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A message from David Brown

Dear all,

This will be the last time I write this regular slot after ten years as Chief Executive. And what a decade it has been. Go-Ahead, and the transport industry as a whole, have gone through some profound changes.

When I took this job, Go-Ahead was a domestic transport business. Not only have we become truly national, expanding into areas such as Manchester, Cornwall and East Yorkshire, but we've gone overseas in a big way too. We now operate passenger transport in Germany, Norway, Ireland and Singapore.

Passenger habits, and expectations, have evolved – and technology has come on leaps and bounds. A decade ago, nobody was thinking about the array of apps that now exist. And we've got a much broader diversity of talent working for Go-Ahead, not just in

frontline roles but in areas such as IT and data analysis too.

The last 18 months have been challenging. In common with everybody delivering essential public services, we've grappled with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and I'm proud of the way each and every one of you stepped up and responded. We've also been hit by the loss of the Southeastern contract, which has been a disappointment to us all.

But looking to the future, I see opportunity. We've consistently emphasised the benefits that buses and trains bring in economic development, in social inclusion and in cleaning up the environment. The third of these, climate change, is centre stage as world leaders gather for COP26 in Glasgow.

Very few people have yet grasped how profoundly travelling habits will need to change if we're going

to avert global warming. People will need to switch from cars to walking, cycling and public transport on a huge scale.

Go-Ahead has taken on a leadership role on sustainable transport, delivering innovations such as geofencing, regenerative braking, air filtering buses and solar powered vehicles. We're the largest operator of zero emission buses in Britain and we are in prime position to lead the movement to public transport.

Thank you all for your hard work and resilience, and for the personal support that you have given me.

Regards,

David Brown,
Group Chief Executive

New CEO for Germany

We have appointed Fabian Amini as Chief Executive of our rail operations in Germany. Fabian is a highly experienced leader with a track record of delivering passenger growth and commercial success. He will join the group from 1 January 2022.





ROAD TO RENEWABLES

On the road to Net Zero



A unique electric bus travelled for 11 days across the UK, starting at Go-Ahead London's Northumberland Park bus garage.

The 'Road to Renewables' bus travelled from London to Glasgow to COP26 – the United Nations Climate Change summit. The bus was launched in partnership with SSE, BYD, ADL, Swarco and Go-Ahead.

Northumberland Park was chosen as the starting location because it is home to the Bus2Grid project. This project could enable buses to become two-way chargers, capable of feeding electricity back into the National Grid. Northumberland Park has the capacity to charge more than 100 electric buses overnight.

Leading figures presented at the launch event, including our outgoing CEO David Brown.

He said: "Go-Ahead is the UK's largest operator of electric buses, with nearly 300 modern zero emission vehicles in our fleet. It is fitting that the 'Road to Renewables' journey starts at Northumberland Park Garage, home to approximately 120 electric buses and the pioneering Bus2Grid technology."

"By decarbonising our fleet we can make an even stronger contribution to tackling carbon emissions and enabling public health."

The bus then travelled on the Monday to Oxford Bus Company's garage. It was met by Managing Director Phil Southall and Financial Director Luke Marion as well as representatives from Project LEO (Local Energy Oxfordshire), the UK's most ambitious local energy trial. Project LEO seeks to accelerate the UK's transition to a zero-carbon energy system.

Phil Southall, Managing Director of Oxford Bus Company said: "Oxford is world famous for its innovation and the city is currently working really hard to help achieve net zero, not just for our own city but also to help inform similar efforts worldwide. We are really proud to have played a part in Project LEO and are focused on supporting the city in its ambitious decarbonisation plans."



Very Important Visits

We were pleased to welcome these people this month

Swindon

Swindon's Bus Company welcomed Robert Buckland MP and representatives from Swindon Borough Council to give them a glimpse into the future of sustainable transport in the region. The bus company displayed its electric bus at its depot.

Go South Coast managing director, Andrew Wickham said: "Swindon's Bus Company has been working with Swindon Borough Council on a bid for the Department for Transport's Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme – which could see 57 new electric buses arrive in the town"

"I'm delighted that the bid has progressed to the next stage of the process. Buses are an excellent solution for improving air quality and reducing congestion, because they give people the option to leave their cars at home and use sustainable transport instead."



