

The Broads Society

Minutes of the Northern Rivers Sub-Committee Meeting held on 11 August 2014 at 7.30 pm at the Hotel Wroxham

Present: Paul Savage (Chairman), Lesley Bonshor,
Michael Brandon-Jones, Peter Cobb, David Edleston, John Pitchers and
David Skinner

In attendance: Carol Palfrey (Administrator/Committee Secretary)

1 Apologies

Keith Bacon and John Scott

2 Minutes of the meeting of 9 June 2014

The minutes had been circulated and were agreed and signed by the Chair of the meeting as a true record subject to the amendment of the date the boat trip to

14th September (Minute 3.2).

3 Matters Arising

3.1 Cess Staithe (Minute 3.1)

The Administrator reported that that the Land Registry had asked the Society to clarify whether they were objecting to the registration of Cess Staithe by Martham Boatyard as well as the access road. On the advice of Keith Bacon she had replied confirming that the Society did have such an objection on the grounds that a public right of way traversed the Staithe.

3.2 Gt Yarmouth Borough Council Review of Waste Collection (Minute 6)

Keith Bacon had informed the Administrator that negotiations were in progress and it was hoped that a compromise could be reached.

3.3 Queen's Speech – Elections to National Parks Authorities (Minute 8.1)

At the Main Committee, the Society Chairman had offered to raise this issue at his next meeting with John Packman. CNP did not believe there was a need to change the existing arrangements. However, they had set out a number of principles which they would wish to see adopted if the proposal for direct elections was implemented.

4 Committee Membership

In his report to the Main Committee Paul Savage had suggested that, following the loss of two members, there was a need for new recruits.

5 Matters arising from the Main Committee held on 13 May

The Administrator circulated copies of the notes on the update by Trudi Wakelin (BA Director of Operations) and the presentation on undergrounding of electricity pylons by Lesley Marsden (BA Landscape Architect).

Other issues addressed included:

- Follow up from meeting with Henry Cator - The Chairman will be keeping in touch with Mr Cator with particular reference to water quality.
- Upper Thurne Working Group – The Group will continue under revised arrangements. BA has agreed to make Officers available for advice and support as necessary but administration and organisation will be the responsibility of members.
- Hoveton Great Broad – 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 and found that BA members were even more angry about the current situation. (See Minute 9.3 below – planning).
- Broads Forum – the Broads Authority has accepted the Forum’s recommendation that that the Society should be assigned a new category of representation and be permitted two representatives.
- Climate Change Adaptation – Ian Masters and Pat Simpson had attended a meeting of delegates invited to discuss the Climate Adaptation Plan being prepared by the BA to meet DEFRA requirements. The Society had appointed Pat Simpson to act as a link with local farmers.
- Harnser –at the date of the Committee meeting no one had volunteered to take on the role of editor.

David Edleston explained his position to members of NRSC.

Although he had expressed interest in working with the current Editor to produce the next two issues, he was not currently in a position to take on full responsibility for producing Harnser. The matter was complicated by the need to find a new printer and someone to write the regular report on the Broads Authority as Vic Standley had expressed a wish to step down. The situation had reached an impasse.

- Acle Straight – Robin Godber reported on a second meeting with other interested parties (DoT, County Council, the Broads Authority, Natural England, RSPB and NWT). All those involved share the Society’s view that road improvement is necessary but that the proposals must take account of wildlife and ecological concerns.

(A copy of the minutes has been posted on the website.)

6 BA Mooring and Access Strategy Workshop

Paul Savage reported on his attendance at the Workshop. The BA was considering reducing the number of its official 24 hour mooring on cost grounds, despite the provision of the Broads Act requiring the Authority to calculate toll income by reference to the need to spend money on navigation rather than the other way round. The Stakeholder meeting came about because Auditors said insufficient was being spent on fixed assets including moorings owned or leased by the BA. Current budget is for £140,000. Current expenditure expected at £196,000. The result of the meeting was an expenditure over £600,000 on fewer moorings. Paul had written to the Authority on this matter before the meeting, to set out the position that ring-fenced navigation income should always be sufficient to complete reasonable works.

