

Essex Bus Magazine

Current news and historical features
Issue 727 November 2024



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

www.essexbus.org.uk



fb.me/essexbus

The many colours of
Enviro 400 33750
(SN12 AOK) with First
Essex

New in Urban livery in 2012 for
London Olympics shuttles,
33750 has now been repainted
three times. Details on page
12.

In First West of England 'Excel'
livery on 23 May 2022, its
second day in service with First
Essex, at Hadleigh. With an
ADL badge above the
registration.



First day in service in green
Essex Bus livery, 27 June 2022,
after repaint by TVS,
Laindon. ADL badge removed.



After another repaint at TVS,
this time to the new corporate
livery, second day in service in
purple and grey, 15 October
2024.



All taken at Belton Way West,
Leigh-on-Sea on route 21 to
Canvey Newlands.
All **John G Lidstone**

Essex Bus Magazine the journal of the Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

Issue 727

November 2024



Front Cover

Ipswich Buses 62 (PJ54 YZV), a Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka, about to depart from Colchester Road, Manningtree on 10 October 2024, working 1520 92 to East Bergholt High School and Ipswich.

Robert Appleton

Above & Right: Happy Halloween

People say that Christmas starts earlier and earlier each year, but that certainly seems to have been the case for Halloween this year.

Decorations were up, and stores had displays of pumpkins, at the start of October. And First Essex were early too, with this photo taken on 7 October. Enviro 200 MMC 67197 (SN66 WKU), still in black ex P&R livery, on route S10 in Colchester Bus Station, with the display alternating between this and the normal route number / destination.

Adam Kelleher



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Subscriptions

The calendar year subscription for 2025 is £29 for
printed copies sent by post, or £20 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
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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 728

Reports to Sub-Editors **16 November**
Sub-Editor drafts to Editor **22 November**
Dispatch by Printers on or before **30 November**
The last two dates are fixed, but late news can be sent
up to 23rd 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.

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Group Notices

Membership Renewals for 2025

A massive thank you to all those members who responded immediately to the renewal notices sent out with last month's magazine, and a particular thanks to those who have included a donation with their subscription. More than half of the membership had already renewed as this issue went to press. For those that haven't yet responded, there were details in the last issue and the renewal form was enclosed then. The easiest way to renew is simply to pay the appropriate subscription (£29 for paper copies sent by post, £20 for pdf copies sent by e-mail) by bank transfer to Santander 09-06-66, 42118196, a/c 'Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group (EBEG)', or post a cheque payable to 'EBEG' to me - address on page 2.

Richard Delahoy, Membership Secretary / Treasurer

Group Meetings

These are being held on **Saturday afternoons** at **The Quaker Meeting House**, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, CM1 2QL, which is a five-ten minute walk from Chelmsford Bus & Railway Stations. Doors open at 1400 for a 1430 start, ending at 1630. 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.

9 November	Robert Appleton - Cheshire and North Wales 1984 - 2002.
14 December	Richard Delahoy - 20 years ago.
11 January 2025	Tony Francis - From Camberwell to Westminster via Reigate. A career in transport and lessons learnt. (Postponed from 12 October.)

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.

Group Meetings Organiser

Due to a change in personal circumstances, our Chelmsford Meetings Organiser (Ian Ransom) will be standing down from the role, with effect from 31 December 2024, so we are seeking a volunteer, to take over.

The requirements of the role are:

Arrange programme of monthly meetings

Liaise with the location to book facilities

Book speakers (either advertise, or contact directly)

Set up at location (seats, laptop, projectors and screens, you will need to provide a laptop)

Store the Group's projection equipment and transport to & from the meeting venue (so access to a car or van required).

Provide refreshments (the group covers the cost)

Welcome speaker and audience

Ensure location is clean and tidy at the end of the meeting.

If you are interested please contact me, details on page 2.

Saturday afternoon seems to be the preferred option for meetings, but we wouldn't rule out retuning to midweek evenings (or afternoons) if that suited a potential organiser better.

Unfortunately, if there isn't a volunteer, we will be unable to continue holding meetings and the 11 January 2025 meeting will be the last one (excluding AGMs). Members of the existing committee are unable to take on this role so it is down to the membership.

Ian Ransom, Chair

Buses Magazines

Member Andrew Fieldsend has most issues of Buses Illustrated / Buses from January 1967 to December 2008 in good condition which he would like to pass on free of charge to a good home. Delivery in the Chelmsford area may be possible. Would any interested member please contact him on fieldsend54@gmail.com.

The Running Card

Owen Woodliffe

The following events have been advertised.

Saturday 2 November: Aldenham Transport Spectacular. Allum House, Allum Lane, Elstree, WD6 3PT. 1000-1600. £4 entrance.

Sunday 3 November: Regent Running Day. Ipswich Transport Museum, Cobham Road IP3 9JD. 1100-1600.

Saturday 16 November: Enfield Transport Bazaar. St Stephens Church Hall, Village Road, EN1 2EY. 1100-1430.

Sunday 17 November: Christmas Craft Market. Canvey Island Transport Museum, 105 Point Road. 1030-1600.

Sunday 8 December: Christmas Cracker. Ipswich Transport Museum, Cobham Road IP3 9JD.

Saturday / Sunday 7/8, 14/15, 21/22 December: Ride the Lights. East Anglian Transport Museum, Carlton Colville NR33 8BL. 1500-1900.

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

Appeal for Photos - the Southend X1 Story

I am in the advanced stages of writing a book about the story of the Southend to London X1 coach service, including its successors, for publication early in 2025. I am still looking for a small number of photos to illustrate specific obscure aspects of the story. Can anyone help with any of the following please?

- Reading Transport bus or Southend coach at Heathrow during the period of joint operation (i.e. October 1980 to May 1982)
- Reading Transport Scania Metropolitan double-decker on X1 during period of joint operation (not a Metrobus or Titan)
- International Coach Lines very short lived commuter coaches from south Essex, October / November 1980
- Highways Coaches Canvey to London commuter service (mid 1980s)
- Stephenson's East Lancs rebodied Volvo B10M double-decker MIL 8340 actually in use on the London service
- Any Stephenson's coach in service at Canary Wharf
- Swallow Coaches vehicles actually in service on their X1/X3/X10 services, 2008/9
- Snowdrop Travel X1 service (with minicoaches), 2009-14
- A very obscure operator with a minibus, Drive With Neo, 2014-6
- Ensignbus's Boxing Day 2018 X1 service Southend Airport to Upminster and the Boxing Day 2019 follow up, numbered X2.

Pictures need to be of high quality suitable for publication. If on slides or prints, I can arrange scanning if you are able to give me access to the originals, alternatively jpg files can be sent by e-mail or We Transfer. Contact me at richard@signal-training.com please.

Richard Delahoy

Harlow Bus Station Redevelopment

Further to EBM 721 and 722, where we reported that the bus station office / toilet block and the footbridge from Terminus House / car park, which crossed the bus station, had been demolished by the end of May this year, work seems to have paused on the redevelopment of the bus station.

However, in early October it was announced that from Monday 14 October, Post Office Road car park would be closed off to prepare for its transformation into a temporary bus station. This is to allow work to recommence on the new transport interchange which will replace the existing bus station, whilst minimising disruption to bus services.

