

Taking care of every journey

Go South West
Sustainability Report 2020

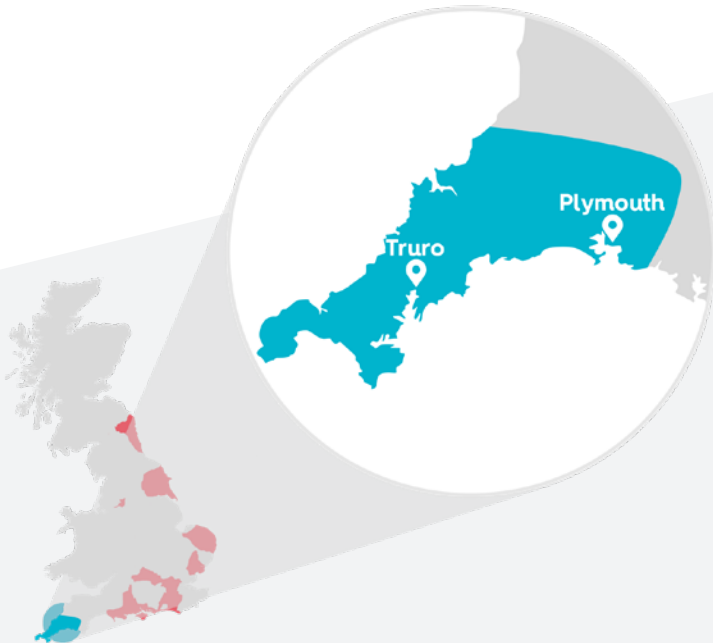


All Aboard!

With operations now covering a large geographical expanse, including Cornwall and Plymouth's travel-to-work area, we're delighted to adopt the Go South West umbrella identity, as the home of the Plymouth Citybus and Go Cornwall Bus passenger-facing brands.

In March 2020, Plymouth Citybus expanded further into Cornwall under the name Go Cornwall Bus, delivering Transport for Cornwall services, having won an eight year contract to deliver council-subsidised local bus routes that are essential to local communities but are not commercially viable.

Across the region, Go South West now runs over 250 buses and employs 759 team members, all of which is underpinned by our commitment to supporting customers, colleagues and the wider community. We're at the very heart of driving society forward, appreciating the beauty of this unique part of the country and encouraging everyone to get on board this exciting journey to sustainable transportation.



In this report you'll find information on:

- 02 Managing Director's message
- 04 Stronger Communities
- 06 Happier Customers
- 08 Better Teams
- 10 Cleaner Environment
- 11 Safer Working
- 12 Finance
- 13 Key Data

Find out more...

Twitter:

@plymouthbus
@TFCBuses

Facebook:

/PlymouthBus
/TFCBuses

Websites:

plymouthbus.co.uk
transportforcornwall.co.uk

Cover Picture: 500 years of Cornish management

Our reporting structure

We are committed to operating our buses in a way which helps put our services at the heart of the communities they serve.

This report is split into six sections:

Stronger Communities

To increase positive and proactive engagement with the communities we serve

→ [Read more on page 04](#)

Happier Customers

To provide a safe, reliable service to our customers

→ [Read more on page 06](#)

Better Teams

To constantly develop our people

→ [Read more on page 08](#)

Cleaner Environment

To look at the way in which we can reduce our impact on the environment

→ [Read more on page 10](#)

Safer Working

To provide safe working environments for our people and our customers

→ [Read more on page 11](#)

Finance

To operate our business and services in an open and transparent way

→ [Read more on page 12](#)

Managing Director's Message



2020 highlights

- Winning awards
- Increasing customer satisfaction levels
- Setting up Go Cornwall Bus to run Cornish services
- Establishing Go South West as a company with 759 employees, running over 250 buses
- Beginning Mayflower 400 anniversary celebrations in Plymouth
- Supporting the Nancy Astor statue unveiling

“Throughout this challenging period, my absolute priority has been to safeguard the health and wellbeing of Go South West’s team members and our customers.”

Richard Stevens DL
Managing Director

Welcome to our Sustainability Report 2020

I can say without fear of any contradiction, that this year’s report is truly unique.

