

Essex Bus News

No. 649; MAY 2018



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

£4

www.essexbus.org.uk



fb.me/essexbus

where sold



<< Upper picture
First Essex has only ever owned three vehicles in the 61xxx series, 61054/7 (R434/7 GSF) Scania L113CRL / Wright Access-ultralows and 61230 (YM52 UWH) a Scania L94UB / WrightBus Solar. 61230 returned to First Scotland East in April, having only been acquired last August. Before it went, it is seen parked out of use at Colchester Bus Station on 4 April.

Adam Kelleher.



Lower picture First Essex 37017 (WX55 VJE) a Volvo B9TL/Wright at Wivenhoe Station after completing a 62A service from Colchester Station before returning, on May 4.

Ken Coldwell.

Front Cover Picture.

On 20 April, Kings Coaches took delivery of KC65 ABC, an Irizar i6, 13.22m, C53FT, with DAF - MX13 - 462bhp. Vin no. VS916AD00H1016101. Replacing MAN/Van Hool Astron, KC11ABC.

Peter Mobbs.

EBN649ifc

Editor & Sub-Editors

Magazine Editor

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

First in Essex/Trustybus/EOS

Adam Kelleher
74 Park Road
BRENTWOOD CM14 4TU adamxxxx4@yahoo.co.uk

Ensignbus/Hedingham/Chambers

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

Arriva including Network Colchester

Peter Mansbridge petemans_1@hotmail.com

Stephensons of Essex

Richard Delahoy, details opposite.

Panther Travel & Publicity

Ian Ransom ianandsallyr@googlemail.com

Smaller Operators

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

Service Changes

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

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

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

*Owen also stocks a wide range of colour photos;
Send SAE with your requirements*

Black & White Photo Sales

Robin Jenkinson, 23 Wheatfields, Rickinghall, DISS, IP22 1EN
Using the order form available on-line at:
<http://www.signal-training.com/ebeg/Photo%20order%20form.pdf>.

Essex Bus News is the "house magazine" of the **Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group.**

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

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

Subscriptions

A calendar year subscription is £21. New members may join from any month, but subscriptions will always run to December, from whichever month the member chooses.

Those joining from February to December inclusive will pay a pro-rata subscription calculated at £1.80 per month. For example, a member joining in March would pay 10 x £1.80, i.e. £18.00. Contact Richard Delahoy, address below.

Membership Secretary & Data Protection

A statement of our compliance with the GDPR is set out on page 3 of this issue. For any membership or data protection issues, please contact:

Richard Delahoy,
272 Shoebury Road,
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA SS1 3TT
richard.delahoy@blueyonder.co.uk

Printed by Directcds Ltd

Unit 2, Gentlemans Field, Westmill Road
WARE, Herts SG12 0EF
01920 465023
www.directcds.co.uk

Reports and observations

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

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

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

© 2018 Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group.

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

MID-ESSEX MEETINGS by Maurice Austin.

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

Thursday 24 May	Richard Delahoy
Thursday 28 June	Ian Thompson
Thursday 26 July	Robert Appleton
Thursday 27 September	David Moth
Thursday 25 October	Martin Weyell
Thursday 22 November	Alan Osborne
Thursday 13 December	Richard Delahoy

Great British Bus Ride.
My 70 year obsession!
Greater Manchester before & After Deregulation.
Former NBC companies in the 1990s.
slides from John Boylett collection, part 2.
30 Years AGO.
20 years ago.

NORTH ESSEX MEETINGS by Dave Arnold.

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

Friday 8 June	tba	
Friday 13 July	David Moth	Buses in northern England since 1994.
also Fridays 10 August, 14 September, 12 October, 9 November (Steve Marskell), 14 December (Gary Sharpe).		

A Blast From The Past.

Paul Harvey.



Southend Transport 372 Daimler Fleetline Northern Counties WJN 372J at Shoeburyness Renown turning ready for next journey towards Rayleigh on service 7, during early 1978. **Paul Harvey.**

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

EVENTS

Saturday 19 May

Sunday 20 May

Monday 28 May

Sunday 3 June

Sunday 10 June

Friday 15 June

Saturday 23 June

Sunday 24 June

Sunday 24 June

Sunday 22 July

Epsom & Ewell Transport Fair. Bourne Hall, Ewell KT17 1UF

Fenland Bus Festival., Whittlesey. www.easternbusgroup.co.uk/busfest.html

Bus Rally, Buckinghamshire Railway Centre, Quainton

Reading Buses Running Day. Station forecourt

Luton Festival of Transport Stockwood Park.

Royal Blue/Associated Motorways Coach Run. Starts 10.30 Victoria Coach Stn

Ipswich Transport Museum. Transport & Model Festival.

London Bus Museum, Brooklands. 60 Years of Routemaster.

Classic Car & Retro Show. The Lawn Rochford SS4 1PJ

Essex BusRally. Barleylands, Billericay. NB. The Basildon Rally on 24 June is cancelled — this event, now combined with 'The Londoner in the Country', replaces it. **Group Stall at this event.**

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.

EBEG and your personal data

Richard Delahoy.

With new data protection laws coming into effect later this month (the GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation) we have reviewed our policies and set out below how we use *personally identifiable information*.

§ We will store and process data in accordance with the Regulations.

§ The information we hold will be your title, name, address, postcode, e-mail address (if supplied to us or if you contact us by e-mail), phone number (if supplied) and details of transactions (such as payment of subscriptions, purchases or bookings for events). This information will be held on a computer and/or in paper form. Our membership database is held in an encrypted file for additional security.

§ The lawful basis on which we process your data is for the performance of a contract, in other words to administer your membership, issue Essex Bus News and to process any purchases or event bookings you make with us.

§ We will not share your data with any other party, other than the provision of mailing labels to our magazine distributors. We will not contact you for marketing purposes and we do not provide marketing details to any other organisation.

§ When you pay money to us, we do not retain your bank details (other than an e-mail address in the case of money sent to us by PayPal). With BACS payments the only information we receive is the name of the account the funds have come from. In the case of cheque payments, we do not retain any details other than the account name.

§ As a member you have the right to request a copy of the personal data we hold about you and the right to request we amend any incorrect data. You also have the right to ask for your data to be deleted (eg after you cease to be a member).

§ Personal data will be deleted from our records when it is no longer required, in accordance with our data retention policy.

Enquiries or requests regarding your data should be addressed to the Membership Secretary, details on page 1 of each issue of Essex Bus News.



This Month's Puzzle!

<<<Picture left Well, we know it is;

WNO 480, former EN2384

Bristol KSW5G seen on

Sunday 13 May 2018.

But where is she and what is she doing?

There are clues in the picture but if I tell you the photographer, that will totally give the game away! He (or she!) will have to wait a month for the accolade.

No prizes, but I will print the names of those who solve all the clues!

EBN649p3





If the Editor's in-box is to be believed, Members thoroughly enjoyed last month's piece on this operator. Gone but far from being forgotten. As well as a couple of letters on EBN649p31, I have had comments from many others.

We start the second part of Brian's contribution with this atmospheric picture of JN 983 Commer Invader (front view in a narrow lane), **photographer not known**. Nor is the narrow lane!

The same bus, presumably waiting between trips is shown more formally in the lower picture on this page. Again we don't know the photographer but the copyright is held by **The Omnibus Society**.

Upper picture this page is Albion JN 7409.© **The Omnibus Society**.

Thanks to Alan Oxley for allowing us to use these pictures.

