



After months of detailed planning, the new East Midlands rail franchise is now live and set to bring big improvements for passengers.

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CHIP PAN FUEL IS JUST THE TICKET

- Pure biodiesel from used cooking oil to power vehicles in Scottish trial
- Cleaner fuel technology expected to cut CO2 emissions by up to 82%

PASSENGERS are enjoying their own oil boom, thanks to a groundbreaking green bus project.

Stagecoach has launched the UK's first Bio-buses as part of an eco-friendly initiative allowing customers to exchange their used cooking oil for cheaper bus travel.

Eight vehicles in Kilmarnock are running on 100% sustainable biodiesel made from used cooking oil and other food industry by-products, resulting in an expected 82% cut in CO2 emissions.

All households on the Service 1 route – which runs from Stewarton to Darvel via Kilmarnock and carries around 15,500 passengers a week – will receive

a free container to recycle their used cooking oil.

The oil can then be exchanged for bus discount vouchers at East Ayrshire Council's Western Road recycling plant.

The single-deck Bio-buses, running under the slogan "Do your part, be Bio smart!", have been fitted with specially-made dual fuel tanks as part of the project undertaken with Motherwell biodiesel business Argem Energy Ltd.

The project will produce an annual saving of 960 tonnes in carbon emissions.

Launching the initiative, Secretary of State for Scotland and Kilmarnock and Loudon MP The Rt Hon Des Browne

said: "I welcome this innovative collaboration between two of our leading companies.

"A recycling initiative that fuels public transport cuts carbon emissions twice over. It is particularly important that the project is using bio-fuel from wholly recycled material and not from a source competing with food production."

Brian Souter, Stagecoach Group Chief Executive, said: "This innovative project is a great opportunity for our customers to play their part in saving the planet by recycling household products that would otherwise go to waste.

"I'm sure the idea of cheaper travel in exchange for the used contents of your chip pan will capture people's imagination.

"Bio-energy is an excellent renewable fuel, which has a number of environmental benefits, and we are delighted to carry out the first UK trial of this technology on a commercial bus service. We are looking forward to assessing these vehicles and the potential of this technology for our bus operations in the UK."

Stagecoach currently uses a blend of 5 per cent biodiesel in more than 4,300 vehicles, covering around 60 per cent of its UK Bus fleet. In 2006, the Group conducted the first UK trials of a bioethanol-fuelled bus outside London to evaluate the technology that can use sugar beets to power vehicles.

The pilot study covered Liverpool, Barnsley, Sheffield, Newcastle and Manchester. Ethanol-powered buses are already in operation in Sweden, Spain, Italy and Poland, delivering significant reductions in carbon dioxide and particulate matter.



Launching the new project are, from left: Bill Stafford, Chief Executive, Neighbourhood Services, East Ayrshire Council; Des Browne, MP for Kilmarnock and Loudon; Stagecoach Group Chief Executive Brian Souter and Sam Greer, Managing Director, Stagecoach West Scotland.

Get me to the church on time!



Stuart and Claire Draper with the 1968 Regent MK1.

WHEN Kent bus driver Stuart Draper was planning his wedding to Claire Robinson, there was only one way to travel... by bus!

Stuart hired Stagecoach South / East Kent and Hastings' restored 1968 AEC Regent MK1 double decker bus to take guests from St Peters Church, Broadstairs to Quex Park in Birchington.

And his colleague, Thanet controller Lana Jefferies, drove it for him!

"My family and friends were delighted," said Stuart. "They loved the scenic trip along Margate seafront and thought the bus looked amazing. I'm really happy that I chose the Regent as it added to our very special day."

The happy couple live in Broadstairs, Kent, and Stuart has been driving at the Stagecoach Thanet depot since January 2003.

The historic bus carries 60s-style advertising supplied by Thanet-based Hornby, famous for its train sets and Scalextric. Restored by the engineering team at Thanet depot in 2006, it's now used for private hires and charity events.

Praise for pension fund

STAGECOACH Group has one of the UK's leading corporate pension funds for responsible investment, according to a major new report.

The UK Social Investment Forum (UKSIF), the membership body for responsible investment, ranked the Stagecoach Group Pension Scheme as one of the top three in the country.

The findings are contained in the UKSIF report 'Responsible Business: Sustainable Pension - How the Pension Funds of the UK's Corporate Responsibility Leaders are approaching responsible investment'.

The Stagecoach Group Pension Scheme — a defined benefits scheme with more than 21,000 members and assets under management worth more than £580 million — was given a gold ranking, the second-highest level of award.

The report said it was one of three schemes that had demonstrated "particularly strong leadership".

Derek Scott, Chairman of Trustees, Stagecoach Group Pension Scheme, said: "Responsible investment is not just common sense for pensions trustees, it is both good business sense and essential to the proper discharge of fiduciary responsibilities."

Impressive apprentice

A YOUNG apprentice has earned a glowing tribute from his bosses.

Stagecoach North East nominated Christopher James, a young apprentice from the Slatyford depot, in this year's Apprentice of the Year Awards — and never was a nomination more deserved.

Bob Aspinall, Engineering Manager at the Slatyford depot, explained: "Chris is a hard-working young man who has consistently impressed me with his enthusiasm and commitment."

"I have never entered a worker into the national Apprentice Awards before, but I was so pleased with Chris' development that I felt he deserved it."

"While he didn't win, he has become a valuable team member in this depot and to the company as a whole."

Christopher (20), from Newcastle, successfully completed his GoSkills apprenticeship after four years of dedicated study this summer. He is now qualified to VOSA (Vehicle and Operator Services Agency) PSV (Public Service Vehicle) standard.

STAGECOACH in Warwickshire honoured its long-standing employees at a special presentation event.

Eleven colleagues were recognised — all having served 20 years or more with the company.

They were treated to a three-course meal before receiving a certificate, badge and gift from Phil Medlicott, Managing Director for Warwickshire and Mike Bishop, the region's Engineering Director.

The longest-serving member was Robert Milne, who has been a driver with the company for 35 years.

Phil Medlicott said: "It's great to be able to honour people for their commitment to Stagecoach and to have so many still reaching these milestones is testament to the company and the employees' hard work."

STAFF HONOURED FOR THEIR LONG SERVICE



STAGECOACH POSTS STRONG RESULTS

STAGECOACH Group has posted a strong set of half-year results as more people get on board its bus and train services.

Revenue from the Group's continuing operations shot up by more than 9% for the six months ended October 31, 2007, while earnings per share were up by a massive 62.1%.

Stagecoach grew passenger volumes in its UK Bus division by an estimated 3.9% compared to the same period in 2006.

Strong partnerships with local authorities, coupled with innovative services and the success of its telemarketing campaigns, have been behind the huge return to public transport.

Excellent operational delivery at the Group's rail division, where South Western recorded its best ever performance, continued to drive revenue and passenger

▲ Revenue up 9%

▲ Earnings per share up 62.1%

▲ Bus passenger volumes up 3.9%

▲ Rail revenue up 16.6%

growth. Revenue from rail operations was up 16.6%.

Stagecoach was boosted in November 2007 with the start of its new East Midlands rail franchise. Now Britain's biggest tram operator, the Group has also made a good start to the 10-year Manchester Metrolink operations and maintenance contract.

Both revenue and margins continued to improve at the

Group's North American operations where growth has continued in sightseeing, charter, contract, commuter and scheduled services.

Stagecoach Chief Executive Brian Souter said: "We have achieved further strong growth in our bus and rail operations, leading the market with our innovation and strong stakeholder partnerships."

"Our bus operations in the

UK and North America are performing strongly. We believe increasing car congestion, inward migration and a growing focus on environmental issues will provide more opportunities to attract passengers to our public transport services in the years ahead.

"The Group is well-positioned to deliver further value to our shareholders and we are confident in the prospects for the rest of the year."

Stagecoach Group Chairman Robert Speirs added: "I would like to thank our employees across the Group, whose continued hard work and commitment to first-class customer service is crucial in growing our business. Putting passengers first is at the heart of what we do every day and we have clear plans to build on our new and existing operations."

Sayed's still going strong

AT the age of 77, Sayed Khatib from Lindford, Hampshire, is thought to be the oldest full-time bus driver within the Stagecoach Group, and possibly within the UK bus industry.

Based at the Aldershot depot, Sayed says he enjoys the job and hopes to continue driving at least until his 80th birthday.

And, as long as he can pass the strict annual medical, his 200 colleagues — including Emma Butterfield, the youngest driver at the depot aged 23 — believe he will achieve his goal.

"You would not believe that he is 77," said Emma from Yateley, who took up professional driving three years ago. "He has a great attitude



Emma Butterfield with 77-year-old driver Sayed Khatib.

to the job and is very encouraging towards new drivers who join the team."

Sayed said: "I have always enjoyed driving and look forward to coming

into work most days. There is a great camaraderie at the depot with a great mix of ages, gender and religions that would be hard to find in other business sectors."

Go fir it!

COACH Canada staff swapped baubles for bottles for an enchanting Christmas event.

