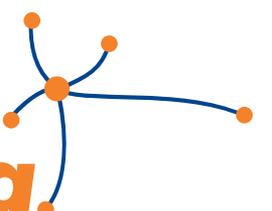




backing the bus



pteg.
delivering public transport solutions
Representing the
7 UK Passenger Transport Executives

backing the bus



The bus is still Britain's most popular form of public transport - over 4 billion local bus journeys are made every year by people going to the shops, work, school and leisure activities.

Better bus services are vital to achieving the Government's wider goals for tackling traffic congestion and promoting social inclusion in our largest urban areas. This is why we have invested £400m annually in the PTEs' programme to transform the quality of local bus provision.

This funding, alongside local PTE and bus operator initiatives to improve services, has increased overall satisfaction for bus journeys in metropolitan areas to a best ever 85 per cent.

We are pleased to welcome the publication of this summary of what's been achieved so far, and the major improvements that passengers can expect to see in the next few years.

New passengers are being won over through innovations like guided buses on busy corridors and 'buses on demand' in less busy areas or times of day.

Real time information is being rolled out across urban bus networks and the typical urban bus station is now clean, bright and modern.

There is more to come. Looking forward we can expect easier journeys through smartcards, with real time information at stops being complemented by information delivered via mobile phones.

Free off-peak concessionary fares for older and disabled people is set to give bus patronage a real boost and make a significant contribution in tackling social exclusion.

The report shows that much has already been achieved with Government, PTEs, local authorities and bus operators all working together. There is though, more to do.

To help PTEs and local authorities deliver better local public transport, we are looking at ways to improve planning and operating bus networks in our big urban areas. This could involve local authorities and bus operators agreeing timetables, fares, bus priority and investment by mutual agreement and to the benefit of passengers.

Getting people out of their cars and onto buses is a big challenge.

We believe this work in partnership with the PTEs and bus operators will transform urban bus services and attract even more passengers. In the meantime, I would like to thank PTEs for their achievements in 'backing the bus'.



Derek Twigg

Derek Twigg MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport



For most travellers in the city regions the bus **is** public transport. 85% of journeys in PTE areas are made by bus. 1.3 billion bus trips a year are made in PTE areas - around 30% of all bus journeys.

The relatively low cost and flexibility of bus services makes the bus a key weapon in the battle against traffic congestion. With most bus users from non-car owning households the bus is also key to tackling social exclusion.

PTEs provide the superstructure for the industry in seven of Britain's largest conurbations by:

- Setting the overall strategy
- Supporting nearly 100 million kilometres of non-commercial services every year
- Systematically upgrading bus stations to the very highest standards
- Maintaining and improving a vast network of more than 60,000 stops and shelters
- Promoting multi-modal tickets
- Investing in bus priority and innovative new services
- Providing travellers with comprehensive and impartial information
- Taking the lead on strategies to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour
- Supporting and administering comprehensive concessionary fares schemes
- Marketing and promoting the bus network as a whole

Both the Government and the PTEs recognise the essential role that the bus needs to play if traffic congestion is to be tackled. PTEs have exciting plans to transform bus networks over the next five years through working with private sector partners to provide:

- Fast and reliable services on core routes benefiting from extensive bus priority
- Real time information about services - available at key stops and by internet and mobile phones
- More convenient, demand responsive services, on less busy routes
- New vehicles which will transform the quality of bus travel - and the image of bus travel



The PTEs are one of the bus industry's biggest backers. With Government support, and with their local authority partners, they invest around half a billion pounds a year.

Investing in the bus

From state of the art bus interchanges to comprehensive programmes of bus priority measures, the PTEs are behind the infrastructure which keeps bus services moving in some of the UK's largest city regions.

Last year, PTEs and their local authority partners invested £145 million in capital improvements to bus services. Spending on bus services last year was an estimated five times greater per head than for local authorities in the rest of England outside London.

