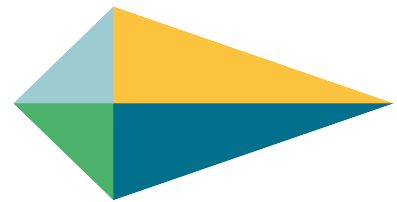


East Suffolk Tourism Strategy

2017 to 2022



EASTSUFFOLK
COUNCIL



The Bigger Picture

National context



[2015] was record-breaking, with tourism generating over £62bn in GVA to the UK economy. Domestic overnight spend reached a new high of £19.6bn in England, and the UK attracted more overseas visits than ever before, generating over £22bn of export earnings.

Tourism Action Plan August 2016

Regional context



Tourism and culture employ about 74,000 people. Tourism is worth £1.3bn in GVA to New Anglia. We have the Broads, the Norfolk and Suffolk coast, and special attractions like Newmarket, Centre Parcs and Dedham Vale. Tourism is underpinned by a strong cultural offer including the Aldeburgh and Latitude festivals.

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan

Local context



Tourism is an important part of our economy valued at £590m and 13% of all employment in 2015. Visitors are attracted by the character, culture, festivals, music, art, food, drink, clean beaches and spectacular coastline, river valleys, and the outstanding countryside and wildlife. Capitalising on these strengths will also enable us to address some significant local challenges.

East Suffolk Business Plan, Volume and Value Studies 2015

The Visitor Economy in East Suffolk

Tourism is a key driver of economic growth, employment and wellbeing in East Suffolk. Our visitor economy offers a **diverse range** of tourism experiences to satisfy all tastes. Our strengths include beaches, family attractions, landscapes, culture and heritage.

Our weaknesses include low pay and productivity in the sector along with gaps and inconsistencies in the overall offer we make to visitors. At the same time we face **strong competition** from other areas who are busy capturing high value/high spending customers all year round.

This **visitor economy** strategy will build on our strengths and direct us to develop compelling offers for visitors and inward investors and that combine our unique natural assets and way of life with new and innovative visitor experiences, a well maintained infrastructure, and excellent destination marketing.

Our **key aims** are to increase the volume and value of tourism, to extend the tourist season, to create compelling destinations and to link visitors more to experiences.

Tourism by numbers

- ♦ Total day trips 10.3 million
- ♦ Total staying nights 2.6 million
- ♦ Average length of stay 3.9 nights
- ♦ Total spend £474 million
- ♦ Total value of tourism £605 million
- ♦ Tourism related jobs 12,871
- ♦ Percentage of all jobs 13.4%

*Economic Impact of Tourism Reports for
Suffolk Coastal and Waveney 2016*

From 788 interviews completed across 22 survey points throughout the coast, it was found that visiting a pub/cafe (43%), short walks (30%), shopping (24%) and relaxing/enjoying the view (22%) are the main activities undertaken

The Suffolk Coast Tourism Strategy 2013—2023



Above: Snape Maltings Concert Hall



Top right: Scallop shell on Aldeburgh beach



Bottom right: Southwold Pier

Making our Visitor Economy Work

What do we need to do?

