

Chambers

EAST



ROADMAP

The voice of business in the
East of England

Ensuring the future prosperity of the UK
by boosting the contribution from the East

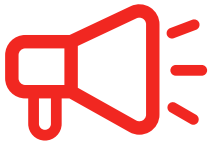


Chambers East is on a mission to make the East of England the UK's most dynamic, connected, and prosperous region for business. By uniting the Chambers of Commerce in the East, we amplify the voice of businesses and our members, advocate for investment, and drive transformative policy change.

Our collective goal is to create an environment where businesses of all sizes can innovate and contribute to the UK's economic prosperity.

We envisage an East of England where businesses of all sizes can grow, lead, and succeed in a competitive global market. Through strategic investment, innovation, and collaboration, we will unlock the full potential of our region.

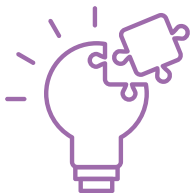
Chambers East brings businesses across the region together to grow and succeed. By combining our influence, we secure investment, shape policy, and remove barriers to growth, ensuring the East remains competitive on the national and global stage.



A powerful collective voice representing thousands of businesses.



Greater influence on government and key decision-makers.



Cross-sector collaboration creating new opportunities and solving regional challenges.



A stronger, more resilient economy for the East of England.

**Together,
we are driving
the East forward.**

Chambers East is a partnership of Chambers of Commerce serving the East of England. With nearly 750 years of combined expertise, we provide dedicated advocacy and support to businesses of all sizes. We champion local economic success by driving leading policy initiatives and delivering tailored, practical solutions that help businesses prosper.

5,100+

Member organisations

9 universities

Inspiring research, skills, and innovation

300,000+

Jobs supported by our members

2 Airports & 2 Freeports

Cutting-edge renewables and energy infrastructure

£163bn

GVA contribution to the UK economy

#1

In life sciences, healthcare, net zero, and digital innovation



Championing the East

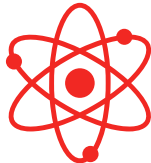
The East of England is not just a region, it's a driving force behind the UK's economic strength, innovation, and global competitiveness. With a thriving business ecosystem, world-leading industries, and vital national assets, our contribution is undeniable.



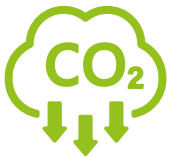
£113bn+ GDP generated annually in the East of England



Home to global giants: BT, Ford, Lotus, Arm, AstraZeneca



Sectors leading the future: Life Sciences, Clean Energy, AI, Manufacturing



60% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions since 2005



Foundation industries powering everyday life: Logistics, Construction, Tourism

Despite our strengths, the East receives one of the lowest rates of public funding in the UK.

Investment is critical to unlocking our full potential.

Our focus is on three key priorities to improve:

- Transport and infrastructure
- Skills and workforce development
- Trade and economy



Justin Richardson

Chief Executive of
Bedfordshire Chamber
of Commerce



Charlotte Horobin

Chief Executive of
Cambridgeshire
Chambers of Commerce



Denise Rossiter

Chief Executive of
Essex Chambers of
Commerce



Donna Schultz

Chief Executive of
Hertfordshire Chamber
of Commerce



Nova Fairbank

Chief Executive of
Norfolk Chambers
of Commerce



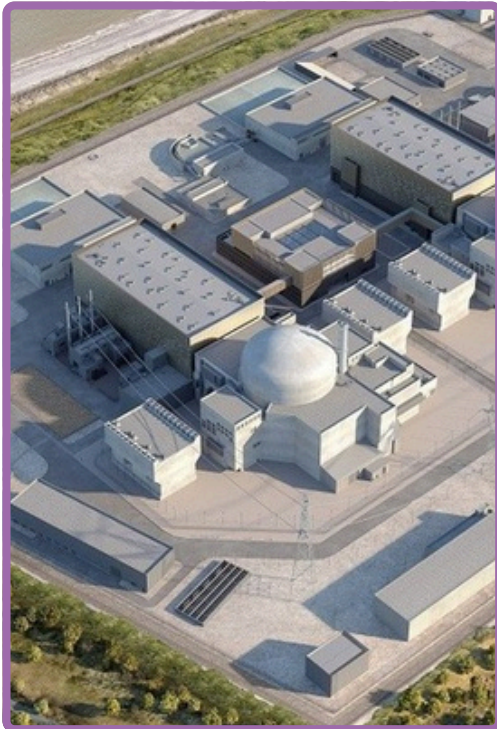
John Dugmore

Chief Executive of
Suffolk Chamber of
Commerce



Why the East Matters

The East of England is home to vital assets and infrastructure that are central to the UK's economic strength. From world-leading research to key transport hubs, the region plays a crucial role in driving growth and innovation, positioning itself as a key driver of the nation's future prosperity.



