



Department  
for Transport

# Annual bus statistics: England 2018/19

## About this release

This statistical release presents the latest annual statistics on the local bus sector. Local bus services use public service vehicles (PSVs) to carry passengers paying separate fares over short distances. Most of the data are derived from the Department for Transport's (DfT) annual survey of local bus operators. Figures are presented for England, in line with coverage of DfT bus policy. Statistics for Scotland and Wales are available [online](#).

## In this publication

Infographic	<a href="#">2</a>
Summary	<a href="#">3</a>
Things you need to know	<a href="#">3</a>
Passenger journeys	<a href="#">4</a>
Bus mileage	<a href="#">7</a>
Vehicles	<a href="#">9</a>
Financial outlook	<a href="#">11</a>
Bus and coach staff	<a href="#">13</a>
Bus punctuality	<a href="#">14</a>
Passenger satisfaction	<a href="#">15</a>
Other DfT data sources	<a href="#">16</a>
Other sources of Bus Data	<a href="#">18</a>
Background information	<a href="#">19</a>

## We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to [bus.statistics@dft.gov.uk](mailto:bus.statistics@dft.gov.uk)



**The number of local bus passenger journeys in England fell by 29 million or 0.7% to 4.32 billion in the year ending March 2019.**

In **London**, bus use decreased by 1.2% in the latest year and is a continuation of a downward trend since the record peak in 2013/14.

Passenger journeys in **England outside London** declined by 0.1% over the same period, representing a smaller decrease than in previous years. The total is at its lowest recorded point.

Bus mileage in **England** decreased by 1.3% when compared with 2017/18.

### Local bus passenger journeys

**4.32 billion** journeys **▼0.7%**  
since 2017/18  
in England in  
2018/19

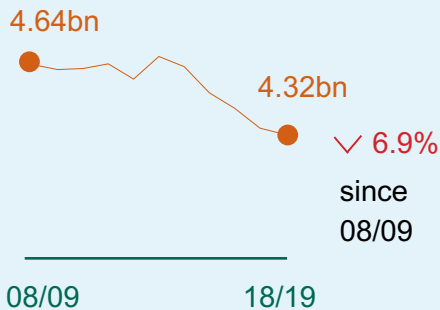
### Vehicle miles on local bus services

**1.18 billion** vehicle miles **▼1.3%**  
since 2017/18  
in England in  
2018/19

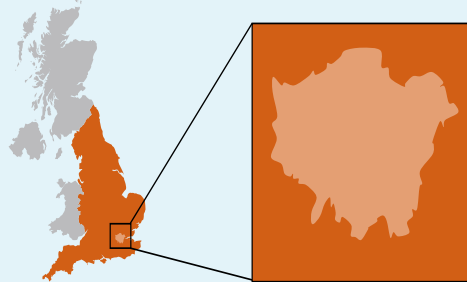
# Infographic

## Passenger journeys (bus0103)

Passenger journeys on local bus services: England



**51%** of journeys occurred in London



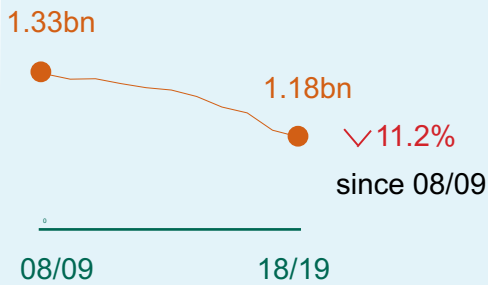
**2.12 bn** journeys in England outside London  
**2.20 bn** journeys in London

Passenger journeys on local bus services: England outside London and London

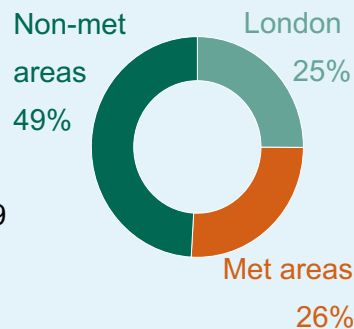


## Bus mileage (bus0203)

Vehicle miles on local bus services: England



**25%** of mileage occurred in London



## Bus Satisfaction (Transport Focus)

**88%**



overall satisfaction with the journey

**64%**



satisfaction with value for money (fare-payers)

## Bus punctuality (0902)



**83.1%**

of non-frequent services in England ran on time.



**74%**

of people are satisfied with punctuality (for bus use in England outside London)

## Bus fleet (bus06)



**33,900** buses used by local operators in England

Of which...



**29%** were in London

**92%** had CCTV



**98%** had an AVL device



**31%** had free WiFi



**74%** were enabled for payment by contactless bank card



**92%** of buses in England outside London were ITSO smart enabled

\*AVL - Automatic Vehicle Location device. ITSO - sets a common technical standard for smart ticketing.

## Summary

**Table 1** summarises the annual figures for bus passenger journeys and mileage for the 2018/19 financial year. Figures for England are broken down into England outside London (metropolitan areas and non-metropolitan areas) and London.

**Table 1: Local bus passenger journeys and mileage by area type: England, 2017/18 to 2018/19 (tables [BUS0103](#) and [BUS0203](#))**

	Passenger journeys		Vehicle mileage	
	2018/19 figures in billion / billion miles and change compared with 2017/18			
London	2.20	↓ 1.2%	0.30	↓ 1.9%
English metropolitan areas	0.91	↓ 0.0%	0.31	↑ 1.3%
English non-metropolitan areas	1.21	↓ 0.1%	0.58	↓ 2.3%
<b>England outside London</b>	<b>2.12</b>	<b>↓ 0.1%</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>↓ 1.1%</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>4.32</b>	<b>↓ 0.7%</b>	<b>1.18</b>	<b>↓ 1.3%</b>

### Concessionary travel

Total concessionary journeys (elderly or disabled, and youth concessions) made up 34% (1.45 billion passenger journeys) of all local bus passenger journeys in England. In England outside London, 28% of journeys were elderly or disabled concessionary journeys, nearly twice the share as in London. DfT's [Concessionary Travel Survey](#) collects more detailed information for Travel Concession Authorities on concessionary passholder numbers, total expenditure on concessionary travel and discretionary concessions offered.

## Things you need to know

The statistics presented here on the local bus sector in England provide information for monitoring trends in usage and provision for a mode of transport used for about 50% of public transport journeys.

Most figures in this release relate to local bus services. These are timetabled services using public service vehicles to carry passengers over relatively short distances, and are usually eligible for Bus Services Operators Grant. Long distance coach services, private hire work and closed contracts are excluded but school services accessible to the general public are included.

The majority of bus services in England are provided by private companies since deregulation of the industry in 1986 in England outside London. Services can be operated on a purely commercial basis or with financial support from local authorities (supported services). London services are operated by private companies but regulated by Transport for London (TfL). There are two broad passenger types: concessionary and non-concessionary passengers.

Concessionary passengers are either older or disabled people (free to travel anywhere in England since April 2008) or young people in local authorities where such discretionary travel schemes exist. More detailed statistics on concessionary travel are published separately by DfT and available [online](#).

# Passenger journeys

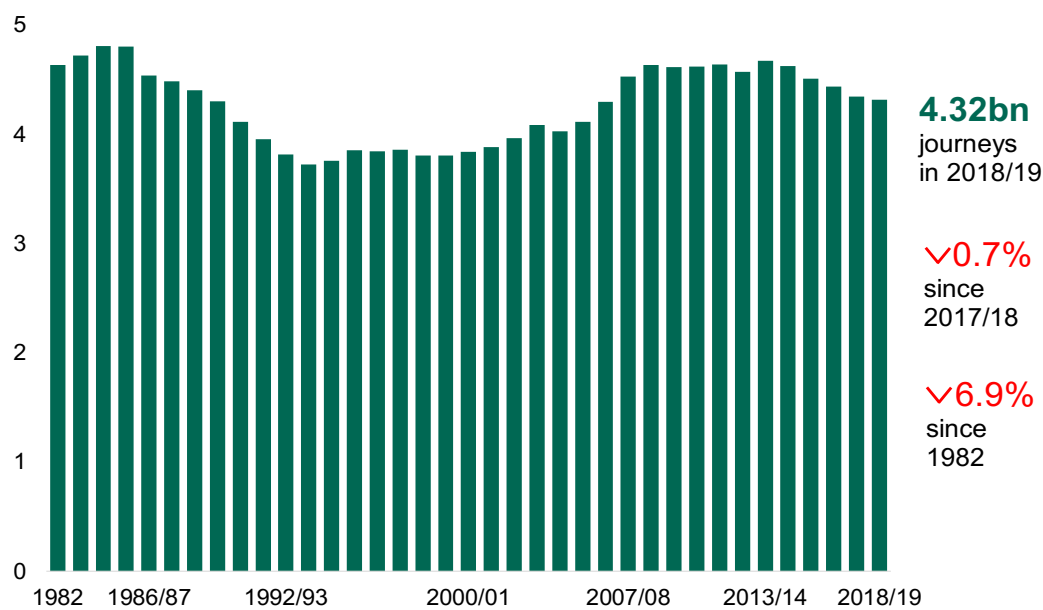
## England

In 2018/19, 4.32 billion passenger journeys were made by local bus in England, down 29 million journeys or 0.7% when compared with 2017/18.