The Omnibus Society has a huge range of photographs for sale and details can be found on their website.

EBEG has its own extensive range of photographs for sale.

Robin Jenkinson (details on page 1 of every EBN will be pleased to provide details.

Stephensons & Stephensons.



Upper picture Stephensons of Essex Alexander Dennis Enviro200 468 (SN66 WKG) has just been acquired from Stephensons (I) of Easingwold and dovetails very nicely into the fleet. It has ousted Alexander Dennis Dart 417 (EU07 FRN) from Rochford to Haverhill. At Paglesham on Wednesday on its first week in service. **John G. Lidstone.**



Lower picture "I was intrigued to read in EBN648p22 that Stephensons of Essex had bought two ADL E200 from Stephensons of Easingwold who have ceased trading. Here is one of them, SN66 WKF, in Malton, North Yorkshire, on 29 June 2017. This photo makes a nice comparison with its "sister" above in Stephensons of Essex livery. **Robert Appleton.** EBN649p6



It's that new bus again! Freshly acquired from Stephensons of Easingwold by Stephensons of Rochford, Alexander Dennis Enviro200 468 (SN66 WKG) on its first week in service at Rochford, passing Stambridge Church.

John G. Lidstone.

Service Revisions

by Paul Harvey.

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

Highlights/Lowlights of the Period:

Mind that bridge! X30 formally re-routed.

Changes in Clacton – to National Express services.

Arriva Southend changes, more buses on the 1 and reliability changes.

NIBS changes school services.

26 March 18

X30 Southend to Stansted Airport (D) First Essex – some double deck operation introduced, all journeys from Southend re-routed via Parkway & Rainsford Road to Chelmsford Bus Station. Towards Southend re-routed via Coval Lane to Parkway in order to avoid the railway bridge at Chelmsford Station.

30 April 18

21 Warley to Ongar (M-S) Ensign Bus – additional Mon to Fri journeys introduced from Brentwood at 1022 and from Ongar at 1050 replacing service X21 journeys.

X21 Lakeside to Ongar (M-F) Ensign Bus – the 0948 from Lakeside and the 1050 from Ongar withdrawn and replaced by service 21 journeys.

81 Brentwood to Hutton (M-S) Ensign Bus – minor timetable revisions.

X81 Lakeside to Hutton (M-F) Ensign Bus – minor timetable revisions with journeys from Lakeside not serving South Ockendon Royal Oak.



Picture Ensignbus 129 (LX15 GOU) at Rail Station, Brentwood Essex 1/5/18 on route 81 (normally operated with Dennis Darts) 2015 Volvo B9TL/Wright H73F.

Robert Downton.

EBN649p8

6 May 18

- CR P&R Colchester Park & Ride (M-S) Arriva Kent Thameside – service will commence at 0530 and operate until 2100. It is understood the changes planned for introduction on this date have been postponed until further notice.
- 13 Epping to Waltham Cross (M-S) EOS –
Mon to Fri evening service revised with the last journey from Waltham Cross at 2115.
- 66 Loughton/Debden to Waltham Cross (M-S) EOS –
Mon to Fri evening service revised with the last journey from Waltham Cross at 2015.

13 May 18

- 1 Shoeburyness to Rayleigh (D) Arriva Kent Thameside – revised timetable to improve reliability and main Mon to Fri daytime frequency increased to operate every 8/10 minutes.
- 6 Southend to Temple Sutton Circular (D) Arriva Kent Thameside – revised timetable and route to operate Southend to Temple Sutton and extended to Garon Park Leisure Centre Mon to Sat off peak and Sundays. Withdrawn from Southchurch Newington Avenue/Archer Avenue loop, Hamstel Road & Woodgrange Drive.
- 7/8 Landwick to Rayleigh (D) Arriva Kent Thameside – revised running times to improve reliability, off peak service 8 journeys extended to/from Rayleigh Station.
- 9 Rayleigh to Shoeburyness (D) Arriva Kent Thameside – revision to times to improve reliability.
- 29 Eastwood to Southend (D) Arriva Kent Thameside – revised timetable to improve reliability.
- 92 Ipswich to Manningtree (M-S) Ipswich Buses – minor timetable revisions, the 0925 & 0958 journeys from Ipswich withdrawn and replaced by a new journey at 0930.



<<<picture

Ipswich Buses have increased their order for Scania Omnicity double-deckers from 14 to 18. These are coming from Scania. They were new to First London, later transferred to Metroline when First pulled out of London.

Robert Appleton.

Caption, cont. Ipswich 44 (YR61 RRZ) has entered service in London red livery. Photographed in Colchester Road, Manningtree, on 10 April, after working 1025 Ipswich - Manningtree service 92.

Robert Appleton.

21 May 18

- 350 Liverpool to Stansted Airport (D) National Express – revision to timetable.
- 370 Birmingham to Clacton (D) National Express – express service withdrawn.
- 484 London to Clacton (D) National Express – the 1700 from London Victoria to operate 30 minutes later at 1730.
- 777 Birmingham to Stansted Airport (D) National Express – revised timetable and route, some journeys operating via Cambridge and some via Northampton.

Service Revisions **concluded.**

Paul Harvey.

29 May 18

- 84/A Colchester to Sudbury (M-S) Go Ahead Chambers – minor changes to timetable.
- 89X Braintree to Sudbury (M-F) Go Ahead Chambers – revised route around Chilton Industrial Estate Sudbury.
- 753/754 Bury St Edmunds to Colchester via Sudbury (M-S) Go Ahead Chambers – minor changes to timetable.

2 June 18

- 66 Loughton/Debden to Waltham Cross (M-S) EOS – revised timetable with reduced frequency on Saturdays.
- 86 Harlow to Waltham Cross (M-S) EOS – service withdrawn from Nazeing and Saturday service withdrawn.

4 June 18

- S1 Harlow to Stratford (D) EOS – this new service will commence operation on 4 June 18 not as previously quoted.
- 31 Basildon to Cranes Farm First Data (M-F) NIBS – new contract service for First Data registered although shuttle service has been operating since January 2018.
- 49 Basildon to Brentwood School (Sch) NIBS – revision to route and timetable to operate via West Horndon replacing service 477.
- 434 Pilgrim Hatch to Shenfield School (Sch) NIBS – service extended to/from Ongar with revised timetable.
- 437 High Ongar to Shenfield School (Sch) NIBS – school service withdrawn.
- 477 West Horndon to Brentwood School (Sch) NIBS – school service withdrawn.



Panther Travel AB62 PAN Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 in Osborne Street, Colchester, on 1 May, working 1600 Colchester Norman Ways Schools - Dedham service 81A.

Robert Appleton.

Essex County Council Ongoing Bus Service Consultations

Ongoing consultations

Consultation - Service 10 Wickford – Basildon and Services 13,13a and 14 Chelmsford -Wickford

Operated by First Essex Buses

Consultation Period: 05 April 2018 – 08 May 2018

Background Commercial First Essex Bus 15 service was withdrawn, this left Church End Lane and parts of Alderney Gardens Wickford without a service.

Proposal It is proposed that service 10 will operate around Church End Lane instead of Guernsey Gardens. It is also proposed for services 13/13a/14 to operate in both directions along Alderney Gardens instead of Swan Lane. Wantz Corner will no longer be served.

