

# **Essex Bus News**

**Number 678 October 2020**



**Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group**  
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### **This Issue's News Highlights**

Updated livery for First Essex, details and photo on page 10.

Nine more vehicles hired by First Essex, making it 12 in total in the last two months. See inside front cover, rear cover and page 9. Vehicles also hired by Arriva and Stephensons / NIBS for schools' work, see pages 16-19.

### **Photo Captions**

**Above:** In contrast to the photo of the revised First Essex livery on page 10, one vehicle still remains in the pre-2012 Barbie scheme. 32629 is seen climbing Colchester North Hill on route 62 from Colchester Railway Station to Brightlingsea on 23 September 2020.

**Richard Delahoy**

**Front cover:** As reported on page 18 of EBN 677, Volvo B7TL / Alexander ALX 400 30888 (W743 DWX), which was owned by First Essex between December 2011 and August 2013, and which had been in Lowestoft Corporation heritage livery, has returned to Essex. It was recently sold by First Eastern Counties to Ensignbus and has been acquired by SJH Travel. **Mark Doggett** captured it at Noak Bridge on 8 September. A photo of it in Lowestoft Corporation heritage livery appeared on the inside rear cover of EBN 619.

**Inside front cover top:** The fine late summer weather broke on 23 September with heavy rain at times. Heddingham 286, one of two MPDs ex Go-South Coast and still in an all-over blue livery, splashes along Lexden Road in Colchester past Norman Way en-route to the delightfully named Layer Breton on the 85, a route which runs on Wednesdays only with a single trip each way. **Richard Delahoy**

**Inside front cover bottom:** An unusual location for a photo in Essex Bus News. First West Yorkshire 66760 (Y105 VVB) turning from St Leonard's Place into Museum Street in York on 12 May 2014, complete with a side advert for the York Chocolate Story, which tells the history of chocolate, plus the Terry's and Rowntree's chocolate factories in York. This vehicle is currently on loan to First Essex at Basildon (see page 9). **Robert Appleton**

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## Missing or Defective EBNs

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

## Subscriptions

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 per month. For example, a member joining in March would pay £10 x £2, i.e. £20. Please contact Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road, Southend-on-Sea SS1 3TT  
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## Membership Records & Data Protection

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

## Reports, Articles & Photographs

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

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|                             |                                 |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Reports to Sub-Editors      | <b>6 November</b>               |
| Sub-Editor drafts to Editor | <b>13 November</b>              |
| Dispatch by Printers        | on or before <b>23 November</b> |

The last two dates are fixed, but late news can be sent up to 13th and will be included if possible, if not it will be held over to the next month.

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

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# Group Notices

## EBN Editor & Chelmsford Meetings Co-ordinator

Maurice Austin has decided to stand down as Essex Bus News Editor and Chelmsford Meetings Co-ordinator with immediate effect. Maurice has been editor since January 2013, so has been responsible for 94 editions of Essex Bus News, during which time he has worked hard to not only pull together a magazine full of news, historic articles and photographs, but also through newer software, has improved the layout and quality of the magazine. In addition, Maurice has organised a variety of interesting meetings in Chelmsford. On behalf of the committee and membership, I would like to thank Maurice for the considerable time and effort that he has put into the Group, particularly whilst having to cope with serious health issues. Adam Kelleher has offered to step up into the role of Acting Editor. He has produced this issue and is more than willing to take on the position long-term, but we are offering all members the opportunity to volunteer for the role. Due to the nature of the job, you will need to have access to a computer, strong IT skills (including use of Word and basic photo editing software), an e-mail account, a good knowledge of the current Essex bus scene, plenty of spare time and the ability to work to tight deadlines, supported by the existing editorial team.

The role of Chelmsford Meetings Co-ordinator involves booking the room and arranging the evening, including booking speakers, setting up projection equipment etc. (although due to Covid restrictions, we are currently unable to hold meetings).

If you are interested in applying for either or both of these posts please contact the Chair [ianransom2008@gmail.com](mailto:ianransom2008@gmail.com) or in writing to 34 Donald Way, Chelmsford, CM2 9JE.

Ian Ransom  
Chair

## Membership Renewals

A renewal form is enclosed (loose) with this month's magazine for all who are due to renew at the end of this year. Although we may face some increased costs next year, the Committee have agreed to keep the subscription unchanged at £22 for 2021, recognising the pressures that we all face as individuals at present. I hope you will agree that the magazine still represents excellent value for money! Subscriptions can be paid in one of three ways:

- 1) By BACS transfer to our bank, see details on the renewal slip. This is our preferred method as it is easy and cheap both for you and for us. Note that you can only do this by electronic banking or on your bank app; you cannot go into a Santander branch to pay.
- 2) By sending us a cheque or postal order.
- 3) By PayPal - again, details are on the form.

Air mail prices are on the renewal slip, and life members (you know who you are) pay a reduced price of £21. As we do not have any meetings or events scheduled for the foreseeable future, the option to pay by cash is not feasible this year, I'm afraid.

I look forward to receiving your 2021 subscription and thank you in advance for your continued support for the Group. If, however, you do not plan to renew, could you please let me know - preferably with your reasons - to save chasing unnecessarily.

Richard Delahoy  
Treasurer & Membership Secretary

## Book Reviews in EBN 677

For anyone wishing to order Jim's books, there was a an 'r' missing in his E Mail address. The correct address is [drjryoung@aol.com](mailto:drjryoung@aol.com)

## Ian Allan Shop, Waterloo

Members may be aware that the shop at Waterloo has stocked Group publications and Essex Bus News but is sadly about to close. They have advised that their last trading day is 31 October, and they will have a 33% sale on VAT items and a 50% sale on books from Saturday 10 October, so if you are in London, it may well be worth a final visit to snap up some bargains!

## The Running Card - Dates for Your Diary by Owen Woodliffe

Saturday 5 December: 15th Anniversary of Routemasters ending on Route 159 (subject to Government Guidelines; local restrictions may be imposed at short notice).

The Aldenham event has been cancelled. There will not be an Ensignbus Running Day this December.

Suggested Essex books for reading during what seems likely to be a stay-at-home winter, as listed on MDS Books website:

|                                                     |                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Buses in Brentwood Chris Stewart. Ref OS115.0       | Eastern National - The Final Years David Moth. A7945.0 |
| East Anglian Buses 1970-95 Robert Appleton. A7386.0 | Buses in Essex David Christie. A7747.0                 |
| East Anglian Buses since 1990 David Moth. A8352.0   | Bristol RE Buses and Coaches Robert Appleton A9585.0   |



## A Blast from the Past

Below: Harwich's Bristol FLF / ECW 2842 outside its home garage in 1979. New in September 1965, it was withdrawn in December 1980. **Paul Harvey.** See also page 32.



Below: A Blast from the Even Further Past, although a modern photo. Oldest meets newest! Lodge's Ford T SV 6936 contrasts with Mercedes-Benz Tourismo JW20 DGE at the Centenary event held on 23 August 2020, reports of which were in EBN 677. **Richard Delahoy**



## 678 for EBN 678

Right: Eleven of the twelve Enviro 300s that First Essex acquired from Scotland between October 2018 and March 2019 have fleet numbers commencing 677, but the twelfth is the only vehicle in the fleet commencing 678. 67805 is in Pier Avenue, Clacton, on 28 February 2019, working service 97 Walton to Colchester. This vehicle came from First Aberdeen.

**Robert Appleton**



See Page 32 for a '678 for EBN 678 Extra'.

Below: First Essex Buses 678, a Scania L94UB / WrightBus Solar, was new in June 2003, allocated to Colchester. A rear view at Colchester Bus Station on 20 September 2003, showing the route branding for service 65 Highwoods - Stanway Tollgate. This bus became 65686 the following March and made the opposite trip between countries to 67805 when it was sold to First Scotland East in April 2018.

**Robert Appleton**



# Service Revisions

by Paul Harvey

with thanks 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 the current service situation re the virus arrangements.

## Standard Changes

### 30 March 2020

410 Harlow to Waltham Cross Holdbrook (M-S) **Trustybus**

Service withdrawn between Cheshunt Brookfield Centre and Holdbrook Estate.

### 1 September

211 Waltham Cross to Breach Barns (M-S) **Epping Forest Community Transport**

Some journeys rerouted around Holdbrook Estate at Waltham Cross.

212 Waltham Cross to Roundhills (M-S) **Epping Forest Community Transport**

Timetable revisions.

513 Chelmsford to Southend High School for Girls (Sch) **Stephensons**

Revised timetable with service extended to / from Witham, replacing withdrawn 514.

817 Southchurch to Westcliff Schools (Sch) **Stephensons**

New school service replacing services 509 / 560 / 814 which are withdrawn.

FC01 Mayland to South Woodham (Sch) **Ford Coaches**

Revision to timetable.

FC03 Southminster to South Woodham (Sch) **Ford Coaches**

Revision to timetable.

FC05 Mundon to South Woodham (Sch) **Ford Coaches**

Revision to timetable.

FC07 Maldon to South Woodham (Sch) **Ford Coaches**

Revision to timetable.

### 2 September

2 Wickford The Wick to Billericay Mayflower School (Sch) **NIBS**

Revision to timetable.

3 Shotgate to Billericay Mayflower School (Sch) **NIBS**

Revision to timetable.

45 Billericay Mayflower School to Shotgate (Sch) **NIBS**

Revision to afternoon timetable.

49 Basildon Watermill to Brentwood (Sch) **NIBS**

Revision to timetable.

473/4 Fyfield / High Ongar to Brentwood County High School (Sch) **NIBS**

Revision to timetable.

475 Stanford le Hope to Brentwood (Sch) **NIBS**

Revision to timetable.

### 3 September

D1 Laidon Station to Deanes School Thundersley (Sch) **APT Coaches**

New school service.

193 Ardleigh Church to East Bergholt High School (Sch) **Carters Heritage Buses Ltd**

Revision to timetable.

### 6 September

SB11 Matching Green to Epping Tesco (MTh) Essex County Council **Ugobus**

Service withdrawn.

SB12 Toot Hill to Harlow (WF) Essex County Council **Ugobus**

Service withdrawn.

### 5 October

Chigwell Dart 8 Chigwell Parish to Epping Hospital (M-F) **Epping Forest Community Transport**

New pre-bookable flexible service replacing Chigwell services C001 & CP02 which were suspended on 27 March and are now withdrawn completely.



## **Covid-19 Updated Bus Operator Information**

Timetables are continuing to be increased by bus operators. The deadline for operators in England, Scotland and Wales to return to pre-Covid timetables has been extended from 30 September 2020 to 4 January 2021 to give operators more time to consider permanent changes. Until that time operators are able to make temporary changes with three working days' notice. Timetable changes from 4 January 2021 must be registered in advance in the usual way.

### **Arriva Kent Thameside**

6 (Southend to Temple Sutton) from an unknown date increase in the Monday to Friday frequency to every 20 mins.

14 September 2020 66 (Waltham Cross to Debden) revision to school day S66 journeys, 0656 Waltham Cross to Debden will only operate to Loughton Station. The 1440 Waltham Cross to Debden will operate 10 mins earlier at 1430. Extra journey will operate at 0800 Waltham Cross to Borders Lane College.

### **Epping Forest Community Transport**

392 (Harlow to Hoddesdon) was reinstated sometime in July, exact date not known, with the first and last journeys suspended.

### **First Essex**

28 September service changes as follows:

#### **South Essex**

5X Wickford to Grays (am peak) revised to provide one morning journey to Grays.

