

Go-Ahead Sustainability Report 2021



Go-Ahead

About Go-Ahead Group

Go-Ahead is an international transport group and one of the UK's leading public transport providers. We operate bus and rail services across the UK, as well as in Ireland, Singapore, Norway, and Germany.

We are the largest operator of bus services in London and, outside the capital, our regional buses account for about 11% of the UK market. Our rail operation is the busiest in the UK, responsible for over 20% of all train passenger journeys.

We employ over 27,000 people who deliver safe, reliable and value for money services, underpinned by our purpose, core beliefs and attitudes.

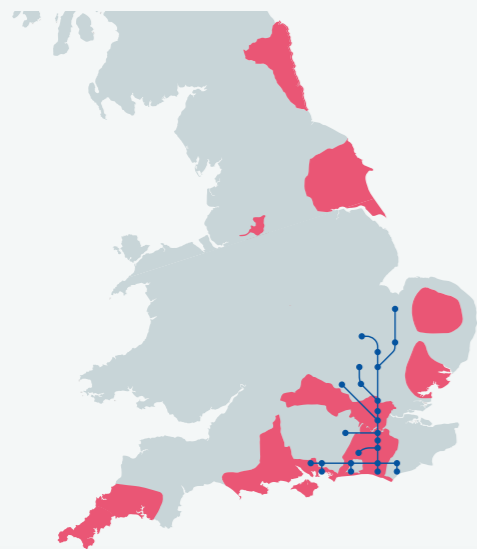
Our purpose

To be the local partner taking care of journeys that enhance the lives and wellbeing of our communities across the world.

Our vision

A world where every journey is taken care of.

Transport services that create long-term value for our stakeholders



UK buses and trains

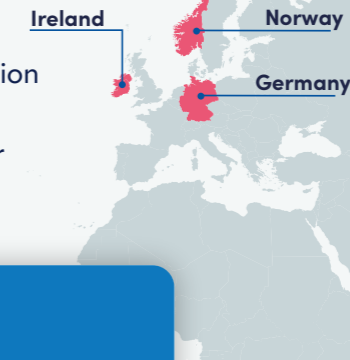
- Achieved customer satisfaction score for bus of 91%
- 42% of our bus fleet is either zero or low emission¹
- Leading change and transformation as the operator of the UK's busiest rail franchises

Our UK brands



International operation

- Clear strategy for international expansion
- Ten international contracts won in four countries to date



Our international brands



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¹ The figure includes electric and Euro VI diesel busses.

CEO's review

Welcome to our Sustainability Report, a document that gives the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) perspective on our story in 2021, including how we manage our key topics, our performance indicators, and how we create shared value with our stakeholders.



Christian Schreyer
Group Chief Executive

I joined Go-Ahead Group as Chief Executive in November 2021 and visited all our operating companies in my early weeks. I have been very impressed by the depth of the commitment of our people to serving their local communities – not just through providing vital bus and rail services, but in the various contributions they make to social and environmental wellbeing. Our strong reputation led to us being recognised as the ‘most admired’ transport operator in the UK according to the influential report annual Britain’s Most Admired Companies report on corporate reputation.

Strong relationships and transparent engagement with stakeholders is very important to me. I was disappointed that failings in this regard resulted in the Department for Transport (DfT)’s decision to appoint the Operator of Last Resort, to take over the operation of Southeastern services from 17 October 2021. Since these events came to light, our corporate governance procedures have been enhanced and the group is under new leadership.

The public transport industry has been through a very challenging time in the last two years. The pandemic led to many less people travelling but the services we provided became more important than ever. We ensured that key workers could get to their places of employment, provided vital links to healthcare and vaccination centres and contributed to wider community efforts to tackle the virus. I am very proud of how our people kept going and supported each other. I would like to thank each and every one of them for their efforts.

COVID-19 accelerated many trends already prevalent in society, like working from home and a shift to online retail. Public messaging also led to an unfortunate shift away from public transport that is taking some time to reverse. Thankfully, passenger numbers are now increasing. Surges in fuel prices are also leading people to consider leaving their cars at home. And with it being clear that action is needed now to minimise the devastating impacts of climate change, public transport has a vital role to play in providing efficient, reliable solutions that can enable sustainable journey choices. We were pleased to both sponsor and participate in an event ‘Communities enabling greener travel’ at the COP26 summit in Glasgow that focused on this theme.

Our role in tackling climate changes involves both enabling a shift away from car use and decarbonising our own operations. Last summer the Group launched its ambitious Climate Change Strategy, with plans to become a net zero company by 2045 and to decarbonise our rail and UK bus fleets by 2035. Our plans have been validated by the Science Based Targets initiative. We are already the biggest operator of electric buses in the UK and have recently placed our first order for hydrogen buses for our Metrobus services in Sussex. Our environmental credentials were underlined by receiving a Highly Commended as “company of the year” at the 2021 Business Green Leaders Awards.

With customers returning in numbers, it's as important as ever that we provide them with the best possible service. In Singapore, 96% of our buses run on time, in London, the figure was 89% and in Norway, 82% of rail passengers are satisfied, a higher level than all other operators. In UK rail, Southern was named Passenger Operator of the Year, marking a great turnaround from a few years back. We continue to invest in improving customer information, including new apps to help plan bus journeys, featuring tools that allow customers to see which services are likely to be least crowded.

Throughout the recent challenges we have continued to invest in our people. During 2021 we bucked wider trends by recruiting no less than 1,030 new apprentices into our business, and we will be taking on a further 1,100 in 2022. Go-Ahead London has demonstrated that apprentice bus drivers stay with the business longer, attract more commendations from passengers and have safer driving records, all of which benefits the business. In 2021, Go-ahead London won two accolades at the London apprenticeship awards: ‘Macro employer of the year’ (for companies with more than 5,000 employees), and ‘Best Diversity and Inclusion Strategy’.

