

ESSEX BUS NEWS

**No. 567
July 2011**



ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
www.essexbus.org.uk



Lemon-fresh and now fitted with coach seats and seatbelts, 1995 Alexander Royale-bodied Volvo Olympian N122 UHP, new to London United and now with **SBC Leisure**, at Southend SeaLife Centre on June 30th.

Under glowering skies, **Fords of Althorne's** whiter than white, recently-acquired ex-Hong Kong tri-axle Leyland Olympian / Alexander RH, L808 SNO, was seen on Southend's sea front on June 22nd. *both: John G Lidstone*



Essex Bus News

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Your reports and observations

Members reports, quality photos (prints, slides or JPGs) 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.

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

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Dates for your diary

■ EBN PRESS DATES

EBN dated

August

September

reports to Editors by

July 30

September 3

Despatch day is posted to the website as soon as it is known. Please allow reasonable time for postal delays (at least seven working days) before claiming non-receipt. Replacements can be obtained from the Distribution Secretary (see Group Directory).

■ SOUTH ESSEX EVENTS

- **Monday July 25 - evening visit to the Castle Point Transport Museum**, arrive there any time from 1900 onwards. We hope to have a short run around Canvey in a Museum vehicle. There is no charge for the visit but donations towards the Museum's upkeep will be welcomed.

Cover

A timeless scene - summer in the picturesque village of Finchingfield, with **Regal Busways MAN/Wright RG09 BUS** providing a touch of modernity as it mounts the bridge over the village pond. See *Richard Delahoy's* busman's holiday, *Around Essex by bus* on pages 26-30.

- ▶ There is no South Essex meeting in August. The autumn season will then recommence at our usual Wickford venue
- ▶ **Monday September 26** - slide show by Chris Stewart, "From Derry to the Atlantic - the Lough Swilly bus company".
- ▶ **Monday October 24** - on the eve of the 25th anniversary of bus deregulation (was it really that long ago?!), Bill Hiron will present an illustrated talk "My 25 years in the bus industry", covering his managerial career that mirrors the deregulation era.
- ▶ **Monday November 28** - Harris Bus, a look back to the years from 1986 of this Essex & London operator that rose to prominence following deregulation, slide show by Dave Arnold & Fred Lawrance.
- ▶ **Monday December 19** - Christmas Social and "20 years ago" slide show by Richard Delahoy.

Richard Delahoy

■ NORTH ESSEX MEETINGS

Venue: 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 1930 for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from 2000 to 2200. £1.50 donation towards room hire, please. Slides/digital photos are preferred, but prints can also be shown. Members and guests welcome. *Dave Arnold*

2011 programme ~ slide shows

- ▶ **Friday August 12** - slide show by Steve Maskell.
- ▶ **Friday September 9** - slide show by Gary Sharpe.
- ▶ **Friday October 14** - *see it, buy it!* Slides from the Group's sales stock will be shown by Owen Woodliffe – if you like one, buy it there and then!
- ▶ **Friday November 11** - slide show by Trevor Brookes.
- ▶ **Friday December 9** - Xmas social & slide show by Gary Sharpe & Dave Arnold.

■ TOURS

- ▶ **Saturday August 27: Three Essex Girls and a Geordie** A day out with a difference starting at Colchester North Station at 09.00.

Our first bus will be WNO 480 of Talisman Coachlines which will take us to John Jacksons farm at Wormingford, we will have the morning here where we will have a chance to view the latest progress on VV 9146 the Northampton Crossley. Then it will be rides on AJN 825 (Bristol K), VNO 859 (Bristol KSW), WNO 480 (Bristol KSW) and GR 9007 (Crossley DD42). The ride out will include photo stops and also stops to change buses so you get to ride on them all. Lunch time will be in the form of a picnic at the farm, so you will need a packed lunch (free teas & coffees will be available). After lunch will we go to visit the premises of Felix at Long Melford (14.00 – 16.00) in GR9007, where we will be taken for a ride in their two Bedford OB's. We then return to the farm in GR9007, where WNO 480 will be waiting to transport us back to Colchester (approx. 18.00)

The fare for this super day out is only £20.00 [which includes a free raffle ticket to win a code 3 model of GR 9007 complete with adverts].

Bookings are on a first come basis as there is a maximum of 36 seats only. To book please send a cheque for £20.00 made payable to "Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group" together with a stamped addressed envelope to:

Keith Woods, 34 Normandie Way, Bures, Suffolk, CO8 5BE

[As these are all old buses we cannot guarantee that all will be available on the day]

■ EVENTS ETC

- ▶ **Sunday July 24:** Colne Valley Railway Vehicle Rally, Castle Hedingham. All vehicles welcome.
- ▶ **Friday/Saturday July 29-30:** London Transport Museum, Guided Tours: Acton Depot.
- ▶ **Sunday July 31:** Classic & Vintage Bus Day, Cambridge Museum of Technology, Cheddars Lane, Cambridge.
- ▶ **Sunday August 7 31:** 'Middy' Joint Day, Ipswich Transport Museum, joint admission with Mid-Suffolk Light Railway.
- ▶ **Friday/Saturday August 26-27:** London Transport Museum, Guided Tours at Acton Depot.
- ▶ **Saturday August 27:** Ensignbus Special Summer Vintage Bus Running Day around Thurrock. Routes X55 Upminster - Lakeside and X81 Bluewater - Lakeside - Brentwood - Shenfield. Full details next month.
- ▶ **Bank Holiday Monday August 29:** Ride a Fire Engine Day, Ipswich Transport Museum.
- ▶ **Saturday September 3:** London Bus Display, Royal Forest Hotel, Chingford. Free rides.

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 altered.

John Boylett ~ 8 June 1939 : 20 May 2011

It is with considerable sadness that we must report that John Boylett has passed away. Although John was not a Group member, he, along with his wife Joyce and their son Michael, were regular participants on Group coach tours over many years. His ability to have vehicles to be positioned exactly right for the sunlight became legendary and have set the benchmark for our present tours.

His slides have been enjoyed by many members over the years, including some very early black & white ones that he took in Aden whilst on National Service. After an extended period working in a heat treatment factory John then had a career change and became a London Transport bus driver at Kingston piloting RTs on routes 65 and 71 and then, as a one man driver, RFs. He was one of the drivers selected to drive on the special tour to commemorate their passing in 1979. A change to Putney (AF) then took place driving RMLs on routes 14

and 22 into central London. His last driving experience was as a part time driver at Kingston in charge of a Metrorider on the University Shuttle Service.

John always had a story to tell and in his address at the funeral in Barnes his son Micheal thanked the Group for all the pleasures that the family had gleaned from our tours. He remarked on an incident on the homeward journey on our South Wales weekend tour when the tour coach suffered a failure. I announced to the party that "We have a problem with our water" only to be met by the inevitable John response "Don't worry Alan , you can get tablets for that !"

John was a valued friend and I am sure that many tour participants will miss him and mourn his passing.

*Alan Osborne
Bob Palmer
Martin Weyell*

Welcome to new members ...

A warm welcome to new members :

Phillip Eames, Canterbury - 1029

David Whitby, Benfleet - 1030

Richard Delahoy - Membership Secretary

Timetable Subscription Service

The June 2011 Essex CC timetable book has now been published and was posted to subscribers in mid June. The book is another whopping issue of 560 pages weighing 990g; with a wrapper, this makes the postage weight just over 1kg, a rather expensive rate, unfortunately. Subscribers to the timetable service whose balance is used up have been contacted for a top-up. *Richard Delahoy*

Group Directory

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A calendar year subscription is **£20**, renewable in January.

New members may join from any month during the year, 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 **£1.70** per month. E.g., a member joining in March would pay $10 \times £1.70$; i.e. **£17**.

