



WildAnglia

Nature is our business



WildAnglia
Manifesto
Part 2

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Failed sea defences at Happisburgh - Richard Powell

About the manifesto

Wild Anglia's manifesto is in two parts.

Part one covers our aims and objectives, our culture and ways of working, and has been designed as a separate document for easy reference.

Part two has more depth, and provides information and evidence to support Wild Anglia's four main aims.

Both parts are available at www.wildanglia.org



What has nature ever done for us?

Tony Juniper, writer, environmentalist, campaigner

The simple answer is a great deal. Natural systems underpin much our economic activity and are of vital and direct importance to several key economic sectors, including agriculture and tourism. Nature supports people's well-being and enriches the places where all we live, work and relax. Here in the East of England, like everywhere else, nature is of fundamental importance for maintaining our wealth and health.

But nature has been in decline, as witness the disappearance of many wild species and the fragmentation and loss of many natural habitats. There are many reasons for this. They span business sectors, different tiers of government and work on multiple timescales. This is why partnerships are an essential prerequisite for effective efforts to reverse nature's decline. No single organisation or business sector can achieve what is needed, and neither can any particular law, policy or conservation group.

The launch of Wild Anglia offers new opportunities to forge exactly the kinds of collaborations necessary for rebuilding the natural systems and services that we all rely upon. Driven by its vision of how nature can improve the lives of everyone, while sustaining the economy, I am sure its work will create a legacy that we will all be very proud of.



Foxley Wood NNR - Haldree Bishop



A personal view: why nature reserves are not enough

Heidi Thompson
Biodiversity and Countryside Manager,
Norfolk County Council

In 2010, the Government asked one of the most honest, heartfelt questions ever asked by a UK Government about the environment: “Where has it all gone wrong?”

“We’ve spent millions of pounds, we’ve designated hundreds of nature reserves, we’ve passed numerous acts of parliament, we’ve created special agencies to look after the natural world, and yet wildlife continues to decline across the country.” They commissioned Sir John Lawton to find out, and his report pulled no punches.

Nature reserves have been a good start he said, but there are too few of them. The ones we have are too small, and are mostly in a poor condition. They are too isolated from each other, and wildlife finds it difficult or impossible to cross the gaps in between.

I believe nature reserves were a valiant and understandable response to the rapid loss of species and habitats, mostly during the 1970s and 80s. I agree with Sir John when he says that said we need to start thinking on a ‘landscape scale’ - joining-up these jewels in the crown of wildlife conservation.

Brendan Joyce of Norfolk Wildlife Trust says, “Nature reserves should not be seen as museum pieces preserving some past vestiges of a healthier environment. They are the spawning ground of a new era of rebuilding our damaged ecosystems, for the benefit of the wildlife that clings on to a fragile existence between them.”

The Natural Environment White Paper that followed in 2012 set out the ambition for achieving ‘more, bigger, better, and joined-up’ nature, and a mechanism to form new Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs), of which Wild Anglia is one.

I remember being a child on a long car journey and marvelling at the squashed insects coating the windscreen of my parents’ car. That doesn’t happen any more. I worry that there appear to be fewer frogs in my pond than there used to be. I don’t like the fact that I now comment when I see a skylark or a sparrow, when before they were too numerous to be worth mentioning. Many people have a general sense that things are just not as good as they used to be. Unfortunately, the science supports this and most species have declined in the past 50 years - some catastrophically and some even to extinction.

The fact is that nature reserves on their own just aren’t enough.

“Nature reserves should not be seen as museum pieces preserving some past vestiges of a healthier environment.”

Brendan Joyce, Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Wild Anglia and the economy

Aim 1 Economic growth: nature will make a full contribution to the success of the economy

- We will promote nature as a core element of economic growth strategies and natural resources as viable assets.
- We will develop the Wild Anglia brand so that our iconic landscapes will receive recognition and investment and so that local businesses can benefit.
- We will seek new and significant investment in nature at all levels; natural capital will be considered a bank worthy of investment.
- We will champion inspirational thinking to look at the ‘big picture’ in which the environment, economy and society are considered together.
- We will do things differently and in a more integrated way than before.



Timney Marshes and Felixstowe - Steve Aylward

“ I welcome the announcement of Wild Anglia. I see it as a key partner in helping New Anglia champion the green economy. ”

Andy Wood, Chairman, New Anglia LEP and CEO, Adnams

Delivering the green economy

Wild Anglia will work with New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to deliver key actions for the natural environment.

In 2012, New Anglia LEP wrote in its trailblazing Green Economy Pathfinder manifesto:

“The Norfolk and Suffolk economy will celebrate and support those businesses that are actively using, restoring and conserving nature as part of their business model, demonstrating that nature is a fundament of business and is fully integrated into the company’s business operation.”