We continue to work to improve the diversity of our business. 40% of train drivers recruited by Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) in 2021 were female. 30% of this year’s Group graduate intake are female. Our diversity initiatives include our industry leading “Women in Bus” network, which provides mentoring and support. We have a target of increasing the overall proportion of women in bus from 11% to 20% by 2025. Across the Group, 70% of our apprentice intake are from ethnic minorities and we continue to work to ensure more diversity, in all its forms, across all levels of the business.

Across our UK businesses, we work with more than 3,200 small and medium businesses, representing 75% of our suppliers. We have launched a strategy with a commitment to spend at least £250million with SMEs each year.

Our companies continue to be active in the communities they serve. For example, Go-Ahead Ireland is providing community sponsorship for the Gaelic Athletic Association, Ireland’s largest sporting organisation, for the next three years. Go East Anglia has continued to develop its Chatty Bus initiative, working with local businesses in the Norwich Together Alliance to hold events raising awareness of the need to tackle loneliness.

“The roots we have in local communities are an asset and enable us to quickly adapt and change to meet our customers’ needs. This includes constantly improving and innovating our services to stay competitive.”

One of the strongest drivers of change in transport is digitalisation, which is radically changing the way customers do journey planning, and has great potential to integrate different transport modes. Responding to that trend, we worked with Arup to produce a report on Mobility Hubs, part of showing how we can create integrated sustainable journey options that don’t require a car element.

I am excited about the role Go-Ahead will play in driving change in public transport and mobility, as part of creating a more sustainable future.

Our Sustainability Strategy

Our sustainability strategy is underpinned by our five responsible business priorities – Better Teams, Happier Customers, Stronger Communities, Safer Working and Cleaner Environment – and fully aligned with our overall business strategy.

We are one of the largest transport operators in the UK with operations overseas. We provide a vital service to society and have a significant impact on customers, colleagues, suppliers, regulators, shareholders, and the communities we serve. By focusing on our responsible priorities, we work towards a business that is able to sustain itself in the long term by creating shared financial and non-financial value with our stakeholders.

Our approach to sustainability



We have identified five UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) we are most able to contribute with. Our Sustainability Strategy is also targeted to make a meaningful, positive impact on these goals.



External recognition



Awarded the London Stock Exchange Green Economy Mark, an accreditation which recognises businesses with at least 50% green revenues



Received an A minus grade from the Carbon Disclosure Project Climate Change Survey - the highest score achieved by any UK transport operator



We have various ISO accredited standards for our work processes including: ISO 20400 standard on sustainable procurement, ISO 50001 for energy management as well as the ISO 45001 occupational health and safety management system, and ISO 14001 for an effective environmental management system at our UK train businesses



99 FTSE4Good percentile rating out of a maximum of 100



Achieve the top score for all transport companies in the category of 'Community and Environmental Responsibility' on the annual Britain's Most Admired Companies study



Awarded 'Prime' status as part of the ISS ESG corporate rating



Rated AAA by MSCI ESG Rating assessment - the highest rating



Rated as 'Low Risk' by Sustainalytics, ranking in the top 8% of companies in the transport sector



Our Climate Change Strategy

Public transport is a crucial part of the solution we need to fight Climate Change. We believe that public transport can enable a wholesale change to mobility habits specifically through modal shift. Moving away from private car use will be needed to deliver the Paris Agreement and limit global warming to 1.5°C.

In July 2021, we published our Climate Change Strategy, committing to become a carbon net zero business by 2045. Our target of achieving 75% GHG emission reduction on scopes 1 & 2² by 2035 have been validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), a partnership between high-profile organisations to assess and validate emission targets.

Solid transition plan

Our strategy sets a clear and ambitious transition plan, based on validated data, clear governance and a step-by-step implementation forecast. Our focus is to reduce key emission sources (in bus, rail, and premises) from the baseline year of 2019/2020. Our science-based decarbonisation targets are underpinned by the following goals:

- Overall emissions to be cut 75% by 2035 and to become net-zero by 2045 – five years earlier than UK government target
- Conversion of our entire UK bus fleet to zero-emission vehicles by 2035
- A decarbonised rail fleet by 2035
- Improvements to air quality by 2025
- A significant improvement in energy efficiency at all our premises by 2035
- Transition to zero-emission vehicles of our ancillary fleet

Putting this strategy together required a concerted effort from different parts of our business who worked together to develop a detailed and comprehensive plan to curb our carbon emissions. To develop our plan, we:

1. Created a multifunctional task force with representatives across the Group that meets every month
2. Examined our carbon footprint to understand the most relevant topics. We agreed on five workstreams: Decarbonisation, Adaptation, Air Quality, Water, and Waste
3. Elected teams and leaders to champion each workstream
4. Formed a transition plan to become a net-zero carbon business by 2045
5. Publicly launched the strategy and started engaging with our key stakeholders



