

ESSEX BUS NEWS

The Monthly Magazine Of The Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

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**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

The groups Timetable subscription service is an excellent way to ensure that you've always got the latest timetables. 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. Please write to Peter Snell if you have a particular interest. We have photos of most operators and vehicles in Essex both past and present.

Members Adverts and Appeals

As a free service we will publish members for sales, wants and appeals for information. Publication will be 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 in 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 concerning Essex operators, routes and vehicles past and present. Please send these to the Managing Editor.

Any views expressed in articles are those of the articles author 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 Southend , Arriva Colchester, Arriva the Shires&Essex, Essex County council, Psv Circle, LOTS, Colin Sigston, Jon Cush, Richard Delahoy, Members of the Essex bus Y-Group, E.T.Buses, Evening Echo , Essex Chronical ,DETR,Financial Times, Steven R ,F.Allen

Contributions for the next issue of Essex Bus News to Sub-editors by 6th April and to the Managing editor by 10th April
The April magazine is due for posting on Monday 23rd April

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It's Over To you

We'd like to say thank you to everyone who has taken the trouble to let us know how much you're enjoying the new look Essex Bus News.

Each month we aim to provide at least 20 pages with the latest news, views, photos and articles and if you're a regular contributor we'd like to thank you for your help.

Your contributions are vital to ensure that we can continue to improve the magazine and if you haven't contributed before then why not start now?

Perhaps you've read some news concerning Essex bus routes, maybe you're an expert on a particular vehicle or work in the industry. Your contribution, no matter how small is very welcome.

We'd also like to publish more articles about Essex buses past and present. If you've got a story to tell then let us know!

With our new email report line at essexbusnews@hotmail.com it's now easier than ever before to get in touch with us.

We hope that you continue to enjoy the magazine but remember that with your help it would be an even better read.

Group Meeting

The next group meeting will be on **Tuesday 10th April at 8 pm** As usual it'll be held at the Freight house in Rochford . The Guest speaker will be Brian Smith from Linkfast, better known as S&M Coaches and Castle Point Bus Company .

Front Cover Photo— L674 RMD Volvo B6 /Alexander Dash . This much travelled bus, New to Capital Citybus was briefly allocated to First Eastern National at Colchester before moving on to First Leicester . Dave Arnolds photo shows it on Route 64 at Colchester Bus Station . First Eastern National now has six B6'S with fleetnumbers 621-626.

Essex Buses in The News

A Roundup of Recent Bus News

Dengie Transport Boost

The Dengie VillageLink bus service has received more than £1 million to continue running for another three years.

The Government cash boost was announced in February by deputy prime minister John Prescott.

Essex County Council was successful in its bid for Rural Bus Challenge funding with the award of £1,113,805. This will enable the Dengie VillageLink to build upon its most successful features as well as make improvements to aspects of the service which covers the Dengie peninsula and South Woodham Ferrers.'

Five new, larger, fully accessible minibuses will be acquired to increase capacity and these will be fitted with bike racks. Other improvements include roadside real-time information systems and more through ticketing.

Essex has also been awarded around £1.3 million in the next financial year to continue to support rural bus services.

Thurrock Funding

Thurrock council also came up trumps in the Rural Bus Challenge winning £288,270 for a Rural Bus Club - A project providing a demand responsive service to residents of rural Thurrock at the evenings and weekends when commercial rural services do not operate. The service will make use of existing resources, in partnership with Trans-Vol (Thurrock's community-based transport charity).

Green Light To Yellow School Buses In Essex

Essex is set to be one of the first areas in the country to try out yellow American style school buses after Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott gave the go-ahead to a series of pilots schemes last month.

FirstGroup will run the buses in partnership with parents, schools and local authorities. It's aimed at children and young people up to the age of 17 and it would provide a near door to door service.

Each bus would have the same driver every day, who would receive special training, and each child would have an allocated seat

FirstGroup is the second largest operator of school buses in the United States. It believes there's a strong market for an American-style dedicated school bus service in the UK and that this would encourage the switch from cars for the school journey. There will be up to 100 vehicles available for pilot projects and some of these will probably be used in Essex. These vehicles will be imported from the United States but will be modified to meet UK construction and use requirements and essential accessibility requirements.

Late News .Kingston's Expands . Kingstons of Essex is launching it's first commercial bus service in April . Route 511 will run from Loughton to Bluewater via Debden,Ongar,Brentwood and Lakeside on Mondays to Saturdays from 2nd April. There will be about 3 return journeys and it's likely that their recently acquired Lynx will be used. Kingston's have also registered four new school services from 23rd April.

New Road At Stansted Airport

More than 2,000 staff employed near Stansted Airport will find commuting much easier now a new road has been built.

The 2.3 kilometre airport road cost £2.7 million and serves employees at FLS Aerospace, the Stansted Hilton Hotel, the business park at Taylors End and Endeavour House.

It is part of BAA Stansted's drive to get more staff to use public transport and a free travel zone has been created between the airport terminal and FLS Aerospace.

First Eastern National Routes 308/9 and Arriva Route 510 are using the new road, which is an extension of Long Border Road from FLS Aerospace to a new roundabout at Round Coppice Road, near the Stansted Hilton Hotel.

The road was officially opened by children's Tv character Bob the Builder, and an Arriva 510 bus was the first to drive down it.

Bishops Stortford Bus Rethink

A direct bus from Dunmow to Bishop's Stortford could be reinstated – but only if enough people use it.

But passengers have been warned the return of the First Eastern National 33 service would be on a "use it or lose it" basis.

The bus company has promised to review its decision to end the direct route between Chelmsford and Bishop's Stortford.

From January 8, the service was terminated at Stansted Airport and Complaints were made that often there was no connecting bus to Bishop's Stortford, or that people were left standing around waiting for long periods of time.

Colin Riches, marketing manager for First Eastern National, said: "The changes were made because the route from Dunmow to Bishop's Stortford was not used by enough passengers. "This service is run on a purely commercial basis without any subsidy, which means that it has to pay its way. "The company keeps records of all tickets sold and these figures are checked before any changes are made."

Mr Riches said that if enough people asked for the through service to be reinstated, it was possible – but on the use it or lose it basis.

"In another part of Essex the company responded to a request to restore a service, but it was short lived since too few people were prepared to use it," he said.

Arriva Weathers The Storm

Arriva says that has successfully weathered a difficult year marred by flooding and rising fuel prices, with 2001 starting well

The announcement came as Arriva, which operates 7,000 buses around the UK, unveiled pre-tax profits of £72.1m, down from £198.7m last time, in line with expectations. However, the 1999 figures were flattered by an exceptional gain made on the disposal of Arriva's car leasing business.

Turnover on continuing operations rose slightly to £1.39bn, up from £1.37bn previously. Earnings per share were 25.3p against 68.9p.

