

# ON STAGE



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## New management team at Stagecoach UK bus



New Managing Director for Stagecoach in England and Wales Mark Threapleton



Robert Andrew, new Managing Director for Stagecoach in Scotland

STAGECOACH has announced a new management team and structure at its UK Bus division. Mark Threapleton has been appointed Managing Director of Stagecoach's bus operations in England and Wales, with Robert Andrew becoming Managing Director for Scotland. Both roles report directly to Stagecoach Group Chief Executive Martin Griffiths. The appointments follow the announcement that Robert Montgomery, Managing Director of UK Bus, will leave the Group next month after 15 years with the business. He joined Stagecoach in 2002 as Service Development Director of the UK Bus Division and was part of the team which delivered a decade of consistent passenger growth and financial success. Robert has been Managing Director since May 2013.

Stagecoach UK Bus has also confirmed the following management appointments who will support Mark Threapleton and Robert Andrew in their roles:

- Colin Brown continues as UK Bus Finance Director
- Sam Greer continues as UK Bus Engineering Director
- Paul Bunting joins the company in the new position

of Commercial & New Business Director, UK Bus division, from 1 April 2017

In addition, the following executives will report to Mark Threapleton:

- Mike Watson becomes UK Bus Regional Director, England & Wales
- Paul Lynch is appointed UK Bus Regional Director, London

At the same time, Gary Nolan, currently Regional Director, Midlands and Wales, who has 38 years' experience in the bus industry, is leaving the business next month.

Welcoming the appointments, Martin Griffiths added: "We have a talented team of experienced and very capable managers across the Group and I'm delighted to confirm these key roles in our UK Bus division. The new structure and appointment will ensure we continue to be well placed to manage the changing environment for public transport, and deliver on our programme of investment in improvements for our customers and our people." Martin added: "I'd like to thank Bob for the contribution he has made to the business over the past 15 years and most recently in heading our UK Bus division. Gary too leaves with our great appreciation and we wish him well in the future." Robert Montgomery said: "It has been a privilege, a challenge and enormous fun working for Stagecoach for the last 15 years. I've worked alongside a host of talented and committed people, delivering good quality bus services in a dynamic commercial environment. I wish Stagecoach well and also look forward to new adventures elsewhere."

## South Western rail franchise

THE BID by Stagecoach Group for the new South Western rail franchise, due to commence in summer 2017, has unfortunately been unsuccessful. Stagecoach Group Chief Executive Martin Griffiths said: "We are proud to have operated the network under the South West Trains brand for more than 20 years and we are disappointed that we have been unsuccessful in our bid for the new franchise.

"Over the past two decades, we have delivered real improvements for our customers right across the network. That success has been built on fantastic people, detailed knowledge of the business and strong relationships with our stakeholders and railway partners. But we have never thought our job was finished." "We believe we submitted a strong bid for the new South Western franchise. It offered a transformation in the travel experience for our customers, more investment to help the railway support the communities and economy of the south-west, as well as a substantial and deliverable financial benefit to taxpayers to help fund better public services."

"We will be seeking detailed feedback from the Department for Transport on the various elements of our bid."

"I would like to thank all of our employees and partners who have been involved in delivering our vision for the railway in the south-west over the past two decades as well as those who contributed to our strong bid for the new franchise. I know they share our disappointment in the result. Nevertheless, we will continue to work hard on our part to deliver a professional service and meet our obligations in the final months of our current franchise."

## 'Little and Often' service launched

ALMOST £3m has been invested in a fleet of 30 Mercedes vehicles which have gone into service in Ashford, Kent, to pilot a brand new Stagecoach 'turn-up-and-go' travel product for local people. The new innovative, high frequency service is the only one of its kind in the UK and on some routes has quadrupled the number of buses an hour. The new, smaller 17-seat vehicles operate to extremely high frequency levels, offering journeys up to every five minutes from 6am until 11pm, seven days a week. Branded 'Little & Often', the service marks a new approach to modern bus travel and Stagecoach believes it will deliver a more intuitive and convenient service for customers.

In a further boost for customers, the new service accepts contactless payments, including Apple Pay and Android Pay, and offers high specification vehicles for maximum comfort. If the pilot is successful, the service may be rolled out elsewhere in the UK.



A dance troupe helped launch the service

## What a Laugh!



Tram passenger:

**"I once watched a woman eating a whole rotisserie chicken from the bag on the platform at Monument. It was like Attenborough. Absolutely incredible."**

If you have seen or heard something funny – online, in the papers, on social media or just while out and about – send your contributions for the 'What a Laugh' section in the next edition to [lindsay.reid@stagecoachgroup.com](mailto:lindsay.reid@stagecoachgroup.com)

## Sale of Twin America

STAGECOACH Group has confirmed that it has sold its interest in the Twin America LLC joint venture. Twin America was a joint venture between Stagecoach North America and City Sights, which began operating on 31 March 2009. It principally operates sightseeing bus services in New York City. Stagecoach North America has sold its interest to its joint venture partner City Sights.

