

NEWS ACROSS THE GROUP

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A message from David Brown

Dear colleagues,

With the increasing infection rates in recent weeks, it remains an uncertain time. Recently Greater Manchester has entered the 'very high' Tier 3 level of restrictions, and in Ireland there is now a lengthy 'circuit breaker'.

It must be difficult for the travelling public to keep up with changing government guidelines. In Tier 3, despite advice to work from home if you can, or not to stay overnight in another part of the country, you are still able to travel for work, for education and to venues and amenities that are staying open. Importantly, the UK Government's guidance is now 'mode neutral' (e.g. for Tier 2 it is now a general 'reduce journeys' message).

It is a confusing picture but we have an important role to play by keeping our vital services running. We have to give people the confidence they need to use public transport in order to carry on with their day-to-day lives as much as

possible. We can do this by highlighting the enhanced cleaning, mandatory face coverings and other measures we have in place to keep our buses and trains Covid-secure. And to make this activity visible and well publicised.

At the same time we need to look ahead to when restrictions ease and how we can encourage customers back.

As work patterns have changed, this means that some form of flexible ticketing is essential. We want to work with government to introduce relevant ticketing options for our rail passengers, such as products that provide a good deal on 'three day a week' commuting. Or products for five or ten days a month, which offer choice and let people change their plans at short notice. More generally, we will need to do all we can to position train – and bus travel – as a green mode of choice.

And on that more positive note I'm pleased that we have some welcome

coverage this month of recent Group success. GTR's 80-year old dispatcher Siggie Cragwell picked up a lifetime achievement honour and Southeastern was heralded as the top employer in the Women in Rail awards.

And to mark Black History Month, Southeastern unveiled a plaque at Chatham station waiting room in memory of Asquith Xavier – Asquith was the railway worker who overturned a Whites-only recruitment policy in the 1960s.

You can also read more about how Brighton & Hove Buses are set to roll out 24 more geo-fenced buses at the end of November, all helping to improve air quality on the south coast.

Have a good month.

David Brown,
Group Chief Executive



Staying sustainable

Public transport remains critical to environmental sustainability, economic recovery and supporting communities, colleagues and customers. All our operating companies published their sustainability reports at the end of October. Through corporate donations, fundraising and volunteering efforts we have invested nearly £5 million on our local communities in the last five years. We have also reduced carbon emissions per vehicle mile by 27% since 2017.



BRITISH
TRANSPORT
POLICE

We've got it covered

Working together to keep customers safe and secure.


This autumn GTR and Southeastern worked jointly with the British Transport Police as part of its ongoing drive to encourage and enforce the wearing of face coverings. The pilot scheme, in support of the whole rail industry's Safer Travel Pledge, sees railway colleagues team up with BTP officers at key stations and on board trains, to remind passengers of the importance of covering up.

Although compliance is generally very high and a good number of passengers are exempt due to age or medical conditions, a minority of travellers

are still known to be flouting the law. Should these people be encountered and refuse to put on a face covering, the BTP has powers to fine them up to £6,400.

The scheme will run until 22 November, with the objective of further increasing compliance amongst the travelling public. This will be alongside other prominent measures such as posters, announcements and digital information. We'll share an update on the outcomes and learnings in the December issue of News Across the Group.



 **Our attitudes** Collaborative

Cleaner trains, cleaner air

Great Northern trains save more than 4,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions in first year.

GTR brand Great Northern has already generated enough electricity through their brakes to power the households of Welwyn and Hatfield Borough for a month.

The 25 trains have completely transformed travel for Great Northern's passengers travelling between London Moorgate to stations in Hertfordshire, including Stevanage and Welwyn Garden City.

The new models replaced one of Britain's oldest National Rail electric train fleets and provide air conditioning, WiFi and power sockets at every seat. Passenger satisfaction has also soared 22% as a result of the new trains.

Tom Moran, Managing Director of Great Northern and Thameslink, celebrated the trains' significant environmental contribution with MP Catherine West for Clean Air Day in October.

He said: "Our new trains have transformed our passengers' journeys. "Hidden away underneath the carriages electric motors help the trains brake, feeding the energy back into the network for use by other trains. That technology has already generated 17 million kWh, potentially saving more than 4,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions."

GTR has diesel trains on only two Southern routes and is supporting Network Rail as it studies the feasibility of electrifying them.



