



BATTLE AREA COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

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Report from B.A.C.T. - March 2026

1. Running costs. Our running costs have increased dramatically with an impact to our financial reserves. With the ongoing situation in the Middle East diesel prices are increasing daily. And with the possibility of fuel shortages, we may be forced to suspend services. Our vehicle insurance costs have also increased, and despite looking at alternate providers, we are unable to find cheaper cover.
2. Passenger numbers. In the first nine months of 2025, we recorded over 4,000 single passenger journeys, not including our private hire numbers. Our Hail & Ride (B67-B79) services are still being affected by unexpected roadworks and closures. We continue to run our Eastbourne flexible bus services (B81, B82 & B88), but services into Rye & Kent remain suspended pending a decision on their future.
3. Personnel & recruitment. Two more of our drivers retired this year due to personal circumstances. We are currently trying to recruit more but finding drivers with the required D1 licence is proving difficult. Our Treasurer also retired this year after more than 20 years' service. We also said goodbye to another long-serving director.
4. Roadworks/closures. We are still having issues with roadworks/road closures impacting our services. We still get conflicting information from ESCC, East Sussex Highways and the on-site contractors. The "one.network" website does not always reflect the current situation.
5. Office & Administration. Our office manager is still having to work remotely due to both family and health circumstances. However, he does attend the office and continues to manage passenger enquiries/bookings along with all required data returns.
6. Timetables & Fares. Our fare structure will be changed from 1 April 2026 as these have remained unchanged since 2014. Our timetables are in the final stage of review with the Office of the Traffic Commissioner, and we hope these will be ready for June 2026.

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