

ESSEX BUS NEWS

The Monthly Magazine Of The Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

May 2001

Issue 445

Your Ticket For All The Latest Bus
News In Essex Every Month



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Essex Bus News

We welcome your comments, suggestions and contributions. Please enclose an s.a.e. if you would like a reply. Our contact addresses are listed on the front cover.

Membership and Subscription Information

A one-year membership includes 12 consecutive issues of Essex Bus News Magazine and runs from either January or July. Current rates are £13.50 First class £12.50 Second class postage. Membership applications and any enquiries about your membership should be addressed to Derek Stebbing.

Timetable Subscription Service

Members of the scheme receive the Essex county council timetable books and monthly updates plus copies of Thurrock councils timetable book. Please contact Derek Stebbing for information on joining the service.

Photo Sales

A very large selection of photos is available for you to purchase and we have photos of most operators and vehicles in Essex both past and present. Please write to Peter Snell if you have a particular interest.

Members Adverts and Appeals

As a free service we will publish members for sales, wants and appeals for information. Publication is subject to space and restricted to bus and transport related items. Please send your advert to the Managing Editor.

Members responding to adverts should deal direct with the advertiser, as the group is not involved with any of them.

Your Reports and Observations

We aim to provide comprehensive coverage of bus services in Essex and members news reports and observations are very welcome. You can send them direct to the relevant Sub-Editor or e-mail them to essexbusnews@hotmail.com

We are also interested in publishing original articles and photos concerning Essex operators, routes and vehicles past and present.

Any views expressed in articles are those of the articles author alone and they do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the magazine editor or Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group.

Contributions and Closing Dates

Thank you to the following for their help this issue – Essex Buses ,Arriva Shires&Essex, Arriva Southend.Heddingham Omnibuses, Essex County Council ,LOTS,PSV Cirlce, Richard Dellahoy , Colin Sigston ,John Rugg , Jon Cush ,Essex Bus 'Y'Group, Dave Arnold , Brentwood Gazette,J,Salmon,G.Toon,R.Whiteley,J,Clayton,T. Randall

Contributions for the next issue of Essex Bus News to Sub-editors by 4TH June and to the Managing editor by 7TH June.

The June magazine is due for posting on Tuesday 19th June.

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Welcome Aboard ! What's Inside This Month

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Extra Operator For Leicester Trip

Our day trip to Leicester on Saturday 16th June is now even better value as we've added another operator visit to our exciting Day out.

We'll be visiting Whippets Buses , Kinch Bus ,Grantham Bus Station ,Leicester City Centre and now we'll also be stopping off at Confiderice Coaches Depot with their interesting variety of vehicles including Atlanteans and a Routemaster.

There'll be plenty of photographic opportunities and it's going to be a fantastic day out .

Seats on the coach are going quickly ,so if you have'nt booked – Do It Now!

See the Booking form in last month's mag or email essexbusnews@hotmail.com and we'll get one off to you .

Group Meetings

The Rochford group meetings have been very well attended so far this year and we've been fortunate to have some very interesting guests and slide shows.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 11th September and we welcome suggestions for future guest speakers .

Don't forget to visit our sales stall at Southend on 3rd and North Weald on the 24th June
More about this summers rallies on Page 4 .

Front Cover Photo Leyland Lynx F237 CNY Chris Stewart's photo shows this former Cardiff Bus at Brentwood Rail station on 11th April on Kingstons of Essex service 511 which runs between Loughton & Bluewater. Despite much publicity , this service has so far failed to live upto it's expectations.

SUMMER BUS EVENTS

Summers here and there's plenty of Rallies and Days out planned for the next few months including our trip to Leicester . Here's a quick look at some of this Summers major Bus and Coach events in and around Essex.

Monday 28th May Cobham RF50 Running Day - Celebrating a half century of Londons famous RF single Decker . A network of services will be running with about 50 RF's expected to attend . Call Cobham bus museum for more information 01932 868665 (Weekends only)

Sunday 3rd June Hertford & Ware Classic Bus running Day – With a theme of country area RF routes, the day promises road runs featuring much loved RT,RF & GS classes . Contact Alan Charman ,Country Bus rallies 19 Hampton Way East Grinstead RH19 4SG e-mail acharma1@irf.com

Sunday 3rd June 27th Annual Southend Bus & Historic Transport Show at Southchurch Park East Lifstan Way Southend . – Time once again for the parade of buses ,Coaches and Classic Cars and hopefully some good weather . Plenty of sales stands including one from Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group selling Photos,books and much more .

Saturday 16th June Day trip to Leicester area operators – See page 3 for the latest addition to the groups packed day out. If you haven't booked your seat it's still not too late !

Saturday 23rd June Metroline Holloway Garage Open Day – Held in association with RML 903 Preservation society . Details from Stephen Bennett ,Garage Manager 020 7530 7400

Sunday 24th June North Weald Rally – This years show commemorates 30 years of the London DMS plus 100's of buses from london and the south east and plenty of sales stalls including an Essex Bus Enthusiasts sales stall. Easy to get to with buses running from London and a frequent shuttle from Epping Underground Station . Contact NLTS 132 Moorfield ,Harlow CM18 7QQ

We'll look at events later in the summer in another issue but don't forget that if you're looking for something to do on Sundays, the **Castle Point Transport Museum** will be open from 10 until 5 Every Sunday throughout the Summer . Housed at the historic former Canvey & District Bus Depot in Point Road ,Canvey Island , the collection boasts around 30 vehicles and is home to the Eastern National Preservation Group. Admission is free but donations are welcome . First Thamesway Route 21 runs hourly on Sundays and Stops nearby.

Buses In The News

The Latest from the Bus World

First Contracts out Property Management

Trade magazine 'Estates Gazette' has revealed that Property company Chesterton is close to securing a multi-million pound facilities management contract with First Group which controls over 20 bus operators across the country including major Essex operators Eastern National and Thamesway .

