

Essex

Bus News

No. 676 - August 2020



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

£4

www.essexbus.org.uk



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where sold



top
Newly re-liveried First Essex 37007. It entered service in Colchester on the afternoon of Wednesday 5 August.

Kevin Smith.

Bottom
Former First Essex 65028 (YN06 TDO) Scania CN94UB OmniCity. New to First Essex for Chelmsford Park & Ride. Displaced from this work in 2011, it remained with First Essex until last year. Now with First Potteries, it carries 'the Leek link' colours for service 18 (Hanley - Leek), one of four ex First Essex Scania in this scheme. Taken 7th August 2020 in Hanley.

Peter Mansbridge.



EBN676 ifc

Front Cover Picture

BYD/Dennis Enviro 400EV LF69 UXJ on loan to HCT Group, fleet number 2601. The afternoon of Wednesday 24 June 2020 was significant for buses in Essex because it was the first time a battery electric double decker operated in normal service in the county. See Andrew's article on 4 of this issue.

Andrew Colebourne.

EBN676ifc

August 2020

Missing/defective EBN's; please contact ...

**Distribution/ Publication/ Sales Officer;
Publication orders; meetings, events, tour lists.**

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Essex Bus News

is the "house magazine" of the...

Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

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Tours Organiser	Wayne Bell
Publications Co-ordinator	Paul Harvey

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

Welcome to new members

Oscar Harrison	Sidcup	1162
Jaiden Buck-Auld	Chelmsford	1163
Lian Tebbit	Northolt	1164

A calendar year subscription is £22. 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 £2.00 per month. For example, a member joining in March would pay 10 x £2.00, i.e. £20.00. Contact Richard Delahoy, address below.

Membership Secretary & 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:
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Reports and observations

Members reports, quality photos, prints, slides or JPGs to about 5"x4" size and 300dpi resolution and original articles are always welcome to the Editor or the relevant Sub Editor. The Editors exercise the normal discretion to publish contributions in full, in part or not at all **and cannot guarantee publication in any particular month.**

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EBN676p1

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

MID-ESSEX MEETINGS by Maurice Austin. We will review the sense and practicalities of resuming meetings in 2021 during the Autumn of 2020. We will need to look at the prevalence of Covid-19, social spacing, travelling to and from, especially for those using public transport and so on. Members views will be sought before we make any decisions.

***** All our Chelmsford meetings are now CANCELLED until at very least January 2021 *****

***** All Colchester based meetings have now been CANCELLED. *****

Target Dates for EBN677 (September 2020).

Before

Saturday 5 September 2020

Reports to Sub-Editors.

Before

Friday 11 September 2020

Sub-Editor drafts to Editor.

On or before

Monday 21 September 2020

Dispatch by Printers.

A Blast From The Past

Paul Harvey.



Eastern National 3500 open top Bristol VRT ECW WNO 546L seen on seafront service 67 at Southend Central Bus Station during the summer of 1989. This vehicle was based at Southend depot. Just notice the "pandemic level" of other vehicles and people!

Paul Harvey.

EBN676p2

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

EVENTS

From Saturday 1 August

From Sunday 9 August

Saturday 15 August

Interchange from 11.00 and proceeds north on A12 to Copdock Interchange near Ipswich and return. Lodge Coaches have entered two vehicles in this run.

Sunday 23 August ...

Lodge's Centenary Open Day. The Garage, High Easter. No public transport is to be provided and a one-way system with limitation of numbers to comply with current Government guidelines within the Museum and Garage will be in operation. Entry £2.

This is the situation at present but could change in the meantime— see Lodge's website (www.lodgecoaches.co.uk) for any updates.

Saturday/Sunday 12/13 September. Diesel Gala, Epping-Ongar Railway.

Sunday 13 September

Sun. 19 September

Sunday 27 September

LT Country Bus Running Day. East Grinstead.

GoCoach & Darent Valley Classic Bus Running Day

Showbus Flyby. On 25 mile stretch of A40 between Beconsfield and Wheatley.

Buses will travel from both directions starting from 10.00hrs with photo stops for 5 minutes at Tetsworth Green and Stokenchurch Kings Head (southbound); Wycombe Retail Park by Old Thames Valley Depot and Milton Common (northbound) and High Wycombe Bus Station (both directions). Enthusiast stalls will be in West Wycombe Village Hall 10.00 – 15.00. Website: showbus.com/display

NB: All events subject to Government Guidelines and local restrictions may be imposed at short notice.

Information is published in good faith and members are strongly advised to check details with the organisers, as the Group can accept no liability if events are cancelled or or altered.



In 1983 Eastern National and Grey-Green also combined their Essex/East Anglia to West Country seasonal express services. The joint 115/6 to Minehead and Grey-Green X4 to Torbay were incorporated and renumbered into National Express series 180 to 185. EYH 804V, one of the first quartet of Volvo chassis for Grey-Green this one having a Duple Dominant Express body, was at Edmonton Green pick up in July 1985 working 182 service to Torbay.

Owen Woodliffe.

The first battery electric double decker in normal service in Essex.

Andrew Colebourne. I believe the afternoon of Wednesday 24 June 2020 was significant for buses in Essex because it was the first time a battery electric double decker operated in normal service in the county.

The bus in question was BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro 400EV London-specification demonstrator LF69 UXJ on loan to HCT Group and first be used on route 20 (Walthamstow Central – Debden) on that date. The same vehicle was displayed outside during Coach & Bus UK 2019 at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. It had been allocated the registration number YX69 NLX, which was displayed as the “Bus Registration” in the “Comments complaints and suggestions” section on the standard internal TfL information notice, but not externally.

The bus was first used in London on 23 December 2019 running on route 26 (Hackney Wick – Waterloo) from HCT Group's Ash Grove (HK) garage. That turned out to be its only use on that route; it remained unused over the Christmas period but appeared on the 2nd and 3rd January 2020 working route 388 (Stratford City – London Bridge Station). So, taking a cue from Fred Lawrence's comment in EBN675, that was its first appearance in service in the historic County of Essex, east of the River Lea (just).

For completeness, it is perhaps worth mentioning that the historic County gained regular battery electric double deck bus operation in March 2020 when Go-Ahead London started a new contract for route 212 (Walthamstow – Chingford) with operation by similar buses. This was alongside another new contract for the 444 (Turnpike Lane Station – Chingford) with battery electric Enviro 200EV single deckers. The latter route had previously been operated by Tower Transit, including the use of the hydrogen fuel cell single deckers displaced by the withdrawal of route RV1 services in June 2019. That is the nearest that hydrogen buses have come to operating normal services in Essex.

To return to LF69 UXJ; after its brief use on the 388 it is reported to have gone to Arriva London, though I wonder whether it really went anywhere as Arriva shares Ash Grove garage with HCT Group! Anyway, it seems to have been elusive to photographers until its sojourn on route 20 starting on 24 June 2020 and continuing until Wednesday 8 July 2020. It has now moved on to Metroline, operating alongside its similar vehicles on route 43 (Friern Barnet – London Bridge Station). Route 20 is operated from HCT Group's Walthamstow Avenue (AW) garage, though it is common enough for buses from HK to work AW routes and vice versa.

I was unlucky on 24 June 2020; I had been out taking photographs that morning including a number of route 20 buses, but was unaware of its imminent appearance on the route. I noticed it when checking LVF the following morning for anything interesting locally. I determined to go out immediately to try and catch a picture at Woodford Green as it was already on its way to Walthamstow Central from Debden. I was dismayed when I saw it approaching with “Not in Service” displayed on the front! However, it was carrying passengers, so I think the driver was using the display instead of the usual Covid-19 TfL-issue “Bus Full” windscreen notice. The picture shows that TfL Covid-19 notices had been applied to the doors except that the one on the forward leaf of the front door, which shows the reduced “social distancing” capacity, was missing. I then walked north to find a location to capture it on the way back to Debden and duly took the offside picture shown on the front cover of this EBN at the junction of High Road and Epping New Road a few hundred yards short of the Essex boundary. I had checked the road onwards to Buckhurst Hill but unfortunately sun position and shadows precluded any pictures at that time of day. After a day or two when LVF gave no fleetnumber LF69 UXJ was then shown as “2601”, but this was not applied to the vehicle itself. It was a peculiar choice of number as 2600 is HCT's one-off Dennis Enviro 400 hybrid, the former HEA1 renumbered. That choice of number was itself peculiar as the later Enviro 400 City hybrid buses, including those allocated to route 20, are numbered from 2501 upwards. Previously used Enviro 400 MMC demonstrator YY64 GXG had been allocated the temporary number 2400 in a series otherwise remaining unused. So, 2401 or perhaps 2500 would have been a more logical temporary choice for LF69 UXJ. Incidentally, HEA1/2600 has always been allocated to HK and has not yet worked from AW, despite the common vehicle swaps between the two.

LF69 UXJ is fitted with digital destination displays by Navaho Technologies. This company had previously developed the TfL internal stop displays that were first fitted to the Red Arrow BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro 200EV vehicles, complete with a display showing the original Red Arrow fleetname! LF69 UXJ has similar but smaller internal displays on each deck.

The internal displays are quite impressive, but the front external destination display clearly needs further development, or at least better programming. On both periods when used by HCT Group the route number characters were obviously too tall and unnecessarily condensed. The numbers were cut off by the edge of the aperture at the top. Use on route 20 also showed up another flaw with destinations; it easily displayed “Debden” in large letters but evidently “Walthamstow Central” was too much for it and it showed just “Walthamstow”.

There is also a nearside display at the top of the window next to the entrance. This showed the route number and several “via” points.

Unfortunately, I did not get a clear view of that in use, but it seems to have shown the next stop at the top and two other points underneath. At the back there is just a number display; TfL should follow the lead of other operators (including First Essex) and show destinations at the back of buses fitted with digital displays. Like other buses of its type it has cameras instead of rear-view mirrors.

