

ESSEX BUS NEWS

April 1998

The monthly magazine of the ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

(Formerly the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group)

408



VOLVO B6 L102PWR in service with Thamesway during the short stay it had in Essex. It is seen here at Basildon Bus Station on service 151 on 5th March, P FORD

WITH THE RESIGNATION OF ANDY MEADOWS AS THAMESWAY SUB EDITOR ALL REPORTS SHOULD NOW BE SENT TO JOHN WEEKS 34 ELLIOT CLOSE SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS CHELMSFORD CM3 5YN 01245 329540.

MANAGING EDITOR:

Peter Snell

Please send your news reports to:

SUB EDITORS:

Southend Transport:

Steve Thompson, 19 Haven Close, Canvey Island, SS8 0LX

~~Thamesway:~~

~~Andy Meadows, 10 Harvard Court, Boston Avenue, Rayleigh, SS6 9ST~~

Essex Buses & S Essex small ops: Ian Ransom, 34 Donald Way, Chelmsford, CM2 9JE

County Bus:

Ian Burton, 46 Stoneleigh Drive, Hoddesdon, EN11 9LN

North Essex major ops:

Paul Sparks, 87 Thorpe Road, Great Clacton, CO15 4NT

North Essex small ops:

Dave Arnold, 21 Cedar Chase, Heybridge, Maldon, CM9 4NR

TOURS ORGANISER:

Andy Meadows, 10 Harvard Court, Boston Avenue, Rayleigh, SS6 9ST

PHOTO ORDERC:

Peter Snell, 6 Mandeville Way, Benfleet, SS7 4LH

MEMBERSHIP:

Derek Stebbing, 18 Lynmouth Avenue, Chelmsford, CM2 0TP

ESSEX BUS NEWS

408

EDITORIAL

408 FOCUS OF MONTH

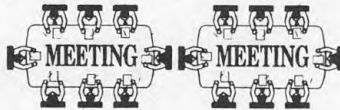
~~KKX~~ 408 ,a Leyland PS1 Duple C35F was acquired by Eastern National with the business of Queens Park Coaches of Halton in 1951,given fleetnumber L128 it later passed to United Counties with the transfer of the Midland Area in May 1952,only to be reacquired by Eastern National in June 1958 as 014.

THAMESWAY.The Volvo B6s mentioned last month left after a few days but as you see the did enter service,but now some other interesting double deckers have arrived.

SOUTHEND SEA FRONT SERVICE 67 STEPHENSONS COACHES

In a recent competition run by Stephenson's to name the Bristol VR MBZ 7140,the winner came up with EASTUARY CLIPPER.This years service in partnership with Southend Council commenced on April 4th and will operate every weekend,most bank holidays all school holidays until September.

THAMES WEALD finally ceases operations,a full history of services appear in this issue thanks to Ian Taylor. Has any member a full fleet history?.



Rochford Freight House 8pm

The next meeting at Rochford will be in September,details later.

May 12th Visit to Stephenson's Coaches at Rochford

June 16th Visit to Harrisbus West Thurrock and Belvedere.

GROUP TOUR

June 13th to Suffolk and Norfolk,booking form enclosed.

The Group sales stand will be at the following events

June 7th Southend Bus and Transport Show Southchurch Park

June 28th North Weald rally see you there*****

Contributions received with thanks from Essex Buses(Eastern National and Thamesway) Southend Transport,County Bus and Coach,Harrisbus.Southend Transport,PSV Circle, LOTS,R Dennis,G Toon,P Ford, C Sigston, I Taylor, Contributions for EBN409 should be with Sub Editors by May 6th and Managing Editor by 13th May.



ROUTE HISTORY OF THAMES WEALD (BY IAN TAYLOR)

The 31st March 1998 saw the end of a long established but rather obscure independent bus company which has been serving Essex continuously since the opening of the Dartford Tunnel back in 1967, although operations in Kent predated this event by six years. I do of course refer to Thames Weald Ltd, an operator which has fascinated me since my early-teens.

Romford was one of my mother's favourite venues for Saturday shopping expeditions in the late seventies and whilst my family concerned themselves with the market and shops I set up base camp in St Edwards Way and Mercury Gardens to record the bus scene with my notebook and pencil. In addition to dozens of new Titans to spot with NS and RD garage codes, routes like the 86 and 193 still boasted Routemasters whilst Eastern National Bristol FLFs serviced the 251 to "London Wood Green".

A further delight for me was the occasional appearance of the elderly blue Thames Weald coach and I lost no time in writing to the address in West Kingsdown for a timetable. When nothing materialised I phoned the number quoted on the London bus map to enquire about bus times but recall receiving a less than helpful response from an elderly sounding gentleman who snapped that he "didn't have time for all my piddling questions as it was quite obvious that I had no intension of ever travelling on the service and was therefore not a genuine customer" and hung up forthwith.

After that less than inspiring start, by travelling on various short working journeys from Romford to Aveley or Dartford and return I actually got to know the proprietor quite well and on one occasion upon payment of five pounds, which was quite a lot of money then to a sixteen year old, I received a large package containing virtually every timetable and leaflet ever issued by Thames Weald with which I was able to compile the route history which follows this preamble.

Founded in October 1961 as The Thames Weald Travel Society by psychiatrist Dr Nesbitt Heffernan, Rev DG Thomas, a vicar from Knatts Valley, and Cranley Onslow, a Kent Councillor, members paid a subscription which entitled them to as many free rides as they wished on a Thursday only route between Gravesend and Sevenoaks via Longfield, Fawkham, West Kingsdown, Knatts Valley and Otford. Hands were raised in horror by London Transport who claimed that "a coach and horses was being driven through the regulations" by daring to operate a service in such a way. Happily much correspondence and a visit to 55 Broadway yielded the necessary stage carriage licence and the service gradually built up to a Monday to Saturday operation by May 1963 when the name was changed to Thames Weald Ltd.

