



Economic Plan

29 January 2016

DEEP HISTORY COAST

Economic Plan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Economic Plan focuses on the coastal strip from Weybourne to Happisburgh to understand the baseline of the area and what actions can be done by the Coastal Community Team that would benefit the area.

The soft clay cliffs of this coast are considered the best place to study Ice Age geology in the UK and have the fastest receding coastline in Europe. As soon as they appear, new finds can be worn down or buried; leaving archaeologists to do their work in a race against time and tide.

Finds on the *Deep History Coast* provide the earliest evidence for human occupation so far discovered in northern Europe. They place early humans here in Norfolk some 350,000 years earlier than had been thought, at over 800,000 years ago. They also inform and provide a focus for the emerging story of Doggerland.

Deep History Coast will see Norfolk, and in particular the Coastal Community Team, clearly claim its position as storyteller and voice of authority for the emerging, internationally significant and iconic stories of Doggerland and the early human occupation of northern Europe.

By growing a coherent and lasting brand identity based on the *Deep History Coast* theme, existing assets and attractions can be coordinated, new projects can be developed (with the creation of new jobs, infrastructure and cultural identity) and it will hopefully reinvigorate and sustain investment in existing businesses in the area, cognisant of the role the heritage and the beauty of the area can provide.

In addition, it is hoped that this initiative will encourage community stakeholders to realise the potential for regenerating the coastal region over coming years, through continuing to inspire new initiatives and attracting funding to projects that link to the *Deep History Coast* in the cultural, creative and educational sectors.

1. THE COASTAL COMMUNITY TEAM

This Economic Plan focuses on the coastal strip from Weybourne to Happisburgh to understand the baseline of the area and what actions can be done to attain future growth. The Coastal Community Team will coordinate the development of the programme of actions through this Economic Plan which provides recommendations based on the evidence found and proposes development of project ideas that would benefit the area.

The Team will comprise a wide range of stakeholders from Cromer and local coastal communities; however, because of the (national) significance of this project, the project team will also include interested parties from beyond the locality (i.e. New Anglia LEP, The British Museum, The National Trust, University of East Anglia, Ancient Human Occupation of Britain academic partners). Membership is yet to be fixed; however it is anticipated that the following organisations will be members of the Coastal Community Team:

- North Norfolk District Council (NNDC)
- Norfolk Museums Service
- Norfolk County Council
- Cromer Town Council and other town and parish councils along this frontage
- Friends of Cromer Museum
- Cromer and Sheringham Art and Literary Festival
- Cromer Chamber of Commerce
- Happisburgh Heritage Group
- Norfolk Coast Partnership
- Visit North Norfolk Coast and Countryside Ltd (VNNC&C)
- Visit Norfolk

There will be further opportunity to grow membership of the CCT to ensure appropriate engagement from all interested communities (communities of place); which must be balanced with the specific focus of Cromer based stakeholders. The initiative also depends upon a high level of input from those who are not local to the area (stakeholders of interest) and it will be important at the early stages to identify any potential differences in aspirations or approach and to reconcile any conflicts.

2. THE LOCAL AREA

Sense of Place

North Norfolk District covers a large rural area of 373 square miles and has a 45-mile coastline extending from Holkham Bay in the north, round to the Broads in the east. Its estimated resident population for mid-2013 is 102,000. North Norfolk's seven market towns and its many villages and hamlets are evenly distributed across the length and breadth of its area.

The area to be covered by this Economic Plan is the coastal strip from Weybourne to Happisburgh where archaeological finds and natural assets of significant importance were discovered and continue to be unearthed. Part of the area is within the North Norfolk Area of

Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) but away from the areas where coastal habitats and species are under pressure from visitors.

The area has some beautiful beaches and benefits from the big skies and open landscapes that are typical of Norfolk and central to its appeal. It has a quiet rural hinterland with some attractive small villages. However the area east of Cromer is relatively isolated and does not benefit from passing trade and so is highly reliant on local custom and seasonal visitors. This has an impact on services and in particular there is a relatively limited shopping and eating out offer.

The soft cliffs of this coast are considered the best place to study Ice Age geology in the UK. The geological strata dip gently from west to east, conveniently exposing different geological bands along its length.

The bedrock transitions from 65-80 million year old Cretaceous chalk in the west to 1-2 million year old Wroxham Crag in the east, both formed from marine deposits of past shallow seas. Subsequent rapid climate and sea level changes led to the deposition of the complex estuarine Cromer Forest Bed sequences, notable for the West Runton Elephant. Next, around 450,000 years ago, a series of ice sheets up to a mile thick exerted huge pressures and caused the deposition of sheets of glacial till and left behind piles of sands, gravels and silts washed out as the ice sheets retreated.

Then, for long periods, Norfolk was an upland area on the eastern edge of the dry lowland Doggerland, linking Britain to Scandinavia. But changing sea levels finally severing the link 6,000 years ago.

On the face of the cliffs we find rich biodiversity based on a dynamic variety of habitats including reed beds, wet flushes, scrub, dry grassland and bare sandy soil, with a number of SSSIs currently designated along this stretch of coastline. The varied flora and rare invertebrates are notable features.

Just offshore is the largest chalk reef in Europe, at over 30 km long. It lies in the shallows, only 10 m from the surface, and exhibits huge caves and undercuts created by the movement of ice sheets, echoing similar structural characteristics of the land-based cliffs. It forms important habitat for edible crab, lobster, sea anemones, little cuttlefish, sponges, seaweeds, etc.

Connectivity

The main arterial roads between Cromer and the south of the county (A140 and A149) either avoid the area altogether (A140) or skirt around it (A149 goes through North Walsham). The single road that passes through the coastal area is poorly signed, offers limited views of the coast and dissects the Bacton Gas Works. However there is a superb network of narrow, quiet lanes linking villages.

The Bittern Line Railway, which is popular with visitors, links Cromer to Norwich via North Walsham but there is no way of accessing the coast from the either Cromer or North Walsham stations using other public transport. There are good bus services linking the main settlements across the area – all run by one company and well publicised. The Coasthopper bus was discontinued east of Cromer, but continues to operate a popular service west of the town. There

is a Sustrans Regional Cycle Route (30), part of the Norfolk Coast Cycleway, which does travel along the coast between Cromer and Great Yarmouth and has associated loop and link routes.