## Champions reminder

DON'T forget you have until the end of May to nominate your Stagecoach Champions of 2017. Employees from across the Group's bus and rail businesses in the UK and North America are invited to nominate colleagues who they believe are making a real difference in any of the areas of Safety; Environment; Community; Health; Customer Service; and Innovation. Gold, Silver and Bronze awards are presented for each category and shortlisted entrants receive a trophy and a cash prize. To nominate your Champion, all you need to do is download a nomination form from the FAQ section, under 'Media', at [www.stagecoach.com](http://www.stagecoach.com). Then email the completed form to [champions@stagecoachgroup.com](mailto:champions@stagecoachgroup.com) or send it by post to Lindsay Reid, Corporate Communications Manager, Stagecoach Group, 10 Dunkeld Road, Perth PH1 5TW. You can nominate yourself or one of your colleagues. Nominations for the 2017 Stagecoach Champions awards close on Friday 26 May 2017. Look out for updates on the awards and the shortlisted nominees in future editions of On Stage.



## Myleene adds a touch of Klass

MYLEENE Klass brought a touch of class to celebrations at London King's Cross Station to mark the completion of Virgin Trains' 'total rehaul' of its East Coast fleet. The classically trained musician dazzled surprised commuters with a live performance on a baby grand piano before joining customers on board the inaugural journey of the final train to receive a stylish makeover.

The moment marks the completion of a £40 million investment by Virgin Trains in its entire fleet of East Coast trains, which included luxurious leather seats and mood lighting in First Class, stunning red cloth seats in Standard, and new carpets and stylish fittings throughout.

A total of 410 coach interiors have been revamped and 24,427 seats replaced, adding extra comfort for customers. Another £100m of investment is still to come for stations and technology. David Horne, Managing Director at Virgin Trains on



the East Coast, said: "It gives me great pleasure to announce that we have completed our refurbishment programme, and passed another milestone on our journey towards totally transforming travel for our customers on the East Coast. We're absolutely delighted that Myleene was able to join us for this special day and help make it even more memorable."

## Ballyhoo's budding bus drivers



The young bus drivers in the making

THE NEXT generation of bus drivers have begun preparation with Stagecoach in Carlisle, with a double decker bus visiting Ballyhoo Boutique Nursery.

Youngsters at the nursery were invited to experience what it is like to sit in the driver's seat, move the steering wheel and press the horn.

Aged between 15 months and 4 years, the children also had the chance to sit on the top deck, climb on the seats and ring the bell and staff at Ballyhoo were keen to use the experience to enhance the children's development.

Liane Atkinson, Manager at Ballyhoo Boutique Nursery, said: "We would like to thank the team at Stagecoach for giving our children the opportunity to explore and cause havoc on a double decker bus!" Stagecoach Carlisle Assistant Operations Manager Maria Muggridge said: "It was lovely to see the children so excited and we hope to see some of them back in the driver's seat in years to come".

## Quick-thinking Stuart is a lifesaver

WHEN a passenger on a 'LOOP' bus in Eastbourne suffered a cardiac arrest, driver Stuart Collingham quickly intervened to help save the man's life by calling 999 and immediately starting CPR. Gordon Piggott from the Eastbourne Area Community First Responders thanked Stuart for acting so quickly. He said: "I wanted to say a big thank you to your driver. Immediate intervention (and I emphasise the word "immediate") gave this man the best chance of survival. Had he not acted so promptly the chance of survival would unquestionably have been lower. It took a little knowledge and a lot of courage to do that - and he should be applauded." Stuart said: "It all happened so quickly, it was instinctive, my training kicked in and I started acting. Hopefully it will not happen again but if it does I

won't hesitate to do the same."

The passenger had two stents fitted in hospital and returned home to rest. His family thank Stuart for acting so quickly.



Driver Stuart Collingham who intervened when a passenger suffered a heart attack on his bus

# High praise for driver Davinder

AN EAST Midlands Trains driver has been recognised by British Transport Police's (BTP) Chief Constable for his decisive and compassionate action in helping to save the life of a man on the railway.

Davinder Shanker was coming out of Clay Cross Tunnel in Derbyshire driving an early morning train in summer last year when he spotted a man near the railway tracks.

He quickly sounded his horn and applied the emergency brake, causing the man to move out of the way. As the train stopped, Davinder saw that the man had climbed onto a nearby embankment and was trying to hang himself from a tree.

Davinder got out of his cab, along with Ian Vickers, a Bombardier fitter who was also onboard, and ran towards the man who had by this point stopped breathing.

The pair managed to get the man down and Davinder put him into the recovery position before he regained consciousness and the emergency services assistance arrived.

Darren Ward, Head of Drivers for East Midlands Trains, said: "Davinder is a role model for everyone here at East Midlands Trains and he is a great ambassador for the rail industry."

Chief Inspector Stuart Middlemas, who nominated Davinder and Ian Vickers for the award, said: "They went above and beyond anything which could have been expected of them and their quick-thinking undoubtedly saved this man's life.

"They are a merit to the rail industry and a shining example of selflessness to us all."



Davinder receives his award from Chief Constable Paul Crowther

# £1,000 a year bus boost saving for commuters

NEW Stagecoach research has found that people who use the bus to commute are on average £1,000 better off than those travelling to work by car. Despite lower fuel prices, bus travel costs are around 55% cheaper than the same commute by car, saving passengers an average of around £95 a month, according to the study.