Data Protection Act: Members' details are held on computer for the purpose of administration. If you object to your information being held in this way, please write to:

Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road
Southend-on-Sea SS1 3TT
richard@signal-training.com

MISSING / DEFECTIVE EBNS

For replacements, contact the Distribution Officer:

Owen Woodliffe, 196 Sinclair Road,
Chingford, London E4 8PT
pat_woodliffe@hotmail.com

TIMETABLE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Join this scheme to receive the Essex County

Council timetable book and bus map. Send

your details and a cheque for **£12** to

Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road,
Southend on Sea SS1 3TT.

Subscriptions can start with any issue of the book (usually three a year) and will be renewable annually at the same time as your Group membership subscription is due.

PUBLICATION SALES

Send orders for publications to:

Owen Woodliffe, 196 Sinclair Road,
Chingford, London E4 8PT

Owen also stocks a wide range of colour photos - send SAE with your requirements.

BLACK & WHITE PHOTO SALES

Lyn Watson
Willow Tree Cottage, 11 Roman Bank,
Gedney Dyke, Lincolnshire, PE12 0AR

Prints of specific EN (and predecessor) vehicles can be supplied; email with requirements:

lynw@barrons-bds.com

Information wanted: EN loans to Luton Corporation

Fred Ward is currently working, with others in the PSV Circle, on an updated draft of the Luton Corporation Fleet History.

One of the unresolved queries relates to the loan of a number of Bristol double-decks from ENOC's Clacton depot from September 1940. They have no details, only a vague comment relating to about 24 vehicles being involved. Does anyone know more?

If so, would they kindly e-mail Fred ([fred.ward\(at\)btinternet.com](mailto:fred.ward(at)btinternet.com)) or alternatively write to Chris Stewart who will pass on any information.

Chris Stewart, 10 Crossways, Shenfield, CM15 8QX

From our Chester correspondent ...

Member, Jeff Clayton, a First Group graduate management trainee who hails from Essex and was instrumental in putting together the running days last summer featuring First Essex's last ECW Olympian, is now Depot Operations Manager for First in Chester and Wrexham and offers two topical items this month.

Firstly, ex Colchester Borough Transport Leyland Lynx Mk 2, 30, H130LPU, was used on June 4th for a tour by the Crosville Enthusiasts Club (www.crosville-ec.org.uk/) which also featured open top VR UWV622S of Express Motors on what proved to be a very sunny day out. The Lynx was one of 14 new to Colchester between 1986 and 1992.





All 14 were withdrawn following the Arriva takeover and transferred to Crosville Wales (now Arriva Cymru) in the summer of 1994. It is now in the fleet of Tanat Valley Coaches and was photographed by Jeff during a stop at the Arriva depot in Bangor.

Secondly, Jeff is planning an Olympian running day from Chester on a Saturday in August, using B200DTU, 30077, which is the final closed top ECW bodied bus still in service with First anywhere – and a traditional Crosville motor through and through (the former EOG200, the “E”

denoting the dual purpose seating fitted). The plan is to use the bus as a duplicate to scheduled services on routes taking in Chester city area services, a faster run to Ellesmere Port, and a working taking in Cheshire Oaks Outlet Village, all for the price of a £4.40 day ticket. You’ll just need to get to Chester first to enjoy it!

The exact date and details were not known as we went to press but will be published on the EBEG web site, www.essexbus.org.uk on the Latest News page, when available.

Richard Delahoy

A spotter's guide to ... Harlow

In the first of what we hope, will be a regular feature (with your contributions), the following observations were made in Harlow Bus Station between 1345 and 1530 on 8th July:

Network Harlow 1 (Harlow – Sumners):

Solo 2460 (new Network Harlow livery), Scania N113/East Lancs M162 GRY (all-white).

Network Harlow 1A (Harlow – Katherines):

Dart SLF/Wright 3440 (Network Harlow red), second bus not in use.

Roadrunner 1 (Harlow – Sumners):

Scania N113/Wright RDZ 1709 (blue/white, no fleetnames), MAN 14.220/East Lancs RX53 LFH (blue/white; Roadrunner names), Dart MPD/Plaxton Y862 TGH (white, no names).

Network Harlow 3 (Harlow – Staple Tye):

B6BLE/Wright 3250/1/4 (Network Harlow blue), Dart SLF/Plaxton 3229 (Arriva).

Network Harlow 4 (Harlow – Latton Bush):

Dart SLF/Plaxton 3230, Volvo B6RLE/Wright 3257 (both Arriva).

Network Harlow 5 (Summers Farm –

Princess Alexandra): Solo 2454, 2474 (both Arriva).

Network Harlow 6/606 (Harlow – Potter

Street) Solo 2457, 2458 (both Arriva) 2460 (new Network Harlow).

Network Harlow 7 (Harlow – Old Harlow)

+ 7A (Harlow – Mark Hall): interworks with 505.

Network Harlow 8 (Harlow – Edinburgh

Way Tesco): Solo 2456, 2473 (both Arriva).

Network Harlow 10 (Town Station-Church

Langley): Dart SLF/Plaxton 0401/4/5 (Network Harlow yellow).

SM Travel 14 (Town Station-Church

Langley): Dart SLF/Marshall P831 BUD, Dart SLF/Plaxton R476 LGH, Enviro 200 EU08 FHB (all blue/white; SM Travel names).

SM Travel 19 (Harlow-Epping):

Mercedes Benz/Alexander Belfast N632 VSS, DAF SB220/Northern Counties R396 XDA, Agoraline OY53 RDX/RFE, EU06 KHK, Enviro 200 EU08 FHC (all blue/white; SM Travel names).

Arriva 59 (Harlow-Chelmsford): Versa 2406 2407 (Arriva 59 branding).

First 347 (Harlow-Hatfield Broad Oak): Solo 53134 (First livery).

Regal 381 (Harlow-Coopersale): Solo 211 (Regal livery).

Network Harlow/Arriva 392 (Harlow-Rye

House): Dart SLF/Caetano HX51 LRJ (TGM livery) MAN 14.220/MCV AE55 VGK (white; no names).

Network Harlow/Arriva 505 (Harlow-Chingford) Solo 2453, Dart MPD/Plaxton 3483, Dart MPD/Alexander 3828 (all Arriva livery).

Arriva 510 (Harlow-Stansted Airport):

B7RLE/Wright 3856/57/60/73/74 (Arriva with 510 branding).

Roadrunner 511 (Harlow-Bishops

Stortford): Scania N113/Wright RDZ 1707 (blue/white; no fleetnames), Volvo B7TL/Alexander W462/68 BCW (both blue/white; no fleetnames) W473 BCW (London red; Roadrunner names).

SM Travel 524 (Harlow-Hertford): Dart SLF/Plaxton R481 LGH (blue/white; SM Travel fleetname).

Lea Valley Buses 555 (Harlow - Loughton):

Volvo B6BLE/Alexander P328 JND (white; blue 555 branding)

Green Line 724 (Harlow-Heathrow T5)

3901/2/7 (Green Line branded 724).

Centrebus C3 (Harlow-Waltham Cross)

Dart SLF/Marshall S522 KFL, Dart SLF/Alexander LX51 FHE (both Centrebus), Scania 230UB/Wright YN08 MRO, YR59 NNV (Centrebus Lea Valley Connect branded).

Travel with Hunny X5 (Harlow-Romford):

Dart MPD/Plaxton SJ53 AXG (white, blue, gold livery).

LCB Travel Zip (Harlow-Kingsmoor):

Mercedes Benz Vito KS05 JJE (silver). Black-liveried Ford Tourneo LB60 LCB has also been seen on this service.

