

Essex Bus Magazine

Current news and historical features

Issue 714 October 2023



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

www.essexbus.org.uk



fb.me/essexbus

hedingham chambers Acquisitions

Two of the three Enviro 200s Heddingham & Chambers have recently acquired from Go South West, full details of which are on page 20.

Top: 234 (YY64 TXO), still displaying its previous fleet number 2209, on route 94 at South Woodham Ferrers on 28 September 2023. **Dave Arnold**

Bottom: 230 (YY64 TXK) at Walton Columbine Centre on route 105 on 18 September 2023. Unlike 234, this has the old style fleet name of just 'heddingham'. **Robert Appleton**





Above: A ride on Heddingham's convertible open top Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 502 (LF52 ZNE) on route 1 approaching St Osyth from Point Clear on 7 September 2023. **Chris Stewart**

Below: Lodge Coaches Mercedes-Benz Tourismo 46 AEW (new to Shearings in March 2015 as BN15 WXY) on Walton-on-the-Naze seafront on the same day. **Chris Stewart**

A nearside photo of this coach, on rail replacement at Ingatestone, was in EBM 709.

Front Cover: A very unusual double-decker working on Arriva Southend route 9. Enviro 400 MMC 6502 (SN66 WHV) turning from Ness Road into Church Road, Shoebury on its way through to Rayleigh on Saturday 2 September 2023. The reason it was on the route is explained on page 22. **John G Lidstone**



Group Information

Chair & Meetings
Secretary
Treasurer & Membership
Distribution, Publication & Sales
Publications Co-ordinator
Tours Organiser

Ian Ransom
Alan Osborne
Richard Delahoy
Owen Woodliffe
Paul Harvey
Wayne Bell

Missing or Defective EBMs
Please contact Owen Woodliffe, 196 Sinclair Road,
Chingford, E4 8PT
pat_woodliffe@hotmail.com
Owen stocks a wide range of colour photos, please
send an SAE for details.

Editorial Team

Editor & First Essex, Ensignbus, Central Connect

Adam Kelleher
74 Park Road
Brentwood, Essex
CM14 4TU
adamxxx4@yahoo.co.uk

Arriva Southend & Colchester

Richard Delahoy, address opposite
(Arriva Harlow notes to Adam Kelleher,
address above)

Hedingham & Chambers

Mark Lloyd
133 Hazelton Road
Colchester, Essex CO4 3DY
lloydhousehold448@gmail.com

Service Revisions, Panther Travel, Lodge Coaches and Publicity

Ian Ransom, ianransom2008@googlemail.com

Stephensons & NIBS

Richard Delahoy, address opposite

Smaller Operators

Roger A Smith, 3 Station Mews
Station Road, Witham, Essex
CM8 2FP

Ipswich Buses in Essex

Robert Appleton, rcappleton29@gmail.com

Vectare

Chris Stewart, shenfield252@gmail.com

Subscriptions

The calendar year subscription for 2024 is £27 for
printed copies sent by post, or £19 for electronic pdf
copies sent by e-mail. New members may join from
any month, but subscriptions will always run to
December from whichever month the member
chooses, please ask for the relevant price.
Please contact Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road,
Southend-on-Sea, SS1 3TT
richard.delahoy@blueyonder.co.uk

EBM Extra

EBM is published monthly. In addition, we aim to
publish two Extras each year full of historical features.
These are supplied to members free of charge, subject
to funding.

Membership Records & Data Protection

A statement of our compliance with the GDPR is
available on our website or by post. For any
membership or Data Protection issues please contact
Richard Delahoy, address above.

Reports, Articles & Photographs

Members' reports, articles and photos (prints, slides or
preferably jpgs) are always welcome. Please send to
the Editor or relevant Sub-Editor. The editors exercise
discretion to publish contributions in full, in part or not
at all and cannot guarantee publication in any particular
month.

Target Dates for EBM 715

Reports to Sub-Editors **28 October**

Sub-Editor drafts to Editor **3 November**

Dispatch by Printers on or before **11 November**

The last two dates are fixed, but late news can be sent
up to 4th and will be included if possible, if not it will
be held over to the next month.

Views expressed in EBM do not necessarily reflect the
opinions of the Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group or
officers. Every effort is made to ensure accuracy, but
the Group cannot accept responsibility for any errors
published.

© Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group 2023

www.essexbus.org.uk

fb.me/essexbus

Printed by

Directcds Ltd, Unit 2, Gentlemans Field, Westmill Road, Ware,
Hertfordshire SG12 0EF
01920 465023

www.directcds.co.uk

Group Notices

Membership Renewals and introduction of electronic distribution option

We are pleased to invite you to renew your subscription for 2024. Despite increased costs, the Committee have decided to only raise subs by £1, so the rate for 2024 is £27. This covers 12 issues of EBM plus the "Extras" which are generously funded by individual members; there will be three such Extras in 2024.

We have also decided to offer an electronic only membership at a lower cost, following a trial and "soft launch" with some new members. Under this option, you will receive a pdf copy of the magazine by e-mail as each issue is published, instead of a printed copy. Electronic copies will go out on the day that we expect Royal Mail to deliver the physical copies to the rest of the membership, so that everyone gets their EBM at about the same time each month. This new option costs just £19 for a full year, including the Extras, and will save you having to find space to store printed magazines and will also help anyone with an unreliable postal service. Existing members can opt to go onto the electronic system immediately if you wish, just let me know.

A renewal slip is included in the envelope with this issue for those paying by cheque, but we prefer payment by direct bank transfer as set out on the slip. There's no need to let us know you've paid, we check the bank account daily for payments, but if you do want to take up the electronic option, please confirm this by e-mail, to check that we have your correct e-mail address.

Many thanks for your continued support for EBEG and I look forward to receiving your renewal!

Richard Delahoy, Membership Secretary/Treasurer

Group Meetings

Our next meeting is being held in the afternoon on **Saturday 28 October**, 1400 for 1430 start. It is a presentation by Anthony Delaine Smith, the 2023 President of the OS, and Managing Director of Delaine Buses. This is at the **Central Baptist Church**, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, which is located between the Railway Station and Retail Market. All members of EBEG are invited to attend.

Following that we return to our regular venue of **The Quaker Meeting House**, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, CM1 2QL. This is the same venue where meetings were held before being halted by the pandemic and is a five-ten minute walk from Chelmsford Bus & Railway Stations. For the rest of this year they are being held on **Wednesday evenings**, doors open for a social chat at 1900, with the presentation starting at 1945. There is very limited on site parking, accessed via Cedar Avenue West, we would ask that you leave these for those less able to walk. On street parking in the evenings is available on Rainsford Road, Broomfield Road and Coval Lane. The meetings are being held jointly with our good friends at The Omnibus Society, Eastern & Southern Branch, who are very generously paying for the room hire so entrance is FREE. Dates for the rest of 2023 are:

15 November Robert Appleton - Eastern Counties Omnibus Company from 1970 onwards.

13 December Richard Delahoy - Buses 20 years ago.

For 2024, the meetings will continue at The Quaker Meeting House but are moving to **Saturday afternoons**. Doors open at 1400 for a 1430 start, ending at 1630. Dates for the first three months are **13 January**, **10 February** and **16 March**. Speakers will be announced in due course.

The Running Card

Owen Woodliffe

The following events have been advertised.

Saturday 17 October: NLTS Transport Bazaar. Theydon Bois Village Hall CM16 7ER.

Sunday 22 October: TransportFest. London Bus Museum, Brooklands.

Sunday 22 October: Lincolnshire Road Transport Museum Open Day, North Hykeham, Lincolnshire.

Saturday 28 October: Halloween Event. East Anglian Transport Museum, Carlton Colville, Lowestoft NR33 8BL. 1500 to 2000.

Saturday 4 November: Aldenham Transport Spectacular. Allum Hall, Allum Lane, Elstree & Borehamwood WD6 3AJ.

Sunday 5 November: Chalk Farm Garage Running Day. (Continued next page)

Saturday 18 November: Enfield Transport Bazaar. St Stephens Hall, Village Road, Bush Hill Park EN1 2EY.

Sunday 19 November: Running Day to commemorate 30 years since the closure of Finchley Garage.

Weekends 2/3, 9/10, 16/17 December: Ride the Lights, East Anglian Transport Museum, Carlton Colville, Lowestoft NR33 8BL. 1400 to 1800.

Saturday 2 December: Ensignbus Vintage Running Day.

Sunday 3 December: The Christmas Cracker. Ipswich Transport Museum, Cobham Road, Ipswich IP3 3JD. 1100 to 1600.

Events are published in good faith. However, the Group cannot be responsible for any changes due to future circumstances. Please check before travelling.

Group Sales

We now have a large stock of donated models, all boxed and in mint condition. £5 each plus postage. If interested please send e-mail to the Sales Officer, Owen Woodliffe (details on page 2).

