

## Route 383

Branding and marketing proposal

TfL and Uno Buses

January 2019



### Background

Uno has been operating route 383 for nearly four years. The route has performed well operationally with high levels of punctuality and reliability. Patronage has remained at consistent levels with a broad cross section of bus users using the service. The service links local residential areas with the underground and bus network and local shopping centres as well as several schools. There is potential and capacity to increase ridership levels. This proposal aims to suggest an affordable approach to branding and marketing the route in the local community based on successful and award winning campaigns undertaken by Uno in the same local areas.

### 1. Branding strategy for the route

The various visuals shown below are intended as concepts to show the approach and general style, and are not definitive proposals. The approach is one of making the external and internal appearance clean, smart, neat, tidy and with a deliberate touch of quality, all to make the bus a more attractive, more desirable way of getting about. They are specifically tailored to this bus and this route.

We've used the Transport for London colour palette, general brand style and language to keep everything on-brand and part of the London bus product.

### External livery

The red London bus is an iconic object, sometimes let down by graphic elements applied indiscriminately. It would be wrong to reduce the impact of the big red London bus (even on a local midibus).

The proposed style is neat, succinct, easy and quick-to-understand, and enhances the overall look. There are various versions, and the black extension upwards of the windows definitely creates a modern, stylish clean appearance.

The aim is to retain the London bus persona but within that create a local bus identity that ties the route to the community it serves and that 'ownership' drives patronage growth across a broad cross section of bus users.



**Internals**



The seats shown are the Lazzerini Practico high-back and our designers have put forward a 'London' look moquette that is in scale with the size and proportions of a bus seat that would look good on any bus type and stand the test of time. The large 'V-dip' headrest section is merely a possibility to add a stylish accent in leather, PVC, polyurethane or whatever material is deemed appropriate and has good wear qualities.

The continuous cove decoration lifts the interior of a bus and eradicates the soulless, bland, basic-engineering, blank look of too many buses. It is not suitable for all bus interiors (this depends on the internal architecture) but is a nice way of strengthening the brand experience and is a stylish, warm way of providing useful information. This is to embed the travel experience into the feeling of locality and community. Even more powerful is that it positions the service provider as warm, friendly, caring and in the know about its operating area and enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the locality. The cove area is also a good way of giving the provider an injection of personality by explaining something about them. All helping develop an emotional bond between provider and passenger, just as the best retailers understand this aspect of the seller-customer relationship.



Route 383 is run by Uno on behalf of TfL. Uno is owned by the University of Hertfordshire and began running buses in 1992, then called University Bus. This grew out of a shuttle service previously operated for students at Wall Hall College near Watford, connecting them with the other campuses of the University.

Right from the start anyone could travel on these buses, but as more routes began to be operated and became more popular it was necessary to rebrand the company and thus University Bus became Uno in 2005.

Today Uno runs buses all over Hertfordshire and into Bedfordshire and has a number of routes running into North London, too.




**The Whetstone**

This stone is known as the whetstone, and is outside The Griffin pub in Whetstone High Road. It was most likely a mounting block connected with the toll gate that was put up here on the Great North Road by the Whetstone & Highgate Turnpike Trust about 1730. The toll gate was removed in 1863.



**The Great North Road**

The course of this historic 400 mile old road between London and Edinburgh passes through Whetstone and Barnet, this section now being the A1000 main road. It was used by the triumphant Edward of York after the Battle of Barnet in 1471 during the Wars of the Roses. Barnet High Street is lined with coaching inns where, before the railways came, horse-drawn coaches would stop to allow passengers to get refreshments, notably the Red Lion (rebuilt in the 20th century) and The Mitre.

## 2. Short, medium and long-term marketing campaign

The 383 route runs every 30 mins from Woodside Park – Whetstone – Oakleigh Park – East Barnet – Barnet.

### A brief outline of areas served

#### Woodside Park

Suburban area, very good schools and lots of green places, making it an ideal place for families. There is also a large Japanese community (near the Japanese school) and a large Jewish community in Golders Green.

Population: 25,642

Average age: 36

Retired: 19.34%

Unemployed 3.38%

Educated to degree level: 39.24%

Student: 4.83%

#### Whetstone/Oakleigh Park

Whetstone is a large, busy town with a busy high street. On High Road you can find a variety of shops, including high street names and independents. There's also a variety of restaurants including Italian and Turkish cuisine. There's a train station at Oakleigh.

There are also a large number of nearby parks Woodside Park, Friary Park and the Glebe Land Open space. Oakleigh Park is a superior suburb situated east of Whetstone and north of Friern Barnet.

Population: 17,991

Average age: 38

Retired: 21.88%

Unemployed 2.44%

Educated to degree level: 33.1%

Student: 4.48%

#### East Barnet

A largely residential suburb, the central area has a variety of shops, public houses, cafes and restaurants, and services. East Barnet is close to the M25 and the A1 and M1

Population: 16,137

Average age: 38

Retired: 7.9%

Unemployed: 3.34%

Educated to degree level: 28.92%

Student: 1.83%

### Research

Before any marketing plans are finalised market research should be undertaken to understand exactly what the current motivations are for journeys being made in this area. Giving a clear idea of the reasons for journeys and common sections of route travelled. Understanding what other modes of transport are also being used as part of the overall trip will help inform future marketing mediums and the key messages. This will help inform our initial campaign.