**Chart 1** shows the trend in local bus journeys in England between 1982 and 2018/19. Bus use fell in the early 1990s before starting to increase to 2007/08, then remained relatively stable to 2014/15 since when it has fallen.

**Chart 1: Local bus passenger journeys in England, 1982 to 2017/18**  
([table BUS0103](#))

Passenger journeys on local bus services (billion)



### What is a bus passenger journey?

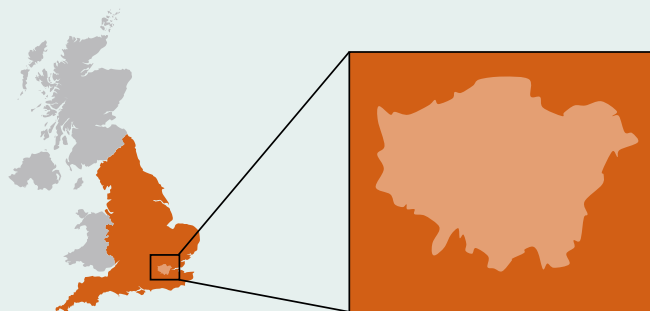
Each boarding of a bus is counted as one journey. The number of passenger journeys are an important measure of bus demand. These statistics relate to passengers on local bus services. The main source of information on non-local bus use (e.g. long distance coach services) is the [National Travel Survey](#).

### Quarterly bus statistics

Local bus passenger journeys and local bus fares are updated every quarter. The latest quarterly statistics are available for [April to June 2019](#). Information on passengers are estimated using a smaller sample size than the annual statistics.

## London

**51%** of journeys occurred in London



**2.12 bn**

journeys in England outside London

**2.20 bn**

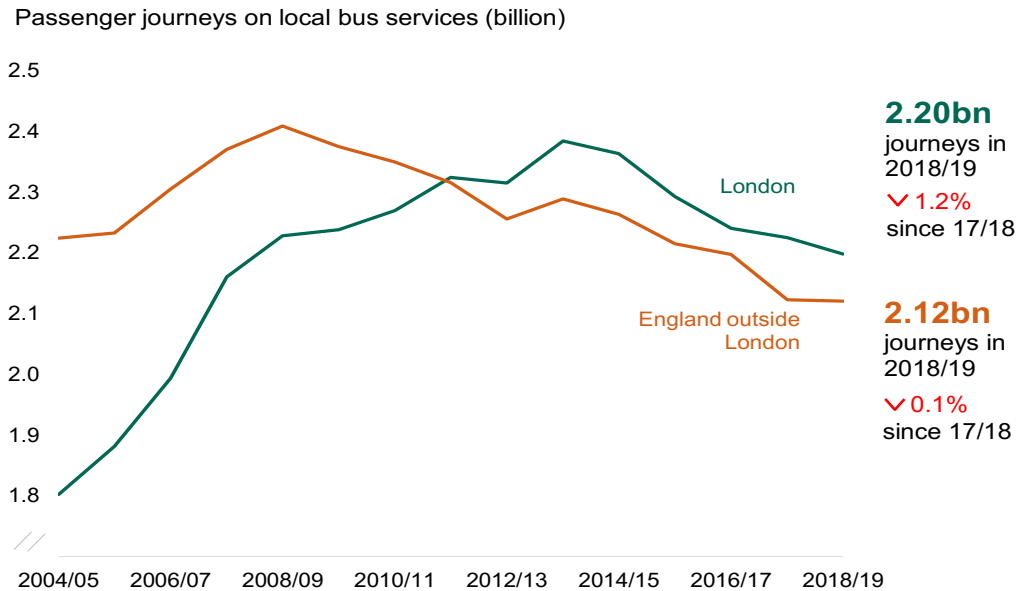
journeys in London

Passenger journeys in London accounted for around a half of all passenger journeys made by local buses in England in 2018/19. There were 2.20 billion passenger journeys made by local bus in London in 2018/19, a decrease of 1.2% compared with 2017/18. This is the fifth consecutive year in which passenger journeys in London have fallen (see [chart 2](#)). Before 2012/13, bus use in London increased every year since 1998/99. Bus use in London in 2018/19 is still 21.9% higher than in 2004/05.

## England outside London

In 2018/19, 2.12 billion passenger journeys were made by local bus in England outside London, down 0.1% when compared with 2017/18. Bus use in England outside London has been on a downward trend since the peak of 2.41 billion passenger journeys in 2008/09 (see [chart 2](#)).

**Chart 2: Local bus passenger journeys in England outside London and London, 2004/05 to 2018/19** ([table BUS0103](#))



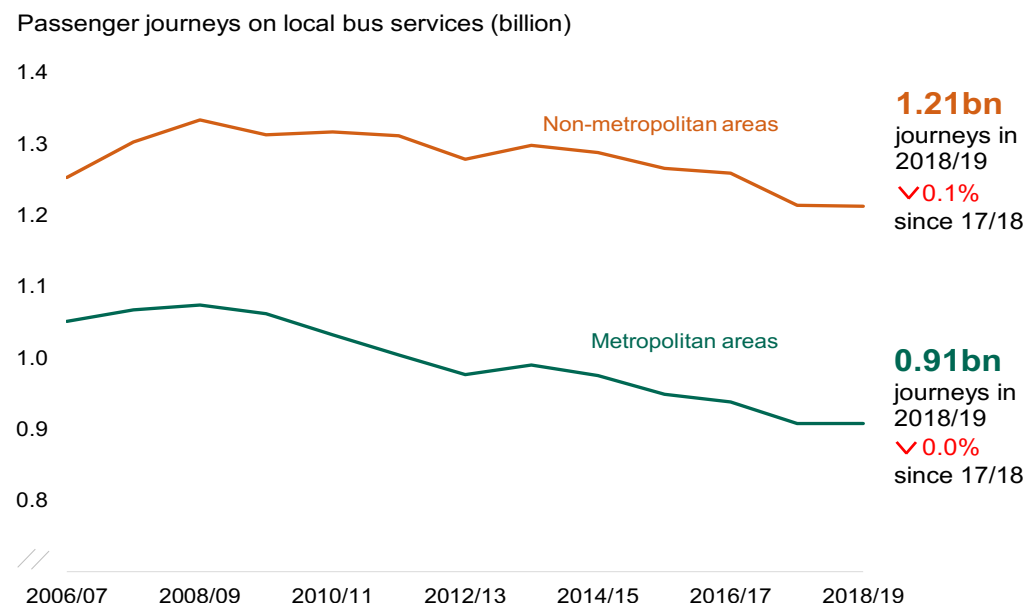
**Why the distinction between London and England outside London?**

Buses in London, through Transport for London, operate under a different regulatory framework to the rest of England. The size of the bus market in London and differing trends in bus use also makes it sensible to disaggregate these two area types. Different disaggregations are available online including local authority level and for urban and rural areas.

## Metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas

In metropolitan areas, there were 0.91 billion passenger journeys, the same as in 2017/18. In non-metropolitan areas, there were 1.21 billion passenger journeys, a decrease of 0.1%.

**Chart 3: Local bus passenger journeys in England outside London by area type, 2006/07 to 2018/19** ([table BUS0103](#))



**England outside London**

Figures for England outside London can be disaggregated further into metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. Metropolitan areas are the six former metropolitan counties: Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands and West Yorkshire. Non-metropolitan areas cover the remaining county councils and unitary authorities in England outside London.

## Bus use by local authority

The two charts of bus passenger journeys per head in 2018/19 in England outside London shows the difference in bus use across local authorities. In general, more urban local authorities have above average levels of bus use when compared with rural areas.

The average number of bus passenger journeys per head in England outside London was 45 in 2018/19, down from 54 in 2009/10. Out of 88 local authorities in England outside London, 70 had a decrease in bus use per head from 2009/10 to 2018/19.

