Essex Bus Magazine

Current news and historical features

Issue 700 August 2022

Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

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Arriva Tribute to Sir David Amess (1952 - 2021)

Essex Bus Magazine the journal of the Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group
Issue 700 August 2022

Welcome to issue 700 of the Eastern National / Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group News Sheet / Essex Bus News / Essex Bus Magazine. The first issue was published in January 1964. To celebrate the occasion, an expanded '700 for EBM 700' is on pages 4-8. To complement this, above is Hedingham L111 (UVX 4S), new as Eastern National 1100 (one of just four Bristol LHs that EN operated) on route 700 to Clacton passing under the low railway bridge at Kirby Cross on 10 March 1994. The bus later went into preservation but has since been scrapped, although the registration lives on on a Group member's car. **Andrew Colebourne**

Front Cover: Also for issue 700 a slightly revised front cover, without side white borders and with an enlarged photo reaching the sides of the cover. This was actually trialled last month; we were less concerned about something going wrong with the cover of issue 699 than 700!

What could be more idyllic than a traditional village green in summer? The grass is even still green in places despite the current record-breaking heatwave. The peace is slightly disturbed as Stephensons Mini Enviro 200 414 (SK07 HLV) carefully crosses the narrow bridge in the centre of Finchingfield on Wednesday 27 July 2022 in the last week of Stephensons' operation of route 16, Chelmsford to Wethersfield. This Essex CC contract has now passed to Hedingham. The bus was on diversion, as described on page 12, due to a road closure in Great Bardfield, and had terminated just over the bridge, hence the Chelmsford destination despite the bus heading towards Wethersfield in this shot by **Richard Delahoy**. We illustrated the same scene back in 2011 on the front cover of that year's July issue (EBN 567) when Regal Busways ran the service, at which point what is now the 'Greedy Duck' café was a funeral directors, G W Hardy & Son, who continue to trade from another part of the building.

Inside Front Cover: Celebrating City Status for Southend. To mark the granting of city status to Southend and recognising the legacy of the work the late Sir David Amess MP did to secure that honour, Arriva have named Enviro 400 MMC 6515 (SN66 WJM) in his honour. This bus received the latest livery late last year (see EBMs 692/3) but this has now been amended with the removal of the blue and white stripes and the addition of decals, as can be seen in the photos. The bus was unveiled in a small ceremony at Southend Pier on the afternoon of 14 July 2022. It was duly named by Sir David's successor as the MP for Southend West, Anna Firth MP (in the blue dress), along with Southend Mayor Kevin Robinson and his wife (in pink). Top: in service on route 1 at Shoebury, The Renown four days later with Group member Matthew Evans driving. Other photos: at the launch. All **Richard Delahoy**

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Please contact Owen Woodliffe, 196 Sinclair Road, Chingford E4 8PT
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Owen stocks a wide range of colour photos, please send an SAE for details.

Subscriptions

A calendar year subscription is £25. 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 £2.20 per month. For example, a member joining in March would pay 10 x £2.20, i.e., £22. Please contact Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road, Southend-on-Sea SS1 3TT
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Membership Records & Data Protection

A statement of our compliance with the GDPR is available on our website or by post. For any membership or Data Protection issues please contact Richard Delahoy, address above.

Reports, Articles & Photographs

Members' reports, articles and photos (prints, slides or preferably jpgs) are always welcome. Please send to the Editor or relevant Sub-Editor. The editors exercise discretion to publish contributions in full, in part or not at all and cannot guarantee publication in any particular month.

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Target Dates for EBM 701

Reports to Sub-Editors	**27 August**
Sub-Editor drafts to Editor	**2 September**
Dispatch by Printers	on or before **12 September**

The last two dates are fixed, but late news can be sent up to 3rd and will be included if possible, if not it will be held over to the next month.

Views expressed in EBM do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group or members of its Committee. Every effort is made to ensure accuracy, but the Group cannot accept responsibility for any errors published.

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Group Notices

Membership News
Welcome to New Members:
Ashley Harding, Colchester - 1199
Neil Cole, York -1200

The Running Card by Owen Woodliffe
The following events have been advertised.
Sunday 14 August: Big Bus Show. Stonham Barns Park, Stowmarket IP14 6AT.
Sunday 21 August: Lodge Coaches Bus & Car Show, High Easter CM1 4QR.
Sunday 21 August: Canvey Bus Museum Open Day.
Saturday 3 September: Lincolnshire Road Transport Museum Open Day, Whisby Road, North Hykeham LN6 3QT. Local heritage bus services from 1000.
Saturday 3 September: East Kent Vintage Bus Rally and Running Day. Walmer CT14 7DY.
Sunday 4 September: From LT to LRT. Epping-Ongar Railway, North Weald Station. Due to a huge amount of private hire work on this day this event has been **CANCELLED**. EOR hope to return with a running day in February next year.
Sunday 11 September: King's Lynn Heritage Open Day PE30 IDS with free bus services around the town. Timetable for the services at www.kingslynncivicsociety.co.uk/heritage/free-vintage-bus-service.
Saturday 17 September: Enfield Transport Bazaar, St Stephens Church Hall, Village Road EN1 2EY.
Sunday 18 September: Canvey Bus Museum Open Day.
Saturday / Sunday 18/19 September: '40's Weekend North Norfolk Railway. martin.westcliff@gmail.com.
Saturday 24 September: Victoria Coach Station 90. Static display of vintage coaches Victoria Coach Station.
Saturday / Sunday 24/25 September: Trolleybus Weekend, East Anglia Transport Museum.
Sunday 25 September: Showbus (the last one) Hertfordshire Showground, Redborne (off Junction 9, M1).
Events are published in good faith. However, the Group cannot be responsible for any changes due to future circumstances. Please check before travelling.

Feeling Hot Hot Hot

Not only was 19 July 2022 the hottest day in the UK ever, it was also the hottest ever day in Essex, with temperatures reaching above 39°C. **Chris Stewart** braved the heat to capture this photo of First Essex Enviro 400 33545 (SN58 CFL) in Shenfield High Street. The route does not normally come this way, past Shenfield Station in the background, it was on diversion as Hanging Hill Lane was closed.

700 for EBM 700

by Richard Delahoy

As we reach the milestone of our 700th edition - News Sheet number 1 was published in January 1964 (as the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group) and we have published monthly ever since, the odd postal strike and other hitches excluded - we thought we'd reflect on the significance of the number 700 in Essex. But then we found that there are few vehicles or services that fit. In fact, the most heavily used service 700 in Essex has never actually displayed that route number! Confused? Well, internally and sometimes in public timetables, the Sandon Park and Ride service in Chelmsford was nominally numbered 700, but buses did not show a route number.

Chelmsford's first permanent P&R, the Sandon service, started in March 2006 and was operated by First Essex until earlier this year when Vectare took over the contract; Vectare number the Sandon route as 701 and Chelmer Valley as 702, so the use of 700 has now ceased.

Timetables for Service Number: 700

First

Mondays To Fridays
Valid from: 26/08/2012
Valid to: Until Further Notice

700 Sandon Park and Ride

Service No.:	700	700		700	700
Notes:					
Sandon Park and Ride Site	0700	0710		1845	1853
Parkway, Mildmay Car Park	0706	0716	and	1853	1901
Victoria Rd Sth, Royal Sun Alliance	0707	0717	at	1854	1902
Duke Street, Careers Office	0708	0718	frequent	1855	1903
New London Road, Reed Agency	0709	0719	intervals	1856	1904
Parkway, Amlin House	0710	0720	until	1857	1905
Sandon Park and Ride Site	0718	0728		1905	1913

Timetable from First's web site in 2013 showing the 700 route number.

We think the only time the route number 700 has been illustrated in the magazine was Hedingham's 700, in **Andrew Colebourne**'s photo which appeared in our June 2006 issue (EBN 386) in a feature on buses under the low railway bridge at Kirby Cross, and is reproduced here, in glorious colour for the first time.

That picture (on the previous page) was taken on 10 March 1994, the same date as the photo on page 1, and shows Hedingham's Bristol VR L197 (GGM 108W), a 13' 8" high bus passing under a 13' 6" marked bridge!

The 700 route linked Walton and Clacton via Holland and only ran briefly - initially for a month from 8 November to 11 December 1993, then again from 10 January to 31 March 1994, so Andrew was lucky to catch it operating.

Another Essex route numbered 700 was a cross-border service from Stansted Airport to Stevenage in Hertfordshire, variously operated by Arriva, Trustline, Galleon Travel, Centrebus and Uno in the 2000s and presumably supported in part by a subsidy from the Airport. It was later withdrawn but long-standing service 386 covers much of the ground outside Essex and today is operated by Central Connect but doesn't serve Stansted or enter Essex.

Owen Woodliffe photographed two of those operators on the 700. Right Trustline, by then renamed Trustybus, DMA8 (AE06 HBX) an ADL Dart SLF / MCV Evolution at The Crown in Buntingford, possibly in 2008, complete with 700 route branding.

He also recorded Uno Transbus Dart SLF / Transbus Pointer 121 (KE04 UMD) as it backed off the stand at Stansted Airport bus / coach station (bottom). The blind shows the route as extended beyond Stevenage to Hatfield, which dates this photo to between March and September 2011. Uno ran the route until March 2015 when Centrebus took over but that only lasted for five months, with the 700 withdrawn completely from 1 September 2015.

Just over the border into Suffolk, Felix Taxis have a town service in Sudbury numbered 700 although when I last saw it in June 2021, like the Park & Ride, it didn't display a route number. Meanwhile another obscure 700 was operated by Arriva Colchester in the late 1990s, a solitary journey from Coggeshall to Colchester and back on schooldays - it was a positioning trip using a bus that ran a school contract to Honywood School at Coggeshall.

Turning to fleet numbers, again we can't think of many Essex operators with a 700. Ensignbus had a Dennis Dart SLF / Plaxton Pointer 2 numbered 700 (V800 CBC), which they acquired in June 2006 and sold in December 2008. It is seen at Lakeside on route 55 on 12 February 2008. **Matthew Evans**

Southend Transport had a 700 for just one week, when Optare Vecta H846 UUA was tried out, as seen in my photo taken on 26 October 1991 whilst on service 12, Shoebury to Canewdon. The fleet number was shown on a piece of paper in the windscreen. The temporary number 700 was in series with the many second-hand Leyland Nationals owned, which were numbered from 701 upwards.

