



# Procedure for Lost or Confused Passengers

**If a passenger appears lost, confused, or remains on the bus until the end of the route:**

- Contact your supervisor immediately for guidance
- Follow the established procedures to ensure the passenger's safety and well-being

## Key Reminders

**Allow passengers extra time to find their bus pass and get seated.**

- Always be kind, patient, and friendly.
- Ask empowering questions (*"I wonder if..."*)
- Take time to make eye contact before talking



## Making a Difference

Supporting passengers with dementia can significantly enhance their confidence and independence in using public transport.

### Margaret, said

*"If I knew that bus drivers understood how dementia affects people like me and that they would always treat us with patience and kindness, it would give me confidence to use the bus again."*

By understanding the challenges faced by individuals with dementia and offering compassionate assistance, YOU can make a positive impact on their daily lives and help them maintain their freedom and dignity.

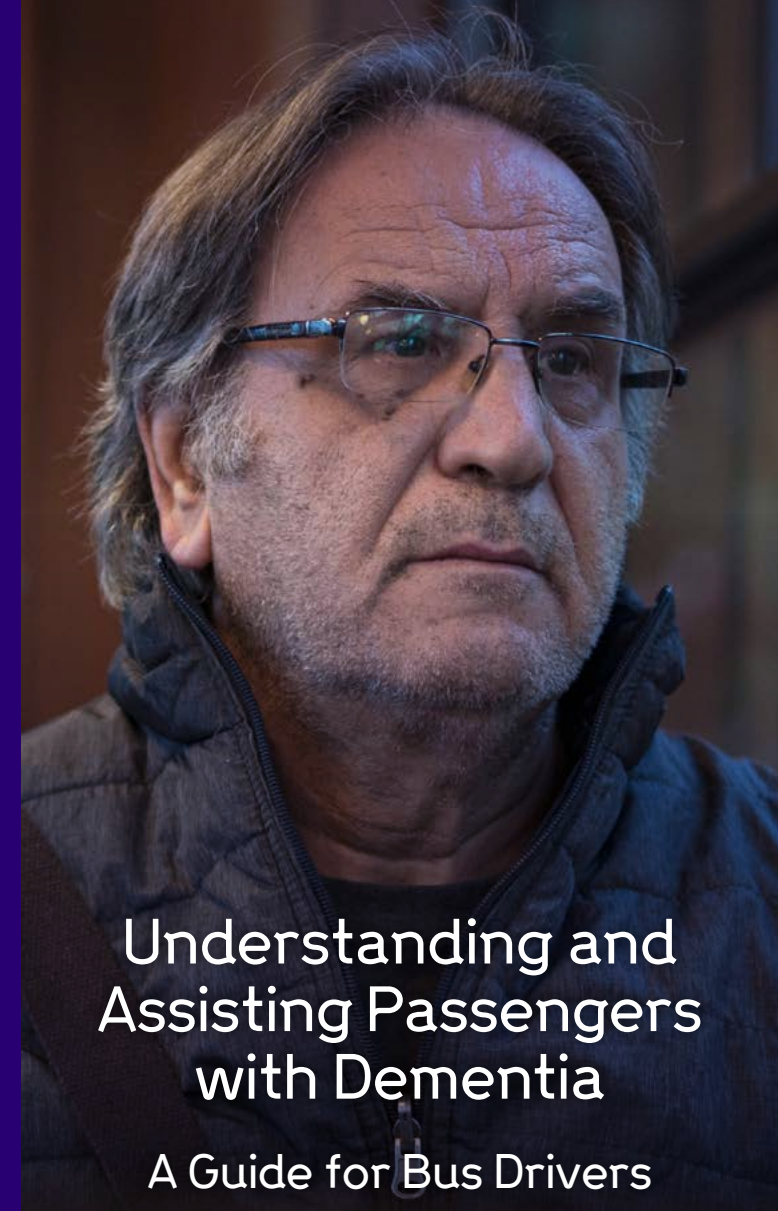
### You can make a difference.

Thank you for your commitment to making our bus services inclusive and supportive for all passengers.



If you would like more information, please call **Alzheimer's Society Dementia Support Helpline** on **0333 150 3456**, or visit **[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)**

This leaflet was written in collaboration with ex-driver Del who is a carer for his partner Margaret who has dementia, and with Alzheimer's Society and First Bus



## Understanding and Assisting Passengers with Dementia

A Guide for Bus Drivers



## What is Dementia?

The word 'dementia' describes a set of symptoms that over time can affect memory, problem-solving, language and behaviour, and is caused by different diseases that damage the brain.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia.

Dementia is a group of symptoms. It's caused by different diseases that damage the brain. The symptoms get worse over time and include:

- memory loss
- confusion and needing help with daily tasks
- problems with language and understanding
- changes in behaviour.

Dementia is progressive, which means symptoms may be relatively mild at first, but they get worse over time.

There are many types of dementia but Alzheimer's disease is the most common. The next most common is vascular dementia.



## Who Does Dementia Affect?

It is estimated that in Essex there are around 23,000 people over the age of 65 are living with dementia, and this number is set to increase by a staggering 33% by 2030.

Dementia doesn't just affect the elderly. It's important to be aware that people of any age might be living with dementia, including those in their 30s and 40s, and may need additional support when using the bus.



## How Does Dementia Affect People? And How Does This Impact Bus Use?

Dementia impacts so much more than just memory, it can affect:

### Disorientation

**Confusion about familiar surroundings, time or place.**

**For example:** Darker evenings make familiar landmarks more difficult to spot, which can lead to confusion.

**Look for:** A customer with dementia might be unsure of their destination or where on their journey they are, they may also appear confused over the time of day/night.

They could be inappropriately dressed for the weather.

### Depth Perception and Colour Vision

**Trouble distinguishing distances and colours.**

**For example:** Customers with dementia might find it difficult to see objects such as handrails, and distinguish changes in floor levels, making it challenging to manage the space around them.

**Look for:** A customer with dementia may need extra time to reach their seat.

### Movement and Balance

**Challenges with coordination and stability.**

**For example:** The unexpected stop/start of the bus can be challenging to navigate, and there is an increased risk of a fall.

**Look for:** A customer with dementia might take longer to board the bus and find their pass or money, they might also need extra time to reach their seat safely.

### Senses

**Difficulty with processing sensory information.**

**For example:** Because the bus environment is noisy and sometimes unpredictable, this can make it confusing for people with dementia.

**Look for:** A customer with dementia might appear confused or disoriented and could have difficulty hearing instructions unless spoken to directly.

### Speech

**Difficulty communicating effectively.**

**For example:** Customers with dementia might have difficulty when asking for destinations or remembering to ring the bell at the right time for their stop.

**Look for:** A customer with dementia may have difficulty communicating with words or sentences.

## How Can I Help?

**If Someone Appears Confused:**

- Look directly at the person, speak clearly, and use a friendly tone.
- Be patient and give them lots of space and time to respond to you, and to find their seat.

**Offer Assistance:**

- Reassure that there is no rush, they can take their time, and you are here if they need help.
- Direct questions that require a yes or no answer can be really difficult for people with dementia to process, so empower them with supportive suggestions: Instead of "Have you got your phone/bus pass?" say "I wonder if your phone/bus pass is in your handbag?"

**Ensure Safety and Comfort:**

- Allow enough time for the person to find a seat and sit down safely.
- Never leave an elderly or confused person stranded. If you don't act on what you are seeing you could leave vulnerable people in unsafe situations.