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Foreword

Welcome to North Norfolk District Council's Economic Strategy and Action Plan (2023-2027), which sets out the approach and actions the Council will undertake to support the growth of the local economy over the next 4 years.

'Investing in Our Local Economy & Infrastructure' is an important strand of the recently adopted Corporate Plan 2023-27 and we remain committed as a Council to helping to create a vibrant and dynamic local economy. It is important to us that we play our role in shaping an environment where there are opportunities for all, innovation and creativity can thrive, and businesses are unhindered in their ability to sustain, grow and prosper. However, it is recognised that we cannot do it alone. We all have a part to play and, in these highly challenging times, we need to be clear in our vision, have clarity as to what we want to achieve, be pragmatic about where we focus our efforts, and seek every opportunity to collaborate and build partnerships.

It starts with our **People**. North Norfolk has an aging population and workforce demographic. These are important concerns for the sustainability of local businesses and in turn, the vitality of our local communities. Whilst age brings

with it experience and knowledge, we also recognise that we need to keep 'fresh blood' in the system by creating a skilled workforce, with clear career pathways for young people seeking to live and work locally, and through identifying skill gaps and solutions for aspirant businesses.



We are ambitious in our desire to create a **Place** where start-ups, indigenous businesses and new inward investment can all be supported in their growth aspirations. Our emerging new Local Plan sets out our policies to support the delivery of climate resilient sustainable growth and identifies a number of sites that will facilitate significant housing and employment development. Ensuring that there is sufficient infrastructure in place to facilitate these is absolutely fundamental to the successful delivery of the Plan through to 2036.

Partnership working is the 'golden thread' that you will find intertwined in almost every element of this strategy's Action Plan. I'm keen for the Council to continue to further strengthen its approach to working with partners and to creating a holistic and joined-up approach to nurturing growth opportunities. Sustainable economic development will simply not happen without the strategic co-ordination of partnership actions.

I invite you to not simply just read this strategy, but to identify ways in which you too can also contribute to supporting your local communities and delivering economic prosperity for the District. These are difficult and indeed worrying times for many, but I am as ever confident that North Norfolk has all the right ingredients to deliver sustainable and inclusive growth.

Cllr Tim Adams

Leader of the Council
Portfolio Holder for Executive Support
and Legal Services



Introduction

This document sets out a strategic framework for economic development and has been prepared based on a detailed body of evidence including:

Data Analysis - A local economic profile of the District has been produced, with particular thanks to the Norfolk Office of Data Analytics (NODA). You will find some of this evidence drawn out within the Strategy, and a more comprehensive report can be found in Appendix D. In addition, both a skills and a recruitment survey of businesses was also undertaken by the Council. The full findings can be found in Appendix B

Engagements with Businesses - to which you will also find a number of case studies inserted amongst the pages of this strategy. Appreciating what businesses are experiencing on the ground is absolutely vital to understanding how we can assist them.

External Partners - In August 2022 we formed the North Norfolk Local Partnership Group to help shape and inform our Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and, in November 2022, our bid to the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). Key stakeholders representing businesses, farmers, landowners, community, voluntary and social enterprise sectors operating in North Norfolk met to review the priorities, challenges and opportunities for businesses and communities. The outcome of this was the securing of £2.7m of Government money which will fund a wide range of programmes and initiatives through to March 2025. A number of these partners are all now engaged in the delivery of this work and we continue to work closely with them.

Internal Stakeholders - in October 2023 a workshop, open to all Council Members and relevant Officers, was held to discuss local economic challenges and the work that the Council should prioritise in the Council's Annual Action Plans and, in turn, the Economic Strategy & Action Plan.

From all this information gathered a number of themes emerged, with particular concerns expressed regarding:

- **Inflationary pressures** - both in terms of the cost of living for residents, but also the operational costs of running businesses. The inflation indices have fallen over the last twelve months, but prices generally remain high and are still increasing at a higher rate than that we have experienced over the last fifteen years.

- **Climate change** - and the need for the Council, partners, businesses, and local communities to become more sustainable, save energy and reduce our carbon footprints. North Norfolk was the first district council in Norfolk to declare a climate emergency in early 2019 and we established an Environmental Charter to underpin this. We have also adopted a 'Net Zero 2030 Strategy and Action Plan' and have implemented a number of energy saving measures to our own assets to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There is also a potential opportunity for the Council to play a role in promoting the district as a strong location for investment in sustainable tourism. There are already a good number of operators already investing in sustainable practices, which the Council could promote and seek to weave into a strong narrative that promotes North Norfolk as the destination of choice for eco-tourism.

- **Skills and Recruitment** – to which a number of issues were identified, including access to training providers, an aging workforce, ‘brain drain’, low wages and a high dependency on the visitor economy.

- **Lack of ‘grow on’ space for businesses** – There are approximately 20 distinct industrial sites in North Norfolk and the emerging Local Plan identifies a number of employment sites to support growth. However, the commercial premises stock of many of these sites are aging and they are predominantly saturated, with little capacity to facilitate business expansion. Historically, public bodies such as the Rural Development Commission, English Estates and English Partnerships funded the provision of serviced employment land or advance business premises in rural areas where there was a lack of developer/investor confidence to make such investments, and many of our towns had such land and premises provided through these organisations. However, over the past two decades, funding disseminated through the Regional Development Agencies, and more recently the LEP, has tended to be concentrated on urban areas and so public funding hasn’t been available to support the bringing forward of serviced land and premises. As such, it is recognised that some businesses seeking to scale up have felt no choice but to leave the district to an alternative location in Norfolk where they could be accommodated.

- **Market towns** – and the changing way in which people shop and use our towns, particularly given the growth in out-of-town retail areas and online shopping. Initiatives such as Experience Sheringham, Love Holt and the Stalham High Street Taskforce have demonstrated that there is a desire and appetite to support proactive change within our local town centres. Moreover, the Council is presently in the final stages of delivering a £4.47m North Walsham Heritage Action Zone programme which has enhanced the amenity of key areas

of public realm, undertaken substantial highway improvements, repaired, restored or brought back into use a number of buildings, and delivered a very well received cultural programme.

- **Infrastructure investment** – needed to unlock key growth areas and to address critical ‘not spot’ broadband and mobile signal issues. We are also very conscious that there are a number of water abstraction licences that could be varied or revoked, as the Environment Agency seeks to ensure abstraction in certain in more vulnerable catchment areas remains sustainable. Yet there are also opportunities, with the Bacton Terminal (to which a third of UK gas is landed and processed), in particular, offering a strong potential for carbon capture and storage and hydrogen production. Should these progress then they will likely support a substantial number of jobs during the construction phase in the short term and create a number of high skilled jobs in the longer term.

Many of these challenges are, of course, far from unique to North Norfolk, but the Council is committed to doing everything it can to unblock issues where they emerge, collaborate with partners to achieve a shared objective, or lobby to influence others where it is beyond our immediate sphere of influence. The remainder of this document outlines the strategic context in which this report sits, draws attention to some of the local economic evidence (links to which can be found in Appendix A), provides further detail on the challenges and, most importantly, how we will approach overcoming them.



The focus of this delivery is built around three high level objectives within the Corporate Plan that are centred on supporting the local economy:

‘Creating an Environment for Business to thrive in’
‘Infrastructure to Support Growth’
‘Skills for Jobs’



The accompanying Action Plan outlines the projects, initiatives and activities that the Council will undertake to support the delivery of the three priority objectives. It is not intended to be an exhaustive catalogue of all activities, as much of the delivery is business as usual for the Council. However, it serves to highlight some of the particularly key items of delivery that the Council will be engaged in, both presently and over the coming years.

Cllr Paul Heinrich
Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth
and Chairman of Development Committee



Business Case Study

Naked Kitchens

Make bespoke oak kitchens, which are designed and adapted to customers specific requirements. On site there is a full design, sales and manufacturing team employing over 60 staff.

What does this business do?

Naked Kitchens moved to the former RAF site in West Raynham in 2015. This company use sustainable timber and eco-friendly material in their manufacturing processes. On site, they have replaced all the fossil fuel heating with bio mass boilers and they use an internal circulating heating system using the timber offcuts and sawdust as fuel. They have been awarded a capital grant as part of REPF funding to replace old machinery; improve productivity and grow their workforce.

What are the challenges?

In a tough economic environment Naked Kitchens are finding the market challenging. They are looking to support staff skills with high end sales and to employing advanced SEO techniques to further improve enquiries and sales.

Why North Norfolk?

Naked Kitchens love the space and the location. A large hangar space allows them to change layouts to meet their evolving workflows and will help to facilitate future expansion. Their location feeds the local story of their company.

What next?

More capital investment in production to drive growth. Development of more innovative solutions and new products to increase and diversify their market.



Strategic Context

Policy

Government Context

UKSPF

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

National

Investing in our local Economy & Infrastructure

County Deal

Norfolk County Deal

Policy

Government Policy

In recent years, national policy has shifted towards supporting investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation. This has been precipitated by the UK's departure from the EU, but also by the economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic. The previous focus was on the Industrial Strategy 2017 which centred around boosting productivity by backing businesses to create good jobs and increase the earning power of people throughout the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure.

However, four years after the strategy was published, it was recognised that the UK's business and economic environment had changed. Creating and supporting jobs remains the Government's economic focus, but helping to drive growth in existing, new and emerging industries was identified as also a priority. Consequently, there was a transition from the Industrial Strategy to the 'Plan for Growth' and its related strategies. More recently the Levelling Up agenda has placed focused on spreading opportunity more equally across the UK.

The 2022 Levelling Up White Paper set out the details of a new devolution framework, the establishment of a new independent data body and a new Levelling Up Advisory Council. It detailed twelve new missions across four broad areas:

- Boosting productivity and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging.
- Spreading opportunities and improving public services, especially in those areas where they are weakest.
- Restoring a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost.
- Empowering local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency.



Policy

To support these objectives, the Government launched four new investment programmes: the UK Community Renewal Fund, the Community Ownership Fund, the Levelling up Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

North Norfolk was identified as a 'Priority 1' area for support from the Levelling Up Fund Round 2. In August 2022, North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) submitted two exciting projects. These included a new swimming pool and multi-sports area in Fakenham and the transformation and enhancement of the clifftop gardens, North Lodge Park and related sites in Cromer, which would better position it as an accessible 'green tourism' destination.

