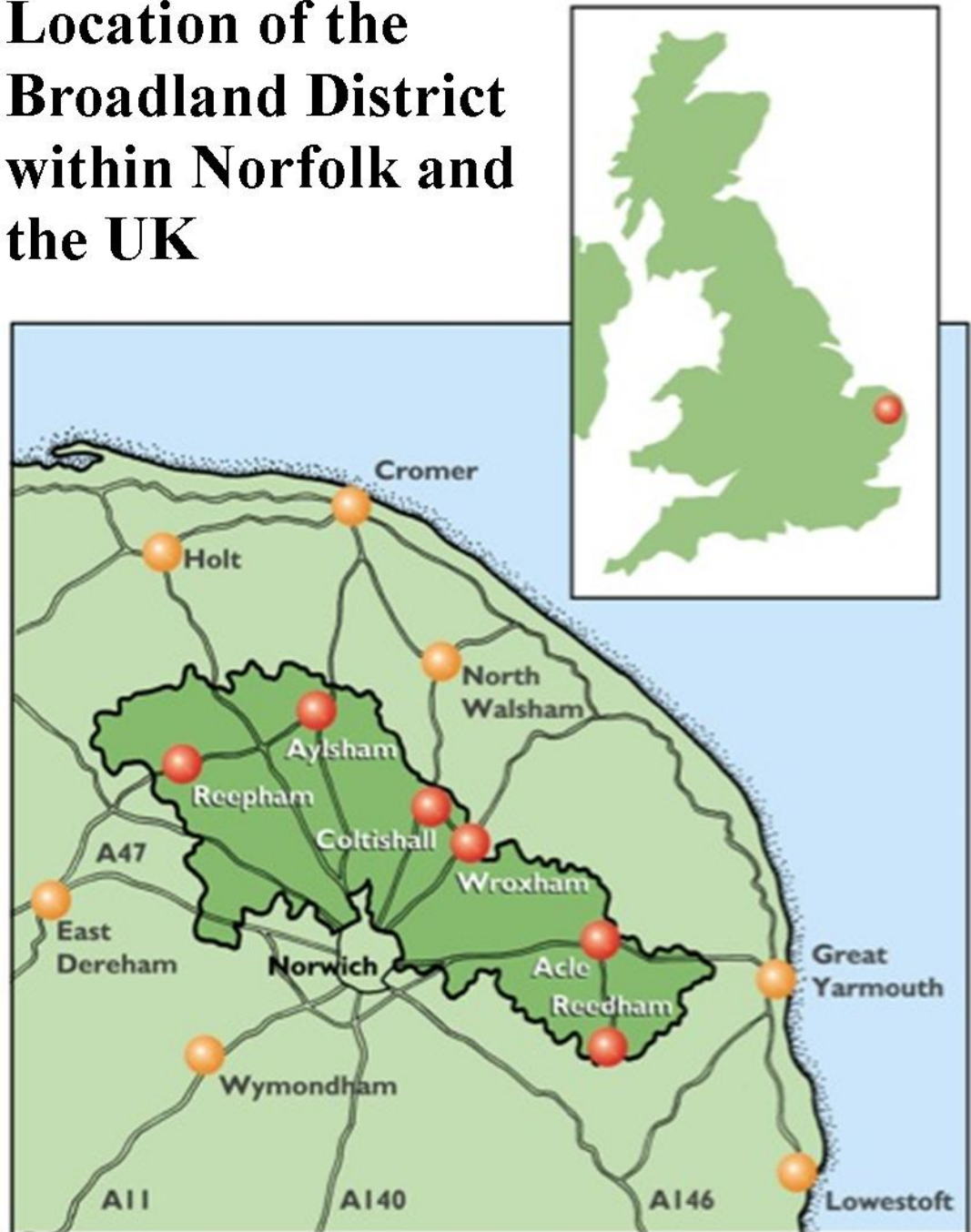


Location of the Broadland District within Norfolk and the UK



Introduction

Broadland lies in the county of Norfolk in the east of England. About 49% of the population lives in former villages, now suburban in character, on the edge of the City of Norwich. These make up about 7% of the land area. This contrasts with an extensive rural area characterised by small market towns, villages and hamlets.