1. effective partnership



From Superoutes in Tyne and Wear to Quality Bus Corridors in Greater Manchester, PTEs and operators are working together to deliver some major initiatives to transform the quality and reliability of bus services. These comprehensive schemes all require both the private and public sectors to bring something to the table.

The operators providing modern, accessible vehicles operating at high frequencies - while the public sector provides the bus priority measures and new high quality stops and shelters.

- In **Greater Manchester**, the Quality Bus Corridor (QBC) programme envisages a 300 kilometre, 20 corridor, £50 million bus priority network which will transform the reliability and quality of the Greater Manchester bus network. Working closely with district highway authorities and the private operators the QBC programme will also incorporate improvements to local streetscapes (with more pedestrian crossings, cycleways, parking bays and environmental improvements) as well as real time information at bus stops.

Spending on QBCs last year was £15 million and three corridors have been completed so far.

Results so far have been encouraging: journey times are 10% faster in peak times on completed QBC corridors helping to generate a 15% rise in passenger numbers and a doubling in passenger satisfaction levels.

- In **Tyne and Wear** the Superoute network guarantees frequent high quality services on 35 key routes. All Superoute buses are low floor and easy access with customer care-trained drivers and timetables that change no more than once a year. To speed Superoute services past the queues, 35 kilometres of bus priority are now in place. Passengers on Superoute corridors also benefit from investment in quality bus shelters and timetable information at all stops.



- 'Yorkshire Bus' is aiming for a step change in bus travel across **West and South Yorkshire**. The plan is to revamp the core high frequency network to generate a 30% increase in patronage over a six year period. Whilst operators would provide new, high quality vehicles the PTEs and the Districts would fast track bus priority schemes. Real time information, smartcard ticketing, and heavy promotion and marketing would also play a key role.

Both West and South Yorkshire PTEs are already delivering on bus priority. There's around 45 kilometres of bus priority already in place, plus, in Leeds, one of Europe's largest guided busway initiatives (see page 9), a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) scheme, and a 'public transport box' in Leeds city centre which has cut journey times on some routes by between 10 and 30%.

- In **Merseyside** SMART bus will transfer 90 kilometres of road space to buses on fifteen major corridors and implement major bus priority schemes for three urban centres. This is in addition to the 17.6 kilometres of existing bus lane. 'Corridor Q' in St Helens is an example of what SMART bus is all about. Nearly five million passengers a year use this corridor

with 88% having no access to a car. SMART bus has transformed the route with the introduction of 26 easy access, lean fuel technology buses with on board real time displays. On the road there are 73 new SMART shelters as well as bus priority measures including traffic signals that favour the bus, bus lanes and five improved interchanges. All this is backed up with real time information at 20 key stops and off-route real time information at St Helens hospital and local libraries and community facilities.

- In the **West Midlands**, bus 'Showcase' schemes aim to transform some of the West Midlands' busiest bus corridors into fast, frequent and reliable alternatives to the car. Showcase sets demanding standards with accessible pedestrian links to all stops, low floor and low emission vehicles, 'turn up and go' frequencies of at least every ten minutes, comprehensive bus priority measures (properly enforced), and customer care trained drivers. Showcase schemes have seen patronage growth of up to 30% and modal shift from the car of 5%.

PTE bus powers explained

The seven PTEs provide, plan, procure and promote public transport in seven of Britain's largest conurbations: Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Strathclyde, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands and West Yorkshire. Between them they serve more than 13 million people and have a combined budget of more than £1 billion a year.

The PTEs are funded by a combination of local council tax and grants from national government. They are responsible to Passenger Transport Authorities (PTAs), made up of representatives of local councils in the areas they serve.

Until the mid-eighties PTEs ran bus services themselves. But the 1985 Buses Act deregulated bus services outside London creating a free market in which the PTEs were initially encouraged, and then required to sell off their bus companies. Those companies now form part of the five largest bus and train operators in the UK - Arriva, National Express, First, Go-ahead and Stagecoach.

