

# Essex Bus Magazine

Current news and historical features  
Issue 704    December 2022



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

[www.essexbus.org.uk](http://www.essexbus.org.uk)



[fb.me/essexbus](https://fb.me/essexbus)

# The Restoration of ST 116

by John G Lidstone

Former Southend Transport Leyland-engined AEC Routemaster 116 (543 CLT) was bought by London-based enthusiast Paul Watson after withdrawal and although he wasn't able to complete its restoration, he ensured it stayed under cover until acquired in early 2022 by Ensignbus. After being stored, it was decided to make 116 the star surprise of the 2022 heritage running day on 3 December, which was its inaugural reappearance in service (see page 32).

Ensignbus craftsman Lee Hitchcock repanelled most of the exterior, as well as providing the freshly re-chromed front wheelnut rings and lamp rims, just as ST 'showbus' 102 (VLT 172, ex RM172) had. I was given the option to wholly manage the task to restore the full livery, with all detailing, at Marden Commercials, a privilege I warmly embraced. This required very detailed research, as, having originally been base painted by Southampton Citybus rather than ST, various details differed to others, such as the hand sign written seating capacity notice, which was copied as identically as possible, not to mention bonnet and other lettering often too small to check with the average photograph of the bus in service.



Full credit to the paint team at Mardens, Mark and Mark, led by MD Max Mckinnon, and to Jodie Mckinnon who achieved all the detailing so well. The Routemasters were exceptionally popular buses at ST and this bus is now a way I've been able to pay tribute to those good times, thanks to then MD Mark Howarth, who also allowed me to design the livery in which 116 is now.

Below: 116 on its first outing after completion on road test, a pause at the Royal Oak at Ockendon for photos on 1 December.

Other photos: the attention to detail involved in the restoration.

All photos **John G Lidstone**





### Season's Greetings

The Committee and Editorial Team wish all members Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Above: .... and also Happy Christmas from Hedingham. Scania N94UD / East Lincs OmniDekka 814 (YN55 PZV) turning out of North Hill into Colchester High Street on 1 December 2022.

**Alan Moore**

**Front Cover** Hedingham extended their operating area further into the south west of the county with two tender wins in November, the 71/2 in Brentwood and the 94 group, Basildon to South Woodham Ferrers (both Monday-Saturday). Both are worked from Kelvedon depot. On 30 November 292 (EU59 AFF) passes along Inchbonnie Road in South Woodham. The 94 acts as a town service there, linking various estates to Asda in the town centre. A short 29-seat ADL Enviro 200, 292 remains in the traditional Hedingham livery, now only carried by a few buses. **Richard Delahoy**

### Ensignbus Running Day 3 December 2022

Right: RTW 335 (KXW 435) passes Shenfield station ready to pick up passengers and head towards Lakeside and Tilbury Ferry on service X81. **Alan Moore.**

More photos of this event are on page 32 and rear covers.



# Group Information

Chair  
Secretary  
Treasurer & Membership  
Distribution, Publication & Sales Officer  
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 and 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)

### Ensignbus and Hedingham & Chambers

\*\* Note new address\*

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, rcapleton29@gmail.com

### Vectare

Chris Stewart, shenfield252@gmail.com

### Printed by

Directcds Ltd, Unit 2, Gentlemans Field, Westmill Road, Ware,  
Hertfordshire SG12 0EF, 01920 465023  
www.directcds.co.uk

## Subscriptions

A calendar year subscription is £26. New members may join from any month, but subscriptions will always run to December from whichever month the member chooses. Those joining from February to December inclusive pay a pro-rata subscription calculated at £2.30 per month. For example, a member joining in March would pay 10 x £2.30, i.e., £23. 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 securing 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 705

Reports to Sub-Editors

**31 December**

Sub-Editor drafts to Editor

**6 January**

Dispatch by Printers

on or before **16 January**

The last two dates are fixed, but late news can be sent up to 7th 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 members of its Committee. Every effort is made to ensure accuracy, but the Group cannot accept responsibility for any errors published.

© Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group 2022

[www.essexbus.org.uk](http://www.essexbus.org.uk)

[fb.me/essexbus](https://fb.me/essexbus)

# Group Notices

## Membership News

We are very sorry to have to record the death of long-standing member Les Thorington, member 352, and offer our condolences to his family and friends. His father Ernest had been General Manager of a small local bus operator, A J S Motor Service of Rayleigh, in the early 1930s and subsequently worked for Rayleigh Motor Services and (probably) Westcliff Motor Services.

Ernest is seen here, right, with A J S Motor Services VX 4773, a 14-seater Chevrolet LQ, in Rayleigh High Street. A J S started running bus services in 1930 and quickly built up a fleet of nine buses, but failed to win licences under the 1930 Road Traffic Act and were forced to cease operations on 21 November 1931. Behind is an open-top double decker of Westcliff Motor Services and an unidentified single decker. Photo supplied by Les Thorington.



## Membership Renewals

Following the editorial notices in the last two issues and the renewal slip enclosed with the October magazine, the majority of members have now renewed for 2023 and we thank you for your continued support for the Group. However, if you are one of the around 35 who've not yet paid, could you please do so now and certainly by 31 December, failing which this will be your last copy of Essex Bus Magazine. The renewal payment of £26 can be made either by cheque or bank transfer. Chasing outstanding subs takes time which we could better use for other things, so please do renew now. If you don't wish to continue your membership, we'd appreciate a brief note to that effect, that will save us chasing you unnecessarily.

If you are missing the details, please contact me at the address on page 2.

Richard Delahoy, Membership Secretary / Treasurer

## The Running Card by Owen Woodliffe

The following events have been advertised.

Sunday 1 January 2023: Open day at East Anglian Transport Museum, Carlton Colville.

Sunday 1 January: King Alfred Running Day with six vehicles from Winchester Broadway.

Saturday 4 February: Transport Collectors Fair, Allum Manor House, Allum Lane, Elstree WD6 3PJ.

Saturday 11 February: Enfield Transport Bazaar, St Stephens Church Hall, Village Road, Enfield EN1 3PJ.

Saturday 25 March: London heritage buses on route 175 (Dagenham-Collier Row).

Saturday 1 April: South East Bus Festival, Kent Showground, Detling.

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

## Book - 'Buses in Basildon' and Basildon map

We have two copies of the 1970 Omnibus Society booklet, 'Buses in Basildon' by David Domin, looking at the history of the development of Eastern National's bus routes in the New Town area. Size 190 x 245 mm, 12 pages, illustrated and includes maps. Free to the first two members who would like a copy. We also have a copy of the 1978 'Basildon New Town Public Transport Route Map', card, DL-size, opens out to A3, showing the new 500 series routes and lettered / numbered bus stops. One copy only, free. Please contact Richard Delahoy if interested.

## Postal Delays

At the time of writing more postal strikes are planned in the run up to Christmas, so apologies if this issue of EBM has reached you a few days later than planned and expected. A reminder again, we confirm the publication date of each issue on our Facebook page and any delays will be advised there.

## Membership Survey Results

Very many thanks to all of you who replied to our recent reader survey. We were delighted and astonished that just over half of the total membership replied, many with constructive comments. The committee and editorial team are meeting shortly to discuss the results, with a view to making some appropriate changes. Here are some key highlights:

- An overall satisfaction score of 95%, with 77% of respondents fully satisfied and 21% satisfied.
- Almost 80% of you read the entire magazine.
- The most popular regular feature is First Essex news, followed by Stephensons / NIBS, then on roughly equal standing, Arriva, Heddingham, Ensignbus, Service Changes and Letters / Follow up pieces, with lower scores recorded for Forthcoming Events, Central Connect, Vectare, Panther, Ipswich Buses in Essex, Other Operators, and at the bottom, xxx for EBM xxx.
- The top occasional features are From the Colour Archives, Tales from the platform / cab and Day in the Life. Middle ranking are anniversaries, fleet lists and route histories and the lowest scoring are the occasional non-bus features and the destination blind spot.
- There's strong interest in vehicles, services and operations, but less so in unusual workings, coach operators, rail replacement, publicity and fares / ticketing.
- 90% think the balance of current vs. historical coverage is about right and 95% think the number of photos is about right, although some commented on the small size of a few photos and difficulty in finding captions to some pictures.
- In terms of our historical coverage, only a small number are interested in the pre-1950 era. The strongest interest is in the 1970s & 1980s up to deregulation.

Some of the key themes from your comments included:

- A significant number of you find the font difficult to read - we are actively looking to improve this from January 2023.
- Some felt that there is too much detail in some First Essex reports, e.g., the Harwich routes and other area reports, etc., and have difficulty relating fleet numbers to vehicle types.
- There were a huge number of very supportive messages, citing the professionalism, depth / quality of content, layout, colour, etc. and these are greatly appreciated!

The editorial team are reviewing the detailed replies and individual comments, but of course we cannot satisfy everyone all of the time, with some contradictory views held.

In terms of our membership:

- The vast majority of members are in the 60+ age group, with only a handful under 40. Two-thirds live in Essex and its immediate environs. Just over 40% work or have worked in the industry.
- Around half the membership view our Facebook page, either regularly or occasionally. There's interest in resuming meetings, either by Zoom or in person (or both) but still no-one has volunteered to take on the role of organising these.
- Just over half of you read Buses magazine, with a smaller number taking Classic Bus. Around one member in five also belongs to the Omnibus Society and / or the PSV Circle.

As stated above, the editorial team is reviewing the results and any changes will be announced / implemented from next month - but rest assured, there will not be any dramatic or fundamental changes, other than to improve the legibility of the typeface. Thank you again for your interest and support.