First group has a lucrative property portfolio of over five million square foot and Chesterton will be charged with managing all aspects of facilities management, as well as advising First Group on planning, acquisition, disposal and development issues.

First group currently has over 350 depots and stations with a typical site size of 4ha (10 acres) and Chesterton has been set a target of 20% cost reductions within the first three years of the contract.

Brian Thompson, managing director of Chestertons fm division, Property Partnering, said: "We are very excited and look forward to announcing a number of development and investment opportunities in the coming months."

Sources indicate that Chestertons's fee is likely to exceed the one million one-off fee and annual 5% commission it generates from a similar contract to manage computer giant ICL's portfolio.

First Group's property director Derek Lawson said: "Chesterton's network, which mirrors ours, was an attractive element."

Southend Bus Users Have Their say

The Southend Area Bus User Group (SABUG) was launched at a lively public meeting in Southend last month .

- The aim of the group is to represent all bus passengers in the Southend, Rochford and Castle Point districts & also to represent users of the Green Line coach services from south Essex to London.
- A committee has now been elected and will meet regularly with both Arriva and Thamesway local managers to improve services and also lobby the Borough and County councils to provide more funding for services that are not commercially viable .

SABUG is affiliated to the National Federation of Bus Users and a regular newsletter will be produced. New members are welcome and Membership costs £2 per year, or £5 for 3 years. Please make a cheque payable to "SABUG" & send to the Treasurer, 40 Orchard Grove, Leigh on Sea, SS9 5TR.

First Eastern National

Timetable Changes

Diamond Service From 30th April the 0550 Chelmsford to Southend runs 5 minutes earlier throughout with it's return at 07:05 also running 5 minutes earlier departing at 07:00.

- 34/A** Extended to Panners Farm and revised to serve Marks Farm Tesco
- 73** Some journeys renumbered 73A and diverted via Woodman Road from 23.4.01.
- 605** Colchester to Walton (Sundays) Reintroduced from 27.5.01 to 30.9.01
- 606** Colchester to Walton (Sundays) Reintroduced from 27.5.01 to 30.9.01
- 631** Burnham to Maldon (Sundays) Reintroduced from 27.5.01 to 30.9.01
- 632** Braintree to Maldon (Sundays) Reintroduced from 27.5.01 to 30.9.01
- 633** Braintree to Saffron Walden (Sundays) Reintroduced from 27.5.01 to 30.9.01

A press release on the First Group site indicates that a Metro system of services as operated in Leicester and Southampton are to be introduced in Chelmsford. This includes route branding, improved services etc. No details are as yet available.

Unusual Workings

- 6.4.01.** CF2824 on service 42 (route branded for 33 and normally Dart SLF operated)
- 23.4.01** CF1520 on service 352 (route branded for service 31/X)
- 25.4.01** CF2907 on service 42 (normally Dart SLF)
- 27.4.01** CF1519 on service 352 (route branded for service 31/X)
- 3.5.01** CF2911 on service 42 (normally Dart SLF)

Chelmsford town services 41,45,51 and 56C, have been operated by Dennis Darts on Sundays and Bank Holidays since 1.4.01.

Repaints

March 2001 621 623 624 625 626

All of the above are in 'Barbie 2' livery.

Not a repaint, but 4013 has a rear Contravision advert for Essex FM.

Allocation Changes

4/01 360 is at Thamesways Hadleigh depot as a paint spare.

Initial Disposal

3220 (WTH 949T) Supreme Engineering, ???, (for scrap), 4/01

New Route For 73

The 73A via Woodman Road duly started on 23.4.01 with 2632 and 2635 on the first two journeys (curiously both ways at Woodman Road 09.20).

The Bishop's Hall Estate-bound journey turns into Woodman Road, goes left into Headley Chase and right into South Drive consequently going down the same short bit of road twice. At about 09.20 there are 3 buses (2 different vehicles) down the short bit of Headley Chase between Woodman Road and South Drive.

RAIL REPLACEMENT

On Sunday 14th April (Easter Sunday) between Pitsea and Shoeburyness were the following:-

Town & Country - Metrobuses and the DAF coach, plus Metrorider on standby (supervisor shuttle bus)

Stephensons - Olympians (bus and coach versions), Tiger coach, B10M coach, Lynx

Nelsons - VR

Kingstons - Titan

and various coach operators, including CM Enterprises (Romford), Chambers of Bures, Brandons of Blackmore End, Grahams of Kelvedon and K B Travel

Sundays 6 and 13 May

Major engineering work at Colchester prevented trains running into Colchester from all directions.

Buses replaced trains between:

Witham and Ipswich.

Witham and Colchester Town.

Witham and Harwich Town.

A shuttle bus also operated between Manningtree and Ipswich.

ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP SALES STAND

Photos – Timetables –Books-

**Come and see us at Southend Bus Rally on Sunday 3rd June
& North Weald Rally on Sunday 24th June**

EMAIL YOUR BUS NEWS TO essexbusnews@hotmail.com

First Thamesway

FLEET CHANGES

Disposals

April 2001 **803** and **851** both to Hardwick, Carlton for scrap
Reports elsewhere of 803 running for First Mainline (as fleet no 175) must be considered erroneous as 803 left Basildon minus engine and many body parts.

Allocation Changes

(period ending 29 April 2001)

360 on loan from First Eastern National to HH as paint spare

Vehicle Requirements - Unchanged

This Months News

Barbie Repaints

Repaints into 'Barbie 2' livery have so far covered (in order) 705, 706, 702, 710 and 704. None has yet been seen with full vinyls and fleetnames. Some of the former Essex Buses Mercedes minibuses with First Eastern Counties have also started to appear in this livery. Paint spare minibus 313 has had its destination box painted over, while 360 is notable for still having an orange light on its.

Bus Adverts

Olympian 4030 (following local press coverage of appalling upper deck vandalism whilst on the Hedley Walter school contract) has also gained an Essex FM 'Contravision' rear advert in two shades of blue. The contract runs until 31.10.01

Other 'Colour Bus Contracts & expiry dates include – BN611 Victoria Coach Station – 31.03.02 and RD2662 BT 01.01.02

Bus Ranger Changes

East Anglian BusRanger ticket prices have been increased from 8 April, to:

Adults £6 (previously £5.50), Children £4 (£3.75), Families £12 (£11).

