

# People in the news at Stagecoach UK

Stagecoach has announced the appointment of **Lee Wasnidge** as the new Managing Director for its bus operations in Manchester. Lee, who has extensive experience across public transport, airports and retail, will join on 4th January 2021



**Lee Wasnidge**

Lee was most recently Customer Service and Security Director for Manchester Airport Group, delivering front line services to 30 million customers a year. He has worked in senior customer service positions across a range of sectors, including Northern Rail and Transdev, as well as a number of fast-moving consumer goods businesses including Asda, Iceland, Pets at Home and PepsiCo. Lee also has extensive experience of stakeholder engagement, having worked closely with national and local authorities and major business groups throughout his career

Lee takes over from **Elisabeth Tasker**, who is leaving the industry. Elisabeth joined Stagecoach in 2000 as Operations Director at Manchester, having previously held a number of management roles in both the heavy goods and bus industries. She then went on to be Managing Director of Merseyside and South Lancashire in 2011, before becoming Managing Director of Stagecoach Manchester in late 2016.

Although there was no official announcement, Stagecoach Group confirmed to *Steven Knight Media* on 15th December 2020 that **Catherine Acton-Brazier**, Regional Director North of England has left the business Catherine joined Stagecoach in 2019 from BT. Following Catherine's departure, **Michelle Hargreaves**, Managing Director of the Stagecoach East business based in Cambridge has been appointed Interim Regional Director North of England. Michelle became MD of Stagecoach East in early 2019 having been Acting MD there since the end of 2018. Previously she had been part of Stagecoach's



**Michelle Hargreaves**

business change team, focusing on developing a strategy around people development and employee wellbeing.

Michelle started her career with Stagecoach in 1987 as a Cash Clerk, and has become a well respected and influential leader.

After holding a number of managerial positions, she was appointed Managing Director, Stagecoach South West in 2008 and then in 2013 she took on the role of Managing Director, Stagecoach East Midlands.

At Stagecoach East, Engineering Director **Darren Roe** is stepping into the role of Interim Managing Director. Darren Roe started his career as an apprentice in the bus industry and then moved into the commercial vehicle industry before joining Stagecoach in 2000.

He was appointed Engineering Director at



**Darren Roe**

Stagecoach Manchester, a position he held until 2011 when he took on the role of Engineering Director, Stagecoach London. After a period as part of the

business change team he was appointed Engineering Director of Stagecoach East in 2019.

Stagecoach Group has also confirmed to *Steven Knight Media* that **Rupert Cox** continues as Interim Regional Director South alongside his role as Managing Director at Stagecoach West,

Rupert Cox began his career in the bus industry while at University, working in the schedules office at Wilts & Dorset Buses in

Poole. He joined Stagecoach on the company's Graduate Development Programme in 2001 and took on his first managerial role two years later as Commercial Manager for Stagecoach West. In 2007, he moved to Stagecoach Yorkshire as Commercial Director where he stayed until 2013 when he returned to Stagecoach West as Acting Operations Director, being appointed Managing Director at Stagecoach West in 2014.

## Stagecoach South West

Now sold and no longer part of the fleet is Optare Solo 47095. It had latterly been used as a publicity vehicle.

## Stagecoach West

Transfers from Cheltenham to North Bristol are Scania/Enviro 400 15981 and Enviro 200 36107, whilst at North Bristol Scania K340 coaches have been relicensed but remain decommissioned.

Vehicles sold are Optare Solo 47037, which has been delicensed and decommissioned at North Bristol along with the remains of damaged Trident 18349.

## Stagecoach Wales

Vehicles currently away for external repairs are Scania/Enviro 300s 28726/34 at Keltruck with Trident 18076 and Optare Solo 47347 at Bulwark Engineering.

Following completion of repairs, Dart SLF 34672 is due to be allocated to the Reserve Fleet at Aberdare. We understand that

Enviro 300 27694 and Optare Solo 47694 are both now back in the operational fleet at Porth following completion of repairs.

## Stagecoach South

Operational Reserve Fleet Enviro 200s from Guildford have been allocated to Aldershot (36438 and 36838) with 36837 now at Winchester. Trident 18502 has returned to service at Chichester following repairs, whilst Enviro 200 36432 is now in the Reserve Fleet at Aldershot.

Optare Solo 47547 from Aldershot is now for disposal.