Under the 1985 Act PTEs can only fill gaps in networks where there is no commercial service. PTEs do this on a route-by-route basis with the services provided by private companies on the basis of competitive tendering. The majority of bus services in PTE areas are operated by the 'big five'.

All of this means that PTEs have only indirect influence over bus service quality, network development and stability, or fares. Under the 2000 Transport Act PTEs can apply to Government to introduce the franchising of bus services in their areas (known as 'quality contracts'). This would allow PTEs to specify and regulate bus services in their areas - with the private sector competing for the exclusive right to operate

the contract. Franchising is the way in which Britain's rail services, bus services in London, and increasingly, urban public transport systems in Europe, are provided.

The 2000 Transport Act sets very difficult tests for any quality contract proposal - but despite this a number of PTEs are preparing applications. Even without franchising PTEs do still have a significant role to play on buses - as the following checklist shows.

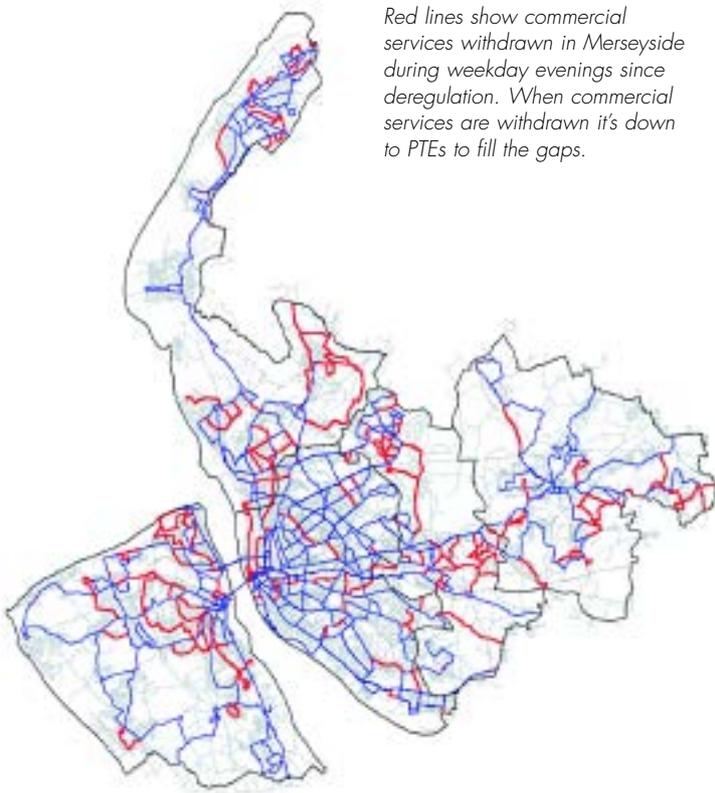
What PTEs can (and can't!) do for the bus

- ✓ Invest in bus stations, shelters and stops
- ✓ Provide impartial information about bus services
- ✗ Operate bus services
- ✗ Specify the networks that private operators must provide
- ✗ Ensure bus operators provide clean, accessible and reliable services with good customer care
- ✗ Control fare levels
- ✓ Provide bus services where there is no commercial service
- ✓ Develop bus priority schemes (but only in partnership with their constituent District Councils who are the highway authorities)
- ✓ Draw up a strategy for the development of bus services in their area
- ✗ Compel operators to support good value multi-operator tickets

2. supporting services

PTEs plug the gaps in the bus networks when a service can't be run commercially. 13% of all bus services in PTE areas are subsidised in this way at a cost to the PTEs of more than £80 million a year. In total, nearly 100 million kilometres of bus services a year are supported by the PTEs. These can be lifeline services for rural areas, or peripheral council estates. PTEs also step in to secure early morning, late night or weekend services when without PTE intervention a commercial service would only be provided during daytime or weekdays. Indeed without the PTEs the evening and Sunday network in particular would be very limited.

Red lines show commercial services withdrawn in Merseyside during weekday evenings since deregulation. When commercial services are withdrawn it's down to PTEs to fill the gaps.



