

Customer Service Standards

(January 2020)

The Broads Authority's Customer Service Standards outline what the public can expect when they contact us. These standards reflect our core values, and we aim for high levels of customer satisfaction across all of our services.

When you contact us, we will:

- Always aim to be friendly and polite, and will respectfully ask the same from you.
- Try to resolve your query in full. If we can't do this immediately, we will explain why and let you know when a full response will be made.
- Keep you informed of the timescale and progress being made on your issue.
- Provide information in alternative formats on request, such as large print or audio.
- Use plain language, making our communications suitable for each customer's needs.

When you call us, we will:

- Aim to answer within 10 rings. If you reach a voice message service, the message will indicate clearly when the Officer is expected to pick up their calls.
- Aim to answer your enquiry in full at the first point of contact. If we can't do so, where possible we will pass you on to the person or department within the Authority who can.

When you send us a letter or email, we will:

- Aim to respond to you within 10 working days.
- Respond to any complaints as set out in our complaints procedure. You can see this at: www.broads-authority.gov.uk/contact-us/comments-and-complaints/how-to-complain
- Decline to respond to letters or emails that are offensive or vexatious.

Emergency contacts

- To notify the Broads Authority of an **urgent situation** within the Broads National Park, phone Broads Control on **01603 756056**.
- Broads Control is open 7 days a week between 9am and 5pm in the winter (November to Easter) and 9am to 6pm in the summer. Calls left on the Broads Control answerphone outside of office hours will be dealt with when the office opens the next morning.
- In all cases requiring an **immediate emergency response**, phone 999 and ask for the relevant emergency service.

Social media

- The Broads Authority manages Broads National Park and Broads Authority social media accounts on the popular platforms, including Facebook and Twitter. We monitor these accounts between 9am and 5pm from Monday to Friday. During these times we will aim to respond to enquiries on the same working day. Enquiries made outside of these times will be answered on the next working day.
- We have 'house rules' for our social media accounts to make sure they are a positive way for you to engage with us and others in our communities - see more below.
- You can follow us on:
Facebook - @broadsauthority and @visitthebroads
Twitter - @broadsauth and @broadsnp
Instagram - broadsnationalpark
Linkedin – Broads Authority

Our planning service

- The Broads Authority is the Local Planning Authority for the Broads. We develop planning policies for the area, handle all planning and related applications, and investigate suspected breaches of planning control. In carrying out these functions we follow the relevant statutory requirements.
- Our Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) explains how we engage with the public, and additional service standards. You can see the SCI at www.broads-authority.gov.uk/statement-community-involvement.pdf

When you contact us to discuss planning policy, we will:

- Acknowledge all comments received within 5 working days. Where a further or fuller discussion is required, we will arrange to do this with you in the most appropriate way.

When you make a planning application we will:

- Acknowledge valid planning applications within 5 working days, or contact you if we need more information for validation.
- Allow a consultation period of 21 days from the date of site notices and notification letters, and 14 days from the date of press advertisements. In general, there is a shorter period for consultation on amendments.
- Acknowledge all consultation responses within 5 working days. Where a further or fuller response is required, we will advise you of timescales.
- Visit the application site where required within 10 working days.
- Determine your planning application within the statutory timescale of 8 weeks for minor development and 13 weeks for major development, other than in exceptional circumstances or where you have agreed to an extension of time.

- Offer a free pre-application service and aim to provide a full response to your enquiry within 21 days.

When you report a suspected breach of planning control, we will:

- Acknowledge your correspondence within 5 working days.
- Investigate the report within 5 working days where the allegations involve development causing a serious threat or threat to public health and safety, or permanent serious damage to the natural or built environment.
- Investigate the report within 15 working days where the allegations involve any other type of development.
- Keep you informed of the progress of the investigation.

Broads Authority social media account 'house rules'

Our social media platforms offer you a way to engage with us on a wide range of topics. We use them to keep you updated with the latest news, events and other information about the Broads and the work of the Authority and its partners.

It's important to make sure our online community members feel safe, respected, and comfortable in sharing their views, and we have some 'house rules' to help everyone get the most from our social media platforms.

Please respect the following guidelines when posting comments:

- Do not post confidential or personal information about any individual. If we need further information, we may ask you to send this to us by private message or email.
- Do not use offensive, indecent or obscene language that could be discriminatory or that promotes discrimination of any kind.
- Do not incite, condone or encourage conduct that could result in a criminal offence, civil liability, or otherwise breach any laws.
- Do not post anything that could be considered defamatory, embarrassing, or damaging to an individual, company or entity's reputation.
- Do not use these platforms for campaign purposes.
- Stay on topic and avoid posting irrelevant comments.
- Do not target, harass or intimidate Broads Authority staff, members, partners or other stakeholders.

Any posts of the above nature will be removed from our social media pages, and we reserve the option to hide any post if it is in violation of our rules. If we believe a person's behaviour is becoming unreasonable, we will explain why and give that person the opportunity to change it. Continuous breaches of our guidelines may lead us to block a person from our online community pages.

Our online communities may not always be the best way for us to respond to your questions. At times we may ask you to use other ways to get in touch, such as direct contact with an officer, where this is the best way to deal with your enquiry.

Our accounts are managed from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. While we may post at any time, we are generally unable to respond to posts or queries outside of these times.

We will manage any content shared by you on our social media platforms, and may repost it in line with our social media terms of service and privacy policies. Retweets, shares and follows on social media should not be considered as endorsements by the Broads Authority.

Our social media channels and forums are not for reporting emergencies. Contact Broads Control or the police if you believe someone is in immediate danger.