

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2016



Winners of the Martin Broom Memorial Trophy for Outstanding Contribution to Broads Boating

At the NSBA's AGM in November, the Trophy was presented by Martin's widow, Jennifer, to Broadsbeat, to considerable acclaim, in recognition of the immense contribution that they have made to Broads boating over the last twenty years. The Trophy was awarded on the basis of the following citation.

History of Broadsbeat

The police presence on the Broads was lost in the 1980's due to budget cuts and other priorities but, in 1995, an innovative sponsorship deal was struck between Norfolk Constabulary, the Broads Authority and local businesses, making funds available to put officers back onto the Broads during the peak season. Initially police officers joined BA rangers on their boats but the team acquired a RIB from the diving team and more recently (2013) a customised boat.

The Team

The current team has one full time officer, one part time officer (operating in the summer season), and a Reserve with two PCSO's and two Special Constables, led by a Sergeant and an Inspector. For some time the team has been fronted by Paul Bassham who has excellent networks within the area. This continuity has been a major benefit. The BA has recently been joined by a former Broadsbeat member demonstrating the synergy between the organisations. Broadsbeat work extended hours and are often on the water until mid evening during the boating season.

Team members are trained in boat handling and first aid, operate VHF marine band radios, patrol all the Broads connected by 125 navigable miles of Norfolk's waterways including the rivers Ant, Bure,

Thurne, Waveney, Yare, Wensum and Chet, as well as Great Yarmouth harbour and the numerous dykes, staites and boatyards.

The patrols aim to offer hi-visibility policing, reassurance and on-the-spot assistance to both local people and visitors to the county as well as dealing with a variety of anti-social and criminal activities and assisting the Broads Authority in enforcing local by-laws.

Tackling anti-social behaviour

Broadsbeat have made a really innovative approach to tackling the perennial problem of anti social behaviour from single gender groups (stag parties, hen parties etc) hiring motor boats on the broads. This has been a major cause of disruption, damage and distress over many years and has affected many communities, other boaters and holidaymakers as well as causing reputational damage to the holiday area. Through close liaison with the hire boat yards, groups are now met by Broadsbeat officers or PCSOs and greeted by name; they are given tips about safety in a friendly way but the message is clear...we know who you are, which boat you are on and people will be watching you. The impact is already being seen with groups still exhibiting high spirits but there seems less damage and bad behaviour.



Tackling theft and damage

The team have recognised the major problems relating to outboard motor theft. Their initiative to supply 'soft' outboard engine covers has been very successful. So far, no engines fitted with one of these has been stolen. They are now widely used throughout the Broads. This year the police have managed to retrieve a number of outboards stolen in the Broads area. The team provide advice on a wide range of safety issues both in person but also on their websites and by Twitter.

Networking across the Broads

The Broadsbeat team have made real efforts to develop strong networks with all the Broads' stakeholders by attending events including major regattas, the NSBA flag officers event, the Three Rivers Race, Gt Yarmouth Maritime Festival, Horning Boat Show and Nancy Oldfield Trust open day. Broadsbeat are known by name which means that they hear about potential problems early. The fact that they do not work nine to five also means that they are present at times when trouble may occur but also they meet a wider range of Broads' stakeholders including fishermen, private boat owners, holidaymakers, and shopkeepers. Additionally, the team work with the Environment Agency enforcing fishing laws and policing angling.

All Change on the Committee

Mike Evans Retires

At our AGM in November, Mike Evans persuaded us to let him stand down following decades of service to Broads boating, 12 as a Broads Authority member, 5 as Chair of the NSBA and the last 4 as President. Mike was awarded the RYA's most prestigious award in November last, having served on the Council for many years. To recognise this award locally, a celebratory dinner was held last October in Norwich. We are pleased that Mike will continue to stay in touch, as a corresponding member of our Committee.



President Richard Card

Pursuant to Mike Evans' retirement, Professor Richard Card was voted in unanimously at the AGM as President of the NSBA. Richard has served the Association well, four busy years as Chairman, applying his encyclopaedic knowledge of the law to acute scrutiny of our transactions. Richard spreads his good works throughout the region, and vacating the Chair will free him to direct his attention more fully on RYA business as Chair of the RYA Eastern Region.

Your New Chairman



Brian Wilkins is our new Chairman. Brian is also a member of the Broads Authority's Navigation Committee, benefitting us with excellent connections to BA members, staff and senior officers. Brian comes from a dinghy racing background, and honed his racing skills mainly on Hickling as a member of HBSC, in Lasers, Wayfarers and Hard Chine Punts, latterly River Cruisers too. Brian is an RYA Senior Instructor, a past commodore of HBSC, and of NSSA, and a past Captain of the River Cruiser Class.

