

# NEWS ACROSS THE GROUP

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Go East Anglia

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Go South West

GTR

oxford  
bus company

METROBUS

## A coach full of hope on the road to Ukraine

Graham Chafer and Roy Mooney were about to embark on a journey they would never forget.

It all started when Richard Stevens, Managing Director for Go South West suggested the idea to Ali Piper, the Chair for Plymouth Ukraine Medical Aid (PUMA). She said: "After four trips helping to deliver vital aid to Ukraine, I found myself speaking with Richard Stevens at an event. He was clearly keen to support us if he could. But then he said something that surprised and delighted me. He suggested that a coach might be a suitable vehicle for the next trip."

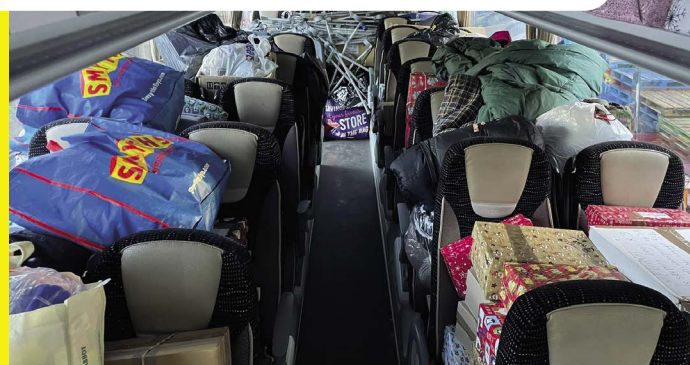
For the aid trip the chosen coach was a 15-plate Irizar i6 belonging to the fleet of Dartline, the Exeter-based company that had been acquired by Go South West just a few weeks before the trip to Ukraine.

Roy describes how the coach was filled.

"It was packed to the gunwales," he says. "Apart from the seats at the front and keeping the aisle free so we could use the toilet, every last space was taken up with supplies. It took a full day to load it. We had everything from prosthetic limbs and specialist neo-natal equipment through to tins of soup and cat food. We also had some 700 Christmas present boxes that the PUMA team would later give to children in Ukrainian orphanages and elsewhere. Ali told us that we'd managed to cram around three Ford Transits-worth of load onto the coach."

Day one saw the coach travel from Plymouth up to Dover, and then head from Calais to an overnight stop in Aachen. Day two took the coach through to Prague. Day three completed the journey to Kisvarda, just 15 miles from Zahony and the Hungarian border with Ukraine.

Roy joined Plymouth City transport in 1974 as an engineering apprentice, working through the ranks and Graham has been a coach driver for over 20 years, and both have got lots of experience under their belts.





# Welcome

from Christian Schreyer



## A year of opportunity beckons for Go-Ahead

An exciting 2023 has begun for The Go-Ahead Group. We start January full of ambition, fuelled by a series of stand-out successes at the end of last year.

Just before Christmas, Go North West won Manchester's first two bus franchises – a fantastic double that will bring 750 new colleagues into the group in Bolton and Wigan.

We entered our seventh country – Australia – through a deal to operate buses in Sydney. Meanwhile, in December, our rail colleagues in Germany began operating a new, ambitious train network in Bavaria.

It was a truly exciting end to an eventful year. And as we look to 2023, I want to set three priorities: to continue improving our performance, to capture further growth opportunities and to make 100% sure that everything we do reflects our values as a company.

In terms of performance, we will shortly launch a Data Centre of Excellence to promote digital

capabilities across the group. That follows the creation of our Zero Emission Centre of Excellence, to develop best practice in running electric and hydrogen buses.



I hope that we'll soon see a settlement to the industrial action on UK rail, and that over the months ahead, a plan moves forward for a new industry structure, whether it's called Great British Railways or something else. We're proud of the service delivered by colleagues at Govia Thameslink Railway, and we need to keep building back rail usage post-pandemic.

On bus, we're working with all our operating companies on a new financial

operating model, and we're looking forward to the arrival of many more zero emission buses this year – including at Go-Ahead London, Metrobus and the Oxford Bus Company.

In terms of growth, we bought Dartline in Exeter and Flexbuss in Sweden last year, and I anticipate more acquisitions this year. We'll be bidding for new contracts, both in the UK and overseas – including in Singapore and Sweden. And there will be other opportunities to step in where our competitors show weakness: for example, Go South Coast has taken on routes in Bournemouth and Southampton following the withdrawal of rival bus companies.

