

Connecting people and communities



Midland Bluebird
2018/19

Welcome to the latest edition of our annual report which focuses on what we're doing to keep people moving and communities prospering across the First Midland area.

We are proud to provide services that connect Stirling and the communities across the Forth Valley together. With investment in the roll out of contactless payments and our First Bus travel app, which now includes integrated m-ticketing alongside intuitive journey planning tools, it's never been easier for customers to ditch the car and take the bus. For instance, a double decker bus has the potential to remove up to 75 cars from the road and therefore has a key part to play in delivering greener journeys across Stirling and the Forth Valley.

I hope that you enjoy reading our report. If you have any comments or questions, don't hesitate to get in touch.

Andrew Jarvis
Managing Director



Introduction from the MD

Improving our customer offer



60% of customers

using cashless travel

****Midland & West Lothian combined****

Technology

Technology is continually playing a greater part in making the customer travel experience easier than ever before. We're continuing to promote the rapid growth of our M-tickets app, which has now been intergrated into our main First Bus travel app, as well as the use of contactless payments, with a view to having 80% of all journeys being made on a cashless basis by 2022.

We were the first national bus operator to have successfully rolled out a contactless payment system across all of our services in the UK.



Satisfaction

**Transport
Focus result:**

68%

We recognise the drop in satisfaction scores which we were disappointed to receive. However, we acknowledge that there were significant network changes to some long established links that had shown significant patronage decline. Whilst service delivery levels remained at excellent levels throughout this period we understand the drop in the score and remain focussed on our customers to enable a return to higher satisfaction levels going forward.

**Supporting
service delivery
for our customers**



Our buses **166 buses**

Our fleet of 166 buses deliver over 10 million passenger journeys every year.

We're also committed to making sure that our services are kind to the environment too - our Uni-Link double decker buses use an advanced Gyrodrive Hybrid system that captures and stores energy during braking that can then be used to reduce the load on the engine during acceleration.

A double decker bus can take up to 75 cars off the road and our network therefore has an integral part to play in encouraging commuters to ditch the car and take the bus.

Staff & training **470 staff**

We employ a total of 470 staff across the First Midland network.

We continually invest in our staff through ongoing training and development. Our Journeymakers programme gives our drivers and customer facing staff new skillsets to use as part of our drive to continually improve passenger satisfaction. Also, we offer a range of apprenticeships delivered to nationally recognised standards, with each apprentice supported and developed with the essential skills and knowledge required to gain a qualification and, in turn, build a rewarding career in the transport industry.



Focus on performance

Safety

Dedicated to

Safety

All of our operating companies across Scotland actively promote our Be Safe programme, which encourages every employee to have a personal stake in the safety of ourselves, our colleagues and our customers. Also, driving standards are monitored through the DriveGreen system to ensure the delivery of safe journeys for our customers and staff.

Reliability

Over
7.8 million
miles operated in the past year

We always aim to operate every journey in our network to schedule, although we have had challenges to overcome across our network in the form of congestion and an intensive roadworks programme in recent times. However, we continue to use our close relationships with transport partners to work towards improving our service reliability.





Strengthening our partnerships



10
million
passenger journeys
per year

Journeys

Our network of services provides a combination of local routes that connects communities with town centres, as well as interurban services that link Stirling and Falkirk with Edinburgh and Glasgow city centres.

We've also reviewed the pricing of many of our season tickets to further encourage passenger demand and position bus travel as a competitive alternative to other travel modes.

Community £1m raised

First Midland, along with our sister operating companies across the UK, commenced a new partnership with Action for Children as our charity of choice, which was voted for by our employees.

Action for Children are a UK children's charity dedicated to helping vulnerable children, young people and their families across the length and breadth of the UK.

Almost £1m has been raised for the charity within the first year of the 3-year partnership through a combination of fundraising and gift in kind advertising.



**First Midland Bluebird
2018/19**

First Midland Bluebird

Contact us

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Our numbers in summary

Over

10 million

passenger journeys per year

Over

7.8 million

miles operated per year across our region

470

employees

A total of

166 buses

60%

of customers using cashless travel

Midland & West Lothian combined

First  **Bus**



First Midland Bluebird is part of FirstGroup Plc. We provide easy and convenient mobility, improving quality of life by connecting people and communities. FirstGroup is a leading provider of transport services in the UK and North America.

www.firstgroup.com