

# POWERING CONNECTING FEEDING INNOVATING

Norfolk & Suffolk

## Growth Proposition

Securing the UK's Future



May 2026

## Where the UK's essential systems converge

**Energy, food, digital connectivity and global trade all come together in Norfolk and Suffolk, supported by world-class science, advanced engineering and nationally significant infrastructure. Nowhere else in the UK brings these strengths together in one place at this scale.**

Norfolk and Suffolk together form one of the UK's most strategically important economies, placing our two counties at the heart of the UK's future prosperity and security - powering energy security, sustaining national food security, enabling global trade and advancing digital and industrial innovation.

**“** *This is not a future ambition. It is happening now, with clear potential to scale.* **”**

**Together Norfolk and Suffolk deliver:**

 **Nationally significant clean energy generation and infrastructure,** powering the UK's net zero transition.

 **Britain's food and drink production heartland,** alongside nationally significant agri-tech and bioscience capability, advancing a sustainable farm-to-fork food systems.

 **A global gateway for trade** anchored by the UK's largest intermodal port and nationally significant clean energy and agri-food ports.

 **Strategically important ICT, digital and creative capability,** anchored by an Advanced Connectivity Technology cluster and growing creative industries.

 **A strong and expanding advanced manufacturing and engineering base,** anchoring productive supply chains and industrial growth.

The convergence of these strengths creates a unique live testbed for innovation across a distinctive rural and coastal economy, shaped by outstanding natural and cultural assets, directly supporting the priorities of the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy.

Delivery is place based, strengthening enabling infrastructure and creating the operating conditions for growth to scale across Norfolk and Suffolk. Underpinning these strengths are foundational sectors - construction,

*Below: Great Yarmouth Market, Norfolk*



the creative, cultural and visitor economy, education, financial services, and health and social care - providing essential skills, services and infrastructure that enable growth at scale.

**“Our competitive advantage lies in what we do and how we work together.”**

As the Chairs of the Norfolk and Suffolk Business Boards, we represent a partnership of leaders across business, universities and colleges, local government and the VCFSE sector, united by a shared commitment to unlock the full potential of our two counties.

Our economies share many of the same economic strengths, opportunities, and challenges. By working together, we can achieve greater impact - championing our assets, addressing shared challenges and attracting the investment needed to support long-term growth.

This growth proposition sets out our shared ambition and the leadership we will provide to realise it. It positions Norfolk and Suffolk as a compelling place for growth and investment for government, investors and partners. It is supported by a wider suite of materials, including an Investment Prospectus.

By aligning investment, skills and innovation with our partners, and proactively addressing constraints to growth, Norfolk and Suffolk are ready to scale, lead and move at pace to convert ambition into impact and deliver clean, productive and inclusive growth for our communities, businesses and UK plc.



**Lisa Perkins**  
Chair of Suffolk Business Board



**Nick Steven-Jones**  
Chair of Norfolk Business Board

## Our Ambitions

Our ambition is clear. We will secure Norfolk and Suffolk's position as:

**A nationally recognised economy where essential systems converge** using innovation to power, feed and connect the UK - driving growth, attracting investment and strengthening the UK's economic security.

**A globally competitive destination for investment, innovation and talent** where high-growth businesses choose to locate and scale, private capital flows, productivity rises and vibrant places attract talent and support thriving communities.

**The UK's leading centre for technology convergence** where technology, assets and skills combine to unlock new markets, boost productivity and drive innovation across the wider economy.

**An inclusive economy powered by diverse talent** developing and attracting the skills our sectors need, while ensuring opportunity reaches urban, rural and coastal communities.

**A place where collaboration multiplies impact**, working with partners across growth corridors and regional economies to deliver more together.

## Our Commitment

### Delivering our ambition requires direction, focus and action.

These commitments set out how we will work with partners to turn our strengths into sustained growth - clean by design and inclusive by intent. Together we will:



**Champion Norfolk & Suffolk strengths** to attract national & global investment & secure recognition of the region's strategic role in the UK's economy.



**Unlock investment ready places & infrastructure** by shaping strategic plans, addressing growth constraints & aligning water, energy & planning frameworks to unlock growth & attract investment.



**Scale high-value clusters & technology convergence** by supporting business growth, strengthening supply chains, increasing regional value & boosting productivity.



**Grow the talent pipeline** by aligning businesses, universities, colleges & training providers to develop skills, growing & attracting the talent our sectors need.



