

South Holland Rural Action Zone

South Holland Today

South Holland is located in the south of Lincolnshire and has boundaries and close relationships with the economies and housing needs of neighbouring rural authorities in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and with the city of Peterborough. The north eastern boundary of the district is the unspoilt coastline of the Wash. The district is sparsely populated with roughly one third of the population of 82,600 living in the principal market town of Spalding with the remainder living in five small towns and many small rural villages. Population growth faster than the national average is predicted to continue. In addition there has been an increased demand for labour to sustain the local economy which has been largely satisfied by workers from other European countries.

South Holland sits on high grade agricultural land with 98% being grade 1 or 2. The economy is dominated by agriculture and horticulture with associated food packaging and processing companies. 20% of all the UK's food passes through the district. These predominantly food based occupations require large numbers of full time and seasonal workers who traditionally have been employed through agencies. This has resulted in a low skilled workforce with limited work place training and generally below average wage rates. More highly skilled workers are commuting to nearby centres such as Peterborough and students tend not to return to the district after higher education.

South Holland has low unemployment levels, a pleasant rural environment, a low crime rate, a strong sense of community and relatively cheap housing. On the other hand there is evidence of high levels of obesity and for many people an unhealthy lifestyle; a difficulty in accessing services through the transport infrastructure; limited access to green spaces because of the man-made, heavily farmed and managed landscape; a low level of earnings and amongst some groups a fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

South Holland in 2030

By 2030 South Holland will be a district which has prospered and flourished in part because partners across the county will have achieved the shared vision for Lincolnshire. It will be a place where health issues have been addressed; where the economy is buoyant and still growing; where the environment is both attractive and functional; where harmonious communities support each other and where transport and accessibility issues no longer feature.

South Holland will be an area in which full use is made of the high value agricultural land and its national significance and importance continues to be recognised. Its contribution to the food security of the UK will be applauded.

The Wash will remain a valued national wildlife asset and wetland of international importance, which will have developed into a significant tourist attraction.

South Holland by 2030

A future where the specific needs and aspirations of the South Holland community have been addressed.

Health

Today:

- Above average levels of obesity and lack of regular exercise
- A need to encourage exercise and sport
- The difficulty of getting appointments at a doctor's surgery, dentist or hospital.
- A growing number of middle aged and older people who will require increased service provision over the next twenty years

By 2030:

- People will be living healthy lifestyles
- All will have access to high quality sports and leisure facilities
- Services support a long term healthy lifestyle and will be readily available to all
- The retired population of the district will enjoy increased independence and an improved quality of life

Economic Development

Today

- A reliance on food based industries
- A low wage and low skill economy
- The need to provide affordable housing for workers
- Young people need to be encouraged to undertake further education and training
- A need to increase skill levels in the working population

By 2030

- An environment in which new and existing businesses grow, flourish and become sustainable
- A highly trained work force with the skills which will enable them to set the highest standards in food based industries and the adaptability to provide support for new businesses
- An available range of good quality affordable housing
- Employees with high skill levels as a result of the work carried out in schools, colleges and locally based Higher Education
- E-learning available to improve skill levels for adult learners along with conventional training methods

Our Environment

Today

- People say they want our towns and villages to be clean and tidy, with a minimum of litter and graffiti
- Increasing evidence highlights the growing risk of flooding and the threat posed by climate change

By 2030

- South Holland's towns and villages are increasingly desirable places to live and are adapting to the impacts of climate change
- Our carbon footprint has reduced year on year
- The Coastal Strategy for Lincolnshire and a commitment to maintain our flood defences has brought about security from flooding which ensures continued sustainable development in South Holland

Our Communities

Today

- People say they want our communities to be safe places in which to live, visit and work, particularly for the most vulnerable sections of society
- People want anti-social behaviour to be reduced
- Integration, social cohesion and active citizenship are issues which public services are having to address

By 2030

- All people will feel safe where they live, work and visit
- Young people will be able to participate in a range of activities to keep them active and involved
- South Holland is a place where people get on together and new people are welcomed and where levels of respect and participation in civic life have led to an improved society
- People are aware of issues and plans that may affect them so that they can make informed choices and become involved
- People are able to access services and obtain the information they need in a variety of ways, thus reducing rural isolation, irrespective of where they live in the district

Transport and Accessibility

Today

- Rural isolation and the lack of a comprehensive transport infrastructure remain issues to be overcome

By 2030

- Our safe and well-maintained transport system is flexible enough to serve the needs of our rural communities and local industry and to connect us to other places
- Rural Communities have a ready access to services