

Broads Authority

14 March 2025

Agenda item number 9

Draft Annual Business Plan 2025/26

Report by Senior Governance Officer

Purpose

This report presents the Broad's Authority's draft Annual Business Plan for 2025/26.

Broads Plan context

The Annual Business Plan is the link between the Broads Plan and the Authority's work plans, including the annual strategic priorities.

Recommended decision

To adopt the Annual Business Plan 2025/26.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Authority's Annual Business Plan gives an overview of work priorities for the financial year. It is the link between the Broads Plan, the strategic partnership plan for the Broads, and the Authority's directorate work plans.
- 1.2. A number of more detailed guiding strategies support the high-level Broads Plan, and a status update on these is included in the Annual Business Plan.
- 1.3. The Broads Plan and guiding strategies may be viewed on the [strategy](#) pages of our website at www.broads-authority.gov.uk

2. Draft Annual Business Plan 2025/26

- 2.1. The draft Annual Business Plan at Appendix 1 sets out planned activity and expenditure for the financial year 2025/26, and a summary of progress against our 2024/25 work plans.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1. All items in the workplans for 2025/26 are within the approved budget at the time of writing. Confirmation from DEFRA on the National Park Grant settlement may require this to be revisited. The indicative revenue and capital allocations for the ten English National Parks, just received, suggests that a review of expenditure plans may be necessary.

4. Risk implications

- 4.1. The Directorate and Corporate Risk Registers will be reviewed in line with the updated workplans.

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Date of report: 27 February 2025

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: all

Appendix 1 – [Annual Business Plan 2025/26](#)

Appendix 1- Annual Business Plan 2025/26

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1. Introduction

1.1. Annual Business Plan

This Annual Business Plan outlines the Broads Authority's work plans for 2025/26 and its 3-year financial strategy for 2025/26 to 2027/28.

Our work plans are guided by the Broads Plan, the partnership strategy for the Broads, and we work with many organisations, interest groups and local communities to achieve the vision and objectives for the area. Figure 1 (page 8) shows the 'golden thread' from the Broads Plan to our work plans and other policies, plans and programmes.

1.2. Our functions

The Broads Authority has a duty to manage the Broads for the following three purposes:

- Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Broads;
- Promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Broads by the public; and
- Protecting the interests of navigation.

No priority is set between these purposes. It is up to the Authority in any particular instance to decide on their relative priority, supporting its commitment to the integrated management of the Broads.

In managing the area, the Authority must also have regard to:

- The national importance of the Broads as an area of natural beauty and one which affords opportunities for open air recreation;
- The desirability of protecting the natural resources of the Broads from damage; and
- The needs of agriculture and forestry and the economic and social interests of those who live and work in the Broads.

The Authority also has the duty to maintain the navigation area for the purposes of navigation to such standard as appears to it to be reasonably required; and to take such steps to improve and develop it as it thinks fit. It may carry out works and do other things in relation to any adjacent waters in or over which it has sufficient rights or interest for the improvement of navigation on those waters.

1.3. Our funding

The Authority's funding is through National Park Grant (NPG) provided by Defra, and navigation income funded by toll payers. Our financial strategy for 2025/26 to 2027/28 is in **Section 3**.

1.4. Context for the year ahead

The Broads Authority reviews its management plan regularly. The current [Broads Plan 2022-2027](#) was adopted in September 2022 following collaborative work with our members and key partners, as well as public consultation. This sets the framework for the period 2022-2027. The plan acknowledges a much greater awareness and urgency of the need to address the impacts

of climate change and flood risk, as well as creating opportunities to inspire and support people in acting to protect this special area. Nature recovery is at the heart of the Plan, and it commits to improve key habitats to help the over 11,000 wildlife species recorded here to recover and flourish, including priority species that are in decline or on the brink of survival.

Maintaining and enhancing the navigation is also at the forefront of the new plan, as we seek to balance the needs of those who visit this special area to enjoy boating and water sports with other responsibilities. This includes objectives to implement a comprehensive dredging and sediment re-use programme, management of riverside trees/scrub, improve safety on the water, maintain and expand riverside facilities, and ambitions to extend access for various types of craft. The plan seeks to ensure that the Broads connects with and inspires a wide range of communities, including young people, those from minority backgrounds and people who may have never been here before.

The Broads Authority employees operate under agile working practices, with many of our office-based staff able to work from home some days of the week, with the prime objective of delivering our services efficiently. This made it possible to reduce the office space, hence making savings and reducing overhead costs. The move to reduced office space was completed in 2024.

As the season starts, as a result of reduced toll income in 2024, the organisation of the Ranger service has been reviewed, with the objective of maintaining Ranger presence on the water in the locations where it is most needed. A Senior Ranger will be dedicated to deal with prosecutions and compliance. Our animated safety videos will continue to be distributed by the hire boat companies to their customers, to enable a safe, responsible and enjoyable visit for all users of the Broads.

While financial pressures have increased with the impact of inflation being significant on the Authority's operations, we must be mindful of other major issues facing the Broads: climate change, and in particular sea-level rise; the long-term decline of biodiversity; the effect of the emerging agricultural support scheme onto our fen and grazing marshes; and the competition for limited water resources.

In November 2024, the Authority declared a Biodiversity Emergency. The aim of the declaration is to raise public and political awareness, emphasising the urgency for immediate action to protect and restore the environment. It will foster stronger partnerships with local stakeholders, encouraging collaboration on critical issues. The Authority also approved the Broads Nature Recovery Strategy (2024-29) (BNRS) which replaces the Broads Biodiversity and Water Strategy (2019-24). The BNRS includes a five-year Delivery Plan which outlines priority actions, either led by the Broads Authority or in partnership with others, as well as projects managed by other organisations working in the Broads. The Strategy will be monitored by the Broads Biodiversity Partnership, a network of organisations, businesses and individuals working collaboratively to enhance habitats and species.

In January 2025, the Authority, in its role as Supporting Authority, approved the public consultation of the draft Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and Suffolk LNRS. The main purposes of LNRSs are to agree priorities for nature's recovery, map the most valuable existing areas for nature, and map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat. The

Broads Authority is fully engaged in the LNRS process through being included in both Norfolk and Suffolk LNRSs working groups and steering committees.