Unfortunately, whilst these projects were well regarded by the fund assessors, they were not successful within that round. However, in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 22 November 2023, it was confirmed that, under Levelling Up Round 3, NNDC had been successful in securing £9.9m to build new sports facilities at Fakenham. This will include a 25 metre public swimming pool and improved outdoor sports facilities. Alongside the new leisure offerings, an allocation of £1m has been made for carbon reduction measures to the existing sports facilities.

“While talent is spread equally across our country, opportunity is not. Levelling up is a mission to challenge, and change, that unfairness. Levelling up means giving everyone the opportunity to flourish.”
from the White Paper “Levelling Up the United Kingdom”





The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the Government's Levelling Up agenda and is the successor funding model to the former EU Structural Funds. It will provide £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation from the Fund via a funding formula rather than via competitive bidding.

Following the submission of an Investment Plan in Summer 2022, NNDC was successful in securing £1.2m from this fund which is to be delivered over three financial years (22/23-24/25). The intention of the fund is to invest in local priorities, targeted towards a number of areas: building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment and productivity growth and increasing life chances.

There are three UKSPF investment priorities:

- Communities & Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People & Skills

The Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) is a top-up to the UKSPF and is available to eligible local authorities in England where communities and businesses face specific rural challenges. It succeeds EU funding from LEADER and the Growth Programme which were part of the Rural Development Programme for England. Nationally, a total of up to £110 million is available for financial years 2023/24 to 2024/25. An addendum to the UKSPF Investment Plan was submitted to DEFRA in November 2022 and in January 2023 it was confirmed that NNDC had successfully secured an allocation of £1.46m. As the Local Authority, NNDC has responsibility for determining the distribution of the funding and its delivery within North Norfolk. In order to help shape and determine the priorities for this funding a Local Partnership Group was formed, composed of a variety of key local stakeholders and representatives within the community, business and rural groups. Support was also provided by the two local MPs and their offices.

The interventions identified within the approved UKSPF Investment Plan are:

Communities and Place

1. Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects.
2. Funding for the development and promotion of wider campaigns which encourage people to visit and explore the local area
3. Community measures to reduce the cost of living, including through measures to improve energy efficiency, and combat fuel poverty and climate change
4. Funding to support relevant feasibility studies



Supporting Local Business

5. Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems, and supporting businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate, including through local networks.
6. Supporting decarbonisation and improving the natural environment whilst growing the local economy.

People and Skills

7. Tailored support to help people in employment, who are not supported by mainstream provision to address barriers to accessing education and training courses. This includes supporting the retention of groups who are likely to leave the labour market early.

The REPF will provide capital grant funding for local businesses and communities. The interventions identified within the addendum plan are:

Rural businesses

The funding is focused on supporting SMEs. Projects that this will support includes: capital funding for net zero infrastructure for rural businesses, and diversification of farm businesses outside of agriculture to encourage start up, expansion or scale up of these businesses where this involves converting farm buildings into other commercial or business uses.

Community Businesses

The grant funding for community groups is for:

- Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups
- Funding existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer
- Supporting impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places

NNDC has seen a high take up of grants and a strong level of engagement in the programmes being delivered. At the point of writing, this contrasts with the national picture where it is understood that there are significant underspends.



Investing in Our Local Economy & Infrastructure

NNDC's Corporate Plan sets out the priorities and ambitions of what we want to achieve for the residents, communities and businesses of North Norfolk between 2023 to 2027. The predominant focus of the Economic Strategy & Action Plan is to support the delivery of the 'Investing in our Local Economy & Infrastructure' theme. This sets out how we will work towards creating an environment where businesses can thrive and prosper, supporting jobs and economic opportunity for all.

There are three priority strands within this theme:

An Environment for Business to thrive in

- Working with our Market and Resort Towns to reinforce their roles as local service centres, centres of employment, financial services and business activity, served by public transport.
- Providing support to allow rural businesses to thrive, recognising that many of our larger employers operate outside of our main towns.
- Looking to maximise the benefits to our business community of the UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funds.
- Continuing to promote North Norfolk's diverse tourism and visitor offer.
- Working with partners locally and nationally to deliver increased sustainability in marine industries and develop a sustainable and equitable blue economy that delivers ocean recovery and local prosperity.

Infrastructure to Support Growth

- Exploring opportunities for securing development of our few brownfield sites.
- Seeking to maximise the potential from the local implications of the transition towards hydrogen and carbon capture, use and storage (CCUS) at the Bacton Gas site.
- Acting as a digital champion to promote investment to address our competitive disadvantage through broadband and mobile connectivity challenges.
- Influencing issues of water scarcity and constraints in the local electricity distribution network.
- Ensuring an adequate supply of serviced employment land and premises to support local business growth and inward investment.



Skills for Jobs

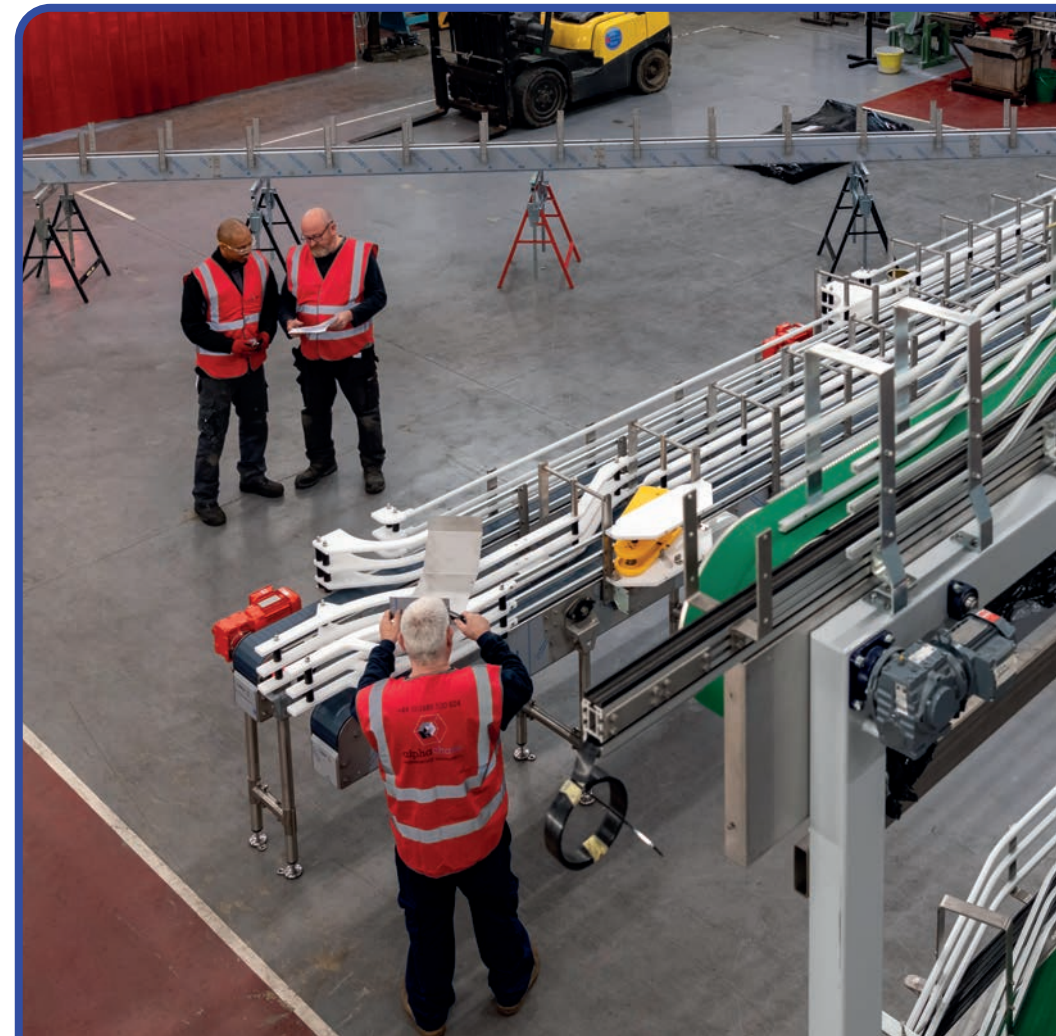
- Promoting innovation and workforce development throughout the district.
- Promoting improved access to post 16 vocational education.
- Continuing to provide apprenticeships opportunities, directly as a large local employer and promoting uptake in the wider business economy.

Through supporting these ambitions, the Economic Strategy & Action Plan will also support the delivery of other elements of the Corporate Plan, including:

- Promote health, wellbeing and independence for all.
- Engaged & Supported individuals and communities.
- Increase accessibility and inclusion for all.
- Promote culture, leisure and sport activities.
- Continue our journey to Net Zero.
- Address housing need.
- Promote best use of housing stock and good housing standards.

It also aligns with a number of other NNDC strategies including the:

- Net Zero 2030 Strategy and Action Plan.
- Environmental Charter.
- Quality of Life Strategy 2022-24.
- North Norfolk Local Plan 2016-2036.



Business Case Study

Woodland Holiday Park

Woodland Holiday Park is a Visitor Economy business supporting tourists, visitors and local residents. It provides holidays as well as a range of leisure and hospitality services and amenities.

What does this business do?

Woodland Holiday Park is a luxury holiday home complex set in 80 acres of beautiful rural surroundings. Woodland has been operating since 1972, when local farmers bought the woods adjacent to their land and decided to set up a basic touring park. This family business is still operating today and now boasts an impressive restaurant and bar, as well as an indoor swimming pool and leisure complex. The park employs over 30 staff.

What are the challenges?

Woodlands are keen to continue to invest in the site, including potentially converting a former chicken shed into a luxury hotel, with accommodation for visitors and staff as well as storage and possible expansion space for the leisure element of the business.

Why North Norfolk?

The Harrison family have owned and farmed this space for the past 50 years and continue to be wedded to the fabulous rural location.

What next?

Key to the growth of this business is the need to offer more services and amenities to tourists and day visitors. This means the development of unused buildings to allow the leisure side of the business to expand and diversify.





Norfolk County Deal

Norfolk County Council and the Government have agreed, in principle, to a new County Deal for Norfolk. This will transfer funding and powers to Norfolk – a process known as devolution. County Deals are part of the Government's levelling up agenda, which are intended 'to spread opportunity equally across the UK'. Should this proceed, NNDC and the neighbouring Norfolk authorities will play a significant role in helping to determine how this funding is disseminated in an equitable fashion, although the detail is still emerging.

