

SUFFOLK ECONOMY



POWERING THE UK, FEEDING THE UK & CONNECTING THE UK

Suffolk Economic
Strategy and Growth Plan

DECEMBER 2024

OUR VISION

To secure Suffolk at the forefront of the UK's green evolution, becoming an epicentre of clean technology convergence, innovation, and robust economic growth.

Suffolk is a dynamo that powers, nourishes and connects the nation, ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to thrive and contribute, by leveraging our strengths in Clean Energy, Agri-Food and Drink and Ports and Logistics.

Cover images show: Clean Energy, Agrifood, Employment and Felixstowe Port

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

We are all incredibly proud of Suffolk. It is one of the best places in the country to live, work, learn and visit offering vibrant rural and urban lifestyles.

Our county is full of entrepreneurship, innovation and ideas, and our growing international economy is one of the best connected in the UK. We are home to some of the world's top businesses, and thousands of smaller enterprises here have big ambitions for growth.

Our £21 billion economy averaging 3.3% annual growth over the past decade. Our ambition is to continue to drive inward investment, jobs and new skills so that we can remain at the forefront of the global enterprise and innovation revolution.

Suffolk has great strengths in clean energy, agri-food and drink, ports and logistics, digital technology and advanced manufacturing. Our focus is on the skills and talent these sectors require and our university and colleges are leading the way.

This is a strategy that we hope will inspire and motivate those with ideas and vision to rise to the challenge of this call to action. We recognise that long-term sustainable growth depends on even stronger working collaborations across the public and private sectors. This is the route to securing a framework for economic decision-making, inward investment and new funding opportunities.

We recognise that a strong economy helps to bring generations and diverse communities together, to make the most of every opportunity and to make sure that no-one is left behind.

This strategy provides a clear blueprint for economic decision-making, investments and funding priorities, focused on driving productive, inclusive and clean growth. It lays the foundations for investment, innovation, workforce and infrastructure development while addressing key challenges such as skills,

housing, water, power and land use. Crucially, it conveys a collective commitment for both the county and the country to seize opportunities and manage competing demands on resources.

At its core is EPIC Suffolk, a strategic framework designed to ensure delivery of our ambitions for **E**conomic wellbeing, **P**roductive, **I**nclusive and **C**lean growth by leveraging our strengths and pioneering Tech Convergence.

"My business needs to recruit the brightest and best to help deliver our ambitious business plan. This growth plan is clear about how our university and colleges are geared-up to develop the right skills and training that I need."

**MD of SME
Haverhill**

"Suffolk and the East of England is very investable, but I need easy access to road and rail networks for goods and services. This strategy is a clear call to action for us all to make an even stronger case for more investment, on which we and UKplc could see a big return."

**CEO of large business,
Bury St Edmunds**

Below, from top to bottom: Clean Energy, Halesworth and Felixstowe Port



To ensure our goals are met, the strategy is structured around clear growth opportunities – high growth, emerging growth and value growth – and strategic enablers. Along with EPIC Suffolk, they elements are designed to guide actions, investments and decision-making across industry, public sector, academia, business intermediaries and the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector.

High Growth – Clean Energy, Agri-Food and Drink, and Ports and Logistics are key areas where Suffolk holds a competitive advantage. It plays a crucial role in the UK’s energy transition, with significant investments in projects like offshore wind and nuclear power. It is also a major hub for agriculture, food and drink production, and sustainable practices, supporting the UK’s food security. Its strategic ports – Felixstowe, Lowestoft, and Ipswich – are vital gateways for the UK’s global trade. These sectors are already driving growth and poised for further significant growth through infrastructure and logistics developments.

Emerging Growth – ICT and Digital Creative, Life Sciences and Biotech, and Financial and Insurance Services sectors offer opportunities for job creation and economic expansion.

Strengthening ties with nearby economies like Cambridge, Norfolk, and London will further enhance growth in these sectors.

Value Growth - Key employment sectors such as Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Construction, Health and Social Care, and the Visitor Economy hold potential for boosting productivity and job quality. Investment in skills, innovation, and infrastructure is crucial to drive growth in these industries.

“I used to think you had to leave Suffolk to get a good job with globally transferable skills. But my eyes have been opened. Some of the UK’s leading sectors are located here and I have a great choice of businesses to help kick-start my career.”

Student, Ipswich

We have a thriving ecosystem of companies dedicated to an array of technology advancements and solutions, which are playing a pivotal role in the UK’s fight against climate change while driving technological transformation. There are significant opportunities to merging of these diverse technologies to create integrated solutions that accelerate clean, productive economic growth.

Our five-year growth plan focuses on five key enablers - Attracting Investment, Boosting Infrastructure, Driving Enterprise and Innovation, Talent Development, and Creating Pride in Place. Each enabler sets out strategic interventions which will be underpinned by an Investment and

Delivery plan, a dynamic plan providing detailed interventions and actions.

This strategy reflects the views and ideas of hundreds of senior leaders from across the public and private sectors, including business, education, health providers, local government and the voluntary sector. Our Business Board reflects the dynamism of the Suffolk economy, and everyone involved has been generous with their time and expertise, for which I am hugely grateful. All of us are committed to bringing energy, time and expertise to delivering the strategy.

