Annual report 2020-21



Contents

A year of changes and adjustments	3
Conserving and enhancing the environment	4
Understanding and enjoying the Broads	9
Revenue accounts	13



Yare House 62-64 Thorpe Road Norwich NR1 1RY 01603 610734 broads-authority.gov.uk

Chief Executive: John Packman

A year of changes and adjustments

Every year's work is different, with regular work continuing, some projects reaching their conclusion and others starting, but the period of work covered by this annual report has been unlike any other. It's been a year of changes and adjustments.

Over the year the Broads Authority has sought wherever possible to continue with business as usual. Virtual meetings of the Authority and its committees continued through the year, with members able to carry out their work of overseeing, guiding and approving projects and all Authority business.

Most staff were able to continue working, either outside, from home or in appropriate ways at our Yare House main office and the Dockyard in Norwich, and latterly at our information centres and yacht stations.

Sadly, volunteer work was not able to continue throughout the year, but some restarted in June 2020. It had to stop again in November but was able to start again in spring 2021. Volunteers contribute a huge amount to projects involving all areas of our work and were greatly missed. Changes and adjustments will inevitably continue as our work continues to evolve. Nature, the natural world, the environment – however you choose to think of it – has been at the forefront throughout the year of this report, with all that it can offer for physical and mental well-being. It has long been the aspiration of the national parks to welcome new audiences, as we certainly have this past year. Long may it continue. And so, we look forward to hearing from you and seeing you.

Bill Dickson Chairman, Broads Authority



Keep in touch

- For details about our projects please go to <u>broads-authority.gov.uk</u> or see our contact details on page 2.
- For regular updates on our work you can read Broads Briefing, our monthly online newsletter. To subscribe, go to <u>Monthly</u> newsletter (broads-authority.gov.uk).
- If you'd like regular news about places to visit and things to do, you can also sign up for our Visit the Broads National Park newsletter by going to visitthebroads.co.uk/ newsletter.

Get involved

- If you'd like to contribute your ideas, go to Broads Engage (broads-authority.gov.uk).
- If you'd like to find out about volunteering go to Volunteering (broads-authority.gov.uk).

Conserving and enhancing the environment

Conserving and enhancing the environment, both land and water, forms one part of the Broads Authority's remit. Here's a selection of project news from over the last year highlighting just some of our work in these areas.

Green Apple gold for CANAPE

We were delighted that our CANAPE (Creating a New Approach to Peatland Ecosystems) project, which is restoring wetlands and developing wetland agriculture, won an International Green Apple Award for Environmental Best Practice. The CANAPE partnership consists of 14 organisations across five countries: the UK, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium. Our gold award was in the category Partnerships for Carbon Reduction.

The award was given in September 2020 for our work with project partners in:

- Demonstrating new types of farming, with wetter, more carbon friendly soils, to provide farmers with a sustainable alternative to current carbon intensive farming practices
- Providing simple calculation tools for conservationists and farmers to estimate and promote the carbon benefits of their projects
- Trialling and promoting commercial products made from waste arising from conservation projects, such as charcoal and compost; these will reduce the cost of managing peatlands for nature
- Encouraging the purchase of peatland friendly products (such as peat-free compost)

northsearegion.eu/canape

Knowledge Pioneer

Just a couple of months later, in November 2020, the Broads Authority was the winner of the Knowledge Pioneer award in the Norfolk Business Awards, sponsored by the University of East Anglia.

The Authority has built productive relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders including research institutions, schools and colleges, and the Broads communities themselves, including farmers, landowners, boat owners and visitors.

The judges were impressed by how the Authority has structured the organisation to enable greater knowledge exchange and problem solving. "Innovation and collaboration are hard-wired into the DNA of our organisation and together we have achieved so much for this unique and special place. This paves the way for us to manage the Broads National Park for future generations to enjoy," said John Packman, Chief Executive.

```
edp24.co.uk/news/business/knowledge-pioneer-
winner-6444478
```

Broadland Futures Initiative

This important partnership is working towards future flood risk management, to cope with our changing climate and rising sea level.

