

HARNSER

A photograph of a windmill at sunset, reflected in a body of water. The windmill is dark against the bright orange and yellow sky. The water in the foreground is calm, showing a clear reflection of the windmill and the sky. The background shows a field of tall grasses and a clear blue sky.

*Magazine of the Broads Society
Friends of the Broads*

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Our Members share a common purpose to help secure a sustainable future for the Broads as a unique and protected landscape in which leisure, tourism and the local economy can thrive in harmony with the natural environment

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

I am definitely not a fan of storms and at the time of writing, we have experienced three storms in less than one week in the shortest month of the year. These storms have brought multiple problems for most of the UK and here in the Broads it brought increased flood alerts and warnings.

In my voluntary role as a Senior Flood Warden and Emergency Coordinator in North Norfolk, I have specific responsibility for the Potter Heigham area working closely with fellow Flood Wardens in the Broads/North Norfolk three rivers area.

Prior to the storms we dealt with earlier flood alerts which are becoming almost bi weekly, a massive change to some five years ago where it was maybe every three months or so. During the latest events our team continued to monitor the situation and we ensured flood barriers were in place. The EA had also raised the saline barrier because of another salt surge. There have been higher salt levels this year which is cause for concern due to the danger to marine life in the river systems.

The more regular flooding situations lead me to believe that we need to work with nature, not against it. Maybe it is time to review the current and recently built (in the last two decades) flood alleviation scheme which allows water to be held in the overflowing rivers flooding the foreshores and many riverside boat yards and businesses constantly.

I have said this before, is the flood alleviation scheme in its current form fit for purpose? It seems not so it's time for discussion.

No, we don't want extensive flooding beyond but a flood plain is a flood plain and certain amounts of water could be allowed on to them. In fact, statistics apparently show that in the very near future, we will experience 55% more rain in the winter months and 50% less in the summer months. Coupled with the recent ending of water abstraction licences in the area, meaning farmers are unable to get the water needed for crops and with the real threat of drought, is it time to look at ways to alleviate the foreshore flooding and water abstraction problem? Could this be an opportunity to create "natural scrape" style reservoirs on parts of the flood plains which could see water allowed in during flood events thus creating water reserves for abstraction during drought periods and with the benefit of more wildfowl and wildlife areas?

So I see the next challenge as building a cohesive plan for the future to protect against flooding and this needs to be done by working across all Broads organisations, agencies, residents and businesses.

I suspect we are all concerned over climate change and the danger this poses to the Norfolk Broads, after all it's really having its impact. Flooding used to happen a few times a year, now it's a few times a month.

Provisions to prevent flood damage need to improve. Local authorities need to start creating new resilience plans to deal with increasing floods.

We need to start championing self-reliance, resilience and community cooperation.

On a connected concern, I recently spent time with an investigative reporter and a photographer from the Daily Telegraph. They were investigating untreated sewage discharges from sewage plants in Norfolk, specifically Neatishead/Horning and Trowse areas. We spent some time skirting the Anglian Water Neatishead site. The outflow is between Ludham Bridge and How Hill into the River Ant.

Let me make it clear that with Environment Agency permission, water companies are allowed to discharge some untreated water into rivers during heavy rain events but shocking figures show this location had discharged untreated water for over 7,600 hours during 2020. This was the highest figure of nearly a dozen plants that they had investigated in England.

As a result of their investigations, the Daily Telegraph have started a national campaign called the Campaign for Cleaner Rivers. I reported this back to the main committee and we have unanimously agreed to support the campaign. This goes hand in hand with our recent declaration of a climate change emergency at our 2021 AGM.

You will see in this Harnser more updates on other issues that The Broads Society are campaigning on and are actively monitoring.

I close by asking for your continued support in our work to protect the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads.

Paul Rice, Chairman

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have recently joined the Society

- Mr M Payne, Docking
- Mrs J B Reid, Needingworth
- Mr & Mrs J M Tomlinson, Stalham

LETTERS TO THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Dear Editorial Team,

January Issue Member Feedback

Hello from possibly your most far flung member in Waiake on Auckland's North Shore, New Zealand. Apologies for missing the October issue request for member's feedback, so here is some :-

1. Photos – Firstly, I love the Harnser, all issues, it's a great reminder of one of my most favourite parts of the UK and the best reminder are the lovely photos that you

always include. It's lovely with each issue having photos of the season, so January, front and back covers, perfect!!

2. Committee News – Its great to have a brief comment on the issues you are focussing on and know that the 'meatier' issues will have specific articles attributed to them.

3. Main Articles – When I look at the bigger main articles in your issues, I thought the 'Simpson's Boatyard Brief History' was wonderful. The personal style of writing was excellent but it was super interesting, well done. I must admit a little knowledge of the area as my parents lived in retirement at Ingham Corner, we had a couple of hire boats from Richardson's for family holidays when we lived in Essex in the 1960s. But my father kept his sailing sloop at Chapelfield in the 70s and many a great sail down the Ant. We kept our own sailing boat just off Rockland Broad when we were living in Surlingham before emigrating to NZ. I do think that by having some 'historical' Broads context on a regular basis is lovely to read about. There is so much more history of and around the Broads, its great to see and read. Reading your July 21 'snippet' on the Reedham Swing Bridge, suggests that would have a wonderful history.

4. Wildlife - The Broads are synonymous with wildlife and your issues are not the same without some inclusion.

5. Walks around the Broads - I have enjoyed the recent articles on Walks around the Broads and would be keen to see many more of them, again photos and hand drawn maps, just perfect.

6. Broads Boats - The Broads means Boats, wherries, hire boats through the ages, commercial craft, punts and more. Your July 21 issue had some super boat articles, well done.

You guys do fabulous work and we love to read every issue, cover to cover. We have fingers crossed that 2022 will see us able to safely travel back to the UK to see family, friends and to revisit some of our favourite haunts. Hunters Boats are a well overdue adventure!

Cheers, Peter Harland

BROADS SOCIETY AGM 2022

The Annual General Meeting of the Broads Society is to be held on Saturday 19th **November 2022** at the Norfolk Broads Yacht Club, Wroxham. A guest speaker is yet to be confirmed, but final details will be published in the October edition of Harnser. In the meantime, please note the date in your diary.

REPORT ON THE BROADS SOCIETY MAIN COMMITTEE MEETING

January 2022

At the Main Committee meeting on 10th January 2022 the following items were updated and discussed. The Broads Charitable Trust meeting was to be held a week after this meeting so no report yet.

CNP

A conference re the outcome of the Landscape Review is scheduled for January. Peter Smith proposed a position paper be set up to answer any press questions. Action by Paul Rice and Paul Savage. Paul Rice to be the spokesperson. Peter Howe has resigned as CNP representative. Paul Rice proposed that Peter Smith should take up this position, seconded by Di Cornell with all in agreement.

Draft Waterways Management Plan

Paul Savage reported that the Broads Authority voted to reduce the depth of dredging to the channel in Breydon Water from four metres to two metres. Sea going yachts would not be able to use the channel. Robin Godber said that a lot of money had been spent on flood defences, which was a waste. Agreement was made to write to the Environment Agency and Port Authority to ask their views on this. Paul Savage suggested that a slogan could be used 'One Landscape' but Keith Bacon disagreed because there are many Broads Landscapes. Paul Rice stated that the authorities are not working together.

Moorings

Paul Rice said there is concern over the loss of moorings despite what the Broads Authority say. The de-masting area has been lost at Ludham Bridge. Di Cornell said that some moorings have been lost at Potter Heigham. Paul Savage said that the loss of moorings in addition to rising water levels under the bridges causes concern. It was agreed to bring this matter back at the next meeting.

BA Governance

Paul Savage reported that the BA Planning Committee had been prevented from calling in a planning application for Haddiscoe New Cut. This had been reported to the police who investigated but no further action was taken. Paul Savage was asked by Cabinet Office Minister to make a complaint and he has. DEFRA should be reviewing public bodies that have a role in managing land, they need to look at functioning together.

Flooding Update

Paul Rice reported two flood alerts for the Ant, Bure, Thurne, etc. Brundall had been badly flooded for several days. Saline levels are high and there was a lack of water flow. Dredging could allow the water to flow faster. Paul Rice has had discussions with Duncan Baker MP and has a meeting with Lord Dannatt who has flood project

money. Paul plans to put in a funding bid. Peter Mason said that if flooding is due to climate change the Government should provide funding. Paul felt that the BFI are not listening to residents or boatyards. The IDB plan to replace the pumps upstream at Potter Heigham using the Archimedes system. Paul said land on flood plains should be set aside to become natural reservoirs. Colin said water cannot get into Brundall Broad as the RSPB have dammed the area.

Broadswatch

Paul Rice reported that Broadswatch do not have a boat at present. They have been approached by Broads Angling Group to discuss a joint grant application.

Finance

The accounts summary had been circulated, there are no problems. Peter Smith reported that the cards and calendars sold well.

