

# Greater Norwich Development Partnership

Jobs, homes, prosperity for local people



## GNDP Newsletter: Summer 2009

Welcome to the latest GNDP newsletter, with information and updates on how growth across Broadland, Norwich, and South Norfolk is progressing. This issue features news of the partnership's Joint Core Strategy; details of the soon to be launched Economic Strategy; and updates on the status of the proposed eco-town at Rackheath and the bid to the Community Infrastructure Fund to support improvements to the Postwick Hub. We also take a look at the impact the GNDP's green infrastructure work has had, with details of how some key projects have brought new benefits to the area.

### Recent Highlights

#### Rackheath eco-town given Government approval

The Department for Communities and Local Government has announced that the Rackheath proposal put forward by the GNDP as a potential eco-town site has been given the green light to progress. The decision means we will be able to bid for a share of £60 million of new infrastructure funding to support the development.

The announcement is a real result for the area, and testament to the benefits of councils working

together through the GNDP. The Rackheath plans have met the Government's tough standards thanks to work across the three districts to ensure that housing and employment growth is well managed.

The GNDP gave the announcement a cautious welcome, calling on the Government to deliver the infrastructure support that the eco-town, and all other development in the area needs.

#### Partnership Manager Sandra Eastaugh said:

"We're delighted that we will now be able to bid for a share of the £60 million local infrastructure fund. All new development in the Greater Norwich area is dependent on significant infrastructure improvements, particularly the Norwich Northern Distributor Road — an integral part of our plans to improve the local public transport network and reduce reliance on the private car.

The case for supporting the scheme is currently being considered by the Department for Transport. We look forward to a successful outcome that will allow us to push on with plans for sustainable development across Greater Norwich."

More information about the proposals can be found at: [www.rackheatheco-community.com](http://www.rackheatheco-community.com)



## Recent Highlights: The Genome Analysis Centre Launch

**The ground breaking Genome Analysis Centre, backed by the GNDP, has now officially opened at the Norwich Research Park.**

Chair of the GNDP Policy Group and South Norfolk Council Leader John Fuller joined local VIPs and members of the international science community to celebrate the opening of the facility on Friday 3 July.

Genomics — using science to understand the make-up of different things by studying their genes — is a growing field. When the state-of-the-art centre at the Norwich Research Park is fully operational in the next two years, about 157 new jobs will be created. Staff will work to analyse plant, animal and microbial — but not human — genomes and more roles will be created as the centre develops.

The facility is a major new asset for the GNDP area, cementing our credentials as a global player in health and life-science research. It's been established by the Biotechnology and Biological Services Research Council (BBSRC) working together with the East of England

Development Agency (EEDA), Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk County Council, Norwich City Council, and of course, the GNDP.

**Councillor Fuller used his speech at the launch to celebrate the area's scientific potential:**

“Today really does mark a momentous occasion for Norfolk and the East of England. At a time when basic science is out of fashion in the public sector, our commitment to this Genome Analysis Centre represents one of the largest investments the GNDP local authorities have made for some years.”

“The work we start today will mean that people across the world will recognise this campus as a world-leading centre for research and innovation. And that's integral to attracting business investment across a range of other key sectors across Norfolk and beyond and a fount of knowledge for the wider business community.”

For more information on the Genome Analysis Centre contact the GNDP team at:

[info@gndp.org.uk](mailto:info@gndp.org.uk)

Cllr John Fuller joins TGAC Director Jane Rogers, and Sheila Childerhouse from EEDA at the new facility



## Recent Highlights

### Joint Core Strategy consultation now closed

Following the deadline extension to meet overwhelming demand, the Regulation 25 consultation into the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) for Broadland, Norwich, and South Norfolk has now closed.

We would like to thank the many local people and stakeholders who took part. Over 3000 comments were received online or at local exhibitions.

The GNDP planning team is now collating the results and analysing responses, and a report

will be published shortly. The full JCS — which acknowledges the issues raised throughout the consultation process — will be published for public inspection later in the year.

The JCS, and all the documents and studies which have informed it, will be available for comment for at least six weeks before being submitted to the Secretary of State for approval. The final document will then guide planning and development in the area to 2026, setting out the locations for major growth and the infrastructure improvements that will come with it.

For further information on the JCS please contact: the GNDP team at [info@gndp.org.uk](mailto:info@gndp.org.uk)

### River Wensum project launched

The Greater Norwich Development Partnership is delighted to have contributed £75,000 of priming finance to kick start a project aimed at re-establishing the River Wensum as the natural artery through Norwich, driving tourism and leisure industries. The project is a key part of the GNDP Green Infrastructure programme.



Launched on Friday 10 July the project is set to help unify developments along the river, attract business and make it an area for everyone to enjoy. The project is a joint venture between The Norwich Society, Norwich Heritage Economic and Regeneration Trust (HEART) and Norwich City Council.

