

NEWS ACROSS THE GROUP

July 2020

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A message from David Brown



Dear colleagues,

In the UK, we're fortunate that the Government is now advising that anyone may use public transport. This is a welcome move away from the previous 'avoid' message – something that we have publicly challenged as it differs from other countries in which we operate, such as Singapore.

Public transport is clean and safe to use. On page 3 you can read about how we're adjusting to increased passenger demand and our enhanced cleaning regimes across our bus and rail companies. We're employing a variety of methods to tell this story – GTR recently welcomed a transport Youtuber to show how railway stations and trains are being cleaned first-hand to spread the word.

The previous message to avoid public transport was driven to a large extent by concern on crowding. This has not happened – there has been

a shift in travel patterns away from the traditional peak, while passenger numbers are considerably lower. Despite the welcome Government support, we have received for both bus and rail, the numbers are not sustainable for public transport operators, as we provide a fundamental service to move people and preferably in larger numbers.

It is important we promote public transport as the sustainable, long-term alternative to car. This includes working with local governments to encourage bus lanes and reduce congestion (page 6) and looking into technology that will help secure our role in the future of transport. Data platform Swiftly won the third cohort of the Billion Journey Project for its work in helping Go South Coast to be more efficient with timetabling (page 3).

Rallying together is essential. On page 7 you can read about some of the

'stars' in our operating companies who have been going the extra mile this month. Our Southeastern colleague Abdul recently became a social media sensation for being a good Samaritan in reuniting a customer with his bike. More than 100,000 people have praised Abdul on Facebook for his good deed, which shows how crucial it is to spread good news stories.

On the back page this month, Go North West's Managing Director Nigel Featham discusses this 'brave new world' we're entering into – have a read on page 10.

Until next month,

David Brown,
Group Chief Executive

Welcome to Go South West

Plymouth Citybus acquired operations in Cornwall earlier this year, which meant that the bus company was covering a much larger area and doubled in size. As Plymouth Citybus name does not suit our rural Cornwall operations, the company has rebranded to be called 'Go South West'. In the same way that Go South Coast operates, our Plymouth and Cornwall operations will now become brands of the larger Go South West identity. While we will not forget our heritage as Plymouth Citybus goes back over 100 years, we needed a new name for the holding company to keep the business relevant.



Back on board

The Coronavirus crisis has had an impact on public transport across the world. As more passengers gain the confidence to use our bus and rail services again, how are we adapting to the new normal?

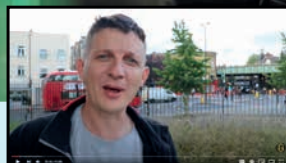
Go-Ahead Singapore

As the next phase of safe management begins along with school and many business activities resuming, colleagues in Go-Ahead Singapore continue to place utmost importance in keeping up with a frequent cleaning regime and maintaining a high level of cleanliness at our depot and interchanges. Recently, teams handed out hand sanitisers to commuters and reminded them to practise good personal hygiene and clean their hands after being in contact with frequently touched surfaces.



GTR

GTR has been continuing to promote its enhanced cleaning regimes. The teams recently worked with Youtube journalist Geoff Marshall to release a fantastic video that explores the amazing work the cleaning teams are doing to keep our stations and trains safe for people and passengers. Geoff saw the deep-cleaning at stations, including the use of 30-day virucide.



Go South Coast

Passengers in Salisbury are being greeted by a new face as they board buses across the city centre. Salisbury Reds' Lucy Humphrey, who is a member of the communications team, is standing by to ensure the bus operator's vehicles are clean and safe, with demand for services steadily rising.

She said: "We have stringent anti-viral cleaning regimes, with a greater focus on high-touch areas since the coronavirus crisis began. Our specialist team at the depot works hard every day, making sure buses are sterile and ready for our customers to travel with us. In addition to these measures, I am meeting buses across the city centre, throughout the day, to check them and give touch points on-board an extra clean with anti-viral wipes."

Brighton & Hove

Brighton & Hove charity Possability People is appealing for understanding for passengers who are exempt from wearing a face covering. Exemptions include disabled people, people with long-term health conditions, children under 11 and those with mental health conditions.