A series of study reports is available on the Broads Authority website:

- Origins of the Plan Area a brief history of the Broadland area and how it has changed and adapted over time
- Sources of Flood Risk includes key flood events that occurred in the past
- Coastal Processes describes the evolution of the coast between Cromer and Great Yarmouth, with a focus on the low-lying Eccles to Winterton area
- Current Approaches to Flood Risk Management – includes an overview of funding for flood risk management
- The Influence of Flood Risk Management overview of how the local economy, as well as the social and natural environments, are influenced by current flood risk management

In January 2021 the Broadland Futures Initiative embarked on its second period of public engagement and consultation. This had to be carried out online and included a virtual exhibition designed as though it were physically in a village hall or similar building, with information including videos, posters and frequently asked questions. Virtual village hall events also took place in February and March. All were welcome to attend and hear a presentation from our project team, with the opportunity to submit questions.

An online survey focused on features of the Broads area, flood risk and climate change, vision and adaptation, decision making and funding, with a final section about respondents. Interim results were available in April and identified damage to wildlife habitats due to the impact of flooding as the area of most personal concern to respondents up to that point. The consultation continued until the end of May.

Please see the introduction to this report for details of how you can contribute your ideas to future public consultations.

Future fuels

Advances in boating technology are closely linked to the motoring industry, but although the Government is phasing out the production of petrol and diesel cars from 2030, there is as yet no date for when this will apply to boating.

As part of the Broads Authority's commitment to tackling climate change, our own work programme and transport aim to be carbon neutral by 2030. Over the past year we have continued to purchase more efficient and cleaner replacement engines for ranger launches, and two-thirds of the fitter team vehicles are now electric. The Construction. Maintenance and Ecology team made a trial purchase of hydrotreated vegetable oil biofuel, as a replacement for red diesel, for use in equipment where there is no suitable electric version currently on the market. This will be trialled in equipment and in the ranger launches throughout 2021, and has the potential to offer a 90% reduction in CO2 emissions from vehicles that would otherwise use diesel.

For the wider Broads, we have been working with British Marine, Hethel Innovation and a working group of boatbuilders, hire boat companies and suppliers looking at how the transition to more efficient fuels could take place. Among the options being explored are electric boats and hydrogen fuel. The potential use of biofuels is also being investigated to fill the gap in the shorter term until low-carbon propulsion options reduce in cost.

The Authority will be seeking boaters' views on what would enable them to switch to low-carbon boating so that we can build the infrastructure around the Broads to support them.

An initial survey to canvass views and gather information on user habits was planned, and has since been carried out in July 2021. As the working group develops more specific proposals, views on those individual proposals will be sought.

Wetland demonstration project: paludiculture

The Broads Authority is leading on the development of a wetland demonstration project in the Upper Thurne as part of the CANAPE project mentioned above, in collaboration with the Horsey Estate, the Internal Drainage Board and the Environment Agency. It is important to demonstrate that wetland can be managed in this way as part of the bigger land management picture. The project aims to show farmers and land managers how this land use change to paludiculture or wetland farming works in practice, and to keep in touch with other work on testing the market viability of biomass products.

Anglian Water has advised on constructing the wetland, together with colleagues in Cambridgeshire, Germany and Denmark, who have relevant practical experience. The project is rewetting around three hectares of deep peat agricultural land, with the rewetted area acting as a trial for the production of reed mace and reed. The demonstration site will test seeding and growing plants in the Broads, to see if these crops could be viable across larger areas. It will also test their water filtration capacity. Preparations continued through autumn 2020, with construction and planting due to take place in autumn 2021. The project continues until 2022.

Expected benefits include improved water quality and water storage, habitat creation, and reduced carbon emissions and flood risk. The project will help to filter ochre from the Brograve catchment, returning clean water to supply the protected downstream wetlands.

The Broads site could act as a demonstration for other areas, particularly along the Thurne coastal drainage area and the Waveney valley.

Six Mile House Mill

Part of safeguarding the future is looking after the past, and a major area of work for the Broads Authority's Water, Mills & Marshes (WMM) programme, which is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, is restoring many of the historic drainage mills, working with the Authority's planning team and in particular the Heritage Planning Officer and the Historic Environment Manager.

