

Issue 516
April 2007

ESSEX BUS NEWS



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group
serving Essex since 1964
www.essexbus.org.uk

Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group - Directory

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A 12 month subscription is £18.50 by First Class post, renewable in January or July.

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 contact the Membership Secretary:

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Replacements for missing or defective EBNs are available from the Membership Secretary.

TIMETABLE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Join this scheme to receive Essex County Council timetable books and updates. Please contact Derek Stebbing for information or visit www.essexbus.org.uk

PUBLICATION SALES

All orders for publications should be sent to:
Owen Woodliffe
196 Sinclair Road Chingford
London E4 8PT

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

B/W PHOTO SALES

All orders for photos from lists enclosed with EBN should be sent to:

Lyn Watson
c/o Barrons Chartered Accountants,
Monometer House, Rectory Grove,
Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 2HN

Prints of specific EN (and predecessor) vehicles can also be supplied: email with requirements: lynw@barrons-bds.com

TOURS ORGANISER

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YOUR REPORTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Members reports are always welcome. Please send them to the relevant Sub-Editor.

Photos (prints, slides or digital images - in JPG format) are also welcome - please send to David Harman.

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.

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

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

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Dates for your diary

■ EBN PRESS DATES

<i>For inclusion in EBN dated:</i>	<i>reports should reach Editors by:</i>	<i>planned despatch date:</i>
May	2 May	11 May
June	6 June	15 June
July	4 July	13 July

Please note that the **planned** despatch date may change for all sorts of reasons. The **actual** 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 **only** be obtained from the Membership Secretary (address opposite).

■ ROCHFORD MEETINGS

Meetings now take place in the **Committee Room** (upstairs), **Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford** (the old railway goods shed, adjacent to Rochford station). There is a large free car park and *one Great Eastern* trains & *Arriva Southend* services 7/8 stop nearby. Doors open at 1915 for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from 2000 to 2145. Drinks are normally available. All members and guests are very welcome. £1 donation towards room hire please. Prints, slides and digital photographs can all be shown. *Richard Delahoy*

- ▶ **Tuesday 17 April*** - cine/DVD evening with *Peter Carr*, buses & light rail
- ▶ **Tuesday 15 May*** - ticketing evening with *David Harman & Richard Delahoy* - come and get some hands-on experience in using ticket machines, etc.
- ▶ **Tuesday 12 June** - *Lyn Watson* will present an illustrated talk "On the Buses" covering his experiences from first gaining a PSV licence, through the development of *Stephensons* and now *Excel/Flight Delay* services.

* NB: the April and May meetings are the **THIRD** Tuesday, not the customary second Tuesday in the month.

■ COLCHESTER 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. **20.00 to 22.00** (doors open at **19.30**). All members and guests are very welcome. £1 donation towards room hire please. We prefer to show slides or digital photos but prints can also be shown. *Dave Arnold*

- ▶ **Friday 13 April** (upstairs room) - slide show by *Trevor Brookes* - 'A quick look @ Scotland'.
- ▶ **Friday 11 May** - slide show by *Richard Delahoy* - '20 Years ago - part 2'.
- ▶ **Friday 8 June** (upstairs room) - slide show by *Chris Stewart* - 'From Charabanc to Highwayman' - A brief history of Eastern National's coaches.
- ▶ **Friday 13 July** - slide show by *John Podgorski* - 'Views from overseas'.
- ▶ **Friday 10 August** - slide show by *Dave Arnold* - 'Rail Replacement'.
- ▶ **Friday 14 September** - slide show by *Gary Sharpe* - 'Evening of nostalgia?'
- ▶ **Friday 12 October** - slide show by *Fred Lawrence* - 'On the company's expenses ~ 2!'
- ▶ **Friday 9 November** - to be advised
- ▶ **Friday 14 December** - slide show by *Fred Lawrence* - 'Coach operators of East Anglia - 1950s and 1960s'

cover: **Stephensons** *Dengie Connections Solo EU07 FVO* at Maldon (Tesco) on 3rd April,
Dave Arnold

■ TRIPS from COLCHESTER

- ▶ **Sunday 20 May - Bristol Harbourside Rally & Running Day** using the ex-Badgerline Volvo/ Van Hool coach of Talisman Coachlines. Depart North Station: 07.00; Shenfield station: 07.50. Fare £15.
- ▶ **Tuesday 26 June - Evening Visit to Talisman Coachlines.** Pick up at North Station: 19.00; return by 22.00. Fare £5.
For both these trips, book via Dave Arnold, 21 Cedar Chase, Heybridge, Maldon, CM9 4NR (david@arnold1.fsnet.co.uk Mobile: 07831 644092), **but please pay on the day.**

■ RALLIES, OPEN DAYS ETC

- ▶ **Sunday 6 May: Ipswich to Felixstowe Historic Vehicle Run**, Ipswich Transport Museum, Suffolk. www.ipswichtransportmuseum.co.uk
- ▶ **Sunday 13 May: Bus Driver of the Year Area Final & Charity Fun Day**, Kent Showground, Detling. Buses, stalls & entertainment. Drive a Bus for £2! All buses welcome, ancient and modern. Arriva Southern Counties, 01622 697000 or email lewisr.sc@arriva.co.uk
- ▶ **Saturday 19 May: Vintage Bus Display & Running Day + Transport Enthusiasts Bazaar**, Theydon Bois Village Hall, Essex. www.nlts.sphosting.com
- ▶ **Sunday 20 May: Bristol Harbourside Rally & Running Day.** Special display celebrating 50 years of the Bristol Omnibus Company. Email for details: william.staniforth@virgin.net Coach trip from Colchester to this event - see above.
- ▶ **Saturday / Sunday 25-26 May; London Transport Museum Acton Depot Guided Tours**, Bookings on 0207 379 6344. www.ltmuseum.co.uk/visiting/depot_tours.shtml
- ▶ **Sunday 3 June: Southend Bus & Transport Show**, Southchurch Park East, Lifford Way, Southend, Essex. * The Group stall will be at this event.

Group Recruitment Drive

At the AGM on 13th March (see opposite), Chris Stewart reported the good news that membership of the Group is edging up. This is encouraging. It confirms that we continue to have something to offer the enthusiast - whether news and views in the mag, photo sales, the timetable subs scheme, publications, coach tours or the sales stall.

It certainly boosts editorial egos to receive compliments on EBN, what we *really* like to hear is the regular thud of new subscriptions dropping on a certain doormat in Weeley.

Why is this? Well, *more* members mean *more* potential contributors to EBN ... *more* potential customers for Owen, Lyn, Derek and Dave ... and *more* cash in the kitty helps keep subs low and enables us to offer a better 'product'.

It's a cliché, but *more really* is better.

How can you help? *Easy!*

- (1) A recruitment brochure is enclosed with this EBN. Please put it to good use by passing it to a friend, fellow enthusiast, relative - anyone who might be a potential member.
- (2) Owen will have these brochures on our sales stall. But if *you* take a stall to rallies, swapmeets, etc., perhaps *you* could distribute some too?
- (3) Preserved railways, transport museums, libraries etc. all have racks for brochures like these. Could *you* distribute them this way (after obtaining permission of course)?
- (4) Perhaps you have other ideas?