A warning to photographers: the route number and destination displays seem to operate at different frequencies. It is quite likely you will get just the route number on the front without the destination unless you take a “burst”.

HCT Group is due to receive two new buses of the Enviro City 400EV type as a result of winning the TfL tender for school route 616 (Southgate – Edmonton Green) which specified electric double deckers. However, it seems that the electric vehicles will in fact run on route 20, sensibly allowing all-day use. Perhaps those will be the first battery electric double deckers permanently allocated to an Essex route?

HCT Group might have wished it kept LF69 UXJ as between 13 and 19 July route 20 was subject to a lengthy southbound diversion between Woodford Green and Waterworks Corner via Broadmead Road, Chigwell Road and Southend Road. The cattle grid in Woodford New Road, north of the Waterworks Corner roundabout, has been infilled. There was a spate of single-deck workings on route 20.

EBN676p4

VillageLink 2 Clacton – Mistley

Robert Appleton.

The joint Eastern National/Eastern Counties service 123 did not survive bus deregulation on 26 October 1986. The Mistley - Ipswich section became Eastern Counties commercial service 96. Eastern National registered two commercial services:

Mistley - Clacton service 124 operated on Tuesdays (Clacton Market Day), and

Clacton - Ipswich service X22 operated on Thursdays, local stopping service to Manningtree, then non-stop to Ipswich.

In July 1987, service 124 became an Essex County Council [ECC] tendered service operated by Carters Coach Services. In addition, from 26 October 1986 there was an ECC tendered service 123 Manningtree - Clacton operating on Fridays, operated initially by Chartercoach t/a Coastal Red. Whilst I do not have details as to when these services changed operator or ceased, at best Clacton was linked to Mistley and Manningtree on three days per week.

In 1998 county councils received a Rural Bus Grant for local bus services. Some councils used this to enhance existing services. ECC used the Rural Bus Grant to start a network of new services, marketed as VillageLink. Thus, on 22 February 1999 VillageLink service 2 started, Clacton - Mistley (Rigby Avenue) via Clacton Common Shopping Village, Little Clacton, Weeley, Tendring, Little Bentley, Little Bromley, Lawford, Manningtree Rail Station, and Manningtree. There were six journeys each way on Mondays to Saturdays. The original operator was First Eastern National. Clacton depot normally used 2683 (P689 HND) Mercedes 709D/Plaxton Beaver DP27F.

When VillageLink 2 was re-tendered, it passed to Hedingham & District on 5 August 2002, using a new bus with VillageLink branding:

L326 (EJ02 KYY) Transbus Dart SLF Pointer 2 B29F.

Hedingham & District retained this service for a long time, with two regular drivers establishing a rapport with their passengers. The timetable was unchanged for many years, with departures from Clacton at 06.40, 08.40, 10.40, 12.40, 14.40, and 17.10, returning from Mistley at 07.42, 09.40, 11.40, 13.40, 15.40, 18.20. In later years short 8.9m long Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 B29F replaced L326. Short buses were useful for the narrow country roads on this route, and for turning round at Manningtree Rail Station and Mistley (Rigby Avenue).

As a result of ECC re-tendering, the service passed to First Essex Buses on 10 April 2016. Once again operated by Clacton depot, normally with a 9.4m long Alexander Dennis Dart SLF Pointer 2 B31F. By this time the VillageLink name had quietly disappeared. The service was rerouted in Clacton to serve Valley Road and rerouted in the Manningtree area to serve Long Road in Lawford, and New Road in Mistley. First Essex Buses closed Clacton depot on 28 July 2018. ECC did not permit First to terminate the contract for service 2. Instead First were allowed to subcontract the service to Panther Travel. Panther Travel have mainly used Alexander Dennis Enviro 200, 8.9m long DC61 PAN (YX61 BXI) has been a regular performer.

There are not many Plaxton Primos in service today, but Panther Travel's SB07 PAN (XY07 GVD) has worked on service 2 occasionally.

The next change to service 2 was caused by Highways England for road safety reasons. The turnings on to the A120 from Little Bentley, Little Bromley, and Great Bromley had become high accident locations. Highways England constructed a new roundabout to replace the Great Bromley turning. For the Little Bromley and Little Bentley turnings, traffic could only turn left, so service 2 could not cross the A120 from Little Bentley to Little Bromley or vice-versa. Clacton - Mistley journeys were diverted to use the new Great Bromley roundabout and A120. Mistley - Clacton journeys were diverted to use the A120, Horsley Cross roundabout, then back on the A120. This added 3km to each journey, which would have meant reducing the number of journeys due to the increased running time.

However, a better solution was a shorter route 2A for two Clacton - Mistley journeys, and one Mistley - Clacton journey. Service 2A did not serve Little Bentley, Little Bromley nor Lawford. Instead from Tendring it followed the old 123 route via Horsley Cross, Bradfield Heath, and Mistley Heath to Mistley. 2A journeys from Clacton returned to Clacton as 2, and one service 2 from Clacton returned to Clacton as 2A. For example, a passenger on the 15.25 Clacton - Mistley 2A, could stay on the bus as it continued on 16.15 Mistley - Clacton 2 to reach Lawford, Little Bromley or Little Bentley. Through fares were available to facilitate this. The new 2/2A timetable started on 11 May 2019, still providing six journeys in each direction, now departing Clacton at 06.25, 08.30, 10.55, 13.00, 15.25, 17.35, returning from Mistley at 07.15, 09.40, 12.02, 14.10, 16.15, 18.45.

Service 2/2A remained with Panther Travel as subcontractor to First Essex Buses until 25 July 2020. Following re-tendering by ECC, Ipswich Buses took over on 27 July 2020, a new operator after 21 years of successful operation by First Eastern National, Hedingham and District, First Essex Buses, and Panther Travel.

Please see pictures on inner rear cover of this EBN.

A Message From Member Paul Carruthers.

Bus magazine, various issues Nov 1968 to March 1974 (with gaps), available free to anyone interested.

Collect from Chelmsford. Please contact Paul Carruthers on picarruthers@hotmail.com if you are interested.

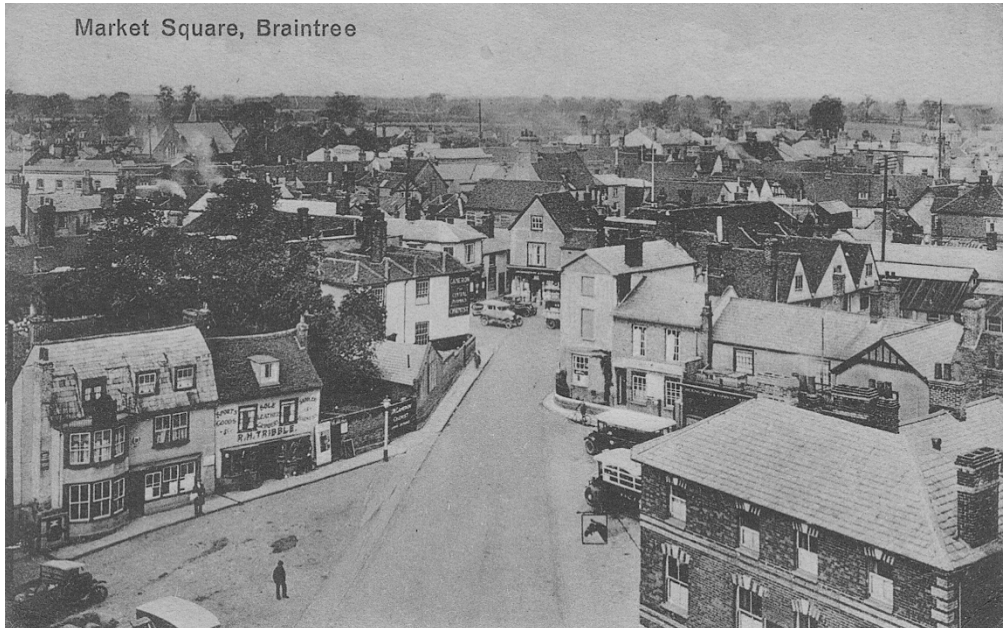
EBN676p5

Braintree Bus Park 1932 – 2020 Part 1 – Construction.

Nigel Turner.

The assistance given by **Trevor J. Beal** in accessing much early information is gratefully acknowledged.

As with many other rural towns, early bus operators serving Braintree followed the example of the carriers and used various pubs as their terminus. For instance, the Horse & Groom in Rayne Road was the terminus for both Alfred Wiffen's service from Finchingfield and J.B. "Ben" Adams' service from Great Bardfield. However, as businesses grew to provide frequent services, the Market Place became the favoured spot for the bigger companies such as Moores of Kelvedon and Hicks of Felstead. A commercial postcard probably taken from the Town Hall roof shows a couple of unidentified buses using a corner of the Market Place.



Although Braintree had seen development in the Victorian era, there remained an open area near the Market Place called the "Fair Field" where various public events were held. The Town Hall (opened 1928) and Post Office (1930) were built on part of this land, fronting Fairfield Road.

In June 1931, the council held a special meeting to consider tenders for the construction of a new motor 'bus and car park on the Fairfield. Nine tenders were received, the highest being £8,282 while the lowest, from E.C.P. Brand was £4,910/10/-. In accepting Mr. Brand's tender, the council noted the recent newspaper advert stating that his business was entirely separate from that of his father Mr. F.C.C. Brand, the significance of this being that Mr. Brand senior was a member of the council although he abstained from the vote.

A couple of months later it was reported that construction had commenced and was to take no longer than 20 weeks. Mr. J. Dodd was appointed clerk of works at £6 a week.

