

3 Themes and cross-cutting issues

3.1 Introduction

This plan comprises 29 programmes classified under seven themes designed to reflect the ambitions of the regional economic strategy (RES) and the regional spatial strategy (RSS). Each theme has been through a process of identifying joint implementation priorities and the scale of the implementation challenge reflecting current activity. The programmes have been developed in close consultation with partners and include a range of interventions that include infrastructure projects and broader areas of activity.

Each of the programmes in this plan has been through a rigorous process to ensure they all adhere to the following set of criteria:

- are not restricted to short-term funding cycles
- are of regional significance.
- have long-term objectives that are derived directly from the RES/RSS
- are designed specifically to tackle market failure
- contain a portfolio of projects, rather than a single project
- are underpinned by distinct and individual logic models.

The programmes cannot be delivered in isolation from one another. Links between the programmes are detailed in a section under each of the themes. Figure 4 summarises the main links between programmes and the themes.

Figure 4: Links between programmes and themes

		Themes						
Programme name		Housing	Transport	Utilities	Enterprise, Innovation and Business Support	Skills and Employability	Culture, creativity and the visitor economy	Green Infrastructure
Housing								
1	Ensuring the supply of market and affordable homes		**	**	*	*	*	*
2	Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of existing homes			**	**	**		
3	Increasing the supply of affordable homes in rural areas		**	**	*	*		
4	Skills and support for delivering and managing sustainable communities		**	*	**	**		
Transport								

		Themes						
5	Managing transport in growing and congested urban areas	**			**			**
6	Improving performance of inter-urban transport corridors			*	**			**
7	Improving journeys to international gateways and freight destinations							
8	Ensuring transport contributes to performance of small market towns, rural and coastal areas	*			*	*		**
Utilities								
9	Developing low carbon energy sectors to facilitate sustainable economic growth	**	**		**			
10	Delivering required water and waste water infrastructure	**			**			**
11	Moving to better water efficiency	*			*	*		**
12	Upgrading regional broadband speed and access		*		*	*	*	
13	Providing required regional waste infrastructure	**			*	*		
Enterprise, innovation and business support								
14	Key business support products and services					**	*	
15	Business finance					*	*	
16	International and inter-regional trade, investment and collaboration					*	*	
17	Strategic investments in innovation			*		**	**	
18	ICT and the workplace			**		**	*	
Skills and employability								
19	Leadership and high-level skills	*			**		*	
20	Skills for business	*			**		*	
21	Integrated employability offer	*	*	*	**		*	
Culture, creativity and the visitor economy								
22	Supporting creative and cultural industries				**	*		
23	Creative places and communities	*	*					*
24	Growing and sustaining the tourism visitor economy				*	*		**
25	The London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games				*			
GI, landscape, heritage, flood and erosion risk management and the coast								

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		Themes						
26	Flood and erosion risk management	*		**				
27	Integrated coastal management			*	*	*		
28	The natural and historic environment	*					**	
29	Delivering green infrastructure	**	*	*				

3.2 Key challenges

Responding to the recession

While the strategic objectives of the RES and RSS are defined over long-term horizons, the scale and nature of the delivery challenges are conditioned by immediate economic circumstances. How we respond to the current economic downturn, and position the region for the upturn across the breadth of the thematic programmes and sub-regional priorities, will be critical for the success of this Implementation Plan.

Some drivers of the business environment changed during this recession and they will influence the speed and nature of recovery⁽¹⁾. The programmes set out in this Implementation Plan address them directly while delivering against the region's long-term ambitions:

- **access to finance:** as financial institutions consolidate bad debts and re-build their balance sheets, this is likely to be partly financed by charging more for credit and banking services. Financial institutions may become more risk averse and lending criteria are like to remain strict for some time to come. The business finance programme includes a package of measures to improve access to finance, from transition loans for short-term needs to growth loans for longer-term investment.
- **consumer demand:** consumer demand is likely to be dampened in the years to come as individuals pay off loans or retain savings in the face of job and financial insecurity. The business finance programme includes a proof of concept package for testing the commercial viability of new and innovative products, while grants for research and development (R&D) will help businesses conduct research and development work for technologically innovative products or processes.
- **intermediate demand:** demand for raw materials, semi-finished goods for manufacture, or finished goods for resale is reduced during and after a recession. The key business support products and services programme includes specialist support for embedding IT systems, while the region's Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS-East) helps manufacturers move towards leaner production processes.
- **external demand:** the recession has been global in nature and has affected the UK's main trading partners. The international and inter-regional trade, investment and collaboration programme strengthens the support infrastructure for businesses trading in international markets and collaborating internationally.
- **business restructuring and reconfiguration:** recessions create a business environment in which improving efficiency and lowering costs are necessary for immediate survival and future profitability. The key business support products and services programme includes measures like the Improving Your Resource Efficiency service, which will help businesses improve their efficiency and long-term competitiveness whilst also reducing CO₂ emissions, landfill, water consumption and materials use.

