

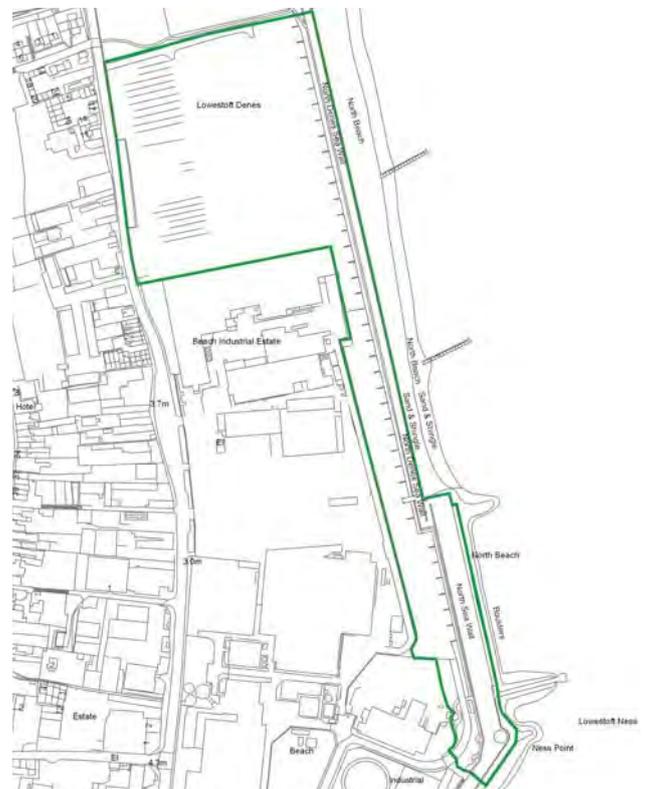
## Major park plan is inspiring ideas!

The local community are bursting with ideas for turning the East of England Park into a contemporary and heritage inspired park.

The East of England Park, known locally as North Denes, is located between the Birds Eye Factory and North Denes Caravan Park and includes North Beach and Lowestoft Ness.

The area is a project within Waveney District Council's Lake Lothing and Outer Harbour Area Action Plan, which aims to transform this currently underutilised area into an exciting new park and events space, celebrate Lowestoft Ness, improve the vitality of the area and give the community a new space to enjoy. All of which will ensure our important local heritage is preserved.

**LOCAL KNOWLEDGE!**  
Did you know the Net Drying Racks were used by fishermen to dry their fishing nets?



### Kicking starting the project

The starting point for this project was to find out the thoughts and views of the local community. This is important to make the project of value and interest to local people. To achieve this two community events were held in the summer of 2014.

The events were well attended and a number of enthusiastic local residents came forward to stress how they would like to be kept informed of the project. Some local residents even took on a role at the second event helping with the group discussions.

### Finding out ideas

Community Action Suffolk (CAS) supported the Council with the two events and together have looked at what people at the event said are their priorities for the area. So far, some of the key themes are to: Make the area a better tourism

destination; Create an area which reflects Lowestoft history; Make the area more accessible; Use sustainable materials, Incorporate the surrounding parks and the Scores and ensure partnership working with the community.

Consulting with the public is a great way for local people, businesses and organisations to help shape the development stage of the project. To ensure the project will have a long lasting use the Council wanted the young generation to get an opportunity to share their ideas the area.

Larger companies in the area such as Birds Eye Factory and the Denes Caravan Park have been engaged to seek their views on the area and are very supportive of the project.

**LOCAL KNOWLEDGE!**  
Did you know the lighthouse and lightlow were used to ensure boats did not get to close to the shore?



## Listening to Young People

Waveney's Youth Council were approached to help the Council understand the best way to engage with young people on the project. The Youth Council came up with the idea of a school 'Challenge' for both high schools and primary schools to take part in.

5 high schools, Lowestoft College and Lowestoft 6th Form College took part in the Challenge from September to November 2014. Ormiston Denes Academy, Beccles Free School, The Ashley School Academy Trust, Benjamin Britten High School and Sir John Leman High School each came up with a range of unique ideas. The schools researched, consulted, designed and submitted their ideas,

which they then presented to Lowestoft Deputy Mayor Councillor Malcolm Cherry, at an event held in the Town Hall on the 25th November 2014.