Publicity

The Publicity Committee is meeting on 18th January. Harnser next edition deadline is 1st March. Volunteers are needed for events. Di Cornell said the article on Simpson's Boatyard was very interesting. Paul Rice sent a calendar and a copy of January Harnser to Country Life magazine with an invitation to them to visit. Paul thanked the Publicity Committee in particular David Edleston for their great work.

Paul Rice, Chairman



REFLECTIONS ON THE SOUTHERN BROADS

As someone who has kept their boat in Wroxham for over 26 years, I don't get to the Southern Broads often enough - once every other year if I can be bothered. After a frenetic season of activity on the Northern Broads, with ever increasing numbers of dayboats bombing about like water soldiers, I thought it was time to re-discover the Southern Broads.

My arrival coincided with the end of half term, and over the period of slack water, only two boats were heading south. Arriving in Great Yarmouth, you can see why some are deterred from going - the former Port of Yarmouth Marina has now been totally demolished and the long stretch of moorings, that used to be an easier place to stop than the yacht station, is overgrown and covered in signs telling you not to moor there. I wonder what future lies for this site?

Next stop was St Olaves.. what was once a string of hire boat businesses is another depressing sight, especially the graveyard of Alphacraft, with its dilapidated buildings, silted up mooring basin, abandoned boat moulds and other detritus of boat building on a half-flooded site. former owner Langford Jillings would be turning in his grave. It has just sold at auction for £360,000 and the new owner will need deep pockets to transform its fortunes. On a more positive note, South Rivers Marine, with its beautiful maintained pre-war sheds, looked busy with yachts being pulled out for winter care.



Former Alpha boatyard, St Olaves

Something that soon became apparent in my voyage was pontoon moorings, and what a great innovation they are for the Southern Broads. I tried them at the Dutch Tea Gardens near Oulton Broad and they took the stress out of working how much line and fender to put out, to cope with the tides. They also enable access to new sites, like the new nature reserve at Carlton Marshes, without the need for steel and wooden pilings. Other reserves, like Strumpshaw Fen, should take note and set their own up -

despite its enormous river side frontage, it is very disappointing that you still cannot access Strumpshaw by boat.



Floating pontoon moorings, Dutch Tea Gardens, Oulton Dyke

The Southern Rivers were incredibly quiet - in one hour, I saw 2 kingfishers and only one other boat. How different to the usual madness at Ludham Bridge! The rivers are so much wider, with less trees to interrupt the wind, why is this not more popular with yachts? I was also impressed by the number of free, well maintained Broads Authority moorings - even in high season, it must be so much easier to moor on these rivers.



Wide open stretches of the Yare

Beccles Yacht Station was a revelation - managed by a local charity, it was had helpful staff, provided clean toilets and showers plus access to a washing machine, and water for the boat. It was £11 for the night, but it was worth it. I had also forgotten what a pleasant, bustling place Beccles is, with a good selection of shops, pubs and places to eat.

As was evident in St. Olaves, many southern boatyards have withered and died - however one example of a former southern boatyard that has successfully re-invented itself is Hippersons, in Beccles. They no longer offer cruisers for the week, but you can stay instead on a floating glamping pod, or one in the garden, you can go on kayaking safaris, day boating or try paddle boarding. The owners create and post lots of interesting videos about their lives and their business on YouTube, and deserve every success for their efforts.

Another business that was still busy, even in early November, was Brooms in Brundall, with their newly built hire fleet. They were literally the only hire boats I came across in the whole week, and all credit to them for re-launching back into hiring boats. In contrast, next to a "Site for sale" sign, was the forlorn sight of Sanderson Marine in Reedham - their wooden boat shed is a wonderful reminder of a bygone era.



Sandersons in Reedham - their last season?

The Southern Broads are overdue a renaissance - yes, it is a bit dilapidated in places; Great Yarmouth is always going to be a challenging place to pass through; and the infrastructure of shops and boatyards is not what it once was, but it still has thriving pubs; plenty of free, well-maintained moorings; fantastic vistas; masses of space and interesting places to visit. I will certainly return more often in the future.

Roger Wilson

WHAT'S BEHIND THE 'NORTHERN GATEWAY' TO THE BROADS

Stalham is a hidden gem with far more than meets the eye. This article by Robert Paul, was originally published as one of his regular columns in North Norfolk News and delves into the town's past, present and future.



Part of the new Stalham Town Sign

© David Edleston

We are all in a hurry these days and rarely have time to stop and appreciate what is around us. Bypasses are often constructed to divert traffic away from the centre of our towns and villages – a good thing of course, relieving congestion and pollution. The downside is that people rush through perhaps only visiting the supermarkets and retail parks that have often been built on the outskirts. When we do have time to stop and explore, there are often surprises in store, interesting buildings, fascinating histories and little gems to discover.



Stalham High Street in 1900 and Stalham Staithe showing a wherry next to the Customs and Excise House (with decorative arches), which is now part of the Museum of the Broads.

Nowhere is this more true than at the town of Stalham on the southernmost 'borders' of North Norfolk. It has always been a town of two halves, being separated at first by the Yarmouth and North Norfolk Light Railway. This was later the Midland and Great

Northern Railway (the M&GN Line) often referred to as the 'Muddle and Get Nowhere' line owing to its mostly rural destinations. At its peak there were 100 trains per day. This nickname became the 'Missed and Greatly Needed' following closure on February 28, 1959. The present A149 now follows the route of the old railway continuing to 'divide' the town.

But back to the early days. There are several explanations of the derivation of the name of Stalham, the most widely held view is that it means 'settlement by the river' chosen as a good location because of its accessibility by water, the abundance of timber for fuel and construction, good farmland and a slightly raised, dry site where the present High Street now exists. Flat-bottomed sailing craft made their way up the River Ant searching for such a place. The first recording of Stalham was in 1045 in a document called the Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici.

The Abbey of St Benet's at Holme held 120 acres of rich farmland at Stalham, supplying produce to the abbey by wherry. So the future of the town was secured due to the efficient transport system provided by the river, the richness of the farmland and the availability of timber and other natural resources. The remains of St Benet's Abbey are still in evidence on the banks of the River Bure close to Ludham.

Moving on a few centuries, the splendid St Mary's Church, completed in 1400, dominates the High Street and remains the oldest building, with its perpendicular style and distinctive squat tower. Extensive re-building took place in the town in the 1690s replacing the easily sourced reed for thatching and timber for construction, with soft red brick and tiles, made in the local brickworks.



Stalham Mill in the 1950s and a Stalham baker van in the year 1930.

The river to the staithe became known as Stalham Dyke, the mills and granaries were extending and developing apace, thanks largely to the waterborne transport system. Here, Burton was a name that has been associated with mills and granaries at Stalham for more than two centuries and the family continued in business up to very recently (around 1995). I remember buying dog food or flour at the mill and waiting for my receipt, written by fountain pen at a Dickensian style desk in a little office that had changed little for a century. Mills, granaries and farming were the life blood of the town

– the 17th century Jacobean manor house, Stalham Hall on the old Yarmouth Road was one of the biggest landowners.

The 19th century saw major developments in Stalham's growth – it remained largely self-sufficient, exporting grain and livestock by river and wagon to Norwich. The year 1833 saw the founding of the town fire brigade, one of the oldest in the country. The building and fire pump still exists and is managed by the Firehouse Museum Trust. It was established due to unreliable insurance and maybe the high fire risk posed by mills. There are records of major fires in mills around Norfolk and the Broads, and Bristow's Mill in the town was actually destroyed by fire in 1908. Interestingly, I have since discovered to be distantly related to the Bristows.

Back to the High Street and the Barclays Bank building. While space doesn't allow the full story, a little to whet your appetite. It started out as a private credit union, but in 1891, architects Boardman & Sons of Norwich and 'How Hill' fame, designed a new building for the Gurneys who later amalgamated with Barclays to form Barclay & Company. In 1906 it was destroyed by fire, was restored and reopened in 1908, continuing as a bank until 2015 when it closed for the final time.



Mobbs store in Stalham's High Street in 1910 and the wherry 'Cornucopia' using its mast to load at the staithe, with the Customs Building (now part of the Museum of the Broads) in the background in May 1934 and Burton's Mill to the left.

Big changes occurred in the late 19th century with a 'board school' opening in 1878 and of course, the coming of the railway, reaching Stalham in 1881 from Melton Constable. This transformed everything including the demise of river transport and wherries. Once the Broads had been discovered by authors such as George Christopher Davies and Peter Henry Emerson, it set the scene for the huge growth

of the area as a holiday destination, with one of the largest boat hire companies established close to the staithe. With the railway line closing in 1959, the A149 became the main road transport connection, dividing the town once again.

