



# **Guide for Suppliers**

Putting perfection and precision  
into procurement

Norse’s constant focus on quality gets results

Welcome to Norse – one of the country’s most dynamic and fast-growing facilities management, contract services and strategic partnership providers.

Established in 1988, Norse Group has an impressive portfolio of clients embracing a wide range of local authority and private sector organisations, more than 10,000 employees and a turnover in excess of £250 million.

Norse has built an enviable national reputation for innovative thinking and delivering outstanding professional services throughout the UK.

As a growing business, we take a very keen interest not only in our valued clients and talented staff but also in the companies and organisations which supply to us.

At Norse, you see, we understand that being able deliver the best possible services on a daily basis often hinges on the reliability and excellence of the people supplying us. Quality and care are always paramount – hallmarks that run right through the Norse supply chain.

Norse procures goods and services worth millions of pounds every year and, understandably, expects the finest levels of service from its suppliers – day in, day out.

Put simply, they must come up to our high standards and always deliver the best possible value.

This guide will help potential suppliers to learn more about the work of Norse and how they can become part of our successful UK operations.

Working hard in communities across the country

Norse Group is an award-winning national business, working closely with local authorities across the country to deliver key services in communities – and saving millions of pounds of public money every year.

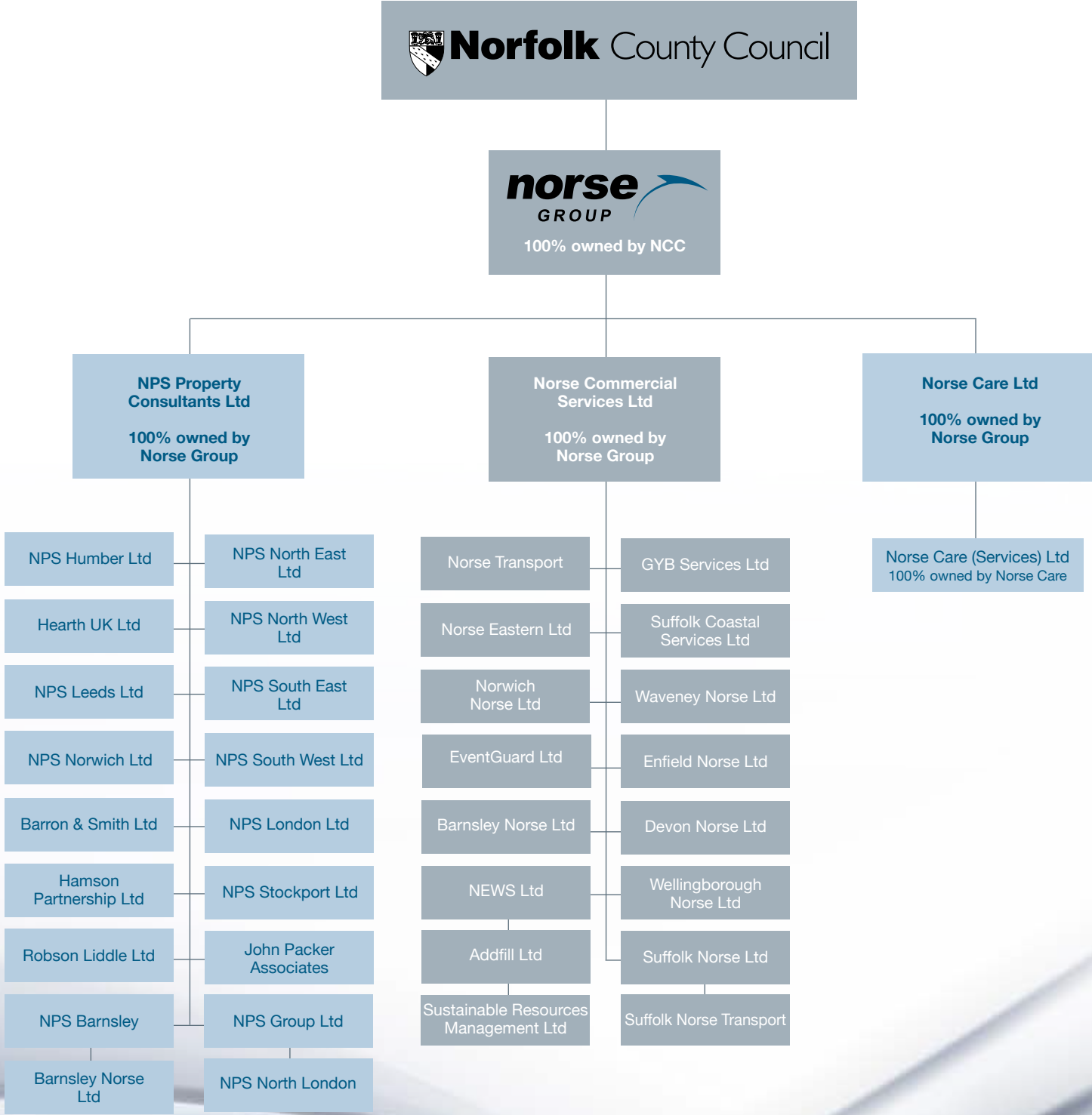
Norse’s work is touching the daily lives of hundreds of thousands of people: from tidier streets, parks and gardens, healthier school meals, improved local transport and well-run care homes to the design and maintenance of safe, clean and eco-friendly buildings.