- Qualitative market research – on board and at key locations of high footfall
- Uno/TfL to provide journey data to identify travel patterns and passenger numbers.

## a) Short term marketing plan - 6 months

### A stand-out concept

A creative concept would be developed in line with the research results. It would have stand out and position the bus as being a key element of the overall communities it serves.

### Driver engagement

Drivers would be engaged in all elements of the marketing plan, they would be aware of targets for the campaign and they would feel real ownership for making it happen. A full morning's training would be carried out running through the overall objectives and the role they'll play in delivering exceptional customer service.

### Marketing activity

The majority of the activity will be influenced by the outcomes of the research; however it will be based on one, or more of the target audiences:

- **Occasional bus users** (every 3 months or less) - those that have a propensity to use the bus however only choose it for very occasional journeys. Marketing to change behaviours within this group to become frequent users.
- **Commuters** (3 days a week or more) - Those already using the service, to encourage them to consider the 383 for leisure trips in the evenings or at weekends.
- **Car users** - Car users at employers and other organisations within the community will be encouraged to make a behaviour change

### Brand awareness marketing - *targeting all audiences*

Promotions via digital channels - targeting facebook and Instagram users within the relevant geographical areas. Targeting profiles that like relevant pages in the area including sports clubs, community groups and other key pages.

### Business leaflet drop with promotional items - *targeting occasional bus users and car users*

Contact would be made with key large employers, schools, colleges and major shopping centres on route (within 5 mins walk from a bus stop). It's key to make informed decisions around which organisations are going to be most open to bus travel. So budget can be used effectively.

For targeting employees or members of organisations it's important to work closely with the departments/functions that would look after travel/well-being to help disseminate the message. When building relationships with shopping centres, such as The Spires, it is also important to engage with the marketing teams and involve them in testing the service themselves, so they can become ambassadors when pushing the 'how to get here' message to customers.

- An introductory letter - from Uno and TfL
- Leaflets with summary times and promotional messages and free day voucher
- Promotional items - low cost but with real impact and aligned to the creative

### Customer loyalty activity, the experience - *targeting commuters*

At peak times there will be onboard activity by 383 representatives (branded clothing). They will provide marketing materials (leaflet) about taking the bus at weekends and offer special free journey vouchers to use or give to family and friends. Messaging will be around all the shopping opportunities and high street eateries on High Road and at Barnet. They will also hand out bus breakfasts (orange juices, pastries, fruit). This will be carried out over 3 days targeting different sections of route and trips.

### **A community launch event**

An event to host the launch of the new brand – inviting local organisations and key leaders from the communities. Photography with individuals and teams, and the 383 buses.

### **b) Medium and long-term marketing plan - 6 - 18 months**

Medium to long term the plan would focus on the relationship of the 383 with its community. The 383 drivers would aspire to be key members of the communities they serve. The relationships between the 383 representatives and all organisations would need to be nurtured and marketing materials would continue to be refreshed and revised according to new opportunities and developments. On board loyalty activity to be consistent and frequent.

6 - 12 months

- Additional driver training to retain focus - refresh
- A partner (B2B) programme of activity within local businesses and the community
- Digital brand awareness – monthly promotions
- Customer loyalty activity

12 - 18 months

- Customer loyalty activity
- A partner (B2B) programme of activity within local businesses and the community
- Digital brand awareness – monthly promotions

### **3. The Comet campaign**

The Comet forms part of Uno Buses' transformational programme and its route-based strategy. The route (614 644) serves The University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, Barnet, Edgware and Queensbury. It provides a key link between North London and the University of Hertfordshire, as well as an important connection with tube stations for onward travel into central London. It runs up to every 30 mins.

The Comet launched in September 2017, a £1.3m investment in 6 new buses ADL Enviro400 City double deck buses, with WIFI, USB chargers at every seat, wooden floor effect, glass stair panels, glass rears and the very latest Euro VI engines. The drivers are dedicated to The Comet and all wear a specific Comet uniform. The Comet brand celebrates its namesake, the first commercial jetliner, developed and manufactured by de Havilland at its Hatfield Aerodrome. Uno wanted to commemorate its heritage but do it with a brand that still looked contemporary and appealed to the student millennials.