Work on transforming the Post Office Road car park is due to take around three months and will include crowning (not removal) of some of the trees in the area to create space for buses and widening of the entrance and exit to allow for bus movement. The temporary bus station will include eight bays with shelters, eight layover bays, new pedestrian pathways, new cycle stands for 40 bicycles, a new kiosk and waiting area at John Robson House, improved lighting and CCTV provision.

The temporary arrangement will be in place for 18 months.

Follow Ups to EBM Extra 7

Allan White writes:

On the far right of Malcolm Gilloch's photo on page 26 of three VRs by the salt mountain at Walthamstow is part of a fourth, in advertising livery. This was 3205 (OBD 841P), also a regular on route 359. The reason I remember this is that I photographed this bus when it broke down opposite my office on 2 December 1991. This gave me the opportunity to see that the advertisement was also repeated on the roof of the bus. Not long after this, on 31 January 1992, Thamesway operation of the 359 ceased; 3205 was one of the VRs on the route during the last week of operation. 3205 was sold to Western National for spares only in May 1992, then went to PVS, Carlton for scrap in November that year.

My office was on the east side of High Road, Tottenham, close to the junction with Lordship Lane and Lansdowne Road. Lordship Lane can be seen at the top left of the photo. The bus is parked outside the old offices of the 'Tottenham and Edmonton Gas Light and Coke Company'. It was built at the beginning of the 20th Century and now has a preservation order on it. When I was working it was being used by Haringey Council for various purposes and I expect it still is.

[Part correction to the caption in EBM Extra 7 - the 19 VRs came from Milton Keynes Citybus, not United Counties, although they had been new to United Counties. Only 12 of the 19 (3200-18), not all of them, were allocated to Ponders End, 3205 and 3207-17.]



Duncan Law writes:

The article on Eastern National at Walthamstow was great, and you even showed our (Waltham Forest Council) Bristol K6B which was on the disposal list at that time. She was the last of eight which we had operated. She was repainted into Tilling Green later and took part in the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations locally and more widely, before purchase by the Staff Transport Society. John Bonser and myself set this up and Malcolm Gilloch was

associated with this. We are still good friends and keep in touch. LHY is still with us, but the Staff Transport Association is no more.

David Tomlin writes:

I would like to complement all involved in the latest Essex Bus Magazine Extra and in particular the item about Vange Depot Basildon before Cherrydown.

It was an excellent piece on the social history of Vange Bull at a time when Basildon was being developed (very nostalgic). My wife used to live in Rashley Drive, which appears on the sketched map on page 9. Her property was one of the many compulsorily purchased and sadly Rashley Drive disappeared to make way for all the new housing.

I moved to Basildon in November 1960 and remember going along to Cherrydown to look at this new bus garage and the fleet of LD, KSW and old K type buses.

Little was I to know that a few years later, on a summer morning, I would be walking along Cherrydown to the garage for an 0433 sign on.

727 for EBM 727



Above: Carters Coach Services 427 (G727 XDL) Leyland Olympian with Leyland body new to Southern Vectis in 1990. Acquired from Damory Coaches, a subsidiary of Wilts & Dorset, in 2014. In Damory Coaches two tone blue livery. On 10 September 2014, 427 was on Long Road, Lawford, working 0818 Ardleigh - East Bergholt High School 193. It had been numbered 4727 with Damory, Carters merely removed the first 7 from the fleet number. G727 XDL was sold for preservation in March 2016. It had been new to Southern Vectis as 727 in June 1990.

Robert Appleton

Arriva Remembrance Buses

Arriva's Enviro 400 6458 (SN58 ENX) received Remembrance branding in October 2019 when it was at Southend. It was named 'Charles Benford', after a World War 2 veteran from Leigh-on-Sea who passed away in July of that year, just two weeks after celebrating his 100th birthday. It moved to Ware in April 2023. It was replaced at Southend as a Remembrance bus by Enviro 400 MMC 6506 (SN66 WJA) in October 2023, also named 'Charles Benford'.

6458 was illustrated on the front cover of EBN 667 (November 2019) and in EBM 709 (May 2023) when it was at Ware. 6506 was illustrated in EBM 715 (November 2013).

In October 2024, 6458 returned to Essex, now at Colchester (see page 24). It is seen in Colchester Bus Station on 25 October 2024. Both **Gareth Jones**



1 September 2024

7 (Sch only) Grays, King Edward Drive - St Cleres Academy, Stanford-le-Hope **Keane Travel**. Closed schools contract, withdrawn.

2 September

717 (Daily) Ipswich, Cardinal Park - Stansted Airport **National Express**. Further to last month, this service has been registered since 7 October as a limited stop stage service between Marks Tey Railway Station and Ipswich, Cardinal Park.

12 October

150 (Daily) Becontree Heath Leisure Centre - Chigwell Row, Lambourne Road **Arriva London**. New TfL tender introduced, with a revised timetable. In common with a number of TfL routes, different timetables apply on Friday, compared to the M-Th service.

370 (Daily) Romford, Mercury Gardens - Lakeside Bus Station **Arriva London**. New TfL tender introduced, with a revised timetable and increased frequency. Also in common with a number of TfL routes, different timetables apply on Friday, compared to the M-Th service.

28 October

61 (M-F morning / early afternoon only) Southend - Fossetts Park B&Q **Stephensons**. Reduced from half-hourly to hourly (to accommodate new **62**) and retimed.

62 (M-F morning / early afternoon only) Southend - Southchurch - Southend circular **Stephensons**. NEW SERVICE, from Southend via 61 route to Bournemouth Park Road then one way circular via Central Avenue, Hamstel Road, Southchurch Road back to Southend. Hourly, interworks with 61. Funded with BSIP+ funding from the UK Government via Southend-on-Sea City Council. Provides a very limited replacement for the former 24 service via Central Avenue.

3 November

1 (M-S) Harlow Bus Station circular via Sumners **Arriva**. Revised timetable for some early morning and early evening journeys.

2/3 (M-S) Harlow Bus Station circular via Staple Tye **Arriva**. Revised timetable.

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

22 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Canvey, Leigh Beck **First Essex**. Minor changes to M-F afternoon peak journeys.

25/825 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Southend Travel Centre **First Essex**. Revised peak hour timetable on M-F and morning / late afternoon on Saturday.

31/331/332 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Burnham Clock Tower **First Essex**. Minor changes to M-F evening peak hour service and revised timetable on Saturday mornings.

37 (Daily) Warley Eagle Way circular via Pilgrims Hatch **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-F afternoons.

42A (M-F, Su) Bishop's Stortford Interchange / Takeley Four Ashes - Chelmsford Bus Station / Wood Street **First Essex**. On M-F revised timetable and section of route between Chelmsford Bus Station and Wood Street withdrawn.

59 (M-S) Harlow Bus Station - Chelmsford Anglia Ruskin University **Arriva**. Revised timetable.

70/170 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Braintree, Marks Farm **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

71/371 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Colchester Bus Station **First Essex**. Minor timetable changes on M-S and the M-F 1825 Chelmsford Bus Station - Chelmer Village withdrawn.