Rob McNaughton

We were very sad to hear of the passing of Rob McNaughton on 3 March 2016. He was a valued member of the General Purposes Committee and represented the NSBA on the Upper Thurne Working Group. Described as a real Broads man, we extend our condolences to his wife Liz, family and friends. He was a lovely man and will be greatly missed.



NEWS UPDATE

Hoveton Great Broad

We do not have much to report, since the last *Newsletter* on Natural England's (NE) proposals for the restoration of Hoveton Great Broad. Our objections to public funding of a major project on a private Broad still stand. We understand that the proposals have been amended since planning consent was granted last year, to address widespread criticism. Spoil will not now be pumped across the Bure onto Wroxham Island. This is a further disappointment, because Wroxham Island does require bank restoration and adjoins both the river and the Broad, navigable all round. Public benefit was one of the principles of NE's application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. Additional modifications include proposals for guided boat trails and an electric boat in addition to the canoe trail on private dykes within the Estate, with any profits for benefit of the Broad. In our view the project is still unacceptable because there is no firm commitment to reopen the Broad to navigation, even in the long term.

For further information including the recent correspondence between Sue Hines, Norman Lamb MP and Tracey Crouch (MP and Minister for Heritage), have a look at Sue's public Facebook site called '*Hoveton Great Broad, Norfolk Broads, Restoration Project*'.

New Moorings at Scare Gap

The Broads Authority are providing moorings on the Lower Bure near Three Mile House for mast lowering and raising when making passage through Great Yarmouth between the northern and southern rivers, and for boats waiting for the tide or requiring assistance for any reason. The NSBA is pleased that facilities on the lower reaches of the Bure, which is very tidal, are being improved.

More on Rubbish

Since the Government redefined boat rubbish as a commercial waste, and the withdrawal of all bins in the Yarmouth, Broadland and South Norfolk Districts, with plans for withdrawal of most of North Norfolk's, the NSBA finds it bizarre that an area now branded as a National Park is at risk of fly tipping. Additionally, we believe it fundamentally unfair that Broads-side hotels, pubs and boat yards should have to foot the bill, especially since the bins fill with a large proportion of waste from sources other than boats. The Broads Authority is responsible for waste only on its own properties, and

the Tolls budget is not being expended on other people's waste.

Unsafe steel marker posts on the River Chet to be removed

The steel posts installed by the Environment Agency as a temporary measure during the Flood Alleviation Project near Loddon have been declared to be hazardous by the BA's Hazard Review Panel and the BA's Boat Safety Management Group. We have been campaigning for their removal since the bank-side vegetation established, and look forward to the eventual removal.

Dredging Programme

In addition to Hickling, dredging has just been completed downstream of Acle Bridge and on the Stokesby bends. In the coming year, dredging is in planning for the lower Waveney at Burgh flats, and is programmed for the Whitlingham Bends and the Lower Bure, using the larger mud lighters for transport to disposal sites. Side-cast dredging is planned for Langley Dyke, Rockland Dyke and Lime Kiln Dyke.

Moorings improvements

The BA's forthcoming work programmes include various improvements at Somerleyton, Cockshoot, Hoveton, Dilham, Potter Heigham and West Somerton. Looking further ahead, Deep Dyke and Deep-Go Dyke will be repiled. Thanks to partnership working with the adjacent land-owner, the flyover bridge mast lowering moorings at St Olaves are to be put into better order.

Tree Clearance

Good progress has been made in preparation for 2016 clearing excessive bank-side tree growth. BA work teams have cleared 4 km of trees which overhung the Ant, and have improved the Bure upstream of Blackhorse Broad. Beneficial work has also been done at Lime Kiln Dyke and on the strip separating Whitlingham Great Broad from the Yare. The traditional Broads reed-ed margin is not only boat friendly, but also the basis of a local industry and an essential component of the Broads landscape.

Upton Dyke

NSBA members will be familiar with the Broads Flood Alleviation Project (BFAP), driven by the Environment Agency to restore flood barriers to 1995 levels. One strategy has been to move the flood banks further back from the river edge and to remove the steel piling that protected the former banks. The process has recently impinged on the southern side of Upton Dyke. In 2008 the project got planning permission to move the banks back from the Dyke and from the banks of the Bure south of the Dyke. However, they were required to obtain separate permission to remove the piles once the earthworks had stabilised. That application has recently been considered by the Navigation Committee and the Planning Committee of the Broads Authority. The NSBA voiced strong objections to the application. So did the Navigation Committee. These objections were disregarded by the Planning Committee which gave the go-ahead for the works to remove or drive down the piles and re-profile the banks. NSBA is concerned that the narrow dyke will be more difficult to navigate without a straight, hard bank to steer by and, if necessary, to stand on and either pull boats along or restrain them while others pass by. This was an opportunity both to widen the dyke at minimal cost alongside the BFAP works



and to provide additional moorings near the village at the end of the Dyke. The moorings are a key contributor to the viability of village businesses.