---

**SOUTHEND & DISTRICT**  
JOINT SERVICES

**CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS, 1958**

**CHRISTMAS EVE, Wednesday, 24th Dec.—Usual WEDNESDAY SERVICE (except Service 18 Saturday Service)**

**CHRISTMAS DAY, Thursday, 25th December—ALL SERVICES SUSPENDED.**

**BOXING DAY, Friday, 26th December—SUNDAY SERVICE.**

**SATURDAY, 27th December—SPECIAL SERVICES—**  
**Early Morning Services will be greatly reduced.**

**In general, SATURDAY Services (with certain exceptions) will operate after about 10 a.m.**

**FOR FULL DETAILS PLEASE OBTAIN SPECIAL LEAFLET FROM THE LOCAL BUS ENQUIRY OFFICES & INFORMATION BUREAUX**

Southend Corporation Transport,  
87 London Road, Southend-on-Sea. (Phone 4941)  
680 114 3138

The Eastern National Omnibus Co. Ltd.  
District Office: 1731 London Road, Southend-on-Sea. (Phone 4941)  
Head Office: New Writele Street, Chelmsford. (Phone 348)

## Follow Ups to Previous Issues

### More on the 'Humped Back' buses

**Richard Delahoy** writes:

In EBM Extra 2 I included a story about the two former Eastern National bus bodies that were found in a garden in Clacton in 1976. One was to the 'humped back' design that David Hawksworth described in his Clacton memories in the same issue, EN 2902 (VW 9565), a Shorts bodied AEC Regent, and I wrote that the existence of the body contradicted the PSV Circle's records. But actually it doesn't, as I should have realised! What I found back in 1976 was just the body, not on a chassis. 2902 had been rebodied in January 1944 by East Lancs and the Circle's disposal records refer to the rebodied complete bus. Obviously the original body had been sold by EN and found its way to the garden in Clacton, along with the second body there, from EN 2788 (TM 3751), a Leyland Titan TD1, which was recorded as scrapped in November 1943. I wonder if both bodies had been removed in EN's workshops at Clacton depot? That would seem to be the most obvious explanation. We don't know why the chassis of the Regent was deemed worthy of rebodiding, to last until 1954, whereas the Titan, only five months older, wasn't.

This has all become clear after Brian Ashley wrote to me following the article, intrigued by the humped or 'camel-back' style of the bodywork. That sent me searching through my records and specifically, to two books by the renowned AEC expert, Alan Townsin, to discover more of the story. The AEC Regent was a revolutionary design when introduced early in 1929 (as indeed was the Leyland Titan, both reflecting the strong influence of George Rackham). A prototype chassis was built and bodied as a demonstrator, and EN's 2902 was the very next one built, part of a batch of a dozen pre-production vehicles. AEC had most of that dozen fitted with bodies which they had designed and were built by Shorts of Rochester. The Shorts bodies were highbridge buses, i.e., with a central gangway, but AEC wanted them to have a lower profile when viewed from the side, much like the lowbridge, side gangway Leyland Titan.

Leyland's body design was patented and Leyland refused to licence its rival AEC to use the design, hence AEC coming up with their own distinctive style. Townsin describes them as "giving an illusion of a similarly low build [to a lowbridge bus], a psychological factor when double-deckers were still rare in many areas". The overall height at the centre of the roof doesn't seem to have been recorded, sadly (or at least, it's not in the sources I've consulted) but headroom over the seats nearest the windows must have been somewhat restricted. I don't believe any further bodies were built to this style after the initial nine in the pre-production batch but am open to correction. 2902 had been delivered to National at Colchester on 12 April 1929 (not often that we have such precise details).

The National Omnibus & Transport Co took four of the first batch of Regents, all with the Shorts camel-back body, 2902/3 for Essex and hence passing to Eastern National, and 2904/5 for the Dorset operations, becoming part of the Southern National fleet on the split of NOTC. 2903 was registered VX 895 and the Dorset pair were TK 3023/4, all new in 1929. 2903's career was curtailed as it was withdrawn in 1939 after an accident, but the Circle record that during the War it was used as a firewatchers' hut at EN's Anchor Works in Chelmsford. It passed to a dealer, Hill of Stock, in March 1945 and was used as an office there until scrapped by 1956.

Our photo, taken by **Alan**

**Cross**, shows 2902 with its new East Lancs body, turning from Duke Street into Fairfield Road in Chelmsford to enter the depot. Interestingly, East Lancs were given dispensation to build to their pre-war design rather than to the more austere utility specification demanded by the Government in the depths of the War. This is the chassis / body combination whose disposal we recorded on page 31 of Extra 2. There were pictures of the humped back body design on the same page and on page 29.



## A Brief History of 2300

In this article in EBM 702 it was noted that when 2300 entered service in June 1978 she replaced KSW open topper 2379 (WNO 475). A contemporary photo of 2379 appeared in EBN 639 (July 2017) with another photo and a brief history of her life since being sold by Eastern National in the following issue, EBN 640. Briefly recapping, 2379 returned to the UK from Holland after being acquired by Stephen Leckie, CEO of Crieff Hydro Ltd, Perthshire, in April 2015. At first she was kept at the Crieff Hydro hotel but was later transferred to the Park Hotel, Peebles (about 80 miles away but part of the same group) and was fitted with a canopy and platform doors. Back-to-back seating and tables had been installed while with Bart Prins (Holland), and these had been retained with the bus appearing to only be a static addition to the 'retro' attractions of the hotel. It was in use as an eating place or as a backdrop to wedding photographs. We have had no reports of 2379 since, but **Richard Stephenson** saw her at the National Trust for Scotland premises at Newhailes near Musselburgh on 20 May 2022, as shown below. There was no event that day but reference to their website shows there was an Outdoor Theatre event on 18 May so it may have been there for that. Since the photos in EBNs 639/40, it has lost its centre green band but gained a green nearside wing, plus has had 'The Gin Bus' branding and illustrations added and gained frosted lower deck windows. With thanks to Phillip Stephenson. If anyone has any more news about 2379 during the last five years we would be very grateful.



On the subject of open top KSWs, further to EBNs 645, 668 & 681, ex 2385 (WNO 481) has now been fully restored and been repainted into 'Wings Over Europe' livery. The restoration includes hinged nearside panels so that the upper deck can be used as a stage. It was on display at the Classic Motor Show at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, from 11 to 13 November 2022. According to one report she is now worth £1 million, not bad for a bus that was languishing for years in a ravine in Tenerife! Congratulations to all concerned with her recovery and restoration. More details and photos are at [www.facebook.com/1972wingstourbus](https://www.facebook.com/1972wingstourbus).

## The Eastern National Bristol SC

**Alan 'Tebzy' Tebbit** writes:

May I say how much I enjoyed Alan Osborne and Richard Delahoy's article on the SCs in EBM Extra 2. It brought back memories of my childhood, and the special part that those vehicles played in my life. My interest in the breed has increased over the past two years since I purchased my own SC, ex Lincolnshire OVL 494.

My father was a driver at Eastern National's Chelmsford (CF) depot, and nothing gave me more pleasure than to ride on his bus. One evening in 1957 he invited me to join him. He had three hours overtime 'on the pump'. The union would not let him fill the buses with fuel (demarcation) but he drove them to the pump, then parked them up after filling. Would I like to watch? He led me to a bus to sit in, it was not going anywhere as it had a "Not Licensed" label in the windscreen. I was amazed by this brand new bus. Recent single deck deliveries had been under floor engine types (Bristol LS / ECWs), but this had the engine in the conventional position alongside the driver. Instead of a bonnet, this had a dummy cab on the nearside, and there was no back to the cab. Dad explained that it was a

new concept (it will never catch on) where there would be no conductor, but the driver would collect the fares from the cab! This had been tried before the war, with Dennis Ace 20 seaters running between Chignall Corner and Widford, via New Writtle Street.

More news was to come. Dad had volunteered to be one of the 'One Man Operators', driving these new buses. With a family to take care of, the 15% increase in wages was most welcome, but remember that the company were saving 100% of a conductor's wage, plus the cost of uniforms, etc. The union was vehemently opposed to this, and put every obstacle in the way, and the original OMO drivers were verbally abused and threatened with violence. A four man rota was implemented, worked by Alf Atwood, Ivan Hatley, Francis Wilkinson and Robin Tebbit. They worked a six day week (six x 6 hour 40 minutes shifts), four Monday to Friday, three Saturday and one Sunday. A six day week was the norm at ENOC at that time.

The SCs were unique for the company in having David Brown gearboxes, known to the staff as 'Chinese boxes'. Compared to the rest of the fleet, 1st was where reverse should be, 2nd at 1st, 3rd at 2nd, 4th in the right place, and 5th at 3rd. The OMO drivers soon mastered them, but if a crew driver got one to drive, he would invariably pull away in 3rd, then change directly to 5th, and my Dad's comments about crew drivers, and the state of the clutches, have, fortunately, not been recorded! CF had three SCs, 436/9 (606/9 JPU) and 448 (9573 F). 436/9 were always OMO cars, with 448 as maintenance spare, mostly used by crews, and suffered a lot of clutch wear.

The union insisted that they would only be used on lightly trafficked routes, mostly country runs. They were not allowed on cross town services, or the Bow, or Tilbury to Clacton services. There is a picture in EBM 687 (July 2021) of 395 (724 APU) crew operated, at Tilbury Ferry, blinded up for a 53 to Clacton. It is a racing certainty that it would have been replaced by a more conventional bus on arrival at Chelmsford. In my mind's eye I can see Ernie Taylor, CF branch chairman, pushing his cap to the back of his head, taking the cheroot out of his mouth, and telling the duty Inspector "My members are NOT taking THAT thing to Colchester!". On the 53, road crews changed at Chelmsford and Colchester.

The OMOs main route was the 46 through the villages from Chelmsford to Harlow New Town. With a four line rota, Dad would do the 0915 to Harlow every fourth Saturday, and I always went with him. He soon got to know his regular passengers, the nearside cab door would often open, and a bag of potatoes, or other vegetables, and sometimes a chicken would appear, as a thank you from grateful customers. As for being a lightly trafficked route, I recall one December Saturday, when the little 4-cylinder Gardner engine struggled with 35 seated passengers, and about 30 standing. No one got left behind. The next Saturday Dad was given a rest day working, duplicating the 0915 to Harlow, returning to Matching Green with the midday departure, then back to Harlow relieving a BS working, and then helping out the afternoon run back to CF. One unusual feature of the 46 was that the 1440 and 1805 ex Chelmsford were operated by CF as far as Matching Green where they met up with BS drivers working from Harlow, the drivers staying with their buses, whilst the passengers transferred. From a customer relations point of view, it would have been preferable for the drivers to change over, but then the buses would end the day at the wrong depots, with incorrect blinds for the next day's services.