So what of the present day? After a somewhat troubled period following the building of a major supermarket close to the High Street in the 1990s which saw the demise of a number of shops, Stalham is once more on the up and up. The High Street is once more flourishing with many shops, small businesses and cafes all doing a roaring trade. There are two pubs and two museums – the Firehouse Museum and of course ‘my own’ Museum of the Broads down on the staithe. In 1841, the population was 761 and today stands at just under 4,000.


Thanks to the tireless work of the Stalham Area Business Forum, town council and local businesses, a new iconic town sign has been erected and now stands at the top of the High Street. Well worth a visit in itself, it depicts elements of the Town’s history with beautifully crafted ‘images’ by local craftsmen and women, featuring a windmill, the railway station, the Firehouse Museum, St Mary’s Church, the Barclays building and the magnificent Baptist Church. Its message is ‘Stalham Welcomes You’ so next time when on the A149, don’t rush past, but stop and enjoy a little of what the town has to offer.

What would I like next for Stalham? Well, as mentioned more than once here, the town is a town of two halves. I would like the major businesses such as the well known supermarket and the various national housing development companies, much in evidence right now, to unite with the town council and design and build an iconic pedestrian and cycle bridge linking the staithe and the town.

It could be fabulous – I can’t wait.

Robert Paul

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The new Stalham Town Sign and interpretation panel depicting six important buildings from Stalham's past, some still remaining, some lost. These include Stalham Smock Mill, Stalham Railway Station, Stalham Fire Engine House, the Anglican Church of St Mary, Barclays Bank and Stalham Baptist Church. © David Edleston

THOUGHTS OF SPRING AT STRUMPSHAW FEN



I'm writing this with birdsong drifting in through the window and signs of spring emerging around the trails here at Strumpshaw Fen. We have snowdrops carpeting the woodland, and our wildlife are beginning to prepare for the breeding season ahead.

Looking back over the winter, we have had a mixed season. We started off with an exciting Christmas activity trail to coincide with the launch of Aardman's *Robin Robin*, which was produced in collaboration with the RSPB. If you haven't seen it yet, this heart-warming, family film is available on Netflix.

Winter wildlife highlights included five taiga bean geese residing at Buckenham until mid-January, along with over a thousand pink-footed geese and an impressive count of 87 white-fronted geese so far. We have been treated to spectacular displays of marsh harriers coming into roost, sometimes accompanied by a hen harrier. Otters and bitterns have been showing well at Reception hide; otters have even been seen catching fish and playing in the broad in clear view of some lucky visitors! Barn owls, muntjac and Chinese water deer have also been seen regularly. Once again, the woodland has hosted siskins and redpoll alongside more common species. The bird feeders have also been a popular focal point for wildlife and photographers.



A flooded pond dipping platform at Strumpshaw Fen in January

The end of January brought high spring tides and widespread flooding to the fen, an event that we have seen more in recent years and are likely to experience more

frequently as sea levels rise. Climate change is having an impact all over the Broads, but Strumpshaw Fen is particularly vulnerable due to its situation downstream on the Yare, which is a tidal river. This tidal surge resulted in the highest river level ever recorded at Brundall!

Our wardens have been working hard to make the visitor trails safe; at present (mid-February) parts of the Fen Trail remain closed at Strumpshaw, but Buckenham marshes is open as normal. This year their attention will be focused on helping the fen to recover by flushing out the saline water using the sluice system and supporting the wildlife to bounce back. Monitoring and research work will be all the more important to see what effects the flooding has long-term. The data collected will highlight which species are likely to need our support the most in the face of changing conditions and which may be able to adapt faster, which will help us to plan for the future.



Butterflies, including swallowtails and orchid flowers adorn the Strumpshaw meadows in early summer.

Looking ahead to the rest of this year, swallowtail butterfly season will soon be upon us. We saw a decline in numbers last year, so our fingers are crossed that the flooding will not have affected them too much to see a recovery. From late May to early July, we hope to see the reserve come alive with bold yellow butterflies! Late spring and early summer is always a busy time for the reserve's wildlife; you may hear cuckoos calling, bitterns booming and the songs of a host of warbler species floating on the warming air. Nesting marsh harriers can be seen performing a spectacular sky dance as the males pass food to the females on the wing. Swallows and house martins return with the warmer weather, usually followed by hobbies.



Norfolk hawker dragonflies treat us to aerial displays in mid-summer.

Strumpshaw's woodland butterfly numbers have increased in recent years, and the reserve is now home to silver-washed fritillaries, white admirals, purple hairstreaks and white letter hairstreaks alongside the more common, but no less beautiful, species. As summer progresses, dragonflies and damselflies steal the limelight. Our star species of mid-summer is the Norfolk Hawker, but several species remain on the wing into the autumn.

We have a busy programme of events planned for 2022. The annual Easter and summer activity trails will be fun events for children and encourage their interest in wildlife. We also have several events for adults and teenagers scheduled, including regular guided photography walks, a bittern guided walk on 30th April and dawn chorus events on 23rd April and 1st May (dates correct at time of writing). All the details of these events, with links to book tickets, and updates about trail openings can be found on the RSPB website and our social media channels. We are also hoping to deliver a new programme of volunteer-led guided walks to take you behind the scenes at the reserve – updates will be announced on the RSPB website:

<https://events.rspb.org.uk/strumpshawfen>

Whether you are joining us for a springtime walk around the woodland trails, looking to photograph our most charismatic species or bringing your family to one of our events, you will be warmly welcomed to Strumpshaw Fen by knowledgeable and friendly reception volunteers and staff.

Jenna Woodford, February 2022.

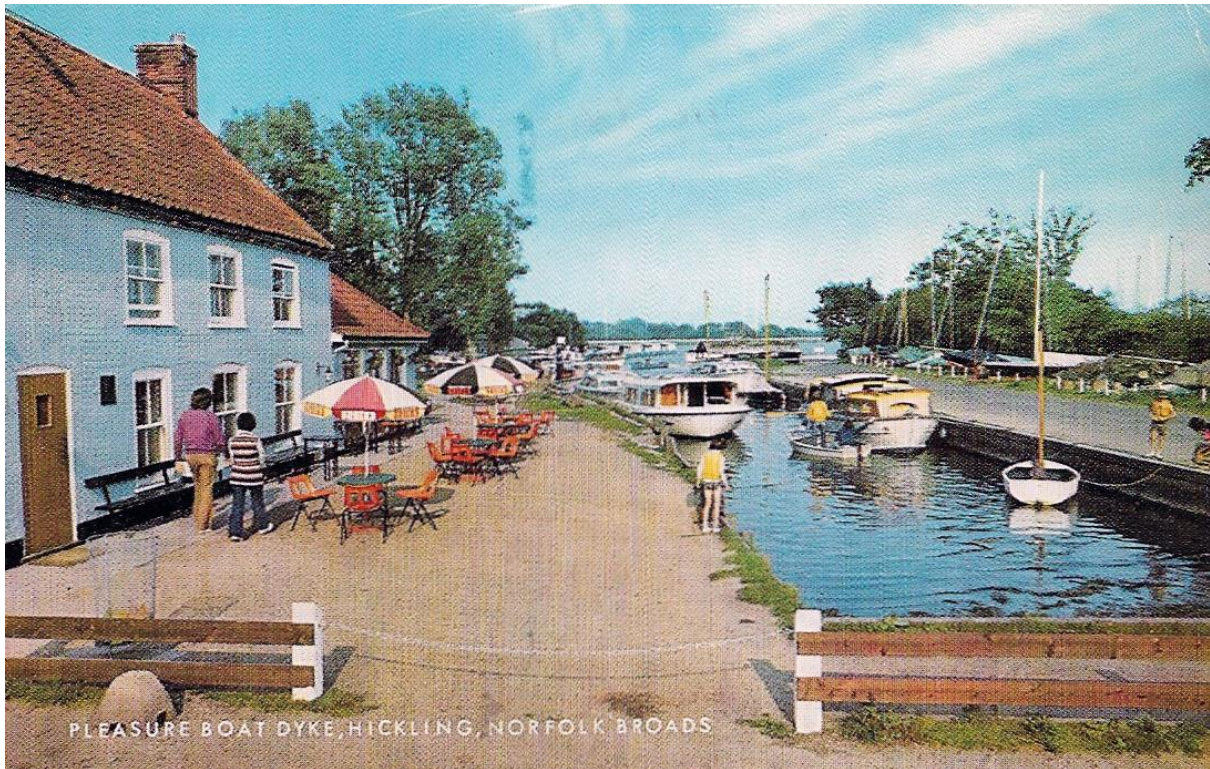
All photographs © Matthew Wilkinson.

THEN AND NOW Pleasure Boat Dyke, Hickling



The top postcard view © The Photographic Greeting Card Co Ltd, London, dates from around the early 1950s. Note the mature trees which no longer exist today and the green painted extension adjoining the gable of the Pleasure Boat Inn which was replaced with a larger scale extension during the 1960s.

