

Economic Vision and Strategy

DRAFT – for consultation

September 2024

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk

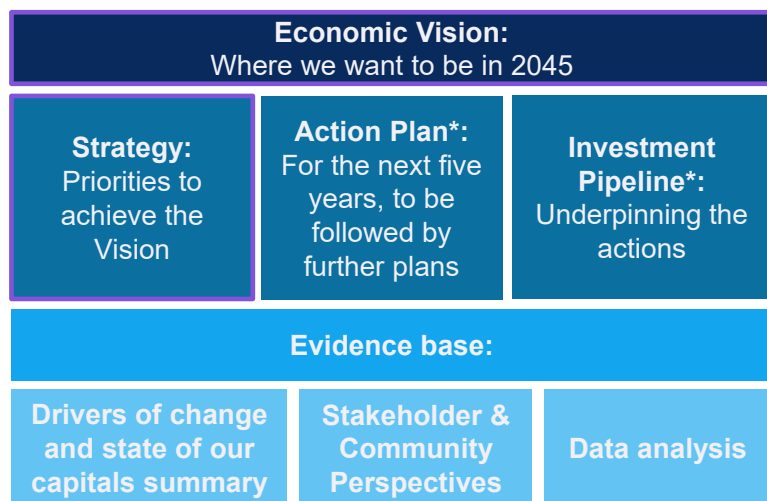


About this document

This document sets out the Economic Vision and Strategy for King’s Lynn and West Norfolk.

It describes where we want to be in 2045 and our strategic priorities for achieving this vision, building on where we are today. It is accompanied by a detailed Action Plan*, which has an associated Investment Plan*, setting out specific actions to take to realise our vision.

These documents are supported by a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence, which provide detail on the rationale for the vision and strategy.



* To be developed as part of the “call to action”

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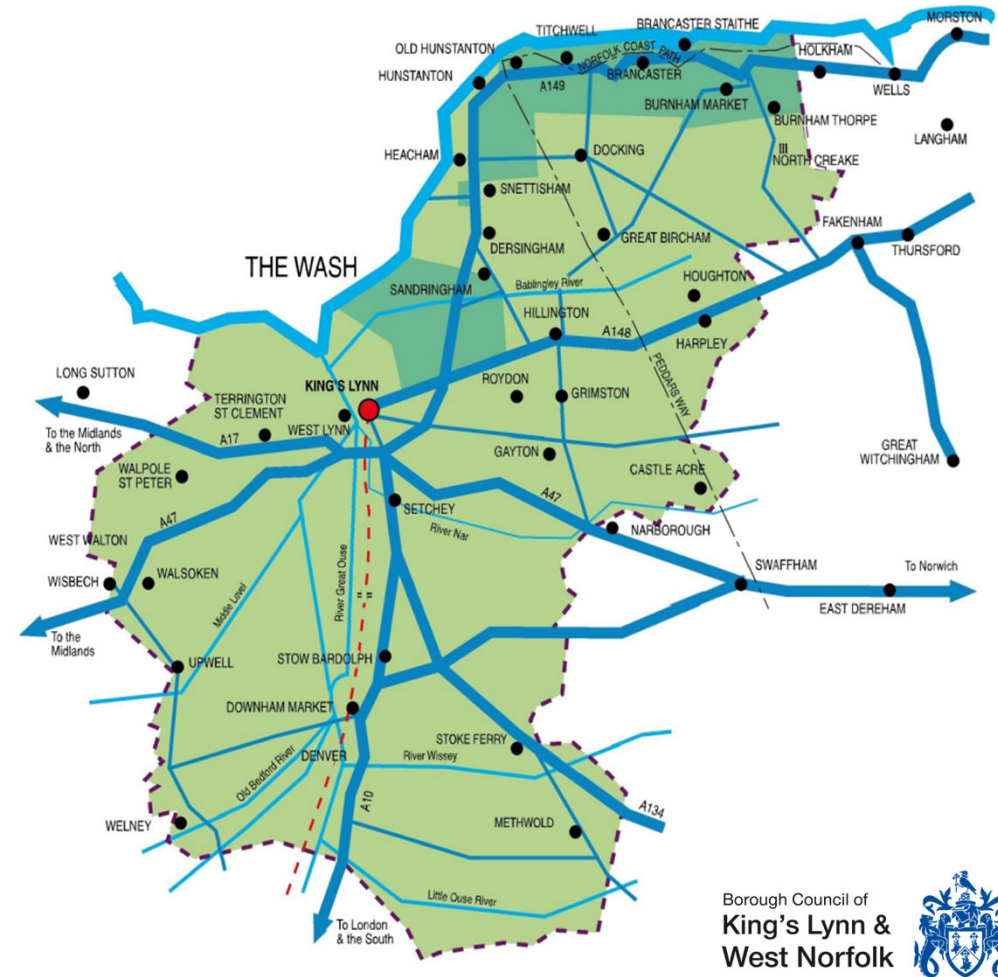
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Introduction

King's Lynn and West Norfolk is the second largest local authority area in terms of land in England. Famous for big skies and open space, we have a wealth of beautiful natural assets, such as the Fens, rural countryside, and designated National Landscape across the coast. The Wash, the largest estuary system in the UK, stretches along the coastline from Snettisham and its RSPB reserve in the south west, through villages such as Heacham, Holme-next-the-sea and Thornham, and the Victorian seaside town of Hunstanton with its strong tourism offer and famous cliffs, all the way to the National Trust Brancaster Estate with its sandy beaches in North Norfolk.

The Borough is also renowned for its ancient history and traditions, with urban and rural heritage attractions from the ancient towns of Downham Market, one of Norfolk's oldest market towns, and King's Lynn, known for its Hanseatic and maritime history, through to heritage sites including castles, stately homes, ancient churches and museums.

Our natural environment and cultural heritage have forged an economy that is rich in expertise across agriculture and food sectors, with fertile farmland and a climate that lends itself to arable farming, along with a prominent livestock industry and significant employment in associated processing and manufacturing. Our manufacturing and engineering capabilities are reflected in a wider manufacturing and engineering business base which locates here to access those specialisms.