**Chart 4: Local bus passenger journeys per head by local authority highest and lowest 5: England outside London, 2018/19 ([table BUS0110a](#))**

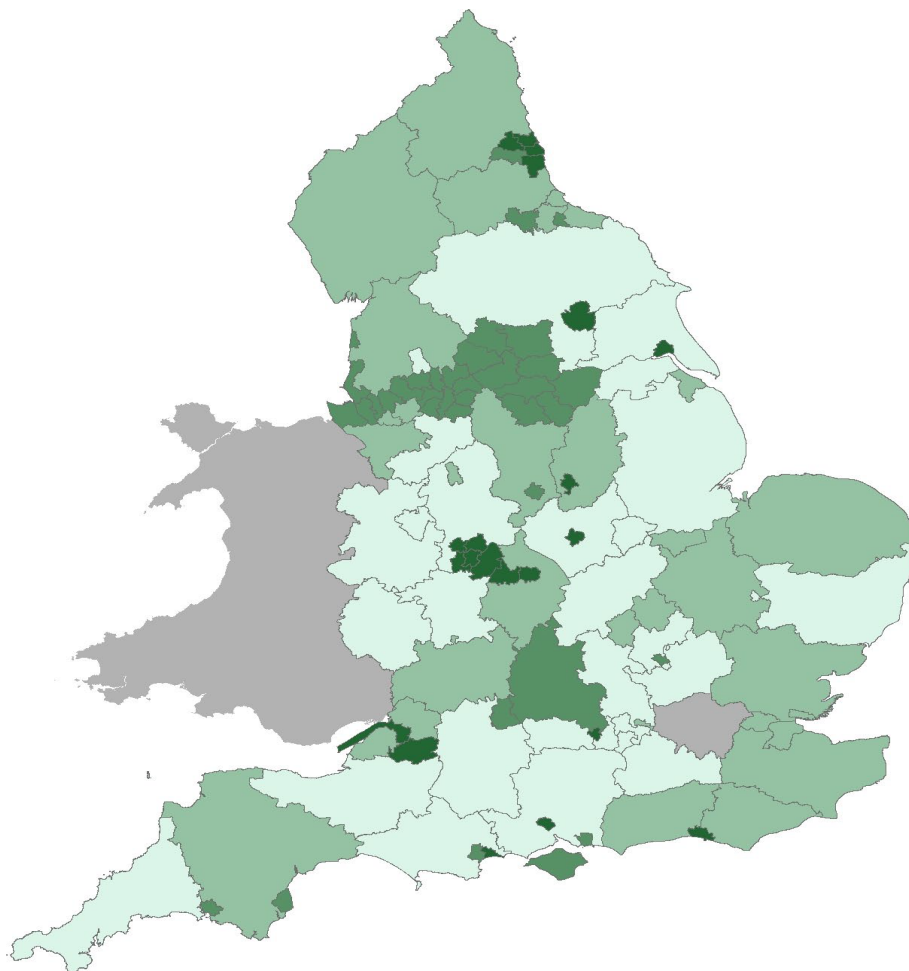


### About the data

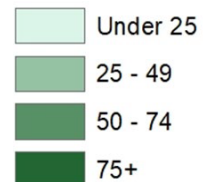
The bus passenger journeys per head figures presented here are estimates based on returns provided by bus operators. Mid-year population estimates from Office for National Statistics are used but do not account for bus passengers using the bus outside the local authority in which they reside. Users should be aware that figures for small areas can be affected by recording differences and so individual figures should be interpreted carefully.

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### Journeys per head

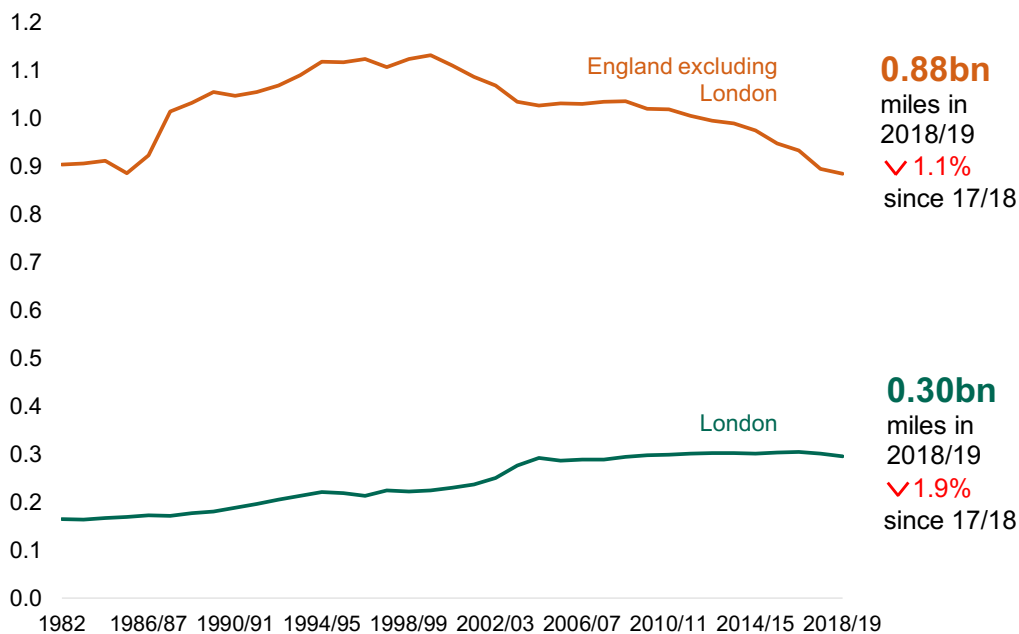


## Bus mileage

In 2018/19, 1.18 billion bus service miles were run in England, a decrease of 1.3% when compared with 2017/18 (see [chart 5](#)). In England outside London, bus mileage continued its decline, decreasing by 1.1% when compared with 2017/18. In London bus mileage decreased by 1.9% compared to 2017/18, but remained at levels seen since 2009/10 at around 300 million vehicle miles.

**Chart 5: Vehicle miles on local bus services by area type: England, 1982 to 2018/19** ([table BUS0203](#))

Vehicle miles on local bus services (billion)



### About bus mileage

Mileage run by buses in service, which excludes 'dead running' (for example mileage between the start and end of routes and the depot). Mileage is split into the amount ran on services which are operated on a **commercial** basis or with financial support from local authorities (**supported** services).

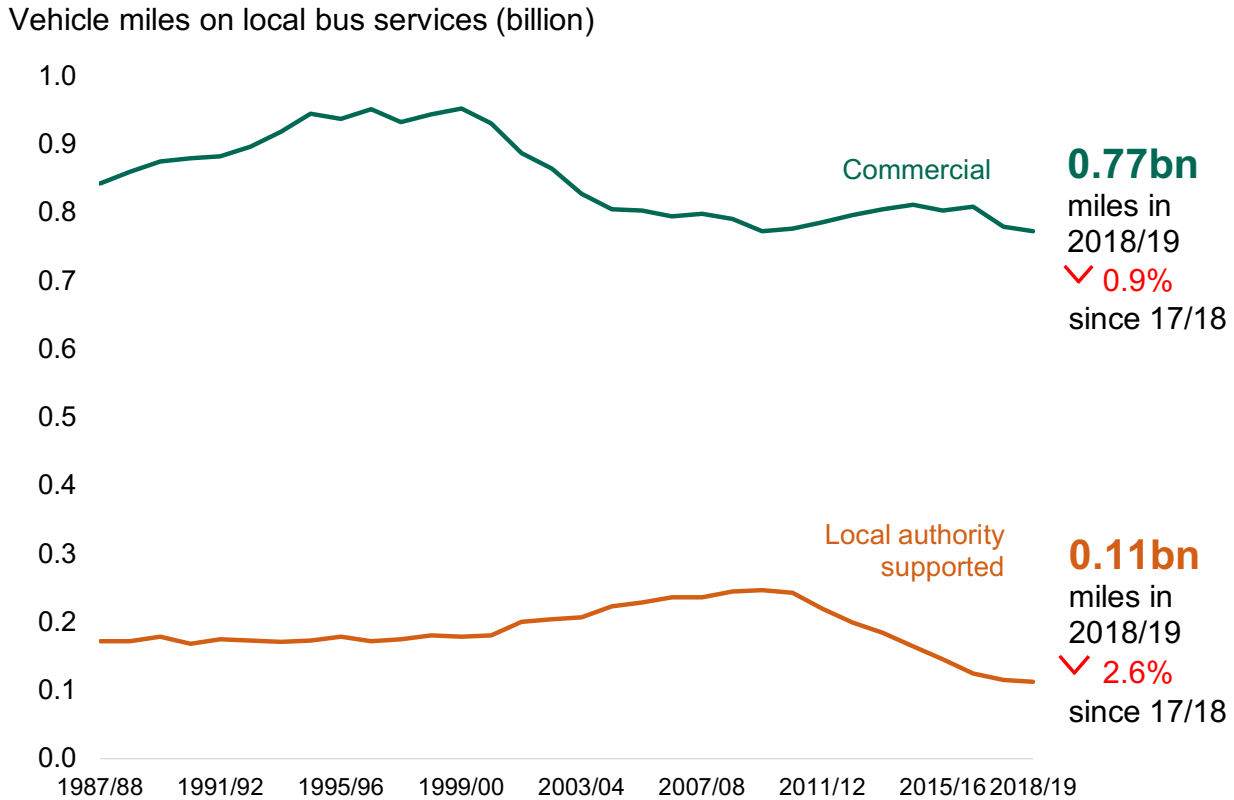
For supported services, operators receive payment from a local transport authority for running the service. They are usually considered socially necessary but not commercially viable. Supply of services is likely to be affected by similar factors to bus use. Operating costs and local authority support for supported services are also likely to be important.

