

# Key Facts

**over 63 million**

**passenger journeys**  
were made on Stagecoach  
North East buses

**21 million**

**miles operated**  
across the North East

**99.65%**

**reliability** and 94% punctuality  
on services throughout the  
North East

**471**

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

**1422**

**staff** employed across  
six Stagecoach North East depots

**£7 million**

**investment** in new buses



### Customer services

Monday to Friday 9.00am until 5.00pm

☎ 0191 566 0231    @stagecoachNE

✉ northeast.enquiries@stagecoachbus.com

stagecoachbus.com

### or write to

Customer Services, Stagecoach North East  
Wheatsheaf, Sunderland, SR5 1AQ

### Disability helpdesk

Monday to Friday 9.00am until 4.30pm

☎ 0191 566 0248 (TypeTalk enabled)

✉ northeast.disabilityhelpdesk@stagecoachbus.com

Fax: 0191 566 0230

### Bus Appeals Body

If you are unhappy with our response you may contact  
the Bus Appeals Body

☎ 0300 111 0001

✉ enquiries@bususers.org

bususers.org

### or write to

BAB c/o Bus Users UK, PO Box 119  
Shepperton, TW17 8UX

### National bus times



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



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# Annual Performance

## North East

May 2014-April 2015

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 great 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 the end of April 2015.

## Our people

We are a major employer in the local economy, with 1,422 staff, of whom 1,110 are drivers, 192 are engineers and 120 are administration and managerial staff. The majority of our employees live within the local communities in which our buses operate. In the 2014 UK Bus Awards, Stagecoach North East was a finalist in the Top City Operator category, which is testament to the hard work and dedication of this local team.

Over the past year, we have recruited and trained 155 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 GreenRoad. 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, 272 drivers (25%) received Fleet Elite awards for their exceptional driving standards. An impressive 130 of 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 13 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 2014/15, 87 of our North East team achieved milestones between 20 and 50 years service with us.

## Our buses

We operate a fleet of 471 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 48 brand new buses into our fleet, including 23 gas buses in Sunderland. The gas buses are a further extension of our green agenda, as they provide a cleaner, greener ride due to lower carbon emissions and help to deliver a better living environment for local people. With the earlier introduction of 17 gas buses, this brings the total to 40 at the Wearside depot.

There were also 25 single deck buses introduced into the fleet serving the Tees Valley area, on routes connecting Hartlepool, Billingham, Stockton and Middlesbrough.

A total of 116 buses in the North East are fitted with free WiFi for the convenience of our customers and more will follow during 2015/16.



## Our services

We operated over 21 million miles over the last year, on 2.2 million journeys. Our key measure of performance is the reliability and punctuality of our journeys.

In the past year, we operated 99.65% of our scheduled services and, of the 0.35% of scheduled journeys that we did not operate, 0.04% was due to factors within our control, such as driver and vehicle allocation, and 0.3% 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 6.9% of all scheduled journeys. Despite an unprecedented number of road work schemes across the region, of these, 94.1% 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 passengers

Our customers made a total of over 63 million journeys on our buses through the year. In the same period, we received a total of 2,472 complaints, equivalent to one complaint for every 27,702 passenger journeys.

An independent customer satisfaction survey by Passenger Focus, published in March 2015, 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 and by people with disabilities. However, we continue to strive to do better and welcome feedback from our customers.

In January 2015, following the introduction of the fleet of gas buses, we surveyed members of the public who use them. With customer satisfaction high on the list, 93 percent of passengers who responded to the survey said that the gas bus offered a 'smoother, more comfortable ride', while 94 percent agreed that the bus was 'quieter, with much less engine noise'.

We have an established Twitter account providing 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.

## New investment

In the last year, we invested £7 million in 48 new buses for Stockton and Sunderland. We've also continued to invest heavily in training and the development of our staff.

As well as increasing the size of our gas bus fleet to 40, passengers travelling around Stockton and Middlesbrough are now able to board the new ADL Enviro 300 buses, which have the latest environmentally friendly diesel engines.

Investment in new technology, that helps us better manage our operations and provide more up-to-date travel information, is on-going and customers will begin to see significant improvements in 2015 /16.

More and more customers are already taking advantage of the free Wi-Fi on many buses, to get access to all the latest online news and views while commuting across the region.

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 six 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 £19,315 to local charities.