

# Essex Bus Magazine

Current news and historical features

Issue 691      November 2021



**Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group**

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



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#### Above

An appropriate photo for November's issue when we remember those who died in the two World Wars and since, First Essex Driver Trainer 62191 (X685 ADK) passes the Memorial Cross at Writtle on 30 August 2019. The bus's relevance to this issue is that First Essex have recently received a driver trainer in a similar livery on loan, see page 14. **Adam Kelleher**

#### Front Cover

Another appropriate photo for November's issue, First Essex 32673 leaving Mardens on 29 October to return to Colchester after repaint into this Remembrance Day livery. **John G Lidstone** with thanks to Mardens Commercials and Gordon Claydon. A rear view is on the inside rear cover with other photos of the bus on page 15.

#### Inside Front Cover

Last month's inside front cover featured the Southend Corporation Transport blue & cream livery first introduced in August 1939 and which finally died out with the withdrawal of Fleetline 211 in April 1990. This month we feature the latest livery of successor Arriva.

**Top Left:** 6503 is the first Arriva Southend double-decker to receive the latest light blue livery, repainted after repairs to accident damage. It was photographed on its second day back in service, 27 October 2021, in Thorpe Hall Avenue with Group member Matthew Evans driving (who tipped off the photographer!). The front top deck window is now further obscured by a vinyl advertising free Wi-Fi and USB charging - the massive TV screens behind the front window already significantly block forward vision. Similar stickers on some lower deck windows also obstruct the view out - these are all solid notices, not contravision. **Richard Delahoy.** A rear view is also on the inside rear cover.

**Bottom Left:** Arriva Southend 4182 has had 'We're heading to the beach' graphics added to promote route 9; it is seen here leaving Shoebury East Beach on its first day in this garb, 3 November. It was already in the new livery and has had its white and blue stripes removed. More will be so treated, see page 13. **Richard Delahoy**

# Group Information

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Owen stocks a wide range of colour photos, please send an SAE for details.

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## Subscriptions

A calendar year subscription is £25. 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 will pay a pro-rata subscription calculated at £2.20 per month. For example, a member joining in March would pay 10 x £2.20, i.e., £22. Please contact Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road, Southend-on-Sea SS1 3TT  
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## 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.

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## Target Dates for EBM 692

Reports to Sub-Editors

**27 November**

Sub-Editor drafts to Editor

**3 December**

Dispatch by Printers

on or before **13 December**

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

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

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# Group Notices

## Membership Renewals

A massive thank you to all those members who have renewed already for 2022 - by the end of October, over half of our membership had already paid, a great endorsement of what we offer. We are also extremely grateful to those who have included a donation on top of their subscription, this all helps us to keep up the quality of our Essex Bus Magazine. If you've not yet renewed, we hope you will do so, using the slip enclosed with last month's EBM or by BACS to our bank account. The subscription rate for 2022 is £25. If you need details of how to pay, just drop me an E-mail (details on page 2).

It would help us greatly if you could pay by the end of November, please.

**Richard Delahoy, Membership Secretary**

## The Running Card by Owen Woodliffe

The following events have been advertised.

Saturday 20 November: Enfield Transport Bazaar, St Paul's Centre, 102 Church Street, Enfield EN2 6AR.

Saturday 26 November: London Transport Museum Acton Depot Discovery Tour. See also 'Letters' on page 9.

Saturday 4 December: Ensignbus Heritage Running Day, [www.ensignbus.com](http://www.ensignbus.com).

Four routes at 30mins frequency - £10 all-day adult ticket:

X21 Upminster - Brentwood

X54 Lakeside - Purfleet Heritage Centre - Hornchurch RAF Heritage Centre

X55 Upminster - Lakeside - Bluewater - Gravesend

X81 Shenfield - Brentwood - Lakeside - Grays - Tilbury Ferry.

Saturday 11 December: Route 159 (London) Anniversary Run.

Saturday 1 January: East Anglian Transport Museum Open Day.

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

## Editorial

This month we have five pages of follow ups to items that have appeared in previous issues. This is exactly how we want EBM to be, with members interacting and providing feedback and additional information. Thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue.

Below: On 30 October, Ensignbus Enviro 500 open topper 368, with appropriately programmed blinds for the 100th Southend Mayor, was used to carry the Mayor and civic party as the lead vehicle in the Halloween Parade on Southend seafront. This is a new event and ran along part of the seafront in a similar way to the summer Carnival. **Richard Delahoy**



# Right Honourable Sir David Amess MP, RIP

The whole nation was shocked by the murder of Sir David, Member of Parliament for Southend West and previously Basildon, at a church in Leigh-on-Sea on 15 October 2021. Tributes to him flooded in, including from our local bus companies which served his constituency. The Group would like to add its own condolences to his family and friends. Here Leigh resident **John Lidstone** pays a personal tribute to Sir David. Both photos by John.

The wealth of warm tributes which quickly flowed across all media gave an indication of the many lives, good causes and businesses Sir David had touched and with which he was involved during his time as MP for Southend West from 1997. His keenness to re-open his local surgeries once Covid restrictions permitted was typical of his strong belief in meeting constituents and offering them a listening ear to resolve issues, whilst supporting a wide range of charitable causes (he was a strong campaigner for animal rights) and local businesses, apart from his personal crusade for the seaside town of Southend to be given city status, something now graciously accorded in his memory by Her Majesty the Queen.

The first time I met Sir David was on a classic car run with SCT Daimler CWA6 244. He thought I was a photographer from the Evening Echo, so, assuming that, his first words to me were "Ah good morning - where would you like me to stand....?". He was personally kind to me on several occasions, both in tackling some issues affecting Leigh-on-Sea (such as the reworking of the c2c timetable several years ago, which badly affected Leigh passengers due to significant capacity reduction at peak times), as well as affording me a day spent at the House of Commons and a later visit spent at the House of Lords, so I have good reason to speak up for him in a personal context.

For EBM, I thought it appropriate to offer a couple of views showing Sir David with a transport connection. Stephenson's stepped in to support the local area when First Essex withdrew its service 26A between Southend and Rawthorpe, introducing its weekday service 17 to maintain a south of London Road link through to Southend. Similarly, when Arriva withdrew peak commuter shuttle service 6A between Leigh and Belfairs, it took over the route, which Sir David recognised as supporting the local community. The photo below left shows him supporting the introduction of shoppers service 23 from Eastwood to Leigh, something requested by Eastwood residents in particular. He came to the launch on 21 August 2015, cutting the official cake with MD Bill Hiron with local Councillors and representatives attending. In his speech, he referred to Stephenson's as "the finest independent bus company in the country".



The last time I spoke to Sir David was when he happened to call by when canvassing for local elections, on which occasion he was nice enough to praise the floral displays I work hard to achieve at my home, saying that they made the whole road look nicer, wishing others would do the same. A typically pleasant comment and one I appreciated.

R.I.P good Sir, you will be missed as will your dedication to local people and good causes.



The photo above right shows him more out of the limelight, enjoying a ride aboard preserved London Transport AEC Regal IV RF518 (MLL 936) on Carnival Day 2018, 18 August. Following our first meeting, Sir David knew me well as 'the local transport photographer' and so here, was commenting that he thought I'd show up at some stage. The bus was operating shuttles between Chalkwell and Southchurch Park for carnival volunteers. I sat next to Sir David during the journey and he took the opportunity to talk to me about the open-top service 68, then worked by Go-Ahead London General, partly I guess as the RF was rather nicely blinded, showing 68.

## 691 for EBM 691

Right: Fourways Coaches, Chelmsford H691 PTW on the left at Fourways Yard, Highwood, Chelmsford on 5 March 2013. A 1990 Leyland Olympian / Alexander ex Dublin Bus RH49 (90-D-1049). Similar G937 FVX, ex Dublin Bus RH 8 (90-D-1008) and J267 SPR, an East Lancs bodied Dennis Dominator, new to Bournemouth, alongside. **Robert Downton**



Below: Last month Windmill Coaches of Colchester B690 BPU was included in this feature, a photo taken in Colchester in April 1998. This vehicle had been new to Eastern National, but had passed to Thamesway with the split of the company in July 1990 before moving to South Wales Travel in February 1991. The next in sequence, B691 BPU, had stayed with Eastern National at the split, and was still in service with them a year after last month's photo of B690. 4503, also at Colchester, at the bus station, on route 53, in 1986 Eastern National privatisation livery on 6 April 1999. 4500, B688 BPU, in its original EN livery, was featured in EBM 688. **Robert Appleton**



# Follow Ups to EBM 690

## Essex Preservation in the North East

**Roger Tuke** has written in:

"Thanks for EBM 690, can I make an observation about the interesting article entitled 'Essex Preservation in the North East' on page 28. I believe there are four not three Essex connected buses in Richard Delahoy's three photographs!