The final dividend was 11.6p for a yearly total of 15.6p up 5 per cent from last time.

The group overcame higher fuel and labour costs to record a 12.7 per cent rise in operating profit at its UK bus operations, helped by the acquisition of MTL, the Liverpool bus operator. The operating margin fell slightly to 13.3 per cent from 13.5 per cent last time.

First Eastern National

Acquired Vehicle

5012 F240 NCY Leyland Lynx LX112L10ZR1R LX1383 DP47F 1989

This vehicle was acquired in 2/01 from Cardiff City Bus and is for use on Phoenix Student Travel contracts and is their livery, as is 5011 (G347 DHF) which was repainted in February.

Allocation Changes

1512 DT – CN ; 1513 DT – CN ; 4009 CN – DT ; 4028 CN – DT
5012 Acquired – CF

Repaint

Leyland Olympian 4007 has lost it's Chelmsford 2000 lettering, but now carries YOUREVENTS@CHELMSFORD instead

Service Changes

Service 9 Great Holland – Walton – New service from 6th March operated under contract to ECC . Operating on Tuesdays –Fridays, It partly replaces the commercial service which was withdrawn by First in January .

Service 302 – Saffron Walden – Bishops Stortford . This Essex County Council contract route will be withdrawn after the 25th March.

The **Stansted Coachlink** service from **Stansted to Colchester** operated by First Airport Buses, has had a minor revision with the 0700 ex Stansted and 1735 ex Colchester now serve Great Dunmow, High Street.

First Eastern National has registered route and timetable changes to Chelmsford town services 54/54a and 56/56A Chelmsford – North Springfield from 2nd April .

Rail Replacement

First Eastern National have been operating a regular rail replacement on Sundays during January and February between Shenfield and Witham .

On Sunday 11th February the vehicles noted included 3084 3103 3110 3112 4004 4007 4008 4024 4027 4028 4305.

Publicity

8.01.01 Timetable Leaflets for Routes 33, 47, 54, 56, 59, 308/309
A new Leaflet for 350/351 was issued in February

General

Many of ENs VRs are losing their second set of front lights etc and gaining silver/grey patches - drivers have to check that the vehicles are correctly working. If the lights don't work, EN's 'Panel Policy' comes into action - the non working component is panelled over, the theory being that if somethings not there , it can't be not working!

Flooding in Maldon on the afternoon of 8th February, led to service 31 (Chelmsford - Maldon) being suspended. Arriva's service 32 (Chelmsford - Ongar) was also suspended.

For those wondering why the Scantias at Colchester have Edinburgh registrations, the marks are from them being registered by Reliable Vehicles, Newbridge, the Scania dealer that many new FirstGroup Scantias pass through.

Real Time in Colchester

Seven bus stops in Colchester have been fitted with electronic displays which provide upto date running information via a satellite link withbuses. The stops are at Tollgate, Head Street, North Station (2), General Hospital, High Street , and St. Johns's St. From next week the stops will provide timetable information for service 65, eg: next bus due at.....1705 etc .

Seven vehicles have so far been fitted with the equipment. By April the system should be fully operational and be expanded over the next few months to routes 1,2,3,5,8,64 and 66. The system will also be linked with traffic lights so that buses running more than two minutes late will be given priority. Reports suggest that service 64 is to be converted to low floor operation.

A similar system is also being installed at some stops in Chelmsford.

From 26th February until 17th March due to the closure of Mill Road for drainage works services 65/A are revised as follows Ex Tollgate. As timetable/normal route to Mill Road/Brinkley Lane roundabout thence by Brinkley Lane, Highclere Road to High Woods (Tesco) arr 3 min early.

Ex High Wood (Tesco). depart 2 min early via normal route to Severalls Lane/Mill Rd roundabout then return Severall Lane/Brinkley Lane to Mill Road roundabout

Unusual Workings

- 30.1.01 CF 1520 on service 352 (1520 is branded for 31/31X)
- 9.2.01 CF 2903 on service 42 (usually Dart SLF)
- 22.2.01 CF 1428 on Diamond Service (usually Dart SLF)
- 2.3.01 CF 2908 on service 33 (usually Plaxton-bodied Dart)
- 3.3.01 CR 1509 on service 65A (usually Dart SLF)
- CR 2830 on service P&R C2 (usually double-decker)

The continued unavailability of Dart SLF 740, following its theft from Chelmsford means that at least one vehicle on service 42 is a 'visitor'. Normally this is a S registered Dart SLF.

Rail Replacement between Shenfield and Witham on 11.2.01 saw at least 3084, 3103/10/2, 4007/8/24/7/8, 4305 in use.

Dart SLF now regularly appear on service 350/1 (Chelmsford - Romford), normally at least one a day. This will no longer be treated as unusual

FLEET CHANGES

Disposals

353 to First Eastern Counties

Allocation Changes

(Period ending 25 February 2001)

4031 BN-D/L(D) 4032 BN-D/L(D) 5005 CF-BN

Vehicle Requirements

Unchanged from EBN442 except that Basildon has no spare double-decker (and one of its allocation is the above-mentioned Phoenix Student Travel Olympian 5005: XWY478X)

This Month's First Thamesway News

Route 193 Retained

Good news for the Company is that they have won the next tender from Transport for London (TfL) covering service 193 (Oldchurch Hospital, Romford – Upminster County Park Estate), starting in September. It will be operated with new low-floor vehicles from Romford depot, expected to be a batch of Optare Solos (provided that a trial run is successful). The contract also includes a Sunday service. It will presumably be for 5 years, extended to 7 subject to satisfactory performance under the 'Quality Incentive Contract' scheme. In the same round of tendering, First Thamesway have retained the contract for the Schools service 646 from Noak Hill to Upminster, operated by Basildon depot (usually a Lynx). It is understood that they have not, however, re-tendered for the Essex CC-supported 200, 301 or 500 mentioned in EBN442 (the contracts for which are believed to expire in July).

Village Link

Regarding the Village Link 19-22 routes, the vehicle used on Friday 19th January was 2657 and not 2659 as given last month (sorry - I was too busy photographing it in a blizzard to take in which vehicle it was!). There were some initial press reports that villagers were campaigning to have at least some of these services reinstated, but so far nothing else has been heard.

Mobility Dart

Dart/Marshall 855 has appeared on the 25A, 751 and 752 as well as the 269, while 'Super 8' liveried Darts are not unusual on the 269 or 752 either. Phoenix 5005 has already been used on Sunday Colchester line rail replacements and was expected to appear again between Shenfield and Witham on 11th March.

Green Line Fares

First Thamesway have increased fares on the Green Line 721, but to avoid conflict with competition regulations Arriva Southend have not yet followed suit; Thamesway vehicles now carry fleetnames behind the passenger door so that they can be identified by passengers.