Finally, Go-Ahead has a strong set of values. Our bus and rail companies are core to our communities, and those communities rightly expect us to uphold the highest ethical standards.

My ask of all colleagues is to be collaborative, transparent, accountable, open-minded and agile. And to keep those values at the front of your minds in everything you do.

I wish you all a happy, successful and fulfilling 2023. Thank you, as ever, for delivering outstanding bus and rail services.

Best regards

*Christian Schreyer*

Christian Schreyer,  
Group Chief Executive



### Christian visits Singapore colleagues

Group Chief Executive, Christian Schreyer visited colleagues in Singapore. Go-Ahead Singapore employs more than 1,000 people and operates 435 buses.

Singapore's Changi Airport with Christian are (left to right) Engineering Director Leonard L., Finance Director Wendy Soh, Managing Director Andrew Thompson, and Operations Director Daniel Corbin.



### Travelling into the office more regularly could boost confidence at work and improve wellbeing in 2023

Research revealed by Govia Thameslink Rail has found that workers are starting to favour in-person interactions again and getting the most from their journeys into work.

The research shows that two-thirds of respondents (66%) agree the working environment is more enjoyable when there are others around them.

People are also looking to get more from the time they spend on their train journey, with health and wellbeing at the forefront of their focus. 34% of people said they now take the time out to read and 30% listen to podcasts. A third of respondents are using the journey as an excuse to take a break from the screen, with 33% simply enjoying the view. Finally, 17% say they are now focusing on making their commutes more mindful with meditation apps adding some much needed 'me time'.

### Go-Ahead wins franchises to operate Manchester's Bee Network buses

Go North West has secured the first two major franchising contracts to be awarded by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) as part of its plan to reregulate bus services in the city region under its new Bee Network. Go North West beat off competition from eight other operators bidding to run bus routes in both Wigan and Bolton from 17 September 2023.

Under the contracts, Go North West will operate 55 routes served by a fleet of 308 buses, and 750 employees will transfer across from existing operators.

On learning the news, Go North West managing director Nigel Featham said:

"We're delighted to be the first bus operator contracted to run services for Manchester's new Bee Network. We've got an exceptional team at Go North West and we're very proud of the level of service we provide to passengers."







## Brighton and Hove and Metrobus: Santa Bus 20-year anniversary

Over 18 nights in November and December, Santa and his helpers brought a busload of festive cheer to over 200 streets across Brighton & Hove and Crawley.

Children, families, and individuals lined the routes for the chance to see Santa and donate to twelve local charities: Martlets, Chestnut Tree House, Motor Neurone Disease Association, Take Shelter, Possibility People, Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare, Extratime, Voices in Exile, Sussex Cancer Fund, Ronald McDonald House, RISE and Fareshare Sussex.

Santa and his volunteers' efforts raised an amazing £28,000!



## Go North East's Christmas gift to bus-mad Jack

Bus-mad schoolboy Jack Thompson was given the best Christmas present of all this week, with an exclusive 'behind the scenes' tour of Go North East's Gateshead Riverside depot.

Jack's nana, Elaine, got in touch with Go North East saying Jack's Christmas wish was to have a tour of Gateshead Riverside depot. His wish was granted, and Jack was also asked to launch the magical Santa Bus tour.

Fourteen-year-old Jack, who lives in Gateshead, was just four months old when he was diagnosed with a brain tumour on his optic nerve which has left him registered blind. He's undergone several rounds of chemotherapy and had numerous hospital stays, but Jack says he is the happiest boy in the world and takes pride in passing his optimism onto others and raising money for charity.



## Newcastle Head Office transforms into a Winter Wonderland

The Grey Street elves were busy this Christmas, spreading joy and bringing sparkle to Go-Ahead's Head Office in Newcastle.

Grey Street colleagues got together in their teams to decorate the office; some even came in on a Sunday to get involved in the festive fun! The creativity, effort and imagination of Grey Street colleagues is off the charts, with the Pensions team going with a Gingerbread Village theme and the Procurement team decorating their office area in a 'Ba humbug' Grinch theme.

In addition to this, Grey Street colleagues raised £406 in raffle for the People's Kitchen in Newcastle. That's enough money raised for an equivalent of 81 Christmas meals for homeless and disadvantaged people.



## Brighton & Hove buses Christmas Day services

Brighton & Hove Buses saw more than 3,000 local residents take advantage of their Christmas Day services that were introduced this year in Brighton & Hove at no cost to the taxpayer. Buses also ran on Boxing Day carrying nearly 30,000 people, which is a huge increase (52%) since last year, and almost reaching pre-COVID bus usage levels.



