

**EASTSUFFOLK**  
COUNCIL

# Visitor Economy Strategy 2022 – 2027



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
European Regional Development Fund



**HM Government**

## 1. FOREWORD

**I am delighted to present the new East Suffolk Visitor Economy Strategy (2022 – 2027).**

Tourism and the visitor economy is incredibly important to the vitality and strength of East Suffolk and is a key element of our Economic Strategy. In 2019 the value of the visitor economy in East Suffolk was just under £700m<sup>1</sup> and supported around, 11,000 FTE jobs, accounting for 15% of employment in the district. Overall, there was an estimated visitor spend of £525m within the district in 2019.

The value of East Suffolk's visitor economy is higher than any other district in Suffolk and plays a major role in attracting new and returning visitors to the whole county. East Suffolk is also home to some of the most well-known visitor destinations in the country. The vibrancy of the sector, and the places we know and love, is a key ingredient in what makes East Suffolk special; it is often why many people not only want to visit the area but also live and work here.

Therefore, this strategy is hugely important and comes at a critical time as we adapt to a new post-pandemic and post-Brexit world and seek to build a visitor offering that is also fairer, greener and cleaner for all.

This Strategy reflects our commitment to the ongoing delivery of, and support for, a visitor economy that can adapt and thrive over the next five years. A key role for East Suffolk Council, as set out within our Strategic Plan, is to maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk. The tourism & visitor economy – including, places, businesses, attractions, and our unique offer from seaside resorts, sprawling countryside and independent and specialised shops is a major part of this. We will achieve this through effective promotion of the district, investment in tourism assets and attracting new and returning visitors to East Suffolk.

We want to build a visitor economy that is sustainable, net-zero, inclusive and builds on a digital economy that will support our businesses to survive, thrive and scale-up the local economy. The Strategy focuses on how we will do this through a focus on our places, our local businesses, our workforce & skills, our identity, our partnerships and our environment.

It sets out how East Suffolk Council and its partners can enable this and ensure that our residents, communities, businesses and visitors are able to share and enjoy the benefits of what makes this part of the country, and the world, so special.



*Councillor Letitia Smith  
Cabinet Member for  
Communities, Leisure  
and Tourism*





## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 How was the strategy developed?

This new Visitor Economy Strategy builds on the previous strategy created in 2017 but also takes into consideration the impacts of the pandemic. The sector was shaken by Covid-19 with fluctuating fortunes. Busy summers in 2020 and 2021, fuelled by the staycation boom, contrasted with a very difficult period over spring and Christmas 2020.

For this strategy to be relevant and effective it needs to reflect the needs and priorities of key stakeholders operating in the visitor economy sector. East Suffolk Council plays a key service delivery and investment role which supports the visitor economy sector and therefore it is essential that we collaborate with the industry and other key stakeholders to maximise the success of East Suffolk as a destination.

To reflect this the Strategy has been developed in a highly collaborative manner which has involved a wide-ranging consultation exercise comprising over 30 face-to-face meetings, a questionnaire to circa 300 businesses and organisations, 4 workshops, close liaison with The Suffolk Coast (TSC) Destination Management Organisation (DMO) and collaboration with the team working on the wider East Suffolk Economic Strategy.

The strategy has also been developed so it aligns with regional and national tourism plans and wider economic policies as well as taking in best practice from other parts of country.

*First Light Festival in Lowestoft,  
Southwold Pier,  
Cyclists*



### 2.2 Who is the strategy for?

East Suffolk Council recognises the importance of the visitor economy, and the Council looks to sustain, develop, and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk.

The Council plays a leading role in facilitating, enabling, and delivering many service areas that directly or indirectly contribute to the vibrancy of the visitor economy. In particular, the Council have significant responsibility in public realm and maintenance, infrastructure, resort management, sector development, marketing and promotion, place making and services that support businesses directly such as Environmental Health, Food Safety and Licensing.

The Strategy aims to provide confidence to existing tourism businesses and potential investors that East Suffolk Council is looking to maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk.

The Strategy will support East Suffolk Council to deliver services and make investments in a coordinated manner that maximises the benefits to the visitor economy, supports decision making and project development.

Overall, the objective is to benefit visitor economy businesses, residents, visitors, and people working within the sector.



© Harry Read

Street Market in Bungay



### 2.3 What are the aims of the strategy?

To make a significant contribution to East Suffolk Council's overall vision for the district:

Specifically for the visitor economy the aims are:

- To support the sector, maintain and grow a vibrant visitor economy
- To attract and stimulate inward investment by maximising our support to encourage local visitor economy businesses to start-up, grow and invest
- To maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk's visitor economy
- To support the development of the year-round visitor economy through the development of new tourism products
- To maximise the Council's assets and responsibilities that directly contribute to the visitor economy offer
- To demonstrate our partnerships and planned projects that will connect people and places throughout the district.
- To achieve a net zero carbon visitor economy.
- To encourage the increase of high value visitors for environmental and economic benefits
- To ensure that the volume of visitors is not detrimental to the environment of East Suffolk and suitable mitigation is put in place



Southwold high street

“

*Our aim is to deliver the highest quality of life possible for everyone who lives in, works in and visits East Suffolk*

”





*Felixstowe seafront*

## 3. SETTING THE CONTEXT

### 3.1 The tourism sector in East Suffolk

In East Suffolk's Economic Growth Plan 2018-2023, the visitor economy and cultural sectors are recognised as one of the district's most important contributors to the growth of the local economy. Despite the devastating impact of Covid-19 on the sector, it continues to be a high priority in the Council's recently published Economic Strategy for 2022-2027.

The sector comprises around 1,300 businesses and employs in excess of 11,000 people, roughly 12% of the total district workforce of 90,000. Pre-pandemic, it is estimated that the value of the sector to the local economy was around £700 million.

The tourism product is extremely strong and the proposition for visitors is built around 5 key strengths:

**Coastline:** The Suffolk coast is approximately 49 miles (79km) long and runs from Corton on the Norfolk/Suffolk border to Landguard Point in Felixstowe. There is also a further 83 miles (134km) of tidal edge within the Blyth, Alde and Ore, Deben and Orwell estuaries that lie within our district (East Suffolk Council, 2022), some of the best beaches in the UK, 1665 beach huts and the UK's most easterly point.