### Commercial and local authority supported bus mileage

In England outside London bus mileage has declined by 13.8% since 2004/05. This has been driven by a decrease of 50% in local authority supported mileage, in particular in non-metropolitan areas. Although commercial mileage increased by 0.6% from 2004/05 to 2016/17, it has decreased in the last 2 years and is down by 0.9% over the year to 2018/19.

Supported mileage in England outside London as a percentage of total mileage was 17% in 1987/88. Supported mileage reached its highest proportion in 2009/10 at 24.2%. [Chart 6](#) shows the decrease in supported mileage since 2009/10 and it is now 12.7% of total mileage. The chart also shows the increase in commercial mileage to 2014/15 and a fall in the last couple of years.

**Chart 6: Vehicle miles on local bus services by service type: England outside London, 1987/88 to 2018/19 (table BUS0205)**



Overall, the decline in supported mileage has not been fully matched by an increase in commercial mileage and in the latest year commercial mileage decreased by 0.9%.

Another part of the public transport network in a local authority is flexible or demand responsive modes of transport, including community transport. These forms of transport are unlikely to be captured in these statistics because the annual bus survey is completed by operators holding a Public Service Vehicle (PSV) licence rather than the Section 19 and 22 permits that the majority of community transport organisations operate under.

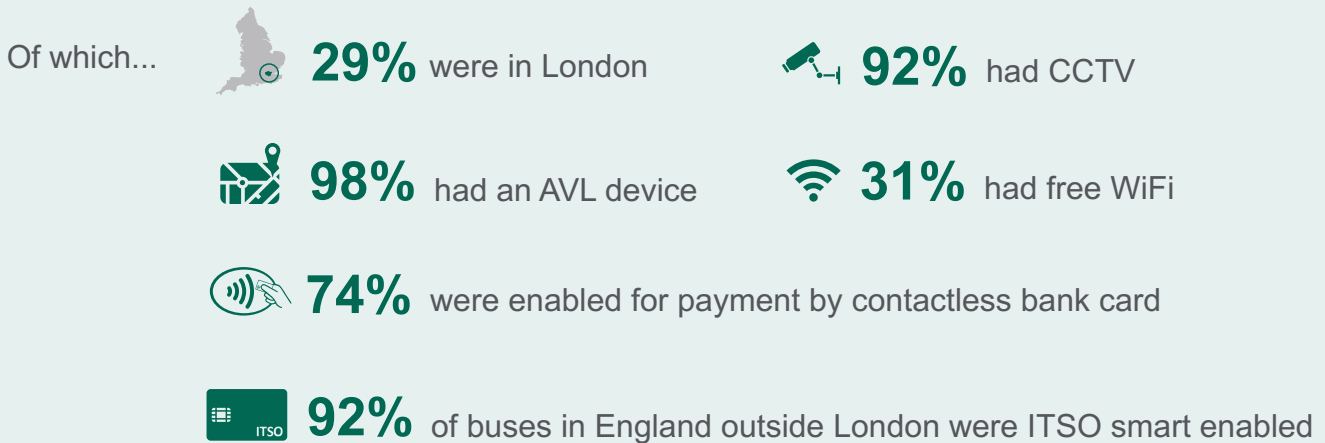


# Vehicles

The below graphic summarises the annual figures for the number of buses used by local operators in England in 2018/19.

## Summary

**33,900** buses used by local operators in England in 2018/19



## Bus fleet

The number of buses used by local bus operators in England has fallen 2% from 34,500 in 2017/18 to 33,900 in 2018/19. 29% of buses were in London (see [chart 7](#)), with the average age of a bus in England in 2018/19 was 7.6 years.

**Chart 7: Proportion of buses used by local bus operators by area type: England, March 2019 ([table BUS0602](#))**



## Equipment on buses

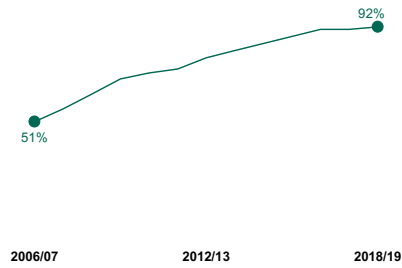
In 2018/19, 92% of buses used by local operators in England were equipped with CCTV, up from 44% in 2005/06. The majority of buses were also fitted with an Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) device (98% of buses in England, compared with 35% in 2006/07). Of the buses in England with an AVL device in 2018/19, 99% were being used to monitor punctuality and 94% used the AVL device to provide real time service information to customers.

In 2018/19, 31% of buses in England had free WiFi, up from 29% the year before and 74% were enabled for payment by contactless bank card (or mobile phones emulating these e.g. Android Pay or Apple Pay) up from 64% in 2017/18. In 2018/19, 92% of buses used by local bus operators in England outside London were ITSO smart enabled. This is up from 25% of buses which were ITSO enabled in 2010/11 (see [chart 8](#)).

**Chart 8: Percentage of buses fitted with CCTV, AVL or ITSO smart enabled buses: England, 2018/19 compared with previous years**

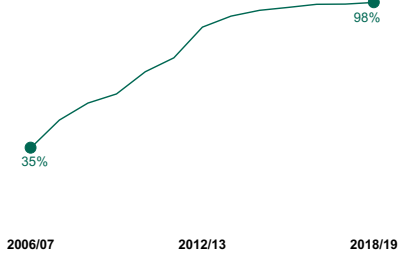
**CCTV**

([table BUS0604](#))



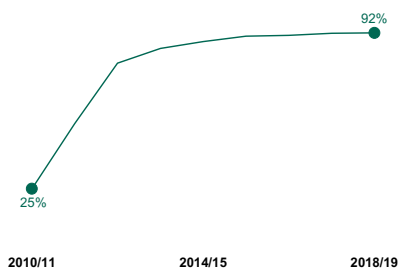
**Automatic vehicle location**

([table BUS0606](#))



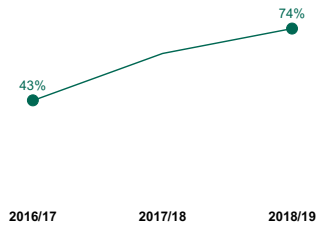
**ITSO smart enabled buses**

([table BUS0607](#))



**EMV smart enabled buses**

([table BUS0607](#))



**AVL, ITSO and EMV**

Automatic Vehicle Location is used to track vehicle location in order to monitor punctuality and provide real time service information to customers.

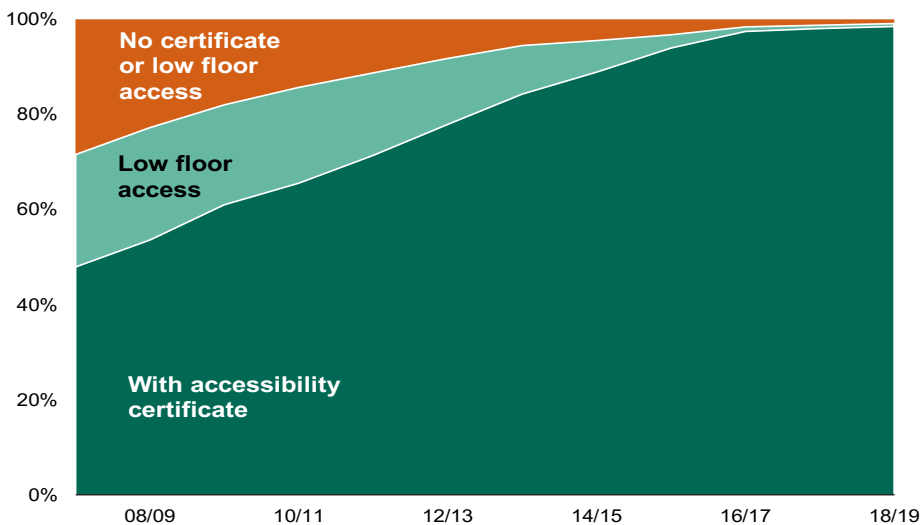
ITSO is an organisation which sets a common technical standard for smart ticketing. Further information can be found at: [www.itso.org.uk](http://www.itso.org.uk).

EMV enabled for payment by contactless bank card (or mobile phones emulating these e.g. Android Pay or Apple Pay)

**Bus accessibility**

In March 2019, 99% of buses in England had been issued with an accessibility certificate. **Chart 9** shows that the proportion of buses in England with an accessibility certificate has increased each year since 2004/05 and is now at a record high level.

