

People advised to wear face coverings on public transport

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People should now aim to wear a face covering when in confined public spaces, such as some shops and public transport, the Government has advised.

Passengers using the Tyne and Wear Metro, buses, the Shields Ferry and rail services are being urged to follow this advice by regional transport body Nexus.

Nexus is today issuing new guidance for passengers including advice on face covering plus signs at stations and messaging to help people distance while using stations and vehicles.

Huw Lewis, Customer Services Director, at Nexus, said: "People should avoid using public transport and only make essential journeys, but if you need to travel then we want to make sure you can do so with confidence.

"Our message is to follow what the Government says, wear a face covering when using public transport, as you should in other confined spaces including some shops.

"This is a small step we can all take to help fight coronavirus, by reducing the chance of passing infection to other people.

“Passengers should continue to keep two metres from other people as much as possible, with face covering – such as a scarf or mask – providing an extra layer of protection when it is not always possible to do this.

“We are making sure stations, Metro trains and the Shields Ferry are cleaned to the highest standard, and that there is clear information on how to distance as you travel; bus companies are doing the same.

“We are following Government advice closely to provide covid-secure environments for our passengers throughout public transport.”

Nexus is issuing protective visors for its own frontline employees to wear when doing their duties on Metro, the Shields Ferry and bus stations.

Passenger numbers in Tyne and Wear are around 7% of normal levels with most people heeding advice to use public transport only for essential journeys, where they do not have access to a bike or car or are unable to walk.