



Suffolk Coastal 2021

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Suffolk Coastal

A Review

PART 2

STRATEGY

DECEMBER 2008

	CONTENTS	PAGE
	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
1	INTRODUCTION	5
	The Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership	5
	Our Sustainable Community Strategy	6
	Why we have developed a new Sustainable Community Strategy	6
	Delivery	7
2	INTRODUCTION TO SUFFOLK COASTAL	7
	What is special about Suffolk Coastal	7
3	LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT	8
	Suffolk's Local Area Agreement	8
	Suffolk Coastal Local Development Framework	9
	The Haven Gateway sub region	9
4	SOCIAL CONTEXT	10
	Suffolk Coastal – key opportunities and challenges	11
	What needs to be done	13
5	ECONOMIC CONTEXT	14
	Suffolk Coastal – key opportunities and challenges	15
	What needs to be done	16
6	ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT	17
	Suffolk Coastal – key opportunities and challenges	17
	What needs to be done	19
7	CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	20
	Key issues arising from Parish Plans	20
	Annual Forum	20
8	KEY ISSUES FOR SUFFOLK COASTAL	21
	The priorities for the LSP	21
	Other key issues for the district	23
9	OUR VISION FOR SUFFOLK COASTAL	26
10	PRIORITY OUTCOMES FOR THE LSP	30
	Key outcome statements for:	
	Access to Services	30
	Strong supportive communities	30
	Climate change and the environment	31

Healthier lifestyles for all	31
Economy and skills	31
Young people	32
MANAGEMENT POLICIES	Part 3
What we must do to achieve the priority outcomes (Objective and methods)	To follow
RISK ANALYSIS	Part 3
Equalities Impact Assessment (Of the policies)	
Sustainability appraisal (Of the policies)	
DELIVERY	Part 3
ORGANISATION & GOVERNANCE	
RESOURCES	
WORK PLANNING	
FINANCIAL PLANNING	
MONITORING AND REVIEW	Part 3
HIGH LEVEL INDICATORS (KPIs)	
Performance management system	
3 year review period	
REFERENCES AND APENDICES	32

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Sustainable Community Strategy has been produced by the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership and tells the 'story of the place' – the distinctive vision and ambition for Suffolk Coastal, backed up by clear evidence and analysis (Part 1 of the Strategy is the associated 'District Profile' and should be read in conjunction with this document).

The overarching vision of Suffolk Coastal in 2021 is:

Building on the best of the present, Suffolk Coastal is a district where people want to live and to invest, to care for others and the environment.

Based on this vision, this Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the Suffolk Coastal District in a way that contributes to sustainable development in the UK. As the overarching plan for the area "Suffolk Coastal 2021" is as far as possible aligned to other statutory plans and policies for the area.

This Sustainable Community Strategy expands on the overarching vision to provide a much more detailed vision of Suffolk Coastal in 2021 which reflects the key issues that face the area. In this way the Strategy provides a vehicle for considering and deciding how to address difficult and cross cutting issues such as the economic direction of the district, how we build strong and balanced communities, how our residents maintain their health and wellbeing and access the services they require, how we ensure a better future for all including young, older and the more vulnerable members of our communities, and how we enhance our environment and adapt to climate change.

This Sustainable Community Strategy identifies ten key issues that face the district, six of which are a priority for implementation by the Local Strategic Partnership, and four which partnerships and organisations are already focussing on. The Local Strategic Partnership does not aim to duplicate their work but will support work where it can make a real difference.

The key issues that are a priority for implementation by the Local Strategic Partnership are :

- Access to services
- Strong, supportive communities
- Climate change and the environment
- Economy and skills
- Healthier lives for all
- Young People

The other key issues for the district are:

- Community safety
- Coastal and estuary management
- Housing
- Support for vulnerable people to live independently in their community

Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership is working across agencies and sectors to deliver this Sustainable Community Strategy. By identifying the key issues that face the district and those issues that are a priority for implementation by the Local Strategic Partnership this will help direct the work of the partnership into areas where it believes it can uniquely make a difference by working together. In this way the Local Strategic Partnership aims to generate solutions to problems that single agencies cannot solve, enhance the coordination of services across organisational boundaries and make better use of resources by avoiding duplication and gaps in service.

The Suffolk Coastal Local strategic Partnership is already delivering action on the ground and Part 3 of the Sustainable Community Strategy will include a three year action plan which shows how the priority issues will be addressed. This action plan also supports delivery of the Local Area Agreement for Suffolk. The Partnership will continue to develop its leadership and capacity to meet future challenges and recognises that the sustainability of actions is critical to the future wellbeing of our area and must permeate the delivery of this Sustainable Community Strategy – our actions must not compromise the needs of future generations.

INTRODUCTION

The Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

Suffolk Coastal LSP is working across agencies and sectors to deliver this Sustainable Community Strategy that sets out the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the Suffolk Coastal District in a way that contributes to sustainable development in the UK.

The Suffolk Coastal LSP Board comprises representatives from the public, private, voluntary and Community sectors. The Board is supported by Working Groups, each given the task of

driving forward delivery on the priorities of the LSP. The LSP also embraces other organisations and partnerships that deliver on key issue for the district.

In Suffolk there are five other district level LSPs and one county level LSP (the Suffolk Strategic Partnership). "Transforming Suffolk" the Community Strategy for Suffolk sets out the countywide priorities, but acknowledges the fact that issues differ in different parts of Suffolk. Suffolk Coastal LSP played an important role in helping the Suffolk Strategic Partnership identify the issues for Suffolk Coastal, which are reflected in this document.

Our Sustainable Community Strategy:

This Sustainable Community Strategy tells the 'story of the place' – the distinctive vision and ambition for Suffolk Coastal, backed up by clear evidence and analysis. In this way the Strategy provides a vehicle for considering and deciding how to address difficult and cross cutting issues such as the economic direction of the district, how we build strong and balanced communities, how our residents maintain their health and wellbeing and access the services they require, how we ensure a better future for all including young, older and the more vulnerable members of our communities, and how we enhance our environment and adapt to climate change.