Wild Anglia will work with New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to deliver key actions for the natural environment.

The key actions for the natural environment in the *Green Economy Pathfinder manifesto* are as follows:

- 1** The LEP and Wild Anglia will join forces and conduct an audit of baseline biodiversity and natural capital.
- 2** The LEP commits to working with Wild Anglia to lead the response to the World Bank’s report *Green Growth - The Pathway to Sustainable Development*, which calls for urgent steps to protect natural capital and place a monetary value on natural ecosystems.
- 3** The LEP will facilitate and support investment in our natural capital’s equivalent to ‘triple A rating’ by optimising funding to support the creation of wild spaces, which will act as investment enhancement and compensation for habitat loss over the next decade. The LEP aims to help create 1,000 hectares of wild spaces by 2020.
- 4** The LEP will actively support the successful delivery of the Norfolk Biodiversity Offsetting pilot project and also promote it to businesses.

5 The LEP will work closely with Wild Anglia and use Defra’s (awaited) best practice guide on Payment for Ecosystem Services to encourage funders and users to come together and set up three Payment for Ecosystem Services projects.

6 As a region on the front line of climate change, the LEP commits to being the test-bed for innovative solutions that respond to climate change challenges. By 2015, it will initiate projects in three key areas: natural flood defence systems, creative building design, and the effect of saline incursion into high-production agricultural areas.

7 To protect and future-proof the most important elements of natural capital, the LEP will lead the debate, alongside key organisations in the region. It will commit to drive forward thinking on the management of natural capital and its contribution to the green economy.

An initial project will review how the natural capital of the Broads can contribute to renewable energy for the benefit of the Broads National Park and the surrounding area.

8 The LEP commits to working with relevant organisations to identify and support natural ways to increase water storage capacity. This includes working with agricultural and community organisations to create solutions at both a micro and macro level.

“The Green Economy Pathfinder Manifesto put us on the map of global green business and I am looking forward to working with Wild Anglia to deliver our ambitious agenda.”

Mark Pendlington, Chairman,
Green Economy Pathfinder and
Group Director, Anglian Water
Group

Nature is an asset to the economy

Wild Anglia seeks a full integration of business and environment, which will result in investment in our 'natural capital'.

Nature is business

Nature is already an established part of our economy in Norfolk and Suffolk. Millions of pounds are spent in Norfolk and Suffolk by people attracted by a day out in nature. Nature stimulates local economic activity, attracts investment and creates jobs.

Woodland worth

The benefits and services provided by the East of England's woodlands are worth more than £1 billion per year (Forestry Commission Woodland Wealth appraisal update, 2010). Norfolk and Suffolk has 90,000 hectares of woodland (a 27% increase since 1980) but over 41,000 hectares - almost half - is not actively managed (Forestry Commission, *pers comm*). Wild Anglia will support the new Norfolk and Suffolk Woodland Working Group and work with the Forestry Commission to ensure that economic, social and environmental benefits are realised from managing these assets, and to create more woodland in places where that brings benefits.



Nature reserves

The RSPB calculated the economic impact of three reserves in the Wild Anglia area in 2009 (*Natural Foundations: Conservation and Local Employment in the UK, 2011*).

RSPB reserves contribute to the local economy

Lakenheath Fen in west Suffolk

5 jobs, 31,000 visitors, **£810,000** spent in the area

Titchwell on the north Norfolk coast

12 jobs, 74,000 visitors, **£10.4 million** spent locally

Minsmere on the Suffolk coast

103 jobs, 80,000 visitors, **£8 million** spent in the area

Nature provides us with free 'goods and services'

An example from the coast

Saltmarsh is an important component of our most cherished landscapes and provides fish spawning grounds, which benefit the fishing industry and our marine biodiversity.

A sea wall constructed behind an 80 metre buffer of saltmarsh is 10 times cheaper to build and up to 50 times cheaper to maintain than one with no saltmarsh to protect it. Saltmarsh also absorbs carbon at a rate 100 times greater than tropical rainforests, and so helps to regulate our climate. Are we investing in saltmarsh?

Nature is our Unique Selling Point

Premium positioning

Nature is the main draw of the visitor industry in Norfolk and Suffolk, but the brand of Norfolk and Suffolk's natural environment has value beyond the tourism sector.

Our brand will play a key role in premium positioning for business marketing and corporate social responsibility and will be closely associated with other strong and evolving green economy brands.

“Our brand will further establish the area's iconic basis from both a national and international perspective, increase investment in nature and ensure the future of our 'natural capital' asset.”

