

**Reducing Household  
Food Waste in Norfolk  
and Suffolk:**  
A vision for 2025





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# INTRODUCTION

The UK is facing a food waste challenge. Nationally it is estimated 7.3m tonnes of food waste was binned by households in 2015<sup>1</sup> – over 60% of which was avoidable. In 2016, Suffolk's research showed that food and drink accounted for over 36% of residual waste<sup>2</sup>. In Norfolk this figure in 2015 was 33%<sup>3</sup> equating to 118,000 tonnes of wasted food across the two counties. Nearly 40% of this food is still packaged.

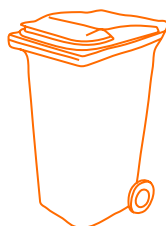
At a time of austerity, food waste impacts on the public's disposable income, this waste costs the local taxpayer over £12m annually. Councils cannot afford the excess and unwarranted waste of resources presented by poor use of food products and councils find themselves at the end of the food and drink supply network, having to pick up the cost for wider trends in food, consumerism and our society's attitude to waste. Unless sustained action is taken, the cost to the environment, councils and households will grow.

Although Suffolk and Norfolk councils have begun to tackle the issue, developing a range of activities to raise awareness with the public about how to avoid food waste, there is still much more to do. This vision places Norfolk and Suffolk at the forefront of the UK's efforts to reduce food waste.

The time is ripe for a different, more collaborative approach to reduce food waste.

Nationally the government-backed Waste And Resources Action Programme (WRAP) is the custodian of the Courtauld 2025 - an ambitious voluntary agreement that brings together organisations across the food system – from producer to consumer – to make food and drink production and consumption more sustainable. Collaboration is key to make this happen. Our shared aim is to deliver significant long-term impacts to reduce the amount of food finding its way into our rubbish bins.

We are calling on Norfolk and Suffolk's food and drink growers, producers, convertors, wholesalers, retailers, chef, restaurants, shoppers and consumers to work with us across the whole of Norfolk and Suffolk's food and drink value chain to cut food waste with great benefit for the budgets of all involved and the environment.





# OUR VISION FOR 2025

Twenty years ago, recycling wasn't on the radar for most people. Yet, in 2017 over 45% of all household waste was recycled across Norfolk<sup>4</sup> and 50% in Suffolk<sup>5</sup>. The culture of recycling has firmly shifted in 25 years. Looking ahead in another 7 years - by 2025 - our aim is to have made an equally significant impact on food waste.

Given current trends, 2025 will look significantly different for both counties with an increased average age of the population, increased ill health and over 5% increase in population number. With this in mind, it is crucial we start to change the food culture of residents now to ensure it continues long into the future and helps to embed stronger financial resolve. Reducing food waste can increase disposable income, improve health and well-being, improving household resilience and releasing aforementioned crucial public sector resources.

The ambition is to achieve a measurable reduction in household food waste across Suffolk and Norfolk by inspiring people to make changes in their homes and communities.

This will be delivered through a new collaborative approach. Communication will encourage people to place a greater value on the food they buy, building an understanding of the amount of time and effort that goes into getting food onto their plates.

Through this new approach:

- Residents will take greater responsibility for the food they eat and dispose of. They will take small but meaningful actions achieving a measurable reduction in food waste.
- Supermarkets and food outlets will reinforce the councils' messaging to further educate and embed behaviour change among the growing population.
- Residents will be more socially aware of the impact of food waste and the steps they can take to help the environment.
- A cross-sector partnership will actively drive awareness of the food waste agenda.
- Residual waste will reduce, freeing up resources for both councils.
- Norfolk and Suffolk councils will be seen as leaders in reducing household food waste.
- Communities will take more responsibility for their own health and well-being by reducing portion size, planning accordingly before shopping and utilising fridges and freezers to extend the life of the food.





## OUR VISION

By 2025 we aspire to achieving a significant step towards a 20% reduction of food waste across Suffolk and Norfolk in line with the Courtauld Commitment. We will strive for an empowered, pro-active population, driven to make a positive difference to their own household, to the community and wider-environment.



# A TIME FOR CHANGE

Food waste is a global environmental challenge.

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## SETTING THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

In 2015, the United Nations launched its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 12 targets sustainable production & consumption including the waste of 1.3 billion tonnes of food every year, whilst almost one billion people go undernourished and another one billion hungry.

The UN's goals have set the foundation for both the EU and the UK to put in place a range of initiatives to tackle the challenge. There is a real opportunity for Norfolk and Suffolk to place themselves at the forefront of local authorities, seeking to meet this challenge demonstrating leadership on this international ambition.

## A GROWING MOVEMENT

The announcement of the SDGs has provoked significant research and activity in the UK raising awareness of the impact of food waste and setting standards for future action.

This includes:

- Courtauld 2025, facilitated by WRAP, of which Norfolk County Council and Suffolk Waste Partnership are a signatory, is the UK's key mechanism that calls for voluntary action on reducing food waste. It is now into Phase 4 (2015-2025) with an increasing focus on influencing consumer habits.
- Landmark campaigns such as WRAP's *Love Food Hate Waste* have set the standard and direction for future work, including those of both Suffolk and Norfolk councils in recent years. These campaigns are shifting away from a broad-brushed approach towards one which is more targeted and focused on specific demographics and food types.
- The Welsh Government has recently announced a target to reduce 50% of food waste by 2025, building on a sizeable reduction over the past ten years<sup>6</sup>.
- Retailers are trialling customer engagement through food waste with Sainsbury's *Waste less, Save more* and IKEA's *Live LAGOM* campaigns being prime examples.
- Both Suffolk and Norfolk councils have put in place a strong foundation of research, to understand household behaviours across the counties which lead to food waste.