The Vecta was a step entrance single decker built by Optare on MAN 11.190 chassis - a bit like a successor to the trusty Bristol LH - but didn't achieve much sales success, only 130 were built, with 80 of those going to just three operators - United Auto (51), Trent (15) and Reading Transport (14). Southend didn't buy any.

EOS also had a 700, YR10 AZV, a Scania OmniCity which **Andrew Colebourne** photographed at Stratford City Bus Station on 16 June 2018 (top of next page) on the short-lived express service S1 to Harlow; it is displaying the wrong route number. Other than those three, we can't recall any Essex operators with a bus numbered 700 - or have we forgotten something?

With registrations, perhaps the most obvious example is Eastern National's 1788, PEV **700**R, a Leyland National seen below on 4 August 1979 at the White Horse, Southchurch. **Richard Delahoy**. Meanwhile, on the next page, **Robert Appleton** recalls former Eastern National Bedford YMT/Duple 1214, BNO **700**T, seen here in later life with Hedingham as their L125 in Colchester on 5 March 1990, and Coastal Red's ex West Midlands PTE Bristol VR/MCW JOV **700**P, in Clacton on 19 September 1987, which later passed to Eastern National on the takeover of Coastal Red but was not used.

So there you have it, some 700 connections for our 700th edition - but no services or buses in Essex currently use that number, unless you know differently!

Thanks to Andrew Colebourne, Robert Appleton, Keith Sadler, Andy Gipson and Owen Woodliffe for their help with this feature.

Follow Ups to EBM 699

Anthony Spindler Reminisces

Last month we included notes of a talk the late Anthony Spindler gave to the Group in 2015 about his time working for Eastern National and Thamesway. Part of Anthony's notes were unclear, but **Paul Harvey**, with the help of **Nick Blackall**, has supplied additional information to cover this. So the section: "I dealt with Highwayman and express coach services, stage services would be Schedules and then into the RSL department [the notes are unclear here] to take to Cambridge (the office of the local Traffic Commissioner)" can be replaced with: "I dealt with Highwayman and express coach services registrations, while stage carriage services would be completed by Schedules as Planning & Schedules were moved from Head Office to the District Offices. [Nick Blackall recalls that schedules completed all the local bus registrations as he remembers getting them at ECC.] These were then forwarded from the District Offices to the RSL department, then taken to Cambridge (the office of the local Traffic Commissioner)."

Geoff Dodson has also written in:

"I was sad to read of the passing of Anthony Spindler. It brought to mind my time at Eastern National as a 16 year old when I joined from school in Ipswich in September 1950. I was appointed to the Traffic Office, under Anthony's father Fred Spindler who was Publicity Superintendent. I worked alongside Donald MacGregor (later of Hedingham fame). Fred gave Donald and I a good grounding in publicity matters and timetabling.

"But as an aside, something I will never forget, when checking timetable proofs, a route in the Midland area covered the village of Pidley (near Huntingdon / St Ives) where the timing point was the Mad Cat pub - the "Pidley Mad Cat" - which amused me as a 16 year old, but this was not shared by Donald MacGregor when it was being read out! He would admonish me for my hilarity every time! (The pub still exists.)

"The notes of Anthony's talk in EBM 699 (July 2022) filled in some of the details of Fred's life for me, particularly the period NOTC to ENOC.

"I left Eastern National in 1951 but returned in October 1978 from National Travel South East. I was later acquainted with Anthony although our paths were different. I was only involved as Coaching Manager, then from 1980 Manager, Braintree, Uttlesford & East Herts; 1986 member of the Management Buy Out team; 1987 Manager Contracts & Commercial Activities; 1990 Marketing Manager until early retirement in 1996."

Anthony's time administering accidents, reminded Geoff of his time at NTSE and their own Accident Reports. Geoff adds:
"To most people the legal profession looks pretty boring, but it did have its lighter side as the company Wedlake Saint found. For example:
'I collided with a stationary coach which was coming in the other direction'
'To avoid a collision, I ran into the coach'
'I had been driving for 40 years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had an accident'
'The coach was all over the road. I had to swerve a number of times before I hit him'."

Bus Stops

Last month we reported that the new ECC Travel Essex logo would be applied to bus stops. **Chris Stewart** captured this one, right, at Wilson's Corner, Brentwood on 22 July 2022. A photo which includes the ECC logo it is replacing is on page 30.

Also in last month's magazine we included pictures of an old bus stop sign in Thurrock, still flying the flag for Eastern National and Thamesway, commenting that it was rather high up on the lamppost. **Martin Farmer**, who was responsible for roadside publicity for First Essex until his retirement in 2012 (and who is one of the custodians of Bristol K type AJN 825), explains why:
"Before I retired, I replaced all of the bus stop flags and timetable frames for Thurrock Council. The flags and posts were replaced with new ones and the timetable frames were the blue ones removed from the Chelmsford area, as these were being replaced with ECC frames. However the one you found at the stop in Orsett Road was put up by whoever replaced the lamppost at some point. They put it far too high up, so when I put up the new flag, the old Eastern National one was too high for my ladders! Thurrock Council were informed that the only way to remove it was with a cherry picker, hence it's still there and will probably remain there."

More on bus stops on page 31.

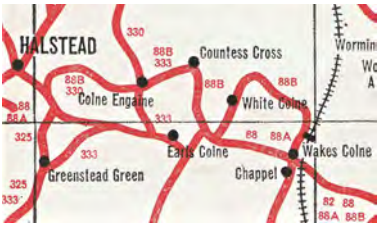
I Didn't Know That . . .

by Richard Delahoy

A story of two non-standard Eastern National Bristol MWs and of the trivia that enlightens our hobby.

Recently whilst looking through an old PSV Circle Fleet History of Eastern National, I chanced upon a seemingly odd comment against a pair of Bristol MW buses, 2727/8 VX (new as 516/7, 1337/8 from August 1964 onwards). The entry states that they "have 'Grimsby' style entrances". I had no idea what this meant and was intrigued. A post to the 'Eastern National Remembered' Facebook group soon revealed the answer. In Alan 'Tebzy' Tebbit's words "As far as I recall (it was long ago) the Grimsby entrance had shallower steps leading up to the platform, then a further step to enter the saloon. I believe that they were both at the same depot (probably HD) so that the drivers got used to the arrangement. As you can imagine stepping out of a standard LS or MW cab was on the level, the cab floor and platform being at the same height. Stepping out of these two cabs meant a sudden and unexpected step down, it would have been easy for the driver to propel himself violently down the steps". Phil Covington added "The step layout was pioneered by Grimsby Corporation on a batch of AEC Reliances, hence the name". David Kemp also added that "they also had strip lights at an angle along the ceiling".

Unfortunately, we haven't unearthed any shots showing the step arrangement, but our photo shows one of the pair, 1337, taken by **Bob Beaumont**, who had been Local Traffic Superintendent (Halstead) in the early 1960s before he moved on to Head Office in the Road Service Licensing section, later to become Head of that section. He photographed a number of last days of obscure services and destinations. Snow seems a long way off as this piece is written in July's heatwave but it makes for an atmospheric photo, possibly taken in 1965 or thereabouts. You're probably wondering where Countess Cross is - I certainly was. It's a small hamlet east of Halstead, served in the late 1960s by routes 88B (T, Th, S) and 333 (W). The blind should be displaying 88B not 88.



The next step (pardon the pun) was to look up the Grimsby-Cleethorpes Corporation fleet in my trusty British Bus Fleets book and indeed, there is a specific comment about modified doorways to help facilitate one man operation; however, all the GCT Reliances were dual-door, in contrast to Eastern National's single-door MWs. The first Reliances went to Grimsby before the merger with Cleethorpes, as their numbers 25-30 (HEE 820-5), with Park Royal bodies, in 1956. Subsequent additions - presumably with the same step arrangement - were made in 1957 (31-4), 1960 (20-4), 1961 (17-9), 1962 (11-13), 1963 (8-10) and 1964 (5-7), all bodied by Willowbrook.

So were step arrangements a hot topic in the late 1950s? I pulled out my 1956/7 issues of the trade magazine 'Bus and Coach' - which incidentally I had yet to get round to opening and reading! - in the hope that the Grimsby entrance would be mentioned. I was encouraged when I found the coverage of the 1956 Commercial Vehicle Show at Earls Court, although a Grimsby vehicle wasn't exhibited there. What did catch my eye was an article by the famed G W Hayter, formerly general manager and chief engineer at Northern General, with the title "Single decker bus entrances need improving" and subtitled "Bright spots in a Show I thought was dull" (clearly he was not smitten with the new-fangled, revolutionary, Leyland Atlantean displayed there!). He'd looked at a number of underfloor-engined single-deckers and had this to say: "It is in the matter of entrance that my main complaint lies. It seemed to me that part of the equipment provided at the entrance steps should have been an alpenstock to enable the less agile to get in and out of the bus. I spoke to the manufacturers' representatives and asked why the design did not provide for two steps giving transverse entrance to the vehicle and one step giving entrance longitudinally to the body itself. I received no satisfactory answer. It appeared that it just isn't done. This rearrangement, although it makes entrance easier, is considered dangerous". Of course, he couldn't put the question to the builders of the bodies on the Bristol MW, Eastern Coach Works, as they were not allowed to sell on the open market and so didn't exhibit at the shows.

Reading on, I was then encouraged to find a feature on Grimsby-Cleethorpes in the December 1956 issue, "Economy without loss of efficiency", which specifically mentioned the move to one man operation - initially with converted front-engined AEC Regals - and even had a floor layout plan of the first of the new Reliances, just delivered. But no mention of the entrance step layout! The thrust of that part of the story was how the buses had central exit doors, designed to encourage boarding passengers to move towards the back of the bus instead of congregating at the front. So the 'Grimsby' step missed out on its potential moment of fame!

Back to Essex and Eastern National: our pair were new in November 1960 and were part of a larger batch delivered late in 1960 / early in 1961 as 512-23, 2723-34 VX (later becoming 1333-44). Only the two had the revised step arrangement and both went new to the small depot at Halstead (as Tebzy surmised) where they lasted until being moved to Colchester in June 1973. They were withdrawn in 1976/77 and both passed to Norths, the dealer that took a lot of EN stock at that time.

So the revised step was applied to just two buses, at least so far as EN were concerned (there may have been some in other fleets, but I've not found any mention in any of the published histories of ECW) and four years after the first Grimsby examples. Were they an experiment by EN and / or ECW? If so, was their use monitored and evaluated? Perhaps a report lies hidden in archive papers somewhere. Clearly it made sense to allocate them both to the same small depot where crews - and passengers - would quickly become familiar with them. We don't have allocation lists prior to early in 1962 but at that stage, there were other MWs at Halstead so they would have not been the only OMO saloons there. The other unanswered question is whether they retained their unique step layout when transferred away, or were they modified to the standard layout? We assume the former as there was no gap in service and no reports at the time - if they had been modified we may well have found out about their existence half a century before we did!