## Go North West festive fun

Go North West colleagues got involved in Christmas Jumper Day this year to help raise some money for Save the Children. Colleagues also dressed up as Santa and gave away gifts to passengers on the Free Bus which goes around Piccadilly station in Central Manchester. Free Bus is a contract Go North West have with TfGM.



## Go-Ahead London colleagues raise money on Christmas Jumper Day

On 8th December colleagues at Go-Ahead London took part in Christmas Jumper Day and helped to raise funds for Save the Children UK.

The money raised will support more children and ensure they are kept safe and healthy in the UK and across the world.



## Cash for kids Mission Christmas event

Go-Ahead London's New Cross Garage held an event on behalf of Cash for Kids Mission Christmas. Colleagues organised a cake sale to raise funds and donated toys to help make a difference to the lives of disadvantaged children in the local community.







**Australia venture  
Go-Ahead's seventh country**

Go-Ahead and UGL announced their joint venture company, U-Go Mobility, has been awarded a contract to operate buses in Sydney by Transport for New South Wales.

The network will comprise 225 buses operated by more than 400 colleagues, accounting for half a million passenger journeys every weekday.

For Go-Ahead, this makes Australia our seventh country of bus or rail operation. U-Go will begin operating buses in Sydney's Sutherland Shire and Bankstown regions in July 2023.

The contract worth approximately A\$500 million (split 50-50 between the two partners) includes operations in the south-west of Sydney's Central Business District and includes services stretching from the city's southern beaches to south-western suburbs.



**Farewell John Trayner**

After 16 years John Trayner has decided to step down from his role as Go-Ahead London Managing Director.

John started as an engineering apprentice in 1975 for London Transport and worked his way up to take on his present role in 2006. Under John's tenure, Go-Ahead London has doubled in size and has become a stand-out success story within the Go-Ahead family. He has presided over the introduction of zero-emission buses, the creation of an award-winning apprenticeship scheme and he has delivered a remarkable record of commercial success to build a business that operates a quarter of the capital's buses. John Trayner is stepping back from day-to-day operations but will remain with Group in a strategic role overseeing our London and international bus businesses.

John said: "I am grateful to have presided over many great and notable milestones, none of which would have been possible were it not for a talented group of individuals". John passes on the baton to David Cutts who was previously Go-Ahead London's Operations Director since 2006.



**Munich-based network expands Go-Ahead's footprint in Germany**

Go-Ahead begins train operations on a major rail network in Bavaria linking Munich with regional towns and cities including Augsburg, Würzburg, and Aalen. The new network serves 71 stations and will involve running 7.6 million train kilometres annually, bringing Go-Ahead's total German network to 20 million train kilometres annually.

This is Go-Ahead's fifth German contract and marks a significant expansion to Go-Ahead's German rail business, which employs 1,000 people in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg.



**Dementia Go To Points for passengers in Singapore**

Dementia Go-To-Points at Singapore's Pasir Ris and Punggol Bus Interchanges ensure a safe place for people with dementia.

The points are a designated place where people in the community can bring a person with dementia who may appear lost and are unable to identify themselves or on their way home. Trained colleagues will then attend to them and assist in reuniting them with their caregivers.

Go-Ahead Singapore's Senior Customer Service Officer Dorothy Tay after completing the Dementia Awareness e-learning module has the skills to put the senior commuters at ease by demonstrating empathy and assurance.



**Apprentice of the Year award for Bob Bryce, the country's oldest apprentice**

Govia Thameslink Rail colleague Bob, completed an NVQ level 3 apprenticeship course at the age of 76, becoming the country's oldest apprentice. He has grown to fame as he was interviewed by 19 different news organisations including Sky, BBC World Service and Steph's Packed Lunch on Channel 4. His motto throughout his many media appearances was "never give up".

In November, Bob was named Apprentice of the Year at The Rail Staff Awards in Birmingham. GTR proudly brought home four awards in total including, Covid Heroes – Outstanding Team Award, Customer Service Award, and Station Staff Award. GTR colleagues were also named Highly Commended in five categories.



## Go-Ahead Ireland raises money for Down Syndrome Ireland

December marked the beginning of Go-Ahead Ireland's collaboration with Down Syndrome Ireland, and colleagues were delighted to welcome them to the Ballymount Depot. This collaboration is an extension of Go-Ahead Ireland's long-term commitment to the communities that they proudly serve. Passengers were encouraged to wear their most festive Christmas Jumpers on the 16th of December to help raise vital funding for Down Syndrome Ireland.



