

Sustainability report 2012



Taking our
communities places

Where we operate

Our network of bus routes covers the entire Brighton conurbation from Shoreham through to Newhaven as well as routes extending west to Steyning, north-east to Tunbridge Wells and east to Eastbourne.



About Brighton & Hove

We are one of the four largest private sector employers based in the city of Brighton & Hove and work in close partnership with Brighton & Hove City Council as well as having close links with East and West Sussex County Councils. This has seen us increase the number of journeys made by bus consistently every year since 1993 and helped minimise congestion.



2012 highlights

- Passenger satisfaction of 89%
- Introduced two Hybrid double deck buses
- Increased passenger journeys by 3.3%
- Introduced 20 new double deck buses
- Prepared 14 refurbished Bendy buses for service
- Introduced smartcards
- Introduced a smartphone app including real-time information
- Increased the number of night buses
- Improved frequencies on the busiest daytime routes

Key facts

48m

passenger journeys in the year

291

buses and coaches

1,185

staff

3

bus garages in the city and three bases in East Sussex

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We're a part of the
Go-Ahead
Group

www.buses.co.uk

Message from Roger French OBE DL, Managing Director

Our aim is to provide our customers with an excellent bus service offering value for money and to do so safely and responsibly.



The city of Brighton & Hove and the surrounding area is one of the most fantastic parts of the country to be running buses. Being surrounded by the newly designated South Downs National Park to the north and the sea to the south, together with natural east/west boundaries of the Rivers Ouse and Adur, it's a very compact conurbation, home to around 300,000 people and growing, and attracting an estimated eight million visitors a year:

The high density of housing and central location of offices and shopping facilities (there are no 'out of town' retail or business parks here) means we can provide one of the most comprehensive and intensive networks of frequent bus routes in any provincial town or city outside London with virtually no call on the public purse for funding.

Bus use per resident is very high compared to other provincial towns and cities in the country. Bus use per head in Brighton and Hove is almost double that in other coastal conurbations such as Southampton and Portsmouth, for example.

We also score the highest satisfaction with bus services according to an independent survey carried out by Ipsos Mori in 75 towns and cities across the country in 2011. And our own annual passenger surveys carried out by the independent transport watchdog Passenger Focus show a regular satisfaction score of 89-92% – a rating many commercial businesses would die for!

The area is also characterised by having had little or no road building during the 1960s. The A27 by-pass was constructed in the 1990s and was the impetus for a traffic management strategy that saw road space previously characterised by slow moving traffic travelling east/west freed up and allocated to a network of bus, taxi and cycle lanes. Despite a number of changes in political control of the City Council in the intervening years, this programme of encouraging sustainable transport has continued. This together with the huge investment Brighton and Hove Buses has made in improving service frequencies, introducing brand new buses, ticketing systems and raising the profile through innovative marketing, has led to consistent increases in the number of journeys being made by bus every year since 1993. This is a unique record outside London (where buses are regulated and subsidised) and one of which we are enormously proud.

The city's popularity has meant it continues to attract many visitors by car along the excellent access available from the north via the motorways and the now improving A23 at Handcross. Despite the excellent train service, it is possible that when the road widening is completed more people from Surrey, Kent and south London will opt to 'go down to Brighton for the day' by car. The opportunity to site a Park and Ride car park by the intersection of the A23 and A27 was lost some years ago and the area is now part of the new National Park. The current Green Administration in the City has confirmed that a Park and Ride is unlikely in their latest and final draft of the proposed City Plan which is designed to last for the next 30 years. The consequential challenge is therefore that congestion in the city is a real threat to its future economic prosperity. Indeed, in a recent review by the City's public sector partners, the greatest "risk" they felt the city faced in the future was from traffic congestion.

Despite the impact of congestion on our ability to run a reliable bus service – this is a challenge which should not be underestimated – we are determined to continue to play a key part in the future success of the city and the surrounding area and we will do more than ever to make buses an effective choice for people wanting to travel around the area.

This report provides an update on the work we have achieved over the last 12 months and outlines our plans for the year ahead. I hope you find it an interesting read.

Roger French OBE DL, Managing Director

Our 2012 performance highlights



Our 2012 safety highlights

3.89

bus accidents per million passenger journeys

83%

of drivers pass covert checks with flying colours

100%

buses fitted with cctv



We regularly undertake covert driving assessments of drivers on the road to ensure the highest standards of professional and safe driving are being maintained. Each year around 80 full assessments are undertaken with a third party company specialising in this work, Driver Assessment Services Ltd. In the last assessments, 83% of drivers were judged to be providing first class standards and those with exemplary reports received a modest reward as a goodwill encouragement.

