



Britain's magical  
waterland

# the Broads brand story



# the Broads brand

A destination's "brand" is the sum of all the impressions, beliefs and mental images that people hold about a place. People will talk about a place and form opinions and feelings based on their own experiences, the experiences of others and information – accurate or inaccurate – transmitted through the media.

It follows that every destination – including the Broads – already has a brand. We need to help shape and manage this brand to guide the conversations people have about the Broads. If we don't, then someone, or something else will.

Managing the Broads brand means using a consistent, unique, unified voice and personality to convey the essence of the place, to explain what makes it so special, and to turn around any negative perceptions that people may hold.

To succeed, the Broads brand must carry a compelling idea that is at once emotionally powerful and believable. It should bring together the unique offer of the Broads with what visitors really want. The brand is much, much more than a logo and a strapline. Although the Broads experience can be captured in a communications campaign, it cannot be manufactured: it must spring from the reality of the place, from constant, careful management, but above all from the consensus, enthusiasm and commitment of the organisations and businesses within the Broads. As with all brands, the actions of its stakeholders speak far louder than advertising copy.

# a successful Broads brand will:

- ▶ Make the unique essence of the Broads more tangible to visitors and potential visitors.
- ▶ Update the offer for visitors and give the Broads contemporary appeal.
- ▶ Influence customer preference and build visitor loyalty.
- ▶ Differentiate the Broads from competing destinations.
- ▶ Dispel any negative perceptions of the Broads.
- ▶ Extend the image of the Broads beyond that of a summertime water-based tourist destination to decrease its economic dependence on seasonal visitors.
- ▶ Build a reputation for the Broads of which we can all be proud and to which we all wish to contribute.



# building the brand: our process

Building a compelling, distinctive, and credible brand capable of delivering the changes promised on previous pages is a significant challenge. This is due to the huge diversity of the landscape, leisure, tourism, wildlife and heritage components of the Broads, and its numerous stakeholders. The branding process was initiated in 2005. It combined solid research in travel marketing with expertise in destination branding, and inclusivity has been central to the process at every stage. The key stages are outlined on the following pages.

## 1 Market research and analysis

Research conducted by renowned consultant Simon Anholt on wider perceptions of the Broads, and possible directions for the Broads brand was published as "The Broads, Identity and Reputation" in April 2006. This extensive analysis was backed up by quantitative research and strategy consultancy carried out by the specialist agency The Tourism Company. This research, and its interpretation by the Broads Authority and the Broads Tourism Forum underpins subsequent work carried out on developing the Broads branding strategy.

## 2 Moving to the big idea

Brand strategist Simon Middleton became involved in the project in 2010 with a brief to build upon the market research and shape the Big Idea for the Broads. Evocative and engaging, inspiring and alluring, the Big Idea would capture, sum-up, embody and express the promise of the brand and become a touchstone for subsequent thinking and visual expression of the Broads.

The key outputs of Simon Middleton's work were a positioning line – the shortest, most evocative and definitive verbal summary of the brand's Big Idea, and a positioning statement – a summary of the brand's promise that could form the basis of literature, advertising and wider communication.

## Positioning line

the Broads.  
Britain's magical waterland

## Positioning statement

The Broads is Britain's magical waterland, a uniquely beautiful environment shaped by people working hand in hand with nature over thousands of years. The Broads offers visitors an experience unlike any other, both on its rivers and lakes – the "broads" – and alongside them, on peaceful paths and cycleways and in the unspoiled villages and market towns that make up the tapestry of this rural area.

The Broads offers a rich mix of attractions and activities year-round for visitors of any age and any interest. The Broads is proud to be a member of Britain's family of National Parks, and is recognised globally for its wildlife and the distinct and precious character of its environment.

Best of all, the Broads is so easy to get to for a holiday, short break or day visit, and it's all within easy reach of the historic city of Norwich and the exhilarating coastline of Norfolk and Suffolk. A magical place where land and water, people and nature meet – there's nowhere quite as special as the Broads.



### 3 Development of the visual identity

A project steering committee, consisting of representatives of the Broads Authority and Broads Tourism Forum, appointed Norfolk-based communications and design agency cobalt id to develop the visual identity. This involved consolidating the research and brand strategy into a compelling and distinct visual identity, and creating a practical brand toolkit that could be applied consistently by all stakeholders and businesses within the Broads.