Iain Dunnett, Operations Manager, New Anglia LEP



Wild Anglia will support businesses

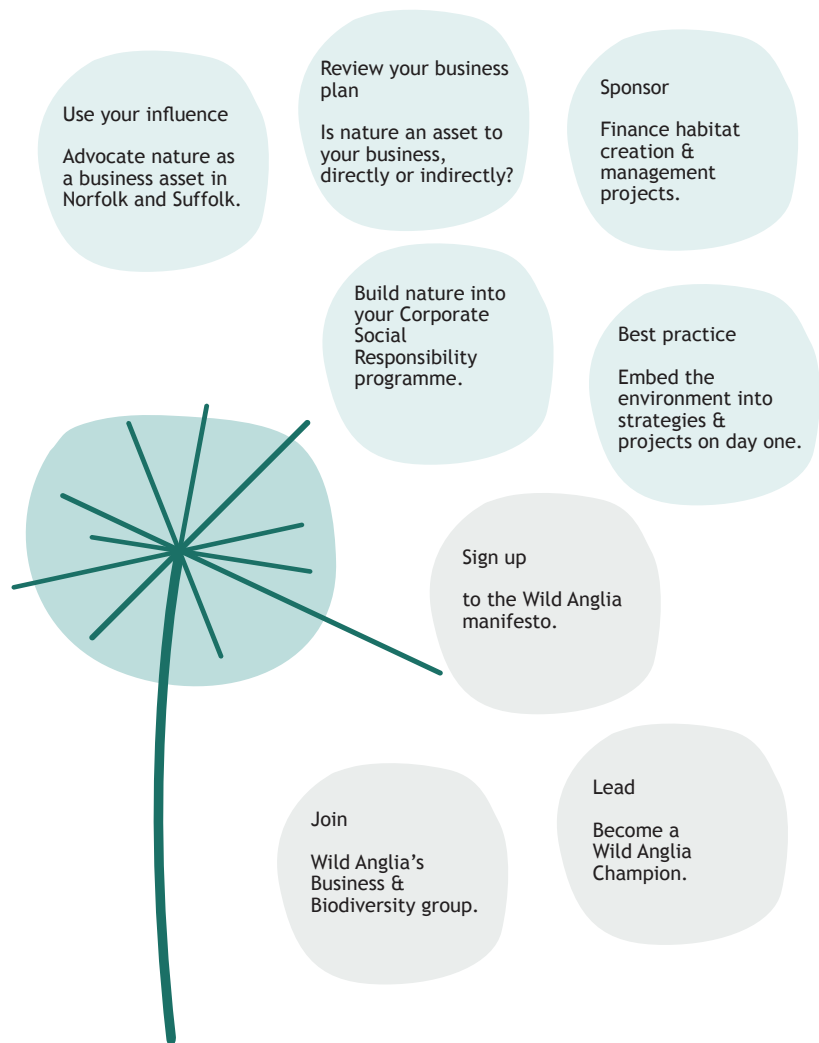
No longer satisfied with 'either-or', there is a growing desire to find effective business solutions that also benefit the natural environment at no extra cost.

Are you a business owner, manager or leader?

Every business can contribute to investing in natural capital. You can start by looking at what natural assets you use and rely on, how much these cost your business and if they feature in your business plan. Then look outside and consider your relationship with your local environment, county and your part of England.

Some companies use natural resources heavily (e.g. brewing, farming, tourism) some benefit from excellent employee retention by being located in a place where people like to live or readily move to, many own land assets or are sited in employment parks or areas that can be made to contribute not detract from the sum total of our natural resource.

However small, businesses benefit from being part of a thriving economic community, and our natural capital underpins this to a considerable extent in our two counties.



Visit www.wildanglia.org

Wild Anglia and growth strategies

A Wild Anglia-New Anglia consortium, supported by local authorities, is developing and testing a toolkit designed for LEPs and local authorities to use as they develop their growth strategies.

This Local Economic Development and Environment toolkit (LEDE) has been created by Natural England/ Defra and will be rolled out across the country to help decision-makers take account of the natural environment in growth strategies. It will also facilitate closer working between LNPs and LEPs.

Wild Anglia will work with New Anglia LEP to contribute to the Growth Plan and Investment Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk.



A strong relationship with nature

Our economic activity has close links with and clear impacts on Norfolk and Suffolk's natural environment, landscape and resources - here are three examples:

Farming

Wild Anglia recognises the importance of the food, agriculture and land-based industries to the rural economy. Most of the opportunities to improve the connectivity of natural areas lie within privately owned or farmed land. We will seek a mature dialogue on the contribution of agriculture to long-term investment in nature.

The land management across two-thirds of Norfolk and large areas of Suffolk influences the water quality and quantity in our rivers and in UK's premier wetland The Broads National Park. A new Broadland Catchment Approach is linking the land and water environments to find solutions with farming businesses and other sectors that want a better water environment.