123,000 people live in Broadland of which 18.1% are aged 0-15 years, 62.6% are of working age and 19.3% are of pensionable age. It is one of the fastest growing areas in Norfolk. About 40.7% of economically active people are employed full time, with 14.7% part time, 9.8% self employed and a little over 2% are students. Compared to other areas unemployment is low at 1.9%.

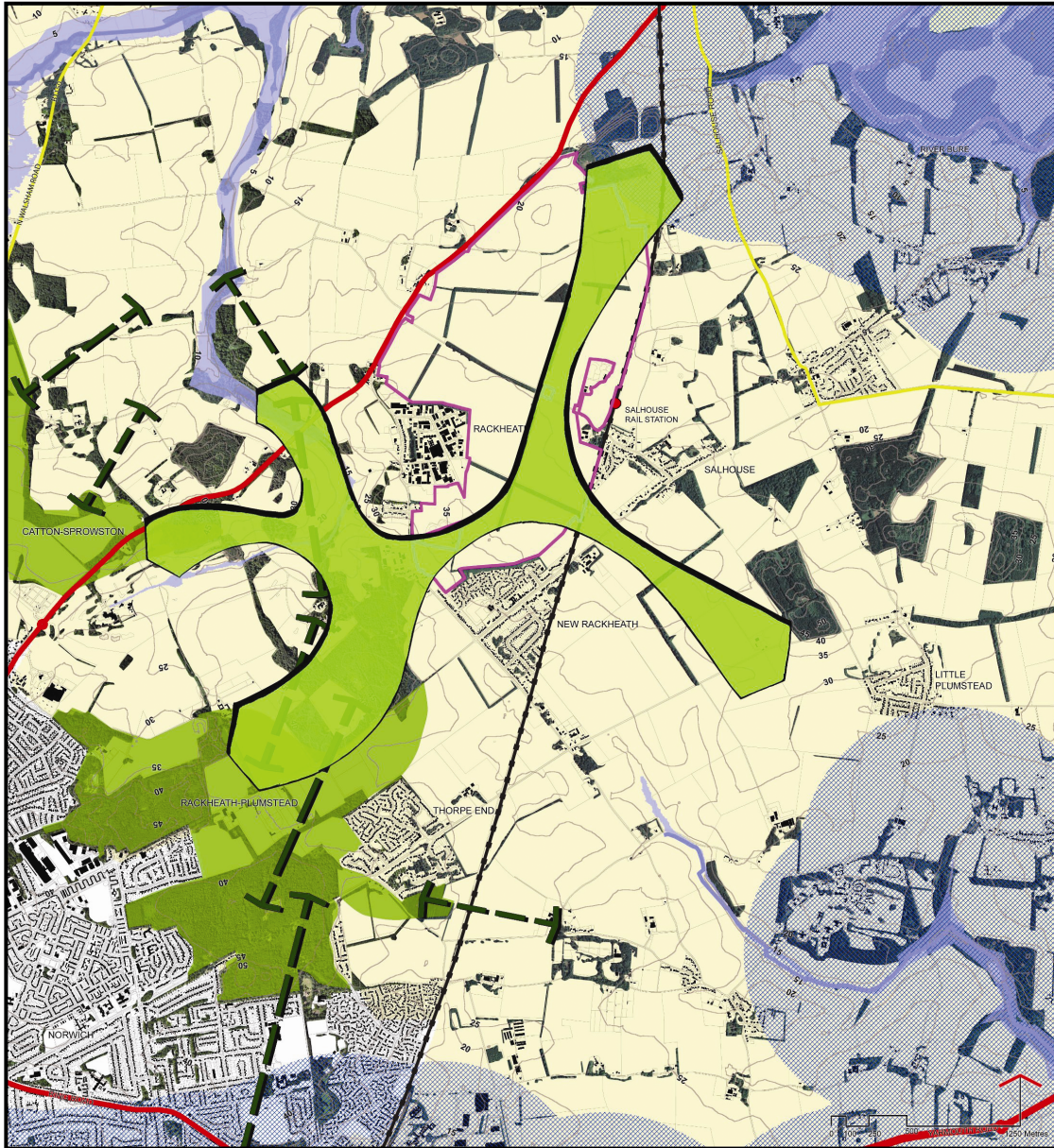
84% of the businesses in Broadland are small (employing between 1 and 5 people) and employ only 18% of the workforce. Tourism is an important element of the district's economy and the unique wetland known as the Norfolk Broads is the district's best known tourist attraction.