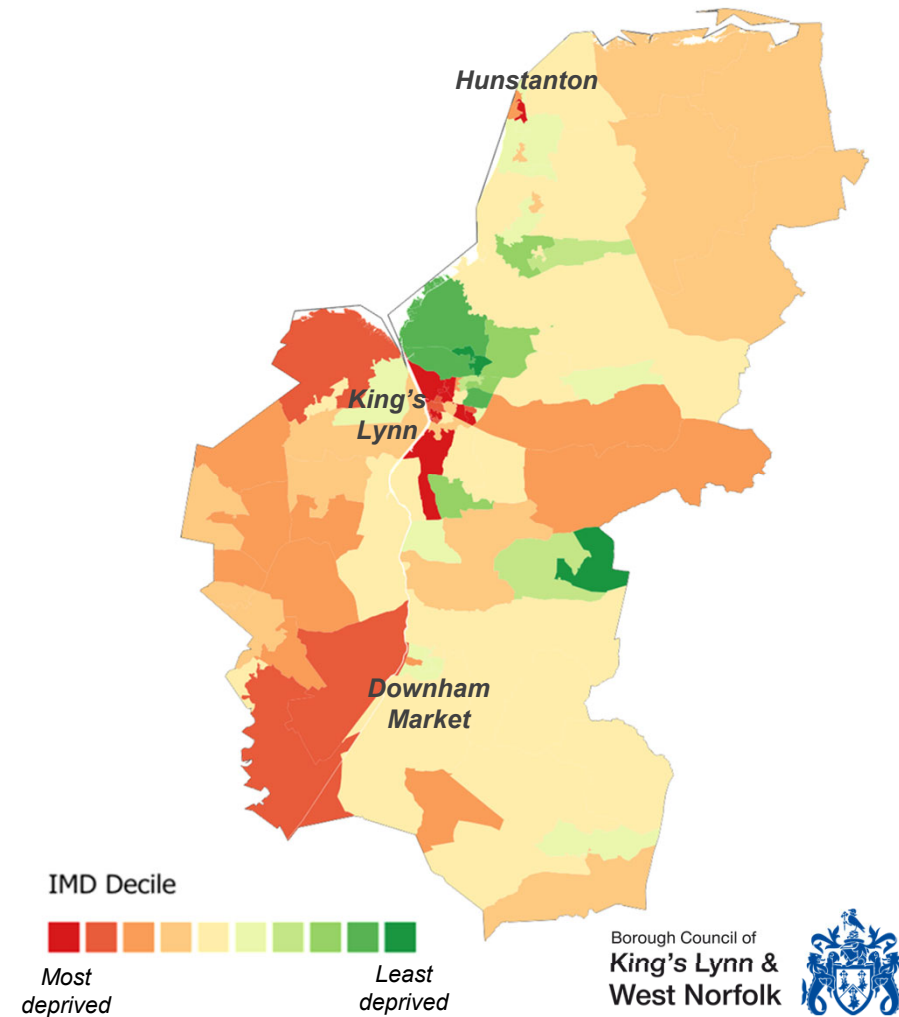
Introduction

We have a place people want to visit, and our tourism offer generates direct jobs as well as supporting significant employment in local retail and hospitality businesses. The Borough has a strong foundational economy, including significant employment in manufacturing, engineering, and health and care, which is expected to increase to support an aging population with more complex needs in the years to come, many of whom live in rural and coastal areas where public transport options are limited.

However, as a rural community with a predominately production, consumer and public service economy, we have been more exposed than most to the economic shifts the UK has experienced over recent decades; from Brexit induced labour shortages and trade difficulties affecting our businesses, to residents who still feeling the impact of the 2008 financial crash and subsequent austerity, had this compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic and cost-of-living crisis that has typified the 2020s so far.

Our population is ageing rapidly, accelerated by young people moving outside of the area at early career stages and fewer people choosing to be here mid-career. Our people also face significant challenges associated with poor physical and mental health, which reinforces the continued need to address isolation; even in an age where digital connectivity can provide *some* alleviation, a rural community is by nature more dispersed, which makes facilitating active lives and in-person connectivity all the more important.

The disparities of a beautiful place with challenging circumstances are most acutely evident in the stark disparities in deprivation in West Norfolk. Ensuring the natural benefits of our place feed through to our communities benefiting from a strong economic life is vital.



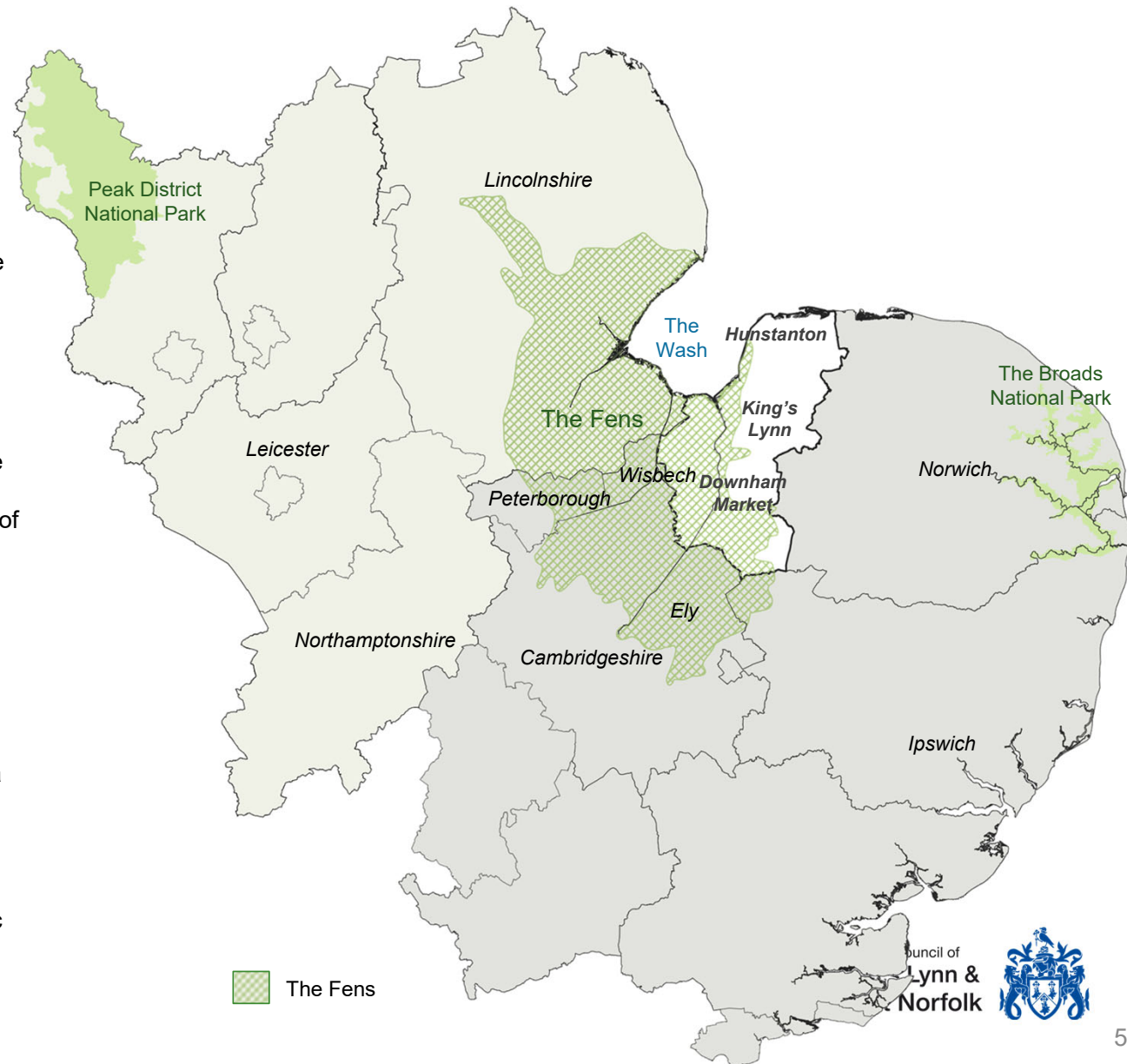
Introduction

West Norfolk is home to the largest population in Norfolk County and as host to the most businesses is a critical economic centre for the county. However, along with North Norfolk we are also the most sparsely populated area in Norfolk, and challenging connectivity means that we have a more a self-contained labour market than other areas in the County.

The borough is unique in the county in sharing borders with multiple other county/combined authority areas: Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and Lincolnshire. This feature of our geography drives close connectivity with places outside of Norfolk, in a way that is not necessarily the same for other parts of the County.

This connectivity to both Norfolk and surrounding areas drives a diverse character, where parts may feel distinctly different to one another; Downham Market may feel more connected to Fenland and Cambridgeshire, for instance, while Hunstanton may feel more like North Norfolk.

Looking to the future, our borough will be part of a devolved area bordering other devolved areas, sharing a cultural geography which lends itself to partnership working. In this context, West Norfolk must have a compelling economic story, which draws together the opportunities that are clearly present to drive our economic growth and position the Borough's important economic role within Norfolk and the broader region.