If you can help the recruitment drive and would like a supply of brochures, write or email:

David Harman, 24 Frankfield Rise, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 5LF
ebn@casuarina.org.uk

EBEG Annual Report 2006

2006 saw a major change within the Group, as Alan Osborne resumed his one time role as Secretary while I took over as Chairman. Alan has been variously Secretary, Chairman and Treasurer for 42 years and the Group continues to benefit from his valuable input. Richard Delahoy stepped forward to take on the role of Treasurer, and with the assistance of computerised accounting packages he has enabled us to focus much more effectively on financial control. Money isn't everything - but without it we can't develop publications, maintain the quality of EBN or carry the risk on other ventures.

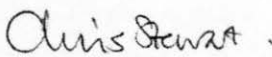
The new committee has met three times during the year, a more flexible programme proving much more successful and enabling most members to attend each time. Regular use of e-mail has enabled many interim issues to be discussed by all. I am grateful to the committee for their time, enthusiasm and support in all their various roles. 'Essex Bus News' continues to be well received, thanks to the monthly work of Editor David Harman, the sub Editors and the many contributors. Topics covered have been diverse - the new Park & Ride at Chelmsford, Blue Triangle's heritage operations, the closure of Hitchin (one time ENOC) depot and Colchester Bus Station, demolition of Braintree depot, new Plaxton Primos for First Essex, the demise of Town & Country, bus blinds, archive photos from the Group's collection, much expanded small operator news under Ian Ransom's remit and much, much more.

Tours were a popular feature of the year. The bi-annual 'Hedingham Depot Bash' in May proved very successful, thanks to the planning and hard work of Dave Arnold and Gary Sharpe, but even they had no control over a chemical spill which isolated Sudbury depot. The 'Evening Talisman' trip from Colchester to Harwich provided a somewhat bracing June evening in an open top Atlantean and covered a wide range of interests. Donations were made by Talisman and EBEG to the Essex Air Ambulance, something we hope to repeat in 2007. Later in June the Group's "Three Counties Tour" visited Norfolk Green, Embling's and Towler's. In September, Talisman's 6-wheel Hong Kong 'Megadekka' took us to Ford's at Althorne, Nelson's at Wickford and Ensign (with a short trip in Ensign's Bristol K6A from Purfleet to Rainham). Thanks are due to all the operators visited this year, some of whom were in the midst of emergency railway work but still managed to accommodate us.

Colchester and Rochford meetings have continued to be well supported, with a wide range of topics covered - some looking back at Deregulation 20 years ago, others further back and some more recent. One recent talk by Michael Yelton on Blackwell's of Earls Colne may spawn a Group publication, one of several in progress or under consideration at the moment. Accumulated Group funds will help to bring some of these to fruition.

Photograph sales have proved particularly successful, and we must thank Lyn Watson for his work in bringing a new sense of order to the Group's collections. The year end has seen a modest increase in membership, and we plan to produce a supply of promotional leaflets for distribution to exhibitions, travel centres, libraries and elsewhere. New outlets are being investigated for the sales stall, under Owen Woodliffe's guidance, and the timetable subscription service continues to provide a valuable 'extra' thanks to the valued input from Derek Stebbing, Dave and Mary Arnold.

Please continue your support for the Group in whatever way you can.



Chris Stewart
Chairman
March 2007

Photo Sales Update

List no.18 will be found in the centre pages. This is the second to include negatives kindly made available by Kevin Lane. It also includes negatives taken by the late Terry Coughlin which the Group has recently acquired, and which represent vehicles not already in the Group Archives.

There will be one further list comprising Kevin Lane's negatives, and the plan is then to begin on Bill Cansick's shots. It is hoped to merge these lists with the earlier ones on the website, so there will be one complete catalogue of pictures available.

Over 6,000 prints have been supplied since the Photo Sales lists started. Both members and non-members have benefited from a regular stream of new photos, and Group finances have reaped a considerable benefit from the surplus (a whopping £1,003 in 2006) on sales.

All the hard work is done by **Lyn Watson** (sorting and selecting negatives and making up the lists) and **Kevin Lane** (in the darkroom), to whom we render our grateful thanks.

Stephen Smith

The Group sends best wishes to Stephen Smith, former Managing Director of First Essex Buses, whose appointment as Operations Director of the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK (CPT) was announced in *Bus & Coach Professional* (16 March 2007). Stephen began his transport career in 1972 as a management trainee with Halifax Corporation, and moved on to various operational roles in south and west Yorkshire, before becoming General Manager at Metroline Travel, and subsequently MD at FEB.

Essex Bus Publicity News

Recent items of publicity include:-

Essex County Council Village Link (services 9/10; 11/12/13/14/15/15A; 16; 17/18 and 34, it includes route timetables and a map and is dated February 2007.

Essex County Council – Community Transport dated February 2007. This 40 page booklet features details (including some timetables) of the Community Bus schemes operated in the county, most of which do not appear in the ECC timetable books.

Essex County Council – Maldon District Links - slimline timetable and route map combo issued to coincide with the April 2007 changes. Girl + fizzy drinks pic on cover.

First timetable leaflet for services X30 and X40 from Chelmsford to Stansted Airport, dated 2.1.07

First timetable leaflet for services 17/18 (Clacton-Point Clear) dated 27.8.2006.

Stephensons of Essex - Dengie Connections - 8-page A5 temporary timetable for new routes D1-6, plus 280, dated 2 April.

I've not had much time to collate items this month, so any help with providing details or copies of leaflets would be appreciated.

Ian Ransom, with thanks to Dave Arnold and Richard Delahoy

Traveline Relaunch

Traveline South East (www.traveline.org.uk) was relaunched on 16th March.

The home 'journey planner' screen now adopts a far more intuitive approach, with options to select the type of journey origin and destination. Instead of being presented with a long list of stops for a location like 'Chelmsford', you can select 'Locality' and it will use the most appropriate - the rail or bus station. You can now set 'walking speed' and specify use of a bicycle for part of the journey.

The other major enhancement is the on-screen timetable. Instead of PDF files (still available to

download or print out), the system generates a scrollable, conventional timetable 'on the fly'. You can switch directions, days of operation, including as I write, the Easter variations. You can also specify 'all stops', which gives interpolated times at 'untimetabled' stops. Finally, it will also generate an on-screen map. All quite good.

The principal bugbear remaining is the old one - quality of source data - which comes electronically from the councils. Some councils are good; ... some are not so good ...

One confusing thing is where a tendered route changes operator, but where times remain unchanged. This is still dealt with quite logically from a computer point of view - as two separate routes with the same number (one running *until* date *x*; one running *from* date *x*). But, does the man in the street know (or care) about the stuff that fascinates us? Probably not. A more elegant method of covering tender changes is needed.

But, overall - an improvement. Traveline SE moves up a notch in the nationwide league in my opinion - give it a try!

David Harman
with thanks to Roger Slevin of TSE

Service Changes

Arriva East Herts & Essex

2 Apr 07 ZIP1 M-F

Harlow Bus Station - Staple Tye (circular)
Service re-registered

Arriva London North

24 Mar 07 462 Daily

Ilford, Hainault Street - Hainault, Fernie Close
Change of operator (Operated under contract to London Buses) via Barkingside, Chigwell and Grange Hill

Arriva London North East

24 Mar 07 20 Daily

Walthamstow Central Station - Debden Broadway, Torrington Drive. Revised timetable. This service is operated under contract to Transport for London.