Eastern National

EFE: LS bus, LS coach/air, RELH coach, FLF coach, FLF bus, VR route 400, VR Badgerline style livery, Olympian, Leyland National First/EN, Citybus livery, Mercedes.

Corgi: OB/Duple, Tiger Highwayman livery

B-T Models: Bedford YMT

Thamesway

EFE: Dennis Dart, Mercedes

First Essex

EFE: Solo on193

Southend

EFE: National, VR

Corgi: Tiger/Plaxton

Colchester

EFE: Guy Arab, National

Ensignbus

Corgi: Bristol K

Harris Bus

Corgi: DAF (Lakeside Link)

Below: EFE model of an Eastern National Bristol LS / ECW.



Follow Ups

EBM 713

Page 1

The fleet and registration number of the open top Dennis Trident / Alexander ALX 400 in John G Lidstone's photo were inadvertently omitted, the bus is 339 (TSU 639, ex T678 KPU).

The Story of 2383

Regarding the fact that 2383 now resides in Norfolk, there is a Norfolk and Suffolk connection in that two of the batch of 10 open top KSWs, 2381 (WNO 482) and 2385 (WNO 481), were sold to Eastern Counties in January 1968, becoming LKO239/8 respectively. Ironically, 2381 now resides in Essex with the Blackwater Preservation Group, back in traditional Eastern National cream and green (albeit with a green band). 2385 has been restored as the 'Wings over Europe' bus.

A selection of photos of WNO 481, plus one of WNO 482, were in EBM 688.

Also, 2383 was used in Norwich in November 1999 in the Christmas Lights switch-on parade, as seen on the **next page**.

Right & Below: As reported last month, 2383 returned to service for the first time since 1980 when route 300 was introduced in 1987 to complement the open top VRs which operated on routes 100 & 200 (which had also been used the previous year). The 1987 timetable for the 300. With thanks to Paul Harvey.



**VINTAGE FUN –
NOT TO BE MISSED**

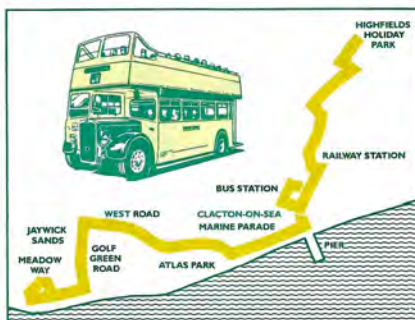
**A daily service between
Jaywick, Clacton
and Highfields
11th May - 30th September**

**Extra service
with nothing on Top!
EASTERN NATIONAL**

HIGHFIELDS - CLACTON - JAYWICK SERVICE 300

DAILY

JAYWICK Meadow Way	0825	0925	1025	1125	1225	1325	1425	1525	1625
Jaywick Three Jays	0828	0928	1028	1128	1228	1328	1428	1528	1628
Atlas Park	0831	0931	1031	1131	1231	1331	1431	1531	1631
CLACTON Bus Station arr.	0837	0937	1037	1137	1237	1337	1437	1537	1637
CLACTON Bus Station dept.	0838	0938	1038	1138	—	1338	1438	1538	—
Clacton Rail Station	0841	0941	1041	1141	—	1341	1441	1541	—
Great Clacton Church	0845	0945	1045	1145	—	1345	1445	1545	—
HIGHFIELDS Holiday Park	0849	0949	1049	1149	—	1349	1449	1549	—
HIGHFIELDS Holiday Park	0851	0951	1051	1151	—	1351	1451	1551	—
Great Clacton Church	0855	0955	1055	1155	—	1355	1455	1555	—
Clacton Rail Station	0859	0959	1059	1159	—	1359	1459	1559	—
CLACTON Station Road	0902	1002	1102	1202	1312	1402	1502	1602	—
Atlas Park	0908	1008	1108	1208	1318	1408	1508	1608	—
Jaywick Three Jays	0911	1011	1111	1211	1321	1411	1511	1611	—
JAYWICK Meadow Way	0914	1014	1114	1214	1324	1414	1514	1614	—



EASTERN NATIONAL

Eastern National, Bus Station,
Jackson Road, Clacton CO15 1JA. ☎ 421151.

Right: The front cover of the Eastern Counties staff magazine 'On Board', December 1999.

With thanks to Richard Dixon & Chris Stewart.

David Edwards advises that the hooks on 2383 for its roof tarpaulin were fitted in the mid 1990s whilst it was at Harwich under the care of the 'Eastern National KSW Preservation Group'.

As mentioned last month, 2383 was used as a spare vehicle for the two open top VRs on Southend route 67 in summer 1989. This was the first time for 11 years that a KSW had operated the service and the first time since 1973 that one in traditional cream and green livery (albeit with the addition of a green band) had done so. It also proved to be the last time ever, except for on running days.

The location **below** is on Queensway, coming up to the Southchurch Avenue roundabout near the Kursaal, so it's on a run to & from the bus station. The date is Saturday 8 July 1989. Posters either side of the destination box advertising a maximum fare of 30p for travel on route 300 in Clacton the previous year have been removed, but markings remain.

The photographer was driving the RELL, LHT 166L. It belonged to Lynxline, a company associated with Stephensons and was on route 60A, Southchurch Newington Avenue to Southend. He'd taken it over at Southchurch at 1240 for 10 rounders, before a final trip to Rochford depot. He issued 59 tickets for a total of £21.62. **Richard Delahoy**



Right: An important date in KSW history was 2 September 1994, the last time 2383 and 2384 worked together in regular service. The timetable for route 99 resulted in them meeting up in the town centre once an hour. The photo shows both of them on the last day with the clippie of 2383 chatting to the driver in Station Road. **Nick Street**

Smelly Canteens and Falling Asleep on the Job

Peter Carr writes:

"I chuckled at Alan 'Tebzy' Tebbit's letter in EBM 713. I thought a couple of points might be of interest or amusement to readers. Re smelly depot staff canteens, the absolute worst one I ever encountered was at Eastern Counties Surrey Street depot in Norwich, where in April 1978 I found myself as part of the Eastern National cricket team due to play Eastern Counties. As we got there early we went into the staff canteen. The smell was positively rancid; Surrey Street had been built in 1936, and it smelt (and looked) as though 42 years of cigarette smoke and stale cooking fat had completely permeated the walls. I had to get out, but the upside of this was that I was then able to photograph two ex-Eastern National FLFs parked up outside, FLF 424 (MVX 884C) and FLF 428 (LWC 666C), ex-Eastern National 2847 and 2840 respectively, as seen **below**.



"I never encountered anything remotely as bad during the 13 years I was with Eastern National, and the few London Transport canteens I experienced during my four years driving Routemasters out of Leyton garage were all very clean.

"Re falling asleep on the job, it happens to the best (and worst?) of us. After leaving London Transport in 1986 I was taken on part-time by Golden Boy Coaches of Roydon, Essex, and did trips for them for the following 24 years. One freezing winter Saturday night in the 1990s I picked up a large hen-party in Harlow to go to a club in Epping. I got them there at 2100, and was due to collect them for the return at 0100. I didn't fancy sitting in a cold bus for four hours, so as my home in Sawbridgeworth was only 20 minutes' drive away, I drove the coach there, parked up and went indoors, made a cup of tea and lay down on the sofa to watch TV. As it was so cold I put the heating on. Big mistake, I woke up with a start and found, to my horror, it was a quarter to two! I got back to Epping over an hour late and, I'm almost ashamed to say, lied through my back teeth and told them the coach had broken down. Needless to say, I got no tip at the end of that job!"

EBM Extra 4

Scottish Exchange - Part 1

EBM Extra 4 included the story of the 15 Bristol FLFs that Eastern National sent to Scotland in 1971 in exchange for Bristol VRs. There wasn't space then to show the Lodekkas whilst still in Essex, so to make amends, **below** is 2880 (SVX 279D) in Braintree Bus Park in this undated shot from the **EBEG Collection**. 2880 was allocated to Braintree (BE) for the whole of its life with EN. It went north on 31 August 1971 in company with Halstead's 2873 (RWC 945D), the drivers bringing back what were to become 3015/8 (SMS 41/4H) the next day. The VRs went to Basildon, Braintree receiving 2770 from Canvey in place of 2880 (Halstead fared worse, getting the oldest FLF, 2700, from Brentwood to replace their 1966 FLF). On the left in the photo is another long term Braintree resident, 2753 (JWC 713).

Peter Carr's photo on the previous page also has a connection to NBC FLF / VR exchanges. Both 2840 and 2847 moved from Eastern National to Eastern Counties as an indirect result of the 1973 exchanges which will be covered in Part 2 of the article in EBM Extra 6.



1 September 2023

From this date, the registration of services operated by **Fords of Althorne** were cancelled on the previous licence (PF 1099410) with services now operated on a new licence (PF2066718), this follows the sad passing of Tony Ford and the creation of a new partnership.