A new economic vision and strategy for West Norfolk

The development of a distinct economic vision for West Norfolk is a new step for the area. Developed in partnership through a collaborative process involving stakeholders and residents across Borough, supported by robust data and analysis, this document enables us to deliver in partnership; actively driving the development of West Norfolk through our own efforts and through purposeful connections with partners in the wider region.

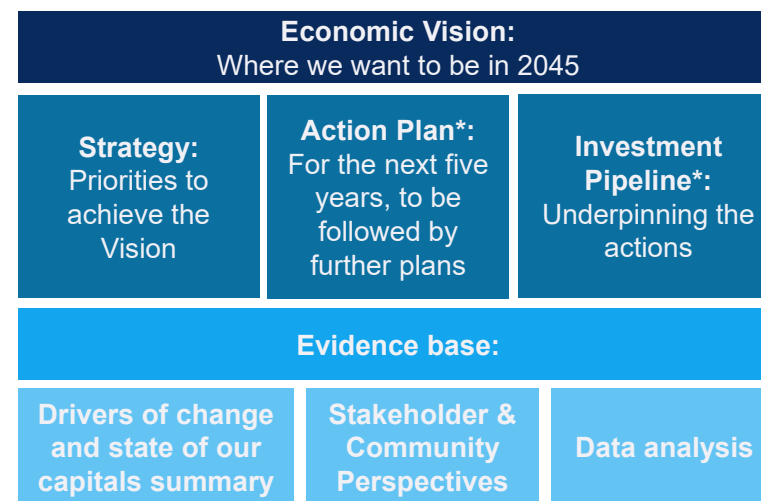
Fundamental to this is the development of a unifying vision which captures the breadth and strengths of the Borough and its different economic and population characteristics and provides an agreed position on what we want to collectively achieve that can tie together and inform future project decisions and investment planning over the long-term.

The vision is a strong, shared articulation of King's Lynn and West Norfolk as a Borough and its ambition for the future, bringing together the views of a diverse range of stakeholders, residents, business community groups. The strategy provides a route forward to achieve the vision and drive sustainable growth.

In the development of this vision and strategy there has been significant consideration of drivers of change for the socio-economic prospects of the Borough as a whole and its towns and rural communities – the strength/opportunities which can be capitalised upon and the challenges/threats to be addressed and mitigated for the future.

An extensive programme of engagement with local residents and businesses was undertaken in development of the strategy, including a survey, workshops with business owners, residents and community groups, borough visits and a programme of officer and stakeholder engagement calls. All perspectives captured helped shaped this vision for what the future of West Norfolk should look like.

This strategy is not just for the Council; it is for West Norfolk a whole. The council is one partner, but anyone who lives, learns, works, visits or invests in West Norfolk is another. This document is a call to action for all partners involved, to work together to realise this vision, leveraging our unique strengths and assets to create a thriving future for West Norfolk.



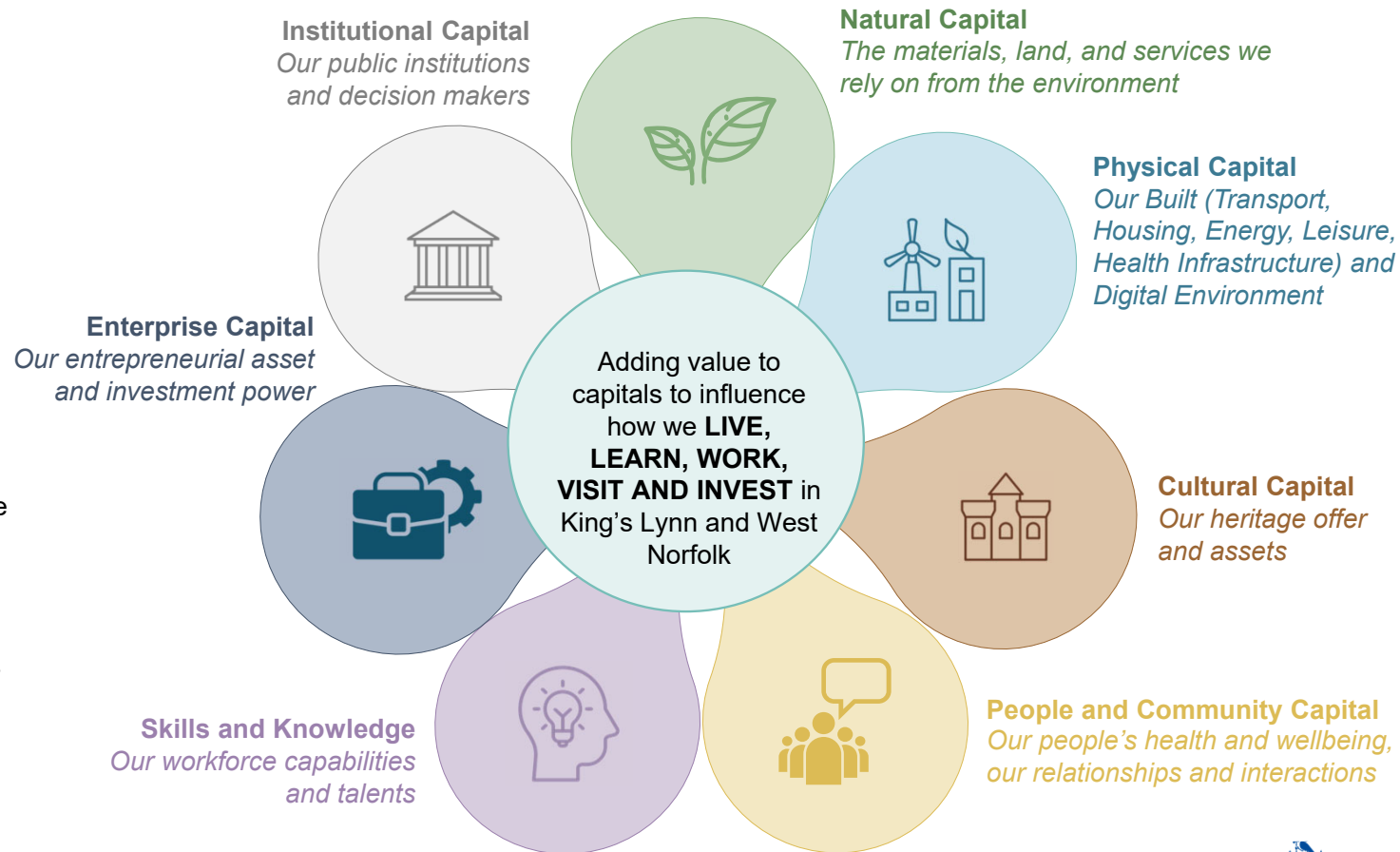
Our approach to economic growth

Growth is critical, but we believe that inclusive, sustainable economic growth, which enhances the wellbeing of our residents and the sustainability of our environment, needs to consider impact and potential across various aspects of economic life.

Our strategy is underpinned by a **capitals approach**, seeking to identify and deploy strong concentrations of capital in the Borough, recognise capitals that are depleted and require investment and ultimately seek to add value across all.

Adopting a capitals approach allows us to identify surpluses of capital in the Borough, which should be further increased and used responsibly, and recognise capitals that are depleted and require investment.

Ultimately, this approach seeks to add value across all areas, recognising that the various aspects of economic life are interlinked, and we cannot focus solely on economic capitals.