There are three levels of local government in Norfolk – county, district and town and parish councils. Responsibilities are divided among these three levels – for example a town council will take charge of street cleaning, the district council collects waste and the county council disposes of it.

Broadland prides itself on being an enabling council. Effective partnership working across the public, private and voluntary sectors, ensures that services are delivered to a high standard. This is reflected in survey results which indicate that 91% of the district's population consider their quality of life to be good or very good.

Broadland responds flexibly to changing circumstances and has undertaken a range of actions and projects to mitigate the impact of the recession on local residents and businesses.

Enhancement of the Natural and Built Landscapes



Map showing ecological corridors connecting the City of Norwich with the Norfolk Broads

Protection and enhancement of the landscape is important to Broadland residents – surveys show that 68% visit formal open space and 21% visit natural green spaces on a regular basis. Broadland District Council has adopted a number of measures to ensure that the quality of landscape is sustained and where necessary improved.

Broadland has a wealth of diverse landscapes and communities, urban and rural and the Council faces a number of challenges. The Greater Norwich Area is a designated growth point, set to expand considerably over the next 20 years. Broadland is working with partners on a Green Infrastructure Policy

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to ensure quality landscaping forms an integral part of this expansion. Green corridors will link communities throughout the city.

Catton Park is a key element of this strategy. The park is run by a Charitable Trust comprising members of the community, supported by Council representatives and advisors. It is a Repton designed parkland in the heart of the urban area, formerly in agricultural use but now restored and open for the enjoyment of the public with funded projects to enhance its biodiversity and provide an education facility on site.

The Council also opens woodland areas in both the urban and the rural areas to the public. These are much valued by residents as quiet havens. The Council has implemented a Tree Risk Management Policy to ensure that work is carried out to the highest standards whilst ensuring public safety



New areas of woodland are being transferred into community ownership as part of residential development applications. In one case planning permission was given for a small number of Zero carbon houses creating public benefit in the form of gaining access to the woodland. Landscaping also forms an important part of commercial development sites. Building to high standards of sustainability is

encouraged such as this new psychiatric intensive care unit at Hellesdon Hospital which has calming internal Japanese style gardens and externally blends with its surroundings. Importantly, the building uses green technologies including photovoltaics and water recycling. The scheme won the Broadland Design Award which was set up by the Council to recognise and encourage excellent design.

Broadland District Council runs a biennial Green Award on Cablespace principles, having signed up to its manifesto on Open Public Space, to encourage the highest standards in green space design. Entries range from school sites and play areas to countryside walks. Many are volunteer led, enabled and encouraged by Broadland.

The Council's Parish Tree Warden Scheme has received a government award and grants are provided for Warden's landscape enhancement schemes such as the repair of the boardwalk, which gives public access to Brundall Fen, an important wetland site on the Norfolk Broads.

The Council owns two former railway lines now converted to footpaths and cycleways and opens them to the public. One, the Bure Valley Railway path, runs alongside a narrow gauge steam railway giving residents and visitors the

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unique opportunity to walk or cycle through beautiful countryside for seven miles and then ride back on a steam train.

Broadland has committed funding for the review of its Tree Preservation Orders, using state of the art GPS equipment to pinpoint the position of protected trees. This review is well underway. The development pressures on land are increasing but community volunteer tree wardens, councillors and officers are committed to ensuring that the natural environment and heritage of the district is protected and many new preservation orders are served each year.

The Council has encouraged the development of sustainable housing which demonstrates how sustainability can be combined with good design, a high standard of comfort and respect for the landscape.

