



# WINTER NEWSLETTER

November 2005

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## Key concerns for Broads boaters:

- *Dredging is needed throughout the Broads*
- *Insufficient 24 hour moorings*
- *Methods being used by the Flood Alleviation Project may deprive navigators of many informal moorings*
- *Banks and staithes need maintenance and clearance of scrub and underwater obstacles*
- *Broads Authority needs to find money to maintain and improve the navigation from sources other than river tolls*

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## BA Chief proposes 13% year on year increase in Tolls

Speaking at the National Parks Conference, hosted this year by the Broads Authority, BA Chief Executive, Dr John Packman, announced a proposal to increase river tolls by 13% a year for each of the next five years. This would effectively double river tolls over that period.

The proposal came days after a Navigation Committee meeting at which the increase had not been mentioned. At a Broads Authority meeting on 30th September, the proposal was discussed in detail and BA Chairman, Professor Kerry Turner, promised that the Navigation Committee would be able to discuss the matter and that a detailed list of projects to be funded by the increased tolls would be put before them.

NSBA's position was put by Chairman, Mike Evans in a letter to the EDP published on October 7th. The letter is reproduced in full on NSBA's web site. NSBA participated in the Tolls Working Group, set up in summer 2004 by the BA to review the Tolls System. Its report was presented to the BA meeting on 22nd April

and the minutes of that meeting record "that the report be welcomed and that the recommendations of the Tolls Working Group be accepted in full."

Recommendations of the TWG included:

Toll increases should achieve two things - protect the income base against inflation and changes in the composition of the fleet and fund specific works to improve the navigation; Such works should be clearly identified and justified to tollpayers; Expenditure of the toll income should be accounted for transparently; Tolls should be reviewed annually and tollpayers should be consulted on priorities and involved in any decisions involving fundamental changes to the toll system.

At the Navigation Committee meeting on 27th October, former committee chairman, Tony Coe proposed that the committee accept the Chief Executive's recommendation of a 13% increase. No member of the committee was prepared to second the proposal. An alternative pro-

posal, that the rate should be increased by 9.5% was put forward by NSBA Vice-Chairman, David Adler and supported by all the remaining members of the committee. David also made it clear that in future years, the Authority would have to base any proposed increase for special projects on this year's base level – and not assume it could carry on increasing the rate year on year.

It is hard to see how the Navigation Committee could have made a clearer signal to the Chief Executive that it was not happy with his proposal or his handling of the tolls issue. It remains to be seen whether the Chief Executive will accept that signal or seek to marshal conservation and local government representatives on the Authority to over-ride the Navigation Committee's view on this essential matter for navigators – something which has so far never happened in the Broad's Authority's history.

The matter will be decided at the Broads Authority meeting on November 25th

### Problems in the New Cut

NSBA is concerned about the quality and design of flood relief work in the New Cut. One side is lined with collapsing wire baskets, the other with already failing soft membranes. There have also been reports of boats hitting underwater obstructions arising from the work. We would like to hear of any problems members have experienced. Please let us know via the NSBA forums on the website.

## Security at Norwich Yacht Station

Members will have seen comment in the press and on the broadcast media about the lack of security at Norwich Yacht Station. Recently refurbished by Norwich City Council and now operated by the Broads Authority, the Yacht Station suffers from totally inadequate security and NSBA recommends that, until improvements are implemented, boat owners should not moor there. This advice is also given by the Broads Hire Boat Federation.

Incidents of boats being

cast adrift and vandalized have been reported.

At the Navigation Committee meeting on October 27th, the BA chief executive reported that Norwich City Council intended to install new closed circuit television facilities.

NSBA continues to believe that there is a need to control physical access to the Yacht Station to give boat owners confidence that their property is safe.

The Yacht Station is close to the "Clubland" areas of Prince of Wales Road and

Riverside. Without some form of physical control, we believe that too great a temptation is presented to homebound revelers. They are unlikely to resist the temptation to have some late night "fun" at boat owners expense.

Surely the BA and NCC can find a solution. Given adequate security, the Yacht Station would provide an excellent base for a waterborne visit to the heart of the city. Without it, our advice remains, "Don't moor there"

"Each year the NSBA sponsors three regattas."

## Regatta Results

Each year the NSBA sponsors three regattas, the Ramuz Trophy, the Broadland Dinghy Regatta and the Broadland Youth Regatta.

The Broadland Dinghy Regatta was staged this year by Horning Sailing club on July 16th /17th and reported in the Summer Newsletter. The Ramuz Trophy was sailed this year

at Norfolk Broads yacht Club in Norfolk Dinghies. Fourteen clubs competed, including a first time entry from Norfolk Schools Sailing Association. The trophy was won by Chris Bunn and Ian Tims, representing Snowflake Sailing Club.

The Broadland Youth Regatta attracted 52 competitors from 7 clubs. On a

windy day, close competition resulted in a win for Norfolk Broads Yacht Club with second place going to Waveney and Oulton Broad Yacht Club. The Lady Mayhew Trophy, for "endeavour, showing spirit, determination and fun, without necessarily achieving a top position" was presented to Tessa Heaffey of Horning Sailing Club.

"NSBA advice is that boat owners should not wait until the last minute."

## Boat Safety Scheme

The Broads Authority has announced that it is now aiming to introduce the Boat Safety Scheme in stages starting in April 2007.

The further one year delay has been caused by the time taken to get the necessary legislation passed by Parliament.