Arriva Southend

28 Apr 07 370 Daily

Lakeside Bus Station - Romford, Mercury Gardens
Revised to operate every twenty minutes and no longer serving the section between Lakeside and Grays

373 Daily

Grays Bus Station - Upminster Station
Revised terminal (no longer serving Romford). Between Lakeside and Grays now scheduled to operate via West Thurrock, London Road (in replacement of the 370)

383 M-S

Basildon Bus Station - South Ockendon Station
Revised to operate via Basildon Hospital, A13, Orsett Cock, Brentwood Road, Brentwood Road Estate (eastern section) then as normal to Lakeside then Fenner Road, Pilgrims Lane, Stifford Hill, Stifford Lane, Daiglen Drive, Arisdale Avenue, West Road, South Road and Tamarisk Road

Ensign Bus Co

27 Apr 07 55 M-F

Grays (circular) Service withdrawn

30 Apr 07 66 M-S

Lakeside - Chadwell St Mary
Revised timetable and re-routed between Grays and Lakeside via A1013

83 M-S

Chadwell St Mary - Lakeside Bus Station Revised timetable

Excel

19 Apr 07 321 Th

Sheering, the Plashets - Bishops Stortford Interchange
New morning service via Hatfield Heath, Broomfields and Little Hallingbury

23 Apr 07 333 M-S

Stansted Airport - Epping Station. Additional SDO journeys

First

5 Mar 07 25B M-S

Runwell Church - Langdon Hills, Westley Road
Additional SDO journey Basildon to Wickford at 07:45

8 Apr 07 2 Daily

Southend Travel Centre - Basildon Bus Station
Minor changes to M-F morning peak journeys

25 Daily

Southend Travel Centre - Basildon Bus Station
Revised Saturday timetable

National Express

5 Mar 07 305 Daily

Liverpool Coach Station, Norton Street - Southend Travel Centre. Additionally stopping at Madingley Park & Ride (Cambridge)

S M Coaches

2 Jan 06 524 M-F

SM19 M - F

Church Langley - Hertford Bus Station Extended in Harlow to Church Langley and revised timetable Harlow - Epping. This service now operates M -F (not SDO)

Stansted Transit

12 Feb 07 7a M-F

Stansted Mountfitchet, Church Road - Bishops Stortford Interchange. New day time hourly route to partly replace re-routed 333.

Stephensons of Essex

2 Apr 07 280 T (SDO)
D1 M-S

Burnham on Crouch, Clock Tower - Maldon, Tesco Maldon, Tesco - Bradwell, East End (Bate Dudley Drive); New service.

D2 M-S

Maldon, Tesco - Southminster Station; New service.

D3 M-F

Maldon, Tesco - Southminster Station; formerly route 93

D4 M-S

Burnham on Crouch, Clock Tower - Bradwell Waterside, Parker Court. New service via Southminster and Tillingham.

D5 M-S

Burnham on Crouch, Clock Tower - South Woodham Station. New service via Althorne and Cold Norton.

D6 M-S

Southminster Station - Althorne Station New M-F peak hour service via Tillingham, Bradwell, Steeple and Maylandsea.

280 and D1-D6 form the *Dengie Connections* network of services (VillageLink services having been withdrawn)

17 Apr 07 230 T(SDO)

Heybridge, Oak Road - Basildon Bus Station.

Service withdrawn

19 Apr 07 260 Th(SDO)

South Woodham, Asda - Maldon, Tesco Store

Outward journey now operates ten minutes later at 10:00

David Tomlin

An ex-Stagecoach Mercedes of **Crown Coaches** with the Stagecoach livery adapted to promote their 104 and 106 routes. Basildon Bus Station; 8th March. *A D Nugent*





Chelmsford Bus Station

The new Chelmsford Bus Station opened for use on Sunday 14th January 2007. The problem with bus manoeuvring has been alleviated, apparently by 'shaving' the central island at the top end. From limited observation, buses with long rear overhangs, like the Scania's, still have to turn very carefully, particularly if vehicles already on-stand are not tight against the kerb. A sign just visible to the left of the Dart (above) warns drivers on layover not to park any further forward, to avoid fouling the turning area.

Most services terminating at Chelmsford now use the bus station; through east-west routes use the adjacent stands on Duke Street. In the opposite direction, a few services, including the Regal 1/1A (Essex Pullman) stop quite some distance up Duke Street, opposite the old cinema. Layover space is at a premium, even on a Saturday, and buses were noted in both station lay-bys when I visited.

On 29th January, the First

Travel Shop and Visitor Information Centre opened in one of the retail units. I know staff are expensive to employ at weekends, but it does seem a pity that the Travel Shop closes at 1pm on a Saturday! Other retail units are now in use by Tesco and Greggs (bakery), with the remainder as yet unoccupied. As at 31st March, the waiting rooms and toilets were incomplete.

Being an architectural ignoramus, I can only give an amateur opinion of the structure. It is clearly a great improvement on the old bus station, being light and airy, yet giving





reasonable protection from the elements. Signage and information is good: timetables at each bay, TRIPS real-time info screen for the routes so equipped, and a 'Smart Column' (see EBN 509) are provided. Seating at present is limited to stainless-steel 'bum-perches' - acceptable for a five minute wait, but not so good for longer.

Finally, the decorative, coloured glass panels by Essex artist, Martin Donlin, are an attractive feature, particularly when lit from behind after dark.

David Harman

opposite, top: two **First** Scania on the stands, with a Dart in the layover area.

bottom: limited layover space means the the station lay-bys are used: **Stansted Transit** Optare Delta G957 KJX, waits its turn on the 35 to Southend.

this page, left: coloured glass panel composed of 135 individual images, and **Stansted Transit** ex-Universal Buses Optare Excel in the other layover area.

below: **First** service 100 Scania and service 352 Dart wait departure. The modern canopies frame the pleasantly-proportioned parade of shops in the background.





Dengie VillageLink



31st March saw the end of **Arriva Southend's** tenure on the **Dengie VillageLink** network, and despite the Spring weather, there was a tinge of sadness in the air. Since the network began in 1999, Arriva's team of regular drivers has built up

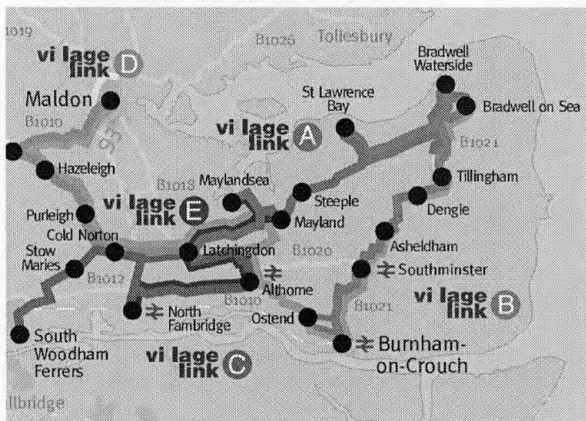
a good relationship with passengers, to whom the VillageLink bus service has become something akin to the 'village bus' of yesteryear. The lady driver of the last "D" from Maldon to Latchingdon told me that she and other drivers had received farewell





cards from regular passengers - a nice gesture in these unsentimental times. On the last day, most of the Sprinters were out, plus a Vario on the "C". The last journey of

all was unusually worked by Dart SLF/Plaxton 3220: the 2021 "A" from St Lawrence Bay to Latchingdon. The Dart had been specially rostered to transport equipment from the staff restroom at Latchingdon, back to Southend.