The devolution agreement includes:

- Control of a £20million per year allocation of investment funding over 30 years, 40% capital and 60% revenue, to be invested by Norfolk County Council to drive growth and take forward its priorities over the long term.
- Almost £7m for the building of new homes on brownfield land in 2024/25, subject to sufficient eligible projects for funding being identified.
- £5.9 million of capital funding in this Spending Review period to support the delivery of housing, regeneration and development priorities Norfolk.
- New powers to drive the regeneration of the area and to build more affordable homes including compulsory purchase powers and the ability to establish Mayoral Development Corporations.
- An integrated transport settlement starting in 2024/25. Government will work with Norfolk to agree an integrated multi-year transport settlement at the next Spending Review, at which point opportunities for expanding the integrated transport settlement offer will also be explored.
- New powers to shape local skills provision to better meet the needs of the local economy and local people, including devolution of the core Adult Education Budget, as well as input into the new Local Skills Improvement Plans.
- A commitment to explore a local partnership with Great British Railways so that the Norfolk County Council directly elected leader can help to shape and improve local rail services.
- Norfolk County Council will continue to engage district authorities on the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund through the Norfolk Investment Framework Steering Group.
- Norfolk County Council will plan and deliver the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) from 2025/26.

- A County Council resolution to change executive governance to the model described in statute as the directly elected 'mayor and cabinet executive' governance model. The elected leader will provide overall leadership of Norfolk County Council and will be vested with all its executive powers.
- The future integration of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership to ensure there continues to be a strong and independent local business voice which informs local decision making and strategic economic planning.

On 12 December 2023, County Councillors voted to accept a County Deal devolution agreement with the Government. Government funding will start transferring to Norfolk next summer, if Councillors vote in July 2024 to stage the first election for a leader in May 2025.

In Spring 2024 , Parliament will decide whether to approve the 'statutory instrument' required to let the Deal proceed.

A more detailed summary of local, regional and national policy can be found in Appendix C.



Devolution creates many potential benefits for Norfolk. The in-principle level three County Deal, agreed last year, gives Norfolk more control of adult education, brownfield site regeneration and transport.

Update from County Council Leader, Councillor Kay Mason Billig



Business Case Study

Equipmake Ltd

More than 20 years' experience developing and integrating industry-leading innovative electric powertrain solutions for global automotive, aerospace, marine, construction and bus markets.

What does this business do?

Equipmake retrofit buses with an in-house designed electric motor and battery pack. Diesel buses are retrofitted with their own bespoke electric parts. This way the bus can have a longer range and more electric miles than new buses on the market. Equipmake are working on a fleet from York and buses from Wales, and they have secured a contract with First Bus Co. in Norwich. They design, manufacture and install the machinery and provide a repair service.

What are the challenges?

Forecasted growth will require additional space. Buses are big! They will also need to recruit people with the correct skills in order to fulfill their growth aspirations

Why North Norfolk?

Their main manufacturing business is based at Hethel, but this offers limited capacity for expansion. Their new site at Scottow Enterprise Park means that they can test buses on the runway and, as a large hangar, this provides optimal space for their operational needs.

What next?

Last year (May'22-June'23) Equipmake retrofitted 20 buses. This year (May'23-June'24) the plan is to double capacity to 50, and next year (May'24-June'25) there are plans to be retrofitting up to 100 buses on site in North Norfolk.



North Norfolk in Numbers

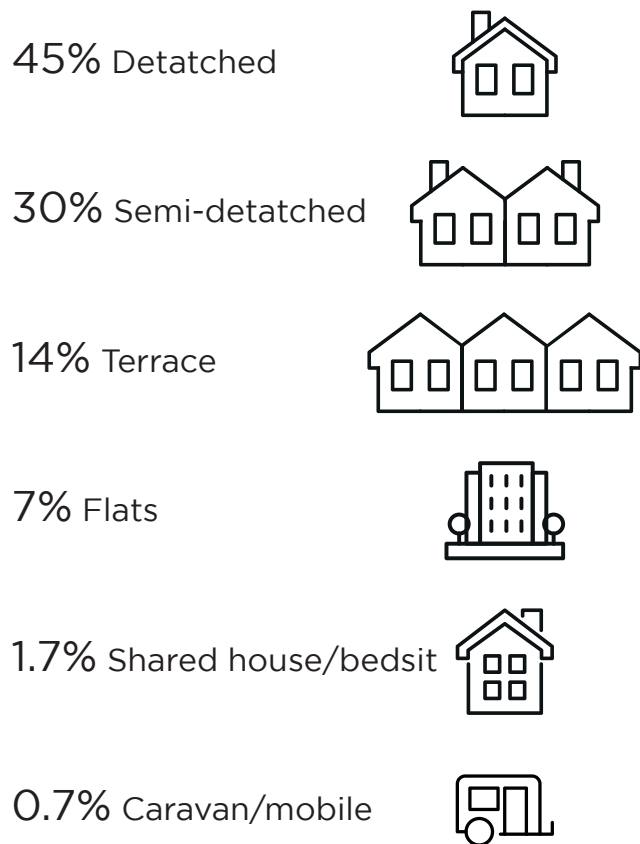


1. Homes & Households

Nearly half of all North Norfolk households are in the bottom 4 of The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

Journey times to key services are close to double that of Norwich and over a 6th are living in fuel poverty.

Types of households



102,979 residents

 52,681 Female

 50,298 Males

Minimum Journey Time
to 8 of key services

 18 mins vs Norwich 9 mins

 35 mins vs Norwich 16 mins



2. Skills & Employment

North Norfolk's working population are generally less well formally educated, and nearly half of females work part-time. Many people travel to work in the car, and often longer distances, over 10km or more. A large proportion work in the hospitality, retail and health & social care, which account for the top 3 employment types. A lower percentage are employed in professional and technical roles. A low proportion of the working population have qualifications above NVQ3.





Employment*

36,800 Employed

6,600 Self Employed


Working part-time

 44% Female

 19% Males

Working full-time

 56% Female

 81% Males

Travel to work

 57%

 30% Travel over 10km

Qualifications % of 16-64yrs

93% NVQ1+ min 1-3 GCSE's

76% NVQ2+ min 4-5 GCSE's

54% NVQ3+ min 2 A levels

33% NVQ4+ min High Ed Cert/BTEC

Type of work

19% Wholesale/Retail Trade

16% Accommodation and food service

13% Human health and social work

9% Education

9% Manufacturing

6% Construction

6% Admin and support

5% Professional, scientific and technical

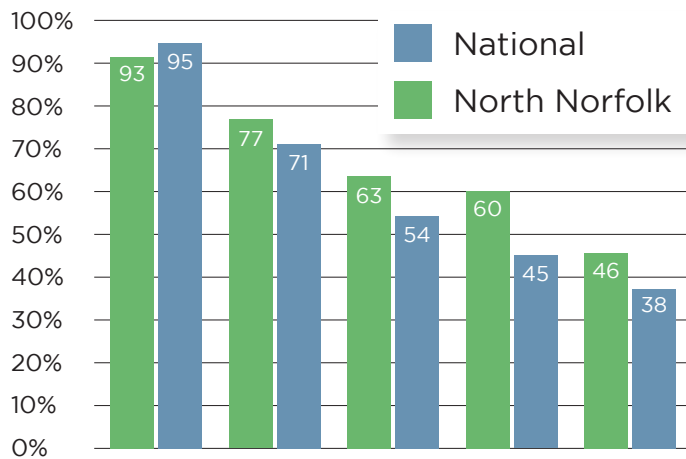
*(April 2022 - March 2023)

3. Business

In North Norfolk's business are predominantly micro, mostly employing less than 9 people. Agriculture, forestry & fishing, accommodation & food services, construction, retail and manufacturing account for the majority of local businesses by volume of enterprises.

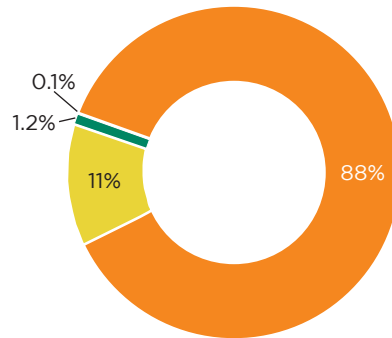


Business survival rate



By employment size

- 88% micro (0-9 employees)
- 11% small (10-49 employees)
- 1.2% medium (50-249 employees)
- 0.1% large (250+employees)



By industry



4. Visitor Economy in Focus

Economic Impact 2022 vs 2019 (Pre-pandemic levels)

Day trips 2022

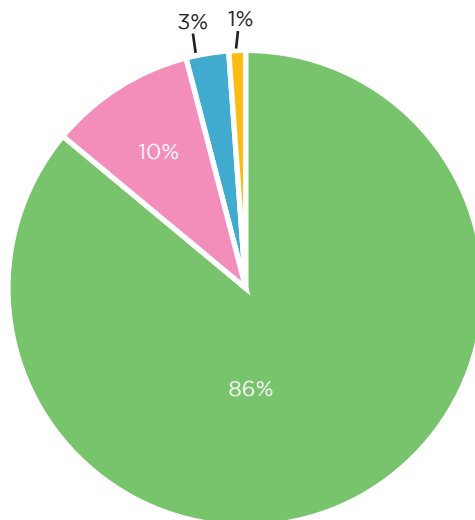
548,400
worth
£136,658,000
2022 vs 2019
-3%
2021 vs 2019
-34%

Overnight trips 2022

9,014,000
worth
£287,813,000
2022 vs 2019
-9%
2021 vs 2019
-30%

Trips by purpose

86% Holiday
10% Friends/Family
3% Business
1% Other



Value of Tourism

2022	£512,370,262
2021	£365,221,323
2019	£528,931,378

Breakdown of expenditure (Total staying)

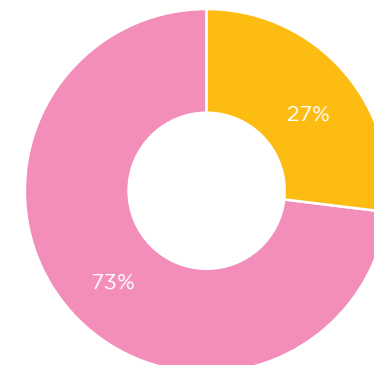
32% Accomodation
29% Food & Drink
12% Shopping
10% Attractions
17% Travel

Breakdown of expenditure (Total day visitors)

43% Food & Drink
26% Shopping
18% Travel
13% Attractions

Tourism jobs as a % of total employment

73% Total jobs
27% Tourism



Business Case Study

Anglia DNA

Anglia DNA is an independent UK laboratory offering a range of scientific services, specialising in DNA, drug and alcohol testing and leading the way in genetic analytical laboratory services and research.

