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goeastanglia

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Go SouthWest

GTR

oxford
bus company

METROBUS

A message from Christian Schreyer



Dear all,

To those of you who don't know me yet, my name is Christian Schreyer and I'm Go-Ahead's new Group Chief Executive. I took on the role on November 5th and over the next few weeks, I'll be visiting our operating companies around the world.

It's been a fascinating, and exciting, first few weeks. I've been putting in a lot of mileage, seeing as many of our bus and rail operations as possible. And what has particularly struck me is the dedication and commitment of our front-line colleagues – ranging from engineers to drivers, depot managers and customer service staff.

We held a senior leadership conference in London this month which, in addition to discussing strategy, involved site visits for our management team to a Govia Thameslink Railway depot

and to Go-Ahead London's bus driver training academy. It was encouraging to hear of the work GTR is doing in delivering an every more consistent on-time rail performance, and of Go-Ahead London's efforts in taking on nearly 700 apprentices a year.

During November, the global climate change conference, COP26, was held in Glasgow and Go-Ahead was proud to take part – not just by sponsoring a panel discussion on sustainable transport but by co-sponsoring an electric bus that travelled from London to Scotland, stopping at several of our depots en route.

Looking overseas, Go-Ahead Singapore's impressive initiatives to improve passenger accessibility have won praise from the city authorities. In Ireland, it was good to see Go-Ahead's name gaining prominence as our sponsorship of

Gaelic sports reached a season's highlight in the senior hurling final. And in Germany, an exciting landmark is quickly approaching as we begin operating our second rail contract, in Bavaria, in early December.

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed challenges for our business over the last year, as has the loss of our Southeastern franchise. But looking ahead, I am determined that we will emerge stronger. Over the months to come, you will be hearing more from me about how we can work together to build a more successful Go-Ahead Group than ever.

Regards,

Christian Schreyer,
Group Chief Executive



Apprenticeships
Regional Awards 2021

A big apprenticeship win

Go-Ahead London was recently named London's large employer of the year in the National Apprenticeship Awards. Go-Ahead London and East Yorkshire apprentices also recently took part in government-accredited videos for the national ceremony in December – we'll share them in the January issue.



WELCOME CHRISTIAN SCHREYER

Our new CEO steps into action

Our new CEO, Christian Schreyer, has only been in post for a few weeks and has already travelled across the UK and Germany.

Christian took over as Go-Ahead Group Chief Executive at the beginning of November. You can read his welcome message on page 1 or watch his introductory video here:

Watch here 

During November he visited Go-Ahead London, GTR, Oxford Bus Company, Go-Ahead Germany, Go North East and Go South Coast. At each location he received a behind-the-scenes tour and met key people who keep services running.

Along with other senior Go-Ahead leaders, he visited GTR's Hornsey Depot, an integral site for Thameslink and Great Northern maintenance and operations.



At Go North East, Christian travelled on board the new Voltra electric buses and had a whistlestop tour meeting Head Office colleagues in Bensham and visiting the depot in Gateshead Riverside.

He met with colleague Gary Harm, who explained how good the buses are for both the Go North East team and its customers. Christian also sampled one of the latest generation diesel Euro VI buses, with driver Joanne Grey behind the wheel.

In Germany Christian came to visit Augsburg depot and see how Go-Ahead Germany are preparing for mobilisation. We are due to start operating services across Bavaria in December. Our operations in Germany are looking towards the future, with Fabian Amini set to join as Managing Director from the beginning of January.



Hello Hydrogen

We're driving into the future

Hydrogen-powered buses are coming to Go-Ahead in summer 2022. We've ordered 20 hydrogen fuel cell buses for Metrobus' routes in Crawley, Gatwick and Redhill. The single-decker GB Kite Hydroliner buses are part-funded with money from the UK Government and European Union's zero-emission bus schemes.

Brighton & Hove and Metrobus is also looking into investing in 34 more buses for the Fastway bus rapid transit network. The Fastway is a network of guided busways designed to speed buses past congestion hotspots. If the deal is completed, it has the potential to be Europe's biggest local fleet of hydrogen buses to date.

