

PRESS RELEASE

Arriva UK Bus

1 February 2018

It's MIND over Matter for Arriva's Marathon Runner

Arriva UK Bus' has helped to kick-start a campaign to raise mental health awareness across its workforce by pledging £1,000 to one lucky employee who is gearing up to run the Virgin Money London Marathon in aid of MIND the mental health charity.

To mark national Time to Talk Day on 1st February, Arriva donated the money to Social Media Manager Abi Buck, 30, from Loughborough, who was last year confirmed to be taking part in the flagship race on behalf of MIND, the mental health charity, which is a cause close to her heart.

Abi explained: "I chose to run for MIND was because of how beneficial they were for me when I started to experience mental health problems myself.

"In late 2013 at the age of 25 I woke up in the middle of the night having a panic attack and it quickly spiralled into a period of extreme anxiety. I had periods in my teenage years where I had experienced similar symptoms, but it never got to the point where it was affecting my day to day life and I always managed to 'shake it off'. This time it was different. I quickly started living in a cycle of fear of further attacks, and sleeping and eating became almost impossible. I constantly battled on for a year thinking I could get better without any help that it would disappear, but I was getting worse.

"I called on MIND's website and their resources one evening after admitting to myself that I was ill and needed support. At that point I was at the lowest in my life, I felt horrendous and I genuinely couldn't ever imagine feeling better. I kept saying to myself that I had no reason to feel the way I did, but that's the thing about mental health issues, they aren't always logical.



“I used MIND’s resources to help me understand what was happening to me and booked into the doctors to get the help I needed. One huge part of getting better came from understanding and accepting that I was struggling. Part of managing it came with confiding in people who I can trust and that includes my employer Arriva, who have been overwhelmingly supportive and because of this I thrive in my job.

“I’ve continued to be as open as I can be about mental health, in the hope that it will help anyone who is struggling and challenge the stigma. To also give faith that you can get better, you can thrive in your life, you can get promoted and you can do anything that you want to do, even if that’s running a marathon.

“I think Time to Talk Day is important initiative for us to all get involved in as it encourages people to be open and honest about how they are feeling with someone they trust, and I know from experience how hard this can be. The real value to be had is everyone becoming more comfortable with being uncomfortable and having the courage to be vulnerable. It’s not easy to start talking about or listening, but it is an opportunity for all of us to be more open about mental health.”

During Time to Talk Day, Arriva will be encouraging its employees to open up about their worries, anxieties and feelings, and to talk more freely, be it with a friend, family, or someone at work.

Julie Linforth Marketing Director, from Arriva, added: “The wellbeing of our team is of the utmost importance and we have just engaged Health Assured, a third party health provider, to provide employees with that support through our new and enhanced Employee Assistance Programme. The programme has been designed to help employees deal with any personal or professional problems that might affect their health or well-being. It offers advice, guidance and counselling on a wide range of services.

“Time to Talk Day offers us the opportunity to shout from the roof tops that mental health is as important as physical health and it’s high time that we started looking after ourselves better.

“Abi has been incredibly brave to be so honest about her struggles and we are so proud of how she is channelling her time into championing Time to Talk Day across the business by being open with her own personal experiences, whilst also fundraising for MIND.



“She’s somehow also managing to fit in her training for Marathon around all this too, and with such dogged determination, we’re in no doubt she’ll smash it, and succeed in her goal in raising awareness throughout Arriva and beyond.”

The Virgin Money London Marathon takes place on 22nd April 2018. To learn more about Abi’s endeavours or to sponsor her, visit <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/abiadores>

Details about how MIND works to empower people to understand their condition and the choices available to them, can be found at www.mind.org.uk. To get involved in Time to Talk 2018, visit www.time-to-change.org.uk.

Ends.

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Notes to Editors

Arriva UK Bus is part of Arriva plc, one of the largest passenger transport providers in Europe, employing some 54,500 people and delivering more than 2.2 billion passenger journeys across 14 European countries every year. It currently operates a fleet of some 5,900 vehicles in the UK alone, providing services in the North East, North West and South East of England, Yorkshire, the Midlands and Wales.

In addition to the Arriva-branded networks, it also operates locally branded bus services including Hinckleybus, Yorkshire Tiger, Network Colchester and Green Line, which provides regular coach services between central London and the Home Counties.

In 2010, Arriva was acquired by Deutsche Bahn, and is now responsible for the growth and development of all Deutsche Bahn’s regional passenger transport outside of Germany.

