

# News across October 2019 THE GROUP

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## A message from DAVID BROWN



Hi everyone,

In this month's *News Across the Group* we are featuring stories on improving accessibility and encouraging inclusivity in our operating companies.

Our organisation should reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. We recruit people through various channels, including apprenticeships, graduate schemes and partnerships with organisations such as the Prince's Trust. On page 8 you can read an interview with Alicia Lawrence, who was once one of our Apprentice Engineers at Go-Ahead London. Our apprenticeship programme has seen nearly 900 people join the business this year, and we're hoping to reach our target of 1,000 by the end of 2019.

On page 4, you can read more about GTR's five-year partnership with the Prince's Trust. Their 'Get Into Railways' scheme offers an opportunity to receive work experience in the railway to young people from challenging backgrounds. The programme has helped 164 young people to secure jobs at GTR. A study revealed this month that the scheme has created £1.6 million in social value, measured from the material change it has made to the lives of graduates.

As well as recruiting, we must continue to retain the fantastic talent we have within this company. The Women in Bus network is growing and is there to support the 1,500 women who work across our UK bus companies.

And we need to take care of our colleagues' wellbeing. Our Chatty Bus scheme focussed on those issues this month (pages 2 and 7). Go North East joined up with Newcastle United Foundation, who came to the depots to talk to drivers about mental health discrimination. Southeastern has been particularly prominent in creating open conversations and recruiting more than 20 mental health ambassadors across the business. Initiatives like these are welcome in helping stop the stigma around mental health.

Until next month,

David Brown,  
Group Chief Executive

## OUR PURPOSE

Many organisations now have a "purpose statement" to show to the world who they are, what they do and how they operate. This year we developed our own statement for Go-Ahead, following workshops and consultations with colleagues across the business.

**Our purpose is to be the local partner taking care of journeys that enhance the lives and wellbeing of our communities across the world.**

This statement supports our vision of 'a world where every journey is taken care of' and helps clarify our primary responsibilities and actions.



# STOPPING THE STIGMA OF MENTAL HEALTH

**Chatty Bus campaign moves to mental health**



One in three people will suffer from a mental health problem at work, so we must ensure that we care for every colleague's wellbeing. Go-Ahead bus companies promoted initiatives to stop the stigma around mental health in October. This was to mark Mental Health Awareness Week, which this year focussed on suicide prevention. This initiative builds on the Chatty Bus campaign that was kick started in January this year. Buses provide a vital lifeline for those living in isolation and who suffer with their mental health.

Brighton & Hove Buses, Go South Coast, Go North East, the Oxford Bus Company and Go East Anglia promoted better awareness of mental health in their organisations by encouraging colleagues to open up about how they were feeling, with wellbeing assistance signposted through posters, leaflets, employee benefit apps and push notifications through phones.

Brighton & Hove Buses worked with the charity 'Table Talk', to promote its 'Chatty Café' network of more than 40 local cafes. The aim was to encourage people to sit down and chat in places where they see a 'Table Talk Brighton' sign. Brighton & Hove Buses is aiming to train mental health first aiders across its depots and travel shops to help passengers and employees alike.

Salisbury Reds, operated by Go South Coast, partnered with the charity Pets as Therapy. The charity helps to enhance community health and wellbeing through visits of trusted volunteers and their specially-trained therapy pets.



Salisbury Reds and the charity helped to raise awareness of mental health in the city's Guildhall Square with their support dogs on show. The dogs provided an icebreaker for members of the community to come together and talk to each other.

Go North East joined forces with the Newcastle United Foundation. The Foundation came to Gateshead Riverside depot to talk to bus drivers and other colleagues about the importance of mental health, as part of their 'Be a Game Changer' campaign.

Figures published recently highlighted that the North East had the highest male suicide rate in the country, which increases the importance of tackling the stigma surrounding mental health issues in these areas.