PTEs also support dial-a-ride services for disabled and older people. 4.6 million trips a year are made on these lifeline services. One of the largest of these – and indeed the third largest such service in the world – is the Centro funded 'Ring n Ride'. Providing a door-to-door service for those people who find mainstream public transport either difficult or impossible to use, Ring n Ride is a lifeline for its 43,000 users, who between them make 1.9 million journeys a year. The Charity that runs the service (West Midlands Special Needs Transport) also provides a further 200,000 trips a year for children with disabilities, enabling them to travel to and from special schools within the area.

3. interchange

Urban bus stations used to be typically grim and seedy places – not anymore! PTE bus stations and interchanges have won award after award – setting new standards for public architecture, customer care and personal security. Right across the city regions PTEs have been systematically upgrading or replacing bus interchanges – often with brand new facilities right at the heart of major town and city centre regeneration projects.

Of the 57 major bus stations in PTE areas three quarters have been replaced or comprehensively modernised. A further eleven interchanges are currently under construction or planned.

And it's not just a matter of building a bus station then walking away. Standards of cleanliness, maintenance and supervision would shame many an airport or railway station.



setting the standards

South Yorkshire PTE's interchanges are impeccably maintained – reflected in a string of awards including Chartermark status. In South Yorkshire it's all about setting challenging standards for every aspect of the management and maintenance of interchanges – then rigorously enforcing them. Take their 'loo of the year' toilets as an example. Above each toilet block are electronic 'countdown' indicators which are reset every time the facility is cleaned – which is every twenty minutes. Regular patrols throughout the bus stations ensures the security of users and prevents vandalism. The target is for any litter, graffiti, oil or spillage to be removed within an hour of it being spotted, and at larger interchanges for a customer service officer to pass within five metres of any point of the interchange every five minutes. No surprise then that customer satisfaction levels in excess of 90% are regularly achieved as part of six monthly customer surveys.



stops and shelters

PTEs manage, maintain and renew a vast network of more than 60,000 bus stops and shelters. PTEs also do their level best to keep that network in the best possible condition, setting demanding standards for inspection, cleaning, maintenance and repair. A tough task given the sheer number of stops, and the ever-present threat of vandalism. All PTEs also have programmes for the systematic upgrading of stops and shelters – with stop-specific information and increasingly, with realtime information displays.

- More than half the shelters in Merseyside are now high quality 'SMART' shelters and every stop in Merseyside now has stop-specific timetable information
- Every shelter in West Yorkshire is checked at least once a month by a team of twenty responsible for their cleaning and maintenance
- Nexus ensures that graffiti is removed from shelters within 12 hours of notification
- GMPTE are installing new shelters at a rate of 400 a year
- In July 2004 Centro signed a deal with Adshell to release the value of advertising on 5,000 shelters – which could result in £60 million being reinvested in shelters and other bus network improvements over the next ten years

4. pushing the **boundaries**



New technologies and fresh thinking are changing perceptions of what a bus can look like, and what a bus can do. In the process the boundaries between bus, tram, trolleybus and train are beginning to blur.

In partnership with manufacturers and operators the PTEs are at the forefront of testing and introducing these new 'hybrids'.

In Greater Manchester the former railway line to Leigh is to be converted to a guided busway which will feed into bus priority measures on the main route into central Manchester. GMPTE is looking to use high-impact, 'tram-like' buses for the scheme and has already brought one of the futuristic Civis to the streets of Greater Manchester to show passengers the type of vehicle they can expect to travel on.

PTEs are also working with First Group to be among the first in line to benefit from their new 'Streetcar' which aims to replicate some of the qualities of modern light rail – but with rubber rather than steel wheels.

PTEs have also been among the first to bring into service low or zero emission buses.

The regenerated quaysides of Newcastle and Gateshead are now served by a new ultra low emission 'quayside transit' service. One of the first in the country to utilise hybrid diesel-electric vehicles the low noise / low emission service is particularly welcome on the semi-pedestrianised quayside. The scheme has been chosen by the DfT as one of the nine 'Clear Zone' trailblazers to demonstrate how technology can contribute to making cities more liveable.

