

# BROADS TOURISM FORUM

the voice of broads tourism businesses

## Summer Briefing 2007

### Quality Standards for cruisers

An article in the Summer edition of VisitBritain's qualityEdge industry magazine shared the results of consumer research conducted in 2006 into narrow boat and cruiser holidays.

The research indicated that over 80% of respondents thought that the 'star' rating scheme was important as a guide to the standard of their accommodation. The most important individual issues were secure car parking, detailed hand-over on arrival and 24-hour phone support, while only 1% wanted internet access on board. Unsurprisingly, over 90% said that the quality of the boat and equipment is important.

While Blake's have adopted the scheme, Hoseasons are yet to do so, meaning there is no consistency for visitors aiming to compare standards across the boating sector. How do BTF members feel about the 'star' rating scheme being adopted across the boating sector as an indicator of quality for holiday customers? What about other tourism industry sectors, such as pubs, day boat hirers? Email your comments/thoughts to us at [chris@clippesby.com](mailto:chris@clippesby.com)

### Broads Authority additional grant renewal

Many of you will have seen a piece in the EDP recently, which mentioned the possibility (or even likelihood) that the additional grant from DEFRA of £500,000 per annum may not be renewed next year. The current grant has run for 3 years, ending in 2007/08. The Broads Authority continues to provide significant support for the Forum, in administration and logistical terms, and any reduction to their annual budget would clearly put pressure on the assistance available for the Forum.

While John Packman, the Chief Executive of the Broads Authority, was also quoted in the article as remaining optimistic that the grant will be renewed, hopefully being incorporated into the core grant, it is important we bear this in mind when we consider the future of the Forum and its activities. Accordingly, I think it is worthwhile for the Forum to lobby for the continuation of this element of the grant, but it also shows the importance of the Forum widening its membership base and aiming to become self-funding.

### Off Road Path Funding Success

Following my recent letter asking for members' help in supporting the proposal from the Stalham with Happening Partnership for a multipurpose cycle and pedestrian path to run between Potter Heigham, Ludham, Horning and Hoveton, **I have been advised that this has won funding from the shortlist of 6 projects**, so well done to everyone who wrote in support.

I hope everyone will agree that this is a great result, especially as it was the only one located in the Broads area. It now moves to the costing stage, and I will keep you advised of any further support that the Forum can provide.

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## **Broads Bike Network – our very own cycle network**

With funding obtained from the Leader Plus programme following some sterling work by Peter Howe, the Broads Bike Network is about to become reality. Work has been undertaken to identify a series of interlinking circular routes, together with a perimeter route utilising the Weavers Way and Bure Valley Railway path. The next stage is to specify the detail of each route, design, map and produce the leaflet and detailed guidebook, and we are extremely grateful for the support of Sustrans in connection with this.

Initially covering the Northern Broads, we need people with ideas, drive and determination from the Southern Broads to step forward so that this area can also be covered. Email us if you're interested! We would also welcome input from businesses located on the planned routes as to points of interest to be shown on the network, so if you would like to know exactly where the network is going and if there is a route near you, please email us at [chris@clippesby.com](mailto:chris@clippesby.com)

## **The Broads – a 'cure for the soul'?**

Another article in the EDP (25<sup>th</sup> July) profiled a book written by Simon Anholt 'The Broads – Identity and Reputation' talking about the branding or re-branding of the Broads. There were pieces on Philip and Caroline Search at Broad House, Ian Russell at Wroxham Barns and Bewilderwood. The article makes a number of points about how the image of the Broads as a tourist destination can be updated and improved following 12 months of consultation with local authorities and businesses.

This seems a very relevant subject for the Forum to be involved with, and I am trying to see if Simon and/or John Ververker who is also working with the Broads Authority on interpretation issues around the Broads would be able to speak at a future meeting. If anyone has been involved in consultation with either Simon or John and would like to share their experiences/comments, please email us at [chris@clippesby.com](mailto:chris@clippesby.com)

I hope you are all having a profitable and rewarding holiday season.

Best wishes,

Chris Haycock  
Chairman