Martijn Gilbert, Managing Director at Go North East, said: "As a major employer we want to get more of our workforce talking about mental health, helping to break down any stigma associated with something that can affect 1 in 4 people each year. Our activities on World Mental Health Day are just the start of a wide-ranging programme of discussion and support-based activities."

Katy Taylor, Go-Ahead's Customer and Commercial Director, said: "We are committed to building thriving communities, which includes our own colleague communities across the UK and abroad. If we can stop the stigma around discussions about mental health, we can make sure we're continuing to be an inclusive employer and provide help to the colleagues who need it."

GTR and Southeastern work continuously to promote mental health in their companies. Every year, people die on the railways – some of them accidents, some suicides. As part of Mental Health Awareness Week, ITV News Meridian spoke to a GTR train driver who was affected by a death on the line. GTR is now offering drivers extra help and support, and all managers will receive Mental Health and Resilience Training.



# SEEING SUNFLOWERS

## How Southeastern is helping passengers with hidden disabilities

If you have a hidden disability, it can be hard to find the help you need - especially as it doesn't seem automatically obvious. Southeastern has launched a pilot scheme on its line from Hastings in Kent to raise greater awareness among colleagues on passengers with hidden disabilities. The sunflower lanyard is designed to be worn by people who have needs such as dementia, anxiety, chronic fatigue syndrome or autism. By wearing the lanyard, it flags to a Southeastern colleague that the passenger may need extra help. If successful, this lanyard scheme will be rolled out more widely across the network.

Colleagues at Sevenoaks station in Kent have also been trained in a bespoke course on hidden disabilities. It was conceived by in-house trainer Chris Cook and Station Manager Elliot Waters. Elliot and Chris worked together to adjust rosters and make sure every member of the Sevenoaks' team received training.

Elliot said: "We wanted to create something different and ensure we were being as aware as we could when it came to assisting passengers who might need that extra little help. It's pleasing to see the customer services postbag already reflecting how appreciative our passengers are." The course is now being rolled out more widely across the Orpington area in Kent.



Our beliefs  
Trusting people

# HEART STARTERS ON THE GO

## Defibrillators board Plymouth Citybus

Plymouth Citybus has become the first British bus operator to add defibrillators to its bus fleet - and it has already saved a life. As part of an initial pilot, sixteen defibrillators will be fitted on board Plymouth Citybus services in partnership with Hearts Together, a heart disease charity operating across the South West.

The industry-leading kits will be featured on one of the busiest routes in the city, travelling from the Devon commuter belt into the heart of Plymouth. Drivers will be trained in how to use the defibrillators, with instructions also on board for passengers, converting each bus into a roving lifesaver for the people of Plymouth. It helped to save a passenger's life in October. Two bus drivers came to the aid of a man suffering from a stroke in October and performed CPR, with a defibrillator on standby.

Defibrillators can be used to restart the heart in case of cardiac arrest and can raise survival rates from 6% to an incredible 74%. Each of the buses will have signs to advise passengers that a defibrillator is aboard their bus, with clearly labelled QR codes next to them, which members of the public will be able to scan to play a video showing how to use them. Drivers will also be trained to operate them. By taking a lead on the stand against heart disease, Plymouth Citybus is enriching and saving lives in the local community.



Our attitudes  
Accountable



# LINKING TO FIGHT LONELINESS



Our beliefs  
Being can-do people

## Morebus is combatting isolation in the UK

Go South Coast company Morebus has joined a partnership with other local businesses called 'Linking Dorset'. This initiative will provide a joined-up way of signposting people to transport schemes in the county of Dorset in the UK, including local bus rides, community car schemes and minibus schemes.

Head of Communications Nikki Honer said "Having easy access to local transport is vital for both physical and mental wellbeing - particularly for more vulnerable members of the community. We are delighted to be involved in such an important initiative. Our team will operate a special information helpline - between 10am and 2pm on weekdays - to signpost those seeking transport in their area."

# PRINCE'S TRUST IN PARTNERSHIP

## Giving young people a chance to grow



Our beliefs  
Building relationships

The 'Get into Railways' scheme has proved its worth to society, according to a recent report published by GTR and the Prince's Trust.