I assume the 'Grimsby' epithet was a PSV Circle invention, as I've never heard of the term being used more widely in this context. Incidentally and rather oddly, the only place that this reference appears in the Circle histories is in supplement PF5B of June 1976, which updated the original PF5 of 1966; when a later fleet history was issued in 1984 as 2PF8, covering the EN fleet from 1960 to 1984, the Grimsby note didn't merit inclusion.

So, there we have it, a bit of previously unrecorded trivia which just goes to show that even after 60 years we can still learn things we didn't know before. Another bus of the same batch, 1340 (2730 VX), survives in preservation, having been through a number of hands after it was famously (and foolishly, in my humble opinion) given away in a prize draw by a bus preservation magazine many years ago. But it doesn't feature a 'Grimsby' step!

Many thanks to Alan 'Tebzy' Tebbit, Phil Covington, David Kemp and David Edwards for their help.

Left: As reported last month, a later MW, 1348 (208 YVX), has recently returned to Essex where it resides at Canvey Museum. It is seen at the Kursaal, Southend on 20 June 2022. Photo by owner **Ian Mahoney**

Service Revisions

by Ian Ransom

1 November 2021

To expand on the notes in EBM 691 regarding **First Essex** service 42A being withdrawn, with the exception of one journey each way on Mondays - Fridays and two hourly on Sundays. Services X10 and X30 were revised to provide some additional stops between Chelmsford and Stansted Airport. These are located at:

X10 Chelmsford Keene Home; Chelmsford Broomfield Parade; Broomfield The Angel; Broomfield Hospital; Great Waltham War Memorial; Great Waltham Parsonage Lane; Ford End Primary School; Ford End Butchers Arms; Onslow Green; Barnston Church School.

X30 Chelmsford Keene Home; Chelmsford Broomfield Parade; Broomfield The Angel; Broomfield Hospital; Ford End Primary School; Ford End Butchers Arms; Onslow Green; Barnston Church School; and in Great Dunmow stops at Gatehouse Villas, Station Road, High Street, The Queen Victoria and Woodside Way.

Some late evening, night and peak services on X10 and X30 operate direct from Ford End to Chelmsford Bus Station, while some night time X30 services don't serve Great Dunmow.

Further stops are due to be introduced on X10 from 1 September 2022, see below.

Local fares are available on some sections of these routes. In some cases these are higher than equivalent journeys on shuttle routes, as an example £3.70 from Bus Station to Broomfield Parade compared to £2.50 on C1.

18 July 2022

COG1 (M-F) Coggeshall - Kelvedon Railway Station **Coggeshall Community Bus**. Revised timetable.

25 July

As a result of roadworks on Great Bardfield Bridge, the B1057 was closed from 25 July for approximately six weeks. As a result, services 9/A, operated by **Stephensons** to 29 July and **Central Connect** from 1 August, were revised to terminate in Finchingfield, rather than continue to Great Bardfield. Service 16, operated by **Stephensons** to 30 July and **Hedingham** from 1 August, was revised to operate from Chelmsford to Finchingfield, via Great Bardfield, Shalford and Wethersfield. See photo on front cover.

A temporary service 9B operated by **Flagfinders** operates between Shalford, Village Hall and Great Bardfield, with an extension each way from Blake End (am) and to Blake End (pm) to allow connections with 9/A in Shalford.

Below: In use on the shuttle on 27 July was Flagfinders Enviro 200 YX10 BFO, awaiting custom at the temporary bus terminus in Crown Street, Great Bardfield. Flagfinders acquired this bus from Panther Travel last September. Behind the bus is a temporary bus stop sign which is illustrated on page 31. **Richard Delahoy**

25 July to 4 September
350 (M-S) Chelmsford Bus Station - Ingatestone, Seymour Field **First Essex**. Temporary service, to serve east Ingatestone, during Ingatestone High Street closure due to gas pipe replacement works. A photo of a Dart on route 350 is on page 24.
351 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Warley Eagle Way **First Essex**. As a result of these works in Ingatestone High Street, diverted from Margaretting Black Bull, via Wantz Road and A12, then picking up normal route at the next turn off, on to Roman Road, Ingatestone, where it does a short loop around neighbouring roads to pick up and set down passengers who require the western end of Ingatestone at a temporary stop in Rye Walk. There is not a Sunday service on the 350 but the 351 is also diverted on this day.

31 July - Essex County Council supported services. Additional information to last month.
The following routes that have changes of operator also have revised timetables:
3 (M-S) Chelmsford Bus Station - Southend Travel Centre (minor change); 82/A/B (M-S) Colchester Osborne Street - Colne Engaine, The Green; 301 (M-S) Saffron Walden, Tesco - Bishops Stortford Interchange; services in the Uttlesford area, detailed on the next page.
Additional and corrected information:
9 (M-S) Walton on the Naze - Great Holland, The Ship. *Some journeys extended from Great Holland to Clacton, Pier Avenue.*
40 (M,W,S) Witham Ebenezer Close - Witham Gershwin Boulevard. *Remains M,W,S only rather than becoming M-S.*
83/A/B (M-S) Colchester Osborne Street - Fordham / Bures. From **Hedingham** to **First Essex**, with a revised timetable. *This was missed out last month.*
94/A/B (M-S) Basildon - South Woodham Ferrers, Asda. From **First Essex** to **Stephensons**, on a three month emergency tender. *The new operator wasn't known when we went to press last month.*
315 (M-S) Bishops Stortford Interchange - Great Hallingbury. New service **Central Connect**. *To Great Hallingbury not Stansted Airport.*
322 Bishops Stortford Interchange - Lindsell Old School. New service **Central Connect**. *Tues only with two journeys each way, not M-S.*
323 (M-S) Bishops Stortford Interchange - Great Dunmow Ongar Road. New service **Central Connect**. *This was missed out last month.*
324 (M-S) Bishops Stortford Interchange - Stebbing Church End. New service **Central Connect**. *To Stebbing Church End not Lindsell.*
325 (M-S) Bishops Stortford Interchange - Little Hallingbury. New service **Central Connect**. *To Little Hallingbury not Stansted Airport.*
345 (W only) Fuller Street - Braintree. From **Hedingham** to **First Essex**. *Revised timetable and extended from Braintree Town Centre to Braintree Village.*

31 July - Other
61/A/C (M-S) **Vectare** (ECC Supported service) Blackmore the Green - Brentwood Railway Station. Revised timetable, with some Saturday journeys extended from Brentwood High Street to Brentwood Railway Station as 61C.
62 (M-S) Highwood - Blackmore **Vectare** (Commercial Service). The limited one journey each way service extended from Highwood to & from Chelmsford Army & Navy roundabout. Guaranteed connection at Blackmore to & from Brentwood (see photo on page 30).

1 August
420/A (Daily) Harlow Bus Station - Ongar, Two Brewers **Central Connect**. Temporary timetable revisions on Monday to Friday during school holidays. Normal timetable will resume on 1 September.

28 August
351 (M-S) Bishops Stortford - Hertford Bus Station **Central Connect.** Revised timetable with reduced running time, following the opening of the Little Hadham bypass. One journey on schooldays revised to operate via Pinehurst.

1 September
35 (Sch only) Debden Broadway - Chelmsford Bus Station **First Essex**. Revised route and timetable.
71/X71/371 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Colchester Bus Station **First Essex**. Revised timetable.
701 (Sch Only) Brightlingsea, Victoria Place - Colchester, Norman Way Schools **Stephensons**. Renumbered from L1.
721 (Sch only) Alresford, The Pointer to Manningtree High School **Stephensons.** Renumbered from M1.
C1/C2/C4/C7/C8/C9 **Stephensons** routes to Colne Valley School, Brightlingsea, now registered closed door services. C1 from Wivenhoe, C2 from Elmstead Market, C4 from Frating, C7 from Alresford, C8 from Aingers Green and C9 from Great Bentley.
C7 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Galleywood, Keene Hall **First Essex**. Revised timetable.
Lodge Coaches closed school services White Roding Blocks Corner - Herts & Essex School, Bishop's Stortford; Leaden Roding - Bishop's Stortford; Leaden Roding - Bishop's Stortford Birchwood School; Leaden Roding, Village Hall - Sawbridgeworth; Leventhorpe School, High Easter, The Street - Stansted Mountfitchet, Maths & Computing College all cancelled. In effect they ceased at the end of term in July.
X10 (Daily) Stansted Airport - Basildon, Bus Station **First Essex**. Further additional stops to be added but we don't yet know where these will be (also see 1 November 2021 above). No change to timetable.

5 September
DAN001 (Sch only) Bicknacre, White Swan - Colchester, Middleborough **Flagfinders**. Revised route and timetable. Closed service for school pupils only.

A Brave New Network for Uttlesford by Richard Delahoy

As noted last month (EBM 699), there are major changes from 31 July to the supported bus network in the north-west of the county, in Uttlesford District; these follow a consultation in the spring. At the time, Essex County Council (ECC) explained that "The majority of bus services in the Uttlesford District are subsidised by Essex County Council and their contracts are reaching the end of their contractual period. Therefore, we are taking this opportunity to consult on the current Uttlesford network which also takes into consideration various developer funding opportunities (i.e., Section 106 planning obligations related to new housing developments) throughout the district.

"The intention is to grow passenger numbers through changes to the bus network. Pre-covid passenger levels were declining, and the pandemic has had a further impact on the industry, however we believe that a meaningful and considered overhaul of the network within the district of Uttlesford will help provide a strong base position on which to rebuild the usage of public transport and play a valuable part in supporting the desire for people to travel more sustainably".

This is a rural area with very few commercial services. Existing supported service 7/A, Bishop's Stortford to Stansted Airport via the indirect route (Stansted Mountfitchet, Elsenham and Henham) continues as before, M-S with a frequency just less than once an hour (12/13 journeys), as do the deeply rural demand responsive services DaRT1 (covering the area west of Saffron Walden / Stansted, up to the Hertfordshire border) and DaRT2 (the area north of Great Dunmow, east of Saffron Walden and west of Braintree). Both DaRT services are a mix of timetabled trips and on-demand journeys but all must be pre-booked; they are operated by Arrow / Essex DaRT.

