

Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2015



First Award of Martin Broom Memorial Trophy for Outstanding Contribution to Broads Boating

All who knew Martin Broom MBE were saddened when he passed away in 2013. Martin will go down in Broads history as a wise, unassuming and tireless worker for boating on the Broads. His record for contribution to the administration and well-being of boating is without equal.

After consultation with Martin's widow, Jennifer, the NSBA's General Purposes Committee decided that each year the NSBA should offer to award a trophy in Martin's name for an outstanding contribution to Broads' boating.

For this purpose, 'outstanding contribution to Broads' boating' is not limited to any particular context or to an individual contribution. It could, for example, be awarded on the basis of work behind the scenes, contribution in the commercial boating sector, contribution to training, or a combination of these things. The Trophy may be awarded to an individual, a group of individuals or an organisation. *The closing date for nominations (to be submitted to the Hon Administrator) is 30 September in any year.*

The Trophy consists of a wooden cabinet containing a display of some silver spoons adorned with club burgees which Martin won at regattas and open events across the Broads. The concept was inspired by Jennifer Broom who donated the spoons. The Trophy was made by Lorne Betts, who donated the wood and his time. Its construction took many hours of work.



The winners

Jennifer Broom presented the Trophy to its first winners at the NSBA's AGM in December. It was awarded to the Nancy Oldfield Trust to general acclaim.

The Nancy Oldfield Trust was founded 30 years ago by Richard Kenyon who had a vision of providing a centre for anyone disabled or socially disadvantaged so that they could experience and participate in water-based sports. With help from his parents and with the £80,000 that he had raised, a bungalow at Neatishead was bought as a base and some sailing boats were bought with extra funding.

Over time three specially converted motor boats, each with capacity for up to ten people, have been bought enabling visitors, even those with significant mobility issues, to enjoy the Broads in all weathers. In addition, a pontoon was obtained which provides a permanent base for the nine sailing boats (two Bass boats, three Yeoman, a YBOD, a Kinsman, a Randmeer and a Pandora).

Supported by a recent bequest, the bungalow has been updated for the second time so that en suite accommodation is available for up to ten people with disabilities and their carers.

The Trust can now provide experience in tandem canoes, sailing, fishing, bird-watching and trips in the three motor-craft. It is committed to 'green' technology and has a number of craft powered by electricity giving the opportunity for peaceful observation of wildlife.

The Trust co-operates with many other Broads organisations including the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, the Hunter Fleet, the Green Festival, Fairhaven Gardens, St Benet's Abbey, and the Broads Authority. In addition, it has trained many RYA Instructors and Senior Instructors who also now support sail training in clubs across the Broads. Motor-boat drivers are trained to RYA Inland Waterways Certificate standard by the Trust.

The Trust works with local charities for people with a range of disabilities including Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind and residential homes and day centres.

The Trust is run by the Centre Manager, Stephen Bradnock, full and part time senior instructors and part time administrative support. More than 60 trained volunteers (many of whom are NSBA members) work summer and winter and the NOT has recently been awarded the National Parks Group Volunteer Award 2014. The Trust would always welcome more volunteers, particularly sailors. You can contact them on 01692 630572 or visit the website www.nancyoldfield.org.uk



Nancy Oldfield Trust receives no statutory grant funding and is dependent on donations and bequests. If you have enjoyed spending time on the Norfolk Broads during your lifetime, perhaps you might consider remembering the Trust in your will or making a donation to enable people with disabilities, both young and old, to benefit from time on the water both now and in the future.

Keep the NSBA informed

Members of the NSBA Committee continue to take up boating-related issues, eg bankside trees and hazards to navigation, on behalf of individual clubs and individual members. We can only take up issues if we are kept informed. So please do so, via the Hon Administrator (e-mail: julia.bower1@btinternet.com). Often the information received from an individual can be very useful in contributing to an overall picture.

Hoveton Great Broad

Natural England (NE) is leading a £4.5 million project to improve water quality in Hoveton Great Broad (HGB). HGB was closed to public use in around 1890 by the landowner. Up till then it had been open to navigation. There remains a question mark over this action because the Broad was and remains tidal, a fact admitted by NE. Tidal waters should be open to navigation. The funds for the project will be drawn from grants expected to be provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the EU LIFE+ Fund. This large expenditure of public money for private benefit has resulted in calls for access to the Broad to be opened up. In response, NE has proposed creating a privately run, guided, commercial canoe trail along drainage dykes in the nearby marshes at limited times. The proposed trail culminates in a short boardwalk and viewing platform on the bank of HGB.