Recent closed consultations

Consultation - Service 41 Evening Services (Chelmsford – Galleywood)

Operated by First Essex Buses

Closed 28 February 2018

First Essex Buses are making changes to their day time commercial Service 41 and ECC would like to mirror these changes on our evening journeys (renumbered service 57) . It is proposed that the service will no longer serve the whole of Baddow Road. Instead it will travel down Meadgate Avenue, Longmead Avenue and re-join the current route at Vineyards in Gt Baddow.

OUTCOME Currently being assessed.

Consultation - Service 441 Currently Old Harlow Post Office – Saffron Walden HS (Monday – Friday, schooldays only)

Operated by Stephenson's of Essex

Closed 28 March 2018

As the ECC funded section of the route is not well used, it is proposed that the section will be removed & the commercial 441 service will revert back to previous timetable (i.e. Takeley to Saffron Walden High School)

OUTCOME Currently being assessed.

Consultation - Service 59/60 Audley End Station – Haverhill

Operated by Stephenson's of Essex

Closed 25 April 2018

Essex County Council has received a request to amend the journey times Mon - Fri to coincide with train arrivals from London. The County Council propose that the 1127, 1227, 1327,1427 and 1533 bus departures from Audley End are adjusted to 1135, 1235, 1335, 1435 and 1541

OUTCOME Currently being assessed.



National Express
SH219 (BX65 WCV)
at Elizabeth Street,
Victoria, London on
route A7 London
Victoria - Stansted
Airport 015, Volvo
B11RT/Caetano
C55FLt new to Harry
Shaw Coventry.

Robert Downton.

Miscellany.



LF02 PNK is currently a training bus at Southend. The oddly spaced windows show that it was new as a dual door vehicle. **Gary Sharpe.**



Lower picture The Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 used on the Colchester park and ride service have received coloured branding to promote the service. Here is 4073 (SK15 GXT) climbing North Hill in Colchester on 1 May.

Robert Appleton.

EBN649p12



Upper picture As reported elsewhere, Trustybus gained Herts. CC routes 383/4 from Centrebus on 3 April. A pair of Solos was acquired in February from Stagecoach Western and SF05 NXE in fleet livery is at Ware Old Town Hall on its journey from Stevenage to Hertford.
Owen Woodliffe.



Lower picture First Essex 65586 in Colchester 'Bus Station' at work, now 'retired'.

Gary Sharpe.
EBN649p13

Closure of Clacton & Braintree

First Essex announced on 27 April that Clacton depot will be closing. Routes 2, 3, 4/4A, 5/5A and 6 will be withdrawn by the company (plus evening Essex County Council 10A & 17/18) with routes 7/8, Clacton to Walton-on-Naze, and the 74/76 group, Clacton to Colchester, transferred to Colchester depot. As detailed in EBN647, 21 buses are required for Clacton services, 10 of which are for 7/8 and the main 74/76A routes. In January this year Clacton had an allocation of 27 vehicles, so, allowing for spares, it is likely that around 15 vehicles will be withdrawn. (The January total is given as the current allocation is complicated by vehicles withdrawn from service but still officially allocated to Clacton.) No date has yet been given, as there needs to be a consultation process with the trade union re redundancies, although July has been reported elsewhere. There may be up to 50 redundancies, with 25 drivers and one skilled fitter moving to Colchester.

The depot at Telford Road was acquired with the takeover of Coastal Red in 1988 and replaced the previous depot in Castle Road. Hedingham Omnibus, which already has a depot in Clacton just down the road from First's, has announced that they will be running replacement routes 3, 4/4A, 5/5A and 6 once First's services cease. They have also won the contract from ECC for evening buses in Clacton from 29 July. The Unite trade union also reports that Braintree outstation is to close, with drivers transferring to Chelmsford. These closures will reduce the number of depots to four, Basildon, Chelmsford, Colchester and Hadleigh. When Eastern National was privatised in December 1986 there were 16 main depots at Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Bishop's Stortford, Chelmsford, Clacton, Colchester, Enfield, Hadleigh, Harwich, Maldon, Ponders End (being prepared for use, it opened in January 1987), Silver End, Southend, Walthamstow and Walton, plus part of the old Central Works at Chelmsford and two small outstations at Great Dunmow and South Woodham Ferrers. At the time, Prittlewell Works was also owned and was in the process of being rebuilt as a bus garage to replace Southend.



When Scania Omnicity 65032 (YN06 TDZ) moved from Chelmsford to Clacton at the end of February, she went in to service at Clacton with Chelmsford City fleet names. Now repainted with standard Essex fleet names. This is the only one of the five Scania Omniculties to have a Scania badge, between the Scania name and First logo on the front dash panel. Pictured in Pier Avenue, Clacton on 13 April, working service 7 to Walton-on-the-Naze.

Robert Appleton.

EBN649p14

Acquired Vehicles

Correction to EBN648, 37016 does not have moquette seating but has e-leather, like the other five acquired B7TLs.

Allocation Changes

BE-Braintree (outstation of Chelmsford), BN-Basildon; CF-Chelmsford; CN-Clacton; CR-Colchester; HH-Hadleigh; DS-Driving School (based at Chelmsford), FG-to/from another First Group company

Period 12 2017/18 (18 February - 31 March 2018)

The observations reported in EBN648 are confirmed as correct by the company's allocation sheet.

Period 1 2018/19 (1 April - 28 April 2018)

53113 CF-CF (out of service), 53115 CF-CF (out of service), 53117 CF-CF (out of service), 53121 CF-CF (out of service), 53123 CF-CF (out of service), 53125 CF-Disposal, 53127 CF-CF (out of service), 53132 CF-CF (out of service), 53133 CF-CN (out of service), 53134 CF-CF (out of service), 53136 CF-CF (out of service), 61230 CR-FG, 62407 CR-CR (out of service), 65031 CF-CN, 65665 CN-CN (out of service), 65666 CN-CN (out of service), 65667 CN-CN (out of service), 65669 CN-CN (out of service), 65670 CN-CN (out of service), 65681 CR-CR (out of service), 65686 CR-FG, 65742 CR-FG, 65743 CR-FG, 65745 CR-FG, 65746 CR-FG, 65748 CR-CR (out of service), 65750 CR-FG

Some of the Solos listed above as out of service are parked at the front of Westway. 53133 was seen withdrawn at Clacton on 5 May. The eight Solos reported in EBN647 as being out of service at Braintree were still there on 28 April. 62407 is out of use following an RTA whilst on route 103 in Lawford a couple of months ago. It has gone from Colchester, but it is not known where to. 65681 was left parked on road after breaking down in April when a fire was lit in the interior by vandals, although, despite its age, it has been seen in the workshop so may be repaired. 65748 is off road with a broken rear axle and may not be repaired.

Information has been provided about vehicles which have been off road for some time, as follows:

33080 CR-CR (out of service), 62195 DS-CF (out of service), 62197 DS-CF (out of service), 66829 CF-CF (out of service), 68535 CF-CF (out of service), 68551 CF-CF (out of service)

33080 has been out of service since around last October, out of MOT with numerous, and possibly costly, defects to repair. It is dumped at the back of the yard with other withdrawn stock. 62195, 62197, 66829, 68535 and 68551 have also been out of use for a while, probably since the last couple of months of 2017. 62195 and 62197 are the two driver-trainers still in Barbie livery. Panels have started to be removed from 66829 and 68535.



It is unusual to see a Wright Streetlite Max on service 103, but on 1 May 63336 (SM65 EEU) was in Stanwell Street, Colchester, waiting to depart on 1605 service 103 to Harwich.

Robert Appleton.