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## FINANCIAL PRESSURE AS A DRIVER

With rising living costs, a lack of disposable income is becoming a key driver of behaviour change. Research commissioned in 2017 by Norfolk & Suffolk councils and undertaken by the environmental charity Hubbub, showed that both Suffolk and Norfolk have similar population breakdowns based on ACORN profiles. The research showed that 69% of people living in Norfolk and Suffolk think that saving money is an important driver of change.

The highest proportion of population for both counties is the 'Comfortable Communities' ACORN group – those with average incomes, owner-occupiers – both in rural and urban locations. These are households that feel the costs rising but have the awareness to make changes. They are also a key demographic including young families, some of the largest contributors of food waste. Those 'Financially Stretched' can also play a part. This cohort is accessible, in need of financial support and we believe, still has the awareness to make a change in their lives. Together, they account for over 60% of the population in both counties.

## A SHIFTING MINDSET

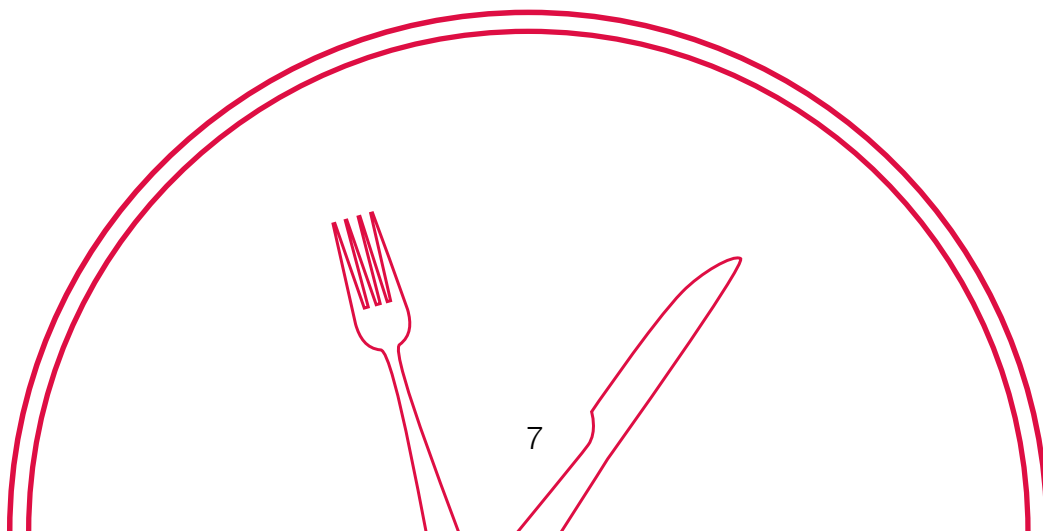
The public's attitude to recycling is changing. With national and international coverage supported by local recycling schemes, there is widespread recycling of plastics, glass and paper/card. Campaigns including Norfolk's *Give Your Recycling a Little Bit of Love*, Suffolk's "Getting Your Recycling Right" and home composting promotions have led to more households being engaged in recycling and composting than ever before. More recently, trends such as the Plastic Bag Tax, Blue Planet II, and single use plastics are also creating greater environmental awareness with the mainstream.

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## A TIME TO ACT

Norfolk and Suffolk are both at slightly different stages of food waste prevention development, with Norfolk undertaking campaign activity more recently. Our vision therefore recognises slightly different starting points and details how effective behaviour change models could be applied across Suffolk and Norfolk working with local communities and embracing the whole of the food and drink supply chain.

The vision focusses on the top of the waste hierarchy, reducing the occurrence of food waste at source and moving down the food chain to household consumption. Encouraging consumers to understand the value of food and engage with production will be key to this ambition as will be working collaboratively with partner organisations across the two counties.



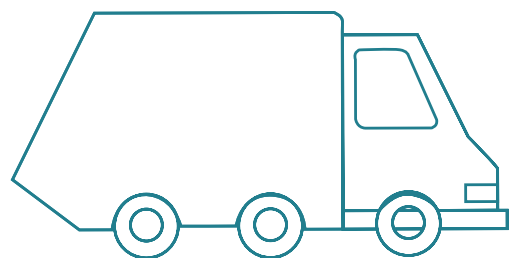
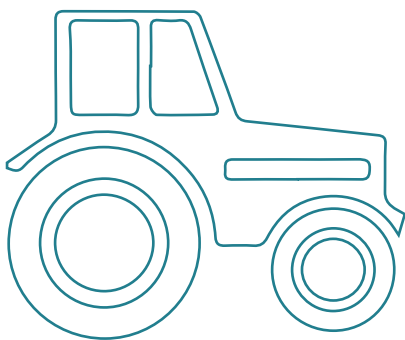


# CAPTURING THE OPPORTUNITY

Suffolk and Norfolk have a new opportunity to overcome the significant food waste challenge that exists in both counties, changing behaviour among many of the 1.6m residents.

To deliver our vision it is important to recognise the target audience, to identify what behaviours need to be changed and to understand what activities have already been undertaken. What is equally as important is to recognize and acknowledge the local food and drink supply chain which operates across Norfolk and Suffolk. As two counties our area is home to some of the most significant food and drink companies in Europe.

Norfolk and Suffolk's historical agricultural strengths see it blessed with national and international food and drink companies, as well as the manufacture of machinery to support them. This sector is an important employer in rural areas, though there are also significant agricultural production sites in urban areas. These major companies, alongside growing boutique high-value companies, see Norfolk and Suffolk specialism in: sugar, malt, the production and processing of poultry and pork, cider and fruit wines, beer, chocolate, soft drinks and potatoes, amongst others.