According to the report, the partnership between the rail company and the youth charitable organisation has garnered £1.6 million of social benefit to the UK in five years.

The 'Get into Railways' training programme is a scheme that helps disadvantaged young people get into work - mixing classroom training and practical work experience. The programme has so far helped 182 18-25 year olds gain skills and work experience in the rail sector. 14% of colleagues at London Bridge station have come from the Get into Railways scheme. Due to the success of the programme it is set to be extended for two further years, with a commitment to training at least 70 more young people.



Our attitudes  
Down-to-earth



# HELPING THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV

## Raising awareness and support of a misunderstood condition

Brighton & Hove launched an HIV-themed bus in October to encourage people to have an HIV test and get treatment if they need it. The bus is named after Professor Martin Fisher, who passed away in 2015. Brighton & Hove buses worked with Martin Fisher's charitable foundation and local illustrator Daniel Lock to design and wrap a bus to raise awareness of HIV.

The Martin Fisher Foundation continues the professor's work by developing new strategies for effective HIV prevention, treatment and care. The panels inside the bus talk about Martin's life, recent advances in HIV treatment, and their campaign to boost HIV testing rates and decrease stigma around the condition. The bus is decorated with purple Queen of the Night tulips - Martin's favourite flower.

This is a message close to Brighton & Hove Buses' Managing Director Martin Harris' heart. In 1988, he broke new ground when he wrote one of the first myth-busting AIDS and HIV factsheets in the transport industry to counter the misinformation being spread by the national press at the time. Martin said the new bus was a continuation of this effort to highlight inaccurate information still out there around HIV, while acknowledging the significant progress made in patient care and treatment.

Martin said: "This new bus is testament to Martin Fisher's amazing determination and his incredible success in transforming patient care for people living with HIV. I know the people he helped remember him as someone that kept on fighting for them, even when they were too exhausted to fight for themselves. Nobody should feel marginalised or alone with HIV."

# WOMEN IN BUS

## The network appoints Sophie Moorby as Chair

The “Women in Bus” network held its second event in Oxford in October. About 35 representatives from Go-Ahead operating companies were in attendance. Sophie Moorby, Operations Manager from Go North East, was named as the Chair of the network. At 23 years old she became the youngest ever depot manager in the company’s 105-year history. She started on the Go-Ahead graduate programme and was named North East Employee of the Year in 2017.

At the event, colleagues from a range of roles at the Oxford Bus Company spoke about their experiences working in the bus sector – dispelling myths that it isn’t for women. Claire Mann, Director of Operations at Transport for London, spoke at the event. She spoke about her career to date and how she has managed to work successfully in a male-dominated environment without sacrificing her core values.

The next Women in Bus meeting will take place in Newcastle on the 28th January.



Left, Phil Southall, Managing Director of Oxford Bus Company  
 Middle, Claire Mann, Director of Operations at TfL  
 Right, Carra Bosworth, Head of Talent and Development at Go-Ahead

# GOING GREEN

## Breathing the life into concrete structures

Commuters at Singapore’s Punggol Bus Interchange will notice a change in their environment, thanks to the addition of a living green wall. Go-Ahead CEO David Brown visited Singapore in October and came to see the wall, which is filled with plants to help provide more pleasant surroundings and a fresher atmosphere.

One square metre of a living wall extracts approximately 2.3kg of carbon dioxide from the environment and produces 1.7kg of oxygen a year – demonstrating its importance to helping boost air quality. Plants also absorb 50% and reflect 30% of sunlight, helping to create a cooler and more pleasant climate – especially relevant in hot countries, such as Singapore. An automated irrigation system is included in the wall to deliver precise measurements of water to each plant pot. Going green in the bus world has never been so easy on the eyes.



# FROM LONDON TO ZAMBIA



## A London bus enjoys a new lease of life in Africa

In October Go-Ahead London officially handed over a bus to the Industrial Training Centre in Lusaka, Zambia. The bus was donated to Go-Ahead’s corporate charity Transaid, who work with governments in low- and middle-income countries to create and promote improvements in training standards. The bus will be used to deliver training to local drivers in Zambia to help improve driver competency.