Annual payments through agri-environment agreements in Suffolk are currently about £9m, which fund farming businesses to help them farm in an environmentally beneficial way. This sum is expected to reduce significantly in coming years; new ways to enable biodiversity to thrive within farmland are needed now.



Energy and the green economy

The East of England is at the centre of new investment in electricity infrastructure, including Sizewell C, 20,000MW of offshore wind energy as well as oil and gas. With solar farms, onshore wind turbines and local biomass systems, the Wild Anglia area hosts a concentration of activity and opportunities for lasting relationships with this growing sector.



Tourism

Our landscapes attract local, national and international visitors and in Suffolk alone underpin a tourist industry worth £1.6 billion to the local economy annually, equivalent to 11% of the county's GDP.

Many small businesses benefit from their connections with our tourist destinations. Increasingly, there are opportunities for investment in Wild Anglia's natural beauty.



On the Broads - Heidi Thompson

Kelling Heath Holiday Park - nature is an outstanding asset to this business

Kelling Heath Holiday Park is set among 100 hectares of woodland and rare open heathland close to the North Norfolk coast. It is also within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Our guests enjoy walking, cycling, following guided trails and our 'Acorn Events' that are set in and linked to our natural environment and managed by our dedicated professional Countryside Events Co-ordinator.

Each year our 34,000 guests spend over 12,000 hours enjoying these events and learning about the unique environment.

We also work with the Kelling Trustees on a nearby Site of Special Scientific Interest. This pro bono work has helped the silver-studded blue butterfly become re-established on our doorstep.

Why do we do all this? We certainly sleep better at night with a nice warm feeling inside that we are sustaining our habitats and educating our guests. But the real reason is that Kelling Heath has become a highly desirable tourism destination all year round, and is very profitable.



Cycling by the conservation ponds - Blue Sky Leisure

Wild Anglia and development

Aim 2 Exemplary 'green infrastructure': insisting on the best projects for people, nature and economy

- We will help Norfolk and Suffolk build a future to be proud of by including the modern needs of people and nature into housing and infrastructure projects - within, beyond and between the footprints of individual projects.
- We will encourage our counties to adopt the best technologies, innovation and design so they become renowned for good practice and excellent outcomes. We will work with businesses to deliver top quality initiatives.
- We will help decision-makers ensure that all development and infrastructure projects add value to our natural environment, providing people with better products and services for the long term.
- We will work to maximise the potential of developer contributions through the (awaited) 'offsetting' mechanism, and we will work as the local branch for Norfolk and Suffolk with bodies such as the Environment Bank.

Good quality and good value

We all desire a good standard of living, most of us rely on cars or buses to get around, and we all need food, clean water, housing and jobs. To service these needs of a growing population, it will be necessary to build housing, offices, waste facilities, transport links, schools and shops. The districts' core strategies indicate that Norfolk and Suffolk will need to find space for around 75,000 and 60,000 new homes respectively up to 2031.

Our natural environment is vital to our quality of life. Building futures we can be proud of means building nature into development projects right from the start, at project inception.

As with other development, new housing can impact on the environment in a number of ways, including carbon emissions, land take, water usage, services and utilities, disturbance to sensitive wildlife, and flooding.

The evidence is mounting that development projects *can* be delivered in a way that is beneficial for nature. Imagination and brave leadership are required, and the benefits will be seen for many lifetimes.

Wild Anglia will challenge the assumption that incorporating environment measures will always reduce profits, and increase costs. We believe it is important to change any perception that nature 'gets in the way' and that growth always comes first.

It can be done. The best housing developments invest in high quality green spaces for people,

wildlife and flood control. They incorporate wide, cycle-friendly routes that are also commuting corridors for bats and birds. New orchards or woodlands planted as sound or sight barriers also provide spaces for wildlife to thrive and for residents to enjoy.

Good developers know that investing in a good environment can mean greater returns, better house sales and reduced long-term costs.

The best projects seek to protect and enhance natural features, link them to the wider landscape, involve the local community and ensure that the benefits will be safeguarded for the long-term.

The best infrastructure projects take early regard of statutory protected wildlife areas but also use local records to discover the impact on the rest of the countryside: the 'ordinary' wildlife that represents most of the living part of the landscape.

The best projects acknowledge that their impact will be felt by people and wildlife far

beyond the project's immediate footprint, and they make best use of advice and evidence at the initial planning stages. They ensure that they deliver a net *gain* in biodiversity - because they can and because they seek quality and value.

Time wasted

There is often an adversarial style of engagement between environment and development, which is costly, time wasting and does not generate the best outcomes for the project or the taxpayer.

