

Issue 514
February 2007

ESSEX BUS NEWS



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

serving Essex since 1964

www.essexbus.org.uk

Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group - Directory

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A 12 month subscription is £18.50 by First Class post, renewable in January or July.

Data Protection Act: Members' details are held on computer for the purpose of administration. If you object to your information being held in this way, please contact the Membership Secretary:

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Replacements for missing or defective EBNs are available from the Membership Secretary.

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Join this scheme to receive Essex County Council timetable books and updates. Please contact Derek Stebbing for information or visit www.essexbus.org.uk

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All orders for publications should be sent to:
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196 Sinclair Road Chingford
London E4 8PT

Owen also stocks a wide range of colour photos - send SAE with your requirements.

B/W PHOTO SALES

All orders for photos from lists enclosed with EBN should be sent to:

Lyn Watson
c/o Barrons Chartered Accountants,
Monometer House, Rectory Grove,
Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 2HN

Prints of specific EN (and predecessor) vehicles can also be supplied: email with requirements:
lynw@barrons-bds.com

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YOUR REPORTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Members reports are always welcome. Please send them to the relevant Sub-Editor.

Photos (prints, slides or digital images - in JPG format) are also welcome - please send to David Harman.

The Editors exercise the normal discretion to publish contributions in full, in part, or not at all and cannot guarantee publication in any particular month.

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

Every effort is made to ensure accuracy but the Group cannot accept responsibility for any errors published.

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Dates for your diary

■ EBN PRESS DATES

<i>For inclusion in EBN dated:</i>	<i>reports should reach Editors by:</i>	<i>planned despatch date:</i>
March	7 March	16 March
April	4 April	7 April
May	May	May

Please note that the **planned** despatch date may change for all sorts of reasons. The **actual** despatch day is posted to the website as soon as it is known. Please allow reasonable time for postal delays (at least seven working days) before claiming non-receipt. Replacements can **only** be obtained from the Membership Secretary (address opposite). None of the Editors hold spares, so there is no point in contacting them. They cannot help!

■ ROCHFORD MEETINGS

Meetings now take place in the **Committee Room** (upstairs), **Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford** (the old railway goods shed, adjacent to Rochford station). There is a large free car park and *one Great Eastern trains & Arriva Southend* services 7/8 stop nearby. Doors open at 1915 for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from 2000 to 2145. Drinks are normally available. All members and guests are very welcome. £1 donation towards room hire please. Prints, slides and digital photographs can all be shown. *Richard Delahoy*

- ▶ **Tuesday 13 March** - AGM, followed by slide show "30 Years AGO" by *Alan G Osborne*
- ▶ **Tuesday 17 April*** - cine/DVD evening with *Peter Carr*, buses & light rail
- ▶ **Tuesday 15 May*** - ticketing evening with *David Harman & Richard Delahoy* - come and get some hands-on experience in using ticket machines, etc.
- ▶ **Tuesday 12 June** - *Lyn Watson* will present an illustrated talk "On the Buses" covering his experiences from first gaining a PSV licence, through the development of Stephensons and now Excel/Flight Delay services.

* NB: the April and May meetings are the **THIRD** Tuesday not the customary second Tuesday in the month.

■ COLCHESTER MEETINGS

Venue: Downstairs room at the **Friends Meeting House, Church Street, Colchester**, just south of "Jumbo" (the water tower) and behind the Mercury Theatre. Town centre bus stops and parking are nearby. **20.00 to 22.00** (doors open at **19.30**). All members and guests are very welcome. £1 donation towards room hire please. We prefer to show slides or digital photos but can prints can also be shown. *Dave Arnold*

- ▶ **Friday 9 March** - slide show by *Alan Osborne* - 'Hong Kong in the 70s & 80s'.
- ▶ **Friday 13 April** (upstairs room) - slide show by *Trevor Brookes* - 'A quick look @ Southend'.
- ▶ **Friday 11 May** - slide show by *Richard Delahoy* - '20 Years ago - part 2'.
- ▶ **Friday 8 June** (upstairs room) - slide show by *Chris Stewart* - 'From Charabanc to Highwayman' - A brief history of Eastern National's coaches.
- ▶ **Friday 13 July** - slide show by *John Podgorski* - 'Views from overseas'.
- ▶ **Friday 10 August** - slide show by *Dave Arnold* - 'Rail Replacement'.

