



transdev

talk

APR 2026

The Shuttle is electrified

an **update**
on **bus franchising**

£3.8m investment
on the **464**



FUNDRAISING FOR NEW CHARITY OF THE YEAR

a year **for** unlocking **our** potential...

2025 was a strong transition year for the company – we reinforced our fleet, invested in our people, and refurbished our spaces. Now, we are looking ahead to a more settled future.

Our biggest achievement in 2025 was the management of our largest fleet transition. During the year, we replaced over 100 buses in our different operations, including new low-carbon emission, hybrid, and fully electric models, both for our commercial operation and our school activities. This transition was complex, and I want to thank the team for making this happen.

We greatly improved our systems for training and recruitment, and our new apprenticeship programmes show great potential. Our recruitment indicators are all green, and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our 2025 and 2026 new colleagues.

Together, we have also achieved some spectacular improvements in punctuality in both the Yorkshire and Lancashire regions. This is great for our passengers and is helping us in showing what we can achieve with a great team, good scheduling and better-maintained buses to our different Combined Authorities.

Another notable accomplishment was the refurbishment of colleague spaces, including renovations at Blackburn and Keighley depots.

Strengthening our safety measures has also proven to be a key success for us in 2025, with a significant reduction in both health and safety incidents and roadside accidents. We need to continue to reinforce safety in 2026 for all our colleagues, passengers and local residents in general.

Finally, we are investing to improve how we work. In 2025, we rolled out our new uniforms across the company with positive feedback, and we have now

started the implementation of new HR and Payroll systems. It is a challenging project, but we want to create better added value, better tools, and better personal spaces for all of us.

If 2025 was a strong transition year, then 2026 is about maturing those projects to reach their full potential. This will be a year to sustain and support, to consolidate our positions within the transport industry, and to unlock more opportunities for our amazing customers that we serve in the North of England.

Thank you everyone for your hard work and support in 2025, and welcome to our new joiners!

story by: **Henri Rohard**

Managing Director



simpler & **better** **value** *bus tickets*

In response to last Summer's mammoth customer survey – Your Ticket, Your Say – we finally launched our bus ticket upgrade across the North of England in January.

Here at Transdev, we pride ourselves on listening to feedback, understanding our customers' needs, and making informed decisions on how we can improve our services.

That's why we put so much time and energy into our research campaign 'Your Ticket, Your Say' – a customer survey to find out what everyone thought about our range of bus tickets in Yorkshire and Lancashire... And we were blown away with the response!

Over 1,300 customers participated in the campaign, providing us with hours upon hours' worth of data that helped us rebuild our ticket range, all with simplicity and better value in mind.

From January, we reduced the number of ticket zones in Yorkshire and Lancashire – making travel simpler. We also extended the coverage of certain tickets to more locations – making travel broader – and reduced the price of select tickets on major routes, making travel more affordable for our most frequent customers.

These changes represent some of the biggest upgrades that Transdev has made to its bus tickets in the past decade, and we're delighted that it was our customers who led us in this journey towards better travel options.

It's amazing that those who rely on public transport, who travel on our buses to work, to school, and to see family, had the opportunity to get involved and help shape our day-to-day operations.

The campaign has also helped reinforce our customer-first ethos here in Commercial, and that the best results often come from working together with stakeholders across the North of England.

An enormous thank you to all our driver colleagues and the entire customer service team for helping to explain these changes to our customers.

We appreciate that the transition is not always easy, and we're so proud of how everyone came together on this project to deliver our customers simplicity and good value.

story by: **David Wallington**

Head of Commercial



new buses 4 the 464



As part of a £3.8m investment, our colleagues in Blackburn have received some fancy new low-carbon buses for the 464, packed full of the latest features for our customers and colleagues

The 464 is a vital part of Lancashire's public transport network, carrying over 1.5 million passengers annually between Accrington, Rawtenstall, and Rochdale.

We've wanted to upgrade the vehicles on this route for several years, and we're thrilled that 16 new Alexander Dennis Enviro200 buses are set to launch this Spring!

These low-carbon emission single-deckers use 15% less fuel compared to similar vehicles and will also run on high-blend biodiesel – making them both fuel-efficient and more environmentally-friendly than previous models.

Each bus includes free Wi-Fi, USB Charging, skylights, back-to-back stop displays, and moquette-trimmed high-back seats as standard.

And as part of our commitment to accessible transport for all, buses also have two wheelchair spaces, on-board audio-visual announcements, and hearing loops to support those who require hearing aids.

These stylish vehicles are presented in The Blackburn Bus Company's signature light blue colour scheme, with custom livery created by our wonderful designer Ashlie Minasian.

They are also a significant upgrade for our colleagues, with a state-of-the-art digital dashboard to make operating easier, and a driver screen to make working safer.

The introduction of new buses for The Blackburn Bus Company follows the rollout of 15 eCitaro vehicles for The Keighley Bus Company, and 15 Mercedes-Benz Citaro hybrid buses to the FLYER-branded network in 2025.



story by: **Frank Stanisauskis**
General Manager, Lancashire

the million club

story by: Dave Wallington
Head of Commercial



While the Government's fare-cap increase did impact many of our services across the North of England, a number of our most popular routes still cleared the one-million-customer mark in 2025 – including:

1. Blackburn - 6/6A, 7/7A
2. Blackburn - 464
3. Blackburn - 1
4. Blackburn - Hotline 152
5. Burnley - Witchway X43
6. Harrogate - The 36
7. Harrogate - 1
8. Keighley - SHUTTLE 662
9. Keighley - Airline 60 / 60A
10. York - Coastliner

We're particularly proud of the following services, as despite the fare-cap increase, each route carried more customers in 2025 than the previous year:

- York - Coastliner
- Flyer - A2
- Blackburn - 2/2A
- Team Pennine - 502, 575, and 577
- Harrogate - 6, and 24
- Keighley - K1, K5, K6 and SHUTTLE 662

Thank you to everyone for your hard work, and congratulations to those involved with either the Million Club or on any of the most-improved services!

they're green, clean and our customers love them!