Based in Norwich and owned by Norfolk County Council, Norse Group brings together Facilities Management specialist Norse Commercial Services, property consultancy NPS Group and care homes provider NorseCare.

Norse is proud to be at the heart of local life: delivering quality public services, serving communities with real dedication and providing secure jobs amid very tough times.

Underpinning Norse Group’s success is a thoughtful and consistent approach to growth and investment, with a clear emphasis on the priorities which make a business both successful and sustainable.

Norse therefore attaches great importance to issues such as staff retention, training and development, quality assurance, Corporate Social Responsibility, improving its green credentials wherever possible and forging long-term, secure business partnerships.



Winning partnerships – they’re what we do best

Constantly pioneering, Norse in 2000 forged the first of what was to become a benchmark in local authority partnerships.

Since then, ground-breaking joint ventures have continued to attract the attention of public sector organisations and the media across the UK.

At Norse, we know exactly how to deliver the very best services into the hearts of communities. Local authorities, education and health authorities, housing associations and emergency services have all benefited from the forward-thinking and quality-driven ‘Norse approach’.

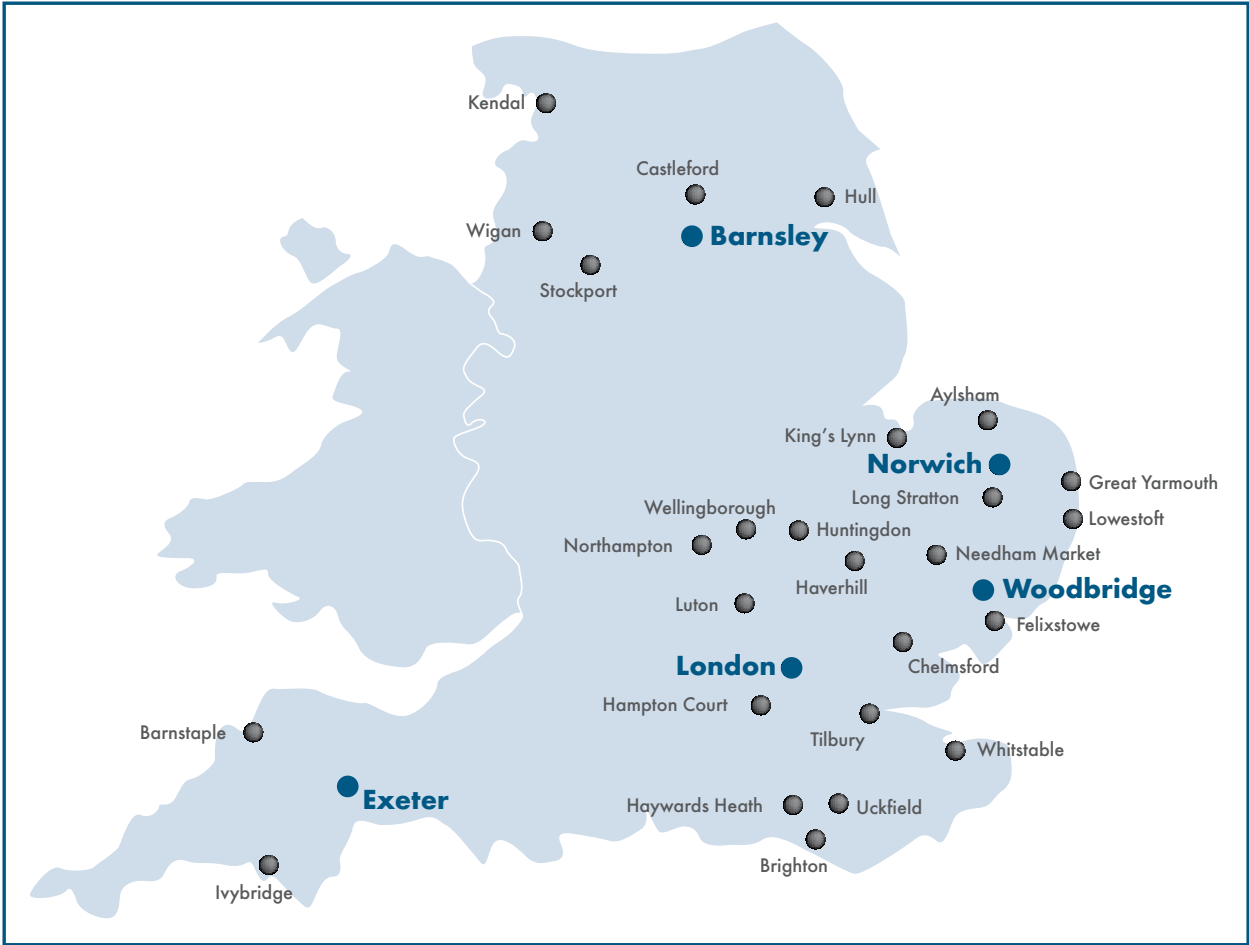
These are extremely challenging times economically for public sector organisations across the UK.