Roadrunner Scania N113/Wright RDZ 1712 appeared on a driver shuttle. Arriva Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton 3231 failed and departed behind a Sovereign recovery truck

Ian Ransom, Owen Woodliffe

Renown in Essex (or not)

It was all carefully planned. A day out to Saffron Walden to photograph Renown of Bexhill's Enviro on the 11 (Saffron Walden - Chrishall) on the last day before the tender passes to Viceroy. It's an infrequent route with one journey a day each way (two on Tuesdays), and both previous attempts to photograph it had failed.

On the first, I arrived just as the bus, unexpectedly a step-entrance Dart 70 (K710 PCN) arrived, and missed getting a shot due to the traffic. Saffron Walden is one of those places where nothing much happens for ages and then suddenly, the town becomes gridlocked for ten minutes. I decided to wait four hours for the afternoon journey but the bus sailed up the High Street without stopping. Schools 4x4 traffic was by then in full swing so I gave up any thought of chasing it.

On a second, passing visit, horrendous school traffic once again made for a late arrival, so I tried to intercept it en route to Chrishall but got lost in the lanes.

Thus, come Saturday July 2, I arrived in Saffron Walden in good time but was surprised to find streets lined with people wearing funny hats, sitting in deckchairs,

eating ice-cream, children waving flags, bunting draped from shops etc. Tender changes don't usually attract this sort of celebration, even in East Sussex, unless the outgoing operator has proved especially unpopular. In fact, it transpired that it was Saffron Walden carnival day, held once only every three years. All very entertaining but no buses or indeed any traffic could enter the town between 3pm and 4pm, and the 11 departs (no inward timetabled journey) at 3.25pm. Inevitably, no sign of the bus. Grrr ...

However, on setting out from home in the morning, I had spotted the route 11 Enviro (16 - KX59 CXO) on the 297 (Tunbridge Wells - Tenterden). The Saturday 297 is a recent tender gain by Renown, normally the preserve of similar Enviros, confusingly in East Sussex CC blue *Local Rider* livery, despite it being a Kent CC contract.

Luckily, it wasn't carnival day in Tunbridge Wells (it never is, as they don't have one), so I got my snap after all, even if it was on the wrong route in the wrong county. S*d's law sometimes works in perverse ways.

David Harman



Service changes

Burtons Coaches

27 May 11	9/10	M-F	Great Bardfield to Great Notley: service transferred to Network Colchester.
28 May 11	59	M-S	Haverhill to Clavering: service transferred to Stephenson's of Essex.
	89A	F	Great Yeldham to Haverhill: service withdrawn.

Ensign Bus

4 Jul 11	20	M-S	Lakeside to Stifford Clays: service withdrawn.
	22	D	Aveley to Grays: service extended from Grays to Stifford Clays on Mondays to Saturdays every 20 mins. Sundays will operate between Aveley and Grays.
	22A	M-S	Aveley to Stifford Clays: service withdrawn and replaced by service 22.
	33	M-S	Lakeside to Grays: minor early morning journey changes.
	44	D	Lakeside to Grays: timing alterations to few of the Mon to Fri morning journeys.
	66	M-S	Lakeside to Tilbury/Chadwell St Mary: revised Mon to Fri timetable.
	73	D	Lakeside to Tilbury: evening and Sunday service renumbered 73A with revised routing replacing 73C.
	83	M-S	Lakeside to Chadwell St Mary: minor changes to few journeys in the evenings.
	X80	M-S	Chafford Hundred to Bluewater: Saturday service revised to operate hourly.
	374	M-S	Grays to Basildon: minor timing changes in the Grays direction and revised routing in the Stanford le Hope area.

First Essex

4 Jul 11	48/A/X	M-S	Chelmsford to Broomfield Hospital: service 48A renumbered 49. No change to route or timetable.
21 Jul 11	999	FS	Colchester to Mile End Circular: service withdrawn.

NIBS

17 Jun 11	237	M-S	South Woodham to Basildon: Saturday Service reinstated. (updated information).
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Regal Busways

2 Jul 11	3/A/B	M-S	Southend to Oxney Green: revised timetable with certain Monday to Friday journeys extended from Rayleigh to start/finish in Chelmsford.
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Stephenson's of Essex

28 May 11	59	M-S	Haverhill to Clavering: service taken over from Burtons.
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TGM Group (Network Colchester)

27 May 11	9/10	M-F	Great Bardfield to Great Notley: service taken over from Burtons Coaches.
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TGM Group (Network Harlow)

13 Jun 11	14	M-F	Staple Tye to Templefield: new journey introduced to replace Roadrunner journey.
	392	M-S	Hertford to Harlow: service introduced to replace Roadrunner service.

*Paul Harvey**with acknowledgements to LOTS, Essex & Hertfordshire County Council,
Richard Delahoy, Harlowwide & First*

Publicity News

Recent items of publicity include:-

Joint Essex County Council/City of London leaflet for service 845 (see page 7 last month).

The leaflet is dated 3rd April to 30th October 2011.

Essex County Council leaflets for 32 dated 7.2.11; 47/146/147 dated 5.4.11; 88/A/B dated 7.3.11; 140 dated 7.2.11; 392 dated 13.6.11.

Joint First/BAA/Essex County Council leaflet for X30 dated April 2011.

First leaflet for service 36 and 88/A both dated 6th March 2011.

First small multifold leaflets for 100 dated 5.6.11; 40/50; 41/51 and 48/X/49 all dated 3.7.11

First 26 page timetable booklet for 42/A dated 6.3.2011.

Ensignbus 32 page timetable booklet (no 13) for Thurrock Area dated 4th July 2011.

Centrebus 20 page Lea Valley Local Buses dated May 2011. Features a cover photo of Scania YR59 NNV and includes timetables for C1, C2, C3, 311m C4, 311, 242 plus a line map.

Network Harlow booklets for 1, 1A, 1B, 2, 3, 3A, 5, 505, 4, 6, 6A, 10, 7, 7A, 8, 8A, 510 all dated 13th June 2011. The 510 timetable is strange, in that it only shows the Old Harlow-Harlow section and makes no reference that it continues to Stansted Airport, which may confuse some passengers.

Network Harlow leaflet for 505 dated 13.6.11.

Green Line 16-page timetable booklet + map for 724 (includes 725,726) dated 16.4.11.

A4 sheet for 555 dated 18.5.11 – no operator name shown, but it is **Lea Valley Buses** (Gemma Smith) – not to be confused with Centrebus, who also use refer to providing Lea Valley Local Buses (see above).

Roadrunner leaflet for services 511 and 808 (Bishops Stortford – Parsonage Estate); includes the (Olympian Coaches) London commuter services 741/742/744.

The **First** Clacton Area Bus Guide mentioned last month, is dated 4.4.11

Ian Ransom with thanks to Richard Delahoy

■ FIRST ESSEX BUSES LTD

New/acquired vehicles

30900	W774DWX	Volvo B7TL YV3S2C611Y000141	Alexander 0030/5	H49/29F	7/00
30901	W756DWX	Volvo B7TL YV3S2C619Y001045	Alexander 0030/6	H49/29F	7/00
30902	W757DWX	Volvo B7TL YV3S2C610Y001046	Alexander 0030/7	H49/29F	7/00
30903	W758DWX	Volvo B7TL YV3S2C612Y001047	Alexander 0030/8	H49/29F	7/00
53701	LK05DYO	Optare Solo M780 SAB19000000001707	091707	B21F	3/05
65525	R145GSF	Scania L113CRL 1830583	Wright Y362	B40F	11/97
65526	R146GSF	Scania L113CRL 1830582	Wright Y363	B40F	11/97
65527	R147GSF	Scania L113CRL 1830581	Wright Y364	B40F	11/97

All ex First Eastern Counties Buses Ltd, King's Lynn following the transfer of local stage services to Norfolk Green on 12th June. 30900-3 were new to Yorkshire Rider (5755-8), 53701 was new to First Capital and 65525-7 were new to Strathclyde Buses (SS45-7). The remainder of this batch of Solos, which were to be found working out of Walthamstow on the Wanstead W12 in their earlier lives, has gone to Kidderminster and Redditch.

