

NEWS ACROSS THE GROUP

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Brighton & Hove

East Yorkshire

Go-Ahead
BAHN & BUS

Go-Ahead
Ireland

Go-Ahead-London

Go-Ahead
NORDIC

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Go North East

Go North West

goeastanglia

gosouthcoast

GoSouthWest

GTR

oxford
bus company

METROBUS

southeastern



A message from David Brown

Dear all,

I know that most of you are aware of the disappointing news that the Department for Transport has decided to take over the Southeastern contract on its expiry on 17 October.

I'm proud of what we've delivered on Southeastern over the past two decades, and we'll be leaving a meaningful legacy – passenger satisfaction of more than 90%, new City Beam trains introduced only in the last few weeks (see page 6), innovative apps and record-breaking punctuality. We also played a key role in the 2012 Olympics by providing, amongst other things, Javelin high-speed trains to Stratford.

Like you I am saddened by the circumstances surrounding the DfT's decision. As a group, we've held up our hands and accepted that mistakes were made in relation to the franchise. We've apologised, accepted responsibility and launched an independent review. That is the right way to respond.

We've worked hard as a group to have value-led leadership. We're a global business with nearly 30,000 colleagues and operations across three continents. We do a lot of great things and we do them with integrity. We work hard for our customers and our partners. Those values don't change after what has happened at Southeastern – they continue to be our guide.

We must also consider the future coming out of the pandemic. Towns and cities are coming to life and our buses and trains getting busy again, so it's essential people don't go back to their cars. I know a lot of our bus companies supported 'World Car Free' day on 22 September, offering incentives and tickets, such as Go North West and Go East Anglia (page 7).

We need to focus on getting the basics right while ensuring we can improve all aspects of the customer experience. Our idea for 'mobility hubs' gained a lot of interest in the press and social media this

month. On page 2 you can read about our concepts for the new 'bus interchanges of the future', and our plans with design consultancy firm Arup. We'd like to see some of these hubs built within the next 12-18 months. Public transport must be an attractive option – from start to finish.

Meanwhile, we published a strategy on our work with Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). Local community businesses, like public transport, are the backbone of society, and we believe it is our duty to help them grow back from the pandemic. Small businesses were worst hit by the impact of Covid-19 and we want to work with 100 more by 2023. We're putting more investment into this, too. You can read more on page 3.

Until next month,

David Brown,
Group Chief Executive

New MD for Brighton & Hove and Metrobus

Ed Wills will become Managing Director of Brighton & Hove Metrobus, replacing Martin Harris on his retirement in November. With more than two decades' experience in the passenger

transport industry, Ed is currently the Managing Director for Bus Commercial Development at Go-Ahead, and was previously Managing Director of Go-Ahead Ireland between 2017 and 2020.



A bus stop of the future?

Our beliefs
One step ahead

Joining up transport for a better customer experience

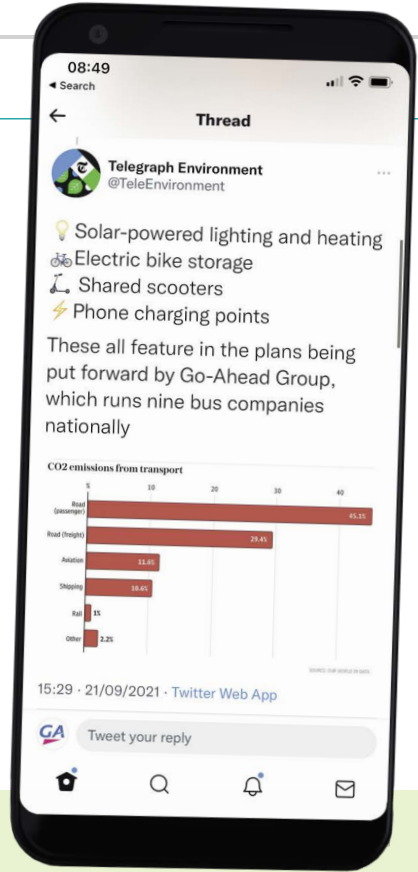
Imagine a bus interchange with solar-powered heating and lighting, WiFi, bike storage, electric charging points and real-time journey information. This vision may well become a reality soon, with our unveiling of sustainable transport 'Mobility Hubs'.

