

First edition

THE MAGAZINE FOR FIRST PEOPLE IN LONDON

Welcome to a bumper version of FirstEdition for all First London staff.

When pulling these articles together it was more evident than ever that YOU are the people who will help make our company develop. During these difficult economic times we made a point of focussing on staff recognition for those who have excelled. Pages 4 to 6 show the success that YOU have brought the company and goes a small way to show the talent that we have across all areas.

Getting this message out both within and outside the company and recognising those who have delivered is very important and compliments our core values of safety and customer service. It is also very important to me that we develop better lines of communications throughout the organisation, that you have a voice within the company, that you have access to information and that your views will be heard.

Without your input and ability to feed into the companies development we won't move forward. My plan is to develop this area of staff engagement and is covered in more detail on Page 2.

You are all a vital part of the organisation and it is only by tapping into your expertise that we will be able to improve our standards, perform better than our competitors and grow the company.



I recognise that the pay settlements with drivers have been a long and drawn out affair with both sides having solid, but opposing, arguments. However, I want to put those difficulties to one side and also improve Union relations.

The convenors are being fully briefed on the companies operational and financial position and I hope that we can realistically work together to place First London on an improved competitive footing against the other London Operators.

I hope that you enjoy reading this copy of FirstEdition - the First magazine for people in London. If you have any suggestions or articles please send them to your Manger and they will put them forward for consideration in future editions.

Adrian Jones
Managing Director

*** STOP PRESS ***



DISCOUNT TRAVEL ON FIRST GREYHOUND
See Page 8 for full details



Improving Staff Engagement

In the 2008 Staff Survey many staff told us that they felt they did not feel 'engaged' with the business and we introduced regular Question Time sessions to try and address this concern.

A further Mini Staff Survey was done at the end of 2009 and again the message that came back was that staff did not feel engaged or well informed about what was happening in the company.

This is of great concern to me because positive staff engagement plays a critical role in developing our company and improving it for everyone.

I see a need for honest staff/management engagement to help build the company for the long-term rather than for short-term gains. If you know where the company is going, and why, then you are more likely to understand and appreciate some of the decisions that are taken, which sometimes you may not agree with.

I plan to introduce new ideas to try and build your trust in me and the company and to give you the opportunity to be more involved and to feel more engaged. Key to this approach are the following principles:-

- **Managers treating people as individuals rather than resources.**
- **Giving employees a real voice.**
- **Having a true up, down and sideways flow of ideas.**
- **Improved Industrial Relations.**

All of these are two-way processes and I want **all** staff to actively air their concerns and offer their ideas.

To kick start this new approach I am launching the 'Ask Adrian' e-mail address. If you have a question or query that you don't feel has been answered by your Line Manager, if you want to raise a safety concern, if you want to make an observation or simply have a great idea then please send it to: ask.adrian@firstgroup.com

I will read every e-mail and where required I will ensure that you get a reply.

I look forward to hearing from you – all you have to do is ...

**ASK.ADRIAN@
FIRSTGROUP.COM**

Employee Director

For those who don't know me, my name is Lawrence Breach and I am your Employee Director for the London and Berkshire area. I first joined Gold Arrow as a bus driver in 1993, having spent the previous seventeen years within the Postal Service.

As your elected Employee Director I attend local and national board meetings on your behalf. It is in my remit to bring to your attention matters relevant to you as a Company employee i.e. Pension Information, Health & Safety issues and forthcoming Company initiatives.



Having undertaken a small staff survey at the end of 2009, I, like Adrian, was concerned to see that a lot of staff didn't feel they had a significant engagement with the company. I want to help to change that and if you want to raise something or ask a question the best way to catch me is to e-mail me at fortyfive1956@yahoo.co.uk

The Bristol Dozen

On 9th May Adrian Jones will join eleven other runners who will complete the Bristol 10km run in aid of Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research.

The team chose the charity because of the support and assistance that they have given to Leon Daniels, the UK Bus Division's Customer Service and Communications Director. Many of you will know Leon from his Capital and CentreWest days. Sadly Leon's wife Alice, mother to their two young boys, was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia at the start of 2010.