The Parkway will be marked by 10 signs along the river and will link Marriott's Way with Whitlingham Country Park — the first of which was unveiled at Bishop Bank, near Bishop Bridge, by the Rt Rev Graham James, Bishop of Norwich.

As it progresses, the project hopes to encourage more people to make the most of the river. Small business opportunities and cultural events will be encouraged, with a high-profile fundraising

conference planned for the autumn. The latest Norwich Trails booklet, Wensum River Parkway, was also released. This 32-page illustrated guide will be on sale at several locations in the City, including the Tourist Information Centre in the Forum. The pocketable guide provides a map and commentary on the heritage, plants, and wildlife that can be viewed at various points along the river.

For more information on the River Wensum project contact Vicky Manthorpe at The Norwich Society: [admin@thenorwichsociety.co.uk](mailto:admin@thenorwichsociety.co.uk)



One of the news signs on the river trail

## Current Issues

### Postwick Hub Community Infrastructure Fund

Earlier in the year the Government announced that the GNDP had been successful in its application for funds to pay for improvements to the Postwick Hub. However, the allocation of the money was conditional on the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NDR) business case being accepted by the Department for Transport (DfT).



Since the announcement, GNDP officials have been working closely with the DfT to ensure that the Postwick Hub work is able to proceed without undue delay. The project will provide a major boost for the area's growth plans, opening up opportunities for new homes and improving access to jobs at Broadland Business Park.

Negotiations with DfT are ongoing, and every effort is being made to impress upon the Government how important the project is. We look forward to further news early in the autumn.



For more information on the Postwick Hub CIF bid contact Mike Jackson at Norfolk County Council:

[mike.jackson@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:mike.jackson@norfolk.gov.uk)

## Coming Soon

### Greater Norwich Economic Strategy

This summer will see the launch of the Greater Norwich Economic Strategy, which sets out how we will help the area meet the target of 33,000 new jobs by 2026.

The area has always been known for its innovation and business development. It is one of the most attractive places to live in the United Kingdom, combining the qualities of city life with easy access to coast and countryside. And of course, the city centre is one of the strongest shopping centres in the country.

The strategy sets out plans to maximise these assets. We will encourage enterprise, provide opportunities for people to improve their skills; improve infrastructure and the quality of the environment; and build the profile of the city and surrounding area to attract investment.

Along with the strategy we'll be publishing a detailed plan of action to put it into practice. This plan — a living online document — will set out the key activities that the public, private and voluntary sectors will undertake to ensure a prosperous future for Greater Norwich.

For more information on the Greater Norwich Economic Strategy contact Chris Starkie at Shaping Norfolk's Future:

[chris.starkie@shapingnorfolksfuture.org](mailto:chris.starkie@shapingnorfolksfuture.org)



## Spotlight Projects

The GNDP supports a wide range of projects which are enhancing the area's 'green infrastructure'. Here is news on how three of these projects are bringing new benefits for local people and businesses.

### St George's Street

Where modern culture meets historic heritage:  
How the GNDP helped revitalise St George's Street

St George's Street is the oldest part of Norwich with the most listed buildings in the region. It's situated in the centre of Norwich and is known as a trendy part of the city brimming with arts, culture and heritage. The GNDP has funded a project to redesign the street to make the most of its cultural and historic attractions.

Ben Webster, Design Quality Manager at Norwich City Council, explains how the project has brought new benefits to this unique part of Norwich:

#### How has this project redesigned St George's Street?

St George's Street was a fantastic place struggling to get out of a traffic strait-jacket. You would cower against buildings as traffic sped past. You wanted to stand on the bridge and chat to a friend looking out to the Cathedral but there wasn't space. So what we have done is shut the street to traffic except vehicles that need to visit properties in the street. This allowed us to pave the street at one level from building to building. There are three focal points along the street that have been emphasised with seating, trees and sculpture. New lighting makes the street enticing at night. Lots more people use it now. I can't help popping down at lunchtime to see everyone sitting out in the sunshine.

#### What were the key objectives of the project?

There were several. First, we wanted to attract more people to the street so they would visit the venues and businesses. Second, the Council is working with Norwich HEART to transform the Halls, which is a rare surviving medieval friary complex, into a really special concert and conference venue. The pedestrianisation will complement that project. All the beautiful historic buildings needed a better setting so they could be appreciated. And third, but certainly not least, was the desire to get people out of their cars and enjoy the city centre safely on foot.

#### How has the project preserved the culture and heritage of the area?

I think preserved is the wrong word. It implies freezing things in time. In fact the area needed to change to flourish. It is a place where culture and heritage come together — Cinema City epitomises



The striking image that will appear in St George's Street throughout the Contemporary Arts Festival

this in its Grade 1 listed building. The University College of the Arts is based on the street and its students will give the spaces a creative edge. I am looking forward to the CAN09, the contemporary arts festival that takes place in July and August. There will be a big picture of a hairy woman put up in the street - she looks like a female Chewbacca!

