



# oxford

*Moving with our people...*

Corporate Responsibility Report 2011

**oxford**  
bus company



The UK's greenest bus company, Oxford Bus Company takes pride in being part of the local community. We take our responsibilities very seriously and continuously monitor how our business impacts on the people and places around us.

We're a part of the  
**Go-Ahead**  
Group

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

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## ABOUT OXFORD BUS COMPANY

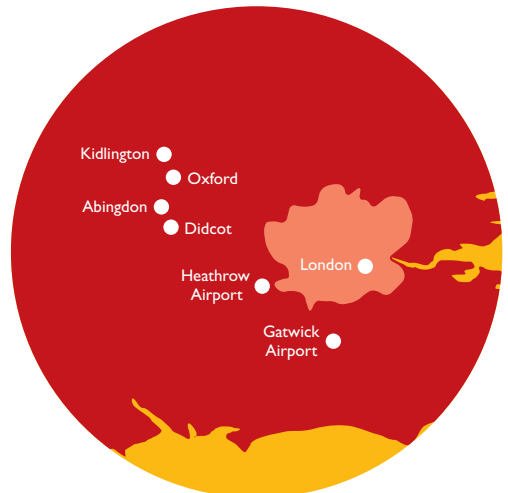
We are part of the Go-Ahead Group plc, one of the five major transport groups involved in running buses in the UK. The Go-Ahead philosophy is for each subsidiary company to run as an autonomous business in tune with local markets.

## 2011 HIGHLIGHTS

- Expansion of Oxford Brookes University bus network
- Conversion of Park & Ride network to electric hybrid buses
- Passenger numbers up 4%
- Carbon use cut by 12% in three years

## WHERE WE OPERATE

We provide a network of high frequency services throughout the central Oxfordshire region, including the Oxford Park & Ride system and BrookesBus, and links from Oxford to Central London and to Heathrow and Gatwick airports.



MESSAGE FROM  
PHILIP KIRK,  
MANAGING  
DIRECTOR



Welcome to our latest  
Annual Corporate  
Responsibility Report.

Welcome to our latest Annual Corporate Responsibility Report.

Corporate Responsibility lies at the heart of everything we do at Oxford Bus, whether that is the actual running of our bus and coach fleet, the management of health and safety at our operating base, or specifying new vehicles with the lowest possible emissions rates. Our aim is to run the best possible service for those who live in and travel to Oxford, and also to minimise our effect on the historic city, which will benefit everyone.

We have consistently been at the forefront of the industry in specifying environmentally friendly vehicles, and in this year we have taken this a step further by completely re-equipping the fleet used on the famous Oxford Park & Ride network with hybrid diesel-electric double deckers which use less carbon whilst also delivering lower emissions. Additionally, we are fully engaged with local authorities to deliver a highly challenging Low Emission Zone in central Oxford for 2013; to that end, we have upgraded 26 mid-life buses to the required LEZ standard and we are on track to be the first company to meet the stringent target.

We have set ourselves a target of reducing our carbon use per passenger journey by 20%, based on our consumption in 2007/08. I am pleased to say that this year has seen a reduction of 2.4% year on year; making a cumulative total of nearly 12%. With the changes we are making to our services and investing in newer, cleaner buses, I am confident we will make very significant strides towards our target in the next year.

As the use of our services increases, we are mindful that we need to cater for the needs of as many people as practically possible. The use of our buses by people in wheelchairs and by those who are using buggies has risen to the extent that conflicts were starting to happen about the use of space within our buses. We have therefore embarked on a programme of providing separate wheelchair and buggy spaces in each bus, to give more confidence to customers. We are also running Travel with Confidence courses for wheelchair users who may be unfamiliar with using public transport – again to build confidence.

Making our services easier to use has been a theme across all user groups and this year we converted Go-Ahead's highly successful smartcard, the key, to the new industry standard. This conversion was not without difficulty but we proactively managed the situation and now the scheme has 40,000 users, one of the largest commercial schemes in the UK. With the forthcoming changes under the Transform Oxford scheme, smartcards will be inter-available amongst bus operators in Oxford, removing a significant barrier to use.

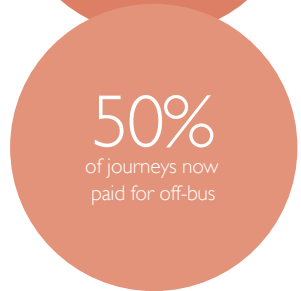
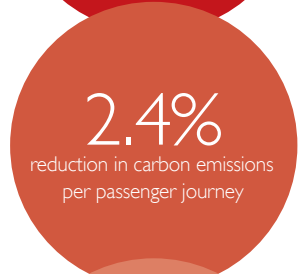
Our work with local authorities will reach a new level in 2011 with the introduction of Transform Oxford, a partnership between Oxfordshire County Council, Stagecoach and Oxford Bus. This initiative will result in the coordination of previously separate services on four main corridors in Oxford, and at the request of the County Council the number of departures on each combined service will be reduced.

