

Key Facts

over 65 million

passenger journeys
were made on Stagecoach
North East buses

21 million

miles operated
across the North East

99.4%

reliability and 93.5%
punctuality on services
throughout the North East

477

buses across Newcastle,
Sunderland, South Shields,
Hartlepool and Teesside

1436

staff employed across
six Stagecoach North East depots

£4.5 million

investment in new buses



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✉ northeast.enquiries@stagecoachbus.com

stagecoachbus.com

Follow us on Twitter  **@stagecoachNE**

We aim to satisfy our customers' queries as quickly and efficiently as possible. However, if for any reason you are unhappy with the response that we provide, please contact the Bus Appeals Body on **0300 111 0001**

or by writing to

**The Bus Appeals Body, PO Box 119,
Shepperton, TW17 8UX**

For timetable information, call Traveline on

0871 200 22 33.

Calls cost 12p per minute plus your phone company's access charge.



Annual Performance

North East

May 2015-April 2016

All details correct at the time of going to print, June 2016.

greener smarter travel

Our company

Stagecoach North East provides local bus services in Newcastle, South Shields, Sunderland, Hartlepool and Teesside. Our aim is to provide safe, reliable and comfortable services with value ticket offerings.

We are based locally at our head office in Sunderland and are a subsidiary of Stagecoach Group Plc. This report covers our activities over the year up to end of April 2016.

Our people

We are a major employer in the local economy, with 1,436 staff, of whom 1,123 are drivers, 212 are engineers and 101 are administration and managerial staff. The majority of our employees live within the local communities in which our buses operate. In the 2015 UK Bus Awards, Stagecoach North East's Sunderland depot won Gold in the Top National Depot category, which is testament to the hard work and dedication of this local team.

Over the past year, we have recruited and trained 172 new staff. Our drivers also attend certified classroom courses during the year to maintain their Driver Qualification Card, which requires them to maintain and improve their skills through regular training updates.

We also work with drivers continuously to improve driving skills and use a monitoring system on the buses called Green Road. Using a traffic-light LED system on the dashboard, GreenRoad gives drivers instant feedback on their driving manoeuvres, encouraging smoother, safer, and more fuel-efficient driving.

In the last year, 276 drivers (25%) received Fleet Elite awards for their exceptional driving standards. An impressive 170 these drivers achieved the Gold

badge for consistently maintaining the Fleet Elite driving standard for three consecutive years.

We are active in getting more young people into our company through the Stagecoach Apprenticeship Scheme, and currently employ 15 engineering apprentices from within the local community.

Many of our employees have shown impressive commitment and loyalty to Stagecoach and the bus industry in general. Each year we hold Long Service Awards and, in 2015/16, 65 of our North East team achieved milestones of 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45 years service with us.

Our buses

We operate a fleet of 477 buses and have invested millions in new buses for local areas over the last couple of years, all of which are fully accessible and meet the latest Euro emission standards.

In the last year, we have introduced 36 brand new buses into our fleet for services operating in Teesside and South Tyneside. All buses have state-of-the-art fuel efficient engines, improved seating for customer comfort and free Wi-Fi. This included 19 on services which link South Shields town centre locations and Harton Nook and 17 on services around Stockton town centre with links to Fairfield, Hardwick, Norton and Billingham. Featuring a 'connecting the DOTS' theme, the bus designs highlight the connections available along the routes and the flexibility on offer for passengers when travelling in the region.

A total of 178 buses in the North East are now fitted with free Wi-Fi for the convenience of our customers and more will follow during 2016/17.

Our services

We operated over 21 million miles over the last year, on 2.18 million journeys. Our key measure of performance is the reliability and punctuality of our journeys.

In the past year, we operated 99.4% of our scheduled services and, of the 0.6% of scheduled journeys that we did not operate, 0.04% was due to factors within our control, such as driver and vehicle allocation, and 0.56% was due to factors out of our control such as bad weather, road closures and traffic congestion.