EBN649p15

Disposals

53125 to A2B Buses, Cambridge, April 2018. Seen on 19th working the 7A Whittlesford to Babraham Road, Cambridge Park & Ride service still in First livery, with fleet names removed but retaining Chelmsford depot stickers.

61230, 65686, 65742, 65743, 65745, 65746, 65750 to First Scotland East, all driven to Scotland on 28 April 2018. These are for Larbert depot.

65686 had been allocated to Colchester since new in July 2003. The rest had only been acquired from First Borders in August last year (see EBN641). They have been disposed of as part of the deal which saw the acquisition of the six Volvo B7TL/WrightBus Eclipse Gemini listed in EBN648. 65686 is a replacement for 65748, which, as noted above, is off road with a rear axle problem. (History repeating: 61230 and 65686, at least, stopped off at Bannockburn on the way. In 1971 a number of Eastern National Bristol FLFs, some of which had been new to Colchester, moved from Essex to Alexander, Midland at Bannockburn in exchange for the SMS registered Bristol VRs.)

For info, 61230 was new as dealer stock and had the same non-standard interior as 65665-65685, with a red based moquette and yellow hand rails. It retains the yellow hand rails, but the moquette has been replaced with standard First style (before it was acquired by First Essex).

Repaints

CF66795 to Urban livery, first seen on 15 March, with a small "First Essex" with f symbol above the driver's cab and the doors, main "Essex" fleet names on cove panels both sides and depot stickers both sides. All Volvo B7RLEs at Chelmsford are now in Urban livery, with 66821-4 at Basildon the only ones of the type still in Barbie livery.

CN65032, seen on route 7 on 13 April. This is the first repaint of a vehicle that was already in Urban livery to Urban livery. Differences from before are that it now has an f symbol on the front, a small "First Essex" with f symbol above the driver's cab and the doors, f symbol and "Essex" added to rear window, the main "Chelmsford City" fleet names on lower side panels have been replaced with "Essex", the middle of the front bumper is now purple instead of white, the area on the front dash around the "Scania" name is now black rather than silver-grey and the area around the rear window is now black rather than purple. Clacton depot stickers have been added both sides. It has small fleet numbers all round. [see picture EBN649p14].

BN69913 to new Route 100 livery, first seen 17 April.

BN69918 to new Route 100 livery, first seen 28 April.

CF43848 to Urban livery, seen on route 51 on 5 May. It has a small "First Essex" with f symbol above the driver's cab and the doors, main "Essex" fleet names on lower panels both sides and depot stickers both sides.



33087
(LN51
GMO)
Dennis
Trident/
Plaxton
President,
North Hill
Colchester
on 1 May,
working
service 62
Colchester
North
Station —
Bright-
lingsea.

**Robert
Appleton.**

EBN649p16

Other Vehicle News and Workings - *Clacton*

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CN.)

Of the SN51 reg Scania not seen in service during the second half of March (see EBN648), 65676 was on route 3 on 7 April and 7/8 on 13th & 18th. Other sightings of SN51 reg Scania during April: 65668 on 3 (6th, 16th & 24th), on 6 (20th), on 7/8 (26th); 65671 on 7/8 (6th, 9th, 19th, 20th, 27th plus 4 May), plus on 6 on 3 May; 65675 on 7/8 (19th, 27th plus 3 May) plus unusually on 74 instead of a newer Scania on 1 May.

The five Scania OmniCities at Clacton, 65028-32, normally work on services 7/8 & 74/76A Monday - Saturday daytime, with usually one or two on services 7/8 each day, but on 28 April there were three on 7/8: 65030/31/32. Sightings of these on other routes have been: 65029 on 3 (12 & 13 April) & 6 (27th) and 65030 on 6 (13th, the first sighting of one on this route) & Sunday 74A on 22nd.

The four Scania with 74/76 route branding, 65688/90-92, continue to work on routes 74/76A, plus some sightings on 3, 6 and 7/8. The four recently transferred in from Colchester, 62408-10/65689, work on services 3, 6, 7/8 plus a few sightings on 74/76A.

8 April	42918 on 74B
12	42928 on 74A
14	42556 & 65028 on 74A
26	65031, recently transferred from Chelmsford, on 7/8 (and again on 27th, 28th & 30th)
1 May	42937 on 7/8
3	42928 on 7/8
4	42918 on 7/8



Picture First Essex 65677 (SN51 UYL) Scania L94UB/Wright, new to First Edinburgh in 2001, in Mistley High Street on service 103 to Colchester on 12 February 12.

Ken Coldwell.

Colchester

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CR.)

Double deckers seen operating on routes 103/4 during April & early May: 32476 (4 May), 32477 (3 & 4 May), 32640 (1 May), 33088 (13 April), 33184 (27 April), 37009 (12 April & 2 May), 37016 (20 April). Also, a couple of StreetLites, 63336 on 1 May and 63344 on 19 April.

Sightings of SN51 reg Scania during April and early May: 65672 on 67 (20 April), on 103 (25th); 65673 on 66 (1 May); 65677 on 71 (19 April), on 103 (25 April & 1 May).

The newly acquired 370xx BTLs have appeared on Colchester workings on route 70 during April.

1 April	Easter Sunday. 63338 on 65, 63339 on 64, 65687 & 66798 on 1A
2	Easter Monday. 63341 & 63342 on 65, 65681 & 65685 on 1A, 65687 on 64

Continued on EBN649p18

EBN649p17

Other Vehicle News & Workings – Colchester continued.

6	32087 on 62A
7	32068 on Colchester United football shuttles
8	61230 on 1A, 63333 & 65746 on 88A
9	63338 on 75 on last Colchester to Maldon journey of the day and return
12	33078 on 62
13	Route 62/A branded 37133 at MC Trucks, Witham
14	33044 & 65743 on Colchester United football shuttles
15	37016 on 62, 63331 on 64A, 66803 on 1A, 66816 on 88A
22	65686 on 102
24	32481, a recent transfer from Chelmsford, back on its old route 70
25	Route 62/A branded 37136 on 17 (and again on 11 May, similar 37135 on 17 on 27 April)
26	Route 62/A branded 37138 on 61
28	Route 62/A branded 37136 on 75 (and on 65 on 1 May)
1 May	33087 on 62, 37010, back from loan to Hadleigh, on 67
4	63332 on daytime 88



Picture 37136 (SN57 HCU) Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini, route branded for service 62 Colchester - Brightlingsea, working service 65 Highwoods - Tollgate, in Osborne Street, Colchester, on 1 May.

Robert Appleton.

Chelmsford (including Braintree Outstation) (All vehicles listed below allocated to CF.)
X30 branded Enviro's seen on other routes: 67165 on 31X (4 May); 67168 on 31B (14 April), on 71 (1 & 4 May); 67169 on 351 (18 April & 3 May), on 71 (2 May), on 42 (4 May); 67170 on 42 (9 April), on 73 (19th, first sighting of an X30 branded vehicle on this route); on 71 (2 May); 67171 on 71 (17 April), on 42A (21 April), on 42 (4 May).
2 April Easter Monday. 32482 on 70 8 37985 on X30 all day, first use of a double-decker on a Sunday
12 43847 on 71A 15 69421 on 71C
17 53123 on Brentwood driver shuttles, the last reported sighting of an 02 registered Solo in use
18 68508 on Brentwood driver shuttles (and again on 20th & 21st)
20 41520 on 73 22 42922 on 71C, unusual Dart working on this Sunday service
26 69434 on X30, unusual now that there are spare X30 branded buses since the introduction of the two double-deckers
27 44900 on 71A 28 68509 & 68520 on Brentwood driver shuttles
30 43847 on 73, 44662 on 70
3 May 69421 & 69430 on 42 / 70 both failed at successive stops in Great Leighs in the afternoon
4 41414 on 71A, 44661 on 14, 44662 on 13A, 53209 on 73
5 42932 on 37, last day of 37's re-routing omitting Doddinghurst Road, it returned to its pre-18 Feb routing on 8 May.