#### Do you feel the investment has made Norwich a safer city?

Yes. In two ways — better lighting makes people feel safer from personal assault; slower traffic and wider pavements make people safer from traffic. In our survey the percentage of people that said they felt safe from crime at night rose from 51% before the project, to 65% after, while the figures from traffic were a dramatic rise from 36% to 72%.

#### Has Norwich become a 'walking city'?

Norwich has always been one of the best cities to walk around in England. The work that has happened in the past few years and is planned to happen in the future is making us one of the best in Europe.

## Spotlight Projects

### Whitlingham Country Park

#### Local people flock to enjoy all new Whitlingham Park

**The GNDP is delighted to discover that the funds it provided to improve Whitlingham Country Park have had a real impact, with local people making the most of the park in the early summer sun.**

Located just under 2 miles away from the city centre, Whitlingham Country Park offers a tranquil and scenic space. The park's outdoor education centre is especially attractive, with many people regularly enjoying the opportunity to go canoeing and wind surfing.

Over recent years many of the park's footpaths had fallen into poor condition and become uneven, suffering from large puddles on rainy days. Thanks to funding from the GNDP these footpaths have been thoroughly replenished, making life much easier for many joggers, parents with pushchairs and prams, and those with physical disabilities.

The improved footpath accessibility has been a big hit with the many visitors who enjoy the park. We spoke to some as the sun shone over Greater Norwich in mid-June.

The park looks set to enjoy a busy year, as Park Manager Russell Wilson revealed: "There has been a dramatic increase in the number of visitors from only 27,000 two years ago to about half a million visitors this year."

As well as repairing existing footpaths, the GNDP investment has helped provide new access through the Whitlingham Woods. Large areas of shrubs, trees and weeds have been cut back and wooden fences have been installed to segregate the footpath from the surrounding shrubs. With the Woods previously only accessible from the main road this new footpath provides easy and direct access from the park.

The project has been so successful that plans for taking the work further are now on the way. Paul Hoey from Norfolk County Council said, "Car-parks are now packed from 7am till about 10pm, and we are looking into the possibility of expanding car parking space."

The development of the park is closely linked to its youth outreach programme. Paul Hoey said, "Thanks to the Park's community outreach programmes, youth from socially disadvantaged backgrounds are being made aware, and also being encouraged to take part in the conservation of the heritage that lies on their doorstep."

From felling trees to taking measurements for fences, young volunteers have contributed to a number of the Park's conservation activities. Up to 30 volunteers participated last year, and the Park hopes to continue to build on this outreach programme in future years.

For further information about this project please contact Paul Hoey at Norfolk County Council:

[paul.hoey@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:paul.hoey@norfolk.gov.uk)



## Spotlight Projects

### St Anne's Wharf

Building bridges to opportunity:

St Anne's Wharf regeneration project set to breathe new life into city's industrial heartland



The GNDP is supporting a project to revitalise the St Anne's Wharf area of Norwich. Situated in the heart of Norwich, St Anne's Wharf Bridge is the brand new £2.5million bridge between King Street and Riverside. It will form the catalyst for the regeneration of redundant industrial land, helping to bridge the divide between new east of river developments and the vibrant Norwich City Centre.

St Anne's Wharf, once well renowned for its riverside trading, exquisite medieval merchants' halls and wealthy residents, is set to thrive once again thanks to the GNDP and its partners. An injection of growth investment will see the Wharf become home to hundreds of new houses, shops and offices.

Expected to be completed this August, the bridge will provide a pedestrian and cycle link from the city centre to the riverside, giving people a new way to get about the city.

**Councillor Brian Morrey, Executive member for sustainable city development, said:**

"It's great to see the construction work beginning on this bridge, which is a priority for the City Council and will make a real difference to King Street."

Alongside the £70,000 funding from the GNDP, the project has been made possible through £730,000 from the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) and £1.7 million from Norwich City Council.

**Gwyn Jones, Norwich City Council's City Growth and Development Manager commented:**

"This project is a really good example of delivering in partnership. The team includes people from public agencies and the private sector who have worked extremely well together as we all share a common goal and want the bridge to happen."

### STOP PRESS!

As this newsletter goes to print Norwich City Council has announced that the new bridge is to be called 'The Lady Julien Bridge' after the City's famous medieval mystic. The name has been selected from a range of suggestions submitted by the public. Recognising this popular figure from Norwich's history means that the bridge will be a powerful reminder of our past as well as a route to future opportunities.

For further information about the project please contact Gwyn Jones at Norwich City Council:

[gwynjones@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:gwynjones@norwich.gov.uk)

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