As a leading player in EU research programmes Merseytravel has piloted in service operation of battery electric minibuses, buses powered by compressed natural gas and clean diesel vehicles. In June 2005 six diesel-electric hybrid buses began operating a circular city centre shuttle service between the tourist honeypot of Princes Dock and Lime Street station.



Guided bus

A guided busway is a specially constructed, dedicated bus lane, the width of one bus, along which specially adapted buses can travel. The unique design of the busway prevents its use by other vehicles meaning the bus has a clear road ahead. This helps the bus keep to the timetable, avoid getting caught in known congestion hotspots, and gets its passengers where they need to be, safely and on time. Buses using the busway are fitted with small 'guide wheels' located immediately in front of the normal front bus wheels. Away from the busway the guided bus behaves like any other bus with the driver using the steering wheel in the normal way. As the bus approaches the start of the busway the driver guides the bus into the special trackway. The guide wheels take over, guiding the bus along. At the end of the busway special traffic lights give the bus priority to rejoin the normal road.

West Yorkshire now has three guided bus schemes in place – two in Leeds and one in Bradford with a total of 6 kilometres of guideway between them. The three schemes are now used by 20 routes which carry over 18 million passengers a year. Despite the introduction of additional pelican crossings journey times are now quicker and more reliable – with increased patronage on all three systems and modal shift of up to 6%.



Yellow bus

Yellow bus has captured the imagination of schools, parents, pupils and policy makers alike. Instead of providing school children with the lowest cost service – Metro has started from scratch with a new bespoke service designed to provide a secure form of school transport which will also reduce 'school run' traffic congestion.

Under the scheme Yellow bus drivers, who are specially trained, have a list of all the pupils registered to travel on their bus, so they know whom to expect at each stop along the specially devised route. Each pupil is allocated their own high-backed padded seat with seatbelt. If a child will not be travelling due to sickness or holiday, parents are asked to telephone the dedicated Yellow bus Hotline so that the driver will know not to expect them. On arrival at school, the bus is either met by a teacher, or a walking bus scheme is in place to escort the children from the bus to the school. In the afternoon, a teacher will supervise the loading of the bus. Because of this exclusive use and registered system, Metro's pilot schemes have shown that parents are happy and confident to wave off their children, aged as young as five, on the bus.

Metro began Yellow bus pilot schemes, in Hebden Bridge and Ilkley, in 2002. In both locations Yellow buses were shown to have reduced school gate congestion by attracting significant numbers of pupils, many of whom formerly travelled to and from school by car.

More than 2,000 pupils at 42 schools across the County now benefit from the scheme – with 60% of pupils formerly having travelled to school by car.

Funded by a successful £18.7m bid to the Department for Transport, Metro is now acquiring a fleet of brand new custom built vehicles to develop its Yellow bus services to around 300 schools across West Yorkshire.



5. tackling exclusion through flexible services

These days a bus doesn't have to run to a fixed route or at fixed times. A growing number of services are either partially or fully 'demand responsive'. Ranging from services that will deviate from their route within a fixed area, to 'door-to-door' services which pick up and drop off anywhere within a designated zone.

PTEs have been pioneering new types of bus services, including DRT, to provide a more flexible service for sparsely populated rural areas, to better serve large council estates, and for linking areas of unemployment with new, out-of-town employment opportunities.

- Some PTEs serve large rural areas which can be difficult to serve effectively with conventional fixed bus routes. SPT's **Ring'n'Ride** is an innovative on-demand bus service that collects rural residents from their door (or as near as is safely possible) and takes them where they want to go, when they want to go. The service provides direct links for seven rural areas to town centres, leisure facilities, train stations and hospitals.
- GMPTE's family of **Local Link** demand responsive services benefits predominantly disadvantaged areas of Greater Manchester including Wythenshawe, which until its abolition

contained the most deprived ward in the country. With fares pitched midway between a taxi and a conventional bus 'Local Link' services now carry more than 100,000 passengers a year with the Wythenshawe service scoring a 96.7% approval rating from its users.