## Bus drivers aid 82-year-old diabetic man in Clacton

David Walsh, 82, was on a Hedingham and Chambers bus in Clacton on Tuesday, November 29, when he suffered a bout of hypoglycemia due to his diabetes. Hedingham bus driver Michael, with the support of other drivers Debbie and Bradley, looked after David and were told that without their help he would have gone into a diabetic coma and probably wouldn't have made it. A spokeswoman for Hedingham and Chambers said: "We are very proud of the way our drivers responded to the situation and helped the elderly gentleman who felt unwell as he left one of our buses on Tuesday." David has since recovered and has thanked the drivers for saving his life.

## Hamster's great escape on Route 89

By the power of social media, our colleagues at Go-Ahead London reunited a newly acquired hamster with its owner. The hamster escaped whilst on the way home on the Bexleyheath Route 89, to be found by the garage team. We are glad that the hamster is well and has since been renamed Panda 89 Metro. Louene Rothwell had gone into Pets at Home in Crayford, near the border with Dartford, to buy some fish when she came across Panda 89 Metro. The 55-year-old said: "I am mad about pandas, and he was black and white, so I thought I had to take him home. It was spur of the moment"



## Go South Coast colleague named Employee of the Year after grenade drama

Go South Coast colleague Lee Peters has been praised for his calm approach when he was handed a live World War II British hand grenade. The bus driver who also manages shuttles and day tours for cruise passengers at Portland, is named employee of the year by operator Damory for remaining professional in a uniquely pressured situation.

## Go-Ahead London's 'Stay Safe' Risk and Safety Competition awards

After a two-year hiatus due to coronavirus, Go-Ahead London's annual 'Stay Safe' Risk and Safety Competition Awards took place in November last year. Colleagues were celebrated and awarded for best practice and good ideas across the company. This year's theme focused on practical solutions to reduce our carbon footprint. New Cross Garage came first place for their efforts in the reduction for the use of paper and Northumberland Park Garage picked up the Innovation award for reducing idle time on EV's.



## Mr Garrard swaps books for Oxford buses

Former primary school teacher Sam Garrard has swapped books for buses to teach Oxford's newest bus driving recruits how to drive public transport. After 13 years teaching languages in primary schools across east Oxford, Mr Garrard joined Go-Ahead's Oxford Bus Company as a bus driver. Five years on, he is now using his extensive teaching experience to coach new trainees in the bus operators' training school.





## Flexbuss introduces Star-of-the-month!

Flexbuss since August has introduced Star-of-the-month, as a way to lift inspirational stories and acknowledge the incredible individuals and employees.

Congratulations to the following Stars-of-the-month.



AUGUST



SEPTEMBER



OCTOBER



NOVEMBER

## Rail and football club team up to help vulnerable families at Christmas

Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) teamed up with Stevenage FC's Foundation charity to drive up toy donations to ensure disadvantaged children living across Hertfordshire don't miss out on a gift this Christmas.

This is the ninth year that the rail operator has worked with Stevenage FC, offering its Academy players free train travel on the Thameslink and Great Northern network. The partnership helps to upskill the next generation of football stars, no matter their background.



## 55% of the public would catch a bus more often if it was electric or hydrogen

A poll for Go-Ahead suggests millions of extra passengers could catch buses and trains if they are powered by zero emission fuels. A key finding from the ComRes Poll was that 55% of the public would catch a bus more often if it's an electric or hydrogen bus, rather than a diesel bus.

Polling findings in detail include:

- 26% of the public think bus travel is a 'green' form of transport. This compares to 3% for flying, 4% for taxis, 9% for car travel, 26% for rail travel, 73% cycling and 83% for walking.
- If a bus was 'zero emission' and powered through an electric battery or hydrogen fuel cell, would you consider it to be green? 81% agree, 6% disagree.
- 55% of respondents would be more likely to travel by bus if they knew it was a zero-emission bus. For those aged under 35, the figure was 66%.

The polling was carried out on behalf of The Go-Ahead Group's Zero Emission Centre of Excellence, which has officially opened in London, bringing together expertise from Go-Ahead's bus companies across the UK, Ireland, Sweden, and Singapore and will develop best practice in buying, running, and maintaining zero emission buses.