With the active support and engagement of national and local government, and a solid commitment from business to lead the way, we see this as an exciting next step in tackling the challenges and opportunities before us.

Together, we will achieve the success we deserve, for the Suffolk economy, the region and for UKplc.

Mark Pendlington, Suffolk Business Board Chair, on behalf of the Suffolk Business Board



STRATEGY SNAPSHOT

TECH CONVERGENCE

The integration of diverse technologies such as digital, AI, clean tech, robotics and satellite applications into established industry sectors provides significant opportunity to drive clean, productive economic growth.

HIGH GROWTH

Agri-Food & Drink
Clean Energy
Ports and Logistics

Sector strengths which are driving our economy and contributing to UK plc with significant growth projected.

EMERGING GROWTH

ICT Digital Creative
Life Science and Biotech
Financial Services

Smaller sectors with regional comparative advantages so potential for future expansion.

VALUE GROWTH

Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering
Construction
Health & Social Care
Visitor Economy

Large employment sectors with opportunities to improve productivity and quality of jobs.

OUR SECTORS

OUR ENABLERS

ATTRACTING INVESTMENT

BOOSTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

DRIVING ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

CREATING PRIDE IN PLACE

ATTRACTING INVESTMENT

Attract £4 investment for every £1 of government economic investment.

Build a multimillion-pound strategic project pipeline to attract investment and generate jobs.

Ensure local businesses access emerging opportunities through the Suffolk £ initiative.

Attract major companies with incentives, focusing on Enterprise Zones and Freeports.

BOOSTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

Create a spatial planning framework that integrates housing, transport, utilities, and green infrastructure.

Ensure infrastructure upgrades are in pace with growth and decarbonisation.

Explore sustainable new housing settlements.

Leverage local expertise to advance connectivity beyond 5G.

Support efforts to secure road and rail improvements for enhanced transport links.

DRIVING ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION

Establish strategic clusters in key locations focused on sector specialisations and tech convergence.

Develop technology showcases across Suffolk to promote knowledge transfer, attract talent, investment, and visitors.

Provide impactful access to business support with specialist advisors, mentorship, and targeted interventions for start-ups, scale-ups, and high-growth businesses.

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Implement initiatives that accelerate upskilling and reskill, attract talent, and align training with business needs.

Strengthen work readiness through business-education collaboration and maximising impact of existing and new initiatives.

Establish the UK's first Institute of Tech Convergence to foster innovation and address skill gaps.

Boost productivity through workforce health and wellbeing initiatives and build an inclusive talent pipeline.

CREATING PRIDE IN PLACE

Build and promote a strong Suffolk brand, showcasing strengths and opportunities.

Support Ipswich to transform further into a vibrant economic centre.

Launch "EPIC Suffolk" charter to recognise business committed to economic, social and environmental responsibility.

Expand the ambassador networks to boost Suffolk's national and international profile.

EPIC SUFFOLK

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Achieving financial resilience & improved living standards for all.

PRODUCTIVE

Driving Innovation and boosting economic efficiency.

INCLUSIVE

Ensuring equitable access to opportunities and shared prosperity.

CLEAN

Leading in clean growth for a prosperous, sustainable future.

SUFFOLK

Pioneering Tech Convergence

OUR ECONOMY

ENTERPRISE & PRODUCTIVITY

SUFFOLK ECONOMY CONTRIBUTES £21BN TO UK PLC (2022)



PRODUCTIVITY
£30.96 per hour Suffolk and England £35.86 per hour

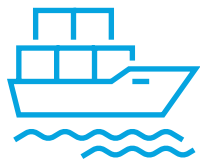
HOME TO 30,945 BUSINESSES (2022)



PEOPLE & EMPLOYMENT



96% EMPLOYMENT RATE
compared to 96% England average (2023)



GATEWAY TO 36%

OF UK'S TOTAL CONTAINERISED TRADE
through Felixstowe (2023)

90% GROWTH IN BUSINESS INCORPORATIONS
over the last 5 years (2019-2024, UK 39%)



BUSINESS THAT START HERE, THRIVE HERE



Suffolk bucks the trend across England

BELOW AVERAGE WAGES with opportunity for growth (2023)



£31K SUFFOLK



£36.2K ENGLAND

BUSINESS MAKE-UP

	XS Micro (0-9)	S Small (10-49)	M Medium (50-249)	L Large (250+)
BUSINESS	88.6%	9.4%	1.6%	0.4%
JOBS	12.2%	15.4%	13.3%	59.1%
REVENUE	8.1%	14.5%	16.5%	60.8%



BUSINESS FORMATIONS 10.5%
(England average 11.6%)



BUSINESS CLOSURES 10.1%
(England average 12%) (2022)

59% OF JOBS ARE IN LARGE BUSINESSES (2023)