Mobility Hubs are a concept – not unlike a bus interchange – where people can make quick and easy connections between buses, walking, cycling and trains. We teamed up with engineering and consulting firm Arup to come up

with designs and hosted a webinar to promote our new report on the concept, which you can read on our website.

The idea is that no Mobility Hub is the same, and instead fits the specific needs of each local area. Larger hubs could include gardens, co-working spaces, playgrounds and even catering. This will help unlock opportunities for low-carbon journeys by encouraging an attractive alternative to cars.

[Read the report here](#)



The Telegraph featured the report extensively on its social media, including its Telegraph Environment pages.



MP Sam Tarry was a speaker at the webinar. He said: "I think the potential of mobility hubs encourages more sustainable journeys. There's no point in having the best vehicles, routes and infrastructure if it's not all joined up. [...] Mobility Hubs will enable seamless switches between modes [of transport.]"

Go South West's Mark Collins appeared on BBC Radio 4 to discuss the proposals for Plymouth. He said: "There are two aspects to mobility hubs. They could have heating, facilities to send email or just to read a book in the corner. The second aspect is being able to join up with other transport modes – so electric bikes, scooters and club cars."



Thinking small, looking big

Our attitudes
Down-to-earth

We're committed to boosting back local businesses

We are helping communities bounce back from the pandemic with our renewed commitment to small and medium-sized businesses. In a new strategy document, published this month, we have pledged to spend £250 million annually with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across all of our bus and rail companies.

We have also introduced a wide range of initiatives to help SMEs to work with us, including:

- A new SME Champion Group within Go-Ahead to maximise opportunities
- A publication of a simple guide on 'how to do business with Go-Ahead', which will be published later this year



- Ensuring contracts are written simply and in plain English
- Introducing an 'SME of the year' award in our Sustainable Procurement Awards

The pandemic has disproportionately affected SMEs in comparison to large businesses – with 70-80% of SMEs experiencing a drop in revenue since February 2020 – some by up to 50%.

We work with more than 3,200 SMEs, which represent 75% of our suppliers. SMEs include smart ticketing software suppliers, independent rail station cafes, mobile app providers, infrastructure improvement suppliers and bus spare parts providers. We aim to bring in 100 new SME suppliers by the end of 2023.

We plan to bring in 100 new SME suppliers by the end of 2023 and will set targets to work with more in the coming years.

Let's Celebrate



Go-Ahead Singapore

In August Go-Ahead Singapore was the first-time winner of the Tripartite Alliance Award, in the category of Age Inclusive Practices. The company has many senior workers, who bring plenty of experience and knowledge to the workforce.

Through investments in technologies, Go-Ahead Singapore upsills its team by improving proficiencies, and streamlining work processes. People are the driving force of Go-Ahead Singapore, and the company will continue to support them in their lifelong learning journey whilst cultivating a workplace that reflects inclusion and diversity.



Southeastern

There was some fantastic news for Southeastern from Investors in People this autumn, with confirmation that the train operating company has attained their prestigious 'We Invest in Wellbeing' Gold Award.

Showcasing Southeastern as one of the top employers for health and wellbeing in the country, the accreditation underpins the company's commitment to helping all their colleagues feel at their best, as they continue to champion the importance of both physical and mental health across the network.

Southeastern's Head of Safety and Environment Colin Clifton said: "We understand from Investors in People that we are the first train operating company - and quite possibly also the largest company in the UK - to receive this award. I'm delighted we have achieved such prestigious recognition of Southeastern as a forward-looking employer and great place to work."

Britain's greenest train station?

Recycling is one of the key parts of our climate change strategy

GTR has unveiled its new initiative to boost recycling rates at Brighton station to 95% from an average of 30% over the last year. To do this it has installed a new Mobile Segregation Unit.

Currently 12% of the total waste collected across GTR's 800-mile network comes from Brighton; Prior to the pandemic, the station produced 650 tonnes of rubbish per year. The new unit will segregate, wash, compact, bale, weigh and electronically tag all waste from Brighton station, as well as all Southern and Thameslink trains running to and from the city, in partnership with innovative sustainability start-up, The Green Block.

