

Backing Britain's Coaches

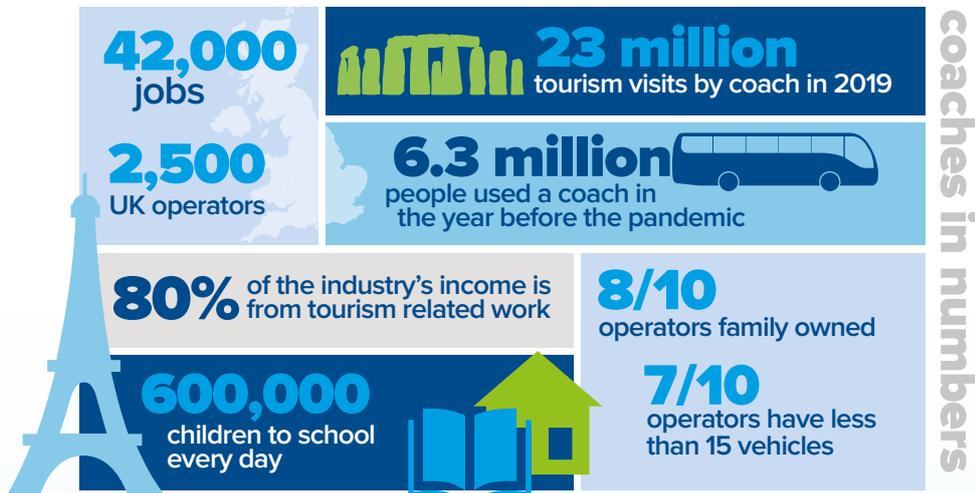


Coaches play a vital role in moving people from A to B and keep hundreds of millions of car journeys off our roads.

Millions of visits are made each year by coach to attractions and places across the UK contributing £14bn to the UK tourism economy in 2019. 600,000 children also regularly rely on a coach to get them to and from school safely and coaches frequently step in to provide emergency transport such as rail replacement or when flights are diverted. They also help sports fans follow their team across the country, schools arrange educational visits and provide a cost-effective alternative to train or air travel.

A thriving and prosperous coach industry should be a central plank of the UK's plans to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and be a world leader in fighting the climate emergency and improving air quality in our towns and cities.

one coach
can keep up to
50 cars off the road



Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on an industry that is normally fundamentally healthy and profitable. However, with lockdown restrictions gradually easing, it is likely that trips can get underway this summer and is an opportunity for the industry to play a leading role in the UK's economic recovery.

Despite support packages being made available to other sectors to help them both through and pandemic and to restart the coach industry has largely been overlooked. But there is pent up demand for travel and with the right support the industry can recover and continue to provide both essential journeys and play a key role in kickstarting the UK's tourism economy.



only 20% of operators have been able to access the support available to tourism & Leisure businesses in England

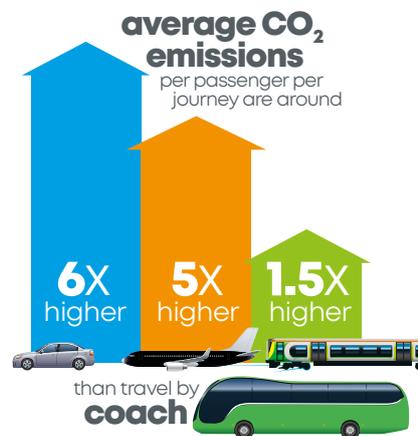
one coach operator who carried almost **40,000** passengers in the summer of 2019

carried fewer than **200** in the summer of 2020

Delivering net zero and improving our air: the role of coaches

Coaches will play a central role in the UK's drive towards net zero and cleaner air by reducing the number of cars on our roads. Just a 15% increase in coach travel would mean 47 million fewer cars on our road reducing carbon dioxide emissions by over a quarter of a million tonnes. A greater focus on encouraging more journeys to be made by coach, both for leisure and essential purposes, will help the UK meet its climate change and air quality targets.

Although coaches are already amongst the cleanest vehicles on our roads, through improvements to the coach fleet we can reduce carbon dioxide emissions even further, by around 56,000 tonnes over the next decade, and reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides equivalent to £225m in damage cost savings.



Backing Britain's Coaches: What we need to see

Coach travel will be crucial for the UK's long-term environmental targets and economic recovery. The industry is ready to work with Government to raise the profile of coach travel with individual passengers, local areas and society as a whole but we need Government to commit to providing a coach-friendly operating environment.

Below are the policies we need to see delivered.

Coach facilities and access being a priority for locations that are expected to receive a large volume of visitors



Alongside operators committing to best practice when visiting attractions and places the provision of coach facilities must be a central part of the planning process in places likely to have large numbers of visitors.

Enabling the sector to bounce back from the devastating impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

A £150m grant-based scheme to support English and Welsh operators to get up and running while social distancing is in place.

£100-£150 million
needed to support coach sector

The Chancellor to fulfil his commitment to extend repayment terms for those who have a Coronavirus Business

Interruption Loan and work with commercial lenders to allow greater flexibility in finance repayments and a longer-term view of the sector's prospects.

Government backed campaigns to promote coach travel to passengers and locations including encouraging the return of educational trips by coach.



A joint industry and government strategy to reduce the number of long-distance car journeys

This strategy should include:

Measures that ensure clean air strategies support modal shift from the private car to sustainable forms of mass transport. This must mean all Clean Air/Low Emission Zones including cars.

A national clean air fund to support coach operators to invest in new vehicles or retrofit to meet Clean Air/Low Emission Zone requirements.

Incentives for manufacturers to develop ultra-low and zero emission vehicles solutions and support the development of associated infrastructure.

An exemption from any road pricing schemes for vehicles like coaches that reduce congestion and pollution.



Certainty over PSVAR regulations

Alongside an industry guarantee that PSVAR compliant coaches will be used where required, a realistic date by which all coaches would need to be PSVAR compliant.

Where PSVAR coaches are regularly deployed, a suitable access point to deploy the wheelchair lift is available.



Encouraging young people into the industry

Provide a route for school and college leavers into the industry by changing historic EU regulations to allow 18-20 year olds to drive coaches on journeys over 50km.



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