22 Canvey to Basildon additional school day morning and afternoon journeys introduced.

28 Southend to Basildon additional school day morning and afternoon journeys introduced between Basildon & Hadleigh.

100 Lakeside to Chelmsford additional school day morning and afternoon journeys introduced.

#### **Mid Essex**

42/A/B Galleywood to Broomfield Hospital / Stansted Airport / Braintree Saturday service increased to every 12 mins between Galleywood & Broomfield Hospital with hourly extensions to Stansted Airport & Braintree. School day changes am S42 withdrawn and pm journey to operate as 42. Extra school day journey 42B from Braintree to Chelmsford Wood Street.

71 group Chelmsford to Colchester via Witham two peak (one am & one pm) journeys changed from 71 to 71E plus first 71D journey from Witham changed to 71E to enable double decker operation (71E starts / ends at Chelmsford Bus Station and serves the Retail Market in both directions).

351 Chelmsford to Brentwood extra journey introduced on Saturdays 1705 from Chelmsford returning from Warley at 1800.

#### **North Essex**

61 Highwoods to Wivenhoe revised Saturday timetable operating every 15 mins with additional journeys at busy times.

62/B Colchester Station to Brightlingsea revised timetable with four buses per hour between Colchester & Wivenhoe (62 & 62B combined) and half hourly to Brightlingsea. Saturday evening service 62B increased to every 30 mins.

64/A Greenstead to Shrub End / St Michaels revised Saturday timetable to operate every 10 mins (64 & 64A combined).

65 Highwoods to Stanway Tollgate revised Saturday timetable operating every 15 mins.

67/B/68 Colchester to West Mersea revised improved Saturday timetable operating every 30 mins.

75/A Colchester to Maldon revised improved Saturday timetable operating with two journeys per hour between Colchester & Tiptree and hourly to Maldon.

103/4 Colchester to Harwich revised Saturday timetable.

### **Richmond Coaches**

10 September service 20, 0725 Brent Pelham to Bishop Stortford on school days will start at Anstey.

### **Trustybus**

1 September revision to timetables to include school day journeys on services 351 (Hertford to Bishop Stortford), 386 (Stevenage to Bishop Stortford), 410 (Harlow to Cheshunt), 418/B (Epping / Harlow to Loughton) & 420/A (Harlow to Ongar). Service 14 Harlow to Little Parndon / Pinnacles revision to route and timetable.

2 September 7/A Bishop Stortford to Stansted Airport revision to timetable.

Correction to EBN 677: Vectare taking over the 13 group & 61 group of services was included in both sections of Service Revisions. It should only have been in standard changes, not Covid 19 changes.



Both these photos relate to both Service Revisions and First Essex so an appropriate place to include them. Above: As reported in Service Revisions last month, First Essex have introduced S prefixed journeys on some routes for use by schoolchildren only, often these run over only part of the route, as seen by 32484 waiting to take up service at Chelmsford Bus Station on route S31 to Maldon only, on the afternoon of 23 September 2020. 32484 itself had been out of service for a year and would probably have gone for scrap if it hadn't been for the requirement for more buses for schools' work. 44915 in the background has just arrived on route 351.

Below: Newly programmed blinds on Essex Airlink 36841 at Lexden Road, Colchester, waiting to take up service on schooldays only route 525 on 7 September. Behind is 32483, about to operate school route 570. Both **Adam Kelleher**



**Acquired Vehicle**

42898 WX05 RVC SFD3CACR44GW18068 4226/4 B37F 03/05 First Somerset & Avon  
Alexander Dennis Dart / Pointer. Acquired from Lawrence Hill, Bristol (First West of England). In Urban livery. Seen on route 54 on 5 October. Small f First names above the driver's cab and doors, the offside also has a small main Bristol fleet name (in capitals) behind this.

**Vehicles on Loan**

Further to 36148, 36153 and 36161 being reported as on loan to Basildon from 9 September in EBN 677, two days later 36141 (BJ11 EBP), 36143 (BJ11 EAF) and 36156 (BJ11 DZY) joined them on loan from Ensignbus, but at Hadleigh, just too late for inclusion in EBN 677. These are also Volvo B9TL / WrightBus Gemini 2, H39/23D, new April 2011 (36156) and June 2011 (other two) to First London, but latterly with Tower Transit. These are also in all red livery, they did have roller blinds, but they have been removed. They are for school routes 820, 822 and 827. Although the loans are from Ensignbus, the buses were delivered directly to Hadleigh from Tower Transit's Lea Interchange depot. A photo of 36156 appears on the back cover of this issue.

Six Volvo B7RLE / WrightBus Eclipse Urbans (B43F) are on loan.

66759 (YJ05 VVA) & 66760 (YJ05 VVB) were collected from York (First West Yorkshire) on 3 October 2020. They were new to First West Yorkshire in April 2005. 66759 has gone to Colchester and 66760 to Basildon. Both in Urban livery with 'York' main fleet names on cove panels. 66759 was first seen on route 65 on 5 October, 66760 was first seen on route 25 on 7th. A photo of 66760 is on the inside front cover of this issue.

66872 (MX05 KKD) & 66873 (MX05 CKE) arrived at Chelmsford from Oldham (First Greater Manchester) on 1 October and both were seen parked in Chelmsford Bus Station on the afternoon of the next day, not in service, although 66872 later went out on the 351. They were new to First Manchester in August 2005. Both in Urban livery without main fleet names. 66872 was on route 36 and 66873 was on 42 group on 5 October.

66970 (KX05 MIV) & 66971 (KX05 MJY) were delivered to Colchester on 12 September. They were new to First Northampton in May (66970) & June (66971) 2005. From South Yorkshire & Midlands, 66970 from Bramley and 66971 from Huddersfield, but both transferred from Leicester earlier this year. 66971 had been used on driver training at Huddersfield. In Urban 2 livery with pink fronts, both with large f symbols each side behind the rear wheels, 66971 also has a magenta pin stripe below the side windows (this does not continue over the red front). 66971 arrived still with Leicester fleet names but these had been removed before it entered service. However, the ghosting remains. 66970 had also had Leicester fleet names, but these had been removed before delivery to First Essex, again the ghosting remains. 66970 has the strapline 'anywhere in the city' on the white area of its cove panels each side, from when it was in Leicester, but these have been removed from 66971. 66970 entered service on route 62 on 14th with 66971 following two days later on route 65. (First Essex previously owned 66976-80/2-6 with KX05 Mxx registrations, from March 2013 until August-November 2014, when they all went to First Eastern Counties.)

**Allocation Changes**

BN-Basildon; CF-Chelmsford; CR-Colchester; HH-Hadleigh; DS-Driving School; FG-First Group cascade (to / from another First company); FEC-First Eastern Counties (where they were on loan); oos-out of service.

**Period 6 2020/21 (23 August - 26 September)**

30564 FG-CR, 30567 FG-CR, 32484 CF (oos)-CF, 32551 CF (oos)-CF, 32673 CR (oos)-CR, 33044 CR (oos)-Disposal, 33088 HH (oos)-BN, 33178 BN (oos)-BN, 33567 BN (oos)-BN, 33574 BN (oos)-BN, 36141 on loan-HH, 36143 on loan-HH, 36148 on loan-BN, 36153 on loan-BN, 36156 on loan-HH, 36161 on loan-BN, 41521 CF (publicity)-CR (shuttles), 44005 HH-CF, 44908 FEC-BN, 44909 FEC-BN, 47528 BN-HH, 47529 BN-HH, 47530 BN-HH, 63328 HH (oos)-HH, 63343 CR (oos)-CR, 66795 CF-BN, 66798 CR (oos)-CR, 66970 on loan-CR, 66971 on loan-CR, 67160 BN (oos)-BN, 67165 CF-BN, 67193 HH-CF, 67194 HH-CF, 69024 FG-CF, 69515 BN-HH, 69910 BN-BN (oos), 69911 BN-BN (oos), 69913 BN-BN (oos)

32484, 33088 & 33178 are three of the four withdrawn vehicles that were being prepared for a return to service and have now done so. The fourth, 32068, is still being worked on at Colchester. 67165 is the first former X30 Enviro 200 MMC to move depots. 36842 last worked on route X10 on 7 September, it was back at Chelmsford and on X30 on 9th. 36837 last worked on X10 on 25 September and has also now returned to Chelmsford. There are thus no longer any Scania double-deckers on loan to Basildon for the X10, and the route is now once again fully single deck operated with its branded Enviro 200 MMCs.



Above: 30567 was acquired from First South Yorkshire & Midlands in August for use on schools' work, details in EBN 677. It is seen on Lexden Road running empty on its way to Stanway School to take up service on route 17 on 9 September 2020. **Robert Appleton**

### Updated Livery

69432 emerged from the Chelmsford paint shop on 24 September in a revised livery. It is the same colours as Urban livery but to Urban 2 layout, similar to the Route 62 livery on some Volvo B9TLs at Colchester (although the rear light purple dividing line is slightly thicker) but without the green front; the front two-thirds or so of the vehicle are white (it has a curved purple stripe in the sill under the windscreen). It also has standard font fleet names. The amount of magenta has been reduced, it is now only used for the fleet names & f symbols and depot stickers. The livery is the same as the current standard First Glasgow one. 69432 has small 'f First Essex' above the doors and the driver's



cab and main 'Essex' fleet names (in capitals) on the cove panels each side and depot stickers each side. It re-entered service in its new livery on the 31 group on 30 September. Then on 6 October, 69434 was the second vehicle to be outshopped in this livery, it has the same fleet names, etc. as 69432. 67171 was thus the last bus to receive Urban livery, in July this year. 69432 is seen above right on route 42 (LED blinds not working, number in windscreen) on 6 October, with 69431 on route 31B to its left. **Adam Kelleher**

## Disposals

66708 late August & 66709 by October 2020 (exact date not known; it was last seen at Chelmsford depot on 26 March this year but may well have been in stock later than this) both for scrap. Both were acquired in June last year for spares, although 66708 was used in service for a few weeks at Basildon when it first arrived.

Further to EBN 677, 33044 went to Alpha Recovery.

Further to EBNs 674 & 675, 67640 was sold by Ensignbus to Picture Vehicle Co, Pinewood Studios in September.

In EBN 672 it was reported that 41522 & 41541 had been sold for private preservation in March this year, but, because of lockdown, both were still parked at Basildon awaiting collection. 41522 was happily collected some time ago, but the sale of 41541 fell through and it had remained at Basildon until finally leaving on 22 September.

## Further Capacity Changes

Further to EBNs 676 & 677 revised capacities of a couple of other types of vehicles have been noted. Standard length Enviro 200 MMCs 44659-44662 now have a total capacity of 17 (normal seating capacity of 37) and the longer version bought for the X10 & X30 67160-67171, which have additional luggage racks, are 18 (36).



Above: 66816 on route 67 at Colchester Bus Station on 2 September, showing how every other seat is marked out of use and Covid notices on the windows. This vehicle now has a total capacity of 21. Its normal seating capacity is 43. **Adam Kelleher**

## Vehicles Returning to Service

Further to EBNs 674-677, the following, which had been out of service since the 29 March service reductions, are now back in use. 33088 and 33178 (which had both been in service at Colchester up to and including 28 March, but out of use since) have now returned to service at Basildon. 37135 has returned to service at Colchester (more information in Area News below). Additionally, 32484 which had been out of service since September 2019 and 32673, which was acquired in February, are now in use, the latter, still in Midland Bluebird livery, finally entered service, on route 62, on 24 September. 33044, which had been out of service from before the 29 March service reductions, has now been sold. 32068 and 33424 are now the only two vehicles that were taken out of service around the time of the 29 March service reductions that have yet to re-enter service or be sold.