LT withdrawals on the sabbath led to the introduction of a Southfleet to Meopham service in May 1964 although this was withdrawn sometime in the autumn of 1966. During the LT overtime ban of the same year, Thames Weald took over part of the 89 route working it in two separate sections between

Blackfen and Bexley and Welling and Blackheath using one bus on each portion until LT resumed operation on 27.2.66.

The opening of the Dartford-Purfleet Tunnel presented the opportunity of running through to Romford and Dr Heffernan commenced his grandly named "Tunnel Express" on 19.8.67. On the 25.5.71 this 32 mile route was extended from Sevenoaks to Crawley on a DAILY basis and re-named "The Four Counties Route", with a total route length of 65 miles. Ironically this covered a fair proportion of the once proposed orbital Green Line 728 service from Romford to Guildford which in the end never materialised.

A lack of staff and serviceable vehicles regrettably led to the temporary suspension of the Sevenoaks to Crawley section of The Four Counties Route on 28.2.74 which in the event never resumed.

Further difficulties caused the Sevenoaks to Romford route to be reduced to Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays in July 1976 and although a licence was granted in November 1978 to provide a replacement for withdrawn LCBS 401 between Sevenoaks and Eynsford, this road was never worked by Thames Weald.

The operation of badly maintained vehicles landed Doctor Heffernan in the Traffic Court in the early 1980s, the ramifications of which led to the purchase of two new Dodge minibuses. A monthly excursion to Maidstone was introduced in November 1981 in order to get them serviced.

The original Gravesend service which had run constantly since 1961 was withdrawn on 3.6.82 but major improvements were made to the Romford service on the same date. In 1984 an adventurous Saturday service was introduced called "The Ring of Kent" which ran Romford - Dartford - Maidstone - Romford. I was fortunate enough to be able to sample this mammoth expedition in the summer of that year; the round trip taking three hours forty-five minutes!

De-regulation saw Maidstone featuring in the timetable on five days a week (instead of just Tuesdays and Saturdays) whilst in July 1987 a new Swanley to Romford service was introduced on Wednesdays and Fridays. On 15.10.87 another ambitious extension was introduced which took buses beyond Romford to Epping, Bishop's Stortford and Cambridge!

On 1.5.89 a determined attempt was made to serve the entire south of England by Thames Weald minibus with one bus on Wednesdays and Fridays running from Sevenoaks to Shoeburyness via Maidstone, Gravesend, Dartford and Basildon whilst the second bus ran from West Kingsdown via Swanley, Dartford, Ilford, Barking to Dagenham. On Saturday the bus ran from West Kingsdown via Dartford, Basildon to Southend, returning to Dartford then via M25 to Crawley and Brighton! This pattern of operation lasted until 3.4.95 when the Romford to Dagenham section and the loop via Swanley were both withdrawn. The adventurous extensions to Cambridge and Brighton also ceased from the same date with the remaining services being re-cast.

A drastically reduced timetable was introduced from 10.7.97. Romford was still served on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays with the Southend projections still taking place

on Thursdays and Saturdays. In Kent, the Tuesday service to Maidstone, Ashford and Folkestone continued unchanged. There turned out to be no further changes until the final closure of the Thames Weald business took place on 31.3.98.

Thames Weald services may not have been the most frequent in the London area but they have offered plenty of interesting, and quite diverse, destinations over the years all the same.

How ironic that after all those years of going to Romford to observe Dr Heffernan's buses, in the days when I lived in Cheshunt, that twelve years later I should move to far away Brighton and end up living within one hundred yards of the Thames Weald bus route which ran along Lewes Road!

THAMES WEALD - ROUTE HISTORY

- 5.10.61 NEW ROUTE Gravesend to Sevenoaks via Longfield, Fawkham, West Kingsdown, Knatts Valley and Otford (Thursdays).
- 2.11.61 Diverted via Woodlands and East Hill.
- 7.12.61 Augmented to run Tuesdays and Thursdays, upon withdrawal of LT 492.
- 5.1.62 Augmented to run Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.
- 20.5.62 Hever Road, West Kingsdown added to network.
- 23.5.63 Name changed to Thames Weald Ltd. Service introduced to work Mondays to Saturdays. Romney Street added to network.
- 31.12.63 Revised route in East Hill - no longer runs beyond No.1 Ashen Grove due to poor roads.
- 31.5.64 NEW ROUTE C Southfleet to Meopham (Sundays). Service A now runs Southfleet to Sevenoaks (Mondays to Fridays).
- 9.2.66 Took over LT 89 during overtime ban withdrawal. Worked in two sections: B1 Blackfen to Bexley and B2 Welling to Blackheath using one bus each.
- 26.2.66 B1, B2 withdrawn. (LT 89 resumed 27.2.66)
- Autumn 66 Route C withdrawn.
- 19.8.67 NEW ROUTE D Sevenoaks to Romford (Tunnel Express) (Daily) Gravesend to Sevenoaks now known as route A. Service to Romney Street suspended.
- .6.69 Route out of Dartford revised due to closure of Darenth Road. Now runs via Watling Street, Gore Road, Green Street, Green Road, Lanes End.
- 31.5.70 In Romford, Mercury Gardens replaced Church Lane as the terminus due to building of a shopping precinct.
- 25.5.71 Diverted via West Kingsdown between Horton Kirby and Knatts Valley following withdrawal of LT 452. NEW ROUTE B Romford to Crawley "The Four Counties Route" (Daily)
- 8.1.74 All Sunday services withdrawn.
- 28.2.74 Service temporarily suspended between Sevenoaks and Crawley (Never resumed). Service via Woodlands withdrawn.