A recent development of affordable housing at South Walsham is a good example of this. The properties are built to high eco-standards which include the collection of grey water and a heat recovery system. An owlery was constructed to compensate for a derelict barn that it was necessary to demolish during development of the site.



Eco Houses at South Walsham



Owlery

At community level, the Greenlanes Community Garden goes from strength to strength creating a delightful garden in what was formerly a dull and neglected space. The process of creating and caring for the garden has had considerable social as well as environmental benefits.

Arts, Culture and Heritage

The conservation and management of heritage is a priority in Broadland, with residents valuing the unique and rich historical environment.

There are over 1200 listed buildings in Broadland, three parklands of historic interest (including Catton Park mentioned above), 19 conservation areas and 27 scheduled ancient monuments. The Council's community plan commitment to the natural and built environment is actively pursued, and supported and appreciated by the Council's diverse local communities.



St Michael's Church Parish Rooms

The Council has supported a project to renovate the Aylsham Parish Room. This nineteenth century building located in the churchyard was dilapidated and unused. Renovation is now complete and it has been opened to the community as a local archive and education centre.

The Council cares for emerging heritage. Two new conservation areas at Wroxham and Thorpe End have been added. The former is a 1960's open plan layout estate built in the wooded gardens formerly belonging to a country house, now demolished. Thorpe End is an important example of a 1930's garden village. These areas are considered to be important elements of the built landscape and worthy of protection.

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An Article 4 Direction is in place to ensure the retention of original 1930's frontages in a small *cul de sac* of houses in the Old Catton Conservation area. This has been welcomed by residents and backed up with grant aid to assist in the retention of original steel windows and other characteristic features.



1930's Houses at Old Catton

Availability of grant aid for all historic buildings (not just listed buildings) is an excellent starting point for making contact with owners, educating them and ensuring that works are carried out to the highest standards. There is a special grant fund for walls, gates and ancillary structures to ensure that the setting of buildings in the wider landscape can be maintained.

A Heritage Regeneration Scheme (HERS) invested over £300,000 of Council and English Heritage funds in Aylsham over a four year period. The scheme concentrated on commercial and industrial buildings and was extended for a year in recognition of the efforts being made by the Town to build on its unique heritage, culminating in its being awarded Cittaslow status, only the second town in Britain to gain this honour.

Specialist conservation structural engineers have been employed to produce annual condition reports on and repair schedules for the old railway bridges over the Bure Valley Railway and Cycle Path and Marriott's Way. This will ensure that best practice is followed in the maintenance of these assets.

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Aylsham has over 20% of the district's listed buildings and an interpretation scheme for residents and visitors funded by the HERS has been so successful that similar schemes have been planned for other communities with an additional grant fund of £25,000.

To further encourage excellence in restoration and extension of historic buildings the Council has run an annual Enhancement Award Scheme for the last thirty years and also runs a Design Award biennially to recognise the best new design in the district, which in many cases, sits alongside historic buildings. The Council actively encourages the best modern design to complement the historic environment and landscape.

To ensure that due recognition is given to the historic environment in the planning process, a three year programme is currently underway to review the district's conservation area boundaries and appraisals. Communities have enthusiastically embraced extensions to five in addition to the designation of two new conservation areas.

The Broadland Building Preservation Trust is actively supported, both financially and with member and officer involvement. It is pursuing solutions for many 'buildings at risk' and excellent progress is now being made on several schemes. Although the district has relatively few buildings at risk, (fewer than 5% of the total) the Council employs an officer whose role is to specifically tackle the problem and to work supporting owners to find viable solutions for buildings in severe disrepair. The Council has taken ownership of and repaired an important listed wall in Horsham St Faith.



Listed Wall at Horsham St Faith

The Grants budget was supplemented by a further £25,000 to ensure that specialist building skills are retained during the recession.

Environmental Best Practice

Broadland residents enjoy and value a clean and attractive environment and readily support new initiatives to further improve environmental conditions. In the last 5 years, residents have improved their recycling rate to over 50% and it is still climbing. Recyclables and waste are separated by householders and collected on alternate weeks. Green garden waste can be collected and recycled for a small annual fee. In the past 12 months this service has been increased to include a further 760 households.

