

Bus Facts

(Figures are for GB unless stated)



A day in the life

- Buses travel over 3.5 million miles every day across Great Britain.¹
- For every journey on the national rail network, 2.5 journeys are made by bus.²
- In England, they carry 10.2 million passengers each day, for a range of purposes:³
 - 25% of journeys were made to leisure activities
 - 21% of journeys took students to schools and colleges
 - 24% of journeys were made to shops
 - 21% of journeys took people to work⁴
- 62% of all public transport passenger journeys are made by bus, making it the most popular mode of public transport.⁵
- On average, people use the bus over 48 times a year.⁶



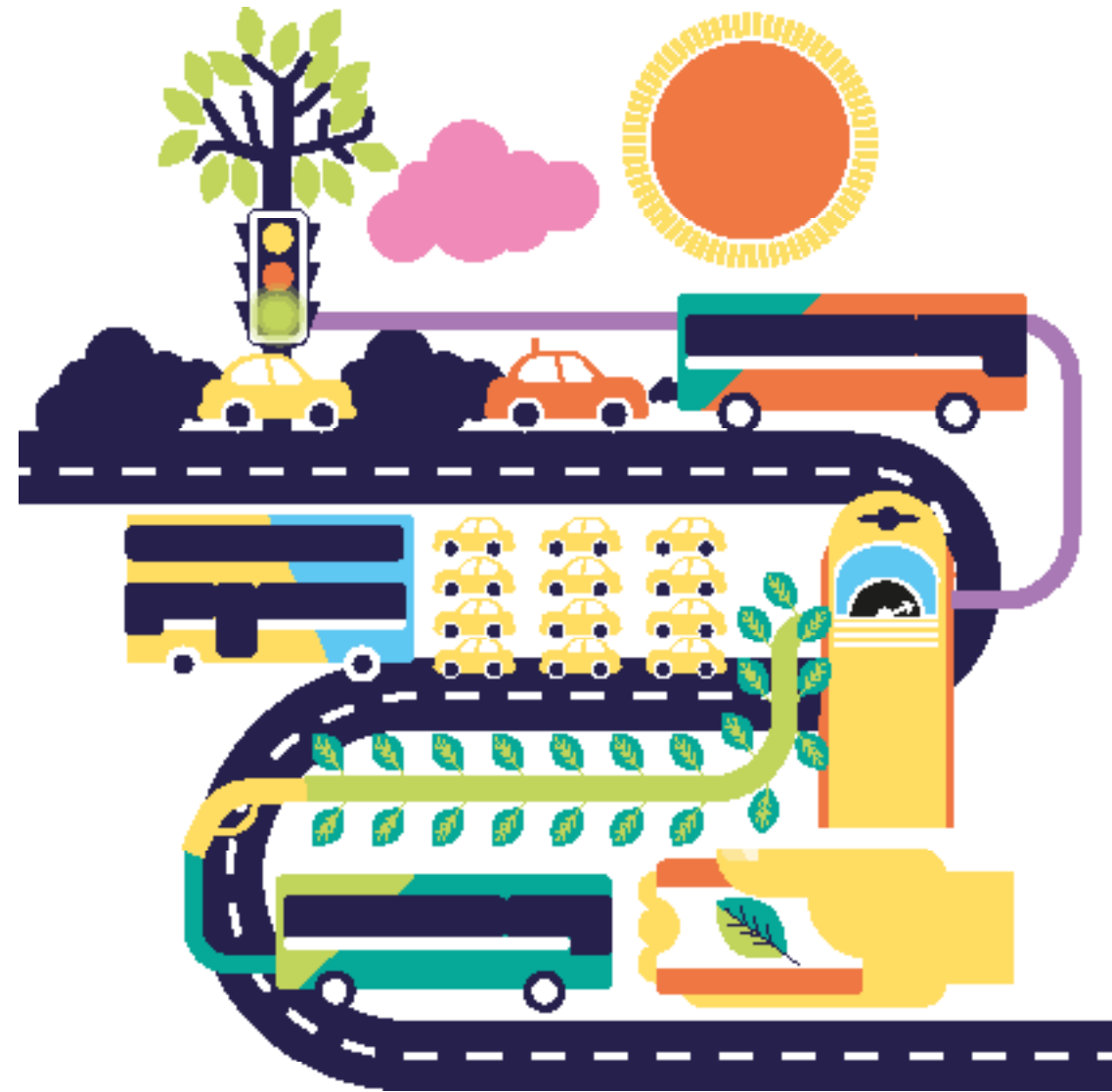
Economic contribution

- The bus industry is a major employer – 105,000 people are directly employed in the provision of bus services, including 82,000 drivers.⁷
- In addition, almost 53,000 people are indirectly employed by the sector, working in supply chains including vehicle manufacturers, fuel suppliers, maintenance and parts, technology providers, and those responsible for bus stations, stops and depots.
- The total net value of direct, indirect, and induced employment, including wages, operating costs, operating profits, and taxes is estimated at more than £11 billion per year.⁸
- Bus passengers spend £39.1 billion per year in local economies:
 - Leisure spend is £12.9bn
 - Commuter spend is £9.0bn
 - Shopping spend is £17.3bn⁹
- Bus passengers spend on average £32 per return journey in shops, cafes, restaurants and leisure facilities at their destinations.¹⁰
- Bus commuters earn £72 billion per year and generate additional tax revenue of more than £15 billion per year.¹¹
- The bus sector spends £180 million per year on capital investment in UK-manufactured buses and generates £3.1 billion in wages.¹²