**Convene partners to unlock growth** by working across growth corridors & regional economies to align strengths, shape investment opportunities & deliver greater impact.

## Our First Moves

### Amplify our shared voice

We will appoint a series of Growth Champions, each championing the strength and opportunities of our sectors by aligning our messages, coordinating engagement and strengthening the region's profile as a place to invest, innovate and grow.

### Align and strengthen our investment pipeline

We'll take stock of current programmes and initiatives across Norfolk and Suffolk, identify opportunities to scale what works and address gaps, developing new interventions through a shared investment pipeline and collaborating to secure funding.



**£47.6bn**  
Economy



**Norwich Research Park**  
Europe's largest food & health innovation campus



**1.7m**  
Population



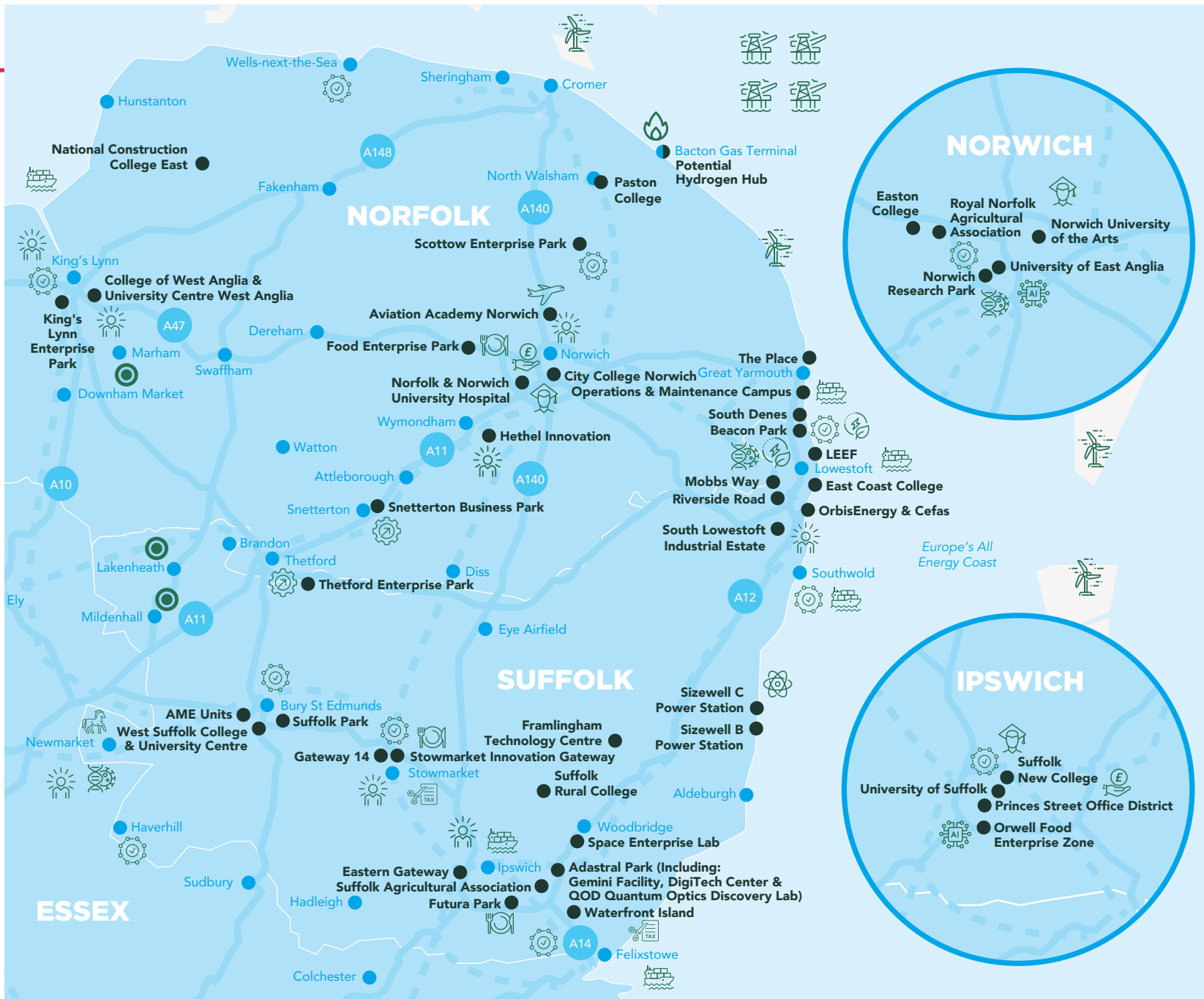
**66%**  
England's homes powered by clean energy NSIPs