Member Eamonn Delaney kindly pointed out the Freudian slip in EBN566 regarding the new P&R Volvos, which are dealer-registered **BJ11** (Birmingham) and sadly not **EJ11** (Chelmsford).

Allocation changes

Period 3 (four weeks commencing 26th June 2011)

These are, and always have been, taken from the Company's allocation sheet. For operational reasons there may sometimes be discrepancies with the actual situation on the ground.

FEC=First Eastern Counties; FGC=First Group cascade, i.e. transfer to/from any other First fleet; RES=reserve (spare/retained, licensed); D/L(S)=spare/retained (delicensed); D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal; DS=Driving School; PH=Private Hire; Sh=shuttle bus (non PCV)

30558 CR-CR(RES); 30560 CR-CR(RES); 30900 FEC-BE; 30901 FEC-BE; 30902 FEC-BE; 30903 FEC-BE; 34290 CR-CR(RES); 34301 BE-CR; 34302 BE-CR; 46169 D/L(D)-sold; 53701 FEC-BE; 60031 D/L(D)-sold; 60130 D/L(D)-sold; 60103 BN-D/L(S); 65525 FEC-CR; 65526 FEC-CR; 65527 FEC-CR; 66807 CF-BE; 66809 CF-BE; 66810 CF-BE; 66811 CF-BE; 66814 BE-CF; 66815 BE-CF; 66829 BE-CF; 66830 BE-CF; 66837 CF-BE; 67004 BN-D/L(S)

Also by observation:

34355 CF-BN by 16th June

34303 BE-CR and 43801 BE-CN on 29th June

30558/60, 34290 to First Scotland East Ltd on 30th June

65690 on loan to Ipswich (FEC), noted in Stowmarket on 2nd July

Disposals

To Erith Commercials (scrap): 46169 (31st May)

Private sale: 60031, 60130



The withdrawal of First Eastern Counties from Kings Lynn has resulted in further variety in the First Essex fleet. Braintree-based 30902 (W757 DWX), one of four Volvo B7 / Alexander ALX400s new to Yorkshire Rider, is seen leaving Chelmsford Bus Station on 23 June (*Kevin Smith*), and in Howbridge Road, Witham, two days later (*Russell Young*).



Repaints/Adverts

65030 to fleet livery (by 15th June)

42485 lost its super rear advert for Duxford by May 2011

Area News - workings and sightings

Pointers and Dashes - Step entrance Darts

46153/85 continued in use at BN throughout June (both were on 551, 28th June). At CF, 46158 was noted on 8th June working 31X, on 22nd June on the 71A, on 24th June & 6th July operating service 45 and on 23rd June working the 41. BN's 46827 was allocated to the 25B on June 15th and had been noted on the 100 on 8th June. The various shuttle buses were all noted in regular use.

Lance Watch - down to four

67009 is still, at the time of writing, working on loan to Harwich (DT) although it spent several days at Clacton from 24th June to 3rd July. It worked Point Clears (17) on 29th/30th June and Colchester 74 on 1st July, reverting to 103/104 at Harwich on 4th July. On 16th June, Robert Appleton was surprised to see CR67005 come through Mistley on 15.55 Harwich - Colchester 104, and half an hour later 67009 on 16.25 Harwich - Colchester 103. On 17th, 67005 worked the 06.55 Harwich - Colchester 103, light to Mistley and 08.57 Mistley - Colchester 103 and was still in use from DT the following day. Robert says this brings back memories of 1512/3 (P512/3MNO) - later 67012/3 - when they were allocated to DT in 1997.

67005 was noted stored in Clacton yard on 23rd June, however, while 67008 was towed from Colchester to CN on 5th July leaving just 67003 at CR. Unusually this worked all day 64s on 8th July having been on the 67 the day before (and on 65 on 11th June). 67008 had been noted working the 67 to West Mersea on 1st July as well as 13th, 14th, 24th & 27th June. It was operating the 65 on 17th June.

Chelmsford's 67006/7 were both on service 71 on 20th & 27th June but 67010 had moved to Braintree for storage by 24th June and 67007 was out of use at CF by 5th July. Lances noted on town service 42 have been 67006 (3rd and 29th June), 67010 (6th June), 67007 (6th & 21st June) and 60102 (21st June 42A and 8th July). On 16th June, 67007 worked the 07.19 South Woodham to Chelmsford 36 while 60102 worked route 70 on 20th.

At the time of writing, 60103/4, 67001/2/10/1/2/3 were stored at BE.

Clacton (CN) & Harwich (DT)

Olympian CR34014 replaced defective Trident DT32801 on 104 on 10th June. The vehicle situation on 3rd July was rather difficult with Tridents 32809/10/52 all off the road for various reasons and 32847's MOT about to expire. Colchester Olympian 34304 was on loan and Lance 67009 returned the following day after being used briefly at CN (see earlier). Dart/Enviro 44517 had been at CN for rear airbag repair and was used on route 11 on 4th July before going home to Harwich.

CR's Olympian 34290 worked out of Clacton for three days (being noted on service 74 on 27th June) prior to departure for Scotland on 30th June. Olympian CR34305 remains at CN for gearbox or engine repair and fire victim Scania 65538 is still out of use at CN.

Colchester (CR)

On 2nd June, Colchester town centre was closed due to Annual Colchester Cycle Race. Town centre closure diversions applied.

Services 1, 2C, 8C 61, 62/A, 63, 64/A, 65, 66/A, 67/A/B, 68, 70, 71/A, 75, 83 and 88/A/B called/terminated at Crouch Street (which was used for crew/bus changeovers) while 74, 76, 103/4 and 175 terminated at Colchester Town Station.

On 7th June, town centre diversions were in force for Homecoming parade of 16 Air Assault Brigade.

A fire in a derelict building at the junction of Hythe Hill and Hythe Quay on 16th June caused 64/A and 103/4 to be diverted via Maudlyn Road, Hythe Quay and Haven Causeway.

June

- 10th CR30560 on 28
- 13th Newly arrived CR65525 on 64, CR65526 on 68 and CR65528 on 75
- 22nd CR34311 on 64

Chelmsford (CF) and Braintree (BE)

Braintree's newly acquired Volvo/ALX400 double deckers 30900-2 were initially noted on service 132 with 30903 being the last to enter service on 20th June. The Volvos have now settled down on the 70/70X but are also due to upgrade the Saffron Walden/Bishop's Stortford 302 and Colchester 509 from September. Olympian 34613 (K613LAE) was originally thought due for withdrawal on MOT expiry at the end of June but was at BN by 5th July, believed to be for MOT renewal. Meanwhile the Solo from King's Lynn (53701) is required for ECC contracted 306 (Wicken Bonhunt/Bishop's Stortford).