"In the third lower picture of former Colchester Borough Transport Bristol RELL / ECW 20, OWC 720M, taken at Tyneside Heritage Vehicles group in Felling, there is an Alexander bodied Atlantean under restoration directly behind it, MVK 538R, new to Tyne & Wear Passenger Transport as 538. It came to Essex in August 1983 (along with two others that summer) and became 51 with Colchester Borough Transport after conversion to single door by T&WPT before delivery. Its Essex connection doesn't end there, because after withdrawal by CBT it went on to Boons of Boreham in November 1990 and following withdrawal by Boons several years later, it then went to Dons of Dunmow where it acted as a store shed (and a source of parts possibly?). It was rescued from Dons and towed back to the North East, where, when I last saw it, it had regained its centre entrance behind its near side staircase and a front grille from another Atlantean in T&WPT yellow, despite the rest of its body still being in Boons red and white [as seen right, Sept 2021]."

Richard Delahoy caught up with MVK 538R in service in Colchester on 19 June 1984, as seen here in St John's Street on cross-town service 4, Greenstead to Shrub End Estate. The lettering on the side reads "We'd all miss the bus", part of a national campaign by the bus industry trade body, the Bus & Coach Council (today known as CPT-UK) in the lead up to planned deregulation. Earlier that month, 51 had appeared at the annual Southend Bus Rally in Southchurch Park. Then nine years later, he found it at Boons of Boreham's depot on 17 September 1993. This nearside view clearly shows that the original centre exit door had been removed. Tyne & Wear PTE were unusual in specifying nearside staircases for their double deckers for some years. The foot of the staircase was near the centre exit and the stairs were forward ascending. Hence the blank panel is actually where the staircase rises; behind is a short plain window where the exit door was. An inward facing seat was placed here as part of the conversion. The staircase panel contains what looks at first sight like an emergency door control (it can't be, there are no exit doors any more!) but is in fact the screen washer top up point.

The staircase position and layout was intended to speed boarding and alighting but that only worked whilst the buses had separate entrance and exit doors; without the centre exit, they created a confusing layout that hindered passenger flow. Left: interior shot showing the staircase on a similar bus, RCU 838S, also taken on the OS Presidential Weekend this September. All photos **Richard Delahoy**



## FA Vase Finals Late 1970s by Adam Kelleher

I was doing some research for EBM on Monday 11 October, when, by chance, I found an article and photo in EBN 621, January 2016, of WNO 479 being used for a victory parade for Hoddesdon Town FC, almost certainly in 1971. This supports what Allan White wrote in his letter last month. I found this the day after last month's EBM went to press - typical! The article states that after their success in 1971, Hoddesdon Town went on to win the inaugural FA Vase in 1975. This competition had been introduced to replace the FA Amateur Cup, as by then, the line between professional and



amateur players had become increasingly blurred, and was for teams lower down the football pyramid. This brings us neatly back to Essex, as three of the next four competitions were won by Billericay Town, in 1976, 1977 and 1979. Buses from Billericay to Wembley in all three years were mainly supplied by Eastern National and Southend Transport (among others) as can be seen in **Paul Harvey's** photo taken in Radford Way, Billericay, parallel to the railway station, on 28 April 1979, with EN's Bristol FLF / ECW 2859, RHK 344D, allocated to Southend, in the foreground and a line-up of Southend Transport Fleetlines in the background.

I was on one (or two) of the buses to Wembley and back, but annoyingly I didn't make a record of which. The next day there was a victory parade in Billericay High Street on an open top bus, but, unlike the Hoddesdon Town 1971 one, this wasn't an Eastern National vehicle, instead Southend Transport Leyland Titan PD3/6 / Massey 312. Unfortunately we don't have a photo of that, but we do have one of 312 taken just over a month later, on 6 June 1979, at Epsom for another sporting event, The Derby (on hire to National Travel (London) for Phillips Petroleum 66). **Richard Delahoy**. Incidentally, when Richard took this photo he had no idea that he would be driving the same bus to the Derby a year later! Also, see page 31 for another Derby Day photo, taken 11 years earlier.





# Letters

Continuing from the previous three pages, some more follow ups to recent EBMs

## Nigel Turner from Braintree

2336

I was interested to see the photo of TNO 690 in EBM 690. In the caption it was noted that it had been allocated to Braintree continuously since at least January 1964. In fact it entered service at Braintree when brand new on 1 March 1952 as number 4165 on hire to Hicks Bros. It replaced Hicks 70, CK 4263, a 1930 Leyland bodied Titan TD1 acquired by Hicks from Ribble circa 1940. I only have details of Braintree allocations from 1950 to circa 1958 and then from circa 1964. However I've got several photos of TNO 690 at Braintree which I think date from the early 1960s so I'm reasonably confident that it spent its entire life there.

## Doug Brown from Brentwood (DB from BD)

2510 & 0474

More of Doug's personal memories and opinions from the Sixties.

Yet more on gearboxes on early 70 seat double-deckers. See also EBM 688 page 22 and EBM 689 page 4.

Bristol LDXXG / ECW 2510 (236 LNO) did have a five-speed gearbox. I once took it to Gatwick on a children's overseas holiday, 70 children and six teachers. This was before the M25 and part M23 and both journeys had to be made through London. Not many drivers can take a decker through London without taking the roof off on a low bridge. I was fortunate, in a previous life I was a taxi driver, but not in London, in Brentwood, but we had to know where the main line railway stations were and other places of interest. The full story is on page 131 of the book 'Eastern National Memories of a Bus Company' [which was reviewed in EBN 680].

More on open-top tree lopper 0474 (WNO 474) as illustrated on pages 30 & 31 of EBM 688.

This was kept at the back of Brentwood garage all winter and was brought out on 1 April and went back in again at the end of October. To get a crew to work the bus a second ESU duty [ESU is 'Early Show Up', i.e., a spare duty which signed on early in the morning to cover for any crews who failed to report for duty] was put up 6am till 2pm. However, this crew did not go out until after the am peak as it didn't want to hold our own buses up. This tree lopping shift was totally City Coach Company guard, I never ever saw an Eastern National crew on it. Tree work was only ever done from 9am to 12pm. Then we would see it outside pubs at Herongate, Blackmore and Shenfield. At 1.15pm the bus would leave the pubs to go to the Council landfill site at Coxie Green to get rid of tree branches, then back to the depot for a 2pm finish after a very hard day's work.

## Ian Pritchard from Leicestershire

The Running Card

On 29 October I went on the Discovery Tour at the Acton Depot of the London Transport Museum and would highly recommend it to anyone interested in London's Transport. The next one is on 26 November, as advertised in 'The Running Card' on page 3.

We had a brief welcome and introductory talk where it was explained to us that this is the storage depot for the collection and is not open as a walk-in museum as Covent Garden is, but is the store for the collection, its maintenance, renovation and cataloguing. The depot is open for tours, private party tours, open days and educational visits.

Our tour was guided by one of the very knowledgeable Friends of the Museum volunteers and took about two hours, the first 30 minutes on buses, trams and trolleybuses, the remaining time on tube stock, maps, signs and artwork and a glimpse at the vast array of signalling, lifts, kiosks and electrical equipment and all the paraphernalia to make the Underground system work. You do get the opportunity to sit down on the Underground trains and benches on the way around.

There are two shops, the Museum's own shop with their products, books and guides and the Friends of the Museum shop that has a vast collection of second hand transport books, maps, timetables etc. A great day out.

Right: London Country Bristol LH / ECW BN61, TP1 61S, blinded for 'Old Harlow', with RM1 and LT165 (GK 5323) from 1930, plus a bit of green RM2.

Ian Pritchard





We're back in Southend this month for another evocative early/mid 1950's shot from our **Frank Church** archive. This is from a roll of slide film he took and based on other shots on it, we'd guess that the date is around 1955. Unfortunately no details were recorded of the bus, but after some detective work, it can be identified as one of the batch LD 11-16 (NVX 308-13) of the City Coach Company, Leyland PD1As with Beadle bodies. Key features helping us are the outswept lower edge to the bodywork, the straight waistrail from the cab along the lower deck windows, the position of the ventilators on the roof and opening windows, the location of the step for the driver to access the cab and - crucially - the small, painted out, reversed 'D' shaped window by the staircase panel. That establishes that this was not, for example, one of the AEC Regents of Westcliff with quite similar Beadle bodies. The Bass advert also helps, as explained below. This batch of six buses went on to become EN 1128-31/3/2 (later 2108-11/3/2) and were converted to open top between 1956 and 1960 for service at Southend and Clacton, lasting until 1965. NVX 311 may still survive in the USA.