cover: The usual bus on the **Stephensons** Fridays-only Heybridge - Brentwood service 240 is this low floor Dart, **P749 HND**. *Chris Stewart*

■ TRIPS from COLCHESTER

► **Sunday 1 April - Cobham Bus & Coach Gathering @ Chobham**

Travel in a Talisman vehicle. Depart Colchester North Station: 08.00; Shenfield station: 08.50. Fare £10 + £10 entrance fee.

► **Sunday 20 May - Bristol Harbourside Rally & Running Day** using the ex-Badgerline Volvo/Van Hool coach of Talisman Coachlines. Depart North Station: 07.00 ; Shenfield station: 07.50. Fare £15.

► **Tuesday 26 June - Evening Visit to Talisman Coachlines.** Pick up at North Station: 19.00; return by 22.00. Fare £5.

For all these trips, please book via Dave Arnold, 21 Cedar Chase, Heybridge, Maldon, CM9 4NR david@arnold1.fsnet.co.uk Mobile: 07831 644092

■ RALLIES, OPEN DAYS ETC

► **Saturday / Sunday 10-11 March - 75th anniversary of the commencement of services into Victoria Coach Station by "London Coastal Coaches":** a limited rally with a small number of historic vehicles.

► **Sunday 1 April - Cobham Bus & Coach Gathering** The traditional start to the rally season and an important change this year. The Wisley airfield site is no longer available, and the rally will take place at the **Longcross Test Track**, near **CHOBHAM** in Surrey. Furthermore, the Museum at Cobham will NOT be open on this day.

Up to 300 visiting buses and coaches are expected to be on display with some providing rides inside and outside the grounds. This year, there will be a display of buses from the pre-war period.

Longcross is sited off the M25 (J11 or 13) and M3 (J3). The entrance is in Chobham Lane, just off the B386, immediately to the north of where that road crosses the M3. Frequent bus services will connect Longcross with both **Woking** and **Longcross** stations, which have frequent services to and from London. Longcross Station does not normally have a Sunday train service, but South West Trains have agreed to stop trains there on the day. All visiting buses/coaches welcome, no fees charged for display vehicles; no pre-booking is required. Entry fee of £10 per adult (accompanied under-16s are free) includes parking and unlimited rides on bus services both within and outside the grounds.

See above for Group coach trip from Colchester to this event.

JOYCE BOYLETT

John, Michael and Susan Boylett would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody for the cards and message of condolence that we received following the untimely death of Joyce on the 7th of January 2007.

I would especially like to thank all those who helped with Joyce's wheelchair on the EBEG trips during the last two years, which made it possible for her to be there and enjoy them.

We thank you all.

John Boylett

Geoff Clarkson ~ 1946-2007

An appreciation of Geoff Clarkson, first Managing Director of the privatised Eastern National Ltd., who died on 3 January 2007, by Mike Holden of Crusader Holidays.

I first met Geoff on the 5 September 1966 on my first day at work on the Management Training Scheme at Ribble Motor Services in Preston. Geoff had already been on the scheme for three years by this time.

Geoff was born in Preston in December 1946 and you could say that the "bus blood" was already in his veins as his father worked for Leyland Motors Ltd just outside the town.

The training scheme at that time was some five years in length and covered all aspects of bus and coach management quite thoroughly.