**Chart 9: Percentage of local buses with low floor access or an accessibility certificate: England, 2006/07 to 2018/19 ([table BUS0603](#))**



**Accessibility regulations**

The [Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 2000 \(PSVAR\)](#) set out standards for public service vehicles to ensure they would be accessible to disabled people from 1 January 2017 at the latest (depending on bus type). Buses that comply with the accessibility regulations are issued with an accessibility certificate. Some buses are suitable for wheelchair access through low floor designs.

# Financial outlook

## Bus fares

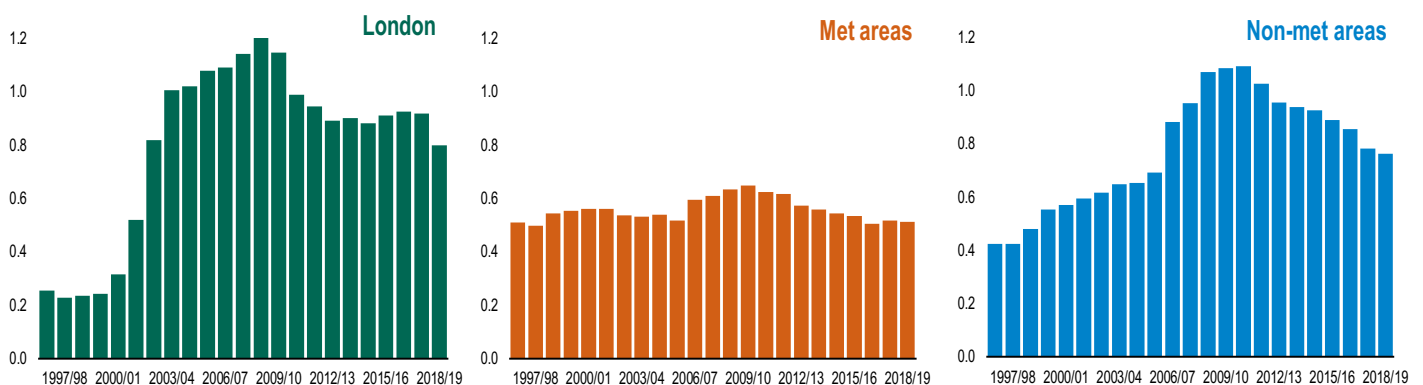
In the year to March 2019, local bus fares in England have increased by 3.3%, faster than the annual all items Consumer Prices Index rate of inflation (1.9% increase), meaning bus fares have risen in real terms. Local bus fares in England increased by 71% between March 2005 and March 2019. Bus fares have risen at a faster rate in metropolitan areas (93%) than in non-metropolitan areas (67%). The all items Consumer Prices Index (CPI) has increased by 38% over the same period. See quarterly releases for more detail.

## Government support

Central and local government support for local bus services consists of payments for supported services, Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) and concessionary travel reimbursement (effectively a subsidy to concessionary passengers). In 2018/19, estimated total net support paid in England was £2.07 billion, of which £0.98 billion or 47% was for concessionary travel.

**Chart 10** shows that in real terms total net support in metropolitan areas has remained at a similar level since 1996/97. London has seen increases in support but has declined since a peak in 2008/09. In non-metropolitan areas, there was a peak of net support in 2010/11 of £1.09bn but support has declined since then.

**Chart 10: Total net support by central and local government for local bus services and concessionary travel by area type: England, 1996/97 to 2018/19 (2018/19 prices) ([table BUS0502b](#))**



## Quarterly stats release

We currently publish 4 quarterly releases on bus stats containing information on fare changes and provisional estimates of the number of passenger journeys. These can be found from the bus stats home [page](#).

## BSOG

One form of central government support for buses. The rate at which BSOG is paid was cut by 20% from April 2012. From October 2013, BSOG for London was devolved to Transport for London.

## Operator revenue

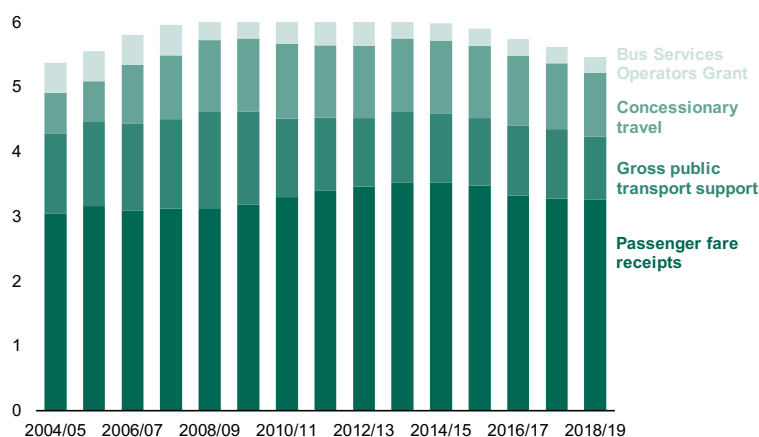
In 2018/19, the total estimated operating revenue for local bus services in England was £5.46 billion. Passenger fare receipts made up the largest proportion of operating revenue: £3.26 billion or 60% of operating revenue (see [chart 11](#)). Revenue from passenger receipts has increased on average each year by 0.6% in real terms between 2004/05 and 2018/19.

BSOG has decreased by 46% in real terms between 2004/05 and 2018/19. In 2004/05, BSOG made up 9% of operating revenue but in 2018/19 this proportion had fallen to 5%. Some of this decrease will be due to BSOG in London being devolved to Transport for London. Operating revenue from concessionary fare reimbursement has increased by nearly 54% in real terms over same period from £0.64 billion to £0.98 billion. This increase reflects the wider coverage of the concessionary travel scheme (moving from a local authority to a national scheme), increased eligibility and a larger proportion of elderly people in the wider population.

### Types of revenue for operators

**Fare receipts:** on and off bus fares  
**Public transport support:** payments from local authorities, mostly for running supported services  
**Concessionary reimbursement:** from Local authorities. As for carrying concessionary passengers  
**BSOG:** fuel duty rebate from DfT.  
 Other sources of income excluded.

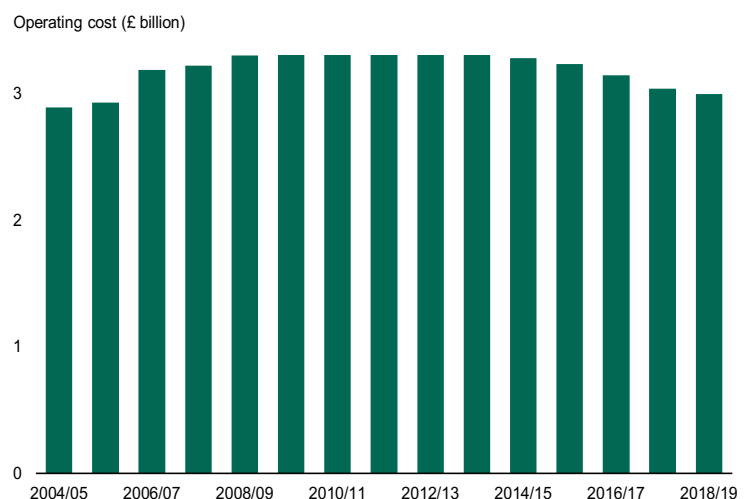
**Chart 11: Operating revenue for local bus services by revenue type: England, 2004/05 to 2018/19 (2018/19 prices) ([table BUS0501b](#))**



## Operator costs

In England outside London, between 2004/05 and 2018/19, operator costs for local bus services increased from £2.89 billion to £3.00 billion in real terms (see [chart 12](#)). This was an average annual real terms increase of 0.4%. However, operator costs have been falling since a high of £3.35 billion in 2011/12. A more detailed index of bus industry cost is compiled by the [Confederation of Passenger Transport](#).