As well as having zero carbon emissions, hydrogen buses have long range capabilities and can be refuelled quickly in depots. Go-Ahead is already the UK's largest operator of zero-emission electric buses, with a fleet of nearly 300 nationwide. This is our first venture into hydrogen.



— Go-Ahead @ — COP26

Go-Ahead supported the world's biggest climate summit

This November marked COP26 – the United Nations Summit on Climate Change. As well as sponsoring an all-electric bus that made its journey from London to Glasgow (photos in the October issue), we sponsored a key event at the summit on its designated Transport Day.

Our Managing Director of Business Development Martin Dean was on the panel for 'People make transport: communities enabling greener travel'. The panel discussion, hosted by the Sustainable Transport Alliance, focused on the need to shift reliance away from private cars and to make public and community transport the natural choice for shared mobility.

Martin discussed the value of community-led responses to green transport and highlighted that communities can better shape services and increase passenger volumes. He said: "The actions we take as operators, working with our communities, need to be matched by a shift in transport policy. We need to work towards encouraging people to walk or cycle where possible, use buses and trains as an alternative, but only use a car if absolutely necessary."



Lest we forget

Marking Remembrance Day across the Group

November 11 marks Remembrance Day in the UK as a tribute to those who have died in the line of duty. It is traditional to wear a poppy as a symbol of memorial.

Our bus and rail companies got involved in different ways. Companies such as East Yorkshire and Brighton & Hove and Metrobus offered free travel to veterans on Remembrance Sunday. At East Yorkshire veteran colleagues were encouraged to wear their regimental ties, berets, badges and medals alongside their bus driver uniform.

East Yorkshire's Area Director Ben Gilligan said: "Bus driving is a popular career choice for those leaving the armed forces, so many of our team have served in the military, and know what sacrifices our soldiers, sailors and aviators have to make. Last year many remembrance parades couldn't happen, so this year we'd like to make sure all veterans who want to can attend to pay their respects to those we lost."

Meanwhile, Thameslink joined the national 'Routes of

Remembrance' campaign. To support this in Bedford, Thameslink invited officers from local base, RAF Henlow, to join them to transport a poppy wreath into central London. The wreath was laid with others at the annual memorial service at St Pancras International. RAF Henlow is a one of only five RAF stations that dates back to WWI and is still in use today.

Leading the journey to safely transport the poppy wreath was Thameslink Driver, Noel Hughes, who spent six and a half years in the 216 Parachute Signal Squadron, part of the British Army's Royal Corps of Signals.

He left the Armed Forces and initially pursued a career in the police. He then joined Thameslink in 2016 as a trainee train driver. He says: "My current role involves a lot of rules, procedures and discipline, which is where my Army background comes in handy. I think that's why there is a big community of ex-Forces that choose to work in the railway."



Our attitudes
Collaborative

From A to Z(ambia) Travelling for training

A Southern Vectis coach is travelling from the Isle of Wight to Zambia. Go-Ahead and Go South Coast have donated the coach to our charity partner Transaid, which will help vital driver training at the Industrial Training Centre (ITC) in Lusaka, the country's capital.

Go South Coast's Managing Director Andrew Wickham said: "Coaches in particular are an important form of transport in Zambia – and there is an extensive network of routes linking some very isolated communities. However, the high level of road traffic accidents are a concern and there is much to be done in terms of infrastructure and education to put that right."

"We are donating a coach to replace an obsolete vehicle that is over 30 years old, and will ensure the ITC can continue its courses, to make coach driving and maintenance safer. Without it, as the current vehicle gets older and less reliable, there would be a real chance that training activities couldn't take place."

"At Southern Vectis, we are pleased to provide convenient, comfortable and comprehensive bus services to people living on and visiting the Isle of Wight. And now, we are proud to be playing a role in ensuring those living in Zambia have the opportunity to access safer transport for years to come."

Our attitudes
Down-to-earth



Lights OFF

Saving energy helps the planet

We are pleased to confirm that Go-Ahead and our bus companies have retained the ISO 50001 qualification, which is now valid for an additional three years. This is an energy management standard that shows our commitment to saving energy. We first received certification in 2019, the first transport company to do so.