So, as reported, service **301** remains, retimed and restored to the pre-Covid hourly frequency and now with extended hours, 0630 to 2220 M-S. In Saffron Walden it is diverted to serve the new Mortimer's Gate development off Ashdon Road in place of Tesco, its previous terminus. PVR 2.

305, Bishop's Stortford to Stansted Airport via Hatfield Heath, is the former 5 renumbered, restored to the pre-Covid hourly frequency and with an additional early morning trip (now 0630-2120 M-S). It continues to interwork at Stansted with the 316/8 (ex 6). Combined PVR 4.

313/4 These replace the infrequent 313/A (3 trips M-F plus 1 schooldays, 2 on Saturdays) with an *hourly* service from Saffron Walden to Great Dunmow via Wimbish, Thaxted and Great Easton - 313 serves Tye Green & Little Easton, 314 Carver Barracks & Great Easton. In Saffron Walden, the service is extended from the High Street to the new Mortimers Gate development (giving a half-hourly service with 301) and in Dunmow it's diverted away from Church End to serve the new Woodland Park development, Tesco and the High Street, to terminate at Ongar Road. The operating day is 0700 to 2200, a massive Increase on the previous service! PVR 2.

315/325 These appear to be completely new services to isolated areas east of Stortford, each running two-hourly - 315 to Bedlar's Green and Great Hallingbury and 325 to Little Hallingbury for the new Wright's Green housing development. Each has 7 journeys M-S. To be interworked with 305 (so no PVR).

316, Stansted Airport to Saffron Walden, Tesco, via Thaxted, is the former 6 renumbered, restored to the pre-Covid hourly frequency and with additional early and late trips (now 0530-2225 M-S). Trips via Saffron Walden High School renumbered **318**. Interworks with 305.

319/320/321 are the old 59/60 renumbered, running between Audley End, Saffron Walden and Haverhill via Ashdon & Helions Bumpstead (319, ex 59) or Radwinter & Steeple Bumpstead (320, ex 60, with journeys via Edith Cavell Way in Steeple Bumpstead as 321). A photo of a Stephensons Enviro 200 on route 59 is on the opposite page. Timetables are revised, still offering a roughly hourly service (not evenings) but now including Saturdays (previously less frequent then). A morning and afternoon trip extends to & from Newport for schools (319/321) but that extension appears to run all M-F, not just schooldays. PVR 2. There is currently no replacement for the previous Stephensons commercial peak trips on 59/590 between Audley End Station and Saffron Walden.

322/323/324 These also appear to be completely new services, Bishop's Stortford to Great Dunmow and then 324 extending on to Stebbing and 322 to Lindsell. Running via Takeley, they divert off the old A120 to serve the Prior's Green development (which had a daily service on First Essex 42A until recently) and in Dunmow they serve the large new housing estates north of Tesco (Woodland Park Drive) on the west side of the town. 323/4 offer a combined hourly service from Stortford to Dunmow High Street, with additional 323 shorts between Tesco and Ongar Road giving a 30/60 frequency across Dunmow. 324 continues two-hourly to Stebbing (a small village of less than 2,000 people); on Tuesdays, two of those 324 trips instead go to Lindsell. PVR 2.

All but 313/4 (**Stephensons**) are operated by **Central Connect** who also run the existing **7/A** (PVR 3). We think that overall, Central Connect now have 12 peak buses on Essex contracts in this area (including the 9/A at Braintree).

Clearly someone has a sense of history, restoring route numbers to the 3xx series introduced by Eastern National in the 1950s, although there is no connection with the original use of these numbers, other than the 301. Overall, the frequency increases and extended hours of operation are welcome but the big question is, will that be enough to attract sufficient passengers? Section 106 funding is time limited. There are new regular town services in both Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow (half-hourly frequencies). These contracts are for two years, so the test will be what happens when it comes to contract extension or retendering. We hope that they can prosper.

STEPHENSONS NIBSbuses by Richard Delahoy

Fleet News

Scania OmniCities YR59 FYO and YT59 PCF (from the batch recently acquired, some to go on fleet, most for resale) were on hire to Xelabus from 2 June to 18 July. Then towards the end of the month, seven Scania / ADL double-deckers, 602-4/6/7/9/10, all went on loan to Stagecoach (with Stephensons / NIBS drivers) for use at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. They are part of the 600 buses Stagecoach are operating for Games transport and were to provide extra contingency support at the start of the Games; they returned to Essex on 2 August.

The two Wrightbus StreetLites, 341/2, are now up for sale.

The following have been withdrawn/sold:
Optare Solo 331 (YJ14 BGE) from the Galloway fleet to McCalls Coaches, Lockerbie
Scania 508 (YT59 NZN) is withdrawn after being hit by a skip lorry
Volvo B7TL double-deckers ex New Horizon Travel: 709 (SFZ 818) to A1 Coaches Merseyside, 710 (BX04 AZU) to Abbey Coaches, Blackburn. This means all the ex-New Horizon double-deckers have now been sold.

Service News

M-S routes 94/A/B South Woodham to Basildon have been won by Stephensons on a short, three-month contract from 1 August whilst Essex CC undertake a full retendering. They were previously operated by First Essex. Vectare had won the new contract but declined to take it up. They are being operated from Boreham depot, PVR two buses.

The former New Horizon Travel school services have now been registered with effect from the start of the new school year, as listed under Service Revisions. Full details of all these services are on Stephensons website.
A further school contract added from September is SC703 (Glemsford – Stour Valley Community College).

Other News

New TransMach electronic ticket machines are being trialled at Rochford depot on three buses at present; the rest of the fleet continues to use Ticketer machines.

The planned takeover of Kirbys Coaches' operations by Galloway has been deferred at present.

With thanks to the companies and Colchester Borough Bus Users Facebook Group.

Below: One of the Uttlesford area routes changing hands in the latest ECC tender round (see page 14) is the 59, Haverhill to Audley End, which moved from Stephensons to Central Connect and is renumbered 319. On Wednesday 27 July, the driver of Solo 328 (YJ58 PHN) helpfully stopped in Castle Camps to let Richard off for a photo - apart from him, there was only one other passenger on that trip. Castle Camps is a small village just over the Cambridgeshire border; 59 also served the nearby rather strangely named Shudy Camps.
Richard Delahoy.

Southend

Mercedes Sprinter 1014 (BF67 WGM), normally only used on crew shuttles, was fitted with a ticket machine in mid-July and appeared on service 6 on 12 & 14 July.

A minor correction to last month, trainer T536 was in fact transferred from Northfleet, where it had been since May 2021, rather than from Maidstone. Also noted at Southend in mid-July was a newer training bus, LJ58 AVB, a dual-door Enviro 200, carrying fleet number T25. It may have only been on short term loan here.

With the 24 July service changes, the double deck schooldays only working on the 7 was amended: in the mornings, it now starts from Southend, not Shoebury and both trips are curtailed to run to & from Golden Cross rather than Ashingdon. The bus runs for King Edmund School pupils and can now turn out of service on a new roundabout in Brays Lane, close to the school, previously it had to run to Ashingdon to be able to turn round. The morning extra schooldays trip on 29 (operated by the same bus as the 7) is now extended beyond Westcliff High Schools to Belfairs, Woodcutters but the afternoon trip still starts at the schools.

The PVR is now 50, a drop of two from the previous timetables: **route 1** 13; **2** six; **6/29** five (one not used off peak); **7/8** 13 (two not used off peak); **9** 13 (two not used off peak).
Double-deckers are used on 2 (ideally on all six workings), 1, sometimes on 6/29, and on the 7/29 schooldays extra bus.

6515 has had its livery amended to celebrate Southend gaining City status, as illustrated on the inside front cover; details on page 1.
Against expectations, Southend Transport liveried Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus 3816 has remained in service despite the PVR reduction; it is the last of its type in use here. It is the oldest bus in use at Southend and was recently given a fresh MOT.

Last month we illustrated the cover of the new timetable booklet for Colchester, asking if Southend would be similarly graced. Well the answer is not, the only publicity for the Southend changes was a single-sided A5 flyer with a summary of the changes; the actual timetables are only available online. We invited Arriva to explain why Southend does not deserve a timetable book yet Colchester does, unfortunately they have not replied by our press deadline.

Harlow

Acquired Vehicles

T23 LJ08 CUW Enviro 400 from Arriva London in June 2022 (already a driver trainer).

The allocation of the VDLs to route 724 has been patchy. For example, 3798 was on 724 on 1 July, but subsequently has been used exclusively on other routes. In recent weeks there have been days when only one of the seven vehicles on the route has been a VDL although towards the end of July things improved.

Ware based Optare Versa 2404 (YJ58 PFV) was in use on route 9 on 7 July (tracking as 4083 which has been off road for some time).

With thanks to John Card, Matthew Evans, Jonathan Thompson, Peter Halls, Adam Kelleher, LOTS and the M&D & EK Bus Club.

Scruffy Arriva Harlow 1466 (KE55 KTD), hardly "creating desire" with a vehicle that's clearly unloved, turns into the bus station approach through the bus only right turn off Velizy Avenue on 25 July 2022 whilst working circular service 3 in Harlow. The destination blind was working but frustrated my camera. It had been the final bus in the attractive Network Harlow livery and was last repainted in October 2017. Now the darker blue of the old Network colours is showing through in multiple places on the bus. **Richard Delahoy**

Airport Connections

Arriva Harlow 11.5m Enviro 200 MMCs in action.

Harlow depot received a batch of 12 in 2017 (4076-87) for routes 508/9/10 to Stansted Airport, for which they carry rather understated route branding as well as the airport's name under the driver's cab. As reported last month, four of this batch (plus four others) were recently sold to Arriva Midlands. One of those still at Harlow, 4084 (YX17 NHB), pauses at the new, very minimalist Interchange in Bishop's Stortford on 25 July 2022 on a 508 heading for Harlow, where 4101 (YX17 NYS) was laying over in the bus station on the same day between trips on the 724 to Heathrow, despite, as also reported last month, eight VDL / Wrightbus Pulsar 2s having been acquired for this route. This bus was amongst those transferred from Gillingham and Maidstone in February 2021 to upgrade the 724 route to Euro VI compliant buses, necessitated by the London ULEZ. The Stansted batch are 45 seaters but 4101, which retains Sapphire livery from its use on the 700 (Chatham to Maidstone) only seats 38.
Both **Richard Delahoy**

Colchester's StreetLite 4324 (SK68 TWV), also in Sapphire livery and branded for route 133, on route 8 in Turner Road Colchester on 16 June 2022, near to Wryneck Close bus stop.
Alan Moore

hedingham chambers

by Mark Lloyd

Acquired Vehicles

270	YX60 FCE	ADL Enviro 200 B29D ex Go Ahead London SE75
	YX57 BXC/D/E/F/H	ADL Enviro 200 B37F ex East Yorkshire 355-8/60. BXC/F/H are reported at Clacton.
SOE20	LX09 AZC	ADL E200 Dart / Optare (East Lancs) Esteem B29D ex Go Ahead London L SOE20 for Driver Training
SOE28	LX09 AZP	ADL E200 Dart / Optare (East Lancs) Esteem B29D ex Go Ahead London SOE28 for Driver Training

The Esteems are to replace East Lancs bodied Scanias currently in use as Driver Trainers.

