

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Date: **Wednesday 13 September 2023**
Time: **10am**
Venue: **Council Chamber, County Hall, Norwich**

Persons attending the meeting are requested to turn off mobile phones.

Membership:

Cllr James Bensly (Chair)
Cllr Vic Thomson (Vice Chair)

Cllr David Bills
Cllr Claire Bowes
Cllr Chris Dawson
Cllr Jim Moriarty
Cllr Rob Colwell
Cllr William Richmond

Cllr Catherine Rowett
Cllr Chrissie Rumsby
Cllr Robert Savage
Cllr Maxine Webb
Cllr Tony White

**For further details and general enquiries about this Agenda please contact the
Committee Services Officer, Nicola Ledain:
email committees@norfolk.gov.uk**

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A g e n d a

1 To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending

2 Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2023.

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3 Members to Declare any Interests

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is on your Register of Interests you must not speak or vote on the matter.

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is not on your Register of Interests you must declare that interest at the meeting and not speak or vote on the matter

In either case you may remain in the room where the meeting is taking place. If you consider that it would be inappropriate in the circumstances to remain in the room, you may leave the room while the matter is dealt with.

If you do not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest you may nevertheless have an **Other Interest** in a matter to be discussed if it affects, to a greater extent than others in your division

- Your wellbeing or financial position, or
- that of your family or close friends
- Any body -
 - Exercising functions of a public nature.
 - Directed to charitable purposes; or
 - One of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union);

Of which you are in a position of general control or management.

If that is the case then you must declare such an interest but can speak and vote on the matter.

4 To receive any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency

5 Public Question Time

Fifteen minutes for questions from members of the public of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm Thursday 7 September 2023**. For guidance on submitting a public question please visit <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/councillors-meetings-decisions-and-elections/committees-agendas-and-recent-decisions/ask-a-question-to-a-committee>

6 Local Member Issues/Questions

Fifteen minutes for local member to raise issues of concern of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm Thursday 7 September 2023**.

7 Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan (2019-24)

Report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

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8 Climate Action Plans, Tranche 1

Report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

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9 NCC Apprenticeship Strategy

Report by the Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation

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10 Draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy Consultation 2023

Report by the Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation

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11 Forward Work Programme

Report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

Page 205

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Date Agenda Published: Tuesday 5 September 2023



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Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 12 July 2023
10.00am, held at County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Cllr James Bensly – Chair

Cllr David Bills
Cllr Graham Carpenter
Cllr Philip Duigan
Cllr Jim Moriarty
Cllr William Richmond

Cllr Robert Savage
Cllr Vic Thomson
Cllr Brian Watkins
Cllr Maxine Webb
Cllr Chrissie Rumsby

Also Present:

Cllr Kay Mason Billig	Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cllr Graham Plant	Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Highways and Transport
Cllr Eric Vardy	Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Also Present:

Titus Adams	Assistant Director of Finance
Alex Cliff	Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager, CES
Paul Cracknell	Executive Director Strategy and Transformation
Tom Galer	Finance Business Partner, CES
Gary Hewitt	Interim Head of Programmes, Growth and Investment
Nicola Ledain	Committee Officer, Democratic Services
Karl Rands	Assistant Director, Highway Services, CE
Sarah Rhoden	Director of Community Learning and Information CES
Chris Starkie	Director of Growth and Investment
Kevin Townly	Asset, Programmes and Funding Manager, CES

1. Apologies and substitutions

1.1 Apologies received from Claire Bowes and Saul Penfold (substituted by Philip Duigan and Brian Watkins respectively)

2. Minutes

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2023 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 Cllr Maxine Webb declared an 'other' interest as her husband worked for Norse.

4. Items of Urgent Business

4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

5. Public Question Time

- 5.1 There were five public questions received and the responses are appended to these minutes.

6. Local Member Issues / Questions

- 6.1 There were no members questions submitted.
- 6.2 Cllr Rumsby raised a question regarding the closure of Wensum Lodge. It was asked if anyone had contacted creative groups such as Men's Shed that were currently based at Anglia Square which was going to be re-developed to see if they could move to Wensum Lodge to make it more viable. The Director of Community Learning and Information agreed to discuss with Cllr Rumsby after the meeting.

7. Strategic and Financial Planning 2024-25

- 7.1 The committee received the report which formed an important part of the process of developing the 2024-25 Budget, representing a key opportunity for the Select Committee to provide its views on priorities and the approach to preparing budget proposals for the services within its remit.
- 7.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
- 7.2.1 A multi year budget settlement from central government would be vital to put together the gross budget and was beyond overdue.
- 7.2.2 With reference to table 8 and the saving of £11.4m for the next financial year, members asked how that amount of savings could be realised without impacting the delivery of services. The Cabinet Member for Finance explained that table 8 references how the overspend was worked out, but he noted that departments were receiving more than had in previous years. Savings did not always mean doing less and it could be achieved by delivering the services differently. To continue to offer the services to residents, constant review of the services needed to happen.
- 7.2.3 It was acknowledged that the workforce was an important asset. In a fast-changing world, jobs and roles could change due to efficiencies, technology and other ways in which roles could change. The workforce were valued and the results of staff surveys represented that.
- 7.2.4 It was confirmed that the figures in table 6 regarding the CES figures showed that the budget next year would have been £199m but the council were looking to save £11m off that figure.
- 7.2.5 Although it was noted that services change and evolve, residents could still experience services being lessened. As interest rates and price rises, this had impacted on the delivery of services. It was always the case that issues in various divisions were identified and rectified as much as was possible.
- 7.2.6 The criteria of deciding what schemes went ahead, were deferred and those that were stopped would be dependent on the business plan put forward by the spending departments. Cabinet members explained that corrective action had to take place as many decisions had previously been taken in a time of low interest rates.

7.2.7 **RESOLVED**

1. To consider the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy position as reported to Cabinet in June 2023 (Appendix 1), noting in particular the following elements as set out in the appended report, which form the context for 2024-25 budget setting:
 - a. the budget gap for 2024-25 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period.
 - b. The Departmental saving targets.
 - c. The overall timetable and approach to developing the 2024-25 Budget.
2. Agree that the Committee will provide input to the 2024-25 Budget process in July (this meeting) and in November, with the latter (November) report providing an opportunity to comment on the detailed savings proposals being taken to public consultation.
3. Consider the key issues for 2024-25 budget setting as they pertain to the services within the Select Committee's remit (as set out in this paper, the appended Cabinet report, and the 2023-24 Budget Book), and in particular to endorse:
 - a. The overall service strategies as set out within the 2023-24 Budget Book.
 - b. The budget setting principles set out in Section 3 of the appended Cabinet report, which will provide the broad framework for savings development for services within the Select Committee's remit.
4. Consider whether there are any specific areas of activity that the Select Committee would recommend exploring for savings development, in order to provide input to the 2024-25 budget process and inform the saving proposals put forward to Cabinet later in the year.

8. A County Deal for Norfolk

- 8.1 The Committee received the report which detailed activity to date regarding the devolution deal which were part of Government's levelling up agenda as set out in the 2022 Levelling Up White Paper. The report explained the proposed next steps and offered a chance for the committee to feedback.
- 8.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
 - 8.2.1 With reference to page 47 and further funding for transport, officers reported that over the previous years, Government had prioritised transport funding and various infrastructure funds to those local authorities which had devolution deals in place. The Director of Growth and Investment was happy to provide a written answer with more detail and figures if that would be helpful.
 - 8.2.2 With reference to page 51, point 3.4.2, the pothole fund referred to funding that the council already received, but as part of the devolution deal, the funding would be available to be spent as the council wished. Otherwise, it would have been ringfenced.
 - 8.2.3 Guidance on quantifiable carbon reductions had not yet been published. When it was published funding would be available to promote those reductions and to respond to the guidance. The response was a statutory duty, but as part of a devolution deal, extra funding would be available to respond. The March publication date of the Local Transport Plan was under review due to the delay of the guidance being published, and this would be the case for all local authorities. Full Council would be kept informed.

- 8.2.4 Members acknowledged that all groups of the Council should engage in the information regarding the devolution deal to ensure that the best outcome was achieved for Norfolk residents. All members needed to be well informed so that they could participate in the decision to be taken in December 2023 to change the governance of the council.
- 8.2.5 It was noted that mayoral combined authority was only being offered to those counties which had a unitary model.
- 8.2.6 One of the areas that were being explored with officials are investment zones which had superseded the policies regarding enterprise zones. One of the criteria to have an enterprise zone, was that a devolution deal was in place. Up front capital funding would be available to attract and invest in companies, but potentially more importantly would be the ability to retain the business rates that were generated from that zone. Currently, this was only a policy that was available to those with devolution deals.
- 8.2.7 The £20m per year that the devolution deal offered would be a useful amount of money. The fund would give the opportunity for the council to invest in various projects such as the Winter Gardens Project in Great Yarmouth and the Marina Centre. These projects were only possible due to the investment attracting other sources of funding such as National Lottery Funding. Being able to invest would then in turn attract other funding.

8.3 **RESOLVED**

1. To offer thoughts and feedback on activity to date and proposed next steps, as summarised in this report
2. To agree that further progress reports are presented to the committee as appropriate

9. **Integration of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Functions**

- 9.1 The committee received the report which outlined the LEP integration into upper tier local authorities as announced in the Chancellor's March 2023 budget statement. The report updated the committee with how this was progressing and the proposed next steps and offered the committee the chance to feedback.
- 9.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the committee:
- 9.2.1 The panel heard that there were the skills and capabilities to manage the transition of the LEP functions into Norfolk and Suffolk local authorities. As a local authority, Norfolk had a long standing and established working relationship with the LEP. Service provision such as growth hubs, the delivery of the services and the activity of the LEP was the most important and the LEP team would continue to operate until the point of transfer. In terms of the transfer the priority was the services and programmes, and work streams were all being reviewed to see if they could continue pending available funding. It was hoped that it would be a smooth transfer and that Norfolk would benefit from it.
- 9.2.2 As part of prudent financial planning, it was ensured that there were suitable reserves to cover redundancies and other winding up costs that might occur if the

LEP was dissolved by central government.

9.3 RESOLVED

1. Consider the changes in policy for the integration of the LEP functions nationally and the role upper tier authorities were asked to undertake
2. Consider the approach proposed to integrate the LEP functions into Norfolk County Council
3. Provide feedback on the proposed approach

10. Performance of Key Highway Contracts

- 10.1 The Committee received the report which summarised the active contracts the Council's Highways Service has procured in terms of services provided, performance and value for money. The Highway Service Contracts reviewed in the report were Tarmac, Norse Highways, WSP, Swarco (formerly Dynniq), Amey and Eastern Highways Alliance (EHA).
- 10.2 Officers reported that there were 54k streetlights in Norfolk. The council had started work on upgrading the final 15k streetlights to LED so the project was on track to meet its target.
- 10.3 The second urban grass and verge cut had been started so any issues that had been expressed would be picked up with that. Performance had been difficult this year due to the growth of the grass, but the timings of the cuts had not changed. Issue relating to the cuts had been reviewed and interventions had been put in place. The issue of the unsightly cutting in the city areas would be taken forward with the contractor. The rural cuts started in the middle of May as per previous years with the second rural cut starting in August.
- 10.4 It was encouraging to see the performance across the contractors was high, and with one contractor specifically mentioned for innovation and new ways of working. Cabinet Members reassured the committee that there was a commitment from the contractors that they were taking the sustainability agenda seriously and there had been innovation carried out at all opportunities as referred to in the report. It was acknowledged that the term 'consideration' wasn't strong enough in the context of the report but there was an expectation from all contractors that they realised their responsibilities of carbon reduction. It was noted that the re-procurement of contracts that would be ending at the end of 2026, sustainability and carbon reduction would be part of any new contract that would be agreed.
- 10.5 **RESOLVED**
To review and to comment on key highway contract performance and arrangements.

11. Highway and Transport Network Performance

- 11.1 The Committee received the report which provided an annual summary of how we are managing our highway assets and the highway network overall. It did not include the A11 and A47 which were the responsibility of National Highways.
- 11.2 There had been significant investment in active travel and that still continued. When compared against peer groups, Norfolk were broadly in line. Norfolk was a large rural county and there were challenges to provide active travel in an area

such as Norfolk. The red indicator as reported in the report were reflected in the public perception, but fluctuations of opinion were seen year on year. Officers reported that there were regular liaison meetings with National Highways which considered their performance and how their network was managed. Officers were happy to take forward any points directly to them such as litter, but it was acknowledged that litter was already on the agenda.

11.3 Whilst members welcomed £6.4 million for pothole funding and prevention, it was questioned if this was enough. It was suggested that lobbying should happen for a full reinvestment of the highways maintenance budget which had been reduced further year on year.

11.4 **RESOLVED**

1. To note the progress against the Asset Management Strategy Performance framework (Appendix C).
2. To note the progress in the development of congestion and reliability indicators.

12. CES Policy and Strategy Framework – Annual Report

12.1 The committee received the report which sets out information on the policies and strategies aligned to the work of this Select Committee, in the form of a Policy and Strategy framework. This framework was brought to the Select Committee annually to enable Members the opportunity to consider the full picture of aligned policies and strategies.

12.2 Members asked if the date that the Adult Education strategy was agreed could be checked.

12.2 **RESOLVED**

1. To note the work carried out by the select committee over the last year to develop and advise on policies and strategies.
2. Review the policy and strategy framework set out in Appendix A and identify any appropriate items for inclusion on the Forward Work Programme (where not already included).

13. Forward Work Programme

13.1 The committee received the report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services which set out the Forward Work Programme for the committee to enable the Committee to review and shape.

13.2 It was suggested that a report be brought to the committee regarding road safety around schools within the committee's remit and that this could be as part of the report already planned for the Committee to update on feedback from the school streets trial.

13.3 **RESOLVED**

1. To agree the Forward Work Programme set out in Appendix A with the addition of a report on road safety around schools.

2. To agree to task officers to bring an update report back to a future select committee with information to support the committee in considering the Rights of Rivers Motion set out in Appendix B.

14. France (Channel) England Programme Update

- 14.1 The committee received the report which gave an update on the NCC delivered France (Channel) England Programme. The last formal update was submitted to the Business and Property Committee meeting in January 2019
- 14.2 **RESOLVED**
To comment on and note the programme update.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm

Chair



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Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 7

Report Title: Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan (2019-24)

Date of Meeting: 13th September 2023

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Eric Vardy (Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste)

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave (Interim Executive Director for Community & Environmental Services)

Executive Summary

The Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was designated in 1968, under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949. The AONB is managed in Partnership by Norfolk County Council (NCC), North Norfolk District Council, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Natural England. The Norfolk Coast AONB is required by law to produce a Management Plan every five years, in line with guidance from Natural England. A 2019-24 Management Plan was produced but required revision in line with input from the local authority partners. The Management Plan has since been updated, through collaborative working with all local authority partners. The updated document (Appendix A) has been approved by all members of the Partnership, and now requires endorsement from NCC so it can be published and made available for use.

Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

- 1. Endorse the Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan (2019-24) (Appendix A)**

1. Background and Purpose

The statutory purpose of the Norfolk Coast AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. This comprises the area's distinctive landscape character, biodiversity and geodiversity, historic and cultural environment. There are also two secondary non-statutory purposes of the Norfolk Coast AONB which support sustainable social and economic development, and recreation/enjoyment of the area.

The Norfolk Coast AONB is managed by Norfolk Coast Partnership (NCP), on behalf of the four local authorities who share responsibility for it: Norfolk County Council, North Norfolk District Council (NNDC), Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk (BCKLWN), and Great Yarmouth Borough Council (GYBC).

The NCP approach to management of the AONB is set out in the Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan. This is a working document that:

- highlights the special qualities and the enduring significance of the AONB, and the importance of its different features;
- presents an integrated vision for the future of the AONB as a whole, in the light of national, regional and local priorities;
- sets out agreed policies incorporating specific objectives which will help secure that vision;
- identifies what needs to be done, by whom, and when, in order to achieve these outcomes;
- states how the condition of the AONB and the effectiveness of its management will be monitored.

A revised version of the 2019-24 Management has now been produced (Appendix A) and signed-off by Natural England, NNDC, BCKLWN and GYBC. It now requires endorsement by NCC so it can be published and made available for use.

2. Proposal

2.1 Endorse the Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan (2019-24)

3. Impact of the Proposal

3.1 Once endorsed, the Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan can be published and promoted by Norfolk Coast Partnership (NCP).

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1 NCC has a statutory obligation to support production of and implementation of a Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan.

5. Alternative Options

N/A

6. Financial Implications

N/A

7. Resource Implications

N/A

8. Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications: NCC has a statutory duty to publish a Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan

8.2 Human Rights Implications: N/A

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included): N/A

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): N/A

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate): N/A

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate): N/A

8.7 Any Other Implications: N/A

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 Without NCC endorsement, the Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan (2019-24) (Appendix A) cannot be published. This means the AONB will not have a current Management Plan to be used in planning decisions affecting the AONB.

10. Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

- 1. Endorse the Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan (2019-24) (Appendix A)**

11. Background Papers

N/A

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

Officer name: Adele Powell

Telephone no.: 07557 813095

Email: adele.powell@norfolk.gov.uk



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NORFOLK COAST
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

NORFOLK COAST
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY
(AONB)

MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-2024
(Revised 2022)

Norfolk Coast Partnership, 2022
aonb@norfolk.gov.uk

Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan 2019-24

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Partner Commitment

In making decisions and managing activities that affect the area we will take account of the area's special qualities of natural beauty set out in this plan and how we can contribute towards maintaining and enhancing these. We will:

- Maintain a committed and effective partnership between organisations and interests within the Norfolk Coast Partnership, work together according to the principles set out towards agreed aims and objectives in the AONB Management Plan and participate in appropriate projects and initiatives to implement the plan.
- Ensure that appropriate representatives are appointed to attend meetings, liaise within their organisations to raise awareness of the AONB and the Norfolk Coast Partnership, provide information on relevant partnership actions and participate in review of the AONB management plan and in action plan progress reporting.
- Act to prevent things that would be detrimental to the area, to address problems that may affect its special character and to take advantage of opportunities for appropriate development.
- Maintain good communication within and between organisations managing the area and between them and the wider public, seeking and taking into account the knowledge and views of local people in making important decisions affecting the area and its communities.

1. Introduction and summary

The Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covers intertidal, coastal and agricultural land with a total area of over 450 square kilometres. Stretching from the silt expanses of the Wash in the west through the coastal marshes, soft cliffs and hinterland of north Norfolk, to the dune system at Winterton in the east, it is an area of remarkable beauty, diversity and scientific importance.

Although 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' is essentially a landscape designation, natural beauty includes wildlife and historic and cultural heritage as well as scenery, and all of these are closely linked. The Norfolk Coast today is the result of a complex interaction between people and their environment. The basic shape and contours of the land and the coast are the product of natural processes, linked to long term climate influence on the underlying geology, particularly the action of ice sheets and water. The action of the sea, both eroding and building, produces an ever-changing coastline. Geology and landforms influence land use, and many of the smaller scale features which give the area its unique character are the result of the actions of people, who have lived in and used the area for thousands of years. Even the present 'wild' coastline is a product of a combination of natural processes and human activities e.g. the enclosure of saltmarsh by protective banks to provide agricultural land has influenced coastal processes over a much wider area. Connections between people and the landscape remain important. Employment in 'traditional' industries such as agriculture and fishing has declined but these still have a key role to play in the area's character. This special character makes the area a unique regional and national landscape resource.

The Norfolk Coast Partnership aims to ensure that the natural beauty and special character of the Norfolk Coast are conserved and enhanced through the work of the Partnership; a group of stakeholders, including the community, who manage a range of issues affecting the natural beauty of the area. The Management Plan is primarily for use by the members of the Norfolk Coast



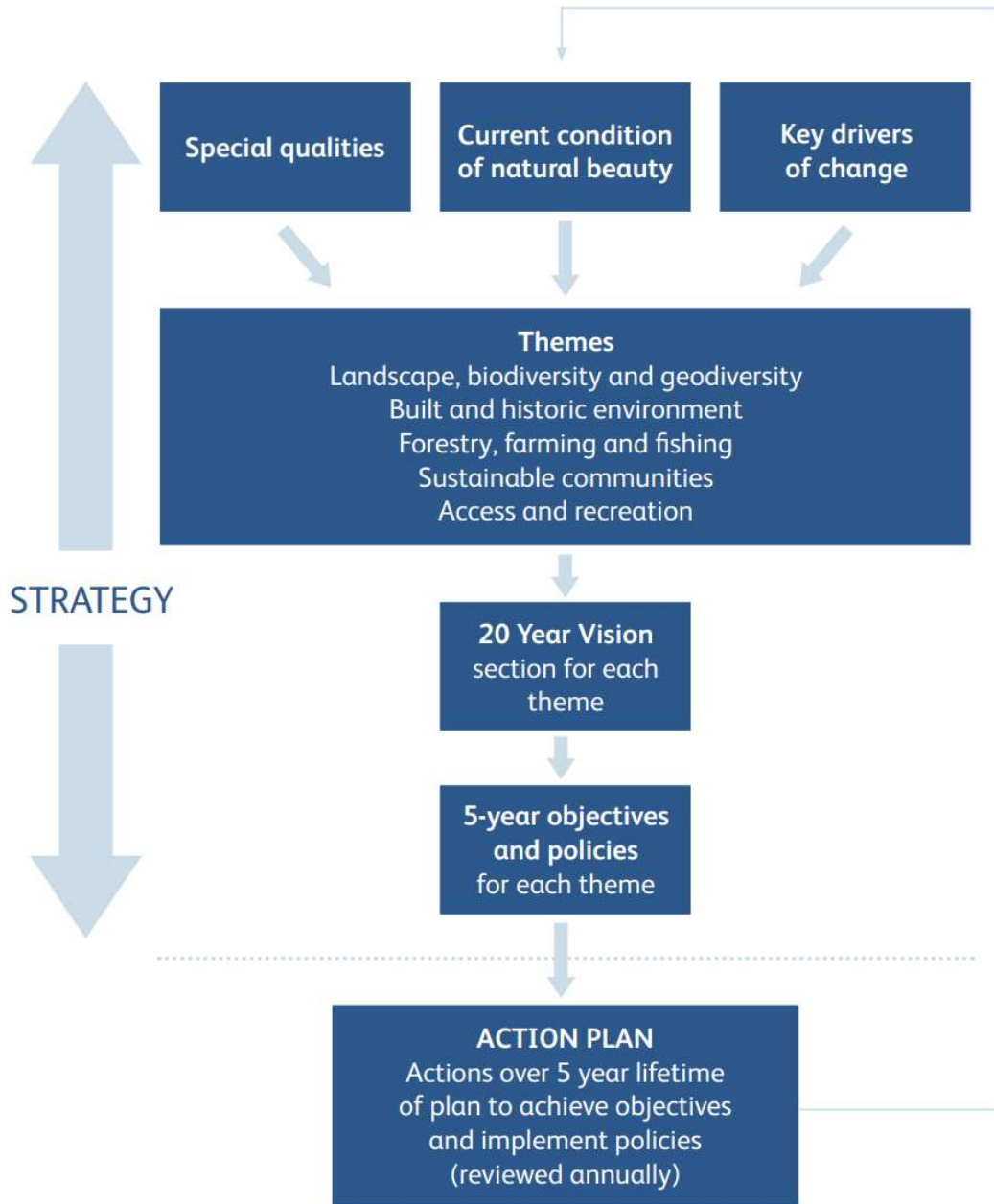
Partnership to inform, guide and influence their activities within the area, though it is hoped that other individuals and organisations may also find it of interest and use. This, the strategy for the 2019-24 Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan, presents the background and the approach of the Norfolk Coast Partnership to management of the area. A separate action plan, to be reviewed annually, details specific actions that the partnership will take forward.

Norfolk Coast AONB – some facts and figures

- Date of designation confirmation: 8 April 1968
- Total area: 453km²
- Length of Public Rights of Way: 287 km
- 5 Local Authorities: NCC, NNDC, BCKLWN, GYBC, BA
- Overlap with the Broads National Park along the east coast of Norfolk, around Horsey
- Highest point above sea level at Roman Camp, on the Cromer Ridge between Sheringham and Cromer (also the highest point in Norfolk): 102m
- Number of parishes partly or wholly in the area: 69
- Total length of coastline in the AONB: 90.8km
 - o 44.8 km in NNDC
 - o 42.8 km in BCKLWN
 - o 3.2 km in GYBC

Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plan Structure

Only the vision, objectives and policies for each theme are presented in this summary; please see the full plan for further explanation of how these were derived.





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2. Setting the scene

2.1 Designation and management – the statutory background

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), along with National Parks, make up our finest landscapes. Together they are a family of designated areas in England and Wales. AONBs came into existence through the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and are recognised as being equal to National Parks in landscape quality, although arrangements for their management and provision for outdoor recreation are different. There are currently 46 AONBs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was designated in 1968. The final area confirmed (174 square miles but re-measured in the 1990s as 453 square kilometres) includes the greater part of the remaining unspoiled coastal areas between the Wash and Great Yarmouth. The western outlier, coming within two miles of King's Lynn, takes in part of Sandringham Estate including Sandringham House, and also about six miles of the south-eastern corner of the Wash. The holiday resort of Hunstanton, and the coast immediately to the south of it, is not included, but from nearby Old Hunstanton a continuous coastal strip, varying in depth between three to five miles, extends eastwards to a point near Bacton, excluding the built-up areas of the resorts of Sheringham, Cromer and Mundesley. The eastern outlier stretches from Sea Palling to Winterton, including the magnificent dune system of Winterton Dunes.

Though there are minor instances where boundary features have changed or disappeared, the statutory boundary remains as originally designated. Review of AONB boundaries is under control of Natural England and is a process requiring approval by the Secretary of State. Natural England has no plans for a boundary review at present.

The designation helps to protect not just the natural features – the trees, fields and open spaces - but also settlements and working environments that are distinctive characteristics of the countryside. The designation allows for sustainable development (i.e. development that takes account of the requirements of environmental, economic and social sustainability), in ways that further enhance the character of the area.

The statutory purpose of designating an area of land as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. This comprises the area's distinctive landscape character, biodiversity and geodiversity, historic and cultural environment. Two secondary non-statutory purposes of AONBs are also recognised

- i. To take account of the needs of agriculture, forestry, fishing and other local rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities, paying particular regard to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the area's natural beauty; and
- ii. To seek to meet the demand for recreation so far as this is consistent with the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the area's natural beauty – and which preferably supports this purpose by increasing understanding, valuation and care for the area – and is also consistent with the needs of rural industries.

The Norfolk Coast AONB also includes the wider non-statutory objectives for the North Norfolk Heritage Coast:

- a) to conserve protect and enhance the natural beauty of the coasts, including their terrestrial, littoral and marine flora and fauna, and their heritage features of architectural, historical and archaeological interest
- b) to facilitate and enhance their enjoyment, understanding and appreciation by the public by improving and extending opportunities for recreational, educational, sporting and tourist activities that draw on, and are consistent with the conservation of their natural beauty and the protection of their heritage features
- c) to maintain, and improve where necessary, the environmental health of inshore waters affecting Heritage Coasts and their beaches through appropriate works and management measures
- d) to take account of the needs of agriculture, forestry and fishing, and of the economic and social needs of the small communities on these coasts, through promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development, which in themselves conserve and enhance natural beauty and heritage features.

Statutory duties for management

The 1949 Act gave rise to strong protection for National Parks and AONBs under the Town and Country Planning system but did not give a specific duty to anyone regarding their management. In 2000, Part IV of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act (amongst other provisions) reaffirmed the objectives of designation of AONBs, gave a ‘duty of regard’ towards the purpose of designation to a wide range of bodies (‘relevant authorities’) and gave a duty to local authorities whose area included an AONB or part of one to prepare and review a plan for the management of the area.

Statutory duty of regard

Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 places a duty on relevant authorities and public bodies, in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or which affect, land in the AONB to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB. The term, ‘public bodies’ includes all arms of both central and local government:

- Broads Authority
- Environment Agency
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- English Heritage
- New Anglia Local Economic Partnership
- Forestry Commission
- Natural England
- Marine Management Organisation
- Parish councils and joint committees of local authorities
- Regulatory bodies of statutory undertakers such as Ofcom (Office of Communications), Ofwat (Office of Water Services), Ofgem (Office of the Gas and Electricity Markets), etc.

There are also other organisations and interests who do not have a formal statutory duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act but who have been part of the partnership for management of AONBs prior to the Act and have long had a significant and valuable role in conserving and enhancing the area’s natural beauty. People who live and work in an AONB or who visit it and other organisations can also play an important part in conserving and enhancing the character of the area.

Statutory duties for AONB Management Plans

Section 89 of the CRoW Act gives relevant local authorities (i.e. those whose area wholly or partly includes an AONB) a duty to “prepare and publish a plan which formulates their policy for the



management of the area of outstanding natural beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it” and to review the plan at “intervals of not more than five years”. A later paragraph stipulates that where the AONB is not entirely within one local authority area the plan should be prepared by “the local authorities for all the principal areas wholly or partly comprised in the area of outstanding natural beauty, acting jointly”.

2.2 Managing the area

The AONB Management Plan

The relevant local authorities (Norfolk County Council, North Norfolk District Council, Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Broad Authority) have agreed that the Norfolk Coast Partnership should undertake the requirement of Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 20001 on their behalf. Although the legislation requires these local authorities ‘to act jointly to prepare and publish a plan which formulates their policy for the management of the AONB and for carrying out their functions in relation to it’ in practice, the plan extends to a much wider group of partners who also have important management functions.

This document is the fourth Management Plan produced by the Norfolk Coast Partnership for management of the Norfolk Coast AONB under the CRoW Act. The Management Plan is the framework for all organisations with a role in management of the AONB. All Partners have worked together to produce and agree the contents of this Management Plan and are committed to its delivery.

The Norfolk Coast Partnership

Since 1991 the Norfolk Coast Partnership has brought together the many stakeholders who have a role in managing the area, with an overall aim: “To bring about the sustainable management of the AONB in such a way that meets its specific environmental, social and economic needs whilst conserving and enhancing its natural beauty.”

The Norfolk Coast Partnership consists of:

Partnership Forum: Representatives from all Partners including those on the Core Management Group and five Community Representatives elected by parishes in the area

Core Management Group: Representatives from the relevant local authorities: Norfolk County Council, North Norfolk District Council, the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk, Great Yarmouth Borough Council; the Broads Authority; Natural England; and community representatives.

Staff Team: Employed to facilitate and support Norfolk Coast Partnership operations. Coordinating and implementing actions in line with the AONB Management Plan under direction of the Core Management Group.

Funding

Core funding for the operation of the Norfolk Coast Partnership is provided by central and local Government, in recognition of both the national status and value of AONBs and local management arrangements. Central government funding is provided via the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra); the relevant local authorities (see above) are also core funders.



Core funding is supplemented by project work, utilising external funding from public, private, and charitable sources to achieve the objectives of the management plan. Details of current projects and funding sources are available on the Norfolk Coast Partnership website.

Other designations

The North Norfolk Heritage Coast, a section of the coast from Holme-next-the-Sea to Weybourne, was defined in an agreement between local authorities and the Countryside Commission in 1975, recognising this section of coastline as one of the finest stretches of undeveloped coast in England and Wales. 'Heritage Coast' is a non-statutory definition, although it is recognised within the statutory planning system. Management of the Heritage Coast is considered within the overall management of the area, as contained in this plan.

In a unique situation for the two national landscape designations, a small area of the eastern outlier of the AONB overlaps with the Broads, which has the same status as a National Park. There are also many sites or areas with other statutory designations at local, national and international level overlapping with, or contained within, the AONB. These are independent of the AONB designation but reflect the richness and importance of its natural beauty in terms of wildlife, architectural and archaeological interest and contribute to the protection and enhancement of these aspects of natural beauty. These other designations include:

International: 4 International Ramsar sites; 7 Special Areas of Conservation; 4 Special Protection Areas

National: 6 National Nature Reserves; 28 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), ranging in size from less than 1 hectare to several thousand hectares; 1 Local Nature Reserve; 85 County Wildlife Sites; 61 Scheduled Monuments; 7 Historic Parks and Gardens; 45 Conservation Areas; 36 registered commons (some with registered common rights); 849 listed buildings

For more information, see Appendix 'Summary of Conservation Designations'.

Working with other designations and plans

The area designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty extends down to the mean low water mark – the limit of planning authority for terrestrial planning authorities. The North Norfolk Heritage Coast has no formal seaward boundary, and there are many links between the area's natural beauty and the marine environment.

The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Protected Area Network encompasses 108,000 hectares of the marine environment covering the Wash and extending along the Norfolk coast to Weybourne, overlapping with the AONB designation in the intertidal area. It combines Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). There are close links between the Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership and the Norfolk Coast Partnership – many representatives sit on both partnerships and staff cooperate closely to pursue joint interests and initiatives.

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is located 200 metres off the North Norfolk Coast, beginning west of Weybourne and ending at Happisburgh. It was designated in 2016 for an area of seaweed-dominated infralittoral rock (321 km²) which is an important habitat for a variety of species in an otherwise predominantly sandy environment.

The combined East Onshore and Offshore Marine Plan, launched in April 2014, is a statutory plan to manage development and activities in a large marine area including the intertidal part and offshore from the AONB. Objective 5, policies SOC2 and SOC3 and paragraphs 153-156 in section 3.3 of the



Marine Plan are particularly relevant to coastal protected landscapes. Shoreline Management Plans are also important in managing the marine dimension (see section 3.3 of this plan).

There are many other plans, both statutory and non-statutory, ranging from local site management plans to international in their scope, which potentially affect the AONB or parts of it, either already in existence or in preparation. Almost all of these relate to management or enjoyment of aspects of its natural beauty or matters affecting it in some way. Many of these plans specifically refer to and recognise the AONB, those relating to the Town and Country Planning system being particularly important. Statutory powers available to partner organisations in AONB management play an important part in conserving and enhancing natural beauty.

It is intended that partners will ensure that broad objectives for the area, and the AONB Management Plan, are recognised in relevant plans they produce, and that they help to ensure these are also recognised in plans in which they have some influence. Conversely, the AONB Management Plan has been developed to maintain consistency with other relevant plans and initiatives that can help to meet its objectives, which are summarised in Appendix 1 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for this plan.

The AONB Management Plan does not override or supersede these other plans, strategies and designations, or confer any additional powers on any organisations. All of the organisations involved will continue to have their own objectives, powers and limitations. What the AONB Management Plan does is to provide an agreement between organisations for how they will work together, towards agreed aims and objectives for the Norfolk Coast AONB. It also provides guidance for other organisations and individuals who wish to play their part in conserving and enhancing its natural beauty.

AONBs within National Planning Policy

National planning guidance and policies in Local Plans have been amongst the most important tools for meeting the objectives of designation of the Norfolk Coast AONB (and other AONBs) since its designation in terms of managing development within the AONB in a sensitive manner.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published as guidance in 2012 and revised in 2021 contains key guidance:

“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

The planning system has three overarching, interdependent objectives for achieving sustainable development:

- a) Economic – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
- b) Social – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services

and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being

- c) Environmental – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

To ensure that sustainable development is pursued in positive way, a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the core of the NPPF.

For plan-making this means that:

- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to:
- meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure
 - improve the environment
 - mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects
- b) Strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole

For decision-taking this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed⁷; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in NPPF paragraph 181) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in NPPF footnote 68); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)

- Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland
- Maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate
- Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures
- Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans
- Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

Plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in the NPPF; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of the:

- The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy
- The cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way
- Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

Following through from this high-level guidance, local plans also contain policies designed to conserve and enhance natural beauty in designated AONBs, as well as provide protection for sites and areas designated for other reasons, usually biodiversity or cultural value. Local planning authorities therefore play a lead role in managing development within the AONB.

2.3 How to use the management plan

Structure of the plan

The 2019-24 Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan is a working document which sets out the approach of the Norfolk Coast Partnership to the management of the area. The Management Plan comprises:

1) The Strategy (this document)

The strategy has a lifetime of five years and aims to:

- Highlight the special qualities and enduring significance of the area and identify those that are vulnerable to change
- Identify the key pressures for change on these special qualities
- Present an integrated vision for the future of the AONB as a whole, in the light of national, regional and local priorities
- Set out agreed objectives and policies which will help secure that vision
- Identify the means by which objectives, actions and overall management will be monitored and reviewed.

The Strategy is supplemented by a range of background information – ‘Supporting Information’ – which has contributed to the plan. This provides more in-depth background information to aid understanding about the history of the AONB and its designation, the management plan process and the Norfolk Coast Partnership.

2) The Action Plan and Annual Progress Report.

The Action Plan aims to:

- Detail specific actions for the five years of the plan which aim to achieve the objectives and enact the policies
- Define which Partners are involved in each Action
- Define the timing of delivery of each Action
- Monitor progress with each individual Action

The Annual Progress Report aims to:

- Review, and publicly report on, progress on the Action Plan in each 12-month period of the Management Plan.

3) Associated Guidance

Guidance produced by the Partnership to inform and assist management of the area by partners, other organisations and individuals. It is available via the web-based version of the plan and at the time of publication of this plan, it consists of:

- Integrated Landscape Character Guidance for the AONB (provides detailed spatial guidance on landscape, ecological, geodiversity and historic character, including sensitivities and recommendations);
- Visitor management zoning map and policies (published in 1995, continues to provide spatial guidance on sensitivities and management of visitors, review to be completed within the lifetime of this plan);
- Bird Hide Design Guide (published 2002 in a revised and updated form from an earlier draft, provides guidance on sensitive design and siting of bird watching facilities); and
- Signing guidance (published 2005, provides guidance on sensitive use of signage).

Further guidance may be produced during the 5-year life of this plan.

Issues affecting the area and its character have been identified in the previous AONB Management Plans and in studies by partner organisations and were reviewed during the process to produce this plan.



The combination of existing mechanisms, specific objectives and partnership policies is intended to ensure that progress is achieved on all of the issues identified. Many partner organisations will contribute to achieving the objectives, although there will normally be one organisation that leads on each action (see the Action Plan). A diagrammatic representation of the plan structure can be found in section 1.

Using the management plan

The Management Plan is intended to be used primarily by partner organisations of the Norfolk Coast Partnership, who have adopted the plan (see inside front cover of the plan), and its Staff Team. The three tiers of the Management Plan enable partners to:

Strategy

- Gain an overview of the AONB, its designation and how it is managed
- Understand what makes the area special
- Access the objectives and policies and use them to guide Partner decisions on their activities within the AONB.

Action Plan and Annual Review

- Access and monitor progress on Partner actions within the AONB.

Associated Guidance

- Access more detailed information produced by the Norfolk Coast Partnership, some of a spatial nature, and use it to aid decision making.

Implementation of the objectives, policies and actions will primarily be the responsibility of the organisations within the Norfolk Coast Partnership and the Staff Team (see the Action Plan). However, the plan is also intended to be used by other organisations and interests to guide management of the area and indeed by anyone with an interest in conserving and enhancing its special character.

The plan provides information and guidance on the AONB and its management for those who wish to contribute to conservation and enhancement of the area's natural beauty - individuals or organisations, with or without a statutory duty towards AONBs under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

3. A special place

Introduction

The Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is unique. What we see today is a result of the interplay of environmental influences on the area over millions of years and more recently its use and modification by people over thousands of years. The human influence is obvious in settlements and buildings, communications infrastructure, field patterns and agriculture, and in archaeological remains. Even the apparently wild parts of the area, for example coastal marshes and cliffs, have been modified by flood defence banks and erosion protection structures.

Section 3.1 briefly describes the combination of characteristics that make the area special and distinguish it from other places and summarises the key qualities that make the area unique and worthy of designation. More detailed information about the character of the area can be found in

the National Character Area Profiles produced by Natural England, the supporting information to this management plan and the Integrated Landscape Character Guidance for the AONB.

Section 3.2 provides a summary assessment of the condition of the area’s natural beauty, based on the summary of its key qualities of natural beauty from section 3.1.

Section 3.3 considers the current and anticipated drivers of change experienced by the area – a range of environmental, economic, social and political influences that are acting, or may impact on the area’s qualities of natural beauty. Overall, this section reflects the fact that the area has changed in the past and will continue to change. The qualities described in section 3.1 are those that it should be possible to conserve and enhance into the future through management of change, following a path of sustainable development that respects the needs of the environment and of people.

3.1 Qualities of natural beauty

SUMMARY OF KEY QUALITIES OF NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE NORFOLK COAST

<p>1. DYNAMIC CHARACTER AND GEOMORPHOLOGY OF THE COAST Movement and interchange of internationally recognised geomorphological features and habitats.</p> <p>2. STRONG AND DISTINCTIVE LINKS BETWEEN LAND AND SEA The area’s distinctive and unique character is based on the visual, ecological, socio-economic and functional links between land and sea.</p> <p>3. DIVERSITY AND INTEGRITY OF LANDSCAPE, SEASCAPE AND SETTLEMENT CHARACTER Key quality is based on maintaining diversity of character types rather than uniformity across the area, including landscapes and seascapes, settlement pattern, building materials and styles.</p> <p>4. EXCEPTIONALLY IMPORTANT, VARIED AND DISTINCTIVE BIODIVERSITY, BASED ON LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE HABITATS Recognised by a range of national and international designations. Coastal habitats are particularly important and most famous for birds, supporting iconic species. Inland habitats and species are also important, particularly lowland heath.</p>	<p>5. NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT GEOLOGY Mainly based on past glaciation and current coastal processes. Includes landforms and landscape scale features as well as individual sites.</p> <p>6. SENSE OF REMOTENESS, TRANQUILLITY AND WILDNESS A low level of development and population density for lowland coastal England, leading to dark night skies and a general sense of remoteness and tranquillity away from busier roads and settlements and, particularly for undeveloped parts of the coast, of wildness.</p> <p>7. RICHNESS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT, PARTICULARLY THAT RELATING TO THE COAST AND ITS CHARACTER. Evidence and features of human use of the area since prehistoric times and links to current uses and features.</p>
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The area designated as the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty comprises three separate areas, extending to mean low water and including coastal hinterland up to about 6 kilometres (4 miles) inland that has a visual and functional relationship with the coast.



As with any area, geology underpins its character. For the Norfolk Coast AONB, the defining geological influences are the Cretaceous chalk and carstone in the west and glacial deposits further east, with more recent marine and freshwater formations near the coast also playing an important role. The geomorphology of the entire coastline is one of the most outstanding assemblages of coastal forms in Britain and is important internationally. The area also includes outstanding examples of glacial and glacio-fluvial landforms such as moraines, eskers and outwash plains. The Cromer Ridge is a terminal moraine revealing much information on past glaciation events.

Unlike some protected landscapes whose character is more uniform, the designated area is very varied in character, containing a wide variety of landscapes, seascapes and locally distinctive features, including variation in geology and topography, land use, field and settlement patterns, the character of settlements, buildings and materials. The orange-brown carstone is prominent in vernacular buildings in the west, with chalk and then flint and cobbles becoming more dominant travelling east.

Overall, the influence of the sea provides a unifying theme, with the variety and interrelationship of dynamic coastal features such as saltmarsh, sand dunes, shingle and soft, eroding cliffs especially important. The links between land and sea are an essential part of its unique character. On the low coast, the distinction between land and sea is blurred by the wide and varied band of intertidal habitats and former intertidal land claimed from the sea, some of which has recently been returned to an intertidal state, a trend likely to continue. On the cliffed coast, the distinction is sharp and provides a more immediate impression of change in the eroding cliffs. The quality and health of the marine environment is vital to the area's natural beauty.

Along the undeveloped coast, panoramic and spectacular views - from the coastal marshes, the higher land behind the low coast and from the cliff top are characteristic and varied but all give an impression of wildness and the dominance of the forces of nature.

Ecological interdependencies between land and sea are also important and characteristic, for example breeding and feeding common and grey seals, and four species of tern breeding on beaches and feeding in the sea. Estuaries and creeks provide nursery areas for fish and the unique and extensive intertidal and offshore chalk platform and reef between Weybourne and Trimmingham is important for marine biodiversity as well as local fishing.

The links extend to local livelihoods and culture. Fishing and the 'longshore economy' have played and still play an important part in the character of coastal settlements. The quality of the beaches, coastal landscape and wildlife attract many visitors, providing a major component of the local economy and many local residents also enjoy the many recreational opportunities on offer, which include walking, water sports, bird watching and fishing.

The area is rich in archaeological and historical sites, many of which have roots in the coastal location, with remains and features dating back to the early Pleistocene and giving a strong 'time depth' to much of its landscape. The Happisburgh footprints (the oldest known hominid footprints outside of Africa), the Bronze Age intertidal Seahenge and Salthouse Heath burial ground, the ancient Roman fort of Branodunum, medieval harbours and Second World War airfields and defence structure are all examples. Ice Age landforms shaped by the most recent glaciation (18,000 years ago) further contribute to the sense of history within the AONB.



The three separate parts of the AONB and the exclusion of the main holiday towns of Sheringham and Cromer and the section of coast between them, and the villages of Overstrand and Mundesley, were decided during the designation process because of existing development at that time.

It includes the coastal plain of the North Norfolk Heritage Coast, a section of undeveloped coast from Holme-next-the-Sea to Weybourne, with its internationally important and dynamic saltmarshes, dunes and shingle, the best-known features being the barrier features of Scolt Head Island and Blakeney Point with the shingle bank connecting the latter to the coast. Creeks run through the marshes, connecting small, sheltered harbours to the sea.

At national level, it is one of the few remaining examples of relatively undeveloped and unspoilt coastal areas of this character. At a regional level it forms a wild, rich and diverse complement to the intensive agricultural landscapes that dominate East Anglia.

The transition from the flat marshes to the coastal slopes behind is sharp, marking a former cliff line and more or less following the coast road, which runs through a string of coastal villages and the larger town of Wells-next-the-Sea. Above the coastal slope, a rolling plateau landscape based on chalk covered by glacial drift, with large arable fields and cut by chalk streams to form quiet, secluded valleys is reminiscent of the Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Wolds.

At Weybourne, spectacular and geologically important soft cliffs of sands, gravels and muds derived from glacial moraines start abruptly and continue eastwards in this main section of the area. The cliffs are unstable and of easily eroded material; the slumped cliff slopes contain a wide variety of habitats and are important for both plant and invertebrate communities. Inland, the moraine material of the Cromer Ridge, which meets the sea between Overstrand and Trimingham, forms a relatively hilly landscape with woodland and heaths amongst arable farmland.

In the west, the 'outlier' between the Woottons and Dersingham includes part of the Sandringham Estate, the settlements of Sandringham, Wolferton and Castle Rising as well as a large area of Wash mudflats and flat arable land reclaimed from former intertidal areas. Inland, higher areas based on a north-south ridge of Cretaceous greensand, locally known as carstone and which extends into the southern extension of the main section of the AONB north of Snettisham, are covered by heath and woodland. Dersingham Bog is the largest and most intact example of an acid valley mire in East Anglia, which is bordered on one side by an escarpment marking the edge of an ancient coastline. In the eastern 'outlier' between Sea Palling and Winterton-on-Sea a band of acidic dunes, different in character from those of the north Norfolk coast, separates the sea from low-lying wet pastures and woodlands and the small villages of Waxham, Horsey and Somerton, providing a link to the distinctive landscape of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads.

The many nature conservation designations testify to the area's national and international importance for wildlife and geology. Coastal and intertidal habitats (cliffs, shingle banks, sand dunes, lagoons, saltmarsh, mudflats, sandflats and freshwater marsh) and the birds and other wildlife they support (particularly the wildfowl and waders in the areas of the North Norfolk Heritage Coast and the Wash), together with some inland habitats such as lowland heath, are particularly important. Iconic and easily seen coastal birds include vast skeins of pink-footed geese in winter and marsh harriers, as well as the more secretive bittern and marsh tit; natterjack toads inhabit the dunes. In the coastal hinterland, nightjars and woodlarks breed on the heaths, and the open, rolling farmland supports increasingly threatened birds such as grey partridge, corn bunting and turtle dove. Ancient woodland is relatively scarce in the area but more valuable locally as a result. More recent plantations and shelter belts add to the character and diversity of a mainly open landscape.

Much of the undeveloped coast, most notably the North Norfolk Heritage Coast but also parts of the Wash coast, the cliffed coast and the dune coast of the eastern outlier, have a wilderness quality rare in lowland England. Inland also, the area's perceived qualities of relative remoteness and tranquillity - it's quiet and peaceful atmosphere and relaxed pace of life - are qualities reflected in art and literature and are often mentioned today as those that people particularly value. The area is noted for the quality of its night skies, the relative lack of artificial lighting away from main roads and towns providing fine views of constellations and occasionally the northern lights.

3.2 Assessment of the condition of the area's natural beauty

The following summary assessment of seven key Qualities of Natural Beauty (QNB) is based on a detailed condition assessment, provided as a separate appendix.

GREEN quality is being conserved and enhanced
AMBER some grounds for concern
RED quality is not being conserved and enhanced

1) Dynamic character and geomorphology of the coast. Movement and interchange of internationally recognised geomorphological features and habitats.

Summary assessment

Some form of flood defence exists for much of the 'low' coast from the western outlier to Weybourne but extensive marshes, mud and sand flats in front of sea banks means that the coast is extensively subject to change through the action of natural forces and coastal processes at present, maintaining the existing range of dynamic coastal geomorphological features and coastal habitats. Realignment schemes and sympathetic management changes have taken place and the future trend is likely to be continued realignment. Extensive stretches of the cliffed coastline are able to erode and change naturally, maintaining a dynamic variety of habitats and providing vital sediment for beaches down-drift. Major settlements are protected by hard defences, which are likely to remain for the foreseeable future and constrain coastal change in these locations. Away from settlements, the current and future trend is for reduced defence.

Overall assessment:

Since designation: GREEN

2014-19: GREEN

2022 update: AMBER

2) Strong and distinctive links between land and sea. The area's distinctive and unique character is based on the visual, ecological, socio-economic and functional links between land and sea.

Summary assessment

Ecological links are generally sound. A few species depending on both land and sea are under pressure, although not necessarily because ecological links are failing. Intertidal areas are a key component in the area's biodiversity and landscape / seascape character. Coastal wildlife and seascapes are strong factors in the local tourism industry.

Economic and social links with the sea remain strong, although different in emphasis from the past. Many local people maintain an active involvement with the coast e.g. through recreational activities



such as sailing, through the 'longshore economy', including common rights (for example shellfish and samphire gathering), although wildfowling has decreased with increasing numbers of visitors. The local fishing industry, although employing few people, is relatively stable and continues to constitute a part of the area's character. Coastal water quality and the quality of beaches is generally good, providing a suitable environment for coastal recreation and bringing large numbers of visitors at peak times.

Panoramic coastal views and seascapes remain distinctive in character, although the wilderness quality of the seascapes of the North Norfolk Heritage Coast has been affected recently by the development of offshore wind farms, with additional wind farms consented (see QNB 6).

Overall assessment:

Since designation: GREEN

2014-19: AMBER

2022 update: AMBER

3) Diversity and integrity of landscape, seascape and settlement character. Key quality is based on maintaining diversity of character types rather than uniformity across the area, including landscapes and seascapes, settlement pattern, building materials and styles.

Summary assessment

Since designation in the 1960s some significant developments in the area have adversely affected the character of parts of the Norfolk Coast, mainly the A149 bypass in the western parts of the area and the expansion of some settlements outside or on the border of the AONB into the designated area – principally in the Cromer-Sheringham-Holt triangle. Considerable development has taken place on the edge of the AONB, either straddling or just outside the boundary. Bacton Gas Terminal was anticipated at the time of designation and the boundary drawn on its anticipated western edge; the terminal exerts a strong influence on the character of this part of the area. Boundary settlements where particularly significant expansion has occurred include Dersingham, Snettisham, Heacham and the Woottons in the western part of the area; Holt, Sheringham and Cromer in the northern part of the area – although most boundary settlements have expanded noticeably. These have some impact on the setting of the AONB as well as adding to recreational pressures.

Within the AONB settlements have generally expanded to some extent, although designation of the cores of most AONB settlements as Conservation Areas has helped to maintain the character of these areas. Growth has not necessarily had a significant effect on the area's character in itself, although insensitive changes to building and settlement character from building alterations / extensions and security lighting are a concern.

The wilderness character of seascapes on a large proportion of the undeveloped coast, principally the North Norfolk Heritage Coast, has been adversely affected by the development of offshore wind farms. Otherwise in the wider coast and countryside of the Norfolk Coast, diversity and integrity of character has remained relatively conserved, although agricultural production has generally intensified in line with national trends. Recent changes having a minor effect on character include agricultural irrigation reservoirs (relatively few) and onshore wind farms (none recently approved in the AONB, although some outside the area will be visible to some extent).

Overall assessment:

Since designation: AMBER

2014-19: AMBER

2022 update: AMBER

- 4) Exceptionally important, varied and distinctive biodiversity, based on locally distinctive habitats. Recognised by a range of national and international designations. Coastal habitats are particularly important and most famous for birds, supporting iconic species. Inland habitats and species are also important, particularly lowland heath.**

Summary assessment

Coastal nature reserves in the area were amongst the first to be established so sympathetic management by conservation organisations has long been in place. 95% of the area's Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), comprising approx 27% in total of the area, are in good condition, comparing very favourably with other AONBs and national parks in general.

Populations of most high profile, characteristic bird species are stable or increasing at present. Some of the relatively few exceptions are affected by pressure from coastal visitors, although this is not the only factor.

50% of the area is covered by Environmental Stewardship agreements, including 29% of the area's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats.

The benefits of this on biodiversity in the wider countryside of the area are not quantified, however. Statistically valid data on farmland bird populations, a useful high-level indicator, are not available for the AONB although individual species such as turtle dove, for which the Norfolk Coast has been known as something of a stronghold, are known to be much reduced in line with national trends.

Assessment of the ecological status of the area's rivers under the Water Framework Directive suggests that 17% of their lengths are in poor condition, over 80% in moderate condition although initiatives are in progress to address these issues.

Overall assessment:

Since designation: GREEN for designated sites, AMBER for wider countryside

2014-19: GREEN for designated sites, AMBER for wider countryside

2022 update: AMBER for designated sites, AMBER for wider countryside

- 5) Nationally and internationally important geology. Mainly based on past glaciation and current coastal processes. Includes landforms and landscape scale features as well as individual sites.**

Summary assessment

At least partly because of the relatively undeveloped nature of the area, large-scale geological formations, features and landforms are largely intact and visible in the landscape, and most are accessible. Coastal geomorphological features are dynamic and internationally known as classic examples (see QNB1). Individual sites are mostly the result of extractive activity, now almost all inactive. Many of these provide sites for geological record and study although not all are accessible or in good condition, and few have interpretation.