The bus is unloading outside Southend Victoria Station, in Victoria Avenue, en route to the Tylers Avenue terminus of the ex-City service from London Wood Green. Passengers can be seen lining up in the offside sunken gangway of the lowbridge body. City had been taken over by Westcliff in 1952 and vehicles were progressively repainted into Tilling green and cream as seen here, with Westcliff names. Westcliff had been a red/cream company but after it came under Eastern National control, the livery was changed to match EN's. Only two ex-City deckers went red (the highbridge PD1s, LD 1/2) before green was adopted. Behind can be seen another green decker, with post-war ECW body, standing on the station forecourt, used as the terminus for many routes of EN and Westcliff, including the 2/70, 11 and 19.

And Bass? The Burton on Trent brewer was founded in 1777 and by 1877, Bass had become the largest brewery in the world, with an annual output of one million barrels. Its main brand was Bass Pale Ale, once the highest-selling beer in the UK. Its pale ale was exported throughout the British Empire, and the company's iconic red triangle - seen here - became the UK's first registered trade mark. [Source – Wikipedia]. They also owned a substantial number of pubs. Many City deckers carried this advert which presumably was painted on. As the buses were re-liveried into Westcliff colours, I wonder if they painted round the advert or whether it was renewed? As a universally recognised brand name in the 1950s, the advert didn't need to explain who Bass were or what they were selling.

After a complicated series of takeovers and divestments, Bass today is something of a niche product but with a loyal following, The Honourable Order of Bass Drinkers, an organisation that predates CAMRA, and there have been attempts to hold a National Bass Day (frustrated so far by Covid restrictions). Now I'm not a beer drinker, but back in 1985 as part of the celebrations for the centenary of Blackpool's tramway, Bass ran a promotion where if you took a drink and got a card stamped in every one of the 25 Bass pubs in Blackpool, you could get a specially commissioned limited-edition tie. I took up the challenge, made more interesting by using public transport throughout in my case, and duly claimed my trophy tie. I no longer have it, sadly.

Finally, a minor correction to last month's archive picture - as the photo showed, the bus was going via North Avenue, not North Road as I wrote. Thanks to Bob Palmer for spotting that slip up.

## From the Colour Archives Follow Up

The 'From the Colour Archives' feature in EBM 687 featured Eastern National 1244, JN 8570, in Southend in 1955. New in 1937 to Westcliff-on-Sea Motor Services, she was a Bristol G05G with an ECW body that was built from new as an open topper, one of three specially ordered for the Southend seafront service, the other two being 1245-6, JN 8571-2. She lasted until the end of the 1961 season before withdrawal, latterly working at Clacton. The photo right is of one of the trio at Clacton, at the end of the 1950s or in very early 1960s.



Andrew Colebourne takes up the story:

"The fleet numbers of JN 8570-2 were allocated by Eastern National in 1954 in anticipation of the Westcliff fleet being absorbed in 1955. Their last season in Southend was in summer 1958 and they transferred to Clacton for the 1959 season after the City / Westcliff Leylands were converted for use at Southend (see previous page). I have copies of pictures of all three working in Clacton. 1246 only lasted one year and was withdrawn after the 1959 season. 1244 & 1245 were withdrawn in 1961 and both sold to a dealer in October 1961.

"I think these were the best-looking Bristol G type open topplers in the fleet, probably because they were built as such and perhaps also because of coach-like design features, notably fewer window bays. Brighton, Hove & District had three quite similar vehicles delivered around the same time (6331-3, ANJ 831-3) but the coachwork was built in their own works and had an arched open cab doorway. This style originated in the new open top bodies produced in 1936 to rebody ten 1930 AEC Regents, which had their chassis lengthened to suit (6002/4/5/7-12, 6200/2/47/8, GJ 6002/4/5/7-12, GN 6200/2, GP 6247/8). This begs the question whether the design originated with BH&D and was passed to ECW for the Westcliff order? Six more to the same general design, but with detail differences such as out-swept skirt panels, were built in 1946 to rebody further AEC Regents (6217/44/76/7/86/91 GN 6217, GP 6244, GW 6276/7/86/91); these also had Gardner engines fitted at the same time.

"Of the Brighton buses, AEC Regents GJ 2004/5 passed to Westcliff on Sea in 1950 and 1949 respectively (see <https://flic.kr/p/jX7xou>) and then Eastern National as 1148 and 1147; GJ 2011/12 and GN 6200 passed to EN as 1008-10 in 1954 and Bristol G05G ANJ 831 passed to EN as 108 in 1953 and then 1248 in 1954 (see <https://flic.kr/p/wkMYDn>). There were other ex-Brighton open topplers in both fleets but I think these were the only ones with five-bay bodies."

And as for the photo? It was taken by **Alf Jeffries** and has kindly been sent to EBM for inclusion by his daughter **Lynn Ballard**. Also thanks to **Andrew Colebourne** who arranged this.

Lynn explains: "I inherited Dad's 10,000+ image archive when he passed away in December 1996. I put them away for about 17 years before starting the process of scanning. He had mostly negative film / positive slides and several hundred prints. When I was growing up during the 1960s we had a darkroom and like many photographers he developed and printed his own black & white images, but he also had a stash of 50 undeveloped ones which we have now had done. He was the seventh generation of his Jefferies male line to be born in Brightlingsea, Essex, in 1932. Dad's day job at the time was Bread Roundsman for 'Wonderloaf' who were based in Magdalen Street in Colchester. He had been an Apprentice Oyster Dredgerman but the sea froze in the 'Big Freeze' of 1963 and killed off the stocks. He had moved to Colchester in 1958 when he married my Mum. The airfield is in Clacton, very close to the Butlin's holiday camp site where he regularly delivered bread to. It wasn't unusual for him to have a quick 45 minute pleasure flight during his lunch break. In the picture, taken from the aeroplane, that's his Morris J2 'Wonderloaf' van being passed by the open-top bus. I have a good selection of aerial shots which follow the east coast from Walton-on-the-Naze down to Bradwell Power Station, including Butlin's in Clacton and Brightlingsea of course. Dad was also a serving member of the Royal Observer Corps for 36 years and had occasionally been invited for a flight in a big aircraft where he got some higher altitude frames as well. He was awarded for his Meritorious service; he used his photography for displays and film nights with the Corps men and occasionally women."

Many thanks to Lynn and we hope to include more of Alf's photos in future issues.

## 1 September 2021

351 Hertford to Bishop Stortford (M-S) **Central Connect** removal of school extra journeys.

## 12 September

**Ensignbus** made further very minor timetable changes to services 22, 73/A, 77/A & Z1.

## 13 October

**Go Ahead Chambers** introduced emergency reduced timetables on services 754/784 (Colchester to Sudbury) & 750/753 (Sudbury to Bury St Edmunds) due to shortage of drivers.

## 24 October

77/A Colchester to St Osyth, M-F ECC contract service from **Arriva Kent Thameside** to **Go Ahead Hedingham**, no change to routes or timetable.

## 1 November

22 Aveley to Grays (D) **Ensignbus** timetable changes to improve reliability.

42/A/B **First Essex** completely revised service Monday to Saturday. Extensions of 42, Galleywood-Broomfield Hospital, to Stansted Airport (42A) and Braintree (42B) withdrawn with one exception. All journeys now 42, operating every 15 minutes between Galleywood & Broomfield Hospital only, apart from the one exception which is one Monday to Friday 42A journey each way, 0724 (SD) or 0729 (NSD) from Takeley to Chelmsford Princes Street & 1600 from Chelmsford Bus Station to Takeley (so no longer serves Galleywood or Stansted Airport). The previous 42B route is served by 42 between Galleywood & Broomfield Hospital and, between Chelmsford & Braintree, by increased 70 and new 70A. The 42A is more complicated - also served by 42 between Galleywood & Broomfield Hospital, and by 70 & 70A between Chelmsford & Little Waltham, and also partly by amended routing of X10 & X30 between Chelmsford & Stansted Airport. Sunday timetables remain unchanged, 42 same as M-S route, 42A still Galleywood to Bishop's Stortford and 42B still Galleywood to Halstead.

66 Grays to Tilbury (D) **Ensignbus** timetable changes to improve reliability.

70 Chelmsford to Colchester via Braintree (D) **First Essex** revised timetable. New service 70A (M-S) operating via Pod's Brook Road & Rayne Road to service Braintree Community Hospital. It will also operate a loop of Chelmsford City Centre to partly replace service 42B on this section. The new combined 70/A timetable provides a basic four bus per hour service between Chelmsford & Braintree with service 70 continuing to & from Colchester every half hour. No change to Sunday timetables.