As the overarching plan for the area "Suffolk Coastal 2021", the Sustainable Community Strategy for the district is as far as possible aligned to other statutory plans and policies for the area.

Why we have developed a new Sustainable Community Strategy

The first Community Strategy for the Suffolk Coastal District was adopted in 2003 and it was subsequently revised in 2005. Since our previous Community Strategy was prepared there has been an increasing desire amongst partners to work more closely together to deliver a united agenda and there is also an increasing emphasis on the "sustainability" of our Community Strategy.

The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations'

(Sustainable Development Strategy 2005).

In response to this the Suffolk Coastal LSP undertook a review of its current strategy in 2008 and consulted widely on what it should contain. The policies contained in this strategy will also undergo a sustainability appraisal.

This Sustainable Community Strategy is therefore intended to build on what has already been achieved. This Strategy is firmly based on evidence, and the associated 'District Profile' should be read in conjunction with this document. We have identified what are the key issues that face the district, and those issues that are a priority for implementation by the LSP. This will help direct the work of the partnership into areas where we believe we can uniquely make a difference though working in partnership. In this way we hope to generate solutions to problems that single agencies cannot solve, enhance the coordination of services across organisational boundaries and make better use of resources by avoiding duplication and gaps in service. (17)

In light of the available evidence and evaluation of the challenges and opportunities that face the district, The LSP has identified ten key issues for Suffolk Coastal District that need to be addresses by 2021. Crucially, we have identified six of these issues as priorities for the LSP, to help us direct the work of the Partnership into areas where we believe we can uniquely make a difference.

Delivery

The Suffolk Coastal Local strategic Partnership is already delivering action on the ground and will continue to develop its leadership and capacity to meet future challenges. The sustainability of actions is critical to the future wellbeing of the area and needs to permeate the delivery of the Community Strategy – our actions must not compromise the needs of future generations.

INTRODUCTION TO SUFFOLK COASTAL

What is special about Suffolk Coastal

Covering nearly 90,000 hectares, Suffolk Coastal is a diverse district incorporating thirty miles of coast, expansive areas of countryside, much of which still forms a working landscape, five market towns of Wickham Market, Saxmundham, Framlingham, Leiston, Aldeburgh and

Woodbridge, the resort and port of Felixstowe and the communities of Martlesham, Kesgrave and Rushmere St Andrews, as well as many villages.

People are at the heart of Suffolk Coastal and in the last 30 years the district has seen its population rise by around 26,000. This represents a 29% increase that is amongst the higher rates of growth in the country. Suffolk Coastal is now home to just over 122,000 people and 94% of our residents say they are satisfied with Suffolk Coastal as a place to live, making it one of the top rated places in the country (MORI April 2005). At just over 21%, Suffolk Coastal is home to a higher proportion of people who are over the age of 65 than nationally or in Suffolk as a whole. Conversely, as our young people leave the district for further education, training or work, we have a much lower than average number of people between the ages of 18 and 34. Our black and minority ethnic community is relatively small, but is growing.

The excellent quality of our environment is recognised in the substantial areas of countryside and coast that are designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Our built environment is of a similar high quality, with numerous listed buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Our coast and estuaries support vibrant communities, a wealth of outstanding landscapes and are internationally significant for the wildlife they support.

The district supports over 4,000 businesses, including large employers like the Port of Felixstowe, BT, Sizewell Power Station and internationally recognised organisations like Aldeburgh Music, as well as a high proportion of small and medium sized businesses that are vital to the local economy. Martlesham Heath, centred on BT's research and development headquarters, is a key part of the information, communication and technology cluster for the East of England. Tourism is also a major driver for the local economy. Much of the district is within the Haven Gateway that is identified for significant growth.

LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

Suffolk's Local Area Agreement (LAA)

The Local Area Agreement is a three-year agreement between Central Government and Suffolk's local authorities and their partners. The agreement describes how local priorities will be met by delivering local solutions whilst also contributing to national priorities set out by the Government.

The Government is putting an ever-increasing emphasis on Local Area Agreements and the development of Suffolk's agreement has placed a further emphasis on the role of Suffolk LSPs and their Sustainable Community Strategies. The Local Area Agreement must be able to demonstrate how it has taken account of individual district characteristics and objectives when setting those priorities. Therefore, there needs to be close cooperation between counties and districts in assessing those priorities and delivering outcomes.

Part 3 of this Sustainable Community Strategy will set out what the partners in Suffolk Coastal aim to do to support achievement of the LAA(2) targets in Suffolk for the three years 2008-11.

Suffolk Coastal Local Development Framework

The government has introduced a new planning system to manage how development takes place in our towns and the countryside which consists of a 'two-tier' system made up of:

- The Regional Spatial Strategy sets out a broad spatial planning strategy for how the region should look in 2021 and beyond.
- Local Development Framework – a folder of local development documents prepared by the District Council that outlines the spatial planning strategy for the local area.

This Sustainable Community Strategy is the overarching plan for Suffolk Coastal and the District Council has as far as possible aligned the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework within it. In this way, the Local Development Framework represents the land-use delivery mechanism for this Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Haven Gateway (12)

The Haven Gateway sub region is one of the fastest growing areas in the Eastern Region, with a population projected to increase from 611,300 in 2001 to 684,500 in 2021. Regeneration needs and opportunities lie mainly in the towns and on the coast and estuaries. Improvements to transport, environmental and community infrastructure are required. East-west transport links are relatively poor, public transport needs investment.

Based on the Haven ports' role as generators of economic activity, the Haven Gateway Partnership provides a context in which partners from the private and public sectors can work together to promote economic opportunities and secure the future prosperity of the sub-region. The Partnership has published a Framework for Growth which identifies the following key themes:

New Housing

Employment and Economic Development

Regeneration

Transport

Other Built infrastructure

The Environment and green infrastructure.