Here is a photo of my Bristol SC 2485 (OVL 494) 'Olive', taken by me above Porthowan, Cornwall, on the north coast on 4 June 2021. 304 is the number for Hopleys Truro to Porthowan service (now as part of Transport for Cornwall). I used to drive for Hopleys, but in my day we had a Wrightbus bodied Volvo B10M (B60F).



Summer Seaside Specials

Paul Harvey writes:

I have a 1985 Seaside Specials leaflet in my collection. The services were as follows:  
53E Romford (T, Th) & Chelmsford (T, Th, Sun) to Clacton & Walton; 70E Bishop Stortford & Braintree (T, Th, Sun) to Clacton & Walton.  
71E Stanway & Colchester (T, Th, Sun) to Clacton & Walton. These operated Sundays 23 June to 1 September plus Late Summer Bank Holiday Monday 26 August and Tuesdays & Thursdays 23 July to 29 August.  
72E Silver End & Witham to Felixstowe which operated Wednesdays 24 July to 28 August.  
Front and rear covers are shown below. Timetables for 53E, 70E and 71E were on the inside two pages.

**Seaside Special**

**SILVER END - WITHAM - KELVEDON - TIPTREE - FELIXSTOWE**

**Limited Stop Service**

**72E**

Wednesdays only (24th July to 28th August 1985)

|                                 |      |                                 |      |
|---------------------------------|------|---------------------------------|------|
| SILVER END, E.N. Depot          | 0930 | FELIXSTOWE, Bus Station         | 1700 |
| Silver End, Hotel               | 0932 | Beacon End, Tollgate Roundabout | 1743 |
| Rivenhall, Oak                  | 0938 | Smyths Green, White Horse       | 1752 |
| Rickstones Road                 | 0942 | Tiptree, Factory Corner         | 1758 |
| Powers Hall End, Flora Road     | 0946 | Inworth, Prince of Wales        | 1803 |
| Humber Road, Brent Close        | 0950 | Peering, Gore Pit Corner        | 1806 |
| Howbridge Estate                | 0955 | Kelvedon, Railway Tavern        | 1808 |
| WITHAM, The George              | 1000 | WITHAM, The George              | 1815 |
| Kelvedon, Railway Tavern        | 1007 | Howbridge Estate                | 1820 |
| Peering, Gore Pit Corner        | 1009 | Humber Road, Brent Close        | 1825 |
| Inworth, Prince of Wales        | 1012 | Powers Hall End, Flora Road     | 1829 |
| Tiptree, Factory Corner         | 1017 | Rickstones Road                 | 1833 |
| Smyths Green, White Horse       | 1023 | Rivenhall, Oak                  | 1839 |
| Beacon End, Tollgate Roundabout | 1032 | Silver End, Hotel               | 1843 |
| FELIXSTOWE, Bus Station         | 1115 | SILVER END, E.N. Depot          | 1846 |

Buses stop at all bus stops on route between SILVER END and BEACON END for travel to and from FELIXSTOWE

**Route in Witham:-** Rickstones Road, Braintree Road, Chipping Hill, Powers Hall End, Flora Road, Faulkbourne Road, Powers Hall End, Spa Road, Humber Road, Tamar Avenue, Humber Road, Spa Road, Highfields Road, Spinks Lane, Howbridge Road, Laurence Avenue, Maldon Road, Church Road, Maypole Road

**Route in Tiptree:-** Kelvedon Road, Maldon Road, Station Road, Church Road, Maypole Road

**FARES TO CLACTON/FRINTON/WALTON (Services 53E/70E/71E)**

| From           | Romford<br>B/Stortford | Chelmsford<br>Dunmow | Braintree<br>Witham | Coggeshall<br>Kelvedon | Stanway<br>Colchester |
|----------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Adult Single   | £2.55                  | £2.40                | £2.05               | £1.80                  | £1.80                 |
| Child Single   | £1.33                  | £1.20                | £1.03               | 90                     | 80                    |
| Adult Return   | £3.95                  | £3.50                | £3.15               | £2.65                  | £2.35                 |
| Child Return   | £1.98                  | £1.75                | £1.58               | £1.33                  | £1.18                 |
| Family Return* | £7.50                  | £6.50                | £6.10               | £5.25                  | £4.95                 |

**FARES TO FELIXSTOWE (Service 72E)**

| From           | Silver End<br>Witham | Kelvedon<br>Tiptree<br>Beacon End |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Adult Single   | £2.05                | £1.80                             |
| Child Single   | £1.03                | 90                                |
| Adult Return   | £3.15                | £2.65                             |
| Child Return   | £1.58                | £1.33                             |
| Family Return* | £6.10                | £5.25                             |

\* - Up to two adults and two children with one additional child under 5 years of age free

EXPLORER TICKETS ARE NOT VALID ON SEASIDE SPECIAL SERVICES

**1985**

**Seaside Specials**

**to Clacton  
Walton  
Frinton  
Felixstowe**



**Seaside Specials**



**Get out and about with  
EASTERN NATIONAL**

Right: An unused Walton depot plate. Chris Stewart

Various

In EBM Extra 2, the inside rear cover feature looked at Eastern National fleet name styles. We've since seen a note in Buses Illustrated to say that the underlined style, so familiar to many of us, was introduced early in 1958, the first bus to carry it being 1119 (RHK 121), a Bristol LL / ECW single-decker.

In the feature on the Bedford to Biggleswade service in EBM 703, there is another (tenuous) link between United Counties and Eastern National in the photo of Bristol VR 794 (GRP 794L) on page 5. Two other members of the same batch, 790/1 (GRP 790/1L) were part of a batch of five ordered by Eastern National, 3024-28 (WNO 544-548L), but were diverted to United Counties and received revised registration numbers. 790/1 were to have been 3024-5 with EN, and so 3026-8 became 3024-6, taking the original three registration numbers with WNO 547/8L not being used. As outlined in the Group's Fleet Record Volume 3, this explains why there is a gap of these two numbers in the registration sequence WNO 537-566L used for the last Bristol RELs, three VRs and the first Leyland Nationals.

EBM 704 - 8

## 704 for EBM 704



Above: Eastern National Leyland National 1792 (PEV **704R**), allocated to Clacton, on route 110 at Clacton Bus Station on 21 June 1984. Alongside is dual-door LN 2200 (UCO 46L) bought in April 1982 from Plymouth City Transport for conversion to a wheelchair passenger vehicle with space for eight wheelchairs. **Fred Lawrance**

Below: Roadrunner Buses **P704 BTA** at S M Group Depot, River Way, Harlow 22 February 2012. A 1997 Volvo B6LE / Alexander ALX200, ex Stagecoach Devon **704**, still with a blind display for a route in Exeter. **Robert Downton**



## 15 November 2022

570 (Sch only) Great Dunmow, Queen Victoria - Colchester **First Essex**. Registration amended from school service to normal stopping, so now available to the general public.

725 (Sch only) Basildon Bus Station - Southend Boys High School **First Essex**. Registration amended from school service to normal stopping, so now available to the general public.

## 21 November

A (Sch only) Takeley Garnetts - Bishops Stortford Birchwood School **Acme**. Revised timetable.

R (Sch only) Little Hallingbury, New Barn Lane - Sawbridgeworth Leventhorpe School **Acme**. Revised route and timetable.

To update last month's note, **Stephensons** services 313/314/414/453 are now expected to revert to normal route in mid-December rather than on this date, following delays to roadworks on the B184 North of Thaxted at Armitage Bridge.

## 26 November

20 (M-F) Harlow Bus Station - Brays Grove **Vectare**. Saturday service introduced.

## 11 December

1 (Daily) Southend Travel Centre - Rayleigh Station **Arriva**. Minor timetable revisions.

132 (Daily) Braintree Interchange - Colchester Bus Station **Arriva**. Previous 133 journeys between these points revised to a limited stop operation as service 132.

133 (Daily) Stansted Airport - Colchester Bus Station **Arriva**. Revised timetable and section of route Braintree Interchange - Colchester Bus Station renumbered 132 (see above).

## 21 December

42A (M-F, Su) Chelmsford - Bishops Stortford Interchange **First Essex**. The one journey each way on M-F (Chelmsford - Takeley) will now run on schooldays only.

## 1 January 2023

2/3 (Daily) Harlow Bus Station - Harlow, Staple Tye **Arriva**. Revised timetable.

4 (Daily) Clacton Pier Avenue - Jaywick, Martello Beach Park **Hedingham**. Revised timetable.

6/A/B (Daily) Clacton Pier Avenue - Point Clear **Hedingham**. Revised timetable.

8 (Daily) Harlow Bus Station - Old Harlow Post Office **Arriva**. Revised timetable.

21 (M-S) Brentwood Station - Ongar Four Wantz **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

31 (M-F) Basildon Bus Station - Basildon, Endeavour Way (First Data) **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

49 (Sch only) Basildon, Watermill - Brentwood, The Chase **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

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

88 (M-S) Colchester Bus Station - Great Yeldham, The Green **Hedingham**. Revised timetable.

89 (M-S) Great Yeldham, The Green - Braintree Railway Station **Hedingham**. Revised timetable.

135 (M-S) Clacton Pier Avenue - Bockings Elm **Hedingham**. Revised timetable.

136 (M-S) Clacton Pier Avenue - Clacton Shopping Village **Hedingham**. Revised timetable.

137 (Daily) Clacton Pier Avenue - Clacton Shopping Village **Hedingham**. Revised timetable.