 **Our attitudes**
Collaborative

Let's go for geo-fencing

Twenty-four more in store

More extended range electric buses are arriving for Brighton & Hove buses. Providing nearly 4,000 trips across the city a week, the buses are geofenced, meaning that they switch to electric mode only, when in the city's Ultra Low Emissions Zone. The buses also switch to zero-emission when they come to a stop.

The 24 new buses will add to the 30 buses that were launched in October 2019. The company has invested £17.8 million into the vehicles so far. The bus is powered by a battery, which is charged by an on-board generator when the driver brakes. This means that the bus can deliver zero emissions without needing to stop and charge during the day – eliminating the need for expensive and intrusive roadside charging stations.

Brighton & Hove Buses' Managing Director Martin Harris said: "These extended range electric buses are the most practical way of achieving no emissions through the city centre and in other sensitive areas. We will use data gathered from the first group of 30 buses to set the next 24 buses to zero emissions over a greater distance beyond the city's ULEZ."

"It's an investment that underlines our steadfast commitment to making Brighton & Hove a clean air city with zero emissions by 2030."



Our attitudes  Agile

You are not alone

Colleagues at Go-Ahead London marked World Mental Health Day in October by pulling together a campaign.

This year has been tough and we all need a little extra support from colleagues. Accident Prevention Manager Katarzyna Bilinska, from Merton Garage raised awareness about mental health to all colleagues of Go-Ahead London with the message 'You are not alone'.



Our attitudes  Down-to-earth

Winning BIG

We had a lot to celebrate in October



Southeastern won 'Top Employer' at the Women in Rail awards. It was the only train operating company shortlisted for the main award. Southeastern was recognised for its work in improving gender equality – including introducing a two day fertility policy for those going through treatment, launching menopause awareness sessions for managers and colleagues.

southeastern



Southeastern won 'Best Ongoing Communication' at the Institute of Internal Communication Awards for its ALERT Bert campaign. ALERT Bert is Southeastern's safety mascot who fends off 'trouble bugs' to ensure safety is at the forefront of everyone's minds.

southeastern

Oxford Bus Company's City Sightseeing fleet scooped a prestigious award from Tripadvisor, after it was ranked one of the top tourist attractions in the world. The open-top bus tour was placed in the top 10% of tourist attractions across the globe, based on passenger and review feedback.

oxford
bus company

GTR's Rachel Halliday won 'Apprentice of the Year' at the Women in Rail Awards. She started her station manager apprenticeship in 2019 and within three months was managing stations and on-call duties alone. She was integral in her work on the West Coast Blockade – the biggest line block ever attempted on the route.

GTR



Brighton & Hove Operations Manager Kirstie Bull won the Customer/Passenger Award at the Everywoman in Transport and Logistics Awards. She became a bus driver in 1998 and has worked her way up – now managing a busy bus depot with more than 200 drivers and 82 buses. The bus company's Head of Marketing and Communications, Vicky Doyle, came runner up for an Industry Champion award, while Go-Ahead London's apprentice manager Caroline Welch was a finalist in the 'leader' category.

Brighton & Hove
essential travel for our city



Vicky Doyle

Kirstie Bull

Oxford Bus Company was awarded a National Express 'Golden Spanner' award after excelling in an annual engineering audit. The company runs routes from Oxford to Cambridge via Luton and Stansted Airport on behalf of National Express.

oxford
bus company

GTR's Najla Almutairi was crowned for Outstanding Personal Contribution (Frontline) at the National Rail Awards. She found work with Southern rail through the Prince's Trust 'Get into Railways' programme and had been looking for a way to better support her mum and siblings after her mum fell ill.



GTR

GTR's Siggie Cragwell won a Lifetime Achievement Award at the National Rail Awards. Siggie, aged 80, has worked on the railway since the day after he landed in England as part of the Windrush generation, 57 years ago. He gets up at 4am to do the 6-11am shift, dispatching trains at Elstree and Borehamwood station. He was interviewed by Youtuber Geoff Marshall about his life, working in the railway and all the change he has seen.

GTR

See the video

Go-Ahead Group won 'Best Investor Communication Award' at the PLC awards. Head of Investor Relations, Holly Gillis, accepted the award, saying: "Great importance is placed on Investor Relations at Go-Ahead, with genuine commitment from the Board and great support from our Executive Directors and Senior Management."

Go-Ahead



Commemoration in Chatham

Southeastern united with RMT and Network Rail to commemorate a pioneer in rail.