86 (Daily) Colchester Norman Way Schools / Bus Station - West Mersea High Street **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

87 (Daily) Great Horkeley, Malvern Way - Brightlingsea, Victoria Place **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

88/A/B (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Halstead, Conies Road **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

100 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Lakeside Bus Station **First Essex**. Revised peak hour timetable on M-F and morning / late afternoon on Saturday.

200 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Grays Bus Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

300 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Chelmsford Bus Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

308 (M-S) Bishop's Stortford Interchange - Thorley Park Sainsburys **Arriva**. Service withdrawn (see **511**)

311 (M-S) Bishop's Stortford Interchange - Thorley Fields **Arriva**. Service withdrawn (see **511**).

320 (M-F) Colchester Railway Station / Bus Station - Great Notley, Bakers Lane **First Essex**. Revised timetable, with a reduced service (no changes to **X20**).

336 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - South Woodham Ferrers Asda **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

351 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Warley, Eagle Way. Revised timetable on M-F afternoons, with the 1858 from Brentwood Railway Station withdrawn.

511 (M-S) Bishops Park Tesco - St James Park, Beaumont Avenue **Arriva**. NEW SERVICE. Generally every 30 minutes during daytimes. This replaces current services **308/311** and serves new housing developments in Bishop's Stortford.

724 (Daily) Harlow Bus Station - Heathrow Central Bus Station **Arriva**. Revised timetable.

B2 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Laindon, Fenton Way **First Essex**. Minor changes to early evening journeys on Saturday.

B4 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Pitsea Tesco **First Essex**. Revised peak hour timetable on M-F and morning / late afternoon on Saturday.

C1 (Daily) Galleywood, West Lawn - Broomfield Hospital / Great Waltham, Warners Farm **First Essex**. Revised timetable. M-F off peak and on Saturday, reduced from 15 minute frequency to 20 minutes.

C2 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Broomfield Hospital **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

C3 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - North Melbourne, Wickfield Ash **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

C4 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Writtle, Lodge Road **First Essex**. Revised timetable with M-F peak service reduced from every 15 minutes to every 20 minutes.

C5 (Daily) Chelmsford Railway Station - Moulsham Lodge, Heath Drive **First Essex**. Revised timetable with M-F peak service reduced from every 15 minutes to every 20 minutes.

C7 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Galleywood, Keene Hall **First Essex**. Revised early morning and evening timetable on M-S.

C8 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Beaulieu Park **First Essex**. Revised early morning and evening timetable on M-S.

C10 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Channels, Brassie Wood **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S, with an hourly evening service introduced.

C11 (Daily) Chelmsford Railway Station - North Springfield **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S, with a reduced peak service on M-F morning.

S1 (Daily) Colchester Highwoods - Wivenhoe Railway Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable with minor changes to peak and early evening journeys on M-F.

S2 (Daily) Colchester Highwoods - Stanway Sainsburys **First Essex**. Revised timetable with minor changes to peak and early evening journeys on M-F.

S4 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Greenstead Library **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

S5 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Greenstead Library **First Essex**. Revised timetable on Saturdays.

S6 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Shrub End, Hazell Avenue **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

S7 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - St Michaels, Baronswood Way **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

S8 (Daily) Colchester General Hospital / High St - Monkwick, Gosfield Road **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

S9 (Daily) Colchester Railway Station / High St - Rowhedge, Heath Road **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

S10 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Colchester General Hospital **First Essex**. Revised timetable on M-S.

25 December

816 Ipswich Cardinal Park - London Victoria Coach Station, via Colchester Bus Station and Stansted Airport. Two journeys each way (0800 & 1530 ex Ipswich, 1200 & 2000 from Victoria). Operates Christmas Day only.

With thanks to Richard Delahoy.

Below: A change from this month 63 years ago.

EASTERN NATIONAL

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC
Commencing SUNDAY, 12th NOVEMBER, 1961

The Service at present operated by Mr. G. DIGBY between COLCHESTER and WEST BERGHOLT will be taken over by "EASTERN NATIONAL"

Existing Service 76 (COLCHESTER—WEST & EAST MERSEA) will be extended to WORMINGFORD incorporating the above with revised time table

For full details, please see Leaflet No. 7999, obtainable (free) at any of the Company's Offices

ENL AD. 80/11/61Head Office: NEW WHITE STREET, CHELMSFORD. Phone EN1 1411(ENL AD. 80/11/61)

Adam Kelleher

Vehicle Not Acquired

It was reported in EBM 722 that StreetLites 47461 and 47462 were acquired from First Glasgow, collected from Caledonia depot on 2 June 2024. However, in EBM 723 it was noted that 47462 failed on the journey and remained in Scotland. It still has not come to Essex so we are going to record this as not acquired unless and until circumstances change.

Acquired Vehicle

67406 SN13 CKC SFD1C8AR2DGG30791 D302/6 B41F 06/13 First Manchester

E30D / Enviro 300. Acquired from First Eastern Counties at Ipswich on 20 October 2024. In Ipswich Reds livery. It entered service on route C1 on 22nd.

67406 had moved from First Manchester to First Eastern Counties in 2017 as a spare bus for the Ipswich Park & Ride service 800, Copdock - Town Centre - Martlesham (which is mainly operated by seven Enviro 300s in a dedicated blue P&R livery). According to Bustimes, it last operated with FEC, on route 800, on 19 October.

Note: First Essex also have an SN13 registered Enviro 300 numbered 67805. First Bus started numbering Transbus Enviro 300s at 67600-67604 then jumped to 67631 for ADL Enviro 300s. They got as far as 67894 (with a few odd gaps). 67901-4 were then used for First Essex's Enviro 350Hs, so the Enviro 300s then went back to 67401-39. Some of the later vehicles in the original sequence were newer than those in the 67401 sequence due to blocks of fleet numbers being allocated in advance.

Below: 67406 having arrived at Westway Depot, Chelmsford on 20 October. **Jack Benee**
Further photos on page 17.



Vehicles on Loan

From Ensignbus Sales Stock

Trident / Enviro 400 33590 (SN09 CFD) and 33593 (SN09 CFG) arrived at Quayside Depot, Colchester on 2 October 2024. New to First London with the same fleet numbers but with DN prefix. Moved to Metroline in June 2013 (fleet numbers TE1730 and TE1733 respectively) when First Bus withdrew from operating in London. Sold to Ensignbus May 2020. Later to Igbus of Royal Wootton Bassett, all white livery. Back with Ensignbus by June 2024 and converted to single door, H41/31F, and LED blinds fitted. They both remain all white. They have standard First interiors but with Metroline moquette. Both entered service on 4 October. See photos on page 15.

From Ensignbus Fleet

E40D / Enviro 400 MMC 132 (34432, YX66 WLH) arrived at Quayside Depot, Colchester on 1 October 2024 mainly for use on route X20 (although it has been used on other routes), covering for accident damaged Essex Airliner 67189. It entered service the next day. It had previously been on loan from 7 July 2023 to 4 January 2024 to cover for accident damaged 36843 on route X30. It has been repainted since it was previously with First Essex.