This postcard view © J Salmon Ltd, was taken sometime during the early 1970s. Moored in the dyke are several hire craft, including one of the popular 34ft 'Bermuda' class boats first launched for the 1969 season, built by F B Wilds of Horning.



Although the photograph above was taken out of season, there are private moorings in the dyke, with most hire boats now being unable to negotiate Potter Heigham bridge and the Pleasure Boat Inn has been closed for several months and remains so today.

David Edleston

WALKS AROUND THE BROADS

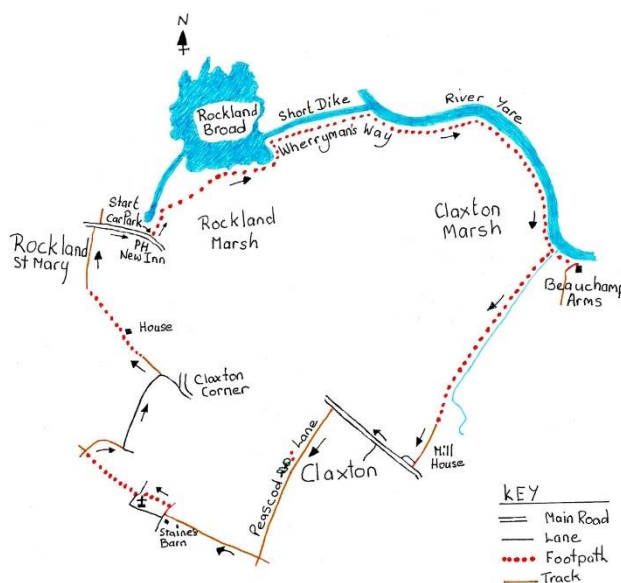
Rockland St Mary & Claxton



This 5.5 mile walk from Peter James is one of 12 walks published in the Ramblers booklet 'Country Walks Within 15 Miles of Norwich' (£3.90), which can be ordered by email from pdjames.ramb@ntlworld.com. It starts from the car park by the Staithe at Rockland St Mary (Explorer Map OL40 G/R TG327046) which is opposite The New Inn. Rockland St Mary is on a bus route from Norwich.

The route of the walk goes past Rockland Broad and Rockland Marsh. This area is popular with birdwatchers, and mallard, tufted duck, common tern, greylag goose, Canada goose, heron, kingfisher and great crested grebe may be seen here. Habitats at Rockland Marsh include reed beds, wet grassland, wet woodland, pools, ponds and ditches. The walk then follows the path beside the River Yare. This section is part of the Wherryman's Way long distance path that links Norwich with Great Yarmouth. The walk then turns inland to the village of Claxton and continues across the fields to visit historic, but lonely, St Andrew's Church. The church dates from late Norman times, but it was much altered and extended over the centuries. It retains the atmosphere of a simple country church including the underside of the thatch visible in the roof. The walk then returns along farm tracks and paths back to the start.

Refreshments: The Beauchamp Arms public house, with limited opening times during the winter months, is just off the route of the walk along the riverside path. The New Inn, opposite the car park at the start and end of the walk, is open daily.



Leave the car park by the bridge across the head of the staithe and turn left along the Wherryman's Way. Follow the path past Rockland Marsh on the right and Rockland Broad on the left where there is a bird hide. Then continue along the path to Short Dike. Turn rightwards and follow the dike to the bank of the River Yare. Now keep right and follow the riverside path past the pumping station. Then, just before the gate to the Beauchamp Arms, leave the Wherryman's Way and turn right on a path heading away from the river and

running beside a dyke. On reaching a gate, go through and follow the track to the road in Claxton.

Cross to the pavement opposite and turn right along it. Continue past the end of Folly Lane on the left. At the end of the pavement go past a thatched barn conversion and then take the restricted byway (Peascod Lane) on the left. Follow the lane for some 800 metres to the brow of the hill. On reaching a crossing track (Slade Lane) before the electric pylons, turn right. There are good views of the countryside in all directions from this track. Continue to the end of the track. Then turn right and immediately left into a narrow path beside some gardens and into a churchyard. Go through the churchyard, past Claxton Church, to the gate into a road.



Rockland Staithe



The River Yare

Cross the road into another path. Follow it around the field edge and then through a gap in the hedge. Go diagonally across the field and, at the crossing track, turn right. Follow the track round to the lane past Burton's Farm. Turn left along the lane and continue along it until, shortly after crossing a stream, the road swings to the right. Here, turn left away from the bend onto a track leading towards a house. The path then goes down to the left following around the boundary of the property. Continue along a field edge. Then follow signs round to the right. Then go left through trees and then right again on a clear track leading to the road at Rockland St. Mary. Turn right along the road and then turn left back into the car park.



Church of St Andrew, Claxton



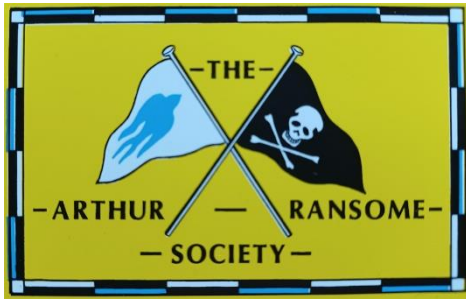
Peascod Track

For more information about THE RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION, call 07505 426750 or click www.ramblers.org.uk

Sue Walker

All images © Ramblers' Association

ARTHUR RANSOME FANS OUT THERE?



Being involved with the Norfolk Broads suggests that many/some people may be members /supporters of The Arthur Ransome Society (TARS). Having just re-joined their merry band reveals that they have a thriving group and events that members and readers of Harnser may find to be of interest.

Of particular note are

- i) The Literary Weekend at St. Edmund Hall, University of Oxford from Friday 1 April to Sunday 3rd April with a range of illustrious and inspiring speakers (as well as the practically inclined, adventurous and very much Broads Society-style Friends of the Broads)

Booking queries to davidymiddleton@waitrose.com

- ii) Equally, if not more exciting is the proposed camping and water-based adventures at our very own Dilham. A basic camp site, no electricity hook-up but toilets and showers are available. Cost £16 per head per night, children £8 per child per night. If you wish not to bring your own tent, they have Glamping available at a separate cost. Please book in your own name at canalcamping.co.uk. Please mention The Arthur Ransome Society when booking, and let Marc Grimston know you are coming.

If you have a canoe or paddle board they can be launched from the site. Other boats can be launched locally. Hunter's Yard (Womack Staithe Ludham) will host us on Wednesday 1 June when they will give us a talk on the history of the yard and will be holding 2 half-deckers back for us if we wish to hire them at the time. *Titmouse* will also be in the water for us to 'play' with.

There will be loads to do and see around Norfolk so please book in as soon as you can and come and join us. marcgrimston@gmail.com (from pg. 31 of SIGNALS: The magazine of TARS_Jan -April '22)



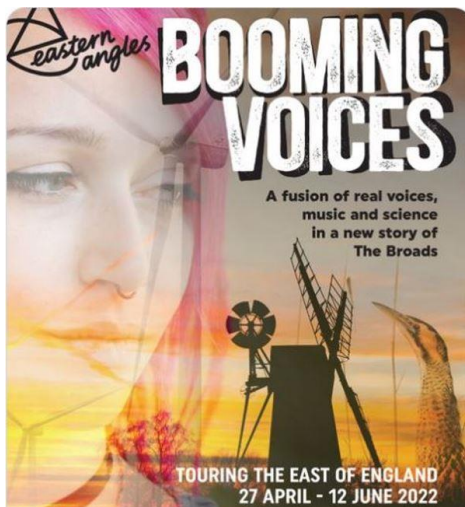
Looking forward to welcoming lots of people of all ages to our lovely Broads!

Mike Filgate

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Events in and around the Broads over the next few months, which may be of interest to Members

- 14-21 April : Easter Trail, Museum of the Broads (for younger visitors)
- 30 April : Horning Boat Show
- 30 April-1 May : Coldham Hall Open Regatta
- 19 May : Wildlife of the Halvergate Marshes in Spring, online talk, Mill and the Marsh Folk event. free
- 21 May : Boat & Fishing Jumble, Museum of the Broads
- 22 May : Wildlife of the Halvergate Marshes in Spring, guided walk, Mill and the Marsh Folk event, £5
- 21-22 May : Acle Regatta
- 28 May : Three Rivers Race, Horning
- 2 June : Stalham Town Jubilee Weekend, Museum of the Broads
- 2-5 June : Thurne Mouth Regatta
- 26 June : Ludham Open Gardens
- 19 Nov : Broads Society AGM, Norfolk Broads Yacht Club, Wroxham



Eastern Angles Theatre Company will be touring the East of England with a new Broads play, *Booming Voices*, between 27th April and 12th June, details of which can be found on their website at www.easternangles.co.uk

Booming Voices aims to capture the magic of the Broads and explore its possible future. From a range of interviews with people living on this iconic landscape, the play fuses real voices, music and science to tell a new, unheard story of the Broads. In the height of the pandemic, Jen, a young student, is shielding in an isolated cottage on the edge of a watery haven, housesitting for a Professor in the US who is investigating the impact of climate change. Together they explore the iconic wildlife and nature of the Broads, showing us just how vulnerable this seemingly timeless landscape is. With the songs of acclaimed folk musician Jimmy Alridge and insights from figures who helped discover the true nature of this wetland paradise, *Booming Voices* promises to be an evening that both prepares us for the future and gives us hope. Local venues include Woodbastwick Village Hall on 17 May at 19.30 and Beccles Quay on 11 June at 14.30 and 19.30 and 12 June at 14.30. Tickets can be booked online. This is part of the Water, Mills and Marshes project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Broads Authority. (Please note STOP PRESS item on page 45).

MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE BROADS



This interesting collection of black and white images was kindly submitted by member, Tim Greenhill who says that, although they are rather old and faded, they may well jog a lovely memory or two amongst older readers. The pictures are all of his family's association with the Broads which goes back to 1955

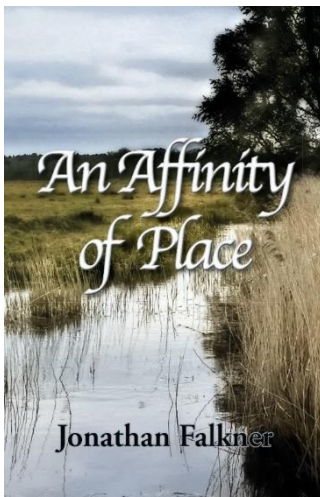


1. The Belvedere on the Ant in 1955, hired from Wayford Bridge, feted to be the biggest sailing hire boat on the Broads at the Time; 2. Pastime in 1958 at Acle Bridge, hired, Tim seems to recall, from Beccles; 3. Ferry Pioneer in 1960, hired from Ferry Boats in Horning; 4. Upriver, a Potter Heigham bungalow in 1960, which was in Tim's family for 40 or more very enjoyable years and 5. Horning regatta in 1963.



This image of one of the thatched boatsheds on the edge of Hickling Broad was taken by member, Jane Dammers on 20 April 2021. Jane says that although these boatsheds are much photographed, she was inspired by the quality of the evening light and the invitation of the wide open doors.

If you would like to see your photo of the Broads featured in a future edition of Harnser, please send it to Harnser.Editor@gmail.com along with details of where and when it was taken. Images can be either portrait or landscape format and should be high resolution, at least one megabyte in size.



A NEW NOVEL SET ON THE NORFOLK BROADS

'An Affinity of Place' is a new novel set mainly on the Norfolk Broads. It is a story of friendship and love, of loss and the resolution of grief. The Broads environment itself plays a major part in the story and in particular the very special wetland habitat of the Ludham and Potter Heigham Marshes. The author lived in north Suffolk in the 1990s and his observations of Broads wildlife provide the background to the story. A paperback version is available at £8.99 from bitternbooks.co.uk An e-book version is available at £1.99 from amazon.co.uk

NEWS AND VIEWS

Trustees have been participating in Webinars, preparing for the DEFRA consultations, with the Campaign for National Parks and the Centre for National Parks and Protected Areas. Consultation closes on 9th April. With so many people participating, it is hard to get across our point, when we don't even have the same legislation. Julian Glover says that as much as he heard each area say they were unique, actually they all described the same problems, such as lack of affordable housing and transport. I think he would get his feet wet if he tried implementing his ideas about such things on the Broads. However, I'm pleased to report that the Head of Future Landscapes came back with a list of questions. This is a condensed account of what he asked and my attempt at answers. He certainly made me think by asking what were Parliament's original intentions for the Navigation Committee? and why it – according to him – doesn't currently work as it should.

I believe the answers are to be found in the fact that, being tidal, the right to navigate arose automatically when the Broads were flooded in the 13th century. Nothing was planned and the flooding was an "accident". The lack of any coordination persisted right up to the 1970s, when an attempt was made to create a single public body to manage the Broads. In 1971, the three separate River Commissioners agreed to form a sub-committee at the Port and Haven Commissioners office. Having a unified toll collecting system was certainly a step in the right direction. However, the Port and Haven Commissioners, who were still actively controlling the Norwich Navigation, objected, "in the strongest possible terms", to the suggestion that the entire inland navigation should be run by the East Suffolk and Norfolk River Authority. Who? For a brief period between 1965 and 1973 these local bodies managed land drainage, river pollution and fisheries throughout England. The fact that they have been consigned to history is typical of the way central government has continually reorganised the various public bodies responsible for low-lying landscapes in a way which borders on the manic.

For their part, Norfolk County Council also made an objection to installing a tidal barrier at Yarmouth on the grounds that its effect on nature conservation were too uncertain.

In so many ways, we have not really moved on in 50 years.

The wording of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 is quite odd, and resulted, I believe, from the fact that there was still a cargo trade from the sea. If Parliament had known that this would disappear within about 5 years, they would have constituted the Broads Authority as a full-on Navigation Authority, instead of having the somewhat feeble purpose of, "protecting the interests of navigation." Instead, as the Port of Norwich quietly died and Yarmouth lost interest in the "Haven", we have had ad hoc acquisition of responsibility for Breydon Water and the Lower Bure (the "Haven") and also Mutford Lock taken over from the council in Lowestoft. Strictly speaking, obstructing a tidal navigation does not cause the right to lapse. Though, as we all know, the practice of blocking certain Broads, at least at certain times of the year, continues to this day. When the Act was passed Parliament sidestepped this issue by

defining the navigation area as, those parts of the rivers etc, which were actually in use for navigation in 1988. A new plan of the area was filed with Parliament as part of the 2009 Broads Act but, while that sits safely in a drawer in Whitehall, one cannot be sure exactly where the navigation is! I gather some places are still “let off” the tolls if boats don’t stray.

A typically English muddled compromise?

Reading the words again carefully, it dawned on me that the assumption everyone has had, for the last 20 years at least, that the Navigation Committee is merely there to give advice on matters affecting the navigation is clearly mistaken. There is a duty on the Authority to, “keep under review the extent to which its functions in relation to the Navigation Area are delegated to the Navigation Committee”. Likewise, such functions were not to be delegated to anyone else, save the Commissioners. At least, that was the case before the subsection was quietly deleted in the 2009 Act. The only logical explanation – I think – is that Parliament originally intended the navigation to be run by a standing sub-committee of “experts”, in a symbiotic relationship with the largest pre-existing body controlling the navigation: the Commissioners.

I was also asked to comment on “Systems and processes that restrict public participation and transparency,” and “potential changes that resolve...these issues.” If you read the Eastern Daily Press last October, I expect you already have your own ideas about that, as do I. Such things as having to lodge questions at BA meetings the same day the agenda is published immediately spring to mind. I must admit to feeling very pessimistic about the overconfident attitude some of the webinar panellists had. But, it was noticeable that support for the National Landscapes Partnership, which they all enthusiastically lobbied for, was actually reduced by their presentations. Questions such as how do National Parks maintain nature when they don’t own or manage the landscape and have no powers to protect nature were, to my mind, rather glibly swept under the carpet.

However, let’s be positive, DEFRA are actually asking *us* the right questions.

Paul Savage



Goodchild Marine Services Ltd
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Company Registration Number: 4618725
www.goodchildmarine.co.uk

CHURCHES AROUND THE BROADS

10. Claxton : Church of St Andrew

The Church of St Andrew, Claxton stands in an isolated and rather remote location with just a few cottages nearby. Built of flint and red brick with limestone and brick dressings, the church is Grade I listed. The nave is of 12th century origin with later fenestration and a thatched roof. The west tower and red brick and pantiled south porch date from the 16th century and the plain tiled chancel was rebuilt in 1867. The church was originally larger with a north aisle, but all that now remains is the ghost of an arcade which can be seen in the north wall of the nave and from outside the church. The interior is plain and simple with brick and tiled floors, limewashed walls and 18th century box pews. With no coloured glass in the windows, the subtle light spilling through the windows adds to the simple and harmonious character. The scissor braced roof to the nave was greatly restored in 1928, but still retains the internal appearance of a mediaeval thatched roof. The 15th century octagonal font is a fine example of its type with four lions to the stem and angel corbels to the bowl.



View from the south-west with the 16th century tower and view from the south-east.

The nearest moorings are at the Staithe in Rockland St Mary where there are free 24-hour moorings and it is around a 30 minute walk to the church. Turn left on the main road at the Staithe towards Claxton along Lower Road and then right into Church Lane which winds up to the church. The church can also be visited on the circular walk around Rockland St Mary and Claxton, details of which can be found on page 22. Parking is also available at the church



South porch, door and nave window; chancel and east window; blocked north wall.

