



CORONAVIRUS
STAY ALERT TO
THE SYMPTOMS

**HIGH TEMPERATURE OR
NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH OR
LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL?**
Find out how to get a test, and how
long to isolate, at nhs.uk/coronavirus

STAY ALERT
CONTROL
THE VIRUS
SAVE LIVES



COVID19

Risk review

Community Bus
services



Connecting People with Places

Nigel HINCH

ABILITY (Northants) cic

FINAL DRAFT for DISCUSSION

Notes

This document covers the procedures to be adopted by **ABILITY** (Northants) cic for its community bus services.

The purpose of the document is ensuring all relevant parties are aware of its responsibilities to minimise the risks associated with travelling on the bus.

It is formatted in such a way that the relevant sections can be used as standalone documents for use on social media, posters, website and general communication for passengers, friends and family, and our stakeholders

This risk assessment will be reviewed and updated based on advice from the Government and relevant industry trade bodies.



Introduction

ABILITY (Northants) cic operates community bus services within the Northamptonshire and North Oxfordshire area, we have been extremely successful in providing valuable bus services to communities where traditional public service bus services are no longer available. Operating a fleet of minibuses, regular services are made to supermarkets, town centres, retail parks and social and leisure venues.

The service is operated as a not for profit social enterprise with a mix of volunteers and employees in the team. The scheme operates using a section 22 permit issued by the Traffic Commissioners with a flexible route registration.

Following the announcement by the Government the demand for the service reduced to virtually zero as most users were placed in self isolation or were advised to shield. People over the age of 70 were advised to stay at home for 12 weeks.

During the COVID 19 (Coronavirus) the decision was taken to suspend all services from 20th March 2020 to minimise the spread of the virus amongst passengers and our team. During the lockdown period we continued to keep in touch with our service users with telephone calls, postcards and social media.

Summary

It is currently envisaged that services could recommence late June or early July 2020 subject to lifting of the lockdown restrictions, sufficient demand from users and a clear plan to minimise the risks to users and our own team. Most of our users are deemed to be vulnerable due to age and underlying health reasons

The scope of this document covers the risk analysis undertaken and the actions to be taken by everyone involved in using and providing the service.

- Our Team of Drivers
- Passengers who can and cannot travel
- Passengers mobility
- Vehicle Capacity
- Social distancing requirements
- Standard operating procedures
- Cleaning of Vehicles
- Ventilation and air conditioning
- Service/Route Frequency
- Group outings and Trips

Guidance was sought from Public Health England, Dept of Transport, Community Transport Association, Local Authorities, other operators, and internet research.

Our Insurers have agreed that tasks are risk assessed and the common sense approach for social distancing and use of PPE if appropriate.

How will everyone be kept safe on the bus?

ABILITY (Northants) cic has reviewed and detailed the safety measures that it will implement for all travel both during and beyond the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. We will ***“provide a controlled environment that is safe for travelling as well as ensuring our passengers’ health and wellbeing.”***

Our 10 step guidance

1. Anyone with Coronavirus symptoms will not be permitted to travel (High Temperature, new continuous cough, loss of taste or smell)
2. All journeys are pre booked so we can provide contact tracing for every passenger and journey
3. The Driver will advise which seats can be occupied as we have reduced the seating capacity to allow social distancing.
4. All passengers will need to board the bus unaided and be able to fit the seat belt themselves as we must minimise close contact
5. Passengers must always wear a face mask on the bus **(Mandatory)** and we recommend wearing of gloves. Upon boarding, passengers are encouraged to use the hand gel.
6. Passengers must take with them all waste items such as tissues, disposable gloves and masks and not leave them on the bus
7. Journey times to be no longer than 30 mins (unless agreed) to minimise transmission of the virus
8. The buses are fitted with extraction fans and the windows will be open to allow frequent air changes. The air conditioning system will only be used if necessary
9. We actively keep cleaning the interior touch points to minimise transmission of the virus
10. Passengers should follow the guidance of the government regarding hand washing, distancing, avoid touch your face, minimising the spread of the virus

We have a limited supply of surgical masks available on the bus for £1.50 donation

We appreciate that these precautions and procedures are somewhat onerous, however it is in all our interests to do what we can to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus

Should you require any further information or have any specific considerations and requirements then please do not hesitate to contact us on 07799 522097

Safe Operating Procedures

The Operating Procedure document is based on current [government guidance](#). It also considers its' coronavirus COVID-19 risk assessment.

We are committed to proactively reducing the spread of any disease and maintain the health of our staff and passengers. As such, passengers are urged to follow this guide to help maintain the hygiene levels that we have in place to reduce the spread of any disease.

How do we protect passengers?

The following Safe Operating Procedure is based on the current official government guidelines and is also based on the measures identified and required through our Covid:19 Risk Assessment. The transmission of Corona virus is primarily through people touching surfaces contaminated by the virus and then transferring that contamination to their mouth, eyes or nose. There is also a possibility of breathing in droplets expelled by another person when in close face to face contact.