- 10.7.76 Romford to Sevenoaks route reduced to Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays due to lack of staff. Other routes are: West Kingsdown to Sevenoaks (Mondays to Fridays; peaks), Sevenoaks to Gravesend (Tuesdays, Saturdays) and Sevenoaks to Dartford (Thursdays).
- .8.77 Dartford route diverted away from Horton Kirby and Darenth to run via Longfield. This ran Thursdays with Gravesend route Tuesdays and Saturdays.
- .3.78 Licence to Crawley suspended. Temporary withdrawal thus became permanent.
- .11.78 Licence granted for Sevenoaks to Eynsford route over withdrawn LCBS 401 but never operated.
- .9.81 A monthly excursion to Maidstone introduced in order to get Dodge bus serviced.
- 12.9.81 Extra journey introduced on Saturday mornings into Romford.
- 3.6.82 Gravesend service ceased. Service extended in school times to/from various schools in Sevenoaks. More through journeys from Romford to Sevenoaks introduced, a return facility is now available from Essex (previously only possible from Kent). Romford service introduced Tuesdays and Thursdays (so now Mon-Sat) and service altered to form loop: Hornchurch, Roneo Corner, Romford Station, Mercury Gardens, Main Road, Balgores Lane, Slewins Lane, Butts Green Lane, Romford (one way only). Diversion via Romney Street withdrawn.
- 12.7.82 Monday service withdrawn except for school and commuter journeys.
- 14.12.82 Tuesday afternoon service withdrawn. Thus Romford to Sevenoaks service runs Wednesdays to Saturdays only.
- 23.7.83 New timetable introduced. Saturday morning journeys work into Romford via Gidea Park instead of Roneo Corner. School journeys in Sevenoaks also serve Walthamstow Hall School. Afternoon journeys south of Longfield and West Kingsdown now worked on a dial-a-ride basis.
- 16.6.84 Saturday journeys work via Uplands Estate and a new Saturday service introduced from Romford and Dartford to Maidstone. Tuesday service revised to run Dartford to Maidstone via Longfield, New Ash Green and Saturdays from Romford and Dartford to Maidstone, (instead of Sevenoaks). However the new timetable did not start until 3.7.84.
- ? Certain journeys on Thursday (non Schooldays) diverted via West Thurrock (Tesco Superstore).
- c.10.84 Journeys via Uplands Estate withdrawn.
- 26.10.86 Extended Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays from Sevenoaks to Maidstone and on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays continue from Maidstone via Rochester, Gravesend, Dartford, Aveley to Romford. On Thursdays returns from Sevenoaks via East Hill, West Kingsdown, Longfield, Gravesend, Dartford,

- Aveley to Romford. Also short journeys on Tuesdays work from Sevenoaks to Maidstone.
- 1.7.87 Timetable changes on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays with a through return journey from Sevenoaks (Wednesdays and Fridays) or West Kingsdown (Saturdays) to Southend. New Wednesdays and Fridays service from Swanley to Romford.
- 13.10.87 Tuesday Romford to Maidstone journey extended to Folkestone.
- NEW ROUTE Ash to Sevenoaks (Sch)
- 15.10.87 Thursday Sevenoaks to Romford journey extended to Epping, Bishops Stortford and Cambridge.
- 1.5.89 On Wednesdays and Fridays one bus runs from Sevenoaks to Shoeburyness via Maidstone, Gravesend, Dartford and Basildon whilst the second bus runs from West Kingsdown via Swanley, Dartford, Ilford, Barking to Dagenham. On Saturdays the bus runs from West Kingsdown via Dartford, Basildon to Southend, returning to Dartford then via M25 to Crawley and Brighton.
- 3.4.95 On Wednesdays and Fridays service now runs from Sevenoaks to Romford via Gravesend. Romford to Dagenham section and loop via Swanley withdrawn. On Tuesdays the service runs between Sevenoaks, Dartford, Maidstone and Folkestone and on Thursdays from Sevenoaks to Southend but not via Romford. Saturday service is from Riverview Park via Gravesend to Romford and Southend. Services to Cambridge and Brighton withdrawn. (Cambridge licence was surrendered on 24.10.95).
- 10.7.97 Reduced timetables introduced on all services. New Ash Green to Sevenoaks (Solefield School) (Mon-Fri). Then Solefield School (Tue, Wed, Thu SDO, Fri) via Otford, Eynsford then:
 Tuesday: Dartford, West Kingsdown, Maidstone, Ashford, Folkestone.
 Wed, Fri: West Kingsdown, Gravesend, Dartford, Lakeside, Romford
 Thu SDO: West Kingsdown, Dartford, Lakeside, Basildon, Southend
 Thu NSD: Starts at West Kingsdown then Dartford, Lakeside, Basildon, Southend
 Sat: Riverview Park, Gravesend, Dartford, Lakeside, Romford, Basildon, Southend.
- 31.3.98 Last day of operation by Thames Weald Ltd.



Owing to the end of the financial year, your sub-editor has not been able to make his monthly visit to Essex Buses. The following is from members reports, my thanks to them, for enabling some information to be published.

ALLOCATIONS

Mercedes 308/28-35 are now in use at Clacton, in Thamesway livery, but with First Eastern National names. They have enable the final Mercedes 608's to be withdrawn. It is reported that Olympian 4503 (B691 BPU) has been withdrawn and sold to Stephenson's, Rochford.

SERVICES

Changes to Colchester area country services are expected from 26.4.98. Town services are to remain unchanged. This is expected to see work transferred to other depots including Chelmsford (Service 71), Clacton and Maldon (service 75).

UNUSUAL WORKINGS

6.3.98. CF1130 on service 33

7.3.98. CF1130/31 and 4014 all on service 33.

4.4.98 CF 4511 on service 59!!!! (normally single deck)

The above on service 33, were prior to it becoming the Diamond route and were in place of Tiger/Duple or Lynx. Since it became the Diamond route, availability of Dart SLF vehicles has been very good, with an occasional Lynx standing in.

Mercedes 2666 has been noted operating from Chelmsford in early April.

HARRIS BUS



VEHICLES

Optare Excel P320 KAR is now lettered 'Lewisham Link' for use on service 108.

Two further DAF/N Counties are expected soon as R381/2 GTW. It is thought that they are the balance of five built for demonstration to London operators, three years ago. The balance are in stock as P335-7 ROO.

Leyard Leopard/Duple NLG 926T (HIL 3932, BWE 197T) has been acquired for use as a driver training vehicle.

