



**David Burton-Sampson**  
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South Essex Green Party  
By email

08 November 2024

Dear Richard, Stuart, Tilly and all,

Thank you for your letter you sent me on 30 October 2024 concerning the increase in the Bus Fare Cap.

Under the plans we have inherited from the former Conservative Government, the current cap was due to expire at the end of 2024 and fares were set to soar across the country, including here in Southend. No funding was in place to prevent this from happening. We have acted now to keep fares down.

The government's announcement will ensure fares remain affordable from 1 January 2025 and prevent a financial cliff-edge for bus operators that would have seen vital services put at risk across the country. The £3 maximum fare cap will keep bus travel affordable while ensuring the cap is fair to taxpayers, helping millions of people access better opportunities and protect vital bus routes, particularly lifeline services in rural communities.

The cap means no bus fare will exceed £3, and routes where fares are less than £3 will only be allowed to increase by inflation in the normal way.

The cap is being funded by £151 million from government until the end of 2025. It comes as the Department for Transport confirms an additional £925 million for the 2025 to 2026 financial year to improve bus services across the country, bringing total bus investment at the Budget to over £1 billion.

Local authorities can use the £925 million to introduce new bus routes, make services more frequent and protect crucial bus routes for local communities. Moving forward, the government will also explore more targeted options that deliver value for money to the taxpayer to ensure affordable bus travel is always available for the groups who need it the most – such as young people.

This move comes ahead of the new Buses Bill, to be introduced later this parliamentary session, which will help bring an end to the current postcode lottery of bus services by empowering local authorities to deliver modern and integrated bus networks that put passengers at the heart of local decision making.

The bill will mean local transport authorities can emulate the huge success of publicly controlled buses in Greater Manchester and London. Greater Manchester's successful Bee Network has already seen passenger numbers grow by 5% since public control began to be rolled out just a year ago.

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Buses remain the most used form of public transport across the country, but – after almost 4 decades of failed deregulation – thousands of vital services have been slashed, with passengers left frustrated at the lack of accountability. Since 2010, the number of miles driven by buses has plummeted by around 300 million.

The transformative work this government is doing will turn the tide by giving communities access to reliable and affordable services and the opportunity to have a real say in building local transport networks that work for them.

The government also announced in the budget an additional £500m to fix the blight of potholes on our roads. This will ensure that our roads are fit for purpose for bus users and drivers alike.

I am confident that our actions will provide an affordable and better bus solution across the country moving forward.

Yours sincerely,

**David Burton-Sampson**

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