

# Self-driving buses to begin next month

## Stagecoach will begin running autonomous buses across the Forth Road Bridge from 15 May 2023.

The bus company has a fleet of five vehicles and each bus will cover a 14-mile route at speeds of up to 50mph across the Forth Road Bridge from the Ferrytoll Park & Ride in Fife. This is the first registered bus service in the UK which will have self-driving vehicles.

Stagecoach say that buses will operate on a frequent timetable with capacity for around 10,000 passenger journeys each week. There will be two members of staff on board including a safety driver in the driver's seat who will monitor the technology and a captain in the saloon who will take tickets and look after passengers. More than 20 staff have already been trained in preparation.

CAVForth is a joint venture between Fusion Processing Ltd, Stagecoach, Alexander Dennis, Transport Scotland, Edinburgh Napier University and Bristol Robotics Lab, and is part funded by the UK Government's Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles.

Scottish Minister for Transport Kevin Stewart said: "This is an exciting milestone for this innovative and ambitious project, and I very much look forward to seeing Project CAVForth take to the roads next month.

"Our trunk road network can provide a wide range of environments as a diverse testing ground, and the ground-

breaking and globally significant Project CAVForth will really help Scotland establish its credentials on the world stage.”

Carla Stockton-Jones, UK Managing Director for Stagecoach said: “We are excited to introduce the UK’s first autonomous bus fleet in East Scotland which is also home to our headquarters and where it all began over 40 years ago.

“We are proud to be at the forefront of transport innovation with this project that marks a significant milestone for public transport and we look forward to welcoming our customers on board in the coming months.”

Jamie Wilson, Head of Concepts & Advanced Engineering for Alexander Dennis, said: “This is a thrilling milestone for this ambitious project which we are delighted to be delivering with our partners.

“Our Enviro200AV autonomous buses will demonstrate latest innovation in vehicle technology and we are delighted that passengers travelling between Fife and Edinburgh will be able to experience this for themselves when the service launches next month.”