Below: 132 having arrived at Quayside on 1 October. **David Edwards**



Allocation Changes

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

Period 6 2024/25 (25 August - 28 September) additional to EBM 726

32526 CR (oos)-Disposal

Period 7 2024/25 (29 September - 26 October)

32547 CR-CR (oos), 32673 CR-CR (oos), 33549 BN-BN (oos), 33590 FG-CR (loan), 33593 FG-CR (loan), 33657 CF (oos)-CF, 33678 CR (oos)-CR, 33750 HH (oos)-HH, 34432 FG-CR (loan), 36217 HH-HH (oos), 37037 CR-CR (oos), 47697 CR-HH, 63370 BN (oos)-BN, 63465 HH-HH (oos), 67192 BN-BN (oos), 67406 FG-CF

Disposals

September 2024: 32526 to Wigley, Carlton.

Repaints

Two, on the face of it, rather strange repaints this month. The first two repaints out of Essex Bus green into new corporate livery.

33750 at TVS. This only received Essex Bus green in June 2022. It has been repainted after suffering upper deck nearside roof corner damage from a tree on 13 August this year (why this required another full repaint is not known). It returned to service on 14 October without vinyls.

This is actually the third livery it has worn since being acquired in April 2022 (and fourth in total), it entered service with First Essex in First West of England orange Excel livery. See photos on inside front cover.

63064, probably also at TVS. This only received Essex Bus green in July 2022. It returned to service on 25 October, also without vinyls, but retaining its 'Essex Bus' fleet name at the bottom of the windscreen and its 'pay contactless' strap line on side cove panels.

It has also had three liveries whilst with First Essex (and also four in total), it entered service after acquisition in February 2022 in Southampton City Red (as illustrated in EBM 695 and EBM 697 supplement).

Meanwhile most vehicles of eight to 12 years old have never had one repaint, let alone three.

However, a more conventional repaint was 33684 from Urban livery to new corporate livery (with vinyls), back in service on 23 October.

Next Stop Announcements

On 30 March 2023, the Department for Transport introduced regulations that will require almost every local bus or coach service to provide audible announcements and visual displays identifying the route and direction, each upcoming stop, and the beginning of any diversions. At the time of the announcement there was patchy provision across the country, with only 30% of buses outside London providing this information, the lack of which can be a major barrier for disabled people wanting to travel by bus or coach.

Clear audible and visible information also benefits non-disabled passengers, helping those who are travelling on an unfamiliar bus route alight at their correct stop. The Audio-Visual aids will include ensuring audio is available through induction loop systems, and all new vehicles introduced after October 2024 must also include visible information which can be seen by a wheelchair user when travelling in a rearward facing wheelchair space. All vehicles registered after October 2019 were required to have displays and announcements by 1 October 2024, with a deadline of October 2026 for all remaining vehicles.

For First Essex, the October 2024 deadline only affects a few vehicles, 69-registered Airlink Scania 36837-43, 22-registered short StreetLites 47696-7 and 72-registered long StreetLites 63454-66. In order to minimise for now the number of depots having to have this facility fitted, the two short StreetLites are due to move from Colchester to Hadleigh (47697 has gone, but 47696 currently remains at CR) to join the long StreetLites there. The Scania are based at Chelmsford. Equipment has been fitted at Ensignbus, Purfleet.

Obviously the 55 new electric vehicles due for Basildon at the end of next year (see EBM 720) will have this equipment from new, and some older buses will have left the fleet by October 2026, but other vehicles still in the fleet by that date will also have to be retrofitted.

A ride on Hadleigh's 63466 on route 22 on 12 October showed the system to be working. Many buses (not all) have a narrow screen at the front, above the gangway. On 63466 this was being used; the screen has two lines with the text orange LEDs on black. The top line normally reads "The Next Stop Is:" with the bottom line showing the name of the stop, preceded by the area, e.g. "Pitsea, Station Road". If the bus was at the bus stop for a while whilst loading, the top line changed to "This Stop Is:".

The bottom line was fixed if the bus stop name fitted the space available, but scrolling if longer. At times, the top line changed to "Welcome Aboard!" with the second line then being "This is a service 22 to Canvey Island". The audio announcements, in a female voice, generally mirrored the text, but often shortened, e.g. just "Station Road", no "Pitsea", and no "a" or "Island" in the service description.

Around the Depots

(All vehicles listed below allocated to relevant depot. All dates October 2024 except where stated.)

Colchester

Further to last month, on loan from First Cymru 47679 remains at Colchester and returned to service on 22 October. StreetLite 63341 has received a light blue based super rear advert for Colchester Institute. Enviro 400 33730 had its super rear advert for Seaworld, Weymouth removed by early October (see photo on page 16).

News of the Harwich routes (27 September-25 October).

On Monday to Friday schooldays, services 102/104 were normally worked by eight single-deckers, with inter-workings on services 86, 88B, 320, 71/371, S4, S5, S6.

A fairly typical allocation, on 1 October was 47461, 47630, 63329, 63330, 63331, 63334, 69516, 69518.

On 30 September, it was rare to see Airlink liveried 34423 on 0720 Harwich - Colchester 104, in between its duties on X20. This was a prelude to more double-deckers working on 102/104:

0720 Harwich - Colchester 104: 33682 (9th), 37140 (10th), 33672 (14th), 33688 (16th), 37136 (17th), 33718 (18th), 37139 (21st), 33825 (22nd), 33686 (24th). The bus off this service then worked as required, often on S1, S2, or S4.

Working off 320, 1720 Colchester - Harwich 104 & 1900 Harwich - Colchester 102 also saw some double-deckers: 33681 (7th), 33682 (11th), 37016 (16th), 37613 (17th), 33692 (24th), 32672 (25th). Other double-deckers working part day duties on 104 were: 33663 (8th), 33590 (11th), 33669 (18th), 33674 (22nd).

The only double-deckers that spent a full day on 104 working from 0640 Harwich - Colchester Norman Way Schools through to 1910 Colchester - Mistley were 33669 (17th), and 33668 (25th). The most unusual workings were the late Saturday journeys on 102: 2035 ex Colchester, 2215 ex Harwich, 2335 ex Colchester worked by 33684 (5th) and 33670 (12th).

The two ADL Enviro 200 MMCs currently in service at Colchester also worked on 102/104: 67190, in Airlink livery, on 9th, 67197, still in black livery, on 27 September, 2, 4, 12, 13, 17 October.

Chelmsford

33714 (19th) and 33730 (26th) non-MMC Enviro 400s on X30.

44915 on 351/37/80A/80C (29 September).

67750 an unusual single-decker on school route 620 (2nd).

DS69148 on driver training at Brentwood Station (1st).

Basildon

From c19 October, there is no parking for staff cars at the depot as it begins to be prepared for the electric buses due towards the end of next year. Parking has been secured in a car park across the road.

33412 (8th), 33507 (7th), 33545 (15th) double-deckers on X10 shorts.

Hadleigh

Green Enviro 400s 34453 and 34456 have received white based super rear adverts for Oatly milk (a dairy alternative).

With thanks to Robert Appleton, Stephen Barham, Jack Bennee, David Edwards, David Hewitt, John Lidstone, Gareth Norris, John Podgorski, Derek Stebbing, Rob Webb, Robert West, Bustimes, Bus Lists on the Web, Facebook, Essex Buses Google group and Terminus.

