

## Day trips are not essential – Northern’s warning to NE customers

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Taking a day trip is not essential. That’s the message from rail operator Northern which is calling on all rail travellers in the north east to take extra time to think ‘Is my journey necessary?’.

The move comes after an increase in people using trains to get to the seaside and other beauty spots at a time when only essential journeys should be made. And, with social distancing on trains meaning capacity is down by 85 per cent, the operator is asking all passengers to leave space for those who need it most.

Sadly, last weekend, as temperatures soared so did passenger numbers across the north of England to destinations such as Blackpool, Hope Valley and Saltburn.

Tony Baxter, Regional Director for Northern, said: “We know the temptation is there to jump on the train and head to some of the fantastic destinations the north east has to offer, and in ordinary circumstance we would welcome everyone onto the railway.

“But we are still being affected by the coronavirus pandemic and, as a result of social distancing measures, capacity on Northern’s trains is significantly reduced.

“We are still advising people to use public transport only if no other options are available and if the journey is essential. The space we have on our trains should be left for those who need to make vital journeys.”

Tony added: “Destinations across the north of England will still be there to be enjoyed when the country recovers from coronavirus and I ask everyone to show a little more patience and take a little more time to consider if they absolutely have to travel by train.”

Northern is operating reduced timetables due to the coronavirus crisis and, where services do operate, capacity on trains will be significantly reduced as measures have been put in place to help people keep their distance.

Anyone who needs to make an essential journey should wear a mask, leave extra time for travel and check times carefully as services may be subject to further amendments and delays.

*Photo credit: David Sherrington*