The average annual savings of £1,095 would be enough to cover the entire annual energy costs for a medium-sized house.

The news comes as further research shows that people's worries about congestion and its impact on pollution are growing, with 55% of people saying they were concerned about congestion and 60% saying they were concerned about exhaust fumes in towns and cities.

The research compared the weekly price of hopping

on the bus with the cost of fuel and car parking for the same journeys.

The study found the biggest savings were in the West of Scotland where bus passengers travelling between Ayr and Glasgow could save more than £2,800 a year compared to motorists.

Robert Montgomery, Managing Director of Stagecoach UK Bus, said: "This research shows it's still significantly cheaper to commute to work by bus for many people up and down the country. The average savings could pay for a family holiday or increase the monthly shopping budget.

"We are working hard to deliver good value travel for the many people who rely on buses. However, bus passengers need urgent action from our politicians to tackle the growing problem of traffic congestion in our towns and cities which is pushing up fares and increasing journey times."

# Down right fabulous fundraiser



Stagecoach Group Chief Executive Martin Griffiths, Katrina Leese and Katie London hand over the cheque to Kerry Lindsay, Fundraising Manager for Downs Syndrome Scotland

A HUGE sum of money has been raised by Stagecoach for Down's Syndrome Scotland. The Group's Deputy Treasurer Katrina Leese and her husband Colin, along with the help of Executive PA Katie Loudon, organised a 'Down Right Fabulous' charity ball which raised more than £15,000 on the night.

The Stagecoach Charitable Committee matched the sum to give a grand total of over £30,000 to the charity.

## A helping hand from new audio announcement system

STRATHCLYDE Partnership for Transport (SPT) and Stagecoach have installed a new Audio Visual Announcement System on vehicles in West Scotland to help passengers with sight difficulties.

The £40,000 investment by SPT aims to improve the lives of blind or partially sighted passengers by using real-time information to provide next stop announcements so that they know where they are on their journey and when their stop is coming up. Investment by Stagecoach into Automatic Vehicle Location technology also allows real-time next-stop information to be available through smartphones. Tom Bridge, Managing Director Stagecoach West Scotland is also running an event to help staff understand the practical issues faced by blind and partially sighted people.



The Audio Visual equipment was launched by (l-r, back row) Tom Bridge, Managing Director, Stagecoach West Scotland, SPT Chief Executive Gordon MacLennan, SPT Bus Development Manager Gordon Dickson, Robert Andrew, Stagecoach Regional Director for Scotland (front row) RNIB Scotland Members Terry Robinson and Hussein Patwa

## The big question

VIRGIN Trains helped to make Valentine's Day extra special for one customer at Warrington Bank Quay Station when Mick, from Runcorn, proposed to his girlfriend Terri (28) at the station where they fell in love seven years ago.

Virgin Trains wanted to help create a romantic and memorable engagement for the couple so they arranged for a busker to compose a song and perform it on the same platform where the couple met, before Mick got down on one knee.

To celebrate their engagement Virgin Trains surprised Mick and Terri with a First Class journey to London and Afternoon Tea at Harrods.

## Dropping by

MINISTER for Transport and Islands Humza Yousaf recently visited Stagecoach East Scotland's Aberhill depot to learn more about operations in the area. Mr Yousaf was shown around by the local management team and Regional Director Robert Andrew. He learned more about the vehicles in operation, engineering functions and was particularly interested in the recruitment process of apprentices.



Transport Minister Humza Yousaf with Regional Director, Robert Andrew and Aberhill dept staff

## ■ South West Trains Managing Director moves on

SOUTH West Trains Managing Director Christian Roth has decided to step down after nearly a decade with the business.

Christian joined South West Trains in 2008 and became Managing Director of the franchise in February 2016.

Margaret Kay, Managing Director of Stagecoach Supertram, has been appointed Managing Director of South West Trains for the remainder of the current franchise, which runs until summer 2017.

She has worked for Stagecoach since 2000, initially as HR Director for South West Trains, and then East Midlands Trains before taking up the position as Managing Director of Stagecoach Supertram in 2012. She was named one of the UK rail industry's most inspirational women in the most recent Women in Rail survey. Tim Bilby, currently Supertram's Head of Finance and Commercial, will become Interim Managing Director of Stagecoach Supertram.

Tim Shoveller, Managing Director of Stagecoach Group's UK Rail Division, said: "I would like to thank Christian for his contribution to the business over the past decade and wish him well for the future.

"Margaret is one of the most talented executives in the UK rail industry and is a tremendous role model and mentor for the next generation of young managers."

## ■ Double awards win for Virgin Trains

THERE were double celebrations at this year's Business Travel awards Virgin Trains was voted Best Rail Operator and also awarded Best Travel Technology Product for BEAM – its onboard entertainment app.

Regarded as the market's benchmark for excellence, the Business Travel Awards recognise the best service providers in business travel.