Safety

A proactive approach

Safety has always been and will continue to be our highest priority. When customers step on a Brighton & Hove bus they do so with the confidence that a professionally trained driver will take them to their destination in the safest way possible. When other road users see a Brighton & Hove bus being driven around the city they are reassured it will be done so professionally and safely.

We are very proud of our excellent safety record. Our passengers can travel at ease with the knowledge they are using the safest form of transport available.

Once again in the 12 months from July 2011 to June 2012 there were no incidents of seriously injured passengers nor fatalities attributed to the conduct of our business. Sadly a motorcyclist died following a crash involving one of our buses at the Open Market, Brighton in February 2012 which the Coroner found was an accident with no blame attached to our driver in July 2012.

We continue to fully investigate each and every incident that does occur so that we can establish the cause and ensure it is not repeated if we are at fault in any way.

Training

We have continued our programme of training for each driver already employed as part of their continuing Certificate of Professional Competence as well as arranging extensive induction and initial training when new staff are recruited. This two-month programme includes comprehensive training with an emphasis on safety and includes presentations from the Company's Managing Director and Insurance and Risk Manager.

Monitoring

We have again arranged for mystery shopper observations by qualified independent experts to be carried out to monitor driving skills on the road and the feedback provided is always welcomed and appreciated in follow-up discussions.

Awareness

We again held two high profile Cycle Activity Days. These included a bus being parked in New Road when cyclists were given the chance to test for themselves the sight lines a bus driver has from the cab. We also continued our briefings for bus drivers on the need to be aware of the presence of cyclists.

Health & Safety

Our commitment to the very best Health and Safety practice extends throughout the workplace including our busy workshops. As well as regular workplace inspections by Health & Safety representatives, independent audits are carried out by an external company. All this is overseen by an active Health & Safety Committee with representation from all categories of employees.

Environment

A real focus

We continued our work towards achieving a target reduction of 20% in CO₂ emissions per passenger journey by 2015. Action plans across the whole Company's operations under the theme Driving Energy Further are being worked on to ensure we reduce the impact of all our activities.

We have encouraged all our employees to take an active part in saving energy through fuel efficient driving, efficient use of power in the workshops and offices and suggestions for investment in new energy saving devices.

We invested £4.5 million in vehicles during the year including a further 20 brand new Volvo double deck buses which entered service in April 2012 (joining a fleet of 21 delivered in the previous year). These are fitted with the exacting Euro 5 standard for emissions as are ten of a fleet of 14 more nearly-new bendy buses we acquired and refurbished from another bus Company for use on the busy 25 bus route to the universities during 2012.

The engines in a third of our fleet are now to Euro 4 or better standard.

We also acquired our first two fully hybrid buses – manufactured by Volvo to the same body design as our traditional diesel buses. Unlike other hybrid buses in other bus fleets, these were acquired without Government funding and have given us the opportunity to trial this new and encouraging technology which significantly reduces fuel use and emissions. We have another 11 hybrid buses on order for delivery later in 2012.

As part of our Driving Energy Further targets we are investing in technology advances to improve fuelling equipment and data recording, incorporating spill-free apparatus at all our garages.

Waste continues to be recycled at our garages in segregated containers.

Our 2012 environment highlights



100%

VOSA emission test pass rate

56%

waste recycled

40%

saving in fuel consumption experienced on first two Hybrid buses

The Campaign for Better Transport published their latest assessment of the least car-dependent cities in summer 2012 and listed Brighton and Hove as second only to London in the league table. They particularly cited the good public transport network as one of the key components of their assessment. The Green-led administration which has run Brighton & Hove City Council since May 2011 has pledged that they want the city to become the "greenest in the UK" and we aim to play our part in achieving this objective.

Our 2012 passenger highlights



28%

passengers use the bus to travel to work

30,000

passengers with a smartcard

85%

of journeys made on a bus route running at least every 10 minutes

Our latest 20 Volvo double deck buses and two hybrid buses were again delivered with automatic next-stop announcements enabling those with sight impairments as well as tourists to be reassured about where the bus is. This innovation, now installed on 43 buses, has been welcomed by local and national disability groups.

Passengers

Innovation continues

Satisfaction

Two further surveys into passenger satisfaction were carried out by the independent transport watchdog Passenger Focus with overall results of 89-90%. These comprehensive surveys involve self-completing questionnaires by over 1,200 passengers and cover a wide range of feedback which is used to further improve our services.

