



**Thursday 23 January 2025 ~ Park Plaza London Riverbank**

**12:30-13:10 Future of the Coach Market**

The traditional coach industry has some big changes over recent years, with a number of high-profile acquisitions, several significant new entrants to the market, and a variety of alternative operating models. CPT research has highlighted the value of coach, but can the traditional model survive? Is the need to decarbonise a game-changer? The panel will address these questions and explore what the future holds.



**Graham Vidler, Chief Executive, CPT (Chair)**

Graham joined CPT as Chief Executive in May 2019. Prior to joining CPT Graham worked in a wide variety of roles in financial services, most recently as Director of External Affairs for the workplace pensions trade body, the Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association. He has also worked as a researcher in both the House of Commons and the Scottish Parliament, led the policy team at Which? and, as Director of Communications, was a member of the start-up team which created the UK's largest pension scheme, NEST.

**Andrew Luckett, Director, BluMarbl**

Andrew founded BluMarbl, an Energy and Transport consultancy expert and leader in transitioning buses and coaches to zero emissions. BluMarbl has worked with dozens of coach operators in the UK and is a crucial contributor to the ZE Coach Taskforce, heading up the CPT's industry data-gathering project. They provide various technology solutions, including toolsets for operators to manage their ZE buses and coaches. Their data-based feasibility studies in Scotland recently obtained funding for operators to buy many electric coaches as part of the Zenobe consortium. BluMarbl also powers the UK's first coach-specific charging network platform, which caters to industry-specific needs such as charger reservation. BluMarbl has most recently been advising The Coach Travel Group on how best to utilise their systems and data, where Andrew has been consulting as their Chief Technology Officer.



**Roland Eglinton, Managing Director, Chalkwell Hire and Coach**

Managing Director of Chalkwell Coach Hire, with 55 vehicles based in Sittingbourne, Kent. Chalkwell is diverse business providing local bus services, special educational needs transport and coach hire for private groups and organisations.

Roland is the third generation to run the family business, which was established in 1931 by his grandfather, Harry Eglinton. Whilst taking a break from the family business, Roland spent four years in Australia, mainly planning bus services for Queensland Government, covering an area seven times the size of the UK. In recent years Chalkwell has invested in accessible transport, and expanded considerably.



**Gareth Davies, MD - Coaching, First Bus**

Born and bred in a Coaching family, however having chosen an initial non corporate professional path as a Doctor and at the age of 29 was a Partner within an established medical practice. Then eventually returning to family business to take over the baton and transition into the coach industry step wise to subsequently lead the business of Lakeside Coaches.

Overseeing the strategy and driving it, as it grew substantially over the last 6 years through acquisition and natural growth. It becoming a multi award winning, highly profitable business of 145 vehicles attracting a PLC in the form of First Bus to acquire both the business and also in the process their first ever MD – Coaching. Now working to achieve the objective of synergising the other businesses acquired with a current combined coach fleet of c. 350 vehicles. Then executing the development of the coaching strategy through an ambitious plan for once again that same organic growth and acquisition.



**Tom Stables, CEO, The Coach Travel Group**