



Community Strategy Theme: Aspiring and Skilled

The emerging sustainable community strategy for West Norfolk has five themes, of which 'aspiring and skilled' is one. This is founded on an evidence base that identifies low levels of aspirations, educational attainment and skills as characteristic of the area.

The West Norfolk Partnership has had a priority of raising skills, aspirations and improving attainment levels since 2005. The partnership allocated funding as part of this 'big idea' approach to addressing local priorities, which also attracted funding from the County Strategic Partnership; Go-East's 'Learning Communities' programme and the Learning and Skills Council.

To continue to tackle these issues the WNP has identified potential interventions that address the 'aspiring and skilled' priority theme within the community strategy. This has been led by the Skills and Learning Group, reporting through the Economic partnership to the partnership's Management Group.

Evidence Base

The 'State of West Norfolk' report presented the evidence base relating to skills in a way that clarified the importance of the issue locally and confirmed the earlier prioritisation. The evidence available suggests skills and aspirations is arguably the biggest challenge facing West Norfolk - 42% of the resident population is functioning at basic skills level or below¹ (qualified below NVQ 2 level):

Proportion of working age population with no qualifications (residence based) (January - December 2006)			
Filtered by Sub Region : Norfolk			
Rank.	District	%	Nat. Rank
1	Kings Lynn and West Norfolk	20.18	43
2	Breckland	18.18	70
3	Great Yarmouth	17.49	80
4	North Norfolk	16.3	107
5	Norwich	11.76	250
6	Broadland	11.11	271
7	South Norfolk	8.7	336
Great Britain : 14.3			

Source: DAWN; Annual Population Survey

Notes: Reproduced under the terms of the Click-Use License. This indicator is an official Performance Indicator - ECR5a. National Rank is out of 408 local authorities.

¹ Full data is available from www.visitdawn.com

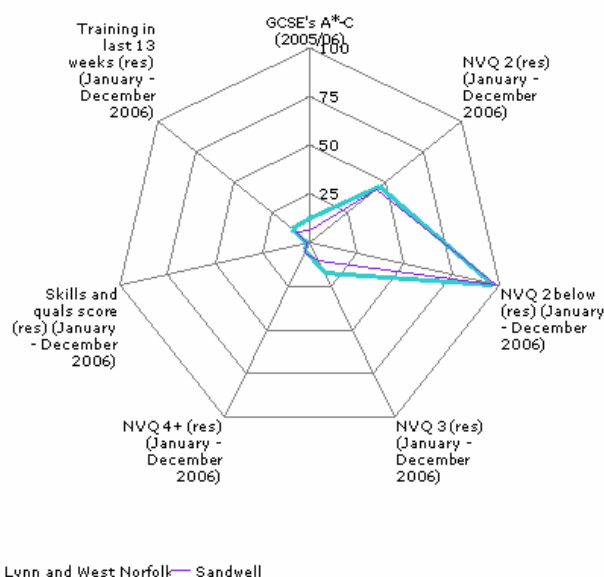
There is a real need to improve the local skills and knowledge base to help drive up what is a relatively low-wage economy. This is key to shaping the area’s future, in terms of attracting growth sectors and retaining skills. This trend is partly dependent on retaining the 16-18 year old population and raising their aspirations and attainment, which is the lowest in Norfolk:

Proportion of students gaining 5+ GCSEs (A*-C) (2005/06)			
Filtered by Sub Region : Norfolk			
Rank.	District	%	Nat. Rank
1	South Norfolk	66.6	41
2	Broadland	58.1	168
3	North Norfolk	54	252
4	Breckland	53.2	260
5	Norwich	52.4	273
6	Great Yarmouth	50.1	300
7	Kings Lynn and West Norfolk	49.8	308
England : 58.5			

Source: DAWN; GCSE results (LAD level)

Notes: Reproduced under the terms of the Click-Use License. This indicator is an official Performance Indicator - QoL9b & BV38. National Rank is out of 408 local authorities.

Equally important local issues are around ‘up-skilling’ older people and transferring skills of migrant workers, both of which will help address local skills shortages and take advantage of the skills inherent within the population. Our nearest neighbour, based on a range of skills and qualifications indicators, is Sandwell in the West Midlands:



Source: www.visitdawn.com

The Norfolk Investing in Communities (IIC) Partnership has provided a thorough analysis of deprivation and need within the County which identifies, in particular, the extent to which pockets of isolation and deprivation exist at sub-ward level within rural communities. The Norfolk County

Strategic Partnership published research on skills and aspirations at its annual conference in 2007 – this again showed the extent to which this issue is relevant in West Norfolk, even within the context of a county that generally underperforms compared to national averages².