First Essex News in Pictures

Enviro 400 33688 (SN12 AEL) turning out of Birchwood Road, Langham, on 11 September 2024 working 1545 East Bergholt High School - Colchester St Andrews Gardens school contract 694. This contract moved from Heddingham to First Essex from 4 September following retendering by Essex CC. It has been extended from Langham to start / finish at St Andrews Gardens in Colchester.

Robert Appleton

The oldest vehicle, and the last 54 registered vehicle, in service, 32547 (SF54 OSK) on route S2 at Colchester Bus Station on 7 October 2024. It ran for the last time on 12th when its MOT ran out.

Adam Kelleher

For a while now, Volvo B7TLs are being withdrawn from service once their MOTs run out. 37037 (YJ06 XLC) last ran in service on 10 October 2024 before its MOT expired. It is seen at Highwoods on route S2 three days earlier. Behind it is StreetLite 63328 (SK65 PXJ) on the same route. However, as we went to print, 37037 was being examined in the workshop at Quayside and there was the possibility it may get a new MOT and return to service. An update will be given next month.

Adam Kelleher



On loan from Ensignbus

33593 (SN09 CFG) in Maldon High Street on route 75 on 5 October 2024.

Gareth Jones



33590 (SN09 CFD) having just returned from a route 50 journey from Layer-de-la-Haye, in Colchester Bus Station on 4 October 2024.

Derek Stebbing



This nearside view of 33593 illustrates the white window pillars around the window which replaced the middle door, as opposed to black around the other windows. Route S1 to Wivenhoe leaving Highwoods on 7 October 2024.

Robert Appleton



The first single-decker in new corporate livery at Colchester, StreetLite 47630 (SN15 ADU) at the bus station on route S4 on 24 September 2024. It had transferred from Hadleigh the previous day.

Robert Appleton

Photos of this bus at Mardens (in Bee Line yellow), at Basildon Bus Station and at Southend Travel Centre were in EBMs 722, 723 & 724 respectively.



Super Read Adverts

StreetLite 47658 (SN15 AEY) parked up in a kneeling position at Colchester Bus Station on 7 October 2024. It has a super rear advert for Creffield Lodge dentist.

Adam Kelleher



As reported last month, 33730 (SN12 AMK) was acquired with this super rear advert for Sea Life, Weymouth, as seen on route 170 at Braintree Bus Interchange on 27 September 2024. Sadly, this attractive advert (albeit with no connection to Essex) was removed over the following weekend.

John Podgorski



Recently acquired Enviro 300 67406 (SN13 CKC).

67406 when with First Eastern Counties in original Urban livery in Dogs Head Street, Ipswich, on 25 May 2018, on local service 61 Town Centre - Greenwich, which competed with Ipswich Buses. Competing against Ipswich Buses was not a success, service 61 was later withdrawn.

Robert Appleton



67406 later received Ipswich Reds livery. On 20 July 2021, it was leaving the Turban Centre at Woodbridge on service 65 Rendlesham - Ipswich, which still runs today, part of the Ipswich Reds network.

Robert Appleton



67406 in its first week of service with First Essex, on route C1 at Chelmsford Bus Station on 25 October 2024. 'Ipswich Red' fleet names have been removed.

William Morrison



Acquired Vehicles

Further to EBM 717 and an update in EBM 725, another update on the four former Go Ahead London Enviro 200s SE143/4/65/66 (YX61 BXL/M/DVP/R) which were acquired last autumn. Pictures are online of the completed SE166, which was done at Plymouth, but there continues to be an issue getting it back into service after the conversion to single door due to recertification. SE165 also went to Plymouth for conversion to single door, but SE143 has been reported as with Birmingham Busworks. As Birmingham Busworks converts centre doors and also sells buses, it is awaited to hear whether these are finally being completed or if they are being sold on.

Withdrawn Vehicles

457	AU61 AVK Scania OmniLink	Withdrawn at Clacton
464	NK56 KJV Scania OmniCity	Withdrawn at Clacton

Both vehicles are now spares donors for other similar vehicles in the fleet.

Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 521/523/524/525 all appear to be out of use with 523/525 removed from the fleet list.

Significant Allocations

529	CN - Konectbus	by 22 October
640	KN - CN	by 26 September
642	CN - Konectbus	by 3 September
874	KN - SY	by 12 September

Fleet News

On loan VDL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 2 540 (LX58 CWG) performed on the 63 Colchester to William Harris Way service on 12 October with the vehicle and driver from Clacton, usually a Kelvedon duty. Volvo B7TL / President 587 (PL51 LDU) was still active during October seeing service from Sible Hedingham. Recently on loan B7TL / Gemini 529 (LX06 EAC) mainly worked the 5/A Clacton circular service with late duties on the 74/76 services. It is seen **below** entering Jackson Road Clacton at 1205 on 7 October 2024 (**Mark Lloyd**). It operated in full dual door mode, complete with the central door closing alarm from London service days. Unfortunately the ticket machine on 529 during 7 October was not accepting card payments but was showing fleet number 529 on the tickets when purchased with cash only. However, by 22 October, 529 had migrated north to Konectbus and was recorded working on Konectbus services 8A, 5B and 30A. It joins Enviro 400 641 (LK08 FLL) which has been working with Konectbus since 3 September and was still in Norfolk at the time of writing this report.

Vehicles off road during late September / early October: 292, 502, 521, 524, 537, 832, 871.

With thanks to Dave Arnold, John Podgorski and the Hedingham website.





Above: As reported last month, long term off road Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipse Urban 470 (EU05 CLJ) returned to service during September 2024. On 24 September, 470 was leaving Braintree Bus Interchange on service 89 to Halstead, Sible Hedingham and Great Yeldham.

Below: As also reported last month, ex Go Ahead North West Enviro 200 249 (LX13 CZC) has been refurbished and repainted. It is seen on layover at Colchester Bus Station on 7 October 2024. The blue moquette on the seats is standard for Hedingham's refurbishments. Both **Robert Appleton**



Disposals

Further to EBM 721, Enviro 200 MMC 333 (YX22 OKC) is now with Red Rose Travel, Aylesbury (joining former 331, 332, 334 and 336 there) and similar 338 (YX72 ONC) is now with The Big Lemon (by late August 2024).

With thanks to LOTS.



Above: A bespoke service for the NHS is a staff shuttle for Royal Papworth Hospital, Cambridge to Waterbeach Barracks. This consists of two early, one evening and two late journeys. Mini Enviro 200 MMC 363 (Y24 HBG) has worked from route 36 on 24 September 2024 for the 1830 departure from the Cambridge Biomedical Campus with the fading sun lighting the all-glass futuristic AstraZeneca building in the background.