- We demonstrated our improvements through:
- Setting efficiency targets for our London bus fleet
 - Significantly improved awareness and communications in the area of energy and sustainability
 - Continuing to work on our sustainability strategy
 - Investment in hydrogen-powered buses (see page 2)
 - An ongoing programme of LED lighting installation

Our attitudes
Agile



Time for technique

Recognising technical skill across Singapore

The Singapore Bus Academy and the Singapore National Trades Union Congress Employment and Employability Institute jointly organised the inaugural Singapore BusTech Grand Challenge this month. The aim was to promote a culture of technical excellence across the public bus industry and to recognise outstanding technicians.



Six bus technicians from Go-Ahead Singapore went to compete in a series of technical challenges in mechanical, electrical and diagnostics categories, and were evaluated based on their skills and competence. We are proud of our teams and their amazing performance during the challenge.

Sound the alarm

Coming together for the community

Go-Ahead London hosted Erith London Fire Brigade at its Bexleyheath garage to proactively upskill, seek advice, and receive a demonstration from the company's Engineering team. They covered safe jacking points, isolation points and fuel cut off points in the event of an emergency involving a London bus. They gained a lot of knowledge and were very satisfied with the training,

A fire fighter emergency response team also visited Henley Road Garage. Henley Road is the first purpose built electric garage, and the response team needed to understand the working of an electric bus and how to handle it in an emergency. This day was organised by Accident Prevention Manager, Helen Kinch and was very successful.



Apprentices in action

A great job!

Earlier on this year, Go-Ahead London entered the IRTE Skills Challenge. Celebrating its 10th anniversary, the challenge provides an opportunity for apprentices and qualified engineers to test their skills and knowledge against the best in the industry, gaining recognition for their excellence.

With over 20 different bus and coach operators competing, Go-Ahead London were proud to say that Arnold Duran Cuadros was awarded the runner up Electrical apprentice technician, with Chris Bissett winning the best senior Electric Driveline technician, along with runner up for senior electrical technician.



Yes Prime Minister

Boris Johnson sees our electric fleet

Prime Minister Boris Johnson came to see Go North East's electric buses in November. He was attending the CBI Annual Conference – a flagship event in the business and political calendar that is being held in the North East this year.

Go North East provided shuttle buses for the event. Office-based workers with bus driving qualifications provided this service, so no customer services were impacted.

Go North East's Managing Director Martijn Gilbert and Commercial Director Stephen King were able to brief Boris on the Voltra fleet, which provides 55,000 journeys a year to nearly 2 million passengers in the region.

Local charity support

Supporting the local region

Plymouth CityBus continues to support local charities. Devon Air Ambulance recently received £1,000 in thanks for the work they and other air ambulances services carried out in the aftermath of the tragic Keyham shooting incident.

The depot was also recently visited by Jeremiah Bear, the mascot for Jeremiah's Journey, a Plymouth-based, self-funded charity that offers free support and information to children, young people and families who have experienced or are anticipating the death of someone special, in Plymouth and the immediate surrounding areas.





Local neighbourhood champions

Coming together for communities

The bus is your sustainable travel partner. Go East Anglia attended the Norwich Chamber of Commerce's exhibition to promote bus use among businesses. Business benefits for car-free travel include reduced pressure on car parking, less traffic congestion in your local area and helping staff live healthier lifestyles.

Meanwhile, Go East Anglia has been pushing forward with Chatty Bus initiative, showcasing the bus as a key pillar of the local community. It supported the SOS bus at the University of East Anglia with the Norwich Together Alliance as part of National Alcohol Awareness Week.

The bus also went out and about to celebrate Norwich becoming a Social Enterprise space. It visited five Norwich-based social enterprises to showcase the organisations that are doing good within the city and have a direct social impact on the community.



Celebrating a local legend

The Brighton community celebrates 'Mrs Whitehawk'

Brighton & Hove Buses celebrated community activist Faith Matyszak-Gander with a bus tour on what would have been the local legend's 90th birthday.

Faith was awarded an MBE in 2007 for her volunteering and community work, which included helping to raise £1 million for Crew Club, a youth centre in the Brighton region of Whitehawk.

She also worked hard for Brighton and Hove Black Women's Group, Brighton & Hove Racial Harassment Forum, the Trust for Developing Communities, and the Brighton Unemployed Family Centre, amongst others.