Environmental contribution

- Aside from ZEBRA funding, private English bus operators have invested more than £2 billion in Euro VI and green bus technology over the last eight years. As part of ZEBRA funding, over £230 million was invested by operators through both the standard track and fast track ZEBRA schemes.¹³
- A fully loaded double decker bus can remove up to 75 cars off the road. Bus priority measures can deliver 75% fewer emissions per bus passenger km than for car passengers.¹⁴
- Euro VI diesel cars emit 10 times more nitrogen oxide emissions per passenger/km than a Euro VI diesel bus.¹⁵ A petrol car journey emits between 2.6 and 3.5 times more CO₂ emissions per passenger than the equivalent bus journey.¹⁶
- Buses and coaches account for just 2% of road transport nitrogen oxide emissions and 1% of particulate matter emissions, compared to cars and taxis which account for 32% and 21% respectively.¹⁷
- Transport accounts for 24% of the UK's Greenhouse Gas Emissions, of which cars account for 52%, with just 2% from buses and coaches.¹⁸
- 60% of people agree increasing the use of public transport is important to help the UK reach net zero.¹⁹



Social contribution

- Research by the University of Leeds found a 10% improvement in local bus connectivity to be associated with a 3.6% decrease in social deprivation.²⁰
- Bus passengers on average undertake at least 20 minutes of exercise per day as part of their journey, which will often be cycling or walking before or after their bus journey.²¹
- 11% of older people, aged over 65 years, would not travel at all if there were no bus services.²²
- Buses provide an essential service for job seekers, more than three quarters of whom do not have access to a car.²³
- Buses are essential for social inclusion. In England, 44% of low income households have no access to a car, and use the bus over three times more a year than those from high income households.²⁴



Paying for buses

- In England, 43% of revenue came from fare paying passengers and a further 17% from the government paying the fares of concessionary passholders during 2022.²⁵
- Regular support for English bus services in the form of Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) fell by 50.7% in real terms between the financial years ending 2005 and 2022.²⁶
- The price of an average day ticket was £5.29 in 2022, an increase of 6% over the last three years, and only 12% since 2009, well below the 60.5% increase in Retail Price Index, and the 71.1% increase in rail tickets since 2009.²⁷
- Regular bus users get an average of 22% discount when purchasing weekly tickets.²⁸
- On average, a weekly bus ticket costs 2.6% of the average weekly wage.²⁹



Passenger experience

- When surveyed:
 - 85% of passengers using buses outside of London were satisfied with their journey.
 - 76% of commuters were satisfied with their bus journey to work.
 - 87% of passengers travelling to leisure activities were satisfied with their bus journey.
 - 77% of all passengers were satisfied with the helpfulness of their drive.
 - 82% of passengers were satisfied with their bus journey time.³⁰
- Bus passengers have a higher satisfaction with value for money than rail passengers, 73% of bus passengers felt that their bus journey was good value for money, vs 57% of rail passengers.³¹



Making buses better

- If we all took the bus instead of the car twice a month, by 2050 this would create:
 - A reduction of 15.8 million tons of CO₂e, which equates to the total emissions of the North East in 2019.
 - Reductions in air quality pollution valued at £28 million, enough to pay for 800 nurses for a year.
 - £14.9 billion of health benefits, enough to build 33 new hospitals.
 - Reductions in congestion valued at £29.4 billion, more than the Gross Domestic Product of Manchester in 2019.³²
- A 10% decrease in bus speeds increases operating costs across the bus network by £400 million a year. This is money which could be spent on providing an improved service for passengers by, for example, improving bus frequency, quality and/or expanding the network.³³
- A 10% increase in bus speeds - to just under 12 miles per hour on average - could reduce operating costs by 8%, as well as delivering huge benefits for accessibility, economic efficiency and the environment. If combined with increasing the cost of running a car, increased passenger demand could reach nearer 20%.³⁴
- A 10% increase in bus speeds could allow each driver to cover an additional 34 miles every week. With 84,000 drivers employed in the sector, this alone could enable operators to provide an additional 135 million miles of services each year at no extra cost.³⁵
- Across England bus speeds fell by 3.1% in 2018/2019 when compared with data from 2014/2015, which led to a 2.4% increase in the number buses required. If applied across the whole English fleet, this would equate to 574 additional vehicles, costing £120.5 million.³⁶
- Bus priority measures can speed up buses and make them more reliable by keeping them out of congestion. Evaluation of previous schemes has shown that every £1 spent on investment in local bus priority measures can deliver up to £5 of economic benefit.³⁷



Sources

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