The Norfolk Coast Path runs for 63 miles from Hunstanton to Sea Palling, with the majority of this walking trail running through the dramatic landscape of the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It includes our first stretch of England Coast Path which runs for 25 miles between Weybourne and Sea Palling. Taking in unique coastal towns and villages as well as cliff top and beach walks this trail passes through some stunning scenery with fascinating geology and history to discover.

3. CONTEXT

Community

The coastal towns and villages in the area of focus have grown over the centuries from isolated fishing communities into bustling seaside resorts. But they have kept their character of communities working on the shore – the crab boats still putting out to sea, the lifeboat still proudly manned, and the waters and nature reserves carefully maintained to preserve North Norfolk’s reputation of an unspoilt retreat.

The Coastal Community Team area covers two towns and eleven parishes listed in the table below.

	Population count	Aged 16-74	Economically active
Weybourne	543	384	191
Sheringham	7,367	4,975	2,895
Runton	1,667	1,216	728
Cromer	7,683	5,409	3,287
Overstrand	1,030	707	368
Sidestrand	370		
Trimingham	485	359	208
Gimingham	513	397	251
Mundesley	2,758	1,958	1,059
Paston	239	180	120
Bacton	1,194	883	530
Walcott	548	412	212
Happisburgh.	889	651	410
Total	25,286		

The beaches are Blue Flag accredited at Sheringham, Cromer and Mundesley which are patrolled by RNLI Lifeguards in the high season increasing perceptions of safety. There are a small number of attractions located across the area and very few all weather attractions. The big attractions likely to draw visitors to the area in their own right are Cromer Pier and North Norfolk Railway. Other attractions in the area which command a good number of visitors include Cromer Museum, Sheringham Museum, Amazona Zoo, Henry Blogg Museum and Happisburgh Lighthouse.

This coastal area also hosts a wide range of events and activities in arts and entertainment, sports and recreation, business and education. Many of these events are targeted at local residents, but a local audience is bigger than just those of the local community and often includes day visitors from other parts of Norfolk, Suffolk and other nearby counties.

Visitor Economy

Tourism plays a key role in contributing towards North Norfolk's local economy. The latest available estimates in 2014 place the total value of the visitor economy in North Norfolk at £470 million compared to £435 million in 2013: an increase of 8.1%. This includes £120.4 million spent by British residents during their staying trips in the District and £17.6 million spent by international visitors. The Norfolk Insight Track¹ report showed that activities such as walking, boating and bird watching are popular – reflecting the fact that being 'outdoorsy' is also the most common characteristic of visitors in the county.

The table below shows an increase in day trippers over the last three years which may be attributed to more people tending to travel less distance for pleasure. The trend for visitors taking shorter breaks from year to year leads to continued drop in staying trips and lesser number of staying nights in 2014.

It can be deduced that people are staying less, but generally spending more, so the clear opportunity for North Norfolk (as it is in Norfolk and England) is to ensure the Council and its partners can convert the day trippers into staying visitors, ensuring they have many different things to see and do over a period of time.

	2012	2013	2014	Variation (2013-2014)
Day trips volume	5,948,000	6,733,000	7,451,000	10.7%
Day trips value	£220,173,000	£230,338,000	£247,512,000	7.5%
Staying trips volume	571,000	568,600	545,600	-4.0%
Staying trips value	£124,937,000	£124,321,000	£138,047,000	11.0%
Number of staying nights	2,452,000	2,934,000	2,614,000	-10.9%
Average length of stay	<i>not available</i>	5.16	4.79	-7.2%

North Norfolk's growth potential may be constrained due to challenges faced by the District caused by an economy dominated by micro SMEs, an aging demographic leading to fundamentally disconnected, less diverse communities. There are also parts of the area in

¹Research undertaken in 2014 to gain a clearer understanding about Norfolk's visitor market
<http://mediafiles.thedms.co.uk/Publication/ee-nor/cms/pdf/Visit%20Norfolk%20-%20REPORT%20FULL%20FINDINGS%20v6.pdf>

which visitor numbers are significantly higher than others, as such one of the aims of the partnership is to more evenly distribute visitors across the area as well as spread **visits** throughout the year.

Whilst tourism is an important feature of the economy in this middle coastal area of the District, the focus of the industry remains on the traditional beach offer to a greater extent than in the western half of the district. This can be attributed directly to the environmental character of this coastline influenced as it is by the impact of coastal erosion and the uncertainty in terms of confidence and investment amongst tourism businesses operating in this area. Another factor can be the lack of information and opportunity to make more of its outstanding natural and historic / cultural interest.

4. RELATED INITIATIVES

Many of the listed partners in the Coastal Community Team are already closely aligned; bringing about benefits that the historic and beautiful natural assets North Norfolk provides. Community groups such as Happisburgh Heritage Group are researching and promoting aspects of the area, whilst Visit North Norfolk (VNN) inspires visitors and tourists wanting to maximise their stay. Others such as the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership alongside NNDC, Norfolk Museums Service, Norfolk County Council (Environment and Historic Environment Teams), AONB, Norfolk Trails, Visit Norfolk and Visit East Anglia recognise the economic value in tourism and how this can be shaped more effectively through partnership working.

The following are current initiatives that can seamlessly integrate the *Deep History Coast* brand within their activities.

Cromer West Prom Revitalisation Programme

Cromer West Promenade bore the brunt of the effects of the tidal surge which hit the North Norfolk coast on 5 December 2013. In all there was a loss of 40 chalets, 17 privately owned beach huts and considerable damage to the Art Deco and Edwardian chalet blocks, café and public conveniences. It is therefore considered a prudent time to reassess the options open to NNDC regarding the future management and development of the West Promenade at Cromer.

