

ebulletin

Issue 9: December 2005



Northamptonshire
County Council

Produced by [Northamptonshire County Council](#) on behalf of partners including the seven [Borough and District Councils](#), [WNDC](#), [NNT](#), [Catalyst Corby](#), [Invest Northamptonshire](#), [Northamptonshire Partnership](#), [emda](#) and [Government](#)

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WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: SHAPING THE FUTURE



WNDC successfully launched its Prospectus 'Realising the Opportunity - West Northamptonshire in the 21st Century - A Prospectus for growth and prosperity' on 6th December at the Guildhall Northampton. Over 200 people gathered to hear how WNDC is going to work with communities and key partners, Northampton Borough Council, Daventry District Council, South Northants District Council & Northamptonshire County Council.



The Prospectus presents the people of Northampton, Daventry and Towcester with a once in a generation opportunity to create vibrant communities with a dynamic economy - a world class West Northamptonshire. It is the first step towards a framework WNDC is developing that will set out how the regeneration of West Northamptonshire will be achieved.

Mike Hayes, Chief Executive of WNDC said "WNDC has a clear focus to deliver - to make sustainable communities happen. We are an important resource for West Northamptonshire and are committed to working with all who have an interest in the area to capitalise on the opportunity the agenda for growth offers us."

The prospectus sets the scene for regeneration and growth activities over the next ten years and beyond. It states "why" WNDC is here and links with the local development frameworks being prepared by the local authorities that set out the "where" and "when" things will happen. The next step is the preparation of a Growth Delivery Plan during 2006.



Copies of the Prospectus can be obtained from: WNDC, PO Box 355, Franklin's Gardens, Northampton, NN5 5WU, Tel: 01604 586 60, www.wndc.org.uk

Comments on the prospectus can be sent to: prospectus@wndc.org.uk

For further information please contact Tracey Anthony-Winter:
tel: 01604 586 604, email: tracey.anthony-winter@wndc.org.uk



NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
CHAMPIONS GROWTH DEBATE



On 18 November 2005, North Northants Together and Catalyst Corby hosted the *Delivering Growth: North Northamptonshire Summit*, held at the Kettering Conference Centre. The summit, supported by Bee Bee Developments Stakeholder Group, East Midlands Development Agency, English Partnerships and Invest Northamptonshire, provided an opportunity for all private and public stakeholders to discuss the opportunities and challenges presented by the government's ambitious growth proposals for North Northamptonshire. Turn to page 2 for more details →

NORTH NORTHANTS FEATURE

Delivering Growth: North Northamptonshire Summit

Over 500 people attended the North Northamptonshire Summit on Delivering Growth, which took place on Friday 18 November at Kettering. The event focused on the growth agenda for North Northamptonshire. Co-hosted by North Northants Together and Catalyst Corby and supported by Bee Bee Developments, Invest Northamptonshire, East Midlands Development Agency and English Partnerships, the Summit provided an opportunity for those with an interest in North Northamptonshire to take part in the debate about its future, the impact of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands growth agenda and its sustainability. The main objective of the event was to stimulate an in-depth discussion leading to positive outcomes and developing closer partnerships with the public, private and community sectors.

Phil Hope MP, Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Skills gave the keynote address setting out the Government's commitment to delivering regenerated and new sustainable communities in North Northamptonshire. He focused on the DfES agenda: of extended schools and academies, the skills agenda and the structures to join up skills with the regeneration work in communities.

