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Canine customer flees burglars to ride no. 67 bus!

A Gateshead man who feared his Chihuahua had been stolen by heartless thieves, was elated to discover his dog was actually riding around town making friends on a local bus.

Wayne Swaddle, from Hendon Road in Deckham, woke to discover thieves had broken in and his two friendly dogs, Betty and Austin were missing.

Betty – a Patterdale-cross – was found shortly afterwards in a neighbouring garden but Austin was nowhere to be seen.

Wayne said: “I was distraught. My first thought was that the burglars had taken him. Things can be replaced but my dogs can’t, they mean the world to me and my family.”

Wayne’s partner Zoe Patterson quickly took to social media to appeal for people to look out for Austin.

In the meantime, a Go North East driver had noticed an unaccompanied dog sitting on his number 67 bus in Gateshead. The driver radioed for someone to come and get the dog and he was looked after by staff at their Gateshead Riverside depot in Dunston.

The bus firm put out a message on their Facebook page about their lonely canine customer and within a few hours Wayne was happily reunited with his dog.

“I can’t thank Go North East enough.” Wayne said. “I never heard a thing when we were broken into so I’ve got no idea how long Austin had been out on the streets. I think he must have jumped on the bus to get warm.”

Go North East’s head of marketing and retail said: “By all accounts Austin the dog was quite happy riding around on the bus taking in the scenery. The fact that we were able to reunite him with his owners in under two hours shows the power of social media.”

Wayne, who is a sound technician, had only been living in the house for a few days when it got burgled. The thieves got away with a games console, games, a watch and a handbag worth hundreds of pounds.

[Go North East website](#)