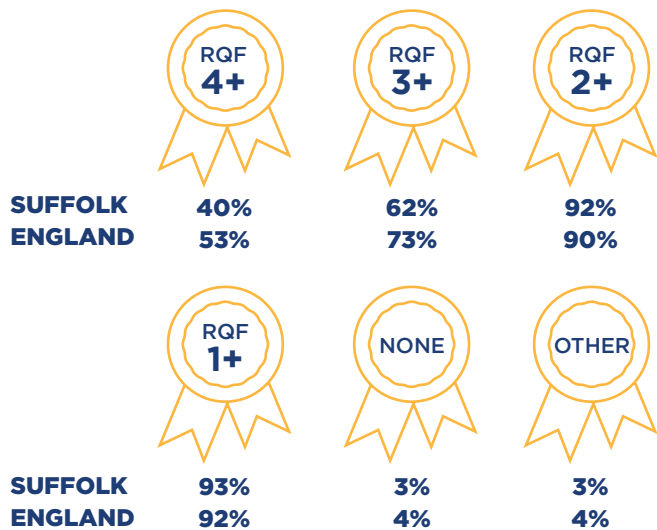


776,000
POPULATION
(2023) with
350,000
ECONOMICALLY
ACTIVE



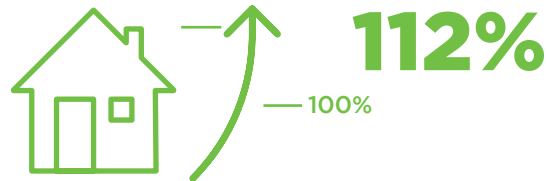
QUALIFICATION LEVELS

in Suffolk (2023)



*Regulated Qualification Framework. Previously NVQ.

HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE & ASSETS

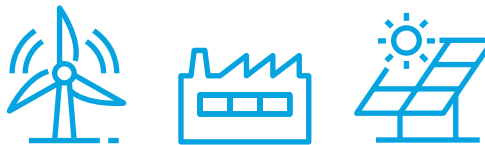


EXCEEDING NEW HOUSING TARGETS

Suffolk Local authorities deliver on housing.

19 NSIP SCHEMES

approved submitted or proposed over recent years including 14 energy projects in development



STRATEGIC TRANSPORT

National and international connections by road and rail to London, the strategic growth corridors along A11, A12 and A14



To unlock our potential, we need to tackle the key challenges facing our economy. Low productivity, skills deficits and infrastructure gaps are well documented. This strategy sets out a clear plan to tackle these issues to deliver tangible success.

330
BROWNFIELD SITE
with **11,500 HOMES** potential.



NATURAL CAPITAL

A Treasure of Protected Landscapes



2 NATIONAL LANDSCAPE AREAS



1 NATIONAL PARK



148 SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

DELIVERING GROWTH

Suffolk's growth opportunities are built around three types of growth.

HIGH GROWTH SECTOR STRENGTHS WHICH ARE DRIVING OUR ECONOMY AND CONTRIBUTING TO UK PLC

CLEAN ENERGY

Suffolk is a national leader in Clean Energy, playing a crucial role in the UK's energy transition.

By 2050, the sector is projected to more than double to £1.5 billion.

Home to nationally significant offshore windfarms in development with a globally competitive renewables supply chain and support industry. Once completed, these will power 4.5 million homes, while Sizewell B and C are set to generate enough electricity to power 8 million homes. With Sizewell C projected to add £4.5 billion in local value from

Energy sector contributes £600m GVA annually and has 54% more jobs than the England average with a GVA per job of £101k.

construction to operation. Together, these will have the capacity to power over half of England homes.

Suffolk has the widest range of energy Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), in the UK, 14 in development. Future investments, such as the £150 million green hydrogen plant at Felixstowe, further enhance Suffolk's clean energy credentials. Much of the clean energy production and transmission is centred in East Suffolk, making this a nationally significant clean energy hub.

Scottish Power Renewables recently announced their commitment to making Lowestoft PowerPark their long-term home for UK offshore wind through a multi-million investment.

"I am proud to work in clean energy, and equally proud that this area is leading the way. The commitment here to sustainable growth is in line with my personal and professional values, and the main reason why I choose to live and work locally."

**Offshore Engineer,
Lowestoft**

Maximising Potential:

To ensure success, we must attract additional investments in renewable energy projects and enhance training programmes, such as those at East Coast College and Suffolk New College, to expand the skilled workforce.

Building on local strengths we must integrate next-generation technologies to enhance efficiency and cut emissions. Key elements include hydrogen generation, carbon capture and storage, and a resilient, transmission network.

Strengthening energy innovation hubs like Lowestoft PowerPark, and OrbisEnergy will support emerging technologies and start-ups. Collaboration with government will help secure favourable policies and funding for clean energy initiatives. Tech convergence offers exciting nationally significant opportunities.

AGRI-FOOD AND DRINK

Suffolk is the larder for the UK, excelling in horticulture, cereal, sugar beet, pig and poultry farming. It is also a key hub for food processing and the drinks industry particularly brewing. Over the last decade the sector has outpaced national job growth by 1.6% annually, underscoring its importance, and it is projected to grow a further two and a half times by 2050 to £4 billion.

Major UK and international companies such as AB Agri, Adnams, Boortmalt, Birdseye, British Sugar, Class, Cranswick, ForFarmers, Greene King, GCB Cocoa, Gressingham Foods, Konings, Molson Coors, Muntons, and Nestlé are here. Babergh and Mid-Suffolk districts are a particular focal point.

