

Essex Bus News

No. 656; DECEMBER 2018



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

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where sold



“Strange Visitors” on the 100

Owing to the temporary situation of the entire Volvo 7900 hybrid stock at Basildon being stood down from service....

Top

Former Leicester Alexander Dennis Enviro400 33544 (SN58 CFK) most unusually on service 100, also unusually without tree deflector bars standard on the type.

Middle

Barbie livery is now rare in First Essex, here very tidy TransBus Dart / Caetano Compass 41527 (LK53 FDD) is an unusual sight on service 100.

Lower

No mistaking the location for the rare loan of routes 22/28 branded Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 2 69515 (BJ11 ECN) making a return to its original home at Chelmsford for the first time since reallocation to Hadleigh, here on loan to Basildon for service 100.

All pictures taken by
John G. Lidstone
on 29 November.

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EBN656 outer rear cover

Essex Bus News 656

December 2018

Editor & Sub-Editors

Magazine Editor

Maurice Austin
Tindal Lodge,
11 Valletta Close
CHELMSFORD CM1 2PT maurice.austin@phonecoop.coop

First in Essex/Trustybus

Adam Kelleher
74 Park Road
BRENTWOOD CM14 4TU adamxxx4@yahoo.co.uk

Ensignbus/Hedingham/Chambers

Mark Lloyd
448 Ipswich Road
COLCHESTER CO4 4EY Lloydhousehold448@gmail.com

Arriva including Network Colchester

Peter Mansbridge petemans_1@hotmail.com

Stephensons of Essex

Richard Delahoy, details opposite.

Panther Travel & Publicity

Ian Ransom ianandsallyr@googlemail.com

Smaller Operators

Roger A Smith
3 Station Mews, Station Road
WITHAM CM8 2FP

Service Changes

Paul Harvey
3 Orangewood Close, Gonerby Hill Foot
GRANTHAM NG31 8QW pw.harvey@ntlworld.com

Social Secretary; meetings, events, tours Distribution Officer; missing/defective EBN's Publication Sales; orders for publications

Owen Woodliffe
196 Sinclair Road
CHINGFORD E4 8PT
pat_woodliffe@hotmail.com

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We regret to advise the recent passing away of

Dave Livermore (member 537) and

Len Rason (989)

Thanks to the over 200 members who have renewed their membership for 2019. If we had not received your subscription by 6 December, a further reminder slip will be enclosed with this magazine. Please reply by 31 December to avoid any interruption in your supply of Essex Bus News!

Essex Bus News is the "house magazine" of the...

Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group.

Chair	Ian Ransom.
Secretary	Alan Osborne.
Treasurer & Membership	Richard Delahoy.
Tours Organiser	Wayne Bell.

Views expressed in EBN do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group.

Subscriptions

A calendar year subscription is £21. 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 £1.80 per month. For example, a member joining in March would pay 10 x £1.80, i.e. £18.00. Contact Richard Delahoy, address below.

Membership Secretary & 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,
272 Shoebury Road,
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA SS1 3TT
richard.delahoy@blueyonder.co.uk

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Reports and observations

Members reports, quality photos, prints, slides or JPGs to about 5"x4" size and 300dpi resolution and original articles are always welcome.

The Editors exercise the normal discretion to publish contributions in full, in part or not at all and cannot guarantee publication in any particular month.

Every effort is made to ensure accuracy but the Group cannot accept responsibility for any errors published.

The Running Card (Dates For Your Diary) compiled by Owen Woodliffe.

MID-ESSEX MEETINGS by Maurice Austin.

Quaker Meeting House, corner of Parkway and Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, less than 10 minutes walk from the Bus and Rail stations; continue along Duke Street past Civic Centre and cross to far side of Parkway. Small car park on site, other public ones nearby. Tea and coffee making facilities. Members and guests welcome. £2.00 donation towards cost of room hire, please. Doors open at 1915 for an informal chat and often impromptu slide show, with the main talk or show from 1945 to 2145.

Thursday 13 December	Richard Delahoy	20 years ago.
Thursday 24 January 2019	Rachel Perkins	reviews her "Austerity, Mobility & Buses in Essex" project.
	Followed by Richard Delahoy , slide show "Southend to Imber by Bus".	
28 February 2019	Bob Palmer	Recollections.
Other 2019 dates: 28 Mar, 25 Apr, 23 May, 27 June, 25 July, 26 Sept, 24 Oct, 28 Nov, 12 Dec.		

NORTH ESSEX MEETINGS by Dave Arnold.

Downstairs room at the Friends Meeting House, Church Street, Colchester, just south of "Jumbo" (the water tower) and behind the Mercury Theatre. Town centre bus stops and parking are nearby. Doors open at 1915 for informal chat, and often an impromptu slide show, with the main talk or show from 1945 to 2145. £3.00 donation towards room hire, please. Slides/digital photos are preferred, but prints can also be shown. Members and guests welcome.

Friday 14 December	Gary Sharpe	tba.
Friday 11 January 2019	David Moth	South East England in 1990's.
Friday 8 February 2019	Dave Arnold	tba.
Friday 8 March.	Owen Woodliffe	Essex Operators, Past & Present.
Friday 12 April.	Group AGM with	Alan Osborne afterwards.
Other 2019 dates: 10 May, 14 June, 12 July, 9 August, 13 September, 11 October, 8 November, 13 Dec.		

A Blast From The Past.

Paul Harvey.



Eastern National TJN 498R Leyland National 1799 on layover at the terminus at Shoeburyness, Cambridge Hotel on service 22 during 1978. The vehicle was based at Southend depot.

Paul Harvey.

EBN656p2

The Running Card (Dates For Your Diary), continued, by Owen Woodliffe.

EVENTS

Saturday 22 December

Wednesday 26 December

Saturday 5 January 2019

Saturday 16 February 2019

Saturday 23 February 2019

Saturday 30 March 2019

Saturday 6 April 2019

Sunday 23 June 2019

Ensignbus Christmas Tour to London on Routemaster. Pre-Booked only.

Ensignbus Boxing Day Services.

Chiswick Transport Fair. Chiswick Town Hall.

Enfield Transport Fair. St Pauls Centre, Church St, Enfield.

LT Collectables Auction. Croydon Park Hotel Altyre Rd, Croydon.

RT 80 Event, Barking.

SE Bus Festival, Kent County Showground, Detling.

Essex Bus Rally, Barleylands, Billericay.

EBEG PUBLICATIONS

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Information is published in good faith and members are strongly advised to check details with the organisers, as the Group can accept no liability if events are cancelled or or altered.



Further to EBN654 front cover, Beestons of Hadleigh, Suffolk, also operate in Essex on service OC4 from Harwich to the Otley Campus (north of Ipswich) of Easton & Otley College. This is the morning journey, departing Harwich at 0720 operating via Dovercourt, Horsley Cross, Manningtree, Lawford, Ardleigh and Capel St Mary. Beestons YN54 OBB Scania N94UD/East Lancs Omnidekka seen in Manningtree High Street.

Robert Appleton.

EBN656p3

Santa's big helpers – when Eastern National delivered the mail!

Richard Delahoy

In the dim and distant past – well, the early and mid-1960s actually – Eastern National buses and coaches had an extra job in the run up to Christmas, helping to deliver parcels for the GPO (General Post Office). Details of this work are rather scant, but we do have some memories from people involved, coverage in our newsletter and EN monthly allocation sheets and other reports in our archives.

The earliest record we have is for 1962, when 13 buses/coaches were allocated to Prittlewell depot in December for GPO work:
010/2, 222/79/81/4/9/93/4, 300/19/21/4.

For 1963, no fewer than 17 vehicles were so allocated:
008/9/11-13, 289/90, 301/19/20/2-4/6-8/95.

[these fleet numbers refer to the pre-August 1964 numbering scheme. Most are Bristol L buses or coaches, but the 1962 list includes three rarities – 222 was PTW 623, the Maudslay Marathon III coach ordered by Hicks Bros, 279 was HHT 429, the Bristol L built with an integral gas producer unit during WW2 and 395 was 724 APU, one of the prototype Bristol SCs].



<<<Picture<<<

Eastern National BD205, MXB 744, a Bristol LL6G with ECW FC35F body from 1952, ex Tillings Transport in 1961/2, on hire to the GPO for Christmas parcel deliveries in Southend. Note the Royal Mail stickers. Although not obvious in this shot, many of the seats had been removed. Wednesday 23 December 1964, Shakespeare Drive/Fairfax Drive, Westcliff.

David Lang.

Eastern National Enthusiasts Group [ENEG] was then formed in 1964 and our December 1964 newsletter (issue number 12) recorded:

“Christmas Mails: the following vehicles have been loaned to the Post Office to assist in the conveyance of Christmas mails: 100, 201-9, 1107 (Total 11).

With these loans, 100 is operating for the first time from a garage other than Kelvedon and 1107 is re-instated for a further period of service.

Prittlewell garage has been cleared of vehicles and the garage converted to a temporary sorting office. The vehicles are at present all garaged in -the open yard adjacent to the garage.”