The introduction of The Comet has three main aims:

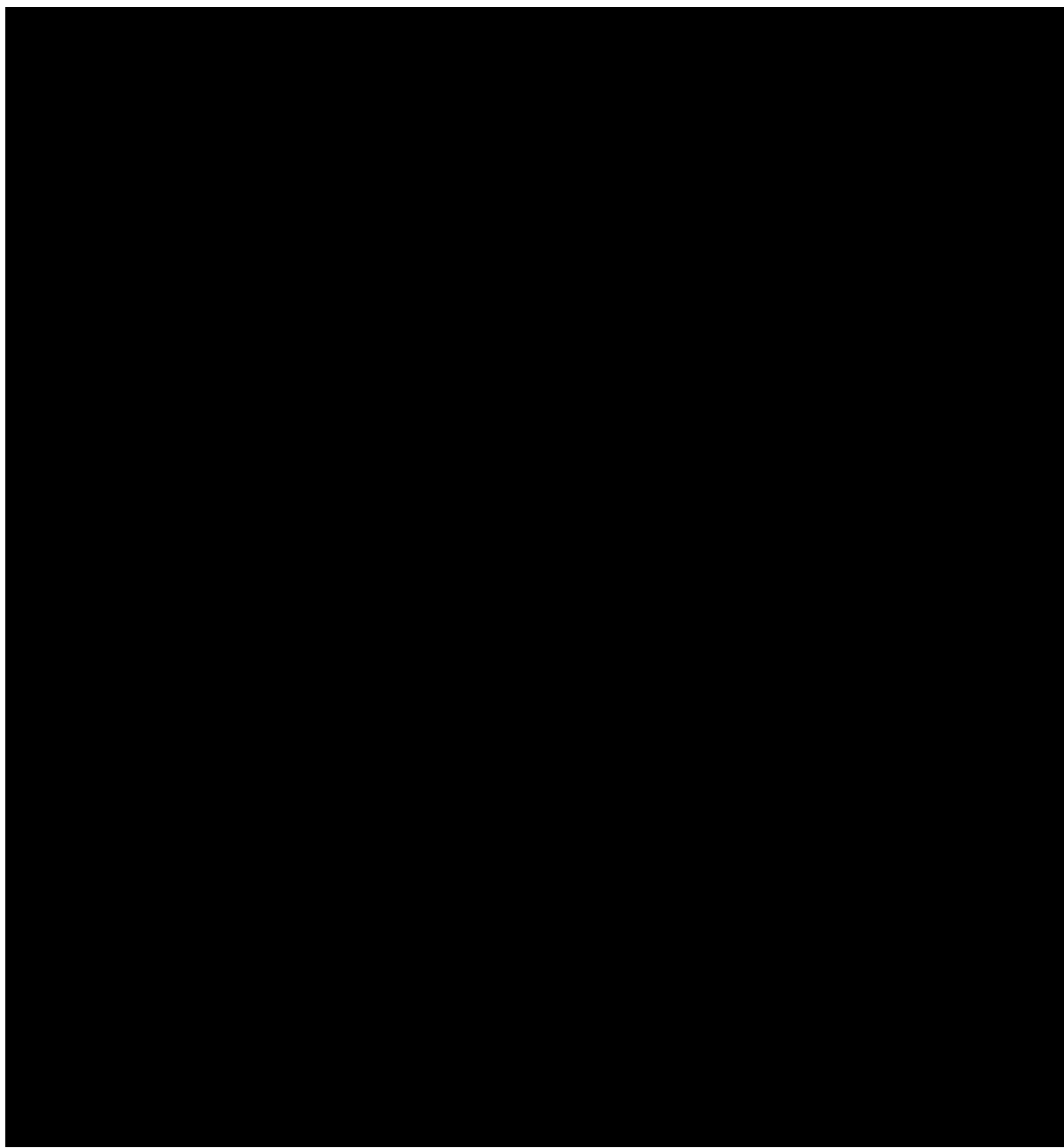
- to enhance the customer experience and grow passenger numbers by 5% by the end of the 17/18 academic year, and then into double digit growth by the end of the 18/19 academic year.
- to become a recognised brand in the community, with quality and reliability forming its core values.
- to engage employees and create a passion and motivation to deliver an outstanding product and service.

The campaign included:

- Social teaser campaign - across all university channels
- Internal promotion - studynet/staffnet intranet sites
- Pre media engagement - regional and local
- Launch event - with university stakeholders, community leaders, press and the student union
- Digital 6 sheet media across both campus sites
- B2B timetable drop to business across the business park
- Discounted Mticket incentive
- Mail drop to North London - leisure trip messaging (35,000)
- Little things that go along way campaign - customer experience activity, giving free refreshments, gifts and journey vouchers on board.

The Comet is showing impressive double digit year on year percentage increase in passenger numbers. It has reached the 18/19 target in its first 8 months of operation. The latest customer satisfaction survey has seen a marked increase in satisfaction too. The team benchmarked against all other services.

Customer satisfaction levels on The Comet reached 98%. 6% higher than the overall satisfaction levels on all other services, which stood at 92%. The comfort onboard scored extremely high too with 100% satisfaction score for comfort of seating on The Comet. Driver appearance with the new dedicated rota stood out too. Overall satisfaction on the 614 644 for driver appearance rated 96%, with 66% rating satisfaction as 'very satisfied'. All other services also rated highly at 91%, however the majority rated appearance at just 'fairly satisfied'.



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