In February 1932 the council, having heard that the bus park would be complete in a week's time, agreed a quote of £58 per annum for lighting the premises. However, opening would have to wait for the Traffic Commissioners to agree to attach conditions to the licences. The council chairman confirmed that a bus park in Bank Street (formerly part of Dr. Harrison's garden) would not be used for cars. This must have been a very temporary arrangement as I haven't seen any other reference to it and Dr. Harrison's house had only been recently demolished. It was also reported that requests to erect a refreshment bar had been refused as all space would be required for the buses and passengers.

The next month, Hicks Bros applied to renew some of their licences; however, Braintree Council requested that the operator be forced to use the new bus park. It was stated for Hicks Bros that they were converting their garage into a station for their buses. They had given £1,050 for the land and the actual extension would cost £1,400. If they were forced to use the council's car (sic) park then their outlay would be wasted. The council said that the annual cost of running the bus park would be £746. The Traffic Commissioners response was that they didn't have sufficient information so they would renew the licences without prejudice to any further schemes.

In May it was reported that negotiations were continuing with the bus operators over charges for usage of the bus park. The council were asking for 3/- (15p) per week for buses with more than 14 seats.

The 3 June 1932 issue of the Essex Chronicle reported on the public inquiry held at Braintree Town Hall by the Traffic Commissioner, Sir Haviland Hiley regarding the use of the Bus Park recently constructed at a cost of £6,000.

Various operators had instructed Kings Counsel which shows how serious the situation was perceived. Hicks Bros had applied for a service between Braintree and Dunmow (presumably a renewal), using their garage as the terminus. This was opposed by Braintree Urban District Council which applied to impose a condition that the Bus Park should be used as the terminus, not this just for this service but for all routes serving Braintree. They also wanted buses to be banned from Bank Street and Sand Pit Lane. I don't remember the latter ever being used for buses but Bank Street continued in use for nearly fifty years, the last day being 12 September 1981.

It was said that Mr. E.C. Hicks of Hicks Bros had previously suggested that a road be constructed from Manor Street to Victoria Street and part of the Fair Field be used as a parking place. The Chairman of the Council thought this a very sensible suggestion and would do away with what Police Supt. Whiting had described as "the intolerable situation of motor bus traffic in Braintree, particularly on Wednesdays and Saturdays". The council gave notice of the intention to proceed and no bus company made any objection. Now the new bus park had been made, a question was raised whether it should be used or whether the markets should be moved from the streets in order to allow the buses to run up and down the narrow streets.

The number of bus journeys using Braintree was quoted as 1,129 per week, the greatest number being on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

It was stated that after the bus park had been completed, a letter was received from the bus operators complaining of the Council constructing the park at great expense and stating it would be a heavy charge on bus owners and ratepayers. The operators suggested that the Market Place was more suitable for the buses and that the market stalls should be moved to the park. The Council's counsel said that the narrow streets would be relieved from the buses practically altogether and the park would provide a central exchange station for buses. Messrs Moores Bros had objected to the charge of three shillings per week which they considered too high.

The council's architect produced the plans of the bus park and Sir Haviland Hiley said they considered the ground plan admirable.

The following week, the papers reported the proceedings of the resumed public enquiry at which "there was again a large attendance of the public".

The council had now considered again the charges for the bus park at Colchester and now suggested a change in the Braintree charges, with reductions for less frequent services.

The question of the market being moved to the park was again raised and it was stated that it was held in the Market Place under a charter dated 1199 and the council could not force traders to move.

Mr. Showan for Hicks Bros. stated that they had been operating a fleet of buses at Braintree since 1919 and had gone to considerable expense in enlarging their premises so that their buses could go in one way and out another. Messrs Hicks could not be expected to pay £429/5/- a year for use of the park. Giving evidence, Mr. E.C. Hicks stated that he had written to the council in 1929 regarding provision for buses but nothing was done for some time, only talk. Mr. Harold Moore (of Kelvedon) said that they didn't want the bus park at any price. Mr. Akers of Halstead (Bird Buses) said it would cost him £84/10/- per year and he did not wish to do it. Mr. C.M. Taylor (Horn Buses) said his charge would be £40/6/- and it would be a serious burden. Mr. Smith (Silver End Buses) said his charge of £46/6/- would be serious. Mr. Cummings (Royal Blue of Braintree) said his contribution would be £23/8/-. These figures show the relative importance of the smaller operators compared with Hicks Bros. To put the Hicks' figure into context, their profit in 1937 was £4,925 so the council's suggested fee was nearly 10% of their profit.

Having heard the evidence, Sir Haviland Hiley said they would give their decision at a later date.

To be continued.
EBN676p7

Service Revisions

by Paul Harvey.

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

This month's report again has two sections, the usual bus changes and a report of current service situation re the "Virus arrangements".

6 July 2020

- 61 Brentwood Station to Blackmore (M-S)
New contract service replacing Swallow Coaches.

Arrow Taxi's Essex

27 July 2020

- 2/A Clacton to Mistley (M-S)
New contract service replacing Panther Travel
4 Stanway to Hythe (M-F)
New contract service replacing Arriva.
11 Colchester North Station to Highwoods (M-F)
New contract service replacing Arriva.

Ipswich Buses

Ipswich Buses

Ipswich Buses

2 September 2020

- 18 Ramsey Church to Harwich (Sch)
New school service
20 Great Hormead/The Pelhams to Bishop Stortford (M-F)
Revision to timetable.
HTD1 North Weald to Leventhorpe School Sawbridgeworth (Sch)
New school service.

Panther Travel

Richmonds Coaches

Hedge the Distance Ltd

7 September 2020

- 7A/7B Grays Lodge Lane to St Clare's Academy Stanford le Hope (Sch)
Revision to route and timetable.
10 Grays Warren Primary Sch to Grays William Edward Sch via Chafford Hundred (Sch)
New school service.

Keane Travel

Keane Travel



Panther Travel Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 DC61 PAN (YX61 BXJ) opposite Rigby Avenue in Mistley on 25 July 2020, arrived on 10.55 service 2 from Clacton. This was the last day of Panther Travel operating Clacton - Mistley 2/2A. Following re-tendering by Essex County Council, Ipswich Buses took over on 27 July 2020.

Robert Appleton.

EBN676p8

COVID-19 (Updated Bus Operator Information)

Due to the Covid-19 (also known as Coronavirus); as more facilities begin to open and people return to work, bus services are continuing to see increase in timetables - check operator websites or social media accounts for latest details.

Arriva Kent Thameside

12 July 2020

increase in service frequencies for Colchester Services:

Service 1 Mon to Fri every 15 mins normal Sat service.

Service 2 Mon to Fri every 30 mins normal Sat service.

Service 8 Mon to Fri every 15 mins normal Sat & Sun service.

Service 133 normal Mon to Fri school holiday timetable normal Sat & Sun service.

Service 900 still suspended.



Arriva Colchester 4324, SK68 TWV, 2018 Wright Streetlite DF/Wright B44F at Bus Park, Braintree, 5 March 2020.

Robert Downton.

Ensignbus

17 July 2020

18 July 2020

21 July 2020

minor timetable adjustments to the Tilbury service 99 Mon to Fri.

Sat services reintroduced to services 33 & 88. Additional Sat journeys introduced on services 66 & X80.

Mon to Fri changes:

Service 44 06.52 from Garrison Estate to Grays will start from Lakeside at 06.45.

Service X80 additional journeys 16.30 Chafford Hundred to Bluewater and 17.00 from Bluewater.

Service Z1 duplicate bus from Cross Keys at 06.15 to Lakeside introduced.

Epping Forest Community Transport

8 June 2020

reintroduction of services 211/212 with emergency timetable with 4 journeys on Mon to Fri covering both routes.

First Essex

12 July 2020

2 August 2020
South Essex Area

increase in services

Mid Essex

North Essex

additional journeys introduced:
Service 5/A/B additional Sat journeys between Basildon Hospital & Pitsea introduced.
Service 9 additional Sat journeys at 11.50 Basildon to Brentwood & 13.13 Brentwood to Basildon.
Service 42/A/B additional Sun journey at 18.15 Galleywood to Broomfield Hospital.
Service X10 additional Mon to Sat journeys introduced at 15.20 & 19.20 Basildon to Stansted Airport & 17.00 & 21.00 Stansted Airport to Basildon.
(Service 5/A/B Sat daytime service increased to every 15 mins, extending every 30 mins to Grays.
(Service 9 Sat daytime increased to every 30 mins
(Service 20 minor retiming Mon - Fri morning peak journeys. Sun service frequency increased to every 30 mins.
(Service 21 minor retiming of some Mon to Fri morning peak journeys.
(Services 22, 25, 28 & 100 Sun service frequency increased to every 30 mins.
(Service 27 minor retiming of Mon to Fri morning peak journeys. Sun service frequency incr'd to every 30 mins.
)Service 36 Sat service revised timetable but frequency unchanged.
)Service 40 minor Sat timetable changes.
)Service 42/A/B minor timetable changes.
)Service 45/A service 45A reintroduced on Sat at hourly frequency
)Service 54/56 Minor timetable changes on Mon to Sat.
)Service 57 Sat timetable revised operating every 20 mins Galleywood to Chelmsford and every 30 mins Chelmsford to Beaulieu.
)Service 70 minor timetable changes.
)Service 71 On Saturdays the short journeys which terminated at Springfield extended to Witham as 71A via Boreham Village. The Sunday service reverts to 71C via Springfield Road following the reinstatement of 45A through Chelmer Village.
)Service 351 minor timetable changes to Saturday timetable.
)P&R Chelmer Valley site reopens. Sandon P&R to City e'ry 15 mins & Chelmer Valley P&R to City every 30 mins. (to every 30 mins.
(Service 62/B minor timetable changes Mon to Sat additional 62B journeys will operate Sunday afternoons.
(Service 64/A Timing changes Mon to Sat service increases to up to every 9 mins. Additional journeys will operate on Sunday afternoons.
(Service 65 minor ch'ges to Mon - Fri timetable, no ch'ge on Sat. Sunday frequency increase to every 30 mins.
(Service 66 minor timetable changes Mon to Fri. Sat frequency increased to every 30 mins.
(Services 67 & 75 revised timetable every 30 mins Mon to Fri and every 60 mins Sat.
(Service 88 minor timetable changes to Mon to Sat timetable.
(Service 103/104 minor timetable changes with additional journeys on Mon to Sat.