It's been an exciting start to 2026 for colleagues and customers in West Yorkshire with our all new fleet of zero-emission electric buses now on the road between Keighley and Bradford!

A total of 15 new electric eCitaro buses have joined our Keighley based fleet, thanks to a £4.5 million total investment by Transdev in the new vehicles and infrastructure in our depot to support them.

We've also received financial support from central Government worth £3 million, secured by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) from the nationwide Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme.

The new fleet is now at work on SHUTTLE 662, our frequent route linking Keighley, Bingley, Saltaire and Bradford, and also on hourly route 67 between Bradford, Thornton, Cullingworth and Keighley – and the reaction to the new eCitaros from our customers has been fantastic, with many telling our drivers what a leap forward in comfort and quality these buses really are.



story by: Jim Craven
General Manager,
The Keighley Bus Company

Our new eCitaros are fully compliant with Bradford's CleanAirZone, after the city became the first in Yorkshire to introduce the scheme in September 2022, covering all vehicles except private cars and motorcycles.

Each new bus features fast and free Wi-Fi and USB device charging, custom-designed seating in a part leather, part moquette design unique to us, and for the first time on these routes, hearing loops and two colour audio-visual information screens, one facing the wheelchair space, giving constantly updated journey information.

To protect our customers, colleagues and other road users, each bus also features extensive safety systems, including electronic assistance at the front and when turning, plus traffic sign monitoring and electronic tyre pressure reporting. Acceleration Skid Control also significantly cuts stopping distances in an emergency by applying braking more quickly and precisely.

Higher power output from today's new generation batteries means each bus can go further between charge-ups, while delivering the reliable service our customers rightly expect from us.



The bright green Keighley Bus Company branded livery really makes these new buses stand out on our busy roads – while for those following behind in their cars, the back of each bus features a popular day out destination served by our buses as an added incentive to give us a try next time.

Our introduction of the first new all-electric buses to join our Keighley fleet follows the rollout in 2025 of 15 brand new Citaro hybrid buses on our popular FLYER bus network, linking Bradford, Leeds, Otley and Harrogate with Leeds Bradford Airport.

Together we're looking forward to welcoming more customers old and new on board our green, clean and pristine new electric buses in 2026 and beyond!



menopause awareness training

story by: **Claire Swann**
Head of People



WELLBEING OF WOMEN

We recently partnered with Wellbeing of Women, a British charity that for over 60 years, has driven positive action and change for women across the UK.

Research has shown that women over the age of 50 are typically at the most successful and experienced stage of their career – yet many feel compelled to reduce their hours, pass up promotions, or even leave their jobs due to a lack of menopause support.

We've long wanted to enhance our support network for our female team members. That's why we reached out and teamed up with Wellbeing in Women to put some of our colleagues through their Menopause Awareness Workplace Online Training course.

So far, our Heads of, General Managers, Engineering Managers, and Service Delivery Managers have each completed this course – giving them valuable insights into creating supportive and inclusive workplaces.

I'm confident that by working with such an influential charity action group, we can not only enhance the understanding and awareness of issues that may be faced by many of our colleagues but create a more open culture here at Transdev.



***"I reject your reality,
and substitute my own"***

That was the catchphrase made famous around the world by 'Mythbusters' – a hit TV documentary series, in which two Hollywood special effects experts set out to debunk rumours and separate fact from fiction.

Ask yourself this: why do urban legends surrounding what we do together every day – keeping the wheels turning for our customers – keep on springing up?

story by: **Kel Pizzuti**
Head of Operations



The answer is that it's not always easy to tell facts from folklore, particularly when we hear it from those who work alongside us. There's no shortage of misconceptions out there – too many to list them all.

Here are just two of the myths we hear most frequently – see if you recognise them!

*thank you to all,
and keep shining*

We receive thousands of compliments from our customers every year – a testament to the amazing work that you all do across Yorkshire and Lancashire.

It really is wonderful to see the compliments land in Customer Services' inbox. Whilst people are very quick to complain, they are not so quick at complimenting. This is why I treat compliments with great respect and pleasure.

We make sure that the depot managers are aware of each compliment, allowing them to forward the great news on to our colleagues. More importantly,

we also make sure each customer is thanked for writing in, as they deserve to know that their message has been passed on.

From Preston to Scarborough, and Keighley to York, these compliments really remind me of the incredible work that you all do, every day while serving our customers. Often your job is conducted under such conditions that mean it would be so easy to deliver poor customer service; however, your constant dedication and professionalism shine through and continue to make us remembered by the customers for the right reasons.

Thank you to all for your hard work in 2025, and keep shining!



story by: **Phil Harris**
Customer Service Manager

MYTH 1: 'THE GOLDEN MINUTE'

No, it's not a 1970s TV game show – that was 'The Golden Shot'!

Rumour has it that the so-called 'Golden Minute' gives our drivers the opportunity to leave a timing point on their route one minute early – maybe to allow extra time in case of unforeseen delays on the road, or even to reach the destination a fraction ahead of time.



REALITY CHECK: Leaving a timing point up to one minute ahead of schedule is only ever allowed by the Traffic Commissioner to account for variation between watches, and for no other reason. Besides, leaving early isn't in the best interest of our customers – imagine how you'd feel if you turned up 30 seconds before your bus was due to leave, only to see it disappearing over the horizon?

The bottom line is that we don't leave timing points ahead of the published timetable. It's why many of our buses feature countdown to departure timers on the destination display – so that our customers can have confidence in our buses running to time. In short, we go when our timetable says we will, not before.

MYTH 2: THE 'DIVERSION DILEMMA'

We've all experienced it – having to divert away from our usual route because of roadworks, unplanned road closures due to accidents, weather related reasons such as flooding... the list goes on.

But what happens when we're following an unfamiliar route that we don't normally serve, and a customer rings the bell (or asks our driver) to leave at the next stop?

