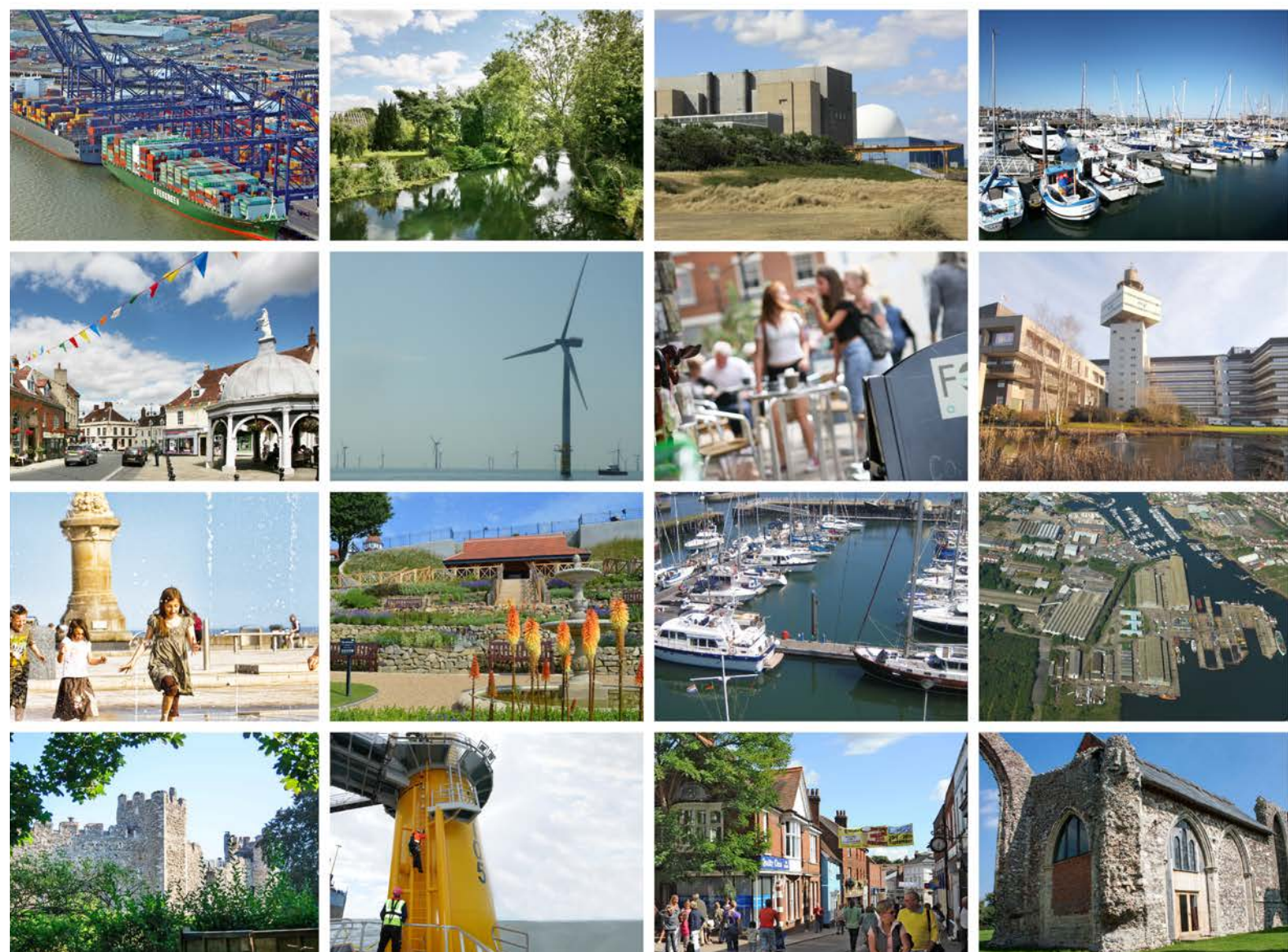




East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan, 2018-2023



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Foreword

I am delighted to present the new East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan – a crucial document at a critical time, reflecting our commitment to the delivery of a flourishing and healthy local economy.

Promoting economic growth is one of the central pillars of the East Suffolk Business Plan. In order to create the best environment for businesses to start up, flourish and grow we need a clear and robust approach to facilitating economic growth. This refreshed growth plan sets out clearly how East Suffolk Council and its partners will achieve this through maximising our competitive advantage in key sectors such as energy, ICT, tourism and logistics. The

new strategy also demonstrates that by investing in the foundations of a successful and growing economy such as transport and communications infrastructure, skills development and business support and finance we can fully exploit the growth opportunities across East Suffolk in the coming years.

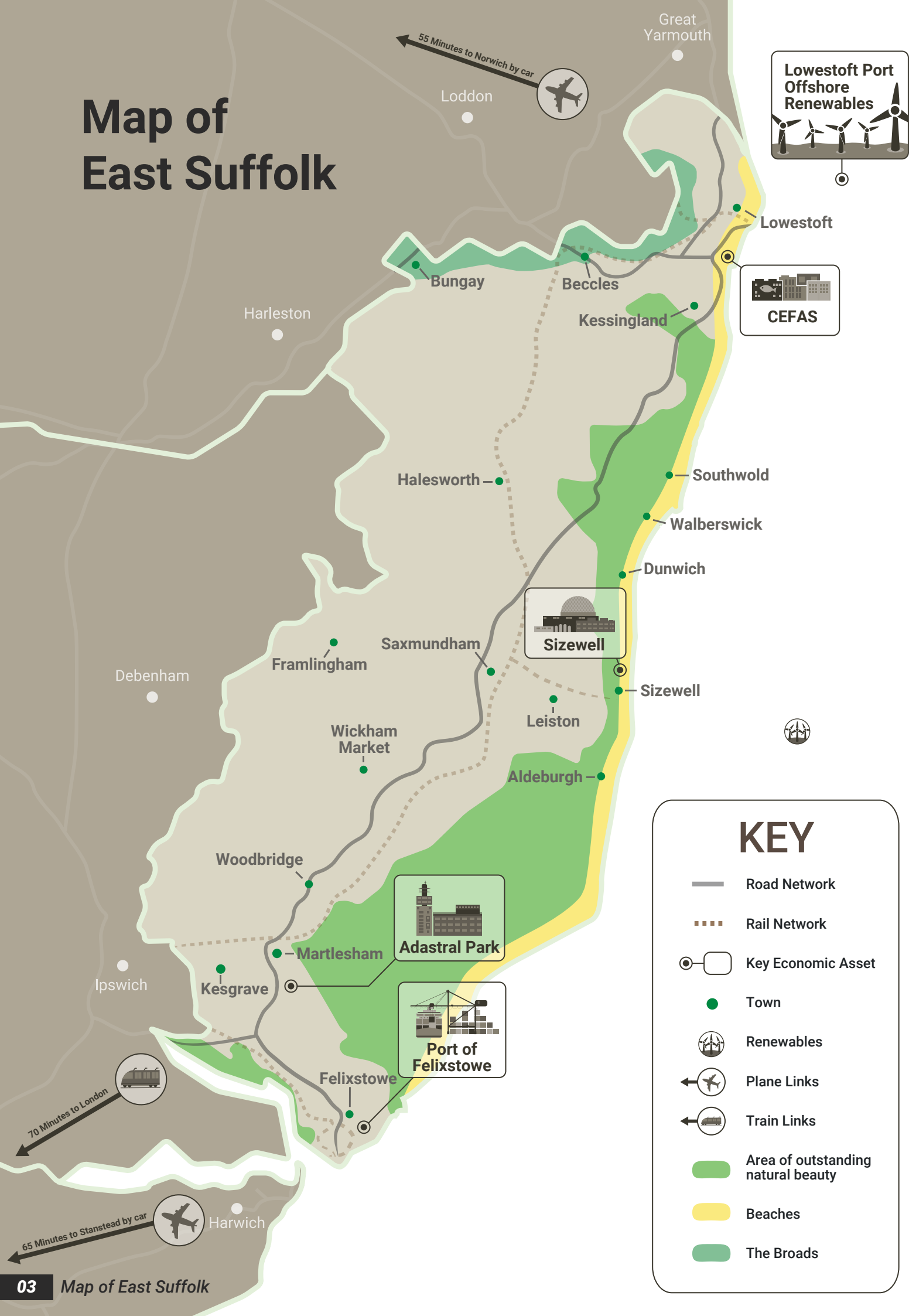
East Suffolk is a strong and dynamic economy with a wide range of opportunities for future growth and the new East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan sets out the framework to achieve this growth for the benefit of our residents, communities and businesses.



Steve Gallant

Leader, East Suffolk Council

Map of East Suffolk



At a glance...

East Suffolk has major economic, cultural, heritage and environmental assets. Parts of East Suffolk are set for significant growth. However, there are also on-going regeneration challenges. Through this Economic Growth Plan, we will ensure that across East Suffolk, businesses and communities are able to thrive.

Our Strategy

In uncertain economic times, we want to use our Economic Growth Plan to build business confidence – and with it, both the capacity and ambition for investment and growth. With greater business confidence, better opportunities will be created for the people and communities of East Suffolk. This in turn should allow more people to enjoy a higher quality of life in an outstanding environment.

We will achieve this by focusing on three main priorities:

Priority 1: Supporting entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in East Suffolk

East Suffolk's economy is dominated by micro and small enterprises, and we want more of them to thrive. To achieve this, we want to provide appropriate workspace and premises, equip small business owners/managers with the skills they need, and enable small businesses to access the support that is available more generally.

Priority 2: Encouraging established businesses to invest and grow

We want our established and medium-sized businesses to invest and grow. To this end, we will work closely with these firms to understand better the risks they are facing and to inform investment decisions accordingly. These are likely to focus on issues relating to skills and labour supply, infrastructure (including digital connectivity), and access to markets.

Priority 3: Attracting inward investment to East Suffolk, focused around existing and emerging sectors and supply chains

East Suffolk is a major international gateway. It benefits from assets that are already world-renowned (e.g. BT's activities at Adastral Park) and/or fast gaining recognition (e.g. Cefas at Lowestoft, cultural activities across East Suffolk). We will promote East Suffolk in order to attract international investment, developing sectors and supply chains in the process and creating opportunities for local people.