**Chart 12: Operating cost for local bus services: England outside London, 2004/05 to 2018/19 (2018/19 prices) ([table BUS0406b](#))**



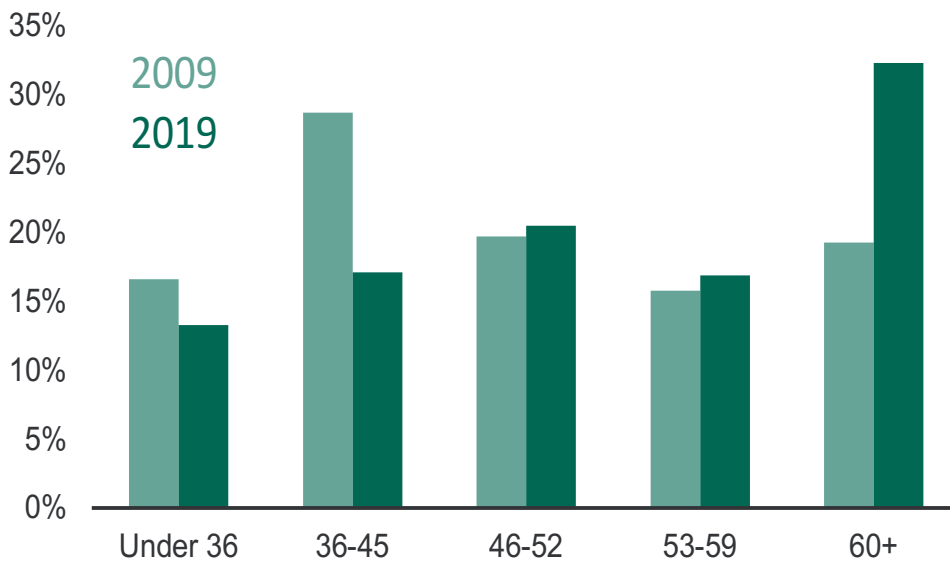
# Bus and coach staff and drivers

## Bus staff

Local bus operators in England employed an estimated 100,000 full-time equivalent staff, including maintenance and admin staff, as at March 2019 (see [table BUS0701\(area\)](#)). This was 1% lower than the 2018 figure and is based on PSV survey figures.

According to the Labour Force Survey, 93% of drivers were male in 2018/19, up from 89% in 2017/18, while drivers over 60 have increased from 19% in 2009 to 32% in 2019. While figures from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings state that bus drivers work on average 41.9 hours a week, more than the national average of 37.5 and earn £523 a week, below the national average of £585.

**Chart 13: Age range of bus and coach drivers, England, 2009 compared to 2019 (Labour Force Survey)**



## Staff disability awareness training

New legislation that requires drivers to be trained in disability awareness came into effect from March 2018. As at March 2019, 95% of bus operators required drivers to meet this requirement and 99% of all drivers and on bus staff are required to meet this requirement.

**95%**

Of operators require staff are trained in disability awareness

**99%**

Of all drivers and on bus staff

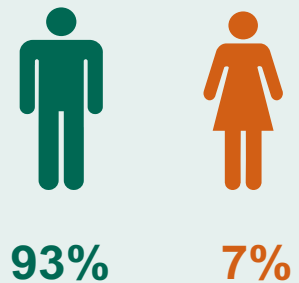
## ONS survey data

The [Labour Force Survey](#) (LFS) is a large study of the employment circumstances of the UK population, run by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The data are defined using the Standard occupational classification system, SOC 2010, as “Bus and coach drivers” (code 8213), which will contain both bus and coach drivers.

As the sample size for bus and coach drivers within the LFS is relatively small, it is subject to high variability and error range. As such caution should be used when using this data.

The [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings](#) (ASHE) provides information on working hours and earnings.

## % of bus drivers



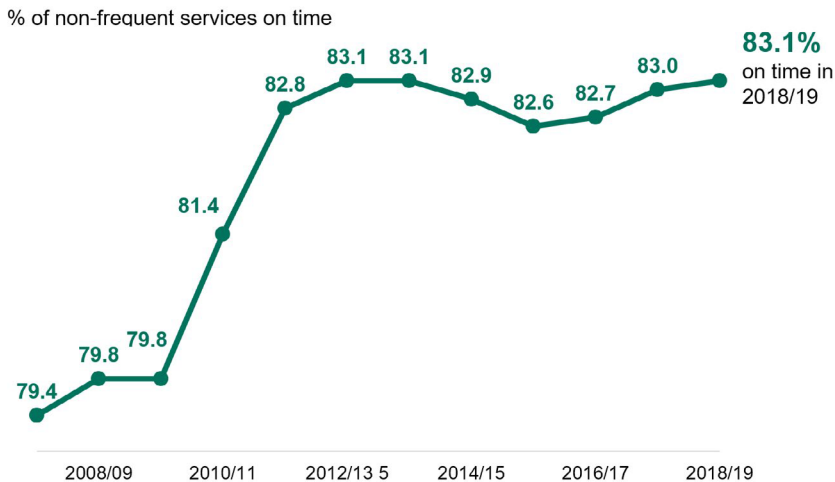
## Staff disability training background

From March 2018, Article 16 of Regulation (EU) 181/2011 requires that drivers are trained in disability awareness, consistent with Part A of Annex II to that Regulation. Such training may be provided as part of Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (DCPC) or separate to it. More information can be found [here](#)

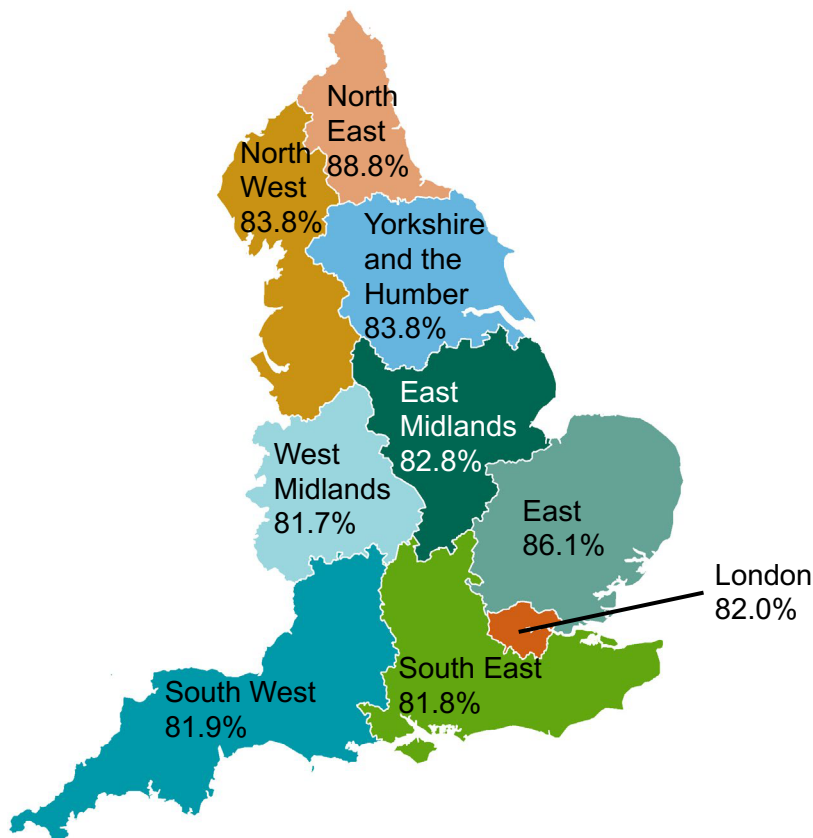
## Bus punctuality

In 2018/19, 83.1% of non-frequent services in England ran on time. This is very similar to the level seen since 2011/12 (see [chart 14](#)). 'On time' is defined as between 1 minute early and 5 minutes 59 seconds late. At the regional level bus service punctuality varied between 81.7% and 88.8%. At the local authority level there was greater variation ranging between 63% and 97%.

**Chart 14: Percentage of non-frequent services running on time: England, 2007/08 to 2018/19** ([table bus0902](#))



**Map 2: Percentage of non-frequent services running on time: England, 2018/19** ([table bus0902](#))



## Bus punctuality data

[Bus punctuality statistics](#) provide one measure of the performance of local bus services based on data reported by local authorities who monitor punctuality using manual surveys or data from electronic systems. There are different measures of punctuality for frequent and non-frequent services: a frequent service is one that has six or more buses per hour. Several areas have no frequent services.

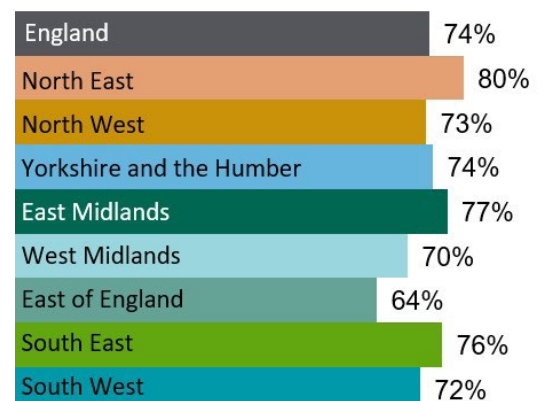
## Bus timetable data

Timetable data provides more detailed information on when and where bus services run, and who operates them than the other sources in this publication. An analysis of bus timetable data from the [Traveline National Dataset](#) was included in [the 2016 publication](#) (see page 12 of the release).

## Frequent services

Data on the average excess waiting time for frequent services by local authority in England can be found in [table bus0903](#).

**Chart 15: Passenger satisfaction with bus punctuality: England, 2018** ([Transport Focus Bus Passenger Survey](#))



## Other Sources of Bus Data

The following pages contain data on buses from sources other than the PSV or punctuality survey. It comes from a mix of Department for Transport and external sources and is published to different timescales and therefore is not new data. Below is a brief outline of some of the data sources.