The rumour says that we're 'not allowed to stop on a diversion, because it's not our stop, and if we do stop there, we'll be fined'. And no-one wants to be responsible for that...!



REALITY CHECK: In fact, no bus operator will be fined simply for setting down or picking up a customer at a recognised bus stop. That's a fact, whether it's one we normally serve or not.

To understand why, look at it through the eyes of the customer. Imagine our diversion passes a stop outside their home, maybe a mile from the place they'd normally leave the bus.

If we refuse to let them leave the bus at the stop where they live, and insist on carrying them to the first stop beyond the diversion, we're making them walk all the way back home... on top of the delay to their journey caused by the diversion.

We sometimes have temporary stops in place on a diversion route – always make sure you know where these are. And while you follow the diversion, keep your eyes peeled for any intending customers at stops.

Quite simply, picking up and setting down customers safely at a recognised bus stop while on diversion is completely fine. It's a common sense way to show we put our customers first.

Two myths busted – and here's one golden rule (this one's 100 percent true!)

If you're not sure about any aspect of what we do, please, **ASK YOUR MANAGER**. And remember – don't take folklore as fact. That way, you'll always be on the right side of reality!



I would like to let you know that all your bus drivers for the coastliner 840 & 843 are brilliant.

They really help me to be supported on my journeys to York and Leeds as I have autism, ADHD as well as learning difficulties and struggle with my communication as I can't talk properly. All of your drivers are the best I've ever seen. They make my journeys really calm and help with my sensory issues.

I feel all other bus companies should be the same as you as you go above and beyond.

compassionate Coastliner!

Many thanks for being neurodiversity and disabled friendly!

Just want to say a massive, massive thank you to Darren the driver of the No. 64 bus from Skipton to Ilkley.

We had a slight issue with our client, a young autistic male, and the driver was brilliant with us and with him.

I can't thank him enough, for keeping the passengers calm and for allowing us to do our job.

Hopefully this will get to the right man.

excellent Darren!



I wanted to take a moment to personally thank you for your incredibly generous donation of 248KG food/goods to Blackburn Foodbank in the months of November and December. Your support is making a profound impact on our mission to alleviate hunger and food insecurity in our community.

Your kindness and compassion are truly inspiring. Due to your donation, we are able to provide essential food supplies to individuals and families who are facing challenging circumstances. Your contribution brings hope and comfort to those in need.

We are incredibly thankful. It is through the kindness and generosity of individuals like you that we can continue our work and bring about meaningful change. Your belief in our cause and your commitment to making a difference is ultimately inspirational.

Thanks again for your ongoing support.

Best wishes

Rachel

Blackburn Foodbank

brilliant Blackburn!

thank you Jacky!

I would love to give Jacky a big thank you for keeping our buses clean and always kindly pointing us in the right direction when our buses are in a different bay. You are the greatest and keep up the good work (she works in Harrogate bus station and cleans the buses as they arrive in and out of the station).

I have just been on the A1 route, Leeds Boar Lane.

The driver is an absolute gentleman. He greeted us with a smile and chatted to us as we got on, he then as we got off he spoke to us and wished us well on our travels.

Every person who got on between the station and the airport was greeted in the same lovely way. As someone who has suffered from low mood and PTSD, you can never underestimate the impact of someone greeting you nicely with a smile and wishing you well. The service itself was great as well the bus was spotless.

outstanding Paul!

Just wanted to pass on my thanks to a driver. She had to deal with a very drunk passenger, who was abusive and aggressive.

The driver was so calm and collected, brilliantly assertive whilst keeping the other passengers feeling safe and informed without being judgemental of the passenger she had asked to leave the bus after he repeatedly ignored her requests.

While it's sad that your staff have to deal with stuff like this alongside doing an already very difficult job, I just thought it was remarkable how well she dealt with this situation!

amazing Abigail!

Just wanted to say a huge thank you to the driver of the M5 bus from Barnoldswick.

He made my daughter feel so welcome, let her have a look at the drivers seat and she was super excited to go on the bus.

Never met as a friendly driver in my life and he deserves some recognition for the love of the job.

wonderful Dave!

I just wanted to state how lovely and kind the driver was to all customers getting on board this service.

Even to those who exited the bus - he got out of his seat to help those who needed support in exiting the bus, and served everyone with a smile.

I'm local, and have been using the service for over 30 years since I was a child, and I have to say today felt like a special journey. Well done on employing such a lovely fellow and please pass my regards to the driver.

Brilliant top class service.

making a difference Abdul!

I am on the 1A from the retail park to Harrogate and I would like to feedback a positive review.

super Steve!

I have been getting the bus since before Christmas to the hospital and now to station view to visit my mum. Most of the drivers have been polite and helpful but today the driver is exceptional he saw my running to catch the bus and waited so I could get on, I am not supposed to run due to waiting for brain surgery he was so polite and helpful when I couldn't get my card to work and waited until I sat down nothing was too much trouble. He has excellent customer service skills and is a credit to your company sorry I don't know his name

I have to rely on buses as I don't drive and I am due to have open brain surgery soon and for the last 2 months I have been firstly going to the hospital and currently station view in Starbeck. I think it is nice and polite to comment on excellent customer service as people are quick enough to complain.

I would like to take a moment to commend one of your drivers, James, who was driving the No. 20 bus to Monks Cross.

James demonstrated exceptional thoughtfulness and professionalism when he waited for a disabled passenger who was just about a minute away from the bus stop to safely board.

Additionally, he also waited briefly for another passenger who was less than 30 seconds from the stop. This small act of kindness was noticed and greatly appreciated not only by the passengers involved but by all of us on the bus. Many of us thanked him personally for his consideration.

His patience and awareness ensured that no passenger was left behind, especially considering that the next bus would not have arrived for another hour. This level of care and attention to passengers' needs is commendable and reflects very positively on your service.

Please pass on my sincere thanks and appreciation to James for his thoughtfulness. Acts like these make a real difference and are worthy of recognition.

exceptional James!