The Government announced how it will monitor the delivery of Protected Landscapes in January 2023; we are continuing to work with Natural England on the implementation of the [Outcomes Framework](#). We are expecting the final version of the Framework to be completed in the Summer of 2025, and it will be included in the Management Plan review going forwards. Those targets that have been apportioned locally will be implemented through the Broads Nature Recovery Strategy.

As always, working in partnership will be at the heart of any initiative. The Authority owns little land itself but can work with others to support major change.

The Farming in Protected Landscape (FiPL) programme, which started in 2021, has been extended for another year, until March 2026. It is delivered locally through the Broads Authority and Norfolk Coast Natural Landscape. FiPL grants support farmers and land managers in carrying out projects that support the natural environment, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide public access opportunities or support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses.

In December 2024, the Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). A briefing paper was presented to the Planning Committee in February 2025. Officers will assess the changes to the NPPF and reflect them in the emerging Local Plan. The timeframe for the emerging Local Plan was amended because of the December announcements, and the submission to the Planning Inspectorate is scheduled for December 2025.

1.5. Guiding plans

Through an amendment to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, the legislation for National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority was amended on 26 October 2023. A key change in the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 is at section 17a, that relevant authority shall seek to further the purposes of the Broads Authority, when the previous wording said that relevant authorities shall have regard to the purposes of the Broads Authority. This change is a positive development and provides an opportunity to have discussions as to how we might work more closely to deliver the Authority's purposes. Public bodies are now required to take a much more active role in the preparation and implementation of the Broads Plan for example. This change (which also applied to national landscapes through s.85 (A1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) was tested in court for a development in Dedham Vale National Landscape, with a [January 2025 decision](#) "*...the Secretary of State accepts that the failure to apply the statutory duty to seek to further the purposes of the National Landscape when making the screening decision constitutes an error of law and the outcome might have been different had it been applied.*" The Dedham Vale case is significant as it sends a clear message to public bodies and Government that they must further the purposes of Protected Landscapes, including the Broads.

The [25-year Environment Plan](#) (2018) aims to improve the environment within a generation by setting goals for clean air and water, wildlife, environmental hazards, sustainable resource use, engagement with the natural environment, climate change adaptation, minimising waste and managing exposure to chemicals.

The national legislative framework for nature recovery is set through the 25 Year Environment Plan 2018, The Environment Act 2021, and the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023. The Government has also committed to protect 30% of the land and sea of the UK for nature's recovery by halting the decline in species abundance (the number of individuals from a given species within a given area) and protecting 30% of UK land by 2030.

At a local level, the **Broads Plan** sets a long-term vision and shorter-term objectives and guides more detailed plans, programmes and policies for us and for partners working in the Broads. The [current Plan \(2022-27\)](#) was adopted in September 2022.

Sitting under the Broads Plan are a number of **guiding strategies** (see Appendix 1).

2. Review of last year

2.1. Our financial position

The forecast for the end of 2024/25 reflects a surplus when compared to the Latest Available Budget mainly due to the pay award for staff (as negotiated by the NJC) being less than previously budgeted for and interest rates not falling to levels as budgeted for. Navigation income indicates a decrease of £132,000 which has been offset by the increase in investment income and the delayed works at Potter Heigham and Martham.

The forecast consolidated surplus of £342,301 will be transferred to General (National Park) and Navigation reserve at year end.

It is likely that the Authority will see an underspend in some projects which may result in budget holders submitting carry forward requests. Where this is the case, budget holders will submit carry forwards for the full Authority to consider in May.

Both reserves are forecast to remain above the minimum operating levels at the end of 2024/25. While the budgeted financial position is sustainable in the short to medium term, the fact that National Park income has not risen in line with salary costs means the Authority continues to look at ways to reduce its costs and increase income.

The year-end report to the Authority, when available, will be published on our website at www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-us/committees/broads-authority

2.2. Progress against work plans

A summary of progress against last year's Directorate work plans is in Appendix 2.

Each year we set a small number of strategic priorities, focused on Authority-led projects that have high resource needs or a very large impact on the Broads, or that are politically sensitive. These priorities help us target resources and make the most of partnership working and external funding opportunities. The summary tables in Appendix 2 highlight last's years priorities, and updates are reported regularly to the Broads Authority.

The strategic priorities for 2025/26 are:

- Respond to future flood risk in the Broads that better copes with climate change and sea level rise
- Continue to provide home to thriving wildlife that can adapt to the changing climate

- Implement the five Ps¹ of the Race to Zero Programme to halve emissions by 2030
- Bring significant external funding to deliver Broads Plan objectives
- More people enjoying more activities in the Broads safely
- Support farmers and land managers in carrying out projects which benefit the Broads

3. Financial Strategy 2025/26–2027/28

At the time of writing, we are awaiting confirmation about our 2025/26 National Park Grant settlement, which makes planning difficult. From the indicative allocation for the revenue grant for the ten English National Parks, just received, it looks like the settlement will be a decrease for the following year, which creates pressure for funding future years' salary increases.

Our guiding principles in setting our Financial Strategy from 2025/26 are:

- Salary negotiations for 2025/26 will be in line with the 4% budgeted and increases from 2026/27 onwards are based on a provisional increase of 2%, subject to negotiations with the NJC.
- Staffing levels will remain at 100% of budget. Staff turnover may result in timing differences between vacancy and appointment. Where these savings arise, the forecast will be adjusted accordingly. Overall, full-time equivalents (FTE) represent an approximate reduction of three FTE on permanent contracts in 2025/26 when compared to the budget this time last year of 126 FTE.
- Navigation tolls will be collected in line with the budget and boat numbers will remain as forecast.
- National Park Grant -The Revenue Grant (RDEL) is likely to fall while there is likely to be a capital (CDEL) for 2025/26. The details are subject to confirmation from DEFRA.
- The contributions to the earmarked reserves have been reinstated following the payment holiday in 2024/25.
- Ranger Services patrolling will be reprioritised in 2025/26 to reflect the reduced budget.
- The forecast outturn position for 2024/25 will be delivered in line with budget holders' projections.
- 2025/26 will see the fourth instalment of £50,000 transferred from Navigation reserves to the National Park reserve.
- Maintaining the National Park reserve at 10% of net expenditure plus £100,000 and the Navigation reserve at 10% of net expenditure.

