

## BROADS SOCIETY

### Minutes of the Main Committee held on Tuesday 15 July 2014 at the Hotel Wroxham, Wroxham

**Present:** Robin Godber (Chairman); Keith Bacon (Vice-Chairman),  
Nick Balls, Colin Dye, Peter Horsefield, Ian Masters,  
Richard Reid, Paul Savage, Pat Simpson, Peter Howe

**By invitation for part of the meeting:** Trudi Wakelin and Lesley Marsden  
(Broads Authority)

**In attendance:** Carol Palfrey (Administrator)

#### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Mark Wells and Jill Wickens

#### **2 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

#### **3 Minutes of the Meeting of 13 May 2014**

The minutes, having been circulated, were agreed and signed as a true record subject to amendment of Minute 8.2 to read: "Natural England had agreed to allocate funds for improvements to Hoveton Great Broad. These would include mud pumping, removal of vegetation and creation of a nature trail. The decision had the support of the Broads Authority."

The Administrator confirmed that she would send an amended version for the website to Nick Balls.

#### **4 Matters Arising**

##### **4.1 Follow up from meeting with Henry Cator**

The Chairman was keeping in touch via correspondence with particular reference to improving water quality, but there were no developments to report so far. At the recent launch of the Broadland Partnership it had been demonstrated that small schemes were making a difference.

##### **4.2 Upper Thurne Working Group (UTWG) (Minute 4.1)**

During questions after her presentation to the Committee Trudi Wakelin had confirmed that Broads Authority Officers would be made available to provide support as necessary. However, administration and organisation would be the responsibility of Group members.

##### **4.3 Arthur Ransome Society (Minute 4.2)**

The Chairman and Richard Reid had met for preliminary discussions and would continue to be responsible for organising the Society's participation in this event.

4.4 Pegasus Site (Minute 13.8)

Robin Godber reported that the site had been featured in a BBC2 programme about development of sites formerly used for commercial and industrial purposes. Two members of the Society who lived nearby had been interviewed.

4.5 Hoveton Great Broad (Minute 8.2)

Keith Bacon reported on the debate at the Local Access Forum and the Broads Forum. The overwhelming view of members of both Forums was that the allocation of £4m of public money should be conditional on opening the Broad for public access. The proposed agreement, allowing access to the adjoining dykes but not to the main Broad, was considered inadequate. Keith had subsequently spoken on this issue at a meeting of the Broads Authority.

It was agreed the Broads Society should make representations to Natural England and DEFRA. Keith Bacon and Robin Godber agreed to draft a letter to be sent to Natural England. Robin would raise this issue at his next regular meeting with John Packman, and Peter Horsefield offered to email Jackie Burgess, Vice-Chair of the Broads Authority.

Colin Dye, supported by Ian Masters, suggested that this was an opportunity for the Society to take the initiative and have influence by canvassing public support for opening Hoveton Great Broad to public. Members supported this proposal. It was agreed that, in due course, the matter could be aired through the Society's column in Anglia Afloat. Keith Bacon pointed out that if access were denied, the Society should then campaign for the funding to be transferred to improvements to Hickling Broad.

## 5 Finance

5.1 Annual Report and Accounts 2013-2014

Copies had been sent to all members. The Treasurer explained the adjustments made necessary by the change of accounting practice which now provided for receipts and payment to be shown in the year in which they occurred. He drew attention to the apparently large expenditure on the Norfolk Show. Payment for the Stand for both 2013 and 2014 had been made in the financial year under review. The expenditure had been covered by two donations from a member; however, the second of these had been received and recorded in the accounts for the current financial year 2014/2015. A note to this effect would be included in the Accounts and in the version published for the AGM. The Treasurer commended the service provided by Debit & Credit Accountancy and proposed that the accounts be accepted by the Committee for formal adoption at the AGM. This was seconded by Ian Masters and unanimously agreed.

Members thanked the Treasurer and the Administrator for their work.

5.2 Financial Report for the current year 2014/2015

The Treasurer reported on the financial situation as at 30 June 2014, including his budgetary projection for the year. Although the anticipated in-year deficit appeared greater than in the previous year, this could be explained by a number of accounting anomalies and was not therefore a matter for concern.

He confirmed that, as the year progressed, the “Budget to Date Column” would reflect the normal expected peaks and troughs in expenditure and income, thus enabling monitoring of cash flow.

Members were grateful to the Administrator for waiving the annual cost of living increase to her fee.

5.3 Other Financial Matters

The possible implications of the Lobbying Bill would be kept under review. General advice would be published in due course.