I got on the X41 to Manchester at Harcourt Road.

It broke down just a few stops later (brake system failed) and I just wanted to send over an email to make sure the lady driving the 464 to Rochdale (which was only a few minutes behind us) knows that she was an absolute superstar.

She stopped her own bus to help, got us all on it and made sure we all knew which bus to get on at Rawtenstall bus station to get in to Manchester.

Not only that, but she also made sure a young woman waiting at one of the bust stops in Rising Bridge was not left behind and got her on the bus too.

In my eyes, this is above and beyond what is expected of her and absolutely deserves recognition.

kind & considerate Emma!

I would be very grateful if you could pass on my thanks to her, and I hope that she always shows as much compassion as she did today. We need more people like her in the world!

we gave Starbeck students a blooming brilliant day out!

Organising school transport can be a headache... especially when the students have additional needs to consider.

That's why we were happy to help when the team at Springwater School, close to our depot in Starbeck, approached us for assistance with taking a group of 25 youngsters plus three tutors to the annual Harrogate Autumn Flower Show at Newby Hall, near Ripon.

The event is widely seen as the premier Autumn gardening gathering in the UK, with leading plant nurseries, a fantastic fruit and vegetable show and a sea of over 5,000 blooms plus Newby Hall's famous gardens awaiting the eager young visitors.

Emma Kitwood is the school's Early Years Leader and Senior Leader. Emma says: "Transport is a significant cost for a school visit, and in the current financial climate we are very aware that many families can't afford additional school trips.

"Our Parent Teacher Association try to subsidise our trips with up to £150 per class each year, but we still need to ask parents for the rest. Legally, we need to ask them for a voluntary contribution as we can't insist that parents pay, and many don't – leaving the school to pay the shortfall, which we can't afford given our own restricted budget.

"Coaches can cost between £300 to £400 for a day visit, which is then divided by the number of children in the class – bad enough in a class of 30, but with some of our classes only numbering 24, and entry costs on top, a trip can become very expensive. The only other option would be to cancel the visit, a shame given these trips really enhance classroom-based learning.

"Everyone enjoyed a wonderful day at Newby Hall with The Harrogate Bus Company's kind support – all of our tutors, parents and of course students are enormously grateful for your help in making our Autumn Flower Show visit a wonderful day out."

Our help with Springwater School's trip to Newby Hall maintains our proud tradition of supporting its students with special educational needs.

In previous years we've also provided free travel across Harrogate and Knaresborough on our scheduled bus network for groups of students with their teachers, to help them to get around town and gain travel skills and independence along the way.

All young people attending the school have moderate to complex learning disabilities, and teachers say our long-term support is vital to help the youngsters build confidence in social settings.



story by: **Adam Emmott**
General Manager,
The Harrogate Bus Company



Mystery solved!

Feedback drives top customer service



story by: **Phil Harris**
Customer Service Manager

They look, talk and walk like any ordinary customer, yet they help us deliver our signature high quality customer service. So... who are they?

Our mystery shoppers travel on our buses every day, but what makes them different is tucked away in their pocket or purse – it's a dedicated mobile app, which they use to log their journey from start to finish.

As well as the date, time, route and journey start and end points, they record important feedback on the details that matter – the welcome when they board, the presentation of their bus inside and out, how comfortable their journey is and the information they pick up along the way from destination displays outside the bus and audio-visual customer information screens inside.

Our mystery shoppers change regularly and are drawn from a range of backgrounds, including managers from other depots and offices and ordinary customers who work outside our organisation, and share our desire to be the best we can at what we do.

By now, you may be wondering... what do we do with the results from our mystery shopper app?

We review all the results we receive on a monthly basis with our engineering managers and the General Manager of the depot which operates the route.

We look carefully at the detail that comes in via the mystery shopper app, and where we see an opportunity to learn constructively from it and take action, we agree on a plan to make it happen.



It's also every bit as much about positive feedback as the other variety.

For example, where we've introduced new buses, such as our electric vehicles in Harrogate and Keighley, or our hybrids on FLYER, we have seen a significant rise in customer satisfaction from our mystery shoppers.

And where we've improved things in other ways, such as increasing on-bus cleaning, the results can also be seen through the mystery shopper app within days.

Many businesses across and beyond transport use mystery shopping to gain real insight into what their customers think. And as a company with a hard-won reputation for great customer service, it's vital to keeping our standards high on and off the road.

Mystery solved!



food drive & Christmas bus

Transdev's most recent Food Drive was an enormous success, with over 1100 items being donated to local food banks across the North of England.

From Blackburn and Burnley to Halifax and Harrogate, our regional bus companies came together at Christmas to donate more than one thousand food, hygiene, and household items to those in need across Yorkshire and Lancashire.

These parcels were distributed to the Blackburn Foodbank, the Elland and District Foodbank, The Salvation Army in Keighley, The Joyful Brew in Harrogate, and Burnley FC in the Community.

A very special mention to Frank Stanisauskis and his team at The Blackburn Bus Company, who together donated more than 630 individual items – a truly fantastic achievement!

In fact, our festive Food Drive was such a success that we want to make them a year-round thing – but we need some help deciding on how best to plan this out.

Should each depot continue donating separately to their local food bank, or should we pick one food bank in Yorkshire and one in Lancashire so that we can put donations together? You can email talk@transdevbus.co.uk to let us know what you think – we'll be deciding on this soon.

In partnership with a local community café, we helped bring some Christmas cheer to families when we arranged a meet-and-greet with Santa Claus on board one of our all-electric buses.

Our team at the Blaze field offices started by decorating one of the



Mercedes-Benz eCitaro buses with baubles and tinsel, before delivering it to community café – The Joyful Brew – in Starbeck, Harrogate.

There, Santa Claus himself boarded the bus, and from his all-electric Grotto, met almost 100 families from the local community: handing out goody bags full of sweet treats, 'Golden Tickets', as well as copies of our 'Bright Sparks' activity and story book.