NNDC would like to see the revitalisation and redevelopment of Cromer West Promenade through an innovative and considered design which incorporates essential infrastructure, embraces and promotes the history and heritage of Cromer and its fishing industry and provides a variety of economic, educational and recreational facilities and opportunities, thereby increasing its desirability as a destination in its own right. In addition any design will have to consider and be sensitive to the location of the site and its vulnerability to storm and flooding damage along with the environmental impact and sustainability of any proposals. Future sustainability, in terms of both income generation and protection against future storm surge events are therefore key elements to any design and business plan.

Ultimately this area could provide a year round facility for local residents, businesses and visitors alike and it is hoped its revitalisation will create a much improved leisure, educational

and civic foundation to attract further investment and promote a new sense of local pride in this area. It is essential that any design links the significant car park facility based at Runton Road with the main promenade, pier and town centre, improving accessibility and desirability to visit this area of the town and promenade.

A Master Plan for this programme has been developed to be delivered in three phases. The Cabinet already approved the delivery of the phase 1 works with estimated costs of £683,500 which includes the basic elements below that will underpin further development:

- Installation of essential infrastructure/service improvements to lighting, drainage, and power supplies
- Works to prepare the site for future development (clearing lost chalet foundations along the promenade and old buildings on the Melbourne slope)
- Installation of a key attraction by way of a new education and play facility
- Installation of new relocated public conveniences, a retail kiosk and daily let beach huts (adjacent to the above)
- Enhancements to access ways and shelters
- Increased number of beach hut sites
- Relocation of the disabled parking spaces (against cliff face)
- Installation of a heritage information trail (to include points along the promenade and town) with clear and strong links to the England Coast Path and other long-distance walks and parts of the Norfolk Trails network
- Support to undertake feasibility of attracting funding for a significant art installation with COAST arts group (aka 'the mammoth project')
- Initial repairs to the art-deco building prior to developing potential interest for private investment

They are essential, not only from a practical service provision level, but will set the scene and standard for the roll out of further phases including providing a platform for projects forthcoming as part of the *Deep History Coast* brand.

Explore More Coast

This is an exciting project funded by the Coastal Communities Fund being delivered by the Norfolk Trails Team at Norfolk County Council. It is designed to encourage more people to spend more time exploring the area's unique environmental and heritage features, showcasing the extensive network of fine long and short distance walking routes in the area that already exist along the Norfolk Trails and which link numerous local towns and villages with beautiful countryside and the coast.

It will also promote the first two Norfolk stretches of the England Coast Path which are planned to be completed by the end of this year between Weybourne and Hopton on Sea.

Explore More Coast will include: 20 new short and circular walks; developing an annual walking festival; working with towns and parishes to create a network of 'Walkers are Welcome' communities; training 20 volunteers to become walk leaders; and implementing a 'Tourism for all' marketing campaign to highlight the suitability of the walks for everyone - including families, older people and those with mobility issues.

The first Norfolk Walking Festival supported under this project was held during the last two weeks of October 2015. The festival took place in north-east Norfolk to showcase the unique and stunning area covered by the first completed stretch of England Coast Path (Weybourne to Sea Palling). The two weeks of walks and talks included events ranging from short strolls to long distance jaunts and themed walks including; bird migration on the coast (particularly exciting at this time of year), a tour of Happisburgh Lighthouse with its fantastic views, foraging for beer ingredients, Battle of Agincourt theatrics at Erpingham, uncovering the lost medieval village of Eccles on Sea and discovering all about early humans in the area (including an incredible 3D print of one of the earliest human footprints found outside of Africa).

North Norfolk Railway Improvement

North Norfolk Railway is one of the largest tourist attractions in the District, transporting around 160,000 visitors every year. In January 2015, the Railway received a grant of £497,163 from the Coastal Communities Fund. The funding is largely for improvements to its Sheringham station although there is also an amount included for improvements to the new Boiler shop at Weybourne.

The changes at Sheringham will involve some external alterations as follows:

- A new Toilet block including baby changing and disabled facilities
- The inclusion of a new Tourist Information Centre at Sheringham station which will be open all year round.
- An expansion of the buffet area
- An expansion of the shop allowing direct access to the street, if required.
- The demolition of the existing TIC/toilet block.
- Track work changes at the Eastern end of the station which will involve 'straightening' of the line meaning that we will be able to use the full length of platform 1, the main platform.

The external alterations will be done in a manner sympathetic to the current building using similar materials. The changes at Weybourne will only involve the 'new' boiler shop, previously the machine shop. This will enable the roof to be raised allowing the internal lifting of boilers. It will also provide the necessary sound insulation to avoid an adverse impact on people on the platforms and staff working in the shed.

The new TIC at the Sheringham station (along with the North Norfolk Information Centre in Cromer) will have a key role in providing information to visitors about the future *Deep History Coast* initiatives. There may be further development opportunities to incorporate a DHC them within NNR's events and activities.

Norwich Castle Keep Heritage Lottery Funding project

This project will include a life-size 3D display of the West Runton Mammoth as the centrepiece of a permanent *Deep History Coast* exhibition in Norwich Castle Museum. Complementary displays could be put on in Cromer Museum and Great Yarmouth's Time and Tide museums as well as elsewhere in the County.

Norfolk's Coastal Heritage Project Evaluation Report²

The Coastal Heritage Project was developed in Happisburgh under the North Norfolk Pathfinder Programme in 2010 to inform, engage and empower local communities, allowing them to take an active part in preparing for the impact coastal change will have on their heritage. This Project delivered a number of significant community heritage events and initiatives which have greatly enhanced the community's understanding of the area's rich historic environment.