**6 CNP**

Peter Howe saw his role as providing a channel of communication between CNP and the Society. He reported on the following matters.

6.1 National Parks Society Conference 2014

This would be hosted by the Yorkshire Dales Society 8–10 October. Peter would be unable to attend due to a prior commitment but he hoped that the Society would be able to send a representative. He had circulated full details by email. The Chairman confirmed that he would be attending and Peter Horsefield expressed interest if he was not in France

6.2 Council Meeting 19 June

Due to transport delays Peter had missed the item on the Manifesto. He pointed out that strategic plan of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership does not include any reference to the Broads.

6.3 The Changing Landscape

The CNP had identified the differences in Scotland, Wales and England.

6.4 Direct Elections to National Park Authorities

CNP was considering its response to the proposal for Direct Elections included in the Queen’s Speech. There was great uncertainty about the criteria to be used in defining the constituency and it was likely that each National Park would have a different view. It would therefore be difficult for CNP to find a stance which would be suitable for all National Parks.

Robin Godber agreed to raise this with John Packman.

#### 6.5 Other Matters

Responding to Peter Horsefield's concern about the current Chief Executive being an employee of Natural England, and only appointed for a one year term, Peter Howe said that his influence so far appeared beneficial and that he was a "breath of fresh air". CNP had achieved some financial savings by moving to shared premises with CPRE.

### 7 **Broads Charitable Trust**

The Trust would be considering applications for funding from the "Love the Broads" Scheme. £4,000 had been allocated last year and five applications were under review.

Colin Dye suggested that the Trust might consider a project to include postcodes on signs at public moorings to assist the Emergency Services. It was, however, agreed that this was a Broads Authority responsibility. Robin Godber would contact Steve Birtles.

### 8 **Broads Forum**

Keith Bacon had chaired the last meeting. The Broads Authority had approved the proposal that the Society should have a category of membership in its own right instead of being categorised as a local charity. The Society would have two representatives – currently Robin Godber and Martin George. However, it would be prudent to appoint a substitute to cover for absence. Peter Horsefield volunteered. There would be a very strong Society presence at the Forum as Keith Bacon and Colin Dye were already members representing other interest groups.

### 9 **Waste Collection**

Correspondence with Gt Yarmouth Borough Council about cessation of their waste collection service for Broads users had been circulated.

Paul Savage had prepared an analysis of the arguments put forward by the Council and identified some flaws in their reasoning. The regulations on waste collection and recycling were due to change next year.

The issue had been discussed at the Broads Forum and fears had been expressed that North Norfolk and Broadland District Councils would follow Gt Yarmouth's example. Waste collection was an essential service for visitors coming to the Broads. The new policy developed to make immediate savings would, in the longer term have a detrimental impact on the tourist industry. There needed to be an agreement between all the local authorities, including the Broads Authority, about the responsibility for providing and funding this service.

It was agreed that Robin Godber, briefed by Paul Savage, should raise this issue with John Packman with a view to the Authority and the Broads Society agreeing a common line.

Peter Horsefield pointed out that this was yet another example of fragmentation. He believed an integrated strategy was required to develop and improve "The Broads Experience".

## **10 Publicity and Promotion**

### **10.1 Norfolk Show**

Although the Society's Stand at the Norfolk Show had created interest, it was evident that it was not a useful event from the point of view of recruitment. Many of the visitors had been Society members. The member who had made the donation to fund the stand had suggested that the Society needed to promote its message in different way. At present the Society found it difficult to make its role clear to the public; there was a need to find a way to make an impact.

### **10.2 Other Activities**

The Society had had more success with recruitment at other events. Since April 2014, eleven new members had joined, two of whom had applied for Life Membership. The majority of these had been recruited via the publicity stand, particularly at the Loddon and Horning events. One visitor to the Stand had been so impressed that, although she did not wish to become a member, she had made a donation of to support the Society's work.

## **11 Harnser**

The Administrator read out a short report from Jill Wickens who had tendered her apologies for absence.

No one had yet volunteered to take on the role of Editor. David Edleston had expressed interest but could not take up the position in the foreseeable future due to other commitments. Jill was willing to continue as Editor as long as she was able.

Keith Mcdougall, one of the Society's Vice-Presidents, had written to the Chairman suggesting that the Society should find a suitable way to recognise Vic Standley for his invaluable contribution to Harnser over many years. He had sent this to Jill Wickens for publication in "Harnser".

