

**Plymouth Citybus**  
Sustainability Report 2017

# ABOUT US

Plymouth Citybus is focused on being the Provider of Choice, Employer of Choice and Investment of Choice in the Plymouth travel to work area and surrounding communities. We strive to improve communications with passengers, giving them the service they deserve. We aim to be innovative in all aspects of the business, always looking at ways in which to improve both our service to our passengers and our duty to our employees. It is important to us to maintain our relationships with stakeholders and develop new relationships, embedding the Citybus brand within Plymouth and the wider community.



## In this report

- 2 **Managing Director's message**
- 4 **Our approach**
- 6 **Society**
- 8 **Customers**
- 10 **Our people**
- 12 **Finance**
- 13 **Key data**

## Our reporting structure

We are committed to operating our buses in a way that helps to put our services at the heart of the local community. This report is split into four sections based around our core aims:



### Society

To run our company in a safe, socially and environmentally responsible manner.  
page 6



### Customers

To provide high quality, locally focused passenger transport services.  
page 8



### Our people

To be a leading employer in the transport sector.  
page 10



### Finance

To run our business with strong financial discipline.  
page 12

Follow us on Social Media:

 [facebook.com/plymouthbus](https://facebook.com/plymouthbus)

 [@plymouthbus](https://twitter.com/plymouthbus)

For more information, visit our website:

[www.plymouthbus.co.uk](http://www.plymouthbus.co.uk)

We're part of The  
**Go-Ahead**  
Group

# MANAGING DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

“Concentrating on our three main pillars of customers, employees and stakeholders, Plymouth Citybus has over the past year strived to be the Provider of Choice, Employer of Choice and Investment of Choice. As a result of our hard work, we’ve achieved significant growth in satisfaction scores across the board.”



**Richard Stevens**  
Managing Director

2016/17 has been a year where Plymouth Citybus has concentrated on its three main sectors: customers, employees and stakeholders. We’ve followed our vision of being the Provider of Choice, Employer of Choice and Investment of Choice.

Headline numbers reveal that all three areas have shown growth through engagement and satisfaction scores.

Firstly, our employee engagement index has risen from 66% to an industry leading 69% in the last 12 months. This follows similar growth last year and is a true testament to the work we’ve put into improving the employee experience. Our employee turnover rate is also down to 8.8% from 10.5% the previous year.

Passenger Focus figures show us that customer satisfaction has risen from 84% to 90%. We have continued to invest in our fleet, putting in a further £1.5 million over 2016/17, which takes our three year investment in buses to £11.5m. This has brought the average age of our bus fleet to just eight

years, which is a decrease from 11 in 2014/15 and nine in 2015/16. As a result, we’ve seen a huge improvement in both the customer experience and the amount of carbon emissions produced.

This year we also introduced our own stakeholder engagement survey, which shows us leading the way with a score of 9.4 out of 10, against a Go-Ahead Group average of 8.3. Stakeholder relations are a key part of making sure that Plymouth Citybus is seen as the Investment of Choice, not just nationally, but by local authorities and education establishments. With the introduction of gas buses to our fleet and the launch of our future investment in new highly efficient diesel buses at the Devon Business Show this year, we have worked to demonstrate to the local business community that buses are not the problem but part of the solution when it comes to both congestion and green issues.

Passenger numbers have seen a steady increase, with commercial passengers per mile operated increasing by 5.1% in the

last year and 11% in the last two years. Our premium Flash services have grown by much more. BlueFlash, which provides the main service between the city centre and Derriford Hospital, has seen passenger numbers grow by over 20% in the last 12 months. To meet demand, double deck buses will replace single deck buses to provide the additional capacity needed on the route.

Our focus on employees, customers and stakeholders has been the main driving force behind continual growth in what is a tough time for bus operators. At a time when concession travel is reducing throughout the country and the entitlement age becomes higher, we have still managed to see growth in this area.

## 2016/17 highlights

- Accredited Investors in People Gold, meeting the new higher standard
- Highly commended as Bus Operator of the Year at the 2016 National Transport Awards
- Shortlisted as Large Bus Operator of the Year at the 2016 routeone Awards
- Continued growth in employee engagement

Being innovative sits behind all three of these strands, making sure we are leading the way and punching above our weight not just in the industry, but also showcasing what the industry can be capable of to those outside.