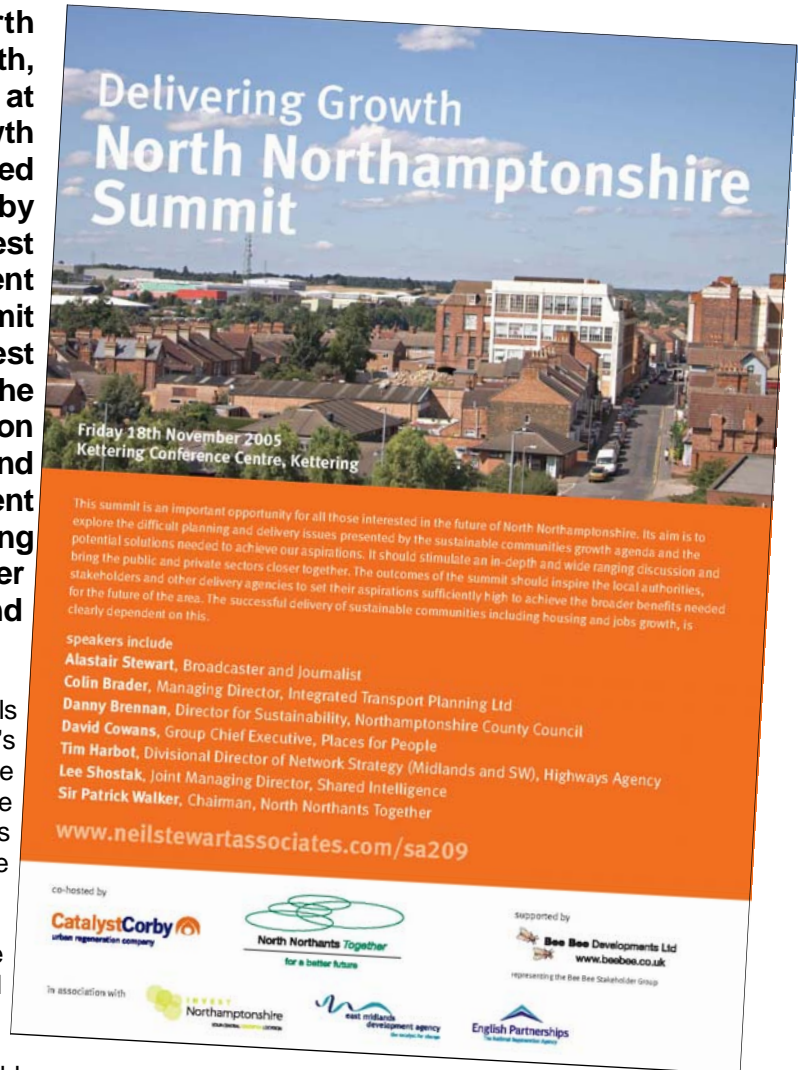
Phil Hope, who is also MP for Corby, emphasised the commitment and support required from central, regional and local government and its agencies and partners to deliver the necessary transport infrastructure, schools, healthcare, green infrastructure and community facilities to achieve sustainable growth and the strong private sector buy-in needed to deliver the housing, retail and job opportunities. He then talked about the Government's aim to get schools to work in partnership with agencies, such as health and social care, which will provide an extended service to help the community get the best from their local school and the role of the City Academies – an important link between schools and regeneration.

In order to ensure that these aims are delivered in a coherent and effective way, he referred to the work with ODPM to pilot Local Area Agreements.



North Northants *Together*

for a better future



The Northamptonshire Local Area Agreement will provide a clear focus for:

- Raising education and skills aspirations
- Addressing the different needs of communities and individuals with lower life chances
- Enabling the building of safer and stronger communities
- Ensuring that housing growth is accompanied by strong jobs growth and appropriate transport, strategic and community infrastructure

CatalystCorby
urban regeneration company



NORTH NORTHANTS FEATURE

Presentations and panel sessions in the morning focused on 4 key themes:

- **Economic Development** – What needs to be done to strengthen the North Northamptonshire economy?
- **Movement** – What are the key challenges for North Northamptonshire and how can these be addressed?
- **Housing** – What are the key challenges for local housing providers?
- **Delivery and Investment** – How do we secure and maximise early investment to support delivery and who is going to pay?

Some of the key challenges posed to the expert panels during the morning plenary sessions included:

- How will the issue of the A14 be addressed and what is the timescale for completing this?
- When is there enough housing? Is there a point when house building will stop?
- Have the utilities companies been consulted on the extra supply of electricity and water required to meet the new demand for the new houses?
- How can planning out crime be incorporated within the growth agenda?
- How effective are urban regeneration companies in achieving their objectives for the area?