4 September

21 (M-S) Brentwood Railway Station - Ongar Four Wantz **NIBS**. Further to last month's note, the 1130 from Brentwood Station and 1158 return from Ongar were also withdrawn along with the 1430 from Brentwood Station and 1458 return from Ongar and the 1908 from Ongar. Previously the 21 was interworked with other routes but now seems to be a stand-alone service with one driver, and the two hour gaps in the service (1030-1230 and 1330-1535 from Brentwood Station) are to allow the driver to take statutory breaks.

201 (M, W, F only) Basildon Bus Station - Stanford-le-Hope, The Green **First Essex**. NEW SERVICE. Operates via Fobbing, with three journeys each way, as a very limited part replacement for withdrawn **NIBS** 11 and 374 (which were reported last month). Operated with support from Thurrock Council. We have previously reported that Thurrock have withdrawn their funding for bus services (hence the withdrawal of the 11 and 374) and we assume that the funding for route 201 has come from the Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus (BSIP+) of £433k awarded to Thurrock for the current financial year (as detailed in EBM 710, page 6).

436 (Sch only) Kelvedon Hatch Church Road - Shenfield School **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

C392 (M-F) Harlow Bus Station - Hoddesdon Merck Sharpe & Dohme **Epping Forest Community Transport**. In addition to last month's note, the service no longer serves Old Nazeing Road.

30 September

1 (Daily) Clacton Pier - Point Clear **Hedingham**. Open top service, final day of operation for 2023 season.

2 October

61/A/C (M-S) Brentwood Railway Station - Blackmore Bus Terminal **Vectare**. Service via Plovers Mead in Wyatts Green (M-F) withdrawn due to badly parked cars. In reality, this has been the case since early August. The majority of services now operate via the former 61A route, which is renumbered 61 (Brentwood High Street - Blackmore Bus Terminal). Some early morning and late afternoon services continue to operate as 61C, extended to the railway station in Brentwood.

29 October

9 (M-S) Basildon Bus Station - Brentwood Railway Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable.

80/A (M-S) Colchester Bus Station - Dedham Marlborough Head **First Essex**. 1700 80A from Dedham on M-F retimed to depart at 1735.

81/A (M-S) Colchester Bus Station - Dedham Marlborough Head **First Essex**. Revised timetable.

82/A/B (M-S) Colchester Bus Station - Colne Engaine, The Green **First Essex**. Revised timetable and route revised to operate via Marks Tey Estate (providing some additional journeys to the estate, most of which were withdrawn when the previous 370 was withdrawn on 23 July, although route 320 also provides some journeys there).

83/A/B (M-S) Colchester Bus Station - Bures Church **First Essex**. Revised timetable.

87/U (Daily) Great Horkesley, Malvern Way - Brightlingsea, Victoria Place / University of Essex **First Essex**. Revised timetable.

100 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Lakeside Bus Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S, no change to Su service.

104 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Harwich Railway Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable.

200 (M-S) Basildon Bus Station - Lakeside Bus Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable.

C1 (Daily) Great Waltham, Warner's Farm / Broomfield Hospital - Galleywood, Barnard Road **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S, no change to Su service.

S1 (Daily) Colchester, Highwoods Square - Wivenhoe Railway Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S, no change to Su service.

X10 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Stansted Airport Bus Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable.

X20 (Daily) Colchester Railway Station - Stansted Airport Bus Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable.

X30 (Daily) Southend Travel Centre - Stansted Airport Bus Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable.

30 October

444 (Sch only) Barley, St Margret of Antioch Church - Saffron Walden High School **Stephensons**. Revised timetable.

453 (Sch only) Wimbish Carver Barracks - Newport Joyce Franklin Academy **Stephensons**. Revised route and timetable. Revised to start from and finish at Thaxted Guildhall.

Below: Passengers are not giving up on the 374 without a fight. **Keith Ward**



Publicity

Essex County Council Passenger Transport - Leaflet for Sandon and Chelmer Valley Park & Ride (undated, but with revised fares introduced on 24 August 2023).

Bus Funding and Fare Cap Extended

The previous report on this was in EBM 710, page 6.

On Thursday 28 September, Roads Minister Richard Holden announced the allocation of £80m of funding to 64 local authorities in England for the financial year 2024-25 as part of the Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus (BSIP+). Local authorities can use the funding to improve local buses in a number of ways, such as by introducing new services, extending timetables with additional morning or evening buses, by making tickets cheaper through reduced fares for elderly or young people, protecting services with low passenger numbers, all depending on what will be most valuable in their local area.

The Minister said: "Buses are the most popular form of public transport, and millions of people across the country from the Tees Valley to Torbay rely on their local service to get to work, attend medical appointments and see loved ones. We are providing a further £80 million to help local authorities improve and protect essential services, delivering for local communities across the country by enhancing transport connections, supporting passengers and growing the economy."

The funding matches the £80 million BSIP+ investment for 2023-24, building on the £1bn of BSIP funding announced in 2022. The Government says it will continue to work closely with bus operators and local transport authorities to ensure an adequate provision of bus routes to deal with changing travel patterns while managing pressures on the taxpayer.

This followed the announcement the previous day by the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, during his speech to the Conservative Party Conference in Manchester, that the £2 bus fare cap would continue until at least the end of December 2024. It had previously been due to increase to £2.50 from 1 November this year, and continue until November next year, although it had been due to be reviewed before next November.

With thanks to Coach & Bus Magazine.

Vehicles on Loan

First Eastern Counties StreetDecks 35918 (BN72 TVM) and 35925 (BN72 TVX) were last used at Colchester on 1 September, at the end of the school holidays, before returning to Ipswich.

Allocation Changes

BN-Basildon; CF-Chelmsford; CR-Colchester; HH-Hadleigh; PT-Purfleet (Ensignbus); DS-Driving School; FG-First Group cascade (to / from another First company); oos-out of service.

Period 5 2023/24 (23 July - 19 August)

Correction: 63338 CF-BN should have read CR-BN.

Period 6 2023/24 (20 August - 23 September)

32540 CF (oos)-CR, 32551 CF-FG, 32641 CF-FG, 33416 BN-BN (oos), 33552 BN (oos)-BN, 33705 FG-CF, 33713 BN-CR, 33714 FG-CF, 33825 BN-CR, 33983 BN-BN (oos), 36839 CF (oos)-CF, 44001 CF-BN, 44003 CF-CR, 44004 CF-BN, 44599 BN-FG, 63064 HH (oos)-HH, 63331 CR (oos)-CR, 63340 CR-BN, 63341 CR (oos)-CR, 63342 CR-BN, 66759 CF(oos)-Disposal, 66806 CF-CR, 66814 CF (oos)-Disposal, 66817 CF-CR-CR (oos), 66860 CF(DS)-FG, 67163 BN (oos)-CF, 67166 BN-BN (oos), 67168 BN (oos)-BN, 67189 BN (oos)-BN-CR (oos), 67738 CF (oos)-CF, 67741 CR-CF, 67750 CR-CF, 67902 BN (oos)-Disposal, 67904 BN (oos)-Disposal, 69024 BN-Disposal, 69148 CF(DS)-FG, 69421 CF (oos)-CF, 69516 CR (oos)-CR, 69905 BN (oos)-Disposal, 69907 CF (oos)-Disposal, 69909 PT (oos)-Disposal, 69915 BN (oos)-Disposal, 69916 CF (oos)-Disposal, 69917 BN (oos)-Disposal

Colchester has received its first Enviro 400s (33713 & 33825) and its first mid-length Enviro 200 (44003), whilst Basildon has received its first of the latter type (44001 & 44004).
33416 was seen at ADL, Harlow on 14 September.

Disposals

32551, 32641, 44599 to First Eastern Counties, 3 September 2023, first two to Great Yarmouth, 44599 to Ipswich. Driver Trainers 66860 and 69148 also to First Eastern Counties, at Norwich, during September. 69905 to First Bus Apprentice Academy, Reaseheath College, Crewe, 22 September 2023. It will stay in the workshop and be used as a vehicle inspector trainer for all of England's First Bus engineering apprentices. 66759, 66814, 67902, 67904, 69024, 69915, 69917 to PVS, Barnsley (via Ensignbus) September 2023. In practice some or all may have gone direct to PVS, and also all were not collected in September, for example 69024 was still at BN on 27th and 66814 was still at CF on 30th. 69907, 69909, 69915, 69916 and 69917 also disposed of in September, where to not yet known.

66797 was reported in EBM 708 as going to Shelton Motors for scrap on 3 April this year. However, its complete front section (up to the rear of the doors) and three exposed pairs of seats behind this, have turned up at Sparks, Bristol. What's left of it has fictional fleet number 16699 and registration number SPARKS 1, but its original fleet number is still on the interior above the windscreen. It remains in Urban livery and has a fully working LED blind. On the ground floor Sparks has a range of shops, installations, events and more, with a hub for local artists, offering affordable studios, rehearsal and performance space upstairs. More information at Sparksbristol.co.uk.

