# Liberal Democrats propose £1,000 fines to curb ‘bare beating’ on public transport



Commuters across the UK are expressing their frustration over a growing trend known as 'bare beating', a phenomenon that involves individuals playing media aloud on public transport without the courtesy of using headphones. The practice, now increasingly common, creates an atmosphere of noise pollution that many consider exceedingly rude. Observers note that this trend has been particularly prevalent on trains and buses, prompting discussions about its implications for public behaviour.

As the volume of complaints rises, the Liberal Democrats have taken notice, proposing to amend the Bus Services Bill to explicitly outlaw this behaviour on English public transport. The party is suggesting hefty penalties of up to £1,000 for those who neglect to use headphones. Lisa Smart, the party’s home affairs spokesperson, articulated the concerns of many commuters, stating, "Far too many people dread their daily commute because of the blight of antisocial behaviour." She emphasised the need for respect and safety on public transport for everyone, whether they are travelling to work, school, or simply trying to enjoy some peace.

The backlash against 'bare beating' has been echoed on social media platforms, particularly Reddit, where users have lamented the loss of social etiquette in public spaces. One commenter expressed how this pervasive loudness contributes to a depressive atmosphere, while another indicated embarrassment at their own accidental playback of content in public. The sentiment is growing that being subjected to the hyper-stimulating sounds of social media or blaring music is not only bothersome but also indicative of a declining social contract among individuals.

Interestingly, the rise of 'bare beating' might be part of a wider trend where individuals forgo traditional norms in favour of increasingly bold expressions of personal enjoyment. This echoes another recent social phenomenon, 'rawdogging', which involves flying or travelling without consuming any form of entertainment. This trend has drawn criticism for health reasons and has been popularised by high-profile figures, including footballer Erling Haaland, who shared a questionable experience of a lengthy flight devoid of water, food, or digital distractions. Experts warn that such behaviour can heighten the risk of serious health issues, including deep vein thrombosis.

The social landscape surrounding public transport continues to evolve, particularly with the backdrop of rising operational challenges. A recent report highlighted that one in five rail passengers arrive in major cities during peak hours unable to find a seat, which adds to the frustrations commuters already face. Alongside this, public perceptions of safety on transport networks have also shifted, with recorded violent incidents against women and girls rising by 20% in the past year, raising concerns about the overall environment for commuters.

Amid these challenges, interest in sustainable transport options appears to be gaining traction, with a survey indicating that over half of UK adults plan to increase their use of public transport in 2023. This shift is broadly motivated by both economic factors and environmental concerns, highlighting a possible resurgence in public transport use, although the rise of antisocial behaviours presents a troubling backdrop.

As discussions around the 'bare beating' trend and other public transport issues continue, it is clear that the social contract within shared spaces is under scrutiny, and there are calls for increased legislation to protect the commuting experience. The outcome of these legislative efforts and the response from the public will likely shape the character of transport etiquette for years to come.

## 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), [[2]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/12/29/end-of-night-out-faith-public-transport-low/)
* 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), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyg9mmnewwo)
* Paragraph 3 – [[5]](https://futuretransport-news.com/uk-adults-aim-to-use-more-public-transport-and-shared-mobility-in-2023/), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/nov/28/bus-services-cut-by-more-than-80-perent-in-parts-of-england-and-wales-since-2008-finds-study)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.thecity.nyc/2024/12/13/mta-study-psychology-fare-beating/), [[7]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cj310jpxr4yo)

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## 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.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/12/29/end-of-night-out-faith-public-transport-low/> - An article from The Telegraph discusses the decline in traditional night-out activities, attributing it to factors such as increased costs and reduced confidence in public transport due to issues like rail strikes. The piece highlights a shift towards earlier, daytime social events and the challenges faced by the late-night industry in adapting to these changes.
3. <https://www.thecity.nyc/2024/12/13/mta-study-psychology-fare-beating/> - This report from THE CITY details the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's initiative to study the psychology behind fare evasion. With a significant rise in fare dodging, the MTA plans to use behavioral science to understand and address the motivations of individuals who evade fares, aiming to reduce the estimated $800 million annual loss from non-payment.
4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyg9mmnewwo> - BBC News reports a 20% increase in recorded violent crimes against women and girls on the transport network over the past year. With over 11,000 complaints made, authorities suggest the rise may be due to increased reporting rather than a surge in incidents. The government has pledged to hold publicly-owned railways accountable for these figures.
5. <https://futuretransport-news.com/uk-adults-aim-to-use-more-public-transport-and-shared-mobility-in-2023/> - A survey by private mobility platform FREE NOW reveals that over half of UK adults plan to increase their use of sustainable transport options in 2023. Motivated by cost-saving and environmental concerns, respondents expressed a preference for public transport and shared mobility, with a notable shift towards daytime social activities.
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/nov/28/bus-services-cut-by-more-than-80-perent-in-parts-of-england-and-wales-since-2008-finds-study> - The Guardian reports on a study revealing that bus services in parts of England and Wales have been cut by over 80% since 2008. The research highlights significant declines in rural and urban bus services, with some areas experiencing reductions exceeding 80%, leading to concerns about community isolation and the need for a 'public transport renaissance'.
7. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cj310jpxr4yo> - BBC News highlights that one in five rail passengers arriving in major cities during the morning rush hour were forced to stand, according to official figures. Despite a 13% increase in commuter numbers, train operators only increased seating capacity by 2%, leading to overcrowded conditions and calls for improved investment in rail services.