The following month the report was expanded to note that another 5 buses had been used, 1123/9/32/6/9. It appears 100 & 203 were allocated to Basildon (although 100 was also used at PL) and the rest at Prittlewell.

[100 was a Commer Avenger coach ex Moores of Kelvedon; 201-9 were Bristol LL coaches with ECW full-fronted bodies, ex Tillings Transport and the 11xx series were Bristol L, LL or LWL saloons].

Fast forward a year to December 1965 and we reported:

“Christmas Mails: the following vehicles have been loaned to the Post Office to assist in the conveyance of Christmas mails: 1208-14, total 7.

It is presumed that Prittlewell garage has been cleared of vehicles and converted to a temporary sorting office, as usual, and that the vehicles are garaged in the adjacent yard.”

Again, the January issue carried more news: the following vehicles were also used for conveyance of Christmas mails: 1221/2 at Basildon and 1216-20 at Southend. [All the buses used in 1965 were Bristol LS saloons].

In 1966, the buses hired were again Bristol LS saloons: 1221/2/5/8/31/5/7/46 at Prittlewell and 1233/8 at Basildon. That appears to have been almost the end, as we had no similar reports in 1967 and there is nothing on the monthly allocation sheet issued by EN, and then finally in 1968, just 1221/9 were in use (both Bristol LS buses). After that, the practice appears to have ceased.

David Lang, webmaster of the excellent www.sct61.org site (which has almost 20,000 photos, many with an Essex connection) and then a student living in Southend recalls: "I worked for the Post Office in Southend as a student at Christmas 1968, starting on Monday 9 December and working through to Monday 23 December, 6 days a week, no Sundays. There was a postman, the driver and two students on board. The other student also worked Christmas Eve - we tossed up for who would do the last day.

My only note about the bus was 'old LS type with all offside seats taken out so lots of room'.

Our days seem to involve approx. 0730 start, load the bus up, go somewhere for breakfast (GPO canteen in Tylers Avenue), set off about 0915, along Southchurch Road with a break for tea in a café, lunch break, then covering the roads to the east of Hamstel Road and north of Southchurch Boulevard plus the Boulevard itself (south side had few if any houses at that time). The postman in charge then had to decide whether we could go back or whether it was a bit early, so another café stop was required. It was organised out of the ENOC Prittlewell Garage, so the Post Office must have taken over the main area of the garage for sorting the parcels ready to be loaded on to the buses".



Picture Eastern National CR1123, RHK129, a Bristol LL5G with ECW B39R body, new in 1951, seen on hire on a grey December day for GPO Christmas parcel deliveries somewhere in Southchurch. Wednesday 23 December 1964. **David Lang.**

Jim Revell adds: "Yes, the hired in ENOC buses/coaches were driven by ENOC drivers. As to whether any seats were removed for the purpose I don't know. I don't think ENOC would be unduly concerned about wear and tear on these older vehicles which were unlikely to be used on major coach routes the following spring/summer. Furthermore, many of these older vehicles would have been de-registered at the end of summer as would some newer vehicles with reduced coach work during the autumn/winter months thus saving road tax" and **Chris Stewart** comments that "Most of the MXB-registered LLs were withdrawn and sold in early 1965, so presumably didn't see any further use with EN. I can also remember Midas of Brentwood's ex-Ribble PD1 CCK 651 being used by the Royal Mail in the 1960s, but don't recall it having seats removed for the purpose".

John Bath, one-time resident of Leigh on Sea but now living in Surrey, adds to our story:

"At Christmas 1963, I distinctly recall seeing one of the APU-registered Bristol SCs on these duties near Leigh Church, seen from a Bristol K on the 23A route from my home in Woodleigh Avenue to Leigh Station. It was possibly one of its last duties before sale and still (as I thought at the time) a very recent bus to be demoted compared with many others still in all-day service. I guess it was the same with the coaches - their last hurrah. [as noted above, the SC will have been 724 APU].

The same year, my wife to be (also a Westcliff pupil at the time) was earning some pocket money working as a 15-year-old in the school Christmas holiday for the Post Office, on various duties which included local parcel deliveries from ENOC buses and coaches. Schools broke up for the holiday a little earlier in those days allowing more available days to earn cash and she was based at Tylers Avenue Sorting Office at the time".

We can't say when these hires first began, as our records only go back to 1962, but it seems to have been a well-established operation and presumably may have started some years earlier. **Brian Ashley**, then resident in Westcliff but now living in France, recalls having seen the GPO hires mainly during the early to mid-1960's and explains "a number of them were Bristol L5G's about to be withdrawn, which had about three rows of seats towards the rear removed to accommodate parcels. Interestingly, one of them was ONO 49 (Fleet Nos: 4028, 309, then 1107), which is the one now preserved in the Canvey Museum. Fortunately, I took a photo of it, in which you can see that the rear seats had been removed. You can also see through the cab side window the Royal Mail sticker attached to the forward facing nearside front window. Parked just behind it was ex-Moore's Commer Avenger 576 FVW (Fleet No: 100 previously 037), which a member of staff kindly pulled out especially for me to take a photo, having moved ONO 49 out of its way. I can't help you with exact dates or years. I rather doubt if it went as far back as the Westcliff days, which I think I would have remembered, having been very fond of Westcliff's red buses as a boy and in my early teens".



Picture A real rarity on this work was 576 FVW, the ex-Moore's Kelvedon Commer Avenger coach referred to by Brian Ashley. This shot is in Prittlewell depot yard in 1964. **Brian Ashley.**

Do you remember these parcel buses? Did you work on them? We'd love to hear from you if you did!



Upper Picture Also, in Prittlewell yard, **Brian Ashley** was able to record ONO 49 in 1964, clearly showing how some rows of seats had been removed for parcel duties.

Lower picture This second shot from 1964 of one of the ECW "Queen Mary" coaches shows 209, MXB 748, with Royal Mail stickers and sacks of parcels clearly stacked up inside. Note that the depot allocation plate has been removed. This coach would be withdrawn the following month. **Brian Ashley collection.**

EBN656p7

Service Revisions

by Paul Harvey.

(acknowledgements to LOTS, Essex, Hertfordshire & Suffolk County Councils, Omnibus Society (Eastern Branch), & Richard Delahoy).

Highlights/Lowlights of the Period:

Ensign "usual" Boxing Day services plus a "new" X1,
Tinkering by Trustybus,
Arriva changes stopping places on former Green Line 724.

28 October 18

57/A/B/C Beaulieu to Galleywood (D) First Essex –
route extended to serve Armistice Avenue in Beaulieu with minor timetable adjustments (updated information).



First Essex Alexander Dennis Enviro 200/Enviro 200 MMC44662 heading towards the bus gate at Anglia Ruskin University on 8 August 2017 on its way to Beaulieu before the development's roads had been completed to allow the extension described above.

Maurice Austin.

8 November 18

350 Liverpool to Stansted Airport (D) National Express – revision to route.

10 December 18

Z2 Tilbury Amazon to Canning Town (D) Ensign Bus –
adjusted journey times on Saturday & Sunday, no change to Mon to Fri timetable.

26 December 18

X1 Southend Airport to Upminster Station (WO) Ensign Bus – new service operating on 26 December only.
X10 Southend to Lakeside (WO) Ensign Bus – this service will again operate on 26 December only.

30 December 18

87C Brightlingsea to Weeley School (Sch) Go Ahead Hedingham – school service withdrawn.

EBN656p8

3 January 2019

51 Chafford Hundred to Southend Schools (Sch) NIBS – new schoolday service.

7 January 19

410 Harlow to Waltham Cross (M-S) Trustybus – timing adjustments & last journey from Harlow curtailed at Broxbourne Mon to Fri.
608 Gidea Park Gallows Corner to Shenfield School (Sch) Go Ahead London General – new school service.
667 Grange Hill to Chigwell School (Sch) Go Ahead London General – new school service.

14 January 19

481 Felixstowe to London Victoria (D) National Express – revision to route and timing adjustments.

21 January 2019

418/B Harlow/Epping to Loughton (M-S) Trustybus –
the 0705 from Epping to operate 2 mins earlier throughout. The 1816 from Harlow to operate 3 mins later throughout.
420 Harlow to Ongar (D) Trustybus – revised timetable.
420A Harlow to North Weald (M-S) – Trustybus – revision to timetable.

27 January 19

804 Debden to Chigwell School (Sch) Go Ahead London General – revision to timetable.

3 February 19

724 Harlow to Heathrow Airport (D) Arriva Kent Thameside – revision to stopping places.



Trustybus acquired several Darts from Go South Coast earlier this year and SN03 EBU, still in Solent Blueline livery with route branding for Southampton, is seen at Hertford Bus Station.

Owen Woodliffe.

This just shows how inconsiderate bus station designers are! Fancy putting a bus stop just where photographers need a clear line of vision!
– Ed.

Ongoing consultations

Service 11

Highwoods Circular Colchester operated by Arriva

Closing Date:

02 January 2019

Service 11 operates Monday to Friday with financial support from Essex County Council (ECC). ECC are considering amending the timetable with the aim of improving reliability and is carrying out a public consultation regarding this proposal.

