

NEWS ACROSS THE GROUP

September 2020

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A message from David Brown

Dear colleagues,

I want to begin by saying thank you for all your hard work throughout the summer. Running extra services, enhanced cleaning regimes, regular reminders about face coverings and hand-sanitising, along with new tech that helps passengers choose less busy services, has all built up passenger confidence. It was pleasing to see steady growth in the number of people travelling on buses and trains.

It was encouraging to see how well we prepared for the rail timetable changes in early September and for the return to schools, which involved deploying a large number of extra buses. Our rail timetables in the UK have returned to nearly 98 percent of normal levels, which has been vital in giving confidence to our passengers to get back on public transport.

We have helped support colleagues further with additional protective equipment and reduced cash payments through mobile ticketing and smart cards. Southeastern embedded a new technology this month – Seatfinder – which helps passengers to socially distance by seeing how busy their trains are.

The recent announcements about further restrictions including a 10pm curfew for pubs and restaurants and encouragement for office workers to work from home will likely have an impact on our services. However, at the time of writing this, the Government remains clear that they want to keep businesses and places of education open. Our services will remain vital for those who need to access these and other activities.

Various studies have shown that the risk of infection on public transit to be extremely small.

For the health and wellbeing of people and cities, public transport use should be encouraged alongside walking and cycling. Excessive car use will only increase congestion, emissions and air pollution, with all the health consequences that brings. On page 2 you can read our report on hydrogen fuel-cell buses.

The changing trends of work patterns underlines the necessity of a move to flexible, part time season tickets for rail and we await the response to the proposals we have submitted to Government – for more on this, read David Statham's piece on page 10.

Until next month,

David Brown,
Group Chief Executive

Full year results

We have announced our financial results for the year ending June 28 2020. This has been a difficult year due to Covid-19 but colleagues have banded together with continued hard work, resilience and patience. Our priorities this year have been to safeguard the health and wellbeing of colleagues and customers, to play our role in society in challenging times and to protect our business.

[CLICK HERE](#)
to watch the video



Staying in Singapore

As we celebrate four years in the city-state, we welcome three more

Go-Ahead Singapore celebrated four years of operations in September. While this year is proving a challenge across the globe, the company is continuing to innovate and striving to provide a valuable service for the communities we serve.

While abiding by safe distancing measures, Go-Ahead Singapore has given away handy face covering cases and reminded commuters to put their masks on properly while maintaining good personal hygiene.

In August we announced that we have been granted a two-year contract extension from the Land Transport Authority (LTA) of Singapore, meaning we will be able to continue operating 450 buses around the Loyang region of the city-state. The contract will begin in September 2021 and run until September 2023. This follows on from our initial five-year contract, which saw us enter the market in September 2016.



Trials in hydrogen



Leading the way for green technology

Metrobus trialled clean hydrogen fuel cell buses at the end of August on its 'Fastway' routes. This was to test the technology and to engage with key stakeholders. Last year Brighton & Hove Buses and Metrobus secured £4.36 million under the government's Ultra-Low Emission Bus Scheme as well as £2.9 million funding from the European Union to buy 20 zero-emission fuel cell buses for Metrobus. Discussions are progressing in respect for more public sector funding and an increased order of hydrogen buses.

Hydrogen buses perform in the same way as electric vehicles, but also keep a smaller number of onboard batteries fully charged throughout the day. This means they can operate at a similar distance to low-emission diesel buses, without the need to be plugged in for lengthy periods of recharging. The buses can drive 370 miles a day – double the mileage possible from conventional electric buses.

The clean hydrogen fuel is generated using water and renewable energy from wind by a process called electrolysis. The electrolysis turns the water and renewable energy into hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen is then delivered to the bus depot by tube trailer (a large lorry),

where they are connected to a seemingly conventional fuel pump. From there, the hydrogen is pumped into tanks on the bus, which takes the same time as it would to fill up a diesel engine. The onboard fuel cell then converts the hydrogen back into electricity, which charges the batteries and electric motors.