Published in 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) should be a catalyst for positive gain for nature alongside development. But there is inertia in this area, and the 'presumption for development' rhetoric is obscuring genuine opportunities. We need to support our planning authorities to define what sustainable development means for their area, and point developers to how their schemes can add greater value.

Driving 'green infrastructure' in the Norwich area

The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) area is currently planning for the building of 37,000 new homes over the next 20 years. This unprecedented scale of development takes careful planning for transport, schools, water, waste requirements, etc.

For the first time, a co-ordinated approach is being taken across three local authority areas to integrate the *green* aspects of infrastructure in a similarly strategic way. Joining-up proposed green space and cycleways to existing parks, green spaces and nature reserves can enhance their overall value and create economies of scale for sustainable management.



Investing in nature

Harnessing some of the wealth created by growth to radically improve the nature of Norfolk and Suffolk is a priority.

It is not always possible or desirable to mitigate for loss of habitat on the same site, but mechanisms are being developed and tested to facilitate adding value elsewhere, so that the wider ecosystem can function better.

Money from development projects will be used to properly compensate for any harm that they cause, and to re-stitch and repair the fabric of the Wild Anglia countryside. However, nature needs a strong voice to compete with social infrastructure projects for the funds.

Agreements under section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act are current mechanisms that place planning obligations on the developer as part of a planning approval. These measures help alleviate the impact of the development on local nature, where an increase in population and demands for recreation may have adverse impacts on local wildlife sites for example.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new levy. At this time, local authorities can choose to charge CIL on new developments in their area. The money can be used to fund infrastructure and long-term maintenance that the council, local community and neighbourhoods want. This can include 'green infrastructure', such as new habitats, new recreational areas and visitor facilities, as well as the provision of revenue funding to enable existing facilities to cope with increased demand.

Biodiversity offsets are conservation activities designed to deliver biodiversity benefits in compensation for losses due to development. A number of pilot areas will run until 2014 to test this new scheme: the area around Norwich is one of these. Offsetting ascribes a value to all areas of habitat damaged by development and allows mitigation proportional to the quality of the habitat lost, and on a different site if that is more appropriate. It is still a last resort mechanism and does not encourage habitat 'sale' or loss.



Photo - Gilbert Addison



Walking Sudbury common lands - Haidee Bishop

Wild Anglia and the environment

Aim 3 Strengthening nature: creating, improving and investing in the natural environment

- We will create new wild spaces with many benefits including: increasing biodiversity; alleviating flood risk and protecting assets eg drinking water; providing quality spaces for leisure and recreation that will benefit our health and well-being and increase our tourism offer. We will safeguard benefits for future generations by ensuring the appropriate measures and resources are in place for long-term management.
- We will champion biodiversity, which describes the richness and quality of nature. We will support measures that connect natural areas, so making nature stronger and more adaptable to its many pressures.
- We will seek to put funding of the natural environment on a better, more sustained footing.
- We will inspire debate and thinking that will enable new long-term projects on adaptation to coastal changes, flood resilience and flood defence to be economically, socially and environmentally sound.

Wild Anglia's definition of nature includes the landscapes we find so familiar, the habitats and rich diversity of wildlife, the geology and the soils. Our long coastline helps define our two counties. Nature includes the land, the sea and the tidal areas that connect them, and we believe nature must include people too.

We do have a problem

The signs may not be obvious to most of us in our daily lives, but nature is weakening and the ability of our natural environment to serve us is under threat.

Our natural areas are becoming increasingly small and disparate having been broken up by roads, developments and by modern farming practices over the decades. But to function properly as an integrated system, nature needs to be well-connected.

Strengthening nature

Strengthening nature means paying attention to it at every scale. At the small end of the scale, we need healthy populations of, for example, ash trees, dormice, dragonflies and little terns. At the landscape scale, we need large areas of, for example, wave-buffering saltmarsh and water-retaining floodplains to protect our homes, businesses and farmland. And we need our iconic landscapes to prevail and continue to attract paying visitors to our beautiful counties. Each animal, plant and area of land has a role in making this complex system work - and work for people too.

Strengthening nature can mean different things to different people.

To the economist, it is about investing in our natural capital - an asset that is so important to our jobs, health and prosperity in Norfolk and Suffolk.

To the ecologist, it means establishing new habitats to strengthen the resilience of species populations so they can cope with the pressures of development and climate change.

To the agency or council with responsibility for delivering services to taxpayers, it means ensuring that the natural environment will continue to clean our air, protect us from flooding, reduce stress and health costs, provide a water supply and provide many other services.

To the resident, it might mean simply making sure that in 20 years time there are still beautiful places to visit and enjoy - places outdoors in nature where we can be with friends and family, or in solitude.