Not only does it detail some massive achievements and great strides forward for the company, it also recognises that we have lived through one of the most challenging periods in living memory.

This is the first report we have produced as Go South West; the newly established parent company of both of our brands, Plymouth Citybus and the new company Go Cornwall Bus.

As the 2020 year began, we celebrated awards’ successes and a major contract win, with no inkling of just how crucial the provision of our transport services would become.

Prior to the pandemic, Plymouth Citybus won Bus Operator of the Year 2019 in the National Transport Awards, swiftly followed by the company winning an eight year contract to deliver council-subsidised services across Cornwall, under the new brand Transport for Cornwall. This virtually doubled the size of the company and we were all eagerly looking forward to the April roll out of services. Little did we know that we would be launching Transport for Cornwall under such extreme lockdown circumstances.

I would like to pay tribute to my colleagues, old and new, who pulled out all the stops to ensure we were ready for the start of this new venture. As Go South West, our two companies, Plymouth Citybus and Go Cornwall Bus, now employ 759 team members, running

over 250 buses from the Plymouth travel-to-work area down to Penzance.

The early part of 2020 saw us achieving the accreditation of Investors in People Platinum – the first transport operator in the country to reach this significant milestone. I know that without the enthusiasm, dedication and commitment of all of our colleagues, in their many and varied roles, this would not have been possible and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them.

Similarly, I am immensely proud that we won the highest honour which can be bestowed on a company – the Queen’s Award for Enterprise in the Promoting Opportunity category. We know all too well we operate in an area where 14% of households are workless and where child poverty statistics are heartbreaking. As a consequence, it’s important that we play our part in helping to improve things where and when we can; not just focusing on moving passengers from A to B, but also on transforming life chances. Collectively, everyone at Go South West strives to help as many disadvantaged people into work as we can and this award recognises our achievements in that area.

Each of the sections in this report are testament to the enormous efforts our team members make in so many areas – across the entire region. I hope you will enjoy finding out more about our activities. Whether it’s supporting community events and charities, investing in our people, innovation and introducing greener vehicles, we are continuing to develop our business links and partnerships to bring sustainable, accessible transport to more people.

Obviously, some events and operational activities have been curtailed in recent months as we have dealt with the impact and challenges brought about by lockdown restrictions, the reduction in passenger numbers and necessity for government financial support. However, through swift



Awards

- Bus Operator of the Year 2019 National Transport Awards
- Investors in People Platinum
- Queen’s Award for Enterprise

management action and the agility of our colleagues, we are still in a good place to look to the future with optimism. We have done everything we can to safeguard our colleagues and passengers, and will continue to keep their wellbeing at the core of our operations, as we contribute to the region’s vital connections, economic recovery and societal structures.



Accepting the Bus Operator award

Stronger Communities

Our commitment to the communities we serve underpins and motivates everything we do at Go South West.

As we physically move passengers from A to B, we are backed by our Social Mobility Pledge to support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our society, which includes members of our own workforce. We are creating opportunities for social mobility and improving life chances in as many ways we can.

During the year we have continued to tackle issues such as child poverty, providing free travel for children during the half term holidays and for Saturdays in the run up to Christmas, as well as participating in Plymouth City Council's 'Sea in the Park', which took children from deprived areas to experience the magnificent coastline.

In November, we partnered with Barnardo's Bus Bingo project which aimed to engage with families through games designed to boost literacy skills, predominantly on bus routes in areas of Plymouth with a low take up in early years funding.

We have continued to encourage and raise children's aspirations, hosting 150 Year 5 pupils from six schools to experience 'a day in the life of a bus company' as part of the Widening Horizons project to enhance their understanding of the world of work.

Other support has ranged from donating 50Dayrider tickets to entrants in a children's bereavement charity competition run by Jeremiah's Journey, to backing a crew of young Devon sailors tackling a once in a lifetime trip of sailing hundreds of miles over seven days. We also celebrated Young Carers' Awareness Day with a day trip to the depot for 30 youngsters who provide emotional and physical support to another person.

Community Investment

Plymouth Citybus is proud to support many local charities and initiatives and is beginning to work in the same way across the area we serve with Transport for Cornwall.

