

York's Quality Bus Partnership

The York Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) operates on a voluntary and largely informal basis and has been in existence since 2001. The QBP was re-launched in August 2007 to officially recognise the new chair, John Carr (ex West Yorkshire PTE director), to provide increased publicity for the group and to provide new stimulus to take the partnership forward. City of York Council provides administrative support to the partnership, which consists of the following companies, organisations and people.

City of York Council Officers	First West and North Yorkshire
Yorkshire Coastliner / Blazefield	Transdev York
Arriva	York Pullman
Reliance Motor Services	East Yorkshire Motor Services (EYMS)
Executive Member for City Strategy	Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy
Confederation for Passenger Transport (Yorkshire Region)	Bus Users UK

This membership offers comprehensive coverage of the bus services in the city and whilst some of the smaller operators do not attend, the Confederation of Passenger Transport is able to speak regarding the issues they may have. Political representation is important to the partnership in order to maintain the high status accorded to pro-bus schemes in the city and also to highlight any operational or strategic bus issues to the members.

The main Quality Bus Partnership group meets quarterly and in addition to this the three sub-groups - the performance group, the marketing group and the bus users group, meet on a similar basis prior to the main group meeting. The sub groups do meet more regularly when working on 'task and finish' projects.

Recent achievements of the partnership:

Branding:

The majority of buses running in the city now carry the QBP brand in order to publicise the cooperation and commitment to improvement of the partnership members. Most operators display the logo on their timetables and it is also prominent on the York Bus Route Map.



Bus Route Map:

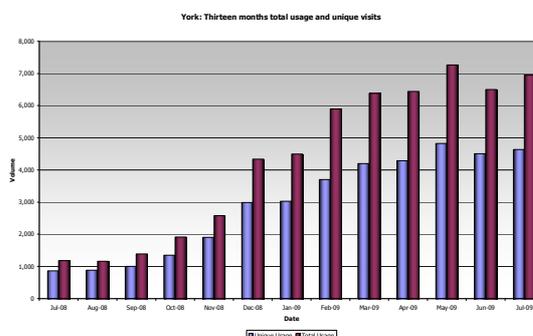
Operators were consulted through the partnership to produce the first York Bus Route Map in two years in 2008. The marketing group was also integral to the delivery of the map. This is revised twice a year and is proving a popular addition to the sustainable travel information offered by City of York. The launch of the map was held using a modified events bus in the heart of the city centre to ensure a high profile was given to the product.

Car Free Day:

York will be holding it's first Car Free Day on the 22nd September. The Quality Bus Partnership has been a vital part of working towards this being a success. The events bus will again be used to provide sustainable travel information so the marketing group has had input into this. Three of the bus companies in the city are also offering a free day ticket for travel in the city on the 22nd.

Real-time Information:

The partnership, mostly through the performance sub group has dedicated significant effort towards improving the quality and quantity of real-time information offered in the city. A QBP led workshop was held with all operators that had an interest in real-time information, neighbouring authorities and the real-time information supplier. This highlighted several issues with the system, enabled organisations to take responsibility for actions that require their attention and as a result, has improved the information provision to the public. Yournextbus, the sms-messaging component of real-time information, has also seen a significant increase in use since 2008 as shown by the graph below:



Bus Users:

A successful meeting was held with representatives of Bus Users UK, both local and national, which has led to the formation of a 'bus users' group. The items from this group are put to the full partnership and allow for both greater interaction between bus users and bus operator managers and also for a broader cross section of users opinions to feed into the partnership rather than having one representative as was previously the case.

Other items are high on the agenda of the QBP, such as, integrated ticketing, improving access for disabled bus users, the YOzone concessionary pass for secondary school pupils and getting input from bus operators into the third Local Transport Plan for the city