

# We wear our face coverings to protect you and others including those we return home to



my dad



my brother



my friends



my grandad



my girlfriend



my school friends



my mam



my grand

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## NEbus, Nexus and local authorities come together to highlight face covering message with face covering awareness week

The North East's bus operators, working with the local authorities, have come together to highlight the importance of wearing a face covering on public transport.

NEbus, the North East bus operators' association, consisting of Arriva, Go North East, Stagecoach, Stanley Travel and independent contract service operators, plus the region's transport authorities, have united once more to

encourage safe journeys.

A series of online, on bus and in bus station activities will take place during a 'Face Covering Awareness Week', starting from Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September, to highlight the importance of wearing face coverings and also encouraging customers who are exempt to download an exemption card from [Nexus' website](#) to help when they board the bus.

The region's buses are still here for you to get to work, school, shopping and more, but please do it safely – wear a face covering.

Compliance across the region's buses remains high in the 90%+ range, but this joint campaign aims to increase that further with a series of adverts highlighting how wearing a face covering, and wearing it properly over the face and nose, not only helps protect them and fellow travellers on board, but also the people they return home to.

A particular focus of the campaign is young people where compliance is at its lowest but increasing the risk of spreading Covid-19 is at its greatest. The campaign will also include outreach to local schools and colleges to help get the important message out there that wearing a face covering also helps protect their family members at home.

Wearing a face covering has been mandatory on public transport since 15<sup>th</sup> June and since Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September, the fine for not wearing a face covering on buses has doubled to £200 for a first offence and doubles further on each repeat offence to a maximum of £6,400 if you get caught a sixth time.

Throughout the entire journey, from the bus stop or station through to alighting the bus, or leaving the station, a face covering must be worn, except for those with certain health conditions listed by Government, disabled people and children under the age of 11.

### **What is a face covering and when do I need to wear it when travelling?**

A face covering is something which safely covers the nose and mouth. You can buy reusable or single-use face coverings.

You may also use a scarf, bandana, religious garment or hand-made cloth covering but these must securely fit round the side of the face.

Customers are required to wear their face covering for the full journey, including areas such as bus stations and interchanges.

NEbus chair, Martijn Gilbert, said: “We want to highlight the importance of wearing a face covering and wearing it properly, in turn making further improvements to compliance rates on our buses.

“Wearing a face covering not only helps protect you and others around you, but it also helps those you return home to, be that your siblings, parents, grandparents or any other relation.

“Bus operators have worked hard to make their services Covid secure with extra cleaning and safety measures. Face covering compliance rates on board are generally high, but there is still room for improvement especially from younger people.

“We also understand that some people may be exempt. To improve this, we’d like to encourage any customers who have an exemption to download an exemption card and show it as they board, which will make things easier for both you and our drivers.

“Exemption cards can be downloaded from the Nexus or bus operators’ websites and shown on a mobile phone or printed off. If people cannot access the internet or a printer then a friend or relative can download and print one off for them.”

Cllr Martin Gannon, chair of the Joint Transport Committee for North East England, added: “It could not be more important that everyone who uses public transport wears a face covering throughout their journey, unless they are exempt.

“This new campaign really gets that message across, and builds on the efforts by bus companies and Metro throughout this pandemic to create a covid-secure environment in which people can feel confident travelling.”

To find out more about NEbus, visit [nebus.co.uk](http://nebus.co.uk).

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