To survive, many businesses have needed to reduce their workforces or close parts of their business. This process of restructuring and adaptation has resulted in job losses and fewer employment opportunities. The Implementation Plan includes programmes of activity to address these challenges:

1 See East of England Recession Impacts (September 2009), Insight East.

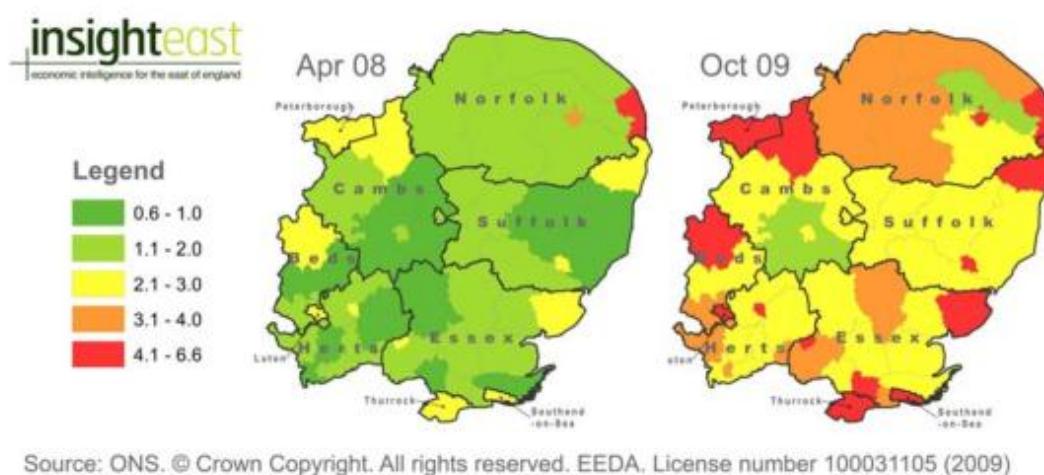
- lack of opportunity for new labour market entrants as the main driver of rising unemployment:** unemployment has risen over the course of the downturn, particularly amongst young people. The integrated employability offer programme will provide young people with training to develop their employability skills as well as information, advice and guidance based on spatial and sector needs and future job markets.
- labour demand and the legacy of unemployment:** experience from past recessions shows that unemployment continues to grow even after a recession has officially ended and that high unemployment rates can persist for years. The integrated employability offer programme will provide comprehensive support to individuals made redundant or at risk of redundancy, guided by sector and spatial needs and focusing on re-training in areas of employment growth.

The recession has also severely affected the region's housing market, stalling the delivery of new homes and affecting the supply of affordable housing. The Implementation Plan includes measures to support the delivery of homes in this difficult context. The market and affordable homes programme includes support for new models of delivery capable of introducing new resources such as Local Asset Backed Vehicles (LABVs) and Local Housing Companies (LHCs). The affordable homes in rural areas programme supports Community Land Trusts as routes to delivery in rural parts of the region.

However, the impact of the recession has varied across the region⁽²⁾. The areas experiencing the greatest increase in unemployment are mostly those that had high rates of unemployment prior to the recession.

Figure 5 below shows how the pattern of increased unemployment has played out across the region.

Figure 5: Unemployment in the East of England 2008–2009



Unemployment in the East of England 2008–2009

The sub-regional priorities of the Implementation Plan address the local effects of the downturn while positioning for the upturn.

As this Implementation Plan is taken forward, it is likely that public expenditure will continue to be reconfigured in order to reduce the public-sector budget deficit. Some public sector budgets and projects have been cut or delayed and this situation is likely to continue. For example, the £100 million regeneration of Hatfield town centre has been postponed due to the current investment climate. The current situation also makes it more difficult to augment public investment with private or European match funding.

² The sub-regional sections of the evidence base in the supporting documentation portfolio present more detailed information on the region's economic geography.