These and other issues were addressed further in workshops on housing, economics and employment, movement, delivery and investment, health, education and skills, town centre development and the environment.

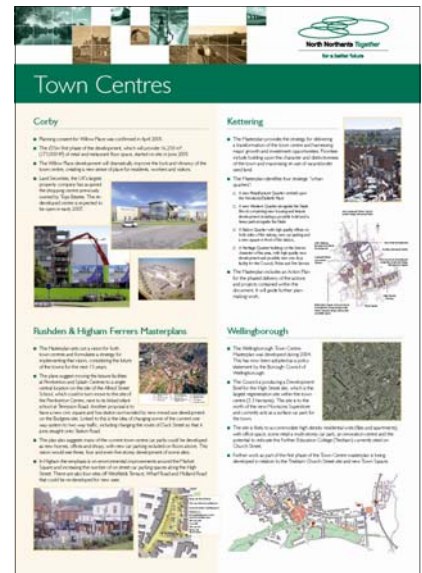
Some of the key issues and potential solutions highlighted in the workshops included:

- **Housing** – Development must be infrastructure led
- **Movement** – Improvements on the A14 are essential now to deliver the growth strategy
- **Education and Skills** – We must raise the aspirations of young people, and continue the ongoing engagement with employers
- **Town Centres** – It is crucial that North Northamptonshire towns build on their strengths and work together to achieve complementary offers in order to compete. There is a danger that new residents have no loyalty so are drawn to other 'brighter' regional shopping centres.
- **Economics and employment** – How can we encourage graduates into the area? How can the town centre and retail situation be improved?

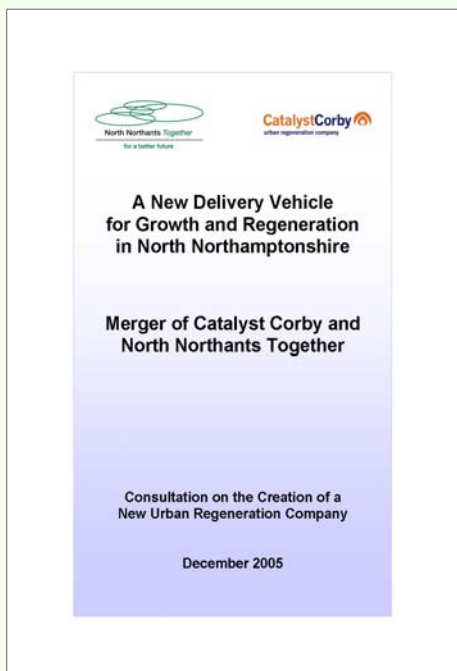
Delegates left the summit with the clear message that there is an important need for partnership working in order to achieve the right level of investment and the right quality of development, thereby raising people's aspirations for the future of North Northamptonshire.

For further information on the Summit please visit the North Northants Together or Catalyst Corby websites at www.nttogether.co.uk and www.catalyst-corby.co.uk

Copies of speakers presentations will be available in due course.



NORTH NORTHANTS TOGETHER AND CATALYST CORBY ANNOUNCE INTENTION TO MERGE



On 18th November 2005, ODPM Minister Baroness Andrews announced provisional approval for a new Urban Regeneration Company (URC) to be formed through the merger of Catalyst Corby and North Northants Together. The new URC could be up and running by April 2006 subject to public consultation and final approval. It will continue the regeneration work that has been taking place in Corby and will drive delivery and a co-ordinated approach to the sustainable development of the whole of North Northamptonshire.

The announcement came following discussions with Government earlier in the year and a joint submission by the North Northants Together and Catalyst Corby Boards.

ODPM also announced £540k revenue support and a further £200k capital on top of that pledged by emda, English Partnerships and the five local authorities covered. This will be subject to agreement on a satisfactory business plan and work programme for the new body.