The Administrator suggested the award of the Society Trophy which could be presented at the AGM. This was unanimously agreed. Robin Godber would contact Vic Standley.

Annual Reports from the Chairs of the Rivers Sub-Committees and Broadsword were required by 28 August at the latest.

Jill issued a please for more entries for the Photographic Competition were required. It would be a great pity if the organiser, Nigel Hughes, received a lack of support for his generous initiative.

Margaret Bird, a longstanding member, would be giving a talk on Keels and Wherries in Ludham Village Hall on 7 October at 7.15 and had

asked Jill to let Committee members know in the hope that some of them might wish to attend.

## **12 Anglia Afloat**

The article in the August edition would feature the Society's Stand at the Norfolk Show. There were two more issues in 2014, September and November, and Richard Reid, the Society's columnist, was seeking topics. Members suggested the Society's seminal role in the selection of power lines for undergrounding and a report on the various Broads-related events and Festivals at which the Society had mounted a stand during the year. It was agreed that, at some stage, a feature on the controversy over funding for Hoveton Great Broads would be appropriate, but it would be premature to consider such an article this year.

## **13 Website**

Nick Ball had nothing to report other than to say that the site was being regularly updated.

## **14 Issues of Concern**

### **14.1 Pylons - Lowestoft to Norwich**

Lesley Marsden's comments about the Government's fund for undergrounding transmission lines were noted.

### **14.2 Solar Farm Development**

The Society was maintaining a watching brief.

### **14.3 Water - Ski-ing and management issues**

There was very little water ski-ing activity at present.

### **14.4 River Chet**

Work on the Chet had resulted in great improvement. The leak from Hardley Flood had been repaired and dredging of the main channel would take place this winter. The steel posts at the entrance would be removed in due course.

### **14.5 Water Quality**

The Broads Catchment Partnership had been launched by the Waveney River Trust. This initiative would foster co-operation and Robin Godber was encouraged by what he had seen.

### **14.6 Climate Change Adaptation**

Ian Masters and Pat Simpson had attended a meeting of delegates invited to discuss the draft of the Climate Adaptation plan being prepared by the BA in response to DEFRA's requirements. However, they did not yet have the latest information at their fingertips as UEA scientists were still working on data to determine priorities. Ian Masters expressed surprise that only one person present was aware of Henry Cator's thinking on water collection and other farming initiatives in the Broads.

Members decided that the Society needed to set up a link with local farmers and Pat Simpson agreed to take on this role.

Peter Horsefield had been trying, without success, to obtain from Simon Hooton the DEFRA briefing document on the terms of reference for a plan. Peter pointed out the influence of the sun's state and position on the cycles of heating and cooling experienced over millennia. However, it was apparent DEFRA believed strongly that in the anthropic origin of the current stage of climate change and Peter believed that Simon had been given an impossible job. Keith Bacon suggested a number of individuals who might be contacted for advice.

Ian Masters suggested that the Chairman should invite Henry Cator to speak at the AGM and this was agreed.

#### 14.6 Acle Straight

Robin Godber had attended a second meeting to ensure that the Society's voice was heard. Other interested parties (the DoT, County Councils, the Broads Authority, Natural England, RSPB and NWT) were all of a similar view, namely that road improvement was necessary but that the proposals must take account of wildlife and ecological concerns.

#### 14.7 Norfolk Hub and the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NDR)

The Chairman proposed that in future the Society should consider these two issues jointly. Nick Balls' written report on the Society's response to the Consultation document had been circulated. Having examined the documentation, and in particular the Habitats Regulations Assessment, Nick had concluded that, as the NDR lies at the edge of the Society's area of interest, there would be little advantage in responding to the current dialogue. However, it could learn from the process used for deriving the environmental statements.

The Committee supported this analysis and recommendation.

### 15 **Rivers Sub-Committees**

#### 15.1 Northern Rivers Sub-Committee (NRS-C)

The minutes of the meeting of 9 June 2014 had been circulated. Paul Savage (Chairman) believed that the time was approaching to recruit new members to replace resignations and possible ill health of existing members.

Paul would be attending the BA Workshop Moorings and Access on 22 July. He hoped that it would be a workshop and not merely a "transmission of information" exercise which was often the case with Broads Authority public meetings.

Bryan Read had been unable to lead the Norwich Riverside Walk for health reasons.

15.2 Southern Rivers Sub-Committee (SRS-C)

The next meeting would take place on 23 July.

**18 Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 9 September 2014

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10.00 pm

Signed .....  
Chairman

Date .....