Vehicles on Loan

297	SN10 CCZ	ADL Enviro 200 on loan from Konectbus
501	Y824 TGH	Volvo B7TL / Plaxton President (Partial Open Top) from private owner, formerly Go Ahead London

Withdrawn Vehicles

510	LB02 YWX	Withdrawn and stored at KN
586	X584 EGK	Withdrawn and stored at HD

Significant Allocations

283	HD - CN	by 25 July	511	HD - KN	by 25 July
284	CNu - CN	by 1 August	514	KN - HD	by 30 June
287	CN - KN	by 6 July	514	HD - KN	by 18 July
470	HD - CN	by 1 August	911	HD - CN	by 1 August
501	Loan - CN	by 15 June			

Fleet News

500 (PL51 LDJ), which was illustrated in EBM 699, suffered damage by hitting the Venetian pier bridge in Clacton after attending a publicity and recruitment day in front of the pier on 10 July. Fortunately nobody was injured. Damage was sustained to the front upper screen, destination box and upper side windows and the impact bent the rails back along the sides of the vehicle. Closed top double-deckers substituted on route 134 during the following week, 528, 850, 528 again, 521, 641 respectively between 11 and 15 July. 501 (Y824 TGH) has been hired from a private owner (ex-GAL). It is familiar with Essex as it was used on the Southend 68 seafront service by GAL prior to Ensignbus taking over (so reminiscent of Eastern National open toppers being used in both Southend and Clacton!). 501 is dual-door and partial open top, the front section is covered with an ingenious Perspex cover over the stairwell and drain to keep the stairs area dry as the roof stops short of the stairwell. It is still in heritage London General livery with fleet number PVL224. It commenced service on 16 July with on hire vinyls in the front nearside window and a laminated Clacton Breeze emblem between the two doors. Both doors are used in service. A photo is on the rear cover and a photo of it in service at Southend in 2019 was included in last September's EBM (689).

Meanwhile fellow President 586 is no longer shown on Bustimes and is reported withdrawn and stored at HD. Similar 584 is also not shown on Bustimes, but appears to be back in use again at CN, possibly just as a driver shuttle.

531 (LX59 DCF), ex WVL323, is the first Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 2 to be converted to single door and repainted into Hedingham livery. It arrived back at Clacton depot for further service preparation by 8 July.

297 is on loan from Konectbus and joins Hedingham liveried sisters 295/6 once again.

To cover the 9/105/107 contracts gained from 1 August 2022, 283 was transferred from HD along with 470 which is a very rare visitor to Clacton depot. Additionally at long last, 284 (OU57 FGX) has entered service from CN, still in its old Carousel livery but with Hedingham fleet names. 296 (SN10 CCY) currently has a super rear police recruitment advert applied.

Service News

In addition to the ECC tender changes listed in EBM 699, the 40 in Witham has been lost to First Essex, also from 31 July 2022.

Last month we noted that the ECC tender wins from 31 July would strengthen Hedingham's dominant control of bus services in the Tendring peninsula. In fact, from that date they operate all local services in the area apart from M-S evening 74B and Sunday 76 (Clacton to Colchester, both First Essex) and schooldays 702 (Frinton-on-Sea - Colchester Norman Way Schools, Stephensons). Hedingham also operate the services to the two Tendring Technology College sites at Thorpe-le-Soken and Frinton-on-Sea, but these are school contracts, not local bus services.

Most Clacton single deckers, except those transferred in the first week of August, have cove panel adverts for the Seasiders ticket, with "Clacton - Harwich - Mersea - Colchester - Braintree - Maldon - Halstead" listed, advertising the one day ticket links to the coast.

With thanks to Robert Appleton, Stephen Barham, Colin Berry, John Podgorski and the Hedingham website.

Corporate News
A correction to last month re First Essex and First Eastern Counties MDs. It is true that since 2017 the FEC MD was also the MD of FE and he remains as FEC MD, but since around 2020 FE have again had their own MD. Apologies to those concerned for the error.

Acquired Vehicles
First Essex are acquiring a batch of ex-Arriva London 59-reg Trident / Enviro 400s from Ensignbus to replace the remaining President and ALX400 bodied Tridents. They are being converted to single-door and having white LEDs fitted at Ensignbus and repainted to Essex Bus green at Mardens. Fifteen in total are expected. Reported by 7 August have been:
34451 (LJ59 LXP); 34452 (LJ59 LXR); 34453 (LJ59 LXS); 34454 (LJ59 LXT); 34455 (LJ59 LYK); 34458 (LJ59 LYS); 34459 (LJ59 LYT); 34462 (LJ59 LYW); 34463 (LJ59 LZD).
Of these, the first to be delivered to Hadleigh depot was 34454 on 5 August. Full details next month.

69148 MX06 VOA YV3R6G7226A113765 K933 B43F 06/06 First Manchester 69148
Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipse Urban. Acquired 26 July 2022 (at Westway, Chelmsford) from Adderley Green, First Midlands and South Yorkshire (it had still been in service there up to 21 June). Converted to a driver trainer (possibly at Thorntons) and repainted into all over driver trainer red, but without any vinyls when it arrived, see photo on page 25. When Rotala purchased the Bolton depot and its bus services from First Greater Manchester on 11 August 2019 (operating as Diamond Bus North West) 69148 went on loan to the new owners. It returned to First, at Midlands and South Yorkshire, sometime between July 2020 and June 2021.

Further to last month, acquired Enviro 200s 44171-8 seem to have settled down on shuttle routes at Chelmsford, although they still do make occasional appearances on 'green' routes. As reported last month, 44176-8 entered service on Sunday 10 July, then the next day, the final one, 44173, did so. To clarify the livery, the darker shade of red is much lighter than that on the four acquired ex Southampton 'City Red' StreetLites (63061/3-5, since repainted green), on those four the darker shade was more of a maroon colour.

Allocation Changes
BN-Basildon; CF-Chelmsford; CR-Colchester; HH-Hadleigh; DS-Driving School; FG-First Group cascade (to / from another First company); oos-out of service.

Period 4 2022/23 (26 June - 23 July)
32249 CF (oos)-Disposal, 32530 CR (oos)-CR, 32631 CF (oos)-Disposal, 32641 CF-CF(oos), 33098 HH-HH (oos),
33413 BN (oos)-BN, 33561 BN-HH, 42487 CF-CF (oos), 42895 CF-CF (oos), 42923 CF (oos)-Disposal, 44171 CF (oos)-CF,
44172 CF (oos)-CF, 44173 Acquired-CF, 44174 Acquired-CF, 44175 Acquired-CF, 44176 Acquired-CF, 44177 Acquired-CF,
44178 Acquired-CF, 47655 BN-CR, 47656 BN-CR, 47658 BN-CR, 63332 CR (oos)-Disposal, 66798 CR (oos)-Disposal,
66799 CF-CF (oos), 66810 CR (oos)-Disposal, 66812 CF-CF (oos), 66830 CF (oos)-Disposal, 66837 CF-CF (oos),
66872 CF-CF (oos), 67192 HH (oos)-BN, 67193 CF-BN, 67195 CF-BN, 67735 CR-CF, 67755 CR (oos)-CR, 67756 CR-CF,
67779 CR (oos)-CR, 69429 CF (oos)-Disposal
42487 is now being stripped for spares, its last day of service was 15 July, on route 42A. This is a significant withdrawal; it was the last Transbus Dart in service and the last vehicle in service which had carried a pre Sema, pre March 2004 local fleet number, 778.
47655-8 (47657 in Period 5) have transferred to Colchester because shorter vehicles are required on some ECC contract routes gained from 31 July. These transfers, plus earlier ones to Hadleigh, have left just two StreetLites remaining at Basildon, 47653/4.

Disposals
32631, 66798 and 66810 to Ensignbus July 2022, as reported last month.
32249, 42923 and 66830 all at Ensignbus by 19 July 2022. 42923 (EU05 AUP) was one of the last three vehicles in the fleet with an Essex issued (Chelmsford DVLA office) registration. The two remaining are 44596 (EU60 LFS) and 69434 (EU58 JWZ), although the former was a re-registration, it was originally Jersey J52083.
63332 towed away for scrap from Quayside Depot, Colchester by Trevor Wigley, Barnsley on 12 July. As reported in EBM 688 (August 2021), 63332 caught fire whilst on the 0559 service 71 from Colchester to Chelmsford on 26 July last year, having just turned off the A12 to Witham. The fire was in the engine bay and it caused significant interior damage. It has since been stripped for spares and now becomes the first StreetLite to be disposed of.
69429, July 2022 (accident damaged, not known where to).
We reported in EBM 689 (September 2021) that 32640 was out of service following an RTC. The next month 32640 was reported as being seen in the scrap line at Westway on 23 September. It was still there on 8 November but had gone by 13 December. Then in

EBM 692 (December 2021) we reported that 32530 had received its engine and gearbox. We have had no reports of 32640 since, but we now understand that it was sold for scrap a few months ago. Given the above timeline we will record this as sold for scrap in December 2021, but if anyone has any more details, i.e., exact date and where it went to, that would be very helpful.