## Stagecoach South East

Further Scania/Enviro 400MMC swaps have seen 15262/78 transferred from Herne Bay to Hastings in exchange for Enviro 400MMCs 10703/04. Reserve Fleet Dart SLF 34442 has transferred from Thanet to the main fleet at Folkestone whilst a swap at Ashford has seen Dart SLF 34483 move to Reserve Fleet and in exchange 34791 is now in the main operational fleet.

## Nuneaton's BMMO S17s

A brief look at Midland Red's S17s at Nuneaton



We are not sure the practice of unloading passengers in the outside lane of the bus stand would be acceptable today. 5490 (6490HA) loads in Nuneaton bus station with an N32 for Chapel End, which would operate via Round Towers but the driver has decided not to use the via blind. 5490 was new to Southgates Street garage in Leicester in March 1964 moving to Nuneaton in June 1969. It was a float vehicle in May 1979 being withdrawn in November of the same year.

© Steven Knight Media

5490 (6490HA) was also used on the last day that Nuneaton garage operated the Friday and Saturday local routes in Coleshill and north Warwickshire on 11th May 1979. © Steven Knight Media

Working a local Nuneaton service to Weddington is 5681 (CHA681C) which was new in August 1965 but was transferred to Redditch in December the following year. It was converted to driver only operation in October 1966. © Steven Knight Media Collection



Pictured in Fenny Drayton on one of the extensions of the N44 beyond Weddington is 5479 (6479HA), which was allocated to Nuneaton in February 1979. Withdrawn the same year it is now Preserved. © Steven Knight Media



5555 (AHA155B) 'all the fives' was a Nuneaton bus all its life, New in June 1964 until withdrawal in July 1979. During that time it suffered extensive roof damage requiring major repairs, when it was hit by a hedge trimmer in Arley whilst wit was working a 737 Nuneaton to Coventry service. © Steven Knight Media

5632 (BHA632C) was new to Nuneaton in February 1965. It is one of the S17s that had bodywork finished by Plaxton. It was transferred to Tamworth garage in November 1970 returning to Nuneaton in March 1975 where it remained until it was withdrawn from service in February 1977. It is pictured before conversion to driver only operation which took place in January 1969. © Steven Knight Media Collection



## Stagecoach West Scotland

Volvo B13R 54108 has been allocated to Cumbernauld, from the Reserve Fleet whilst 54107 remains in the Reserve Fleet but is now at Kilmarnock.

The company reports the arrival of former **Stagecoach Oxfordshire** Van Hool Astromegas 50280-84 here. All are for Kilmarnock with 50280 undergoing preparation at Ayr and 50281-84 at Kilmarnock. Also at Kilmarnock are the three former **Stagecoach London** 10.2m Enviro 200s 36331/32/37.

Now for disposal here are Enviro 300 27627 and Optare Solo 47733.

Reserve Fleet Optare Solo 47613 is now allocated to Ayr whilst 47615 has transferred from Kilmarnock to the Reserve Fleet. Although planned to transfer to **Stagecoach Merseyside & South Lancashire** it has gone to **Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire** and is in the Reserve Fleet there. 47476 and 47489 remain earmarked for transfer to **Stagecoach Merseyside & South Lancashire**, 47838 has transferred from the Reserve Fleet to Kilmarnock.

## Stagecoach East Scotland

Enviro 300 27599 has been taken out of service at Dunfermline and has transferred to Perth.

## Megabus Operations

Left Hand Drive Van Hool Altano 55010, from the North Bristol (**Stagecoach West**) allocation has been at Rugby depot (**Stagecoach Midlands**).

## Stagecoach Highlands

Enviro 400s 19038/40/43, which had been on loan to **Stagecoach East Scotland** have been despatched to **Ensign** for seat belt fitment before returning here.

Vehicles stood down for long term repairs in the last month have been Volvo B7RLE 21204 at Skye; Optare Solo 47564 at Caithness; Volvo B9R 53623 at Tain and Trident 18124 at Aviemore. Reliability of the electric Optare Solos here remains poor with 48900 and 48904 joining 48901/03/06 out of service for repairs.

Back in use following completion of repairs, all at Kirkwall, are Enviro 300 27807, Optare Solo SR 47813 and Volvo B7R 53309.