One of the first things that Geoff taught me was that Friday lunchtimes of each week was there for drinking, which all of trainees took to seriously. On one occasion I remember, we were challenged to have a pint of beer at lunch time in three separate English counties and still be back at work in the afternoon. We did manage the three pints at three pubs on the borders of Lancashire, Westmorland and Yorkshire, but we did not make it back in time for the start of the afternoon session. Geoff finished his management traineeship in 1968 and was promptly dispatched to the local bus depot in Preston with the title of Assistant to the District Superintendent. This position was regarded as a "waiting room job" until "a proper job arrived". Geoff continued in this position for another two years and in 1970 he transferred to Red & White Services based in Tredegar in Monmouthshire as it was then.

Geoff was somewhat of a pioneer in this respect, becoming one of the first people in the newly constituted National Bus Company to move between a BET Company and a BTC Company.

He was to remain in South Wales for another

eight years and during that time he was promoted to the position of Area Manager, Gwent, retaining that position when Red & White merged with Western Welsh in 1977 to become National Welsh.

It was at this time that a monumental event took place for Geoff when he met his future wife Susan, who worked for Red & White at the time, and subsequently they married in 1976.

It was at this time that I had almost lost track of Geoff since his move from Preston to Tredegar six years previously, when our paths certainly went different ways. We met up again during that long hot summer of 1976 when I moved down to South Wales as an Area Manager for South Wales Transport based in Swansea. For the next two years we met again on varying occasions remembering fondly our social activities and particularly Friday lunchtimes that we enjoyed together some ten years earlier.

Geoff was on the move again in 1978 with his promotion to Assistant Traffic Manager for the huge Midland Red Company. He was not to know it then but Midland Red would be broken up into five different companies within the next year or so. Geoff would come to prominence at this time with no less than three further promotions in the space of six years.

On the breakup on the Midland Red company into its various constituents, Geoff was appointed to the position of Traffic Manager of Midland Red South and this was based in Rugby. He moved there from Bromsgrove, his previous home after he moved from Wales. His second promotion came when he was appointed General Manager of Midland Red Coaches based at Digbeth Bus Station in Birmingham. Geoff felt at the time that Rugby was near enough to Birmingham and he wasn't going to move any closer to the city. He also was given control at this time of Black & White Motorways at Cheltenham and Wessex

Coaches at Bristol. Our paths crossed again in 1983 for the first time for five years and I can recall a meeting towards the end of that year in Manchester where I had recently started working for the now long defunct National Travel, West.

Needless to say the meeting ended with pints being drunk to celebrate the future and to reminisce the past both in Wales and previously in the North West. We are now at a time when the white paper on the "Future of Transport" had been published and conversation was awash with likely future happenings such as privatisation, deregulation and anything else that was vaguely to do with the future of bus services. Geoff's promotion in the late 1970's and early 1980's had put him in good stead to what the future of the bus industry held.

In 1984 he was appointed as General Manager of Eastern National, a position that probably had more far-reaching future consequences than he ever imagined.

He has subsequently told me that two companies were available to him, the aforesaid Eastern National or City of Oxford Motor Services.

He chose wisely. The then Traffic Manager of Eastern National, Arthur Townsend moved to Oxford. The next two years or so at Eastern National were quite frantic for Geoff. Firstly, he was charged, along with other General Managers of preparing the company for future deregulation and future privatisation. Before he did that, he wanted to reorganise the management of the company so that it would be better prepared for what the future threw at it. For the third or fourth time in our careers our paths met up again and I applied for one of the Manager positions within the new organisation and, quite surprisingly, was offered the one at Colchester and Tendring. I say surprisingly, because the interview that my friend Geoff gave me had no friendliness in it at all and was one of the toughest I think I have ever had to endure. He later told me that this was done deliberately. 1986 was the year that we were double guessing what other operators in Essex were likely to

do in the light of deregulation which was now only a few months away and services were planned with an eye on shutting out any potential competitor or opposition in the area. As it happened the competition came from a somewhat unexpected source.