Our partnership with City College Norwich had been essential to the work, but unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions and college closures, student participation was limited this year. Despite losing the assistance of the college students, our two WMM heritage construction apprentices and the Heritage Skills Supervisor continued their extensive restoration project at the brick-built Six Mile House Mill. One part of their recently completed project was to build a new conical roof for the mill, a key part of protecting it for the future. This grade II listed building dates from the mid-19th century and was one of the mills used to drain Halvergate Marshes for cattle grazing. The mill is situated on the south side of the River Bure and its name derives from the distance by river to Great Yarmouth. You can see the mill from the river or from a riverside footpath.

A fitting culmination after completion of the project was the result for WMM in April 2021 in the Norfolk Constructing Excellence Awards – the complete Six Mile House restoration project won the Preservation & Rejuvenation category and came second overall. Both apprentices are keen to pursue careers in heritage construction.

watermillsandmarshes.org.uk

ccn.ac.uk

northsearegion.eu/canape

Peto's Marsh

A collaboration between the Broads Authority and Suffolk Wildlife Trust has seen the start of a new wetland habitat creation project at Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve, as part of the trust's ambitious project for expanding this reserve.

The Authority's work is contributing to the trust's new wetland at Peto's Marsh, beside the River Waveney at the junction with Oulton Dyke. The new wetland is providing habitats loved by wildlife such as dragonflies, fresh water snails, bitterns, common cranes, marsh harriers, avocets and lapwings, as well as contributing to carbon storage.

About 20,000 cubic metres of sediment from the Authority's dredging work at nearby Oulton Broad are being used to create approximately one hectare of new wetland at river level, with reedbeds and pools, replacing an area previously ploughed and drained as marginal arable land. Work started on this in summer 2020.

suffolkwildlifetrust.org/carlton

Recent history – the 1970s

In 2020 it was more than 40 years ago that the original, non-statutory Broads Authority was established (in 1978, beginning operation in 1979), a completely new organisation with a huge expanse of challenges and opportunities ahead.

The concept of governance of organisations didn't exist in quite the same way that it does today and even today governance, while it's always there, the key to all we do, sometimes remains in the background. Looking back on this year of so much change seems a good time to recognise that.

The first staff appointed were a chief executive, a secretary and what we now call a governance officer. One key area of governance for us is providing administrative support to the governing group of committee members and to the chief executive, together with organising committee and Broads Authority meetings.

Initially, the Authority sought guidance from Norfolk County Council's planning and conservation teams, the regional Nature Conservancy Council, the Great Yarmouth Port and Haven Commissioners, Anglian Water and the regional Countryside Commission, and collaborated closely with the University of East Anglia. Collaboration with these partners, as well as others including Suffolk County Council, the district councils and conservation organisations, was the key to the Authority's initial achievements. It was the start of being a knowledge pioneer, and the principles and practice of partnership working continue today.

The first governance officer, Sandra Beckett, retired in July 2020. Looking back, Sandra noted how the Authority has always been ahead of its time in its environmental work. She remembered how during the 1980s the Broads Grazing Marsh Conservation Scheme developed to become the national Environmentally Sensitive Areas scheme, leading on to later conservation farming schemes, of which more below.

"I feel lucky to have been right at the heart of this pioneering organisation that's been so closely aligned to my principles and cares so much about the environment," said Sandra.

Environmental Land Management schemes

The Government, through the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), has been developing a vision for agricultural policy post-Brexit that will help to achieve its ambition to improve the state of our environment. The Basic Payment Scheme and Countryside Stewardship will be replaced with a system of public money for public goods called Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMs). Public goods include clean and plentiful water, clean air, thriving plants and wildlife, reduction in and protection from environmental hazards, adaptation to and mitigation of climate change, beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment.

The Broads, along with other national parks, was selected as one of the areas to try out these schemes. Tests and trials were run for collaboration between farmers and land managers. Tests helped design some of the fundamentals of the post-Brexit agricultural policy, including how scheme participants can plan and record which public goods they will deliver. Trials are making sure any interventions and innovations work before they are applied across the country. National pilot projects will analyse methods of delivery of environmental outcomes, as well as payments. Initial test and trial results were reported to Defra in July and October 2020. The ELM schemes are due to be introduced nationally in 2024.