# OUR APPROACH

## Our vision and values

As part of the Go-Ahead Group, Plymouth Citybus has a clear strategy to which the Board is committed. We advocate a strong set of key values, beliefs and attitudes that support everything we strive to achieve as a company.

In 2016, we updated our company vision, values, attitudes and beliefs to ensure that we tied our local vision to that of the national Go-Ahead Group.

The process involved a number of workshops to find out what working for Citybus means to employees and how, going forward, everyone is aligned in what we strive to achieve.

The result was a set of visions and values that the company has agreed to work towards over the next year and beyond. These are displayed at key points throughout the business so that everyone is reminded of the company's vision and is working towards a common goal.

## Values

Plymouth Citybus focuses on three core values — community, integrity and respect — to ensure we meet our vision of being the Provider of Choice, Employer of Choice and Investment of Choice.

From helping the disabled and elderly to inspiring tomorrow's bus operators, Citybus has a clear commitment to the community it serves. In the past year, we've supported a wide range of local causes with a community spend of over £100 per employee.

We ensure we operate our company and bus services with integrity and respect. Diversity is important to us and we champion it both within our workplace and the wider community. In 2016 we became the first corporate company in the city to support Pride in Plymouth.

To celebrate fun and laughter within the company, we organised a range of initiatives in the past year to recognise those who go above and beyond.



## Attitudes

Citybus runs a collaborative workplace where employees are encouraged to make an active contribution to the company's success – and are commended for doing so.

In the past year we've achieved Investors in People Gold certification against the new higher standard and continued our STAR awards to recognise those who go above and beyond.

We hold ourselves accountable to our customers, employees and stakeholders and take an agile approach to service operation to ensure we meet changing needs.

Where other operators in the city have cut services over the past year as a result of large roadworks schemes in Plymouth, Citybus invested £½ million in additional peak resource to ensure reliability wasn't hit.

## Beliefs

Plymouth Citybus' core beliefs include building relationships and being 'can-do' people, both within our organisation and with stakeholders.

Building solid working relationships with stakeholders is key in making sure that Plymouth Citybus is seen as the Investment of Choice, both nationally and locally. We also realise the importance of partnering with suppliers who align their work with our values as this supports the efficient delivery of our services. Over the past year, we've worked closely with the local business and education communities to challenge thinking around buses and environmental issues.

Being innovative sits behind everything we do at Citybus, making sure we continue to lead the way both as a Plymouth business and as a bus operator.

## Go-Inspire

In 2017, Citybus launched its Go-Inspire school engagement programme, aiming to inspire the youth into jobs in the industry. The initiative, run in conjunction with the Widening Horizons project in Plymouth, enabled children aged 10-11 from five local primary schools to visit the Citybus head office for 'a day in the life' experience. Schools were chosen from areas with higher levels of poverty to showcase that a job well done can also be rewarding. The day covered a range of activities including planning a timetable and route, designing a bus livery, a walk under a bus in the engineering pit and a bus journey. Feedback from teachers and parents alike was so positive that we're looking to roll it out for a second year.



Watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgKKxWbDIwI>

# SOCIETY

Being an inclusive company is a huge part of our community focus at Citybus. Increasing our visibility across the city makes sure we continue to grow awareness of our brand as a good neighbour, as well as working to make our city a cleaner place to live and work.



## Key highlights



## Community

Keeping to our value of community, Plymouth Citybus has supported local businesses, organisations and charities and really embedded itself within the local community.

Throughout 2016/17 we sponsored a number of events and teams. Plymouth Citybus was the main sponsor of both the Plymouth Albion RFC ladies and Plymouth Argyle FC ladies teams, alongside being the main sponsor of six local youth sports teams. We were also headline sponsor of the Britain's Ocean City Running Series, which included the Plymouth 10k and half marathon runs, as well as being transport partner for MTV Crashes Plymouth.

We are patrons of Devon Chamber of Commerce and members of the Plymouth Area Business Council and Devon and Cornwall Business Council, getting involved in all aspects of business across the region.

We build contacts with local businesses and keep business partnerships as local as we can.

We also help a number of local charitable projects. One in particular is our partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support in Plymouth





“The ‘We Care, We Share’ project will raise awareness not only among Citybus drivers but also among other road users and cyclists themselves.”

**Councillor Steve Ricketts,**  
Plymouth City Council’s Cabinet Member for  
Transport and Housing Delivery

(pictured, front page). To help the charity raise funds, we painted a bus green and branded it in special Macmillan livery. It also has a collection tin on-board for passengers to drop their change into while travelling on the bus.