Key Sectors

In delivering our strategy, we will pay particular attention to the opportunities and potentials that exist in seven key sectors:

- Agriculture, food and drink
- Energy
- IT, tech and digital creative
- Manufacturing and engineering
- Marine
- Ports and logistics
- Visitor economy and cultural sectors

Key Places

We will have regard to the particular characteristics of our places. We intend to sustain existing communities and support new ones – and to effect regeneration whilst also accommodating growth in more buoyant areas. Our priority places are:

- Lowestoft
- Adastral Park/Martlesham
- Felixstowe
- Sizewell
- Market and coastal towns
- Rural areas

Delivering the plan

Our economic ambitions can only be achieved by working together with businesses and other stakeholders and partners. Within East Suffolk Council, we need to build on excellent “core services” to ensure a joined-up approach to economic development. In this context, we will need to continue to secure external funding to help deliver this Economic Growth Plan and lever in wider investment. Through this, East Suffolk Council will be an “excellent partner to do business with”.

Through the use of Key Performance Indicators, we will monitor our progress in relation to the East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan. A Delivery Plan will be developed to galvanise the use of resources in response.

East Suffolk in Numbers

PRODUCTIVITY 2017

£40,000

COMPOUND ANNUAL
GROWTH RATE 2001-2017

0.9%

COMPARED WITH

NEW ANGLIA LEP £38,000 0.8%

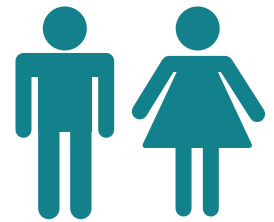
UK £44,000 0.7%

Source: Cambridge Econometrics EEFM (2016)

TOTAL POPULATION

246,900

IN 2017



POPULATION GROWTH SINCE 2001

EAST SUFFOLK 6.5%

NEW ANGLIA LEP 11.5%

UK 11.1%

Source: ONS Population Estimates

88.7% MICRO
ENTERPRISES

9.7% SMALL
ENTERPRISES

1.2% MEDIUM
ENTERPRISES

0.3% LARGE
ENTERPRISES

9,300
ENTERPRISES

EQUIVALENT TO
15%

OF ENTERPRISES ACROSS
THE NEW ANGLIA LEP

Source: ONS UK Business Counts

WEEKLY EARNINGS FOR FULL TIME EMPLOYEES 2017

	RESIDENT	WORKPLACE
EAST SUFFOLK	£515	£500
FORMER WAVENEY	£460	£430
FORMER SUFFOLK COASTAL	£570	£570
NEW ANGLIA LEP	£510	£500

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

East Suffolk figure is average of former Waveney and former Suffolk Coastal

TOTAL GVA 2017

£4.4bn

IN 2011 CONSTANT PRICES

EQUIVALENT TO

15%

OF NEW ANGLIA LEP's GVA

Source: Cambridge Econometrics EEFM (2016)

HIGHEST QUALIFICATION LEVEL OBTAINED FOR POPULATION AGED 16-64



MEDIAN PROPERTY PRICES 2016



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government

East Suffolk figure is average of former Waveney and former Suffolk Coastal

EMPLOYMENT RATE: POPULATION AGED 16-64 IN WORK

79%

COMPARED WITH

**78% ACROSS THE NEW ANGLIA LEP
74% ACROSS THE UK**

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey

Profile of East Suffolk

Located on the east coast of England, East Suffolk is a very diverse local economy, with both outstanding economic assets and potential, and – in some areas – continuing regeneration challenges.

East Suffolk's economic geography...

The largest town is **Lowestoft**. With a population of about 70,000, Lowestoft is home to just under a third of the 240,000 people who live within East Suffolk, and a slightly higher proportion of the working age population. This means that the performance of Lowestoft has a major bearing on the economic health of East Suffolk as a whole.

Almost 50 miles away and to the south, **Felixstowe** is the second largest settlement. It is home to around 25,000 people. Also in the south are towns – like **Kesgrave** – which border Ipswich – and are notable East Suffolk population centres.

Then there is a group of (mainly smaller) **market towns** – like Woodbridge, Leiston, Framlingham, Saxmundham, Beccles, and Bungay – which are distributed around East Suffolk and typically have populations of 5,000-10,000 people.

Most of these settlements are connected principally by the **A12** – which forms a “north-south spine” through East Suffolk and extends from London, Chelmsford, Colchester and Ipswich in the south to Lowestoft in the north. The journey on this north-south axis is a relatively long one – even within East Suffolk, it extends for well over 40 miles and will typically take at least an hour. There is also a **rail connection** through East Suffolk; journeys by train from Felixstowe to Lowestoft take over two hours.

It is – at least in part – for this reason that the north of East Suffolk (Lowestoft in particular) continues to have strong links to Great Yarmouth and, via the A47, to Norwich

(about 30 miles away). The south of the area links more strongly to Ipswich and Colchester (and then onto Cambridge (to the west) and London (to the south)). This pattern is confirmed through Travel to Work Area definitions, and it continues to help shape the character of economic activity across East Suffolk.

...its cultural, heritage and environmental assets

East Suffolk has **outstanding landscapes**. These include the Deben, Blyth, Alde and Ore estuaries, and nature reserves (such as Trimley Marshes and Minsmere), all within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). East Suffolk provides the “southern gateway” to the Broads National Park; and the River Waveney is one of the rivers linking the broads, of which Oulton Broad (near Lowestoft) is amongst the largest. In total, East Suffolk's coastline extends for close to fifty miles.

East Suffolk also has major **heritage assets**. These include Sutton Hoo (with Anglo-Saxon archaeology), Bungay Castle, Landguard Fort, Framlingham Castle, Felixstowe Museum and Bawdsey Manor.

Partly as a result, the area has a very distinctive and diverse **visitor economy**. This ranges from traditional seaside tourism at Lowestoft (with attractions including Pleasurewood Hills Theme Park) and Felixstowe, through to the major arts festival at Aldeburgh and events at Snape Maltings. There is also a growing range of cultural and heritage activities and attractions in market and coastal towns like Beccles, Bungay, Framlingham, Southwold, Halesworth, Leiston, Woodbridge and Saxmundham. East Suffolk therefore offers something

special. It is an area which people enjoy; and many choose to spend their leisure time there, whether as visitors or as retirees moving into the area.

But alongside this picture of East Suffolk, it is important to paint a second.

...its major economic assets

The area hosts **economic assets and opportunities that are amongst the most significant anywhere in the UK.**

These matter, for both current and future generations in East Suffolk, and for the UK economy as a whole.

Four are especially significant:

- The **Port of Felixstowe** – in the south – is the UK's busiest container port, accounting for almost 40% of the total national volume of container freight¹. It is the seventh busiest in Europe, and it increased its cargo capacity by over 18% between 2010 and 2015². The Port of Felixstowe is therefore a major international gateway and a logistics hub. With deep water capacity, it handles "mega vessels" and it has a substantial intermodal rail freight facility. There has been – and continues to be – substantial investment in the port's operations. In 2017, approval was given for a £60m scheme funded by Network Rail and Hutchison Ports to improve rail connections³; and a 1.4 million sq. ft. Port of Felixstowe Logistics Park is planned. The Port of Felixstowe currently employs more than 2,500 people⁴.
- **Adastral Park** – located close to Martlesham in the south of East Suffolk – is home to BT's Global Research and Development Headquarters. It is recognised internationally for its excellence in telecommunications research. It hosts BT's national broadband operations centre and also BT's network test and integration facility, which is the largest facility of its kind in Europe.
- **Offshore and renewable energy** is a major focus further north, particularly in and around Lowestoft. The energy sector has many different elements, both within Lowestoft and more broadly. Offshore wind – and servicing linked to it – is one element; and activities linked to Southern North Sea gas fields are another. With its own port, Lowestoft is playing a key role. The sector's growth is further encouraged through the designation of sites within an Enterprise Zone and the activities and provision linked to OrbisEnergy. In this context, Lowestoft has seen major investments and success stories in recent years. These include the growth of James Fisher Marine Services which developed quickly from being a tenant of OrbisEnergy to a major offshore service provider and significant local employer. In addition, Lowestoft should benefit from the East Anglia Array (a proposed series of offshore wind farms to be located around 30 miles off the east coast).
- **Sizewell B** opened in the 1990s and will operate until at least the 2050s (following a licence extension). It followed Sizewell A, which operated for about 40 years from the late 1960s. Looking ahead, EDF Energy and its partner (China General Nuclear Ltd) have put forward proposals to construct, develop and operate **Sizewell C**, a new nuclear power station. This would be a major project running well into the second half of

It is a key resource in relation to artificial intelligence. At Adastral Park, BT accounts for around 3,000 direct jobs of which over 2,000 are focused on R&D. In addition, **Innovation Martlesham (IM)** has been operating since 2011 to encourage the development of a cluster of ICT companies. There are now close to 100 companies, ranging from global ICT vendors – such as Cisco, Huawei, Nokia and Intel – to scale-up businesses such as Coderus and Silicon:Safe⁵.

1 Department for Transport Statistics – Table PORT0104

2 Data from Eurostat

3 "Port of Felixstowe rail improvements receive go-ahead" Press release from Hutchison Ports – 16th October 2017

4 Data from Hutchison Ports (see www.portoffelixstowe.co.uk)

5 See East of England Science and Innovation Audit, September 2017

the 21st Century. On one estimate, it could generate 25,000 roles during the construction period as well as 900 permanent new jobs once the station is operational. A final decision is expected well within the lifetime of this Economic Growth Plan. Given the scale of the scheme, this decision will be important for the future of East Suffolk's economy.

All four assets are of national economic significance. To these, we might add a fifth – **Cefas** (an executive agency of Defra with substantial expertise in marine science and technology). Cefas has recently invested in its Lowestoft site and it has the potential to be the hub of a wider marine technology cluster.