Amanda Robinson, Head of Sales at Virgin Trains on the West Coast, said: "Picking up the title of Best Rail Operator is a huge accolade and our award for Best Travel Technology Product really

serves to highlight how innovative our onboard entertainment app – BEAM – is. We're already looking forward to building on our success in the coming year!"



# Key role in Special Olympics

STAGECOACH is to play a key role in delivering transport at the The Special Olympics Great Britain (SOGB) National Games.

The company will provide free transport to 2,600 athletes between the event accommodation and venues during the games, which are taking place in Sheffield between 7 and 12 August.

Held every four years, the flagship SOGB National Summer Games is the country's largest multi-sports event for athletes with intellectual (learning) disabilities.

Now in its tenth year, the National Summer Games will see athletes compete in 20 sports across a dozen venues.

John Young, Commercial Director of Stagecoach Yorkshire, which is leading on the delivery of the operation, said: "We're really proud to be supporting the Special Olympics GB National Games.

"To help make travel easier for the athletes, Stagecoach will be providing reliable transport to and from the games across all four days. This will include up to 35 dedicated buses to and from local venues as well as assistance in getting the athletes to each



The launch of the partnership between the Stagecoach and the Special Olympics Summer Games

event from the Stagecoach team."

Karen Wallin, CEO of Special Olympics GB, commented: "We are delighted and grateful for this support from Stagecoach. This is a seminal year for the games as we celebrate ten years and we're sure this will be our most successful event yet!"

# Engineering excellence

FURTHER enhancements to Stagecoach's engineering standards will provide even more reliable services for customers.

The company is the only major bus operator in the UK to have put in place a new Engineering Management Programme which all existing and new bus engineering managers across the UK will undertake.

The course delivers a bespoke solution to meet Stagecoach's specific engineering development needs and is tailored to the company's UK Bus

engineering management requirements.

Stagecoach UK Bus Engineering Director Sam Greer said: "The introduction of this training course further demonstrates our commitment to improving services for our customers. Through this programme we aim to further enhance our engineering standards in a way that is tailored to the specific requirements of our business. Vehicle maintenance and reliability are crucial to the successful delivery of our services to passengers and I believe this training will benefit both our staff and our customers."

# Konrad's page turner

AN OXFORD Tube driver who left his native Poland for the UK a decade ago is celebrating the launch of his first novel about immigration, which he says is inspired by life on the buses.

Konrad Jaskolski has worked on Oxford Tube services for the past 18 months and his new book – which has been published in Polish initially – explores life for a new immigrant who moves to London and then New Zealand.

He said: "The novel is about changes and about movement. I have been an immigrant for nine years and I have seen many different things. As a bus driver I see many different people and different situations. It is an excellent source of stories."



## Record punctuality

VIRGIN Trains is celebrating a five star rating for reliability in the latest Annual Passenger Survey from Which?.

Customers of Virgin Trains on the West Coast are also experiencing record punctuality as a result of a combined effort between the rail operator and Network Rail to identify and resolve the cause of delays on the route. 88.3% of trains arrived on time over the last twelve months, an improvement of eight percentage points since comparable records began just after privatisation, two decades ago.

This has resulted in eight months of strong performance – with PPM (punctuality) figures of over 90% – and a significant reduction in ‘bad days’.

Meanwhile, Virgin Trains has achieved some of the highest overall scores for long-distance franchised operators in the recent National Rail Passenger Satisfaction results, scoring 90% on its West Coast route and 91% on its East Coast route. Virgin Trains, which has delivered consistently high scores on the West Coast for a number of years, is now seeing the best autumn result on its East Coast route in three years.

David Horne, Managing Director of Virgin Trains on the East Coast, said: “We are delighted to see Virgin Trains leading the results for long-distance operators. The work doesn’t stop here though as we continue to improve on the high quality service our customers have come to expect of us ahead of the launch of our cutting edge new Azuma fleet in 2018.”



## PICTURE THIS



THIS edition’s Picture This winner was taken by driver **Richard Burgess** who works for Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire. It shows a new Lakes Connection 555 bus at Stybeck Farm heading for Kendal.

Congratulations to Richard who will shortly receive his prize of £50 in M&S vouchers.

If you have any good photos for Picture This please send them to Lindsay Reid, On Stage, Stagecoach Group, 10 Dunkeld Road, Perth, PH1 5TW, or email it to [lindsay.reid@stagecoachgroup.com](mailto:lindsay.reid@stagecoachgroup.com)



Agata Michalewska & Adam Kharaz on the Love Train from Sheffield

## The Love Train

NINETEEN lucky customers and their guests were chosen by East Midlands Trains to ride on the special Love Train to London on Valentine’s Day. The winners were all chosen through a Twitter competition which offered people the chance to win a pair of First Class return tickets to London. The winning customers were treated to a complimentary romantic breakfast with Prosecco, strawberries and red roses and on arrival in London, were met by a harpist to serenade them into the station.

Andrew Conroy, Customer Experience Director for East Midlands Trains, said: “It’s great to be able to do things like this to treat our customers and help them to celebrate Valentine’s Day.”

## Welcome to the world

STAGECOACH in Skegness sponsored two hampers from local shop Gill&Co Baby gifts which were presented to the area’s first two New Year babies of 2017, and their parents, to welcome them into the world.

