

# New concept electric bus



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Oxfordshire firm starts testing range-extended EV technology for buses

A range-extended electric bus and truck chassis from Charge R&D Ltd, a new business to the industry, begins its testing programme in the UK this month before being readied for commercial operations.

Headquartered in Enstone, Oxfordshire, it has substantial financial backing from Kinetik, a new \$500m international investment company.

Charge R&D is developing electric powertrains for commercial vehicles and its platform offers "game-changing

driveline and vehicle solutions."

It has two unique propositions that give it an edge over other solutions: cost and scalability.

It is expected to be at a price "comparable" to a conventional diesel solution (excluding the battery cost). Secondly, it is designed to work in vehicles from 2.5-26 tonnes.

Combined, these features will form an important part of Charge's strategy to move the commercial vehicle market towards EV technology.

Charge employs 40 engineers under the direction of Technical Director Glenn Saint, previously Optare Deputy CEO.

A dedicated software development team is creating advanced systems which will deliver a highly 'connected' vehicle that enhances the experience of the operator and driver.

Says Mr Saint: "We believe there is a real opportunity for a low emission range-extended electric platform that is a revolutionary departure from current chassis design in layout and low weight, with a high degree of zero-emissions capability.

"It will be financially attractive to operate without external incentives, while offering users advanced features new to the commercial vehicle sector."

The prototype, now entering the track-testing phase of its development programme, is a proof of performance engineering demonstration truck.

Charge is committed to selling the technology it incorporates to both truck and bus makers for them to build into their own products.

Mr Saint says a number of manufacturers and investors from Europe and Asia have



Glenn Saint: Game-changing range-extended EV driveline on test

expressed their interest in the technology. Some are already working with Charge on potential products, including positioning, design and routes to industrialise the electric driveline.

## Integrated bus/rail m-ticket

At the show, Byt token announced that it is to provide an integrated mobile app for One-Ticket Ltd, a travel syndicate in Edinburgh and east-central Scotland, committed to offering unlimited and affordable bus and rail in the area.

Together, the companies will deliver secure mobile ticketing for bus and railway passengers and offer combined tickets for events and attractions.

## Another Gold route for Oxfordshire

Stagecoach in Oxfordshire has launched its latest Gold service, on the Oxford-Banbury S4.

The £850k investment sees hand-stitched Italian leather high-back seats, increased leg room and free Wi-Fi on the route, which passes through Adderbury, Deddington and Kidlington.

Stagecoach has bought five brand-new single-decker ADL Enviro200s for the hourly service, in Stagecoach Gold livery. They are Euro 6 and run on a mix of 30% biofuel, and 70% standard diesel.

It's the fifth Stagecoach Gold service to be introduced in



MD Martin Sutton at the launch

Oxfordshire. Martin Sutton, Managing Director of Stagecoach in Oxfordshire, says: "The launches of our other Gold routes in regions across Oxfordshire

have encouraged more people to use our buses, so we're delighted to bring the offer to customers travelling between Banbury and Oxford."



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