One initiative contributing to this continuing improvement is the food waste collection which was trialled in the urban area and became so successful that it has been expanded to include a further 750 households this year.

Road sweepings are also recycled with organic matter composted and the grit reused in landscaping works. In 2011 over 154 tonnes of fallen autumn leaves were collected by Broadland District Council's leaf hit squad during November and December. The collections were made from particularly leafy areas of the district and were sent for recycling. They will be composted to produce a soil conditioner for use on agricultural and horticultural land. Priority was given to areas where a lot of people walk and where slippery paths might be a hazard to vulnerable people, such as outside schools and residential care homes. The autumn service is additional to the year round schedule of road and footway sweeping.



In 2011 Broadland was judged as the cleanest district and the cleanest place overall in the Clean Britain Awards beating cities, towns and districts from across the UK. The judging process involved anonymous inspection visits looking at 13 key criteria. These included general litter, chewing gum and smoking-related litter, fly-tipping, graffiti and the provision and condition of litter bins.

Every issue of Broadland News, distributed free to every household, carries articles on the environment, recycling and energy saving and is packed with information and advice relevant to residents and businesses.

Broadland Council leads the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership, made up of representatives from each of the District Councils as well as the County Council. The Partnership is working with external organisations such as the Energy Saving Trust to establish strong links with our community groups to help them reduce their energy use and/or transport needs.

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A range of projects has been implemented to enable both residents and businesses to improve energy efficiency, to install energy saving and generating technology in community buildings and to offer interest free loans for families on low incomes to install solar water heating technology.

Green and sustainable housing is also high on the Broadland agenda. A development of 15 homes at Lingwood achieved an eco-homes rating of 'Excellent'. By building one pair of homes without adding renewable energy sources and providing the other 13 with different combinations of renewable energy technologies, the University of East Anglia is researching comparative data on the economic and social implications of using eco-technologies. In July 2011 a development of 12 zero carbon affordable homes was completed at Trinity Close, Rackheath.

Rackheath, a settlement of 870 houses, is the proposed site of a new low carbon community. The existing housing stock was built in the 1950s and the 1990s and needs to be brought to a higher standard of energy efficiency. The Retro-Fit Project will not only help existing residents to work towards a vision of an energy efficient community but also reduce their utility bills and provide work for local tradesmen.

Our communities play a huge part in our climate change agenda. The small market town of Reepham was awarded £30,000 to develop a car club, with the aim of reducing car ownership and emissions among community members. This was the first full trial of the concept in a rural setting and uses vehicles with ultra low emissions. The scheme was so successful that another market town, Aylsham, has now taken up the scheme.



The Council holds regular Waste Electrical Equipment Events in the community and, to date, 15 events have diverted 77.68 tonnes of these items from landfill. Of this total 3.20 tonnes have been reused with the remainder being recycled.

Broadland District Council's Green Team continues to actively seek ways of reducing the carbon footprint of the Council. A number of initiatives, such as increasing recycling and installing power down devices for office computers are already well established. New ideas being implemented include mapping staff journeys and brokering car sharing, a scheme to offer low cost loans to staff for the purchase of cycles, mini-Farmers' Markets and deliveries of locally grown food.

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At the Council's head office, electricity usage fell by 15 per cent as a result of energy saving measures such as increased insulation, energy saving light bulbs, improvements to ventilation and air conditioning efficiency, solar hot water heating and the installation of a voltage optimiser. Gas usage fell by 25 per cent in the peak month of January 2011 compared with the same month in 2010. Even greater reductions are expected from the installation of photovoltaic solar panels in November 2011 and the planned replacement of the gas boilers in September 2012.

Altogether, these changes are expected to remove nearly 100 tonnes of CO2 emissions (around 25%) from the Thorpe Lodge headquarters from 2008/9 to 2012/13.

