



The Oxford Bus Group
Sustainability Report 2016

Focused on partnership

About us

Oxford Bus Group's fleet consists of 268 vehicles across 3 depots in Oxford, Wallingford and High Wycombe. Our services operate across Oxford, South Oxfordshire, Reading and Buckinghamshire, as well as coach services between Oxford and London, Gatwick, Heathrow and Birmingham. The company also runs the popular park and ride service connecting Oxford's five purpose-built car parks outside the city limits to the city centre. With over 800 employees, Oxford Bus Group is one of the region's largest employers.

Where we operate

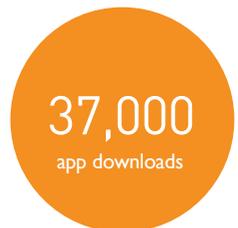
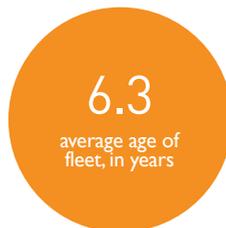


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2016 highlights

- Achieved Investors in People Accreditation
- Launch of High Wycombe park and ride service
- Improved customer service offering, including launch of live chat and mobile app
- High quality 'connector' service launched, connecting Didcot Parkway and Harwell Campus



For more information about Oxford Bus Group, visit:

www.oxfordbus.co.uk
www.thames-travel.co.uk
www.carouselbuses.co.uk

Follow us on social media



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[facebook.com/ThamesTravel](https://www.facebook.com/ThamesTravel)



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

We're part of The
Go-Ahead
Group

Managing Director's message

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The last year has been one of continuous improvement, both for our customers and our staff. New services, Investors in People certification and leveraging technology to better engage with our customers are just a few highlights of the year's achievements.

Phil Southall, Managing Director

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At Carousel Buses, we were awarded High Wycombe's important park and ride contract, a service which we branded and developed from the ground up. Staying in High Wycombe, we also introduced the town's very first Euro 6 buses. British-built and showcasing some of the latest features available, this investment is a great example of how we are constantly improving our customer experience in a sustainable manner. It doesn't stop there though – we've also added an additional 8 Plaxton Interdeck coaches to our X90 Oxford – London fleet, strengthening our commitment to providing high quality coach services between Oxford and London.

An ever-improving customer experience

Over in Oxford, technology has been at the forefront of our efforts. In our High St travel shop, we introduced self-service top up machines for our key card customers. This now means there's no need to queue for customers who just want to make a quick top up and be on their way.

In recognising the changing face of technology and the convenience it brings, we re-launched our mobile ticketing app. Our customers can now instantly buy tickets for our city, park&ride, Thames Travel and the airline services – even as they are waiting for the bus to arrive. Those wanting a quick answer to a question can now also use the live chat feature on our website – compatible with desktop, tablet and mobile devices – in addition to our well-established and very popular social media accounts.

None of this excellent work can be delivered without an exceptional team behind it. To this end we have been working hard on our programme of culture change, which led to us achieving Investors in People accreditation for the first time in the company's history.

Recognition is an important part of staff engagement and we've been keen to shout about our achievements. We've been recognised for our work with improving access for the disabled in the Beautiful South Awards for Tourism with Silver in

the 'Access for All' category. Our X90 Oxford – London coach service also took Silver in the UK Coach Awards' 'Top Express Operator' category. One of our very own coach drivers placed 5th overall (as well as 1st in Go-Ahead) in the Bus Driver of the Year competition in Blackpool.



Oxford Bus Company receiving Silver at the Beautiful South Awards

Vision and Values

At Oxford Bus Group our company mission statement is “One team, delivering an ever-improving customer experience.” This embodies the idea that pleasing our customers is an endless journey – there will always be more we can do, and our efforts build on work already done. Our internal and external culture is described by 5 core values:

- Continued Success
- Customer Focused
- Embracing Diversity
- Socially Responsible
- Working as a Team



Visit oxfordbus.co.uk/visionandvalues for more information

Our reporting structure

We are committed to operating our bus and coach services in a safe, environmentally and socially responsible manner. This report is split into four sections:



Society

To run our companies in a safe, socially and environmentally responsible manner.