- Merseytravel's £5 million, 20 vehicle, **joblink** initiative deploys a range of branded conventional and door-to-door services to link areas of high unemployment with key employment sites in Merseyside. Fares are a maximum of 50p and 12% of joblink users say that the service helped them to take up a new job or training opportunity.
- Nexus provides a range of DRT services under the UCall brand. **UCall** provides a mixture of semi-fixed and door-to-door services tailored to local circumstances and the needs of individual users.
- South Yorkshire's Dearne, Rother and Lower Don Valleys were badly hit by the decline of traditional heavy industries in the 1980s. Since then they have attracted new business parks offering a valuable source of new jobs. However, these new employment generators were poorly served by public transport, and difficult to reach from nearby areas of high unemployment. South Yorkshire PTE worked with local business and colleges to provide a new **lost-cost shuttle** which runs every twenty minutes from a refurbished railhead at Swinton, with a flat fare of just 20p. The services have proved so popular they are now running without the need for subsidy during the daytime.



6. tackling exclusion through targeted concessions



PTEs spend more than a quarter of a billion pounds every year supporting concessionary fares schemes for pensioners, disabled people and children. Some of these schemes have gone way beyond the current statutory baseline – with free schemes already in place in Merseyside and the West Midlands. Every year nearly half a billion concessionary journeys are made in PTE areas.

Many of those eligible for concessionary fares are on low incomes and would find it difficult to access the services they need without the lifeline of cheap or free public transport. A 1997 study for Centro found that 80% of pensioners with a concessionary fares pass had an income of £100 or less and half the journeys wouldn't have been made without the pass. The pass was found to promote independence and bring significant benefits to health and social services. It also reduced car journeys.

More recent research for Merseytravel showed that in 2002, nearly a quarter of a million elderly and disabled passes were in use in Merseyside and that without those concessions, the elderly would make fewer and shorter trips by public transport – if they didn't cancel them altogether or switch modes. Faced with the same difficulty, a majority of disabled passengers would cancel their trips altogether.

On top of the statutory schemes PTEs have also introduced concessionary schemes for other low income groups, including young people and job seekers.



7. keeping passengers safe and secure



Nearly one in five people say that personal security would have to improve for them to use buses more. Women and ethnic minorities are likely to be particularly concerned. And people in the most deprived areas are around five times more likely than those in the least deprived areas to say that they are concerned about levels of crime in their area and safety at bus stops.

Crime, and fear of crime, doesn't just mean lost markets, it also costs the industry millions to tackle the damage caused by vandalism. GMPTE estimate that 15% of all bus shelter windows have to be replaced each year. In 2001/2 damage to bus windows in Merseyside alone came to £440,000 – an average of £287 per vehicle.

PTEs are investing heavily in a range of initiatives to reduce crime and fear of crime, both on buses, and at bus stops, interchanges and their approaches.

PTEs play a major role in bringing together all the interested parties – police, operators, local authorities, schools – in order to draw up **coordinated strategies** for targeting and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. For example Travelsafe in Merseyside brings together more than 15 organisations including Merseytravel, Merseyside and British Transport Police, bus and rail companies through to local crime and disorder partnerships.





TravelSafe initiatives include

- establishing five youth work outreach teams – who travel on the public transport networks to engage with young people hanging around on public transport with the aim of diverting them towards fun and productive activities
- ensuring 20% of the bus fleet is fitted with CCTV
- setting up a team of Community Support Officers to patrol the network

Since TravelSafe was set up the cost of repairing shelter damage has halved.

Similar coordinating partnerships are in place across the PTEs.