**AGRICULTURE, FOOD  
AND DRINK GENERATES**

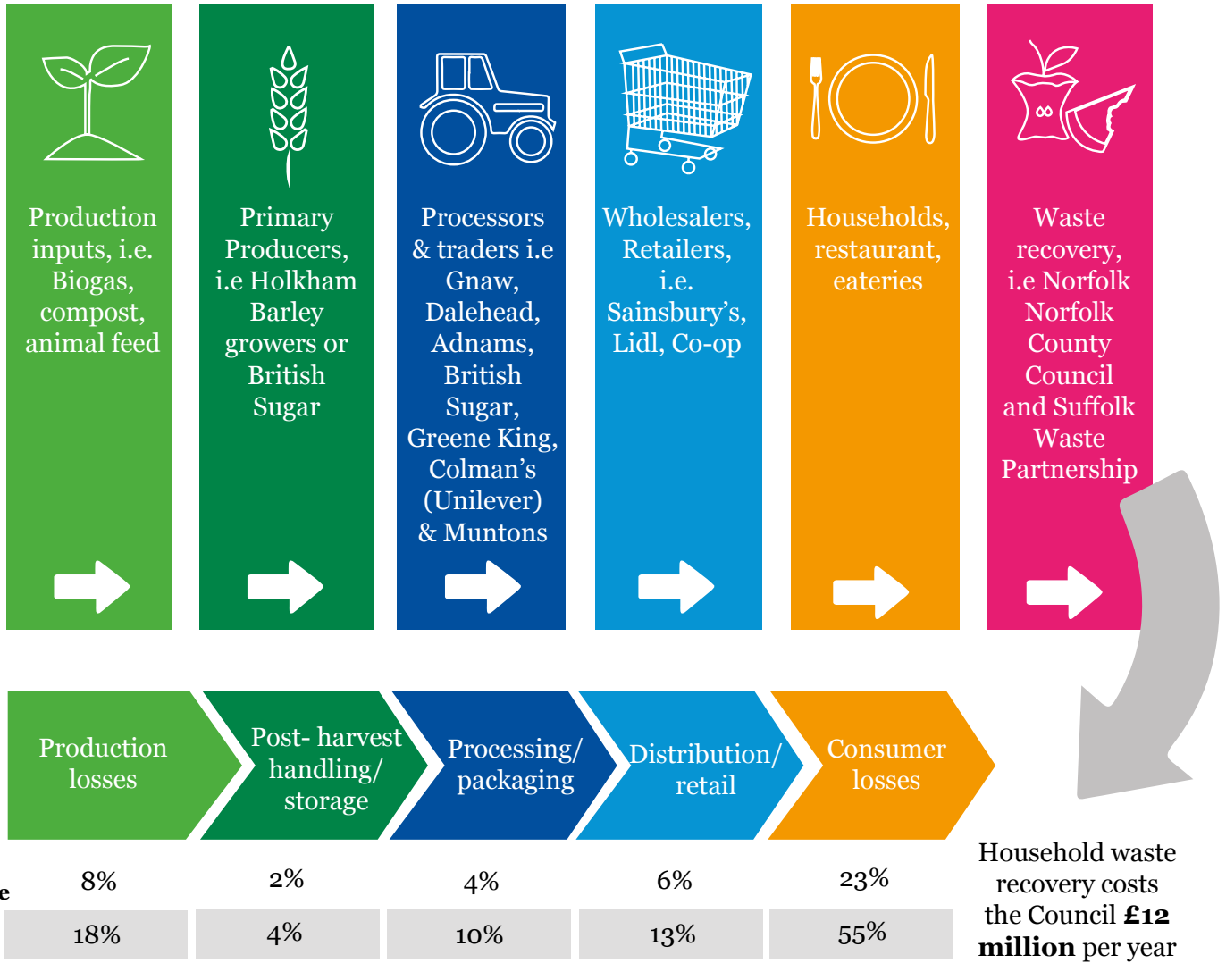
**£3.9BN** PER ANNUM

Source: <https://newanglia.co.uk/project/agriculture-food-and-drink>





**118,000 tonnes food** is wasted in Norfolk and Suffolk Households per year



Only through collaboration can Norfolk and Suffolk combat food waste.

## THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Research by Hubbub and other organisations including WRAP, shows that young parents, millennials and the Comfortable Communities generate the most food waste. Comfortable Communities account for approximately 40% of each county's population (approx. 800,000 people), which provides a huge opportunity to make an impact. This target group is educated, socially aware, and is accessible with a network already in place. Financially, they are also still in the bracket of watching their income, so the motivation for each household to reduce costs by over £700 annually is important, for many it's the cost of their annual fuel bills or car insurance. This should be the priority group in the first instance.

## BARRIERS AGAINST EFFECTIVE CHANGE



Poor knowledge of preparation and storage



Confusion around date labelling



Residents per household



Understanding the use of leftovers



Managing portion sizes



Defaulting to household norms

## ACTIVITIES TO-DATE

Norfolk County Council has invested in an incredibly successful *Plan, Eat, Save* campaign which in 2017 was seen over 5.9m times across Facebook and Twitter combined, and on Facebook alone reached 1.9m unique users.

Launching in October 2017, as part of the *Waste Less Save More* Sainsbury's project, Norfolk Councils delivered seven Discovery Communities driving food waste reduction activities across all districts. This work has targeted a large proportion of the Comfortable Communities profile. This work has set a strong precedent and our vision builds upon and compliments the success in the county to date.

Suffolk's last campaign was 2014's *Making Food Waste History* project, which utilised assets from Love Food, Hate Waste. The three-month campaign proved successful in reaching large numbers of residents but was a short-term approach. It is time to refresh and drive new activity to stimulate awareness of food waste across the County.

Both counties have existing volunteer networks, that will be pivotal to growing the awareness of our campaign messaging so it is important to not only ensure they continue but increase in number, sharing a common vision.