Recent closed consultations

Service 63

Colchester North Rail Station - Monkwick operated by Hedingham & District Omnibuses Ltd

Closed

15 October 2018

Service 63 (Colchester North Station to Monkwick) operates Monday to Saturdays with financial support from Essex County Council (ECC). ECC are considering withdrawing the 0658 journey only and a public consultation was carried out regarding this proposal.

Outcome

The consultation is being assessed.

Service 381

Harlow - Coopersale operated by Community Link

Closed

27 November 2018

Service 381 operates Monday to Saturdays with financial support from Essex County Council (ECC). ECC are considering amending the Monday - Friday timetable and a public consultation was carried out regarding this proposal.

Outcome

The consultation is being assessed.

Hedingham Has The Blues!



Hedingham now has two ex-Go South Coast Dart SLF/MPDs. One is 286, seen on Lexden Road, Colchester on 20/11/18 - its first day in service. It is in a light blue livery.

John Podgorski.

Service revisions, concluded.

Paul Harvey.

Something Paul picked up from this week's (1st week in December) N&P (Notices and Proceedings) is that Konect Bus, Dereham have new operating centres attached to their "O" licence as follows:

Hedingham Clacton Gorse Lane Industrial Estate	40 vehicles
Hedingham Brunel Road	6 vehicles
Chambers Sudbury	32 vehicles
Hedingham Kelvedon	12 vehicles
Hedingham Sible Hedingham	26 vehicles

It looks as though Go-Ahead East Anglian are having all the operating centres on the Konect "O" licence. The Anglian Bus base at Ellough Beccles has been deleted from the licence. Paul hasn't seen the cancellation of the "O" licences for Chambers & Hedingham so far. He wonders if all the bus service registrations will be cancelled and registered in Konect Bus "O" licence name?



Mark Lloyd reported in EBN655p25 that Optare Solo M850 911 (SF04 SKE) had finally entered service on Clacton town services on 18 October. Here is 911 (SF04 SKE) in Jackson Road, Clacton, on 9 November.

Robert Appleton.

Subscription Renewal Reminder!

Richard Delahoy.

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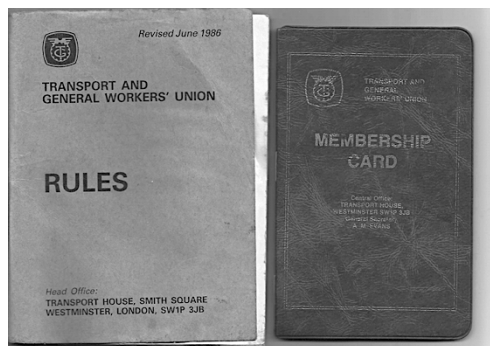
Further Recollections of a Former Chelmsford Bus Man.

Alan Tebbit BEM.

I always regarded the unions as a necessary evil. I will not deny their worth; they, or their members, fought for a fair deal at a time when many employers would exploit the workforce. However, they often went "over the top" on inconsequential matters. When I joined Eastern National in 1964, it was a closed shop, i.e. no Union card, no job. Chelmsford (CF) depot had a reputation for militancy, and my father, a long service employee, offered me the advice to keep a low profile, when it came to Union affairs. If there was a move towards industrial action, I would attend Union meetings to argue against striking, but if the vote went against me, I would stay away on the day of inaction, and not join the pickets. In production or retail industries, what was lost on a strike day could be made up at a later date. In the public transport sector, if you left your passengers behind on a Monday, you could not expect them to travel twice on Tuesday, and many of them would find a permanent alternative, a strike was always counter-productive, in my opinion. I know that some of the readers will point out that I forfeited my job with ENOC as a result of industrial action, but that is a story for another day. There were a couple of disputes in which I was very involved. Both were during my time as vehicle output supervisor at CF.

The availability of crew type buses had ceased, our last allocation of double-deckers at CF had been VRs 3027/9/35, which we were using as crew buses, and the management were eager to use them as they were intended, as OPO vehicles. We were already using Leyland Nationals as high capacity 72 passenger buses but introducing double-decks was a step too far for the TGWU 1/699 branch. New vehicle allocation graphs had been prepared, and I was summoned to a meeting in the local superintendent's office. It was made quite clear to me that I WOULD allocate VRs to services 41/a/b Bus Station and Galleywood the following day. Any OPO driver refusing a VR, I had to send to the duty inspectors office, to be dealt with. On no account was I to substitute a Leyland National for a VR. I went about my usual routine, arriving at 0415, opening up the depot, and driving buses onto their respective stands, including a VR onto bay 4. The early buses departed, until the 0618 41a to Galleywood was refused. The driver was sent off to report to the Inspector and was sent home. No other buses left the depot that morning, and I set about putting all of the buses away, apart from one being left out to change over with the Dunmow outstation car, due in for routine maintenance. As a card-carrying member, I then had to join the strikers, but to stay available to allocate buses back out, if an agreement was reached. Just after lunch a compromise was agreed, and I had a busy hour getting the services up and running.

On the second occasion, I took more of a central role. We were at that stage where OPO conversion was increasing at a rapid pace. Many of the conducting staff, especially the ladies, were not keen on driving, or finding alternative employment within the company, cashiers, cleaners etc. Increasingly, OPO drivers were being asked to cover crew duties. On one afternoon duty OT11 (crew) had no conductor. This was an easy little job, 1600 hrs service 54 to Danbury Common, and 1735 hrs 31a to Woodham Walter. Derek Harris volunteered to do it, but there were only crew buses available. We took a gamble on asking Derek to take RE, Plaxton 428, a most unsuitable vehicle for OPO, although it did have numbers on the destination display, and an automatic door. A conductors Setright strap was tied to a stanchion, to hang the machine on, and a margarine tub placed on the dashboard to act as a cash tray. It was a lightly loaded couple of trips, and Derek was as happy as a pig in fertiliser driving the cream of the fleet. The following day a similar situation arose, only this time it was the 1600 hrs service 152 to Grays, a very busy trip, with a lot of schoolchildren out of town. Again Mr. Harris was up for it, on condition that he could have 428. I was very dubious about this, but the regulator, Ron Jepson, argued that 47 seats were better than none, and it reduced the lost mileage. I prayed that nobody spotted him leaving the station. All went well until he went through Basildon, some of the drivers incredulous at what they were seeing. Phone calls ensued among Union officials, and it was agreed that Derek would be "persuaded", to offload any passengers at Basildon on his return trip, and run back "dead" to CF, or both depots would cease work. I can only imagine the conversation that took place at Basildon bus station, but there was no disruption to service, apart from the loss of one 152 from Basildon to Chelmsford. The next day I was summoned in to see the boss, praised for my initiative, but to keep my ideas to myself in future.



Ironically a few years later (1980), a similar situation arose. Again, there was not a conductor for the 1600 hours service 152 to Grays. I was back driving at this time and offered to operate it OPO on overtime. However, I stipulated one condition, that I could use Bristol VR no. 3048, which at that time wore the original 1930s livery, as part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations. In order to get the trip covered, this was readily agreed to, and off I went. This led fairly rapidly to union resolution being passed that "only Leyland National vehicles will be allowed on OPO operated service 152/3 journeys".

Spoilsports!

VR 3048 was selected to carry this historic livery from June 1980 to June 1981 as the Company commemorated 50 years of service. Seen at Central Works Open Day, the bus then toured depots around the county before regaining NBC green livery. It might not seem that long ago, but we're heading for the 90th anniversary of the formation of ENOC Ltd. The late **Peter Snell**.



Alan refers to RELH/Plaxton coach 428 but this is sister 429 (LWC 980J), which - like 428 - stayed with EN until May 1974 when it joined the National Travel (South East) fleet. Both passed to Eastern Counties (as RE844/5) in 1978 and then Ambassador Travel, the pair staying together even after that when they went to Wing of Sleaford. Seen here on the forecourt of Chelmsford Bus Station, an RE bus waits alongside, an early FLF follows 429, what looks like an LWC-C registered FLF is heading for Dunmow on the 33 and a Leyland National on the 36 just gets into shot.

EBEG collection, per the late **Andy Meadows**.



Text and
picture
research
by
**Chris
Stewart**.

Acquired Vehicles

30894 X749 VUA YV3S2C611YA001007 0009/36 H49/29F 09/00 First Yorkshire Rider 5749

(Note, last two numbers of registration transposed in fleet number.) Volvo B7TL / Alexander. Acquired from First Greater Manchester. Collected from Oldham depot and driven to Hadleigh on 7 December. This is a replacement for 33189 (see below) but is likely to go to Colchester in exchange for a Trident. In Urban livery with "Greater Manchester" main fleet names, small "First" name with f symbol above driver's cab and small "First Greater Manchester" name with f symbol above entrance door.

Further to EBN655, 67805 entered service on route 65 on 12 November, and blue 67779 entered service on route 61 on 21st. 67755 has depot stickers both sides, but 67756 only has one on the nearside. 67779 has small "First" with f symbol above driver's cab, but no depot sticker or main fleet name on offside. It has a contactless advert around the rear wheel arch on the offside. 67805 has small "First" with f symbol above driver's cab, depot sticker, but no main fleet name on offside (nearside not seen).