But perhaps the greatest test of how we are doing is down to our customers. We were pleased that a survey carried out by watchdog Passenger Focus recorded that 91% of our customers are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with what we do. That in itself is gratifying, but we are constantly looking for ways to make the customer experience even better:

**Philip Kirk**

Managing Director

## OUR 2011 PERFORMANCE



## SAFETY

100%

of vehicles fitted  
with CCTV

99.4%

VOSA annual test  
pass rate

### Success through training

We invest in our staff through comprehensive and continuing training, which is described fully in the section on employees. In a people-oriented company, this training lies at the heart of our safety policy, and is showing real dividends. This year saw a further reduction in the number of accidents involving our vehicles, from an already low level: there has now been a reduction of 49% in the last three years. We will work hard to reduce this figure further next year.

### On-bus confidence

For a number of years, all our vehicles have been fitted with CCTV cameras and this has given our customers added comfort and reassurance when using our services. We are now rolling out the next generation of recording technology, which additionally has audio recording near the entrance doors. This has proved very useful in resolving conflicts between staff and customers.

### Maintenance standards

The way we maintain our buses makes a big contribution to safety. In this year, the first-time pass rate of our buses presented for annual VOSA test was 99.4%, against a national average of around 85%. Our vehicles are also tested each month for their emissions against national standards and we achieved 100% pass rate for this.



Our longest serving employee – Arthur Pearson, a member of the team introducing Go-Ahead's smartcard, the key.

## ENVIRONMENT **Building on excellence**

**£4m**  
invested in low-emission new  
buses and conversions



17 new electric hybrid buses were added to our fleet.

We have a strong reputation for environmental awareness and minimising the effect of our activities. Since 1994 we have been fitting additional emissions control equipment to our buses and we are proud of our claim to be the greenest bus company in the UK, based on total emissions from our fleet.

70% of our fleet now have emissions standards at Euro 5 or the better Environmentally Enhanced Vehicle (EEV) level. We believe this is the highest percentage of any fleet of our size in the UK.

In recent years, we have started to tackle directly our carbon use with the investment in a fleet of seventeen electric hybrid double deckers for the famous Oxford Park&Ride network of services. These buses were purchased at a total cost of £5.3m with the government's Green Bus Fund contributing 65% of the difference between a standard diesel bus and the electric hybrid design. These buses provide an excellent low-carbon, low-emission alternative to driving into central Oxford.

We are supporting Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council in the introduction of a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) for central Oxford in 2013. In this year, we spent £326,000 converting 26 mid-life buses to conform to the stringent requirements of the LEZ – Euro 5 for Oxides of Nitrogen, the most challenging in the EU. More than two-thirds of our fleet is now LEZ compliant and the remaining non-compliant vehicles will be replaced before the LEZ starts.

### **Excellence in buildings**

We are conscious that it is not just our vehicles which use carbon – our buildings do too. In recent years we have implemented a tough campaign of reducing the use of gas, electricity and water in our buildings. Since we started recording our consumption in 2007/08 our gas consumption has reduced by 6% and our electricity consumption by a huge 19%.

We have now reached the figure of 12% saving in carbon consumption from all our activities, well on the way to the 20% target we set ourselves in 2008.

### **Moving forward**

Our target for 2011/12 is to achieve a further reduction in carbon consumption, with the full year effect of our electric hybrid buses and the changes associated with Transform Oxford. We will increase the proportion of LEZ compliant vehicles in our fleet to 85%.

# PASSENGERS

91%

of passengers 'satisfied'  
or 'very satisfied' with  
our services

## Reliability and punctuality

Consistently, our customers tell us that they want our services to run reliably and punctually. We put a lot of effort into achieving this, one of our main tools being the GPS system which is fitted to all our vehicles which means that we can track in real time our services and proactively manage these. In addition, we make detailed plans based on roadworks and other potential disruptions to services where we are warned about these in advance.

This year, we maintained our target for reliability: 99.5% of journeys operated, and we improved the percentage of journeys which ran within five minutes of schedule, to reach 96.7% (up from 95.9%).

## Improving delivery

During 2011/12, we are introducing Service Delivery Managers for each brand, with the aim of improving still further.

## Satisfaction

Passenger Focus, the body appointed by the government to look after the interests of passengers in the bus and rail industry, have undertaken a survey of Oxford Bus Company passengers. This revealed that 91% of respondents were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their service.

## Access for more – space for more

We have operated easy-access buses since 1997 and for the last two years our bus fleet has been entirely to this design, six years ahead of the government target. These buses have encouraged people with access problems – particularly wheelchair users – to use buses either more frequently or for the first time. We run courses to demonstrate to wheelchair users how they can use buses, which in many cases has given them the necessary confidence.

Easy-access buses have also encouraged buggy users to use buses more and in a small number of cases this has resulted in conflicts with wheelchair users over the occupancy of the area with tip-up seats. We have now doubled the area with tip-up seats, allowing both sets of users to have a dedicated space.

## Smartcards

Go-Ahead's smartcard, the key, has been in operation for five years and during this year we converted the cards to the "ITSO" industry standard. The switch-over proved problematic to a number of customers and we offered free travel and a full apology to those who were affected. During the year, the number of smartcards in circulation doubled to 45,000 – one of the largest commercial schemes in the UK. We are approaching the point where 20 million journeys have been made with the key.