It was a truly uplifting event to be part of - welcoming local children and their families on board this amazing Christmas bus created such a special atmosphere.

Seeing the joy on their faces as they met Father Christmas and received a gift was incredibly rewarding - I can't wait to do it again next year!

An enormous thank you to everyone at Transdev who donated to the Food Drive, and to the Blaze field offices for organising the Christmas family bus – you're all exceptional!



congratulations to our latest CPC winners!



story by: **Dale French**
Training Manager

It's great to start 2026 with some good news... so, well done to our latest duo to celebrate a successful boost to their qualifications!

Stewart McDonald and **Luke Buchan** have become the latest to achieve **Transport Manager CPC** – the Certificate of Professional Competence qualification needed to manage transport operations.

To qualify, both have had to show they have the knowledge and skills to meet legal and safety standards – while also being fully able to lead on managing:

- **business operations**, such as financial planning and cost control
- **drivers**, including regulations on working hours
- **compliance and risk**, following legal and safety standards and operator licensing requirements
- **transport operations**, including practical aspects such as vehicle maintenance and route planning

Stewart and Luke are the latest to progress through our 'StepUp' fast-track career development programme, which allows our people with potential to move into areas beyond their comfort zone.

We invite applications from within our teams to join StepUp each year, so if you'd like to know more, ask your manager for details.



story by: **Tracey Cloggie**
Office Manager & PA to Directors



bus franchising an explanation

We know that everyone has a lot of questions about Bus Franchising, so we thought it would be good to explain what's been going on and where momentum is building for 2026.

What is Bus Franchising?

Bus Franchising in the UK is where a local transport authority (such as West Yorkshire Combined Authority) plans the bus network - routes, timetables, fares and service standards - and then competitively awards contracts to private operators (such as Transdev) to run those services. This is essentially a shift from on-the-road competition to competition for the market.

Over the past few years, franchising in the UK has begun to expand beyond London; for example, Greater Manchester's Bee Network completed its roll-out in January 2025, bringing all local buses under local control.

What does Bus Franchising mean for drivers?

When a franchise changes hands, drivers typically transfer to the incoming operator under something called TUPE, which ensures that employment contracts, rights, and obligations transfer seamlessly to the new employer.

Think of this as a kind of 'safety net' for when a business changes hands – whatever happens, your contracts, conditions, and jobs are safe.

Then, once a local authority has taken over a transport network, drivers work to performance, punctuality targets and customer service standards that are set by that authority – not the operator.

no such thing as a free ride!

story by: **David Wallington**
Head of Commercial



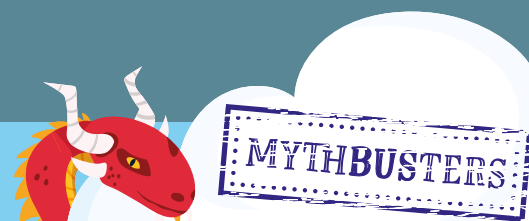
"Why should they get a free ride – surely it costs our company money?"

It's a comment we hear every now and then, usually when a customer uses a concessionary travel pass or a multi-operator ticket like West Yorkshire's MCard or the City of York's AllYork ticket to get from A to B on our buses.

The popular myth is that as they're travelling for free, that's a fare lost to us and as a commercial business, why should we pick up the cost of carrying them for nothing?

The reality is very different. In fact, we are fully reimbursed by local authorities for carrying English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) pass holders – which currently

helping
people get
to...



What are we doing in the Franchising team?

We recently submitted bids for small franchises in Manchester, and there are upcoming opportunities in Liverpool, South Yorkshire, and West Yorkshire.

For example, in West Yorkshire, we are currently bidding on Tranche 1. Those services are planned to go live in April 2027, under the name Weaver Network, and the winning award should be announced by mid-2026.

The WYCA are putting a lot of focus on improving bus punctuality and introducing electric vehicles – they want to have all local buses under local control by the end of 2028.

To keep our momentum up, we've recently been joined by two new colleagues: Robert Dempster and Paul Zarka. Together, they complete our core team in Manchester and bring fresh energy to our bids, ahead of what will be a vital year for our projects in 2026.

story by:
Clément Bureau
Bid & Performance
Director



theatres

includes everyone over the age of 66 and those with a range of disabilities, not all of them immediately visible.

For each pass recorded by our ticketing system, we are paid a realistic fare for the journey made – that's why we ask passholders where they're travelling to, so each trip they make is accurately recorded.

Yes, travel is free to the passholder, but the local authority in the area where they board our bus and scan their pass is responsible for reimbursing us for the cost of their travel.

For journeys with a pass that would have been made even if there was no concessionary travel scheme, we are reimbursed with the fare that would have been paid, adjusted to take account of inflation. And the cost of extra trips by passholders who wouldn't have chosen to travel if they didn't have a pass is also paid back to us.

So, our business doesn't lose money by carrying pass holders – that's why we ran our



markets



cafés

successful 2023 information campaign "Get Your Freedom – Get Your Free Bus Pass" to encourage take-up and use of concessionary passes on our buses.

The reality is similar when a customer uses a multi-operator pass on our buses – for example, West Yorkshire's MCard. All operators who are partners in the scheme, including us, are reimbursed by West Yorkshire Combined Authority at the commercial rate when we carry such customers.

The bottom line is that as a bus operator, we should be no better and no worse off than if there was no concessionary travel scheme or multi-operator ticket in existence. In other words, the guiding principle behind carrying passholders is that we as operators don't lose money by welcoming them on board.

Every customer is equally important to us – including those with passes or multi-operator tickets sold on another company's buses. So, please continue to give every customer the same signature service we're famous for.



the shops



visit family

next stop retirement...

You may not have met me, but I will have spoken to many of you down the years as the author of Talk Magazine and the voice behind our company comms.

It was always going to feel a little strange. After 42 years in journalism and public relations, retirement is a big change, especially as it ends 11 happy years working with our super marketing team at Transdev Blazefield.