The introduction of fuel cell buses would enable us to be the first commercial operator in the world to independently introduce this technology.



Our everyday heroes

Art installation celebrates Go-Ahead London key workers

London's bustling Southbank Centre has come alive with a free open-air exhibition called 'Everyday Heroes', which celebrates key workers in a vivid series of art and poetry commissions. The aim of the exhibition is to put a spotlight on those who have kept the country running due to the pandemic.

The exhibition is made up of large-scale posters and dynamic digital displays for passers-by and features artists including Michael Armitage, Jeremy Deller, Lubaina Himid and Ryan Mosley. Two Go-Ahead London colleagues, Stephen Appaiah and Natasha Lambert, have been featured for their critical role of keeping London connected during the pandemic.

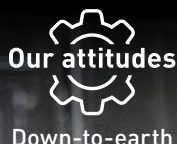
Printed on a large scale, their portraits are featured on the Grade I listed Hayward Gallery as well as in hotspots around London and the UK.

To find out more please watch this video, where you'll catch Stephen and Natasha's portraits at 17 seconds in, 1 minute 7 seconds in, and again at 1 minute 43 seconds in.

CLICK HERE
to watch the video



It's okay to not be okay



Words can go a long way

To mark Suicide Awareness Day, GTR installed chalk cluster messages around its busiest stations to give passengers and colleagues a boost. Messages included "we're with you", "don't suffer in silence" and "it's ok to not be ok". In the last year there have been 426 interventions and 25 fatalities on the GTR network.

GTR has worked closely with partners such as Samaritans, Network Rail and the British Transport police to highlight its commitment to supporting passengers and colleagues who feel vulnerable. GTR has additionally hired its first Suicide Prevention Manager, and is the only train operating company to have someone in such a role at the present time.



Staying apart

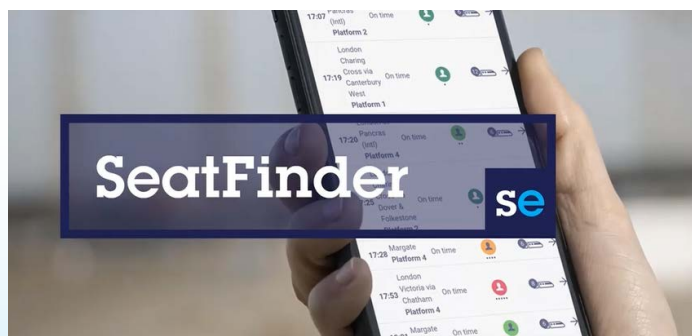


How Southeastern is helping social distancing

Southeastern has become the first train operator in the UK to share train load data directly with passengers so they can understand carriage capacity before boarding services and social distance more effectively.

The innovative new tool, SeatFinder, broke records the moment it launched this summer. Designed to help travellers understand the usual seat availability before setting out on their journey, the system uses daily data from previous train services to estimate how busy carriages might be – helping them to plan their trip with confidence.

Red, amber and green indicators on the Southeastern website, along with on live departure boards at stations,



not only enable a quick assessment of each option, but encourage people to take quieter services outside of peak hours - maintaining vital social distancing whilst keeping everyone moving.

Going electric

Making travel to the station more sustainable

GTR has opened what is thought to be rail's largest dedicated electric vehicle charging hub at Hatfield station. With a total of 27 charging points, the installation marks a wide range of station improvements being undertaken by GTR, which includes 230 stations and 1,000 individual projects.

The new charging infrastructure was installed with leading provider Pod Point to demonstrate the increasing consumer demand for electric vehicles, while also demonstrating the company's commitment to sustainability.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps came to the unveiling. He said: "We're taking great strides towards our goal of having one of the best electric vehicle infrastructure networks in the world. This means a network for current and future electric vehicle drivers that is affordable, reliable, accessible and secure. [This] landmark announcement ticks all those boxes and will make journeys on road and rail much greener for local residents, commuters and businesses."