Customers

To provide high quality, locally focussed passenger transport services.



Our people

To be a leading employer in the transport sector.



Finance

To run our business with strong financial discipline to deliver sustainable shareholder value.



Visit www.go-ahead.com/sustainability to find out more about our approach

Our core values

Our business is built on a solid foundation of principles and ethics. At the centre of this is our mission statement:

One team, delivering an ever-improving customer experience

We deliver this through living by our 5 core values:

1) Continued Success – to be continually successful, we cannot stand still. We must constantly strive to change, innovate and move forward, with perfection as our ultimate aim.

2) Customer Focussed – Delivering excellent customer service every day is at the very heart of what we do. The more we understand our customers, the better the service we can provide, meaning customers will choose our services again and again.

3) Embracing Diversity – We recognise the value of a diverse workforce and the differing communities in which we operate. Differences in age, race, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, physical ability, thinking style and background bring richness to our business.

4) Socially Responsible – We have an impact on all the communities we serve. At Oxford Bus Company we are proud to say we are always giving back to the people we serve, and respecting the environment.

5) Working as a Team – We are one team, and we all have our own parts to play. Working together makes the delivery of our very complex bus operation easier for all, and mutual trust across the whole business is key to being a strong team.



Read more about our approach online at www.oxfordbus.co.uk/about-us



Our stakeholders

Collaboration with stakeholders and partnership-working is fundamental in our approach to sustainability.

Stakeholder structure

As a leading provider of transport in the UK, we face a wide range of complex issues. Some of those issues are within our control, some we seek to influence and others are more challenging to manage and require partnering with pioneering and forward-looking groups.



Society

Doing good for society goes hand in hand with good business. As a provider of services direct to the public, we help tens of thousands of people get where they need to go every day.

Being such an integral part of peoples' days gives us the opportunity to do so much more than provide bus services – we have the ability – or perhaps even the responsibility – to make a real difference to society.

Key Highlights



Together in Partnerships

Oxford's establishments, both new and old, have always thrived on strong partnerships. Through working with key stakeholders at all levels of government, local enterprise partnerships and the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce we ensure that buses get a 'fair say' in business and government decisions. It doesn't stop there though – we have supported dozens of charities throughout the year, either on an ad hoc basis or through long term commitments such as Sobell House Hospice's '40 Club' fundraising initiative.

Library Bus for Cowley School



Oxford Bus Company's 'Library Bus' project

Earlier this year, a group of skilled Engineers at Oxford Bus Company turned one of the old vehicles into a long-needed library for a local primary school.

The donated bus will become the central reading space for young pupils to practice their ever so needed reading skills.

Gillian McDermott, Year 6 teacher and literacy lead said,

"We have always had school book corners but never had a space for a full school fiction library to access. We are hoping it will have a very big impact on raising the profile of reading."

A Cleaner Environment

Over half of our bus fleet is powered by hybrid technology, be it diesel-electric or flywheel. Oxford City centre has been declared an Air Quality Management Area, and Oxford City Council has imposed a Low Emission Zone on scheduled bus services with a frequency of 1/hour or greater. This requires buses to meet the Euro V standard for emissions, which we achieved long before the LEZ came into force.

Together in Communities

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

We measure our community activity through the London Benchmarking Group (LBC), the global leading framework for community investment. This helps us get a better understanding of how our contributions, donations and our work with partners and employees volunteering activity benefits the local community. This year we have invested over £36,000 in a range of projects and we will continue to work together with local stakeholders to maximise the positive impact of our contributions.

Smarter Energy

We have 540 solar panels fitted to our depot roof in an innovative partnership with a local social enterprise – Low Carbon Hub. These provide us with discounted electricity to meet around 18% of our energy needs, and surpluses generated are used to fund local community projects such as insulating homes in areas of social deprivation.

Our Finance Director, Luke Marion, helps the Hub on a 'pro bono' basis to help manage their accounts and to support the numerous community projects they undertake in Oxfordshire.

