

Stagecoach highlighted that one bus can carry the occupants of as many as 75 cars



# Green Week tackles the congestion issue

Stagecoach last week held its ninth annual Green Week highlighting environmental awareness, with a focus this year on tackling air pollution

## CAMPAIGNS

▶ Stagecoach called for tougher action on air pollution last week as part of the group's annual Green Week campaign.

The Perth-based group said that as global concerns mount over rising pollution in towns and cities, urgent action is now needed by central and local governments to tackle what Stagecoach describes as a "public health emergency".

The group added that research shows that too many cars and worsening traffic congestion is a major contributor to the 40,000 to 50,000 early deaths a year in the UK from air pollution.

The issue is linked to cancer, asthma, strokes, heart disease, diabetes, obesity and dementia, with children, the elderly, and the poorest in society being most at risk. The issue also has a financial cost to the country of over £20bn a year.

To tackle the problem, the group is calling for:

- ▶ Continued investment by public transport operators in cleaner vehicle technologies;
- ▶ Tougher tax regimes and use of clean air zones to target vehicles and journeys which contribute most to pollution on a per passenger basis;
- ▶ Focused taxpayer support where it will deliver the best value environmental benefit;
- ▶ Clearer promotion of switching from cars to public transport as the most effective route to tackling the twin scourges of urban congestion and air

**"Operators urgently need input from politicians and local authorities to free up road space"**

pollution; and

- ▶ Targeted public investment in bus priority measures and better transport interchanges.

Stagecoach pointed to research that has shown that Britain's roads are now the most congested in Europe and that time wasted in the UK's worst traffic jams will cost motorists £62bn by 2025.

The group also said that public transport can help mitigate these issues - one full double deck bus can remove up to 75 cars from the road - thus freeing up road space, reducing overall emissions levels and helping to improve air quality.

"But in order to achieve the kind of reliability and journey times that make buses more attractive to potential customers, operators urgently need input from politicians and local authorities to free up road space for buses, to deliver bus priority measures and to implement bus friendly policies," Stagecoach added. ■

## GREEN WEEK

### GREEN-THEMED DRAGON'S DEN

▶ Liverpool-based Stagecoach Merseyside, Cheshire and South Lancashire used Green Week to launch a green Dragon's Den-style competition.

It sees the company looking for a product or initiative from each area which will help local communities to be more environmentally friendly. Contestants shortlisted by Stagecoach will pitch their product or idea in Dragon's Den-style panel events in October and three winners representing Cheshire, Merseyside, and South Lancashire, will be chosen.

Each winner will walk away with a grand prize of £1,000 to develop their product or idea further.

### STAFF FOCUS ON ENERGY

▶ Stagecoach Yorkshire used Green Week to further raise awareness of environmental issues amongst staff by demonstrating how energy can be conserved, the effects that wastage has on the environment by running a 'paper amnesty'. "We are continuing to take steps to reduce our carbon footprint as well as working more widely with our partners to protect our environment," said managing director Matt Davies.

### SOUTH WALES EVENTS

▶ Green Week saw Stagecoach in South Wales hold a number of events. These included 'Tweet the manager' sessions to coincide with World Environment Day and a number of green giveaway events at towns across the operator's network. Staff were also encouraged to take part in local environmental activities including litter picks, a paper amnesty and a special 'green food' challenge.