The Haven Gateway sub-region was awarded New Growth Point status by the Government in 2006 to direct finances to help foster growth of the areas of Suffolk and Essex immediately around the ports of Felixstowe, Harwich, Ipswich and Mistley and includes the southern part of the district.

SOCIAL CONTEXT

By 2021 the UK population is expected to increase to 67 million and the number of those aged over 85 will increase by 50% in the same period (5). Increased life expectancy will bring with it growing numbers of people with health and care needs and the changing demands of the older population will put pressure on the public and private sectors to adapt. Being able to afford to buy a home will still be an issue for some, especially first time buyers.

The East of England is commonly assumed to be affluent yet parts, including areas of Suffolk Coastal, face problems associated with remote areas that have limited employment opportunities, low wages and lack access to services.

Pockets of deprivation in some of our rural, coastal and urban areas are often obscured by average district level data and it is therefore important to look beyond the headline statistics to find the true picture. In our rural areas, social exclusion can be disproportionately influenced by access to services, as even the most basic of community services such as grocery shops; banks and doctors surgeries may be difficult to reach. The loss of local facilities like these from small towns and villages leads to a significant number of our residents being socially

excluded. Lack of services therefore impacts on the vibrancy and cohesion of our communities.

While our Black and Minority Ethnic population is relatively low, there may be undercounting of minority ethnic communities, e.g. large numbers of migrant workers, primarily connected with the agricultural industry, who do not appear on census or other official statistical data. We need to consider these groups when we are planning our actions for the future.

The Regional Social Strategy (9) aims to provide a framework for concerted action in tackling social exclusion by a range of agencies and organisations including LSPs. It has a range of objectives, many of which are supported by the regions Local Area Agreements and the Regional Economic Strategy. Through the development and implementation of this Sustainable Community Strategy for Suffolk Coastal, the LSP is supporting delivery of these objectives.

The objectives of the County Accessibility Strategy are important in Suffolk Coastal and the LSP aims to support improved access to healthcare, leisure, education, training and employment.

Suffolk Coastal – key Opportunities and challenges:

Housing

There is a need in the next 5 years to deliver a minimum of 600 new houses to meet the need for affordable homes in the district and if house prices escalate more than incomes there may well be an increased need. The number of the district's houses that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard (currently 26.1%) needs to be reduced.

Older People

The district has a significantly older population than the national average (15.72% over 69 compared to 11.58% for Great Britain) and the second highest in Suffolk. We can expect this to result in increasing demands on health, social and community services including housing services and provision.

Older people have a wide range of needs and aspirations depending on their circumstances. Many are very active and want facilities and opportunities the same as other members of the community. For some older people, however, their choices may be reduced by impaired mobility and health or low income and they are in need of help, care and support. Therefore,

specific services should be provided to these more vulnerable people. The ageing population of the district will bring with it both economic and social consequences and if we harness the skills, experience and abilities of older people our communities are likely to benefit both economically and in terms of quality of life. For example, the significant role many older people play in voluntary and community activities is recognised and should be supported.

Young people

A large number of young people leave Suffolk Coastal at 18 resulting in an unbalanced age profile in the population with consequences for the economy and local communities: the district had the greatest net loss in Suffolk of 16-24 year olds due to migration in 2005. Young people (particularly in the rural parts of the district) are concerned about the accessibility of education training and social facilities.

Vulnerable people

Whilst there are national policies to enable vulnerable people to live in their own homes for longer the availability of suitable services to meet the needs that arise from this policy is an increasing problem. If planned reductions in funding in future years happens there will be insufficient funding to meet current needs by 2010/11 In this case either funding will have to be re-aligned or the key organisations involved in providing services for vulnerable residents will have to make significant contributions from their own resources to meet demand.

Access to services

The rural parts of the district have poor access to services when measured against national standards and the trend is for rural services to continue to contract. (13): Suffolk Coastal are ranked 5th poorest out of the 7 districts in Suffolk for overall access to services. The district is also below the median (of districts in Britain) for access to a bank or building society, and in the bottom quartile for access to a secondary school, doctor's surgery, post office or primary school.

Health and wellbeing

Sexual Health, obesity and alcohol abuse are all issues for the district. For example, in 2006, 31.5% of year 6 children weighed and measured in Suffolk Coastal were overweight or obese (32.6% for Suffolk as a whole). Suffolk Coastal has a worse than average rate of alcohol specific hospital admissions for under 18s (2004/05). There is a lack of evidence on substance misuse throughout the county.

Crime and the fear of crime

Although there has been a 42% fall in crime since 1995, public concern about crime remains high across the country. Neighbourhood policing is likely to play a crucial role in public reassurance and engaging local communities in the fight against crime and anti social behaviour. (6) The perception of anti-social behaviour from young people is of concern to many residents' especially older people (Suffolk Coastal residents perceive parents not taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children (43%) and teenagers hanging round the streets (39%) as the two biggest problems in their area).

Deprivation

In Felixstowe the south and west wards have significant levels of multiple deprivation, while part of western Saxmundham is also assessed as more deprived than the national average. The estate around Seaward Avenue in Leiston is ranked amongst the most deprived 10% in the region, with 62% of residents having no qualifications and 70% living in social, rented housing. (11)

What needs to be done

The focus of effort from all sectors should be to improve quality of life – especially for **vulnerable people**, including the growing population of **older people**, who should be supported to live in their own homes and communities if they should wish. It is also important to foster communications between generations so to reduce stereotypical fear and misunderstanding.

The positive contribution that our **young people** can bring to our community must be enabled and valued through volunteering, citizenship and community activities. In addition the number of young people involved in accidents must be reduced. As young people continue to be over represented as a proportion of our road casualties they should be a priority for action on this. Also, effort should be directed towards reducing the number of our young people having accidents in the home.