The key is a huge success. 45,000 cards are now in circulation.

## Moving forward

In the first few weeks of the next financial year, we will implement a new partnership scheme with Stagecoach and Oxfordshire County Council: "Transform Oxford". This will coordinate departures between the two companies on four main corridors in Oxford, and the total number of departures will be reduced at the request of the local authority. In addition, joint ticketing and smartcard validity will be introduced. There will be fewer buses in use, which will lead to improvements in the environment in central Oxford, and all buses will be available to all passengers.

People are at the heart of our business; our staff are our principal assets. The success of the business is down to our team at Oxford Bus and the service we give to our customers.

## EMPLOYEES

### Encouraging good health and good employment

We offer all our staff an occupational health facility, where they can talk over any health issues with a professional, on a confidential basis, free of charge.

We believe strongly in communicating with our staff – a newsletter is published every fortnight and there are weekly meetings between company directors and trade union officials. By making everyone feel part of the team we give all our staff a say in how we do things.

Staff turnover this year rose slightly to 12.5%, and our attendance rate improved to 96.4%. The average length of employment is a little under nine years.

Thankfully, assaults on our staff are very rare and this year there was a decrease to 12. The audio CCTV system which is being introduced (see Safety) had a bearing on this, as did a welcome increase in the number of cases attended and cleared up by Thames Valley Police.

As a fun project – with a serious message – Oxford Bus employees participated this year in the Oxfordshire Cycle Challenge. In total, 95 businesses across the county signed up in an initiative to get more people cycling; in a cycling city like Oxford it was a tall order to get more people cycling but we won the overall competition with 22% of our staff taking part.

### Moving forward

There will be some reductions in our number of employees due to the implementation of Transform Oxford. We have been working with trade union representatives to ensure that these reductions are achieved through natural wastage and so do not affect job security.



Good health and safety practices are at the heart of everything we do.

## COMMUNITY

397

stakeholder events

£27,478

charitable giving  
and investment

We have been around Oxford for almost 130 years and we like to think we are part of the fabric of the city; engaging with the community is deeply rooted in our company philosophy. During this year, we participated in almost 400 stakeholder events – that's more than one for each day of the working year. Senior managers and Directors attend the Bus Users UK forum and meet our passengers for frank and honest feedback on how we are doing. As a result of one such meeting and follow up customer emails, additional journeys have been operated to cope with a particularly heavy school peak, which runs through a busy business park.

We support local charities. Raffle prizes in the form of tickets for our coach services are provided for school fetes and fundraisers and we donate uncollected passenger change and lost property to a local hospice, Helen and Douglas House, the first hospice for children in the country.



	2010/2011	2009/2010	2008/2009
<b>Safety</b>			
Bus accidents (per million km)	15.81	18.8	31.3
Fleet with CCTV (%)	100	100	100
<b>Environment</b>			
Carbon emissions per passenger journey (kg)	0.81	0.83	0.84
Site energy savings			
– Gas consumption (kwh)	523	524	439
– Electricity consumption (kwh)	762	767	835
Fuel efficiency			
– Miles per gallon	7.92	7.98	8.06
<b>Passengers</b>			
Number of journeys running to schedule (%)	96.47	95.86	98.33
Fleet with wheelchair accessibility (%)	89	89	75
<b>Employees</b>			
Number of employees	559	564	550
Turnover rate (%)	12	11	9
Absence rate (%)	3	4	4
Number of staff training days	76	354	428
Diversity by ethnic group (%)			
– Asian, black or other origin	12.2	11	11
– White	87.8	89	89
Diversity by gender (%)			
– Women	9	9	9
– Men	91	91	91
Average length of service (yrs)	8yr 10m	9yr 6m	8yr 10m
<b>Community</b>			
Charitable giving and investment (£)	27,478	25,083	23,733
Number of stakeholder events	397	n/a	n/a

For information on the full Group data please visit our corporate website [www.go-ahead.com](http://www.go-ahead.com)

# We're a part of the **Go-Ahead** Group

You can find out more about Oxford Bus Company by visiting our website [www.oxfordbus.co.uk](http://www.oxfordbus.co.uk) and more information on how Oxford Bus Company manages its corporate responsibilities can be found by visiting [www.go-ahead.com/responsibility](http://www.go-ahead.com/responsibility)

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:

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## Verification of Corporate Responsibility data

For the third year Bureau Veritas UK Ltd has worked with the Go-Ahead Group plc (Go-Ahead) to verify and to provide an independent opinion on selected corporate responsibility (CR) key performance indicators (KPI) data contained within the Go-Ahead Group's Corporate Responsibility Report 2011. The information and data reviewed for this verification process relates to the reporting period 1st of July 2010 to the 2nd of July 2011. The verification incorporated site visits, interviews, document review and checking of Group and Operating Company data.

The full Bureau Veritas verification statement is available in Go-Ahead's Corporate Responsibility Report and at <http://www.go-ahead.com/responsibility.aspx>

This report was put together by The Go-Ahead Group and designed and produced by Black Sun plc, London.

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