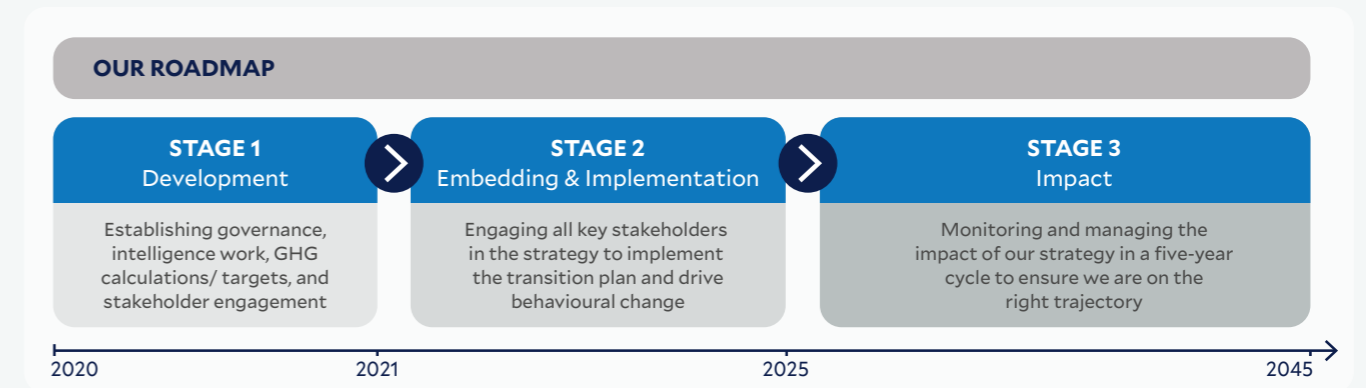
² GHG Protocol definitions: Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from owned or controlled sources. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy.



Our roadmap

Achieving these goals will require many smaller steps along the way. These will include investments in new technology – including purchasing zero-emission buses, electrifying bus depots, and improving the power efficiency of railway rolling stock.

It is also vital to know exactly where we want to go – and how we are going to get there. Our Climate Change Strategy implementation is based on the following roadmap:



Going forward

No business can act on its own. We recognise that there are variables outside of our control to deliver our targets, such as how quickly the energy grid will be decarbonised or the availability of public funding for transitioning to a zero-emissions fleet.

Therefore, at the forefront of our strategy is the engagement of our key stakeholders, including colleagues, customers, suppliers, investors and governments. We are dedicated to bringing these groups on board and look forward to taking this journey together.

[TO READ OUR FULL STRATEGY](#)

Go-Ahead

Better Teams

We are a 'people business'. Our colleagues are the foundation of everything we do. In order to support our employees through an extraordinary year, we were dedicated to listening and continuing to embed a culture of inclusivity, learning and continual business improvement.

Supporting our people in times like no other

The health of our colleagues has been our top priority through the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognised the strain many colleagues felt across our businesses, so our efforts aimed to care not only for their physical, but also mental health.

During the reporting period, we trained mental health champions at all our UK and Irish bus companies. They are trained to spot triggers, reassure people in distress, and seek support. More broadly, they signal the importance we place on mental wellbeing.

Examples of best practice are evident across the Group and recognised in many cases as industry-leading. Some examples:

- Brighton & Hove and Metrobus launched a mental health first aider programme in 2020. A tenth of the workforce has since used the scheme, with most calls regarding pandemic-related anxieties
- Govia Thameslink Railway won an Inside Out award for its mental health initiatives. This includes a network of more than 100 'Wellbeing Champions' and a volunteer support group for colleagues through COVID-19
- Go-Ahead London is setting a target to train every depot manager in mental health awareness
- Southeastern launched the railway industry's first-ever Mental Health Charter in May which set out eight actions that can be taken by organisations to identify mental health hazards, address problems and train supportive managers

Engaged people

Keeping our employees engaged has been more important than ever. We understand that listening is crucial, so besides continuing with our annual rail engagement survey, we have introduced quarterly seasonal pulse surveys across our UK bus companies, enabling our managers to respond quickly to feedback and implement positive change.

The first pulse surveys across UK bus presented an engagement rate of 71%. The survey also showed increased levels of engagement across the business, and the importance of communication and additional levels of support provided to employees during this year. Across UK rail, the engagement registered was 72%, despite the logistical challenges posed by COVID-19.

Investors in People

Investors in People again awarded Go-Ahead Group with its gold accreditation, placing it as 8th of 61 companies in the 'transportation' and 'storage' category. Its survey revealed that 90% of colleagues believe that Go-Ahead has a positive impact on society and they, unanimously, would recommend the Company as a place to work.



Investing in better teams

Continually developing our skills is an important part of delivering our strategy.

Senior Management development

In the period covered by the report, we have reshaped the Executive and Senior Management Development Programmes to more effectively align them with our business strategy. These programmes aim to accelerate the development of our brightest talent. During the year we were glad to see an increased number of delegates and female representation within the scheme.

Other training initiatives

We are constantly looking for different ways to enhance our people's knowledge. Our initiatives include:

Train the Trainer: A Group-level programme that allows team members to nominate colleagues to run training sessions at a local level for supervisors

Work Academy Programme: GTR launched its first Sector-based Work Academy Programme with East Sussex College. Targeted at those who are long-term unemployed and are not in training or education, the programme has given candidates the opportunity to develop essential employability skills while gaining qualifications

Get into Railways: In its seventh year, this programme is a partnership between GTR and The Prince's Trust and offers young people the opportunity to have two weeks of customer service training. So far, 89% of the participants have successfully completed the programme.

Graduate and apprenticeship programmes

Our graduate programme identifies and attracts our future leaders. The scheme, now in its tenth year, has been enhanced to expedite development and monitor performance more effectively. Our retention rates are very high, 94% (7% higher than the industry average).

London Apprenticeship Awards

In 2021, Go-Ahead London won two accolades at the London Apprenticeship Awards:

- 'Macro employer of the year' (for companies with more than 5,000 employees),
- and
- 'Best Diversity and Inclusion Strategy'

Throughout the year, we recruited more than 50 apprentices a month – despite the disruption caused by COVID-19 – and adapted the training sessions to the challenges of the pandemic. We currently have 1,030 graduates in the programme.