Former First Essex Scania 65679 (YR52 VEH) has been withdrawn from service and stripped for spares prior to disposal by Dan's Travel, Stowmarket.

Re-seated Vehicles

67163 and 67195 were seen at ADL, Harlow on 14 September, the former to have luggage racks removed, the latter to have them fitted. 67163 had also been repainted (see below), 67195 was still in Park & Ride black livery. 67167 (back in use 12 September) and 67168 (back in use 4th) have also had their racking removed and three side facing tip-up seats fitted. However, these ex X10/X30 vehicles do not have a step fitted at the front, so a small

luggage pen remains there, rather than a double forward facing seat being fitted. Previously done 67161 is similar. These are all now B39F, ex B36F.

67192 has had racking fitted (back in use 7th). 67193 returned from having racking fitted on 4 October and 67190 went to have it fitted. All three had already been repainted into Airlink blue.

67189 was seen repainted (see below) at Mardens on 26 September and also with racking fitted. These are all B36F, ex B41F.

Repaints

67163 seen at ADL, Harlow on 14 September repainted from Airlink blue to Shuttles red. Back in service, transferred from Basildon to Chelmsford, on 22nd.

67189 seen at Mardens on 26 September repainted from P&R all over black to Airlink blue with branding for route X20.

Around the Depots

(All vehicles listed below allocated to relevant depot except where stated. All dates September 2023 except where stated.)

First Essex peak vehicle requirement (PVR) figures from 3 September 2023 service changes:

	Mon-Fri Schooldays	Saturdays	Sundays
BN - Basildon	63	52	29
CF - Chelmsford	76	57	30
CR - Colchester	64	51	30
HH - Hadleigh	55	44	24
Totals	258	204	113
Change from April 2023	-1	+2	+5

Chelmsford is broken down to 36 Main, 31 Town, 3 Schools, 6 Airlink (M-F); 27 Main, 25 Town, 5 Airlink (Sat); 13 Main, 12 Town, 5 Airlink (Sun).

Colchester is broken down to 30 Main, 29 Town, 5 Airlink (M-F); 21 Main, 25 Town, 5 Airlink (Sat), 8 Main, 17 Town, 5 Airlink (Sun).

With thanks to Sean Menzies for extracting this data from Bustimes files made available under the BODS (Bus Open Data Service) Regulations. The previous table was in EBM 709 after the 16 April 2023 service changes.

EBM 713 - Corrections and Additional Information

Page 13: 37137 unusual on route X20 on 13 August should have been 37136. (37137 would have been extremely unusual as this bus has never been owned by First Essex!)

32629 unusual on route X30 should have been 32641. (32629 is in the scrap line at Colchester.)

Page 14 Service Vehicles: All the Vauxhall electric vans (driver shuttles and engineering) are of type Vivaro e, none are Movanos.

Page 32, bottom photo: The entire front cowl was a replacement which originated from 3059 and was fitted to 3109 at Colchester, as can be seen by the older style Series 3 sidelight / indicators and the fact it carries a Bristol VR badge which later Series 3s didn't. Thanks to David Edwards for spotting these.

Also, going back to EBM 707: 37136 has not received new 'Essex Bus' style fleet names on its Urban 2 with green front livery, it retains the original 'Essex' ones associated with this livery.

Colchester

Further to last month, 32531 and 32547 were noted back in the scrap line on 6 October, the former is being cannibalised for body parts. 32629 and 67901 were still there on that date and had been joined by 66817. 66806 and 66817 had been seen in the line after operation on 15 September, but the former returned to service on 21st. 63337, which had been in the scrap line after a minor fire in its engine compartment, returned to service on 2 October. 63341 (7 September) and 69516 (12th), which were also in the scrap line last month, have also returned to service.

Accident victim 63331, which was towed away on 8 August for assessment, returned to service on 4 September.

News of the Harwich routes (2 September - 6 October).

The new 104 timetable (no longer including the 103, as reported last month) started on 4 September, normally requiring nine buses on Mondays - Fridays. Double-deckers returned to the 104 on a regular basis including buses not seen before on 104: 33825 on 6th, 7th, 11th, 37613 on 4th, 37621 on 4th, 19th, 20th and 33713 on 6 October. However, on most days 37613/21 were employed on X20 (see below), and other double-deckers worked on 104, usually on 0645 Great Notley - Colchester 320, then 0830 Harwich - Colchester 104 through to 1615 Harwich - Colchester 104, and/or 0750 Braintree - Colchester 320, then 0935 Colchester - Harwich 104 to 1420 Harwich - Colchester 104, then 1600 Colchester - Great Notley 320. Sometimes double-deckers have also worked on 104 starting on 0710 Colchester - Harwich 104 until 1645 Colchester - Harwich 104, or 1545 Colchester Norman Way Schools - Harwich 104, 1735 Harwich - Colchester 104, 1905 Colchester - Mistley 104. The 0915 Mistley - Colchester 104 is normally operated by a short StreetLite because it is part of a vehicle duty which includes journeys on 80/A to Langham and 81/A to Dedham.

The mix of Volvo B7TL / B9TL double-deckers, short and long Wrightbus StreetLites, and Volvo B7RLEs has varied from day to day as shown by three examples:

5th: 37007, 37133, 47650, 47669, 63328, 63330, 63333, 63336, 66817.

13th: 32526, 37007, 37062, 47666, 63328, 63330, 69518, 69519, 67191.

14th: 32540, 47427, 47656, 47669, 47696, 63328, 63335, 66817, 69516.

On Monday 2 October all nine buses on 104 were StreetLites: 47427, 47650, 47656, 47665, 47666, 47696, 63328, 63330, 63336.

Unusual single-deckers seen on 104 have been mid-length Enviro 200 44003 on 12th, 21st plus 3, 4, 6 October and Airlink liveried Enviro 200 MMCs 67190 on 22nd, 67191 on 13th (see photo on page 19) & 19th, 67192 on 3 October, 67194 on 18th.

On Saturdays four single-deckers are used, three on daytime 104 journeys plus 1900 Harwich - Colchester 102, and one on evening 102 starting with 2035 Colchester - Harwich 102. However, on 16th 37054 worked the evening 102 duty.

Clacton routes. Since 4 September, route 74B has reverted to (almost) 100% double-deck operation (Volvo / Geminis) after previously been mainly worked by long StreetLites. A great variety of buses have been used: 32540, 32628, 32669, 32672, 32676, 37006, 37007, 37010, 37015, 37017, 37020, 37035, 37042, 37053, 37054, 37062, 37133, 37134, 37135, 37138, 37139, 37140 and 37621. The only exceptions have been long StreetLite 63330 (first journey) & Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus 66817 (the rest) on 13th and Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus 69516 on 22nd.

On the other hand, Route 76 has been worked by single-deckers: 63328 & 63335 (10th), 63328 & 63341 (17th), 63341 & 69516 (24th), 47668 & 47696 (1 October), 63330 & 69517 (8 October).

Capacity issues between Colchester and Braintree have meant that double-deckers have been used on some route X20 journeys. Green Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Geminis 37613 and 37621 have been regulars on the route during September and early October, normally at least one and often both. Supplementing these have been recently transferred from Basildon Enviro 400s 33713 (17th-20th, 22nd, 2 October) and orange 33825 (6, 8 October) and, more unusually, Colchester Zoo liveried Gemini 37133 (3 October). Green Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipse Urban 2 69519 continued to be used in early-mid September (3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 10th, 17th) and again on 7 October when 69517 was also on the route.

Conversely, some of the Airlink liveried Enviro 200 MMCs have been used on other routes. Examples on route 104 are noted above, others have been: 67190 on S1 on (7th), on S2 (3 October); 67191 on S4/S6 (14th), on S7/S8 (15th, 5 October), on 371/X71 (20th), on S4 (28th); 67192 on 320 (12th), on S4 (25th); 67194 on 11 (29th), on S1 (2 October).

67189, repainted into Airlink livery and with racking fitted, has transferred from Basildon and entered service from Colchester on route X20 on 3 October. However, its blinds had not yet been reprogrammed to include X20 and it was seen with both X10 (at least with the correct final destination towards Stansted Airport) and 370 (the old 370 mainly matched the X20 between Colchester and Braintree)!

Further to the photo last month of 67193 on the 1605 M-F 86 from Colchester to West Mersea, which returned dead, this journey has been back projected to Norman Way Schools in term times since 4 September and is no

longer operated by a bus off the X20 (it still returns from West Mersea out of service). However, from the same date, the 0735 X20 to Stansted Airport works on the 0652 11 beforehand.

On Saturday 16 September, the 1435 Colchester to Stansted X20 service was worked by 37613. Unfortunately, after leaving Braintree Bus Interchange it came in to contact with the canopy of 'The Picture Palace' (now a Wetherspoons) on the corner of Victoria Street and Fairfield Road, smashing some upper deck windows on the bus. Consequently the journey was abruptly terminated there. 67190 later came dead from Colchester to cover the Braintree - Colchester section of the return journey. The damage to 37613 was not too severe and it was back in use on the X20 on 19th.