Allocation Changes

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

Period 8 2018/19 (28 October - 24 November)

65675 CR-CR (out of service), 65677 FG-CR, 65678 CR-FG, 67779 FG-CR, 67805 FG-CR, 68510 CF-CF (out of service)
65677 returned from Great Yarmouth to Colchester on 22 November and was on route 97A the next day. Its stay with First Eastern Counties turned out to be a loan rather than a disposal. It replaced 65675 which is out of MOT. 20514 was seen in service for the first time, on Colchester schools, on 13 November, this led to the withdrawal of 68510 from service again.



First Essex 65690 Scania L94UB/WrightBus Solar, loaned from CR to BN, as a result of hybrid issues. Seen at Lakeside on 1.1.18.

Ian Ransom.

Disposal

Further to EBN655, and as noted above, 65677 was only on loan to First Eastern Counties.

Repaints

66812, seen on route 42 on 21 November. This had been repainted into Urban livery in June 2015, but it has recently had some work undertaken and the opportunity was taken to repaint it at Westway whilst it was off road. It has small "First Essex" names with f symbol above entrance door and driver's cab, depot stickers both sides and main "Essex" fleet names on cove panels both sides.

42935, seen on 24 November 2018. This had been repainted into Urban livery in December 2014. It has small "First Essex" names with f symbol above entrance door and driver's cab, depot stickers both sides and main "Essex" fleet name on offside lower panels (it has an advert on nearside). (It also has an f symbol, as do most buses, on its front dash, but after its 2014 repaint it only had an f symbol in the rear window, its small fleet names above driver's cab and entrance door were just plain "Essex".)

Further to EBN655, the branding for route 37 on the cove panels of 44539 & 44540 has the route number plus "Brentwood Railway Station • Pilgrims Hatch".



TransBus Trident 33232 (LT52 WXX) is one of only two at Hadleigh with gasket (rubber) -mounted glazing. Hadleigh double-deckers do not normally work on Sundays, making poppy-adorned 33232 a very rare 'catch', and not only that, also on Sundays-only routing of service 21. Seen here in Thames Drive, Leigh-on-Sea appropriately on 11 November.

John G. Lidstone.

General

Further to EBN655, the poppy stickers included "100" and "1918-2018". By early December, many buses were still displaying them.

Sources own observations, and with thanks to R Appleton, S Austin, S Barham, D Bell, W Bell, N Clark, T Clark, L Cornwell, J Cush, R Delahoy, A Harding, D Lund-Conlon, W Morrison, R Newman, T Maguire, G Norris, J Podgorski, D Pretty, S Quay, I Ransom, J Salmon, K Smith, C Stewart, T Webb, R West, First Essex, Essex Buses Google group, Evening Echo, Bus Lists on the Web, Flickr and Terminus.

Other Vehicle News and Workings Colchester (All vehicles listed below allocated to CR).

Route 62/A/B branded Volvos seen working on other routes during November: 37133 on 17 pm, then 65 pm peak (8th), on 75 (18th & 21st); 37134 on 65 pm peak (29th); 37135 on 17 pm then 65 pm peak (16th); 37136 on 1A (7th), on 61 (21st); 37137 on 61 (24th); 37138 on both 104 & 70 (9th); 37139 on 1A (Sunday 4th), on 175 (29th).

Other double deckers seen operating on routes 103/4 during November: 32087 (9th), 32477 (23rd), 33087 (30th), 37009 (24th, an unusual double deck operation on a Saturday), 37015 (21st, 23rd & 30th), 37017 (12th), plus StreetLite 63333 on 6th & 30th. Morning peak services on 103/104 are still single deck; on 12 November the following were noted: 62407 on 0640 Harwich-Colchester 103, 65031 on 0700 Harwich-Colchester 104, 66798 on 0710 Harwich-Colchester 103, 65687 on 0715 Colchester-Harwich 104.

4 Nov	Sunday. 62407 on 99, 65032 on 102, 65685 on 76 & 8, 65687 on 2A, 65688 on 76	
6	33078 on 67, then 17 pm, then 65 pm peak, 65029 on 174/175	
8	63337 on 71, 65687 on 70	9 63335 on 102
11	Sunday. 32481 on 62, 33195 & 33196 on 62A, 63339 & 63343 on 1A, 65681 & 65684 on 76 & 8, 67756 on 74A & 8	
12	65028 on 104, 65029 on 70	14 65675 on 104
15	63340 on 174/175, 63343 on 70, 67805 on 67	16 66807 on 70
21	65030 on 103	
22	65028 on 174/175, 65681 on 75	
24	33195 on 62, 32068 & 32481 on 62	
27	63340 on 70	
29 & 30	Non-pupil days at Stanway and Thomas Lord Audley schools, Colchester. 17 did not run, and 174/175 did not call at TLA	
1 Dec	33184 & 63333 on 62	4 66807 on 97



First Essex Buses Scania Omnicity 65031 (YN06 TDX) in Manningtree High Street working 07.00 Harwich - Colchester service 104 on 12 November.

Robert Appleton.

EBN656p16

Other Vehicle News and Workings - Chelmsford (All vehicles listed below allocated to CF)

69429 still retains its super rear advert for Co-Op Funeral East of England which it has had since it was acquired in October 2014, but 69432, acquired the same month, has had its similar super rear advert removed (exact date not known, between April & December 2018).

- 6 Nov 42555 on 71, 42931 & 43846 on 70
- 7 42931 on 71, 42932 & 69433 on 70
- 8 DS62139 on driver training on Maldon Road, Colchester
- 12 44599 on 70
- 13 41521 on 71 (and again on 22nd)
- 16 DS62191 on driver training on B1025 northbound, near Abberton
- 20 X30 branded 67167 on 32
- 24 Route 37 branded 44539 on 32 (and on 59 next day)
- 26 X30 branded 67165 on 13/14
- 27 Double deck 70 services in both directions were missing out Little Waltham and travelling round the by-pass. 44597 on 70. (Road resurfacing - Ed).
- 2 Dec Sunday. Route 37 branded 44539 on 54 with similar 44540 on 45, 44596 on 37 & 80C
- 3 42555 & 44900 both unusual on 351
- 5 67902 unusual on 351
- 7 44597 & 44599, back from Basildon (see below), plus 44598 on 351



It seems very appropriate that First Eastern Counties Volvo B7TL/Wright Gemini 32672 (SN55 HEV) - complete with poppy - is now based in the County in which the traditional 'EV' registration was issued. Indeed, Eastern National had Bristol Lodekka FLF6Gs registered HEV 994-7B (HEV 997B with its unique roof-box body), the EV mark issued of old in Chelmsford, where the bus was photographed. Colchester had Colchester Corporation Transport AEC Regent Vs registered 679-82 HEV also.

John G. Lidstone.

EBN656p17

Other Vehicle News and Workings - Basildon & Hadleigh

(All vehicles listed below allocated to BN except where stated)

The 19 Volvo 7900Hs were all taken out of service for checks on the morning of Saturday 24 November. This was due to a wheel coming off one of the buses in Basildon whilst in service on route 100 the previous day (no-one was injured in this incident). Other vehicles were allocated to the 100 as cover, including, for the first time, Enviro 400s. As these cannot fit under the Duke Street railway bridge in Chelmsford, they were stopping at Chelmsford Market then turning right into Duke Street to commence the return journey (hence not serving the bus station). Notices were posted at every bay in Basildon bus station advising of potential delays to all First services due to "operational difficulties". From Wednesday 28th, some vehicles from other depots were loaned to Basildon. This led to the cessation of double deckers on the 100. On Friday 30th, 69911 was seen on test on the A127 and the next day two hybrids were back in service on the 100, 69901 & 69910. On Monday 3 December, 69901, 69904, 69909, 69911, 69914 & 69919 were all back in use on the 100.

Observations on route 100:

24 Nov	33507, 33546 & 33570 plus Caetano bodied Darts, B7RLEs (including 66821 & 66827), StreetLites and one X10 branded E200
26	33544, 33554, 33555, 33574, 41513, 41542, 47650, 47654, 47656, 66821, 66823 & 66825
27	41542, plus in an hour and a half at Chelmsford from 17.30 only three 100s were seen, 42519, 47651 & 47655
28	33548, CF44597, 47652, 47657, 47658, CF66794, CF66808, CF66812, 66819, 66821, 66823, 66826, X10 branded 67163, CR67755 & HH69915 (black livery)
29	33544, 41527, CF44597 (daytime), 47650, 47653, 47654, 47655, 47658, CR65690, CF66794, CF66812, 66813, 66821, 66825, 66826, CR67755 & HH69515
1 Dec	47651, 47652, 47653, 47654, 47655, 47656, 47657, 47658 (so all of Basildon's StreetLites except 47650), CR65690, 66813, 66819, 66823, 66825 & CR67755
3	CF44599, 47651, 47655, 47659, CF66812 & CF66794

Observations on other routes (Caetano Darts are usual as back up to StreetLites on route 9, but both they and double deckers were covering for StreetLites which were being used on the 100):

26 Nov	33077 on 9
28	CF32483 on 25, 33546, 33562 & 33557 on 9, CF44599 on 8/A, CR65690 on 5
29	CF32483 on 25, CF44597 on 8 in evening, CF44599 & CF66808 on 8/A
1 Dec	33574 & CF44597 on 9
3	41523 & 44541 on 9
5	41543 on 9
7	Of five 9s seen, four were Darts, 41523, 41527, 41542 & 42519, but StreetLite 47655 was back on the route



As seen on p24, most buses in Rayleigh were diverted from their usual High Street route on 29 November due to the Christmas lights being switched on. First Essex Wrightbus StreetLite DF Micro Hybrid 47525 passes through. Your Editor thinks this trip is usually operated with a 'decker.