The Project has achieved the following during its 15 months of delivery and some of these continue to be undertaken at present through the efforts of the Happisburgh Heritage Group:

- designed and delivered a local solution to help coastal communities with the transitions associated with coastal change by raising awareness and encouraging the active study of the county's rich heritage;
- increased local communities' knowledge and understanding of their heritage by publicising the work of the Project and promoting the public archives and resources which are available to everyone across the county;
- helped local communities prepare for the impact coastal change on their heritage by providing local communities with the skills and experience to record their heritage before and while it is affected by coastal change;
- given a voice to the people of Happisburgh, enabling them to tell their own story for posterity in the form of enhanced Historic Environment Records and via The Book of Happisburgh;
- helped the community of Happisburgh interpret their heritage and make this available to visitors and others by a variety of means;
- informed future Shoreline Management Plans by enhancing several hundred coastal Historic Environment Records and ensuring that the significance of coastal heritage assets is properly recorded in an appropriate manner;
- supported lifelong learning (a corporate objective of Norfolk County Council) by providing a number of training sessions and public information events at a variety of locations throughout the county, including the Happisburgh's Heritage Conference;
- developed and enhanced understanding of Norfolk's cultural heritage and resources (a corporate objective of Norfolk County Council), including the Norfolk Historic Environment Record, the Norfolk Record Office (including the Sound Archive), the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service and the Norfolk Library and Information Service; and
- developed a community heritage methodology that is easily applicable to communities affected by coastal change in the rest of England.

² http://www.northnorfolk.org/pathfinder/files/Coastal_Heritage_Project_Report_v5_-_Final.pdf

The community heritage methodology can be used in particular by the CCT to engage with other communities in the area and encourage them to be involved in developing, managing and delivering *Deep History Coast* projects being proposed in the next section.

5. AMBITION

Deep History Coast (DHC)

Summary – Archaeology’s great new frontier

On **the** *Deep History Coast* find after find re-writes our understanding of the story of humankind and of the landscape around us. Our very early or ‘deep’ history is being re-written before our eyes, as dynamic, cutting-edge archaeology reveals astonishing new stories and new worlds.

The story

With its soft clay cliffs and sandy shoreline North Norfolk has the fastest receding coastline in Europe. As soon as they appear, new finds can be worn down or buried; leaving archaeologists to do their work in a race against time and tide.

Finds on the *Deep History Coast* provide the earliest evidence for human occupation so far discovered in northern Europe. They place early humans here in Norfolk some 350,000 years earlier than had been thought, at over 800,000 years ago. They also inform and provide a focus for the emerging story of Doggerland.

Extending out from North Norfolk’s shoreline, and submerged beneath 50 metres of water, Doggerland is an area the size of Wales that once joined Britain to mainland Europe from Denmark to Normandy. Though it was only completely lost beneath the waves some 7500 years ago, Doggerland is only now being mapped and explored.

Deep History Coast reveals an earlier world that archaeologists have called a lost Garden of Eden. Standing on the beach at West Runton or Happisburgh, though the weather and the landscape might have felt familiar, the elephants and giant beavers, hyaenas and rhinos would not.

Finds on Norfolk’s coast and beneath the North Sea emerge undisturbed and well-preserved. As archaeologists continue to explore our coastline and the North Sea, the future holds the possibility of incredible new discoveries about our earliest ancestors and the world in which they lived.

The protagonists

Deep History Coast is a story that is being shaped by pioneering archaeologists and scientists using cutting edge technology to chart, analyse and preserve their finds. Their articles and papers are charting new territories in humankind’s understanding of its distant past – its *deep history*.

Experts have been supported in their work by amateur archaeologists and by members of the public, often just out for a walk on the beach. Fishermen have made key finds as they trawl the seabed, and drilling by oil and gas workers has helped map Doggerland.

The story tellers

Deep History Coast will see Norfolk, and in particular the Coastal Community Team, clearly claim its position as storyteller and voice of authority for the emerging, internationally significant and iconic stories of Doggerland and the early human occupation of northern Europe.

Deep History Coast will bring together archaeologists, scientists, curators, artists and writers, tourism professionals and local people to help tell this compelling, dynamic and evolving story, and will establish North Norfolk as ‘the place to go’ to learn about and be inspired by these powerful stories.

A catalyst for change

Deep History Coast will provide the infrastructure and resource to attract new funding to invest in interpretation, infrastructure, events, activities and marketing so that visitors, both online and in person, can discover and engage with this amazing story.

Deep History Coast will build on existing intelligence and understanding of the needs and potential of the area. It will succeed where others have foundered by providing the crucial combination of a compelling narrative, powerful partnerships and significant investment that has, until now, been lacking.

It will enhance and increase the appeal of the area’s existing strengths –the coastal path, quiet lanes for cycling, unspoilt coastline, environmentally important landscapes and wildlife, and traditional beach culture.

It has the charisma and interest to engage interest not just from visitors and tourists, but also importantly from local tourism and cultural organisations, accommodation providers, pubs and restaurants, from businesses, schools and groups who we believe will want to reflect it in their own identities and agendas.

In the longer term the *Deep History Coast* concept could be extended along the whole of Norfolk’s coastline and has the potential to become a brand of national and international significance to rival those of Norfolk’s other key icons: the Broads, Norwich (City of Stories), and the existing Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) offer. There will also be an opportunity to link with Suffolk as they develop the Saxon Shore initiative.

It also may have the potential ultimately to help attract UNESCO World Heritage Site status for Doggerland and / or the Norfolk / East Anglian Coast.

6. NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY AND INTENTIONS OF THE TEAM TO MEET THEM

Grant Thornton suggest via their ‘Place Analytics’ research that North Norfolk is low on both economic and social growth potential. Data indicates that due to challenges faced by the District

caused by an economy dominated by micro SMEs, an aging demographic leading to fundamentally disconnected less diverse communities, North Norfolk has practically every constraint to growth going. However, as a gem has many facets, so too does North Norfolk, and with each challenge comes an opportunity.

North Norfolk has the added complexity of an eroding coast causing blight and disinvestment; whilst providing a phenomenal asset. With *Deep History Coast*, we intend to reconcile these apparent conflicts through engagement with the community alongside efforts to adapt to coastal change. We may be unable to compete on the same playing field with areas of higher economic growth potential; but by exploiting our unique qualities we can 'put North Norfolk on the map' developing a niche of our own.

The fact that the eroding geology is exposing important secrets is a story that interests all. From children and families learning about coastal geology and expert palaeontologists seeking evidence of how society evolved, this narrative will help the area gain widespread recognition. The challenge then is to use and develop this to establish visitor attractions, accelerate visitor numbers across all seasons and elevate our profile to grow and attract investment opportunities.