Brighton & Hove Buses' Managing Director Martin Harris said: "I am appealing for people to treat their fellow passengers with compassion, not judgement. That said, people who are not exempt must wear a face covering, particularly to protect vulnerable people who may not be able to wear one when they travel."



All going Swiftly

We have a winner
for this year's Billion
Journey Project



The Billion Journey Project has crowned this year's winner. Swiftly, the world's first big data platform for public transport, won the programme for its work with Go South Coast in examining efficiencies across bus routes.

The Billion Journey Project is an innovation programme where start-up and scale-up businesses are given the opportunity to work with Go-Ahead companies and test their products. This year, nine companies took part and worked with us for over 12 weeks. Participants included Esoterix - a specialist provider of flexible season ticket technology, Peakon - an employee engagement and feedback portal and Aclima, who measure and track air quality across the globe at hyper-local street level.

Swiftly worked with timetable planners from Go South Coast to track 100,000 bus departures a week, as well as 38 routes

on the Bluestar line. The company's platform sped up access to key data sets, reducing scheduling processes from three days to just five seconds. Through collaboration, Swiftly recognised that performance could be improved by 15 per cent through operational changes - meaning passengers could benefit from more reliable services.

All participants presented their ideas at a 'demo showcase' virtual event, with more than 150 people in attendance. At the event, big data analytics and visualisation company Emu Analytics received 'People's Choice award'. The company had partnered with Plymouth CityBus to track real-time location and movement data of bus fleets to gain insights into delays that can impact services. Richard Tyldsley from Go South Coast also won the 'Innovation Leader' award.



Photo taken prior to social distancing measures

Seeing Sunflowers



Making public transport more accessible

Go North East, the region's largest bus company, has joined the Sunflower Lanyard Scheme. By wearing a lanyard, individuals with 'hidden' disabilities - such as hearing loss, multiple sclerosis or autism - can discreetly signal that they may need extra assistance, patience or time when travelling.

All of Britain's rail companies have now joined the scheme. Southeastern was ahead of the curve as Natalie Leister, Station Manager at Southeastern, kickstarted the initiative in October last year on the Hastings to Tonbridge line in Kent.



THIS MONTH IN PICTURES

Rainbow Bus

Go North East unveiled a retro, rainbow, multicoloured bus to celebrate the company's pride in transport, its colleagues and the people of the North East. The bus is a re-work of the company's now infamous 1985 'don't judge a bus by its colour' initiative.

Colleague champions are being appointed at each of the company's seven depots to work on making company culture kinder, more inclusive and mutually supportive, whilst also improving engagement with local communities.



We'll meet again

Brighton and Hove and Metrobus drivers and other bus colleagues got together to say a big thank you to NHS staff and all the UK's keyworkers for the 72nd birthday of the NHS on Sunday 5 July. They sang "We'll Meet Again" as a tribute to Dame Vera Lynn, who passed away in June at her home in East Sussex aged 103.



A London visit

Go-Ahead London welcomed the capital's most senior transport official, Andy Byford to Waterloo this month. Byford visited the all-electric bus garage and was given a personal guided tour by Go-Ahead London's Engineering Director Richard Harrington.

Richard took the opportunity to update the Commissioner on the many coronavirus challenges we've overcome in recent months and highlighted our sustainable travel goals with our electric bus fleets, including recent works at Northumberland Park Garage.

Art attack

A young girl from Worthing couldn't ride her favourite train during lockdown – so she built it instead! July's artwork beat 17,700 entries to claim the President's Prize in the Young Artists' Summer Show at the Royal Academy of Arts. Congratulations on your win July – we look forward to welcoming you back on board.





Colleagues in front of the GTR 'Trainbow'



GTR has partnered with the Prince's Trust for five years



Members of GTR's women's network

Embedding D&I in our DNA



Diversity and inclusion is essential for what we do.

It is integral that our workforce represents the communities we serve. Many of our businesses are rolling out initiatives to make their area a better and more inclusive place to work. This month, GTR announced that it is establishing a new black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) network group to support individuals across the organisation.