Michelle Hargreaves, Managing Director of Stagecoach East Midlands, said: “We were delighted to sponsor the baby hampers which were a wonderful idea and a great welcome gift for the New Year babies.”



One of the gift hampers

## Bus donation

COACH USA and Motor Coach Industries teamed up to donate a bus to the Neighborhood Center in Camden, New Jersey. The bus is now being used for field trips for children and teenagers, college trips for the evening teen programme and field trips for the senior programme. It will also be used to transport young people travelling to take part in artistic performances, family trips for parents and children and to transport numerous other members of the community who use the Neighborhood Center.



The handover of the bus to the Neighborhood Centre

## Special day out

PUPILS from St Joseph’s Primary School in Dorking were treated to a fantastic day out learning about the railway thanks to South West Trains. Bill Evans and Maria Atfield from Waterloo arranged the visit and along with a team of others, who provided the children with a comprehensive insight into how the trains work, including a tour of the

driving cab of a stationary train, demonstrations of how train doors are operated and use of the PA system.

Teacher Liz Hampshire said: “The children had an awesome train experience and they learned a huge amount. They are very positive towards possibly being involved with the railway in the future and most will certainly remember the day for years to come.”

## Launch of luxury coaches



Two of the new coaches on display in West Scotland

STAGECOACH West Scotland has launched eight new luxury coaches to operate on the popular X76 route

between Cumnock, Kilmarnock and Glasgow.

The Volvo B11R/Plaxton Elite coaches boast 61 comfortable leather seats, free wifi, USB charging points, are fully accessible and meet the latest Euro emission standards.

Tom Bridge, Managing Director Stagecoach West Scotland, said:

"These vehicles offer a premium

passenger experience and we hope will encourage more people to travel by bus in the future."

## Waste food donation

EAST Midlands Trains decided to do something about the excess weight it was carrying after the festive season by donating unused produce from services running between Sheffield and London to a good cause: The Real Junk Food Project Sheffield.

Since January, East Midlands Trains has donated food including sausages, eggs, rolls and croissants to the charity which aims to reduce unnecessary waste by cooking good quality, unused food to feed local people.

The unused food would otherwise go to landfill sites and so the donations are good for the environment as well as helping East Midlands Trains to support a local community venture.

Debbie Pye, Catering Logistics Manager for East Midlands, said: "The idea to approach The Real Junk Food Project Sheffield came about late last year when we realised that good food was going to waste. Although our breakfasts are very popular with customers travelling between Sheffield and London, like any company serving food, we do have leftovers that previously were being sent to landfill."



Aberdeen City Council leader Jenny Laing and Stagecoach North Scotland Managing Director Mark Whitelocks

## New service jets into park and ride

THE JET 727 Stagecoach service in North Scotland has now begun serving an all new £15.2 million Park and Ride site at Dyce, Aberdeen.

The 1,000-space facility has been designed so people can park there for free and choose which mode of environmentally-friendly transport to use for the remainder of their journey – bus, car-share, cycling or walking. Motorists are allowed to park for a maximum of 36 hours.

Mark Whitelocks, Managing Director for Stagecoach North Scotland, said: "We have seen great success with the Park and Ride in Ellon and will look forward to welcoming more people on board our buses which will help ease traffic congestion within Aberdeen."

## State-of-the-art information

NEW state-of-the-art customer information screens are now in place at Derby, Leicester and Sheffield stations, providing real-time train information for East Midlands Trains customers.

The investment makes it easier for customers to get up-to-the minute information when they arrive at the station, including when and where their train is arriving. Rick Cammack, Project Manager for East Midlands Trains, said: "These new customer service improvements are all part of East Midlands Trains' commitment to keeping customers informed and as up-to-date as possible with the latest information. "We understand that customers want fast and reliable information and these screens deliver that. They are also very well designed and pleasing on the eye which is an added bonus."

## City of culture investment

CUSTOMERS in Hull are to benefit from a £2.7million investment in a fleet of 15 new double decker buses in readiness for the 2017 City of Culture.

The state-of-the-art vehicles are now running on the popular Simplibus network joining main residential areas of Hull with Paragon Interchange through the heart of the city centre, which is currently being transformed by major public realm works.

Chris Clay, Hull 2017 Technical and Operations Director, said: "It's great to know that investment is being made into local transport infrastructure ahead of the UK City of Culture year. It's going to benefit both the people of Hull and the many visitors who will come to the city during 2017."



From front left: Councillor Martin Mancey, Michelle Hargreaves, Dave Skepper, (back) Paul Clark

## New buses unveiled

A LOCAL bus route in Worthing has been revamped following investment by Compass Travel and Stagecoach, with three brand new buses introduced, all featuring a new look. Edward Hodgson, Managing Director of Stagecoach South, said: "This has proved to be a successful partnership with Compass Travel who provide a high standard of Service and this latest investment further demonstrates our continued commitment to making even more improvements for customers."



