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Cash boost is a vote of confidence for our region's growth

News that £60m is set to be invested in East Anglia from the government's Local Growth Fund is a major vote of confidence for the region.

Our region was once seen as a rural backwater by major businesses and central government. But not any more.

Projects like the A11 dualling scheme between Thetford and Barton Mills are helping to unlock East Anglia's economic potential. And hopefully this new investment will help to create new jobs and put infrastructure projects in place that will give the region a real boost.

Communities across Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire are set to benefit from new relief roads, college buildings, homes and broadband money that has been pledged to the New Anglia local enterprise partnership and the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough local enterprise partnership.

The funding is great news for relief road projects in Brandon and Bury St Edmunds to encourage further business investment and a £10m pledge for faster broadband will be welcomed by many people living in rural Norfolk and Suffolk.

But could have East Anglia benefitted from a larger share of the £1bn Local Growth Fund budget?

The New Anglia local enterprise partnership bid for £500m worth of projects, but received funding for their top 10 schemes and have provisional backing for a further £20.1m for other initiatives.

Now that the region has this extra cash, the enterprise partnerships must ensure that every pound is spent wisely to ensure that tax payers get the very best value for money.

GP recruitment crisis

It is extremely worrying that senior doctors in Norfolk are warning more patients will be de-registered from their surgeries in the future because of a GP recruitment crisis.

It is unacceptable that some vulnerable members of society in Breckland have already been put through the stress of having to register with a new practice.

This must not be allowed to happen elsewhere across the region.

Senior GPs have warned of a "perfect storm" with doctors retiring early from the profession and not enough newly qualified medics joining general practice.

The government and NHS England needs to take action to make sure GP practices get what they need.

More investment and less form filling and bureaucracy for doctors under pressure would help in some way to address the recruitment problem.

Town's bouncing back

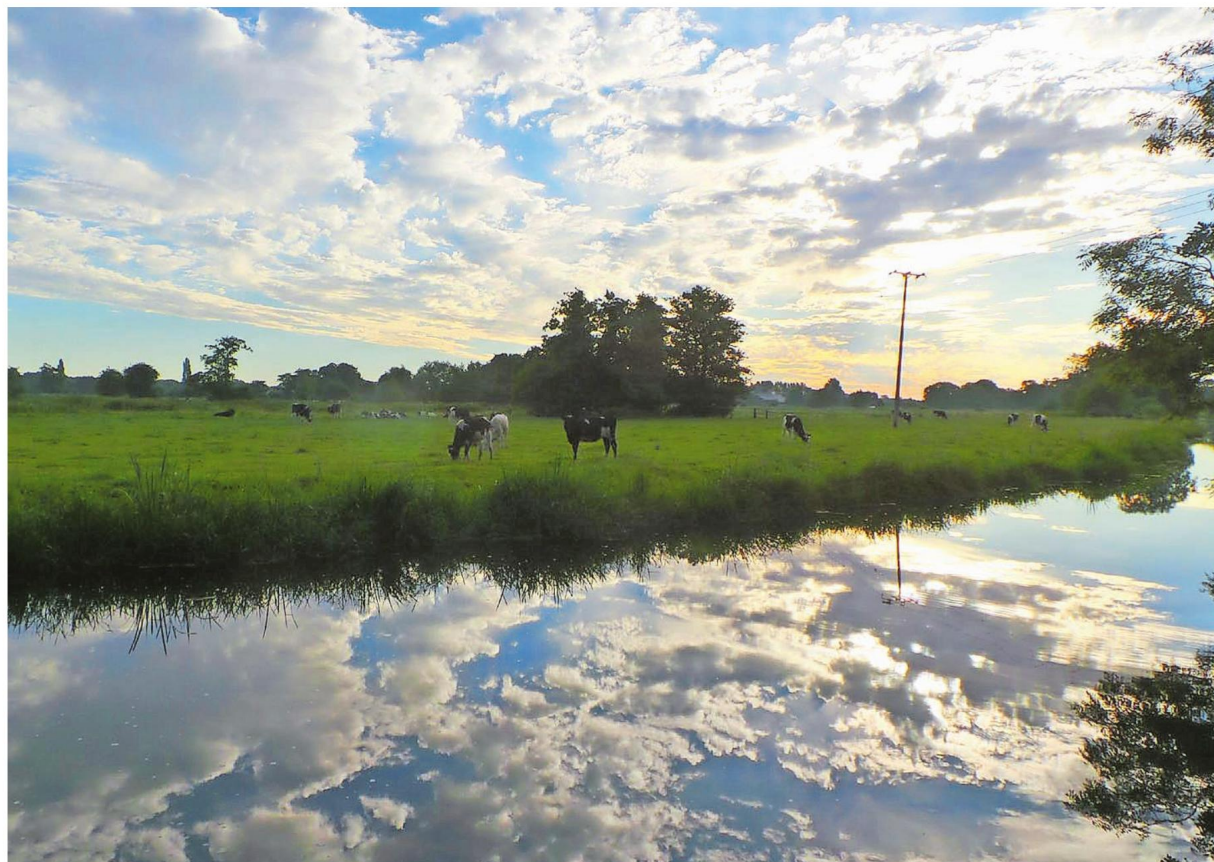
The community of Fakenham has rallied around since a devastating town centre blaze that gutted the home of the Original Factory Shop.