# DELIVERING A 2025 VISION

Changing behaviour is complex and needs people to rethink habits. There are a range of proven academic techniques that can ‘nudge’ people to positively change behaviours, these will be used within the delivery of the vision.

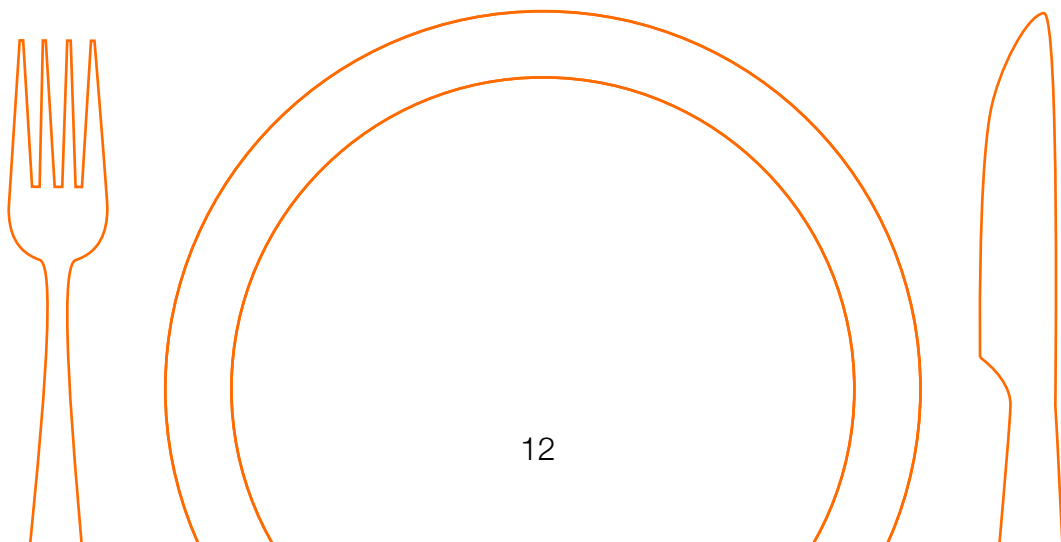
Recent research in both the British Medical Journal and from the World Resources Institute highlight that the public make most decisions in their life quickly and often based on habit rather than rational decision-making. This is unsurprising given the average adult sees over 5,000 adverts a day trying to persuade them to buy the next best thing<sup>8</sup>. Therefore interventions to change behaviour need to affect consumers’ rational, informed decisions but also influence their automatic or unconscious decisions and stand apart from traditional information and education campaigns with a poor record of cut through.

People are keen to have conversations around habits, routines and daily living. We know that people want to be inspired rather than

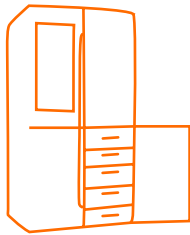
scared into taking action through a doom and gloom approach, and this consistently showed up in 2017 research in Suffolk and Norfolk and presented in the Insight Report. People also want to feel part of a wider group that is delivering positive change. Creating this ‘social norm’ is a proven behaviour change technique.

Conversational pieces will be created across the two counties, which spark interest, and offer tangible, positive and beneficial actions for the householders. These conversations will challenge the norm and suggest immediate actions that can save money and reduce food waste. New debates will be opened up around existing habits, routines and daily living. The focus will be on inspiring people with positive messaging rather than doom and gloom. Every effort will be made to show the impact of cumulative actions illustrating to people that they are part of a wider group creating change.

These proven change techniques seek to change seven specific behaviours.



## 7 BEHAVIOURS THAT CUT FOOD WASTE<sup>9</sup>



1

Checking food in the house before shopping



2

Planning meals in advance



3

Ensuring you know what to buy when you go shopping



4

Avoiding unplanned purchases



5

Controlling portion size



6

Placing relevant food in cold storage or using other preservation methods

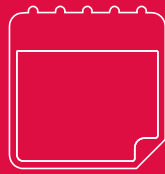


7

Conserving food that is left-over after meals

All messaging will show that the suggested actions will:

- **Minimise disruption** – fit change activities in with daily lifestyle
- **Sell a compelling benefit** – ensuring a message resonates
- **Maximize awareness** – leaving a lasting impression to break habits
- **Evolve social norms** – changing the culture around the subject



# A PHASED APPROACH

Creating momentum and impact requires a strong brand and common message that effectively unites different activities across the counties. This brand will maximize the impact of social media and digital campaigns targeted at the seven behaviours we want to change.



- **Securing investment** – partners will be sought to support this plan and help drive change.
- **Building awareness**, creating a conversation and targeting ‘the first step’ in a high profile campaign. The campaign will be launched with high profile press and social media, focusing on a single food type and the scale of the problem in the region.
- **Building alliances.**  
Collaborating across the influential food and drink value chain in Norfolk and Suffolk to build a recognizable brand to literally take our collective food waste prevention message into people’s homes.
- **Creating authentic stories.**  
Genuine stories from local influencers will be used to demonstrate the practical steps that can be taken to cut food waste.
- **Developing the networks of committed supporters.**  
A wider network of supporters will be recruited to deliver the messaging. This will include public sector partners such as NHS staff (e.g. health visitors), individuals, retailers, employers and NGOs.
- **Proving a range of behaviour change interventions.**  
During the first year, a range of behaviour change interventions will be introduced helping to inform where best to invest in subsequent years.
- **Year One review:** A comprehensive review will be undertaken in partnership with both councils to understand impact and how the vision could best be delivered in subsequent years.





