



For Immediate Release
Attn: Newsdesk

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15018

'Cygnet' Bus Smartcard Launches on 1st October

On 1st October the new 'Cygnet' smartcard will be launched, enabling bus users to switch freely between two local bus operators without the need to buy multiple tickets.

Bus operators Stagecoach and Grant Palmer have been working with Bedford Borough Council to launch this new smartcard, which will allow for unlimited travel on any bus within the designated area, across a day or a week.

The Cygnet travel zone equates to the area currently covered by the Stagecoach Megarider and includes the whole of Bedford and Kempston, as well as surrounding villages such as Bromham, Clapham, Cople and Elstow.

Cllr Charles Royden, Portfolio Holder for Transport at Bedford Borough Council said: "This will make local bus travel easier and more convenient, so it's good news for bus users. Enabling people to change from one operator to another on the same smartcard ticket removes a barrier to bus usage, and is a real step forward for local public transport."

Zoe Paget, Operations Director at Stagecoach East, commented: "We're always looking for ways to make life simpler for our customers, and this smartcard will enable passengers to make best use of the local bus network."

Dave Shelley, Director of Grant Palmer said: "The launch of this ticket is fantastic news for bus users in Bedford, allowing them to buy a ticket to use on the buses of both local operators for the first time. The added convenience and value for money will, we hope, encourage more local people to use the bus to get around town."

The 'Cygnet' smartcard will be £5 for a day ticket, with the weekly ticket priced at £17. You can buy your smartcard on Stagecoach and Grant Palmer buses. Ask your driver for a new card which costs 50p, which you can keep and re-use. Your ticket products can be loaded onto your smartcard on the bus when you purchase.

-Ends-

Notes to Editor:

- **Stagecoach East** is part of the Stagecoach Group, one of the largest bus operators in the UK. In 2015-16, over 40.4 million passengers travelled on 436 Stagecoach East buses, on routes covering 21.4 million miles. Stagecoach East has 1078 employees. Operating at over 90% reliability, the company invested £4.5m in new buses last year and the service receives just one customer complaint for every 7,919 miles. For more information visit www.stagecoachbus.com

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- Grant Palmer Ltd is a locally owned and run business which has been serving Bedfordshire for over 15 years. The business employs 60 local people, carries 900,000 passengers a year, and runs an extensive network of routes right across Bedfordshire. You can find out more at www.grantpalmer.com

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