Suffolk land-based businesses pioneer innovative agri-tech and sustainable practices, major constituent to net zero aspiration. The county has strong promise in food-tech, with opportunities to increase food processing and to inspire a workforce for the future. Unlocking water and power infrastructure is key to successful delivery. Suffolk is a rich testing ground for food and farming innovation and a key contributor to UK food security.

GCB Cocoa is investing £62.2 million in its facilities in Glemsford, Babergh, creating 220 jobs.

Maximising Potential: Suffolk strengths complement those of our neighbouring counties - Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Norfolk - together forming 'Britain's breadbasket' and producing a third of the UK's crops and nearly half of its home-grown vegetables.

Capitalise on the food processing potential by promoting collaboration between agribusinesses, regulators and research institutions: finding solutions, developing facilities opening markets, and re-localising food systems.

Support the adoption of sustainable farming practices through grants, such as the Innovate UK Agri-Launchpad and technical assistance, to further enhances Suffolk's agricultural productivity and natural capital stewardship.

Suffolk's innovation and research capabilities are bolstered by the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) - world leaders in marine science and technology providing world leading solutions for the aquatic environment, biodiversity and food security.

The Agri-Food and Drink sector has 3,500 businesses employing 41,200 people (11% of the local workforce) and contributing £1.6bn GVA annually

54% more jobs than the England average, with a GVA per job of £39.7k



PORTS AND LOGISTICS

Suffolk is a linchpin in global logistics and trade. Home to the UK's largest intermodal port at Felixstowe and nationally significant ports for clean energy and agri-food sectors in Lowestoft and Ipswich.

Freeport East, encompassing tax sites at Felixstowe port, Gateway 14 in Stowmarket, and Bathside Bay in Harwich, is one of the largest Freeports in the UK, with the A14 corridor as a major strategic location for smart logistics hubs, port expansion and innovation.

With 29,400 employees in over 3000 businesses the

area is poised for significant growth. Freeport East is positioned to be a major investment opportunity for both advanced logistics and manufacturing businesses, with a drive for clean growth. It has the potential to attract £300 million in investment and create 13,500 new jobs, projected to generate £5.5 billion to the UK economy over 10 years.

Suffolk's commitment to innovation and economic vitality is highlighted by the £35 million development of Lowestoft Eastern Energy Facility port for offshore wind and advancements like 5G technology, AI and satellite applications.

Ports and Logistics contributes £1.2bn to the economy with 32% more job in Suffolk than the England average with a GVA per job of £42.2k



Maximising Potential:

To further strengthen Suffolk's leadership in global logistics, greater investment is needed in Freeport East, along with wider Enterprise Zones and other strategic developments. It is essential to build on existing strengths and focus on advancing new technologies in the sector fostering innovations that promote decarbonisation.

Specialised training programmes for the local workforce, will ensue Suffolk remains attractive to international investors. Boosting global trade connections and partnerships will enhance export opportunities for our businesses.

EMERGING GROWTH

Sectors with strong potential for expansion, building on the close relationships with surrounding places and economies, which could create new businesses and deliver new jobs. These include:

Financial Services and Insurance - centred in Ipswich, it includes a cluster of large insurance firms with niche markets such as marine, farm and crop insurance and a network of small financial services businesses adding to the strength of the sector locally. There are opportunities to leverage this cluster joining forces with the emerging fintech cluster in Norwich.

Life sciences and Biotech - which includes Cefas in Lowestoft whilst Haverhill is home to several large pharmaceutical companies, benefiting from their proximity to Cambridge's life science cluster.



The sector has shown a 4% increase in economic output and 11% productivity growth in recent years with opportunities arising from spillover effects from Cambridge.

ICT Digital Creative - includes recognised tech clusters centred around Ipswich and East Suffolk, with BT Adastral Park and Innovation Martlesham, hosting over 150 high-tech ICT companies. The University of Suffolk's DigiTech centre and Digital Futures Institute drive applied research and technology innovation. The University and the Innovation Labs on Ipswich Waterfront supports start-ups, while the Ipswich Creative Hub promotes the growing media and gaming businesses.

Suffolk's distinct landscapes, expanding film infrastructure, and talent development underscores its potential in the creative industries especially in the film industry, immersive technologies and gaming.

We will further enhance connections right across the network of innovation centres in Suffolk and with neighbouring counties, as well as enhancing the focus and connectivity with the Ipswich Waterfront growing it into a vibrant, tech area.

Left: The Life Sciences sector promises growth

VALUE GROWTH

Value growth opportunities are within our large employment sectors where we plan to improve productivity of businesses and quality of jobs.

Advanced manufacturing and engineering (AME) - employs 39,200 people across over 3,000 businesses, contributing around £1.9bn to the economy annually, with a particular focus in West Suffolk and supported by the NAAME network, fostering innovation, collaboration, and productivity.

Construction - employs 24,100 people across nearly 5,000 businesses. Boasting 22% more jobs than the national average which will expand significantly with the construction of Sizewell C, the largest building site in Europe. With an emerging specialisation in Passivhaus and sustainable design, the sector has shown strong job and business growth over the past decade.

Health and Social Care - employs 43,700 people and is supported by the University of Suffolk's Integrated Care Academy (ICA), focuses on mental health, quality of life, and end-of-life care, addressing the rising demands of an ageing population.

