



# Members Newsletter

Issue 2019/3 – October/November

## OUR NEXT CHALLENGE

I am only too aware that 26 October 2020, the day that Euro VI Low Emission Zone expands to cover the whole of Greater London is now just 12 months away. As a trade body we will continue to support you in your efforts to meet this challenge.



## FROM THE CHAIRMAN – STEPHEN TELLING

It seems at the moment that the pace of change is intensifying and as soon as you think you have met one requirement another even more challenging situation presents itself. In recent weeks I have spoken with members about the impact of the **PSV Accessibility Regulations** for coaches which take effect from 1 January 2020 as well as the changes to the **Low Emission Zone** in October next year. However, there is growing concern even more stringent requirements are just around the corner, with Zero Emission Zones being spoken about during the next decade.

This is one of the reasons why the Board of the LTCOA are developing the **'workshop'** concept, which gives you more of a chance to ask searching questions of those who influence those decisions and allows them to get a greater understanding of the challenges we as coach operators face.

We have had very good feedback from both of our workshops this year; one on the **Ultra Low Emission Zone** in April and, more recently, focusing on **Operating Coaches in London - Can we deliver the service our customers expect?** I was glad that those from the local authorities in particular seems to listen to the points of view that were being put across and I hope that a change in attitude will result.

I was also pleased to represent the Association at the relaunch of the **All Party Parliamentary Group for the Road Passenger Transport Industry** in September. This is a real opportunity to influence politicians and to ensure that the Coach (and Bus) are firmly on the agenda.

Finally, the Board spent time over the summer looking at the rules of the Association and proposing some updates. These will be put to all members at an **Extraordinary General Meeting** on Monday 18 November. I look forward to seeing you then.

# Operating Coaches in London – Can we deliver the service our Customers expect?

## Peter Bradley reports

We held another successful workshop on **23 September**, in conjunction with the **Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport** which concentrated on how the industry can work better with stakeholders to ultimately improve the service to those who travel by coach.

**Paul Sainthouse**, President of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, as well as MD Dawsongroup Bus & Coach, set the scene. He reminded us that the world in which we work is seeing unprecedented levels of change and evolution, the fact that London is leading the way in key social and economic planning for this shift, and we have to learn to work in a new environment where knowledge is power. He mentioned the growth in London's population, the Victorian infrastructure / layout of our capital city and congestion, and questioned whether these were threats or opportunities for the industry.

Interestingly he also mentioned how empowered the population now is and that most of us have quite a strong opinion on the world we want to live in. That leads to politics entering uncharted territory i.e. you can't please most of the people most of the time. That can translate into how local authorities have to deal with many conflicting demands on how road space is used.

Finally, and a theme that continued to be raised throughout the day, is the image of the coach industry with our stakeholders and society as a whole; there is so much more that could (and should) be done. The industry needs to be far more vocal and promote itself effectively as well as embracing new technology and working practices. It gave much food for thought and Paul set the standard for the rest of the workshop.

TfL was represented by **Joel Adams**, the Lead Sponsor of **Victoria Coach Station** who gave us more information about its retention, which allows a longer-term view to be taken for the first time since it was transferred from the National Bus Company in 1988. He spoke about the efforts of finding alternative locations, including Royal Oak, which although would have given a direct link with the underground, was a much smaller site.

Although the footprint of Victoria may eventually be smaller, other options could be available to make better use of the space, including possibly for tourist and private hire coaches as well as scheduled coach services. Joel then set us the question as to what should a modernised coach station be; one that we need to respond to!

**Bruce McVean** from the City of London and **Hugh Brennan** representing the City of Westminster gave the view from the local authority perspective and surprised many of those present by their high regard for coaches. However again they laboured the point that the industry needs to do more to promote itself. Both have experienced a significant increase in walking on their patch which is set to continue, and interestingly is a contributor to traffic congestion because of pedestrians crossing the road.