Taking part in Ontario's Peterborough Festival of Trees for the seventh time, the Coach Canada team of Debbie Naylor, Sue Adam, Lyn Morrow and Jan Fortune created a special Wine Tree.

They decked the tree with wine-related decorations such as glasses and corkscrews.

And thousands of festive Festival-goers admired the spectacular creation, with the Coach Canada name proudly displayed in front.

All proceeds from the event went to local healthcare initiatives.

CATCH A LITTLE LUXURY GOLD

Passengers tempted by Italian leather coach-style seats and smart interiors



Brian Souter, Stagecoach in Warwickshire Managing Director Phil Medicott and John Deegan, Strategic Director – Environment and Economy for Warwickshire County Council, launch the Goldline buses in Leamington.

TRAVELLERS are being tempted with luxury bus journeys in a bid to lure them out of their cars.

Stagecoach's new Goldline service promises superior comfort, service guarantees and state-of-the-art green travel.

The innovation is being piloted in Perth and Leamington Spa, at a cost of £2 million, and could be rolled out to key locations across the UK if it proves a success.

Passengers travelling on Goldline can expect comfortable hand-stitched Italian-designed leather high-backed coach seats plus specially-designed flooring, track lighting and a softer fabric interior.

They'll receive guaranteed service standards and free tickets if delayed by than 20 minutes because of factors within Stagecoach's control. Hand-picked friendly drivers and CCTV for added comfort and safety

are also part of the package.

Brian Souter, Stagecoach Group Chief Executive, said: "Goldline is a completely new concept and we are challenging people to rethink their expectation of bus travel.

"It is a complete package offering passengers luxury travel and unrivalled first-class customer service on some of the greenest state-of-the-art transport in Europe. "Our research shows that some

people stick with the car because they like some of the comforts it offers. With Goldline, they can get catch a little luxury at a fraction of the cost of commuting to work by car – and do their bit to cut their carbon footprint and save the planet."

Bus fares on the service will stay the same, with unlimited weekly travel using a megarider ticket from just £6.50.

Ramping up the work at Norbiton

DISABLED passengers using South West Trains' Norbiton station have received a boost after more than £200,000 was invested to improve disabled access to the station.

A ramp has been installed at the Kingston-bound platform to provide step-free access to the station. A low-level ticket counter has also been installed, while the booking hall was redecorated and new flooring laid down.

The project was developed through work with Transport for London, the Royal Borough of Kingston, Network Rail, the Department for Transport and SWELTRAC, who all offered significant financial assistance to the project.

Richmond Park MP Susan Kramer said: "Public transport is becoming more and more popular and it is vital that we make it accessible to as many people as possible."

Matthew Winnie, South West Trains Area Manager, added: "This work will make the world of difference to our disabled passengers.

"We want to give our passengers a railway that is accessible to all and this investment shows our commitment to that. We are very grateful to the other organisations who have helped bring this plan to fruition."

Virgin Trains website hits a million

VIRGIN Trains' easy-to-use ticket booking website has proved a hit with customers who have used it to make a million ticket transactions since its launch last February.

Sales made through the website are currently running at around 15 percent up on the same period last year.

Virgin Trains Commercial Director Graham Leech said: "We are really pleased with the results so far. In preparation for our increased frequency train service which starts in 2009, we're now working on further improvements, including tickets@home, so we can offer an even better ticket booking service to the increased number of customers we will be carrying."

The colour of money



Staff at Stagecoach East (Northampton) enjoying the special event.

BUS staff were truly 'in the pink' for a fun charity event.

Stagecoach East employees donned brightly-coloured clothes to support Breast Cancer Awareness.

Assistant Marketing Manager Elaine Bulmer said: "All our depots (Bedford, Kettering,

Northampton and Corby) got involved and we would like to thank everyone who dressed up or made a donation."

The money poured in, with the total raised topping £1,100. This amount will be matched by the company, making a total donation of over £2,200.



VIP value for teenagers

YOUNG people are being given the VIP treatment to get them back on the buses.

The new VIP (Very Independent Person) Megarider ticket allows 11 to 19-year-olds to travel throughout Tyne and Wear from as little as £1 a day.

Robin Knight, Commercial Director for Stagecoach North East, said: "It's good for young

adults to learn how to be independent and not simply rely on mum or dad to be a 24-hour taxi service.

"It also encourages greener travel patterns for the future, helping them learn that the car is not the only mode of transport and there are efficient and viable alternatives."

Engineering apprentices go from strength to strength

TWO teenagers are enjoying getting their hands dirty as they prepare for a career in public transport.

Stagecoach East is always looking for future engineering talents and is currently working with two young people with ambition to progress in the company.

Eighteen-year-old Connor McNally, from Corby, and Tom Fullerton (17), from Kettering, have just completed their first year on the four-year apprenticeship. They have found it to be the perfect way for them to develop a career within a field that they enjoy.

Tom said: "I didn't really enjoy school and wanted to do a job which was hands-on."

As well as being a practical course, Connor and Tom also attend college in Bristol where they are working towards an Advanced Modern Apprenticeship in Transport Engineering Maintenance.

Kettering Engineering Manager Gary Line said: "Both Tom and Connor are hard workers and are proving themselves to be real assets to Stagecoach East."

Would you like to share your experiences of working with Stagecoach?

Checkout p16 for a full list of your On Stage contacts.

A tale to tell?



Ho ho home from home

CONVALESCING children at the Royal Preston Hospital enjoyed a seasonal treat in the build-up to Christmas.

Stagecoach bosses contacted Santa's Secret Village, believed to be in the North Pole, to invite the Man in Red to deliver gifts to the poorly youngsters.

Tom Wileman, Regional Director for Stagecoach, said: "We fully understood Santa's commitments at Christmas, but we believed the children who couldn't enjoy the festive

season in the comfort of their own homes, needed a little lift."

Thanks to a sub-contracting arrangement with Father Christmas and the elves, the gifts were kindly provided by Toymaster.

And, in the absence of Rudolph, Prancer, Dancer and the rest of the reindeer team, Father Christmas arrived at the Hospital in style, on board the Stagecoach Christmas bus which operated throughout the city in December.



Michelle Melling, Matron of the Children's Ward at the Royal Preston Hospital, welcomes Father Christmas and the Stagecoach North West Christmas bus.

WIFE SEES RED OVER RIVAL BUS



Alan Kops it from die-hard Evertonian Marie.

BUS driver Alan Curran didn't quite know what he was getting into when he got behind the wheel of a Stagecoach bus decked out in Liverpool FC colours.

It was not exactly the ideal job for Alan, who is a committed fan of city rivals Everton – but the heat was really turned up when his wife, Marie, found out.

Marie is also a die-hard fan of the Goodison Park club – and was not best pleased that Alan would be driving the Champion of Champions bus around the city.

And she was so upset that she even threatened to go to the divorce courts if husband Alan continued with the job!

Alan (54) said: "She's a massive Evertonian and she thinks it looks

as though I have changed my allegiances. According to her, I should refuse to drive them on my shift. But if I do that I'll get the sack."

Friends and workmates have been ribbing Alan about his predicament – and he's also been refused service in his local pub.

Even worse, Marie, who works in the canteen at the Stagecoach depot, has refused to serve Alan his breakfast in protest.

She said: "I'm devastated Alan's driving that bus. It's an insult to our heritage and our football beliefs."

However, bosses at Stagecoach have come to the rescue – by decking out another bus in Everton colours!

Bumper year of success

STAGECOACH celebrated a bumper year for awards in 2007.

The company scooped two top honours at the 2007 Scottish Transport Awards. The Information and Marketing Award went to Stagecoach in Fife for its promotion of the Taylink 99 service. Passengers have flocked to the service since it was re-launched in May, 2006, with

numbers now up more than 40 per cent.

Stagecoach Bluebird, in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council, received the Bus Award. The judges praised the Stonehaven Quality Bus Corridor and Coastrider service, developed through a successful Quality Partnership initiative between Aberdeenshire Council and

Stagecoach Bluebird.

Meanwhile, no less than three top honours went to Stagecoach at the 2007 Route One Operator Excellence awards.

George Connell, Traffic Manager at Stagecoach West Scotland, was named Bus Manager of the Year, while colleague Alex McSorland, Operations Manager at Stagecoach West Scotland, was given the Special Award following nearly 50 years' service to the bus industry.

Stagecoach Group Technical Engineer Adrian Havlin, based at the company's headquarters in Perth, was named Bus Engineer of the Year at the event held at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham.

At the inaugural Light Rail Awards 2007, Stagecoach Supertram won a top honour for its focus on customers.

The company, which operates the 28km light rail network



Bus Manager of the Year George Connell receives his award from Stuart Mackay, Managing Director of award sponsor Irisbus UK Ltd, routeONE Editor Mike Morgan and awards ceremony assistant Emma.

incorporating three routes in the city of Sheffield, won the Best Customer Initiative award.

Andy Morris, Managing Director of Stagecoach Supertram, collected the award, which was made for the company's innovative approach with the introduction of low-floor buses on the Sheffield-Stockbridge corridor.

Manchester Metrolink signaller Chris Allen also boosted Stagecoach's trophy cabinet, taking a top honour at the RailStaff Awards

2007.