431 (Sch only) Blackmore Bus Terminus - Shenfield High School **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

434 (Sch only) High Ongar Church - Shenfield High School **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

436 (Sch only) Ongar Hospital - Shenfield High School **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

473 (Sch only) Fyfield, Queens Head - Brentwood, The Chase **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

475 (Sch only) Stanford le Hope, Rookery Corner - Brentwood, The Chase **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

483 (Sch only) Mountnessing, George and Dragon - Hutton St Martins School **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

484 (Sch only) Ongar Four Wantz - Hutton St Martins School **NIBS**. Revised timetable.

621 (Sch only) Great Totham, Captains Wood Road - Chelmsford Schools **Stephensons**. Revised route and timetable.

HALCON2 (Sch only) Halstead, White Horse Avenue - Coggeshall Honeywood School **Flagfinders**. Revised route and timetable.

HOOLNE1 (Sch only) Colne Engaine, Church Street - Coggeshall Honeywood School **Flagfinders**. Service withdrawn.

X76 (M-S) Colchester, Head Street - Jaywick, Millers Barn **Hedingham**. Revised timetable.

The revisions to the **NIBS** services above are registrations of changes made during Covid, so there is no actual change to the current timetables.



## 2 January

X80 (Daily) Chafford Hundred Station - Bluewater **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

Above is Wrightbus StreetDeck 168 (LX71 AOB) on X80 at Lakeside Bus Station on 3 December 2022. **Alan Moore**

## 3 January

3 (M-S) Chelmsford Bus Station - Southend Travel Centre **First Essex**. Revised timetable. Rerouted between Leigh-on-Sea and Southend to run via Elmsleigh Drive, Blenheim Chase and Prittlewell Chase, instead of along Leigh Road and London Road, and also now serves Southend Hospital. Restores a link lost (apart from school journeys on 21S and 827) with the April 2022 changes to route 21. Other minor changes.

22 (Daily) Aveley, Usk Road - Grays Bus Station **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

33 (M-S) Chafford Hundred Railway Station - Grays Bus Station **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

44 (Daily) Lakeside Bus Station - Grays Bus Station **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

66 (Daily) Grays Bus Station - Chadwell St Mary, Morant Road **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

73/A (Daily) Lakeside Bus Station - Tilbury Civic Square **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

77/A (M-S) Aveley, Usk Road - Tilbury Civic Square / Asda **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

83 (M-S) Lakeside Bus Station - Chadwell St Mary, River View Crescent **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

87 (Daily) Brightlingsea, Victoria Road - Great Horkesley, Malvern Way **First Essex**. Revised timetable on Monday to Friday.

88/A/C (M-S) Grays Bus Station - Stifford Clays **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

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

99 (M-S) Tilbury Ferry Terminal - Tilbury Asda **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

701 (M-S) Sandon Park & Ride - Chelmsford City Centre **Vectare**. Revised timetable.

702 (M-S) Chelmer Valley Park & Ride - Chelmsford City Centre **Vectare**. Revised timetable.

S1 (Daily) Colchester, Highwoods Square - Wivenhoe Rail Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable on Monday to Friday.

Z1 (Daily) Aveley, Usk Road - Tilbury Amazon **Ensignbus**. Revised timetable.

Basildon Surgery Shuttle (M-F) NEW SERVICE George Hurd GP Centre - Basildon Town Centre **Basildon Community Transport**. Flexible on demand service.

## 5 January

DAN001 (Sch only) Woodham Mortimer, Post Office Road - Colchester, Southway **Flagfinders**. Revised route and timetable.

## 7 January

39 (S only) Witham, Collingwood - Witham, Flora Road **First Essex**. Saturday service under contract to ECC. **Stephensons** continue to operate the M-F service.

40 (M,W, S only) Witham, Gershwin Boulevard - Witham, Ebenezer Close **First Essex**. Revised timetable introduced on Saturdays.

Buses were noted in early November displaying “Lest We Forget, We Will Remember Them” on destination blinds, alternating with the normal route displays.

### Colchester

Enviro 400 MMC 6499 continued to be on loan for weekend rail replacement (Colchester to Clacton) - used in normal service at other times - until the end of November, but remained at Colchester as we went to press at the start of December.

### Southend

3756 (YJ08 DZF), a Wrightbus bodied VDL SB200, was taken out of service on 9 November and, like similar 3759 reported last month, transferred to Harlow. Only three of this type now remain at Southend.

Further repaints into the current light blue Arriva livery are 4205, plus two we missed previously, 4250 and 6514.

We don't routinely cover roadworks / temporary diversions, but one more unusual set of works in the evenings of the week commencing 31 October closed Rayleigh Road and the Woodmans Arms roundabouts in Thundersley, affecting route 1 in a location with no quick diversion. After an initial night of confusion when buses were curtailed at Hadleigh (with no service to Rayleigh), on subsequent nights at least some buses diverted via the A13 to Tarpots Corner and Sadlers Farm, A130 and A127 to Rayleigh Weir to pick up the route, an extra 3.5 miles. Member Nigel Clark sampled the diversion and was pleasantly surprised by the journey time and the unusual experience.

### Harlow

As noted above, Wrightbus bodied VDL SB200 3756 (YJ08 DZF) transferred here from Southend in November. It is in old aquamarine livery. It had briefly operated in Harlow for a few months in 2015. 3759, which also transferred here from Southend as reported last month, has not been in service since 2 November. Also further to last month, 3771 remains out of use. VDL availability for route 724 is still poor. Correction to EBM 703, reference to 1446 returning to service should have been 1466, as correctly noted in EBM 702.

Further to the report last month, it is now confirmed that 1519 (YJ58 CCF), Optare Solo M890SL (B26F), is a transfer from Tunbridge Wells. It is to the revised bodywork design and is in new light blue livery. It has replaced Solo 1454 (YJ06 FXT) which is currently in store at Ware.

With thanks to John Card, Nigel Clark, Adam Kelleher, Keith Sadler, the M&D & East Kent Bus Club and LOTS.

Right: We reported in EBM 702 that Enviro 200 MMC 4101 (YX17NYS) in Sapphire livery has had its front repainted from purple to light blue (it retains purple at the front on the sides). Here it is on route 508 at Harlow Bus Station on 7 November 2022, with a suitable display for the date of the photo. Compare this photo to the one on page 15 of last December's issue (EBM 692), with the same bus with the same display at Hertford Bus Station, but before its partial repaint. That photo and this one were taken by **Allan White**.



## Acquired Vehicles

|       |          |                   |       |      |       |                          |
|-------|----------|-------------------|-------|------|-------|--------------------------|
| 47421 | SK63 KMJ | SA9DSRXXX13141390 | AJ519 | B37F | 11/13 | First Hampshire & Dorset |
| 47427 | SK63 KMY | SA9DSRXXX13141396 | AJ528 | B37F | 11/13 | First Hampshire & Dorset |
| 47430 | SK63 KNB | SA9DSRXXX13141399 | AJ531 | B37F | 11/13 | First Hampshire & Dorset |

Wrightbus StreetLite Door Forward. Collected from Lawrence Hill, Bristol, First West of England, by First Essex drivers on Sunday 27 November 2022. These had only moved from Southampton to Bristol earlier this year, 47427/30 in Period 1 2022/23 and 47421 in Period 2. They remain in Southampton 'City Reds' Urban 2 style livery (although with branding removed), similar to the livery 63061/3-5 were acquired in in February this year, and, as illustrated on the front cover and page 12 of EBM 695, with red at the front and maroon at the rear. However, these have a solid rear dividing line in a slightly lighter shade of red, rather than the forward facing triangles the February acquisitions had, and there is no additional dividing line towards the front. 47421 has a super rear advert for Fareham College, but it is reported that this bus will be repainted before entering service.

47430 entered service on either 29 or 30 November (it tracked on Bustimes on the former date for only a few early morning journeys on S2, so these may not actually have been operated, but it showed a full day's service on 30th). 47427 entered service on route 11 on the afternoon of 1 December.

Further to EBM 703, 33825 moved from Weston-Super-Mare to Leicester in Period 2 2022/23. A correction to last month, this vehicle returned to service on 8 November (for the first time since 29 October) and had not been repainted, it is still in orange 'Excel' livery (with branding removed), see photo taken on 2 December on page 17.

## 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 8 2022/23 (23 October - 19 November)

32260 CR-CR (oos), 32530 CR-CR (oos), 32540 CR-CF, 33384 BN-BN (oos), 33552 BN-BN (oos), 33553 BN-BN (oos), 33559 BN (oos)-BN-BN (oos), 36843 CF-CF (oos), 42945 CF-CF (oos), 44473 CF (oos)-CF, 44927 FG-HH, 47650 HH-CR, 47696 CR (oos)-CR, 63329 CR (oos)-CR, 66800 CR-CR (oos), 66818 CF (oos)-CF, 66821 CR-CR (oos), 67195 BN (oos)-BN

## Disposals

32539, 33384, 66800, 66816, 66971 to Ensignbus, November 2022.

In practice, 32539 (1 December), 66800 (2 December), 66816 (2 December) and 66971 (1 December) were collected directly by Shelton Motors, Ely for scrap from Quayside Depot, Colchester.

Further to EBM 702, 33134, 33232 and 33403 moved on from Ensignbus to Shelton Motors in November.

Further to EBM 703, 33402 moved on from Ensignbus to First Stop, Gravesend in November.

## Around the Depots

(All vehicles listed below allocated to relevant depot. All dates November 2022 except where stated.)

### Colchester

StreetLite 63344 has a super rear advert for Colchester Institute.

32530, which has not been used since 9 November, was seen in front of the workshops on 23 November. On the scrap line on 27th were 32260, 66804 and 66821 plus four that were removed for scrap a few days later (as above) 32539, 66800, 66816 and 66971.