Coastal Red at Great Oakley began operations in September 1986 and progressively increased their number of services and vehicles in North Essex for another 12 months. Eastern National in 1986 were forbidden by the Transport Act to retaliate and we all had to sit tight until we were allowed to alter our registered service pattern in February 1987. Between these dates, the change of ownership of Eastern National occurred for the first time since the 1948 Transport Act had nationalised the company. Throughout the major part of 1986 the management of the company was preparing to submit a bid to purchase Eastern National and the deal was finally completed on the 23 December 1986. I was fortunate to be part of the Management buyout team that was led by Geoff and Harold Taylor and that date along with one or two others will be forever emblazoned in my mind and in Eastern National's history.

Geoff and I along with some others sometimes, plotted and suggested ways to overcome Coastal Red's attack on us, usually over a few pints during the evening and reminiscing even on the carefree days of Ribble, 20 years previously.

An agreement with Coastal Red was concluded towards the end of 1987 and the takeover of the business took effect from the end of February 1988. The next couple of years or so proved quite peaceful in comparison to the previous couple of years but things changed again in 1990.

In that year a generous bid from the Badgerline Group was put to the Directors and shareholders of Eastern National and after much discussion and deliberation it was finally agreed that the company would be sold to that organisation. Geoff, who by this time was still only 43 years old, decided he wanted to remain with the company and continue as Managing Director, working

with the new owners. Sadly for Geoff, the new owners had other ideas and within weeks of the takeover of Eastern National they decided to split the company into two, with the South Essex operations becoming Thamesway and two separate managements being formed. Geoff decided he did not wish to remain with the company in its new form and took up a position of non-executive Director for both the new Eastern National and the Thamesway company, a position he retained for a further seven years. Geoff had by now, in effect retired and he decided to pursue another of his ambitions. He bought a pub, the Anchor at Dedham. He ran the pub successfully for a number of years before selling some five years ago.

My 12 year career at Eastern National came to an end in 1997 and, like friends do, we reminisced the good times with a few pints. I joined the Crusader Holidays group the following year and in 2003 it was learnt that the owner of Crusader Holidays, the son of the founder, Antony Staines, would be quite

willing to sell the company. I had no hesitation in expressing an interest and together with a work colleague we approached Geoff Clarkson to see if he would be interested in joining with us so that we would tap his vast experience in the industry and also his previous knowledge of management buyouts. Geoff agreed to join us but in a non-executive role and the purchase of the company was completed in May 2004. Geoff became the Chairman of Crusader Holdings Ltd and its subsidiary companies and retained that non executive role until his untimely death in January of this year.

On a personal note, Geoff was my friend, sometimes my inspiration, and on some occasions he would even buy the beer. In a professional capacity Geoff's attributes were fairness, trustworthiness, honesty with a shrewd acumen for business. I am sure that all on the local bus scene in Essex will miss him and mourn his passing.

Service Changes

Arriva East Herts & Essex

14 Jan 07 46 M-S
59 M-S

Ongar, Two Brewers - Chelmsford, Vicarage Road
Chelmsford, Coval Lane - Harlow Bus Station
46 and 59 no longer serving Coval Lane with the opening of
Chelmsford Bus Station
Lakeside Bus Station - Grays Bus Station via Purfleet and
West Thurrock. (For M-S service refer to Ensign 44)

Arriva Southend

28 Jan 07 150 Su

Basildon Bus Station - Lakeside Bus Station
Formerly numbered 100 (it does not operate to the same route as the weekday service)

Beestons

2 Jan 07 87A M-F
247 M-S

Dedham, Marlborough Head - Colchester Bus Station
Single journey in each direction at 16:53 and 17:50
respectively
Colchester Bus Station - Dedham
Revised route and timetable and section of route between
Dedham and East Bergholt withdrawn
Dedham Heath (Crossroads) - Colchester Bus Station
Single journey in each direction at 09:57 and 14:00
respectively

6 Jan 07 87 S

Blue Triangle

11 Dec 06 339 Sun(&PH) Epping Station - Harlow Bus Station
363 Sun(&PH) Witham Station - Bacon End, Banana Depot
622 Sun(&PH) Harlow Bus Station - Braintree Bus Park
339, 363 and 622 vintage services withdrawn



Service 389. First Marshall-bodied Mercedes 52580 (V480 GTW) leaves Basildon bus station. From 29 January, operation passed to **Blue Triangle**. Now renumbered 11, and extended to Purfleet Garrison Estate/Station, the route is being run temporarily with vehicles from the rail replacement fleet, like Metrobus MCW1200 (B200 WUL) in Grays.