75/A Colchester to Maldon (D) **First Essex** minor timetable changes to Monday to Saturday timetable to improve reliability.

77/A Aveley/Lakeside to Tilbury (M-S) **Ensignbus** timetable changes to improve reliability.

103/104 Colchester to Harwich (M-S) **First Essex** early morning / late afternoon timetable Monday to Friday adjusted to align with school start & finishing times along line of route. Most afternoon journeys to operate 5 minutes later.

X10 Basildon to Stansted Airport (D) **First Essex** section of route between Basildon & Chelmsford temporarily withdrawn due to driver shortages. Extra stops added to route including Broomfield Hospital & Great Waltham to partly replace service 42A on Mondays to Saturdays.

X30 Southend to Stansted Airport (D) **First Essex** revision to timetable, remaining hourly with extra stops added to route in the Broomfield area and most journeys diverted via Great Dunmow (previously only late evening journeys were so diverted) to partly replace service 42A on Mondays to Saturdays.

Z1 Aveley to Amazon Tilbury (D) **Ensignbus** timetable changes to improve reliability.

**Ensignbus** - very minor timetable changes to services 44 (Lakeside to Grays), 73 (Tilbury to Lakeside) & 83 (Lakeside to Chadwell).

**First Essex** 700/701 (Chelmsford Park & Ride). Further to last month's report, the temporary reduced timetable that was introduced from 27 September to 30 October continues to operate according to the FE website.

**Vectare** introduced reduced emergency timetables on services 61/C (Brentwood to Blackmore) & 62 (Blackmore to Edney Common Highwoods) until 12 November, due to a shortage of drivers. The Saturday 61A was unaffected. More detail on page 24.

## 4 December

**Ensignbus** Heritage Running Day. X21, X55 & X81 will operate on this day every 30 minutes. A new service this year is X54 Lakeside - Purfleet Heritage & Military Centre - RAF Hornchurch Heritage Centre, also operating every 30 minutes.

The bus industry continues to suffer from a shortage of bus drivers resulting in ad hoc journeys being cancelled at short notice. Some operators have introduced reduced timetables to overcome the situation on a temporary basis.

Councils were required to publish their Bus Service Improvement Plans as of 31 October 2021. Essex, Hertfordshire, Southend & Thurrock Councils plans are available on their websites. We will include a snapshot report of these BSIPs in next month's EBM.

## Southend

Wrightbus Cadet bodied DAF SB120 3937 (GK52 YVB) was withdrawn in mid-October. That leaves just two of the type, 3935/60, in service here.

Further to EBM 690, repainted 6503 re-entered service in the latest Arriva blue livery on 26 October, this is illustrated on the inside front and rear covers.

Short Versas 4182 and 4186 have had 'We're heading to the beach' graphics added to promote route 9. The former is in new livery, the latter in old. More Versas are to follow. 4182 is also illustrated on the inside front cover, with more details on page 1.

Services 7/8 were suffering very serious delays at the end of October due to temporary traffic lights for roadworks in Hockley, with reports of buses running up to an hour late. On Friday 29 October, some short workings were operated between Southend and Wakering / Landwick using double-deckers, a very rare event as 7/8 have low bridges on the section west of Southend which preclude the use of double-deckers (other than on the scheduled Ashington Schools school journey). 6505 is shown below at the Landwick terminus. **Richard Delahoy**

## Colchester

Short Dart / Caetano 1564 (HX04 HUH) was put into store at the end of October. To replace it, transferred in from Northfleet on 31 October was: 4038 GN09 AWJ ADL Enviro 200 B38F.

The use of the black liveried Park & Ride Enviro 200s on 77/A ceased after 20 September, but 4074 was unexpectedly used again on 11 October. The contract for the 77/A then passed to Hedingham Omnibuses after 22 October.

The replacement buses for the new Park & Ride contract have yet to appear in Colchester although one, 4124 (SN67 WUO), was noted being repainted by Arriva Midlands at Derby in mid-October. It is thought the first may be in use in Colchester from mid-November.

Meanwhile, former P&R bus 4071 is in service at Gillingham as previously reported; despite a repaint into the latest Arriva livery, it retains the name given whilst at Colchester (Saint Helena) and a full set of Essex notices inside, at least when checked on 16 October! It attended the South East Bus Festival at Detling on 10 October.

Incidentally, we don't think we have ever recorded the names given to the five P&R buses last year, following an Essex CC competition at the end of 2019. The names all have local historical connections and are applied in white lettering on the left hand leaf of the doors, as follows: 4071 - Saint Helena; 4072 - Queen Boudicea; 4073 - Sir Charles Lucas; 4074 - Emperor Claudius; 4075 - Sir George Lisle.

Finally on the subject of the P&R, Essex CC are offering free travel on both the Colchester and Chelmsford services on Saturday afternoons from 6 November up to Christmas, to encourage shoppers to visit.

With thanks to Keith Sadler, Tim Webb, Matthew Evans, John Lidstone, Roger Tuke and the M&D & EK Bus Club.



## First Group News

Further to EBM 688 and previously EBNs 662, 669, 673 & 685, FlixBus, global mobility provider of the FlixBus and FlixBus brands, announced on 21 October 2021 that it had acquired Greyhound Lines, Inc., the largest provider of long-distance bus transportation in the United States, from FirstGroup plc. This completes the sale of First's North American businesses.

## Vehicle on Loan

Mercedes-Benz Citaro driver trainer 64017 (LT52 WXP) was delivered to Westway, Chelmsford on 10 October 2021 from Slough. It is in a similar livery to that of the previous First Essex driver training livery carried by Volvo B10M / Plaxton Premiere 20463 and Volvo B10BLE / Wrightbus Renowns 62139, 62191, 62242 and 66179 (see page 1). It is Urban at the sides with 'Driver Training' fleet names and a large red on white 'L' sign, but the front and rear are magenta, not magenta and purple chevrons. It carried registration OIG 6947 for a while but reverted back to its original.

It is seen, right, at Westway on 12 October. **Jake Gill**



## Allocation Changes

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

## Period 6 2021/22 (22 August - 25 September)

One correction to EBM 690, 42898 should have read CF-CF (oos)-CR-**CR (oos)**, not CF-CF (oos)-CR-**CF (oos)**, it has remained out of use at Colchester and did not return to Chelmsford.

## Period 7 2021/22 (26 September - 23 October)

30567 CR-CR (oos), 32485 CR-CR (oos), 33376 HH-HH (oos), 37053 CR (oos)-CR, 37133 CR-CR (oos), 42933 CR-CF, 47653 BN-BN (oos), 63334 CR-CR (oos), 64017 FG (Slough)-CF (DS) loan, 66730 CF (oos)-CR, 69919 BN (oos)-BN

## Halloween Bingo

Stickers were added to bus seats, walls, windows and drivers' cabs in the run up to Halloween for children to find, just for fun, no prizes. The characters illustrated below were Sally Spider, Gordon Ghost, Pete Pumpkin, Barry Bat, Coral Cauldron, Sasha Skull, Horace Hand and Harriot Hat. An example of their application on 67171 is also shown (photo taken 29 October). **Adam Kelleher**  
33404 is illustrated on the rear cover with a Pete Pumpkin sticker by the doors.



## Repaint

32673 from two-tone blue livery to Remembrance Day livery at Mardens. The lighter green on 32673 looks to be the same shade as the middle colour of 'Essex Bus' livery with the darker green the same colour as the rear. The front shade of green of 'Essex Bus' livery has not been used. The three yellow dividing stripes have been amended to represent the sun over the poppy fields. Together with the overall advert applied to 32669 as illustrated last month, this means that the blue 'Alexander' livery has been eliminated from the fleet, apart from the front of 32669, plus 67779 is in an advert livery amended from the two-tone blue. 32673 returned to Colchester on 29 October, but, as at 7 November it had not yet re-entered service, pending an official launch at Colchester Garrison.

Below: 32673 in its as acquired livery at Chelmsford Bus Station on 22 September 2021. **Adam Kelleher**  
Bottom: Leaving Mardens on 29 October. **John G Lidstone**



## Area News & Workings

### Colchester

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CR. All dates October 2021 except where stated.)

It has not previously been reported that buses at Colchester now have fixed or alternating via points as opposed to scrolling ones, thus now being in line with buses at other depots. It is not known when this change occurred, but possibly during one of the lockdowns. 32673 is seen in the top photo on the previous page with alternating via points.