47528, 47529 & 47530 (from BN back to HH), 67193 & 67194 (from HH back to CF) and 69515 (from BN back to HH) returned to their pre-29th March depots during Period 6. The return of 69515 means that all six Volvo B7RLE / WrightBus Eclipse Urban 2s have now returned from Basildon to Hadleigh.

There are no longer any Scania double deckers on loan from Chelmsford to Basildon for route X10.

## School Services

The following is information obtained from Bustimes, members reports and own observations. Unfortunately, not all school services are shown on Bustimes. For example, routes 17, 67C, 525 and 570 (plus others) are not shown. One strange anomaly is that the bus that works the S57 into Chelmsford Bus Station in the afternoon then becomes the S32 to Ongar, but although the latter is included on Bustimes the former is not! Some buses seem to be restricted solely to school services whereas others work on normal routes before, in between and after operating on school routes. Details of school route changes commencing in September were included in Service Revisions in EBN 677, including the introduction of S prefixes to some schoolchildren only routes.

## Colchester

Recently acquired 30564 & 30567 (see EBN 677 and photo on page 10) have been restricted to schools use only, on route 17. 37005 has been used almost exclusively on school route 67C in the past month, although it was reported on school route 17 on 24th and normal route 75 on 21st & 23rd.

## Chelmsford

Chelmsford has a pool of eight school buses from the existing fleet, these being 32482, 32483, 32484, 32551, 36841, 44913, 67196 and 67902, although these have also been used on normal services in the past month, 67902 especially. There are seven car workings on services 525, 570, 620, S31 (Maldon-Chelmsford), S32 (Ongar-Chelmsford), S33 (Ongar-Debden) and S42 (Galleywood-Broomfield for Chelmer Valley High School). 32483 was on route 570 on 7 September (see photo on page 8). No further reports of it in service, so assumed still on school services, until it was on 70 on 28 September-1 October inclusive. 32484, back in service after a year, was seen on S33 on 21 September and S31 on 23rd (see photo on page 8), plus in normal service on 8 October, on 70. As reported in EBN 677, 32551 was on route S33 on 8 September and S31 the next day. Again, no further reports until it too was on 70 on 28 September-1 October inclusive plus 6, 7 & 9 October. Essex Airlink 36841 was on 525 on 4, 7-9, 17, September (also see photo on page 8), on 4th it also worked on X30 and on 9th on 42. 44913 was seen on S57 feeding on to S32 on 23 September & 6 October, it was also reported on S32 on all school days between 3 and 24 September inclusive, except 21st when its place was taken by 44915. It was also on S32 on 28-30th. By implication it was also on S57 on these dates. It operated 73 on Saturday 5th, 42 group on 25th and 13 on 1 October. Park & Ride 67196 was on the S32 on its first day, 2 September. S42 was one of the routes that didn't show on Bustimes, but 67196 was seen on it on 23rd. This route has now been withdrawn (see Service Revisions page 7).

## Basildon

A number of Enviro 400s have operated on school routes 561, 625 & 825. For example, 33504 was exclusively on 561 on 3 & 4 September and on 625 on 14th, 24th & 30th. It also worked school routes 625 & 825 on other days, but was also on normal routes on those days, e.g. it was on both 5 & 825 on 17th & 18th. Other Enviro 400s noted on the routes in the last month have been 33507, 33544, 33545, 33546, 33551, 33553 and 33563. However, since the red Geminis were hired (see page 9), only 33504, 33507, 33546 and 33573 have been used (the first three relatively regularly, 33573 reported only once, on 825 on 16th). The hired Geminis, 36148, 36153 and 36161, have been used exclusively on route 561, although 36148 was only noted on 17 September, it is not known if it is just not showing on Bustimes or if it is off road. 47653 operated route 725 on most schooldays between 2 September and 6 October, it usually also works normal services on the same days. 47650 replaced it on the 725 on 30 September for one day only.

## Hadleigh

33376 was on route 820 on 3-4 & 7-8 September, plus on 827 on 9th-11th; 33383 was on 827 on 4 September, then 820 on 9th-11th; 33385 was on 822 on 3, 7 & 8 September. 33383 & 33385 also worked on normal routes on other days in the period 3-11 September, but not on the same days that they operated school routes. These three vehicles were then replaced on school services by the three hired red Geminis (see page 9 and photo on rear cover) and they returned to normal service work. Since 14 September, 36141 has been used exclusively on route 822 and nothing else on every school day, 36143 similarly on route 827 and 36156 similarly on route 820. 36219 was on 822 on 1 October (also on 27 that day).

## Area News and Workings

Dates are September except where stated. From this month, listings are generally in fleet number order rather than date order to provide greater clarity.

## Colchester

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CR)

South Yorkshire & Midlands (Potteries) Scania L94UB / WrightBus Solar 65705 (YN04 GME), in Urban 2 livery with a red front and 'Potteries' main fleet names on cove panels, was towed to Colchester on 15 September from Adderley Green. This appeared to mark a surprise return to the fleet of Scania L94UBs, after the last of these were sold in June this year (see EBN 675). However, on 1 October it was towed back to Adderley Green without being used by First Essex. It didn't even have its lower front panel re-affixed while at Colchester. During its stay, however, it did acquire a nearside advert for 'Colchester Institute' as a souvenir of its short spell in Essex! 37062 has received a super rear advert for 'First & Unite the Union, celebrating 20 years of a lifelong learning partnership'. It was applied on 30 September. It features a large photo of Darren Hinks, a Colchester driver who started with Charter Coach / Coastal Red,



then moved to Eastern National at Harwich, later transferred to Clacton and now at Colchester, with 30 years continuous service. Not surprisingly, Darren has received some light-hearted stick from his colleagues, such as "I drove past your bus and waved, but you didn't wave back"!

As at 1 October, 37015 and 63342 were out of service, the latter with engine crank case broken and leaking oil. They were joined on 2nd by 32087, also engine related and leaking oil, after it had spent the day on driver shuttles in place of 41521 which was being prepared for MOT (Class V, non-PCV). 37135 returned from Colchester Fuel Injection on 30 September and was back in service on route 62B on 3 October.

News of the Harwich routes. The Saturday timetable on 103/104 was revised again on 3 October. The frequency is now every 55 during the day, with journeys alternating between 103 and 104.

The 1440 M-F Colchester - Harwich 104 is now normally operated by two single-deckers, one for schoolchildren from Manningtree High School, this bus returns light to Colchester using the A120, the other is for ordinary passengers, this bus then works 1610 Harwich - Colchester 104. Occasionally, the 1440 Colchester - Harwich 104 is one double-decker, and on 23-25 September it was one double-decker and one single-decker. Some observations of this: 67738 normal service bus / 66970 schoolchildren duplicate (21 September), 32477 / 66810 (23rd), 63339 / 37037 (24th), 66971 / 32476 (25th), 66971 / 66801 (28th), 63335 / 66828 (1 October).

Most days now (M-F) there are at least two double-deckers on 103/104, the following are regular double-deck workings:

0712 Harwich - Colchester Middleborough 103 (busy peak journey), 0905 Colchester - Harwich 103, 1040 Harwich - Colchester 103.

0725 Colchester - Harwich 104, 0900 Harwich - Colchester 104 (0900 ex Harwich first journey for concessionary pass holders, and next departure not until 1020).

1205 Colchester - Harwich 103, 1332 Harwich - Colchester 103, 1455 Colchester - Harwich 103 (some Manningtree High School pupils going home), 1630 Harwich - Colchester 103, 1755 Colchester - Harwich 103.

1300 Colchester - Harwich 104, 1435 Harwich - Colchester 104, 1605 Colchester - Harwich 103, 1735 Harwich - Colchester 103 (to relieve overcrowding on 1605 ex Colchester).

Between 2 September and 10 October, the following double-deckers were noted on the routes: B7TL (22 in total) 32087, 32476, 32477, 32478, 32485, 32547, 32628, 32629, 32669, 37004, 37006, 37007, 37010, 37015, 37016, 37020, 37027, 37034, 37035, 37036, 37037, 37042, 37053, 37054 and 37062 plus two B9TL, 37134 and 37140.

Between the same dates, the following non-Enviro 300 single-deckers were also noted: StreetLites 63331, 63335, 63337, 63338, 63339, 63340, 63341 63343 & 63344 and Volvo B7RLEs 66798, 66801, 66803, 66810, 66816, 66828, 66970 and 66971.

The following non-Enviro 300s were noted on route 102: 32476 (Sunday 13 September), 32477 (23rd), 37004 (15th), 37054 (Sunday 20th, 22nd, Sunday 27th), 37134 (30th), 63338 (25th), 66798 (17th), 66810 (11th) and 66970 (18th) plus 63337 on 6 October.

Enviro 300s on 71: 67737 (22nd, 23rd & 24th), 67738 (22nd), 67739 (15th), 67742 (14th), 67756 (25th) and 67805 (30th & 31st plus 5 October) plus StreetLites 63335 on 15th, 63336 on 6 October & 63337 on 8 October.

Other unusual / interesting workings during September: 32669 (24th) & 37036 (29th) plus 32476 on 5 October on 74B; consecutively numbered single-deckers 63338, 63339 & 63340 on 61 (28th); 66804 on 76 (27th); 67739 (26th) & 67750 (30th) on 70.

## Chelmsford

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CF except where stated)

To enable construction work for the pedestrianisation scheme in Braintree High Street to begin, the current bus stops on the High Street were permanently closed after the last departure on Sunday 20 September. From the next day, routes 42B and 70 Chelmsford bound are diverted from Manor Street left into Fairfield Road through a new 'bus gate' which allows buses to go down the southern half of Fairfield Road, which has been one way in the opposite direction for many years. This allows buses to avoid the High Street without adding significantly to journey times. They then turn right into South Street, continue into St. Michael's Road and pick up line of route by the fountain (so basically the opposite way that they arrive in Braintree town centre from Chelmsford). Colchester and Halstead bound services, which did not serve the (one-way) High Street are unchanged. Similar arrangements apply for other operators' services.

Further to EBN 677, the part of the super rear advert over the rear window and surround has been removed from 44437 (seen on 6 October). This comprised of a woman's face and the wording 'However You're Living'. The advert still makes sense, although there is a stray bit of the 'g' remaining.

Hadleigh's 44002 was on loan to Chelmsford from 30 September to 6 October. On 6th, it operated route 565 in the morning before returning to HH on routes 22 & 28 in the afternoon.

X30 Scania continue to appear regularly on routes 70 & 71X, 36838, 36839, 36840 and 36843 all seen in the last month. But most unusual on the routes were Park & Ride liveried 67191 on 21st and 67190 the next day. 67190 was then equally unusual on 351 & 71 on 30th. More standard vehicles unusual on route 70 have been 42937 (13th), 42939 (22nd), 44540 (12th) and 44659 (22nd) plus 44900 & 67167 on 5 October. Other unusual / interesting workings: 32482 on 42 (7 October); 32483 on 350 (30th); 32640 on 71E (5 October); 44661 on 565 (14th); 66808 on 32 (26th); 66860 on 54 (22nd) plus 66830 on 6 October; 67168 on 71 (22nd).

An update on Volvo B7RLEs 66846, 66848, 66860, 66861 and 66863 which were acquired from First Greater Manchester in July & August 2019. When acquired, all entered service at Basildon, except for 66860 which did so at Chelmsford. 66860 remains in everyday service at Chelmsford but the others are now all training vehicles. As reported in EBN 676, 66846 has had its driver screen and ticket equipment removed, but not yet had a trainer's seat fitted. It is often used as a driver shuttle at Chelmsford between the depot at Westway and the bus station at Duke Street, for example seen thus on 30 September and 1, 2, 5 & 6 October. As reported in EBN 677, 66848 is now in new all-over red training livery. 66861 is out of use at present. As also reported in EBN 676, 66863 has also had its driver screen and ticket equipment removed. It was temporarily at Colchester for CPC training but is now away being converted and repainted.