**44%**  
of the UK's containerised trade via Felixstowe



**#1 in UK**  
for AI patents, BT Research & Innovation at Adastral Park



-  Clean Energy Cluster
-  Finance & Insurance Cluster
-  Digital Cluster
-  Engineering Biology & Agri Food Innovation
-  Food Enterprise Zone
-  Innovation Hub Projects
-  Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering
-  University
-  Enterprise Zone
-  Gas Rig
-  Wind Farm
-  Gas Terminal
-  Nuclear Power Station
-  Airport
-  Shipping Port
-  RAF Base
-  The National Stud
-  Rail
-  Main Roads

## High-growth sectors and clusters

Norfolk and Suffolk bring together high-growth sectors and innovation, creating investable opportunities at scale. These sectors converge to form strong supply chains and clear pathways to growth.

# Powering the UK's Energy Security

**Enabled by nationally significant infrastructure across the UK's Energy Coast.**

Norfolk and Suffolk sit at the heart of the UK's clean energy transition, forming one of the country's most strategically significant concentrations of energy infrastructure. Offshore wind in the southern North Sea, nuclear power at Sizewell, expanding solar and emerging hydrogen and carbon capture opportunities at the Bacton Energy Hub and Port of Felixstowe position the Energy

Coast central to the UK's clean energy security and delivering net zero priorities.

### Powered by partnerships

Partnerships across the Energy Coast strengthen the sector's competitiveness. Initiatives such as GENERATE, the East of England Energy Group (EEEGR), and the East Wind Offshore Cluster bring together developers, ports, SMEs and education providers, accelerating knowledge exchange, attracting investment and supporting supply chain growth.

### Leading the future energy system

The opportunity now goes beyond generation. With much of the UK's clean power generated and transmitted through the region, Norfolk and Suffolk are uniquely placed to shape the future energy system. Ports at Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft, engineering capability and digital innovation assets such as the Gemini facility at Adastral Park support the integration of clean power

with smart grids, storage and local energy systems. Capturing this opportunity requires coordinated investment and stronger local value capture. Grid upgrades must keep pace with scale, alongside continued investment in ports, industrial infrastructure and specialist skills. Building on assets such as the Bacton Energy Hub, Lowestoft PowerPark, OrbisEnergy and the Great Yarmouth Operations and Maintenance Campus, alongside plans for a national Nuclear O&M Centre of Excellence, will expand capacity for testing, innovation and supply chain growth.

### Powering the nation at scale

Norfolk and Suffolk have 24 energy Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), spanning offshore wind, nuclear and solar – the UK's most substantial and diverse clean energy pipelines. Together, we are not just powering the nation but helping to design and deliver the future energy system.

## Investment & Intervention: Powering the UK

**£39bn Investment in Norfolk & Suffolk offshore wind farms** producing enough power for 16m homes a year.

**£38bn Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station** Will power 6 million homes, creating 10,000 jobs & £4.5bn supply chains opportunities.

**£24.8m Great Yarmouth O&M Campus** home to RWE's UK operational hub for offshore wind. Supporting 650 jobs in offshore wind servicing, skills & supply chain growth.

**£23m+ Sizewell C investemnt in skills** upgrading training facilities, & strengthening workforce skills & employment programmes.

**£8m+ ScottishPower Renewables investment** Rooting their UK offshore wind operations, creating 100 jobs.

# Feeding the UK

## **Driven by world-leading agri-tech, engineering biology and a farm-to-fork food system.**

Norfolk and Suffolk form the core of the UK's most significant food producing region. Excelling in crop and livestock production, the area is home to global and UK businesses operating across the full agri-food value chain, from primary production to advanced processing, brewing and branded consumer goods. Globally significant bioscience and agri-tech capabilities place the region at the forefront of UK food security and agricultural innovation.

## **Leading the future food system**

Norwich Research Park (NRP), Europe's largest single-site hub for agri-tech, food and engineering biology, is a global centre for plant science and nutrition. Its institutions advance crop genetics, plant

resilience and sustainable food systems, supporting UK priorities on food security, productivity and environmental resilience.

NRP anchors a strategic engineering biology cluster, complemented by the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), a global leader in marine science and food security. The Food Enterprise Park is also a significant hub for food innovation and business growth.