These four/five key assets are defining features of East Suffolk's current economic character and its future potential.

...and its wider economic character

Alongside these national assets is another important narrative.

It relates in part to the **micro- and small businesses** that are found across the area. In total, there are over 9,000 businesses within East Suffolk and the vast majority of these are small (with fewer than 10 employees). In addition, there is a high incidence of self-employment, particularly in the south of the area.

These micro- and small businesses – and the people who own and manage them – reflect a range of circumstances. In some cases, there is real growth ambition and potential, and the occupants of, say, Framlingham Technology Centre, North East Suffolk Business Centre (in Lowestoft) and the members of Innovation Martlesham may be uppermost among these. In other cases, aspirations may be more modest – and for some, support may be needed to realise future potential. Throughout, the role of micro- and small businesses in sustaining the fabric of economic life within communities across East Suffolk is very important indeed.

Alongside micro/small businesses, the role and significance of **firms that have grown to**

at least medium size must be acknowledged and supported fully. Often these are local, family-owned businesses. Whilst they are not all well known outside of East Suffolk, within it, their role is crucial. Some examples are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Examples of local businesses that have grown in East Suffolk

Brafe Engineering – Woodbridge

Formed in the 1960s and with its origins as an aluminium-based foundry producing fittings for oil tankers, Brafe is a leading manufacturer of precision engineered castings worldwide. It has expertise in over 250 advanced grade alloys including high nickel and titanium.

Clays – Bungay

Established 200 years ago, Clays produces over 180 million books a year, all printed and bound in Bungay. Clients include major publishing houses in the UK and independent publishers. In recent years, Clays has developed digital services, managing the digital data for media such as apps, iPads and eReaders and focusing on 'sell then print' rather than the more traditional model of 'print then sell'.

Harrod Sport – Lowestoft

Established in the 1950s, the company originally bought fishing nets, repaired and sold them on as garden netting. Subsequently, it became a leading manufacturer of sports ground equipment and netting. Its equipment has been used at international venues and events (e.g. Rio 2016 Olympics). In 2017, Harrod Sport opened an Innovation Centre with over 800 sq. m. of office and workshop space to design, develop and prototype new products.

Herrco Cosmetics – Halesworth

Formed in the 1980s, Herrco Cosmetics manufactures cosmetics and personal care products. It now employs over 150 people and it reports that £2,000,000 investment is underway to develop new products and technologies, and increasing its own innovation laboratory.

Maritime Transport Ltd – Felixstowe

Formed in 2011, Maritime is a multi-modal logistics company. Starting as a container transport haulier, Maritime has diversified into curtain-sided distribution, warehousing, railports, container storage, container repair and freight management.

Source: Review of company websites, winter 2017/18

Summary SWOT analysis

As a local economy, East Suffolk has a range of strengths and opportunities on which to build – but also some weaknesses and threats that need to be addressed through the Economic Growth Plan.

Strengths and opportunities

- **Major economic assets** – Port of Felixstowe, Adastral Park, offshore energy, Sizewell – are of national significance and have attracted substantial investment although impacts need to be captured fully
- **Investment at Sizewell C** should deliver substantial economic benefits alongside ongoing activities linked to Sizewell B
- **Adastral Park and Innovation Martlesham** are attracting major inward investors and supporting the growth of a tech cluster – although Adastral Park continues to be “behind the wire” and the scale of the wider resource may still be under-used
- A **marine cluster** is emerging in and around Lowestoft: the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) is effectively an “anchor institution”
- Brexit impacts could generate new opportunities in **primary industry**, notably fishing
- A **significant cadre of (mostly family-owned) firms has grown to medium size**, some of which are now well-known outside of East Suffolk
- **Market towns** across East Suffolk have strong and unique communities, a vibrant voluntary sector and a tangible commitment to “place”
- **Activity and employment rates are high – and local people are thoroughly engaged** in the local economy
- Some **high-quality provision exists for small businesses** – e.g. Framlingham Technology Centre, Hempworks, North East Suffolk Business Centre, NWES, OrbisEnergy – and there may be scope for more
- **Regeneration plans are progressing** (e.g. Third Crossing and flood barrier in Lowestoft)
- The development of the **East Anglia Offshore Wind (EAOW) array** is a major opportunity and when completed, it will be the largest wind farm in the world; Lowestoft is a major hub in relation to it
- With a strong focus on the energy sector, Lowestoft’s **Enterprise Zone** is making good progress
- The recently-established **North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone (HAZ)** should help to bring neglected buildings back into use
- **Planned housing growth** should bring new investment including in parts of East Suffolk where the economic fundamentals are weak – so it can be (and needs to be) linked to regeneration more broadly
- **Making Waves Together (Great Place Scheme)** – a three-year programme delivering a broad range of cultural activity, increasing participation in the arts and making Lowestoft a more attractive place to visit, work, learn and live – is progressing
- The strength of the **wider cultural offer** (e.g. Aldeburgh Music at Snape Maltings) – including events such as Latitude Festival (near Southwold) and

the Suffolk Show – has established East Suffolk as a major destination

- East Suffolk's **built heritage** (e.g. Framlingham Castle, Sutton Hoo and Landguard Fort) – and the history linked to it – is a major asset for the visitor economy
- East Suffolk has an outstanding **natural environment** (including 49 miles of coastline and large parts of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a National Park) and the quality of life that comes with it, linked particularly to the visitor economy
- **Coastal Communities Teams** have been established at a local level and are working well with relevant communities
- The **creation of East Suffolk Council** has created scale and critical mass in delivery, and a commitment to work across all functions to deliver regeneration and growth



Weaknesses and threats

- The **skills profile** continues to be weak in parts, particularly in the north of East Suffolk
- There is **limited higher education provision** and – although only one factor among many – **retaining talented young people is difficult**
- There is **insufficient existing provision for small businesses and limited move-on space** – and developers are reluctant to build speculatively
- Many micro and small companies have **limited ambition** to grow – which restricts their wider potential impact
- In the north, **wage levels are low** on a workplace basis, as is **productivity**
- Levels of **social mobility** are low in the north of the district; former Waveney was ranked 314th out of 324 local authority districts in 2017 while former Suffolk Coastal was ranked 116th⁶
- Existing **skills and labour shortages** may be accentuated through Brexit (although this could also generate some opportunities)
- The area's population is already relatively old and **ageing**, with widespread implications (including for workforce skills)
- **Housing affordability** is challenging for people who rely on local jobs, many of which are poorly paid; it is raising particular issues for young people
- Levels of **second home ownership** are high in some areas (e.g. Southwold)
- Some **smaller town centres and High Streets** (e.g. Saxmundham, Leiston) are struggling – and the retail sector is under pressure

⁶ State of the Nation 2017 – Social Mobility in Great Britain. Social Mobility Commission, November 2017

- There are continuing **economic and physical regeneration challenges** in larger towns, particularly Lowestoft
- Given rising sea levels, there are **flood risk** issues, particularly in Lowestoft, which mean that regeneration schemes are expensive – although important defence schemes are being put in place
- **Coastal erosion** is a major concern for some coastal communities
- Locationally, parts of the area are remote and road improvements are needed; in the north there are issues relating to the **A47. Acle Straight improvements** (in Norfolk, but important for Lowestoft) have long been a priority
- There is **congestion on the A12** – but improvements are unlikely without significant housing growth (linked to ongoing Local Plan reviews)
- Although the SEGway scheme should help, **A12** improvements have not generally been a regional priority and more emphasis has been given to the A14 (in part reflecting the significance of port activities at Felixstowe); in the north, the A12 has been re-labelled A47 to highlight the link to Norwich
- There are continuing issues linked to **digital connectivity** – broadband and mobile
- **Major economic differences between the north of the district (especially Lowestoft) and the south** mean that different places need different responses
- “East Suffolk” (as a new construct) needs to **raise its profile**



Strategic context for the refreshed Growth Plan

The strategic context for the refreshed East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan has many different “layers”. These are defined within Suffolk, at LEP-level and nationally. This Plan will respond to these and - over time - shape them.

Economic strategy/policy

In 2017, the **economic strategy/policy** context was redefined by two key publications.

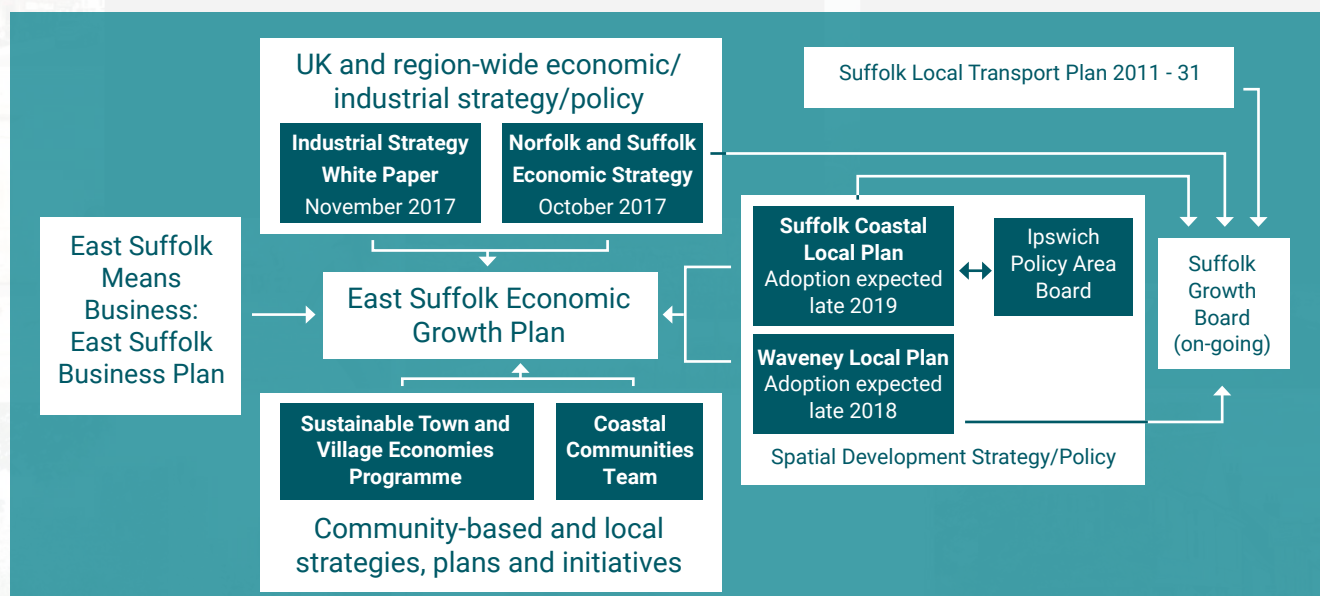
The first of these was the **Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy** which was published by New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership in October 2017 (replacing the Strategic Economic Plan from 2014). This set out seven major ambitions for Norfolk and Suffolk which emphasised aspiration, connectivity, productivity, inclusivity and internationalisation as overarching themes, together with a strong focus on clean energy. In terms of actions, a series of priority themes and places (including the Norfolk and Suffolk Energy Coast) were identified, as were key sectors (including energy, ICT, tech and digital creative, visitor economy, advanced agriculture, food and drink, transport, freight and logistics). Headline targets were set with respect to eight key performance indicators

which were defined in relation, inter alia, to GVA, GVA per job, skills, inclusivity and housing.