Chris won the Signaller of the Year award, which was one of 11 presented in front of 500 guests at the ICC in Birmingham.

His nomination for the accolade gave a glowing account of his dedication, stating: "He greatly deserves recognition for his incomparable contribution to the way the Manchester Metrolink system runs for the benefit of both our staff and our customers."



Chris Allen receives his Signaller of the Year Award from music supremo Pete Waterman (far right).

GOING FORWARD IN PARTNERSHIP

STAGECOACH has endorsed a major new report that reveals improvements to bus services in the UK's major urban areas through partnerships between operators and transport authorities could boost bus use by 11 per cent, cut congestion and improve the local environment.

'Moving Forward - New Opportunities, New Passengers', published by the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT), reveals the potential for 129 million extra bus passenger journeys in the UK per year.

The growth in bus use would result in 17 million fewer journeys by car and an annual CO2 emissions reduction of 27,500 tonnes. It would take 15,000 trees 100 years to erase this amount of carbon dioxide from the environment.

In the report, which was launched in Merseyside, there is overwhelming evidence that significant improvements can be achieved through a partnership approach rather than organisations working in isolation.

It reveals that by increasing the frequency of buses, decreasing bus journey times through reduced congestion, improving service punctuality and reliability and improving passenger waiting areas will increase passenger numbers by 12.4 per cent in Greater Manchester, 13.2 per cent in Merseyside, 9 per cent in South Yorkshire, 12 per cent



Phil Stone, Managing Director, Arriva North West; Jim Barclay, Director of Resources, Merseytravel; Nigel Featham, Regional Chairman, CPT; Tom Wileman, Regional Director, Stagecoach Merseyside; Stephen Pearse, Policy Specialist, Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

in Tyne and Wear, 13.3 per cent in West Midlands and 10.5 per cent in West Yorkshire

Les Warneford, Managing Director for Stagecoach UK Bus, said: "We have invested millions of pounds in improving the quality of our bus services in recent years.

"Our proven package of investment, innovation, strong marketing, first-class customer service and operational expertise is attracting more people back on

board the bus.

"This report shows clearly that we can do even more if bus operators and transport authorities make the most of the partnership opportunities within our grasp. By giving bus passengers more priority on the road and faster journey times, we can make the bus the sustainable transport choice for millions more people."

Simon Posner, Chief Executive, Confederation of Passenger

'We can do even more if bus operators and transport authorities make the most of partnership opportunities'

Les Warneford

Transport, said: "A successful, attractive and high-quality bus service can have a measurable impact on an individual's life.

"This report illustrates what can be achieved through successful partnerships between bus companies and local authorities. We must replicate these successes across the country if we are to provide an efficient and economical transport option and lessen the burden on our roads and the environment."

He added: "Bus operators and local authorities are most successful when they play to their strengths. Operators have an entrepreneurial spirit and expertise in product development, pricing and marketing and local authorities have skills in management of their public assets and infrastructure.

"When these are combined, our bus services succeed in putting passengers first."

The report comes after the Department for Transport unveiled its 'Towards a Sustainable Transport System', a new framework which promises to deliver a low carbon transport system to support the economy and reduce carbon emissions.

Moving Forward - New Opportunities, New Passengers, can be downloaded from www.cpt-uk.org or at www.stagecoachgroup.com/scg/media/publications/policydocs/

Five steps to a greener life

A FIVE-STEP plan to make people more eco-friendly has been rolled out by Stagecoach East.

The company's '5-a-day' campaign is a new take on the familiar principles of healthy eating, suggesting five small alterations which Bedford residents can make for a greener lifestyle.

"It's not about telling people what they should and shouldn't do, but about suggesting ways in which they can adjust their lifestyles to become more environmentally friendly - and using the bus is one of the most effective ways," said Stagecoach East's Marketing Manager Adam Rideout.

Leaflets - printed with vegetable inks and on 100% recycled material - include five sections on reducing your carbon footprint.

Meanwhile, buses have been branded in the distinctive 'greener by bus' look, while tickets have been printed with handy tips. Large billboard images have also been produced and a radio campaign has been broadcast on Chilton FM.

The website www.greenerbybus.com also gives more eco-aware information.

Toddlers take their tickets

TODDLERS in Andover were delighted to hop on board when a Stagecoach bus made a special stop at their playgroup.

The double-decker visited Moore Hall playgroup to give the kids the basics on bus travel. And, for some, it was their first ever experience of boarding a bus.

Excited youngsters were each given a Stagecoach hat and ticket, and teachers turned the top deck into a temporary classroom to tell them all about public transport.

Bards brighten up the buses

THE work of five talented young poets from Kent is really going places.

Poems were displayed on local buses after Stagecoach in East Kent sponsored the Canterbury Festival's Poetry competition for the 5th year.

Tom Bridge, Stagecoach's Operations Manager in Canterbury, said: "We are pleased to be able to let the work of the selected winners reach a wider audience on our buses.

"We know from feedback given to drivers that our customers enjoy the creative and often thought-provoking writing."

James tidies up 3,000 bus stops



KEEPING passengers up-to-date really is a full-time job for James Rolfe.

James, from Brickhill in Bedford, is Stagecoach East's roadside publicity officer.

And the 33-year-old has his work cut out, making sure all of Bedfordshire's 3,000 bus stops are clean and tidy, have new flags and the correct route information.

This is the first time Stagecoach East has employed someone on a full-time basis to maintain roadside information and the company feels it is an important part of the service provided.

James said: "I really enjoy my job and take pride in ensuring that all areas look as good as they can. I live on a bus route, so I know how important it is to residents to have their street looking the best it can and one way of doing this is ensuring that street furniture is clean and up-to-date."

on
stage people



Andrew Dyer (left) with Worthing staff Maureen Roberts, Pam O'Connor and Kath Batey.

Worthing's worthy of praise

STAGECOACH staff based at the seafront travel office at Worthing have been presented with certificates following a new training initiative launched earlier this year by coach operators National Express.

Supervisor Maureen Roberts and Travel Clerks Pam O'Connor and Kath Batey were offered the opportunity to become some of the first in the country to benefit from the Excellent Level Of Product Knowledge qualification that covers

all aspects of customer service when journey planning for coach travellers.

Andrew Dyer, Managing Director at Stagecoach South, presented the certificates to the team that has worked together for 17 years: "We are delighted that the Worthing team who are always one of the top booking agencies in Stagecoach, are also one of the first to gain these certificates. I'm very proud of the quality of service offered by the team," he said.



Richard and James with their awards at the ceremony.

Richard and James have plenty of go

FOR the second year running, a Stagecoach apprentice has won the GoSkills 'Go for Excellence' Passenger Transport Awards in the category of Transport Engineering Maintenance.

Richard Taylor from Chorley Depot, Stagecoach North West, and James Belfield from Princess Road Depot, Stagecoach Manchester, were selected as finalists to attend the awards ceremony at Chelsea Football Ground in November.

Richard and James with personal guests and representatives from Stagecoach attended the

event and all were ecstatic when Richard was announced as the winner.

His Engineering Director Paul Lee said: "I and Stagecoach North West are very proud of Richard's achievement, he has shown that hard work and endeavour can lead to success. Richard has restored my faith in youth and is possibly the best apprentice I have had the pleasure of training. Richard has a bright future and we look forward to helping him develop into a successful Manager of the future".

BOXING CLEVER FOR COACHES

A NORTH EAST boxing school is training more young people to Olympic standard, thanks to help from Stagecoach.

Top local boxer Glenn McCrory is working on his Olympic dream by bringing the best of world boxing to the region.

But his coaches, including a number from Cuba, need to travel around the area to train young boxers, so Stagecoach stepped in with free bus passes.

Alberto Gonzalez Caturla and Alberto Perez Basnueva are training in the gym at Newbiggin Hall.

The pair were part of the Cuban boxing team which won 48 medals in just seven Olympic games.

Alberto Gonzalez contested 152 bouts, losing only 12 until hand injuries cut his career short, but he continued his passion for the sport.

Nearly 20 years and several national and international championships later, his passion for boxing remains as strong as ever. Several members of the current Cuban team who are chasing world and Olympic titles are former students of Alberto.

Alberto Perez contested 212 bouts losing only eight. He was a member of the Cuban national team for the first ever world championships held in Havana and also competed with the national team worldwide.

He is also the trainer responsible for



It's a knock-out! Jodine Milne, Marketing Manager, Stagecoach North East, hands over the free passes.

the Cuban medallists of the Montreal and Moscow Olympic games – Andres Aldama, Orlando Martinez and Jose Gomez.

The third coach receiving a bus pass is Mickey Duncan, who competed as a junior boxer during the 1980s when he took part in some 40 contests.

Mickey also spent time as a

professional boxer, travelling around Europe to compete. He even had a contest with British boxing legend Lloyd Honeghan.

Glenn McCrory said: "The bus passes will give them more freedom and flexibility and is an excellent support to our bid to bring Olympic standard boxing and training to

Newcastle."

Robin Knight, Commercial Manager for Stagecoach, added: "We are pleased to do what we can to support this excellent initiative which benefits young people in Newcastle.