"I keep returning to Suffolk for its rich history, breathtaking landscapes, and the warmth of its people. The serene beauty of Sutton Hoo always draws me back - there's simply nowhere else like it."

Visitor, London

Visitor Economy - is our largest sector employing 45,600 and thrives on its diverse attractions, from rural landscapes, scenic coastlines and historic market towns to cultural and heritage sites like Newmarket, the home of international horse-racing. The Visitor Economy is a particularly important sector in East Suffolk, where it accounts for 15,400 jobs and contributes almost £700m to its economy each year.

With the right public and private investment and support, these sectors promise substantial economic benefits, enhancing job quality, boosting regional innovation, and supporting local businesses and cultural heritage.

PIONEERING TECH CONVERGENCE

Suffolk is forging a bold path to become a leader in next generation Tech Convergence, where digital innovation, AI, clean technology, robotics and space advancements intersect and integrate with established industries to drive clean economic growth and productivity.

With a thriving ecosystem of companies dedicated to clean tech solutions, Suffolk is playing a pivotal role in the UK's fight against climate change while driving technological transformation.

Suffolk's has strengths in an array of diverse technologies including AI, AgriTech, CleanTech, cyber security, quantum technology, IoT, UX design, and low orbit space technology. Most importantly, the application of these technologies across all our sectors has the potential to significantly enhance productivity and growth.

Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering plays a particular role to play by acting as a bridge between emerging technologies and practical applications across industries.

Suffolk's increasing involvement with the UK defence and security sectors, exemplified by collaborations with Space East and Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA), underscores its strategic importance in national security and advanced technology initiatives.

Suffolk's hosting of Space East highlights our ambition to be at the forefront of the UK's £18.9 billion space sector working with neighbouring

counties. The region is recognised as the 3rd largest in the UK in terms of income from space related activities and with world-class strengths across a range of converging sectors.

Our strengths in Earth Observation in relation to climatic and environmental research places us at the forefront of solutions to solve global challenges.

The opportunity to support 'non-space' businesses to utilise space capabilities, expertise and assets also present significant opportunities. Building on existing initiatives such as connected Innovation, TechEast and the DigiTech Industry Council will accelerate these opportunities.

By leveraging our expertise and research capabilities we will support our economy in becoming more productive, scale up and increase value chains. This will involve nurturing a strong tech start-up ecosystem and enabling businesses, both new and established, to access new markets and expand globally.

The strategy aims to leverage technology convergence to unlock next generation technologies and new markets, drive technology adoption to enhance productivity across all sectors, and accelerate technology diffusion to ensure these advancements spread effectively across industries, businesses, and organisations. By integrating these three elements, the approach maximises the reach and impact of technological innovation, fostering a resilient, high-growth economy.

Tech Convergence - Integration of different technologies and platforms across different industries to create new products opening opportunities in current and new markets.

Tech Diffusion - the process by which technology innovations spread across industries, businesses, and organisations, ensuring broad access and impact.

Tech Transformation - Business, industry or an organisation change how it operates through the adoption of technology leading to productivity gains.



"Tech and AI are where it's at, and the future will belong to those ahead of the game. This plan commits to putting both at the heart of economic growth, so three cheers for Suffolk, leading by example."

**Technology Director,
Sudbury**

*Top: Clean Tech
Middle: Advanced
Manufacturing
Bottom Left: UX design
Bottom Right: Space
Advancements*

DRIVING CHANGE

Success Stories from the Frontlines of Innovation



Right: 150 hydrogen buses to transport construction workers

SIZEWELL C CLEAN ENERGY AND TRANSPORT

Sizewell C aims to deploy up to 150 hydrogen buses to transport construction workers to site, starting with a pilot of four Wrightbus manufactured buses.

This fleet, among the first in Suffolk, could establish a hydrogen transport market in the East of England. Beyond transport, Sizewell C's low-carbon electricity generation could support technologies like hydrogen production and direct air capture. It is helping to pave the way for hydrogen-powered equipment use on construction sites.

The project consortium, led by hydrogen company Ryze, received over £3m of Government funding to trial a mobile hydrogen refuelling system. Success in this project may reduce fossil fuel dependency on construction sites by introducing hydrogen power equipment.

VIRTURI WORLD-LEADING AI CLINICAL INFORMATICS AVATAR PLATFORM

VirtTuri is a patented AI clinical informatics avatar platform that addresses diverse healthcare needs, including clinical trial support, patient management, and personalized treatment. Currently, it plays a pivotal role in the largest cardiovascular research project globally, aimed at enhancing heart failure treatment. The platform recently earned the National AI Award for Healthcare and an NHS HSJ Award for its respiratory support tool, which significantly reduced hospital admissions in northern England by 75%.

Conceived 12 years ago within Orbital Global, VirtTuri focuses on improving patient understanding of critical clinical information, aligning with the NHS Core20 strategy to engage the entire population. The technology employs interactive AI avatars that cater to various languages, ages, genders, and ethnicities, effectively overcoming barriers related to neurodiversity and literacy.

VirtTuri has garnered substantial support, including recommendations from New Anglia Growth Hub and funding from various organizations, allowing the company to rapidly scale within the NHS and international markets, achieving a valuation nearing £100 million.