© Steve Aylward

*Carlton Marshes*

**Towns and places:** A variety of distinctive towns and villages offering a rich variety of experiences. Along the coast and moving inland, pretty villages, historical hamlets, seaside and market towns await you here on The Suffolk Coast.

**The natural landscape:** Beauty spots such as the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Carlton Marshes, Sutton Hoo, the Southern Gateway to The Broads National Park, Rendlesham Forest, and Dunwich Heath and Beach offer authentic, uplifting experiences for visitors

**Events and festivals:** Latitude, the Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts, the Aldeburgh Food and Drink Festival, FolkEast and the developing First Light Festival are some of the best examples of a vibrant programme.

**History and cultural heritage:** more than 20 museums, 4 castles, more than 200 churches and assets such as Snape Maltings are indicative of a place steeped in historical significance and interest.

Other attributes of the product include an evolving food and drink offer, a diverse array of accommodation possibilities, an attractive environment for walkers and cyclists, one of the most favourable climates in the UK, the Coast and Heaths AONB as a nationally protected environment and the Southern gateway to The Broads National Park.

Bringing all this together, is what creates a compelling proposition for the visitor through the sheer variety of visitor experiences. There is so much to do, see and experience in East Suffolk and this wealth of possibilities will continue to be at the heart of the offer.



### 3. SETTING THE CONTEXT



*Café in Felixstowe,  
First Light Festival*

East Suffolk is well known for its historical assets and significance, but substantial investment continues to build and develop the visitor economy for the future. Recent developments include a £4 million National Trust investment and an additional £1.8 million injection of funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and support from the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership in Sutton Hoo (EADT, 2019), a £2.6 million investment in 72 new beach huts in Lowestoft (East Suffolk Council, 2021) and an £8 million investment by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust in Carlton Marshes, (Suffolk Wildlife Trust, n.d.).

East Suffolk's largest towns – Lowestoft and Felixstowe – are both undergoing major development and regeneration. The significant investment in Lowestoft is underpinned by a strong cultural strategy. The ambition is clear: “Our ten key priorities

all strive to make Lowestoft a place where being on the eastern edge of the country is celebrated. A place which is creatively edgy and leading in cultural leadership, placemaking, community participation and economic growth.” A wider cultural strategy for the whole of East Suffolk will be developed during 2022. Both towns have Business Improvement Districts, organisations that can contribute very positively to the visitor economy agenda. Meanwhile, the South Seafront in Felixstowe, has undergone significant redevelopment in recent years and East Suffolk Council has invested a significantly in revitalising the area. This includes the Felixstowe seafront café, Martello Park play area and new car parking facilities. The Council has also invested in the refurbishing the two public shelters on the South Seafront and the long-term maintenance of its historic Martello, which forms the centrepiece of the park.



### 3. SETTING THE CONTEXT

Visit Britain segments domestic visitors into 5 distinct types: aspirational family fun, free and easy mini-breakers, country loving traditionalists, fuss-free value seekers and fun in the sun. Specific data is limited but anecdotal evidence suggests that East Suffolk is particularly attractive to country loving traditionalists and fun in the sun enthusiasts. These 2 segments represent 50% of all tourists in the UK.

The East of England, London and the Southeast are the catchment areas where most of East Suffolk's visitors come from, typically a catchment area of around 2 to 2.5 hours. Over 50 trains a day run from London to nearby Ipswich, (Greater Anglia, n.d.), with the shortest journey time as little as 55 minutes. The East Suffolk Lines, operated by Greater Anglia, then provides a more local service, linking Lowestoft in the North to Ipswich with 12 stops in between and the Felixstowe Line linking Ipswich to Felixstowe in the South. Developing public transport, to relieve pressure on over-stretched roads, remains a key challenge as well as changing travel practices.

East Suffolk has more than 4,000 second homes (Office of National Statistics, n.d.), around 3.5% of total households, contributing to a rise in holiday lettings through agencies such as Airbnb. Hoseasons have their base in Lowestoft and offer several hundred properties in East Suffolk. The district has a diverse selection of tourist accommodation: camp sites, caravan parks, pubs with rooms, bed and breakfasts, boat moorings and some quality boutique hotels including those operated by two locally based businesses, Adnams and Hotel Folk. What is not a significant part of the accommodation offer are national budget hotels and large hotels. The Ufford Park Hotel is the largest in the district with 90 rooms.

East Suffolk has a growing reputation as a film location, promoted expertly by Screen Suffolk. The best example of many positive impacts on tourism was the filming of 'The Dig', featured on Netflix in January 2021. In August 2021, 33,781 people visited Sutton Hoo, the film location, the highest monthly figures since opening in 2002 and a 30% increase on the year before.

The marketing of East Suffolk is the responsibility of The Suffolk Coast (TSC) Destination Management Organisation (DMO), formed in 2012. It is part-funded by East Suffolk Council (ESC) and its income is supplemented through a membership scheme supported by over 230 local businesses operating in the visitor economy sector. TSC works collaboratively with other DMOs in the region under the 'umbrella' brand of Visit East of England (VEE). Digital marketing is increasingly important and [www.thesuffolkcoast.co.uk](http://www.thesuffolkcoast.co.uk) is visited by more than 1 million people a year and TSC has more than 40,000 followers on social media.

Some of the challenges facing the visitor economy in East Suffolk are addressed later in this section but, to focus on the opportunities, there are a number of national trends that clearly play to the strengths of the district:

- The growth of the 'staycation'
- Increased participation in cycling and walking activities
- Heightened awareness of wellbeing
- Rapidly growing interest in environmental matters
- The thirst for experiences
- Increase in dog ownership and including them on holidays

There is a lot to suggest that East Suffolk captures the zeitgeist of the UK domestic visitor in the 2020s and this presents a huge opportunity and a platform for sustainable growth.

