



Stephen King (centre) collects Gold in the Inclusive Tourism category at the North East Tourism Awards

Nov 23, 2016 12:50 GMT

Go North East drives its way to victory with prestigious award win

A commitment to providing exemplary transport services to the region's visitors and those with disabilities and special access needs has earned [Go North East](#) a top honour in the Inclusive Tourism category, at the North East Tourism Awards.

Held at Newcastle Civic Centre on the evening of Tuesday 22 November, the region's largest bus operator was pitted against three leading tourist destinations, the National Glass Centre, Tyneside Cinema and The Hog's Head Inn, Alnwick.

As part of its entry, Go North East highlighted the important role it plays in transporting a proportion of North East England's 460,000 annual visitors. Its easily recognisable routes, the Angel, Castles Express, AD122, Coaster, Drifter and Prince Bishops, link together the major tourist hotspots. These include the cities of Newcastle, Sunderland and Durham, the beautiful coastline, historic castles, Chester-le-Street - the international home of cricket and Hadrian's Wall, plus many more.

An integral partner to the region's biggest annual events, Go North East provides transport for the Great North Run and this year supported the Tall Ships in Blyth and Kynren show near Bishop Auckland. For the past 20 years, it has also operated a route from the international ferry terminal in North Shields to Newcastle city centre, welcoming European tourists who travel on the DFDS Seaways cruises.

Go North East's submission demonstrated its commitment to excellence in accessibility. This incorporates its [easy access guarantee](#), comprehensive disability awareness driver training, audio-visual next stop announcements and partnership-led initiatives, encompassing conditions such as dementia and sight problems.

The judges cited the company's industry-leading standards as a contributing factor for its win, explaining there is a true commitment to providing an accessible service at the heart of the brand. They were particularly impressed with Go North East's 'Swap with Me' initiative in partnership with the RNIB, to assist blind and partially-sighted people, as they use the bus.

Its innovative approach to customer service, consultation with customers and clear tourism links – including easily identifiable branding on its routes, meant the bus giant pipped the other finalists to the post.

Stephen King Head of Marketing and Retail at Go North East, collected the award. He said: "We strive to ensure every single one of our passengers has a safe and comfortable journey, whether they're popping to the shops, commuting to work or visiting our beautiful region for the first time.

"Having great transport links is what makes the North East an inviting place to visit and we're overwhelmed to be recognised for our commitment to inclusive tourism.

“It was great also to share the spotlight with the handful of staff who joined me at the awards event – those on the frontline who are making a difference every single day.”

The North East England Tourism Awards are organised and delivered by NewcastleGateshead Initiative in partnership with the Northern Tourism Alliance.

[Go North East website](#)