June

- 1st Olympians CF34282 on 71, BE34301 on 70.
- 6th Volvo CF66798 on BE70
- 7th Olympian BE34613 on 70
- 8th Solo CF53125 on 70X, CF43455 on 42, CF65691 on 36
- 9th BE34613 on 70, ex P&R Scania CF65028 on BE70, 56006 noted back at BE, CF34282 and CF34355 on 42/42A
- 11th CF65028 on 70 (and 10th), CF66794 on X30
- 13th MPD CF43357 on 70X, Dart CF42922 on 70, CF65029 on 71A (08.00 ex CF), Volvo CF66798 on BE70
- 14th Olympians CF34286, BE34613 on 70; Volvo BE66828 on 509
- 15th BE34301 on 70, CF42936 on 71, CF65028 on BE70
- 16th BE34301 on 70, BE34613 on 70X
- 17th CF34286 on 70, CF34284 on 36X (07.27 ex South Woodham), BE34301 on 132
- 21st Dart CF42921 on 70
- 22nd MPD CF43357 on BE509
- 23rd BE34303 on BE509, CF65029 on 42
- 24th Dart BE42486 on 70
- 27th BE34613 on 70X
- 29th CF65031 on 36 (16.10 ex SW)
- 30th Olympian CF34282 on 36X (07.27 ex SW), Bluebird 68000 noted heading for Westway

July

- 1st CF65028 on 36 (17.44 ex SW)
- 6th CF34286 on 42, CF53137 on 31X

Basildon (BN) & Hadleigh (HH)

June

- 8th BN43738 on 100, BN43847 on 351

9th BN65627 on 100, BN66820 on 8A
July
4th CF65666 on 100

Other news

Colchester Olympian 34307 was fitted with seats from a withdrawn tri-axle FEC Olympian during June, the exchange being undertaken at Great Yarmouth depot.

On 2nd July, Ken Mead was interested to note First Devon & Cornwall Olympians 34614/5 (K614/5LAE) - sister vehicles to 34610/3 - in all day service on a visit to Plymouth, and also saw former Romford Solo 53109.

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to First Essex and to R Appleton, S Austin, A Bird, N Clark, T Clark, J Collins, D Edwards, M Farmer, K Mead, L813OPU, J Podgorski, D Pretty, I Ransom, J Salmon, 'Solo', D Southwood, TBL177M, R West, the Essex and East Anglia yahoo! groups, Essex Google group, www.bustlistsontheweb.co.uk, Real Bus News, LOTS, PSV Circle and 'Terminus'.

Reports relating to First Group may be sent by text on 07973 509459, by e-mail to shenfield252@gmail.com or by conventional post. Many thanks to all who do so.

Chris Stewart

Arriva Southend

Further to the report in EBN 566 on new route 29 branding, the three Dart SLFs listed have not in fact yet been branded. It is intended that they will be but they await fitting of the vinyls.

Dart SLF 3279 worked DLR Rail Replacement between Canary Wharf and Lewisham on 18th June.

Volvo Olympian 5934 attended the 3rd Clacton Bus Rally on 5th June.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy and John Podgorski

TGM Group

■ NETWORK COLCHESTER

Since 3rd July, the extended service 133, Colchester (University of Essex) to Stansted, hourly every day, has been operated entirely by Network Colchester using five dedicated Scania Omnicsities (see below). The X22 Colchester - Stansted was withdrawn from the same date. This had been operated by TGM Stansted using two Scania coaches which will be redeployed elsewhere within the TGM group. Stansted will no longer have any workings on the 133. Previously they ran part of the Sunday service.

The extended 133 will run limited stop over the Colchester to Braintree section as X22 did and then all stops via the current 133 route through Felsted, Dunmow and Takeley to the Airport.

The five buses acquired for the extended 133 are Scania C94UB/Scania B42E, originally with Menzies Aviation at Heathrow. They are numbered as follows:

2801 YS03 ZKW
2802 YN53 GGP

2803 YN53 GGJ
2804 YN53 G GK

2805 YN53 GGO

Centrebus

Optare Vecta P10 TLS has been sold.

Former Trustline Dart 541 (LN03 AYL) is now in Centrebus colours.

Ian Ransom with thanks to LOTS

Ensignbus

■ DEALING STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in

Laverne, City Sightseeing Belfast:	<i>from</i> Olympians CFZ 6549/94
Clinton, Brentwood, Essex:	Dart SN51 SXV
Go-Ahead London:	Volvo B7TLs X502/95/6/97/8/699 EGK, Darts P507 RYM, R446/7 LGH
Harrogate Coach Travel:	Scania 5480 WY (reg. to be retained by HCT)
Rotala:	Volvo B12B KX08 OMA
Stagecoach London:	Darts LX51 FGE/F, Tridents V126/68/9/94/213 MEV, X235/6/7/84/322/7/36/87 NNO
Stagecoach West:	Olympian J124 XHH
Stagecoach Yorkshire:	Volvo B10Ms R82 SEF, R638 RSE, K577 DFS, L125 NAO
Star Travel, Aylesbury, Bucks:	Dart V560 JBH.
Veolia:	Volvo B7RLEs CN07 HVL/HVM, CN57 EBC-F Optare Tempos YJ06 FXW, YJ56 WUB-E/WVS -V Darts CN04 NLL/M/P/R, V674 FPO, W813 UAG Volvo B10Ms X4 PCL, W383/8 PRC Dennis Javelins R749 XPO, M601 RTX, AIG 5289 Solo CU06 AWG MANs CN07 FSA/FSC/FSG DAF SB200s CN07 FTA/FTD/FTE Scania YN51 MKG, AIG 7944 Volvo B12Bs CN54 HFE, FJ56 YWB Volvo B12M FJ03 AAX Bova WA54 HYC Neoplans CIB 2652, TIL 1183 DAF SB3000 AIG 7821

Vehicles out

	<i>to</i>
Darts Y338/371 FJN:	Carmel, Exeter
Volvo B12M FJ08 OMA Neoplans TIL 1183, CIB 2652:	Catterall, Southam, Warwicks.
Bova WA54 HYC:	Cooks Coaches, Southend, Essex
Olympians H114 /7 SAO, G101/203 AAD, J124 XHH:	Fencabs, Ely, Cambs.
Volvo B7LAs 00-D-65013/9:	FirstGroup Plc
Tridents V114/45/54/60/3/88 MEV:	Golden Tours. London

Volvo B12Bs CN54 HFE FJ56 YWB: **Galleon Travel**, Harlow, Essex
 Scania N253-5 BKK: **Harrogate Coach Travel**, York
 Dart Y853 TGH: **Herberts**, Shefford, Beds.
 Volvo B10M P127 XCN: **Lawrenson**, Preston, Lancs.
 Trident X266 NNO, DAF SB200s CN07 FTA/FTD/FTE, MANs CN07 FSA/FSC/FSG,
 Volvo B12M FJ03 AAX, Scania YN51 MKG:
New Adventure Travel, Cardiff
 Volvo B10M R638 RSE: **Newtons Travel**, Newport, Gwent
 Volvo B10B N622 FJO: **Poynters**, Wye, Kent
 Javelin K327 PHT: **SDR Coach Help**, Sible Hedingham, Essex
 Primo MX07 JPU: **Star Travel**, Aylesbury, Bucks.
 Darts LX51 FGE-G/M: **Stephensons**, Rochford, Essex
 Dart W813 UAG: **Tates Travel**, Barnsley
 Dart Y854 TGH: **VR Travel**, Merthyr Tydfil
 RML2679: **XelaBus**, Eastleigh, Hants.
 Olympians G336/7 CSG: **York Pullman**, York
 Olympians P477/86 MBY: **Direct Location Services**, Chertsey, Surrey
 Dart P330 HVX: **Kim Hayley**, Somerset
 Volvo B10M X4 PCL: **Bob Vale Coach Sales**, Andover, Hants.
 Dart S98 EGK, Volvo B7LAs 00-D-65001/20:
Geoff Ripley, Barnsley

■ ENSIGN BUS CO. LTD.

Acquired vehicle

from Metroline TA77 via dealing stock

109 T87 KLD Dennis Trident / Alexander H45/19D new 6/99

Now converted to single door.

Several ex-Stagecoach Tridents and ex-Go-Ahead B7TLs are in temporary use for rail work. .

The solitary Enviro 400 (121) has been sold to Aintree Coaches, Liverpool (reported with the associated Helms, Eastham fleet).

Dart 726 has been sold to Nu-Venture, Aylesford, Kent.

■ ENSIGN BUS CO. LTD.

Metrobus B285 WUL has been sold to City Sightseeing Washington DC.