Other Diversity and Inclusion work for the next 12 months includes: introducing new ways to attract and recruit talented people from diverse backgrounds, reinvigorating the women's network group, rolling out unconscious bias

training for managers and updating relevant policies and practices to support our communities.

Diversity and Inclusion Partner Dante Frederick said: "This plan is not about excluding anyone, or pushing anyone out – in fact, it's exactly the opposite. The goal is to build a truly inclusive business, where everyone feels welcome, valued and safe. The more inclusive we are, the more diverse we become."

CEO, Patrick Verwer said: "Over the years we've worked successfully with the Prince's Trust to help young people from diverse backgrounds into work, discovering some fantastic talent.

We've seen more women recruited into engineering and driver roles and seen our LGBT+ Network go from strength to strength.

"But we know we can do more, and actions speak louder than words. The railway has such potential to bring people together, there's no place for prejudice or discrimination as we build a more inclusive and more diverse organisation. I'm excited about these plans and look forward to seeing the impact they have over the coming months and years."



Let's go Norway

How Go-Ahead Nordic is encouraging people to visit the Norwegian riviera

Go-Ahead Norway have been working with different municipalities along the Sørlandet Line to showcase all the areas you can visit and the things you can see. The railway line covers 545 kilometres between Oslo and Stavanger, and we started operating services in December 2019. The south coast of Norway is a great location for coastal sights and active holidays, which Go-Ahead Norway has been promoting through Facebook.



Top of the class

Out with the old, in with the new

Southeastern is set to welcome an all-new fleet to its network, thanks to the forthcoming transfer of thirty Class 707 trains from South Western Railway. The ultra-modern units, which feature air conditioning and a spacious walk-through design, can accommodate a massive 1,426 passengers - significantly more than the existing Networker units, which are currently in use on various metro routes through London.

Whilst a date for the transfer is yet to be confirmed, a range of preparation work is in the pipeline for the new arrivals - from Driver and Engineer training, to the development of maintenance facilities, and detailed assessments of the stations at which the trains will call.



Our attitudes
Down-to-earth



Our attitudes
Down-to-earth

Bus lanes for the future

Dedicated bus lanes mean better journeys for all

Bluestar has written to Southampton City Council, praising its decision to introduce dedicated bus lanes in the city. The operator has seen a significant reduction in journey times since the lanes came into effect and believes the council's Green Transport Recovery Plan can be instrumental in reducing congestion across the region.

"Dedicated bus lanes in-and-around Southampton provide an excellent opportunity to lead the way for a greener future here," said Bluestar managing director, Andrew Wickham. "Since Southampton City Council introduced a lane scheme on the eastern side of the city, bus journey times along these routes have reduced by an average of more than three minutes. Frequent and reliable bus services not only benefit passengers, they can improve air quality for the wider community."

Customer queries

Go-Ahead Germany focusses on customer service first

Go-Ahead Germany's customer service department handles multiple issues, from lost smartphones and requests for passenger rights to information regarding train cancellations. Miguel Taux, sales consultant at Go-Ahead Baden-Württemberg, is responsible for complaint management and is the point of contact for questions, praise and criticism.

Complaint management was at first a challenge at the beginning of operations, due to various bottlenecks leading to delays and cancellations. However, processes have been improved and an online form will be added to the website for customers to give feedback even quicker. Miguel now receives between five and fifteen cancellations a day, and some are unusual. One customer even asked which areas of the train have the least electromagnetic radiation.

Some customers write several emails a week. Miguel says: "We take these customers very seriously. Regardless of whether you complain often or only once, Go-Ahead treats all customers equally." The company also receives a lot of praise, especially about colleagues' customer service skills and help for those with disabilities.



Our attitudes
Down-to-earth

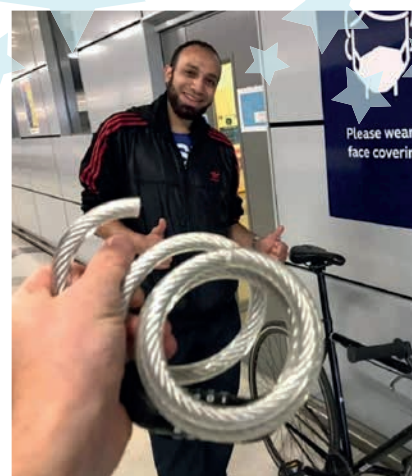
YOU'RE A STAR!

