BATTLE AREA COMMUNITY TRANSPORT
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Report on B.A.C.T. bus services – April 2022

This is to provide an update, regarding our operations both during and in the "wake" of the Covid-19 pandemic.

On Tuesday 17th March 2020, the decision was taken, to immediately suspend all operations, i.e., bus services and bus hires. This was not an easy decision for us and was made knowing the impact it would have on our passengers. However, it was felt this was the best way to follow the Government's guidance on supressing the spread of Covid-19.

On Monday 28th September 2020, we restarted our B67-B79 services, under Covid restrictions. These include restricting seating to 50% capacity, i.e., a maximum of eight passengers. Also, additional hygiene measures were adopted, including the requirement for all onboard to wear face coverings, use the hand sanitiser gel provided, that nobody eat or drink whilst onboard and that all rubbish must be taken away by individuals for safe disposal.

It was decided to only start with the local B67-B79 services, as this would limit the area we were going to be covering. The flexible B80-B90 services all cover a larger area and naturally increase risks to those onboard. Also, with only eight passengers allowed to be seated, each service would have to be run at a financial loss. Finally, we would still need drivers to cover these and we only had sufficient cover for the B67-B79 services.

When the decision was taken to restart, we had to consider both the health and well-being of our volunteers, along with our passengers, most of whom also fall into the highest risk category. We also had to consider that our vehicles; (of which the newest is now 13 years old); had been sitting unused for six months, and that they required maintenance checks before they could be put back on the road. At the time of resuming services, only two of our minibuses could be started and at some expense. Of our remaining two, the third was eventually brought back into service. Sadly, we had no option other than to sell the fourth, as it was uneconomical to repair.

Our Board of Directors met in October 2020, and with only two buses running at that time and a limited number of volunteers being available to drive, the decision was taken that our B80-B90 flexi services would remain suspended for the remainder of 2020, with our bus hire services also remaining suspended.

There were two further National Lockdowns in November 2020 and between January and March 2021, once again requiring us to suspend all our services.

In August 2021, we resumed our flexi services to Eastbourne & Rye. And we have only just resumed our Kent services this month, i.e., Tunbridge Wells, Tenterden and Ashford. Hire services have resumed but in a limited capacity.

However, over the past few weeks, we have lost several of our personnel, either due to testing positive for Covid, health issues or other family priorities. As you are no doubt aware, Battle Area Community Transport is not a commercial entity. We are a registered charity, and our drivers and directors are all unpaid volunteers. As our drivers are exclusively retirees, they fall into the highest risk category.

Our primary concern has always been to protect the health and well-being of our volunteers, passengers, and the wider community.

We hope that this explains the actions we have taken over the past two years and that we can rely on your continued support during these difficult times.

Yours sincerely

Bryn Newman
Company Secretary
Battle Area Community Transport

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FLEXIBLE BUS SERVICES

1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022

BATTLE AREA inc. Ashburnham, Catsfield, Netherfield, Hooe, Mountfield, Robertsbridge, Sedlescombe and Westfield

B82 To EASTBOURNE 21 Apr, 19 May, 16 Jun, 21 Jul, 18 Aug, 15 Sep.
B84 To ASHFORD/TENTERDEN 22 Apr, 24 Jun, 26 Aug.
B87 To TUNBRIDGE WELLS 9 May, 4 Jul, 5 Sep.

BURWASH AREA inc. Hurst Green and Etchingham

B88 To EASTBOURNE 11 Apr, 13 Jun, 8 Aug.
B89 To ASHFORD/TENTERDEN 20 May, 15 Jul, 16 Sep.
B90 To RYE 27 May, 28 Jul, 22 Sep.

TICEHURST AREA inc. Flimwell and Stonegate

B80 To ASHFORD/TENTERDEN 13 May, 8 Jul, 9 Sep.
B81 To EASTBOURNE 25 Apr, 23 May, 27 Jun, 25 Jul, 22 Aug, 26 Sep.
B83 To RYE 14 Apr, 9 Jun, 11 Aug.

YOUR BUS PASSES CAN BE USED ON ALL OUR SERVICES

All bookings need to be made in advance. Times and Pick-up locations will be arranged according to requests made.
Bookings commence 3rd week of preceding month.

Call the office on 01424 870955.

URGENT!

BATTLE AREA COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU!

Volunteer Drivers Required.
Could you Drive this Bus?

You do not need a PCV or CPC licence but you MUST have a category D1 licence. Training provided. Travel expenses paid.

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unsung heroes
The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2008

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