During the period covered by this report, Go-Ahead London and GTR received an official stamp from Ofsted New Provider Monitoring Visit regarding their apprenticeship scheme.

Building a diverse team

As a public transport operator serving communities in Europe and Singapore, having a diverse team is essential to our success. Within that topic, we have been focused on gender diversity, which is still an issue for our sector. We are committed to driving change in the industry and promoting public transport as an attractive career choice for women.

In the period covered by the report, women account for 15% of total colleagues and we are taking action to increase their representation. Our UK gender pay gap reporting shows a wider gap in rail than the national figure, and a much narrower gender pay gap among our bus companies.

Our targets

By 2025, we want to have at least 21% female representation within rail and 20% within bus.

Attracting and empowering women

To increase female representation in our business, we have female-focused recruitment campaigns, open days, and other initiatives to increase opportunities for women to work with us.

While our 'Women in Bus' network continues to offer online workshops focusing on topics that are pertinent to this group, in the last years we continued to support 'Women in Rail' and launched numerous initiatives to promote careers on the railway to women. These include recruitment campaigns, and unconscious bias training to help make the organisation a more inclusive place to work.

³ Asian, Black, and mixed/multiple Ethnic Group.

⁴ Figures for 2021 and 2020 include acquisitions.

As a result of this work, GTR has doubled the number of female train driver applicants in a year – from 413 in 2019 to 825 in 2020.

Nurturing an inclusive culture

While our focus has been on increasing gender diversity across the Group, we also recognise the importance of diversity in all its forms. Throughout the years we have supported the LGBTQ+ community. In 2019, GTR celebrated Brighton Pride by rebranding a train and, in 2020, during the lockdown, we supported the 'Rail Presents: Pride Festival' by inviting our all employees to join a series of events hosted by the LGBTQ+ community across the rail industry.

We were pleased to learn that 80% of colleagues surveyed in our quarterly employee engagement pulse survey consider Go-Ahead's culture to be inclusive to all. Our apprentice intake is exceptionally diverse with almost 70% of our London bus apprentices coming from ethnic minorities³ backgrounds.



KEY STATS	2021	2020	2019	2021 vs 2020 (%)
EMPLOYEES				
Average length of service in years ⁴	6.1	6.1	11.8	0%
Turnover (%)	15	9.4	11	+5.6 p.p.
ENGAGEMENT				
Employee engagement - bus (%)	71	n/a	62	-
Employee engagement - UK rail (%)	72	72	69	0 p.p.
TRAINING DEVELOPMENT				
Staff training days per employee	5	3.7	4	+35%
Training spend per employee (£)	848	589	680	+44%
DIVERSITY				
Female employees (%)	15.3	15.3	14.4	0 p.p.
Women in senior management roles (%)	20	20	16	0 p.p.
Female board members (%)	57	57	50	0 p.p.
% of ethnic minorities within our employees	21.0	21.0	19.7	0 p.p.

Happier Customers

Customer satisfaction is a top priority for us. While we observe the numbers of passengers increasing after the challenges imposed by COVID-19, we believe that continually improving all aspects of our service and constantly seeking innovation to enhance the customer experience are key factors to attracting more passengers to our buses and trains.

Keeping customers safe during the pandemic

Throughout the year, we strived to keep both our customers and colleagues safe. Our bus and rail companies have worked within government guidelines at every stage of the pandemic. We have introduced protective equipment for employees, restricted the use of seats, provided hand sanitiser and enhanced standards of hygiene in our premises and vehicles.

We have also worked with CitySwift to launch 'When2Travel', a transport tool that helps passengers to socially distance in their bus journey by offering the latest timetables and up-to-date capacity predictions (how busy the bus will be) on a stop-by-stop basis, and the option of choosing a quieter bus.

Where restrictions have been eased or lifted, our local teams have been running reassurance campaigns for customers to return to public transport safely. These have included:

- Online information
- On-board signage
- Station and bus stop signage
- Advertising
- Videos showing cleaning routines
- Updates via app on COVID-19 regulations and precautions

Future of urban mobility

In 2021 we released, in partnership with Arup, our Future Mobility Hubs Report, where we stated our vision for the future of public transport as a world where active travel combines with shared mobility modes to reduce the dependency on the private car.

In this document, we invited our stakeholders to imagine cities and towns where they can use a full suite of complementary transport modes. These would include different operators collaborating to offer integrated services and allowing people to switch easily between different modes to reach their destination.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR PROPOSAL](#)

Transport in the palm of your hand

We are increasingly using app technology to make travelling on our buses and trains easier. In 2021, all Go-Ahead bus operating companies have launched a new smartphone app, which allows customers to:

- Plan journeys
- View real-time information for arrival times
- Purchase tickets
- Create favourites stops or journeys

In rail, Southeastern designed a new app that allows customers to check how busy the train is with a 'SeatFinder' function, and to book further assistance for those with accessibility needs. GTR offer on-demand information through popular social media apps such as WhatsApp and Facebook messenger, providing real-time updates direct from the control rooms – so do Southeastern.

Flexible season tickets

In response to changing working habits accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, flexible season tickets have been launched across Go-Ahead's rail operations.

Our rail companies have launched a new online Season Ticket Calculator, that helps commuters to identify and buy the right ticket for the number of days they wish to travel. Go-Ahead Nordic has launched the 'Sørpasset', an interrail-type ticket across its routes, which enables passengers to hop on and hop off the train for a week, significantly saving on purchasing a single ticket for each journey.

In our bus operation, all our companies accept contactless payment, and 60% of our services have rolled out 'Tap On, Tap Off' technology. Not only does this simplify the payment process, but it also provides customers with peace of mind that they are paying the best value fare for their trip.

