

# Organisations join for ‘sustainable tourism’ plea this summer

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As East Anglian tourism businesses hope for increased trade thanks to staycations this summer, organisations in the region have issued a joint plea for people to visit sustainably.

The region's six Community Rail Partnerships, Greater Anglia, Visit East England, the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, and the University of East Anglia, which leads on climate change research, hope to build on the benefits achieved for the environment during lockdown.

Asher Minns, Executive Director for the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the UEA, said, "Our researchers calculated a 17% drop in global carbon emissions in April last year when COVID-19 confinement measures were at their peak.

"Sadly this drop was only temporary, but we can all reduce emissions, improve air quality and decrease congestion by choosing sustainable transport options as we begin to travel again."

To try to encourage people to leave the car at home, Greater Anglia and the region's community rail partnerships have produced a series of tourism videos demonstrating how easy it is to reach some of the

region's most delightful tourist hotspots by train.

The videos will be promoted on social media and showcase the sights and attractions that can be found along the rural branch lines of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire to help encourage people to visit sustainably.

Statistics show that rail accounts for just 1.4% of transport emissions despite representing 10% of all journeys, and is the most environmentally friendly form of transport after cycling and walking.

Greater Anglia's new trains are longer than the ones they replaced and so now have increased capacity that would allow them to remove even more vehicles from the regions roads if more people made the switch from car to train.

Martin Moran, Greater Anglia's Commercial, Customer Service and Train Presentation Director, said, "Many people are hoping to see a green recovery from Covid and switching from car to rail is a small step towards that aspiration that will have a big impact.

"It's so easy to get all around East Anglia by train and have a day out that, literally, doesn't cost the earth, reduces your carbon footprint and will help to protect the region's fragile habitats and human health, preventing our lovely beauty spots being choked by congestion and pollution so that everyone can enjoy them more."

Pete Waters – Executive Director, Visit East of England commented, "The East of England has exceptional natural landscapes, from beautiful beaches to ancient heaths and historic woodlands, but they will only be here for future generations to enjoy if we look after them now.

"Our natural environment is particularly vulnerable to climate change so it's important we travel responsibly where we can, use our superb rail network which has myriad branch lines away from the honeypots, and walk, cycle and use public transport where we can."

Greater Anglia has launched a new online 'green hub' which includes a new carbon calculator to help travellers see how much they could help the planet by switching from car to train at [www.GreaterAnglia.co.uk/GreenerAnglia](http://www.GreaterAnglia.co.uk/GreenerAnglia)

The hub offers information about why it's more sustainable to travel by rail and lets people calculate the environmental impact of different transport modes, showing them how much they can reduce their CO2 emissions by travelling by train.

Greater Anglia has taken steps to ensure that people can find the cheapest ticket for their journey online with its Cheapest Fare Finder tool and also offers heavily discounted Advance tickets to help people save money.

Face covering compliance is high on trains and stations and Greater Anglia is asking people to follow the Government's recommendation and keep on wearing them when it's busy.

As more people return to rail, Greater Anglia is seeing some trains and stations getting busier. Customers are encouraged to use the full length of trains and platforms and check the operator's 'Less Busy Trains tool' at [greateranglia.co.uk](https://www.greateranglia.co.uk) to opt for a quieter train.

Trains are well ventilated either by air conditioning which replaces air inside the train every six to nine minutes or by open windows. Doors also open at every station.

Greater Anglia is also continuing with enhanced cleaning and sanitisation of trains and stations.

Full details of the revised timetable and measures Greater Anglia is taking to keep people safe are available from [www.greateranglia.co.uk](https://www.greateranglia.co.uk)

*Photo credit: Greater Anglia*