A month later, BEIS published its **Industrial Strategy White Paper**. This focused on five “foundations of productivity”: ideas, people, infrastructure, places and business environment. It invited local enterprise partnerships and/or combined authorities to prepare Local Industrial Strategies through a co-design process; in time, the expectation is that these will shape the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (successor to the European Social and Investment Funds).

Beyond this, the White Paper has an important focus on four “grand challenges”, all of which are germane to East Suffolk given the area’s opportunities, assets and challenges. artificial intelligence and data economy, future mobility, clean growth, and ageing society.

Figure 1: Summarising the strategic context for East Suffolk’s refreshed Economic Growth Plan



Spatial development strategy/policy

Alongside wider economic policy, the East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan is informed by – and informing of – two local plans. Both are being revised currently.

Emerging Local Plan for Waveney

The **Draft Local Plan for Waveney** underwent public consultation in summer 2017. It makes provision for just over 9,000 homes and 5,000 jobs over the period 2014-2036, with more than half of both totals to be in Lowestoft. Beccles is the other key location for growth (but on a much smaller scale than Lowestoft).

The Local Plan will continue to promote growth and regeneration in Central and Coastal Lowestoft, where there are plans to deliver significant new housing and economic growth (including industry, retail and leisure). The issues relating to economic performance are acute in these areas of the town, but they also have potential for transformation.

Central and Coastal Lowestoft benefits from the town centre, port, the beach and Broads, extensive areas of waterfront and good public transport links. There are substantial redevelopment opportunities on former industrial sites which are currently underused or derelict. In addition, Lowestoft (with Great Yarmouth) has an **Enterprise Zone**, with four sites that provide benefits to businesses and act as a catalyst for economic growth.

There will be significant change and regeneration opportunities created by the **Third Crossing** over Lake Lothing and also strategic flood protection measures. Further improvements to road, rail and sustainable transport are also being delivered as set out in the **Lowestoft Transport and Infrastructure Prospectus**. These are consistent with the objectives of the new Draft Local Plan around improving connections and permeability within the area.

Within the Draft Local Plan many of the specific site allocations have been rolled forward from **the Lake Lothing and Outer Harbour Area Action Plan**. This made provision for 950 direct jobs, mainly delivered

through the Power Park, with a focus on environmental and energy businesses. Other sites include Kirkley Waterfront and the Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood, which along with the Western End of Lake Lothing, will deliver around 1,500 new homes, community facilities, new employment premises, better access to the waterfront and a new pedestrian/cycle crossing.

Several specific sites in the town centre have been identified to expand the retail and leisure offer including a multiplex cinema, hotel and restaurants. The north end of the town centre, which now forms the **Heritage Action Zone**, will be enhanced to support existing and new shops, cafes and other small businesses, along with plans to create a new market. It will also create better links between the High Street, Scores and the East of England Park.

To the south of the Town Centre, the South Beach supports proposals for an enhanced tourism offer as set out in the **Seafront Vision** with plans to attract a younger, professional demographic to increase visitor spend and to extend the season.



Emerging Local Plan for Suffolk Coastal

For Suffolk Coastal, the Draft Local Plan is expected to be published in 2018. Consultation responses were invited on an **Issues and Options** document in autumn 2017. This reported Objectively Assessed Need for just over 10,000 homes in the period 2014-36 across the district. Land will need to be found for a quarter of these during the plan preparation process. In terms of jobs, the need for additional provision was considered within the wider context of Ipswich Policy Area. On a baseline scenario, the Issues and Options paper hints at just under 8,000 extra jobs in Suffolk Coastal. However, there are also more bullish scenarios. Spatially, there are different options. In all cases, “East of Ipswich” accounts for the largest share of housing growth, but at levels ranging from 27% to 50%

of the total. Some options identify significant growth at Felixstowe whilst others attach more emphasis to the A12 Corridor (near Saxmundham).

Although at an early stage, the new Suffolk Coastal Local Plan is important in relation to the East Suffolk Economic Growth Strategy. Long term, it could either – effectively – concentrate growth around Ipswich (meaning that East Suffolk’s economy will have a “dumbbell shape” – with hubs in the north (Lowestoft) and south (edge of Ipswich), but little in between). Alternatively, it could advocate a distributed model with the A12 Corridor playing a greater role. It will be crucial that infrastructure investments are aligned with the finalised spatial strategy.



East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan, 2018-2023

Vision and Strategy

Our Vision is that businesses across East Suffolk have the confidence to invest and grow, creating opportunities for people of all ages and improving further the quality of life in an outstanding environment.

We will achieve this by working closely with our businesses and focusing on three main **priorities**:

1. Supporting entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in East Suffolk
2. Encouraging established businesses to invest and grow
3. Attracting inward investment to East Suffolk, focused around existing and emerging sectors and supply chains

To deliver these priorities - and often in partnership with others - East Suffolk Council will:

- support the appropriate provision of **employment land and premises** (including provision for start-ups) within effective spatial policy frameworks
- work to address **key infrastructure constraints**, including in relation to transport, housing, flood risk and digital connectivity
- encourage appropriate forms of **skills and workforce development** so that businesses can find the skills they need, and people from East Suffolk are equipped for the jobs those businesses generate
- facilitate access to **finance and business support**, including export advice
- engage in **marketing and promotion** across East Suffolk

Our work will focus particularly on East Suffolk's key sectors and places:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| • Agriculture, food and drink | • Lowestoft |
| • Energy | • Adastral Park / Martlesham |
| • IT, tech and digital creative | • Felixstowe |
| • Manufacturing and engineering | • Sizewell |
| • Marine | • Market and coastal towns |
| • Ports and logistics | • Rural areas |
| • Visitor economy and cultural sectors | |

Our Economic Growth Plan will help advance East Suffolk's economy over the next five years.

Our Vision

Our **Vision** for the next five years is a simple one.

It is focused on **building business confidence** – and with it, both the capacity and ambition of our businesses to invest and grow.

With greater business confidence, **more and better opportunities will be created for the**

people and communities of East Suffolk (both current and future generations).

This in turn should allow **more people to enjoy a higher quality of life in a natural environment that we already recognise to be outstanding.**

Our Strategy

To achieve our Vision, we will focus on three overarching priorities. These will shape and guide everything we do.

Priority 1: Encouraging entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in East Suffolk

East Suffolk is an overwhelmingly small firm economy, particularly outside of the larger towns. Its economic vibrancy depends on the process of enterprise, as does the fabric of many of its communities.

Micro- and small enterprises take many different forms and they reflect many different circumstances.

Some have significant growth potential, particularly those with links to major knowledge-based assets (e.g. small and new businesses linked to Innovation Martlesham). Here, key issues tend to surround navigating the “valley of death”⁷ and accessing growth finance to translate concepts into products and services for which clients and customers can be found.

A second broad type of micro- and small enterprise is, essentially, a product of self-employment and often enabled by broadband connectivity. Businesses of this nature may be locally-focused, or they may be part of broader supply chains. They are frequently (but not always) home-based and attitudes to growth may well vary.

A third group derives from challenging circumstances – where setting up a small business is really the only option. Growth potential in this context tends to be limited and often the focus is on highly localised markets – although enterprises of this broad type may play a crucial role in relation to social and economic inclusion.

There are many other possibilities too. But encouraging the formation of small business – and providing a wider environment in which they can survive and grow – is central to this Economic Growth Plan.

What this means in practice is strongly place-based. It will include:

- ensuring that physical provision is made for small businesses across East Suffolk, including incubators and innovation centres as well as informal “makerspaces” (providing the basic tools for design and production) and “move on” accommodation (for growing businesses)
- supporting SMEs to increase their productivity through the adoption of digital technologies and strengthened management capacity
- making town centres “small business-friendly”, recognising that many High Streets are looking for new purposes while small businesses need homes (so there may be a case for repurposing retail space for small business uses) – although recognising also that business rates revaluations have been

7 A difficult period for many new, growing firms in financing terms – i.e. before they start earning revenue but after initial investment funding has been “consumed”

challenging

- encouraging formal and informal networking and mentoring – some place-based, some with a sectoral focus – to provide support to new enterprises and entrepreneurs
- developing procurement processes, consistent with the Council's social value policy, to provide greater opportunities for micro- and small businesses in East Suffolk
- engaging with masterplanning and other processes to ensure that provision for new enterprises is designed into new/expanded communities, including (where appropriate) through live/work space and the re-use of buildings
- ensuring that entrepreneurs and small business owners/managers are aware of support that is available (e.g. through the Growth Hub and in relation to workforce development, etc.)
- encouraging community groups and town/parish councils to nurture micro- and small businesses as part of a more symbiotic relationship between local communities and businesses (including community interest companies and third sector organisations), and recognising the role of small and micro-enterprises in relation to social and economic inclusion.