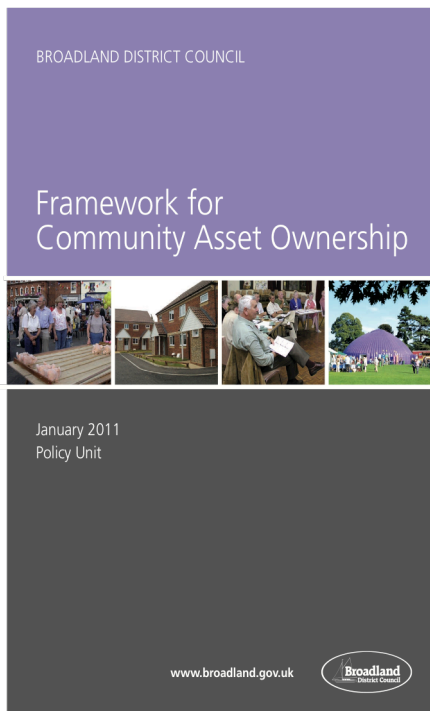


The Broadland Council Energy Bus is present at many community events with staff on hand to give information and advice to residents on all energy related issues.

Community Participation and Empowerment

Broadland prides itself on being an enabling council and community sustainability lies at the heart of this policy. By supporting communities, by building capacity and by creating a range of fora within which local people can influence local decisions, communities in Broadland are actively engaged in developing their future. Broadland is a council that listens and responds to the views of the people it serves. Surveys indicate that 91% of Broadland residents consider their quality of life to be good and believe that the council keeps them well informed.

In 2011 Broadland launched its Framework for Community Asset Ownership. Under this scheme a local social enterprise, community or voluntary group, on meeting the sustainability criteria, may be granted ownership of a Council owned asset – mainly land or woodland – at no cost.



The key aims of the asset transfer programme are to:

Empower communities and support social enterprise, community or voluntary groups, bring under utilised assets into full use for the benefit of the local people and support community enterprise activity and a thriving third sector through asset transfer.

The benefits to the Council of having a framework include:

Demonstrating a commitment to community priorities, preserving community services during a time of cut backs, encouraging partnership working, incentivising communities and preparing for community engagement in new development.

The Broadland Business Plan 2011/12 sets out the Council's Vision, Aims, Values and Ambitions in its commitment to deliver the priorities identified by the community in Broadland's Sustainable Community Strategy. It is a statement of what the Council will do to improve services and promote the economic, environmental and social well-being of the area, based around the four priorities.

The Business Plan priorities sit alongside the priorities of the Local Development Framework through the Spatial Vision.

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Our plan for 2011 2012



Putting the pieces in place for the future...

For full version of the Broadland Business Plan visit www/broadland.gov.uk/businessplan



Our 4 Ambitions *Key Actions to deliver in 2011/12*

Our Vision

To continually strive to improve the quality of life for all in Broadland.

Our Aim

To lead the way in demonstrating that a District Council working collaboratively, can provide cost effective services, responding to community priorities in an accountable way.

Our Values

Underpinning our work are our values:

- We are **CUSTOMER FOCUSED**
- We provide **INNOVATIVE and COST EFFECTIVE** services
- We are a **CARING and ENGAGING** employer.

1 Economic Success

- Support and promote infrastructure and supply chain development.
- Promote Broadland for inward investment and as a visitor destination.
- Deliver meaningful and economically valuable training.
- Support the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Deliver business start up and business training programmes.

2 Prevent Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

- Deliver Stairway projects including the use of restorative approaches.
- Fund the Matthew Project to deliver Voicebox Caravan sessions in targeted areas.
- Pilot the Alcohol Workbooks Project.
- Fund Leeway to deliver outreach and drop-in services.
- Continue to deliver the Carrowbreck project.

3 Environmental Excellence

- Improve waste recycling and collection.
- Progress the retro-fitting (improving energy efficiency) project.
- Maintain the cleanliness and appearance of the district.
- Expand the food waste scheme.
- Continue to reduce the district's carbon footprint.

4 Carefully Planned and Well Housed

- Plan and prepare for the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Deliver homes people can afford with minimal public subsidy.
- Deliver the priorities of the Joint Core Strategy.
- Deliver the Rackheath Exemplar project.
- Improve access to the private rented sector.

