

## FAQ's

### General

#### **What is 'Book my bus ride'?**

'Book my bus ride' lets you book a space on your bus before you travel, giving you the reassurance that your space is guaranteed.

#### **Why are you offering this service?**

The Covid-19 pandemic and the need for social distancing means we can't offer as many seats on each bus as we used to, so we think 'Book my bus ride' will appeal to key workers and other people who are reliant on public transport but concerned about whether there will be space on their bus.

#### **Is 'Book my bus ride' restricted to certain customers, such as key workers?**

No, anyone can book, including concessionary pass holders after 9am. Although key workers who rely on the bus are obviously a very important target audience, 'Book my bus ride' is available to everyone who has to use the bus and wants the peace of mind that booking will bring.

#### **Which services offer 'Book my bus ride'?**

We are piloting the service on three different routes to enable us to get a broad range of experience of how popular it is. These are the Brislington Park and Ride in Bristol, the 3a in Bath between Weston and Batheaston via the Royal United Hospital and Bath City Centre (with bookable buses operating under a new service number, 3b) and the T1 between Bristol and Thornbury, with bookable buses operating under a new service number, T1b.

We will add additional routes if the pilot proves successful. 'Book my bus ride' will initially run on Monday to Friday services only.

#### **When will 'Book my bus ride' be available from?**

Customers will be able to travel using 'Book my bus ride' from the following dates: -

- Brislington Park & Ride – Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020
- Bath 3b – Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020
- Thornbury T1b – Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Buses offering 'Book my bus ride' will follow the normal published route.

#### **Does this mean I have to book to be able to travel?**

All journeys that offer the 'Book my bus ride' service will still also have seats that are freely available without booking. Customers who are more flexible about when they travel and don't want to guarantee a space can continue to travel without a booking.

## Routes and Timetables

### **Will 'Book my bus ride' be available for all departures?**

'Book my bus ride' will be offered at the following times: -

- Brislington Park and Ride: all Monday to Friday departures
- T1b: all Monday to Friday departures in the morning and afternoon peaks
- 3b: all Monday to Friday departures

Please see the Routes page for timetables.

### **Why can I only book on certain buses on the T1b?**

We have focused on the busiest times of day for this service. We can change things if necessary, based on what we learn from the pilot, and we will continue to monitor travel patterns as the lockdown eases and consider the impact this may have on where bookable services will add the most value.

### **Why isn't the service I use available for booking?**

We've chosen a limited number of services so that the pilot can be launched as quickly as possible. We will add new services if the ability to book proves popular.

### **I have a query about the 'Book my bus ride' service. How do I contact you?**

If your question isn't answered here, you can email us at [BMBR-WOE@firstgroup.com](mailto:BMBR-WOE@firstgroup.com). Note that this email address is to be used for 'Book my bus ride' queries only.

## Booking

### **How do I make my booking?**

Simply use this website to select your route, origin and destination stop and departure time, make your payment where you don't already have a valid ticket or concessionary pass and we'll email you a booking confirmation that you scan or show when boarding the bus.

### **How far in advance can I book?**

7 days in advance of travel.

### **How close to the departure time can I book?**

Bookings can be made until 15 minutes before departure and will be subject to availability.

### **Can I amend my booking to change to another journey?**

Customers can register for an account in order to be able to change the time of day of an existing booking, free of charge. The date or service cannot be changed.

### **What happens if I need to cancel my booking?**

Bookings are non-refundable; however, customers can register for an account on 'Book my bus ride' in order to be able to change the time of day of an existing booking, free of charge. Account customers also benefit from being able to save their name and payment details, saving time for repeat bookings.

### **Can I only book online?**

Booking through the website is the fastest way to secure you space. Customers who are not able to make an online booking and receive their booking confirmation by email can contact us by phone on: 0786 697 7586, Monday to Friday from 09.00-17.00 (excluding Public Holidays).

We recommend booking by phone 7 days in advance as we will need to send you your booking confirmation by post (postage charges will apply and will be confirmed when making your booking).

