

# Broadland Flood Alleviation Project

## Protecting



### Introduction

Public Rights of Way and other permitted access routes provide an important function in the public enjoyment of the Broads. A large proportion of the public footpaths (Public Rights of Way and permissive routes) in Broadland run along the crest of the floodbanks, giving views of the river. In order to undertake flood defence improvement works, access along the floodbank is formally closed under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 for Health and Safety reasons. However, BESL recognises the importance of public rights of way for informal recreation by both residents and visitors and look to provide alternative routes (footpath diversions) where at all possible by landowner agreement.

### Footpath Impacts: During Construction

### Broadland

#### Temporary footpath diversions

Where temporary footpath diversions are provided by landowner agreement, the route of the footpath would be agreed in consultation with landowners, Broads Authority and County Council representatives. Any footpath diversion route follows as close as practicable the existing right of way and normally runs parallel to the works corridor within the grazing marshes.

The footpath diversion is double fenced and appropriate footpath furniture and temporary crossing points provided where appropriate. During the works, footpath diversions are cut regularly to ensure a level and safe walking surface. A guide rail will also be provided where barbed wire is required for the control of livestock.

The Broads Authority and relevant public access organisations (e.g. Ramblers Association) are kept informed of BESL's work and potential issues relating to public access through ongoing public consultation at a strategic level and on an individual scheme by scheme basis. For information on active footpath closures within the Broadland project area, BESL will provide updates on its' website [www.bfap.org](http://www.bfap.org) in due course.



**Beccles Common.** This footpath allows disabled access within the existing Beccles marsh trails.



**Footpath diversion at Rockland Marshes, 2004.**

#### 'Equality of access' and 'barrier free access'

BESL have full regard to obligations placed on it by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. In conjunction with the Environment Agency, BESL establish aspects of its operations that are provided for the general public and ensure that these aspects provide an equality of access for all users including people with disabilities.

All licensed structures such as gates, stiles or squeeze gaps located on footpaths are shown on the Definitive Rights of Way Register maintained by NCC. Where structures are required for the control of livestock on completion of flood defence works, these structures have to be licensed by NCC and must comply with the policies of equality of access and barrier free access.

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## Footpath Impacts: On completion

Broadland

### Replacement Footpath Furniture

BESL will maintain the existing rights of way network through reinstatement of routes following the completion of works. With respect to existing barriers such as stiles located on a public right of way, these are removed prior to construction of any flood defence improvements. On completion, landowners may require gates or stiles for example along with associated fencing to control any livestock grazing the floodbanks and folding areas.

Due to the principles of barrier free access and equality of access, any required structures need to be approved by the Norfolk County Council Rights of Way Team. The type of structure provided needs to make allowances for the existing uses of the footpath in order to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The installation of squeeze gates or kissing gates will be used in preference to stiles wherever replacements are needed and where any existing structures cannot be re-used. Wherever possible BESL will seek to remove these barriers with permission from landowners

### Permanent footpath diversions

Where public footpaths pass over floodbanks that are to be re-built inland of the existing floodbank (termed setback) the existing route requires permanent diversion under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 on completion of the improvement works.

BESL consult with the Broads Authority and Norfolk County Council on all proposals to formerly divert public rights of way including the provision of any footpath furniture.



**Disabled access passing bay, Rockland.** BESL provided the passing bays and the Broads Authority and Norfolk County Council funded a new surface to aid wheelchair access



### New ramp at Strumpshaw

footpath over the river and across the grazing marshes to higher ground beyond. Where works access is required across grazing marsh, existing tracks (some of which are also classified as public rights of way) will be used. Any Public Rights of Way affected by construction vehicles accessing the works corridor will be reinstated to its former condition prior to the works starting.

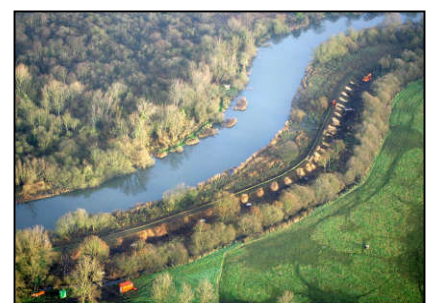


**New viewing platform at Strumpshaw.** Provided as part of the ongoing improvement works to the sandy wall.

### Footpath enhancements

The completed works will provide a 2m wide on average crest width that is level and safe for walking. The surfacing of reinstated rights of way will use the same materials as the original surface unless there are more suitable alternatives acceptable to all parties.

In some areas such as the Waveney valley, extensive tree clearance has been required in order to undertaken detailed condition surveys and to allow the improvement works to go ahead. Such clearance can result in the development of mosaic of views from the



**Tree clearance at Beccles Common.** Undertaken during the winter 2004/5 to allow for subsequent flood defence works to be undertaken.