The consolidated financial position looks to return to a deficit position in 2025/26. Both the National Park and Navigation deficit will be balanced through the use of the reserves. The Financial Strategy takes account of the latest boat numbers; a 1% reduction in boat numbers

¹ Pledge; Plan; Proceed; Publish and Persuade

could result in a £45,000 reduction in income. The toll increase allows for the Navigation reserve to maintain the 10% minimum reserve over the next three years.

Our Financial Strategy for 2025/26 – 2027/28 is published on our website: www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-us/spending/budgets-and-financial-planning. The latest available budget for 2025/26 is at **Table 1**. Detailed Directorate budgets are in the Directorate Work Plans in **Section 4**.

Table 1

Expenditure summary 2025/26 (Note: subject to amendment)

Item by section	National Park £	Navigation £	Consolidated £
Income	(3,469,078)	(4,697,800)	(8,166,878)
Operations	1,427,286	3,520,589	4,947,875
Strategic Services	1,476,954	505,994	1,982,948
Finance & Support Services	989,982	1,161,699	2,151,681
Contributions from earmarked reserves and corporate items	(259,632)	(482,011)	(741,643)
Net (Surplus)/Deficit	165,512	8,471	173,983

4. Directorate work plans 2025/26

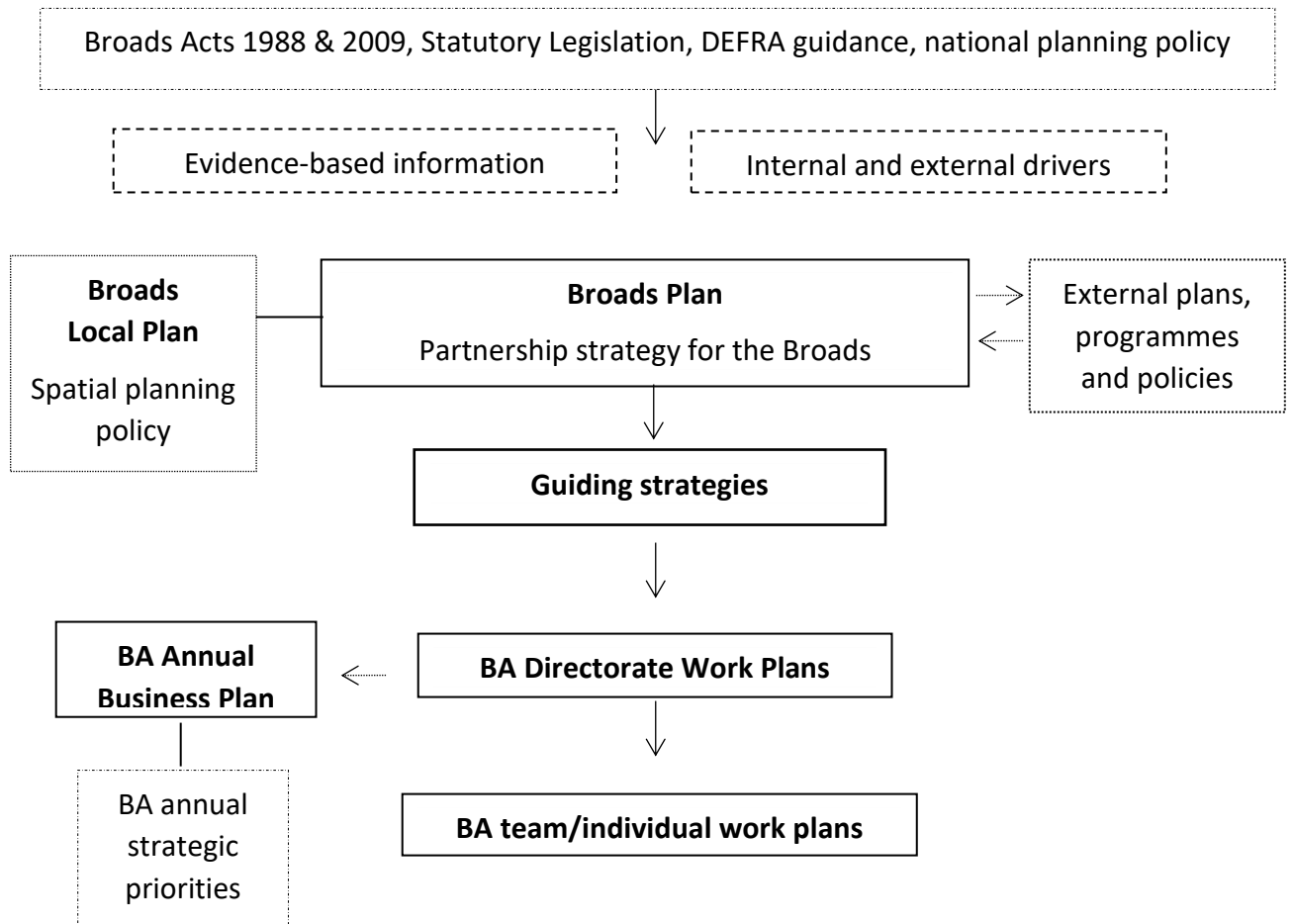
This section outlines the annual work plans for our three Directorates:

- Finance and Support Services Directorate
- Operations Directorate
- Strategic Services Directorate

Appendix 2 shows progress against last year’s work plans. **Fig.1** shows the link between the Broads Plan, which sets the high-level strategic direction for the Broads, and our Directorate work plans.

Our staffing structure chart is at www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-us/who-we-are/staff.

Fig. 1
 'Golden thread' strategic framework



4.1. Finance and Support Services Directorate

The Finance Directorate includes the Monitoring Officer, Legal Services, Governance, Financial Services, Tolls, IT and Asset Management.

Table 2

Finance Directorate: Work plan 2025/26 (summary)

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2025/26
FD1	Strategic planning and governance	Produce Annual Governance Statement and Code of Corporate Governance; monitor and update Corporate/Directorate Risk Registers, monitor and update the strategic priorities.
FD2	Strategic planning and governance	Provide admin support to CEO, Chairs and Authority members, incl. servicing of committees, member training and allowances.
FD3	Financial Services	Provide financial planning and administration service, incl.: 3-year Financial Strategy, end of year accounts, monthly financial monitoring reports, internal & external audits, Govt returns for DLUHC/ CIPFA/ HMRC, Treasury Management; annual insurance renewal.
FD4	Financial Services	Review additional savings and income generation opportunities to reduce pressure on the budget. Project manage the downsizing of head office.
FD5	Financial Services	Prepare insurance tender for contract award 2026/27
FD6	Development at key sites, asset management	Monitor Authority-owned assets, incl. negotiations of leases, additions and disposals; maintain assets database.
FD7	ICT	Provide ICT support service. Deliver priority projects in corporate ICT plans, including investigating a new planning system.
FD8	Tolls	Collect and process toll income and prepare potential prosecutions.