Cromer itself is traditional with a fascinating cultural heritage. Its visitor economy is healthy but its infrastructure is stretched. It displays many of the indicators of deprivation common to other resorts but has managed to maintain a relatively buoyant high street. Cromer's seafront however has long been described as 'tired'; and was devastated by the North Sea storm surge of December 2013. The town's west promenade (which is within a Conservation Area and includes two Listed Buildings) was severely damaged by the storm and much of the lost infrastructure has yet to be repaired. Ambitious schemes for the Cromer's west promenade are being designed with the involvement of a local stakeholder group; however Cromer needs a new purpose: a new attraction that will serve not only to rejuvenate the prom but to raise the profile of the town and the District as a whole. The havoc wreaked by the storm provides the perfect 'blank canvas' on which to create something exciting: and its proximity to one of the Country's most significant paleontological finds (an almost complete skeleton of a Steppe mammoth) may provide the solution.

By bringing forward a 'string of pearls' style concept, whereby individual assets are brought together through a coherent marketing approach, fostering greater economic benefits than 'the sum of their parts', the Team can capitalise on the distinctive historic, cultural and environmental characteristics of the area in order to deliver economic growth and enhance the quality of life and opportunities of local residents.

7. SWOT ANALYSIS

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important archaeological finds (West Runton mammoth, Happisburgh handaxe and hominin footprints) • Strong tourism appeal of Cromer and Sheringham with long tradition of visitors to the area. • Excellent landscape with strong environment appeal links to trend for 'green' tourism, outdoor recreational activities and general satisfaction of visitors with the landscape of the area. • England Coast Path (Weybourne to Sea Palling), national trails and circular walks – soon to extend to Hopton via Great Yarmouth and linking with the Broads National Park on route • Online marketing campaigns for the destination by Visit North Norfolk and Visit Norfolk • Tourist Information Centres (Cromer and Sheringham all year). • North Norfolk appeals to different market segments • 2/3 hour travel makes the area attractive to visitors from London, Midlands etc. and different holiday packages. • Local festivals, art, heritage and sport activities • Variety of visitor attractions in the area • Good supply of different types of accommodation • Beautiful landscape and environment • Natural assets such as Cromer Forest-Beid, North Norfolk's Chalk Reef, outstanding and visually striking coastal geology, rich and diverse coastal wildlife and habitats (both linked to coastal change) • Rich local historic heritage • Outdoor activities (e.g. bird watching, walking, fishing etc) • Walkers are Welcome Town status of Cromer 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional holiday market changing (bucket and spade holidays declined over the last 20 years or so) • High proportion of day visitors compared to staying visitors. • Honey pot areas (Cromer and Sheringham) create traffic problems in peak periods • More discerning visitors, higher expectations, not always matched at present. • Heavy reliance on holidaymakers as opposed to business, conference market and passing trade • Lack of public transport leads to reliance on the car as main means of transport • Visitor conflict e.g jet skiers v beach users v anglers, fishing industry • Peak summer season still most popular time to visit • Profile of the area (for new visitors) still not high enough • Seasonality of some businesses, most attractions not open all year round • Reliance and over dependence by the industry on Local Authorities to provide visitor related services/ infrastructure • Fragmented industry not working together to offer the visitor more to do or meet the needs of the visitor, eg ability of arts and tourism businesses to work together. • Apart from Cromer Pier, no all year round big draw visitor attraction in the area
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create and strengthen the <i>Deep History Coast</i> brand image. • To target visitors by using market segmentation. • To maintain the current long stay (4 plus nights) tourism. • Expand on year round destination tourism appeal • To promote short breaks linked to a choice of themed packages • To build upon current trends to visit North Norfolk for its local distinctiveness, e.g. community appeal, churches, village walks, learning more about local industries etc. • Linking of cultural tourism initiatives • Develop further the group travel market. • Quiet tourism activities like cycling, walking and bird watching • To support the development of family friendly cycling initiatives, e.g. off road cycle trails • Greater public awareness of environmental issues/feel good factor room for further environmental visitor messages, Visitor Payback Schemes • Better local interpretation of towns and villages to reflect their unique qualities. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural disasters such as storms, flooding, coastal erosion etc • Too many visitors make the area unattractive and or spoil the very things visitors come to see • Reluctance to change and meet or exceed the needs of the visitors • Economic decline, budgetary changes • Change in trends make the area unattractive to visitor markets • Visitor expectations are not met • Inability to change and meet or exceed the needs of the visitors due to financial restrictions • An over reliance on the Council to support the tourism infrastructure whilst it is faced with budget restraints and cut backs bearing in mind that most of the tourism related services are discretionary • Not complying with 'access for all' laws. • Inability to work in partnership • An over reliance on grant funding which is ceasing to be available • Further increase in day visitors coupled with an increase

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of car free travel • To benefit from a forecasted increase in the day visit market • To benefit from a forecasted increase in the friends and family market • To attract new visitor markets and products e.g. arts, cyclist, / to meet new markets needs • To work with Visit Britain to attract overseas visitors • Take advantage of external funding opportunities such as Coastal Community Fund, Growing Places Fund etc • School group/ activity markets and take advantage of emphasis on STEM curriculum through collective/ partnership working • Fully optimise the visiting friends and family market • Creation of stronger partnership and collaboration between the local tourism industry, public sector and communities through a Destination Management Plan • More joined up approach on cultural tourism) • Take advantage of business advice and support initiatives • Promote the benefits that tourism can bring to the area to the community • For arts, crafts, rural/ farm diversification and traditional industries to engage with visitors • To form partnerships through the Coastal Community Team in order to further engage the local community in tourism related activities. • Develop local planning guidelines in the future that continue to conserve the special nature of the area but meeting the needs of the local businesses and community as well as visitors • Make more of the area's outstanding natural interest (landscape, geology, biodiversity incl marine) by making it more accessible both physically and intellectually • Increased countryside and coastal access with related SME growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in car trips resulting in clogged facilities • Non-management of natural or built heritage assets • Lack of coordination of programmes and initiatives • Lack of confidence in the future, and lack of buy-in to the concept, if a viable pathway towards adapting to coastal erosion is not developed with local communities and implemented at the same time
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8. EVIDENCE

The north-east coast of Norfolk is the fastest-receding coastline in Europe today. The eroding geology is revealing important secrets.