THESE COLLEAGUES WENT ABOVE AND BEYOND THIS MONTH

Southeastern colleague Abdul El-Gayar hit the headlines this month with a sensational tale of great customer service - due to a passenger thank you going viral around the world.

After Abdul stopped a would-be bike thief in his tracks - waiting an incredible four hours after his shift to reunite the owner with his wheels - grateful cyclist Steve Farmer posted a shout-out on social media, which has been shared 133,000 times on Facebook alone. The good deed also hit presses and airwaves across the country - including features in the Metro and ITV News, and an exclusive interview with Abdul on BBC Radio 5 Live.

"When I heard the lock snap, I didn't think twice - I have a bike myself, and know what value they have to people," said Abdul, who's worked for SE for four years. "The guy eventually gave up and walked off - and after I called the police, I thought I could do more by waiting for the owner. When he came back, he couldn't thank me enough - but I was only too happy to help. I wasn't about to let a theft happen right in front of my eyes!"



Metrobus driver Andy McLaughlin stepped in to help save the day after a woman fell ill on the street in Worthing. He got off the bus he was driving and supported her (in a socially distanced way) until the paramedics arrived. He also moved the bus to allow room for the paramedics to attend to her.

Lynn Gamblin, a revenue clerk at Go North East has been busy helping support the company and its customers by making face coverings. With the help of her daughter, Izzy, they have handmade over 70 fabric face masks in their own time, which will help Go North East customers adhere to the new face covering requirements on public transport. Thanks to Lynn and Izzy's kind gesture, bus station supervisors at both Gateshead Interchange and Metrocentre Interchange will be giving out face coverings to passengers that need them.



Here comes the sun

Southeastern's summer campaign continues

With the mercury rising even earlier than usual this summer, Southeastern was swift to spring into action - bringing ahead the launch of their annual warm weather campaign, 'Beat the Heat'.

With a dedicated web page on how to stay safe and hydrated - along with a prominent poster campaign, and socially-distanced water giveaways at select locations - there was stacks of support available for key workers travelling during the June heatwave. Plus, Head of Performance Dan Tall was on hand to explain the steps Southeastern take to beat the heat, including chatting to the Met Office as part of their popular 'My Summer' blog series.



Open-top buses spread the cheer

Many of our open-top bus services are now back in service for the summer sunshine months. Go North East, East Yorkshire, Go South Coast and Oxford Bus Company have put in rigorous measures to ensure customers and drivers will be safe while enjoying the sunshine.

Ben Gilligan, East Yorkshire's Area Director, said that the restart of the open top buses was a morale boost to

the company's drivers: "Throughout lockdown, our drivers have been working hard, in difficult conditions, to make sure key workers could get around," he said. "We've gradually seen things getting back to normal, and seeing people safely enjoying a ride on our Beachcomber buses will feel like a real milestone."

Jane Marshall, General Manager of City Sightseeing Oxford, said:

Let the sun shine on the top deck

"We're looking forward to returning to service and welcoming visitors to our wonderful city. The visitor economy has been severely impacted by COVID-19 and it is great to now see more and more tourist attractions and associated businesses re-opening and welcoming visitors. We have introduced a comprehensive hygiene system and we are safe and ready for when tourists wish to enjoy a tour of Oxford."



Our beliefs
One step ahead

Cycle for charity

Go-Ahead London is arranging a bike ride for a good cause



Go-Ahead London's Katarzyna Bilinska, Accident Prevention Supervisor based at Merton Garage, is organising a charity cycle ride to raise money for Cancer Research and Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH). Taking place later this summer, eight colleagues across the company will be taking part. All funds raised will be distributed to help families in need of support from Cancer Research and GOSH.

Each of Go-Ahead London's 17 locations will receive a plastic box to fill with donations, such as toys and superhero pyjamas for GOSH children. On the day of the event, participants will cycle approximately 90 miles from garage to garage to collect donations.

