



## **Michelle Bus Driver – First Aberdeen: March 2021**

Here, Michelle tells us more about her passengers, her routes and the important social connections of bus, especially for older people.

*"My passengers and greeting them is my most favourite part of my job, especially the older people because older people rely in the buses more. You'll sometimes see them try to run for the bus, so I slow down so they know not to rush, stop and wait for them. Or I'll wave, so they know it's okay. I wait and they always come on with a thank you and appreciate the gesture. But what I like about the older people, they always try and sneak you biscuits in wrappers, boiled sweets and things. They'll say 'they're in wrappers' hoping that's ok!!*

*The little kids too like to wave so you'll give them a wave back! Sometimes, if there's no traffic you'll give them a toot, and you see their little faces all excited. The bus is good for everyone, most come on and they're straight onto their phone to catch up with social media and everything else and relax on their journey, whilst older people just love looking out the window and chilling!*

*What I also like about the buses is, in different weather everything looks different, which makes it more interesting. Its lovely when you see some passengers that meet everyday on union street, it's people that are on their own. And sometimes when you're walking from one bus to the next you pass them and get a big wave and they shout over and you'll hear 'that's my friend' or 'she's lovely' and it really makes you appreciate the job that you're doing, so even when you're not with the passengers - they know who you are.*

*Sometimes I'll be in Asda and people will wave, or say 'Hi', then I'm working out how I know them, is it somebody from work? Is that somebody from the pub? Is that somebody from darts? and it's like no, It's a passenger off the bus! And then you'll hear them say to someone. 'Oh, that was my bus driver!'*

*When I was down in Halifax and due to come home, the day before I came home a regular lady waited for my bus, letting one go before me so that she could give me a little Toblerone with a gift tag that said 'thank you driver!'. She'd waited the week before too, she had a wheelchair as well. She said I just wanted to catch you before you go home.*

*You know, if you make an effort with the passengers, you can see they appreciate it. I always say 'it's nice to be nice', it doesn't matter what you do. It's nice to be nice.*

*I had two people just the other week on the same day that wrote into my boss to say how happy and cheery and smooth my driving was and it was a pleasure to be on my bus.*

*So its pays off. That's three or four that I've had and I've only been a bus driver a year and a half! Customers are really quick to criticise and phone in with a complaint and less so to write in for a positive experience so it means a lot to the drivers when they do!"*

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