Since installation last month the MSU has already prevented over 32 tonnes of waste going to incineration. If rates remain at the same level, the initiative will recycle nearly 400 tonnes between now and September 2022; the equivalent weight of 80 elephants.



Back to basics

The company continues to invest in its people

Plymouth Citybus marked the start of its recovery from the pandemic by reopening its revamped and refurbished Travel Centre.

Ruth Quick, Travel Centre Manager, said: "When we first opened the Travel Centre in 2014, we simply made the best of the fittings that had been left behind from the previous shop such as the flooring and counters. This refurbishment has given us the chance to create something purposefully designed to work for us. It should make everything more accessible for customers, and generally improve the experience they have with us."

Go South West also announced new timetables in September to reflect increased demand, with extra services to the local hospital and the NHS' Lighthouse Laboratory.



Southern

The rail sector's answer to the Oscars, the National Rail Awards, saw our companies win a host of awards. Southern Railway won 'Passenger Operator of the Year', with judges praising the company, saying it had evolved into an effective, people-focused business. Great Northern also received 'highly commended' in the same category.

Eastbourne Station was also named 'Medium Station of the Year'. There have been numerous improvements at the station, including new toilets, a better waiting room and a wider, step-free entrance. Network Rail also made a £5 million investment to refurbish the canopy, replace the slate roof and improve masonry at the front of the station.



Getting ready

Getting ready for our new rail routes

In December, Go-Ahead Bavaria starts operations of its first service from Munich to Lindau. Now the first of 22 EMU-Trains have arrived, Go-Ahead Germany is progressing on its Langweid near Augsburg depot. Its partner, TMH Germany, is building the depot and will maintain the fleet there for our Bavarian parts of the business. It plans to start works in December.



SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

Let's start a conversation

This month marked World Suicide Prevention Day – an annual initiative to get more people talking about mental health and suicide.

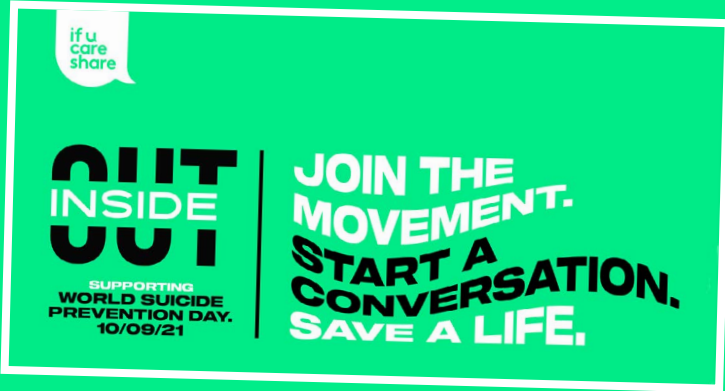
To mark the day, GTR announced that it was extending its suicide prevention training to key partners to increase the number of frequent travellers able to identify vulnerable people on its network. Its industry partners include the Rail Pastor network, community rail partners and MPs.

The training has given GTR staff the confidence to approach potentially vulnerable people using the railway, which in turn has seen the company double the number of interventions made from 233 in 2018, to 508 in 2020. So far this year, there have been more than 160 interventions.

Go North East showed support for local charity by going 'Inside Out'. It asked colleagues to wear an item of clothing inside out, or use the hashtag #AskMeWhy, with the aim to get more people talking about sensitive issues.



This initiative comes ahead of Go North East launching its internal Mental Health Ambassador programme. These ambassadors will be a point-of-contact within workplaces for colleagues to talk to in confidence. Ambassadors will be there to listen without judgement, and signpost to other people or organisations if necessary.



Beam Me Up, City

City Beam trains, at your service

Southeastern launched its new 'City Beam' trains in September, which are set to transform passengers' experiences around the network.

Southeastern's Head of Marketing Nikki Causer said: "The 'city' part comes from the trains' heritage, as they were originally named 'Desiro City' by Siemens - it also highlights the fact that for the most part, they'll be delivering passengers across the capital and urban areas"

"On the other hand, 'beam' reflects what the trains will offer - as there are no carriage doors, there'll be an

uninterrupted view from one end to the other, making it just like a ray of light in motion. Our marketing campaign will build on this to focus on the key areas of lighter, smarter, fresher, highlighting the trains' features - from air conditioning and upgraded on-board info, to free Wi-Fi and handy plug sockets."