## Basildon & Hadleigh

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

In EBN 675 it was mentioned that the subways linking the Railway Station with the old market car park were being removed. Since at least the middle of June, and possibly earlier, there has only been one road lane in use on Southernhay between the Bus & Railway Stations, meaning that buses westbound are having to divert via Cherrydown East past the bus depot or alternatively (such as routes 9 and 100) behind the shopping centre. Then from 17 September until further notice, routes 8/A no longer served the Bus Station. However, from 22nd, for at least the next five weeks, Southernhay was closed overnight from the Asda petrol station to the multi-storey car park, and so between 2000 and 0630 routes 8/A returned to the Bus Station. These works are part of a major remodelling of the area between the Bus & Railway Stations to improve the interchange between the two for passengers.

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

Route 9 (usually StreetLites) now has a number of, often three, Enviro 400s running each day. This is probably because of Social Distancing and also due to the fact that 47523 is often on schools' work. As these are now standard, at least for the time being, they will no longer be reported, but between 11 September and 10 October most of the Enviro 400 fleet has been noted: 33425, 33507, 33544, 33545, 33546, 33548, 33549, 33551, 33552, 33553, 33555, 33557, 33558, 33559, 33561, 33562, 33563, 33567, 33568, 33570, 33572 and 33573. More unusual were Presidents 33086 on 16th & 33077 on 5 October and mini Enviro 200s 44909 on 26th plus 1 October & 44910 on 22nd. Generally, the daytime 94 has settled down to being worked by a StreetLite on the even-hours journeys from South Woodham Ferrers and an Enviro 400 on the odd-hours on Mondays to Fridays, with Saturdays being either.

Other unusual / interesting workings: HH33098 (18th), HH33134 (28th) and HH36216 (29th, seen below left approaching journey's end at Pitsea Broadway - photo by **William Morrison**) on additional double deck short workings from Hadleigh to Pitsea Broadway to provide extra capacity in the afternoon school peak (the full 28 route through to Basildon can only operate with single-deckers because

of a low bridge on the c2c line at Pitsea High Road, just west of the town centre); 33563 on 16 (15th) plus 33574 on 5 & 6 October; 33570 an unusual double decker on 100 (28th); HH67195 (in Chelmsford Park & Ride livery) very unusual on 100 (22nd), running a duplicate journey to assist Basildon; HH69520 (TW livery) on 26 on 6 October, reportedly the first Volvo B7RLE to work on the route.

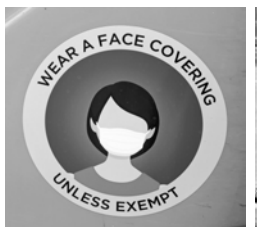
Sources: own observations, and with thanks to R Appleton, E Aspinall, S Barham, N Clark, J Clayton, D Bell, W Bell, T Clark, J Collins, D Edwards, J Elliott, N Field, R Hannah, J Lidstone, C McCormack, W Morrison, R Newman, J Podgorski, S Quay, C Stewart, N Turner, R West, O Woodliffe, First Essex, Bustimes, Facebook, Bus Lists on the Web, Flickr, Essex Buses Google group and Terminus.



## Signs of the Times

Left to right: the front of 37133 on 2 September 2020; interior window of 47653 on 5 August; upstairs on 32641 on 7 September.

All **Adam Kelleher**



by **Mark Lloyd** with thanks to John Podgorski, Essex-Buses Yahoo group & Hedingham website

## Acquired Vehicles

586 X584 EGK 587 PL51 LDU 588 PJ02 RBY  
Details were in EBN 677, but these three Volvo B7TL / Plaxton Presidents have now gained fleet numbers.

## Significant Allocation changes

|       |                 |                 |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 286   | KN to CN        | by 29 September |
| 500   | CN to HDu       | by 29 September |
| 586   | CNu to HD       | by 9 September  |
| 586   | HD to CN        | by 22 September |
| 586   | CN to KN        | by 29 September |
| 587/8 | CN to HD        | by 21 September |
| 601   | HDu to CN       | 8 September     |
| 602   | Konectbus to CN | 8 September     |
| 911   | SY to CN        | by 12 September |

## Fleet News

The two Enviro 400s transferred from Konectbus, 601 & 602 (SN10 CFE / F), were quickly allocated to Clacton and saw very swift introduction into service, improving the output on routes 74 and X76. The pair are currently running in old style Konectbus livery. Both have settled into regular use and also see service on Clacton town routes.

Reports in EBN 673 recorded that 512 (LB02 YXA) was in a withdrawn condition at HD. Keen spotters will have noticed that it has reappeared in the allocations, but it was never formally recorded that it had re-entered service after repairs. Long term off-road 569 (W484 WGH) has also returned to the operational fleet this month.

457 (AU61 AVK) was recorded in Clacton in early September with Hedingham fleet names on its Konectbus livery. It had been running from HD with Chambers names. Recently acquired 586 (X584 EGK) was seen on schools' service on 9 September with Hedingham names added to its EYMS livery. By 22 September 586 had swapped with 587 (PL51 LDU).

804 (YN55 PZF), the odd one out of the three Scania OmniDekkas transferred from Anglianbus, has finally lost its yellow / blue Anglian livery in favour of standard Chambers livery and completes the batch 800-820.

## Service News

From 2 September registered school routes 901-904 restarted along with the newly registered 910 Marks Tey-Copford-Easthorpe-Feering-Kelvedon-Feering-Honywood School, Coggeshall. The following day Plume School Maldon and Thomas Lord Audley (TLA) Colchester School reopened. After 6 September, service 134 'Clacton Breeze' reverted to the autumn timetable, and on 22 September was being operated by closed top 817.

From 7 September there is a new morning duplicate 95A Tollesbury to Plume School which then completes one Bradwell-Maldon journey on D1. It is worked by a KN saloon.

From 8 September KN supplied an extra bus for TLA School. It is for Year 11 students for social distancing, the route is numbered TLA3. It covers both A and B routes for West Mersea and East Mersea. Usually operated by a small single-decker, 292 was in use on the morning of the first week, with 261 on the afternoon run. Year 7 to 10 students continue to use usual double deckers on routes A & B. Braintree town Sunday service 21 changed from an HD duty to a KN duty from w/c 13 September.

When school term schedules returned some 63 duties transferred from KN back to CN. Some 82 & 83 duties moved from KN to CN and HD. From 14 September a duplicate was added to 19 and an afternoon duplicate added to 95A. Runs Plume School-Heybridge Basin, for scholars only.

## Other News

Facemask vinyls now adorn MPDs 253, 256, 257, 259, 260 and 291. 616 was spotted on 2 October with 60 years celebration vinyls added in-between decks, in the same style as the 50-year ones but with updated fleet name and dates. 500 has now entered winter storage. Ancillary vehicle Vauxhall Combo van 9004 (W761 TRE) has been sold. Ford Transit EX61 NZV has been de-branded for sale. New Engineers Ford Transit at CN is ex Go Ahead London EA63 VUE. 9005 Corsa van GY57 LOD is at CN and 9014 MB Vito RI56 TYK has moved CN to HD.



by **Peter Mansbridge** with thanks to Lee Burvill-Eckett, Richard Delahoy, David Flatman, Adam Kelleher, John Podgorski, James Sadd, Keith Sadler, Bustimes, Flickr, harlowride.co.uk and intalink.org.uk

### **Southend Hired Vehicles with drivers - External**

These are used to duplicate selected journeys on routes 1, 7, 8 & 9, generally shadowing the service bus quite closely. Only two work in the morning peak (both from Grange Travel) but there are seven in the afternoon. The vehicles do not have ticket issuing facilities and only carry school children with pre-paid tickets. They do not carry any Arriva signage and have varying degrees of destination displays. The position was fluid initially (see last month), and to some extent has remained so, the exact deployment may have changed over the course of the month. We do not have any official information and the two lists of planned duplicates shown on Arriva's website are contradictory, but from observations and discussions with staff the following is what we know.

**Peter Godward Coaches, Wickford:** the two double-deckers mentioned last month were only used for a few days in w/c 7 September. On the Friday of that week, Turismo coach BF61 HCO was noted in place of T88 PGC. Godward have not been observed since then.

**Grange Travel of Gravesend:** morning peak two coaches, afternoon five. Vehicles regularly used are Mercedes-Benz Turismo coaches BV20 HLY, BV70 UBR, BV70 UBZ, triaxle Turismo BU18 YMO and Van Hool Astromega double-deck coach S23 BUS (originally V11 OCL, later RY65 RVC).

**M&M Staffing, Cooksmill Green, Chelmsford:** one coach, afternoon only. Triaxle Neoplan MM68 BUS complete with fully programmed destination display, was noted at least from week commencing 28 September, replaced on Friday 2 October by MM18 BUS, another Neoplan. Then from 5 October their ex Blackpool Trident / East Lancs double-decker bus PN04 XDK was being used.

**Westbus, Hayes:** one coach, afternoon only. Van Hool Astromegas YJ13 GYG and YJ61 FFD (see rear cover) have been noted.

The actual workings are (all Grange Travel except as noted):

Service 1 - 0658 ex Rayleigh; 1426 ex Rayleigh, not Fridays (Westbus); 1508 ex Shoebury, 1534 ex Shoebury (M&M);

Services 7/8 - 0655 ex Southend; 1350, 1416 & 1521 ex Rayleigh; Service 9 - 1523 ex Rayleigh.

### **Southend Hired Vehicles - Internal**

Colchester supplied two Park & Ride Enviro 200s, 4072 & 4073, to Southend from around 9 September. Initially they were operated and crewed by Colchester drivers, duplicating busy journeys at school start and finish times on services 7 & 8, in the manner of the external vehicles noted above. Later both were reallocated to Southend and based there, with Southend drivers and the destination displays programmed for Southend routes, but they continue to be used almost exclusively on school duplicates, with very limited use elsewhere, an example being 4073 on service 1 on Saturday 3 October. A photo of 4073 is on page 29.

Colchester StreetLite 4261 returned to its home depot on 17 September. Northfleet StreetLite 4331 remained in service until 24 September but has since returned to Kent but is in use at Gillingham rather than Northfleet. During their stay at Southend, the StreetLites saw regular use on services 1 (normally Enviro 400 operated) and 9 (Versa), in addition to the other Southend area routes with a more mixed vehicle allocation. 4331 was used on Sundays only service 4A on 6 September.

The place of 4261 has been taken at Southend by the loan of Dart / Caetano 1565 from Colchester. Mainly used on service 6 due to its low capacity, it has also seen use on the 29, and frees up a vehicle to provide duplication on busy routes at school start and finish times.

The use of the London City Airport short Enviro 200s on local services, as reported last month, was spasmodic and short lived. YX68 UUL remains at Southend and is used for crew shuttles, supplementing the Sprinter 1000. YX68 UUK suffered accident damage on 8 September and has been moved to Milton Keynes as the repairs required are quite extensive. The other two Enviro 200s, YX68 UUM / UUN have left Southend and are in service at Gillingham.

In summary, as at the beginning of October, at Southend there were three buses on loan from other depots, plus one as a staff shuttle and seven coaches hired with drivers (Grange x 5, M&M x 1 Westbus x 1), all to enable duplication on routes with heavy school traffic. Two journeys (on the 7 & 29) are also restricted to schoolchildren only, numbered S7 / S29, as illustrated on page 21 of EBN 677.

### **Other News**

Due to roadworks, from 5 October **Southend** service 9 is temporarily terminating at Blackgate Road as it cannot reach the Shoebury East Beach terminus.