"What Glenn McCrory is doing is quite remarkable and we are delighted to be able help."

Bridge Card is opening public transport to all

PASSENGERS with special needs can access public transport with the help of a simple card.

Stagecoach North East has joined with local authorities and other bus operators to introduce The Bridge Card.

The card is a way of showing public transport staff its holder needs extra help during a journey – whether because of age, disability, illness or simply lack of confidence.

Holders do not get a discount fare –

but the card can be an invaluable aid in other ways.

Robin Knight, Commercial Director of Stagecoach North East said: "Public transport for all is a message everyone in the industry is working towards.

"Great progress has been made to improve accessibility to buses and other public transport modes over recent years.

"We are pleased to be part of the Bridge Card initiative. It is through

partnerships such as these that we can promote the right message regarding transport accessibility and help to improve the quality of life for all passengers."

Our picture shows Nigel Winter, Operations Director, Stagecoach North East; Nexus Travel Development Officer Irene Storey and Cllr David Wood, Chairman of the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority, showing off the new Bridge Cards.

Learning experience

STAGECOACH has teamed up with unionlearn and staff union Unite to open a new learning centre for employees in Manchester.

The centre at the Princess Road depot is seen by all involved as an essential tool in ensuring Stagecoach staff gain more workplace skills and qualifications.

Equipped with laptops – which can be moved between Princess Road, the Stagecoach depot at nearby Hyde Road and its other bases at Stockport and Glossop – Stagecoach sees the centre as a role model for future learning centres at its other UK depots.

Dave Eva, unionlearn's Regional Manager, said: "The opening of this learning centre means that Stagecoach staff now have access to a much better and wider range of learning opportunities.

"It is often hard for staff in the transport sector to gain access to learning because of shifts and other working arrangements. Having a learning centre in their workplace is the best way to ensure that the staff can take full advantage of the learning opportunities on offer."

A learning centre has also been opened in Stagecoach's depot in Morecambe.

Golden Spanner for Salisbury

SOUTH West Trains maintainers at Salisbury depot have scooped another award, this time at the annual Golden Spanner awards.

The awards celebrate excellence in train maintenance and, for the third year running, South West Trains won the category of Most Reliable British Rail Era Diesel Multiple Unit with its Class 159 train.

Throughout the year, the fleet has been undergoing refurbishment to provide CCTV, a controlled emission tank, improved air conditioning system, enhanced lighting and internal improvements such as new tables and new seat coverings. Lisa Hindley, South West Trains' Depot Manager at Salisbury said: "Over the last year we have not only been refurbishing our existing diesel trains but also taking delivery of extra trains. The team at Salisbury Depot have risen to the task admirably and despite having more trains to maintain, have continued their excellent work to give passengers a better, more reliable train."

In September South West Trains' maintenance team were crowned Fleet Maintainer of the Year at the prestigious National Rail Awards.





In the frame: Virgin Trains Managing Director Chris Gibb and Stuart Styles, Art Director of Hedz Limited.

First-class artworks on display

RAIL passengers are enjoying some first-class art created by young people.

Emerging artists' work is being showcased in Virgin Trains' First Class lounges at Euston and Birmingham New Street.

The project was launched in partnership with Hedz Limited, the Midlands' leading creative art and design company.

And Richard Shotton, Virgin Trains Director of Stations, said: "The opportunity to support

and help up and coming young artists to fulfil their ambitions was one that particularly appealed to us.

"It's important to us as a major transport provider in the Midlands to reach out and feel part of that community."

NUMBERS ADD UP FOR HOVERCRAFT

A CLEAR business case has been made for a permanent hovercraft service across Scotland's Firth of Forth.

Following a very popular and successful two-week trial project, Stagecoach has now unveiled a four-part masterplan to exploit the potential of the Forth estuary, identifying a preferred link between Kirkcaldy in Fife, and Leith, Edinburgh.

Financial analysis carried out by Stagecoach suggests that the crossing would become commercially viable under a three-year kickstart initiative.

A two-hovercraft operation is expected to attract more than 870,000 passengers a year within four years, with significant savings in carbon emissions.

The company has promised to invest £8.3 million in two hovercraft for the service, plus £2 million in maintenance facilities, a park-and-sail terminal at Kirkcaldy and landing works.

Brian Souter, Stagecoach Group Chief Executive, said: "This is a major milestone in the development of an environmentally sustainable

Stagecoach outlines business case for link



A cross-Forth hovercraft service could attract more than 870,000 passengers a year.

cross-Forth link.

"The trial this summer proved there is huge support for this project from communities on both sides of the Forth and it is crucial we maintain the momentum behind this initiative."

The full service between Kirkcaldy and Leith could be operational from summer 2009, offering peak

connections every 25 minutes and services every 30 to 60 minutes off peak.

Meanwhile, Stagecoach is proposing to launch a one-hovercraft operation from Kirkcaldy to Portobello – similar to the route of the original trial – from late 2008.

Company representatives have met

senior Scottish Government officials to outline further details of the business case.

Stagecoach is also briefing representatives from the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran), Fife and Edinburgh Councils, Scottish Natural Heritage and the local communities.

Hampshire's new bus link welcomed

THE wheels on the bus are going round and round after South West Trains introduced a new bus service linking Waterlooville with Petersfield station.

With an average of three trains an hour from Petersfield to both London and Portsmouth, Petersfield provides the perfect destination for Waterlooville residents to link into South West Trains' mainline services.

Mark Dunn, South West Trains' Area Manager said: "The Waterlooville area is a one of the largest parts of Hampshire without a rail station so this bus service acts as the perfect link between Waterlooville and Petersfield."

Councillor Hilary Ayer, East Hampshire District Council's Youth and Community Portfolio Holder said: "Many East Hampshire residents are employed outside the district and depend on good transport links to get to work.

"We have been pushing for the integration of bus and rail for some time and it's great that South West Trains has responded so positively."

Back to your roots



Sholto enjoying his afternoon at the sharp end.

A BUS boss was told to hit the road when a radio crew came calling. Stagecoach West's Operations Director Sholto Thomas took part in a "back to your roots" campaign organised by BBC Radio Gloucestershire.

The week saw various local industry leaders doing a job on the "shop floor" and having a reporter in attendance asking customers how they are doing.

Sholto did five hours' bus driving one Thursday afternoon, mainly on Service 1 (Gloucester Centre to Matson).

And he found a few things had changed over the years.

"I counted 246 speed humps and cushions in 5 hours, encountered numerous chicanes and obstacle courses that highways engineers design in the name of safety – none of which prevented motorists overtaking me on the wrong side of a traffic island!"



Michael Denne reads the first In the Loop magazine.

Passengers enjoy being kept in the loop

BUS passengers using Stagecoach's popular Loop route between Ramsgate, Margate and Broadstairs will have no excuse to be bored.

Should the passing scenery be not enough to pass the travelling time, they will now be issued with a free magazine.

In the launch issue, Michael Denne, Operations Manager for Stagecoach in Thanet, introduces the 11-page 'In The Loop' magazine, which contains details of special offers, events and attractions in the region, as well as a letters page and staff profiles.

"There is also a Kids' Page that introduces a cartoon Seagull family, The Gullivers, and a competition to design a Christmas card," said Michael.

"Our first print run for 'In The Loop' is 10,000, and drivers tell us that the magazine is being well received by customers for both its information and entertainment value."

STAGECOACH PLEDGE TO PASSENGERS AS

PROUD DAY AS SERVICE KICKS



Smart staff show off their new East Midlands Trains uniforms.

PASSENGERS and employees have been promised a first-class service with the launch of the new East Midlands rail franchise.

East Midlands Trains – Stagecoach Group’s new train company for the East Midlands and South Yorkshire – started its seven-year franchise on November 11.

The franchise is made up of all of the existing main line train services running to London St Pancras International, regional rail services in the East Midlands area and inter-regional services between Norwich and Liverpool.

Speaking at the launch of the new service in November, Tim Shoveller, Managing Director of East Midlands Trains, said:

“We are really looking forward to getting stuck into what we do best – running a railway of which both our passengers and employees can be proud.

“We have been working hard behind the scenes getting everything ready to make sure that day one goes as smoothly as possible.

“I would like to thank everyone who has got us this far and look forward to working with them in the future to make this franchise a success.”



Hitting the headlines: Brian Souter launches the new service, which has captured the attention of the press and public.

Train services are taken over

A NEW operator has taken over most rail services in Leicestershire and the rest of the East Midlands from Central Trains and Midland Mainline.

New train firm brings hope of more city jobs

Prospect of better services as well as new jobs with rail change

New train company's first day success

PASSENGERS in Nottingham took the first journeys run by a new train company for the East Midlands and South Yorkshire yesterday.

East Midlands Trains (EMT), run by the Stagecoach Group, has taken over main line train services running to London St Pancras International, regional rail services in the East Midlands and services between Norwich and Liverpool.

A spokeswoman said yesterday: “Everything has gone really smoothly.”

The franchise, formerly owned by Midland Mainline, has been secured by EMT for seven years and four months. The company plans to invest millions of pounds in improvements including station refurbishments, more CCTV cameras, more parking spaces, improved journey times and links to Europe in partnership with Eurostar.

