

Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework



APRIL 2024

TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Norfolk Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation (RAMS) Programme
Governance**

And

**Norfolk Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy Board
(Norfolk RAMS Board)**

Section 1 - Norfolk Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation (RAMS) Programme Governance

1.1 Background

The RAMS mitigation programme is a programme set up by the 8 Local Planning Authorities of Norfolk. It aims to deliver the mitigation necessary to avoid the likely adverse effects from the 'in-combination' impacts of residential development that is forecast to be delivered across Norfolk until 2047 at internationally designated sites. It is important to acknowledge that the RAMS exists to mitigate these 'in-combination' effects specifically. It is not a mechanism to deliver mitigation for recreational impacts from individual residential developments alone or individually; this must be provided on or near the development site.

To this extent, the RAMS is 'strategic' in nature. The RAMS identifies a detailed programme of strategic mitigation measures at the internationally designated sites which would be funded by contributions from residential development schemes. The strategic approach of a RAMS has the following advantages:

- It provides developers, agents and planning authorities with a comprehensive, consistent and efficient way to ensure that appropriate mitigation for residential schemes is provided in an effective and timely manner.
- It is pragmatic: a simple and effective way of protecting and enhancing the internationally important wildlife in Norfolk and will help to reduce the time taken to reach planning decisions;
- It provides an evidence based and fair mechanism to fund the mitigation measures required as a result of the planned residential growth; and
- The notion of RAMS and this strategy itself is endorsed by Natural England and has been used effectively to protect other Habitats Sites across England and is therefore the most effective way to mitigate in-combination recreational impacts.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of Norfolk RAMS Programme Fund is to deliver the programme of projects identified in the Norfolk RAMS Action Plan. The project programme will be created and updated by the RAMS Delivery Manager who will be hosted by Norwich City Council. The programme will be agreed and overseen by the Norfolk RAMS Board. The decision on the timing and delivery of the projects will be determined by the Norfolk RAMS Board, who will ensure the projects are being delivered in line with GIRAMS Strategy and the planned GIRAMS action plan.

Section 2 - Norfolk RAMS Board Function

2.1 Delivery of Norfolk RAMS Programme

The implementation of the agreed programme of projects will be overseen by the Norfolk RAMS Board. With the support of the Delivery Manager, the Board will use the mitigation package and RAMS Action Plan to determine the programme of projects for the forthcoming years and their timeline for delivery. This will create a programme delivery plan. This plan will set out how each project will be delivered and the appropriate accountable body for delivery of each project.

2.2 Process for determining the timing of the delivery of projects

Based on the GIRAMS mitigation package and RAMS Action Plan, the Delivery Manager will assess where contributions have been received for development and which relevant internationally designated wildlife sites will be impacted by this development based on the Zones of Influence set out in Norfolk RAMS Action Plan. The priority of the projects will be based on the RAMS action plan.

The work programme plan will then require prior approval by the RAMS Board where the work programme will be reviewed by each Council on an annual basis with any agreed changes being fed through to the delivery manager. The approval by each Council of the work programme will be completed annually.

The Delivery manager will need to ensure that forthcoming projects are ready to deliver once sufficient funding has been received.

2.3 Commissioning of projects

Once the Norfolk RAMS Board has agreed the programme of projects then the Delivery Manager will work with stakeholders to deliver the projects in accordance with the City Council's rules of financial governance and contracting.

2.4 Funding of RAMS Programme

The Delivery Manager will be responsible for managing the programme working with stakeholders and land managers who will procure and deliver the projects as part of the programme. In order that the Norfolk GIRAMS board has the authority to deliver the projects in the RAMS programme Norfolk LPAs pass over their contribution to the fund to Norwich City Council. The local authorities will pass contributions to the fund on a half yearly basis. Local authorities cannot deduct any proportion of the tariff to cover administration costs.

2.5 Reporting

Contribution Expenditure Reporting

The Norfolk RAMS Board will be provided with a report annually on where contributions have been spent in line with where development has commenced, this information will assist the LPAs annual requirement to set out how the fund has been used.

Monitoring & Reporting of projects

The delivery manager will report twice yearly to the Norfolk RAMS Board on the progress of its individual projects in accordance with the signed-off project delivery timeline. This reporting will include as a minimum:

- Progress against the agreed project plan including milestones

- Progress against the agreed budget, including justification for variances and slippages highlighting any variations in terms of timescale, costs, resources and funding
- Where there are slippages on programmes, how these will be addressed and potential impact on overall delivery of the programme
- Major risks and their mitigation

Where issues arise then the Norfolk RAMS Board have the authority to reprioritise the programme of projects. This includes:

- Bringing projects forward where other projects have been delayed.
- Delaying forthcoming projects to enable funding to be reassigned to existing projects whose costs have increased.
- Stopping projects should the need arise.

2.6 Project Completion

Delivery of projects – signing and adoption after completion

The Norfolk RAMS Board will sign off each completed project. Once the project has been delivered it will be adopted by the applicable body (eg Landowner/Manager of site) and on-going maintenance of these assets will be the responsibility of the adopter.

Section 3 – Norfolk RAMS Board Structure

3.1 Norfolk GIRAMS Board Membership

The Core Group will consist of One Member from each of Norwich City Council, South Norfolk District Council, North Norfolk District Council, Breckland District Council, the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and the Broads Authority.

To support members the group will also include:

- One officer from each of Norwich City Council, South Norfolk District Council, North Norfolk District Council, Breckland District Council, the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and the Broads Authority.
- The Delivery Manager and Norfolk Strategic Framework Programme Manager
- Officers from Natural England (as required)

The membership of the group will be determined by each authority by nomination. Each authority should also nominate substitutes should the nominated Member not be able to attend particular meetings.

Membership of the Core Group will be kept under review and adjusted to reflect any changes to the district make up.

Chairmanship and vice chairmanship will be determined by the Board and reviewed each year.

3.2 Frequency of meetings

Every six month but initially further meetings may be required, at intervals to be agreed, hosted by one of the councils that form part of the group.

3.3 Secretariat

The secretariat for the group will be provided by the Delivery Manger.

3.4 Decision Making

The Norfolk RAMS Board will be granted the power, by each authority, to make decisions regarding the Norfolk RAMS fund and the projects it is used to deliver. Decisions made by the Norfolk RAMS Board will need to be unanimous. However the use of this fund will be determined by development which has commence and the zone of influence this development is in and therefore the role of the board is to scrutinise this process and ensure it is completed to the related regulations and guidance.

3.5 Exiting from GIRAMS Scheme

Should an authority wish to leave the GIRAMS scheme, they should provide 1 year's notice to other members.