David Edleston

BROADS SOCIETY GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS

Looking for an unusual gift idea? Why not consider an annual subscription to the Broads Society? From £16 for four editions of our magazine, *Harnser*, with news, views and articles on many Broads related topics, regular articles about the Broads, commentary from our campaigns and much more. Help the Broads Society to protect this unique part of our country.

Please contact the Administrator, details on page 3.



THE LANDSCAPES REVIEW RESPONSE

A CRITICAL TIME FOR NATIONAL PARKS



January saw the long-awaited Government response to Landscapes Review (also known as the Glover Review), which was published in 2019.

Campaign for National Parks helped inform the Review and has been calling for a full Government response ever since. That

response is finally here and a consultation is now underway.

The Review looked at whether protections for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England were fit for purpose and explored what might be done better. It outlined a series of recommendations, many of which we supported and are pleased to see in the Government response, including:

- Strengthening the duties on other bodies such as local authorities and utilities companies to ensure that they give greater weight to the special circumstances which apply when undertaking activities in National Parks.
- The statutory purposes for National Parks are also to be amended to place a much stronger emphasis on nature recovery and improving the opportunities for all parts of society to visit.
- Plans to improve the performance of National Park Board members through the introduction of a package of measures including standard role profiles, a shared code of conduct, regular skills audits, improved training and fixed term appointments.

There are clearly some good commitments in there, but there is also lots that still missing from the package of measures needed to ensure our National Parks really are fit for the 21st century.

We are calling for new legislation – a Landscapes Bill – to help deliver on the ambition of the Review. We want to see it mentioned in the Queen’s Speech and keep up momentum, now we have it. It’s taken over two years to get to this point – we cannot afford to wait any longer while the nature and climate crisis worsens.

We also need to see multi-year funding commitments for National Park Authorities which have seen a decade of real term cuts in their core funding from Defra, despite welcoming record numbers of visitors in recent years.

Earlier this year, we hosted a Landscapes Review webinar for National Park Societies, including The Broads Society, to find out more about the response and highlight areas of support and concern. Campaign for National Parks’ Chief Executive Rose O’Neill also recently joined the Review’s author Julian Glover and leaders from Defra, Natural

England, University of Cumbria's Centre for National Parks and Protected Areas and others to discuss plans for a national landscapes partnership.

In the run up to the consultation deadline on 9 April, we are continuing to work with partners to discuss the detail and prepare a full response – and are engaging politicians and decision makers with the importance of supporting the nation's National Parks to deliver more for people, nature and climate. If you want to keep in touch with the latest Landscapes Review news, or support Campaign for National Parks in its mission for better protected, improved National Parks, sign up to our free mailing list at cnp.org.uk



Campaign for National Parks Chief Executive Rose O'Neill delivers a speech at a joint online panel event with Centre for National Parks and Protected Areas in February.

Laura Williams, Campaigns and Communications Manager, CNP



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NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM OF THE BROADS



February is drawing to a close as I write this update and we are not sorry to see the back of this month! Gale after gale, storm after storm! Thankfully, the Museum remains virtually unscathed although the weather has caused us some delays in preparing for opening. We had hoped to open on March 29th but sadly we may have to delay opening for a week or so. However, there is much to look



forward to, not least our 2022 Annual exhibition – ironically chronicling the history of wind power on The Broads and entitled ‘Sails and Blades’! We would like to thank the Broads Authority’s ‘Water, Mills and Marshes’ Project for sponsoring the Exhibition. The

date for the official opening will be posted on social media and on our website soon.

In addition, we are planning to revamp our shop and café. Various parts of the displays that have had to remain closed during the pandemic can now be reopened including the highly popular wherry cuddy complete with the wonderful and amusing recording of the two wherry crew about to cast off! Work has continued throughout the winter months on the newly acquired Cookes Staithe building, levelling of the floor, new walls and windows which will eventually allow more greatly needed display space. Both boats, steamboat ‘Falcon’ and electric launch ‘Marsh Harrier’ are undergoing their annual maintenance with lots of painting and polishing going on to make them ready for launching in the coming weeks.

With the help of grant funding last year, we were able to commission some short videos about the museum during summer months. We were very pleased with the results, and they are all available on YouTube, so please take a look when you have a few minutes to spare – a pleasant diversion from the current weather and the news! I am also happy to report that some of our popular events will be back this year including the Easter Trail and the ‘Boat and Fishing Jumble’ on May 21st. And although still in the planning stage, we are hoping to host the opening event of Stalham Town’s Jubilee weekend on Thursday, June 2nd with decorated boats, live music and a barbecue. Details of all our events can be found on the website.

Finally, as always may I remind readers that we love to hear from anyone interested in joining us as a volunteer for a few hours each week, in one of the many roles available, reception and front of house, boat crews and steam engineers (training given) , maintenance and restoration work etc. You can get in touch via our website www.museumofthebroads.co.uk, email info@museumofthebroads.co.uk or call 01692 581681. See you soon!

Robert Paul, Chair of Trustees



**Love the
Broads**

Business supporters gearing up for a “super” season

Love the Broads business supporters have continued their amazing support throughout the Covid pandemic which has enabled us to continue to award small grants. In the last few months we have provided funding to the River Waveney Trust and Burnt Fen Alpacas. Although many businesses have managed to remain open during Covid or have been able to find creative ways to engage with their customers, they are now gearing up and preparing for a busy season and to welcoming customers into their businesses. We wish them all every success for 2022.



Burnt Fen Alpacas provides support to less able visitors

We have provided a small grant which has helped Burnt Fen Alpacas to provide specialist disabled facilities to less able visitors. There are so many benefits for the less able to experience the landscape of the Broads and particularly the engagement with the alpacas as our photograph demonstrates.

Can you help us? Join us as a Volunteer

Love the Broads is urgently seeking volunteers to help us with our important work to ensure that the Broads remains special. We need a small number of volunteers who could take on a variety of basic tasks such as attending events and engaging with the public to showcase our work, organise Member events and connect with our tourism business supporters. There is limited commitment of time and we are flexible and can work around volunteers' commitments. Expenses would also be paid. For an informal chat about this opportunity please contact: be peterh@broadstrust.org.uk 07887 480331

Trustees needed

The Broads Trust (a registered charity) which administers Love the Broads, is urgently seeking people that are passionate about the Broads to join us as Trustees. This important role helps to steer our vital work to ensure that the Broads remains special now and into the future. There is limited time required but an opportunity to have a voice as to how our work has an impact. For further information please contact peterh@broadstrust.org.uk 07887 480331

BRIEFING FROM THE CNP CONFERENCE (Part 2)

October 2021 hosted by the North Yorkshire Moors Association

I continue this second briefing from last year's CNP Conference with a quote by one of the Conference speakers attributed to Margaret Mead: *Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has!*

This opens the main day one presentations and discussions which amongst a large range of topics included the Future Role of National Parks (and the Broads), challenges and opportunities for our protected landscapes, the parks after COP-26 and Covid-19, Putting people at the heart of policy making (something we perhaps seem to lack on the Broads), Sustainable and Regenerative Tourism and CNP current policy priorities. Discussion was had about proper protection of the areas so there are no misuses and no movement towards theme park images, thus a sustainable way that landholders can have an income stream without destroying the natural aspects. Habitat regulations and ways of using them without watering them down plus light pollution were also mentioned.

North Yorkshire County Council had set up a rural commission in 2018, a study of North Yorkshire. It was an independent commission including farmers, businesses, scientists, religious groups, academia, journalist and community groups. Subjects covered included enabling response to climate change, rivers being used for hydro-electric power, churches with solar panels on roofs, EV charging provision, sustainable transport and easements in planning for insulation. It was noted that challenges must be made on non-sustainable processes, behaviours and cultures and that communities should be more empowered to self-help, e.g., creating district heating supplies, new affordable housing and to constrain non primary housing (second homes).

So how would the parks family look after COP-26 and Covid 19? The new CEO of the North Yorkshire Moors National Park asked this. He went on to raise the subject of the challenges of climate change, nature recovery, landscapes and the spending reviews. The future of farm and land management will be affected by climate change so the farmers must adapt and mitigate. The park family has a duty to address climate change especially as many parks (and the Broads) suffer more and more with winter flooding. DEFRA realise that there is a biodiversity and climate crisis hence a 25-year environment plan and the thinking behind a Nature Recovery Network (NRN). The Glover Landscape Review touches on this, we must reverse habitat decline.

Mention was made of the Environment Land Management Scheme (ELMS) and the parks family with £240m to potentially be utilised by 2030 for such partnership projects involving peat land, woodland, wetland and grassland dubbed "net zero with nature".

Post covid, people have started to flock to park areas with new audiences as being in nature helps people to recover. Statistics show a 35% increase in visitors to green and natural spaces in a sort of move towards embracing health and well-being. This increase in visitors has brought its problems, how do you conserve what these spaces have yet facilitate change to cater for this increase? The expected landscape review is meant to look at this and the parks must move on. With the comprehensive spending review its expected DEFRA will not be protected and austerity will play a part in funding so it's time for the parks family to speak up for its status.

