

Briefing: The free bus pass

This briefing note provides information about the free bus pass in **England** and explains Age UK's views. (Policy on the bus pass is devolved to local administrations in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales - where there are differences in the application of travel concessions).

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Central Government also provides subsidies to buses via the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG), which benefits all passengers by reducing fares and helping to maintain rural bus services. At the end of 2015, BSOG totaling nearly £230m was protected from cuts by the Comprehensive Spending Review^{vi}.

Is spending on the bus pass likely to decline or increase?

The Campaign for Better Transport found that since last year 2013\14 there has been a net reduction of £9 million to supported bus services in England^{vii}. The decline in

areas 95% of people live within 13 minutes of a regular (hourly) bus, but in rural areas this falls to 6%.^{xv}

Can community transport provide an effective alternative to the loss of local bus services?

The Government recently made £25 million available to fund