Tickets are no longer available from agents in the First Eastern National/Thamesway areas, and stocks of the printed card version were seen being collected in on 27 April. BusRangers must now be bought on the bus, but confusingly this is thought not apply to the First Eastern Counties area.

Ensign Olympian Returns

The former First PMT Olympian, in fact EEH109Y and not as given in EBN444, was on loan from Ensign covering repairs to Phoenix 5001 but has now been returned.

VEHICLE WORKINGS

Rail replacements

Starting Sunday 22 April, First have provided buses to cover Shenfield-Wickford rail services during planned engineering works. Vehicles and drivers have come from a variety of depots, with a First Thamesway Romford depot supervisor in charge. The following were noted:

22.4.01	CF3084, BN3109, BE3219, CF4008, CF4010, CF4024, BN5005 and 1 Lynx
29.4.01	CF3077, HH4003, HH4005, CF4025
6.5.01	CF3112, BE3219, CF4008, CF4013

Unusual sightings

12.4.01	HH4003 and HH4005 both on 3B
17.4.01	BN1433 and BN4026 on 100
20.4.01	HH808 on Canvey Clipper, HH4005 on 15
25.4.01	BN1433 on 8A
1.5.01	BN711 on 723, BN1433 on 721
3.5.01	BN711 on 721
30.4.01	BN925 (in Super 8 livery) on Service 100

During the Easter School holidays, double-deckers from HH were used extensively on routes which normally see Darts/Lynx, while Mercedes minibuses have become commonplace covering 'big bus' work. BN now appears to have a duty covering service 2 Basildon-Southend on Sundays/Bank Holidays, 1433 being noted on Mon 7.5.01. Meanwhile Marshall bodied Dart 855 has seen use on the 751 and 752 on numerous occasions, shortage of double-deckers at BN means that a Lynx often deputises on school service 860/Hutton local 77 and Volvo 35 has made further occasional appearances on the early morning 77.

SERVICE CHANGES

Essex County Council are reported to be reconsidering the position regarding the abandoned Village Link services 19-22 following sustained pressure from residents and councillors particularly in the Kelvedon Hatch area.

80 Years Chelmsford to Brentwood – 6 Page Special from Page 18 & 2 pages of Nostalgic Photos on Pages 11 & 12

Arriva Southend

This Months News

- **Mega Rear Advert**

Volvo 5416 (N706 NPK)

Rear End Advert for Essex FM Radio

- **Dotty Dominators** The Dot Matrix blinds on the Dennis Dominators have yet to show 19/19a subsequently when operating these routes still appear as 62/62a.

The proposed Rest/Signing on point in the town centre may be "put on ice" as a proposed bus station may be built on the Tylers Ave. car park, this is of course where the old City Coach Company was situated. This is still in it's planning stages and is unlikely to come to fruition for at least a few years.

Subsequent Disposals

5342 (MRJ242W)

A.C. Williams

Ancaster Lincs via Ensign 4/2001

5347 (MRJ247W)

A.C. Williams

Ancaster Lincs via Ensign 4/2001

390 (JTD390P)

Arriva Cymru

sold for scrap /2000

395 (JTD395P)

Arriva Cymru

sold via Lister (dealer) to ? Devon 2/01.

392 (JTD392P)

To Ensign for continued preservation.

4322 (F572UPB)

Holmeswood Co Holmeswood 1/01 ex Bostock Congleton.

4323 (F523UVW)

Holmeswood Co Holmeswood 1/01 ex Bostock Congleton

405 (E405EHK)

Heath Hinkley ex Heath Barwell.

Arriva East Herts & Essex

Vehicles in

From Arriva the Shires 4/01&5/01

2059 H406 FGS

MB 811D 670303-2P-016611

RB 18298 B31F 12/90

2230 M290 AJC

Iveco 59-12 2112244

MI C31-070 B27F 10/94

3092 H923 LOX

Ds Dt 9.8SDL3004/307

Ce C27.006 B40F 2/91

2130 N910 ETM

MB 709D 669003-2N-035506

Pn 957.6MHV4257 B27F 9/95

Vehicles out

2348 (M728 UTW): Arrivs the Shires 2348 4/01

3308 (NIW 6508 ex GUA 821N): Arriva Fox County 4/01

4336 (J926 CYL): Arriva Colchester 4336 4/01

5262 (KYV 782X): Hardwick, Carlton (dealer) 4/01, for scrap

Allocation Changes 4/01: 2059. GY 2230. HA 2348 To the Shires 3092. GY 4336 To Colchester 5/01: 2130 GY 2361 HA

Grays Tfl Contracts Retained

The operator has been successful in retaining the Tfl contracts for services 256 & 346. New vehicles are required and the options include further Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton or DAF SB120/Wright Cadet.

Allocations May 2001

Grays (GY) Iveco 59-12: 2334
 MB 709D: 2130/99/200/24/64
 MB 811D 2059
 Dennis Dart: 3092, 3349/50/54/73-75, 3404-14
 Dennis Dart SLF: 3387-90, 3400-3/21/23-29/31
 Leyland Olympian: 5072/80, 5373/84-87

Note: The Olympians are for service 324; Dart SLF for 370/73/77; Dart for 256, 345/48.

Harlow (HA) Iveco 59-12: 2091-94/96-2100, 2230/31, 2333/36-41/45/49-58/61
 MB O810D: 2186-88
 Dennis Dart: 3352/3/56-64/66-69/71/72
 Dennis Dart SLF: 3230/31
 Dennis Dart MPD: 3461-69/71-79/81
 Dennis Lance: 3376-78
 DAF SB220: 3328/29
 DAF DE02GSSB220: 3446-49
 Volvo B10 BLE: 3250-57
 Leyland Olympian: 5375/76/78/79

Note: The Dart MPD are for services W13/14, 397 (worked from Debden outstation);

Dart SLF for 10, Volvo B6 BLE for 4, 500 & 502; Dennis Lance for 500 & 502; Darts 3356-9 for the 510; DAF DE02GSSB220 for the 724.

