



Southwold Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2038

**Draft for Consultation
September 2018**

PREFACE

The Southwold Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has been working on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan for four years. We have consulted widely with the community through drop-in sessions, focus groups and questionnaires. Our extensive research is summarised in the Appendices to the Draft Plan. Our approach was to identify the challenges facing Southwold, especially those which emerged from our 2016 Neighbourhood Plan questionnaires and contained in the 2013 Southwold Town Plan, and then develop policies to meet those challenges. The focus of the Neighbourhood Plan has to be on planning matters and it is essentially a supplement to the New Waveney District Council Local Plan (2019).

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Plan

- 1.1 This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Southwold parish for the period 2019 to 2038. The Plan contains a vision for the future of Southwold and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.
- 1.2 The principal purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the town. It also provides guidance to anyone wishing to submit a planning application for development within the town. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible. The different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Southwold, its residents, businesses and community groups. Planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the development plan for Southwold parish and will be used by the local planning authority (Waveney District Council) in the determination of planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area.
- 1.3 Some of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are general and apply throughout the Plan area, while others are site or area-specific and apply only to the appropriate areas illustrated on the relevant maps. Nevertheless, in considering proposals for development, the Town Council and Waveney District Council will apply all relevant policies of the development plan. It is therefore assumed that the Neighbourhood Plan will be read as a whole, although some cross-referencing of policies within the Plan has been provided to assist the reader.
- 1.4 The process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan has identified a number of actions which have not been included in the policy sections and these can be found in Section 11. This is because these are not specifically related to land use matters and therefore sit outside the jurisdiction of a Neighbourhood Plan. These actions will be addressed by the Town Council outside the Neighbourhood Plan process.
- 1.5 Waveney District Council, as the local planning authority, designated a Neighbourhood Area for the whole of the Southwold area in May 2015 to enable Southwold Town Council to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has been prepared by the community through the Southwold Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) Team.
- 1.6 The boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area is contiguous with the boundary of Southwold parish. (*see Figure 1.1*)

Figure 1.1: Southwold Neighbourhood Plan area boundary



Policy Context

1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF¹) states:

"Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes ... can use neighbourhood planning to set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications (para.183).

Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies (para.184).

Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation (para.185)."

1.8 The Waveney District Council Core Strategy² was adopted in 2009 and therefore, under the guidance provided by the NPPF, is up to date where policies are consistent with the NPPF. As such, it provides the clear strategic context for the neighbourhood plan. It is supported by the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document³, adopted in 2011.

1.9 Waveney District Council undertook consultation on its Draft Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) between March and May 2018 and it is anticipated that this will be formally adopted in Winter 2018/19. It is therefore important that the Southwold Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) takes account of the policies in the New Waveney Local Plan.

1.10 In January 2017, Waveney District Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council agreed to formally merge, with the intention of commencing operations in 2019.

Consultation

1.11 The Southwold Neighbourhood Plan Team has developed the Neighbourhood Plan through extensive engagement with the community.

1.12 In late 2013, following its formation and early consideration of issues based partly on the findings of the Southwold Town Plan (published 2012), the SNP Team engaged with the community to shape the Neighbourhood Plan through a public consultation, drop-in events, focus groups, and interviews with owners of local businesses. The objective was to establish, and give initial consideration to, matters of concern to the

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

² <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/local-plans/waveney-local-plan/existing-waveney-local-plan/core-strategy/>

³ <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/local-plans/waveney-local-plan/existing-waveney-local-plan/development-management-policies/>

community. Whilst these public consultation activities were ongoing, the SNP Team gathered technical evidence on a range of issues related to the community's concerns. These included changes in the use of buildings over time and a street by street survey of all buildings in Southwold to determine their use. A map showing the results of the survey has been produced with the different uses of the buildings colour-coded. (See *Appendix 6.1*)

- 1.13 In July 2016, a detailed community questionnaire was developed and distributed to every household in the parish, with responses open until 16 September 2016. The analysis of the questionnaire, combined with the technical evidence, enabled the SNP Team to draft the policies and actions in this Neighbourhood Plan document.

2. LOCAL CONTEXT

History of Southwold

- 2.1 The town of Southwold sits on the stunning Suffolk coast. Its environment is of the highest quality, being part of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Heritage Coast. The town covers 263 hectares but its built environment is much smaller; the majority of the land within the town's boundaries is an open landscape created by the Common, Buss Creek, dykes, marshes, the River Blyth, the beach, the dunes and the North Sea. This landscape has striking views and is rich in wildlife habitat. Much of it is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or County Wildlife Area. Visitors come to the town to enjoy this landscape, which is also prized by the residents of Southwold.
- 2.2 Southwold is a small town, adjacent to neighbouring Reydon; the two settlements are separated only by Buss Creek and a short distance of green open space. Although the two settlements have distinct identities, they are closely inter-related and, as Southwold's population declines, the parishes are increasingly inter-dependent. Southwold also provides services, jobs, open leisure space and other amenities for Reydon residents and Reydon provides a source of affordable housing for people with a sense of connection to Southwold as well as volunteers for Southwold events, civic groups and charities. Reydon also provides essential services such as residential homes, the GP surgery, fire station, and a business park. Outside the tourism season, Southwold's High Street is more dependent on custom from Reydon and the adjoining parishes.
- 2.3 The small built area of Southwold town has a wealth of heritage assets; the town has 143 listed buildings and two-thirds of it is covered by Conservation Areas.
- 2.4 Southwold's urban design is vital to its distinctive character. The density in the Conservation Areas is high. Consequently, with so many significant buildings clustered together, any development, even applications for minor works such as the addition of gables, porches, rear extensions and raising of roofs etc. may cause harm to its built heritage and ultimately erode what makes Southwold so special.
- 2.5 Alongside the density of its buildings, Southwold is a town with many alleyways and footpaths, hidden courtyards and tucked away gardens. These may not be visible from the street but they can be seen from the windows of adjoining buildings and alleys and footpaths. Each of these spaces is part of Southwold's endearing character, and creates a sense of openness within its dense urban fabric.
- 2.6 There are also numerous green spaces around the town. These range from the mown grass of South Green, Constitution Hill, and Skillman's Hill to the public gardens of North Parade, the semi-wild churchyard of St. Edmunds the Martyr, Ladies' Walk planted with wild flowers, the Common and marshes, and numerous other green spaces and verges. In addition, there are a number of private gardens identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and in the Neighbourhood Plan Character Area Appraisal that are of special note, and merit protection. In total, all of these green spaces contribute to a sense of openness and peacefulness that is an essential quality of Southwold's character.
- 2.7 Southwold has been shaped by bursts of development in different periods; this results in different styles of building from different eras sitting side-by-side. Until the 1970s, it was a town in which trades, manufacturing, shops, and residences were mingled together. For example, in the first part of the 19th century, grand villas for the local gentry were built on South Green facing the sea but they backed onto humbler

buildings on South Green and Constitution Hill that included a pub, a baker, a cobbler, fishermen's cottages, a school, a department store. The result is a mixture of buildings, each working with the other, which is part of what creates Southwold's charm and its character. Southwold is not a town which has a uniformity of character, even within individual streets.

- 2.8 As any resident or visitor will attest, Southwold is a town for walking. It is compact and level and much pleasure is obtained from strolling its streets and footpaths and observing the variety of its heritage assets, its front gardens, green spaces and views.
- 2.9 The street scene as well as the beautiful environment and the coast is part of what makes Southwold such a popular place to visit.
- 2.10 At one time, visitors to Southwold stayed in hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation or as guests in private homes. Now, there are only a handful of hotels and bed and breakfast places. Most people now stay in self-catering houses (including Airbnb) or in second homes. The increase in the number of properties being bought to rent as holiday lets or as second homes has transformed the character of the town and substantially reduced the stock of residential property that is affordable to local residents, whether to buy or rent. This is a primary reason for Southwold's demographic imbalance – the lack of young people living in the town.
- 2.11 Because of the natural barriers of sea, rivers and marshes and the sensitive environment, the Local Plan rightly restricts further extension of the town boundary for development. This means that it is not possible for Southwold to build its way out of demographic decline by creating significant amounts of new affordable housing to attract younger people and families into the town. The outcome is a shrinking and ageing population, which the Southwold Town Strategy 2016⁴ identified as a clear weakness of the parish.
- 2.12 Tourism represents the largest part of the economy of Southwold, which has seen a decline in economic activities that were predominant in previous generations (e.g. fishing and small manufacturing). The largest employer in the town is the Adnams brewery and distillery, whose distribution centre is in Reydon. Apart from this, most employment is directly or indirectly related to tourism, in particular, retail is a strong sector, with the High Street continuing to support a mix of independent and national retailers.
- 2.13 The Southwold Town Strategy identified over-reliance on tourism as an economic vulnerability – tourism is a seasonal and low wage sector of the economy. Moreover, tourism is subject to fads and fashions and unpredictable events, including natural or man-made disasters or interventions.
- 2.14 Historically, Southwold's High Street has had many independent shops and this, again, has been one of its attractions both to local people and to visitors. However, high land values have led to an increase in commercial rents and this, coupled with the enlargement of high street shops through extensions into back gardens and courtyards, has resulted in an increase in the number of national chains. One of the consequences is to reduce local employment from local supply chains. It also homogenises Southwold's unique character.
- 2.15 Historically, council housing has not only been an important source of homes for people, it is as important to the character of Southwold as the villas of South Green. Southwold Borough Council (dissolved in 1974 when local government was reorganised and Waveney District Council took over the Borough's functions) was one

⁴ *Southwold Town Council (2016) A Strategy for Southwold, see Appendix 1.4*

of the most progressive in the country. The Corporation (as the Borough Council was then known) was the town's largest landowner thanks to the bequest of William Godyll, who left his estate covering most of the land in the town to its governing body upon his death in 1504. Between 1903 and 1974, Southwold Borough Council built more than 150 houses on land that it owned north of St Edmunds Church, and on Station Road and Blyth Road. When it ran out of land in Southwold, it built more housing in Reydon. It also purchased two and three-storey properties as they came onto the market in Southwold, and converted them into flats. This housing is mostly of good quality design, reflecting the taste of the era when it was built, and many of the houses have generous gardens either in front or back or sometimes both. Some of these gardens are still used for fish ponds, raising chickens, and growing fruit and vegetables.

- 2.16 With limited public transport serving Southwold (there is a day-time bus service to Beccles, Lowestoft and Norwich), most people come to the town by car. The historic layout of most of the town means that its small streets are not designed for car use, which makes on-street parking a particular issue. This problem is being exacerbated by investment in houses that are converted to holiday lets and enlarged to accommodate multiple family units in order to maximise revenue. An unintended consequence is an increase in the number of cars associated with each holiday let, often in areas of town with limited on street parking. This leads to competition with residents for parking spaces, and anti-social parking on green spaces or prescribed areas of streets. For day-trippers and other visitors there are car parks around the town. A balance needs to be struck between ensuring there is sufficient parking for visitors and simply surrounding the town, whose landscape is essential to its character, with car parks that will generate more cars coming into the town. The Town Council is working on a strategy to manage better Southwold's parking problem.