Tim Shoveller, managing director of EMT, said: “We are really looking forward to getting stuck into what we do best – running a railway of which both our passengers and employees can be proud.”

“Between June, when the Department for Transport announced we had been awarded the franchise, and today, we have been working hard behind the scenes getting everything ready to make sure that day one goes as smoothly as possible.”

“I would like to thank everyone who has got us this far.”

Mr Shoveller and his team were hosting a launch event today at Nottingham and Derby.

New train firm takes over

NEW franchisee East Midlands Trains will take over from Midland Mainline tomorrow.

The company will begin running the service serving Kettering and Wellingborough stations following the official changeover at 2am tomorrow morning.

The company, run by the Stagecoach Group, is beginning a seven year and four month franchise.

East Midlands Trains plan to invest millions of pounds in station and train improvements, including refurbishments, more CCTV cameras, more car park space, improved journey times and new links to Europe.

All change on the trains

Three companies to take over running of Derby's rail services from tomorrow

BY ROBIN JOHNSON

IT will be a case of all change tomorrow as three new rail companies take responsibility for Derby's train services.

train companies to bid for the right to run them.

In June, Stagecoach learned that it had successfully won the East Midlands franchise and

gathered, the directors agreed Derby was the right place. Whether we stay in Midland House is another matter, but we will certainly be looking to stay in the city.

“Derby is at the heart of the region and

EAST MIDLANDS RAIL FRANCHISE BEGINS

S NEW S OFF

Key stakeholders in the franchise area had the chance to see the first train in its new livery and travel to the newly refurbished London St Pancras International station.

Highlights of improvements planned by Stagecoach under the new franchise include:

- New links to Europe in partnership with Eurostar
- Faster journey times from Sheffield and Leicester to London from 2008
- Better performance across the franchise
- More seats and a programme of train refurbishment
- Investment at Derby's Etches Park train maintenance depot
- A centralised information and security centre
- More car parking spaces
- Two new stations at East Midlands Parkway and Corby.



Ian Dobbs (left), Chief Executive of Stagecoach Group's Rail Division, and Tim Shoveller, Managing Director, East Midlands Trains.

Residents have their say over Bayfast plans

THE public are being asked for their views on plans for a frequent fast ferry service between Torquay and Brixham in the south-west of England.

The ferry service, which would be operated by Stagecoach under the brand Bayfast, would use two 150-passenger catamaran or trimaran vessels.

With a speed of 30 knots, the ferries would complete the four-mile crossing in just 20 minutes. Up to 26 services would operate every weekday, with an operation all year round.

The two locations are currently linked by Stagecoach's 12/12a bus service, which carries 4.5m passengers a year between Brixham, Torquay and Newton Abbot.

However, the journey time between Torquay and Brixham is 42 minutes and up to 90 minutes in the summer when the route is congested with tourist traffic.

The ferry could bring a range of benefits, including more use of public transport, reduced congestion, faster journeys for commuters, increased leisure and tourism opportunities, as well as assisting economic development and employment.

Pontoons would be required to be built at Torquay and Brixham at a total cost of around £2 million. These would be open to both the Bayfast operation and the existing ferry/excursion services.

Stagecoach would fund the cost of the two vessels, estimated at between £2m and £2.5m each, with the pontoons proposed to be funded by the public sector.

The ferry would be integrated with the local Stagecoach bus network and fares are likely to be set at a slight premium to the current cost of bus travel between the two locations.

24-hour challenge

A BIG-HEARTED worker is catching up on her sleep after taking part in a gruelling 24-hour challenge.

Angela Leeson and 13 friends from Stagecoach Warwickshire tackled the Relay for Life in aid of cancer research after Angela's aunt died of the disease.

"It was incredibly hard – especially during the hours between midnight and 7am," said Angela.

"The weather didn't help either as it rained all night, but it was great fun and overall the event managed to raise nearly £20,000."



SMART ROUTE TO BUS TRAVEL

First major Scottish operator to introduce new technology for bus initiative

STAGECOACH has become the first major bus operator in the country to introduce ITSO smartcard technology to deliver the Scottish Government's concessionary travel initiative.

A fleet of 29 buses in St Andrews was the first to be equipped with the new high-tech equipment to allow over-60s to access free bus travel.

The new ticketing machines, supplied by ERG Transit Systems, means cardholders can place their smartcards on a machine reader

instead of the previous 'show and go' process.

Stagecoach is now rolling out the ERG TP5000 ticket machines and smartcard technology to the rest of its 400-vehicle fleet in Fife.

There are plans to introduce the technology on all 1,300 Stagecoach buses across Scotland during 2008.

The implementation of the scheme is being managed and funded by Transport Scotland, an agency of the Scottish Government, and will be the first time the technology has been introduced in an entire

country rather than a city. The only similar schemes on such a scale are in cities such as Hong Kong and London.

Doug Fleming, Managing Director of Stagecoach East Scotland, said: "We have been working closely with Transport Scotland on this project for nearly two years and we are delighted to become the first major bus operator in the country to offer this key service to our customers.

"Stagecoach is committed to improving public transport and we

are at the forefront of innovation. This new technology will make it easier for customers to access concessionary travel and ensure the administration of the scheme is more efficient."

The equipment is initially for use with the older and disabled person's concessionary travel scheme, but in the future will also be used for the younger person's concessionary fares scheme. Stagecoach will also be evaluating the system for potential commercial smartcard products in the future.

Busman's holiday for veteran employees

BUS enthusiasts are searching for veteran bus workers for an extra-special event in the summer.

The Manchester Transport Museum is looking for the oldest busman or buswoman from the Greater Manchester area to be guest of honour at a staff open day on Saturday, June 28.

The event will be a very special reunion for who has fond memories of getting up for working those early morning journeys to Trafford Park factories, or collecting the fares on the last bus on a Saturday night, full of tipsy mill-girls and beery lads, or of running the famous "football extras" to the United or City grounds.

The Museum has a huge collection of buses from the past, ranging from 1920s boneshakers to much more recent exhibits, and is especially keen to find someone who once worked on its recently-found 1936 Crossley which ran from Princess Road and Queens Road depots between 1936 and 1951.



Manchester Transport Museum recently acquired this 1936 Crossley.

However, all former and current bus staff will be made very welcome on the day, when there will be an opportunity to compare old buses with the newest examples entering service in today's Manchester fleets.

The event takes place at the Museum of Transport, Boyle

Street, Cheetham, on Saturday, June 28, 2008, from 10 am to 5 pm, and will include displays of old uniforms, ticket machines and other memorabilia.

Admission is free and further information is available from the Museum on 0161 205 2122 or email enquires@gmts.co.uk

Rail-ly good value

THE innovative budget rail service megatrain.com has been extended to key routes operated by East Midlands Trains.

megatrain.com, which offers some of the lowest fares on the UK rail network for decades, is giving passengers the chance to travel on the mainline route from just £1 (plus 50p booking fee).

Tickets went on sale in early December for travel from January 2 on services to London from Sheffield, Chesterfield, Derby, Nottingham, Loughborough and Leicester.

David Horne, East Midlands Trains Commercial Director, said: "We're very excited to be launching the successful megatrain.com concept on our services.

"megatrain.com has become well renowned for providing high-quality, excellent value rail travel, and we are extremely pleased that passengers in the East Midlands will be able to take advantage of these low-cost fares."



Celebrating NVQ success

NVQ CANDIDATES from Stagecoach in South Wales recently celebrated their academic success with a special presentation evening in Cwmbran.

Successful students enjoyed an evening of celebration accompanied by John Gould, Managing Director, Stagecoach in South Wales, and Martin Shepherd, NVQ Co-ordinator.

Pictured are (from left, rear): Shane Pembroke – NVQ

Assessor, Simon Furley, Robert Crowley, Lewis Phillips – NVQ Assessor, Wayne Furley, John Gould, Glyn Randell, Mark Smith, Lillian Nutt, Stephen Perkins. Centre (from left): Paul Redman, Gareth Skinner, Kevin Williams, Jonathen Lee, Martin Shepherd, Christopher Apperley, Paul Hawkins. Front (from left): Jeremy Thomas, Richie Sherwood, Kyle Reynolds, Lloyd Thomas, Ashleigh Price.

Cuppas cop a crop of cash

BUS staff created a stir by taking part in the **World's Biggest Coffee Morning**.

Stagecoach in the South sponsored a bus to boost the **Macmillan Cancer Support** fundraising drive.

Marketing Officer **Steve Thorpe** drove the **Volvo D10** double-decker to a number of locations in Hampshire with **Macmillan's Portsmouth-based Fundraising Manager Paul Morgan**.

First stop was **BAE Systems Insyte** facility at **Broad Oak, Portsmouth**, where the charity committee arranged for the 800 personnel on the site to support the event with a cake sale, raffle and a sponsored 'jail break'.

"The **Expresso Tour**, as it's been dubbed by local supporters, has become an annual feature of the cancer charity's flagship fundraising event in Hampshire and helps us emphasize just how big the coffee morning has become," said **Paul Morgan**.