# BREAKING BARRIERS OF THE MENOPAUSE

## *Raising awareness of women's health*

Although it will affect half the population at some point in their life, the menopause isn't often spoken about in daily conversation. Southeastern is tackling this head-on by running a campaign to raise awareness. In September, the rail company held a series of half-day workshops for 171 managers and frontline colleagues. The workshops included information on the symptoms experienced by women going through the menopause and how to manage them, as well as promoting the support that is available in the workplace.

Southeastern's Women in Rail Empowerment (WIRE) colleague network group was the driving force behind the campaign. Natalie Leister, Chair of WIRE, said: "The group identified that menopause is something that women, and men, often feel uncomfortable talking about and we felt passionately that raising awareness would help break down barriers.". A female colleague said: "My GP was not very helpful about my symptoms especially as I am not able to take HRT [hormone replacement therapy]. The session gave me the answers I needed."



# BE SAFE, BE SEEN

## *Helping children stay safe with stickers*

Plymouth Citybus has partnered up with Radio Plymouth to offer over 20,000 reflective stickers to local primary school aged children across the city and surrounding areas. This is part of the radio station's Be Safe Be Seen campaign. These stickers can be worn on bags, bikes or coats to make sure the children can be seen during the darker hours of the winter months. Buses form an essential part of so many children's journeys to school - now Plymouth Citybus can help them through their whole journey.

An advertisement for the 'Be Safe, Be Seen' campaign. It features four circular stickers in white, blue, yellow, and green, each with the text 'BE SAFE BE SEEN' and the 'radio plymouth 106.7FM' and 'city bus' logos. Below the stickers, the text reads 'Be Safe, Be Seen this winter with our reflective stickers.' and 'IN PARTNERSHIP WITH city bus'. At the bottom right, there is a large circular logo for 'radio plymouth 106.7FM' with the tagline 'The sound of the city'.

# THREE TIMES A WINNER AT ROUTE ONE

Go-Ahead bus companies won big at this month's Route One Awards, an annual ceremony to celebrate the best in bus.

Go South Coast's Bluestar brand won the 'Environment Award'. This was in recognition of the Southampton operator's efforts to improve air quality across the city. It was the first operator to pilot our air-filtering bus, which extracted 65g of particulate matter from the air in a 100-day pilot. Bluestar was also praised for its 'Bluestar Promise' campaign, which encourages people in Southampton to commit to travelling by bus rather than car.

Colin Barnes from Go North East won Engineer of the Year. The accolade follows his promotion to Engineering Director in December 2018, with the judges saying, "he was removed from his comfort zone and subsequently excelled in his new sphere". As Engineering Director at Go North East, Colin is responsible for a fleet of over of 700 vehicles and 250 team members, and plays a significant role in developing new opportunities, technologies and innovations across the business.

Oxford Bus Company won 'Large Bus Operator', facing competition from sister company Go South Coast as well as Arriva Yorkshire, Nottingham City Transport, Reading Buses and Stagecoach East Scotland.

Tim Deakin, Editor of Route One magazine said "[We] favoured OBC for its outstanding work to grow buses' modal share in Oxford and its excellent returns in passenger satisfaction surveys. OBC also continues to demonstrate a class-leading awareness of its environmental responsibilities, which further counted in its favour. It is for those reasons that OBC came out on top despite some superb competition."