Profile of the Community Today

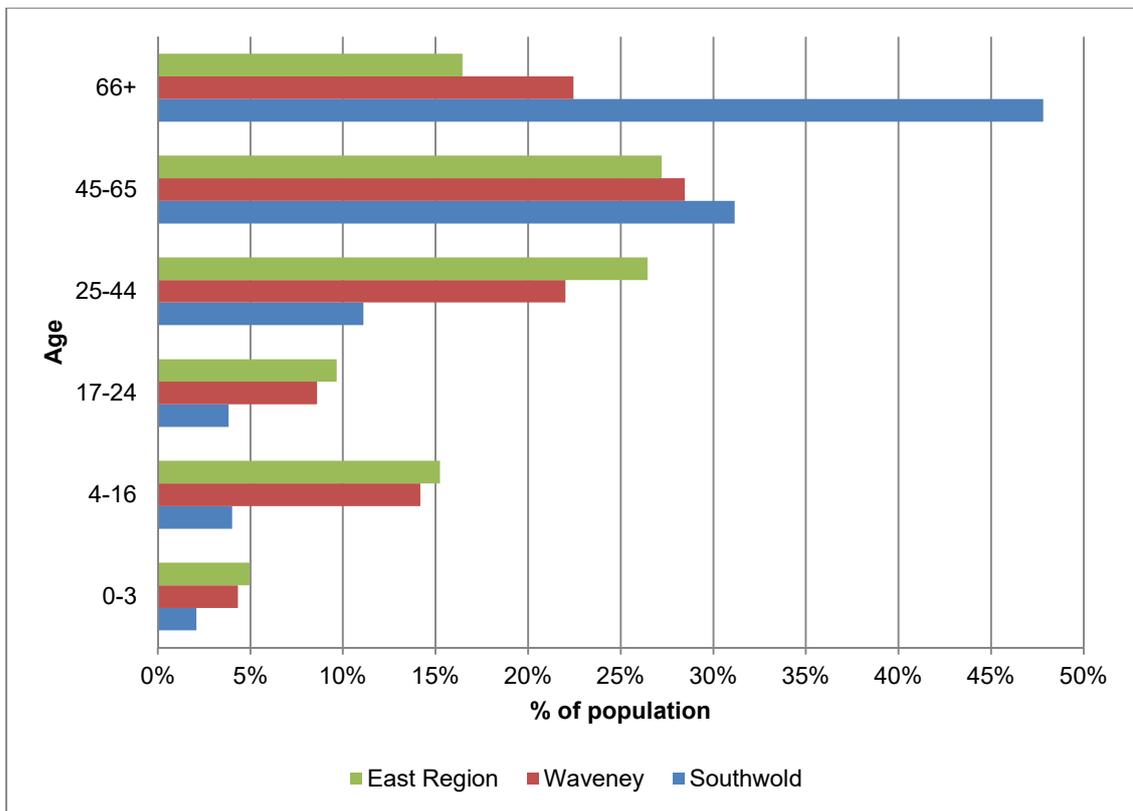
- 2.17 Unless stated otherwise, the profile of the community has come from the 2011 Census⁵.

Population

- 2.18 According to the 2011 census, the population of the parish was 1,098 persons. Southwold has a significantly higher proportion of people of retirement age than Waveney District and the East of England region: nearly 50% of its population was 65 or older compared with 22% in Waveney and 16% in the region. It also has substantially fewer children (6% aged 16 and under) and young adults (15% aged 17 to 44) when compared with Waveney (18% and 31% respectively) and the region (20% and 36% respectively). (See *Figure 2.1*)

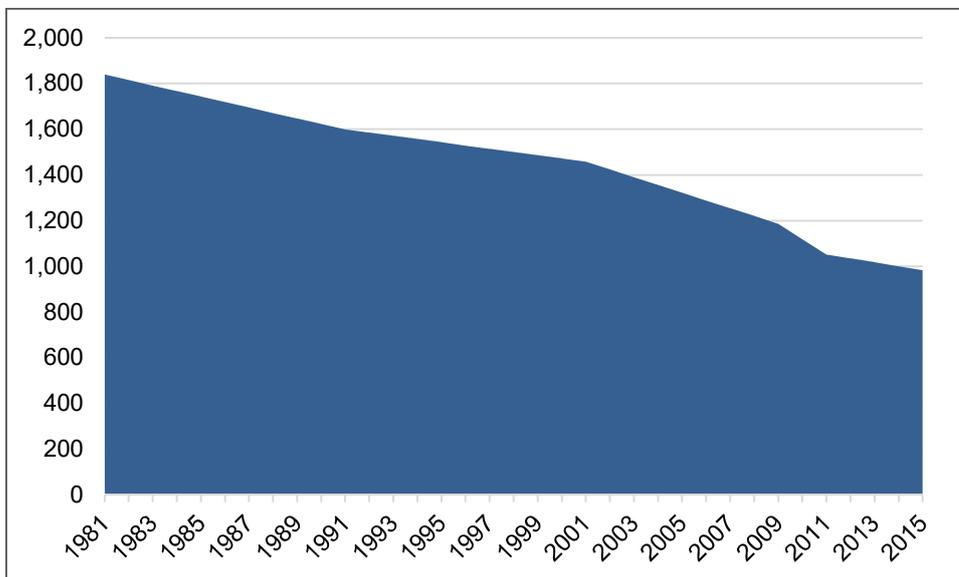
⁵ Appendices 1.1 and 1.2

Figure 2.1: Population profile, 2011



2.19 The town's population fell from 1,839 in 1981 to 1098 in 2011. 981 is the projected figure for 2016 ⁶ (See Figure 2.2)

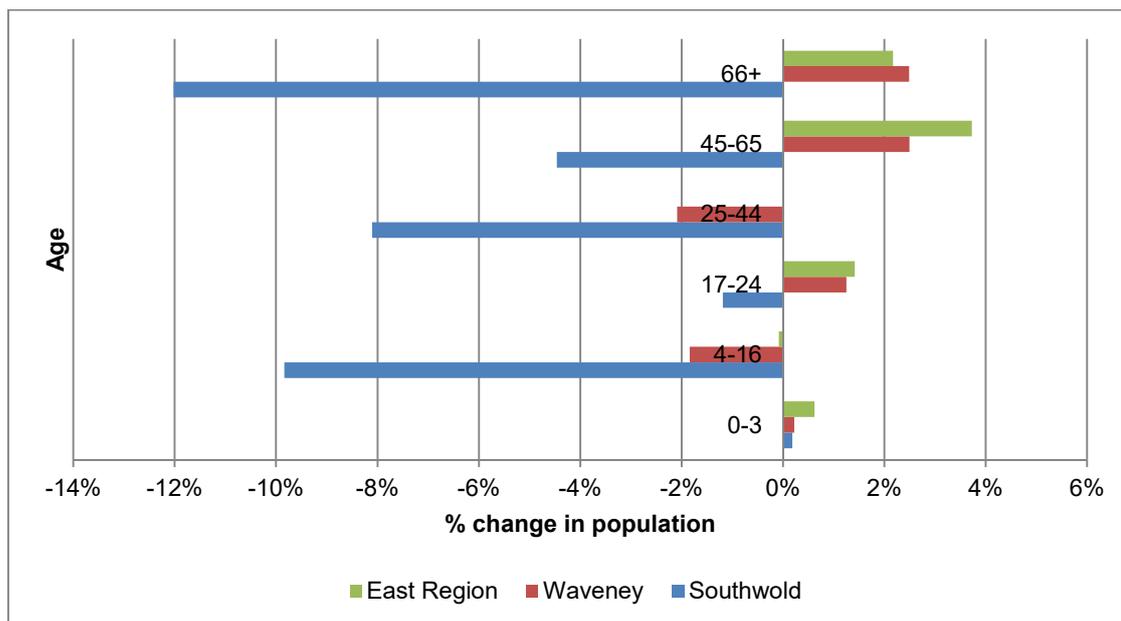
Figure 2.2: Population decline 1981 - 2016



⁶ Census data and Suffolk Observatory

2.20 Since 2001, the population of the parish has fallen by 389 persons, or 35%. Southwold has seen a decline across almost all age groups, while both the district and region have seen net growth across the equivalent age groups. (See Figure 2.3)

Figure 2.3: Change in population, 2001-2011



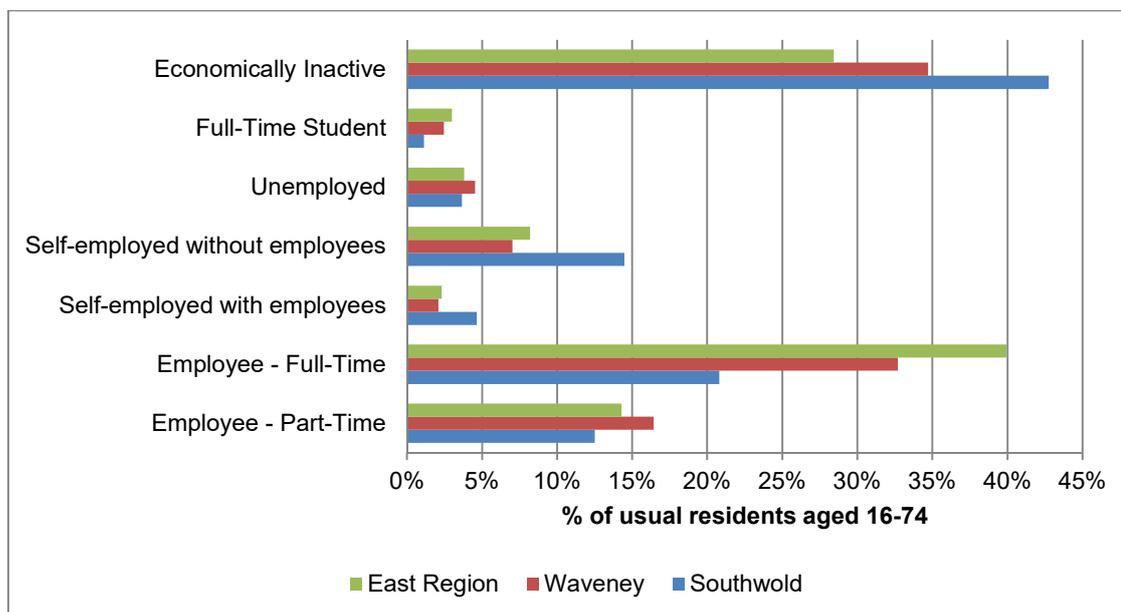
Work

2.21 The proportion of Southwold's population of working age (16 to 74) in self-employment is 19%. This is significantly higher than the rest of Waveney district (9%) and the region (11%).

2.22 33% of Southwold's population is in full time or part time employment. This is very low compared with Waveney and the region.

2.23 The economically inactive proportion of Southwold's population (43%) is high compared with that of Waveney (35%) and the region (28%). This reflects the high proportion of retirees. (See Figure 2.4)