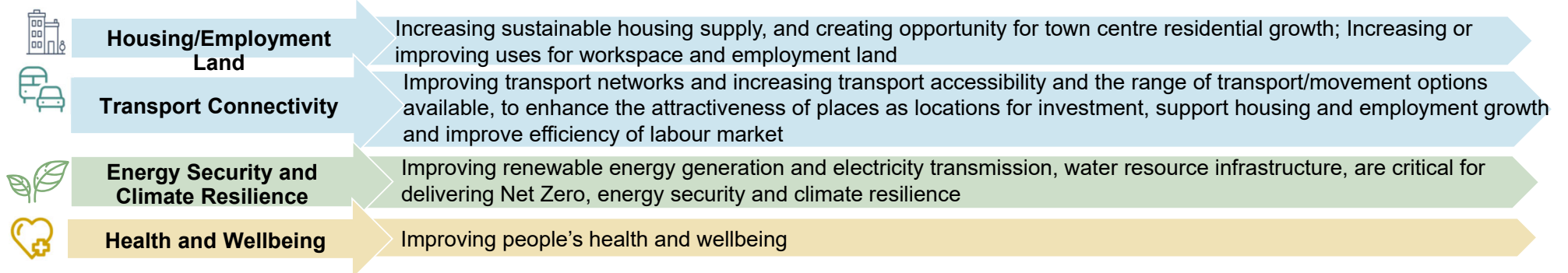
Our approach to economic growth

Underpinning the strategy is a set of growth levers that describe the ways in which growth can be achieved. It is through the co-ordinated application of these levers, guided by the vision and strategy, that economic growth in the Borough will be achieved.

Economic levers:



Cross-cutting levers/ growth enablers:



Where we are today



The status of our capitals at a glance



Natural Capital

Strengths

- 20 minutes to work 20 minutes to the coast
- Coastline, The Fens
- Over 10m trips (c.6.4m visitors) in 2022
- Total tourism value - £560m, total visitor spend - £421m
- £11m business rates retention 2022/23
- CO2 emissions have decreased since 2005
- Active travel increased by 8.2%

Challenges

- Coastal erosion, floods, drought, climate change threats
- The Wash – flood risk management
- Lower than average proportion of properties with EPC rating of A-C
- Ouse Washes Habitat Creation programme failing
- Above average per capita transport emissions



Physical Capital

Strengths

- 10.5k new homes planned by 2040, with 4K a sustainable urban expansion to the south of King's Lynn at West Winch
- Offshore wind off Hunstanton
- Rail connectivity to Cambridge and London

Challenges

- Declining town centres, above regional average high street retail vacancy rates
- Limited rural transport impacts night-time economy and workforce mobility to employment centres
- 30% of neighbourhoods are in the bottom 20% nationally on IMD barriers to housing
- Rural businesses - physical/digital infrastructure
- Some areas are 1h+ by car from nearest employment centre of 5,000+
- 64% of neighbourhoods have above average travel time to key services
- Summer tourism pressures infrastructure
- Grid connectivity
- 2/3 leisure centres at risk of closing due to building condition



Cultural Capital

Strengths

- Cultural and heritage assets:
 - St. George's Guildhall,
 - Sandringham,
 - The Walks,
 - Corn Exchange
 - Riverfront Quays area,
 - King's Lynn historic town centre
 - Hanseatic Port
 - Burnham Market
- King's Lynn/West Norfolk festivals
- Growing immigrant population
- Downham Market food/hospitality offer

Challenges

- Residents unaware of Borough's offer
- Assets underutilised/lacking activation to benefit the local economy/community



People and Community

Strengths

- Worthwhile life, happiness scores above UK average, anxiety scores below UK average
- Lynnsport

Challenges

- 26% aged 65+ - this group growing the most
- Declining proportion aged 25-39
- Impact of rurality on health – insufficient access to GPs
- c.20k residents live in areas among the 20% most deprived in England, with life expectancy varying significantly based on where in the Borough one lives
- 56% of households have 1+ dimension of deprivation
- Joint least densely populated LA, lower population growth than across the East of England
- GDHI increased from 2017-21, but still below UK average
- Poor evening economy, and lack of an offer for young people



Skills and Knowledge

Strengths

- School of Nursing Studies
- Above average percentage of firms provide on the job training
- BOOST Programme
- Above average proportion of 16–18-year-olds in apprenticeships
- CWA University Centre
- Partnership with Anglia Ruskin University

Challenges

- 6.7% of the population have no qualifications
- 4.5% NEET, higher than national and Norfolk averages
- 30.3% of people with level 4+ qualifications - below average
- Second highest levels of economic inactivity in Norfolk (22.1%)
- Lack of hospitality skillset to support visitor economy sector
- Limited HEI presence
- BOOST Programme ending March 2025



Enterprise Capital

Strengths

- Most productive sectors are Energy and Adv. Manufacturing and Engineering
- Adv. Manufacturing and Engineering has the highest GVA (£530m, c.28% share)
- 70.7% of people both live and work in KLWN
- Decrease in percentage of people providing <19 hours of unpaid care a week from 2011-21
- Gradual increase in employment
- Median workplace wages on par with Norfolk average (c.£590)

Challenges

- Job density below regional and national averages
- Lower proportion of employment in high skilled occupations
- GVA per hour less than UK average
- Lack of commercial/ industrial space



Institutional Capital

Strengths

- Long Term Plan for Towns - King's Lynn (TBC)
- AEB devolution
- BID
- King's Lynn Enterprise Park
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy (in development)
- Norfolk Floods Strategic Alliance
- CTAP Programme
- Norfolk Economic Strategy (in development)

Challenges

- Upward trend in temporary accommodation
- Lack of day-to-day support for small businesses
- Decline in cases of homelessness prevention
- Perception that town centre car parking charges impact footfall

Our environment and community life

West Norfolk has a wealth of beautiful natural assets, such as the Fens, rural countryside, and coastal offer, which make our borough a fantastic place to live, learn, work, visit, and invest. These assets give our residents a strong quality of life, enabling them to be 20 minutes from work and 20 minutes from the coast, and make West Norfolk an ideal trip away for individuals and families alike. Our worthwhile life and happiness scores are both above the UK average, while our anxiety scores are below the UK average.

Challenges still remain, with climate change, specifically coastal erosion, threatening to change our natural environment and potentially alter our visitor economy drastically. We lack sufficient housing and necessary supporting infrastructure supply. Poor health disproportionately impacts some of our communities, with our rurality posing a particular challenge - rural residents struggle with less access to GPs and other essential health services, and mental health conditions associated with social isolation.

Our residents and visitors benefit from trainline connectivity to outside of the area, particularly to Cambridge and London. This is ideal both for short trips, or for re-locating professionals mainly working from home – enabling them to work in a faster-pace urban environment, and recharge surrounded by rural beauty at home. However, transport and travel connectivity within the Borough is highly limiting.

Culture and heritage are at the heart of our places, and assets like St. George's Guildhall, Sandringham Estate, King's Lynn historic town centre, the Hanseatic Port, and more, attract national and international visitors. Our festivals further contribute to our thriving sense of community and shared identity. However, our culture and heritage assets are currently underutilised, or lacking activation to benefit the local community and our economy. Our town centres are similarly underutilised, with above average retail/industrial vacancy rates, and our leisure centres are increasingly falling into disrepair.



154,300 residents
Largest population in Norfolk



15.3% of population living in the 20% most deprived areas of England
(c. 20,000 residents)
Norfolk: 14.9%



56% of households have at least one dimension of deprivation
Relative deprivation in Norfolk increasing over time



Significant health inequalities

Life expectancy for men in North Lynn is 11.5 years shorter than men in Brancaster, Burnham and Docking (72.2 vs. 83.7)

Life expectancy for women in North Lynn is 7.9 years shorter than for women in Fairstead and Springwood (77.6 vs. 85.5)

Life expectancy in King's Lynn and West Norfolk is below the Norfolk averages



Ageing population
More than 25% 65+ – and growing
Declining proportion ages 25-39

Our places

West Norfolk is a diverse borough comprising three main towns, King's Lynn, Hunstanton and Downham Market, and several small villages.