The Broads Authority (BA) has granted planning permission for the works designed to improve water quality on the Broad – dredging, bund creation and backfilling and temporary barriers to exclude fish – and also for the canoe trail – an access road, car park, slipway, staithe, boardwalk and viewing platform. The planning application described the fish barriers as stone-filled gabions fronted by wooden piles. There are concerns that the success of the method proposed to improve water quality is far from guaranteed and that the stone-filled gabions will be far from temporary. NSBA also considers that the expenditure of such large sums of public money merits greater opportunity for the public to enjoy the benefits of their investment. This, latter view is shared by the Broads Authority and its Navigation Committee.

It has been pointed out that the deterioration in water quality in the Broad has coincided with more than 100 years of private control, recent years being in partnership with NE. Data provided by the Environment Agency (EA) shows that the water quality in the adjacent River Bure, Wroxham Broad and Salhouse Broad (all of which are open to navigation) is superior to that in HGB. Similarly, the conservation designations of HGB and Hickling Broad are identical, yet Hickling Broad is open to navigation and has public access (including a long distance trail, Weavers Way) to sections of its shoreline.

NSBA is lobbying the HLF to press the case for restoration of navigation access and calls on the BA to demonstrate its commitment to protecting the interests of navigation.

AGM

THE NSBA's AGM on 1 December was a particularly well attended event. The location, Salhouse Lodge, had much to commend it, especially in terms of convenience and parking, except that an adjacent event produced rather too much background noise, particularly for those at the back of the room. Salhouse Lodge have promised sole occupancy for any future NSBA meetings.

The AGM thanked David Yapp who was standing down after 16 years valuable service as Hon Treasurer. Robert Whitefoot was elected as the Association's new Hon Treasurer.



Tim Whelpton Trophy

In addition to the Martin Broom Memorial Trophy, the Tim Whelpton Trophy was also presented at the AGM. It was presented to Carol Dugdale by Anne Whelpton. This trophy is awarded by the NSBA to a young (under 25) sailor who is considered to have achieved excellence either at national or international level. Carol is currently in the RYA paralympics sailing a 2.4 mR and classed as 'Podium Potential'. Carol was selected for the able-bodied Topper Youth Squad in 2010 but her enthusiasm and determination increased when she became a paralympic keelboat sailor. In August 2014 she was crowned RYA Sailability Multiclass Champion. Among her impressive results in 2014 was ninth at the Sail for Gold Regatta at Weymouth and Portland and three top-15 finishes against the world's top paralympians at ISAF World Cup events in Palma, Hyeres and Holland.



Like previous winners of the Tim Whelpton Trophy, Carol has participated in the NSBA's Broadland Youth Regatta. This is the fourth year running that the trophy has been presented to a female sailor.

The OPC's decision at the end of January to drop sailing from the 2020 Paralympics is a matter of great regret and is being hotly contested by the RYA.

This year's AGM will be held at Salhouse Lodge on 30 November 2015.

Moorings

As indicated in previous issues of the Newsletter, the scarcity of 24-hour moorings and the lack of demasting moorings (especially on the Lower Bure) continues to be a concern for NSBA members and clubs. The former concerns were heightened in early December by the sudden withdrawal by the landowner of the 24-hour moorings at Thurne Mouth/Boundary Farm. Since then steps have been taken as a matter of urgency to rectify the situation. A solution will undoubtedly be found but at the time of writing it is too early to know what form that solution will take.



The concern about moorings is shared with the other stakeholder groups, the Broads Hire Boat Federation and the Broads Society, who have agreed to work with the NSBA in a common campaign. One of the problems in maintaining, let alone adding to, the stock of moorings is that the source of funding for the Broads Authority is the tolls and it is therefore cost prohibitive for the Broads Authority to keep control of all mooring sites if toll income is not to be significantly increased.

Waste collections

As reported in the last Newsletter, consequent on a change in the waste regulations, Norfolk County Council (NCC) began in 2014 to charge the District Councils (DCs) to dispose of boat waste. In consequence, the DCs made plans to withdraw waste collections from 24-hour moorings. All DCs postponed any action except Great Yarmouth BC which gave two weeks' notice of cessation of service at the end of May. With effect from the end of October, the other DCs withdrew waste collections from many sites; the choice of sites still served was sometimes surprising.