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Resource requirements for each of the programmes have been identified as far as possible. However, as a live process, the resource requirements will be under continual review through the corporate planning processes of the delivery partners identified.

Delivering sustainable communities

This Implementation Plan is designed to allow the region to deliver sustainable communities. A sustainable community is one that is organised so as to enable all its citizens to meet their needs and enhance their well-being without damaging the natural world or endangering the living conditions of other people, now or in the future. The following principles are adopted:

- **governance** – well-run communities with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership.
- **environmental** – providing places for people to live in an environmentally friendly way, including awareness of, and action on, climate change.
- **economic** – a thriving, vibrant and diverse local economy.
- **housing and the built environment** – well-designed, high-quality buildings in a well-balanced built and natural environment.
- **transport and connectivity** – well-connected communities with good transport services linking people to jobs, health and other services.
- **services** – public, private and community and voluntary services that are available to all.
- **social and culture** – active, inclusive and safe with a strong local culture and other shared community activities.
- **Equity** – fair for everyone in our diverse world and both for today's and for tomorrow's communities.

These principles guide both the RES and the RSS – and in consequence this Implementation Plan – and will be implemented at the local level through Sustainable Community Strategies, Local Development Frameworks and a range of supporting strategies. A practical toolkit, shown in Figure 6, is designed to embed these principles. Sustainable Communities is cross cutting in that it describes in a holistic way the principles, and associated actions, required to deliver the sort of well-balanced society we all strive for. It is a composite of the themes and cross-cutting issues such as equality and diversity and health.

The delivery of the place-based elements of the programmes in this Implementation Plan is designed to support and strengthen local sustainable communities, by promoting the delivery of regionally important interventions in ways that are integrated with, and add value to, local delivery.

The principles of sustainable communities fit with holistic approaches to planning and delivering local services, and to programmes for growth and change, exemplified in recent strategic initiatives at the regional and local level within which the Implementation Plan will be delivered.

One example is the **Total Place** Initiative being introduced by government in partnership with local authorities. The impact of the economic downturn means all of the public sector needs to find radical new solutions not only to deliver better value for money, but also to deliver better local services more tailored to local needs. A number of local authorities and partnerships are piloting a re-consideration of the way public services are planned and delivered through Total Place. This takes a 'whole area' approach to public services, which can lead to better services at less cost. It seeks to identify and avoid overlap and duplication between organisations – delivering a step change in both service improvement and efficiency. It may also lead to transformational change where agencies agree to change existing processes and priorities to make a radical change in delivery to one where the overriding concern is about outcomes rather than the independence of operation of agencies.

Figure 6: The Excellence Framework, Inspire East



The Excellence Framework, Inspire East

At the sub-regional level, the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) has pioneered the development of **Integrated Development Programmes (IDPs)**, in conjunction with the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA), Government Office for the East of England and Regional Cities East. IDPs are investment planning tools, based on functional economic areas, which set out how local partners aim to deliver sustainable growth and where, in order to challenge market failure or to provide essential infrastructure, priority investment should take place. They have been developed for most of the region’s ‘engines of growth’ areas and provide the evidence and business case at the more local level for both public and private sector investment. A Toolkit has been developed to assist local partners develop their IDPs and this has been updated to take account of major changes such as the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy. It also provides advice to both local and regional partners in how best to make use of assets at a time of diminishing public sector resources.

A third example is the **Single Conversation**, promoted by the Homes and Communities Agency. This is a dynamic business process designed to bridge local ambition and national targets, providing a shared investment agreement and local delivery, based on a shared vision and objectives for places. The term ‘Single Conversation’ refers to its comprehensive coverage – including the full range of housing, infrastructure, regeneration and community activities that is within its scope.

3.3 Cross-cutting issues

Under the umbrella of sustainable communities, three cross-cutting issues have been identified that are viewed as particularly pertinent to the delivery of the RES and RSS, that cut across the themes and sub-regional regional priorities:

- climate change
- equality and diversity
- health

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The delivery of objectives associated with these areas is often about the way programmes are designed and delivered and, therefore, appropriate actions are integrated into the relevant programmes. Delivery of all programmes need to have regard to the proposals within these cross-cutting areas.

It should be noted that, in many cases, the cross-cutting areas are part of wider national, regional and local strategies and programmes. The issues and proposals addressed here in the cross cutting areas specify the particular areas that overlap with and have relevance to the ambitions of the RES and the RSS.