The **Coffee Morning** has raised approximately **£7m** across the UK to help with the charity's ongoing campaign to support people affected by cancer.

Two-for-one deal is a hit

A NEW working partnership between **Stagecoach North East** and **Nexus** is celebrating success in only its first three months.

The two organisations run a collaborative corporate sales scheme, with **Nexus** offering businesses in the region discounted corporate travel on **Stagecoach** services.

The five per cent saving has already attracted interest from nine companies, which have purchased over 50 **Megariders** worth **£31,500**.

Jodine Milne, **Stagecoach North East Marketing Manager**, said: "We have been impressed with the level of sales achieved and they are testament to the demand for quality public transport.

"Working together in this way has enabled us to further improve our high standards of service to our customers and show our commitment to making bus travel the future of public transport."

LOW-DOWN ON BETTER BUSES

A **£1.3 MILLION-POUND** investment has paid off for **Stagecoach** in South Wales.

Travelling between **Blackwood** and **Newport** became even easier in early December as 14 brand new **Optare Versa** buses hit the road, with an increased frequency on the **Route 151** service.

The major investment is part of an ongoing South Wales campaign to encourage more people to leave their cars at home and travel by bus instead.

The new low-floor buses represent the latest in clean engine technology, meeting **Euro IV** emissions standards and helping to cut carbon emissions.

They also provide step-free entrances, allowing customers to roll on wheelchairs, buggies or shopping trolleys and park them in dedicated areas on board.

John Gould, **Managing Director** of **Stagecoach** in South Wales, said: "We believe that the combination of new vehicles alongside enhanced timetables will deliver a much-needed boost to bus provision in the area, and also play a vital role in sustaining the environment."



John Gould, Managing Director of Stagecoach in South Wales (far right); Don Touhig, MP for Islwyn and Councillor Harry Andrews, Leader of Caerphilly County Borough Council, launch the improved service at Blackwood bus station.

Lewis has designs on Christmas

A BIG surprise was on the cards for young artist **Lewis Hill** after winning a festive competition.

The nine-year-old contestant came top in the contest to design the Christmas cards sent by **Stagecoach's** 13 bus depots across the South and South East to contacts this year.

His card – showing reindeers saying that they were keen for **Santa** to save the planet but were worried that he wouldn't get a bus to fly – won **Lewis** a family ticket to the **Isle of Wight**.

Lewis, who's from **Purbrook, Portsmouth**, received his prize from

Portsmouth Operations Manager Dave Rossiter, and was the first member of the public to see the special Christmas bus created by the engineering team.

The bus will be fundraising on routes in the **Portsmouth** area for **Stagecoach** against **Multiple Sclerosis (SAMS)**.

"Lewis's great Christmas card design has helped us wish many people a great Christmas and happy new year," said **Dave Rossiter**. "We hope that the Christmas bus will also bring a smile to peoples faces as it appears."



Dave Rossiter hands over the prize to Lewis, his grandfather Ray Pitman and mum Jo.

If you have a story you would like to see included in the next issue of **On Stage**, then we want to hear from you.

Your **On Stage** contact is listed on p16.

A tale to tell?



Playing it safe on the roads

A MASSIVE 140 drivers at Stagecoach Warwickshire have been recognised with ROSCO Awards.

These national awards recognise drivers who have not had an accident for a year or more, and have no points on their licence.

Speaking at the presentation evening, Stagecoach in Warwickshire's managing director Phil Medlicott said: "It's an amazing achievement to have so many drivers awarded for their concentration and dedication – a total of a third of our driving force.

"It's becoming more and more difficult in today's driving conditions to achieve this, but it's very satisfying that so many have managed to do so."

Driver faces tough test

A WARWICKSHIRE driver is gearing up for the toughest physical challenge of his life.

Sean Palmer is taking part in the notorious 'Tough Guy' contest, in which competitors tackle 22 gruelling sections, including a terrifying 200-metre underwater tunnel.

The 41-year-old Nuneaton driver's main motivation for the event is his drive to raise money for Emily Bradshaw – a friend's daughter who is quadriplegic and suffers from cerebral palsy, and requires specialist clothing and equipment to make her life more comfortable.

Sean is hoping to raise over £2,000 at the event on January 27, and anyone who would like to sponsor him can do so by visiting www.emilyhopeforcharity.com.

Bob's not shy ... or retiring

BOB the coach builder – can he fix it? Yes he can!

And Kettering Depot's Bob Green is so fond of his job at Stagecoach East, he's staying on after his 65th birthday.

He revealed: "I love what I do and wanted to continue for as long as I can do the job to the best of my ability."

Prior to working at Stagecoach East, Bob used to repair cars and lorries, but now he puts his skills to use at the bus depot, repairing panels and getting the buses ready for the road.

"All the paintwork is now repaired by hand and it's very satisfying to see a bus which has come in with damaged panels or looking tired leave looking refreshed and ready for the road."



Rob Patterson, Chichester's new Operations Manager.

Rob's a real high-flyer

ROB PATTERSON has been appointed the new Operations Manager for Stagecoach in Chichester.

He'll oversee the day-to-day running of the bus network with a team of 90 drivers and administration personnel.

It's the first management post for the former University Of Lancaster student from Stoke-on-Trent, who joined Stagecoach's

Graduate Training Scheme in September 2005.

Andrew Dyer, Managing Director of Stagecoach South, is delighted that the 23-year-old has joined the management team.

He said: "Within a relatively short time with Stagecoach he has demonstrated the multitude of skills required to manage a busy bus network."

Rob now hopes to add another

licence to his PCV and normal driver's licence. He has already made his first solo flight towards his Private Pilot's Licence and hopes to complete his training during a flying holiday in Florida this year.

Colin Stratford, the former Operations Manager at Chichester for four years, has been promoted to Operations Manager at Worthing.

ON-BOARD AND ON-LINE

COACH passengers in Scotland can now spend their journey travelling the information superhighway.

Scottish Citylink has introduced free email and web access for passengers commuting between Glasgow and Edinburgh.

It's the first bus company in Scotland to offer the service, and the company has invested £20,000 to provide Wi-Fi technology.

The announcement is the latest step in the company's campaign to persuade commuters to switch from the train or car to the coach.

Graeme Hoggan, Commercial Manager at Scottish Citylink, explained: "Thousands of people commute between Glasgow and Edinburgh every day and being able to work online or check emails during the journey will be a major advantage for them.

"When you add this to the fact that taking the bus is £160 cheaper every month than the train and the fact you are guaranteed a seat, bus travel looks an increasingly attractive option for commuters."

The Wi-Fi access is on a 12-month trial basis, with a view to rolling it out to services elsewhere in Scotland.



On time and on-line: Commuters with computers on Scottish Citylink.

Around 5000 passengers a day travel on Citylink services between the two cities, with coaches leaving every 10 minutes at peak times.

In addition to the main bus stations at Buchanan Street in Glasgow and St Andrews Street in Edinburgh, passengers can board the service at a number of key points, including the Gogarburn

headquarters for RBS, Baillieston, Murrayfield and Haymarket.

Last year, Citylink launched a £60k advertising campaign to highlight the benefits of travelling by coach between Glasgow and Edinburgh, which has resulted in a 40% increase in people using the service.

In May 2007, 16 state-of-the-

art 15-metre coaches were introduced on the route, all with environmentally-friendly engines and designed to carry as many passengers as 13 fully loaded cars.

The new 65-seat vehicles (the first of their kind to be manufactured in the UK) are fitted with seatbelts and air-conditioning and have a special lift for wheelchair passengers.



Hitch-hiker gets the thumbs-up

AN adventurous student has been given a helping hand to aid community development in Africa.

Stagecoach in Warwickshire was happy to support Warwick University's Sylvester Loy in his efforts to raise money for the charity Link Community

Development. Sam Dixon, Operations Manager for Leamington, with raffle prize-winner Rob Harris and fundraiser Sylvester Lou.

Development.

The company donated a one-term Unirider pass which Sylvester included in a raffle to raise money for the charity.

And Stagecoach also supported the 21-year-old's participation in a sponsored hitch-hike from Morocco to Prague.

Stagecoach in Warwickshire's Marketing Manager, Adam Rideout, said: "We were very happy to help him raise money for such a worthwhile cause."

MINISTER HAILS ECO-FRIENDLY DEPOT

'GREEN' BUS JOBS BOOST

BUS bosses in Scotland have gone the extra Inch to become more eco-friendly.

A new Stagecoach Bluebird bus depot in Inch, Aberdeenshire, was opened recently by Stewart Stevenson MSP, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change.

The depot is now the base for over 30 buses which operate throughout the area, with plans for the fleet size to increase further over the next year.

Located within Inch Business Park, the depot covers over 6000 square metres and includes on-site engineering and maintenance facilities.

Whilst constructing the depot, Stagecoach and Andrew Cowie Construction worked hard to keep environmental factors in mind.

As a result, the depot uses a Geothermal Climate System to heat the building. In addition, depot insulation is over and above the recommended requirements and rainwater taken from the roof of the



Inch depot is heated by a Geothermal Climate System.

building is harvested to a tank and used in the chassis wash.