### 3.2 Progress since the last strategy

The 2017 strategy focused on 4 key priorities:

- Developing tourism assets
- Improving the visitor experience
- Ensuring foundations are in place
- Excelling at destination marketing

The main strategy document was accompanied by a detailed action plan sub-divided into different areas of the district. Delivery of the strategy was though severely disrupted by the pandemic which necessitated a whole new set of approaches to try and support and sustain the visitor economy. The aspirations of 2017 were subsumed by the pandemic but nevertheless progress has been made in many areas of strategy delivery. Highlights include:

- **Development of festivals and events**

- First Light Festival
- East Suffolk Town Celebrations Event delivery
- East Suffolk Town Celebrations Events consultancy

- **Marketing**

- The Suffolk Coast DMO and associated campaigns
- Continued development of the official tourism website for East Suffolk [www.thesuffolkcoast.co.uk](http://www.thesuffolkcoast.co.uk), improving content and assets available for local businesses
- Visit East of England partnership campaigns, delivered through a collaboration of 14 DMO's



*The Women's Tour*

- Visit Suffolk partnership campaigns
- Localised place marketing
- Marketing products
- **Resort development**
- Felixstowe south seafront development
- Lowestoft town centre and seafront masterplans
- Lowestoft seafront asset development
- Blue flags and seaside awards



### 3.3 The impact of Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic had a considerable impact on many businesses and organisations engaged in tourism, hospitality or culture. Like the rest of the UK, the visitor economy was virtually shut down in East Suffolk at the following times:

- March 23 to 4 July 2020 – total lockdown
- September/October 2020 – hospitality restrictions
- November 5 to December 2 2020 – total lockdown
- December 2 to January 6 2020/21 – hospitality restrictions
- January 6 to March 8 2021 – national lockdown
- March 8 to July 19 2021 – hospitality restrictions

The following table illustrates the impact on the visitor economy. Following steady growth in the value of tourism between 2017 and 2019, peaking at just short of £700 million in 2019, the value figures for 2020 show a decline of more than 57% during 2020. This compares to Visit Britain's estimate that the UK suffered a 64% decline across the whole of the UK.

	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>DAY TRIPS – VOLUME</b>	11,835,000	12,014,000	11,777,000	5,133,000
<b>DAY TRIPS – VALUE</b>	£340,160,000	£357,354,000	£371,087,000	£147,596,000
<b>NO. OF O/N TRIPS</b>	717,000	686,000	701,000	316,000
<b>NO. OF O/N NIGHTS</b>	2,573,000	2,594,000	2,722,000	1,232,000
<b>TRIP VALUE</b>	£150,595,000	£145,231,000	£151,195,000	£64,271,000
<b>TOTAL VALUE</b>	<b>£657,861,000</b>	<b>£671,710,000</b>	<b>£695,187,000</b>	<b>£297,292,000</b>
<b>ACTUAL JOBS</b>	13,880	14,153	14,660	9,026

SOURCE: Economic Impact of Tourism reports

East Suffolk Council made every effort to support and sustain the visitor economy by ensuring that as many eligible businesses as possible accessed the support grants for the sector. Administered by East Suffolk Council, this funding amounted to more than £140 million across retail, hospitality, and leisure sectors. In addition to this, Visit East of England worked in partnership with all DMO's within the East of England, securing funding of more than £425k to promote the regional visitor economy as lockdowns came to an end.

There is evidence to suggest that the recovery and mitigation measures have succeeded in stabilising the sector. Looking at just companies involved with 'accommodation and food services', the Office of National Statistics (ONS) reports on the number of registered companies shows the following<sup>2</sup>:

YEAR	NUMBER OF REGISTERED COMPANIES <i>food and accommodation services</i>
<b>2019</b>	<b>660</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>655</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>680</b>

2. NOMIS data : 'accommodation and food services activities' and 'arts, entertainment and recreation'

### 3. SETTING THE CONTEXT

There was a small decline (4%) in the number of retail businesses between 2019 and 2021 and virtually no change in businesses involved in 'arts, entertainments and other services', both categories with important segments for the visitor economy.

Those businesses that were able to sustain themselves did enjoy a sharp revival in the second half of 2021 feeding off the 'staycation' boom – UK nationals choosing to holiday at home rather than go abroad. Research done by Sykes Cottages suggested that 62% of British holidaymakers planned to spend their main summer break in the UK in 2021, up from 50% in 2019, and 46% of people were more likely to consider a staycation than before the pandemic. Some accommodation providers in East Suffolk had a record year in 2021 as a result of the post-lockdown scramble for domestic holidays. Tourism businesses that were able to survive demonstrated their creativity and resilience in managing two years of extreme operational fluctuations.

This staycation boom is expected to continue in 2022 and, assuming no further serious Covid-19 consequences, East Suffolk is well-placed to benefit from this short-term opportunity. A survey carried out by Visit East of England in January 2022, showed that 23% of visitor economy businesses expected to be back at pre-pandemic levels in 2022 and an encouraging 46% of businesses expected to perform better than in 2019.

As time goes on, and as overseas travel begins to return to something like normal, the challenge is to turn the staycation option from a "have to" to a "want to."



Aldeburgh Red House, East Anglia Transport Museum, Beccles Museum, Somerleyton Hall, Southwold Museum, Africa Alive

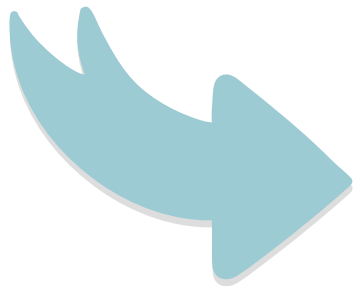


### 3.4 The visitor economy in a changing world

Like every sector, the visitor economy sector is experiencing rapid change with many influences, many of them unseen, impacting both positively and negatively.

Globally the economy is in uncertain times, still in recovery from the pandemic and now facing a major geopolitical shock. This is having severe economic impacts, including shortages of raw materials and supply-chain challenges. This has led to soaring food and fuel costs in particular but more generally across the whole economy with inflation at a 30 year high.

