

## CELEBRATE THE BUS PASS

*(embargoed until 00:01 Monday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2018)*

IT'S THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY of the English National Concessionary Bus Pass. The pass allows senior citizens and disabled persons to travel for free by bus between 9.30 a.m. and 11 p.m. on weekdays and all day on Saturdays and Sundays. The scheme has been enormously successful, providing much needed access for the elderly and disabled to services.

To celebrate this, and to call for investment in bus services and for the pass to remain as a national scheme the TUC pensioners network are undertaking a tour of the region over the next fortnight and are in the West Midlands area between Monday and Wednesday. They are campaigning to ensure the pass is retained as a non means tested benefit.

Bob Deacon, of the Midlands TUC Pensioners Network said:

**“The English National Travel Scheme is a long fought for benefit that brings financial, health, social and other benefits to older people and disabled people, helps keep bus services viable and reduces congestion and pollution. But a bus pass is no use unless there are buses. Last year, England saw 500 bus routes withdrawn or reduced. English councils have cut funding for buses for a third since 2010.”**

Kevin Chapman, from West Midlands Campaign for Better Transport added:

**“The pass is a lifeline for many people and allows them to get out and about to access local businesses, contributing millions of pounds into the local economy and supporting town centres and local high streets. If the pass was not there businesses would lose customers, people would be isolated and many bus services would wither away.**

**“It is right the scheme should continue, but central Government needs to ensure there is a proper investment strategy and increased funding for buses which are the workhorse of public transport. Local authorities, bus operators and the community should also be encouraged to work together using the powers available to them to improve services and increase patronage.”**

The itinerary of the tour is as follows:

### **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> April – Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry**

Campaigning with [Jess Phillips MP](#) at the Swan, Yardley 11.a.m – 12 p.m.

Campaigning with [Jim Cunningham MP](#) at Pool Meadow Bus Station, Coventry 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Campaigning in Solihull Town Centre (Station Road) 3.30 p.m – 4.30 p.m.

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> April – Herefordshire and Worcestershire**

Campaigning Bromsgrove Bus Concourse 9 a.m to 11 a.m.

Worcester Bus Station 12.30 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.

Hereford Church Street/High Green 3.15 p.m.

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> April – the Black Country**

Campaigning Walsall Bus Station 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Campaigning Queens Square, Wolverhampton with Emma Reynolds MP 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

**ENDS**

1. The Campaign for Better Transport is an organisation promoting the development of sustainable transport, including improved public transport services.
2. For more information contact:

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