Looking ahead with the apprentices

Congratulations to 2019–20's three Environmental Conservation apprentices, who all passed their apprenticeships, having excelled in their Easton College and Broads Authority work. Their college assessor and trainer was full of praise for them, as was their Authority supervisor. They were subsequently taken on as trainee operations technicians for a year and started their new roles in September 2020. Our ranger apprentice also continued to work as part of the ranger team and our two Water, Mills & Marshes apprentices have continued work with the project (see above). We hope to restart the apprenticeship schemes for the 2021/22 academic year.

Understanding and enjoying the Broads

Promoting understanding and enjoyment of the Broads, both land and water, and protecting the interests of navigation, form the other two parts of the Broads Authority's remit. Here's a selection of project news from over the last year highlighting just some of our work in these areas.

Stay safe

An essential part of enjoying the Broads is staying safe and understanding the Broads is an important part of staying safe. Over the year of this report the Broads Authority has been engaged on further work to keep everyone as safe as possible on the waterways, by practical means and by further promotion of safety messages, working with the many other organisations and businesses involved.

A series of boating safety videos was produced for the start of the 2021 boating season, covering Preparing for Your Holiday, Staying Safe on the Broads, Mooring, Mooring in Tidal Waters, Ropes and Knots, Man Overboard, Navigating Bridges, Crossing Breydon and Paddlesports. These are all available on the Authority's website from the link below. The videos were distributed to hire boatyards so that they could be sent out ahead of holiday bookings to help visitors prepare in advance. Additional boating safety advice was included in our 2021 Broadcaster visitor magazine in words, infographics and a fun safety quiz page for children.

broads-authority.gov.uk/boating-essentials

Additional rangers have been employed, ensuring that we have even more staff available to assist boaters with advice and practical help, and able to respond to any eventualities that may occur, working with Broads Beat police and the other emergency services. The Port Marine Safety Code requires harbour authorities to base their policies, plans and procedures on a Formal Safety Assessment, and to maintain a Safety Management System to control the identified risks to a level as low as reasonably practicable. You can find the latest information at

broads-authority.gov.uk/boating/navigatingthe-broads/safety/port-marine-safety-code/ safety-monitoring

A welcome return and old friends in new places

The Broads Authority and Norfolk Wildlife Trust worked on arrangements for handing back the lease for the Broads Information Centre at Ranworth Staithe to the Authority and we were able to open the refurbished centre in time for the start of the 2021 visitor season. Work was carried out for an interpretive feature, installed in April, featuring a display of archive photos showing Broads holidays through the decades, together with a short compilation of archive film from the East Anglian Film Archive at the University of East Anglia.

Preparations were also made for moving Liana from Hoveton to Ranworth to operate a new boat trip going from Ranworth to South Walsham. Meanwhile work progressed with moving Ra to Hoveton, from where we are now able to offer an extended boat trip to Belaugh.

New moorings

Broads Authority 24-hour free moorings are now available at Castle Staithe and Stalham Staithe. At the Castle Staithe moorings, near Caen Meadow in Wroxham, the quay heading was repaired and new mooring posts and safety equipment were installed. As part of the project at Stalham, the staithe was completely refurbished, as befits this site of local historical and architectural significance, within a conservation area. Moorings were also created at Peto's Marsh, part of Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve, enabling visitors on holiday or private boats to have direct access to visit the reserve.

River Wensum adventures

A new pontoon and canoe portage are now available at New Mills on the River Wensum in the centre of Norwich, giving access downstream towards the River Yare or upstream towards Hellesdon. The Broads Authority, working with the River Wensum Strategy Partnership, identified the need to create river access around the pump house at New Mills and the work was completed in October 2020, allowing paddle craft users to safely remove their craft from the river and re-enter either side of the sluice.

The success of this collaborative working enables more people to make fuller use of the river and the partnership will continue to provide further improvements over the coming months and years.