Debden outstation also requires vehicles for services 250, 517 & 549

Ware (WE) MB O810D: 2370-82
 Dennis Dart: 3355/65/85
 Dennis Dart SLF: 3386, 3416-18/35/39/40
 DAF DE02GSSB220: 3441-45
 MCW Metrobus: 5250-53/55/57/60/63/69, 5348/63/67/70

Note: The Metrobuses are for service 310; Dart SLF for 331 & 395; DAF for 724. MB O810D are for Cheshunt, Ware & Hertford local services and the 363

Withdrawn & Awaiting Disposal

Iveco 59-12 2090, 2236
 MB 709D 2072
 National Greenway 3310



Bristol L5G / ECW B31R 3762 GPU 414 Seen at Chelmsford Bus Station probably when virtually new in 1938 with a sideboard reading 'London Ilford Romford Brentwood Chelmsford.' This Bus survived in service until 1959.
(A.G. Vowles Bristol Vintage Bus Group)



AEC Regal 3078 TM 8794 New in 1931 but had been rebodied by Beadle when seen here on 10th April 1949 leaving a joint LT, Green Line & EN Bus stop, possibly in the Romford area. (A.B. Cross)



Tomlin's Grove, Bow was the terminus for the 30 for 34 years but the 31' long FLF6LX's only appeared there for 2 months at the end of 1967. From January 1968 the 30 became the 351 to Wood Green. **CF2888 WNO 576F** waits at Bow on the Sunday only extension to Broomfield Hospital. (EBEG Collection)



80 years to the day since National started running from Chelmsford – Ingatstone – Brentwood, our Photo Tribute ends with former North Western Leyland Olympian/ECW 4024 **B960 WRN** at Ingatstone Market Place on 23rd March 2001 Don't forget to read our 6 page article from Page 18 (Chris Stewart)

Hedingham Omnibuses

Service Changes

14 (Tiptree to Chelmsford) Tuesday service withdrawn from 22.5.01.

331/2 Operation on Monday to Friday passed to London Transit from 14.5.01.

Changes to services around Tollesbury are expected from 4th June . Full Details next Month.

Into The Fleet

L320 TIL 6881 (ex L103EPA) Volvo B6/Northern Counties B40F is in 5.01 ex Tillingbourne 103

Out of The Fleet

L256 SUB791W went to Slackers, Gt. Blakenham, Suffolk for scrap 12.4.01

Summer Clearout

It is reported that a number of vehicles will leave the fleet at the end of the school summer term ,possibly including further inroads to the large fleet of VR's

Other Essex Operators

ARRIVA COLCHESTER From 20th May Ser 2 Every 15 mins High Woods to High Street Ser 2A Every 30 mins High Woods to North Station (minibus) Ser 2B Withdrawn Ser 8A Extended from General Hospital to High Woods. More Arriva Colchester News next month.

ARRIVA LONDON A revised timetable has been introduced on service 167 (Ilford to Debden) from 28.4.01.

CLINTONA BRENTWOOD Have M988CYS a bus-bodied Mercedes (with blind display box)

KINGSTONS THUNDERSLEY The ex Cardiff Lynx ,pictured on the front cover is registered F237 CNY. Chassis no LX1380 LX2R11C15Z4R .DP47F New in 03/89.

LONDON TRANSIT more fleet additions include Dart SLF/UVG R104 GNW, SLF/Caetano V682 FPO and SLF/Wright Cadet Y283 HUA, all in white, though our correspondent has seen some buses with blue LT fleetnames.

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

New Prices for Essex Sunday Saver & Sunday Rover Tickets

The cost of both Sunday Saver and Sunday Rover tickets will be changed from Sunday 27 May.

SundaySaver: Adult £4.50, Senior Citizen £2.25, Child £2.50,Family £9.00

Sunday Rover: Adult £6.00, Senior Citizen £3.00, Child £4.00,Family £12.00

Eastern National and Thamesway London Bus Contracts

-A Look At the Routes and Vehicles Used -

Part 4 - 1993-1994

1993 Return Of The 608's

This year was rather quieter compared with a very busy 1992, not that everything stayed the same of course as there were plenty of surprises that would have a marked affect on the companies future in the capital.

It had been intended to extend Route 362 from Barkingside to Ilford from 20th March transversing residential roads that did not previously have a bus service.

Three New Mercedes 709D with Plaxton bodies were ordered to cover the increased vehicle requirement. Everything was ready for the new service including the printing of new timetable leaflets but at the last minute Redbridge council was unable to remove a 7' width barrier in Longwood Gardens. This precluded the use of full width buses and a solution had to be found.

The answer came with the return of the small Mercedes 608 Minibuses previously used on the 193 and on local town services in Brentwood. Although these were now past their first flush of youth, they were the only buses narrow enough for some of the restrictions on the route. New Route **462 (Ilford – Barkingside)** commenced on 26th June with a requirement for 3 buses and 4 Mercedes 608's received LT service transfers. To compliment the changes the 362 was extended to serve King George Hospital, Goodmayes and an early evening service was introduced.

There was an interesting development concerning **Route 193 Romford – County Park Est** this year. The service was conveniently routed via Roneo Corner Tesco's and Thamesway managed to strike a deal for its drivers to use the staff café for their meal breaks. In return the commercial **Service 351 Romford – Chelmsford** was extended to terminate in the stores grounds.

In the autumn, Thamesway's parent company Badgerline was floated on the London Stock Exchange with the aim of financing further investment and expansion.

At around the same time the Conservative government had a change of heart regarding the much-discussed Deregulation of London's bus services and announced that deregulation had been postponed indefinitely.