LOTS report a number of unusual workings including Excel 333 on service 129 on 20.1 and 22.1 (should be double deck), it was then on service 132 on 24.1 (should be a R--- DJN Excel). On 2.2 and 4.2 Ilford Link DAF P337 ROO was on service 132! R---DJN Excels in Eltham Link livery have also appeared on service 108. Ilford Link buses on Lakeside routes were 335 on 29.12 and 349 on 24.1, both on service L4.

New Lewisham Link Olympians were used on Ilford routes prior to there use on service 180.

HARRIS COACHES

Short Neoplan N601 EEV has been sold to The Kings Ferry, Gillingham. Also sold is Toyota/Caetano L98 PTW.

DAF/Van Hool N505 CVW has lost Eurolines lettering.

OTHER OPERATORS - REST OF ESSEX

A&D BENFLEET Renault G782 MAK has been sold to Need a Bus, Bowers Gifford.

AIRPORT EXPRESS SOUTHEND A further Ford Transit L582 EPC has been acquired.

APT RAYLEIGH Recent additions are A229 RNS a DAF/Jonckhree, L76/206 RAK both Bova Futuras and Volvo/Plaxton HIL 7591 (D270 XRG) and HIL 8435 (new as A721 BUX). Vehicles sold are Nepolan APT 42S (E75 DMA), DAF/Plaxton A12 APT (E337 EVH) and Dennis Javelin/Marco Polo M1 APT (M708 HBC) and N6 APT. all withdrawn stock will be re-registered with the plates being returned to APT.

Re-registrations are L76 RAK to APT 42S and L206 RAK to 827 APT.

BMW HULLBRIDGE Not a car! But a new operator with Ford Galaxy R757 XKK.

BOON BOREHAM Scania/Van Hool K11 BOO has been sold. Two Setra S250's are expected soon.

BRENTWOOD COACHES Volvo/Plaxton N41 BWN has been acquired.

CEDRIC WIVENHOE Acquired vehicles are former EN Olympian/ECW B694 BPU from Stephenson's, Rochford and Bova Futura OIL 5313 (G827 YJF). A disastrous fire occurred in the early hours of 24th March, which according to press reports was a result of arson. It is reported that 10 vehicles were destroyed and three others damaged. Vehicles known to be destroyed are Setra FSK 868 (C357 KGG), Volvo/Caetano EIJ 4016 (LRT 841V), Volvo/Van Hool M15 CED, Fiat/Dormobile K878 KOO, Bova OIL 5313, and VR's NTC 571R and CJH 116V. A further VR, a Bova coach and one unidentified coach were also destroyed. A number of vehicles have been loaned to cover, including VR HUP 766T from Grahams, Kelvedon and coaches from Partridge.

CHARIOTS STANFORD LE HOPE A further Renault Master is C780 BWVY. Both this and its sister are thought to be on associated company Flavix discs, but are shown here for simplicity.

CHELMSFORD CAB Further Ford Transits are R274/296-99 EVW and R676-9FTW. An acquired Transit is ex Essex CC H957 K VX. A number of vehicles have been replaced including transit F884 PYM and DAF 400 H114 DUT. Press reports state that 60 Transits and 70 Galaxys (for Stansted Airport) are to be purchased each year for the next 3 years. The Galaxys are to be replaced at 4 month intervals!

CROWN BENFLEET G406 DPD a Fiat/Carlyle has been acquired from Tillingbourne.

CRUSADER CLACTON New vehicles are Setra S250's R102/3/24 HEV. Also here is a left hand drive Setra DYV 914V.

CUNNINGHAM CORRINGHAM Scania/Irizar R447 YDT has joined this fleet. It has replaced similar M251 TAK. Setra decker A407 GPY was noted at Scania, Workshop in March and may have been sold.

DM TRAVEL CLACTON This operator has a ?/Caetano. It is usually kept at Hedinghams depot in Stephenson Road.

FARGO RAYNE Have acquired Bova Europa GGD 847X from Stallion, Broomfield. A new vehicle is Scania/Irizar R448 YDT.

FORD ALTHORNE Acquired vehicles are L706 CNR a DAF/Caetano ex Lodge, High Easter and J858 HHU a Dennis Javelin/Plaxton.

MASTER TRAVEL HERONGATE Volvo/Plaxton 579 FTM (A417 CJH) is thought to have been acquired. It was noted at Godwards depot in Ramsden Heath.

NIBS WICKFORD Leyland National 2 ARN 891Y is now registered BIL 6538. This was on ex Ipswich Dodge D202 YDX, which is thought to be withdrawn.

PEGASUS POINT CLEAR LDV 400 L593 KMJ is now owned.

PIONEER CLACTON Ford Transits D75 WRS and EGC 412X are being operated.

S&M THUNDERSLEY Fleetline GHV 29N and Leopard have never been owned. They were loaned here from Ensign, to whom they have now returned.

STORT VALLEY STANSTED According to Coach and Bus week, Meteor Parking (Pink Elephant) now has a 20% stake in Stort Valley.

SUPREME SOUTHEND Former Colchester/Southend, Leyland National 2's BVP 809/10V and EOP 829V have been acquired. A new Neoplan Cityliner is R290 THL. Noted at Scania Coach Sales in March was Scania/Van Hool R861 SDT, in fleet livery, presumed to be waiting delivery. MAN/Jonckhree H10 SUP and HSK 856 (G370 RNH) have been sold.

TRAVELUX STANFORD LE HOPE Bedford/Duple YPB 827T has been acquired.

WINDMILL COPFORD One vehicle is kept at Applebys, Stephenson Road, Clacton.



The third ex-LT MCW Metrobus, M299 (BYX 299V), arrived on 23.3.98. The next one is expected to be M220. M301 (BYX 301V) came out of the paint shop in Arriva livery on 16.3.98. It entered service the following day and promptly broke down. M336 has been fitted with a route number-cum-passing points blind, but still does not carry a fleet number.

Atlantean 76 (TPU 76R) was withdrawn on 6.3.98.

