

Broadland District Council Plan 2024 - 2028

Putting people and communities first







Foreword by Leader of the Council, **Sue Holland**

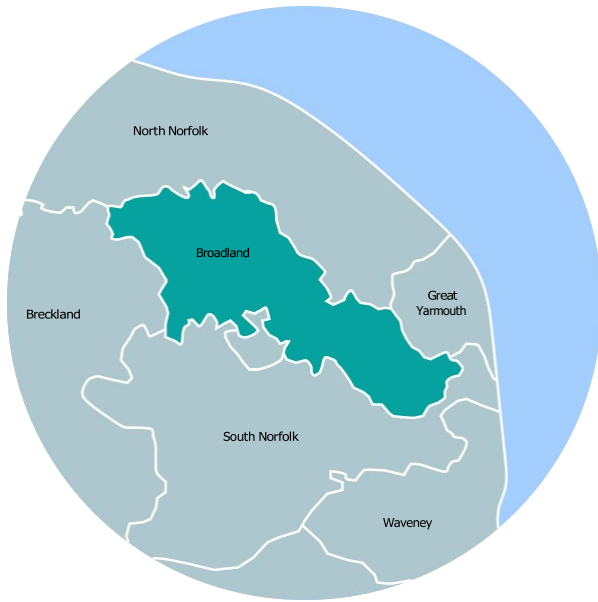
I am very proud to represent the residents of Broadland, as we lay out our future plans over the next four years to support our residents to lead happy, healthy and fulfilled lives. As a partnership comprising Liberal Democrats, Labour and Green, we bring a modern caring council which is looking to safeguard our future. This is a really exciting time for our new leadership in Broadland, as we set out our plans and work with residents to deliver quality services in an environment that is protected, restored and enhanced for future generations to enjoy.

We will create a district where:

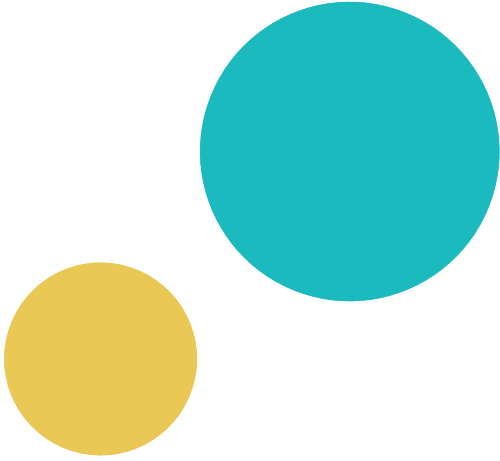
- individuals are empowered, to live their best lives, where health and wellbeing is promoted and our communities thrive
- residents have access to the right homes in the right places
- we think globally and act locally, working collaboratively to respond to the climate and biodiversity crisis
- residents are in well paid jobs, supporting our local economy to thrive. They can access our services and receive the help and support that they may need.

We know that the combination of the lack of central government funding, changing resident needs, and increasing pressure on our critical services will impact on financial plans and we will be working tirelessly to build and develop new ways of working, to make a real difference.

Our plan for the next four years is ambitious, and we will work with our communities and partners to deliver outcomes that will have a lasting impact on the residents in Broadland.



Sue



Introduction

Broadland is a great place to live, work and visit. We aim to provide the best public service for all our residents. This plan describes how we will focus our resources to deliver high quality, easily accessible and value for money services to our residents and stakeholders.

Our communities face many challenges. The cost of living, food, and housing is difficult for many and through our services, we will endeavour to provide the support necessary for all in our communities to not only get by but thrive.

We are committed to ensuring the right homes are available in the right places with a focus on affordable homes for local people. National planning rules often constrain what we can do at a district level, but we will make a determined effort to ensure appropriate and sensitive delivery for our residents. Investment in our own housing stock will provide accommodation for those in priority need and reduce our dependency on costly hotel and private accommodation.

The next four years, and beyond, will also see a transition in our response to climate change. We can already see the impacts on the infrastructure that supports our daily lives. Electricity will become even more important in our lives for heating our homes and powering our vehicles. The insulation of our homes to reduce energy dependence will require modernisation and specific support for those less able to pay. Together we can tackle biodiversity loss by preserving, enhancing, and connecting our existing green spaces. New planning rules will help us to develop and increase biodiversity in new developments. Tree and hedge planting schemes will be continued to increase the greenery that helps air quality, reduces carbon dioxide in our atmosphere, and enhances our nature and wildlife.

To build a sustainable, resilient economy we recognise that economic activity should serve human wellbeing and the natural world. Our focus will be on creating meaningful, well-paid jobs for local people.

This Plan is not an exhaustive list of everything we will be doing in the next four years, it sets out the critical activity for the Council and ensures this activity is focused through our governance arrangements. Supporting this plan is the first of our 2-year ambitious Delivery Plan for 2024-2026 (see appendix 1) which outlines the proactive programme of work we will prioritise to achieve our objectives.