This was not the first time the building had acted as a "bus stop". On Saturday 12 September 1936, two newly acquired ex Bolton Corporation Leyland TD1s (from the WH 1551-4 batch) were being delivered to the Hicks Bros garage opposite. One was left unattended and started to roll down Fairfield Road. It hit the canopy of the building (then the Embassy cinema) damaging the neon lighting and then veered across into the premises of W.S. Gill (now John Mitchell Electrical but still owned by the Gill family) before coming to rest.

Although the on-loan First Eastern Counties StreetDecks have returned to Ipswich, a StreetDeck from Ipswich still visits Colchester M-F in school terms on route OC 04 (see photo on the next page). Suffolk One Sixth Form College on the outskirts of Ipswich has a network of home to college contracts organised by Kura (OC = One College): OC 01 from Stowmarket, OC 02 from Felixstowe, OC 03 from Stowupland, OC 04 from Colchester, OC 05 from Leiston, OC 06 from Dovercourt.

OC 01 to OC 05 are operated by First Eastern Counties and OC 06 by Hedingham (see page 21). OC 04 and one other may be recent gains by First Eastern Counties and probably explains why First Essex 32551 and 32641 transferred to Great Yarmouth (see Disposals above) which allowed 32653 and 32654 (the latter ex First Essex) to move from Great Yarmouth back to Ipswich. Ipswich depot needed two additional double-deckers for the new contracts that started in September.

Chelmsford

Further to last month, acquired Enviro 400s 33705 and 33714 entered service in early September, the former on 4th the latter on 6th.

Also further to last month, 66814 (heavily cannibalised) remained on the scrap line on 30 September. 42935 was probably still there, but was hidden behind a row of other buses (it was definitely still there on 16th). 66907 and 66916 were also still present on 16th but had gone by 30th (see Disposals above plus photo on page 19). Driver Trainer 69151, seen on the scrap line minus its engine on 20 August, was back in use by 6 September, seen in Southend that day. It was also noted on the A120 at Coggeshall on 19th.

67741 has finally had the top of its Christmas wrap removed (see photo in EBM 697, with a photo of the full wrap in EBM 692).

67805 (8th) and 69434 (15th) single-deckers on 372.

On loan 34432 took a break from route X30 on 17th, used on c2c rail replacement. Other than this, there have been no reports of this bus being on any route other than X30 since the start of its loan.

Driver Trainer 66860 was seen on the A120 at Marks Tey, this vehicle has since transferred to Norwich (see Disposals above).

Basildon

33413, 44910, 69024 and 69905 were seen on the scrap line on 16 September. 69905 has since gone (see Disposals above).

One of the StreetLites acquired from First Hampshire & Dorset, 63381 (on 18 March 2023), has still not entered service, it is awaiting a new engine.

StreetLite 47654 operated on new route 201 on its first day (4th).

Mid-length Enviro 200s 44001 and 44004, transferred from Chelmsford, have seen regular use on interconnected routes 9 & 200, quite low capacity vehicles for these routes. Even smaller 44909 was on 9 & 200 on 12th.

Hadleigh's 44927 was borrowed for one day only, on Saturday only 1A (9th). Hadleigh's 47530 was also borrowed for one day only, on 100 (15th).

Green StreetLites 47595 & 47596 both on X10 (full route) on 10th. 63383 on 300 (7 October).

Hadleigh

Further to last month, 63064 returned to service with its new Cummins engine on 11 September.
34462 (18th), 36216 (5 October), 36217 (19th) double-deckers on 14 shorts.

Service Vehicles

A further Vauxhall Vivaro e for driver shuttles at Colchester is FP23 WKY.

Miscellaneous

Our chairman popped into the Station Hotel, Wivenhoe recently and saw a board with ex Eastern National fleet number plates screwed to it: 1358 (Bristol MW / ECW), 2783, 2804, 2890 and 2935 (Bristol FLFs / ECW, the latter a former coach converted to a bus).

With thanks to Robert Appleton, Stephen Barham, Jack Bennee, David Edwards, Paul Harvey, John Lidstone, William Morrison, Gareth Norris, John Podgorski, Ian Ransom, Derek Stebbing, Nigel Turner, Robert West, Allan White, Bustimes, Facebook, Essex Buses Google group and Terminus.

First Essex News in Pictures

But starting with a bus that isn't First Essex! Instead, a bus from fellow First East of England company First Eastern Counties, in Essex. StreetDeck 35926 (BN72 TVY) at Southway, Colchester on 4 October 2003 on college route OC 04, on the afternoon return from Suffolk One Sixth form College, more details on the previous page.

John Podgorski



47666 (SN15 ACJ) in a similar livery, but with a different colour dividing line, still in Southampton City Red colours, at Manningtree on the 0710 Colchester - Harwich 104 on 2 October 2023. As reported last month, all M-S First Essex daytime journeys on this route corridor have been numbered 104 since 4 September, with the 103 variant withdrawn.

Robert Appleton



Last month we reported that during August some Enviro 400s recently acquired from Glasgow had been used on route X30. Here is 33998 (SN65 OGP) at Eastwood Road, Rayleigh on 1 September 2023. Far fewer have been used in September than were in August, others noted being 33994 (30 September), 33995 (7th, 12th) and 33997 (11th, 13th, 24th) plus 33998 again on 8 October.



On the same day, just round the corner in Rayleigh High Street, Enviro 200 44173 (YX11 AFO) in red shuttles livery is on an X30 short working.



Also on the same day and also in Rayleigh High Street, StreetLite 63061 (SK63 KKB) in Essex Bus green livery awaits attention after breaking down. This bus was illustrated in EBM 697 in Southampton City Red livery.



All this page **Nigel Clark**

As reported last month, the final two original style Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipse Urbans in service, 66806 & 66817, moved from Chelmsford to Colchester on the last day of August. Here is 66806 (MX05 CCV) on route 174 at Fingringhoe on 4 September 2023.

David Edwards



... and here is 66817 (MX05 CDZ) at Maldon Road, Colchester on route 4 on 13 September. However, this bus was taken out of service two days later.

John Podgorski



Another transfer to Colchester, this time from Basildon, is Enviro 400 33825 (SN63 MYH) still in First West of England orange 'excel' livery. It is seen in Colchester High Street on route S1 on its second day of service from CR, 5 September 2023.

Dan Pretty



A long way from the Brentwood local route it is branded for, Enviro 200 44539 (YX13 AHO) outside Colchester Railway Station on route 11 on 18 September 2023. However, it had been on its advertised route 37 that morning before making the journey to Colchester. It was in service at Colchester for two more days before returning to Chelmsford.

David Edwards



67163 (YY66 PAO), back in service after having most of its luggage racking removed and three tip-up seats fitted and repainting from Airlink blue to shuttles red, on route 336 at Chelmsford on 26 September 2023. Passing Chelmsford Railway Station...



... and in Chelmsford Bus Station. Note it has an additional fleet number on the side at the front and it doesn't have a town / city logo by the 'shuttles' names.

Both **William Morrison**



A first sighting of an Airlink liveried bus on route 104, 67191 (SN66 WKM) on 13 September 2023. In Upper Dovercourt on a very late running 1725 from Colchester. This journey returns to Colchester as a 102, scheduled to leave Harwich at 1900.

Stephen Barham



As reported last month, First Berkshire's Volvo 7900H 69928 (BV13 ZCX) just outlasted the First Essex examples in the same registration series, by operating on the morning of 19 August, the day after the Essex ones were retired. However, it made a surprise return to service on 29 August and has been in almost daily use since, mainly used on route 8 and instead of a coach on Rail Air route RA2. It is seen at Woking Station on 13 September 2023.

Nick Street



Meanwhile, here are two of First Essex's examples in store at Westway, Chelmsford on 16 September. 69916 (BV13 ZBY) and 69907 (BV13 ZBL). They had both gone by 30th.

Jack Benee



Acquired Vehicles

230	YY64 TXK	ADL E20D / Enviro 200	B30F	Ex Go South West 2205 (originally GAL SE225)
234	YY64 TXO	ADL E20D / Enviro 200	B30F	Ex Go South West 2209 (originally GAL SE229)
236	YY64 TXR	ADL E20D / Enviro 200	B30F	Ex Go South West 2211 (originally GAL SE231)

231/2/3/5 YY64 TXL/M/N/P are with Konectbus.

The batch were originally Go Ahead London SE225 - 231 (B25D). They were converted to single door and transferred to Plymouth and then onto the Transport for Cornwall operation of Go South West. They have entered service in all over red livery. 230 has old style 'hedingham' fleet name on the front, 234 has new style 'hedingham & chambers' fleet name on front and sides, 236 has a mixture of both - old style on front and new style on side!