It was subsequently decided to continue to put bus routes out to tender but in view of the impending privatisation of the London bus company subsidiaries, there would be a break in the tendering process.

A new vehicle rounded off the year; a Volvo B6 /Northern Counties being exhibited at the Bus & Coach show in Birmingham. The intention was to use the bus for an increased requirement on LT Route 214 which was extended from Parliament Hill Fields to Highgate Village from 4th December but operating difficulties precluded this and it was allocated to Hadleigh Garage and made very few appearances on London contracts.

At the end of the year Thamesway had a peak vehicle requirement for LT contracts of 16 buses from Brentwood Garage and 51 from Ponders End giving a total of 67 buses on 10 Routes.

As a prelude to the new tendering programme which will be discussed later, London Buses decided to extend all the current contracts. Thamesways Routes would expire as follows –

193 9/96 ; **214** 8/00 ; **307** 12/95 ; **362/462** 7/96 ; **379** 8/95 ; **W9** 3/00 ; **W11** 2/00 ; **W13** 3/00 ; **D8** 9/98

1994 The Welsh Minibus

The stock market floatation of Thamesway's parent company Badgerline was extremely successful with the share issue being over subscribed 1.7 times. Unfortunately the extra financial muscle provided by the share issue was not to help Badgerline expand it's share of the London bus market as it was outbid in the race to acquire the London Buses subsidiaries.

On the whole, this year brought very little outward change to the companies London operations from Ponders End and Brentwood Garages. The **211/213 (Breach Barns – Waltham Cross)** Essex County Council contract was lost to rival County Bus from 1st August and the **W11** was re routed from 21st May to serve the Chingford Hall Estate. Three 'K' registered Mercedes 709's transferred from Brentwood to Ponders end to meet the increased requirement.

A further Mercedes Minibus was added to the fleet in the shape of a 'D' registered 609D with a Robin Hood body. Acquired from Badgerline subsidiary Brewers in South Wales, it was allocated to Ponders end for driver shuttle work. However, it's narrow body made it very useful for routes in residential areas and it was often seen filling in on bus work.

Brentwood Garage Closure * Route 307 Lost * Mobility Routes Gained * The Full Story Next Month

DAY TRIP TO LEICESTER AREA OPERATORS
Saturday 16th June 2001

HAVE YOU BOOKED YOUR SEAT YET ?

**See The Booking Form in Last Months Magazine or email us
if You Need Another Copy essexbusnews@hotmail.com**

Essex Fleet Focus

The first in an occasional series looking at the current operations of some of the counties smaller Bus & Coach companies.

Let us know which other operators you'd like us to feature in future.

THE NELSON GROUP (NIBS) WICKFORD

Routes Operated

2	Wickford—Ramsden Heath—Billericay—Ingatestone	School days
3	Shotgate-Billericay School	School days
5	Shenfield-Ingatestone	School days
12	Billericay—Shotgate	School days
21	North Benfleet—Basildon—Wickford-Shotgate	Mon—Sats
37	South Woodham Town Service ECC contract	Mon-Fri
41—6	Shotgate-Basildon—Billericay-Brentwood various routes	School days
47	Wickford—Basildon—Chelmsford	School days
48	Hockley-Rayleigh—Wickford—Brentwood	School days
49	Shotgate-Billericay-Brentwood	School days
50	Shotgate—Ingatestone	School days
221	Wickford—The Wick-Wickford (Circular) ECC contract	Mon—Fri
222	Southend-Wickford—Billericay—Brentwood ECC contract	Suns—BH
222	Shotgate-Wickford—Gt Burstead—Billericay	Mon—Fri
222	Shotgate—Wickford—Gt Burstead-Billericay ECC contract	Sats
224	Nevendon-Wickford-Rayleigh ECC contract	T F Sats
225	Brock Hill-Runwell-Shotgate	Schooldays
232	Basildon Hosp—Basildon—Wickford—Shotgate ECC contract	Mon—Fri
		Eves

Current Fleet List

BIL7894	Leyland PSUE4R	Plaxton	C53F
BIL4539	Leyland PSUE4R	Plaxton	C53F
J51GGX	DAF SB220	Ikarus	B48F
J52GGX	DAF SB220	Ikarus	B48F
L89OUVE	Mercedes 811D	Marshall	B33F
L891UVE	Mercedes 811D	Marshall	B33F
N88CSC	Mercedes 811D	Alexander	B33F
STW25W	Bristol VR	ECW	H74F
NDL652R	Bristol VR	ECW	H74F
DNG232T	Bristol VR	ECW	H74F
VEX295X	Bristol VR	ECW	H74F
VEX304X	Bristol VR	ECW	H74F
FDV835V	Bristol VR	ECW	H74F
LFJ855W	Bristol VR	ECW	H74F
LBD921V	Bristol VR	ECW	H74F
SNV93OW	Bristol VR	ECW	H74F
G601KTX	Scania N113DRB	Alexander	H77F
G603KTX	Scania N113DRB	Alexander	H77F
G604KTX	Scania N113DRB	Alexander	H77F
G605KTX	Scania N113D-9B	Alexander	H77F
G607KTX	Scania N113DRB	Alexander	H77F

CHELMSFORD TO BRENTWOOD

80 years of service

Chris Stewart pays tribute to one of the counties longest standing bus routes.

Ambitions and Origins

The National Omnibus & Transport Co undertook some trial operations of buses in Brentwood during 1920/21, and already had a network of routes based on Chelmsford. It was not surprising, therefore, that NOTC applied for a Chelmsford-Brentwood-Romford route in 1921. Unfortunately the establishment of a much wider operating area than previously by the London General Omnibus Co thwarted this, limiting National to a Chelmsford-Brentwood service although from May 1921 this offered an onward connection by General 26 to Stratford. National's route was un-numbered when it started on Wednesday 23 March 1921, but it soon became the 10.

The very first timetable shows three return journeys from Chelmsford on Mondays - Fridays, with 4 on Saturdays and Sundays; the additional workings provided vehicles for the Brentwood-Ongar service, one of the trial routes which was reduced to run only at weekends after March 1921.