Basildon & Hadleigh (All vehicles listed below allocated to BN except where stated.)
As noted above, CR37010 has returned from Hadleigh to Colchester.
9 April 47650, 47652 & 47658 on 100, HH47649 on 25, 41523 on 9
21 66819 on 100 26 33567 on 512
29 41524 very unusual on 100 4 May 47652 & 47657 on 100
9 41538 on 512
10 67164 on 825 (whereas X30 branded Enviro's are common on other routes, X10 branded ones are rare)
11 47651 & 47653 on 100



<<<Picture
the ex-First
Bristol
(Hengrove)
Volvo
B7TL/Wright
Gemini
37010
(WX55 VHV)
on loan to
First
Hadleigh,
departing
Canvey,
Leigh Beck
21 April.
**John G.
Lidstone.**

Other News Steve Wickers is the new Managing Director of First Essex, although it not known when he started.
The Group wish him every success in this role.

Sources own observations, and with thanks to D Acott, M Allen, R Appleton, S Barham, D Bell, W Bell, T Clark, D Edwards, I Hardie, D Latus, D Lund-Conlon, J Norris, J Podgorski, S Quay, J Salmon, K Smith, C Stewart, G Toon, R West, First Essex, Essex Buses Google group, Flickr and Terminus.

Route 88 Partnership

Robert Appleton.

Go Ahead Heddingham & District, First Essex Buses, and Essex County Council signed a Route 88 Partnership relating to service 88 Colchester - Halstead in January 2018. For many years before deregulation in 1986, service 88 was jointly operated by Heddingham and District and Eastern National. In Colchester, on 1 May, both operators had the same type of bus, Volvo B7TL with Wright Eclipse Gemini bodywork on two journeys that I photographed.



Upper photo
Heddingham &
District 514
(LB02 YXF)
**Robert
Appleton.**



Lower photo
First Essex
Buses 37016
(WX55 VJD).

37016
transferred
from First West
of England at
Bristol as per
EBN648p14.
But I do not
know where the
foxy passenger
in the front seat
upstairs came
from!
**Robert
Appleton.**

YWC 649F for EBN649

Robert Appleton.



Colchester Borough Transport 49 (YWC 649F) in Osborne Street, Colchester, on 5 September 1981. This Leyland Atlantean PDR1/1 with Massey body was new to Colchester Corporation Transport in 1968.

Robert Appleton.

Buses As Schools



The use of old buses as extra accommodation at schools seems to be on the increase. Richmond Avenue Junior School in Shoebury has this ex-Arriva decker – the fleetnumber still in place identifying it as 6233, Y466 UGC. New in 2001 to Arriva London South as DLA266 it is a DAF DB250 with Alexander body. More recently it ran from Grays garage on the 370 and then on non-TfL services in Kent but is now converted to a library and has been repainted into an olive green livery but retaining the Arriva “cow horns” and fleetname. Donated by Arriva Southend and moved to the school in April 2017 it has since been fitted out with help from the local community.

Richard Delahoy took the photo from the pavement outside the school whilst it was closed for the Easter holidays. EBN649p21

Vehicles

The recently acquired ADL E200s are numbered:

467 SN66 WKF

468 SN66 WKG

468 is based at Rochford, 467 is not yet allocated. The 2 ex Express Motors E400s are allocated to Rochford (609) and Haverhill (610). Dart 455 (EG02 NZD) is currently on loan to Galloway, joining 412 there.

In a ceremony at the Museum of Power at Langford (nr. Maldon) on 2 May, two buses were named in honour of Stephensons' senior managers who died last year. 501 was named after Lyn Watson, the former Finance Director who had been involved with the company since the 1980s, and 610 was named Chris McCormick MBE after the company's Service Delivery Manager. Chris had joined Stephensons in 2012 after a long career with Eastern National, Thamesway and First.



<<< Top picture

Very rare use of a Scania Omnidekka on the 105, Walton on the Naze to Colchester on Friday 6 April after Enviro 464 developed a gearbox fault earlier on in the morning. Taken during driver break at The Colombine Centre, Walton.

Simon Lee Morgan.



Lower picture

As mentioned in the text above, two well-known former Essex busmen were remembered by Stephensons recently.

Lyn Watson was an early member of EBEG and its predecessors. Your Editor worked with Chris McCormick for several years when he was at Thamesway and First.

Stephensons of Essex.



Top picture The "line-up" at the naming ceremony mentioned on previous page. 501 is a Scania N230 Optare Olympus H80F new on 1 November 2008 whilst 610 is a Scania N280 ADL E400 lowheight H75F new on 1 April 2014.

Stephenson's of Essex.



Lower picture There are other types of vehicle in the Stephenson fleet but this one must just be topical! 509 (YN07LHP) at Stephenson Outstation, Gorse Lane Industrial Estate Clacton on Sea 20/11/15 2007 Scania N230UD/East Lincs Olympus H72F ex London United S01.

Robert Downton.

EBN649p23

Vehicles Acquired/Transferred

550	A057 EZM	Scania N230UD	Omnicity	H47/30F	Ex Anglianbus
9016	YU02 GHA	Scania N94UB	East Lancs Myllenium	B29D	Ex Go Ahead London Trainer
9017	YU02 GHD	Scania N94UB	East Lancs Myllenium	B29D	Ex Go Ahead London Trainer

Note – previously reported 9016 PJ02 REU Volvo B7TL has joined the operational fleet as 584.

Vehicles Withdrawn/Disposal

739 has donated gearbox to 737 on its withdrawal.

Allocations

There are many engineering movements of B7TLs between Kelvedon, Clacton and

Hedingham – the allocations below focus on the Omnidikka coverage of the 63 from KN with buses supplied from CN

25/03	1512	KN to CN	23/04	1515	CN to KN
25/03	1514/18	CN to KN	23/04	1518	KN to CN
03/04	1514	KN to CN	02/05	1518	CN to KN
17/04	1515	CN to KN	04/05	1513	KN to CN
19/04	1515	KN to CN			
19/04	1513	CN to KN			

Fleet News

The two trainer Scania single deckers have come from Go Ahead London presumably to give better familiarity with the Scania Omnidikkas in the fleet. They were originally ELS6 and 5 respectively.

Ex Angliabus Scania Omnicity decker 552 A057HCD has been renumbered 1552 whilst ex 550 A057 EZM has also recently arrived at Clacton workshop.

569 W484 WGH damaged in the mini-beast from the east ice and snow on 19 March was quickly repaired and returned back to work after a couple of days of the incident, initially working in Clacton but after a while transferring back to original duties in Kelvedon..