From Monday, a revised network is in operation, operated by **Stephensons of Essex**. (see *Dengie Connections* on the following pages)

Last day pictures show: (opposite, top) the Latchingdon base, with two Sprinters, a Vario and the Dart in evidence; (opposite, bottom) Sprinter 1755 (DE52 OLM) on the last "D" at Maldon (Tesco Stores), and (above) Vario 1188 (R188 DNM) loading on a mid-afternoon "C" at South Woodham Ferrers Town Centre.

VillageLink services

A	St. Lawrence – Steeple – Maylandsea – Latchingdon
B	St. Lawrence – Bradwell – Tillingham – Southminster – Burnham on Crouch
C	South Woodham – Stow Maries – Cold Norton – Farnbridge Station – Althorne – Latchingdon
D	Latchingdon – Cold Norton – Purleigh – Woodham Mortimer – Maldon
E	Maylandsea – Latchingdon – Althorne – North Farnbridge

Dengie VillageLink network as at March 2007

*David Harman
with thanks to the
Arriva VillageLink drivers*



Denge Connections

The Government's Rural Bus Grant funded the start of the Denge VillageLink scheme in 1999. A further grant from the same source paid for the Mercedes Sprinters that replaced the original Renault Traffic vehicles. However, the RBG was only ever intended to 'kickstart' new transport initiatives, not to fund them long-term, and hence, Essex County Council is now providing a subsidy in the conventional way via the tendering process. A contract to provide a replacement scheme was duly advertised and has been won by Stephenson's of Essex. The new network, christened **Denge Connections**, took to the road on 2nd April.

Out go A-B-C-D-E; in come D1-2-3-4-5-6. The two key routes, **D1** (Maldon - Purleigh - Cold Norton - Maylandsea - Mayland - Steeple - St Lawrence - Bradwell), and **D2** (Maldon - Woodham Mortimer - Purleigh - Cold Norton - Maylandsea - Mayland - Steeple - Southminster), provide an hourly clockface direct link to Maldon from the principal villages, without the need to change at Latchingdon.

Although Latchingdon is geographically, fairly central, it was something of an artificial interchange point under the old scheme, which was geared to the Arriva crew base in the village. A network where the axis is Maldon makes more sense now, since Stephenson's have a depot there.

The 93 route (Maldon - Woodham Mortimer - Purleigh - Cold Norton - Maylandsea - Althorne - Burnham - Southminster), already operated by Stephenson's is brought into the scheme and renumbered **D3**. It runs on the same days and times.

The **D4** is a commuter link, connecting Bradwell with Southminster station (MF), where evening buses wait up to 5 minutes for the arrival of trains from London. Off-peak, there are four journeys per day extended down to Burnham) with Bradwell. The Saturday service comprises three Burnham - Southminster - Bradwell journeys.

The **D5** (South Woodham - Cold Norton - Althorne - Ostend - Burnham) offers a

limited link (four journeys MF, two, Saturdays), with some buses connecting at Cold Norton with the D1, to provide a Bradwell - South Woodham service.

The **D6** (Southminster - Tillingham - Mayland - Maylandsea - Latchingdon - Althorne) is a commuter route with one morning journey from Southminster to Althorne Rail Station to connect with the London train, and two evening peak journeys from Althorne, again waiting for the train connection. These run to Mayland Mill only.

Finally, there is a Tuesdays-only during school terms shopper route **280** (Burnham - Southminster - Asheldam - Tillingham - Bradwell - Steeple - Latchingdon - Maldon Tesco), replacing the Malbus 1 route, previously worked by Ford's of Althorne. This is the only non-low floor bus route.

Fares have been simplified: a £2.50 flat fare for any single journey, with a £1 short hop fare within each town or village; a £4 day ticket and a £20 weekly.

The peak vehicle requirement for the 'D' routes is three buses, with one spare. New Optare Solos have been sourced, and one low-floor Dart completes the allocation. However, initially, not all journeys on the D3 will be low-floor bus-worked.

What has been the reaction 'on the ground'? It's early days of course. It will take people some time to adjust to what has been a major change in the route network, but one change appears to have gone down well. Passengers seem to like the Solos; confirmation that a 'proper' bus is preferable to a van conversion.

*David Harman with thanks to
Dave Arnold and Richard Delahoy*

opposite **EU07 FVO** at Bradwell Waterside, Parker Court on the first day
below **EU07 FVL** at Bradwell East End.

Richard Delahoy



Dengie



EU07 FVO at Tillingham
on the D4; 2nd April.

Richard Delahoy



EU07 FVL at Maldon
depot on 3rd April.

Dave Arnold



EU07 FVO at Maldon
Tesco Store on the D2;
3rd April.

Dave Arnold



Three Solos have red moquette with a "Smarties" pattern. Handrails are yellow. The fourth is understood to have a blue scheme.

Dave Arnold

Vinyls feature a dark green, white and orange logo.

Richard Delahoy

Solo rears are put to good use, to show the towns and villages served.

Richard Delahoy



■ FIRST ESSEX

Allocation changes

Period 12: 26 February 2007 to 1 April 2007

FGC=First Group cascade, i.e. transfer to/from another First fleet

(A)=acquired, including vehicles on loan; Anc=Ancillary fleet; (S)=spare/retained (licensed);

D/L(S)=spare/retained (delicensed); D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal; DS=Driving School;

PS=Paint Spare

51780 DS-(S); 51805 D/L(D)-sold; 56001 D/L(D)-sold

The slight change in terminology for 'spare' vehicles more accurately reflects the allocation list

Disposals:

Period 12: 51805, 56001

51805 is reported to be acquired by *First Hampshire & Dorset* for spares only.

46802 was noted on 18 March in White Roding (parked on private land with other preserved buses).

Other vehicle news:

41637 and 41642 have gained LED destination displays. 41642 has, rather unusually, been set to alternate between a large 'Hutton Circular' and a two line 'Hutton Circular/via Shenfield and Wash Road' (scrolling lower half). HH carried out the installation work.

Olympian 34013 returned from repair at Mainline, Rotherham on 28th March. It is distinguishable by having the grille in fleet colours rather than black, a thin corporate font fleet number and a small fleetname over the grille.

The former *First Essex* Solos 53101-11 have now been displaced from the 193 by Darts. Five are destined for *First Devon & Cornwall*, after repaint at Dagenham; one of them will be for new service 89 at Tavistock. With Romford depot already having closed, this now brings to an end the remaining links between *First Essex/Thamesway/Eastern National* and this long established tendered operation. The Brentwood-Romford section of the ECC supported Sunday route 351 is also likely to cease later this year.

Operations:

Chelmsford – March 2007

Following the reallocation of Darts 47224-7 and the removal of route 36 branding, the allocation of vehicles to services on the Broomfield Road corridor has been very complex. John Salmon logged most of the following (with additional notes from other members), but we do not know if they should now be called unusual. There have been a large number of substitutions on the 42. Vehicles 42483-7 still carry 352 branding; over recent months 42486 has been the most regular vehicle on the 352, but this last month 42483 seems to have replaced it.

2nd CF43729 on 352.

7th CF43729 on 352, CF43730 on 42, CF43731 on 42, CF60103 on 352.

8th CF 43730/1 again on 42 (08.46 ex Station and 08.25 ex Galleywood respectively.)

10th CF43730 on 33, CF43731 on 352, CF60103 on 33.

11th CF46815 on 352, CF43731 on 352.