Mrs Whitehawk sadly died in 2015 and a Brighton & Hove bus was named after her in 2020.



Best in class

Well done to the winners of this year's Bus Awards

A special shout out to two stand-out colleagues who won awards at this year's UK Bus Awards. Martijn Gilbert, Managing Director of Go North East, and Victoria Garcia, Accessibility Manager at Brighton & Hove Buses both received accolades for their hard work.

Martijn was recognised for his tireless work in bringing back communities to bus from the pandemic – from creating new partnerships to introducing night-time fares and 24/7 routes.

Victoria is a leader in accessibility in the bus sector and introduced the Helping Hand card, which is now also in place in our other companies, such as Go-Ahead Singapore.

Brighton & Hove Buses and Metrobus also won the 'Services to the Community' award for its above and beyond campaign, which puts 24 local heroes on the side of its geo-fenced buses.



Give me more!

More trains coming to Germany

Go-Ahead Baden-Württemberg is driving more trains in the new timetable period on behalf of the local government. It is helping to connect the city of Stuttgart between morning and night every half an hour. The route between Stuttgart to Karlsruhe will offer more trains and capacity, while the company is launching more trains on other routes.

Meanwhile Go-Ahead Bavaria will start operating on 12 December. There will be 22 new EMU trains that will bring faster connections across the region. The line has been recently electrified, so we will also be providing much more sustainable journeys. Watch out in the next issue for more.



Top talent needed

Attracting talent – from North West to South West

Go North West has been on tour as part of its Recruitment Roadshow. It is visiting locations all across Greater Manchester, providing opportunities for potential bus drivers to meet the team and to try the 'big chair' for themselves. The events had freebies, information and experts on hand to answer question about life on the road.

Meanwhile Go South West's latest driver recruits are getting trained to take to the road!

The latest batch of 27 new drivers going through our driving school are getting behind the wheel, revising for their theory tests or learning bus routes. By getting smaller groups of trainees to concentrate on different aspects of the training, people can onto routes as soon as possible once they've passed their test.

Go South West has recently doubled the size of its training school and doubled its fleet of training vehicles so trainees are able to qualify more quickly in Plymouth and Cornwall.



Southern Railway crowned Passenger Operator of the Year at the National Rail Awards



Angie Doll, Managing Director of Southern and Gatwick Express reflects on a remarkable railway turnaround.

We were absolutely at rock bottom. Our passengers didn't like us. Our stakeholders didn't like us. Our own staff didn't like us. People couldn't see a way out of it.

I got everybody together at a conference at the Amex stadium in February 2017. I had to give them a vision of where we were going to go, and how we were going to get there. I said that we would stabilise in 2017 with better reliability, recover former performance levels in 2018 and exceed our previous best in 2019 by fixing timetabling and other legacy issues. I said that, by the end of the franchise, we would win Operator of the Year and have double-digit percentage improvement. One in four thought we could do that.

The railway – like all transport – has always been about people. Our business is about moving people. People drive our trains. People clean our trains. People talk to our customers. The trains are just the mechanism. If we treat staff fairly, and if our staff are happy, then they will make customers happy. Love our staff, and they'll love our customers.

We had to empower people so they could fix problems, grab opportunities, make decisions. We moved from a 'telling' organisation to a 'listening'

organisation. Set the context and the goal, then allow people to use their skills and their knowledge.

When I started out 22 years ago, I got more hostility because I was from outside the railway than for being the only woman in the room. People would openly challenge my ability because I wasn't an insider. I've seen all of Govia Thameslink become more confident about what it can do. We have brought in new people, and the emphasis during selection was about diversity of thought, about curiosity, about style. This is a more open place now. So, there is more opportunity and capability to deliver great customer experience.

This is more important than ever because we are in a transition phase. We are providing a service for which customers have a choice. They no longer have to use it, because many can work at home instead. So, we are working hard to win their trust and get them back. How this industry is shaping up with DfT's Plan for Rail and Great British Railways is going to be interesting. I am genuinely more excited now than I have ever been.

The award has gone out on tour. The reaction has been amazing. People want to hold it and have selfies with it. The award is a reward for 3,000 people and the really hard work they have done. It's motivation too.