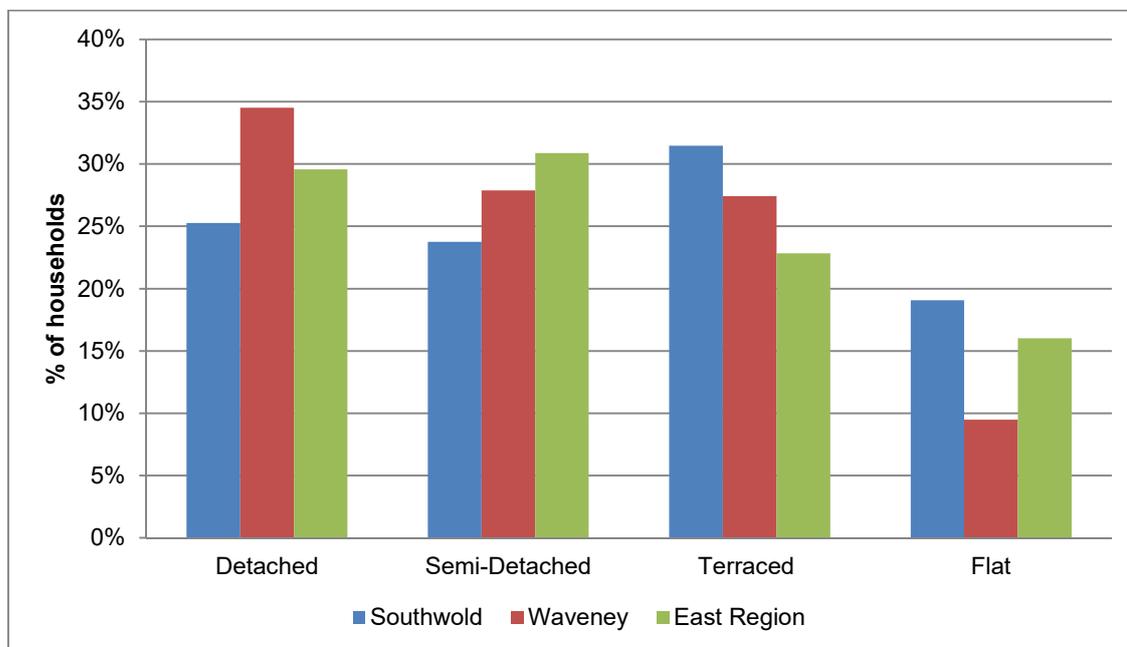
Figure 2.4: Economic activity, 2011



Housing

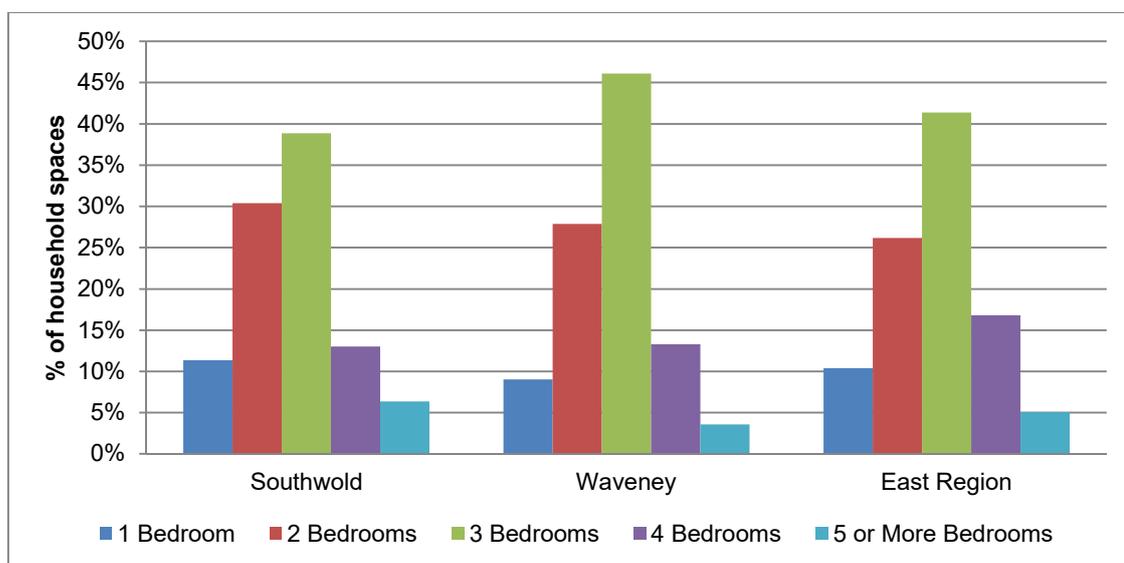
2.24 Reflecting the historical pattern of development, discussed in the Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal⁷, Southwold's housing is varied. Terraces and flats, represent 51% of the housing stock. This is higher than in Waveney and the region, at 37% and 39% respectively. By contrast Southwold has a low proportion of detached (25%) and semi-detached (24%) housing. (See Figure 2.5) All of this has implications for Southwold's character and the impact of poor or high quality design on its sustainability.

Figure 2.5: Type of dwelling



2.25 Southwold has a higher proportion of one- and two-bedroom properties compared with Waveney and the region. Although the number of detached properties is small, the number of properties with at least five bedrooms in Southwold is above the district and regional average. (See Figure 2.6)

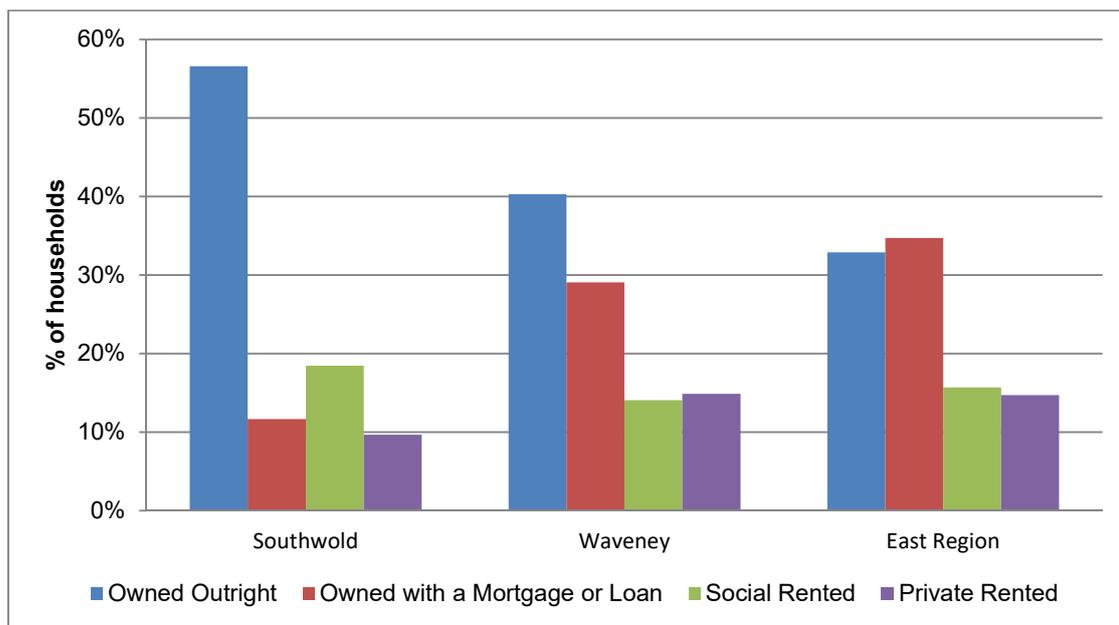
Figure 2.6: Number of bedrooms



⁷ See Appendix 5

- 2.26 Only 9% of the housing stock is available for private rental. This makes it difficult for people on average wages for the region to find full time rental accommodation in Southwold through the private market.
- 2.27 The full time rental sector is chiefly through councils and housing associations, which is 18% of the total housing stock. (See *Figure 2.7*) This is higher than Waveney and the rest of the region because of the legacy of Southwold Borough Council's progressive policy of investing in house building that began at the turn of the 20th century.

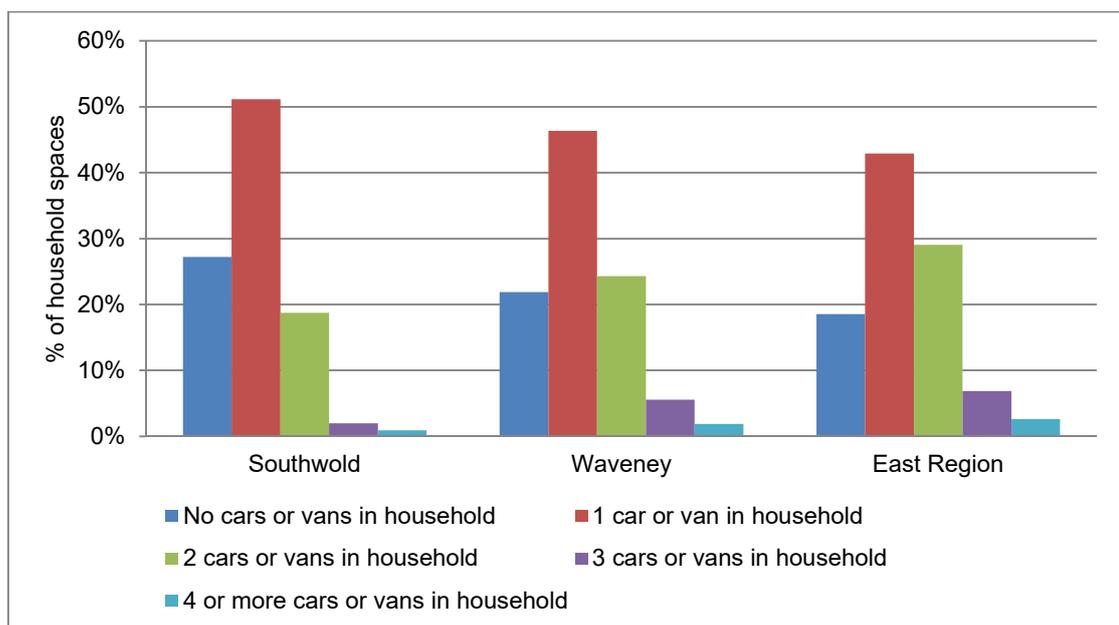
Figure 2.7: Ownership profile



Cars and Travel

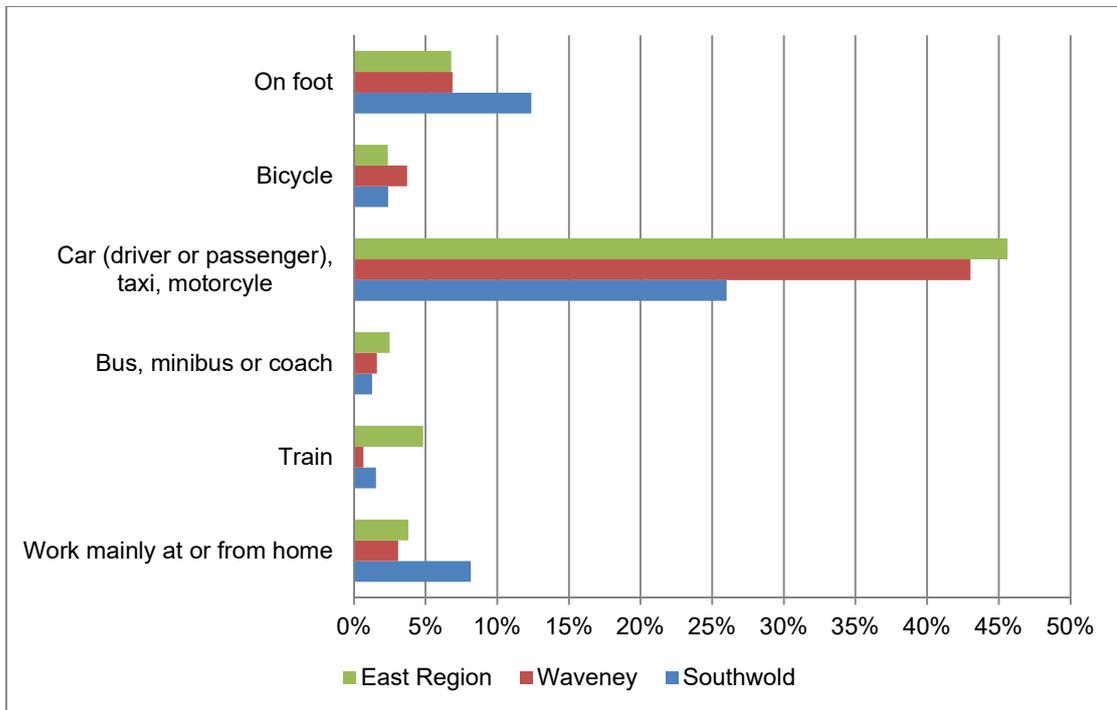
- 2.28 27% of the households in Southwold have no car or van available for travel, which is higher than that of Waveney (22%) and the region (19%). 51% have access to one car or van. This is higher compared with Waveney at 46% and the region at 43% (See *Figure 2.8*)

Figure 2.8: Car or van availability



2.29 A comparatively high proportion of Southwold's working age population travel to work on foot (12%, compared with 7% across both the district and region). The number of people working at or from home in Southwold (8%) is also more than that of Waveney and the region. (See *Figure 2.9*) This reflects the high proportion of people that are self-employed.

Figure 2.9: Mode of travel to work



3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Challenges for Southwold

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the community of Southwold. In summary these challenges are:
- Ensuring that all development is of high quality design, and at an appropriate density that reflects the local character of Southwold.
 - The limited number of residential properties that are affordable to local residents and those who work in Southwold and the local area.
 - The reliance on tourism; this leads to a fluctuating seasonal population. This has adverse consequences for High Street traders, especially the independent shops.
 - Southwold's declining and increasingly elderly population.
 - Provision of dwellings suitable and affordable to younger people and families, enabling a wider range of people of all ages to live in the town.
 - The limited availability of on-street car parking in certain areas of the town which leads to anti-social parking.
 - The lack of employment opportunities and premises for growing businesses, start-up businesses and micro- and small businesses.
 - Protecting existing community services and providing for their changing needs, as well as providing for new community services.
 - Maximising the potential reuse of existing built assets for the benefit of the wider community.
 - Protecting the sensitive natural environment for the benefit of residents, tourists and future generations.