Table 3

Finance and Support Services Directorate - Expenditure 2025/26

Item by section	National Park Grant £	Navigation £	Consolidated £
Legal	60,000	35,000	95,000
Governance	135,585	139,105	274,690
Office Expenses	22,914	11,286	34,200
Chief Executive	84,596	55,394	139,990
Asset Management	43,582	75,158	118,740
Finance and Insurance	270,964	332,136	603,100
Collection of Tolls	0	236,570	236,570
ICT	276,641	227,750	504,391
Head Office	95,700	49,300	145,000
Total	989,982	1,161,699	2,151,681

4.2. Operations Directorate

The Operations Directorate includes Construction, Maintenance & Ecology (CM&E), Ranger Services and the Safety Management Team.

Activity for the CM&E Team in 2025/26 is apportioned at 70% Navigation/30% National Park (20% conservation and 10% recreation). We regularly report on our delivery within CM&E and safety management to the Navigation Committee.

Ranger team apportionment has been amended to 80% Navigation/20% National Park to reflect the time spent on the respective tasks. Ranger Teamwork plans and priorities are agreed at area level, according to local priorities.

Table 4

Operations Directorate: Work plan 2025/26 (summary)

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2025/26
OD1	Broads Authority operations carbon neutral by 2030 [A2]	(BA strategic priority Responding to Climate Change) Install photovoltaic panels onto the dockyard office roof. The power generated will charge the electric vehicles, with any surplus feeding into the site to reduce mains power usage.
OD2	Maintain Navigation water depths (C1)	2025/2026 Dredging areas: Upper Yare – Postwick Viaduct to Trowse Swing Bridge Upper Thurne – Martham and Somerton
OD3	Enhance areas of fen, grazing marsh and wet woodland [B3]	(BA strategic priority Biodiversity Crisis Response) Conservation management on 22 sites Six of which are BA-owned & sixteen sites which are managed through management agreements with third parties Includes use of specialist fen harvester & Truxor
OD4	Manage water plants (C3)	Between April and October, water plants are managed within the following river stretches: River Ant – Tyler's Cut to Wayford Bridge River Bure – Coltishall to Belaugh & Caen Meadow River Thurne – Martham Ferry to West Somerton, Waxham Cut, marked channel within Hickling Broad (inc. Catfield Dyke)

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2025/26
		River Waveney – Geldeston Dyke, Waveney Meadow to Beccles New Bridge, Beccles to Aldeby River Yare – New Mills to Thorpe Island (inc Thorpe New Cut), marked channel within Rockland & Bargate Broads
OD5	Manage bankside trees and scrub (C3)	The 2025 – 2026 work programme has identified 2000m of river edge management as part of the 5-year plan to manage riverside banks. Landowners are agreeing to these areas.
OD6	Implement and monitor management regimes for priority species [B4]	(BA strategic priority Biodiversity Crisis Response) Carry out species surveys of water plants in main river stretches managed for navigational purposes
OD7	Management of moorings, slipways and waterside infrastructure	Martham Bank Potter Heigham -De-masting mooring Ranworth
OD8	Develop good practices for sediment reuse	Sediment is reused for agricultural benefit by spreading dried material on land (addition of organic matter). The sediment side cast alongside rivers strengthens flood banks as part of the Environment Agency's maintenance work.
OD9	Maintain Navigation Access [C2]	Complete Mutford Lock work.
OD10	Improve safety standards and users' behaviour on the waterway (C4)	Manage navigation aids and up-to-date reference on GIS mapping; carry out navigation infrastructure inspection and maintenance regimes to agreed annual schedules, incl. full review of navigational posts.
OD11	Improve safety standards and users' behaviour on the waterway (C4)	Through rigorous checks and reviews, ensure adherence to boat safety measures, including maintaining an up-to-date Safety Management System and compliance to the Boat Safety Scheme

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2025/26
OD12	Improve safety within paddle sport hire industry	Through audit, spot checks and on-site observations, ensure compliance with the Hire Boat Licensing codes.
OD13	Improve safety within Hire Boat industry. [C4]	Ensure compliance with the latest revised version of the Hire Boat Code (April 2021) through licensing, on-site checks, and auditing of Hire Boat operators.
OD14	Safety Signage [C4]	Manage and maintain navigational aids, carry out regular infrastructure inspections, identify works, and agree on annual repair schedules.
OD15	Safety Management [C4]	Consistently apply byelaws and other powers to ensure safe use of the Broads by all water users, including water skiing, power boat racing and paddle sports. Ensure compliance against existing agreements in place to promote safe use and develop new ones where issues arise.
OD16	Broads Authority Ranger Safety Provision [C4]	Promote and improve waterways' safety and security for all recreational users through ranger patrolling, events, training, and guidance.
OD17	Development at key sites [E1]	Progress re-piling of the river edge at Hoveton Riverside Park and development of a partnership approach for ongoing site maintenance.
OD18	Integrated physical access network and riverside facilities [E1]	(BA strategic priority more people enjoying more activities in the Broads safely) Implement the Broads Integrated Access Strategy, using details from the public consultation process, incorporate valid suggestions and develop key deliverables with the 2025/26 programme year.

Table 5

Operations Directorate: Expenditure 2025/26

Item by section	National Park Grant £	Navigation £	Consolidated £
Construction & Maintenance	756,454	1,011,026	1,767,480

Item by section	National Park Grant £	Navigation £	Consolidated £
Equipment, Vehicles and Vessel	202,950	473,550	676,500
Water Management	5,500	95,780	101,280
Land Management	(102,950)	0	(102,950)
Waterways & Recreation Strategy	0	6,400	6,400
Practical Maintenance	130,640	400,575	531,215
Ranger Services	208,822	1,141,288	1,350,110
Safety	42,894	98,586	141,480
Project Funding	13,650	1,350	15,000
Operational Property	104,797	195,243	300,040
Operations Management & Admin	64,528	96,792	161,320
Total	1,427,285	3,520,590	4,947,875

4.3. Strategic Services Directorate

The Strategic Services Directorate includes Development Management, Strategy and Projects, Human Resources, Volunteer Services, Communications, Visitor Services and Education.