Left: Tom Moran, MD of Thameslink and Great Northern
Right: Grant Shapps, Transport Secretary





Back to school



School's no longer out for summer

Southeastern heralded this year's back-to-school season with a first-of-its-kind media campaign, designed to support both pupils and parents in planning ahead and returning to the railway safely. The campaign included a dedicated webpage with key information and a downloadable top tips guide. They also launched a drive for youngsters to switch to the smartcard, the Key, which hit headlines across the region – receiving digital news media and radio chats championing the easy-to-clean and contactless smartcard.

Funky face coverings

Bringing some colour to the commute

Go-Ahead London recently paired up with a local designer to produce over 13,000 facemasks. Masks for Extraordinary People, based in New Cross, rapidly produced the masks with local volunteers to stitch together the washable, re-usable, environmentally friendly facemasks. The fun and colourful African prints are made with fabrics from local suppliers in the South London community.



All new up North

A super-green bus trial and more investment in Go North East

In October, Go North East will be introducing the region's first fully electric fleet of buses between Newcastle and Gateshead. To get ready, the company has been trialling the electric buses across Newcastle's quayside and the city centre. The company is continuing to build on its environmental credentials and now operates more than 250 Euro-VI clean diesel engine buses.

Meanwhile, the company is also making a £4.5 million investment into new and refreshed, clean, safe and comfy buses for its Consett depot. The buses feature all the latest mod-cons, including free WiFi, USB and wireless charging, luxury interiors, next-stop audio-visual announcements and tables on the upper deck. The buses can also accommodate two bikes on board, making them a perfect option for integrated and active travel.



A community boost

Tourism begins at home

City SightSeeing Oxford welcomed more than 1,000 residents on its open-top tour bus for free in August and September, as part of a campaign to encourage people to visit the city. The intention was to help the economic recovery from Covid-19 and to build confidence for people to return to city centres.

Residents who could demonstrate that they lived at an address within Oxford enjoyed a one-hour tour of their own city via a #RediscoverOxford campaign. It was delivered in a partnership between Oxford Bus Company, Oxford City Council, and the Oxford Mail.

Phil Southall said: "The tourism and leisure industries are vital parts of Oxfordshire's economy. We wouldn't ordinarily run such a promotion in the summer months but it is vital during these challenging times that we work together with partners to help build confidence for residents to come into the city centre for the benefit of the local economy."



Going for gold

A golden spanner for Go South Coast

Engineers at Go South Coast have been recognised for the services they have provided to coach operator National Express. The company has been running National Express services in Poole, Southampton and Salisbury.

The engineering teams are heavily monitored, with unannounced roadside audits and depot inspections. Checks are vigorous and range from whether vehicles are maintained correctly, and the cleanliness of coaches inside and out - to whether on-board magazines are kept up to date.

If an operator achieves a 95% score over the course of the year, it is awarded Gold Operator standard.

Go South Coast's Managing Director Andrew Wickham said: "We have an incredibly talented team of engineers who have worked tirelessly to ensure these coaches continue to offer customers the high-quality travel experience they come to expect from National Express. "I'm delighted that all three of our engineering teams - in Poole, Eastleigh and Salisbury - who look after National Express vehicles have been awarded a Golden Spanner by our client."



All covered up

Covering our vehicles from Kent to Essex



Six Hedingham buses have been kitted with their very own face covering. The buses, which serve the Essex town of Clacton and its surrounding towns and villages, were wrapped to remind passengers to wear a face covering when using public transport.

General Manager Glen Shuttleworth came up with the idea after seeing Southeastern's face wrap train, which was launched in July.