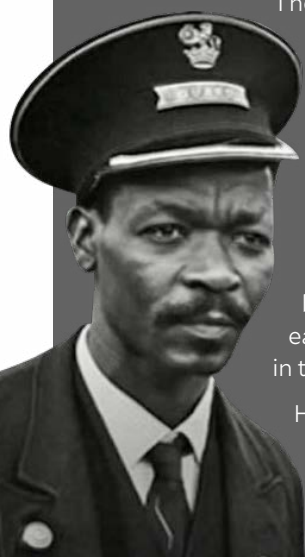
October marks Black History Month, a time to celebrate, commemorate and remember the achievements of the Black community. Southeastern helped to honour railway hero Asquith Xavier in September by unveiling a plaque in his memory.

The memorial, located in Chatham's waiting room, commemorates Asquith's ground-breaking fight to end the historic 'colour bar' on Guard roles at Euston Station. This paved the way for the eradication of racial discrimination in the workplace.

A resident of Chatham in his later years, Asquith commuted to his beloved Guard role from the station each day – making the plaque's inclusion in the waiting room all the more poignant.

His granddaughter Camaelia Xavier-Chihota said: "It is a proud moment for our family that Network Rail, Southeastern and the RMT union

have come together to pay a special commendation to Asquith, in honour of his contribution to our multi-cultural society. It will be a place where we can bring our children to be educated about his pioneering ways, and for the general public to learn of a regular man who achieved extraordinary things by speaking out against discriminatory practices, not only for himself but for others."



Show racism the red card

Racism has no place in transport.

Go North East has kicked off its own diversity, inclusivity and improvement initiatives called 'One Team GNE'. The initiative addresses six key themes selected by colleagues – mental health and wellbeing, disability and inclusion, community engagement, gender equality, ethnicity and LGBTQ+. The company has 29 'One Team GNE Champions' who are working to create a more inclusive and supportive team for colleagues.

In October the company raised money for Show Racism the Red Card – the UK's leading anti-racism educational charity. Bus drivers and support teams wore red instead of their usual uniform and donated to the charity.

Go North East managing director, Martijn Gilbert, said: "It was great to see so many colleagues wearing red and supporting such a great cause. We've recently kicked off our own 'One Team GNE' diversity, inclusivity and improvement initiative, so it was great to work with Show Racism the Red Card and support their Wear Red Day."



GoAhead
BAHN & BUS

Lights, camera, action!

Stuttgart in the spotlight.

On a quiet train at 7.15am in Stuttgart station in October, travellers were suddenly taken aback by a crew, cameras and actors occupying a train carriage. The reason? A film crew were producing an advertising campaign to promote the

district of Göppingen, a town in southern Germany and part of the Stuttgart region. The crew were filming across local public transport on the local picturesque Fils valley.

To give an understanding of the local public transport system. The advertising campaign will be shown in cinemas across the region and on social media.



This is not a man's world

How GTR is riding the waves of change.

GTR has doubled the number of female train driver applicants in a year – from 413 in 2019 to 825 in 2020. This is a remarkable feat that shows the company's commitment to pushing for equality in the workplace.

The company has launched numerous initiatives to promote women, including recruitment campaigns – such as working with Mumsnet – and launching unconscious bias training to help make the organisation a more inclusive place to work.

Whilst the progress made is encouraging, GTR recognises that the fight is far from over, and has once again committed to doubling the number of female train driver applicants, this time by 2021. The company is also committing to a target of a 50/50 gender split on all training programmes by the end of 2021.



Rail recruitment

Our German train drivers show off their day.

Driver apprentices at Go-Ahead Germany recently took part in a fun video produced by Bwegt – the mobility brand for the Baden-Württemberg region – to show what it's like to be a trainee driver. In the film the trainees are shown learning a variety of skills, such as how to couple train cars. Most of the recruits have transferred over from other industries, with one driver claiming he is now in his 'childhood dream job'.

See the video 

Passengers talk Covid

Feedback is essential.

Brighton & Hove and Metrobus has interviewed passengers about their experiences of travelling by bus during the pandemic. Feedback was positive, with one passenger stating: "I'm glad to be back on the bus – I've got my freedom back."

One Metrobus passenger said: "Even during lockdown I've been getting Metrobuses. I feel perfectly safe on them."



"They get cleaned regularly, sanitised, and they are usually not overcrowded"

The fleets are cleaned up to five times a day, with cleaners also jumping on buses to clean frequent touch points, such as handrails and stop buttons. There are now hand sanitiser dispensers on board every bus, and passengers can assess how busy their bus is with the When2Travel app.