First Essex
67167
(YY66 PBV)
at Two
Brewers
Ongar
24/7/2020.

A little while
earlier, this
bus was in
X30 livery!
See First
report. Pp14
and on.
**Robert
Downton.**

EBN676p10

Go-Ahead Konectbus Chambers

20 July 2020

additional journeys on service 753 between Bury St Edmunds & Sudbury introduced on Saturdays. The 07.10 service 756 from Long Melford to operate as service 754.

Go-Ahead Konectbus Hedingham

26 July 2020

Pre-Covid Sunday timetables restored to Clacton services 3, 4A, 6 & 137.

National Express

1 July 2020

limited services were introduced

13 July 2020
network.

12 new routes were introduced while others have frequencies increased and over 40 stops added to the

24 July 2020

further new services and increased frequencies introduced.

27 July 2020

further new services and increased frequencies introduced including new service 482 London VCS to Ipswich via Stansted Airport, Braintree & Colchester operating daily.

NIBS

13 July 2020

service 269 normal Mon to Fri timetable introduced.

20 July 2020

service 11 (Purfleet) normal timetable introduced.

Stephensons of Essex

10 August 2020

services 38/A & 90 normal timetable introduced.



NIBS Optare Solo 330, MX59 AWF still in Galloway livery in Rayleigh High Street on 17 July waiting for the Friday afternoon 63 departure to Great Wakering.

Ian Dann

EBN676p11

CAP 211 and Relatives

Chris Stewart.

After over 35 years hidden away and decaying in Collier Row (just over the Greater London border of course), former Brighton, Hove & District and Thames Valley 1940 Bristol K5G CAP 211 left by lowloader on 1 July having been saved by Kirsty & Ashley Blackman of York. They run a professional vehicle restoration business (trading as The Revivist) doing high quality repaints, bodywork and mechanicals. Also in their ownership are former London Transport breakdown tender 739J and one time Black & White Motorways Bristol L6G/Duple coach HDD 654 (and prepared/painted preserved former NIBS/Southern Vectis VR NDL 652R).

CAP211 was converted by BH&D (with whom it had been fleet number 6356) for Thames Valley in 1957, retaining its high radiator position unlike BH&D's own conversions, and ran with 3 others for a couple of seasons on a Reading to Maidenhead riverside route which was later extended to run 30 miles in all to Windsor. Upon abandonment of these services, it passed to Red & White Services Ltd as a tree lopper in 1960 where it remained until 1968. It was on the preservation scene in the early 1970s, being based at the Dart Valley Railway in Buckfastleigh, Devon and later moving to Winkleigh.

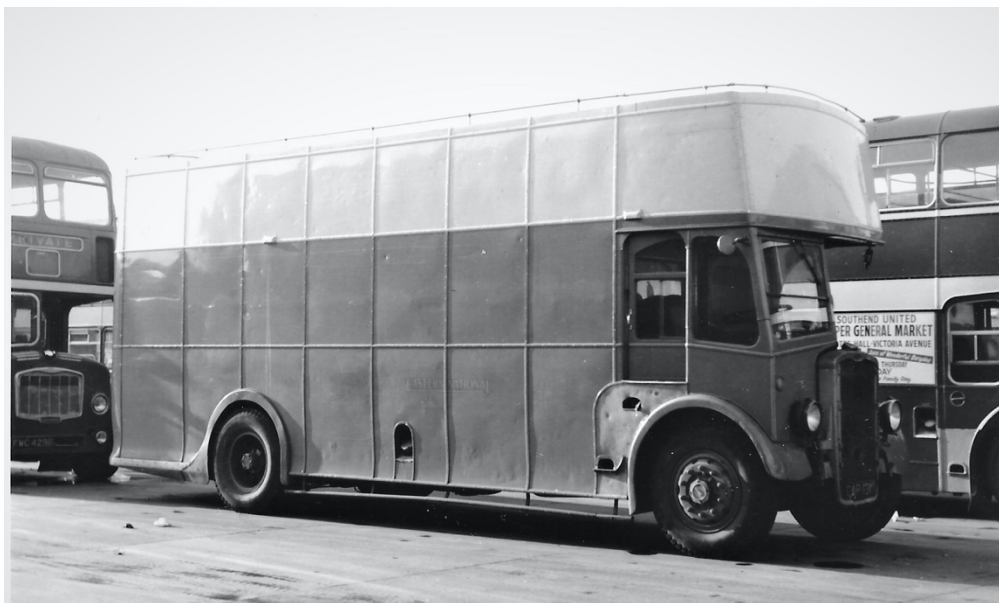
When its then owner moved to the Romford area in the early 1980s, CAP took up residence on the outskirts of Collier Row where it stayed until this year. By then the upper deck floor had collapsed but it otherwise remains remarkably intact. Restoration will nevertheless be a long and painstaking job, joining the queue behind HDD and probably also 739J.

Essex was home to two working CAPs in the 1960s, namely Eastern National 1023 (CAP 131) and J D Best & Son's CAP 230. The latter (BH&D 6358) was a convertible open top but kept its roof on with Best's (as it had with the Shangri-La holiday park at St Osyth from whom it was acquired) and lasted until replaced by a former Exeter Daimler in October 1962.

Picture below. **Philip Wallis** captured it on film in March of that year at Colchester Bus Station. For caption see last paragraph above.



CAP 131 (BH&D 6349) came to Essex in October 1960 and was fitted with a post-War style PV2 radiator on acquisition. Running for two seasons at Clacton, it became a tree lopper (with the lower deck windows panelled in and front windscreens, which EN had fitted, removed again) and served until 1968 when KSW5G WNO 485 was converted to replace it and it passed to Syd Twell (dealer) of Ingham. [photo courtesy **EN Preservation Group**, believed by **Bill Cansick** appears on the following page.]



Picture above

CAP 131 in its guise as a tree lopper as described in the article on the previous page.

Picture below

CAP 211 being loaded ready for its trip northwards.



Acquired Vehicle

42956 WX06 OMO SFD3CACR46GW88777 6210/8 B37F 07/06. First Bristol/Alexander Dennis Dart.

From First Eastern Counties. Urban livery, small "First Great Yarmouth" fleet name above doors, "First" above driver's cab and Great Yarmouth depot stickers. Entered service from Chelmsford on route 45 on the afternoon of 20 July 2020. More information under Dart Swaps below. First Essex briefly owned sister 42955 (WX06 OMM) earlier this year, see EBNs 672, 674 & 675 for details.

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

Period 3 2020/21 (24 May - 27 June) Additional to EBN675. 32628 CR (oos)-CR.

Period 4 2020/21 (28 June - 25 July) Additional to EBN 67532628 CR (oos)-CR.

Period 4 2020/21 (28 June - 25 July) 33425 BN (oos)-BN, 33548 BN (oos)-BN, 36840 BN-CF, 36842 BN-CF, 42487 CF-HH, 42956 FG-CF, 42968 CR (oos)-CF, 43846 CF-FG, 43848 CF-FG, 44004 HH-CF, 44005 CF-HH, 44599 CF-CF (oos), 63328 HH-HH (oos), 63333 CR (oos)-CR, 63336 CR-CR (oos), 63343 CR-CR (oos), 33425 BN (oos)-BN, 33548 BN (oos)-BN, 36840 BN-CF, 36842 BN-CF, 42487 CF-HH, 42956 FG-CF, 42968 CR (oos)-CF, 43846 CF-FG, 43848 CF-FG, 44004 HH-CF, 44005 CF-HH, 44599 CF-CF (oos), 63328 HH-HH (oos), 63333 CR (oos)-CR, 63336 CR-CR (oos), 63343 CR-CR (oos), 66798 CR-CR (oos), 66802 CF (oos)-Disposal, 66813 BN (oos)-BN, 66819 BN (oos)-BN, 66827 BN (oos)-Disposal, 66829 CF (oos)-Disposal, 66846 BN (oos)-CF (DS), 66863 BN (oos)-CF (oos), 67160 BN-BN (oos), 67190 HH-CF, 67191 HH-CF, 67192 HH-CF, 69516 BN-HH, 69517 BN-HH, 69906 BN-BN (oos), 69914 BN-BN (oos)

43846 last operated for First Essex on route 56 on 17 July and 43848 on route 45 on early morning of 24th. The disposal of 66829 is of note, this vehicle had been out of service for over two years, since at least April 2018 and likely from November / December 2017. Various attempts to put it back on the road came to nothing. See EBNs 649, 659 & 667 for previous references.

Change of Policy. As reported in EBN673, a couple of X30 branded Scania have been loaned to Basilidon for use on route X10 since 10-11 April. As the two that are at BN are continuously changing, these will no longer be recorded as transfers between CF and BN, but as loans to BN, with all shown as officially allocated to CF. During Period 4, 36837 was at CF until it moved to BN on 24 July, 36839 was at CF until it moved to BN on 8 July, 36840 was at BN until it returned to CF between 8 and 14 July, 36842 was at BN until it returned to CF on 8 July, 36843 was at CF until it moved to BN on 7 July but returned to CF on 25th.

Period 5 2020/21 (26 July - 22 August)

Note, to tie in with Change of Use and Disposals below, early Period 5 transfers are shown. The rest will be in EBN677.