Burgh Castle Almanac and other tales

Many fascinating and inspiring projects make up Water, Mills & Marshes, the Broads Landscape Partnership Scheme. Here are just two projects completed in 2020, with elements of looking back at the Broads but also looking to the future. Both projects were funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Burgh Castle Almanac was an archaeology, creativity and well-being programme based at Burgh Castle Roman fort and Time and Tide Museum at Great Yarmouth, run by the Restoration Trust, in partnership with Norfolk Archaeological Trust and others. Follow the link below to The Return of Happy Times, a film directed by Lowestoft-based photographer and filmmaker Julian Claxton, together with members of the Burgh Castle Almanac group. It illustrates Burgh Castle Almanac activities, with members also explaining how the group benefited them. The title is taken from a saying on a Roman coin that the group found at the fort.

youtube.com/ watch?v=ODVpf0bwVQI&feature=youtu.be

Almost 100 Broads stories were recorded by the Wise Archive project and published as a book by Bittern Books. There are tales of life on the marshes from childhood onwards, with much about working life on the waterways with marshmen, reed cutters, thatchers, millwrights, farmers, boatbuilders, boatyard operators, wherryman and even rangers all featuring, amongst other stories, including some about conservation initiatives. The stories span the years 1920-2020 and are an important firsthand record of Broads life from that period.

wisearchive.co.uk

watermillsandmarshes.org.uk

Life in the Broads

Working with local and national media continued to offer opportunities to bring the Broads to a wider audience. Thanks to Radio Norfolk's BBC Breakfast, many more people now know more about life in the Broads and how varied, interesting, enjoyable and sometimes challenging it can be. A series of interviews celebrating life in the Broads was aired during the early part of 2021, with Broads Authority interviewees and others talking about their work and other aspects of life in the Broads. The Authority's Chief Executive and a ranger talked about their contrasting but closely related roles, while other interviewees included the Chair of Visit the Broads, the destination management organisation for the Broads National Park.

Love the Broads

There is so much to see and do in the beautiful and diverse landscape of the Broads National Park. But this beautiful place needs everyone's help to safeguard its future. The Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Charitable Trust aims to do just that by welcoming donations from visitors, local people and businesses through its fund-raising scheme, Love the Broads. So far, Love the Broads has given over £50,000 in grants to 38 projects that benefit the landscape and wildlife of the Broads, and help schools and other visitors to enjoy and understand the Broads. You can find out about the projects at

lovethebroads.org.uk

Postcards from the Parks

The UK national parks have a new website to help you get outside and explore your national parks, including recovering with nature and learning outdoors. The site is a collaborative project between all 15 parks, managed by the national parks communications and marketing team, based within the Broads Authority's communications team. The parks have also established a newsletter, Postcards from the Parks, to keep you updated with projects and activities across the country, tell you inspirational stories and give you inside info. To sign up for the postcards go to

nationalparks.uk

Clarion call

The Broads Authority is working on a new youth engagement and social action project in partnership with Clarion Housing, the UK's largest housing association. Authority staff are providing training and education to young people who may not normally have an opportunity to visit the Broads. The aim is to inspire them with their local natural environment and to encourage them to deliver their own social action projects within their own communities.

Projects they'll be working on include practical conservation, constructing wildlife homes, tree planting, and ecological surveying and recording, as well as exploring the Broads National Park. The initiative between Clarion Housing and the Authority is supported by the #iwill Fund, which is an England-wide joint investment bringing together funding from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and the National Lottery Community Fund.

myclarionhousing.com

iwill.org.uk

Generation Green

Life needs to get greener and this national project is one way to make it happen.

The 10 English national parks are partners in Generation Green, which is funded by the Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund. The coalition of partners is called Access Unlimited and as well as the parks, comprises YHA (England & Wales), who are hosting the project, the Outward Bound Trust, Scouts, Girlguiding and the Field Studies Council. The Broads Authority's Education Officer worked with partners to contribute to the bid to gain funding for the project.

The 16-month project aims to create opportunities for thousands of young people to connect with nature. Through new jobs, training, volunteering roles, residential visits and outdoor and online learning experiences, the project will provide more than 100,000 opportunities to connect young people to nature – many for the first time – and to cultivate a sense of care for the natural environment. Activities include experiences in national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty, social action and citizen science projects, self-guided learning and micro-volunteering. The project will prioritise participation of ethnically diverse groups, people from disadvantaged backgrounds and coastal communities.

