

Taking care of every journey

The Oxford Bus Group
Sustainability Report 2018



oxford
bus company

 **carousel**

City Sightseeing
Oxford

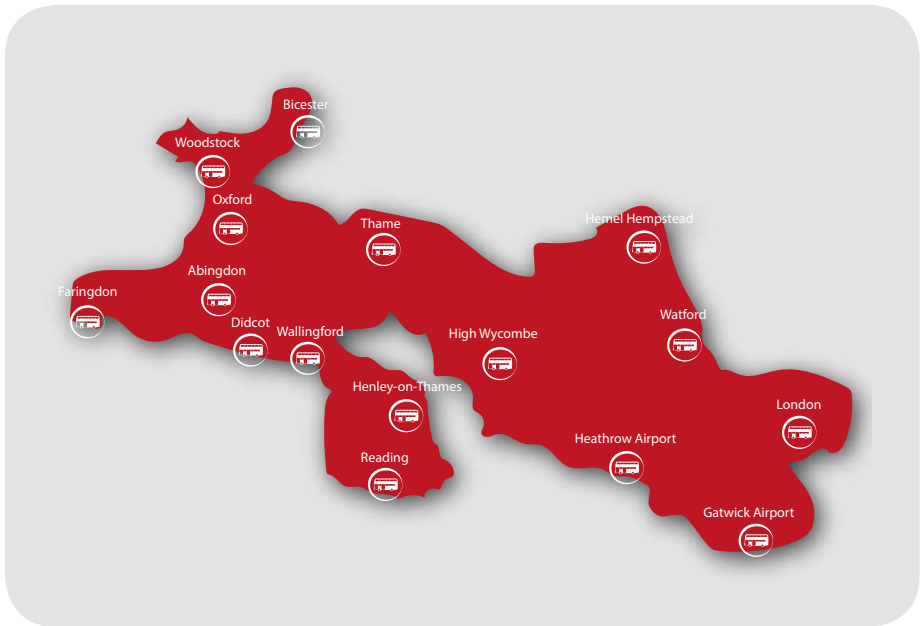
Thames Travel

About us

Oxford Bus have been at the heart of Oxford since 1881. We serve customers across Oxford, South Oxfordshire, Reading and Buckinghamshire; and also provide services between Oxford and London, Heathrow and Gatwick. The Group's fleet consists of 261 buses across four depots (Oxford (x2), Wallingford and High Wycombe).

We acquired City Sightseeing Oxford in December 2017, providing passengers with guided tours of the City, and most recently launched PickMeUp, an on-demand ride-sharing minibus service serving passengers in the eastern arc of Oxford.







We provide employment for over 800 people throughout the region.



In this report

- 2 **Managing Director's message**
- 4 **Finance**
- 5 **Stronger communities**
- 6 **Happier customers**
- 8 **Better teams**
- 10 **Cleaner environment**
- 12 **Smarter technology**
- 13 **Key data**

For more information...

follow us on social media:	visit our websites:
 Oxfordbuscompany	oxfordbus.co.uk
 ThamesTravel	thames-travel.co.uk
 Citysightseeingoxford	carouselbuses.co.uk
 Oxford.pickmeup	pickmeup.oxfordbus.co.uk
 @OxfordBusCo	citysightseeingoxford.com
 @Oxford_pickmeup	

Our reporting structure

We are committed to operating our buses in a way which helps to put our services at the heart of the communities they serve. This report is split into six sections:



Finance

To work together with suppliers to jointly deliver the best possible service.
p4



Stronger communities

To support colleagues with fundraising events which support the local community.
p5



Happier customers

To gain more happy customers and reward colleagues for receiving positive feedback.
p6



Better teams

To perform all job roles and tasks competently to allow further growth.
p8



Cleaner environment

To improve air quality and encourage fuel efficiency at all locations across the business.
p10



Smarter technology

To implement new market leading technology and adapt it accordingly.
p12

Managing Director's Message

"This year has seen significant changes across our business, with major developments in our City's landscape at the same time as several technological innovations. We've risen to the challenges and improved our business for customers, colleagues and our community."

Phil Southall
Managing Director



The last year has been a very exciting one, with an increasing pace of change across our business.

