



Bakers Travelines

March 2010



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Travelines– sustainability- live information at our finger tips– loyalty schemes– ‘the green mile’, carbon neutral holidays– setting sail with Pirates– looking forward to 2010– an award winning service—the big kiss

Welcome to the March edition of Travelines, our company newsletter for employees, business partners and clients. Winter is finally behind us and we are seeing green shoots as the Holiday booking season approaches. We look back on the events since our last newsletter in October 2009...

As someone once said – we are living in interesting times. This last six months have certainly been a mix of trial and triumph. As a business we have put on significant growth in our bus service operations – taking on new drivers as well as additional vehicles to service new routes. We now need a period to consolidate and assess the impact that this will have on the company’s overall profitability.

Sustainability

Our theme for 2010 is sustainability. That means fine tuning the business to ensure we smooth out every last wrinkle of value for money. This involves a combination of training and investment in the technology needed to operate more efficiently. Training is intended to deliver good customer service levels; better equipment will also help improve customer service but most importantly it will enable smarter use of our resources and in particular reduce fuel consumption and vehicle wear and tear – our operating costs.

In action we have now completed training to NVQ level 2 for 60 drivers over the last twelve months and this is ongoing. Our focus on defensive driving not only ensures a smoother ride for passengers by reading the road conditions ahead, but it will also improve vehicle fuel economy. All vehicles are being equipped with a new monitoring device designed to help drivers achieve a smooth style of driving, identifying in real time, acceleration, harsh cornering or braking. The software records the drivers’ performance and allows the ops team to set benchmarks for excellence. Benefits to the driver are less stress and support from his colleagues. Bottom line for the business is better fuel economy, longer tyre life and lower maintenance costs.

Live information

We have also installed tracker devices into our fleet. In operation this technology provides the location and movements of every vehicle. Effectively this live information enables customers to be updated on arrival times at pick-up points. Pay back for the business is the ability to plan routes to avoid congestion and make changes in real time to ensure optimum fuel consumption. The system has also been used recently to help find stray passengers.

Ultimately ‘sustainability’ means we remain competitive – continue to win new business and continue to benefit through our wages and pensions and in the long run, the security that this underwrites for everyone employed by Bakers Coaches.

May I take this opportunity to pass on our thanks to all; Bus and Coach drivers, engineers, cleaners and office staff for their efforts in keeping our services operating during this winter. All our drivers were faced with some very challenging conditions. We set some records – three hours for one journey from Hanley to Biddulph and our Continental drivers were faced with 3 ft of snow along with a 12 hour drive from Dover to Biddulph. And finally we have passed on some suggestions about gritting priorities to the local authorities.

Phil Baker, Managing Director



Bakerbus and Bakers Coaches

Congratulations to all our drivers for passing their NVQs – professional driving standards are an important part of the Bakers ethos. And thanks also for keeping our scheduled services, school contracts and private hires – more or less – as advertised, during the adverse weather conditions.

Bus Miles

The Bakers Bus Miles scheme has been well received, with positive comments coming back from the drivers as well as the passengers. So far about 20 customers have redeemed their collections to buy holidays and day trips. Stephanie Hutt, Tours Manager, is optimistic that the numbers will start to increase from here, as some people will achieve 50 journey’s easier than others.



'The Green Mile'- Carbon neutral holidays

News from the Green Coach Company
All Bakers Holidays travel is now Carbon Neutral

The Green tourist- 'take nothing but photographs, leave nothing but footprints...'

Since the travel industry accounts for a large proportion of carbon emissions, Bakers Coaches recognises its social responsibility to do everything possible to help reduce pollution.

This impacts on almost every aspect of the company's operations, Modern buses and coaches are fuel efficient and the fleet is checked frequently for CO2 emissions as part of the routine maintenance. The measures that we have taken to improve driving style and route planning will all help reduce the company's carbon footprint. We are harvesting rainwater for the vehicle wash. Our diesel storage and yard drainage are all fully compliant with stringent environmental protection legislation.

So what more can we do?

We use all our charm and marketing skills to persuade people to take their holidays in the UK and use coach travel rather than go by car – that should help a bit. Having got a full coach full of passengers however, we are still burning fuel to get them to their destination.

This is where we turn to carbon offset initiatives.

Book your holiday with Bakers and help fund a green energy project. That's how it works – every passenger mile will make a contribution to our carbon neutral programme. Operated in partnership with Carbon Footprint.com, this is a worldwide initiative to support alternative energy solutions – see www.carbonfootprint.com.

So we can boast that Bakers Holidays will not cost the earth – as well as going the extra mile to make your journey comfortable and fuel efficient.



Coach Hire Services

Staffordshire Brownies set sail for 'Pirate Adventure'

In good scouting tradition Bakers Coaches promised 'to do our best' to support the Girlguiding UK's centenary celebrations. Our mission was to transport 650 Brownies to the Haven Holiday Park in Hafan Y Mor, Pwllheli, North Wales for a weekend 'Pirate' adventure held last year.

Although there were dreadful weather conditions on the journey, this did not dampen the spirits of those travelling. Even the coach drivers joined in the spirit by wearing fancy dress hats and singing along to pirate sea-shanties.

Speaking on the outcome of the event, Julie Tanner of Girlguiding Staffordshire added "The adventure was a great success. We would like to thank all involved, including Bakers Coaches of Biddulph, for transporting everyone safely to and from the venue".

Looking forward to 2012 Olympics

Bakers Coaches has passed stage 2 of the pre qualification approval process for the forthcoming Olympics and we expect to be in receipt of the first requests for quotations over the coming months.

Prism attends awards ceremony in London without leaving the office..

Thanks to Bakers Coaches, key members of staff from Prism, an IT Solutions company were able to continue work providing essential client support services as they travelled to London to attend an industry award presentation. While it is good to win industry recognition, the time out and costs for travel and overnight accommodation in London are difficult to justify.

As a member of the North Staffs Chamber of Commerce, David Collins-Lafferty, Business Development Manager for Prism knew that Bakers Coaches provided executive travel services. He was able to commission the latest addition to the fleet which is fully equipped with communications, refreshments and washroom facilities.

"This provided the ideal solution. Our team travelled in style and arrived relaxed and stress-free to enjoy the awards celebrations", said Mr Collins-Lafferty.



And finally: Well done to everybody for making it work – here is a big kiss on the backside.

The BIG KISS (Knowledge, Information, Sharing and Support) is the new name for the local Jobs and Training Open Day (formally the Congleton Borough Careers Exhibition) which is an annual event aimed at connecting employment skills and education at a local level.