Tiger coach 100 has had its seats refurbished by Hants & Dorset and seat belts have been fitted. 123 also now has seat belts.

Services are to be revised from 20.4.98. Service 1C will be reduced from two to one an hour and will be diverted via Bridgebrook Estate instead of service 1B. There will be an extra hourly bus on service 1A. Two journeys an hour on service 2 will be extended from North Station/Asda via General Hospital and Severalls Park to Highwoods. New service 3 will operate from General Hospital, via the town centre, Maldon Road, Shrub End Estate and Straight Road to Chaucer Way. It will run every 90 minutes. Service 5 will have some extra journeys at tea time on Saturdays. There will be some changes to the Monday to Friday evening peak journeys on service 8. The shopping hours journeys on service 9 will be withdrawn. And new service 700 will run one journey each way between Coggeshall and Colchester on school days.

On 8.3.98 Volvo 60 operated a railway replacement service between Thorpe le Soken and Walton on the Naze, and Olympians 43, 45, 46, 48 and 49 ran between Bethnal Green and Leytonstone. On 15.3.98 56 covered the Walton branch, and 55 did the same on 22.3.98.

Thamesway

ACQUIRED VEHICLE

4022	TPD105X	Leyland Olympian ex County Bus Repainted in Thamesway livery, allocated to HH.	Roe	H45/32F
4023		Similar vehicle, awaiting delivery. Registration number not yet known.		

ALLOCATION CHANGES

411 New – Pool, 412 New – Pool, 415 New – Pool, 416 New – Pool,
1830 D/L – Pool, 1845 HH – BN, 1863 HH – BN, 3225 HH – D/L (D),
3234 HH – D/L (D), 4003 BN – HH, 4004 BN – HH, 4005 BN – HH,
4022 BN – HH, 4023 BN – HH, 2817 EN – BN.

The Dennis Darts on LRT route 214 have had their fleet names removed and now carry MTL London legal lettering, although they are technically only on loan.

2 Leyland Nationals, 1803 & 1870, have been up-seated to 52 seats for school contract work.

A new outstation at Harold Hill Industrial Estate has been opened. The old Brentwood depot site in North Road is now a Sainsbury's supermarket and there is no trace of the old depot.

ODD WORKINGS

Darts on the W9 have been 909/08Jan, 908/19Jan, 911/21Jan, 902/28Jan, 914/10Feb, 913/13Feb and more unusually longer Dart 982/23Jan. 904 was on W13 on 10, Jan and 976 on 21, Feb.

PUBLICITY

Timetable/information leaflet for the Canvey Clipper service, printed in First Group colours, has recently been published.

Would contributors please note that all future Thamesway news items should be sent to the new sub editor, John Weeks, at the address on the front cover.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Andy Meadows for his excellent contribution to the Essex Bus News during his time as Thamesway sub editor. He will be a hard act to follow.

EASTERN NATIONAL
(SUBSEQUENT MOVEMENTS)

<u>FLEET No.</u>	<u>REG No.</u>	<u>DETAILS.</u>	<u>DATE.</u>
0209	C209HJN	To Midland Red West Ltd. ex Brewers. 220	by 3/98
0225	C478BHY	To Midland Red West Ltd. 1478 ex Brewers. 222	12/97
1206	BNO692T	Hardwick (dlr for scrap). Carlton. ex Mansfield Rugby Club.	9/97
1309	ANA 93Y	To Bennett, Warrington. ex Fairbrother, Warrington.	12/97
1404	929CVJ	Northern, Anston. 2229	
	[ex VHK177L]	Re-reg VHK177L	by 1/98
1713	WNO562L	To Yorkshire Terrier Ltd. 26 ex Lincolnshire. 2822 (may only be on loan)	2/98
1754	LJN662P	To Thames Valley Training, - ? - ex West Midlands. 1662	10/97
2857	OPU822D	Londag, Basserdorf, Switzerland. (in use)	by 3/97
9019	4K97493	Subby's Double Decker, Chula Vista, California.	
	[ex LFS298F]	still owned.	3/97

THAMESWAY
(SUBSEQUENT MOVEMENTS)

<u>FLEET No.</u>	<u>REG No.</u>	<u>DETAILS.</u>	<u>DATE.</u>
30	D873LWR	To Garrington, Hednesford. ex Lancaster Bus, Lancaster. 4	11/97
4506	B694BPU	To Cedric, Wivenhoe. 17 ex Stephenson, Rochford.	3/98

ESSEX BUSES
(SUBSEQUENT MOVEMENTS)

<u>FLEET No.</u>	<u>REG No.</u>	<u>DETAILS.</u>	<u>DATE.</u>
2202	C202HJN	To Webber (t/a Small Group Travel), Bodmin.	8/97
2204	C204HJN	To Webber (t/a Small Group Travel), Bodmin.	9/97
2205	C205HJN	To Webber (t/a Small Group Travel), Bodmin.	8/97



VEHICLES

Leyland National 12 BVP812V suffered an engine fire at Shoebury ness recently and is currently out of service.

REPAINTS

AN110 MPJ210L to Arriva livery 4 98.

SUBSEQUENT DISPOSALS

Fleetline 213 JTD 393P Blackmore Brandon End, ex Stephenson's.
Bristol VR 401 LHG440T Halstead Travel

Fleetline 384 GHJ 384L was seen recently at Associated Coachways at Harlow receiving a repaint, ownership unknown at present, ex Glantawe Coaches.

SERVICES

Brighton service 795 resumed operation for 1998 season on 10th April.

Days of operation Sats 11th April to 26th September & 2nd Jan 99
Sunday 27th December. Wednesday 15th July to 26th August
Fridays 10/4.1/5.22/5 28/8. Mondays 13/4.4/5.25/5.31/8.28/12.
Thursday 24/12.31/12.

OTHER NEWS

Operations Manager David Tomlin has now left the Company. David was a good friend of the Group and we wish him well in his new appointment.