### Bus passenger satisfaction

#### England Outside of London

The Transport Focus Bus Passenger Survey gathers information on levels of satisfaction of bus users with their most recent journey.

In 2018, 88% of bus passengers in England outside London were satisfied with their journey, the same as in 2017. Since around 2014, levels of satisfaction in the four areas below have broadly remained static, with the exception of satisfaction with punctuality which has decreased from 77%.



**88%** overall satisfaction with the journey



**64%** satisfaction with value for money (fare-payers)



**74%** satisfaction with punctuality



**85%** satisfaction with length of time for journey

#### Bus Passenger Survey



Data from the [Bus Passenger Survey](#) (BPS) is managed by the independent transport user watchdog Transport Focus. Note that the statistics from the BPS are not National Statistics.

The 2018 survey was conducted in 50 authority areas in England outside London, including the six metropolitan counties, a mix of unitary county councils and bus operators' divisions. The survey does not cover all areas, and varies slightly from year to year, but covers around three quarters of bus passenger journeys within Transport Focus's remit.

For information on your area, see the full BPS report [here](#).

#### London

Transport for London collects satisfaction data on a wide range of bus service features from a sample of passengers every quarter, based on the journey they have just made. In 2018/19, 85% of bus passengers in London were satisfied with their journey, a slight decrease from 86% in 2017/18.



**85%** overall satisfaction with the journey



**80%** satisfaction with value for money (fare-payers)



**82%** satisfaction with reliability

#### TfL Customer Satisfaction Survey



More information on bus satisfaction can be found on the [TfL](#) website.

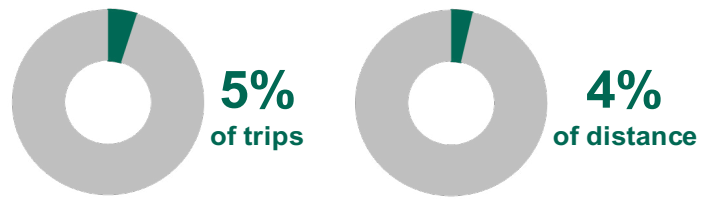
# National Travel Survey

On average people:

- make 48 local bus trips per person per year.
- travel 235 miles by local bus per person per year.
- spend 36 minutes per local bus trip

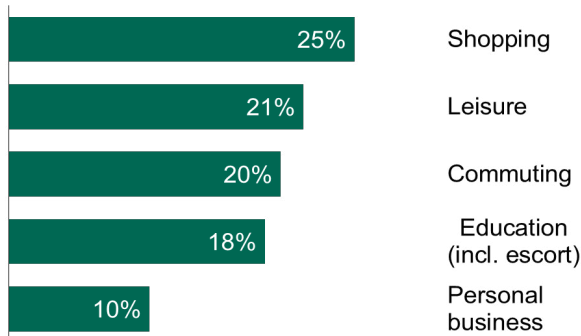
## Local bus mode share [NTS0303]

Local bus as a proportion of all modes



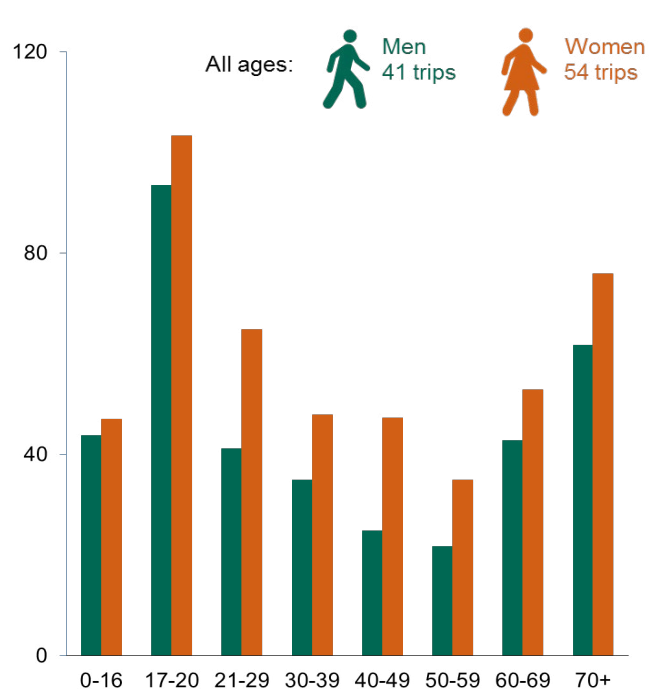
## Purpose of local bus trips [NTS0409]

Top 5 purposes as % of bus trips



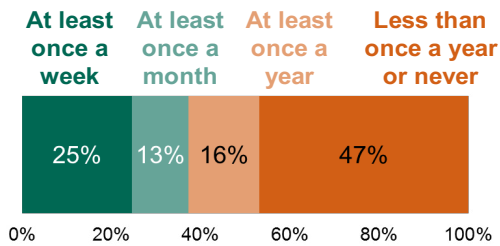
## Local bus use by age and gender [NTS0601]

Trips per person per year, by age and gender



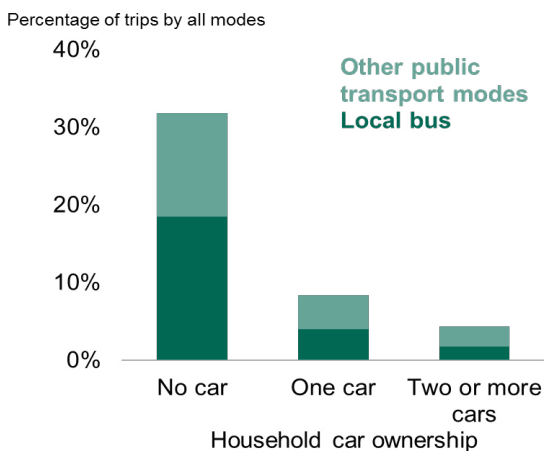
## Frequency of local bus use [NTS0313]

Proportion of people



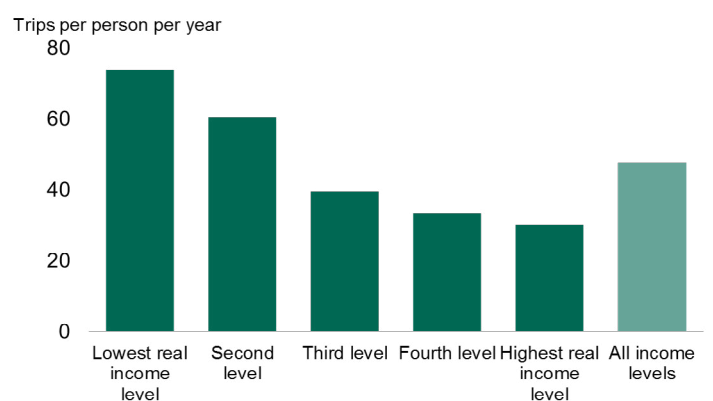
## Local bus use and household car ownership

Proportion of trips by local bus and other public transport modes



## Local bus use by household income quintile

Trips per person per year



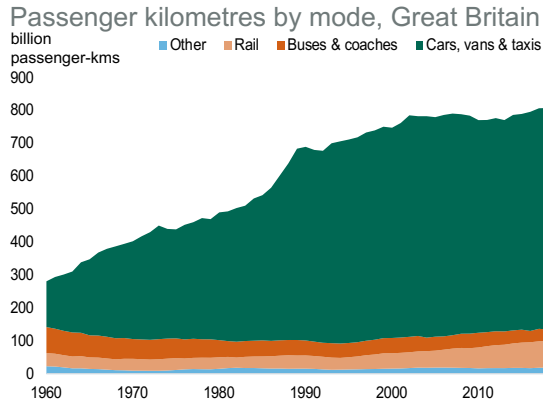
The National Travel Survey is a household survey carried out on around 16,000 individuals in England. The figures here are for 2018. For more information see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travelsurvey-statistics>.



## Other DfT sources containing bus data

### Transport Stats Great Britain

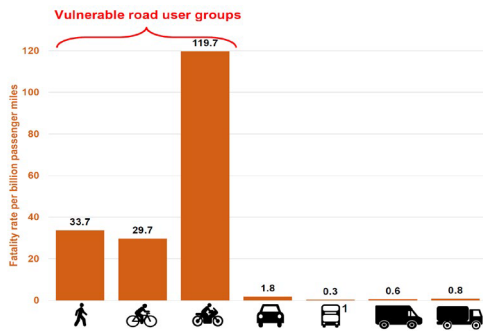
Buses share of all passenger kilometres travelled has decreased to 4%. This is as a result of increased travel by rail and more notably car.



### Transport Stats Great Britain (TSGB)

contains additional modal comparisons, as well as providing a single publication containing statistics across all transport themes and modes. [Link](#)

Fatality rate per billion passenger miles by road user type, 2018



### Road accident statistics

The fatality rate per billion passenger miles by bus is the lowest of any mode. Bus passenger miles is based on 2017 mileage figure as no 2018 figure is available at the time of publication.