Our commitments to you

As a modern, caring Council, we will strive to achieve this by focussing on our four key priorities:

- Empowering individuals and communities
- Cleaner, greener Broadland
- Providing the right homes in the right places
- Sustainable resilient local economy

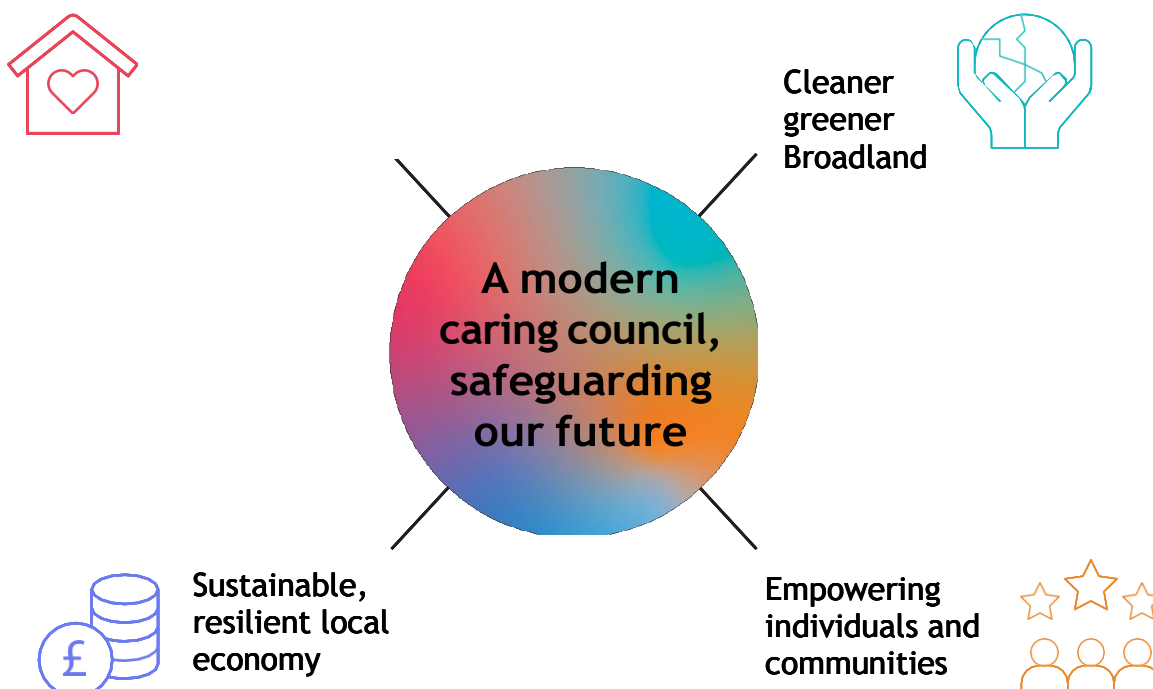
To achieve this, we will:

- Listen to our Broadland residents, always putting them first in what we do.
- Build and develop new cost-effective ways of working incorporating the latest advances in technology where possible.
- Work towards reducing inequalities for a fairer society.
- Strive to minimise our own impacts on the climate and respond appropriately to the consequences of climate change.

Our actions will provide opportunities to adapt to changing circumstances, narrow inequalities, and build more resilient communities.

The publication of this Council Plan is the start of a process, and we look forward to taking steps to address the complex issues and challenges facing Broadland so that all residents can enjoy a good quality of life in an environment which has been protected, restored, and enhanced for future generations to enjoy.

Our vision is to support our residents to lead happy, healthy and fulfilled lives



Empowering individuals and communities

Objective: Create a district where individuals are empowered, enabled and supported to live their best lives, where health and wellbeing is promoted, and communities thrive.

Current challenges we need to address:

- By 2036, an average of 6.1% of the population will be 85 or over.
- 9% children live in low-income families.
- 11.6% of households experience fuel poverty.
- An average of 60% of adults are classed as overweight or obese and a sixth of children aged between 10-11 are classified as obese.

Our aims:

- Further target our help hub delivery to areas of higher need.
- Expand a funded social prescribing service into all GP practices and further into acute and community mental and physical health settings.
- Play an active role in encouraging Corporate Social Responsibilities (both social and environmental) across as many businesses as possible.
- Through appropriate signposting, provide guidance on what actions residents and businesses can take to reduce carbon emissions and reduce energy costs.
- Explore the delivery of Community Hubs across the district.
- Roll out the use of our outreach vehicle to support those in areas of isolation and rurality in the district.
- Develop a strategy which explores and outlines future leisure provision in Broadland, with the council as possibly both a provider and as an enabler.
- Work with our Health and Wellbeing Partnership to enable residents to thrive within a supportive framework.