Signifiant Allocations

230 KNu-CN, 234 HDu-HD, 236 CNu-CN

Fleet News

230 entered service on Clacton town route 137 on 6 September, with its acquired fleet number 2205. It still had this when seen on 12th, but by 18th this had been replaced by its new one. 234 first worked from Sible Hedingham depot on 19th, still with its acquired fleet number 2209. 236 entered service by 16th. Photos of 230 and 234 are on the inside front cover.

It is confirmed that 275 and 279 (YX57 BXC/H) have been repainted and therefore have lost their EYMS liveries. 279 is missing its front fleet number on its dash panel. 279 tracked as 462 for many days after repaint and service resumption, only reverting to the correct tracking by mid-September.

Further to last month, 822 (YN56 FFB) is confirmed repainted to fleet livery, ex Brighton & Hove livery.

Optare Solos 910/1 (SF04 SKD/E) have reportedly been taken out of service. 910 is seen **below** in Tollesbury on 24 July 2023. **John G Lidstone**



Service News

New college routes have been won from the start of the autumn term, with Go Ahead East Anglia winning several routes to & from the West Suffolk College (WSC) in Bury St Edmunds:

B1 Haverhill, B2 Soham, B3 Diss, B4 Brandon.

B1 is allocated to Chambers, B3/4 are operated by Konectbus and B2 has been allocated to Hedingham at Clacton but has also been operated from Sible Hedingham. The bus travels dead to Soham in the mornings, comes back to the depot for a couple of service runs then travels back to WSC and out to Soham before returning to Clacton.

Clacton to Soham is a nearly 2 hours, over 70 miles dead mileage run. 850/1/2 were used at the start. Vintage 511 (LB02 YWY) performed on 2 October - brave scheduling for a 21 year old double-decker!

Also won is the OC O6 contract from Dovercourt to Ipswich Suffolk One college, via Harwich, Horsley Cross, Bradfield, Mistley and Manningtree, then via Brantham, Stutton and Holbrook to Ipswich Suffolk One College. Regular performer at the start was 640 (LX56 EUC). Services OC 1-5 are operated by First Eastern Counties (see also page 14).

Additional 2023-4 school contracts won have been a three-bus contract for Manningtree School:

M1 Harwich, Dovercourt, Ramsey, Bradfield and Mistley

M2 Langham, Dedham and Ardleigh

M3 Parkeston, Dovercourt, Little & Great Oakley, Wix, Little Bentley, Great & Little Bromley.

Two buses are left on the bus stands in the school grounds all day, the third bus returns the other drivers back to Clacton depot and then back to the school later in the day.

Additionally, RC5, Sudbury via Hadleigh service, has been won by Konectbus to the Suffolk New College, Otley and is regularly in the hands of Clacton depot output, with one single-decker solely allocated to the contract.

Additional News

It has been reported that due to temporary access issues to Kelvedon depot, some buses were kept briefly at the Boreham Services parking.

Repainted 822 participated in a 'Catch a Bus' promotion in Colchester High Street on 20 September.

On 23 September all three long wheelbase Omnidekkas, 821-3, were stabled at Kelvedon.

Below: Scania OmniLink 456 (AN61 BUS) on route 97 passes the popular bikers' cafe 'Revved Up', which was the former Eastern National enquiry office as part of the Walton depot complex, on 7 September 2023. **Chris Stewart**
A photo of sister 455 (AN61 LAN) with Chambers was in EBN 679.



Southend

3761, which had been on loan to Colchester, has returned to Southend and was back in service here by 13 September.

In a very surprising development, withdrawn Southend Transport liveried Volvo B7RLE 3816 (GN07 AVC) has been repaired - the fault causing its withdrawal was less serious than first thought - but rather than staying at Southend, on 1 September it was towed to Milton Keynes depot for possible service there! It has been renumbered 3906. We have had no reports of it being in service there yet.

Southend depot faced a serious vehicle shortage on Saturday 2 September. It is understood that, following an incident with an Optare Versa in another fleet, an instruction was issued that all such buses had to be given specific safety checks before being used again. With 36 Versas at Southend out of a current fleet of 54, this created major difficulties. From Bustimes tracking data, it appears that only 12 were in service that morning, plus 12 of the Enviro 400 MMCs and one VDL SB200. This gave just 25 buses in service; later in the day another four Versas and another Enviro 400 MMC were in service. We're not sure of the exact PVR on a Saturday (M-F it is currently 48, Saturday is lower) but this meant that only just over half of the PVR could be operated and frequencies had to be thinned out. The double deck fleet can't be deployed on the 7/8 due to low bridges, but a pair were diverted from their usual routes 1 & 2 to work instead on the 9. As we've mentioned in previous EBM's, the 9 is barred to double-deckers due to low trees in Green Lane and Dandies Drive, Eastwood, and on the very rare previous occasions that a decker has been used, they have diverted via Whitehouse Road and Rayleigh Road instead. However on Saturday, 6499 (Southend Corporation livery) and 6502 both ran the full normal route. **John G Lidstone's** photo **below** shows 6499 (SN66 WHS) at The Oakwood, Eastwood Rise on its way to Shoeburyness. John's photo of 6502 on route 9 on the same day is on the front cover.

Problems continued into the following week. On Monday (with schools now back), only 28 Versas were recorded in service by the time of the afternoon peak, with those still off the road being predominately from the older 61 plate examples. A similar situation persisted on Tuesday but improved, with 29 Versas on the road (and 45 buses in total, still short of the full PVR). Incidentally, 4226 (KX62 JPI) had been off the road since mid-July, but returned to service on 15 September.



Enviro 200 Driver Trainer T027 (LJ58 AVD) has now left Southend and been replaced by Enviro 400 T199 (SN08 AAE).

Harlow

Disposals

Further to EBM 710, where it was reported that Solo 1459 and VDL SB200 / Wrightbus Pulsar 3752 had been delicensed, these have now gone to Shelton Motors, Ramsey, as has Optare Versa 4180, which was withdrawn from service in May this year.

Colchester

A further transfer in is Enviro 200 GN59 FVG from Maidstone, where it was fleet number 4065. It entered service on 11 September. It has replaced similar 4022 (GN58 BUO) which is now withdrawn. It is seen below in Maidstone on 16 June 2022. **David Moth**

Meanwhile, one of the two double-deckers at Colchester, 4468 (MX61 AXJ), has not been in use since the beginning of August, awaiting gearbox repairs.

As noted above, 3761 (YJ08 DZM) which was on loan from Southend has been returned there; its last day in use at Colchester was 9 September.

With thanks to John Card, Dan Pretty, Matthew Evans, Adam Kelleher, John Lidstone, Keith Sadler and LOTS.



The main summer school holidays started on 24 July. In addition to the normal ex-Metroline Scania OmniCities and ADL Enviro 200s, other buses were used on services 92 Ipswich - Manningtree and 93/A Ipswich - Colchester, including some of the seat belt fitted Scania OmniCities that are allocated to Ipswich School contracts during school terms.

On 92, the all-day duty continued to be worked by a Scania OmniCity, but with the occasional use of a Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka: 60 (PJ54 YZT) on 24 August (see an earlier photo on rear cover) and 61 (PJ54 YZU) on 30 & 31 August. The second bus on 92 working 1740 Ipswich - Manningtree 92 & 1830 return was normally a DAF DB250 / East Lancs Lowlander on school days, but these DAFs were taken out of service for the school holidays, so instead these journeys included:

Seat belt fitted Scania OmniCities 47 (SGZ 3347) on 28 July, 49 (SGZ 3349) on 22 August.

Scania OmniDekkas 60 (PJ54 YZT) on 7/9/23/29 August, 61 (PJ54 YZU) on 26th.

ADL Enviro 200 85 (KX59 GNY) on 2 August, 72 (LX58 LMM) on 3 August, 76 (LX58 LML) on 4th/30th, 81 (YX63 LGE), with 'Nacton Nipper' route branding, on 8th, 82 (YX63 LGF) on 1 Sep, 74 (DU60 LOJ) on 2 Sep. Optare Tempo SR 88 (YJ12 GWC), with 'Chantry Connexions' route branding, on 21 August.

On 93/A the school holidays started with Scania OmniCities working the two all-day duties, then from 1 August one or two of the Scania OmniDekkas 60/61/62 (PJ54 YZT/U/V) were used instead.

The third bus on 93 working 1645 Ipswich - Colchester 93 and 1810 return is normally an ADL Enviro 200, but exceptions to this have been:

Seat belt fitted Scania OmniCities 48 (SGZ 3347) on 21 August, 47 (SGZ 3347) on 22nd, 49 (SGZ 3349) on 26th, 51 (SGZ 3351) on 2 September.

Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Urban Eclipse 161 (SN57 DCX) on 24 July, 24 August.

Mercedes Citaro 154 (BF65 HVU) on 25/26 July, 155 (BF65 HVV) on 5 August.

Below: 154, named 'Private Samuel Harvey VC', waiting to depart from Colchester Bus Station on the 1810 service 93 to Ipswich on 25 July. **Robert Appleton**



With the new school term starting from 5/6 September, the third bus reverted to an ADL Enviro 200 working, for example on 12 September, 83 (KX58 GUW) was used.