Some of the other runners include Nicola Shaw (FirstGroup plc Director), Justin Davies (MD Bristol Somerset & Avon) and Marc Reddy (MD Devon, Cornwall, Hampshire and Dorset) so Adrian will be up against his peers and will need to push himself hard to secure bragging rights. Any support for Adrian and this great cause would be gladly received via the following website:

WWW.JUSTGIVING.COM/RUNNINGFORTHEBUS



If you do not wish to donate online Adrian will happily accept a cheque, postal orders, stamps and good old fashioned cash.



Hyde Park Run – 14 April 2010

Well done to a team from Macmillan House who completed 5 and 10km runs in Hyde Park in support of the British Heart Foundation. Thanks also to those who cheered them all over the finish line.

If your depot has done something which you want to share please let your DGM have details and if possible a picture and we may include in future editions.

Celebrating Long Service

The following staff have all reached significant milestones and are worthy of a mention :-

25 Years – Alpertown & Uxbridge

Anilkumat Bhayani – iBus Controller
Stephen Oldfield – Driver

30 Years – Head Office & Westbourne Park

Martin Widdicombe – Scheduler
Alexander Graham – Mechanic

35 Years - Uxbridge

George Snell – Driver

40 Years - Willesden Junction

Mavis Francis – On Street Inspector
Ishwarlal Maisuria – Driver

Celebrating Safe Driving

We all know the importance of safety in the workplace and whilst driving.

Congratulations to the following six staff, who between them have 150 years safe driving.

Lalji Bhudia, Oscar Brathwaite and Primus Allain all based at Willesden Junction and Rex Porter and David Phillips based at Uxbridge.

Finally a special mention for Lloyd Payne a Driver based at Willesden Junction who has clocked up a total of 40 years service and 35 years safe driving – well done Lloyd.

Awards

2009/10 has seen First London secure a number of awards following the recognition and nomination of many staff who have delivered excellent services and performance.

We should all be proud of the our colleagues and well done to all those nominated. Below are just some of the highlights.



June 2009 - UK Fleet Safety Awards

Highly Commended - Company Driver Safety Award - Greg Wright Insurance Manager and Steve Roberts Health and Safety Manager. The award was for taking a proactive training and accident analysis approach which has helped London reduce collisions and improve driver training.

Greg is pictured to the left [looking a bit like James Bond].

June 2009 - Passenger Transport Management Awards

- Winner** - Unsung Heroes - Winston Dottin (Willesden Driver)
- Winner** - Unsung Heroes - Alan Bwye - (Engineering Manager)
- Winner** - Marketing Award - Matthew Wooll (Berkshire)



Pictured to the right with Adrian Jones Managing Director (left to right Adrian, Winston, Matt and Alan)

June 2009 Green500 Awards - Silver Award

We won the award at the first Green500 Awards for our successful environmental initiatives and for our reduction of carbon emissions from vehicles. Green500 is a carbon reduction scheme initiated by the Mayor of London for large organisations to encourage, acknowledge and reward those who make reductions.

The Silver award is in recognition of a 36 month project covering 20 initiatives including lighting improvements, water recycling, Drive Green benefits, waste recycling, lighting schemes, etc.

The Award demonstrates our commitment to minimising the ecological footprint of our operations. We are the only London bus operator to participate in the Green500 scheme and it is hoped we can achieve the Gold level currently held by Transport for London and First Capital Connect and push for a Platinum standard with the adoption of Hybrid and Hydrogen Fuel Cell technology.



July 2009 - National Transport Awards

Commended - Chris Moyes Bus Operator of the Year

First London & Berkshire - Slough

September 2009 - UK Bus Driver of the Year (Blackpool)

Stephen Elliott (Uxbridge depot) shared the trophy for 'Top London Driver'.