The new organisation will build on the regeneration skills and experience of Catalyst Corby, drawing in all their staff, together with posts from North Northants Together. Subject to its final approval, the new URC could be located in new offices being constructed at Exchange Court, Cottingham Rd, Corby.

A public consultation paper on the merger has just been released, with a response return date of 27th January 2006. The paper is available on the North Northants Together and Catalyst Corby websites: www.nttogether.co.uk and www.catalyst-corby.co.uk, or call 01536 414644 to request a copy.

NORTH NORTHANTS FEATURE

WELLINGBOROUGH: EASTFIELD ROAD UPDATE

The Borough Council of Wellingborough has finalised its Development Brief for the area East of Eastfield Road identified in the Wellingborough Local Plan. This is likely to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document at the Council's Economic & Environment Committee on 21st December.

The land East of Eastfield Road currently has a mixture of industrial and commercial land uses, and is also occupied by allotments and areas that are overgrown and derelict.

The Development Brief identifies a number of principles for this site which include:

- That development is anticipated to be predominately residential, with back gardens of new properties abutting existing back gardens.
- Continued presence of industrial/commercial businesses that wish to remain.
- The option for the railway sidings to develop as new employment uses.
- Hybrid live/work uses that mix residential and workshop are strongly encouraged
- An integrated public open space network.
- Retained allotments.
- A highly permeable layout for cars, walking, cycling and public transport.
- A mix of housing types and tenures ranging from detached and semi-detached properties to terraces and flats.

Colin Buchanans are currently undertaking a pre-application consultation exercise on behalf of Bee Bee Developments during December 2005. The consultation will consist of key stakeholder workshops and an exhibition for local residents and the general public. This is in addition to the statutory consultation which will be undertaken once the application is submitted to the Borough Council.

Further work is currently being commissioned on the Eastfield Road site to clear vacant areas, demolish some buildings, remove vegetation and undertake further detailed reports on asbestos, site drainage, environmental audit and ground investigation. This is part of the work which has been allocated funding until March 2006 from ODPM to help decontaminate the site. The site improvements will enable development proposals to progress more rapidly once the planning application has been submitted and determined.

For further information about Eastfield Road contact Victoria Phillipson: vphillipson@wellingborough.gov.uk

EASTFIELD ROAD



- Over 200 representatives of Corby's business community gathered at the Hotel Elizabeth, Corby on Friday 14 October 2005 to hear first hand about the progress of key regeneration projects. The business breakfast was hosted by Catalyst Corby and supported by Northamptonshire Chamber and Business Link. Guest speaker was Michael Markham, chair of the Northamptonshire county board of the Prince's Trust, who updated the business community on the charity's local projects.
- On Monday 24 October 2005, work began on improvements to the look and design of the Southern Gateway, located at the A6003/ Oakley Road. The new landscaping, which will cost £800,000, will also enhance the access to the Southern Gateway Business Park. Work on the park is scheduled to start in 2006 and will include high quality office space as well as leisure and residential development.
- On 21 November 2005, Corby Borough Council announced that S&P Architects, the UK's leading swimming pool designers, had won a national competition to design Corby's new £9.9m swimming pool. The pool is part of the masterplan for the flagship Parkland Gateway regeneration project, which will transform the civic heart of Corby. The new facility is scheduled to open in early Spring 2008 and will also include a 70-station gym, dance studio, squash courts and a café/restaurant.

Preferred Options: what do you think?



The North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee launched their consultation on the 'Preferred Options' document on 18th November 2005 at the North Northants Together Summit. The document sets out ideas on how North Northamptonshire should tackle the challenges and opportunities that come with being identified as a growth area. Government plans require North Northamptonshire to accommodate over 50,000 new homes and 40,000 jobs in the twenty years to 2021.

Chair of the Joint Planning Committee Bob Seery emphasises that, "*The Preferred Options report is not a draft plan. It is a progress report showing how our work is developing and giving an opportunity for you to say whether or not we are heading in the right direction*".