What does this business do?

Anglia DNA is an independent UK Lab offering bespoke DNA testing and extraction. They are also involved in workplace testing, toxicology reporting and genotype sequencing for drug specific reporting. This work will dramatically change the way in which drug prescribing will work in the future. It can potentially offer huge NHS cost savings and deliver massive benefits for patient care.

What are the challenges?

As ever, there are challenges recruiting specialist staff and expanding the businesses. Currently Anglia DNA occupy four different buildings which in itself can create working practice constraints.

Why North Norfolk?

Anglia DNA were previously based at Norwich Research Park, but space was limited and expensive. North Norfolk site provides more space at lower rents and the opportunity to expand. This site also has free parking and ease of access for staff and clients.

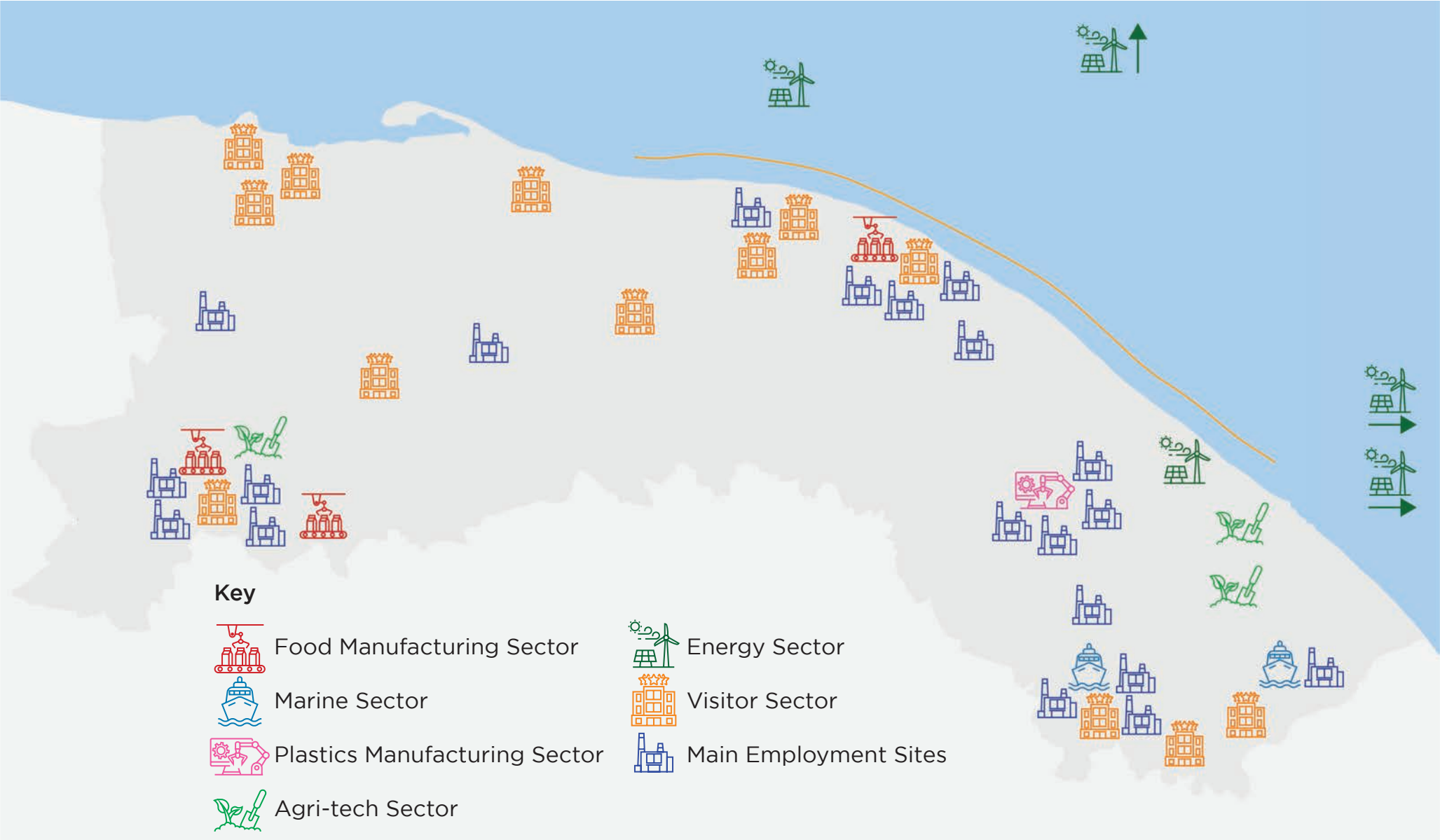
What next?

Genotype sequencing for drug and lifestyle specific reporting is about to come to fruition and that will be a game changer for Anglia DNA and for the industry.



Key Sectors & Sites

A full list of locations is shown on the next page.



Key Sectors & Sites

Note: this list is illustrative of businesses within some of North Norfolk's key sectors, but it is not exhaustive.



Food Manufacturing Sector

Hain Celestial, Fakenham
Kinnerton, Fakenham
Crisp Maltings, Great Ryburgh
Jonas Seafood, Cromer



Marine Sector

Oyster Yachts, Hoveton
Landamores, Hoveton
Haine Marine, Catfield
Jeckells, Hoveton
Benthic Solutions, Hoveton
Trendmarine, Catfield



Plastics Manufacturing Sector

East Coast Plastics, North Walsham
Coda Plastics, North Walsham
Weener Plastics, North Walsham



Agri-tech Sector

Ploeger UK, Fakenham
Ernest Doe, Fakenham
Sands Agricultural Machinery, Brumstead
Crop Systems, Happisburgh



Energy Sector

Bacton Gas Terminal
Sheringham Shoal
Hornsea 3 (Pending delivery)
Vanguard (Pending delivery)
Boreas (Pending delivery)



Visitor Sector

Cromer Pier
Holkham Hall
Wells Maltings & Sackhouse
Wells Harbour
Sheringham Little Theatre
The Broads
Bewilderwood
Wroxham Barns



Main Employment Sites

Catfield Industrial Estate
Crossways Business Centre
Fakenham Industrial Estate
Scottow Enterprise Park
Laundry Loke Industrial Estate
Lingate Industrial Estate
Stonehill Way Industrial Estate
North Norfolk Business Centre
North Norfolk Retail Park
Rose Centre Retail Park
Stalham Road Industrial Estate

Fakenham Racecourse
Deep History Coast
Thursford Steam Engine Museum
and Christmas Spectacular
Cley Marshes Visitor Centre
Holt Country Park
Sheringham & Pretty Corner Country Parks

Tattersett Business Park
The Folly Industrial Estate
Tilia Business Park
Weybourne Road Industrial Estate
Clipbush Park Estate
Melton Constable Industrial Estate
George Edwards Road Industrial Estate
North Creak Airfield Business Park
Middlebrook Way Industrial Estate
Scottow Enterprise Park

Challenges

North Norfolk is faced with a number of challenges that belie a perception that the casual observer or visitor to the district may have. Whilst it is undoubtedly blessed with an array of unique environmental and built assets - with 45 miles of attractive coast, a plethora of charming villages, bustling coastal resorts and an abundance of places of cultural and historical interest - these mask a number of significant and emerging issues.

Indeed, some of its strengths are also the source of some of its weaknesses. For example, local people are challenged by its rurality; with no motorways or trunk roads and limited public transport outside of the towns, this can make it difficult to access employment, training, education and essential services. Moreover, its popularity as a place to retire has exacerbated an aging demographic which potentially will place long-term strains on social care and future labour supply.



Though some may have a perception that **North Norfolk** is a wealthy district, **43.5% of the population** are in fact within the four most deprived deciles of the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Whilst they make a valuable contribution in terms of local spend, the greater wealth tends to be concentrated amongst those who have retired and relocated to the district, often from areas of higher income and with accumulated wealth. **Over one third of the population are over 65** and this is predicted to increase. An aging population tends to place greater strain on social care and access to healthcare. This can also have an impact on those of working age who may need to provide care for family members.

A large proportion of **those of working age are in fact on lower incomes** by national standards. The median salary for full time workers in North Norfolk is 9% less than the rest of Great Britain and full and part time pay for locally employed females remains both less than locally employed males and less than the national average. Consequently, the recent high levels of inflation have had a proportionately greater impact on many residents within North Norfolk. Much of the inflationary pressure has come from rising energy prices, which is further exacerbating a trend of increasing fuel poverty within the district, with 16.3% of the local population living in fuel poverty.

The concentration of growth in the Greater Norwich area and A11 corridors, is placing some of our communities, particularly traditional market towns such as Fakenham and North Walsham, at a disadvantage economically as they become increasingly 'dormitory' in their role and make-up. There is a concern that encouraging people to travel out of their home towns for employment on a large scale also has wider implications for the well-being of the home communities as the local retail and service base is undermined; people who commute to work often do their shopping and other business whilst at or travelling to/from work and this is creating a challenge for the district in sustaining some of our local town centre economies.

Housing affordability is a significant issue within North Norfolk as significant numbers of residential properties within certain parts of the district are being bought by older people retiring here or for second homes and holiday lets. It has been observed that high price housing locations are often occurring where median salaries are lowest. This is having a significant impact on the sustainability and viability of some of our communities, particularly in the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, where the availability of small and affordable properties is extremely limited and is impacting upon the provision of basic community and public services, as well as the supply of labour for tourism businesses. **Local people are effectively 'priced out' of the area** and are therefore moving inland to market towns such as Fakenham and North Walsham where they then access more 'local' jobs (or more easily commute to Norwich) and thus support local services in these locations.



