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## North East bus operators and local authorities set to continue face covering awareness week with activities across the region

The North East's bus operators, working with the local authorities, are continuing to highlight the importance of wearing a face covering on public transport as part of their 'Face Covering Awareness Week'.

The campaign, which started on Monday, has included 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.

Tomorrow (1<sup>st</sup> October), the region's bus operators and local authorities will be carrying out activities at local bus interchanges and busy places across the region, including Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, Middlesbrough, Stockton and Darlington, as part of a day of action.

Face covering marshals will be on hand to remind customers to wear face coverings and encourage any people that are exempt to download an exemption card that they can show when they board the bus.

NEbus chair, Martijn Gilbert, said: "These are our latest activities to help boost the compliance of people wearing face coverings on public transport.

"Whilst compliance is high, currently well above 90%, our face covering awareness week is all about improving this further, whilst educating people to make sure they're wearing it properly, over the mouth and nose throughout their journey.

"We're also focusing on young people, reaching out to local schools and colleges to get the important message out, reminding people that wearing a face covering also helps protect the family members they return home to.

"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."

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