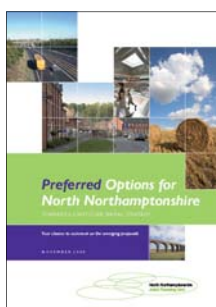
Since the launch more than 350 people have attended four consultation events, one held in each of the North Northamptonshire districts, which have been organised with the Local Strategic Partnership.

Key messages from the consultation to date include the desire that infrastructure is put in place before major developments begin and that Kettering, Corby and Wellingborough expand in a complementary way. In addition, the wish for the smaller towns and villages is to make them sustainable for the future.

The consultation will be used to prepare a draft plan for North Northamptonshire. The Joint Planning Committee is committed to ensuring that local people influence the development of North Northamptonshire. To obtain a copy of the Preferred Options document, people can either go into the local council offices, where there will be exhibitions on the growth, or a copy can be downloaded from www.nntogether.co.uk

The consultation period ends on 27th January 2006.

For further details contact:
Joint Planning Unit,
SATRA House,
Rockingham Road,
Kettering,
Northamptonshire NN16 9JH
Tel: 01536 414644
Email: jpu@nntogether.co.uk



Government Pre-Budget Report

Following the pre-budget report, the Government are consulting on three major documents to aid with the delivery of housing growth and infrastructure to create sustainable communities:



Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) on Housing

Draft PPS3 aims to make the planning system more responsive to housing markets and to ensure a better supply of land to meet long-term housing need. If adopted, PPS3 would enable a new approach to planning for housing to be delivered, based on sub-regional housing market areas, rather than administration boundaries. High quality design is also emphasised through PPS3 with local authorities encouraged to use tools such as design codes to demand high standards of housing design from developers.

A major change would be the requirement on local authorities to manage delivery and development. This would mean that the emphasis would be placed on the local planning authority to consider favourably planning applications, even if the land has not been allocated in development plans, providing the use of land is efficient and there is a requirement for more housing in the area. There will also be a requirement on local authorities to monitor their delivery against the targets and to state actions in Annual Monitoring Reports where they fall short.

Planning Gain Supplement (PGS)

PGS would enable local authorities to capture a portion of the land value uplift created by planning permission being granted. The majority of PGS revenue will be recycled for local and strategic infrastructure, enabling the local community to benefit from growth. It is anticipated that local authorities will receive more funding through PGS than in the present system.

PGS would be accompanied by a scaling down in the current system of planning obligations (Section 106 agreements), allowing the planning system to be more efficient and transparent. Section 106 agreements would only apply to items directly related to a development site. PGS would not be adopted until at least 2008.

Code for Sustainable Homes

The government have published a new Code for Sustainable Homes to increase standards of homes above building regulations. This will give each home a star rating on energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. The lowest star rating will be more comprehensive than current building regulations and the highest rating (5 stars) will require cutting edge technology to achieve carbon neutral development. Publicly funded homes will be expected to reach level 3 on the star ratings and local authorities will be encouraged to promote the use of the system on all new developments.

The consultation periods for both PPS3 and PGS end on 27th February 2006 and comments on the Code for Sustainable Homes should be submitted by 6th March 2006.

All three documents can be found at www.odpm.gov.uk

re:LAA
Relaying information on the Northamptonshire Local Area Agreement.

Looking for the latest information on the Northamptonshire LAA?

The November issue of the electronic newsletter *re:LAA* includes highlights of the draft LAA and lists of some key forthcoming meetings you may like to attend - it can be found at www.relaanorthants.org.uk

RESOURCES

Regional Funding Allocation (RFA)

As part of the 2004 Spending Review the government announced that it would examine new ways to integrate transport, economic development and spatial development within each region. The government is seeking advice from the regions on their spending priorities for transport, economic development and housing, as an input into government policy development and to future RFA. Also, regions including the East Midlands have been asked to advise on the balance of spending between the three spending areas.