Overall assessment: Since designation: GREEN

2014-19: GREEN

2022 Update: GREEN

6) Sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness. A low level of development and population density for lowland coastal England, leading to dark night skies and a general sense of remoteness and tranquillity away from busier roads and settlements and, particularly for undeveloped parts of the coast, of wildness.

Summary assessment

Given the amount of development in and bordering the AONB since designation in 1968, the population both in and close to has clearly increased significantly, although it is still arguably of low density compared with lowland England as a whole. Recent trends suggest a slight reduction in the population of some coastal parishes, possibly because of second / holiday homes. This may contribute to a sense of tranquillity but also has negative impacts on local services and communities and increases the pressure for developments including affordable housing.

Visitor numbers have increased significantly since designation and pressures arising from this were the main reason given for the foundation of the Norfolk Coast Project in the early 1990s. Evidence for the last five years suggests that visitor numbers remain high, with a large difference between peak and low season numbers on the coast.

Most of the area has been objectively assessed as tranquil or very tranquil in a 2006 national study by CPRE with western and eastern outliers and the North Norfolk Heritage Coast being the most tranquil areas.

Recent night sky surveys show dark skies away from the larger settlements of a quality to compare with areas that have been certified as 'dark sky reserves', although no data is yet available to show trends. Recent development of wind farms off the north Norfolk coast have had a significant negative impact on the wilderness quality of the undeveloped coast, as noted by local observers.

Overall assessment:

Since designation: AMBER

2014-19: AMBER

2022 update: AMBER

7) Richness of archaeological heritage and historic environment, particularly that relating to the coast and its character. Evidence and features of human use of the area since prehistoric times and links to current uses and features.

Summary assessment

Of the large number of designated heritage assets from a range of periods in the AONB, only around 1.5% are assessed as being 'at risk', which is at the lower end of the range for English AONBs as a whole. Two of the heritage assets 'at risk' assessments appear to be because of their vulnerability to coastal change / flooding.

Although agri-environment schemes have assisted in providing beneficial management for some archaeological sites, archaeological damage has occurred from ploughing and continues in some cases. There has also been some loss of historic landscape patterns, for example field boundaries since designation although this has also been reduced by changes in agricultural grants and incentives. Coastal and offshore development such as wind farms has affected the setting of some coastal heritage assets.

Overall assessment: Since designation: GREEN

2014-19: GREEN

2022 update: GREEN

3.3 Key drivers of change in the area

There are key drivers of change acting on the area that have potential to affect its special qualities of natural beauty significantly now and in the future. The purpose of the management plan is not to preserve the area unchanged, which would anyway be unrealistic; it has changed over time in response to environmental and human influences and will continue to do so. Rather, the aim is to manage change so that its special characteristics of natural beauty are conserved and enhanced.

Some of these drivers of change can be managed directly and locally, through the powers of individual partners or by new partnership initiatives; others we can only aim to influence indirectly but all are legitimate considerations within this plan. These drivers for change and their potential impacts on the area's natural beauty are considered below and the general approach to management is based on the characteristics of the drivers. Not all of these drivers are likely to have significant impacts within the five-year timescale of this Management Plan, but these still require action to address longer term impacts. Most of these influences will have impacts under more than one theme in section 4.

Coastal processes

All coastlines are naturally dynamic, although changing at different rates; the coastline of Norfolk is especially so, subject to continuous and often rapid change. For the Norfolk Coast AONB, this is a major aspect of its special character. The geology and dynamic landforms of the AONB coastline (including submarine features), with its variety and combination of features responding to coastal processes, make it of international scientific importance, in addition to its landscape qualities.

As historical and archaeological records and geological research show, this coastline has been changing for millennia: there are records of many 'lost villages' along the cliffs; sediment cores drilled across the North Norfolk Heritage Coast show a succession of alternating intertidal and freshwater habitats; in Roman times the Broads area was a navigable estuary.

Sediment transport processes driven by tides and waves interacting with coastal and undersea geomorphology act on the coastline to change it, eroding in some places and building in others. These processes are large scale, so what happens in the marine and coastal environment well outside the area, as well as along its immediate coastline, needs to be considered in managing its coastline. Coastal defence structures exist along much of the area's coastline, in some cases affecting the natural operation of coastal processes.

The tidal storm surge in December 2013, the most severe for decades, highlighted the forces acting on the coast and particularly the changes that can take place in extreme events over very short timescales.

The British landmass is still adjusting to the removal of the huge weight of ice sheets over its northern parts during the last Ice Age, by tilting on a northwest / southeast axis (isostatic readjustment). This is still causing relative sea level rise of around 1-2 mm per year on the Norfolk coastline. Although this has some impact on erosion rates on the cliffed coastline, saltmarshes have easily been able to keep up with this rise through sediment accretion.

Offshore dredging of aggregates (sand and gravel) and offshore developments also have the potential to affect the coastline through complex interaction with sediment supply and transport systems (as well as potential effects on marine ecosystems and species). The actual effects, including potential cumulative and long-term effects, are difficult to assess in an environment of complex interactions and a lack of data, and often not fully understood or generally agreed, although there is no evidence that current offshore activities are having an impact on the coast.

Based on historic rates of change, continuing coastal change in areas where defences currently allow this would support the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty in general.

For the western parts of the AONB, including the western outlier, to Weybourne the current mosaic of intertidal features and habitats would be expected to change but to retain its character overall. Defences, where necessary to protect settlements, would be expected to be able to cope with limited sea level rise from isostatic readjustment. Former intertidal areas now protected from the sea by sea defence banks would gradually become further below the saltmarshes as the level of the latter would rise by accumulation of sediment, and would need to be returned to an intertidal state by careful management to maintain a functioning system. This would mean some loss of valued wildlife habitats and landscape elements, but replacement by others of a consistent character overall.

On the cliffed coastline, continued erosion and slumping would maintain the biodiversity, geological importance and landscape character of the cliffs. There would, however, be implications for some coastal communities where the cliffs are not fronted by defences or where these become ineffective and means of enabling settlements to 'roll back' in a way that is both sensitive to conserving natural beauty and the needs of local communities would need to be identified and implemented.

In the Horsey-Winterton part of the AONB, the current Shoreline Management Plan policy is to maintain coastal defences. However, the prospect of significant sea level rise caused by global warming, far above the rate from isostatic readjustment, is likely to affect future scenarios significantly. Shoreline Management Plans and relevant Local Plans are the recognised means of managing the coastline within the AONB.

Consideration of current and potential future effects of coastal processes and options for management can be found in table 5, Appendix 3 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for this plan.

The approach to management of coastal processes in this plan is:

- Ensure that the predictions of coastal change and its impacts are better understood and inform key decisions that affect the coastal zone.
- Work within the Shoreline Management Plan and relevant Local Plan policies to plan and prepare for managed change if necessary, which maintains the special qualities of the area in such a way that any negative impacts on coastal communities and habitats can be properly mitigated.

Climate change

Scientific research and historic records show that global and local climates have changed over geological and shorter timescales, through natural cycles and events. However, the emission of 'greenhouse gases', mainly carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels, is driving relatively rapid global climate change at an unsustainable rate. All areas of the UK are projected to experience warming, with greater chance of warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers.

The UK Climate Projections (UKCP) is a climate analysis tool which provides the most up-to-date assessment of how the UK climate may change in the future. The data used here are taken from the latest projections (UKCP18).

Across the East of England:

- Winter and summer mean temperatures are predicted to increase by between 0.5 - over 2°C by the 2020s, 1-4°C or more by the 2050s and about 1.5- 6°C or more by the 2080s.
- Summer mean daily maximum and minimum temperatures are predicted to increase by about 0.5- 3°C or more by the 2020s, 1-5.5°C or more by the 2050s and 1.2 to 8-10°C by the 2080s.
- Winter mean precipitation is predicted to increase by anything up to 16% by the 2020s, up to 35% by the 2050s and up to over 50% by the 2080s
- Summer mean precipitation is predicted to change by around -20% to +15% by the 2020s, -40% to +15% by the 2050s and -50% to +10% by the 2080s

Marine impacts

Global sea level has risen over the 20th Century and will continue to rise over the coming centuries. Linked to climate change, a warmer global climate causes thermal expansion of sea water and input of additional water through melting ice sheets, ice caps and glaciers. Water warms more slowly than air, causing ocean warming and sea level rise lag behind atmospheric temperature changes. Even if the trend of global air temperature increase were to stop now, sea temperature rise, and other associated changes would continue for decades or longer.

Mean sea level around the UK has risen by about 17cm since the start of the 20th century (when corrected for land movement - see 'Coastal processes'). UK tide gauge records show substantial yearly changes in coastal water levels, typically in the range of several centimetres.

Based in UKCP18 projections, in London (the nearest reference point to the East of England), sea level rise by the end of the century is very likely to be in the range of 0.29 – 0.70 metres in a low emission scenario. In a high emission scenario, this increases to 0.53 – 1.15 metres.

The shelf seas around the UK are projected to be 1.5 to 4°C warmer and ~0.2 practical salinity units (p.s.u.) fresher (lower salinity) by the end of the 21st century. The strength and period of summer stratification is projected to increase in the future.

Current and potential future effects

Although there are no current significant clear-cut changes in natural beauty due to local climate change, there is already evidence that climate change and associated changes are acting on features and species that are characteristic of the area, for example the migration and distribution of wintering wildfowl and waders and ranges of mobile invertebrates and marine species. In the longer term, climate change is likely to be a very significant driver of change for the area's current characteristics of natural beauty.

Although it is not possible to predict detailed impacts with any certainty, over the coming decades climate change could have profound effects on:

- Characteristic habitats, landscape features based on these and the species they support (including Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and species), and on the marine environment (sensitivity etc).



- Agriculture, and agricultural landscapes and habitats through changing viability of crops and production methods (e.g. irrigation)
- The local economy and pressures for development, through a changing climate for tourism
- Conservation, understanding and enjoyment of heritage assets (including more frequent flooding).

A study on the implications of climate change for the Norfolk Coast's characteristic species and habitats was commissioned by the Norfolk Coast Partnership in 2013. Broadly, the results of the study suggested that:

- For many terrestrial species, significant increases in mean and maximum temperatures in themselves might be expected to have little negative impact
- However, associated changes such as precipitation, soil moisture and extreme weather events could mean that this is too simplistic, and that the dependence of many species on complex ecosystems could mean that 'generalist' species are favoured over more specialist, characteristic species.
- Nevertheless, for at least some terrestrial habitats and landscapes, with suitable management it may be possible to maintain something like the current characteristics of the habitats and species they support in their current landscape context for at least some time yet.
- For aquatic habitats and species, both freshwater and marine, changes associated with increased temperatures and associated effects are likely to be more significant.
- Although the factors identified for terrestrial and aquatic habitats also apply to the low-lying coastal habitats around the western and northern coast of the AONB, which comprise the best known and richest landscapes of the AONB in terms of the variety, abundance and rarity of its wildlife, the overriding factor for these is sea level rise, which is likely to give rise to very significant change to these habitats and landscapes at some time in the future.

The sea level rise effects of global climate change also greatly magnify and accelerate the effects of coastal processes. Whereas it might be possible, if not necessarily desirable from all perspectives, to maintain and even extend sea defences in some places for a considerable period into the future under the historic scenario, this would not be viable with rapid sea level rise.

This would cause additional and increasing problems in maintaining sea defences in their current position, giving rise to threats to coastal settlements, archaeology and buildings (including some of architectural/historical value). It also threatens to damage or destroy characteristic and designated coastal habitats, although it could also lead to the creation of other valuable and characteristic habitats at the same time.

A more detailed consideration of effects of climate change can be found in table 5, Appendix 3 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Approach to management

Effective action by individuals and organisations locally to reduce carbon emissions and reduce contributions to climate change are important and will all help to affect the global picture. However, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is a global issue that requires concerted action from all countries. However, reducing greenhouse gas emissions locally or even nationally, although important, is not by itself an effective option in terms of managing the local effects of climate change and development of resilience and adaptation to climate change are also important as well as achievable through local action. There is still much uncertainty about local changes in climate and their potential impacts on the area's natural beauty. The main focus within this plan is therefore:



- continuing to improve and update understanding of local impacts of climate change on natural beauty
- improving resilience and ability to adapt to climate change for key components of the area's natural beauty

Policy and socio-economic drivers

Policy decisions and changes at national and international level can affect what happens in the area, either directly or through influencing local policy. Difficult economic conditions persist following the national and global financial crises that developed in 2008 and are a strong driver of national policy. Market forces, the result of society's preferences and decisions, are also a powerful driver of change for example through impacts on the land and sea-based economies, and commodity and property prices. Understanding changes that may potentially arise as a result of such drivers is difficult and likely to change during the lifetime of the plan. The ability to manage the effects of both high-level policy and market forces at a local level is limited, although not completely absent.

Current potential and actual key drivers of change in the AONB under this heading include:

Environment policy

The Defra 25 Year Plan for the Environment (2018) is part of the UK Government's goal to be the first generation to leave our environment in a better state than we found it. It is supported by the Environment Act (2021), which provides the Government with powers to set new, binding targets for air quality, water, biodiversity and waste reduction. Key for AONB management is the creation of a Nature Recovery Network (NRN), a national network of wildlife-rich places designed to address biodiversity loss, climate change and wellbeing. This will be mapped via Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), a new mandatory system of spatial strategies for nature, designed to be tools to encourage more coordinated, practical and focused action and investment in nature. A new Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) approach to development and land management will also influence future management and increased use of nature-based solutions within AONBs.

Development and economic policy

In 2019, economic growth is a high priority for the Government and likely to remain so for at least the lifetime of this plan. This may have implications for the AONB. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) retains strong protection for AONBs and national parks, and for many other environmental and cultural designations and assets. It also includes a strong 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' (as a driver of economic growth), which although it does not override this protection, may be leading to further pressure for development in or on the fringe of the AONB.

Any development in the AONB must aim to promote the purpose of designation of the AONB (i.e. conservation and enhancement of natural beauty) and 'major' development must consider the provisions of the NPPF. Local Development Frameworks/Local Plans, developed and administered by local authorities, are the prime local planning policy documents for managing development in the AONB (see also section 2.2 in this plan).

The District of North Norfolk is one of the most rural in lowland England and had a reported resident population of 103,587 in 2016 and is predicted to have a population of 112,078 by 2036 according to the latest Office for National Statistics projection (2016 base). Approximately half the population lives in the major towns and villages, with the other half living in the large number of smaller villages, hamlets and scattered dwellings which are dispersed throughout the rural area.



Estimates of population and trends from the 2001 and 2011 census suggest that the population for parishes wholly within the AONB in 2011 was 13,235, which is 652 (4.7%) fewer than in 2001. The fall in population is apparently much greater than 4.7% in some parishes (see table 4, Appendix 2 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment). Within North Norfolk, household growth between 2018 and 2028 is projected to be an average of 402 households per year, derived from the National Household Projections (2014 base).

The emerging Local Plan for North Norfolk District Council, along with emerging Neighbourhood Plans, makes provision for housing growth within the AONB. Housing allocations are planned in Cromer, Blakeney and Wells where appropriate locations have been selected.

Modest allocations for some AONB villages are suggested in the draft allocations for the West Norfolk Local Plan, although significant growth is anticipated close to the AONB around Hunstanton and Kings Lynn. Great Yarmouth has an adopted Local Plan Core Strategy (2015) and Local Plan Part 2 (2021), while Winterton-on-Sea is identified as a Primary Village the plans do not specifically allocate any sites for development. Winterton-on-Sea Neighbourhood Plan generally seeks to protect and enhance the parish and the plan does not contain any allocations for development.

New housing in and around the AONB is likely to remain a strong economic proposition for developers due to the quality of the local environment. New housing provision in and close to the AONB has potential benefits for the local economy and viability of services and there is a need for housing provision to meet local needs so that a wide range of people are able to continue to live and work within the AONB.

Local Plans have specific policies that facilitate the adaptation of coastal communities to climate change and specifically to consider the relocation and replacement of dwellings affected by coastal erosion.

Tourism-related development, including services and provisions for the local tourism industry and diversification of farming enterprises into visitor-related economic activities, can have economic benefits for local communities but also has potential for significant adverse impacts on the natural beauty on which tourism depends - for example tranquillity, the area's landscape character and through increasing pressures on sensitive habitats and species, especially on the undeveloped coast.

There are also pressures for other forms of development in the countryside and in some cases potential conflict between government and other guidance and AONB protection – for example telecommunications masts and broadband infrastructure – and there may be others, unforeseen at present, in the future. Although development is likely to bring economic benefits, impacts on the area's natural beauty can undermine the natural capital that underpins the tourism industry and makes this an attractive area to live in and visit. We need to manage development so that it is compatible with AONB designation.

National energy policy

The UK Government's commitment to meet 15% of the UK's energy demand from renewable sources by 2020, and its desire to provide a more secure supply of energy for the UK, is driving renewable energy development. For the AONB, this is currently apparent in the development of wind farms and solar photo-voltaic arrays.

For wind energy, the main focus at present is on offshore development, although a few relatively small-scale onshore wind farms are present in or close to the AONB. The North Norfolk Landscape



Sensitivity Assessment (2021 Supplementary Planning Document) identifies suitable areas within the AONB where onshore wind energy may be appropriate, and this is set out in the emerging Local Plan. Offshore, large wind farms are operating and frequently clearly visible from the AONB - in the Wash off the Lincolnshire coast (Lincs, Lynn, Inner Dowsing), off Sheringham (Dudgeon and Sheringham Shoal) and off Winterton-on-Sea (Scroby Sands). Three further offshore wind farms are already consented off the North Norfolk Heritage Coast (Dudgeon, Race Bank and Hornsea Three).

One solar PV array has been granted planning permission in the AONB and a few others on the edge of the area, although visual impacts from these are expected to be limited compared to wind farms.

Marine planning

Since the AONB is a coastal designation which includes the intertidal zone, with many ecological, cultural and visual links with the sea, what happens in the marine area is highly relevant to the conservation and enhancement of its natural beauty.

An important provision of the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) is the development of Marine Plans, which interpret the principles of the high-level marine objectives from the Government's Marine Policy Statement in a detailed spatial management plan for sections of offshore and inshore waters (up to high water on the coast).

The combined East Marine Plan, covering inshore and offshore areas from Flamborough Head to Felixstowe, and so including and relating to part of the AONB, was published in April 2014. The objectives and policies of the plan need to be taken into account by public bodies in making decisions that may affect the marine environment. The plan can potentially help to support the objectives of AONB designation by managing development in the marine area to conserve seascapes, habitats and species that contribute directly or indirectly to natural beauty.

Housing development in the visitor catchment

Data from 2017 paints a clear picture of the importance of the tourism sector. Within North Norfolk alone, the total number of trips (day and overnight) was more than 8.8 million. There was ~6% growth in day trips and ~12% growth in overnight stays from 2016. The total value of tourism for the area grew by 3% from 2016 to £505 million and the number of people employed in the tourism industry reached 11,352. The 12% increase in the number of overnight trips to North Norfolk is against a 3% increase in the same statistic across England as a whole.

As examples of the scale of numbers at some sites, the Holkham Estate estimates that around 800,000 people and 300,000 dogs visit every year whilst Norfolk Wildlife Trust receives more than 110,000 to Cley and Salhouse marshes.

Within the mix of more traditional recreational activities such as sailing and other forms of boating, windsurfing, wildfowling, sea angling, walking, cycling, walking dogs, browsing in villages and scenic drives, new recreational activities may arise either as short-term fashions or more permanent features of the recreational scene. A recent example is kite-based activities on beaches. It is difficult to predict new activities and the opportunities and pressures they may bring, but they need to be managed in a way that is compatible with existing activities and conservation of the area's natural beauty.

Significant housing growth is anticipated in areas within the wider catchment area of potential day visits to the area over the next five years and beyond – for example around Norwich, Great Yarmouth, Thetford, King's Lynn, Peterborough and Cambridge.



In conjunction with Natural England, Local Planning Authorities in Norfolk have adopted a strategic mitigation package (GIRAMS) to offset adverse impacts from new residential and tourism development and increased visitor pressure on the designated European sites which form much of the valued landscape of the AONB.

The development of the England Coast Path with associated 'spreading room' by Natural England around the coast under the Marine and Coastal Access Act will continue during the period of the AONB plan. The route currently runs from Hunstanton in west Norfolk to Hopton-on-Sea, with the final section along the coast of the Wash (King's Lynn to Hunstanton) in development. This is likely to attract additional visitors, with associated economic benefits, although development of the routes and spreading room will take potential impacts on nature conservation into account.

Current / potential effects – development and economic policy drivers

Even small-scale development can have impacts on the character of existing settlements, heritage assets and the landscape and seascape character of a wider area depending on design and location. There are also potential associated environmental impacts such as:

- Water resources and effects on natural features dependent on these
- Capacity of sewage and sewage treatment systems and consequent water quality
- Transport infrastructure and traffic
- Light pollution
- The tranquillity of the area.
- Unexpected consequences of development on complex relationships and processes, especially in the marine environment (e.g. coastal processes, species and food chains)

Properties bought as second homes, for retirement, as holiday homes, or for buy-to-let cause high property prices, excluding people on relatively low incomes who work in the area from the market. This has impacts on the character and cultural distinctiveness of communities and settlements, with many properties empty for much of the time, and on the local economy.

Depending on the ability and resources to influence and manage recreational activities, an increase in visitor numbers driven by local and, perhaps more significantly, regional housing development could potentially have impacts through:

- pressures on some sensitive habitats and species, particularly in coastal locations, through inadvertent damage and disturbance. There are already known pressures and impacts on some sensitive habitats and species in some locations, for example dunes and beach nesting birds. Impacts on ground-nesting, feeding and roosting birds from people walking dogs is a contentious issue on some sections of coast and poorly controlled dogs can also cause problems with livestock. Impacts may be experienced in conjunction with other pressures, such as those arising from climate change, and may affect habitats and species covered by European designations
- increased traffic levels and associated impacts e.g. erosion of tranquillity, pressures for signage and infrastructure (visual / landscape character impacts), increased local air pollution and carbon emissions, increased congestion and impacts on settlement character
- increased damage to heritage assets
- increasing noise and disturbance from some recreational activities (e.g. aircraft, jet-skis)
- Conflicts between different recreational activities
- increase in litter, including dog fouling (already a recognised problem in many parts of the area, which affects people's enjoyment of natural beauty as well as carrying health risks)

Although there is a likelihood of impacts, there is currently limited information available to predict likely increases in numbers, potential impacts and areas of most sensitivity. A more detailed consideration of effects can be found in table 5, Appendix 3 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Agriculture, forestry, fishing and other local economy

The UK is no longer part of the European Union and is in the process of replacing the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) with alternative schemes. Farming in England is moving away from top-down, arbitrary land-based subsidies towards schemes which recognise farmers as stewards of the natural environment. Policy reforms aim to support productive and sustainable farming and food production alongside environmental, climate and animal welfare outcomes.

This is supported by an updated plan from Defra – The Path to Sustainable Farming: An Agricultural Transition Plan 2021-24 – which outlines initiatives to increase biodiversity, restore landscapes, promote animal welfare and increase productivity through investment in new equipment and technology. Three new, complimentary Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMs) are proposed to support the vision for the future of farming payments. Schemes are voluntary, and designed to be accessible, supportive and with fair compensation to incentivise high levels of uptake leading to ambitious outcomes. All schemes will be designed to pay for public goods which go above and beyond regulatory baselines.

- Sustainable Farming Incentive. Making agricultural activities more sustainable, will pay for actions at scale across the whole farmed landscape.
- Local Nature Recovery. More ambitious successor to Countryside Stewardship. Supports local collaboration to make space for nature in the farmed landscape and contribute to targets for trees, peatland restoration, habitat creation and restoration and natural flood management.
- Landscape Recovery. Pays landowners or managers who want to take a more radical, long-term and large-scale approach to producing environmental and climate outcomes through land use change and habitat and ecosystem restoration.

A large proportion of the AONB is farmland, with many environmental organisations also relying on agri-environment funding to manage reserves. The development and implementation of ELMs is therefore likely to have a significant influence on the conservation and enhancement of the area's natural beauty.

The Water Framework Directive, for which the Environment Agency is the key competent authority, is a powerful policy driver for river catchment improvement. The Directive commits European Union member states to achieve good ecological and chemical status of all water bodies (including marine waters up to one nautical mile from shore) by 2015, or if this is not possible, it allows interim targets to be set for 2015 and 2021 with full compliance by 2027. Under all conditions, it requires that there should be no deterioration in status.

Following Brexit, the UK is no longer part of the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). It is now an independent coastal state, fully responsible for managing fisheries in the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), extending 200 nautical miles from shore. The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) includes provisions for fisheries, but these remain contentious. Despite this, the UK remains part of wider international agreements and treaties which manage fish stocks which provide a basis for continuity and an ongoing baseline for engagement with EU actors. The impacts of these changes



on the small-scale local fishing industry within the AONB (which contributes to the distinctive character of the area and its communities and economy) remain to be seen.

The majority of funding available to support other economic development in Norfolk and Suffolk will be distributed through the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The LEP's Economic Strategy (2017-2021) outlines ambitions for the future of growth across the two counties.

The Norfolk Rural Development Strategy (2013-2020) is designed to help focus how rural Norfolk needs to develop over the next decade and beyond. The 2020 vision for Rural Norfolk is to 'Achieve inclusive, sustainable rural areas which provide their inhabitants with a high quality of life through a dynamic economy, vibrant community and healthy natural environment'.

Potential effects – agriculture, forestry, fishing and other local economy drivers

Given the state of development and change in policy and programmes, it is very difficult to assess potential effects on the AONB, although this is likely to become clearer over the next year. These could include:

- Changes to agricultural policy and national delivery of this, as well as commodity prices and operational costs, may have significant effects on agricultural habitats, species and landscapes
- Some operations that are not currently viable may be able to attract funding through ELMs
- Changes in crops may affect wildlife and the historic environment, both positively and negatively. For example, loss of sugar beet as a prominent local crop through loss of production support and market viability would be likely to affect farm economics and wildlife, although it could benefit some archaeological sites. Beet is an important 'break' crop in the rotation with no obvious alternative at present and is important for farmland bird species such as skylarks. Wintering geese use harvested beet tops as an important food source and may transfer to other crops (e.g. winter barley), with impacts on the value of the crop
- Demand and profits for increased biofuels/biomass production may increase, with potential changes in crops and characteristic biodiversity and landscapes
- Difficulty in sustainable economic management of some characteristic habitats e.g. heathland, grassland (grazing), woodland may continue, with effects on landscape and wildlife from lack of active management – although ELMs funding might be available
- ELMs may not be widely adopted if funding levels are insufficient or compare unfavourably with market prices
- There is a risk of loss of continuity in transferring from pre-existing Environmental Stewardship and woodland grants to new schemes, with possible loss of sensitively managed landscape/ habitats and damage to the historic environment
- Economic development funding may drive diversification into other activities e.g. tourism, for smaller farms in particular, with possible landscape impacts but also potentially some relief of recreation pressures on the coast

Reduction in public sector funding

Following the economic crash of 2008, Government policy has included reducing the cost of the public sector as part of reducing the UK budget deficit. This has included significant reduction in Government funding to local authorities and AONB partnerships, with further reductions likely for most organisations for the foreseeable future.



Local authorities and other public sector organisations such as the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage have an important role to play in conserving and enhancing aspects of the area's natural beauty.

Potential effects

Whether, and if so how, the roles and operation of AONB partnerships and partner organisations who play a critical role in meeting AONB objectives are affected by continued reductions in funding remains to be seen. Overall, the approach in this plan is to:

- Improve understanding of issues where necessary
- Manage development to conserve and enhance natural beauty through the local planning system, achieving a consistent and co-ordinated approach across the area, including by using the Integrated Landscape Character Guidance for the area and other guidance such as that provided for National Character Areas.
- Develop a consistent and co-ordinated approach to influencing policy and development issues outside local control that have potential impacts on the area's natural beauty, through the National Association for AONBs and by coordination between local partners.
- Develop local approaches for adaptation to high level policy initiatives, where possible.
- Develop effective and coordinated local targeting and promotion of grant schemes that help to conserve and enhance natural beauty and promote sustainability
- There is a risk of inappropriate tree species (such as Paulownia) being planted for carbon sequestration, causing damage to both landscape and biodiversity

4. Themes, objectives and policies

20-year vision for the area

In developing the 2004-09 Management Plan, local people and organisations were asked what they wanted for the future of the Norfolk Coast. Their views were developed into a vision for the area in 20 years' time, divided into sections following the themes in this section of the plan. This vision was taken forward into the 2009-14 plan with only minor modifications. This vision was continued in the 2014-19 plan and is refreshed in this current 2019-24 plan.

The vision covers what needs protecting - and what needs changing. The aim is not for everything to remain the same and it is important to recognise the tension between the character of the area, as seen today, and change and adaptation required to meet the future. Everything in the Management Plan is linked to this vision.

Themes in this section of the plan

There are five themes, covering aspects of management of the area:

- Landscape, biodiversity and geodiversity
- Built and historic environment
- Farming, forestry and fishing
- Sustainable communities
- Access and recreation

The objectives and policies have been developed through consideration of the qualities of natural beauty, its condition and the drivers of change from section 3, and what is needed to help to achieve the vision. Each theme section contains:

- An introduction containing background information relating to the theme
- The section of the twenty-year vision relating to this theme
- A summary of key issues relating to this theme
- Objectives, which are an expression of specific goals over the five-year period of the plan and relate to the achievement of the twenty-year vision for that theme, against which progress (and possibly setbacks) can be assessed, probably annually, as part of management plan monitoring
- Policies, which set out broadly how the Partnership intends to address key issues and achieve the objectives

Actions for each theme section are presented in a separate Action Plan, which will be reviewed and updated annually. Actions may contribute to both objectives and policies; their relevance to these is indicated in the action plan. The actions are intended to be specific initiatives or projects involving the staff team and /or partners, which are over and above partners' normal management operations that contribute to AONB management, and their day-to-day application of AONB policies.

Understanding and education

Understanding of the area, its unique and special qualities and its sensitivities, is an additional cross-cutting theme throughout this section and there are objectives and policies relating to understanding and education in all of the sections.

Appreciating what the natural and managed environment of the area provides for people is essential to maintain these vital environmental goods and services (sometimes called ecosystem services). Understanding the natural and managed systems, habitats and species and their sensitivities is essential to enable sustainable use of the area – for environmental and other organisations managing the area, but also for local residents, landowners and farmers, businesses and visitors.

4.1 Landscape, biodiversity and geodiversity introduction

The landscape, in its broadest sense, including its wildlife, habitats, cultural and historic features – how the area looks and how it is perceived by people, using all their senses including emotional response – is the basis of AONB designation. The details of the landscape will change as they always have done in response to physical, economic and social influences but the challenge is to recognise and act to conserve the essential character of the area.

The area's landforms are based fundamentally on its geology and the forces that have acted on it over time – particularly the effects of glaciation, followed by marine erosion and deposition. It is nationally and internationally recognised for its geological and geomorphological features, especially the coast with its variety and combination of features responding to coastal processes.

The qualities of the coast and its relationship with the marine environment and its hinterland are fundamental to the character of the area, and the foundation of its designation. This is a particularly dynamic coastline, subject to continuous and often rapid change, which is an essential part of its special character.

The area's landscapes, and the habitats and species within them, are diverse. The many layers of international, national and local statutory and non-statutory conservation designations for wildlife and geodiversity testify to the area's importance and are fundamental to protecting the key habitats, features and species which make a major contribution to the area's natural beauty. The



international importance of the wildlife and habitats of the marine and intertidal areas of the Wash and North Norfolk Coast is also recognised by its designation as a Marine Protected Area Network. Many of the species and habitats are listed in the Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan, and a number of species are protected in their own right.

Inland from the highly designated coast, important areas of lowland heath remain as remnants of once much more extensive habitat, with relatively small blocks and belts of woodland, including a small amount of ancient woodland.

Opportunities to remove overhead electricity supply lines in sensitive landscapes have arisen since 2005 for national parks and AONBs, through an agreement between the Government regulator Ofgem and the Distribution Network Organisation in this area, currently UK Power Networks. Three schemes have been completed so far, with a further scheme in the pipeline and others anticipated in the lifetime of this plan.

Integrated Landscape Character Assessment for the AONB

An Integrated Landscape Character Assessment and guidance for the AONB have been produced by Partners working together to integrate information on landscape, biodiversity and historic environment. The full Integrated Landscape Character Guidance is a large document, accessible via the Norfolk Coast Partnership website. It consists of:

- An introductory section giving background to the study and explaining how to use the guidance for different user groups;
- An overview of the data used to compile the integrated character types and guidance
- A section on general character and pressures for change in the area; and
- A section for each of the 16 distinct landscape character types in the area, comprising:
 - An integrated description of its character and development, including sub-areas
 - The key characteristics that are sensitive to change, and key forces for change in this landscape character type
 - A vision for the future of this landscape character type
 - Recommendations / guidance for management to achieve the vision
 - Maps showing local landscape character areas and the information layers that have gone into producing the integrated guidance.

Biodiversity 2020

Launched in 2011, “Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services” outlines the strategic direction for biodiversity policy for the next decade on land (including rivers and lakes) and at sea, building upon the Natural Environment White Paper, ‘The Natural Choice’ and linked to the National Ecosystem Assessment and the recommendations in a report on the State of England’s wildlife sites by Prof John Lawton in 2010, ‘Making Space for Nature’.

A key conclusion of ‘Making Space for Nature’ is that England’s collection of wildlife sites does not currently comprise a coherent and resilient ecological network that is capable of coping with the challenge of climate change and other pressures. The report recommends that we address this by:

- Improving the quality of current sites by better habitat management.
- Increasing the size of current wildlife sites.
- Enhancing connections between, or join up, sites, either through physical corridors, or through ‘stepping stones’.
- Creating new sites.



- Reducing the pressures on wildlife by improving the wider environment, including through buffering wildlife sites.

In short – more, bigger, better and joined up sites to create a sustainable, resilient and effective ecological network. AONB Partnerships clearly have an important part to play in helping to deliver Biodiversity 2020 targets. Action 1.1.9 states: “Encourage and support new and existing large-scale initiatives for improved ecological networks across the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designated landscapes”. The key outcome in Biodiversity 2020 for AONB Partnerships is Outcome 1c: “By 2020, at least 17% of land and inland water, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, conserved through effective, integrated and joined up approaches to safeguard biodiversity and ecosystem services including through management of our existing systems of protected areas and the establishment of nature improvement areas.” This plan aims to promote a coordinated, landscapescale approach to conserving and enhancing ecosystems and to contribute to Biodiversity 2020 targets. One example of a current large-scale ecosystems project is the Nine Chalk Rivers programme to restore and enhance the area’s rivers.

Vision: in 2034...

The Norfolk Coast will be richly diverse, with distinctive landscapes, wildlife, settlements, geological features, building styles and materials, communities, history and culture.

Necessary development, including outside the area and in the marine environment, will have been managed so that the area will still be essentially unspoilt with a strong feeling of remoteness, peace and tranquillity, with wide skies, seascapes and dark night skies that show the richness and detail of constellations. The marine environment will be sustainably managed in a way that takes full account of the area’s important links with the sea.

The coast will retain a strong feeling of wilderness and of being exposed to and shaped by the elements. In general, there will have been a managed approach to achieving a more naturally functioning coastline, which will be increasingly valuable for its habitats and the species they support, including breeding, migrating and wintering birds. Where it has been deemed necessary to maintain coastal defences, this will have been done in the most sensitive way possible in terms of sustainability and visual and wildlife impacts.

Habitats will have been improved, increased and linked to enable adaptation of the area’s biodiversity to climate change. The area’s rivers and estuaries will be in good ecological condition, providing a passage for migratory species. All parts of the area, not just designated sites, will support a rich diversity of characteristic wildlife and habitats associated with local environmental variations and management, including species and habitats of national and international importance, although these will not necessarily be exactly the same as in 2019. Where coastal habitats have been lost through realignment they will have been replaced elsewhere and plans for managing future loss will have been developed.

The landscape will show many links with history, with features and patterns created by past cultures and land use, and with its geological past through large scale features and individual sites. The value of the landscape and the story it tells will be widely understood.

Key issues relating to natural beauty for 2019-24 plan

In the longer term, there is likely to be potential loss of, or at least major change to, existing dynamic coastal geomorphology and coastal / intertidal habitats of the North Norfolk Heritage Coast through

sea level rise. To provide for effective mitigation and adaptation there is a need to plan well in advance.

Impacts on biodiversity and landscape features from climate change (other than sea level rise); are also expected; although uncertain, these are likely to be more significant for aquatic (including marine) than terrestrial species and habitats. Ground water availability and flows in water courses are likely to be affected, and acidification of the sea through increased dissolved carbon dioxide affects marine ecology. Some impacts are beginning to be apparent now but there is also a need to plan for increased resilience in the longer term.

Changes to marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecology from climate change are likely to have impacts on species relying on one or more of these e.g. marine food sources. A general decline in biodiversity is apparent, particularly away from designated sites. There is an international, national and local responsibility to reverse this decline and meet Biodiversity 2020 targets.

Non-native invasive species exist in places but are not currently a major issue affecting native biodiversity in the area. There is a possibility that they may become more of a problem in future, possibly driven by climate change in some cases and including marine species.

In addition to development that has been planned and consented, there are potential additional impacts of future offshore, coastal and terrestrial developments on existing landscape and seascape character, which may need to be avoided, mitigated or as a last resort compensated for. Development both within the area and within travelling distance to it may lead to continued gradual erosion of tranquillity and wilderness quality, for example through roads, car parking, lighting, traffic and numbers and activities of visitors (see section 4.5).

There is generally a low awareness and understanding of geodiversity and its importance, with little information aimed at non-specialists available. Some individual sites are in poor condition through lack of maintenance.

The area's rivers, which are important ecological and landscape features in their own right and key links between land and sea, are not currently in good ecological condition, although work is underway to address this.

Objectives 2019-24: by 2024...

Landscape:

OL1 The integrity and diversity of the area's landscapes and seascapes will have been maintained and preferably enhanced, assessed with reference to the Integrated Landscape Guidance for the AONB

Biodiversity:

OL2 Internationally and nationally designated sites for wildlife will be in favourable condition and under effective management

OL3 Locally designated sites for wildlife will be under positive management

OL4 A local expression of Biodiversity 2020 targets for the area will have been developed and a programme for their achievement nearing completion

OL5 The area's rivers and estuaries will be in good ecological condition or approaching this state

Geodiversity:

- OL6 Large scale geodiversity features, including dynamic coastal features will have been conserved so that their integrity and their influence on the landscape remains apparent
- OL7 Significant local geodiversity sites will be in positive management
- OL8 The area's geodiversity will be better understood and appreciated by decision-makers and the public, and public access and information for a range of sites will be available.

Policies 2014-19

Members of the Norfolk Coast Partnership, including the staff team will, cooperating where necessary...

PL1 Refer to and use the Integrated Landscape Character Guidance for the AONB to guide decision making and delivery of conservation objectives across the area

PL2 Continue to promote understanding of the area's key qualities of natural beauty, particularly those less understood and valued at present and including seascapes and the marine environment, and take account of these in decision-making

PL3 Continue to improve understanding of changes to landscape and biodiversity arising from climate change (including sea level rise and other effects) and other drivers, and plan to adapt to and mitigate these changes

PL4 Work together on a landscape scale to improve resilience to change for key habitats and species through development of ecological networks that increase, extend, link and buffer key habitat areas

PL5 Be proactive to reduce and manage adverse impacts on the key qualities of natural beauty from past development and activities, as well as resist and mitigate damaging new impacts and influence decisions by organisations outside the Partnership

PL6 Protect the area's distinctive native biodiversity from the impacts of invasive non-native species where possible by restricting pathways of introduction and carrying out targeted eradications

PL7 Plan and prepare for implementation of coastal realignment where necessary to allow maximum ability to adapt and maintain active coastal geomorphology, landscape and seascape character including ecological links between land and sea, taking into account conservation objectives for coastal sites and the interests of coastal communities (see also policy PC8)

PL8 Identify and implement opportunities for the relocation of key habitats and features that are threatened by coastal change

PL9 Take into account in plans and decision-making the services to society that habitats in the AONB provide (eco-systems services)

PL10 Work with landowners to bring Sites of Special Scientific Interest, County Wildlife Sites and other Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and non-statutory geodiversity sites into positive management where this is required.

4.2 Built and historic environment

Introduction

Important archaeological features and artefacts have been found in both terrestrial and intertidal areas. Flint tools made by Palaeolithic hunter-gatherers are the earliest evidence of human occupation and use of the area, dating back to around half a million years ago. Recent nationally important discoveries at Happisburgh (outside the AONB) dating back at least 780,000 years emphasise the importance and potential of this stretch of coastline. More recent archaeological evidence, following the end of the last Ice Age about 10,000 years ago, is more plentiful. Artefacts and sites from the Mesolithic period (about 10,000 to 6,000 years ago) and Neolithic period (about 6,000 to 4,000 years ago) have been discovered. The Bronze Age (about 4,000 to 2,700 years ago) is well represented, with numerous burial mounds and the famous timber circle at Holme-next-the-Sea, discovered in the late 1990s. Iron Age forts and treasures, Roman forts and villas and Saxon



settlements and cemeteries enrich the picture, which continues through medieval times with the development of fishing and trading ports. Further information on the area's heritage assets in the coastal zone, historic landscape character and other heritage information can be found via English Heritage and the Norfolk Historic Environment Record.

Traditional buildings make a strong contribution to the distinctive character of the area through the use of local vernacular materials, particularly flint in the eastern sector, and chalk and carstone to the west. Villages, consisting largely of modest 18th and 19th century cottages, are clustered along the coast road, most markedly in the chalk downland area where the hinterland is noticeably empty of settlement, punctuated with an occasional isolated farmstead. In the eastern half, small settlements are found inland amongst a network of narrow, winding country lanes. Flint churches, mainly with square towers, are often prominent features in villages, particularly where they are sited on ground rising from sea level, as at Salthouse and Morston. A number of surviving windmills form landmarks in the coastal villages. Traditional farm buildings of flint and soft red brick are common, particularly in the area east of Holkham. Barns and other agricultural buildings often form characteristic blank boundary walls within villages. Many have been converted to residential use or have become redundant.

Historic parks shape a significant part of the landscape and contain country houses of great variety (Old Hunstanton, Felbrigg, Bayfield, Sheringham, Holkham, Sandringham). There is also a strong Arts and Crafts influence on the design of a number of early 20th century country houses found between Holt and Mundesley. In addition to their visual contribution, these historic buildings are important for providing wildlife habitat, in particular for bats, barn owls, swallows and house martins. Traditional lime mortar also provides habitat for lichens.

The design of some more recent housing development has not always respected local character, although the Town and Country Planning system has been generally effective since designation in managing levels of development, including some affordable housing. The area still has a generally undeveloped character, in common with much of Norfolk.

Traditional materials and designs do not always lend themselves easily to improved environmental performance or for conversion to other uses, but this should be achievable with thought and care. Some new buildings, e.g. the Norfolk Wildlife Trust Visitors Centre at Cley and the Millennium Centre at Brancaster, include innovative sustainable design features, as well as complementing their surroundings.

The highway corridor

The network of narrow roads, often hedge-lined and with wide grass verges, makes a significant contribution to the area's landscape and historic character and biodiversity, and needs sensitive management when undertaking signing, maintenance or other traffic management work.

Vision: in 2034...

The quality and locally distinct character of the historic environment, including settlement form, character and patterns and in the marine environment, will be evident and valued. It will be understood, recorded, maintained and conserved as far as possible.

Archaeology and historic ruins will have been well conserved and managed, or where this is not feasible will have been recorded. Traditional buildings that contribute to the character of the area will have been well maintained and conserved, including through appropriate productive use where



possible. New buildings will have been located and designed to conserve and enhance landscape and settlement character.

Buildings will have been sensitively adapted where necessary to incorporate features that enhance their performance in terms of both local and global environmental sustainability. New buildings, including those using innovative design, will also have these features as well as complementing their surroundings.

Within the constraints of rising sea levels and storm activity the area will retain characteristic coastal settlements and road networks. Coastal settlements will be adapting to change, with new buildings and roads located where they are sustainable in the long term in respect of coastal erosion and flood risk from rivers and the sea while retaining local distinctiveness.

Key issues relating to natural beauty for 2019-24 plan

Relatively minor individual developments and changes to buildings can accumulate to cause a larger change in overall settlement character. 'Exceptions' sites for affordable housing can deliver affordable housing in response to proven local needs, with minimal landscape impacts. However, affordable housing requirements are often met through a proportion of market housing developments, leading to more housing overall than is required to meet local needs.

New development, both residential and for tourism, can lead to additional pressures on the local environment such as water resources and sewerage (see also section 4.5)

Some historic environment sites are likely to be at risk from climate change related impacts in the longer term, including sea level rise and flooding. Planning to adapt and mitigate impacts needs to happen in the short term. Understanding and awareness of some historic environment sites may be affected by poor management and information. Some historic / vernacular buildings are no longer required for their original use and may be unsuitable for modern uses without alteration. It may be necessary to convert some buildings to enable a modern use to preserve them overall.

Objectives 2019-24: by 2024...

OB1 The area's designated heritage assets will be under positive management

OB2 Measures to improve understanding and conservation of the area's historic and archaeological heritage amongst partners and public will have been implemented

OB3 The area's key historic environment sites most at risk from climate change-related and other impacts will be known and where appropriate mitigating measures investigated and in progress

Policies 2019-24

Members of the Norfolk Coast Partnership, including the staff team will, cooperating where necessary...

PB1 Ensure that historic and archaeological heritage assets within their ownership or powers of regulation, particularly heritage assets at risk, are recorded, conserved and enhanced

PB2 Provide opportunities for public understanding and appropriate access to historic environment sites within their ownership and promote this elsewhere, where consistent with conservation objectives

PB3 Ensure that new development, including changes to existing buildings and infrastructure, within their ownership or powers of regulation are consistent with the special qualities of the area and relevant conservation objectives



PB4 Demonstrate good practice and provide examples of how to incorporate measures for energy, water use, resource reduction and biodiversity enhancements sensitively into new, vernacular and historic buildings and structures

PB5 Support new development and conversion that is consistent with local and national planning policy and the principles above, in order to retain and develop residential and employment opportunities that support natural beauty.

4.3 Farming, forestry and fishing

Introduction

Our landscapes and wildlife heritage have been shaped by the decisions of land managers over thousands of years. The management of farmland and woodland for food and other products has been, and still is, the key human influence on the landscape of most of Britain, including most of the Norfolk Coast AONB; approximately half of the designated area is farmland, mainly arable, with about a further 17% woodland or parkland. Agricultural and parkland landscapes, with field boundaries, hedgerow trees, and belts and blocks of woodland, are an important part of the area's character, contrasting with the relative wildness of coastal landscapes. Parkland and wood pasture includes rare and valuable habitat including occasional veteran trees.

The economic health of farming and woodland management, and the ability of these land uses in the future to deliver environmental benefits at the same time, are vital for the maintenance of a landscape worthy of the AONB designation. The decisions that farmers and land managers take, often influenced by EU and Government policy, determine to a great extent whether society's ambitions for water, wildlife, healthy soil and production of food and other goods can be achieved. Historically the farmed landscape has reflected the economic and social needs of the time and the area has played an important role in the history of agricultural innovation, for example by 'Coke of Norfolk' in the 17th century. Arable farming has been a major land use since designation, and although profitability has varied over the last decade high quality malting barley is a notable local crop favoured by the soils and climate of north Norfolk. When arable margins are high compared to livestock enterprises, the availability of suitable grazing livestock has made it harder to manage valued conservation habitats such as heathland, downland and grazing marshes. There has been a consequent decline in the quality and quantity of some habitats over many years. However, agri-environment schemes have contributed to conservation and enhancement of landscape, biodiversity and the historic environment and there may be opportunities for new approaches to habitat creation and management, and linking isolated habitats, using socio-economic drivers.

Woodland, copses and even individual trees make an important contribution to the area's landscape character, although it is not rich in woodland generally, particularly ancient woodland. The economic viability of woodland for timber products is relatively low at present but woodland can provide recreational and wildlife benefits as well as supporting income from shooting or other activities. There is also scope for more woodland in appropriate locations, as well as for improved management for a range of uses.

Like agriculture, fishing still has a key role to play in the area's natural beauty. Now based mainly on shellfish and much reduced in economic importance, local fishing activity has shaped the character of coastal settlements. It still contributes to that character in many cases, through activity at harbours and beaches, and through quays, boat and building styles. The area is widely recognised for the quality of its local seafood.

Vision: in 2034...

Agriculture will still be the prime means of maintaining the natural beauty of the majority of the area's countryside. Farming and forestry will provide an economically sustainable livelihood through producing crops for a wide range of uses including food and biofuels as well as providing recreational opportunities and habitats for wildlife. Economic sustainability will be assisted where necessary through environmental grants to enable farmers and land managers to maintain and enhance specific landscape features, habitats and species and heritage assets, and use of this support will be actively encouraged.

Farming, the management of woodland and food production in general, including some new crops that are being grown in response to climate change and market demand, will be in tune with the local climate and soil characteristics.

Crop and animal production methods will not impact adversely on water resources and quality, soil structure and local eco-systems and at least maintain, and often enhance, landscape character, local distinctiveness, biodiversity and heritage assets through a mixture of smaller tenant and family-owned farms sitting alongside larger estate-based businesses. Farm businesses in the area will be considered to demonstrate good practice and to be at the vanguard of sustainable agricultural management.

Fishing will be an environmentally sustainable and economically viable activity, at least in combination with other economic activities, and will continue to contribute positively to the distinctive character of the area.

Key issues for 2019-24 plan

Agricultural changes driven by a range of drivers (agricultural transition, market forces / commodity prices, climate change) may have impacts of on the viability of farming businesses, existing landscape character, biodiversity and the historic environment.

The area's chalk rivers have been affected by run-off of silt and artificial nutrients from farmland and by modification of their courses and profile to improve drainage, affecting diversity of river habitats and species. Many farmland ponds have been filled in or have effectively disappeared through neglect as they are no longer relevant to current farming.

Major impacts of climate change on agriculture and woodlands are likely to be over a longer timescale than the five years of the AONB management plan, but adaptation is needed to mitigate predicted impacts, which could include new diseases and invasive species. Changes in temperature, rainfall patterns and extreme weather events (drought, flood and storms) may all affect viability of current crops, cultivation methods and irrigation.

Changes in freshwater and marine ecology linked to climate change are likely to be more rapid than for terrestrial species. For marine habitats and species acidification is an additional factor; marine impacts may increasingly affect the local fishing industry through changes in traditional target species.

Although woodland is not a major feature of the AONB, opportunities exist for improving it as an economic resource as well as benefitting biodiversity, landscape and recreation, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.



Objectives 2019-24: by 2024...

OF1 High take-up of ELMs, which is appropriate to the area and supports AONB objectives, delivering landscape, biodiversity and historic environment enhancements and supporting sustainable agricultural enterprises, will be in place in the area

OF2 Improved efficiency of water use and storage, and management of soil and nutrient run-off by agriculture in the area will be in development, reducing impacts on ground water, rivers and other water dependent features, respecting landscape character and contributing to Water Framework Directive and biodiversity objectives.

OF3 Changes to new types of crops, such as energy crops, will have taken landscape and ecological character and the historic environment into account

OF4 There will be increased and improved management of woodland in the area with benefits for biodiversity, businesses and recreation, and development of local supply chains for woodland products

OF5 The local fishing industry will have remained viable economically and as a way of life and measures / initiatives to support adaptation, if necessary, and sustainability of the local fishing industry will have been continued

Policies 2014-19

Members of the Norfolk Coast Partnership, including the staff team will, cooperating where necessary...

PF1 Aim to develop and maintain understanding of the key issues affecting local farming, farmland habitats and wildlife under changing circumstances within the framework of the new Common Agricultural Policy and influence the development and implementation of the new agri-environment scheme in the area to benefit farming in the AONB and farmland landscapes, habitats and wildlife and its historic environment features

PF2 Continue to develop support for grazing infrastructure and local grazing networks as a means of maintaining specific areas of distinctive agricultural landscapes and habitats, including historic environment features, and meeting conservation objectives

PF3 Support development and diversification associated with farming, forestry, fishing and other marine industries which respects, and ideally contributes to, conserving the special qualities of the area, including their enjoyment and understanding

PF4 Promote and support the development of sustainable practice in farming, forestry and fishing, including through promotion of appropriate grant schemes and advice, and support for cooperation to develop local initiatives and marketing of sustainable local products

PF5 Promote and implement an integrated catchment-based approach to all aspects of water management throughout the area to achieve benefits for landscape, biodiversity, the historic environment and the economy.

4.4 Sustainable communities

Introduction

The natural world touches our lives every day and we rely on the natural systems that support us. Our natural environment underpins our health, wealth and happiness and gives us a sense of place, pride and identity. A healthy natural environment can support economic growth and social regeneration, improve public health, improve educational outcomes, reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, improve quality of life and help communities adapt to climate change. Good businesses recognise that maintaining and enhancing natural capital, the services and materials provided by the environment are essential for them as well as for communities.

The interaction of people with their environment, resulting in living, working landscapes that respond to environmental, social and economic changes, has made the area what it is today. As well as clear differences in the character of buildings and settlements, different local customs, festivals, historical associations and language all contribute to the area's distinctive and diverse cultural character. Common rights are important in embodying traditional relationships with the land, particularly in the western part of the North Norfolk Heritage Coast. Maintaining natural beauty includes maintaining its distinctive communities, and sustainable communities will only be possible if their economic and social needs are met at the same time as they continue to adapt to change. This Management Plan focuses on the conservation and enhancement of the area's special qualities of natural beauty, the pressures that affect them or may do so in the future and their management in order to meet the purpose of designation of the area. Although the importance of social issues in the area are recognised by the Norfolk Coast Partnership, it is beyond the scope of this plan to put forward policies and actions to address most of these issues, since they do not directly affect the area's natural beauty. The relevant partners have policies and mechanisms to manage them, however, and will do so whilst taking account of the area's sensitivities and managing potential impacts on its natural beauty.