Table 6

Strategic Services Directorate: Work plan 2025/26 (summary)

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2025/26
SD1	Climate change planning incl. flood risk management [A1]	(BA strategic priority) Implement next steps of the Broadland Futures Initiative programme, including the modelling of actions and starting the initial appraisal. Review of the communications strategy and delivery of engagement activities, including newsletters. Second workshop with BA members (early 2026).
SD2	Climate change planning incl. flood risk management [A2, A3]	(BA strategic priority) Refresh Climate Action Plan by summer 2025. Develop plan towards more zero-emission boating. Continue reporting under the Race to Zero Framework, completing the second report by September 2025.
SD3	Strategy and project planning [B3]	(BA Strategic priority) Implement the Buttle Marsh project, funded through the DEFRA Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme, to agreed schedule, and record lessons learnt from the project.
SD4	Strategy and project planning [B3]	Subject to funding, coordinate and implement with partners the extension of the FibreBroads project, funded through the Defra Nature for Climate: Paludiculture Exploration Fund, to agreed schedule, and record lessons learnt from the project.
SD5	Strategy and project planning [B3]	(BA Strategic priority) Continue to work with DEFRA and Natural England on the implementation of the Outcomes Framework. We are expecting the final version of the Framework to be completed in the Summer of 2025.
SD6	Biodiversity and agriculture [B1, B2, B3, B4, B5]	(BA Strategic priority) Implement Year 1 of the Broads Nature Recovery Action Plan.

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2025/26
		Respond to the consultations about Norfolk and Suffolk Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
SD7	Biodiversity and agriculture [various]	(BA strategic priority) Run the Farming in Protected Landscape programme and support the Broads and Norfolk Coast Land Management Board to allocate funding. Publish case studies showing projects completed in the Broads.
SD8	Broadland Rivers Catchment Plan [B2 and others]	Implement small-scale local interventions and river enhancement projects across catchment.
SD9	Biodiversity and agriculture [B2, B3]	Subject to funding (from PEF+), deliver the next steps of the Horsey water filtration and wet farming demonstration project (as part of the FibreBroads project – see SD3) including harvest and crop use (for thatching and acoustic panels). Subject to funding (from Environment Agency), develop the pipeline of peatland restoration projects with farmers, as part of an extension to the Lowland Agriculture Peatland Water Discovery Project.
SD10	Priority species and invasive non-native species management [B4]	Develop and cost projects for the key species that maintain a UK stronghold in the Broads. Support the development of species translocation outside of the Broads, including contribution to development of eDNA technique for invertebrates. Monitor Deer population (drone count), publish results showing impacts in Broads wetland habitats, and discuss future management strategies. Support mink and floating pennywort control. Survey bittern, swallowtail butterfly, fen, and water plants in key areas. Collate data for monitoring water level in fen habitats to support adaptive management approaches.
SD11	Mental health and well-being [F1]	Include projects addressing mental health and well-being in the Landscape Connections bid to the Lottery.
SD12	External Funding [Themes B, D, E, F]	(BA strategic priority)

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2025/26
		Develop partnership arrangements for a significant project “Landscape Connections” and submit bid to the Lottery.
SD13	Communications [E1, E2, E3]	Promote Broads National Park through branding guidelines and action plan; manage Authority’s events programme, PR and media engagement, incl. support to key partnership projects.
SD14	Communications [E3]	Operate Authority’s information centres and yacht stations to provide a high standard of service to the public. To highlight the breadth of activities available in the Broads, including information regarding accessibility, with relevant and appropriate safety messaging.
SD15	Communications [A3, E2, E4, F5]	Develop a collaborative plan of action for the delivery of year 1 of the Recreation and Tourism Strategy 2024-29. Provide support for the new Suffolk and Norfolk (Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) and the associated Destination management Plan along with continued partnership workings with Visit the Broads to promote the Broads National Park.
SD16	Education [F3]	Implement Education Strategy annual action plan, incl. Broads Curriculum, work placements, and award schemes. Subject to funding (from the Prudence Trust), deliver additional youth engagement work. Seek funding to extend and develop target audiences particularly 8-18 year olds from local areas of high social deprivation, Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft.
SD17	Development management [F4]	Review of the Local Plan for the Broads for adoption in 2026 (estimated).
SD18	Development management [F4]	Provide high quality planning service, including determining applications to national targets, providing free pre-application advice, investigating alleged breaches of Planning & Listed Building Consent including condition and s106 monitoring, and resolving breaches of control; conduct annual Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2025/26
SD19	Development management [F4]	Engage with District Councils on Land Registry changes to ensure records are accurate prior to migration. Work remaining to migrate 4 districts' charge data (NNDC, GYBC, BDC and ESC).
SD20	Landscape Character and Historic Asset Management [D3]	Adopt Conservation Area Appraisal for Neatishead. Commence work on next Conservation Area Appraisal.
SD21	Landscape Character and Historic Asset Management [D2, F1, F2]	Endorse an updated Landscape Character Assessment for the Broads.
SD22	Landscape Character and Historic Asset Management [D1, F4]	Adopt and publish a Design Guide for the Broads.
SD23	Landscape Character and Historic Asset Management [D1, F5]	Support NCC in their bid to repair and restore some of their built heritage assets.
SD24	Active Travel [E1]	Adopt Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) for the Broads, as part of the work funded by Active Travel England.
SD25	Undergrounding wires programme [D4]	Through the Steering Group, promote the implementation of undergrounding wires projects, funded by UK Power Networks.
SD26	Volunteer Service [F2]	Implement Volunteer Strategy annual action plan, including bespoke induction training programme (relevant to the role), Authority and local community project support, promotional events, recruitment of new volunteers as required.

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2025/26
SD27	Human Resources	Provide routine HR support services to the Authority's staff, including payroll and pension management and occupational health; support flexible working opportunities through HR policy and recruitment; provide support for recruitment needs, including annual intake of apprentices; review and update HR policies as appropriate.
SD28	Human Resources	Run "Best Companies" staff survey during 2025.
SD29	Strategic Services administration	Provide administrative support to directorate officers and committees/working groups.