My career as a newsreader changed by chance when I turned a corner one day in York and saw the Transdev team at a launch event. I knew it was now or never, so I took a deep breath and explained who I was and how I could support the business.

Three weeks later, I began working to persuade more people to travel by bus and to turn the spotlight on the true stars of our show – our talented, hardworking people.

There were bumps in the road – not least the pandemic and its unprecedented impact on us all, then the challenge of winning old and new customers back as restrictions eased.

Two moments particularly stand out for me: Coastliner being named Britain's Most Scenic Bus Route – a story shown as far away as the United States, Japan and Australia – and the unveiling of the first electric 36 bus in the heart of Harrogate.

As my journey with this fantastic business ends, my thanks go to the many colleagues, past and present, who've shown patience, kindness and support in sharing their wonderful team Transdev stories with me... see you on the bus!

story by: **John Gelson**



charity of the year



story by: **Matt Burley**
Project & Marketing Manager

From donating to food banks to running local events, we support countless charity groups across the North of England in a variety of ways – we're incredibly proud of this, but we want to do more together.

That's why moving forward, we're going to refocus our efforts and concentrate on supporting just two specific charities. In a recent vote by the senior leadership team, almost 70% of the votes went to the **North West Air Ambulance Service** and the **Yorkshire Air Ambulance Service**.

Both of these incredible charities fly emergency service helicopters seven days a week, 365 days a year



– responding to patients in need of urgent medical attention and transporting them to hospitals for further treatment.

And they need our support. Neither the North West Air Ambulance nor the Yorkshire Air Ambulance are Government-funded; instead, they are both fuelled by donations from the public and organisations such as Transdev.

We'll be running campaigns, raising money, and supporting local events for these two amazing Air Ambulance services throughout the year, so keep an eye out for news and more information on your staff notice boards.

we're investing in the next generation



Our new bus driver apprenticeship programme has finally left the station – the first class of learners are now on their way towards a successful career in transport.



story by: **Dale French**
Training Manager

Along with recruiting the best colleagues, we're also investing in the next generation of 'home-grown' bus drivers, and our new apprenticeship scheme is designed to be as accessible as possible.

This innovative new "Level 2 Bus Driver Apprenticeship" programme has been developed in partnership with leading provider Realise Training and will be the first of its kind for our amazing organisation.

It's certainly been a challenge, but we're delighted with what we've got on offer. Transdev will be investing £8000 into each individual apprentice, who will be taught by our industry experts over eight months, across a mammoth 326 total hours of training.

This new apprenticeship scheme is hugely significant for us here at The Academy; not only will it enhance our current training experience for our driver colleagues but also open the door to a whole new cohort of local talent.

Our roles here at Transdev aren't just jobs, they're careers – and by investing in the next generation of drivers, we're also creating roles that will help serve and develop the communities we work in.

Realise

"We are excited to partner with Transdev and to play our part in ensuring the bus provider has well-trained, skilled drivers to serve Lancashire and Yorkshire,"

Kairon Flowers, Director of Transport at Realise.

"Buses are of critical importance to cities, towns and villages, so safeguarding services by developing skills is vital. For individuals, apprenticeships can not only provide a route to a stable, fulfilling new career but can also leave them well placed to earn a promotion in the future."

With our industry experts beside them at the wheel, these apprentices will be welcoming customers aboard our buses by the end of the year – and if you see them about-and-about in our depots, give them a wave!



minor accidents = major impact

story by: **Carl Weall**
Engineering Manager,
Blackburn



They might be referred to as 'minor accidents' – a dented panel here, scraped paintwork there – but they can have a major impact on our customers... **Let me explain why.**

Our engineering workshops right across our business operate within tight margins. Like all bus operators, we simply don't have a sizeable fleet of spare buses ready and waiting to cover when vehicles unexpectedly come off the road for repairs.

Even relatively minor accidents can lead to significant issues for us, including:

- **Financial burdens** due to rising repair costs
- **Costly compensation claims**
- **Rising insurance premiums**
- **Disruption to** our planned **repair and maintenance** schedules.

Every day, we have a **Peak Vehicle Requirement** – PVR for short – which is the number of buses we need to operate all our timetabled journeys.

We aim for 12 to 15 per cent availability of spare buses, which allows us to be as efficient as possible with our resources. And we cancel bus journeys only as an absolute last resort.

Quite understandably, our customers hate the disruption to their everyday lives that cancellations cause, and this damages our reputation – something none of us wants to see.

But when there simply aren't enough buses to deliver the timetable, our colleagues in operations are left with

no choice. And, when a bus is involved in an accident and needs bodywork repairs, even a minor fix can lead us to a major headache.

For example, buses involved in large accidents must be painted by external contractors – that includes branding, which needs to be done correctly so that our operations teams can match route-branded buses to the correct service. And ours aren't the only buses going out for repaint either.

Once a vehicle has been booked in, painted and returned, graphics also must be applied, adding to the total cost of repairs – this can take weeks... **So what can our drivers do to help?**

Of course, some accidents can't be avoided – on today's busy roads, they're an unfortunate fact of life – but **being observant and aware** of what's happening around your vehicle could really help. Complacency is our enemy here.

Using your mirrors frequently when manoeuvring in confined spaces, including in bus stations and out on the road, is the best way to prevent costly mishaps.

Please **don't assume that everything is clear** to make that next manoeuvre – **always check in your mirrors first**. And with so many more raised kerbs now in place at bus stops, it's more important than ever to **approach with care and attention**, avoiding damage to the bus and thus making it a safer environment for our customers when alighting from the vehicle.

Together we can all help to reduce accidents and deliver a reliable and, above all, safe service for our customers.

boosting CitySightseeing York for the summer!

With Summer fast approaching, we're ramping up operations at CitySightseeing York ahead of our busiest sightseeing-season of the year.

Firstly, schedules. We introduced a bigger timetable for Easter school holidays, with tours every 15 minutes – we'll be running tours every 20 minutes throughout the spring season, returning to every 15 minutes again during the summer holidays.