Listening to the customer

Customers are at the heart of all our decision-making. To make sure we listen to this public, we use different methods, including:

- **Online passenger panel:** An online panel where customers give their feedback about our services through online polls, surveys, and online forums

- **Brand tracking:** an ongoing measurement of our brand performance against metrics, such as brand awareness, trust, net promoter score, disposition, brand image and attitudes, and brand impressions
- **Mystery passengers:** trained observers use our rail networks to experience customer journeys and assess staff interaction, facilities and disruption handling

In terms of results, we entered the pandemic with a strong base of satisfied customers. Before COVID-19, our customer satisfaction score (measured by Transport Focus) was 81% for GTR, and 83% for Southeastern – achieving its best-ever result. On regional bus, in 2020 we achieved the industry's highest level of customer satisfaction for the sixth year running, scoring 91%.

Both rail and bus Transport Focus surveys were paused during the pandemic. To make sure the customer's voice kept being heard, we introduced our own equivalent surveys, which registered 91% of satisfaction for regional buses, and 88% and 73% satisfaction respectively for Southeastern and GTR.



Making public transport accessible

Making our transport services accessible to all is our responsibility.

All our bus and rail services are accessible to passengers with wheelchairs, pushchairs and guide dogs. Our customer-facing staff are trained in assisting people living with dementia and those who are blind or partially sighted. Additionally, we are a member of the ‘Sunflower Lanyard’ scheme, whereby customers wearing the lanyard can discreetly indicate that they may require extra support.

In the reported period, we rolled out the ‘Helping Hand’ card scheme across our bus operations, which enables the holder to discreetly advise the driver if they need further assistance. To make travelling even more accessible, we are working to introduce audio-visual ‘next stop’ technology on all our buses, which helps visually impaired passengers understand when they are approaching their stop through clear automatic audio announcements.

Inclusivity ‘Highest Leader’

Brighton and Hove Buses were one of only two public transport providers in England to be given the ‘Highest Leader’ status under the Department for Transport’s Inclusive Transport Leaders scheme. The bus company has improved its screens and audio announcements while ensuring its buses do not have black floors, which can be problematic for people who experience black-out seizures, and for those with dementia.

In UK rail, GTR and Southeastern have been working to reduce the time needed to pre-book assistance for customers who need extra support. Our goal is to shorten it to two hours before travel in April 2022. GTR also has plans to trial a ‘turn up and go’ service for partly or unstaffed stations, where mobile support teams will arrive within 20 minutes to assist passengers who need extra support. The company also hosts ‘Try a Train’ sessions, dedicated to people who may encounter barriers when travelling.

Training customer-facing staff

Throughout the year, GTR retrained all 3,000 customer-facing colleagues in courses refreshed by experts who themselves have disabilities. Southeastern pledged to train all 4,500 staff in bespoke disability awareness training.



KEY STATS	2021	2020	2019	2021 vs 2020 (%)
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION				
UK customer satisfaction - regional bus (%)	n/a ⁵	91	92	-
UK customer satisfaction - rail (%)	83	83	81	0 p.p.
UK rail punctuality PPM (%)	91.1	80.6	86.2	+10.5 p.p.
UK regional bus punctuality (%)	80.7	77.0	85.3	+3.7 p.p.
London excess bus waiting time (mins) (punctuality)	0.80	0.83	0.86	-4%
ACCESSIBILITY				
UK bus fleet that is DDA compliant (%)	97.6	94.6	70.9	+3 p.p.
UK trains certified accessible (RVAR) (%)	61.3	60.4	56.8	+0.9 p.p.
UK trains certified accessible (PRM-TS) (%)	74.9	69.3	60.4	+5.6 p.p.
UK rail accessible managed train stations (%)	42.3	42.0	58.5	+0.3 p.p.

⁵ Results from Transport Focus independent customer survey. Due to the impact of COVID-19, surveys were paused for this year

Stronger Communities

Our buses and trains connect customers to work, education and other essential services. They carry people to be with their friends and family and to leisure activities. We're also a member of the communities where we operate and are constantly looking for ways to use our business and activities as a means to create shared value with our stakeholders.

Supporting our communities through the pandemic

Despite all the challenges posed by COVID-19 our teams worked hard to ensure that people who had to travel could use our services to reach their destinations. Throughout the periods when COVID-19 was most affecting our people, we adapted our timetables to ensure they fit the needs of essential workers in health and other sectors wherever possible.

Being a transport provider, we continued to support wider community efforts such as bottling and distributing hand sanitiser for key workers, delivering food packages to those in need, and transporting medical equipment.

We proactively sought to support the vaccination programme in England and transformed our buses in Crawley into the UK's first mobile vaccination units. Our teams also provided on-bus vaccination centres in Newcastle, Brighton and Surrey. Moreover, we partnered with Nexus to run free-to-use buses to transport people to vaccination centres in the North East, and also provided free car parking at train stations next to these locations.

East Yorkshire recognised during the pandemic

Go-Ahead's East Yorkshire Buses won the 'Heart of East Yorkshire' award and a Business in the Community prize for colleagues' efforts to enable communities and key workers to keep moving during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tackling loneliness

In 2019, we launched the 'Chatty Bus' campaign to encourage passengers to talk to someone new every day in our bus services. Since then, our operating companies have shaped the initiative to suit their communities and worked with local organisations. To keep the 'Chatty Bus' active in face of challenges imposed by COVID-19, throughout the year some of our bus companies organised telephone calls with community members in need.