Calls for car free

Our bus and rail companies got involved with World Car Free Day on 22 September to support public transport over the car. As we come out of the pandemic, we need to ensure buses and trains are the sustainable option.



Konectbus offered a Family Anywhere Day ticket for £5 and special prices on its Norwich Park and Ride services by encouraging passengers to download its new app and use a discount code.



Go North West offered 50% off the cost of a day ticket to tempt drivers over to the 'green side' for World Car Free Day. Go North West Managing Director, Nigel Featham, said: "To help meet global emissions targets, and make cities more liveable there are no alternatives. We must reduce the amount of cars on our roads and switch to more sustainable methods of transport."



Brighton & Hove Buses offered free travel on its 'Breeze Up The Downs' routes for Saturday 18 September. These buses travel to the highest point in Sussex to Ditchling Beacon, where visitors can experience panoramic views over the most beautiful parts of the countryside.

Meanwhile, the company offered a week-long celebration of events, activities and giveaways and asked residents and visitors to think about how they travel to, from and around the city.



Go North East collaborated with local company Co-Wheels to launch a dynamic new flexible mobility solution that blends the best bits of using both a bus and a car when you need them.

'Flexility' is a new smartcard-based season ticket that enables you to use a bus for your regular journeys and still have access to a car when needed without the need to own one – making sustainable lifestyles even easier.

Flexility can be used on Go North East buses but, in a UK first, it also includes car club membership on a single smartcard, so it works as both a bus ticket and car club membership key.

The companies hope that the new product will play an important role in doing more to ease congestion and improve air quality.



Oxford Bus Company and Thames Travel are taking part in a month-long campaign to encourage people 'Back to Bus'. Working in partnership with Stagecoach, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and local businesses, the campaign coincides with the latest phase of recovery from the pandemic. Residents were also offered 30% off the cost of 12 trip tickets to encourage people to swap private vehicles for buses for their commute.



Pastor support

Showing support for locals

Morebus is continuing to support its local service of Christian volunteers. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the operator was providing complimentary transport across Bournemouth, so Pastors could help keep late night revellers safe and sound. Now the town is beginning to return to normal, the local bus operator has reinstated the partnership.

Garry McDermott, from Bournemouth Town Pastors, said: "Since lockdown restrictions were eased, we've seen a tremendous up-turn in the number of people enjoying themselves here - and we're always on hand to help those in need, wherever necessary. We'd like to thank Morebus for this wonderful gesture - allowing us to freely move around the town to help as many people as possible here. Although we are a group made up of local Christians, this isn't about religion - it's about providing support to anyone who needs it, regardless of faith."



Sun seeker

Groundbreaking solar-powered digital bus information has arrived in Newcastle. Go North East has funded three solar-powered bus stops in the region, working in partnership with Newcastle City Council and UK supplier McKenna brothers.

The state of the art 'e-ink' bus stop displays information on a giant Kindle-style screen that is solar-powered and linked to the operator's central computer system.

The innovative system avoids the needs for paper displays at bus stops and takes a real time feed from the buses to provide waiting passengers with highly accurate live times of bus arrivals and departures. The system can also display information on other nearby bus services through the new nationwide Bus Open Data (BODS) database.

The system additionally provides a 'text to speech' audible facility, helping further improve the accessibility of bus services.

The bus stop systems are part of a wider customer information revolution linked to the new Voltra electric buses - the first fully electric bus fleet in the North East of England.

Providing information in a green, clean way



An Oxford Bus Company bus has a new arty lease of life

A double decker has been converted into an art therapy bus, thanks to Oxford Bus Company. Oxford Bus Company donated the vehicle to local charity At The Bus and supported its conversion at the Cowley House depot, as part of its community values. At The Bus uses art as a therapy intervention to support children and young people who experience a variety of life challenges.

The therapy bus will be based at a local school for six months to provide mental wellbeing support to youngsters ahead of going on tour. The charity will provide key therapeutic services to children and young people in partnership with schools to enhance mental wellbeing, alleviate anxiety, develop resilience, self-esteem and independence. The bus has a bespoke livery designed by renowned London designer Camille Walala.