Vision for Southwold

- 3.2 In consultation with the community, the established vision for Southwold is set out below:
- In 2038, Southwold looks the place it has always been – a charming and seemingly unchanging town situated in a beautiful natural environment. Visitors still come from near and far but Southwold's identity is no longer exclusively defined by tourism nor is it seen only as a place to retire.
 - Attracted by the availability of flexible artisan and digitally connected work space, younger people have moved into Southwold or into the surrounding parishes, where housing is more affordable. The new resident population this has brought into the town and surrounding network of villages has brought with it a range of interests and skills. Start-up companies and expanding businesses help to bring year-round vibrancy to the High Street. Independent businesses are flourishing in a new business hub at the entrance to the town and in the old hospital site. A new generation of volunteers continues Southwold's tradition of a strong and caring community.

3.3 As a result Southwold has become an even better place to live, work and visit. It has achieved this by the following:

- Protecting the town's historic identity and exceptional landscape by ensuring that all development delivers high quality design that preserves the best features of the local character
- Restricting the occupancy of newly built housing to primary residences and encouraging the building of more affordable housing for people with a local connection has reversed the declining population, making Southwold a vibrant place to be in December as well as July.
- Encouraging self-employment, start-up businesses and the expansion of existing businesses by providing sufficient work space.
- Preserving and creating space for community facilities to respond to the changing needs of the residents of Southwold and adjoining parishes.
- Ensuring that residential development does not contribute to parking congestion so that there is adequate parking space for residents, employees, and users of Southwold's shops, businesses and community facilities, as well as for visitors
- Developing the Harbour, the Blyth Estuary, and the Harbour Lands to ensure a long term future for these for the benefit of residents and visitors.

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

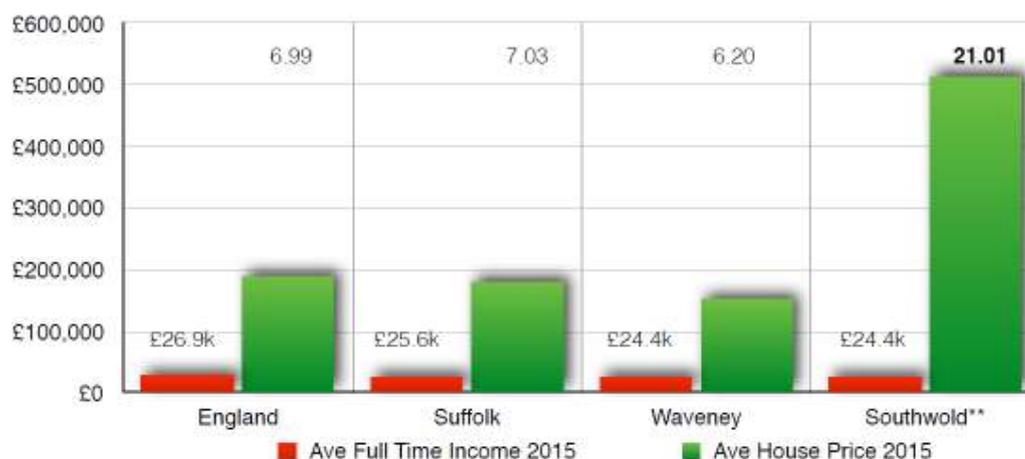
3.4 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan, as identified through engagement with the community, are as follows:

- To restrict the loss of dwellings to second home ownership and holiday lets so that Southwold can be a place where people live and work.
- Ensure that the stock of affordable housing is increased.
- Ensure development is of a high quality of design that responds appropriately to the local character.
- Grow and diversify the local economy by providing workspace for start-up and growing businesses.
- Protect existing community services and provide space for changing community needs.
- Maximise the potential reuse of existing built assets for the benefit of the wider community.
- Protect the sensitive natural environment and exceptional landscape surrounding Southwold.
- Ensure that residential parking problems are not worsened.

4 HOUSING

- 4.1 Southwold is a small coastal town of just over 1,400 dwellings⁸. According to the Office for National Statistics⁹, which analysed the age composition of 274 coastal communities, Southwold has the highest proportion of its population aged over 65 years, 50%, and the highest average age, 65, in the whole of England and Wales¹⁰.
- 4.2 There are many reasons for this but one factor that has discouraged younger people into the town is the high house prices.
- 4.3 With an overall average price of over £500,000 and flats selling for more than £300,000, prices are unaffordable for most local residents. In 2015 the price of the average property was more than 21 times the average earnings of a Southwold resident¹¹. (See Figure 4.1)

Figure 4.1: House price/earnings ratio, 2015



- 4.4 There is a demonstrable housing need in Southwold. In 2013, Southwold Town Council undertook a Housing Survey. In total, 21 existing households (43 people) reported housing need and 11 households identified a further 19 people wishing to return to Southwold if appropriate housing were available. This amounts to 40 housing units needed, based on a 40% response rate from full-time residents.
- 4.5 In January 2016 there were 80 people on the Waveney District Council Housing Register asking to be housed in Southwold and Reydon¹². Of these, 22 were classified as being in high or medium need.
- 4.6 Another way of evaluating housing need is to look at the number of people coming into Southwold to work as a percentage of Southwold's resident working population. The ONS study referred to above found that there were more than twice as many people travelling to Southwold for work each day as there were Southwold residents in employment. This is the highest percentage in the ONS study. Many of these in-commuters might like to live in Southwold but cannot afford to do so.
- 4.7 At present there are approximately 88 Waveney District Council properties in Southwold. Turnover is typically 10% per annum. Further provision of affordable units

⁸ Figure for 2012; Southwold and Reydon Society Housing Report (2012)

⁹ ONS (2014) 2011 Census: Coastal Communities

¹⁰ ONS (2014) 2011 Census: Coastal Communities

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160107113925/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census-analysis/coastal-communities/index.html>

¹¹ ONS and Land Registry - Southwold Full Time Income assumed to be similar to Waveney District Council area

¹² Appendix 4.1

are being built at Duncan's Place. The provision of further affordable units on development sites in Southwold is therefore key to addressing housing need.

- 4.8 The most notable feature of Southwold's housing stock is the high proportion of dwellings occupied as second homes or holiday lets. According to the 2011 ONS study¹³, Southwold is the coastal community with the highest proportion of household spaces with no usual residents, 50%, in the whole of England and Wales. Moreover this has changed substantially in the period since 2001, when the equivalent figure was 38%. By contrast, the average rate of non-principal residents in small coastal communities in England and Wales is 10.4% and in England and Wales as a whole, it is 4.4%. The data collected in the SNP audit in 2016 found that 57% of dwellings were occupied as second homes or holiday lets. (See Figure 4.2)
- 4.9 Southwold has had a tourism economy since the 1870's but until the 1980's, second homes were a small part of this economy. Most visitors lodged in hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation or boarding houses. The majority of the town's housing stock was occupied by full time residents, typically on a long-term rental basis.

Figure 4.2: Use of dwellings in Southwold, 2015



- 4.10 In order to estimate the trajectory of population decline resulting from the second home/holiday let housing market, the SNP team analysed the use of properties sold between 2006 and 2016¹⁴. During this period 506, both new build and existing properties were sold. Of these 24% were subsequently found to be occupied by permanent residents, the remainder, 76%, becoming holiday lets or second homes once sold.
- 4.11 In light of these trends, it is not surprising that in responses to the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire¹⁵ 87% of residents, and 73% of second homers, were in favour of mechanisms in the Neighbourhood Plan to encourage full time residency of newly built residences. In response to the question "How does the high proportion of second homes and holiday lets affect you?" 47% of residents listed 'Worried about the sustainability of the Southwold community' as their first or second priority.
- 4.12 In-depth interviews with business owners also highlighted deep concerns about the impact of the lack of full time residents on their viability; a typical comment was that the abundance of tourism during the summer did not make up for the lack of off-season trade. Significantly, whilst this comment might have been expected from shops

¹³ ONS (2014) 2011 Census: Coastal Communities

¹⁴ Appendix 4.3

¹⁵ Appendix 2

supplying ordinary needs like the hardware, butcher or delicatessen, it was also made by businesses that cater for tourists.

- 4.13 Equally, it is important to recognise that the occupiers of many holiday homes are committed to Southwold and have a positive impact on the town. Many come to the town regularly and, in the case of those owning second homes, for quite long periods of time, so are very committed to Southwold. Indeed many end up living in Southwold. The second home/holiday let housing market creates local jobs for painters, decorators, cleaners, gardeners, etc. At the same time, Southwold also has “buy to invest” properties which are empty nearly all year round. Some owners of holiday lets regard the town as a business opportunity rather than their community.
- 4.14 With the ability to physically expand Southwold greatly restricted by its near-island nature and sensitive environment in which it sits, it is important to strike the right balance between providing a residential market which is attractive for the tourists that provide for so much of Southwold’s economy and recognising that without a thriving residential community, Southwold will suffer as a town and lose many of the things that make it a place that people want to visit and spend their holidays.
- 4.15 In seeking to strike this balance, and in light of the trends over the past 10-15 years which are considered to have swung too far, it is necessary to have a ‘principal residence requirement’. Policy SWD1 provides this. It will be important to review the outcomes of this policy over the early years of the Neighbourhood Plan. If it is considered that this is having a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of Southwold, then there will be an early review of the Plan and Policy SWD1 in particular.
- 4.16 Policy SWD1 allows for the provision of unrestricted non-principal residences in ‘exceptional circumstances’. For example, this could include a small amount of market housing used to deliver affordable housing which a developer would not be required by law to deliver or a scheme that guarantees that affordable housing would be held in perpetuity for people with a local connection to Southwold.

POLICY SWD1 - PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT

Due to the impact upon the local housing market of the predominance of dwellings used for holiday accommodation (i.e. as non-principal residences), new open market housing, excluding replacement dwellings, is required to have a restriction ensuring its occupancy solely as a Principal Residence.

Sufficient guarantee must be provided of such occupancy restriction through the imposition of a planning condition or legal agreement. New unrestricted non-principal residences will only be supported in exceptional circumstances.

Principal Residences are defined as those occupied as the residents' sole or main residence, where the residents spend the majority of their time when not working away from home.

The condition or obligation on new open market homes will require that they are occupied only as the primary (principal) residence of those persons entitled to occupy them. Occupiers of homes with a Principal Residence condition will be required to keep proof that they are meeting the obligation or condition, and be obliged to provide this proof if/when Waveney District Council requests this information. Proof of Principal Residence is via verifiable evidence which could include, for example (but not be limited to) residents being registered on the local electoral register and being registered for and attending local services (such as healthcare, schools etc.) and listing the property as their full time residence on insurance applications for houses and vehicles.

5 DESIGN

Introduction

- 5.1 The importance of design, especially concerns about over-development, were highlighted by the Neighbourhood Plan survey, with 87% of respondents expressing a view that discouraging infill of gardens and courtyards was important. Protecting and enhancing 'historic building styles and materials' was a first or second priority of over 40% of respondents and protecting and enhancing 'open spaces' was an equivalent priority for 42% of respondents ¹⁶.
- 5.2 The New Waveney Local Plan¹⁷ (Policy WLP8.29 –Design) both supports high quality design -- whether innovative or traditional – that “reflects local distinctiveness” and also encourages Neighbourhood Plans to set out design policies that respond to local circumstances.
- 5.3 The factors that create local distinctiveness can be summarised as the character of buildings and the space around them; the surrounding landscape; and the interaction of the built and natural environment.

Landscape

- 5.4 The Waveney District Council Landscape Character Area Assessment¹⁸ describes the town as having a “unified character which adds to the strong sense of place evident in this part of the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB.” The town is “traditional,” “compact,” “low key,” “contained by landform and estuary,” and characterised by “an intimate spatial scale in terms of streets and building heights”. Its skyline has “a simple and uncluttered character.” As for its setting, “this is a simple, often wild coastal landscape of big skies and defined by panoramic views across a windswept, exposed coast to an ephemeral seascape characterised by tidal movement and associated changes in the quality of reflected light and shadow.”
- 5.5 The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to give great weight to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the AONB (Paragraph 115).
- 5.6 The New Waveney Local Plan Policy WLP8.33 requires development proposals to be informed by, and be sympathetic to the distinctive character of Southwold’s landscape. “Proposals should demonstrate that their location, scale, form, design and materials will protect and where possible enhance the special qualities and local distinctiveness of the area and visually sensitive skylines, seascapes and significant views towards key landscape and cultural features... Proposals should also include measures that enable a scheme to be well integrated into the landscape...”
- 5.7 The impact of development on landscape is particularly important on the perimeters of the built area of the town – for example, North Road, Ferry Road, the Harbour, the Common, Blyth Road, North Parade, East Cliff, Centre Cliff, and Gun Hill.