An electric visit

Demonstrating our charging technology.



Go-Ahead Singapore welcomed guests from the Land Transport Authority at the end of September to show off the latest electric bus technology. LTA Chairman Alan Chan and LTA Chief Executive Ng Lang came to visit

Loyang depot and boarded a double decker electric bus and experienced a short ride outside of the depot. Two of our Bus Captains (Drivers) introduced the visitors to features of the bus and demonstrated the charging process.



New buses for Swindon



Delivering benefits for passengers.

Passengers travelling across Swindon will enjoy brand-new buses when travelling across the town. Representatives from Swindon's Bus Company (a brand of Go South Coast) were joined by MP Robert Buckland and Swindon councillors to unveil six new British-built vehicles. Swindon's Bus Company have added 27 brand new vehicles to its fleet in the last three years – all which have the latest Euro VI clean diesel engines.

Andrew Wickham, Managing Director of Go South Coast, said: "We made this investment prior to lockdown, and we are pleased to be introducing them to our customers across Swindon. One positive to come from the past months, is that the area's congestion has greatly reduced. This is a chance for us to build on that. These buses represent more than £900K investment and have the potential to take a number of cars off the road – even whilst social distancing measures are in place."



Cornish cleaning

Working with local suppliers.

Go South Coast is working with local supplier Cornwall Vacuum Services to ensure its bus services are clean and sanitized. Cornwall Vacuum Services have supplied Go Cornwall Bus and Plymouth Citybus with antimicrobial treatments that are colourless and odourless, while providing maximum benefit for passenger safety.

Mark Horide, Director of Engineering for Go South West said: "It's crucial that we utilise the very best cleaning regimes and cutting-edge products to keep staff and passengers as safe as possible and I was very impressed with the range of products and services we were able to access from this Cornish company."



Training in style

Being a bus driver never looked so stylish.

Go-Ahead London has replaced its double-deck training vehicles with newer, slicker models. The new buses have a bright and colourful livery to match Go-Ahead London's branding. The company was the first bus operator to bring apprenticeships in house and has a training centre in Camberwell, south London.



The priority for our nation's bus services

By Martijn Gilbert



Go North East's Managing Director responds to levelling up bus services.

The Times newspaper recently ran an opinion piece in its 'Red Box' column about the importance of city bus services to local economies and the fight to improve air quality. In the article entitled 'Britain can't level up without better buses' Cllr Nick Forbes, the leader of Newcastle city council and an executive member of the Core Cities UK group highlighted how last year in England, bus passengers took three times as many journeys as railway users.

He added that, according to the Transport Focus watchdog, more than half of passengers said that a bus is the only means of transport available to them. He then went on to say that the number of local journeys has declined in many cities and that the buses they catch are ageing, environmentally damaging and expensive.

I disagreed with these last points and wrote a letter in response to the Times. In the letter, I said that Nick had some good things to say about the value of buses to our communities, to accessing jobs and education. And that we support his call for more recognition of their vital role in our economic recovery, along with the creation of a National Bus Strategy that will help tackle urban congestion. That is why we've been pushing the Government to encourage people back on buses, to reignite the economy and get more people back to work.

However, I did feel he was unduly negative about current bus services. Prior to Covid, the North East saw

a 2.4% increase in passenger journeys, and Tyne & Wear already has the fourth highest level of bus use in England outside of London. Rather than our buses being 'ageing, environmentally damaging and expensive', there are now nearly 600 low emission buses in the North East including electric, hybrid, biogas and the latest Euro 6 diesel buses meeting very stringent emission standards.

I went on to say that as we compete with the private car we must prioritise the needs of our customers, by investing in WiFi, luxury seating, USB points and contactless ticketing. I pointed out that the most recent Bus Passenger Survey showed 92% satisfaction in Tyne & Wear, one of the highest levels for any metropolitan area.

Coronavirus restrictions have tightened since I wrote the letter but what I said then still holds true now. The priority for our nation's bus services is not changes in ownership and regulation as argued, but continuing to give customers the confidence to return, in line with the extensive measures taken to ensure buses are clean and safe to use. That, and continued investment in low and zero emission vehicles and bus priority measures, are what is needed for buses to play their full part in boosting the economy, connecting our communities and reducing carbon.

How it started:



How it's going:



Image credit: Adam Malarkey