Below: Central Connect have expanded by obtaining contracts in neighbouring counties being worked by ex-Arriva London Enviro 400s (see EBM 726). New school services are 812 (Gamlingay via Potton to Bassingbourn Village College) and 813 (Meldreth via Royston to Bassingbourn Village College). Both routes have a PVR of one and are scheduled for one journey in each direction on college days. 586 (LJ59 LYC) is at Royston, still with dual doors and in Arriva London red livery and fleet number, on 24 September 2024. Both **Owen Woodliffe**





Above: Fleet liveried Enviro 200 MMC 315 (YX22 OHB) in Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, on Sandon Park & Ride on 10 October 2024. **Andrew Fieldsend**



Robert Appleton

The new school term started at East Bergholt High School and Holbrook Academy on 4 September 2024. From that date, the one all day duty on Ipswich - Manningtree 92 and the two all day duties on Ipswich - Colchester 93/A reverted to operation by the three Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekkas 60/61/62 (PJ54 YVT/U/V). See photo on front cover. The new to Network Colchester Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka 63 (YN06 TFZ) normally works on school service 615 between Ipswich Chantry Estate and Holbrook Academy, so is not normally seen in Essex, but on 17 September 63 it spent a whole day on 93/A.

The second bus required, for 1740 Ipswich - Manningtree 92 & 1830 return, is a Scania OmniCity working off Suffolk One Sixth Form College - Ipswich 997.

The third bus required, for 1645 Ipswich - Colchester 93 & 1810 return is a single-decker working off Shotley - Ipswich 97/98. Normally this is an ADL Enviro 200, but of note was the use of 86 (YX63 GXY) on 5 September. This is an 11.3m long Enviro 200 with B40F seating. This and sister 84 (YX63 GX5) were acquired from Nottingham City Transport earlier in 2024 and both are operating in overall white livery. Also used on these journeys were Mercedes Citaros 153 (BF65 HVT) on 27 September and 155 (BF65 HVU) on 30 September.

Also on 4 September, school service 693 from Dedham Lamb Corner to East Bergholt High School via Arleigh, Lawford, Mistley New Road, Manningtree, Brantham and East End restarted. This is normally a Scania OmniCity working.

On Saturdays, services 92/93 are worked by a mixture of Scania OmniDekkas and OmniCities, with ADL Enviro 200s also appearing. On 21 September, 73 (YX18 KNW) worked 1635 Ipswich - Manningtree 92 & 1730 return. This is an ADL E20D / Enviro 200 MMC B41F in overall white livery, acquired from Mistral Group where it was part of their leased fleet.

The new school term for Ipswich School started on 5 September. Changes to the contracts operated by Ipswich Buses: 2C from Langenhoe withdrawn, replaced by the extension of 2B from Braiswick across Colchester to Langenhoe. 6 now starts & finishes at Halstead, no longer reaches Castle Hedingham, which is now served by the extension of 9 from Sudbury.

On 5 September the departures at 1625 from Ivory Street next to Ipswich School, heading into Essex were worked by the following seatbelt fitted buses and coaches:

Scania OmniCity 47 (SGZ 3347) on 2A to Colchester & Feering.

Scania OmniCity 51 (SGZ 3351) on 2B to Colchester & Langenhoe.

ADL Enviro 200 76 (LX58 LML) on 3 to Dedham & Dedham Heath.

Scania OmniCity 48 (SGZ 3348) on 6 to Halstead.

Volvo B11RT / Caetano 2 (SGZ 1002) on 9 to Sudbury & Castle Hedingham.

Volvo B7R / Jonckheere 1 (SGZ 1001) on 10 to Tendring & Holland-on-Sea.

On 1 October ADL Enviro 200 74 (DU60 LOJ) was on 10, but 1 (SGZ 1001) returned to this contract on 3 October.

With thanks to the Ipswich Buses website, Ipswich Transport Society Journals and Ipswich Buses Enthusiast Facebook Group for this and the report in EBM726. In addition, the Ipswich School website for this report.

Below: Ipswich Buses 38 (YR61 RUU) turning at Ardleigh Church on 1545 East Bergholt High School - Dedham Lamb Corner school service 693 on 16 October 2024. The last schoolchildren had alighted at the previous stop, so the driver had reset the destination display for the dead run back to Ipswich. The purple scroll name on the front dash panel reads 'Constance Andrews Suffragette'. Constance Andrews (1864-1947) was a leading suffragette in Ipswich for the 'Votes for Women' campaign 1909-1914.

YR61 RUU is a Scania OmniCity N230UD, new to First London in October 2011 with fleet number 36058. Later transferred to Metroline. One of 16 purchased by Ipswich Buses from Scania (UK) in 2017/18 (fleet numbers 30 - 45), converted to single-door, reseated from H41/22D to H45/27F, and repainted by Hants & Dorset Trim.

Robert Appleton



Acquired Vehicles

Further to EBMs 720, 723 & 725, the final of the three ex Lloyds Coaches Scania N230 / ADL Enviro 400s, 611 (SN15 ETD), entered service on 16 September 2024 from Haverhill depot; it is thought to still be in Traws Cymru green / white, minus lettering, like Rochford based 612 (613 was repainted and refurbished before entering service). It was illustrated in Traws Cymru livery in EBM 720.

Galloway Travel. Further to last month, the other two Scania / Levante III for the new National Express contract route 717, Ipswich-Stansted Airport, have now arrived, registered BV73 ZTJ/K, ex Chalfont Coaches; they join BV73 ZXK and the three are numbered 109-11.

Withdrawn Vehicles / Disposals

Solos 325 (YJ58 PHO) and 326 (EU58 AXX), have been withdrawn, the latter, previously in reserve, following an RTC.

Part correction to last month. Of the four Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekkas sold to Acme, the registration of 646 should have been YN55 NKK, not NKA, on page 27 (the caption to the photo on page 29 was correct).

Other Vehicle News

Volvo B10M / Plaxton Paragon 200 (X400 MTT) has been noted back in service at Boreham after a period off road. It is the spare coach for the Colchester school contract normally operated by the Levante 161.

With thanks to the companies, John Podgorski and David Green.

Below: Stephenson's 507 (YT59 NZM), a Scania N230UD with Optare Olympus H51/28F body, new to Network Colchester, fleet number 105, in October 2009, leaving Braintree Bus Interchange on local service 30, Marks Farm to Beckers Green on 24 September 2024. **Robert Appleton**



Colchester

Transferred in from Maidstone is a further ADL Enviro 200, 4063 (GN59 FVE), received on 17 October 2024 and entering service the following day.

Enviro 400 6458 (SN58 ENX) was received from Ware depot on 2 October, entering service here the next day. This is an ex-Southend vehicle with Remembrance branding. See photos on page 7.

Further to last month, Southend's Enviro 400 MMC 6530 (YX16 OJA) remained on loan here until it was transferred permanently to Ware on 8 October. The vehicle it was covering, 4468, returned to service on 23 September (as reported last month) but is now due to move to Southend, further details below.

There is no further news on the expected cascade of Mercedes-Benz Citaros to Colchester.

Below: 6530 on route 1 at Colchester Bus Station on 24 September 2024. **Robert Appleton**



Southend

Optare Versa B37F 4185 (KX62 JJO) has been received from Ware depot (as cover for 6530, see above) but has not yet entered service.