## Environment

Plymouth Citybus is one of the best performing companies across the Go-Ahead Group when it comes to emissions. Carbon emissions per passenger journey in 2016/17 were 0.71kg. That figure is 4.8% down on the previous year and is 6.1% down on 2014/15.

In December 2016 Plymouth Citybus welcomed the arrival of 12 MAN gas buses, previously of Go East Anglia. With the installation of a gas fuel station at the Milehouse depot, the buses are now in service helping to reduce the city’s CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

In June 2017, Citybus was the headline sponsor at the Devon Business Show, the largest event of its kind in the South West. We used this opportunity to push our green agenda. With the introduction of gas buses to the fleet and 16 new highly efficient diesel buses launched at the show and due to hit the roads in July 2017, we demonstrated to the local business community that buses are not the problem but part of the solution when it comes to both congestion and green issues.

## Safety

The health and safety of all Plymouth Citybus employees, contractors, passengers and customers is a top priority. We aim to reduce personal accidents within the workplace by means of thorough training, instruction and information on correct and safe working procedures.

In September 2016, we held a public launch of our ‘We Care, We Share’ initiative to help Plymouth cyclists feel safer on the road. We designed and implemented the campaign long before police interest in the minimum pass rule. This followed an extensive employee training scheme to look at the issues and discuss the beliefs of bus drivers so that behaviours could change. All our fleet now carry distinctive ‘We Care, We Share’ markers on the rears, showing our ongoing commitment to road space sharing.

## Operation Grenadier

In March 2017 we partnered with the local police force to run ‘Operation Grenadier’. The operation used a

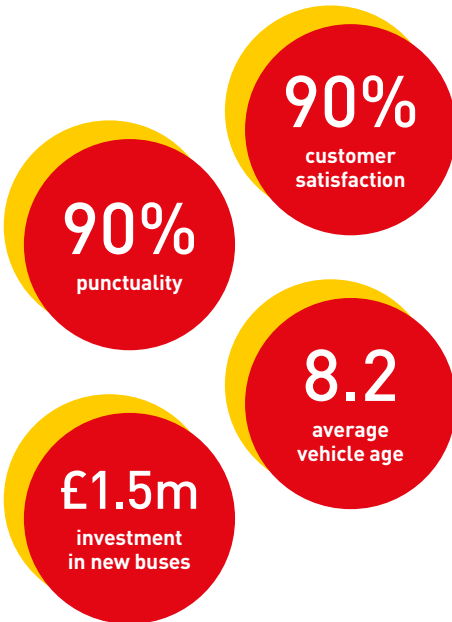
double deck bus as a viewing platform to crack down on motorists breaking the law. The bus was joined by a fleet of police outriders, who were sent to stop and prosecute those found on the wrong side of the law. In the two days it operated, over 130 motorists were caught of whom 39 were using mobile phones and 36 were not wearing seatbelts.



# CUSTOMERS

Plymouth Citybus works hard to ensure that all decisions made are not just right for the business, but also right for our passengers. As a result of our efforts to improve the customer experience, passenger satisfaction has risen from 84% in 2015/16 to an industry leading 90% in 2016/17.

## Key highlights



## Customer experience

Providing reliable information to customers is key in making sure every journey is taken care of. Over the past year we have heavily concentrated on making sure that the customer is put at the heart of every decision we make to the network. In turn, the publicity of all network changes is pivotal in ensuring every customer knows when and from where their bus is due.

We have redesigned our printed timetables to make them easier to follow alongside making sure our online and roadside information follows suit.

We have continued to invest in new vehicles, making sure as far as we can that every journey is fault free and comfortable for passengers.

During the past year we have introduced new ranges of tickets aimed at off peak and youth travel. 'Add a Kid for a Quid', launched in July 2016, continues to grow in popularity, while an off peak 'Nightrider' ticket which was launched in December 2016 gives great value for those travelling into the evening.





## Technology

50% of the Citybus fleet is fitted with WiFi and every new bus entering service is fitted with WiFi units. Year on year WiFi sessions have increased dramatically from 10,000 sessions a month to 86,000 sessions a month, averaging 15 minutes each. This shows that our investment in on-board technology is paying off in terms of enhancing the passenger experience.