Pressures increasing

Unfortunately, as nature has become weaker, the pressures on it have been escalating.

The effects of climate change are becoming more apparent. As the conditions around them change, habitats and species have always had to move physically to have a future. We must allow for enough space and natural habitat in Norfolk and Suffolk for this to happen.

We can easily draw up an alarming list of threats to nature: the erosion of our soft low cliffs; the extremes of temperature and rainfall witnessed in a changing climate; increases in non-native plant and animal species; diseases signalling the need for better 'bio security'; declining populations of our pollinating insects; summer droughts and winter floods prompting the need for storage and management of our precious water resources; pressures on our marine environment; changes in the subsidy and support systems for farm conservation schemes; the biological and chemical health of our rivers ...

The push for economic growth and building new houses are daily headlines, but the benefits of investing in our natural environment lie beyond current strategies and political cycles.



Shingle Street - Halden Bishop

Spectacular declines

Declining nature is not a new story, but we might take renewed interest when we realise there have been spectacular declines on our doorstep.

For example, lowland heathland is one of the *most important* wildlife habitats in the UK yet over 80% of this habitat has been destroyed since 1939. This is a globally rare and threatened habitat. The UK has 20% of the total World resource of lowland heath and more than 5% of that is in the ‘Sandlings’ area on the Suffolk coast.

A recent cutting-edge research project by the University of East Anglia found more than 2,000 species listed as a priority for conservation in ‘the Brecks’, an area of heath and forest straddling the Norfolk/Suffolk border. This is more than was previously realised. That represents 28% of the UK’s rarest species, which is quite remarkable for an area covering just 0.4% of the UK’s land.

New wild areas

New Anglia LEP’s *Green Economy Pathfinder manifesto* commits to establishing 1,000 hectares of new wild areas. Wild Anglia will work to achieve this alongside New Anglia.

Exciting opportunities

Projects to deliver wildlife and habitats have become more inclusive, and are extending beyond the nature reserve fence. The RSPB’s Futurescapes and the Wildlife Trusts’ Living Landscapes programmes are two examples, along with the many landowners who are ‘greening’ their estates and generating additional incomes from accommodation and wood fuel.

New mechanisms for safeguarding land and its long-term benefits are being developed by The Land Trust, which is able to hold and manage land in trust, so supporting local partnerships in delivery and providing safeguards from risk and liability.

New initiatives are being developed, for example monitoring habitats from space, ‘citizen science’ initiatives to involve communities in recording wildlife, and smart-technology using mobile phones.

Wild Anglia will promote and celebrate truly connecting, exemplar schemes by supporting projects that invest in nature, and helping to find security of funding from all possible sources.



Sandlings heath - Steve Aylward

Fens for the future

Wild Anglia has readily endorsed A strategic plan for fenland produced in 2012 by the Fens for the Future consortium. The strategy takes a view of existing and potential habitats as they relate to water across the vast fenland area, a part of which is in Norfolk and Suffolk. Wild Anglia sees this as a ready framework for partners, including LEPs and Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) to use in delivering integrated projects to benefit the economy, community and biodiversity of fenland.