All drivers are encouraged to take part so we can judge our high standards against other operators. The winners of the London & Berkshire trials are shown right Imran Khan, Stephen Elliott (both Uxbridge) and Scott Russell (Reading).



November 2009 - UK Bus Awards

Winner - London Service Quality Award - Greenford

Winner - Top London Bus Driver - Winston Dottin (Willesden) pictured left with Nicola Shaw and Dave Kaye

Highly Commended - Top London Bus Driver - Harjinder Banbheru (Uxbridge) and Comfort Nkrumah (Westbourne Park)

Highly Commended - Top National Bus Driver - Karen Parker (Bracknell)

Highly Commended - Express Operation of the Year 2009 - First RailAir (Reading)



December 2009 - Go-Skills Awards

Winner - 'Literacy, Numeracy & Language'

Samuel Tuffour (pictured middle with Martin Moran and Adrian Jones front row and Michael Dixon and Abdikarim Mohamed Aar back row)

March 2010 - London Transport Awards

Winner - Frontline Employee of the Year - Winston Dottin

Highly Commended - Comfort Nkrumah

Both pictured right with their awards.



March 2010 - London Bus Awards

Winner - 'Above & Beyond The Call Of Duty' - Benham Shalovi (Greenford)
 (pictured below left with Raj Chadha)

Winner - 'Best Vehicle Care' - Willesden Junction
 Team members : Ben Wakerley, Pat Lamb and Sanjeev Amratlal (pictured below right)



April 2010 - FirstGroup Safety & Environment Awards

Winner - 'Best UK Environmental Initiative' – Wendy McAleese (Macmillan House) Mobile phone recycling and savings (pictured below right with a selection of mobile phones).

Highly Commended for the 'Safety Award (Large Depot)' for Uxbridge depot
 Below left Stavros Heracleous Depot General Manager (Uxbridge).



First London DriveGreen update

DriveGreen is a safety program that allows drivers to manage their own safety and provides instant in-vehicle feedback which helps to stop risky driving before collisions occurs.

Use of this system can help you drive safely, avoid accidents and passenger injuries, whilst having a positive effect on the environment because CO2 emissions are reduced. There are so many benefits why would you not want to use the system which may even lead to a cash award.

Your cash reward results from Safe Driving Awards which are payable every year if you drive without an accident and have a good attendance record. Why not use the DriveGreen system to your advantage, take note of what it tells you and drive safely and maybe you could benefit from a Safe Driving payment next year.

You should all have a Dallas Key which enables you to log on every time you start driving. This is important as it ensures that trips are recorded against the right driver.

If you have any questions about the system, if you feel that buses are not recording information correctly or if perhaps the DriveGreen system appears not to be working please raise them with your manager or DriveGreen Champion.

CPC – All your questions answered

What is it?

A new qualification for professional bus and coach drivers that came into force on 10/09/08. 'Driver Certificate of Professional Competence' is also known as Driver CPC and needs to be held in addition to your licence if you drive professionally!

How does it affect you?

If you passed your PCV driving test after 10/09/08 it is your responsibility to carry a DQC Driver Qualification Card when you are driving a bus.

What if you passed a PCV test before 10/09/2008?

You will need to prove you are exempt from holding a DQC by carrying both parts of your licence when you are driving as they show when you passed your test.

Will everyone need a DQC?

Yes! If you have one now you will need to prove to the DVLA that you have taken part in 35 hours official CPC training before the card runs out. All other drivers currently holding a PCV will need to prove they have completed 35 hours of training by 10/09/13.

What if I do not complete the training?

If you are unable to qualify for your DQC then your PCV becomes useless for professional driving!

What should I do next?

Attend your CPC courses on time in uniform when requested by your Manager. Make sure you present BOTH parts of your driving licence to the training department. If you are required to hold a DQC and have been given one make sure you bring it with you! Check your licence is in date, it has the correct address and that the photocard has not run out.

We look forward to welcoming you on your CPC course.