¹⁶ Appendix 2

¹⁷ <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/local-plans/waveney-local-plan/new-waveney-local-plan/>

¹⁸ *The Waveney District Landscape Character Assessment (2008)*
<http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Waveney-Local-Plan/Landscape-Character-Assessment/Landscape-Character-Assessment-Part-2.pdf>

Over-development

- 5.8 Part of the town is covered by a Conservation Area and the town has many nationally and locally listed buildings. Unfortunately, despite statutory protection, the quality of heritage assets is being eroded through the cumulative impact of mostly small scale development proposals for replacement dwellings, extensions, conversions, and garden infill structures.
- 5.9 The 2008 Southwold Conservation Area Management Plan¹⁹ flagged up “Overdevelopment” as a key issue affecting the quality of Southwold’s built and natural environment. The Management Plan noted the pressure for the development of gardens, the tendency to add additional storeys or convert lofts, with the consequent demand for roof lights or dormer windows, often visually inappropriate.
- 5.10 The adverse impact of overdevelopment on design is not limited to the above issues or to the town’s heritage assets. Poor quality design in new development is also evident in the Town Farm and Gateway character areas of Southwold, which have many 20th century structures including garages, bungalows, terraces, simple cottages and detached houses that, with their associated gardens, make a positive contribution to the town’s character.
- 5.11 The New Waveney Local Plan states clearly that development proposals “will be refused” if they fail to meet the New Local Plan’s criteria for demonstrating “high quality design which meets local distinctiveness.” (Policy WLP8.29 –Design). This policy applies to all development within the boundaries of the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 5.12 Since 2008, the pressure from over-development in Southwold has intensified. The chief driver is the second home/holiday let housing market where properties (including new build) are being developed for temporary occupancy. It is common in Southwold for development applicants to seek to create the largest possible number of bedrooms and bathrooms, even on small plots of land, in order to generate the highest level of holiday let rental. In the process, fundamental principles of good design, including sensitivity to character and respect for neighbour amenity, are being sacrificed. Garden space is significantly reduced; green areas paved for car parking or to keep maintenance costs low; high boundary walls erected by absentee owners concerned about security despite Southwold’s low crime rates.
- 5.13 These alterations to maximise holiday let revenue are being made on dwellings that require all of the amenity space and facilities to make functional, permanent dwelling places for future occupants. Consequently, Southwold, which has such limited land for new build development, is suffering the loss of housing stock suitable for different groups in the community – for example, houses with gardens suitable for families with children; cottages suitable for older people who wish to downsize; and bungalows suitable for people with disabilities. This contributes to the vicious circle of Southwold’s demographic decline.

Character and Context

- 5.14 High quality design is rooted in an understanding of context, which requires an understanding of the character of buildings and the character of the immediate and surrounding area.
- 5.15 Character derives not only from individual buildings or groups of buildings but from the spaces around and between buildings, access paths and boundary treatments.

¹⁹ <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Design-and-Conservation/WDC-Conservation-Area-Appraisals/Southwold/Southwold-Conservation-Area-Management-Plan.pdf>

- 5.16 To assist applicants to develop proposals demonstrating high quality design, the Neighbourhood Plan is supported by a Character Area Appraisal for Southwold, which includes illustrations of successful design in Southwold.
- 5.17 The Neighbourhood Plan Character Area Appraisal uses four character areas identified in the Southwold Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2008²⁰ and adds three more areas. (See Appendix 6.2)

The seven distinct character areas are:

1. Old Town
2. Marine Villas
3. Seaside Suburban
4. Seaside Corporation
5. Town Farm
6. Gateway
7. Harbour and Ferry Road

- 5.18 The Character Area Appraisal describes the history of development, landscape, townscape vegetation, and open and green spaces. It also provides some pictorial guidance on design that is considered “in character” and “out of character,” with explanations.

Recurrent Design Issues

- 5.19 The process of conducting the Neighbourhood Plan Character Area Appraisal identified recurrent issues, set out below, that will need to be addressed in any development proposal.

Landscape Character

- 5.20 Development on the perimeter of the built area of the town does not always respond to and enhance the character of its exceptional landscape.
- 5.21 Landscape is experienced from two directions – from inside the town looking out, and from outside the town, looking in. Accordingly, development proposals should be treated as double-sided and assessed from the special landscape areas identified in the Character Area Appraisal.
- 5.22 For perimeter development, the landscape may be the most important element in the setting. Therefore, the Design and Access Statement needs to demonstrate that the applicant has understood the landscape context and that the design has responded to this context.

Amenity – Sense of Space and Visual Amenity

- 5.23 The New Waveney Local Plan, Paragraph 8.157, states: “It is a primary aim of the planning system that development should deliver good standards of amenity for existing and future occupiers and surrounding uses and does not generate significant harmful effects. Harmful effects can arise from overlooking, loss of privacy, noise and light pollution, and overbearing development, amongst others. Such effects can be triggered by individual developments or as a result of cumulative impacts. The impact can be acute or dispersed, affecting the general amenity or tranquillity of an area.”

²⁰ <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/design-and-conservation/conservation-areas/waveney-conservation-areas/conservation-area-appraisals/southwold-conservation-area-appraisal/>

- 5.24 In Southwold, amenity impacts are frequently dispersed. The town is densely developed with an urban grain that is a mixture of “ancient desire lines” and planned development from the Victorian, Edwardian and Garden City periods – all within a small and contained geographic area. In many parts of the town, dwellings are in close proximity, overlooking each other. Southwold also has a number of alleys, footpaths, and private shared rights of way that lead to courtyards or individual buildings. This creates visibility even when structures do not front onto streets.
- 5.25 Within Southwold’s dense urban grain, the open spaces around buildings (including gardens, courtyards, and all rights of way) combine to create a sense of space for surrounding dwellings. Encroaching development can affect this essential amenity. Accordingly, a proposed scheme’s impact on sense of space should always be considered, taking into account the cumulative impact of earlier development on the surrounding area.
- 5.26 Poor quality design is a blight. In Southwold, the design of buildings can be experienced not only from the street but also from the public or private domain in the rear of buildings, or from public or shared private rights of way. Accordingly, when an application is assessed, its impact on visual amenity should be considered from all sides, including from private space from which it would be visible. This principle of looking at the impact of design from the side and rear as well as front elevations is already embedded in the Waveney Built Heritage and Design Supplementary Planning Document²¹ (April 2012), (Sections 4.19 – 4.20).

The Public Realm

- 5.27 Historic walls are protected within the Conservation Areas but outside the Conservation Areas, there are 20th century boundary treatments that contribute positively to character. Some have been identified in the Character Area Appraisals; others will be identified through individual planning applications.
- 5.28 Development proposals will be expected to take account of their impact on the public realm, and preserve and enhance its character, including through landscaping that greens areas visible to the public, and retaining and enhancing boundary walls that harmonise with the structure and area.

Coherence

- 5.29 Often, new development is poorly integrated because of forms, elevations, materials, and detailing that are incongruous, out of scale and not proportional. There are also examples of visually dominant subsidiary development that has overwhelmed the original building.
- 5.30 Many of Southwold’s buildings are simple cottages, whose quality depends to a large extent on maintaining their simplicity and their completeness. Design proposals that clutter and dilute the character of simple cottages will be discouraged.
- 5.31 Southwold has a number of rows of terraces, pairs of semi-detached houses, and one cluster of bungalows, whose quality of design derives from uniformity. Alterations to some of these buildings has degraded character by introducing elements and details that noticeably break up uniformity, creating incongruity. Where uniformity is a part of character, design proposals will be expected to preserve and enhance this quality including through the use of consistent forms, elements, materials, fenestration, and detailing. Loss of coherence (uniformity) is not a justification for further erosion of character but an opportunity for reinstatement of lost character.

²¹ <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/local-plans/waveney-local-plan/existing-waveney-local-plan/supplementary-planning-documents/guidance-for-historic-buildings-and-conservation-areas/>

Ancillary In-fill Structures

5.32 There is a trend of development proposals for infill structures in gardens that are justified as ancillary structures to the main dwelling because of their purported use as studios, over-spill family accommodation, games rooms, granny annexes, etc. These are then subsequently converted to holiday letting without planning permission. Enforcement action by Waveney District Council may be required in some cases.

POLICY SWD2 - DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

All development proposals must:

- **demonstrate how they contribute positively to the relevant character area, including the architectural style of the building itself and its spatial context;**
- **be informed by what has been identified as good quality design in the Southwold Character Area Appraisal; and**
- **seek to reinstate character where the Character Area Appraisal identifies opportunities for this.**

Where simplicity or uniformity is a part of character, design proposals will be expected to preserve and enhance this quality, including through the use of sympathetic and consistent forms, elements, materials, fenestration, and detailing.

6 PARKING

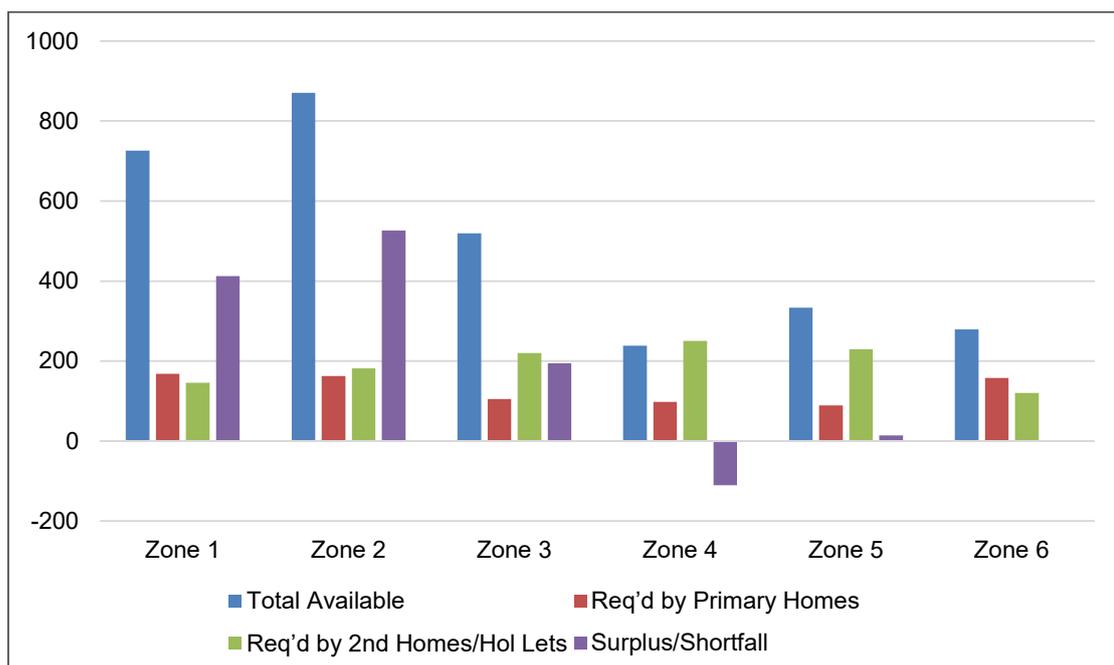
- 6.1 In a small historic town like Southwold, which is a very popular tourist destination, it is inevitable that parking is a significant issue. This is most keenly felt by local residents and people working in Southwold but living elsewhere, with many experiencing problems finding a parking space convenient to their residence or place of work, particularly during the peak tourist period and school holidays.
- 6.2 Southwold has no direct rail access and a very limited bus service and as a consequence cars are the main form of transport to and from the town. The historic centre of Southwold was designed before the arrival of cars as a significant means of transport. Most of the roads in the centre are narrow and mostly flanked by small frontage terraced houses, with very few dwellings having off-street parking. This leads to competition between residents, workers, business users and visitors for limited on-street parking. The consequence is often anti-social parking which blocks pavements, greens, footpaths and roads. This creates risks to pedestrians, degrades the environment and character of the centre of town and causes access, parking difficulties and road congestion for all users.
- 6.3 The growth in popularity of Southwold to holiday makers and tourists in the early 20th century, attracted to its beach, harbour, estuary and beautiful surrounding countryside, led to the development of the Town Farm area to the north of the historic central area. It is noticeable that this development recognised the need to accommodate cars and incorporated much wider roads and pavements and larger building plots than elsewhere in Southwold. Moreover, as the popularity for seaside holidays grew, public car parks were developed near to the beach and harbour to the north and south of the town centre.
- 6.4 To illustrate this, in 2016 a survey to inform the Neighbourhood Plan was conducted of the roadside parking availability based on property type (primary residence, second home, holiday let) and net kerb length. The town was divided into six zones, each of which have approximately the same number of dwellings. The results (*see Figure 6.1 and Appendix 6.3*) clearly indicates that three of the six zones surveyed, all in the historic centre of town, are at or have exceeded their capacity to support the cumulative parking needs of residents, workers and short term visitors. Given the paucity of vacant spaces in or near the town centre that are suitable for the provision of additional parking, the resolution of this situation cannot be addressed through Neighbourhood Planning policies alone but will have to be dealt with through statutory regulations and enforcement under the control of the Highways and Local Authorities.
- 6.5 Nevertheless, one of the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan is to mitigate the parking problems through a policy approach which seeks to ensure the provision of adequate parking for development. New build properties are already covered by the Highway Authority's guidance on parking provision. Extensions to existing properties, however, do not have the benefit of such guidance, but where these involve the provision of additional bedrooms or space that could be used for that purpose, an associated increase in demand for parking spaces could result. Such increases could have significant impacts, particularly in zones of high demand for road-side parking, often related to ongoing proliferation of residential houses being rented out as holiday lets.
- 6.6 There are several blocks of garages, separate from the nearby houses which are owned or rented out. These are sited on land which may, at some future date, be subject to a redevelopment application for residences or offices etc. Even if such a development met the requirements of SWD3A and SWD3B and was approved, there

could still be a loss of 30 or so existing garages unless the developer is required to replace them somewhere within the same zone.