Oxford Bus Group Supporting Oxford United Women



During the year, Oxford Bus Company teamed up with the Oxford United Women's team as their front-of-shirt sponsor. In addition to a financial contribution, the sponsorship also involves supporting fans with special travel arrangements and various contra-deals. Oxford United evokes a lot of passion in the hearts of Oxford's residents and so there are few better ways to get involved with the community than in this way.

Phil Southall, Managing Director of Oxford Bus Group said:

"Our core values of supporting the local community and embracing diversity are shared by Oxford United in the work they do, and so it was an easy decision for us to get involved with the club more closely. Football has consistently been one of the fastest growing sports for women and girls across Oxfordshire in recent years and so we're delighted to also be backing the club's Female Centre of Excellence as they develop the stars of the future."

Les Taylor, manager of the Oxford United Women's side, said:

"It's fantastic to have the Oxford Bus Company supporting us this season. They are such a familiar name to everyone across the city and I am sure that the partnership will go from strength to strength."

Customers

In the last year Oxford Bus Company has encountered huge challenges: the loss of a long serving MD, unprecedented levels of roadworks and congestion disrupting services across its operating area, and no let up in the strength of local competition.

Despite this the company has made significant strides forward, with customer satisfaction on local services (as measured by Transport Focus) growing from 86% in 2015 to 91% in 2016. Park & Ride services were even higher at 92%.

Key Highlights



Improving Customer Experience

The company cares passionately about delivering an ever-improving customer experience; indeed this is at the centre of the company mission statement. A dedicated customer service team working 7 days per week is employed at the depot, and across two travel shop sites in the City.

This year we introduced a new RTI system which provides improved visibility to our service controllers, allowing them to better regulate services and helping

Oxford Bus Wins Silver



Paul Hennigan, Head of Operations (left) and Shaun Ritchie, Service Delivery Manager – Express (right)

Oxford Bus Company's X90 Oxford-London coach service has taken Silver in the 'Top Express Operator' category at eighth UK Coach Awards. The award recognises the delivery of consistently excellent customer service, high operational and engineering standards and health and safety, among numerous other measures.

"The judges noted the continuous improvement to the service and how it competes effectively with rail on this busy corridor. The investment in new vehicles as been rewarded with increasing passenger numbers making it a key part of the company's business."

us to proactively communicate information on disruptions via social media, faster. The RTI system provides "open data" feeds to sources including on-street signs and the "Oxontime" website and app, and we are currently working with ITO to provide live bus positioning and expected arrival times to customers using Google Transit, allowing real time journey planning in Google Maps.

Customers can contact us via phone, email, post and both Twitter and Facebook, where we have a combined 18,000+ followers. In April 2016 we introduced a "Live Chat" function to our websites, and this has proved very popular. We conduct regular online customer surveys and focus groups, and have a detailed database which allows us to track and analyse all customer contacts.

Accessible

We operate a fully accessible fleet, with dedicated wheelchair and buggy spaces on all vehicles, and wheelchair lifts on all coaches.

Around a quarter of our fleet has audio-visual stop announcements, and we have made a public commitment to have this technology fitted to every new local bus that we purchase going forward.

We have purchased a unique feature for our website called 'Recite', which allows individuals with accessibility needs to have the website text 'read' to them via built-in text-to-speech software. In addition, text size and contrast levels can be altered by the user, and translation is also available.

Affordable

Promoting bus use as a viable alternative to the car requires not just great quality services, but also great value.

Our wide range of ticketing products on the key and our mobile ticketing app account for well over half of all journeys taken on our services. We work closely with large employers and educational institutions around Oxford and south Oxfordshire to provide discounted staff travel schemes, assisting the organisations in meeting their own green travel objectives.

"We've put a lot of work into improving our services over the past two years and it's really pleasing to see that our customers have noticed this and made their feelings known in the Bus Passenger Survey."

Improving visitor experience



Carousel Buses' 'Talking' park and ride service

Carousel Buses has fitted a system to its park and ride service to make the buses 'talk', improving the experience for visitors to the town and those with hearing and visual impairments.