Investing in Communities: Norfolk

The vision of LiC Norfolk is to “reduce deprivation and social exclusion in Norfolk, so that more people have the opportunity to realise their potential, contribute to the greater prosperity of the county and benefit from an improved quality of life.” The strategic themes for LiC reflect the regional priorities:

- ✚ Skills: Raise the skills aspirations and achievements of young people and adults from disadvantaged communities
- ✚ Employment: Raise the employment prospects of adults and young people from disadvantaged communities
- ✚ Enterprise: Encourage an enterprising culture in disadvantaged communities

The priority geographic areas are those wards and Super Output Areas in the 10% most deprived in the country, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2004), which in West Norfolk are largely co-terminous with the areas targeted by SSCF funding³: Fairstead; North Lynn; Gaywood Chase; South and West Lynn; St Margaret’s & St Nicholas.

Skills & Aspirations: Vision & Priorities

Developing skills and raising aspirations across West Norfolk with improved attainment, lifelong learning and local workforce skills

The plan for an ‘educated West Norfolk’ aims to create a place that recognises the fundamental role of skills and learning in breaking down social and economic barriers. By fostering a culture of learning, it aims to raise aspirations and opportunities for local residents, whilst meeting the needs of business, so that West Norfolk and its communities can fulfil their potential.

The vision for West Norfolk as a university town is a recurrent and underpinning theme. The future development of the College of West Anglia site alongside the proposed new Anglia Ruskin university provided an important opportunity for developing this role. This provides a catalyst for promoting wider skills development across West Norfolk, including lifelong learning, ‘up-skilling’ amongst older generations and improving local workforce skills. In addition to promoting the skills agenda, the University would provide economic benefits by attracting and retaining skills and, crucially, allowing the local community to fulfil its potential. It would help in raising aspirations and provide opportunities to meet these higher expectations. The plan therefore aims to build on the university as a driver for other elements of the vision, such as shaping the economy and promoting learning.

This also links to developments such as the planned Academy for King’s Lynn and the implementation of the ‘Building Schools for the Future’ programme, which is being rolled-out in West Norfolk ahead of the rest of the county.

² All this research is available on the partnership’s data observatory www.visitdawn.com

³ worth £3.6m over the four years to 2010, delivered through the Neighbourhood Management Board and accountable to the West Norfolk Partnership

This plan therefore places skills at the centre of West Norfolk's vision, tackling the borough's educational underperformance and need for improved skills. The plan is driven by the end goal of removing the ceilings imposed by the local low levels of skills.

Objectives

1. Raise aspirations and educational performance
2. Reduce exclusions from schools
3. Reduce the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)
4. Increase participation in lifelong learning
5. Support housing and economic growth with major investment in education, training and skills development ,

Achieving the Priorities

The management group of the WNP want to provide coherence and focus to the initiatives and funding opportunities in this area; aligning funding programmes where possible will help achieve greater value for money and reduce the risk of duplication of effort.

It is also important that the programme of investment over the period provides a legacy and that outcomes and benefits are evidenced to increase the likelihood of such improvements being mainstreamed. The data observatory, 'DAWN' will be used to provide the evidence base for the target groups and allow the impact of the interventions to be monitored.

This paper goes on to provide a summary of projects previously identified to tackle the issues and help achieve the priorities, whether funding has been attracted or not. These need to be developed into a coherent work programme, project and performance managed, overseen by the skills and learning group with regular updates to the management group.