Close links were maintained with Bus Users UK both at a national level in the organisation and locally with regular meetings being held to discuss developments and listen to feedback.

Increasing numbers

Every year since 1993 we have increased the number of passenger journeys undertaken on the city's buses and during this time we have more than doubled the number of journeys from around 22 million to over 48 million each year. In 2011/12 a further increase of more than 1.5 million journeys was made on our buses compared to the previous year, which in turn had seen an increase of 1.4 million journeys.

Improving service

We are always delighted to receive feedback from our customers and have used these valued comments to introduce more improvements to our timetables in Autumn 2011 and Spring 2012.

More buses were introduced to the Sunday timetable for the cross city route 1 to improve the frequency to every 10 minutes.

Further improvements were introduced to the Coast Road service with more journeys for commuters, a new 15 minute off peak service to North Peacehaven and an improved Sunday evening frequency on the 12/12A bus routes. Leisure travellers also benefited during summer 2012 with a doubling of the frequency of the 13X route between Brighton and Eastbourne via Beachy Head to every 30 minutes. Research carried out in the morning peak period showed that 45% of people travelling into Brighton along the A259 are now using the bus thanks to the improvements to bus timetables following the introduction of bus lanes in 2008.

More buses were added to the timetable for route 25 serving the universities following further growth in the number of students opting to travel by bus.

A new bus route was introduced to Lower Bevendean offering a more frequent service and a direct connection to Brighton Station.

Additional journeys were introduced in the early and late evenings on a number of routes as well as improved train connections at Brighton Station for commuters.

A revamped network of night buses was introduced with more journeys and more destinations for those travelling on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights in addition to our nightly N7 and N25 cross city routes.

Smartcards

Our new smartcard called the key was launched in October 2011, initially for students, with other passengers including children able to obtain one from Spring 2012. There has been a very encouraging take up with over 30,000 smartcards in circulation within a few weeks of the general launch in March 2012.

Passengers are appreciating the huge convenience and benefits of buying SAVER tickets online not only at the cheapest prices offering great value for money, but also safe in the knowledge that the purchase is secure and will be added to their smartcard when they next travel.

Further developments are being planned to incorporate into smartcards during the remainder of 2012 and into 2013.

Employees

Highly valued

Training courses continued covering the areas of customer service skills, conflict avoidance, defensive driving, diversity and discrimination and enhanced driving for bendy buses. All drivers are in the process of accumulating 35 hours of professional training for their Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) and these courses formed part of this. Each one runs for seven hours, and is produced and delivered by our in-house team of qualified trainers, who have met stringent criteria prior to approval and registration. Nearly 8,000 hours of training were provided.

Thirty drivers achieved their NVQ Level 2 in Bus Driving and two new driving instructors achieved their NVQ level 3, and a further two are now qualified to conduct internal NVQ assessments.

The Company has a long-standing recognition agreement with the union Unite and regular consultation and negotiation meetings are held to discuss all aspects of the work content for jobs involving driving, cleaning, skilled maintenance, administration and supervision.

We continued our commitment to apprenticeship training in engineering skills with four staff currently being trained and two more being recruited.

To ensure we have enough drivers to cater for the significant expansion of bus timetables a large recruitment and training programme was implemented in late 2011 and early 2012. Aside from filling the 56 vacancies which arose as drivers retired (ten during the year), moved away or decided to leave for personal reasons we recruited a further 89 drivers to fill the new jobs we created making for 145 new drivers employed and trained as well as five skilled engineers, two apprentices and three cleaners. This was a record year for job growth coupled with one of our lowest ever years for staff turnover.

Our delegated driving examiner, Paul Carter, received a glowing report from his Driving Standards Agency (DSA) supervisory examiner, and the Company was inspected twice by Joint Approvals Unit for Periodic Training (JAUPT) to ensure our CPC course delivery is up to standard. Again we received excellent feedback from them.

Our 2012 employee highlights

1,185

staff

4th

largest private sector
employer in the city

89

new jobs created

145

new drivers recruited

9 years

average length of service

We have a long established apprenticeship scheme to train young school leavers in the skilled trades of PSV motor mechanics, electrical and body fitting. The four year training course includes specialist college study as well as extensive on-the-job training and mentoring. We currently have four apprentices in training and took two more recruits during the year.



