

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF BUS AND COACH IN SCOTLAND

Confederation of Passenger Transport
Scotland Manifesto for the 2026
Scottish Parliament Election



**A SINGLE BUS OR COACH CAN REMOVE
MULTIPLE CARS FROM OUR ROADS**



Driving
Scotland
forward

▶ We all gain when more people choose bus and coach travel.
We call on all parties at the Scottish Parliament 2026 election to support these five priorities:

1. Tackle congestion to improve journey times

When a bus or coach is stuck in traffic it lengthens the passenger journey time, increases the costs to operators (who may have to put on more services to keep to the timetables they have registered), and makes bus less attractive, potentially resulting in reduced services and higher ticket prices. The following could help improve journey times and result in more people switching from car to bus.



- Multi-year funding commitments for bus priority



- National and local action to improve bus speeds, by tackling congestion and reducing the impact of road works

2. Support rural bus and coach

Bus and coach play a vital role to Scotland's rural populations, connecting people to education, employment, leisure and tourism, and reaching the areas that other public transport can't. However, rural transport presents distinct challenges for operators and local authorities including higher costs, attracting and retaining employees, and access to zero emission vehicles and infrastructure. The following could help increase bus and coach journeys in rural areas:

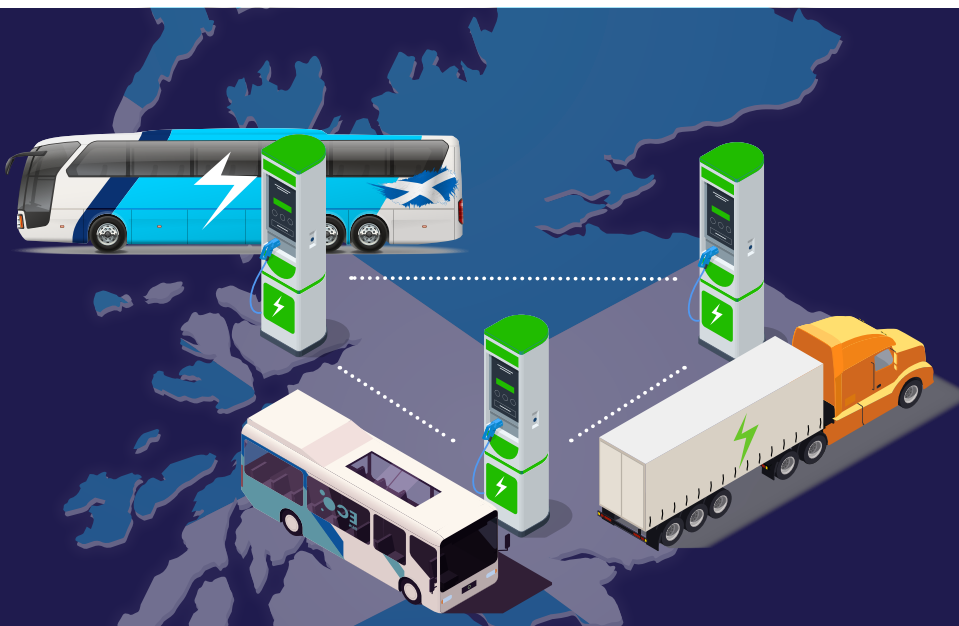
- Consider designating socially necessary bus services
- Improve rural zero emission infrastructure
- A greater focus on public transport and coach tourism by rural tourism locations



3. Continue the journey to greener bus and coach

Bus and coach account for less than 5% of road transport emissions, with 25% of the Scottish bus fleet now zero-emission and the vast majority of the remaining fleet ultra low emission. A great deal of investment in vehicles and infrastructure, has been made by both the Scottish Government and operators but the following could take us further on the decarbonisation journey.