**The second year will learn from the first and continue to build the conversation and network, while honing down the specific communities and audiences to target.**

- The network will be grown with increased levels of engagement.
- Behaviour change campaigns will continue targeting both Comfortable Communities and other ACORN profiles.
- Specific activities focused on food types and seasonal themes will be delivered.
- Success stories will be celebrated.
- The profile of the campaign will be increased at a local and national level.
- Year Two review.



**Year three of the Programme will be more ambitious in its delivery with a more robust and challenging campaign approach. Achievements from the previous two years will be further leveraged with increased targeting of the financially stretched cohort.**

- Visual displays demonstrating environmental savings achieved in the first two years.
- High profile zero food waste street campaign.
- Continuation of profile raising building on the previous year's communication campaigns.
- Comprehensive assessment of campaign and the overarching strategic approach. This will be in hand with the councils, partners, stakeholders and public forums.



**The communication plan will be further refined based on outcomes in the first three years and through consultations with stakeholders.**



# OUR GOALS

Our vision will be delivered through four tangible goals.

## GOAL ONE

**Households make tangible changes to their lives to reduce food waste. Households will be encouraged to make small changes that together achieve a meaningful reduction in food waste.**

- Designing and launching a campaign that identifies quick-wins in years one and two.
- Delivering measurable change with the target audience of - Comfortable Communities in years one and two with the addition of Financially Stretched from year two onwards.
- Remaining focused on the seven key behaviour change targets.

## GOAL TWO

**Increased resourcing and leadership across Norfolk and Suffolk. Secure external funding and increase access to high-level skills and knowledge.**

- Develop an investment and partnership strategy within six months of the start of the campaign.
- To agree funding targets with the councils that will generate a growing level of external private sector support.
- Deliver an external stakeholder plan targeting key politicians, key opinion leaders and top ten food producers/retailers to bring them into the campaign.
- Implement a value for money analysis every twelve months.

## GOAL THREE

**A stronger network of advocates.**

**A network of advocates promoting food waste messaging.**

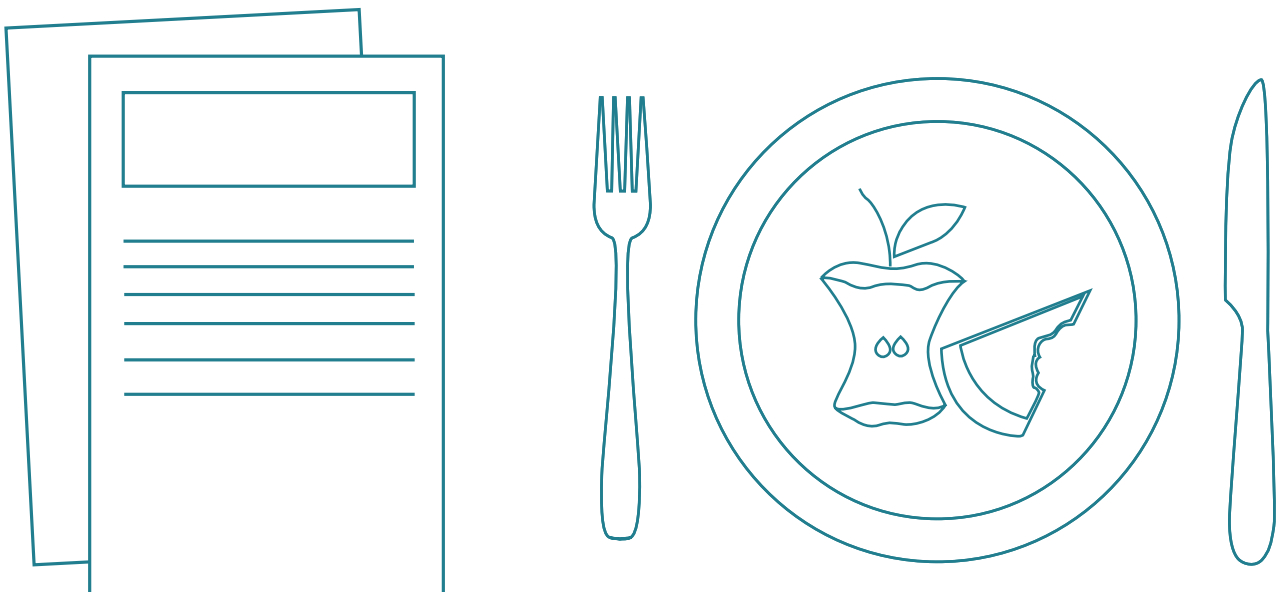
- To build a network of strong advocates across Suffolk and Norfolk who will provide real life case stories of how cutting food waste can help both the environment and household budgets.
- To ensure the network achieves maximum reach with the target audiences.
- To create content that make it easy for the advocates to promote the agreed messages.

## GOAL FOUR

**An active sector.**

**Work with the leading organisations in Suffolk and Norfolk to ensure they have greater skills and capacity to promote behaviour change on food waste.**

- Work with the local council and communities to ensure all appropriate organisations are targeted and engaged with core messaging.
- To provide high quality targeted resources to empower organisations to take the challenge forward to their networks.
- To ensure the campaign offers supporting organisations tangible benefits.







# PERFECT PARTNERS

There are c. 745,000 and 893,000 residents in Suffolk and Norfolk respectively. Reaching these residents involves a collaborative approach engaging all sections of the community, with key stakeholders playing a vital role in reducing food waste.

## STARTING FROM WITHIN

Both councils have strong community networks which will play an important role to the first two years of the campaign.

