

# [Bus Operator ordered to provide free services](#)

Press release

Stagecoach Devon Ltd, trading as Stagecoach South West, has been ordered by the region's Traffic Commissioner to provide free transport in Exeter for two weekends before Christmas.



The company attended a public inquiry over two days in June and October this year. A DVSA investigation found that around 21% of services were not running to timetable. The figure was accepted by the operator who put the cause down to a lack of drivers despite efforts to recruit and retain.

In his written decision following the inquiry, Traffic Commissioner Kevin Rooney noted that this was not a case of buses running more than one minute early or five minutes late (the accepted "window of tolerance") but one of buses not running at all. Stagecoach's own evidence was that between six and nine percent of registered mileage had been lost. He found that the operator had not been quick enough to act and was also critical of the information available to passengers. He set the shortcomings against the significant lack of drivers across the bus and coach sectors since the pandemic and EU exit, and the significant recent action to recruit and retain drivers.

In making the order for free services, estimated to cost around £120,000, Mr Rooney also recorded the company's intent to keep a member of staff available at peak hours at Exeter Bus Station.

The decision can be found [here](#).

For any further details or enquiries, please contact:

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