News of the out of service vehicles, as at 13 October. 30567 looked like it was withdrawn, it has chassis corrosion and has had its Ticketer and base plate removed, but long term off road 32477 was receiving a new back axle and suspension units. 42898 all complete, Ticketer still fitted and appeared ready for service if required. Fire damaged 63332 being stripped for spares. Update as at 29 October. 66800 (MOT expired) & 32485 (various defects) both out of service, the latter has had its Ticketer base plate and LED destination display removed. 67736 off road with rear suspension problem. 63334 awaiting engine replacement. 32477 still awaiting completion. 37133 out of service with the usual fuel pump / engine problems that seem to plague this batch of B9TLs.

Right: As reported last month, 63344 has received a super rear advert for Colchester Institute. Seen on route 64A on 13 October 2021. **David Edwards**



Below: First Essex Darts in service from Colchester Depot are a rarity these days but recently two Darts from Chelmsford were in use from there, 42898 from 17 to 23 September and 42933 from 20 September to 5 October. The latter is seen in Turner Road passing Colchester General Hospital on route 65 on its final day at CR, 5 October 2021. It is now back in service at Chelmsford. **Alan Moore**



News of the Harwich routes (5 October - 2 November).

Double-deckers on 102/103/104 have been five Volvo B7TL / ALX 400s, seven Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Geminis and two Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Geminis. Single-deckers have been three Wrightbus StreetLite, all 11 Colchester allocated Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipse and all 12 ADL Enviro 300s.

Although 14 double-deckers in total were recorded, most of these were on the Monday - Friday morning peak hour duty that finishes with the 0920 Mistley - Colchester 103, duty 1 as outlined in EBM 690, page 11. Only three double-deckers reached Harwich: 37042 on 8 October, 30564 on 1 November and 32478 on 2 November. Saturday duties remained single-deck operated. The Sunday 102 duties (10/17/24/31 October) were operated by single-deckers instead of double-deckers. As only three StreetLites were recorded, nearly all journeys to & from Harwich were operated by Enviro 300s and Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipses.

Another revised timetable was introduced from 31 October but it has only minor timing changes on Monday - Friday on 103/104 and no changes to the four vehicle duties (Monday - Friday) listed in EBM 690.

On the Clacton routes: 74B: 32478 (12th), 32547 (27th, 29th), 32628 (2 Nov), 32629 (16th, 21st, 4 Nov), 32669 (6 Nov), 37004 (14th, 22nd, 23rd), 37007 (15th, 20th), 37017 (18th), 37020 (13th), 37027 (11th, 19th, 26th), 37035 (25th, 30th), 37037 (28th), 37140 (5 Nov), 67735 (1 Nov), 67738 (3 Nov). 76 (in date order): 66810 (17th), 66803 (24th), 37016 (31st), 37042 (7 Nov).

## Chelmsford

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CF. All dates October 2021 except where stated.)

As reported under 'Arriva' above, Essex CC are offering free travel on both the Colchester and Chelmsford Park & Ride services on Saturday afternoons from 6 November up to Christmas, to encourage shoppers to visit the town / city centres.

67160 & 67162 (both green) were on route X10 on 31st October, the first day of its shortened route and of operating from Chelmsford. From 1 November onwards, 67161 & 67163 (both 'Essex Airlink' blue), transferred from Basildon to Chelmsford, were regulars on the route. 66795, 66813, 66823 & 69532 on first day of 70A, 1 November. X30 liveried Scania continue to work on route 70 on schooldays. Further to EBM 690, single-deckers continued to work on double-deck route 72 (which serves Chelmsford Retail Market and is diverted away from Duke Street bridge) on the evening journey from Chelmsford to Witham. However, from 25th, start of half-term week, the situation was reversed with single-deckers on the morning Chelmsford to Colchester and return, with a double-decker on the evening journey. Since schools returned on 1 November, things seem to be back to normal with double-deckers only on the route. Other unusual / interesting workings. 66814 (22nd) & 67162 (17th) on X30. 36838 (12th), 36839 (2 Nov), 36843 (19th) on Tuesday only 35 (plus onto / off S33). The route did not run on 26th as it was half-term. 69533 an unusually long vehicle on 32 (25th). P&R buses continue to be used on other routes, 67191 on new route 70A (3 Nov) & 67192 on S33 (5 Nov) being the most notable.

## Basildon & Hadleigh

(All vehicles listed below allocated to BN except where stated. All dates October 2021 except where stated.)

Further to last month, HH33095 has had more parts taken from it, its back axle has gone into HH33098. HH33376 is out of service following an RTC on Canvey Island on 2 October whilst on route 27. HH33384 was seen parked at the front of Chelmsford depot on 4 November, it was there for electrical work.

33567 was on loan to Hadleigh on 2 November (on route 26) and the morning of 3rd (on 20 & 27) but was back at Basildon in the afternoon, on school route 561.

67161, 67163 & 67165 were on route X10 on its last day operating from Basildon (at least for the time being), 30 October.

Route 9 continues to be mainly Enviro 400 operated but with at least one StreetLite each day. Other types of double-decker noted have been 32249 (13th, 1 & 4 Nov), 32260 (14th, 18th, 19th, 22nd, 23rd, 2 Nov), 32526 (28th), 32532 (25th), 32539 (2 & 3 Nov), 32540 (1 Nov), plus Enviro 200 MMC 67165 unusual on 16th.

Routes 94/A continued to be mainly operated by a StreetLite and a mini-Enviro 200 or, occasionally, two StreetLites. On 11th, 33561 replaced 47657 as from the 1300 from Basildon, after 47657 broke down in Runwell on the 1100 from Basildon. The 1200 from South Woodham Ferrers did not operate. On 28th, 33561 replaced 47655 on the 1810 94A from Basildon. On 29th, 33567 replaced 47655 on the 1400 from Basildon, this journey terminates in Wickford for school journey reasons. There is no 1500 from SWF. Other double-deckers on the routes: 33425 (5 Nov), 33504 (2 Nov) & 33574 (Saturday 16th).

Other unusual / interesting workings. Non-Enviro 200 MMCs on X10: 67901 (11th) & 69901 (21st). 32526 double-decker on 16 (30th). 32526 (20th), 33424 (30th), 33507 (29th), 33544 (19th), 33553 (15th), 33562 (5 Nov), 33563 (5 Nov), 33568 (13th), 33572 (4 Nov), 33573 (4 Nov) double-deckers on route 100. 44908 (24th), 44909 (7 Nov) & 44910 (also 7 Nov) on 251.

HH69517 (1 Nov pm), HH69520 (11th pm) on schools 827. HH69519 on 20 and evening 21B (11th). HH69520 on 20 & 27 (11th am peak).

Following the service changes of 1 November, Essex Airlink liveried 67161 & 67163 moved to Chelmsford with route X10. 67165 was in service at Hadleigh, on routes 22 & 28, on 1-3 November. P&R liveried CF67194 was in service from HH on the same routes on 3-7 November.

With thanks to Robert Appleton, Stephen Barham, Dale Bell, Jon Collins, David Edwards, John Lidstone, Peter Mansbridge, John Podgorski, Robert West, First Essex, Bustimes, Facebook, Essex Buses Google group and Terminus.

## Vehicles

Further to EBM 689, ADL Enviro 200 MMCs 401/2, YX16 OBP/R, are now repainted into NIBS livery but had not yet entered service at the end of October. Stephensons / NIBS operate many Enviro 200s but hitherto have only bought the classic body style. 402 is seen right in the Wickford depot yard on 22 October prior to fitment of LED destination displays in place of its former London style roller blinds. Most companies leave the areas above the side windows and below the windscreen black on Enviro 200 MMCs so the painting of these yellow gives a distinctive look.

**Matthew Evans**

NIBS Enviro 200 417, DK09 OBH, has been withdrawn and sold to Harris Coaches, Cardiff. 415, LK07 BEJ, is also withdrawn and for sale.

Acquired for spares only is SN57 DXA, ADL Enviro 200, ex Go-Ahead London SE34, via Ensignibus.

## Services

Driver shortages have continued to result in cancellations of some journeys on NIBS routes.

Mercedes Sprinter 301 (RE66 VPD) was in service at Brentwood on the 71/2 for some days during half-term week, normally it would be operating on 418 Epping-Loughton but that was covered by the other minibus, 302 (KF19 LCV), not required for school day service. 301 has also made occasional appearances on Witham town service 39 (e.g., on 23 October).

With thanks to the companies, Matthew Evans, Terry Torch and Adam Kelleher.

Below: As noted above 415 and 417 have been withdrawn, but 414, SK07 HLV, and 419, CN11 FBE, were seen together, in contrasting liveries, at Brentwood Station on 2 November 2021. **Adam Kelleher**



**Acquired Vehicle - Update of Status**

Unidentified Konectbus Enviro 400 as referenced in EBM 690 was being delivered to CN on 2 October for preparation for repainting. The vehicle concerned was 609, SN61 CZZ. Konectbus 613, SN2 AVY, has already been repainted into standard Konectbus livery of blue, yellow and grey and this is believed to have been done at Mardens hence travelling through Clacton workshop before work being completed.