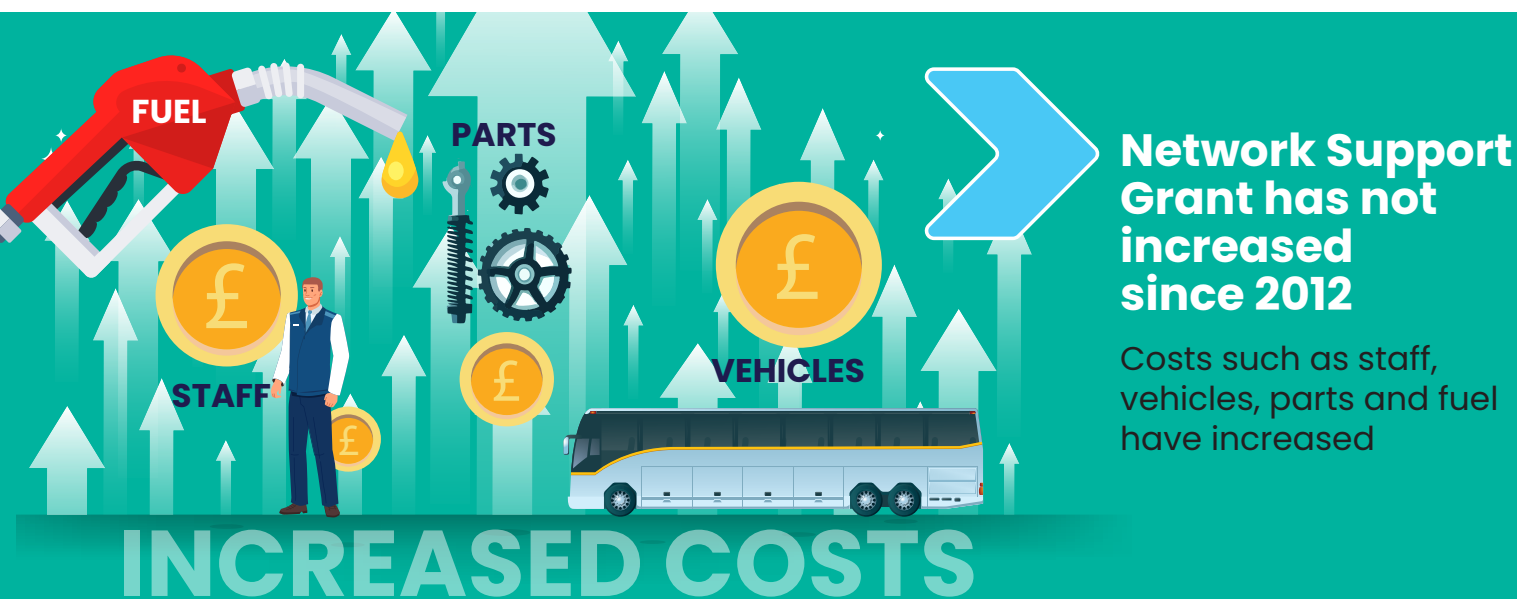
- **More support for SMEs and coach operators**
- **Prioritise fast charging infrastructure for bus and coach and work to create shared networks benefiting bus, coach and HGV**



4. Review bus funding in Scotland

The only direct funding to all bus operators, large and small, is the Network Support Grant, which has not increased since 2012, amounting to a real terms cut of over 30%. At the same time costs such as staff, vehicles, parts and fuel have increased. The Network Support Grant needs to be reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose in 2026 and beyond to meet its aims of keeping fares affordable and networks more extensive.

In addition to reviewing Network Support Grant, Government should evaluate transport budget commitments to ensure they are just and effective.



Network Support Grant has not increased since 2012

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5. Ensure passenger and staff safety

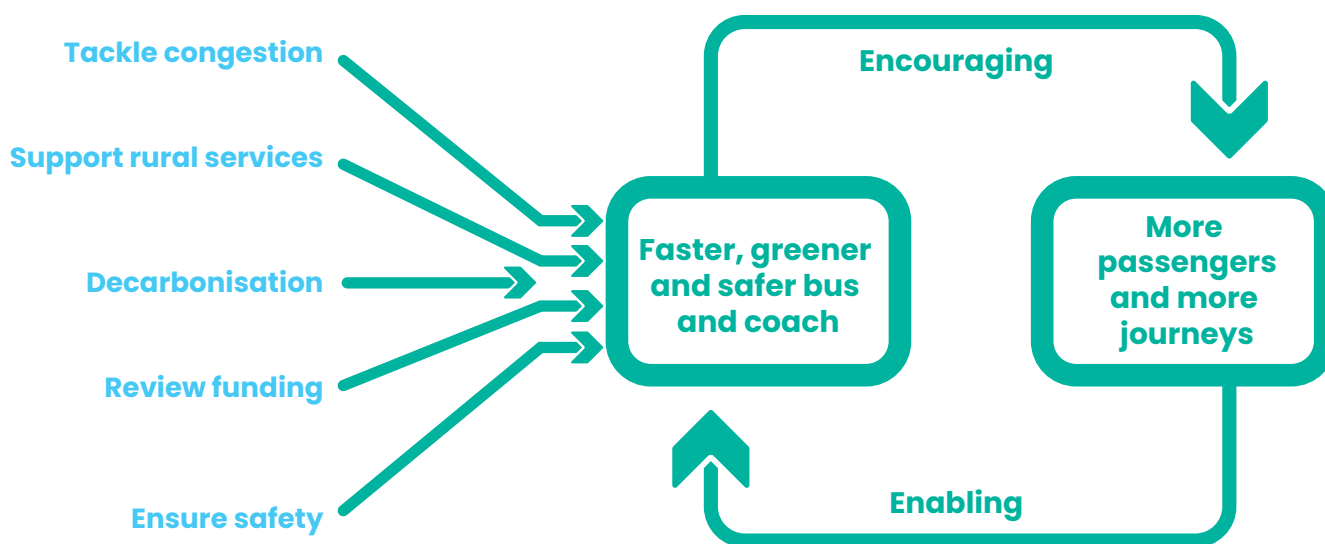
Bus is the most popular form of public transport and most passengers travel safely and responsibly. However, bus and coach are not immune from crime and antisocial behaviour, which affects other passengers and staff.

The following could help bus and coach to be a safer space for all:



- Suspend or remove free travel from concessionary card holders where use is linked to criminal and serious anti-social behaviour
- Consider introducing Transport Safety Officers and encourage greater partnership working
- More education and awareness raising activity on how to use bus safely and responsibly

These priorities for the next government work together to attract more passengers and deliver more, faster buses, creating a virtuous cycle which over time reduces the need for government expenditure.



For further information

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