Hunstanton

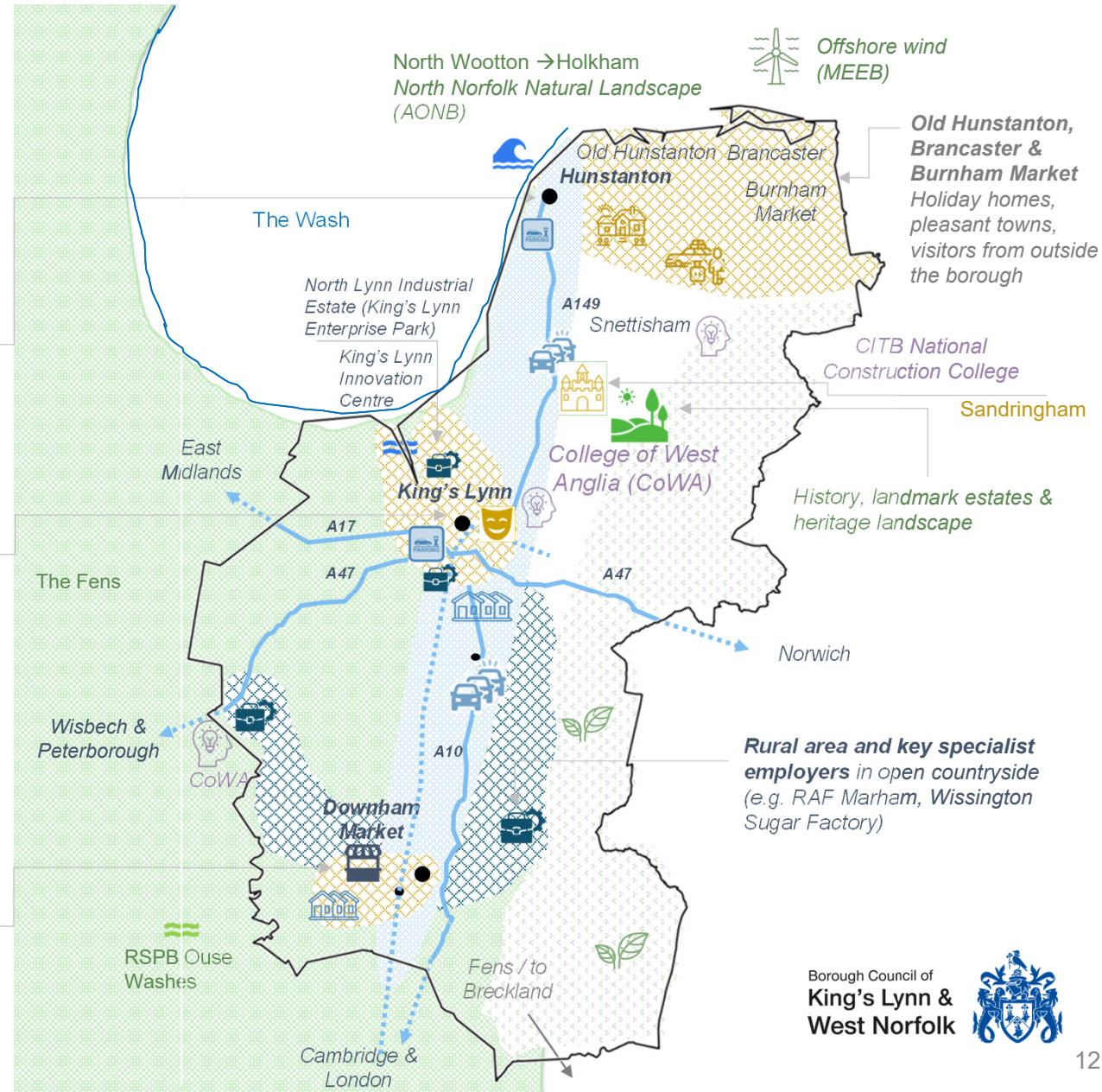
Known for its beautiful beaches and coast, Hunstanton is characterised by affluent areas with many holiday homes and an older retired population. **However**, its facilities need improvement, it struggles with overtourism in the summer, and coastal erosion poses a significant threat.

King's Lynn

King's Lynn has a rich cultural and heritage offer, as well as maritime and river assets. **However**, the town is not perceived as a cultural destination. It struggles with a declining retail offer and limited leisure activities for young people and families, leading residents to prefer nearby cities like Norwich. The town has good rail and road connections to Cambridge and London, **but** congested roads, limited public transport and parking systems create barriers for residents to come into town. The Town Investment Plan aims to catalyse a number of investments to address these issues and enhance both the day and night-time economy.

Downham Market

Town growing rapidly, independent shops popping up, high demand for houses, lower prices than Cambridge, up-and-coming young demographic, **but** not enough to do for young families. Schools, health and leisure facilities are not yet there to meet the demand of a growing population.



Our social and infrastructure challenges

West Norfolk faces a complex and interconnected set of challenges related to housing, transport, and health, which together create a cycle that impedes economic progress.

Old and inadequate housing stock: Our housing stock is aging and inefficient, with insufficient diversity in housing size, types, and tenure options, making it difficult to accommodate current and future demographic changes. Many homes are situated in conservation areas, which restricts opportunities for renewal. Additionally, numerous built areas are at risk of flooding. Despite efforts to support housing growth and address market failures, significant challenges persist, particularly in the private rented sector and affordable housing provision. The limited housing offer, combined with the diverse market across urban, southwest, and northeast areas, has resulted in under-occupation in King's Lynn town centre, inadequate provision in Downham Market, and a predominance of second homes, holiday homes, and larger properties in coastal and rural areas.

Transport and connectivity constraints: Despite direct train connection to major cities such as Cambridge and London, public transport options within the borough are insufficient, especially in rural areas, and road congestion often creates a barrier to access essential services and economic opportunities. These issues contribute to rural isolation, impacting our residents' quality of life and economic prospects.

Population health challenges: As a borough, we face significant health challenges, including pockets of high deprivation, homelessness, and poor physical and mental health outcomes. These issues are exacerbated by inadequate housing and transport systems, as well as limited health and leisure facilities in town centres and rural villages, which struggle to meet existing and future demand and needs. While significant progress has been made in reducing homelessness, particularly in decreasing rough sleeping, challenges remain, especially with hidden homelessness, such as families in temporary housing and individuals in insecure accommodation.

If left unaddressed, we risk the private housing market continuing to focus primarily on attracting and catering to retirees, resulting in an increasingly older population. This will lead to a surge in demand for healthcare services for the elderly, placing additional strain on our health infrastructure. Meanwhile, younger residents may leave in search of better opportunities, leading to school closures and a shrinking workforce. To reverse this trend, we need a comprehensive strategy that integrates improvements in housing, transport, and health infrastructure. Specifically, we need a modern housing stock that meets the needs of all age groups, enhanced public transport to reduce rural isolation and improve access to local opportunities, and bolstered health and leisure facilities. By implementing these changes, we can make West Norfolk more attractive to younger adults and families, support a healthier and more balanced community, and lay the foundation for a sustainable and prosperous future for all residents.

Examples of housing types in the borough



Our business base and economic life

West Norfolk is an important economic centre in Norfolk, its largest for businesses, second largest for employment and strong for productivity. Our most productive sectors are Energy and Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, with Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering having the highest GVA of all our sectors (£530m, approximately a 28% share).