Earlier this year Ipswich Buses purchased two 11.9m long Scania N230UD / Optare OmniDekkas, H51/35F, from Nottingham City Transport, 25 (YT11 LTF) and 26 (YT61 GOJ). Their 86 seat capacity is very useful for school services in Suffolk, so when the new school term started in September, one or two of the existing 80 seat Scania OmniDekkas 60/61/62 (PJ54 YZT/U/V) have moved to working all day duties on Ipswich - Manningtree 92, and Ipswich - Colchester 93/A, instead of the usual Scania OmniCities. Then on 11 September and 3, 4, 5, October, all of 60/61/62 worked the all-day duties on 92/93/A. The ex-Network Colchester Scania OmniDekka 63 (YN06 TFZ) made a rare appearance in Colchester on 12 September when it worked 0805 Ipswich - Colchester 93A and 0935 Colchester - Ipswich 93. On arrival back at Ipswich it was replaced by Scania OmniCity 32 (YR61 RRU). 63 is seat belt fitted, so often works on Ipswich School contracts, or other school duties as required.

For the new school term, three DAF DB250 / East Lancs Lowlanders returned to service: 55/57 (PN52 XNO/J) and 58 (PJ53 OLA). However, two work school contracts to Holbrook Academy, and the third a school contract to Claydon High School and East Bergholt High School. So their previous work into Essex is now handled by Scania OmniCities. For example on 12 September OmniCity 34 (YR61 RSV) worked 0813 Ardleigh - East Bergholt High School 693 and 1545 return, plus OmniCity 35 (YR61 RTV) worked 1740 Ipswich - Manningtree 92 and 1830 return.

The new term at Ipswich School started on 6 September, and on 7th the following contract journeys from Essex were seen arriving at the school:

Scania OmniCity 47 (SGZ 3347) on contract 2A from Feering and Colchester Tollgate.

Scania OmniCity 51 (SGZ 3351) on contract 2B from Colchester Braiswick and Langham.

Scania OmniCity 46 (SGZ 3346) on contract 2C from Langenhoe and Colchester.

ADL Enviro 200 76 (LX58 LML) on contract 3 from Dedham Heath and Dedham.

ADL Enviro 200 75 (GD10 MVM) on contract 6 from Castle Hedingham and Halstead.

Volvo B7R / Jonckheere 1 (SGZ 1001) on contract 10 from Holland-on-Sea, and Tendring.

All these are fitted with seat belts.

With thanks to Ipswich Buses website, Ipswich Transport Society Journal, Ipswich Buses Enthusiast Facebook Group and Bustimes.

Ensignbus part of First Group

Adam Kelleher

Dealer Stock Movements August 2023

Vehicles In

From **ex preservation**: AEC Regent III RT3316 (LYR 535). This has been acquired for the **heritage fleet**.

From **First Essex**: Enviro 350H SN13 CHV/Y. Ex First Essex 67902/4. These are for component recovery and then scrap. See page 11.

From **other First Bus companies**: Enviro 500 SN09 CAU/V/BU/X/DO, First fleet numbers 38201/2/6/8/25.

Vehicles Out

Falcon, Surrey: Volvo B7RLE SK07 CFP, Scania OmniLink YT13 HKZ

Vehicles Both In and Out during the month

From **First Essex**: Volvo B7RLE YJ05 VVA, MX05 CNV/DU, SF55 UAS; Enviro 200 LK57 EJE/J, YX09 AGV;

Volvo 7900H BV13 ZBX/Z. Ex First Essex 66759/96/814, 69024; 44002/5/913; 69915/7. See page 11.

From **other First Bus companies**: Volvo B10BLE W597 RFS; Volvo B7TL WJ55 CRZ, YN06 URE;

Optare Solo YJ56 AOT; Volvo B7RLE SV07 EHF, SN57 HZZ/JDJ, SV57 EYH, CU08 AHV, SV08 FHC/G;

ADL Enviro 200 CU08 ACZ; ADL Enviro 400H SN61 BFK/L/M/O/P/U/V/X/Y/Z.

All the above to **PVS, Barnsley**.

From **Nu Venture**: Transbus Trident LX04 FZH. To **Shelton Motors**.

Company News

As reported last month, Central Connect and its parent Galleon Travel 2009 Ltd were sold to Vectare in August. As Central Connect is being kept as a separate unit for the time being at least, we will for now continue to report on it separately from Vectare in EBM.

Acquired Vehicles

In EBM 693 (January 2022) it was reported that YN56 FBX, a Scania N94UD / Scania OmniCity H41/23D, new to London United as SP13 in September 2006, had been acquired from Happy Al's, Birkenhead, via Ensignbus. In EBM 695 it was noted that this was for the East End (London) Gangster tour. In LOTS's 'The London Bus' 708 (August 2023) it was reported "YN56 FBX appears to have left the Gangster Tour fleet (by November 2022); can anyone confirm what happened to it?". There are no photos of it in use on the Gangster Tour on Flickr, so it seems likely it was never used. We therefore repeat TLB's question.

In EBM 706 it was reported that Enviro 200 GX07 HUU had been acquired from Stagecoach South, via Ensignbus, in January 2023. However, it has never been noted in service. In May there was a report that an unidentified white / blue Enviro 200 was being cannibalised at Stansted depot. As GX07 HUU was in the new Stagecoach livery, it is quite likely that this was the vehicle being cannibalised.

In EBM 707 it was reported that StreetLite 1202 (CC11 BUS, ex SN64 CVR) had been sold to Yorkshire Buses in January 2023. However, it was back at Central Connect by 12 July. So it has either been re-acquired or was just on loan to Yorkshire Buses. It has remained in Central Connect livery.

Withdrawn Vehicle

Volkswagen Transporter T5 / Bluebird Tucana 1102 (YX10 AYF), which was only acquired from CT Plus in September 2022 and received Central Connect livery that month, was withdrawn c June 2023.

Services

In a surprise development Central Connect commenced operation of route 84B on 5 September 2023, funded by Hertsmere Borough Council, to replace the missing link between Potters Bar and Barnet from when Metroline withdrew their 84 route in April 2022. It does not follow the original 84 routing. **Below:** Euro 6 compliant 1612 (YX72 ONC) is passing Barnet Church on 11 September for the third of four times as the route double runs twice between High Barnet Underground Station and Barnet Hospital before returning to Potters Bar. **Owen Woodliffe**



Fleet Acquired by Vectare

A complete Central Connect fleet list was in EBM 696 (April 2022). (In the end 2102 in that fleet list was not received.) Since then there have been various acquisitions and disposals as reported in EBMs since, although we don't always receive news of disposals. Below is the fleet acquired by Vectare which is currently in service.

Type	Fleet Number	Registration Number	Notes
Scania K320 / Irizar	1018	JFZ 1018	
Wrightbus StreetLite	1201	CC10 BUS	
	1202	CC11 BUS	
Transbus Dart / Pointer	1301	KP02 PVO	Driver Trainer
ADL Enviro 200	1401	LX07 BYA	
	1402	LX07 BXV	
	1403	SN57 DWV	
	1404	SN57 DWZ	
	1405	LJ57 USU	
	1406	LJ58 AVE	1
ADL Enviro 200 / East Lancs Esteem	1409	LX09 AZL	
ADL Enviro 200	1410	KX08 HMF	
	1412	LK08 DWE	
	1413	YX60 DXY	
	1414	YX12 FPY	
	1415	YX12 DHM	
	1416	YX12 DHO	
	1417	ML62 OGY	
	1418	L8 XEL	
	1420	MX12 DZE	
ADL Enviro 200 MMC	1601	CC21 GAL	
	1602	CE21 GAL	
	1603	CC71 GAL	
	1604	CE71 GAL	
	1605	YX22 OKA	
	1606	YX22 OKB	
	1607	YX22 OKC	
	1608	YX22 OKD	
	1609	YX22 OKE	
	1610	YX72 ONA	
	1611	YX72 ONB	
	1612	YX72 ONC	
	1613	YX72 OND	
	1614	YX72 ONF	
Scania N230UD / OmniCity	2002	YP59 OEM	2
	2004	YP59 OES	
	2005	YP59 OEV	
	2008	YP59 OEO	
	2009	YP59 OET	
MetroDecker M1114	2101	CT21 GAL	

Notes

There is confusion about the actual fleet numbers of two vehicles:

1. LJ58 AVE is shown on Bustimes as 1407. It doesn't help that in photos it does not appear to be carrying a fleet number! However, in the April 2022 fleet list, 1406 was registered LJ58 AVE and 1407 was CC55 BUS. CC55 BUS was last reported as being stripped for spares in September 2022.

