

“Less busy trains” tool revamp helps rail passengers pick trains with fewer travellers

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Greater Anglia is making it easier for rail passengers to find out at a glance which are the least busy trains to travel on.

The company has just improved its “less busy trains” tool on the Greater Anglia website to provide more detailed information about how busy services are along the whole route of selected rush-hour journeys to and from London.

After selecting a journey and time of day, passengers can see a colour-coded “journey heat map” which indicates at a glance whether the selected train is quiet, moderate, busy or crowded.

By clicking for more details, passengers can then see how busy or quiet the train is at every station along the route.

They can compare data for trains on the same route but at different times to find the service they feel most comfortable travelling on.

The tool uses passenger monitoring data from the week before, gathered by staff at Greater Anglia stations who count how many passengers are getting on at each station.

It can be found at www.greateranglia.co.uk/lessbusytrains.

The data is uploaded once a week. The tool is not a live feed but a useful guide based on analysis of the previous week's data.

Martin Moran, Greater Anglia commercial, customer service and train presentation director said: "We're seeing increasing numbers of people travelling on our trains as COVID restrictions have been gradually lifted.

"We wanted to make it as easy as possible for passengers to choose a less busy train if they do not feel comfortable catching a train with many other people, which is why we've made these improvements to our less busy train tool, following its launch last year.

"If you're at a station and you want to find out which is the least busy train, you can also ask a member of staff or press the help button on a ticket machine to go through to an assistant at Norwich who will be able to help you.

"I would like to reassure people that you can travel with confidence on our trains – and many people are doing just that. Often you'll find fewer passengers if you move down the length of the train.

"On the busiest trains – described as "crowded" on the less busy trains tool – it will not be possible to socially distance – but we still have many measures in place to keep passengers safe, including enhanced cleaning and sanitisation of trains, either air conditioning which replaces air inside the train every six to nine minutes or opening windows – as well as doors which open at stations. In addition, the vast majority of passengers are wearing face coverings for all of their journeys."

Photo credit: Greater Anglia