

BROADS SOCIETY

Notes on an informal discussion with Trudi Wakelin, BA Director of Operations Tuesday 14 April 2015 prior to the formal meeting of the Main Committee

Trudi reported on the following issues:

1 Lake Restoration Workshop

On Friday 17 April the report of a comprehensive review of all data on water quality and lake restoration activities will be presented at a workshop comprising members of the Broads Authority and Stakeholders. The findings will enable an assessment of the current situation in the context of compliance with Natural England and Water Framework Directive targets.

Work will be carried out in tandem with the Broads Plan. A major project at Hickling is planned to be developed over the course of this financial year. The programme will be developed with the Upper Thurne Working Group and the Broads Forum will be consulted towards an agreed vision, with EU funding needing to be sought for implementation.

Significant algal blooms have been noticed, primarily Prymnesium and blue-green algae with a significant accumulation at the head of the River Thurne. Fish have been relocated by the Environment Agency and aerators installed as the high numbers of fish deplete the oxygen supply.

2 Wensum River Strategy

The BA is working with Norwich HEART and the Norwich Heritage Group to develop a strategy for increasing access to the Wensum. Norwich City Council will fund the work and is developing an action plan for consultation. The Broads Society will be one of the stakeholder consultees.

3 Three Rivers Cycle Path

In 2014 Norfolk County Council approved £800k for the first phase of the cycle path. Work will start this summer with opening planned for summer 2016. Feasibility work is also ongoing to develop Phases 2 and 3 which will continue the route to Potter Heigham. Norfolk County Council is a partner for central government cycling funding.

4 Ludham Bridge Footpath

Final agreements have been sent to landowners and agents for signature. The BA needs to complete the on the ground physical work within eight weeks of documents being signed.

5 General Update on Miscellaneous Issues

- a) Reconstruction of Turn Tide Jetty is due to start later in the week.
- b) Induction training for new members of the Navigation Committee arranged for 23 April.
- c) The BA has agreed to rent moorings at Thurne Mouth; the agreement has yet to be signed.
- d) BESL will remove steel markers in the River Chet this winter.
- e) Channel markers in Barton Broad will be replaced after dredging of the Ant.
- f) BA Annual Public Open Day – 27 June at the Dockyard, Griffin Lane.
- g) Dredging of Oulton Broad to take place this summer.
- h) Malfunction of the gates at Mutford Lock is due to problems with the hinges. Remedial work is planned for completion by the end of April. A full report will be presented to the Navigation Committee in June.

Questions from Committee members

Q. Why are the water levels in the River Yare so low this year? – Colin Dye

A. The entire fluvial catchment area has been affected by the dry winter

Q. What Impact will there be on navigation during work on Turn Tide Jetty? – Colin Dye

A. None

Q. Is small scale dredging at Hickling (Whispering Reeds) and Catfield Dyke likely to proceed? – Keith Bacon

A. Not this summer as Natural England has concerns over dealing with prymnesium responsibly, but hoping to undertake the work early winter

Q. What progress had been made with negotiations with Network Rail about bridges over the Yare? – Nick Balls

A. A meeting has been arranged with Network Rail officials in May. The BA has received confirmation that Network Rail is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

Q. How Hill – is there any possibility of the bridge being re-opened? - Peter Horsefield Keith Bacon?

A. Don't know, will need to check with Adrian Clarke

Q. Why are channel markers needed in Barton Broad? Paul Savage

A. This is a contentious issue within the Navigation Committee. The Barton Liaison Group believes they are necessary for those unfamiliar with the area, particularly when transiting the Broad in poor light conditions.

They also help to restrict the passage of motor boats to the central channel, thus reducing the disturbance of wildlife and leaving space for sailing activities.