Brighton

Sam Tarry, the Shadow Buses Minister, came to see our geo-fenced buses in Brighton this month. Brighton & Hove currently operates 54 geo-fenced buses in operation across the city. They cover 244,000 zero-emission miles in the city, providing 3,845 trips a week and carry 3 million passengers annually.



Singapore

Three Ministers came to visit our Pasir Ris bus interchange this month to share appreciation with our bus captains. [First sentence with their names] were all in attendance.

Care packs and air purifiers were given to colleagues to provide a cleaner working environment throughout the interchange.



North West

Go North West welcomed two visitors this month. Baroness Charlotte Vere, Minister for Buses, Roads and Places, and Graham Vidler, CEO of CPT travelled on one of the bus company's Cross City buses following the second day of the Conservative Party Conference, which was taking place in the city.



COMEBACK CAMPAIGNS

Marketing is helping passengers come back to bus and rail



Oxford Bus Company

A month-long campaign to encourage people 'Back to Bus' resulted in a 20% increase in patronage at Oxford Bus Company and Thames Travel in September.

Working in partnership with Stagecoach, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and local businesses, the September campaign was designed to coincide with the latest phase of recovery from the pandemic and World Car Free Day.

Residents were offered 30% off the cost of 12 trip tickets to encourage people to swap private vehicles for buses for their commute, and joint social media campaigns with positive messages on the benefits of taking the bus took place.

The success of the campaign means every three in four passengers have now returned to using buses compared to pre-COVID-19.



Go-Ahead Norway

As Covid-19 restrictions lifted in September throughout Norway, ticket sale and seating restrictions lifted too. Through the pandemic, Go-Ahead Nordic's ticket sales were restricted to around a capacity of 70% to ensure passengers were able to stay socially distanced.

To build the brand, the company created a TV advert that shows passengers, colleagues and all the locations the routes have to offer. To allow passengers to experience as many of these destinations as possible, Go-Ahead has created an "interrail" ticket that allows passengers to hop on and off at multiple destinations over the course of 7 days. These have been sold during the summer holiday and the autumn half term and offer an innovative and popular option for those wanting to holiday in southern Norway.



Sew Good A lovely gesture

Following a donation to the Durham County Cricket Foundation, a local sewing and knitting group have made a Go North East banner as a thank you to all the colleagues who work at the bus company. The eye-catching banner celebrates the history of Chester-le-Street depot, focusing on a map from 1938 that was obtained from the Chester-le-Street Heritage Group.



Spooky in Nor-Witch

Go East Anglia asked little monsters to go to the Norwich Forum in October for a family fun event packed with spooky activities and ghoulish going-ons. The company partnered

with Norwich Mumbler to provide local families with a few fun hours of arts and crafts, sports activities, spooky tales, pumpkin colouring competitions and face painting.



Heart starters



Keeping people safe

It's the largest roll-out of heart restarters on the UK rail network. Great Northern, Southern and Thameslink stations will soon have publicly accessible, life-saving automated external defibrillators at every one of their 238 stations.

More than 30,000 people suffer cardiac arrest out of hospitals across the UK every year and fewer than one in 10 survive. However, early chest compressions can double the chances of survival.

Sam Facey, Go-Ahead and GTR's Head of Zero Harm said: "By fitting these life-saving AEDs, we believe we've made a genuinely positive contribution to the communities across our vast network, which covers London and nine counties."

"All our defibrillators are publicly accessible, so of huge benefit not only to those travelling with us but also the communities we serve. They're fully automatic – anyone can use them – and our staff are being given familiarisation training."



Family Footsteps



Welcome to the transport family

Oxford Bus Company intern Adam Marsden is following in his uncle Paul's footsteps by embarking on a career in the bus industry.

Adam Marsden, a transport management student at Aston University in Birmingham, will combine the next year planning bus routes with driving as part of his one-year placement.

The 22-year-old joined Oxford Bus Company as a Network Coordinator three years after his uncle, Paul Marsden, retired following 30 years of service driving buses on Oxfordshire's roads.

Adam said: "My uncle Paul worked here for a very long time driving on the 300 Park & Ride service and enjoyed every day of his job, it's easy to understand why. I knew from my uncle that Oxford Bus Company would be a great place to develop. They really care about the people who work for them."