Climate change

This Implementation Plan will be delivered within the context of a rapid social and economic transition to a low carbon economy. Global, national and regional targets are in place to make substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions over the timescale of this document. This transition offers many potential rewards and opportunities if we act early, appropriately and effectively.

We will make this transition during a time when the impacts of climate change will introduce increasing economic, social and environmental risks. The UK Climate Projections (UKCP09)⁽³⁾ provide the best available information for how the climate is likely to change across the region in the future and helps to define what these risks may be. To effectively address these risks, our interpretation of these projections should be evident across all programmes.

To progress mitigation and adaptation to the required scale, credible solutions will need to be integrated into core service delivery, embedded into measurements of success and have long-term viability. Our ability to make these changes and encourage stakeholders to take responsibility for this shared challenge will shape the extent of the benefits low carbon will bring. As yet, not all of the solutions are evident, so a flexible innovative approach must be encouraged.

The Implementation Plan has been subject to an integrated sustainability appraisal based on the region's Integrated Sustainability Framework (ISF). The ISF contains objectives that seek to 'reduce greenhouse gas emissions' and 'adapt to the impacts of climate change'.

Climate East, the Regional Climate Change Partnership, has reviewed and revised each theme in this Implementation Plan. Actions from the programmes that forward the shift to a well-adapting, low carbon region are detailed below. Alongside these actions, Climate East has developed a plan of work that will support and strengthen this implementation and also focus on short-term climate change imperatives. The Climate East Action Plan is available from www.climate-east.org.uk.

Actions in this Implementation Plan that forward the shift to a well-adapting, low carbon region include:

- the instigation of measures that will provide a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions associated with **transport**, commensurate with levels of predicted growth. A clear shift to more appropriate, efficient modes throughout the region with an improving role for information communications technologies (ICT) and improved mechanisms for the distribution of regional freight and the impact of gateway passenger movements
- targeted steps to ensure the reduction of energy use within existing **housing** and the upgrading of skills to make certain that future domestic growth will be holistically resource efficient and fit for the purposes of low carbon society
- a facilitation of the development of low carbon energy **business** sectors such as offshore wind, marine energy, nuclear power, carbon capture and storage, low carbon construction and ultra-low carbon vehicles
- support for some of the ambitions of New Industry, New Jobs agenda by improving **skills** for a responsive modern economy, by promoting resource efficiency in business enterprise, and by helping businesses respond to the new economic opportunities given by the shift to a low carbon economy. Strengthening

3 <http://ukclimateprojections.defra.gov.uk/>

the region's agricultural economy by responding to the market for local food production, by building on new food consumption patterns

- a planned approach to refining processes across sectors to draw out improvement and efficiency, particularly in use of **utilities**, eg effective and efficient water systems, use or disposal of waste arisings. Results will signify smarter, innovative, integrated ways of working that are intrinsically low carbon
- positioning of **culture, creativity and the visitor economy** at the heart of the region's performance, increasing efficient practices and enhancing the quality of our environment
- the continued development of **green infrastructure** aligned with a landscape scale perspective of habitats that will contribute to protecting natural and historic assets
- evaluation of the risks posed by changing weather patterns associated with climate change leading to proportional, considered mitigation measures and adaptation of regional assets and infrastructure, including integrated, concerted action to combat the effects of climate change on the coast.

Equality and diversity

All communities make a vital contribution to the economic, social and cultural success of the region. Promoting equality and tackling barriers, which affect under-represented groups, ensure that we are able to harness the potential of the region's diverse and talented population.

An equality impact assessment (EqIA) of the Implementation Plan was undertaken, as part of the broader integrated sustainability appraisal (ISA). The primary function of an EqIA is to assess whether the Implementation Plan is likely to have a positive or negative impact on different groups of people, or how it may have a differential effect on different groups. The EqIA assessed the impacts of the draft Implementation Plan across six equality strands within the community - race, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion and faith. Recommendations from the ISA informed the development of the final version of this Implementation Plan.