We also have 16 new Enviro400 City buses on order which are due to take over our busiest route across the city in July 2017. The new buses have USB charging points on-board throughout – a first for any Citybus buses.

Our mobile responsive website continues to grow with an annual session count of 2 million, up 20% on the prior year. In November 2016 we integrated a journey planning facility into our website, which is used 10,000 times per month. Sales of tickets through our mobile app have also continued to rise, removing on-board cash fares, which in turn speeds up boarding times.



“We are really happy to continue to invest in our fleet, making sure we increase the comfort of our passengers.”

**Richard Stevens,**  
Managing Director, Plymouth Citybus



## Add a Kid for a Quid

The 'Add a Kid for a Quid' initiative was launched in 2016 to run throughout the school summer holidays, offering families a better value option to travel around over the summer. Due to its high popularity, it is still available today. Figures from July 2016 alone saw an increase of 21% in child journeys, which despite a lower ticket price than previously, still managed to return a 9% revenue increase. The marketing plan for the product saw an eye-catching creative campaign pushed out over a number of channels including car park posters and, for the first time, Citybus ventured into the world of TV advertising.

# OUR PEOPLE

Plymouth Citybus prides itself on investment in and development of its employees. We were one of the first companies to be awarded Investors in People Gold against the new higher standard, making sure our employees are at the heart of the business and are listened to and invested in.

## Key highlights



With employees being at the heart of the business, it is important to Plymouth Citybus to recognise those who go above and beyond. In February 2017 we held our annual STAR (Special Thanks and Recognition) Awards, with 120 attending the event to recognise staff achievements over the past 12 months. This year the format changed so that we now recognise success all year round. Each month, there are a number of STARs all nominated by colleagues and passengers.

Alongside the STAR Awards we also run our annual long service dinner in May. The dinner recognises all those who have served over 20 years with the company. As part of our annual employee feedback sessions, we also found that service should be recognised at a lower level. To recognise those who have served between five and 20 years with Citybus, we will be launching our first interim service lunch in September 2017. This year we also launched our service badges, with the first being awarded at one year's service, recognising those that have not been recognised in the past.

Plymouth Citybus has this year also continued its successful family days. It's not just our employees that are cared about, but the wider Citybus family. In June 2017, we hired local outdoor adventure centre, Woodlands, for the day. 300 members of the Citybus team and their families took on the adventure park's famous water slides and activity areas.



## Diversity

Plymouth Citybus is committed to promoting diversity and has a core value of respect. In 2016/17 the percentage of female staff at the organisation remained at 12%. The percentage of Asian, black and other ethnic group employees remained at 3% for 2016/17, which was up from 2% in 2014/15.

Plymouth Citybus also celebrates diversity within the wider city. In 2016, for the first time, we joined Plymouth Pride Festival to show our support. We were the only corporate organisation to do so.

## Training

Employee training is important to keep the Citybus team ahead of the game with everything from on-bus technology to their own specialist areas.

Over the past year, Citybus has invested just under £100 per employee in training. To improve the delivery of in-house training to drivers and other employees, we have planned to relocate the Citybus training centre in September 2017 to a purpose built facility at our Milehouse head office.

We have also continued to produce 'hot topic' leaflets throughout the year for employees to learn in depth about particular issues around bus services, including network changes and cyclist safety.

## Awards

### Investors in People Gold

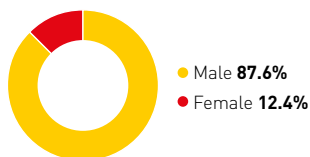
**Highly commended, Bus Operator of the Year, 2016 National Transport Awards**

**Shortlisted, Large Bus Operator of the Year, 2016 routeone Awards**

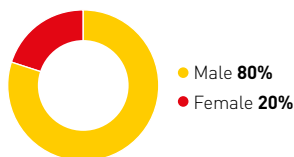
We have also delivered a number of specialist driver training initiatives to help improve driver awareness of various road hazards and issues.

One in particular was in support of the 'We Care, We Share' campaign. We worked with a number of stakeholders to ensure that the content of the course was relevant and would make a difference to all attitudes towards cyclists on the roads. In 2016, the training was approved for delivery to bus drivers as part of their driver CPC qualification hours. Since launching, over 50% of Plymouth Citybus drivers have taken the accredited course.

## All employees



## Senior Management



# FINANCE



Each one of the 17,000,000 journeys taken on our services every year is important to us. Throughout the year, Plymouth Citybus made a direct contribution to the economy by providing people with a convenient way to get to work, amenities and leisure activities every day.