Services

Following the news at the end of April that Clacton's First depot is to close Hedingham quickly updated its website to announce that they would be covering the withdrawn local bus services, specifically mentioning the 3, 4, 4A, 5, 5A and 6 routes. The ECC contracted route 2 will be subject to ECC finding a replacement operator. Hedingham stated "Hedingham will provide the same services at roughly the same frequencies as soon as First finishes." Another tweet stated "Proposed timetables will be posted soon and feedback is welcomed" which triggered several local and not so local responses. Hedingham have already won the evening contracted town buses in Clacton from 29 July and this seems to coincide with the planned closure of the First depot. Hedingham are looking forward "to being the major operator in the town as the summer arrives".

Other News.

ECC service 15 consultation is still being assessed according to ECC website (since October 2017).



<<< picture
Chambers 1508 (YN55 PZL) Scania
N94UD/East Lancs Omnidikka turns
from Osborne Street in to Stanwell Street
in Colchester on 1 May to reach the bus
stop in Stanwell Street. 1508 was
working 1550 Colchester Norman Way
Schools - Sudbury service 84.
Robert Appleton.

EOS London.com

(Swallow Coaches, Rainham, Essex & Vigar Travel Ltd, a subsidiary of Swallow) by Adam Kelleher.

Acquired Vehicles

Further to EBN646, LX07 BYN was first reported in service on route 87 on 9 March, with LX07 BYL first seen on 20 March and LX07 BYK on 23rd. Like LX07 BYT (see EBN647) they remain in acquired overall red.

Vehicles Not Acquired

In EBN639, Dart / Pointer KX06 LXH was reported as being acquired from Globe Holidays, Barnsley, but with a note that it may only have been on loan. It was seen on route 87 on 19 June 2017, and also in service in August, but there have been no reports of it in use since. Similarly, in EBN640, sister KX06 LXG was shown as acquired. It was seen on route 66 on 23 June 2017, and in service on 5 July, but no sightings since. It is now confirmed that both were only on loan from Globe Holidays, and the loans probably ended circa August last year.

Vehicle Out of Use

Dart / Caetano 761 (LK03 NLE) has had its destination equipment removed. It was last reported in service in January this year.

Disposals

Further to EBN642, Dart / Caetano LK53 FDN, which was acquired from Ensignbus bus fleet (number 798) in September 2017, was only acquired for spares and had been broken up by February 2018. Plaxton Primo 661 (BU08 ACV) was withdrawn from service last year (last reported in service in April 2017) and has now been sold.

With thanks to John Card, Owen Woodliffe, LOTS and Flickr.



Picture EOS LX07 BYT on the route 87 extension to Loughton which commenced on 2 April 2018. It is in Loughton Lane, Theydon Bois on 7 April 2018; I don't know when this section of road was last served by a bus service. It is still in red livery, retains its Go Ahead Blue Triangle fleetnumber ED27 and is no stranger in Debden having previously been allocated to route 167. The destination is the recently-opened Epping Forest Shopping Park, which is located in the industrial estate south of Debden station; TWH used to use a yard there as did (if I recall correctly) County Bus at one time.

Andrew Colebourne.

EBN649p25

Trustybus (Galleon Travel 2009, Roydon, Essex, bus operations) by Adam Kelleher

Acquired Vehicles

X336 NNO, Dennis Trident / Alexander ALX400, H45/24D, new to Stagecoach Selkent (TA336) 02/01

SN03 EBP, Mini Pointer Dart, B29F, new to Solent Blue Line (571) 04/03

SN03 ECA, Mini Pointer Dart, B29F, new to Solent Blue Line (576) 04/03

X336 from Golden Tours, the other two from Go Ahead South Coast, all via Ensign, April 2018.

X336 is in mainly blue livery and is partial open top (first three bays are covered). It retains dual doors and has LED blinds. Both MPDs are in overall blue livery with LED blinds (ex Bluestar / Damory fleet numbers 3302/7 respectively). EBP was first seen in service on 25 April and ECA on route 7A on 3 May.

Repaints

Recently acquired Solo SF05 NXE and MPDs NK53 UNY & HW54 BTZ have been repainted into fleet livery. NXE was first seen on routes 383/4 on 3 April (the first day of these newly acquired routes, see below), UNY was first seen on 17 April and BTZ on 1 May.

Disposal

Further to EBN635, Y239 FJN, which had not been seen in service since February 2016, had been disposed of by January 2018.

Services

Trustybus gained Hertfordshire County Council routes 383/4, between Hertford and Stevenage bus stations, from Centrebus on 3 April 2018. (This is ironic given that in August 2009 the original Trustybus bus operations were sold to Centrebus.)

SN03 YBK operated on TfL route D3 on 29 March as part of extra buses running to cover a strike on the Docklands Light Railway.

With thanks to John Card, Ross Newman, Owen Woodliffe, LOTS, Bus Lists on the Web and Flickr.



Although Solo NN02 DNU was acquired by Trustybus from Go South Coast in November last year this retains Bluestar livery and fleetnumber. It has arrived at Stanstead Airport covered in road dirt from the circuitous country lane route from Bishops Stortford.

Owen Woodliffe.

EBN649p26



Mark Lloyd with thanks to Ross Newman.

Ensignbus Dealing Stock Movements April 2018.

Vehicles in

Abellio London	BX55 XMC/XNL/XNP	Volvo B7TL's
First South West	A002 RBZ/RCU	Volvo B12M's
	YV03 UBA/UBC	Scania
	N765 PAE	Javelin
	YN53 VBT/U/V	Mercedes
	EY54 BPX	
Go-Ahead London	LX07 BYJ/BYR/BYS	E200
	BT04 BUS	Darts
	LX06 FAI/O/U/FBA	
	P056 JEU	
Go-Ahead South Coast	SN03 EBP	Darts
	SN03 ECA	
Nottingham City Transport	YN07 EYO/P/R/T/U/W-Y	Scania
RATP London	YN55 NKR/U/NLG/M	Scania
	SN53 EUJ/L/M/O/P	Tridents
	LG02 FAI/FBN	
RATP Yellow Buses	Y411/413 CFX	Volvo B7TL's
	HU02 HFA/HFE/HFD	
	SN55 DVM	Dart
Stagecoach SE	FJ08 KOE	Scania

Vehicles Out

A1 Minibus and Coach Services, Fife	BX55 XMA	Volvo B7TL
Aintree Coaches	LX03 OSG/OSR	Tridents
Als Coaches, Birkenhead	BX55 XMD/XMM	Volvo B7TL's
Avondale Coaches, Glasgow	LX06 FAI	Dart
Bear Buses, Feltham, Middx	BT04 BUS	Dart
Coastal Liner, Wolverhampton	YV03 UBC	Scania
	YN53 VBV	Merc 814
Cymru Coaches, Swansea	SV55 FJO	Volvo B7R
Galleon Travel , Roydon, Essex	SN03 EBP/ECA	Darts
	X336 NNO	Trident
Grayscroft Coaches, Mablethorpe, Lincs	YN54 AUJ	Scania
Hulleys, Baslow	SN55 HTD	Dart

Landmark Coach Hire , Arlesey, Beds	LX03 BXL/BXN	Tridents
London City Tours	LX60 DXC/DXH	Volvo B9TL's
Meritrule , Kingswood , Surrey	FJ08 KOE	Scania
Mullaneys, Watford	LX06 FAO	Dart
Nu-Venture, Maidstone	P056 JEU	Dart
RATP Yellow Buses	YX12 ARZ/AXU	E200's
Red Kite, Tilsworth, Beds	Y417 CFX	Volvo B7TL
Red RM, Brentford	PJ02 RDZ	Volvo B7TL
Renown Coaches, Bexhill	YV03 RBX	Scania's
	YN53 RYH	
	YN53 RYM/R	
South Wales Transport , Swansea	SN55 DVK/HTF	Darts
YMS Travel, Canterbury.	SN53 EUL	Volvo B7TL
		Trident

Other Movements

E200
LJ56 VST
Select Bus and Coach, Skewen.