**Can I book a specific seat?**

No, your booking guarantees you a space on a specific journey, rather than a specific seat. All seating will be socially distanced in line with government guidelines and we won't allow more than the number of available seats to be booked.

**Why can't I book on the First Bus app?**

This is something we can consider in future but would take time to develop, so for now we want to test this new concept and see how popular it is.

**I travel several times a week. Can I book for multiple days in one transaction?**

No, each journey requires a separate booking. This is something we can look at if the pilot demonstrates that the service is popular, and people would value being able to add multiple journeys to a basket and pay in one go.

**Can I book multiple seats when traveling in a group?**

Yes, multiple seats can be booked in one transaction.

**Up to two under 5s travel free with a fare paying adult on the Brislington Park and Ride. Can I include them in my booking?**

Yes, please book a seat for under 5s by using the 'Existing Ticket Holder' option when stating the passenger type. This will ensure their booking is free of charge.

**How do I check the names of my bus stops to ensure I book the correct ones?**

Timetables and route maps showing all stops can be found on the Routes page.

## Tickets and Fares

**Do I have to pay extra to use 'Book my bus ride'?**

No, there is no extra cost, including for concessionary card holders travelling after 9am. If you already have a valid First ticket for travel on your chosen journey, or are a concessionary card holder travelling after 9am, you will simply use your ticket or concessionary card on the bus and not have to pay any extra when making your 'Book my bus ride' reservation. Otherwise you can pay for a single or return journey when making your 'Book my bus ride' reservation.

**Is the booking open to all passenger types?**

Prices on the 'Book my bus ride' website reflect adult fares, but anyone who has already paid for a First ticket, including student, young person and child tickets, can make a booking at no additional cost.

**How much do I pay if I haven't got a First ticket and need to pay when making my 'Book my bus ride' reservation?**

Prices will reflect our normal adult fares for tickets bought prior to boarding for the zone in which you are travelling, with the return fare capped at the relevant Day ticket price: -

- Brislington Park and Ride: £2.25 for a single journey and £4.50 for a return
- Service 3b: £2.20 for a single journey and £4.30 for a return
- Service T1b: £3.85 for a single journey and £6.60 for a return, regardless of the distance travelled, in line with our normal West of England Zone mTicket fares. Journeys eligible for our Thornbury Town fare will cost £1.50 for a single and £3.00 for a return

**Can I use this booking service as a concessionary card holder?**

Yes, although the normal Diamond Card scheme time restrictions will apply for departures before 9am. Just follow the normal “Book my bus ride” booking process, scan your concessionary card on the bus as normal and show your booking email to the driver.

**Can I make a booking and then buy my ticket when I board the bus?**

No, customers using the ‘Book my bus ride service’ need to pay for a single or return journey when making their ‘Book my bus ride’ reservation, or board with a valid First ticket to scan on the ticket machine or show to the driver as normal.

Information on how to purchase First West of England tickets can be found on our website at [www.firstgroup.com](http://www.firstgroup.com) by selecting your area and then viewing the Tickets section.

## Boarding My Bus

**Will I be able to track my bus?**

Yes, all buses offering the “Book my bus ride” service will track in real time on our app and at bus stop displays, just like normal buses.

**How will I be able to tell the bus I’ve booked from other buses?**

The ‘T1b’ and ‘3b’ service numbers will be shown in the destination display on the front of the bus. Real time information on the First Bus app and at bus stops will also display the new service numbers.

**How do I show I have a booking when I board the bus?**

Once you've completed your booking, you'll be sent an email with your booking confirmation. If you already have a First ticket you simply need to scan or present this as normal and show your ‘Book my bus ride’ booking confirmation to the driver so that we can check that you have a valid reservation for the bus in question. There is no need to print the email out; just show your phone to the driver. If you don't have a First ticket and paid for your seat when making your booking, just scan the bar code on your booking confirmation against the ticket machine.

**Can I use my booking on another journey?**

No, your booking is only valid for the service, stops, date and time you selected when making your booking.

**What if I’ve missed the bus I’ve booked on?**

Bookings are not transferable to another departure, so customers will need to board the next available bus.