He said: "Even though it is law, we have noticed that many people are still choosing to travel on public transport without a face covering. It's not our drivers' job to enforce the law as passengers board the bus but we do have a job to actively promote the wearing of one unless they are exempt. The bus wrap is fantastic advert for this and creates awareness to all, even car drivers and pedestrians."

A Clacton resident commented: "The first time I saw the bus drive past, I had to look again as I couldn't believe it was wearing a face covering. What a great idea, it really spreads the message."



Experts in Cornwall

Our Cornish bus operations
are in the best hands



Go Cornwall Bus has now a permanent team in place who have more than 500 years experience between them. Go South West was awarded an eight-year contract in Cornwall this year that sees us operating nearly half of all bus journeys across the county.

Managing Director Richard Stevens said: "Buses are such an important part of the fabric of life in Cornwall. I myself once worked as a bus driver in this beautiful county many years ago and I know first-hand how vital they are.

"So, in order to provide the best service possible, we need a highly experienced team to deliver it. That's why we've placed such great importance on creating your local management team based in Truro bursting with knowledge and people of Cornwall can trust with their buses."



From Syria to Swabia

Becoming a train driver is no easy feat

Go-Ahead Germany has been recruiting drivers from all walks of life. This includes Shadi Hentayeh, who fled from Syria four years ago. He was doing an internship for refugees at an automobile company when he first saw a newspaper advert about becoming a train driver. He found out about a project Go-Ahead Germany launched, where 15 refugees could be trained as train drivers for 12 months, and then be given permanent contract if they passed their exams.

His training took place in Mannheim, which was classroom-based theory, which had to move online because of Covid-19.



Shadi had to improve his German level up to near-fluency, which was difficult because the strong accent in south west Germany (Swabia) is different from the standard ('high') German you learn in a classroom.

All 15 refugees passed the theoretical exams, so have moved onto practical work. When they have completed 40 shifts, they are able to take a practical exam and drive trains by themselves. Shadi said: "Being a train driver is an important profession. I am well trained and have a lot of responsibility. I get up every morning and look forward to my work. I have found a profession where I can have a future, security and respect."

Shine on Swindon



Connecting communities and rebuilding economies

Swindon's Bus Company has been working with the town's business improvement district (BID) to boost business across the area. The operator has joined the #shineonswindon campaign - reassuring passengers that buses are a safe, comfortable and reliable way to travel when visiting the town centre.

"Swindon's Bus Company plays a major role in getting people in-and-out of the town centre safely," said Swindon's Bus Company general manager, Alex Chutter. "It's by working in

conjunction with organisations like inSwindon BID that we can help boost confidence in people returning to some normality - and it starts by supporting our local economy.

"The #shineonswindon campaign has done a fantastic job, raising the profile of businesses within the town centre, demonstrating that they are ready and open. As a company, we are proud to display some special star stickers on our new buses, as a show of support."



Onboarding apprentices



Germany welcomes new recruits

In September, Go-Ahead Baden-Württemberg launched its first apprenticeship scheme in cooperation with transport companies ODEG and Cantus. Over three years, the apprentices will learn to drive traction units, work as brake testers and try their hand in the control centre. Together with trainees from other companies, they will travel through Germany and the Go-Ahead network to know other routes.

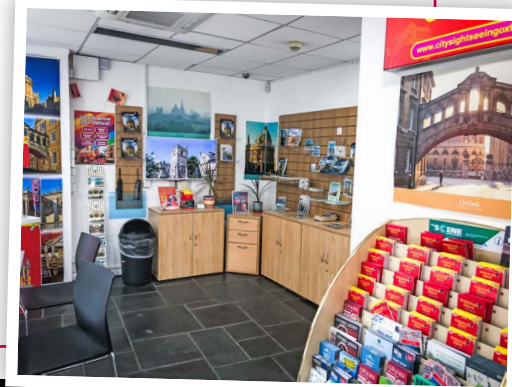
Bjarne Dorge and Dominik Kremer are two apprentices excited to start their training. Dominik said: "I love the FLIRT [models] and the extensive and varied Stuttgart network really appealed to me." Bjarne, on the other hand, appreciates being part of something new. He said: "At Go-Ahead, you can get involved and make a difference".