Rural isolation in areas of Suffolk Coastal, with their poor levels of **access to services** and connectivity when measured against national standards, presents a major challenge to improve the quality of life for many people. The issue of rural accessibility is one that has been deteriorating and requires action. **Rural accessibility** is a recurrent issue and should be considered as a cross cutting theme. More delivery options are needed to make a given

service truly accessible to all. Living in a rural area should not present unreasonable barriers to accessibility of services. Rural isolation for our young people needs to be tackled head on to overcome access issues to education and training, and to ensure our young people can access a range of positive activities and social networks. Suitable transport needs to be made available to young people in rural areas at times when they most require it. Building socially inclusive, sustainable, thriving and supportive communities is vital in these isolated rural areas. Support for the community and voluntary sector to facilitate **community development** is a key factor and this is closely linked to efforts to improve quality of life as community support contributes to being able to take responsibility for ones own health. More support is needed for people with mental health problems. Developing supportive communities, where mental health does not create a barrier to work, housing and playing a full part in the community is important. This should be achieved through education, and by bringing together all organisations and partnerships that can help people access early interventions.

Recognising the links between **housing**, Health and wellbeing is vital and it should be a priority that everyone firstly has a place to live, and equally that all housing (private, social, private rented etc) should be of a recognised safe and healthy standard.

Building strong supportive communities in our towns and rural areas based around social networks, neighbourliness and civic pride will have many benefits and should be looked at as a fundamental cross cutting issue that supports many of the outcomes described in this strategy. Community support contributes to being able to take responsibility for ones own health. Community based initiatives like the Good Neighbour Scheme and Village Links should continue to be supported. Though there have been a great number of successes already, the need for new **volunteers** remains a key issue for the district, and there is a need to develop a more sustainable partnership for existing infrastructure support organisations. It is also important to foster communications between generations so to reduce stereotypical fear and misunderstanding.

ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Although the UK economy is fundamentally strong, with open and flexible markets, it will face a number of challenges before 2021, including the growing effects of globalisation, the need to shift to a low carbon economy and the increasing pace of technological innovation.

Increasing global competition will require a more highly skilled and creative workforce with a

focus on high value added sectors. Creative industries and financial services between them now account for over 17 % of the UK economy (3). Rapid changes in technology will require an improved ability to make the most of technology and create value from technological breakthroughs (for example environmental technologies). To adapt and exploit new opportunities, a more favourable climate of enterprise – and changed attitudes to risk – will be needed. Total entrepreneurial activity in the UK is still roughly half the rate of the US (4).

To continue to prosper Britain will need continued investment in physical infrastructure and an open, competitive, resilient and proportionally regulated business environment engaging in all parts of the United Kingdom in contributing to prosperity. The East of England is one of the fastest growing regional economies in the UK and the Regional Economic Strategy identifies goals for regional economic development that have an important bearing on the economy of Suffolk Coastal.

Suffolk Coastal – key Opportunities and challenges:

Growth

Major growth is planned for the district up to and beyond 2021 including 10,200 new houses 2001 to 2021 and 8,000 new jobs 2001 –2021. Within the Haven Gateway, Felixstowe is a designated Growth Point as is Ipswich part of whose growth will be in Suffolk Coastal. Felixstowe Port is the biggest container port in the country and is planned to grow substantially requiring good rail and road links. BT at Martlesham Heath is the centre of an ICT Growth Point identified in EEDA's Regional Economic Strategy.

Small and medium sized businesses

Notwithstanding the presence of BT and the Port of Felixstowe 70% of the district's businesses employ 5 people or less (UK Business: Activity, Size and Location – 2006). 29.96% of businesses are Knowledge based which is above the Suffolk average.

Earnings

Gross total average earnings in the district (i.e. part time as well as full time workers) are below the regional average despite the presence of such major wealth generators as BT at Martlesham Heath.

Education and skills

Suffolk coastal has the lowest proportion of students completing study at 19+ in Suffolk (81%).

The rate for 16-18 year olds is the second lowest in Suffolk (75%) These achievement rates are below average for the county and region. A recent employer survey has identified the lack of skills, as well as a perception of a lack of motivation or “work ethos”, in young people as a significant barrier to employment and to meeting business needs.

What needs to be done

We must ensure that the increased jobs and housing included in the Regional Spatial Strategy are planned with the required infrastructure. Focus needs to be placed on the **Ipswich policy area** and **Felixstowe** as part of the **Haven Gateway** as one of the fastest growing sub regions in the Eastern area. In addition **tourism**, and the economic and social benefits to local communities it brings must be supported.

There is an identified shortage of **affordable housing** in the district and more will need to be provided to help the workforce to live and work locally.

Appropriate incentives and planning policies will need to be developed to ensure business will want to locate in the area. Small and medium sized enterprises should be supported to grow and prosper and the increasing role of social enterprises is also important. The **transport infrastructure** will need to develop to support this business growth and development of the rail network particularly the freight connection from Felixstowe to Nuneaton is important for the development of the port and reducing road usage. Greater use of the two passenger lines within the district and upgrading the A12 must be encouraged.

Overall the economy in Suffolk Coastal is strong, however one of the key issues is to ensure wealth is created more widely throughout the district. In particular there are weaknesses in some **rural areas**. The important regeneration initiative being developed for **Felixstowe** should be supported.

The **market towns** in the district have an important role to serve their rural hinterlands as service centres. It is vital, for example, to ensure that the planning framework facilitates the continuing strength of town centre retailing and services in the market towns. By developing this approach it will also reduce travel requirements and make a contribution to reducing green house gas omissions. It is also vital that enterprise is encouraged in our rural areas and market towns.