- 13th CF43731 on 42, BE46822 on 352, CF47252 on 56 and 33, CF60103 on 352, CF60104 on 33.
- 14th 46116(S) on 352.
- 15th CF43730 on 42, BE46824 on 352, CF60102 on 33, CF60103 on 351.
- 16/17th CF47229 on 352.
- 17th CF43730 on 42, BE46827 and CF60103 on 352.
- 19th CF42488 on 42.
- 20th 46116(S) on 352, Olympian CF31198 on 352 (noted on 12.15 BE-CF)
- 21st Olympian CF34807 on 352, CF42489 on 33.
- 22nd CF42488 on 352, CF65683 on 33.
- 23rd CF47229 on 352, CF43730 on 352, CF60102 on 42.
- 24th CF42482, CF43730 and CF46823 on 33.
- 26th BE46823 on 352.
- 27th BE46811 on 352, CF60102 on 33
- 28th CF60104 on 33.
- 29th CF42485 on 42 and then on 352, CF42488 on 33, CF43730 on 42.
- 31st BE46823 on 33, CF42482 on 18.10 33, CF60102 on 352.
- 2 April CF47221 on 33, CF60104 on 33

Colchester

Volvo B10M coaches have been noted on a duty which starts as a 67E East Mersea - Norman Way Schools, and returns as a Marks Tey - Colchester short, arriving CR approx 0930. On 27th March this was CR20110, with CR60031 on 28th and 29th.

With reference to EBN515, the afternoon of 1st February saw not only a burst water main in Barrack Street but also an accident in East Street. Closure of that road is presumably the reason Brightlingsea-bound 78s were operating via Brook Street and Wimpole Road, since the Bus Station is not served in this direction.

On 24th and 25th February, the north end of Turner Road was closed water pipe work. First and NC routes were diverted to Northern Approaches Road; for Hospital passengers, Essex CC provided a free 65X every 15 minutes from N Station layby on both days (65679 was seen on 24th). On 25th, the 8C was re-routed to terminate at Defoe Crescent instead of the General Hospital. The 65X was due to run again on 1st April.

During re-siting works to the roundabout at the junction of Tollgate West and London Road (Stanway), Tollgate bound 65s are currently approaching their terminus via London Road and Tollgate West, rather than the usual way of Tollgate Road, into Tollgate West, dropping off at McDonalds and turning at the roundabout. This diversion is expected to run until late spring/early summer 2007; Heddingham route 4 is similarly affected. During the w/c 5th March, the junction of London Road and Tollgate West was closed completely; terminating 65s and Heddingham 4s turned/laid over in the Tollgate West service yard.

Between 5th and 9th March, Mill Road was closed causing 65s to be diverted as follows:

From Stanway to Highwoods: Normal route to Mill Road then Brinkley Grove Road, Brinkley Lane, Severalls Lane, Mill Road, Severalls Lane, Brinkley Lane, Derwent Road and then normal route. Peak journeys this direction only continued to serve Severalls Business Park and Flakt Woods.

From Highwoods to Stanway: Normal route to Derwent Road then Brinkley Lane, Brinkley Grove Road, Mill Road and normal route.

Unfortunately any evening passengers from Severalls and Flakt Woods had to travel via Highwoods Square, considerably lengthening their journey times by a double run and allowing for the scheduled waiting time at the terminus.

Harwich

Harwich (DT) is still experiencing severe vehicle shortages. Lance CR67005 was still on loan as at 29th covering 34290, and Olympian CR34302 also remains at DT. Dart CN46830 was on Village Link 4 (9th March) and was noted again on 13th, when DT51780 was in use during the morning and on the 22B (substituting for a Primo) and CR34303 was on the 103.

On 18th March, Dovercourt High Street was closed. 102s worked from Parkeston to Harwich Station via the bypass, after it was found that the diversion route was obstructed by parked cars.

Basildon

On 12th March, Laindon Road was closed between 18.00 and 06.00, resulting in 551s working via Upper Mayne and Noak Hill Road missing out Dunton Road, Willowfields and Nicholas Lane. On 19th, Mountnessing Road in Billericay was closed for re-surfacing over about 3 days, with 551s serving the railway station via the High Street in both directions.

In answer to a query, the Thurrock-supported Corringham evening 100s operate Lampits Hill-Town Centre-The Sorrells via the normal route and then run dead to Stanford le Hope Station before working a 200 back to Lampits Hill.

March sightings - general

- 1st Lance CR67007 on CN75/76
- 2nd Lance CR67006 on 64A.
- 4th Scania CR62408 on X22.
- 5th Lance CR67007 on 65.
- 6th CR34012 on 64A; CR34307 on 64; 66-branded CR43740 on 61.
- 7th CN47226 on 74; CR67007 on 64;
- 8th Olympians CR34011 and CR34307 on 64. BN43713 on 100 (09.00 ex CF). BN52583 on 1. HH31456 on 27 (12.32 arrival at Temple Sutton and 12.43 dep to CY). CF43729 on 48 (17.00 from CF Stn).
- 10th CR62408 on X22. Olympian BN31373 on 200, Scania BN65669 on 8/8A.
- 12th CR67006 on 65.
- 14th CR47101 on 65. CR47101 on 64 and 65.
- 15th Olympian CF34815 and Dart 46116(S) on 72, CR47101 on 65; 67-branded CR67002 on 65.
- 16th CN46820 on 75/76; CR67004 on 65.
- 17th CR34307 on 64A.
- 18th Solo DT53139 on 102 (15.30 ex DT). CR34012 on 70.
- 19th 352-branded CF42484 on 36. Scania CR65679 on X22 (13.45 ex CR N Stn).
- 20th CR43742 on 65, CR47106 on 74 (09.37 CR-CN).
- 22nd Dart BN46804 on 73
- 23rd CR34018 on 64.
- 24th CR34018 on 66. Dart CF47219 on 54/56. CR67001 in BN showing X22 (possibly MOT)
- 26th Solo CF53132 on 351
- 28th CR67007 on 64A.
- 29th CR34014 on 65, CR34056 on 64, CR67007 on 64A. Dart BN46171 on 100.
- 30th CR67005 on 64. Olympian CF34815 on 33 (11.25 CF-Stansted)
- 31st Lance CF60102 on 36, Dart BE46816 on 351

April

- 2nd BN46808 on 73.
- 10th BN52583 on 81.

Other News

One of the 'sister' ex Calderdale Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties still with First Yorkshire, 30737 (L306PWR), is reportedly to be painted into Todmorden JOC dark green and cream livery to celebrate the centenary of that undertaking.

Leyland National 1707 (WNO556L) is back in the County, having been acquired by John Wilson from Julian Patterson at Konect.

The former Elite Engineering business at Rettendon (EBN514/5) is in fact now trading as A & D Commercials (telephone 01376 331457). Alan and Anthony Brown are specialising in commercial restoration and mechanical work, both having considerable experience in this field.

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to *First Essex* and to R Allen, A Bird, T Clark, D Edwards, M Farmer, I Hardie, A Kelleher, A Nugent, I Olley, J Podgorski, D Pretty, I Ransom, J Salmon, R Smith, 'Solo', R Webb, R Whitley, *First Devon & Cornwall*, the *London Bus*, *UK Bus*, *Essex Bus* and *South West* y-groups, *Real Bus News*, *LOTS*, *PSV Circle*, *Terminus*.

Text message reports relating to First Group may be sent on 07973 509459, in addition to e-mail and conventional post.

Chris Stewart



Solo 307 went on loan to TGM Portsmouth from March 24th. 530 remains on loan to TGM Portsmouth (not as stated in EBN515) and has gained Hoverspeed Livery.

Volvo Citybus/East Lancs 214 has been parked in the garage at Magdalen Street awaiting repairs since last months accident (see EBN515).