Table 7

Strategic Services: Expenditure 2025/26

Item by section	National Park £	Navigation £	Consolidated £
Development Management	522,941	5,329	528,270
Strategy and Projects	262,710	29,758	292,468
Biodiversity	8,520	0	8,520
Communications	296,670	100,510	397,180
Visitor Services	142,495	223,035	365,530
Human Resources	92,934	85,786	178,720
Volunteers	51,137	18,913	70,050
Strategic Services Management and Admin	99,547	42,663	142,210
Total	1,476,954	505,994	1,982,948

Appendix 1 – Guiding strategies

The Broads Plan is the key partnership strategy that sets the long-term vision and objectives for the Broads. Under this high-level plan sit more detailed guiding strategies, which generally focus on a single theme and cover a short-term period. Table 8 shows the status of those strategies for the Broads where the Broads Authority is a lead or key delivery partner.

Read our strategies here: www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-us/how-we-work/strategy

Table 8

Guiding strategies

Strategy and scope	Lead	BA contact	Status
<p>Broads Plan</p> <p>Key partnership management plan for the Broads</p>	Broads Authority	Director of Strategic Services	Adopted 2022 Review date: 2027
<p>Local Plan for the Broads</p> <p>Spatial planning policy used in determining planning applications within the Broads Executive Area</p>	Broads Authority	Planning Policy Officer	Adopted May 2019 Review date: 2024-2025 for adoption in 2026 (estimated)
<p>Broads Nature Recovery Strategy</p> <p>Implementing Nature Recovery in the Broads</p>	Broads Biodiversity Partnership	Environment Policy Adviser	Adopted 2024 Review date: 2029
<p>Broadland Rivers Catchment Plan</p> <p>Managing water quality and quantity in the catchment</p>	Broadland Catchment Partnership	Catchment Partnership Officer	Adopted 2014 Review under way for adoption in 2025. Action plan under ongoing review.
<p>Climate Change Action Plan</p> <p>Reducing our carbon footprint towards net zero.</p>	Broads Authority	Carbon Reduction Project Manager	Adopted 2022 Review date: 2025
<p>Waterways Management Strategy</p> <p>Managing the Broads waterways, and prioritisation of the maintenance requirements and programmes</p>	Broads Authority	Head of Construction, Maintenance & Ecology	Adopted 2021 2022-27 Action Plan Review date: 2027
<p>Education Strategy for the Broads</p>	Broads Environmental	Education Officer	Adopted 2023

Strategy and scope	Lead	BA contact	Status
Formal environmental education and wider outreach in the Broads	Education Network		5-year action plan in place. Review date: 2028
Integrated Access Strategy for the Broads Improving access facilities and links to and between land and water in the Broads, and wider access	Broads Local Access Forum	Waterways & Recreation Officer	Adopted 2024 Rolling 3-year action plan in place. Review date: 2027
Recreation and Tourism Strategy Promoting and managing tourism within the Broads and wider 'area of tourism influence'	Broads Tourism	Head of Comms	Adopted 2024 5-year action plan Review date: 2029
Volunteer Strategy for the Broads Promotion, recruitment, training and administration of BA Volunteer Service	Broads Authority	Volunteer Coordinator	Adopted 2022 5-year action plan in place Review date: 2028
BA Financial Strategy Managing the use of the BA's financial resources	Broads Authority	Director of Finance	3-year rolling strategy adopted annually in January

Appendix 2 – Progress against Directorate work plans 2024/25

Key 1

Progress status in tables 9 to 11

Progress	Details
Good	Progressed to agreed schedule or ongoing routine, no problems identified
Completed	Fixed term project, completed
Some	Some progress, delays or challenges in delivery
Not achieved or withdrawn	Work did not proceed

Table 9

Finance and Support Services Directorate: Progress against work plan 2024/25

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (explanatory note)
FD1	Strategic planning and governance	Review of Standing Orders following the implementation of the recommendations from external review into the independent complaint.	Completed November 2024
FD2	Strategic planning and governance	Produce Annual Governance Statement and Code of Corporate Governance; monitor and update Corporate/Directorate Risk Registers, monitor and update the strategic priorities.	Good
FD3	Strategic planning and governance	Provide admin support to CEO, Chairs and Authority members, incl. servicing of committees, member training and allowances.	Good
FD4	Financial Services	Provide financial planning and administration service, incl.: 3-year Financial Strategy, end of year accounts, monthly financial monitoring reports, internal & external audits, Govt returns for DLUHC/ CIPFA/ HMRC, Treasury Management; annual insurance renewal.	Good

FD5	Financial Services	Review additional savings and income generation opportunities to reduce pressure on the budget. Project manage the downsizing of head office.	Good Completed, new lease commenced 19/08/24.
FD6	Financial Services	Tender for a new accounts package to be operational prior to 06/03/25.	Completed, new system went live 13/11/24.
FD7	Development at key sites, asset management	Monitor Authority-owned assets, incl. negotiations of leases, additions and disposals; maintain assets database.	Good
FD8	ICT	Provide ICT support service. Deliver priority projects in corporate ICT plans, including supporting the downsizing of the head office.	Good
FD9	ICT	(BA strategic priority) Progress tolls system project by developing specification and tender preparation by June 2024.	Completed
FD10	Tolls	Collect and process toll income and prepare potential prosecutions.	Good

Table 10

Operations Directorate: Progress against work plan 2024/25

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (explanatory note)
OD1	Broads Authority operations carbon neutral by 2030 [A2]	(BA strategic priority Responding to Climate Change) Install photovoltaic panels onto the dockyard office roof. The power generated will charge the electric vehicles, with any surplus feeding into the site to reduce mains power usage.	Deferred to 2025/26 for a new open tender
OD2	Maintain Navigation water depths (C1)	2024/2025 Dredging areas: River Yare (Rockland Broad to Bargate Broad) 15,000m3.	Completed. Catfield Dyke dredging has been