Enviro 400 6514 worked route 8 on 16 September, just for a Southend-Landwick-Southend trip, substituting for a failed single-decker. Routes 7/8 are normally banned to double-deckers due to the railway bridges at Hockley and Hawkwell which are too low for Arriva's double deckers; the only scheduled dd working is on the school only S7 trips that turn at Ashingdon Schools.

At **Colchester**, Dart 1562 has returned to service, having been fitted with a driver protection screen. 4261 has returned from loan to Southend, but 4072/3 are on loan there and have been joined by 1565, as noted above.

Plain white Temsa Safari coaches 7100/1/2 (Y169 AAO/U/V) are on loan at **Harlow** from Luton to assist in the operation of duplicate journeys for school pupils, comprising service S510 between Harlow and Bishops Stortford, service S308 in Bishop's Stortford and a duplicate journey on service 10 between Harlow and Hertford.

Some of the 16 Mercedes-Benz Tourismo coaches that were due to take up service on new Stansted - London Green Line service 720 in April (see EBN 672) have entered service at Luton on the 755/7 Green Line service between Luton and London, 7201/2/4/9/13 being noted. They carry the latest Green Line livery with generic 'Frequent connections to and from London' branding.

### Historical Notes

At **Southend**, despite it now being 78 years since the trams ceased, sections of track continue to emerge. The latest is in London Road immediately west of Victoria Circus, where contractors digging up the road as part of an extension to the pedestrianised area have uncovered tracks there buried under the road surface. So much for all the rails being lifted for scrap to aid the war effort!

In **Colchester**, the new student flats have been completed on the site of the former Magdalen Street Colchester Corporation / Arriva / First Essex depot. The bus stop in front has been reinstated. A section of rails from the old Corporation Tramway have been included in a pathway within the complex. By the main entrance is the stone containing the Colchester Borough Crest which had been on the frontage of the old Number 2 (1930s) building, together with a commemorative / explanatory historical plaque.



Above, left to right, top to bottom: A touch of luxury for school travel. Grange Travel brand-new Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BV70 UBR, and the first 70 registered vehicle to be illustrated in EBN, on loan, with driver, to Arriva Southend. Duplicating a service 1 bus, the coach was full leaving Southend Victoria Station heading towards Southend High School for Girls on 22 September;

Peter Godward coaches only provided vehicles to Arriva Southend for a few days. Here in Chichester Road on 11 September, all four vehicles are on service 7/S7 at 0655 heading towards Ashingdon. Peter Godward VDL DB250 / WrightBus LJ05 BHP will follow the Arriva VDL SB200 saloon, whilst behind is a Godward Mercedes Tourismo and finally an Arriva Enviro 400;

Also appearing on loan to Arriva Southend, with driver, from the end of September was this Neoplan coach of M&M Staffing of Cooksmill Green, near Chelmsford. With commendably programmed destination display and closely following the service bus, an Enviro 400, MM68 BUS was seen at Thorpe Bay Station on the afternoon of 30 September;

From 5 October, M&M Staffing started to use ex Blackpool Dennis Trident / East Lancs PN04 XDK for their diagram on Arriva Southend service 1, in place of the Neoplan coach, as depicted here passing Chalkwell Park that day. All photos **Richard Delahoy**

**by Richard Delahoy** with thanks to Adam Kelleher, Dave Arnold, Chris Stewart, Stephenson's/NIBS/Galloway Facebook group and the companies

## Fleet

Not previously recorded, the company has a second training bus, 7054, A19 SOE (ex YN54 AHC), a former Nottingham City Transport Scania N94UB with Scania OmniCity bodywork. The other trainer, a Dart / Caetano, numbered 7033, A17 SOE (ex LK03 NLG), is now in reserve.

## Services

Southend school routes 509/560/814 have been combined into a single route 817, from Southchurch to Westcliff High Schools. On routes to selective schools, as well as the curtailment of 503/593 noted last month, 514 from Witham to Southend has ceased, with 513 back projected to start at Witham rather than Chelmsford. All of these changes took effect from the beginning of September for the new school year.

School extra (shadow) journeys: expanding / updating last month's notes, Galloway Travel Group coaches have been noted as follows:

Brentwood area: 1 x 21S, 2 x 31S, 2 x 81S, 1 x 269S

Rochford area: 1 for the Wakering to King Edmund group (807-13 routes)

Maldon/Witham: 1 x 90S

Halstead/Braintree: 3 x 38/38A.

Vehicles noted on these workings have included Galloway's sole midi-coach Mercedes 131 plus almost their entire fleet of full-size coaches (excluding the National Express fleet); numbers 141-4, 151-6, 161/3-5 (a mix of Van Hool, Setra, Mercedes and Volvo models) have been seen - the only one not seen by our various correspondents is 162. It is understood that they all run to / from Mendlesham each day, except for one based at Rochford.

On Stephenson's route 12, Wickford to Billericay, NIBS now operate a couple of afternoon journeys.

In Suffolk, the 2 VDL SB180 / MCV buses in the Galloway fleet, 204/5 (YJ60 GDO/GFA), are duplicating on Stephenson's 16A Newmarket-Bury and a 15A Haverhill - Bury. It will be recalled that Galloway is a sister company of Stephenson's and NIBS, under common ownership.

Right: 449, the only bus left in dealer stock white and not in fleet livery, on service 288 in Maldon High Street on 5 September 2020. See 'Letters' on page 30 for a history of the route. **Andrew Colbourne.** A photo of 478 on this route appeared on page 5 of EBN 677.





Above: as reported on the previous page a considerable number of coaches from sister company Galloway Travel Group are assisting Stephensons & NIBS with extra capacity at school times. A former National Express Volvo / Caetano Levante 162 (6037 PP) is parked at Warley ready for service as an 81S on 18 September. **Matthew Evans**

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Below: we are pleased to confirm that New Horizon Travel **are** still trading. Here is their BX55 XLW on 23 September turning off Lexden Road, Colchester, into Norman Way to pick up its afternoon working from the school bus park there as a 78S to Brightlingsea. **Richard Delahoy**







The silver Mercedes Sprinter illustrated on page 24 of EBN 677, RX20 RDV, was only in use on route 61 for that first day of operation, the regular vehicle being 200 (WN69 FYL), with 202 (WV20 VDG) usually being on the 13. The 390 and school S13 are worked by two out of BK13 NZM/R/U, Volvo B7RLE / WrightBus B44F, new to Flights Hallmark but acquired from Diamond Bus (NZR is red, NZM/U are blue). The third one can sometimes be found on route 13, Waltham Cross to Epping, as seen above, NZR at Highbridge Roundabout before entering historic Waltham Abbey, last resting place of King Harold, on a sunny first official day of Autumn, 21 September 2020.

#### **Owen Woodliffe**

Brentwood has seen plain white Ford Transit WP20 LDO parked up in reserve or acting as a school time duplicate, until about 5 October when red StreetLite WF B28F SN64 CUO was first noted working afternoon 61 (and variants). This bus was new to London General but then worked for Travel Express of Wolverhampton. Gardner Travel Mercedes midicoach SF04 VJL, also illustrated in EBN 677 (page 3), often spends much of the day parked up in Brentwood (High Street, Station or William Hunter Way). It presumably acts as a morning school duplicate and spare.

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A bit of space to fill at the bottom of the page, so a close-up photo taken by **Richard Delahoy** of Lodge's Centenary branding as carried by Trident C20 DGE (ex PNO4 XDL - from the same batch of ex Blackpool buses as the M&M Staffing one illustrated on page 17).



Most Ipswich Buses services reverted to their pre-lockdown timetables from 30 August, also school and college journeys were reinstated for the new term starting from 2 September onwards. Thus services 92 Ipswich - Manningtree and 93 Ipswich - Colchester reverted to double-deck operation, using Scania OmniCities. Also, Ipswich Buses reinstated their five DAF DB250LF / East Lancs Lowlanders dating from 2002/03. Two of these normally come into Essex on the following journeys when Suffolk One Sixth Form College is open:

1610 Suffolk One - Ipswich - Manningtree and 1720 Manningtree - Colchester 92

1610 Suffolk One - Colchester and 1715 Colchester - Ipswich 93.

Service 94 was revised to operate East Bergholt - Ipswich, so it no longer serves Langham in Essex.

On Saturdays, services 92/93 are normally worked by Optare Versas.

From the beginning of September, Ipswich Buses started operating five school contracts for Ipswich School, of which four serve parts of North East Essex:

2A 0730 Kelvedon - Colchester Tollgate - Capel St Mary - Copdock-Ipswich School

2B 0728 Colchester Braiswick - Boxted - Langham - Ipswich School

3 0730 Dedham Boxhouse Lane - Dedham - Dedham Heath - Jupes Hill - Manningtree Road - Dedham - Ipswich School

10 0650 Holland-on-Sea - Frinton-on-Sea - Thorpe-le-Soken - Weeley - Tendring - Horsley Cross - Bradfield - Mistley - Lawford - Brantham - Ipswich School.

The return journeys all depart from Ivy Street next to Ipswich School at 1625.



Ipswich School specify seat belted vehicles, so Ipswich Buses acquired four vehicles so fitted:

1 (SGZ 3351 ex FL02 ZXX) Volvo B7R / Jonckheere Modulo C53F. New to Skill's of Nottingham in 2002, acquired from Thompson's of Framlingham

71 (LX58 LMO ex 09D3524) & 72 (LX58 LMM ex 09D3520) Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 (8.9m long) B29F

76 (LX58 LML ex 09D3732) Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 (10.7m long) B37F

71/72/76 were new to Bus Eireann in 2009 and were acquired via Ensignbus. All three have Irish names: 71 is Ciara, 72 is Niamh, 76 is Siobhan.

(Ipswich Buses already have 10.7m Enviro 200s numbered 77-82, so 76 fits in this sequence. 71/72 are the first short 8.9m long ADL Enviro 200 with Ipswich Buses. Fleet numbers 73/74/75 are vacant at present.)

Above: 72 is seen at Dedham Heath Crossroads on 22 September 2020, working school contract 3 from Dedham to Ipswich School. **Robert Appleton**

A fifth seat belt fitted bus is a demonstrator on loan, 500 (YX19 ONU), Alexander Dennis Enviro 400 MMC, in overall pink livery promoting the Breast Cancer Prevention Campaign.

On 29 September number 1 worked contract 10, 71 worked contract 3, 72 worked contract 2B, and 500 worked contract 2A. Contract 3 is always operated by 71 or 72, due to the narrow roads and sharp bends around Dedham and Dedham Heath.

Another contract that started at the beginning of September was for Suffolk Rural College at Otley north of Ipswich:

RC1 0720 Thorrington - Alresford - Wivenhoe - Colchester - Suffolk Rural College, return journey departs at 1640.

For the first few days, Ipswich Buses oldest single-decker was used, 137 (SN53 AVP) Transbus Super Pointer Dart B42F, new to Lothian Buses in 2003. However, capacity problems on services 118/119 Framlingham - Ipswich meant that 137 was moved to these services, replacing an Optare Solo that moved to this contract. Thus 245 (YJ05 XNY) became a regular performer on the morning journey on RC1. The afternoon journey is worked by a bus off service 11A in Ipswich, St Albans High School - Tower Ramparts Bus Station. The Optare Solo did not have enough capacity for this service, so larger buses such as Optare Versas or Optare Tempo SRs have been working service 11A, and then continuing on to the afternoon RC1.

The Optare Metrocity demonstrator YX67 FXE (photo on page 9 of EBN 677) is still with Ipswich Buses, on Saturday 26 September it worked on Greater Anglia rail replacement services between Stowmarket and Bury St Edmunds.



