



Broads
Drainage Board

Brograve Partnership Terms of Reference

Scope

The Brograve Drainage District (1653.93 ha) is a pumped catchment located to the north of Hickling Broad. The Hickling and Horsey drainage districts are to the south and the sea coast is along the eastern margin. This large District occupies a wide sweep of land between Horsey in the south east and Ingham in the north west, bounded to the south by marshland and arable land around the Hickling District. It comprises grazing marsh, arable land, wet carr woodland, fen, fen meadow, sand dunes, foreshore and the open water of Calthorpe Broad. Much of the area is within the Broads Authority Executive Area.

The historical need for land drainage to maximise arable production resulted in watercourses being dug deep into the peaty soils, some cutting through this relatively impermeable layer connecting the bed of the watercourse to the crag aquifer beneath. Due to the close proximity to the North Sea, and the marshes levels being at or below 0m AOD(n), salt water flows through the crag aquifer and issues in the form of springs into the coastal marsh watercourses. The whole of the Brograve catchment water is drained down by pump under essential normal operations into Horsey Mere, which is part of the internationally important freshwater habitat of the Upper Thurne Broads and Marshes SSSI/SAC/SPA/Ramsar. Horsey Mere is rapidly declining in ecology due to the increase in salt water content.

Objectives

Due to the critical importance of addressing the decline in the protected habitat the Broads Internal Drainage Board (IDB) as the Operating Authority has formed the Brograve Partnership to ensure that the often conflicting business activities, be it livestock management, arable farming or tourist/amenity activities supporting the rural economy are voiced and balanced against significant environmental issues.

Key stakeholders are represented on the Brograve Partnership including Landowners, business stakeholders; public bodies including Environment Agency, Natural England, Broads Authority, County & District Councillors, Parish Councils, Broads IDB Members; National Farmers Union, and academics from University of East Anglia and Cranfield University who have extensive historical knowledge on key drivers established from previous studies in the area.

Success

The aim of the Brograve Partnership is to work with landowners and the wider community to develop and agree targeted actions to achieve the best possible water level management regime across the whole of the Brograve Catchment that results in an improvement of the water quality reaching Horsey Mere. This will enable the SSSI to recover, restoring the natural habitats and species of community interest to a favourable conservation status.