The committee were presented with multiple creative solutions, initially for the logotype only. These were analysed, discussed and refined and re-presented in a series of approval stages. Following agreement on the version of the logotype favoured, cobalt id produced printed and electronic versions of a brand toolkit that sets out guidelines for usage of the logo, colour, type and language.

### 4 Brand introduction and implementation

It is our vision that all stakeholders in the Broads will unite in one clear, compelling message to promote the Broads and aim for the highest standards in delivering the new brand to surpass the expectations of visitors.

Guidance will be given by the Broads Authority and Broads Tourism Forum in sharpening marketing skills and improving customer service to meet today's sophisticated requirements of visitors.

Marketing workshops will be held and a web-based toolkit will provide material, advice, and photos for businesses to use in their promotions.

We will introduce a new customer service training scheme, with special emphasis on destination knowledge. The Broads will be the first destination to offer this new Welcome Host Gold course, in conjunction with East of England Tourism.

Good food and drink are a major requirement of any visit and we will be refining and re-launching the Broads Quality Charter to ensure our hosteries are among the best. There will be specific inspection and grading criteria for fine dining across the board.

Green tourism is becoming increasingly important to visitors. We will be encouraging more businesses to take part in the Green Tourism Business Scheme and are exploring the idea of establishing a green grading scheme for hire boats. This will give hire yards the opportunity to enter this relatively new market in a practical and affordable way.

The Broads Tourism Forum will continue to work closely with Norfolk Tourism, VisitNorwich, East of England Tourism and VisitEngland to ensure that the Broads, Britain's Magical Waterland, gains maximum exposure as a dynamic and developing UK destination.

### 5 Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Broads Tourism Forum is the industry's voice on the Broads. Its members have significant influence on how the Broads will be shaped in the future. With that influence comes significant responsibility.

Businesses must live up to the quality pledge that comes with Broads Tourism Forum membership. Regular membership meetings will continually review the effectiveness of our brand work. We expect to develop additional resources to meet the needs of Broads businesses and other organisations.

Broads Tourism Forum e-news will disseminate news, comment and feedback on the Broads, our brand and how businesses are shaping their proposition around this new work.

The Broads Authority will be commissioning visitor surveys to gauge reaction to current and new developments.



# the brand Q and A

## **Q Why do we need a Brand?**

**A** To crystallize the Broads identity in the eyes of the public and to give them an understanding of the quality and experiences they can expect. A solid brand will unite everyone who has an interest in the Broads in promoting the same message.

## **Q Who is paying for the Brand?**

**A** Development of the brand has been paid for by the Broads Authority making use of a 50% grant from Europe through the Sustainable Tourism in Estuary Parks (STEP) project.

## **Q How much is it costing?**

**A** It will cost in the region of £20,000. The Broads Tourism Forum members have supported this donating their time enthusiastically to assist in the development of the brand. This investment should return many times this amount as a wide range of businesses put a consistent message across to the public and this in turn has a positive effect on tourism in the region.

## **Q Who owns the brand?**

**A** The brand is owned by no one and has been developed as a shared resource so that we can all put forward a positive and consistent message about the special qualities of the Broads.

## **Q Who is it for?**

**A** The brand is available for everyone to use, from businesses to local communities.

## **Q Will this new brand attract more visitors to the Broads?**

**A** The expectation is that a quality brand will tempt more visitors to the Broads, helping to safeguard thousands of jobs that are dependant on tourism.

## **Q Why is the logo so simple?**

**A** The logo captures the spirit of the Broads. The blue water and sky and the flying swans evoke feelings of space, freedom and beauty without overloading the eye.

## **Q Why is the Brand being launched now?**

**A** The brand is being launched in preparation for the 2011 holiday season. Having material available now means it can be incorporated in the planning for next season's promotion. Further promotion of it to the public will happen next year.

## **Q Where can I use the branding material?**

**A** You are welcome to use all elements of the toolkit free of charge on any publication or website without infringing copyright. You must not sell the supplied photographs or share them.

## **Q Where can I get a branding toolkit?**

**A** If you would like a toolkit email: [karen.sayer@broads-authority.gov.uk](mailto:karen.sayer@broads-authority.gov.uk) or go to [www.broads-authority.gov.uk/visiting/broads-branding-guidelines.html](http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/visiting/broads-branding-guidelines.html)