In a very retrograde move, it is understood that 11 of Southend's remaining Enviro 400 MMCs are to be transferred away, nine to Maidstone (6503-5/9-14) and two to Ware (6508/30), to be replaced by 11 VDL DB300 double-deckers which are around five years older. This will include the transfer of 4459/68 from Colchester to Southend. It is thought that the only Enviro 400 MMCs to remain at Southend will be 6499, 6502/6/7/15, due to

the special liveries they carry. The first to arrive was due to be 4468 (MX61 AXJ) from Colchester, to be used for type training of drivers ahead of their introduction. Further details will follow next month.

Harlow

Further to last month, Optare Vera 4184's last day at Ware was 3 October and it returned to service at Harlow on 8th. Sister 4183 was at Ware on 8 & 9 October.

With thanks to John Card, Adam Kelleher, Keith Sadler and Steve Thompson.



Ian Ransom

ADL Enviro 200s LK08 DWE & VB08 PAN and ADL Enviro 200 / East Lancs Esteem LX09 AZL were sold by October 2024, buyers unknown. The heritage vehicles have also been sold. Panther Travel no longer owns any vehicles.

With thanks to Adam Barham.

Below: Further to EBM 702 (October 2022), the 50th Showbus on 25 September 2022 did not prove to be the last one after all, and the event was revived this year, on 29 September at the Bucks Railway Centre (hence the locomotive in the photo). It had a good turnout of both buses and people but, as so often in the past, the weather played havoc with the event. Although the rain thankfully held off for the day, the previous heavy rain during September led to the large field being saturated and early on three vehicles sank in the mud. The recovery truck then got stuck trying to reach them! As a result, most buses were jammed into the hard standing car park, but others were scattered around every bit of gravel standing which gave some interesting locations, such as this for new to Eastern National Olympian / ECW coach D511 PPU still in Panther Travel livery. Stallholders in the open had a miserable time as the chill wind strengthened. The loco is South African Railways Class 25NC, built to 3ft 6ins gauge in 1953 at Glasgow, donated to Bucks Railway Museum in 1970. **Owen Woodliffe**





All photos by **the author**.

I had not been to Southend for a very long time but on 6 June 2024 my wife had a job in Thorpe Bay, so I went along for the ride and walked into Southend.

I was intrigued by a pair of 'Barton Coach Company' coaches I found in the Gas Works car park; a company I had not come across before but obviously with a name associated with quite different vehicles! Having checked them out, I see they come from Barton-Le-Clay, Bedfordshire so the name is perfectly appropriate. The orange and white livery is pretty eye catching, although the BCC logo is strongly reminiscent of the BBC!

PO12 GWJ is a Volvo B9R / Caetano Levante C48FLt, new to John Shaw (Travellers Choice), Carnforth in National Express Livery. It was all white by April 2017, reregistered 4122 YG and in fleet livery by August 2018, back to original registration with Riddleys Coaches, Warwick by March 2020, still with them October 2021.

YP14 HCD is an Irizar i6 C57Ft integral new to Watts, Bonvilston, South Glamorgan July 2014 passing to dealers Moseley and prepared in Roselyn Coaches pale green colour by them before Moseley went out of business. Sold by auction and with BCC by July 2021.

By sheer co-incidence, before spotting the BCC coaches I had taken a picture of a beach hut next to Thorpe Esplanade called 'Tangerine Dream' in remarkably similar colours, as seen **opposite**.

Ian Barlex has provided some additional information: "Barton Coach Co. is an established Bedfordshire operator with a sizeable fleet, including half a dozen double-deckers (some ex-London) for schools and a mixed fleet of coaches and minibuses. The business is nowadays actually formally Clyde's Minibuses Ltd, trading as BCC Executive, and is owned by a lady from Eastern Europe - Poland, I think. The business took the Clyde name when the lady got married here to somebody with the surname of Clyde."





Continuing the orange theme, ex-Cardiff CN57 FGA was parked next to The Kursaal (with the driver asleep in the cab). It didn't have any fleet names, but the operator information in the front nearside window read 'Coach and Bus Travel, T/A Barnes Coaches of Aveley Road, Upminster'. I realised that that location, just across the Essex border in Greater London, was also the address of Empress. After a bit of digging online it transpires that Mr Barnes owns both companies.

Therefore, **above**: Barnes Coaches, Upminster (Coach and Bus Travel) CN57 FGA, a Scania N270UD / East Lancs Olympus, H47/22F, new as Cardiff Bus 470 in December 2007 but by June 2023 was with this owner.

Again, Ian Barlex has kindly supplied some additional information: "Trevor Barnes is a very long established figure in the East London coach scene who has been based around Upminster and Rainham for years. He has always been at the relatively cheap end of the market but has smartened up significantly since acquiring the rump of Empress, which was of course one of the oldest established London coach operators of all. Empress was sold by the Stanton family who had owned it for years, initially to the owners of Brentons of Blackheath, another old established firm. It later passed to Barnes after hitting hard times. Barnes has had a double-decker for years, usually left in the livery of whoever its former owner was. It can be seen regularly on school work, including frequent visits to Becontree Heath on swimming pool contracts, and is often parked up around Heathway in Dagenham and in local areas."



Acme Bus, Saffron Walden

Part correction to last month, the fourth Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka acquired from Stephensons Rochford is registered YN55 NKK not NKA..

Airport Bus Express, Stansted Airport

BV74 MZL, a Mercedes Benz Tourismo M/2, is brand new here.

Barker, Roydon

MAN 14.280HOCL / Caetano (C39F), registration WA54 JYX, is here from Lewis, Rhydlewis, Ceredigion, Wales.

Don, Great Dunmow

ODL 678, an East Lancs bodied Volvo B9TL, CH69/31F is here from Xelabus, Eastleigh, Hampshire. This vehicle was originally registered as LJ58 GCK and has now been registered as BIG 9248. Also here from Xelabus is G3 XCL (ex.PO59 KGG), a Volvo B9TL with East Lancs H61/39F body.

Klarners Coaches, Colchester

Further to the news last month that coach industry investor REL Capital had purchased Klarners Coaches, Colchester, Klarners have surrendered their operator's licence from 16 September and the fleet has been sold, with outstanding work passing to other REL group companies.

Swift Travel, North Weald

Recently arrived here from National Express are BX16 CMV and BX16 CMZ, a pair of Scania K410EB6s with Caetano C56FLT bodies.

With thanks to Ian Ransom and the PSV Circle.

Below: As reported in EBM 722, **Lodge Coaches** have acquired Optare Solo M970 SR YJ62 FXA to replace Optare Solo M950SL YJ07 VTA. It came from Coachstyle, Nettleton. Here it is on layover behind Chelmsford Railway Station on 23 August 2024. **David Moth.** A photo of YJ07 VTA, taken on 17 December 2020, shortly after entering service with Lodge, at the same location, was on the inside front cover of EBN 682.



Group Visit to Canvey Museum

Ian Ransom

A group of EBEG members met at Canvey Island Transport Museum on Sunday 30 June for a private visit, by kind invitation of the Museum and Vehicle owners.

Paul Harrison, long time Museum member, owner of AVX 975G (see below) and EBEG member, introduced himself and gave a brief outline of plans for the visit, which apart from looking over some of the vehicles, included rides around the local area and, most importantly to enthusiasts, tea and cake!