Here are some of the key factors that need to be taken into account in formulating and delivering the strategy:



#### POLITICAL

Levelling-up and Prosperity funds potential opportunities for visitor economy investment

Outcome of the DCMS de Bois review may have implications for the Suffolk Coast DMO

Legacy of Brexit continuing to affect staff recruitment and retention

The demise of the Tourism Sector Deal delaying progress in the national strategy for tourism

Geo-political tensions around the world and a continuation of the pandemic creating massive instability and uncertainty in the travel sector



#### ECONOMIC

Severe inflationary pressures increasing costs for visitor economy businesses

Staff and skill shortages a real concern for the visitor economy, particularly hospitality

Squeeze on household incomes may prolong the popularity of the 'staycation'

VAT rate reverting to 20% for the hospitality sector from April 2022

Increasing tax pressures on second homeowners and accommodation rentals



#### SOCIO-ECONOMIC

Growing environmental awareness and interest in sustainable eco travel

Pet friendly travel a developing market

The rise of 'work-and-play- cations' – people choosing temporary locations to 'work from home'

Growing thirst for adventure, experience and something different

The importance of cleanliness and hygiene as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic



#### TECHNOLOGICAL

Relentless ongoing need for visitor economy businesses to be digitally capable and innovative

Internet of Things technology developments

The shift from printed marketing to digital marketing

The growing importance of data collection, management and analysis

Virtual reality as a means of promoting travel experiences



### 3.5 The challenge of Sizewell C and the Energy Coast

If the Sizewell C project is approved it will contribute positively to the local, regional and national economy and prove to be a significant step forward for the UK's energy security policy and decarbonisation ambitions. However, it poses a challenge for the visitor economy, and this is reflected in the concerns of a range of stakeholders across the sector. The challenge is compounded due to the significant offshore wind development taking place off the East Suffolk coast and the associated onshore infrastructure required.

Research undertaken by TSC in conjunction with AONB Partnership and a separate survey carried out for TSC, capture the concerns of visitor economy businesses, particularly those operating within a 10-mile radius of the Sizewell C construction site.

These concerns should not be dismissed and therefore the strategy will include a framework to be developed, should Sizewell C receive approval for construction. This framework will seek to mitigate and limit disruption to the sector and also harness any opportunities. This will be done by (a) making

optimum use of the agreed £12m tourism mitigation fund and (b) exploiting the opportunities that Sizewell C may open up for the sector. East Suffolk Council and TSC will be partners in developing and delivering the Sizewell C tourism mitigation plans and will therefore ensure they align with the aims and objectives of this strategy.

It is worth noting that there are two brands which focus on the Suffolk Coast. The Energy Coast business facing brand is used to attract and market the area to inward investment opportunities linked to the growing clean energy sector (predominantly in the Lowestoft area). The Suffolk Coast tourism branding is clearly focussed on attracting and growing the tourism economy and whilst concerns have been raised about the potential conflict between these two brands, they are focussed on two very different audiences and therefore any conflict should not arise.



#### 3.6 National, regional and local policy context

This strategy has not been developed in isolation and care has been taken to position it within the context of existing local, regional and national policies and strategies, including the following:

- [The DCMS Tourism Recovery Plan \(June 2021\)](#)
- [Visit East of England Destination Development Plan \(October 2021\)](#)
- [New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership \(NALEP\) Recovery Plan for the Visitor Economy](#)
- [The Suffolk Visitor Economy Strategic Framework](#)
- [East Suffolk Strategic Plan 2020-24](#)
- [East Suffolk Strategic Growth Plan 2022-27](#)
- [Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy 2022](#)
- [Suffolk County Council Corporate Strategy 2022-2026](#)
- [Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Management plan 2018 and 2023](#)
- [Lowestoft Cultural Strategy 2020-2025](#)
- [Broads National Park Strategic Plan](#)
- Stakeholder strategic plans

Common themes run across these different plans, most notably: sustainable tourism and clean growth; developing skills and workforce planning; 'top of mind' promotion and more innovative use of digital technology.



*Oulton Broad Angles Way*

## 4. CHANGING DISTRICT, CHANGING ASPIRATIONS

*Sunrise*

East Suffolk is both home to around 250,000 residents (2020) and a tourism destination for millions of people a year. It's a district that's changing and committed to growth but not growth at any price as clearly demonstrated by the Council's Strategic Plan. The strategy has been built on a series of aspirations for the visitor economy to ensure that growth is based on values and principles and is for the benefit of all:

**The visitor economy must work for residents** - We will strive to make the visitor economy work for residents by providing good employment opportunities, creating experiences and attractions that aren't only enjoyed by visitors and contributing to a sense of local pride of place. We want our residents to play a part in giving the warmest of welcomes to our guests.

**The visitor economy must protect the environment** - Our priority is to grow the value of tourism over growing the volume of tourism. We want to share our unique and diverse collection of landscapes and heritage assets but we also want to protect them, not least for the enjoyment of our residents.

**The visitor economy must work for the whole district** - Our 12 towns and widespread collection of visitor experiences gives us a great opportunity to spread the benefits of tourism across the whole district. Working together in partnership, we can help businesses throughout East Suffolk to thrive and grow.



## 4. CHANGING DISTRICT, CHANGING ASPIRATIONS



**The visitor economy is not just seasonal** - If we want to focus on the value of tourism rather than volume, and if we want to protect our environment, there must be an emphasis on promoting the district as an all year-round destination. East Suffolk's best natural assets have consistent appeal – changing through the seasons, and this should be capitalised upon.

**The visitor economy must move to net zero carbon emissions** - The sector must play its part in contributing to the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership and the commitment that : “Our Vision is that Suffolk wants to be an exemplar in tackling climate change and protecting and enhancing its natural environment and to be the county with the greatest reduction in carbon emission.....we are working together with partners across the county and region towards the aspiration of making the county of Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030.”

**The visitor economy must be inclusive and positive for social mobility** - East Suffolk is a place open to all and this must be further developed as a core strength over the lifetime of the strategy. The abundant scale and breadth of job opportunities is an excellent way of improving social mobility.

**The visitor economy must contribute to the district's wider Economic Strategy** - The Visitor economy and cultural sectors are identified as one of the key seven sectors within the East Suffolk Economic Strategy. There is clearly strong alignment between the two strategies and in particular how to overcome some of the key challenges facing the sector including low wages, low productivity, low skills, seasonality of employment and recruitment/ retention issues.

*Kayaker,  
Wickham market,  
Countryside walk*



## 5. WHAT DOES A SUCCESSFUL VISITOR ECONOMY LOOK LIKE & HOW WILL IT BE MEASURED?

*Lowestoft town centre*

East Suffolk Council want a visitor economy that has evolved positively and sustainably, offering even more experiences for visitors, offering up well-paid, skilled jobs for residents, encouraging new businesses and new investment to the sector, building resilience and innovation into small businesses, and developing pride and a better quality of life for East Suffolk residents.



