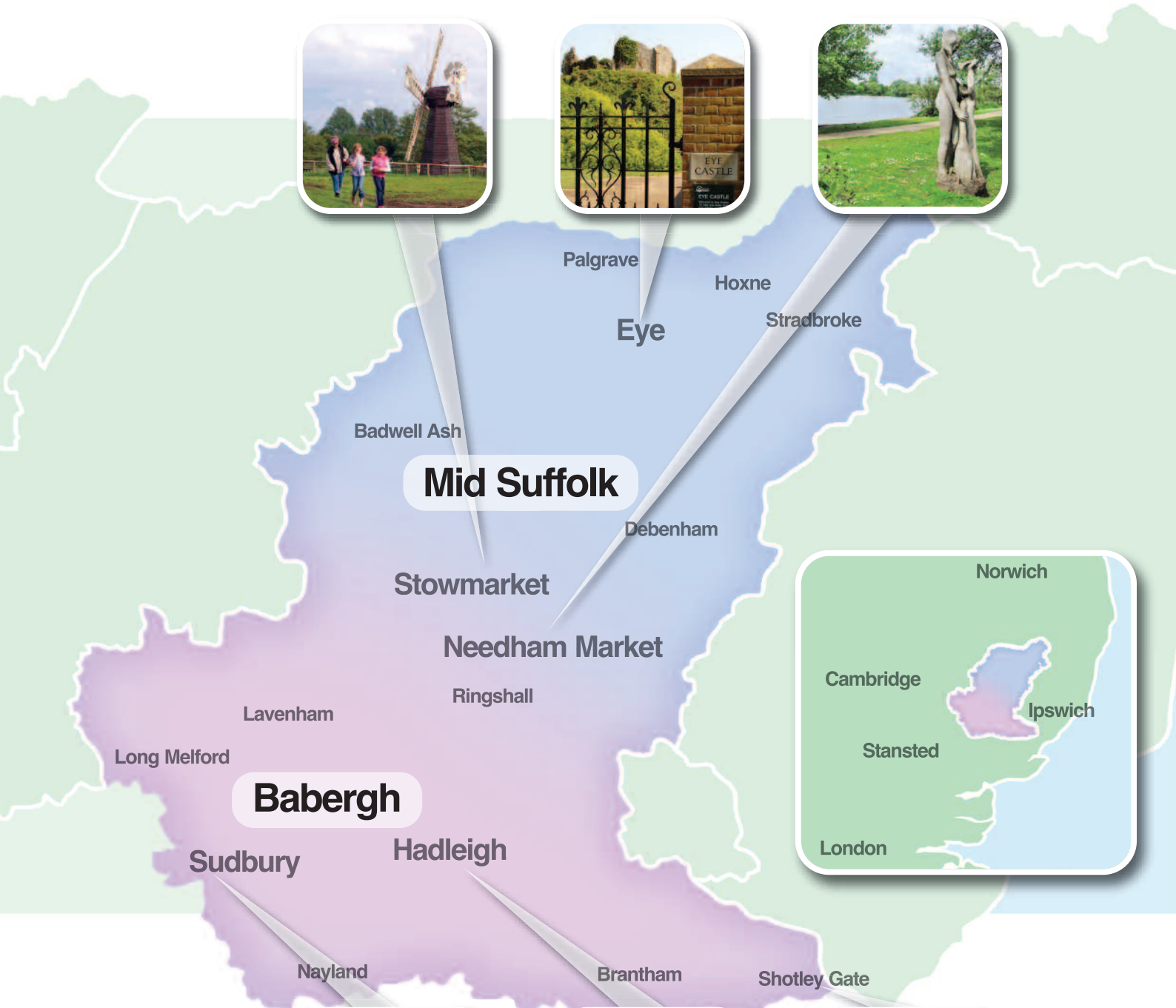


Babergh and Mid Suffolk

The Districts



The districts - as places to live and work

With an area covering nearly 600 square miles, and a combined population of 178,000, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are based in the heart of Suffolk but bordered and influenced by the major growth points around Cambridge, Colchester and Ipswich, and offer a range of services to local communities and businesses alike.

Babergh District, which has its base in Hadleigh, covers 240 square miles, stretching from the outskirts of Bury St Edmunds in the west, around Ipswich and down to the Shotley Peninsula in the east, with a population of 86,000. Mid Suffolk District, which is based in Needham Market, is one of the largest districts in England covering 335 square miles with a population of 92,000.

Both districts are relatively rural with the main populations and retail centres focused in Great Cornard, Stowmarket and Sudbury.

There are modern, thriving, industrial estates at Chilton, just outside Sudbury, Hadleigh and Stowmarket. Firms produce everything from boiler tubes for nuclear-powered ships to antique picture frames and the finest perfumes and essences. Silk is still woven in Sudbury as it was hundreds of years ago. Most of the once famous wool towns have turned to new enterprises, including tourism. Stowmarket is home to Atco and Muntons - two international companies.

Across the two areas, around three quarters of businesses are small and employ less than ten people.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk have low unemployment but also low wage levels affecting affordable housing and leading many people to commute significant distances for work.

Pressures on housing, transport and other infrastructure are likely to increase for both councils in the future and there is a need to balance development opportunities with the protection of the natural environment.