



Brecks LAG

LAG area distribution



■ Breckland ■ South Norfolk
■ St Edmundsbury ■ Forest Heath

The Brecks LAG area crosses over four district council areas and includes the hub towns of Swaffham Wymondham, Thetford and in Norfolk and Mildenhall in Suffolk. Also all other smaller towns and villages and the rural areas in between.

These areas are all possible sources of people and businesses that could benefit from LIFT funded projects

Local Business Overview

There are a significant number of target Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the area

Size (employees)	No.
Micro (0 to 9)	4350
Small (10 to 49)	465
Medium (50 to 249)	75

2015 figures shown

and the local business survival rate beats the national average year on year

Business Survival Rates from 2009 births	1 year per cent	2 year per cent	3 year per cent	4 year per cent	5 year per cent
UK	90.8	73.8	59.6	48.9	41.7
Example: Breckland	92.8	77.1	62.7	50.6	44.6

Certain business sectors dominate in the Brecks. They are retail, construction, health & care, education, professional services, accommodation, land transport and wholesale. Also more than 100 automotive engineering and related advanced manufacturing companies that are clustered along the A11 between Thetford and Norwich, now known as the 'A11 Corridor'. From Formula 1 to food processing, this sector employs 10,000 people, representing a strong High Tech Manufacturing and Advanced Engineering cluster

Other sectors are represented and the LAG believes there are additional **opportunities** for growth and employment in the timber supply chain, in water, forest and cultural tourism, local/artisan food and drink, rural crafts and to supply the American air bases

Any rural SME business from any sector can be eligible for support from a LIFT Skills or LIFT Trials project

Local Skills Overview

Improving the skills and qualification levels of working age people in the area is key to supporting the local economy and raising household incomes

A key concern is that the skills attainment of local people is significantly below the national average in the Breckland area.

Breckland Qualification (Jan – Dec 2014)	Number	% local resident population aged 16-64	National average
No qualification	8600	11.1	8.8
NVQ1 and above	62100	80.2	85
NVQ2 and above	51400	66.3	73.3
NVQ3 and above	36000	46.4	56.7

The skills attainment of people living in other parts of the LAG area show a similar picture.

LIFT Priorities

The LIFT programme is looking to fund projects that will offer solutions for local businesses and people

- ✓ Enable rural businesses to recruit, train and retain staff they need
- ✓ Overcome the barriers faced by many working age residents in rural areas to be ready for, and secure employment including self-employment.

The Brecks area has a higher than national average proportion of residents working in basic level jobs and a lower than national average proportion of people working in high skilled, professional level jobs.

There is a need to support existing businesses by helping them to 'upskill' existing employees with bespoke training packages in order to keep their business operating to capacity and to develop and grow.

Improving English language and basic numeracy, literacy and ICT skills could raise the confidence and prospects of employees and job seekers. This may also encourage those not currently seeking work to enter the local workforce.

LIFT will fund projects that will contribute to positive change to the local economy through support for working age people in the LAG area. Overall the LIFT funding programme must deliver the following as a minimum:

- 351 unemployed people (including long-term unemployed) and 151 inactive people supported towards or into employment, of whom 176 are expected to be in employment at the end of the project.
- 713 people in employment supported to develop their skills to benefit their own careers and to enhance their contribution to their employer businesses, of whom 120 will have no basic skills at the outset of the training.
- 61 businesses supported to deliver work trials for those with limited or no workplace experience, and from disadvantaged communities.

Other targets include support for groups of participants who may face additional barriers because they are

- without basic skills
- over 50
- from an ethnic minority group
- have a disability
- single parents

Some key local statistics to inform LIFT projects ideas might be:

17.7% of population is economically inactive (although in the Forest Heath area it is 22%)

More women than men are inactive

The total claimant count for the main out of work benefits is 5620, of which 650 is claiming JSA, 4240 is claiming ESA and incapacity benefits, 570 is lone parents support, 150 are others on income related benefits.

There are 210 aged over 50 years old claimants in the area currently receiving out of work benefits (mainly JSA claimants)

Of the 13600 of economically inactive population in Breckland, there are 3700 who are unable to work due to long term sickness. This is 27.4% of its economically inactive population, and is significantly higher than the national average