By June 1921, service 10 consisted of four return journeys on weekdays (3 on Sundays), with one extra on Saturday evenings and a short Saturday morning working from Chelmsford to Ingatestone. Surprisingly these all had only a 5-minute turnaround at Brentwood's *Yorkshire Grey* after a journey time of roughly an hour.

I have a very early photograph of double-deck AEC 2001 (HK4689) at Chelmsford on this service, these open-top vehicles being the normal buses from the outset; West Country-allocated National vehicles were also apparently used occasionally following overhaul at Chelmsford. The regular vehicles for the 10 were garaged at Chelmsford, the 2-vehicle Brentwood outstation having closed again by then.

From September 1926 to August 1927, the 10 was extended at the Brentwood end to Great Warley, while on Summer Sundays in 1927 it ran through to Maldon – an extension which was not repeated. By 1928, the frequency had reached 16 weekday departures from Chelmsford (with 22 on Sundays) at fares of 1/2d single, 1/9d (9p) return to Brentwood and 8d single, 1s (5p) return to Ingatestone.

I have seen little photographic evidence from this period, but Leyland Lions and Dennis Lancets would seem the most usual vehicles until the arrival of the first Bristol JO5G's in 1936. The second half of the 1920's, incidentally, saw the advent of long-distance coaches on the same road - National themselves following the formation of London Coastal Coaches in 1924, together with those belonging to United (later Eastern Counties), Grey-Green, Primrose and Hillman.

London at Last

The biggest change of all to service 10 came on 18 March 1934, when the Hillman's Coaches Empire was acquired compulsorily by the London Passenger Transport Board.

While the main Bow to Brentwood service became a Green Line route from Aldgate, the Bow-Chelmsford workings were handed to Eastern National and the 10 extended (at last) through Romford to Bow, albeit with restrictions on the carriage of local passengers within the LPTB area. At the same time, Chelmsford-Brentwood journeys became service 10A, and on 14 June 1935 the market-day Chelmsford-Mill Green 10B began (lasting, as the 40A, until 15 May 1970). In October 1936, the timetable shows a 30-minute interval service starting at 5.55am from Chelmsford, with the last journey being the 9.55pm from Chelmsford and 11.40pm return (arriving Chelmsford 1.08am!). The Chelmsford-Brentwood section had a 15-minute interval service and some fares were actually lower in 1936 than they had been in 1928, presumably part of Hillman's legacy. Chelmsford-Bow return was 3/6d (17.5p), Shenfield-Bow 2/2d and Chelmsford-Brentwood 1/6d. These fares were basically unchanged in the June 1949 timetable, as was the service.

Pre-war photographs I have seen show 1933 Tiger TS3 3453 (GK443) at Brentwood Station, and a publicity shot which includes 1933 Lancet 3490 (AVW468) with side destination boards for the through London service. Bristol JO saloons 3667 (ENO445) and 3714 (FHK751) also figure. Immediately post-war, double-deckers re-emerge; rebodied AEC Regents 3030 (TM6308), 3078 (TM8794) and 3082 (TM8798), MPU-registered ECW-bodied Leyland PD1's and NNO-registered Bristol K's. Beadle-Bedford saloons were used on the 10, as well as the 10B to Mill Green (which later had Bristol LWL's). Former City Coach Co Leyland Titans of the FJN batch became quite common until the early 1960's, and from 1954 Bristol Lodekkas arrived in large numbers. I also have a photograph of one of the dual-door Bristol LS's in London (showing 10A). To add further variety, the sole LDL prototype, 236LNO (1541, later 2510), became a fairly regular performer on the 30 from about 1963.

The Tilbury Arm

There is another arm of the 10/30 story, involving the Brentwood-Tilbury Ferry road. To trace this fully involves going back to 1924, when National opened a Grays garage (in Argent Street).

On 1 October that year, they introduced a service to Upminster via the Ockendons, to be followed in 1925 by Wednesdays-only service 41 from Grays to Romford via Horndon, Laindon, Herongate and Brentwood. In July 1928, however, what later became the 40A started between Grays and Brentwood (via Ockendons), with one return trip each Thursday and Sunday afternoon (probably for visitors to Warley Mental Hospital). A daily Chelmsford to Tilbury Ferry service took this number in January 1931 (extending the route at both ends) and survived in this form until 1942.

Wartime restrictions on the use of fuel and tyres led to the suspension of the main London service 10, which was diverted instead over the 40A route to Tilbury Ferry. As shortages eased, the 40A was reinstated (but not until 7 April 1946), only to be renumbered as the 40 two months later on 2 June. From 28 September 1947, some Monday to Friday journeys on the 40 operated through to Dunmow (changing to show service number 3A at Brentwood) over the route pioneered by Simpson's of Leaden Roding in March 1929 and taken over by Eastern National on 24 March 1940. An early post-war photograph in Brentwood shows an express-liveried Bristol L (MPU-registered) on the 40. In May 1958, the 33A (as the 3A had become) was curtailed to run Dunmow-Ongar, leaving the 40 isolated again.

The 40 continued largely unaltered until 5 September 1971, when the Chelmsford-Brentwood section was finally abandoned, leaving it in the sole charge of Brentwood depot. One-man operated since 1968, a succession of Bristol LS's, MW's and RE's included the later 1974 MW6G coach conversions 1442/6/9 (NWC16, BNO116B and BPU23B). With the 1971 change, there were 7 weekday and 3 Sunday journeys to Tilbury Ferry (and a Schooldays only extension to Shenfield School). On 20 July 1975, the 40 was reduced again to 5 journeys on Weekdays only, and cut back to Grays bus station on 1 January 1976. The bus station had opened on 18 May 1975, but the 40 was not EN's last service to Tilbury Ferry, as the 155 continued to serve it until 6 December 1976.