Volvo B9R 53624 has transferred from Skye to Inverness and has been replaced on Skye by Volvo B7R 53332 from the Reserve Fleet. Former **Stagecoach East** Volvo B7R 53613 has been allocated to Kirkwall. Departures from Inverness are Enviro 300 27588 to Tain and Enviro 400 19371 to Aviemore.

## Stagecoach Bluebird

The transfer of MAN/Enviro 300 22866 was rejected by **Stagecoach Merseyside & South Lancashire** and it is now for disposal here.

Following repairs, Optare Solo 47161 has been allocated to Aberdeen in a Reserve Fleet capacity as a 'Paint Float' vehicle.

## Stagecoach London

Enviro 200s 36306/07/08 are now in use a 'meal relief' vehicles but remain at Bromley. Further **Stagecoach South Wales** hired vehicles now spare at Bromley, following the withdrawal of the contract they were being used on are Optare Solo 47638 and Optare Solo SRs 47847/48.

Enviro 400H Hybrids 12324-26 which had been for disposal are now being retained here.

The company reports the delivery of new Enviro 400City EVs 14101-09/30-47 of which 14130/31/33 are in use for driver familiarisation.

## Go North East

Repainted in the week ending 10th December 2020 was OptareVersa 8317 into the 2019 fleet livery and has returned to service at Riverside.

The recently repainted and refurbished 'Quaycity' branded OptareVersas 5380-88 have all now returned to service at Riverside, being re-allocated to service Q3.

Engineering float OptareVersas 8295-99 and 8300/01/02/04/05 have all transferred to Chester-le-Street, allowing better fleet standardisation there.

In turn; this has released Wright Streetlite DF Micro-Hybrid 5419 to Deptford where it has replaced Mercedes Citaro 5313 which has been taken out of service. Scania Omnicitys 5249/64/66 have moved to Riverside, allowing Mercedes Citaros 5321/22 and Scania Omnicitys 5267/68/69/70/71 to transfer to Percy Main, replacing Mercedes Citaro Citaros 5315/16/17/18/20.

The new ADL Trident 2/ADL Enviro 400MMC for Hexham; 6352/53/54/55, have all now entered service.

Along with the earlier transfer of 6337 to Hexham, this has allowed 'Tynedalexpress' branded Mercedes Citaros 5298/99 and 5300/01/02 to be taken out of service at Hexham, but retained as 'Hot Spares'.

Mercedes Citaros 5306/07/11 have all been reinstated at Riverside and 5308 at Deptford, to be used as 'Hot Spares' in the lead up to Christmas, allowing a rapid response to any overloading issues which may arise.

The earlier transfer of Scania OmniDekka 6132 from Percy Main to Riverside has allowed Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 6099 to transfer to Deptford. Similarly, the earlier transfer of dual-door Volvo B7TL/Plaxton President 6934 to Hexham has in turn permitted the release and re-allocation of Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 6043 to Deptford. The of these Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 to Deptford has displaced similar 'Fab Fifty Six' branded examples 6091 and 6092 which have been taken out of service for repaint and seat re-trim at **Bus & Coach World**, Blackburn.

Go North East's open top Volvo B7TL 3999 has been touring the company's operating area in its 'Santa Bus' guise. Pictured here in Seaburn. © Ian Hardie



## Stagecoach East's Joe Somers hangs up his uniform

Whilst we were researching the Silverstone images for this issue of Fleet Digest we were reminded that one person who played a pivotal role in the operation of the shuttle services to and from Sixfields Park & Ride was Stagecoach East's Joe Somers.

Joe took retirement earlier this year after a staggering 60 years in the bus industry.

Moving from Dublin he started as a conductor with eastern Counties in Peterborough in 1960, progressing to driver.

As well as local services Joe also did overseas tours over a 28 year period. He then undertook a number of roles including Bus Station Inspector at Peterborough's Queensgate Bus Station and then as a Revenue Protection Inspector and Customer Relations Officer. The job title

didn't, however, reflect the contribution that Joe made.

In 1991 he became the first bus driver to pass the Institute of Advanced Motorists driving test in a double deck bus.

When he went part time he still spent countless hours out of his personal time promoting the company and the benefits of public transport.

Joe enjoyed driving and was always ready to volunteer when the Bristol FLFs were used in service, and for which I did a number of conducting shifts. He was also ready to assist when I needed a driver for either the FLFs or the Megadekka.

In 2016 he received a Special Commendation for Outstanding Service at the UK Bus Awards.