Fleet News Update – London

Since the last First Edition London has seen the introduction of a number of Volvo B9 buses with Wrights Gemini bodywork. The Volvo B9 represents a shift in purchasing policy for London away from the ADL Enviro 400. Since September 2009 Alperton, Northumberland Park, Lea Interchange and Hayes have all received new buses. The latest additions at Hayes now bring the fleet compliment of Volvo B9's to 117 and these buses are powered by a Volvo EEV low emission engine. In addition to these double deck buses, Greenford have received a number of ADL Enviro 200 buses and Uxbridge are in the process of receiving new buses for the U1 and U5 routes.

For nearly all of these new additions to the London fleet there are buses that will be cascaded within First and will include Dennis Tridents and Volvo B7 type buses. The future of the DMC's released from Uxbridge is uncertain, however there is a plan to retain them within London and release other bus types.

MTV hits London Screens!

MTV has finally made its way to depots across London. Not to be mistaken with the 24 hour music channel, Missing Trips Verification (MTV) is a web based application which uses iBus and GPS technology to track the movement of our vehicles across all routes and reports any missing trips to operators.



The iBus system contains schedule/trip data for all routes operated in London and through MTV, reports by exception cases where buses either do not pass or are late passing a timing point - which in the new system is any bus stop. MTV reports all details of the 'missing trip' including location, time and distance of the 'missing' trip. The operator is then responsible for assigning a cause code, if mileage was lost or for coding as operated if the mileage was in fact operated.

Uxbridge and Lea Interchange went live on MTV at the start of March and all other depots went live on 1st April. The expectation is that MTV will automatically generate QSI data and QICs payments by the monitoring of buses through iBus and the future coding of mileage in MTV.

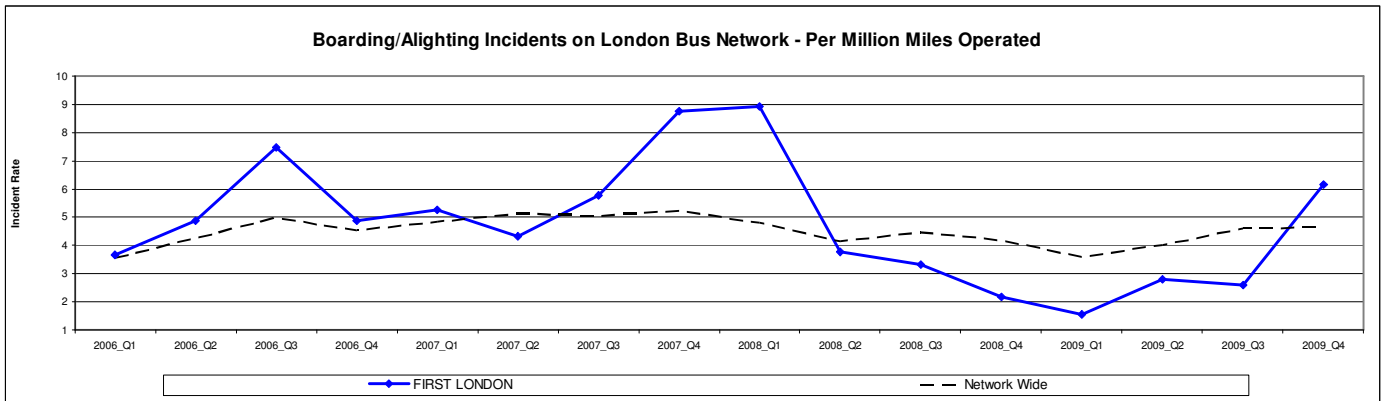


BREAKING NEWS

Fancy a trip to the seaside? As a special offer to mark the launch of the new Greyhound service to Bournemouth we have negotiated a 50% staff discount for all First London employees on all Greyhound trips in May. So if you fancy a pint in Portsmouth, a savaloy in Southampton or a burger in Bournemouth now's your chance.

All you need to do is log onto www.greyhounduk.com and enter the promo code 'london'. Remember to take your Staff Pass or Bus Operators Oyster Card to show the Driver and don't forget the sun tan lotion.

