

= Kelvin Scottish =

Kelvin Scottish Omnibuses Ltd was a bus operating subsidiary of the Scottish Transport Group based in Bishopbriggs , Strathclyde , Scotland . It was formed in March 1985 from parts of Walter Alexander & Sons ( Midland ) Ltd and Central SMT , initially with six depots and a varied fleet of 381 vehicles .

The company expanded its operations in Glasgow prior to bus deregulation in 1986 . New services were introduced in competition with Strathclyde Buses , many using Routemaster double @-@ deckers operated by conductors . Kelvin suffered from vehicle maintenance problems , and on two occasions was forced to hire vehicles from other companies to ensure operation of all its routes . After Kelvin lost money in 1987 , the depot at Milngavie was closed and many routes withdrawn .

In July 1989 Kelvin was merged with Central Scottish to form Kelvin Central Buses . This company was sold to its employees on privatisation , before being taken over by Strathclyde Buses . It is now part of First Glasgow .

= = Operation = =

Operating from its head office in Bishopbriggs and depots in Old Kilpatrick , Milngavie , Kirkintilloch , Kilsyth , Stepps and Cumbernauld , Kelvin Scottish had an operating area bounded by Loch Lomond to the west , Cumbernauld to the east , the Campsie Fells to the north and the River Clyde to the south . Kelvin was the largest operator in Dunbartonshire and north east Glasgow , and was responsible for urban , rural and interurban services . Its operating area had previously been served by Central SMT and Walter Alexander & Sons ( Midland ) .

= = History = =

Kelvin was created by the Scottish Bus Group ( SBG ) as a limited company wholly owned by the group in March 1985 in preparation for bus deregulation the following year , and began operation three months later . It was the largest of the four new companies created by the SBG in 1985 , with an initial fleet of 381 vehicles , of which almost 300 were sourced from the former Alexander ( Midland ) fleet .

In early 1986 , maintenance problems saw a number of vehicles banned from use by vehicle examiners from the Ministry of Transport . The company was forced to hire eight vehicles from other companies to keep services running ; they remained in the fleet for four weeks while the regular vehicles were repaired . Similar issues resurfaced in February 1987 , when twelve vehicles were hired for three weeks .

Although deregulation itself took place in October 1986 , Kelvin received permission to introduce its new routes from 31 August . A number of new services were started in competition with Strathclyde Buses , running from Glasgow to Clydebank , Drumchapel , Easterhouse and Springburn . Strathclyde responded by extending its services into Clydebank , Cumbernauld , Dumbarton , Kirkintilloch and Milngavie .

In 1987 Kelvin made a reported loss of £ 3 million , leading to the closure of the depot at Milngavie . Many of the competing routes introduced in 1986 were withdrawn in July 1987 , and 70 vehicles were taken out of service . Two years later both Kelvin and neighbouring Central were severely affected by a strike by 700 of the companies ' drivers , caused by the dismissal of four shop stewards .

In July 1989 , it was announced that SBG was to be privatised . In an effort to make Kelvin Scottish more attractive on the approach to privatisation , Kelvin was merged with Central Scottish to form Kelvin Central Buses Ltd . Upon the merger , Kelvin Scottish ceased trading as a stand @-@ alone subsidiary .

= = Subsequent history = =

Following the privatisation of Scottish Bus Group in 1991 , Kelvin Central was sold to its employees . In 1994 it was taken over by Strathclyde Buses , which was itself bought out by FirstGroup two years later .

Kelvin Central was renamed to First Glasgow ( No.2 ) Ltd. in May 1998 , with a red livery adopted . Its operations are now part of First Glasgow .

= = Branding and promotions = =

The company initially adopted a simple two @-@ tone blue livery with a logo incorporating the Flag of Scotland and the words " Scottish " and " Kelvin " ; a more striking livery consisting of two lighter shades of blue and yellow applied diagonally was introduced in September 1985 . This was revised in early 1988 to yellow and light blue with a dark blue diagonal stripe .

As a result of increased competition in Dunbartonshire following deregulation , Kelvin decided to introduce additional fleetnames to its vehicles to establish local identities . From April 1987 onwards Dumbarton BUS appeared on vehicles operating in Dumbarton and Loch Lomondside . In October Kirkie BUS was introduced onto Kirkintilloch @-@ based vehicles and Cumbernauld 's Buses onto vehicles stationed in that town .

In 1988 a new fares scheme , the Glasgow Gold Card , was introduced , offering weekly travel on all SBG routes in the city . A Kelvin Routemaster bus was painted in a gold livery to advertise the ticket , and remained in the livery until withdrawal by Kelvin Central in 1991 .

= = Fleet = =

The fleet acquired by Kelvin at its formation was very mixed . Of the 381 vehicles initially used , 135 were double @-@ deck . Nine types of vehicles were operated . The largest constituent was 153 Leyland Leopard single @-@ deckers ; the first new buses were six Leyland Tigers ordered by Central Scottish prior to the creation of Kelvin .

A fleet of 40 Routemaster buses were purchased from London Transport in 1986 to launch the new services in competition with Strathclyde Buses . Kelvin had not previously employed conductors , but introduced them for these services . This meant the vehicles did not have to spend as long loading at bus stops as one @-@ person operated buses and were able to offer quicker journeys through Glasgow . The Routemasters proved popular with both passengers and staff and continued to operate into the 1990s under successor company Kelvin Central , which was one of the last operators of the type in regular service in Scotland .

Although the original fleet did not include any minibuses , a large number of Mercedes @-@ Benz vehicles were introduced from September 1986 on a high @-@ frequency route in central and northern Glasgow ; it did not prove profitable and was converted to full @-@ size operation a year later , with many of the minibuses transferred to other SBG subsidiaries . Another unusual vehicle in the Kelvin fleet was the only Leyland Lynx bought by Scottish Bus Group , which was delivered new in 1989 . Six rare Leyland Lion double @-@ deckers were ordered in 1988 , but owing to a large cut in Kelvin 's peak vehicle requirement they did not enter service with the company and were instead sent to Clydeside Scottish .