Brentwood Double Deckers

Following the 12th February revision, Brentwood/Hutton local 77/77A retains one BN double-deck working in the morning, the 09.02 from Shenfield Station finishing back at Brentwood (09.30) – this follows on from a schools contract (and has been 3109, 4026 and 4030 so far). A BN single-deck works the 07.08 from Brentwood, returning at 08.00 after two circuits; often a Dart, this was red-liveried Volvo 35 on 7th and 8th March (35 having also appeared in Brentwood, presumably on a schools contract, on the 5th). The Hutton Village short 751's are now an RD duty (and therefore a Mercedes 709 or 811), and then operate one lap of the 77 leaving Shenfield at 07.57. In the evening, a different BN double-decker duty covers five circuits starting from Brentwood High Street at 16.53. To combat overcrowding, Mercedes 811D's are used wherever possible at other times in preference to 709's, although this means that BT-liveried 2662 does not make such regular appearances. It may be worth recording that the Monday to Friday service operates via the forecourt of the BT building, and has done since Kavanaghs Road was closed for bridge works during March 2000.

Hadleigh VR's

Two First Eastern National VRT's were noted in Hadleigh depot on 6.3.01, Schools contract vehicles apparently now staying at III during the day rather than returning to Chelmsford. Observation of service 25 (Basildon to Southend) at Shotgate on the same day revealed Olympian 4005, Lynx 1411 and SLF Dart 709 in succession.

Other Unusual Workings

7.2.01	VRT 3069 on service 2
8.2.01	808 on service 3B (normally a Dart) 955 on Canvey Clipper (usually an SLF Dart)
9.2.01	Dart 931 seen in Grays heading for Southend on the 721
26.2.01	'Famous Five' branded Dart 735 on service 100
1.3.01	946 on Canvey Clipper

SERVICE CHANGES

King's Road, Brentwood reopened on 5th February as a result of which First Eastern National 73 and First Thamesway 77/77A, 268 & 269 have all reverted to their normal route.

PUBLICITY MATERIAL

14.2.01	New leaflet for 77/77A (with photograph of 2662 outside BT building)
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ARRIVA SOUTHEND

TRANSFERS IN

Ex Arriva The Shires 2/01

2135 N915ETM

2115 N919ETM

Mercedes 709D

Mercedes 709D

Plaxton

Plaxton

B27F

DP27F

REPAIRS

2319 (L613LVX) Mercedes 811D to Arriva corporate livery 2/01. The replacement at the Latchingdon outstation was 3370 (K320CVX) Dennis Dart/Plaxton.

DISPOSALS

Routemaster 105 (WLT937)----- Nova Scotia 9/00 ex Greater Reading.

UNUSUAL WORKINGS

6/2 2087 Shuttle

27/2 2115 2 Lakeside

14/2 2086 Shuttle

28/2 2087 5

17/2 5418 721

It should be noted that the Leicester Carriage Builders Mercedes have at last got blinds.

DIVERSIONS

On Sundays in February, due to bridge work at Hockley railway station, buses on service 7a were unable to use Greensward Lane resulting in buses being diverted via Hawkwell on the 8c route.

SHORT STREET GARAGE

Work has started on repairs to the office block (they are at present housed in cabins) it is expected to last 14 weeks.

STAFF CANTEN AND SIGNING ON POINT

Arriva Southend plan to buy a two storey building in Clarence Street Southend and convert it into a staff canteen and relaxation area for drivers. The building formerly a solicitors office has been chosen for it's close proximity to the Central Bus Station.

SERVICE CHANGES 18TH MARCH

Service 1 Shoebury-Southend-Rayleigh Minor Timetable changes

Service 2 Southend-Basildon-Lakeside Revised evening service and withdrawn between Basildon and Lakeside.

Service 6 Leigh-Eastwood-Southend-Landwick Minor Timetable changes.

Service 12/61/69 Southend-Sutton-Canewdon. Service 12 withdrawn and replaced by extension of service 17. Minor timetable changes to services 61/69.

Service 13 Southend-Eastwood Rise withdrawn

Service 17/a/b Service extended to Rochford, Canewdon and WALLASEA ISLAND.

Service 29 Southend-North Leigh Revised Timetable

Service 62/62a Southend-Westcliff-North Leigh/Belfairs Revised Timetable and renumbered 19/19a and shown as a circular service.

With these services changes, the renumbering of Service 12 brings to an end a relationship with Canewdon that goes back to 1925 when the Westcliff Motor Services first numbered their route to Canewdon.

Peak Vehicle Requirement

Prior to the changes, the peak vehicle requirement was – Minibus 15, Single Deck 21, Coach 8 and Double Deck 40. This gives a total PVR of 84 vehicles.

Arriva East Herts & Essex

Peak Vehicle Requirement (PVR) 2/01

	<u>Grays</u>	<u>Harlow & Debden</u>	<u>Ware & Hoddesdon</u>
Traffic Requirement			
Minibus	7	32	11
S/D	35	46	12
D/D	4	3	10
Eng Spares			
Minibus	3	4	2
S/D	3	11	3
D/D	6	1	3
Total Allocation			
Minibus	10	36	13
S/D	38	57	15
D/D	10	4	13

Vehicles in

From Arriva the Shires 2/01 New in 10/94

2231 M291 AJC Ft 59-12 2112245 MI C31-071 B27F

Vehicles out

2235 (N935 ETU): Arriva the Shires as a training vehicle 2/01
 2310 (G925 WGS): gone 1/01
 2327/30 (K707/10 FNO): SM Services, Harlow 1/01 via Gale, Harlow (dealer)
 2328 (K708 FNO): SM Services, Harlow 2/01 via Gale, Harlow (dealer)
 2331 (K711 FNO): Reid, Bedford 1/01 via Gale, Harlow (dealer)
 3096 (H243 MUK): Arriva the Shires (Dunstable) 1/01
 5349 (GYE 419W), 5368 (BYX 208V): Hardwick, Carlton (dealer) 2/01
 5381 (MUH 281X): Arriva the Shires (Dunstable) 2/01

Allocations

2/01: 2231. HA

Liveries

1/01: to Arriva corporate - 2333, 3367
 2/01: 2231 received in Arriva corporate livery

Subsequent movements : Olympians LR44/5 (A144/5 DPE), LR56/8/9 (A156/8/9 FPG) which left County Bus & Coach in 5/90 for Wilts & Dorset are now with Guide Friday, Stratford-on-Avon; all except LR44 were converted to open top during 2000.