### Road Accidents and safety statistics

These provide detailed statistics about personal injury road accidents, vehicles and casualties involved. [Link](#)

### Speed Compliance statistics

Buses are more likely to comply with speed limits on 30mph roads, than any other mode. The bus category includes coaches.

Road Type	Cars	LCVs	Articulated HGVs	Rigid HGVs	Short Buses	Long Buses	Motorcycles
Motorways	54%	53%	99%	..	..	..	47%
National Speed Limit Single Carriageways	90%	..	80%	64%	64%	69%	70%
30mph Roads	48%	47%	58%	54%	64%	67%	45%

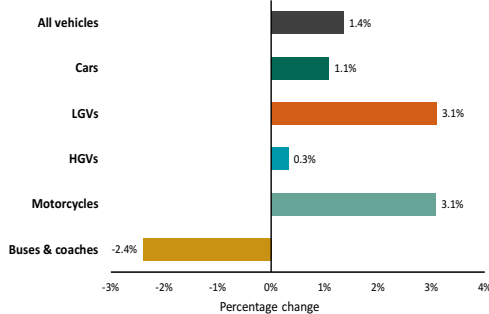
.. Data is not available

Complying With Speed Limits

### Vehicle Speed Compliance

contains information on speed compliance with a variable for long and short buses. Also includes distance to vehicle in front. [Link](#)

Annual Change in licensed vehicles by body type, Great Britain, to March 2019



### Vehicle statistics

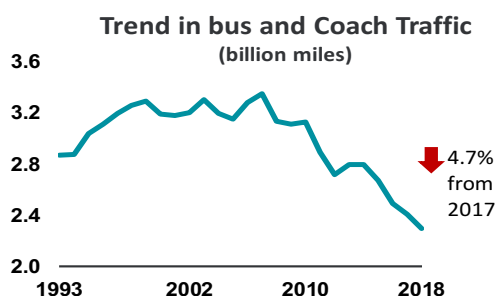
There has been a 2.4% decrease in the number of buses and coaches licensed in the year to end 2019. All other vehicle body types have increased over the same period.

### Vehicle Statistics

contains statistics on licensed vehicles and new vehicle registrations derived from data held by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). [Link](#)

### Road Traffic statistics

Buses make up 0.7% of all motor vehicle traffic in 2018. This has been on a downward trend since 2007 and has reduced 4.7% in the last year.



### Road Traffic

Road traffic statistics provide estimates of the vehicle miles travelled each year in Great Britain by vehicle type, road category and region. [Link](#)

## Other Sources of Bus Data

There are many other data sources available on buses. Below is a selection of some of the sources with links to their websites. We do not take responsibility for the quality or content of these sources, nor is this a fully exhaustive list.

[Traffic Commissioners](#) publish data on the number of bus routes registered and bus route variations in their [annual reports](#). Caution should be used when using this data to make judgements on the overall bus market, as routes are changed for many operational reasons and can vary greatly in length and frequency. Traffic Commissioners also publish changes to local routes and provide notices to changes at local bus route level. In addition they provide search tools to find your [local operator](#) and find your local [registered bus routes](#).

[Traveline](#) is a partnership of transport companies, local authorities and passenger groups which have come together to bring you routes and times for all travel in Great Britain by bus, rail, coach and ferry. As well as this Traveline offers several [open data](#) options.

The [NHT Network](#) is a service improvement organisation providing a range of benchmarking services for the Highways & Transport sector. They perform a large public satisfaction survey each year across multiple modes including public transport with data available at [local authority level](#).

The [TAS partnership](#) is a transport consultancy and provides data and research including undertaking a [fares survey](#) to identify bus ticket prices across the UK every 2 years.

[Bus Times](#) is an unofficial source for bus times and useful website to find local bus route times and information. It utilises other open data sources and contains contact details for most bus operators.

[Transport for London](#) covers half of all local bus passenger journeys in England. They are responsible for bus registrations in London. As such they publish many [additional reports](#) and information on buses in London as well as for other public transport. Many local authorities also publish information on buses in their area, but this varies by local authority.

The department is **not** responsible for complaints about bus operators or services. As well as providing the bus passenger satisfaction survey on page 15, [Transport Focus](#) produce other bus research and information and provide additional information and help including for [bus complaints](#).

### Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain

Traffic Commissioners are responsible for the licensing and regulation of those who operate heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches, and the registration of local bus services. They are assisted in this work by deputy Traffic Commissioners, who preside over a number of public inquiries.

TC is a tribunal of the Department for Transport.

### Bus Open data

The Bus Services Act (2017) provided powers for the Secretary of State (Transport) to legally require operators of local bus services across England to openly publish data about those services, including timetables; fares; and location data. During 2020, DfT will launch the new Bus Open Data Service where data consumers, including researchers and application developers, will be able to find and use this data online. More information about the service will be shared in 2020. Follow us on Twitter [@busopendata](#) for updates.

## Background information

### Users and uses of these statistics

These statistics provide key information on trends in the bus sector. Within the Department for Transport they are used for:

- ▶ Ministerial briefing and to answer public enquiries;
- ▶ As background to policy development;
- ▶ Monitoring trends in the bus sector, for example in relation to accessible buses;
- ▶ The bus punctuality figures are used to monitor progress for the DfT business plan indicator related to the proportion of buses running on time ([www.gov.uk/government/publications/input-and-impact-indicators](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/input-and-impact-indicators)); and
- ▶ By economists in modelling policy options.

Outside DfT known uses include:

- ▶ Passenger journeys figures are used as a measure of the overall health/state of the industry, for example by private research organisations, and are occasionally reported in the trade press;
- ▶ Local authorities may use these statistics to compare trends in their area with the national picture;
- ▶ These statistics have also provided background information for recent reports by the Transport Select Committee and Competition Commission;
- ▶ Bus fares data are used by the Office for National Statistics in calculating the Retail and Consumer Price Indices and in the National Accounts.

### Strengths and weaknesses of the data

These statistics are derived from a number of sources, with the main source being the DfT annual Public Service Vehicle (PSV) survey of over 500 local bus operators which provides data on passenger journeys, vehicle miles, revenue and costs, and vehicles and staff. However, certain statistics (for example annual statistics on bus fares) are derived from smaller surveys of the larger bus operators, or from local authorities. Information on passenger journeys and bus mileage for London is provided by Transport for London.

### National Statistics

These statistics were designated as National Statistics in June 2012. The continued designation was confirmed in February 2013.

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs: [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html). For details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/bus-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/bus-statistics)

Many of these statistics have been collected on a broadly comparable basis from operators for many years. However, following revisions to the methodology used to compile the published figures, 2004/05 is the earliest year for which figures are comparable on exactly the same basis.

The PSV survey uses imputation techniques to derive key figures for operators who were either not selected in the sample for that year, or who did not respond. On occasion, imputations for earlier years can be improved using directly-reported data for later years. Minor revisions to back-data can occur as a result, although trends are rarely affected substantively.

For the key indicators (passenger journeys and vehicle miles operated) the data provided by operators covers around, or above, 90% of the total figure, with the remainder imputed. This will also have an impact with previous year's data, where more up to date information is used to impute data, usually limited to the two preceding years and changes of under 1% to previously reported figure. In rare occurrences we receive corrections to previous year data which may change figures to a more significant level particularly at local authority level, including reallocations across local authority boundaries. Changes this year are small and there has been one correction of note reallocating passenger journeys for 2017-18 between Portsmouth and Hampshire local authorities.

Comparison with other sources suggests that, at aggregate (national) level, the statistics are likely to provide a reasonably robust measure of levels and broad trends. However, figures representing smaller groups of operators and single year on year changes should be treated with caution as these are more susceptible to measurement errors (for example, an inaccurate return by an operator, or a change in an operator's method of producing the figures) which are more likely to even out at the national level.

Regional, and particularly local authority level figures should be interpreted with caution. Occasionally a bus operator will change the system they use or the way they record data, meaning local authority level data will change between boundaries and it is not always possible to backdate the changes.

Local authority areas match the Travel concession Authorities as set out in the concessionary travel publication, covering 90 areas: the 89 TCAs outside London and London.

Further details of the data sources and methods used in the production of these statistics can be found in the notes and definitions document available via: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/buses-statistics-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/buses-statistics-guidance).

### Next update to bus statistics

Quarterly bus statistics for July to September 2019 will be released in January 2020. The next annual bus statistics will be published in Autumn 2020.

To hear more about DfT statistics publications as they are released please follow us on Twitter via our @DfTstats account: <http://www.twitter.com/DfTstats> TWITTER, TWEET, RETWEET and the Twitter logo are trademarks of Twitter, Inc. or its affiliates