Lakenheath Fen - Nick Ford, creative commons

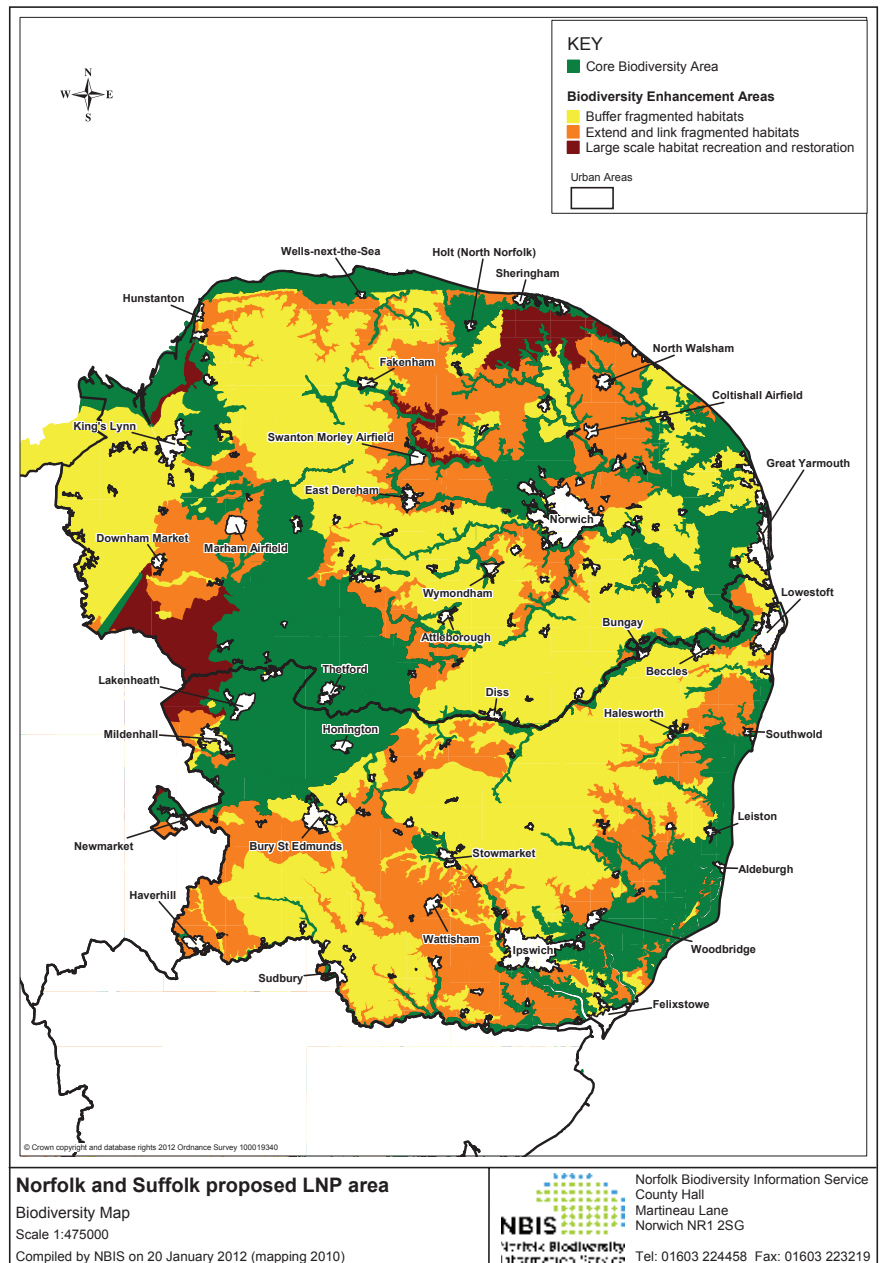
Fragmented nature

In Norfolk and Suffolk, we are fortunate that we have not 'sold the crown jewels' and still have some superb areas for wildlife.

Most of these 'jewels' are in the green areas of the map below, which shows our core biodiversity areas. But even so, much of the land in the green areas is commercial farmland and not high quality habitat.

These special areas rich in wildlife do not look after themselves. For example, the Broads Authority takes the lead with strategies and practical management on the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads, which appear on the map as feathery green fronds stretching from Great Yarmouth to the north, west and south.

There is work to do: work to improve the green areas and to find ways to bridge the yellow gaps to connect our natural environment with successful measures that are viable for the local economy, and secured for the future.



A Living Landscape

Suffolk Wildlife Trust has a vision for a Suffolk Broads Living Landscape running through the Waveney Valley from Lowestoft to Beccles reconnecting the wildlife sites and creating a more robust (eco)system which is better able to respond to change.

The once fragmented small marshes and fen meadows at Carlton & Oulton Marshes have been linked together into a single, more sustainable wetland. Now the largest block of wetland habitat within the Suffolk Broads, it extends for one mile from north to south.

Standing on the river wall, the overwhelming sense is that this is, once again, a wetland landscape. In the winter hundreds of wigeon and pink-footed geese use the new wetland scrapes and in spring you can hear grasshopper and Cetti's warbler in the reed and willow carr. Shallow ponds dug into the peat are already of national importance for their abundance of invertebrate life.

A Living Landscape works for people too. On the doorstep of Lowestoft, Suffolk's second largest town, the reserve is free to visit and enjoy. It is an inspiring place, and getting better.



Carlton marshes - Steve Aylward

Wild Anglia, people and health

Aim 4 Healthy, happy society: making the most of nature's capacity to improve lives

- Nature will contribute fully to health strategies.
- We will help to connect communities to nature so people can enjoy the outdoors in places full of wildlife, fresh air and inspiration, close to where they live.
- We will work with health organisations to enable natural capital to deliver health and well-being.

The nature subsidy

Every day, nature fulfils an important role in treating illness and encouraging wellness. Our public health costs are quietly subsidised by nature.

Sir John Lawton's health check on nature in 2010 found it in need of urgent attention, and a large measure of stitching together, but this prescription came with no extra funding.

Wild Anglia will encourage our Health and Well-being Boards to ensure that nature contributes fully to health strategies, and also that it benefits from more investment.

Wild Anglia will help the health sector support its nature asset, while helping to deliver public health goals. Opportunities range from advocacy in overarching strategies to partnership projects, for example, investing in the management and promotion of public access paths and trails; enabling better and joined-up quality green space, paths and cycle-ways for people and nature in towns and rural communities.