It is recognised that **community and voluntary organisations play a vital role** in the provision of a wide range of activities (both essential and additional) and local facilities that deliver a number of health and well-being benefits that would otherwise not be met. These are needed and highly valued by local people, but are often highly dependent on grants or fund-raising in order to sustain themselves. In North Norfolk such facilities are commonly found in locations that have limited (or no) public transport and, as such, local communities, and particularly those which are vulnerable or on lower incomes, have limited ability to access services that are more readily available in more urbanised areas. Moreover, many facilities have experienced a lack of investment stretching back decades, and rising costs have placed substantial strain on their viability. The loss of such facilities, and the organisations that they support, could cause further degradation to the vitality of many of North Norfolk's rural hamlets and villages.

The anticipated impact of climate change creates uncertainty in the seasons, an expectation of further rises in sea levels and a higher frequency of storms. This will bring challenges in relation to water resource, flooding, coastal erosion and impacts on the natural environment.

In many parts of **North Norfolk, businesses**, communities and future housing provisions **are facing a number of threats** in terms of water security, nutrient neutrality and coastal erosion. The Council is working with partners to develop programmes that will help to partially mitigate or build a greater degree of local resilience to these challenges.

“

In our skills surveys - over a third (38%) found it difficult to meet training needs. Identifying cost, location and lack of suitable courses as the top reasons.

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Business Case Study

West Runton Surf School

Surf Shed West Runton's team are passionate about sharing their love of surfing. They offer a package of lessons, equipment hire and/or experienced instructors to offer visitors the opportunity to enjoy and learn water activities safely.

What does this business do?

This business is currently located in two venues along our coast and have a different offer at each location - Surfing hire and lessons and SUP hire and lessons. The business owner is looking to consolidate his business at one location and expand to have all the boards and accessories available and stored in one place. WRSS is also looking to become the base in the East for adaptive surfing and SUP for visitors and with support from a local SEND school.

What are the challenges?

The main challenges are identifying the right building and space in which to expand into, and securing sufficient funding to support this. There will be a challenges around making sure that there is good access onto the beach for adults and kids with additional needs.

Why North Norfolk?

North Norfolk is fast becoming recognised as a great surfing destination and adds to the varied mix of activities that visitors can do.

What next?

Help and support by New Anglia LEP and NNDC to locate suitable premises and identify grant funding opportunities.



SMEs account for 99.9% of North Norfolk businesses, with 88.2% of them being at the micro level (employing less than 10). Businesses of this scale generally tend to be less well informed about opportunities (business support, grants etc.), are less able to obtain commercial lending (particularly new and fledgling enterprises) or access trading markets.

North Norfolk has a very narrow sectorial make up, with a **third of employment being accounted for within just 3 sectors** - agriculture (inc. forestry & fishing), accommodation & food services and retail. These sectors tend to pay lower wages than most other sectors.

Business in North Norfolk can be very insular and interdependent, with some businesses having limited ability or awareness of how to trade at a national or international scale. **The district has no major road nor high-speed train infrastructure** and the geography is such that it is not en route to anywhere. You have to come here for a reason, but also its catchment is only 180 degrees - being on the North Sea coast.

Historically, North Norfolk has struggled to compete with other areas in securing European and Government infrastructure funding. Eligibility for such investment has typically been assessed in terms of their ability to deliver thousands of jobs, which is something that, as a rural district, could not be demonstrated locally. However, arguably a number of locations in North Norfolk could in fact deliver a number of relatively smaller projects that could support local growth (possibly involving hundreds of jobs) that collectively would be of significant value to the sustainability and future prosperity of the district. With a changing funding landscape and the emerging Levelling-up agenda, it is hoped that this will provide the opportunity for North Norfolk to secure higher levels of investment to help overcome some of the endemic local issues and foster growth opportunities, commensurate at least to the anticipated housing growth within the emerging Local Plan.

The high level of commercial development sites that have arisen over the last two decades within the key growth locations in the region (eg Greater Norwich, A11/A47/A14 corridors) has meant that some indigenous businesses looking for grow on space that can't be found locally have relocated. 'Development-ready' serviced sites are attractive to businesses seeking turnkey premises with limited further investment required. **North Norfolk has over 20 well established industrial sites**, but more recent commercial growth opportunities within the extant Local Plan have come through mixed allocations where the developers have placed greater focus on bringing forward the residential land and have marketed the commercial elements without established site servicing infrastructure. This has dissuaded local businesses and some inward investment who are seeking a more ready-made offering that gives greater certainty of capacity for further growth.

Moreover, the concentration of **new jobs in more urbanised areas has had increasingly negative impacts on market towns** which historically had a good level of self-containment, with local manufacturing jobs on the outskirts in turn supporting retail and professional services jobs in town centres through locally retained footfall. High numbers of jobs from now long forgotten industries have effectively been redirected to the Greater Norwich and consequently market towns, in both North Norfolk and the rest of the county, have become increasingly dormitory and less sustainable locations, resulting in greater commuting distances and higher levels of congestion within the Norwich area. Whilst many **local businesses demonstrated a high degree of resilience during the Covid-19 pandemic**, this was largely met through a combination of Government support and the use of business or family resources. Consequently, a high number of businesses are now sitting on lower cash reserves or in higher leveraged positions than before the pandemic, reducing their ability to invest in their business and inhibiting their capacity for growth.

However, many businesses - partly driven by necessity and in part through delayed investment plans - have recognised a number of opportunities to diversify, innovate and build resilience into their business. The pandemic has also highlighted that some businesses are not embracing new ways of working and risk returning to previous outmoded models of conducting business and people management. In general, engagement with our businesses has identified that the pandemic had exposed a number of fundamental structural issues in businesses, including insufficient cash positions, lack of contingency preparation, business planning and management training.

It is recognised that a number of our cultural, historic and heritage institutions - struggling with rising costs and many successive years of under-investment - are also feeling the strains. Such businesses and organisations, which all play an integral role in the make-up of the local cultural heritage and visitor offer, are keen to explore ways to invest in their facilities so that they can sustain themselves and improve the visitor experience.

The relatively **poor performance of businesses in North Norfolk**, in terms of real GVA growth and productivity in recent times, has been **compounded by poor utility infrastructure**, including broadband and mobile coverage. Improved communication infrastructure across the whole county, including rural areas, would help to ensure greater equality in growth across the region and deliver wider benefits through local economic regeneration and reduced congestion.

UK Power Network's local distribution network serving the east of the North Norfolk District are at capacity. This is a critical local issue, desirably requiring distribution infrastructure to be upgraded from the Norwich main sub-station up to North Walsham. **The pressure on this network exists** not only in terms of supply to **support new**

business and housing growth, but also the ability of new sources of embedded generation through solar, onshore wind and anaerobic digestion facilities being able to connect into the 'grid'. There is a risk that, if the local electricity distribution network serving the east of North Norfolk is not addressed, the district faces being in the same position as with gas landed at Bacton Gas Terminal - with supplies coming into the UK effectively **'bypassing' the district**, with the area experiencing all of the inconvenience of accommodating these major schemes, but seeing little of the benefits. It is appreciated that this can be a difficult pill for local people to swallow when they similarly observe and suffer the inconvenience and disruption of cable corridors proposals for major offshore wind developments crossing the district, however well the construction of these schemes are managed.

As with many other areas of the country, particularly within the south and the east, **water security remains a critical issue for North Norfolk**. The combined pressures of climate change and increasing demand, along with the need to tackle environmental issues and ensure resilience to drought, have resulted in a sizeable inter-regional water resources challenge. Ensuring that there is an adequate water supply is essential to supporting future housing and business growth and sustaining businesses who abstract water.



North Norfolk has an aging population and workforce. Many businesses are struggling to address the matter of succession planning, which threatens their future existence and places financial and wellbeing strain on business owners. This is often compounded by the rurality of their premises, which typically means that public transport is limited (or non-existent) and therefore **many local businesses struggle to recruit and retain staff**, particularly when higher wages and better access to training, education or other opportunities can be found outside of the district.

As in common with many other rural areas, **'Brain Drain' is a significant issue for North Norfolk** which has very limited access to further education, higher education and training. There is also a 'perceived' lack of opportunity by some, which conflicts with the fact that a number of businesses have struggled to fill vacancies for highly skilled and well paid roles, such as engineers. It has been observed that young people leaving the area for education, training or work opportunities elsewhere are not returning, possibly only intending to retire here later in life. The income-to-house-price ratio serves to further exacerbate this issue with **North Norfolk having a lower median salary** than both Norfolk and the East of England region. The issue is particularly stark within our most rural villages and hamlets, which are commonly seeing an aging and diminishing population with consequent impacts on local services that are becoming increasingly unviable.

Some businesses are failing to engage young people and to raise the profile of their business and demonstrate career pathways. Many businesses seek to fill only immediate vacancies and do not necessarily have the knowledge or foresight to recognise the value of sowing seeds with those of pre-work age e.g. work experience, internships, career days etc. In addition, **employment retention in some sectors locally is very poor**, particularly in care and hospitality. This has had a significant impact on service delivery.

Much of the jobs growth in Greater Norwich has been to the south-west of the city – Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, Norwich Research Park, Longwater and the A11 corridor – all of which are relatively inaccessible for many North Norfolk residents without significant effort. The concentration and clustering of new business growth and employment in such areas potentially creates long-term problems for North Norfolk. A high commuter outflow of working-age people has in part fuelled the narrowing employment choice within the district and exacerbated 'brain drainage', **with young people choosing to locate to locations where there is greater opportunity**. Others are left to travel some distance to access jobs, with significant cost in terms of commuting either by personal or public transport.



Access to post-16 education and training facilities in North Norfolk is difficult as many courses and providers are typically found in areas of greater population density. Apprenticeship numbers have been falling nationally for some time and the issue is further challenged locally by the fact that there are no training providers headquartered within North Norfolk. Furthermore, many local businesses willing to invest in training or apprenticeships have frequently advised that they are having to send staff significant distances for accredited training, often outside of the East of England, resulting in additional costs for both the business and the employee.

A contributing factor to the lower median wages in North Norfolk is that approximately **a quarter of the population are employed within some aspect of the visitor economy**, which in the main tends to pay lower wages than other sectors. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic had a substantial impact on local tourism. The Economic Impact of Tourism Report for North Norfolk in 2022 indicated some degree of recovery but that the volume and value of tourism still have not returned to the pre-pandemic levels.

Whilst the 2022 report did demonstrate a recovery, **North Norfolk's high dependence on the visitor economy**, and the recently exposed fragility of it, means it is essential to find ways to ensure it remains vibrant, resilient and moves more towards a year-round offering. Shifting from the traditional seasonal tourism patterns, which tends to create short-term, lower-paid employment and less animated places for local people in the low seasons, will be essential to fostering greater wealth creation and economic resilience.