EASTERN NATIONAL ENTHUSIASTS GUILD

Blackwells of Earls Colne operated a Leyland TD2 HL 5335 fitted with a secondhand Brush body, was this ex Eastern National?

The following EN Brush bodied vehicles were rebodied by ECW

Bristol G05G 3634/5/40-6	DEV470/1/6-82
Leyland TD5 3706-13	FEV175-18
Leyland TD4 3649	DEV485 fitted with s/hand ECW body

Did the Blackwell body come from one of these? any ideas.

NORTH ESSEX BUS SCENE

In the second North Essex Bus Scene column the news highlight must be the fire at Cedrics of Wivenhoe. At approximately 2.30a.m. on the morning of 24th March flames "as big as a house" were reported by local residents which lead to the attendance of about six fire engines and 30 firefighters..

It is believed that 10 vehicles out of a fleet of 25 were lost at an estimated cost of £500,000. Vehicles destroyed range from some of the Company's VR's to their luxury coaches. Hopefully by next month I will be able to report in more detail on exact vehicles destroyed or damaged in the fire. I can confirm, though, that the former MTL Merseybus ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian registration No. ACM 708X did escape the fire and is still operating as normal.

If a local newspaper article Steve Peck, a director of the Company stated that although the firm had been a regular target for vandals, it was too early to identify the cause.

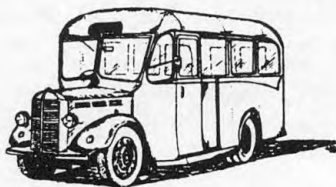
Clacton's local Town services buses are indeed an array of liveries and transfers at present. All of the Mercedes 608's have been withdrawn from service although a batch of around eight or nine remain in tact at Clacton depot. In their place a batch of Reeve Burgess-bodied Mercedes Benz 709D's No's 382-7, (Registration No.'s H393 -H380K), have been transferred from Thamesway. They remain in Thamesway colours with Eastern National small type lettering on the sides and larger style First lettering on the front and rear. The existing Eastern National 708's have mixed lettering. Some have been changed as described on the Thamesway vehicles whilst others still have the larger Eastern National lettering on the sides, front and rear!

An array of vehicles lay in the yard at Clacton depot ranging from the Mercedes 608's, already mentioned, 3 Alexander bodied Leyland Tigers, Thamesway Leyland Nationals, Thamesway Reeve Burgess Beavers, Thamesway and Eastern National VR's, long and short wheel based Dennis Darts and of course Bristol KSW No.2380, Registration No.WNO 480 now decaying rapidly by the day.

Of considerable interest is a new intake of vehicles for Staines Crusader Coaches. These are wearing a new "white based" livery and now means that this Company is operating vehicles with three different types of livery. Hopefully I will be able to bring you a detailed summary of the new vehicles in this fleet by next month.

The Northern Counties bodied Volvo Olympian No.4304, Registration No.L304 PWR, which came from Calderline and is based at Colchester seems to be, in the main, employed on the route between Colchester and Braintree.

Paul Sparks, April 1998



MEMORIES by KEN JENNINGS.

I was 8 years old when Eastern National took over the services and fleet of Berrys of Colchester and was very excited when the first shining double decker was introduced at Brightlingsea outstation.

Mr Webb, who I had been told by my grandfather was the first man to drive a motorbus to the town and Mr Briggs, a younger man, whose widow still lives in Brightlingsea were the local drivers who all the school children knew very well.

The first double decker I can remember was Leyland TD3 3558 BTW 497, which was out-stationed at Brightlingsea until the first years of the war, how we loved it after Berrys saloons. Then one Monday morning early in 1941, a big ancient looking six wheeler appeared to take us to school, it carried 66 passengers, possibly used to carry the extra passengers to the Paxmans factory at Colchester----the 7 05am from Brightling sea, then the 8 05am back then it took us to the senior school. It was an AEC Renown 333 MJ 407, then after the summer term in 1942 it was replaced by sister vehicle 3334 MJ 290 for a week or two, 3333 returned, repainted, and the shabby seats repaired, it remained at Brightlingsea until my school days were in 1943. In 1943 many local buses were drafted to Chelmsford after the disastrous bombing of the depot. In 1944, 3333 disappeared and was replaced by a much newer bus, Bristol GO56 3643 DEV 479 and I remember asking Mr Webb where the Renown had gone and he said it was at Chelmsford 3643 remained at Brightlingsea for many years and was never painted grey as so many buses were at this time, but it received a repaint in 1945 when it lost the white bands round the body, I well remember VE and VJ days it was decked out with Union Jacks and bunting. It kept running through the terrible winter of 1947.

As the years went by the Brush body became very shabby and the autumn of 1948 it disappeared as did many of Colchester's Bristols, I was told that they were at the Eastern Coachworks at Lowestoft for new bodies. Bristol K 3944 MPU 5 a new bus, was used at Brightlingsea until 3643 was returned, but it was found that the new body body was four inches higher and would not go into the depot.

Mr Webb retired in 1955 aged 70 and from then on until the depot closed there never seemed to be a regular bus assigned, although I remember Bristol K 3891 KNO442 and 4045 ONO 66 spending periods there, and the last bus I recall was Bristol FLF 1675 BVX 672B.

Sid Cooper - Transport artist

I was saddened to learn recently of the death of the respected transport artist, Sid Cooper, who passed away on February 25th. He had painted three local transport scenes for me, now well known since they were reproduced as postcards (and sold on the group sales stand!) - Southend tram 44 at Southchurch, tram 48 at Leigh and AEC Regent III 259 at Victoria Circus. More recently, Sid's painting of the unique Gloster trolleybus, Southend 122, was featured in *Classic Bus* 29.

His family, now living in France, intend to continue to market copies of the prints; if you are interested in seeing the catalogue when available, please let me know.