**Spinnaker Tower
Portsmouth**



INCIDENTS WHEN BOARDING AND ALIGHTING

Latest data received from Transport for London shows that we have had a recent surge in incidents when passengers have been injured either boarding or alighting. Using the Injury Prevention Principles please ensure you adopt and apply these good habits whenever pulling up at bus stops.

- Align your bus with the kerb so passengers can step up or down directly from the kerb.
- Do not obstruct doors by pulling up next to street furniture e.g. lampposts, barriers etc.
- Kneel your bus to make boarding easier.
- Always check your mirrors and CCTV before opening/closing doors to ensure passengers are not trapped.

And always be on your guard for cyclists driving up the nearside.

Training for the Trainers.

It is important that as a company we ensure we are up to date with the latest training techniques and offer the best possible Driver Training service to our bus driving colleagues. In order to achieve this the Recruitment and Training Team have set in a motion a programme of training to update the qualifications for our training staff.

Driving instructors

All our Driving Instructors are working toward an NVQ in Driving Instruction. This requires them to gather evidence of their ability and carry out on job assessments of practical teaching. To achieve the qualification First London is working in partnership with First Group Learning and Development and West Nottinghamshire College. The partnership enables us to work on a pilot scheme to gather the qualifying evidence through new technology and all our Instructors have been issued with Motorola Dext's which have camera, video camera and internet access to help them develop their portfolios.

Recruitment Staff

Additionally our Recruitment Staff are working toward an NVQ in Customer Service, in partnership with Evolution Training and requires gathering of evidence and on job assessments.

Classroom Instructors

Our Classroom Instructors are also working toward an industry qualification which is the first step in a teaching qualification and introduces professional techniques from the education sector into our training regime.

Kieran McDonnell, Recruitment and Training Manager, said "Changes to PCV regulations, the introduction of CPC and a robust Btec qualification has prompted us to ensure our staff are up to date with the latest training techniques. It has been encouraging to see the training staff react so positively, especially on the pilot scheme to gather portfolio evidence through new technology."



What do **YOU** want to see? Do you have any comments about this FirstEdition? Please send any comments to **debbie.lamshead@firstgroup.com** or **david.fielding@firstgroup.com** and we will try to get them in the next FirstEdition.



Crisis Management Hotline

In the event of an unexpected emergency e.g. fire, flooding, terrorist activity you can contact the First London & Berkshire Crisis Hotline. It will have a pre-recorded message advising you about the incident, provide regular updates and explain what further actions you should take. The Hotline number is **07872 829000** and it would be a good idea to take the number down for future reference.

Hopefully you will never need to use it.

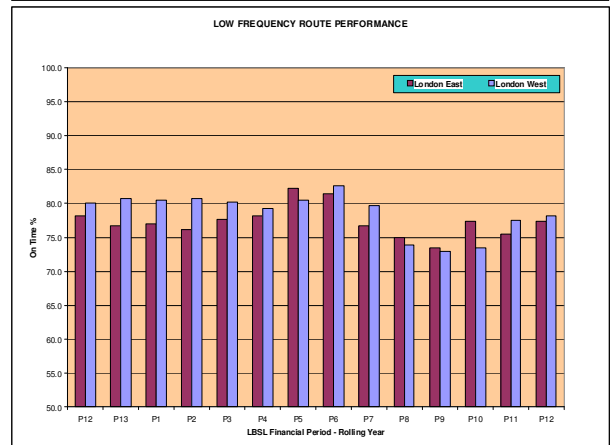
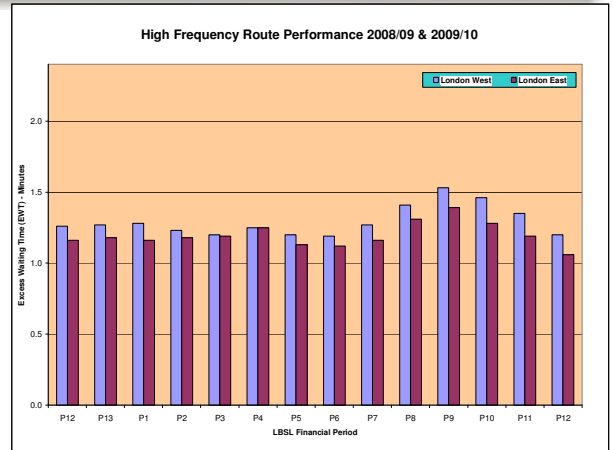
ROADWORKS HIT HARD!

