

FOREWORD

The Green Book has been published annually for about 80 years and is almost certainly the best single source of the information you need if embarking on a trip by boat on the Broads.

Over the years the Green Book has expanded to contain more information, and this year's, for 2017, is stuffed with the latest information, much of it provided by our affiliated Clubs and Classes. The fixtures lists, regatta details, Club and Class contact details, boat lists, Members list and tide tables are all as updated with the latest information when we go to print in January.

The Green Book is available on-line, at <http://thegreenbook.org.uk/> (scroll down to the third line on the menu on the left on all pages), however your printed copy is the perfect companion when you are afloat or enjoying a remote part of Broadland without internet access.

Peter Mantle, our dedicated new Green Book Organiser, is now in his second year and has taken a number of initiatives to improve the Green Book and boost advertising. He is assisted by a team including Sue Hines, Julia Bower, Chris Balls and John Tibbenham. I am most grateful for their good work – producing the Green Book is a considerable undertaking.

Lobbying for the interests of private boat owners on the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads is one of the NSBA's primary purposes, in addition to producing the Green Book. The pressures arising from conservation and environmental legislation continue to present threats to boating on the Broads in its present form. Interestingly, there are over 7 times more private boats on the Broads than there are hire boats, (almost 11,000 private boats, and 1568 hire boats at the start of last year), and the trend is towards even more private boats but fewer hire boats.

In the past year we have continued to campaign for the reopening of parts of the Broads closed to navigation, responded to planning consultations, made representations about mast lowering moorings at bridges, boat friendly moorings construction and surfacing, assisted to identify dredging priorities, supported the Upper Thurne Working Group, lobbied for limiting rises in Broads Authority tolls, helped appoint new members to the Navigation Committee and taken initiatives to get replacement floating moorings at Thurne Mouth to replace the piling closed several years ago and which will be removed by the Environment Agency in conjunction with the Broads Flood Alleviation Project. In the past year we went to considerable lengths in seeking a fair and transparent replacement tolls structure, in the face of an inadequate consultation and disappointing outcome for many members.

We are represented on, variously, the BA Navigation Committee, the BA Broads Forum, the RYA Eastern Region, the RYA Inland Waterways Group, the Port of Great Yarmouth Leisure Community Meeting, and the Upper Thurne Working Group.

Tolls, BA Income and the drive for efficiency

Broads Authority tolls are on average 9%* of the cost of keeping a boat on the Broads, and considerably lower than on other UK inland waterways.

We aim to keep broads boating affordable and are pressing hard for any increases in tolls to be modest, and justified by the quality of the service provided by the Broads Authority (BA). Keeping the BA's navigation account and functions separate from its National Park budget is necessary to ensure tolls are spent on relevant work, dredging, river rangers, moorings and so on.

At the time of writing, the Tolls Review for 2017 is complete and tolls demands will be issued to existing toll-payers within the next couple of months. Time will tell if the significant increases for some categories of boat including classic unpowered Broads yachts and larger motor boats, will be accepted by the wider boating public without further protest.

We have pressed the BA hard for greater transparency of Navigation and 'National Park' expenditures and better reporting of targets met and cost efficiency. The dialogue continues.

NSBA Regattas

I am please to relate that our flagship events, the inter-club, Ramuz Trophy competition and the Broadland Youth regatta, were again a great success last year, (with reports inside) and that arrangements are well in hand for these exciting regattas in the coming year.

Membership

The NSBA has over 50 affiliated Clubs, Classes and other Organisations, with a combined membership of nearly 10,000 and about 1000 personal members. However, the more personal members the NSBA has, the stronger it will be in the political arena. If you are not already a personal member, I do urge you to join. We need you, so that we may continue to serve, promote and protect boating interests in the Broads.

If you are already a member, thank you, please maintain your membership and please pass on word of our work and persuade your friends to join, even if they already belong to a Club or Class.

Finally, I wish you fair weather and good boating in 2017.

Brian

Brian Wilkins
Chairman, NSBA
January 2017