The 40 was renumbered 269 (in the Brentwood area number series) on 21 May 1978, but did not survive long; further change took place on 1 September 1979 when Eastern National withdrew from it altogether and London Country's new 369 replaced it. As a result, the North Ockendon to Warley section came into the hands of a London operator for the first time despite being in the London Passenger Transport Area, and the Schooldays only extensions to Shenfield School placed that destination within LC's area for the first time. LC mostly used Bristol LHS's, but Green Line liveried AEC Reliances and Leyland Nationals also appeared. After a period of operation by Harris Bus, however, the Brentwood to Grays road is back in the hands of Eastern National's successor, First Thamesway, who operate it once again as the 269 (and 268).

Into the 1960's

Back on the main London route, the 10/10A/10B became the 30/30A/30B under the 1955 renumbering.

By the early 1960's, the service was basically hourly to Bow with the intermediate journeys running alternately to Brentwood Station (30A) and Tilbury Ferry (40). One curiosity of the 40 was that a Basildon bus worked the 07.55 from Tilbury Ferry to Brentwood and 09.10 return to Grays at a time when they were not otherwise seen in Brentwood.

In summer 1963, the service was increased to quarter-hourly daily between Chelmsford and Brentwood, every other bus running through to Bow. At the same time, the first 30ft Lodekkas appeared – FLF 1590 (later 2719) and LDL 1541 (later 2510) for example, presumably spare off the 251. Shortly afterwards, Chelmsford's first FLF (1632, later 2758 – JWC718) started on the 30 to be joined some weeks later by 1642 (later 2765 – VWC45). Brentwood received a batch of EOO-registered FLF's at this time, but these seem to have been used either on the 251 or on the 260 although they probably released 2510 from the 251 in the process.

In 1965 the service was reduced to a combined frequency of 20 minutes between Chelmsford and Brentwood. The even hour's journeys operated in sequence to Bow, Romford and Brentwood Station with the odd hours working to Ilford, Tilbury Ferry and Ilford again. The Ilford terminal was in Argyle Road (behind the station) where most LT services also terminated. At the same time, the Sunday service became every 30 minutes Chelmsford to Brentwood.

Starting with Chelmsford's 2888 (WNO976F) in October 1967, the 31ft semi-automatic FLF6LX's began to appear in the last days of the 30 – the 15.55 Broomfield Hospital to Bow became a common duty for 2888 or 2889 during November and December 1967. Brentwood received 2885/94/5, 2904/5 from new, adding 2887 from Wood Green and later 2891-3 while CF also gained 2917/23/5-8 although 2917 was quickly exchanged with WG for 2916.

Wood Green 351

The most dramatic change for 34 years took place on 7 January 1968; service 30 to Bow was withdrawn and replaced by the 351, which ran Chelmsford-Brentwood-Romford (half hourly) and on to Wood Green every 2 hours (hourly on Saturdays). Strangely, though, WG vehicles did not operate the 351 despite having the relevant destinations on their blinds; instead, as well as BD and CF vehicles as one would expect, the 15.45 from Chelmsford and 16.46 return were worked by crew-operated MW's from Kelvedon (1319/33/9 or 1425). The next pair of 40's, the 16.15 and 17.15 from Chelmsford, were worked by a CF-based LD long after FLF's had taken over most other journeys while Brentwood's KSW's (2352/62/3/72/3) occasionally worked peak-hour 351's in 1969 (to be followed later by LD's). The last LD to appear was almost certainly CF2515 on 19 November 1974, which worked its way to Wood Green for filming via the 351 and 151. Despite the predominance of semi-automatic FLF's on the remaining school duties, as late as 5 September 1980 manual-gearbox CF2845 (MVX882C) ran for the last time before its withdrawal on the 351.

One odd journey during the late 1960's and much of the 1970's was an 08.20 Ingatestone (New Road) to Brentwood which was originally unadvertised, and later shown as terminating in Ingrave Road before working a Hornbeam Close to Brentwood 262 schools duty. At the height of the 1960's staff shortages it was worked one-man by a saloon even though grossly overloaded – reverting to a double-decker in about 1970. BD-based LD5G 2482 (fitted for driver training) appeared for long spells but these were interspersed by a ludicrous selection of buses – including most of the FLF6LX's in the fleet, regardless of home depot – Canvey, Basildon, Hadleigh, Southend and Wood Green included. These appeared following maintenance work at BD, which at the time was carrying out work for many other depots. At the time of the 1969 (or possibly 1970) Essex Show, LS6G coach 323 (616JPU) turned up complete with conductor before working a Brentwood-Showground excursion. MW6G coach 366 from CF also materialised on one occasion; coincidentally this vehicle was later to be Brentwood-based bus 1446.

OMO Saloons and Leyland Nationals

In early 1969, Eastern National's first Bristol RELL's arrived with 1500 (CVW854G) going to BD depot in February. However it was CF which first used these buses on the 351 – initially 1515/6 – and BD did not use them on a regular basis until much later.

A very early loan of a Leyland National to Brentwood depot in 1973, incidentally, convinced them to remain faithful to Bristol RELL's for a further 2 years (until 1751/4 arrived).

From 11 February 1973 the main service 351 was converted to one-man operation. The section beyond Romford had already been withdrawn (except on Sundays) from 9 April 1971, but with the omo conversion even the remaining Romford sections went and the route was diverted to operate from Chelmsford to Warley (Fords). In May 1973, Leyland Nationals from EN's first batch of these (1700-11: WNO549-60L) were allocated to the 351, 1706 entering the history books after being written off when less than 2 days old as the result of an accident at Margaretting.

Later, Bristol VRT's became more common but Leyland Nationals were to be a feature of the 351 for the next 27 years (1850 being the last one seen, in June 2000). Brentwood VRT's 3040/1 (PWC515/6M) had regular duties on the 351, while CF provided some of the former Alexander (Midland) SMS-H batch as well as ex Eastern Scottish VRT/LL 3043; sister bus 3042 also appeared on occasions, transferred temporarily as a mechanical spare. Standard VRT's 3027/9/35 were also among early visitors to the 351 in 1973; the following year also saw CF3002 (CPU981G) on occasions.