## GO SOUTH COAST, LOOK BACK IN TIME

### Salisbury Reds

Leyland TD3 double deck bus WV 4922 had been new to Wilts & Dorset in 1934; it is seen here parked at Amesbury in 1954 with destination blind set ready to operate to Larkhill by the direct route 2.

The 3 route also ran to Larkhill but went via Bulford. The 2 and the 3 were known to the bus crews and to many passengers as 'the direct' and 'the via' respectively



### Bluestar

The Hants & Dorset 39 route ran between Southampton and Fordingbridge via Calmore, Copythorne, Bramshaw and Godshill.

Seen shortly after arrival at Southampton bus station on a sunny day during the 1971-2 winter is 2719 EL, a Bristol MW5G saloon that had been new in January 1960.



### Morebus

When Bristol LS5G saloon SRU 974 was new to Hants & Dorset in July 1956 it was intended for crew operation with a driver and conductor and had doorways at the front and the rear.

The rear doorway was removed in March 1959 when SRU 974 was adapted by Hants & Dorset to be suitable for driver only operation. It was photographed in Bournemouth bus station during the 1973-4 winter - towards the end of its service with the Company; SRU 974 was withdrawn in 1974.



## Go-Ahead bus fares capped at £2 across Britain

Go-Ahead bus companies are offering millions of adults across England single fares capped at £2 on bus journeys outside London from January. The offer is funded through a £60 million scheme under the Government's "Help for Households" program to help the public with cost-of-living pressures over the winter.

Passengers can expect to make big savings from Go-Ahead's longer bus routes, including:

- Go North East's X10 between Newcastle and Middlesborough, usually £8 (39 miles)
- The Regency Route between Brighton and Tunbridge Wells, usually £6.20 (33 miles), run by Brighton & Hove Buses
- Oxford Bus Company's, River Rapid route from Oxford to Reading, usually £5 (26 miles)
- Salisbury to Swindon, operated by Salisbury Reds - a journey of 40 miles, usually £7.20
- East Yorkshire Buses' X46, from Hull to York, usually £8.50 (37 miles)

The government has estimated that the average single fare for a 3-mile journey is £2.80, meaning the special fare will save passengers almost 30%. The initiative, which ends on March 31st, will help millions of Go-Ahead passengers with travel costs for work, education, and essential journeys.



Buses Minister, Richard Holden at Go North East's Gateshead depot to launch the scheme. More than 130 bus operators are taking part in the offer, which applies on over 4,600 routes.



## Get to know...

### Managing Director for Go South West Richard Stevens MBE



#### **Congratulations on your recent MBE award, what was your reaction when you heard the news?**

I was in disbelief; it still doesn't seem real! I was notified by email, and I of course accepted the award. But I do remember being in complete surprise. I even googled the email address to check it wasn't a joke. For the first couple of weeks, I had to keep it a secret, even from my wife.

#### **What is your passion and what gets you out of bed?**

I love my family and my three grandchildren, aged five, three and six months. It's a nice buzz being a grandad and I spent Christmas with them for the first time.

I truly believe buses are the lifeblood of any community. And that's where my other passion lies. I want to do everything I can to give people the best opportunity in life. I think the bus industry has the potential to transform people's lives.



**Richards granddaughters - Willow, Jasmine and Alba**

#### **How did you get into transport?**

I left school as I turned 16 and joined the army, I was not a good fit; I did not like running and being shouted at! I then worked as a milkman for a while. I started my bus career in 1989 with Western National, now First Group. Ten years later I started my first managerial position, appointed as director in 2022. In 2012, that's when my journey with Go-Ahead began – I felt at home from the moment I had my interview.



**Richard on Duty as Deputy Lieutenant for Devon**

#### **What do you like most about being an MD for GSW?**

Being a private sector leader in the community is rewarding. I get to work with secondary schools and the largest college in the South West region. Working within the community we get to influence good decisions which benefits everyone. And of course, I am blessed with an amazing team!

#### **How has working for Go-Ahead helped you in your career?**

I'm so lucky to work for Go-Ahead. Having previously worked for First Group and Stagecoach I understand that having the permission and being entrusted to make decisions locally and from the centre of the community has been vital to my success. If it wasn't for Go-Ahead I wouldn't have achieved as much, the way we work, and our values has been a key driver for me in my career.

#### **What are your hobbies?**

I like to spend my time by the sea. It really doesn't matter if it's a rainy day. My favourite beach is Bigbury-on-Sea in Devon and I love sailing. I just like the fresh breeze and it's good way to decompress.