Cyclists will start as one team from Northumberland Park Garage in Tottenham, North London, and then take various routes to other premises, before converging at Merton Garage in Colliers Wood, South West London, which will form the finish line.

The team at Go-Ahead London are excited to be a part of something very special. They hope they will help raise a smile for families and children, some of whom have been badly affected, both by illness and the impact of coronavirus.



All aboard

Tickets by children, for children

Go-Ahead Baden-Wuerttemberg launched children's tickets that have been created by children, for children. Once the ticket has been validated by train colleagues, it can be exchanged for a small gift (usually a colouring book) at any Go-Ahead service centre. This means the company is the only German railway company to offer children's tickets for a fun pastime on long train journeys.



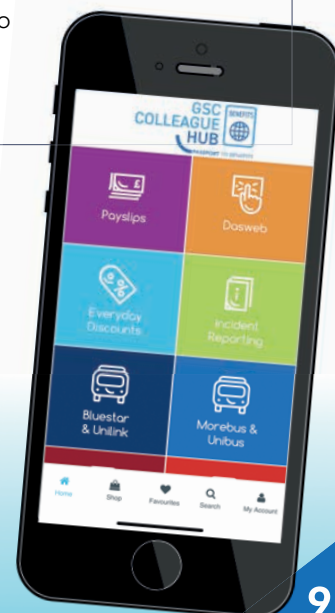
Tracking incidents

Goodbye paper



Go South Coast implemented a new incident reporting system for drivers that's speedier and paper-free. The 'Tracerit' system went live at the end of July and is available on their 'Hapi app' portal. The new system helps driver colleagues to report and record incidents digitally, rather than on a traditional paper-based report.

The Tracerit system will help speed up the process, because Insurance Teams will be able to respond within hours of an incident – compared to waiting for days for a written report in the post. This is also a great initiative to help our impact on the environment by reducing paper waste, while keeping information more secure.



Brave new world

Go North West's Managing Director Nigel Featham discusses how we will adapt to the aftermath of the pandemic

Fed up of the term 'new normal' yet? Where nothing is going to be the same as before in our COVID-19, recession threatened, climate change-conscious world?

Some commentators are already predicting sweeping changes to public transport in light of the above, with a sharp increase in home working and a reluctance to share personal space cited as primary factors in heralding the demise of town and city centres.

The emphasis on hygiene caused by the pandemic has placed enormous responsibility on employers, particularly public transport businesses, to provide people with assurances on their health and wellbeing. But that's not all.

At the same time there is speculation that government would like to exert more control over public transport provision in the future, a development that could lead to bus networks being driven by a wide array of planning - and even political - priorities rather than simply focusing on passenger demand.

Were such forecasts to come to fruition these changes would entail considerable consequences for private sector bus operators like ourselves - for example a move towards client and supplier-based relationships, services focused on operational rather than passenger targets, and more pressure to invest in greener fleets. It would certainly all be 'new', and a long, long way from what we considered 'normal' only a few short months ago.

So, should we be apprehensive about impending change? Should we be having sleepless nights? No, I don't think so. Why? Because, in reality, nothing ever stands still and change is an ever-present. Plus, here at Go-Ahead, we've got a built-in formula for coping. 'What's that?' you may ask.

As a relative newcomer to Go-Ahead of less than a year, for me one of the most noticeable - and appealing - aspects of the group's approach is its emphasis on 'doing the right thing'. This is manifested in well-led, locally managed and operated businesses, the cultivation of strong relationships with local stakeholders, positive engagement with our workforces and a willingness to innovate. It's a mindset that has seen us grow and prosper, not only coping with and managing change but also exerting a positive influence on the direction it can take.

More change is coming, yes, but let's embrace it, welcome it and help shape it. This is not the time to weaken or compromise on what has served us so well in the past.

Keep 'doing the right thing' and we can face the future with fortitude. The same Go-Ahead principles and skills deployed to such good effect prior to COVID-19 will be the same principles and skills we will rely on to be successful in a post-COVID-19 world.

It's a whole new world.
We just need to be brave in it.

Go North West launch Orbitis