The Transport Minister said: "This depot will deliver real benefits for local communities, ensuring the very best standards of service for all.

"Today is a win, win for Scotland's environment – a new depot built with the environment in mind and the securing of bus services for the area. As Minister for both

climate change and transport, that is something I am pleased to see.

"This Scottish Government wants to encourage more people to use public transport, walk and cycle, instead of the car.

"The services on offer here will give people that choice – allowing them to choose to leave their car at home whenever possible. That has got to be good news for our

environment."

Charlie Mullen, Managing Director, Stagecoach Bluebird, added: "We are delighted to be officially opening this new depot, which has good on-site facilities for both the engineering and driving staff. With plans to increase the size of the fleet in the near future, we also hope to further recruit driving staff from the local area."

Steven gets on his bike

FIT drivers swapped buses for bikes to raise cash for charity.

Steven Lockey got more than 20 of his co-workers from Stagecoach's Slatyford depot into gear to complete the 54-mile Great North Bike Ride from Seahouses to Tynemouth.

And Stagecoach North East supplied a bus to transport the team to the event, which raises money for the Chris Lucas Trust.

The 45-year-old driver is known by his Stagecoach colleagues as 'Mr Charity' because if there's a cause to be supported, Steven will get on his bike or don his running shoes to raise the cash.

Steven said: "I saw a poster for the bike ride and read about Chris Lucas and his fight against cancer. It's always terrible when young people get diseases like this and it seemed such an excellent cause that I wanted to join in and raise money for it."

Cash raised during the ride helps care for children and young adults with cancer, as well as research into rhabdomyosarcoma – the particularly aggressive cancer which affected Chris Lucas.

Have you been involved in any fund raising activities? If so we want to hear from you.

Your On Stage contact is listed on p16.

A tale to tell?



Daniel's a star

FIRST-CLASS service to South West Trains passengers has earned Daniel Opoku the title of Customer Service Employee of 2007.

Over 1,300 nominations were made by passengers during August, and Daniel – who's based at Mortlake station – received glowing praise.

He was rewarded with a trophy and £1,100 in holiday vouchers, while the remaining nine finalists each received a certificate and £100 in High Street vouchers. Daniel has been part of the South West Trains team for over 12 years and ensures everyone travelling from the station leaves knowing he has done the best he can for them.

Christian Neill, South West Trains' Area Manager, said: "I am extremely proud that Daniel has been recognised for the fantastic customer service he delivers day in, day out. Daniel truly is part of the community as everyone knows him and nothing is too much trouble for him when it comes to looking after his customers."



Edward Hodgson (left) and Cllr Don Eldridge launch the new Bognor Regis Stars with council and Stagecoach officials.

Reach for The Stars

THE Mayor of Bognor Regis, Cllr Don Eldridge, and Stagecoach's Regional Commercial Director Edward Hodgson launched seven new buses for the seaside town's Star 1 and Star 2 routes, replacing routes 61 and 63.

Edward Hodgson said: "The new Optare Solo low floor, wheelchair and child buggy-friendly single-deck vehicles meet the Euro 4 emissions regulations."

He added: "Over the last 12

months, over half a million people travelled on our 61 and 63 services. We hope that we can attract more people to change their hop in the car habits through this £500,000 investment."

The buses, branded as The Stars service with the promotional message "Protect the Planet by Riding The Stars", will be operated by the company's Chichester depot.

Big event in the Big Apple

THE 2007 production of the Radio City Christmas Spectacular in New York left audiences spell-bound with the most dramatic re-imagining of the show in its 75 year history.

The show included original scenes and performance numbers, with dazzling costumes and breathtaking special effects, and many who enjoyed the event were carried to the venue by New York Sightseeing, Stagecoach's tour bus business in the Big Apple.

The Christmas Spectacular creates

wonderful memories for over one million people each year and has been seen by 62 million people since its inception in 1933.

"As we embark on the 75th celebration of the Radio City Christmas Spectacular, we are saluting one of the most beloved entertainment institutions and the millions of people that have made this show part of their holiday tradition," said Jonathan Hochwald, executive vice president of productions, MSG Entertainment.



UK BUS AWARDS 2007

STAGECOACH led the field at the 2007 UK Bus Awards, driving off with more accolades than any other British bus operator.

The company won four top awards for its excellence in marketing, integration, operations and winning new customers.

And Stagecoach – the UK Bus Operator of the Year in 2005 and 2006 – was named Shire Operator of the Year for its Cambridge operation.

Minister of State for Transport Rosie Winterton MP praised Stagecoach for its success in cutting congestion and helping make the bus a viable alternative to the car.

- Stagecoach's Research and Development Team won the Department for Transport 'Winning New Customers' Award for its innovative 'Where You Want To Be' campaign. The campaign, which used industry-leading telemarketing techniques, has attracted millions of new bus passengers across the UK.
- Stagecoach Cambridge was named Shire Operator of the Year. The company has attracted around 80% more bus passengers to its services in Cambridge in the past five years, investing millions of pounds in new vehicles and high frequency services, and supported by a strong partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council.
- Stagecoach South took the CBS Outdoor Award for Bus Marketing Campaign of the Year for its 'Cruise Along the Coast' initiative. The campaign was devised to promote Portsmouth to Brighton bus services to local people and tourists, making strong use of branding, advertising, direct marketing and a special customer magazine.
- Stagecoach East's Route

- Stagecoach wins more awards than any other British bus operator
- Company takes customer, marketing, integration and operator titles
- Transport Minister praises Stagecoach for attracting motorists to bus



Edward Hodgson and Andrew Dyer, Stagecoach South - Winners of the CBS Outdoor Award for Bus Marketing Campaign of the Year with 'Cruise Along The Coast'



Stagecoach Cambridgeshire and Cambridgeshire County Council representatives celebrate Stagecoach in Cambridge winning the Shire Operator of the Year Award

X1, which links Corby with Kettering's General Hospital and railway station, won the BAA Heathrow Integration Award.

- Oxford Tube, Europe's most frequent express coach service, was Runner-up in the Express Coach Operator of the Year Award sponsored by Volvo Bus.

Stagecoach had a total of 13 shortlisted entries across 18 categories, including areas

covering rural transport and accessibility.

Les Warneford, Managing Director of Stagecoach UK Bus, said: "We are continuing to lead the way in making bus travel more attractive and I am delighted that our companies and our people have been recognised for their innovation and service.

"Our success is also down to our strong partnerships with our stakeholders. We will continue to work hard to make our services even better in the future to get more people in Britain back on board the bus."

Rosie Winterton MP added: "Excellent work is going on up and down the country by bus companies, local authorities and suppliers to improve services and increase the number of passengers on buses. I'm pleased to be here to see first-hand the people behind this success rewarded for their tremendous efforts.

"It is particularly pleasing to present the Department for Transport 'Winning New Customers' Award to the Stagecoach R&D Team for their 'Where You Want To Be' project,

The full list of shortlisted Stagecoach entries at the 2007 UK Bus Awards was:

- Stagecoach Research and Development Team – 'Where You Want To Be' (Department for Transport 'Winning New Customers' Award)
- Stagecoach Merseyside (Titan Outdoor City Bus Operator of the Year Award)
- Stagecoach West Scotland (Shire Operator of the Year Award)
- Stagecoach Cambridge (Shire Operator of the Year Award)
- Stagecoach North East – David Hands (Chris Moyes Memorial Award: Industry People of the Year)
- Stagecoach South – Cruise Along the Coast (CBS Outdoor Award for Bus Marketing Campaign of the Year)
- Stagecoach Fife/Fife Council – Go Flexi (Bus In The Countryside Award)
- Stagecoach Warwickshire – Route 63/64 (Bus In The Countryside Award)
- Stagecoach North East – Quaylink (Alexander Dennis Innovation Award)
- Stagecoach Oxford Tube – Enabling Passengers with Wi-fi (Alexander Dennis Innovation Award)
- Stagecoach East Midlands – Gainsborough Into Town (Claudia Flanders Memorial Award for Accessibility – sponsored by The TAS Partnership)
- Stagecoach East – Route X1 (BAA Heathrow Integration Award)
- Stagecoach – Oxford Tube (Express Coach Operator of the Year Award sponsored by Volvo Bus)



John Drew, Tony Cox (MD), Bryan Hadden, Neil Lancaster, Michelle Hargreaves, Keith Dyball, Michelle Pryle, Adam Rideout, Elaine Bulmer, Lisa Ross and Neil Tayton of Stagecoach East - Winner, BAA Heathrow Integration Award for 'Route X1'



The Stagecoach Research and Development team - Elaine Rosscraig, Neil Mackinnon and Doris Watt - receive the Winning New Customers Award.

which has generated an extra 4.2million bus journeys each year, helping to cut congestion and prove that the bus really is a viable alternative to the car."

Now in its 12th year, the UK Bus Awards place a spotlight on best practice in areas such

as marketing, customer service, innovation and integration, as well as the award of the prestigious Bus Operator of the Year prize. The Awards presentation ceremony took place in November at Old Billingsgate Conference Centre in London.