A higher percentage of firms in the borough provide on the job training compared to the national average, highlighting their investment in upskilling our local population. There is also significant investment coming into the Borough, through programmes such as the Long-Term Plan for Towns in King's Lynn, our Enterprise Zone, and the Business Improvement District.

We still, however, struggle with untapped potential in our working age population and business base; we have a lower proportion of employment in high skilled occupations, our business base is expanding at a consistently slower rate compared to nationally, and our jobs density remains below both regional and national averages. Agri-food – our only large-employing sector with a distinct local specialism – is not on a growth trajectory, presenting a challenge for future growth.

The declining proportion of our population aged 25-39 is particularly difficult, in light of our lower rate of high level skills and higher rates of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). Combined with our high levels of economic inactivity, this presents a challenge to developing a workforce with the skills needed for the future.



£3.2bn GVA; £34.2 GVA per hour worked (productivity, 2022)

Norfolk: £32.90
UK: £39.7



30.3% NVQ Level 4+

Norfolk: 33.1%
England: 43.2%



£589.20 median workplace wages

Norfolk average: £588.30

£585.30 median resident wages

Norfolk average: £600.00



6,650 businesses*

+15% (2013-23)

Norfolk: +14%
England: +23%



79.8% employment rate

Norfolk: 77.4%
National: 75.8%



22.1% economic inactivity rate

Norfolk: 20.2%
England: 21.4%



Our distinctive sectors

West Norfolk's economy is characterised by strengths that have evolved from our industrial and cultural heritage, our location and our natural environment.



Agri-Food

West Norfolk is a hub for agri-food in the UK, home to businesses across the full food supply chain, from producers to processors, manufacturing and wholesale through to local retail and food service, as well as wider supporting services such as fertilisers, packaging and machinery. A critical part of our industrial heritage, this specialism will be as important in our future as it has been in our past.



Manufacturing and Engineering

Flowing originally from our agri-food and maritime economy, our businesses have developed significant inter-connected expertise in manufacturing and engineering. Our world leading manufacturers benefit from connection to our engineering economy, which includes locally owned SMEs and global companies operating alongside the Port of King's Lynn, which specialises in agri, manufacturing and recyclables, and RAF Marham, one of the largest air bases in the UK.



Water and Waste management

West Norfolk has a long history of water-related industry. Shaped by our location and network of rivers, the port and maritime trade drove our economic growth for centuries and our agriculture industry has always relied heavily on water management. This legacy underpins our expertise in sustainable water management and advanced wastewater treatment, which in are in turn leading to emerging strengths in waste-to-energy and the wider circular economy.



Visitor Economy

Our visitor economy is built on our historic heritage, cultural assets and natural landscapes, which draw visitors year-round. West Norfolk combines beautiful architecture, coast and countryside with unique market towns, which alongside a growing programme of festivals and a developing arts scene, positions us as a strong cultural and historic destination.

Our economic challenge

Despite West Norfolk's strong role in the Norfolk economy and the presence of many prominent and successful businesses, the picture overall is one of challenge. Looking at the recent economic performance of sectors across our whole economy identifies three particular issues:

Whether looking at measures of employment, businesses or gross-valued added, only 20% comes from sectors that are on a growth trajectory.

Our distinctive sectors don't over-ride these trends, rather recent trends show our agri-food sector is struggling; businesses have closed and whilst employment overall has not declined, it has not grown. At the same time, agri-food is growing elsewhere in the UK, which means we have started to lose ground on our specialism. Whilst engineering and manufacturing are on a positive trajectory, too few of our sectors – distinctive or found everywhere - are growing.

Industrial specialisms in West Norfolk, beyond agri-food, are fragile.

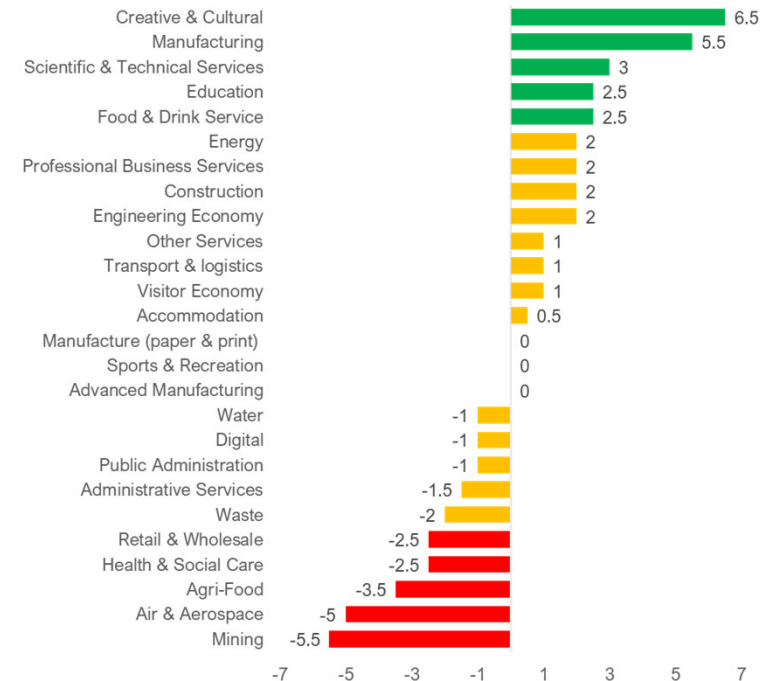
In manufacturing, our specialism lies in the traditional manufacturing base, which intensifies the importance of supporting our businesses with the transition to advanced and modern methods of manufacturing. Our other specialist sectors are either comparatively small in terms of number of jobs and businesses, e.g. water and waste management, or are not supported by allied strengths in the economy, and therefore require concerted interwoven development. The visitor economy is a prime example of the latter: whilst there is a distinct concentration of holiday accommodation, particularly on the coast, and we have destination worthy assets this is not reinforced by strong concentrations of other leisure and recreation activities and services.

Under-representation in professional service economy activities.

We have a small, but growing, number of businesses in science and technological services, and the creative and cultural sectors, but our business base is significantly under-represented in these and in professional and digital service businesses that form a critical part of today's service economy. Strengthening and pro-actively developing from our positions of deep expertise will be of paramount importance moving forward. However, we must also build capacity where we are underpowered and these service sectors must form a greater part of our business base in the future, to support and enable growth.

Trajectory/Measure	Growth	Static	Decline
Employment	13,970	22,390	27,500
% of Employment	22%	35%	43%
Businesses	1,000	2,890	1,700
% of Businesses	18%	51%	30%
GVA (£millions)	579	1,425	1,048
% of GVA	19%	47%	34%

Growth trajectory by sector



Note: This measure reflects sectors that have seen the most proportionate growth in 5 years across five measures: businesses, employment, gva, productivity and specialisation. They may not be most productive or most specialised or largest.

A challenging combination of core issues

In enterprise, skills, people and physical capital - the core of the KLWN economy today - is a set of interlinked, embedded issues that must be addressed to deliver future growth. None of these have quick fixes, nor can they be addressed in isolation. Rather, they require combined, long-term action.

We have:

A smaller business base. Despite strong rates of business creation for Norfolk, too few businesses are on a growth footing and indexed change in the number of businesses in the borough shows King's Lynn and West Norfolk consistently behind growth in the business base in the East of England and nationally.

Fragile industrial specialisms and underpowered professional services. Our strength in agri-food is undoubtedly an asset, but we must address fragility in our other distinctive sectors to promote growth. We also have far less activity than average in professional, digital and sci-tech services, these are not only sources of high-value work in themselves, but also critical enablers of growth in our distinctive sectors.