Internationally important discoveries have been made in Norfolk which have transformed the knowledge on early human occupation and presence in this part of northern Europe. Many of these new discoveries have been facilitated by Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) and Historic Environment Service staff and key discoveries are now held and presented in NMS museums and recorded in the Historic Environment Record. Many have been discovered within the last 20 years.

Cromer Forest Bed³

The presence of the geological deposit known as the Cromer Forest Bed holds the key to many of the discoveries. This runs from Weybourne in North Norfolk to Kessingland in Suffolk and is exposed at intervals around the coast. It is world-renowned for the thousands of fossils mammals such as mammoth, rhino and hippo that have been discovered over the last 250 years. The bones have been recovered by fossil collectors from the black muds, sands and gravels that have been exposed in the eroding cliffs and on the foreshore around the coasts of Norfolk and Suffolk. The complex deposits date from 500,000 to over two million years ago. The most important fossil discoveries found there include:

- **The West Runton Mammoth⁴**

On 13 December 1990, local residents Harold and Margaret Hems discovered a partly exposed large bone at the bottom of the cliffs at West Runton. This was followed by two major excavations at the site that led to the unearthing of the rest of the skeleton remains of a Steppe Mammoth *Mammuthus trogontherii*. This was the largest species of elephant that has ever lived, and the largest animal ever to have lived on land except for the very biggest dinosaurs. Standing four metres high at its shoulder, it would have weighed about ten tons – twice the weight of any male African elephant you would find today. It is the largest elephant skeleton ever found and is the oldest elephant skeleton to have been found in the UK (some individual bones or teeth from elsewhere are older, but none make even a partial skeleton).

- **Happisburgh handaxe⁵**

This was discovered in March 2000 by a member of the public walking his dog on Happisburgh beach. Currently dated at 500,000 years old, it is considered to be the earliest known handaxe in Britain. As a result of its discovery, subsequent excavations were undertaken by the Ancient Human Occupation of Britain project between 2005 and 2010 which have recovered further flint tools and butchered animal bone potentially as much as 950,000 years old, making them the earliest evidence for human occupation so far discovered in northern Europe.

- **Happisburgh hominin footprints⁶**

The discovery was made in May 2013 on the foreshore of Happisburgh at low tide where heavy seas had removed the beach sand to reveal the normally flat estuarine muds. A series of elongated hollows were cut into one area of the compacted silt. These were confirmed to be ancient human footprints after recording of the surface was done through photogrammetry, a technique that stitches together digital photographs to create a 3D record. Within two weeks the prints had eroded away, but analyses of the digital

³ <http://www.ahobproject.org/EHHP/>

⁴ <http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/view/ncc123705>

⁵ http://www.rik-hoggett.co.uk/files/2013_happisburghhandaxe.pdf

⁶ <http://www.plosone.org/article/fetchObject.action?uri=info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0088329&representation=PDF>

images show in some cases the heel, arch and even toes of a range of adults and children. Measurement of the prints suggests that their heights varied from about 0.9 m to over 1.7 m and they appear to have been heading in a southerly direction on mud-flats along the river edge. Early Pleistocene human fossils are extremely rare in Europe, with no evidence from the UK. The only known species in western Europe of a similar age is *Homo antecessor*, whose fossil remains have been found at Atapuerca, Spain. The foot sizes and estimated stature of the hominins from Happisburgh fall within the range derived from the fossil evidence of *Homo antecessor* or 'Pioneer Man'.

The above discoveries in North Norfolk make this the only part of Britain which has evidence for the presence of four species of humans, which are: *Homo antecessor*, *Homo heidelbergensis*, *Neanderthals*, Modern humans.

Doggerland⁷

In recent years national attention has also been focused on the massive submerged landscape which joins Britain to mainland Europe but which now lies beneath the North Sea. This landscape is known as Doggerland. At the height of the last Ice Age, Doggerland was dry and stretched from the present east coast of Britain and the present coasts of The Netherlands, Denmark and North Germany. Thus, the so-called land-bridge, was a place where people settled as the ice-sheets wasted and northwestern Europe became habitable once more. But, as the ice-sheets retreated further and sea levels rose, the North Sea encroached on the land, eventually separating the British Peninsula from the mainland. The following discoveries, although currently on display at locations outside of the coverage of this Economic Plan, will still be important to the *Deep History Coast* story:

- **Lemar and Owen antler harpoon⁸** (currently on display at Gressenhall), which originally served to prove that the North Sea had once been a dry landscape. Its discovery (trawled-up by fishermen in 1931) was instrumental in focusing archaeological study of this lost landscape. (Found off the north Norfolk Coast. Dade: c9,500 BC)

9. KEY PROJECTS

a. Product development

Objectives	Partners	Timescales	Outcomes
<p>a.1 Enhancement of attractions offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate DHC brand onto themed offer of existing attractions • Explore the feasibility to showcase the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit North Norfolk Local businesses • North Norfolk District Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 6 months – ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased visitor satisfaction and more repeat visits

