
First Bus announces proposals to cease operations in Cornwall

- **Proposal to withdraw all First Bus services in Cornwall in 2026**
- **Above inflation costs, falling passenger numbers and an increasingly competitive market have led to difficult decision**
- **Focus is on supporting colleagues and a smooth transition**

First Bus has announced its intention to close its entire operation in Cornwall, withdrawing all bus services in the county by the middle of February 2026. The difficult decision has been made in the face of ongoing financial challenges intensified by above inflation costs, a significant fall in passenger numbers (21% fall year on year on top of a 13% fall in 2024/25) and increased competition. A downward trend in tourism and changes in travel patterns post Covid have also contributed. Despite extensive efforts to turn the business around and cut costs, including making significant changes to the network, closing smaller outstations like Helston and introducing transformation plans to attract more customers through joint partnership work with Cornwall Council, First Bus recognises the heavily loss-making business is no longer financially viable.

First Bus, which currently runs 14 services across a fleet of 85 buses in Cornwall, plans to withdraw from all five depots it currently operates from in Camborne, Falmouth, Penzance, Summercourt and Truro.

As a result, 275 roles are at risk, and First Bus is working with all colleagues affected, who are being supported to find other roles, wherever possible, within First Bus and its parent company FirstGroup.

First Bus will continue to operate its current network as normal in Cornwall until the last day of service (up until and including) Saturday 14th February. It is working closely with Cornwall Council and other operators to ensure a smooth handover and in the hope that as many routes as possible can be maintained.

Simon Goff, Managing Director for First Bus South (which operates First Bus in Cornwall), said:

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"This was an extremely difficult decision, which was made after all other options were exhausted. We understand this news will be deeply disappointing for our colleagues and passengers, and we want to thank everyone who has travelled with us over the years.

"Our proposal to exit the market in Cornwall isn't a process that we have entered into lightly. Above inflation costs, changing travel patterns and recently an increasingly competitive market all added extra pressure. We cannot afford to continue with such a heavily loss-making business.

"These plans do not in any way detract from the commitment of our colleagues, who have worked tirelessly to provide the best possible service to local communities in Cornwall. Now, supporting our people through this process is our priority. Wherever possible we are working to offer options or transfer colleagues to alternative employment."

Further details of the proposals and next steps will be provided before Christmas.