Philip Mansbridge.

EBN656p18

Basildon and Hadleigh cont.

Other non-related observations.

11 Nov Sunday. 69905 (still in original livery) & 69916 on X10
 23 X10 branded 67161 on 100
 2 Dec 44541 & 44544 on 251

The top deck of HH33189 was severely damaged when the driver missed a right-hand turn on route 20 around 0530 on 29 November and collided with the low bridge in Hambro Hill, Rayleigh. Fortunately, at such an early hour, there were no passengers upstairs at the time and no-one was injured.



Wright StreetLite 47646 (SN15 AFF) was the last delivered to Hadleigh, replacing the last Dart, 43721 (R721 DJN). Now with poppy adornment on Sundays-only routing of service 21 via Thames Drive, Leigh-on-Sea.

John G. Lidstone.

Former Depots & Outstation

The former outstation at Braintree has been taken over by Stephenson's (who have moved from Skitts Hill). Two former Uno Dart SLF / Pointers (Stephenson's dealer stock) were seen stored there on 18 November, 113, KC03 OSE and 120, KE04 UMC (they hadn't been there the previous week). By the 25th, they had been joined by nine of Stephenson's own (operational) vehicles. In November, demolition of the old Colchester Corporation Tram Depot in Magdalen Street began, this had been used by First Essex for additional parking space before they moved into the new depot at Haven Road. Demolition had nearly been completed by 6 December. Student accommodation is to be built on the site. Further to EBN624, the purchase of Harwich depot by the adjacent Harwich Town Brewing Company fell through, indeed as at May 2018 the micro-brewery building itself was "under offer". First still own the lease to the depot, but the land that it is built on is owned by Network Rail as successor to British Rail. A partial correction to EBN655, Clacton depot is "To Let" by Fenn Wright, with A1 Truck and Van occupying part of it.

Buses in Harwich 2016 to 2018

By Robert Appleton.

Part One 2016 to 2018

The last part of my articles about Eastern National/First Essex Buses at Harwich appeared in EBN624 p28/31 April 2016. As it is five years since the closure of Harwich depot, I thought I should bring the story up to date since April 2016 and do a comparison between November 2013 and November 2018.

From April 2016 to date, First Essex Buses have continued to operate services 102/103/104 Colchester - Harwich. There have been minor timetable changes, and the basic half-hourly frequency during Monday to Saturday daytime has been maintained.

In April 2016 First Essex Buses' Clacton depot were operating services 3 & 4 Clacton - Harwich. From 28 May 2017, service 4 journeys via Clacton Factory Shopping Village were replaced by service 3 journeys so that all served the Meadowview Estate in Clacton. With the closure of Clacton depot on 28 July 2018, this service was taken over by Hedingham & District.

In April 2016, First Essex Buses' Clacton depot were operating service 2/2A Harwich - Dovercourt - Parkeston Circular. Clacton depot operated this service for the last time on 27 August 2016 using 42486 (SN03 WMX) Alexander Dennis Dart SLF Pointer that had come to Clacton for the summer from Chelmsford depot. From 30 August 2016 Hedingham & District gained the Essex County Council contract for this service. However, due to staff shortages, Hedingham subcontracted this service to Panther Travel from 19 September 2016 to 14 November 2016.

Then Panther Travel gained the Essex County Council contract for this service from 29 August 2017, and agreement was reached for Panther Travel to takeover this service early from 3 June 2017. From 29 August 2017 Panther Travel introduced additional journeys on this service, operated commercially.



Panther Travel Alexander Dennis Mini Pointer Dart DC56 PAN (RX56 BWE) leaving Harwich on 0905 service 2 Parkeston Circular on 16 October 2018.

Robert Appleton.

EBN6546p20

Back on 1 September 2014 the Harwich - Ramsey schoolday only journeys on service 103 had transferred from Hedingham & District to Panther Travel. On 11 April 2016, these journeys were renumbered 118. The morning journey was amended to start from Parkeston. The afternoon journey was extended to Parkeston, then to the Fryatt Memorial Hospital on Dovercourt Main Road.

School service 30A Harwich – Manningtree High School was taken over by Panther Travel from First Essex Buses' Clacton depot on 5 September 2016.

On 4 September 2017 Panther Travel started operating commercial service X15 Harwich - Colchester Norman Way Schools via Dovercourt, Little Oakley, Great Oakley, Wix, Elmstead Market and the University of Essex, thus creating a service from the Harwich area to the University of Essex. This service had minor changes from 2 January 2018, and a revised timetable from 22 October 2018.



Picture Panther Travel VB08 PAN (PN08 SWJ) Alexander Dennis Trident 2/East Lincs in Osborne Street, Colchester, on 29 November 2017, working service X15 Harwich - Colchester.

Robert Appleton.

For a two-year period from September 2015 to September 2017, Stephenson's of Essex school service 701 Harwich – Colchester Norman Way Schools was subcontracted to Panther Travel. Stephenson's operated this service from September 2017, but it was withdrawn from 18 February 2018.

On 20 August 2018 Panther Travel started commercial service 14 Harwich - Clacton serving the Clacton Factory Shopping Village. One journey in each direction plus short workings between Clacton Pier Avenue and the Factory Shopping Village on Mondays to Saturdays. The bus on this service interworks with the other Panther Travel service 2, Clacton - Mistle, which First Essex Buses have subcontracted to Panther Travel following the closure of Clacton depot on 28 July 2018.

One more service to mention that had a long association with Eastern National. This was schooldays only service 193 Ardleigh - East Bergholt High School. For several years Harwich depot worked the morning journey, and Colchester depot worked the afternoon journey. With the closure of Harwich depot on 30 November 2013, Colchester depot worked both journeys. Then, on 1 September 2014 Carters Coach services took over this service. When Ipswich Buses took over Carters Coach Services on 27 May 2016, they did not take on this service, so it was retained by Carters Heritage Buses, who have two ex-Metroliner Alexander Dennis Trident ALX400 available for this service. LK05 GGI is normally used, with LK05 GFV in reserve. Both retain London red livery and dual-door layout.

In November 2018 these operators and buses can be seen in Harwich:

First Essex Buses' Colchester depot continue to operate services 103/104 Colchester - Harwich, plus the evening and Sunday service 102. Six buses are required for the daytime Monday to Saturday services. Most journeys are single-deck, mainly Scania L94UB/Wright Solar or Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse. Scania Omnicities also appear. Now that they have short nearside mirror arms, Wright Streetlite Max also reach Harwich. Double-deckers are in the minority on this service, but when used they can be Dennis Trident/Plaxton President, or Volvo B7TL with Transbus ALX400 or Wright Eclipse Gemini bodies.



First Essex Buses 63334
(SK65 PXR) Wright
Streetlite Max leaving
Harwich on 0930 service
103 to Colchester on 16
October 2018.

Robert Appleton.

Hedingham & District operate service 3 Clacton - Harwich, with two single-deckers, normally Alexander Dennis Dart SLF Pointer or Alexander Dennis Enviro 200. The timetable was inherited from First Essex Buses, the Monday to Saturday frequency is every 65 to 70 minutes, the Sunday frequency is every two hours.

On Monday to Friday schooldays, Panther Travel double-deckers start on the following journeys:

0712 Harwich - Colchester Norman Way Schools X15 is a double-deck working.

DC52 PAN (PN52 XBH) DAF DB250/East Lancashire Lowlander H44/29F or

BIG 7758 (W758 DWX) Volvo B7TL/Alexander ALX400 H47/29F are normally used. The return journey is at 1550 from Colchester Norman Way Schools back to Harwich. Normally the double-decker also works 1145 Colchester - Harwich X15, and 1415 Harwich - Colchester X15.

The 0730 Harwich - Manningtree High School school service 30A is normally worked by VB08 PAN (PN08 SWJ) Alexander Dennis Trident 2/East Lancashire Olympus H43/27F. BIG 9210 (N5982 BRH) Volvo Olympian/Alexander CH51/33F has also worked this service at times. The return journey on 30A is at 1510 from Manningtree High School. In between these journeys, a DDA compliant double-decker can work 1115 Harwich - Colchester X15 and 1315 Colchester - Harwich X15.