**Significant Allocations**

|     |         |               |     |         |              |
|-----|---------|---------------|-----|---------|--------------|
| 262 | KN - CN | by 2 October  | 296 | CN - KN | by 2 October |
| 510 | HD - KN | by 11 October | 517 | KN - HD | by 3 October |

**Fleet News**

263, EU59 AYM, and 294, OU57 FGZ, have been repainted into the current livery, 263 first spotted w/c 11 October. 642, LK08 FLN, one of the refurbished Enviro 400s due into service shortly, was at Hants & Dorset Trim with centre door conversion completed and repainted into Hedingham livery by 16 October. Open top 500, PL51 LDJ, has been stored for winter.

**Service News**

Chambers cancelled some 750/3/4/84 journeys from 13 October onwards due to lack of drivers. Recruitment adverts were seen at the same time in the local job centre windows!

**Other News**

Ex L302, UWV 615S, attended the South East Bus Festival at the Detling showground on 10 October, in ongoing preservation and repair guise. This was the Clacton based convertible open top vehicle illustrated in the open top article on page 31 of EBM 689. Its roof still looked to be in Hedingham's 'Clacton Common Factory Outlet' advertising colours. Below, **Mark Lloyd**. During the same weekend, former 286, HW54 BTY, attended the Isle of Wight Bus Museum VectisBus 100 Event. Also attending was ex L254, RAH 260W, Bristol VR Series 3 / ECW, now back in Eastern Counties NBC red & white.

The reported demise of the Vauxhall Combo van 9003, FN54 SXC, in EBM 690 was premature.

With thanks to John Podgorski & the Hedingham website.





# Ensignbus

omnibus suppliers to the world

by Mark Lloyd

## Dealer Stock Movements October 2021

### Vehicles In

From **Axe Valley**: Volvo B7TL LF52 ZFP  
From **Go Ahead London**: Enviro 400 LX07 BYH, Enviro 200s LX07 BXH/L/N/S/V, SK07 HLO/DZO, SN57 DWI/Z/DWP/W  
From **Grant Palmer**: Scania YN03 WRG  
From **Lothian Buses**: Volvo B9TLs SN09 CTU/V/X/Y/Z/CUA/C/G-K/O/U-Y/CVA  
From **Metrolink**: Volvo B9TLs LK59 CWW/CXA/G/J/M/CWN/FCX  
From **Oxford Bus Co**: Volvo B11Rs BF/CF/DF/EF14 OXF  
From **Redbridge Transport**: Volvo B7TLs LK51 XGL/N, PN02 XCS, Olympian S265 Y00  
From **Sidlaw Coaches**: Scania YN55 NGY - see page 25.  
From **Stagecoach South East**: Tridents LV52 HFT/HFW/HFZ  
From **Translink**: Scania K320s JFZ7001/2//13/16/18/22/23/28/29/9036, BYZ 2386

### Vehicles Out

**Borderbus, Bungay**: Scania LX59 COJ  
**Brylaine Travel, Boston**: Volvo B9TL SN08 BYH  
**Bws Peris, Llanberis**: Enviro 400 SN11 BPY  
**Change Org, SE1**: Scania YN56 FBZ  
**Fowlers Coaches, Holbeach Grove**: Volvo B12M YS02 YXT  
**Gardbus, Eastleigh**: Volvo B7TLs LK51 XGL, KP51 WAO  
**Grant Palmer**: Volvo B9TLs SN08 BXD/BYC  
**Happy AI's, Liverpool**: Volvo B9TLs SN09 CTU/V/X/Y/CUO  
**Leia Mackinnon, Forest Gate, London**: Volvo B7TL LK04 HYG  
**Liverpool City Sights**: Volvo B7TLs EU05 VBG/VBP  
**Notts & Derby**: Volvo B9TLs SN08 BVP/U/V, SN09 CTZ/CUA/K/U/CVA/CTU  
**May, Birmingham**: Enviro 200 SK07 HLO  
**MID Coaches, Crediton, Devon**: Scania YN56 FCE  
**NE Coachways, Peterlee**: Tridents V196/8 MEV, S817 BWC. Correction to last month, V198 did not go for scrap, it was V199 that did.  
**Oxford Bus Co**: Versas YJ56 EVM/N  
**Panther Travel, Harwich**: Scania YN55 NGY - see page 25.  
**Redbridge Transport**: Enviro 400 SN12 EHC  
**Redfern Travel, Mansfield**: Scania YV03 PZK  
**Red Route, Northfleet**: Enviro 200s LX07 BXK/L, SK07 DZO, SN57 DWP  
**Seven Sister Bus & Coach, Lewes**: Enviro 200s SN57 DWM, LX07 BXR, Trident LV52 HFT  
**South East Bus Supplies, Kent**: Volvo B7TL LK04 HHY  
**Solus Coaches, Tamworth**: Volvo B11Rs BF/CF/DF/EF14 OXF  
**Stephensons of Essex**: Enviro 200 SN57 DXA - see page 18.  
**Towlers Coaches, Wisbech**: Trident LV52 HFP

**To Shelton Motors for scrap**: Tridents LK05 GFV/GGI

### Ensignbus Fleet

Volvo B9TL 115 sold to Redline Aylesbury  
Volvo B9TL 119 sold to Crosskeys, Folkestone  
PD3 5280 NW sold to York Pullman

The only Ensignbus Volvo B9TL / Optare Olympus to receive the new-style Ensignbus livery, with back-to-original RT3232-style paler blue, together with blue wheels and blue mirrors, is 120 (PO58 NRE), as it is being retained as the last Olympus, once all 14 of the new StreetDecks are in service. It is destined for the Vintage Fleet as per MCW Metrobus Mk2 192 (F292 NHJ), as that, as per 120, was the last of its type purchased new by Ensignbus. Meanwhile, late-build Volvo B9TL / Wright Gemini 2s (15-reg) are now receiving their

second repaints in Ensignbus colours. They arrived (from dealer-stock) in all-over white, they are also now also being painted in the latest paler blue livery. 128-131 are now in this style of livery.

The 'filming bus', StreetDeck EBS 1972 was unusually on c2c rail replacement work on 9 October.

With thanks to Ross Newman and John Lidstone.

Below: A good comparison of the 21-reg low-height StreetDecks with the 71-reg normal-height versions, 167 (LX21 CHV), right, and last month's front cover star, newly delivered 177 (LX71 AOM), at Ensignbus on 15 September 2021. **John G Lidstone**



Bottom: A recent sale from the Vintage Fleet is of former Leeds City Corporation Leyland PD3/5 / Roe 5280 NW to York Pullman. During its time with Ensignbus it sometimes performed on their Vintage Running day. It is seen on the 2012 such event on 1 December in South Road, South Ockendon. **Richard Delahoy**. A reminder that this year's running day is on Saturday 4 December, details page 3.



## New Vehicle

In 2019 Reading Buses cancelled an order for five Optare MetroDecker M1114s, although already in build, and indeed at least one was completed in Reading's Green Line livery. Two went to Johnsons, Henley-in-Arden, and two are now coming to Central Connect. The first, YJ21 FDD, H51/25F, was received c 22 October 2021, in in three-tone Green Line livery. This had been used as a demonstrator and during September and early October had been operating with Centaur Travel, Crayford, where it was used on University of Greenwich services. It has upstairs tables and three point seatbelts throughout.

In the last week of October / first week of November, there was an eight day closure of the railway line between Broxbourne and Hertford East, so that platforms could be extended for new trains and an out of use signal box at Hertford East could be demolished for transfer to a heritage railway. YJ21 FDD is seen at Broxbourne on 26 October operating this service. **Alex Hazell.**

## Acquired Vehicle

Dart KP02 PVO, reported last month, was a driver trainer with previous operator Tower Transit and will remain as one at Central Connect.

## Withdrawn Vehicles

Further to EBM 690, withdrawn Solo YJ09 MHO was reinstated from 15 October (it had been out of service since 6 July this year). Solo FY52 RZC, which last operated on 21 September 2021, has been withdrawn instead.

## Other News

A new depot at Stansted is due to open in December / January, this being the current Mercedes-Benz commercial premises. The current depot at Hailes Farm, Roydon, will be kept as an outstation.

With thanks to Wayne Bell and LOTS.

Right: Solo RGZ 7806 remains in the attractive original Buses of Somerset livery that it was acquired in. It is seen in Hertford on HCC route 380 on 21 July 2021, which was lost to Arriva on retender in September.

**Allan White**



Further to EBM 690 a few changes to report.