## **Capturing value at scale**

Commercialisation is accelerating, as innovation-led companies translate research into real-world solutions. The focus now is scaling this, boosting productivity and retaining more value locally. Partnerships with Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, including the UKRI Agri-tech Launchpad, are supporting growth.

Climate change, water scarcity, biodiversity loss and the shift to low carbon production make Norfolk and Suffolk an ideal testbed for climate resilient, technology enabled food systems. Expanding processing, AI and earth observation enabled agriculture can improve competitiveness, reduce environmental impacts and secure higher-value jobs locally.

## **Feeding the nation at scale**

This sector is outperforming, growing faster than the national average over the past decade. As the UK increases domestic food production whilst reducing environmental impacts, Norfolk and Suffolk will play a greater role in feeding the nation and strengthening food security and resilience through innovation.

## Investment & Intervention: **Nourishing the UK & growing food systems**

### **£317m UKRI investment – Norwich Research Park (NRP)**

Establishing a global hub for plant & microbial research.

**£200m Vengrove & NRP partnership** New research & commercial buildings to grow & attract high value businesses.

**£7.5m Innovate UK Agri-Food Launchpad** £80m+ private investment leveraged, £44m+ locally, driving collaboration, innovation & commercialisation.

**£500k investment in Suffolk Rural Campus** Developing skills needed for the Norfolk & Suffolk workforce.

**£26m Fischer Farms invested to date** backed by Gresham House, plans to scale to £1bn in vertical farming investment.

# Innovating the UK's Digital Future

## **A world class nexus where digital, creative and advanced technologies converge.**

Norfolk and Suffolk combine globally significant telecoms capability with Advanced Connectivity Technologies (ACT) - one of five vital technologies essential to UK competitiveness and security, alongside growing digital and creative capability. Secure networks, AI, satellite applications and next generation connectivity intersect strengths in screen, immersive and games, creating a platform for cross sector innovation.

## **The UK's most significant ACT cluster**

Adastral Park, near Ipswich, hosts BT's global R&D HQ, Innovation Martlesham, the University of Suffolk's Quantum Optics Discovery (QOD) Lab and DigiTech Centre, forming a leading centre for digital and telecoms R&D and commercialisation. This concentration of high-tech businesses, talent and specialist test environments supports

secure networks, satellite applications and low earth orbit systems, directly contributing to the UK's critical national infrastructure and the delivery of ACT, including defence and national security applications, supporting sovereign capability. Space East links this expertise across the East of England.

## **A growing digital and creative ecosystem turning ideas into products and growth**

Norwich University of the Arts (NUA), its Immersive Visualisation Lab, the Norfolk Film Office and Screen Suffolk support screen, immersive and games production, strengthened by distinctive landscape and cultural assets.

Across both counties, hubs including Akcela, Innovation Martlesham, Innovation Labs Group, the DigiTech Centre and UEA's Enterprise Centre drive digital adoption, commercialisation and scale up, supported by networks such as Tech East and Connected Innovation.

Education providers are aligning pathways with industry demand, embedding digital, immersive, and advanced technologies, backed by facilities such as West Suffolk College's XR Lab.

## **Technology convergence: a scale defining opportunity**

The focus now is expanding the ACT ecosystem, scaling commercialisation, strengthening digital adoption and entrepreneurship, and deepening secure networks, satellite applications and creative tech.

Embedding these technologies across the economy will improve productivity and support the UK's critical national infrastructure. High growth firms such as Halo Service Solutions demonstrate the potential for rapid expansion, major graduate recruitment, and global scaling. Alongside a growing screen sector and proximity to Cambridge, Oxford and London, Norfolk and Suffolk are well placed to attract investment, scale content and grow high value creative tech jobs.

## **Investment & Intervention: Securing the UK's digital future**

**£4.2m Quantum Optic Discovery Lab** Europe's largest space-to-ground optical research facility.

**£4.5m NUA Immersive Visualisation & Simulation Lab** Research & studio space advancing immersive media & virtual production.

**£9.6m DigiTech Centre** Skills led growth via real-world student-business innovation co-located with BT at Adastral Park.

**£5.1m Investment into Digital Hub Norwich** for digital start ups & scale ups & scaling the Innovation Martlesham next generation tech cluster.

**£2.2m Future Tech** £1m commercial deals & 10x public return. Supporting early-stage tech founders from first product to investment.

# Realising the UK's Industrial Capability

## Through advanced manufacturing and engineering (AME) applying and scaling innovation across the UK's essential systems.

