

# TEES VALLEY BUS PASSENGER CHARTER

This Bus Passenger Charter has been produced by the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA), in coordination with local bus and coach operators as part of the authority's [Bus Service Improvement Plan](#). It sets out a collective commitment to work as a partnership and for operators to provide bus services that meet passenger needs and expectations across the area. It does not affect your legal rights, but it sets out the rights passengers have under [EU and UK legislation](#).

## PASSENGER ENTITLEMENTS

Bus passengers across the Tees Valley can expect a safe, comfortable, connected, and high-quality journey experience across the local bus network, no matter which bus service they are travelling on. All Tees Valley passengers should be able to plan their journey with confidence, enjoy a safe and comfortable waiting environment, and trust the bus will turn up and arrive at their destination on time.

All locally registered bus services provided by operators across the network, including any services operated on a flexible or on-demand basis, are covered by the Bus Passenger Charter, which is reviewed each year to ensure it remains in line with current legislation and passenger expectations.

## OUR SERVICE COMMITMENTS

1. **Passengers are our priority.** Operators will do all they can to ensure you receive the best journey possible, meeting your expectations of a high quality, safe and reliable service.
2. **Tees Valley Buses are reliable.** Operators will operate services using sufficient resources to ensure they meet the expectations of passengers. The partnership will work collectively to minimise any disruptions and where possible, provide real time information either at bus stops or online.
3. **All travel information provided will be accurate, relevant and in an accessible format.** Buses will clearly display a route number and destination on the front and side, with at least a single number on the rear, and all information will be simple and accessible.
4. **It should be simple to find the best fare.** When possible, operators will provide fares information on their website, including discounted tickets and passes for use across the TVCA area. On buses, please ask the driver for the best fare details for your journey as there may be day tickets or other suitable options available.
5. **Passenger and staff safety matters most.** Operators will accept zero tolerance of unreasonable behaviour from any passenger using their buses. As part of their role, customer-facing staff undergo mandatory training to ensure they can deal with difficult situations should they arise.
6. **Operators look out for their passengers and staff.** Operators may operate CCTV to help ensure passenger and staff safety. When passengers are recorded on any CCTV systems, each operator will follow the CCTV code of practice as published by the Information Commissioner's Office.

7. **Operators are committed to making buses accessible.** All operational staff, including drivers, are provided with appropriate guidance, awareness, and training so they are able to respond to any reasonable request for further assistance or information. Also, upon request, operators will issue journey assistance cards that can help people with disabilities by making staff aware of their needs. If this is something of interest, please visit the relevant operator's website or get in touch with them using the details below.
8. **Buses are clean, well-maintained, and welcoming.** Operators will regularly clean and maintain the interior and exterior of vehicles to always ensure they are ready for service.
9. **Buses are safe, comfortable, and professionally operated.** Operators commit to checking vehicles to make sure all automatic heating, cooling, and lighting systems are working as intended and all drivers are professionally trained to operate their vehicle to provide passengers with a safe and comfortable ride.

### **IF THINGS GO WRONG**

**Journey Satisfaction** - Although operators are committed to providing the best service possible, we understand sometimes things do not go to plan. If you feel dissatisfied with any Tees Valley bus journey, then we invite you to get in touch using the operator's details below.

**Last Journey Promise** – If for any reason the last scheduled journey to your destination is later than 15 minutes or cancelled, operators will reimburse you for the taxi cost to get you to the destination stop of the intended service. You must provide a taxi receipt to the relevant operator for this.

### **HOW CAN YOU HELP**

There are many ways that you can help us in making journeys more enjoyable for yourself and other passengers –

- Use the buses safely – walk, do not run, use the handrails provided and let people off the bus before you get on.
- Where possible, try to pay by contactless payment or pre-book your tickets. If these methods are not possible then using the correct change to cover your fare also helps reduce boarding delays.
- If there are seats available, then please use them. However, if seating is limited, then please offer priority seating to elderly or disabled passengers.
- Help us look after buses and stops – do not throw litter on the ground.
- Let us know of any problems or ways we can improve services by using the below contact details.

### **CONTACT US**

All operators welcome feedback on bus service performance – good or bad. Your feedback is important to us and when you provide comments, complaints, or suggestions regarding services, we will collectively use them to monitor performance and identify areas for improvement.

For all queries relating to timetable information, lost property or to feedback your experience on a particular service, you can contact the relevant operator using the details below –

## **Bus Operator Details**

- Arriva - [Contact Us | Arriva Bus](#)
- Stagecoach - [Contact Stagecoach North East | Stagecoach Bus](#)
- Go North East - [How to get in touch - Go North East](#)
- Coatham Coaches - [Coatham Coaches](#)
- Hodgson's Coaches - [Contact Us - Hodgsons Buses](#)
- Paul's Travel - 01429 236360

If your query relates to something else, or if you are unsure of who to contact, you can direct your query to TVCA directly using the details below –

## **Tees Valley Combined Authority**

**Our address:** Tees Valley Combined Authority, Teesside Airport Business Suite, Teesside International Airport, Darlington, DL2 1NJ

**E-mail:** [info@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk](mailto:info@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk)

TVCA will aim to send you a response within 10 working days. However, this timescale may differ if we need to contact an alternative authority or operator to assist with your query. If this is the case, then the relevant organisation will contact you to outline the expected response time.

Information relating to the carriage of items such as wheelchairs, small prams and buggies are set out in each operator's individual 'Conditions of Carriage', which can be found on their individual websites and a copy of the full complaints and comments procedure is available from individual operators.

## **Independent Appeals**

If you disagree with the response received to any complaint, you have the option of approaching Bus Users UK who will try to resolve the issue for you. The contact details for Bus Users UK are:

**Address:** Bus Users UK, Terminal House, Shepperton, TW17 8AS.

**Telephone:** 0300 111 0001

**Email:** [enquiries@bususers.org](mailto:enquiries@bususers.org)

If necessary, they may refer your complaint to the Bus Appeals Body ([www.busappealsbody.co.uk](http://www.busappealsbody.co.uk)).