With severe cuts to public finances, never before has there been so much pressure on senior managers within the public sector to deliver savings in front-line services – finding efficiencies and innovative ways of working while avoiding a major impact on the communities they serve.

By working in harmony with Norse, public sector partners can increase cost efficiency and raise standards of delivery, protecting front-line services and ensuring value for money for local communities.

Fundamental to Norse’s success is recognising that our clients value our **public sector ethos** of mutual respect, honesty and openness, combined with **commercial flair** and shared vision. That’s why Norse continues to go from strength to strength.

A national business – Norse’s areas of operation



“I’ve been a sub-contractor for Norse for 15 years or more. Norse is a superb company to work for, really. There are never any issues with the people we deal with, and the Norse job request system is always run very efficiently. We know that we will always get paid for the work that we do – and paid on time, which is very important for sub-contractor businesses like mine.”

Norse sub-contractor

## Building solid bonds of trust with our suppliers

Procurement has a vital role to play in the success of our business and we currently spend more than £75 million every year – everything from tanks of water for our office water coolers to tanks of fuel for our fleets of vans and lorries.

We have over 4,000 businesses on the Norse Approved Supplier list, a figure which is growing every year as Norse’s operations continue to expand across the country.

As a business which delivers efficiency and value for clients, we understandably expect the best value from our suppliers too – in terms of quality and cost.

Norse’s choice of suppliers is also strongly influenced by its obligations to Corporate Social Responsibility, the environment, equality, and health and safety issues.

Through the Norse supply chain, we must be able to show that we put the wellbeing of the communities we serve high on our agenda – as well as the health of the planet and its people. At Norse we are proud of our green credentials and put a constant emphasis on sustainability.

As a business which champions partnerships across the UK, Norse is keen to foster and promote long-term relationships with suppliers – building up solid bonds of trust that bring mutual rewards and prosperity.

The company benefits from national purchasing power but also looks to ‘buy local’ wherever and whenever feasible, supporting the economies and communities in which it operates. This balance is achieved through close liaison with clients and commercial partners, taking into account their own strategies and requirements.

While well-established supply partnerships are important, Norse’s innovative and entrepreneurial spirit means it also strives to develop new links with fresh suppliers – often helping younger companies to grow and encouraging new ways of working and thinking.

Close relationships with major buying organisations and suppliers means that Norse is able to keep fully abreast of market information, new technologies and product developments.

## How much does Norse spend on supplies?

Here are examples of some of the key spend areas of Norse:

£7.8 million	Catering
£6.6 million	Waste services
£5 million	Equipment
£4.8 million	Sub-contractors
£4.5 million	General materials
£4 million	Vehicle-related costs (non-fuel)
£3.9 million	Vehicle fuel
£3.7 million	Agency staff
£3.2 million	ICT
£2 million	Premises-related costs
£1.6 million	Other transport costs
£1.3 million	Utilities
£1.3 million	Printing
£600,000	Cleaning expenses
£600,000	Training and recruitment
£300,000	Personal protective equipment (PPE)



## Becoming one of our Approved Suppliers

To ensure that we deliver the best possible service in our own work, the people who supply us are expected to come up to Norse's high standards at all times.