42900 HH (oos)-Disposal, 43845 BN (oos)-Disposal, 43847 CF (oos)-Disposal, 66863 CF (oos)-CR (DS)



First Essex 43848 outside Chelmsford Railway Station, 22 September 2017.

David Moth.

..... EBN676p14

Change of Use

Ex Basildon 66846 and 66863 were both seen parked out of use in Westway on 10 July. They have now been converted to permanent driver training vehicles, with the drivers' screens and ticket equipment removed. They are currently being used on (socially distanced) CPC training, 66846 at Chelmsford and 66863 at Colchester. The former was seen in Brentwood High Street on 23 July.

Disposals

66802, 66827 and 66829 to Ensignbus 14 July 2020 and all on to Shelton Motors, Ely for scrap later in the month.

43846 (between 17th & 20th) and 43848 (24th or 25th) to First Eastern Counties July 2020, more details in Dart Swaps below.

42900, 43845 (28 July) and 43847 to Ensignbus w/e 1 August 2020.

Further to EBN674, 66807 also went from Ensignbus to Shelton Motors for scrap in July.

Further to EBN675, 42556, 62408, 66719 and 67641 (confirming the report of its sighting on the M25) also went from Ensignbus to Shelton Motors for scrap in July.

In EBN675 it was reported that all the mid-length Darts had been sold, now all the Mini ones have been as well. The only Darts left in the fleet are all standard length.

Dart Swaps

First Eastern Counties have recently gained a contract in Norwich from Konnectbus, routes 10/A (branded by FEC as Pink Line) Norwich to Eaton Park / Cringleford, which requires two short length single deckers. Ex-First Essex mini Enviros 44908 & 44909 have moved from Ipswich to Norwich to operate it. MPD 43848 has moved from Chelmsford to Norwich as a spare vehicle for the route (seen operating on it on 30 July) with 43846 moving from Chelmsford to Ipswich to partly replace the two Enviros. In exchange, Chelmsford has gained 42956 from Great Yarmouth and 42968 has been returned to service at Chelmsford from storage (where it had been made ready for disposal) at Colchester.



Last month we reported on the reduced capacity of buses in the current crisis. With the relaxation to "1 metre plus", buses are beginning to accept greater numbers and First have re-stickered their fleet. Single deckers now typically accept 17-20 passengers, with 32-35 on double deckers. Hadleigh allocated 36216 shows its new sticker on 5 August in Southend; normal seating on this bus would be 72 passengers plus standing.

Richard Delahoy

Repaints

Correction to EBN662, the Chelmsford paint booth has not been adapted for spray painting.

67167 from X30 livery to Urban at Westway, completed 21 July, on 32 next day. 67171 the same, completed 31 July. 67165-67171 have all now been repainted from X30 "From Pier to There" silver and green livery to Urban livery. The livery remains on 67160-67162 & 67164 with X10 "From Here to There" branding. Two double deckers also received this livery, 37985 & 37986. The former has been repainted into Westcliff-on-Sea heritage livery (see EBN 675) and the latter is currently at Mardens for repaint.

37007 has been repainted at Mardens from as acquired burgundy front Urban 2 livery to heritage 1993 Badgerline style Eastern National livery of light green and yellow, with blue doors, wheels & E symbol (plus depot stickers) and red fleet names on front and sides, yellow on rear. It does not have badger symbols, so is representative of the period from after June 1995 (when First Bus was formed and badgers were no longer applied to new buses and were gradually removed from existing ones) until sometime after April 1996 (which was when First corporate style fleet names were introduced which gradually replaced the style applied to 37007). After repaint it was at Hadleigh for a few days (not used in service) before returning to Colchester on 1 August and re-entering service on route 64A on the afternoon of the 5th, appropriately driven by an ex Eastern National driver of 41 years-service.



As reported by Adam,
First Essex 67167, YV66 PBV
has been repainted.

Here, it is at Travel Centre,
Southend-on-Sea
on 8 August 2019

We show it in its new version on
p10 of this issue.

Robert Downton.

Further Capacity Changes

With the gradual lifting of lockdown restrictions and the easing of the 2-metre social distancing rule to 1-metre plus, from Monday 13 July vehicle capacities were increased. A basic one person per row (see EBN 674) was replaced with two per row with passengers not sitting directly next to or in front of / behind other passengers. So, for example, in the first row, one passenger can sit in the offside seat by the window, with one in the nearside by the aisle, then in the second row, in the offside seat by the aisle and the nearside seat by the window and so on. Revised capacities noted are long StreetLites 20 (up from 10 / normally 41 seated), standard length ones 17 (9/37), standard length Darts 17 (9/37), mini Enviro 200s 13 (7/28 or 29), standard length Enviro 200s 19 (not recorded/35, 37 or 39), Volvo B7RLEs 21 (10/43 or 44) and Geminis 35 (17/74).

Vehicles Returning to Service

Further to EBNs 674 & 675, the following, which had been out of service since the 29 March service reductions, are now back in use.

33425 returned to service on route 25 on 6 July

42968 moved from storage at Colchester to Chelmsford where it returned to service on routes 54 & 56 on the afternoon of 25 July.

66813 returned to service on route 100 on 24 July.

66819 returned to service on route 100 on 3 July.

In EBN674 it was reported that, according to Bustimes, 33548 had only made one return journey on route 25 (on 3 June) since 29 March, this may have been an error on Bustimes. Further reports of it in service are on 16 & 17 July and then more regularly from 27th.

In addition, 66846 & 66863 have transferred to the driver training fleet.

67190, 67191, 67192, 69516 and 69517 returned to their pre-29th March depots during Period 4.

Further Timetable Changes

In the past few months these have been recorded in the First Essex report to give a complete picture of the service and vehicle changes caused by the Coronavirus pandemic. However, some of this was duplicating information in Paul Harvey's Service Revisions report and so, now that timetables are mainly back to pre-29th March reduction levels, they will no longer be recorded here (except where they have a direct effect on vehicle allocations). Please see Paul's article for changes in the past month.

EBN676p16

Area News and Workings

Colchester

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CR).

Further to EBN675, 37010 was back at Quayside, in the workshop, by 10 July.

Unusual / Interesting Workings as follows (all July unless stated). Most journeys on routes 103/4 continue to be operated by Enviro 300s, some exceptions: 63340 (8th), 66801 (8th & 11th plus 1 August), 66800 (9th), 63344 (10th), 66816 (14th & 18th), 66828 (18th), 66810 (22nd), 66803 (23rd), 63331 (28th), 63338 (31st). On Sunday 102s and interworked 75s: 63334, 63335 & 63339 (12th), 66800 (19th). Thus, no double deckers seen on the Harwich routes in the past month.

37138 on short journeys Colchester to Kelvedon and return 71A (10th). 37062 on 74B (19th). 63337 & 67742 on 62 (24th). 67756 on 70 (25th). 67805 on 71 (29th). 32478 on 174 (30th). 63335 on 76 on 2 August and 70 on 5 August.



Robert Appleton has been to Colchester! Volvo B7TLs acquired by First Essex Buses this year. 37037 was illustrated on EBN672p17. Big pic. 37062, YJ06 XMP, Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini leaving Osborne St bus station in Colchester on 13 July 2020, working service 75 to Maldon, transferred from First West Yorkshire. Left 37004, WX55 VHN, working service 70 to Chelmsford via Braintree. Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini transferred from First West of England. Right: 37035, YJ06 XLA Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini on service 61 to Highwoods, transferred from First West Yorkshire.

EBN676p17

Area News and Workings

Chelmsford

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CF).

Publicity bus 41521 has been used as a trainer/re-familiarisation vehicle for drivers returning from furlough plus also as a driver shuttle.

Unusual / Interesting Workings as follows (all July unless stated).

Double deckers on short 42 workings: 36842 (10th & 29th), 32640 (12th), 32672 (19th), 36839 (31st).

X30 liveried Scania on 70: 36840 (9th, 14th, 17th, 24th & 30th), 36838 (13th, 19th & 27th), 36837 (15th & 23rd), 36842 (16th), 36841 (21st & 31st).

Enviro 200 MMCs on 32: 67165 (14th plus 6 August); 67171 (21st & 23rd), 67167 (22nd & 24th plus 3 August), 67170 (30th & 31st).

44662 on 351 & 37 (10th & 14th). 44004 on 71A (14th, 21st & 24th). 66806 & 69431 on 70 (Saturday 18th). 44660 on 36 (21st).

44661 on 45 (21st). 67167 on Sandon Park & Ride (Saturday 25th). 66817 & 66818 on 70 (Saturday 25th). 44538 on 42A (Sunday 26th). 66730 on 45 (28th). 44551 on 71A (29th). 44660 on 73 (29th), 45A (2 August). 44661 on 31X (3 August).



To mark the welcome return of the Chelmer Valley Park & Ride service from 2 August 2020, we see Dennis Enviro 200 67916, SN66 WKT, in a quiet New Street, Chelmsford on 12 August 2017. When the picture first popped into your Editor's in-box on 30 July 2020, it gave him quite a turn. He first assumed this was a test run ready for the resumed service in a few days' time! When he read the caption properly, all became clear!

David Moth.

Terry Challis writes from Poulton-le Fylde

That KSW at Clacton.

Thank you for EBN675. I was particularly interested in the photo of ENOC KSW.TNO 675

(ENOC 1364) on page 7 at Clacton Bus Station. My interest is because EN 1364 appears to be the service car on that departure of Service 53 as it is displaying a destination display for the whole route. This would have been very unusual as KSWs usually only strayed onto this service on short workings and duplicates. I think that by 1965 the 53 was the preserve of Bristol FLF double-deckers. If I am wrong about that the service car would have been an LS or MW single decker. The KSW was, no doubt, the replacement for a failed FLF or LS/MW.