Delivering the 4 Ambitions - Organisational Capacity

- Maintain a sound Medium Term Financial Plan.
- Identify further efficiencies/savings.
- Deliver the Community Engagement programme.
- Improve Customer Services through system thinking reviews.

The Council's plans and strategies are underpinned by close communication with Broadland communities both directly through their parish and town councils and a range of fora. Grants support community events in towns and villages and there is support for the development of local village or parish plans which focus on their specific aspirations.



Public consultation and involvement is central to developing council initiatives and the community grants scheme requires applicants to demonstrate how they have consulted with their communities and show evidence of local support.

The Broadland Community Festival is an established annual event. The festival forms part of the ongoing programme of community engagement designed to support the community and help it prepare for significant change.

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Events such as this provide an informal and friendly way for the public to meet Council staff and members, to ask questions, see displays and make their views known.



The sense of belonging, pride of place, of being engaged with the local community is highly valued in Broadland. Plans and Strategies are more than exercises to fulfil government requirements – they are driven by a commitment to service and to sustain and further develop communities so that the people who live and work in them can enjoy a good quality of life and take a full part in their future development.

£2 million was set aside for 2 years (2009-2011) to develop projects to help mitigate the effects of the recession on Broadland residents. These included:

- Substantial additional marketing for tourism business
- Small Business Grant Scheme
- Hardship Rate Relief for small businesses
- Support for youth employment
- Increased grants to maintain listed buildings
- Additional monies for Community Grants
- Additional Housing Project Officer to secure more affordable housing
- Additional funding for Leeway to allow for likely increases in stress, family breakdown and domestic violence as a result of financial problems
- Support for women who have lost their jobs or are returning to work to subsidise a reduction in household income
- Support for Broadland Community Bank – a credit union
- Additional Debt Assessors

In January 2012 Broadland invested £1 million with LloydsTSB, a national bank, in a bid to help 30-40 first time buyers purchase a home with a reduced deposit of just 5% through the Local Lend a Hand scheme.

Healthy Lifestyles

Broadland is a relatively affluent area, although there are pockets of deprivation and rural isolation that are masked by the statistical profile of the area as a whole. The population of the district is expected to grow by 13% by 2021 – faster than the regional average and presenting a new set of challenges.

Broadland has lower than average England levels of

- Income deprivation
- Child poverty
- Reported violent crime
- Teenage pregnancy
- Binge drinking
- Smoking rates
- Diabetes
- Sickness benefit claims due to mental health problems



Broadland residents enjoy relatively easy access to healthy and locally grown food and the Council promotes local sourcing through its food directory. More people eat healthily in Broadland compared to the England average, life expectancy is higher and improving as are rates of early death from heart disease and stroke and adult obesity. However, physical inactivity amongst children is increasing and is a priority for action.

Aylsham Farmers' Market

Broadland recognises that, while the district may be better placed than some areas, there is nevertheless a need to continue to actively promote healthy lifestyles and sets out to achieve this through its Community Plan and related strategies.

The Council has reviewed its Culture and Leisure Strategy and associated action plan and these were the subject of public consultation.

Broadland is a member of the Active Norfolk Partnership which aims to increase participation in sports and physical activity. One of the activities of this partnership is the Active Norfolk Youth Games, a sports festival for young people with special needs.

Leaflets, and/or the Council's website provide information for residents on recreational facilities, events, discount schemes and routes for walking on the district's extensive network of safe footpaths. Sports coaching is available for

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young people during school holidays. Grants are available for talented young sportspeople competing at county level and above.



Older residents are encouraged to maintain physical activity through the Re-Energise Project; others who have suffered from health problems can be referred by their doctor to the Broadly Active programme.

One of our parish councils has installed 'play' equipment for older people.

A portfolio of arts programmes – ranging from support for the principal professional theatre in Norwich to touring digital cinema – aims to make the arts accessible to all residents.

Sports and arts are also means by which Broadland aims to capture the interest and motivation of young people who are not in education, employment or training with specially tailored programmes provided by Broadland Council Training Services.

Community events are often initially supported with grants and then become self sustaining. Aylsham Carnival was revived after a gap of some ten years and is now a popular annual event attracting over two thousand participants. Broadland has run community festivals in partnership with local parish councils under the Broadland Life banner and these are being continued by communities in subsequent years.