We have experienced a difficult twelve months on the road - mainly as a result of roadworks. Every route has, at one time or other, suffered significant delays. The Victorian Water Main replacement program affected our Central London routes and the two week closure of Brentwood High Street on route 498 mean it has been a tough year on the road. As well as the impact on performance it has also meant late finishes for drivers. Where we have had sufficient advance warning we have worked with London Buses to introduce temporary emergency schedules such as those currently on routes 150 and 179.

However, with the iBus system now producing some excellent quality data we are currently in the process of working through a list of all of our routes that we believe may need schedule reviews and a number have already been implemented. Additionally, if you believe that the running time provided is either not enough or too much, please speak to your relevant route Performance Manager.

On the plus side, we have also had a number of routes (particularly on our Uxbridge and Lea Interchange networks) that have regularly appeared in the London

Buses best performing categories - well done to all involved. Also we have seen significant improvements on routes along the Uxbridge Road corridor. Thanks for your efforts through what has been a very tough year and here's to a successful 2010/11.



Tender Market News

This year has undoubtedly been one of the most challenging years in First London's history. This has been reflected in the London tender market. Managing Director Adrian Jones takes a look back at the last 12 months and previews the year ahead...

In the last 12 months the tender market has become increasingly difficult, with tender prices in some cases at levels lower than they were seven years ago. First in London has had mixed results over the last year, losing a number of its contracts to other operators, but at the same time retaining important contracts such as the routes 18, 23, 58, 92, 282, 295, 339, 427, RV1 and U routes 1 to 5.

Transport for London has told operators that over the next few years there will be limited growth in the London bus network. After all Artic routes have converted to double deck, there is little or no scope left for any further growth. Furthermore, and given the economic conditions, it is working hard to maintain the network at existing levels. Certain operators appear to be seeking growth in London as part of their strategy and can only deliver this by winning routes off other operators. This is causing operators to bid more cheaply.

First has restructured and made changes to its costs. This means the company is in a stronger position to meet the market. However it is still necessary for us to continue our focus on cost improvement across all areas of the business. The year ahead will be as equally tough as the last with more important routes coming up for tender but I am optimistic that we can meet the challenges that 2010/11 will bring to the London tender market

In the meantime, may I take this opportunity to thank you all for your hard work and commitment.

WORKING TOGETHER

Crossrail – update – further details can be found on the web site – www.crossrail.co.uk

The Crossrail website now has a new function that enables information about Crossrail works to be easily located. It is called 'Near You', and allows you to search a map, by entering street names or postcodes, to locate areas where work is happening. There is also a brief description of and the duration of the works. This will continue to develop over the course of the project and information will be kept up to date by Crossrail. Watch out for the tunnel route which will be added soon.

Closer to home in January, at Royal Oak, Network Rail began preparatory work to relocate some railway equipment at the site of Crossrail's future tunnel entrance just west of Paddington. Work on the tunnel portal structure will follow. Preparatory work has started in the Paddington New Yard area of Westbourne Park Depot.



Artist impression of the new canal side entrance

This is the second part of the Royal Oak Portal preparation work being conducted by Crossrail who have taken possession of buildings and land in the yard area. Morgan Est are their construction partner for this work and they are planning for work to commence at the end of May. The Crossrail design review panel has supported Weston Williamson's designs for part of Paddington station, which includes the Hammersmith & City and Circle line Underground station and a new canal side entrance. When finished it will create a much improved facility for passengers.