Volvo B7TL
LX05 FBZ
Symphony Chauffeurs, Heathrow.

The following have all gone to Shelton Motors, Ramsey, for scrap :
B7TL's
LX03 EXU/Y163 NLK

Tridents
SN53 EUO/EUP/EUM/LG02 FAI/FBY

Dart
AE56 OUJ

E200
LX07 BYR

E400
LX06 EZM

Scania's
YN03 UWT/UWR.



Twin-steer 6-wheelers.

Richard Delahoy.

Ask a bus enthusiast about twin-steer six-wheel buses and coaches and they'll probably think first of the 1960's Bedford VAL – or being a true Essex bus enthusiast, of the six Leyland Gnus operated by the City Coach Company. The thoughtful might also recall that City had a seventh twin-steer bus, G7, a post-war Leyland Tiger which ran with twin front axles until the law on legal length changed, upon which the second axle was removed. Older enthusiasts might also recall the Leyland trolleybus DTD 649 which became the solitary member of LT's X7 class, and the sisters of the original City Gnu, a pair run by Walter Alexander in Scotland, or the subsequent solitary Leyland Panda (underfloor-engined, unlike the front-engined Gnus).

Anyway, back to Essex and the City Gnus. It's sometimes overlooked that the original one, G1 (FGC 593) had set back front axles as the TEP1 model (VAL style) whereas G2-6 had their axles right at the front as the TEC2 model, although all had centre entrances. G1 must have looked amazingly stylish and modern when new in 1938, contrasting with conventional half cabs. Our picture [below] is from the **Alan Cross collection (photo by S L Poole)** and is undated and possibly early post-war and shows the handsome lines of the 40-seater. G1 was withdrawn by City by May 1948 but G2-6 survived until 1956 with Westcliff MS and then ENOC.



You might have thought the so-called "Chinese six" layout had died out with the Bedford VAL, but there is a modern connection. Fast forward to early in 2018 and **Bill Hiron**, MD of Stephenson's of Essex, came across the amazing bus seen [below] whilst on holiday in Sydney, Australia. It is one of five CDI models built by Bustech, part of the Transit Australia Group. The 12.5m long buses with Cummins engines are operated by Sydney's private bus company Hillsbus on peak journeys on their M61 route. Thanks to Bill for sharing this interesting pic with us. If City had remained independent, might we have seen something like this on the Southend-Wood Green service?



Group Tour to Reading, Saturday 28 April 2018.

An early start (for a pensioner) saw me walking to Chelmsford bus station for a look round before heading "round the corner" to Victoria Road to catch the Panther coach. Colin Sigston was doing the same, we met and decided there was no rush as the coach would not have travelled from Colchester in the allotted half hour. As we turned the corner we saw Wayne Bell looking for us with Panther Volvo B10M/Plaxton coach, Y5 TRU behind him. Panther by name, Panther by nature!

After picking up at Shenfield and Brentwood, we were soon on the M25 and M4 heading for Reading. Almost perfect navigation took us to the Reading Buses depot where we were met by Martijn Gilbert, the company's dynamic CEO. Martijn gave us a tour of the offices, the garage and the yards, starting in the high-tech control-room. Directly linked to the town CCTV systems, this hub would be the envy of many operators. Controllers had visual displays of all buses operating, could tell at a glance which were running late (and presumably early as well) or bunching and could communicate directly with each driver (hands free, of course) to adjust services where necessary. Drivers names are displayed and they were contacted using their first names. Notably, Martijn used first names as he spoke to every single employee he met.

All employees, including drivers have access to the offices. There were none of the security measures I have experienced in some depots; if a driver feels the need to talk to a colleague "upstairs", she or he can do so. I was particularly impressed by the signing-on area. It was well supplied with timetable and other documents for drivers to put on their vehicles and all of the many awards the company had won were on display there rather than being kept somewhere safe in a senior person's office.

When he introduced himself, Martijn had said there would be a surprise in the garage and we were asked to respect a company embargo. Something was to be "launched" to the media and public the following morning. That something turned out to be a Green Line double decker to be used on the Windsor- London service recently given up by First. The vehicle had been given a dramatic Best Impressions livery, basically royal purple with huge vinyls of Prince Harry and his soon wife to be Meghan. What a livery, it will be a head-turner. If only Martijn could persuade the royal couple to take a trip on it, peoples attitude to bus travel would be transformed! My own pictures of this bus were not suitable for publication but a superb one by Richard Delahoy was shown on the EBEG facebook page.

The depot had two yards and many colours! Reading Buses has adopted colour branding for most of its routes. Example are purple 17 to Tilehurst and the claret 21 to Lower Early. Just enough buses are given each livery to match PVR. Spares are painted in less dramatic colours and can be used anywhere appropriate. The depot also houses and maintains the First Air Coach fleet, drivers sign on and off here but pay into a First office near the town centre terminus.

Diesel fuel is being eliminated. Most buses operate using cow gas (methane) and futuristic looking giant gas containers have been installed next to the railway line.

This dynamic company has a significant advantage in that there is only one shareholder, the Borough Council, and all profits are expected to be ploughed back into the business to improve services, to help reduce both the severe traffic congestion and air pollution which blight the town. The Council is very hands off – by law and by inclination. Another advantage is that although there is an active Company Chairman, the CEO is the top manager who does not have to take account of a host of HQ experts.

We then went to Reading town centre and parked close to the fantastic new railway station from where buses could be found on three corners and there were plenty of opportunities for spotting and for refreshments. We had the opportunity to watch the frequent football special service which was very well patronised and used a rainbow of buses spare from normal routes.

After an hour, we were driven to Slough and dropped off at Brunel Way, between the bus and railway stations. Slough services are also very colourful with First adopting colour coded services as well, a number of services operated by a subsidiary of Reading Buses, largely replacing services dropped by First as part of a recent retrenchment and frequent red London buses on route 81 operated by London United from Hounslow. The highlight seemed to be Reading's replacement Green Line service to London, the mass movement of photographers between stops must have caused considerable amusement amongst Slough residents.

All in all a very good day; Wayne's only mistake was to forget to order excellent weather! The day was very cold and overcast but, to be fair, the rain held off until we were heading back home on Y5 TRU. It was awful but had cleared up by the time we got back to Chelmsford.

My own photographs were not very good but I have used a few for the outer rear cover as I have received no others from members.

Many thanks to Wayne for organising the trip, to Richard for giving him support and our excellent driver whose name I forgot to note down!

EBN649p29

Other Operators.

Roger A. Smith.

With thanks to the PSV Circle.

APT Coaches, Rayleigh

T545 EUB, a Plaxton C48FT bodied Volvo B10M is now with Kinsley & Lemons, Shirecliffe, South Yorkshire.

Bone (Tendring Travel), Thorpe-le-Soken

Former Turners of Essex Setra 315GT-HD C53FT, reg. LSU 788 (ex W2 SET) is now here.