Fewer residents with high-level skills. King's Lynn and West Norfolk has been consistently below the East of England and national averages for the proportion of the resident population with high level skills. This is predominantly a reflection of the jobs available, which tend to demand low-mid level skills grow our economy.

Restricted labour market for senior and professional roles. Whilst the rate of growth in senior roles has matched East and National averages, KLWN has had consistently fewer senior and professional jobs available. This is a reflection of the smaller business base and the customer service, trade and production focus of the businesses.

A steeper decrease in working age population. The proportion of our population that is working age has been consistently below the East of England and national average over the last 20 years and indexed change shows a significant divergence in working age population growth compared to the situation nationally.

Constrained housing. There is poor distribution of housing tenures across the Borough with particular challenges in the urban areas and low representation of households with children. Housing is less affordable and there has been a fall in home ownership with mortgages.

To grow our economy, we need:

More businesses, who in turn create more jobs and more supply chain and investment opportunities for other businesses (who then create more work).

To act on two fronts: 1) harness our specialisms, leveraging our expertise to the full to pursue growth and 2) maintain and build stable capacity in the wider economy

Our businesses to drive greater demand for high level skills, providing motivation for residents to up-skill.

Our businesses to offer more opportunities for senior professional jobs

More working age residents, and those residents need jobs and homes to live in.

A housing supply that is available, attractive and affordable for more working age residents.



Smaller business base

Fragile industrial specialisms



Lower demand for high-level skills

Restricted labour market



Smaller working age population



Housing constraint

Imperatives to act

We live, learn and work in a beautiful place that people want to come to visit and invest in. We are surrounded by nature, which influences many positives in our way of life, but brings great responsibility to manage and maintain it for the future. Our rich heritage is infused in our industry and our culture, we are place where people have settled and thrived for centuries and continue to be an open, welcoming community.

However, our communities feel constrained. Moving around the Borough is hard, finding the right home is problematic, health – physical and mental – is a challenge for many. Despite feeling engaged with the natural environment, people increasingly look outside of the Borough and its towns for entertainment, experiences and opportunities.

The imperatives to act to change direction from where we are today are strong. We need to:



Transform our towns in into lively destinations during day and night for residents and tourists



Increase economic participation and activity among all age groups, from young people to older residents



Improve productivity across our sector strengths and retain more economic value within the local community



Manage our natural resources proactively, efficiently and sustainably, increasing our resilience to climate change



Create active, inclusive, connected communities, improving health, wellbeing and economic vitality

Our vision and strategy for 2045



Our vision for 2045

Our vision is founded on the understanding that a vibrant economy encompasses not only economic growth but also the wellbeing of our residents and communities, and the sustainability of our towns, places, and natural environment. To achieve this, we have broken down the vision into five strategic pillars. These will guide our efforts to ensure inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous economic growth for our residents and businesses while ensuring that our beautiful heritage, landscape and natural resources can continue to be responsibly used by our community and tourists.

In 2045 King's Lynn and West Norfolk is a model for sustainable, active and inclusive rural communities, where the benefits of economic growth are shared widely, and natural and cultural heritage is preserved, enhanced and celebrated for future generations.

King's Lynn and West Norfolk will be a vibrant economy, characterised by:



Thriving towns that are destinations for both residents and tourists



Access to education and good work, at all phases of life



Specialised agri-food, engineering, waste & water and visitor economy sectors, with productive jobs and businesses that are a reason to stay in the area, re-locate to it and invest in it



Proactive, efficient and sustainable management of our natural resources



Happy, healthy people living in inclusive communities with access to housing, health services, social and leisure facilities

Thriving towns

We need to transform our towns into lively destinations during day and night for residents and tourists, so that more people live in, work in, enjoy and visit them.

In 2045 our towns will be lively and attractive during both the day and night, offering a strong entertainment and dining scene. More people will live in our towns and will choose to spend more of their leisure time and money within the area. We will attract more tourists who will explore our beautiful coastal *and* countryside areas, rich cultural heritage, and vibrant town centres, supporting a year-round borough-wide visitor economy.

To get here we will focus on:

- Developing modern, safer, more attractive, mixed-use town centres, with vibrant day and night entertainment
- Increasing residential and non-retail workplace presence in town centres
- Improving public transport (more frequent and better-connected), active travel and parking solutions to into town centres and workplaces
- Effectively leverage our cultural and natural assets
- Incentivising a year-round tourism across the borough, not only on the coast

Our indicators to understand progress towards this over the long-term are:

- Increase in housing units in town centres
- Increase in footfall in town centres
- Town centre vacancy rates decrease

We have foundations for success in this from:

- King's Lynn Town Investment Plan
- Hunstanton Neighbourhood Development Plan
- West Norfolk Tourism Development Plan

AGO



In development:

The Place



Multi-use Community Hub

King's Lynn Long Term Plan for Towns - a vision and 3-year investment plan to access funding for safety and security, high streets, heritage, and regeneration, and transport and connectivity in King's Lynn

King's Lynn Cultural and Heritage Strategy – 10-year strategy to bring together our array of creative partners, residents and businesses on the priorities to support the development of Creative Industries in King's Lynn.

Downham Market Town Tourism Plan

Local Plan 2019-2040 – updated strategy to shape and steer new development in West Norfolk

King's Lynn Transport Strategy

King's Lynn and Hunstanton Parking Strategy

Slide 21

AGO

Image to be updated

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Access to education and good work

We need to increase economic participation and activity among all age groups, from young people to older residents, so that we can see increased employment rates across all age groups, better access to high quality jobs, and raised skills and wages.

In 2045 we will be a community where younger people are inspired into local careers and find ample opportunities to start their careers locally and older people can work, or volunteer, for longer if they want to. We will attract mid-career professionals and families to settle and work in our borough. Clear career pathways and targeted high-skilled training will match the needs of local industries, ensuring that residents can access high-quality jobs.

To get here we will focus on:

- Raising young people's aspirations and ensuring access to quality schools, colleges, higher education, work-related training and jobs
- Raising skills levels in the borough, particularly more level 4 skills, ensuring an adequate supply of skilled labour aligned with local needs
- Retaining and attracting incoming young and mid-career professionals and families to work and live in the borough
- Supporting older individuals who want to, to continue working for longer

Our indicators to understand progress towards this over the long-term are:

- Level 4+ skills attainment increases
- Wages and GDHI increases
- High proportion of senior professional employment

We have foundations for success in this from:

- BOOST Programme
- Norfolk and Suffolk LSIP



School of Nursing Studies

*The University Centre:
partnership with Anglia
Ruskin University*



In development:

Strategic Skills Plan (AEB) – will guide Adult Education Budget devolution in Norfolk

West Norfolk 

Productive jobs and businesses

We need to improve productivity across our sector strengths and retain more economic value within the local community, so that we have more jobs and businesses, better and more employment space, and increased productivity across our sector strengths.

In 2045 we have enhanced productivity by capitalising on our strengths in manufacturing, engineering, food production, net zero, leisure & tourism, and by fostering innovation in these sectors created new jobs and grown the business base. We are capturing value from tourism spend, ensuring it benefits local businesses and communities. We have adopted technologies and business processes that are contributing to a more productive, resilient economy.