Discussions continue with Transport for London and Crossrail on the effect of the construction on the lower compound at Westbourne Park. Once concluded announcements will be made to fill the current uncertainty.

Hydrogen Fuel Cell Project - Update

Towards the end of 2010 we will be seeing five hydrogen fuel cell buses running on the RV1 route. This follows the success of the Clean Urban Transport for Europe (CUTE) project in which First ran three fuel cell buses from the Hackney depot. The five hydrogen buses will run as part of the route PVR and a new hydrogen bus specific facility will be constructed at Lea Interchange. This project is exciting for First as it is at the forefront of future transport technology. The lessons learnt will enable First to benefit when a hydrogen economy becomes more widespread.

Advantages

Using hydrogen as a fuel means there will be less vehicle emissions, as the only waste product is water vapour. Hydrogen vehicles will help to reduce CO2 emissions and tackle climate change. Hydrogen buses will be quieter than diesel buses and will give passengers a smoother ride because of the drive being provided by an electric motor.

Safety

Public perception of hydrogen is that it is a dangerous substance. When using any fuels safety has to be paramount and all the buses will be certified and undergo tests before they are allowed on the road. The fuelling and maintenance facility will also undergo stringent tests and have appropriate safety procedures in place.

In the event of a leak hydrogen has an advantage over conventional fossil fuels. Hydrogen will go in to the atmosphere and disperse hence minimising any risk. A traditional fossil fuel leak will stay at ground level and continue to be a safety and environmental hazard for a considerable period of time.

The Future

Completion of the five buses and the maintenance facility is due towards the end 2010 and you will see full operation on the RV1 route in 2011.

Under the Spotlight

Ben Wakerley joined First in 2002, based at Wigan Depot (which is way up North). Ben joined First in London in 2008 initially as the Willesden Junction Staff Manager.

1) You were promoted to Depot General Manger at Willesden in March 2010 - what has been your biggest challenge?

There is a good close-knit team at Willesden across all staff. One area we are focussing on is improving the punctuality and reliability of our routes. The iBus and Road Side Controllers are a key part of the team, as service delivery is not a case of just pushing the buses out of the gate in the morning, it's about controlling the services effectively, communicating and working as a team to get results.

2) What originally made you want to join FirstGroup?

My family used the bus all the time when I was growing up, as we didn't have a car (its tough up North), so I had a natural interest in buses and how it all worked. A family friend worked at Queen's Road (Manchester) and as a sprightly 20 year old, after completing my degree, I trained as a driver.

3) Bolton Wanderers to win the FA Cup or England to win the World Cup?

I am sure England will win the World cup one day, but Wanderers to win the FA Cup as it WILL be amazing.

4) How do you promote the Company Value of 'Pride' with your staff?

Having been very proud of the depot team who won Best Vehicle Care category at the London Bus Awards, I know it is about recognising those who deliver the goods. It was great that the company recognised the garage (Staff Notices and publicity) and it was also very unexpected to receive personal letters of thanks from Adrian Jones and Sir Moir Lockhead. This illustrates what can be done when you overcome obstacles and challenges and it helps you drive for more success in the future.

5) What is the best thing about being a Northerner in London?

It's nice to meet so many different people from different backgrounds. I can't imagine leaving London now! I am a very proud Northerner, after all we do have the best music, football, food etc. I'm just glad it's not all jellied eels down here and where are the gold paved streets!

6) What are you most proud about when you walk around Willesden Junction?

The importance of what we do. We're part of a machine that safely moves 2.2 billion Londoners on journeys per year. We play an important role in the Capital city, and we do it diligently, safely and with pride, despite traffic, fluctuating fuel prices, lost mileage and all the other issues, every day we overcome them and provide an extremely valuable service.

7) Oasis or Blur?

Oasis obviously since they are Northern but Abba get my real vote!

8) What are you looking forward to in 2010?

I'm looking forward to England winning the World Cup, going to some music festivals and the success of Willesden Junction!

9) Do you believe in Extra Terrestrial life?

I'm not answering that ...