Two key issues that do relate more closely to natural beauty, however, are affordable housing and second homes. The availability of affordable housing and local jobs are inseparable, although the need for affordable housing in different parts of the area varies. The main issue for this plan is how affordable housing is provided while respecting the area's character (see section 4.2). A study in 2005 investigated the subject of affordable housing in the AONB.

Houses bought and used as second, holiday or retirement homes contribute to the shortage of affordable housing in many areas. This in turn contributes to young people moving away from the area and results in changes in the area's age profile and in the structure of its communities. Empty second and holiday-let houses also tend to affect community vibrancy and character, especially in the winter months. There are local initiatives in place or in progress to provide affordable local housing, in addition to provision as part of commercial housing development schemes. There can be tension and differences between people moving to the area and families who have lived here for generations, and a weakening of the character of local communities, but 'incoming' people can also bring valuable new perspectives, skills, knowledge and employment opportunities which benefit the area, as well as helping to build support and understanding of the AONB. Coastal settlements have long existed with the risks of flooding and erosion, but the difficulty of managing this while maintaining functioning coastal communities is increasing under the pressures of increased rates of sea level rise and communities need support in adapting to change.

Vision: in 2034...

The Norfolk Coast will be a living, working area with individuals and communities working together where necessary for the benefit of the whole community or a wider area. The economy will be broadly based, with a range of environmentally sustainable economic activities, including opportunities to earn a living through 'traditional' activities for the area as well as activities based on new technology and communications, and others that draw on and support the area's distinctive and special features. Tourism will remain an important part of the local economy, generating money that benefits a wide section of the local community. Appropriate tenures of housing, including affordable housing will be available for people working locally. Although diverse in terms of age, income and occupation, communities will include people with family ties to the area and people will share an understanding and appreciation of the area's special qualities.



The area will be widely recognised as leading in environmentally sustainable practice, including mitigating climate change. While adapting to climate and coastal change, the area will be maintaining characteristic and viable coastal settlements and infrastructure. Various forms of renewable energy will be produced and used in locations and in ways that are consistent with the key qualities that give the area its special character. Effective local food and products networks will be in operation, with local producers working together to promote their products and the links to the area. Networks and services providing alternative low-impact forms of transport to the car, reducing congestion and the need for additional car parking, will be available and widely used by both visitors and residents.

Pollution from all local sources will be avoided or its impacts minimised. Water quality will be high and water will be used and managed efficiently with maximum benefits to the local environment. Generation of waste will have been minimised and waste will be used as a resource wherever possible.

Key issues relating to natural beauty for 2019-24 plan

The area has large numbers of second / holiday homes, particularly in some coastal settlements, which affects the cost and availability of housing for local workers and others e.g. new businesses and their owners. The shortage of both affordable housing and secure, full-time, well-paid local jobs in the area affects the ability of young people with family connections to live and work in the area, affecting the character of communities. For a sustainable future for the area and its communities, all aspects of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental), within which conserving natural beauty needs to be included and integrated, need to be taken into account. Communities need planning and support to achieve this. Coastal communities are additionally affected by coastal change, which will be increased by sea level rise. They need support for planning and adaptation to coastal change.

Objectives 2019-24: by 2024...

OC1 The area will be improving as an environment for local businesses and availability of local jobs, assessed against regional averages

OC2 Public transport and other alternatives to car travel in the area will have been maintained and improved as a service for both local residents and visitors

OC3 Pupils in all schools in the area will have been involved in learning about its special qualities

OC4 Further understanding and means of supporting coastal communities in adapting to coastal change will have been developed

Policies 2014-19

Members of the Norfolk Coast Partnership, including the staff team will, cooperating where necessary...

PC1 Support opportunities for economic growth that invest in the natural capital and sustainable management of the special qualities of the AONB

PC2 Promote and support services and products from the local area and use these whenever possible, especially those that are sustainable and high quality, and which contribute to maintaining natural beauty in some way, in order to support the local economy and jobs and to reduce 'supply miles'

PC3 Continue to develop understanding amongst second home owners to enable them to contribute to maintaining sustainable local communities and natural beauty

PC4 Continue to involve and develop communication and cooperation with local people and communities in the work of the Norfolk Coast Partnership



PC5 Support the development of renewable energy in the area in ways and locations that contribute to the area's local economy and jobs and maintain its natural beauty

PC6 Continue to investigate and develop ways of securing a mix of different housing tenures which will enable local people or those with local connections to live and work in the AONB, in ways that maintain the area's natural beauty

PC7 Manage traffic and transport issues, including car parking and provision and promotion of effective public transport and other non-car means of travel, to reduce traffic congestion at peak times, conserve tranquillity and manage pressures on sensitive sites in the area

PC8 Involve local communities in the development of plans and projects that may affect them, for example Shoreline Management Plans, and inform them of progress on plans and programmes

PC9 Support the provision of necessary facilities and new development to meet proven needs of local communities and businesses, in ways that maintain the area's natural beauty, including the provision of fast broadband throughout the area

PC10 Seek to maintain support for community projects in the area that contribute to AONB objectives and sustainable development, including through availability of grants

4.5 Access and recreation

Introduction

The area has long had a strong attraction for visitors based on its qualities of tranquillity, its beaches, its sense of remoteness and wilderness (for parts of the coast), the character and charm of its landscapes and settlements, and its wildlife. Historical and cultural attractions such as Castle Rising castle, Sandringham House, Holkham Hall, Blakeney Guildhall, Binham Priory, Felbrigg Hall and the North Norfolk Railway add to this attraction, as does its reputation for high quality local produce and eating places.

The Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail provides a key coastal access route through the area. The English Coast Path secures further opportunities for the public to enjoy the natural environment along with other local and regional trails. The Norfolk Coast Cycleway runs through the area, forming part of the Sustrans National Route 1 and Regional Route 30, and has numerous associated loops and links. Norfolk County Council manages trails and public rights of way in Norfolk; the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP) which incorporates Norfolk's Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2019-2029 contains objectives and actions for improvements to public access and rights of way in the county.

Parts of the area, particularly the North Norfolk Heritage Coast, are heavily used for a wide range of recreational activities, by local people and those who live within easy travelling distance as well as visitors from further away, either on day visits or longer stays. The effects of increasing numbers of visitors and recreational use on the area was one of the main concerns that led to the setting up of the Norfolk Coast Project as a partnership of organisations for its management in 1991.

These activities benefit the health, well-being and quality of life of those taking part, as well as helping to support the local economy in many cases. Those using the marine environment are especially important and well established, in particular sailing, but also including other forms of boating, windsurfing, wildfowling and angling. The area is also popular for more informal activities such as short walks, walking dogs, cycling, browsing in villages and scenic drives, by both local residents and visitors.

The tourism industry, for which the area's environment and natural beauty is the key asset, now plays a more important part in the local economy than 'traditional industries' such as farming,



fishing and boat building, although its strength is linked to their influence and products. A study in 2000 estimated that annual visitors to six nature reserves on the north Norfolk coast spent £5.3 million on the day of their visit and £20.8 million during their trip as a whole. Another study in 2006 estimated the annual economic value of tourism in the area as £163 million, supporting over 3,500 jobs. Tourism supports many local jobs directly as well as other businesses indirectly, and helps to support community services such as village shops, post offices and pubs. It also helps to support conservation and management activity on important nature and historic environment sites in the area.

However, visitors can generate conflict with nature and historic environment conservation objectives, with tranquillity and with local communities, depending on numbers, locations and activities. In order to work towards a truly sustainable tourism destination, tourism businesses and site managers need to be actively involved in understanding the behaviour and impact of visitors, both positive and negative, and in visitor management plans and policies that help to inform visitors of ways to enjoy the area while minimising impacts and maximising benefits.

Traffic levels and infrastructure can have significant impacts on landscape and tranquillity, and the majority of visitors still reach and move around the area via the road network, although many alternatives are available including the excellent Coasthopper bus service.

Vision: in 2034...

The Norfolk Coast will be a place where people can refresh both body and soul. Tourism, recreation and enjoyment of the area will provide benefits to both its communities and landscape. Tourism businesses, visitors and residents will understand the area's special qualities of landscape, wildlife and cultural and historic heritage and their sensitivities and support their conservation through how they use, and promote use of, the area.

Tourism businesses will understand the value of the natural capital that underpins their businesses and be actively contributing to initiatives that conserve and enhance natural beauty and support local communities.

Recreation by both visitors and local residents, including long-standing traditional activities for the area, will be managed in a way that provides opportunities for all users to experience and enjoy the special qualities of the area without conflicting with those qualities or with other people's enjoyment of them.

Public access routes and areas, both statutory and discretionary, together with non-car forms of transport, will form an integrated network which is widely used by both local residents and visitors. Information on these, and on areas suitable for a variety of recreational activities, will be easily and freely available to the public.

Key issues relating to natural beauty for 2014-19 plan

Understanding and support for the area's special qualities by people who use the area and enjoy these qualities is needed to ensure these qualities are conserved and enhanced.

Some habitats and species, particularly in coastal locations, are currently affected by human disturbance, largely as a result of lack of understanding of the pressures caused by recreational activities. Beachnesting birds are a particular cause for concern, as are impacts on sensitive habitats such as saltmarsh and sand dunes.



Housing development locally and in nearby growth areas, combined with predictions that changing climate may increase numbers of coastal visitors, suggests that visitor numbers are likely to increase in future, which may potentially increase pressures on sensitive habitats and species.

Awareness of wildlife, landscape and historic environment sensitivities, and of ways to enjoy the area sustainably, need raising to encourage sensitive behaviour by visitors and recreational users, with consistent messages communicated throughout the area.

High levels of car traffic in peak periods causes congestion and parking problems in coastal settlements, and affects tranquillity, landscape and settlement character.

Some parts of the area are more sensitive and under pressure from visitor numbers, while other parts are less sensitive and could potentially accommodate more visitors without detracting from natural beauty, with economic benefits.

Objectives 2014-19: by 2019...

OR1 Information on current and future site user numbers, behaviours, visit profiles and recreational activities, particularly those that may affect coastal Natura 2000 sites, will have been further improved and used to develop information for the tourism sector, visitors and recreational users, and management of pressures on sensitive sites.

OR2 Cooperation will have been further developed between the tourism sector, conservation organisations and local communities to develop understanding and more sustainable enjoyment of the area by visitors and local residents, and to manage pressures on key sites, particularly for coastal Natura 2000 sites, by providing clear and consistent information and guidance

Policies 2014-19

Members of the Norfolk Coast Partnership, including the staff team will cooperate and share information to...

PR1 Continue to improve communication of the area's special qualities, including seascapes

PR2 Continue to improve understanding about current and future visitor numbers, behaviours, visit profiles and recreational activities, particularly for coastal Natura 2000 sites

PR3 Investigate and seek to secure funding contributions from new housing development, both within and outside the area, that are likely to provide sources of recreational pressures on Natura 2000 sites, to enable their mitigation

PR4 Develop consistent messages with the tourism sector and local communities about promotion of the area that takes into account sensitivity to visitor and recreational pressures and capacity to manage these

PR5 Work with tourism businesses to develop and promote ways for visitors to contribute to conserving and enhancing the features and qualities that bring them to the area, and to maximise benefits and minimise impacts from visitors to communities

PR6 Develop integrated and holistic management of recreation activities along the area's coast to provide opportunities that do not impact on sensitive sites, especially coastal Natura 2000 sites

PR7 Ensure that opportunities, information and incentives for visitors to enjoy the area without using the car, including new public access links, are easily available and increased where appropriate

PR8 Encourage the provision of appropriate levels and types of visitor facilities and information at key sites, including public lavatories and facilities for visitors with restricted mobility, together with information that promotes the aims of the AONB management plan in a coordinated way and ensure that opportunities and information are easily available for all actual and potential users to enable enjoyment of the range of the area's natural beauty sensitively and encourage suitable activities away from sensitive areas.

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This document, i.e. the Strategy, including the visions, objectives and policies, will continue to be reviewed at five-yearly intervals, so the next plan will be published in 2024. A new five-year Action Plan will also be prepared as part of this review, based on the objectives and policies. This will enable the plan to continue to adapt to changing circumstances as necessary.

Monitoring the condition of the area's natural beauty

Monitoring of the condition of the area, in terms of the state of its natural beauty, is covered in Section 3 'A special place'. The assessment of current condition is based on a set of indicators, which are limited by currently available information and by resources required to survey and set up new indicators specifically for the area and to repeat surveys at five yearly intervals.

The current condition includes some assessment of trends, where information is available to support this. The assessment will be repeated before the next review of the Management Plan i.e. at approximately five years from the assessment presented in this plan and published as part of the review. In this way, the condition monitoring will continue to provide input to management of the area.

Monitoring implementation of the Management Plan

The objectives, policies and actions within the 2019-24 Management Plan have all been formulated with the intention of conserving and enhancing the area's natural beauty, which is the focus of the plan. It may not always be possible to relate observed improvements in the condition of natural beauty to specific policies or actions, but maintenance and improvement of the area's natural beauty observed through condition monitoring should provide a strong indication that policies and actions are having a positive effect. Similarly, negative changes will highlight aspects where further consideration is required, both in the current Action Plan and in the next five-year plan.

In the revised Strategy (this document) the objectives and policies are drawn from the issues (including those arising from condition assessments), and from the vision for the AONB and its management. An Action Plan based on these objectives and policies has also been developed by Partnership representatives. The action plan sets out specific actions agreed by the Partnership and assigns lead partners and indicative timescales to these actions looking five years ahead. Other key plans and initiatives that have an important influence on the area, and which may help to implement policies and achieve objectives are summarised in Appendix 1 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for this strategy.

While objectives and policies will remain unchanged over the five years of the plan, the Action Plan will be reviewed and updated at least annually to take account of actions completed and to allow review and updating of actions and priorities. Monitoring of progress on the Action Plan will be done through a review by the Partners and there will be a publicly available document to show actions completed, in progress, modified or added. An annual progress report will also be published.

APPENDIX 1 – GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS

- **Agri-environment schemes.** Grant schemes supporting farmers and land managers in providing environmental benefits according to set criteria as part of farming or management operations. In England, from 2015 these were known as the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.
- **Biodiversity.** Shorthand for biological diversity, defined in the Convention on Biological Diversity as: the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.
- **Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).** Biodiversity Action Plans (national, regional and local) were the response to the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity, focusing on characteristic and rare habitats and species for that area and how to conserve these assets. The ‘UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework’, published in July 2012, succeeds the UK BAP and ‘Conserving Biodiversity – the UK Approach’, and is the result of a change in strategic thinking following the publication of the CBD’s ‘Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011– 2020’ and its 20 ‘Aichi Biodiversity Targets’, at Nagoya, Japan in October 2010, and the launch of the new EU Biodiversity Strategy (EUBS) in May 2011. However, BAP habitats and species remain relevant as priorities for conservation.
- **Biofuels and biomass.** Biofuels are gases or liquids – for example methane, alcohols, and biodiesel (which may be made from agricultural crops or waste). Biomass is solid material e.g. woodchip or dried vegetable material such as elephant grass (*miscanthus*), used to provide heat by burning, which may also be used to produce electricity.
- **Bronze Age.** In Britain this refers to the period of approximately 1,700 years from around 2500 BC until around 800 BC (around 4,500 to 2,800 before present). It was preceded by the Neolithic era and was in turn followed by the Iron Age era. It was marked by the use of copper and then bronze by the prehistoric Britons to make tools also saw the widespread adoption of agriculture. During the British Bronze Age, large megalithic monuments similar to those from the Late Neolithic continued to be constructed or modified, including such sites as Avebury, Stonehenge and Silbury Hill. This has been described as a time “when elaborate ceremonial practices emerged among some communities of subsistence agriculturalists of western Europe.
- **Carstone.** Carstone is an iron-rich sedimentary sandstone conglomerate formed between about 103 and 110 million years ago during the Cretaceous period. It varies in colour from light to dark rusty ginger and can be found used as a building stone in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and extensively in the historic buildings of North-west Norfolk. One of the oldest exposed geological strata in the AONB, spectacularly seen underlying the younger Red Chalk and upper Cretaceous Chalk in Hunstanton cliffs.
- **Chalk river.** Chalk rivers are fed primarily by springs emanating from chalk aquifers, producing clear waters and a generally stable flow and temperature regime, which potentially support a rich and distinctive ecosystem of plant and invertebrate life and higher animals. English chalk rivers are all located in the south and east, from Dorset to East Yorkshire and constitute the principal resource of chalk rivers in Europe. The small rivers



that flow into the North Sea through the AONB are all chalk rivers, although their quality varies because of drainage operations and pollution.

- **Coasthopper.** A successful bus service currently operated along the Norfolk coast. Runs very regular services between Hunstanton and Sheringham, with connections and extensions on some services to King's Lynn and Cromer.
- **Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act.** Passed in 2000, the Act consists of four parts. Part I contains measures to improve public access to the open countryside and registered common land ('open access'); Part II amends the law relating to rights of way; Part III amends the law relating to nature conservation by strengthening protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest and provides a basis for the conservation of biological diversity; Part IV provides for better management of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, including a duty of care for public bodies and a duty to produce AONB Management Plans.
- **Ecosystem.** An ecosystem is a community of living organisms (plants, animals and microbes) in conjunction with the non-living components of their environment (things like air, water and mineral soil), interacting as a system. These biotic and abiotic components are regarded as linked together through nutrient cycles and energy flows. As ecosystems are defined by the network of interactions among organisms, and between organisms and their environment, they can be of any size but usually encompass specific, limited spaces (although some scientists say that the entire planet is an ecosystem)
- **Environmental Stewardship (ES).** Agri-environment scheme for England introduced in 2005 and administered by Natural England, replacing previous Countryside Stewardship scheme. To be replaced in 2015 by a new Countryside Stewardship scheme following CAP reform.
- **European Marine Site.** A marine area, including intertidal areas, designated under the European Union Habitats Directive and the UK Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 1994 as a Special Area of Conservation or a Special Protection Area. Unlike on land where SACs and SPAs are underpinned by Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), there is no existing legislative framework for implementing the Habitats Directive in marine areas. Therefore, the Regulations have a number of provisions specifically for new responsibilities and measures in relation to marine areas. The Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site consists of a large marine and intertidal area from Gibraltar Point on the northern edge of the Wash to Weybourne on the north Norfolk coast.
- **Geodiversity, geomorphology.** Geodiversity may be defined as the natural range (diversity) of geological features (rocks, minerals, fossils, structures), geomorphological features (landforms and processes), soil and natural water features that compose and shape the physical landscape. Geomorphology is the physical features and natural processes operating on the surface of the Earth which enable us to understand landforms and their origin.
- **Glacial, glaciation, glacio-fluvial (see also Ice Age).** Terms referring to a period marked by colder temperatures and the advance of glaciers and ice sheets. Also referring to the physical processes associated with the activity and impact of glacier ice. The term glacio-fluvial refers to meltwater streams associated with glaciers and ice sheets and the deposits and landforms they produce.

- **Greenhouse gases.** Gases in the atmosphere, both natural and produced by man's activities, that allow radiation from the sun to reach the Earth's surface but reflect the different frequencies of heat radiation that are emitted back from the Earth. Greenhouse gases are essential to maintaining the temperature of the Earth but an increase in their concentration causes warming of the atmosphere. The most prominent greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide, which is produced by burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas but other gases such as methane, although present in lower concentrations, have a more powerful greenhouse effect.
- **Heritage Coast.** Heritage Coasts are the finest scenic areas of undeveloped coast in England and Wales. These non-statutory definitions have been agreed between the former Countryside Commission and local authorities. 32% (1,027km) of English coastline is defined as Heritage Coasts, most of which are within National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- **Ice Age.** An informal term for the Pleistocene period, lasting from c.2.5 million to 12,000 years ago, during which the world's climate markedly oscillated between colder (glacial) and warmer (interglacial) phases. Also sometimes used to refer to one of the colder glacial phases.
- **Marine Protected Area (MPA), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ).** A Marine Protected Areas (MPA) is a clearly defined geographical space in the marine environment, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values. The main types of marine protected areas in English waters are: European Marine Sites giving legal protection to species and habitats of European importance; Marine Conservation Zones and SSSIs with marine components giving protection to species and habitats of national importance. The Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site overlaps with the AONB in its intertidal area. There are currently no MCZs designated around the AONB, although there are some candidate sites.
- **Mesolithic, Neolithic, Palaeolithic.** Three divisions of the Stone Age, characterised by the use of stone tools by humans. The end of the Palaeolithic is traditionally positioned some 12,000 years ago, coinciding with the end of the Ice Age (the Pleistocene) but the beginnings of the Palaeolithic are more mysterious, perhaps over 3million years ago. During this long period, many different species of humans populated Earth, lived on a non-productive economy (scavenging, hunting, gathering), and based most of their technology on stone tool-making. In the Neolithic, from around 6000 to 4500 years ago there were farmers in settlements with domesticated animals and wheat, with over 100 kinds of tools and with pottery. The Mesolithic, from around 12,000 to 6,000 years ago, was a transitional period between the two and happened at different times in different places. Mesolithic tools are small tools produced by chipping, and are hunter-gatherer tools, often arrowheads and points. Neolithic tools are often polished and far more varied. They are tools of more settled societies with some agriculture.
- **Moraine.** An accumulation of unconsolidated soil and rock formed by the eroding and transporting action of a glacier or ice sheet. Terminal moraines are deposited at the leading edge of a glacier or ice sheet.



- **Natura 2000**, A European Union wide network of sites designated as Special Protection Areas or Special Areas of Conservation, which are intended to form a coherent ecological network of protected areas to conserve and enhance special and characteristic biodiversity and assure the long-term survival of Europe’s most valuable and threatened species and habitats. The establishment of this network of protected areas fulfils a European Community obligation under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.
- **Renewable energy**. The most common definition is that renewable energy is from an energy resource that is replaced by a natural process at a rate that is equal to or faster than the rate at which that resource is being consumed. Renewable energy (sources) or RES capture their energy from existing flows of energy, from on-going natural processes, such as sunshine, wind, wave power, flowing water (hydropower), biological processes such as anaerobic digestion, and geothermal heat flow. Most renewable forms of energy, other than geothermal and tidal power, ultimately come from the Sun. Some forms are stored solar energy such as rainfall and wind power which are considered short-term solar-energy storage, whereas the energy in biomass is accumulated over a period of months, as in straw, or through many years as in wood.
- **Rural Development Programme**. The England Rural Development Programme is the instrument by which the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) fulfils its rural development obligations in England, as set out by the European Union under the Common Agricultural Policy with funding from the European Commission. The programme provides money for projects to improve rural life and businesses (administered through Local Action Groups) and to promote environmentally friendly ways of managing land and to sustain existing and create new areas of woodlands (administered by natural England and the Forestry Commission). There are separate rural development programmes for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- **Seascape and skyline**. Seascape, like landscape is about the relationship between people and place and the part it plays in forming the setting to our everyday lives. Seascape results from the way that the different components of our environment – both natural and cultural - interact together and are understood and experienced by people. Seascape is defined by Natural England in its position statement on All Landscapes Matter (2010) as: “An area of sea, coastline and land, as perceived by people, whose character results from the actions and interactions of land with sea, by natural and/or human factors”. A skyline is a view in which the sky plays a significant or dominant role in the experience, either during daylight or at night, in which the colours and forms of sky and clouds or star constellations are an essential and dominant aspect of the viewing experience.
- **Setting (of heritage assets)**. The significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence and historic fabric but also from its setting – the surroundings in which it is experienced. Setting is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as “The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of the asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.” This may form an important part of its historic environment and context or affect the quality of people’s experience of the asset. The careful management of change within the surroundings of heritage assets therefore makes an important contribution to the quality of the places in which we live.

- **Sustainable / sustainability / sustainable development.** Any activity which we can predict will have unacceptable environmental or social consequences in the future, or which will not be possible to maintain financially, is not a sustainable activity. Sustainable development has been defined in many ways, but the most frequently quoted definition is from Our Common Future (1987), also known as the Brundtland Report: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs.” The five principles from the UK Sustainable Development Strategy still form the basis for sustainable development in the UK and devolved administrations under the Government’s refreshed vision for sustainable development. These are living within environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; using sound science responsibly; promoting good governance. Sustainable policy must respect all five of these principles, though some policies, while underpinned by all five, will place more emphasis on certain principles than others.
- **Tranquillity.** Tranquillity is often thought of as a peaceful, calm state, without noise, violence, worry, etc and the undeveloped countryside and coast is often associated with tranquillity. Work undertaken by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) sought to quantify tranquillity on an objective basis, using people’s perceptions and including a wide range of factors such as naturalness, openness, distance from noise, development, numbers of people, light pollution etc. This culminated in a tranquillity map for England’s in 2008.
- **UKCIP and UKCP09.** The UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP) was established in 1997, based at the Environmental Change Institute at Oxford University, to help coordinate scientific research into the impacts of climate change and to share the outputs in ways that are useful to organisations in adapting to those unavoidable impacts. UK climate projections were initially produced in 2002 (UKCP02). Following discussions between Defra, the Met Office Hadley Centre and UKCIP to discuss possible improvements, UKCP09 was produced in 2009, funded by several agencies led by Defra. It is based on sophisticated scientific methods provided by the Met Office, with input from over 30 contributing organisations. UKCP09 can be used to help organisations assess potential impacts of the projected future climate and to explore adaptation options to address those impacts. There have been developments in climate modelling since its release but UKCP09 continues to provide a valid assessment of the UK climate and can still be used for adaptation planning. Options to update UKCP09 are currently being explored by government.

APPENDIX 2 – SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- 25 Year Environment Plan, 2018 (Defra): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>
- Biodiversity 2020: a strategy for England’s Wildlife and Ecosystem Services, 2011 (Defra): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services>
- Common Agricultural Policy reform: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-common-agricultural-policy-reform/2010-to-2015-government-policy-common-agricultural-policy-reform>
- Common Fisheries Policy reform: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn05957/>
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents>
- Designation History of the Norfolk Coast AONB (Ray Woolmore / Countryside Agency, 2001).
 - <https://www.norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Designation-history-summary.pdf>
 - East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan (Marine Management Organisation)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/312496/east-plan.pdf
- England Coast Path (Natural England):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/england-coast-path-improving-public-access-to-the-coast>
- Environmental Land Management Scheme (Natural England):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/natural-england-action-plan-2022-to-2023/natural-england-action-plan-2022-to-2023--2>
- Heritage Coasts. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heritage-coasts-protecting-undeveloped-coast/heritage-coasts-definition-purpose-and-natural-englands-role>
- Landscapes for Life (National Association for AONBs) <http://www.landscapesforlife.org.uk>
- Local plans for the relevant local authorities:
- Norfolk County Council: (Minerals and Waste Development Framework):
<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/environment-and-planning-policies/minerals-and-waste-planning-policies/norfolk-minerals-and-waste-local-plan-review>
- North Norfolk District Council: <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/planning-policy/local-plan-current/>
- Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk: <https://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/article/5194/Emerging-Local-Plan>
- Broads Authority: <https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning/planning-policies/development>
- Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/23/contents>
- National Character Area (NCA) profiles can be found on Natural England’s website:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>
- National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/12-13-14/97>



- National Planning Policy Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>
- National Trails: Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path: https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/trails/peddars-way-and-norfolk-coast-path/
- New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership: <https://newanglia.co.uk/>
- Norfolk Coast AONB Management Plans <https://www.norfolkcoastaonb.org.uk/what-we-do/>
- Norfolk Historic Environment Record, Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service; accessed via the Norfolk Heritage Explorer at <http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk>
- Norfolk Rights of way Improvement Plan: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/public-rights-of-way/norfolk-access-improvement-plan>
- Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act, 1988: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/4/contents>
- Norfolk Rural Development Strategy (Norfolk County Council): <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/business-policies/rural-development-strategy>
- Shoreline Management Plans relevant for the Norfolk Coast AONB:
 - SMP4 The Wash (Gibraltar Point to Old Hunstanton): <http://www.eacg.org.uk/smp4.asp>
 - SMP5 North Norfolk (Old Hunstanton to Kelling Hard): <http://www.eacg.org.uk/smp5.asp>
 - SMP6 Kelling Hard to Lowestoft Ness: <http://www.eacg.org.uk/smp6.asp>
- Sustrans National Cycle Network <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/national-cycle-network>
- UK Climate Impacts Programme report (UKCP 2009): <https://catalogue.ceda.ac.uk/uuid/077fd790439c44b99962552af8d37a22>
- Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership <https://wnnmp.co.uk/>
- Water Framework Directive: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/407/contents/made>

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 8

Report Title: Climate Action Plans, Tranche 1

Date of Meeting: 13 September 2023

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Eric Vardy (Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste)

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave (Interim Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services)

Executive Summary

In June, Norfolk County Council launched its Climate Strategy. The strategy sets out how the council can address its own carbon footprint and its role in supporting Norfolk's transition to become a greener and more resilient county. With this strategic statement in place, action plans are needed to help translate the vision and priorities of the strategy into practical implementation. These action plans will be reported and refreshed annually to provide accountability for the delivery of the Climate Strategy. This paper proposes that action plans are brought to the Select Committee in three tranches, and the first tranche of actions are provided for the committee's review.

Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

- 1. Review and comment on the proposed approach to climate action planning**
- 2. Review and comment on the first tranche of actions**
- 3. Endorse the approach and actions to progress to Cabinet.**

1 Background and purpose

- 1.1 Launched in June this year, Norfolk County Council's Climate Strategy set out a comprehensive a framework for how the council can best direct its powers, resources and influence in support of Norfolk's journey towards a clean and resilient future in the face of climate change.
- 1.2 Looking beyond carbon reduction, the strategy considers in tandem the close relationship between climate action and nature recovery, the jobs and growth opportunities from the expanding green economy, and how adaptation is needed to protect our local services and communities. This is reflected in the seven 'focus areas' that make up the structure of the strategy:
 - Reducing our estate emissions
 - Reducing our indirect emissions
 - Addressing Norfolk's county-wide emissions
 - Promoting a green economy for Norfolk
 - Climate adaptation
 - Ensure nature has space to recover and grow
 - Engage and collaborate.
- 1.3 With the strategy in place, we now need to set out the governance procedures to oversee its delivery and provide public accountability. Action plans are an appropriate governance tool that translate strategic vision into practical implementation — enabling member and public monitoring of the strategy's delivery.
- 1.4 This paper introduces the approach of publishing climate action plans, proposing to bring these for member consideration in tranches, and presents the first of these action plans for comment and approval to progress to Cabinet.

2 Proposal

Tranches

- 2.1 As mentioned, the Climate Strategy is wide ranging in scope. With such a broad portfolio of work across the strategy's seven focus areas, coordinating these action plans is a significant piece of work. To maintain momentum in building the governance framework for delivery we propose to tranche the action plans into three releases:
 - Tranche 1 – Established programmes, often where the council has greater control, and plans can be put together quickly;

- Tranche 2 – Programme areas with some level of maturity in plan development but requiring refinement;
- Tranche 3 – Programme areas with less mature plans and/or requiring external engagement as NCC’s role is less direct, and there may be significant interdependencies (for example, national guidance for transport carbon quantification of local transport policies).

2.2 The content and timing of tranches is set out in the table below.

Tranche	Tranche content	Committees
1	Our estate (focus area 1) Procurement (focus area 2) Digital connectivity (focus area 3) Nature recovery (focus area 6)	Infrastructure and Development (I&D) Select Committee: September Cabinet: October
2	Green skills (focus area 4) Sustainable tourism (focus area 4) Climate adaptation (focus area 5) Waste & circular economy (focus area 3)	I&D Select Committee: January (provisional) Cabinet: February (provisional)
3	Transport (focus area 3) Energy (focus area 3) Building and planning (focus area 3) Commercial and industrial (focus area 3) Agriculture and food (focus area 3)	I&D Select Committee: spring 2024 (provisional) Cabinet: spring/summer 2024 (provisional)

Tranche 1

- 2.3 This report brings the first tranche of actions for review by the Select Committee. The list of actions is provided in full as an appendix to this report.

Reporting cycle

- 2.4 The action plans will become the basis of an annual reporting cycle to members on delivery of the Climate Strategy. Each year an update will be produced as to progress towards the published actions, areas with risks to their delivery, and any new actions that need to be added to the plan.
- 2.5 With the plans being reviewed and refreshed annually, they will iteratively develop each year rather than standing as all comprehensive from the outset. This is important given the fast moving regulatory and technological context around Net Zero with many drivers outside of the council's control.
- 2.6 For example, as the UK's 2050 net zero commitment draws nearer, we can expect tightening regulations around emissions across major sectors, while low carbon technologies are rapidly improving and reaching affordability in consumer markets.

3 Impact of the proposals

- 3.1 The action plans will bring together initiatives taking place across the council that help it to address climate change. They will form the basis of a reporting structure for member and public oversight of the council's delivery of the Climate Strategy.

4 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 Action plans help to translate the strategic vision into practical implementation and provides accountability to members and the public.
- 4.2 Given the breadth of scope of the strategy, agreeing action plans in tranches will help to maintain momentum in developing the governance framework around its delivery. It represents a more agile approach to getting plans out that are ready rather than getting held up for those areas still under development. This approach also gives members greater scope to review actions across different focus areas than if they were to be released in one single list.
- 4.3 Moreover, publishing action plans follows good practice adopted by other local authorities and enhances the council's reputation in relation to climate governance.
- 4.4 Cabinet approved a recommendation to publish action plans, therefore this proposal is fulfilling that recommendation.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The council could decide to publish all actions related to the Climate Strategy in one rather than to release the action plans in tranches. This would lead to the same end result for creating a reporting structure for delivery of the strategy. However, this approach would slow down the publication of actions for areas which are ready or soon to be ready for release. They would have to be held back by development of actions around more complex areas, which could impact on the momentum for building up the reporting framework.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The action plans do not have direct financial implications, but their content relates to initiatives which do. Where these initiatives are not already in progress and represent key decisions, they will be brought forward for consideration in their own right.
- 6.2 In May, Cabinet approved the recommendation to develop a Funding Blueprint for the Climate Strategy. This will set out funding options for delivering the strategy. The blueprint is under development by officers and will be brought for Select Committee review in 2024.

7 Resource Implications

- 7.1 Staff – the coordination of the action plans will be undertaken within existing staff resource.
- 7.2 Property – the initial phase of capital investment towards estate decarbonisation was approved by Cabinet in June this year.
- 7.3 IT – no direct implications. IT and digital connectivity actions are included in the tranche 1 action plan this report presents.
- 7.4 Implementation capacity – implementation capacity for the specific actions will be managed by the teams owning those actions through their staffing and budgetary allocations.

8 Other implications

- 8.1 Legal implications – no direct legal implications
- 8.2 Human rights implications – no direct human rights implications
- 8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included) – individual actions may have equality implications which have either been assessed [in the case of decisions already made] or will be assessed at the time of detailed implementation.
- 8.4 Sustainability implications – climate action plans represent a governance tool to help ensure the council contributes to a sustainable Norfolk.

8.5 Any other implications - none

9 Risk Implications/Assessment

9.1 Individual actions may have risk implications which have either been assessed [in the case of decisions already made] or will be assessed at the time of detailed implementation.

10 Action Required

10.1 The Select Committee is asked to:

- 1. Review and comment on the proposed approach to climate action planning**
- 2. Review and comment on the first tranche of actions**
- 3. Endorse the approach and actions to progress to Cabinet**

11 Background papers

11.1 [Norfolk County Council Climate Strategy](#)

12 Officer contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

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Email address: Jonathan.franklin@norfolk.gov.uk



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Item 8 Appendix A

Focus area	Sub-section	Action	Target date	Owner
1 - estate emissions	Vehicle fleet	Keep under review the hybrid leased emergency response vehicles within Norfolk Fire Service for the potential to transition the vehicles to full electric versions as charging infrastructure allows	Ongoing	Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service
1 - estate emissions	Streetlighting	Sign a contract variation to convert remaining streetlight stock to energy efficient LED technology by 2026	2023	Highways Services
1 - estate emissions	IT	Keep reducing and rationalising the on-site server estate over the next three years for the remaining local requirement. This includes a reduction in storage volumes, advances in our server efficiency, and migration of locally held files and applications to cloud services	2025	Digital Services
1 - estate emissions	IT	Improve smart energy management systems through a redesign of the collection of half-hourly data on gas, electric and solar usage across the corporate estate.	2023	Digital Services
1 - estate emissions	IT	Install Internet of Things-enabled smart sensors across our corporate estate to track temperature, humidity and CO2 in a building. This provides insight to energy consumption patterns to identify energy-efficient practices.	2023	Digital Services
1 - estate emissions	Building decarbonisation	Utilise the approved capital expenditure of £22.5m to undertake the first tranche of building decarbonisation works on our freehold sites with fossil fuel heating, as agreed by Cabinet in June 2023	2025	Corporate Property Team
1 - estate emissions	Building decarbonisation	Prepare options appraisal for second tranche of building retrofit works	2025	Corporate Property Team
1 - estate emissions	Building decarbonisation	Continue to seek external grant funding towards the decarbonisation of NCC buildings	Ongoing	Corporate Property Team
1 - estate emissions	Vehicle fleet	Oversee completion of the current tranche of around 40 chargepoint installations across 16 council-owned sites	2024	Corporate Property Team
1 - estate emissions	Vehicle fleet	Review lessons learned from first set of chargepoints and develop options for further rollout across NCC sites - based around feedback and use	2024	Corporate Property Team
1 - estate emissions	Vehicle fleet	Develop usage policy that encourages staff and visitor use of County Hall chargepoints	2023	HR
1 - estate emissions	Vehicle fleet	Transition NCC owned cars and light vans to electric when they come up for replacement where practicable	Ongoing	Procurement in consultation with user departments
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Building construction and maintenance	Include a requirement for suppliers joining the new construction framework to have corporate carbon reduction plans. The new construction framework is due to replace the existing framework which will expire at the end of September 2023	2023	Procurement
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Building construction and maintenance	Let a framework for retrofit works to decarbonise our estate that helps drive the development of local green skills	2023	Procurement
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Highways construction and maintenance	Integrate carbon reduction as an evaluation criterion in the procurement of the Long Stratton Bypass construction works	2023	Highways Services
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Highways construction and maintenance	Use lessons learned from the Long Stratton Bypass procurement to inform approach to integrating carbon reduction in the procurement of the West Winch Housing Access Road	2024	Highways Services
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Highways construction and maintenance	Integrate carbon reduction into the re-procurement of our highway works, design and traffic signals contracts for the new contracts that take effect in 2026	2025	Highways Services
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Highways construction and maintenance	As condition of renewal of Norse Highways maintenance contract require a carbon reduction plan to be introduced	2024	Highways Services
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Highways construction and maintenance	Draw on the expertise in innovative road pavement design and engineering of Norse Partnership Laboratory for specifying appropriate low carbon materials and techniques when contracting for highways works	Ongoing	Highways Services
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Passenger transport	Develop a carbon reduction strategy for the passenger transport procurement category	2023	Procurement
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Passenger transport	Engage with districts through the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership on aligning hackney and private hire licensing arrangements with the transition to lower carbon passenger transport contracting	2024	Procurement
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Passenger transport	Engage with passenger transport operators about barriers and opportunities for reducing the emissions related to home-to-school transport provision	2024	Passenger transport
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Social care	Use the reprocurement of home care services across the county to encourage more efficient route planning and use of lower emission vehicles or sustainable travel options where practicable	2024	Procurement
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Social care	Build on the residential care energy audit pilots to engage with the care sector on sharing opportunities and best practice for lowering energy costs and reducing carbon	2024	Procurement
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Collaboration	Explore opportunities for public sector procurement partnering with local NHS providers through Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System	Ongoing	Procurement
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - Waste	Review carbon-efficient solutions for processing Norfolk's residual waste as part of exploring options beyond the current contract with Veolia and Suffolk County Council. These arrangements run until 2027 with possible extension until 2029	2027	Waste
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - processes	For our gold tiered contracts, make our carbon management approach more rigorous and standardised, including: - Monitor the publication and updates to corporate carbon reduction plans of our gold tier suppliers - Take opportunities of contract breakpoints in our gold contracts for integrating carbon reduction considerations - Seek feedback from suppliers on how we can be a better client in supporting carbon reduction (such as through our specifications and KPIs)	Ongoing	Procurement
2 - indirect emissions	Procurement - processes	Improve our procurement intake process to enable early identification of requests with carbon implications	2024	Procurement

3 - County wide emissions	Digital solutions and connectivity	Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN) phase 3 - deliver gigabit capable broadband to 8,221 premises across Norfolk	2024	Digital Services
3 - County wide emissions	Digital solutions and connectivity	Project Gigabit - contract awarded in June 2023 with 62,000 rural premises in scope for upgrade to gigabit capable fibre broadband	2026	Digital Services
3 - County wide emissions	Digital solutions and connectivity	Fixed Wireless Access project: connect 10 rural village halls with Starlink satellite based internet services installed, along with free public wireless access. Services will be funded for up to 3 years with regular assessments into the effectiveness of the service, and whether it is suitable and cost effective for communities with poor internet coverage	2025	Digital Services
3 - County wide emissions	Digital solutions and connectivity	Deploy test case Internet of Things sensors that can monitor air quality, identify pollution hotspots and guide targeted interventions. The initial use case will be at Castle Meadow in Norwich with a second site on Magdalen Street in Norwich. A different type of sensor will also be tested at a school site linked to a roadside Wescotec device	2024	Digital Services
3 - County wide emissions	Digital solutions and connectivity	Deliver the Smart Farm Project to trial the use of IoT sensors and devices across two farm locations with both arable and livestock use cases. The project aims to demonstrate benefits to the farm team in areas such as monitoring field conditions, storage of grain and fertiliser, water, livestock, and safety and security	2024	Digital Services
3 - County wide emissions	Digital solutions and connectivity	Engage with local businesses, community organizations, technology providers and academia to foster collaboration in implementing IoT solutions for climate action	Ongoing	Digital Services
6 - Nature recovery	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Produce, agree, and politically sign off the governance framework, working groups and steering group structure that will be adopted to deliver the LNRSs, agreeing terms of reference, roles, functions and sign off process.	2023	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Review and refresh operation of the Norfolk and Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership and its involvement in the LNRS process.	2023	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Develop a Communication and Engagement plan to raise awareness and enable engagement with key stakeholders from all sectors needed for the delivery of the LNRS.	2024	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Develop the Habitat and Opportunity Mapping for the LNRS	2025	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Develop the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities	2025	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Develop strategic relationships needed to facilitate the delivery of both small- and large-scale nature recovery projects	2025	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Greenways to Greenspaces	Increase the number and length of all-abilities routes connecting people and places by 10 routes and 100 kilometres by 2029 (p.78 of Norfolk Access Improvement Plan)	2029	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Greenways to Greenspaces	Identify new linear and circular walks opportunities from Norfolk Trails, the National Trail, Norfolk Coast Path and Public Rights of Way that link business, heritage and culture sites and improve connectivity with residential areas. This includes links with public transport and supporting applications for funding (p.77 of Norfolk Access Improvement Plan)	Ongoing	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Greenways to Greenspaces	Use spatial planning to identify where gains for biodiversity (connectivity of habitats and landscapes) can be made associated with the access network (p.80 of Norfolk Access Improvement Plan)	Ongoing	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Greenways to Greenspaces	Increase the number of Roadside Nature Reserves from 111 to 300 and provide quality management to improve their status	2025	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Greenways to Greenspaces	Develop, sign-off and implement a new roadside verge management policy by the end of 2024.	2024	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Greenways to Greenspaces	Establish 1 million new trees across the county through planting and natural regeneration by 2025	by 2025 [possibly extended to 2030]	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Greenways to Greenspaces	To connect communities, landowners and parishes with external schemes, provide expertise, and identify opportunities for council-led planting.	Ongoing	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Protected Landscapes	Work with partners to undertake the Landscape Recovery pilot scheme - 'Wilder, Wetter, Better for Wildlife'. This will work with land managers to increase the amount of land managed for nature in North Norfolk by 2,000 ha. This should ultimately create contiguous habitat for nature of at least 20,000 ha	2030	Environment
6 - Nature recovery	Protected Landscapes	Redesign protected area management plans which cover land and seascape following guidance from Natural England, providing a joined-up approach to planning and delivery	2025 - 2026	Environment

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 9

Report Title: NCC Apprenticeship Strategy

Date of Meeting: 13.09.2023

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Fabian Eagle (Cabinet Member for Economic Growth)

Responsible Director: Chris Starkie, Growth & Investment

Executive Summary

The NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025 sets out a strategic vision, aims and objectives and an operational delivery plan for apprenticeships across all areas of Norfolk County Council [NCC], cohesively bringing together the three strategic priorities from three directorates (as identified by the 2018 Local Government Association [LGA] review); Children's Services, Growth & Investment and Human Resources.

As a result of the proposal there will be a clear mechanism to support the development and take up of apprenticeships in Norfolk. This will help achieve key outcomes for each directorate and will support key priorities for NCC:

- A vibrant and sustainable economy
- Better opportunities for children and young people
- A greener, more resilient future

Ongoing progress and impact will be measured and articulated in the live Operational Delivery Plan, which the three directorates will report quarterly to the NCC Apprenticeships Board.

Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

- 1. Review, consider and offer feedback on the proposed Norfolk County Council [NCC] Apprenticeship Strategy (and Operational Delivery Plan) – updated for 2023-2025.**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 The 2018 LGA review 'Realising Apprenticeship Opportunities at NCC' identified an overall vision and strategy for the delivery of Apprenticeships in Norfolk, both internally and externally to NCC, reflecting individual strategic strands of activity across Growth & Investment, Children's Services and Human Resources.
- 1.2 As a result, we established an Apprenticeship Board (chaired by Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, currently Cllr Fabian Eagle). Together we have developed an updated NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025, with an Operational Delivery Plan. This builds on the previous NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2020-2023 and guides our joint support for and delivery of apprenticeships across Norfolk.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The proposed NCC Apprenticeships Strategy 2023-2025 has been written and developed collectively by officers within Children's Services, Growth & Investment and Human Resources.
- 2.2 The supporting 'Operational Delivery Plan' [appendix D] is a live document and as such, progress will be updated on an ongoing basis, in line with the NCC Apprenticeship Board meeting schedule.

The key strategic aims/approach for each directorate include:

Childrens Service's - 'Pathways to Work'

Aim 1 | Establish apprenticeships within education settings as a key option route for 16-18 learners leading to an increase in the % of applications and starts.

Aim 2 | Promote apprenticeships as a key option route for 16 18-year-olds who face additional barriers to contribute to a more diverse workforce in Norfolk.

Aim 3 | Inspire and promote an increased awareness and understanding of apprenticeships and other work-based options with parents/carers and teachers, so that they can support their children and young people, with aspirational decision making.

Growth & Investment - 'Apprenticeships Norfolk'

Aim 1 | Increase opportunities to inspire, promote and champion apprenticeships, improving awareness and understanding of the benefits an apprenticeship can bring to individuals, businesses and the local economy and celebrating successes.

Aim 2 | Undertake primary research to better understand the barriers to taking up and completing apprenticeships, in order to develop innovative & evidence based interventions for service delivery.

Aim 3 | Support an increase in the number of apprenticeship starts in Norfolk (focussing on improving balance and opportunity based on age, level, sector, place, diversity, availability and approach – as appropriate).

Aim 4 | Support the system to increase the number of apprentices who complete and achieve their apprenticeships in Norfolk.

Aim 5 | Increase opportunities to influence improvement to the local apprenticeship landscape in Norfolk, through collaborative and innovative systems thinking, to maximise impact.

Human Resources – ‘NCC Workforce Apprenticeships’

Aim 1 | Continue to support Workforce Apprenticeships at NCC and in schools, continuing to develop apprenticeship take-up, fully utilising levy, and achieving recognition as an employer of choice in terms of the quality and quantity of apprenticeships provided.

Aim 2 | Develop and establish an NCC Employer Early Careers development offer for 16-24 year olds in Norfolk, positioning NCC as an employer of choice for apprenticeships.

Aim 3 | Develop NCC workforce analytics capability to enable the use of the LGA workforce planning toolkit, embedding apprenticeships and other talent pipeline vehicles within corporate and directorate workforce plans and shaping a workforce that reflects the diversity and demographics of the Norfolk community.

- 2.2 Prior to submission to Select Committee, draft and finalised papers have been approved by senior management in each directorate; and have been submitted to the NCC Apprenticeships Board for feedback, agreement and approval. Council members invited to attend of the NCC Apprenticeships Board and review/offer feedback for the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy papers, include Cllr Fabian Eagle (Chair and Cabinet Member for Economic Growth); Cllr Andy Grant (Member Champion for Apprenticeships) and Cllr Barry Stone (Chairman; as apprenticeships key area of focus for Chairman for 2023/24).

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 Collectively, the three directorates will respond to series of strategic priorities including supporting both our own workforce and also broader economic growth. Through our work, we will support the growth of apprenticeship starts and completions (including increases in equality, diversity, inclusion and participation) – which will contribute the increased knowledge, skills and behaviours required to meet our local economic need; alongside a focus on preparing our future workforce (individuals and businesses) for working in the emerging Net Zero economy.
- 3.2 Ongoing progress and impact will be measured and articulated in the live Operational Delivery Plan, which the three directorates will report quarterly to the NCC Apprenticeships Board.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1 *Not Applicable*

5. Alternative Options

5.1 *Not Applicable*

6. Financial Implications

6.1 All three directorates (Children's Services, Growth & Investment and HR) will utilise existing resource within the team to deliver their objectives. The cost/expenditure falls within the parameters of the Annual Budget agreed by Council. There is no additional cost to NCC in respect of this proposal.

6.2 Growth & Investment continue to seek external funding opportunities to support ongoing Apprenticeship initiatives. To support peaks of activity for these additional projects, external funding bids include budgets to provide additional staffing.

7. Resource Implications

7.1 Staff:

All three directorates (Children's Services, Growth & Investment and HR) will utilise existing resource within the team to deliver their objectives. As noted in 6.1, additional resource could be expanded through securing additional external funding (Example: Growth & Investment have secured almost £2.4m of external funding since 2020 to deliver a range of initiatives, which included staffing resource).

7.2 Property:

Not Applicable

7.3 IT:

Not Applicable

8. Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications:

Not Applicable

8.2 Human Rights Implications:

Not Applicable

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):

Assessment undertaken with contributions from all three directorates within the report (Children's Services, Growth & Investment and HR). Based on the evidence available, this proposal is likely to have a **positive impact** on people with protected characteristics/a particular group of people with protected characteristics.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

Not Applicable

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

Not Applicable

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

Sustainability Assessment - Not Applicable

However the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy includes strategic priorities to increase the number and range of green skills and apprenticeships in Norfolk, preparing our future workforce (individuals and businesses) for working in the emerging Net Zero economy.

8.7 Any Other Implications:

Officers have considered all the implications which members should be aware of. Apart from those listed in the report (above), there are no other implications to take into account.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 *Not Applicable*

10. Actions Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

- 1. Review, consider and offer feedback on the proposed Apprenticeship Strategy and Operational Delivery Plan**

11. Background Papers

11.1 Not Applicable

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

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Norfolk County Council

Apprenticeship Strategy 2023 - 2025



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Glossary

ASK	Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge Programme
CEYP	Care Experienced Young People
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
CS	Children’s Services [Department at NCC]
DfE	Department for Education
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EHE	Electively Home Educated
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency
GAAP	Green Apprenticeship Advisory Panel
GJT	Green Jobs Taskforce
G&I	Growth & Investment [Department at NCC]
HAS	Higher Aspirations Scheme
HR	Human Resources [Department at NCC]
IAG	Information, Advice & Guidance
IfATE	Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LGA	Local Government Association
LSIP	Local Skills Improvement Plan
NCC	Norfolk County Council
NCC AL	Norfolk County Council Adult Learning [Department at NCC]
NODA	Norfolk Office of Data Analytics
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PTW	Pathways to Work
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SME	Small to Medium-sized Enterprise
UK CRF	UK Community Renewal Fund
UK SPF	UK Shared Prosperity Fund
YJS	Youth Justice System

Foreword

“Norfolk County Council is pleased to present its Apprenticeship Strategy, revised for 2023-2025.

Apprenticeships remain core to our goal of supporting people and businesses in Norfolk. We recognise that inclusive economic growth, increased social mobility, productivity, innovation and resilience – will be made possible through developing our people.

A well-educated, ambitious and flexible workforce trained to seize new opportunities is key to business success. Equally, our residents deserve to have the very best opportunities at all stages of their career, to raise their aspirations, gain the relevant skills and qualifications and to progress in challenging and rewarding work roles. Apprenticeships can create these opportunities; they provide a clear framework for businesses to grow, for individuals to progress and will equip Norfolk with the skills to harness the opportunities of the green economy.

This strategy (and associated operational delivery plan) outlines how we intend to meet our responsibilities to support the delivery of apprenticeships locally; both as an employer and as a strategic leader.

The next two years are likely to see an increasingly changeable apprenticeship landscape; and we will need an agile approach in adapting to this. By working collaboratively with individuals, businesses and key stakeholders, we can best support sustainable economic growth for Norfolk”.