David Harman with thanks to Ross Newman of Ensignbus

Olympus / Roadrunner / SM Coaches

New here last year, but not previously reported is SM10 BUS, an Irisbus Eurorider. Scania N113/Wright RDZ 1708 has gone to Lea Valley Buses. Dennis Dart SLF/Marshall T408 AGP has been sold. Dennis Dart/Alexander P103 HNH has been acquired from Lea Valley (Gemma Smith), Debden. Although Lea Valley is a separate company, there are a number of movements between the fleets on a regular basis

Ian Ransom

Regal Busways

Acquired is former Xelabus, Colden Common, Volvo B10M/Plaxton SIL 2172 (J426 HDS). Unusual on 6th July were MAN, 801 (RG09 BUS) and Dart 513 (M93 WBW) on service 1 (Writtle – Canvey Island)

Ian Ransom

Stephensons of Essex - and Suffolk - and Cambridgeshire!

The take-over of the former Burtons Coaches (Yellow Star Travel Services) services was reported briefly last month. Stephensons have bought the goodwill and various assets of Yellow Star Travel Services Ltd (in Administration) and have taken a lease on the former Burtons depot in Duddery Hill, Haverhill to operate various services and school contracts, a mix of commercial work and contracts for Essex, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire county councils.

A considerable number of buses have been hired or acquired, as follows:

New

462 YX11 CTO ADL Enviro 200 B39F

463 YX11 CTU ADL Enviro 200 B39F

Both delivered June 9 and to service the following day – they are usually to be found on the Mildenhall – Bury St Edmunds services 16/16A.



New Enviro 463 at Audley End Station on the infrequent 59 from Haverhill; 2nd July.

David Harman

Acquired

- 435-8 LX51 FGE/FGF/FGG/FGM Dennis Dart SLF/Alexander ALX200 B34F, being converted from dual door – originally Stagecoach London, supplied by Ensign
- 401 N541 TPF, Dennis Dart, East Lancs B40F ex Burtons
- 507 YN07 LHD, Scania N94UD/Scania H41/??F ex Reading, reported in EBN565, is currently in the operational fleet although no decision has yet been made about its long-term future. This was H41/25D, its revised lower deck capacity, needs to be confirmed. A further two Scania deckers are due from Reading in July, details to follow.
- 705 G705 TCD Leyland Olympian/Alexander H51/34F, ex Stagecoach
- 706, G706 TCD Leyland Olympian/Alexander H51/34F, ex Stagecoach
- 724 J624 GCR Leyland Olympian/Alexander H47/30F, ex Stagecoach
- 802 L562 YCU Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties H47/30F ex Arriva Southern Counties
- 804 L564 YCU Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties H47/30F ex Arriva Southern Counties
- 807 867 P167 BTV Leyland Olympian/Northern Counties H47/30F ex Burtons; new to Derby
- 875 H155 PVW Leyland Olympian/Alexander H47/33F ex Burtons; new as Dublin Bus RV386 (98-D-20386)
- 871 G371 YUR Leyland Olympian/Alexander H47/30F ex Burtons; new to Armchair

As shown above, four vehicles from the Burtons fleet have been acquired from the Administrator for further service. In addition, the following Burtons vehicles have passed to Stephenson's for scrap/resale: N540 TPF (Dennis Dart/East Lancs), F245 HTW and F892 BKK (Leyland Olympians), G619 OTV, G632 BPH, H683 GPF (Volvo Citybuses), M232 TBV (Volvo B10M saloon).

Reinstated

- 747 H347SWA Leyland Olympian/Alexander has been reinstated and is having its accident damage repaired.

Olympians 721/30 (F621/630 MSL) are still in service and currently not for sale.

On hire

The following have/are being used at Haverhill – some were only very short term hires, most will have gone by the time this issue of EBN is published:

- C51 CHM, Leyland Olympian/ECW from NIBS
- PDZ 6275, Leyland National Greenway, from Adam Barham/Panther Travel, replaced by P390 LPS, Dennis Dart/Alexander
- R446 LGH, P503 RYM – Dennis Dart/Plaxton, from Ensign
- P786 SWC, R319 LHK – Volvo Olympian/Alexander, from Ensign
- H114/7 SAO, K106 JWJ, 392 MBF (ex P482 MBY) – Leyland Olympian/Alexander, from Ensign
- X979 CNO – Volvo B6/Wrights, from Ensign
- SN09 CGX – ADL Enviro 300 demonstrator
- YJ53 VBO, VDL DAF/East Lancs from UNO
- VJ53 VBN, Optare Spectra from UNO
- OY53 RFE, Irisbus Agoralline, from Norfolk Green
- YJ51 ZVE, Optare Spectra, from Norfolk Green
- Leyland Olympian/ECW coach D511 PPU is parked at Haverhill, but has not been used

The following were noted in the yard at Haverhill on 26th June: Stephenson's: H159 BKH, H551 VAT, K872 CSE, EU 03 CFX/Y, YX 11 CTO/U, J624 GCR, L564 YCU and one other

decker (N827 FKK is the likely candidate). Also present were Burtons Olympian F892 BKK, withdrawn and in use as a store, and Dennis Dart/East Lancs M526 MPM, also withdrawn and not likely to run again - this is a long-withdrawn accident victim thought to belong to insurers, but this needs confirmation

Various vehicles from Stephenson's main fleet have been drafted in, as and when required (including those listed above), so none should be regarded as permanent transfers to Haverhill.

Many thanks to Richard Delahoy, Lyn Watson, Bill Hiron, and Steve Curl for these extensive notes

Other operators

ACCESS ANYONE, Southend Volkswagen LT35 RJ04 JWG has been acquired from London Buses.

AC ROSS, Braintree Ford Transit PX56 YLO has been acquired.

AMAYESING Grays Ford Transit EA51 YTM has been sold

APT TRAVEL, Rayleigh Delete any reference to Volvo B10M/Plaxton NIL 4997 (R501 HUF) as being here, this was reported in error.

BARKERBUS, Roydon A remarkable addition is Bedford VAL70/Plaxton VBD 310H from Vals, Chase Terrace. Also acquired are Mercedes Benz 0303 C79 VJA, and Bluebirds N734 EOT, ex-Aintree Coachlines, Bootle (re-registered PJZ 9335 here) and P37 JCR ex-Accord, Chichester (P36 JCR has been here for some time). Duple 425 SIB 3276 has been re-registered XAZ 2718.

CEDRIC, Wivenhoe Noted back here in May, is K908 RGE (FSK 868) a Volvo B10M/Jonckheere, acquired from Heartlands, Tamworth. Leyland Olympians reported out of service are K815/6 HMY, H548 GKX, and K360 DWJ, the latter may now have been sold.

CHELMER VALLEY, Chelmsford Ford Transit EA52 XFY has been sold.

CHELMSFORD TAXIBUS Ford Transit EF05 OLV has been sold.

CHIGWELL CARS, Chigwell Another Renault Trafic is BV56 FEG (non PSV).

CLINTONA, Brentwood Following the end of Thurrock contracts, both Darts, W795 VMV and SN51 SXV have been sold to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet.

GARDNER, Boreham To correct EBN566, V342 JTO has Jonckheere bodywork and

was new as 99-D-74491.

KNIGHTS COACHES, Witham Ford Transit KS07 KTE has been acquired.

LETTERBOX DAY NURSERY, Walton-on-the-Naze Here as a PSV is Ford Transit EX60 KKN.

L&R, Shotgate Scania K113/Plaxton K354 YOD (new as K680 BRE) has been sold to Exclusive Holidays, Market Harborough

LODGE, High Easter Mercedes Benz Touro BX54 ECC has been sold to Coopers Coaches, Annitsford.

NCS, Widdington Renault Trafic M176 AAR has been sold.

