# town hall powers could ease parking woes in tik-tok famous honeypot villages



Town hall powers to establish bus routes could provide a solution to parking challenges in TikTok-famous "honeypot villages," according to MP Jon Pearce. He has lauded a proposed suite of new powers that would enable councils to operate their own bus routes, addressing the issue of companies withdrawing "socially necessary" services. This initiative comes as part of the Bus Services (No. 2) Bill, which recently received a second reading in the Commons. Pearce highlighted the pressing need for improved transport solutions in areas like the High Peak, where social media trends have escalated visitor numbers, resulting in significant parking congestion.

Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander asserted that the Bill aims to "streamline" the franchising process for local authorities, making it easier to establish networks similar to those in London. This legislation is particularly pertinent for regions like Mam Tor in Derbyshire, where the scenic beauty has attracted an influx of visitors eager to capture the landscape at sunrise and sunset. Pearce recounted instances of emergency services being impeded by illegal parking, stressing the urgent need for integrated transport services that connect buses and local train networks. He noted, "We need to deliver better bus services that are integrated with local train services."

The Bus Services Bill also transfers decision-making powers from Westminster to local councils, allowing them to regulate routes, timetables, fares, and vehicle standards without needing ministerial approval. Alexander framed the move as a much-needed reform to a “broken” franchising process, arguing that local leaders understand their communities’ needs far better than central government officials. She assured MPs that the reform would ensure lifeline routes remain operational, particularly in tourist hotspots where increased footfall has put a strain on local infrastructure.

However, the proposal has garnered a mixed reception. While Alexander highlighted its potential to improve local transport services, some critics have raised concerns regarding the financial implications of these changes. Liberal Democrat transport spokesman Paul Kohler cautioned that merely empowering local authorities without providing them with the necessary resources could lead to inadequacies in implementation. He remarked that while the Bill offers local councils the "keys to a new bus network," it does not guarantee that they will have the fuel to operate effectively.

Additional scrutiny from Conservative shadow transport secretary Gareth Bacon pointed to gaps in the government’s proposals, asserting that substantial Treasury funding will be essential for actual improvements in service quality. Bacon described the Bill as primarily politically motivated, lacking concrete strategies to enhance the passenger experience.

Furthermore, while hopes are high for urban centres, rural areas worry that the reforms will not adequately consider their specific challenges. For example, while Greater Manchester's bus network is set to be fully re-regulated early next year, regions less endowed with resources may struggle to implement sustainable models. Labour’s thrust for bus reform, in contrast to its full nationalisation approach for rail services, raises pertinent questions about the overall effectiveness and future viability of local bus networks across England.

As the Bill awaits further examination in Parliament, the future of bus services throughout the UK hangs in the balance, with the potential for transformative change contingent upon robust funding and support.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bus-powers-could-help-tiktok-famous-villages-deal-with-problem-parking-mp-5RYFGA6KJNOK7JZRBTEL4RWHO4/), [[2]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/better-buses-on-the-way-as-government-introduces-new-legislation-to-boost-local-control-of-services)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bus-powers-could-help-tiktok-famous-villages-deal-with-problem-parking-mp-5RYFGA6KJNOK7JZRBTEL4RWHO4/), [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/5431912a-7d49-42ec-98dc-fe2de983b670), [[4]](https://www.ft.com/content/469653a1-4b6d-4ef7-ad67-af0f135e5f08)
* Paragraph 3 – [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/f47a31bc-60da-465c-9fe7-dfd94ceef952), [[6]](https://www.ft.com/content/fdf761bf-2884-454b-8046-849e1a7ee281)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/5431912a-7d49-42ec-98dc-fe2de983b670), [[4]](https://www.ft.com/content/469653a1-4b6d-4ef7-ad67-af0f135e5f08)
* Paragraph 5 – [[6]](https://www.ft.com/content/fdf761bf-2884-454b-8046-849e1a7ee281)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/bus-powers-could-help-tiktok-famous-villages-deal-with-problem-parking-mp-5RYFGA6KJNOK7JZRBTEL4RWHO4/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/better-buses-on-the-way-as-government-introduces-new-legislation-to-boost-local-control-of-services> - The UK government has introduced the Bus Services (No. 2) Bill, aiming to enhance local control over bus services. This legislation empowers local authorities to manage routes, timetables, and fares, reversing decades of deregulation. The bill also allows councils to establish their own bus companies, facilitating better integration with local train services. Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander emphasized the importance of local decision-making in improving bus services and managing tourism sustainably in popular areas like Mam Tor, which has faced parking issues due to increased social media attention.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/5431912a-7d49-42ec-98dc-fe2de983b670> - The UK's 'bus revolution' plan, which hands control of bus services to local authorities, aims to revitalize the industry by granting councils the power to set fares, routes, and timetables. However, regional leaders and transport executives have warned that substantial new investment is necessary to support these changes. The bus network faces funding challenges, with subsidies for fare caps and service improvements set to expire soon. Labour's bus policy contrasts with its approach to rail, where it seeks full nationalization, raising questions about the feasibility of these reforms.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/469653a1-4b6d-4ef7-ad67-af0f135e5f08> - Labour's efforts to revive bus services in England face significant challenges, including the proposed increase in the subsidized bus fare cap from £2 to £3. The fare cap alone has not significantly increased bus usage or mileage, suggesting that setting bus fares is better managed by local authorities or private operators. The decline in bus services began long before the 1985 Transport Act, with a significant drop in bus journeys starting from the mid-20th century. Successful bus networks require subsidies and regulatory support, similar to the model in London.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/f47a31bc-60da-465c-9fe7-dfd94ceef952> - Manchester's mayor, Andy Burnham, has praised the upcoming public control of the entire bus network in Greater Manchester, set to begin on January 5. This move will fully re-regulate the network for the first time in almost 40 years, aiming to improve timetables, fares, routes, and increase ridership, frequency, and reliability. The government's new buses bill aims to extend these franchising powers nationwide, but funding details remain uncertain until the Comprehensive Spending Review in June. While cities are optimistic, rural areas express concerns about the financial and expertise demands of such reforms.
6. <https://www.ft.com/content/fdf761bf-2884-454b-8046-849e1a7ee281> - The bus fare cap in most of England is set to rise by 50% to £3, announced by UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer. This ends the current nationally subsidized £2 cap, which was funded by the previous Conservative government until the end of 2024. Ministers will fund the new £3 cap until the end of 2025 to assist rural communities. The existing cap was implemented in 2022, replicating regional policies in Manchester and West Yorkshire. The Urban Transport Group warned that fares could increase by up to 40% if the cap were removed.
7. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/better-buses-on-the-way-as-government-introduces-new-legislation-to-boost-local-control-of-services> - The UK government has introduced the Bus Services (No. 2) Bill, aiming to enhance local control over bus services. This legislation empowers local authorities to manage routes, timetables, and fares, reversing decades of deregulation. The bill also allows councils to establish their own bus companies, facilitating better integration with local train services. Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander emphasized the importance of local decision-making in improving bus services and managing tourism sustainably in popular areas like Mam Tor, which has faced parking issues due to increased social media attention.