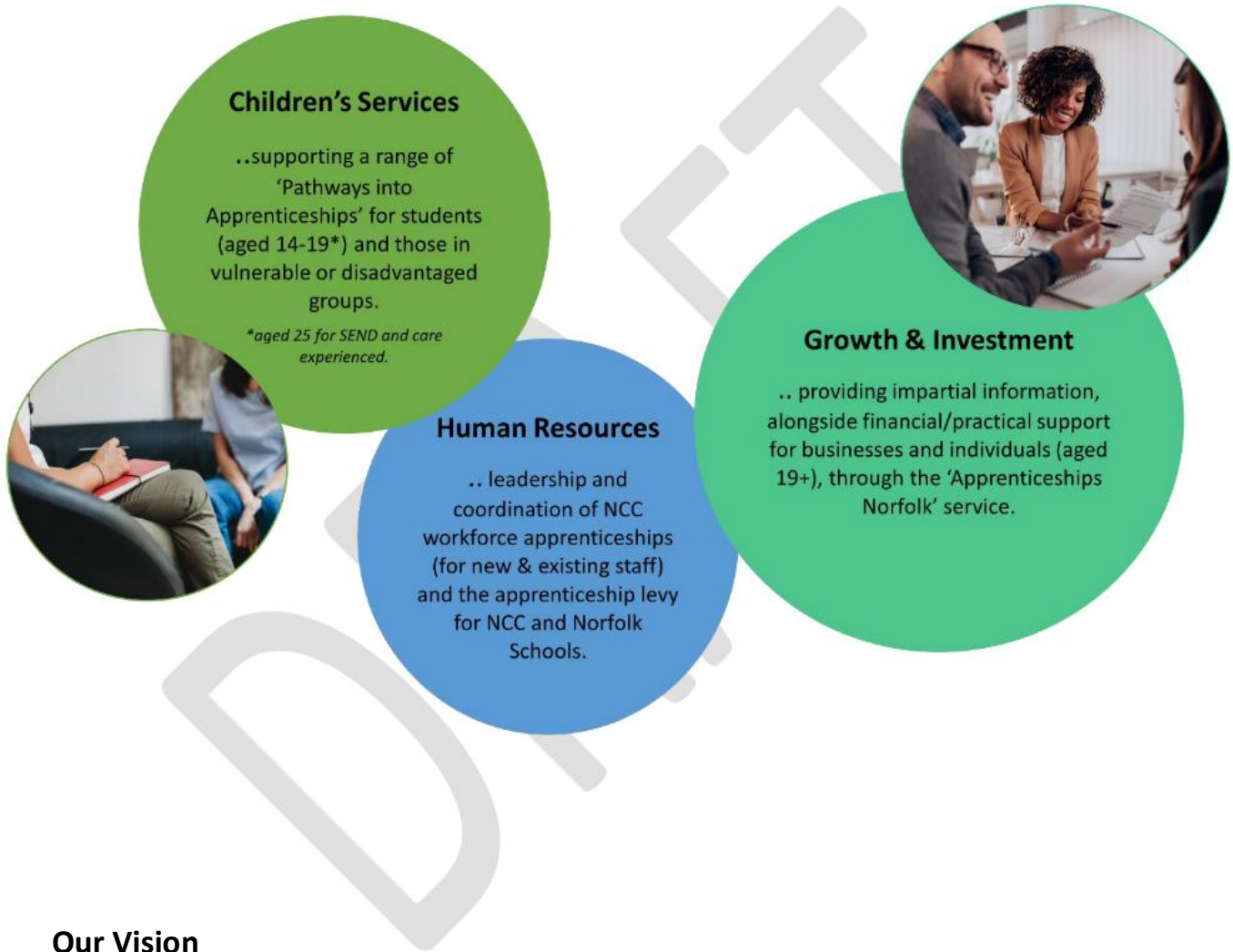


CLlr Fabian Eagle

Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Chair of the NCC Apprenticeships Board

Executive Summary

This strategy sets out a strategic vision, aims and objectives and an operational delivery plan for apprenticeships across all areas of Norfolk County Council [NCC], cohesively bringing together the three strategic priorities from three directorates - as identified by the 2018 Local Government Association [LGA] review; **Children’s Services** [CS], **Growth & Investment** [G&I] and **Human Resources** [HR].



Our Vision

Apprenticeships will be an attractive offer that our young people and adults aspire to go into as a high quality and prestigious path to a successful career, and that employers (including NCC itself) value to develop their workforce and create a talent pipeline that supports our current and future skills needs.

NCC are committed to helping ensure Norfolk’s economic growth and will promote social mobility by helping people, of any age, to get the skills they need for 21st century employment – whether this be starting a career, developing a career or reskilling for a different career.

Action & Impact

Collectively, the three directorates or resource 'strands' which underpin the NCC Apprenticeships Strategy at NCC, will respond to a series of strategic priorities including supporting both our own workforce and also broader economic growth. Through our work, we will support the growth of apprenticeship starts *and* completions (including increases in equality, diversity, inclusion and participation) – which will contribute to the increased knowledge, skills and behaviours required to meet our local economic need; alongside a focus on preparing our future workforce (individuals and businesses) for working in the emerging Net Zero economy.

The cross cutting priorities will be delivered through our strategic aims:

Children's Services - 'Pathways to Work'

Aim 1 | Establish apprenticeships as a key option route for learners aged 16-18, leading to an increase in the % of applications and starts.

Aim 2 | Promote apprenticeships as a key option route, for those aged 16-18 who face additional barriers, contributing to a more diverse workforce in Norfolk.

Aim 3 | Inspire and promote an increased awareness and understanding of apprenticeships and other work-based options with parents/carers and teachers, so that they can support their children and young people, with aspirational decision making.

Growth & Investment - 'Apprenticeships Norfolk'

Aim 1 | Increase opportunities to inspire, promote and champion apprenticeships; improving awareness and understanding of the benefits an apprenticeship can bring to individuals, businesses and the local economy; and celebrating successes.

Aim 2 | Undertake primary research to better understand the barriers to taking up and completing apprenticeships, in order to develop innovative & evidence based interventions for service delivery.

Aim 3 | Support an increase in the number of apprenticeship starts in Norfolk (focussing on improving balance and opportunity based on age, level, sector, place, diversity, availability and approach – as appropriate).

Aim 4 | Support the system to increase the number of apprentices who complete and achieve their apprenticeships in Norfolk.

Aim 5 | Increase opportunities to influence improvement to the local apprenticeship landscape in Norfolk, through collaborative and innovative systems thinking, to maximise impact.

Human Resources – 'NCC Workforce Apprenticeships'

Aim 1 | Continue to support Workforce Apprenticeships at NCC and in schools, continuing to develop apprenticeship take-up, fully utilising levy, and achieving recognition as an employer of choice in terms of the quality and quantity of apprenticeships provided.

Aim 2 | Develop and establish an Early Careers development offer for 16-24 year olds in Norfolk, positioning NCC as an employer of choice for apprenticeships.

Aim 3 | Develop NCC workforce analytics capability to enable the use of the LGA workforce planning toolkit; embedding apprenticeships and other talent pipeline vehicles within corporate and directorate workforce plans - shaping a workforce that reflects the diversity and demographics of the Norfolk community.

These aims will provide the focus and approach for developing our Operational Delivery Plan (see Appendix D). Monitoring our progress, through quarterly performance updates reported to the Apprenticeship Board, will help us to provide an agile response to the ever-changing apprenticeship and economic landscape, to achieve successful outcomes for the people, businesses and economy of Norfolk.

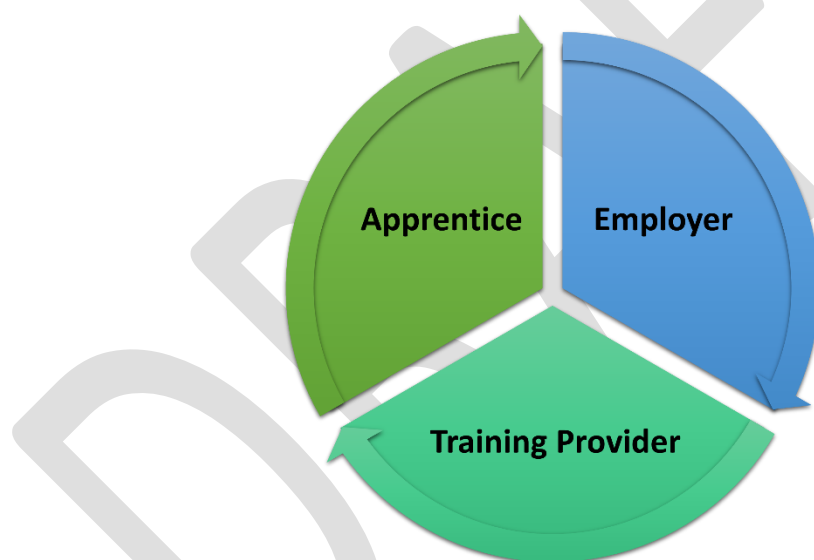
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Why Apprenticeships?

An apprenticeship is a paid job where the employee learns and gains valuable experiences¹

Apprenticeships rely on a successful, interdependent, tripartite relationship between the **apprentice**, **employer** and **training provider**:

- the apprentice – must be ready to work and develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours;
- the employer – must be able to invest in the apprenticeship scheme (potentially through establishing a new job or upskilling existing staff) with appropriate scope (depth and breadth) of occupational opportunities; provision of a mentor; and funding - for wages which cover the hours invested in working and studying both on and off the job, and potentially a contribution towards the training provision.
- a registered training provider – must have the capacity/expertise to offer suitable, high quality provision to meet the learning needs of the apprentice, their occupational job role and the apprenticeship standard.



Apprenticeships are a key element of national skills policy and provide a vehicle for developing and increasing skills, knowledge and behaviours for those entering the labour market, workforce development and progression, and the development of higher-level skills. A key strength of the apprenticeship system in England is its 'broad occupational coverage, providing a route into work for all and a route for those already in work to continue to progress their careers'².

However, the interdependency is a crucial factor in determining successful strategies; there is a need to balance sufficient numbers of work-ready, motivated individuals (all age, all level) with steady employer demand, and a flexible supply of training provision.

¹ [HM Govt | What is an apprenticeship? \(2023\)](#)

² [Apprenticeship achievements: an update for the sector \(2023\)](#)

In its 2015 strategy 'Our 2020 Vision'³ the UK Government stated that 'a nation flourishes when it realises the full potential of all its people'. Further research^{4,5,6,7,8} suggests that apprenticeships deliver real benefits to individuals, businesses and the economy:

Benefits to **individuals**:

- ✓ Individual apprentices achieve higher levels of qualification and increase their own employment prospects, productivity and wages.
- ✓ Apprentices completing an apprenticeship at level 4 or above could earn £150,000 more, on average, over their lifetime.
- ✓ Apprentices who *achieve*, have higher earnings compared to those who do not.
- ✓ In 2021:
 - 25% of apprentices stated that their promotion was a direct result of their apprenticeship.
 - 27% of apprentices stated that they received a pay rise as a direct result of their apprenticeship.
 - 92% of apprentices stated knowledge, skills and behaviours learnt through their apprenticeship would equip them to succeed.
 - 91% of apprentices felt that their apprenticeship had prepared them well for their next steps.
 - 80% of apprentices stated that they felt empowered to have successful careers in their industry.

Benefits to **businesses**:

- ✓ 98% of businesses currently employing apprentices state they bring additional benefits - among the most cited benefits were 'addressing skills shortages' and 'providing value for money'.
- ✓ One third of employers say apprentices improve diversity within their business.
- ✓ As a key source of learning & development, apprenticeships support increased employee engagement, retention, wellbeing and mental health.
- ✓ Even during training, apprentices deliver a return of c£2,500 (in some cases significantly more).
- ✓ Many employers recoup the cost of training before the completion of the apprenticeship and others within a time frame as short as 1-2 years.
- ✓ Firms that invest in apprenticeship programmes also report other benefits; including reduced recruitment costs, enhanced job satisfaction among workplace supervisors and achievement of corporate social responsibility outcomes.

Benefits to local **economy**:

- ✓ Apprenticeship programmes can help to improve the general level of skills in the local economy and can boost overall economic growth and productivity.
- ✓ Apprenticeships provide opportunities to retain people in our county and encourage people into our county, which increases and developed our local skills and talent pipeline.

³ [HM Government | English Apprenticeships - Our 2020 Vision \(2015\)](#)

⁴ [OECD/ILO | Engaging Employers in Apprenticeship Opportunities \(2017\)](#)

⁵ [DfE | Apprenticeship achievements: an update for the sector \(2023\)](#)

⁶ [DfE | Apprenticeships evaluation 2021: Learners research report \(2021\)](#)

⁷ [Training Zone & Open University | L&D's role in employee wellbeing \(2023\)](#)

⁸ [SMG | The Real Costs & Benefits of Apprenticeships \(2021\)](#)

- ✓ Apprenticeships represent an excellent investment for both the Government and employers, delivering significant benefits for the taxpayer: Apprenticeships provide a typical return⁹ (depending on age/level) of between £12 to £25 for every £1 of government investment.

Our NCC values¹⁰ set out what's important about how we work, and these have been applied in developing the strategy;



Our Vision

Apprenticeships will be an attractive offer that our young people and adults aspire to go into as a high quality and prestigious path to a successful career, and that employers (including NCC itself) value to develop their workforce and create a talent pipeline that supports our current and future skills needs.

NCC are committed to helping ensure Norfolk’s economic growth and will promote social mobility by helping people, of any age, to get the skills they need for 21st century employment – whether this be starting a career, developing a career or reskilling for a different career.

⁹ [DfE | Measuring the Net Present Value of Further Education in England 2018-19 \(2018\)](#)

¹⁰ [NCC | Our Values \(2023\)](#)

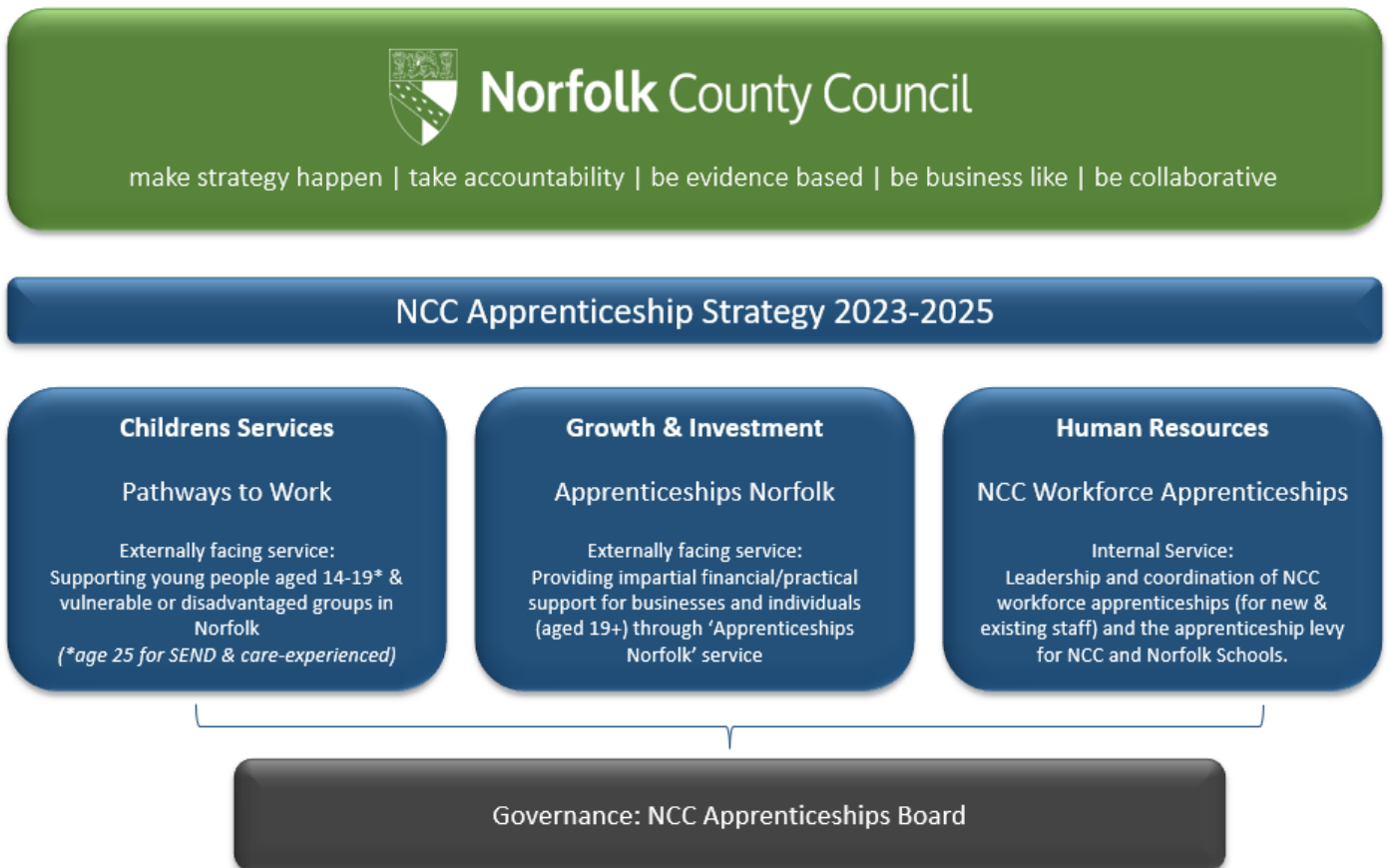
What does Apprenticeship success look like for Norfolk?

- ✓ Every apprenticeship will be a high-quality opportunity that delivers the skills, knowledge and behaviours that employers are looking for, and increasingly the sustainable green skills required to support our emerging Net Zero priorities.
- ✓ A broad range of apprenticeships (including green apprenticeships) are available to meet local economic need, and at all levels, from intermediate/advanced through to higher/degree level.
- ✓ Apprenticeships will be a viable and aspirational pathway and route of progression for our young people and adults.
- ✓ Apprenticeships are increasingly inclusive and accessible to the communities of Norfolk that reflect our diversity, adequately representing groups such as care experienced, young people in the Youth Justice system, younger workers, returners to work, people with disabilities and special educational needs and people from ethnic minority groups.
- ✓ Apprenticeship starts and achievement rates will have increased (including green apprenticeships).
- ✓ NCC will be an exemplar employer of apprenticeships in Norfolk; apprenticeships will be a good quality pathway to successful careers at NCC - providing opportunities for new and existing employees to develop/reskill, helping the Council achieve its 'Caring for the County' vision and Net Zero priorities.

Background

The 2018 LGA review ‘Realising Apprenticeship Opportunities at NCC’ identified an overall vision and strategy for the delivery of Apprenticeships in Norfolk, both internally and externally to NCC, reflecting the three key resource strands delivering strategic activity across the organisation.

Together we have developed this Strategy to guide our collaborative support for and delivery of apprenticeships across Norfolk:



Governance is achieved through an established NCC Apprenticeship board (see Appendix A for Terms of Reference), chaired by the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, which meets on a quarterly basis. Members of an ‘Operational Working Group’ from each of the resource strands; Children’s Services, Growth & Investment and Human Resources deliver updates on progress against the Operational Delivery Plan (see Appendix D). Senior representation attends from each of these directorates, along with the Director of Community Information and Learning¹¹ and the lead for the NCC Net Zero Hub.

¹¹ NCC Adult Learning [NCCAL] is an education provider (regulated and funded as a Further Education Institution) and sits within the Community Information & Learning directorate. NCCAL provides delivery of apprenticeships across a number of apprenticeship standards and is one of a number of local training providers. Whilst NCC Adult Learning delivery is aligned with and supports the main aims set out by the above tripartite strategy, it does not contribute to it specifically - as the resources delivering the NCC strategy seek to retain an impartial approach.

Strategic Drivers

The NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2020-2023 identified a clear direction of travel, to enable the organisation to drive increased value for its own workforce and also for the people and businesses in Norfolk, through the apprenticeship scheme. At the time of writing in 2020, a focus on post-pandemic stability and growth was key – and now, in 2023 stability and growth remain important as economic uncertainty continues to dominate as we navigate the cost of living crisis¹².

The 2023-2025 updated strategy retains our long term vision, and we continue to prioritise economic growth, however it gives us the opportunity to respond in a dynamic way to emerging priorities (national policy and local need) - for example the inclusion of green apprenticeships and Net Zero.

A PESTLE analysis (see Appendix C for full, referenced analysis) provides an opportunity to draw insight and strategic direction from a range of external drivers; including political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental priorities, both nationally and locally. Further, we utilised published data relating to starts/achievements¹³; the emerging Local Skills Improvement Plans [LSIPs]^{14,15} and also other forms of primary research – for example project evaluations¹⁶, research surveys and anecdotal feedback from our work with local stakeholders, businesses and individuals.

A summary below, articulates our approach.

Apprenticeship policy and funding decisions in England (including devolved authorities) are led by central Government^{17, 18, 19} and have continued to evolve with a number of strategic interventions since the significant apprenticeship reforms in 2017.

We seek to align our work clearly with **national strategic priorities**, including:

- improving the quality of apprenticeships²⁰;
- broadening careers advice for young people, supporting the Gatsby benchmarks^{21,22};
- inspiring and supporting more people to start and achieve apprenticeships^{23,24};
- prioritising the development of skills to address local skills gaps; support the fastest growing roles in future technology; and sustainability skills to help our people support green jobs and the green economy²⁵; and

¹² [FSB | Cost of living is holding back growth \(2023\)](#)

¹³ [DfE | Explore education statistics \(2023\)](#)

¹⁴ [HM Govt | Skills & Post-16 Education Act \(2022\)](#)

¹⁵ [Norfolk Chamber | LSIP – Draft Priorities for Norfolk \(2023\)](#)

¹⁶ [Apprenticeships Norfolk | Grants and Incentives](#)

¹⁷ [DfE | Progress report on the Apprenticeships Reform Programme \(2021\)](#)

¹⁸ [HM Government | English Apprenticeships - Our 2020 Vision \(2015\)](#)

¹⁹ [HM Government | Skills for Jobs \(2021\)](#)

²⁰ [DfE | Apprenticeship achievements: an update for the sector \(2023\)](#)

²¹ [DfE | Provider Access Legislation \(2023\)](#)

²² [Gatsby | Good Career Guidance \(2023\)](#)

²³ [HM Government | Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth \(2021\)](#)

²⁴ [SMG | SME Apprenticeships & Skills Report \(2021\)](#)

²⁵ [HM Government | Skills for Jobs \(2021\)](#)

- supporting our businesses and our people to thrive - through levelling up resilience, productivity, pay and jobs in those places which benefit less from strong social mobility²⁶.

We are also guided by local context and insight drawn from **local strategic priorities, set at a countywide level in Norfolk**^{27,28,29,30} to:

- build a vibrant and sustainable workforce that is fit for the future;
- create of an inclusive and growing economy, with improved provision and attainment aligned to employer's needs;
- contribute to strong social value through collaboration.
- invest in creating new opportunities to increase skills, in particular enabling increased social mobility and the transition to a Net Zero economy; and
- provide a commitment to ensure young people, especially those in disadvantaged or vulnerable groups to develop skills to support educational achievement and ambition.

Finally, we will work closely to support and achieve **strategic priorities set at a district level in Norfolk**, to;

- support and empower our people to be the best they can be through wellbeing support, development, and training³¹
- create an inclusive economy which promotes skills and job opportunities for all. Ensuring the workforce have the right mix of skills to match business need and helping to prepare our young people to be successful in their working lives by ensuring there are the right career pathways in place, whether that be vocational or academic³².
- work with colleges/independent training providers, schools and businesses to match future business opportunities with the right skill provision, to boost the number of apprenticeships, encourage social mobility and ensure more local people can benefit from local job opportunities³³.
- help people of all ages improve their skills and qualifications, and help raise their aspirations. We want to help people become entrepreneurs and benefit from the growing economy. We want to be a place where skilled people want to live and work. There is a need to improve the local skills base to help drive up what is a relatively low-wage economy³⁴.
- promote inclusive growth which seeks to match the skills of the local workforce with the needs of local businesses, encouraging links between local education providers, apprentices and businesses³⁵.
- work with partners to support good jobs, skills and opportunities for Norwich, including making the city a Living Wage Place³⁶

²⁶ [HM Government | UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus \(2022\)](#)

²⁷ [NCC | Together for Norfolk \(2019-2025\)](#)

²⁸ [NALEP | Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy \(2022\)](#)

²⁹ [NCC | Climate change strategy sets out path to net zero \(2023\)](#)

³⁰ [NCC | Norfolk Investment Framework \(2022\)](#)

³¹ [Breckland | Corporate Plan \(2021-2025\)](#)

³² [SNBC | Strategic Plan \(2020-2024\)](#)

³³ [GYBC | The Plan \(2020-2025\)](#)

³⁴ [KLWN | Core Strategy document \(2011\)](#)

³⁵ [NNDC | Corporate Plan \(2019-2023\)](#)

³⁶ [NCC | Corporate Plan \(2022-2026\)](#)

We will look to utilise strategic opportunities such as the County Deal³⁷, UK Shared Prosperity Fund [UK SPF] and the Norfolk Investment Framework³⁸ to innovate new approaches/projects to invest in local skills, and increase our labour market dynamism.

Acknowledging our strategic drivers within the local context, will enable us to deliver collective value to our people, our businesses, our stakeholders and our own organisation, NCC – whilst contributing to a stronger local economy and a broader, national apprenticeship landscape also.

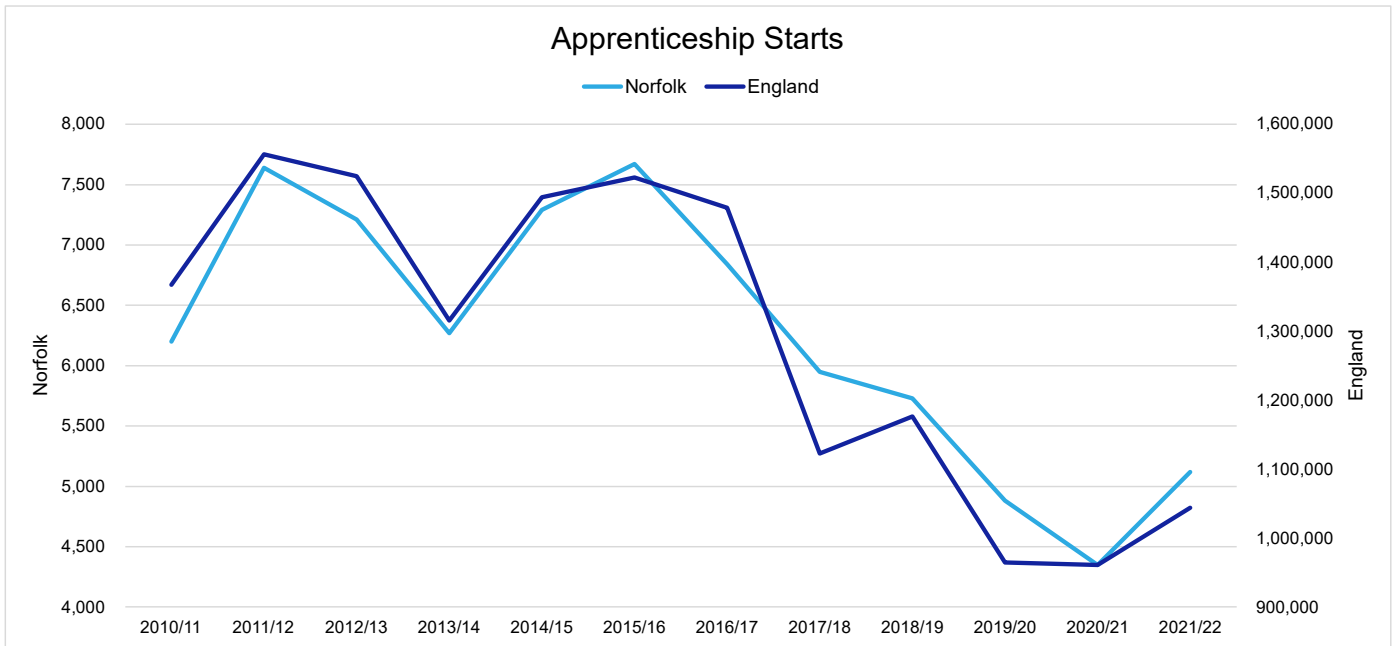
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³⁷[DLUHC | Norfolk Devolution Deal \(2022\)](#)

³⁸[NCC | Norfolk Investment Framework \(2022\)](#)

National & Local Apprenticeship Context

Apprenticeship starts (England and Norfolk, 2010-2022)³⁹



There has been a significant decline in the number of apprenticeships in Norfolk and England; which aligns to the significant national apprenticeship reforms and the introduction of the apprenticeship levy in 2016/17 (see Appendix B for details). In Norfolk, academic year 2016/17 saw a peak of over 7,000 new apprenticeship starts, through to the low point in 2020/21 when just 4350 new apprenticeships started. However, in 2021/22 we saw a change; the first increase of apprenticeship starts in over 5 years, arresting the decline. Growth appears to have been stimulated more broadly, by the availability of post-pandemic national incentives⁴⁰ - however as our local data bucked the national trend with a greater growth rate, it is likely that local⁴¹ incentives/interventions contributed to increased uptake in Norfolk.

Note: Growth figures are always derived through comparison to the same point of the previous academic year. Data is released each quarter, but as it lags, reviewing performance is always retrospective.

Department for Education [DfE] data from the last full academic year identified the following information about new apprenticeship starts in Norfolk in 2021/22:

- 5,118 new apprenticeship starts.
- The overall growth of these new 5,118 apprenticeship starts reached 18% (in real numbers, c771 more new apprenticeship starts than in 2020/21) - *double* the national figure of 9%
- The 5,118 new apprenticeships which started in academic year 2021/22 was higher than the number which started in 2019/20 (c4,879) but was not as high as the numbers in 2018/19 (c5,734)

³⁹ [DfE | Explore education statistics \(2023\)](#)

⁴⁰ [DfE | Apprenticeship Funding in England \(Nov 2021\)](#)

⁴¹ [Apprenticeships Norfolk | Grants & Incentives](#)

- In comparison to our statistical neighbours (as classified by Chartered Institute for Finance & Accountancy [CIPFA]⁴²) the 18% growth of new apprenticeship starts in Norfolk, outperformed Suffolk (4,726 starts, 13.6% growth), Lincolnshire (4,829 starts, 13.8% growth however Derbyshire saw a similar growth of 17.8% (5,902 starts).
- 1,141 new apprenticeship starts in Norfolk for those aged 16-18; this growth rate of 31% was significantly higher than the national figure of 19%.
- 1,279 new apprenticeships started at Intermediate (Level 2) and this growth of 18% in Norfolk was over double the national figure of 8.76%.
- In 2021/22, all districts across Norfolk saw growth of apprenticeship starts; with the most prominent increases in Broadland (23%), Norwich (23%) and South Norfolk (26%) – who also saw the largest increase in real numbers (180).
- Non-levy paying, small to medium-sized enterprises [SMEs] started more apprenticeships (1,841 new starts; growth from the previous two academic years (2020/21 and 2019/20)
- The training provider supporting the greatest number of apprenticeship starts (479) in Norfolk was City College Norwich.
- By sector, the largest number of new apprenticeship starts were in Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (201 starts; 43% growth from previous year) and Health, Public Services and Care (175 starts; 13% growth from previous year).

At the time of writing, we are currently part way through academic year 2022/23. The most recent cumulative data up to Q3 (August 2022 to end of April 2023) from DfE identifies that despite a positive position throughout last year, the growth of new apprenticeship starts has not yet stabilised.

It is worth noting that comparisons are being made to 2021/22 which saw higher spikes of growth – so will impact on the effects of the comparative analysis in the current year.

DfE data from Q3 of academic year 2022/23 identified the following information about new apprenticeship starts in Norfolk:

- 3,964 new apprenticeships starts by end of Q3.
- The current in-year decline, compared to same point in the previous academic year is -5.89% (c248 less starts in real numbers) during the same Q3 cumulative period of 2021/22.
- 3,964 apprenticeship starts is higher than the amount of starts at Q3 of 2020/21 (3,473) however is 237 less than 2019/20 (4,201).
- In comparison to our statistical neighbours (as classified by CIPFA⁴³) the declining trend in new starts by the end of Q3 has also been noted; with Suffolk -5.2% (-200 starts, 3,646 overall), Lincolnshire -7.51% (-309 starts, 3,807 overall).

⁴² [CIPFA | Nearest Neighbour Model \(2014\)](#)

⁴³ [CIPFA | Nearest Neighbour Model \(2014\)](#)

Green apprenticeships: Apprenticeship starts (Norfolk):

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education [IfATE] established the Green Apprenticeship Advisory Panel [GAAP] in 2021. Working alongside the Green Jobs Taskforce [GJT], GAAP categorised apprenticeships as light, mid and dark green - to recognise the impact that the occupation itself has on helping the UK achieve net-carbon zero by 2050 - in terms of scale and influence. IfATE reviewed and amended their classifications in 2023, to align to the new Office for National Statistics [ONS] definition⁴⁴ of a green job, framings which will help provide distinct guidelines for the measurement of green jobs:

“Employment in an activity that contributes to protecting or restoring the environment, including those that mitigate or adapt to climate change”.

Further work is underway to develop a framework to underpin the definition which will identify jobs in green industries, green occupations and green firms. IfATE have also identified green apprenticeships within their occupational maps⁴⁵ (with a ‘green occupation’ filter) so employers and learners can see which apprenticeships support a green career.

- A *dark green* occupation, for example wind turbine engineer, which is embedded within the green occupational landscape and delivering sustainable outcomes.
- A *mid-green* occupation will remain the same in overall scope but there might be a need for new knowledge, skills and behaviours to be embedded to enable the use of new technologies and approaches.

For the purposes of identifying a starting point for benchmarking ‘green’ apprenticeships in Norfolk, we have identified the number of ‘dark and mid-green’ new apprenticeship starts in Norfolk (as classified by IfATE, at the time of writing⁴⁶) in the last full academic year 2021/22:

- Norfolk had 25 ‘dark green’ apprenticeship starts, over 9 apprenticeship standards (see PESTLE analysis in Appendix C for the full list of 31 ‘dark green’ standards).

Apprenticeship Standard (Dark Green)	Sum of starts
Agriculture or Horticulture Professional Adviser	2
Arborist	1
Community Energy Specialist	2
Countryside Ranger	4
Dual Fuel Smart Meter Installer	2
Environmental Health Practitioner (Integrated Degree)	6
Landscape Technician	1
Waste Resource Operative	4
Waste Environment Worker	3
Grand Total	25

⁴⁴ [ONS | Green Jobs Definition \(2023\)](#)

⁴⁵ [IfATE | Occupational Maps \(2023\)](#)

⁴⁶ [IfATE | Occupational Maps \(2023\)](#)

- Norfolk had 679 ‘mid-green’ apprenticeship starts, over 75 apprenticeship standards (out of c184 ‘mid-green’ standards).

Note: For the above ‘dark green’ apprenticeship standards, there is currently extremely limited availability of local apprenticeship provision in Norfolk. Provision does increase when mapping to mid-green apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship achievements (2021/22)⁴⁷

Government ambition⁴⁸ is to have at least two thirds of apprentices (67%) achieving their apprenticeship standard by 2025. Currently (nationally) for apprenticeship standards this is only 51.4%, having fallen from 51.8% in 2020/21.

Achievement rates are one of a number of measures within the Apprenticeship Accountability Framework⁴⁹ used by DfE to hold apprenticeship training providers to account. The achievement rate is the proportion of funded apprentices (excluding those that withdraw prior to the 42nd day of their course) that successfully pass the whole apprenticeship standard⁵⁰.

Whilst not losing sight of the importance of the ambition to increase achievements, it is appropriate to also acknowledge some of the challenges in measuring apprenticeship achievements⁵¹; if maths/English are required within an apprenticeship, passing these is critical to full achievement of the apprenticeship (which is not the case for A-Levels, T-Levels etc); apprenticeship standards are longer and more technical than their predecessor (frameworks), as well as inclusion of a robust, independent end point assessment. Additionally, the extremely tight current labour market conditions *could* result in a proportion of non-completions actually resulting in a positive outcome, for example an apprentice progressing to a better paid job with more responsibilities. Comparing apprenticeship achievement outcomes to non-apprenticeship FE provision and/or previous apprenticeship frameworks must be undertaken with due consideration of these factors.

DfE chose not to publish the Qualification Achievement Rates⁵² [QAR] data in 2019/20 and 2020/21 due to the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The data was published again in March 2023 for the academic year 2021/22:

Note: as this is the first release of achievement rates following the hiatus during/following the Covid-19 pandemic, the data should be treated with caution; it is likely to still be affected by residual impact following the pandemic (e.g. impact from bottlenecks in delivery; breaks in learning etc.).

- Out of *all* providers in England;
 - 269 (25%) currently have an achievement rate above 67%;
 - 480 (45%) are between 50-67%
 - 309 (29%) are under 50%.

⁴⁷ [DfE | Explore education statistics \(2023\)](#)

⁴⁸ [DfE | Apprenticeship achievements: an update for the sector \(2023\)](#)

⁴⁹ [DfE | ESFA Apprenticeship Accountability Framework \(2023\)](#)

⁵⁰ [DfE | Qualification Achievement Rates \(2023\)](#)

⁵¹ [FE News | How can we measure apprenticeship success and quality in a meaningful way?](#)

⁵² [DfE | Qualification Achievement Rates \(2023\)](#)

- Out of the ten providers (national and local) with the *greatest number* of apprenticeship starts in Norfolk (2021/22);
 - 2 (20%) currently have an achievement rate above 67%
 - 5 (50%) are between 50-67%
 - 3 (30%) are under 50%.
- Out of nine providers *based in* Norfolk:
 - 2 (22%) currently have an achievement rate above 67%
 - 5 (55%) are between 50-67%
 - 2 (22%) are under 50%.

Local primary research – Young People: ‘How much do you know already’ ⁵³

In 2020, 2022 and 2023 the Apprenticeships Norfolk and Pathways to Work team ran a survey for young people aged 11-19, during the Norfolk Careers and Skills Festival. The responses provided insight to the knowledge, interests and engagement in Apprenticeships as a learning and career option.

- Over the three years, we have received 508 responses; increasing each year from 108 in 2020 to 214 in 2023. Of the 2023 responses, 49.5% were from female students, 47.8% from male students and 2.7% classed as other/didn't say. The majority of responses (331) were from those aged 14-15.
- In 2023, when asked if they would be more likely to complete a 'green' apprenticeship which positively impacts the environment/climate change, 96 students (52%) were unsure, and 63 (34%) said yes. Only 27 (14%) said no.
- Over the three years, by sector, the majority of students (109) stated they were interested in going into an Engineering role, followed by Health & Social Care (98).
- The future intention after leaving education question has seen a positive increase in responses stating the 'apprenticeships' option; from 27 in 2020, 51 in 2022 and 55 in 2023.

Local primary research – SME Businesses: ‘Overcoming Barriers to Apprenticeships’ ⁵⁴

In 2021, Apprenticeships Norfolk ran a business facing apprenticeship survey (in particular for SMEs). The responses provided insight to barriers faced by local businesses in engaging with apprenticeships, and potential solutions which may positively impact their decision.

- 246 businesses responded (215 small-medium sized and 33 large).
- Responses were received from all districts in Norfolk; however the largest proportion of responses were from Breckland (61) and Norwich (57)
- 135 (54%) of businesses had previously had apprentices within their organisation whereas 113 (46%) had not.

⁵³ Local Primary Research Survey – ‘How much do you know already’ (2020; 2022; 2023) - unpublished.

⁵⁴ Local Primary Research Survey – ‘Overcoming Barriers to Apprenticeships’ (2021/22) - unpublished.

- 182 businesses (74%) were considering recruiting an apprentice in the next 12 months.
- The main reasons businesses chose to use an apprenticeship to upskill or recruit staff included: to help develop skills and address a skills shortage (95 responses); invest in new talent (87 responses) and expand or upskill the workforce (70 responses).
- The main barriers to apprenticeships cited by businesses included: cost of wages/equipment or contribution to training (74 responses); time consuming/complexities in system (46 responses); Lack of available staff in the organisation to support and mentor a new apprentice (44 responses).
- Support from Apprenticeships Norfolk, which might make a difference to the businesses' decision to use an apprenticeship, included: financial grants/incentives to help with the costs (167 responses); free and impartial guidance (105 responses); the opportunity to recruit from a pre-apprenticeship programme, so candidates have increased work readiness and a better understanding of the sector/role (95 responses).

Summary Position

Since the previous iteration of the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2020-2023, the social turbulence and post-pandemic economic uncertainty following Covid19, has been directly followed by further instability, due to the cost of living crisis. Challenges around financial stability have not just been evident for businesses^{55,56} but the impact of stagnant apprenticeship funding on provision has also been well documented^{57, 58, 59} with calls for immediate support to increase funding and investment to stabilise the skills sector^{60, 61}.

The apprenticeship landscape is well known for continual policy developments and annual developments to (complex) funding rules. However, at the time of writing, as the UK approaches a general election, there is an increasing volume of policy reports speculating recommendations for further reforms to the apprenticeship system, in particular the apprenticeship levy.

We should therefore note the likelihood of a potentially volatile and increasingly changeable policy landscape during the next 2 years; and the need for our approach to be agile in adapting to this.

⁵⁵ [Norfolk Chamber of Commerce | Quarterly Economic Survey \(2023\)](#)

⁵⁶ [FSB | Cost of living squeeze is holding back growth \(2023\)](#)

⁵⁷ [IfATE | Exceptional funding band reviews for apprenticeships \(2023\)](#)

⁵⁸ [FE Week | IfATE promises review of occupational standards \(2023\)](#)

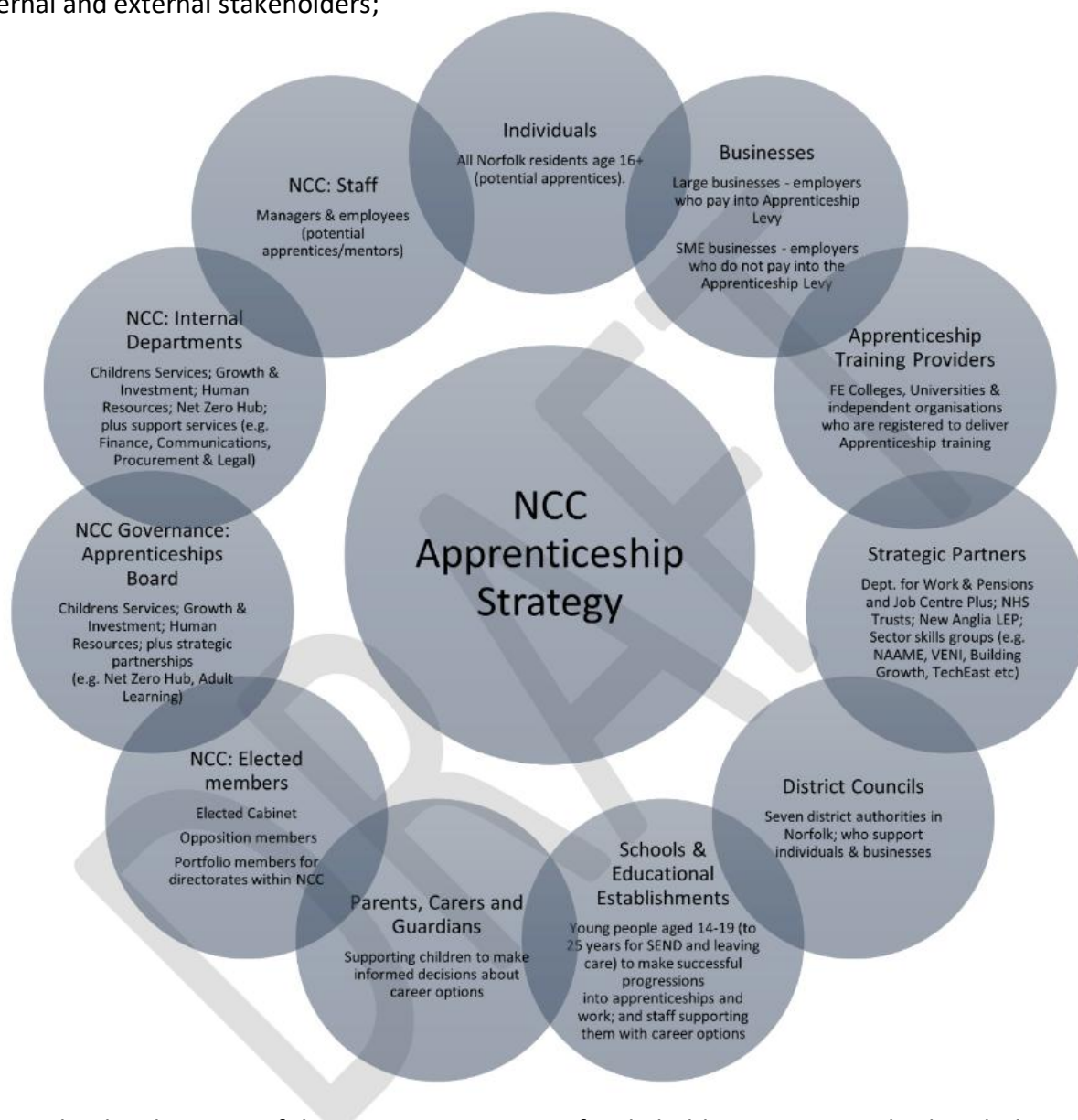
⁵⁹ [FE Week | 'No doubt' underfunding is impacting on learners \(2023\)](#)

⁶⁰ [AELP | Calls for immediate action to save the skills system \(2023\)](#)

⁶¹ [Association of Colleges | Opportunity England \(2023\)](#)

Stakeholders

Stakeholders are at the heart of any organisational strategy; and consideration of the responsibilities we have towards our various stakeholders, helps us to create value in reconciling our wider ambitions in the delivery of the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy. The diagram below identifies the wide range of our internal and external stakeholders;



During the development of this strategy, a variety of stakeholders were consulted, including representatives from local training providers⁶²; District Councils⁶³, local schools⁶⁴ and within NCC, the Net Zero hub and the Norfolk Virtual School. Consideration was also given to information collected from student-facing⁶⁵ and business-facing⁶⁶ local primary research. A draft paper received internal scrutiny from the NCC Apprenticeship Board, with approval of the final paper provided prior to endorsement via Cabinet.

⁶² City College Norwich; College of West Anglia; East Coast College; Poultec Training; NCC Adult Learning

⁶³ TBC

⁶⁴ TBC

⁶⁵ Local Primary Research Survey – ‘How much do you know already’ (2020; 2022; 2023) - unpublished.

⁶⁶ Local Primary Research Survey – ‘Overcoming Barriers to Apprenticeships’ (2021/22) - unpublished.

Progress from Apprenticeship Strategy 2020-2023

The three directorates at NCC have worked collaboratively to deliver an apprenticeship strategy to support young people, adults and businesses in Norfolk and NCC employees/schools.

A SWOT analysis enabled a review of the progress from the first NCC Apprenticeship Strategy (2020-2023) and identified opportunities from which the new Strategy 2023-2025 can build upon.

Areas of strength/achievements:

Collectively, there have been some significant areas of success; delivered through the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 'Operational Delivery Plan' and are highlighted below;

Children's Services

- ✓ Increased the number of young people aged 16-18 accessing apprenticeships - currently 5.8%⁶⁷ (against 10% target) from 4.68% in 2021 and 5.61% in 2022, indicating a progressive upward trend.
- ✓ Pathways to Work service recruited to focus on working with young people aged 14–19 to increase take up of apprenticeships, as evidenced in the figures above.
- ✓ Successful in achieving DfE Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge [ASK] contract KPI's for 2021-22 and on track to achieve success for ASK contract 2022-23.
- ✓ Engagement with 44 out of 69 schools sixth forms and colleges in Norfolk including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities [SEND] schools for ASK contract 2022-23.
- ✓ Activities delivered with Year groups 9-13 and one to one support provided to young people with additional barriers; including contribution to the Project McKenzie for care experienced young people; sessions delivered to young people and parents in the Home Educated group and with young people excluded from mainstream education, based in the Short Stay School for Norfolk.
- ✓ Established social media presence through Apprenticeships Norfolk channels.
- ✓ Established working relationship with the Careers Hub and Enterprise Co-Ordinator network to facilitate delivery in education.

Growth & Investment

- ✓ In academic year 2021/22, Norfolk saw the growth of apprenticeship starts for the first time in five years, with 18% more starts than in the previous year, exceeding the national growth rate in England (9%).
- ✓ Successfully re-branded Apprenticeships Norfolk and significantly increased social media presence with increasing followers/engagement month on month since 2020.

⁶⁷ NCC Core+ data – extracted 31.05.2023.

- ✓ Developed new website (including a bespoke interactive provision matrix for Norfolk) – 45k visits since 2021.
- ✓ Delivered an award winning #MadeInNorfolk TV advertising campaign in 2021, and again in 2022 to raise awareness of the benefits an apprenticeship can bring to Norfolk SMEs.
- ✓ Increased information, advice and guidance [IAG] engagement with employers (rising from 40 in 2020 to 1000+ in 2022) and individuals (rising from less than 50 in 2020 to 1000+ in 2022) and increased attendance at Training Provider network meetings (rising from 30 in 2020 to 44 in 2022). A considerable proportion of this increased engagement with employers was connected to the external funding investment which resulted in delivery of three incentive/grant schemes (see below), which also enabled a significant increase in staffing resource.
- ✓ Successful delivery of:
 - Recruit | Retain | Reward incentive grant (£437k Norfolk Strategic Fund) - 437 x £1000 incentives for SMEs in Norfolk to recruit a new apprentice aged 16-24.
 - Access to Apprenticeships (£250k European Regional Development Fund [ERDF] funding) - 378 bursary grants for apprentices aged 16-24 to access financial support to buy tools/equipment, travel expenses and digital kit to enable them to start an apprenticeship in Norfolk.
 - Progression to Apprenticeships (£350k part funded by UK Community Renewal Fund [UK CRF]) - a pilot programme, supporting 42 SMEs in Norfolk to progress a Kickstarter (aged 16-25) onto an apprenticeship.
 - Insight Apprentice project (£893k, part funded by European Social Fund [ESF]) – ongoing project offering support to SMEs in growth sectors in Norfolk, looking to start an apprenticeship scheme.
- ✓ Improved data insight and analysis and application of big data through a new Apprenticeships Norfolk PowerBI dashboard, developed with Norfolk Office of Data & Analytics [NODA] and a Data Analyst apprentice, part funded by the Insight Apprentice project.
- ✓ Apprenticeship Norfolk Awards: delivered virtually in 2021, 2022 and in-person for 2023 (with over triple the number of nominations in 2023)
- ✓ Various pieces of primary research completed – Covid19 (x3), Traineeships, Myth busting for Young People (3 years of data), Higher Apprenticeships and Overcoming Barriers to Apprenticeships for Businesses.

Human Resources

- ✓ NCC levy has been *consistently* used to full capacity.
- ✓ Increased schools engagement with levy, turning underspend into fully utilised in 2022.
- ✓ Policy that all grade A-I roles are first reviewed and considered as apprentice suitability.
- ✓ Strong ratio of existing/new staff (65:35)
- ✓ Strong procurement framework against existing apprenticeship standards offered at NCC.
- ✓ Workforce Strategy signed off for NCC that includes focus on apprenticeships development.

Areas for further development and future opportunity:

Whilst progress against the Strategy 2020-2023 has been evident, there are some areas of opportunity which are yet to be realised, or emerging priorities which will require increased strategic focus as we move into the period 2023-2025, with NCC leading by example:

- Increased engagement with young people in Norfolk schools and educational establishments, including with parents/carers and teaching/support staff.
- A specific offer for an increased level of support, for care experienced young people to access apprenticeships; and support for businesses to offer them.
- Increasing the low numbers of disadvantaged young people in Norfolk starting an apprenticeship; including specific support for disadvantaged groups to be able to access apprenticeships.
- Increasing the numbers of young people classed as 'participating' in education, employment and training in Norfolk, to choose apprenticeships as a pathway.
- A clear focus on supporting businesses and individuals towards Net Zero; through increased green apprenticeship opportunities and the embedding of green and sustainable skills more broadly.
- Longer-term support for employers (particularly SMEs), apprentices and training providers once new apprenticeships have begun, supporting an increase overall retention and achievement.
- An increased ethical emphasis; e.g. encouraging local businesses to offer apprentices a *living wage*; encouraging larger organisations (including NCC) in Norfolk to support local SMEs, for example through gifting apprenticeship levy-transfers.
- Further work to support an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion [EDI] strategy and enable apprenticeships at NCC to reflect Norfolk's communities.
- Establish NCC Local Government work experience programme for young people.
- Reduce duplication of externally facing apprenticeship services; to hide the wiring for external stakeholders.

Resources to deliver the Strategy 2023-2025

The following three directorates have committed to deliver the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025. We will set out the strategic and *individual approach* that each directorate will take; how they link and work *together*, to form an overall operational delivery plan (Appendix D).

1 | Children's Services

Supporting a range of 'Pathways into Apprenticeships' including delivery of the DfE ASK programme⁶⁸, for students aged 14-19* and for those in vulnerable or disadvantaged groups (such as SEND, Home Educated, Looked After Children, Care Experienced and those supervised by the Youth Offending Team).

**aged 25 for SEND and care experienced*

2 | Growth and Investment

Driving economic growth in Norfolk through removing barriers to apprenticeships; including delivery of the 'Apprenticeships Norfolk' service - providing free, impartial information and a range of initiatives offering financial and practical support for businesses and individuals (aged 19+) across the county.

3 | Human Resources

Management of the NCC Workforce Apprenticeships; including utilising the NCC and Norfolk school levy to promote and support apprenticeship opportunities at NCC to existing employees and new recruits to the organisation and Norfolk schools. Also, offering guidance and support to managers and employees; procuring and monitoring quality of training provision and progress of apprenticeship delivery.

Equality Impact Assessment Statement

NCC recognises its responsibility to lead by example; our commitment to work to address disadvantage and promote equality, is supported by our Workforce Strategy⁶⁹ which interlinks with the Apprenticeship Strategy.

Note: Objectives and actions detailing our work contributing to Net Zero will be embedded within all our strategic aims and detailed in the Operational Delivery Plan (Appendix D), rather than a standalone strategic aim.

⁶⁸ [DfE | ASK programme](#)

⁶⁹ Internal, unpublished document

1 | Children's Services: Pathways to Work

Introduction

The participation of 16-18-year-olds with education and training is paramount to young peoples' achievement, attainment, well-being and progression to economic independence and adulthood.

NCC Children's Services [CS], has a statutory duty⁷⁰ to 'encourage, enable and assist' young people aged 16-18 to participate in learning and to reduce those who are Not in Education, Employment and Training [NEET]. This duty is overseen by our Participation & Transitions Strategy Team [PTST]. In line with Norfolk's Corporate Parenting responsibilities⁷¹, no young person should be left behind and we are committed to promote aspirations and opportunities to help seek and secure best outcomes, and to enable NCC to fulfil its statutory role as the champion of children and corporate parent to Norfolk's most vulnerable young people.

Context & Strategic Approach

The Pathways to Work [PTW] service was created in May 2021, including contract funding from the DfE Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge (ASK) programme⁷² and are the operational delivery arm of the CS strand of the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy but also contributes to the wider CS programme, Local First Inclusion, and the Learning Strategy. The PTW service supports young people aged 14-19 in Norfolk.