Next, team news. There'll be a new Tourism Manager joining us soon to boost our customer service and partnerships throughout the city, strengthening our presence as the sightseeing bus of choice for both tourists and locals.

We've also recruited some new Tour Guides and Sales Representatives, who will help increase our visibility and support us in delivering incredible experiences to visitors.

Our partnerships with York's top attractions are also extremely important, and we'll be looking to add more throughout the summer. This is on top of popular discounts that are already available at Cliffords Tower, The Dungeons, York's Chocolate Story and more!

And finally, we've officially launched a fantastic new mobile app, which is full of ideas for great places to go, things to do, and even includes exclusive discounts for our customers.

Plus, with a unique twist, we've got our very own audio walking guide that extends the CitySightseeing experience beyond the bus and onto foot.

Thank you to our colleagues Mark Davies and Chris Geeson for producing all the content. It's all about giving our customers added value when they choose us and making sure that they get the most out of a trip to York.

Don't forget your Team Transdev Colleague pass is valid for free tours – as are your family's through their passes – so please do hop on board and see the city from the top deck of our fantastic open top buses!



story by: **Matt Burley**
Project & Marketing Manager

books open for the Finance Team

As well as investing in our people through Skill Up, and apprenticeships, we also support them through qualifications and training programmes.

Here in Finance, we're supporting Jonny Egerton in studying for his final level of AAT (Association of Accounting Technicians), Amy Showler in studying CIMA (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants), while Michael Scott, Ella Dickson, and Luke East are all studying for ACCA (Association of Certified Chartered Accountants). We've also got Aaron West studying to become an APA (Account Payable Academy) Technician.

Good luck with your exams – Jonny, Amy, Michael, Ella, Luke and Aaron!

peak performance

From Lost Mileage, i.e., the miles lost due to breakdowns, staff shortages, traffic congestion, to idling rates and complaints – performance stats across the business have seen enormous improvements in 2025...

In many places, performance is the best it's ever been!

Lost mileage is the lowest it's been in a decade!

We've seen a consistent decrease in Lost Mileage over the past six months, with major improvements tracked for Harrogate and Team Pennine in particular – a massive well done to those teams!

The FLYER network is by far the best network for Lost Mileage, and everyone involved has done a fantastic job in streamlining performance.



story by: Kel Pizzuti
Head of Operations

Keighley has also seen a massive improvement, especially since the new eCitaro buses made their debut in 2025 – which have been truly transformative!

So far in 2026, Blackburn is showing some extremely positive signs and will surely see more improvements when the new 464 vehicles are fully integrated into the fleet.

<1% lost mileage is what we're aiming for – and we're on track to hit that so far in 2026!

Peak performance for idling, complaints, and Greenroad stats!

There's more good news elsewhere; idling rates have improved from the start of the year, and customer complaints are down again.

Greenroad has also been a major success story so far – specifically, we'd like to highlight those at The Burnley Bus Company for their hard work!

We raised the bar in 2025, but we don't just want to maintain these exceptional standards – we want to push them further than ever before in 2026.

Thank you!

representing the UK at women's ExCom



story by: Louise King
Head of Finance

I joined the company as the Head of Finance in 2023 – based at our offices in Starbeck – and recently, I got the chance to be part of the women's ExCom scheme.

Gender diversity is one of Transdev's key priorities, and as such, the Group runs a special programme called Women ExCom Mentoring,

which not only supports talented women in their leadership development but also accelerates the change towards a more inclusive and diverse leadership culture within Transdev.

As part of the programme, a select few are mentored by members of the Executive Committee (the CEO's and Group Officers who direct global strategy) for 1 year.

This is the 4th edition of the women's ExCom mentoring programme, with nine women from eight countries chosen to take part – and I'll be representing the UK.

My experience so far...

After being selected for the programme, the first stage was a psychometric questionnaire to

understand my leadership style, highlight my leadership strengths and areas for development. This was followed by a debrief to explore the results and start identifying development actions.

I then attended a two-day session at our Head Office in Paris, where I got the chance to connect with the other mentees from across the global Transdev community.

We also got to hear from previous participants, learn what they took away from their experience and were given valuable advice for getting the most out of the next year.

This was a truly amazing experience, although the highlight for me was definitely finding out that my mentor would be our very own Group CEO, Thierry Mallet!

So far, it's been a fantastic opportunity to connect with like-minded leaders across the business, and it's already made me feel much more confident in my leadership skills.

I am also gaining a lot from my mentoring sessions with Thierry – it's great to receive guidance and support on my current role, and to explore my career path, with someone so experienced.



congratulations to our colleagues who've hit a milestone

Everyone who hits a **5 year milestone** in their career with us will get a Betty's Gift Box delivered to their home, so everyone here can look forward to enjoying the goodies on their anniversary of working with us.

5 years

Khalil Ahmed
Ashfaq Ahmed
Ansar Ali
Simon Bolland
Luke Buchan
Peter Chapman
John Coverley
Paul Crabtree
Sana Dad Chaudhary
Lisa Duffill
James Flintoff
Suzanne Greenwood
Christian Harbourne
Sara Harris
Mark Keighley
Stewart Macdonald
Ashlie Minasian
Akhtar Muhammad Noor
Sadia Nazir
Philip Nickson
Andrew Page
Mohsin Patel
Ian Pell
Ishfaq Shah
Billie-Jo Stones
Thomas Sullivan
Dariusz Turecki
Michael Wignall

10 years

Amjad Ali
Mark Ambler
Donna Buchan
Davina Cockshott
Carl Dagless
Malcolm Foulds
Dale French
Robert Kennedy
William MacDonald
Paul Mathema
Steven Ottley
Fiaz Sabar
Mark Scott
Peter Spratt
Michael Tomkinson
Antonio Vodola
Kushtrim Zjaca