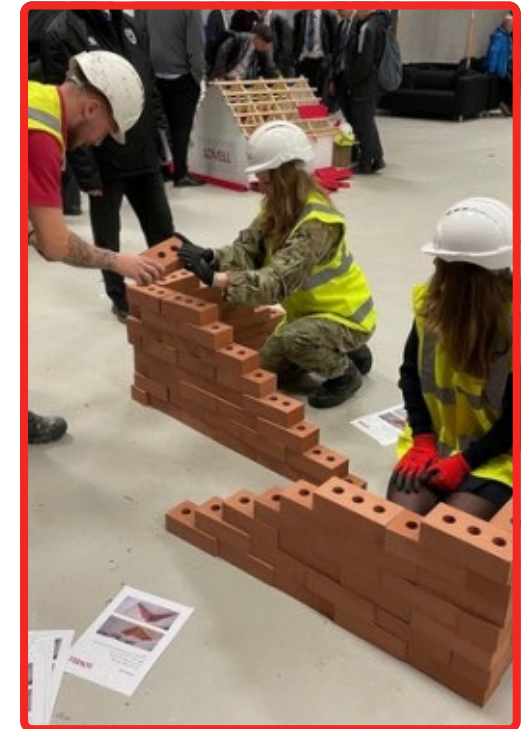
Vital UK assets



World-class infrastructure



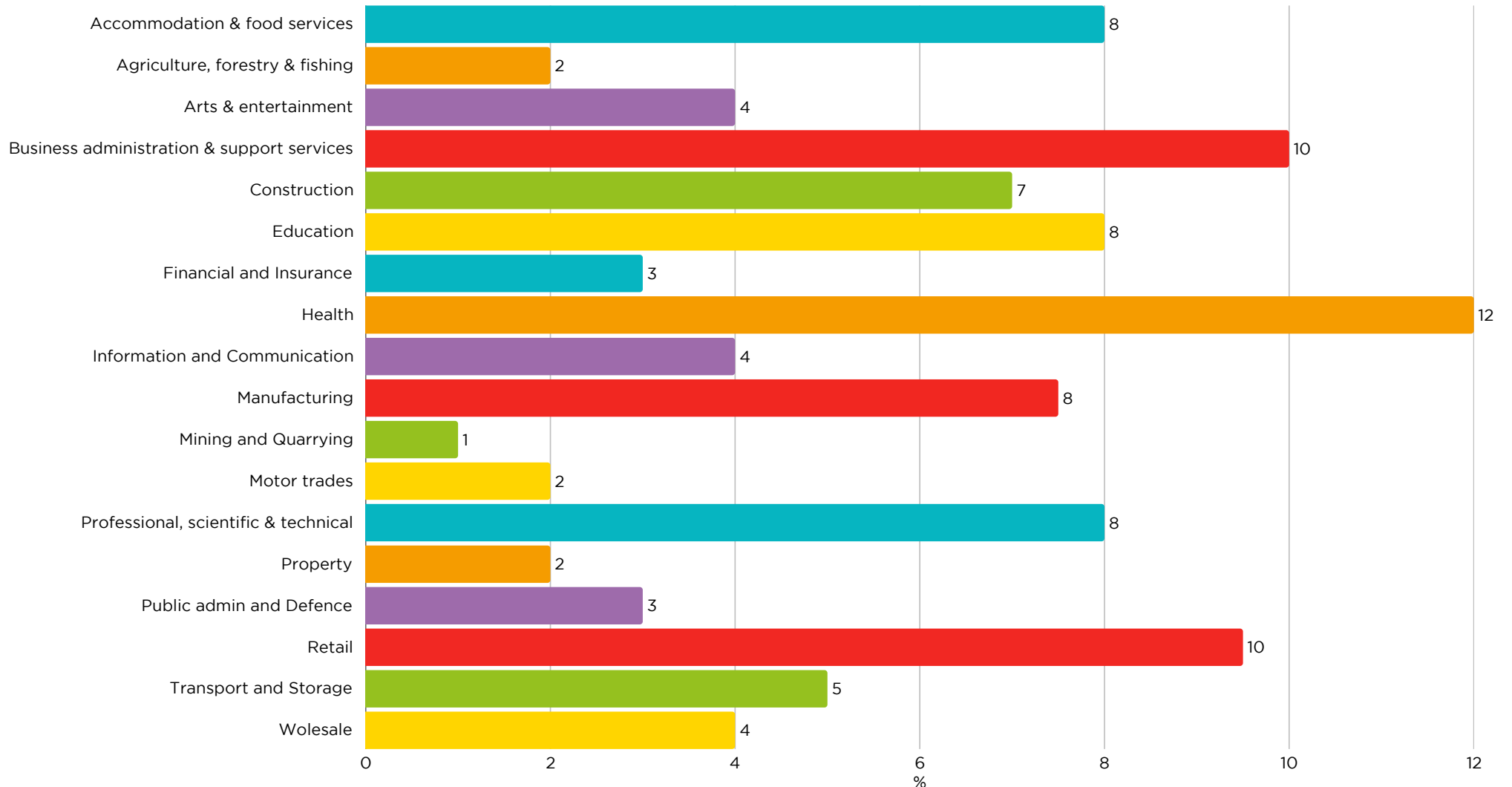
Cutting edge food security, agriculture and climate resilience