Glenn DeSousa also joined the company this summer as a Graduate Trainee following his previous internship after he completed the same degree as Adam.



First train on the tracks

Another step to mobilisation

In October the first train went on the track under the responsibility of Go-Ahead Bavaria. Covering a distance of 41 kilometres from Donauwörth and Augsburg, fleet manager Tomislav Ivsa transferred two of the new 'Flirt' units to the interim workshop for light maintenance work.

The trains won't enter into passenger service yet. The next few months need to be dedicated to training the drivers on the new routes. This is in preparation for the 12 December, when the company will launch its passenger train services.



Godt jobbet!

Putting our passengers first



A big well done to all our Norwegian colleagues – Go-Ahead Nordic has come out on top in a new customer satisfaction survey.

The independent survey was the first of its kind and undertaken by the Norwegian Government. It gathered data on the major rail operators in the country, with just under 500 people completing surveys between 12 July and 5 September 2021.

Go-Ahead Nordic received a 82% 'satisfaction with the operator' score – better than operators SJ Nord (80%) and Vy (81%). We received especially good scores for customer service on board our trains.

MD Cathrine Elgin acknowledged the great news to colleagues, but added: "This doesn't mean we can sit back and relax. We need to continue to become even better and ensure we deliver good experiences for all our customers, every day."

All the Accolades



We're riding high

It's been a great month for Go-Ahead in terms of awards. Go South West received 'Digital Business of the Year' at the Devon and Plymouth Chamber awards. Meanwhile Managing Director Richard Stevens, received the Outstanding Leadership Award.

Next, we picked up 'Best regional apprenticeship employer' for London. This means our apprenticeship programme is through to the national final – so watch this space in December.

Finally, Jay Rodgers, an engineering apprentice at East Yorkshire, was named Apprentice of the Year at a major national awards ceremony earlier this month.

The award is given by the Society of Engineers (SOE) at their Safety and Sustainability awards to rising stars of the engineering industry. It is aimed at apprentices who strive for knowledge, practical skills and embrace new technology.





VIRTUAL REALITY

Step inside a virtual world and discover the world of buses. Brighton & Hove has launched its 'VirtualBus360' project where you can hop on board, check seating, learn about the hearing loop system and even ring the bell.

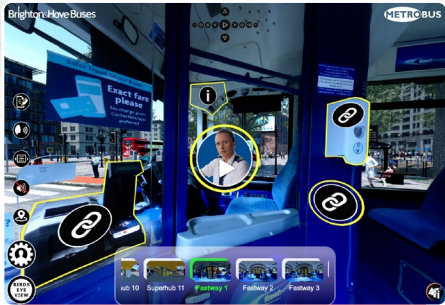
Visitors to the virtual world can hear about bus services first hand from real customers; bus drivers and customer service colleagues, as they share their own travelling experiences and tips in 23 separate videos. The videos and online information cover every aspect of bus travel including accessibility, tickets and payments, journey planning, real-time bus information and environmental and technological features.

Once you've toured the three virtual buses on offer, people can check out the bus company's vision for transport superhubs, which brings together current thinking about mobility hubs for the busiest central locations. Mobility hubs will dramatically improve passengers' waiting experience with larger shelters,

more comfortable seating, enriched digital information, Wi-Fi, USB charging points, links to other modes of transport, green bus stop roofs and solar panels.

Martin Harris said: "VirtualBus360 connects some of the high quality elements of the service as it is today, with a vision of the near future showing how we can integrate all forms of sustainable travel with great information and facilities for all bus users. This adds another way customers can choose to receive their information.

We really want to hear from people about their experience of using VirtualBus, along with any ideas about how it could be improved or developed. This is just the beginning of our use of virtual reality to make travel easier.



Click here and discover more

Catching crime

A team exercise led to a great result



In the German state of Baden-Württemberg, the police organized a day to create awareness for fighting crimes in public spaces. Colleagues in Go-Ahead Baden-Württemberg were also involved. The event also proved its worth – the police actually arrested someone red-handed.

Go-Ahead colleagues were accompanying the police officers on the trains. During one journey they noticed that one person came out of the driver's cab at the rear end of the train. He wasn't wearing a uniform and had his head down – both unusual circumstances.