The new Westgate shopping centre opened its doors to customers in October 2017 and we were at the centre of the action, working together with the local authority and developer to ensure our newly upgraded Park&Ride services met the needs of the many visitors to our city wishing to visit the new development. A new "Fast track" ticket was introduced in partnership with Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council to give customers the ability to pay for their parking and bus travel in a single transaction at all five Park&Ride sites, and this has proven very successful.

In December 2017 we welcomed a new member into our family, with the acquisition of City Sightseeing Oxford. Since taking over this long established and successful company, we've been working hard to understand the business and to deliver improvements, with contactless payment technology already rolled out to the entire sightseeing fleet.

We partnered with Oxford City Council to win over £500,000 of funding to upgrade five sightseeing buses to full electric power in the year, and expect to see the first of these in service in the city during the winter of 2018/19.

Helping to improve air quality in the areas we operate remains a key focus for the business, and it was excellent to see the results of our recent investments in improved air quality data for Oxford City centre, with air in bus-only streets in the city centre now below legal limits for oxides of nitrogen, for the first time in many years. We introduced a further 18 ultra-low emission "Euro 6" buses to our fleet during the year to continue to accelerate this process, bringing the total of such vehicles in the fleet to 87. We were also delighted to have been able to successfully partner with Oxford City Council to win funding of over £1.0m from the DfT to enable a further 61 buses across our fleet to be upgraded to the ultra-low emission standard during 2018/19.

2018 highlights

- PickMeUp, Britain's largest demand responsive bus service, launched in June.
- £1.5m of funding won for new low and zero emission buses.
- Acquired City Sightseeing Oxford.
- Introduced 18 new ultra-low emission vehicles.
- Introduced a new staff awards programme.

In June 2018 we introduced the UK's largest demand-responsive bus service, PickMeUp. The innovative new service aims to help reduce reliance on taxis and private cars in the Eastern Arc area of Oxford City, where car modal share for travel to work journeys is in excess of 90%, and where it is difficult to operate orbital bus services in a financially sustainable way. The service has made a very positive start and we hope to develop it further in the years to come.

Further innovation this year has seen the launch of new smartphone applications with improved real time tracking of buses and QR code scanning to speed up boarding times.

A new "Really Amazing" awards evening was introduced to recognise the many achievements of our employees, and it was really heartwarming to see so many fantastic examples of our colleagues delivering above and beyond for customers.

The business was recognised with a Bronze award in the "Top Shire Operator" category of the UK Bus Awards, for the second successive year, and our engineering department was awarded the prestigious "Golden Spanner" award from National Express for excellence in vehicle maintenance on the fleet used to support our contract with them.

At Thames Travel we re-launched our Oxford – Wallingford – Reading services as "River Rapids" and added a new through service between Oxford and Henley on Thames to the corridor, restoring a link lost in the 1990s. Through tourist focused marketing we have been able to attract more than 20% passenger growth to the services, to help pay for the increase in resource on the corridor. We also introduced new night bus services to Didcot in response to customer feedback and have seen very encouraging usage of these from customers living in the growing "Garden Town".

195

staff training days

809

employees

23 million

passenger journeys



The 23m journeys taken on our services every year are critical to our business and our communities.

These journeys provide our customers with a convenient way to travel around the communities we serve, going to work, engaging in social activities, and accessing essential services. Oxford Bus Group makes a direct positive contribution to the communities we serve.

We have 809 employees and we are dedicated to providing training and development, supportive inclusive workplaces, engineering apprenticeships, and a graduate and internal management trainee programme. This investment allows our people to reach their full potential with the aim to improve our customers' overall experience.

In the year we made a direct contribution to the UK economy through payment of £659k in corporation tax, and £2.65m in National Insurance and Apprenticeship Levy contributions.

We invested £2.9m in new, ultra-low emission buses and coaches during the year, many of which were built in the UK, and improved our average fuel economy by 2.3% on the previous year. We now have 108 buses with hybrid technology in our 261 vehicle fleet, 41% of the fleet.

Nearly two thirds of visitors to Oxford City Centre get there by bus and so our customers are also essential in ensuring a vibrant and prosperous high street economy.