All suppliers and sub-contractors undergo a rigorous vetting procedure to ensure that they meet required standards with regard to:

- Licences and certification
- Safety policies and procedures
- Safety training
- Safety monitoring
- Accident/incident reporting
- Accident statistics
- Employment practices
- First aid
- Insurance
- Safety accreditations.

Documentary evidence is required for all the above prior to becoming an Approved Supplier for Norse.

Suppliers and sub-contractors will receive clear instruction and guidance with regard to specific client policies and procedures to ensure compliance.

Regular audits and re-assessments are conducted by Norse managers, and reports provided, to ensure ongoing compliance with safety policies (both Norse's and clients').

"Supplying Norse has been a real pleasure – and a valuable part of my company's business – for the past four years. The people at Norse clearly treat their suppliers with respect and courtesy – and, in my experience, liaise regularly about what is expected from them and how the working relationship between us can grow and flourish. They are helpful, responsive, flexible and encourage a useful flow of information and feedback in both directions. Payment is always prompt and efficient, which I think demonstrates the importance Norse attaches to its suppliers."

**Norse supplier**

## Highly experienced in supply chain management



Matt Dewsbury joined Norse as Procurement Manager in 2012, bringing with him more than 18 years of industry experience in purchasing, supply chain and new product development.

Procurement has a key role to play in the success of Norse's business – and Matt, a member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, is building on the company's impressive track record.

Before joining Norse, his roles had predominantly been with national and international food manufacturers but were also supported by exposure to the non-food industrial sector.

These broad FMCG environments have allowed Matt to gain the depth of skills and experience required to maximise purchasing performance in demanding circumstances: attributes that are helping him to implement and co-ordinate best-practice purchasing methods as Norse continues to grow.

A talented and enthusiastic manager, Matt has experience outside the local government environment which perfectly complements Norse's strengths in that sector – and he is now developing and expanding the company's procurement processes as it continues to increase private-sector business.

Born and raised in Norfolk, Matt is a former student of Wymondham High School and City College Norwich.

"My business currently sub-contracts to Norse and the whole operation runs very smoothly because of the extremely efficient arrangement we have in place with Norse. We set aside two days every week for this work – Tuesdays and Thursdays – and Norse sends us very clear and precise job requests, set out on PDFs, which we always try to fulfil within two days. The turn-around is very quick because that's the way both we and Norse like to operate. We invoice Norse on completion of each job and we are always paid promptly and efficiently. Norse is now one of our biggest and best customers and, in my experience, working as a sub-contractor for Norse has grown into a very positive and successful business relationship."

**Norse sub-contractor**

## What we do – the wide range of Norse services

### Grounds Maintenance

Horticultural areas across the country are blossoming thanks to the tender care of Norse. Our Grounds Division maintains a diverse range of sites such as schools, colleges, hospitals, health centres, private gardens, cemeteries, industrial estates, commercial premises, housing associations, village greens, recreation grounds, tennis courts and cricket, football and rugby pitches. Norse's Landscape Development Team specialises in both soft and hard landscaping activities. The team will undertake fencing, paving and decking work, as well as the development of lawns, tree, hedge and shrub planting projects.

### Cleaning

Cleanliness and hygiene have never been so important and people quite rightly expect high standards in the 21st century. Norse offers a wide range of cleaning services, including regular cleaning; stripping, sanding and resealing of hard floors; carpet shampooing and dry cleaning; disinfecting and sanitising; curtain and fabric wall covering cleaning and dust removal; absence cover; and elimination of infections/infestations. We also have an in-house window cleaning team.

### Catering

From school meals and staff restaurants to sports clubs and business functions, the Norse Catering Division has the recipe for success at every level. Our catering services experts meet the demand for quality, tailor-made operations in the private and public sectors alike – with an emphasis on healthy, fresh and locally sourced food. Full contract and specialist catering services cover both the operations and management of staff restaurants, leisure and tourist facilities, educational establishments, sporting facilities, private sector enterprises and welfare organisations.

### Security

Norse Commercial Services has its own Security Division – EventGuard – which is a leading provider of skilled, professional, Security Industry Authority (SIA) licensed personnel. Norse is therefore able to offer a comprehensive range of security services, appropriate to the target audience and venue and tailored to each client's needs to ensure public safety and protect property.

