



First Bus

Our month of inclusion

WHO WE ARE

I am Gareth Hind, the Head of EDI and Wellbeing at First Bus. I joined First Bus in March 2022, moving from a Retail career to transport. My background is primarily operations, but for the five years prior to First Bus, I work in a pure HR role across in SME including L&D, Talent, Capability, Engagement, Digital Communications and most recently EDI and Wellbeing.



First Bus is First Bus operates around a fifth of local bus services outside London, including two-thirds of the UK's 15 largest conurbations. We are the leading operator in a number of major urban areas including Glasgow, Bristol and Leeds, with a fleet of almost 5,000 buses. We employ more than 13,500 people across our operations and have 53 depots across the UK.

OVERVIEW and OBJECTIVES

Through listening activity, we heard that colleagues fear saying the wrong thing or 'getting it wrong' in the EDI space, therefore often avoided any conversation relating to EDI. This isn't helpful if we are to move the conversation on.

Furthermore, the listening also showed us a culture of 'banter' and microaggression existed, which could lead to some colleagues feeling they don't belong in First Bus and not having a strong colleague experience.

To solve both, a programme of education and awareness raising was need, that ultimately would lead to greater confidence and more representation in our business.

APPROACH

Storytelling is a very powerful tool to humanise EDI. If it was as easy as saying 'you need to be more inclusive', then society wouldn't be where we are today. Storytelling brings bravery, courage, vulnerability and a reality to a conversation, and leads to a compelling narrative and you can't avoid engaging with.

We produced 17 videos of colleagues across the diversity spectrum, would shared in short 60 – 90 second videos, their story. Importantly, each story offered a reality, a lived experience but also a piece of advice on what you could do to be an ally to the given community.

Click [here](#) for Sarah's video and [here](#) for Isaac's video. All 17 videos can be accessed through the QR codes on page 3.

RESULTS

The month started with a letter, direct to every colleagues home, from Janette Bell, the Managing Director of First Bus. This outlined our 'position' on EDI in our business, and was designed to be a disruptive mechanic to get peoples attention. It did! Within the letter, it launched the concept of Our Month of Inclusion and invited colleagues to actively watch the videos.

Every other day across November, a video was shared across every available channel to us, including email, the employee ConnectApp, the employee portal, and on the digital screens.

The final video of the month was from our executive team – here it is [Our Month of Inclusion - closing video \(vimeo.com\)](#)

The month finished with a booklet being provided to every colleague titled 'Our Way to building an inclusive First Bus'. This booklet opened with a message from Janette Bell, and then contained a quote from every colleague who contributed a video across the month together with a QR code to view the video again, should the colleagues have missed it first time round.

Every video was also shared on LinkedIn through the Head of EDI's channel, demonstrating that these videos are powerful both internally and externally too.

The videos were seen over 6000 times across the month, and there were over 150,000 impressions on LinkedIn during Nov 2022. This has since increased to nearly half a million impressions!

The overarching result was bringing the inclusion conversation front and centre into our organisation.

CONCLUSION

Whilst there were 6000+ views of the videos, it is difficult to say where these views came from. Listening has shown us that we didn't get to the driver population as much as we would have liked.

When we do a further Our Month of Inclusion, we would make better use of the Digital Screens across our business, and we have also written a 45 minute module for drivers in the next dCPC course, which will also encourage them to watch these videos again.

We will also use moments across the calendar to share these videos again – it is unlikely the messages in the videos will ever expire.



What makes us, uniquely us!

It's only by understanding each other's differences, that we can build a First Bus that is welcoming to everyone.

Take a look at these eye-opening videos from colleagues all across First Bus and learn a little more about what makes us all different.



"Don't always assume the worst in people, 80% of disabilities are hidden".

Keith, Driver in Swansea



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"Be patient with people, when their first language is not the same as yours".

Isaac, Hybrid Engineer in Slough



SCAN ME



"Never judge a book by it's cover, you never know what's going on inside".

Christopher, Driver in Stoke



SCAN ME



"Coming into a male dominated job isn't what you think".

Cara, Driver in Aberdeen



SCAN ME



"Please respect everyone and allow them to be themselves".

Sarah, Driver in Norwich



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"Consider why someone might need flexibility in their job".

Yemi, EDI Partner in Leeds



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What makes us, uniquely us!



"Being an ally to the LGBTQ+ community is excellent".

Stuart, Staff Manager in Aberdeen



"Think before you speak to avoid unintentional comments that can be hurtful".

Katie, Head of HR in the Midlands



"It's ok to not be ok. Try to be honest and accept help".

Stephen, Driver in Swansea



"People are happy to answer your questions, please ask".

Mubarak, Engagement and Wellbeing Advisor in Leeds



"Accept everyone for who they want to be"

Laura, Driver in Southend-on-Sea



"Know who your supporters are and stand up for others".

Carolyn, Marketing Manager in Glasgow

What makes us, uniquely us!



"What matters is that we are all treated fairly".
John, Employee Director in Manchester



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"Talk, talk and talk some more to the right people".
David, Driver in Halifax



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"Everyone in my team has the potential to be a future leader".
Richard, Head of Procurement for First Bus



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A behind the scenes of these incredible colleagues filming for Our Month of Inclusion!



SCAN ME

Our Way is to be inclusive and create a First Bus where everyone is welcome, can be their true selves and succeed.

Always care | Do what's right | Succeed together | Shape the future