

# Fares capped at £2 to make buses 'affordable for everyone'

Millions of people across England can save money on bus travel with the introduction of a £2 cap on fares for more than 4,600 routes.

More than 130 operators outside [London](#) will charge no more than £2 for a single ticket from Sunday until the end of March, the [Department for Transport](#) (DfT) said.

The cap is being paid for by £60 million of [Government](#) funding.

Single fares for a three-mile journey outside London cost an average of around £2.80 but tickets can exceed £5 for long journeys in rural areas, according to the DfT.

It is hoped the cap will help passengers travelling for education, work and medical appointments amid the cost-of-living crisis.

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Journeys with some of the biggest savings include between Leeds and Scarborough (£13), Lancaster and Kendall (£12.50),

and Plymouth and Exeter (£9.20).

Transport Secretary [Mark Harper](#) said: “By helping passengers outside London save almost a third off the average single bus ticket and taking two million cars off the road, the £2 bus fare cap is a fantastic way to start the new year.

“Buses are a key part of our vision for a clean, efficient and modern transport network that is affordable for everyone.

“That’s why we’re investing £60 million to encourage everyone to hop on the bus and ‘Get Around for £2’.”

A report published in July by pressure group [Campaign for Better Transport](#) (CBT) highlighted how funding pressures have led to more than a quarter of English bus services being axed in a decade.

This move will likely encourage shoppers to go to towns and cities – just the fuel we need for economic growth

Responding to the introduction of the cap, CBT director of external affairs and former Lib Dem transport minister Norman Baker said: “Affordable bus travel really is a win-win.

“Capping bus fares in this way will help struggling households, cut traffic congestion and carbon emissions, and inject new life into dwindling bus services.

“We think the £2 cap should be extended indefinitely.”

The DfT made more than £2 billion available to bus operators to keep services in England running during the coronavirus pandemic.

It said it will “consider future support”, with the current emergency funding deal expiring in March.

Buses minister Richard Holden told the PA news agency he hopes the cap on fares will boost passenger numbers.

He said: "We've been in a situation where we've been putting in an awful lot of help to support buses through Covid and in more recent months coming out of the pandemic.

"But we really need to see those ridership numbers increase.

"We're back up to around 80-85% on paid-for fares, and around two-thirds on concessionary travel.

"What I really want to do is try and move away from a situation where we're constantly having to put more money in to subsidise routes, and instead get people back on buses so that they can be more self-sustaining for the long term.

"I want to see us move as close as possible to those pre-pandemic levels."

DfT figures show ridership on buses in Britain outside London was around 10% below pre-coronavirus levels in recent weeks.

Martin McTague, national chair of the Federation of Small Businesses, said: "More than a third of small firms consider public transport important to their business.

"It is therefore encouraging to see support on bus fares as we battle tough economic conditions.

"This move will likely encourage shoppers to go to towns and cities – just the fuel we need for economic growth."