



# VISITOR ECONOMY

**ENERGISING  
PLACES,  
BUSINESSES &  
COMMUNITIES**



# NORFOLK'S VISITOR ECONOMY — ENERGISING PLACES, BUSINESSES & COMMUNITIES

Offering outstanding landscapes, 90 miles of coastline, thriving market towns and a strong cultural scene, Norfolk is one of the UK's leading, all year, accessible visitor destinations. While Norwich is the county's main city, its success is intrinsically linked to a wider ecosystem that includes the major seaside resort of Great Yarmouth, as well as many other coastal destinations including Cromer and Hunstanton, protected areas of outstanding natural beauty, the Broads National Park, historic market towns such as King's Lynn and Holt, and rural communities across the county.

Tourism contributes £3.6bn annually to Norfolk's economy<sup>1</sup>, supporting almost 73,000 jobs. This is the county's largest employment sector (21% of all roles), with tourism employment projected to grow by 12% by 2033. The visitor economy is therefore central to Norfolk's economic performance, labour market and long-term prosperity.

## FOUR THEMES CAPTURE NORFOLK'S UNIQUE VISITOR ECONOMY

### 1. THE NORFOLK TOURISM MEGA-MIX

- An exceptional mix of destinations and culture drives Norfolk's thriving visitor economy. From vibrant city breaks to peaceful coastal villages, from bustling family attractions and holiday parks to open countryside, the county appeals to a diverse range of visitor interests.
- This strength results in over **50 million** trips to Norfolk each year, including **3.2 million** overnight stays and **47.2 million** day visits, generating **£3.6bn** in visitor spend<sup>1</sup>.
- The coastal beauty, big skies and Blue Flag beaches of North Norfolk attract **9.36m** of these annual day trips and overnight stays, while Great Yarmouth welcomes **7.5 million** visitors each year and supports **14,000** tourism jobs alone (**40%** of the town's workforce), firmly positioning Norfolk as a leading family destination<sup>2</sup>.



- Meanwhile, Norwich, the capital city of Norfolk (voted the UK's **best place to live** in 2026 by The Sunday Times), boasts a year-round cultural programme, heritage assets, a vibrant food and drink scene, and an independent retail offer that complements major attractions across the county, while its football club brings in **25,000** people every other week during the season.
- Visitors can combine breaks at the **coast**, **countryside** or **Broads** with trips to **Norwich**, or use the **city** as a base for exploring the county - another cornerstone of Norfolk's unique offer.
- Continued success depends on clearly presenting Norfolk's distinctive blend of city, coast, countryside and culture.

**UK'S  
BEST  
PLACE  
TO LIVE**



## 2. RISING TO THE OFF-PEAK SEASON CHALLENGE

- Norwich is uniquely positioned to address seasonality in Norfolk's visitor economy. Its concentration of indoor attractions, performance venues, festivals and events drives off-peak and shoulder-season demand.
- Outside the city, matchless attractions including the Deep History Coast, Dark Sky Discovery sites and Halloween-themed PrimEvil (**voted the UK's Best Scream Park 2024**) pull visitors in the shoulder months, while the renowned Thursford Spectacular and festive entertainment at Great Yarmouth attract Christmas holidaymakers, internationally as well as nationally.
- This demand supports accommodation, attractions and hospitality businesses by encouraging longer stays and midweek visits.
- Norfolk's night-time economy and hospitality businesses, such as restaurants and pubs, draw year-round visitors in their own right, with seven restaurants across the county awarded **Michelin recognition** in 2026<sup>3</sup>.
- Strong coordination between city and rural destinations enables visitors to plan longer, multi-location trips, increasing overall value to the county.

## 3. INDEPENDENT TOURISM BUSINESSES CREATING DISTINCTIVE EXPERIENCES

- Norfolk's visitor economy mirrors its wider business base, with a high concentration of ambitious, independent and innovative small and medium-sized enterprises spanning accommodation, attractions, hospitality, retail and creative experiences.
- These businesses draw on Norfolk's heritage, landscape and culture to create distinctive, high-quality visitor experiences that differentiate the county in a competitive national market.
- Tourism businesses anchor local supply chains, supporting food and drink producers, service providers and transport operators.
- The sector also supports accessible employment across age groups and skill levels, particularly in rural and coastal communities where alternative industries are limited. This role in placemaking and community vitality underpins Norfolk's economic resilience.

## 4. SUPPORTING QUALITY OF PLACE ACROSS NORFOLK

- Norfolk's visitor economy strengthens towns and communities by sustaining local services, supporting cultural activity and enhancing the quality of life for residents as well as visitors.
- Investment in tourism supports wider economic priorities, making Norfolk an attractive place to live, work and invest while reinforcing objectives around wellbeing, skills and population retention.

# WHAT THE NORFOLK VISITOR ECONOMY NEEDS TO CONTINUE TO SUCCEED

## 1 INVEST IN SKILLS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Provide targeted, long-term support to attract, retain and upskill people across hospitality, tourism, retail, attractions and cultural organisations, to meet demand and deliver high-quality experiences.

## 2 CREATE SUPPORTIVE CONDITIONS FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

Access to finance, innovation support and flexible planning frameworks that enable tourism businesses to diversify, invest and respond to changing visitor expectations.

## 3 IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Reliable transport links and premium digital connectivity that improve visitor journeys, support multi-destination trips and enable businesses and communities to benefit fully from tourism growth.

## 4 SHOWCASE NORFOLK AS THE NATIONAL DESTINATION OF CHOICE

Investment in strategic marketing that will raise Norfolk's profile as the UK's choice staycation destination and encourage more holidaymakers to look closer to home, particularly during off-peak and shoulder periods.



**By recognising the visitor economy as a core economic driver, and investing in the conditions it needs to thrive, Norfolk can secure sustainable growth, strengthen communities and provide a high-quality experience for visitors and residents alike.**

Sources: 1. Economic Impact of Tourism Report 2024, 2. Visit Great Yarmouth/CYTABIA, 3. Michelin Guide