NEW HORIZONS, Frating Ford Transit EY54 NXC has been sold to a dealer.

PDQ, Colchester Toyota/Caetano H12 PDO has been re-registered back to M944 JJU and been sold. Ford Transit WG03 TXN has also been sold.

SBC, Wickford An interesting addition is the former England Football team coach FA08 ENG a Scania K420/Irizar from Guideline Coaches, Battersea.

STB COACHES, Corringham Ford Transit Y221 YFR has been sold as this company has ceased operations.

SUPREME, Rettendon MCW Metrobus LOA 434X and F775 EKM have been sold, probably for scrap).

WARD, Alresford Recently acquired is Ford Transit BD55 OXE.

WILSONS TRAVEL, Grays Additions here are LDV Maxus WIL 2669 and Iveco 45C11/Euromotive AO02 PZN, the latter ex Essex County Council.

Ian Ransom with thanks to Colin Sigston, Harlowride website, Essex Bus y-group, PSV Circle



County Coaches of Brentwood's MAN-powered Ayats A2E/AT integral 2851 RU "Lincolnshire" was seen on a day excursion to Clacton on 28th June. *Jonathan Bale*

John Salmon and his wife visited Chenies Manor and Buscot Park with the Chelmsford National Trust Group on 9th July. The vehicle used, KC11 ABC is the flagship of **Kings Coaches** (proprietor: Andrew Barry Cousins), a Van Hool Astron T916 new in 2011, and a departure from the Bova marque favoured in recent years. *John Salmon*



h Panorama



Two Essex visitors to Isle of Wight: M & E Coaches of Rochford's Bova Futura, LIL 3055, which started life in 1995 as G522 XHK is seen on a typical June day this year at a damp Carisbrooke Castle. Also seen on the 'Garden Isle' is Lodge Coaches' new Setra 416 in gold livery and with personal plate JW 10DGE delivered last year to celebrate the firm's 90th anniversary. It is seen at Ryde on a lunch stop whilst on tour. *both Owen Woodliffe*



Suffolk & North Essex Tour, 28 May - Pt 2



Turners of Essex

New to Citybus, Hong Kong and thence to Stagecoach South Coast and Stagecoach Devon Dart/Plaxton N978 RCD.

Former Stagecoach United Counties Olympian/Alexander F635 YRP.





Florida Coaches

New to North Western Road Car in British Bus days: Volvo B10M/ East Lincs **G659 DTJ**.

Another Hong Kong Citybus export, in this case to Stagecoach Manchester and Magic Bus: Olympian/ Alexander **H493 LNA**.

all photos: Dave Arnold ~ <http://davidarnoldphotos.zenfolio.com/>



Around Essex* by bus

(* not forgetting bits of Suffolk & Hertfordshire!)

Richard Delahoy takes a busman's holiday

It's become something of a tradition in recent years that I take a day off work around my birthday and spend the day touring by bus, usually aiming for more obscure routes – one year taking in the Tilbury Ferry and a tour of Kent, for example. 2011 was no different and after some hours pouring over the Essex timetable book and map, plan A version 3.1 emerged and I duly set out on a sunny and dry mid June day, camera and rucksack ready (and weighed down by the aforesaid 1kg timetable book – just in case a plan B was required!).

Living in Southend, it's not easy to get anywhere quickly by bus, so as usual with many of these trips, it started with First's X30 to Chelmsford. This was the expected fare, 20801, one of the five Volvo B9R coaches with Plaxton bodies dedicated to the X30. The 0900 from Southend is the first weekday trip on which concession passes are valid so is usually pretty busy but no-one was left behind at Rayleigh, thankfully, and most passengers alighted in Chelmsford as I did. I'm always fascinated by the gearbox operation on these vehicles, an automated version of a manual box, so there is no clutch pedal but the coach goes up and down the box (rather ponderously) just like a manual, whilst the driver has both hands on the steering wheel.

I had just over half an hour to observe the local bus scene, including one of the former park & ride Scania's recently repainted into First corporate colours on the 71 to Colchester, an Arriva Optare Versa on the 59 to Harlow (a route used on last year's similar trip) and Selwyns Travel's YJ05PWE, a Van Hool bodied DAF on National Express 305. That coach had left Southend 15 minutes

before me but was routed via Basildon on its long cross country journey to Liverpool, a route that now often sees some of Selwyns' new Plaxton Elites, as illustrated in EBN in April.

My next route was Regal's 16, due away from the bus station at 1033 but at the appointed time I was alarmed to see it pass in the opposite direction, still on its inbound trip from Wethersfield. The dedicated bus, MAN/Wrights RG09BUS duly returned from the Retail Market terminus but a leisurely crew change saw us leave ten minutes late – and me with a nine minute connection onto my next bus!

The driver was aware of this and we progressively caught up the lost minutes, helped by my being the only passenger from the outskirts of Chelmsford onwards. The 16 is a fascinating route, well worth a ride; it follows much of the former Hicks route, which became EN's 316. Leaving Chelmsford via Broomfield

Hospital, we took a quick sprint up the A130 (not the route the Traveline map seems to think it takes!) before starting a long meander round the country lanes through Felsted, Little Dunmow, Blake End and Stebbing. Here we met a problem, an unannounced road closure – luckily between the driver and me, we guessed what the diversion was and soon got back on route. In my day job I seem to spend an inordinate amount of time replanning bus services for notified road works closures, so it was strange to come across one that had not been advised to the bus operator. Ad-hoc diversions round narrow country lanes in a



12m long bus are not to be recommended!

Incidentally, the 16 schedule basically sees the bus never stop all day, starting at Wethersfield at 0655 and ending there at 1914, with only a minimal turn-round of two or five minutes at each end and two fast dead runs between Chelmsford and Wethersfield with an allowance of only 45/48 minutes, where Google maps suggests a car would need 44 minutes, so no room for error or delays here. The timetable, by the way, is specified by Essex County Council as this is a tendered service, not commercial. Continuing on through Lindsell and Great Bardfield, I left the 16 in the Finchingfield, by now only five minutes late and with time to photograph the bus crossing the narrow humped bridge in the centre of this picturesque village (see front cover). A couple of minutes later and spot on time, Network Colchester Caetano bodied Dart 512 (HX51LRK) appeared on the 9 to Braintree and Great Notley. This is an ECC tendered route, hastily reassigned to Network Colchester after the sudden insolvency of Burtons Coaches, contract compliant buses being drafted in from Colchester town services, hence the branding advertising the 6, the route that serves Old Heath and acts as

the crew shuttle to and from N-CR's depot. Recently the route has been offered for re-tender and we will have to wait to see who will operate it from this autumn.

I could have continued through to Braintree town centre on the 9 but one late iteration of my plan recognised that by getting off in Bocking, the northern fringe of Braintree's built-up area, I could save half an hour, as a short walk would take me to a stop on my next route, First's 21 to Halstead. Waiting in the middle of a housing estate, I was pretty sure I was at the right stop but my nervousness levels rose progressively in the eight minutes that elapsed between the scheduled time and the actual arrival of a well loaded Dart, 42485 (SN03WMM). A brisk run to Halstead allowed time to photograph the local Sainsburys (no, I'm not a supermarket anorak, it is actually on the site of the former EN depot and I wanted a "before and after" picture), find a café for a bacon roll and tea, and to photograph Hedingham's 50th anniversary liveried Enviro 400 L386 on the 88 to Colchester. This bus was featured in EBN exactly a year ago, the edition with the special cover in Hedingham colours rather than our usual Tilling green & cream.