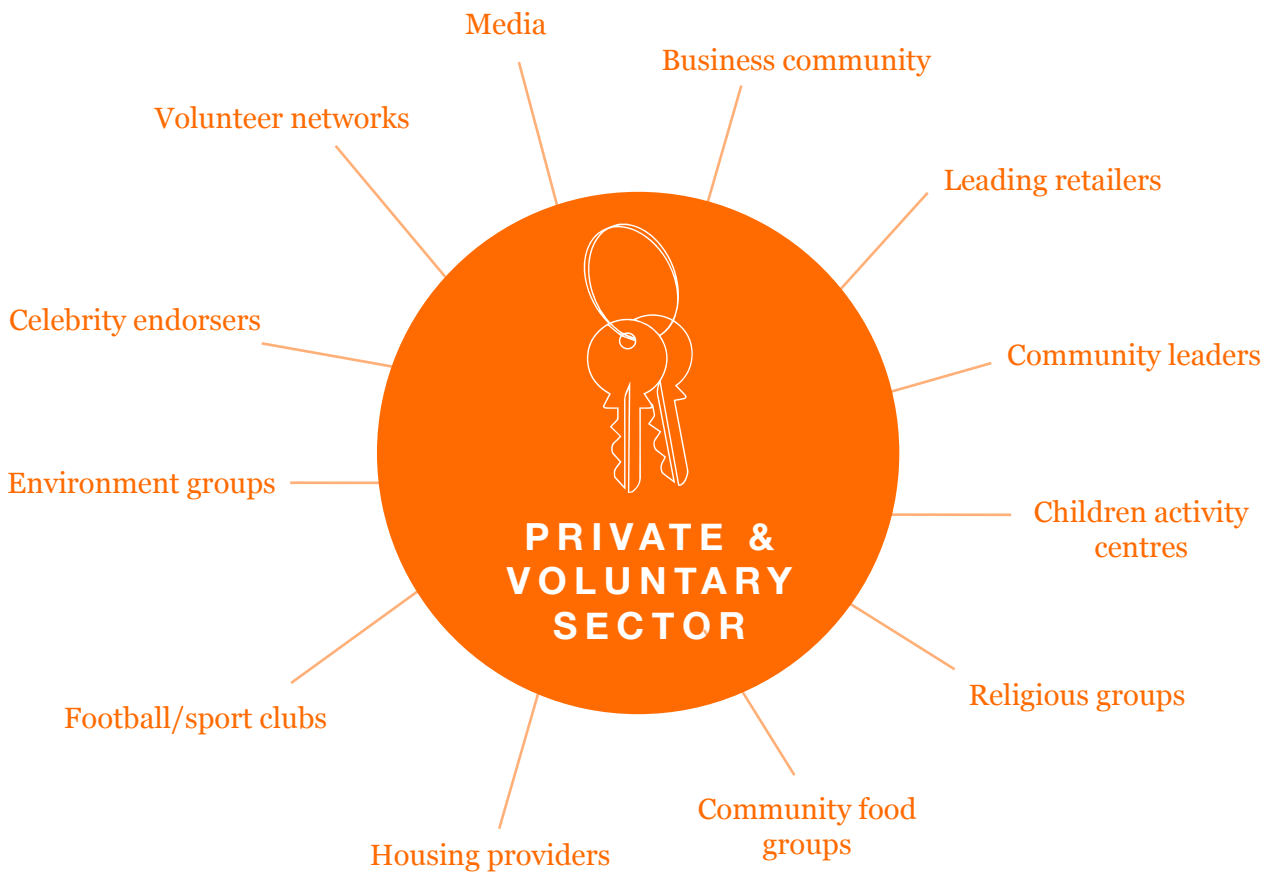
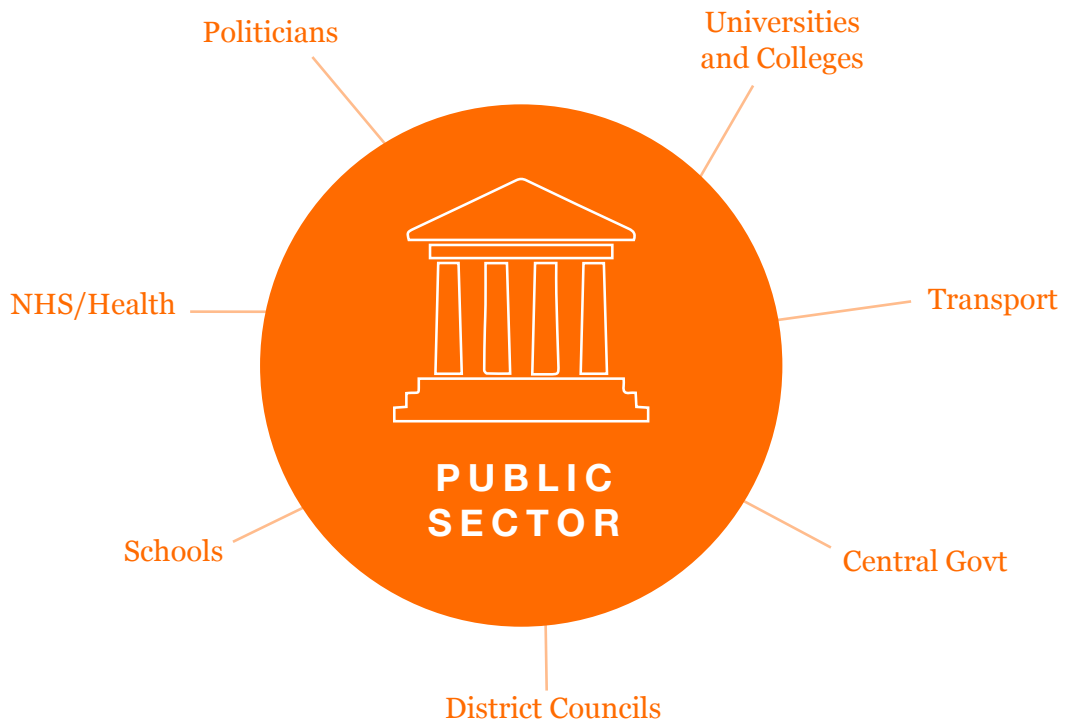
## EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Potential stakeholders will be assessed against defined criteria:

- Are they in direct contact or are influential with our target audience?
- Can they reach out to over 2,000 households?
- Are they a positive influence on society?
- Do they share the same ambition to positive impact on society and/or the environment?
- Can they contribute to the profile of the Programme?
- Are they significantly influential – positively or negatively?