15 years

Michael Dinning
Paul Hallas
Jabbar Haq
Richard Magee
Karl Morant
Graham Scott
Ian Simpson
Rebecca Slaughter
Paul Thake
Andrew Woodward

20 years

Martin Augustine
Virgil Berry
Andrew Crossley
Krystof Dziekonski
James Michael Eagles
Piotr Kolacz
Krzysztof Semeniuk
Michael Smith
Benjamin Thompson
Paul Whitford

25 years

Sarfraz Ahmed
Ian Barton
Trevor Bartram
Hazel Brett
Paul Broughton
James Craven
Alan Gibson
Terence Hall
Kevin Hulbert
Zafar Iqbal
Andrew Kenyon
Garry Lomax
Abdul Xecur

30 years

Colin Clements
Stephen Gargett

35 years

Elaine Watson

40 years

David Minnock

CELEBRATION OF SERVICE

Well done to all these colleagues who have reached a milestone in the first half of this year - **those colleagues who have reached a milestone over 25 years in 2025 and 2026 will receive their invite to the Celebration of Service during the spring.**

our apprentices are working hard

We're incredibly proud of the latest talent coming through The Academy to join our Engineering apprenticeship scheme in Yorkshire and Lancashire.

Our engineering teams have quite a few apprentices currently enrolled, so congratulations and good luck with the rest of your learning courses to:

1ST YEAR – Holly Hemingway (Harrogate), Aaron Baxter (Keighley), Zakariyya Mulla (Burnley), Zakki Hassan (Blackburn), and Lewis Misseldine (York).

2ND YEAR – Finley Delaney (Burnley), Adam Patel (Blackburn), Hassan Maqsood (Burnley), and Matthew McNulty (Harrogate).

3RD YEAR – Lewis Harrison (York), and Damian Green (Blackburn).

A special congratulations to Husnain Mansha, who recently completed his three-year course and is now a fully qualified Shift Engineer in Burnley!



story by: **Matt Burley**
Project & Marketing Manager

The 'Movember Magnificent Seven' also returned, and yet again, our wonderfully-whiskered colleagues have smashed their fundraising goal – raising over £780 for men's health projects around the world!

"Most of our wives aren't fans of 'the Mo' but they all put up with it for a month to help us raise money for a great cause," said Harrogate-based General Manager Adam Emmott from beneath his bristles.

Our deepest thanks to those who baked or donated cakes for our fundraising events at the Macmillan Coffee Mornings, and to those who donated towards the seven super 'Staches - such generous colleagues remind us of what a special team we have.

our charity brews are good news...

Transdev has a long history of supporting charitable foundations locally, nationally – even globally – and we've been busy helping a few different fundraisers of late.

Our caring teams at Blackburn and Harrogate each decided to run their own Macmillan Coffee Morning – and together with colleagues across the organisation, raised more than £800 in a couple of hours to support the charity's work.

Several of our team baked their own home-made cakes, while others who were a little less skilled in the kitchen bought cakes to top up the tables.

Not all of us are natural bakers, but the cakes – whether homemade or not – and the drinks went down well, and more importantly, helped us to support cancer care on our doorstep."

story by:
Darren Bell-Walker
Head of Engineering



we've got a great team in store!

Introducing our Central Stores team – we're the people who keep all nine of our depots supplied with the parts needed to keep our show on the road!

We opened our doors at Intack depot in Blackburn back in April 2024 to provide effective control of engineering stock across the entire business. It's a big area to cover, stretching across east Lancashire and Yorkshire.

I remember it was a bit of a struggle at first as we needed to bring all the existing arrangements for longer-term parts storage and supply under one roof here. Fortunately we have the benefit of experience and technology combined to help us, and now we have a well-established system which works pretty well.

We've benefited from the introduction of Freeway, our digitised engineering management platform. It brought our various digital operating systems together to create a 'virtual digital world' in which electronic systems effectively 'talk' to each other to deliver greater cost control at local operating centres and at a central level.

Working with our suppliers and our depot engineers, Freeway gives us instant visibility of parts stock at every depot and makes it easier to make sure every workshop has the parts it needs, without carrying excess stocks which cost the business money and storage space.

With such a wide area to supply, we have two daily van delivery runs to serve all our depots, driven by **Paul Crabtree** and **Matthew Bradley**. The early delivery shift begins at 4.30 in the morning, with the second loading up from 10am. Our furthest destination is Coastliner at Malton, which depending on traffic can take over two and a half hours from here.

We couldn't do what we do without the support of our wonderful engineers across the depots ... thank you all for being patient and helpful with all of us. We're fortunate to be based alongside the engineering team at Blackburn, who are always happy to give us advice and support. Working together as a team is what makes it happen for us all.

That's enough from me for now –
let's meet your Central Stores team!

BILLY WEALL – I came out of retirement to join the team and have over 50 years of experience... in that time there's not much I haven't seen. I started as an engineer on the night shift until 2013. When I started we used a system called Sage to manage parts stock, and we had a lot of data reports to work through compared with Freeway, which has made the job much more straightforward.

EDWARD BLADES – I'm a former driver with Rosso over in Rochdale turned Storekeeper – before that I worked in the stores supply team for Woolworths. When I came here it was a big change from sorting out the Pick and Mix to keeping our engineers supplied with the parts they need. The smallest part we supply is a washer or a nut, and the biggest is a differential unit!

LUCY HARRIS – I started on the office side supporting Lee at Rochdale in 2021 alongside my college studies – when I left college I began working with Billy to gain knowledge and experience within Central Stores. I'm quite OCD about what I do, I have a certain way of organising things and that keeps me going, alongside being part of our brilliant team here in Blackburn.

story by:
Lee Wardle
Operations Manager



LUCY

EDWARD

BILLY

LEE

 **talk about me**

send us your stories for our next issue
talk@transdevbus.co.uk

As featured in THHS Disability and Mobility Magazine, Transdev helped boost confidence in using public transport for students who use wheelchairs, and their carers, at a Specialist College in Yorkshire.

March 2026 Photoshoot