Our aspiration is for 10% of young people aged 16-18 to progress into an apprenticeship pathway, a target set in line with CIBYL research⁷³ which cites that 10% of young people aspire to an apprenticeship in the East of England and that across England, broadly one in ten young people are planning to undertake an apprenticeship.

The CS strategic approach will also include a focus on work with the 'key influencers' on young people's post 16 choices; parents/carers and teachers - to ensure that they have a current working knowledge of the work based learning landscape, including apprenticeships. This aligns to the national DfE approach (via the ASK contract 2023/24) that aims to prioritise work with stakeholder groups who are instrumental in young people's choices, and to ensure that apprenticeships are seen as a viable and competitive alternative to Further/Higher Education or jobs without training.

Inclusion and supporting vulnerable young people:

CS is committed to promote the interests and provide a safety net for Norfolk's most vulnerable young people. The PTW service works alongside other professionals to support young people with information and advice with regards to accessing work and training. Bespoke work is undertaken with young people in the Short Stay School for Norfolk, who often face additional social mobility barriers and are more likely to become NEET. Each of the individual PTW advisers has a focus on one or more of the vulnerable cohorts, which enables closer partnerships with the professionals working with

⁷⁰ [DfE | Participation Statutory Guidance \(2016\)](#)

⁷¹ [NCC | NCC Corporate Parenting Strategy \(2019-22\)](#)

⁷² [DfE | ASK programme](#)

⁷³ [CIBYL | School Leaver Research \(2023\)](#)

these young people and to develop expertise. They represent the PTW team at multi-agency partnership groups relevant to their work with this group of young people.

The increase in apprenticeship participation, seen over the last 2 years, is not yet reflected amongst vulnerable groups of young people; those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities [SEND], Care Experienced Young People [CEYP], those in the Youth Justice System [YJS] and those who are Electively Home Educated [EHE]. We know that these groups still face barriers to accessing mainstream apprenticeships, exacerbated by the lack of pre-apprenticeship provision, as a work-based learning pathway. Currently, a total of 1,060 apprentices in Norfolk (aged 16-17) present at least one of these characteristics: CEYP 0.19%; SEND 1.40%; SEN-Support 12.77%; YJS 0.32%; EHE 1.93%.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance⁷⁴ reflects our shared commitment to Norfolk's children and young people and bringing us formally together as one system. The PTW team contributes to the FLOURISH vision through its commitment to meet the aspiration for 10% of young people aged 16–18 (25 for SEND and Care Experience) to progress into an apprenticeship pathway, including those in disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. The FLOURISH vision seeks to improve equality, diversity and inclusion of all young people engaging in education, employment and training, by providing additional support to those young people who may face additional barriers. The NCC Care Leaver Covenant for care experienced young people, provides support and promote opportunities for this group of young people.

By engaging young people with apprenticeships, the PTW service seeks to reverse the declining post 16 participation of 16–17-year-olds in Norfolk and to support the increased number of young people with SEND to access meaningful work-based opportunities.

Supporting our young people to understand and to identify green skills and green apprenticeships and the pathways into green jobs as meaningful progression routes, to ensure our future local workforce can contribute to Net Zero priorities, will become a prominent focus within our strategic aims.

'Pathways to Work' Action Plan – Aims/Approach

Aim 1 | Establish apprenticeships as a key option route for learners aged 16-18, leading to an increase in the % of applications and starts.

Aim 2 | Promote apprenticeships as a key option route, for those aged 16-18 who face additional barriers, contributing to a more diverse workforce in Norfolk.

Aim 3 | Inspire and promote an increased awareness and understanding of apprenticeships and other work-based options with parents/carers and teachers, so that they can support their children and young people, with aspirational decision making.

⁷⁴ [NCC | Flourish \(2021\)](#)

2 | Growth & Investment: Apprenticeships Norfolk

Introduction

NCC Growth & Investment [G&I] is committed to helping ensure Norfolk's economic growth and will promote social mobility by helping people, of any age, to get the skills they need for 21st century employment – whether this be starting a career, developing a career or reskilling for a different career; and championing Apprenticeships as a highly effective means for all businesses to build their pipeline of skilled future staff. Increasing the quality and quantity of apprenticeships plays a significant role in developing opportunities for improving skills and thereby helping to address Norfolk's skills shortages. This, in turn increases productivity and stimulates economic growth.

Local government play a critical role in developing a community wide vision; acting as “champions” of apprenticeship programmes and lead efforts to raise awareness of the benefits of participation and completion in a training programme, which is well linked to a quality job.

Context & Strategic Approach

'Apprenticeships Norfolk', formed in 2014, offers a free brokerage service to businesses and individuals; offering impartial information and guidance in order to successfully navigate the complexities in the system. In 2020, we brought a fresh approach; relaunching the service with improved & updated branding, website and social media platforms; creating a clear, strong presence and visibility to all key stakeholders. The award winning #MadeInNorfolk⁷⁵ TV and digital campaign in 2021, and subsequent campaigns in 2022 and 2023 – continue to raise awareness of the benefits an apprenticeship can bring to Norfolk SMEs.

Furthermore, the service provides a partnership approach to influencing the strategic growth and achievement of apprenticeships in Norfolk, in line with national and local strategic drivers. We have developed strong working relationships with provider and stakeholder networks; and enquiries from employers and potential apprentices have increased significantly in the last three years.

Recognising the post-pandemic opportunity to stimulate economic growth, and the increasing need to support both young apprentices and SMEs to be able to access apprenticeship opportunities, since 2020 we have secured over £2m of external funding to deliver wraparound support⁷⁶, financial incentives and bursary grants⁷⁷. To date, these schemes have supported c750 apprentices and c670 businesses in Norfolk; based on DfE methodology⁷⁸, supporting this number of new apprenticeships to start has *contributed* an indicative £50m return on investment to the local economy.

We will continue to optimise external funding, broker partnerships and explore opportunities to influence and support improvements to the local apprenticeship landscape in Norfolk; through evidence-based, collaborative and innovative systems thinking. Integrating Net Zero priorities in our work will become a prominent focus within all of our strategic aims, to ensure we accelerate local action to boost green skills/apprenticeships for individuals and businesses in Norfolk.

⁷⁵ [Apprenticeships Norfolk | #MadeInNorfolk Campaign](#)

⁷⁶ [Apprenticeships Norfolk | Insight Apprentice](#)

⁷⁷ [Apprenticeships Norfolk | Grants and Incentives](#)

⁷⁸ [DfE | Measuring the Net Present Value of Further Education in England \(2018/19\)](#)

As an intermediary service, funded by an anchor local government institution - we recognise the value in representing our local apprenticeship landscape in national forums, to ensure we have the opportunity for proactive horizon scanning, to identify emerging opportunities to develop our service offer and also embrace opportunities that might arise to support/influence national policy development.

The focus for G&I is to promote the growth of apprenticeships across a breadth of indicators (such as level, sector, place, availability and approach) as appropriate. Every apprenticeship will be a high-quality opportunity that delivers the skills, knowledge and behaviours that employers are looking for. Employers will recognise that investing in apprenticeships brings value, innovation and emerging talent into the heart of their business. People of all ages in Norfolk, considering starting, reskilling or changing career, will see apprenticeships as a viable opportunity. We recognise different opportunities to support the local apprenticeship landscape, including inspiration and development of increased pre-apprenticeship pathways; support to increase not only apprenticeship starts, but also retention and achievements; and finally celebration and promotion of real life stories to inspire further engagement from our people and our businesses in Norfolk.

We will continue to facilitate the established 'Apprenticeships Norfolk' service to deliver an effective and impartial brokerage service; working collaboratively to promote the profile, growth and achievement of Apprenticeships across the county and championing apprenticeships #MadeInNorfolk.

'Apprenticeships Norfolk' Action Plan – Aims/Approach

Aim 1 | Increase opportunities to inspire, promote and champion apprenticeships; improving awareness and understanding of the benefits an apprenticeship can bring to individuals, businesses and the local economy; and celebrating successes.

Aim 2 | Undertake primary research to better understand the barriers to taking up and completing apprenticeships, in order to develop innovative & evidence based interventions for service delivery.

Aim 3 | Support an increase in the number of apprenticeship starts in Norfolk (focussing on improving balance and opportunity based on age, level, sector, place, diversity, availability and approach – as appropriate).

Aim 4 | Support the system to increase the number of apprentices who complete and achieve their apprenticeships in Norfolk.

Aim 5 | Increase opportunities to influence improvement to the local apprenticeship landscape in Norfolk, through collaborative and innovative systems thinking, to maximise impact.

3 | Human Resources: NCC Workforce Apprenticeships

Introduction

NCC is one of the largest employers in the area, with the ambition to lead the way as an employer in championing, shaping and deploying apprenticeships to help solve strategic challenges within its own 7,500 person workforce, thereby improving the quality of services offered to the people of Norfolk.

Our Apprenticeship Strategy to date has successfully raised the profile of apprenticeships meaning that we use all the NCC levy; and have supported 938 apprenticeships in total⁷⁹, across NCC since 2017. Since the apprenticeship levy was introduced in 2017, we've seen year on year growth both in terms of the number of apprentices (16 in 2017 to 274 in 2022), and the number of apprenticeship courses we offer (4 in 2017 to 50 in 2022). We have developed relationships across Norfolk Schools to ensure that their levy is now also fully utilised, supporting 196 apprenticeships⁸⁰. We will continue to focus on NCC and schools workforce challenges to ensure that we deploy apprenticeships to best effect.

Context & Strategic Approach

We will continue to build on our existing successful strategic approach which has been to use apprenticeships as a vehicle to address systemic or long-term workforce difficulties (e.g. Social Care, Planners) along with identified hard to recruit posts. Apprenticeships will continue to support workforce skills gaps and building skills and knowledge capacity across NCC and School's Workforces.

We will focus on supporting strategic priorities to deliver the 'Together for Norfolk'⁸¹ plan through to 2025, exploring opportunities to integrate Net Zero opportunities into the Apprenticeship programme. We will, as part of the Workforce Development Strategy, further develop early career offers, linking NCC apprenticeships to support Children's Services objectives for care experienced young people - along with further development of internships, graduate schemes, traineeships and work experience.

Apprenticeships support social mobility by widening the options to enter professional careers. By supporting and delivering a successful NCC apprenticeship programme, we are contributing to broader EDI objectives and developing a workforce that reflects the demographics of society in Norfolk.

NCC's current workforce demographic profile has lower numbers of employees in the early-career age range (16-24) where we want to encourage apprenticeship pathways. This in turn will support longer term workforce succession planning and our future employee value proposition development activity. Our workforce reflects national trends where we have five generations of people in the workforce and people working for longer over their lifetime; our average workforce age is 44. Digital upskilling will be a key route to enabling NCC to be able to support the post covid hybrid working model and this directly impacts on how we provide support and guidance to existing and future cohorts and their NCC Managers.

⁷⁹ Internal, unpublished data – extracted 31.05.2023.

⁸⁰ Internal, unpublished data – extracted 31.05.2023.

⁸¹ [NCC | Together for Norfolk \(2019-2025\)](#)

Our mission is to use the NCC levy strategically to provide apprenticeships that support the Council to attract, retain and develop a skilled and diverse workforce that meets our county's needs now and, in the future; positively impacting NCC service delivery and opportunities for the community of Norfolk. Embedding apprenticeships into our services' workforce plans and creating recruitment/outreach campaigns will ensure our offers are targeted for maximum return and supports our visibility as a local employer of choice.

Our aim by the end of 2025 is:

1. Apprenticeships form an integral part of each service / directorate strategic workforce plan, which is based on evidence, focused on current/future areas of strategic need for skills.
2. We are recognised as an employer of choice in terms of quality and quantity of apprenticeships provided. We should also recognise that we offer fair pay for apprenticeships, with apprentices being paid one grade less than the substantive grade for the role while studying, and increasing to the full grade for the role once the apprenticeship has been completed.
3. Through the medium of apprenticeships and other learning vehicles, the NCC workforce reflects more accurately the diversity and demographical make-up of the Norfolk communities we serve. We have established a baseline and appropriate methods to measure progress in these areas and we have some success stories we are able to share.
4. Joint vision with Children's Services: Schools continue to fully utilise all their levy and we see schools apprenticeships have become embedded into Norfolk Schools workforce landscape.

HR Workforce Apprenticeships' Action Plan – Aims/Approach

Aim 1 | Continue to support Workforce Apprenticeships at NCC and in schools, continuing to develop apprenticeship take-up, fully utilising levy, and achieving recognition as an employer of choice in terms of the quality and quantity of apprenticeships provided.

Aim 2 | Develop and establish an Early Careers development offer for 16-24 year olds in Norfolk, positioning NCC as an employer of choice for apprenticeships.

Aim 3 | Develop NCC workforce analytics capability to enable the use of the LGA workforce planning toolkit; embedding apprenticeships and other talent pipeline vehicles within corporate and directorate workforce plans - shaping a workforce that reflects the diversity and demographics of the Norfolk community.

Appendices

DRAFT

Appendix A | NCC Apprenticeships Board: Terms of Reference

Role/Purpose

The Norfolk County Council (NCC) Apprenticeship Board was established by the Corporate Board in accordance with the recommendations of the LGA Apprenticeship Review *'Realising Apprenticeship Opportunities at NCC'*.

The Apprenticeship Board will provide collective leadership and a strategic steer for apprenticeship activity across NCC (Children's Services, Growth and Investment and Human Resources) driving commitment to the programme by:

- Developing and agreeing the overall vision and strategy for the delivery of apprenticeships both internally and externally to NCC
- Agreeing an overall apprenticeships Operational Delivery Plan that brings together the service area plans for each discrete area of work.
- Developing, monitoring and providing challenge on targets and KPI's
- Agreeing areas of collaboration (e.g. literature & information, engagement & events) within NCC to maximise the impact of apprenticeships both internally and externally, (including budgetary responsibility)
- Agreeing proposals for the transfer of the NCC apprenticeship levy
- Identifying and agreeing papers to come to the Apprenticeship Board
- Providing half yearly reports to the Corporate Board on progress against targets

Responsibilities

- Each discrete function i.e. Children's Services, Growth & Investment and Human Resources will bring its operational delivery plans to the Board for agreement at the first meeting and will provide an update report at each subsequent meeting on progress, proposing additions/changes as necessary.
- Each function will have budgetary responsibility for its own area of work.
- Each function will have responsibility for leading and co-ordinating any sub-groups relevant to the function and for providing reports to the Board as appropriate.

Term

These Terms of Reference are effective from (date of first meeting) and will be ongoing until amended or terminated by agreement between the parties.

Membership*

The NCC Apprenticeship Board will comprise:

- Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy (Chair)
- Assistant Director – Children's Services
- Director – Growth & Investment
- Assistant Director – Human Resources

- Director – Community, Information & Learning
- Delivery Manager – NCC Net Zero Hub

Members may appoint an alternate to represent them. Each member may be accompanied by an officer to support with detailed knowledge.

** Correct at time of writing, will be updated to reflect membership if roles subsequently change*

Roles and Responsibilities

The members of the Board will commit to:

- Reading papers in advance of meetings, to ensure effective contributions to board meetings.
- Attending all scheduled Board meetings, nominating a proxy if necessary.
- Wholeheartedly championing the Board within and of work areas.
- Sharing relevant communication and information across all Board members.
- Making timely decisions and acting to facilitate the work of the Board.
- Notifying members of the Board as soon as practical, if any matter arises which may be deemed to affect the development/progress/work of the Board.

Members of the Board will expect:

- That each member will be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely fashion.
- To be given reasonable time to make key decisions.
- To be alerted to potential risks and issues that could impact on the delivery of apprenticeships in Norfolk.

Meetings

All meetings will be chaired by the Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy

Members with any personal, business or financial interest in a matter being discussed must declare that interest and will not be entitled to take part in discussion/decision making. Any declared interests will be maintained on the meeting notes.

Decisions will be made by consensus (i.e. members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice). If not possible, the chair of the Board will make the final decision.

Growth & Investment, will act as the secretariat to the Board, including:

- Coordination of NCC Apprenticeship Strategy & Operational Delivery Plan
- Preparing agendas
- Preparing meeting notes and actions and following up on progress
- Coordination of any sub-groups

Agendas and papers will be circulated at least 5 working days in advance of meetings. Meetings will be held quarterly for 1.5 hours and will take place remotely via MS Teams. *(Note: If significant decisions are required, meetings could be held at County Hall.)*

Sub-Groups

The Board may establish such sub-groups as it sees fit in order to support the implementation of the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy. The Board will be responsible for developing and agreeing the Terms of Reference of any sub-group and deciding on a chair. Any sub-group will be required to establish an operational delivery plan to achieve the task set by the Board and will report to each quarterly meeting of the Board.

Amendment, modification or variation

These Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement at a Board meeting.

DRAFT

Appendix B | Apprenticeship Reforms

In 2016/17 the UK Government led radical reforms to the English apprenticeship system. The ‘Apprenticeships Reform Programme’ was established in May 2015, with quality at its heart, and scheduled to be delivered by the end of the financial year 2020/21. The Government committed to several fundamental reforms, prompted by the Richard Review 2012.⁸²

Apprenticeship Standards	A major transition from Apprenticeship ‘Frameworks’ to Apprenticeship ‘Standards’ which are occupation rather than qualification led, with their scheme design led by groups of trailblazer employers (putting employers “in the driving seat”). A Standard contains a list of the skills, knowledge, and behaviours an Apprentice will need at the end of their Apprenticeship.
Higher & Degree Apprenticeships	A major expansion of the availability and take-up of higher Apprenticeships across all sectors.
20% off the job training requirement	Introduction of 20% off the job training evidence requirement - to demonstrate 20% of time spent learning is away from the day-to-day job role (previously, off the job training was less defined). <i>*Note: terminology has since changed to remove the 20% calculation and simply indicates 6 hours</i>
End Point Assessment	Inclusion of a rigorous, graded End Point Assessment (EPA) to confirm the apprentice is fully competent and their capabilities appropriately stretched. This aims to increase quality and consistency of achievements.
Apprenticeship Levy	Changes to funding and the introduction of the Apprenticeship levy in 2017 – 0.5% for those businesses with annual UK pay bill in excess of £3m.
Digital Accounts	All employers required to administer their Apprenticeship funding via a digital account (started with levy paying and most recently transitioned to include all non-levy employers too).
Apprenticeship Levy Transfer	Levy transfer – Employers who pay the apprenticeship levy and have unused apprenticeship funds can find employers who want to receive a transfer. From April 2019, levy-paying employers can transfer a maximum amount of 25% of their annual funds. They can make transfers from their apprenticeship account to as many employers as they choose.
Apprenticeship Funding Bands	Funding Bands – the reforms introduced a new scale of maximum funding bands, originally set at £1,500 to £27,000.

⁸² [DfE | Progress report on the Apprenticeships Reform Programme \(2021\)](#)

Appendix C | PESTLE Analysis

This PESTLE analysis is not exhaustive, but an indication of the global, national and local strategic priorities which have helped us to shape our direction of travel.

Political

Government policy changes in the skills and apprenticeships landscape have been ongoing since the apprenticeship reforms⁸³ (2017 onwards) following the Richard Review (2015):

National – strategic priorities:

English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 Vision⁸⁴ (2015)

Changes to the Apprenticeship system, including the move from Apprenticeship frameworks to the new employer-led standards.

- Introduction of 20% off the job training evidence requirement – increasing quality, additionally with a rigorous, graded End Point Assessment (EPA) to confirm the apprentice is fully competent and their capabilities appropriately stretched.
- Changes to funding and the introduction of the Apprenticeship levy in 2017 – 0.5% for those businesses with annual UK pay bill in excess of £3m.
- Levy transfer – Employers who pay the apprenticeship levy and have unused apprenticeship funds can find employers who want to receive a transfer.
- From April 2019, levy-paying employers can transfer a maximum amount of 25% of their annual funds.
- Removal of non-levy funding cap in 2023 – increasing access to uncapped apprenticeship starts for SMEs.

‘Skills for Jobs’ white paper⁸⁵ (2021)

Sets out planned reforms to the further education and technical training system, with a focus on three key areas:

- To support more people to start apprenticeships, helping employers to recover from the coronavirus pandemic with the skilled employees they need to grow.
- To continue to respond to feedback from employers to improve the programme, including by making more use of apprenticeship funding, making it easier for levy-paying employers to transfer funds and making apprenticeships work in more sectors.
- To raise quality, ensuring that every apprentice has the best experience and reaches their potential.

Skills and Post-16 Education Act⁸⁶ (2022)

- Prioritising local needs and local people: Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs)
- Supporting flexible study options
- Boosting the quality of education and training on offer
- Broadening careers advice for pupils
- Prioritise green skills.

⁸³ [DfE | Progress report on the Apprenticeships Reform Programme \(2021\)](#)

⁸⁴ [HM Government | English Apprenticeships - Our 2020 Vision \(2015\)](#)

⁸⁵ [HM Government | Skills for Jobs \(2021\)](#)

⁸⁶ [HM Government | Skills & Post-16 Education Act \(2022\)](#)

Levelling Up – Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus⁸⁷ (2022)

- UKSPF will boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging. ‘Supporting local businesses’ and ‘People & Skills’ are two of three investment priorities for UKSPF.

Devolution⁸⁸ (2022)

County Deal for Norfolk would bring guaranteed £20 million per year investment fund for the next 30 years. Finalising a Deal would mean that, from 2024 onwards, we can:

- Target funding and resources to Norfolk’s own growth and infrastructure priorities
- Attract and retain new and key businesses and sectors.
- Invest in the skills we know we need.
- Raise our profile nationally, enabling our voice to be heard by Government and help shape future policies.

Provider Access Legislation⁸⁹ (2023)

- Places a requirement for all schools to include information about work based learning and apprenticeships to those young people in Years 7-11

Apprenticeship Achievements⁹⁰ (2023)

- Government ambition is to have at least two thirds of apprentices (67%) achieving their apprenticeship standard by 2025.

Local – strategic priorities:

NCC Together for Norfolk⁹¹ (2019-2025)

- Create more new apprenticeships by working with local businesses and the education sector.
- Continue to grow Apprenticeships to improve employment opportunities for young people in our care, those not in employment, education or training, and those leaving education.
- We know we’re successful when Apprenticeships start increasing.

New Anglia LEP Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy (2022)

- Build a workforce fit for the future and excited about purposeful jobs. Improve attainment levels and align provision to employers needs and inward investment opportunities particularly STEM, enabling the transition to a zero carbon economy.
- Provide a range of opportunities that enable all residents to upskill, reskill and access employment throughout their lives.
- Close the skills and labour gaps, aligning provision to current and future employer needs and clean growth opportunities, especially in digital and technical skills.
- Improve aspirations and continue to develop employability and work readiness among young people.

⁸⁷ [HM Government | UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus \(2022\)](#)

⁸⁸ [HM Government | Norfolk Devolution Deal \(2022\)](#)

⁸⁹ [HM Government | Provider Access Legislation \(2023\)](#)

⁹⁰ [DfE | Apprenticeship achievements: an update for the sector \(2023\)](#)

⁹¹ [NCC | Together for Norfolk \(2019-2025\)](#)

NCC Norfolk Investment Framework⁹² (2022)

An urgent priority is to ensure residents across all areas of the county have the means and tools to participate in Norfolk's evolving economy in ways that are best for them. We seek innovative approaches and projects for investment that support Norfolk's residents to increase skills.

- Grand challenge 1 – Create new opportunities by increasing skills and labour market dynamism.
- Grand challenge 4 – Protect Norfolk's economic and natural assets from climate change.

Local Skills Improvement Plan – draft priorities⁹³ (2023)

- 33% of respondents (c230 in Norfolk) to the LSIP survey preferred to use Apprenticeships.
- 52% of businesses were keen to seek additional support for training development.
- There needs to be greater openness by employers to consider newer forms training.
- Prioritise bringing through the next generation of green skilled workers & incentivise innovative models of training.

District Council – strategic priorities:

Breckland Council⁹⁴:

- Continue to drive investment to unlock the significant potential and opportunities in our district and will support and empower our people to be the best they can be through wellbeing support, development, and training.

Broadland & South Norfolk Council⁹⁵

- Create an inclusive economy which promotes skills and job opportunities for all. Ensuring the workforce have the right mix of skills to match business need and helping to prepare our young people to be successful in their working lives by ensuring there are the right career pathways in place, whether that be vocational or academic.

Great Yarmouth Borough Council⁹⁶

- Work with colleges, schools and businesses to match future business opportunities with the right skill provision, to boost the number of apprenticeships, encourage social mobility and ensure more local people can benefit from local job opportunities.

Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council⁹⁷

- Help people of all ages improve their skills and qualifications, and help raise their aspirations. We want to help people become entrepreneurs and benefit from the growing economy. We want to be a place where skilled people want to live and work.
- There is a need to improve the local skills base to help drive up a relatively low wage economy.

North Norfolk District Council⁹⁸

- Promoting inclusive growth which seeks to match the skills of the local workforce with the needs of local businesses, encouraging links between local education providers, apprentices and businesses.

⁹² [NCC | Norfolk Investment Framework \(2022\)](#)

⁹³ [Norfolk Chambers of Commerce | LSIP – Draft Priorities for Norfolk \(2023\)](#)

⁹⁴ [Breckland | Corporate Plan \(2021-2025\)](#)

⁹⁵ [SNBC | Strategic Plan \(2020-2024\)](#)

⁹⁶ [GYBC | The Plan \(2020-2025\)](#)

⁹⁷ [KLWN | Core Strategy document \(2011\)](#)

⁹⁸ [NNDC | Corporate Plan \(2019-2023\)](#)

Norwich City Council⁹⁹

- Work with partners to support good jobs, skills and opportunities for Norwich, including making the city a Living Wage Place

Economic

Global:

United Nations ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ [SDGs]¹⁰⁰

- Provides an ‘action plan for people, planet and prosperity’ and reflects 17 areas of critical importance, presenting an urgent call to action requiring global partnership.
- Goal 8 – Decent work and economic growth

National:

HM Treasury – Plan for Jobs¹⁰¹ (2020)

- ‘Plan for Jobs’ summer statement announced a vast variety of new policy decisions to support the economy following Covid-19 – including; Job Retention bonuses, funding for Kickstart, Traineeship and Apprenticeships - seeing incentives for employers taking on new or redundant apprentices, which focused on employment and skills.

Winter Economy Plan¹⁰² (2020)

- Announced further and extensive measures, including £127m of “new investment in training and apprenticeships” extending Apprenticeship incentives for employers and suggested further flex in the levy system so employers can ‘pledge’ unspent levy to SMEs.

Spring Budget¹⁰³ (2023)

- £2.7bn funding invested by Government by 2024/25 – referenced as ‘Returnerships’ which is an umbrella term for Sector-based Work Academy Programme [SWAPs], Skills Bootcamps and promotion of accelerated apprenticeships using recognised prior learning [RPL].

Apprenticeship Levy – returned to HM Treasury¹⁰⁴ (2022)

- Over £2 billion of apprenticeship funding has been returned to the Treasury since the launch of the levy.

Measuring the Net Present Value [NPV] of FE in England¹⁰⁵ (2018/19)

- Apprenticeships deliver strong economic returns; the NPV is higher for younger learners due to higher wage premia and a longer time left in the workforce. Level 2 Apprenticeships provide between £16-17 economic return on every £1 of government funding invested, between £14-16 for a Level 3 apprenticeship and £25 for a Level 4/5 apprenticeship.

⁹⁹ [NCC | Corporate Plan \(2022-2026\)](#)

¹⁰⁰ [UN | THE 17 GOALS - Sustainable Development \(2023\)](#)

¹⁰¹ [HM Government | A Plan for Jobs \(2020\)](#)

¹⁰² [HM Government | Winter Economy Plan \(2020\)](#)

¹⁰³ [HM Government | Spring Budget \(2023\)](#)

¹⁰⁴ [FE Week | DfE reveal amount of apprenticeship funding returned to Treasury \(2022\)](#)

¹⁰⁵ [DfE | Measuring the Net Present Value of Further Education in England \(2018/19\)](#)

IfATE funding band uplifts^{106,107} (2023)

- Only 20 high-volume apprenticeships in skills shortage occupations and priority sectors are being targeted by the IfATE exceptional funding band reviews (Jan 2023) – chosen by DfE following consultation with provider representative bodies, and taking account of available evidence on the impact of cost inflation on apprenticeships delivery.
- DfE announced (May 2023) that providers and employers will be able to apply for temporary funding uplifts for apprenticeships where costs have ‘substantially’ increased from the end of this month, providing a short-term boost to apprenticeship standards in the hardest hit sectors full funding reviews take place.

Calls to increase funding in FE/Apprenticeships (2023)

- Challenges around financial stability have been evident for businesses^{108,109}
- The impact of stagnant apprenticeship funding on provision has also been well documented^{110, 111}
- Calls for immediate support to increase funding and investment to stabilise the skills sector^{112, 113}.

Local:

Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy¹¹⁴ (2022)

- 75.9% employment levels, that’s higher than the 74.4% UK average
- 63,460 independent enterprises
- £28,452 median gross wage (England £31,777)
- Working age population 978,000 (58.4% vs 62.3% for England)

NCC Together for Norfolk¹¹⁵ (2019-2025)

- ‘A vibrant and sustainable economy’ is a key strategic priority; with specific reference to creating more new traineeships/apprenticeships by working with local businesses and the education sector.
- We will collaborate with partners, local communities and employers to develop and continuously improve an innovative and responsive lifelong learning that meets the needs of green, high-value and transformational businesses.

Devolution¹¹⁶ (2022)

County Deal for Norfolk would bring guaranteed £20 million per year investment fund for the next 30 years. Finalising a Deal would mean that, from 2024 onwards, we can:

- Target funding and resources to Norfolk’s own growth and infrastructure priorities
- Attract and retain new and key businesses and sectors.
- Invest in the skills we know we need.
- Raise our profile nationally, enabling our voice to be heard by Government and help shape future policies.

¹⁰⁶ [IfATE | Exceptional funding band reviews for apprenticeships \(2023\)](#)

¹⁰⁷ [FE Week | Temporary apprenticeship funding band uplifts planned by DfE \(2023\)](#)

¹⁰⁸ [Norfolk Chamber of Commerce | Quarterly Economic Survey \(2023\)](#)

¹⁰⁹ [FSB | Cost of living squeeze is holding back growth \(2023\)](#)

¹¹⁰ [FE Week | IfATE promises review of occupational standards \(2023\)](#)

¹¹¹ [FE Week | 'No doubt' underfunding is impacting on learners \(2023\)](#)

¹¹² [AELP | Calls for immediate action to save the skills system \(2023\)](#)

¹¹³ [Association of Colleges | Opportunity England \(2023\)](#)

¹¹⁴ [NALEP | Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy \(2022\)](#)

¹¹⁵ [NCC | Together for Norfolk \(2019-2025\)](#)

¹¹⁶ [HM Government | Norfolk Devolution Deal \(2022\)](#)

Apprenticeship Data – Norfolk¹¹⁷ (2023)

- Norfolk has experienced a five-year declining trend of new Apprenticeship starts from 2017, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- In academic year 2021/22, Norfolk saw the first year of growth of new Apprenticeship starts; at 17.74% this was double the national growth rate of 9%

Local investment in Apprenticeships (2023)^{118, 119}

- Since 2020, Apprenticeships Norfolk have secured over £2m of funding to offer SMEs in Norfolk both financial and wraparound support (Insight, RRR, A2A, P2A, Levy Support Scheme).

Social

Global:

United Nations ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ [SDGs]¹²⁰

- Provides an ‘action plan for people, planet and prosperity’ and reflects 17 areas of critical importance, presenting an urgent call to action requiring global partnership.
- Goal 4 – Quality Education
- Goal 5 – Gender Equality

National:

Corporate Responsibility¹²¹ (2008)

- Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR] acts as a powerful investment for long-term sustainability; collaborating with stakeholders to improve opportunities for businesses and people.
- Recognises the strategic advantage of Corporate Responsibility and take voluntary action to raise their standards of behaviour above minimum legal requirements.

Local Government – fostering CSR¹²²

- Local authorities have a significant leadership role to play in helping the business community to be more socially and environmentally responsible; recognising (and showcasing) well-conceived CSR local strategies can lead to improved relationships.

National Themes, Outcomes & Measurements [TOMs] Framework¹²³ (2019)

- The aim of the National TOMs Framework is to provide a minimum reporting standard for measuring social value; to embed social value into procurement and management processes, it provides an easy to use solution that is immediately available, and may be applied to any project.
- One of the themes includes: Promoting Skills and Employment: To promote growth and development opportunities for all within a community and ensure that they have access to opportunities to develop new skills and gain meaningful employment.

¹¹⁷ [DfE | Explore education statistics \(2023\)](#)

¹¹⁸ [Apprenticeships Norfolk | Grants and Incentives](#)

¹¹⁹ [Apprenticeships Norfolk | Insight Apprentice](#)

¹²⁰ [UN | THE 17 GOALS - Sustainable Development \(2023\)](#)

¹²¹ [HM Government: Corporate Responsibility Report \(2008\)](#)

¹²² [Centre for Urban Research | Local Government Guide to Fostering Corporate Responsibility \(2016\)](#)

¹²³ [National Social Value Taskforce | TOMs Guidance \(2019\)](#)

‘Skills for Jobs’ white paper¹²⁴ (2021)

- Announced increased funding to enable more employers to take on apprentices, citing ‘smaller employers are important because they help increase opportunities, particularly for young people, to embark on apprenticeships across the country’.

SME engagement with Apprenticeships¹²⁵ (2021)

- There are many barriers to SMEs engaging with apprenticeships or other skills programmes; we need to replicate the support provided to apprentices in larger organisations for those working in SMEs; it’s not just apprentices who need support, their SME employer needs it too; we need to improve communication and services to SMEs and we need to find better ways to engage with those who aren’t currently using the system.

UK Community Renewal Fund¹²⁶ (2021)

- Based on the 2021 UK Economic Resilience Index (which is based on measures for productivity, skills, unemployment rate, population density and household income), four out of seven Districts in Norfolk were rated in the top 100 ‘priority’ places in the UK.
- This identified the places most in need of support for levelling up economic resilience through pilot growth interventions, funded by the UK Community Renewal Fund, which in turn will help inform the future UK Shared Prosperity Funding.

Living Wage Foundation¹²⁷

- The National Living Wage is based on the cost of living and is voluntarily paid by over 11,000 UK employers who believe we all need a wage that meets our everyday needs.

Improving the Journey to becoming an Apprentice¹²⁸ (2021)

- The word ‘prestigious’ was associated with university degrees by 76% of those polled compared to just 4% for apprenticeships.
- We know teachers and advisers are working hard to inform students about their options. But despite their best efforts our research found that the clause is not being implemented consistently across all schools and colleges

Social Mobility Index¹²⁹ (2023)

- Norfolk was rated as a social mobility cold spot (bottom 20%) in the 2016 Social Mobility Index, which identifies that ‘Many of these areas perform badly on both educational measures and adulthood outcomes, giving young people from less advantaged backgrounds limited opportunities to get on.’

What influences the choices of would-be apprentices?¹³⁰ (2023)

- 40% of students (430,000) interested in undergraduate options are also interested in apprenticeships.
- 70% of respondents also report having a positive initial perception of apprenticeships.
- 41% of student respondents indicated that they had received the same or more information about apprenticeships than they did university options, with those from lower socioeconomic

¹²⁴ [HM Government | Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth \(2020\)](#)

¹²⁵ [SMG | SME Apprenticeships & Skills Report \(2021\)](#)

¹²⁶ [HM Government | UK Community Renewal Fund: prioritisation of places methodology \(2021\)](#)

¹²⁷ [Living Wage | Living Wage Foundation \(2023\)](#)

¹²⁸ [UCAS | Improving the journey to becoming an apprentice \(2021\)](#)

¹²⁹ [HM Government | Social Mobility Index \(2023\)](#)

¹³⁰ [UCAS & Sutton Trust | What influences the choices of would be apprentices \(2023\)](#)

backgrounds more likely to report hearing more about apprenticeships than those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds.

- Currently, there are disparities in support for students – with 1 in 3 apprentices from a lower socioeconomic background receiving no support with their application.
- While for some, pay can act as a key attraction to becoming an apprentice, for others this can also be a barrier - a quarter (24%) of former applicants said that one of the top three reasons why they did not pursue an apprenticeship was because they felt they could not afford to do so.
- A common reason for students not entering an apprenticeship was due to availability.
- Overall, apprentices were positive about their experience, and 63% were likely to recommend this route to family or friends.

School Leaver Research¹³¹ (2023)

- Broadly, 1 in 10 students plan to do an apprenticeship after school.
- Interest in East of England sits at 10% (higher/lower in some other areas of England)
- Only 1 in 10 students say parents or school encouraged them to do an apprenticeship.
- Parents (39%) are the biggest influencer of student decisions. Teachers (19%) and role models (16%) also play a big part in student decisions.
- Teachers have the biggest impact on low socio-economic, LGBTQ+ and disabled students.

Local:

Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy¹³² (2022)

- Employment levels are higher than the UK average, yet we don't have enough people to fill current vacancies and some sectors face significant skills shortages – particularly with regards to science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) related skills and capabilities.
- A young person is 86% less likely to be unemployed or not in education or training if they have had four or more encounters with an employer and can earn up to 22% more during their career.
- 90%+ of the UK workforce will need to be trained if workers are to realise the full benefits of reskilling over the next decade
- The Norfolk and Suffolk economy is skewed more towards occupations which require lower-level qualifications. Norfolk and Suffolk has above average proportions of the working population with NVQ Levels 1, 2 and 3 qualifications. However, this could largely be due to the low proportion of the workforce with Level 4+ qualifications. A contributing factor to the low percentage of the 16-64 population having Level 4+ qualifications could be due to there being fewer roles in Norfolk and Suffolk which have an estimated education level of Level 4+

NCC Together for Norfolk¹³³ (2019-2025)

- Key strategic priorities include; 'Strong, engaged and inclusive communities' and 'Better opportunities for children and young people'.
- We will support young people and adults, including those with learning or physical disabilities and mental health problems, or those in care, to be able to develop skills to support educational achievement and ambition.

¹³¹ [CIBYL | School Leaver Research \(2023\)](#)

¹³² [NALEP | Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy \(2022\)](#)

¹³³ [NCC | Together for Norfolk \(2019-2025\)](#)

Rising to the Challenge¹³⁴ (2021)

- The Covid-19 pandemic has had an immeasurable impact on all of us, but it has become apparent that children and young people will carry a heavy burden from the impact of the pandemic in terms of their mental and emotional wellbeing, education, training and employment pathways.
- We need to respond to the immediate challenges to children, young people and their families if we are to avoid long-term damage to their prospects. Placing young people at the heart of our plans to 'build back better' and help them to flourish.

NCC Corporate Parenting Strategy¹³⁵ (2019-22)

- Commitment to ensure children and young people in our county receive the very best care, support and outcomes. Care experienced young adults can expect care/support towards independence to age 25.
- It is important to join-up this Corporate Parenting strategy with the other key strategies and developments that affect our care experienced children and young people.

NCC Flourish Strategy¹³⁶ (2021-2025)

- The Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance was established in April 2021, reflecting our shared commitment to Norfolk's children and young people and bringing us formally together as one system.
- Young people have told us that what is most important to them is their family and friends, access to learning, opportunities to lead a good life, being understood, building resilience, respect for their individuality, feeling safe and being healthy.
- As a partnership, we have identified four key priorities – prevention and early help; mental health and emotional well-being; special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and addressing gaps in learning. This builds on the work already happening before the pandemic as well as responding to needs that have emerged over the last 18 months.

The Future Of Work Depends On Supporting Gen Z¹³⁷ (2022)

- Gen Z's entrance into the workforce is shifting old social contracts between employers and employees with distinct expectations about workplace environment, culture, and support. This emerging generation has higher expectations for the workplace than ever before. They prioritize flexible working arrangements, shared values, higher pay, and increased support for mental health.

Participation in Norfolk¹³⁸

- Participation - The proportion of Norfolk's 16 and 17-year olds participating in education and training (88% in 2023) is lower than for the East of England region (91.6%) and nationally (92.4%). Further, Norfolk participation has reduced since 2020 (91.5%)
- The number of NEET young people in Norfolk is reducing, with current figures reporting 3.9% (c700 in real numbers) - a drop from 4.4% in 2021, of the cohort of young people aged 16-18. However, the number of young people in a job without training [JWT] has increased from 3.5% in 2021 to 5.9% in 2023 (c1065 in real numbers).

¹³⁴ [NCC | Rising to the Challenge](#)

¹³⁵ [NCC | Corporate Parenting Strategy \(2019-22\)](#)

¹³⁶ [NCC | Flourishing in Norfolk - A children and young people partnership strategy \(2021-2025\)](#)

¹³⁷ [Forbes | The Future Of Work Depends On Supporting Gen Z \(2022\)](#)

¹³⁸ CCIS data tables (March 2018-2023)

LSIP – draft priorities¹³⁹ (2023)

- It was apparent that soft-skills needs are a requirement for nearly all businesses for new employees and that there is a requirement for those skills to be a fundamental part of any training. Whilst we are aware that soft skills are embedded within many existing training course, it appears to be difficult for employers to access the required training and to navigate the local skills system effectively.

Apprenticeship Data – Norfolk¹⁴⁰ (2023)

- Norfolk has experienced a five-year declining trend of new Apprenticeship starts from 2017, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- In academic year 2021/22, Norfolk saw the first year of growth of new Apprenticeship starts; at 18% this was double the national growth rate of 9%. Furthermore, the growth of apprenticeships at Level 2 reached 18% (also double the national growth rate of 9%) and for those aged 16-18, growth of 31% also exceed the national growth rate of 19%.

Technological

Global:

United Nations ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ [SDGs]¹⁴¹

- Provides an ‘action plan for people, planet and prosperity’ and reflects 17 areas of critical importance, presenting an urgent call to action requiring global partnership.
- Goal 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

National:

World Economic Forum: The Future of Jobs¹⁴² (2023)

- The impact of most technologies on jobs is expected to be a net positive over the next five years. Big data analytics, climate change and environmental management technologies, and encryption and cybersecurity are expected to be the biggest drivers of job growth.
- The fastest-declining roles relative to their size today are driven by technology and digitalisation.
- The fastest-growing roles relative to their size today are driven by technology, digitalisation and sustainability. The majority of the fastest growing roles are technology-related roles. AI and Machine Learning Specialists top the list of fast-growing jobs, followed by Sustainability Specialists, Business Intelligence Analysts and Information Security Analysts

Digital Legacy¹⁴³ (2020)

- Lockdown may leave a lasting digital legacy. Covid-19 has radically changed the way we live, work and communicate online, with millions of people using online video services for the first time.

The Apprenticeships Service digital account

- The digital account is used to; access apprenticeship funding; find and save apprenticeships; find, save and manage training providers; recruit apprentices and add and manage apprenticeships.

¹³⁹ [Norfolk LSIP – Draft Priorities \(2023\)](#)

¹⁴⁰ [DfE | Explore education statistics \(2023\)](#)

¹⁴¹ [UN | THE 17 GOALS - Sustainable Development \(2023\)](#)

¹⁴² [WEF | Future of Jobs \(2023\)](#)

¹⁴³ [OFCOM - UK internet use surges \(2020\)](#)

- Supporting users of the apprenticeship service takes a lot of hard work. Like any government service with thousands of users, it requires maintenance and also customer support for when things don't run smoothly or unforeseen issues arise¹⁴⁴.

Local:

Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy¹⁴⁵ (2022)

- Over £60m has been invested in recent years, bringing together collaborations between industry leaders and education institutes to ensure the training being offered meets the needs of local employers.

NCC Together for Norfolk¹⁴⁶ (2019-2025)

- With increased digital technology comes significant opportunities to transform and innovate our services.
- Investment in our workforce will mean people have the right skills for emerging jobs. Technology can automate repetitive and dangerous jobs and boost productivity, but learning new skills is key if people are to adapt. The education sector will need to work closely with business to provide skills of the future.

LSIP – draft priorities¹⁴⁷ (2023)

- Social Media for Marketing was the most commonly referenced selection, with 54.2% of respondents selecting this need, although Microsoft Applications was also popular choice – with 48.4% of respondents selecting this need. 21% of respondents cited Web Based Reports (i.e. Google analytics etc.). Only 11% cited Coding and Software Development as a pressing need.
- There needs to be greater openness by employers to consider newer forms training e.g. Apprenticeships, T Levels, Bootcamps. Current public funding too prescriptive to deliver timely digital skills interventions for the majority of employers.
- Our local skills system includes a range of highly regarded intermediaries although it is viewed by employers as 'patchwork' and difficult to navigate.

Legal

Employment law¹⁴⁸

- Informs the terms and conditions for UK apprenticeships.
- Apprentices are entitled to a contract of employment, a wage (at least the Apprenticeship National Minimum Wage¹⁴⁹ (£5.28 in April 2023) and also an 'Apprenticeship Training plan (formerly known as the commitment statement).

Health and Safety¹⁵⁰

- For apprentices who are under 18, the employer has the same responsibilities as for other young workers and as such should receive a full induction from the employer which takes in account their lack of experience and potentially young age.

¹⁴⁴ [ESFA | How we transformed support in the apprenticeship service \(2022\)](#)

¹⁴⁵ [NALEP | Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy \(2022\)](#)

¹⁴⁶ [NCC | Together for Norfolk \(2019-2025\)](#)

¹⁴⁷ [Norfolk Chambers of Commerce | Norfolk LSIP – Draft Priorities \(2023\)](#)

¹⁴⁸ [Hm Government | Employing People](#)

¹⁴⁹ [HM Government | Apprenticeship National Minimum Wage](#)

¹⁵⁰ [HSE | Young people \(apprentices\) at work](#)

Training Provision

- All training providers must be registered on Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers¹⁵¹
- The Accountability Framework¹⁵² is the new specification DfE will use to review the quality of apprenticeship training from providers.
- ESFA funding rules¹⁵³
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework¹⁵⁴

Environmental

Global:

United Nations ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ [SDGs]¹⁵⁵

- Provides an ‘action plan for people, planet and prosperity’ and reflects 17 areas of critical importance, presenting an urgent call to action requiring global partnership.
- Goal 13 – Climate Action

National:

HM Government 10 point plan¹⁵⁶ (2020)

- The Green Jobs Taskforce [GJT], working in partnership with business, skills providers and unions, to help us develop plans for new long-term good quality, green jobs by 2030 and advise what support is needed for people in transitioning industries.
- We will help people train for these new green jobs through our Lifetime Skills Guarantee

Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener¹⁵⁷ (2021)

- Grow key post-16 training programmes (such as apprenticeships, Skills Bootcamps etc) in line with the needs of employers in the green economy, helping individuals get the training they need for a job in the green economy, either at the start of their careers or when retraining or upskilling once already in the workforce
- Build upon existing targeted provision including Sector-based Work Academy Programmes [SWAPs], traineeships, apprenticeships and other skills provision which are ensuring jobseekers can develop the right skills to move into green jobs.
- IfATE has convened a Green Apprenticeships Advisory Panel [GAAP] to work with employers to align apprenticeships to Net Zero objectives. Work is underway to map existing apprenticeship standards against green occupations and identify opportunities to create new standards. GAAP has endorsed existing apprenticeships which support green career pathways.
- Potential to develop and introduce other occupational traineeships, including in priority and green sectors to ensure that young people secure the jobs of the future.

¹⁵¹ [DfE | Register of Approved Training Providers](#)

¹⁵² [ESFA | Accountability Framework \(2023\)](#)

¹⁵³ [ESFA | Apprenticeship funding rules](#)

¹⁵⁴ [Ofsted - Education Inspection Framework](#)

¹⁵⁵ [UN | THE 17 GOALS - Sustainable Development \(2023\)](#)

¹⁵⁶ [HM Government | The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution \(2020\)](#)

¹⁵⁷ [BEIS | Net Zero Strategy \(2021\)](#)

IfATE - Green Apprenticeships (GAAP)^{158,159,160} (2023)

- Sustainability framework to deliver green skills through apprenticeships and technical education; approving occupational standards that support economic recovery and Government priorities such as Net Zero, to meet future skills needs of the country.
- GAAP: categorised apprenticeships as light, mid and dark green to recognise the impact that the occupation itself has on helping the UK achieve net-carbon zero by 2050 in terms of scale and influence.
- Green apprenticeships have been identified in occupational maps (with a 'green occupation' filter) so employers and learners can see which apprenticeships support a green career.
- Green skills are being defined and added into new occupational standards.
- A *dark green* occupation, for example wind turbine engineer, which is embedded within the green occupational landscape and delivering sustainable outcomes.
- A *mid-green* occupation will remain the same in overall scope but there might be a need for new knowledge, skills and behaviours to be embedded to enable the use of new technologies and approaches.

ONS – Green Jobs (definition)¹⁶¹ (2023)

- Building on work from Green Jobs Taskforce report in 2021 – work to develop a preference for 'occupation-framing for statistics'.
- Following substantial stakeholder engagement, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) defines a green job as: "Employment in an activity that contributes to protecting or restoring the environment, including those that mitigate or adapt to climate change".
- This definition is sufficiently broad to encompass a range of green jobs, including those related to decarbonisation and Net Zero, but also jobs in wider environmental activity.
- A framework is in development to underpin the definition which will identify jobs in green industries, green occupations and green firms.
- IfATE have confirmed they will use ONS to inform their dark, mid and light green apprenticeship classifications.
- These framings will help provide distinct guidelines for measuring green jobs.

The role of Local Authority - Green Jobs and Skills¹⁶² (2022)

- There is a clear opportunity for local authorities to support the development of green skills in our communities and at the same time support levelling up by focusing on young people and those disadvantaged and economically vulnerable at the grass roots.

Local Government Association - Local green jobs - accelerating a sustainable economic recovery¹⁶³

- Role in supporting local businesses and the upskilling of the local workforce.
- In 2018 there were 185,000 full-time workers in England's low-carbon and renewable energy economy. In 2030 across England there could be as many as 694,000 direct jobs employed in the low-carbon and renewable energy economy, rising to over 1.18 million by 2050.

¹⁵⁸ [IfATE | Framework Document \(2023\)](#)

¹⁵⁹ [IfATE | Climate change and environmental skills strategy \(2023\)](#)

¹⁶⁰ [IfATE | Occupational Maps \(2023\)](#)

¹⁶¹ [ONS | "Green jobs" update \(2023\)](#)

¹⁶² [ADEPT | Green jobs and skills - what role for local authorities? \(2022\)](#)

¹⁶³ [LGA | Local green jobs - accelerating a sustainable economic recovery](#)

Road to Zero Carbon: Council Action on green jobs and skills¹⁶⁴(2022)

- Bringing together local employers, skills providers and other stakeholders to help residents to develop the skills they need to achieve their potential is a core priority.
- Opportunity to focus resources on creating pathways into green jobs and supporting those furthest from the job market. Young people as well as those from disadvantaged communities need to be supported to develop skills in high quality green jobs to level up the economy.

An emergency plan on green jobs for young people¹⁶⁵ (2021)

- Colleges and other training bodies will need to build up the requisite skills and teaching capacity to deliver large-scale Green Apprenticeship training.
- Support is required to be able to support students to identify green apprenticeships as meaningful progression routes.
- Promote high standards of job quality for apprentices and other workers delivering the green transition.
- Introduce stronger measures to promote diversity amongst local authority-employed workers and apprentices delivering the green transition.
- Collaborate closer with stakeholders to develop ambitious green transformation policies to boost the local economy, skills and environment.
- Make full use of government funding to accelerate local action on the climate/environmental priorities.

Local:

NCC Together for Norfolk¹⁶⁶ (2019-2025)

- 'A greener, more resilient future' is a key strategic priority.

Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy¹⁶⁷ (2022)

- 25% higher salary in 'Green Jobs' than the economy average
- 27,000 new job opportunities will be generated by the clean energy sector between 2019-2030

NCC Climate Strategy¹⁶⁸ (2023)

- Across Norfolk, as elsewhere in the country, there is a significant green skills gap which can act as a barrier to our broader climate action agenda. It is vital that Norfolk grasps the opportunities for jobs and business growth that the transition to a green economy will offer.
- Our strategic priority here is to help Norfolk to get equipped with the skills to harness the opportunities of the green economy; such as creating apprenticeships to address the skills shortages in the region and provide the skills for future work.
- To enable the county to be resilient and mitigate the impacts of climate change there needs to be a major upskilling in the clean energy and Net Zero economy. This will need to include both adoption of new technologies as well as training and retraining those who currently do not have sufficient skills to meet the green goals of businesses across all sectors.
- It requires us to use our position to bring together the businesses, academic, public and community and voluntary sectors towards delivering the right changes for Norfolk.

¹⁶⁴ [Friends of the Earth | Road to Zero Carbon \(2022\)](#)

¹⁶⁵ [Friends of the Earth | Emergency Plan for Green Jobs \(2021\)](#)

¹⁶⁶ [NCC | Together for Norfolk \(2019-2025\)](#)

¹⁶⁷ [NALEP | Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy \(2022\)](#)

¹⁶⁸ [NCC | Climate change strategy sets out path to net zero \(2023\)](#)

LSIP – draft priorities¹⁶⁹ (2023)

- Preliminary analysis suggests that in the gradual ramp up to Net Zero by 2030 scenario, a peak of around 95,000 FTE jobs will be needed in Norfolk.
- Priorities include; facilitating knowledge sharing between local authorities, green industries and training providers to share best practice and minimise duplication of effort and strengthen partnerships to promote creation of business led training, supporting the next generation of green skilled workers.

Apprenticeship Data – Norfolk¹⁷⁰ (2023)

Based on the ‘dark green’ apprenticeship routes (as identified by IfATE *at the time of writing*)¹⁷¹, the following 31 apprenticeship standards are classed as ‘dark green’ with 29 approved for delivery:

- Agriculture or horticulture professional adviser – Level 6
- Arboriculturist – Level 4
- Arborist – Level 2
- Community Energy Specialist – Level 4
- Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Practitioner – Level 4
- Countryside Ranger – Level 4
- Countryside Worker – Level 2
- Dual Fuel Smart Meter Installer (Electricity & Gas) – Level 2
- Ecologist (degree) – Level 7
- Environmental Health Practitioner (degree) – Level 6
- Environmental Practitioner – Level 6
- Forest Craftsperson – Level 3
- Horticulture and Landscape Technical Manager – Level 5
- Junior Energy Manager – Level 3
- Landscape or Horticulture Supervisor – Level 3
- Landscape Technician – Level 3
- *Low Carbon Heating Technician – Level 3 (not yet approved for delivery)*
- Metal Recycling General Operative – Level 2
- Metal Recycling Technical Manager – Level 5
- Nuclear Health Physics Monitor – Level 2
- Nuclear Operative – Level 2
- Nuclear Reactor Desk Engineer – Level 6
- Nuclear Scientist and Nuclear Engineer – Level 6
- Nuclear Technician – Level 5
- Nuclear Welding Inspection Technician – Level 4
- Professional arboriculturist – Level 6
- Professional forester (degree) – Level 6
- *Soil Scientist – Level 7 (not yet approved for delivery)*
- Sustainability Business Specialist – Level 7
- Waste Resource Operative – Level 2
- Water Environment Worker – Level 3

Norfolk had 25 ‘dark green’ apprenticeship starts in 2021/22 academic year, over 9 of the above apprenticeship standards.