Continuing my theme of using obscure rural routes, the next stage was to Sudbury on Regal 11. (As an aside, Regal operate three different 11s, the Sunday Harlow town service, Sunday Chelmsford to Southend 11A and this version – I plan to write about route numbers in Essex in a forthcoming magazine). This 11 is part of a group, 11/12/13, that run hourly between Gosfield, Halstead and Sudbury via some pretty narrow and rural roads. I gathered from the locals that the 11 variant is regarded as the “flyer” as it omits Pebmarsh and Great Maplestead and so gets to Sudbury up to 12 minutes quicker than its even more rural cousins. Interestingly, this is the area once served by EN’s Countrycar service using an eight seat Peugeot 504 estate car RLX168W, a rare case today where a “big” bus has replaced a small one. “Big” in this case translates into the smallest version of the Optare Solo, 208 (YJ60KBZ) on my trip. Due to a parked lorry the driver wasn’t able to get up to the kerb in Halstead High Street, making boarding for a lone wheelchair user more difficult. I opened up the folding ramp for him and helped push him in, the driver certainly not rushing to help.

By now I’d crossed the county line, Sudbury

of course being in Suffolk. I’d written about Countrycar for Buses magazine back in the February 1982 edition and commented then how Sudbury was something of a border town for bus operators, Eastern National and Eastern Counties being joined by no less than ten independents – Amos, Chambers, Corona, Hedingham, Burtons, Jennings, Goldsmiths, Norfolks, Rules and Theobalds. That list has slimmed down somewhat in the intervening 29 years but Sudbury still sees a good deal of variety.

Not yet being old enough to qualify for my concession pass (indeed, my qualifying date was moved even further away by the previous government), since getting off the X30 I’d been using the £8 Essex Saver ticket (which is not valid on premium fare services like X30), without any problems. My next leg though was to be more difficult - using Beestons 236 to Haverhill. This passes into Essex through Baythorne End and Sturmer before ending back in Suffolk in Haverhill, so my ticket should have been valid; I even had a map showing the county boundary just in case. However the Beestons driver was having none of it so I reluctantly paid £3.50 (the refund of which is still the subject of an on-going debate!). I must admit to be

astonished that a rural operator like Beestons uses a no-change, farebox system and also doesn't sell returns; this all seems very customer-unfriendly. I can understand fareboxes in busy urban areas like Birmingham, but rural Suffolk??

Contrasting with the small Solo, my bus on this leg was a Scania Omnidecker, YN55NDY, presumably the capacity of this large decker being required on school journeys, but there was no contrast in one other unwelcome way - the heating was on on both buses on this hot, sunny afternoon! Despite not seeming to dawdle and having left Sudbury only a minute down, we were six minutes late into Haverhill, but no worries on the connectional front this time, I had time to kill. After a brief business visit to Stephensons' new Haverhill depot at the former Burtons premises (on what was supposed to be my day off!), I had time to watch the comings and goings in the bus station, musing on the Hertfordshire connection as one of the two Uno deckers on loan to Stephensons (VJ53VBO, an East Lancs bodied DAF) passed through on a schools service. Hertfordshire beckoned me, but not the areas promised by the route branding for Uno's 614 service, as I caught Freedom Travel

service 18 to Saffron Walden, with ex Stagecoach London Dart/Plaxton W236DNO, the seat belts retro-fitted to its bus seats indicating its use on school contract journeys.

Leaving Haverhill at 1705, the 18 was surprisingly quiet, indeed just me, a walker returning from a day out and a home-going office worker who got off in Steeple Bumpstead, highlighting the fragility of these subsidised services linking rural towns and communities. An on-time arrival in Saffron Walden High Street saw the bus collect a few more passengers for its final trip back to Haverhill. Freedom Travel rarely features in the pages of EBN - it is based in Ely, north of Cambridge but presumably the bus is outstationed locally during the week (just as Excel used to do when it ran the service with an Alexander PS bodied Volvo B10M a few years back - that bus parked on a local farm and only returned to base once a week).

By now I was keen to get home - at the opposite side of the county! By bus (or indeed train) there is no quick way back, but a nine minute wait put me onto TGM Stansted operated 301, another ECC contracted service. A steady ride on the inevitable Dart SLF (556, KP54BYZ, a long





term loan from Dawson Rentals in all-over white) took me via Audley End Station, Newport, the double run to reverse near the Fleur-de-Lys pub in Widdington, and then out of Essex into Hertfordshire in Bishops Stortford before going back into Essex by the M11 junction and on to Stansted Airport. My theoretical two minute dash for the 1900 X30 was a little more leisurely, thankfully, and I settled down in 20501 (AO02RBY) for the hour and a half ride back to Southend – minus the advertised leather seats, wi-fi or tables, as this coach is one of the earlier

examples in First's fleet, displaced from the X22 when First pulled off that route and is now a spare for X30.

So ended a long but enjoyable tour of some of the more obscure places in central and north Essex – and plan A (version 3.1) had worked as intended – I wasn't stranded anywhere and needn't, after all, have carried around my 1 kg burden in my rucksack!

Where shall I go next year?

See the Beauty of the Countryside



CONVENIENT OMNIBUS SERVICES LINK
THE TOWNS AND COUNTRY VILLAGES

0101



Former Chelmsford AEC Matador recovery lorry 0101, rebuilt by Eastern National using parts of a Tillings ECW coach body, seen at Kelsall Steam & Vintage Rally, Cheshire, on 25th June. It has been in private ownership

for a number of years after passing to Crosville from EN. The KSW alongside is GJB279, a Thames Valley example painted green rather than red and not often seen out.

Chris Stewart



North Weald 2011

Regal Busways 'heritage' fleet no.101 (BYW 365V), a London Transport Leyland-National, still used for schools.

Two types that never normally met in real life: **Moores Bros 373 WPU** (Guy Arab with Massey body) and **London Transport Green Line-liveried RT3254 (LLU 613)**.

both: John Salmon



rear cover

airport by bus 133

above: Fully-branded **Network Colchester Scania YN53 G GK** at Little Dunmow on 3rd July.

below: The spare Scania, **YS03 ZKW** in Network Colchester livery (minus yellow band) at Colchester North Station on 9th July.

both: Russell Young



Two & Three doesn't make Eight

On loan from Network Harlow to Network Colchester is 2&3 branded 3253. It's yet to be reported as working on the 5, perhaps the best route to match the branding !! Derwent Road, Highwoods on 17 June in glorious summer weather. *Russell Young*

DAF double-deckers 131/3 (T131/3 AUA) were withdrawn at the start of July and returned to Dawson Rentals.

From 27th May there was an increase in the pvr by two due to operation of an emergency tender for ECC route 9/10 (Braintree - Great Bardfield) until the end of September. Network Harlow 3253, a Volvo B6BLE/Wright in blue livery for Harlow services 2/3, is on loan to Colchester until the end of September to release a vehicle for operation of service 9/10.

A number of vehicles have lost route branding in recent weeks. Scania deckers 103/106 have had route 1 branding removed. Volvo D10M 214 and Dart SLF 513 have had route 2 branding removed.

Trident 190 attended the 3rd Clacton Bus Rally on 5th June.

*Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy, John Podgorski,
Keith Sadler and Essex Bus y-group*

■ TGM STANSTED

As outlined above, service X22 was withdrawn from 3rd July, with the replacement extended service 133 operated entirely by Network Colchester. Scania K114/Irizar coaches YN06 CYJ/Z formerly used on the X22 are to transfer elsewhere within TGM.

564/5 (AE55 V GK/L) MAN/MCV transferred to Network Harlow in mid June.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy



What might have been (if Westcliff had not been absorbed by Eastern National and Tilling red had not been replaced by NBC poppy red): Steven Hughes's Leyland-National 1843 (YEV 3075) next to the genuine article (AJN 825), with an Eastern Counties L in the background. Carlton Colville; June 26th. *David Harman*

What certainly was: preserved Colchester Corporation Daimler 4 (OHK 432) was providing rides at the Waddington Airshow on July 2nd. *Jonathan Bale*