Speaker Rory Stewart broached the subject of Landscapes with People. Landowners, residents, visitors and business need to keep pressure on Government to protect these areas as people pressure is important. The parks are inspiring in connecting people with nature. Natural England has no proper resources now so often projects and policies are just paying lip service. Funding is perhaps not at the levels required, look at sustainable farming payments, landscape and nature funding, ELMS, walking routes and rivers, safe crossings, rights of way etc. There has been a loss of staff thus a loss of expertise and a loss of interest in such organisations as DEFRA. "Waiting for Glover" is not an excuse, let's move forward, the parks family and the CNP, to put our points forward, rally the people, let's have protected landscapes for the wealth and well-being of the people, we must speak out now.

There is more to come in part 3 in the next issue of Harnser.

Paul Rice, Chairman

BROADS SOCIETY 500 CLUB

The 500 Club was set up many years ago with the intention of raising additional, much needed, income for The Broads Society. Membership is £12 per annum, payable on 1st March each year. A draw takes place every month and members have the chance to win either £50, £20 or £10. In November at the Broads Society AGM there is a draw for £500.

Broads Society members may join the 500 Club or buy a membership for family or friends, there is no limit to how many subscriptions any one person may have.

If the number of members increases, we may be able to increase the prize money!

If you would like to join the 500 Club please get in touch with our Administrator, Sarah Vergette. Contact details are on page 3.

Broadland Futures Initiative

As 2021 passed, we saw the completion and publication of the BFI's strategic objectives and a shift towards the next phase in the development of the BFI strategy.

The next step, Step 4, as shown below, will comprise using our new and updated computer-based models of the Broadland rivers and the sea to understand how climate change may affect the risk of flooding in different locations.



These models are still in development and will not be available for us to use until 2023. In the meantime, we can make a start on Step 5 and are currently finalising plans for the required tasks to begin this year. Our planning includes identifying points when we will need input and feedback from communities and other stakeholders.

Step 5 will start by identifying potential actions to manage future flood risk. Such actions could be traditional measures such as flood embankments and

walls, or those that have been considered previously such as barriers and washlands.

In addition to physical structures designed to keep out flood water, some actions may be more about how we plan developments, use the land, or prepare for flooding so that impacts are reduced when it does happen. We will look for innovative ideas locally, and from elsewhere in the UK and abroad. Different actions might be implemented together or at different points in time depending on circumstances.

Therefore, it is likely that in Step 6 a large number of action combinations may be considered and tested against the objectives. From this list of actions, we will select the best range of possible 'pathways' of actions that will allow a flexible response and adaptation to currently uncertain changes in climate and flood risk.

After this, Steps 7 and 8 sees the development and implementation of the BFI strategy and plan for managing future flood risk management. Steps 9 and 10 highlight the need, in a changing world, to check on our progress, with a possible need to revisit certain aspects of the cycle.

The reason for a strategic approach is because the sources of flooding for a large and low-lying area such as the BFI plan area can be complex and interconnected. Whilst the BFI is fundamentally a strategy and not the primary deliverer of the flood risk management actions, and neither will it impact upon current shoreline management policy, it will be as a strategy relatively 'high level' in nature. Therefore, providing the direction for subsequent more detailed projects on the ground as we all move into the future.

It will set out a framework that helps communities, the public sector, and other organisations, to work together to manage flood risk. The BFI will support local decision making, engagement around flood risk management and ensure flood risks are managed in a coordinated way. Only together, can we improve the resilience of people, places, and the environment to flooding, as we adapt to the changing climate.

As always if you would like more information or to get in touch with a member of the BFI please visit [Broadland Futures Initiative \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](http://broads-authority.gov.uk)

Gavin Rumsey, Environment Agency

EVENTS 2022

Bookings have been confirmed for the Broads Society stand at the following events during 2022

- Saturday 30 April : Horning Boat Show
- Sunday 26 June : Ludham Open Gardens
- Wednesday 29 and Thursday 30 June : Royal Norfolk Show (set up Tuesday 28 June)
- Sunday 7 August : Hoveton Village Fete

More events are likely to be added to the list and although we have a small but dedicated team who attend these events and set up the stand and display material, new volunteers are always welcome to come along and help to promote and raise awareness of the Society. It is a good way of meeting fellow members and talking to visitors to these events with a view to encouraging them to become members of the Society. If you are interested, even if you can only spare a few hours, please contact Peter Smith by e-mail p.smith40@outlook.com

BROADS SOCIETY MERCHANDISE

The full range of Broads Society branded merchandise is still available and further details can be found on our website in the section headed 'Merchandise'.

NEWS SNIPPETS

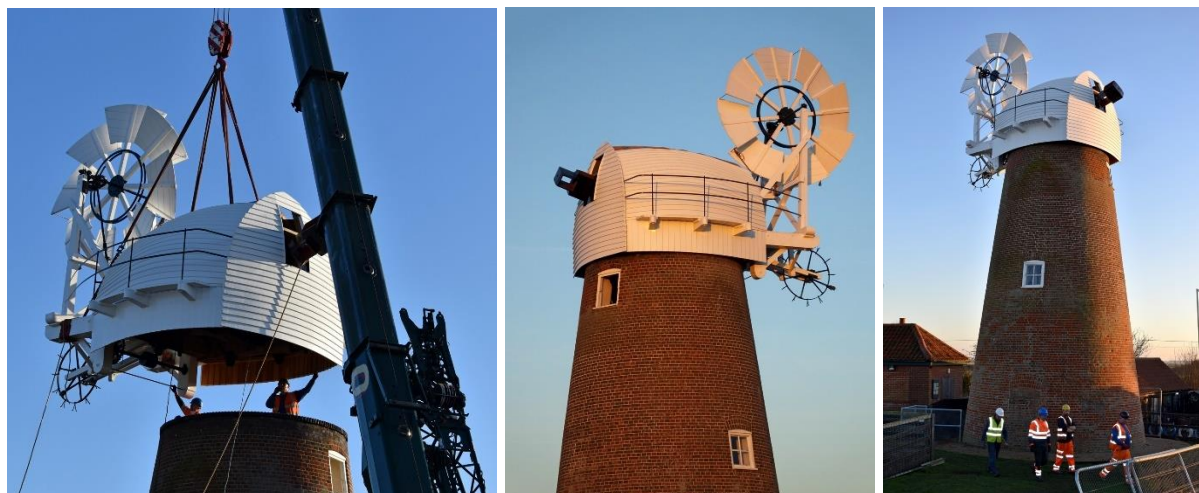
Stracey Arms Mill : Fitting of New Cap and Fantail

Further to the brief report on progress with the restoration of Stracey Arms Mill in the last edition of Harnser, the new cap and fantail were finally hoisted into position in mid-December 2021. This marked a key point in the Norfolk Windmill Trust's 'Mill and the Marsh Folk' project to restore the Grade II* listed building, which was launched more than three years ago. The temporary roof, put in place to keep the mill watertight as building repair works on the brick tower progressed, was removed prior to the cap being hoisted into place by crane.

The restoration project is supported by a grant of £554,600 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which will see a new set of sails being installed by the end of the year. In addition to restoring the structure, the Mill and the Marsh Folk project will also provide interpretation on site for visitors and educational activities for schoolchildren and community groups. Volunteering opportunities will also be available for those who wish to assist visitors and help to maintain the site.



Stracey Arms Mill with its temporary roof being removed prior to fitting of the new cap



The new cap being hoisted into place by crane and after fitting in position. All images © Norfolk Windmills Trust

Thurne Telephone Box



One of the more unusual planning applications that the Society recently commented on, relates to the existing redundant, K6 type, red telephone kiosk in The Street, Thurne, designed by Giles Gilbert Scott, a traditional and familiar sight in many towns and villages. The telephone box was decommissioned some time ago and is now in the ownership of the Broads Authority. The application involves the change of use to a mini-visitor information hub and the kiosk is to be cleaned and repainted and fitted internally with an audio and visual display providing visitor information, which can only be seen and heard from inside the box. The Broads Authority will continue to be responsible for its ongoing

maintenance. The Society positively supported the proposals noting that it would provide an appropriate long-term use to secure the retention and maintenance of the kiosk as a traditional feature in the village.

Railway Closed After Storm

After a particularly high tide on 30th January, the railway alongside the Haddiscoe New Cut was closed for almost a week when floodwater washed away the ballast under the track. Following repairs, the Environment Agency has adjusted the water height which triggers a flood warning, as it has become clear that the bank under the track forms part of the flood defences. It was subsequently announced that the Rail Accident Investigation Branch will be carrying out a full investigation which will be published in due course with recommendations to prevent related problems in future. They work under similar guidelines to the Marine Accident Investigation Branch.