## Dealer Stock Movements September 2020

### Vehicles In

From **First Wessex**: Scania YN04 GLV, YN05 HGA  
From **Go-Ahead London**: E200 LX07 BXU  
From **Metroline**: E400s LK08 NVF / DXP, E200s LK08 FKW / FLG / DWO / FLC / F / Z, YX58 FPC / D / F / DWD / G / M / N / DUA, LK58 CTF / U / CSX / Y / CNC / DWC / CTE, MANs LK57 EHS, LK07 AYF / H / Y  
From **RATP**: Solos YJ09 MHO / MHU, YJ11 EJC  
From **Stagecoach Manchester**: Trident LX03 NFE  
From **Stagecoach Midlands**: Tridents LV52 HEJ, KX04 RVJ, MX54 LPV  
From **Stagecoach Oxford**: Trident LX55 EPZ  
From **Tower Transit**: StreetLites SN64 CVM / O / P  
From **Travel de Courcey**: Tridents LX03 BWJ / OPV / ORV, LV52 HHO

### Vehicles Out

E200 YX10 BFU: **A2B, Cambridge**  
Volvo B9TL BJ11 EAK: **Abbey Travel, Erith, Kent**  
Trident SN04 AAU: **Aintree Coaches**  
E400s SN13 CHF / G: **Atlantic Travel, Bolton**  
Trident AE06 GZR: **Brylaine, Lincs**  
Volvo B9TL BJ11 EAX: **Coach Services, Thetford**  
Scania YN08 DHY: **Connexions Buses, Harrogate**  
E400s LK58 KHP, SN09 CDU: **First South West**, converted to partial open top  
Trident T509 SSG: **First South West**  
StreetLites SN64 CVF / R, Solo YJ09 MHO: **Galleon Travel, Essex**  
Volvo B7TL LX54 HAO: **Hackney Play Bus**  
Scania YN08 DHU: **Happy Al's, Liverpool**  
Scania YN08 MRX / Y: **Ipswich Buses**  
Volvo B7TLs LT52 WWA / B, Volvo B7RLEs RIG 6496 / 7: **Langston and Tasker, Steeple Claydon, Bucks**  
Solo YJ57 EJE: **Little Jim's Berkhamsted Herts**  
Volvo B9TL BJ11 EBG: **Mayfair Coaches, London W14**  
Volvo B9TL BJ11 DZX: **Mundare Ltd, Chester**  
Volvo B7TL LK04 CVE: **Parkside Primary School, Chingford Essex**  
E300 VX54 MRU: **Picture Vehicle Co, Pinewood Studios** (this is ex First Essex 67640)  
Volvo B9TL BJ11 EAE: **Reliance Travel, York**  
Volvo B7TL LT52 WVP: **Seaford & District**  
E200 MX12 DZC: **Squarepeg Buses, Leeds**  
YN08 DHC: **The Message Trust, Manchester**

### The following all to Shelton Motors for scrap

Dart SN55 HSG. Volvo B10BLE W371 EOW. Volvo B7TLs W473 WGH, YU52 VYT, YJ51 RRV. E200s LX07 BYU, YX10 BFM. Tridents LN51 GKU, LK05 GFX. Solo YJ57 EHD.

### Buses on Hire to Other Operators

E400 LK58 KGN: **Border Bus**  
Ensignbus Fleet E200s 714, 715 & 716 & Volvos SN55 BJJ / K / U: **Bournemouth Yellow Buses**  
Volvo B9TLs BJ11 EAW / DVX / EBA / EBP / EAF / DZY: **First Essex** (see page 9 for more details)  
E400s LK08 DXV / U / NVL: **First South West**  
E400 SN13 CHD: **HCT**  
Volvos BJ11 DSX / DTZ / DZZ / EAO / EBL & E400s SN13 CHC / H / K, LK08 DXP / NVF: **Stagecoach Midlands**



## Fleet News

Ensignbus TfL school route extras: since the beginning of the school term Ensignbus has been running two extras on route 679 (Goodmayes - Woodford Wells) in the mornings, which follow the last scheduled bus. Enviro 400s 970 (LK58 KGI), 971 (LK58 KGO) and 974 (LK58 KHO) have been noted on the route. One has also been seen on route 667 (Ilford - Chigwell, West Hatch School). The routes do not seem to work in the afternoons. Ensignbus are to be congratulated for ensuring they display full number and destination blinds (something that some of the buses of the main operator of the 679, Go Ahead London, do not do).



## Route 68 Mini Running Day

Ensignbus have been running Southend open-top route 68 from 11 July this summer. The last day was planned to be Sunday 6 September, but, due to the popularity of the service, it was extended two weeks until 20th (to a slightly curtailed timetable). Nevertheless, a '68 Extravaganza' went ahead as scheduled on the 6th, with no less than seven open toppers in service, including three guest buses from Roger Wright's London Bus Company. The buses used on the 6th were

**Ensignbus:** Dennis Trident 339 (TSU 639) one of the two regular buses on the service (the other being Volvo B7TL 392, 392 MBF); ex London Transport DMS33, (EGP 331); MCW Metroliner A112 KFX, presented in London Pride sightseeing livery and London B type replica 946 WAE (which was illustrated in EBN 676).

**London Bus Company:** AEC Regent RT3435 (LYR 854); Routemaster RM1159 (159 CLT) and ex Maidstone & District AEC Regal / Beadle single decker HKL 836. Ensign's promotional mini-Routemaster MRM1 was also on site at the Pier as usual. During the last two weeks of the service, the Metroliner made various appearances, its last day being Saturday 19th. On the final day, Sunday 20th, the buses in use were the two regular open toppers 339 & 392, the B-type replica and RM371 (WLT 371), with all fares donated to the RNLI which, along with collections on the buses and at the Pier, raised a very creditable £2,695.22! Well done to Ensignbus and all their crews.



Photos taken on 6 September, all by **Richard Delahoy**. Top to bottom:

RT3435 on Western Esplanade, Westcliff

A reminder of the thousands of ex London Daimler Fleetlines that Ensign have handled over the years, DMS33 at Leigh Station  
RM1159 also on Western Esplanade, Westcliff.

## c2c Rail Replacement Services

by Ian Ransom

A major rail replacement operation for c2c took place on Sunday 27 September, due to an upgrade to the signalling centre at Upminster, track replacement at Pitsea and points replacement at Southend Central, resulting in no c2c services operated prior to 1200. From start of service until approx. 1200, rail replacement services operated from Upminster to Grays via Rainham and Purfleet; Upminster to Laindon via West Horndon; Upminster to Shoeburyness via Laindon and then all stations; Upminster to Pitsea via Chafford Hundred and then all stations; Upminster to Southend Central, fast to Leigh-on-Sea, then all stations. From 1200 rail services operated Fenchurch Street to Grays and Fenchurch Street to Laindon, with onward replacement buses.

Between 0900 and 1200, the following were seen at Upminster:

Ensign 101 103 109 110 111 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 122 123 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 146 150 402 503

705 706 707 708 970 971 972 973 974 975 and dealer stock LK57 AXE

Galleon YP59 OEO, YP59 OER, YP59 OEU, YP59 OEV, YJ11 EHO

London Borough of Havering LX60 DXF, LX60 DXI

NIBS YN08 OCR, EU58 BLJ, EU59 BFK

Stephensons EU09 AUK, EX63 UZV, EU64 CVR

A total of 50 vehicles, there were a number of duplicated journeys to maintain social distancing. The Enviro 200s mainly operated Upminster to Laindon journeys.

Other vehicles known to have worked were:

Ensign 102 121 151

Candy Coaches 294 CLY (ex LJ56 VTO), B10 MVD (ex LJ54 BDZ)

Stephensons EU13 EBL, EX63 UZW, EU64 CVP



Above: new to London United as SP160 in January 2010, Scania OmniCity YP59 OEV was acquired by Galleon via Ensignbus in June 2019 and painted in red and blue livery, with silver Central Connect fleet names. It is seen at Upminster Station on 27 September working a c2c rail replacement service to Shoeburyness. **Ian Ransom**

**Richard Delahoy** adds that on an earlier c2c rail replacement on 19 July, Upminster to Shoeburyness, that as well as the usual suspects (Ensignbus and Stephenson's / NIBS), much more unusual participants for this part of the world included Arriva London, Galleon / Central Connect and two really rare ones - a National Express coach (usually on Stansted to London services) and at least seven double deckers from Stagecoach South East! Provincial Stagecoach buses are almost never seen in south Essex but here 15274, YN16 WVP, a Scania N250UD / ADL Enviro 400 MMC shows off its 'Breeze' livery for services between Canterbury, Margate, Broadstairs and Westwood as it waits for passengers outside Southend Central. The Breeze name is apposite as Arriva in Southend used the same brand name for service 9 at one time. Photo taken by **Matthew Evans**.



## HCT Group TfL Route 20

by **Andrew Colbourne**

*This is some follow up news to Andrew's article about electric bus LF69 UXJ which was on page 4 of EBN 676. Incidentally, this vehicle has now moved on from Metroline and at the time of writing was with RATP at Fulwell (as BCE47000) and was being tested over route 71.*

From 10 September HCT Group have been running their one-off Enviro 400 hybrid 2600 (ex-HEA1) on route 20, the first time it has been used on the route since HCT Group took over in March 2019. Whilst there have been regular swops of buses between the route 20 garage (Walthamstow Avenue, AW) and Ash Grove (HK) where 2600 was allocated, it had not previously featured.

A second Enviro 400 (this time a diesel) appeared on 14 September. It is SN13 CHD, on loan from Ensignbus, ex Tower Transit DN33792 and originally part of the First Centrewest fleet. It has, so far as at 19th, only worked one northbound morning extra journey (identified as V20 in the schedule) from Walthamstow to Debden on each day, appearing mysteriously as a temporary vehicle on London Vehicle Finder (LVF). It was only when I managed to photograph it on 17 September that I discovered its identity and found out that it had HCT Group fleet names but no fleet number. It was displaying the route number (a yellow on black blind), but no destination. Images on Flickr show that on 16 September the number blind was stuck on '616' and 20 was displayed hand-written on the back of the 'Bus Full' card in the windscreen. On 19th LVF was showing it as 2601, the same fleet number as previously allocated to LF69 UXJ!

# Other Operators

by **Roger A Smith** with thanks to the PSV Circle

## **Acme Bus, Molehill Green**

YN08 DH0, a Scania N230UD, is now here, formerly fleet number SP40027 with London United.

## **Dan's, Waltham Abbey**

Further to EBN 677, the PSV Circle confirms that this operator's license, number PF2008993, has been surrendered. YN07 KGX, a Plaxton bodied C70FL Volvo B7R, and YN57 BWA, an Alexander Dennis Javelin with Plaxton C70F body, have both gone to 1st Choice. Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, Wales. All other vehicles are withdrawn from service. It is a shame to see yet another company cease to operate. Although based on the western fringes of Essex, vehicles from Dan's well-maintained fleet were often seen throughout the county on excursions, private hires and rail replacement duties, as illustrated in the photo below.

## **Don, Great Dunmow**

PX12 BSZ, an Enviro 200 B38F, new to Reays, Wigton, has been acquired from Ensignbus (fleet number 704) and is in fleet livery, whilst F602 MSL & F604 MSL, both Alexander H87F bodied Leyland Olympians, have gone from here.

## **Hardiman (SIH Travel), Canvey Island**

As reported in First Essex news in EBN 677, and as shown on the front cover of this issue, recently arrived here via Ensignbus is W743 DWX, a Volvo B7TL with Alexander ALX400 bodywork, ex First Eastern Counties (latterly in Lowestoft Corporation heritage livery) and also one-time First Essex 30888.