Calling all crafters

Send your crafted poppies to Go North East

Are you a dab hand at knitting or crochet? Go North East has launched an appeal for volunteers to knit or crochet poppies for a display that will mark the centenary of Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal. The poppies will then be made into a display and unveiled in November at Go North East's Gateshead Riverside depot as a tribute to all who have served, sacrificed, and changed our world.

If you'd like to make a poppy, ensure it is weatherproof and send to:

Go North East,
17 Queen Street,
Gateshead,
NE8 2UA

Or drop off at the Gateshead Interchange, Metrocentre Interchange or Park Lane Interchange.

Commenting on the appeal, commercial director at Go North East, Stephen King, said: "We're long-term supporters of the Royal British Legion, and we've shown our support for our armed forces and veterans with various iterations of branded poppy buses and fundraising activities over the years.

"Our current poppy bus runs all-year-round, displaying a tribute with its 'thank you' message, and we're wanting to take things a step further this year to mark the centenary of the Poppy Appeal.

"So, no matter your skill level, we want you to get involved and help bring the display to life before it's unveiled in November - we can't wait to see your efforts."



Towards a caring commuter culture in Singapore

Are you a caring commuter? In Singapore, a government-backed body is encouraging the public to show a little patience and compassion for those who find travelling a challenge.

Andy Thompson
Managing Director
Go-Ahead Singapore



The Caring SG Commuters Committee, which trains “champions” and gives awards to those who help fellow customers with accessibility needs, is a sign of a changing culture in this east Asian city, where Go-Ahead operates 450 buses.

It wasn't so long ago that disability, here, tended to be hidden away. But inclusivity is now firmly on the agenda, and there's a welcome sense that disabilities, whether obvious or not, are nothing to be ashamed of.

Singapore is a city of plans - and at the centre of the city's transport masterplan for 2040 is an objective to provide “transport for all”. It sets out to create barrier-free journeys with a more “gracious and caring commuter culture”.

It's easy to see why this is a priority – like many modern cities, Singapore has an ageing population. And it's also a city where very few people own cars (about 11%, compared to around 50% in Europe and 80% in the United States). So it's vital that everybody feels comfortable using public transport.



I have a seat please” card has been adopted by the Land Transport Authority for all bus and rail services.

We know that some people can feel unwell, or just need a rest, when they're travelling. So at Pasir Ris, one of our key bus interchanges, we've created a designated Heart Zone where people can sit down and where help is available if they need it. There will be one at our other main interchange, Punggol, soon too.

So what can we do to contribute? Last year, Go-Ahead Singapore introduced an idea created by a sister company in the UK, Brighton & Hove Buses, for yellow cards which can be shown to bus drivers discreetly with slogans such as “may I have a seat please” or “alert me when I'm approaching my stop”. Called Helping Hand cards, these have proven hugely popular and we're proud that the “may



To help challenge any remaining stigma around disability, we've created a gallery wall at Pasir Ris displaying works from artists with disabilities. And we're organising Confident Commuting courses to help build comfort around everyday travelling – using an out-of-service bus to give people the opportunity to practice boarding, and interacting with drivers.

I know that hidden disabilities – including dementia and autism – can make public transport daunting. So we're training our colleagues in dementia awareness, and we're liaising with a local charity, Dementia Friends, who have launched an app – which displays the family contact details very prominently for anybody looking a little lost around our network.

We've established a designated Go-To Point for people with dementia who need help. And at Pasir Ris, there's even a chill-out room for people with autism who occasionally just need a space away from the crowds.

I'm not presenting these initiatives out of boastfulness, or to gain plaudits. These are things that any good public transport operator should be doing. They're ideas that are appreciated by our customers, by our stakeholders and that motivate our colleagues, too.

I'm delighted to be working in a city where the authorities view accessibility as a genuine priority. And it's gratifying that we've been able to share ideas, and borrow a few, from our Go-Ahead colleagues back in the UK. Our objective must be to provide journeys that work for everybody, not just those lucky enough to be young, fit, healthy and free of disabilities.