1 (SGZ 3351) Volvo B7R / Jonckheere Modulo has switched from contract RC1 back to Ipswich School contract 10 from Holland-on-Sea and the Tendring area. It was noted on contract 10 on 7 & 11 October. Following this, RC1 Thorington Crossroads - Suffolk Rural College at Otley has been worked by different buses, including 51 (YN08 DHX), a Scania OmniCity, on 11 October and 73 (YX59 BZN), an 8.9m long ADL Enviro 200, on 12th.

The two school services from different parts of Essex to East Bergholt High School have both been worked by DAF DB250 / East Lancs Lowlanders:

Service 693 from Ardleigh, Lawford, and Manningtree: 57 (PN52 XBJ) or 58 (PI53 OLA)

Service 694 from Langham and Boxted: 55 (PN52 XBO), 56 (PN52 XBK) or 59 (PI53 OLB).

57/58 and 59 were repainted into the current green / purple livery during the school summer holidays, 56 was already in this livery. 55 remains in the old green / white livery.

During part of the school half term week, 27/28/29 October, the Scania / OmniDekkas 60/61/62 allocated to services Ipswich - Manningtree 92 and Ipswich - Colchester 93/A were replaced by Scania OmniCities 32/38/39/40/43 (YR61 RRU/RUU/V/W/RVF/L); all had turns on these services.

The school half term holiday brought two of the three Mercedes Citaros into Essex. The last journeys on service 92, 1740 Ipswich - Manningtree 92 and 1830 return, are normally worked by an Enviro 200, but on 26 October Mercedes Citaro 153 (BF65 HVT) worked these journeys. Then on 29th, 153 worked on Colchester routes 4/11 instead of an Enviro 200. On 30th 153 was joined by 155 (BF65 HVV) working the Saturday duties on Ipswich - Colchester 93.

Bromley Road, Lawford was closed 11 - 22 Oct due to gas main replacement work by Cadent. Service 2, Mistley - Clacton, was unable to serve Little Bromley, it diverted via Long Road, Lawford, then Clacton Road to Horsley Cross Roundabout, then A120 to Little Bentley, and normal route to Clacton.

With thanks to Ipswich Buses website, Suffolk on Board website, Ipswich Transport Society Journal, Ipswich Buses Enthusiast Facebook Group, Bustimes.

Below: Ipswich Buses 2 (BX65 WDA) Volvo B11RT / Caetano Levante, acquired from Go North East earlier this year, in its new Ipswich Coachlines livery. At Ivy St in Ipswich on 9 September 2021, before working Ipswich School contract 6 to Halstead and Castle Hedingham.

**Robert Appleton**



### New Vehicle

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter RX71 TGK. It is seen right at Ingatestone Station on 16 October 2021 on cross platform shuttle as part of the Greater Anglia rail replacement service. **John Podgorski**

### Acquired Vehicles

As reported last month, the two former National Holidays Tourimos NH17 EFH/HFH, have been re-registered W12/11 VEC respectively. Both are now in Vectare fleet livery and are now based at Rettendon where W12 is seen below on 8 September 2021. **Steven Quay**

### Services

Vectare's website announced an emergency Monday-Friday timetable for routes 61/C, 62 between 1 and 12 November "due to higher than normal driver sickness". The 61 was reduced to two hourly during the off peak and the last 61C return journey did not operate, with the message that "Passengers who would usually travel on the 1805 departure from Blackmore or the 1835 departure from Brentwood should contact Vectare to arrange alternative transport (at no cost to you) whilst these journeys are not operating". In addition the following journeys on 14/22 did not operate on weekdays between 1 & 12 November: ex 1205 Waltham Cross-Upshire and 1220 return (14), 1240 Waltham Cross-Sherbrooke Road and 1255 return (22). Saturday services remained unaltered on all these routes.



### Acquired Vehicles

Scania L94UB / Wrightbus Solar YN05 WKE, new to First PMT, from Klarners Coaches, Colchester. It is seen right climbing the hill into Great Oakley working the afternoon Manningtree High School - Dovercourt school bus no. 3 contract on 4 October 2021.

#### Robert Appleton.

A photo of it on loan to Arriva Southend for schools work appeared in EBN 681.

Former Blackpool Trident / East Lancs PN04 XDK from M&M Staffing, Chelmsford. Photos of this bus on loan to Arriva Southend for schools work have also appeared in EBN/M, in issues 678 & 688.



New to Nottingham City Transport Scania N94/UD / East Lancs YN55 NGY from Sidlaw Coaches via Ensignbus. This currently has 92 seats with belts.

New to Sussex Coastline Dennis Dart SLF / Plaxton Pointer X963 VAP from Flagfinders, Braintree, initially for spares, but it has now passed its MOT and has entered the fleet.

### Disposals

ADL Enviro 200 SB09 PAN to HTL Buses, Huyton. Registration retained by Panther, re-registered back to YX09 FLE. A small photo of this bus, taken on 17 August 2021, was in EBM 689. It was seen with HTL, still in Panther livery but with fleet names removed, on 21 September.

ADL Dart DC56 PAN to Flagfinders, Braintree, keeping that number plate.

### Other News

The Weeley site, which had been used as a workshop and for storage, but was not an operating centre, is no longer in use.

Enviro 200 DB09 PAN has been on hire at weekends to Suffolk Travel. Similar AB09 PAN is currently being converted to single door.

With thanks to Adam Barham, Adam Hughes, John Podgorski.

Right: Panther are still operating the one vehicle diagram on Hedingham service 3 on Mondays to Saturdays. DB10 PAN (ex YX10 BDY) in Great Oakley on 4 October 2021.

#### Robert Appleton



## **Cartwright (Calders Coaches), Basildon**

Plaxton bodied C49FT Volvo B10M-62 BU51 ZAK (ex FE51 RDX) is here from Thorn's of Rayleigh, Benfleet.

## **Don's, Great Dunmow**

YJ56 LNC, a BMC B57F, is reported as here from Lakeside, Ellesmere, Shropshire, whilst H818 CBP, an Alexander H85F bodied Leyland Olympian and P99 TCC, a Dennis Javelin with Plaxton C53F body, have gone from here.

## **Flagfinders, Braintree**

H493 LNA, an Alexander CH94F bodied tri-axle Leyland Olympian, has gone from here, to preservation (c May 2021). It is seen below at the South East Bus Festival at the Detling showground on 10 October 2021 in the early stages of restoration. It was new to Hong Kong Citybus in 1991, registered ES 7623. In 2004 it passed to Stagecoach for Megabus work and later Magicbus services in Manchester. Then in July 2008, Florida Coaches of Halstead acquired it for schools work; it passed on to nearby Flagfinders in 2013 when they took over Florida Coaches. Latterly with its destination box panelled over, the original display has now been restored, giving clues to its Hong Kong origins. It is still in Flagfinders livery but with fleet names removed. **Alan Moore**



## **Jackson, Bicknacre**

PO53 OFA, a DAF SB4000 with Marco Polo C49FT body, has gone from here.

## **Kevenly, Wickford**

M655 KVV, a Van Hool C49FT bodied Volvo B10M, and R958 AEV, a Setra S250, C48FT, have gone from here. R958 AEV reverted to this registration from K800 DYS prior to disposal.

## **Klarners, Colchester**

Setra S416GT-HD T14 KCL has reverted to its original registration of EU06 JBO. Optare Versa SF09 AFE is ex Llew Jones, Llanwrst, Wales and has been e-registered to T60 KCL.

## **Swallow, North Weald**

BX64 VRE, a Volvo B11R (T) C55FT, is reported as here from Miller Brothers, Littleport, Cambridgeshire. This vehicle was originally registered as 151-G-1746 in the Republic of Ireland.