A significant part of Broadland is agricultural and provides easy access to locally grown high quality and sustainable food. Farmers' markets in the small market towns, vegetable box schemes and farm shop outlets are growing in popularity. An annual Food Festival in Aylsham highlights local producers and celebrates the pleasures of the table.

Children's play – including facilities for older children and teenagers – is planned in the context of the Play Strategy. Four projects to provide play facilities for the older age group have been completed and further new provision is planned.

Crime levels declined in Broadland by 7% in 2011 and this built upon an overall reduction in crime over three years of 28.3%. Broadland is once again the safest district in Norfolk and East Anglia.

The continuing and expanding Stairway Out of Crime project, which was the recipient of a Livcom Bursary Award in 2008, is a key example of how Broadland takes a holistic view of communities and seeks to ensure that they are strong, vibrant and able to go forward into the future with confidence and security.

Planning for the Future

The Greater Norwich area is faced with a major challenge in terms of accommodating future growth. It has been designated a Key centre for development and change, and in recognition of the scale of growth this implies, has been awarded Growth Point Status.

The local planning authorities in the area have recognised the need to plan for this growth as sustainably as possible and have worked together with Norfolk County Council, on a joint Core Strategy as the framework for managing this growth. A strong evidence base developed across the area to help in defining the best strategy has supported this.

This includes a water cycle study and strategic flood risk assessment, both of which recognise that the area, while likely to be affected by climate change, is also one of potential water shortage which will, unless properly addressed, threaten to damage important ecological areas. Alongside this, work has been undertaken to quantify the necessary infrastructure, social as well as physical, to help us bring forward truly sustainable new developments. A study into the local potential for renewable energy is underway.

While meeting development needs will be a challenge, it can also present opportunities, and a further important piece of work that has been undertaken is the preparation of a green infrastructure strategy that looks at current assets and how they can be enhanced. By taking these factors into account as new development is planned, it is our aim to make sure the valued environment of Norwich and the surrounding countryside can not only be protected, but enhanced over the coming decades.

The major growth in jobs and homes will be located within or close to the Norwich urban area in the most sustainable locations and will be matched by investment in the appropriate infrastructure. One proposal being considered is for a new low carbon community at Rackheath, immediately north east of Norwich.



The site of the proposed low carbon community on a disused wartime airfield

Working in partnership, the three authorities have prepared a spatial vision which aims to ensure that people will be able to enjoy:

- Access to a wider variety of services and facilities and high value, fulfilling jobs, based on enhanced education and skills and thus increased prosperity and reduced deprivation.
- High quality surroundings in accommodation they can afford and which meets their needs both in the city centre and the outlying locations.
- Living in a distinctive locality whether part of the historic city, suburbs or fringe parishes, a market town, village or countryside and in an enhanced environment where assets such as the spaces between Norwich, towns, villages and the rural environment are protected.
- An environmentally friendly way of life contributing to reducing their carbon footprint.
- Improved communications within and between Norwich and its surroundings and to neighbouring areas within Norfolk, at the same time acknowledging that we must ensure equal opportunities for rural dwellers.

The Spatial Vision provides a clear agenda for future development. In the urban area there is a strong emphasis on environmental performance, valuing the architectural and historic heritage, high quality public transport and safe walking and cycling routes. The rural areas will have prosperous market towns and rural villages that are a focal point for people to access jobs, facilities and services and which meet local housing needs. The tranquil working countryside will retain its distinctive Norfolk character with enhanced habitats to support biodiversity and wildlife.

The process is informed by extensive consultation with all sectors of the community. This input from local people, in all areas of the district, is essential to the creation of a sustainable plan for the future.

Broadland works closely with its parish and town councils to ensure that communities retain their sense of identity and distinctiveness. Rapid future growth will inevitably stretch communities. They will need help to absorb newcomers and to adapt to change.

Broadland has a clear vision for the future – one in which the need to provide more housing is balanced by the recognition that we need more than houses – we need thriving, connected, liveable communities which accommodate everyone's needs.