In 2021, we became a champion of the Government's 'Tackling Loneliness Network', a group of high-profile charities, businesses and public figures formed to help connect people at risk of isolation. Within this network, we represent the role public transport plays in preventing loneliness and social isolation, while also helping people to remain independent and access their communities.

Social investment

We regularly join in national and local fundraising events and we support our colleagues in their volunteering activities within local communities.

Our seven-year partnership with Transaid has gone from strength to strength. In April, Go-Ahead London delivered virtual driver training sessions to Transaid's partner Driver Training schools in Africa. This enabled important knowledge-sharing opportunities between Ugandan, Zambian and Tanzanian trainers, and a fantastic learning and development opportunity for our team.

Southeastern pioneered the Rail to Refuge scheme with the charity Women's Aid, which was then rolled out nationwide over the pandemic. Under the scheme, UK train operators covered the cost of train tickets for people fleeing domestic violence to find accommodation. On average, four survivors a day have used the scheme and 62% said they would not have travelled if the initiative had not been in place.

In 2021, Go-Ahead Ireland established a partnership to sponsor the Dublin Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), an Irish organisation that runs adult leagues and championships including over 88 clubs and thousands of players.

The Queen's Award

Go South Coast is part of the Isle of Wight Community Bus Partnership, which provides 33,000 yearly journeys using vehicles from Southern Vectis and volunteer drivers. This year the Bus Partnership was recognised with The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, recognising the outstanding work by volunteer groups to benefit their local communities.

Through our corporate donations, colleague fundraising and volunteering efforts, we have invested nearly £5m in our local communities over the last five years.



SME strategy

Our supply chain is a vital stakeholder to our business, and we are constantly looking for ways to improve our support and engagement with this audience. We already operate in accordance with the ISO 20400:2017, an internationally recognised standard of sustainable procurement and, in 2021, we released an SME Strategy, committing to increasing the percentage of our influenceable spend with small and medium-sized enterprises to 35% by 2023.

Across bus and rail, we spend about £2.5 billion a year within our supply chain, which means that we have a relevant impact on this group. By increasing our proportion of spend with SMEs, especially those local to our operations, we can add more value to the communities we serve.

There's also a benefit for our business. Many of these smaller companies are innovative start-ups, who know well the region where they operate, and will certainly add value to our business.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT SMEs STRATEGY](#)



KEY STATS	2021	2020	2019	2021 vs 2020 (%)
COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL INVESTMENT				
Total contributions (£)	1,035,269	905,919	966,239	+14%
Cash contributions (£)	315,720	269,403	296,782	+17%
Gifts in kind (£)	140,117	355,100	383,421	-61%
Value of employee time (£)	9,153	187,467	174,554	-95%
Management time (£)	300,729	93,948	111,482	+220%
Community spend per employee (£)	33.6	30.0	34.2	+12%
Individuals/beneficiaries directly reached	71,525	710,388	321,792	-90%
Partner organisations/beneficiaries directly reached	2,970	16,893	22,318	-82%
Stakeholder events	1,493	236	1,371	+533%
Employee involvement	246	612	531	-60%
Leverage – total spend on payroll giving (£)	104,186	98,613	101,362	+6%

Safer Working

The health and safety of our customers, colleagues, suppliers and members of our communities are paramount for the sustainability of our business. In our culture, safety is a shared responsibility, which means that all our 30,000 colleagues work to protect the health and safety of our personnel and all those that are impacted by our activities.

Safety in pandemic times

Keeping people safe throughout the pandemic has been a priority for our teams.

Building on an already strong safety culture, we have focused on safety measures, social distancing, cleaning regimes, guidance and information, and personal protective equipment to ensure that every possible step is being taken to minimise the risk of harm to our colleagues and our passengers.

We have continued with the enhanced cleaning, disinfection and protection processes in vehicles, trains, and facilities. Through a robust process of Adenosine triphosphate (ATP) testing, we have been able to increase the effectiveness of our cleaning and identify where additional measures are required. We have also launched a trial of a new fogging/misting product on our vehicles that is effective for longer and enhances protection for everybody on board.

To help to protect customers and employees, we have also introduced or expanded contactless payments throughout our services and retained temporary screens in bus drivers' cabs. GTR used an app to provide up-to-date information in real time across its operations, for customers and colleagues, including instructions related to social distancing, cleaning and desk booking.

In line with Government guidance and the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, we are constantly evaluating our response. Our office-based colleagues have been supported in returning

to our COVID-safe offices and we continue to support them with their mental and physical health.

Harnessing technology

To enhance our safety systems, we are investing in technology to develop a wide-ranging Incident Management Process and a 'Go-Report-it' app for our bus division. This will enable our colleagues to easily report incidents and a wide variety of safety concerns, as well as allocate responsibility for their resolution and track progress.

This new system will generate data at local and bus division level, and help us to learn more about risks, pre-empt similar incidents, and improve our safety practices. We are integrating the safety reporting system with our business analytics solution, Power BI, to make data available in real time and through a friendly interface.

GTR recently launched a safety reporting app enabling faster, more accurate reporting of all safety relating incidents. With instant notifications, the app has contributed to initial responses to be managed quicker and subsequently be investigated in a timely manner. From this, lessons have been learned, shared and risks mitigated.

Safety culture

We have a culture of continual improvement and are always striving to reduce our exposure to safety risks. Our aim is to eliminate all injuries and health concerns from our operations.

Our policy and strategic framework sets out Group standards, which are put into practice by our local management teams through their own health and safety management systems. Each of our operating companies' systems goes through a bi-annual audit and the results and lessons learned are reported to the Group Board and the Audit Committee.

Additionally, we have achieved accreditation to the global ISO 45001 Health and Safety Management System Standard across a number of our UK bus operations, which also demonstrates our commitment to providing safe and healthy workplaces.