We monitor our services for punctuality and, in the past year, we monitored 6.1% of all scheduled journeys. Despite another year of an exceptional number of road work schemes across the region, of these, 93.5% operated within 5 minutes of their scheduled time. We continue to seek improvements both through rescheduling services and in discussions with our local highway authorities.

Our customers

Our customers made a total of over 65 million journeys on our buses through the year. In the same period, we received 2,657 complaints, equivalent to one complaint for every 24,595 passenger journeys.

An independent customer satisfaction survey by Passenger Focus, published in March 2016, showed that bus users in the North East are some of the most satisfied in the UK, with Stagecoach rated highly for value for money. However, we continue to strive to do better and welcome feedback from our customers.

We work hard to improve the experience of our customers with disabilities and, in February 2016, we launched an internal campaign to help our drivers better recognise and assist people with

hidden disabilities. 'Challenging perceptions' was developed with Jo Milne, campaigner and author from Gateshead, who has Usher Syndrome , and uses eye-catching posters asking drivers not to judge customers on what they can see.

Our established Twitter account provides regular service updates from our depot teams and also a contact point for enquiries and comments. We also have a central customer communications team to maintain and improve customer services through social media, telephone, email and web based channels.

Our investments

In the last year, we invested £4.5 million in 36 new buses for Teesside and South Tyneside. We've also continued to invest heavily in training and the development of our staff.



As well as increasing the frequency of buses between South Tyneside and Newcastle in 2015, we extended our services in North Tyneside. New customers have made more than 170,000 journeys to access Silverlink and Cobalt in the first six months.

Investment in new technology, that helps us better manage our operations and provide more up-to-date travel information, continues and customers can now access an industry-leading fares finder and real-time bus updates on our new website. Even more developments are planned, including a new APP, to further improve the bus travel experience.

Further commitments to smart ticketing have led to the launch of three new multi-operator smart card products. "SmartZone" which allows travel on buses operated by all three major bus companies in South Tyneside, Sunderland, Newcastle and North Tyneside, now provides unlimited travel from less than £2 per day. This follows a pledge made by the country's major bus companies to deliver multi-operator smart ticketing to millions of bus customers across England during 2015 as part of the government's Smart Cities initiative.

At the same time, young people and the unemployed continue to benefit from our industry-leading discount travel schemes; 'VIP' for under 19s and 'Back on Board' for job seekers.

Our environment

We are making some real progress in becoming a greener, smarter bus company; not just on the road but in our depots, workshops, offices, canteens, kitchens, toilets...everywhere!

New types of fuels and fuel additives are being tested across the UK and this includes a fleet of 40 gas buses in Sunderland, a first for Stagecoach. The rest of our buses in the north east, now run on

B30 diesel, which blends 30% biodiesel with normal diesel, reducing harmful exhaust emissions.

During Stagecoach Green Week, North East depots get heavily involved with schools events, recycling and energy saving competitions. At Christmas, Green Santa visits schools to award environmentally friendly prizes and community groups are given the opportunity to apply for eco grants.

Additionally, staff at the depots are encouraged to reduce, reuse, recycle and even cycle, all year round, with hundreds of employees signed up to the company's cycle to work scheme.

Our community

We are a major employer in the local community and enable thousands of people to go about their daily activities. We work with many local organisations to improve transport access and information.

The North East team is tireless in its dedication to supporting local communities. Through campaigns like Green Santa, Catch the Bus Week, Green Week and National Customer Service Week, we've given away goody bags, free travel vouchers and grants to local schools, individuals and groups.

We also support our employees, through both funding and practical help, in the many and varied ways they fundraise across the region. Our depot teams regularly take part in sporting events, quizzes and collections to raise money for local charities and community projects.

Once again, bus drivers from across the north east depots raised thousands for charity by spreading some Christmas cheer as they drove their buses dressed as Father Christmas and his festive friends. Passengers showed generosity in their thousands and we were able to donate more than £16,000 to local charities.