Dart/East Lancs 801 (N541 TPF) was involved in a serious road traffic accident on 1st February gaining offside damage towards the rear. This bus has now returned to service.

Vehicle Workings

B10BLEs now make regular appearances on Colchester – Walton services 105/7/9.

Unusual Sightings

Feb 1st 213 on 175 (1625 ex Colchester)
March 7th 517 on 1.
9th 307 on 105.
17th 513 on 1.
20th 904 on 93C (1435 Colchester – Bentley and return)
30th 514 on 83 & 175.

Corrections and updates to EBN515

It is school contract JM 1011 which interworks with service 5 not 728.

Solo 307 did not arrive at Colchester in yellow Classic livery.

Varios S130/1 NRB did work the Linkline Tesco contract in north-west London, but were replaced by former Colchester Varios R763 VUB and R174 VBM. S130/1 NRB were then repainted into TGM livery and transferred to Haverhill.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Michael Allen, Richard Delahoy, John Podgorski

■ ARRIVA SOUTHEND LIMITED

Loans to Grays

Southend based Dart SLF 3391 (P261 FPK) (Route 9 branded) is currently on loan to Grays. It replaced 3326 which had previously been on loan to Grays.

Also at Grays on a temporary basis is Arriva London DAF SB120/Wright Cadet DWL10 (LJ51 DDO). This is not due to receive a temporary Arriva Southern Counties fleet number as it is only due to stay for about a month. 3974 (formerly DWL19) has also been on loan to Grays from Dartford in recent weeks.

Dengie operations end

Arriva Southend ceased to operate the network of Dengie VillageLink routes from 1st April. Dart SLF 3320 (T820 NMJ) was used for the last service departure – the 2021 “A” St Lawrence Bay to Latchingdon on the 31st March. This was so that various items of equipment could be ferried from the Latchingdon crew rest room back in the Dart to Southend.

The Sprinter which was badly damaged in the accident at Mayland (1756) is in the Latchingdon yard (at the Mayfair Industrial Estate).

East Lancs Darts gain branding

Four East Lancs bodied darts have received branding for route 29. These are 3006-3009



(L508-11CPJ). The branding features a red strip along the skyline with the points "Belfairs – Coombes Corner – Fairfax Drive – Town Centre" listed. This is accompanied by 'Belfairs to & from town up to every 15 mins' on the main body. It is unclear whether or not route 29 will be promoted as "red line" on future network publicity. This is possible now that there are no vehicles carrying red route 1 branding (although route 1 in theory remains red even if no vehicles carry branding for it). See picture of 3008 opposite by Peter Mansbridge.

Vehicle Workings

Step-entrance single decks are now commonplace on routes 1 and 7/8. They are also becoming increasingly common on low floor route 9.

For the first time in several years there are no specific types of double deck allocated to individual routes. The three remaining dominators are just as likely to appear on routes 7/8 as they are on the 1 (their home for the past five years). Compare this to the second half of 2002 when Tridents were allocated to 7/8, Volvo Olympians to 2 and Dominators and Leyland Olympians to 1.

Rail Replacement

Grays assisted Arriva London with London Underground railway replacement between Walthamstow and Finsbury Park on 24th March using 6225. Southend also assisted on the Underground replacement and assisted the Arriva Medway Towns fleet on Southeastern railway replacement between Dartford and Gillingham on 17/18 March. H-GEV Olympians were used throughout by Southend.

*Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Matthew Arnold, David Harman,
Bill White and Essex Bus y-group*



STEPHENSONS of ESSEX, Rochford

Not previously reported here is that Volvo B10M/Plaxton N746 BAU was re-registered A18 SOE in August 2006. New is Dart/Plaxton EU07 FRN.

The report regarding fleetnumbers in last months EBN, whilst supplied by a company employee, is **not** correct and fleetnumbers have **not** been applied to vehicles

The Optare Solos for use on the Dengie services have arrived. They are M810 models, seating 24. Registrations are EU07 FVL-FVO. PVR is three Solos (with one spare), plus a low floor Dart. Vehicle requirements will now be 15 at Rochford and 20 at Maldon.

Ian Ransom, with thanks to Lyn Watson

Regal Busways

The report of T158 OGC Dennis Dart/Plaxton here, is thought to have been in error. Leyland Olympian/ECW SJR 617Y is now in fleet livery.

Ian Ransom

Hedingham

Dennis Dart L312 (W312 CJN) has been transferred to Clacton, thus enabling all Clacton town services to be operated by vehicles to full DDA specification.

The program of repainting the fleet of early ECW bodied Olympian double introduced since 1999 is progressing well with fleet numbers L307, L310, L313 and L314 completed in 2006. L315 has emerged from the paint shop in the first week of March and has returned to Tollesbury depot. L316 (another Tollesbury vehicle) is now in the paint shop and should be returned to traffic during April. This just leaves L317 to complete the entire Olympian allocation at Tollesbury.

Alexander Dennis has confirmed the new Dennis Trident 2 Enviro 400 double decker should be delivered the second week in April. Fitting of fare collection equipment will follow, with expected licensing from May 1st. This is the first vehicle to be fitted with CCTV cameras as initial equipment.

Allocations ~ March 2007

	Saloon	B6/Dart	SLF	Coach	Double-decker
Hedingham	L196 L206	L297	L211 L328 L212 L340 L301 L350 L325		L337
Sudbury	L148 L200	L241	L339	L122 L282 L124 L291 L233 L298 L242	L336 L353 L341 L345 L352
Kelvedon		L198 L296 L208 L304 L258 L342	L344 L351	L281 L311	L167 L306 L197 L310 L254
Tollesbury	L150 L354	L207 L303 L243 L308 L283	L343 L349	L309 L329	L237 L315 L262 L316 L288 L317
Clacton	L322	L210 L287 L319 L320	L312 L326 L334 L335 L338 L346 L348	L244 L347 L285 L286 L290 L295 L299 L323 L324	L160 L292 L331 L245 L293 L332 L246 L300 L333 L248 L305 L249 L307 L251 L313 L253 L314 L255 L330
Paint float					L199

David Harman,
with thanks to Mr D R MacGregor

■ DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in *from*

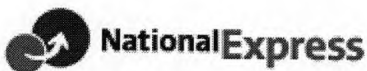
Carters Coaches, Ipswich: RML2270.
Go-Ahead North East: Spectra's K306/9/10/12/16 FYG, K125 PGO
S & M, Benfleet, Essex: M675.
Stagecoach Devon: Olympians F510/1/2 NJE
UK North: DAF DB250's V651/2/4/5 LWT
 DAF SB220's P902/9 PWW, W176/7/8 CDN.
Williams Coaches, Camborne, Cornwall:
 Olympian PJI 4983.

Vehicles out

to
 Mercedes 709 M654 FYS: **A1 Travel Services, Hewish, Somerset.**
 DAF SB220's P902/9 PWW: **Bannisters Coaches, Owston Ferry, S Yorks.**
 L244 L258: **Blackpool Transport, converted to partial open top.**
 Lance M204 DRG Spectra K310 FYG: **Carters Coaches, Ipswich.**
 Dublin Olympian 93-D-10159 now L842 SNO with **Galloway, Mendlesham, Suffolk.**
 Olympian B275 LPH: **Grange Farm, Peterborough.**
 RML2339: **Erik Lopez, Colombia.**
 L183 M1339 M1395 M697
 Scania H234 LOM: **PVS for scrap.**
 L46/50/247: **S & M Coaches, Benfleet, Essex.**
 Olympian PJI 4983: **Travel with Hunny, Ipswich.**
 Olympian P801 GMU: **Williams Coaches, Camborne, Cornwall.**

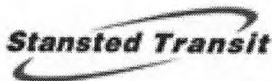
David Harman

with thanks to Ross Newman of Ensignbus, LOTS



Burton's National Express Airport-liveried Volvo B12B/Panther YN54 ZHK was seen in Colchester on private hire, on 15th March. This is usually found on the Cambridge - Heathrow 787.