More detailed guidance on what boat owners need to do is provided on the Notice Board page of the Associa-

tion's web site.

No further changes are expected to be made to the requirements of the scheme and the second edition of the BSS Essential Guide has been launched.

Full details can be downloaded from the BSS web site:

[www.boatsafety.com](http://www.boatsafety.com)

or bought in hard copy from the Boat Safety Office 01923 201278.

NSBA advice is that boat owners should not wait until the last minute to make sure that their craft comply. The scheme examiners and boatyards on the Broads have a finite capacity for carrying out the inspections and remedial work that will be needed and, if everyone waits till the last minute, they will not be able to cope.

## Broads Authority Planning consultations

Consultation on the new Local Development Framework which will control planning decisions after 2007 has moved forward one stage. Earlier this year the BA published a draft Core Strategy, the top level of the process. Having received responses to its Core Strategy consultation, the BA published an "Issues and Options Report" summarizing the responses it received and setting out possible responses to the issues raised. The closing date for responses was 14th October.

NSBA submitted a detailed response which can be accessed from links on the Campaigns page of the NSBA website.

NSBA's main concerns are:

1. There is a proposal to alter the purposes of the Broads Authority as set out in the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 (The Broads Act). NSBA does not see the need for change and we do not believe that the proposed changes constitute an improvement.
2. The top level of the Core

Strategy (the Vision) makes no mention of navigation and ignores the importance of navigation to the culture, economy, landscape and social fabric of the Broads.

3. Throughout the Core Strategy, in its current form, the Authority fails to deal evenhandedly with its three purposes (conservation, recreation and navigation) which were defined in The Broads Act.

Further consultation exercises will follow.

**"The Vision makes no mention of navigation and ignores the importance of navigation to the culture, economy, landscape and social fabric of the Broads."**

## 100 New Members and 50,000+ website visitors

NSBA has celebrated two milestones in recent weeks. Our summer membership drive has just achieved its hundredth new member and the redesigned website has recorded its 50,000th visitor.

The membership drive was based round a promotional leaflet enclosed in the July edition of Norfolk Afloat. The leaflet was also distributed with the help of affili-

ated organisations, Green Book advertisers and other Broads businesses. Several people have contacted us to ask for supplies of leaflets to pass to friends or people who moor nearby. Between 25% and 30% of applications have been for life membership.

The website was redesigned at the beginning of 2004 with input from committee member Mark Wells and

web designer Paul Douglas. It has transformed the Association's ability to communicate with its members and with the wider world.

Part of the website's success is due to the "links" that have been provided to it by other websites aimed at people interested in enjoying the Broads. They make it much easier for people to find the site.

**"Between 25% and 30% of applications have been for life membership."**

## We would like to communicate with you by email

It would be cheaper for us to email this newsletter to you than to print and post it. Before we can do that we need to be confident that, where members have given us an email address, it remains up-to-date.

In order to try to improve the accuracy of our data, we have devised the following process:

In the space on the right of this article, you will find a sticky label with your name and, if we have one, our current understanding of your email address.

If the email address is correct, you need to do nothing. If the email address is incorrect or missing, please email [philip.ollier@breezebarn.com](mailto:philip.ollier@breezebarn.com) to provide him with the correct one. We will continue to

communicate by post with members who do not provide us with an email address.

Thank you for helping to reduce our running costs.

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## Norfolk & Suffolk Boating Association

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Guarding the future of Broads boating

**We're on the web**  
**[www.thegreenbook.org.uk](http://www.thegreenbook.org.uk)**

- **The NSBA has a voice on the Broads Authority but needs more information and support from representative boat-owners.**
- **The NSBA supports the Broadland joint interests of recreation and conservation with navigation but urges balance and fairness by all.**
- **The NSBA is lobbying for improvements on issues including: dredging; moorings; river work and funding for navigation priorities.**
- **The NSBA stands firm on protecting the navigation from any closure threats to any part of the Broads.**
- **The NSBA represents 38 sailing and boating clubs plus more than 1000 individual members.**

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## From the Chairman

This has been a year of change for the NSBA. We have said goodbye to Rosemary Klein who has edited and developed the Green Book for the last 25 years and, for her efforts, has been awarded the RYA Community Award for Lifetime Achievement; Daphne Musgrave has stood down as Honorary Secretary and we have welcomed Phil Ollier as Executive Secretary. The Association is dependent on people who give their time to underpin its work and I am grateful to Rosemary and Daphne for the hard work they have put in. I hope Phil knows what he has let himself in for!

The changes we started last year with the new website are bearing fruit with 50,000 visitors and much more effective

communication with our members and the wider world. Our summer recruitment campaign has been very successful, bringing in another 100 individual members to the association.

On the Broads we are seeing the introduction of a new framework to control planning decisions and, yet again, we see a Broads Authority unable or unwilling to be even-handed in the way that it exercises its responsibilities to conservation, recreation and navigation. This is coupled with a move to use the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill to alter the purposes of the Broads Authority, enshrined in the Broads Act. NSBA is not aware of any clamour to alter the purposes of the Broads Authority. It does have some concerns about the

vigour with which the Authority pursues its existing purposes.

The vexed issue of river tolls is high on current agendas. I am inclined to think that the issue here is one of transparency. The BA documents discussing the level of increase in the tolls make much of relatively small sums in the context of the £1.7m plus that is currently raised in tolls. Perhaps if toll-payers were given more information about the way their money is spent they would have more confidence that any increase would accrue to their benefit.