

**Local member question for Scrutiny Committee on 21 October 2020 from Cllr S Squire**

***Given that tourism contributes such a large amount to Norfolk's economy, and that Covid cases in Norfolk are generally a lot lower than elsewhere in the Country, would it therefore be wise for the Council to advise those with second homes or thinking of travelling to Norfolk during half term from outside the County, to postpone their visit to help protect Norfolk and our high number of vulnerable residents at this time, while encouraging local people to stay within Norfolk and to support our local businesses through this difficult time.***

**Answer by the Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services:**

As part of our ongoing strategy for tourism, all Norfolk partners continue to work closely to avoid differing approaches or messaging for different parts of the county. At a meeting with all Norfolk Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) last week, partners agreed to pause Stage 2 of the *Undiscovered England* Campaign until after half term and only resume if and when partners agree it is appropriate to do so. Visit East of England, Visit Norfolk and Visit Suffolk are all actively promoting the message that if you are in a Tier Three area, please do NOT come to the region. For potential visitors from Tier Two, partners are neither encouraging or discouraging visits as, under current Government legislation, visitors are legally allowed to travel at this time. However, tourism partners including NCC continue to stress that any visitors, both from within Norfolk or beyond, must abide by all restrictions and use consideration and common sense at all times. Overall, and following the significant investment made during the summer, our primary message continues to be that health and safety for all is the paramount concern. We are also encouraging Norfolk residents to enjoy days out on their doorstep rather than travel large distances.

With significant support from the Norfolk Strategic Fund, Norfolk County Council has been working closely with District Councils, Visit East of England and local Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) to ensure that Norfolk is as safe a place as possible to visit for tourists from beyond the County, as well as for Norfolk residents. Work over the summer and early autumn has focused on increased levels of hygiene in key public locations, safety measures to assist with social distancing, and providing clear information to visitors both before they set off on their visit and once they arrive. This work has supported the VisitBritain Know Before You Go campaign which contains essential advice around planning a break and helps consumers find businesses who have secured the We're Good to Go industry standard and consumer mark, designed to demonstrate that they are adhering to the respective Government and public health guidance, have carried out a Covid-19 risk assessment, and have the required processes in place. In this work, Norfolk County Council has been following Government guidance around tourism, and is continuing to work closely with key partners, including DCMS and VisitBritain/VisitEngland.

**Supplementary Question:**

***There seems to be such a wide variance between hospitality premises across the county of what covid measures they have put in place to keep customers safe and whether they enforce them, with some districts visiting premises to check and some not. What measures***

***should districts be taking to ensure safety at premises and how can people report any issues they have come across.***

**Answer by the Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services:**

This is a matter for our district council colleagues rather than the county council.

For information, each hospitality premises is required to undertake a covid-19 secure risk assessment in line with government guidance. As with other health and safety requirements, each risk assessment will take account of the business' own physical layout and working practices and therefore businesses may adopt varying practices to achieve the same aim of keeping customers and staff safe.

The police, seven local authorities and the county council Trading Standards Service have a Norfolk enforcement protocol on coronavirus restrictions and regularly share intelligence and best practice on enforcement approaches. If people have concerns about the practices adopted in a particular venue, they can familiarise themselves with the guidance provided at [www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19) and, if appropriate, they can refer the matter to the district council in whose area the venue is located or they can report their concerns to Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline via [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/if-you-need-more-help-about-a-consumer-issue/](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/if-you-need-more-help-about-a-consumer-issue/) or 0808 223 1133.