Less than six weeks after the fire, staff from the retailer returned to work in Fakenham at the weekend when a temporary shop was opened in George Edwards Road.

Congratulations to all those that worked so hard to get the store reopened in the town after the blaze at the old Aldiss department store in the Market Place.

READER'S PICTURE OF THE DAY

iwitness24



■ A beautiful and tranquil morning at the Staithe in Bungay. Photograph by Andrew Atterwill. If you would like to submit a picture for possible publication in the EDP, visit www.iwitness24.co.uk

Being able to enjoy a mardle is quite a new concept

Peter
Trudgill

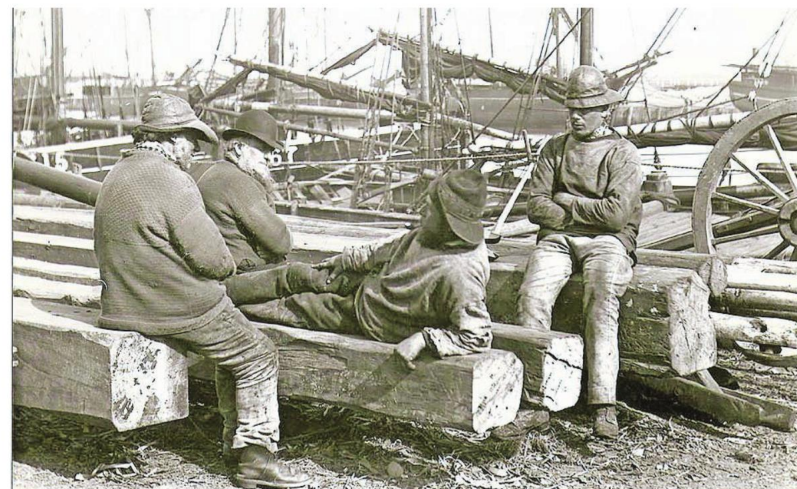


email: newsdesk@archant.co.uk

I'm sitting at my laptop, in the county of Norfolk, about 17 miles from the North Sea, writing about English, in English.

That's a very new thing to be able to do. I don't mean because laptops are a recent invention. And I don't mean because people of relatively humble origins like me have only recently known how to write. What I mean is that the English language itself is very recent. Human language is probably about 200,000 years old; but English hasn't been around for even 1pc of that time.

Five thousand years ago there was no such language as "English" – not even here in Norfolk which, I reckon, is where English was born. But there's an important way in which the language I'm writing in did already exist then – there actually was a language which BECAME English. Five thousand years ago, the language-which-became-English wasn't spoken anywhere in Britain. You would've had to travel eastwards from Norfolk at least 500 miles across the North Sea to hear the forerunner of modern English spoken. Around 2,500 BC, the linguistic ancestors of modern English speakers were in southern Scandinavia – in southern Sweden and on the Danish islands, in



■ The way we speak today and the way these Norfolk fishermen spoke many years ago can be traced back to southern Scandinavia where the Proto-Germanic language was formed.

the region where Copenhagen and Malmö are today.

During the millennia since, the language they spoke there has changed so much, as languages do, that if we could hear it today it would be unrecognisable and incomprehensible. But the English dialect I grew up speaking in Norfolk, on the other side of the North Sea, really is a direct descendant of that ancient language of southern Scandinavia – a descendant passed down directly from one generation to another over centuries.

We've got no idea what name the speakers of that language had for it – if it had a name at all – but today linguists call it Proto-Germanic. Two hundred genera-

tions later, my native language is called English by its speakers. But there's a direct line of transmission from the one language to the other: Proto-Germanic no longer exists, but it hasn't died out. It's simply become transformed, over the millennia, into English – and also Dutch, Afrikaans, Frisian, German, Yiddish, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic and Faroese, the sister languages of English in the Germanic language family.

It's very hard to imagine what the lives of our linguistic ancestors 200 generations back were like.

But we owe them our language. If they hadn't spoken like that, we wouldn't be speaking like this.

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The Lord satisfies your life with good things, so your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
Psalm 103:5

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