John Podgorski



Dennis Dart/Plaxton J308 WHJ has been withdrawn.

Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton sold are P105/106 OLX, P511 RYM, V898 DNB and YT51 EAF.

Ian Ransom



Former Blue Bus of Horwich Dart/Alexander Dash N5 BLU is in a new version of the Stansted Transit lilac-blue/white livery. Chelmsford: 31 March. David Harman

Essex Small Operator News

10.8.4, Saffron Walden LDV 400 N770 BWF has been acquired from 1st AAA Coaches, Cambridge. Volvo B10M/Plaxton MJI 8660 (B542 BMH) has gone to Meridian Line, Royston

AMBER,, Rayleigh Leyland Tiger/Plaxton SIB 9492 (A149 EPA) has been sold for scrap

APT TRAVEL Rayleigh In from Mike Boggis, Ipswich is Volvo B10M/Van Hool CIW 7633 (A185 MNE). A report on *Essex buses y-group* states that the Olympian is for sale, this is ARP 619X, new to United Counties. The *Google Essex Bus Photos* group gives this as having passed to Alpha Coaches, Honiton.

ARROW, Maldon Ford Transit P976 HTW is now with a private owner.

BARKER, Roydon Volvo B10M/Ikarus BLZ 6983 (E80 AMW) has been sold to a Welsh operator.

BASILDON TRAVEL, Rayleigh Mercedes Benz 709D/PMT F303 JNC has been sold for scrap

BLUE DIAMOND, Harlow In from

Pickford, Chippenham (dealer) is Mercedes Benz 709D/Plaxton L887 VHT.

BPH TRAVEL, Elmstead Market Ford Transit/Carlyle C196 KBH and DAF 400 J583 EGH have been sold.

BRADAMOUR, Southend Acquired from a private owner is Ford Transit N693 WRP

BRIANS, Maylandsea Bedford YMT/Duple HAZ 2960 (DWP 777S) has been sold

BUSHEL & SACK HOTEL, Gt Dunmow Ford Transit S361 SNO has been withdrawn

CHELMSFORD TAXIBUS, Chelmsford New Ford Transis here are EJ56 YOX, EK56 SUA, EJ56 YDS, EJ56 YOV, EF56 AOZ, EJ56 OT, EF56 ASX, EY56 ZNZ, EJ56 YOW, EJ56 YOR, EF56 MWY (numbered 120-130) and unnumbered EN56 VKK. Volvo B10M/Duple EXI 2805 (E858 WSB) has been sold.

CLASSIC CARRIAGE, Rochford Here for some time, but not previously reported is H559 PPU a "vintage appearance" Mercedes Benz 709D/Maunders

CRUSADER, Clacton Setra S315GT V105
OJN has gone to Kardan Travel, Newport,
IOW.

FARGO, Rayne Acquired from Hellyers
Fareham is unusual short Bova Futura
A4 HFY (R636 VYB). Also now here are
Scania/Irizar YN51 MFZ and long Ford
Transit EN56 VKK. Vehicles sold are ex
Blackpool Atlantean/East Lancs AHG
340V, Dodge/Wadham Stringer E927 JAR
and LDV Convoy EU03 VPV. Scania L94/
Van Hool T719 JHE has gone to Northern
Ireland, while Scania K124/Irizar YN04
GOE is now with Knights Travel,
Warnham. Former Blackpool Atlantean
AHG 331V has been withdrawn, although
Mercedes Benz 609D/Made to Measure
E677 UND is back in use.

FLAGFINDERS, Braintree Iveco/Beulas
LV02 LLF has been acquired

FLORIDA, Halstead Executive specification
S943 ETV a Scania K124/Irizar has been
re-registered P400 OSH and is used as the
Peterborough FC team coach. DAF
SB2300/Duple C305 AHP has been sold.

FST COACHES, Basildon SAZ 2350 (TOB
614Y) a Bedford YNT/Plaxton has been
sold

KEANE, Canvey Island Ford Transit
P19 FRR is now a non-PSV

LINKFAST, Thundersley Leyland
Olympian/ECW C205 GTU has been
acquired from Ruffle, Castle Hedingham.
MCW Metrobus KYV 675X has been sold
to Ensign (dealer). Further ex London
Leyland Olympian/ECW acquired via
Ensigns are C46/50 CHM and D247 FYM.

MARINA CARS, Chelmsford Ford Transit
EX03 ZVZ has been sold.

MASTER TRAVEL, South Ockendon
Vehicles withdrawn are former First Essex
H609 OVW a Mercedes Benz 709D/
Reeve Burgess and former Midland Red
Leyland Leopard/Plaxton (rebuild) Q553
UOC (LOA 843X)

MB TRAVEL, Harlow Further to EBN 515,
LDV Convoy Y581 CGN is with
LAMTRA, Harlow and not here.

NCS, Newport LDV 400 M544 JAT has been
sold for scrap.

NELSONS, Wickford Whilst ex Town &
Country Scania/Alexander H247 LOM
was originally acquired for spares, it is
now being prepared for service. Leyland
Olympian/ECW C70 CHM (EMN 210U)
has been withdrawn and is stored off site.

NITELINE, Maldon Peugeot Boxer
N712 AKP has been sold

OLYMPIAN, Harlow Iveco/Marshall
M152/153 RBH have been withdrawn.
Vehicles sold are AHZ 7344 (K777 KGM)
a Scania K93/Plaxton, M154 RBH an
Iveco/Marshall and P546 MSF a
Mercedes Benz 308D

P&M, Crays Hill Bedford YNT/Plaxton
B787 OUT has been withdrawn

RUFFLE, Castle Hedingham LDV Convoy
acquired are BD52 HLG, BD52
HKE/HLE, AF03 BVE all from private
owners. MCW Metrobus A143 AMO has
been withdrawn

SM TRAVEL, Harlow MAN/Optare
L806 FRD has been withdrawn. Iveco/
Dormobile K707 FNO has been sold to a
private buyer.

SOUTHEND RADIO CARS, Southend
Acquired from Lancashire Education
Dept. is Iveco35-10/LCB S294 JFR.

STANSTED HOTEL SPRINTER, Stansted
Operations have indeed ceased (EBN515)
and the fleet which comprised Mercedes
Benz 413CDI W887 COJ, X973 JVP and
Y357 RTD plus Scania L94/Irizar W261
GBV have passed to dealers.

SWIFT CARS, Little Waltham Ford Transit
LK52 SSU has been withdrawn. VW LT35
minibus GX54 FTT has been sold.