¹⁶⁹ [Norfolk Chambers of Commerce | Norfolk LSIP – Draft Priorities \(2023\)](#)

¹⁷⁰ [DfE | Explore education statistics \(2023\)](#)

¹⁷¹ [IfATE | Occupational Maps \(2023\)](#)

Based on the 'mid-green' apprenticeship routes (as identified by IfATE, *at the time of writing*)¹⁷², there are a further c184 apprenticeship standards are classed as 'mid-green'.

Norfolk had 679 'mid-green' apprenticeship starts in 2021/22 academic year, over 75 apprenticeship standards.

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¹⁷² [IfATE | Occupational Maps \(2023\)](#)

Appendix D | Operational Delivery Plan

See separate document. Include link before publishing final version!

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Item 9 Appendix D

NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025 Operational Delivery Plan

Children's Services - Pathways to Work

RAG: Not Started / Slow Progress
In development / Moderate Progress
On Track / Good Progress

Aim	Objective	Actions	Responsibility: Lead/Support	Timescale	Desired Outcome/Impact	Progress Achieved	RAG status
Deliver the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025	0.1 Design and develop NCC Apprenticeship strategy 2023-2025	0.1.1 Support the design and development of NCC Apprenticeship strategy for Norfolk through an operational working group [OWG] (established with representatives from G&D, HR, CS) to ensure effective and efficient collaboration	KD / OWG	Endorsed by: NCC Apprenticeships Board - August 2023 &D Select Committee - September 2023 Cabinet - December 2023	Increased cohesion, communication and collaboration between all directorates delivering Apprenticeship related activity for NCC, in order to strengthen the NCC approach for addressing Apprenticeships county-wide growth, pathways for 16-18s and workforce strategy for NCC employees.	> Background analysis completed - PESTLE/SWOT > OWG developing new strategy	
	0.2 Deliver against NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025 Operational Delivery plan	0.2.1 Deliver operational activity against the CS strand of the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy, reporting progress on a quarterly basis to NCC Apprenticeships Board	SH / PTW team	4 times per year - February, April, August, December	Progress of operational activity against the Children's Services strand of the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy is regularly reported in a timely manner.	> Regular attendance at NCC Apprenticeships Board to report progress against Operational Action Plan	
1. Establish apprenticeships as a key option route for learners aged 16-18, leading to an increase in the % of applications and starts.	1.1 To focus on engagement with Year 10 and 11 students in schools with a particular focus on schools with low numbers apprenticeship starts	1.1.1 To develop Apprenticeship 'Pathways Maps' and case studies and testimonials that showcase the achievements of young people from a diverse range of backgrounds and including examples of green apprenticeships.	SH/PTW team	Jan-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of young people to increase the number of young people who are participating in EET and thereby reduce the NEET Post 16 figure for Norfolk	Work not yet commenced	
		1.1.2 To deliver ASK sessions as per 23-24 KPIs to Year groups 10 and 11 with a specific focus on schools with low apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of YP.	PTW/Team	Jul-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of young people to increase the number of young people who are participating in EET and thereby reduce the NEET Post 16 figure for Norfolk	Achieved ASK Contract KPI's for 2022-23 and work to continue for 23-24	
	1.2 To focus on engagement with Year 12 and 13 students in FE colleges	1.2.1 To deliver ASK sessions as per 23-24 KPIs to Year groups 12 and 13 with a specific focus on Application and Find An Apprenticeship Registration Workshops and to include information on green apprenticeships	SH/EK/WM	Jul-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of young people to increase the number of young people who are participating in EET and thereby reduce the NEET Post 16 figure for Norfolk	Achieved ASK Contract KPI's for 2022-23 and work to continue for 23-24	
		1.3 To raise awareness of apprenticeships with Year groups 7-9 as per PAL legislation	1.3.1 To pilot work in a small number of schools with Key Stage 3 students	SH/PTW team	Mar-24	To increase the number of students in this cohort who consider apprenticeships as a viable transition option Post 16 and to contribute to the PAL requirements in schools.	Pilot schools identified and work has commenced to develop specific resources for this group of students
2. Promote apprenticeships as a key option route, for those aged 16-18 who face additional barriers (with particular focus on focus on SEND and Care Experienced young people), contributing to a more diverse workforce in Norfolk.	2.1 To work with YP who are subject to an EHCP or SEN support to improve outcomes	2.1.1 To develop Apprenticeship 'Pathways Maps' and case studies and testimonials that showcase the achievements of this group of young people to ensure their inclusion in the labour market	SH/SA	Jan-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of young people to increase their participation in EET and ensure their representation in the Norfolk labour market	Work not yet commenced	
		2.1.2 To deliver bespoke sessions in Norfolk Special Schools to young people in Years 7-14 to raise awareness of opportunities including supportive pre-apprenticeship provision and supported internships	SH/SA	Jul-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of young people to increase their participation in EET and ensure their representation in the Norfolk labour market	Bespoke sessions delivered in academic year 22-23 including Key Stage 3 Compass Schools. Work to continue and extend in 2023-24 and Key Stage 3 Pilot to be delivered in a Special School	
		2.1.3 To develop resources for SEND YP and Parents promoting apprenticeship and other work based learning opportunities including a focus on green apprenticeships	SH/SA	Jan-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of young people to increase their participation in EET and ensure their representation in the Norfolk labour market	Work has commenced for academic year but needs to be developed	
		2.1.4 To work with individual YP with SEND to support them into opportunities	SH/SA	Jul-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of young people to increase their participation in EET and ensure their representation in the Norfolk labour market	Ongoing	
	2.2 To work with care experienced young people to improve outcomes	2.2.1 PTW Adviser to operate as a member of the EET working group for the 'Virtual School'	WM	Jul-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of young people to increase their participation in EET and ensure their representation in the Norfolk labour market	Ongoing	
		2.2.2 PTW Adviser to lead on the delivery of bespoke group and individual sessions to care experienced young people to ensure their inclusion in the labour market	WM	Jul-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of young people to increase their participation in EET and ensure their representation in the Norfolk labour market	Work not yet commenced	
		2.2.3 To contribute to the 'Care Covenant' in NCC and other strategic and operational joint working for this cohort of young people	SH	Jul-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst this cohort of young people to increase their participation in EET and ensure their representation in the Norfolk labour market	Work not yet commenced	
3. Inspire and promote an increased awareness and understanding of apprenticeships and other work-based options with parents/carers and teachers, so that they can support their children and young people, with aspirational decision making.	2.3 To work with parents/carers and teachers in a range of educational and targeted settings to develop awareness of the range and level of apprenticeships, in order to establish them as a viable Post 16 alternative to Further and Higher Education.	2.3.1 To deliver ASK sessions as per KPIs for 2023-24 to Parents and Carers with a specific focus on schools with low apprenticeship starts in Years 11 and 12/13 and to raise awareness of green apprenticeships	SH/PTW team	Jul-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst young people to increase the number of young people who are participating in EET and thereby reduce the NEET Post 16 figure for Norfolk	Work not yet commenced	
		2.3.2 To deliver apprenticeship awareness sessions to teachers with a specific focus on schools with low apprenticeship starts in Year 11 and 12/13 and to raise awareness of green apprenticeships	SH/PTW team	Jul-24	To increase the number of apprenticeship starts amongst young people to increase the number of young people who are participating in EET and thereby reduce the NEET Post 16 figure for Norfolk	Work not yet commenced	


NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025 Operational Delivery Plan
Growth & Investment - Apprenticeships Norfolk

RAG: Not Started / Slow Progress
In development / Moderate Progress
On Track / Good Progress

Aim	Objective	Actions	Responsibility: Lead/Support	Timescale	Desired Outcome/Impact	Progress Achieved	RAG status
Deliver the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025	0.1 Design and develop NCC Apprenticeship strategy 2023-2025	0.1.1 Lead the design and development of NCC Apprenticeship strategy for Norfolk through an operational working group (OWG) (established with representatives from G&D, HR, CS) to ensure effective and efficient collaboration	KD / OWG	Endorsed by: NCC Apprenticeships Board - August 2023 &D Select Committee - September 2023 Cabinet - December 2023	Increased cohesion, communication and collaboration between all directorates delivering Apprenticeship related activity for NCC, in order to strengthen the NCC approach for addressing Apprenticeships county-wide growth, pathways for 16-18s and workforce strategy for NCC employees.	> Background analysis completed - PESTLE/SWOT > Stakeholder Consultation completed with local training providers > OWG developing new strategy	On Track / Good Progress
	0.2 Deliver against NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025 Operational Delivery plan	0.2.1 Facilitate the secretariat of the NCC Apprenticeships Board and OWG	KD / CES Exec Support	4 times per year - February, April, August, December	Effective, organised governance for the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy - meeting four times per year - aligned to time after the ESFA national apprenticeship data is published.	> NCC Apprenticeship Board meetings rescheduled to align better with regular publishing of apprenticeship data by ESFA (January, March, July, November). > Briefings with Chair of Board in advance of board meetings and distribution of papers > Coordination of OWG > Secretarial support for minutes of board meeting	In development / Moderate Progress
		0.2.2 Deliver operational activity against the G&D strand of the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy, reporting progress on a quarterly basis to NCC Apprenticeships Board	KD / Apps Norfolk team	4 times per year - February, April, August, December	Progress of operational activity against the G&D strand of the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy is regularly reported in a timely manner.	> Regular attendance at NCC Apprenticeships Board to report progress against Operational Action Plan	In development / Moderate Progress
1. Increase opportunities to inspire, promote and champion apprenticeships; improving awareness and understanding of the benefits an apprenticeship can bring to individuals, businesses and the local economy; and celebrating successes.	1.1 Increase opportunities to inspire and promote apprenticeships to people and businesses in Norfolk, busting myths and increasing awareness - in particular around the uptake of green apprenticeships	1.1.1 Deliver marketing campaign(s) to increase awareness, including for green apprenticeships	KD / Apps Norfolk team	#MadelnNorfolk 2023 - June/July 2023, then 2024/2025 moving to 'always on' campaigns	Increased awareness amongst Norfolk SMEs of the benefits apprenticeships (including green apprenticeships) can bring to a business; call to action to contact Apprenticeships Norfolk (50% increase in referrals in 3 months post campaign)	> #MadelnNorfolk 2023 - TV advert is currently live on ITV-X (June/July 2023) and includes a green (horticulture) apprenticeship amongst the SMEs featured	In development / Moderate Progress
		1.1.2 Facilitate the Apprenticeships Norfolk website, including dedicated content zone for green apprenticeships and support for cohorts such as care experienced individuals.		As required	Informative and accessible website, providing easy to understand information and guidance on accessing financial and practical support for starting apprenticeships - for both individuals and businesses in Norfolk, with a bespoke Apprenticeship Provision Matrix detailing apprenticeship training provision delivered in Norfolk. Dedicated information related to green apprenticeships to increase awareness and accessibility of information for all.	> Apprenticeships Norfolk website includes accurate content which is regularly maintained/developed. > Website has dedicated zone for Green Apprenticeships information; to be developed in line with continued updates and local availability of provision/opportunities. > Development of page dedicated to Care-Experienced YP and their employers was launched on 1st August to align to increased bursary for SMEs	In development / Moderate Progress
		1.1.3 Build Apprenticeships Norfolk social media presence/engagement, including regular content to support myth busting, green apprenticeships, higher apprenticeships and promotion of vacancies offering living wage		Ongoing - scheduled posts via Orlo (usually 3 per day minimum)	Increase followers, reach and engagement from active social media channels, providing a variety of information to individuals, businesses and training providers in Norfolk - to inspire, increase awareness and promote pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities, support available (financial and practical), case studies, celebrations of success etc.	> Apprenticeships Norfolk social media includes regular, engaging content which covers broad variety of topics for all audiences (business, individuals, providers) > Current #MadelnNorfolk digital campaign includes green apprenticeship film > Social media assets/campaigns developed to promote additional focus on green/higher/living wage apprenticeship vacancies	In development / Moderate Progress
	1.2 Increase opportunities to celebrate successful apprenticeship outcomes of people and businesses in Norfolk, in particular around the uptake of green apprenticeships	1.2.1 Develop and publish real life stories of apprentices in Norfolk, including those who have had an additionally challenging journey, have completed green apprenticeships, are in a role not typical for gender etc		Monthly (one new case study per month)	Increased opportunity to champion individuals and businesses across Norfolk; including examples which highlight social mobility, apprentices with LLDD or from a vulnerable/disadvantaged cohort and those who have completed 'green' apprenticeships which contribute to Net Zero. Increased promotion of these real life stories will inspire individuals and businesses to engage.	> Case study format has been revised, to move away from static content - new format will use shorter, more impactful video-based content instead. > Old content has been removed in line with expiry dates > NEW case studies to be developed, one per month WEF August 2023.	On Track / Good Progress
		1.2.2 Deliver the Apprenticeships Norfolk Awards, including a specific award for a green apprenticeship ambassador		Each National Apprenticeship Week - usually early February	Celebration of the apprentices and businesses in Norfolk who have shown dedication, resilience and tenacity to achieve amazing results in an apprenticeship programme - providing recognition to our local community and promoting the benefits apprenticeships can bring. A specific 'green' award will enable the service to recognise the efforts in Norfolk to support green apprenticeships; those completing them or offering them!	> Apps Norfolk Awards 2024 planned for NAW24 - planning begins in July 2023	In development / Moderate Progress
		2.1 Conduct ongoing primary research, to identify, explore and draw local data insight and intelligence	2.1.1 Deliver research survey (collaborative with all construction apprenticeship providers in Norfolk) as part of Building Growth sector skills group	KD / Apps Norfolk team / Local FE providers	Autumn 2023	The survey focuses on current apprenticeship provision for construction standards. One survey will be distributed to sample from all training providers with a delivery footprint in Norfolk. Apprenticeships Norfolk will collate findings which we hope will identify both apprentice and employer feedback relating to the delivery models currently in place and potential improvements; this will help inform providers and might help to shape future curriculum development, specifically in regard to flexibility of delivery.	> Survey is ready for distribution - all TPs have approved content and willing to share to apprentices/employers. > Aim is to publish survey following October half term
2. Undertake primary research to better understand the barriers to taking up and completing apprenticeships, in order to develop innovative & evidence based interventions for service delivery.	2.1.2 Work with local providers to draw insight from local, unpublished data relating to withdrawals data (as part of the Working Well Norfolk [WWN] programme pilot activity)	2.1.2	Nov-23	The WWN programme gives Apprenticeships Norfolk the opportunity to support apprentices on programme, who might be at risk of withdrawing due to mental and physical health conditions. In order to identify the size of the cohort and potential proactive interventions, data research into local apprenticeship withdrawal trends will provide valuable insight, as this data is not published by DfE.	> In principle agreements gained from a range of local providers to provide unpublished withdrawals data to NODA for analysis. ISAs in progress. > In discussions with No.10, AELP and The St. Martins Group to develop opportunities for comparative benchmarking to national data sets. > National provider engagement - TBC	On Track / Good Progress	
		2.1.3 Explore the current awareness/demand/barriers for Green Apprenticeships in Norfolk	KD / Apps Norfolk team	Autumn 2023	With an emerging focus on Net Zero priorities, there is a journey for businesses to undertake to understand how sustainability and environmental priorities will fit within their organisations. For green apprenticeships to increase in the next 2+ years, it would be useful to understand current awareness, demand and barriers to engagement.	> Primary research for businesses, planned for Spring/Summer 2024	Not Started / Slow Progress

3. Support an increase in the number of apprenticeship starts in Norfolk (focussing on improving balance and opportunity based on age, level, sector, place, diversity, availability and approach – as appropriate).	3.1 Coordinate a free, impartial IAG service with clear information for all stakeholders	3.1.1 Offer free and impartial IAG to increasing numbers of individuals, businesses and stakeholders in Norfolk - who are keen to start an apprenticeship scheme but are unsure how/where to start. Maintain focus on data to ensure opportunities reflect a balance of equality, diversity and inclusion as appropriate.	KD / Apps Norfolk team	Ongoing - core service KPIs to be reviewed/set - January 2024	Apprenticeships Norfolk is an intermediary brokerage service, offering free and impartial information, advice and guidance to individuals and businesses across Norfolk - the impact of the service is to remove the pain points of understanding complex policy and knowing where/how to start an apprenticeship.	> Established service; we continue to support increased numbers of enquiries: • by July 2023 we have supported 106 individuals with IAG (we supported 108 in whole of 2022) • by July 2023 we have supported XX businesses with IAG (we supported XXX in whole of 2022) > We are currently reviewing the process for tracking enquiries with a view to setting new KPIs in January 2024, following closure of Insight Apprentice project	
		3.1.2 Deliver the Insight Apprentice project (part-funded by ESF) to completion in October 2023	KD / Insight Apprentice team	Project funded to 31st December 2023 KPIs - ESF contracted targets by 31st October 2023: SMEs supported - 31 Apprentices recruited - 26 Participants engaged - 125	Externally funded project to provide enhanced wraparound support to SMEs specifically working in the growth sectors of Norfolk; including Agritech, Digital and ICT, Clean & Green, Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing and VCSE sector - who have had a poor previous experience, who have not been engaged previously in apprenticeships (2yrs+) or are diversifying their offer. The project also seeks to pilot new approaches which may benefit the local apprenticeship landscape.	> Performance: • 108 SME referrals, 48 SMEs supported to date • 15 of the businesses supported by the project have progressed to recruit apprentices so far • 298 participants have been engaged through the project including: 23 new apprenticeship starts, 4 workplace mentors trained and 271 individuals that have taken part in pre-apprenticeship activities. • Budget use is on track at 100.4% of the current Q2 financial profile	
3.2 Deliver Levy Support Scheme (LSS), providing increased financial support to Norfolk businesses	3.2.1 Support matching service to connect businesses requesting a levy transfer with donating organisations in Norfolk - including continued engagement to create new opportunities for donations and requests	3.2.1 Support matching service to connect businesses requesting a levy transfer with donating organisations in Norfolk - including continued engagement to create new opportunities for donations and requests	KD / Apps Norfolk team	Project funded to 31st March 2025 KPIs/Milestones: - £1m transfers by 31.03.25 (£350k in year 1, £650k in year 2) - First transfer completed/started apprenticeship by end of July - 5 pledges by end of July	Internally funded project to provide a brokerage service to facilitate relationships with organisations to enable unspent levy funds to be pledged for sharing with Norfolk businesses who require a transfer. This creates more opportunity to hire more staff or train their workforce without additional training costs, which will help the county's economy to thrive, with money that would otherwise be returned to HM Treasury.	> LSS project soft-launched 1st April, however pre-election period so full launch was delayed until 10th May > Performance: • £880k of pledged levy within first 4 months, by 10 organisations (local and national) • 13 matches confirmed within first 2 months • Pipeline of c£600k of transfer requests within first 2 months, supporting c£7 new apprentices	
			3.3 Work with local providers and stakeholders to develop effective pre-Apprenticeship provision, especially in relation to emerging green skills and/or apprenticeships, which meets the needs of people in Norfolk who are further away from being able to access Apprenticeships (e.g. those without Maths/English, those wishing to change career or re-skill).	3.3.1 Explore opportunities to develop new pre-apprenticeship provision in Norfolk	KD / Apps Norfolk team / Training Provider Network	Autumn 2023	Pre-apprenticeship provision supports improved social mobility and entry points for those who are not apprenticeship ready - an increasingly common challenge post pandemic. There is a need to increase the variety of pre-apprenticeship pathways in Norfolk - now that Kickstart is no longer available, Traineeship funding has changed and Skills Bootcamps only support those aged 19+
3.3 Work with local providers and stakeholders to develop effective pre-Apprenticeship provision, especially in relation to emerging green skills and/or apprenticeships, which meets the needs of people in Norfolk who are further away from being able to access Apprenticeships (e.g. those without Maths/English, those wishing to change career or re-skill).	3.3.2 Map apprenticeship provision in Norfolk, exploring opportunities for increased local provision, particularly for green apprenticeships (mid and dark) and those standards with limited provision e.g. construction - subject to evidence of need.	3.3.2 Map apprenticeship provision in Norfolk, exploring opportunities for increased local provision, particularly for green apprenticeships (mid and dark) and those standards with limited provision e.g. construction - subject to evidence of need.	KD / Apps Norfolk team	Dec-23	Increased local provision will create increased opportunities for businesses and individuals in Norfolk to access apprenticeship provision, including green apprenticeships.	> Initial mapping of green apprenticeships has identified current provision availability (limited) > Apprenticeships Norfolk TP Network (June 23) completed activity to unpick the barriers in developing further provision and identified action to develop working group to 'green' existing apprenticeship standards as well as consider new delivery. > KD chairs BG Skills Supply & Demand working group - which through collaboration with training providers, identifies pipeline for construction related apprenticeships in Norfolk and Suffolk.	
			3.4 Work with local stakeholders to increase opportunities for Higher Apprenticeships in Norfolk	3.4.1 Explore the current awareness/demand/barriers for Higher Apprenticeships in Norfolk	KD / Apps Norfolk team	Spring 2024	With the emerging focus on LSIP priorities (higher level requirements for digital and leadership skills) in Norfolk, it would be useful to understand current awareness, demand and barriers to engagement with higher apprenticeships.
3.4 Work with local stakeholders to increase opportunities for Higher Apprenticeships in Norfolk	3.4.2 Support promotion of UCAS apprenticeship vacancy listings and application service to businesses and individuals in Norfolk to help increase the parity and transparency of options for those wishing to undertake higher level apprenticeships in Norfolk.	3.4.2 Support promotion of UCAS apprenticeship vacancy listings and application service to businesses and individuals in Norfolk to help increase the parity and transparency of options for those wishing to undertake higher level apprenticeships in Norfolk.	KD / Apps Norfolk team	Autumn 2023 - UCAS Vacancy Listings launch Spring 2024 - UCAS Application service launch (TBC)	UCAS are working closely with DFE to increase parity between degree routes and apprenticeships (in particular higher apprenticeships) and their new platforms will help create increased visibility for higher apprenticeships alongside degree options; this could support businesses in Norfolk to recruit from outside the county, bringing in a fresh new talent pipeline.	> UCAS launched new vacancy search facility - AN beginning to support employers to advertise on this portal as well as FAA and other local options	
			3.4.3 Tailored advertising of higher apprenticeship opportunities on Apprenticeships Norfolk social media (spotlight vacancies)	KD / Apps Norfolk team	Autumn 2023	Highlighting specific higher apprenticeships when they are available will encourage individuals looking for those opportunities to apply. Increased promotion, increased applications should support increased higher apprenticeship starts.	> Social media vacancy template asset has been developed to highlight specifically higher/degree apprenticeship vacancies
3.5 Provide increased support (financial and practical) for care-experienced young people to become an apprentice and for the businesses who employ them	3.5.1 Develop a bespoke service offer to provide 'Norfolk Support Line' for any care-experienced apprentice and the non-levy (SME) business who employs them, in Norfolk	3.5.1 Develop a bespoke service offer to provide 'Norfolk Support Line' for any care-experienced apprentice and the non-levy (SME) business who employs them, in Norfolk	KD / Apps Norfolk team	Aug-23	The number of care experienced YP in Norfolk progressing into an apprenticeship is low; increased support for both the YP and their employers, especially SMEs who have less infrastructure, could help support more successful apprenticeship starts and more consistent, supported apprenticeship experiences, for both apprentice and employer.	> Funding secured to offer 'Norfolk Support Line' free of charge for new apprentices and their SME employers, for care experienced young people starting new apprenticeship > Promotion will start 1st August 2023 - alongside the increased national bursary offer (£3k) from HM Govt.	

4. Support the system to increase the number of apprentices who complete and achieve their apprenticeships in Norfolk.	4.1 Explore & develop opportunities to support existing apprenticeships to completion and achievement, through external funding	4.1.1 Develop pilot activity for apprenticeship support to be offered as part of the Working Well Norfolk [WWN] programme (IPSPC)	KD / Apps Norfolk team / Training Provider Network	October 2023 - launch Project funded to 31st March 2025	Apprenticeships Norfolk will host an Apprenticeship Project Officer (APO) within the WWN project, funded by DWP and managed by NCC. The pilot will seek to support apprentices with a range of health (mental or physical) conditions, to ensure these do not present a barrier to remaining in work and on their apprenticeship programme. The APO will develop and manage operational partnerships with a range of stakeholders, supporting a pilot intervention to increase the effectiveness of the Apprenticeship system in Norfolk, for apprentices aged 18+, to facilitate a reduction in the number of apprentices withdrawing from their programmes.	> Funding secured via NCC Working Well Norfolk programme > Recruitment for 1FTE APO post live w/c 24th July - project start 1st Oct 2023 > Development work in progress > Co-design workshop with providers planned for September	
5. Increase opportunities to influence improvement to the local apprenticeship landscape in Norfolk, through collaborative and innovative systems thinking, to maximise impact.	5.1 Further develop the Apprenticeships Norfolk Data Dashboard (NDDA) to develop enhanced business intelligence and big data insight - including focus on proportionality based on demographic/population and business counts	5.1.1 Develop the dashboard to support new types of data to create new, effective data insight - in particular related to uptake of green apprenticeships	KD / Apps Norfolk team / NODA	Autumn 2023 - MVP December 2023 - enhanced following user feedback (v2)	Further developments to the Apprenticeships Norfolk dashboard will ensure that it continues to provide valuable business intelligence to the Apprenticeships Norfolk service, which will help to design new interventions as required to support the local apprenticeships landscape.	> The MVP is currently completed and has been used by the team for several months, as refinements are completed > Further development will be phased alongside user testing feedback from external stakeholders	
		5.1.2 Develop the dashboard for external stakeholder access, via Apprenticeships Norfolk website (and/or commissioning model for other hubs)	KD / Apps Norfolk team / NODA	Autumn 2023 - user feedback collated December 2023 - enhanced following user feedback (v2)	Publishing the dashboard onto the Apprenticeships Norfolk website will enable external stakeholders to benefit from the resource; providing similar insight to that provided on Norfolk Insight.	> The MVP is currently completed and has been used by the team internally for several months, as additions and refinements are completed. > A version of the dashboard has been published to a webpage, so stakeholders can complete user testing in summer 2023.	
5.2 Continue to develop and grow the Apprenticeships Norfolk Networks (apprentice, employer and training provider) to bring added value, through collaboration and opportunities to build relationships		5.2.1 Develop Apprenticeships Norfolk 'Apprentice' network, to encourage attendance of a pilot scheme, with a view to securing further funding/sponsorship to run regularly	KD / Apps Norfolk team	Autumn 2023	The first pilot event was successful and enabled apprentices to meet informally; which for those working in SMEs or in companies where they are the only apprentice, social networking removes the feelings of isolation and provides opportunity to make connections and receive support if/when required.	> Pilot event successfully completed in Summer 2023 > Feedback and evaluation to be completed and links to AoA and EoEAAN to be reviewed and next steps agreed.	
		5.2.2 Develop Apprenticeships Norfolk 'Employer' network, to encourage increased attendance from new SME businesses, with a view to offer buddy-support from other local employers to share good practice.	KD / Apps Norfolk team	Ongoing - meeting take place on quarterly basis	Events in 2022 saw increasing numbers of employers attending, however increased attendance will ensure more businesses in Norfolk feel supported in their apprenticeship journeys. Businesses with established schemes support less experienced employers with their insight and shared practice, creating enhanced social value and business network support. Also, network events allow Apprenticeships Norfolk to promote new initiatives, IAG and convene topical guest speakers.	> Established network group which meets quarterly > Next meeting in Autumn 2023 > Plans to pilot additional locations (KL and GY) in 2023	
		5.2.1 Develop Apprenticeships Norfolk 'Training Provider' network, to encourage increased participation in collaborative activities which support the local apprenticeship landscape, in particular the opportunity to increase provision of green apprenticeships.	KD / Apps Norfolk team / Training Provider Network	Ongoing - meeting take place on quarterly basis	The Training Provider network meeting are open to any providers (local and national) who join the network (no cost attached, just delivery footprint in Norfolk). The meetings enable collaborative thinking and opportunity to host guest speakers (e.g. ESFA, Ofsted etc) and provide necessary updates and useful information on national policy updates and local (Apprenticeships Norfolk) initiatives, projects and opportunities.	> Established network/working group which meets quarterly > Apprenticeships Norfolk Training Provider Network (June 2023) captured initial feedback around barriers and short, medium and longer term actions to help address green apprenticeship provision in Norfolk - the network will continue to develop actions in Oct meeting > Plans being developed to support 'green champions' in apprenticeship teams within each local training provider through funded training (IEMA)	
5.3 Apprenticeship Strategy Manager to continue to support strategic steering groups, to influence the work of Apprenticeships Norfolk		5.3.1 Apprenticeship Strategy Manager to continue to co-chair 'National Apprenticeship Hub' network group, to share good practice and create new opportunities to work closely with other apprenticeship hubs in England.	KD / Jodi Fair (Solent LEP)	Ongoing - meeting take place on quarterly basis	As a co-chair, the role provides two-way value; supporting the network as a representative of NCC and Apprenticeships Norfolk; plus it brings opportunities to share practice from other hubs, which is relevant to the work Apprenticeships Norfolk do to support the broader national apprenticeship strategies and direction of travel.	> KD co-chairs the 'National Apprenticeship Hub Network' and acts as representative of NCC and Apprenticeships Norfolk	
		5.3.2 Apprenticeship Strategy Manager to continue to support (DfE) East of England Apprenticeship Ambassador Network	KD / EoEAAN	Ongoing - meeting take place on quarterly basis	As an ambassador, the role provides two-way value; supporting the network as a representative of NCC and Apprenticeships Norfolk; plus it brings opportunities to the work Apprenticeships Norfolk do to support the broader national apprenticeship strategies and direction of travel.	> KD continues to attend East of England Apprenticeship Ambassador meetings as representative of NCC and Apprenticeships Norfolk	
		5.3.3 Apprenticeship Strategy Manager to continue to support local and national steering groups to bring strategic and operational insight to the work Apprenticeships Norfolk undertake.	KD	Ongoing - meeting take place on quarterly basis	Membership of national strategic steering groups provides two-way value; supporting the organisations as a representative of NCC and Apprenticeships Norfolk; plus it brings opportunities to the work Apprenticeships Norfolk do to support the broader national apprenticeship strategies and direction of travel.	> KD continues to attend a variety of strategic/board meetings (including IFATE, UCAS) as representative of NCC and Apprenticeships Norfolk	
5.4 Develop/submit new external funding proposals to increase, enhance and support all aspects of the local apprenticeship landscape		5.4.1 Develop further external funding proposals to increase, enhance and support all aspects of the local apprenticeship landscape.	KD / Apps Norfolk team / External Funding team	Ad hoc - as required when funding opportunities are available	External funding ensures the Apprenticeships Norfolk service can continue to innovate and bring new pilots and interventions to benefit the individuals and businesses in Norfolk, in engaging with apprenticeships. The service has successfully secured over £2m of funding since 2020 which has supported a variety of schemes, creating ROI to the Norfolk economy.	> Three proposals in development - details confidential at this stage	
5.5 Support HR with the development of Public Sector Apprenticeship working group		5.5.1 Develop collaborate working group that: - Supports the wider work to shape and drive public sector provision of apprenticeships in Norfolk. - Contributes to the identification of common core skills needs across the public sectors in Norfolk. - Reviews existing apprenticeship standards and identifies those that meet joint requirements. - Joins up to leverage the best provision from learning providers for working group organisations represented.	KD / WF / HR Team	December 2023 for established format	A working group has been established, with key stakeholders engaged from public sector organisations across Norfolk. A regular calendar of collaborative activity has been established, with defined outputs and responsibilities. Impact will be more effective collaborative working, and ability to be more proactive in terms of addressing future needs	> Work is underway, but on an adhoc basis, needs to be formalised and bought together to establish a more focused approach.	

<p>5.6 Support broader strategic work to increase benefits to social value through apprenticeships, by influencing emerging procurement opportunities</p>	<p>5.6.1 Develop collaborative working to increase opportunities to advise, influence and support apprenticeship activity in contract procurement - at NCC and more broadly in Norfolk</p>	<p>KD/ NCC - various teams</p>	<p>Dec-23</p>	<p>Exploiting emerging opportunities to include apprenticeship/skills within contract procurement will increase social value in Norfolk and could not only support the longer term skills shortages in Norfolk, but also could support building capacity for the interconnected (long term) challenges around provision/tutor shortages, especially in relation to green skills and apprenticeships.</p>	<p>> Initial meeting planned with local stakeholder to provide guidance regarding apprenticeships for contract procurement</p>	
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NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025 Operational Delivery Plan
HR - Workforce Apprenticeships

RAG: Not Started / Slow Progress
In development / Moderate Progress
On Track / Good Progress

Aim	Objective	Actions	Responsibility: Lead/Support	Timescale	Desired Outcome/Impact	Progress Achieved	RAG status
Deliver the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025	0.1 Design and develop NCC Apprenticeship strategy 2023-2025	0.1.1 Support the design and development of NCC Apprenticeship strategy for Norfolk through an operational working group [OWG] (established with representatives from G&D, HR, CS) to ensure effective and efficient collaboration	KD / OWG	Endorsed by: NCC Apprenticeships Board - August 2023 &D Select Committee - September 2023 Cabinet - December 2023	Increased cohesion, communication and collaboration between all directorates delivering Apprenticeship related activity for NCC, in order to strengthen the NCC approach for addressing Apprenticeships county-wide growth, pathways for 16-18s and workforce strategy for NCC employees.	> Background analysis completed - PESTLE/SWOT > OWG developing new strategy	
	0.2 Deliver against NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025 Operational Delivery plan	0.2.1 Deliver operational activity against the HR strand of the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy, reporting progress on a quarterly basis to NCC Apprenticeships Board	LR / PTW team	4 times per year - February, April, August, December	Progress of operational activity against the HR strand of the NCC Apprenticeship Strategy is regularly reported in a timely manner.	> Regular attendance at NCC Apprenticeships Board to report progress against Operational Action Plan	
1. Continue to support Workforce Apprenticeships at NCC and in schools, continuing to develop apprenticeship take-up, fully utilising levy, and achieving recognition as an employer of choice in terms of the quality and quantity of apprenticeships provided.	1.1 NCC is widely recognised within Norfolk and beyond as an employer offering a wide range of attractive apprenticeship opportunities	1.1.1 Ensure apprenticeships at NCC are represented clearly as part of the NCC Employer Value Proposition and that there is a clear communication and engagement offer publicising apprenticeships across the organisation.	WF / NCC HR App team	EVP due to launch Spring 2024	Apprenticeship opportunities are embedded into the EVP when it goes live, apprenticeships continue to be included as part of established internal comms strategy, apprenticeship drop in sessions continue to be delivered. Impact will be greater visibility of apprenticeship offer, internally and externally	EVP project underway, NCC apprenticeships team has comms plan, this will be periodically reviewed / updated	
		1.1.2 Apprenticeships to be endorsed by and written into strategic workforce plans per service by SHRBPs, and opportunities for 'green' apprentices to support Net Zero priorities are explored.	WF / NCC HR App team	Aim to have understanding of workforce planning timescales by end of 2023. Work undertaken to highlight green apprenticeship opportunities by end of 2023	NCC apprenticeships team have visibility of wider workforce planning timelines, and are engaged with SHRBPs to be able to support when needed. Green apprenticeships have been fully investigated and opportunities highlighted. Impact will be longer term, planned use of apprenticeships to support strategic objectives	To be started	
	1.2 The NCC apprenticeship levy is consistently tracked and forecast against, to allow us to finance apprenticeships in the priority areas identified by directorate plans	1.2.1 Established monitoring and reporting system ensures no under-spend, prioritised recruitment initiatives for certain grades and roles are monitored with clear data metrics and a visible reporting cycle. We are able to demonstrate the topic spread of apprenticeships and how these support corporate ambitions such as better Together for Norfolk, EDI Strategy, Net Zero. This may include levy sharing with other organisations where this supports corporate objectives.	WF / NCC HR App team	Decisions made around key metrics by end of December 2024, including a more accurate estimate in terms of when these can be achieved. Work is dependent on access to required data and capacity in I&A team to build reports	Key metrics have been decided upon, and work has been completed to build appropriate reports / dashboards to track levy spend. Reports show breakdown of apprenticeships by service and subject, and can be easily cross-referenced against workforce plans to identify how they support corporate objectives, but also to identify areas of opportunity. Impact will be greater confidence in forecasting and predicting, and ability to target work / initiatives where most needed	Process is in place to track this, but needs to be reviewed and developed to deliver desired outcomes	
		1.3.1 Establish Public Sector Apprenticeships	1.3.1 Develop public sector approaches to create additional apprenticeship opportunities for young people through County/District/City Councils – promoting the public sector as an employer.	WF / NCC HR App team	Aim to have the full scheme up and running for a September 2024 intake	Public sector apprenticeship scheme has been developed and there are regular cohorts of apprentices starting apprenticeships across engaged organisations in Norfolk. Impact will be helping to raise the profile and employer brand of public sector in Norfolk, particularly in terms of apprenticeship opportunities.	Multiple organisations have been engaged and are onboard, some apprenticeships are underway, work required to develop a more coherent scheme.
		1.3.2 Create and setup an HR Apprenticeships working group that: - Supports the wider work to shape and drive public sector provision of apprenticeships in Norfolk. - Contributes to the identification of common core skills needs across the public sectors in Norfolk. - Reviews existing apprenticeship standards and identifies those that meet our joint requirements. - Joins up to leverage the best provision from learning providers for working group organisations represented.	WF / NCC HR App team	Working group has been created by November 2023, work will then be ongoing	A working group has been established, with key stakeholders engaged from public sector organisations across Norfolk. A regular calendar of collaborative activity has been established, with defined outputs and responsibilities. Impact will be more effective collaborative working, and ability to be more proactive in terms of addressing future needs	Work is underway, but on an ad hoc basis, needs to be formalised and bought together to establish a more focused approach.	
	1.4 Alignment and integration of apprenticeships within wider NCC workforce development offer	1.4.1 Work with Workforce Development Consultants to identify areas where apprenticeships could enhance the NCC L&D offer. Map Apprenticeships against the development programme offers.	WF / NCC HR App team	Aim to deliver by summer 2024	Work has been completed to cross reference our apprenticeship offer with our L&D offer, commonalities identified and apprenticeships integrated into wider NCC workforce offer. Impact will be a more joined up career development offer, underpinned by L&D and apprenticeships	Initial work is being scoped	
	1.5 NCC continues to engage with schools, colleges and young people to raise the profile of apprenticeships and promote them as high-quality learning opportunities and good routes into successful careers, making sure we attract high quality apprentices to the council, especially in under-represented or priority areas.	1.5.1 Work with Children's Services to develop an approach to using apprenticeships to provide pathways for young people to join NCC	WF / NCC HR App team	Aim to establish working group by end of 2023, with work to be undertaken during 2024	Early careers apprenticeship opportunities identified across NCC, timelines established for recruitment, calendar including opportunities and timescales produced, collaboration with Childrens Services to develop engagement with schools. Impact will be improved offer to schools	Work to be scoped and allocated	
		1.5.2 Promotion of apprenticeships in NCC communications to schools.	WF / NCC HR App team	Aim to have full plan in place ahead of summer 2024, to tie in with careers activity in schools - progress expected prior to then	Understanding of engagement / content calendar, identification of best channels for promotion (e.g. newsletters, careers fairs, engagement with careers advisors in schools etc), content produced and promotion plan developed and launched. Impact will be higher profile of apprenticeship route to school leavers	Some ad hoc progress, needs to be formalised and future work planned	

	1.6 Establish a work experience programme	1.6.1 Develop, implement and embed a diverse work experience programme, both within NCC / schools, but also integrating a wider public sector work experience scheme. The programme should consider how we offer opportunities to young people, children in care, care leavers, long term unemployed and those with disabilities.	WF / NCC HR App team	Aim to have programme in place to facilitate intake in summer term 2024	A formal work experience programme has been established, to offer multiple entry routes depending on choice of subject. Toolkit developed which will allow individual programmes to be developed in the future. Aim for an NCC specific scheme, but also a broader scheme in partnership with other public sector organisations in Norfolk. Offer clearly articulated, and promoted to target audiences. Impact will be improved access to work experience and greater opportunity to deliver a public sector wide programme.	Pilot scheme is underway, this will provide feedback for future work	
2. Develop and establish an Early Careers development offer for 16-24 year olds in Norfolk, positioning NCC as an employer of choice for apprenticeships.	2.1 Develop a comprehensive apprenticeship offer for 16-24 year olds that supports Childrens Service's strategic ambitions	2.1.1 Evaluate new national and local employment and early career initiatives, and participating in schemes where there is clear synergy with our workforce development plan.	WF / NCC HR App team	Workgroup established by end of 2023, work undertaken during the first half of 2024, including plan developed to monitor new developments in this area.	Mechanism put in place to track schemes and initiatives from outside NCC, along with an assessment process to establish value of NCC participation. Impact is greater visibility of national trends and opportunities.	To be started	
		2.1.2 Work with Childrens Services leads to identify appropriate apprenticeship offers, and consider how these are marketed and targeted at our care leavers and under 18's within NEET. (Not in Employment Education or Training)	WF / NCC HR App team	Key stakeholders within CS established by March 2024, with further work plan to be developed	Collaboration with Childrens Services to fully understand their goals and where we can align, review of our offer and identification of opportunity areas, target audiences defined and engagement/marketing plans developed. Impact will be improved marketing of opportunities to target audiences.	To be started	
		2.1.3 Investigate the potential to ringfence levy funding to provide apprenticeship opportunities to a defined number of care leavers per year.	WF / NCC HR App team	Aim to complete this by summer 2024	Work undertaken to establish mechanics of how this would work, legal implications, what funding is available and what suitable apprenticeships might be. Investigate whether other local authorities are doing this successfully and collaboration with them to understand how they have made it work. Impact will be positive action to support under represented groups.	Initial conversations happening on this topic	
		2.1.4 Research and develop a proposal for a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Care Leavers and/or NEET applying to apprenticeships at NCC.	WF / NCC HR App team	Aim to complete this by summer 2024	Work undertaken to see if this is already being done elsewhere and if so how, decisions on who would/wouldn't be eligible and what criteria they would need to meet, engagement with policy team to develop policy behind scheme. Impact will be improved opportunities for this demographic.	Initial conversations happening on this topic	
		2.1.5 Undertake research into and participate in, the plan for a public sector/ LA approach to increase a joined-up approach to opportunities to for care leavers/NEET in Norfolk and how these can support emerging technologies such as a green renewables and IT linking into our Net Zero strategy.	WF / NCC HR App team	Plan and key stakeholders in place by end of 2023	Engagement with other public sector organisations in the East of England to establish a working group, forward schedule of work planned. Impact will be a more collaborative, county wide approach.	Work group is being established, future work needs to be planned	
	2.2 Work with wider Talent Development Team to establish apprenticeships as a key part of our early careers recruitment offer, integrating other talent and entry to work initiatives as part of our wider early talent approach	2.2.1 Explore all entry points to early careers opportunities, including work experience, T-levels, placements, apprenticeships and graduate programmes, and develop a combined offer that considers all potential options. Work closely with Communications Team to create an appealing brand and explore alternative ways to promote to maximise engagement.	WF / NCC HR App team	Ongoing - estimate full scheme to be developed by 2025 but constituent parts launched incrementally before then	Work with the Talent Development Team to develop a whole organisation approach to early careers, with multiple entry points and subject areas. Once scheme has been developed, engagement with Comms to develop marketing plan. Impact will be a more comprehensive, engaging offer, and also improvement to our employer brand in this space.	Initial conversations with services are happening on an ad hoc basis, but formal plan needs developing and implementing	
3. Develop NCC workforce analytics capability to enable the use of the LGA workforce planning toolkit; embedding apprenticeships and other talent pipeline vehicles within corporate and directorate workforce plans - shaping a workforce that reflects the diversity and demographics of the Norfolk community.	3.1 Improved visibility of NCC as an employer of apprenticeships	3.1.1 Use demographic data and engagement with EDI groups / professionals (internally and externally) to develop and establish an action plan that aims publicise the NCC Apprenticeship offer to under-represented groups.	WF / NCC HR App team	Aim to complete this by March 2024	Research into data sources and appropriate groups to engage with, identification of under-represented areas, engagement / promotional plans developed for each area. Impact will be greater ability to target / promote apprenticeships to specific audiences.	To be started	
	3.2 Supports the objectives of the NCC EDI strategy	3.2.1 Use apprenticeships as a conduit to support the recruitment initiatives identified within the EDI strategy.	WF / NCC HR App team	EDI strategy mapped against app strategy by end of 2023, with clear understanding of common goals and areas of common interest	Develop deep understanding of EDI strategy and areas of alignment, provide support for recruitment initiatives. Impact will be greater understanding of how apprenticeships support ongoing EDI initiatives.	Engagement around EDI strategy is underway, plan needs to be developed for future work	
		3.2.2 Use improved workforce analytics and recruitment data to provide monitoring and reporting on the EDI makeup of NCC apprentices both live and completed.	WF / NCC HR App team	Ongoing - dependent on access to required data and capacity in I&A team to build reports - aim to have mapped desired outputs by spring 2024, and commissioned work	As part of the data / reporting workstream, reports / dashboards developed that capture and communicate key EDI metrics that enable us to track progress and shape future work. Impact is greater insight delivered through improved reporting.	Data is available but needs to be reviewed and plan put in place to develop greater reporting capability	
	3.3 Creation of a plan for workforce data needed that explores future job trends and identifies key stakeholders, underpins the workforce development strategy and has a clear set of data metrics developed with suitable analysis and reporting.	3.3.1 Once the data has been established, create a number of key metrics, including: - Of the people who started an apprenticeship with NCC (excluding schools), 90% have remained with us in NCC roles for at least two years after the end of their apprenticeship. - 90% of starters have completed their apprenticeship. - 50% of apprenticeship opportunities filled by new starters, 50% by current NCC employees.	WF / NCC HR App team	Ongoing - dependent on access to required data and capacity in I&A team to build reports - aim to have full reporting in place by end of 2024 with work delivered incrementally before then	As part of the wider workforce data workstream, ensure key metrics are embedded into dashboards / reports, and these are tested with apprenticeship board in early 2024. Impact will be greater ability to track and measure progress, and to identify problems at an earlier stage.	To be started	

		3.3.2 Establish recruitment data to feed strategic priorities. Establish data from action plan on workforce planning tasks. Establish data to understand effectiveness of initiatives such as all roles A-E as apprenticeships	WF / NCC HR App team	Assuming data capability is in place, aim to be regularly engaging on this by end of 2024.	As part of the wider workforce data workstream, ensure key recruitment / workforce data is captured and embedded into dashboards / reports. Aim / Impact is to be able to measure effectiveness of wider projects / initiatives through data	To be started	
		3.3.3 Work with SHRBPs and Service managers to feedback recruitment data and understand their skills needs, i.e. Digital, to identify apprentice opportunities as part of service workforce planning to meet current and future skills needs.	WF / NCC HR App team	Collaborate working patterns established by end of 2023, ongoing calendar of engagement established beyond then.	Regular calendar of engagement established between NCC apprenticeship team and SHRBPS / Service Managers, to facilitate collaborative interpretation of data / trends, and to engage early to influence thinking on where apprenticeships could support longer term workforce needs. Impact will be ability to take a longer term, strategic approach to workforce planning and development.	To be started	
	3.4 Work with service managers to map apprenticeships to roles within services	3.4.1 Develop plans for managers that allows them to identify (within their teams); - Apprenticeships that offer development opportunities for employees by roles, - Apprenticeships that allow them to recruit as a 'grow your own'. - Visibility within the Career families framework	WF / NCC HR App team	Scoping work for this to be delivered by spring 2024	Project undertaken that aims to create a toolkit for managers to use, which will allow them to map how apprenticeship opportunities might support recruitment and retention plans that are specific to their team. Impact will be upskilling managers to enable them to plan career development and progression more effectively within their teams.	To be started	

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 10

Report Title: Draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy Consultation 2023

Date of Meeting: 13 September 2023

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Graham Plant (Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport)

Responsible Director: Chris Starkie (Director of Growth and Investment)

Executive Summary

An update to Norfolk's existing Walking and Cycling Strategy (2017) has been developed. The updated strategy takes account of new government and local policies, plans and strategies which place walking, wheeling and cycling at the heart of decision making. The Department for Transport's Gear Change Vision (2020) was a catalyst for change and set the ambitious target for half of journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030. Norfolk County Council's (NCC's) Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) also places emphasis on the role of active travel to deliver a sustainable Norfolk and enhance Norfolk's quality of life.

The benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling are well documented. The strategy will seek to unlock these, support local and government visions, and overcome existing barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling as a natural choice for short journeys, or as part of a longer journey, to create a healthier and greener Norfolk. The ability for the council to do this will depend on it being able to draw down sufficient funding, and so the scale and pace of delivery will be dependent on future resource levels. The draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy (Appendix A) and adjoining Databook (Appendix B) have been developed with the input of numerous NCC service areas and workshops with internal and external officers, partners and stakeholders, helping to join up work across the county. The updated strategy outlines and guides, at a high-level, how NCC will achieve this and present the outcomes NCC want to see.

It is now appropriate to broaden our feedback on the draft strategy. A public consultation survey on the draft strategy hosted on Citizen Space launching mid-late October, subject to sign-off dates, is proposed.

Infrastructure and Development Committee is asked to comment on the draft strategy in Appendix A. Comments will be taken into account ahead of obtaining an Individual Cabinet Member Decision to launch a public consultation on the draft strategy.

Following the consultation, the responses will be analysed, necessary amendments to the strategy document made and the updated strategy will return to Infrastructure and Development Select Committee for comment and go to Cabinet for final approval and adoption in 2024.

Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Provide views on the Draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy 2023 before public consultation.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 In July 2020 the Department for Transport (DfT) published Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking. The document is a catalyst for change and places walking, wheeling and cycling at the heart of decision making to create safer streets, healthier, happier and greener communities, provide convenient and accessible travel. The vision also sets out ambitious targets for walking and cycling, with an aim for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030. This new vision, Norfolk's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), and a number of other important national and local plans and policies relating to transport, public health, environment and climate, all place emphasis on the role of walking, wheeling and cycling to support improved physical and mental health, to safeguard the environment and support the local economy.
- 1.2 To account for this, an update to Norfolk's existing Walking and Cycling Strategy (2017) has been developed. The draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy 2023 sits beneath LTP4 and brings together national and local transport, environmental and public health ambitions. The strategy sets the context for NCC's County-wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and enables a joined-up approach to our investment in walking, wheeling and cycling into the future. The strategy explores the challenges and opportunities faced to enable people in Norfolk to walk wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for short journeys or as part of longer journeys, with 50% of journeys in towns and cities walked and cycled by 2030, which is government's target, and proposes steps to success and achieving this.
- 1.3 The updated strategy introduces the term 'wheeling' when discussing walking and cycling. This term includes people who use wheelchairs, mobility scooters

and mobility aids. The terms walking and wheeling are used together to ensure the work is holistic and inclusive, helping enable everyone to walk, wheel and cycle more often.

- 1.4 Norfolk has a strong track record in attracting funding for active travel schemes. Since 2020, Norfolk County Council has received over £5.5million from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund to deliver a step change in the provision of active travel and better streets for walking, wheeling and cycling. In addition, Norfolk County Council has been able to deliver active travel schemes through successful funding bids with District, Borough and City Council partners through the Transforming Cities Fund and Town Deals. This has seen the delivery of new crossings, cycle parking facilities, cycle lanes and campaigns, to name a few, making Norfolk a safer, healthier, and more attractive place to choose to walk, wheel and cycle. Norfolk also has a number of defined walking and cycling routes across the county, including networks of Public Rights of Way and long distance trails. Despite this, there is still work to be done to make walking, wheeling and cycling a natural choice. The updated strategy looks to address this, but the scale and pace of delivery, and the ability of the council to achieve its ambitious vision, will be dependent on the authority being able to secure sufficient funding to enable delivery of schemes and other intended actions.
- 1.6 Producing an updated Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy will:
 - Better align our strategy to national and local policies
 - Help overcome the barriers faced to walking, wheeling and cycling in Norfolk and unlock their benefits
 - Support Norfolk in securing funding. This is particularly the case with funding from Active Travel England as we can demonstrate we have a comprehensive plan and direction for walking, wheeling and cycling in Norfolk, helping to raise our Active Travel Capability Rating (see section 3.3 for more information on this).
- 1.7 The draft strategy to date has been developed with input from numerous NCC service areas and two workshops, one with internal officers and the other with external officers, partners and stakeholders, have been undertaken to understand the challenges and opportunities relating to walking, wheeling and cycling within different departments and areas of work. The workshops were also an opportunity to discuss how these could be addressed. Feedback from the sessions has informed the draft strategy and have helped to join the strategy up with work across the county.
- 1.8 It is now appropriate to broaden feedback on the draft strategy to ensure public, stakeholder and partner views and level of support for the draft strategy are taken into account before progressing towards adoption. The purpose of this report is to obtain Infrastructure and Development Select Committee's views on the draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy, which can be found

in Appendix A, before an Individual Cabinet Member Decision to launch a public consultation.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy vision is “to create a healthier and greener Norfolk by enabling people to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey, with 50% of the journeys in towns and cities to be completed by walking, wheeling and cycling by 2030”. This aligns with DfT’s Gear Change vision, DfT’s Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2 as well as our local plans and policies.
- 2.2 The Strategy outlines ‘Seven Steps to Success’ which propose what we will do to achieve our vision. These are:
 1. Engage with local communities and enable behavioural change
 2. Create a safe, connected and well-maintained walking, wheeling, and cycling network for all that gets people to where they need to be
 3. Build healthy places, spaces and communities
 4. Support multi-modal journeys
 5. Embrace new technology
 6. Remove barriers to provide a network that is accessible, inclusive and considers the needs of all users
 7. Work with our partners to achieve common ambitions.
- 2.3 A public consultation on the draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy is proposed. The consultation will be hosted on Citizen Space with an expected launch in mid-late October, subject to sign-off. The consultation will ask the public for their views on the draft Strategy’s vision and what we propose is done to achieve this. The consultation will be publicised and sent to a list of stakeholders, partners and interest groups.
- 2.4 Select Committee’s views are requested on the draft strategy. These will be considered, and the strategy amended as appropriate, prior to seeking Cabinet Member authorisation for the consultation. Select Committee Members will also be able to respond directly to the consultation itself.
- 2.5 The consultation will then be analysed and necessary amendments following the consultation will be made to the strategy document. A final version of the strategy will be developed and taken to Infrastructure and Development Select Committee for comment before going to Cabinet for adoption in 2024.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 The Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy 2023 will help to create a positive impact on the physical and mental health of people in Norfolk, our

environment and air quality, or communities and our local economy. By delivering on our 'Seven Steps to Success' we want to achieve a number of outcomes for Norfolk including:

- Communities know the benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling and have the confidence, capability, opportunity and motivation to change their travel behaviours
- Projects are well informed by partners, stakeholders and local communities' expertise and local knowledge ensuring projects meet their needs
- A walking, wheeling and cycling network that can be enjoyed by everyone which is safe, well maintained, accessible and meets the needs of all types of user
- New developments support good access to sustainable travel, facilitate walking, wheeling and cycling, and safeguard the environment and air quality
- Multi-modal journeys are simple and convenient enabling people to travel further and flexibly via sustainable modes
- New technologies are used to enable active travel, including micromobility, gain insight into the way people travel in Norfolk, and support the achievement of net zero carbon emissions in transport by 2050
- Close partnership working ensuring walking, wheeling and cycling interventions are joined up and collective challenges are overcome

More detail on these outcomes can be found within the draft strategy in Appendix A.