**Right: The Bluestar team celebrate**



**Left: Colin Barnes holding his award**



## OLDER PEOPLE, NEWER FRIENDS

### *Chatty bus has been targeting the older generation*

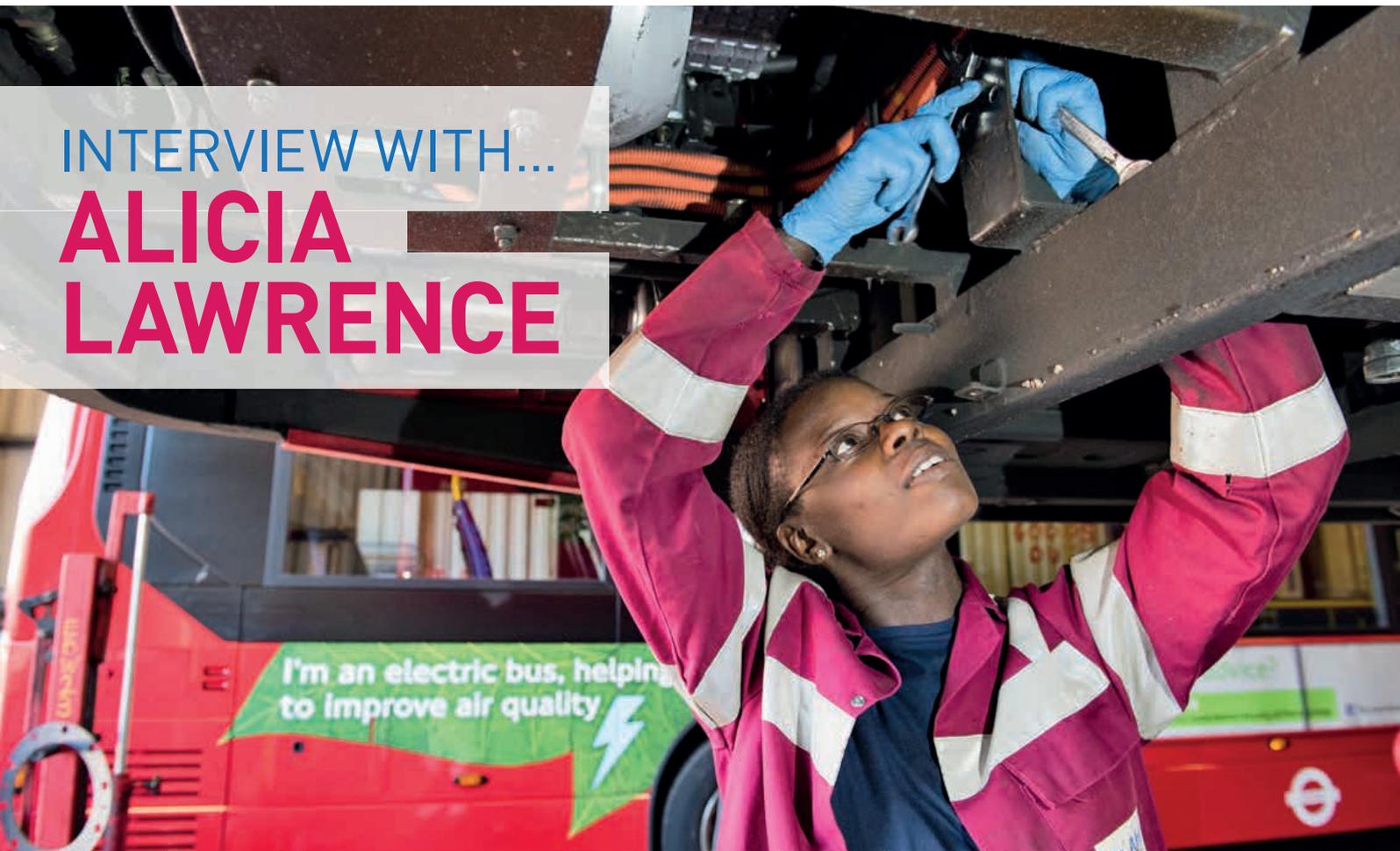
Our Chatty Bus campaign was launched in response to the pressing need to combat social isolation. Loneliness particularly affects the older generation, especially in rural areas. Bus companies Go South Coast and Brighton & Hove Buses have undertaken recent initiatives to help older people in their communities.