## 5. WHAT DOES A SUCCESSFUL VISITOR ECONOMY LOOK LIKE & HOW WILL IT BE MEASURED?



The Strategy will look to contribute to the Council's ambitions within the following areas:

- Pride of place
- Quality of life for our residents
- Range of experiences
- Employment opportunities
- Increased equality and business and resident prosperity
- Ongoing investment within the sector that responds to need in a flexible way

In addition to this, we will assess quality of life through economic indicators as well as social indicators which we are measuring as an authority to deliver our Strategic Plan.

Annual 'Economic Impact of Tourism' reports will enable us to track and compare:

- Number of staying visitors
- Expenditure per trip
- Number of day trips
- Number of overnight trips
- Visitor spend
- Number of FTEs working in the sector
- Overall visitor expenditure
- Duration of stay
- Visitor satisfaction levels
- Visitor recommendation rates

We will also be exploring a project to collect local tourism data with a view to establishing a monthly dashboard that can be used to inform better decision-making. It is acknowledged that much of this data is not collated nationally so a local solution will need to be explored.

*Framlingham market,  
Lowestoft windsurfer*





## 6. MANAGING DEVELOPMENT OF THE VISITOR ECONOMY IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY

*Felixstowe Town Hall Gardens*

East Suffolk has a diverse range of natural and cultural tourist attractions as well as destinations that are popular for holidays, overnight stays and with residents, and those from further afield. Visitors to East Suffolk are attracted by the character, culture, history, festivals, music, art, film, food and drink, clean beaches and spectacular coastline, river valleys, and the outstanding countryside and wildlife. Capitalising on these strengths will enable the area to continue to attract year-round tourism trade. However, growth of the sector should not be at the expense of the assets and attractions that draw people into the area.

Sustainable growth in tourism can promote a better understanding and appreciation of the natural, built and historic environment, which in turn will help to maintain these finite resources for future generations.

Growth and development within the industry could result in some places and communities experiencing potential significant adverse impacts such as loss of natural habitats or overcrowding. Both the Waveney Local Plan and the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan include strategic priorities and policies that seek to increase the volume and value of tourism trade and extend the tourist season to support compelling destinations and visitor experiences, whilst managing the potential adverse impacts.



The National Planning Policy Framework encourages development of tourism initiatives in urban and rural locations, provided the character of the countryside is respected, and pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environments are minimised. The NPPF encourages the retention and development of accessible local services and facilities.

East Suffolk has a wide range of natural landscapes that require protection, including the scenic beauty and special landscape qualities that justify the 155 square miles of designated Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) that make a significant contribution to the attractiveness of the area to visitors and the Heritage Coast which is also outlined in national planning policy. The Council recognises the wider economic benefits that can be brought about through the conservation of these environments, bringing significant benefit to local economies and communities.

The Council is supportive of proposals for tourism development that contribute to the broad appeal, accessibility and year-round nature of destinations across the district.

Tourism proposals should be of the highest standard of design and seek to protect and enhance the special character and interest of the destinations and the distinctiveness of the area with particular regard to sensitive landscapes and heritage assets.

Where necessary, applications for new destinations or the redevelopment or extension/intensification of destinations will need to be subject to screening under the Habitats Regulations.

### Local policy context

When considering tourism development, there are a number of local policies that should be followed by developers and individuals seeking to provide local growth within the industry. These include policies relating to accommodation, attractions, sustainable development and town regeneration. These include:

- Waveney Local Plan (pages 224 to 228 are specific tourism policies)
- Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (pages 118 – 128 are specific tourism policies)
- Neighbourhood Plans – these will vary from place to place, and some contain specific tourism related policies
- Supplementary Planning Documents, including the Sustainable Construction SPD
- Other planning guidance, such as the Cycling and Walking Strategy

In addition to this, subject to Local Plan policies, East Suffolk Council is supportive of and encourages the development of green tourism – small-scale tourism that involves visiting natural areas while minimising environmental impacts. Green tourism generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of local communities, improves working conditions and access to the industry. It can also support the increase of local supply chains and provide more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues.



## 7. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

*Beccles Relish, Framlingham Street Art, Aldeburgh High Street*

To address the national, regional and local issues and challenges identified throughout the context setting and consultation process of this strategy, East Suffolk Council, together with our partners, have identified 6 core priorities to fulfil the ambition for the visitor economy sector based on the following themes:

- Our Place
- Our Local Businesses
- Our Workforce and Skills
- Our Identity
- Our Partnerships
- Our Environment





## 7. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Each of these themes addresses the following challenges and opportunities for the sector:

THEME	CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	OUR AMBITION
<b>Our Place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring priorities are in place that will help shape future Levelling-Up and Share Prosperity Funds opportunities through the development of both improved physical infrastructure and community pride of place.</li> <li>The rise of 'work-and-play- cations' – people choosing temporary locations to 'work from home'</li> <li>The importance of cleanliness and hygiene as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic</li> <li>The growth of the 'staycation'</li> </ul>	By 2027, the visitor experience in East Suffolk will be significantly enhanced by an ongoing programme of investment in both the physical infrastructure of the district and the quality of service. This will be clearly seen by visitors and enjoyed by residents, adding to their sense of pride.
<b>Our Local Businesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased cost of supply chains on local businesses, increased by geo-political shocks.</li> <li>Severe inflationary pressures increasing costs for visitor economy businesses.</li> <li>Relentless ongoing need for visitor economy businesses to be digitally capable and innovative</li> <li>Internet of Things technology developments</li> </ul>	By 2027, East Suffolk will have a growing base of visitor economy businesses – in good economic health, resilient and fuelled by innovation.
<b>Our Workforce &amp; Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff recruitment and retention issues from the legacy of Brexit and continuing issues.</li> <li>Attracting high level skilled workers in to the sector</li> </ul>	By 2027, East Suffolk will have a stable visitor economy workforce supported by a strong local skills training offer with the aim of creating a skills academy in the region.
<b>Our Identity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing thirst for adventure, experience and something different</li> <li>The shift from printed marketing to digital marketing</li> <li>Virtual reality as a means of promoting travel experiences</li> </ul>	By 2027, East Suffolk will, through a consistent, adequately funded marketing programme with 'best in class' promotional assets, strengthen the reputation and brand identity of the visitor economy.
<b>Our Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outcome of the DCMS de Bois review may have implications for STC</li> <li>The demise of the Tourism Sector Deal delaying progress in the national strategy for tourism</li> </ul>	By 2027, East Suffolk will have a network of highly focused partnerships supporting and enhancing the visitor economy and will continue to be playing an active role in the regional development of tourism.
<b>Our Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing environmental awareness and interest in sustainable eco travel</li> <li>The need to ensure sustainability of our local environment and the places that make East Suffolk unique</li> <li>Increased participation in walking and cycling</li> </ul>	By 2027, the East Suffolk visitor economy will be an exemplar in both sharing and protecting its natural environment and will be on a clear pathway to net-zero carbon by 2030.