## **Peter Godward, Basildon**

YN08 OCE, an Irizar C49FT bodied Scania K34 OEB4, is now with Bryants Travel, Bedhampton, Hampshire.

## **SBC Engineering, Leigh on Sea**

Optare H47/29F bodied Scania N270UD PN10 FNO is here from Courtney Buses, Berkshire.



Summer of 2019 and Dan's Luxury Travel in happier times. 2014 built King Long XMQ6130 / King Long C70D BX14 FZY at Old Gasworks Coach Park Southend-on-Sea on 8 August 2019. Only seven of these were imported and Dan's had two. **Robert Downton**

## Part 2 - The Traffic Commissioners Decision and the Grand Opening

Part 1 appeared in EBN 676

By the beginning of August 1932, the Council had become impatient to know if operators were to be forced to use their new bus park and the town clerk reported that he had wired and telephoned the clerk to the Traffic Commissioners and "put the matter extremely plainly" to him. A week later, on Friday 12 August, the council got their answer, albeit not the one they were seeking. The Commissioners said that they had no powers to force operators to use the bus park if they had already had satisfactory terminal facilities. Essentially this meant most operators would have to use the bus park. Hicks would be exempt as would Mr. Harrison whose market day service (from Haverhill) terminated at the Horse & Groom. It is not clear what the situation was in respect of Wiffen's service from Finchingfield which had also used that pub as their terminus. By then it was in the hands of Mr. Wiffen's half-brother Christopher J. Wilks and sadly I completely failed to interrogate him about this when he was the relief driver on my school bus fifty years ago.

The Commissioners noted that it was a requirement of Section 90 of the Road Traffic Act that any charge made by an Authority for use of a public service vehicle station should be 'reasonable'. Although they were not empowered to approve a suggested scale of charges, they would not feel able to endorse operators' licences to use the bus park until they were satisfied that the charges would not cause undue hardship for the travelling public by way of increased fares or discontinuance of services. The Commissioners requested that the council give further consideration to the scale of charges.

Having received the Commissioners' decision, the Council held a special meeting on the following Tuesday which, after some discussion, was in camera. A statement was issued saying that the Council had considered the memorandum from the Commissioners and found it satisfactory. Presumably this was said through gritted teeth! The Highways Committee were instructed to report to a subsequent meeting on various matters regarding the opening and management of the bus park.

The following day, a white elephant about a foot and a half long was found tied to the light wires high above the bus park. This caused some amusement but was cut down and taken to the Town Hall.

On Monday 29 August the Council held yet another special meeting about the bus park. They heard that the Traffic Commissioners had agreed that the conditions set out in the schedules for the use of the park would be operative from Monday 5 September and the park would therefore open on that date.

The Council recommended that the charges be revised, and a list sent to all operators. An 'Entrance only' notice was to be affixed to the Manor Street entrance and it was resolved that bus stop signs costing eight Guineas (£8.40) be purchased and Mr. Frank Lewis be appointed attendant.

The revised schedule of charges was:

Buses regularly operating in the district designed to carry more than 14 passengers 2/6 (12.5p) for three or more days per week, 2/- (10p) for two days and 1/3 (6.25p) for one day with 6d (2.5p) for each duplicate. The charges for vehicles with 14 or fewer seats would be 2/- (10p), 1/6 (7.5p) and 1/- (5p).

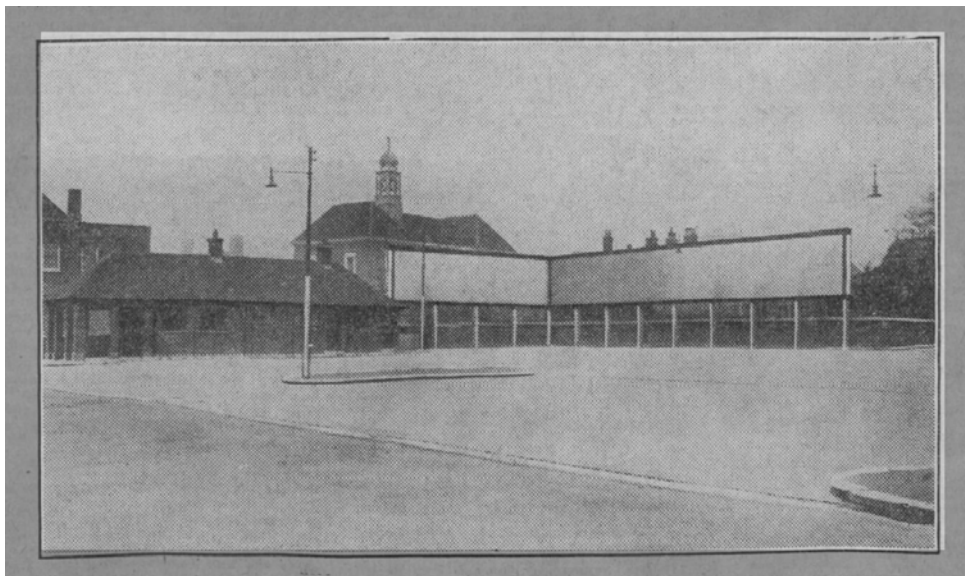
Vehicles not regularly operating in the district would be charged 1/3 (6.25p) for a two hour stay or 1/6 (7.5p) for up to one day.

After so much discussion and argument, the great day came on Monday 5 September 1932. Councillors and officials met at the entrance to the bus park at 6.15 a.m. in readiness for the arrival of the first bus which was due to leave the park at 6.30. This was the Mondays only departure of the London (via Chelmsford) service of the Horn Motor Coach Company. The identity of the vehicle used wasn't recorded but is likely to have been either VX 4640 or VX 5600 which were 32 seat Metcalfe bodied AEC Regal coaches, new to the operator in 1930. There was a full attendance of the Council and a good gathering of townspeople in spite of the early hour. Mr. Dan Sargent, ex P.O., R.N. was in charge of the bunting.

The chairman of the Council, C.H. Howard J.P., made a speech in which he stated that their 'public vehicle parking station' was the first to be erected under the Road Traffic Act of 1930. He then asked the vice-chairman, Mrs. Mabbs, to open the park. The tape across the entrance having been cut, the first bus entered the park with a Union Jack on the front of it. Behind the bus came a motor van belonging to Mr. F.C. Brand which was decorated with the Union Jack and a number of toy balloons.

The bus took up its position at stand number one and the Councillors and officials entered it for the first drive out of the park. The bus stopped at the High Street, where they alighted, and the bus continued on to London. Mr. Howard then entertained his colleagues and officials to a breakfast of bacon, eggs and coffee. Further speeches were made, and one gets the impression that the Councillors were very pleased with themselves.





Originally, the brick-built accommodation comprised a covered waiting area at the front, behind which was a waiting room with coal fire, toilets and, at the rear, an information and parcels office.

Not long after the opening of the bus park, Hicks began negotiations to acquire the bus operations of the Silver End Development Company. This had been founded by the Crittall family to develop the 'model village' that they were building at Silver End for their factory workers. From late 1926 or early 1927, they had operated a Braintree - Silver End - Witham service. The Essex Chronicle of 16 December 1932 announced that agreement had been reached subject to the approval of the Traffic Commissioners. Normally the takeover would have been approved without difficulty, however the fly in the ointment was that the Silver End Company was using the bus park as its terminus and Hicks wanted to use their own premises. In January 1933 a sitting of the Traffic Commissioners was held at Cambridge to consider transfer of the licence to Hicks Bros. The application was opposed by Braintree Council and by Mr. C.S. Cummings, proprietor of the Royal Blue Coaches plying between Braintree and Witham. Mr. H.W.P. Cotting, representing Royal Blue, said that Mr. Cummings had made an offer practically the same as Hicks Bros. The route was a small one and just paid the present operators; if the whole operation were in the hands of one proprietor, it would be better for the public and more economical. Norman Orfeur, for the Council, said that their sole objection was that Hicks proposed to move the terminus to their garage from the Council's bus park. Mr. E.C. Hicks said that he operated 27 buses, of which 18 were at Braintree. In taking over Silver End they would have 24 at Braintree. Mr. Cummings said that he already operated six buses on the Silver End route. He felt he had first claim on the service since he had been on the route since the first brick had been laid in the village. This claim appears not to have been disputed but a photo exists which shows Mr. Cummings (with a cash bag) and his daughter Isobel in front of a Silver End Panhard VW 2180. As Isobel sadly died in 1929 this dates the photo to between December 1927 and early 1929, suggesting that he was initially an employee of the company before setting up in competition. Unfortunately, I completely failed to elucidate these matters when I had the opportunity to do so in the 1980s when, after my parents had moved to Panfield, my father would point out two men walking past on a Sunday and tell me that they were the son and grandson of the late Mr. Cummings. Rather than rushing out and interrogating them, I kept eating my lunch instead.

At the end of the sitting, the Commissioners said that they would grant a licence to Hicks, but they would reserve judgement on the question of the terminus. The Commercial Motor of 27 January 1933 recorded that the Commissioners had decided that the bus park should be used "for the time being". As Mr. Cummings used the bus park for his service, the decision was perhaps inevitable. In July 1933, the Traffic Commissioners met at Colchester to consider Hicks application to move the Witham service to their own garage. The Chairman (Sir Haviland Hiley) said he had inspected Messrs. Hicks' private station and considered it inadequate for the accommodation of any more vehicles so far as passenger services were concerned. Mr. E.C. Hicks strongly disagreed with this view and claimed that his Braintree terminal point was superior in point of accommodation and convenience to many bus stations he had seen. Despite much argument, the Traffic Commissioners said that they were satisfied that no case had been made for any alteration.

In October 1933, Hicks applied to take over Mr. Cummings' journeys on the Witham route thus giving them a monopoly. This was granted but the newspapers are silent on whether the bus park was still to be used as the terminal for these services. Unfortunately, Hicks' timetables are also quiet on the matter. Hopefully a Group member may be able to enlighten us.



**To be continued.**

Nigel is currently researching and writing Part 3 which will appear in a future edition of EBN.

The help given by Trevor J. Beal in accessing early information is gratefully acknowledged.

Opposite page: Braintree Bus Park at opening in September 1932.

**Unknown**

Left: a photo taken almost exactly 88 years later shows the building work being carried out at the bus park on 7 September 2020.

**Adam Kelleher**

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## Chelmsford & Colchester Park & Ride Buses in Southend

Photos of First Essex Chelmsford Park & Ride Enviro 200 MMCs working from Hadleigh depot appeared in EBNs 674 & 675. At one stage during June, eight out of the nine P&R vehicles were allocated to HH. Most have now returned to Chelmsford as Park & Ride services have resumed, but as at 10 October, two, 67195 and 67197 remained. They were joined on Southend services from around 9 September by Arriva Colchester Enviro 200s 4072 & 4073, as reported on page 16. The latter is seen turning into South Street, Rochford at 0721 on 14 September, en route to Ashingdon carrying King Edmund School pupils, showing how they initially ran with Colchester drivers. The blinds have since been programmed for Southend routes. **Richard Delahoy**



# Letters

## Andrew Colbourne from South Woodford

## Thoughts on Route Numbering

On Saturday 5 September I had a pleasant afternoon in Maldon and obviously took the opportunity to photograph some of the buses that I saw. One of the routes is Stephenson's local 288 and I'm wondering why it has that number, which doesn't relate to anything else local, historical numbers or particularly other Stephensons numbers, though they operate the 200/220 Southminster/Burnham - South Woodham - Basildon and also the 265 Grays - Bulphan (an historic number). This is just one example of 'why did they give it that number'? Perhaps members can relate reasons for certain numbers (historical or otherwise); especially if they are unusual. The historical evolution of Eastern National route numbers and those of municipalities plus those of London Transport are well recorded and influence many numbers in use in Essex today. Obviously, many operators would number from 1 upwards, even if they didn't actually display the numbers on their vehicles. I'm thinking of unusual or odd reasons. Route 288 is a 'double frying pan' circular with Tesco in the middle, so the eights in its number are kind of appropriate!