In our recruitment survey, 81% of respondents had difficulty in obtaining new staff. 



Business Case Study

Swift Technology Group

Swift Technology Group, a driven organisation providing complete end-to-end product development. With industry leading expertise in design, manufacture and support in Aeronautical, Marine, Automotive, Oil & Gas or Renewable Energy.

What does this business do?

Swift Technology Group incorporates eight active companies under one trading umbrella. For example, Swift Air are working on the development of a new small sustainable aircraft. In another part of the business is the design and production of composites for marine companies – specifically yacht hulls. Other composite work also includes the production of elements for the automotive industry.

What are the challenges?

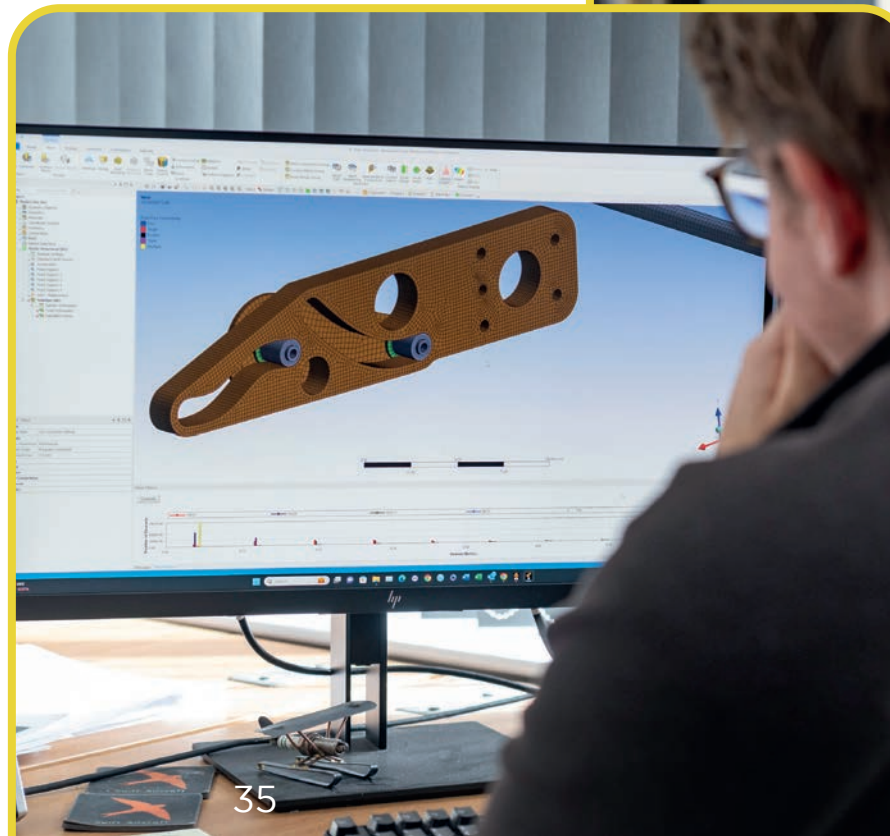
SPACE! Swift have recently submitted a planning application for additional hangar space which will be critical for growth. Other challenges include recruitment and investment, where up front investment in new machinery is needed to support new contract bids.

Why North Norfolk?

Space is critical and the affordability of large production areas is essential and their site at Scottow Enterprise Park provides ample opportunity for them to grow into.

What next?

Swift Technology Group are working on a number of key projects, any of which will deliver huge growth potential. These include the new Swift aircraft as well as Instron testing contracts and new commissions for carbon fibre composite work.



Delivering Success

The Economic Strategy & Action Plan is focused on supporting and delivering against 3 priority objectives:

Creating an Environment for Business to thrive in

Helping to create a place where local businesses can grow and prosper, new enterprises can flourish, inward investment is nurtured, and innovation, fresh thinking and creativity is welcomed.

Infrastructure to Support Growth

Working together to deliver the fundamental elements needed to support the objectives of increased housing provision, economic growth, mitigating climate change and creating thriving and sustainable communities.

Skills for Jobs

Creating a skilled, robust and sustainable workforce to support local businesses in their ambition to fulfil their growth aspirations.



What we will do:

- Work with our market and resort towns to reinforce their roles as local service centres, centres of employment, financial services and business activity, served by public transport
- Provide support to allow rural businesses to thrive, recognising that many of our larger employers operate outside of our main towns.
- Look to maximise the benefits to our business community of the UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funds.
- Continue to promote North Norfolk's diverse tourism and visitor offer.
- Work with partners locally and nationally to deliver increased sustainability in marine industries and develop a sustainable and equitable blue economy that delivers ocean recovery and local prosperity.

How we will do it:

We will undertake the following projects and activities:

Rural Business & Communities Grant – design and deliver a grant scheme to increase business investment and diversification, and to help community organisations with projects that support social action, volunteering and culture.

Business Support Programme – providing 1-2-1 support, advice and guidance and assisting with access to funding and resources.

Business Digitalisation Programme – supporting businesses through undertaking a digital audit and providing funding to assist with implementing recommended measures that deliver efficiency gains or improve their digital presence.

Tourism marketing and business support – working with Visit North Norfolk to deliver marketing campaigns (including the promotion of the Deep History Coast), and work with tourism businesses to support North Norfolk's diverse tourism and visitor offer.



North Walsham High Street Heritage Action Zone – deliver the final year of this programme. This will improve pedestrian flow and enhance the public realm; bring back to life under-utilised spaces; and, improve the structure, character and viability of a number of important buildings within the town.

Stalham High Street Task Force - take forward the recommendations of the Stalham High Street Task Force Action Plan through the facilitation of a Town Team, or Place Partnership.

Facilitate a Banking Hub - work with partners in Fakenham to retain banking and post office services in the town centre, through establishing a banking hub facility.

Business Partnership/forum – we will explore the development of a business forum for businesses to engage with the Council, share information and provide a sounding board for new initiatives.

Business Decarbonisation Programme – deliver a programme to support businesses on their sustainability journey by helping them to develop a decarbonisation strategy and through grant support.

Business Sustainability Toolkit - develop a package of resources to support local businesses to become more sustainable and reduce their energy costs.

Invest North Norfolk – building on the virtual business hub to further develop the brand and act as an umbrella for the promotion of NNDC’s business support offer in terms of location, skills, supply chain support etc. Continue to develop an effective regular communication channel to help businesses to keep up-to-date with information on council services, events and other sources of support.

Improve Business Intelligence – through the acquisition of business, labour market and movement data intelligence. This will improve our knowledge and understanding of businesses and labour market supply/demand, and enhance our evidence base to support the development of funding bids.

Project Pipeline Management – maintain a database of identified business and community projects and investments, including establishing their needs (funding, resource, advice etc), timescales to deliver and, where required, the support needed from the Council and/or partners to realise them.

Key Account Management – deliver a rolling programme of one-to-one engagements with our larger employers. This helps to instil the Council’s role as a key point of contact to support new investment, help overcome any barriers to growth or support with any appropriate early interventions if a business is experiencing financial difficulty.

Business Survey – undertake a business survey to help the Council to better understand the prevailing economic and business conditions facing local businesses. This will help to inform and shape future business support.

What we will do:

- Explore opportunities for securing development of our few brownfield sites.
- Seek to maximise the potential from the local implications of the transition towards hydrogen and carbon capture, use and storage (CCUS) at the Bacton Gas site.
- Act as a digital champion to promote investment to address our competitive disadvantage through broadband and mobile connectivity challenges.
- Influence issues of water scarcity and constraints in the local electricity distribution network.
- Ensure an adequate supply of serviced employment land and premises to support local business.

How we will do it:

Key Infrastructure delivery - actively work with developers, Norfolk County Council and other partners to support the delivery of important infrastructure projects, such as the Fakenham A148 roundabout enhancement and the North Walsham western link road.

Bacton Energy Hub - be a lead advocate and facilitator in establishing the Bacton Energy Hub site as one of the UK’s principal locations for carbon capture and storage and hydrogen production. This will serve to support the UK’s energy transition to Net Zero, realising the employment, supply chain and wider economic benefits for North Norfolk, Norfolk and the wider East of England region.

Develop Energy Infrastructure and Water Resources Plans - working collaboratively with partners, we will seek to develop and lobby for solutions to resolve key infrastructure constraints in the district that need to be addressed by statutory undertakers so that businesses and developers are not disadvantaged in taking forward investment plans in the district.



Mobile and digital infrastructure - through developing a deeper understanding of the constraints of existing mobile and digital infrastructure in North Norfolk, lobby key operators and providers so as to reduce the “digital divide” which exists in the district.

Serviced land business case/pipeline development - based on previously commissioned surveys, develop a pipeline project proposal which seeks to increase the supply of serviced land or advance factory premises at Fakenham, Holt or North Walsham and can be delivered at pace if external funding can be secured for such an investment.

Establish and maintain a regular dialogue with **private sector developers** and commercial property agents, to inform decision making and assist the delivery of employment sites.

Market Town Network Improvement Strategies - Norfolk County Council have previously produced reports for North Walsham, Fakenham and Hoveton and Wroxham. We will encourage and support reports in the other towns.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plans (LCWIPs) - support the development and delivery of LCWIPS in Sheringham, Cromer, Holt, and Fakenham.

Commercial opportunities marketing - Monitor and map data relating to employment sites and premises and promote development/investment opportunities where they exist.

Establish new facilities at Fakenham Sports Centre - including a 25m swimming pool, a full size 3G all-weather artificial grass pitch and implement carbon reduction measures to the existing Trap Lane facility.



What we will do:

- Promote innovation and workforce development throughout the district.
- Promote improved access to post 16 vocational education.
- Continue to provide apprenticeships opportunities, directly as a large local employer and promoting uptake in the wider business economy.

How we will do it:

We will undertake the following projects and activities:

Establish and support a North Norfolk Skills Assembly - to help embed a joined up and collaborative approach to supporting skills and recruitment and overcome critical issues.

Support the delivery of the **Local Skills Improvement Plan** through collaborating with the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce and local partners - helping employers to access to funding and workforce/employee skills support.