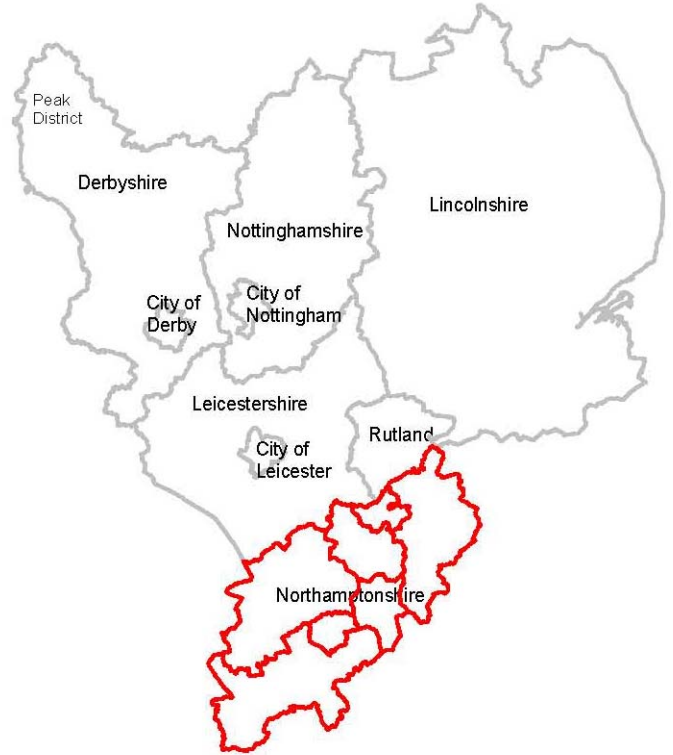
The Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) have been co-ordinating the production of the region's advice through working with partners including emda and EMRA. To collate advice, a consultation paper on funding in the East Midlands was published in November to which local authorities in Northamptonshire were invited to respond; the consultation document can be found at

www.gos.gov.uk/goem/docs/279595/fundingpaper.

This consultation process ended on 12th December.

The RFA Reference Group will bring together the advice which will be submitted to government by the end of January 2006. The advice given to government will influence the next Spending Review in 2007 allowing regions a greater say over the future RFA. This opportunity to influence RFA is important to provide the funding for delivery of the sustainable growth and infrastructure required in the region.

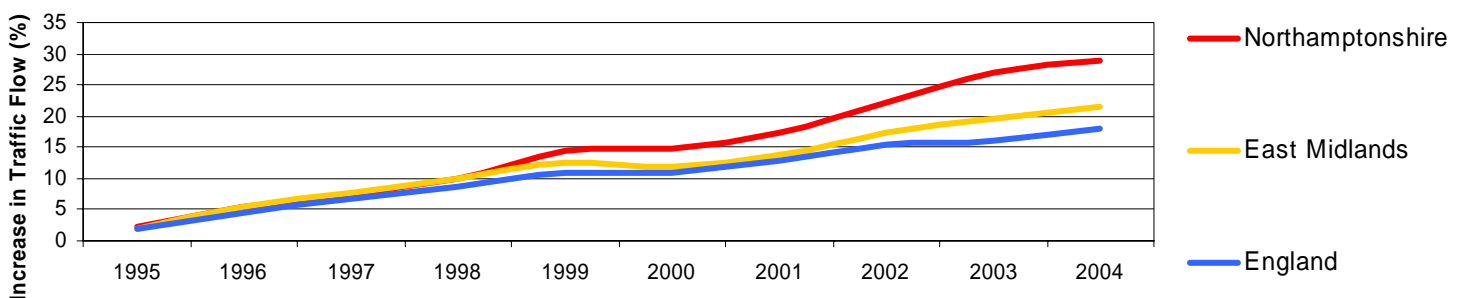
For further information contact Ian Achurch: iachurch@northamptonshire.gov.uk