Town centre

## 8. OUR PLACE

### AMBITION

“By 2027, the visitor experience in East Suffolk will be significantly enhanced by an ongoing programme of investment in both the physical infrastructure of the district and the quality of service. This will be clearly seen by visitors and enjoyed by residents, adding to their sense of pride.”



AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To improve the physical infrastructure of the district to benefit both residents and tourists	A continuation of the capital programme already well underway and look to secure further funding in line with the programmes that have been developed	ESC Asset Management, Economic Regeneration and Travel Management	To deliver the capital programme, the Towns Fund and other regeneration programme associated with the visitor economy.
	Continue to develop the public realm to improve the experience of living in and visiting East Suffolk	ESC to work with local town councils and Suffolk County Council (SCC) where appropriate	Neighbourhood Plans, Town Council Strategies and SCC strategies.
To improve the public transport infrastructure	To work with other public sector bodies and transport partnerships to lobby local transport priorities.	Through the ESC Parking and Infrastructure service manager	ESC own policies and strategies in relation to transport and influencing SCC's policies and strategies.
	Promote the use of public transport where appropriate to both visitors and residents when accessing tourism attractions and services.	TSC DMO and through local place promotion	Development of green transport marketing. Integrate existing green transport platforms for promotion with local marketing.
To create new and promote existing walking and cycling and pathway routes for outdoor enthusiasts	To ensure linkages and promotion of existing walking and cycling routes.	TSC DMO	Continue to develop the promotion through the TSC website.
	To develop a year-round visitor offer linked to walking and cycling that would appeal to outdoor enthusiasts and engage with new audiences.	ESC and partners, including SCC	Through TSC and town promotion
	Delivery of the East Suffolk Cycling and Walking strategy	ESC Planning Team	Strategy delivery

AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To enhance digital connectivity across the district.	Delivery of the East Suffolk Digital Towns project (including the Digital Springboard business support programme)	ESC to deliver	Completion of the programme
Ensure our visitor economy businesses have the appropriate skills level to maximise the benefits of digital technology	Ensure businesses are aware of the business opportunities that full fibre can provide and how to access.	ESC working in partnership with City Fibre	Promotion of offer and benefits to businesses
	Ensure high levels of upskilling around digital support through the Digital Springboard and other business support programmes.	ESC to deliver the Digital Springboard and relevant digital support programmes with partners	Completion of programme and promotion of programmes to the visitor economy sector through organisations such as TSC.
To support the 12 towns with their own objectives for residents and the visitor economy	Secure additional funding for the delivery of the next phase of the East Suffolk Town Revitalisation Programme	ESC to seek funding, including the UK Shared Prosperity Fund	Delivery of a phase-2 programme
	Build on the work undertaken with Control Outbreak Management Fund in 2021 and promote place-based products	ESC to develop products with TSC and partners	Delivered through the Towns Programme and the TSC business plan
To encourage new events and festivals to further animate the district	Pilot town centre events and activities, individualised to town needs and share best practice across the district	ESC to review phase-1 & 2 of the East Suffolk Towns Celebrations programme and seek funding for phase-3.	Through the Towns Programme
	Develop a new pro-active events and festivals strategy that informs large scale event opportunities as well as local events.	ESC to commission and adopt an Events Strategy	Recommendations to formulate action plan





Leiston Film Theatre

## 9. OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES

### AMBITION

“By 2027, East Suffolk will have a growing base of visitor economy businesses – in good economic health, resilient and fuelled by innovation.”

AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To encourage new businesses to enter the visitor economy	Ensure that we have appropriate business support programmes to support new business start-ups as well as support, advice and guidance for those businesses wishing to grow.	ESC, New Anglia LEP, Enterprise Agencies, and partners	Through the delivery of the Local Enterprise Partnership, East Suffolk Growth Plan, Visit England and DCMS Strategies.
	Set up a business mentor scheme to help new businesses or provide access to existing mentoring schemes where appropriate.	ESC to review existing business mentoring offer	To be determined, subject to review.
	Review and enhance the 'welcome' package for new businesses.	ESC to develop	Delivery of a new 'welcome' package
	Development of an East Suffolk Visitor Economy Sector group.	ESC to work with partners, including TSC, place-based groups and local businesses	Delivery of a new sector group and identify a lead organisation to facilitate the group
To encourage existing businesses to grow and invest	To ensure businesses have access to support, advice and guidance through our business support partners.	Using established networks to promote business support opportunities to the business community.	Networks could be through the East Suffolk Visitor Economy sector group, other established business groups and TSC.
	We will work closely with our visitor economy firms to understand the risks they are facing and inform investment decisions accordingly.	Using established networks to understand and gather intelligence.	Networks could be through the East Suffolk Visitor Economy sector group, other established business groups and TSC.



AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To support businesses, develop their digital capabilities	Delivery of the East Suffolk Digital Springboard programme and work closely with local visitor economy firms to assess future business digital needs.	ESC to deliver	Through MENTA
To encourage innovation within the sector	Define tourism innovation opportunities for the sector Development of a tourism innovation group Development of a tourism toolkit and upskilling programme Development of a tourism innovation fund. Provide opportunities for businesses to share innovative best practice across the Visit East of England area.	ESC to develop a project and seek funding for innovation within the sector, such as through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.	Development of project and funding secured.
To help businesses build their resilience	Ensure local businesses have access to the appropriate support around resilience, including financial and environmental resilience. Support the sector to be able to be flexible and respond to global challenges.	ESC to review existing support and resources ESC to work with partners to support and mitigate impacts where possible	ESC to formulate action plan following review Delivery of support, guidance and mitigation recommendations
To encourage businesses to learn from each other	Working with all partners to link best practice and ensure networking across the sector. Explore the development of a business best practice knowledge hub.	Promote existing and new business networks. ESC to identify lead facilitation organisation	Embed shared learning into the East Suffolk Visitor Economy sector group Lead organisation identified and hub set-up.