A high-skilled, high-wage sector employing 87,816 people, generating £3.8bn in GVA. Employment levels are 13% above national average, with wages around £43,000, reflecting a strong concentration of productive firms embedded in nationally significant supply chains.

## A uniquely connected industrial ecosystem

Norfolk and Suffolk's AME strengths stem from a rare concentration of interconnected assets. Few UK locations combine:

- Nationally significant clean energy infrastructure
- A major agri food and agri tech ecosystem
- Global trade access through the Port of Felixstowe
- One of the UK's designated Freeports - Freeport East

- Advanced Connectivity Capability at Adastral Park
- Pharmaceutical manufacturing in West Suffolk and King's Lynn
- A strong engineering base across both counties
- A growing defence manufacturing base including BAE Systems, combining deep defence and aviation heritage with direct access to RAF and MoD sites such as Marham and Lakenheath.

AME businesses across these systems, supply precision components, specialist fabrication, process technologies and secure systems. Infrastructure investment flows through this industrial base, translating into supply chain contracts, exportable products and high-skilled employment.

## Boosting productivity through technology convergence

Norfolk and Suffolk already host the infrastructure, research base and industrial

capability. The next phase is scaling modern manufacturing, integrating these strengths at scale and embedding AI, robotics and advanced connectivity into production systems. This will raise productivity, shorten innovation cycles, capture greater supply chain value, and strengthen export performance.

This requires expanding shared testing and demonstration facilities, aligning skills pipelines and capital investment, accelerating SME adoption, and ensuring power-ready industrial sites that enable growth.

## Unlocking AME's true scale

Advanced production is already being driven by investment across clean energy, agri food, pharma, defence and advanced connectivity. But convergence offers a step change. Embedding AI, robotics and advanced connectivity will accelerate growth and scale high-value firms.

## Investment & Intervention: Driving industrial innovation

**£42m+ of investment in AME innovation centres** at Snetterton & West Suffolk, with Hethel set to double in size - boosting R&D & collaboration capacity.

## £7.4m Productivity

**East (UEA)** Industry-led prototyping, digital integration, productivity expertise.

## £9.6m Made Smarter

**Adoption** Accelerating SME adoption of automation, robotics & data driven production.

## £200m UKRSPEC SYSYEMS

11,000 sqm with up to 1000 drones/month & 500 jobs. Establishing a major advanced drone manufacturing & R&D hub.

**NAAME** Strengthening supply chain collaboration, peer learning & sector leadership.

# Connecting the UK to Global Trade

*Below, left: Lowestoft Eastern Energy Facility (LEEF) Port, Suffolk*

## **Anchored by national significant ports and integrated logistics network.**

Norfolk and Suffolk is a linchpin of UK trade, home to the nation's largest intermodal port at Felixstowe, handling 44% of the UK's containerised freight. Alongside nationally significant ports in Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Ipswich and King's Lynn, the region forms a vital gateway for global markets. Together, these ports enable clean energy operations, support agri-food exports and underpin advanced manufacturing supply chains.



This globally connected system keeps UK supply chains moving, fuels export performance and reinforces national energy and trade security, supporting the UK's supply chain resilience, trade competitiveness and economic security. The sector generates £2.3bn GVA and supports 55,000 jobs, with Suffolk showing strong specialisation and employment 55% above the national average.

## **Unlocking growth through smart logistics**

The next phase of growth is about value capture. Scaling smart, clean and secure logistics that strengthen UK trade competitiveness and supply chain resilience, supported by Transport East to improve regional and national connectivity.

Freeport East demonstrates this momentum, with the potential to attract £300m of investment and create 13,500 jobs across advanced logistics, clean energy and

manufacturing. Investment into Freeport East, Enterprise Zones, port adjacent industrial sites and inland logistics hubs can anchor more processing, distribution and supply chain activity locally.

Specialist training aligned to automation, digital freight systems and low carbon operations will ensure the workforce is equipped to capture this growth.

## **Strengthening the UK's trade and supply chain security**

With further infrastructure in the pipeline, Norfolk and Suffolk offer a scalable, high-growth ports and logistics ecosystem capable of attracting sustained investment. This will generate high-skilled jobs, retain more value locally, accelerate clean logistics and strengthen UK trade, supply chain and energy security, providing a resilient, globally connected platform for long-term competitiveness and secure international trade.