We must have a workforce who possesses appropriate **skills for local employment**. It is

essential that the education and skills sector is providing the right skills base, and that suitable employment opportunities exist. A recent study has identified a lack of **basic skills** as well as pressure within the **high technology** industries and **port logistics** to find suitably qualified employees locally. Therefore, all levels of education must be available to develop the skills to support growth of a knowledge-based economy that allows the best prospects for the long term prosperity of the district.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

With such a large body of scientific evidence now highlighting the serious and urgent nature of climate change the debate is now focused on what action needs to be taken (14). A Royal Commission on Environmental protection considered that the UK would need to reduce CO2 Emissions by 60% by about 2050 to avoid “dangerous climate change”. At a more local level the implications of climate change, should it continue unchecked, include increased coastal and flood plain flooding, permanent coastal land loss, higher incidents of damage to transport and communications infrastructure caused by extreme weather and increased deaths and hospital admissions from heat related conditions.

Global demand for energy is increasing as a result of the economic growth of the newly industrialised countries (15). 70% of UK power generation currently comes from coal and gas but in future a combination of nuclear, renewables and gas/coal and carbon capture and storage is likely to be required. Transport is also highly dependent on fossil fuels but in future clean electricity and hydrogen fuel cells could radically reduce road emissions. The use of bio-fuels is also forecast to increase.

The natural and built environment of Suffolk Coastal is special. Approximately a third of the district is designated as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and 11,201.50 hectares of the district is designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are 33 Conservation Areas and approximately 2,700 buildings Listed of Architectural or Historic Importance in the district. The Haven Gateway Green infrastructure study identifies current provision of green space within the Haven gateway and opportunities for increasing green-space in line with development of the sub region.

Suffolk has an excellent record in waste management and rates for waste diverted from landfill are 38.35% against a Suffolk Waste Management long-term target of 60%.

Suffolk Coastal – key opportunities and challenges:

A high quality natural and built heritage

The exceptional quality of the natural and built environment makes Suffolk Coastal a very special place to live and work and a popular destination for visitors and tourists from the UK and abroad. This brings with it the responsibility of preserving this heritage as the utmost priority, for its own intrinsic value, as well as for the health, prosperity and wellbeing of our residents. Our standards of environmental stewardship need to be of the highest order, and we need to lead the field where necessary to ensure that we pass on an enhanced environment for future generations.

Coast and estuaries

The Coastline is the subject of pressures from rising sea levels and also falling land levels together with the consequences of increased storminess. This also impacts on the major estuaries of the Blyth, Alde/Ore, Deben and Orwell that form a major part of the coastal area of the district and are intrinsic to its character. The coastal areas subject to pressures include the towns of Felixstowe, and Aldeburgh, large stretches of the AONB and substantial designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.

A working landscape

The high quality landscape of much of the district gets its character from the nature of the way the land is managed which is subject to the economic pressures on agriculture and forestry and environmental requirements on land managers. The majority of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB is within Suffolk Coastal and many of the priority habitats and species identified for special measure in the county Biodiversity Action Plan occur in the district.

Climate change

Our carbon dioxide footprint is slightly better than average in the county (we rank 3rd best behind Ipswich & Waveney). However, the growth planned for the district presents opportunities as well as challenges for addressing environmental issues. Sizewell nuclear power stations are located in the district and government proposals on energy are likely to lead to proposals for further nuclear power.

Waste and recycling

We have an excellent foundation from which to ensure that the amount of materials that we as individuals and as a community reuse or recycle is the highest we can. We need to continually

challenge what we do and ensure that our businesses, communities and individual residents are given the knowledge and support to reduce the amount of waste we generate year on year.

What needs to be done

Action must be taken to reduce our **carbon footprint**. Outcomes should be directed to delivering locally on the global initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and also to mitigate against negative impacts of environmental change. There are opportunities to reduce carbon emissions in people's everyday lives and there are many simple steps that we can all take. However, translating willingness into action will be challenging. There will need to be a balance between changing behaviour that is environmentally unsustainable and embracing new technologies that reduce the impact of our behaviour. As well as providing challenges, the transition to a low carbon economy will bring with it significant opportunities and we should be prepared to benefit from the growth of environmental technologies and services.

Long term planning for **health** needs to be shaped by opportunities and threats from environmental changes, including climate change. For example measures to address **fuel poverty** that includes use of environmentally friendly systems should be encouraged.

Our **coastal area** must continue to support strong communities and a high quality natural environment. With particular regards to the impact of climate change / sea level rise on our coastline, integrated coastal zone management needs to address the needs of our communities and the natural environment.

Felixstowe Port expansion and the growth of the **Haven Gateway** area must be managed alongside improvements to the county's environment. Increased transport will put pressure on the existing transport network and is likely to have a negative impact on the environment (landscape, air quality, noise levels etc). A multi agency approach should be taken to proactively manage these issues to minimise environmental impacts whilst maximising economic efficiency.

Suffolk's landscape contains diverse farmland, which supports a rich **biodiversity**. With its Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the large areas with an international and national conservation designation, Suffolk Coastal has a significant contribution to make to conserving

and enhancing biodiversity. There may well be a need to mitigate against effects of the potential increased biofuel production. Climate change may have significant effects on **agricultural production** and knock-on effects on rural communities, many of who are still reliant upon a thriving agricultural industry. Changes in agricultural support measures are challenging the economics of grazing marshes that has a fundamental impact on the nature of the countryside. In turn this impacts on issues such as tourism, and therefore the local economy. Building strong linkages across policy areas are therefore critical.

The LSP recognises that it is important to encourage and support our communities to take action to become stronger and more vibrant, and that this is done within a framework based on sound principals of sustainability to ensure that we retain the character and economy of the area.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To ensure that the priorities and actions of the LSP are firmly based on the views and wishes of our residents, this strategy has been informed by the outcomes from a range of consultations and engagement events undertaken by various partners. In addition, two separate consultations were undertaken by the LSP directly, firstly to seek views specifically on the LSP priorities and also on the draft strategy itself.