- 3.2 The draft strategy outlines how it's proposed these outcomes are achieved and will be supported primarily by the delivery of the Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP) as well as other local strategies and plans which are also outlined within the draft strategy.
- 3.3 The draft strategy will influence the future funding NCC can obtain from Active Travel England. Active Travel England are working alongside local authorities to ensure people have the high-quality infrastructure needed to make active travel part of their everyday lives, supporting the achievement of the Gear Change vision for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030. Achieving this objective will be challenging, so Active Travel England are focusing their resources on councils that have strong leadership, ambition and a track record of delivery. Following a self-assessment of Norfolk's own active travel capabilities, Active Travel England provided Norfolk with a rating of 2 out of 4. We want to improve on this rating as it is linked to funding, and being able to demonstrate our ambition for walking, wheeling and cycling in an updated strategy for Norfolk is a step towards this.
- 3.4 Publicly consulting on the Draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy will enable the strategy to progress with the input of the public, partners and

stakeholders, allowing us to move closer to adopting the new strategy and its implementation.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1 The draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy has been informed by a variety of evidence and data as well as results from recent LTP4 and LCWIP consultations.

4.2 Norfolk County Council also led two workshops with internal and external officers, stakeholders and partners on 4 May 2023 and 15 June 2023, as set out in 1.7.

The workshops, data collection and reviews of recent consultations show that Norfolk faces a number of challenges which the strategy looks to help overcome. These include, but are not limited to, population growth, maintenance and levels of physical activity.

4.3 Evidence has also informed knowledge of the benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling and the reasons for promoting these modes of transport. Key benefits include prevention and management of chronic conditions and diseases, support for improved air quality and reduced carbon emissions, enablement of multi-modal journeys through share schemes, and support for the local economy

4.4 More information on evidence which helps to inform the strategy can be found within the Draft Strategy in Appendix A and within the Databook in Appendix B.

4.5 Infrastructure and Development Select Committee's views on the draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy are being sought ahead of an Individual Cabinet Member Decision to approve the draft strategy for public consultation. Infrastructure and Development Select Committee's comments will help inform the strategy.

4.6 The public consultation will support the strategy in progressing towards adoption by ensuring the views of and level of support from the public, partners and stakeholders are taken into account. Progressing the strategy is important as it sets a direction for how we will remove the barriers and unlock the benefits walking, wheeling and cycling can bring to people, the environment and our local economy.

5. Alternative Options

5.1 An alternative option would be to not undertake an update to Norfolk's Walking and Cycling Strategy (2017). This option however is not advised as the existing 2017 strategy does not account for the new policy direction coming from central

government and our local policies and plans such as LTP4. Not undertaking the strategy could also impact on our ability to access future funding from Active Travel England as it would reduce our potential to achieve the higher capability rating. Having an adopted Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy will help to boost NCC's rating by showing our ambition and plan for active travel in the county, supporting us in securing future funding. It is therefore important that member comments are made on the draft strategy and a subsequent Individual Cabinet Member Decision is obtained in order to progress towards the consultation and subsequent strategy adoption in time for the next active travel assessment.

- 5.2 Another alternative option would be to not publicly consult on the draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy. This option is not advised as public, partner and stakeholder input into our updated strategy is essential to ensure we are meeting the needs of people in Norfolk.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 None: Costs for the consultation will be met from existing budgets. A budget of £400 from the Local Transport Plan 4 funding has been set aside for consultation promotion activities.
- 6.2 Delivery of the strategy will be funded from a number of sources including the council's Local Transport Plan capital funding, successful bids, developers and funding via Active Travel England, see above. The scale and pace of delivery will depend on future funding levels secured.

7. Resource Implications

7.1 Staff:

None: Resources allocated within existing teams.

7.2 Property:

None.

7.3 IT:

Involves usage of existing programmes, including Citizen Space.

8. Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications:

None.

8.2 Human Rights Implications:

None.

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):

EqIA has been undertaken in the preparation of the Strategy. The EqIA for the Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy is available on request. The Strategy aims to promote equality and inclusivity with a key theme of “Remove[ing] barriers to provide a network that is accessible, inclusive and considers the needs of all users”.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

A DPIA Screening has been undertaken through the preparation of the Strategy as a public consultation will be carried out. A Full DPIA was not deemed necessary due to the nature of the data being collected as part of the work. The DPIA for the Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy is available on request.

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

None.

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

The Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy promotes travel via sustainable modes, including active travel and public transport, aiming to have a positive implication on sustainability and support decarbonisation of transport. The consultation on the Strategy will not have an implication on sustainability however it is expected that the adoption and delivery of the strategy will support sustainability.

8.7 Any Other Implications:

None.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

- 9.1 A potential risk identified is a low consultation turn out, making it difficult to ascertain public views towards the strategy. To mitigate this, we have budgeted £400 to put towards publicity of the consultation. We also plan to distribute the consultation to numerous stakeholders, partners and special interest groups to obtain a good level of representation in the consultation responses.

10. Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Provide views on the draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy before public consultation.

11. Background Papers

- 11.1 [Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking](#)

[Better Together, For Norfolk 2021-25](#)

[Norfolk Local Transport Plan 4](#)

[Norfolk Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#)

[Norfolk Access Improvement Plan 2019-2029](#)

Equality Impact Assessment: Available on request

Data Protection Impact Assessment: Available on request

11.2 Further relevant documents can be found referenced in Appendix A.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

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Norfolk County Council

Draft Walking, wheeling and cycling strategy for Norfolk 2023-2036

2023

Our Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy on a page

Our vision: To create a healthier and greener Norfolk by enabling people to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey, with 50% of the journeys in towns and cities to be completed by walking, wheeling and cycling by 2030.

Benefits and opportunities

- It's great for your physical and mental health. 30 minutes of walking or 20 minutes of cycling a day can reduce mortality risk by at least 10%.
- It's a way of getting from A to B without emitting harmful emissions which helps improve air quality and mitigate climate change
- It supports access to education and employment as well as supporting local businesses and public transport
- New technology offers innovative solutions and the opportunity to go further
- A way of connecting to the environment, exploring the county and reducing social isolation

Challenges

- Changing behaviours to active travel as the car is the dominant mode of transport. 28% of adults in Norfolk are currently physically inactive.
- Perceptions around safety and stereotypes can put people off
- A mix of rural and urban settings
- Join-up across different partners, stakeholders and communities
- Walking, wheeling and cycling is a broad subject and impacts many different groups of people who should all be represented

- Maintenance of our pavements, footpaths and cycleways
- Securing funding to deliver projects and improvements
- Climate change adaptation (e.g shading may be more important for those using active travel)

Our 7 steps to achieve our vision, realise the benefits and overcome the challenges

1. Engage with local communities and enable behavioural change
2. Create a safe, connected and well-maintained walking, wheeling, and cycling network for all that gets people to where they need to be
3. Build healthy places, spaces and communities
4. Support multi-modal journeys
5. Embrace new technology
6. Remove barriers to provide a network that is accessible, inclusive and considers the needs of all users
7. Work with our partners to achieve common ambitions

Next steps and delivery: This strategy sits beneath our Fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and takes account of other key national, regional and local policies. The strategy will be mostly implemented through the Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP) as well as other adopted and emerging plans to ensure walking, wheeling and cycling is at the heart of Norfolk County Council's (NCC's) decision making. Scale and pace of delivery will depend on ability to secure funding for our ambitions. We will monitor our strategy's success through these plans.

Introduction

Here at Norfolk County Council (NCC) we have a collective ambition to ensure our communities grow, thrive and prosper for the future. In recent years, Norfolk has experienced impressive growth with a population of over 900,000 which is forecast to grow to more than a million by 2036. There are plans to build more than 80,000 homes over the next 20 years and with this comes increased travel and traffic. We want to support the growing Norfolk population by enabling more people to walk, wheel and cycle in the county and choose sustainable transport modes to get to where they need to be and for leisure. This will help us be more efficient in our use of transport space, create and support healthy communities, enable our transport network to run effectively and emit fewer harmful emissions, and help connect people to and protect our environment as much as we can.

Norfolk has a strong track record in attracting funding for active travel schemes. Since 2020, NCC has received over £5.5million from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund to deliver a step change in the provision of active travel and better streets for walking, wheeling and cycling. In addition, NCC has been able to deliver active travel schemes through successful funding bids with District, Borough and City Council partners through the Transforming Cities Fund and Town Deals. This has seen the delivery of new crossings, cycle parking facilities, cycle lanes and campaigns, to name a few, making Norfolk a safer, healthier, and more attractive place to choose to walk, wheel and cycle.

Norfolk also has a number of defined walking and cycling routes across the county, which are particularly prevalent in urban areas. Despite this, Norfolk still faces challenges to increasing levels of walking, wheeling and cycling which this strategy identifies, along with the opportunities our unique county presents. This strategy seeks to overcome these challenges and create a county where walking, wheeling and cycling are a natural choice.

This strategy sits beneath Norfolk's Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and is an update to our existing Walking and Cycling Strategy (2017) to bring together our local transport, environmental and public health ambitions. The strategy sets the context for our County-wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and enables a joined-up approach to our investment in walking, wheeling and cycling into the future. This will help create healthy communities, create an efficient transport network with reduced congestion, and to help protect our environment.

We want to support government's ambitions to enable people to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey, with 50% of journeys in towns and cities walked and cycled by 2030. Having a strategy in place will put us in a better position to secure the funding to help achieve this ambitious vision.



Content

1. Summary
2. Our Vision for an Active Norfolk
3. Benefits and opportunities
4. Challenges
5. The policy drive for a step change
6. Our 7 steps to success and achieving our goal
7. What next?
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9. Our LCWIP and NAIP
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11. References

1. Summary

In Norfolk, 7.6% of people cycle and 28.4% walk for travel at least once a month, and for leisure 11.8% of people cycle and 73.5% walk (DfT data, 2021). Norfolk has existing walking and cycling networks made up of the National Cycle Network, Norwich and Great Yarmouth Pedalways, Greenways, quiet lanes, Norfolk Trails, and Public Rights of Way. This strategy aims to make walking, wheeling or cycling for both travel and leisure the natural choice, particularly for short journeys or as part of longer journeys. Extending, linking and improving our network and encouraging activity, have many positive health and wellbeing, environmental and economic impacts.

The purpose of this strategy is to bring together the national, regional and local ambitions, plans and policies to create a walking, wheeling and cycling strategy for Norfolk and our residents. This strategy is high-level and outlines what our vision is for Norfolk, providing a direction for walking, wheeling and cycling investment and activity in the county and creating a journey to achieving the vision.

The updated strategy introduces the term 'wheeling' when discussing walking and cycling. This term includes people who use wheelchairs, mobility scooters, mobility aids and similar modes that use pavement space at a similar speed to walking. In this strategy we use the terms walking and wheeling together to ensure the work we do is holistic and inclusive to enable people in Norfolk to walk, wheel and cycle more often.

The strategy vision is to create a healthier and greener Norfolk by enabling people to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey, with 50% of the journeys in towns and cities to be completed by walking, wheeling and cycling by 2030. We want to enable everyone to have the opportunity and motivation to walk, wheel and cycle in our county wherever possible. These ambitious plans require funding to deliver. We have a strong track-record in drawing down money for delivery and will be in a stronger position to continue to do this with this strategy.

We have outlined seven steps to achieve our vision which are:

1. Engage with local communities and enable behavioural change

2. Create a safe, connected and well-maintained walking, wheeling, and cycling network for all that gets people to where they need to be
3. Build healthy places, spaces and communities
4. Support multi-modal journeys
5. Embrace new technology
6. Remove barriers to provide a network that is accessible, inclusive and considers the needs of all users
7. Work with our partners to achieve common ambitions.

The strategy is also an opportunity to show the public, local authorities, stakeholders and central government what areas NCC will focus on to achieve our vision and will support us to secure future funding for active travel schemes.

Our strategy has been guided by engagement with our partners and departments, reviews of recent consultations and local data, and has many links into a variety of national, regional and local policies and plans including Norfolk's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) to create a cohesive approach to the strategy (see Section 5 for more detail).

We aim to deliver our strategy through a number of plans and mechanisms but primarily through Norfolk's LCWIPs and the NAIP. Delivery is subject to securing government funding for our walking, wheeling and cycling projects. We will monitor the success of our strategy through these plans as well as reviewing how we are progressing towards the outcomes we would like to see.

2. Our Vision for an Active Norfolk

To create a healthier and greener Norfolk by enabling people to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey, with 50% of the journeys in towns and cities to be completed by walking, wheeling and cycling by 2030.

Our vision is in line with central government's ambitious target for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030 (DfT, 2020). We want to support this vision and enable people in Norfolk to walk, wheel and cycle.

Achievement of our vision is subject to securing funding from government. This strategy will put us in a strong position to be able to secure government funding as it enables us to demonstrate our ambition and vision for walking, wheeling and cycling in Norfolk.

The steps to how we aim to achieve this vision and the outcomes we want to see are summarised on the next page.

Vision

To create a healthier and greener Norfolk by enabling people to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey, with 50% of the journeys in towns and cities to be completed by walking, wheeling and cycling by 2030.

7 Steps to Success

Engage with local communities and enable behavioural change

Create a safe, connected and well-maintained walking, wheeling, and cycling network for all that gets people to where they need to be

Build healthy places, spaces and communities

Support multi-modal journeys

Embrace new technology

Remove barriers to provide a network that is accessible, inclusive and considers the needs of all users

Work with our partners to achieve common ambitions

Outcomes we want to see

Communities know the benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling and have the tools in engage in an active lifestyle

People and organisations feel supported to change their travel behaviours

Adults and children have the confidence, opportunity and motivation to walk, wheel or cycle to education and employment

Projects are well informed by partners, stakeholders and local communities' expertise and local knowledge ensuring projects meet their needs

A walking, wheeling and cycling network that can be enjoyed by everyone

Half of all journeys in Norfolk's towns and city being cycled or walked by 2030

Parents and children feel confident and safe walking, wheeling or cycling to school when living within a walkable or cyclable distance

Comprehensive plans helping us secure government funding to deliver walking, wheeling and cycling projects

Safer roads and road users to aid a reduction in the rate of fatal and serious casualties involving people walking, wheeling or cycling

Well-maintained pavements and cycle paths

Residents and visitors can explore and enjoy Norfolk by utilising well connected and maintained paths, trails, cycle routes which are well signed and information about these is readily available

New developments have good access to sustainable travel and active travel

New developments, places and spaces facilitate walking, wheeling and cycling to education, employment, amenities and green spaces and make people feel safe when doing so

Places, spaces and communities offer viable sustainable transport modes such as walking, wheeling and cycling

Air quality in urban centres is improved and measures are being taken to revoke Norfolk's Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)

The impact of our travel behaviours on the environment is minimised

Multi-modal journeys are simple and convenient enabling people to travel further and flexibly via sustainable modes

Walking, wheeling and cycling interventions and connectivity are contributing towards the Norfolk BSIP target to grow annual bus patronage in the county by 1% per annum between 2023 and 2027

Multi-modal journeys are facilitating rural accessibility and contributing to the BSIP target to improve Norfolk's index of rural accessibility to 85% by 2027

New technology is used to enable active travel and gain insight into the way people travel in Norfolk

Achievement of the LTP4 target of net zero carbon emissions from transport by 2050

Measures to adapt our walking, wheeling and cycling network to climate change

Micromobility schemes are found across Norfolk facilitating low carbon travel

All residents and visitors have access to walking, wheeling and cycling networks suitable for them

Infrastructure meets the needs of all users

Walking, wheeling and cycling are activities that can be undertaken by all whether for travel or leisure and whether you are new to, returning to, or already walking, wheeling or cycling

Norfolk County Council and partners understand their role in enabling people in Norfolk to walk, wheel and cycle as the natural choice

We are collectively reducing our impact on the climate, air quality and environment

Walking, wheeling and cycling interventions, whether infrastructure or behavioural change, are well informed and joined-up with other local policies, plans and projects

We have strong working relationships with our partners and are overcoming our collective challenges

3. Benefits and opportunities

Walking, wheeling, and cycling have huge benefits for both people and place and help us to achieve national, regional and local ambitions. By achieving our goal, we will be supporting Norfolk's people, economy and environment to thrive.

Health

Physical activity helps both physical and mental health conditions and disease. It is well documented that physical activity can help prevent and manage over 20 chronic conditions and diseases, as well as reducing stress and anxiety and increasing mental alertness and energy. Physical activity also leads to reduced costs for the NHS (Sustrans, 2022).

Did you know: Walking for 30 minutes or cycling for 20 minutes on most days reduces mortality risk by at least 10% (WHO, 2022).

Cancer-related mortality is 30% lower among bike commuters (WHO, 2022).

Enabling more walking, wheeling and cycling also provides an opportunity for health workers to prescribe active travel to patients to help people's physical and mental health. Active Travel England are trialling an active travel social prescribing scheme in 11 areas across the country (Active Travel England, 2022) looking to support reduced demand in healthcare appointments and reliance on medication due to more physical activity.

Education and employment

Increasing active travel can increase access to employment and has created safer environments around schools. Wider availability of cycling has the potential to reduce transport inequality and promote access to jobs and education (DfT, 2019). It can also improve the environment outside schools, as has been seen from NCC's School Streets trials which observed reduced congestion, and improved perception of safety by 37% outside the trial schools (NCC, 2023).

Workplace

Cycling to work can increase productivity. 73% of employees who cycle feel it makes them more productive at work (The Prince's Responsible Business Network, 2011). Employees who are also physically active take 27% fewer sick days than their colleagues (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2012), saving them, and their employer, time and money.

Did you know: Around 10% of people in Norfolk's workplace is within a walkable and cyclable distance.

In Norfolk 12% of people travel less than 2km to get to work and 11% travel less than 5km to get to work (Census, 2021). These are generally considered walkable and cyclable distances respectively and offer the opportunity to enable people to walk, wheel or cycle these short journeys.

Community

Walking, wheeling and cycling is a great way to explore and meet new people. Walking, wheeling and cycling can reduce social isolation and create a sense of place and community. Streets that cater for walking, wheeling and cycling lead to spaces where people feel safe, relaxed and welcome, where people choose to travel actively and where children can play.

E-bikes

Electric bikes and scooters allow for increased travel distance. E-bikes offer an

opportunity for people to travel further by bike as well as enabling more people to access cycling due to their power assistance. For example, in Holland e-bikes are more likely to be owned by over 65s and have been shown to increase trip length (Harms and Kansen, 2018).

Did you know: There are 100 e-bikes and 245 e-scooters available for use in Norwich and Great Yarmouth through Beryl and Ginger share schemes and trials (2023).

Economy

Low-cost transport option.

Making it easier to walk, wheel and cycle is important to help people in Norfolk through the cost-of-living crisis and to grow our economy (Sustrans, 2022). They are relatively low-cost transport options.

Active travel also **supports our local businesses and economy.** People who walk to the high street spend up to 40% more than people who drive to the high-street (TfL, 2013). Cycle parking delivers five times the retail spend per square metre than the same area of car parking (Rajé and Saffrey, 2016).

Did you know: Average charges for parking for two hours across Norfolk is approximately £2.50 with the average in Norwich being closer to approximately £4. Walking, wheeling or cycling these trips would eliminate these fees.

Walking, wheeling and cycling can also support Norfolk's tourism industry by promoting exploration around the county via sustainable modes of transport and experiencing Norfolk's trails and quiet lanes.

Environment

Walking, wheeling and cycling create a greener, healthier and safer Norfolk.

Giving people the opportunity to choose to walk, wheel or cycle supports a reduction in transport emissions, congestion, noise and air pollution because they can replace journeys that would have been otherwise undertaken by car. This mitigates climate change and supports cleaner air helping us to meet national and local decarbonisation and air quality targets whilst also making our county a nicer place to live for both people and nature.

Did you know: People who switch just one trip per day from car driving to cycling reduce their carbon footprint by about 0.5 tonnes over a year, representing a substantial share of average per capita CO₂ emissions (Brand et al., 2021).

Transport in Norfolk is the highest emitting sector with 30% of total carbon emissions coming from road transport (BEIS, 2022). Transport is therefore one of the largest sectors where carbon savings need to be made in order to contribute to the global efforts to mitigate climate change for both people and the environment and meet local and national decarbonisation targets (Norfolk's Environmental Policy 2019 and Transport Decarbonisation Plan 2021). Giving people the opportunity and motivation to walk, wheel or cycle as the natural choice can help Norfolk achieve this target.

4.9% of mortality in Norfolk and 5.5% in Norwich is attributable to air pollution (Norfolk Insight, 2019). Increased walking, wheeling and cycling can help reduce this percentage.

Public transport

Walking, wheeling and cycling can improve accessibility around Norfolk.

Enabling people to walk, wheel and cycle more can also support use of and access to public transport. The rollout of the Beryl bike, e-bike and e-scooter scheme in Norwich has seen 42% of riders connecting to train journeys and 24% have connected to a bus journey (Beryl, 2022).

Did you know: Norfolk is welcoming 70 electric buses, making journeys even greener.

Last mile journeys

Cost effective for

businesses. Enabling more walking, wheeling and cycling offers an opportunity to support last mile journeys in a cost effective way. For example, e-cargo bikes can be used for business deliveries instead of vans supporting a reduction in emissions, congestion and business costs.

Funding

Increased investment for Norfolk and its residents.

Enabling more people to walk, wheel and cycle in Norfolk creates more opportunities for us to receive funding from government to deliver further initiatives. Active Travel England are rating local authorities across the country on their active travel plans and provision and their rating can influence the funding we receive (Active Travel England, 2023). By developing this strategy, we can show Active Travel England that we have strong leadership, comprehensive plans and significant ambition which can support us to obtain funding from government to deliver our strategy, as and when it becomes available.

4. Challenges

There are a number of challenges and barriers we face to achieving our vision to enable people in Norfolk to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of longer journeys. These challenges have been identified by collecting data, reviewing recent public consultations and undertaking workshops with departments within NCC and partners. The challenges we face and aim to overcome include:

Levels of physical activity

Currently nearly one third of Norfolk adults are inactive.

In Norfolk, 28% of adults are physically inactive (Active Norfolk, 2021) and a quarter of adults in Norfolk are obese (OHID, 2022). Insufficient physical activity is associated with one in six deaths in the UK (Public Health England, 2020).

The car is still the main mode to get to school and work in the region. In 2021, 54% of people in Norfolk drove a car or van to work, 8% walked and 3% cycled (Census, 2021). The percentage of physically active children is also lower in Norfolk than the regional and national averages (OHID, 2022).

This strategy aims to support everyone to enjoy an active lifestyle.

Safety and speed

Feeling safe on Norfolk's roads.

In 2022, there were 103 fatalities or serious casualties of people walking or

cycling on Norfolk roads. Whilst this is on a downward trend, we must continue to reduce this to ensure people are safe and feel safe when walking, wheeling, and cycling in Norfolk. Recent consultation has shown that safety is a barrier to walking, wheeling and cycling in Norfolk. 63.5% of respondents to our recent Countywide LCWIP engagement survey said safer roads including slower driving speeds, less traffic and more considerate driving would encourage them to walk more and 61% said it would encourage them to cycle more. Vehicle speeds, vehicle type, lighting, road and pavement conditions and proximity to other modes contribute to this.

Safety can also present an issue with getting to school. Some children live within a walkable or cyclable distance to school but travel to school by car or organised transport due to the journey being deemed unsafe.

This strategy aims to change this and to improve safety and confidence when walking, wheeling and cycling.

Rural county

Norfolk is a large and rural county.

Norfolk is a largely rural county with services focussed in market towns and urban centres. Distances can often be too far to be travelled by walking, wheeling, or cycling, particularly for people with reduced mobility and active travel infrastructure in rural areas is often absent.

This strategy aims to support sustainable movement in our rural county.

Aging population

One quarter of the Norfolk population are over 65 years old. Norfolk has an older population with the proportion of residents 65 years or older rising from 25% to 28% over the next 10 years (Norfolk Insight, 2021). Norfolk has the 15th most elderly population in England. Streets and active travel infrastructure are not always suitable for those who are elderly or with reduced mobility. This acts as a barrier to people choosing to walk, wheel or cycle for their journeys, part of their journeys or for leisure.

This strategy aims to consider everyone's needs when implementing walking, wheeling and cycling projects to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be active.

Inequalities

Transport inequalities exist whether that be based on gender, income, race and ethnicity, age, location, health or disability. People from ethnic minorities, young people not in education, employment or training, students, older people and women were all reported to be particularly at risk of transport poverty.

Levels of cycling to work are higher for males in Norfolk than females (ONS, 2021). Walking and cycling for leisure

is also lower in groups that are most deprived than those with lower levels of deprivation.

Three key underlying factors that influence the relationship between transport and inequality are the way people are distributed (geographically and by social class), the way opportunities are distributed (jobs and education) and how accessible the transport system is (cost, accessibility, time and reliability) (DfT, 2019). Working closely with local planning authorities and integrating active travel into how we build spaces is essential to overcome this challenge.

Disabled people take 38% fewer trips across all modes of transport than non-disabled people (Motability, 2022). In England, disabled people take 30% fewer walking trips than non-disabled people (NTS, 2021). Pavement parking, pavement maintenance and distance to services are identified as key barriers disabled people face to walking and wheeling more often (Sustrans, 2023).

This strategy aims to ensure all residents and visitors have access to a walking, wheeling and cycling network suitable for them.

Growth

Population growth in Norfolk is above average. The East of England experienced the largest population growth in England between 2011 and 2021. South Norfolk experienced the highest growth in the county with a growth of 14.4% making it 15th in the country for increase population growth. Population growth

in Breckland and Norwich were also above the England average (Census, 2021). This means more people are using our transport network and forecasts show that the Norfolk population will be over a million by 2036. Ensuring new developments provide options for sustainable transport, such as walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, can help ensure the growth in our county has a positive impact our transport network.

This strategy aims to support growth in the county and ensure new developments and residents support walking, wheeling and cycling.

Engagement

Taking into account the requirements of everyone in schemes we do. Norfolk has a strong sense of identity and place. There is a mix of urban, rural, and coastal communities, each with its own character, distinctiveness and needs. Representing the wants and needs of the county can be challenging. We need to do more to ensure that the requirements of everyone are taken into account so that walking, wheeling and cycling investment meets the needs of all.

This strategy aims to increase representation of Norfolk's residents when we engage on walking, wheeling and cycling projects.

Monitoring

Monitoring is complex. Monitoring and data collection on

walking, wheeling, and cycling activity is challenging, which can make it difficult to understand how parts of the network work for walking, wheeling and cycling, and where improvements can be made.

This strategy aims to address this challenge by embracing new methods and technology for monitoring and working within best practice.

Maintenance

Well maintained infrastructure. Pavements, including shared use, are the second largest of the Council's assets and account for an estimated 7% of the total highway asset value (TAMP, 2022). Maintenance of walking and cycling routes has been raised in the LCWIP consultation as an important consideration with 69% of respondents stating that better maintenance of pavements and walkways would encourage them to walk more and 51% would cycle more if road surfaces were better maintained for cycling.

This strategy is linked to the Countywide LCWIP and NAIP helping to address challenges of maintenance of walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure.

Join-up

Wide landscape of stakeholders. We must ensure that we join-up the work we do with existing schemes and stakeholders. Norfolk is a large county and active travel is a broad subject with numerous stakeholders. We will strive

to ensure join-up to deliver the best outcomes for Norfolk.

This strategy presents our ambition to work with partners and stakeholders to ensure join-up and take collective action to overcome barriers.

Road space

Road layouts and designs can be a challenge. Space for walking and cycling, alongside other means of travel like in buses or cars, can be a challenge, particularly in locations such as Norfolk's historic market towns where roads can often be narrow. Parking or other obstacles on the pavement can also present a challenge to walking, wheeling and cycling by creating obstructions.

This strategy aims to work within best practice to support place specific solutions to competing modes and complex road layouts which can make walking, wheeling and cycling more difficult.

Stereotypes and perceptions

Stereotypes and perception play a role. Stereotypes of 'pedestrians', 'walkers' or 'cyclists' can lead people to not identify with walking or cycling as a way of travel or means for leisure. This can put people off these modes and presents a barrier to getting more people walking, wheeling and cycling.

This strategy aims to show that walking, wheeling and cycling can be part of anyone's journey.

Habits and car ownership

New habits and changing behaviours. Car ownership in Norfolk is higher than the England average. 83% of households in Norfolk have at least one car compared to 76% for England (Census, 2021). Car ownership is lowest in urban areas such as Norwich. Habits of car use can present a challenge to getting more people walking, wheeling and cycling, particularly for short journeys where active travel is a viable option.

This strategy aims to create conditions where people feel confident to make the switch to walking, wheeling and cycling, supporting people to live healthy and active lives.

The pandemic also had an impact on how often people travel. In Norfolk, the number of people working mainly from home has grown by 20% (Census, 2011). The prevalence of needing to look after physical and mental health has also grown since the pandemic (Active Norfolk, 2021).

Funding

Local authority resources.

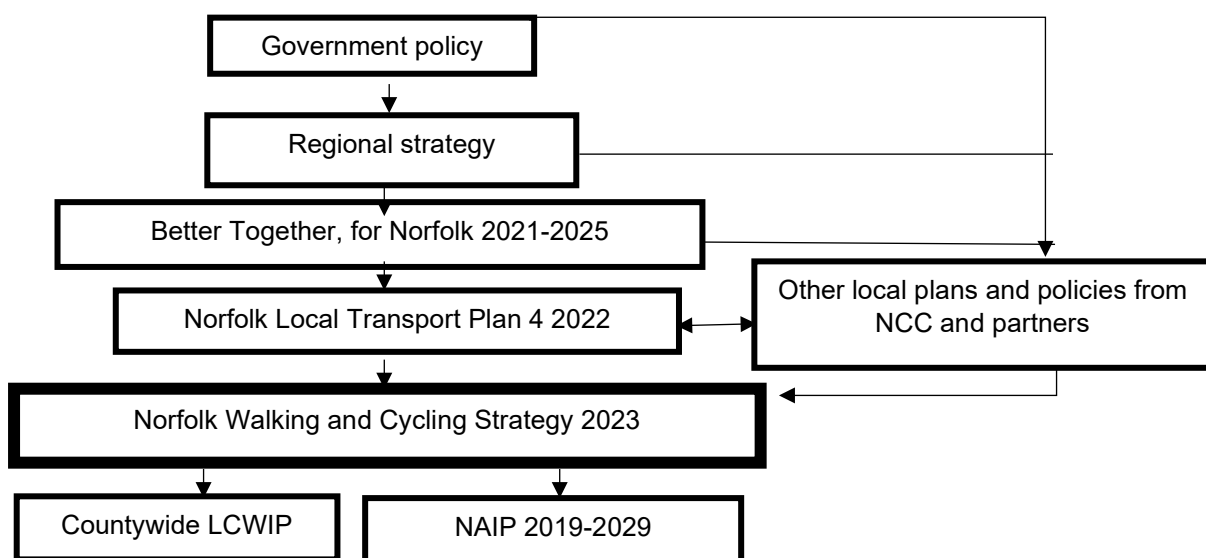
Local authorities do not have unlimited budgets to deliver infrastructure or for other activities. Being able to achieve our ambitions and deliver this strategy will be dependent on our ability to secure funding and work with partners. Having a strategy puts us in a better place to be successful in doing this.



5. The policy drive for a step change

Since we published our last Walking and Cycling Strategy in 2017, there has been a step change in policy which has placed emphasis on the need to increase walking, wheeling and cycling for health and wellbeing, the environment and the economy. We need update our strategy to recognise this.

This strategy sits beneath [Norfolk's Fourth Local Transport Plan](#) and takes account of other key national, regional and local policies. The strategy will be mostly implemented through the [County Wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#) (LCWIP) and [Norfolk Access Improvement Plan](#) (NAIP) but will also be considered when delivering other schemes and plans to ensure walking, wheeling and cycling is at the heart of NCC's decision making. Read more on our LCWIP and NAIP in Section 9.



We aim to support government's [Gear Change ambition](#) of 50% of journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030 and take account of the [Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2](#), revisions to the [Highway Code](#) which places the people using active modes as high priority, and government's [Transport Decarbonisation Plan](#) in this strategy. The strategy also supports regional strategies including [Transport East's Active Travel Strategy](#).

The strategy is guided by [NCC's Better Together, for Norfolk](#), 2021-25 strategy and supports the ambitions for a sustainable economy, better opportunities for children and young people, enabling healthy and independent lives, creating strong, engaged and inclusive communities and a greener and more resilient future. We achieve this because enabling people to walk, wheel and cycle more, and as the natural choice, unlocks huge benefits for people, the economy and the environment.

Other policy developments in [public transport](#), [maintenance](#), [public health](#), [speed management](#), [sustainable development](#), [climate](#), and partner strategies have also been aligned to in this strategy to ensure walking, wheeling, and cycling investment is joined up and tailor made for Norfolk.



6. Our seven steps to success and achieving our goal

To unlock the benefits and opportunities, overcome the challenges and support our national, regional and local policies, we have identified seven steps to success to achieve our goal. These steps will help us to enable more people to walk, wheel and cycle in Norfolk more often and as the natural choice, particularly for short journeys or as part of a longer journey. Our success in achieving the seven steps, and how quickly we can move forward on this, will be dependent on our ability to find the means to provide the necessary resource.

1. Engage with local communities and enable behavioural change

Engagement enables people to help shape the design and delivery of walking, wheeling, and cycling schemes, as well as changing attitudes and behaviours. We aim to engage with communities and organisations to understand their needs, what motivates and influences them to make the choices they do, and how we can enable and encourage increased uptake of active travel.

We want to engage with people who may be new to walking wheeling or cycling, or returning to it, to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be active. We want engagement to be representative of everyone in Norfolk to ensure no one is left behind.

Outcomes we want to see:

- Communities know the benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling and have the tools to engage in an active lifestyle
- People and organisations feel supported to change their travel behaviours
- Adults and children have the confidence, opportunity and motivation to walk, wheel or cycle to education and employment
- Projects are well informed by partners', stakeholders' and local communities' expertise and local knowledge ensuring projects meet their needs

We want to do this by:

- Engaging with communities to understand their needs and encourage and assist people to use more sustainable transport
- Targeting engagement based on data with increased granularity on demographics and behaviours to ensure engagement is representative of everyone in Norfolk, ensuring we strive to involve under-represented groups
- Providing schools, workplaces and communities with the tools and skills needed to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling. This would involve:
 - Delivering the Norfolk Sustainable School Travel Strategy (2022) including working with schools and colleges to promote take up of the cycling allowance, work with partners to create more walking and cycling routes available to school children and working with partners to reduce carbon emissions in schools. NCC's cycling allowance is available for any student resident in Norfolk who qualifies for support under the general school and college transport policy but cycles to school instead.

- Continuing engagement with schools through projects such as road safety education courses, Modeshift Stars, Bikeability and offering Active Travel Audits and encourage home educated children and children not in regular education to access road safety and safe independent travel
- Encouraging early conversations with students transitioning to next level education about what active travel options or pupil transport options are available
- Working with Sustrans to raise awareness of sustainable and active travel options amongst workplaces and providing support packages
- Engaging with private and public sector partners, such as district councils, Active Norfolk, the NHS, schools and employers to ensure join-up across the county, contribution towards common ambitions, and draw on their expertise to collectively enable more people in Norfolk to walk, wheel and cycle
- Engaging communities as early as possible so that residents' views are considered when choosing, designing, and developing interventions
- Continuing to work with residents, and schools and developers through [A to Better](#) to enable and encourage an increased uptake of walking, wheeling, and cycling
- Delivering the Road Safety Partnership Strategy and continue to deliver road safety campaigns
- Working with organisations to encourage sustainable tourism in the county
- Utilising social media to encourage people to walk, wheel and cycle and promote projects and tools which support people in doing this.

2. Create a safe, connected and well-maintained walking, wheeling, and cycling network for all that gets people to where they need to be

We will seek to develop Norfolk's network of walking, wheeling, and cycling routes which are safe, direct, convenient, accessible, comfortable and well maintained. We aim for the network to be inclusive and give everyone the opportunity, confidence, and desire to be active across Norfolk, whether for travel or leisure and make active travel a natural choice for short journeys for those living in urban areas and encouraged in rural areas. We aim for the network to take account of the needs of all types of users.

Outcomes we want to see:

- A walking, wheeling and cycling network that can be enjoyed by everyone
- Half of all journeys in Norfolk's towns and city being cycled or walked by 2030
- Parents and children feel confident and safe walking wheeling or cycling to school when living within a walkable or cyclable distance
- Comprehensive plans helping us secure government funding to deliver walking, wheeling and cycling projects
- Safer roads and road users to aid a reduction in the rate of fatal and serious casualties involving people walking, wheeling or cycling
- Well-maintained pavements and cycle paths

- Residents and visitors can explore and enjoy Norfolk by utilising well connected and maintained paths, trails, cycle routes which are well signed and information about these readily available.

We want to achieve this by:

- Preparing walking, wheeling and cycling projects so we are ready for when funding comes available to deliver them in short timescales
- Aligning our work to the Department for Transport Gear Change vision and adjoining design guidance and taking account of the needs of all types of user
- Adopting and delivering the Countywide LCWIP which identifies a walking, wheeling, and cycling network that connects people to education, employment, and public transport in a safe, coherent, direct, and comfortable way
- Delivering the actions identified in the NAIP
- Delivering [Greenways to Greenspaces](#)
- Taking forward the actions identified in the Market Town Network Improvement Strategies and review and extend the work
- Liaising with National Highways on the government's proposals to 'cycle-proof' the Strategic Road Network
- Seeking to improve connectivity between rural areas and services in urban areas by connecting urban routes to long distance routes
- Supporting interventions to provide access to green and blue (environments that predominantly feature water) space in a 15-minute walk
- Delivering NCC's revenue and capital programme for walking, wheeling, and cycling schemes
- Planning maintenance of the strategic cycle network into future capital programmes
- Supporting projects such as EXPERIENCE, which support the local tourism industry and businesses, through provision and promotion of walking, wheeling and cycling routes.

3. Build healthy places, spaces and communities

We want to enable people in Norfolk to live physically and mentally healthy lives.

This will be facilitated by ensuring places are planned to support people to live active lives, taking a Healthy Streets approach, supporting improvements to air quality, and putting people first. This strategy aims to support growth in the county and ensure new developments and residents can make walking, wheeling and cycling the norm.

Outcomes we want to see:

- New developments have good access to sustainable travel and active travel
- New developments, places and spaces give people the choice of walking, wheeling and cycling to education, employment, amenities and green spaces, and people feel safe when choosing to do so
- Places, spaces and communities offer viable sustainable transport modes such as walking, wheeling and cycling
- Air quality in urban centres is improved and measures are being taken to revoke Norfolk's Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)

- The impact of our travel behaviours on the environment is minimised.

We want to do this by:

- Working with partners to deliver development that has active and sustainable travel in mind. This will help to ensure our developments meet Active Travel England's requirements as a statutory consultee and to encourage uptake of active travel. We seek to secure development layouts, along with off-site highway improvements to support and encourage active travel.
- Securing contributions to active travel infrastructure from developers so that any negative impacts from developments are minimised
- Securing and enacting travel plans for new developments
- Reviewing opportunities to consolidate freight within the urban network through last mile delivery hubs in combination with e-cargo bikes
- Exploring the need for a Parklet Policy and following best practice
- Investigating best practice approaches to tackling pavement parking recognising there will be no 'one size fits all' answer
- Considering the impact of each of our schemes on the environment to enable biodiversity net gain and ensure we have a positive impact
- Utilising the Healthy Streets Approach when delivering infrastructure and planning spaces and build capability within the council to do this
- Working closely with schools to ensure that they are clear what NCC can support with in terms of schools based travel interventions e.g. road safety training, cycle training, school streets, behaviour change work etc
- Exploring solutions to create neighbourhoods that give people the opportunity and confidence to walk, wheel or cycle
- Delivering the Norfolk Speed Management Strategy.

4. Support multi-modal journeys

The ability to complete journeys using different forms of transport is important in both urban and rural areas. People should be able to transfer between active modes of transport and Norfolk's public transport services easily due to well-designed networks providing sustainable transport means, travel hubs, journey planners such as Travel Norfolk and facilities. This would help support usable alternatives to car travel for longer journeys, and support ambitions in Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). Delivering interventions to enable multi-modal journeys also helps to support sustainable movement in our rural county, supporting access to public transport.

Outcomes we want to see:

- Multi-modal journeys are simple and convenient enabling people to travel further and flexibly via sustainable modes (walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and car shares)
- Walking, wheeling and cycling interventions and connectivity are contributing towards the Norfolk BSIP target to grow annual bus patronage in the county by 1% per annum between 2023 and 2027
- Multi-modal journeys are facilitating rural accessibility and contributing to the BSIP target to improve Norfolk's index of rural accessibility to 85% by 2027.

We want to achieve this by:

- Supporting the delivery of the BSIP by improving walking, wheeling, and cycling connectivity to bus interchanges and travel hubs and accommodate Cycle and Ride facilities. Also seek to improve connectivity to and facilities at other public transport interchanges such as train stations
- Delivering Travel Norfolk to help people plan journeys via active modes to support Mobility as a Service (digital transport service platforms) and integrate sustainable modes
- Reviewing cycle parking in the county to ensure people feel confident locking their bicycles
- Supporting micro-mobility share schemes such as Beryl in Norwich and Ginger in Great Yarmouth which facilitate multi-modal journeys and exploring the feasibility of more share schemes in Norfolk.

5. Embrace new technology

Norfolk continues to support the delivery of micromobility schemes (such as cycle hire schemes, cargo bikes, e-scooters and e-bikes) and embracing new technologies which contribute to improved air quality, reduced congestion, reduced carbon emissions and reduced the dependency on private vehicles. E-cargo bikes offer new opportunities to move goods around as well as people. E-bikes offer an opportunity to extend the distances people can travel by bike as well as opening up cycling to different demographic groups.

The role of e-scooters in supporting active and sustainable travel is acknowledged within this strategy. NCC support the current trials of e-scooters using the same facilities as bikes. We support the continued use of e-scooters on the network and would support them being included in legislation to be used on the highway and treated as per bikes.

We aim to continue to utilise technology to effectively monitor our transport network and explore ways of expanding this. Data from the Beryl share scheme has provided useful insights into how people are moving around Norwich. Monitoring helps us understand what walking, wheeling, and cycling interventions are needed and where, and how successful the schemes we implement are.

Outcomes we want to see:

- New technology is used to enable active travel and gain insight into the way people travel in Norfolk
- Achievement the LTP4 target of net zero carbon emissions from transport by 2050
- Measures to adapt our walking, wheeling and cycling network to climate change
- Micromobility schemes are found across Norfolk facilitating low carbon travel.

We want to do this by:

- Continuing to support and monitor our live e-scooter trials including reporting to DfT monthly
- Making provisions for micromobility for example infrastructure that supports e-cargo bikes and charging facilities for e-bikes and e-scooters
- Embracing new and innovative technology to help monitor and maintain our networks, provide information about travel and current performance of the network to users, and assess the effectiveness of schemes to ensure the schemes we invest in are beneficial to our local people and communities
- Placing the foundation for monitoring now and work within best practice to ensure our work is benefiting local communities
- Exploring measures to adapt our network to climate change
- Working in partnership with the private sector to bring about innovation.

6. Remove barriers to provide a network that is accessible, inclusive and considers the needs of all users

We want to remove barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling so that all our residents and visitors have a network they can access and use. Delivering this strategy will help us to give everyone the opportunity and motivation to walk, wheel or cycle in Norfolk and support people who may have barriers to this at present whether that may be due to reduced mobility, health conditions or impairments, or socioeconomic reasons. The Disabled Citizens Inquiry found that 73% of disabled people say that stopping vehicles parking on pavements would help them walk or wheel more (Sustrans, 2023). This strategy aims to enable everyone to enjoy an active lifestyle and to enable walking, wheeling and cycling to be a part of anyone's journey.

Outcomes we want to see:

- All residents and visitors have access to walking, wheeling and cycling networks suitable for them
- Infrastructure meets the needs of all users
- Walking, wheeling and cycling are activities that can be undertaken by all whether for travel or leisure and whether you are new to, returning to, or already walking, wheeling or cycling.

We want to do this by:

- Ensuring streetscape, spacing, wayfinding and infrastructure design (including for electric infrastructure eg charging, parking, signposting) will take account of accessibility for all including those with reduced mobility, health conditions and impairments
- Following guidance and best practice to ensure our projects enable accessibility for all, including the outdoor accessibility guidance (Paths for All, 2023)
- Working with Sustrans to create Paths for Everyone (Sustrans, 2018)
- Using a Healthy Streets Approach when planning to provide spaces that are accessible and comfortable for all, including places to stop and rest
- Ensuring that when we engage it is meaningful and representative of everyone in Norfolk. We want to ensure that we create a walking, wheeling and cycling network accessible to everyone and give everyone the motivation and opportunity to walk, wheel and cycle in Norfolk. Ensuring we are representing everyone in our

community in our engagement is an important step towards this. We want to engage with and listen to the perspectives of disabled people, across the impairment groups

- Pilot walking, wheeling and cycling initiatives to reduce inequalities
- Investigate best practice approaches to tackling pavement parking recognising that there is no 'one size fits all' answer
- Exploring the feasibility of expanding cycle share and rental schemes
- Delivering existing plans and strategies which support barrier removal such as the LCWIP and NAIP
- Working with partners and special interest groups to utilise their expertise and ensure our projects are inclusive
- Taking forward learnings from projects such as SAIL (Staying Active and Independent for Longer) and MONUMENT (More Nurturing and More Empowerment Nested in Technology) to deliver initiatives to support our aging population to have active lifestyles and support carers of people living with dementia in accessing the outdoors and its associated benefits
- Auditing all areas of our network. In Norwich, we have audited the pedalway network to assess how accessible is for e-cargo bikes and other adapted/non-standard bicycles and we will be working up plans looking to source funding to address those barriers.

7. Work with our partners to achieve common ambitions

To deliver this strategy and enable people in Norfolk to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey, it is essential that we work with our partners.

When we travel, we do not always remain within our district council or county council borders, particularly for people who live close to these. Where people live and where they need or want to get to could be across borders and our impact on the environment, such as emissions from our vehicles, often know no borders. We want to ensure consistency and join-up of our walking, wheeling and cycling initiatives to achieve the best outcomes for Norfolk, helping people to live healthy and active lives and doing our bit to protect the environment and mitigate climate change.

We also don't pretend to have all the answers. By working together with partners and stakeholders we can draw on a plethora of expertise and local knowledge to ensure the work we do has a real and lasting positive impact on our local communities and environment. We need to set the direction on how we will work with partners and stakeholders to take collective action to overcome the barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling.

Outcomes we want to see:

- NCC and partners understand their role in enabling people in Norfolk to walk, wheel and cycle as the natural choice
- We are collectively reducing our impact on the climate, air quality and environment

- Walking, wheeling and cycling interventions, whether infrastructure or behavioural change, are well informed and joined-up with other local policies, plans and projects
- We have strong working relationships with our partners and are overcoming our collective challenges.

We want to do this by:

- Engaging with private and public sector partners and charities, such as district councils, Active Norfolk, the NHS, Pathmakers (a charity helping improve access to the Norfolk countryside for people of all abilities and backgrounds), schools and employers to ensure join-up across the county, contribution towards common ambitions, and draw on their expertise to collectively enable more people in Norfolk to walk, wheel and cycle
- Convening and continuing regular forums where we meet with partners to discuss and guide the work we are doing and where join-up can be made. An example of this includes the [Norfolk Local Access Forum](#).
- Building stronger partnerships with community services to improve health outcomes and quality of life, and to ensure that people remain healthy and independent for as long as possible
- Striving to work across all sectors and all willing partners to lay foundations for future solutions to barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling, and create a more accessible Norfolk
- Working with our partners to take a whole-system approach to our collective challenges
- Working with our partners in the public and voluntary sectors to create joined up networks of information and advice on walking, wheeling and cycling
- Working with our partners, achieve 'Net Zero' carbon emissions across our estates by 2030
- Working with partners to inform decisions about new development ensuring they are well connected to maximise use of sustainable and active transport options.



7. What next?

We will expand on many of the actions outlined above when we complete our Countywide LCWIP, deliver the NAIP and a variety of other local strategies such as the [LTP4 Implementation Plan](#), [Transport for Norwich Strategy](#), [King's Lynn Transport Strategy](#), [Great Yarmouth Transport Strategy](#), [Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan](#), the emerging Road Safety Partnership Strategy and review our [Market Town Network Improvement Strategies](#).

We are now holding a public consultation on this Draft Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy to obtain the views of and level of support from the public, partners and stakeholders towards it. The consultation will help us to ensure we are meeting the needs of people in Norfolk. Following the consultation we will analyse the responses, make any necessary amendments to the strategy document and progress towards the adoption of the strategy.

By engaging with local communities and partners, creating a safe and connected walking, wheeling and cycling network for all that gets people to where they need to be, building healthy places, spaces and communities, supporting multi-modal journeys and embracing new technology, we will enable people to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of longer journeys.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

The strategy will be monitored and evaluated to understand how successful it has been in enabling people in Norfolk to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey, with 50% of journeys in towns and cities walked and cycled by 2030.

Monitoring and evaluation will take place as part of the plans and strategies mentioned above. We will also monitor against the outcomes outlined earlier in this strategy. Data has been collated to provide a context and a baseline for the strategy. This can be seen in the adjoining Databook.

The scale and pace of delivery will depend on ability to secure funding for our ambitions.

Upon refreshing this strategy, an evaluation of how successful the strategy has been and what we have learnt from it will be undertaken.

9. Our LCWIP and NAIP

Our LCWIP and NAIP are the key documents that are beginning to deliver on our Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy. Here is a short summary of what these important documents are.

- LCWIP

We are creating an LCWIP for Norfolk. We have already completed LCWIPs for Norfolk's large urban areas of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn. We have identified potential active travel networks for 20 towns in Norfolk.

The purpose of the LCWIP is to enable increased levels of cycling, walking, and wheeling across the county, helping to create a modern, well-connected transport network that gives people more alternatives to travelling by car.

Our LCWIP will play an important part in the delivery of our Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy for Norfolk, as well as our other key transport policies and plans in Norfolk including LTP4. It will also support the Government's ambition for "Cycling and walking to be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030".

- NAIP

The NAIP sets out priorities for increasing public use and enjoyment of Norfolk's rights of way network.

The NAIP's Statement of Actions shows how we will work in partnership with countryside access users, volunteers and local communities to ensure that the network evolves to meet the changing needs of Norfolk's residents and visitors and to address environmental challenges.

Our NAIP plays an important part in the delivery of our Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy, ensuring access to Norfolk's countryside, involving communities and working with parish councils, volunteers and other community organisations, protecting our environment and enabling and encouraging exploration of Norfolk's attractive routes for health, leisure and accessing services.

For more detail on how we are already creating and will continue to create a healthier and greener Norfolk by making walking, wheeling and cycling a natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey, take a look our Countywide [LCWIP](#) and [NAIP](#) documents.



10. Glossary

Cyclable distance – We have taken 8km to be a cyclable distance, though e-bikes are enabling more people to go further.

Healthy Streets - Healthy Streets is a human-centred framework for embedding public health in transport, public realm and planning. There are 10 Healthy Streets Indicators which focus on the human experience needed on all streets, everywhere, for everyone (Healthy Streets, 2023).

Last mile – The last step of a journey from transportation hub to final destination. These journeys are often made by delivery vehicles such as Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs).

Leisure - We define leisure as walking, wheeling or cycling for the purpose of recreation, health, competition or training.

Mobility as a Service – Digital service platforms that enable users to access, pay for and get real-time information on a range of public and private transport options

Multi-modal – Using different modes of transport within a journey. For example, this could look like cycling to a train station, getting a train for part of the journey and then changing to a bus for the final part.

Parklet – An area transforming kerbside space into a place for the community such as creating places to stop and rest, areas for children to play, and space for planters

Physical inactivity - is defined as doing less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week.

Travel - We define travel as walking, wheeling or cycling to get from place-to-place for example, commuting, going to school / college, visiting a friend or going to the supermarket. We also consider freight travel as part of this, including cargo bikes.

Walkable distance – Walkable distance is 2km.