One of the brand new vehicles in worthing

## LETTERS OF PRAISE

IF YOU or one of your colleagues has received a letter of praise from a customer, please email a copy to [lindsay.reid@stagecoachgroup.com](mailto:lindsay.reid@stagecoachgroup.com) or post it to Lindsay Reid, Senior Group Communications Manager, Stagecoach Group, 10 Dunkeld Road, Perth, PH1 5TW. We will publish as many as possible.



The below message was in a card, sent to Stagecoach in Wales

Hi,

I am currently sat on the 600 to Leigh. I have not been in a bus for a while but felt I had to let you know just how good your driver is. It is a really smooth ride no sudden braking, hard acceleration etc. Every time a passenger gets on he is polite and makes sure they get to a seat before he sets off. He is a real credit to you. Name and address supplied

## Boost for shoppers

STAGECOACH East Midlands has announced a new travel initiative to improve trading in a popular shopping quarter.

The company has launched a newly decorated bus featuring the images of the streets and shops located in the Cornhill Quarter, Lincoln. The bus will serve the city routes and provide a visual reminder to customers that the area is still accessible despite the generation works that are currently taking place. Partnering with Lincolnshire County Council, Stagecoach has also introduced a bus hop ticket that will allow passengers to get to the popular shopping destination at no extra cost.

Michelle Hargreaves, Managing Director of Stagecoach East Midlands, said: "Following the bus station move, we didn't want passengers to feel they were cut off from any part of the city. The hop ticket initiative allows passengers to still get to the Cornhill Quarter with ease at no extra cost."



Michelle Hargreaves, Diane Pettitt and Councillor Donald Nannestad with market and Sincil Street traders

## Top employers

EAST Midlands Trains and Virgin Trains East Coast have been recognised as one of the UK's Top Employers.

The train operators joined 78 employers in the country to be certified by the Top Employers Institute, including other major employers such as Asda, DFS, Harrods and Santander.

Every year, the Top Employers Institute carry out annual research to identify leading employers around the world, specifically looking at those that provide excellent employee conditions, nurture and develop talent throughout all levels of the organisation and who are continuously striving to build a positive employee experience.

James Gooding, UK Country Manager for the Top Employers Institute, said:

"Optimal employee conditions ensure that people can develop themselves personally and professionally."



## The survey says

A BIG effort was made by Stagecoach Wales to encourage participation in the recent employee survey.

Staff held survey roadshows and gave out goody bags containing a Kit Kat, mop head pen, gold pen, leaflet and travel mug.



Brynmawr depot - Lead driver Terry Barrett handing a goody bag over to Neil Woods

## Omnibus society

IN THE last edition of 'On Stage' we reported that Gary Nolan, Regional Director Midlands and Wales had been appointed the role of Ambassador for The Omnibus Society Midlands Branch.

Gary, who leaves Stagecoach this month, wanted to raise awareness of the Society and said:

"I know from my company visits that a lot of our staff are enthusiasts and have a detailed interest in the industry and how it works. As well as finding the vehicles fascinating there are specialist groups who report on service changes, ticketing, timetables and maps with a number of our staff contributing.

"The Omnibus Society is a national organisation run by enthusiasts for enthusiasts and with branches across the UK, there is the opportunity to learn more about your hobby. Give it a try by going on line at [www.omnibussoc.org](http://www.omnibussoc.org)."

## Charity fund boosted by Stagecoach

THE MAYOR of Dalton's charity fund received a welcome boost with a £200 donation from local bus firm, Stagecoach in Barrow.

The gift, presented to Councillor Nick Perrie earlier this month, will be added to the pot and at the end of the mayoral year, distributed to local organisations and community projects in the area. Matthew Cranwell, Stagecoach Cumbria and North Lancashire Managing Director, said: "We are delighted to have had the opportunity to support the Mayors Charity Fund. We hope that the donation provides valuable support to existing community projects in Dalton and Furness".



David Cowperthwaite, Barrow's Engineering Manager (left) and Mayor of Dalton in Furness, Councillor Nick Perrie

## Chris to the rescue

MERSEYSIDE Workshop Manager Chris Cureton recently helped with the rescue of an injured seal pup in Wirral. Chris, a volunteer coastguard, was one of a team called out in response to concerns for a young common seal. The team recovered the pup and it was taken to the RSPCA Stapeley Grange wildlife centre in Nantwich. The RSPCA said the injured seal pup has a wound on its chest but is well hydrated and "doing fine".

## ■ Helping out

GENEROUS staff at Group headquarters raised more than £1,200 for the Cornhill Macmillan Support Group through a number of Christmas fundraising activities.

The events included two raffles and Christmas Jumper Day donations which raised £601, which was matched by the company to give a total of £1,202. Thanks to all for their generosity.

## ■ World series transport

CHICAGO Trolley took the Chicago Cubs baseball team on their 2016 World Series Parade and Rally in celebration of being World Series Champions.

This was a monumental task for the coach company which included wrapping the buses and trolleys in less than 40 hours, arriving at the stadium very early in the morning to pick up all the honorees and participating in the parade. Congratulations on to Chicago Trolley on a job very well done!



## ■ Treading the boards

VIRGIN Trains helped to stage a play on the banks of the River Thames about a Geordie examiner who became a rowing superstar.