With these facts in mind, please be assured that your bus will arrive in a sanitised, virus free condition; and that we have the following measures in place prevent the spread of the virus while on board the bush. Our normal front facing seating arrangements avoids 'face to face' proximity and the physical barrier of the high-backed seats, plus the use of face coverings and masks will all help to ensure maximum safety.

1. Our driver will arrive just a few minutes before departure time, to minimise the time that passengers spend on the vehicle once boarded. Please maintain social distancing when approaching and speaking with our driver.
2. When your driver arrives, he or she will alight the vehicle and gesture for you to board. If you have shopping bags, trolleys and mobility aids that need to be handled by our driver they will wear protective gloves. Again, please ensure you observe social distancing while waiting to board.
3. Our driver will ask passengers to load from the back first and passengers that live together may be seated together. The double seat immediately behind the driver is not normally available for use. We require that you wear face coverings during the journey, preferably your own; however our driver will also have masks available.
4. Once everyone has boarded, our driver will board and then carry out the safety and information briefing before commencing the journey.
5. As part of our drivers briefing he or she will advise that upon arrival at the destination he or she will be exiting first and that once he or she has left the vehicle then all passengers may safely disembark, starting from the front - and of course must continue to observe social distancing.
6. Our driver will drive with the vehicle windows partially open (weather permitting) and the extractor fan operating to expel air from the vehicle cabin. [The air conditioning system will only be used if necessary](#). The aim is to have a plentiful supply of fresh air which helps to prevent the spread of germs. The driver will also be wearing a face mask while driving.
7. During your visit and prior to returning to the vehicle for the return journey, please try to wash your hands with soap and to use the hand gel.

VEHICLE CLEANING GUIDELINES.

Our cleaning system includes daily cleaning of all floors and surfaces, mopping with disinfectant of all floor surfaces, disinfectant wiping of dash areas, driver controls and handles.

It also includes cleaning all, handrails, hand grabs, seat belt buckles, armrests between all journeys

PASSENGER CAPACITY GUIDELINES.

The following guidelines are based on the current official government guidelines and are also based on the measures identified and required through our Covid:19 Risk Assessment.

The primary concern on board buses is that of social distancing; all our passengers should keep their distance from people outside their household, and we recognise that this is not always possible. The transmission of Coronavirus is primarily through people touching surfaces contaminated by the virus and then transferring that contamination to their mouth, eyes or nose. There is also a possibility of breathing in droplets expelled by another person when in close face to face contact.

Our normal front facing seating arrangements avoid 'face to face' proximity and the physical barrier of the high backed seats, plus the use of face coverings and masks will all help to ensure maximum safety.

To set out passenger capacity recommendations for our buses, the following provisions and policies are in place during this pandemic.

1. All passengers will be requested to wear a face covering, preferably their own, however our drivers will carry a stock on board.
2. Passengers should look to maintain at least 1 metre distance from each other during all boarding, travelling, and alighting from our buses.
3. For the on-going safety of our drivers and passengers, the double seat immediately behind the driver may not be available for use.
4. Our buses all have forward facing, high backed seats, which do create an important physical barrier between passengers. Passengers will be seated on alternate seats on each row.
5. Passengers who live together in the same household, may sit together on a double seat. Where this occurs, the seat opposite, next to the aisle must not be used

REDUCED BUS CAPACITY RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above provisions, the recommended capacities for fleet is as below. An illustration of the principle of seating 2 passengers per row on alternate seats is also shown below. This example excludes where passengers who live together in the same household will sit together.

NORMAL SEATING CAPACITY	CORONAVIRUS ADJUSTED PASSENGER CAPACITY (Generally, all rows are utilised, except the seats behind the driver,).
Mercedes Sprinter minibus 16 seats + Driver	6 - 10 passengers.
Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle 4 + 1 w/c + Driver	2 – 3 Passengers plus Wheelchair user

Reduced capacity - Covid 19

Mercedes 6 + Driver	Driver	N/A	Seat 1	N/A	Seat 4	Luggage Locker
		N/A	N/A	Seat 3	N/A	
Maximum spacing 6 Singles	N/A					Seat 6
	Door	Seat 2	N/A	Seat 5	N/A	

Mercedes 8 - 9 + Driver	Driver	N/A	Seat 1	Seat 3	Seat 5	Luggage Locker
		N/A	N/A	Seat 4	Seat 6	
Maximum Same Household 3 Couples & 3 Singles + 1 opt	Seat 9 ^					Seat 7
	Door	Seat 2	N/A	N/A		Seat 8

Mercedes 8 - 9 + Driver	Driver	N/A	Seat 1	Seat 3	Seat 5	Luggage Locker
		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Maximum allowable 1 couple & 6 singles + 1 opt	Seat 9 ^					Seat 7 *
	Door	Seat 2	Seat 4	Seat 6		Seat 8 *

VW Caddy WAV	Driver	Seat 2	
		Seat 4*	Wheelchair
	Seat 3 ^	Seat 1	

Seat	Seat available
Seat *	Passengers from same household
Seat	Not Available
Seat ^	Optional Seat (not normally used)

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