### LOCAL KNOWLEDGE!

**Did you know the seawall was built in 1947?**

The students amazed the staff and the Council with their thoughtful and interesting ideas and ways to improve Lowestoft Ness.

Each presentation was unique in its delivery – some students from Benjamin Britten High School (BBHS) even performed a song entitled 'our vision'.

Steve Beckingham, media teacher at BBHS, sadly passed away recently. He was a big supporter of the project and said: "It is an inspiring event that shows young people in and around the community of Lowestoft really understand the East of England Park".

Student Molly Bowler, who participated in the project said: "It was quite fun coming up with ideas. We got to work together and say what we wanted instead of the adults and council coming up with the ideas."

Waveney District Councillor Bruce Provan, Cabinet Member for Tourism and Economic Development, said: "I want to thank you for two things. "Firstly, your work and effort, you have taken the project very seriously.

"Secondly, your creativity in coming up with such wonderful ideas, picking them out and putting them all together. "We have a budding society of young people who have ideas that need to be listened to."

Councillor Cherry addressed the students and added: "For you to stand in front of people here and explain your ideas has made my day."

### LOCAL KNOWLEDGE!

**Did you know Lowestoft Ness is the most easterly point in the UK?**

## Sifting through the ideas

**Hundreds of ideas have been received from local residents, organisations and the schools!**

Each idea has been looked at to 'group it' with other similar ideas and find the key themes. This exercise considered such things as; is the idea sustainable, will it have a long lasting use, will the idea compete with or complement other things near by, is the

idea suitable for different users. This is known as an 'Options Appraisal'. This exercise allows the Council to consider what the public really want at this location. The different ideas heard so far include a play park, an event space, high quality planting, better knowledge on the history of the area with the maritime objects restored, the seawall more interactive and Lowestoft Ness as a location which 'puts Lowestoft on the map'. Other people would like the area less prescriptive with a high quality environment

achieved but with no other functions. Throughout all the options the focus was for a high quality landscape area focused on a heritage / maritime theme which ties in the Sea as the catalyst for both the activities of the past and the present day.

### LOCAL KNOWLEDGE!

**Did you know the navigation buoys marked the off shore sand banks ?**

## Works so far

The project is being given a helping hand by Tomorrow's People, a national employment charity dedicated to helping disadvantaged 16 - 24 year olds to find work.



Following the September 2014 community workshop a number of local residents raised concerns over the mess and untidiness of the area. Assisted by staff from Waveney Norse, this team of volunteers took part in four 'tidy-ups' during October and November.

The volunteers removed weeds and litter, especially around the historic drying nets, buoys and anchors. Thanks to this enthusiastic group of young people the gravel path leading from Whapload Road to the seawall has been cleared and some extra bins have been put in to encourage dog walkers to not leave mess on the ground.

The important net drying racks and the maritime objects have been surveyed to see what repairs can be done in the near future to preserve them from the exposed elements.



## Next steps for the project....

The project is still in its early stages and the ideas are helping to gain an understanding of what is important for people in the area.

### Primary Schools

Primary schools will be spending from January to March 2015 to take part in the School Challenge which will give younger school children the chance of being involved in a 'real life' local project.

All further contributions from the schools will help to drive the project forward and deliver something for Lowestoft that local people really want as well as create a new attraction for visitors to the area.

#### LOCAL KNOWLEDGE!

**It is thought the name of the nearby 'scores' comes from the verb 'to scour' or the Old Norse 'skor' which means 'notch' Many of them were named after local people or public houses that stood at their top.**

### Partnership Working

Project partners including Waveney Norse, Sentinel Leisure Trust, CAS and Lowestoft Rising will have a central role in delivering the project.

There are also a number of interested local residents and organisations who are keen to form a Community Group to participate more in the project. The first meeting of this group is organised for February 2015.

### Funding options

There is always strong competition for funding a project of this size. We have identified some suitable pots of funding and would look to apply to these funders once the project has reached a suitable stage to be able to make a strong case for funding.

**Contact the AAP team on**

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