Award-winning actor Jamie Brown played Harry Clasper, the 19th century world champion rower and boat builder, to sell-out crowds at the London Rowing Club in Putney. Claire Ansley, General Manager for Virgin Trains, said: "We're committed to supporting the rich history and heritage of our East Coast route. We love the story of Harry, a local hero who became a world champion and, through his innovation and popularity, helped to make rowing the popular sport it is today."

## ■ Leading the way on value

WEEKLY bus travel offered by Stagecoach is almost 10% cheaper than the UK average, according to new independent research.

Analysis published by transport specialists TAS found that Stagecoach saves customers almost £1.50 per week compared to the average cost of weekly bus travel across the UK.



ACTRESS Rita Simons, best known for her role as Roxy Mitchell in Eastenders, was on hand recently to bring a bit of glamour to the launch party of South East's new Little & Often service.

Rita, who smashed a bottle of champagne (made of sugar resin!) against the bus to mark the launch, was

also joined by local dignitaries and a cabaret dance troupe at the event.

If you, or one of your colleagues, have a claim to fame – perhaps a hidden talent, a meeting with a celebrity or an interesting hobby – please email details to [lindsay.reid@stagecoachgroup.com](mailto:lindsay.reid@stagecoachgroup.com)

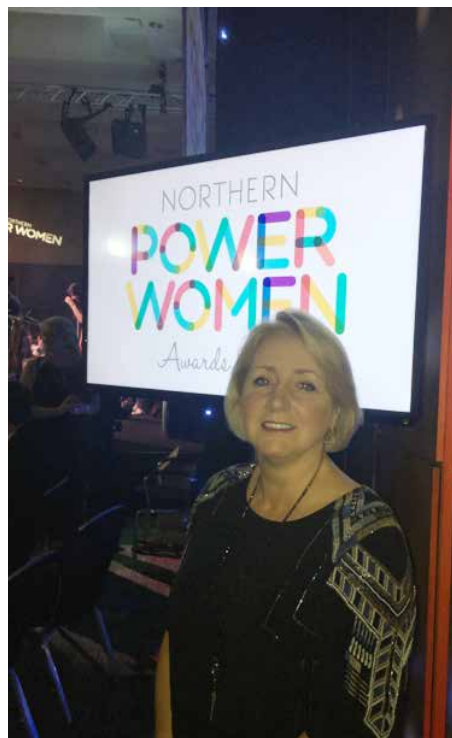
## All aboard

STAGECOACH East recently provided transport for the Cambridge Guide Dog Forum as some of their members visited the city to listen to guest speaker Daniel Zeichner MP, who is the MP for Cambridge and is the shadow transport minister.

The members came from as far afield as Norwich, Ipswich, Peterborough and Leicester and were very grateful for the transport provided.



Two of the Guide Dog Forum members about to board the bus



Elisabeth Tasker, recently named among the top 50 Northern Power Women

## Elisabeth's a power woman

MANAGING Director at Stagecoach Manchester, Elisabeth Tasker, has been named among the top 50 Northern Power Women.

The Top 50 Power List was revealed at the 2017 Northern Power Women awards held in Manchester recently.

Elisabeth leads by example in the approach she takes to her role and inspires others to take the same approach, giving young managers responsibility while at the same time ensuring they feel supported. She said: "I'm delighted and quite humbled to be named as a Northern Power Woman. It's certainly not something I ever expected but was a lovely surprise.

"More than 250,000 jobs are supported, directly and indirectly, through the UK bus industry so there are many opportunities out there for both men and women to have a successful and rewarding career in the transport sector. However, over 90% of people in the bus industry are male and I look forward to seeing that change in the years to come as more women realise what the bus industry can offer them and what they can offer the industry."



## ■ A starring role

TO PROMOTE the Express City Connect network, Stagecoach East Scotland ran a four week TV advertising campaign on STV, which showcased the luxury vehicles and coach features.

Staff were recruited to star in the advert and a huge thanks to Jay Boyle, Michael Skinner, Gary Banks and Katie Craig for taking part.

The video can be seen here:  
<https://youtu.be/8tqf4XRCjE8>

## ■ Christmas fundraising

EASTBOURNE Operations Manager Krystian Kaczala recently presented Eastbourne Lifeboats with a cheque for £300, which had been raised over the Christmas holidays through the company's vintage Christmas bus.

The 1952 'Christmas' bus was driven by specialist driver Garth Porrell for the second year, as part of an initiative between Stagecoach and Eastbourne's Chamber of Commerce.

The suggested donation was £1 a ride and all proceeds went to the Eastbourne Lifeboats charity.



Eastbourne Operations Manager Krystian Kaczala proudly presents Coxswain Mark Sawyer from Eastbourne Lifeboats with a cheque for £300

## ■ Sally's charity success

GRIMSBY Driver Sally Gigg recently raised £146 for St. Andrew's Hospice by asking local shops around Grimsby to donate prizes for a raffle. St Andrew's Hospice in Grimsby offers respite care, day therapy, symptom control, rehabilitation and terminal care, as well as other services such as counselling, complementary therapies, lymphoedema clinics, physiotherapy and bereavement support.