## 10. OUR WORKFORCE & SKILLS

*The Crown in Framlingham,  
The Bell Hotel in Saxmundham*

### AMBITION

“By 2027, East Suffolk will have a stable visitor economy workforce supported by a strong local skills training offer with the aim of creating a skills academy in the region.”



AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To reduce the number of job vacancies in the sector	Support and fully participate in the Visitor Economy skills initiatives and develop local schemes where there are gaps in provision.	ESC working with partners to develop local initiatives and deliver county and regional programmes.	Development and delivery projects and initiatives.
To encourage staff retention and less volatility in the sector	Support the development of an East Academy for Skills in Tourism being prioritised by Visit East of England	ESC to support and ensure East Suffolk benefits from the Academy	East Suffolk maximises any opportunities presented around the development of such resources
To explore a sector skills academy specifically for hospitality	To carry out a needs and provision analysis and consultation with relevant stakeholders.	ESC to initiate the discussions	Formulate an action plan based on need
Working in partnership to encourage businesses to develop career paths for staff	Develop clear career paths within the sector and changing attitudes towards the tourism and hospitality sector.	ESC working with partners to develop a programme of support for the sector, employment agencies and education establishments	Development of new programmes, or integration with existing programmes with partners.
	Linking appropriate training to careers within the sector.		
	Develop a bespoke 'skills funding matrix' to assist East Suffolk businesses access training funding		
	Ensuring local skills provision matches local business need.		
	Ensure suitable training programmes are offered, based on local business need.		

AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To 'sell' the sector more positively to young people in schools and colleges and the wider community	Development and promotion of ICanBeA as a job vacancy website and skills shows.	ESC to develop closer collaboration with SCC Skills Team, education establishments and tourism & hospitality sector	ESC to ensure opportunities are harnessed from local skills strategies
	Provide and link hospitality and tourism businesses with education providers to work with them to promote career opportunities.		
	Create marketing collateral to help promote opportunities in the sector.		





## 11. OUR IDENTITY

*First Light Festival in Lowestoft*

### AMBITION

“By 2027, East Suffolk will, through a consistent, adequately funded marketing programme with ‘best in class’ promotional assets, strengthen the reputation and brand identity of the visitor economy”

AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To further develop The Suffolk Coast brand based on the variety of the offer, on international and domestic tourism behaviour, by communicating a clear, consistent message, in a complex and changing market.	Examine and identify what is the brand of East Suffolk and how the individual towns and locations within East Suffolk can benefit from the brand	TSC to deliver town outcomes	TSC to deliver town outcomes
	Explore funding options to enable more investment into consistent marketing, particularly building the district's digital capabilities	TSC to deliver projects against funding secured	TSC to deliver projects against funding secured
ESC to support TSC to achieve their strategic priorities over the next 5-years, that deliver the Council's strategic direction	Nurture and grow the membership of TSC	TSC to deliver priorities	TSC to deliver priorities
	Continue to educate and inform visitors to experience the whole area		
	To achieve sustainable growth of the visitor economy		
	Work with partners to overcome recruitment challenges		
	Foster and grow local, regional and national partnerships		
	Make the DMO more sustainable by growing advertising and membership revenues, whilst retaining our brand integrity.		
	Be ready for rapid upsizing, to deliver creative and innovative campaigns to mitigate the huge impact of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)		
	The current funding and operational agreement runs from April 2021 to April 2024. A review will take place at the end of the agreement term.	ESC Cabinet decision regarding the outcome of the review	ESC Cabinet decision regarding the outcome of the review



AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To ensure that tourism is supported and welcomed by residents and the local communities working in partnership with TSC and local place groups	Deliver regular communications with residents and visitors through the marketing platform with the free-to-use public WiFi and other public press articles and campaigns such as through TSC	ESC to deliver appropriate marketing through the WiFi marketing platform and work with the TSC on other press	ESC, TSC and partners communication platforms
	Visitor Information Points (VIPs) and place ambassadors are fit for purpose to serve the local visitor economy	ESC to review current need, availability of printed and digital material and the process in which visitors want to engage during their visit	ESC to deliver outcomes of the review
To promote East Suffolk as a year-round destination	Work with TSC and partners to develop year-round visitor offer and associated campaigns.	ESC, TSC and partners to develop campaigns	ESC, TSC and partners to deliver
	Build an events and festivals strategy, that provides a year-round offer, that attracts new content to build the district's national and international identity	ESC to commission a study of provision and opportunities that events and festivals can bring to East Suffolk	ESC to commission, develop and deliver outcomes
	Develop consistent, bespoke marketing campaigns for different times of the year, particularly off-season	TSC and partners Local campaigns to encourage movement of visitors across East Suffolk	Through ESC, TSC, VEE, Visit Suffolk and local place promotion
	Develop a district wide Cultural Strategy that will provide a vehicle for all-year-round cultural engagement	ESC to commission a study of provision and opportunities for cultural development	ESC to complete the strategy and delivery of the agreed delivery plan
	Develop marketing that promotes East Suffolk's experiences and activities for all	ESC, TSC and partners	Development of experience itineraries, trails, projects and events etc

AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
Further enhanced product development that promotes our less known areas of the district and our out of season offer	Develop new themed trails and experiential itineraries across the district and make existing offers more accessible	ESC to develop a programme of activity that supports product development	Development and delivery of identified projects.
	Target distinct interest groups – walkers, cyclists, bird watchers etc. – to build East Suffolk’s reputation in these subject areas. In addition to this, we will review and monitor new interest groups emerging.		
	Continue to develop and link town plans to ensure the whole district is experienced by both visitors and residents		
	Develop new experiences linked to key assets		
Complete a full audit and review of existing digital and physical marketing platforms and messages	Carry out consumer surveys and reviews of before, during and after a visit to East Suffolk and then build on recommendations.	ESC to carry out review of towns digital assets through the Digital Springboard programme	Recommendations to be developed
	Develop the digital experience of the place, e.g. the further development of East Suffolk Digital Trails	ESC to work with partners to review and develop, digital, fit for purpose marketing	Development of digital marketing initiatives