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (explanatory note)
		<p>Upper Bure – Continued from last year</p> <p>Upper Ant – Finishing Stalham Dyke - 5000m3.</p> <p>Catfield Dyke – Just under 4,000m3</p>	cancelled in 24/25, as priority for repiling the 24 hour mooring was withdrawn.
OD3	Enhance areas of fen, grazing marsh and wet woodland [B3]	<p>(BA strategic priority Biodiversity Crisis Response)</p> <p>The 2024-2025 work plan has over 390 hectares of habitat land to be managed, with various projects ranging from scrub clearance, water level management and conservation mowing/grazing.</p>	Good
OD4	Manage water plants (C3)	<p>Between April and October, water plants are managed within the following river stretches:</p> <p>River Ant – Tyler's Cut to Wayford Bridge</p> <p>River Bure – Coltishall to Belaugh & Caen Meadow</p> <p>River Thurne – Martham Ferry to West Somerton, Waxham Cut, marked channel within Hickling Broad (inc. Catfield Dyke)</p> <p>River Waveney – Geldeston Dyke, Waveney Meadow to Beccles New Bridge, Beccles to Aldeby</p> <p>River Yare – New Mills to Thorpe Island (inc Thorpe New Cut), marked channel within Rockland & Bargate Broads</p>	Good
OD5	Manage bankside trees and scrub (C3)	As part of the 5-year plan to manage riverside banks, the 2024 – 2025 work programme has identified 2000m of river edge management. These areas are being agreed and consented with landowners.	Good
OD6	Implement and monitor management	(BA strategic priority Biodiversity Crisis Response)	Good

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (explanatory note)
	regimes for priority species [B4]	Carry out species surveys of water plants in main river stretches managed for navigational purposes	
OD7	Management of moorings, slipways and waterside infrastructure	<p>Potter Heigham Repps Bank 24 hour mooring wooden barge board re-piling work along entire 145 metres. Work planned for April/ May 2024</p> <p>Potter Heigham demasting 24-hour mooring 36 metres steel re-piling and refurbishment planned for autumn/ winter 2024/25</p> <p>Catfield Staithe 24 hour mooring 36 metres steel re-piling and refurbishment (dependent on progress on other dredging tasks).</p> <p>Ranworth 24-hour mooring wood and steel re-piling and refurbishment 20 metres with additional timber refurbishment in the 35-metre dinghy dyke including reinstating paths and some new signage.</p> <p>Wroxham Broad Island upstream 24-hour mooring 60 metres timber capping, waling and back-rail refurbishment.</p> <p>Ranworth dinghy dyke western side, replace waling, capping & back-rail.</p> <p>North Cove 24-hour mooring replace all 45 metres timber capping, waling and back-rail.</p> <p>Rockland short dyke 24-hour mooring, replace and repair damaged areas of waling, capping and back-rail.</p> <p>Sutton Staithe no 2 24-hour mooring repairs to capping/ waling.</p> <p>Postwick wharf 24-hour mooring replace all 32 metres timber waling and back-rail</p>	All completed, other than Potter Heigham demasting 24-hour which is deferred to 2025/26 and Catfield Staithe which has been deprioritised for the time being.

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (explanatory note)
		<p>including replacement of path back-rail and reinstate path/ top up with aggregate.</p> <p>Somerleyton 24-hour mooring path upstream section approx. 35 metres, replace path back-rail, raise type one path.</p> <p>Various 24-hour mooring safety chain replacements for lower reaches on Bure/ Waveney and Yare.</p>	
OD8	Develop good practices for sediment re-use.	<p>Sediment reuse sites for 2024/25</p> <p>Upper Bure 20,000m³ of sediment being reused on Wroxham Home Farm (Trafford Estate) as soil conditioner on 21Ha of arable land.</p> <p>River Yare, Rockland and Bargate Broads being dredged (15,000m³). Sediment being used to strengthen existing flood defences, by EA along Postwick Marsh & Rockland Short Dyke</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Good</p>
OD9	Maintain Navigation Access [C2]	Assist Network Rail plan and prioritise refurbishment plans for Somerleyton, Reedham & Oulton swing Bridges. Work with other bridge operators to ensure bridges open to allow access and opening information is shared to navigators.	Good
OD10	Improve safety standards and users' behaviour on the waterway (C4)	Manage navigation aids and up-to-date reference on GIS mapping; carry out navigation infrastructure inspection and maintenance regimes to agreed annual schedules, incl. full review of navigational posts.	Good. All checks completed on schedule.
OD11	Improve safety standards and users' behaviour on the waterway (C4)	Through rigorous checks and reviews, ensure adherence to boat safety measures, including maintaining an up-to-date Safety Management System and compliance to the Boat Safety Scheme	SMS reviewed in 2024 and next review scheduled for March 2025. Boat safety scheme compliance

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (explanatory note)
			thoroughly monitored and actions progressed.
OD12	Improve safety within paddle sport hire industry	Through audit, spot checks and on-site observations ensure compliance with the Hire Boat Licensing codes.	Good. Checks took place and completed.
OD13	Improve safety within Hire Boat industry. [C4]	Ensure compliance to the latest revised version of the Hire Boat Code (April 2021), through licensing, onsite checks and auditing of Hire Boat operators.	Good. Checks took place and completed.
OD14	Safety Signage [C4]	Manage and maintain navigational aids, carry out regular infrastructure inspections, identify works and agree annual repair schedules.	Good.
OD15	Safety Management [C4]	Consistently apply byelaws and other powers to ensure safe use of the Broads by all water users including water skiing, power boat racing, wild swimming and paddle sports. Ensure compliance against existing agreements in place to promote safe use and develop new ones where issues arise.	Good All reported incidents investigated, and action taken as per Enforcement policy.
OD16	Broads Authority Ranger Safety Provision [C4]	Through ranger patrolling, events, training and guidance, promote and improve waterways all recreational user safety and security.	Good. Patrolling targets achieved. Super safety days held across area.
OD17	Development at key sites [E1]	Progress re-piling of the river edge at Hoveton Riverside Park and develop a partnership approach for the on-going maintenance of the site.	Good
OD18	Integrated physical access network and riverside	Implement the Broads Integrated Access Strategy, using details from the public consultation process, incorporate valid	Some progress. Mooring targets within the IAS are

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (explanatory note)
	facilities [E1]	suggestions and develop key deliverables with 2024/25 programme year.	priority for 2025/26

Table 11

Strategic Services Directorate: Progress against work plan 2024/25

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (Explanatory note)
SD1	Climate change planning incl. flood risk management [A1]	(BA strategic priority) Implement next steps of the Broadland Futures Initiative programme, including the development of the modelling which is expected in 2024. Workshop with BA members in 2024.	Some (The modelling took longer than initially planned)
SD2	Climate change planning incl. flood risk management [A2, A3]	(BA strategic priority) Implement agreed actions in the Authority's Climate Change Action Plan as presented to members in December 2022. Monitor and report progress towards carbon neutrality in the BA operations.	Good
SD3	Climate change planning incl. flood risk management [A3]	(BA Strategic priority) Implement the Buttle Marsh project, funded through the DEFRA Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme, to agreed schedule.	Some (Gained water abstraction licence but design of the scheme not finalised yet)
SD4	Strategy and project planning [B3]	Coordinate and implement with partners the FibreBroads project, funded through the Defra Nature for Climate:	Good (Extension requested in January 2025 – awaiting outcome)