## Ford, Althorne

Alexander bodied Leyland Olympians H815 CBP, H819 CBP and R141 EVX are all reported as no longer here. Below: YN06 BUS, a Scania N94 UD, with H47/33F East Lancs body, at Witham Station car park on 17 October 2021 on Greater Anglia rail replacement work. Originally registered YN06 JWL, this vehicle was acquired in 2015, previously it was with Reading Buses. **Roger A Smith**



Below: Whilst the Isle of Wight Bus Museum's 'Vectis 100' commemorative running weekend was taking place on 9/10 October, **Lodge's** Mercedes Tourismo AL17 DGE was also on the island with holidaymakers based in Ryde. It is seen here passing the bus/rail station with a Southern Vectis Enviro 400 MMC loading. The 1970s interchange here is due to undergo major changes, including complete remodelling of the bus stands, as part of controversial local authority-led plans. **Chris Stewart**



Below: **Airport Bus Express** recommenced their Stansted Airport service on 27 August 2021 with a reduced hourly A21 to Stratford. Mercedes Tourismo BN17 JHY, previously with London Travel In Ltd for tour & sightseeing work, lacking the former Airport Bus red relief, departs from the coach stop outside Stratford City Bus Station on 20 October 2021. **Owen Woodliffe**

Bottom: **Travelmasters** Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Gemini 2 BK10 MFV which was new to Dunn of Heanor, on c2c rail replacement in Belton Way West, Leigh-on-Sea, on 9 October 2021. **John G Lidstone**



# Day Trips to Essex - How It Was

by Bob Palmer

A book published by Bowden Publications entitled 'The Valliant Years of Coaching in West & North West London', priced at £50, details the history of the three 'big cheeses' in London coaching in said parts of the capital - Valliant Direct of Ealing, Cronshaws of Hendon and Venture of Hendon. It includes plenty of text, photos, publicity material and a fleet listing for Valliant Direct. A review by Owen Woodliffe was in EBN 681 and there was also a review in the February 2021 edition of 'Buses' magazine. The three companies later amalgamated. Numerous local pick-up points for their services ran from Harlow round to Barnet and inwards to Paddington and Marble Arch.

All three ran daily summer express services to coastal resorts stretching from Great Yarmouth to Bournemouth and later even Torbay, plus day and half-day excursions, extended coach tours to all parts of Britain and of course, the usual range of contract and private hire work. There was one big exception to the express network - Southend, in our neck of the woods. All offered a day excursion to sunny Southend-on-Sea for a fare of either 4/6 (23p) or 5/- (25p) and Valliant Direct ran every day from late May / early June to the end of September. I'm quoting pre-war fares although they only rose slowly during the heyday of post-war coaching. Only Venture ran an express service to Clacton, the other two firms only offered a day excursion, Valliant Direct on Wednesday for 7/1 (35p) and Sundays for 8/- (40p). Fares were always higher at weekends.

The big question has to be why were the resorts in Essex treated so differently to the others? I don't know the real answer but having thought about it I offer these suggestions. The 1930 Road Traffic Act introduced road service licensing and anyone could object to applications made by operators and, of course, rivals objected to each other whilst the mainline railways objected to all express service applications as a matter of course! Venture probably won over Cronshaws with regard to Clacton but possibly the likes of Grey Green, Suttons and Eastern National objected because they offered more than one return trip per day and some, at least, ran all year which the West London operators didn't want to do. As for Southend, perhaps a few smaller operators won out over the big three and there was always the New Empress Saloons / Westcliff Motor Services 15 minute frequency, seven days a week service, although this didn't serve west or north-west London. Cronshaws considered themselves a cut above the rest so perhaps they thought that the clientele they catered for didn't want to go to the East Enders pleasure resort of Southend?! There is however one possibility as to why Valliant Direct couldn't obtain an express licence. There was a through railway service between Ealing Broadway and Southend Central stations jointly operated by what had been the Metropolitan District and London, Tilbury and Southend Railways using electric locos hauling slam door stock over the District and then onwards to the coast, so perhaps the Underground Group and the LMS Railway raised objections? Mind you, the services finished at the start of World War Two and never resumed. I think the LPTB was rather glad to get rid of those through workings as it could interfere with the close headway services run on the sub-surface network!

Mentioning the LPTB/LTE/LTB (London Transport in various incarnations), that organisation always took a close interest in picking-up / setting-down points in their area, making sure bus stops and stands were not encroached upon by a load of coaches twice a day and much preferred coach business to use side streets or private land. It might also be helpful to explain here, as it is now over 40 years since deregulation of coaching activities, that an express service licence had a minimum fare of 1/- (5p) but offered single, day return and period return fares, and an operator could carry passengers between any two points that were authorised on the licence. The big three here only carried passengers to and from the coastal resorts, not any intermediate towns. An excursion licence only had an all-in fare that offered a round trip from point of departure. As stated earlier, fares were usually dearer on Saturdays and Sundays. Of interest, all Green Line services were licenced as bus services (except to Whipsnade Zoo) and they all had minimum fares below 1/- which was no problem pre-war, but once fares started to rise in the 1950s and 1960s, a fare of no more than 11d (4 1/2p) had to apply somewhere on the route, always in the Country Bus area and usually between two obscure points unlikely to be of much bother to the conductor! Do any readers have a set of fare tables to hand and can find out these odd low fares on the Green Line routes that served Essex (routes 718, 720/A, 721, 722, 723/A/B and 724)?

I hope the above scribbblings are of interest and it is all part of the rich history of road passenger transport in Essex. I include 'Metropolitan Essex' in that when the county boundary was the River Lea. It does not finish just yet, as I have a couple more nuggets of information regarding coaching and Essex. Firstly, one of the directors of Valliant Direct opened a large restaurant and function suite called Crossways, just off the A127 at Great Warley, and coaches were run regularly from West London to dinner-dances there. This did not last long and closed at the beginning of World War Two and did not seem to recommence afterwards.

Finally, it seems Valliant Direct provided their drivers with private hire rate cards just in case a passenger made an enquiry. The 1965 rates were: Clacton £29-£36 (51 seater), £21-£29 (41 seater); Southend £26-£32 (51 seater), £18-£27 (41 seater). Low price on Mondays-Fridays, high rate on summer Saturdays, middle rate on summer Sundays. Also Southend Lights Period (remember those in September and October?) £20-£28 (51 seater), £15-£21 (41 seater). Prices according to which Saturday or Sunday was involved. If you want to know the rates to other places then sorry, but buy the book! I did and don't regret it one bit. £50 may seem expensive but where else do you get all the information that is included? My thanks to authors Maurice Bateman and Chris Beer for writing the book and Julian Bowden having the courage to publish it, getting all this fascinating history out into the public domain. Yes of course I

recommend purchase. I'm now waiting for someone to produce a book on those south and south-east London giants Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society, Timpsons and United Services Transport and all their subsidiaries! Thanks for reading.

Three photos to illustrate Bob's article, the first two taken by **Frank Church** and with thanks to Richard Delahoy.

Below: DBV 319 was an Albion Victor FT39 with Duple FC31F body new to Cronshaws in 1951, one of four such Albions delivered in 1950/1 alongside Bedford OBs, photographed seven years later on 30 June 1958 on what looks like a refreshment stop at a pub - but where? Unusually, Frank didn't record the location and the "Private" blind doesn't help.



Previous page bottom: Representing the use of hired-in coaches to cope with peaks in traffic, Valliant were using 240 DPC four weeks later on 28 July 1958 when Frank found it at a refreshment stop at the Fortune of War pub on the A127 at Laindon. This was quite an unusual coach, a Dennis Lancet UF with a bus shell Burlingham body fitted with coach seats. It was new in 1957 to Cooke's Coaches of Guildford and was probably hired to Valliant on a regular basis - note the destination blind includes a display for Southend, and the "On Hire to Valliant Coaches" sticker in the windscreen.

Below: NMU 7, an AEC Reliance with Harrington bodywork, new to Valliant-Cronshaw of Ealing in 1963. It, and a sister, are seen parked in one of the many coach parks on Epsom Downs for the Derby in June 1968. It was later sold to Premier Travel, numbered 209.

**Alan Osborne.**



Right: this is the photo referred to in the Ted Miles article on page 8. Eastern National Bristol K / ECW 1251 (ENO 933) on route 103. Next to it is Bristol SC / ECW 452 (9576 F). The CN garage plates on both vehicles, plus the fact that 452 was new in 1958 and 1251 was withdrawn before 1964, date the photo to between 1958 and 1963. And further to page 10, another beer advert! **Ted Miles**



## Award Winner!

by Bob Palmer



Congratulations to Group member Luke Deal (pictured with trophy) for his ex-Eastern National Bristol VR / ECW 3072, KOO 790V, winning the Doyen double-deck entry at Showbus 2021 on 26 September. Since Luke has owned 3072 he has retrofitted original style opening front top deck windows and an original style grille, both of which greatly enhance the appearance of the vehicle. His most recent job has been updating the faded moquette, so now she looks as good as new. Photo **Bob Deal**

### Inside Rear Cover

Rear views of recent repaints. More details of both on page 1 and in respective company reports.

Top: Arriva Southend 6503 on its second day out in new livery, 27 October, at Shoeburyness Renown. **Richard Delahoy**

Bottom: First Essex 32673 leaving Mardens on 29 October. **John G Lidstone**

### Rear Cover

33404, in heritage Midland 'Red' livery, on route 21B at the London Road / Sutherland Boulevard stop in Leigh-on-Sea on 19 October 2021, with a 'Pete Pumpkin sticker' by the doors (see page 14). **John G Lidstone**





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