

## Auditors' report

To the Shareholders of Stagecoach Holdings plc

We have audited the accounts on pages 54 to 90 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on pages 59 to 62.

### Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

The directors are responsible for preparing the Annual Report including, as described on page 45, preparing the accounts in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and accounting standards. Our responsibilities, as independent auditors, are established in the United Kingdom by statute, the Auditing Practices Board, the Listing Rules of the Financial Services Authority, and by our profession's ethical guidance.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the accounts give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the Directors' report is not consistent with the accounts, if the company has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law or the Listing Rules regarding directors' remuneration and transactions with the company and the group is not disclosed.

We review whether the corporate governance statement on pages 46 to 50 reflects the company's compliance with the seven provisions of the Combined Code specified for our review by the Financial Services Authority, and we report if it does not. We are not required to consider whether the board's statements on internal control cover all risks and controls, or form an opinion on the effectiveness of the company's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

We read the other information contained in the Annual Report, including the corporate governance statement, and consider whether it is consistent with the audited accounts. We consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the accounts.

### Basis of audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the accounts. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the accounts and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the circumstances of the company and of the group, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the accounts are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the accounts.

### Opinion

In our opinion, the accounts give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the Group as at 30 April 2001 and of the Group's loss and cash flows for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985.



ARTHUR ANDERSEN

Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors

191 West George Street

Glasgow G2 2LB

20 June 2001