

**A.** No. Because those benefits are paid for by the London authorities, only London Freedom Pass holders will be able to enjoy additional local travel on the tube, trains and trams. You will, however, be able to enjoy the statutory national concession of free off-peak bus travel when visiting the capital.

**Q.** I'm finding all the differences in the different schemes confusing, what do I really need to know?

**A.** The new national pass entitles you to free off-peak local bus travel anywhere in England. This is the only service that is guaranteed. There may be additional services but you should check with the local travel authority that issued your pass for more details.

**Q.** Does the decision to abolish Blyth Valley Borough Council affect the new pass?

**A.** No. The new Council will continue to administer the scheme but Blyth Valley will undertake the first issue of the passes before it is abolished.

**Q.** What is the life of my pass?

**A.** No more than 5 years.

### Additional information

You may travel before 9.00am if you have a medical appointment and can show your appointment card or letter to the driver.

### Companion passes

Certain people who, in the opinion of the authority need a companion to be able to travel on public transport may apply for a companion pass. To apply, you must obtain a certificate from your medical advisor confirming that you cannot travel alone.

Companion passes are not part of the new national scheme, however, Blyth Valley and neighbouring authorities are able to continue to provide a companion pass on the basis of local travel. This enables travel within Blyth Valley, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear and the Durham area.

If you travel beyond these boundaries you will travel free but your companion may be charged full fare. It is advisable to check with the relevant authority in the area to which you intend to travel.

The companion pass is identified by a +C symbol at the top right hand corner of the pass.

To find out more about the new pass you may visit our yourlink offices at:

- Blyth – Keelrow Shopping Centre
- Cramlington – Forum Way
- Seaton Delaval – Avenue Road

Please note that the concession only applies to local bus services and not the Tyne and Wear Metro, London Underground, local rail services or buses in Scotland and Wales unless there is a local arrangement. Look at our website at [www.blythvalley.gov.uk](http://www.blythvalley.gov.uk) or call our helpline on **01670 542500**.

### Lost and replacement passes.

If your pass details change, you move or lose your pass please call the helpline or visit one of our yourlink offices. There will be a small charge for replacement passes.

## England's 2008 bus concession explained

Find out more inside.





**The new National Bus Concession. Your questions answered.**



From 1st April 2008 if you're 60 or over, or eligible disabled and live in England, your bus pass is changing. The new pass will allow you to enjoy free off-peak travel on local buses anywhere in England.

Over the next few pages you'll find more information about the changes to the National Bus Concession. If there's anything else you need to know, don't hesitate to contact your local authority or visit [www.direct.gov.uk/buspass](http://www.direct.gov.uk/buspass) [www.blythvalley.gov.uk](http://www.blythvalley.gov.uk)

**Q. How is the new national bus concession different to the current one?**

**A.** From 1st April 2008, the new national bus concession will enable eligible users to get free off-peak travel on local buses anywhere in England.

**Q. When exactly is off-peak travel?**

**A.** Off peak hours are 9.30am until 11pm Monday – Friday, and all day weekends and bank holidays. In Blyth Valley and the rest of Northumberland you will be able to start your journey from 9.00am onwards.

For more information about eligibility, visit

[www.direct.gov.uk/buspass](http://www.direct.gov.uk/buspass)  
[www.blythvalley.gov.uk](http://www.blythvalley.gov.uk)

**Q. What is the definition of a 'local' bus?**

**A.** The definition of a 'local' bus will be self-evident in most cases, but in a few instances could include some longer distance buses and coach services where part of their route is registered as a local bus service. If in doubt, pass holders can check with the service operator or local authority that issued the pass.

**Q. Will I be able to enjoy free travel everywhere within the UK?**

**A.** No, the concession will only apply within England.

**Q. Is it only applicable to buses?**

**A.** The new concession applies just to bus travel but some authorities offer additional services. Check with your local authority to find out exactly what services are covered in your area.

**Q. If I visit an area that offers additional services, will I be entitled to them?**

**A.** Probably not. As a general rule, local authorities will only provide additional services for their own residents. Some authorities, however, may provide them – check with the relevant authority in the area to which you intend to travel.

**Q. I don't live in London, but I visit relatives there occasionally. Will I be able to enjoy the same benefits as a Freedom Pass holder if I travel there?**

*Continued overleaf*