Hugh painted a very though provoking picture of the activities in the City of Westminster. For example, they have approximately 41,000 on street parking spaces. However, this is to meet the

demand from the 600,000 vehicles that enter London daily, over 46,000 business (and rising – more than the City of London and Canary Wharf combined) and 250,000 residents (also rising).

The City of Westminster is also home to:

- Parliament, the Monarchy and most of the Royal Parks;
- A range of world class tourist attractions;
- One of London's international shopping centres;
- The highest number of historic buildings in the country;
- The lively West End - including Theatreland



As Hugh explained these all sit alongside large residential neighbourhoods and local community facilities, where more will live, work and visit in the coming years.

Some other interesting statistics from trends in central London were that residents are driving their cars less as more walk, cycle and work at home. Use of London's roads by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV's) and the traditional black cab has 'flatlined', but has been replaced by a large increase in Light Goods Vehicles (LGV's), and Private Hire Vehicles respectively. Westminster are also having to contend with other more

unconventional modes such as Pedicabs and Electric Scooters, which cause many issues for them.

For me one of the most fascinating pieces of information gleaned from **Hugh Brennan's** presentation was that there are currently 39 identified demands for use of the kerbside, including traffic capacity needs, diplomatic bays and for residents, as well parking and waiting provision for coaches. There is simply not enough to go around. Whilst this does not excuse the lack of parking provision in London for coaches, it does help you understand what the challenges are.

**Matt Winfield** from the charity **Sustrans**, whose aim is to make it easier for people to walk and cycle, spoke about their challenges and gave a different perspective. Their vision is for a society where the way we travel creates healthier places and happier lives for everyone, which I don't think anyone can argue with. Matt highlighted the need for society to be more active (only 34% of Londoners manage 20 minutes of moderate activity each day) and the challenges of a growing population in London. It was also concerning to hear that car drivers killed or seriously injured 751 pedestrians in London in 2018, which I thought was a staggering number and completely unacceptable.

Separately Matt commented how much he had learnt from being at the workshop about coaches; one of the aims of the day.

Finally, **Mark Anderson**, MD of Anderson Travel gave a balanced view from the industry. He reminded us that our customers, amongst many other requirements, wanted to see 'interesting attractions with a seamless entrance at an affordable price'. He highlighted the confusion over the

different rules for red and 'yellow' routes for setting down and picking up, and the proliferation of penalty charge notices that the company receives where the majority are quashed on appeal; that clearly is not right.



Mark concluded with a plan of action as follows:

- **Effective communication** – both sides talking & meeting regularly
- **Coach operators stopping bad habits**
  - Engine idling
  - Paying for parking bays they occupy
  - Keeping within the Code of Conduct for pickups & set downs
  - Empathy towards other road users
- **From local & national government**
  - Effective & meaningful stakeholder engagement on a regular basis
  - Easy & cost-effective solutions to ongoing problems
  - Relevant & regular assistance with driver & management training

The workshop was intended to bring stakeholders and the coach industry together, and from the lively question and answer session chaired by **Stephen Telling**, clearly it had achieved this. However, the ultimate success of the workshop is now down to the hard work that needs to follow in further engagement; and something that we will now follow up with our partners.

We now look forward to our next workshop in Spring 2020 which will focus on **Driver Recruitment and Retention** as well as keeping a close eye on the **Low Emission Zone** and its implications.

## UK Coach Awards 2020

There are many members who do so much good work but often does not get the recognition it deserves. Therefore, why not consider entering the UK Coach awards? Now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year, the awards have just been launched for next year and entries will be accepted from now until early 2020.

There are categories that can be entered across all areas of the industry. The awards fit in to 3 main types, Coach Operations, People in our Industry and Technical and Professional Awards (for most awards self-nomination is appropriate).



Last year there were some great entries which demonstrate the relentless ambition of Coach Operators to improve the provision and perception of Coach travel. The Industry is constantly moving forward, and the organisers are committed to making our award scheme relevant, and reflective of the great work being done each year.



