



Thursday 23 January 2025 ~ Park Plaza London Riverbank

15:00-15:45 Green Growth

Governments in every part of the UK have promised to transform the economy and deliver growth through investment in green skills and decarbonisation, with public transport at the heart of those plans. Bus and coach operators will have a significant role to play as we work with the Government and private sector partners to decarbonise our vehicles and drive modal shift. But have we fully realised the opportunities for the industry presented by the green growth agenda, and have we fully understood the financial and human challenges in achieving it?

Aaron Hill, Cymru Director, CPT (Chair)

Aaron has a wealth of experience from membership organisations and the third sector, having an extensive background in policy, influencing and external affairs. His previous roles have covered a wide variety of public services, including housing, regeneration, health and education. Since joining in 2023 he has championed the role buses and coaches can play in tackling the climate emergency and boosting local economies.



Julia Meek, Director of Business Development, Zenobē

Julia is a Director of Business Development on the EV fleet team at Zenobē. Julia's career has included a range of senior roles at mission-driven start-ups and scale-ups. Prior to joining Zenobē she was Head of Business Development for a UK social enterprise bus operator, Chief of Staff at a microfinance organisation in China, and co-founder of a social investment resource. She has an MBA from London Business School. Recently leading the successful ScotZEB consortium bid, Julia and the rest of the Zenobē business development team works with bus and coach operators across the sector to define their electric fleet requirements and then deliver them.

This includes providing financing, technical expertise and operational support.



Marcus Johns, Senior Research Fellow, IPPR North

Marcus leads IPPR North's regional growth research, including regional economics, local economic development, and transport with specific projects including exploring reforms for better, greener buses and the role of regions in green industrial strategy. His published work at IPPR North includes exploring [the role of tax reform could in regionally rebalancing the UK](#) alongside [charting course for a decade of renewal](#) in our State of the North 2024 report, and [looking internationally to assess regional inequality and good practice in rebalancing](#) in our 2023 edition. Prior, he assessed [the impact of austerity](#) in the North of England, and [five years of the Northern Powerhouse](#).

Marcus is an IPPR North spokesperson with extensive media and influencing experience, including giving evidence to the Treasury Select Committee on regional inequality and devolution. He belongs to the NEON Spokesperson Network and has recently appeared on LBC, BBC North West Tonight, talkRADIO, and BBC Breakfast, alongside writing op-eds in his areas of [expertise](#).

Prior to IPPR North, Marcus worked as an economic consultant in an independent consultancy, developing local economic strategies including housing and transport, conducting impact assessments, and appraising funding bids.



Faizan Ahmad, Decarbonisation Programme Director, First Bus

Faizan is the Decarbonisation Programme Director at First Bus where he has overseen a significant expansion from 200 EVs across four sites to over 650 EVs across more than 10 sites in 2023/24, with further projects already in the works. He is responsible for programme, mobilisation and product across the First Bus estate, including First's innovative proposition for collaborating with businesses and organisations to use their depot charging infrastructure while buses are out in service.