Arriva Colchester

Into The Fleet

2139	N369	JGS	Mercedes L709D	Plaxton Beaver	New 1995
2314	J934	WHJ	Mercedes L709D	Plaxton Beaver	New 1991
2320	L614	LVX	Mercedes L811D	Dormobile Routemaker	New 1993
3341	H251	GEV	Leyland Lynx		New 1990
3343	H253	GEV	Leyland Lynx		New 1990
3346	H256	GEV	Leyland Lynx		New 1990
3347	H257	GEV	Leyland Lynx		New 1990

All of the above entered the fleet in January and were transferred from other Shires & Essex fleets .

Out Of The Fleet

January

2131	N911	ETM	To Watford
3079	F151	KGS	To Luton
3315	A855	UYM	To Stevenage
3316	A856	UYM	To Stevenage
3324	E564	BNK	To Watford

February

5054	ARP 614X	Scrap to Barnsley
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Repaints

2134 , 2320 Repainted at Watford to Arriva National Livery in January

Rail Replacements

Sunday 4th , 18th and 25th February Southend -Wickford upto 19 Arriva Colchester drivers used Arriva Southend buses as Low Height vehicles were needed and Colchester only have High Bridge Deckers. 4310/12, 5402/3 and 5415-7 were used on the 4th together with 1 bus from Chambers , 2 Stephenson's and 1 Heddingham bus.

On Sunday 11th February 4 Olympics were used between Colchester –Shenfield.

General

Superbowl Adverts started to appear on the back of tickets from late January .
Mobile Phones are being fitted to the Minibuses
The recently acquired Lynx's do not yet have radios fitted .

The Current Peak Vehicle Requirement is 40 Vehicles.This includes Private Hires & Contracts

REST OF ESSEX - OTHER OPERATORS

Adams Brentwood F770CKM a Ford Transit was operating on a PSV disc 1.01 (previously on taxi plate)

A & M Couriers Basildon W67NTG LDV Sa 200 is in by 1.01 (probably from new)

APT Rayleigh F301RUT Mercedes Benz 709D/Robin Hood is in by 2.01 ex Arriva Fox County M301

Bobs Minicoaches Wickford N603HGJ LDV Sherpa 200 is in by 1.01

Brians Maylandsea S870TAH LDV Convoy is in 2.01 ex Silk, Swafeld, Norfolk via Porter, Gt.Totham (who did not operate it)

Buzz Harlow MIL6994 (ex D592MVR) Leyland Tiger/Plaxton is in by 10.00 ex South Mimms, S.Mimms, Herts.

Colchester Coaches, Clacton KPJ268W a Leyland Atlantean/Roe was unlicensed when seen 2.01

Crusader Coaches Clacton E245RBE a Mercedes Benz minicoach had gone by 2.00

E C A B S Great Dunmow G334MKU Rt Tc T1100D is in by 2.01

Fargo Rayne Vehicles in - all ex Associated Coachways, Harlow are KBH860V Leyland Leopard/Plaxton, IIL7076 (ex H167DVM) Volvo/Van Hool, SBZ8075 (ex H166DVM) Volvo/Van Hool and TIB4880 (ex ???) Volvo/Plaxton Excalibur. X734MFL MB Vario/Euro C.F is in by 12.00

Fourways Highwood LBD923V Bristol VRT/ECW is in by 12.00 ex Nelson, Wickford

Gardners Widford A467JRE Ba/Du is in by 1.01 (was with Butcher, Rochford - but may have been elsewhere since)

Godward Shotgate E565DMA (a reregistration) Toyota/Caetano is in by 1.01 but has been seen unmarked in S.Essex since 12.99 so has probably been with Godward since 'by 12.99'.

Grahams Kelvedon HIL4585 (ex C153UDD) Bd YNT/Pn Pt 3200 is in 1.01 ex Hunter, Hocknall, Notts

Halls Henham PNM682W Bedford YLQ/Duple is in by 2.01 ex Cordall, Saffron Walden

Howard Halstead F809LBM a Mercedes 609/AVB has gone to Ruffle, Castle Hedingham. OXI 525 (ex A167MNE) a Leyland Tiger/Van Hool is in by 2.01 ex Ulsterbus 595 but is unlicensed. K264PLA a Ford Transit is in by 2.01 ex Hardwick, Cheshunt, Herts.

Jackson Bicknacre DAF/Van Hool K96GEV was reregistered MJ15031 and sister J811KHD (ex 5516PP, J811KHD) was reregistered MJ13084 on 29.12.00. X839HEE is thought to be MB O1120U/Fer Solara is new 2.01 and has fleet no. 7. F303RMH a Mercedes L307/Reeve Burgess was delicensed by 2.01

Kingston Thundersley M52WEV LDV Sherpa 400 was in (date not known, but was not before 4.00) ex Harris Bus, W.Thurrock and out by 1.01 to Ruffle, Castle Hedingham. F752EVG a Mercedes 609D/ADV (ex PIL4683, F569MCH, A5NPT, F552HRC) is in by 1.01 ex Ruffle, Castle Hedingham. A8FRX (ex H528DVM) Scania/Plaxton is in by 11.00 ex Frames-Rickards, London. G782MAK Rt Mtr/Wh is in by 1.01 ex Rumble (Need-a-bus), Basildon

Knights Gt.Braxted RIL4328 (ex D31CFL) Mercedes Benz/Reeve Burgess is named "Miss Jane", R622 YJV LDV Convoy is named "Miss Lucy", S466 OEW LDV Convoy is named "Miss Claire"

Lodge High Easter It has not been recorded that C445LGN (ex 535FN, C445LGN) Bedford YNV/Duple was acquired 1.00 ex Cobholm, Gt.Yarmouth, Norfolk and reregistered 436VVT (presumably soon after purchase). It was sold 8.00 to Thorne, Pewsey, Wilts. who reregistered it back to C445LGN. G361FOP FR Sherpa has gone by 1.01. M7SLC a Scania/Van Hool was reregistered 160EBK (by 3.00). D519FYL is unlicensed by 2.01. K317EJV Mercedes Benz/ACI is in (c 9.00) ex Staines (Clintona), Brentwood. A19FCC (ex F293PAC) Ford Transit/Do is in (c 10.00) ex Driver (Farthing Corner Coaches), Rainham, Kent

Malcolms Blue Bus Services Clacton XPG184T Leyland Atlantean/Roe was in c11.00 ex Fowler, Holbeach Drive, Lincs. and out 2.01 to Windmill, Copford. Leyland National KCR108P (ex 2704MAN, KCR108P) is in by 2.01 - last reported with a preservationist at Portsmouth, previously with Ludlow, Halesowen.

