



## Tourism Chief Gives the Broads the Thumbs Up

A top tourism boss today described the Broads as a “truly great destination” and pledged his backing to help local businesses compete on the world stage.

Chief Executive of Visit England James Berresford was visiting the Broads on Friday (6<sup>th</sup>) as a guest of the Broads Authority.

He began his visit at Bewilderwood touring the woodland attraction and chatting with owner Tom Blofeld and Peter Howe of Broadland Cycle Hire.

He then took a trip on the Authority’s trip boat the Electric Eel at How Hill nature reserve and visited the original marshman’s cottage which also acts as a visitor information centre on the site.

Ferry Marina owner Len Funnell took him by boat from Horning to Ranworth accompanied by representatives of the Broads Tourism Forum which is made up of local tourism businesses in the area. They spoke to him about how businesses have embraced the new initiative to promote the Broads as ‘Britain’s Magical Waterland’ and are working together to ensure the brand’s success.

The final stop on his visit was to Clippesby Hall caravan site where he presented certificates to the owner John Lyndsay to recognise the fact that the park has just been awarded Gold Status in the Green Tourism Business Scheme.

Mr Berresford said: “I have known for a long while that this is a great destination but the efforts of the partners both in the public and private sector to raise the profile of the Broads I can’t praise more highly. My breath has been taken away by the range and scale of the product and by the professionalism of the businesses.”

“The Broads is a quintessential English experience – an undiscovered gem and can play a much bigger role on the world stage in my view. This part of the world offers a genuine holiday experience that competes with anywhere in the world and Visit England will make sure that we can give as much profile as possible to this part of England.”

He pledged to consider the Broads as an “attack brand” – a destination which Visit England would be willing to promote amongst the best in England.

He said: “Visit England needs to work with principal destinations and having seen what we’ve seen today I think there’s a real chance to do that here in the Broads. I am absolutely certain that we can work here to champion really great destinations of which this is clearly one.”

Tourism business bosses were delighted at the show of support. Broads Tourism Forum Chairman Ian Russell said: “The recognition by James Berresford that the Broads truly is Britain’s Magical Waterland and as such can take its place alongside the most iconic destinations that England offers. The businesses recognise that they have a role to play to deliver the highest quality visitor experience and that is, to an extent, a work in progress.”

Receiving his GTBS certificate from Mr Berresford John Lyndsay said: “It’s the culmination of a number of years of hard work in terms of changing the focus of the business and helping people discover the Broads in a more sustainable and responsible way.”

Chief Executive of the Broads Authority John Packman said: “The Broads Authority has been working with the Broads Tourism Forum to promote sustainable tourism and we’re delighted that Clipperby has been recognised for its fantastic achievements in this area as well as James Berresford’s praise for the wider Broads businesses.”



## Notes to Editors

1. The Green Tourism Business Scheme is the national sustainable tourism certification scheme for the UK. It is the only certification scheme validated by Visit Britain, through the International Centre for Responsible Tourism (ICRT). Businesses opting to join Green Tourism are assessed by a qualified grading advisor against a rigorous set of criteria, covering a range of areas, like energy and water efficiency, waste management, biodiversity and more. Those businesses that meet the required standard, receive a Bronze, Silver, or Gold award based on their level of achievement. The current network of members is comprised of a wide range of business types, including accommodation providers, visitor attractions, corporate offices and others.
2. The Broads branding initiative has been funded with money from the European Regional Development Fund’s Interreg Two Seas programme as part of a project called STEP, (Sustainable Tourism in Estuary Parks), which promotes green tourism.