Our 2012 community highlights

400

stakeholder events
and meetings were held
and attended

£18,000

support to
community projects

For almost a decade we have run a hugely popular Santa Bus from late November through until Christmas in conjunction with two local charities, the Argus Appeal and the Martlets Hospice. The brightly coloured bus visits a residential area of the city each evening with volunteers making house to house collections and raising much valued funds for these two worthy charities.

We helped the Martlets Hospice raise awareness in the local community of its need to raise funds through legacies by donating the space to promote this on ten double deck buses during the year.



Community

Consultation high on the agenda

Company representatives once again attended a large number of meetings with stakeholders involved in all aspects of the City. Some 400 meetings were attended by the Managing Director, Operations Director and the Business Development Manager with not only our strategic partners including the City Council, neighbouring local authorities, Sussex Police, the Universities and education providers but also a whole host of community groups and other organisations in the city.

Among the diverse community groups we met to discuss all aspects of buses during the year were the Pensioners Association, Brighton & Hove Federation of the Disabled, Tenants Disabled Network, Shopmobility, Sussex Deaf Association, Newhaven Rotary Club, Hove Civic Society, Friends of the Earth and residents groups in areas including Bevendean, Goldstone Valley, Hangleton and Knoll, Steyning, Whitehawk and Woodingdean.

Roger French, the Company's Managing Director, continued to fulfill his role as chair of the city's Local Strategic Partnership which brings together the major players in Brighton and Hove including the public sector; the private sector and the community and voluntary sector.

The Company also participates in the Economic Partnership and the Transport Partnership and Roger French chairs the City's Business Forum and the Executive Committee of the Chamber of Commerce and the Hove Business Partnership as well as being a long-standing member of the management executive of the Hove Business Association. The Company is also a member of the City's Tourism Alliance.

The Company continued its support for many local charities and not for profit organisations providing in-kind help, support and raffle prizes. Free bus advertising was given to the Martlets Hospice so they could promote their new high profile campaign to encourage residents to leave a legacy in their will as well as the long-standing support for the Hospice's weekly lottery. Once again a bus and driver were made available to both the Martlets Hospice and the Argus Appeal throughout December for the popular fund-raising Santa Bus. Roger French continued his role as Chairman of the Martlets Hospice as well as a Trustee of the Argus Appeal.

We hosted three group visits from Grace Eyre, which assists people with physical and mental disabilities to live independently. We have shown the groups around a bus garage and then taken them out on a bus where, through role play, they have built up their confidence to tackle travelling on their own. This has not only been of great benefit to the people themselves, but they have also passed on to us really useful feedback about any problems and frustrations that they encounter when using our buses which has been incorporated into our training programmes.

Data table

	2011/2012	2010/2011	2009/2010
Safety			
Bus accidents (per million passenger journeys)	3.89	3.58	3.33
Fleet with CCTV (%)	100	100	100
Environment			
Carbon emissions per passenger journey (kg)	0.47	0.51	0.51
Site energy			
– Gas consumption (kwh)	1,670	2,190	2,101
– Electricity consumption (kwh)	1,484	1,485	1,432
Fuel efficiency			
– Miles per gallon	5.68	5.70	5.76
Passengers			
Number of passenger journeys (m)	48.3	46.7	46.3
Fleet with low floor (%)	100	100	100
Saver tickets sold off-bus (%)	31.9	28.6	26.1
Employees			
Number of employees	1,122	1,084	1,048
Turnover rate (%)	7.4	9.5	9
Absence rate (%)	5.6	5.5	6
Diversity by ethnic group (%)			
– Asian, black or other origin	2.8	2.2	2
– White	97.2	97.8	98
Diversity by gender (%)			
– Women	9.4	8.5	8
– Men	90.6	91.5	92
Average length of service	9yr 1m	9yr 6m	8yr 1m
Community			
Charitable giving and investment (£)	18,293	42,202	10,984
Number of stakeholder events	402	312	263

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

We're a part of the
Go-Ahead
Group

You can find out more about Brighton & Hove by visiting our website www.buses.co.uk and more information about how Brighton & Hove 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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Summary Verification Statement from Bureau Veritas UK Ltd

For the fourth year, Bureau Veritas UK Ltd (Bureau Veritas) has worked with the Go-Ahead Group plc ('Go-Ahead') to verify selected sustainability key performance indicator (KPI) data contained within the Go-Ahead Group's Annual Report 2012 and on its website.

The information and data reviewed for this verification process relate to the period from 3rd July 2011 to the 30th June 2012. Bureau Veritas has verified sustainability KPIs contained within the Key Data table on the website and for selected Go-Ahead companies.

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