Area News and Workings

Basildon & Hadleigh

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

HH63165 returned to Hadleigh from Wrightbus on 28 July. It had been involved in an RTC on 21 April 2019 (see EBN662) and had been at Wrightbus for over a year. Unlike Colchester's 37009 (see EBN673), it has been repaired.

33548 (engine defects) was seen at Westway on 10 July but is now back in use at Basildon.

HH44081 was on loan to Basildon from 7-11 July inclusive, used mainly on routes 25 & 16.

Unusual / Interesting Workings as follows (all July unless stated).

Route 9 (usually StreetLites): 33544 & 33552 (9th); HH44081 (10th); 33077 (13th), 33551 (14th), 67161 (18th), 33507 (23rd), 69909 (23rd), 69518 (27th), 33555 (28th plus 5 August), 44910 (31st), 33548 & 33553 (1 August).

Many StreetLites plus X10 liveried 67160-67164 have continued to appear on routes 94/A in the last month. Pre-29 March service reductions, the routes were nearly 100% double deck operated with the odd single decker, but now this is reversed. Two double deckers noted have been 33095 on 17th (replacing 47655 on the 1500 journey from Basildon to South Woodham Ferrers) and 33546 all day on 29th. 69908 was also unusual on 16th and 44910 on 1 August.

44910 on 21 (Basildon-North Benfleet) (Saturdays 11th & 25th). 33551 on 16 (23rd).



First 47653, SN15 AET, Wrightbus Streetlite DF on route 9, Warley to Basildon, heading along King's Road, Brentwood towards the town centre. 26 October2019.

Alan Moore.

Sources own observations, and with thanks to R Appleton, S Barham, D Bell, T Clark, J Collins, D Edwards, R Hannah, C McCormack, J Podgorski, E Semaj, First Essex, Bustimes, Facebook, Bus Lists on the Web, Flickr, Essex Buses Google group and Terminus.

Basildon Bus Station Diversion

Extract from First Essex website.

From 3 August, there was an unplanned road closure before Basildon bus station. Services are unable to access the bus station from Ashtons Way. Services returning into the bus station have to turn left at the railway station to the Roundacre roundabout and back on Southern Hay pass the Beehive. This will affect all Services. At present this is delaying services 5-10 minutes.

Hopefully, we will get more information to share in EBN677...**Ed.**

EBN676p19

HKE 676 and First 65676 for EBN676

Robert Appleton & Robert Downton.



Cedric's of Wivenhoe HKE 676L at Colchester Bus Station on 5 March 1990. Bristol VRT/SL2/6LX with 13ft 5in high ECW body new to Maidstone & District in 1973.

Robert Appleton.

First Essex 65676, SN51 UYK at Pier Avenue, Clacton on Sea 4 November 2016, Scania L94/Wright B43F ex-First Edinburgh.

Robert Downton.



EBN676p20

That Woolworth's Shop.

Paul Creighton.

Mention was made in EBN675 of 126 SMD, the mobile shop operated by Woolworth's in Essex. I don't have any photos of the vehicle with Woolworth's, of course, but I thought that the readers might like one of the vehicle with its final subsequent operator, the Bury St. Edmunds Division of St. John Ambulance by which it was operated as a mobile first aid post. It had previously been operated by the Ipswich Division of St. John Ambulance, where it was replaced by a Bedford VAL, and before that with the Weybridge Division. My understanding is that the body was by Eustace & Partners. Upon withdrawal by Bury St. Edmunds Division in 1987, I was offered the vehicle to preserve but wasn't able to take it on, and I couldn't find anyone at the time who wanted to acquire it to keep as a complete vehicle; it subsequently went to some preservationists and was broken for spares for bus or coach bodied Reliances.

Paul Creighton.



Additional Bedford VALs which Chris Stewart has found.

The membership has obviously got a soft spot for Bedford VALs and have inundated your Editor with pictures and notes. There are so many that we need more space than I have available so some of the material will just have to wait a while longer before it can be published. In particular, Paul Creighton has sent some nice pics and notes, one is shown at the foot of the page as a "taster". Meanwhile, here is a picture sent in by **Chris Stewart** that will, hopefully, keep you satisfied for a while!



Kevin Lane photo - Alec Swan collection. See note below.

Brentwood Coaches — BYU 338B VAL14/Duple, PIJ 454H VAL70/Duple (bought new)
County Coaches, Brentwood LGK 461D VAL14/Duple, TGI 367F VAL14/Plaxton
Don's, Dunmow — EMK 396B VAL14/Duple
Lodge's, High Easter — ULG 38E VAL14/Duple (sister to Wells ULG 39E), KNK 362G VAL70/Duple
Midas (Dover), Brentwood — 649 DCE VAL14/Duple
Wells, Hatfield Peverel — ULG 39E VAL14/Duple, LAW 105F VAL70/Duple
George Weston, Wickford — OOU 858G VAL70/Duple
Wiffen, Finchingfield — GVO 266D VAL14/Duple
Denyer, Stondon Massey (not operated) OTM 649H VAL70/Plaxton

Plus of course Grey-Green/Orange Luxury and Empire's Best (CMP 205/6A, EMP 798B) working regularly to/from East Coast resorts.



SAN 913L was visiting West Road, Clacton-on-Sea in the late 80s, by which time VALs with coach companies were becoming rare.

O

Operated by Drewery of Loughton
Paul Creighton.

STOP PRESS!!!



EBN6767p23

At **Southend**, E400 decker 6503 was returned from Colchester on 10 July and 6504 on the 28th, meaning there are no longer any Southend buses on loan to other depots. Two of the last three buses in store also re-entered service in early/mid-July, leaving just Southend Transport liveried 3816 which finally re-entered service on 29 July following MOT test.

Then on 21 July, E400 6529 (the one in Sapphire livery) was transferred to Guildford, with **Southend** receiving 4203, YJ61 CHY, Optare Versa B37F in return; it is in the standard old Arriva livery.

Also received at **Southend** for crew shuttle work was Mercedes-Benz Sprinter BT66 UAL, latterly with Arriva Click in Liverpool where it was numbered 7928, although when new in 2017 it had operated for Arriva Southern Counties at Maidstone and was numbered 1000 then.

Updating last month, at **Southend** service 6 was retimed from 6 July and had a couple of extra journeys added but remains every 40 minutes on M-S, and hourly Sundays.

From 1 July to 5 August Services 7 and 8 were diverted via Southchurch Avenue, Eastern Esplanade and Liffan Way due to Woodgrange Drive being closed both ways for major gasworks.

At **Colchester**, a further service enhancement from 12 July not listed last month was the restoration of a normal timetable on service 133. With the park & ride, although this restarted from 6 July, the hours of operation are shorter than before (M-F) and the frequency is every 20 minutes all day long, meaning it only requires 2 buses. The Braintree Freeport shuttle remains suspended.

Colchester Darts 1564 & 3420 were moved to Southend mid-July for storage but are not yet withdrawn. However, Dart/Caetano 1565 has been fitted with a driver screen and is back in service.

At **Harlow**, the M-F frequency on service 59 was improved from 27 July to 11 trips each way, hourly but with 2 gaps. Citaro 3895 has returned to service.



Nearly a year ago, 'deckers returned to Arriva Colchester; on 18 October 2019, 4459, MX61 AXW was in Middleborough.

Roger Tuke.
EBN676p24

Vehicle Sold

Mercedes-Benz tilt-lift low loader H682 ELX to private owner, Northern Ireland in July 2020.

Vehicle Scrapped

Bedford VAM5 / Duple Bella Venture DJL 126D It was decided that it was not possible to renovate this coach due to its very bad condition. It was broken and scrapped in July 2020 with any useful parts being retained.

Other Vehicle News

Dennis Trident / East Lincs T273 BPR, T274 BPR, T278 BPR and V428 DRA are currently being prepared and repainted white and blue for their new owner.

Other News

The first day excursion since lock down took place on the 17 July to Dunwich and Southwold. The coach used was Tourismo JW20 DGE on its first public outing. The second outing for JW20 DGE took place on the 20 July 2020 when it took part in the 'Honk for Hope' protest in Central London. The first holiday is planned for Sidmouth in September.



The coach industry is facing an existential threat as a result of the current pandemic and associated massive drop in economic activity. Whilst bus services are being supported through Government subsidies, notably the "CBSSG" (Coronavirus Bus Service Support Grant) to cover the massive drop off in passenger numbers, pleas to assist the coach sector have fallen on deaf ears, despite a campaign by the industry trade body CPT-UK and a meeting with the Minister, Baroness Vere. To draw attention to the industry's plight, a series of demonstrations by coach operators have taken place across the country under the banner "Honk For Hope". By far the biggest brought around 420 coaches to London on 20 July for a protest drive round Parliament Square. Most coaches then carried on to Tower Hill where **Richard Delahoy** was positioned with his camera. Local operators seen there included Don's, Flagfinders, Fords, Galleon, Hailstone, Kelly's and Lodge's, others took part (eg Kirbys) but weren't seen by the photographer.



Mark Lloyd with thanks to Ross Newman.