Wheeling – The updated strategy introduces the term ‘wheeling’ when discussing walking and cycling. This term includes people who use wheelchairs, mobility scooters, mobility aids and similar modes that use pavement space at a similar speed to walking. In this strategy we use the terms walking and wheeling together to ensure the work we do is holistic and inclusive to enable people in Norfolk to walk, wheel and cycle more often.

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Norfolk County Council

Draft Walking, wheeling and cycling strategy for Norfolk 2023-2036 Databook

2023

This Databook, which sits beside the Norfolk County Council Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy, presents a variety of data which informs the strategy.

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Levels of walking and cycling in Norfolk

Figure 1 and Figure 2 present the levels of walking and cycling for leisure and travel purposes in Norfolk from 2016-2021. The data was sourced from the Department for Transport (DfT) website but it is originally sourced from the Active Lives Survey undertaken by Sport England. DfT defines leisure as walking or cycling for the purpose of recreation, health, competition, or training. DfT defines travel as walking or cycling to get to place-to-place, for example, commuting, visiting a friend, going to the supermarket.

Statistics can be accessed on the DfT website here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/walking-and-cycling-statistics-cw>

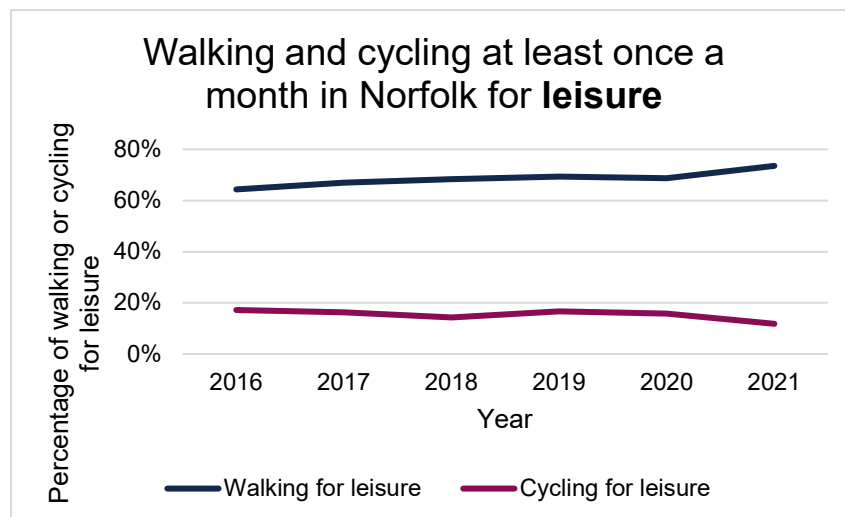


Figure 1 Walking and Cycling at least once a month for leisure in Norfolk

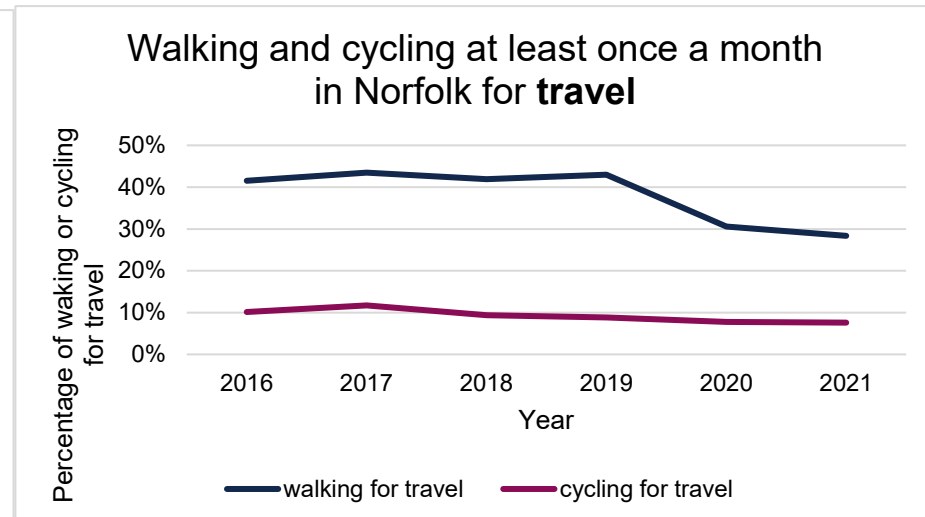
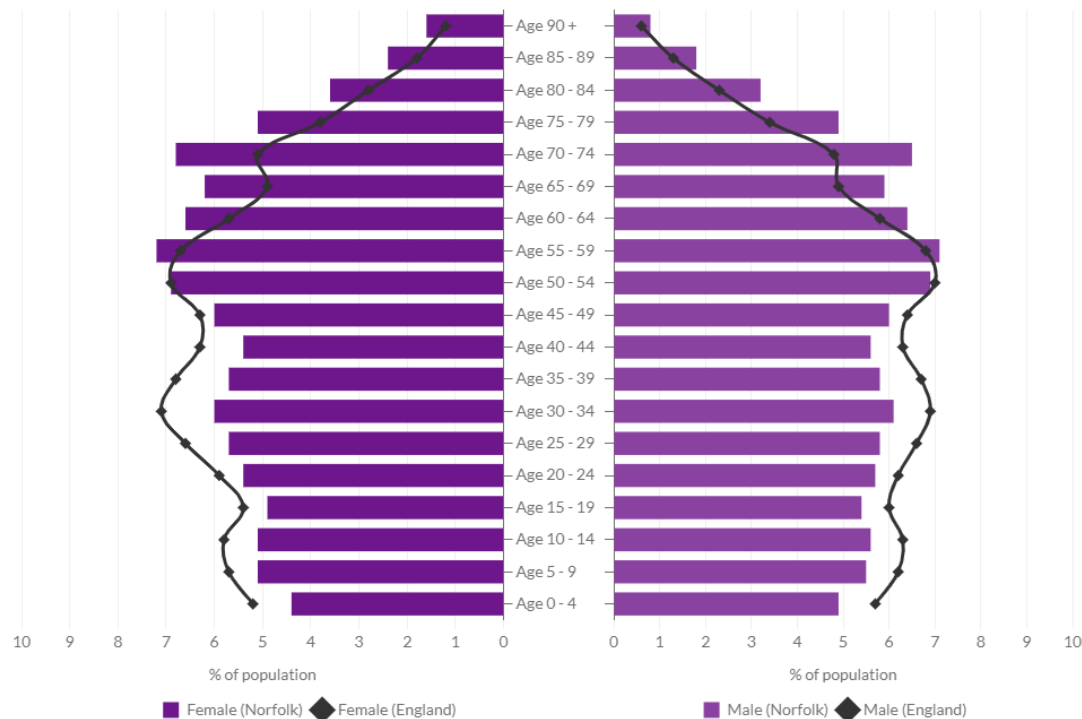


Figure 2 walking and cycling at least once a month in Norfolk for travel

The data shows that the number of people walking for leisure at least once a month has increased between 2016 and 2021 with a particular increase between 2020 and 2021. The number of people cycling for leisure at least once a month has decreased since 2016. The number of people cycling for travel at least once a month has also slightly declined since 2016 and the number of people walking for travel at least once a month has experienced a large decrease since 2016, particularly post 2019. This is likely due to changing travel habits as a result of Covid-19 pandemic.

Percentage of population by 5-year age groups (2021)



Age profile

The data presents the age profile of Norfolk in 2021. The data has been extracted from Norfolk Insight and the original source is from the ONS Census 2021 data. The data can be accessed here: [Population - UTLA | Norfolk | Report Builder for ArcGIS \(norfolkinsight.org.uk\)](https://norfolkinsight.org.uk/Population-UTLA-Norfolk-Report-Builder-for-ArcGIS)

The data shows that Norfolk has an aging population. Norfolk Insight also states that the proportion of residents 65 years or older is expected to rise from 25% to 28% over the next 10 years and that Norfolk has the 15th most elderly population in England.

Figure 3 Percentage of population by 5-year age groups Norfolk 2021

Physical activity in children and young people

The data presented in Figure 4 shows the percentage of physically active children and young people in Norfolk compared to national levels. Figure 4 shows that Norfolk is below the national average and also that there has been a decline in the percentage of physically active children and young people since 2018. This may be due to the Covid-19 pandemic as some increase has been observed for 2021-2022, though not to 2018-2019 levels.

The data was sourced from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities website which can be accessed here: [Physical Activity - Data - OHID \(phe.org.uk\)](https://www.phe.org.uk/about/our-work/physical-activity-data)

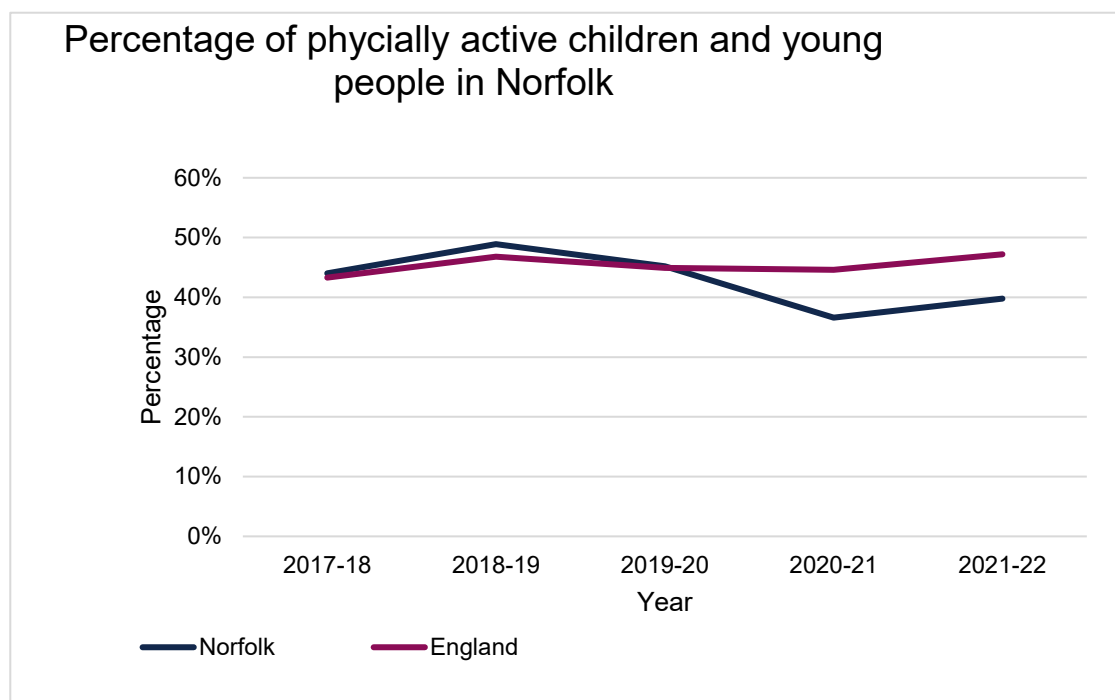


Figure 4 Percentage of physically active children and young people

Percentage of children who usually walk or cycle to school

Data made available on a national level shows that in 2022, 43% of children in England aged 5 to 16 usually walked to school and 3% cycled. This data, presented in Figure 5, is sourced from the National Travel Survey available here: [Percentage of children who usually walk or cycle to school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/percentage-of-children-who-usually-walk-or-cycle-to-school)

Whilst this is at a national level and not a local level, the data provides context on the method of travel to school and level of walking and cycling. The data shows there has been little change in levels of walking and cycling to school in the past 10 years.

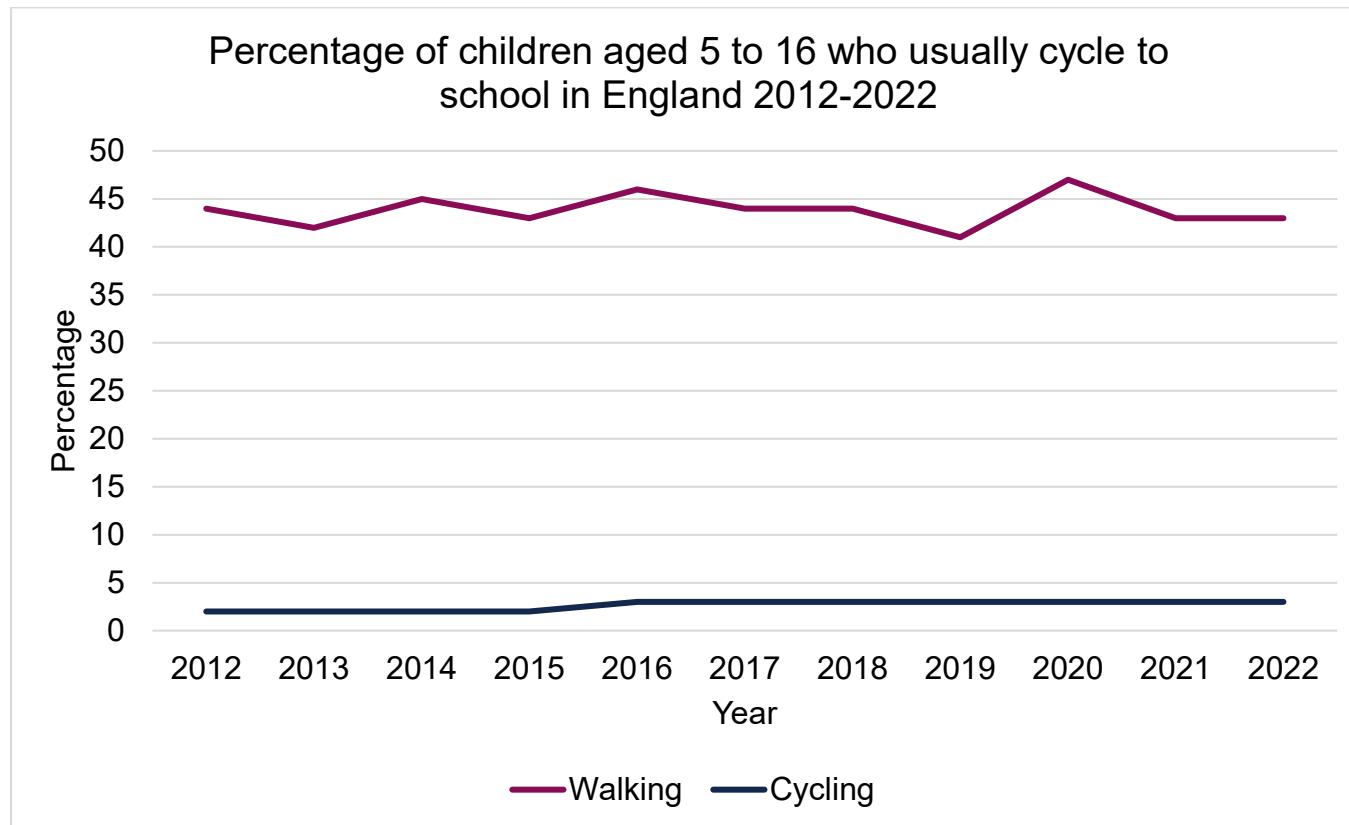


Figure 5 Percentage of children aged 5 to 16 who usually cycle to school in England 2012-2022

Obesity

Figure 6 shows the percentage of adults aged 18+ classified as obese has been rising in Norfolk and is now above the national average. There has been a particularly steep increase since 2020-2021 in Norfolk. This could be linked to the Covid-19 pandemic and changes in behaviours as a result. Over 25% of adults in Norfolk are classified as obese.

The data was sourced from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities website here: [Obesity Profile - Data - OHID \(phe.org.uk\)](https://www.phe.org.uk/about/our-work/obesity-profile)

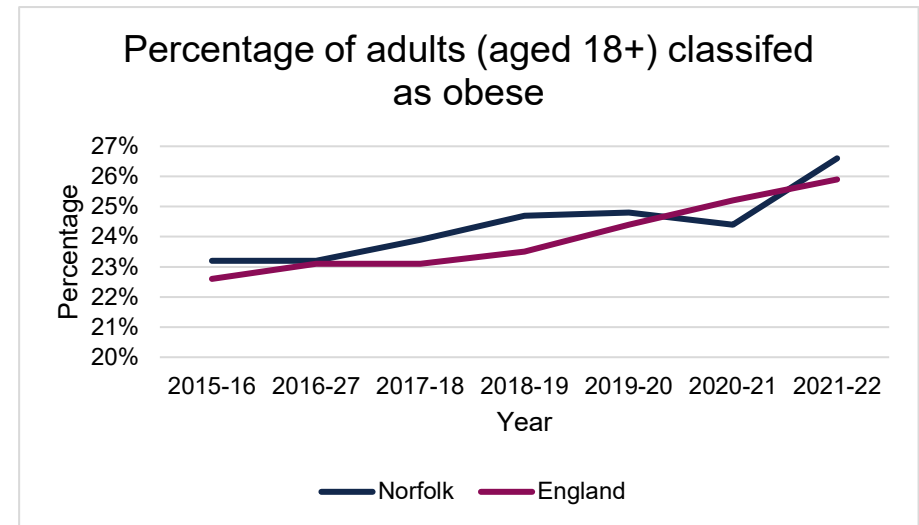


Figure 6 Percentage of adults classified as obese

Disability and inactivity

Census 2021 data shows that 20.1% of people in Norfolk are disabled under the Equality Act compared to 17.3% in England. Figure 7 shows levels of physical inactivity between people with a disability or long term health condition and those without in England. Data was sourced from the Active Lives Survey and can be found here: [Active Lives | Results \(sportengland.org\)](https://www.sportengland.org/active-lives/survey)

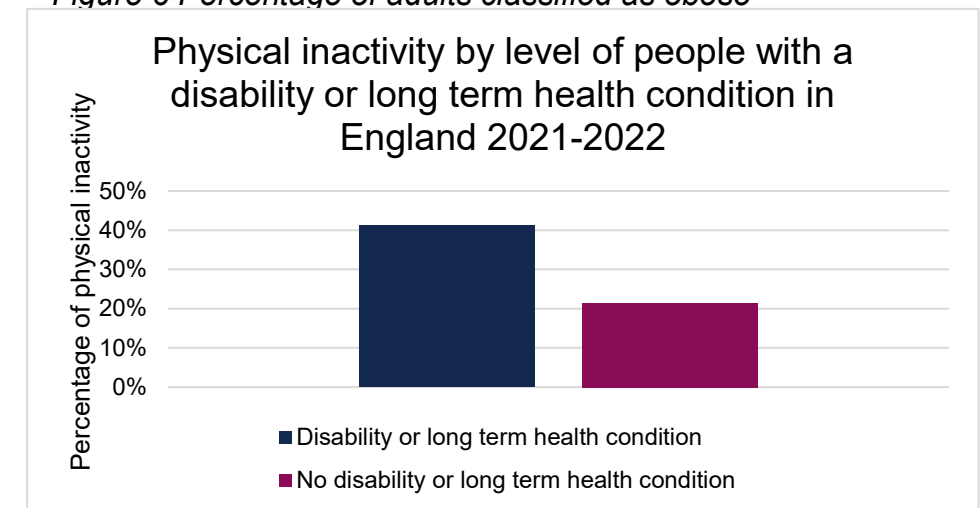


Figure 7 Physical inactivity by disability in England

Gender

Figure 8 below shows the levels of walking and cycling for travel by gender in England in 2021. The data was sourced from the Department for Transport (DfT) website but it originally sourced from the Active Lives Survey undertaken by Sport England. This can be accessed here: [Walking and cycling statistics \(CW\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/walking-and-cycling-statistics-cw). Figure 9 shows the levels of walking and cycling for travel to work in Norfolk by gender from the 2021 Census accessed here: [Create a custom dataset - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/custom-dataset)

The data, which is for England, shows that males generally walk or cycle more than females for travel. The difference in participation between the genders is most prevalent in cycling for travel where more the number of males that cycle for travel is more than twice as many as females. In Norfolk, males are recorded as cycling more than females to get to work however females walk to work more than males. This could be due to females traveling less far to work and within more of a walkable distance, as is shown in the Census 2021 data where a greater proportion of females both work mainly from home than males and a greater proportion of females travel less than 5km to work than males.

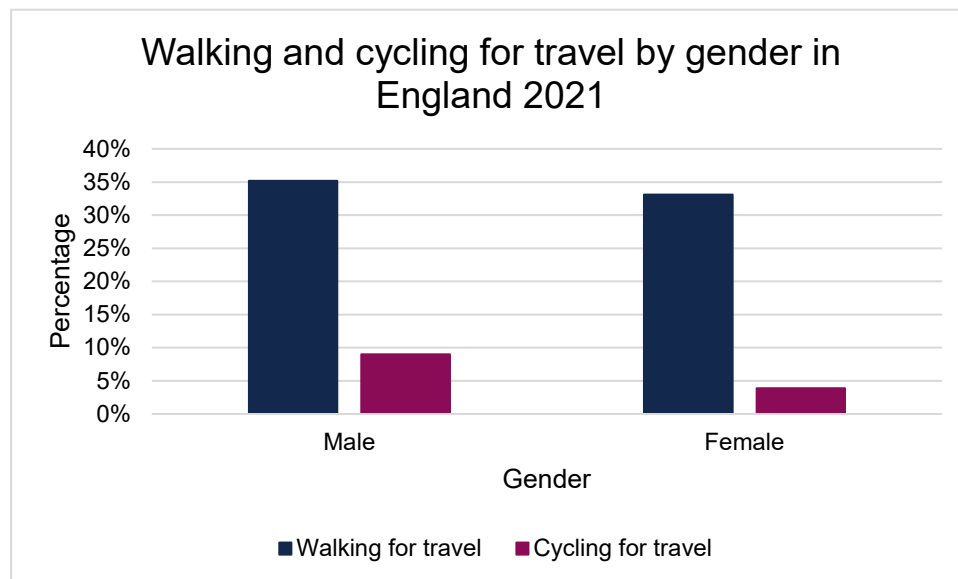


Figure 8 Walking and cycling levels for travel by gender in England

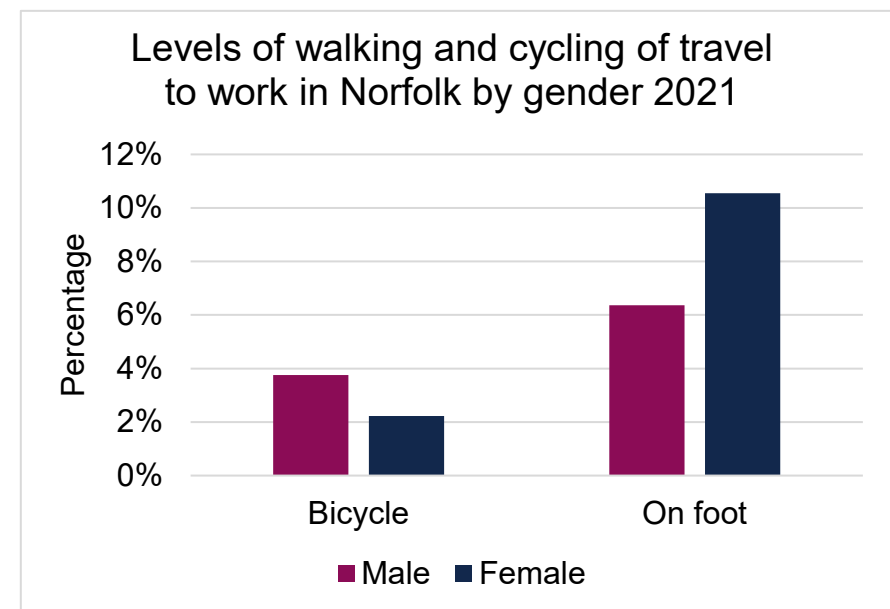


Figure 9 Levels of walking and cycling for travel to work in Norfolk by gender 2021

Rurality

Figure 10 defines the urban and rural areas across Norfolk in 2012. The figure shows the large mix of urban and rural areas in the county with Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn being the largest urban areas (shown in red) and large swathes of rural areas particularly in the north of the county and Breckland areas (shown in yellow).

The information has been sourced from Ordinance Survey.

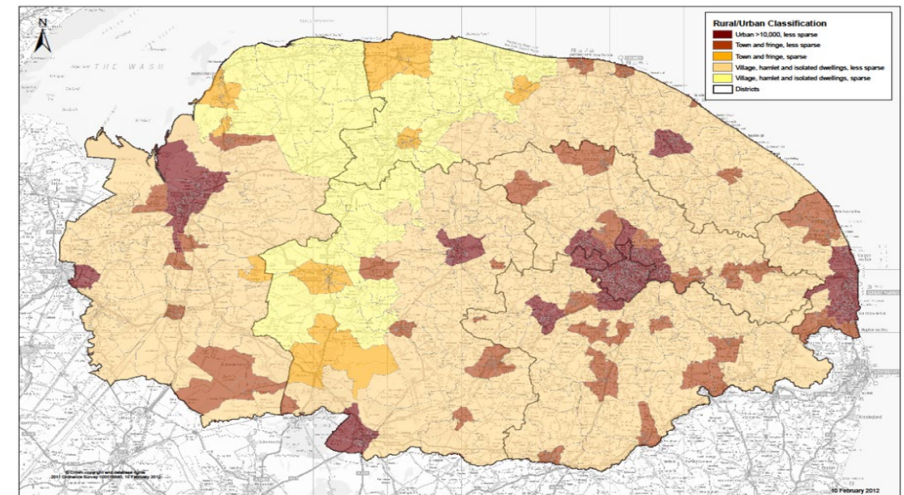


Figure 10 Rural/urban classification in Norfolk

Deprivation

Figure 11 presents the percentage of physically inactive people in Norfolk based on class and shows that physical inactivity is higher for those in lower classes than those in higher with 36.7% of people in lower class being physically inactive compared to 16.8% of people in higher class being physically inactive. This data was sourced from Active Lives Surveys by Sport England.

Figure 12 presents the levels of deprivation across the county and the geographical disparities. It shows that communities in Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and West Norfolk and in the north of Norwich have particularly high levels of deprivation and areas to the south of Norwich and the city's suburbs have low levels of deprivation.

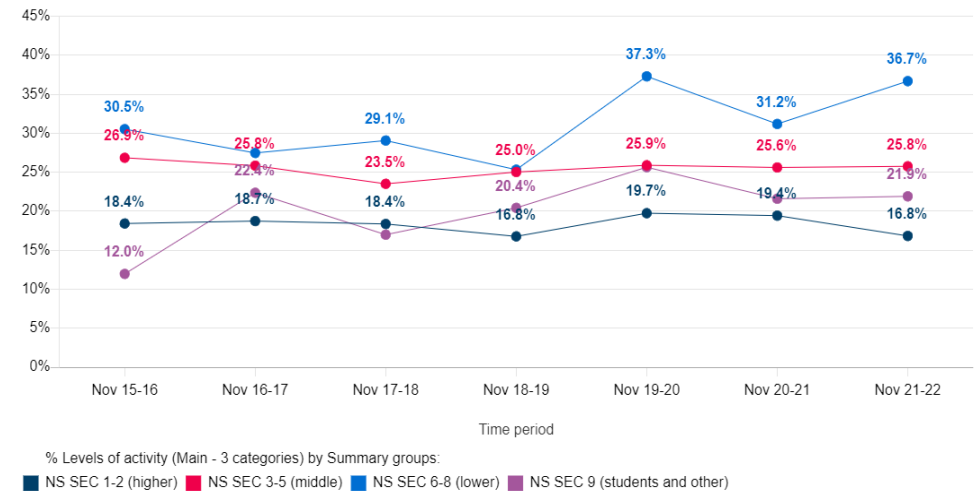


Figure 11 Percentage of physically inactive people in Norfolk based on class

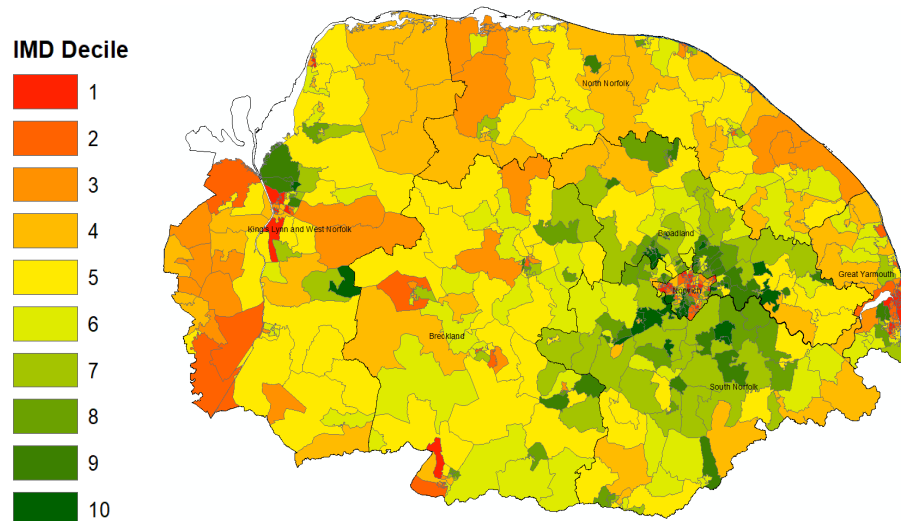


Figure 12 Map showing the varying levels of deprivation in Norfolk

Safety

Figure 13 shows the number of fatal and serious injuries (also known as KSI data) in Norfolk involving pedestrians and cyclists. Between 2016 and 2022 the data shows a downward trend particularly between 2019 and 2020. This may be impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic due to the changes in behaviour. Data was sourced from Norfolk Police.

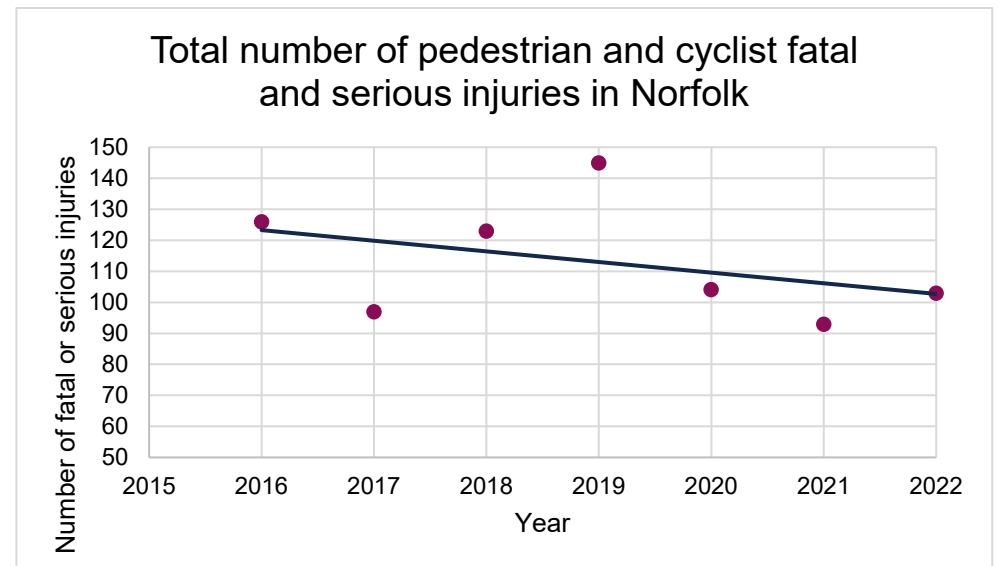


Figure 13 Total number of pedestrian and cyclist fatal and serious injuries Norfolk

Population growth

Figure 14 shows how much the population has grown in Norfolk between 1991 and 2021. The Norfolk population has grown between this period and the Norfolk population was recorded as over 900,000 people in 2021. Figure 15 shows the projected growth in the Norfolk and Waveney population between 2020 and 2040 and shows particularly high growth in people aged 75 plus. This age band is expected to grow by 55% showing that Norfolk has an aging population.

Data was sourced from Norfolk Insight here: [Norfolk Population Statistics and Demographics - Norfolk Insight](#)

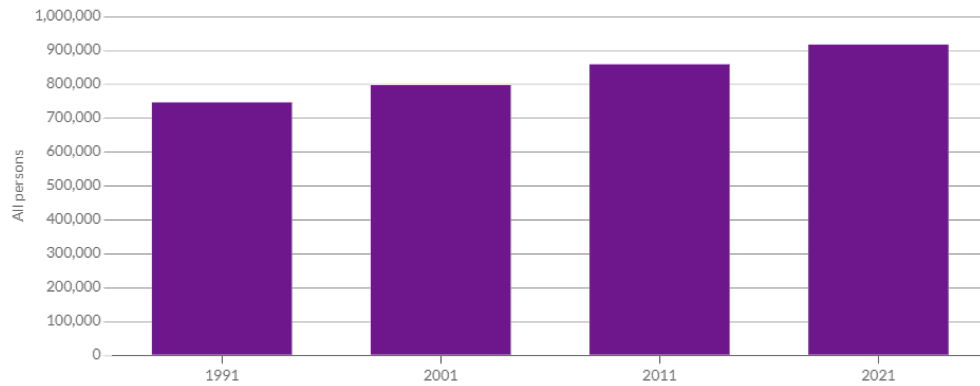
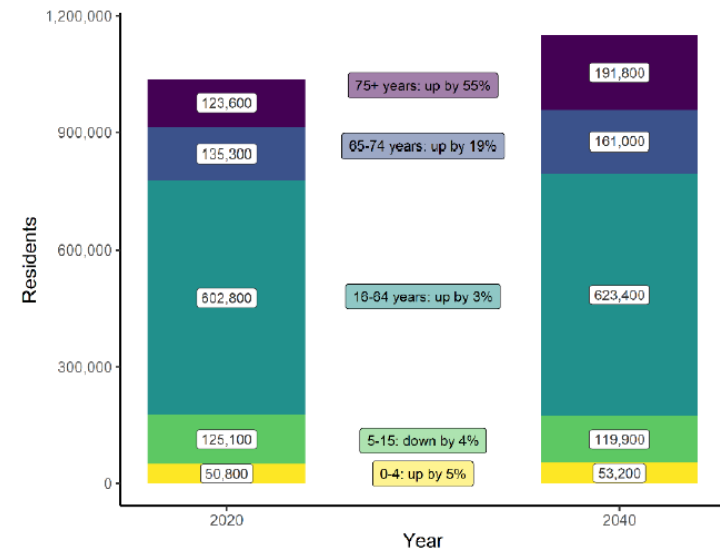


Figure 14 Norfolk population growth between 1991 and 2021



Projected change in the Norfolk and Waveney population

Figure 15 Projected change in the Norfolk and Waveney population from 2020 to 2040

Distance travelled to work

Figure 16 shows the distances travelled to work in Norfolk in 2021. Apart from those who work from home or work mainly offshore, in no fixed place or outside the UK, the majority of people travel less than 2km to work (12.11%) followed by traveling 10km-20km. The data is sourced from the Census 2021 which can be accessed here: [Distance travelled to work - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/employmentandworklessness/detailedmeasures/census2021/distance-travelled-to-work)

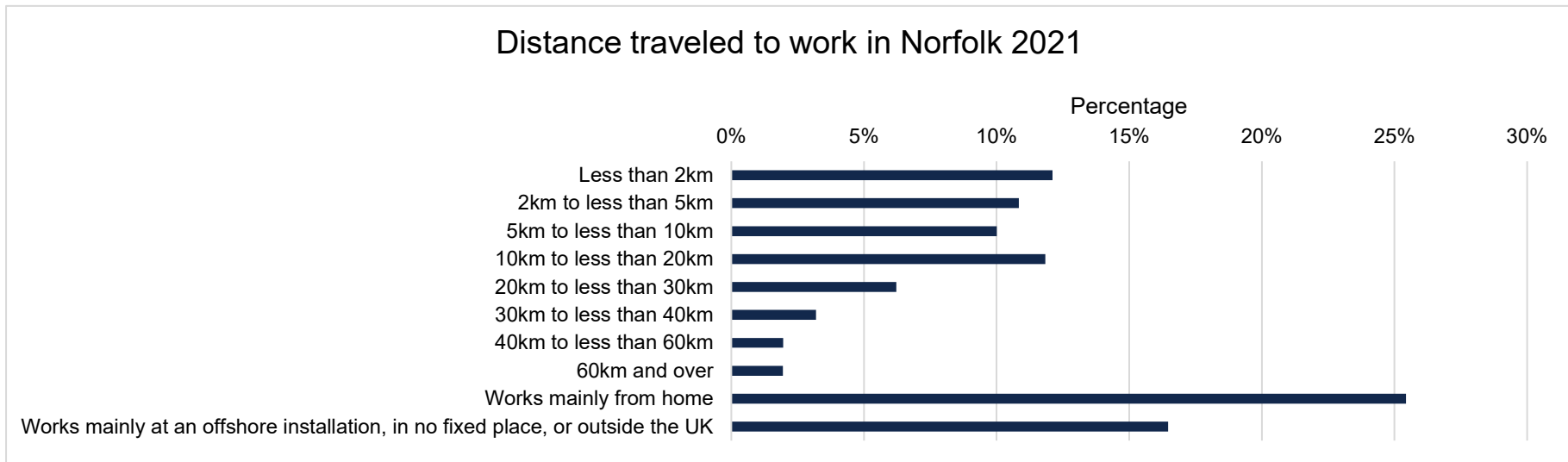


Figure 16 Distance travelled to work in Norfolk 2021

Method of travel to work

Figure 17 shows the methods of travel to work in Norfolk in 2021. 54% of people in Norfolk travel to work by driving a car or van whilst only 11% walk or cycle. When comparing to 2011 Census data (Figure 18), there are fewer people driving to work but also fewer people walking or cycling to work. This is likely due to the large growth in the number of people working from home, a likely result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Data was sourced from the 2021 Census and can be accessed here: [Method of travel to workplace - Census Maps, ONS](#) and 2011 Census data here: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/default.asp>

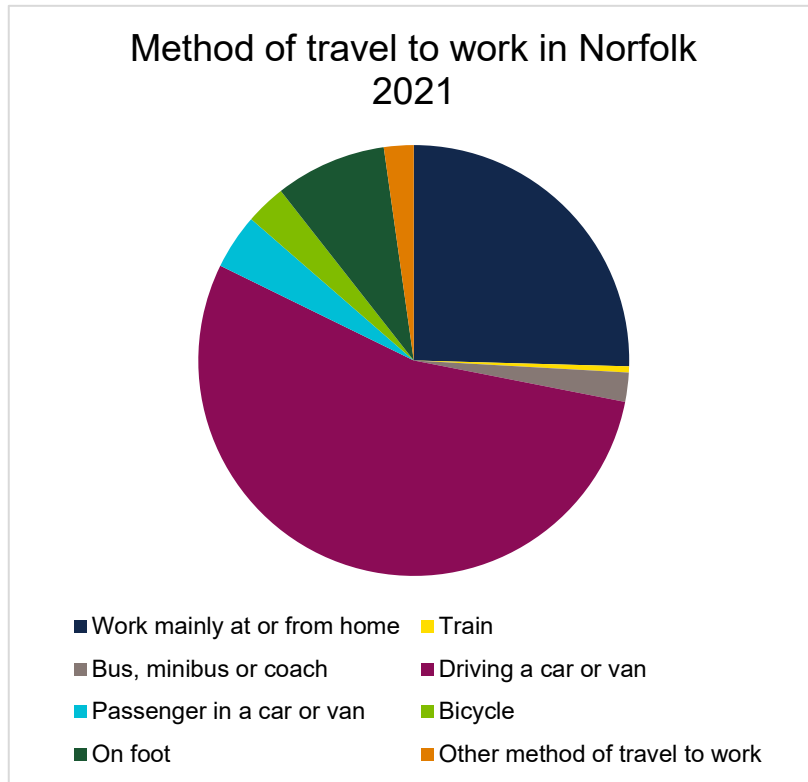


Figure 17 Method of travel to work in Norfolk 2021

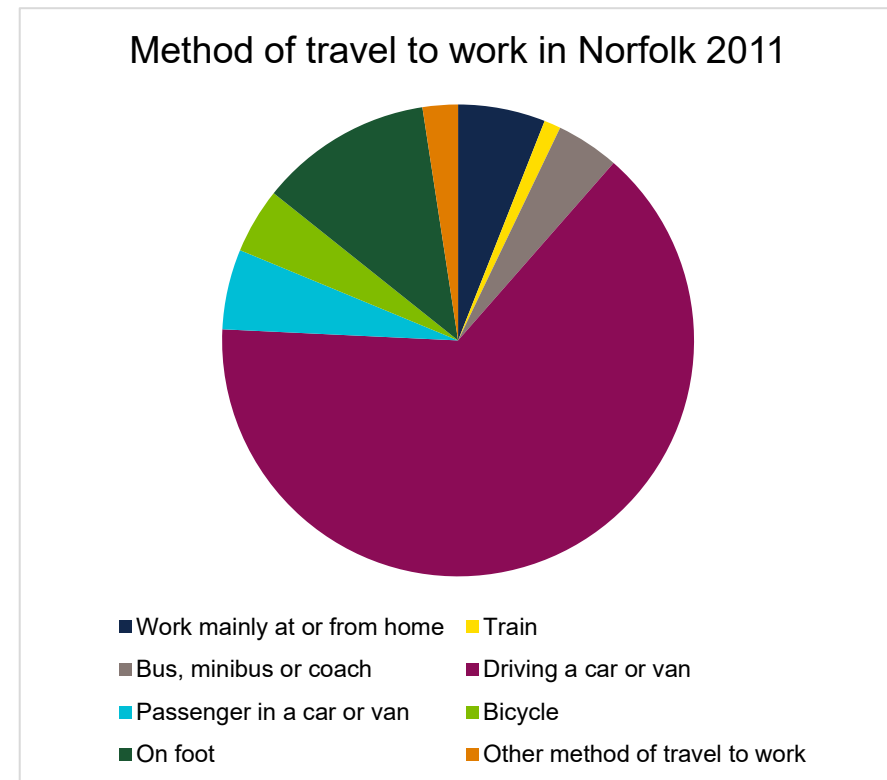


Figure 18 Method of travel to work in Norfolk 2011

Car ownership

Figure 19 shows the level of car ownership across Norfolk in 2021. The data was sourced from the Census 2021 which can be seen here:

[Number of cars or vans - Census Maps, ONS](#)

Car ownership in Norfolk (83%) is higher than the England average (76%).

Car ownership is lower in urban areas such as Norwich where 67% of households own at least one car or van.

Car ownership is highest in South Norfolk with 90% of households owning at least one car or van.

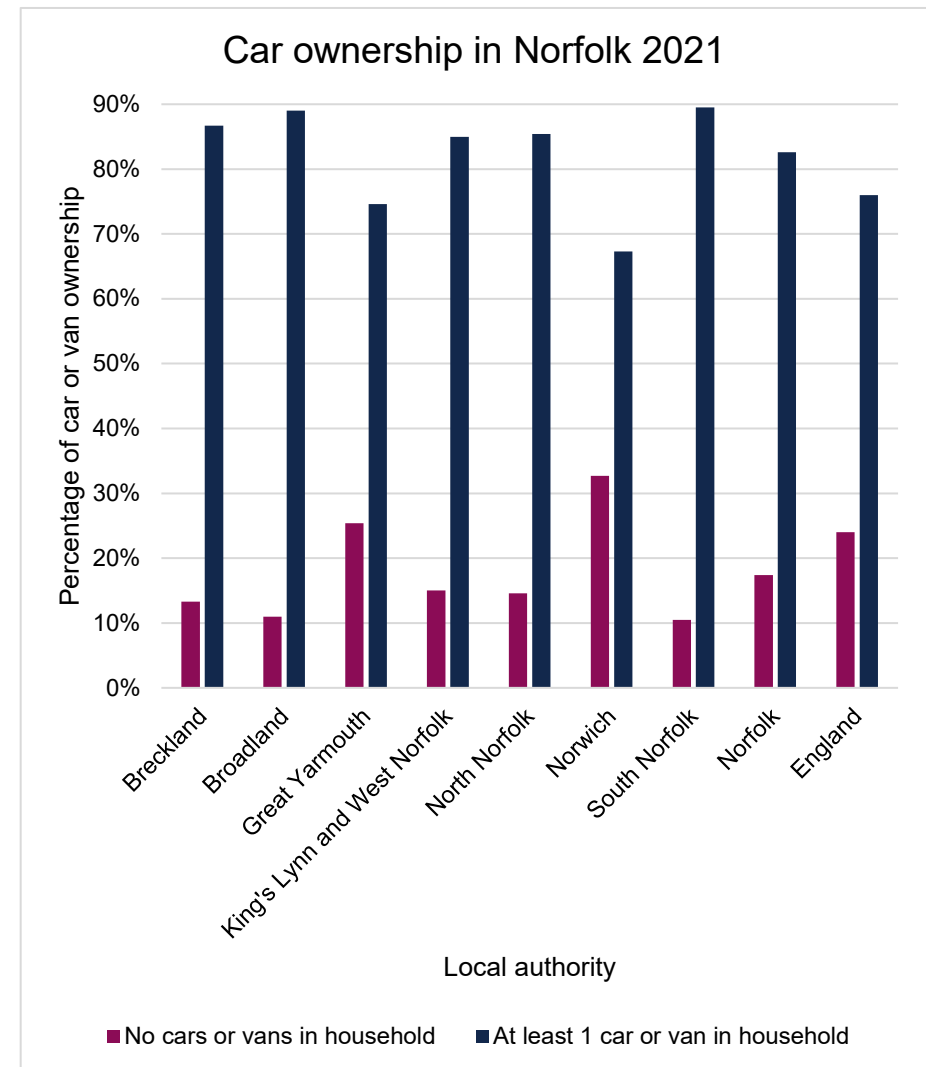


Figure 19 Car ownership in Norfolk 2021

Carbon emissions from transport

Transport is the largest emitting sector in Norfolk, making up over 25% of the county's greenhouse gas emissions in 2021. This data can be seen in Figure 20 below. Data was sourced from the Office of National Statistics available here: [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2005 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2021)

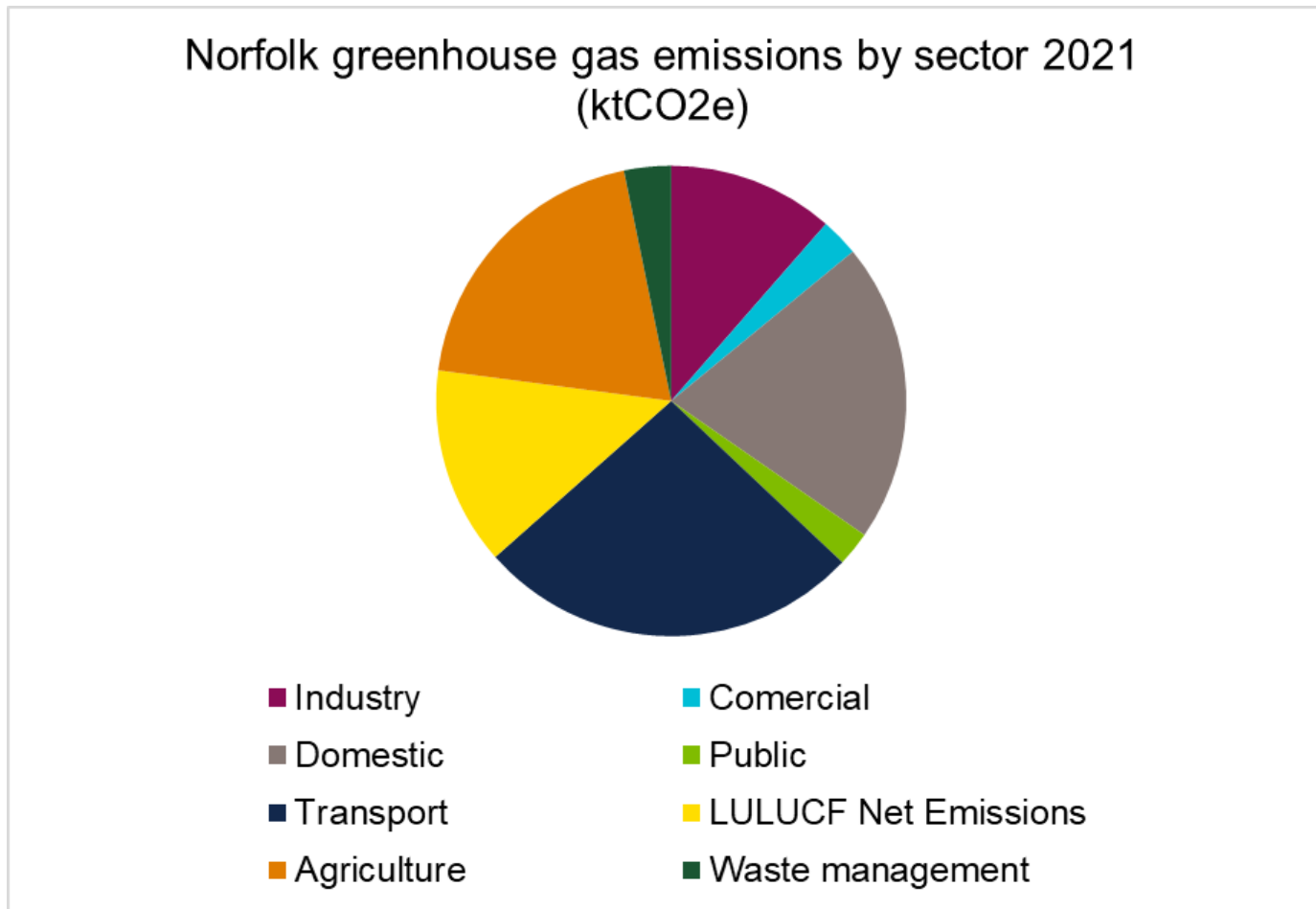


Figure 20 Norfolk greenhouse gas emissions by sector 2021

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 11

Report Title: Forward Work Programme

Date of Meeting: 13 September 2023

Responsible Cabinet Member: N/A

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave (Interim Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services)

Executive Summary

This report sets out the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee, to enable the Select Committee to review and shape it.

Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Review and agree the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee, as set out in Appendix A.
2. To agree that the motion set out in Appendix B should be considered by Scrutiny Committee and to identify any key lines of enquiry the Select Committee may wish to suggest are explored.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee to enable the Committee to review and shape it. It also includes a proposal on dealing with a motion that was referred to Select Committee by Full Council.

2. Proposal

2.1 Forward Work Programme

The current Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee is set out in Appendix A, for the Committee to use to shape future meeting agendas and items for consideration.

2.2 Member Task and Finish Groups

The Select Committee previously agree that, to help ensure a manageable workload, there will be no more than two Member Task and Finish Groups established by this Committee operating at any one time. There is currently one active Group – the Task and Finish Group look at the subject ‘Providing Highways and Transport Development Management Advice to Local Planning Authority’s in Norfolk’.

2.3 Sewage discharges motion

Full Council considered a motion on sewage discharges in May 2023 (see Appendix B). It was agreed to refer the motion to this Select Committee to consider, and report back to Full Council.

In March 2023, the Scrutiny Committee received an update on the topic of sewage discharges and storm water overflows. This included attendance and evidence from NCC Officers, the Environment Agency and Anglian Water; Members of the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee were invited to attend this meeting. Alongside a number of other recommendations, the Scrutiny Committee requested a further update in March 2024; this is programmed into their Forward Plan.

In directly considering the motion set out in Appendix B, this Select Committee may be inadvertently duplicating scrutiny activity already planned by Scrutiny Committee. This duplication may deter key stakeholders for effectively engaging and also may interrupt the continuity of the activities already carried out and planned by Scrutiny Committee. Therefore, it is recommended that Scrutiny Committee continue to provide challenge around these issues. The Select Committee are asked to consider whether there are any key lines of enquiry that the Committee wants to suggest that Scrutiny Committee explores as part of their activity.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 This report enables the Select Committee to shape agendas for future meetings so that it can include items which the Committee considers the most important to consider.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 As above.

5. Alternative Options

5.1 The Committee can amend and shape the work programme.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 None.

7. Resource Implications

7.1 **Staff:** None.

7.2 **Property:** None.

7.3 **IT:** None.

8. Other Implications

8.1 **Legal Implications:** None.

8.2 **Human Rights Implications:** None.

8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** N/A

8.4 **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** N/A

8.7 **Any Other Implications:** None.

9. Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Review and agree the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee, as set out in Appendix A.

10. Background Papers

11.1 None.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Forward Work Programme – Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Draft agendas for the next three meetings.

Report title	Reason for report
15 November 2023 meeting	
CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy – Annual Review	To approve any changes to the policy
Financial and Strategic Planning 2024-25	Select Committee input to development of 2024-25 Budget – comments on specific proposals
Waste Services Review	To review performance
Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)	To consider proposed amendments and updates for the TAMP
Pollinator Action Plan	To provide an update for the Committee prior to consideration for adoption at Cabinet.
Local Nature Recovery Strategy	To provide an update for Committee on work to develop the LNRS for Norfolk, for which NCC has been appointed responsible authority.
Biodiversity Net Gain	To provide an update for the Committee on Biodiversity Net Gain, which will be launched in November.
Highways Capital Programme 2023/24/25 and Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)	To review the highways capital programme and TAMP for the coming year.
Creating Community Spaces: Norfolk's library, learning and community hubs	To provide an update on the King's Lynn Multi-User Hub and the Great Yarmouth Library and Learning Centre projects.
Forward Work Programme	To review and shape the Select Committee's forward work programme.
17 January 2024 meeting	
Adult Learning Annual Plan	To review the annual plan for the Adult Learning Service.
Climate Action Plans Tranche 2 (<i>Provisional date</i>)	To review the action plans. (<i>Provisional date</i>)
Forward Work Programme	To review and shape the Select Committee's forward work programme.
13 March 2023 meeting	

Report title	Reason for report
Trading Standards Service Plan	To review the proposed Service Plan for the following year.
Forward Work Programme	To review and shape the Select Committee's forward work programme.

Sewage Discharges

Council motion - 9 May 2023

Mover: Cllr Mike Smith-Clare

Seconder: Cllr Terry Jermy

Council believes Water companies should be held automatically liable for any sewage discharge. In addition to fines levied upon them, water companies should automatically be liable for compensation for direct and indirect impacts on those, particularly businesses, near to or affected by the discharge assessed by an independent body funded by water companies but not appointed by or accountable to them.

Council requests the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee to explore existing powers and opportunities available to Norfolk County Council in order to–

1. enforce fines on water companies
2. ensure compensation is paid by water companies for direct and indirect financial losses of those, particularly businesses, near to or affected by discharges

and to report back findings and recommendations to Council by no later than December 2023.