The LSP recognises the parish planning process as a key mechanism by which we can be informed of issues that are important to our local communities. The LSP actively supports parishes who want to complete a plan and we have analysed the outcomes of all of the parish plans produced in the district to date to identify the key issues that they identify in order to inform this strategy. It is evident that a significant number of the issues identified through the parish plans are concerned with two of the priorities of the LSP - community development and access to services. Other issues that are raised less frequently also reflect the importance of economy and skills, young people, housing and community safety.

The LSP also places a great emphasis on bringing a large number of community representatives together at its annual forum, in order that the Board can feed back on achievement and the forum can help shape future direction of the partnership. These events help to bridge the gap between the work of the LSP and our communities and have helped to move the work of the partnership forward. Feedback from previous forums has been fed into

our actions and is reflected in the outcomes identified in this strategy.

KEY ISSUES FOR SUFFOLK COASTAL

In light of the available evidence and evaluation of the challenges and opportunities that face the district, The LSP has identified ten key issues for Suffolk Coastal District that need to be addresses by 2021. Crucially, we have identified six of these issues as priorities for the LSP, to help us direct the work of the Partnership into areas where we believe we can uniquely make a difference.

OUR PRIORITES

1. Access to services

The issue of accessibility is a complex issue that requires action. The LSP recognises that *rural accessibility* is a recurrent issue across the key issues for the district and should be considered as a cross cutting theme. More service outlets and delivery options are needed to make a given service truly accessible to all. Living in a rural area should present opportunities, not barriers to accessibility of services.

There have also been some significant developments since the last Community Strategy was produced, not least the closing of a number of Post Offices in Suffolk Coastal; the marked increase in the amount of goods and services produced via the Internet (combined with increased home delivery); the rationalisation of the Primary Care Trusts which has resulted in moves towards centralisation of health services; initiatives to reduce the amount of CO2 produced from transport which has already started to have an impact on personal travel behaviour; the cost of transport fuel which is impacting on how people travel and on the delivery of all services; and the move to everyone over the age of 60 now being entitled to free travel which has had implications for transport providers. The effects of these developments on peoples ability to access services is important and must be addressed in future planning.

2. Strong, supportive communities

We recognise that the vitality and inclusiveness of our communities is key to the quality of life of our residents and future prosperity of our district. We have therefore integrated community development as a priority throughout our strategy. Voluntary and Community organisations,

which make up the 'third Sector', are of vital importance to the development of strong, active and empowered local communities. We must look at the promotion of a vibrant and sustainable third sector as a key ingredient of community development.

3. Climate change and the environment

As a strategic partnership we have recognised that climate change is likely to be one of the key drivers of change within our community this century and have therefore integrated the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to climate change as a priority throughout our Sustainable Community Strategy. The LSP has to play an active role in helping to tackle climate change, both by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and by adapting to the effects of climate change, in order to strengthen the delivery of sustainable development at a local level.

In addition, the quality of our landscape and natural environment is both nationally and internationally important and must be preserved and enhanced for the future. The values of retaining and where appropriate strengthening ecological networks are recognised as an important tool in combating the effects of climate change on habitats and species.

4. Economy and skills

Matters relating to the economy necessarily cover a broad remit and the LSP clearly has a role in facilitating delivery across agencies and sectors. The Suffolk Coastal Employment Study has highlighted key economic information about the district identifying sectors with predicted growth and sectors with predicted decline. The Suffolk Coastal Business Forum has conducted a Business Needs Analysis to consult in depth with a sample of businesses directly. This research highlighted the opinions of businesses and has informed the priorities for action by the LSP.

5. Healthier lives for all

The LSP recognises the role it can play in continuing to support the multi-agency approach that is crucial in promoting healthy and wellbeing, within a framework of national and local policy. The LSP has a role to deliver improvements locally, which complements the County 'Healthy Ambitions' strategy. By working in partnership we can develop improvements in health and reduce health inequalities in our population. In addition, we emphasise the responsibility of the individual in promoting their own health and wellbeing but recognise the importance of

ensuring appropriate information, support and services.

6. Young People

Building on its success, the LSP recognises it still has a crucial role in working with young people to meet their needs and help them remain in the district. By working in partnership with SCTV, the districts young peoples forum, the LSP can continue to support our young people to be healthy; Stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing in line with current national and county priorities.

Other key issues for the district:

The LSP considers the following four issues as important but recognises that partnerships are already focussing on them and we do not aim to duplicate their work. We will continue to monitor achievements in these areas and will support work where the LSP can make a real difference.

1. Community Safety

The Suffolk Coastal Community Safety Partnership aims to work together to build a safer, stronger and more secure district. The partnership has a three-year rolling partnership plan that commenced in April 2008 and will carry out an annual strategic assessment to identify the priorities for the district for the following year and develop an action plan to address them.

The strategic assessment for 2008/09 has identified five local priority areas:

- Violent crime with specific emphasis on the night time economy.
- Anti-social behavior with specific emphasis on youth, night time economy, vehicle and traffic related anti-social behavior.
- Criminal damage.
- Domestic abuse.
- Substance misuse particularly alcohol which is the one common driver behind all the other priorities.

The partnership will be measuring its progress by comparing its performance with other partnerships that have a similar crime and demographic profile and endeavour to improve our relative ranking. All Suffolk community safety partnerships have the same overall crime reduction targets as those set by Suffolk Constabulary.

2. Coastal and Estuary Management

In recognition of the complex social, economic and environmental issues facing the coastal area, and the limitations of the present policy frameworks governing the long term future and management of coastal areas, a partnership has been formed involving the key public and statutory bodies involved with managing the coastal area to establish mechanisms for a joint approach to the future planning and management of Suffolk's coastal area.

The Shoreline Management Plan (in preparation) is a strategic document that proposes preferred short, medium and long-term options for the management of the open coast from the perspective of flood risk and erosion over a time period of 100 years. In addition, Suffolk Estuarine Strategies (in preparation) consist of estuary-wide strategies that propose preferred short, medium and long-term options for the management of flood risk on the estuaries over a time period of 100 years.