Ensignbus

Dealing Stock Movements – July 2020

Vehicles in

Bear Buses	SN51 SYA / SYC	
First Eastern Counties	W743 / 768 DWX	Volvo B7TL's
First Essex	MX05 CFD/CFG/CKK	Volvo B7RLE's
	SN55 CXH / CXJ	Darts
	WX05 RVF	
First West of England	W728 DWX	Volvo B7TL's
	KP51 WCG / WAJ / WDE	
	LT52 WVP / WVO / WWD / WWE /	
	WVY / WUK / WWZ / WWA / WWB	
	YU52 VYM	KP51 WCW
	LN51 GKY / GKV / GKU	Tridents
Go-Ahead London	LX54 HAO/HBA/HBB	
	GZG	Volvo B7TL's
	LX06 ECF	
	LX56 ETY / ECF	E400s
	LX56 EUD	
Metroline	LK09 EKU / EKO	E400s
	LK58 KHR/KGU/KHM/KHH/KHU/	
	CNV / KGO / KGN / KHO / KHL	
	LK08 DXW / DXO / FNE / FMA	
RATP London	YN08 DHC/O/P/U/V/X	Scania's
	DHY/Z/MRV/MRX / MRY	
Tower Transit.	BJ11 DVC / DUA / DUV / DVM / DTF	
		Volvo B9TL's
	DVF / DUU / DSY / DRZ / DSE /	
	DSU/ DTV / DVL / DVP / DZX / EBP	

/ EAM / EAG / EAX / EBG / EBL /EAK / EAW / EAO
 / EAE / DVX / DZZ / DZY / EAG / EBA / EBO / DSX
 / DTZ
 SN13 CGY / CGZ / CHC / CHD / CHF / E400s
 CHG / CHH / CHJ / CHK / CHL

Vehicles Out

ACME Transport Services, Bishops Stortford	YN08 DHO	Scania
Happy Als, Liverpool	YN08 DHZ	Scania's
	YT59 DYG	
	LX58 CFJ	
Ipswich Buses (UK reg numbers TBA)	09-D-3524 / 3732 / 3520	E200s
MP Travel, Manchester	BJ11 DVU	Volvo B9TL
Oxford Bus Co	LX60 DXC / DWZ	Volvo B9TL's
South Staffs Coach Hire, Tamworth	LK08 FMA	E400
Vision Bus, Bolton	BJ11 DUV / DVM / DTF / DVF /	
		Volvo B9TL's
	DUU / DSY / DRZ / DSE / DSU /	
	DTV / DVL / DVP	
Warrington Buses	SN09 CDV/CFM / CEX / CDY	E400s

Other Movements

Volvo B7TL
 LX54 HBB

Team Britt, Dunsfold Aerodrome.

Volvo B7TL

LX54 HBA

Manor Primary School, Stratford, London.

Volvo B7TL

LK04 CUJ

Ravenscote Junior School, Camberley, Surrey.

Continued next page.

EBN676p26

Other Movements, continued.		The following all to Shelton Motors for scrap:	
B7TLs	BX54 DJO / DIK / DIJ / DHO / KP51 WAJ / KP51 WCG		
Tridents / E400s	V309 KJW / LK56 FHO / LX56 ETY / EHD / SN51 SYA / LN51 GMO		
Darts / Enviros	PX55 EDJ / SN03 YBA / VX54 MRV / WX05 UAN	Scania's	YS03 ZKE / LK55 ACJ
Versa	YJ58 VBC	Volvo B7RLE	WX54 XCR /XDC/MX05 CFG/CCK/ CFD/CCY

Ensignbus

Mark Lloyd with thanks to Ross Newman and Richard Delahoy.

Ensign Fleet – July 2020

As from last month's magazine the second regular open top bus on Southend Seafront Service 68 is 339, TSU 639 (ex T687 KPU), an ex-Stagecoach Dennis Trident/Alexander, converted to single door and open top. On Saturday 18 July, open top Routemaster RM371 was also used to provide additional trips, whilst on Sunday 19th, due to the non-availability of the Trident, Ensign's heritage fleet MCW Metroliner A112 KFX, in red London Pride livery, was used all day long. Then, on the following Sunday, 26th, both the Metroliner and the Routemaster were used to provide additional trips, providing the welcome sight of 4 open toppers in use at once. Also, usually to be found at the Southend Pier stop to help drum up trade is Ensign's MRM1, BNK 217A, the promotional miniature open topper built on the running units of a Mini car.

E200 704 To Dons Coaches, Dunmow, Essex.



Southend's Pier bridge was rebuilt some years ago with normal headroom, so there's no longer any need for a conductor to tell passengers to stay seated! Ensign's 392 (392 MBF) passes under on the Southend seafront service 68 on 11 July. Sadly, parking is now allowed here, detracting from the perfect photo.

Richard Delahoy. EBN676p27

Richard Delahoy.

Fleet

Solo 319 (YJ06 YRN) and Dart 423 (EU64 CVT) are both now confirmed as write-offs following (non-fault) accidents.

Stephensons Dart 456 [see picture below] and Galloway Solo 330 remain in use at NIBS as the non-schools PVR there can utilise more single decks than the schools PVR.

Solo 329 (MX08 DHC) is temporarily on hire from Galloway to Stephensons.

Deckers 601 - 608 have remained on road throughout for rail work and 609 is also now back in service. At NIBS, 514-6/22 were relicenced for the 19 July c2c rail replacement and have also been used on other services.

Scania 634 is now transferred to NIBS and is in their livery. A number of SOE and NIBS vehicles have received repaints, in NIBS case to the 'updated' livery, and in both cases with the new style fleetnames.

All in-service buses now have Perspex screens on cab doors to reduce the risks of spreading Covid-19 between customers and driver.

A number of **services** will see further frequency enhancements from 10 August, including 38/A and 90 reverting to half-hourly, and the combined PVR for Stephensons/NIBS will rise to c. 63 vehicles.



On loan from Stephensons to NIBS since at least 11 June, Dart SLF/Plaxton 456 (GU52 HJX) is actually the oldest active vehicle in the combined fleets. New to Coastal of Newick, Sussex it makes periodic appearances on the Brentwood area services (as it did here on 24 July) where it adds to the variety of E200s, Plaxton Darts, StreetLite WFs, Solo 330 and the occasional double decker with which NIBS have been running the 21 and 81.

Chris Stewart.

hedingham and chambers

Mark Lloyd with thanks to Jon Podgorski, Hedingham website & Essex-Buses yahoo group.

Vehicle Withdrawn

285 SN03 EBV Dart Transbus MPD Withdrawn due to mechanical/fuel issues 31 July.

Significant Allocations

457	SY to HD	1 July	500	KNu to CN	by 1 July	510	HD to KN	20 July
512	KN to HD	6 July	513	HD to KN	3 July	513	KN to HD	17 July
513	HD to KN	28 July	514	KN to HD	3 July	572	KN to HD	28 July

Fleet news

Scania Omnicity Decker 852 A057 HCD was repainted at Marden's by 12 July and 850 A057 EZM was to be the next recipient.

Hedingham
851,
A057 EZL
in new livery
just
completed
a run on
Service 4 in
Pier
Avenue,
Clacton on
17 July
around
15.20
awaiting
next duty.

**Mark
Lloyd.**



500 PL51 LDJ open top Volvo B7TL Plaxton President was first spotted in service on 11 July in Clacton, on service 134 which is branded Clacton Breeze.

President update – 569 is SORN at HD as is 570 – previous report was incorrect. 572 is back at work at KN/HD and 575 back at work at HD. 577 is being cannibalised at HD. Wright/Gemini 510 returned to service and moved from HD to KN by 20 July.

Dart MPD 285, SN03 EBV has been withdrawn at Clacton due to continuing fuel starvation and injection issues. At going into press early August – 455, AN61 LAN Scania Omnilink had just returned to Sudbury in full Chambers livery – repainted from Anglianbus livery similar to 456 at Clacton shown last month.

Service news

Service 134 has reverted to an all-day service to provide the open top facility during fine weather at Clacton. Branded Clacton Breeze the previous East Yorkshire livery has further been amended by vinyls to remove some previous branding and to add the Clacton Breeze logos. The logo depicting the pier in silhouette against a bright sun. The Pier being identified by the pier entrance, helter-skelter ride and the Jolly Roger café at the pier head.

Other News

8035, EK56 MGE service van and R006 TUU Mercedes crew van have been collected by DJ Spall for scrap.

EBN676p29

Letters

Martin Farmer from Harwich

Another VAL not mentioned was a Duple bodied one owned by Victoria Coaches of Leigh on Sea. Their yard was behind the Elms and was F-reg 1968/69.

A comment about RT315 at Loughton Station; the only thing 1948 is its registration number! Its chassis was new in May 1951 as RT4141 and its body was new to RT2580 in August 1951.

Alan Osborne from Ilford

Another VAL and an Aged RT

The Overlooked Westcliff Centenary and more Woolwich connections.

Thank you to David and Maurice for bringing this interesting July 1920 event to our attention.

This Centenary actually marks events that were initiated by the Westcliff-on-Sea Motor Char-a-banc Company Limited (WSMC), not Westcliff-on-Sea Motor Services Limited (WMS). WSMC was registered on 23 April 1914 and later changed its name to WMS on 28 January 1922. So the events referred to in 1920 and 1921 were truly char-a-banc activities.

I rambled on a bit earlier, but this seems a good occasion to relate the very strong links that EBEG has with Kent, of which some members may not be aware. Also, there is a Woolwich connection!

The M&D and East Kent Bus Club has been in existence since the early 1950s and was the dreamchild of Don Vincent who for many years ran the club almost single handed from his home in 30, Shirley Avenue, BEXLEY, Kent. I had the pleasure of meeting Don in Canterbury Bus Station in the summer of 1958 and we then had a long conversation over a cup of tea. It turned out that our workplaces were quite near to each other in London, his in Kings Cross (Gestetner) and mine in Clerkenwell (Northampton College) and so we later had a number of lunchtime chats. He put to me the idea of becoming the Ilford Area Representative of the M&D and EK BC. This I took up and organised meetings in my front room and also a couple of coach tours of Eastern National garages, with a picking up point at Tilbury Ferry for Kentish members to join by crossing the Thames from Gravesend.

So why have an Essex group in the M&D and EK BC? There were actually a number of links. Geographically the old established Borough of Woolwich (remember July 1920) stretched across the Thames and had a couple of enclaves on the north side of the river which were duly regarded as part of Kent. Later, Woolwich was split into Woolwich and North Woolwich and the latter then being part of Essex. If you were to catch the 101 bus from the North Woolwich (Free Ferry) terminal towards Manor Park then you would have passed the Timpsons garage in East Ham, latterly occupied by the Fire Station. Timpsons was a BET company with headquarters in Rushey Green, Catford with another garage in Crayford, Kent.