Priority 2: Encouraging established businesses to invest and grow

East Suffolk Council will deepen their working relationships with businesses of medium size and beyond.

There are not many of these: data suggest that across the two districts, there are about 25 local units with more than 250 employees and a further 80 with between 100 and 249 staff.

Where relevant and appropriate, East Suffolk Council will strengthen relationships with these businesses to:

- provide an “early warning system” for businesses facing difficulties and/or making decisions as the process of Brexit moves forward (noting that this group is disproportionately important in relation to business rates receipts)

- generate “real time intelligence” to inform skills and workforce development priorities; steer funding priorities for workforce skills and to link more generally with the county-wide “Developing Suffolk Talent” programme
- encourage greater engagement with apprenticeship (and other) programmes, recognising that larger businesses pay the apprenticeship levy
- understand businesses’ infrastructure needs and other priorities; and respond where possible, consistent with the Economic Growth Plan
- gain intelligence and contribute a business perspective to processes of infrastructure prioritisation
- forge deeper links within East Suffolk, helping to reinforce major local firms’ commitment to the place
- make businesses aware of available support, including for export (from, for example, New Anglia Growth Hub, DIT and Suffolk Chamber of Commerce)
- support the development and adoption of clean technologies across sectors.

Priority 3: Attracting inward investment to East Suffolk

The third main priority relates to inward investment.

East Suffolk is a major international gateway, particularly through port activities at Felixstowe (and Lowestoft). It is therefore key to international trade, and crucial for national economic growth.

In addition, some of its assets are of international significance. BT’s activities at Adastral Park are one example. A second is the marine science and technology generated by Cefas in Lowestoft. A third relates to East Suffolk’s cultural assets which are “on the map” internationally (through, for example, the music festival at Aldeburgh).

East Suffolk is an international destination – and it should be promoted and marketed in these terms as part of the wider UK offer. Efforts to attract investment will focus on sectors with real and distinctive growth potential; and on places with the capacity and appetite to respond well.

Key sectors

In working towards our Vision – and advancing our priorities – we will pay particular attention to the opportunities and potentials that exist in seven key sectors.

In identifying these key sectors, there is a strong read-across to the Economic Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk. There is a cross-cutting commitment to align wider investment in both infrastructure and skills with the requirements of these sectors (through, for example, the county-wide “Developing Suffolk Talent” programme and the New Anglia Sector Skills Plans). There is also an intention to enhance the environmental performance of key sectors across the board and to improve the efficiency of resource use.



Agriculture, food and drink

Agriculture, food and drink are important and long-established sectors in East Suffolk. Businesses within them range from micro-enterprises to the major food processing and packaging businesses that are found in the Waveney Valley, north east Suffolk and Lowestoft. The aim is to ensure that businesses in these sectors are at the forefront of new advances (in technologies, resource-use solutions and routes to market) and cognisant of changing market circumstances, especially as the Brexit process unfolds. This may open new opportunities (e.g. in a potentially resurgent fishing sector) but it could also present challenges as mechanisms and processes of support are re-engineered.



East Suffolk Council will support these sectors by:

- ensuring a strong link to initiatives led by New Anglia LEP in respect of **agri-tech** in general and the application of data-driven technologies in particular (noting the scope for links with activities at Adastral Park)
- sustaining a dialogue with existing businesses to ensure that changing **labour market and skills issues** are quickly recognised and acted upon (particularly in the context of a changing supply of migrant labour) and issues about resource use are appropriately reflected in relevant local and regional policy
- working to **promote local food and drink** as part of East Suffolk’s visitor economy and cultural offer
- advancing opportunities for the **local fishing sector**, including potentially as part of a local food offer (linking in with the visitor economy, as outlined above).

Energy Sector

The energy sector is crucial for East Suffolk and the next few years should see significant opportunities.

These relate, inter alia, to supply chain opportunities in offshore wind energy (linked, for example, to the development of the East Anglia Offshore Wind (EAOW) array which – when completed – will be the largest wind farm in the world). Lowestoft already has an Enterprise Zone and provision for small businesses in this field, and it will be crucial that both continue to develop. The Energy Skills Centre – to be built at East Coast College's Lowestoft campus – will be a significant resource. The work of the East of England Energy Group (EEEGR) continues to be important, both in relation to skills and more generally.

In addition, there are huge possibilities surrounding nuclear power, especially in relation to Sizewell C.

Various infrastructure schemes should support the sector's growth. For example, Suffolk County Council recently consulted on two bypass route options for the A12 between Saxmundham and Wickham Market as part of the SEGway proposals (Suffolk's Energy Gateway).

East Suffolk Council will support the energy sector by:

- continuing to ensure **appropriate land and premises provision** in and near Lowestoft to enable the offshore energy sector – and its supply chain – to thrive
- supporting the case for **investment in Sizewell C**, ensuring that this is linked to clear economic development outcomes, and learning from the experience of other similar ventures (e.g. Hinkley Point) in respect of supply chains, inward investment opportunities and issues relating to employment and skills
- working with New Anglia LEP to **promote and advance the East of England Energy Coast**, recognising the role, contribution and potential of East Suffolk's specialisms in renewables, nuclear and gas
- supporting the development of the **Energy Skills Centre** at East Coast College's Lowestoft campus, to address skills issues in the energy sector.



IT, tech and digital creative

Through BT's activities at Adastral Park – and the work of both multinational firms and key start-ups – East Suffolk has a world class knowledge base in relation to IT, tech and digital creative.

The Adastral Park 2025 Vision will be significant for the site. This will support the growth of the Tommy Flowers Institute for post-graduate ICT industrial research. It should also consolidate the role of Adastral Park as a major converged networks research facility.

The significance of Adastral Park/Innovation Martlesham was recognised clearly in the 2017 TechNation Report.

These sectors are bringing high quality jobs to East Suffolk and they explain, to a significant extent, the strong performance of Suffolk Coastal on the main economic indicators. The aim now must be to widen and deepen the cluster, equipping it to grow on Adastral Park – but also beyond it.



East Suffolk Council will support these sectors by:

- continuing to support and encourage the work of **Innovation Martlesham**, and the development of Adastral Park more generally
- **promoting the strength of the area's assets** in these sectors – alongside the outstanding quality of life that East Suffolk can provide
- ensuring that there is provision of **small business accommodation** appropriate to the needs of new and small IT, tech and digital creative businesses (recognising that some will be "informal" space)
- The creative sector is also well represented in East Suffolk at Bentwaters parks which is home to a growing film and production hub. There are plans for a new film studio here and this sector is also supported by the Screen Suffolk initiative.
- working with local communities to identify **appropriate spaces in town centres for small digital businesses**, possibly through the re-use of surplus retail space
- continuing to encourage links with the University of Suffolk, University of Essex (across the Haven Gateway) and the University of East Anglia in Norwich to **develop appropriate links into higher education**
- encouraging businesses in other sectors to benefit fully from the potential of **digital enabling technologies**
- advancing particularly – and alongside New Anglia LEP – the potential of a **link between the telecoms specialisms at Adastral Park and applications in high tech agricultural firms.**

Ports and logistics

The port of Felixstowe is a major economic driver in the south of East Suffolk and a significant logistics industry has grown up around it. The port at Lowestoft is also important, with strong links to the energy sector. Both will need to adapt as the UK withdraws from the European Union, but they are well placed to do so. The aim must be to add value and local economic impact to port-related activities, whilst mitigating and managing environmental pressures.



East Suffolk Council will support these sectors by:

- continuing to lobby – through Suffolk County Council, Haven Gateway Partnership, Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and national agencies – for **appropriate infrastructure provision** (road, rail and land-related)
- working closely with ports and port users to **facilitate investment in employment land and premises** to support the growth of ports and logistics sector, and associated industries
- sustaining a **close dialogue with the major employers** to identify key business development issues, particularly in respect of **skills and labour supply**.

Manufacturing and engineering

Manufacturing and engineering are sectors of cross-cutting importance that relate to many others (e.g. food and drink, and energy). Although sometimes under the radar, they are major employers in both districts and – at the town level – individual firms (some of which have long histories in East Suffolk) have emerged as the hub of local labour catchments.

East Suffolk Council will support these sectors by:

- working with businesses, schools and further education providers to promote apprenticeships and other forms of **workforce development**, and more generally working with employers to understand changing circumstances in relation to labour supply and workforce skills
- engaging in appropriate **promotional activity** (for the area and the businesses/sectors within it)
- using planning policy to ensure a **suitable and appropriate supply of B2 sites and premises**.



Marine sector

The possibility of developing a marine cluster around Cefas is potentially game-changing for East Suffolk in general (and Lowestoft in particular). Cefas has world class expertise in marine science and technology, notably in relation to aquatic environments, biodiversity and food security. It has already brought significant numbers of high quality jobs to Lowestoft and the opportunity to build on this is very important indeed.

East Suffolk Council will support the marine sector by:

- forging stronger **links to Cefas**, perhaps with national agencies and bodies, and exploring how a marine cluster could be developed, and then putting in place **measures linked to skills, business support, networking and land and property** to support it.



Visitor economy and cultural sectors

The visitor economy and (closely-related) cultural sectors together account for a significant part of East Suffolk's economy.

As sectors, the visitor economy/cultural sectors face some challenges: wage levels tend to be low, productivity is low and the seasonality of employment is a feature. At the same time, however, the vibrancy of these sectors is a significant factor in "what makes East Suffolk special": it is frequently what causes many people to want to live and work in the area, as well as to visit it.

East Suffolk Council will support these sectors by:

- nurturing local supply chains through, for example, the **promotion of local food and drink**, particularly when there is a clear association of brands with East Suffolk (e.g. Adnams Southwold Bitter)
- working with partners, particularly the Suffolk Coast Destination Management Organisation, to define a **"year-round offer"**
- **forging links to regeneration imperatives and ventures**, particularly in Lowestoft (First Light, Heritage Action Zone, etc.) but also in Felixstowe
- helping to define a visitor economy "offer" in relation to **East Suffolk's market towns**
- **promoting** the area as a whole as a place to live, work and visit – and invest
- Aldeburgh Music at Snape Maltings is a cultural offering of international significance which provides a major draw for visitors to east Suffolk.