To get here we will focus on:

- Developing key sectors strengths (agri-food, manufacturing & engineering, water & waste management and visitor economy),
- Fostering entrepreneurship, start-ups, scale-ups and inward investment
- Developing high-quality business premises and industrial sites and enhance destination marketing
- Promoting and enabling the adoption of cutting-edge technologies
- Leveraging connections to key economic hubs, such as the Cambridge corridor
- Encouraging supply chain efficiency and complementarities among sectors
- Supporting expanding international trade and export activities

Our indicators to understand progress towards this over the long-term are:

- Increased employment land and commercial space
- Increased GVA in our growth sectors
- Increased number of high-growth enterprises

We have foundations for success in this from:

- King's Lynn Enterprise Park Site Development Plan 2021-2026

King's Lynn Enterprise Park



King's Lynn Innovation Centre



In development:

Norfolk County Council Economic Strategy – will support economic growth of Norfolk and ensure that all residents, businesses, and places benefit

Further incubator space at King's Lynn Enterprise Park

Creative Hub at St. George's Guildhall for creative industries

Business co-working/hot desking space in the Multi User Community Hub



Managed natural resources

We need to manage our natural resources proactively, efficiently and sustainably, increasing our resilience to climate change, so that we can more efficiently and sustainably use and re-use our natural resources and generate clean energy.

In 2045 proactive, efficient and sustainable natural resource management is protecting and conserving the beautiful natural environment that makes our place. Sustainable business practices to manage natural resources efficiently have been adopted, making our economy more resilient to climate change and extreme events such as coastal erosion, flooding, and drought. Implementing circular economy principles, industrial symbiosis, decarbonisation, and the use of renewable resources is ensuring long-term environmental sustainability and energy security.

To get here we will focus on:

- Supporting interventions aiming to mitigate the impact of climate change on our natural resources
- Supporting businesses to become energy resilient, encouraging circular economy, decarbonisation and the generation / adoption of clean energy
- Ensuring local residents and businesses benefits from national relevant energy generation projects
- Encouraging sustainable and responsible tourism

Our indicators to understand progress towards this over the long-term are:

- Increased investment in natural resource management
- Growth in our water and waste management sector
- Reduced damage levels from floods/drought events

We have foundations for success in this from:

- Norfolk Climate Strategy
- Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme



Ouse Washes

In development:

KLWN Climate Change Strategy 2024-2028 – alongside an action plan, will set out our approach to tackling climate change

Local Nature Recovery Strategy - will map the existing natural environment and identify opportunities for delivering nature recovery through habitat restoration, creation and expansion.

Norfolk LEAR – Local Energy Asset Report (to be replaced by the Norfolk Energy Plan)

Healthy, inclusive communities

We need to create active, inclusive, connected communities, improving health, wellbeing and economic vitality, so we can have reduced rural isolation and reduced deprivation at local level.

In 2045 our increased housing supply in towns is enabling residents to locate and stay in the area, where they have access to comprehensive health and wellbeing facilities. Isolation in rural areas has improved through improved digital and transport connectivity, ensuring that all residents can participate fully in economic and community life. Residents lead active lives, with access to recreational and leisure facilities, promoting a healthier lifestyle for all.

To get here we will focus on:

- Enabling active and healthier communities
- Ensuring that all residents can access education, employment, leisure opportunities and health services, regardless of their age, location, background or disabilities
- Removing mental health barriers to work and reduce sickness absences among young people
- Reducing rural isolation

Our indicators to understand progress towards this over the long-term are:

- Longer healthy life expectancy in all areas of the borough
- Increased number of GPs/service providers per population
- Improvements in neighbourhood-level health indicators
- Increased mix of housing types
- Reduced house price to workplace-based earnings ratio

We have foundations for success in this from:

- King's Lynn and West Norfolk Health & Wellbeing Partnership Strategy
- King's Lynn Transport Strategy
- Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2022
- Transport East Transport Strategy
- King's Lynn Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan



Sustainable transport and regeneration scheme (STARS)

In development:



Nar Ouse Active Travel Hub

Housing Needs Assessment – will update previous assessments of the need for different types and tenures of housing.

Alive West Norfolk Capital Investment Strategy – will set out the investment required in our borough's leisure facilities

Marmot Programme - Marmot principles in development for improving health equity across the borough

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy – will set out the issues the borough faces locally and what it is doing to prevent homelessness.

Our vision and strategic priorities

In 2045 King's Lynn and West Norfolk is a model for sustainable, active and inclusive rural communities, where the benefits of economic growth are shared widely, and natural and cultural heritage is preserved, enhanced and celebrated for future generations.

VISION


OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

OUTCOMES



Thriving towns




Access to education and good work



Productive jobs and businesses



Managed natural resources



Healthy, inclusive communities

Transforming our towns into lively destinations during day and night for residents and tourists

Increasing economic participation and activity among all age groups, from young people to older residents

Improving productivity across our sector strengths and retaining more economic value within the local community

Manage our natural resources proactively, efficiently and sustainably, increasing our resilience to climate change

Creating active, inclusive, connected communities, improving health, wellbeing and economic vitality

We will achieve our vision and deliver against our objectives by seeking investment and using our assets and resources to:

- Develop modern, safer, more attractive, mixed-use town centres, with vibrant day and night entertainment
- Increase residential and wider (non-retail) workplace presence in town centres
- Improve public transport, active travel and parking solutions
- Effectively leverage our cultural and natural assets for all to experience
- Incentivise a year-round tourism across the borough, not only on the coast

- Raise young people's aspirations and ensure access to quality schools, colleges, higher education, work-related training and jobs
- Raise skills levels in the borough, particularly more level 4 skills, ensuring an adequate supply of skilled labour aligned with local needs
- Retain and attract incoming young and mid-career professionals and families to work and live in the borough
- Support older individuals who want to, to continue working for longer

- Grow from our key sectors strengths
- Foster entrepreneurship, start-ups, scale-ups and inward investment
- Develop high-quality business premises and industrial sites and enhance destination marketing
- Promote and enable the adoption of cutting-edge technologies
- Leverage connections to key economic hubs, such as the Cambridge corridor
- Encourage supply chain efficiency and complementarities among sectors
- Supporting expanding international trade and export activities
- Leverage exporting opportunities and inward investment via our Hanse business network

- Support interventions aiming to mitigate the impact of climate change on our natural resources
- Support businesses to become energy resilient, encouraging circular economy, decarbonisation and the generation / adoption of clean energy
- Ensure local residents and businesses benefits from national relevant energy generation projects
- Encourage sustainable and responsible tourism

- Create active and healthier communities
- Ensure that all residents can access education, employment, leisure opportunities and health services, regardless of their age, location, background or disabilities
- Remove mental health barriers to work and reduce sickness absences among young people
- Reduce rural isolation

More people live in, work in, enjoy and visit our towns

Increased employment rate across all age groups, better access to high quality jobs, and raised skills and wages

More jobs and businesses, better and more employment space, increased productivity across our sector strengths

More efficient and sustainable use and re-use of our natural resources and clean energy generation

Improved health, wellbeing and economic vitality, reduced rural isolation and deprivation at local level

How we will act

Our vision and strategy for King's Lynn and West Norfolk are built upon the insights and aspirations of a diverse range of stakeholders, including community organisations, educational and training institutions, government and environmental agencies, businesses, and residents.

Through collaborative effort, the council team has shaped a vision and priorities that reflect our current state and our ambitions for 2045. But this strategy is not just for the Council; it belongs to the entire community and it is through our combined efforts that these objectives will be achieved.

As we move forward, the Council will lead the call to action, inviting all partners, residents, businesses, and community groups, to work together, leveraging our unique strengths and assets to create a thriving future for King's Lynn and West Norfolk. This strategy serves as the anchor and guiding reference for our collective actions over the next 20 years.

Together, we will design and implement a coordinated action plan aimed at enhancing economic prosperity and improving the quality of life for all.

An investment plan will follow, outlining the resources needed to realise our vision and priorities, along with a plan for regular monitoring and evaluation against our key metrics.

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**

