



Local bus user Grace with assistance dog Star

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Go North East supports accessibility improvements on its game-changing fleet

Go North East, the region's largest bus company, is excited to be showing its support for disabled people and those with mobility needs.

Last month, local bus user Grace was welcomed into the company's Gateshead Riverside depot, with her trainee assistance dog, Star, to practice getting on and off buses.

Star's training took place on one of the company's zero-emission VOLTRA

buses.

Assistance dogs are trained to support disabled people and people with medical conditions in a variety of ways.

The company has now introduced 18 game-changing electric buses which operate through Newcastle and Gateshead on services 53, 54 and Q3.

These buses are packed with the latest technology to improve accessibility: wide gangways; dedicated wheelchair and buggy bays; and 'next stop' audio-visual announcements which build upon facilities available on diesel buses by having a repeater screen facing the opposite direction for the disabled and buggy bay.

The company is also trialling an induction hearing loop on one of these buses, acknowledging that travelling alone on public transport can be a daunting task for deaf people, as ambient noise and physical barriers makes communication with the driver difficult.

Dan Graham, Commercial Development Manager at Go North East said: "Travelling by bus is a vital part of the lives of many, so we're very pleased to be able to support the training of assistance dogs like Star to help owners like Grace travel with confidence.

We are committed to working with bus users and groups to improve accessibility on our buses.

All our new buses are fitted with 'next stop' audio-visual announcements as standard, and we are excited to be trialling an induction hearing loop on one of our VOLTRA buses, in partnership with supplier McKenna Brothers."

[Go North East website](#)