Number of residents physically active is higher than the national average



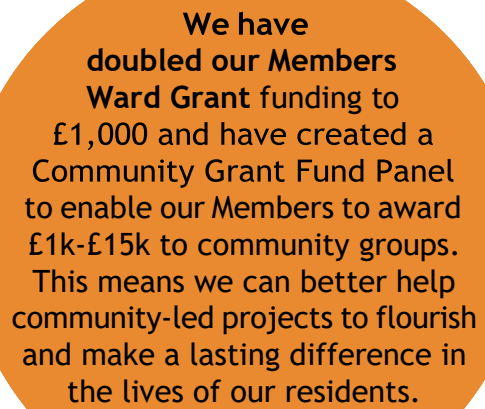
There is lower than average crime rate



132,000 people live in the area



In 2021, 48.2% of Broadland residents described their health as “very good”

An orange circle containing text.

We have
doubled our Members
Ward Grant funding to
£1,000 and have created a
Community Grant Fund Panel
to enable our Members to award
£1k-£15k to community groups.
This means we can better help
community-led projects to flourish
and make a lasting difference in
the lives of our residents.

Providing the right homes in the right places

Objective: Create a district where all residents have access to safe, and affordable, energy efficient housing, leading to thriving, inclusive communities that promote overall wellbeing.

Current challenges we need to address:

- 18,500 new homes needed in Greater Norwich by 2026.
- Supply of housing provision outstripped by demand.
- Energy inefficient housing.
- Lack of funding to invest in affordable homes.

Our aims:

- Grow the number of affordable homes in our district through our approach to housing development.
- Explore the opportunities with establishing a Housing Commission, which would seek to bring together partners (e.g., developers, housing associations, health partners, charities etc) to develop evidenced-led solutions to the housing crisis in Broadland
- Explore opportunities, following Registered Provider status, with Homes England as a potential key delivery partner.
- Explore further investment into low level housing adaptations from other agencies, to enable residents to live independently for longer.
- Expand the Norfolk Warm Homes programme to develop and offer guidance on retrofit schemes suitable for a wide range of housing types and circumstances.



By 2038 the household projection is 12% increase



22% of residents rent their homes, while 78% own their home (either mortgaged or outright)



The % of households in the social rented sector increased in Broadland between 2011 and 2021, but fell across England.



We unanimously voted in favour of becoming a **Registered Provider for Social Housing in October 2023**. This has opened up options and opportunities for us to address the much needed housing challenges in our district.

Cleaner, greener Broadland

Objective: To think globally and act locally with low-carbon solutions and safeguards for the natural environment through working collaboratively and innovatively to respond appropriately and effectively to the climate and biodiversity crisis.

Current challenges we need to address:

- We have large rural areas with 11% of households having no access to a vehicle, creating challenges with accessing key services.
- Rurality causes reliance on cars.
- High Energy prices.
- We have an above average proportion of homes that are difficult to make more energy efficient (those with solid walls and off the gas grid).
- Habitat destruction, climate change, invasive alien species, over-exploitation and pollution has caused biological diversity to decrease at an alarming rate.

Our aims:

- Develop and deliver our refreshed Environmental Strategy and Clean Growth Strategy to outline how we will respond to the climate emergency we have declared.
- Deliver a retrofit programme, focussing on least energy efficient homes and grow the circular economy and local skills around retrofit.
- Drive behaviour change initiatives to further target waste reduction and recycling improvements.
- Work with our Town and Parish Councils to pilot targeted community energy and recycling projects.
- Target our community grant fund to green projects.
- Explore the potential for Broadland Growth Ltd to build an exemplar housing scheme.
- Lead by example by providing low carbon travel options for staff.
- Support and promote our local businesses and communities to reduce their carbon emissions, enhance their energy efficiency, and lower their costs.
- Be an enabler by working with housing associations and Homes England to build more energy efficient housing.
- Proactively respond to bio-diversity net gain in new development.
- With our partners significantly reduce nutrient overload in our watercourses, enhance biodiversity net gain, support regenerative farming, and aid carbon sequestration through the activities of Norfolk Environmental Credits.



19.8% Canopy cover - higher than national average



An average of

49% of household waste is recycled



21 conservation areas



In July
2023, we declared a
**Climate and Biodiversity
Emergency**, highlighting
the importance and
significance of climate
change and biodiversity.
**We will now focus on
taking action within our
resources and power as
a Council.**

Sustainable, resilient local economy

Objective: Enable a transition to well paid, green jobs locally and support our local economy to thrive, both homegrown businesses, large and small.

Current challenges we need to address:

- Smaller town centres and high streets are struggling - and the retail sector is under pressure.
- 14.8% of our residents are currently economically inactive.
- Businesses are required to meet net zero 2050 carbon emission targets.
- Ensuring communities have access to the businesses and services they need.
- Rising cost of living and high energy costs.
- Ensuring the workforce has the right mix of skills to match business need.