POLICY SWD3 - PRIVATE PARKING PROVISION

- A** Residential development proposals including extensions and conversions which potentially increase the accommodation capacity of the development must provide the minimum number of parking spaces required by the Suffolk Highway Authority Guidance for Parking, 2015, or any successor guidance. Parking spaces can take the form of open spaces or garage/car ports permanently available for parking use. Where open spaces are provided, permeable surfaces will be encouraged.
- B** The use of on-street parking in order to satisfy the requirements of Policy A above, will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it would not result in obstruction of the local road network to a degree that would create safety concerns for pedestrians and cyclists and that there is sufficient spare on-street parking space within the zone of the proposal to accommodate the additional demand.
- C** Development that results in the loss of existing off-street or on-street parking will be required to provide, in addition to the minimum provision detailed in A above, at least the same number of new parking spaces in the zone in which the proposed development is located.
- D** By avoiding the appearance of car dominated development, parking areas at the front of a property that use the front garden will only be acceptable where this is the prevailing pattern of parking in the character area. Proposals for open frontages to create new parking areas will not be acceptable in areas where enclosed front boundaries prevail.

Figure 6.1 Parking Availability by Zone



7 ECONOMY

- 7.1 The economy of Southwold is largely dependent on leisure and tourism. The largest employer in the area is Adnams, the brewer, hotelier and wine merchant, although it also has a direct interest in tourism through ownership of a number of pubs and restaurants.
- 7.2 Southwold's retail centre, which caters both to the needs of local residents in Southwold and Reydon and also to the tourism industry, is concentrated in a small number of streets, mostly in a tightly drawn town centre boundary. The total floor space for Southwold is 7,600 square metres which is significantly less than the other market towns, including the next largest Halesworth, (10,500 square metres). Snapshots of Southwold's vacancy rate taken in 2015 showed only 5.3% of vacant shops compared to a national average of 11%. High demand and lack of retail space contributes to high rents in the Southwold retail centre.
- 7.3 70% of respondents to the Southwold Town Plan Questionnaire thought the character of Southwold High Street 'very important'²² and this was confirmed by the Neighbourhood Plan focus groups. This character derives partly from historic shop fronts and partly from the number of independent shops which are valued by visitors and local residents.
- 7.4 In recent years, Southwold has seen a decline in the number of independent businesses and an increase in national chains. This is felt by the community and visitors to have diluted the High Street's distinctiveness. It has also led to a dramatic increase in commercial rents which in turn has substantially increased the rates burden, leading to further displacement of local independent shops. The closure of Southwold hospital and the relocation of the doctors' surgery to Reydon, which has reduced the footfall in the town centre, has also undermined the vitality of shops serving the needs of local residents.
- 7.5 The Coastal Community Team Strategy²³ developed through community consultation, highlighted the importance of independent businesses to a vibrant town centre. The space needs of independent shops tend to differ from national chains, many of which seek larger floor areas that can be fitted out to a corporate template. The National Planning Policy Framework promotes "competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer ". Retaining premises suitable for small retailers reinforces customer choice and promotes the vitality of Southwold High Street by preserving its attractive character.

POLICY SWD4 – CONVENIENCE RETAILING

In the Primary and Secondary shopping areas of Southwold, proposals to increase the size of a single shop unit so that it has a total floor space exceeding 150m² will only be supported if the existing smaller shop unit is demonstrated not to be commercially viable. This should be done by undertaking a comprehensive marketing campaign of at least 12 months in accordance with Appendix 4 of the New Local Plan (marketing requirements).

²² Appendix 1.3.

²³ <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/business/regeneration-projects/coastal-communities-teams/southwold-coastal-community-team/>

- 7.6 Southwold harbour includes a small fishing industry with locally caught fish sold from huts near the jetties, and a variety of marine services including boat building and repairs. Other local industries include construction and building maintenance (partly driven by the strong second home market), and a variety of service businesses, including a successful creative digital tech sector business.
- 7.7 Tourism is by far the strongest sector in the area and will continue to be promoted in a way that is consistent with protecting and promoting Southwold's natural environment and heritage. However, diversification from tourism is necessary to attract a greater range of employment opportunities.
- 7.8 Reviewing the success of entrepreneurs in setting up businesses in other seaside towns, the Centre for Entrepreneurs notes²⁴:
- 'a passive reliance on tourism will not be enough for seaside towns to fulfil their potential. What's needed ... is a transformation in the way seaside towns view themselves, as well as how they educate their children and manage their infrastructure.*
- Seaside towns need entrepreneurs to bring ideas, jobs, and wealth to their communities; but entrepreneurs need talent, infrastructure, and public support to help them lead the revitalisation of seaside towns.'*
- 7.9 Southwold Town Council, the Coastal Communities Team Economic Plan for Southwold²⁵ and the Southwold and District Chamber of Trade and Commerce (SDCTC) support attracting to the town small-scale knowledge sector businesses working in, for example, IT, design, marketing, communications and financial services, and consultancy. With good broadband connections, the location of such businesses is less sensitive than it used to be and the benefits of working and living in a high quality environment would be attractive to many start-up, micro (under 10 employees) and small (under 50 employees) businesses.
- 7.10 The community supports the creation of a more diverse economy and more business space. In the Neighbourhood Plan survey, support for 'non-tourism-based businesses' was the first or second priority for nearly 60% of respondents, with start-up units for new businesses being a priority for over 50%. In addition, 84% of respondents thought it important or very important for 'small, flexible-use premises for small and start-up businesses' to be provided. 59% of respondents wanted the old hospital site used for low rent facilities for start-up businesses. The need for business meeting rooms was also highlighted by the business leaders Focus Group²⁶.
- 7.11 Southwold already has the basis for an entrepreneurial economy. The ONS Coastal Communities review of 195 small coastal communities (1,000-20,000 population) reported that Southwold had the sixth highest self-employment rate, 34%, the average for England and Wales being 15%.
- 7.12 Developing a network of peers and symbiotic relationships could make Southwold and Reydon attractive places for entrepreneurs to locate their fledgling businesses. This view is supported by a 2016 feasibility study undertaken by Tech East into converting part of the former Southwold hospital into a creative digital tech hub. Following analysis of growth in the digital tech sector in East Anglia and the out-migration from London into East Anglia of tech sector workers in their mid to late 30's, the study concluded that "given Southwold's overall attractiveness as a place to live, work and

²⁴ https://centreforentrepreneurs.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Seaside_Entrepreneurs_Report_WEB1.pdf

²⁵ <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Business/Coastal-Community-Teams/Southwold-Coastal-Community-Team-Economic-Plan-summary.pdf>

²⁶ Appendix 3.2

vacation ... it would seem feasible to attract between 5-10 businesses to tenant the available space assuming the right facilities at the right price.” The Waveney District Council economic development team has noted that, in other rural areas, when space is created, it is quickly filled to capacity, meeting demand from entrepreneurs.

- 7.13 The Tech East study identified the need for a variety of types of space to meet the needs of both start-up companies and growing businesses, and also emphasized the importance of flexible easy-in, easy-out terms, and competitive rents to attracting new businesses.
- 7.14 Since 2000, Southwold has lost significant amounts of space suitable for businesses²⁷. The little remaining business space is chiefly in the Southwold Business Centre on St Edmunds Road, which is over-subscribed, and the Reydon Business Park, located a little less than a mile outside the Neighbourhood Plan area. The latter provides facilities for 22 businesses; some of which have relocated from Southwold because of their inability to find adequate or affordable space. The Business Park is currently fully let, with available units rarely coming on the market, rents have recently increased, reflecting the scarcity of business space in the area.
- 7.15 For people without adequate space for a home office, and for start-up and growing businesses, the ability to access workspace on flexible terms (including affordable rents) is one of the most important factors in deciding where to locate a business. Having such space available in the town creates the potential to attract incomers, encourages new start-ups by local residents, and retains businesses within the town that are out-growing their space. Accordingly, opportunities to develop business spaces of various sizes, including meeting rooms, should be encouraged.
- 7.16 Ideally, office space would be created through new-build provision as part of a larger new development which could potentially cross-subsidise the provision of start-up units and space at attractive rents. This could potentially be achieved on the development sites identified in Section 10.
- 7.17 However, given the limits on development space within Southwold, alternative provision could be made in existing buildings, potentially in existing employment or community premises that are no longer in use or through flexible and creative use of other space, for example, space above shops.

POLICY SWD5 – START-UP AND GROW BUSINESS SPACE

Development proposals to provide start up and grow B-class business space on flexible terms will be supported. This could be through:

- **Conversion of existing buildings across the Neighbourhood Plan area;**
- or
- **Provision of new buildings within the physical limits boundary of Southwold Town, and in particular on the identified development sites in Policy SWD11.**

Southwold Business Centre

- 7.18 Southwold Business Centre is a cluster of buildings off St Edmunds Road accommodating a number of small businesses, including the Dome Antique Centre, Southwold Carpets, Suffolk Pilates Centre, Suffolk Summer Theatres’ scenery workshop, Richard’s Bargains, Garrett’s Housekeeping Services, Little Acorn

²⁷ Appendix 4.6

Accounting and The Haven. These are businesses that do not need a High Street location but require low-cost units, some of them quite spacious. It is important for maintaining a diverse economy in Southwold that provision of this type is available. All these businesses are well used by local residents.

Waveney's New Local Plan Policy WLP8.12 states that "Neighbourhood Plans may identify additional premises or clusters of premises outside of Existing Employment Areas within use classes B1, B2 and B8 for protection from redevelopment or change of use if local evidence supports it."

The local evidence supporting the Southwold Business Centre having this protection is:

- the lack of other flexible employment space in the town,
- the Centre is thriving. The businesses are well supported by local residents and there are no units advertised as vacant,
- there are no alternative sites in the town if this site were lost. Residential values in the town are so high that it is far more commercially advantageous to seek a residential use than a commercial one. There are no sites outside the built-up area because the town is surrounded by the Common and marshes, which are protected.