Place-based and regeneration priorities

Places within East Suffolk vary substantially and for this reason, our Economic Growth Plan has a strong place-based dimension.

With a five-year time horizon, the East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan will both inform – and be guided by – the priorities set out in the two Local Plans, both of which are currently being revised.

The Economic Growth Plan will ensure that economic growth of an appropriate scale and type is achieved alongside the Council's broader spatial development priorities – which are being (re-)defined through the on-going statutory processes.

In parts of East Suffolk, these spatial priorities have a major (and large scale) regeneration focus – with physical infrastructure requirements alongside a pressing need for social and economic regeneration. Elsewhere, the challenges relate more to accommodating growth. In both circumstances, the need to align significant planned housing delivery with

sustainable economic development is crucial.

But the East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan is not just about supporting “new development” and large-scale regeneration. In parallel – and consistent with our Vision – it has “a job to do” in ensuring that all settlements across the district have vibrant and sustainable communities in which local people and businesses (including in the third sector) can thrive. This in turn requires that any barriers to work are broken down and economic growth genuinely is inclusive.

In practice, the need to sustain existing communities and to support new ones – and to effect regeneration whilst also accommodating growth in more buoyant areas – results in **six broad spatial priorities**.

These overlap significantly with the key sectors outlined earlier.



Lowestoft

Lowestoft is the largest town in East Suffolk. It has seen significant investment in recent years, much of it precipitated by the opportunities associated with offshore renewable energy; and building in turn on a longer heritage linked to gas in the Southern North Sea.

Lowestoft continues to have a strong relationship to nearby Great Yarmouth (to the north) but also – and increasingly – to Norwich via the A47. The proximity of the Broads National Park is also important in relation to its current character and future opportunities.

There are deep-seated socio-economic regeneration challenges in Lowestoft, some of an inter-generational character. Levels of deprivation are high; educational attainment is relatively low; wage levels are poor; and high levels of un-/under-employment (particularly among young people) are a concern. Although significant progress has been made over recent years, the physical, economic, social and cultural regeneration of both the seafront and the town centre are long term priorities.

Part of the issue is environmental: much of the area is at significant flood risk and the physical regeneration schemes on which aspects of economic regeneration rely are expensive. However, the Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Project will help to mitigate the surrounding issues.

In addition, there is a need to continue to invest in the area's cultural capital and its sense of place, linking in part to the visitor economy. The "Making Waves Together" project is important in this context. The designation of a Heritage Action Zone has also been important, alongside the East of England Park (which is creating a high quality landscaped park at the most easterly point in England). Significant progress is now being made on multiple fronts. This includes plans for a new crossing over Lake Lothing which has long been a major infrastructural priority and should unlock major regeneration opportunities.

The decision of Cefas to commit to the area (and invest heavily in the redevelopment of its site) was also extremely important, creating the possibility of growth in higher value sectors and activities. More generally, significant

housing growth is planned in or close to Lowestoft – and the economy must gear up to enable a sustainable growth model.

In this context, East Suffolk Council will support regeneration and investment in Lowestoft by:

- encouraging **further investment in the energy and marine sectors** and developing further the supporting infrastructure for both businesses (e.g. through the Enterprise Zone) and people (e.g. through East Coast College)
- developing **opportunities for both the seafront and the town centre**, recognising that the visitor economy and cultural sectors need to play a key role in both but that they also need to continue to evolve (consistent with the Seafront Vision)
- advancing the cultural offer in Lowestoft, including through the **Heritage Action Zone**; through the **East of England Park**; through the **Making Waves Together** project; and through plans for a **First Light Festival**
- emphasising **skills and workforce development issues** in the Lowestoft area and working with local schools, colleges and businesses to **improve employability, and enhance provision and uptake**
- encouraging **community-led** economic regeneration in the town
- continuing to **advance infrastructure priorities** in Lowestoft (**road, rail, port-related and flood defences**), including by emphasising the importance of Lowestoft in Suffolk and/or LEP-wide prioritisation processes in relation to infrastructure funding
- using the **Council's assets and powers** in an integrated way to further Lowestoft's regeneration priorities
- **working closely with partners** in Great Yarmouth (and, when relevant, Norwich) to achieve both scale and synergy in relation to regeneration and growth in Lowestoft.

Adastral Park / Martlesham

In the south of East Suffolk, Adastral Park / Martlesham – and the area surrounding it – is providing a major focus for growth. Significant housing growth is already planned, and – longer term – there are aspirations relating to substantial employment growth at the “Northern Quadrant” (adjacent to Adastral Park), which could complement the growth of the IT cluster. Therefore, this area too is seeing investment, but of different forms, and – building on its strengths – the area needs to flourish.

In this context, East Suffolk Council will support the process of growth by:

- encouraging further the activities linked to **Innovation Martlesham**, including “beyond the wire” of Adastral Park; supporting the delivery of **Adastral Park Vision 2025**, creating a national centre for a global digital economy; and encouraging the work of the Tommy Flowers Institute
- aligning (as far as possible) **the nature of planned housing provision with the range and types of local job opportunities and working styles** – recognising that informal workspaces may be important for small tech-based businesses
- supporting **links to University of Suffolk and University of Essex**, particularly in relation to higher education in the sphere of data science.



Felixstowe

Felixstowe is East Suffolk’s second largest town which accommodates an international gateway and alongside that has a traditional seaside tourism role.

At the same time, it is an important focus for future growth and it is seeing significant investment.

Within this context, place-based visions are emerging for the town:

- **North Felixstowe Vision** is a residential, leisure-led development which will enhance/expand the tourism offer and (alongside residential development) boost the sustainability of the town centre
- **Felixstowe South Seafront Vision** involves investing in Council assets and identifying development opportunities along the south seafront in order to enhance the quality and range of the visitor offer. It brings together existing and planned developments/projects into a single visioning document.

As well as supporting these visioning processes, East Suffolk Council will encourage regeneration and growth in Felixstowe by:

- promoting the on-going work of **Felixstowe Forward** (the Felixstowe Coastal Communities Team) and the initiatives it has identified locally
- supporting the **visitor economy** particularly in seeking to define a year-round offer
- supporting **processes of enterprise and entrepreneurship** within Felixstowe
- supporting measures to enhance the skills, **education and employability of young people**
- encouraging a stronger link between the Port of Felixstowe and the **growth of local micro and small businesses** (e.g. in transport, logistics, etc.).

Sizewell

Sizewell is a village located between the coastal towns of Southwold and Aldeburgh. It is dominated by Sizewell B nuclear power station and – depending on decisions that will be made within the lifetime of this Economic Growth Plan – it has the prospect of Sizewell C. This will potentially generate substantial numbers of jobs, some of them construction-related.

East Suffolk Council will support investment at Sizewell by:

- exploring the **potential economic benefits of Sizewell C** and then putting in place a **plan to ensure that these are fully captured**, drawing on the experience of similar investments elsewhere (e.g. Hinkley Point)
- supporting the **operations of Sizewell B**, particularly in relation to **labour market and skills issues**.

Market and coastal towns

Across East Suffolk, there is a group of smaller market and coastal towns, generally with populations in the range of 5,000-10,000 people. These vary tremendously in character and vibrancy: some are major destinations within the visitor economy, others are much less well known outside East Suffolk, relying instead on local service functions, family-owned businesses (some of which have grown to at least medium size) and small and micro- enterprises.

In all cases, it is important that communities are vibrant and sustainable – particularly in terms of providing both jobs and housing for younger local people.

East Suffolk Council will support these settlements by:

- encouraging the on-going work of **Coastal Communities Teams**, where these are in place, and encouraging similar models elsewhere (particularly through the **Sustainable Town and Village Economies** programme) to support locally-led approaches to social and economic well-being and growth (including through the third sector). This approach will work hand in hand with the Councils' Enabling Communities Strategy

- making connections between **young people and local employers**, particularly in the key sectors outlined elsewhere in this Economic Growth Plan
- ensuring that market and coastal towns have **appropriate levels and types of small business provision, and grow-on** **xe**, recognising that there are market failures in this context and that a positive approach to enterprise provision will be important
- working to ensure that **industrial estates and other business locations have good broadband connectivity** (noting that they sometimes are ascribed lower levels of priority than residential areas)
- supporting local solutions to local housing challenges, particularly in relation to **affordability for younger people**.

Rural areas

Much of East Suffolk is rural. It is sparsely populated, with communities living in hamlets and small villages.

Through the Growth Plan, East Suffolk Council will support rural areas by:

- continuing to implement the **Sustainable Town and Village Economies** programme to support locally-led approaches to social and economic well-being and growth (including through the third sector)
- making the case for **improved digital connectivity** – both broadband and mobile – to reduce the challenges of digital deprivation
- providing **good levels of service provision**
- supporting the **Growth Hub and other virtual business support** solutions targeted at small and micro-enterprises
- encouraging locally-generated networking ventures which will **reduce isolation and help/support people who are self-employed and/or working in micro- and small businesses**.

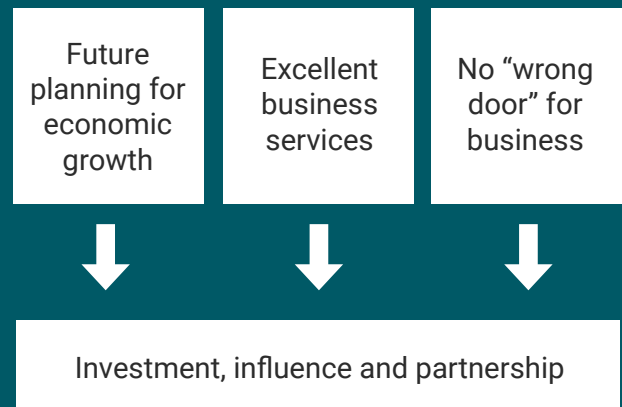
Delivering the plan

East Suffolk Council will work hard to deliver the Economic Growth Plan. We will work with partners and stakeholders to secure external funding.