Our aims:

- Lobby to retain business rates locally to invest in local business.
- Establish a cross partner Skills Board (with Further Education, DWP, business leaders etc.), focussing on employability and a transition to “green jobs” across the district.
- Target lobbying of Norfolk County Council and Government on community transport schemes and where funding is spent in the future.
- Realise the economic and social potential of current council assets to support prosperity, wellbeing, social cohesion, and the provision of skills training.
- Continue to improve the recruitment and retention of apprentices into the Council and promote opportunities for careers in Local Government to schools, Further Education and Higher Education leavers.
- Make bidding for council contracts more accessible to smaller local enterprises.
- Develop “social value” procurement frameworks, and associated training, on reducing carbon emissions and embedded carbon, improved employment practices, the protection and enhancement of natural environments, and investment in green skills.
- Measure the success of our economy not only by monetary metrics but through co-benefits such as community wellbeing, public health, skill development, and social inclusion.



We have launched a Business Builder programme aimed at supporting businesses to invest and grow. To date we have helped over 200 businesses secure grants totalling almost £700,000. This investment has accelerated growth and supported start-up companies, creating jobs and boosting the local economy by supporting investments being made by those businesses.

- Explore and support opportunities for community energy schemes.
- Assess inward investment taking into account local employment and training, decarbonisation, nature recovery, and travel planning.
- Review Supplementary Planning Guidance to require contractors and developers to demonstrate good employment practice as a condition for planning permission through an Employment and Skills Plan which may include apprenticeships in green building skills.
- Support the development of greener leisure and tourism by shifting the visitor economy to low carbon holidays involving greater use of accessible, convenient, public transport and active travel options.



3 market towns



Higher than average first year survival rate of new businesses



500 business start-up a year



84% of working age residents are in employment



A modern, caring Council safeguarding our future

Strategic objective: We want to make it easy for our residents and businesses to access our services and receive the help and support they need.

Current challenges we need to address:

- The need to do more for less as demand on our core services is increasing, alongside the current challenges faced nationally by local authorities with large budget gaps.
- We must adapt and flex our services to meet resident expectations.
- Reduced central Government funding and needing to provide best value services.
- Climate change is a risk multiplier which exacerbates existing threats to our wellbeing from localised flooding to heatwaves. We will need to find ways to support our communities to adapt and become resilient to future impacts.

Our aims:

- Ensure that we provide value for money services by making the best use of our resources for the benefit of our residents.
- Find new ways of working to reduce our operating costs without sacrificing service quality, to deliver a balanced medium term financial position.
- Support our Town and Parish Councils.
- Embed a positive culture of ambition, transparency and improvement.
- Continue to roll out member and employee development, maintaining our Council as a great place to work.
- Listen to residents to inform the shaping of our services through an enhanced community engagement strategy.
- Raise awareness of current and future challenges to ensure the council, residents, and businesses are prepared and able to respond accordingly.
- Recognise our community leadership role, considering the needs of both current and future generations.



We are focussing on improving our resident and business experience with our services and recently agreed to implement a new programme of improvement works to how people can contact us in the future.



47 elected
Councillors



£25.5m budget
per year



48 parish councils,
3 town councils and
12 parish meetings

Funding delivery of our plan

Working for our residents, we need to make sure we have the money to fund our ambitions. This means we need to work differently in the future to continue to be financially sustainable.

We have a spending power of £25.5m to support the 132,000 number of residents who live here and the thousands of visitors who come to our area every year.

Where does the funding come from?

Funding Stream	Percent
Government - specific grants	37%
Fees, charges, and other incomes	27%
Council Tax	17%
Business Rates	12%
Government - general grants	4%
Investment Income	3%
Commercial Services	0%

How our budget is spent (24/25)

Service area	Spend (in millions)
Housing Benefit Payments	£14.3
Community Services	£7.5
Individuals and Families	£4.2
Chief of Staff	£3.4
Transformation and ICT/Digital	£2.7
Economic Growth	£2.4
Finance	£2.3
Planning and Business Support	£2.1
Regulatory	£0.8
Leisure	£0

Delivering this plan and measuring our success - Delivery Plan 2024 - 2026

Our Delivery Plan sets out the pieces of work we aim to deliver in the next two years to enable us to achieve the vision and priorities set out in the Strategic Plan. This Plan is dynamic and will develop over the coming two years.

We strive for openness and transparency in the way we work and that's why we will report our progress throughout the year to the Cabinet of the Council, using a number of Key Performance Indicators set out in the Delivery Plan.

Appendix - Delivery Plan 2024 - 2026



Broadland District Council



BroadlandDistrictCouncil



BroadlandDC



broadland-district-council