

£2 bus fare cap across England to save passengers money

- people could save more than £3 per single bus ticket to help with cost of living pressures
- £2 bus fare cap on almost every single journey across England, saving people 30% on the average fare, helping millions with travel costs for work and essential journeys
- government providing up to £60 million over 3 months to subsidise operator costs and incentivise greener travel for commuters

Millions across England will save money through a new £2 cap on single bus journeys from January to March 2023, backed by up to £60 million to ensure affordable transport across the country.

The Transport Secretary has today (3 September 2022) announced the government will provide up to £60 million from January to March next year, to help bus operators to cap single adult fares at £2 per journey.

The move will help passengers with travel costs for work, education, shopping and medical treatments over the winter months while they are facing pressures from the rising cost of living.

Bus fares vary across different parts of the country and between bus operators, and can even reach almost £6 for a single journey in rural areas. The new cap means passengers in those areas could save more than £60 a month if they took 4 single trips a week.

The average single fare for a 3-mile journey is estimated at over £2.80, meaning that the new fare will save passengers almost 30% of the price every time they travel.

The funding to keep fares down follows the government's announcement of [£130 million last month to protect vital bus routes and services across the country](#), which those on lower incomes in particular rely on.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Buses are by far and away the most used form of public transport, so ensuring that almost all bus journeys are no more than £2 will assist passengers over the winter months and provide direct help to thousands of households across the country.

This £60 million boost will mean everyone can affordably get to work, education, the shops and doctor's appointments.

We know people will be feeling the pressure of rising costs this winter, and so we have been working hard this summer to provide

practical concrete help that will lower daily expenditure.

The new initiative follows the allocation of more than £2 billion to support bus services in England through the pandemic and a commitment to fund improved services, new bus priority measures and new electric or hydrogen buses as part of [Bus Back Better](#), the ambitious national bus strategy, published last year.

During the pandemic bus passenger numbers declined significantly, along with other public transport users, and figures show usage has not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

However, ensuring the public can access affordable bus fares will encourage more people to choose buses for local journeys, which helps to reduce carbon emissions as the country moves towards [Net Zero targets](#). The scheme is estimated to take at least 2 million car journeys off the roads, cutting congestion and pollution for everyone.

Introducing the fare cap by January enables the government to work with operators and local authorities to implement a scheme that most effectively delivers real savings for passengers. Operators representing around 90% of the bus market have expressed support for the scheme and we hope that all bus operators will participate.

The fare cap builds on lots of offers around the country in areas with high bus demand, which include daily, weekly and monthly ticket options and promotional offers. Single fares which are already lower than £2 will not be affected by the cap.

The government will continue to work closely with bus operators and local authorities and consider future support to help passengers continue accessing reliable and affordable bus services after March.

A flat-rate bus pilot scheme, backed by £23.5 million of government funding, launched in Cornwall this January and has already seen an indicative 10% increase in passenger numbers. The 'Any Ticket Any Bus' scheme, running over 4 years, includes a £3 day ticket within towns or a £9 day ticket across all of Cornwall, which is valid across different bus operators.

Dawn Badminton-Capps, Director for England for charity Bus Users, said:

The cap on fares being announced today will bring welcome, short-term relief to the millions of people who rely on buses to access education, employment and health services. Buses make a vital contribution to society and government support is critical in protecting services for the future.

Paul Tuohy, Chief Executive of Campaign for Better Transport, said:

This will be very welcome news for the millions of people who rely on the bus to get to work, to the shops, to medical appointments and to connect with friends and family. It will also encourage more people to find their nearest bus stop and give the bus a try... where could YOU go for just £2?

Buses have great potential to cut traffic and carbon emissions, to connect communities and ease loneliness. This £2 fare cap – which we have called for – will help set buses on the road to a bright future.

Alison Edwards, Policy Director at the Confederation of Passenger Transport:

Bus fare caps at £2 are an eye-catching initiative which could help attract new passengers onto the bus, particularly at a time when networks are adapting to new travel patterns, and both customers and operators are facing cost of living and business cost challenges.

We look forward to understanding in detail how the proposed fare cap will work in practice to ensure it supports the long-term sustainability of bus networks, which are vital in connecting communities with jobs, education and skills, as well as friends, family and essential public services.