News of the Harwich routes (3-30 November). With the reduction in the number of Volvo B7RLEs in service, November saw an increase in StreetLites, including 47650 transferred from HH on 14th (its first day at CR), 18th, 22nd & 23rd. New 47696 worked a full day on 104 and evening 102 on Saturday 19th. Acquired 47430 worked 1905 Colchester - Harwich 104 on 30th. Newer Volvo B7RLE (11-reg) 69516, transferred from HH, worked a full day on services 75 and 102 on Sunday 27th. The only double-deckers to reach Harwich were 32676 on 16th and 37134 on 18th. The majority of journeys were worked by ADL Enviro 300s.

Clacton routes. 74B continues to be mainly worked by Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Geminis. Exceptions reported were: 32068 (12th), 37133 (28th), 37135 (19th), 37139 (23rd), purple 37621 (22nd), 63331 (7th), 66759 (29th) and 67738 (11th).

On route 76: 69515 (13th), 37010 (20th), 37062 (27th), 32676 (4 December).

## Chelmsford

A new timetable booklet has been published for Brentwood services. It follows the same new house style as the Colchester, Chelmsford and Basildon Shuttles booklets but the timetables are in the traditional format not the reduced 'back to front' format of the Shuttles, plus the main colouring is Essex Buses green rather than Shuttles red. It includes timetables for routes 9, 37, 80A/C, 251, 351 and 565, plus maps for routes where there is space and an overall network map. One thing we didn't previously realise is that on route 565 buses go clockwise around the Bulphan - West Horndon loop before midday and anti-clockwise in afternoons.

Enviro 200 44473 (YX62 BNU) finally entered service on 15 November, on route 70. This completes the quartet of 44467/9/71/3 which were acquired in April and which all took a long time to enter service. These four were all acquired from outside First Bus and so were numbered when acquired. We don't know why only odd numbers were used, our best guess is that originally others from the same source were also to be acquired which filled the gaps, but, in the end, they weren't.

Further to EBM 703, on 6 November 69533 was still on the scrap line, 69532 had re-joined it and 42945 had joined. 66760 had returned to service. 66818 had gone, it surprisingly returned to service on 8th despite it recently having been stripped of some body parts (it now has a crudely hand written fleet number on the front offside corner). The same three vehicles were still there on 12th and 27th, by 27th they had been joined by privately owned (by a Chelmsford driver) Dart 42905 from First Cymru (N.B. only parked there, it is not for scrap!). 44175 an unusual red bus in Brentwood on 565 (21st). 44471 an unusual green bus on 35 / 633 (29th). 36840 on 570 (25th). 44469 on X71 (7th). 44544 (17th), 44660 (30th), 66806 (14th), 66811 (28th), 66813 (10th), 67735 (9th) and 67756 (2 December) on X30 shorts.

Driver Trainers: at Witham on 8th 66860 and 69148. 66863 is on loan to First Eastern Counties at Norwich, complete with instructor from Colchester, it has also been seen in Great Yarmouth.

## Basildon

Last month we reported that 33359 returned to service on 26 October after being out of use since February or March last year. This should have read 33559, apologies. However, it didn't last long and, at time of going to press, has been out of service again since 11 November. 44908 (8th) and 47654 (7th) the only reports of a single-deckers on route 9. 47654 on 100 (11th). 67163 on 16 (1 December), 69901 (29th), 69902 (8th & 9th) and 69913 (23rd) on school route 625.

## Service Vehicles

Ford Tourneo MT19 CZD appears to have been withdrawn.

## Fare Increases

Some fares were increased from 19 November 2022. Essex Sunday Saver fares are increasing from 11 December (see right).

## History

Last month Derek Stebbing stated that the Bristol LD in the picture on the Billericay History website appears to have turned left out of Chapel Street (which would be both dangerous and physically impossible now) but that that didn't match the route description in the article, which would seem to be more correct. William Morrison replies that services 34/A used to reverse into Chapel Street in order to turn to proceed to Chelmsford as it had come up the High Street from Norsey Road from Ramsden Heath. The same thing happened from Chelmsford.

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





Last month we reported on the ceremony held at Hadleigh Depot on 26 October 2022 to name Westcliff Motor Services liveried 33985 (BJ11 XGY) in honour of the late former Operations Manager at Hadleigh, Andy Spicer. We included a photo of 37985, together with recently withdrawn 33191 (LT52 XAB) and preserved AJN 825, with staff and former staff of HH & AJN Group members in front of the three vehicles. To add to that, members of Andy's family were also in attendance.

The opportunity was also taken to line up Hadleigh's two heritage liveried Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 2s together, 37985 plus 1968 Eastern National coach FLF liveried 37986 (BJ11 EGY). 37985 had Eastern National style depot and fleet plates specially fitted for the occasion, but this was only a temporary measure and they were removed afterwards. Westcliff vehicles did not carry fleet numbers.

Above: the three Westcliff liveried vehicles lined up. Below: 37985 & 37986 together. Andy's name can just be seen above the destination box of 37985, in the same style, size and colour font as 'Westcliff' above the registration plate.

Both **John G Lidstone**, with thanks to Engineering Manager Jim Harper and Paul Ferguson.



## First Essex News in Pictures

As reported last month, Enviro 350Hs 67902 and 67903 have received super rear adverts for recruitment.

67903 (SN13 CHX) is seen in Chelmsford Bus Station on 25 October 2022.

Under "Smilers Wanted" the wording is "Join our team today. busdrivercareers.co.uk First f Bus".

**Adam Kelleher**



The decline of the Darts has slowed down in recent months, but one more was withdrawn from service in Period 8, 42945. The lowest numbered remaining Dart is 42930 (SNO5 EAM), it is seen on route C11 outside Chelmsford Railway Station on 14 November 2022.

**Derek Stebbing**

See also page 24.



The timetable revisions of 30 October 2022 saw the end of the Saturday journeys on service 103. On Saturday 29 October 66801 (MX05 CCJ) was parked on the forecourt of the closed Harwich depot, before working the last Saturday 103 journey, 1700 from Harwich to Colchester. The Mondays to Fridays journeys on 103 continue unchanged at 0715 schooldays, 0720 school holidays from Harwich, and 1535 from Colchester. At the time, 66801 was one of only two vehicles left in service in 'A Greener Colchester' livery, the other was 66800, but since then 66800 has been withdrawn following expiration of its MOT leaving 66801 as the last of all.

**Robert Appleton**



New StreetLite 47696 (LV22 HVY), in red shuttles livery, was delivered on 9 August 2022 (as reported in EBM 701) but did not enter service until 15 November. It is seen parked up at Colchester Bus Station on 1 December with Enviro 300 67736 (SN62 AHV) behind.

**Alan Moore**



Basildon Bus Station turning green. Basildon's Enviro 400 33411 (WA56 FUB), with another example in the background and a Hadleigh StreetLite alongside, on 2 December 2022. Double-deckers make occasional appearances on Basildon shuttle routes, as seen here on route B3. Note the poppy under the windscreen and behind the bus the work on refurbishing the bus station continues.

**Richard Delahoy**



But here's orange amongst the green, also at Basildon Bus Station on 2 December. Contrary to the report last month, ex-Leicester, but in West of England Excel livery minus branding (although with ghosting remaining), Enviro 400 33825 (SN63 MYH) has not yet been repainted into Essex Bus green. Don't be fooled by these two photos, many of Basildon's vehicles currently remain in Urban livery. Also visible in this photo are the new yellow barriers installed as part of the bus station redevelopment.

**Richard Delahoy**



## Acquired Vehicles

|       |          |                                                                          |
|-------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 532   | LX59 DCO | Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 2 ex Go Ahead London WVL324        |
| 537   | LX59 DDA | Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 2 ex Go Ahead London WVL329        |
| 539   | LX59 DDF | Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 2 ex Go Ahead London WVL331        |
| WVL93 | LF52 ZNE | Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Gemini Eclipse ex Go Ahead London via Compass Bus |

532, 537 and 539 join 531/3/6/8 reported in the last two issues. As will be seen under the Ensignbus report below, vehicles from the same batch are also joining First Eastern Counties. Further to last month, two of the four ex Go Northern Scania N230UB / East Lancs OmniCitys have received fleet numbers and entered service, NK56 KJN is 462. NK56 KJF is either 461 or 463, there have been conflicting reports as to its fleet number (confirmation next month). More details below.

## Vehicle on loan

|     |          |                                                                                                              |
|-----|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 646 | LX09 FCD | ADL Enviro 400 Konectbus was in use at HD until 23 November. This is an update on the date given last month. |
|-----|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Vehicles Withdrawn

|     |          |                                 |
|-----|----------|---------------------------------|
| 517 | LX05 EZR | Long term off road at HD depot. |
|-----|----------|---------------------------------|

## Significant Allocations

|          |          |                                                                       |
|----------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 265      | CN - KN  | by 19 November in readiness for services 71 / 94 groups, see below    |
| 266      | CN - KN  | by 19 November as above but returned to CN two days later             |
| 284      | CN - KN  | by 19 November as 265                                                 |
| 287      | KN - CN  | by 18 November                                                        |
| 293      | KN - CN  | by 24 October, used on X76 services                                   |
| 293      | CN - KN  | by 29 October                                                         |
| 461 or 3 | Acq - CN | by 21 November used mainly on 97 service                              |
| 462      | Acq - CN | by 8 November used mainly on 97/98 & 105/7 services                   |
| 511      | HD - KN  | by 1 November                                                         |
| 512      | HD - CN  | by 2 November but had returned by 4 November                          |
| 523      | KN - CN  | by 18 November                                                        |
| 528      | CN - KN  | by 23 November                                                        |
| 532      | Acq - HD | by 1 November                                                         |
| 533      | HD - KN  | by 31 October                                                         |
| 537      | Acq - CN | by 31 October                                                         |
| 539      | Acq - CN | by 2 December                                                         |
| 877      | KN - SY  | by 28 October                                                         |
| 911      | HD       | returned to service, used for KN route learning routes 71 / 94 groups |

## Fleet News

Enviro 400 646 (LX09 FCD), used on the Stour Valley Schools service, was returned to Konectbus by 23 November. Both 644 (LK08 FLJ) and 645 (LX57 CJI) had returned to Konectbus shortly after the usage dates shown in EBM 703.

Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 2 537 (LX59 DDA) entered service on 31 October with 532 (LX59 DCO) doing so the next day, 537 allocated to CN and 532 to HD.

The LB02 registered batch of Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Geminis, 510-514, previously based solely at Hedingham depot, now seem to be spreading into wider circulation such as Kelvedon and Clacton, but both 513 and 514 have been off road long term, 513 due to fire damage.

As noted above, two of the four ex Go Northern Scania N230UB / East Lancs OmniCitys have entered service, 462 on 8 November and NK56 KJF on 21st, both at Clacton. They have been used on the 97/98 and 105/7 inter-workings. 462 had previously been undertaking school work. Both are in mainly red, with blue rear, livery from their days with Go North East, 462 still has Go Northern fleet numbers. All of the four were acquired to release vehicles for the new services described below.

WVL93 (LF52 ZNE) has arrived ex Go Ahead London via Compass Bus where it had been recently operating. It is a convertible open topper which can have its central roof section removed and safety bars fitted. As reported in EBM 700, 500 (PL51 LDJ) suffered damage hitting the Venetian pier bridge in Clacton on 10 July this year and WVL93's arrival puts its future in doubt. WVL93 is in the same red and white heritage London General livery as 500's temporary cover for summer 2022, 501 (Y824 TGH, also see EBM 700), and like 501 it was used on Southend seafront service 68 by GAL prior to Ensignbus taking over.

819 (YN06 JYD) worked HD8 schools service Toppesfield to Hedingham School on 28 November presumably due to a KN loan.

## Service News

Monday - Saturday services 71/2, Stondon Massey to Warley via Brentwood, and 94A/B, Basildon to South Woodham Ferrers via Wickford, both started on 21 November following the three month temporary emergency contracts operated by Stephenson's (prior to this the 71/2 had also been worked by Stephenson's and the 94A/B by First Essex who retain the separate Sunday contract). On the first day, Enviro 200 284 was on 71/2. Also on the first day, on the 94 group Enviro 200 266 worked the 0515 journey from South Woodham Ferrers to Basildon, with similar 265 on the other duty which does the town circulars then the 0800 to Basildon. Optare Solo 911 was on one of these workings on 25th.



With thanks to Jon Collins, John Podgorski and the Hedingham website.

Above right: Hedingham 284 (OU57 FGX) on the first day of operation of ECC route 71 in Brentwood High Street on 21 November 2022. **Robert Downton**



# Ensignbus

omnibus suppliers to the world

by Mark Lloyd

## Dealer Stock Movements November 2022

### Vehicles In

From **Brighton & Hove**: Mercedes-Benz Articulated Citaros BD57 WDE/P/T, BL57 OXM, BP57 UYF  
From **First Eastern Counties**: Volvo B7TLs YJ51 RAU/RDU, Dart EU05 AUN. The Dart was 42921, new to First Essex.  
From **First Essex**: Trident LK53 EZD, Volvo B7RLEs KX05 MIY, MX05 CCF/CDY, Volvo B7TL YJ05 VWG. These are ex-First Essex 33384, 66971, 66800, 66816 and 32539, see page 13.  
From **First Halifax**: Volvo B7TL YJ54 XVB  
From **Go Ahead London**: Dart SN51 GRK  
From **Metroline**: Enviro 400s SN12 DHD/E  
From **RATP London**: Scania YT59 RXS, YT10 UWG/XBW/X  
From **Stagecoach South West**: Tridents KN04 XJJ/K/M, WA05 MGU/V, KX55 TLN/U, WJ55 NLZ

### Vehicles Out

**Avondale, Glasgow**: Enviro 200 OU08 AYG  
**Bus & Coach Repairs, Yaxley, Cambridgeshire**: SP07 FCY  
**EP Training, Leatherhead**: Enviro 200s LX11 AWC/R  
**First Bus Stop, Gravesend**: Trident VX54 MTY. This is ex-First Essex 33402, see page 13.  
**First South West**: Volvo B9TL LX59 FCX  
**First Eastern Counties**: Volvo B9TLs LX59 DAU/BO/Y  
**First Group**: Mercedes-Benz Articulated Citaros BD57 WDE/L/M/P/T, BL57 OXM, BP57 UYF  
**First West Yorkshire**: Volvo B9TLs LK59 CWU/XC  
**Fourways, Chelmsford**: Scania CN57 BKJ  
**Hardwicks, Barnsley**: Volvo B7TL YJ54 XVB  
**Highlands Council**: Scania YT09 ZCN, YT59 FYX/RYG/H  
**Igobus, Churchdown, Gloucestershire**: Scania K320s JFZ 7013/23  
**New Adventure, Cardiff**: Volvo B9R SV11 FFW  
**Sharpes Coaches, Nottingham**: Volvo B9TLs HF11 HCP/X

(continued overleaf)

#### To Shelton Motors for scrap:

Tridents LT02 ZCA, LT52 WXX

Volvo B7TLs YJ51 RAU, YJ05 VWG, KP51 WBJ

B7RLEs MX05 CCF/CDY, KX05 MJY

Darts SN54 CRK, EU05 AUN, KX06 JYK/S

---

## STEPHENSONS NIBS buses by Richard Delahoy

Further to last month's notes, the allocation to the new Ely outstation (at coach operator Greys of Ely's depot) comprises Scania / ADL double-deckers 607-10, two long Enviro 200s (from 461-3) and one Solo, which are rotated round to Haverhill depot for maintenance.

Galloway Volvo B7TL / East Lancs 702 (PG04 WHU) has been re-registered to EX04 VKD and the old registration sold to a West Ham United FC supporter.

In the week commencing 31 October, Scania OmniDekka YN53 BUS was on loan from Fords of Althorne and used at Maldon on schools services.

With regard to the ex-London United Scania deckers bought earlier in the year, YT09 BIX was not acquired after all (it went to Ensignbus) but to be added to the list is YT59 RXY, which has subsequently been sold to Wagon Wheels on Location, Amersham.

Ticketing news is that NIBS are to convert from Ticketer to TransMach machines, following the trial of two on Stephensons route 24/A. This will enable existing Ticketer machines to be cascaded to Stephensons to replace older machines there that cannot accept contactless payment cards or read QR codes on tickets.

Sad news to report is the death of NIBS' founder Bill Nelson on 25 November. As recounted in EBM 696 (April 2022), Nelson Coaches was formed in February 1969 by Bill and his wife Chris (who died in February), later moving into bus operations as NIBS (Nelsons Independent Bus Service). The business was sold to Stephensons' owners in 2018. We extend our sincere condolences to their family, friends and staff / former staff of Nelsons / NIBS. Below: Nelson's Ford R1114 / Plaxton UPU 526R, with Bill's name on the side, departing Basildon Bus Station on 23 July 1977. **Richard Delahoy**

With thanks to the companies, John Podgorski and Chris Stewart.



## Airport Bus, Stansted Airport

The following Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/2s are brand new here: BV22 WTW, BV22 WTX, BV72 XZA, BV72 XZB, BV72 XZC, BV72 XZD and BV72 XZE. Gone from here are Mercedes-Benz Tourismos to Brighton and Hove, via the Dawson group dealership: BN17 JHH, BN17 JHI, BN17 JHV, BN17 JHX and BN17 JHY.

## Arrow Taxis

This company took over operation of ECC route 12 (Billericay, Arlington Way - Wickford, The Swan) on 21 November 2022. The route had been run by NIBS on a three month emergency contract, before that it had been operated by Stephensons.

Right: Mercedes-Benz Sprinter AY67 PXM on the first day of operation at the Arlington Way terminus. **William Morrison**



## Keane, Orsett

YJ52 HEA, a Wrightbus H74F Volvo B7TL, has gone to Expresslines, Bedford. KIG 1261 (ex BX55 XLW), a Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini, was acquired from Lodge Coaches in August. It had previously been with New Horizon (as illustrated in EBN 678). After the Stephensons takeover it was sold to Lodges.

With thanks to Richard Delahoy, the PSV Circle and LOTS.

Below: AH Minibuses of Little Clacton Ford Transit EX18 CYG, with roof rack. Frating, 7 September 2022. **John Podgorski**



## Withdrawn Vehicles

As a result of the new and acquired vehicles reported in recent issues, most, if not all, of the Optare Solos are now out of service. The last report on Bustimes was of 1012 (SGZ 2219) on routes H1-4 on 16 November. Further to EBMs 698 & 700, former Marshalls of Sutton-on-Trent Solo YG02 FWL M920 has been returned off loan. By October it was working for new company Yorkshire Buses. Ironically Yorkshire Buses has taken on an ex CT Plus route, whereas Central Connect have recently acquired a couple of ex Yorkshire CT Plus vehicles (see EBM 702).

## Other News

ADL Dart / East Lancs Esteem 1302 (P056 JFE) was back in service in November after being off road since June. It remains in 'Here East' grey but has now had the orange dots below the windows removed (compare with photo on page 21 of EBM 687).

Following the photo in last month's issue of Volkswagen Transporter T5 / Bluebird Tucana 1102 (YX10 AYF) on route 542 showing '5' as the route number, since the standard size Central Connect blind is too big for the midibus's screen, it has since been seen with the route number on a paper label affixed to the windscreen.

Last month we reported that MetroDecker 2102 was very unusual on route 420 on 14 October, the first time it has been reported on normal stage service. It has been a regular on 420/A since and is seen below on 420A passing the council offices at Epping on 9 November **Nick Street**. A couple of updates to last month, it may also have been in service on 13 October, plus it is tracking on Bustimes, but under fleet number '70', not its correct fleet number.