QUICK STATISTICS - Transport & Congestion

- Traffic flows on Northamptonshire's roads reached an all time high of 8,453 million vehicle kilometres in 2004. This represents an increase in traffic on the roads in the county of 28.9% since 1995. This is a higher rate of traffic flow growth than both the region (22%) and England as a whole (18%).
- Very few journeys to work in Northamptonshire are made using public transport (just 4%). Despite this, bus patronage has increased by more than 1,900,000 since 2000, meaning c.17,901,000 journeys each year are now taken by bus in Northamptonshire.
- The only town in the county where peak hour traffic flows have decreased since 2001 is Northampton, with nearly 400 cars per day less. However, the towns of North Northamptonshire have all seen traffic flows increase on their roads.
- Similar increases in walking and cycling are yet to occur in Northamptonshire, but slightly more people walk or cycle to get to work in the county than the 8% national average.
- 44.4% of journeys to work across Northamptonshire are made by car, compared with a national average of 36.8%. Corby is the only borough to fall beneath the national average.

Sources: Census 2001, DfT's National Road Traffic Survey, Northamptonshire Local Transport Plan Annual Progress Report 2005.





- Proposition market research into the Northamptonshire's key industry sectors has been commissioned by Invest Northamptonshire, the county's investment promotion agency, and will culminate in the launch of sector specific reports that will highlight investment opportunities. The reports are expected to be launched in spring 2006 as part of a major push to increase the number of companies who choose to locate in the county. Supporting the promotion of the county as a key investment location will be the county's new brand, set to be unveiled in February. The branding process, led by Explore Northamptonshire and Invest Northamptonshire, has involved extensive research of visitors, residents and partners to create an identity that will reflect the qualities of the county as a place to live, work, visit and invest.
- Invest Northamptonshire is working with a number of organisations to promote joint ventures and alliances with overseas businesses and universities (see below). Following a recent visit to Germany, an event to promote joint ventures is being considered. Work has also begun on developing a Business Angel network with Oxford Innovation and the Lean Manufacturing scheme which will enable county firms to receive specialist advice at a subsidised cost.
- The first thirty Northamptonshire Ambassadors have been recruited and have been tasked with spreading the county message across the world. The Ambassadors Programme aims to stimulate investment and encourage business development in the county. The programme will also include visits to leading-edge companies to encourage firms to strive for business excellence.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE CEMENTS PAN-EUROPEAN LINKS THROUGH VISIT

Plans for joint working and developing trade have been made following county visits to two European countries recently. During a visit to the Pilsen Region of the Czech Republic, opportunities to develop areas including tourism and education in Northamptonshire were discussed while trade links were formed by a separate delegation who visited Magdeburg in Germany.

Councillor Ben Smith, Deputy Leader of Northamptonshire County Council, was joined by representatives from the University of Northampton, Invest Northamptonshire, the county's Economic Development Unit and Explore Northamptonshire on the two day visit to the Czech Republic to meet key figures from the Pilsen Region to discuss matters including investment strategies, education links and tourism.

Since the early 1990s the Pilsen Region has attracted significant business investment, grown as a tourist destination and developed a highly regarded Scientific and Technical Park. The delegation heard how this had been achieved and learned about the ways in which Northamptonshire could benefit from adopting similar strategies.

Graham Irvine, Investment Manager at Invest Northamptonshire, said:

"Northamptonshire's growth plans demand an additional 141,000 jobs to be created by 2031. For this to be achieved, we need to work with other countries to develop business opportunities which could lead to investment and jobs creation in the county."

As a result of meetings between the University of Northampton and the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, plans for joint working have been made. John Jones, Business Development Manager of the University of Northampton, said:

"Both Universities have strong research facilities and we intend to collaborate on research projects in the future so that both parties can benefit from collective expertise."

"It is important that The University of Northampton works with its overseas counterparts if it is to continue to grow as a centre of knowledge and technology as well as contributing to the cultural development of Northamptonshire."

Councillor Ben Smith added:

"It was a beneficial trip as clearly there are opportunities to develop joint initiatives which will provide benefits to both communities."