Safety Tours

Our senior leaders are accessible to their teams at all times to discuss health and safety matters and maintain a continual dialogue about the topic. They are responsible for undertaking 'Safety Tours' or 'Director Audits' and go on-site to talk to our personnel and check all relevant safety topics.

The insights from these safety tours improve thematic analysis and trends across the Group, and complement the assurance and auditing process by providing a regular pulse check-in, in-between audits.



Health and Safety is an everyday activity

We encourage an environment of continuous improvement. Through our 'Better Together Forums', insights and best practices are shared across the Group. One example of how this leads to best practice is our response to vehicle and pedestrian movement incidents.

A 'Good Practice Guidance' was developed for our bus division to ensure that our risk identification and controls regarding pedestrian movement were based on internal and external good practice. Each operating company has now conducted a gap analysis per depot and developed an action plan where new or amended controls can be implemented.

Safety Schemes in Procurement

In 2021, we implemented a new supplier pre-qualification process for our UK bus division called Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP), which is based on an external standard of pre-qualification developed by the Government, industry and the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

This process has simplified and streamlined our supplier onboarding procedures. Going forward, any supplier that undertakes on-site working for us will be required to satisfy the standard via one of the SSIP registered member schemes, saving us time and financial cost.



KEY STATS	2021	2020	2019	2021 vs 2020 (%)
SAFETY				
UK RIDDOR accidents per 100 employees	0.48	0.44	0.61	+9%
Bus accidents per million miles	32.4	36.6	37.4	-11%
Absenteeism (%)	5.8	3.5	3.8	+2.3 p.p.
Bus fleet with CCTV (%)	97.3	97.6	94.4	-0.3 p.p.
Train units with CCTV (%)	98.7	95.7	98.4	+3.0 p.p.
Total UK VOSA PSV bus test pass rate (%)	95.9	93.4	80.1	+2.5 p.p.
UK rail SPADS per million miles	0.66	0.80	0.76	-18%
UK train stations managed with secure station status (%)	24.0	25.0	25.0	-1 p.p.
Reported crimes	8,562	12,309	12,540	-30%
Better Together Forums hosted	9	12	9	-25%
Number of 'Safety Tours' or 'Director Audits'	86	89	64	-3%

Cleaner Environment

Managing and reducing the impact we have on the environment is vital to the sustainability of our business. As a transport provider, considering our operation and supply chain, we rely on natural resources, emit greenhouse gases and air pollutants, consume energy, produce waste, and are exposed to a number of climate change-related risks.

By continuously improving our environmental performance, we're not only future-proofing our business, but also reducing our operational costs and becoming more attractive to talent, investment and funding opportunities.

Next step: net-zero

We aim to be the transport provider leader in the transition to a low-carbon economy. In July 2021, we launched the most ambitious and comprehensive Climate Change Strategy in the UK transport sector, committing to achieve a 75% cut in carbon emissions Scope 1 & 2 by 2035, and becoming a net zero business by 2045.

With carbon targets approved by the Science Based Targets initiative (1.5°C roadmap as per the Paris Agreement), our strategy goes beyond energy-related emissions and also sets goals for Climate Change adaptation, water consumption and waste recycling rates. To know more about our strategy, please read page 6 of this report or access it in full by clicking here.

[TO READ OUR FULL STRATEGY](#)

Goals translated into actions

We are the largest operator of electric buses in the UK. Our all-electric bus depot in Waterloo was the UK's first, preventing 2,500 tonnes of CO₂ emissions since it started operating in 2016.

This was followed by a larger electric depot in Northumberland Park in 2017, with capacity for overnight charging of 117 buses. This depot is set to become a 'virtual power station' by trialling 'Bus2Grid' technology, which sends surplus electricity from the batteries of parked buses

back to the grid, helping to balance out the pressure at energy peak hours.

In November 2020, we launched the first fully electric bus fleet in the North East of England, providing 55,000 journeys and covering 300,000 miles across Newcastle and Gateshead each year.

In rail, we have been the UK's largest operator of electric trains, with 98% of our combined Southeastern and GTR fleet comprising electric trains. In 2021, GTR's Class 700 fleet completed five years of operation. These trains use the brakes to regenerate energy and recycle 15.8GWh of energy each month.

All the Group's UK premises – including rail stations and bus depots – are powered by zero-carbon electricity generated from fully renewable sources, such as solar, wind and hydropower. We are piloting the use of solar panels on our buses and depots.

Hydrogen

After undertaking a trial of clean hydrogen fuel cell buses, in 2021 Brighton & Hove and Metrobus purchased 20 hydrogen buses for their operations in Crawley, Redhill and the Gatwick Airport area.

These hydrogen buses offer a long-range, quick charging capability and enhanced accessibility. The single-deckers will be delivered in June 2022 and will be the first hydrogen-powered vehicles in our fleet.



Air Quality

Buses can play a unique role in combatting poor air quality and congestion.

Since 2018, our Bluestar bus company in Southampton has operated the UK's first air-filtering bus, which removes 99.5% of ultrafine particles from the air as the bus moves through the streets. Our six air-filtering buses can take out 1.25kg of particulate matter from Southampton's air each year and filter the same amount of air as 6,000 people breathe an hour. In 2021, the initiative won a UK Fleet Champions Award in the category 'Sustainable Journeys'.

In Brighton, we introduced the UK's first hybrid 'geo-location' electric bus route in 2019, where buses automatically switch to zero-emission mode when driving through the city's Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ). In 2020, we expanded the project to 54 buses by investing £8.6 million in 24 buses that cover other areas of Brighton's ULEZ, delivering 244,000 zero-emission miles a year.