3. Housing

The provision of additional housing, including affordable housing, is seen as a priority both nationally and locally and these issues are set against growing concerns about the state of the housing market nationally.

At a local level the district council encourages the improved provision of and access to appropriate housing to meet existing and future needs as a key priority. In addition the delivery of more housing generally, including affordable housing, is included in Suffolk's Local Area Agreement.

The Council continues to work with its Housing Association partners to secure funding from the Housing Corporation for new affordable housing schemes across the district. This work was successful in securing £3.94 million in April 2008 to assist with the construction or conversion of 147 dwellings. The Council will work with its partners to ensure that future funding opportunities are secured wherever possible in order to meet the affordable/social housing needs of the district.

Amendments to the Local Plan policy adopted in March 2006 have resulted in over 540 new affordable dwellings being planned for development and the Council is now developing its Local Development Framework which is likely to allocate land for further housing development across the district and, in particular, to address needs identified in the Regional Spatial

Strategy in the south of the district.

4. Support for vulnerable people to live independent lives in their community

Within Suffolk County Council, Adult and Community Services (ACS) aims to ensure people of all ages and abilities who live in Suffolk have opportunities to access activities either in leisure, learning or work, that assist them to develop and sustain their economic, health and social wellbeing, helping them remain independent, exercise choice and their right to dignity in a safe environment. The strategic commissioning direction for ACS, based on national policy and guidance and local priorities aim to meet the five outcomes:

1. Improve health and emotional wellbeing (wellbeing for all)
2. Improve quality of life
3. Improve choice and control – promoting independence, respect and dignity
4. Ensure freedom from discrimination and harassment (equality and equity of service)
5. Improve employability and skills

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Suffolk (JSNA) gives a comprehensive view of the needs and aspirations of the population of the County. It identifies the emerging demographic and social trends that are likely to have implications for the way in which Adult and Community Services structures and delivers services into the future. It is the government's expectation that the joint strategic needs assessment will inform the commissioning intentions of Primary Care Trusts and local authorities. The Adult and Community Services' Commissioning Strategy therefore draws from the findings of the JSNA to understand the demand for services in Suffolk.

'Supporting People in Suffolk' is a working partnership of local government, probation, health, voluntary sector organisations, housing associations, support agencies and service users which support over 9,000 people in Suffolk including

- Homeless people
- Older people with support needs
- People escaping domestic violence.
- People who have recently come out of prison or are at risk of offending
- People with drug or alcohol problems
- People with learning disabilities, mental health problems, physical or sensory disabilities
- Travellers and gypsies

- Young vulnerable people and teenage parents

The Supporting People in Suffolk team monitor the quality of housing related support services, and make sure that Suffolk has the right services to meet people's needs. The main purpose of housing related support is to help people live independently in your own home. Short-term services can last for up to two years and are designed to help people move to, or maintain independent living. Long-term services have no specified end date and are provided to help people maintain independent living.

OUR VISION FOR SUFFOLK COASTAL

Our overarching vision of Suffolk Coastal in 2021 is:

Building on the best of the present, Suffolk Coastal is a district where people want to live and to invest, to care for others and the environment.

Our more detailed vision of Suffolk Coastal which reflects the key issues and expands the priorities identified through this strategy is outlined below:

Our vision of how our residents access services in 2021:

Our vision of 2021 is that all the people who live in Suffolk Coastal have equal access to services and the district is an area of excellence for rural accessibility. Closer working between communities, organisations and transport providers has achieved an increase in the use of public and community transport and a reduced need for personal transport. There are more services delivered to our rural communities which has brought about reduced isolation for our residents in rural areas and a reduction in personal travel, having the additional benefit of contributing towards CO2 reduction. Better access to leisure facilities and the countryside has the benefit of encouraging a healthier lifestyle and reducing levels of obesity amongst our residents.

Our more vulnerable residents (of all ages and abilities) have opportunities to access activities either in leisure, learning or work, that help them maintain their health and wellbeing and live independently in their community.

Our vision of strong and supportive communities in 2021:

Our vision of 2021 is that our communities are safe, cohesive and inclusive, and local people

are enabled to respond to the identified needs of their area to ensure our communities are vibrant, balanced and sustainable.

The importance of a robust, diverse and independent third sector in building and supporting strong, active and empowered local communities in a fair and enterprising society is recognised and encouraged.

Voice: Local people are empowered to have a greater voice and influence over decision-making and delivery of services, by ensuring effective representation, consultation and engagement takes place.

Place shaping: A mixture of tried-and-tested services is delivered that are influenced and shaped by local people and that address their needs.

Community intelligence: Information on the shape and needs of our communities in Suffolk Coastal is brought together and effectively feeds into the relevant policies and plans of partners, thus ensuring intelligence is shared, gaps identified, links made and key issues highlighted.

Citizenship: The citizens of Suffolk Coastal are enabled to contribute to the wellbeing of their communities and wider society, by promoting the value of volunteering.

Fit for purpose: A vibrant voluntary and community sector has been built that is fit for purpose and supported by robust infrastructure support.

Community Safety: Suffolk Coastal remains one of the safest districts to live and work in Suffolk.

Housing: As the link between Housing and wellbeing is vital it is a priority that there is a sufficient number and type of home for the local population so that everyone has a suitable place to live.

Our vision of climate change and the environment in 2021:

Our vision of 2021 is that Suffolk Coastal is a district that is supporting the countywide goal of becoming the 'greenest county', is equipped to meet the challenges of climate change and on

target to meet the countywide 2025 targets of a 60% reduction in CO2 emissions and a climate-resilient Suffolk.

An integrated approach to managing our coastal area is addressing the impact of climate change and sea level rise on Suffolk's coastline and supporting strong communities a resilient economy and a high quality natural environment.

A multi agency approach is minimising the effects and maximising the opportunities of Felixstowe Port expansion on our environment, including the effects of the Increased transport on the transport network.

