

Fare dodgers on Greater Anglia trains ordered to pay £325,000 by courts

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Fare dodgers who have avoided paying to travel on Greater Anglia trains have been ordered to pay just under £325,000 in fines and court costs.

In three months, 1,032 people admitted to travelling on Greater Anglia trains without a ticket or any intention of buying a ticket.

The offences took place from May to July this year across the whole of the Greater Anglia network, which covers Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and three stations and east London.

They were dealt with by Single Justice Procedure courts in Reading and Hastings.

Magistrates processed 586 cases from May and June, imposing £110,901 in fines and £69,280 in costs.

So far they have also processed 446 cases from June and July – with more still to come – and have set £80,553 in fines and £63,505 in costs.

Kim Bucknell, head of revenue protection at Greater Anglia said: “Our revenue protection staff – both uniformed and plain clothes – are regularly going through our trains checking people’s tickets.

“Obviously most of our customers are travelling with the right ticket, but when we come across people without a ticket or with the wrong ticket, we will take action.

“It’s easy to buy a ticket, either from a ticket office, ticket machine, online or via our app, so there is no excuse for travelling without a ticket – and it just ends up pushing up prices for our fare-paying customers.

“For every £1 spent on rail fares, 98p is invested in the railway. By not paying for a ticket, there’s less money available for investment to improve the railway for everyone.

“We have a range of great value fares and offers available – especially if you book in advance, and it’s cheaper to buy a ticket than pay a fine.”

Only people who board a train without a ticket and without any intention of buying a ticket are taken to court – which pre pandemic was about 500-700 people a month.

Many hundreds more people end up with penalty fares for using the wrong ticket to travel, such as an adult travelling on a child’s ticket or using a railcard discount when they don’t have a railcard.

Greater Anglia’s revenue protection teams use their discretion when inspecting tickets.

They are informed if ticket machines are out of order or ticket offices closed, so when these are used as reasons, they know if they are genuine.

As well as uniformed Revenue Protection Inspectors, Greater Anglia also employs plain clothes Fraud Investigations Officers who use the latest technology and systems to detect fraudulent activity, specialising in travel fraud, such as delay repay fraud rings.

Photo credit: Greater Anglia