Kevin Smith



29 Jan 07	11	M-S	Basildon Bus Station - Purfleet Station. Further to previous information service 389 is now renumbered and extended to Purfleet, Garrison Estate and Station.
Carters Coach Services			
2 Jan 07	92	SDO	Ipswich - Stratford St Mary. Revised commercial service to cover withdrawn First Eastern Counties 96.
	96	M-S	Ipswich, Old Cattle Market Bus Station - Mistley, Rigby Avenue. This new route is supported by SCC via Tattingstone, Brantham and Manningtree.
	755	M-S	Colchester Bus Station - Capel St Mary, White Horse Minor changes to timetable.
	756	M-S	Colchester Bus Station - Ipswich, Old Cattle Market Bus Station. Minor changes to timetable.
Clintona Minicoaches			
29 Jan 07	99	M-S	Tilbury Town Station - Tilbury Landing Stage. Update to previous information. This service replaces the c2c contract and operates via Civic Square and Brennan Road serving all recognised stops
Ensign Bus			
28 Jan 07	40	M-F	Chafford Hundred - Grays Station. Service withdrawn.
Excel			
5 Feb 07	333	M-S	Stansted Airport - Epping Station. Revised route starting at Stansted Airport and only serving Epping (peaks M-F)
First			
2 Jan 07	36	Daily	Chelmsford, Coval Lane - South Woodham, Town Centre. The 08:20 (M-F) Chelmsford to South Woodham Ferringes now operates at 08:30 and reverting to Chelmsford Bus Station (circa 17/01/07)
	351	Daily	Chelmsford, Coval Lane - Brentwood Rail Station. The 08:51 (M-F) Brentwood to Chelmsford operates five minutes later at 08:56. The Sunday ECC contract will continue to operate Chelmsford - Romford Station. Reverting to Chelmsford Bus Station circa 17/01/07
	X40	M-S	Chelmsford, Railway Station - Stansted Airport Updated information from timetable refers to intermediate point as Braintree, White Court (London Road) and not Pickpocket Lane
7 Jan 07	5	M-S	Holland, Frinton Rd (Park Boulevard) - Bockings Elm, Flatford Dr (Kersey Dr). Service now picks up and sets down in Station Road not Jackson Road
	5A	M-S	Clacton, Station Road - Bockings Elm, Flatford Drive (Kersey Drive). Service now picks up and sets down in Station Road not Jackson Road
	6	M-S	Holland, Frinton Rd (Park Boulevard) - Bockings Elm, Flatford Dr (Kersey Dr). Service now picks up and sets down in Station Road not Jackson Road
29 Jan 07	100	M-S	Chelmsford, Bus Station - Lakeside Bus Station. Service reverting to the new Chelmsford Bus Station. Revised peak hour timetable with additional evening journeys Lampitts Hill to Sorells, Catcracker via Corringham Town Centre at 20:25 and 20:55 (M-F) under contract to Thurrock Council
H C Chambers			
2 Jan 07	753	M-S	Colchester Bus Station - Bury St Edmunds Bus Station SDO journeys re-timed and re-routed in West Bergholt via the Queens Head
Network Colchester			
2 Jan 07	93	Daily	Ipswich, Old Cattle Market Bus Station - Colchester Bus