N.C.S. Newport E702DPU ?/Do (seen 2.01 but probably been here a long time), F768KVV Ford Transit/Dormobile is in ex Essex C.C. (seen 2.01 but probably been here since 6.99 when it went through Chelmsford Auction - probably never used - still in Essex C.C. yellow) K299JHJ, K42 JWC and M601 AVW are further Renault Traffic - these are reregistrations and are probably ex M.o.D. L825ADX LDAF Sherpa 400 is in by 2.01 ex Essex C.C. T991/6RJE are LDV Convey in by 1.01 T996RJE has fleet no 236

Pioneer Clacton The o/c is:- rear of Oxford Road MOT & Service Centre, 106 Oxford Road, Clacton-on-Sea Seen 2.01 are:- G304YBX MB/Wh ex First Cymru 260 and L256VSU MB/Do ex Nottingham City Transport 10

Raynham Newport F863TNH a Toyota/Caetano has fleet no. 1 and is unlicensed - tax expired end 12.00

Ray's Travel Shotgate FDZ792 (ex A541WSU, 851GWL, A590XRP) Volvo/Jonckhree is in by 1.01

Ruffle Castle Hedingham J299DFU Mercedes Benz 811D/Whittaker is in by 1.01(new to Law, Mexborough, S.Yorks. but been elsewhere since). and it is currently C23F. HSK855 (ex H17KFC) and HSK892 (ex H20KFC) both Mercedes Benz O303/Plaxton ex Fargo, Rayne are in 1.01. P926NNO Ford Transit is operating on a taxi plate (by 2.01). XVA545T Ford R114/Plaxton is derelict by 1.01. F809LBM MB 609D/AVB is in the yard but not in use (ex Howard, Halstead) by 1.01

RW Private Hire Tiptree K355PDX Fd Tt (s.w.b.)/Fd (high) has been owned a long time - probably from new - and has previously operated on a taxi plate. It is now on the PSV disc.

SM Travel Harlow F224AKG FV/Ce has been converted to a van sometime between 1.00 & 10.00 - It was unlicensed when seen 31.12 99 as a bus and unlicensed when seen 14.10.00 as a van.

H35DGD Mercedes Benz/Dormobile is in by 10.00. L699NWX and M530 VWT Fiat/Me is in by 10.00 ex Bradford Council 2462 and 2442

Stans Gt.Totham Names as at 2.01 are:- OIA419 (ex E245FLD) Bedford/Plaxton "Miss Mandy" ; SIL6705 (ex 114RVX, E108GOO) Van Hool T815 "Miss Judy" ex Grahams, Kelvedon and VWH836 (ex F148NVE) Bova Futura "Miss Susan"

S870TAH LDV Cy came from Silk, Swafeld, Norfolk and passed to Morley, Maylandsea without being used.

Stansted Airport Cars Stansted X369THK a Ford Transit - fleet no. 99 - on PSV disc - in by 2.01

Town & Country Purfleet Optare Metroriders noted on hire from Arriva Kent & Sussex are 1446 M446HPF on 25.2.01; 1447 M447HPF on 18.2.01; 1449 M449HPF was seen 12.11.00; 1451 M451HPF seen 4.2.01; 1452 M452HPG was seen 26.11.00; 1476 P476DPE was seen 3.12.00 & 7.1.01 & 28.1.01; 1479 P479DPE was seen 10.12.00 & 24.12.00.

1803 N803BKN (Mercedes Benz/Plaxton) was seen 17.12.00

Travelrich Stanway The o/c was (by 11.00 until 1.01) c/o Windmill Coaches at Westside Centre, Stanway, but the present o/c is not known.

Windmill Copford The o/c is now c/o Staines Crusader, Clacton-on-Sea. S426/7/8JUA DAF/Ikarus are out c11.00. XPG184T Ld AN/Roe is in 2.01 ex Alder & Ward, Clacton.

K129OCT a Setra was involved in a serious accident (late 2000) and is now at Setra.

Woodhouse Executive Travel Harlow W1WET Renault is in by 10.00 (probably from new)

ESSEX - NON PSV

Chelmer Valley High School, Chelmsford
J946XVW Fd Tt(l.w.b.)/Fd is in by 2.01

Christ Church U.R.C., Chelmsford
W712ANO Fd Tt (l.w.b.)/Fd seen 1.01 but probably in from new.

Playaway Kids Club (Harlow area phone no.)
D291RNS & D340SPU are both Fd Tt s.w.b./Fd (high roof) seen 10.00

EASTERN NATIONAL**EASTERN NATIONAL**

a NATIONAL bus company

**EASTERN NATIONAL****EASTERN NATIONAL****SUBSEQUENT
DISPOSALS**

<u>FLEET No.</u>	<u>REG No.</u>	<u>DETAILS.</u>	<u>DATE.</u>
429	Q659OVL [LWC980J]	Hunter, Leeds (preservation). ex PVS, Carlton (dir).	10/98
1000	410LIP {MAR775P}	Greenhouse, Cahirciveen (npsv). ex Cournane, Cahirciveen.	by 02/98
1002	74 LIP [MAR777P]	Shanahan, Waterford. derelict at depot.	01/87
1101	UVX 5S	Thomas (t/a Silver Star / Seren Arian), Caernarfon. ex Heddingham & District, Sible Heddingham FLEET No L112.	09/00
1102	UVX 6S	Thomas (t/a Silver Star / Seren Arian) , Caernarfon. ex Heddingham & District, Sible Heddingham FLEET No L113.	09/00
1114	HHJ375Y	Southern National Ltd FLEET No 7024. ex Taylors Coaches Ltd FLEET No 7024. re-numbered 2225.	06/00 07/00
1115	HHJ376Y	Southern National Ltd FLEET No 7025. ex Taylors Coaches Ltd FLEET No 7025. re-numbered 2226.	06/00 07/00
1117	MJI2368 [HHJ378Y]	de Courcey, Coventry. re-reg HHJ378Y Healey, Castlegar. re-reg 83-G-1391	by 09/99 09/99
1120	HHJ381Y	Taylors Coaches Ltd FLEET No 8027. ex Pearce, Darch & Willcox Ltd FLEET No 8027. Southern National Ltd FLEET No 8027. re-numbered 2230.	04/00 06/00 06/00
1121	HHJ382Y	Taylors Coaches Ltd FLEET No 8028. ex Pearce, Darch & Willcox Ltd FLEET No 8028. Southern National FLEET No 8028. re-numbered 2231.	04/00 06/00 07/00