District councils have major roles in supporting economic growth. As local planning authorities, they are responsible for planning the scale and nature of growth that the community both needs and can sustain. On a day-to-day basis, they also provide a range of services and support the environmental quality that businesses (and local communities) need to thrive.

But East Suffolk Council can only achieve its economic ambitions by working together with business and with other public sector partners. In short, it needs to build on excellent “core services” to ensure a joined-up approach to economic development. In this context, it will need to continue to secure external funding to help deliver this Economic Growth Plan and lever in wider investment.

Figure 2: Role of the district council in delivering the Economic Growth Plan



Future planning for economic growth

The two Local Plans – both of which are being refreshed – will influence and support patterns of growth across East Suffolk. They are also important to the business community (as evidenced by the number of consultation responses).

Through the planning process, East Suffolk Council will:

- define an appropriate supply of employment land and identify the infrastructure needed to bring it forward in a timely way
- work with neighbours in the wider ‘economic area’ (particularly Ipswich to the south, and Norwich and Great Yarmouth in the north), recognising that East Suffolk’s residents and businesses benefit from (and contribute to) opportunities in these towns
- engage with business to understand the market and respond to changing market signals, supporting new opportunities as they emerge.





Excellent business services

East Suffolk Council provides direct services to business including licensing, planning and building control, environmental services and enforcement. Some sectors, such as the visitor economy, also rely on the quality of public realm and town centre management services. The Council's core services to business will be efficient and responsive. Innovative solutions will be developed to improve their quality.

No “wrong door” for business

Businesses interact with East Suffolk Council, and the rest of the public sector, through many channels. These include direct services, as well as business support via the New Anglia Growth Hub, and services provided at local, county and national level. The landscape can be confusing. It also frequently changes.

The Council will understand the services that it, and its partners, offer. It will signpost business customers efficiently, working especially closely with partners at Suffolk County Council, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and Suffolk Chamber of Commerce. There will be no “wrong door” for East Suffolk’s businesses.

Investment, influence and partnership

Excellent core services to business provide a platform for stronger joint working with partners. East Suffolk Council will be an “excellent partner to do business with”: with clear priorities, it will invest in relationships – through formal partnership structures and informally – to ensure that East Suffolk’s businesses and communities are supported, particularly by relevant and appropriate infrastructure investment, skills provision, business support processes, and wider inward investment and place-based marketing.

Measuring progress and KPIs

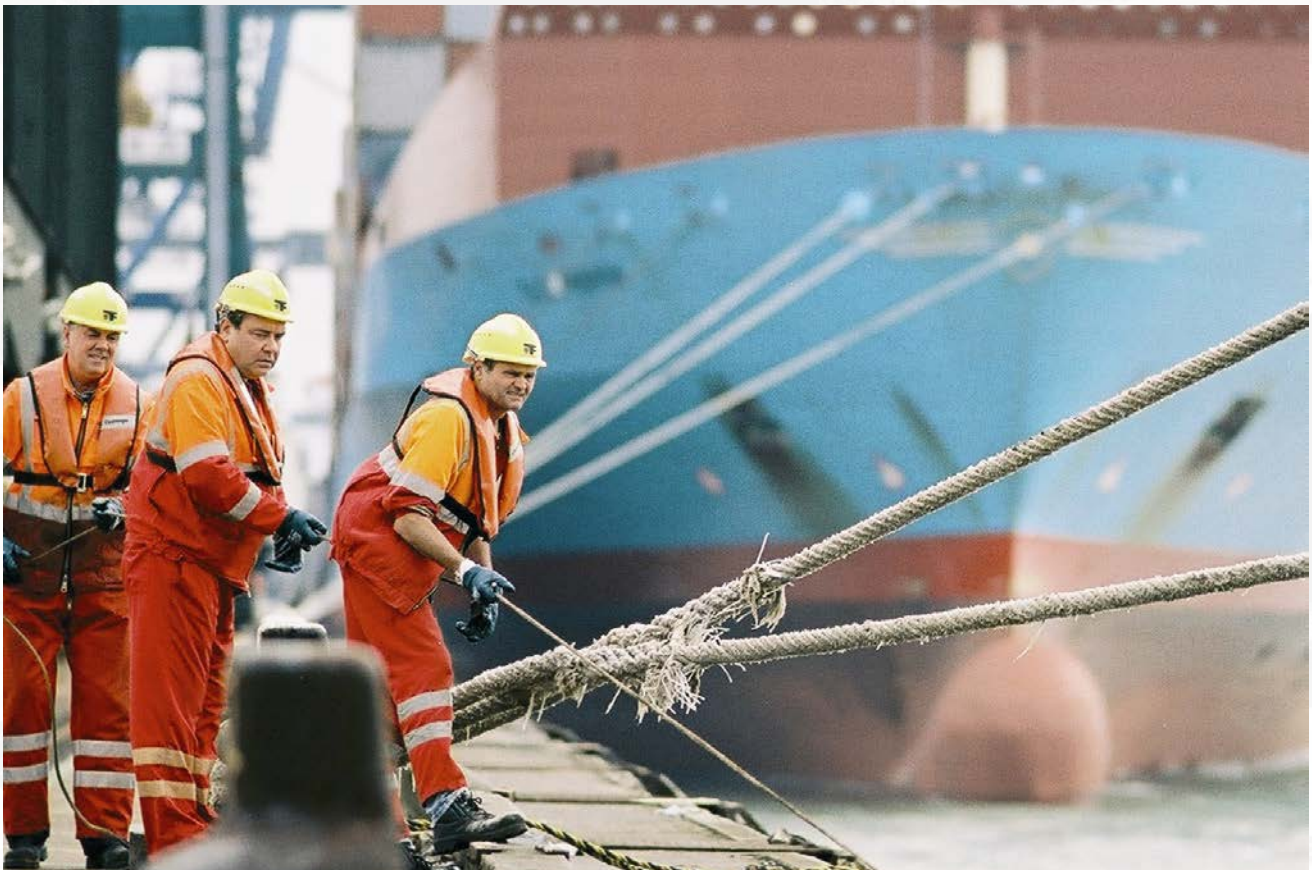
We will use a range of indicators to chart progress in advancing the East Suffolk Growth Plan.

A Delivery Plan is being developed alongside this Economic Growth Plan. It will be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed) and the resourcing requirements – both within East Suffolk Council and in relation to external funding possibilities – will be set out clearly. A series of delivery targets – and outputs linked to them – will be defined in response. Here our focus is on broader outcomes.

Our Economic Growth Plan is relatively “near term”. This means it is nested within the framework provided by our two Local Plans (whilst also seeking to inform the revisions to them). It has a shorter timescale than the Economic Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk which was prepared recently by New Anglia LEP.

Perversely, perhaps, this makes target setting more difficult: one or two “external shocks” (whether good or bad) would put us off course, whereas “average” conditions are easier to assume over a longer timescale.

Nevertheless, we have identified three headline outcomes as Key Performance Indicators, and we intend to monitor our progress in relation to these. These indicators are a subset of the ones identified in the Economic Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk and our targets are informed by those set for New Anglia (although they are not identical). Our targets are also consistent with our Local Plans (although we will need to keep this alignment under review as the Local Plans are revised).



1: Productivity

This is our headline outcome indicator because it relates more to the quality of economic growth rather than simply the quantum. Overall, people who work in East Suffolk will not be able to command higher wages unless productivity improves, and productivity depends on a raft of factors (of which skills and sectoral structure are uppermost). One of the main productivity metrics – GVA (output) per job – therefore captures many of the Priorities linked to our Economic Growth Plan.

East Suffolk's productivity performance has been – and is projected to be – very similar to the average for New Anglia. However as noted already, within this, the south of the district performs better than the north. It is also important to recognise that New Anglia is mid ranking when compared to other LEP areas, with productivity levels below the UK average. In real terms, our target is to increase our productivity performance by 1.75% per annum between 2018 and 2023.

Measured at constant 2011 prices, this will take GVA per job for East Suffolk to £44.8k by 2023 (compared with an expected £44.5k on East of England Forecasting Model's (2016) baseline projection).

2: Jobs

Particularly given the pace of planned housing growth, it is important that East Suffolk continues to generate new jobs – and jobs growth has been challenging in the past in the north of the area.

The baseline projection from EEFM (2016) is for total jobs growth of close to 0.5% per annum across both East Suffolk and New Anglia between 2018 and 2023. The Economic Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk adopts jobs growth of 0.5% per annum as one of its targets.

Our aim is slightly more ambitious. We intend to support jobs growth at 0.6% per annum over the next five years, taking the total to 113,400 jobs by 2023 (compared to 112,700 on the baseline projection). [The projected baseline position (for 2018) is 110,000 jobs in East Suffolk].

It is important to note that significant jobs growth linked to Sizewell C should come to East Suffolk – but not within these timescales. It is not therefore factored into these targets.

3: Business stock

Our third KPI relates to our business stock. Across different sectors and in different places, our Economic Growth Plan attaches significant weight to supporting both the formation and growth of businesses across East Suffolk. Currently, we have around 9,300 enterprises.

Consistent with the New Anglia Economic Plan for Norfolk and Suffolk, we aim to see the stock of enterprises grow in net terms by about 2.0% per annum. This should mean that we create just under 1,000 new businesses (net) by 2023.