PTEs set very high standards for management and maintenance of the bus stations and interchanges that they operate (see page 6). As well as setting rigorous regimes for maintenance and tackling any vandalism or problem behaviour, many PTE bus stations and interchanges are now protected by **state of the art digital CCTV systems**. These digital systems offer pictures of the highest quality which can be used in prosecutions if necessary. For example Nexus's £8.5 million CCTV system is one of the largest and most complex in the country. It covers the Tyne and Wear Metro system as well as seven bus stations. The system is linked to the area's five local authority CCTV control rooms so both town centres and their local public transport stations and interchanges can be monitored by the same staff.

The flexibility of modern technology has enabled some PTEs to go further. In West Yorkshire hidden CCTV cameras are now deployed in bus shelters which have suffered from vandalism. The miniaturised cameras are portable and virtually undetectable. Pictures from the cameras are routinely passed onto the Police. The deterrent effect of this, and accompanying advertising of the possible presence of bus stop cameras, has contributed to a 23% fall in criminal damage across the network.

Increasingly PTEs are also providing direct funding for police or **community support officers** who are deployed specifically on public transport. So, for example, GMPTE has funded a police presence for Wigan's bus services. The unit is based at the Borough's two bus stations and is made up of two police officers, four community support officers and a liveried vehicle. The Unit targets crime hotspots and provides a highly visible presence at peak times.

PTEs work widely with **schools** to enthuse and educate young people about public transport, and also to discourage anti-social behaviour. There has been some encouraging results – in South Yorkshire the PTE's SAFEMark initiative is proving very effective. Under SAFEMark the PTE works with schools, pupils and bus operators to identify problem areas. Discussions are held with pupils on safe and secure use of public transport, and an action plan is then drawn up. Sixty of the region's seventy secondary schools have now signed up and the scheme is now being extended to junior schools.

Some PTEs have also used **detached youth workers** to engage directly with young people who use public transport as somewhere to 'hang out'. The smoking, drinking and general misbehaviour on the 231 bus in Merseyside was proving increasingly intimidating to both passengers and bus drivers. Youth workers travelled the route to gain the group's confidence and then invited them to take part in a youth project. This got them out of trouble and ultimately resulted in the production of artwork which it's hoped will be installed at Liverpool's John Lennon Airport.

Route 112 in Greater Manchester epitomises the role of PTEs as catalyst, innovator and funder of measures targeted at effectively tackling crime and disorder. Nearly half of 112 users questioned had witnessed anti-social behaviour, so GMPTE funded dedicated and trained Safer Travel Officers (STOs) to staff the route. The STOs are equipped with radios and mobile phones and have the authority to check tickets and to expel people who behave unacceptably. The STOs also provide the police and the PTE with information on offenders and on any hotspots for trouble on the route.

8. keeping passengers informed every step of the way

PTEs are the main information providers for bus services in their areas – they aim to ensure passengers have access to accurate and easy to understand information at all stages of a journey. Rapid developments in information technology (from wap phones to websites) are simultaneously opening up new ways to inform passengers and raising their expectations. But while IT is transforming the way in which public transport information can be distributed and personalised, the need to get the basics right – like up-to-date timetables at bus stops – is as great as ever.

PTEs play a key role in the **Traveline** service which, via the internet and call centres, now provides door-to-door information across the country. PTEs call centres handle 4.7 million calls every year. The high standard of service provided by those call centres have won a series of awards as well as retaining the contracts to provide the service. For example Merseytravel Traveline consistently scores between 90 and 100% on a range of criteria measured by the DfT – particularly speed of response, accuracy of information given and the friendliness of the service offered.

PTEs also operate 58 **travelcentres** – usually located at major bus stations – which between them deal with 9.5 million inquiries a year. There are more than 35 million hits per year on PTE **websites** and the English PTEs also publish more than 17 million **leaflets, timetables and promotional handouts**. PTEs aim to ensure that public transport information is available not just at stops and interchanges but also at other key community facilities. As part of GMPTe's 'Integrate' programme, public transport information is now available at 4,300 key community facilities including hospitals, local council offices, colleges and health centres. In Strathclyde many rural areas are many miles from their nearest travel centre. So SPT takes information to them in the form of a fully accessible mobile travel centre. The vehicle visits 35 rural communities in a typical five week period with SPT staff on hand with a full range of timetable and concessionary information, as well as a computerised journey planner. More than 12,500 people used the service last year.