Andrew's photo of 449 in Maldon High Street on the 288 taken on 5 September is on page 18.

In response to Andrew's letter, **Richard Delahoy** has undertaken some research and has written the following.

I can't explain the original choice of number but can add some information about the route. The Maldon Tesco superstore opened in Fullbridge on the edge of the town centre in March 1992. At some point, possibly from the opening date, there was a Section 106 planning obligation for them to provide a free bus service between the store and the town centre. I have not been able to trace any information about the start of the service - we didn't cover it in Essex Bus News, possibly because there would not have been a requirement to register it with the Traffic Commissioner, as no fares were taken. I suspect that Eastern National operated it from the outset but cannot be sure. It did not appear in Essex County Council timetables as they took the view that free services should not be included, as the County would have no way of knowing if or when such services ceased or were amended. As an aside, that policy meant that a whole range of free supermarket buses have been largely off most enthusiasts' radar, although there were a significant number of such services at least in the 1990s, some over long distances, serving superstores such as Asda at Shoebury, South Woodham and Tilbury and Tesco Pitsea. There was later some regulatory debate about whether free services should be registered as local bus routes, notwithstanding the lack of fares. These free services are a subject we should perhaps explore one day.

Back to Maldon. First Essex registered the service effective from 19/8/02, but with route number 228 (which still doesn't fit with any obvious sequences either). They then deregistered it again from 15/8/04 but registered a replacement, now numbered 288, from the following month (15/9/04). We then reported in our magazine towards the end of 2004 that it was one of a number of services that First were struggling to resource due to driver shortages. First gave up the service and arranged for Stephensons to take it over from 17/1/05. It was registered using the number First had used - 288. I can say that much with certainty, as I prepared and submitted the registration! I must confess though that I didn't really stop to question "why 288?". But there was no good reason to change it then, and so it has remained.

It almost ceased in May 2008, but Tesco confirmed continued S.106 funding to allow it to continue, following a further planning application to enlarge the store and a consequent extension to the S.106 obligation. At that point it was still just a shuttle between the Blackwater Leisure Centre (to the south east of the town centre) and Tesco, via the High Street and Market Hill, although there was also a provision added for passengers to travel free to/from the store from Heybridge on the 90. It only assumed the current figure of eight shape when it was extended beyond Tesco to a northern loop round part of Heybridge from April 2011, following an approach and support from the Parish Council.

Another oddity is that when the service was first registered, it was shown as route 228 in Notices & Proceedings and appeared as 228 in the Essex timetable book but when it was cancelled in August 2004, it was listed as 288, and the Traffic Commissioner's database entry for the registration (PF0000599/147) also refers to it as 288! So, was it ever 228 in reality or was that a typo somewhere?

A final thought: I am not certain but have a hunch that the obligation placed on Tesco to procure the service was the opposite of the normal situation, where a supermarket provides a bus to bring passengers to their store. In the planning documents it is referred to as a 'park & ride', and I think the intention may have been to protect the shops in the High Street from abstraction of trade to the edge of town Tesco superstore, by requiring Tesco to offer a park & ride facility to take people parking there TO the town centre.

But as to why 288 (or 228), I really don't know. Does anyone? Thanks to Bill Hiron for filling in some of the detail.

The continued reference to the colour of ENOC Setright ticket rolls in recent EBNs prompts me to put the matter of the red rolls to rest. These were test rolls used by depot staff specifically for running ticket-machine printing checks. I have such a test roll dating from January 1976, run on my machine E1587 at Bishops Stortford. It is 7ft. long, and only 1" wide when rolled up, as against about 3" for a normal buff roll (although as the extra 2" of a normal roll gets progressively wider, the total length would be many, many times that of a test roll, although, having said that, it could have been normal size and my small section came from a larger roll). I attach scans of the outer and inner ends of my test roll (reproduced on the inside rear cover), on which the printing runs continuously from one and a half pence right up to 199 and a half. Interestingly, some of the figures still show a D behind the figure, a throwback to £/S/D, despite the date of this printing being five years after the introduction of decimal currency. I should imagine that very few such rolls have survived.

Richard Delahoy from Thorpe Bay

Royal Tiger Worldmaster 210

With reference to Paul Bateson's 1971 picture of Southend Leyland Royal Tiger Worldmaster 210 on page 19 of EBN 677, the location is actually Runwell Hospital rather than Rettendon Turnpike, although Paul's question and comments about the background are just as relevant. The Runwell hospital complex, a site used to treat patients with mental illnesses, closed in 2010 and almost all the buildings were demolished. Today it is a new housing development, St Luke's Park (a name inspired by the Grade 2 Listed Chapel of St Luke which was part of the hospital) and is served by a dedicated bus service to Wickford, First Essex route 16.

As Paul noted, the picture was taken on the first occasion that Southend Corporation ran special services on Boxing Day to places outside the Southend Co-ordination area, on a day when Eastern National had decided not to operate. It's lucky he went then, as 1971 was the only time that SCT ran to Runwell Hospital, with a solitary trip that laid over there during visiting time. An article about those special Christmas services is on-line at <https://www.signal-training.com/ebeg/xmas.htm> and a copy of the 26 December 1971 timetable is shown below, from the days when SCT still used the 12-hour clock.

20

SOUTHEND (Central Station) — PRITTEWELL — EASTWOOD — RAYLEIGH —  
RAWRETH LANE — RETTENDON — RUNWELL HOSPITAL

20

|                                           |      |                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------|------|
| Southend, Central Station                 | 1 40 | Runwell, Hospital                         | 3 54 |
| Southend, Victoria Circus, Chichester Rd. | 1 42 | Rettendon, Turnpike Corner                | 4 1  |
| Prittlewell, Bell                         | 1 48 | Rawreth, Bedloes Corner                   | 4 6  |
| Eastwood, Kent Elm, Rayleigh Road         | 1 53 | Hambro Hill, Downhall Road                | 4 11 |
| Eastwood Rise, Oakwood                    | 1 58 | Rayleigh, Rail Station                    | 4 15 |
| Rayleigh, High Street                     | 2 5  | Rayleigh, High Street                     | 4 17 |
| Rayleigh, Rail Station                    | 2 7  | Eastwood Rise, Oakwood                    | 4 24 |
| Hambro Hill, Downhall Road                | 2 11 | Eastwood, Kent Elm, Rayleigh Road         | 4 29 |
| Rawreth, Bedloes Corner                   | 2 16 | Prittlewell, Bell                         | 4 34 |
| Rettendon, Turnpike Corner                | 2 21 | Southend, Victoria Circus, Chichester Rd. | 4 40 |
| Runwell, Hospital                         | 2 28 | Southend, Central Station                 | 4 42 |

Traveline South East

Many members would have used Traveline over the years to plan bus journeys and days out. But this is the message that now appears on their website (edited):

“For over 20 years, this website has provided impartial travel advice using data compiled by all of the local transport authorities (County Councils and Unitary Authorities) in the region. Our website had become rather dated, and without funds to develop it with new facilities, and without enhancements to use the latest software developments, the decision was taken to close it down. The closure was initially due to take place a year ago, but then at the end of March 2020. The rapidly changing data resulting from the Covid-19 outbreak provided a further extension. This website's last day of operation was Wednesday 23rd September, when our software contracts and hosting arrangements came to an end.”

However, the previous functionality, geographical coverage and data still appear to be available through the Midlands service, <http://www.travelinemidlands.co.uk/>. The national Traveline service at <https://www.traveline.info/> also remains operational. During 2021 the Government's Bus Open Data Service (BODS) becomes a legal obligation for operators (as part of the Bus Services Act of 2017), all of whom will have to make data files available in a format that IT developers can use, with the hope that more web sites and apps will start to offer bus timetable data. During 2021 that obligation will be expanded to include fares and real time data.

One minor correction to EBN 677 page 22: Robert Downton advises that ECC concessionary passes are available from 0900 rather than 0930.

## 678 for EBN 678 Extra

Southend Corporation Transport acquired five ex-Glasgow Leyland Royal Tiger Worldmasters from Millburn Motors of Preston in March 1966 (210-4), in part exchange for the same number of Southend PD2 double deckers (281/3-6), in a bid to hasten the expansion of one-man operation. The evocative photo of 211 (FYS **678**) on the inside front cover opposite, taken at Broadway Market, Southend on 24 April 1966, shortly after entering service, highlights some interesting points.

Firstly, although there was a separate external cab door, it appears that Southend sealed these up and painted over the door edges.

Secondly, there were no suitable destination blinds in stock, so until special ones were made up, an intermediate (passing point) blind was used instead. We can see that the driver has tried to find a partly suitable entry - 'Barling' - but has not positioned it well, so half of the next entry is showing. This was one of Southend's oddities and read, over 3 lines 'First alighting / point / Wakering Road Sports Ground'. That display was used on some evening peak buses to the Wakering area that were operated by single deckers, which might have been overwhelmed by short distance riders crowding out those going to Barling etc., who had no alternative service. The restriction applied to services 4, 4A, 4B & 18, with the qualifying point on 4A being Armitage Road rather than Wakering Road - in both cases, these were the first stops after Bournes Green. As an aside, one of the earliest bus photos I took, way back on 1 September 1971, was of Leopard bus 206 on service 4 to Landwick, displaying this blind. The custom-made blinds for 210-4 were ordered in March 1966 and soon fitted, being just 30" wide as compared to Southend's standard 48" and were to list T7. (Each blind specification was numbered, so this was Terminal blind list 7. The numbers appeared stamped on the end of each blind, so that engineers and others would know which version a bus was fitted with).

Finally, note the 'local fares' sticker in the window, presumably to reassure passengers that short riders were welcome at times! All five Worldmasters were withdrawn in 1972. Incidentally, the Royal Tiger Worldmaster was quite rare in the UK (Glasgow was the biggest domestic market purchaser) but fared very well in the export market and was in fact the best-selling Leyland chassis of all time, with over 20,000 produced.

Text by **Richard Delahoy**, photo by **Paul Bateson**.

## A Blast from the Past Finale

Further to 'A Blast from the Past' on page 4, here is a rear shot of the same vehicle, 2842, taken in 1967 when allocated to Chelmsford and still in Tilling green and cream livery and with rear destination equipment, at Chelmsford garage. **Ian Pritchard**

And that's it for 'A Blast from the Past', look out for a new historical feature next month. Many thanks to Paul Harvey for all the interesting and varied photos over the years.

### Photo Captions

**Inside rear cover top:** Scans of **Peter Carr's** red Eastern National tickets. Most readers would not have seen these colour tickets before. See Peter's letter on the previous page for more information.

**Rear cover:** **Richard Delahoy** photos of vehicles on loan to local operators to provide extra capacity at school times.

**Top:** As reported on page 16, Arriva Southend currently have seven external vehicles on hire with drivers. The furthest distant comes from Westbus at Hayes (near Heathrow Airport). On 5 October, Westbus Van Hool Astromega YJ61 FFD was photographed pulling out of Rayleigh Station, duplicating the 1426 service 1 to Southend and Shoebury.

**Bottom:** On loan to First Essex (see page 9), 36156 pulls away from the terminus at The Anchor, Hullbridge on the 0812 service 820 to The Sweyne Park School at Rayleigh on 16 September.