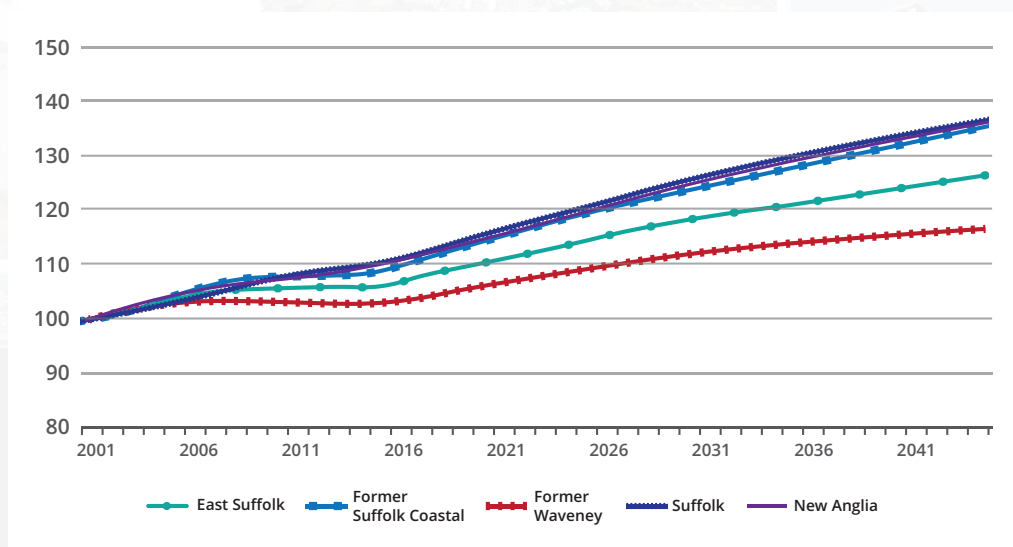


Annex A: Looking back - and projecting forward

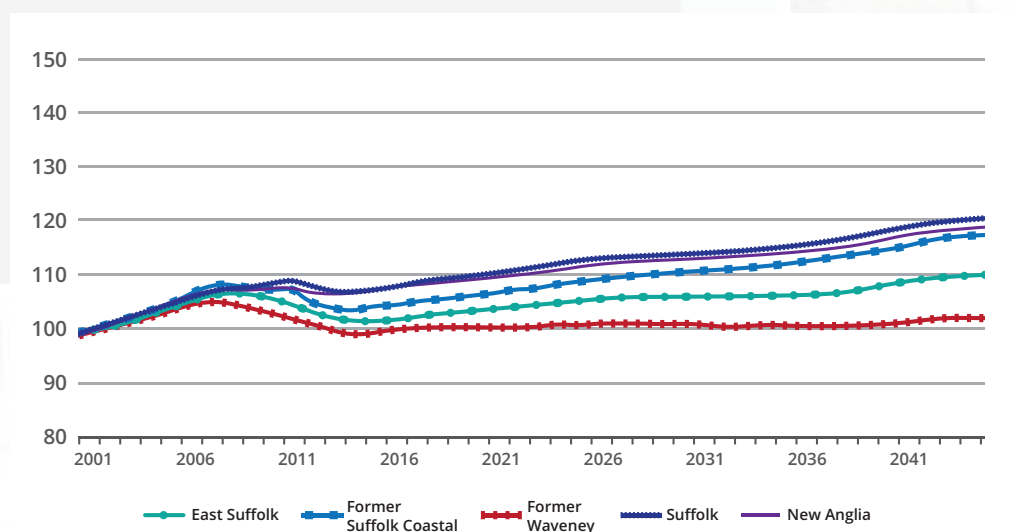
The charts below are based on data from a set of baseline projections which were prepared by Cambridge Econometrics using the East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM) and published in August 2016. The underlying forecast preceded the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU.

Note that the charts have different scales on the vertical axes. Four of the charts are indices (and are useful in illustrating relative patterns of change). The fifth chart shows absolute estimates of GVA per job (productivity) at constant (2011) prices.

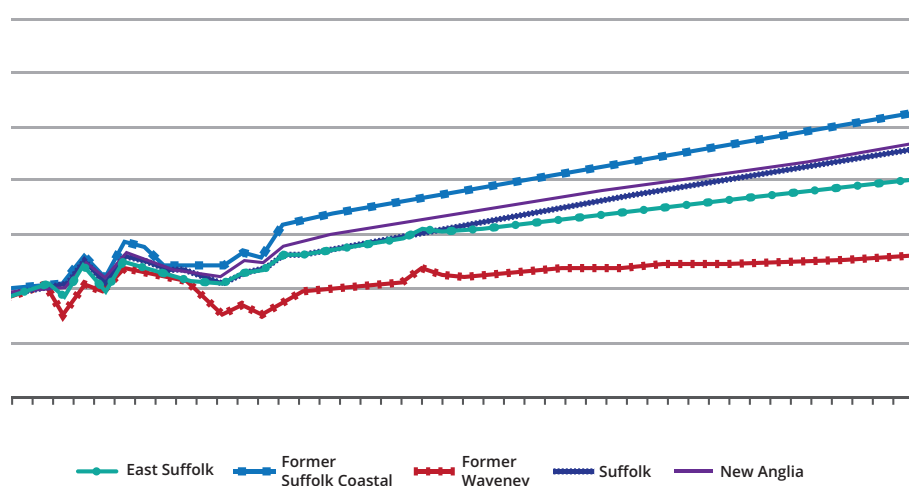
1: Index of total population (2001=100)



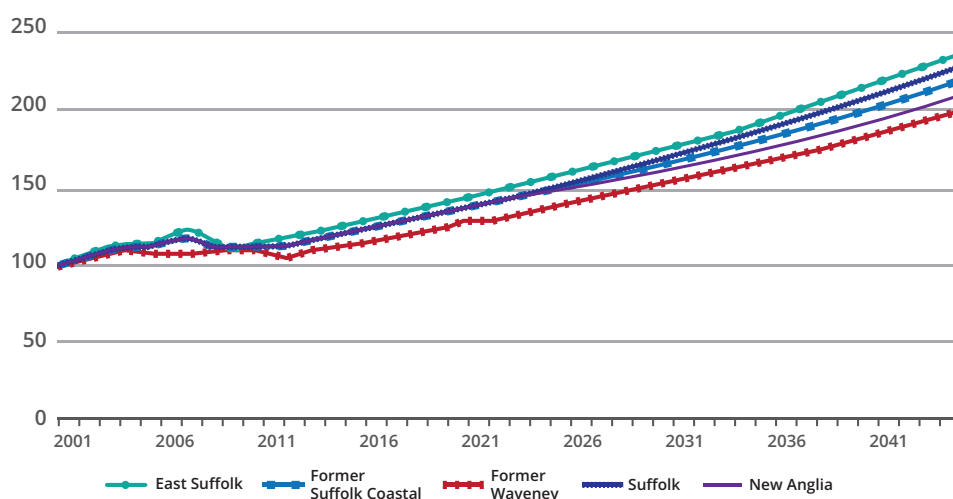
2: Index of working age (16-64) population (2001=100)



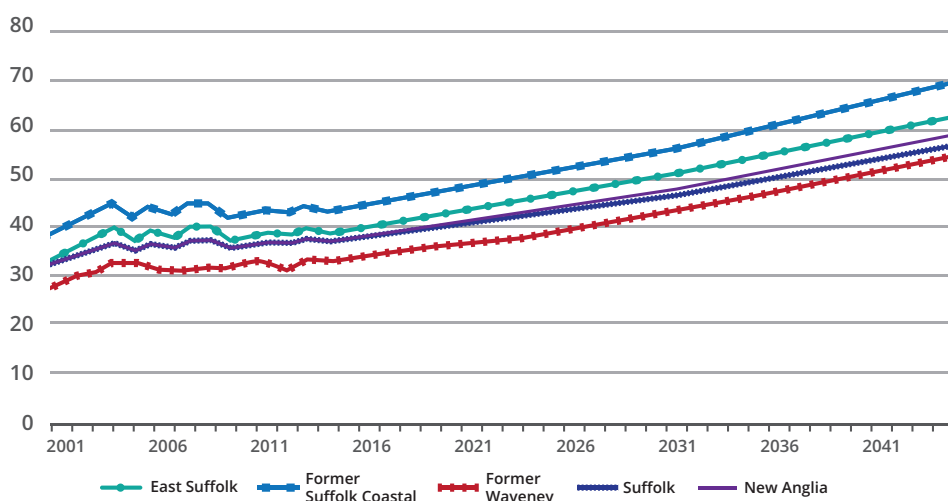
3: Index of total employment (2001=100)



4: Index of GVA (2001=100)



5: GVA per job (£'000s, 2011 prices)



The charts contain important – albeit modelled – data. In providing a perspective on both historic and projected future growth, they are useful in framing East Suffolk's refreshed Economic Growth Plan.

The following headlines may be drawn from the data:

- The historic and projected future pattern of growth in total population is very similar in former Suffolk Coastal to the pattern across Suffolk and New Anglia. Former Waveney, however, is different, with a growth rate in total population (historic and projected) which is notably lower.
- By 2045, former Waveney's working age population is projected to be almost unchanged in absolute terms from 2001. Over the period 2001-2045, the projections suggest that former Waveney's working age population will have declined from 59% to 51% of the total. A similar pattern is evident in former Suffolk Coastal – although in the context of overall population growth (so the working age population is expected to grow in absolute terms).
- Between 2001 and 2017 (for which the estimate is projected) and in net terms, fewer than 100 jobs were created in former Waveney, compared to nearly 8,000 in former Suffolk Coastal. The projections for the two districts are also very different: whilst former Suffolk Coastal is expected to see the fastest rate of employment growth among the areas considered, former Waveney is projected to experience the lowest. East Suffolk encompasses both situations.
- In large part as a consequence, former Waveney is projected to experience lower rates of GVA growth than former Suffolk Coastal over the period to 2041. By 2041 – and at 2011 constant prices – the value of economic output from East Suffolk is projected to be

£7.6bn compared to about £4.4bn currently and £3.6bn in 2001.

- The principal measure of economic efficiency – and a key theme within much government policy currently – is GVA per job which describes the productivity of labour. Currently, GVA per job (in 2011 prices) is about £45k in former Suffolk Coastal, £34k in former Waveney and £40k across East Suffolk (which in aggregate is broadly similar to Suffolk and New Anglia). Projected growth rates in GVA per job are faster in former Waveney than former Suffolk Coastal, but even by 2041, the level of productivity in former Suffolk Coastal (£69k) is projected to be notably higher than in former Waveney (£54k).

The outputs from the East of England Forecasting Model baseline projection need to be treated with a good deal of caution, not least because the underlying forecast did not anticipate the process of Brexit. Nevertheless, 'they point to a mixed picture of growth and prosperity across the two former local authority districts which together define East Suffolk.



6 Defined as residents aged 16-64