Delivery of the Future Skills Now project (2024/25) - empowering employers to develop upskilling opportunities and the provision of UKSPF funding for training aligned to specific employer needs.

Collaborating with Further education, independent providers, Norfolk Country Council and VCSE organisations - to help promote and increase post-16 opportunities across the district.

Raise and support the access to careers (IAG) advice

across the district - working with the Careers hub, Enterprise network and our education establishments to promote career opportunities across North Norfolk.

Support and contribute to the **New Anglia Learning Providers Forum** (NALPF) - sharing best practice in this theme and leveraging further opportunities for the region.

Work collaboratively with **Apprenticeship Norfolk** - to promote and introduce employers to the benefits for Apprenticeships.

Act as ambassador for apprenticeships - through the Council leading by example by taking on apprenticeships as a means to grow our own talent.



Business Case Study

Alpha Case

Alpha Chase formed in 2004 has developed a reputation for providing innovative solutions for the most challenging product handling problems, with an attention to detail, quality and performance.

What does this business do?

Alpha Chase, trading for over 20 years, are involved in the design and manufacture production and assembly lines, predominately for the food, drink, personal care products and packaging. An inward investment from west Norfolk, clients include blue chip companies such as Unilever and Coco Cola AC have a satellite office in Burton Upon Trent, where they support the relocated Colman's production line. Parts of this building will be let to a number of other users who need office space, meeting rooms and other functional spaces.

What are the challenges?

Key to growth is attracting skilled people, as well as keeping talented staff. Roles required are likely to include fabricators, welders and designers and engineers.

Why North Norfolk?

Alpha Chase's MD is Norfolk born and bred. He lives locally and loves the space and the surrounding landscape. The building (formally owned by Equinor) is fabulous, well specified and offers space and growth potential.

What next?

After dividing up office space and making the building's IT work for separate company uses, the plan is to rent parts of the building to other businesses looking for office and meeting space. AC are also looking to recruit apprenticeships to shadow and learn from existing skilled workers.



Next Steps

This document is presently at draft stage. Through engagement with businesses, partners, representative organisations and NNDC's Committee process, the document will be further developed as necessary. It is appreciated that the economic climate is continually evolving and therefore the Strategy, and in particular the Action Plan, will need to be responsive to change. As such, it should be considered a 'living' document.

The next steps of this strategy are:

- Review and seek input from NNDC's Corporate Leadership Team and informally from NNDC's Cabinet.
- Submission to NNDC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 14 February 2024.
- Hold a Business Engagement event – to include a summary of report/actions and test some of the challenges - 30 January 2024.
- Submission to NNDC's Cabinet, and subject to their recommendation.
- Submission to Full Council, with a recommendation for the formal adoption of the Strategy.
- Incorporate the Strategy into Invest North Norfolk.

Post Adoption

- Continued planning and development of identified activities.
- Install appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for key delivery items as part of the Council's Performance Management.
- Maintain the Economic Strategy and Action Plan as a 'living document'.

Economic Strategic Action Plan 2023 - 2027

The following Action Plan outlines the projects and activities the Council will undertake to support the delivery of the three priority objectives. It is not intended to be an exhaustive catalogue of all activities, as much of the delivery is business as usual for the Council. However, it serves to highlight some of the particularly key items of delivery that the Council will be engaged in, both presently and over the coming years.



Action	Rural Business and Communities Grant - delivery of £1.4m of grant support to develop, diversify and create jobs.
Output	Grant programme developed and delivered
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Infrastructure to support growth; Promote health, wellbeing and independence for all; Engaged & Supported individuals and communities; Increase accessibility and inclusion for all; Promote culture, leisure and sport activities. Local Plan Regional - Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-2024; Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy. National - Building Back Better (2021) Levelling Up White Paper
Delivery	2023/24 and 2024/25
By Whom	New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) & NNDC
Indicative Funding	Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)
Desired Outcomes	Business - Increased business capital investment, including diversification, investing in innovation and adopting productivity enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques. Community - Increased investment in: capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups; existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer; impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.
<hr/>	
Action	Business Support Programme - work with New Anglia LEP to provide a cohesive package of support for North Norfolk businesses, including 1-2-1 support, advice and guidance.
Output	Business Support Programme delivered (New Anglia Growth Hub), businesses supported
Strategic Alignment	Local - Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Infrastructure to support growth; Skills for jobs. Local Plan - Regional Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy; Local Skills Improvement Plan; Norfolk Rural Strategy 2021-2024. National - Skill English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 Vision; Green Jobs Taskforce Report 2021s for Jobs White Paper
Delivery	2023/24 and 2024/25
By Whom	New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) & NNDC
Indicative Funding	NALEP & UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)
Desired Outcomes	Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems, and supporting businesses at all stages of their development to sustain, grow and innovate.

Action	Business Digitalisation Programme (Go Digital) - supporting business resilience, efficiency and growth through digital advice and funding.
Output	Mentor programme and grant scheme
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy National - UK Digital Strategy 2022
Delivery	2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25
By Whom	Norfolk County Council (NCC) and NNDC
Indicative Funding	NCC and UKSPF
Desired Outcomes	Improve digital skills and presence of SMEs

Action	Tourism marketing and business support - Working with Visit North Norfolk and partners to deliver marketing campaigns, influence national tourism policy and support local businesses.
Output	Marketing Campaign and increased web searches for North Norfolk
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Promote culture, leisure and sport activities. Regional - Visit East Of England Destination Development Plan; Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy National - Industrial Strategy: Tourism Sector Deal; Local Visitor Economy Partnership Programme - Visit Britain
Delivery	Ongoing, with UKSPF funding in 22/23 and 23/24
By Whom	Visit North Norfolk & NNDC
Indicative Funding	UKSPF & NNDC
Desired Outcomes	To support North Norfolk's diverse tourism and visitor offer

Action	North Walsham High Street Heritage Action Zone - delivery of a four year programme (ending March 2024) to invest in the built assets of the town centre and its key buildings, and to celebrate its history and heritage.
Output	Place making and building improvements and a Cultural Programme
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Promote culture, leisure and sport activities; Infrastructure to support growth; Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy. National - Building Back Better (2021)
Delivery	2024
By Whom	NNDC, Historic England, NCC, appointed lead architects, local stakeholders
Indicative Funding	Historic England, Getting Building Fund, NCC and NNDC
Desired Outcomes	Improved pedestrian flow, reduced high street emissions, improved spaces for activities/dwell. Use of historic and heritage assets to tell the story of the town.

Action	Stalham High Street Task Force - facilitate the development of a town team to drive High Street improvements
Output	Report and establishment of town team
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy National - Building Back Better (2021)
Delivery	December 2023
By Whom	HSTF, NNDC and local stakeholders
Indicative Funding	HSTF and NNDC staff time
Desired Outcomes	HSTF's are intended to provide guidance, tools and skills to help communities, partnerships and local government transform their high streets.

Action **Facilitate a Banking Hub** - work with local partners in Fakenham to retain banking facilities in the town centre through establishing a banking hub facility

Output **Establishment of a Banking Hub**

Strategic Alignment Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Engaged and supported individuals and communities; Increase accessibility and inclusion for all

Delivery **September 2024**

By Whom NNDC, local stakeholders and relevant partners

Indicative Funding

Desired Outcomes To help retain local access to cash and financial services.

Action **Business Forum/Network** - establish mechanisms for the Council to engage with businesses to help inform them of key information and influence future support.

Output **Events held**

Strategic Alignment Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy
Local Skills Improvement Plan, Norfolk Rural Strategy 2021-2024

Delivery **Autumn/Winter 2024**

By Whom NNDC, local/regional business representatives, local businesses

Indicative Funding **NNDC staff time**

Desired Outcomes To engage with the Council, share information and provide a sounding board for new initiatives.

Action	Business Decarbonisation programme - ‘support business growth and sustainability through information, advice and funding
Output	Advice and Grants
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - Continue our journey to Net Zero; An environment for business to thrive in; Net Zero 2030 Strategy and Action Plan; Reducing emissions from running a business in North Norfolk. Environmental Charter Addressing the climate emergency and help to promote environmental excellence. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy. National - Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy
Delivery	2024/2025
By Whom	NNDC and Groundworks East
Indicative Funding	UKSPF
Desired Outcomes	Supporting business decarbonisation and improving the natural environment whilst growing the local economy. buildings, transport and beyond.
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Action	Business Sustainability Toolkit - develop a package of resources to support and promote sustainable business practices.
Output	Development of web resources and support
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - Continue our journey to Net Zero; An environment for business to thrive in. Net Zero 2030 Strategy and Action Plan; Reducing emissions from running a business in North Norfolk. Environmental Charter; Addressing the climate emergency and help to promote environmental excellence. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy. National - Net Zero Strategy; Build Back Greener; Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy
Delivery	2024/2025
By Whom	NNDC
Indicative Funding	NNDC staff time
Desired Outcomes	Improved knowledge and understanding for businesses seeking to make their business more sustainable, energy efficient and reduce operational costs.

Action	Invest North Norfolk - Further develop the brand for the promotion of NNDC's business support activities.
Output	Development of web resources, business support activities and e-communications
Strategic Alignment	Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Infrastructure to support growth; Skills for Jobs Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy. National - Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy; Build Back Better; Skills for Jobs White Paper; Local Skills Improvement Plan
Delivery	Ongoing
By Whom	NNDC
Indicative Funding	NNDC staff time
Desired Outcomes	Improved communication and information sharing with our business community, resulting in higher levels of engagement and facilitating take up of support.

Action	Improved Business Intelligence - Procure business, labour market and movement data intelligence.
Output	Procurement of data/software
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Infrastructure to support growth; Skills for Jobs Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy; Local Skills Improvement Plan National - Build Back Better; Skills for Jobs White Paper; English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 Vision; Green Jobs Taskforce Report 2021
Delivery	December 2023
By Whom	NNDC
Indicative Funding	UKSPF (capacity building element)
Desired Outcomes	Better knowledge and understanding of businesses and labour market supply/demand. This will support the development of a stronger evidence base for the targeting, monitoring and evaluating of existing activities, and the development of future projects/funding bids.