8 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 Southwold is located in an exceptional natural landscape of common, marshes, beaches and dunes. This is valued both by residents and visitors to the town and is a major part of the attraction of Southwold as a tourist destination. It is essential that development respects and enhances this natural environment.
- 8.2 Southwold includes and is surrounded by areas designated to be of high wildlife value. To the south, the Minsmere-Walberwick Heaths and Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) includes the Town Marshes. The northern border of the town stops just short of the Pakefield to Easton Bavents SSSI.
- 8.3 There are six County Wildlife Sites within or adjacent to the town:
- the Southwold Denes
 - Buss Creek
 - Easton Marshes
 - the Reydon Fishing Lakes
 - Reydon Marshes
 - St Felix School Grounds.
- 8.4 Buss Creek is an important ornithological site. In a 2007 survey²⁸ 114 species were recorded in the creek and adjacent reedbeds, these included water vole, seven species of dragonflies and grass snakes.
- 8.5 Since 2014, two amateur ornithologists who live in the town have identified 170 bird species, many uncommon, within two kilometres of Might's Bridge²⁹. The majority were recorded within one kilometre of the boating lake.
- 8.6 The Buss Creek Marshes (reed bed and marsh habitat) and the Common are important areas of undesignated wildlife habitat.
- 8.7 Southwold beach is of exceptional importance for tourism and is the subject of major study and concern in the Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (2010)³⁰. The current policy is that in the medium term a natural shingle barrier should be allowed to develop north of Southwold Pier when the cliff at Easton Bavents is eventually breached by erosion. This is seen as the key to maintaining a supply of sand for Southwold beach. The Plan recognises that a consequence will be the need to develop a defence for North Road and south Reydon from storm surges.
- 8.8 The Common, which includes a mixture of sports pitches, a golf course, and common land also has no formal designation, but it is of County Wildlife Site quality for its reptiles and for the large areas managed specifically as skylark habitat. It has excellent connectivity to the larger habitat block of the Woodsend and Town Marshes (part of the Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SSSI).
- 8.9 The blocks of interconnected wildlife habitats (see Appendix 6.4) help form an ecologically coherent network that allows species to move between sites, which is essential to more robust populations. Equally important are 'stepping stones' between the blocks, which insects, birds and small mammals used to move between the blocks³¹. Gardens and town green spaces can be managed to act as stepping stones if

²⁸ Suffolk Wildlife Trust 2007, *Southwold and Reydon Wildlife Audit*

²⁹ <http://www.southwold-northroad.com/page6.htm> The audit is ongoing.

³⁰ <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/coastal-management/shoreline-management-plans/>

³¹ Suffolk Wildlife Trust (2007) *Southwold and Reydon Wildlife Audit, for Waveney District Council*

they are planted to promote wildlife habitat. Indeed, wildlife audits in different parts of the UK and internationally have established the importance of suburban gardens and parks to compensating for the decline in rural wildlife habitat caused by modern farming techniques³².

8.10 One of the Town Council's strategic objectives is to improve the natural environment and the following steps have been taken to meet this objective:

- planting trees on Tibby's Green and Hospital Green;
- creating a wildflower garden along Ladies Walk;
- developing, in conjunction with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, a management plan for Water's Copse and adjoining land on the Common bordering the south built boundary of the town; and
- working on a management plan for the marshes and the rest of the Common.

8.11 The Coastal Communities Team³³ public consultation on an economic strategy for the town found that improving the natural environment was a community priority and is developing policies relating to the boating lake and lagoon, Buss Creek Marshes and Southwold Town Marshes.

8.12 The use of dwellings for second homes and holiday lets often works against this community priority in two ways. Firstly, the loss of gardens to infill development, usually conversions and extensions that increase the number of bedrooms and bathrooms to enhance holiday let use and the value of investment. Secondly, gardens are often landscaped or paved to be maintenance-free.

8.13 At the local scale, the design of individual buildings and of green and open spaces, will help to ensure that many of the species that are in Southwold can not only survive but thrive. This is crucially in line with the national planning guidance for achieving net biodiversity gain through all new development (NPPF, 2016). Examples include:

- Designing houses so that there is space for wildlife. For example, incorporating integral bird and bat boxes under the eaves of the new houses, or creating artificial nests sited in places away from windows and doors, can create vital new roosting sites to support populations of birds and bats.
- Boundaries between dwellings can be made hedgehog friendly by including pre-cut holes for hedgehogs to more effectively move across neighbourhoods to forage.
- New planting schemes can support bees and other pollinators by including nectar-rich plants.

POLICY SWD6 – PROVISION FOR WILDLIFE IN DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals that incorporate into their design features which encourage wildlife to thrive will be strongly supported. In particular, development proposals should incorporate provision for local wildlife to thrive.

³² M. Goddard, A. Dougill and T. Benton (2010) *Scaling up from gardens: biodiversity conservation in urban environments*, *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*, Volume 25, Issue 2, p90–98, February 2010

³³ <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Business/Coastal-Community-Teams/Southwold-Coastal-Community-Team-Economic-Plan.pdf>

- 8.14 Whilst private garden space in Southwold is limited - much of it, particularly towards the centre of the town, being given over to courtyards - these are the locations where natural habitats have the best chance of flourishing. It is important to protect garden space (including courtyards) in order to allow biodiversity to thrive. This has been particularly under threat from the growth in second homes and holiday lets which, as described above, seek to enlarge properties often at the expense of garden space. In particular, lateral extensions have become common in Southwold and this invariably results in the loss of garden space.
- 8.15 This is also not just an issue with residential properties – extension of commercial property similarly results in the loss of courtyard space which is not only part of the character of Southwold but provides for space biodiversity to thrive.
- 8.16 In Southwold, gardens (including courtyards) provide amenity for residents (including a sense of surrounding space); make an important contribution to the visual experience of residents and visitors; and help to shape the character of different parts of the town. The Conservation Area Appraisal 2008 and the Character Area Appraisal identify that gardens make an important contribution to the character of the town and so should be preserved from development. These are not exclusive lists; the planning process may result in the identification of additional gardens that make a positive contribution, which should be preserved from development.
- 8.17 Because much of the housing in the town consists of terraces or semi-detached houses, many gardens consist of a small area in the front that sets the dwelling back from the street, and a longer narrow rear garden. There are some larger gardens – chiefly in the Town Farm Character Area – which contribute to the supply of housing that is suitable for families. Maintaining this supply is essential to achieving one of the Town Council’s strategies for the town – reversing demographic decline by attracting families to live in the town.
- 8.18 Southwold’s gardens act as ‘stepping stones’ between blocks of interconnected wildlife habitats that help to compensate for the decline in rural wildlife habitat caused by modern farming techniques. It is therefore important to protect garden space in order to allow biodiversity to thrive.
- 8.19 The chief threat to gardens in Southwold comes from cumulative small scale in-fill development that has successively enlarged the footprints of original structures, resulting in the erosion of significant amounts of garden space. The chief impact of the erosion of garden space is seen in the Conservation Area.
- 8.20 A more recent trend is applications for permanent garden infill structures purportedly for ancillary uses (studios, game rooms, granny annexes), which are subsequently converted to holiday lets. Robust enforcement is required to prevent the undermining of planning policies and decisions.

POLICY SWD7 – LOSS OF PRIVATE GARDEN SPACE

Proposals for any development in private residential gardens (including courtyards) will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- a) The garden has not been identified in the Southwold Character Area Appraisal as an area that makes a positive contribution to the character of the area.
- b) The size of the remaining garden is generally consistent with the predominant pattern of garden spaces in the surrounding character area.
- c) The scale, design and siting of the proposal will not detract from the visual amenity of the streetscape;
- d) Where vegetation is removed, detailed landscaping plans are provided for the re-greening of the site with replacement vegetation that promotes wildlife habitat;
- e) Where part of the garden was previously used for car parking, the development does not reduce the level of off-street parking in line with Policy SWD3.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Policy SWD2; Design and Landscape Character.

Local Green Spaces

8.21 Under the NPPF, neighbourhood plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to the local community. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 77 states that Local Green Spaces should only be designated:

- *"where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- *where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- *where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land."*

8.22 The areas that have been identified by the community as being of value to them and in need of protection fall into five categories³⁴:

- Common land (but not with the formal definition of 'registered common land')
- Grazing marshes
- Public greens
- Play and recreation areas
- Allotments

³⁴ Appendix 5.9

- 8.23 The local green spaces in each category are described in more detail and mapped below.
- 8.24 Areas under the categories ‘Common Land’, ‘Grazing Marshes’, ‘Play and Recreation Areas’ and ‘Allotments’ are considered to have sufficient protection under the existing Waveney District Council planning policy framework and/or are directly owned by Southwold Town Council or the Southwold Common Trust.
- 8.25 Most of the areas under the heading ‘Public Greens’ were identified in the Waveney Open Space Needs Assessment 2015³⁵ as being ‘important to the townscape and street scene’ of Southwold’. It is therefore considered important to protect these spaces from development.
- 8.26 The Waveney Open Space Needs Assessment recognised that many of the amenity spaces are ‘passive’ spaces because they offer limited value to residents as usable space; at present their value is solely provided by the visual amenity they create. The Assessment recommended that:

‘Providing ancillary facilities such as seating and planting on passive amenity spaces could assist with creating walking routes to destinations such as the village centre, beach or the playing field that could encourage people to be more active.’

Therefore any ancillary provision which helps to improve the more active enjoyment of these spaces will be permitted. However, these must be generally ancillary uses, for example, signage, litter provision or benches and tables. The connectivity between the green spaces should also be improved through the use of features to encourage wildlife, including native planting, scrub, trees, hedgerows and ponds.

The Public Greens that are designated as Local Green Spaces are as follows³⁶:

South Green	
<p>The most famous of Southwold's greens and is heavily used by residents and visitors for walking and enjoyment of the views. It is the site of the annual Charter Fair, which dates back to the 15th century, and of many other community events.</p>	

³⁵ <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Waveney-Local-Plan/Background-Studies/Open-Space-Needs-Assessment.pdf>

³⁶ See Appendices 6.8-6.11 for maps showing location of each area

Gun Hill

An iconic green in Southwold, with the historic cannons donated to the town after the Battle of Sole Bay in the 17th century. Used by residents and visitors to walk, picnic and enjoy the view.



Bartholomew Green

Along with St. Edmund's Green and Church Green, this is a green space surrounding the Grade I listed 15th century St Edmund's Church. It has formal garden borders and is used by residents and visitors for walking, sitting, enjoying the view and as a footpath to the north side of town. Community events are occasionally staged here.



St Edmund's Green

Also called Hospital Green, it is part of the setting of the Grade I listed 15th century St Edmund's Church and is used for walking, resting, as a footpath to Cumberland Road and occasionally for community events.



North Green

A small local green with circular gardens that provides a footpath into the town centre and makes an important visual contribution to the entrance to the town.



Barnaby Green

A small green enjoyed and looked after by local residents, with a visual contribution to the entrance to the town. Used by local residents for picnics in the summer and decorated with lights at Christmas.



North Parade Green

Runs from the pier to East Green and contributes to the iconic view of the Southwold sea front. It has benches and formal garden areas. The Conservation Area Assessment calls for this green to be protected.



East Green

An important green space that separates elements of the Adnams' brewery complex and includes the Verdun oak commemorating the First World War.



St James's Green

A picture-postcard view of Southwold with a cannon, flag pole, and benches facing the sea. It contributes to the visual harmony of this part of the Conservation Area.



East Cliff Green

Includes a formal circular shrubbery and benches for resting, facing the sea. It is an important feature of the character of this area, creating a sense of spaciousness that contrasts with the density of the terraces built up to the road.



POLICY SWD8 – LOCAL GREEN SPACES

The following areas, as shown on the map in Appendix 5.2, are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- **South Green**
- **Gun Hill**
- **Bartholomew Green**
- **St Edmund's Green**
- **North Green**
- **Barnaby Green**
- **North Parade Green**
- **East Green**
- **St James's Green**
- **East Cliff Green**

Proposals for built development on these Local Green Spaces will not be permitted unless the proposal is of a limited nature and is clearly demonstrated to be an ancillary use that it is required solely to enhance the role and function of an identified Local Green Space.

Flooding and drainage

- 8.27 Areas of the town for which development may be considered for development and which are in designated flood risk zones (either directly from the sea or through breaching of the banks of the River Blyth) include Blackshore, Ferry Road, Millennium Hall car park and North Road. In addition, localised surface water flooding occurs from time to time following periods of intense rainfall. Streets that have reported experiencing such incidents in the past three years³⁷ include Centre Cliff, Ferry Road, Hotson Road, North Parade, North Road, South Green, St James Green and The Common.
- 8.28 Southwold is served by an antiquated waste-water and sewage system, probably at the limit of its capacity, so new developments need to minimise the load placed on the system.
- 8.29 Development will therefore have to ensure that it minimises the potential for all types of flooding, including surface water. Surface level flooding can be addressed through a range of flood mitigation measures, both for the scheme as a whole and for individual buildings.
- 8.30 Additionally, it is not acceptable for new development to require measures that could worsen flooding impacts elsewhere, such as the loss of open watercourses. The creation of new culverts will not be viewed favourably as these contribute to localised flooding.