Driven by the on-bus tracking system, the system announces all stops in advance over a speaker system, as well as displaying similar information on television-style screens inside the bus.

Mark Shaw, Buckinghamshire County Council Cabinet member for Transportation said,

"The Park & Ride is a brilliant bus service. Perfect for visitors to High Wycombe town centre whether they're travelling to the railway station, hospital or shops. The new onboard audio-visual announcements help make these buses an attractive option for all passengers."

Our people

We employ more than 800 local people – from school leavers on apprenticeships to long-serving employees who have been with the company for over 40 years.

Our success depends on our people's expertise and commitment to service, and we are engaging staff in the way our company operates – particularly in our constant drive to deliver the highest standards of safety, reliability and customer experience.

Key Highlights



Training

Our on-site training school is a registered DVLA test centre and we employ a full-time driving examiner. Up to 6 instructors are also employed at the Oxford garage, and when not required, these colleagues perform driving duties.

Driving Diversity

Respecting Diversity is a core value of the business and in 2015 we became a Stonewall Proud Employer.

Our in-house training school has worked in partnership with the RNIB and Guide Dogs to ensure our disability awareness training is fit for purpose.

Asian, black and other ethnic group employees represent over 17% of our colleagues – one of the highest levels in the Group.

Go-Ahead's finest!



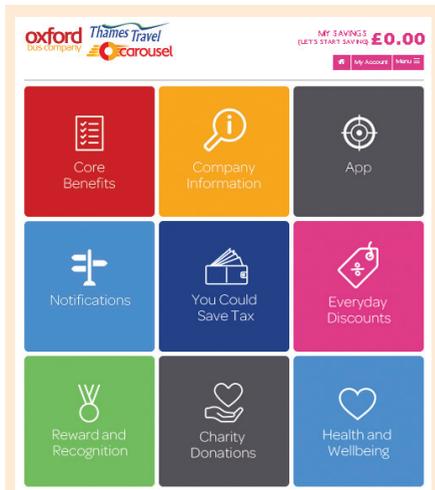
Coach driver David Cameron-Young receiving his reward

Oxford Bus Company driver David Cameron-Young won the Go-Ahead Trophy and a cheque for £500 at the Bus driver of the Year Awards in Blackpool. David, who works on Oxford Bus Company's award winning airline service, finished fifth overall, the highest placed Go-Ahead driver.

Taking care of our Staff

Oxford Bus Company has embarked on a programme of culture change, covering all levels of the business. Supervisors, managers and directors underwent specialised training, and this helped develop a plan to raise morale, focus the company's direction and revive enthusiasm for providing an excellent customer service. A mission statement and core values were developed, along with a new staff magazine and programme of rewards including a "Star of the Month" scheme.

An innovative new staff benefits portal was developed in partnership with Personal Group to provide staff with a range of shopping discounts and salary sacrifice schemes. More than 33% of staff are now active members of this scheme and it has received lots of interest from other operators. In March 2016, the company received Investors in People accreditation in recognition of these efforts.



Our 'Hapi' benefits portal



Three generations of bus drivers at Oxford Bus Company



Phil Southall with Zoe, Arthur and Michael Pearson

The grand-daughter of one of the bus industry's living legends – Arthur Pearson – has carried on the family tradition of bus driving.

Zoe Pearson joined Oxford Bus Company as a driver; following in the footsteps of her father Michael Pearson and her grandfather Arthur Pearson.

Arthur joined the company in 1948, not long after completing his military service which included landing on Juno beach on D-Day. He remained with the company until 2013 when he retired.

Both Arthur and his son Michael met their future wives whilst working at Oxford Bus Company.

Speaking about Zoe joining the company, Managing Director Phil Southall said:

"I think Arthur's positive approach to his career has inspired Zoe to follow the same path. It's so exciting to see her carrying on her family's tradition by entering the transport world. Zoe has brought some excellent skills to our company and we hope her example reminds other women out there that it's not just a man's job!"