Colchester Zoo Overall Advert

Following repairs to accident damage, Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 37133 (SN57 HDH) has received an overall advert for Colchester Zoo, to mark the Zoo's 60th anniversary next year. Front and back are purple (very similar to Platinum Jubilee bus 33983) with wraps on the side. The livery is similar in colours to the X62 one 37133 had when in Scotland, as illustrated in EBM Extra 1. Before receiving the zoo livery it had been in route 62 Urban 2 livery with green front. It arrived back at Quayside, Colchester from Mardens on 29 July 2022 and was on display at the zoo the next day. Below photo taken before it left Mardens on 29th. The nearside features an illustration of an elephant. **John G Lidstone**

Other Repaints

33411 from First West of England orange 'Excel' livery to Essex Bus green, seen repainted at Basildon depot on 27 June (but possibly repainted a month or so prior to this). However, over six months after acquisition, this bus has still not entered service with First Essex.
63064 (July) and 63063 (seen 5 August without vinyls) from Southampton 'City Reds' to Essex Bus green, thus eliminating the City Reds livery from the fleet.
67190 from Park & Ride black to Essex Bus green, seen on route 300 on 14 July (but without any vinyls).
67779 from blue all over advert for Contactless / App (which was an adaptation of its acquired Midland Bluebird two-tone blue livery) to Essex Bus green, seen back at Quayside, Colchester on 21 July and on route 371 the next day. This is the first Enviro 300 to receive new livery plus also the first Colchester allocated vehicle to do so.
69519 from Urban livery to Essex Bus green following repairs to accident damage. It re-entered service on routes 28/22 on 25 July without vinyls. These were added on 2 August.
Further to EBM 698 and the photo in EBM 699, 67165 was seen on 27 July with vinyls now applied.

Services

The winning of some ECC contracts, as listed in 'Service Revisions' last month, has reintroduced some duplicate route numbers to First Essex's services. These are 1A (Colchester and Basildon), 80A (Colchester and Chelmsford [Brentwood area]), 21 (both operated by Hadleigh M-F, but the Basildon to North Benfleet version operated by Basildon on Saturdays, as it used to be when FE previously ran

the Saturday service) and 104 (Colchester and Basildon). Three of these pairings are far away from each other, but one 21 serves South Benfleet and the other North Benfleet, and both operate from the same depot on five days a week!

Some of these routes are being operated by depots other than the obvious; this may be due to linking with other routes and/or driver availability. As mentioned, the Basildon to North Benfleet 21 is being operated by Hadleigh rather than Basildon on five days out of six (although Hadleigh depot isn't far from North Benfleet) and the Wickford peak journey shorts on route 14 are operated by Hadleigh rather than Basildon. Chelmsford still operates the Wickford shorts on the 14 in the off peak, plus the journeys that extend to & from Chelmsford.

Service 83/A, Colchester - Bures, serves Bures in Suffolk twice a day on Mondays to Saturdays, journeys from Colchester at 1000 and 1350, returning from Bures Church at 1045 and 1445. Bures itself is divided by the River Stour, the boundary between Essex and Suffolk. Mount Bures, and Bures Hamlet are in Essex, Bures St Mary is in Suffolk, which is where service 83/A terminates, at St Mary's Church. Service 80/A, Colchester - Boxted, has one journey in each direction on Mondays to Saturdays extended to & from Dedham via Stratford St Mary, 1245 Colchester - Dedham Marlborough Head 80 and 1652 Dedham Lamb Corner - Colchester 80A. Once again the River Stour is the border between Essex and Suffolk. In this area Boxted, Langham and Dedham are in Essex, Stratford St Mary is in Suffolk. These services are the first First Essex routes to serve Suffolk since route 193, Ardleigh - East Bergholt High School, ran on the last day of term on 23 July 2014.

First Essex have also gained route 552 (peak hours M-F Ramsden Heath - Billericay Station am, reverse pm), which, although never previously operated by them, was numbered to follow on from their 551. However, the 551 was renumbered 9 in May 2013!

Reports of vehicles on the acquired ECC routes on the first day, 1 August (or first service day after this if the services don't run on Mondays), in fleet number order, bold indicates operated the first journey.

Colchester
4 **47655, 47656** (both first journeys at 0855, 47655 from Stanway, 47656 from The Hythe); 11 32532, 47655, 47656, **63333**; 80/A **47657**; 81/A **47655**, 47657, 63344; 82/A/B 32087, 47658, **69515**; 83/A/B 32087, **47658,** 67742.

Chelmsford
3 **44550**, 44599, 44914; 40 **44006**; 345 (Wednesdays only, so first day was 3rd) **44006.**

Basildon
1A (Saturdays only so first day was 6th) **44910**; 21 (Saturday 6th as M-F operated by Hadleigh) **47654**; 104/6 **44909**; 256 (Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays only so first day was 2nd) **47654**; 552 47653, **67902**.

Hadleigh
14 (peak extras to the main 13/A & 14 service run by Chelmsford depot) 47525, **47647**; 21 **47643**; 21C **47529**, 63170; 63 (Wednesdays and Fridays only so first day was 3rd) **44915** (a Period 5 transfer from Chelmsford).

Further info on routes 350/1 in addition to that included in 'Service Revisions'. The 350 is an hourly service between 0700 and 1900 which during the day operates approximately half hour before and after the 351, so during the duration of these works the service between Chelmsford and Margaretting Black Bull is double what it normally is.

Right: A First Essex bus on route 104 - but not between Colchester and Harwich! Basildon's last Trident / President, 33186 (LT52 WVB), with surely not much time left in service given the acquisitions noted above, having just left Basildon Bus Station on the second day of FE operation of Monday - Friday Basildon Bus Station - Langdon Hills Tesco ECC contract 104/6 on 2 August 2022. **William Morrison**

Area News & Workings

Colchester
(All vehicles listed below allocated to CR except where stated. All dates July 2022 except where stated.)
On 20 July, only 32539 remained on the 'scrap line'. However, it is believed that this vehicle is awaiting a new engine and will return to service . So after many months there are no vehicles at Quayside awaiting collection for scrap.

As well as the new ECC contracts noted above, from 1 August Colchester are operating two extra car lines on service 370 transferred from Chelmsford along with two vehicles (32672/6, Period 5) and the late ECC 371 on Saturdays only (the working that finishes at Witham at 2305). The Colchester PVR will be 63 from September (up from the 58 reported in EBM 698).
News of the Harwich routes (5 July - 3 August 2022). The 0915 Mistley - Colchester 104 and 1935 Colchester - Harwich 104 continued as double deck workings, with 21 different Volvo B7TL and just one Volvo B9TL, 37140 on 14 July. One exception was on 20 July when 66970 off S3/S9 worked 1935 Colchester - Harwich 104 instead of a double-decker off 86. The only other double deck working was by 32087 on 11 July, working an all-day duty starting with 0605 Harwich - Colchester 104. All other all-day duties were single deck, using all seven of Colchester's Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipse, and 11 of the 12 ADL Enviro 300, before transfers to Chelmsford commenced. 67755 was the Enviro 300 not spotted. Eight StreetLites also worked on all-day duties, including the three transferred from Basildon during Period 4: 47658 worked 0930 Colchester - Harwich 104 and 1100 return on 13 July, then it worked an all-day duty on Saturday 30 July; 47656 worked on an all-day duty on 29 July starting with 0705 Harwich - Colchester 104; 47655 worked one of the Sunday 75/102 duties on 31 July.
Duties were revised from 1 August, affecting some of the workings on 103/4, as follows. One bus works the 0720 Harwich - Colchester 103, then 0900 Colchester - Chelmsford 371, staying on 370/371/X71 for the rest of the day, ending with a dead run back from Chelmsford at 1905. Another bus works 0633 Braintree - Colchester 370, 0738 Colchester - Stanway S2, 0835 Wakes Colne - Colchester 82A, then on 103/4 for the rest of the day, starting with the 0930 ex Colchester.

Clacton routes. 74B: 32540 (18th), 32629 (19th), 32669 (3 August), ex-CF 32672 (4 & 5 August), 32673 (15th), 37007 (14th), 37015 (11th, 27th, 30th), 37020 (12th), 37034 (25th), 37035 (23rd, 29th), 37037 (2 August), 37053 (13th), 37054 (28th), 37138 (6 August), 37140 (1 August), 66970 (16th), 67736 (20th), 67738 (26th). In EBM 699, 37135 on 10 July should have been 9th.
76 (in date order): 37062 (17th), 32530 & 37005 (24th), 37036 (31st), 66804 (7 August).
We started listing the Clacton routes during the pandemic to record whether single-deckers or double-deckers were mainly used. There is no longer a need to list these in such detail so we will cease to do so from next month, but we will still report on more unusual workings. Anyone who still wants to see what is used on a daily basis can obtain this information from Bustimes.
37015 a double-decker on 4 (5 August).

Chelmsford

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CF except where stated. All dates July 2022 except where stated.)
Since the service changes of 17 April, the previous practice of an Airlink Scania operating a Chelmsford to Colchester and return on school day afternoons has ceased. 36839 on 371 on 19 July was therefore unusual. The blinds on this batch of buses haven't been updated (they still have nearside route numbers at the front) and so the old 71X route number was displayed, with '371' on a piece of paper in the windscreen. 36838 then appeared on the route on 29th.
42936 on temporary route 350 on first day (25th). On 6 August, 67750, 67779 and 69515 (all Colchester allocated) were on loan to Chelmsford, covering CF work on routes 70 & 71 with CR drivers.
DS66936 on driver training in Chignall Road (12th), DS66848 on driver training in Witham (26th).

Below: Back in the days when it used to rain in Essex (July 2022 was the driest July in South East England since records began in 1836) Chelmsford's Enviro 200 MMC 44659 (YX66 WBD) is seen on the last 13A of the day from Wickford to Chelmsford on 6 June 2022, under stormy skies just as heavy rain started at Ramsden Heath White Horse. Photo taken by its driver **David Edwards**.

Basildon & Hadleigh

(All vehicles listed below allocated to BN except where stated. All dates July 2022 except where stated.)

We commented in a photo caption last month that after 67165 returned to service on 30 May following its repaint into Essex Bus green it was a regular on route X10, suggesting that Airlink blue livery may have been more appropriate, but we added the caveat that we didn't know the plans for which vehicles will be used on the X10 in the longer-term. Those plans now seem to be coming clearer. As can be seen from 'Allocations' above, more ex Park & Ride Enviro 200 MMCs have transferred to Basildon in Period 4 (and a further one so far in Period 5, 67189). The first seven of the nine are now at Basildon, 67189-5. From around 18 July, the two blue Airlink Enviro 200 MMCs, and others in the batch that were new for the X10 & X30, have stopped being regularly used on the X10 (although they continue to make occasional appearances after this date) and instead the route has been mainly covered by these ex P&R ones. The advantage of the latter is that they have 6 cylinder engines, but they don't have the luggage racks the former have. Three of the latter (67190-3) have been repainted from black to Essex Bus green, but it would seem likely that some of the others will receive Airlink blue in time. The two existing blue MMCs (67161/3) are now mainly used on the 300 and shuttles.

