



Northern city centre

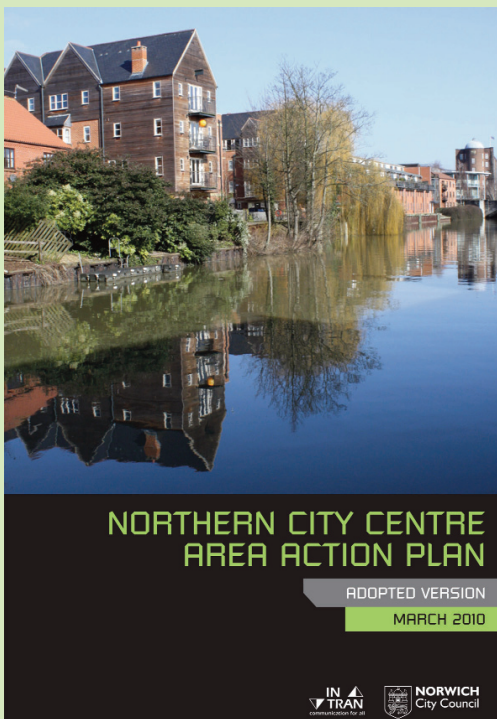
NEWSLETTER – EDITION 7: SPRING 2010

WELCOME to the newsletter for the northern city centre area.

Norwich City Council is making this newsletter available to all those with an interest in this area, particularly those who live, work, shop in, or pass through it.

Changes are starting to happen as a result of the Northern city centre area action plan. This newsletter will chart progress on its delivery, as well as providing other information of interest.

AREA ACTION PLAN ADOPTED



The area action plan was formally adopted at a meeting of the full council committee on 30 March. This means it is part of the Local Development Framework for Norwich and will form the basis for planning decisions, alongside the City of Norwich replacement local plan.

Adoption of the plan is the end result of considerable effort over the last few years by the council, its partners, and local stakeholders. The plan will act as a blueprint for change in this part of the city centre and will guide regeneration of the area to 2016.

The plan:

- allocates a number of key sites for mixed use development, including Anglia Square, St Mary's Works, and land west of Whitefriars
 - proposes improvements to the local road network and to pedestrian and cycle links
 - proposes creation of new public squares as part of new development sites as well as other environmental improvements
 - should result in about 900 new houses and flats being built in the area depending on the state of the property market
 - encourages improved retail and office provision, and will enhance the area's role as a district centre.
- You can see all the plan documents and the adoption statement on the council's website.

NEW PROGRAMME DELIVERY BOARD SET UP

A major part of the area action plan will be delivered through development on privately owned sites. However there are many aspects where the council can take a lead and be proactive in regenerating the area.

The council has created a programme board to guide the regeneration of the northern city centre and oversee delivery of the area action plan.

Membership includes key council officers, a local ward councillor, and representatives from Norfolk County Council, the Greater Norwich Development Partnership, and the East of England Development Agency.

The board has agreed a short-to-medium term programme of council (and county council) led activities and priority projects which include:

- the St Augustine's gyratory scheme. Now under construction – see below.
- completion of the riverside walk. Initial feasibility work for the missing section of the walk near Norwich Playhouse is currently underway.
- improvements to pedestrian and cycle links throughout the area. Initial feasibility work is due to begin this financial year.

The board will also monitor progress on development of privately owned sites and take action to address problems where possible.

You can view the minutes of programme board meetings on the council's website under 'A to Z of services', by clicking on '[Northern city centre area action plan/delivery](#)'.

PROGRESS REPORT: ST AUGUSTINE'S GYRATORY SCHEME

This scheme is currently under construction. It is funded through the Greater Norwich Development Partnership and is being led by Norfolk County Council in partnership with the city council.

The scheme is programmed for completion by the end of 2010. It will create a new one-way system for St Augustines Street, Magpie Road and Edward Street which will improve traffic circulation in the area and air quality on St Augustines Street.

Please [click on this link](#) to see the county council's newsletter about progress on the road scheme.

PROGRESS REPORT: COMPLETION OF IMPROVEMENTS TO THE GILDENCROFT PARK

The final phase of improvements to the Gildencroft Park has now largely been completed, apart from some continuing work on landscaping improvements.

In 2009 the council successfully bid for new Playbuilder funding to complete the improvements to the park. These are aimed specifically at encouraging play activities for children aged eight to 13, using natural elements such as landform and planting.

The improvements are based on previous consultation about the park as well as a consultation with

children and young people from August 2009. The improved park has:

- better access with improved paths, making it easier for everyone to enjoy including wheelchair users and families with pushchairs
- improvements to the Pitt Street entrance to make it more welcoming
- a reinstated part of the central fence in a better position around the play areas
- new planting to make it more welcoming and colourful
- a new medieval-themed activity trail with climbing wall and shield climber
- landscaping with mounds for running and informal play

- more plants and flowers to enjoy
- an improved basketball and goalmouth
- a climbing tree
- a sandpit which has already proven very popular.



Shopping floorspace survey (January 2010)

- The January 2010 survey shows 28 vacant shop units in the Magdalen Street and Anglia Square large district centre (which includes St Augustines Street) out of a total of 135 units. This represents 18.5 per cent of retail floorspace in the area.
- This is a higher proportion than for the city centre as a whole, where 9.6 per cent of retail floorspace was vacant in January 2010.
- The percentage of vacant retail floorspace in the northern city centre has risen since July 2009, when it stood at 16.8 per cent.
- The total amount of retail floorspace in the area has remained fairly constant over the past decade. It is currently 18,239 sq. m., as opposed to 18,346 sq. m. in July 2001.

Anglia Square redevelopment

Negotiations are continuing with the developer of Anglia Square on revised proposals for redevelopment. Although it is not possible to reveal much about progress at this stage, we are hopeful that there will be a consultation on revised proposals in early summer with a planning application to follow.




New neighbourhood working


The council has created four new neighbourhood teams – a new way of delivering services at a local level. These include community engagement officers and neighbourhood wardens, and are based in specific neighbourhoods. They will help communities influence council services to better meet local needs and improve quality of life for residents. The northern city centre comes under the eastern area team, based in the council's Pilling Park area office.



For any further information please contact Judith Davison on 01603 212529, email NorthernCityCentre@norwich.gov.uk, or visit www.norwich.gov.uk.

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 0344 980 3333

 info@norwich.gov.uk

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