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Gratitude pours in for bus staff who battled on to rescue the stranded

Hundreds of grateful people flooded Go North East with praise for our plucky bus drivers who went above and beyond their duty to get them home safely during this year's first heavy snow fall.

Customer, Nicola Finlay-McGuinness, took to Facebook to hail us "the fifth emergency service" for getting people home safely, and for the social media posts that kept everyone informed.

Snow made for treacherous driving conditions across various parts of the north east on Saturday, with much of County Durham and Tyne and Wear

seeing more than six inches of snow fall in just two hours.

Jill Farmer, from Burnopfield, and her two-year-old son Oscar, were rescued by bus driver Tom Fraser after their car became immobile in snow in Harelaw and they were stranded five miles from home. Driver Tom helped Mrs Farmer get her car off the road and told her and her child to jump on board so he could get them home.

She said on Twitter: “HUGE thank you to the fantastic driver of @gonortheast no.6, he got me and my son home when our car got stuck in snow. Such a brave man!”

Go North East’s operations director, David Curry, said: “Many of our drivers and support staff showed huge compassion, determination and grit to get passengers home. Adversity often brings out the best in people and Saturday was definitely a case of that. We had employees staying on well after their clock-off time to drive extra buses and to go back out to find more people who needed our help.

“Driving in those conditions is not for the faint-hearted and I can’t thank the drivers involved enough for what they did.”

Passenger Catherine Armitage took to Facebook to say: “Well done, and a big thank you to all the drivers and staff who have kept things going. Hope they all have a safe journey home at the end of their shifts.”

Hundreds of shoppers were gathered in Eldon Square bus station in Newcastle waiting for buses to get through to them but everyone’s spirits were lifted by the humour of supervisor, John Gordon, who was singing into a broom handle. Costa Coffee supplied free hot drinks for passengers to keep them warm.

John said: “I want to say how brilliant our passengers were. Everyone, bar one, was understanding and patient and we all pulled together having a sing along and telling a few jokes. I had everyone cheering every time a bus managed to turn-up. We all made the best of a bad situation.”

Jon-paul Dimmick added: “Well done to everyone concerned at GNE today and to the driver of the 45 who turned up at about 5 ish in a double decker and

just told everyone to get on.”

Customer Lisa Richards wrote: “Huge thanks to the staff at Go North East Chester le Street for bringing an empty bus round to get us back home.”

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