Right: VirtTuri focuses on improving patient understanding



Right: 11-week free courses designed to close the technical skills gap

FREE ENGINEERING SKILLS BOOTCAMPS HELPING PEOPLE FIND MANUFACTURING JOBS IN NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK

The Engineering Skills Bootcamp, funded by the Department of Education, launched in January 2024, offering an 11-week free course designed to close the technical skills gap in Norfolk and Suffolk's manufacturing sector. Developed by New Anglia Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering (NAAME) and East Coast College, the course equipped participants with essential skills, certifications, and guaranteed job interviews, facilitating employment in maritime, energy, and advanced manufacturing sectors. This initiative aligns with Suffolk's aspirations to enhance talent development and address the skills shortage, ensuring that local businesses have access to a skilled labour pool.

OUR AMBITIONS

WHEN WE SUCCEED, BY 2045 WE WILL:

ADD **£14BN**
TO THE ECONOMY
OUTPACING THE
ENGLAND AVERAGE
GROWTH RATE.



BE A
**LONG-
TERM**
NET CONTRIBUTOR
TO UK PLC



HAVE
40,000
MORE PEOPLE
IN HIGHER
QUALIFIED
ROLES



EXPAND OUR
TALENT POOL
BY GROWING OUR
ECONOMICALLY
ACTIVE POPULATION
BY **35,000**



HAVE A
**NET ZERO
ECONOMY**

CONTINUE TO BE A PLACE WHERE
BUSINESS THAT START HERE,
THRIVE HERE



45,000

MORE PEOPLE
QUALIFIED TO
LEVEL 3+



**SIGNIFICANTLY
BOOSTED
AVERAGE
WAGES
FOR ALL,
SUPPORTING
BETTER LIVING
STANDARDS**



**INCREASED
AFFORDABLE,
SUSTAINABLE
HOUSING
AND LOCAL
INFRASTRUCTURE**



OUR FIVE-YEAR GROWTH PLAN

Our plan to over the next five years to deliver our long-term vision.

Five growth enablers have been identified as essential in unlocking Suffolk's full potential. Each enabler sets out strategic interventions and tactical actions which will be underpinned by an Investment and Delivery plan.



ATTRACTING INVESTMENT

Leverage public and private investment to maximise economic growth, aiming to attract £4 for every £1 of government economic growth funds invested, developing public-private partnerships to share risks and rewards.

Investment Pipeline - Create a multimillion-pound strategic pipeline of projects and programmes to attract investment, generate jobs and boost productivity.

Funding Packages - Work with financial organisations such as the UK Business Bank and Anglia Capital to build accessible funding packages for start-ups and SMEs.

Local Opportunities - Ensure local businesses access emerging opportunities through initiatives including the Suffolk £.

Inward Investment

- Attract major companies through incentives and a new approach to promoting Suffolk, with Enterprise Zones and Freeport a key focus to drive further expansion in our key sectors.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:

Investment leverage - Achieving a high return on investment.

Economic growth - Increased business activity & job creation.

Stakeholder confidence - Demonstrated value and successful project outcomes.

ROUTE TO SUCCESS:



Business Partner and Investor in Projects



Public Sector Facilitate Effective Partnerships and Collaborations



Academia Support Innovation



VCSE Create Investment Opportunities



Business Intermediaries Facilitate Market Access



Government Delivering on National Objectives Locally

Top: Orwell Bridge
Far left: Business Support
Left: Significant transport improvements including East West Rail

BOOSTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

Helping Suffolk to grow in a sustainable and cohesive manner.

Integrated Growth Planning -

Create a spatial planning framework that integrates housing, social and commercial space, utilities, transport and natural capital while positioning Suffolk as a test bed for green infrastructure innovation.

Water and Energy Solutions - Work with National Grid, Distribution Network Operators and Water companies to ensure infrastructure upgrades are in step with growth and support industrial decarbonisation.

Housing - Explore potential for sustainable new housing settlements in Suffolk in addition to planned growth.

Digital Connectivity - Explore opportunities to capitalise on local expertise in Future Networks and satellite applications to accelerate digital connectivity beyond 5G.

Connecting Growth - Support Transport East to secure road improvements to the A11, A12, A14, A1307, Ipswich Copdock and Mildenhall 5-ways junctions, Orwell bridge, and rail improvements for both freight capacity, in particular Ely and Haughley junction upgrades and increased regularity of cross-country passenger services.

NSIP Impact - Continue to develop legacy plans to maximise the local benefits.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:

Cohesive development - Integrated planning.

Sustainable growth - Balance of development and natural capital preservation.

Enhanced Infrastructure - Improved transport and utilities.

Digital advancement - Leading in digital connectivity beyond 5G.

ROUTE TO SUCCESS:



Business Invest, Innovate & Support



Public Sector Plan, coordinate & facilitate



Academia Offer Insights



VCSE Lead Grassroot Initiatives



Business Intermediaries Advocate for Essential Infrastructure



Government Commit & invest

DRIVING ENTERPRISE & INNOVATION

Cultivate innovation by establishing strategic clusters, leveraging technology, supporting adoption and providing new solutions for businesses support.

Innovation Clusters - Identify and establish clusters in strategic locations focused on sector specialisations and technology convergence.