Continuing sponsorship of major organisations like the National Marine Aquarium, the Theatre Royal Plymouth and our hands-on chairing of the Devon and Plymouth Chamber of Commerce by our Managing Director, Richard Stevens, is testament to our regional commitment.

Our community investment increases year on year. Alongside many established initiatives such as free bus travel for those attending job interviews and working with the Ministry of Defence's Career Transition Partnership for



Barnardo's Bus Bingo



Our Elmer design



Young Carers Visit

veterans seeking employment, each year we undertake numerous new endeavours.

July 2019 saw us participate in 'Elmer's Big Parade', launched in support of St Luke's hospice in Plymouth, with 40 uniquely decorated Elmer elephants situated throughout the city. Our bright red double decker design was the most visited elephant.

Plymouth Citybus partnered with the national 'Mayflower 400' campaign, to produce a promotional bus wrap in anticipation of the anniversary of the setting sail of the Mayflower to discover America, sponsored and chaired the Mayflower Makers Volunteer programme and will pick up these commemorations when events are resumed in 2021.

Our full sponsorship of Plymouth Albion RFC Ladies Team was renewed, with ancillary support for the men's team, and we supported the Chestnut Appeal's Breakwater Swim, where over 300 swimmers took on the gruelling 4km open water swim across Plymouth's waterfront to raise funds for prostate cancer.

In partnership with Radio Plymouth, we provided over 20,000 reflective stickers to primary school children as part of a 'Be Safe Be Seen' campaign as the dark nights approached.

In October 2019, 16 life saving defibrillators donated by the charity Hearts Together, were fitted to the company's Spark buses, the first such scheme in the UK. The aim is to have a defibrillator on every bus, with further fundraising underway to make this happen.

October also saw the hosting of the Britain's Ocean City 10k race, with a VIP bus providing an open top viewing area to watch the 20 employees who took part.

November marked 100 years since Plymouth's Nancy Astor, the country's first female MP, took her seat in parliament. A wrapped bus marked the anniversary and the day a statue of Nancy was unveiled by the Rt Hon. Theresa May on Plymouth Hoe.

December's Mufti Day with bus drivers in fancy dress raised over £2,000 for a children's charity and the Barbican's Christmas lights twinkled all that brighter when one of our buses acted as the switch on stage.

Despite COVID-19 enforced disruptions to events and activities this year, Go South West has continued to help build stronger communities wherever it has been possible, including our team led participation across the region in the weekly NHS Clap for our Carers – with even our drone footage of our tribute making TV coverage.

Launching our new services in Cornwall in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, bus drivers handed out colouring books to children to help them pass the time that they were away from school.

Happier Customers

Our expanded Customer Experience Team has continued to develop its relationship with passengers offering an extensive range of services to make travelling with Go South West easier and safer, putting up to date information at their fingertips.

Timetable, fares and accessibility issues continue to be the topics passengers like to talk about at our community roadshows and events, which are held regularly across Plymouth and the region since the Go Cornwall Bus services began.

Last year, Customer Experience Matters' events in both Plymouth and Cornwall connected our staff with thousands of passengers and their feedback helps us improve and provide better services.

The start of the Transport for Cornwall contract saw the opening of our first customer-facing one stop shop in Newquay Bus Station, with a new and dedicated team in situ.

Communication on our services is an integral part of our daily routines. Our social media platforms feature daily, detailed up to the minute traffic and travel news and information,

as well as broadcasting clear content on important government-backed messaging to keep passengers safe during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Never has it been more important for us to lead the way in showing how to travel safely and securely.

During the lockdown period, our teams were widely praised by customers on our social media platforms for their dedication to duty and assistance for essential travellers and key workers.

As the COVID-19 crisis deepened, the Customer Experience Team led the way in using passenger feedback to inform managers on the routes and services required to get key and NHS workers to their workplaces. Daily briefings with key organisations, employers and hospitals were undertaken.



Transport for Cornwall



Key highlights

Passenger satisfaction

94%

Passenger Satisfaction

Up from

93%

last year

And

90%

two years ago



Thank you NHS



Happier Customers

Better Teams

Go South West now employs 759 people across Plymouth Citybus and Go Cornwall Bus. As a major employer in the region, we're striving to support our colleagues through continual training, recognising diversity, fostering inclusion and a sense of belonging.

