

Somerset Bus Partnership Welcomes Flat Rate Fare Proposals

Somerset Bus Partnership welcomes the Government's plan to provide up to £60 million, to enable bus operators to cap single adult bus fares at £2. The £2 flat fare comes in from the beginning of January and will continue through to the end of to March 2023. Most bus operators are expected to adopt the scheme.

This means millions of people across England will save money, at a time when many households are suffering massive pressures from the rising cost of living. The move will help people travel for work, education, shopping and medical treatments and provide a much-needed saving in daily expenditure.

The current average single fare for a 3-mile journey is estimated at over £2.80, meaning that the new fare will save passengers almost 30% of the price every time they travel.

In addition, Somerset County Council currently plans to introduce a £1 single/ £2 return bus fare in Taunton, as part of its Bus Service Improvement Plan. Somerset Bus Partnership welcomes this initiative but emphasises the need to procure further funding to enable this flat rate fare to be extended across all of Somerset.

Somerset Bus Partnership Co-Chair, Peter Travis, said, "Bus usage declined in Somerset in the last decade, and even more so during to the pandemic. We need initiatives like these to restore and improve passenger levels. Encouraging people to choose buses over cars helps to reduce carbon emissions. It is estimated that the Government's £60 million will reduce car journeys by at least 2 million and cut pollution and congestion for all of us."

Somerset Bus Partnership will continue to work closely with Somerset County Council to encourage bus use and ensure implementation of the Bus Service Improvement Plan across the county.

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