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RECENT NEWS FROM THE BROADS AUTHORITY



Recognising the hard work of Broads volunteers

The Authority is grateful to all its volunteers. Their hard work in the National Park helps us to ensure it remains a special place for everyone to enjoy. Last April, the Broads saw a very welcome return of volunteers, back after several breaks during the Covid-19 pandemic, albeit with a smaller, Covid secure programme. Volunteers take part in most areas of our work programme, including assisting visitors at Tourism Information Centres and Yacht Stations, helping Rangers out on patrol and giving advice to the public. They carry out practical conservation work with the Maintenance team; survey wildlife populations with the Ecology and Design team, and help enthuse young people through a range of outdoor activities with the Education team.

There are currently around 110 Broads volunteers, who typically get involved because they love the opportunity to be outside and give something back to the Broads. They take pride in their work, they tell us that it's lots of fun, there is a sense of comradeship and that many long-lasting friendships have been made. Plus, many recognise that being out in nature has positive benefits for health and wellbeing.



Many volunteers stay long-term. When Peter Cannell (see photo) completed 5000 hours of volunteering since 2013, he was awarded gifts and a certificate for his exceptional service. He is a great role model, helping guide new volunteers and supporting them in their work, and bringing his lifetime of work experience to the role. Well-established volunteer groups such as the Beavers have been volunteering in the Broads for many years and the Broadsword Group (all Broads Society members) will soon celebrate its 50th anniversary.

Volunteers help look after the waterways by: maintaining moorings, mowing, installing new signage, cleaning signs and installing safety ladders. Volunteers also help with the water-plant cutting programme enabling staff to complete extra cuts around the Broads. Other recent volunteer tasks included monitoring powerboat races at Oulton Broad, making a pond-animal quiz for Norwich Science Festival, inputting data for a butterfly survey at How Hill, checking footpaths and tree coppicing.

Volunteers are always supervised, appropriately trained and will never replace members of staff. They allow the Authority to deliver additional benefits above and beyond the core functions of its statutory role.

Photograph © Broads Authority

BROADS SOCIETY PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION RE-LAUNCHED!

After a gap of a few years, we have pleasure in inviting you to take part once again in a new, revamped photo competition. There will be two themes: 'People and The Broads'- it could be a marshman or dredger driver, angler or holidaymaker, it is your choice, as long as the central



feature is a person or people – human life in Broadland and 'Broads Landscapes'- any image which captures the distinctive character and unique atmosphere of the Broads. We are indebted to Nigel Hughes, who has once again agreed to sponsor the competition. As a result, we are able to offer the following prizes:



First Prize £250, the David Blair Trophy for one year, plus an engraved glass trophy (to keep)

Second Prize £100 and an engraved glass trophy

Third Prize £50 and an engraved glass trophy

In addition, we have a new category for entries from those under 18: First Prize £50 plus an engraved glass trophy

It is also hoped to display of all the entries at special exhibitions in the Autumn – venues to be announced. Further details and an entry form are available on the Broads Society website.

THE NIGEL HUGHES PHOTO COMPETITION AND THE DAVID BLAIR TROPHY – RECOLLECTIONS

When we had the idea to reinstate the Broads Society Photo Competition, former Harnser editor and Broads Society committee member, Jill Wickens put us in touch with the original sponsor – Nigel Hughes, who has very generously agreed to sponsor the competition for a further year. Nigel sent the following very interesting letter about the history of his involvement and about David Blair. It is a very moving account, and inspires us to encourage a great competition in 2022!

'I first holidayed here in 1967 – so this will be my 55th year on the Broads. In the 60's and 70's we holidayed on the famous Hearts cruisers of Commander Ron Ashby – for a young lad it was a transformational experience and I never forgot my early boating on the five rivers which ultimately gave me the skills and interest to go to sea. I spent 18 months at the Training Ship Indefatigable before joining the Union Castle Line as a cadet Navigating Officer onboard the beautiful Windsor Castle – sadly the mid 70's saw the decimation of much of the British merchant fleet and Union Castle closed its

liner services to South Africa – I was lucky to be amongst the last to sail for the company and experience what life was like on the high seas aboard a magnificent proper passenger liner.

In 1978 I decided to leave the sea and went to university in Glasgow and by a lucky stroke of co-incidence a fellow student also shared my passion for the Broads so during holidays we would apply for casual jobs at boatyards and I managed to get a job at Herbert Woods – in those days the yard was owned by Ladbrokes but still retained many of the wonderful old wooden boats Herbert Woods were famous for building. I spent some very happy times at Potter Heigham and sailing and boating on the northern rivers.

Having graduated, my career took me into work in the leisure and hospitality sector and eventually I was lucky enough to be appointed manager of the biggest inland waterways narrowboat hire fleet in the northwest of England – but my wife and I still booked a fortnight on the Broads every year, much to the bemusement of my bosses who offered me one of the fleet boats free of charge!

In 2002 I joined the YMCA and immediately set about taking young and old people onto the canals and showing them not only how to handle a boat but also appreciate our waterways. We set about raising the funds to buy a narrowboat and not only got enough to design and commission the building of our own, we also had enough to buy and refurbish a second boat – a traditional centre cockpit Norfolk Broads cruiser, which was relaunched after a significant refurbishment in 2008.

But times change and so sadly has much of the Broads and some of it not for the better. 2022 will be our last year on the Broads – we have secured a buyer for the boat and will spend this last year enjoying the rivers for one last time.

The reasons for starting the photographic competition came about as a result of a man called David Blair who had suffered some appalling set-backs in his life and had hit rock bottom. I invited him to come with us on our first trip on the Broads and what a wise move that was. The Broads made such an impact on David, he took dozens of photographs and he set about learning to use a computer and researching the origins and history of the Broads, which completely consumed his spare time and fascinated him. One day he announced he was going to write a book and I recall him calling in to see me one Friday morning with his first chapter – it was amazing – a story being written from his soul, expressing his wonder and excitement of the sights he had seen and the people he had met – he was particularly heartened by the way total strangers were friendly and waved as they sailed by on passing boats. He told me he was nothing special and no-one really – he doubted anyone would want to even know a “looser” as he called himself. I told him he was no looser and I thought this first chapter had the makings of a remarkable story and he should write it as people would only see him as a clever, knowledgeable, kindly man. He left my office beaming with pride. I

never saw David again. David died 48 hours later in his own flat, that he had fought so hard to get. We were devastated.

You see David had been a working man his whole life until when he was 63 years of age, the company he worked for closed and he was made redundant. He tried desperately to get another job but met continual rejections. So for the next 12 months David lived a lie going out to work (or so he told his wife) but instead heading to a local pub to drown his sorrows, eventually the money ran out and bills kept coming in – by now David was a hardened drinker. He lost his home, marriage and family and spent 4 years living on the streets - existing not living and on many occasions begging not to wake up the following day. Thankfully David came to our YMCA and I like to think we gave him a fitting comfortable life to the end. That's why the trophy was so named – so people on the Broads would hear his name and remember him not as the broken homeless man, but the inspiring, private, modest hero who set in train a legacy to encourage others to love the Broads as he did. The rest as they say is history thanks to the lovely lady Jill Wickens who encouraged us to get involved and help others protect and look after the Norfolk Broads.'

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*******STOP PRESS*******

The Eastern Angles Theatre Company has very kindly offered Broads Society members a 25% discount on tickets for their performances of *Booming Voices* at Beccles Quay on 11 and 12 June, making them £13.50 rather than £18. Please use the code BOOMING25 (all in caps) when booking online (once the tickets are in the basket and you have logged in) or over the phone. Further details are on page 25.

BROADS SOCIETY CARDS

We now have a further stock of Broads Society cards available with eight different designs including two new images from photographs taken by David Edleston. The cards are blank inside for your own message and can therefore be used for any occasion throughout the year. Cards measure 8 x 6 inches and can be purchased from Peter Smith, 14 New Road, Reedham, Norwich, NR13 3TR or by e-mail p.smith40@outlook.com It will also be possible to purchase cards from the Broads Society stand at the various events that we will be attending.

Cards are £1.50 each or £1.25 for any 5 or more, plus postage and packing of 75p for up to 3 cards, £1.65 for 4-9 cards, post free for 10 cards or more. Payment should preferably be made by bank transfer to account number 60202770, sort code 20-99-21 adding your surname in the identity box. Alternatively, payment can be made by cheque payable to 'The Broads Society'. When placing an order please state clearly which designs you would like to purchase. The cards will also fit standard, off-the-peg 8 x 6 inches mounts and picture frames, which can be purchased from a variety of retailers, making them suitable for displaying on a wall, either individually or as a group.



1. Sunrise at Thurne Mill



2. Sailing on the River Bure



3. Evening Light on the River Thurne



4. Barton Turf Reflections



5. Dusk on the River Bure at St Benet's



6. Herringfleet Mill



7. Misty morning at Thurne Mill



8. Wherry Hather at Ludham Bridge

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