Go North East's Wright StreetDeck 6315 has received seasonal adornments including having the illumination of the representation of 'The Angel of the North'. It has also received Christmas graphics. © Go North East



The new image for Go North East's 'QuayCity' service, which is now carried by nine Optare Versas - 5380-88.  
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Martijn Gilbert - Twitter

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**Stagecoach Midlands**

An increase in contract requirements at Northampton has resulted in a further two Enviro 400s, LK08DXU and LK08DXV and arriving here on loan from Ensight Bus.

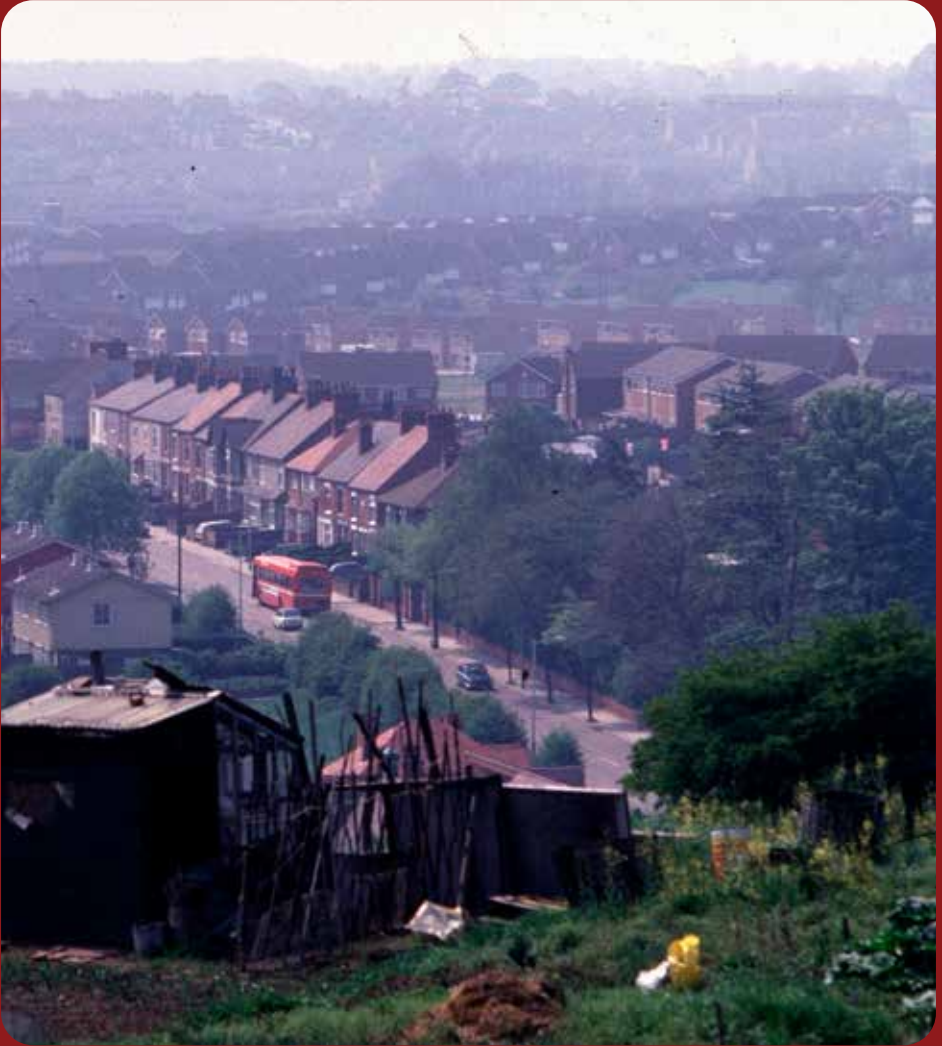
**Late News**  
**Stagecoach East**

The second vehicle here to gain Stagecoach 'Local' livery is Fenstanton's Enviro 200 37232

**Stagecoach East Midlands**

Look out for the imminent transfer of Dart SLF 34702 from the Reserve Fleet at Worksop to Gainsborough, where it will become part of the main operational fleet.





A Nuneaton scene from the late 1970s with a Midland Red Leyland National heading along Bucks Hill with an N32 or N33 service from Chapel End. The Ryders Hill Allotments fill the foreground looking over towards Stockingford and at the top of the picture Grove Farm. The image has deteriorated over the years and has had a partial clean. © Steven Knight Media