⁷ http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/title_89282_en.html

⁸ <http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?MNF11171-Mesolithic-harpoon-from-Leman-and-Ower-Bank-Doggerland&Index=10473&RecordCount=56734&SessionID=53b0c8f7-1a35-4192-b9c0-ed79fd5e349b>

archaeological finds as a permanent exhibition in existing built attractions or a new bespoke attraction	Norfolk County Council Norfolk Museums Service Local businesses		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended stay of visitors • Day trippers encouraged to stay • New inward investment
a.2 Develop and strengthen brand, its promotion and PR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce the brand values and create the corporate identity for the DHC brand • Increase profile for appropriate existing built attractions and natural tourism assets through destination marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Norfolk District Council • Visit North Norfolk • Visit Norfolk • Local businesses • Event organisers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 6 months – ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased area profile and DHC brand awareness
a.3 Capacity Building and Collaboration on Themed Events and Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring together event organisers to explore collaborative opportunities and skills development requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local businesses • Event organisers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 months to 5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More events in off peak season

b. Visitor facilities and infrastructure

Objectives	Partners	Timescales	Outcomes
b.1 Visitor Signing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown tourist signs to key beaches and points of interest – Overstrand, Mundesley, Happisburgh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk County Council • North Norfolk District Council • Parish Councils • Local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 months to 5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors encouraged to explore more
b.2 Visitor Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationalise and improve quality and targeting of local visitor information print • Develop a series of themed podcasts to encourage visitors to explore, add interest and diversity to visitor communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit North Norfolk • Visit Norfolk • Local businesses • Visit North Norfolk • Visit Norfolk • Norfolk Museums Service • Historic Environment Service Team • Local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 6 months • 6 months to 5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased area profile and DHC brand awareness • Visitors encouraged to explore more

<p>b.3 Interpretation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themed interpretation panels at key beaches, villages/towns, England Coast Path and circular walks – Weybourne, Sheringham, West Runton, Cromer, Overstrand, Mundesley, Happisburgh • Explore digital interpretation opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk Trails (Norfolk County Council) • North Norfolk District Council • Norfolk Museums Service • Parish Councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 months to 5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased area profile and DHC brand awareness
<p>b.4 Coastal Change Adaptation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 'roadmap' to a sustainable future through adaptation to coastal change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk County Council • North Norfolk District Council • Parish Councils • Local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 months to 5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New inward investment

c. Transport and access

Objectives	Partners	Timescales	
<p>c.1 Improve availability of public transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the public bus service of Coasthopper to the coastal villages east of Cromer linked to sites, landscapes, itineraries and walks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk County Council • North Norfolk District Council • Parish Councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 months to 5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors encouraged to explore more

Details of the suggested projects and activities that can deliver the above headline objectives in chronological order are as follows:

Short term (1 year) – consolidating research, clarifying the vision and laying the foundations

- Set up Coastal Community Team to provide advice and support, and to act as local advocates.
- Commission and agree business plan and necessary partnership agreements.
- Research and write an interpretation plan to include an audit of locations (beaches, towns and villages, coast path etc), types of interpretation and stories to be told.

- Agree key *Deep History Coast* information points to be developed along the coast.
- Review available resources in terms of individuals and organisations, identify gaps and need / potential for new groups to be developed, and how these might be supported eg '*Deep History Coast Ambassadors*'.
- Marketing strategy and supporting documents such as distribution plans.
- Create a full corporate identity including a selection of versions of the logo, colour palette, supporting visuals and straplines.
- Continue to raise awareness locally: articles in industry-facing communications, agenda items at meetings, talks and one-to-ones with key opinion formers.
- Fundraising (European funding, ACE, HLF etc) – *this will be an ongoing commitment*.
- Audit relevant digital and print media (locally, nationally and potentially further afield), and provide copy, logos and photos to support effective promotion of *Deep History Coast* from 2017.
- *Deep History Coast* Twitter account and blog set up.
- Plan and begin to build *Deep History Coast* website and supporting print.
- Engage with communities in coordination with NNDC's Coastal Management Team in beginning to develop a 'roadmap' to a sustainable future through adaptation to coastal change in accordance with the Shoreline Management Plan.

Medium term (2-5 years) – first steps and investment in product

- Launch at Easter of *Deep History Coast* website providing inspirational copy and detailed information including suggested itineraries, accommodation, information on how to get involved (donations, volunteering etc).
- Set up Facebook and Instagram pages for *Deep History Coast*.
- Targeted distribution of print media across Eastern Region.
- Create and make available a simple toolkit for use by local groups, organisations.
- Investment in promotional materials such as window stickers, waymarker discs, pop-ups and banners for use locally by museums, libraries, shops and accommodation providers.
- Provision of support and training to local businesses (pubs, restaurants, accommodation and transport providers, shops etc) in how they can contribute to, and will ultimately benefit from telling the *Deep History Story*.
- Development and roll out of business partner and ambassador schemes.

- Creation of apps that bring *Deep History Coast* to life for visitors eg by overlaying on the surrounding landscape visuals of nearby finds, Doggerland, early humans, mammoths etc.
- Commission illustrations and models, both 2D and 3D, to illustrate aspects of *Deep History Coast*. For use online and in events, displays and exhibitions.
- Major new West Runton Elephant display in the rotunda at Norwich Castle signposts visitors to *Deep History Coast*.
- New or enhanced displays in Cromer and Lynn Museums, The Mo, Sheringham; and Time and Tide in Great Yarmouth.
- Installation of interpretation panels – linked to Coast Path and themed walks exploring the richness of the landscape
- Investment in new benches and picnic tables in key sites.
- Commission murals and artworks in towns and villages and along the coastal path to give a visual presence to *Deep History Coast*, support waymarking and signposting, and creating distinctive new local icons.
- Investment in improvements to and / or new brown signs and information boards.
- Addition of *Deep History Coast* markers to North Norfolk Coast Path signs.
- Production and installation of interpretation panels at key information points.
- Commissioning of and sales planning for *Deep History Coast* merchandise and postcards.
- Support local organisations (museums, libraries, venues, festivals etc), and / or freelance artists and interpreters to develop talks, learning and arts activities, by offering training and help with materials and promotion.
- Annual programmes of *Deep History Coast* events and activities across the year both self-contained and as part of existing festivals' and venues' programmes (eg Cromer and Sheringham Arts Festival, Waxham Barns etc).
- Regular local, specialist and national press features and events listings.
- Development of key messages and support materials for use by NMS staff and other *Deep History Coast* advocates giving talks and papers at conferences etc.
- Commissioning of a short animation for use in digital promotion and for screening at information points and at events.
- Cycling and walking itineraries exploring the landscape and key points of discovery

