

500 people refused rail travel in Wales in one week for not wearing a face covering

August 20, 2020



Transport for Wales (TfW) and British Transport Police (BTP) are reminding customers of the need to wear face coverings on board public transport services – those failing to comply with the rules will not be allowed to travel and could be fined.

It became mandatory to wear a face covering on public transport on 27 July and over the past two weeks, TfW staff and BTP officers have engaged and advised customers about the new policy. They have encouraged customers, who are unable to explain why they are exempt from the requirements of the Regulations, to wear a face covering for the protection of other customers and TfW staff.

However, enforcement of the policy is now being stepped up and over the last week more than 500 people were refused travel by rail staff.

Welsh Government have recently removed the restriction on public transport for essential journeys only and wearing a face covering is compulsory throughout the Wales and Borders network. There are some exceptions such as children under the age of 11, people who experience breathing difficulties, or those with a physical or mental illness, impairment or disability.

Customers are encouraged to put on their face covering before entering stations and will be required to do so before boarding trains. A three-layer face covering is strongly recommended by the Welsh Government.

Leyton Powell, Transport for Wales Rail Services Safety and Assurance Director, said: "The safety of customers and colleagues is our top priority. From 27 July we have deployed the 3E approach of engage, explain and encourage as we recognised the benefit of wearing face coverings in reducing the spread of coronavirus. This helps us to keep everyone safe who uses our services as the lockdown measures are relaxed.

"We are not seeing the levels of compliance on our services in all areas so we have had to make the tough decision for the safety of our customers and colleagues to move to step up our enforcement activity. In partnership with the British Transport Police we will be refusing travel for people who are not respecting these rules. This could also result in some travellers being asked to leave the train at stations before their intended destination and even fined by British Transport Police."

Signs and cordons will remain in place on Transport for Wales trains and stations until further notice.

BTP Wales Chief Inspector Jon Cooze said: "The requirement to wear an appropriate face covering on all public transport services is an additional safeguard to enhance the requirement to maintain two-metres social distancing where it is possible to do so.

"BTP officers are on patrol across the network and will continue to work with TfW staff to help ensure all customers have a safe and confident journey. We are nonetheless prepared and determined to use the penalties available in the new Coronavirus Regulations where there is non-compliance or blatant disregard for these safer travel rules."

TfW is asking all customers to please plan their journey in advance, maintain social distancing and not to travel if feeling unwell – all travel safer advice can be found at <https://trc.cymru/travel-safer>.

TfW has increased their security provision to work in partnership with BTP for enforcement purposes and has committed up to £150,000 of additional funding to bring in extra staff throughout the summer.

Photo credit: Transport for Wales

For today's rail news from railbusinessdaily.com click [here](#).