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (Explanatory note)
		Paludiculture Exploration Fund, to agreed schedule.	
SD5	Strategy and project planning [B3]	Prepare apportionment of the Broads targets set out in the Government targets and outcomes framework, with support from Natural England.	Good (the targets that have been apportioned locally will be implemented through the Broads Nature Recovery Strategy)
SD6	Biodiversity and agriculture [B1, B2, B3, B4, B5]	Review the Biodiversity & Water Strategy Action Plan toward the development of the Broads Nature Recovery Strategy, aligning with the Biodiversity Duty Report requirements from the Environment Act 2021 (Broads Biodiversity Partnership).	Completed (Adopted November 2024)
SD7	Biodiversity and agriculture [various]	(BA strategic priority) Run the Farming in Protected Landscape programme and support the Broads and Norfolk Coast Land Management Board to allocate funding.	Good
SD8	Broadland Rivers Catchment Plan [B2 and others]	Implement small-scale local interventions and river enhancement projects across catchment.	Good
SD9	Biodiversity and agriculture [B2, B3]	Deliver the next steps of the Horsey water filtration and wet farming demonstration project (as part of the FibreBroads project – see SD3) including monitoring plant growth, water filtration and biodiversity through novel bioacoustics, as	Good

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (Explanatory note)
		well as continuing to plant open areas.	
SD10	Priority species and invasive non-native species management [B4]	Target FiPL funding to support nature recovery. Launch the Important Invertebrate Area for the Broads. Develop and cost projects for the key species that maintain a UK stronghold in the Broads. Support the development of species translocation development outside of the Broads, including contribution to development of eDNA technique for invertebrates. Support monitoring of <i>N. pipistrelle</i> (bat) maternity roosts and first time understanding of their migration from the Broads. Co-ordinate knowledge share on deer to support reedbed, heath and woodland enhancement across NE Norfolk. Support mink and floating pennywort control. Survey bittern, swallowtail butterfly, fen, and water plants in key areas.	Good
SD11	Mental health and well-being [F1]	As part of the legacy of WMM, submit funding bid with partners for external funding to implement Norfolk Landscapes for Wellbeing project.	Withdrawn (Did not get funding)
SD12	Mental health and well-being [F1]	Develop and implement with partners phase 2 of the Living in Changing Landscapes project. Submit research bid to AHRC in partnership with Norwich University of the Arts and Anglia Ruskin University.	Good (NUA funded workshops engaging communities in Great Yarmouth around climate change, flooding and coastal erosion)

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (Explanatory note)
SD13	Communications [E1, E2, E3]	Promote Broads National Park through branding guidelines and action plan; manage Authority's events programme, PR and media engagement, incl. support to key partnership projects.	Good
SD14	Communications [E3]	Operate Authority's information centres and yacht stations to provide a high standard of service to the public.	Good
SD15	Communications [A3, E2, E4, F5]	Prepare next version of the Tourism Strategy for adoption in 2024.	Completed (Adopted July 2024)
SD16	Education [F3]	Implement Education Strategy annual action plan, incl. Broads Curriculum, work placements, and award schemes. Develop and implement Generation Green follow-up project "Access to Nature".	Good (Generation Green 2 ending 31/03/2025)
SD17	Development management [F4]	(BA strategic priority) Review of the Local Plan for the Broads for adoption in 2026 (estimated).	Good (Timeline amended following the Government announcement in December 2024, still aiming for 2026 adoption)
SD18	Development management [F4]	Provide high quality planning service, including determining applications to national targets, providing free pre-application advice, investigating alleged breaches of Planning & Listed Building Consent including condition and s106 monitoring,	Good

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (Explanatory note)
		and resolving breaches of control; conduct annual Customer Satisfaction Survey.	
SD19	Development management [F4]	Engage with District Councils on Land Registry changes to ensure records are accurate prior to migration.	Good (The migration of South Norfolk Council land charges is complete)
SD20	Landscape Character and Historic Asset Management [D3]	Review and adopt Conservation Area Appraisal for Neatishead. Commence work on next Conservation Area Appraisal.	Some (Neatishead Conservation Area has been reviewed, will probably be adopted in spring 2025)
SD21	Landscape Character and Historic Asset Management [D2, F1, F2]	Completion and closure of the Water, Mills and Marshes (WMM) 'Land of the Windmills' programme.	Completed
SD22	Landscape Character and Historic Asset Management [D1, F4]	Produce a Design Guide for the Broads.	Good (Adoption scheduled in spring 2025)
SD23	Landscape Character and Historic Asset Management [D1, F5]	Develop and deliver new Heritage Construction Specialist work programme with NCC to support and partner led built heritage repair and restoration projects.	Withdrawn (due to reduced capacity and staff leaving the region)
SD24	Volunteering and Skills Training [D1, F2]	Coordinate and submit funding bid with partners to support Heritage Skills training and upskilling to develop local workforce necessary to care for built heritage estate.	Withdrawn (funding withdrawn from English Heritage)

Ref	Work area [Broads Plan refs]	Planned priority actions 2024/25	Progress status (Explanatory note)
SD25	Undergrounding wires programme [D4]	Through the Steering Group, promote the implementation of undergrounding wires projects, funded by UK Power Networks.	Some (transition period because of staff changes)
SD26	Volunteer Service [F2]	Implement Volunteer Strategy annual action plan, including bespoke induction training programme (relevant to the role), Authority and local community project support, promotional events, recruitment of new volunteers as required.	Good
SD27	Human Resources	Provide routine HR support services to the Authority's staff, including payroll and pension management; support flexible working opportunities through HR policy and recruitment; implement Equality Working Group actions; provide support for recruitment needs, including annual intake of apprentices; review and update HR policies as appropriate.	Good
SD28	Human Resources	Manage change to new payroll provider from April 2024 and monitor their performance.	Completed
SD29	Strategic Services administration	Provide administrative support to directorate officers and committees/working groups.	Good

[End of document]