Oulton Broad

## 12. OUR PARTNERSHIPS

### AMBITION

“

*By 2027, East Suffolk will have a network of highly focused partnerships supporting and enhancing the visitor economy and will continue to be playing an active role in the regional development of tourism*

”

AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To improve the performance of the visitor economy through progressive and active partnership working	To ensure East Suffolk is represented with all key partners involved in tourism development.	ESC to participate in Visit East of England, Visit Suffolk, Visitor Economy Group, Suffolk Visitor Economy Strategic Group and local tourism groups	To ensure a strategic approach to the development of the visitor economy in East Suffolk
To help Visit East of England deliver its plan and objectives	To deliver the agreed marketing and branding campaigns and strategic objectives of Visit East of England.  Keep fully involved with various regional initiatives, particularly around workforce development e.g. VENI	ESC to ensure Visit East of England objectives are met by our partners	Participation in VEE Visitor Economy Group
To attract more national and regional funding through collaborative partnerships	Developing programmes and funding applications in line with local need and opportunities	ESC to influence and include visitor economy initiatives within funding application opportunities, including the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Levelling-Up fund.	Securing funding for identified initiatives as they arise



## 13. OUR ENVIRONMENT

*River Deben near Woodbridge*

### AMBITION

“  
*By 2027, the East Suffolk visitor economy will be an exemplar in both sharing and protecting its natural environment and will be on a clear pathway to net-zero carbon by 2030*  
”



AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To achieve net zero carbon in the visitor economy by 2030	Supporting businesses to understand the changes they can make to contribute to net-zero carbon emissions.	ESC to review existing net-zero emissions support schemes and work with partners to ensure there is suitable access to business support for achieving net-zero emissions	Through partnership working with New Anglia Growth Hub, SCC and other relevant partners
	Explore the potential of the Green Tourism Business Scheme	Work with key partners to explore interest and opportunities within the scheme	Through partnership working to identify need and a way forward
Support the development of mobility hubs within our towns	Continue to extend battery charging points for electric vehicles	ESC to work with SCC to improve / develop local transport improvements and to promote to the visitor economy	To deliver against strategies and policies that are developed
	Assess the need for improved localised transport infrastructure provision		
	Promotion of sustainable transport methods to both residents and visitors		
	Continue to work with public transport operators on green travel initiatives		

AIMS	RECOMMENDATIONS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS DELIVERY MECHANISM
To protect the district's natural landscape through local planning policies	Ensure planning policy supports the development of tourism in a sustainable manner that protects the natural landscape	ESC to ensure that relevant planning policies within the local plan are adhered to	ESC planning procedures
To protect the district's heritage assets	Ensure planning policy supports the development of tourism while maintaining heritage assets	ESC to ensure that relevant planning policies within the local plan are adhered to	ESC planning procedures
To promote environmental tourism as a key unique selling point of East Suffolk	<p>Develop specific environmental campaigns and itineraries to be experienced by both visitors and residents</p> <p>Explore the possibility of an environmental messaging campaign specifically for the visitor economy</p>	ESC to develop a programme of specific environmental initiatives which are supported by effective marketing campaigns	ESC and partners, including TSC, delivering the programme



## 14. DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

*Beccles Lido, Woodbridge town centre, Sandcastle*

### 14.1 Strategy leadership

East Suffolk Council will re-establish the East Suffolk Visitor Economy Strategy Group that will oversee the delivery of the recommendations within the Strategy and ensure a coordinated approach in delivery.

The delivery of the strategy will be led by East Suffolk Council in conjunction with several delivery partners. In particular, The Suffolk Coast DMO will continue to be responsible for the

promotion and marketing of the East Suffolk visitor economy administered through a formal funding agreement. Other key leadership partners include Visit East of England, Suffolk Growth Partnership and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership. All visitor economy stakeholders also have a vested interest in contributing to the fulfilment of the strategy's ambitions.



### 14.2 Detailed action plan

The Strategy will influence the Council's decision-making processes and our partners, including investment, policy development, project development and delivery and funding. Work will now take place on turning a number of the recommendations into detailed action plans and embed the priorities into East Suffolk Council's service delivery and influencing partners to cover the initial 3 years of the 5-year strategy time-frame. Priorities will be subject to need and funding.





### 14.3 Performance management

In addition to the action plans, more work needs to take place on defining the performance criteria for the 6 strategic priorities. Moving towards a monthly dashboard of visitor economy data remains an aspiration.

### 14.4 Funding considerations

Many of the strategic priority recommendations will require additional funding. We await the outcome of the de Bois review of DMOs which may result in extra funding for The Suffolk Coast DMO. If the Suffolk Coast is considered a 'Tier 2' DMO in the de Bois model it will be able to draw down funding from Visit East of England as the 'Tier 1' strategic DMO.

Other funding opportunities will be taken advantage of not least those emerging from the Levelling-up and Shared Prosperity national initiatives. This visitor economy strategy is positioned to align with their core themes of:

- Communities and Place
- Local Businesses
- People and Skills



*Framlingham Castle*





*Halesworth town centre*

### 14.5 Potential Sizewell C implications

The Secretary of State will announce whether SZC will receive planning approval in early July 2022. Following this, and if the decision is to approve consent, it is likely to take until the end of 2022 for EDF to make their Final Investment Decision, which would signal that Sizewell C can commence construction.

Funding from the SZC Tourism Mitigation Fund will only become available once construction commences and will be the subject to annual implementation plans to be agreed between ESC,

Suffolk CC, New Anglia LEP, Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB partnership and EDF. ESC will continue to work closely with The Suffolk Coast to ensure the views of local visitor economy inform these annual plans. Activities eligible under this fund will be in line with the principles set out in the Deed of Obligation which was agreed between ESC and Sizewell C Co. and, due to the high degree of crossover with the objectives of this strategy, will support its delivery.