Real time information (RTI) about bus services is also increasingly available at bus stops and stations, on the internet and via mobile phones.

As well as stop-specific printed timetable information, RTI is now being rolled out at major bus stops and on key routes right across the PTEs. Information by text about the next bus to serve your stop is already available for all 12,500 bus stops in Greater Manchester, a similar service is being introduced in other PTEs.

PTEs are involved in **travel planning services** which provide detailed guidance for individuals or companies on which public transport services and ticketing offers are right for them.

South Yorkshire PTE's TOPS (Travel Options Planning Service) is one of the biggest such operations in the country. TOPS works with more than 200 public and private sector employers and community groups to provide individually tailored public transport advice. They have also worked with job centres – including providing a one day a week travel advisor able to give public transport information and specially discounted tickets for job seekers.

Thanks largely to Centro's TravelWise initiative 28.5% of West Midlands employees now work for an organisation with a formal transport plan. Something that has also contributed to public transport achieving a 53% share of morning peak flows into Birmingham.

PTEs promote bus networks as part of single integrated public transport systems for the conurbations as a whole. This can include **comprehensive marketing campaigns** with billboards, and TV and radio ads. One recent example is the 'A to Z by Bus' campaign – jointly funded by Nexus, local authorities and bus operators. This £270,000 campaign aimed to show buses as THE viable alternative to the private car – emphasising the key advantages of bus travel through a six week, multi-media marketing campaign.



9. ticket to ride

In partnership with operators PTEs initiate, promote and provide multi-modal ticketing for the areas they serve. Tickets which can be used across all modes and all operators are a cornerstone of any integrated public transport network and all PTEs operate a variety of schemes aimed at different markets – from students to families, and from leisure to commuting.

Some of these tickets are very popular – bringing passengers onto the bus network who otherwise would not have been there. Examples include:

- 3.4 million ‘Saveaway’ one day multi-modal tickets were sold in Merseyside last year
- over 900,000 multi-modal season tickets – ‘Metrocards’ – were sold in West Yorkshire last year
- Zonal card ticketing in Strathclyde generates 14 million public transport trips a year
- In Greater Manchester one in twelve bus journeys (19 million) were made using multi-operator and multi-modal integrated tickets last year

10. bringing it all together

The bus is the mainstay of PTE public transport networks – but it can’t do everything. For longer distance flows heavy rail can be the right choice and on the busiest urban corridors – or where regeneration is a priority – light rail can do the job

best. It’s the role of the PTEs to produce the overarching strategies for the development of public transport in their areas – and to promote those networks as a single integrated whole.

11. the way ahead

As this report shows the PTEs are both the glue that holds bus networks together and the driving force behind their development. With support from Governments the PTEs are:

- improving the reliability of bus services through promoting bus priority schemes
- making bus services more safe and secure by coordinating the battle against crime and anti-social behaviour
- using new technologies to revolutionise the scale and quality of information on bus services available to passengers
- promoting and administering multi-modal and concessionary ticketing which bring in millions of passengers onto bus networks every year
- filling the gaps in the commercial network by investing more than £80 million a year in subsidised services
- systematically upgrading bus stations and interchanges to the very highest standards
- marketing the bus network as part of wider, single integrated networks
- right at the cutting edge of new forms of bus provision – from guided bus to yellow bus, and from door-to-door services to new tram-like vehicles.



The bus is key to wider plans to tackle traffic congestion, social exclusion and in supporting the wider regeneration of the city regions. This is why the PTEs have invested heavily in improving bus services. In the years ahead - and working in partnership with private operators, and with national and local government - we aim to continue to be one of Britain's biggest backers of the bus.



delivering public transport solutions
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