Shaun Clark, Gary Nolan, David Skepper, Cllr Lewis Strange(LCC), Anita Ruffle (LCC), Chris Briggs (LCC), Cllr Mick Tinker(LCC), Paul Harvey (LCC) and Richard Kay of Stagecoach East Midlands and Lincolnshire County Council - Commended in the The Claudia Flanders Memorial Award for Accessibility, sponsored by The TAS Partnership, for 'Gainsborough into Town'

Hi-ho, hi-ho, it's off to work we go...



Pictured in their panto gear are: Andy Campbell (Prince Charming), Terry Fitzjohn (Sleepy), Alan Woods (Dopey), Ben Morgan (Sneezy), Bob Dennison (Wicked Witch), Ed Cameron (Grumpy), Ross Burton (Bashful), Francis Blackburn (Snow White), Steve Brudenell (Happy) and Bob Short (Doc).

SNOW WHITE and the Seven Dwarfs weren't bashful as they collected cash for Children in Need around Cambridge and Peterborough recently.

Stagecoach staff toured the towns on a vintage open-top bus.

Meanwhile, Prince Charming (Managing Director Andy Campbell) also arranged for 50p from every Dayrider sold on the day to be added to the fun

charity collection.

And Operations Manager Alan Woods was sponsored to stay silent for the entire week!

Cambridge Engineering Manager Bob Dennison played the part of the Wicked Witch to terrifying effect, scaring a few children – and the odd adult too.

And, despite the cold weather, the panto crew raised over £3,850 for the national appeal.

Trainee turns bus boss

WHEN Colin Stratford left the Royal Navy in 1989 to begin a new career as a trainee bus driver based at the Worthing depot, he never imagined he would one day run the operation.

He has been appointed by Stagecoach as Operations Manager, leading a team of 160 drivers and administration personnel, who keep the fleet of 65 buses on the regional bus network.

At Worthing, Colin rose through the ranks from Driver, Controller to Senior Controller before joining Stagecoach's Staff Development Programme. He was placed as Operations Manager at Eastbourne, Andover and was at Chichester for four years before taking up his new position in his home town.

Andrew Dyer, Managing



Colin Stratford, Worthing's new Operations Manager.

Director of Stagecoach South, said: "We are pleased that Colin has returned to where his career started.

"The investment in new vehicles and facilities by Stagecoach has ensured that the bus services in Worthing are much improved since his training with what was then the Southdown Motor Services."

Transport in the frame

A **BUS** enthusiast is appealing for help in boosting his extensive archive of photos.

Dick Grenfell, an Outside Inspector for Stagecoach Manchester, received a digital camera for his 30-year long-service award.

He began taking shots of buses he had driven, and has now

amassed more than 14,000 photos.

Dick would now like to hear from anyone who'd like to share or exchange their pictures of buses from Manchester – or any other Stagecoach operating area.

He can be contacted at: 23 Curzon Green, Offerton, Stockport SK2 5DJ; email dickgrenfell@aol.com; tel 0781 8222 703.

A magical day for children

CORBY kids have helped to spread the word about sustainable transport.

As part of European Mobility Week, Stagecoach East donated 25 goldrider passes to Northamptonshire County Council and gave Corby Borough Council the use of a bus for a day.

The company also donated £300 for Corby Borough Council to buy supplies for the children taking part in a drawing competition.

Seven hundred youngsters took part, and also enjoyed a road safety magic show by local magician



Bus driver Laura Wymant is pictured helping the kids enjoy the special event.

James Docherty.

Adam Rideout, Stagecoach East's Marketing Manager, said: "We were very happy to get involved in such a worthwhile

event. Hopefully we were able to assist local councils in reaching a wider audience and help change some people's attitudes towards different modes of transport."

STAGECOACH BOOSTS YWCA

STAGECOACH is supporting vital work to help disadvantaged young women with a £3,000 boost for the charity YWCA.

The donation will help fund personal development work in Corby and, in Northampton, a forum for young women to have their say on local issues that affect them.

YWCA offers support, information and alternative education opportunities to disadvantaged young women aged 11 to 30. Many have faced violence, bullying, lack of family support, lone parenthood, physical or learning disabilities, drug and alcohol problems. In a

safe women-only environment they can improve their health and self-esteem and develop the knowledge, confidence and skills to build a secure future for themselves and their families.

Stagecoach Group Chief Executive Brian Souter said: "We are delighted to support YWCA in its vital work with disadvantaged young women.

"From our first-hand experience of providing lifeline transport services in communities across the country, we know the challenges that many people face.

"We hope our support for YWCA will help the young women take charge of their lives and give them

the opportunity to have a better future."

Kathryn White from YWCA said: "We are delighted with this kind donation from Stagecoach. By supporting this work we can make a real difference to the lives of vulnerable young women."

Every year, Stagecoach shares its success with local people in communities in the UK and North America by donating hundreds of thousands of pounds to fund the vital work of local, national and international charities. Hundreds of the company's employees devote their own time every day to local projects that make a real difference in their area.

Double celebration for Weymouth

A DORSET train service is expanding – at the double!

South West Trains has doubled the service it runs from London Waterloo to Weymouth by running two trains an hour.

Speaking at the launch of the newly-extended service, Stewart Palmer, South West Trains' Managing Director, said: "This is

a massive boost to passengers in South Dorset.

"The route from Bournemouth to Weymouth is a large and popular area of the south west and it is only right that we strive to provide a better service. With the sailing events for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games coming to Weymouth

and Portland in a few years, I have no doubt that we will be carrying a lot more passengers down to the coast and the two trains per hour will help accommodate that."

Under the new timetable, London bound trains will depart Weymouth at 03 and 20 past the hour.



The Mayor of Weymouth and Portland, David Harris, and Chairman of Dorset County Council John Peake join MD Stewart Palmer at Weymouth train station to launch the new service.

DAVID'S A GOLIATH!



David Hands MBE

Stagecoach bus driver David Hands was made an MBE in the New Year Honours for services to public transport.

David (62), who is based at the company's depot in Sunderland, has been a driver for Stagecoach for eight years and is a popular character with his colleagues across the region. He is also known to many Stagecoach passengers for his running commentaries which brighten up their journeys.

During his time as a driver, David has also worked tirelessly for various charities, including the Sunderland Counselling Service and St. Benedict's Hospice. This Christmas, he dressed up as Santa Claus for three weeks to raise funds for the hospice.

David is also Chairman of Sunderland's Counselling Service. He became involved in the charity five years ago after his wife – who also works for the Service – asked him to attend a meeting with her.

He volunteered to sit on the management

committee and was elected Chairman the following year. David now leads a dedicated team of volunteers who provide counselling to the bereaved and those coping with life-limiting illnesses.

Speaking of his MBE, David said: "I was so surprised to receive the award as I was not aware that the company had nominated me. It is a great honour, but I am a little overwhelmed by it all, as I am just an ordinary person doing my job and some voluntary work on the side.

"I am proud of this achievement, though, and would like to thank my family and friends and everyone at Stagecoach for their ongoing support."

Before he was a bus driver, David was a minister for three churches in the North East of England and also spent some time in Perthshire.

He works a 43-hour week and enjoys providing a commentary to passengers as he drives his bus around Sunderland.

"I speak about the history of the city,"

said David. "At first the passengers were a bit bemused, but it breaks the ice. People have a laugh and a chat and leave with a smile on their faces.

"My favourite route is the number 18, as you pass many places of interest, such as the museum and Wearmouth Bridge, built in 1929. The first bridge on that site opened in 1796.

"I drive all over the city and you can tell the cultural differences between the different areas."

John Conroy, Managing Director of Stagecoach North East, said: "We are delighted that David's hard work and commitment has been recognised in the New Year Honours.

"As a driver he is dedicated and hard-working and always prepared to go that extra mile for his colleagues and customers alike. His charity and voluntary work is an inspiration to all those who come in contact with him and he is so deserving of his MBE."

A tale to tell?

We would like to hear from you if you have an interesting story for *On Stage*.

Have you been involved in a novel project aimed at boosting passenger numbers or have news about a vintage bus involved in the community?

Perhaps your depot has been fundraising for a favourite charity?

Whatever tale you have, we'd like to hear from you.

Write to: Steven Stewart, Editor, *On Stage*, Stagecoach Group, 10 Dunkeld Road, Perth, PH1 5TW.



PICTURE OF THE SEASON



Congratulations to Les Smith from Stagecoach's Aldershot depot, who is the winner of our Picture of the Season competition. His shot of a Hants and Surrey Volvo B10 number 20462 stopping in a snowy Eashing Lane Estate on Route 92 from Elstead to Guildford has won him £50 of M&S vouchers, which are on the way in the post.

If you think you have a picture that captures one of the four seasons, please send your images to the Editor at the address below.

If you'd like to contribute to *On Stage*, please take note of these important deadlines:

EDITION	COPY TO BE SUBMITTED BY	ON STAGE PUBLISHED
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Summer 08	First week, June 08	First week, July 08
Autumn 08	First week, September 08	First week, October 08
Winter 08/09	First week, December 08	First week, January 09

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