1123	A692OHJ [MJ12369 A692OHJ]	Healey, Castlegar. ex de Courcey, Coventry. re-reg 83-G-1384	09/99
1125	A694OHJ	Pearce, Darch & Willcox Ltd FLEET No 7026. ex Taylors Coaches FLEET No 7026.	10/00
1127	UFX940 [A696OHJ]	Southern National Ltd FLEET No 7023. ex Taylors Coaches Ltd FLEET No 7023. re-numbered 2227.	06/00
1131	C131HJN	Greaves (t/a Henry Cooper), Annitsford. re-reg ESU110	by 07/00
1132	C132HJN	Simpson & Bilham (t/a CTS), Copmanthorpe. ex NEBB (dlr), Annfield Plain.	by 05/00
1133	C133HJN	Ammbermile, Honley. ex Dun-Deal, - ? - (dlr). Teamdeck, Honley.	03/00 05/00
1202	BNO688T	PVS, Carlton (dlr for scrap). ex Bellamy, Nottingham.	by 04/00
1212	BNO698T	withdrawn. by Lugg Vallery Primrose, Leominster.	by 08/00
1214	BNO700T	Smith, Corby Glen. ex Hedingham & District, Sible Hedingham FLEET No L125	09/00
1217	BNO703T	Collin's Coaches, Cliffe. ex Hedingham & District, Sible Hedingham FLEET No L126.	09/00
1302	JIL7713 [LLT343V]	Ebdon, Sidcup. ex Hicks & Shaw, Heathfield FLEET No 343. Smith (t/a A Plus Buses), Sidcup.	05/99 01/00
1305	JIL7714 [LLT346V]	Wacton, Bromyard (dlr). ex Collett (t/a Bromsgrove Bus & Coach), Catshill.	07/00
1310	ANA 94Y	Bennett, Cranbury (for spares). ex Lloyd, Hixton (dlr for scrap).	by 03/00
1406	EUF828L [ARU 99A VBY546L CSV253 XVW631L]	Miller (t/a Arun), Horsham (for spares). ex Appleford, Shepperton. [updates EBN 423/7]	by 08/98
1419	CSV618 [GJD195N]	Cut up on site. by Miller (t/a Arun), Horsham.	by 03/00
1600	B457WHJ	G Sipson Commerical Vehcle Ltd, Exhall, Coventry (dlr). ex Parkway, Cranford (dlr).	by 11/99

Eastern National and Thamesway London Bus Contracts

-A Look At the Routes and Vehicles Used -

Part 2 - 1987 To 1990

1987 A new Garage and more awards

Eastern national started the year as a private company and was no longer part of the giant National Bus company which was slowly being dismantled and sold off.

The driver shortage which affected LRT services had eased and the 359 was finally taken over on the 25th of January, the same day that a new depot was opened at Ponders end (PD) in north east London. The 359 and 307 were allocated to PD, although for a few weeks some duties were covered by Brentwood to allow the completion of building work.

The 359 contract required the use of double deckers but as there were no surplus VR'S in the fleet, it was necessary to look elsewhere for buses. With operators around the country down sizing following degulation and replacing mid - life Deckers with more economical mini buses, Eastern National didn't have to look far and 21 VR'S were purchased from Milton Keynes Citybus.

During the year Walthamstow garage had 15 Nationals for the 167 and 206 and 18 VR's for the 20,145A and 275. Ponders end was allocated 23 VR's. Enfield council depot continued to be used for the W9 but this was later transferred to Ponders end.

1988 Walthamstow network scheme

The main event was the walthamstow area tendering which was implemented in two stages from November. Eastern National successfully bid for 3 routes and retained the W9, which was christened the "Enfield hoppa". A batch of 16 Mercedes 709/ Reeve burgess were purchased and these would also be used for the W14 and 379, which were contracted from 1989.

One other event in '88 was the appearance of Merc 608's fleet no's 227 and 231 in all over advertising livery for car dealer Eddy Grimstead. These were frequently seen on the 193 and Brentwood Local routes and they retained these liveries until repaint in 1992.

From the 9th September schooldays route 145A was renumbered 345.

1989 Hoppa Rules O.K?

The second stage of the Walthamstow network was launched on 4th / 5th march and Eastern National started running the **W13 (Leytonstone-Woodford wells)** with school day only journeys numbered 235 and **W14 (Leytonstone –Claybury hospital)**. The W14 partly replaced route 206 which was withdrawn The **379 (Chingford –Yardley Lane est.)** was also taken over from grey green

The W13/14 were marketed as the "Woodford hoppa" and the 379 as the "Enfield hoppa" – however this branding quickly fell out of use as buses were mixed on the various routes. The "Citybus " branding also started to fall out of use around this time.

Apart from the 235, which was operated with VR'S from Walthamstow, all of these routes were allocated to Ponders End with Mercedes midi buses. 16 709's for the W9, W14 and 379 and 5 larger Mercedes 811/Reeve burgess were purchased for the W13.

The W9 also gained a Sunday service in March and an East Kent Decker was loaned in late August and used briefly on route 307.

1990 New Decade, New Owners, New Name

The final decade of the century began with Eastern National operating 11 routes under contract to London transport with 58 vehicles from Walthamstow and Ponders end and another 7 Mini's from Brentwood.

Many former National buses company subsidiaries, including Eastern National were management buyouts (MBO'S). Despite the use of minibuses and wage restructuring, it was soon realised that the companies were not the cash-cows that managers had hoped for. At a time of high interest rates and a shaky economy, it made good business sense to sell out to a larger operator.

The major groups were beginning to assert themselves and in April Eastern National relinquished its independence to the acquisitive Badgerline group, headed by the entrepreneurial Trevor Smallwood .

The new owners instigated major changes to the operating structure in an effect to improve productivity and increase profit margins .The first effect was felt on 29th July when the southern part of the company was split. Basildon, Brentwood, Hadleigh, Southend, Walthamstow and Ponders end garages came under the wing of Thamesway Ltd with its registered office in Basildon.

The Citybus image, which had already fallen into disuse, was dropped and new Thamesway logos were quickly applied. Unfortunately, there was a shortage of vinyl transfers and buses were seen without fleetnames or with both fleetnames applied. Many of the Nationals and VR'S were approaching retirement age or were due for repaint and for a while, buses looked very shabby.

Efforts were quickly made to improve public perception and a new maroon and yellow Thamesway livery started to appear on buses .In the autumn 4 new Leyland Olympians were delivered to partially upgrade route 307 as part of a negotiated contract renewal. This was followed by the arrival of 6 Mercedes 709/Reeve burgess to resource the award of the **362 (Chadwell heath –Barkingside)** from the 1st December, operating from Brentwood garage.

Next Month – The Story Continues into 1991

Essex by Bus

A Day Trip To Southend

This month we join group member Steven R as he encounters Darts, Tridents and Olympians for a packed February day out in Southend on Sea.

The first journey of the day was on a **T reg Arriva Southend Dart SLF on Route 9** from Jones Corner, Eastwood to Rayleigh Station. This was the 10:13 (10:15 at Eastwood Rise) which remained on time throughout the entire journey arriving at Rayleigh Station at 10:25. This journey carried 6 people.

After a short wait the 10:43 **number 7A** was the next bus, which departed on time. It was a Trident and was quite stifling upstairs despite being just a sunny winter morning! I wonder what it will be like in the summer? The **7A** picked up a total of 41 passengers by the time I got off in Southend. Whilst on this route and at other times during the day at least 2 single Decker's were spotted on **Routes 7&8**. Sadly this seems to be a common occurrence on what should be a double deck route during the day.