Brighton & Hove brought out a vintage Routemaster bus and took 40 people on board as part of the Ageing Well festival. The bus tour took in Brighton Pavilion and the city before going up to Brighton Racecourse to admire the view. The trip ended with a drive along the seafront and a pit stop at Palace Pier. The Community Team wore Chatty Bus high-visibility vests and handed out Chatty Bus badges to everyone on the bus and encouraged people to get to know each other during the tour.

Meanwhile on the Isle of Wight, Southern Vectis launched its Chatty Bus initiative in Newport for the Celebrating Age festival. The Chatty bus was positioned in the town, where colleagues engaged in conversation with locals to remove the perceived difficulty of talking to strangers.



INTERVIEW WITH...  
**ALICIA LAWRENCE**



**Hi Alicia, tell us about yourself**

I am a Senior Vehicle Engineer at Camberwell Bus Garage for Go-Ahead London. I come from South London and have lived here my whole life. I have been in the company for five years and finished my apprenticeship two years ago. Before that, I was a car mechanic.

**What got you into engineering?**

It was always what I wanted to do. When I left school no women did it, so I thought I was being unrealistic. I worked in a nursery instead, and although I did like working there, I thought that if I was going to do a job for the rest of my life, I needed to enjoy it. I started an apprenticeship to become a car mechanic, and then I applied for an apprenticeship in heavy vehicles, where I learned to fix buses. I've done two apprenticeships.

**What do you prefer – fixing cars or buses?**

Buses, definitely. There's a lot of differences in the way things work. The suspension is air on a bus – which isn't on cars. You have a lot more to do on a bus than you would do in a car. Cars have seats and radio systems like buses do, but the set-up and functions are different. There's a lot more to it.

**What was it like as a woman when you started?**

When I started at Go-Ahead London, I was the only woman. Since then, three women apprentices have joined, and we also have two trainee service engineers. I wasn't fazed by it – but it took time for my colleagues to get used to me. At first, they were a bit awkward and didn't know how to approach me, but the novelty has worn off and I'm like one of them now. A lot more women are coming into

garages now, so it's becoming easier for women to join each time.

**What did you do on your apprenticeship?**

I moved around a lot of Go-Ahead London garages and got to meet a lot of people from different backgrounds and skillsets. You take a bit from everyone.

**What's the best thing about your job?**

I love the satisfaction you get when you fix something. Especially something that someone else hasn't managed to fix – it's a satisfaction that you get every day.

**What's the worst thing about your job?**

It can be frustrating if you do a job that you know how to do and have done ten times before, and something changes – like a bolt snapping. The job becomes much bigger and you know it shouldn't take as long as it does. It's a personal thing – I don't think others would be as bothered by this as me.

**What is your daily routine?**

When you arrive in the morning, you're given a bus to work on. These buses have defects that an inspector has found, and you work your way through the bus fixing all the defects on the list. Sometimes you can't fix everything in a whole shift, so it rolls onto the person after you. We're like a 24-hour revolving conveyor belt.

**Would you recommend an apprenticeship to others?**

If you're a hands-on person, I'd say to go for it. You're learning on the job and paid while you work. And once you have a skilled trade, you're in

demand all over the world and can take it with you. I'd also say to enjoy those three or four years. You can worry about things such as 'Am I doing well enough?' or 'Will I be ready?' but just enjoy it as it will work out in the end. When you're out there on your own and making decisions, that's when you can see what you have learned.

**What would you say to a woman who wanted to do an engineering apprenticeship?**

Make sure it's what you want to do – you must want to do it and have fire in your belly to keep going. You also need to be thick-skinned as it's not easy. But if it's for you, go for it – I really am living the dream.

**Quick-fire questions**

**Tea or coffee?**

Coffee, two sweeteners and milk

**Best thing you can cook?**

Spaghetti bolognese – I make it from scratch

**Favourite biscuit?**

Custard Crème – I'm known for it in the garage

**Apple or Windows?**

Apple, 100%

**Celebrity crush?**

Anthony Joshua

**What TV show are you streaming?**

An American sitcom called Marlon. It's kind of off the radar