Key highlights

88%

customer
satisfaction

1.5%

passenger
volume growth

23.6m

bus kilometres
travelled

6.7 years

average age of
bus fleet

£31,216

community
investment

£2.9m

investment in
new buses

2.3%

improvement
in MPG

Stronger Communities



The Oxford Bus Company supports a wide variety of charities and other good causes, helping to build a stronger local community through challenges and fundraising activities.

Bus 367, serving Abingdon and other City routes, was branded with a new Oxford Pride livery in May. Since then it's demonstrated our support of diversity and inclusion daily. It has been on prominent display at events such as the Abingdon Airshow, and played a central role in this year's Oxford Pride march, acting as registration point and then leading the parade.

Our driver Andy Benton took part in a charity head shave at the Oxford depot. The event was live-streamed via Facebook and attracted almost 2,000 views. The Oxford Bus Company matched all donations and over £1,000 was raised for SeeSaw, supporting bereaved children and young people in Oxfordshire.



Jane Elliott of SeeSaw, and Andy Benton and Phil Southall, Oxford Bus Company.

We're proud sponsors of several local sports teams, including Barton FC Ladies (17-25 year olds) and Girls under 13 teams. The East Oxford United boys team are also wearing new Oxford Bus Company branded shirts this season.

This year, several of our employees took part in – and won – the High Sherriff's Corporate Challenge 'Oxlympics'. The challenge was devised as a unique opportunity to involve all of the workforce in a range of events focused on health and well-being. The challenge brought together over 20 businesses in Oxfordshire in a range of fun and competitive events.

The Oxford Bus Company competed in the Parkrun Challenge from 14 April to 7 July, with all willing employees running 5k every Saturday morning at various locations around the county. We also entered the Town and Gown 10k run on 13 May. The challenge culminated in the 'Oxlympics' event at Abingdon School on 13 July. A team of six participants from each corporate challenger undertook a range of sporting challenges including a swimming gala.



Oxford Bus Company employees proudly displaying their winners' medals at the High Sherriff's 'Oxlympics', July 2018.

Happier Customers

The Oxford Bus Company puts the customer at the heart of everything we do, and our mission statement is “One Team, delivering an ever-improving customer experience”.

This year we continued the roll out of contactless technology, with 100% of our fleet now fitted with contactless-enabled ticket machines. By the end of the year more than 33% of all tickets purchased on board our vehicles used this payment method.

We also saw the culmination of a project that began in the previous year, working with Land Securities, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council to introduce a successful new “One Ticket” product for all five Park&Ride sites in Oxford to support the launch of the new Westgate shopping centre. Special Park&Ride branding was introduced at each of the car parks and in the shopping centre itself, to help visitors find their way seamlessly to the new centre and easily get back to the correct stop when it was time to go.

Additionally, all driving colleagues on Park&Ride services received special training from the Westgate customer experience team to ensure we provided a “world class welcome” to the new centre right from day one. This work has been crucial in helping the development achieve its sustainable travel targets of more than 50% of visitors arriving

by bus, and has resulted in Park&Ride being consistently one of the highest rated areas in Westgate customer satisfaction surveys.

A further 10 new buses with audio-visual next stop announcements systems were introduced in the year, meaning more than a quarter of our fleet is now equipped with this technology. This follows the commitment made in 2014 to fit the systems to all new buses purchased by the business in order to improve accessibility to our services for those with hearing or sight impediments.

In December we upgraded our mobile app to include much improved journey planning, real time bus tracking and location features for customers. Tickets are now fulfilled through QR code technology to improve boarding times, and this technology was also introduced to our “airline” service coach booking system in the year.



Our drivers carry out their duties with pride, having both the company and the customer in mind.



"I always use their app. Always been fine buying tickets on it and slightly cheaper than all other methods. Most of their buses are the best in Oxford. The staff are always friendly and I've never had any trouble with them..."

Justin Adcock



"Lovely bus to ride on"

Chris Wickham



"👍 Good customer service at all"

Diana Bustamante



"Very reliable and flexible to work. Drivers are very friendly."