Showcases - Build showcases across Suffolk to demonstrate emerging applied technologies supporting knowledge transfer, and attract talent, investment and visitors.

Business Support - Provide impactful access to specialist advisors, mentorship, and targeted interventions that equip start-ups, scale-ups, and high-growth businesses with the tools and knowledge needed to succeed. Creating a digital platform to aid efficient, tailored access.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:

Increased innovation - centres of excellence, attracting top talent, leading to breakthroughs in new clean technology and processes.

Job creation - Emergence of new businesses & high-quality jobs. Global competitiveness: Support UK wide global standing via local specialisms and assets.

Tech Convergence and AI leadership - Recognition as pioneers in Tech Convergence & AI solutions.

"I need access to people, networks and funding. This strategy gives me the connections and support, so I can take my ideas to the market with even greater confidence and scale my business effectively"

Sole Trader Entrepreneur, Eye

ROUTE TO SUCCESS:



Business Innovate use of Technology



Public Sector Nurturing Connections & Fund Promotion



Academia Drive Research & Knowledge Transfer



VCSE Supporting Social Enterprise



Business Intermediaries Link Businesses with Opportunities



Government Invest & Testbed

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Grow an adaptable, future-ready workforce by attracting and empowering talent, targeted upskilling and reskilling initiatives and fostering a culture of lifelong learning, unlocking the potential of all individuals across urban and rural communities.

Talent Growth - Implement initiatives that accelerate upskilling and reskilling of the workforce, launch targeted campaigns to attract and retain essential talent, and pursue devolved skills funding to better align training with business needs. Work closely with Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) to meet the skills needs of key sectors.

Next-Gen Workforce - Enhance work readiness, talent identification and early potential by fostering collaboration between business and education, sustained inspiration and clear careers pathways. Maximise apprenticeships and youth employment initiatives to prepare the next generation to contribute to and benefit from local growth, particularly in STEM roles.

Academic Partnerships - Collaborate with the University of Suffolk and Suffolk's Further Education providers to establish the UK's first Institute of Tech Convergence, fostering innovation, industry-academia ties and helping businesses adopt technology to boost productivity and address skill shortages.

Workforce Wellbeing and Inclusion - Boost productivity through workforce health and wellbeing initiatives, support those out of work into sustained employment and leverage the skills of our ageing population to create an inclusive talent pipeline and unlock untapped talent.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:

- Workforce adaptability** - An agile workforce equipped with the skills and qualifications that meets the needs of a growing economy.
- Increased productivity** - Higher efficiency & productivity across sectors.
- Talent attraction** - Known as a prime location for work, learning and living, where all local and attracted talent thrives.

ROUTE TO SUCCESS:

-  **Business** Create jobs & invest in talent
-  **Public Sector** Lead campaigns & design programmes
-  **Academia** Pioneer Education & Training
-  **VCSE** Support Pathways to Employment
-  **Business Intermediaries** Connect Businesses to Talent Resources
-  **Government** Devolve powers & funds

CREATING PRIDE IN PLACE

Enhance Suffolk's reputation as a dynamic, attractive location for business, living, learning and visiting.

Brand Development - Create and promote a Suffolk strong brand showcasing strengths and opportunities. Underpinned with a compelling narrative that attracts investors, talent and fosters pride amongst residents and businesses. Leveraging AI and digital platforms to reach a wider audience.

Transform Ipswich - Support Ipswich in transformation to a vibrant economic centre, pursuing city status and enhancing infrastructure.

Pride in Place Initiatives - Launch the "EPIC Suffolk" Charter, awarding businesses for commitments to social and environmental responsibility.

Ambassador Network - Expand the ambassador network to promote Suffolk's national and international profile.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:

- Community pride** - Enhanced sense of belonging for residents & businesses.
- Talent attraction** - Draw & retain skilled people to Suffolk.
- Increased investment** - Attraction of businesses & investors.
- Visitor economy growth** - Boost in tourism revenue & support for local businesses.

ROUTE TO SUCCESS:

-  **Business** Showcase Ethics
-  **Public Sector** Encourage Participation
-  **Academia** Foster Stewardship
-  **VCSE** Supporting Local Heros
-  **Business Intermediaries** Promote Suffolk Businesses
-  **Government** Endorse Excellence

"The kids I look after don't have many chances in life. They just need someone to believe in them and give them a break. I can see that this new inclusive plan will mean us all working even better together to help those who are among the most deserving, and who should not be left behind."

**Charity Leader,
Felixstowe**

LEADING THE CHARGE

Success Stories of Diverse Paths to Clean, Inclusive Growth

AMBER HUNT

**Managing Director of Marshall Wolfe,
Suffolk Entrepreneur**

Amber's journey from a Law and International Relations postgraduate to a Suffolk Business Leader is defined by bold moves and strategic insights. With her early career in recruitment, she was approached to join Marshall Wolfe's founders in 2018, and later led a management buyout in 2020, successfully guided the company through the pandemic and economic challenges.

Amber's growth mindset was enhanced by the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses programme, where she refined the business strategies and built resilience to drive sustainable growth, along with access to expert mentorship and a powerful alumni network.