## Key highlights



Citybus works hard to ensure it is a sustainable business, making a fair profit and enabling investment across the business. In the last three years, Plymouth Citybus has managed to increase its turnover by 23% to £25m, while implementing processes to make sure costs do not rise in line with turnover. The overall result has seen profit increase eightfold over the same period of time, doubling in the last 12 months.

Working collaboratively with key stakeholders including local authorities, industry partners and suppliers, we contribute to economic growth through partnering with local community groups, not for profit organisations and charities that play a constructive role in our area.

We connect with communities and support local businesses, which plays a part in strengthening the UK economy. We directly employ 558 people in the Plymouth and East Cornwall area and value our staff, investing in our people through training and development; and creating supportive, inclusive workplaces.

## Outlook

Where other operators in the city are cutting service frequencies because roadworks are slowing down road speeds, we are investing in additional resources to ensure reliability is not hit.

In what is a tough time for bus operators, we are continuing to see growth. Being innovative in the way we operate and deliver services means we can continue to lead the way and punch above our weight in our industry.

# KEY DATA: PLYMOUTH CITYBUS

	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
<b>SOCIETY</b>			
<b>Safety</b>			
Bus accidents per million miles	<b>23.0</b>	21.0	22.2
Fleet with CCTV (%) <sup>+</sup>	<b>92.1</b>	99.0	99.0
Number of reported crimes <sup>+</sup>	<b>90</b>	78	176
<b>Environment</b>			
Carbon emissions per passenger journey (kg)	<b>0.71</b>	0.74	0.74
<b>Community</b>			
Community spend per employee (£)	<b>113.61</b>	111.94	69.90
Stakeholder events (number)	<b>399</b>	463	390
<b>CUSTOMERS</b>			
Customer satisfaction (latest Passenger Focus score) (%)	<b>90</b>	84	91
Deregulated/local bus punctuality (%) <sup>+</sup>	<b>88.8</b>	92.9	88.2
Expenditure on new buses in financial year (£'000) <sup>+</sup>	<b>1.541</b>	5.098	0.861
Average age of bus in years <sup>*</sup>	<b>8.2</b>	8.7	10.8
<b>Accessibility</b>			
Bus fleet which is DDA compliant (%) <sup>*</sup>	<b>92.1</b>	98	87.3
<b>OUR PEOPLE</b>			
Average number of employees <sup>+</sup>	<b>558</b>	558	543
RIDDOR accidents per 100 employees <sup>+</sup>	<b>0.18</b>	1.23	0.57
Employee engagement index	<b>69</b>	66	61
Employee turnover rate (%) <sup>+</sup>	<b>8.8</b>	10.5	10.5
Absenteeism rate (%) <sup>+</sup>	<b>4.0</b>	3.6	3.6
Training spend per employee (£)	<b>93.20</b>	127.81	97.66
<b>Diversity</b>			
% of female employees	<b>12.4</b>	12.9	13.1
% of Asian, black and other ethnic group employees	<b>2.9</b>	2.9	2.2
<b>FINANCE</b>			
Passenger journeys (m)	<b>17.00</b>	17.35	16.46
Passenger volume growth (%) <sup>**</sup>	<b>5.1</b>	5.4	4.3

Key


+ For the reporting period

\* As at the reporting period end

\*\* Per kilometre travelled

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 [www.go-ahead.com](http://www.go-ahead.com)

## More information

You can find out more about Plymouth Citybus by visiting our website [www.plymouthbus.co.uk](http://www.plymouthbus.co.uk)

More information on how Plymouth Citybus manages sustainability can be found by visiting [www.go-ahead.com/sustainability](http://www.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, Managing Director

Plymouth Citybus

1 Milehouse Road

Plymouth

PL3 4AA

Tel: 01752 662271

Email: [pa@plymouthbus.co.uk](mailto: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) of selected sustainability Key Performance Indicators (KPI) data contained within the Group's Annual Report. The information and data reviewed in this verification process covered the period 3 July 2016 to 1 July 2017.

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

[www.go-ahead.com/sustainability](http://www.go-ahead.com/sustainability)

Produced by The Go-Ahead Group and designed by Black Sun plc



Bureau Veritas UK Ltd  
September 2017

We're part of The  
**Go-Ahead**  
Group