

Connecting people and communities



**First West of
England
2018/19**

With all that it has to offer, our area continues to thrive as a place to live, work, study and play, and this meant we had another extremely busy year here at First West of England.

Two striking features from last year can be encapsulated in the number 70.

First, passenger numbers for the year broke through the 70 million barrier mark, continuing the growth trend that we've seen for several years. We achieved this by continuing to invest in our network, with new routes like our South Glos Lynx services between Bristol, Yate and Thornbury. We also saw continued growth on our services for the 4 universities that we serve in Bath and Bristol, and this was the year that metrobus finally hit the streets, showing what can be achieved with a modern, high quality bus service.

Second, by the end of the year more than 70% of our business had switched away from paying by cash on the bus. First West of England continues to lead the mobile ticketing revolution with our mTicket app, and the growth in the number of customers that choose one of the 3 'digital' payment methods - mTickets, contactless and online - shows no sign of slowing down. The benefits that these options give our customers in terms of convenience and faster boarding times are fantastic, and we are delighted that so many customers are using them.

Of course, we have some big challenges in our area, not least with congestion and air quality, but we continue to develop our network, invest in our fleet and work with our local partners so that we can keep improving our service and get more people to choose the bus as a sustainable way to travel.


Thank you to all our customers for travelling with us last year; to our stakeholders for their support; and to everyone at First West of England for all their hard work.

James Freeman
Managing Director



Introduction from the MD

Improving our customer offer

 **114%**
growth in mTicket sales

Technology

mTicket sales more than doubled compared to last year, and contactless payments and other ways of paying without cash meant we ended the year with cash payments on our buses dipping below 30% for the first time. We've now also combined journey planning and ticketing into one app, so the digital revolution continues to making using our buses easier than ever before.



Satisfaction

 **40%**
reduction in
driver interaction
complaints

As well as rightly expecting a reliable, safe and comfortable journey, our customers also expect good service from our team of more than 1,400 drivers. We are encouraged therefore that we saw a 40% reduction in the number of complaints from customers who weren't happy with their driver, showing that the ongoing coaching and training that our drivers receive is paying off.

**Supporting
service delivery
for our customers**



Cristian Tenovici
First West of England
Employee of the Year 2018/19

**Staff &
training**
1,800 staff

Recruiting drivers and engineers remains our biggest focus, and it's not just about the numbers, it's about getting drivers that like dealing with people; after all, we are a customer service business. As we continued to grow, last year saw more drivers joining the team, and that will continue.

Our buses
600 buses

Every year we invest significant amounts of money on our fleet, both to improve the customer experience and help tackle pollution. We now have over 150 buses that meet the strictest emission standards, and next year an investment of £22 million will see 77 brand new, Ultra Low Emission bio-methane buses joining the fleet.



Focus on performance

Safety



16%

reduction
in passenger injuries

Keeping everyone safe is the most important responsibility we have. We operate in a busy, challenging environment, so we are proud to have reduced passenger injuries by 16% last year, whilst also reducing staff injuries by 42%. Our work to improve safety is never finished, so we'll continue to focus on it day-in, day-out.

Reliability

2.2%

improvement
in punctuality

Congestion is our number one challenge, so we are constantly reviewing our network, managing our services in response to traffic conditions and incidents, and working with our stakeholders to keep our buses moving. Our efforts paid off last year, with punctuality improving by more than two percentage points, and the day-to-day management of our services meant we reduced the vehicle miles lost due to traffic fell by 86%.





Strengthening our partnerships

 **70**
million
passenger journeys
Journeys

We had another year where our passenger growth bucked the stagnant national trend. Despite this, our area still has too many car journeys, so our job is to keep improving and promoting what we do so that more people see the bus as a viable alternative.

Community
£98,000

We very much see ourselves as an integral part of the communities we serve. We employ local people, and we get local people to where they need to be. We also take every opportunity to help local communities and charities, whether through fund raising, by making our buses available to support local events or by donating tickets to those in need. We are very proud that last year the value of these activities exceeded £98,000.

West of England 2018/19

**First West
of England**

Contact us

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Our numbers in summary

Over

67 million

passenger journeys a year

25 million

miles operated across our region

Over

1,800

employees

11% growth

in passenger numbers

88%

Customer satisfaction

54%

cashless

First  **Bus**



First West of England 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