## **Investment & Intervention: Connecting global trade & supply chains**

**£105m Port investment** across Peel Ports' Southern & Northern Terminal redevelopment & ABP Lowestoft Eastern Energy Facility, delivering essential infrastructure for the growing North Sea offshore energy market.

**One of the UK's largest logistics deals of 2024** Sizewell C lease agreed at Orwell Logistics Park.

**Freeport East Harnessing deep water port access** Unlocking £300m investment & 13,500 jobs across clean energy & high value industry.

**£360m+ highways improvements across A12, A47, A14** Unlocking growth by improving the corridors that connect communities & power business.

# Foundations enabling growth

**Norfolk and Suffolk's growth is reinforced by foundational sectors that provide the services, skills and quality of place high-growth industries rely on.**

**Financial and Professional Services** are a major strength. The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy recognises Norwich as a nationally significant insurance centre anchored by firms such as Aviva, complemented by Ipswich's financial and professional services cluster. Together, they contribute to the UK's strength in insurance and financial services, providing the expertise, capital and risk management businesses need to invest and scale, with growing opportunities in fintech, data and digital innovation.

**Construction** and the built environment enable growth through infrastructure delivery and housing, shaping

communities and growth locations. Supported by a skilled workforce, strengthened by the Construction Technical Excellence College led by West Suffolk College. Together, they deliver investment ready sites, nationally significant infrastructure, including major energy and clean growth projects such as Sizewell C, one of the UK's largest infrastructure investments, and the skills needed to deliver them.

A major **Health and Social Care sector** underpins workforce participation, resilience and productivity. As demands grow and the population ages, there are significant opportunities to harness technological convergence, building on strengths at Adastral Park and NRP, to support prevention, care closer to home and more joined up services, helping people live well and stay in work.

A vibrant **Creative and Visitor Economy** builds on Norfolk and Suffolk's outstanding natural and cultural assets, coast, countryside and market towns that attract talent, investment, and support thriving communities. From Norwich to Ipswich and market towns across the two counties, these places are increasingly recognised among the UK's best places to live and for their cultural ambition. Together, they create the conditions for growth, making Norfolk and Suffolk a place people choose to live, learn, work and invest.

The **Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise** (VCFSE) sector plays an essential role across Norfolk and Suffolk, supporting communities, improving wellbeing and helping people to access opportunities and participate in the workforce.

*Below: King's Lynn, Norfolk*



Norfolk and Suffolk's **intellectual and innovation base** attracts talent and businesses, brings together universities, colleges and research institutions, including the NRP, Europe's largest food and health innovation campus, and Adastral Park, home to BT Group's research and innovation UK's leading AI patent filer.

# Delivering on our commitments

Norfolk and Suffolk's Business Boards are already delivering a coordinated programme of activity that supports business growth, unlocks investment, strengthens the region's economic foundations and aims to leverage £4 of private investment for every £1 of public funding.

These interventions demonstrate how the Boards' commitments are already being translated into action to support regional growth and contribute to the UK's future prosperity, with momentum set to increase through the planned appointment of Growth Champions across both counties.

Norfolk and Suffolk are already powering the UK's clean energy future, feeding the nation, connecting global trade and driving innovation across the economy. By working together to build on these strengths the region is ready to unlock investment, create high-value jobs and deliver clean, inclusive growth that helps secure the UK's future.



**Championing Norfolk & Suffolk strengths**

**Norfolk & Suffolk Unlimited** Promoting the region's investment strengths through a unified place brand.

**UKREiiF** Showcasing opportunities to national & global investors at the UK's flagship investment forum.



**Unlocking investment ready places & infrastructure**

**Water & Energy Plans** Coordinated action to understand constraints, plan for future demands & enable growth at scale.

**Backing Ely Area Capacity Enhancements** with Transport East to unlock rail capacity.



**Scaling high-value clusters & technology convergence**

**New Anglia Growth hub** Supporting businesses to start, scale & innovate.

**Connected Innovation** 27+ hubs joined to drive collaboration & R&D.

**Innovation Grant Mentoring** Supporting high growth businesses to commercialise ideas.



**Growing the talent pipeline**

**Skills Bootcamps** Intensive training to help people gain in-demand skills & move quickly into jobs.

**Norfolk & Suffolk Careers Hub** Supporting high quality careers guidance by connecting schools, colleges & businesses.



**Convening partners to unlock growth**

**Space East** Bringing industry, academia & government together to grow the East England & UK's space economy.

**GENERATE** Convening the energy sector to accelerate innovation, investment & supply chain growth.