In 2012, Natural England produced evidence to show that providing green space is a cost-effective method of benefiting the mental and

physical health of everyone, particularly the least well-off.

"Improving the environment in which people live can make healthy lifestyles easier. When the immediate environment is unattractive, it is difficult to make physical activity and contact with nature part of everyday life. Unsafe or hostile urban areas that lack green spaces and are dominated by traffic can discourage activity. Lower socioeconomic groups and those living in the more deprived areas experience the greatest environmental burdens." *Healthy Lives, Healthy People* (2010)

The University of Glasgow revealed that regular exercise, such as walking, running and cycling, in a natural environment may cut by half the risk of suffering from poor mental health. Lead researcher Professor Richard Mitchell of the Centre for Research on Environment, Society and Health, said, "Woodlands and parks seemed to have the greatest effect, so the message to doctors, planners and policy-makers is that these places need protecting and promoting."

Projects, such as 'green gyms' run by charities like The Conservation Volunteers, involve practical, physical conservation tasks outside in the countryside. They inspire a lifelong interest

“At the Land Trust, we believe that ‘communities’ that feel good about their environment very often feel better about themselves, thus helping create a greater sense of well-being in which a more positive approach to wider social and economic activities can take place.”

Gareth Price, The Land Trust

in nature, while delivering huge mental, physical and social benefits to their participants.

In June 2011, the Natural Environment White Paper, *The Natural Choice*, encouraged the health sector to 'improve public health by connecting people with nature'. The White

Paper went on to state that the Directors of Public Health are ideally placed to influence the joining-up of local services such as rights of way, countryside access and green space management. This approach would dramatically improve public health by connecting people with nature.

Natural Fit, research

Physical inactivity has serious effects on human health, which cost the Norfolk and Suffolk economy hundreds of millions each year.

Research commissioned by the RSPB underlines the strong links between good physical health, good mental health and the natural environment that we strive to protect.

Outdoor activities, particularly walking, offer a cheap and accessible route to better health for all, and address many of today's pressing public health issues. The continued use of green space for physical activity is strongly linked to the quality of the landscape - in terms of beauty, diversity and contact with nature.

Over the next generation, it is likely that Norfolk and Suffolk will need thousands of new homes and associated development. Where communities need regeneration, natural green space and an investment in the environment can lead to more sustainable development and a better urban quality of life. A healthy natural environment offers many benefits - such as creating socially-inclusive places, reducing crime, encouraging businesses to invest in an area and reducing NHS costs, as well as helping wildlife.

“ My own prescription for health is less paperwork and more running barefoot through the grass. ”

Leslie Grimutter



Norfolk 'Health, Heritage and Biodiversity Walks' project

Walking is one of the easiest ways to maintain good health, but for a proportion of the population the countryside can be a daunting prospect. Norfolk County Council's 'Health, Heritage and Biodiversity Walks' project has created 150 short circular walks, carefully selected to help people enjoy Norfolk's countryside. The project created a series of booklets that were attractive and user-friendly, and which have proved an invaluable tool for health trainers.

Walks in and around Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn, Fakenham and Wells were developed with funding from a European North Sea Region (Interreg IVB) Programme called 'Coast Alive'.

Different themes (families; mental health; small business; transport) were evaluated for each area and shared with our European partners (www.coast-alive.eu).

Vicky Mitchell, Kings Lynn health trainer co-ordinator said, "Health trainers support and motivate their clients to lead healthier lives. The 'Coast Alive' books have been great tools for health trainers to use to encourage their clients to become more active. Walking is a free activity that is extremely beneficial for a number of reasons. As many of the walks are local to King's Lynn, it means clients without transport are still able to access these walks and learn more about their local area."

Saving Suffolk

Inactivity alone costs the NHS in Suffolk over £10m a year on treatment of associated illnesses.

There is good evidence of reductions in levels of heart disease, obesity and depression where people live close to green spaces. This effect is much stronger in the most disadvantaged communities. The effect is to reduce health inequalities between the rich and poor. However, nearly 33% of households in Suffolk do not have access to natural green space of an appropriate standard.

Providing easy access to natural green space is one of the most cost effective health initiatives we can make.





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At the start of this manifesto, we said that there needs to be a change in how nature is perceived, by people, by business and by the environment sector too. Wild Anglia's mission is to start to make this happen, using whatever languages or tools are at our disposal, and perhaps inventing some new ones.

We're convinced that nature is everyone's business; this manifesto is for you.

If you have been inspired to find out more or help Wild Anglia's work, please visit the Wild Anglia website. We look forward to hearing from you.

Wild Anglia

www.wildanglia.org