Panther Travel single-deckers are mainly Alexander Dennis Enviro 200:

AB62 PAN (YX62 FVW) DC62 PAN (YX62 FCA) are 10.8m long B39F,

AB09 PAN (YX09 AFA) DB09 PAN (YX09 AEV) SB09 PAN (YX09 FLE) are 10.2m long B36F, DC61 PAN (YX61 BXJ) is 8.9m long B29F. Also in service are DC56 PAN (RX56 BWE) Alexander Dennis Mini Pointer Dart 8.8m long B29F, and

BIG 9856 (X346 YGU) Dennis Plaxton Mini Pointer Dart 8.8m long B29F.

One single-decker starts on 0751 Parkeston - Harwich - Dovercourt - Ramsey Village - Ramsey Church Hill service 118. Then this bus works 0832 Ramsey Church - Harwich X15, and 0915 Harwich - Colchester service X15.

Service 2 Harwich - Dovercourt Long Meadows - Parkeston Circular starts with the 0905 departure from Harwich. The bus on service 2 journeys also works 1500 Harwich - Ramsey X15, 1515 Ramsey Church Hill - Ramsey Village - Dovercourt - Harwich - Parkeston - Dovercourt Fryatt Memorial Hospital 118, 1553 Dovercourt - Harwich X15, then the last service 2 journey at 1605 Harwich - Parkeston Circular.

Another single-decker starts on the other service 2 ie 0625 Clacton – Mistley. There are changeovers with service 14 Harwich – Clacton Factory Shopping Village – Clacton during the day, so that this bus comes back to Harwich on 1520 Clacton – Harwich 14. The single-decker that starts on 0925 Harwich – Clacton 14 operates the last service 2 at 1850 Mistley – Clacton.

Beestons of Hadleigh, Suffolk can be seen in Harwich twice a day working service OC4 from Harwich to the Otley Campus of Easton & Otley College north of Ipswich. This service departs from Harwich Rail Station at 0720 operating via Dovercourt, Horsley Cross, Manningtree, Lawford, Ardeleigh, and Capel St Mary. The return journey leaves Otley Campus at 1640 arriving back at Harwich Rail Station at 1830. OC4 is normally a double-deck working using a Scania N94UD/East Lancs Omnidekka.

So in November 2018 there are 6 First Essex Buses, 2 Hedingham & District, 6 Panther Travel and 1 Beestons buses, giving a total of 15 buses to be seen in service at Harwich Station Approach and Rail Station.

Now a comparison with the situation immediately prior to the closure by First Essex Buses of Harwich depot on 30 November 2013. The final Harwich allocation was:

42937 (SN05 DZT) Alexander Dennis Dart SLF Pointer B37F,
44516 - 44519 (YX09 ACV/ACY/ACZ/ADO) Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 B35F,
65626/627 (V826/827 FSC) 65569/570/573/574 (S569/570/573/574 TPW),
65586 (V586 DVF) Scania L94UB/Wright Access Foline B40F or B43F.

Four buses from 42937/44516 - 519 worked services 3 & 4 Harwich - Clacton, services 20/20A Harwich - Parkeston Circulars, services 22A/22B Harwich - Dovercourt Long Meadows - Parkeston Morrisons. Six buses from 62626/627, 65569/570/573/574/586 worked services 102/103/104 Harwich - Colchester, school service 30A Harwich - Manningtree High School, and the morning journey on service 193 Ardeleigh - East Bergholt High School. So, ten buses for service and two spare, the latter could be seen in Harwich depot or parked outside the depot on Station Approach.

A Stephenson's of Essex double-decker worked school service 701 Harwich - Colchester Norman Way Schools, departing Harwich Main Road (High Lighthouse) at 0715, and returning with a 1545 departure from Norman Way Schools.

Thus 13 buses in November 2013 and 15 buses in November 2018, but the operators, buses, and timetables have changed over five years. For example, of the First Essex Buses at Harwich in November 2013, 42937 is now at Chelmsford, 44516 - 519 are now with First Eastern Counties, and the Scania's have been withdrawn.

With thanks to **Stephen Barham** for help with this article. Also, thanks to past issues of Essex Bus News that helped me keep track of the service changes. Any future changes will be reported for inclusion in Essex Bus News.



First Essex Buses 65691 (YS03 ZKL) Scania L94UB/Wright Solar on layover outside the closed Harwich depot on 16 October 2018, prior to working 09.00 Harwich - Colchester 104.

Robert Appleton.

EBN656p23



Mark Lloyd with thanks to Ross Newman.

Ensignbus

Dealing Stock Movements November 2018.

Vehicles in

Abellio London	SN12 APF/K/O/U	E400's
ACME Transport	T664/685 KPU	Tridents
Go-Ahead London	SN51 UAD/L	Darts
	LF52 ZPK	Volvo B7TLs
	LX06 DZS/T	
	YX60 FUA/B/G/H	Enviro 200s
	/J/M/P/T	
	PN09 EKU	Scania's
	PO59 KFW/Y	
Hedingham	T812 RFG	Tridents
	W824 NNJ	
Metroline	LK55 KLL/KLJ/KLV	Darts
Renown Coaches	GN06 EVL / EVH	Volvo B7RLE's
	B10 MVO	Volvo B10Ms
	AFZ 3857	
	XIL 9400	
Tower Transit	YX61 FZJ	E200
Stagecoach London	LX03 BWN/ORG	Tridents
	LX53 KAE/KAU/KBE/KBF/	
	KBJ	
	LX55 ERI/ESN	
	LX06 AFZ/AGO	

Vehicles Out

Axe Valley, Seaton, Devon	T685 KPU	Trident
Big Bus, London	SN12 APF/K/O/U	E400's
Canavan Travel, Glasgow	YX60 FUB/P/T	E200's
Country Bus, Newton Abbots, Devon		
	YX60 FUA/G/J/M	E200's
Decker Bus, Peterborough	LJ53 BAO	Volvo B7TL
Faresaver, Chippenham, Wilts		
	YX09 AEY / AFK	Enviro 200s
Grant Palmer, Dunstable		
	YX60 FUH	E200
Hams Travel, Flimwell, East Sussex		
	PG04 WHB	Volvo B7TL
Hornsby Coaches, Scunthorpe, Lincs		
	YN54AJX	Scania

Langston and Tasker, Steeple Claydon, Bucks		
	YX61FZJ	E200
North East Coaches, County Durham		
	T664KPU	Trident
Red Route Buses, Northfleet		
	LK55KLL/V	Dart
Surrey Coach Hire, Kingswood, Surrey		
	LX06DYS / DZT Volvo B7TLs	

Other Movements

LX53 BAO
Volvo B7TL

Henry Thomas, Wolverhampton.

LX53 AZN
Volvo B7TL

Valerie Williams, Freetown, Sierra Leone.

S752 KBA
Olympian

Riseandshinesignpost, Eastbourne.

SN11 BNY
Enviro 400
City Direct, Galway, Eire.

LX06 DZH
Volvo B7TL
TM Coach Hire, Dunmurray, Eire.

LF52 ZPK
Volvo B7TL
Cayley Primary School, London E14.

SN51UAD / UAL
Darts
Hardwicks, Barnsley.

Tridents
LG02 FAA / FAU T812 RFG W824 NNJ LX03 ORG
Darts
LX06 EYV SN03 WMK
Volvo B7TL's
LX06 DZO / PN02 XBO / PJ02 RCF.
To MC Tractors for scrap.

Finally all of the **Orpington fire victims** are here, they are confirmed as E60, E211, MEC56, EN37, MEC60, MEC54, EN33, SEN21, EH18, E94 & E224. All are going to be cut-up on site and disposed of in skips, with exception of MEC56 and MEC60, which are going to be disposed of by insurers after further forensic examination.

Mark Lloyd with thanks to Ross Newman.

The final Dart SLF, 785 AE55 EHM has been sold to Hams Travel, Flimwell. This was originally Regal 701 MCV bodied SLF.



Ensign only has one 'Gemini 1' - here, the former Arriva 101 (PIJ 601) arrives at Aldgate during the tube strike on 7 November.

John G. Lidstone.

EBN656p25

There are no vehicle changes to report this month. Six Dennis Darts have been acquired from UNO for dealer stock but are not part of the Stephensons fleet.

The Braintree depot moved from Skitts Hill to the yard on Springwood Drive previously used by First as their Braintree outstation, over the weekend of 24/25 November.



Upper picture The NIBS fleet has been renumbered into the Stephensons series as seen here on 341, MX11 CZR, a wheel-forward Wright Streetlite seen in Brentwood High Street on service 269, on 1 December. There's a bit of a story behind the picture. The bus was on layover with no destination displaying, so a fellow enthusiast asked the driver to turn it on, which he kindly did as shown. I then stood in the road when the pelican crossing behind the bus went red and stopped the traffic, whilst my fellow enthusiast stood on the pavement blocking a car trying to come out of a side entrance, so I could get an unobstructed shot! Sometimes luck is not enough . . . Thanks Clive!

Richard Delahoy.



Dave Arnold kindly sent some interesting pictures following his recent trip to the Lincoln event reported in EBN655. Space prevents showing more (perhaps next EBN!) but, as a taster, here is ex Webbs of Chelmsford UVL 873M.

EBN656p26

Arriva Southend / Harlow / Colchester.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to John Card, Richard Delahoy and Keith Sadler..