This year we were very proud to win a Queen's Award for Enterprise for social mobility. Our Social Mobility programme, thought to be the only one of its kind run by a bus company in the UK, is designed to give city people from disadvantaged backgrounds an equal chance to do well in education and finding jobs – including young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, disabled residents as well as those from ethnic minorities and women.

The firm also ensures equal opportunities for progression at Go South West and is actively looking to employ more women drivers, aiming at a figure of 20% female representation of all drivers by 2024. There is a zero-pay gap between men and women; a major achievement and a signal that our desire to lead on equality and raising aspirations is working. The company is always striving to help employees achieve a successful work life balance, with a Paired Working Arrangements scheme on offer, allowing drivers to find a 'buddy' to share a weekly rota with.

In January 2020, Plymouth Citybus was recognised as an Investor in People Platinum – the first bus operator in the country to achieve

this significant accreditation. It means that policies and practices around supporting people are embedded in every corner of the company and that everyone knows they have a part to play in the company doing well. These policies and practices are now being rolled out in Cornwall.

Subsequently, the company received the highest honour after winning the Queen's Award for Enterprise in the Promoting Opportunity category, for helping disadvantaged people get into a job through its Work Academy and partnership with City College Plymouth and the Department of Work and Pensions. Only seven awards were given in this category and we are proud to say we are currently the only bus company to hold such an award.

During the pandemic lockdown, our Bus Heroes social media campaign publicly identified and thanked team members for their exceptional efforts and dedication to duty in the most testing of times and attracted much support and engagement from passengers.

Plans are also underway to introduce an employee experience and engagement platform for all team members to use, where essential



information and reward and recognition tools will improve communication within the Go South West family.

In preparation for the launch of Go Cornwall Bus, extra team members studied to gain their Operators' Licence and extensive training on behaviours and attitudes for front-line managers was undertaken – all factors in making us well prepared to open up operations in the county.



New bus



Driver training



Key highlights

759

Employees

£170.99

Training spend per employee



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Platinum

All employees

Male



85%

Female



15%

Senior Management

Male



71.5%

Female



28.5%

Gender Pay Gap

Plymouth Citybus has no median pay gap compared to the national average of 17.3% (2019)

Cleaner Environment

We're committed to a cleaner environment and improving air quality for all who visit, live and work across the Go South West region.

As part of our commitment to reducing pollution and giving customers the best possible travel experience, in December, Plymouth Citybus launched eleven new, cleaner buses on some of the city's busiest routes – an investment worth £2.6 million.

The Alexander Dennis Enviro400 vehicles are ten times cleaner per passenger than a new diesel car, offering better quality travel and at a higher capacity, with the added bonus of free WiFi and USB charging sockets.

These state-of-the-art, low carbon emission buses targeted areas particularly affected by poorer air quality, taking in busy services and Park & Ride routes to Derriford Hospital, Tavistock Road, the city centre and Mutley Plain, an area with air quality below Government targets.

Prior to the launch of Go Cornwall Bus services in April, Go South West made the biggest single purchase of the greenest fleet, with an order of 92 buses for the new services. These state-of-the-art, low emission buses are part of our commitment to make the whole of the Transport for Cornwall fleet Euro VI or better by 2024 – and we're well on the way to surpassing this target.



New cleaner buses



Key highlights

11

New, greener buses launched in Plymouth

45

New, greener buses launched in Cornwall

259

Buses in operation

92

Largest single order of Euro VI standard buses made by a bus company

Safer Working

In the last year, measures have been introduced at Plymouth Citybus' Milehouse Depot to improve the safety and security of staff working there.