Opposite top: Trustybus / Central Connect's seven-and-a half year tenure of route 505, albeit significantly reduced to Saturday only and cut back to Waltham Abbey from Chingford during this period, came to an end on 19 November 2022. Ex Tyrer's Enviro 200 1413 (YX60 DXY) has arrived from Harlow at the terminal stop in Quaker Lane, Waltham Abbey on the last day of Central Connect operation. Vectare took over this route from 26th. **Owen Woodliffe**. Owen's photo of Dart / Plaxton KP54 BYL on Trustybus's first day of service on Monday 11 May 2015 was in EBN 614.

With thanks to John Card, Robert Downton, Owen Woodliffe and Harlowride.



by Chris Stewart

### Acquired Vehicles

Four E20D / Enviro 200 MMCs have been acquired via Mistral for the additional routes in the Basildon, Wickford, Epping, Loughton, Waltham Abbey and Harlow areas. The identity of two of these is not yet known, but the other two are 318/9 (SN16 OVM/O), B29F, new to Britannia Parking in Bournemouth, but latterly with CT Plus in Yorkshire. They are both now in fleet livery. 319 is seen right on the first day of Vectare operation of ECC route 10 (Basildon-Shotgate) at Basildon Hospital on 21 November 2022. **William Morrison**. The route had been run by NIBS on a three month emergency contract, before that it had been operated by First Essex.



Other tender gains outside Essex would not normally warrant inclusion in EBM, but the 2-3 journeys a day on services 22/22A/22X from St Ives (Cambs) to Warboys via the delightfully named Pidley cum Fenton, taken over from Dews Coaches and operated since 27 September 2021, can actually be traced back to Eastern National's Midland Area 37. This in turn had been acquired by National O&T in February 1926 with the business of the St Ives & District Motor Service.

Mini Enviro 200 MMC 316 (YX16 OBO) has been repainted from all red to fleet livery (seen on route 61 on 11 November).

With thanks to Paul Harvey, Adam Kelleher and the company.

# A Tribute to First Essex's Dart SLFs

by Derek Stebbing

It may seem strange to some members that there is a tribute in EBM to First Essex's Dennis Dart SLFs, but if you have lived or worked in Essex since the mid-1990s then chances are you will have travelled somewhere on one or, in my case, many of the SLFs (Super Low Floor) in their various lengths and with various bodywork. They have been a stalwart of the fleet throughout that period but, at the time of writing, there remain just nine left in service (42930/4-7/40/1/4/56) all allocated to Chelmsford (CF) and still in full-time service, at least on Mondays to Fridays, plus a few are used on Saturdays although Sunday operation is rare. They are used mainly on Chelmsford City C group shuttles routes, but also sometimes venture out to places like Brentwood, Colchester and South Woodham Ferrers. Not only is CF Depot their last bastion in Essex, it is the last bastion for the SLF in the entire First Bus fleet across the UK.

Earlier this year, it looked as if it was going to be a close call between CF and First Cymru's Swansea depot as to which depot would retain the largest number in service, but it is now a one depot race. Apart from First Cymru, with four (42607/12/13/14) still left in its fleet, but probably now all withdrawn, a remarkable survivor is Caetano narrow bodied mini 43860 with First Glasgow which has an Essex connection as it was first re-registered as EG52 FGF following its repatriation from Jersey (First Essex once owned sisters 43854-7), but which has since been re-registered again to MXZ 2148. It spends its life plying service 266 between Hamilton and Shotts / Newmains.

First Eastern Counties was another contender to be operating the last SLFs, and five (42911/14/21/26/38) still remained in service at Lowestoft during the summer. However, they have now all been withdrawn, and 42921 (EU05 AUN), which was one of three SLFs transferred from First Essex in 2013, had the honour of operating the very last SLF journey on 15 November when it ran on the 0950 service 109 to Carlton Colville. It didn't last much longer, being taken away for scrap on 28 November (see Ensignbus report above).

This will be the SLFs' last Christmas, and I think that they deserve this short tribute in EBM and a thank you for all the service that they have given to Essex communities over many years. When they finally make their last journeys, it will also mark the end of a bus with pure Dennis origins, rather than its successors in the form of Transbus or ADL.

With thanks to Adam Kelleher and Andrew Toms.

42921 (EU05 AUN) was one of six ADL Dart SLFs (42918-23) that were new in March 2005 to operate Chelmsford route 42 (Broomfield to Galleywood) for which they wore new style red branding. They were the first vehicles in the fleet to have scrolling via points, including originally also at the rear in very small lettering beneath the route number. They lost their branding in early 2009. In March 2013, 42919-21 moved to First Eastern Counties. 42921 is seen below ending life as it began, with red vinyls, this time for the rebranded FEC Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth services as 'Coastal Reds', leaving Lowestoft Bus Station on 4 August 2022. **Andrew Toms**



In last year's Christmas issue we ventured further afield than usual with a feature on Alan's trips to France. This year we look at two trips Alan made to Hong Kong and surrounding areas in 1976 and 1982. There are local connections with Eastern Counties, Eastern National, Ensignbus and East London, plus the odd other vehicle included for interest.

In the early 1970s large numbers of British double-deckers were exported to Hong Kong, these included the entire batch of 50 Leyland Atlanteans from London Transport as well as many provincial AEC Regents, Guy Arabs and Leyland Titans and more Atlanteans. A holiday was arranged to Hong Kong in 1976 (in October after the monsoon season), with side excursions to the nearby Portuguese province of Macau.

At that time China Motor Bus served Hong Kong Island, whilst Kowloon Motor Bus covered the mainland and New Territories up to the Chinese border which was firmly closed. In Macau it was possible to travel almost the entire length of the peninsula on a Bristol L5G. Following further interesting developments, a return holiday in 1982 followed, this time to observe lots of acquired London Transport DMSs and to seek out the newly formed Hong Kong Citybus. In 1977 a new bus company with British connections had been established in Hong Kong under the name of Passenger Transportation Services (Asia) Ltd. In 1979 the trading name was changed to 'City Buses'. A sedate yellow livery was adopted with the fleet name carried in both Chinese and English. Contracts, tours and private hires were the main activities. In 1983 the fleet name became 'Citybus' and a striking bright canary yellow livery introduced. More double-deckers followed, including a solitary Bristol from Essex.

Following significant investment from T.T. Tsui (CNT Group) there was considerable expansion into franchised bus service work. In 1991, CNT purchased the bus operating arm of Ensignbus in London which then became Capital Citybus. The corporate yellow livery, logo and dual language signage was then applied as used in Hong Kong.

Below: We start in mainland Macau, at the Barra terminal with two Fok-Lei Auto-Carros Beadle-Bedford integrals. The front one, M-20-73, is the prototype which joined the Eastern National fleet in 1946 as 3924 (LNO 150), re-numbered 162 in 1954. With a retrofitted front entrance. 1976 visit. Fok-Lei is the name of the operator, Auto-Carros is 'bus' in Portuguese. The registration number follows the Portuguese style with M standing for Macau. All photos **Alan Osborne**



Also in Macau is Fok-Lei Auto-Carros M-10-72, an ECW bodied Bristol L5G, operating cross peninsula service 5 (Porta do Cerco - Barra). New to Eastern Counties as LL47 (CVF 747) in 1946, seen passing through the central district. 1976 visit.



Now to mainland Hong Kong and the New Territories, Kowloon Motor Bus 2L63 (BE 7946), at Jordan Road ferry terminal, is a Leyland Atlantean with Metro Cammell bodywork, new to Maidstone & District as DH535 (535 HKI). The L code stands for Lai Chi Kok, a triple decker bus garage with an allocation of 750 vehicles. 1976 visit.



Kowloon Motor Bus 2D44 (CN4275) was previously London Transport DMS1582 (THM 582M), a Daimler Fleetline with MCW bodywork. The "2" in the fleet number denotes second-hand. The sign writing on the side reads "please don't overload the bus". 1982 visit.



Moving on to Hong Kong Island, and China Motor Bus MW10 (AH 4157) which was previously Southdown 528 (PUF 528), a Guy Arab IV with Park Royal bodywork, seen on route 73 to Wah Fu from Stanley in the south of the island. This bus has also had front doors retrofitted. Note the 'coin in the slot' symbols on the front. 1976 visit.



Parked up at North Point is China Motor Bus XA2 (BD 7311), a Park Royal bodied Leyland Atlantean, previously registered CUV 2C and with the same fleet number as when owned by London Transport. 1976 visit.



London Transport had purchased two classes of eXperimental double-deckers in the mid-1960s, XA1-50 (Atlanteans) and XF1-8 (Fleetlines). All the XAs came to China Motor Bus, but the XFs, by then with London Country, stayed in England. However, as CMB had continued to use the XA code for the Atlanteans, they decided to use XF for Fleetlines. Those they imported, via Ensignbus, were later models which had been classified DMS by LT. In the revised China Motor Bus livery is XF69 (CL 1541), a Park Royal bodied example, ex DMS686 (TGX 868M), seen in Wanchai. In total 206 examples were imported. 1982 visit.



City Buses started by operating contracts and private hire work. Their first intake of Metro Cammell bodied Daimler Fleetlines came from Bournemouth, as exemplified by D6 (CA4143), formerly 193 (CRU 193C). The livery was somewhat uninspiring, with English and Chinese fleet names. 1982 visit.



In 1983 City Buses became Citybus with a bright canary yellow livery. Citybus in Cantonese is 'Sing ba'. Note the 'C' logo incorporating an arrowhead. B21 (CR 2146) was their only Bristol, an FLF6LX with ECW bodywork new to Eastern National as 2928 (AVW 397F), later converted by EN to OMO. It is seen parked up at the garage. It was converted to open top in 1985, a photo of it thus appears in the Group's Lodekka book, written by Chris Stewart. 1982 visit.



On 29 December 1991 CNT Group purchased the London operations of Ensignbus, which then became Capital Citybus. Vehicles soon appeared in corporate bright canary livery with dual language names as seen on the FLF in the previous photo. Northern Counties bodied Leyland Olympian 159 (K888 TTT) has a cherished registration. The number 8 is considered lucky in Chinese and TTT refers to T.T. Tsui. Cantonese Sing ba in Ilford in July 1994.