2. YP59 OEM is shown on Bustimes as 2001. It also doesn't help that it only appears to carry its old London United fleet number. However, in the April 2022 fleet list, 2001 was registered YP59 OEX (since withdrawn) and 2002 was OEM. OEM last reported as being in service on Bustimes on 1 August 2023, so it is possible it was not acquired, or not acquired for service, but there have been no reports of its disposal and it is still taxed.

Not included in the above list are the following vehicles which are no longer in service. However, there have been no reports of their disposal and so it is likely they were acquired as non-runners.

Optare Solo M850 Slimline 1001 (SGZ 2221). Removed from Bustimes in early September and untaxed since 11 September 2023.

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 1101 (CC04 GAL). Last reported as being in service on Bustimes on 14 May 2023 and is now SORN (Statutory Off Road Notice).

ADL Dart / East Lancs Esteem 1302 (PO56 JFE). Last reported as being in service on Bustimes on 20 June 2023 and tax expired on 15 September 2023.

ADL Enviro 200 1419 (L9 XEL). Last reported as being in service on Bustimes on 15 June 2023 and is now SORN.

The following all Scania N230UD / OmniCity:

2003 (YP59 OER). No longer on Bustimes. Last reported in service 16 November 2022 and now SORN.

2006 (YP59 OEU). No longer on Bustimes. Last reported in service February 2023 and now SORN.

2007 (YP59 OEN). No longer on Bustimes. Last reported parked out of service at North Weald in February 2023 and now SORN.

2010 (YP59 OEW). No longer on Bustimes. Last reported in service 13 October 2022 and now SORN.

We do not usually report on the coach operations of Galleon, but for completeness, the following were also part of the business acquired by Vectare: DX65 GAL, VDL FHD2 / VDL, C53FT, Shearings livery; SS71 GAL, Scania K410 / Higer, C57FT, Leger Holidays Silver Service livery; LU22 GAL, Scania K410 / Irizar, C31FT, Leger Holidays Luxuria livery; LX22 GAL, Scania K410 / Irizar, C31FT, Leger Holidays Luxuria livery; YS23 XFZ, Irizar i6s, Irizar, C49FLT, Shearings livery (new in June); partial open top Dennis Trident / Alexander ALX 400 X336 NNO in black Gangsters Tours livery.

Vehicles on Loan

Although, as stated above, Central Connect and the Vectare fleet are for the time being at least being operated as separate units, there has already been some vehicle movements between the two.

The following Vectare vehicles have been reported as operating on Central Connect routes:

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter / EVM Cityline RX72 TWP (19 September then from 4 October), RK23 TFF (14 & 15 September), RX23 TFK (from 20 September); Enviro 200 MMC SN16 OVR (from 23 September), YX16 OBS (from 12 September).

Conversely, from 4 October, Central Connect Enviro 200 MMC 1606 (YX22 OKB) has been reported as operating for Vectare in their East Midlands division.

Right: Central Connect Dart SLF / East Lancs Esteem 1302 (PO56 JFE) on route 9 at Braintree Bus Interchange on 16 January 2023 in the remnants of the 'Here East' livery from its Go Ahead London days, now with orange dots removed (compare with photo on page 21 of EBM 687). **John Podgorski**
This vehicle has not been in service since the takeover and is no longer taxed.



With thanks to John Card, John Podgorski, Nigel Turner, Owen Woodliffe and LOTS. Especial thanks to John Card for his help in compiling the fleet list.

Below: Vectare vehicles on hire to Central Connect. Mercedes-Benz Sprinter / EVM Cityline 208 (RX23 TFK) is seen at Bishop's Stortford on ECC route 324 to Stebbing on 25 September 2023. Enviro 200 MMC 321 (SN16 OVR) at Stansted Airport on ECC route 316 having arrived from Saffron Walden, also on 25 September. Both **Owen Woodliffe**



NIBS Scania N230UD / Olympus 515 (EU58 BFX) was transferred to Stephensons in September and repainted into their livery.

Galloway Volvo B7TL / East Lancs Millennium Vyking 702 (EX04 VKD) and 704 (PO54 ACY) were withdrawn in August and are at NIBS for storage.

Stephensons Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka 633 (YN55 NHC) was deroofed on 21 September at Clavering whilst on route 446, after it hit an overhanging tree. There were no serious injuries.

Volvo B10M / Plaxton Paragon coach 200 (X400 MTT) has been replaced at Boreham depot by Galloway's Volvo B9R / Caetano Levante 161 (1842 PP) for the contract to Colchester County High School, although 200 is currently retained as a back-up / reserve.

ADL Enviro 200 SN57 DXA, which had been acquired for spares only, has now gone for scrap. It has been replaced at the Boreham depot store shed by cannibalised ADL Mini Pointer Dart 406 (SN56 AYH) which was previously in the reserve fleet.

A couple of duties on Harlow routes 5 & 14 are being temporarily covered by NIBS buses and drivers (as illustrated last month), whilst Boreham is running most of 313/4 and Haverhill the 306 plus the remainder of 313/4. This is to balance staff requirements with availability of drivers.

There is always a degree of short term loans of NIBS vehicles to Stephensons and vice-versa; we do not routinely record these.

With thanks to the companies and John Podgorski.

Below: NIBS Enviro 200 450 (YX10 FFL) squeezing through the narrow part of Horndon-on-the-Hill on Friday 25 August 2023, a week before the village lost its bus service. **Nick Street**



Disposals

Mercedes-Benz 413CDI mini-coach MV53 GRZ (which was illustrated in EBM 707) has been sold to CJ Cars and Minibuses, Bailt, Flintshire.

Alexander Dennis Dart / Enviro 200 YX10 BFL has been sold to Turners of Great Barton.

Volvo Olympian / Alexander BIG 9210 has reverted back to N592 BRH and has gone to Shelton Motors for scrap.

Other News

Volvo Olympian / Alexander S246 YOO (which was illustrated in EBM 705) has been re-registered to BIG 8796.

ADL Enviro 200 AB10 PAN (ex YX10 BGO) was on loan to Dan's Travel, Stowmarket in September. It was used on school service 387, and the associated local bus services that were described in EBM 707, page 31. It was first noted on 7th but was back with Panther Travel on their services 18/118 on 29th.

With thanks to Adam Barham and Robert Appleton.

Other Operators

Roger A Smith

With thanks to Richard Delahoy and the PSV Circle.

SBC Leisure, Leigh-on-Sea

Not previously reported, SBC has SK22 BTE, an ADL E40D / Enviro 400 MMC H51/34F, ex Beestons, in all over white. It joins similar SK20 AUU, also ex Beestons, which was reported in EBM 702 and which is seen **below** passing St Paul's Cathedral on 11 September 2023. **Richard Delahoy**



London Bus Company, Northfleet

In EBM 707 it was reported that RMC1513 (513 CLT) had been sold from the Ensignbus Heritage Fleet to London Bus Company, Northfleet. It has now been repainted from red and gold to 1970s NBC green and white. It is seen **right** on route 339 on Sunday 24 September 2023 at North Weald Station. **Ian Ransom.**



Business B, North Weald

Routemaster RM1280 (280 CLT), of 1962 vintage, is here from Stagecoach East London.

Don's, Great Dunmow

DH61 DON, a Scania K400EB with Lahden C61FT body, reverted to its original registration of YT61 FFG and is now with Donald's Tours, Beetley, Norfolk.

Fords of Althorne

New is tri-axle Van Hool EX16H / Van Hool VN23 HOL, in metallic grey livery.

Hope Transportation, Harlow

LX70 BVW, a Treka B16FL bodied MB 514 CDI, is here from London Hire, Erith, Greater London.

Jackson, Bicknacre

Recently arrived here from Stewart, Aberfeldy, Perth and Kinross, is SP16 TAY, a Van Hool TX15 (C49FT). Meanwhile, EV06 BUS (ex BU06 CVA), a Mercedes-Benz 1836RL, C49FT, has gone to Franklin, Shard End, West Midlands.

Below: National Express Mercedes-Benz articulated BN20 MYG, a car park shuttle bus, at Stansted Airport on 23 September 2023. **Allan White**



Rear Cover Captions

Top: The Newman Family Metrobus M1 (THX 101S), new to London Transport, at the Gore Cross temporary bus station on Salisbury Plain on the occasion of the annual Imberbus running day on 19 August 2023, with Peter Newman driving. **Richard Delahoy**

Bottom: On pages 24-25 it was noted that Ipswich Buses Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka 60 (PJ54 YZT) had worked on route 92 during the summer holidays and into the autumn term. Here it is on the same route when in its previous livery, having just come over Manningtree level crossing on the 1425 from Ipswich to Manningtree on 8 March 2018. **Robert Appleton**

This Page

Further to last month, here are two more photos from the Lodge Open Day on 20 August 2023, both taken by **Richard Delahoy**. Lodge's own Bedford OB LTA 752 and two visiting late model Bristol MW / ECWs, former Bristol HHW 452D and former Red & White JAX 117E.





ESSEX BUS MAGAZINE Issue 714 October 2023
Reporting the Essex bus scene since 1964