



NORTH TYNESIDE
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To:

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Chronicle Live

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Ticket to Ride

Last summer my brothers travelled to Berwick. They intended to walk the coastal route north to south from Berwick to Cresswell. A total of 62 miles. They were a bit over ambitious with the time they had allowed for the walk. By the time they got to Craster they decided they had to make their way home. In Craster they discovered they could get the bus straight through to Newcastle. On deciding this would be the best way forward they were both pleasantly surprised to be only charged £2 for the journey all the way to Newcastle. Almost 42 miles and 2 and a half hours of some of the most beautiful scenery in the land.

The £2 bus fare cap has been in place since January 2023. It was an initiative to get people back on buses after Covid, especially in rural communities. It has been a success with bus travel becoming more popular. However, the increase to a £3 cap is a 50% rise overnight. Those it will hit most are low-income households and those on benefits.

In London bus fares are set at £1.75 a journey. In places like Calais, in Europe, they are free. Cheap, or free, bus services give access to travel for those on low incomes and young people travelling to work or school. It's also good for the environment as people are using the buses instead of clogging up the roads with cars.

Andy Burnham, the Mayor of Manchester, has said he is going to keep the £2 cap for the people of Manchester. The new Bus Bill will give greater powers to regions to organise their own bus services. Here in the North East, we have some of the most deprived areas in the country. We should be calling for our own Mayor, Kim McGuinness, to do the same and ensure that the people in the North East can still travel cheaply.

Sincerely,

Cathy Davis

North Tyneside Community Independent



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