NSBA feels that the Broads Authority has missed an opportunity to improve an aspect of the Navigation. Such opportunities come along rarely and, when they do, they should be seized. Following the Planning Committee decision, the Authority has set up a working group to see what options exist for improving the dyke and the facilities it offers to Upton. We are actively seeking representation on that group and hope that a way will be found to widen the dyke and provide additional moorings. We can't help feeling that this would have been much easier if the initiative had been seized before permission was given, not as a reaction to public opposition thereafter.

Tolls, 2016/17

Further to the last *Newsletter*, tolls for use of boats on the Broads were set for the current year at the Broads Authority's full meeting on 20 November 2015, in line with the Navigation Committee's recommendation for a 4.5% increase on average, but with a reduction in the multiplier for weekly hire craft from 2.62 to 2.55. The NSBA continues to believe that this reduction in the multiplier was inadequately considered by the relevant BA meetings, and has pressed the BA to deliver better accountability and transparency to justify the increase, especially to private boat owners.

Tolls, 2017 and Beyond

The Special Tolls Working Group established by the Broads Authority following its Tolls Workshop in September 2015 is understood to have met five times now, however, the NSBA has not yet been consulted. We have written to the joint-chairs of the BA Tolls Working Group to remind them that their terms of reference include calling for evidence from a range of stakeholder groups including those involved in previous tolls reviews, and that the NSBA is the primary representation group for private tollpayers (whereas the Broads Hire Boat Federation represent the other group of toll payers). In fact, based on last year's figures, private toll payers accounted for 87% of the boats and 64% of the toll income in 2015. At the time of writing, we understand that the BA Tolls Working Group has decided to hold another workshop to which NSBA representatives will be invited.

Replacement Broads Plan 2017

The Broads Authority is currently consulting the public and stakeholders on a number of documents. In addition they are holding a series of public drop-in sessions at which presentation material may be inspected and your views discussed with staff, although some of these sessions may have happened by the time you read this. The Plan most important to us is the Broads Plan 2017-2021, and our committee is working on a formal consultation response. You are invited to do likewise.

The other consultations are on the Broads Local Plan (Planning), 'Climate-Smart Thinking', the 'Water, Mills and Marshes Landscape Partnership Scheme', and the 'Stalham Staithe Conservation Area reappraisal'. You can 'drop-in' at Oulton Community Centre on Saturday 19 March 10.00 am until noon, Brundall Memorial Hall, Wednesdays 23 March 6.30 pm until 8.30 pm, or inspect all five sets of documents on line at www.broads-authority.gov.uk/broadsconsultations.

New Owners of the Great Yarmouth Port Company

Ben Falat, who joined our committee in December, is also the RYA's representative on the Great Yarmouth Port Users Consultative Group, (our representative now being Les Mogford). Ben met the Great Yarmouth Port Company's new owners, Peel Ports Ltd, at a consultative group meeting in February. The new Company has indicated great enthusiasm for accommodating and welcoming leisure boats passing through the Port, and are willing to investigate the practicality of a pontoon suitable for temporary mooring on the downstream side of the Haven Bridge, provided all safety considerations can be satisfied.

Broadland Youth Regatta and Ramuz Trophy Arrangements for 2016

Planning is under way for this year's NSBA's flagship sailing events, and we are delighted with the host clubs who have volunteered to take them on.

The Broadland Youth Regatta will take place at Wroxham, under the burgee of Norfolk Broads Yacht Club, on 3 September 2016.

The InterClub Championship for the Ramuz Trophy will be hosted by Rollesby Broad Sailing Club and sailed in Wayfarers, on 10 September 2016.

Further details will be issued to Club Secretaries of all affiliated organisations in due course, and links to entry forms and details of both events will be available on www.greenbook.org.uk.

National Schools Sailing Association Annual Regatta—Gorleston

Great Yarmouth and Gorleston SC, in conjunction with our local Norfolk Schools Sailing Association are hosting the National Schools Sailing Association's annual regatta, 25 to 30 July this year. This annual event typically attracts 300 to 400 youth and junior sailors from all over the country, and is the NSSA's most prestigious event. We are pleased to note that the new owners of the Port Company and Great Yarmouth and Gorleston Borough Council are both very supportive. The event details are on Facebook under this name 'NSSA Gt Yarmouth Regatta 2016'.



A Note From Your Administrator

Direct Debits—The first batch of Direct Debit payments were successfully drawn at the start of the year. All new members have to pay their subscriptions using this method. It is hoped that this will mean less time spent by your Administrator chasing up those members who have not paid. A gentle reminder—all subscriptions are due on 1 January and reminders are no longer sent.

Flags— With the new season looming fast, sales of flags has been brisk with an increasing number of members opting for the sewn flag. There are plenty more in stock. Just send your cheque (£10.00 for a printed flag and £25.00 for a sewn flag) to your Administrator.



Printed flag



Sewn flag