

# Helping Hand Scheme



The Sussex Bus is proud to support a *new* scheme to help any passengers that have extra requirements. Called **Helping Hand**, it has been designed so that our bus drivers accommodate your specific needs, to make your journey easier.

Your free card will display a basic instruction to the driver, such as **Please lower the ramp**, for passengers that may be unsteady on their feet.

This card has been introduced following feedback from passengers and after learning from best practice in similar schemes in other areas across the UK.

**The card is free** for any passenger that may need extra assistance or require the driver to be made aware of something *discreetly* without having to verbally communicate it.

**The card is discrete**, and will not label any passenger's conditions but only provide the information passenger's need to convey directly to the driver. However, a passenger can have a bespoke card made for them that does state the holders condition.

**What will the card offer the holder?** It will allow the passenger to be able to communicate quickly, directly and discreetly with the driver any extra assistance that they may require without having to explain every time they board the bus.

**We want to help our drivers to help you.** The card is bright yellow in order to be easily seen and therefore can be used as a **Hailing Card** to an approaching bus. This can communicate with the driver before the passenger has even boarded that they may require extra assistance or have specialised requirements.



It can also display, if required, an emergency contact telephone number.

This may benefit passengers that suffer from a medical condition such as epilepsy, Alzheimer's or dementia.

## How to apply for Helping Hand

Applying is easy, just call **01273 886200** where a customer service operator will happy to help.

**See the following page for examples of Helping Hand cards ...**

## What kind of things can the card help with and what will the card say?

The passenger may need time to find a seat in priority seating before the bus pulls away and the card can inform the driver of this by saying:

### **Please wait until I am seated.**

For passengers that are blind, or partially sighted, the card could inform the driver that they will need to be told when it is their stop by saying:

### **Call out my requested stop.**

As they board they will inform the driver of which stop.

The passenger may require the ramp to be put down to allow easier boarding as well as the step being lowered and their card could say:

### **Lower the ramp and step.**

We also have passengers that have extra special requirements such as a pushchair that has oxygen being carried. The card would say:

### **Pushchair can't be folded.**

We have a passenger in his early 20's that suffers from a debilitating condition. His card will advise that he needs a priority seat so that he doesn't have to explain why it is essential he has one of the seats. His card, as agreed, will say:

### **Requires priority seating.**

We will have a list on our website of possible cards however we will be able to discuss with the passenger personally their requirements and therefore to be able to design bespoke cards as required. We would also of course be happy to discuss the message with the passenger's representative, such as a parent, foster parent, social worker, teacher or carer.

## What will the card look like?



Credit card sized, with one side clearly showing the instruction to the driver and the other side has space for an optional name and emergency contact number.



We will provide a free clear double plastic wallet, which can also carry passenger's concessionary cards if required. For customers who would need to keep their hands free, a card holder on a lanyard will be available