Waste facilities at or near 24-hour moorings will be available at the following, truncated network of sites:

Ant: Gaye's Staithe; Irstead Staithe

Bure: Coltishall Common (King's Head car park); Hoveton (Riverside Road); Salhouse Broad (car park); Ranworth Staithe; Great Yarmouth YS

Thurne: Thurne Dyke; Potter Heigham Staithe; Repps Staithe

Waveney: Geldeston (Lock); Beccles YS; Oulton Broad YS

Wensum: Norwich YS

Yare: Bramerton Common; Rockland St Mary Staithe; Langley Dyke; Reedham Quay

Chet: Loddon Pye's Mill; Loddon Staithe

If the BA was to take a major role in waste collection and disposal there would have to be an increase in tolls.

When approached by the NSBA Committee, the BHF Committee felt unable to agree to a general waste disposal strategy to assist NSBA members. Where one of their yards has the availability and space for private craft, a polite request is advised. Doubtless it would not be refused if one was buying fuel or some other thing or service.



Paddy's Lane Boardwalk

In the latter part of 2014 concern was expressed by the NSBA and others over a BA plan to close Paddy's Lane boardwalk at Barton (hitherto funded out of the BA's dwindling National Park Grant) whose retention had not been prioritised in the Asset Management Strategy and the Broads Local Access Forum had concurred with this. The landowner (Norfolk Wildlife Trust) is unable to afford to take on the financial responsibility for maintaining the boardwalk. The BA Navigation Committee has agreed with the NSBA that the boardwalk is of considerable importance to boaters and indicated at its October meeting that it would therefore be prepared to consider some navigation funding (ie out of the tolls) being allocated to its future upkeep if it was not possible to reach agreement with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust regarding the transfer of upkeep responsibility. The Broads Authority has subsequently asked the Navigation Committee to give this further consideration. It is likely that if the NWT will not play ball the BA will use NPG money to bring the boardwalk up to satisfactory condition whereupon responsibility for the cost of ongoing maintenance would be transferred to the tolls. This is supportable—most users of the boardwalk are boaters.

Upper Thurne Working Group

The Upper Thurne Working Group has been revived and is now chaired by NSBA Committee member Brian Wilkins.

The Broads will not become a National Park in law

The NSBA's negative response to the Broads Authority's consultation on a proposal to brand the Broads as a National Park was the main feature in the last Newsletter.

At the Authority meeting on 23 January 2015, the Authority took the significant step of resolving 'not to pursue the ambition in the Broads Plan for the Broads to become a national park in law'. This followed a suggestion made in the consultation responses by the NSBA and



the Broads Hire Boat Federation to the National Park branding proposals.

The authority has also gone further and has expressly stated that 'it has no intention of seeking the application of the Sandford Principle to the Broads Authority's functions'. This was one of the major concerns of boat users in the National Park debate. The fear was that if the Broads were to become a National Park in law, then conflicts arising between conservation and other areas such as navigation could have been resolved in favour of

conservation. This could have led to navigation interests being disadvantaged, with potentially serious consequences for the future use of the waterways by both private and hire craft. Environmental groups including the RSPB had pressed for adoption of the Sandford Principle, but the Broads Authority maintained that they have sufficient powers through the Habitats Regulations to provide protection for the special qualities of the area.

These decisions were taken as the Authority voted in favour of allowing use of the term 'Broads National Park' for marketing purposes. The BA hopes that use of this brand will provide a clearer image of the Broads to visitors and increase visitor numbers. As the recent Stakeholder Survey has shown that nearly half of future visitors are likely to hire a boat, any increase in visitor numbers should strengthen the cause for increased expenditure on the navigation.

Trowse Railway Bridge

As part of its plans for 'Norwich in 90', Network Rail has put forward for consultation options in relation to the Trowse Swing Bridge which has for all practical purposes been out of action for at least six years. Seven options have been put forward for its replacement, four for a fixed bridge and two of these, at least, would require a change in legislation. Two options would include the retention of the existing swing bridge, in one case parallel to a new swing bridge and in the other parallel to a higher fixed bridge. The NSBA has responded to the consultation saying that it would strongly resist any scheme which would involve the retention of the existing structure swing mechanism which has now proved to be beyond effective, reliable repair. It added that the history of unreliability of the railway swing bridges on the Broads meant that the NSBA would be opposed to any option at Trowse involving a swing bridge. The NSBA concluded by saying that it would also strongly resist any scheme involving a fixed bridge which had an airdraft of less than 35'00" (10.67m), the airdraft of the only fixed bridge (Postwick Viaduct) downstream on the river route in from the sea. This is undoubtedly the first shot by the NSBA in what will be a long campaign

Tolls

As announced in 2014, there is an across the board tolls increase of 1.7% for 2015-16. This decision was made without the benefit of the recent surveys whose results were not published until January. Subsequent changes to the tolls structure will take the surveys into account. The Broads Hire Boat Federation consider that they are unfairly treated and want to change the weighting between private and hire craft.