Right: Colourful seats. NBC green liveried Enviro 400 33424 has comfortable seats, even if the moquette is now starting to fray. In the photo the main colour moquette is what it was acquired with and we assume is what it had when new to JPT Travel, Manchester (it was later operated by Ensignbus). The seat cushion on the inside front seat is a standard First replacement, but we have no idea where the moquette on the seat behind came from.
Basildon, 11 June 2022. **Jonathan Cush**

The transfer away of StreetLites to Colchester has meant that in the last two weeks of First Essex operating the Monday-Saturday 94/A/B (until 30 July) double-deckers once again became common. Prior to the pandemic, the routes had been predominantly double deck operated. Reported were 33413 (20th), 33416 (22nd), 33424 (13th), 33504 (23rd), 33507 (19th), 33548 (28th), 33549 (28th), 33551 (20th), 33552 (28th), 33553 (19th, 26th), 33555 (21st), 33557 (11th, 25th), 33558 (21st), 33563 (22nd), 33567 (27th), 33568 (18th), 33570 (20th), 33572 (29th). Mini Enviro 200s 44908-10, remaining SLs (47653/4) plus other SLs before their transfer were also used in this period. Enviro 200 MMC 67166 was unusual on 18th. This bus was also unusual on route 9 on 13th, one of only two reports of a single-decker on the route, the other being 44908 on 2 August.

Double-deckers on 16: 33416 (2 August), 33418 (20th), 33419 (16th), 33544 (19th, 27th), 33551 & 33552 (both 4 August), 33557 (17th), 33570 (16th), plus 67166 (again!) an unusual Enviro 200 MMC on 15th.

Double-deckers on 251: 33544 (31st), 33558 (24th). Also Mini Enviros 44908 & 44910 on 17th, the latter again on 7 August. On all four of these Sundays StreetLite 47653 also worked on the route. The other SL remaining at Basildon, 47654, operated on 7 August.

Double-deckers appear quite regularly on Basildon shuttle routes B1 and B2, including Trident / President 33186 on B1 on 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 26th, 27th & 28th. More unusual were green 33418 (28th) on B3 and green 33414 (25th), 33572 (15th) and 33573 (12th) on B4. Still no reports of double-deckers on B5.

Hadleigh's last Dart, 42956, worked on routes 22 & 28 on Monday 1 August, but the next afternoon it was on route C1 at Chelmsford. But Southend still saw a Dart in operation on that day as CF42935 was on route 3, Chelmsford to Southend, which First Essex had taken over from Arrow Taxis on the 1st.

Other unusual / interesting workings: 32260 on 106 (2 August); 33186 on 104 & 106 (2 August), again on 106 on 4 August; 33525 at Southend Pride on 16th; HH33987 an unusual double-decker on 14 (Wickford shorts, 2 August); 44908 on 200 (20th); 69902 on school route 625 (19th); 67165 on school route 725 (21st); 69915 on X10 (28th); HH33750 and HH33985 worked late night emergency rail from Upminster to Chafford Hundred / Grays and Pitsea on 6 August evening due to signal problems on the Tilbury loop.

With thanks to Robert Appleton, Stephen Barham, Jon Collins, David Edwards, Paul Harvey, John Lidstone, John Podgorski, Ian Ransom, Derek Stebbing, Chris Stewart, Andrew Toms, Rob Webb, Robert West, Bustimes, Bus Lists on the Web, Facebook, Essex Buses Google group and Terminus.

First Essex News in Pictures

As reported in 'Service Revisions' a temporary route 350 has been introduced for the summer whilst gas pipe renewal works are being undertaken in Ingatestone. Dart / Pointer 42934 is seen on the route outside Chelmsford Railway Station on 4 August 2022.

David Moth

A photo of a different version of the 350 was in EBM 679.

The planned future for Hadleigh depot: mainly Enviro 400s and StreetLites in Essex Bus green livery. 33750 (SN12 AOK) now with vinyls (in comparison to the photo in last month's EBM) and 63161 (SN64 CHX) at Hullbridge on 2 July 2022. 33750 had just been subbed by the StreetLite on route 20. The plain one shade front of the SL contrasts with the over fussy three shade front of the Enviro 400. Perhaps the single deck Enviros and Volvos, with two shades at the front, have got the balance right.

Jamie Marquis

Last month we mentioned that Basildon Bus Station is being renovated. Here StreetLite 63168 (SN64 CJU), on route 22 to Canvey, passes some of the works on 28 July 2022. The work moved on to a different group of bays from 9 August.

As reported in EBM 687 (July 2021) 63168 has a super rear advert for Gladwells Pet and Country Store, Lubards Lodge Farm, Hullbridge Road, Rayleigh.

Adam Kelleher

Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Ecplise Urban Contrasts

Urban 2 bodied 69515 (BJ11 ECN) transferred from Hadleigh to Colchester at the end of April 2022. Plans to transfer the other five have been delayed, as some of their expected replacements at HH, short StreetLites from BN, have gone to CR instead, to operate recently won ECC contracts. 69515 is seen on route 75 in Colchester Road, Heybridge on 17 July.

Dave Arnold

One of the others of the batch, 69519, has now been repainted into Essex Bus green following accident repairs, but in this photo of it on route 28 exiting Basildon Bus Station on 29 July 2022 it had yet to gain vinyls. It received these on 2 August.

Unlike the StreetLite on the opposite page, this has a contrasting dark shade of green on the sill under and around the windscreen.

David Hewitt

As reported on page 19, Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Ecplise Urban 69148 (MX06 VOA) has been acquired for driver training. This has original style Eclipse Urban bodywork. It too was yet to receive vinyls when seen at Westway, Chelmsford, just after acquisition at the end of July.

Lee Best

IPSWICH BUSES IN ESSEX

by Robert Appleton

The last day of term for Ipswich School was 6 July 2022. The afternoon departures on contracts from Ipswich School at 1625 on 5 July, taking pupils home to Essex were worked by:
3 (SGZ 1003) Volvo B11RT / Caetano Levante on 2A to Colchester Tollgate / Feering
51 (SGZ 3351) Scania OmniCity on 2B to Langham / Boxted / Colchester Braiswick
46 (SGZ 3346) Scania OmniCity on 2C to Colchester / Langenhoe
73 (YX59 BZN) ADL Enviro 200 (8.9m long) on 3 to Dedham / Dedham Heath
2 (SGZ 1002) Volvo B11RT / Caetano Levante on 6 to Halstead / Castle Hedingham
75 (GD10 MVM) ADL Enviro 200 (10.8m long) on 10 to Tendring / Frinton / Holland-on-Sea.

The last day of term for East Bergholt High School was 19 July. On the morning of 14 July the following buses served this High School and Essex:
32 (YR61 RRU) Scania OmniCity on 0803 Ipswich - East Bergholt High School - Manningtree 92, 0920 Manningtree - Ipswich 92
60 (PJ54 YZT) Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka on 0755 Colchester - East Bergholt High School - Ipswich 93
61 (PJ54 YZU) Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka on 0810 Ipswich - East Bergholt High School - Colchester 93A
37 (YR61 RUH) Scania OmniCity on 0813 Ardleigh - East Bergholt High School 693, then light to Ipswich
59 (PJ53 OLB) DAF DB250 / East Lancs Lowlander on 0821 Langham - East Bergholt High School 694, 0910 E Bergholt-Ipswich 94.

With schools on holiday, from 26 July the Monday to Friday journeys on 92/93/A were operated by single-deckers, following the normal practice on Saturdays. Nearly all journeys have been worked by Enviro 200s, including seat belt fitted 74 (DU60 LOJ) & 75 (GD10 MVM), and non-seat belt fitted 82 (YX63 LGF), 83 (KX58 GUW), 85 (KX59 GNY) & 101 (SN16 OGG). One exception was Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipse 162 (SK07 CGO) on 93 on 29 July.

Further to EBM 699 page 28, the last day of Ipswich Buses operating Colchester routes 4 & 11 was Friday 29 July, when 8.9m long Enviro 200s 71 & 72 (LX58 LMO/M) were used. The last day of Ipswich Buses operating Clacton - Mistley 2/A was Saturday 30 July, and 72 was in service in Essex again.

With thanks to Ipswich Transport Society Journal, Ipswich Buses website and Bustimes.

Below: Mini Enviro 200 70 (YX59 BZL) departing Clacton with the 1055 to Mistley on the penultimate day of Ipswich Buses operation, 29 July 2022. **Rob Boyce**

Bus Operations of Galleon Travel, Roydon by Adam Kelleher

New Vehicles

Further to EBM 699, the new Enviro 200 MMCs 1605-9 (YX22 OKA/B/C/D/E) are 9.7m long.
Two are normally on the 410 although double-deckers still appear on Saturdays.

Right: Rear view of new 1609 (YX22 OKE) on route 410 on the Hundred Acre Estate, Hoddesdon on 11 July 2022. **Allan White**

Acquired Vehicles

Further to EBM 698, it is reported that former Marshalls of Sutton-on-Trent Optare Solo YG02 FWL M920 is on loan, not acquired.
Further to EBM 697, E200 Dart / Optare (East Lancs) Esteem LX09 AZL, has not been numbered 1303 as we assumed following on from the other Esteem body (which was on a Dart) but 1409 with Enviro 200s.
The fleet numbers of the acquired Enviro 200s reported last month follow on and are 1410 (KX08 HMF, 8.9m) 1411/12 (LK08 DWA/E, 10.8m), 1413 (YX60 DXY, 8.9m), 1414 (YX12 FPY, 8.9m), 1415/16 (YX12 DHM/O, 10.8m), 1417 (ML62 OGY, 8.9m). It is possible that some vehicles were traded in in part exchange for these, but we don't have any information.

Disposals

All the Tempos have gone, bringing an end to the 15xx class of vehicles. The last was reported in use in April. 1501-4 (YJ11 EHH/O/S/W) to MB Services for export, 1505 (YJ11 EHG) scrapped following its collision with a Scania double-decker in the yard sometime last year after being stripped for parts (as reported in EBM 697, although a correction to that, the wrong fleet numbers were quoted.

Other News

Another double-decker has been returned to service, YP59 OEM.
The legal address on vehicles has been altered from Nazeing to Stansted.

With thanks to John Card and LOTS.