Shahid Pervaiz



"Good customer service"

SirJarys



"Good service"

Indu Patel



"Top of the pops! Friendly and helpful staff. My gratitude to Mr James, a driver of the number 8 bus who found my wallet with all my bank cards and bus pass that I accidentally dropped on my way out yesterday in a hurry and kindly returned it to the depot at the end of his shift. Your honesty is clearly exhibited and most appreciated. Also a big thank to Diva, a customer service advisor lady who assisted and guided me through their lost-and-found process with ease. Keep up a brilliant work Oxford Bus Company. Cheers!"

D.C.Blitzspell



"Left my phone on the bus and managed to get it back, result"

John Irvin



"Great professional kind service. They found and returned integrally my accidentally dropped wallet. Hurray Cheers!"

Sergio Garcia Donya



Positive customer feedback - above are some Google reviews of the Oxford Bus Company.

Better Teams

Working as a team is one of the Oxford Bus Company's five core values (along with being customer focused, socially responsible, embracing diversity and delivering continued success).

Our vision is one team, delivering an ever-improving customer experience.

This year we've launched the "Really Amazing" awards to reward high achieving staff, building on our existing "Star of the Month" scheme which was launched in 2017.

On Thursday 8 February 2018, we held our inaugural "Really Amazing" awards ceremony at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, recognising and celebrating colleagues who have been doing Really Amazing things. The event provided the opportunity to recognise some of the real stars of our business, including our "Star of the Year", Geoff High.

All employees are encouraged to nominate colleagues who they feel deserve to be a "Star of the Month". Stars win £100 of Love2Shop vouchers, a certificate and also have their framed photo displayed in the depot. Every "Star of the Month" is invited to attend the annual "Really Amazing" awards, with a three-course meal and the chance to win further prizes.



Oxford Bus Company employees at the Ashmolean Museum, for the inaugural "Really Amazing" awards, February 2018.



All of our "Really Amazing" award winners, February 2018.



Long service awards were also presented as part of the highly successful event. Further award categories included "Customer Hero", "Unsung Hero", "Health, Safety and Colleague Wellbeing", "Embracing Innovation", "Rising Star" and "The 'A' Team". Awards for our Bronze, Silver and Gold "Star of the Year" completed the presentations.

In January, our engineering team was awarded the prestigious "Golden Spanner" award by National Express, following a fleet audit. The award recognises the exceptionally high standard of maintenance our team achieved on the vehicles used on our National Express contract operations, which operate 24 hours per day linking Oxford with Luton and Stansted airports.



Kim Smith receiving "Star of the Month" from Phil Southall, November 2017.

Key highlights

88%

customer
satisfaction

£38.59

community spend
per employee

308

stakeholder
events attended
in the year

33%

on-bus revenue
now comes from
contactless

All employees



● Male **88%**
● Female **12%**

Gender Pay Gap



Median pay for men is 2.2% higher than that of women, compared to the national average of 18.4%.

Cleaner Environment

We are dedicated to being responsible citizens of the communities we serve and are committed to improving air quality and reducing the impact of our services on the environment through improving the emissions profile of our fleet and managing the energy we use responsibly.

We also want to educate customers and stakeholders in the areas we serve so that they can fully appreciate the benefits of the investments we have made, and understand how important buses can be in improving local quality of life.

This year, as well as investing in 18 new ultra-low emission Euro 6 buses and coaches, we successfully partnered Oxford City Council to win £1.5m of funding from the DfT's Clean Bus Technology Fund to improve the emissions profile of our existing fleet. Work has already started to deliver this project, which will see 61 vehicles upgraded to Euro VI standard through the addition of Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) systems to reduce oxides of nitrogen.

The project will also deliver the first five full electric buses introduced to service in Oxford which will be used on our City Sightseeing services, and we have been investigating the use of battery storage technologies in our depot to help charge these vehicles "smartly", using energy generated from our on-site solar PV array rather than drawing power from the grid at times of peak electricity demand.



Park&Ride Wrightbus Streetdeck (Euro 6)

18
new ultra-low
emission Euro 6
buses and coaches

2.3%
improvement in
fuel economy



Our fuel economy improved by 2.3% in the year with CO₂ emissions per passenger journey falling by more than 10%, to 0.9kg. This has been achieved by consistently investing in the most modern, fuel efficient vehicles with hybrid technologies and weight saving measures, and by ensuring our colleagues are properly trained on eco-driving techniques.