³⁷Appendix 2.7

- 8.31 Positive actions to reduce flooding across the parish will be welcomed. For example, where there are existing culverts and development creates the opportunity to open these up, then proposing to do so will likely result in reduced risks of localised flooding, therefore will be viewed favourably.
- 8.32 New developments will be expected to incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) where feasible, guided by SuDS best practice³⁸. Ideally SuDS should be at or near the surface, providing water quality, biodiversity and amenity benefits and reducing flood risk. Given that most development is expected to be on brownfield land, a principal aim should be for development to minimise discharge rates. Current best practice indicates that rates should be reduced by a minimum of 30%³⁹.

POLICY SWD9 – MINIMISING THE IMPACT OF FLOODING FROM DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals will be required to:

- **be designed and constructed to minimise the overall level of flood risk within the parish; and**
- **provide appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which minimise discharge rates unless it can be shown to be impractical; and**
- **re-open existing culverts where practicable; and**
- **provide for rain water harvesting where practicable.**

Development will not be permitted in flood attenuation areas where that development would reduce the ability of these areas to alleviate flooding.

Proposals that would create new culverts (unless essential to the provision of access to water systems) will not be permitted.

Proposals that would result in the loss of open watercourses will not be permitted.

³⁸ Suffolk Flood Risk Management Partnership (2014): Suffolk Surface Water Drainage (SuDS) Guidance, Standards and Information. <http://www.greensuffolk.org/assets/Greenest-County/Water--Coast/Suffolk-Flood-Partnership/19431E-FRM-SuDS-Guidance-Appendix-A-v12.pdf>

³⁹ CIRIA (2015) SuDS Manual https://www.ciria.org/Resources/Free_publications/SuDS_manual_C753.aspx

9 COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

9.1 Community services facilities are the life blood of Southwold, not only for its residents and visitors but also for the surrounding parishes. They provide places for people to meet and socialise, support community activities, encourage people to be active and foster a sense of identity and well-being to those who live and visit Southwold. In Southwold, community facilities not only include buildings, they also include designated areas of open land used for sport and outdoor recreation such as sports pitches, tennis courts and boating ponds.

The loss of community facilities, e.g. the doctors' surgery, which draw people into the town, has had an adverse impact on other community facilities such as the Post Office and shops serving local needs because of loss of footfall.

9.2 It is therefore important that existing community facilities, whether buildings, structures, or defined areas of land with designated outdoor recreational or other uses that are of value to the community, be retained, and that additional facilities be created to accommodate new community needs over the life time of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is supported by the Southwold Town Strategy 2016 which identifies the need to protect, maintain and enhance the town's community assets as one of its short term strategies.

POLICY SWD10 – LOSS OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Proposals that would result in the loss of a community facility and no suitable re-provision for the same or an alternative community use elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Plan area will only be permitted in the following exceptional circumstances:

- **all the requirements of Policy WLP8.22 are met; and**
- **it can clearly be demonstrated that all reasonable efforts have been made to engage with bodies that may have an interest in taking on the running and operation of the facility for its existing or an alternative community purpose.**

10 DEVELOPMENT SITES

10.1 Southwold's situation as an island surrounded by water and marshes and within a sensitive natural environment in the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), restricts development sites to brownfield land within the town boundary. There are few development sites which are available and expected to come forward during the Plan period (See *Appendix 6.5*). The key sites are:

1. The Police and Fire Station site, Station Road
2. The former Southwold Hospital, Field Stile Road
3. Station Road Courtyard

10.2 It is important that the development potential of these sites is maximised but without affecting the character of the town. The Police and Fire Station site and The Station Road Courtyard are at the entrance to the town and whilst only Station Road Courtyard is inside the Conservation Area, the development of both could have a significant impact on the setting. The former Southwold Hospital site is within the Conservation Area and is adjacent to existing residential uses which have established the building line and provide a clear context for design that would be in keeping with the character of the area.

10.3 The Neighbourhood Plan has identified a need to provide more housing that meets the needs of the resident community and also the need for small-scale, start-up workspace, including retail space. In addition, there is a recognised need to protect the existing community services and provide more of these assets which will help to support a growing resident population.

10.4 There is a recognition that such services will, increasingly, need to be community-run. But this needs the right type of space, used as efficiently as possible. If the potential development sites do not provide for such needs, then these opportunities could be lost.

10.5 It is vital therefore that the development of these three sites addresses the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Police and Fire Station site

10.6 This site has been offered for sale and would be expected to provide a predominantly residential-led scheme. This will enable the provision of affordable housing which would go some way to addressing the affordable housing need identified by local residents or those with family looking to live in the town.

Former Southwold Hospital

10.7 This site was been purchased in 2018 by a Housing Association and a Mutual Society and planning permission was obtained for a mix of affordable and market housing, community, business and A3 use.

Station Road Courtyard

10.8 This site has existing businesses located on it, incorporating important local services. As such, it is considered important that the site does not result in a net loss of employment. It is considered that the site has potential to support small-scale start-up workspace for businesses, crafts' people and artisans, cross-subsidised by residential uses above as part of a comprehensive mixed use development scheme. This is identified as a key project for the Town Council in the Southwold Town Strategy 2016.

POLICY SWD11 – DEVELOPMENT SITES

- A. Proposals to redevelop sites within the physical limits boundary of Southwold for a mix of uses will be supported where that mix includes some or all of the following uses:**
- **Residential units that address local housing needs;**
 - **Small-scale start-up/incubator business space/ growing businesses/ retail space;**
 - **Community space where there is a demonstrable need for such provision.**
- B. In particular, a mix of these uses will be required on the following sites shown on the Policies Map, unless such provision would render development demonstrably unviable or there is a proven lack of need for the use:**
- **Former Police and Fire Station site, Station Road**
 - **Former Southwold Hospital, Field Stile Road**
 - **Station Road Courtyard**
- C. Development proposals must ensure that they preserve and enhance the character of the area, as required by Policy SWD2.**
- D. Proposals for these sites should be informed by a development brief. Proposals to forward any development brief in conjunction with Southwold Town Council will be strongly supported.**

11 NON-POLICY ACTIONS

11.1 These Non-Policy Actions are matters of importance, as raised by the community, that do not require a Policy in order to progress. Also, they are actions that will assist the dedicated Policies in achieving the stated objectives of the Plan.

11.2 It should be recognised that a Neighbourhood Plan cannot deliver the entirety of a community's vision, either individually or collectively. Much of such matters are beyond the scope of Planning Policy or require remedial action to deal with existing, perceived, shortcomings. For this to happen, both individuals and groups within the community, together with the Town Council, must continue the work of building and maintaining a strong community. And, in working with developers, landowners, businesses, community groups and other agencies, provide facilities best targeted to meet community needs.

In addition, the closeness of excellent working relationships with both District and County Councils, cannot be overstated.

11.3 The areas in which matters worthy of further work have emerged during the course of consultations are noted here, but they are by no means exhaustive. However, ownership of the matters listed have been suggested, but inclusion is not meant to signify approval, or the prioritisation of any listing.

CONCERN	POSSIBLE ACTIONS	LEAD AGENCIES & PARTNER
Housing		
Reverse decline in resident population, achieving a more balanced age-range	Support Southwold Town Strategy 2016 'tactics': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotional programme to attract people to live and work in Southwold. Check how existing businesses/agents promote the town as a place to live. Seek to influence messaging. Transport links. Take opportunities to work as a pressure group. Encourage initiatives for out of peak season events and activities. 	Southwold Town Council
Transport & Movement		
Improving the flow of traffic	Better signage for visitors, in general, but a major focus on directing people to car parks.	Southwold Town Council, Suffolk County Council.
Improve public car parking	Consider recommended actions within the Southwold Parking Review designed to improve the efficiency of public car parking. This to include improvements to Roadside directional signage and traffic management throughout the town using a revised approach to information provision.	Southwold Town Council Waveney District Council

	<p>Review and, where appropriate, progress the following proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the creation of 60 additional parking spaces at Gardner Road car parkway a small expansion of the existing parking provision; the creation of 30 new off-street parking spaces on North Parade; increases in parking capacity at York Road and Ferry Road car parks through the use of bay markings (estimated to be 50 spaces); seek opportunities for increased capacity within the Pier car park through re-design and a revised approach to disabled and coach parking. 	<p>Southwold Town Council Waveney District Council</p>
<p>Other improvements to access, parking and transport within the town</p>	<p>Support Southwold Town Council (STC) Strategy(2016) 'tactics':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with Millennium Foundation regarding use of its car park - discuss potential approach/options in the light of the Parking Review; liaise with partners regarding feasibility/establishment of a <i>Park and Ride</i> scheme; re-examine timing of larger delivery vehicles in terms of enforcement/feasibility; take account of changing parking enforcement regulations (Deregulation) in terms of both opportunities and solutions. Could STC become an Authorised Enforcement Authority? keep the High Street alive and ensure time-limited parking is enforced: communicate clearly with the Police regarding STC's objectives for a Match-Funded PCSO Scheme. Monitor performance and report regularly. 	<p>Southwold Town Council</p>
<p>Character, Conservation and the Environment</p>		
<p>Retaining and enhancing the natural and built environment</p>	<p>Support Southwold Town Council Strategy (2016) 'tactics':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognising and promoting historic buildings like the Town Hall, Market Place and significant terraces: use of the Suffolk Design Review Panel; incorporate STC Entrance to Town concept designs within potential developments; consider public art works to differentiate the Town and raise its profile; 	<p>Southwold Town Council</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure Tibby's Green maintenance and safety measures are in place; effect better management of the marshes. 	
Managing the use of the environment	Take measures to protect and improve The Common, The Denes, marshes and footpaths.	Southwold Town Council Suffolk Coast & Heaths, ANOB offices
Community		
Protect, maintain and enhance Southwold's community assets	Support Southwold Town Strategy (2016) 'tactics': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with relevant groups with the aim of retaining a thriving library and developing a tourist information centre. 	Southwold Town Council
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Waveney District Council and other partners to ensure sustainable public toilet facilities within the town. This will involve the adoption of an appropriate business model; work with Southwold Museum to assist in the development of an education programme and Blue Plaque Scheme and link with knowledge of town hall cellar and information boards on the Marshes: work closely with organisations to enhance community assets and experiences; bring Southwold Harbour into local control following the agreement with Waveney District Council formulated in March 2015; continue to liaise with SouthGen in its continued development of the former hospital site in Fieldstile Road. 	
Retail and Economy		
Seek to diversify the local economy by establishing space for small businesses particularly within a knowledge-based context	Support Southwold Town Council Strategy (2016) 'tactics': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> investigate potential opportunities for new sites and the further use of existing assets. 	Southwold Town Council

<p>Promote and maintain the independent character of the High Street</p>	<p>Support Southwold Town Council Strategy(2016) 'tactics':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be ready to develop sites owned by the town council and purchase business investment property for improved investment income; • initiate a High Street festival, or similar event, seeking to differentiate Southwold and emphasise its unique qualities; • communicate with national and regional chains in seeking support for town initiatives; • keep the High Street 'alive' by ensuring time-limited parking is enforced. 	<p>Southwold Town Council</p>
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12 GLOSSARY

- **Affordable housing** - Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market
- **Built form** - this refers to the man-made landscape and the various aspects of physical development within it.
- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** - a fixed, non-negotiable contribution that must be made by new development. It is chargeable on each net additional square metre of development built and is set by Waveney District Council.
- **Local Plan** - the planning policy document prepared by Waveney District Council, covering Southwold parish. This addresses strategic planning matters and the Southwold Neighbourhood Plan, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework, must be in general conformity with the Local Plan.
- **Intermediate tenure housing** - Homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.
- **Micro-business** - a company employing fewer than ten people.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** - the national planning policy document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- **Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)** - enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euro, and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding 43 million euro.

13. APPENDICES

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