Right: Driver Trainer Transbus Dart / Pointer 1301 (KP02 PVO) in Braintree Bus Interchange on 29 July 2022, route learning for M-S routes 9/A (Great Notley Tesco - Great Bardfield, Alienor Avenue) which Central Connect took over from Stephensons on 1 August.
John Podgorski

Panther Travel

by Ian Ransom

From 1 August, services 80/A & 81/A transferred from Panther Travel to First Essex. The old order is seen opposite on 14 July 2022 with Panther Travel Enviro 200 KX11 EEH. Top: working 1245 80 Colchester - Boxted - Stratford St Mary - Dedham. It was entering Dedham along Mill Lane, about to turn left to stop at the bus stop on Brook Street in the centre of Dedham, as per the bottom photo. It then departed on 1319 Dedham - Dedham Heath - Langham - Colchester 81. Both **Robert Appleton**
In the rear view, just visible above the silver car, is the old metal bus stop hanging from the light grey building in front of KX11 EEH. This has been there for years and years, as explained on page 31.

On the last day of Panther operation, 30 July, Enviro 200 AB10 PAN was the early bus and similar AB62 PAN was the late bus. The latter fittingly operated the last trip as it had been the very first bus to operate at the start of these services back in 2016.
Preserved Leyland PD3/4 / Northern Counties 'Queen Mary' open top BUF 426C (new to Southdown in 1965 as a convertible open topper and in Southdown livery) was also used on the last day, duplicating three journeys, the 0900 80 Boxted - Colchester High Street, 0958 81A Dedham - Colchester High Street and 1245 80 Colchester Osborne Street - Dedham. It is seen below in front of Enviro 200 AB10 PAN at Ardleigh Road, Dedham on route 81. **Adam Barham**

Panther Travel

Passenger Notice – 80/81 Services

30th July 2022

Dear Passengers

As you are all aware, unfortunately 30th July will be our last day of operating these Essex County Council Services and as a very small company it will be an emotional day for us all. We thank all our passengers for your loyal support over the past 6 years and for the kind messages, cards and gifts we have received in recent weeks.

Weather and operational commitments permitting, we intend to supplement the normal service bus with our Vintage Open Top Bus on the following trips. The open top bus will be a free service. A small way of us saying thank you.

Open top bus Journeys

80	0900 Boxted – Colchester High Street 0921
81A	0958 Dedham, Long Road West – Colchester High Street 1034
80	1245 Colchester Osborne St – Dedham Long Road West 1326 (Via Boxted)

Once again, thank you and we will miss you!

In EBM 691 (November 2021) it was reported that Dennis Dart SLF / Plaxton Pointer X963 VAP had been acquired from Flagfinders, Braintree. This vehicle has now been sold to be converted into an office. Enviro 200 DB09 PAN (ex LJ09 KPR), withdrawn from service a couple of months ago, has been converted to single door. Enviro 200 LJ58 AUX has been sold for scrap, to Whip Street Motors, Branford, after being stripped for spares.

With thanks to Robert Appleton, Adam Barham and John Podgorski.

VECTARE

by Chris Stewart

Vehicles on Loan

Further to EBM699, hired white Enviro 200s 906/8 (YX22 OGM/O) actually remained with Vectare into late July but would now seem to have been returned. 908 was in use on Park & Ride on at least 12, 22 & 25 July and was very unusual on route 61 on 21 July, as seen right in Brentwood High Street.

Chris Stewart

906 had been working on routes around Epping during July.

New Vehicles

306 YX22 OGR ADL E20D / Enviro 200 MMC B39F 07/22

This is numerically the first, but was delivered last, of the current batch of Enviro 200 MMCs, 306-15 (YX22 OGR/S/T/U/V W/Y/Z, OHA/B). The acquisition of Enviro 200 MMCs 305 and 316/7 (the latter two are mini examples) was recorded in EBM 689 and these vehicles fill the gap. 301-4 were now sold Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipses.

306 and 315 are in fleet livery, the others are in ECC black Park & Ride livery. Correction to EBM 699, 314 remained unbranded as at 25 July, although it is a regular on 702 (Chelmer Valley).

306 was first recorded in service on 3 August.

311 unusually operated on routes around Epping between 18 and 26 July.

With thanks to Jonathan Cush and Steven Quy.

Below: Newly delivered 306 (YX22 OGR) is seen at Chignal Corner on 28 July 2022, on road test prior to entering service. Note the blind for the connecting service to Brentwood Station and also the old Essex County Council sign on the bus stop which is now being replaced by the Travel Essex logo, as illustrated on page 9. **Steven Quy**

Other Operators

by Roger A Smith

Airport Bus Express, Stansted Airport
Reported as being here are BN17 JHV, a Mercedes-Benz Tourismo C53FT, which arrived in January, previously with First South West and BN17 JHX, same but C55FT seating, which had arrived by May, previously with London Travel, Hoxton, London.

Galleon 2009, Great Hallingbury
Brand new here in February 2022 was SS71 GAL, a Higer C57FT bodied Scania K410EB6.

Jones, Braintree
New arrivals in April were SK22 BUO and SK22 BUP, a pair of Alexander Dennis E20D / Enviro 200s, B30F.

Peter Godward, Basildon
BF61 HCO, a Mercedes-Benz Tourismo C53FL, has gone to Drew Wilson, Carluke, South Lanarkshire, Scotland.

SBC Leisure, Leigh-On-Sea
Acquired is MIG 8172 (ex YT09 BKO), a Scania OmniCity, formerly Halton Transport 88 and still in their livery. It was noted at Newbury Park on 24 July 2022 on rail replacement.

Southend Pier Trains Update
Previous report was in EBM 696. On 14 July 2022 the second battery electric train was named William Bradley by Southend's Mayor, Kevin Robinson. William Bradley was the pier head light keeper from 1871 to 1891 and went on to be a councilman and alderman of the town. We don't think this second train has yet entered service and the other, named Sir David Amess, has also been out of use with door faults, leaving just the remaining old 1986 diesel train to provide the service.

With thanks to Richard Delahoy, Matthew Evans and the PSV Circle.

More Bus Stops (following on from page 9)

On page 28, just visible in Robert Appleton's photo is the old Eastern National metal bus stop flag hanging from a building in Brook Street in the centre of Dedham. This was illustrated in EBN 526 (February 2008) with a photo taken by Keith Shayshutt. In the following issue some further information was provided by Geoff Dodson and Chris Stewart. The bus stop is hanging from a decorative cast-iron bracket fixed to the wall of Gould House, a private property in Brook Street which is a Grade II (i.e. of regional importance) listed 18th century building. To remove or replace it would require Listed Building Consent. Since Keith's photo, the bus stop flag has been repainted, as seen in **Richard Delahoy**'s photo, right, taken on 26 April 2019. It is appropriate that from 1 August 2022 Eastern National's successor company First Essex serves this stop.

Below: Great Bardfield on 27 July 2022, see page 12. **R Delahoy**

Photo Captions

Inside Rear Cover - Kings Coaches of Colchester

Top: On Wednesday 6 July 2022 **Alan Moore** boarded Mercedes-Benz Tourismo KC20 ABC at the Kings Coaches garage in Copford for an 0645 departure to Davos. The coach made pick-ups at Feering and Witham before heading to Dover to catch a DFDS ferry to Calais. It then drove through France with a couple of stops before reaching the overnight hotel in Saarbrüken, Germany. The following day the party continued through France to the Swiss border and on to Davos for a five night stay. Friday was a rest day for the two drivers, Chris and Andy. Alan went by train to Zurich. Saturday was a visit to Chur with its old town, local bus company and quite a large Swiss PTT bus station over the railway station. In the afternoon they went on to Klosters. Sunday was the highlight of the trip. As the road from Davos to Filisur had been deemed unsuitable for large coaches. the group caught the local train to Filisur instead. People staying in Davos are given a Davos card which gives free travel on local buses and trains which meant no additional costs were incurred. They then caught the Bernina Express which took them high into the mountains and over the Bernina Pass, seeing a large glacier on the way. They stayed on the train to its destination in Tirano in Italy. They had a bit of time there before joining the coach riding back over the Bernina pass by road. There were a lot more sharp bends on the road than on the railway! Monday 11th was a half day trip to St Moritz, where Alan took the photo, returning to Davos about 1400, leaving the rest of the day free for exploring. Tuesday was the start of the return journey back to the UK, using the same hotel in Saarbrüken, Germany which is only a few miles from the French border. The final day was driving back across France to Calais for the DFDS ferry and then back to Copford. Alan says a very enjoyable trip safely driven by Chris and Andy in a very comfortable coach with reclining seats.

Bottom: On Saturday 16 July 2022, **John Salmon** and his wife resumed attending Chelmsford National Trust Group tours after the pandemic. They visited Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk (near Cromer) stopping on the way at Thornham Walks, Eye, Suffolk for refreshments. They too travelled on a Kings Coaches Mercedes-Benz Tourismo, brand new KC22 ABC (Kings are the usual providers for the CNTG tours). The coach is seen parked in a narrow lane at Thornham Walks (it was too long to get into small car park entrance). John also commented on the comfort of the coach.

Rear Cover - Open Toppers

It's the August issue, so a good reason to include a couple of open-top bus photos!

Top: As reported on page 18, 501 (Y824 TGH) is on temporary loan to Hedingham to cover for accident damaged 500. It is seen in Station Road, Clacton on 19 July 2022. A photo of this bus operating in Southend in July 2019 was included last September, EBM 689. **Alan Moore**

Bottom: Former Town & Country and Talisman, new to Eastern National, Bristol KSW / ECW open topper WNO 480 was reported as being acquired by Aire Valley Transport Group t/a Yesteryear Coaches in EBN 654 (October 2018). Although there have been photos of it in EBN over the years, including the front cover of both EBN 499 (November 2005) and EBN 525 (January 2008) when with Town & Country, it has not previously been illustrated with its new owners. On 9 July 2022 **David Bell** had only just arrived in York by train and just happened to be in the right place at the right time to capture a couple of shots of it heading through York city centre on its way to the race meeting at the Knavesmire, the location of York racecourse. Whilst it was a great shame to lose this bus to Essex, and for it to lose the Eastern National NBC livery it carried when with Talisman, it does look very smart in its new guise and it is good to see it being put to such good use.

Below

Three NIBS Enviro 200s parked up at angles very helpful for the camera at Brentwood Station on 9 June 2022. 445 (YX10 FFA), 451 (YX10 FFM) and 439 (YY15 FZD). **Robert Downton**

KINGS TOURS
KINGS TOURS
KC20 ABC

KINGS TOURS
KINGS TOURS
KC22 ABC
eyondtheimage
THORNHAM ESTA
Thornham Walks
Red House Yard

ESSEX BUS MAGAZINE Issue 700 August 2022

Reporting the Essex bus scene since 1964