A new kind of VIP

Visitor Information Points are a new revenue stream for Oxford Bus Company

Oxford Bus Company has opened a new Visitor Information Point to help welcome tourists and provide support to visitors. Based in the heart of Oxford, it provides a one stop shop to access information quickly – be it for directions, bus routes, event calendars and accommodation.

Phil Southall said: "We are diversifying where possible in these difficult times and seeking to create new opportunities and revenue streams. The Visitor Information Point further enables us to ensure Oxford remains a world-leading attraction and that we become the 'go to' organisation to help tourists make the most of what is on offer in the City."



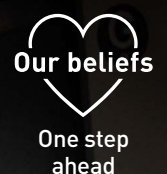
An updated train a week

GTR's modernisation project will enhance customers' and colleagues' experiences

GTR and Porterbrook (the owner of trains leased by the operator) have announced that they're investing £55 million to modernise 270 trains across the Southern, Gatwick Express and Great Northern network.

The trains include 214 Class 377s as well as 56 Class 387s. Most of these trains have been in service between 15 and 20 years. Enhancements will include real-time passenger information screens, USB powerpoints and energy-saving LED lighting. The trains will also have an on-train data recorder to predict and diagnose faults, as well as passenger counting technology to analyse how busy services are.

The first train to enjoy the update will emerge from Selhurst depot, near Croydon, in the autumn. When the programme is in full swing, GTR's engineers will be working on a constant one-per-week stream of trains.



Travelling with confidence

Southeastern's Managing Director David Statham discusses how we can get passengers back on our trains

Like lots of colleagues across our businesses, I was struck by the wide-ranging changes to our society and to our industry when I returned to working in Southeastern's London HQ.

On a recent train journey into work, those changes were particularly noticeable. I got a seat on my south London commuter service – something that's never happened in the previous 25 years of travel. Of those who were travelling, only a tiny minority were wearing the classic commuter uniform of suit and tie. The challenge to the economy of our cities was best illustrated by the complete lack of a queue at Greggs in London Bridge station – an unheard of sight pre-pandemic.

As I walked through the once bustling streets underneath the railway arches built by the Victorians, I got to thinking about the symbiotic relationship between public transport and our cities. When London's railways were built in the mid-19th century, they supported a six-fold increase in the capital's employment. Today, 80% of my company's journeys start and end in London.

London needs public transport to thrive as much as our industry needs London to prosper.

Make no mistake, our cities are currently facing their biggest threat for generations. The city I have lived in for 30 years is in danger of losing the vibrant hustle and bustle which made me move here in the first place. It would be heart breaking to see our theatres, restaurants, pubs and world-class attractions replaced by the type of 'hollowed-out' high streets' we have sadly seen elsewhere.

Public transport has played a huge role in the response to the coronavirus so far – we have operated 24-7 throughout the pandemic, providing vital services to keep key workers moving. All of this is thanks to colleagues across the Group, who can be fiercely proud of how we have collectively responded.

We know that those passengers using our services at present are more satisfied than they have ever been – at my company, we are breaking all-time records for both punctuality and for customer satisfaction.

Our challenge ahead is in bringing back the silent majority of lapsed users before their current temporary habits solidify into more permanent changes. We will need to work hard to bring back our core customers, and we can't take their return for granted in any way. That means first and foremost addressing the things that they tell us are stopping them from taking public transport, whether that is enhanced cleaning, space to social distance, enforcement of face covering compliance or better information on social distancing. In the longer term, this will mean changes to fares, ticketing and timetables to match flexible working patterns.

The good news is that much of this work is already well underway, with Go Ahead companies leading from the front in providing safe public transport to support our cities.