Under her leadership, Marshall Wolfe has become a strategic hiring consultancy to regulated industries across the UK and Europe, seamlessly bridging the gap between technology and business. Known for its tailored solutions to attract, recruit and retain top-tier talent, Marshall Wolfe now partners with household names, technology leaders, and innovative start-ups alike, cementing its reputation for quality and innovation.

Amber is passionate about Suffolk's potential as a hub for innovation, valuing its vibrant business ecosystem and quality of life. She envisions Marshall Wolfe as a catalyst for fostering local talent and attracting skilled professionals to the region, helping to build a thriving community of entrepreneurship and opportunity.



Above: Amber Hunt

WEST SUFFOLK COUNCIL

Net Zero investments

In August 2024, West Suffolk Council secured a £17 million loan facility from the National Wealth Fund to fund net zero initiatives, including building decarbonisation, solar installations, and upgrades to its electric vehicle fleet.

This loan aims to decarbonise the council's operations and support local businesses, creating a model that can be replicated by other local authorities. The financing will enhance West Suffolk's Solar for Business Scheme, which has successfully deployed £7.5 million and 8.7 megawatts of solar energy since 2012. The council plans to expand this initiative, offering rooftop solar installations to local businesses, providing them with low-cost, low-carbon electricity. Additionally, the funding will improve the energy efficiency of council buildings through measures like heat pump installations and better insulation. It will also facilitate the transition of the council's fleet to electric vehicles, decarbonising community assets and supporting net zero objectives in capital development projects.



Above: West Suffolk's Solar for Business Scheme

ALAN AND JOHN

**RIDEALGH
Humber Doucy
Brewing Co.**

Humber Doucy Brewing Co., a family run brewery in Suffolk was established by father-son duo Alan and John, is all about Suffolk. Rooted in the community, they capture the essence of Suffolk in each ale they brew, using locally malted barley and names inspired by the area.

Alan and John worked closely with complimentary Suffolk businesses strengthening the local food and drinks scene. Partnerships with local cafés, hotels, and distilleries, along with collaborations for bespoke label and special events, enhance their offering and community presence. Supporting two Suffolk start-ups including a non-alcoholic gin producer, highlights their commitment to local entrepreneurship.

With backing from the Small Grants Scheme, they expanded their facilities, and further support from the local authority enabled them to begin plans for an even larger brewery expansion.

To support this growth, they are tackling challenges around water access. They are actively involved in finding solutions through the Suffolk Chambers of Commerce Water Group, which this economic strategy looks to address.



Above: Alan and John from Humber Doucy Brewing Co.

TO LINCOLNSHIRE & THE NORTH

OUR ASSETS

NORFOLK

SUFFOLK

ESSEX

CAMBRIDGE

ZONES

- AGRI-FOOD
- FREEPORT EAST
- AME
- ENERGY

IPSWICH TO LONDON
60 MINUTES

- WIND FARM
- CLEAN ENERGY CLUSTER
- FINANCIAL & INSURANCE CLUSTER
- LIFE SCIENCE & BIOTECH
- FOOD ENTERPRISE ZONE
- ICT DIGITAL CLUSTER
- INNOVATION HUB PROJECT
- ENTERPRISE ZONE
- UNIVERSITY
- COLLEGE
- NUCLEAR POWER STATION
- GAS TERMINAL
- AIRPORT
- SHIPPING PORT
- THE NATIONAL STUD
- DEFENCE
- RAIL
- MAJOR ROAD LINKS



MAKING IT HAPPEN

Suffolk already has established forums to bring together relevant local leaders to agree, steer and delivery shared priorities.

Suffolk Business Board - Business led, and includes industry, education, VCSE and local government representatives. The Board steers the direction of this strategy, with members sponsoring key priorities to ensure accountability and drive action.

Suffolk Public Sector Leaders - Includes Leaders and Chief Executives from Suffolk's local authorities, NHS and Police, who have agreed and endorsed the strategy and sponsor collective initiatives and programmes

Suffolk sits as part of a broader regional growth opportunity for the East of England. We have established partnerships in place with neighbouring counties and other regional partners. Our collaborative approach is key to unlocking regional growth opportunities and ensuring alignment with national priorities, with a focus on both urban and rural economic needs.

The likes of Transport East, Opportunity East, Water Resources East, Business Intermediaries and the Business Board network will enable Suffolk business, education and local government leaders to continue to constructively work together and within the national and regional context.

The following tools and systems will support this way of working:

Investment and Delivery Plan - A comprehensive and dynamic plan, detailing the initiatives, projects and programmes needed to implement this strategy.

Pitch Documents - Which are compelling and effectively communications our vision, strategic priorities, and the unique opportunities Suffolk offers to attract investors and talent.

Future readiness - Ensure Suffolk is ready to take advantage of, and embraces, future structural changes such as any devolution arrangements, or future local growth funding packages.

A Shared Evidence Base - A robust, evolving resource which underpins this strategy and will support the case for investment and guide delivery.

EPIC Suffolk - A shared framework to guide decision-making and ensure investments focus on interventions with the highest impact for achieving our collective goals.

This strategy will not be delivered by one partner alone or by one strand of investment or actions. The ambitions and priorities we have agreed provide the direction and strategic case for a wide range of partners to develop their own plans and interventions that contribute to achieving our shared ambitions.

Left: Local leaders agree, steer and delivery shared priorities

