

FIRSTGROUP

A driver of sustainability



This year marks the 30th anniversary of FirstGroup's listing on the London Stock Exchange's Main Market and also the third consecutive year that it has obtained the Green Economy Mark. The Green Economy Mark recognition underscores FirstGroup's contribution to a cleaner, greener future for the transportation industry.*

As one of the UK's leading public transport operators carrying approximately two million passengers a day, London-headquartered FirstGroup's services connect communities across the UK and Ireland via bus, coach, rail, cable car and tram networks.

As a public transport operator, FirstGroup is driving modal shift i.e. supporting the switch from cars and aeroplanes to buses and trains - buses, coaches and trains contribute less than 5% of the UK's total transport emissions, compared to over 50% for cars.¹

Further more, FirstGroup is also playing an important role in the climate transition - by running zero-emission buses and low-carbon rail services that actively reduce environmental impact and enhance the efficient use of natural resources.

The Group's services "simultaneously reduce environmental impact and support growth and prosperity in the communities we serve," says Martin Wayman, Group Director for Corporate Responsibility at FirstGroup. "It is also a key driver of our commercial success."

Towards a zero-emission bus fleet

The First Bus division is one of the largest bus operators in the UK, serving more than 25% of the UK population with its fleet of 5,800 buses carrying more than 1 million passengers a day.²

First Bus' mission is not only to get more people onto buses, it's to get more people onto electric buses. It's about moving people and transforming travel. At the heart of its mission is a bold commitment: a fully zero-emission commercial fleet by 2035. With electric buses already rolling out across the country, the journey to cleaner, smarter, and more sustainable transport is well underway.



FirstGroup

Admitted to Main Market: June 1995
First received the Green Economy Mark: 2023
FTSE subsector: Transportation services
FTSE Industry: Industrials

It's a commitment that Isabel McAllister, Chief Sustainability & Compliance Officer believes FirstGroup is "well on track to achieve."

First Bus has already deployed over 800 zero-emission vehicles in regional operations and more than 300 in London. "Our fleet is now more than 20% electric and will be 25% electric within the next 12 months," says McAllister.

Showcasing innovation and electrification

But the real story goes beyond the vehicles. First Bus is reimagining its entire infrastructure - investing in smart charging systems, electrified depots, and on-site renewable energy. Fifteen of its 75 UK depots are electrified with electrification underway at a further five depots; Leicester, Norwich, and York set the standard as 100% electric, fully upgraded, net zero operations high-performance sites.

Their expertise is also being put to work in the private sector. First Bus supports airports in their efforts to reduce



scope 3 emissions by offering ground transportation passenger services to and from airports and provides large-scale employee shuttles for major construction and distribution sites. At Hinkley Point, for instance, the company is running a 24/7 service transporting 13,000 construction workers - reducing congestion and streamlining access to the nuclear power station.

As the electrification of the depot network gains momentum, First Bus was the first UK bus operator to offer access to its electric vehicle charging infrastructure to other organisations, providing a secure and capacious space for other corporate fleets of vans and trucks. "We are sweating our assets," says McAllister.

Getting on the right track

The other side of the FirstGroup business, First Rail, supports the UK Government's goal to remove all diesel-only trains from service by 2040. One of First Rail's "open access" rail operators - Lumo - operates a fully electric fleet. "Lumo was set up as an alternative to domestic flights and has been a huge success," described Wayman. "On an annual basis, more people now travel between London to Edinburgh by train than by plane."

FirstGroup's other open access rail operation Hull Trains has steadily increased capacity and invested in a new bi-mode fleet which, since entering service in 2019, has reduced emissions by 65% while increasing seat capacity utilisation to almost 70% in FY 2024.

The sustainable transport opportunity

"We consistently perform well across sustainability benchmarks but transport doesn't always get the green spotlight it deserves," says Wayman. "Maybe because of its heritage the transport sector is not seen as green when compared to, say, renewable energy," says Wayman. "That is the perception gap we're determined to close."

And the stakes are high. Transport accounts for a staggering 28% of the UK's annual emissions, making it one of the biggest levers for change. "At FirstGroup, we're not just electrifying fleets - we're shifting mindsets." That is where the Green Economy Mark comes in. Holding the Green Economy Mark is very important in helping FirstGroup to tell this story to institutional investors, says Wayman. "It's more than a badge - it's a powerful signal to all our stakeholders that we're serious about driving sustainable change at scale. It helps us tell our story with credibility and ambition."

¹ [FirstGroup PLC Publication of Climate Transition Plan](#), March 2025

² [FirstGroup PLC UK Bus](#)

* This case study was created based on an interview with FirstGroup where we discussed the London Stock Exchange's Green Economy Mark. Statements regarding FirstGroup are based on information supplied by FirstGroup.

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