Richard Delahoy

(272 Shoenbury Road, Southend on Sea, SS1 3TT)

FLEET



ARRIVA

County Bus & Coach

Allocation Changes to February 1998

LP 5/6	FYT 335/6V	Stored to Sold (Ripley, Carlton)
LR 3/5/11	TPD 103/5/11X	Stored to Sold (Fleetmaster, Horsham)
MD 602	J602 WHJ	Edmonton to Scrapped following fire damage
TDL 53/63	C253/63 SPC	Harlow to Sold (Stephensons, Rochford)
TDL 54	C254 SPC	Ware to Stored
TP 61	B261 KPF	to Sold (Ripley, Carlton)
TP 70-2/5	B270-2/5 KPF	to Sold (Ripley, Carlton)

SERVICES

14 February	333	Ware - Hertford circular. Revised running time. Service via Foxholes withdrawn
	341	Hertford-St Albans. Service withdrawn (Last Day of Operation 13/02/98). HCC subsidy contract 14/02/98 - 09/05/98
	350/1	Hertford - Bishops Stortford. Service withdrawn (LDO 13/02/98). Herts CC subsidy contract 14/02/98 - 09/05/98
	724	Harlow - Heathrow Airport. Revised running time daily. Sunday diversion via Roydon withdrawn.
16 February	381	Toot Hill / Epping - Harlow. Minor timetable revision
21 February	18	Haverhill - Saffron Walden. ECC contract / commercial. Revised route in Steeple Bumpstead.
9 March	711	Old Harlow - London. Service reduced to one journey in each peak on Monday-Friday
4 April	255	Epping - Waltham Cross. Service withdrawn (LDO 03/04/98)
	354	Harlow - Buntingford. Monday - Friday service withdrawn 03/04/98). HCC contract 06/04/98 - 08/05/98
	445	Barley - Saffron Walden. Service withdrawn (LDO 03/04/98)
	E4/63/453	School contracts surrendered (LDO 08/04/98)
9 May	327	Waltham Cross local service. Service withdrawn (LDO 08/04/98). Possible LTB replacement service to be tendered.
	341	Hertford - St Albans. County Bus operation withdrawn LDO (08/05/98). HCC contract awarded to University Bus
	350/1	Hertford - Bishops Stortford. County Bus operation withdrawn DO08/05/98). HCC contract awarded to Eastern National
	354	Harlow - Buntingford. County Bus operation withdrawn LDO (08/05/98). HCC contract awarded to Eastern National



ARRIVA GROUP NEWS

Financial results for the year ending 1997: Turnover for the bus division, which comprises operations and distribution, rose to £472 million (1996: £263 m) with a pre-tax profit up to £50.1 million (1996: £33.7m). Arriva Passenger Services reported an operating profit of £56.1 million (1996: £35.3m) after exceptional redundancy and restructuring costs. Arriva's London bus companies achieved an operating profit of £16.5 million (£15.5m) on a turnover of £118 million (1996: £113m).

Following are the current 'descriptors' and new names for all of the Arriva Group companies. But some may change slightly. The Edmonton garage of Arriva County Bus, may be included in the 'serving London' rather than 'serving Herts & Essex'.

Area & New Name	Descriptor	Old Name
Scotland:		
ARRIVA Scotland West	serving Scotland	Clydeside Buses Ltd
Northumberland/Newcastle:		
ARRIVA Northumbria	serving Northumbria	Northumbria Motor Services Ltd
North East:		
ARRIVA North East	serving the North East	North East Bus Ltd
ARRIVA Durham County	serving the North East	United Automobile Services Ltd
ARRIVA Teeside	serving the North East	Teeside Motor Services Ltd
ARRIVA Tees & District	serving the North East	Tees & District Transport Co Ltd
Yorkshire:		
ARRIVA Yorkshire	serving Yorkshire	West Riding Automobile Co Ltd
ARRIVA Yorkshire West	serving Yorkshire	Yorkshire Woollen District Transport Co Ltd
ARRIVA Yorkshire South	serving Yorkshire	South Yorkshire Road Transport Ltd
ARRIVA Yorkshire North	serving Yorkshire	Selby & District Bus Co Ltd
North West:		
ARRIVA North West	serving the North West	North Western Road Car Co Ltd
ARRIVA Merseyside	serving the North West	Liverline Travel Services Ltd
ARRIVA Lancashire	serving the North West	South Lanes Travel Ltd
ARRIVA Manchester	serving the North West	The Bee Line Buzz Company Ltd
ARRIVA Cheshire		Arrowline (Travel) Ltd
Wales:		
ARRIVA Cymru	serving Wales/gwasanaethu Cymru	Crosville Wales Ltd
Midlands - North:		
ARRIVA Midlands North	serving the Midlands	Midland Red (North) Ltd
	serving Cheshire (Crewe)	
	serving the Midlands	Stevensons
	serving Cheshire (Macclesfield)	

Area and New Name	Descriptor	Old Name
Midlands - East:		
ARRIVA Fox County	serving the Fox County	Midland Fox Ltd
ARRIVA Derby	serving Derby	Derby City Transport Ltd
Shires:		
ARRIVA The Shires	serving the Shires	LDT Ltd
ARRIVA Watford		Lucketts Garages (Watford) Ltd
London Buses:		
ARRIVA London North	serving London	Leaside Bus Company Ltd
ARRIVA London South	serving London	South London Transport Co Ltd
ARRIVA London North East	serving London	Grey Green Ltd
ARRIVA East Herts & Essex	serving Herts & Essex	County Bus & Coach Co Ltd
ARRIVA Colchester	serving Colchester	Colchester Borough Transport Ltd
ARRIVA Southend	serving Southend	Southend Borough Transport Ltd
South East Counties:		
ARRIVA Southern Counties	serving the Medway Towns	Invictaway Ltd
ARRIVA Kent Thameside	serving Kent Thameside	Kentish Bus & Coach Company Ltd
ARRIVA Kent & Sussex	serving the Medway Towns (part)	Maidstone & District Motor Services Ltd
	serving Kent & Sussex (part)	
ARRIVA Croydon & North Surrey		Londonlinks Ltd
ARRIVA Guildford & West Surrey	serving Surrey	Guildford & West Surrey Ltd
ARRIVA Crawley & East Surrey	serving West Sussex (part)	London & Country Ltd
	serving Surrey (part)	
Europe:		
ARRIVA Nederland		Vancom

ARRIVA

Although a corporate image is being presented to the travelling public its a different matter when it comes to their employee share ownership. Shareholders are being asked to vote for a scheme that sets up separate schemes for individual subsidiaries so that employees benefit according to the performance of the part of the group they work for. Grey Green, County Bus and Coach, Leaside Bus Company, London & Country and South London Transport are among those that each have their own schemes although they all operate out of Watsons Road , Wood Green.