More convenience, less carbon footprint

The vehicle traffic caused by delivery of online orders has increased substantially during the pandemic – and so has its related carbon emissions. To help reduce the number of stops required by delivery vans, we have installed Amazon lockers at 51 locations across the Southern network.

The initiative aimed to increase convenience for our customers by allowing them to collect their goods while using the station and reducing the environmental impact of deliveries. Due to its success, the scheme will be expanded across Thameslink and Great Northern stations in the coming months.

Recognition and accreditation

We received important recognition regarding our role as sustainable leaders in the transport industry. During the reported period, we were:

- Named as one of Britain's Most Admired Companies, coming first in the transport sector for 'Community and Environmental Responsibility'
- Awarded with the London Stock Exchange Green Economy Mark, an accreditation which recognises businesses with at least 50% green revenues
- Named one of the top 300 'European Climate Leaders' by the Financial Times for our carbon-cutting initiatives
- Received our highest ever rate on CDP's Climate Change: A minus, the highest score of any UK transport operator

In 2018, we were the first major public transport company to achieve the ISO 50001 – Energy Management Systems – certificate. In 2021, we were audited by an independent body and re-certified on our systematic approach in achieving continual improvement of energy performance.

We also report against the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) – please see pages 38-39 of our Annual Report for more information.

GHG performance

Since 2016, we achieved a 27% absolute reduction in carbon emissions – during a period in which our operations have expanded into Ireland, Germany, Norway and Singapore.

In 2021, our equivalent carbon dioxide (CO₂e) emissions⁶ reduced 8% against the last year.

GHG emissions per vehicle mile

In the period covered by this report, we achieved a 9.86% year-on-year reduction in CO₂ emissions per vehicle mile.

In 2018, we set ourselves a target to achieve a 25% reduction on our CO₂e per vehicle mile by 2021 (having 2017 as a baseline). We are proud to announce that we not only achieved our target a year early, but also exceed it with an overall reduction of 33.1%. We have now set ourselves a new ambitious target to reduce CO₂ emissions by 18% per vehicle mile by 2023.

⁶ In absolute terms and on a location-basis.

⁷ Electric & hydrogen-powered buses and Euro VI diesel buses.

⁸ Indicator reported from 2021 (no information for previous years)

Water and waste

Through our Climate Change Strategy, we committed to reducing water consumption by 25% and increasing our waste recycling rate to 60% by 2025 – having the financial year ending June 2020 as the baseline for both targets.

In the period covered by the report, we dedicated our efforts to understanding challenges that our operating companies face on water and waste, including the accuracy of data collection and management approach.

The numbers show we're on the right track to meet our targets. By the end of our financial year, we reduced our water consumption by 6.5% and increased our recycling rate by 3.8% against the previous period.

Going forward, we will be focused on enhancing management efficiency and sharing best practices across the Group.

GTR's waste pilot in Brighton

In 2021, GTR started a pilot project to trial a mobile recycling facility at Brighton train station. Through a partnership with Green Block Consulting, a mobile segregation unit (MSU) was deployed to facilitate the segregation of unsorted waste and provide instant access to real-time waste data.

The first phase of the project will include up to 16 stations and capture 14% of GTR's total annual waste. In the second phase, an electric vehicle will be used to transport waste between stations to further increase the positive environmental impact of the scheme.

KEY STATS	2021	2020	2019	2021 vs 2020(%)
ENERGY AND GREENHOUSE GASES				
GHG Scope 1 (tonnes CO ₂ e)	366,372	383,082	394,878	-4%
GHG Scope 2 (tonnes CO ₂ e) – location-base	318,099	369,439	371,146	-14%
GHG Scope 2 (tonnes CO ₂ e) – market-base	43,242	67,279	61,173	-36%
GHG Scope 3 (tonnes CO ₂ e) – Electricity transmission and distribution (total)	27,945	31,554	31,510	-11%
Carbon emissions per vehicle mile (kg)	0.98	1.07	1.15	-8%
% of bus fleet that is zero or low carbon emission ⁷	42%	44%	18%	-2 p.p.
Average fleet diesel efficiency (MPG)	7.61	7.25	7.07	5%
Average fleet electric efficiency (kWh/mile)	1.48	1.89	1.66	-22%
Average bus gas efficiency (kWh/mile)	11.191	10.795	10.91	4%
Rail EC4T efficiency (miles/kWh)	0.372	0.344	0.352	8%
WASTE				
Total waste generated (t)	9,448.30	13,196.60	18,218.40	-28%
Landfill diversion rate (%)	94.26	95.7	95.6	-2%
Recycling rate (%)	37.8	36.5	n/a	+4%
WATER				
Amount of water consumed (m ³)	848,548	907,649	916,830	-7%
Confirmed water losses ⁸ (m ³)	39,547 m ³	n/a	n/a	n/a

FOR MORE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

About this Report

Go-Ahead's Sustainability Report 2021 contains information about our environmental and social performance within the period between 28th June 2020 and 3rd July 2021.

The content and performance indicators include all our operating companies in the United Kingdom as well as our international operation in Ireland, Germany, Norway, and Singapore.

Summary Verification Statement from Bureau Veritas UK Ltd

Bureau Veritas UK Limited (Bureau Veritas) has provided verification for Go-Ahead Group plc (Go-Ahead) over selected sustainability indicators contained within the Group Sustainability Report. The information and data reviewed in this verification process covered the period 28th June 2020 to 3rd July 2021.

The full verification statement including Bureau Veritas' verification opinion, methodology, recommendations and a statement of independence and impartiality will be released alongside the Group Sustainability Report and can be found below.



[READ FULL VERIFICATION STATEMENT](#)

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