The plan was to get **Arriva Southend 62 or 62A. Dennis Lance /Wright 3383 (M763JPA)** was prepared for the 11:55 **Route 62** but despite being ready on time did not actually leave Southend Central until 12:00. A total of 14 passengers used this service, which actually managed to catch up those 5 minutes arriving at Belfairs, Woodcutters on the dot at 12:22. It was noticed that the driver did not seem to be inputting the necessary data for returns, passes etc into the Wayfarer which can be misleading for the operator if they try to check how many people were actually on the bus.

After a meal in the local pub I walked back to Jones Corner to get whatever came first which turned out to be the 13:18 (13:16 Eastwood Rise) **First Thamesway Route 25** at 13:28 (10 minutes late). It was operated by **1417 (F417MWC - Leyland Lynx)** which picked up about 14 passengers and arrived at Southend 7 minutes late (13:47).

A short photo stop was taken at Central Bus Station and I decided to get **Dennis Dart T825NMJ (3225)** on **Arriva Southend Route 5** to Shoeburyness, East Beach. It departed 1 minute late at 13:58 getting to East Beach by 14:27 (3 minutes late) having carried 23 people. The extra lateness can possibly be contributed to surface water still on some roads so the driver had to slow down.

As it was quite a warm day I spent longer than expected taking photos at East Beach and I finally boarded the 16:00 **Arriva Route 9** back to Southend. I expected very few people to be travelling to Southend at this time but was quite surprised by the 17 passengers that had used **T826NMJ (3226)** by the time I got off at 16:26. **Route 9** is one Arriva's most popular routes in Southend and the investment in low floor buses combined with route branding has paid off with many parents taking their buggies onto the bus.

I had planned to get the 16:40 **Arriva Route 61** to Canewdon from Central bus station but it did not stop at the correct bus stop. The timetable at the 62 & 62A stop clearly shows the 61 departing from there as well but the bus sailed right past me deciding to load up at the 9, 12 & 29 stop where the daytime Canewdon service leaves.

B185BLG (5387 - Leyland Olympian/ ECW) was about to take up the 18:17 **Arriva Route 1** to Shoeburyness, Renown which I got and it arrived there 3 minutes early at 18:37 after carrying 24 people.

By this time I was thinking about getting to the EBEG meeting in Rochford, so I quickly crossed the road where a **Route 7 (Dennis Lance/Wright M762JPA - 3382)** picked me up at 18:39 (3 minutes late) and reached Southend Central where this journey terminates at 18:59 (5 minutes late). It picked up a reasonable 11 passengers.

I always get the 19:11 **Route 8A** to meetings and finally by 19:20 a **Dominator (K36XNE - 5286)** appeared, which is what this particular journey usually operates with. Hopefully the changes Arriva have introduced in March will ensure that this route will be low floor as advertised. The bus arrived at Rochford Rail Stn at 19:39 (9 minutes late) where my rather busy day ended with a very enjoyable meeting.

What could Be Improved?

There seems to be 3 issues that need resolving. The first is the need for correct vehicle types to stay on certain routes. **Route 9** is doing very well in regard to this but the **7s & 8s** need their Tridents (a minibus was seen on this route in the evening rush hour). Secondly, drivers must be encouraged to input all return, rover and season ticket details into the wayfarer. Lastly, the Canewdon services; **12, 61 & 69** need to have their bus stop or stops decided and adhered to.

Overall Rating 7 out of 10

Considering that I have a yearly **Arriva Silvercard** which is £350, at less than £1.00 a day (if used daily) it makes this day out excellent value for money. The area covered by the **Silvercard** and **First Thamesway's Hopper** is extremely large and varied ranging from towns to small villages. Also available for a day trip is the **Southend Rover**, that costs around £2.30. There's a huge variety of buses to be seen out and about in Southend, ranging from Dennis Tridents, Lance's, Darts & Dominators to various Olympians, Mercedes minibuses and Leyland Lynx's and if you are very lucky a Thamesway VR! If you really do hang about **Stephenson's** vehicles can be observed at various times in the day and on Sundays a **NIBS** mini can be seen.

For the amount that you can do and indeed the quantity of low floor buses (6 out of 9 today) a day out in Southend is recommended.

For the very latest on Buses in Southend, check out Steven's web site at www.argonet.co.uk/users/steven/ There's news, photos and a personal diary of bus journeys .

Why not tell us about your day out? E-mail essexbusnews@hotmail.com

VILLAGE LINKS – OLD & NEW

With the withdrawal on 20th February of the Brentwood/Fryerning area 19-22 group of Village Link services , it may be appropriate to look at some of those villages which have lost bus links, often not for the first time.

South Weald and St Vincent's Hamlet were served by Eastern National from 22nd May 1955 until 10th April 1981 (the Fridays only service 263, probably proposed by Westcliff) and then by Bordabus (to Abridge) both with full-size vehicles. Eastern National used ordinary single-deckers, latterly anything from MW's to RE's (although usually carrying the same 17 or so passengers), while Bordabus usually had either an ex East Kent Reliance or ex South Midland RELH coach.

I believe though that there was a more recent EN revival using minibuses – can anyone confirm? Fryerning and Mill Green were served by Eastern National 10B/30B/40A from 1935 until the early 1970's, when the service was withdrawn without replacement. When introduced in 1935, the 10B ran three Friday and four Saturday round trips, although by 1949 this had reduced to two each day. Meanwhile the section of road between Fryerning and Blackmore is again without buses, having previously seen only a very short-lived service by Saywood in the 1920's and probably nothing since. Beggar Hill near Fryerning was in fact served only from 22nd February until 26th July 1999, when one of two route changes affecting the 19-22 group took place (the other was on 2nd May 2000 when the section along the narrow Dagwood Lane was removed).

Retains

Navestockside retains a very limited service (one bus each way Monday to Friday, one extra from Brentwood on Saturday) provided by Clintona running the 72 (Brentwood – Stondon Massey) under ECC contract, having suffered long periods without any service at all in the past. Other parts of Navestock had services many years ago, the 'Alma Arms' at Horsemanside and the 'Plough' at Navestock Common (now closed) first being reached by Tiffin (later of coach fame) with a 14-seater Crossley (PC7465) in about 1925. Henderson ran to Navestock from about November 1928 until June 1934, causing an outcry when the service was withdrawn. I believe it wasn't served again until 4th December 1973 when the 260 was diverted there on an experimental basis on Tuesdays only. Going back many years before that, Romford & District ran from their home town on certain days of the week around 1927/8, and G H Betts of Gidea Park did likewise in about 1930. As the Village Link 19 crossed the old GLC boundary in Noak Hill, it passed the very rural Pentowan Farm terminus of the one-time LT service 174, which retained RM's simply to facilitate this manoeuvre.