TALISMAN, Gt Bromley Setra S250 M858
YVW has been re-registered WSU 225.
Setra S315 W10 TGM is now LSU 113,
both having been re-registered in
February

TURNERS, Wickham St Paul DAF 400 H84
CDB has been sold. Now rare Ford
R1114/Duple ODJ 588W is back in use

VICEROY, Saffron Walden Ford Transit
G272 NWF has been withdrawn.
Acquired is Scania K113/Irizar M304 VET

WEBB, Highwood Volvo B10M/Plaxton TIB
8571 (D97 BNV) has gone to MSG,
Darlington

WILSONS TRAVEL, Grays Acquired from
a private owner is Iveco 49-10/Mellor
S170 UPU

YELLOW, Braintree Noted here in March as
Mercedes Benz Vito DE56 NXU

Mercedes Benz/Optare Starrider G122 KUB
is reported to be in use in Colchester,
owner unknown.

*Ian Ransom with thanks to
Dave Arnold and Colin Sigston*



photo

Rochford

top: just delivered Solos
centre: Volvo/Plaxton
 A14 SOE.
bottom: decker line-up:
 London Olympians
 C82 CHM and D106
 CHM (in Tesco livery)
 bracket ex-Stagecoach
 C383 SAO.

John G Lidstone



Stephensons
of Essex

-call

Maldon:

top: ASDA-liveried ex-London Olympian
C64 CHM

centre: ex-Lothian Olympian
OFS 683Y

bottom: ex-Stagecoach Volvo
B10M/Alexander
M233 TBV. (correcting
the cover caption in
EBN514, this is the
usual bus on the 240).

below: ex-Metrobus Olympian/
Northern Counties
M408 RVU

Dave Arnold



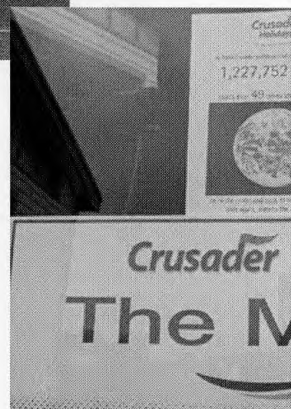


**Crusader
Holidays
photo**

On Saturday 17th March, **Crusader Holidays** held an Open Day at their premises on the Gorse Lane Industrial Estate.

above: **AJN 825**, Westcliff-on-Sea Bristol K stands with **EU05 AVV**, a Setra S315 GT-HD which was operating on the shuttle service to and from Clacton rail station.

below: **EU07 FHX** a Setra S416 GT-HD one of this year's new intake of coaches.



ader
days
o-call



left: The Moon, the latest destination to be offered by Crusader Holidays! In 2006, the Crusader fleet operated 1,227,752 miles, equivalent to 49 times round the earth, or to the moon and back, then to the moon and back again, then to the moon and back again!

above: Almost thirty years separate these coaches: YJN 455S new in 1978 and EU07 FHY new in 2007. How things have changed!

below: EU05AVV ready for another run back to Clacton rail station.

Report and photographs by Paul Smith

Holidays
Moon!



Coach views

March 2007:
Gozo tour: Rita Farugia used her son's LH/Supreme coach, (WJN 22S), new to **Boon**, Boreham in 1977. It is Perkins re-engined with the radiator mounted amidships with added air vents on the side panels.

Terry Partridge



Brentwood Coaches flagship Volvo/Caetano BC06 BWC again: on 16th March, 1300 pupils of Brentwood School (including a certain Iain Stewart) were conveyed up to St Paul's Cathedral for a special service to mark the 450th Anniversary of the school. 35 coaches were used, organised by Brentwood Coaches, with support from King's of Colchester, Fargo, Lodge's, Jackson's, Cook's, SCB, Thurrock Coaches, Swallow noted. Set down and parking was at West Smithfield Market.

Chris Stewart

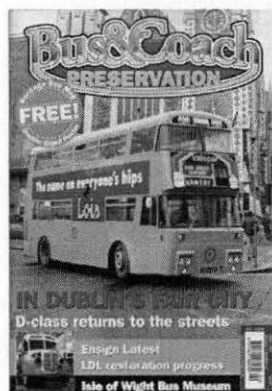




A trio of classic Eastern National Bristol MW/ECW coaches at C(h)obham in April.

Simon Coates

The Essex bus ... in print



Bus & Coach Preservation

Vol.9 No.11 (April 2007); Ian Allan, £3.70.

John Lidstone continues the epic story of young Craig Mara and 2510 (or if you prefer 1541 - 236 LNO), the one and only LDL in the Eastern National fleet. This is coming along nicely, thanks to regular applications of hard work and of course, much £££. The cab has been rebuilt, rewiring completed, windscreen replaced, steering wheel powder-coated, air lines and valves renewed, radiator refurbished - at a cost of £1,632 (ouch!), front cowl replaced (with 'wings' sourced, to be fitted later), and much else. With luck, it may at the Castle Point Open Day this year.

One puzzle was a trace of dark green paint found in an otherwise Tilling green-painted cab. Was the cab interior originally dark green? Memory can be defective, but I think the LDs (and maybe some of the early FLFs) were. Tilling green interior decor was a later aberration. Anyway, Craig has gone for dark green, and as it happens, B&Q racing green is an exact match - which was handy.

Finally, he would still like the original front registration number plate back. If anyone knows its whereabouts ... please let the Editor of *B&CP*, John L., or even myself know.

In the same issue, *Nick Larkin* looks behind the scenes at Ensign, and at four different preservation projects - the superb green Cravens RT1499, RT8 - a project described as frightening - and that is probably an understatement!, the last DMS - DMS2646 (which emerged into the sunlight at C(h)obham), and MLL 735 - one of the BEA London Airport service coaches based on the RF chassis. More good reading with some delights to come!

David Harman

Colchester Lathe Co. WXR 221

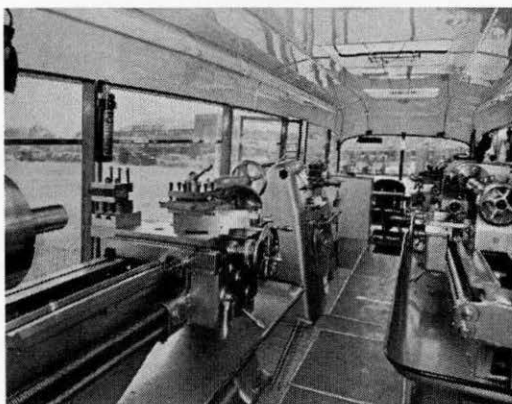


In the PSV Circle's AEC Reliance chassis list, there is an entry for 2HMU3RA1515, registration WXR 221, a "Showroom" owned by the Colchester Lathe Company. This is a classic example of a psv chassis built from new for a non-psv role.

In 1959 the Colchester Lathe Co Ltd commissioned the construction of a specially designed mobile showroom for exhibiting and demonstrating lathes to prospective domestic and overseas customers. AEC's heavy-duty export-specification Reliance chassis was chosen to carry the striking bodywork which can be seen in these pictures.

Looking rather like a large Tonibell ice cream van, the showroom featured very deep windows, allowing the maximum amount of daylight in. Carrying four large lathes mounted securely on the heavily-reinforced floor, the unit weighed in at 12½-tons

fully laden, which must have made it a sluggish performer on the road. The body was constructed by Road Transport Services (Hackney) Ltd of St Andrews Road, London E8, and supplied via distributors, Keith & Boyle. At the time, the Reliance was the largest of Colchester's demonstration units, being numbered 'Unit No.4'.





The Colchester Lathe Company was first established in Colchester in 1897, and is the largest turning machine builder in Europe. It is now part of the 600 Group, with a head office in Heckmondwike, West Yorks.

Background and photos courtesy of Nel Fraser of the AEC Society, and Chris Stewart

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