One of the highest employment and productivity rates outside London

Key Sectors in the East

The East of England is home to a dynamic and diverse range of sectors, each playing a crucial role in our region's prosperity and growth. From health and business services to education, manufacturing, and the creative sectors, the breadth of opportunities reflects the region's strength and potential.



To make the East an even better place to do business, we have identified three key priorities that must be addressed. These are the challenges that our members tell us are holding them back, and the opportunities that, with the right investment, can unlock the region's full potential.

Transport and infrastructure



Ensuring businesses can move goods, people, and data efficiently

Skills and Workforce development



Helping businesses recruit, retain and train the workforce they need

Trade and economy



Supporting businesses to grow, export, and compete globally

These priorities are at the heart of our mission, but our work doesn't stop here. If businesses face other challenges, Chambers East is here to listen, support, and advocate for the changes needed to help them grow and prosper.

We're committed to making the East the best place in the UK to do business.

Transport and Infrastructure

What's holding us back?

Outdated transport networks and poor connectivity are holding back economic growth in the East of England, limiting access to key markets and opportunities.

Why we need action

Upgrading infrastructure is critical to boosting productivity, supporting sustainable growth, and ensuring the region's contribution to the UK's economic success. Investment in transport and utilities will drive innovation, reduce congestion, and prepare the region for the future.

What we need to succeed

- Faster 5G & EV Charging Rollout - Accelerating the rollout of 5G networks and expanding electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.
- Rail upgrades - Investment in vital rail projects, including upgrades to the Ely, Haughley, and Trowse junctions, and the full completion of East-West Rail
- Road Improvements - Key Road projects, such as improvements to the A14 Junction 55, A11 Fiveways, A47, A10, A120, and A12
- Water & Energy Resilience - Addressing water supply challenges and investing in infrastructure to enhance water and energy resilience

“Chambers East is working with the region's MPs, local government and other partners to make the case for investment in much needed infrastructure”

Skills and workforce development

What's holding us back?

Recruitment and business growth are being hindered by skills shortages and gaps, limiting the region's ability to meet economic demands and fully realise its potential.

What we need to succeed

- Flexible apprenticeship levy - Transforming the apprenticeship levy into a more adaptable training fund to support diverse skills development.
- 'UCAS'-style system for apprenticeships - A platform that matches apprentices with opportunities, similar to how UCAS supports university applications.
- More funding for skills-based & bite-sized training - Increased investment in practical training and shorter courses to make learning more accessible.
- Better career guidance in schools - Expanding career resources and guidance to help students make informed decisions about their future.
- Increased support for FE teaching staff & rural learners - Addressing shortages of further education teaching staff and supporting access to education in rural areas.
- An immigration policy that supports business needs - A balanced immigration strategy that helps fill skills gaps while the region develops its workforce.

Why we need action

Addressing skills gaps is essential for boosting productivity, supporting economic growth, and ensuring the region's contribution to the UK economy. Investment in skills development will increase wages, drive innovation, and help businesses succeed.

Chambers East working in partnership with employers, further education and training providers has prepared Local Skills Improvement Plans for the region.

Trade and Economy

What's holding us back?

Global trade barriers, a lack of new trade agreements, and volatility are limiting exports. Local economies are not benefiting from national infrastructure projects due to procurement favouring larger companies, and an antiquated business rates regime.

Why we need action

With the right investment and policy changes, we can increase exports, support small businesses, and strengthen the East's role in driving UK economic growth.

What we need to succeed

- More trade agreements - Securing agreements with important emerging markets, the US and EU.
- More International Trade Advisors - Expanding support for businesses looking to enter international markets.
- Boost green, life sciences & advanced manufacturing exports - Promoting and growing exports in high-potential sectors to enhance regional and national competitiveness.
- Greater digitalisation & export support - Helping businesses embrace digital tools to improve efficiency and expand their reach.
- Better local procurement for major projects - Ensuring more local businesses can access opportunities in major projects.
- A fairer business tax system - Advocating for tax reforms that support business growth and investment.

Chambers East is setting up local supply chain initiatives, encouraging inward investment and is providing international trade advice tailored to the needs of the East's businesses

Join us in shaping the future

Chambers East is committed to securing investment, policy changes, and support that will enable businesses across the East to grow and succeed.

Join your local Chamber of Commerce