We are currently working to achieve ISO50001 accreditation for our energy management initiatives and hope to achieve this recognition in 2018/19.

Awards

UK Bus Awards 2017

The Oxford Bus Company was awarded Bronze in the Top Shire Operator of the Year competition in November 2017.

National Express

Our engineering department received the Golden Spanner award for delivering excellent quality service.



Winners of the Golden Spanner award, January 2018. L-R: Ray Woodhouse, Engineering Director; Zeeshan Hamsa (Zee), Night Shift Servicing Engineer; Nick Elliott, Health, Safety & Environmental Manager; Stacey Locke, Engineering Night Shift Manager; Jak Dutton, Nightshift Engineer; Robbie Betterton, Chief Engineer; and John Davies, Nightshift Electrician.

Smarter Technology



Technology is continuously evolving – and so are we. At the Oxford Bus Company, we embrace change and continuously seek innovative technologies to enable us to improve the services we can offer to our customers.

This year, we launched Britain’s largest on-demand ride-sharing minibus service, PickMeUp. The service has quickly gained popularity with the public and within two months of its launch was already carrying in excess of 2,000 passengers per week. The service aims to reduce congestion and improve air quality in East Oxford, where car modal share for journeys to work is over 90%, by providing missing connectivity in an efficient and flexible way.



Route Manager, Lucy Arnold, was among the first to try the new PickMeUp app.

We’re able to operate PickMeUp through partnership with Via Transportation Inc, who provide the software. Customers download the app from Google Play or the App Store, then book and pay for all rides via the app. In addition, the app displays a map to direct customers to their ‘virtual bus stop’ (usually a nearby roadside a short walkable distance from their current location), and displays real-time progress as the minibus journeys to the pick-up point. Customers can also use the app to send a referral code enabling their friends to try the service for free, and rewarding the referee with free Journey Credit when the referral takes their first ride.

The app provides useful marketing tools, such as in-app push campaigns and promotional code generation - and of course analytics.

Our fleet of six Mercedes Sprinter Citys has been fitted with tablet computers, to enable the app to direct drivers in order to fulfil passenger bookings, and is able to learn routes and road conditions to constantly improve the service offered.

We’ve also invested in other areas of technology, with a new Oxford Bus Company mobile app, and contactless payments have been rolled out across all vehicles in the fleet using innovative UKCA “model 2” based technology. This channel now makes up more than 33% of our on-vehicle revenue.

Key data: Oxford Bus Group

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
Society			
Safety			
Bus accidents per million miles	17	28.5	27.1
Fleet with CCTV (%) ⁺	100	100	100
Environment			
Carbon emissions per passenger journey (kg)	0.90	1.01	0.93
Community			
Community spend per employee (£)	38.59	15.22	45.37
Stakeholder events (number)	308	236	268
Customers			
Customer satisfaction (latest Passenger Focus Score) (%)	88	91	91
Expenditure on new buses in financial year (£'000) ⁺	2875	5473	6493
Average age of bus fleet [*]	6.7	5.7	6.3
Accessibility			
Bus fleet which is DDA compliant (%) [*]	100	100	94
Our people			
Average number of employees ⁺	809	776	804
RIDDOR accidents per 100 employees ⁺	0.1	0.3	3.1
Employee turnover rate (%) ⁺	16.5	19.4	8.3
Absenteeism rate (%) ⁺	3.5	4.9	3.5
Training spend per employee (£)	737	650	333
Diversity			
% of female employees	12.1	11.0	10.3
% of Asian, black and other ethnic group employees	20.4	20.6	17.8
Finance			
Passenger journeys (m)	23	23	24
Passenger volume growth (%)	1.5	-4.6	2.5

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:

Phil Southall, Managing Director

Cowley House

Watlington Road

Cowley

Oxford

OX4 6GA

Tel: 01865 785400

Email: phil.southall@oxfordbus.co.uk

Summary Verification Statement from Bureau Veritas UK Ltd

Bureau Veritas UK Ltd (Bureau Veritas) has provided verification for The Go-Ahead Group plc (Go-Ahead) over selected sustainability indicators contained within the Group's Annual Report. The information and data reviewed in this verification process covered the period 2 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

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



Bureau Veritas UK Ltd

August 2018

We're part of The
Go-Ahead
Group