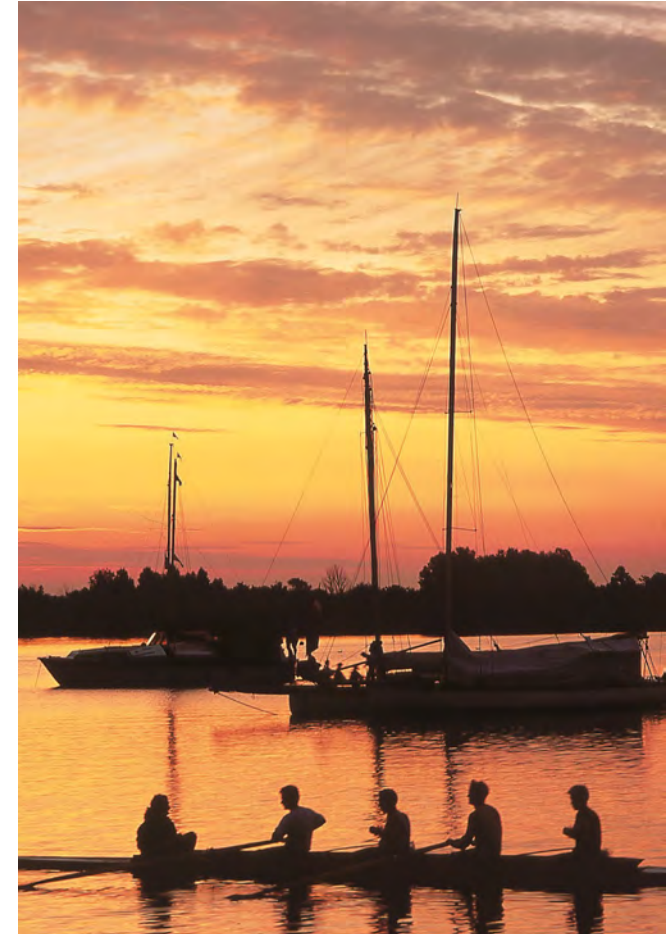
Develop and support our key tourism assets, including seaside resorts, beaches, family attractions, heritage, natural landscapes, market towns, and culture.

Improve the Visitor Experience by having a clear vision of the unique offer our key destinations need to make. Developing our key 'products' in and out of season including walking and cycling, active tourism, health and wellbeing, food & drink, cultural, festivals.

Ensure the foundations underpinning the visitor economy are in place for the long term: accommodation, public realm, signage, car parking, aesthetics of the area, services including mobile/broadband coverage, facilities such as public toilets, links to planning policy and local plans.

Excel at destination marketing by exploiting digital technologies and filming to attract and engage visitors before and during their stay thereby boosting the Volume & Value of tourism.

Work effectively with our partners in the visitor economy, which will be key to our success.



Rowing on Oulton Broad

How We Will Achieve This



‘House in the Clouds’ in Thorpeness

To deliver the desired results we have to focus on the following key enabling actions:

Develop our unique and varied all year round visitor offer

Understand the unique offer our key destinations need to make to visitors.

Effective partnership working

Developing the cultural and heritage offer

Boosting family experience

Active tourism—walking and cycling, the Broads, waterways

Greater engagement between the visitor and the destination — warm welcome, customer service and high standards

Innovate destination marketing

Use digital marketing and filming

Well informed visitors will stay longer and spend more

Market research

Up-to-date consumer market research to inform business decision-making

Protect and enhance

Natural and built environment – East Suffolk, our communities, AONB, Natural England

Enable a joined-up approach

East Suffolk Council, businesses, NALEP, strategic bodies, other industry partners

Priorities

Develop tourism assets

Develop and support our key tourism assets; our resort beaches, family attractions, heritage, natural landscapes, market towns and culture

Improve the Visitor Experience

Continually improve, as well as deepen and broaden, the quality of the visitor experience; cultural tourism, outdoor leisure, food and drink, events. Ensure destinations are clear on the unique offer they are making

Ensure foundations are in place

Get the basics right to ensure we meet, if not exceed, the expectations of our returning and new visitors; accommodation, public realm, visitor services and facilities

Excel at destination marketing

Continue to support and work with our destination management partner the Suffolk Coast DMO. Deliver excellent destination marketing by exploiting new digital technologies and communication channels to secure the volume and value of tourism. Work closely with key local partners such as Visit Felixstowe, Lowestoft CCT etc.