Further along the 101, if you alighted at Manor Park you could catch the train three stops to Maryland (formerly Maryland Point) Station. Exiting the station and walking towards Stratford the first turning on the left was Manbey Park Road. This was the picking up and setting down point for M&D express service E14 which ran from Leyton via the Rotherhithe Tunnel all the way to Leysdown-on Sea on the Isle of Sheppey.

The M&D coach, which in those days would have been a CO class A.E.C. Regal III, with Harrington bodywork would be out-stationed overnight at Winwoods Coach Station in Leyton, its terminal point.

So there are lots of Kentish connections. Just to bring you up to date, today if you did not fancy the train ride from Manor Park to Maryland you could travel by bus using a Stagecoach double decker still on route 25, but now restricted to 30 passengers because of COVID19. End of ramble, hope you found it suitably nostalgic.

Michael Parsons from Orilla, Ontario, Canada, a one-time conductor and then driver for Eastern National at Wood Green.

Cushy shifts (!), Conker Boxes, Collection & Congrats!!!

I hope that all is well with you and yours in these rather difficult times but hopefully we are all on the correct road home.

The PSV world is a far different place today from when we did two hours and thirty-two minutes to Southend, Tylers Avenue [on the 251] and sit in the café for our meal break. Then a short working to Wickford or Rayleigh and back with either a Conker Box or a Tram [see the May issue, EBN673pp4/5 for an explanation]. Then back all the way to Wood Green. I did work the Conker Boxes both as a conductor and a driver and they were hard work with the heavy door on the platform.

I have models of some of my favourite motors to drive or conduct at that time, including Bristol LD 320 GPU (WG1489), Bristol LDL 236 LNO (BD1541), LD 895 GVX (WG1500), LS 859 ETW (SD417) and ex-City Leyland Titan FIN 205 (BD1139), the bus that I passed my test in, around the West End in 1961, a nice bus to drive. I did eventually drive for London Transport out of Leyton on pre-select and automatic gearboxes. Today I have a collection of model EN buses and dioramas based on Wood Green, Harwich and Canvey depots.

Keep up the good work, the magazine is a good read in these quiet months. Take care". *Michael did supply a photo featuring the Canvey model [based on the Kingsway models kit] with a selection from his collection, ranging from the Westcliff AEC Q double decker through to Bristol VRs but your Editor was unable to get it to reproduce sufficiently well.* But see Picture on p32.

Richard Delahoy adds that the fleetnumbers quoted are the pre-August 1964 series.

EBN676p30

Other Operators.

Roger A. Smith.

With thanks to the PSV Circle.

Not Essex operators but often in the county!

Leger Holidays of Rotherham, South Yorkshire has acquired the **Shearings** name from the administrators. Leger does not own any coaches of its own but uses independent operators supplying coaches to Legers specifications. It is understood that Leger intends to promote Shearings as a separate brand. Leger has not purchased any of Shearings coaches or hotels.

Moseley (PCV) Ltd of Pontefract, West Yorkshire has entered administration. The company is the UKs largest independent distributor of new and used buses and coaches. Moseley is the official importer of new VDL, Beulas and Indcar coaches. The business and assets are for sale but 29 employees have been made redundant. The administrators are urgently seeking a buyer for the company which has said the corona virus pandemic led customers to delay, cancel or postpone orders for new coaches. The Airdrie based Moseley Distributors remains unaffected.



As reported on the Lodge page, EBN676p25, many coach operators gathered in Parliament Square, London on 20 July to highlight to government the severe problems Covid-19 precautions have caused the coach industry with the "Honk For Hope – Coach Crisis" rally. Local operators seen there by Richard Delahoy included Don's, Flagfinders, Fords, Galleon, Hailstone, Kelly's and Lodge's, others took part (eg Kirbys) but weren't seen by our photographer.

Picture above Getting the message across! Don's of Dunmow Irizar DH18 DON.

Richard Delahoy.

Good News!

New Horizon Travel, Colchester did **not** "go-down" as was suggested in EBN675p31; they are still "up and running".

We apologise for any distress our error may have caused. We have received no news of the fate of Gardener Travel of Chelmsford.

EBN676p31



Chris Stewart kindly provided this evocative picture of one of the buses Michael Parsons has modelled. It is 320 GPU, Eastern National 2458, 1956 Bristol Lodekka LD6B ECW H33/27R. It is by **Kevin Lane.**

Ted Miles from the Emerald Isle.

Hello Maurice, first of all thank you to your team on keeping us up to date with all that's going on. Now for some items which may be of interest. For the first 18 years of my life I lived in Halstead Road, Lower Kirby. The name of the house was Ilfracombe, two doors away lived Bob Slogrove who was a conductor at Walton depot and we were great mates. One Thursday in May 1954 he told me that a new bus had been delivered to Clacton for testing and that when ready would be based at Walton. This Bus was Lodekka 1435 XVX 21 and was to be tested on Friday the next day. So next day it was to Kirby Cross railway bridge to see if the new bus would go under the railway bridge which had a clearance of 13 foot 6 inches; after shunting all was ok for clearance and sure enough this bus spent its early days at Walton depot on routes 105 and 107. My sister, who now lives in Wivenhoe, recently decided to see how Hedingham were doing on the Clacton area routes, rode on the bus from Clacton to Walton and was amazed that at last there was a bus stop now outside our old home my mother campaigned for years to get a stop here which was quite a walk to Kirby memorial.

Re the photograph in the current issue of RT at Loughton Station on route 38A, the RT was based at Loughton garage and the RTL behind was from Clapton depot who shared the route. Clapton operated most of their journeys to Whips Cross and Loughton garage operated most of the through journeys from Victoria to Loughton. Back to route 251; the shortest dup from Great Burstead, Kings Head to Billericay, Sun Corner just 6-minute running time! Re the 256 from Outwood Common, very busy in the peaks with LS operation in the early 60s, it was known as the copper route as nearly everyone paid the fare in old pennies, and we were always busy bagging up the coins, some routes change always a problem. Re Setrite ticket rolls colours, there was a time when Clacton had pink rolls and also there were some green rolls. I don't know who had these so how do I know? It was when operating the 53 between Tilbury and Chelmsford, passengers had these and we cancelled them re their return journey. Glad you are back in service, I am also although it's light duties still. Kind regards.

Thanks, and Snippets.

Alan Tebbit, BEM from Cornwall

In EBN674, DB from BD mentioned a Bristol LS with a Commer engine. This was 400 (476 BEV) which was a 1954 LS5G, but shortly after delivery was converted to LS3C, i.e. that notorious Commer two-stroke. It was converted back to Gardner 5-spot in 1960, and in 1966 became L46 in the fleet of Hedingham and District. Initially, it was based at Chelmsford (CF), presumably due to its closeness to Central Works. It was used on the 53 service between Clacton and Tilbury Ferry. Not only did this trial it on a variety of road conditions, town centres, hill climbing in the Langdon Hills, and fast dual carriageway between Kelvedon and Marks Tey. Also, it gained feedback from drivers at Basildon, Chelmsford, Colchester and Clacton, instead of just one depot. It didn't prove too successful in timekeeping on that route. My father, a driver at CF, used to tell me that patrons of the Swan in Horndon-on-the-Hill, would leave the pub when the bus was due, only to hear it pounding its way up Laindon High Road, giving them time to nip back in for an extra pint.

For some reason 400 spent most Sundays shuttling between West Avenue and Wood Street, on CF town service 44A. It's last run of the day was the 23.05 hrs (11.5 pm in those days), and I would lay in bed, and listen to it roaring flat out, all the way to the depot, just over a mile away. I would have been 7 or 8 years old at the time.

ENOC 400 [476 BEV].

Route 2/2A, Clacton to Mistley.

All pictures and text by Robert Appleton.

These nicely illustrate Robert's article on p32 of this EBN.



CN1523 (KHK 415J) awaiting departure from Ipswich, Old Cattle Market on 16.35 Ipswich – Clacton 123 on 19 June 1982.



First Eastern National 2683 (P689 HND) Mercedes 709D/Plaxton Beaver in Harwich Road, Mistley on 27 April 2000, complete with VillageLink sign in the windscreen.



Hedingham & District L326 (EJ02 KYY) Transbus Dart SLF Pointer 2 at Rigby Avenue Mistley on 8 April 2003. L326 had VillageLink branding, and the driver wore a smart uniform.



Hedingham & District L381 (EU59 AFJ) Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 in Harwich Road Mistley on 22 April 2010. This bus has been renumbered 293 in the Go-Ahead Hedingham fleet.



First Essex Buses 42556 (WX05 UAN) Alexander Dennis Dart SLF Pointer 2 turning from Colchester Road on to Long Road in Lawford on 11 April 2016.



Panther Travel DB09 PAN (YX09 AEV) Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 working 12.02 Mistley - Clacton 2A on 18 October 2019. DB09 PAN was turning from Straight Road on to Steam Mill Road at Bradfield Heath.

EBN676 inner rear cover



Ipswich Buses started working their Essex County Council contracted services 2/2A/4/11 on 27 July 2020.

Early that morning Ipswich Buses used Optare Versa 145 (YK08 EPA) on service 2/2A and Optare Versa 149 (YK08 EPF) and 150 (YK08 EPJ) on service 11 Colchester North Station - Highwoods Circular - North Station.



Then these two buses should switch to service 4 Stanway Tollgate - Colchester Town Centre - The Hythe Tesco Store in the off-peak, then back on to service 11 for the pm peak.

All pictures and text by
Robert Appleton.



Essex Bus News 676; August 2020.

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EBN676 outer rear cover