



Andrew Bus Driver – First Glasgow: March 2021

Andrew shares more about his story, what he loves about his job and his pride in keeping people connected through the pandemic.

"Before driving the buses, I went to college and worked at McDonald's, it was a great wee place to work, good training and people.

I've now been driving buses since October 2018. I passed my car test exactly a year before that and then I went for the bus test as I'd always wanted to do it! I couldn't get a car when I passed my test originally, I couldn't do it financially. So it was 6 months after I passed my car test before I got a car, then I waited another 6 months to get some experience.

I work out in Clydebank, I've got my own wee Rota, working 6 days a week, Mon-Sat about 55 hours a week. I get one Saturday off per month, I drive from Clydebank bank and do local runs around Duntocher & Drumchapel areas. I know everyone and everyone knows me! I've done that route now for 2 years, it's good going! Always on the same route and rota! I like to know what I'm doing and I like to know my passengers! I like to know everybody, plus after a while you start to get sweeties!

It's quite difficult and challenging at times just now as everyone has to wear a mask unless exempt and sometimes you have to reason with them! The odd passenger comes on and argues and you have to just reason the best you can in line with company policy. It's made the whole 'getting to know your passenger' much harder as you can't speak to your passengers up close anymore and I have to get them on, sit them down and get them off the bus again!

It's probably the elderly passengers affected most, as I drive the local areas, they do sit and chat and you can't not chat back! You can just tell sometimes that you're the only person they've spoken to. They tell you random things like what they had for breakfast. I just reply and just

say aye alright you're making me hungry now! It's matters to them and it matters to me.

Now the passenger count has gone down and you're driving a bus for sometimes 10-11 hours a day and picking up no one, it's not nice! It's affecting everything, what we provide to them and them us!

I do take a lot of pride and I'm still out there, I'm still in a job and I'm so thankful for that. I'm taking loads of NHS workers from A to B, down to the hospital at Clydebank for the day, it does give you a good bit of satisfaction and makes me feel like I'm doing my bit. The passengers thank me and I just say I'm doing my job! There was someone the other day that came on the bus and they worked on the COVID-19 ward, and they were telling me....sad stories... and they got off the bus and was thanking me!! And I was like, no need to thank me I'm just doing my job, just like you!

It's really hard at the moment as I'm quite a chatty person so finding some of this quite hard. I get to know my passengers from everywhere. There are passengers that wave to me from everywhere, they come on my bus ask me how I'm doing, then you have the football crowd and the football banter! The guys when they could go to the pub, but still get the chat when they're going to the shops, it's brilliant!

My favourite part of the job is interacting with people. At McDonald's I was such a people person and I just wanted to carry that onto the buses! There are a lot of people that say 'you cannae talk' and 'bus drivers are grumpy and don't talk to anyone' but that's not the case! You go on and you make peoples day a wee bit more positive, provide a happy service and you want them to remember your journey as a good one! Not a horrible one! They'll go home and tell people about the journey and the funny/nice things that happened! Passengers are often taken aback by being asked how they are too!"

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