Lost Links

Another minor point is that there are no longer any services scheduled to use the bus stop in the purpose-built slip road incorporated when Sainsbury's was built in Brentwood in 1997, almost on the site of the old City Coach Company depot.

And so another attempt to provide village bus routes in the area has passed into history; there are also interesting parallels with some other lost rural links. From 7th September 1990, Vantage Coach Hire ran on Fridays only from Stock to Ingatestone via Buttsbury (157) and Margarettow to Basildon via Mountnessing, Hutton and Billericay (357). Both had been taken over (under contract to ECC) from District Bus Company but the services lasted only until 30th October 1992.

Brentwood Area Village Link Routes

For the record, the 19-22 group comprised:

- 19 *Weds & Sat* Fryerning to Romford via Blackmore, Stondon Massey, Hook End, Doddinghurst, Kelvedon Hatch, Dudbrook, Navestockside, Horsemanside, Noak Hill and Gidea Park
- 20 *Monday* Ingatestone to Epping (St Margarets Hospital) via Fryerning and as 19 to Navestockside, Sabines Green, Navestock Heath, Passingford Bridge, Theydon Mount and Fiddlers Hamlet.
- 21 *Tues & Fri* Pilgrim's Hatch to Chelmsford via Coxtie Green, Navestockside, Dudbrook, Kelvedon Hatch, Doddinghurst, Wyatts Green, Swallows Cross, Blackmore Road, Fryerning, Mill Green, Highwood and Nathans Lane.
- 22 *Tues & Fri* Fryerning to Brentwood via 21 route to Doddinghurst, Frog Street, Navestockside, St Vincent's Hamlet and South Weald.

Compiled by Chris Stewart, with thanks to Peter Clark for some of the route information.



First Thamesway 2659 M659 VJN pictured at Navestockside Green Man working the final Brentwood Village Link, the 13.50 Romford – Fryerning on Saturday 20th January 2001. (Chris Stewart)

Essex Buses On Line

The Days Of The Corporation bus

If you look back nostalgically to the good old days of the municipal operator with its unique crest and livery and solid values then you can relive your youth with help of some of the Internet sites that look back to the days of corporation transport.

One such site is the Colchester corporation transport web site located at www.aspects.net/~markcol/colbus/ It turns back the clock as far as 1904 when trams plied the streets of Britain's oldest recorded town. This comprehensive site tells the story of Colchester's transport with the help of fleet lists and photos and brings the story into the late nineties with the formation of Arriva serving Colchester. Steven Hughes sites at <http://members.nbci.com/arrivaservingsteven/main.htm> brings the story into the 21st century with a current fleet list and news reports. The site is still in its infancy and local timetables and topical pictures should be added shortly.

The remarkable dedication of the Eastern National KSW preservation group is demonstrated at www.powell44.freemove.co.uk/ksw.htm The 1953 open topper Bristol K5G WNO 479 is looked after by a group of First Eastern National workers with the welcome support of the company. The bus celebrates its 50th birthday in 2003 and a special trip is planned. Not that the bus has been idol as photographic evidence of the groups trip from Harwich to Aberdeen and back in 13 days reveals!

The exploits of another former EN Bristol K is recorded in words and pictures at www.geocities.com/bus_to_the_sun/homepage.html. This time it's a K6B DHJ 612 that was bought for £100 in the late 60's and taken on a busman's holiday throughout Europe.

There's also a feast of nostalgia at Nick Webster's Virtual Museum of classic cars and coaches www.topolino.demon.co.uk Among the gems is a list of renovations and current projects at the Castle Point transport Museum that is certainly worth a visit.

If all this reminiscing leaves you with the desire to buy your own bus then take a peak at some of the buses on offer at Essex dealer Ensign www.ensign.co.uk. There's a selection of Olympians, Darts and also some former Southend transport fleetlines for sale. The site features external and internal views of the buses and one of the most interesting items are the huge 12 metre Tri-Axle MCW Metrobuses that were recently imported from Hong Kong. They need to be seen to be believed.

That's all for this month but don't forget to read group member Richard Delahoy's Buses On The Net in Buses magazine each month for the latest transport websites around the world – surf www.showbus.co.uk for the sites he reviews.

Do You Know of Any Essential Bus Web Sites That We Should Review?

Let Us Know e-mail essexbusnews@hotmail.com

Eastern National Enthusiasts Guild

A Page Devoted To The Original Eastern National

The Leyland TD2

The Eastern National intake of Leyland TD2s was small compared to the TD1, only nine were added to the fleet. The PSV Circle, Eastern National fleet history quotes that 3295-3303 were TD2s but in fact the PSV Circle publication CXB201/2. shows these as TD1s

The TD2 fleet consisted of.

3425-3430 (AEV795-800) Eastern Counties L56R bodies of 1933.

3427 was rebodied by Duple L56R in 1941.

3428 Rebuilt by Beadle in 1946 and was later used as a Driver Trainer until 1959

3430 Photographic evidence shows this to carry a later style ECOC body, possibly from an ENO Bristol GO or Leyland TD4 that had been rebodied by ECW. (this does not appear in print anywhere)

3426/7 were transferred to United Counties (528/9) in 1952.

The other chassis delivered in 1933 was 3431 (AHK649) fitted with Park Royal L56R body, this resembled an ECOC body, it was scrapped in 1952

The final TD2s were delivered in 1934 with 3511/2 (BHK741/2) again with Eastern Counties L56R coachwork, these survived until 1951 and 1952 respectively when they were scrapped

If any member knows why 3431 received a Park Royal body I would like to know. PJS

80 YEARS ON THE CHELMSFORD TO BRENTWOOD ROAD

On Wednesday 23rd March 1921, the National Omnibus & Transport Co Ltd introduced a new service between Chelmsford and Brentwood. Daily departures were at 9.45am, 1pm and 5.30pm from Chelmsford, returning from Brentwood (Yorkshire Grey) at 11am, 3pm and 6.45pm. An additional 5.30pm from Chelmsford and 8.15pm return operated on Saturdays. On Sundays there was an additional 2pm from Chelmsford and 8pm from Brentwood. The through fare was advertised at 1s5d (7p). National had originally planned to operate to Romford, but in the event London General started their service 26 from Brentwood to Stratford on 4th May 1921 and National's buses had to content themselves with advertising the London connection for through passengers. In 1934, however, Eastern National's service 10 (as it had become) was extended to London (Bow) over the former Hillman's route after Green Line acquired the main Romford service. Later numbered 30 and then from 1968 the 351 to Wood Green, the service was once again cut back to Romford in 1973 but survives in this form 80 years after introduction.

A much fuller account of the route (and all its many permutations) will appear in Essex Bus News later this year.