Long term (5-10 years) – consolidating the product and extending the message

- Potential extension of *Deep History Coast* concept to take in all of Norfolk's coastline and the major towns of Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth.
- Extension of Norfolk Coast Hopper service (or similar) to Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth.
- Creation of *Deep History Coast* displays to tour targeted Eastern Region museums and cultural institutions.
- Creation of additional materials to extend *Deep History Coast* marketing campaign to London and East Midlands.
- Guided kayak and paddleboard tours.
- Development and promotion of *Deep History Coast* packages for coach trips, walking and camping weekends.
- *Deep History Coast* exhibition at Norwich Castle, touring to 3-4 major UK institutions.
- UNESCO World Heritage Site status discussions.
- Communications plan rolled out to key national and international museums signposting visitors to *Deep History Coast*.
- International conference to be held in Norwich.
- Publication of illustrated guide to *Deep History Coast* for sale locally and online.
- Commissioning of additional merchandise including from local craftspeople.
- Commissioning of *Deep History Coast* game (web and/or app-based), potentially in partnership with Norwich University of the Arts.
- Addition of shop facility to *Deep History Coast* website.

10. BARRIERS

Barriers must be overcome to achieve a successful implementation of this plan. These barriers may include:

- A lack of consensus and support within the business community to the overall vision of the Deep History Coast brand
- A lack of interest or awareness on the value of tourism to the local economy of the area on the part of local residents
- Power bases that preclude grassroots participation from the community in the development of the brand
- A lack of investment capital

- Cultural barriers between hosts (i.e. local community, accommodation provider, attraction) and visitors that lead to low satisfaction levels and lower repeat visitation
- Lack of cooperation, innovation and communication between stakeholders.
- Lack of confidence in future because of coastal erosion
- Existing 'blight' and degradation caused by coastal erosion

To avoid or minimise these barriers and make every project successful, all the relevant stakeholders should be involved in the process of developing and implementing each particular project and its associated marketing programme. The Team should think positively about the use of the brand and its aims and objectives agreed in this Economic Plan and undertake the marketing plan cautiously. The Steering Group described under the section on Coastal Community Team Logistics should play the role of strategic co-coordinator to link all stakeholders in the Team. Community groups or representatives from local residents should be involved in every marketing activity because they have knowledge about the area.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

Consultation

Workshops and other interactive participatory techniques will be used to gather suggestions, comments and ideas from all manner of stakeholders leading to the development of an action plan. A conference will be held to formally launch the *Deep History Coast* initiative and to further garner support and commitment from the various organisations and communities involved in developing and delivering projects, actions and activities to making the appeal of the *Deep History Coast* a realistic proposition to increasing the value of tourism, attracting investors supporting the cultural development of local communities.

Communication with community

Information about the initiative will be communicated via a website (and social media). In addition to this, each partner will sign up to a communications plan, ensuring that the messages are coherent.

12. COASTAL COMMUNITY TEAM LOGISTICS

Management of Team

Deep History Coast Steering Group

Membership

- Norfolk Museums Service: Steve Miller, Dr John Davies, Dr David Waterhouse
- North Norfolk District Council: Tom FitzPatrick, Sheila Oxtoby, Rob Young, Michelle Burdett, Duncan Ellis
- Norfolk Trails (Norfolk County Council): Dr Andrew Hutcheson
- Visit Norfolk: Pete Waters

- Arts Service (Norfolk County Council): Mary Muir
- New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership: Iain Dunnett

The Steering Group can appoint individuals from within its membership to carry out particular functions or act as the Group's representative on outside bodies.

Meeting will be held approximately every 2 months.

The members of the Steering Group will not draw a salary or remuneration or expenses from the CCT funding.

Role of the Group

- To coordinate the development of the *Deep History Coast* concept through the Coastal Community Team.
- To ensure that the concept meets the aspirations of the members in terms of cultural heritage, economic impact, tourism, skills development across the county and social inclusion.
- To prioritise and coordinate activities proposed in this Economic Plan.
- To share information with members and stakeholders.
- To ensure that the branding is used appropriately and consistently.
- To ensure a high quality and integrity for activities under the title *Deep History Coast*.
- To consider funding opportunities and coordinate funding applications.

Deep History Coast Coastal Community Team

A wider partnership will be formed to comprise the *Deep History Coast* Coastal Community Team which will aim to have within its membership representatives from the various sub sectors within tourism, cultural heritage, economic development and the academe; various towns and villages, community groups and sub destinations within the overall CCT area and the various other organisations within our area. The CCT will meet quarterly every year. The Steering Group members will normally attend its meetings.

This Coastal Community Team would invite as its Members:

- North Norfolk District Council (NNDC)
- Norfolk Museums Service
- Norfolk Trails (Norfolk County Council)
- Arts Service (Norfolk County Council)
- Cromer Town Council
- Sheringham Town Council
- Parish Councils along the CCT area
- Friends of Cromer Museum
- Cromer and Sheringham Art and Literary Festival
- Cromer Chamber of Commerce
- Happisburgh Heritage Group
- Norfolk Coast) Partnership
- Visit North Norfolk Coast and Countryside Ltd (VNCC&C)

- Visit Norfolk
- Other interested and relevant organisations and businesses

Role of the Team

- To contribute to the further development of the overall vision and aims of the Deep History Coast programme embodied in this Economic Plan
- To discuss and recommend project ideas and actions that can deliver the aims and objectives of the *Deep History Coast* programme
- To explore and identify external funding to support delivery of the key projects within identified timeframes
- To enable the sharing of experiences, skills and best practice on project development, funding bid writing, project management and execution amongst the CCT members.
- To provide the opportunity for more effective and efficient joint or collaborative working amongst the members to develop, manage and deliver projects under the *Deep History Coast* brand
- To invite resource persons to talk about funding opportunities during the Team's meeting when possible

Relationship between the Steering Group and the Coastal Community Team

The Steering Group will serve as the project advisers – providing the strategic direction and coordinating role to the wider Coastal Community Team.

Support structure

North Norfolk District Council will provide secretariat support to the Steering Group and Coastal Community Team.

Areas of Specific Interest

Tourism, Heritage, Climate Change / Coastal Change