Colchester has received two new Wright StreetLite DF vehicles:

SK68 TWU

SK68 TWV

Seating capacity is not yet known. They arrived on 26 November in Sapphire livery but without lettering. They are intended for service 133 Stansted Airport – Braintree (with occasional journeys to Colchester). It is expected that they will displace DAF SB120 / Wright 3528/9 (LF02 PNE/I) from the Colchester allocation. As of 6 December, there were no reports of them having entered service.

Optare Versas 4199 (YJ58 PFZ) and 4236 (KX13 DHF) transferred from **Harlow** to Ware in October.

At **Harlow**, Volvo B7RLE 3859 was seen operating town service 1 on 14 November. It is rare for anything larger than a Versa to be seen on this route.



Most buses were diverted from their usual route along the High Street due to the Christmas lights being switched on in Rayleigh on 29 November. Buses had to turn right at the top of Crown Hill...normally only the X30 does this but that only stops at Rayleigh Railway Station.

Philip Mansbridge.

Mark Lloyd

With thanks to Essex-buses yahoo group, John Podgorski, Robert Appleton, & Heddingham buses website.

Vehicles Acquired

285	SN03 EBV	Dennis Dart MPD	Transbus	B29F	Ex Go South Coast 3004
286	HW54 BTY	Dennis Dart MPD Alexander Dennis	B27F	Ex Go South Coast 3317	<i>[see picture on p10.]</i>

Vehicle Hired

BU14 YNT	Ford Transit M13	Returned from Robertson's on hire for use on schools.
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Vehicles Withdrawn

251	PJ02 RHE	w/d at HD	(chassis corrosion)
712	T812 RFG	w/d at CN	Towed away by Ensign 16 November
724	W824 NNJ	w/d at CN	Towed away by Ensign 16 November
734	W834 NNJ	w/d at CN	Donated to Mayflower Primary School Dovercourt on 23 November.

Allocations

296	SN10 CCY	HD to KN	17 November	524	LX05 EZG	Konect to CN	28 November ex loan
561	V301 LGC	CN to KN	7 November	563	V307 LGC	KN to HD	30 November
569	W484 WGH	HD to KN	10 November	571	W488 WGH	CN to KN	17 November
571	W488 WGH	KN to CN	27 November	574	W506 WGH	CN to KN	27 November
575	W516 WGH	KN to CN	7 November	575	W516 WGH	CN to KN	14 November
576	W517 WGH	CN to KN	24 November	578	W519 WGH	KN to CN	14 November
578	W519 WGH	CN to KN	24 November	579	W526 WGH	KN to HD	17 November
580	W527 WGH	KN to CN	17 November	581	W956 WGH	CN to KN	29 November
584	PJ02 REU	KN to CN	24 November	738	T108 DBW	KN to HD	30 November
803	YN55 PZE	SY to KN	29 November	807	YN55 PZJ	SY to KN	8 November
807	YN55 PZJ	KN to SY	15 November	810	YN55 PZO	KN to SY	13 November
810	YN55 PZO	SY to KN	15 November	811	YN55 PZP	SY to KN	13 November
812	YN55 PZR	KN to SY	29 November	813	YN55 PZU	KN to SY	26 November
814	YN55 PZV	KN to SY	13 November	814	YN55 PZV	SY to KN	26 November
9000	PL51 LGO	CN to HD	29 November	9017	YU02 GHD	CN to Konect	28 November loan
	BU14 YNT	Hire to CN	Early November				

Fleet News

286 HW54 BTY entered service from HD on 20 November, in Go South Coast Damory Blue with white Heddingham fleetnames. HW54 BTY was originally Southern Vectis 304 new December 2004. 285 SN03 EBV the same model but ex Blue Star arrived at Clacton depot on 28 November. 285 was originally Solent Blue Line 573.

523 LX05 EZF was spotted on the X76 service by 7 November. 520 LX05EXC was reported in use by 30 November. 527 LX06 EAK is currently stripped at CN being converted. 524/5 are next in line for conversion. The conversions are being certified at Ensign's at Purfleet.

570 W487 WGH, normally a Chambers allocation. served nearly a month at Clacton 584 PJ02 REU was allocated to Kelvedon for three weeks. 262 EU58 JCI had worked out of Kelvedon for several days in November on service and on TLA schools. 725 W825 NNJ has been repaired and returned to work at Chambers.

In an unusual move 9000, PL51 LGO has moved from Clacton to Sible Heddingham and is being converted for use in service, ex-training vehicle. This will allow 517 LX05 EZR to be converted to single door. 9000 has now been renumbered 505 in the fleet.

561 V301 LGC and 577 W518 WGH were both damaged in a shunting accident at KN. 577 went to HD for repairs and 561 back to CN.

Services

On 11 November, Hedingham offered free travel to anyone currently serving in the forces. Serving members could show ID cards and the offer was expanded to include those displaying medals and those travelling in uniform.

On 5 November all except one of the 82/83 duties moved from HD to KN. One M-F peak 83 is allocated a decker from HD. CN 82/83 duties remain unchanged.

Other News

734 W834 NNJ has been donated by Hedingham to the Mayflower Primary School in Dovercourt. They are looking to convert the bus into a static library according to an article in the Harwich & Manningtree Standard on 30 November. The school also appealed for local tradesmen to assist in getting power to the bus, fitting out and creating an outside shaded area adjacent to the bus.

Feedback

The allocations get harder to track as Sible Hedingham provides engineering for Kelvedon single deckers and Clacton for the double deckers, and recently since the requirement of the Scania Omnidiekkas at Kelvedon to cover more service work, there are more exchanges with Chambers. It is now common to see Hedingham vehicles on the 754 and the Chambers deckers on 91/2/5 group services. As can be seen from this month's allocations there is a constant rotation of Scantias and B7TL's. Next year, going forward, if the allocations are short, I propose to ignore as engineering movements and report only long-term allocation changes and unusual workings – unless feedback says differently – I would be very interested in readers' comments. Some may find more in-depth movements as provided this month, of interest.

Eds note, *Mark's contact details are shown on page 1 of every EBN.*

LJN 656P for EBN656.

Robert Appleton.



Eastern National 3061 (LJN 656P) was a Bristol VRT/SL3 with Leyland 501 engine and Eastern Coach Works body new in 1975. On 8 March 1986, 3061 was on loan from Colchester depot to Harwich depot, seen in Harwich Road, Mistley, working 0720 Colchester to Harwich service 103.

Robert Appleton.

EBN656p29

Other Operators.

Roger A. Smith.

With thanks to the PSV Circle.

Bone, (Tendring Travel), Thorpe-le-Soken

Former Regal Busways Iriza bodied Scania K114EB4, C49FT, reg. YN56 FGI is now here, along with KV09 GJK, a Plaxton C29F bodied Mercedes Benz O816D, formerly with Country Lion, Northampton.

Cook, Westcliff-on-Sea

YN66 VYG, an Iriza i6 (C53F) is a recent arrival here from Flagfinders, Braintree whilst Bova Futura YJ03 GYG (C49FT) has gone to Lloyd, Hixon, Staffs (Dealers).

Falconrise (Roman Cars), Colchester

Ex-National Holidays Setra S415GT-HD (C48FT), reg. NH11 STH arrived here in October and has been named "Octavia". This answers my query from last month's EBN. The vehicle had only just been acquired when I travelled on it.

Jones, Braintree

YX18 KOB and YX18 KOD, a pair of Alexander Dennis E20Ds with B29F bodywork are new here. Similar YX15 XMO is no longer here whilst YX15 XMP is understood to be with First South West in Cornwall.

New Horizon, Frating

FJ03 AAZ, a Berkhoff C49FT bodied Volvo B12M has gone to Simpson, Rosehearty, Scotland East.

Nicholls, Wickford

Plaxton bodied (C53F) Volvo B10M reg. A14 BUS (ex-W384 PRC) is now with Harrison, Dagenham.



Cook, Westcliff-on-Sea, YJ08 NSO, a Bova FHD127.365 Futura C53Ft coach formerly with Amber Coaches, Rayleigh, Essex. It was new to Reays, Wigton, Cumbria in May 2008. It had passed to Amber Coaches by February 2014 seen at the Grantham, Stamford & Peterborough rally earlier this year.

Paul Harvey.

EBN656p30

Letters

Ian Ransom, Group Chair

Further to Roger A Smith's request for information in EBN655, NH11 STH is with Falconrise, Colchester (t/a Roman Cars) based in Grange Way unless it has been sold very recently!

NH11 STH - Query Corner Response.

Dave Tomlin, formerly District Bus Supremo

Memories!

When I saw the photograph "A Blast From The Past" of the first bus purchased by District Bus I had a lump in my throat. Amazing to think that I set up District Bus thirty years ago.

Eds note. Dave has kindly agreed to talk to the Chelmsford EBEG group later in the year. Watch the programme page!

Sue Burden

VR spotted at North Weald.

Recently I saw at North Weald airfield, parked with a row of lorries, ex-Crosville VR MDM 285P. It is used by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and has "The Mozzie Buzz" overall wrap.

Terry Challis, our man in the North-West

ONO 59

Thank you for EBN655 and especially for the item about ONO 59.

