

Suffolk New College partners with Greater Anglia to offer student outreach projects

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Suffolk New College students can look forward to unique extra-curricular learning after the college teamed up with Greater Anglia to officially 'adopt' Ipswich rail station.

The new partnership means that college students will be able to get involved in all sorts of different projects – from art installations to work experience – thanks to help from the East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership, who facilitated the link.

Greater Anglia's Station Adoption scheme sees people getting involved with their local rail station for the benefit of their communities, working with Greater Anglia to bring about improvements or caring for gardens and floral displays to benefit local wildlife and make stations more welcoming.

This is the first time an entire college has adopted a rail station in East Anglia.

Claire Kendall, officer of the East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership, said: "I'm delighted that by working together we are going to help boost the educational experience of so many young people and give them some excellent opportunities to learn about the railway, get involved in art or STEM projects and

perhaps even work experience opportunities. Who knows where it will take them in the future?"

Alan Neville, Greater Anglia's Customer and Community Engagement Manager, said: "This is a great community initiative which has the potential to bring so many benefits. I'm delighted to welcome the Suffolk New College and Suffolk Rural (formerly Otley College) to Station Adoption and can't wait to help them develop all their exciting ideas to help make a positive difference to young people's lives."

Deputy Principal of Suffolk New College and Suffolk Rural, Alan Pease, said: "We are committed to working in and supporting our local community. This project will give our students – from the arts to horticulture and from STEM subjects – the chance to have their work showcased in front of thousands of passengers who pass through the station every day. Students across other curriculum areas will also gain a valuable insight into the world of business via the work experience opportunities that will evolve from this opportunity.

"Our mantra at Suffolk New College is to give students exceptional experiences so we are delighted to be involved in this project and thankful to Greater Anglia and the East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership for this fantastic partnership."

Whilst Suffolk New College, Greater Anglia and the East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership are currently working together to develop the plans, projects will not be taken forward until the pandemic restrictions are lifted and is safe to do so.

Current Government advice is to stay at home unless you need to travel for permitted reasons including work and medical appointments.

Greater Anglia continues to ensure that rail travel is safe for staff and passengers with an enhanced cleaning regime, on stations and trains, concentrating on high-touch areas such as push buttons, grab rails and door handles.

The train operator has also introduced a wide range of measures to make it easier for customers to maintain social distancing at stations and on trains – including floor markings, one-way systems, new signs and queuing systems. It is now mandatory for customers to wear a face covering when using public transport, to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Children under the age of 11 and people with a disability or illness which means they cannot wear a face covering are exempt from wearing them.

Photo credit: Greater Anglia