# Car park improvements

BASINGSTOKE Station now has a new and improved car park at Basingstoke station, with an extra 400 car parking spaces as well as better facilities for passengers.

Alistair Wright, Head of Station Property for South West Trains, said: "Basingstoke is a major station with over 5.5 million passengers now using the station every year so it was vital we kept up with

demand and expanded the car park.

Maria Miller, MP for Basingstoke, said: "This additional parking is good news for Basingstoke commuters and other regular rail passengers. It comes at a time when demand for rail services locally continues to grow, particularly with the high levels of house-building in the town."



(l-r) Peter Smith (Transport Officer, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council), Cllr Simon Bound (Cabinet member for Communities and Community Safety), Maria Miller MP for Basingstoke, Alistair Wright (Head of Station Property for South West Trains)

# The Stagecoach express

BUS passengers can travel between Sunderland and Newcastle following the introduction of a new express bus service by Stagecoach North East. Steve Walker, Managing Director, Stagecoach North East, said: "After listening to our customers we are delighted to launch this new service to

benefit passengers travelling between Sunderland and Newcastle. It represents a further investment from Stagecoach North East and demonstrates our commitment to delivering more choice, more value for money and more opportunities to travel whether business or pleasure."



It was full steam ahead to promote the new express service

## David's new role

DAVID Frenz has taken on the role of Operations Director, Stagecoach East Scotland. Originally from Perth, David began his career in 2007 with Stagecoach South as a graduate trainee. In 2014 David moved to Scottish Citylink as Operations Director.

David said: "I'm looking forward to working with a great team and continuing to deliver high quality, affordable bus and coach travel for our customers."



Stagecoach East Scotland Operations Director David Frenz

## Melanie gets on board

A GRADUATE from Manchester is now getting to grips with the running of a bus depot after taking on the role of Assistant Operations Manager with Stagecoach North East. Melanie Keylock has joined Stockton depot as part of the company's Graduate Development Programme where she has just started her second year in training. Melanie spent the first year of her training based in Stagecoach West in Gloucester after changing her mind about her original career choice of law. She said: "I have enjoyed my first year and I am enjoying the challenges of assisting with the running of the depot, as there is no typical day."

Colin Newbury, Operations Director at Stagecoach North East, said: "Although Melanie has only recently joined us, she has already become an invaluable member of the team and has taken to the role of assisting with the operations management very well."



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If you have a story for On Stage, please contact Lindsay Reid as above. The copy deadline for the next edition of On Stage will be **Friday 14 April 2017**.

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU...

### Kevin Levitt, Operations Manager, Northampton



- **Who are you?**  
Kevin Levitt, Assistant Operations Manager, Northampton Depot.
- **What do you like most about your job?**  
The daily interaction with our staff and public
- **What do you like least about your job?**  
The 04:00 starts when doing a run out
- **Favourite Food?**  
Steamed steak and kidney pudding
- **Least favourite food?**  
Seafood - following a bad experience
- **What are you most proud of?**  
I organised a Stagecoach National Golf Competition up until 2011 - it was hard work, but the results and the end were very rewarding
- **Favourite holiday destination?**  
Florida
- **Most embarrassing moment?**  
My surprise 50th birthday party which I knew nothing about - it came as a huge shock and slightly embarrassing!
- **Favourite Music?**  
Anything other than punk or rock but I do not have the hair for it!
- **Person you would most like to have dinner with?**  
Margaret Thatcher - to understand her thinking behind the decisions she made, which at the time were revolutionary
- **First thing you would do if you won £1m?**  
I would retire early and go on as many holidays as I could fit into the year

'Getting To Know You' features in every edition of On Stage and we want to hear from as many staff as possible. To suggest the next participant, email [lindsay.reid@stagecoachgroup.com](mailto:lindsay.reid@stagecoachgroup.com)

## Fond farewell to Fred at Coach USA

FRED Sprengel was given a fond farewell by Coach USA colleagues recently at a retirement lunch in his honour after decades of service with a number of transportation companies such as Tuscan Dairies, Laidlaw Transit, Global Passenger Services and finally Coach USA.

Fred was praised for the tremendous work he has done throughout the years including training more than 5,000 Coach USA/megabus.com drivers during his career at Coach USA. Fred single-handedly set up the Coach USA Training school in Elizabeth, and from day one has been the leader of safety for Coach USA with not only his words but more importantly his actions.

President and COO Linda Burtwistle had many kind words about Fred's career and presented him a card with a donation on behalf of Coach USA to the ALS Foundation in honor of his late wife as a retirement gift.



Fred (second from right) and some Coach USA colleagues at his retirement lunch

## Loyal service at West Scotland

STAGECOACH employees from across West Scotland have been recognised for their loyal service and commitment to passenger transport at a special

ceremony. More than 20 staff have clocked up an impressive 547 years of long service between them.

Stagecoach West Scotland's Managing Director Tom Bridge said: "Working on the buses is more a way of life than just a job. The bus industry can take over every aspect of your life and require exceptional levels of commitment and loyalty from those who work in it. I would personally like to thank those receiving an award for their many years of service to Stagecoach West Scotland and its predecessors."



The long-serving West Scotland staff at their ceremony