During the visit, the delegation attended the region's tourism trade fair and met those responsible for tourism in the area.

"The Pilsen region is a similar size to Northamptonshire and we both have a tourism offer that combines historic towns and attractions with rural landscapes," said Rachael Dewis of tourism agency, Explore Northamptonshire. *"Pilsen is the same distance from Prague as Northampton is from London so it was particularly useful to hear about how Pilsen is encouraging visitors to Prague to explore areas outside of the capital."*

Northamptonshire's links with Pilsen were rooted last year when trade links were formed. A visit to Northamptonshire from a delegation from the Pilsen Region is being planned for 2006.

During a visit to Magdeburg in Germany, a delegation including Paul Taylor, Chief Executive of Invest Northamptonshire, attended the InterTech event where they met companies interested in representation or operations in the UK. The delegation also proposed alliances on research and technology projects and it is hoped that Northamptonshire will host a similar event in Northamptonshire in order to increase partnerships between companies in the county and those based in Europe.

DELIVERY

BARNES MEADOW WET GRASSLAND CREATION

Work has begun to create an impressive wildlife and community resource at the edge of Northampton.



Photograph copyright Steve Brayshaw



Photographs copyright Dr Janet Jackson UCN

Contractors are currently on site at Barnes Meadow Local Nature Reserve (LNR) transforming the field into a complex of permanent pools and seasonally wet scrapes. Money secured by the River Nene Regional Park through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Growth Area Fund is being used by the Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust to create wet grassland, helping to reverse the decline of species related to this habitat type. In particular it is hoped that the habitat will become a regular breeding site attracting nationally significant species such as Little Ringed Plover's.

If you would like further information please contact the RNRP project team:

RNRP initiative, c/o Sustainability, P.O. Box No. 163, County Hall, Northampton, NN1 1AX
Tel: 01604 237648, E-mail: RNRP@northamptonshire.gov.uk

The final frontier...

SPACE, the River Nene Regional Park magazine launched in August includes details of other signature projects currently being developed as part of the River Nene Regional Park work.

SPACE can be found at: <http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Environment/MKSM/RNRP/RNRP.htm>



BARRATT WIN COMPETITION TO BUILD 60k HOUSES AT UPTON

Barratt Developments plc has been selected by national regeneration agency, English Partnerships as one of the winning developers of the Design for Manufacture competition and will build 50 £60,000 homes at Upton Phase 1 in Northampton.

The Design for Manufacture Competition was launched in April 2005 by the Deputy Prime Minister to address the major increases in construction costs in recent years by demonstrating that it is possible to build a high-quality home while keeping the construction cost down to £60,000. The figure of £60,000 is a target construction cost, not the total development cost or final sale price. By focusing purely on the cost of construction, the Design for Manufacture Competition aims to improve construction efficiency, quality and design. The cost efficiency should have an impact on total scheme costs and will help to make homes more affordable.

Barratt will use a steel frame hybrid construction method, which makes use of fully insulated and weatherproofed units produced locally at the Advance Housing Ltd factory in Daventry. These units include complete bathroom and kitchen pods, all of which will include windows, doors and wiring. Houses will have a concrete base and external finishes will be applied using traditional, site-fixed methods.

For more information visit: <http://www.designformanufacture.info/>



The successful communication of news and progress on projects and activities within the Northamptonshire growth areas relies on your contributions to the e-bulletin. Thanks to all who contributed to this edition.

If you have any news for the next e-bulletin please contact Kieran Palmer on 01604 236268 or e-mail: kpalmer@northamptonshire.gov.uk. Please let us know in advance if you anticipate any major news on key developments or significant milestones which you would like to highlight as a special feature. For any other enquiries, please contact Bob Colenutt bcolenutt@northamptonshire.gov.uk, tel. 01604 237776.

All issues of the e-bulletin can be found on the Northamptonshire County Council website: <http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Environment/MKSM/ebulletin.htm>

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