Action	Project Pipeline Management - developing and maintaining a pipeline of project ideas and local investments; from concept through to delivery
Output	Database created and maintained
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Infrastructure to support growth; Promote health, wellbeing and independence for all; Engaged & Supported individuals and communities; Increase accessibility and inclusion for all; Promote culture, leisure and sport activities. Regional - Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-2024; Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy. National - Building Back Better (2021); Levelling Up White Paper
Delivery	Ongoing
By Whom	NNDC
Indicative Funding	NNDC staff time
Desired Outcomes	Maintain an understanding local investments and projects (1-2, 1-3years, 3years+ etc. These may be supported through immediate advice and guidance or shape and inform future funding bids.
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Action	Key Account Management - Maintain a database of and an active dialogue with key businesses within the district.
Output	Database maintained and businesses engaged via rolling programme
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Infrastructure to support growth; Skills for jobs. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy; Local Skills Improvement Plan; Norfolk Rural Strategy 2021-2024 National - Skill English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 Vision; Green Jobs Taskforce Report 2021s for Jobs White Paper
Delivery	Ongoing
By Whom	NNDC
Indicative Funding	NNDC staff time
Desired Outcomes	This helps to instil the Council's role as a key point of contact to support new investment, help overcome any barriers to growth or support with any appropriate early interventions if a business is experiencing financial difficulty.

Action	Business Survey - undertake a business survey to help better understand the prevailing economic business conditions facing local businesses.
Output	Survey delivered. Results analysed interrogated and used to evidence future work programmes/funding bids
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Infrastructure to support growth; Skills for jobs. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy; Local Skills Improvement Plan; Norfolk Rural Strategy 2021-2024
Delivery	Spring 2024
By Whom	NNDC
Indicative Funding	NNDC staff time
Desired Outcomes	To improve our knowledge of the critical issues impacting businesses. To provide an evidence base to shape and inform future programmes and fund bids.



Action	Key Infrastructure Delivery
Output	Identify routes to delivery that unlock barriers to/and facilitate growth. Particular focus on items including the Fakenham A148 roundabout enhancement and the North Walsham western link road. Development of Energy Infrastructure and Water Resources Plans. Regular meetings with NCC and relevant partners to collaborate and work through delivery programmes.
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Infrastructure to support growth; Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy; Water Resources East - Water Resources Plan for Eastern England (draft) National - Energy white paper: Powering our net zero future.
Delivery	Ongoing with key dates specific to individual workflows
By Whom	NNDC, NCC, Central Government local stakeholders, developers
Indicative Funding	S106, developers, regional/national funding
Desired Outcomes	Supporting the delivery of growth areas identified within the Local Plan. Working collaboratively with partners, we will seek to develop and lobby for solutions to resolve key infrastructure constraints. Influencing issues of water scarcity and constraints in the local electricity distribution network. Acting as a digital champion to promote investment to address our competitive disadvantage through broadband and mobile connectivity challenges.

Action	Bacton Energy Hub
Output	Working closely with the terminal operators, national and regional partners and local stakeholder to understand the opportunities and support the future development of the Bacton Terminal.
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Infrastructure to support growth; Skills for Jobs Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy. National - Building Back Better (2021) Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener; Energy white paper: Powering our net zero future; Green Jobs Taskforce Report 2021
Delivery	Ongoing
By Whom	Bacton Terminal operators, national/regional partners, NCC, NNDC
Indicative Funding	TBC
Desired Outcomes	Seeking to maximise the potential from the local implications of the transition towards hydrogen and carbon capture, use and storage (CCUS) at the Bacton Gas site.

Action	Serviced land business case/pipeline development - Develop a pipeline of project proposals which seeks to increase the supply of serviced land or advance factory premises at Fakenham, Holt or North Walsham.
Output	Pipeline/business cases prepared
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Infrastructure to support growth; Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy. National - Building Back Better (2021)
Delivery	December 2024
By Whom	NNDC and relevant partners eg developers, NCC, funding providers
Indicative Funding	TBC
Desired Outcomes	To be better positioned to capitalise on future funding opportunities that may bring forward employment site delivery.

Action	Establish new facilities at Fakenham Sports Centre , including a 25-metre public swimming pool and improved outdoor sports facilities.
Output	Improved facilities, including a 25m swimming pool, a full size 3G all-weather artificial grass pitch and implement carbon reduction measures to the existing Trap Lane facility.
Strategic Alignment	Corporate Plan – Infrastructure to support growth; Promote health, wellbeing and independence for all; Increase accessibility and inclusion for all; Promote culture, leisure and sports activities; Continue our journey to net zero; Maximising opportunity
Delivery	Delivery TBC
By Whom	Details TBC
Indicative Funding	Levelling Up Fund
Desired Outcomes	Greater health and well-being for local residents

Action	Promote Apprenticeship take up - connecting and facilitating to deliver increased uptake of opportunities and aspirations.
Output	Promotion of local apprenticeship opportunities, including supporting the North Norfolk Apprenticeships 100 campaign. Promote apprenticeship opportunities within NNDC.
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Skills for Jobs. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy; Local Skills Improvement Plan. National - Skills for Jobs White Paper; English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 Vision; Green Jobs Taskforce Report 2021
Delivery	Ongoing
By Whom	NCC, Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, DWP, NNDC, Apprenticeships Norfolk
Indicative Funding	NNDC Officer time
Desired Outcomes	Increased apprenticeship take up which provides a route into employment or reskilling/upskilling existing staff. Supports businesses and organisations (inc NNDC) to grow and retain local talent.
Action	North Norfolk Skills Assembly/Forum - establish a forum to help facilitate a joined up and collaborative approach to overcoming skills and recruitment issues
Output	Establishment of forum; Agreed Terms of Reference; Identified strategy/critical issues
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Skills for Jobs. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy; Local Skills Improvement Plan. National - Skills for Jobs White Paper; English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 Vision; Green Jobs Taskforce Report 2021
Delivery	Summer 2024
By Whom	NCC, Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, DWP, NNDC, Skills/recruitment representatives from public/private sector
Indicative Funding	NCC, NNDC Officer time
Desired Outcomes	To embed a joined up and collaborative approach to supporting skills and recruitment and to support the local delivery of the Norfolk Local Skills Improvement Plan.

Action	Future Skills NOW - Employment Skills Programme - mapping and audit exercise to support the skills challenges and to be in a position to shape and partner wider skills and training programmes.
Output	Programme delivery
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - An environment for business to thrive in; Skills for Jobs. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy; Local Skills Improvement Plan National - Skills for Jobs White Paper; English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 Vision; Green Jobs Taskforce Report 2021
Delivery	2024/2025
By Whom	NCC & NNDC
Indicative Funding	NCC, UKSPF, NNDC
Desired Outcomes	Tailored support to help people in employment, who are not supported by mainstream provision to address barriers to accessing education and training courses. This includes supporting the retention of groups who are likely to leave the labour market early.



Action	Additional grant funding for energy efficiency retrofit improvements for local homes in North Norfolk - linking with our Net Zero ambitions and our desire to support more vulnerable households.
Output	Grant delivery and advice
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - Continue our journey to Net Zero; Promote health, wellbeing and independence for all; Address housing need; Promote best use of housing stock and good housing standards; Net Zero 2030 Strategy and Action Plan. Improving the energy efficiency of your home; Environmental Charter. Addressing the climate emergency and help to promote environmental excellence. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy National - Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener
Delivery	2024/2025
By Whom	Norfolk Warm Homes (NWH) & NNDC
Indicative Funding	DESNZ, UKSPF & NNDC
Desired Outcomes	To improve the energy efficiency of local homes and reduce the cost of living for those particularly on low income.

Action	Additional funding for the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund - helping communities to develop new and innovative projects which will improve their environment as well as their health and social wellbeing.
Output	Grant delivery
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - Promote health, wellbeing and independence for all; Engaged & Supported individuals and communities; Increase accessibility and inclusion for all; Promote culture, leisure and sport activities. Quality of Life Strategy 2022-24
Delivery	2022/23 & 2023/24
By Whom	NNDC
Indicative Funding	UKSPF
Desired Outcomes	To help build strong and sustainable communities and ensure the long-term future and wellbeing of our communities.

Action	Develop a Cultural & Creative Sector Strategy - identification of existing cultural programmes and joining up to promote cultural opportunities for our residents.
Output	Strategy report and action plan
Strategic Alignment	Local Corporate Plan - Promote culture, leisure and sport activities; An environment for business to thrive in; Quality of Life Strategy 2022-24. Regional - Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy; Visit East Of England Destination Development Plan. National - Creative industries sector vision: a joint plan to drive growth, build talent and develop skills (2023) Industrial Strategy:Tourism Sector Deal March 2024
Delivery	March 2024
By Whom	NNDC and professional consultants
Indicative Funding	UKSPF
Desired Outcomes	Identification of local activity and provision of a cohesive and joined up approach to Cultural delivery.



Business Case Study

October Studios

October Studios are a production company, based in rural north Norfolk, who build spaces and create additional services to support TV and film making.

What does this business do?

October Studios employ 20 permanent people and also use local supply chains to fulfil the design of sets and the supply of costumes, props and make-up services. They house the only free standing permanent 'Oval Office' set in Europe. With their advanced use of AI screen technology they can support film and television production. Alongside the tech they have a large prop and costume department including furniture, small props and set design furnishings. A separate department create bespoke costume racks for film shoots and amongst other production companies including Netflix.

What are the challenges?

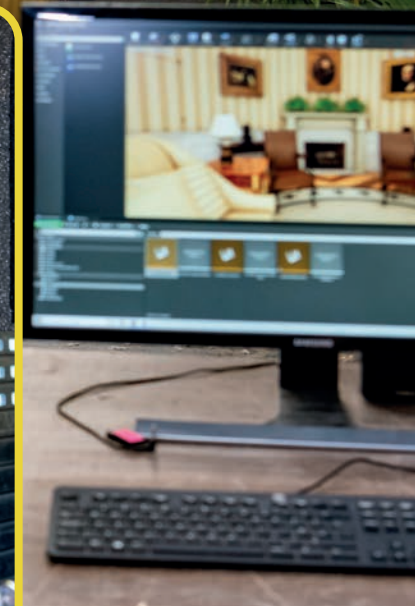
Space is critical and affordability of large production areas can create a financial advantage. For this industry access, parking, local crew availability and low cost rents are essential. The Runway, alleyways and old industrial setting is also very useful for set development.

Why North Norfolk?

October Studios is located on Scottow Enterprise Zone which provides space, accessibility and reduced overheads. October Studios are able to produce their work here at a fraction of what it would cost in London.

What next?

October Studios are constantly looking for more space and there is a desire to expand premises for set production and for storage.





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