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Bus Deregulation in the UK: A Passenger's View



Bus users UK aim:

- To strengthen the voice of bus users in the discussion of public transport issues
- To increase the influence of bus passengers on local and national decisions affecting bus services
- To develop good communication between bus companies and their passengers

Bus users UK activities:

- Bus Users' Surgeries
- Bus Appeal Body
- Passenger Focus 2010



Deregulation of buses – the negatives:

1. Information provision – lack of comprehensive information
2. Commercial operators concentrate resources on most profitable corridors, leaving less commercial routes and areas under threat of poor or non-existent service
3. Lack of “all operator” tickets in many areas – a particular problem where there are several operators
4. Increasing costs due to claims, staff pay deals, reimbursement from authorities for concessionary pass travel journeys lead operators to consider dropping marginal services. The “safety net” of local authorities subsidising replacements is often an issue as they too are under pressure to reduce spending in their budgets.



Deregulation of buses – the positives

1. Commercial incentives free of political interference for operators to respond to the market, and thus demand. Around 80% of bus services are provided “commercially”, i.e. without subsidy and decided by the private operator on a profit basis.
 2. Investment through private financial streams for new vehicles and infrastructure.
 3. Cheap travel deals for regular travellers.
 4. Increasingly staff are being trained on customer care training, for example safer and smoother driving, health and safety.
- Fine examples of how the deregulated system can work: Nottingham, Brighton, Derby and Edinburgh.