Our landscape contains diverse farmland, which supports a rich biodiversity. With our AONB and large areas of the district with international and national nature conservation designations, the significant contribution we can make to conserve and enhancing biodiversity is recognised and supported. The significant potential effects of climate change on agricultural production and knock-on effects on rural communities, many of who are reliant upon a thriving agricultural industry are recognised and managed. Local produce is promoted to support a diverse agriculture and reduce food miles.

Suffolk Coastal is a leading area for best practice and innovative approaches to tackling the causes and effects of climate change. The built environment is developed to the highest environmental standards, biodiversity and landscapes, including treescape, are protected from new development and every opportunity is taken to design in environmental improvements and action is taken to reduce the carbon footprint of existing dwellings.

Our vision of the economy of the district and the Skills of our workforce in 2021:

Our vision is that in 2021 we have developed a strong and diverse economy where Young People and Adults have the opportunity to work, earn and improve their life chances.

We have a workforce who possesses appropriate skills for local employment, and suitable employment opportunities exist. The education and skills sector is providing the right skills base to secure future employment in a growing knowledge based economy. Enterprise is encouraged in our rural areas and market towns and more affordable housing enables the workforce to live and work locally.

Business wants to locate to the district and planning policies support the right environment for

strong economic growth. Our small and medium sized businesses grow and prosper and social enterprises have an increased role in providing services.

The transport infrastructure, in particular the rail network and the A12 and A14 have developed to support business growth.

Overall the economy in Suffolk Coastal is still strong and diverse employment has spread wealth across our communities. In particular wealth is created more widely throughout our rural areas and important regeneration initiatives have been developed for Felixstowe.

Growth point status has brought real benefits to the district by ensuring that the increased jobs and housing have been planned with the required infrastructure whilst maintaining the quality of our local environment. Focus has been placed on the Ipswich policy area and Felixstowe as part of the Haven Gateway as one of the fastest growing sub regions in the Eastern area.

Our vision of Healthier lives for all in 2021:

Our Vision in 2021 is that agencies in Suffolk Coastal work more effectively together so that everyone in the district has the opportunity to live a healthier lifestyle and living in a rural area is not a barrier to achieving that healthy lifestyle.

People take a greater responsibility for their own health, and effort is focused to improve individual responsibility for health includes our young people – not just through schools but also through the network of partnerships and organisations available to them as well as through parents.

The incidences of poverty have reduced in the area and all of our residents live in a healthy, inclusive community and have the opportunity to live in a decent home. Socially inclusive, sustainable, thriving and supportive communities are recognised as vital not least in our isolated rural areas.

Long term planning for health is shaped by opportunities and threats from environmental changes, including climate change and measures have been taken to address fuel poverty.

Our vision of our young peoples lives in 2021:

Our vision in 2021 is that all of our young people are able to access the same level of support, activities and services, including education and training, regardless of where they live. Our

schools, colleges and parents, together with our business community, help to raise the career horizons of the districts young people so that they have the chance to fulfil their potential. There are no longer a disproportionate number of educated young people leaving the district to find work or further education and there is also adequate provision for young people in the lower skills bracket to find work and develop the right skills and qualifications.

Our young people stay safe from accidents, both at home and on our roads and they are well informed about the consequences of risk taking behaviour such as substance misuse through education and information so that they, as well as other members of the community, live healthier and happier lives. Physical activity and adventure is a part of all of our young people lives by having engaged with the 2012 Olympics to develop a legacy of provision that promotes participation in exercise and sport amongst young people.

Our young people integrate more into easily into their community and the positive contribution that they can bring is enabled and valued through Volunteering, citizenship and community activities.

PRIORITY OUTCOMES FOR THE LSP

In order to deliver improvements that help to achieve our vision, the key outcomes the LSP want to achieve in the medium term by directly contributing to their delivery are:

Access to Services:

- Better access to leisure facilities for young people, especially in the evenings.
- Improved access to health and social care, especially for those living in rural areas.
- Increased number of people benefiting from initiatives that develop neighbourliness and build communities, by reducing the effects of rural isolation and social exclusion.

Strong, supportive communities:

- Ensure the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Suffolk Coastal have the skills, governance and capacity to deliver local services – every VCS group attending funding surgeries or applying to an LSP partner for funding receive a health check to ensure their organisation is robust and good governance is in place and support is available to capacity build if required.

- Increase volunteering opportunities in Suffolk Coastal and promote volunteering for targeted parts of the sector (as felt important to the LSP), such as with young people, the elderly or around the environment.
- Ensure communities are inclusive *and* raise the quality of life for Suffolk Coastal residents. This includes ensuring marginalised / vulnerable adults, the elderly, young people and migrant workers in particular have access to services.
- Undertake joint work in specific hotspots to tackle issues of deprivation in Saxmundham, Leiston and Felixstowe.

Climate change and the environment:

- Reducing energy wastage and cutting carbon emissions
- Prepare for changes in the climate
- Safeguard, enhance and manage the distinctive high quality landscape and biodiversity of the district.

Healthier lives for all:

- Agencies work more effectively together to ensure everyone has a decent home environment to live in which enables them to be as healthy as possible.
- Living in a rural area presents opportunities, not barriers, to accessing all services, including health and social care.
- People have the information, and where necessary the support, to take responsibility for their own health.
- Vulnerable people, including those with mental health problems, are supported to live in and be part of a healthy, inclusive community.

Economy and skills

- The maximum number of individuals will acquire employability skills
- Better links between businesses, employers, education providers and young people to

raise awareness of opportunities available and raise aspirations of young people.

- Integrate basic skills provision with other agencies and services
- Explore, increase and improve access to routes out of poverty for adults
- Improved awareness of rural transport issues with relevant agencies at local, sub-regional and regional levels.

Young People

- Provide a balanced activity programme for children and young people throughout the year
 - Increase activity provision for hard to reach groups in the district
 - Improve the community transport system for young people in the district
 - Provide children and young people with the skills required by employers in the district.

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