# WHO WE'LL ENGAGE- KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS





# FOCUS AREAS

Resources will be allocated where the biggest impact can be delivered. It is recommended that activities initially target the Counties most populous areas and those households that waste most food. As established this target audience will be the Comfortable Communities cohort from the ACORN profiles. They are the biggest cohort, have low unemployment and are significant food wasters<sup>10</sup>.

In years two and, in particular, three onwards, it is suggested to broaden the campaign to the Financial Stretched that includes the older population and those of modest means. This will very much play to the financial drivers of reducing food waste and the older generation who tend to know the value of lost food.

## TABLE OF AUDIENCE

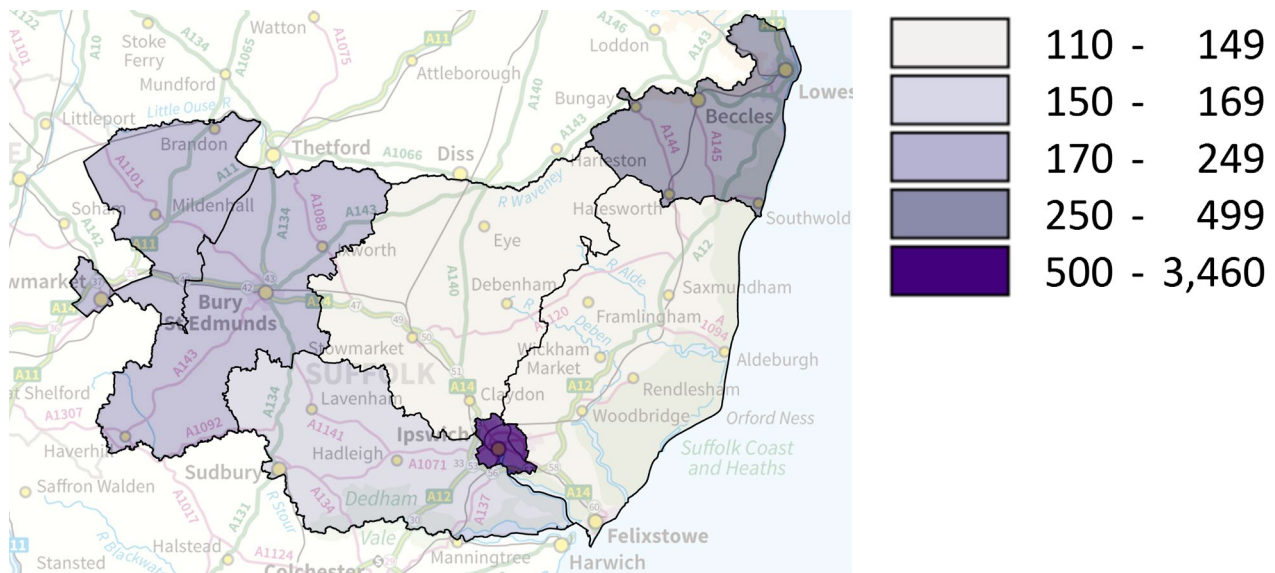
Acorn Profile	Acorn sub-categories	Norfolk % of population	Suffolk % of population
Affluent Achievers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lavish Lifestyles</li> <li>Executive Wealth</li> <li>Mature Money</li> </ul>	20.9	21.8
Rising Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City Sophisticates</li> <li>Career Climbers</li> </ul>	2.8	4
Comfortable Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Countryside Communities</li> <li>Successful Suburbs</li> <li>Steady Neighbourhoods</li> <li>Comfortable Seniors</li> <li>Starting Out</li> </ul>	42.8	39
Financially Stretched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Life</li> <li>Modest Means</li> <li>Striving Families</li> <li>Poorer Pensioners</li> </ul>	20	22.6
Urban Adversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young Hardship</li> <li>Struggling Estates</li> <li>Difficult Circumstances</li> </ul>	13.2	12.3
Not Private Households	n/a	0.3	0.3

# LOCATIONS <sup>11</sup>

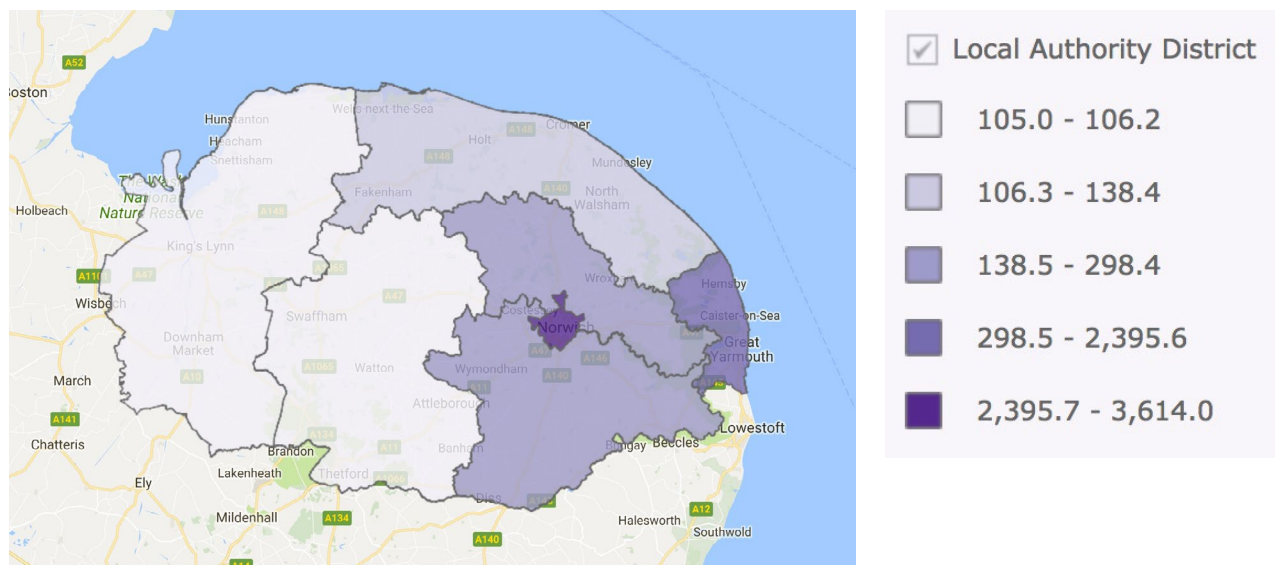
To deliver maximum impact in the short-term it is proposed that initial activities take place in the following locations.