Project Ideas	Funding			
	IIC	SSCF	WNP	Other
<p>1. Skills Strategy - Engaging with NEET and pre-NEET cohorts through active mentoring to provide basic and life skills through vocational learning. Delivered outside mainstream institutional settings focusing on creative arts / media. Approach could lead to wider family engagement in learning. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Catalysts - an action research project to raise and change aspirations through a process of learning about the aspirations of families in participating school communities. It is supported by a dozen or so schools in the mentioned areas of King's Lynn plus rural WN Fens. • Growing Our Own initiative to provide routes for local people into skill development and career progression that strengthens the local economy and raises aspirations by raising awareness and improving information, advice and guidance about opportunities in the key sectors of the local economy to young people, their families, schools and advisers. Opportunities West Norfolk is an 'interactive' careers event developed as part of this project. 	✓		✓	
<p>2. Community Radio and Film unit - Along the NR5 model this would use creative media as a means of engaging with people. Such a unit, possibly mobile so that it can be accessed in all communities, would provide access to filming, radio and other media through which to develop basic skills. This could link to proven initiatives such as community heritage store and current priorities such as tackling issues of community cohesion and use of the internet as a means of publishing work.</p>				
<p>3. Family Learning Unit - linked to arts development and based at King's Lynn arts centre. Builds on existing work with pupil referral unit and probation service. Requires conversion of existing space into a suitable resource which could include a social enterprise.</p>	✓			
<p>4. Young People as Youth Workers - Training and development programme for young people to acquire the skills to be a youth worker within the deprived areas of King's Lynn.</p>	✓			
<p>5. Junior Sports Coaches - To support the Multi-Use Games areas in development across King's Lynn as part of the SSCF programme. A sports coach is being recruited to support these and this project will engage with young people to increase use amongst young people</p>				
<p>6. Getting Started - NCH proposal to engage with 30 young people NEET through a 10 week programme (3 x 2.5 hours per week) aimed at re-engaging them with EET. This will be through accreditation in basic skills, vocational development, CV writing skills etc and access to sporting and community activities. Project proposal is for 60 young people in total over two years.</p>				
<p>7. Learning Shop - Provision of an accessible facility with a range of services including provision of support to lone and young parents, helping them gain confidence and preparing them to go back into employment.</p>				
<p>8. Micro Enterprise Centre for people with learning difficulties - Project already under development and promoted by 'Forward and Futures'</p>	✓			
<p>9. Hardwick Enterprise Centre - Plans to develop Hardwick Industrial Estate units to support 'mid range' enterprise – a natural progression from Enterprise Works retaining support.</p>	✓			

Project Ideas	Funding			
	IIC	SSC F	WNP	Other
10. NORA Entrepreneur Units - NORA 'Entrepreneur Units' developed and supported by ARU / BC / COWA.				
11. Incubator Unit - Provision of business incubator units linked to the ARU / COWA development.	✓			
12. Roll out Bizz Fizz Model - On-hand business support to be available with the enterprise, entrepreneur and incubator units	✓			
13. Exclusion support within and without school(s) / Adolescent Support - Appoint <i>sessional youth workers</i> whose role would be befriending, pulling together existing work, and providing capacity to do individual work with disaffected young people in the area who are not attending school or who have intermittent attendance and who may be causing disruption on the streets and who could also be involved in some way with the criminal justice system				
14. Alternative provision for non 'school-shaped' youngsters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairstead - Possibilities to link with PCT development and / or redevelopment of Fairstead pub site. • Gaywood - Development of unit at Oak Circle – Gaywood Park into internet café / YP enterprise / migrant workers • North Lynn - Improvement of facilities in North Lynn 				
15. Intensive Family Support - Provide a pool of sessional family support workers who can be deployed across the area to provide support to families where there are young people at risk but where we feel that some intervention put in place early enough might deal with the issues and prevent the need for more expensive intervention in the future.				
16. Youth Forum - hrough effective discussions with young people better meet their needs and thus reduce disaffection and raise aspiration and increase participation. Proposal is for a youth participation worker.				
17. Teenage Pregnancy - supporting teenage pregnancy avoidance projects (cross cutting issue) with funding for school nurses in each of the ten high schools. Aims to ensure that young people have access to a range of medical support and advice. This could also include obesity, diabetes, first aid and well-being more generally. Links to the Health Partnership's 'active living' project.				
18. Notcollege - an innovative e-learning initiative launched at the non participation of the 16+ population, following from the 'notschools' project.				
19. Build your own house - This could come on stream as part of tackling rural deprivation. A range of agencies would work together, including Borough Council, Freebridge Community Housing etc, dealing with the homeless / unemployed. These groups would develop 'on the job' basic and construction skills with the end result of additional affordable housing units.				
20. Build a Car/Motorbike/Cycle - Focus on motivating young unemployed people by engaging them in building a vehicle, thus obtaining basic skills. They would then use this vehicle to access lessons and work. Potential links to speedway and positive impact on crime and ASB.				
21. Migrant Workers - This is an emerging priority for the partnership and nationally. Issues include transferability of skills; alternative methods of making ESOL available etc				