Dredging on Hickling Broad

Notice is hereby given that dredging operations at the north end of the navigation channel may restrict passage close to Hickling Staithe during week days from Monday 16 March 2015 until Thursday 2 April 2015 between 08.00 and 16.00. During each period of operation delays of up to two hours may occur. Craft must await clear instructions from the dredging crew before attempting to pass.

In respect of the larger strategy for the rest of Hickling Broad, the BA is in discussion with Natural England about developing the strategy. The implementation of that strategy may miss the window in 2015-16; apparently winter is the time when the area has to be dredged because it is a good time in terms of the risk of prymnesium disturbance.

Affiliated Clubs

We are proud to welcome five new affiliated clubs to the NSBA. They are the Broom Owners Club, the Merchant Navy Association Boat Club, Gardline Sailing Club, Waveney Stardust Trust Ltd and the River Waveney Trust. Here is a little bit about each one.

The Merchant Navy Association Boat Club is a group of some 200 plus like-minded MNA members who are interested in sailing and boating, contributing to maritime safety, sharing information through multi-media linkages and meeting at least once a year at the MNA AGM. The MNA Boat Club membership is scattered throughout the UK, and includes several overseas members as well. The Club operates through its regularly up-dated www.seafarersafloat.uk website.

However the Club's main activity is its "SeaVue" scheme, as described below:

The aim of the SeaVue Scheme is to act as the 'eyes and ears' of the emergency services and report incidents to them in a speedy and effective manner. SeaVue Watchkeepers Afloat members are all experienced seafarers who operate boats in UK coastal waters, on rivers, canals, lakes and even in foreign waters. The primary function of a SeaVue Watchkeeper Afloat is to **SPOT** any vessel or person in difficulty, **PLOT** their position and immediately **REPORT** the essential facts to HM Coastguard or the appropriate inland waterways authority.

The **Gardline Sailing Club** is run by the company Gardline Marine Sciences Ltd and associated group companies for the benefit of its employees to race and cruise YBOD 45 Ringlet.

The **Broom Owners Club** aims and objectives are:-

To encourage ownership of Broom boats

To encourage owners of Broom boats to use, maintain and enjoy their boats

To provide a forum to give support and assistance for owners of Broom boats

To encourage members to help other members, by means of information and/or practical help

Waveney Stardust Trust—founded in 1988—is a registered charity to promote cruising facilities for the disabled and/or elderly persons on the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads. Stardust cruisers are designed to accommodate people in wheelchairs and are suitable for all passengers with walking difficulties. The cruisers are available for half day or full day hire with their crew of volunteers.

The aims of the **River Waveney Trust** are to ensure the river, its tributaries and its surroundings are maintained and made as accessible as possible for the enjoyment of local residents and the public at large now and for future generations. It acts as a forum and network amongst individuals, businesses and other organisations. It plans and delivers improvement projects regarding water quality, ecology and navigation along the entire catchment, from source to sea. It provides educational resources and courses and co-ordinates volunteers from the River Waveney Study Centre at Earsham (the old Otter Trust).

The Last Hard Copy Newsletter

The rising cost of producing the Newsletter and (especially the Autumn edition) posting it to members and affiliated clubs and organisations has become unsustainable. In 2014, the cost of printing and posting directly attributable to the Newsletter amounted to a significant part of the NSBA's annual income. Henceforth, the Newsletter from the NSBA will regrettably be available only by e-mail or on the NSBA website. The same will be the case in respect of other communications from the NSBA. If the NSBA's Hon Administrator, Julia Bower, is not already in possession of your current e-mail address, please send it to her at julia.bower1@btinternet.com. The *Green Book* will, of course, still be in hard copy form and posted to every individual member.

A Note from your Administrator

Thank you to all members who have paid their subscriptions promptly on the due date of 1 January. There are still a number of members who are paying £5.00 per annum. The annual subscription rate increased to £10.00 in 2012. I have written or emailed all members concerned and I hope you will rectify this matter as soon as possible. Members not paying the full subscription amount will not receive a Green Book. Please check your Standing Order mandates. Thank you.

Direct Debit

As of 1 January 2015 all new members will be required to pay their subscription by Direct Debit. Any existing members who wish to pay by this method please contact me and I will send you the form.

Flags



You will remember that I introduced our new flags in the last Newsletter. The printed flag on the left which retails at £10.00 inc. p and p and the sewn flag on the right which retails at £25.00. I am pleased to report that sales of both have been brisk but I must remind members of the new prices and I can no longer sell the printed flag at the old price. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.