I am pretty sure that this is the bus on which I first acted as a conductor at ENOC Clacton garage in the Summer of 1965.

I was doing my 'on the job' training having spent a week learning about way-bills and Setright Speed ticket machines.

On the Monday of that week our first journey was a works service, at about 0730 to a works in the Great Oakley area. We then ran light (dead) to Great Oakley and worked the 0806 Monday to Friday service 106 to Clacton. I was supervised by Reg Turner who was a senior conductor at Clacton garage. The driver was his regular driver Reg Old.

I never worked on ONO 59 again as seasonal conductors worked a different rota to the regular crews. Much of our work was on the PDI Open-toppers on the sea-front service. I think that ONO 59 spent most of its time on country services such as the 104 and 106.

Suzy Scott, Founder, Here To There Publishing Ltd Apologies and news of closure of business.

Heavily edited summary of email to Here To There customers.

"For those who didn't know, I split up with my business and life partner at the end of July and moved to in my home city of Dundee. When it was decided to close the company, agreement was reached that Caroline would be happy to do one more big mailout of the orders received for several weeks. Health issues kept delaying this, and we got to the point in last month of being told C has given notice on our Welwyn Garden City premises late last month. This follows ongoing health concerns. I was still taking orders, because I was genuinely under the impression that we would be able to satisfy them.

While in an ideal world, those who ordered first would be refunded first – sadly PayPal and other card payment systems don't work like that. Now, we are in the situation that everyone will be refunded, but I only have limited means to fall back on. This may mean that the majority of customers cannot get everything overnight – much as I would like to do so, and I will try and contact you all to arrange some kind of recompense. However long it takes, I will personally ensure all customers will be refunded, and C will (hopefully) be seeing to the trade accounts.

Our company telephone service will be ending at the end of the year. If you need to reach me in the longer term, my new address is Suzy Scott, 2 Wolseley Street, Dundee DD3 7QD. We aren't doing any more publications at the moment, but I'm voluntarily assisting Dundee CC with public transport information in the new year. The online fleetlists and Forums etc all continue unaffected, but the company sites will be closed. If you require any more help in the future, please email suzyscott1983@gmail.com and I will do my best to reply to you as soon as humanely possible.

Profuse apologies for the delays with service and communications towards the end - I did intend to give you all good service, but sadly, circumstances ultimately got in the way.

Suzy has given another update which will be reproduced in part in the next EBN.

Ted Miles, our man in The Emerald Isle.

Strokes the Editorial Team and "Promises"!

All your work much appreciated and magazine best it's ever been

Will write a short article on my experiences working in Ipswich in 1953/54 On route 123 based on notes from my diary.

Roger A Smith, our man in Witham.

Bus Awards.

Good to see an Essex based operator doing well, again, in the UK Bus Awards 2018. Ensignbus being winners of the Independent Operator Of The Year. The same award was won by Stephensons in 2017. Ensignbus was also Bronze winner, overall in the 2018 awards, being beaten only by Nottingham City Transport (Silver) and Go-South Coast (Gold).



Well, it's that time of year again, almost Christmas by the time you get and read this EBN; time to dig out the pictures of buses in the snow (or can that wait until February?), time to think of New Year resolutions and quickly break them! And so on!

Paul Harvey and I had one of those brief email exchanges wondering whether we will see as many changes to the bus world - our bus-world!- in 2019 as we have seen this year. We were tempted to put pen to paper with our forecasts of changes to routes, to operators and to aspects of our hobby/obsession/livelihood. We decided not to do so, far too contentious but if anyone wishes to do so, let us all share your pearls of wisdom!

What I, as Editor will do is to thank everyone who plays a part in the life of EBN, without you, our life would be just that little bit poorer. Some contributors put in an enormous amount of effort on a regular basis and I am particularly grateful to you for that. Others contribute less frequently but your offerings are just as important and just as gratefully received. Photographers, writers, snippet compilers and others are all equally welcome.

And, of course, we would be nothing without our members and readers; you are the reason so many of us perform our regular routines for you.

Just a few points to make: firstly, please do not forget to record the everyday happenings. I will (happily) get many contributions about special events but often struggle to get pictures and details of the everyday happenings. We see them regularly and can take them for granted, but a record of them is an important part of our "business".

And don't forget the trivial! I saw a routine item on the First Kernow website a few days ago; a bus had been delayed because of a fallen tree. A while later, there was another message saying that 15 strong men had moved the tree and so everyone was able to get on with their business. A great story!

And don't forget the late news! "Stop Press" can usually be incorporated even after the dates set out below. Once the main news items have been received, there is often some small spaces to be filled. It might be the briefest of mentions but we can usually get it in without squeezing other reports too much!

Anyway, all the Editorial team and EBEG officers wish you all the warmest of Christmas greetings, a very happy 2019 and lots of lovely bus rides. Thank you for your support during 2018.

Ensign Bus Are Top Independent Operator!

Hearty congratulations to all at Ensign Bus on winning the prestigious Top Independent Operator at the recent UK Bus Awards!

John Lidstone's Flickr site shows Ross Newman receiving the trophy and other pictures of that exciting evening.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/46986413@N07/45256861804/>

We are pleased to share the celebration by "making more of a fuss" of Ensign in this EBN than we normally do! We think they well deserve it!

Front Cover Caption.

GLX913, new in 1944 to LT as their D27 with a Duple utility highbridge body. Sold to Southend Corporation in 1953, the bus was rebodied with this Massey lowbridge body, for trolleybus replacement. After serving as a police road safety unit and many years in preservation, the bus was fully restored by Ensign in 2015 and debuted at the heritage running day that year, as we featured in Essex Bus News at the time. The photo was taken in Shenfield, the bus being scheduled for one morning round trip Grays-Shenfield-Tilbury Ferry. Other former Southend buses performing on 1 December were Fleetline 233, Tiger coach 250 and Astromega 245.

Chris Stewart, text by Richard Delahoy.

Target Dates for EBN657 (January 2019).

Before	...	...	Saturday	5 January 2019	Reports to Sub-Editors.
Before	---	---	Friday	11 January 2019	Sub-Editor drafts to Editor.
On or before	...	...	Monday.	21 January 2019	Dispatch by Printers.

Ensign Running Day



Top picture

RT8 Ensign's pride and joy is "pre-war" RT8 dating from 1940, seen here running light up Station Road in heavy rain with Ross Newman at the wheel, passing Upminster's famous department store Roomes, ready to pick up the 0856 working to Gravesend. The photographer is hiding in the bus shelter at the first boarding point!



Centre picture

XF1 Making a guest appearance was the London Bus Company's XF1, one of the batch of Daimler Fleetlines new to LT in 1965 for comparative trials alongside Atlanteans (the XA class) and RML Routemasters. Photographed leaving Lakeside bus station for a trip over the Dartford Crossing en route to Gravesend.



Saturday 1 December.

Bottom picture, left

M&D The X21 route is operated by single deckers, this year including an ex Maidstone & District Leopard now part of the Seaford & District fleet. The location is Brentwood High Street, heading towards Ongar, with a First 37 loading behind on a town service. Like RT8, XF1 and a number of other classic buses, the Leopard had been seen in London a few weeks earlier working Central Line strike extras on TfL route 25!



Top picture this side

RLH61 & ST263 "Please lower your head when leaving your seat". Both featuring the awkward sunken upper deck side gangway and 4-abreast seating upstairs, ex-London Transport RLH61, an AEC Regent/Weymann, contrasts with ex-Southend Transport 263, a Daimler CWA6/Massey, at Lakeside.



Lower picture this side

Not scheduled for service but giving short rides around Lakeside were three very special pre-war vehicles from Ensign's heritage fleet, including 1938 Bedford WTB/Duple EYE 599 that was new to Underwood of Orsett. Other buses used on these trips were an ex-Jersey Leyland TD2 from 1932 and LT Leyland Cub C4 of 1935 (claiming to be on route 3 to Southend!). I think I'm right in saying that the common factor in all three of these buses is that they are petrol-engined.

All pictures and text this page by **Richard Delahoy**.



Around & About

Top picture

The evening of 15 November was the first pea-souper of the winter 2018/19. The last 28 of the day was black Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban2 69517 (BJ11 ECD), complete with poppy on the front dash. Christmas lights on Affinity restaurant give a seasonal look. Photo dedicated to the bus drivers of Southend.

John G. Lidstone.



Middle picture

Does the 99 rank as the shortest bus route in Essex as it runs from Clacton-on-Sea to Holland on Sea with a overall Return trip taking just 20 minutes. Here is 62409 doing the honours today and this route only runs on a Sunday.

Me driving it.
Wayne Bell.



Lower picture

The third massive rail engineering scheme in Bristol this year was to double the track to four lines between Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway. This required over 50 rail-replacement buses and coaches to cover the closed section, together with the Temple Meads to Avonmouth and Severn Beach branch. Seen on 14 November at Temple Meads on hire to First West of England is Ensignbus 907 (LJ54 BFL), a Volvo B7L formerly Arriva London North DLA81.

Allan MacFarlane.

www.essexbus.org.uk

fb.me/essexbus

EBN656 outer rear cover