The Finalists are announced in an online event, and it all culminates in a glitzy award ceremony where the awards are presented to the winners.

The awards evening itself is a fantastic opportunity to showcase your business, achievements and the people who make it all possible. It is an evening to be enjoyed by all and most importantly celebrate the very best about the Coach industry in the UK.

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- Coach Operation
  - Top Express Coach Operation
  - UK Coach Operator of the Year
  - Technical and Professional
  - Coach Travel Programme - Domestic
  - Coach Travel Programme - European
  - Environment
  - Innovation Award
  - Making Coaches a Better Choice
  - Marketing Excellence
  - ROSCO Award for Contribution to Safer Driving
  - Industry People
  - Coach Industry Professional (managers aged 31 years and over)
  - Young Coach Industry Professional (managers aged 30 years and below)
  - Customer Service Award (for customer facing staff)
  - Support Staff Award (for 'backroom' staff)
  - Engineer of the Year (for anyone working in engineering)
  - Unsung Heroes Award
  - Top UK Coach Driver

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You can find more information and the entry forms on the website: [www.ukcoachwards.co.uk](http://www.ukcoachwards.co.uk)

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION & DEVELOPMENT'S DESK



It has been a busy few weeks for the Association. As our Chairman Stephen Telling has already mentioned, the relaunch of the **All Party Parliamentary Group for the Road Passenger Transport Industry** in September is very important for our industry. We need to think even more as to how we can promote ourselves positively and sell the benefits of coach travel to those that matter. Indeed, even understanding what you, our members regularly do day in and day out, is probably not fully understood. The Board will continue to give consideration as to how we raise our profile.

In August, **Andy Warrender** from the CPT, Chris Peat from Bus & Coach Buyer (B&CB) and I went on a tour of London's Coach Bays, which cumulated in an article which appeared in B&CB1544 (23 August 2019). It was a good reminder of the problems that you face when coming into London on a day to day basis, especially when the weather is miserable (which it was) and all you want to do is set your passengers down as close to their destination as possible.

The workshop has already been mentioned, but I am very grateful to those members who showed their support and look forward to seeing even more of you at our next big event in the spring.

Finally, it was good to meet up with members and other industry colleagues at **Coach & Bus UK19** at the NEC in Birmingham at the beginning of the month. We are, once again, very grateful to our sponsors, **Wrightsure** for letting us share their stand and we were able to launch our new banner promoting the Association (see above - with our thanks to **Peter Rice** for organising this). We have had some interest from potential new members and I will be following these up in the coming days.

Looking into the future, I hope to finally have the new website up and ready to launch in the next few weeks and we will be putting together the programme of meetings and events for 2020. In the meantime, we have our next members meeting on **Monday 18 November**, and our **Christmas Dinner** on **Tuesday 3 December** at The Pheasant in Harlington, just north of Heathrow Airport. More details will follow at the end of October.

## Welcome to New Members

We welcome a further new member to our Association.

- **Klarners Coaches**

We look forward to seeing them at future events.

## LTCOA MEMBERS EVENT SCHEDULE 2019-20

### Monday 18 November at 19:30

Hilton Garden Inn, Eastern Perimeter Road, Hatton Cross, London, TW6 2SQ. Speaker to be announced

### Tuesday 3 December; 18:45 for 19:15

**LTCOA Christmas Dinner** – The Pheasant, 98 West End Lane, Harlington, UB3 5LX

### Monday 20 January 2020 at 19:30

Hilton Garden Inn, Eastern Perimeter Road, Hatton Cross, London, TW6 2SQ. Speaker to be announced.

### Saturday 1 February 2019 18:15 for 19:15

The LTCOA 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dinner Dance – The Palace Suite, The Royal Garden Hotel, 2-24 Kensington High Street, W8 4PT

### Monday 10 March 2020 at 19:30

**AGM** - Hilton Garden Inn, Eastern Perimeter Road, Hatton Cross, London, TW6 2SQ

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