In the Broads, preparations were made to employ two new members of staff for the project, which aims to reach 300–600 people with Broads discovery days, primary school residential visits and youth action programmes. Plans also include a youth ranger team and recruitment of engagement volunteers, elements that will continue into the future.

yha.org.uk/generationgreen

Festival time

Under the coordination of the national parks UK communications and marketing team, the family of 15 national parks worked as part of a group bidding to play a key role in delivering one of the coming cultural highlights, Festival UK 2022. The group of which we are a part was one of the final 10 selected to make up the festival, announced in March 2021, which has £100 million of funding from the Government. Our project will receive at least £5.7 million of funding, a proportion of which will make its way to local arts, heritage and community projects.

The festival will engage the public with a celebration of UK innovation and creativity, and demonstrate what is achievable from collaboration between science, technology, engineering, the arts and maths. The national parks chose to join the group because the project clearly supports the aims and ethos of national parks. The project will connect directly with 5,000 schools across the UK and champion the cause of breaking down barriers to access green spaces.

Revenue accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021

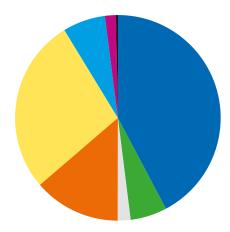
A summary of the Broads Authority's consolidated income and expenditure for 2020/21 is set out below.

National Park Grant is awarded to the Authority in recognition of the Authority's status equivalent to that of a national park. It is spent on matters relating to conservation, planning, recreation and information and design. The level of National Park Grant has remained static since 2019/20.

Navigation activity is self-financing from tolls paid by users of the Broads waterways.

Although the Broads Authority Act 2009 removed the statutory requirement to maintain separate general and navigation revenue accounts, there is still a requirement to prepare a report at the end of each financial year describing the navigation income received by the Authority and the navigation expenditure incurred during the year. A copy of this report is available on the Authority's website.

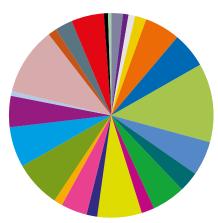
The Authority is required to prepare a full and detailed Statement of Accounts in accordance with guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). These accounts are scrutinised by the Authority's External Auditors and are made available for public inspection. The audit has been completed for 2020/21 and the approved Statement of Accounts can be viewed on the Authority's website or can be obtained from the Chief Financial Officer, Broads Authority, Yare House, 62–64 Thorpe Road, Norwich, NR1 1RY.



Income

	£'000	
 National Park Grant (Defra) 	3,414.1	
National Lottery Heritage Fund Grant -		
Water, Mills & Marshes Delivery phase	464.7	
ERDF* Grant - CANAPE	163.3	
Tolls from hire craft	1,104.7	
 Tolls from private craft 	2,228.4	
 Other National Park income 	540.6	
Other Navigation income	140.9	
Interest	22.3	
TOTAL INCOME	8,079.0	

*European Regional Development Fund



Expenditure

Asset management 148.0 Biodiversity strategy 69.9 ERDF* - CANAPE 86.0 Collection of tolls 143.0 Communications (including education, events, design and interpretation, tourism and 450.2 UK Communications Team) Development management 449.3 Dredging 1,001.4 Equipment, vehicles and vessels 436.8 Fen and tree management 257.7 Finance (including insurance) 422.8 163.8 Governance National Lottery Heritage Fund -Water, Mills & Marshes Delivery phase 564.7 Human resources 135.4 • ІСТ 331.9 Legal services 108.8 592.1 Management and other costs Practical maintenance 513.6 Premises and property management 396.3 62.1 Projects Ranger services 859.5 Safety 110.6 Strategy (including strategy and projects, Broads Plan, cultural heritage, climate change 221.0 and test & trials) Visitor services (including boat trips and 414.5 yacht stations) • Volunteers 52.2 41.4 Waterways strategy TOTAL EXPENDITURE <u>8,033.0</u> Contribution to reserves 46.0

£'000

*European Regional Development Fund