The police confronted the trespasser and it was revealed to be a man who had previously gained unauthorised access to premises. The police recovered counterfeit keys to the train and other Go-Ahead Germany belongings. The man was reported, banned and all his contraband items were removed.

Police chief Reiner Möller wrote to Go-Ahead Germany later and said: "The involvement and close cooperation with you, as well as your staff involved in the operation, significantly contributed to the successful course of the operation. (...) Without your expertise, such a success would not have been possible. Please pass on my heartfelt thanks to all your staff involved."



In Memory

Paying tribute to a key local figure

Friends and family of Southampton man, John Chadwick, gathered in the city this week, for a bus-naming ceremony in his honour. John was a well-respected figure in Southampton and co-founded bus operator Solent Blue Line in 1987. Now known as Bluestar, the company wanted to do something in his memory, and unveiled one of its route 18 buses, with Mr Chadwick's name taking pride of place.

Go South Coast Managing Director Andrew Wickham said: "Sadly, John passed away earlier this year, and is missed by all of those who are fortunate enough to have known him,"

"It is great to think that the bus will be following a route close to where John lived. And it will be wonderful to see it transporting the many people who rely on this service across Southampton. I feel sure he would be proud of the progress we have made as a bus operator since his inspired decision to create Solent Blue Line 30 years ago."



Richard Harrington, Engineering Director at Go-Ahead London



Richard recently spoke at the launch of the Road to Renewables bus in Northumberland Park (see page 2)

London's red buses are enduring icons of the capital. In good days, and challenging times, they serve the millions of people who rely on them well.

Although always efficient people carriers, most buses have, until relatively recently, been powered by a diesel engine. Despite emission improvements via Euro ratings, the principle of an Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) is little altered since its invention in the late 19th Century.

It is apparent that the ICE will, quite soon, be a thing of the past and I am therefore proud that for over a decade, Go-Ahead London has blazed a trail in fleet decarbonisation and tangibly helped to improve the air that people breathe as a result.

The work commenced in 2006, when we started to transition the fleet to diesel-hybrid vehicles and it took a major step forward in 2011, when my team and I first engaged with Transport for London (TfL) on what the future of bus propulsion should be.

Aware of then emerging technologies, especially in electro-mobility, I was keen to trial what we now know as electric buses (e-buses), to ascertain if they had the ability to operate in 'real world' conditions. What followed was a series of innovative firsts for London and the UK.

In 2013, Waterloo Garage became home to a couple of Zero-Emission (ZE) e-buses, the first ever to be tested in service on behalf of TfL. Having proved their reliability in a demanding urban setting, I then encouraged the battery/chassis supplier to partner with a European body manufacturer, thus bringing together different companies and cultures and facilitating the creation of what has since become a market leading product.

This meant that by 2016, Go-Ahead London was able to fully convert the Waterloo site from diesel to ZE and introduce a fleet of 51 e-buses on time and to budget. Popular with drivers and users, Waterloo quickly became a 'go to' location for a myriad of stakeholders from around the world, with over 200 individual visits from politicians, policy makers, transport authorities, suppliers, academics and so on, over an intense 18-month period.

We have also secured numerous accolades for Waterloo's e-buses, including the prestigious Energy Globe Award, called Nature's Nobel Prize.

Our expertise at Waterloo was quickly adopted at other London locations and, as a result, we currently operate about 275 e-buses in service, making Go-Ahead London the biggest ZE bus company in the UK.

This was recently recognised in October 2021, when we hosted the wider supply chain, and media, at an event designed to promote what modern ZE bus travel is capable of. Home to around 120 e-buses, our Northumberland Park Garage was the starting point of an 11-day ZE bus trip around the country, created to coincide with the COP26 Conference in Glasgow.

And there is more to come. Later this year, we will introduce London's first pantograph charged buses at our Bexleyheath operation, with more ZE vehicles scheduled to enter service in 2022 and beyond. All of which means that the Mayor of London will deliver a fossil-free bus fleet by 2034.

As the third generation of a family who have worked on London's buses for over a century, I am proud to be playing my part in delivering cleaner air for my children, grandchildren and the wider community.