### Building Maintenance

Civic buildings, social housing, hospitals, schools, offices and commercial premises are all looked after with care and professionalism by Norse in what has become one of the UK's most cost-efficient building maintenance operations. In social housing alone, Norse Group helps to manage more than 120,000 properties nationally and provides response maintenance and void (empty property) work, along with pre-painting, maintenance and painting, kitchen and bathroom replacements and disabled adaptations.

### Waste Management

Norse Commercial Services provides comprehensive and flexible waste collection services to many thousands of businesses and households. The majority enjoy a service that embraces green waste and domestic recycling options, reducing the amount of waste that goes to landfill and, ultimately, cutting greenhouse gases.

### Engineering Services

Working to ISO 9001:2008, the Norse Engineering Services Division comprises an experienced team of engineers and managers that delivers high quality servicing, maintenance and installation work on gas-fired equipment, such as commercial catering equipment, to both the private and public sectors. From coffee shops and canteens to school kitchens and top-class restaurants, Norse ensures that catering equipment, with all the associated plumbing, ventilation and electrical work, is properly looked after.

### Printing

Right first time, every time – that's the philosophy of the Norse printing division, Interprint. From the initial stages of design through to final delivery, Interprint combines competitive pricing and creativity with a partnership-focused approach that includes flexible shift patterns to ensure deadlines are always met. Using state-of-the-art technology with the ability to print high volumes or single copies, Interprint's portfolio ranges from business stationery through to glossy publications and specialist print and finishing.

### Environmental

Clean and tidy streets are a sign of healthy communities – and a cause for great civic pride. With a broad mix of local authorities and private sector clients, the Norse Environmental Services Division provides a variety of services including cleansing, litter picking and site clearance, supply and control of dog bins and salt bins, toilet cleaning, emergency flood responses and street sweeping.

### Car Parks and Market Management

Well-managed car parks and markets are prime assets, providing an important service and valuable revenue. Norse Car Parks Division offers a comprehensive car park management service to operators in both public and private sectors, including private estates, large PLCs and special events.

### Transport

Norse's Transport Division offers a cost-effective solution to a wide range of public and private service operations: daily home-to-school transport using buses, coaches and minibuses, door-to-door transfer for adults with learning or mobility difficulties, Park & Ride schemes and fleet management. Norse also provides central bus station Facilities Management and route operation as well as social services such as delivered meals and soiled/clean linen collection/delivery.



## Other services available within the Norse Group of companies include:

- Architectural design
- Quantity surveying
- Project management
- Property/asset management
- Structural engineering
- Mechanical and electrical design
- Land surveying
- Archaeological services
- Rating and validation
- Care homes and Housing With Care (HWC) schemes.

## Our hi-tech systems

Keeping on the move and being able to deliver outstanding services is at the very heart of what Norse does best. That's why we always think innovatively and are increasingly placing the emphasis on equipping our people 'in the field' with the most up-to-date mobile technology. It helps them to do the best job possible, boosting communications and giving our clients a flexible, first-class service.

## Our people

At Norse, we see our staff as our most important asset. Constantly investing in our national workforce, at all levels, reaps rewards for clients and takes our already successful partnerships from strength to strength.

Norse's learning and development is recognised, both locally and at national industry award level, as comprehensive, targeted and of the highest standard. Our commitment to staff has been recognised by Investors in People status and we have excellent staff retention levels.

Norse has also become renowned for Corporate Social Responsibility, supporting and sponsoring charitable causes, civic, cultural and arts events and working very closely with communities. These efforts have won the company a string of regional and national awards.

## Our quality hallmark

Norse is committed company-wide to quality in service delivery and operates a continuous management process of quality assurance systems monitoring and external accreditation. Our Quality Assurance systems operate to ISO 9001:2008 for the provision of all services.

We have also secured the much sought-after Environmental ISO 14001 European standard and have Investors in People status.

## The next step. . .

We hope you find this booklet useful as a first step to learning more about Norse and its procurement strategies. Norse very much values its suppliers and is always keen to learn more about companies which want to become part of the Norse supply chain.

If you would like to discuss how your business could work more closely with us, please contact Norse Procurement via **01603 894100** or e-mail [procurement@ncsgrp.co.uk](mailto:procurement@ncsgrp.co.uk). The fax number is **01603 894101** and our website is [www.ncsgrp.co.uk](http://www.ncsgrp.co.uk).







# Norse

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