Finance

Oxford Bus Group is part of The Go-Ahead Group plc.

Oxford Bus Group makes a contribution to the UK economy through the employment of 804 people, the taxes the company pays, payments to its suppliers and the fact that nearly two-thirds of visitors to Oxford City Centre get there by bus.

Key Highlights



Oxford Bus Company passenger assistant issuing a ticket

Supporting the UK Economy

Public transport brings benefits to individuals, communities and the nation as a whole. Economically, it connects workers to jobs and enables trade. Socially, it provides access to employment, education, and health care, and unites friends and family. For many, especially older people, people with disabilities and children, public transport is often the only viable option.

During the year, Oxford Bus Group made a direct contribution to the economy through the £665k we paid in UK corporation tax and £2.49m in National Insurance contributions. Indirectly, we also support economic growth through the employment of 804 people, investing £28.6m in staff; and by providing tens of thousands of people with the means to travel to work, shops and other key services and leisure activities every day.

Fair tax mark

Go-Ahead is the first FTSE 350 company to be awarded the Fair Tax mark for being a good taxpayer, open about its tax affairs and paying the right amount of corporation tax at the right time and in the right place. A fair tax system is to the benefit of everyone and crucial to support a vibrant mixed economy.

Ethical Procurement

Oxford Bus Group's ethical procurement is embedded in its supply chain procurement and management processes. As a buyer of goods and services we have a responsibility for the supply chains from which these goods and services come into the organisation. We will take into account ethical as well as commercial and technical factors, when considering which suppliers to partner with.

The company encourages its suppliers to adhere to similar high standards of corporate responsibility and to have in place appropriate safeguards against bribery, corruption and facilitation payments. In particular, Oxford Bus Group expects its suppliers to be committed to high standards of health and safety and demonstrate a respect for the environment.

Key data

Oxford Bus Company	2015/16	2014/15
SOCIETY		
Safety		
Bus accidents per million miles	27.1	32.7
Fleet with CCTV (%) ⁺	100	100
Environment		
Carbon emissions per passenger journey (kg)	0.93	0.9
Community		
Community Spend per Employee (£)	45.37	13.93
Stakeholder events (number)	268	274
CUSTOMERS		
Customer satisfaction (Latest Passenger Focus score) (%)	91	91
Deregulated / local bus punctuality (%) ⁺	84.3	98.6
Expenditure on new buses in financial year (£'000) ⁺	6,493	3,290
Average age of bus fleet (years) *	6.3	6.2
Accessibility		
Bus fleet which is DDA compliant (number) *	253	249
OUR PEOPLE		
Average number of employees ⁺	804	708
RIDDOR accidents per 100 employees ⁺	3.1	1.1
Employee engagement index	46	46
Employee turnover rate (%) ⁺	8.3	8.75
Absenteeism rate (%) ⁺	3.5	3.6
Training Spend per Employee (£)	333	83
Diversity		
% of female employees	10.3	10
% of Asian, black and other ethnic group employees	17.8	19.6
FINANCE		
Passenger Journeys (m)	24	23
Passenger volume growth (%)	2.5	(4.3)

Key

+ For the reporting period

* as at the reporting period end

RIDDOR – Reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences regulations at workplaces

DDA – Disability Discrimination Act



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

More information

You can find out more about Oxford Bus Group by visiting our website www.oxfordbus.co.uk and more information on how Oxford Bus Group manages sustainability can be found by visiting www.go-ahead.com/sustainability

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

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BUREAU
VERITAS

Summary verification statement from Bureau Veritas UK Ltd

Bureau Veritas UK Ltd has provided verification for The Go-Ahead Group plc over selected sustainability Key Performance Indicators (KPI) data contained within the Group's annual report covering the period 28 June 2015 to 2 July 2016.

The full verification statement including the verification scope and Bureau Veritas' verification opinion, methodology, areas of good practice, recommendations and a statement of independence and impartiality can be found on the Go-Ahead Group website: www.go-ahead.com/sustainability

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

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Go-Ahead
Group