- **In Norfolk**, the Strategy focuses initially on the higher density areas such as Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King’s Lynn where there is the combination of average employment, strong networks but higher numbers of population. While Great Yarmouth has higher than average unemployment, we feel it is important to include given its higher density of population and importance to the county and district.
- **For Suffolk**, the focus is on Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Stowmarket and Lowestoft initially. Again, these areas have average employment but high density and strong community and employer networks.

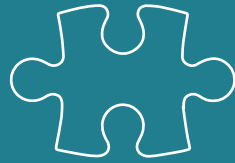
## ONS MAP ON DENSITY- SUFFOLK



## ONS MAP ON DENSITY- NORFOLK







# PART OF THE BIGGER PICTURE

Our vision is to create a new collaboration of organisations that will be able to support both the food waste campaign and other environmental activities of importance to the two councils, we would expect the partnership to include:

- **Local corporate/private sector partnerships** – With a number of high-profile employers we would investigate locally focused funding from these organisations, many of which have CSR programmes and budgets.
- **National corporate funded projects** – Major retailers are all acting on food waste and we will investigate opportunities for cross-promotion and investment.
- **Public sector ‘in-kind’ relationships** – Public sector partners will not have budget to spend on this Programme but we will seek ‘in-kind’ partnerships utilising manpower and channels.
- **Grant funding from Government organisations** – We will position Suffolk and Norfolk Councils as pioneers, putting them front and foremost with key government departments to help ensure support is found when it is available.
- **Opportunities for funding from WRAP and others interested parties** – The Programme will be a high-profile asset to the campaigns run by WRAP and others. We will ensure our Programme stays aligned to the priorities of national and international leaders in food waste, keeping Suffolk and Norfolk front of mind for new funding opportunities.
- **Alternative revenue streams** - we will also explore opportunities around social investment funds such as Nesta, CAF Venturesome and the Big Potential, as well as opportunities to launch crowd-funding campaigns via platforms like Crowdfunder.

**WANT TO GET  
INVOLVED?**

Please contact  
[hello@hubbub.org.uk](mailto:hello@hubbub.org.uk)





# CHARTING PROGRESS

Measurement and evaluation is core to programme delivery. A formal evaluation structure will be put in place with a more detailed action plan highlighting the specifics of how we would evaluate each campaign.

With this in mind the following evaluation structure is proposed:

## FIRST SIX MONTHS

- Initial testing of concept with public forums, friendly stakeholders and internal teams.
- Wash up review meetings of first initial pilot campaigns with the respective council teams and target audience.

## END OF FIRST YEAR

- A comprehensive review and evaluation including feedback from both Norfolk and Suffolk teams – potentially to include a chosen third party for review.
- Surveys will be undertaken to capture the tangible actions residents have taken as a result of the year one campaigns, and calculated food waste savings.

## SECOND YEAR

- A quarterly review framework put in place to assess progress on short-term achievements, goal delivery and to agree a longer-term waste reduction target.
- A final year review and wash-up of campaign and Programme progress including public and stakeholder forums, client meetings and Councillor interaction.
- Ongoing assessment of food waste savings.

## THIRD YEAR

- Continued quarterly review framework in place.
- Third year complete review of Programme and assessment to date including waste composition analysis.
- A next stage, Phase Two strategy and action plan assessment and delivery before moving on to years four to seven.

The Programme is also designed to reflect and recognise the statutory and ‘political’ responses necessary to ensure smooth transition from year to year. This will include internal and external engagement and face-to-face support at a senior level to ensure the waste teams and partnerships can meet their internal accountabilities.



# APPENDIX

## OUR SOURCES OF RESEARCH AND UNDERSTANDING

<sup>1</sup> Household Food Waste in the UK (2015)- WRAP

<sup>2</sup> Suffolk Kerbside Waste Analysis Report (2016)

<sup>3</sup> Research and Insights Report (2017) - Hubbub

<sup>4</sup> Comms Strategy - Norfolk County Council

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.suffolkrecycle.info/2014/10/suffolks-recycling-statistics/>

<sup>6</sup> Welsh Government announcement on food waste reduction – Welsh Government

<sup>7</sup> Diets for a Sustainable Food Future - WRI

<sup>8</sup> <https://sjinsights.net/2014/09/29/new-research-sheds-light-on-daily-ad-exposures/>

<sup>9</sup> Ten Years of Food Waste Interventions - Dr Christian Reynolds

<sup>10</sup> Household Food Waste in the UK (2015) - WRAP

<sup>11</sup> Office of National Statistics East of England Study - ONS





 Norfolk recycles

 Suffolk recycles