Actions

Develop our unique and varied visitor offer

Ensure our key destinations understand and are making a clear and unique offer to visitors. Map and develop key assets. Ensure high quality public realm, beaches, coastal paths, heritage, wildlife, museums, festivals and events, cultural assets, visitor services and facilities

Innovate destination marketing

Focus on cultural and active tourism development; arts, museums, film and TV production liaison and support. AONB SSSI, food and drink, sports and active leisure, cycling, walking, health and wellbeing, festivals and events. Ensure excellent PR, media relations integrated with leading edge website, effective and innovative use of digital and social media channels

Carry out market research

Ensure up to date research is effectively combined with market/business insights. Use existing research, Volume and Value studies, Visit England, NCTA, local tourism surveys, LEP economic research, competitor analysis

Protect and enhance

Destination marketing that builds on the special natural environment in East Suffolk (AONB, SSSI) whilst ensuring that the local environment is protected and continues to preserve its own unique characteristics and communities.

Enable a joined-up approach

Working with partners (Councils, DMOs, AONB, VEA, Visit England, NCTA, local CCTs) to develop initiatives and access funding streams across the public and private sector. Provide sector specific business support, skills and help with careers development

Impacts

Less seasonal

Increase visitor spend

More staying nights

Improve sector employment

Maintain Suffolk brand

Increase Heritage and

Culture segment market share

More sector businesses accessing funding streams (EU/national)

More cultural activity and participation

Improve family offer

Develop active tourism and health and wellbeing offer

More inward investment

Sustainable communities

Outcomes

Clear offer in key destinations to attract and retain visitors. Extend the season, more cultural, active and family offers, more staying visitors, increase volume in re-sorts out of season, generally increase value of spend, increase tourism employment

Resilient visitor economy that capitalises on the varied offer to visitors, sustains its value and increases the number of high value visitors and spend across all of East Suffolk

Being flexible and sensitive to changing visitor trends/ consumer behaviour

Visitor economy increases its contribution to GVA and economic well being in East Suffolk, transforming businesses and their communities and delivering well paid, secure jobs

Note: These high-level action areas will be achieved through a set of delivery plans which detail specific activity together with primary/lead organisations, delivery partners and funding sources.



Above: Tide Mill on the River Deben



Right: Lowestoft beach

Measuring Success



Felixstowe Pierhead

We need to **baseline and set targets** for the number of staying visitors, bed nights, total visitor spend, sector employment, seasonal trends, participation in cultural activity, and businesses accessing funding streams.

We will review **recent trends** over the last 5 to 10 years, including how the visitor economy is changing, how visitor behaviour and expectations have evolved, and how the tourism sector has adapted and the challenges it faces in the future.

Measures include GVA, sector employment, sector earnings, and funding secured.

This monitoring will be enhanced by a range of indicators:

- ◆ Total day trips
- ◆ Total staying nights
- ◆ Average length of stay
- ◆ Total spend
- ◆ Total value of tourism
- ◆ Tourism related jobs
- ◆ Percentage of all jobs

Evidence

Documents

1. Coastal Community Teams Economic Plans
2. Economic Impact of Tourism Reports for Suffolk Coastal and Waveney 2015
3. Waveney Visitor Survey 2015
4. Felixstowe Visitor Economy Events Reports
5. Economic Impact Evaluation
6. The Suffolk Coast Tourism Strategy 2013—2023
7. Rural Tourism Action Plan 2013
8. Visit Suffolk Compendium of Tourism Statistics 2014
9. Visit England research
10. NCTA research



Lowestoft South Pier

Working Together

Partners

The Suffolk Coast DMO

Visit Suffolk



Waveney Valley Group

Lowestoft CCT

Southwold CCT

Deben Peninsula CCT



Leiston Together

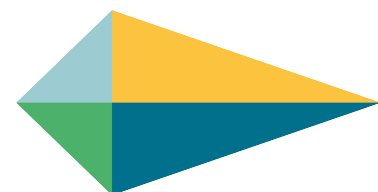
Felixstowe Forward

Suffolk Coast Business

Waveney Business Forum

Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB





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