To Romford Again

It was not long, though, before Romford featured again on the destination screen - in June 1973, two shoppers' journeys were reinstated on Mondays--Fridays.

More controversially, certain journeys were diverted via Shenfield Station and Oliver Road in 1980 as part of the 'Traffic Area Plan', stirring a sustained residents' campaign against the service. The resultant Traffic Commissioners' hearing, however, found in favour of the Company and the 350 still operates this way at peak times in 2001.

On 11 March 1981, unusual permutations 460 and 461 were introduced; the 460 ran Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri only with one return trip from Blackmore to Romford via Kelvedon Hatch. The 461 ran on Wednesdays and Saturdays via Doddingtonhurst. Both operated non-stop between Brentwood and Romford.

During 1982 (I believe), the 351 regained its old route to Romford, being joined in January 1983 by an hourly limited-stop 451 with a journey time of 50 minutes (compared to 59 minutes by 351). The Day Return fare from Chelmsford to Romford at this time was £1.50.

Further changes took place from 23 May 1983 introducing Chelmsford to Brentwood Station or Warley variants 360 (via Shenfield Station) and 361. The publicity leaflet for this shows a Leyland Tiger/Alexander rather than the Leyland National used previously and indeed these Tigers did appear fairly frequently for a time.

1977 records show Mon-Fri allocations of Bristol VRT's and Leyland Nationals from both BD and CF, together with Bristol MW's and RE's from BD along with one Chelmsford FLF (school times). On Saturdays both depots supplied LN's, BD put out RE's as well and CF provided VRT's. Sunday workings were by LN's from both depots. Olympians from both Eastern National and (from 1990) Thamesway later supplemented the VRT's, but the latter still feature after more than 25 years. The 351 continued to be worked jointly by Chelmsford and Brentwood depots until 7 June 1995, shortly before the former City/Westcliff North Road depot closed.

D-Day and Beyond: More Variations

Upon Deregulation in 1986, the pattern was 350 (Mon-Fri) Chelmsford to Romford via Shenfield Station, 351 (Mon-Sat) Chelmsford-Romford and 352 (Mon-Sat) Chelmsford-Brentwood-Collier Row-Romford. These were joined by the 451 (Mon-Fri) Chelmsford-Writtle-Ingatestone-Brentwood-Romford and the Sundays-only 451 from Braintree to Romford via Chelmsford and Writtle. From May 1995, the 350/1 were extended to Braintree, with one journey each way continuing to Halstead. At the same time, the variation along Westway in Chelmsford was brought in, and the 451 via Writtle were withdrawn. The Chelmsford-Braintree/Halstead section was later separated again to become the 352.

Perhaps the oddest variation of the 351 route was in early 1999 when it was extended to West Thurrock (Lakeside) via Romford, Hornchurch and Upminster in a transfer with Capital Citybus which also brought two D-registered Volvo/Duple buses (1601/2) onto the service. There had been similar Duple-bodied Leyland Tigers on the route previously, from the 1001-7 batch of ex Yorkshire Rider vehicles (EWR651-3Y, A660/3/5/8KUM), but 1601/2 brought further variety by retaining Citybus yellow livery. This odd route was short-lived, though, being withdrawn from 9 May 1999 except for the Bank Holiday Monday service that somehow survived for longer.

80 Years On

In 2001, 80 years on from its creation, the 351 continues to ply the Chelmsford to Romford road via Brentwood, run (as in 1921) from Chelmsford depot by First Eastern National with a wide selection of one-person operated vehicles, both double-deck and single-deck. Leyland Olympians and a dwindling number of Bristol VRT's run alongside Leyland Lynx (which have been on the route from new), whilst several varieties of Dennis Dart are currently to be found (including Alexander-bodied ones and SLF versions). Mercedes 709 minibuses operate the late evening service (and on one occasion two of them were seen substituting for a big bus during the daytime!). What is still a basic half-hourly service on Monday to Saturday, becomes two-hourly (and Essex CC supported) on Sundays.

For assistance in compiling this history, special thanks must be given to Rob Webb (who used the route 6 days a week in the 1960's and early 1970's), to Frank Simpson, Alan Osborne, Peter Clark, Terry Dendy and John Stewart. Acknowledgement must also be given to ENEG/EBEG publications consulted. Any errors are my own but I would nevertheless be grateful to be advised of them. And has anybody out there got a photo of 1706 either in service or after its accident - please!!

Essex Buses On Line

The bus scene in Essex is constantly evolving and this month we pick a selection of web sites focusing on some of the rear engined buses of the past 30 years .

The last 12 months has seen the demise of the once dominant Fleetline from Southend and only last month we reported that First Eastern National's final Leyland National is seeing out it's last days in the Clacton graveyard . Thankfully the growth of the internet now enables us to find out more about our favourite Buses and seek out the last survivors .

Fans of the Bristol VR are well catered for by the Bristol VR Societies website, featuring an illustrated fleetlist of the dwindling numbers in service both here and abroad. There's also a peek behind the scenes at VR's that have escaped the breakers torch and are getting some tender loving care in preservation. Lodekka fans will also relish the chance to see where the survivors of the breed now reside. www.bvres.freemove.co.uk
Some former and current Essex VR's also feature at www.bristolvr.co.uk which aims to give a photo history of the buses .

The Leyland National has plied the roads of Essex for almost 30 years and the vehicle is very comprehensively covered by a number of web sites . One of the best is The Leyland National Homepage at <http://members.xoom.com/leynat>
Plenty of pictures of Nationals across the country and you'll even find a copy of the original drivers instruction book and spare parts list !

The National is also lovingly documented by the Leyland National Groups Homepage at www.leylandnational.co.uk The group hopes to bring together those with an interest in the bus and promote the increasing numbers entering preservation. Again there's lots of photos including one of former EN National DAR 120T which is seeing out it's twilight years in deepest Norfolk .

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