The Workshop had not addressed the problem of the loss of informal moorings when piling was removed in the course of flood prevention works by the

Environment Agency. The Broads Authority did not consider they had the power to impose planning conditions when the EA lodged an application for the removal of piling.

After the Workshop Paul had written to the Environment Agency explaining the issues in detail and had copied his letter to Brandon Lewis, MP, and Richard Card, Chair of the Norfolk & Suffolk Boating Association.

7 Norfolk Hub and NDR

It was agreed that the impact of the North East Growth Triangle, a key part of Broadland Council's Area Action Plan, should be included under this heading and developments monitored and kept under review.

8 Issues relating to the Society's Mission

8.1 Boat Trip

Colin Dye had agreed to provide a boat on Sunday 14th September, subject to availability. On Tuesday 9 September he would be able to let David Edleston know whether the boat trip could go ahead. Assuming this was the case, David would contact all members of NRSC who wished to go (Paul Savage, Michael Brandon Jones, Peter Cobb, John Pitchers) and issue an invitation to the Society Chairman. Depending on the maximum capacity of the boat (to be advised by Colin) places could be offered to members of the Southern Rivers Sub-Committee. A start time of 10.00 am was proposed.

8.2 Other Matters

None at present

9 Planning

9.1 Planning Applications and decisions during the last four months

A list had been circulated. There were no comments.

9.2 Refusals, withdrawn applications and appeals

None

9.3 New applications to consider

3871 – Haugh End Road, Lower Street Horning – Creation of reedbeds by pumping lake sediment into geotextile bunds, back filling the areas behind with more sediment and planting these areas with locally sourced vegetation, together with temporary fish barriers.

This application relates to the proposals for Hoveton Great Broad discussed at the Main Committee meeting. It was agreed that the response should include the following points:

- No objection to dredging, piling and creating fringes of fen but object to the creation of fish barriers up to 5 metres wide from steel gabions filled with sand and gravel. The barriers are, in reality, dams and, as it is proposed to leave them in place for 3 – 10 years, they will become deeply embedded.
- Do not agree that the proposed barriers will allow river water to flow through and thus flush and clean the Broad; it seems more likely that the phosphate-rich sediment will leach through the geotextile bunds

back into the Broad and the water quality will be no better – and possibly worse – because there will be no possibility for it to escape the Broad . A more appropriate method of excluding fish, as at Barton Broad, is a net suspended from small buoys.

- The application is incomplete because the linked proposal to create public access has not yet been lodged. The two applications should be considered together.

9.4 Other planning matters

None

10 **A.O.B.**

10.1 Questionnaire

Kayleigh Wood, one of the Planning Officers at the Broads Authority is also a third year student at the College of Estate Management and Reading University. She is carrying out research for her dissertation, and for her employer, on the contribution of traditional waterside chalets to the character of the Broads. Part of this research involves gathering opinions and she has asked the Broads Society to complete a questionnaire designed for community groups.

Members were pleased to note that, in supporting this research, the Broad Authority were giving due recognition to the heritage of the built environment. They agreed, or strongly agreed, with all the questions about the significance of waterside chalets in the Broads but disagreed that such chalets were unique to the Broads.

Additional comments for inclusion in the questionnaire:

Some “traditional” waterside chalets are less attractive than others. Every proposal to alter or demolish or replace a chalet should be considered individually on its merits.

Question 9 refers to alterations being “sympathetic” to the historic character of traditional waterside chalets. In agreeing to this statement we wish to make clear our view that this should not limit alterations merely to copying the existing style. Modern, contrasting designs, provided they are of the right kind, can be sympathetic in terms of enhancing a traditional building.

10.2 Annual Report for AGM

The Chairman invited suggestions for topics to be included in his report. His own proposals included Moorings and Hoveton Great Broad. It was suggested that Cess Staithe might be appropriate

11. **Date of next Meeting**

Monday: 13 October 2014

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Signed

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