Actions to promote equality, diversity and inclusion are integrated throughout this Implementation Plan, examples of which include:

- low-quality **housing** and a poor environment are often acute for disadvantaged groups. Actions under the housing programmes to increase the supply of affordable, decent and accessible housing will be of particular assistance to a wide range of groups within the community facing social or economic hardship
- in the short term, the recession can be a threat to economic and social participation in the region. Providing support to employers to help them attract and retain the best talents in their workforce and invest in their future is needed. A diverse talent pool of people can help businesses through the downturn, and enable them to respond swiftly and appropriately when the economy starts to recover. The **enterprise** theme includes measures to help ensure that mainstream business support is accessible to a wide range of communities. Initiatives such as the women's enterprise programme are designed to encourage entrepreneurial aspirations among groups that have traditional low start-up rates
- there is evidence that unemployment is increasing most amongst the lower-skilled, which disproportionately include those from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as disabled people, certain sections of the ethnic minority communities, and people from the younger and older age groups. Actions within the **skills and employability** theme are designed to provide the unemployed with a comprehensive offer of support to build their skills and find employment, particularly in the region's least prosperous areas
- the rural character of the region and problems with **transport** can further compound the disadvantage experienced by these groups. People with mental health problems for example, can face social isolation and economic exclusion because of poor transport preventing them from accessing the appropriate services they need. The transport theme includes action to improve access
- there are areas of deprivation in urban areas, which disproportionately affect the region's ethnic minority communities. The **sub-regional** section of this plan highlights the need for a targeted approach to

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improve the physical fabric of our urban areas, alongside tackling barriers to social and economic participation

- the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, under the **culture** theme, provide a huge opportunity for the region to promote social and economic inclusion for disadvantaged groups through, for example, volunteering schemes, and healthy living schemes.

In order to deliver our programmes effectively, we also need improved disaggregation of data so that we can better understand the region's demography and identify trends and gaps affecting the different communities that make up the East of England.

Health

Improving the health and well-being of those who live and work in the region, and those who visit, is important for the success of the Implementation Plan. The delivery of health services themselves are dealt with outside of the scope of the Implementation Plan, directly through Primary Care Trusts and Hospitals and in partnership with Local Strategic Partnerships. However, local services such as social care, education, housing, culture, environmental services, community safety and transport all have a huge impact on the health of our population. Ensuring good employment and training opportunities is a key determinant for how healthy people are. Health is, therefore, a cross-cutting issue throughout the Implementation Plan.

The ambitions of both the RES and the RSS include a wide range of objectives that are critical to creating and sustaining healthy communities. The actions set out in the Implementation Plan seek to achieve this, both directly and indirectly. The principles set out in the Department for Communities and Local Government's (CLG's) Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy are followed: "to ensure a strong healthy and just society which aims to meet the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal well being, social cohesion and inclusion and creating equal opportunities for all." More specifically, Planning Policy Supplement 1 Delivering Sustainable Development has required that the RSS should: "protect human health and address accessibility for all members of the community to a range of facilities including health, leisure and community services [and produce] safe, healthy and attractive places to live, and support the promotion of health and well being by making provision for physical activity."

NHS East of England has adopted a Health in All Policies approach, which considers the health implications and the linkages with health delivery in all policy areas. The Implementation Plan also takes this approach and recognises the importance of health as a key contributor to the region (the NHS is our largest employer and invests over £8 billion each year), the importance of health as a key determinant of economic success as well as the impact of the themes on the health of the population. EEDA and the Strategic Health Authority have agreed a concordat of joint working, the focus of which is around Innovation, Employment and Health, and Sustainability.

The Implementation Plan demonstrates that Health is present throughout all of the action themes:

- the **housing** theme includes programmes aimed at providing a decent home for all, recognising that this is key to educational attainment and employment prospects as well as physical and mental well-being. Particular attention is given to vulnerable groups
- **transport** aims are to reduce congestion and associated health problems, together with ensuring accessibility to the range of facilities and services essential for a healthy community
- the **utilities** theme works towards a low carbon future as part of action to tackle climate change which, unless mitigated, will cause health stress both within the region and beyond. It also seeks to improve accessibility to all through universal broadband coverage, which has the opportunity to help those who would otherwise be isolated within the community
- the region has particular strengths in Life Sciences and Health Care, and a key priority within **enterprise** is to maximise job and business creation by facilitating taking potential products to commercial viability

- recognising that for many people being in meaningful work is perhaps the most important factor in determining physical and mental well-being, the **skills and employability** theme acts to ensure training opportunities are both accessible and appropriate
- the emphasis on **quality of place** includes a commitment to high-quality design in the built environment, responding to the need for healthy living opportunities in circulation and movement, leisure and recreation
- through **culture**, the opportunities for both exercise and the development of places where people enjoy living, will be better achieved
- and, finally, the assurance of protecting bio-diversity, the quality of places and the impact of a healthy natural environment will be delivered through the **green infrastructure** theme.