# Liberal Democrats propose fines to end loud audio 'bare beating' on UK public transport



Commuters across the UK are increasingly exasperated by a bizarre trend known as "bare beating," which has emerged as a source of annoyance on public transport. This phenomenon involves passengers allowing noise from their devices—whether it be music, voice memos, or videos—to echo throughout carriages, disregarding the common courtesy of using headphones. The growing acceptance of this behaviour has left many feeling disrespected and frustrated, with calls for change resonating among a public that yearns for a more pleasant commuting experience.

The Liberal Democrats have responded to this growing concern by proposing legislation to amend the Bus Services Bill, aimed at explicitly banning loud personal audio on English public transport. Lisa Smart, the party's home affairs spokesperson, highlighted the prevalent issue of antisocial behaviour among commuters, asserting that loud content from personal devices ranks among the most intolerable disruptions. “Whether you're heading to work, taking your kids to school, or simply trying to enjoy a moment of peace,” she stated, “everyone deserves to feel safe and respected on public transport.” The proposed amendment could lead to hefty fines for those who choose to ignore this social norm, potentially as much as £1,000 for repeated offenders.

Public sentiment on platforms like Reddit underscores a growing dissatisfaction with the social decline in shared spaces. Many users express disbelief at the lack of awareness shown by those who play content loudly, prompting one commenter to lament that "the social contract is long gone." While some individuals have resorted to directly addressing offenders, responses have often revealed a shocking level of ignorance about the disruptive nature of their actions. The emotional toll of enduring such disturbances each day raises questions about the broader implications for community standards and personal responsibility in shared environments.

Moreover, the issue extends beyond mere annoyance; researchers have found that these behaviours contribute to a detrimental atmosphere for commuters. Data from Ipsos indicates that an overwhelming 81% of Britons find it unacceptable to engage in loud activities like listening to music without headphones, with similar discontent expressed regarding video calls and social media scrolling. This collective sentiment highlights a clear preference for a more respectful commuting culture, where everyone can enjoy their journey free from intrusive noise.

Interestingly, the trend of "bare beating" echoes a related phenomenon identified on social media, known as "raw-dogging," where individuals choose to disengage from all forms of entertainment during flights. This trend, popularised by high-profile figures like Manchester City footballer Erling Haaland, has raised health concerns about the implications of such behaviour. Nutritionists warn that prolonged disengagement from essential needs can pose serious risks, particularly in air travel. Experts remark that while the desire for a "digital detox" may appear harmless, neglecting hydration and movement during long journeys can significantly heighten the risk of deep vein thrombosis and other serious health issues.

As commuter dissatisfaction mounts, the bearable reality of public transport experiences hangs in the balance, influenced by these trends. With the Liberal Democrats advocating for stricter regulations, it remains to be seen whether a legal framework can effectively curb disturbances and foster an environment that prioritises the comfort and well-being of all passengers. The challenge lies in reinstating mutual respect within the confined spaces of the bus and train, where civility ought to prevail over an unchecked individualism in the age of smartphones.

Public transport is not merely a means of getting from one place to another; it serves as a crucial touchpoint in urban life, reflecting broader societal values and expectations. Thus, addressing the issues of noise pollution and antisocial behaviour is not only about maintaining a pleasant commuting atmosphere but also about encouraging a communal spirit that respects every passenger's right to peace and comfort.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14734589/Commuters-fuming-bare-beating-trend-public-transport.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/dec/30/uk-public-transport-downturn-to-continue-after-pandemic-ends)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14734589/Commuters-fuming-bare-beating-trend-public-transport.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/what-do-britons-find-acceptable-behaviour-public-transport)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jan/06/bus-services-cut-disproportionately-in-deprived-areas-of-england-study-finds), [[6]](https://www.railway-technology.com/news/uk-commuters-are-travelling-like-cattle-on-public-transport-says-survey/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14734589/Commuters-fuming-bare-beating-trend-public-transport.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/may/28/public-transport-fare-rises-young)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14734589/Commuters-fuming-bare-beating-trend-public-transport.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/what-do-britons-find-acceptable-behaviour-public-transport)
* Paragraph 6 – [[3]](https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/what-do-britons-find-acceptable-behaviour-public-transport), [[7]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/12/29/end-of-night-out-faith-public-transport-low/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14734589/Commuters-fuming-bare-beating-trend-public-transport.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jan/06/bus-services-cut-disproportionately-in-deprived-areas-of-england-study-finds> - A study by IPPR North reveals that residents in the most deprived areas of England have experienced significantly larger cuts to bus services compared to those in less deprived areas. The analysis indicates that people living in the top 10% most deprived areas have faced a ten-fold greater reduction in bus miles per person than those in the top 10% least deprived areas. This disproportionate decline in bus services exacerbates existing inequalities and hampers access to essential services for low-income communities.
3. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/what-do-britons-find-acceptable-behaviour-public-transport> - Ipsos research highlights that a majority of Britons find certain behaviors on public transport unacceptable. Specifically, 81% deem it unacceptable to watch social media content or listen to music without headphones, and 82% disapprove of listening to music loudly through headphones. Additionally, 73% find it unacceptable to talk loudly with a fellow passenger, and 53% disapprove of taking video or conference calls without headphones. These findings underscore the importance of maintaining a respectful environment on public transport.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/may/28/public-transport-fare-rises-young> - A 2013 report indicates that young people, particularly those aged 16 to 24, are disproportionately affected by rising public transport fares in the UK. The study found that this age group relies more on bus travel than others, and reductions in government grants have led to cuts in service provision and fewer discounted fares. This trend has made it more challenging for young individuals to access employment and education opportunities, exacerbating social inequalities.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/dec/30/uk-public-transport-downturn-to-continue-after-pandemic-ends> - A 2020 survey by the Co-op revealed that over half of UK public transport users intended to continue avoiding buses and trains post-pandemic, opting instead for cycling or walking. This shift is attributed to concerns over personal space and safety on public transport during the COVID-19 pandemic. The trend suggests a long-term decline in public transport usage, with potential implications for urban mobility and infrastructure planning.
6. <https://www.railway-technology.com/news/uk-commuters-are-travelling-like-cattle-on-public-transport-says-survey/> - A survey commissioned by the London Assembly’s Transport Committee found that 52% of respondents cited overcrowding as the biggest issue when using public transport. The survey also highlighted that 38% of commuters found trains and tubes to be too hot, and 24% considered fares to be too expensive. These findings reflect widespread dissatisfaction with the current state of public transport in London, emphasizing the need for improvements in capacity, comfort, and affordability.
7. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/12/29/end-of-night-out-faith-public-transport-low/> - A 2023 report indicates a decline in traditional 'night out' activities in the UK, with more people opting for daytime events like brunches. This shift is partly due to decreased confidence in public transport, influenced by factors such as increased costs and industrial action. The report suggests that the late-night industry faces significant challenges, with many consumers expressing concerns about getting stranded after 11pm due to limited public transport options.