In his blog 'Bus and Train User' in November 2021, Roger French, the former Managing Director of Brighton & Hove Buses, made (rightly) scathing comments about the deplorable state of Harlow Bus Station, particularly the long out of date poster information. He made mention of the non-standard oblong frame (which was attached to the outside wall of the Gents toilets) of L C B Travel that mainly advertised the ZIP service along with their other activities using around a dozen minibuses. This caused me to delve into my photo collection and research back numbers of EBN and the excellent website Harlowride to discover more on the history of L C B Travel.

In September 2009, L C B took over the Monday to Friday contract for route ZIP1 (Bus Station to Milwards, to the south west of the town centre) from Arriva, along with the vehicle that operated the route, a Mercedes eight-seat 115CDI (KS05 JJE), successor to two previous people carriers. This was a different route to Arriva's 2/3 and left Paringdon Road where it went round the estate to return. A year later it introduced a commercial Saturday morning service. In April 2010 it obtained a most unusual vehicle for service work, an Optare Alero, YN04 XZR (although another Essex operator, De Vere, also had one, YT51 AX0, illustrated on the cover EBN 544 (August 2009).

Significant expansion occurred in 2011 with the commencement of a commercial service in August, LCB1, which was a circular route to the north of the bus station to Old Harlow via Templefields Retail Park and south to Staple Tye via Bush Fair. Initially it had run Monday to Saturday, but the Saturday service was later withdrawn and Mondays to Fridays reduced to 0900 to 1400 by mid-January 2014. John Card has a copy of a timetable for this service dated February 2014, although no actual date of it ceasing has been recorded and it was never officially deregistered.

In September 2011 the LCB2 to Bush Fair via Mark Hall South and Brays Grove appeared which replaced the withdrawn Arriva commercial daytime service 8 along Maddox Road. However, when Arriva diverted part of service 9 as the 9A and returned to Maddox Road, LCB2 was withdrawn from there and in competition with Arriva's route 4 became just a Bus Station to Bush Fair via Howard Way route. This apparently deviated to the Retail Park at Templefields only on request but later just operated morning off peak. L C B acquired their first and only full-size bus, a Mini Pointer Dart W928 PTS, but this came to an untimely end - Group member Chris Hatley, then driving for Regal Busways, came across it in a ditch near Bumbles Green.

On my later visits to Harlow I admit that I did not associate the anonymous Ford Transits that had replaced the previous trio with L C B, thinking that these were crew vehicles of other operators. However, it is known that in March 2019, around the time L C B was called to the Traffic Commissioner, ZIP1 stopped running for three weeks and, whilst it briefly resumed, as did LCB2 as a part demand-responsive service, both finally ceased in June when the L C B Travel Ltd licences were revoked.

Roger French's blog must have reached the authorities as an announcement in Essex Bus Passenger News stated that Harlow Bus Station had been cleaned up and on his visit in January this year he photographed the wall that had now had the L C B frame removed.

I am grateful for John Card's input into solving the route changes due to the lack of official information. All trace of L C B has now vanished, so here is a reminder of different vehicles that had operated on each of the services. Below: Mercedes KS05 JJE at Milwards.



Below: Optare Alero YN04 XZR acquired April 2010 from Harrogate Community on route LCB2 at Bush Fair. Bottom: Ex Go-Ahead Mini Pointer Dart W928 PTS on LCB1 exiting Harlow Bus Station. All photos **Owen Woodliffe** except one on next page



Richard Delahoy has added some background information

Firstly, why "L C B"? There are a number of possible ideas - one of the directors was Colin Leslie Brown, so L C B is an anagram of his initials, but the sole shareholder initially was Linda Susan Childs, so possibly the L is for Linda and the C for either Childs or Colin (or both) and the B for Brown. The business operated as a limited company, L C B Travel Ltd (always with spaces between the initials, although the route numbers didn't use spaces, neither did the fleet names nor published information), incorporated In November 2001. Linda Childs was the sole shareholder (with one share of £1) until 2009, when the capital was increased to £100 and she and Colin Brown were then equal shareholders.

In terms of operator licences, there were actually three in all:

**PF1010897**, a restricted licence granted in October 2002. Restricted licences are issued to businesses where the activity of running PSVs is only a small part of their total operations, and the licence initially authorised one vehicle but this was increased to two in August 2003. Presumably their main activity was running private hire cars and minibuses (as suggested by the poster below)?

**PF1072807** was then granted in August 2007, this time a standard national licence for four vehicles, later increased to eight vehicles in January 2010. It was this licence that was used for the local bus services. I'm not sure if the same legal entity can hold two different O Licences in the same Traffic Area, I think the restricted one should have been surrendered.

Pre-dating both of those, Colin Brown held a restricted licence in his own name as a sole trader, **PF0001533** for two vehicles.

So potentially, the businesses had 12 disks available for use from 2010 onwards.

This all unravelled when the company and Mr Brown were called to a Public Inquiry before the Eastern Traffic Commissioner on 13 May 2019. Sadly I didn't have time to attend to hear what the specific issues were, but all three licences were revoked from 10 June and the company and Mr Brown were found to have lost their good repute. Interestingly though, showing that the TC's database cannot always be relied on, all three service registrations are still shown as live today! So much for the TC preaching to operators about keeping accurate records.

There were obviously also issues with Companies House submissions, as an initial action to strike the company off the register was published in October 2018; the company was then struck off in January 2019 but was reinstated the following month (without that, its O Licences would have automatically ceased in January 2019). Accounts for the year to November 2017 were then filed, showing the company to be insolvent. No further accounts were ever filed and the company was finally struck off In November 2020. That really was the end!

LCB TRAVEL LTD  
BRINGS YOU ZIP  
MILLWARDS ESTATE TO HARLOW BUS STATION

**LCB Travel**  
MARTIN HALLS  
Mondays to Fridays

**MARTIN HALLS**  
Saturdays only

**WE ALSO CATER FOR...**  
AIRPORTS GATWICK STANSTED LUTON HEATHROW  
CITY AND COASTAL TRIPS  
SOUTHEND WALTON - ON THE NAZE CLACTON  
WEDDINGS CHRISTENINGS FAMILY GATHERINGS  
HORSE RACES AND DOG TRACKS  
RESTAURANTS  
WE CAN GET YOU THERE  
01279 635 222  
WWW.LCBTRAVEL.CO.UK

Here's the display that so appalled **Roger French** in November 2021. The service had ceased two and a half years before this.

# Ensignbus Heritage Running Day 3 December 2022



The star surprise vehicle for the Ensignbus heritage running day on Saturday 3 December was Routemaster 543 CLT, superbly restored as Southend Transport 116 (see inside front cover). It is seen here at Tilbury Ferry, accompanied by preserved Southend 122 (VLT 44, ex LT RM44) which is owned by Stuart Miles and based at the Canvey Island Transport Museum. 122 shadowed 116 from Lakeside to Tilbury (but was not used in service) before returning to the museum. Sadly 116 was declared a failure on arrival in Brentwood with a water leak, being replaced there by RML2588 (which was illustrated last month on Southend seafront service 68). **Richard Delahoy**

There are detail differences between the two Southend Routemasters. 116 is in original style livery, 122 is in later style with blue around the upper deck windows and larger fleet names. 116 has running number plate holders, 122 does not. The red stripe on 122 is where John Lidstone designed it (sitting immediately beneath the beading), that on 116 was as applied by ST, with a one-inch masking tape gap below the beading. Mirror arms on both are different colours (as they were in service). 122 has authentic non-chrome rings / rims, but the front hubs are polished with badges, which they weren't in service. It has also lost its DiPTAC yellow powder-coated stanchions. The front and rear fleet names on 122 are slightly too large, John is providing new ones for 122 to match those on 116. 116 should not have chrome wheelnut rings or lamp rims, but that was a personal preference of the Directors of Ensignbus and is also in line with 102 when a showbus - which 116 would have been had it survived at ST. John added silver to the wing tread strips on 116 to match how 102 looked, also 116 has copy AEC front hub badges made by Mardens, whereas the hub was just black in its ST days. On 116 the registration plate, carefully created, is of the 1962 style with thicker RT style digits. It will get the thinner RM style (as 122 correctly has) once the digits are available to copy. That change occurred in 1964 when seven-digit registration plates were introduced.

## Rear Cover

Carrying passengers for the 2nd time since restoration, used for free short circular trips around Lakeside, and bearing GB registration 6332 J, this 1932 Leyland Titan TD2 with Leyland body was new to Jersey Motor Transport in the Channel Islands with the reverse registration of J 6332. Withdrawn by JMT in 1961, it was sold to collector Michael Banfield who fully restored it in 1962/63. It was sold at auction in 2014 to Ensignbus who became only the vehicle's third owner in 90 years. It remains petrol engined.

At Lakeside Bus Station

Top: front view **Richard Delahoy**

Bottom: rear view **Alan Moore**

Two buses outside 'The Dairyman' public house at Wilson's Corner, Brentwood High Street. Both these buses were loaned to Ensignbus from London Bus Works / London Bus Company for the running day.

Firstly, former London Country Leyland Atlantean AN264 (KPJ 264W) with Roe body. It had earlier failed at Shenfield Station and here was making a short working to Lakeside rather than onwards to Tilbury Ferry, in order to get back onto its booked working. Previously preserved in LondonLinks livery and later in Maidstone & District colours, it was restored to LCBS condition last year. 30 years ago contemporary Bristol VRs in the same livery, operated by Eastern National, would have been picking up passengers at the same spot. Atlanteans got as far as Romford but not to Brentwood.

Secondly, former London Transport SM1 (AML 1H), an AEC Swift / Marshall, takes on a capacity load for Upminster. Ensignbus's own Green Line coach T499 also operated on the X21 on the day. Both **Richard Delahoy**





ESSEX BUS MAGAZINE    Issue 704    December 2022

*Reporting the Essex bus scene since 1964*