MEDIA MONITOR

February 6th: Colchester MP Bob Russell suggests that a light rail system is introduced in Colchester between Stanway and St John's/Essex University.

February 10th: Arriva Colchester drivers raised £2,361 for the children's ward at Colchester General Hospital following their Christmas collection.

February 11th: Rev. Sylvia Wood a Chelmsford industrial chaplain with Eastern National as part of her "flock" is taking her PSV test so that she understands their problems. She may also work a day a month to keep her hand in.

February 13th: A report by the Rural Development Commission reveals that 75% of villages in England have no daily bus service.

February 20th: The youth that stole a coach belonging to Tony Glew (EBN 406/9) causing almost £4k of damage to vehicles he crashed into has been jailed for four months and an existing 6 month ban extended by 18 months.

March 5th: A school girl who tried to use an old 50p coin that had ceased to be legal tender a few days before was turned off an EN bus. This story which covered most of the front page must be treated with some scepticism as according to the report she was travelling to her home in Wormingford on Service 68 which only goes to West Bergholt. Wormingford is only served on weekdays by Chambers and why was she paying as her home was more than 3 miles from the school?

March 6th: A letter complains about R, S, T and V suffix vehicles still being operated by Arriva Colchester compared to other companies who mostly have buses less than 5 years old. For once the accompanying photo is relevant to the story - bus 74..... and behind it an EN LN!

March 9th: The driver of an EN had his coin holder containing £20 stolen at Tower Camp, Jaywick yesterday evening after being threatened by a man with a knife. A 28 year old has been arrested. A condition of First Group taking full control of Great Western Railways is the replacement of all slam door Great Eastern stock by 2002 despite a plan to refurbish them. The 121's on the Sudbury branch must be replaced by October this year.

March 11th: Through bus/rail tickets to locations in the Braintree District are to be introduced and will be available from manned Great Eastern rail stations.

March 12th: A list of 22 ways in which EN want to save £200k has brought a call from the TGWU for the plan to cut overtime and meal allowances to be withdrawn. Although talks are still in progress Bill Lumb of the union said an impasse had been reached and industrial action could not be ruled out.

March 13th: A letter highlights the problem getting car users to switch to the bus. A Fingringhoe resident points out the first bus is 7.50 am and takes 40 mins to get into Colchester, a journey she claims takes 8 mins by car for a 6 mile journey and the last bus back is at 4.20 pm (10.30pm actually but unless you are an expert you probably won't find it in the timetable!) Another letter complains of the lack of regular buses to Colchester Institute and Leisure World. Tiptree Parish Council is again urging EN to reduce off peak fares. Chelmsford Taxibus Ltd and Chelmsford Minicabs Ltd have announced a £10m deal with Dovercourt Ford to supply 60 Ford Transits and 70 Ford Galaxys per year for a

minimum of the next three years. Galaxys with Stansted Airport Cars will be replaced every four months.

March 17th: Colchester Council has approved a £80k scheme to introduce bus lanes in Head Street and North Hill. They will ask the County to remove their eco-friendly adverts from buses which have dirty emissions.

March 19th: Following the loss of Thurrock and Southend and the decision to charge 16 year olds for travel to school the County Council are to re-tender some 300 contracts.

March 20th: EN will introduce four low level "kneeling" buses on Ser 65/A in Colchester in the summer. A letter asks how it is that First Group can invest in new buses while Arriva can't.

March 24th. Fire in the early hours destroyed 6 coaches, three double deckers and a mini-bus at Cedrics premises in Wivenhoe. The blaze is believed to have started in a double decker used on the Colchester Brightlingsea service and is einmg treated as arson. Thanks to Arriva, Glew, Hedingham, Partridge, Wards and Windmill no mileage was lost. Damage to vehicles is estimated at £500k and to buildings £100k.

March 26th: Lodge Coaches of High Easter have moved to new premises covering 3 acres. It boasts a modern paintshop including a £55k paint oven that dries paintwork in an hour. They expect to refinish 40 vehicles a year, Hedingham and Scania being major customers.

March 27th: Boxted Parish Council are to ask Arriva Colchester to consider an evening bus service to the village.

March 30th: A man that punched a bus driver (EBN404 /18) as he was 6p short of his fare admitted the offence which he had committed while already on probation. He was given 14 weeks prison, ordered to pay the driver £25 and further terms of imprisonment for a number of other offences.

March 31st. The Chairman of the Colchester Traffic Management Subcommittee says bus companies have no incentive to invest in new buses and prefer to locate them where they are appreciated. Its up to the Council to create the environment for improving services such as bus lanes. If we expect modern buses we must enter a partnership with the bus companies.

April 7th Bill Lumb of the TGWU claims that drivers are leaving EN because of poor working conditions, six had left last week. EN put staffing problems down to illness. BBC Essex has reported buses in Colchester not running due to "operational difficulties" while cancellation notices have been seen on bus stops in Clacton, one with a customer comment added!

April 8th: First Bus and London developer Simons Estates have submitted a planning application for a multi-screen cinema, two pubs, a restaurant and a health/fitness centre to replace their Queen St. Colchester garage. The plan includes revamping the existing council owned bus station. Bill Hiron of EN said the garage was too cramped and they would welcome the chance to relocate elsewhere in the town. This is the fifth application for a multiplex before the council.

All news appeared in Coach & Bus Week, Colchester Evening Gazette, East Anglian Daily Times, Essex County Standard

or the Essex Chronicle