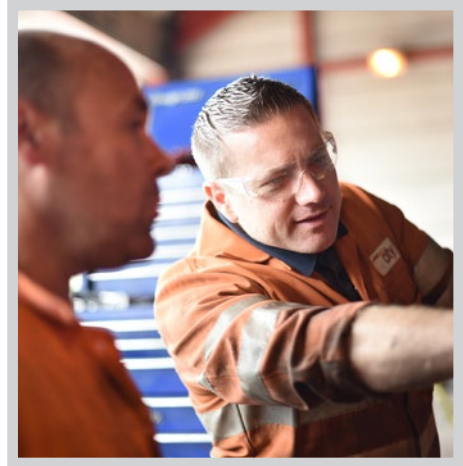
These measures include a new layout of the depot, with dedicated staff parking areas, the installation of barrier access featuring ANPR facilities and electronic passes to access the Head Office. Staff on site have also received additional first aid training.

In the car and commercial workshop, repainting of demarcation lines has helped engineers identify and work within designated areas.

With the Go Cornwall Bus contract coming on stream, new satellite depots across the county have been established to service staff working. Our depot at Newquay bus station features a partnership approach with Cormac, ensuring our people are safe and secure.

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, a Crisis Management Team was set up and a crisis management plan was put in place, as well as an alert system introduced so staff could be made fully aware of prevailing conditions. All of our sites were risk assessed and appropriate safety measures put in place. These included enhanced bus and office cleaning regimes, office capacity reductions, hand sanitisation, temperature checks, provision of face coverings and social distancing training and practices.

Colleagues have been provided with additional protective equipment and cash handling has been reduced, aided significantly by our mobile ticketing, smartcards and contactless payment channels across all bus services.



Some of our Engineers



Go South West Directors

Finance

Prior to the effects of Covid-19, Plymouth Citybus had enjoyed years of commercial growth at a time when other bus companies had seen a decline in numbers.

As Go South West, operating Plymouth Citybus and Go Cornwall Bus services, we will be making a huge contribution to the regional economy, one that will become increasingly important as new Cornwall services are established, COVID-19 restrictions are eased and passenger numbers begin to rise again.

Giving passengers better value

Go South West reduced evening ticket costs to assist passengers and the night-time economy, and offers 10% discount on travel for all NHS staff.

On our buses, use of contactless methods of payment and app purchases have increased, making passenger travel easier and speeding up boarding.



Richard Stevens and new buses

Key Data: Go South West

	2020	2019	2018
Stronger Communities			
Community investment per employee (£)	124.42	239.20	135.65
Stakeholder events (number)	180	354	374
Cleaner Environment			
Carbon emissions per vehicle mile (kg)	1.56	1.64	1.69
Happier Customers			
Customer satisfaction (%)	94	93	90
Deregulated/local bus punctuality (%)	88.92	88.6	87.9
Safer working			
Bus fleet which is DDA compliant (number)	259	175	170
RIDDOR accidents per 100 employees	0.5	0.41	0.55
Fleet with CCTV (%)	98	92	90
Better Teams			
Number of employees	604	559	557
Training spend per employee (£)	170.99	206.22	135.81
Female employees (%)	15.07	12.2	13.3
BAME (%)	3.8	2.4	2.9

Key

2020 figures reflect the launch of Go Cornwall Bus services in 2020, the reduction in services due to COVID-19 pandemic and government regulations and includes yearly averages.

RIDDOR – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations at workplaces
 DDA – Disability Discrimination Act



For information on the full Group data, please visit our corporate website: go-ahead.com

More information

You can find out more about Go-Ahead London by visiting our website goaheadlondon.com and more information on how Go-Ahead Group manages sustainability can be found by visiting: go-ahead.com/sustainability

If you have any comments, views or ideas on how we might improve, or have any thoughts on other issues that we should address in this report, please write to:

Richard Stevens DL, Managing Director Go South West 1
Milehouse Road
Plymouth PL3 4AA

T: 01752 662271

E: pa@plymouthbus.co.uk

Summary Verification Statement from Bureau Veritas UK Ltd

Bureau Veritas UK Ltd (Bureau Veritas) has provided verification for The Go-Ahead Group plc (Go-Ahead) over selected sustainability indicators contained within the Group's Annual Report. The information and data reviewed in this verification process covered the period 30 June 2019 to 27 June 2020.

The full verification statement including Bureau Veritas' verification opinion, methodology, recommendations and a statement of independence and impartiality can be found on the Go-Ahead Group website:

www.go-ahead.com



Bureau Veritas UK Ltd
October 2020

We're part of The
Go-Ahead
Group