Kings Coaches, Stanway

Thanks are due to Peter Mobbs for advising that on 20 April, Kings took delivery of its latest coach, KC65 ABC, an Irizar i6, 13.22m, C53FT, with DAF engine - MX13 - 462bhp. Vin no. VS916AD00H1016101. The registration mark reflects the number of years that Kings Coaches have been in business. This vehicle was supplied by Iriza UK Ltd, Worksop and replaces MAN/Van Hool Astron, KC11ABC. an Iris i6, length 13.22m, C53FT, reg. EC53 ABC, Vin no. VS916AD 00. This stunning vehicle is illustrated on the front cover of this EBN.

Kirby's Coaches, Rayleigh

Recently arrived here is BX14 ONP, a Mercedes Benz Tourismo C49FT, previously with Weardale, Stanhope, Durham.

Lodge, High Easter

Van Hool C53F bodied VDL, reg. Y107 JFK arrived here in January, formerly with Cityfleet, London.

Chris Lodge and Andrew Mead kindly advise that BU18 YUB Mercedes-Benz Tourismo was new to Lodge, High Easter on 27 April and entered service 3 May. This will now NOT be re-registered to AL18 DGE as planned.

NIBS, Wickford

T40 SMV, a Dennis Trident with East Lancs H73F body has gone from here.

SBC Engineering, Leigh-on-Sea

Iriza C53F bodied Scania E3601B4, reg. GL64 LON is here from Guideline, Chelsfield, Greater London.

Simmonds & Griffin, Abridge

Plaxton C49FT bodied Volvo B10M, reg. K20 AMB has gone from here.



Stagecoach Cambus has withdrawn the last of its Alexander ALX300 bodied MAN18.220s. They were once frequent visitors to the north-west corner of Essex - on route 7. Pink Breast Cancer Research liveried 22060 was seen at Saffron Walden in April 2010. Some older readers may remember when Cambus's predecessor, Eastern Counties, out-stationed a bus at Audley End railway station.

John Podgorski.

EBN649p30

Letters

Martin Weyell from the Metropolis

Thanks for another great mag.

Re pg 4/5 - EHJ 746 did have a Beale body - EHJ 300 had a Duple body. CJN 977 had a Heaver body -chassis was new as a military lorry.

Terry Challis from Cleveleys

Thank you for EBN648 and for Brian Ashley's photos of West Leigh Coaches which are very interesting.

However, surely the lower photo on page 4 is of the Duple 'Vista' bodied Bedford OB which was usually driven by 'Danny'. I accept that the Beale body on the Austin looks like a Duple 'Vista' but even as a teenage enthusiast in the 1950s I could tell the difference!

With regard to the most spectacular bus route, even as an 'Essex Man', I must nominate the section of the Stagecoach 'Ribble' route 555 between Windermere and Keswick!

West Leigh Coaches

West Leigh and Spectacular Bus Routes



Robin Jenkinson from Diss

Westcliff Regents

On EBN648p4, Brian Ashley mentions the Westcliff Regents that were rebuilt by Beales having distinctive cabs. Four of these lasted long enough to receive Eastern National fleet numbers. One of these, ENOC1168, JN 4744 is pictured in Maldon disposal yard in 1954 and clearly shows the ill-fitting rebuilt cab.

Incidentally, I seem to recall seeing EHJ 746 running for Isleworth Coaches, probably in the early '60s.

Sue Burden from Braintree

VR in ditch 1986 and KOO 792V

Reading about the incident where the Hedingham bus driven by John Podgorski went into the ditch reminds me of an incident in January 1986 when an Eastern National VR had a similar mishap (I believe 3041, PWC 516M from Silver End). It was carrying secondary school children from Notley to Witham when it slipped on black ice, went onto its left side into a ditch and came to rest leaning against foliage. There were a few minor injuries, but luckily nobody was badly hurt. One child had felt afraid that the bus would roll over and over; maybe it was because of a spate of nasty coach crashes in the early 80s where this had happened. The driver was a Mr. Brian Waller. A few days later I was very pleased to note NPU 980M on my local route, the 311, as I thought that it was the bus that had fallen in the ditch, but it wasn't! continues below.

Continued from inset/

I admire the way John Podgorski handled the more recent incident.

Driving near Cambridge on 23 April, Graham wondered if he saw a bus behind The Missing Sock restaurant near Stow Cum Quy, or if he was seeing things. Looking online I found that VR KOO 792V is here. It has apparently been here since 2009, according to Rob Sly's VR website, and has lounge seating on both decks. Upstairs is a karaoke bar.



Caradoc of Church Stretton, Shropshire Neoplan Tourliner C16 GWG was an unusual participant on the GA Ingatestone-Newbury Park RRP over Easter, and was seen at Ingatestone on 30/3/18.

Also seen were sister C13 GWG and Mb Turismo C14 GWG. All were on hire to BM Coaches of Hayes and looked to be using BM drivers.

John Podgorski.

Book Review.

Roger A. Smith.

Bristol Lodekkas by Stephen Dowle, Amberley Publishing.

The author worked as both a conductor and driver for the Bristol Omnibus Company in the 1970s and seems to have spent all his spare time travelling the length and breadth of the country photographing Lodekkas, for which he appears to have an obsessive interest.

The result is an excellent publication containing a vast array of photos of all things Lodekka, including many Eastern National examples and former Eastern National vehicles in Scotland.

This book is highly recommended and is available for £14.99 plus p&p from MDS booksales, phone 01457 861508 or visit their website www.mdsbooks.co.uk. Postal address MDS Book Sales, FREEPOST SK2162, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 8YF. Postage is 10% of order value (minimum £2.00).

Target Dates for EBN650 (June 2018).

By	Saturday	2 June 2018
By	Saturday	9 June 2018
By	Monday	18 June 2018

Reports to Sub-Editors.
Sub-Editor drafts to Editor.
Dispatch by Printers.

EBN649p32

South East Bus Rally Detling,



top picture left side. Silver Star 1962 Leyland Atlantean PDR1 Weymann body was with Super of Upminster. **Gary Sharpe.**



middle left side. G29 TGW, Dennis Dart/Carlyle former London Buses DT29 ex-Roundabout, Harrier & London United was with Phoenix (no. 5007) for 8 months in 2002. **Dave Arnold.**



left lower Plaxton Prestige T916 KKM was with Arriva Southend for 7 years before going into preservation. **Gary Sharpe.**

Saturday 7 April 2018



top picture right side Former Thamesway 909 Dennis Dart Plaxton Pointer new in 8/1992. **Gary Sharpe.**



middle left side HCD 347E, Southdown "Queen Mary" Leyland Titan PD3 new as Southdown 347, was once with Bender School of Motoring at Laindon. **Dave Arnold.**



lower picture right side Here's another with Essex connections. VKE 566S was East Midland 515 for a time and was used on the Frontrunner Services in the Brentwood area in 1988/9. **Dave Arnold.**

EBN649inner rear cover



Group Tour to Reading – 28 April

Top picture

First Berkshire 44560

Slough based ADL Enviro 200 at
Brunel Way, Slough, between Slough
Rail and Bus Stations.

Not quite our Burnham!

Maurice Austin.



Middle picture

First Berkshire Rail Air

Based and maintained at Reading
Buses depot

This could have been 20611 (LK07
CDE, 20612 (LK07 CDF0) or 20613
(LK07 CDN), Volvo B12B Plaxton
Pointer, all of which work from
Reading

Maurice Austin.



Lower picture

Our steed for the day!

Panther Y5 TRU

Volvo B10M/Plaxton

Tucked between

A couple of Reading Buses

In the Reading yard.

Maurice Austin.

www.essexbus.org.uk

org.uk



fb.me/essexbus