Initially, the group split into subgroups to look over vehicles, or chat with some of the owners in attendance. I spent time looking at 236 LNO a Bristol LDL6G / ECW, seen **right**, which has been undergoing restoration at the museum. Currently the seats are removed from both decks and work is in hand to restore the window surrounds. It became readily apparent how much detailed work is involved in restoring a vehicle that is 66 years old and when finished, it will be as good as the day it emerged from ECW at Lowestoft.

There was a short break over tea and cake, which gave the group a chance to chat with one another and to share memories of some of the vehicles housed there and general memories of Eastern National, Southend, Colchester and independent operators of Essex.

The party were then invited aboard PTW 110, a Bristol L6B / ECW coach, for a circular tour of Canvey Island, which lasted about 30 minutes, including a photo stop at Creek Road, before returning to the Museum. The next vehicle, FLF6G / ECW 2849 (NTW 942C), then did the same. This brought back a lot of memories for me of travelling around Essex on FLFs. It is seen outside the museum on the **next page, top** with co-owner Mike Pack.

Next up was a taste of London in the shape of RM1138 (138 CLT). This vehicle was new to Hounslow in 1962 and has been restored to recapture those days, carrying AV depot codes and blinds for the 117. This tour took us off the island via Tarpots Corner to Victoria House roundabout and returning via Kents Hill Road.

Finally, and for many the highlight of the day, was an opportunity to savour Bristol FLF6LX / ECW AVX 975G superbly restored to its condition as 2614, a double deck coach. The vehicle was originally used on Express services to London when new, it looks and sounds superb.

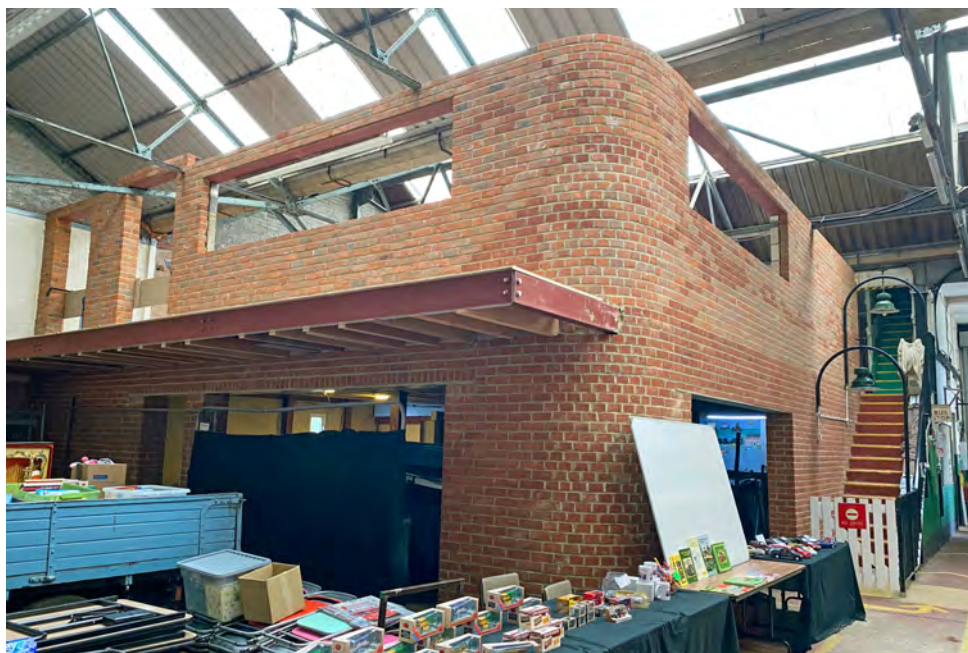
Our return to the Museum gave an opportunity to thank everyone involved for an excellent and interesting day.

Next page bottom: Building work continues at the museum. Compare this photo with the one on the rear cover of EBM 697 (May 2022) to see the progress made. All photos on this and next page **Chris Stewart**





Above & Below: Details on previous page.





Above: 1944 Bristol K JYW 430, fitted with the prototype ECW postwar lowbridge body, carrying its original fleet number 3885. In the background is Leyland PD1 / ECW MPU 52. Both ex-Eastern National. **Chris Stewart**
See also photo **opposite top**.

3885, later 1274 and 2201, hadn't moved for many years, but in April 2024, after adding fuel, oil and connecting batteries, it started first time. The Museum are understood to be currently considering the best way to raise money for its restoration, which will be a major job.

MPU 52 was numbered 2106 in the August 1964 scheme, although it isn't thought to have run with that number, being sold soon afterwards. Prior to that it had been 1121 and 3991. It is illustrated on the next page. Exploratory work is evident but this will be an even bigger job than 3885. However with the sad loss of a Hants & Dorset lowbridge Leyland PD1A to fire in December 2023, MPU 52 is an even more important survivor of the Tilling Group's postwar purchase of Leylands to supplement supplies from Bristol.



Above: This photo of MPU 52 was taken two years ago, on 17 July 2022, but its condition remains unchanged since then. This time it is JYW 430 that is in the background, before it was started and moved. **Richard Delahoy**

Postscript

The Open Day at the museum on 13 October 2024 celebrated 45 years since the Eastern National Canvey depot became the Castle Point Transport Museum (in 1979), 90 years since the depot was built (in 1934) and 80 years since JYW 430 was built (in 1944). The building has now been a museum longer than it was an operating depot.

Below: A cake cutting ceremony was undertaken by Dame Rebecca Harris (MP for Castle Point) in the company of various local dignitaries and Museum members. **Richard Delahoy**





Above: This year is also the 85th birthday of Bristol K AJN 825 (not a Canvey resident), as celebrated in EBM 720. Remarkably, 13 October 2024 is believed to be the first time that this and JVN 430 have ever been photographed together, although it's thought that both were based in Canvey garage at the same time at some point in the 1970s. Despite there being only five years age difference, they illustrate the contrast between pre-war and the much more modern looking immediate post-war ECW body styles.

Right: The cake.

Both **Richard Delahoy**



Rear Cover: Two Canvey residents when they were in service with Eastern National

Top: JVN 430, when numbered 1274, is seen on route 315 at Rayne Road, Braintree opposite the Horse & Groom in 1959. **Trevor J. Beal Collection** with thanks to Nigel Turner

Bottom: When in Tilling green, 236 LNO always had a green radiator grille, which it has now regained (see photo on page 29). However, after transfer away from Brentwood (in November 1972), and repaint into NBC livery, it gained a silver grille. **Chris Stewart** writes: "On 5 May 1975, some ENOC staff from Brentwood and elsewhere took 2510 (as it was then numbered) to Brighton for the HCVC rally. Having befriended the late Ken Taylor (a charming ex-City man, in charge of local schedules and duties) at Brentwood depot, my good friend Chris Baggs and I were invited along. Apart from the day in Brighton (when, apart from studying the visiting vehicles, we went to Rottingdean and back on an FS open top, and I think we may have travelled on the Volks Electric Railway) my abiding memory on the run home is of travelling on the platform through the Dartford Tunnel. This photo is of the return journey, I believe on the A23 - someone had put 'Holland Brighton Road 129' on the scrolls when we got to Brighton as being the nearest (sort of) relevant destination display." **Craig Mara collection**