			Station. Additional information: A single journey at 15:20 (M-S) in the one direction diverted between Stratford St Mary, Anchor and Langham Oak via Langham, Shepherd & Dog
	93A	M-S	Ipswich, Old Cattle Market Bus Station - Colchester Bus Station. One journey Colchester to Ipswich at 15:25 and two journeys Ipswich to Colchester at 08:15 and 10:55
7 Jan 07	96	Su	Ipswich, Old Cattle Market Bus Station - Mistley, Rigby Avenue. Corrected end terminal
	96A	Su	Ipswich, Old Cattle Market Bus Station - Mistley, Rigby Avenue. Corrected end terminal
	103	Su	Colchester Bus Station - Mistley, Rigby Avenue. Single positioning journey in each direction (running on to/off 96) via Ardleigh and Lawford
Regal Busways			
17 Jan 07	14	M-S	Chelmsford, Bus Station - Wickford Rail Station.
	15	M-S	Chelmsford, Bus Station - Wickford Rail Station.
	15A	M-S	Chelmsford, Bus Station - Wickford Rail Station.
	31A	M-F	Chelmsford, Bus Station - Woodham Walter, Council Houses
	52	M-S	Pleshey, Vicarage Road - Galleywood, Temple Grove
20 Jan 07	52A	S	Pleshey, Vicarage Road - Galleywood, Temple Grove
21 Jan 07	11A	Su	Sutton Cemetery - Chelmsford, Bus Station
	71C	Su	Chelmsford, Bus Station - Colchester Bus Station
			All above no longer serving Coval Lane with the opening of Chelmsford Bus Station
	X2	M-F	Harlow Bus Station, Chelmsford, New London Road.
19 Feb 07	7	M-F	Now just the single am journey in the one direction Epping, Ivy Chimneys - Chelmsford, New London Road
			Single journey in each direction at 09:00 and 14:00 respectively (return journey starts at Chelmsford Retail Market)
S M Coaches			
2 Jan 07	SM19	SDO	Harlow - Epping. Sixteen journeys in each direction. Withdrawn between Bishops Stortford and Harlow
Stephensons of Essex			
16 Jan 07	44	TTh	Chelmsford, Bus Station - Chignall Estate, Trent Road
			No longer serving Coval Lane with the opening of Chelmsford Bus Station

David Tomlin

Publicity News

Essex County Council: A4 timetable books for South Essex; South East Essex and Southend; West and North West Essex all dated January 2007. The current Sunday Travel Guide (Winter/Spring 06/07), will be the final issue. Also, the Village Link timetable book dated 13th March 2006, will be the final issue. It is understood that local area leaflets will be published instead.

First have published a folded A4 leaflet for services X30/40 dated 2.1.07. An A4 leaflet for "Get the bus to Lakeside" with 3 vouchers for use at catering outlets during January. Very brief details of services 22 and 100 were included (including the renumbering of service 22 to 200)

Crusader published a newspaper size item, detailing all their holidays for 2007. Details are also available on their web site at www.crusader-holidays.co.uk

Ian Ranson, with thanks to LOTS

■ FIRST ESSEX

New/Acquired

One of the former PMT Volvos, 60130, was first seen out on 12th January working the X22, but as at 28th 60031 was still undergoing attention in Colchester's Haven Road depot.

DVLA records show the following dates for first registration of the various Primos used by First Essex:

YX55DSE (gold demonstrator)	10.10.05
57000 (blue demonstrator)	1.3.06
57001	1.11.06
57002	3.10.06

All have 3.92 litre engines and are recorded by DVLA as 'Enterprise Bus'. Apparently a number of First Essex-inspired modifications are now being incorporated on production Primos. 57001/2 have now covered over 10,000 miles each and problems with wipers and doors seem to have been overcome.

Allocation changes

Period 10: 4 January 2007 to 28 January 2007

FGC=First Group cascade, i.e. transfer to/from another First fleet

(A)=acquired, including vehicles on loan; Anc=Ancillary fleet; RES=spare/retained (licensed); D/L(RES)=spare/reserve (delicensed); D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal; DS=Driving School; PS=Paint Spare

46107 D/L(D)-sold; 46111 D/L(D)-sold; 46801 D/L(D)-sold; 51780 DS-RES; 51804 BN-D/L(D); 51805 BN-D/L(D); 51807 BN-D/L(D); 51808 D/L(D)-sold; 90244 D/L(D)-sold

In fact 51804/5/7 remained licenced after the end of January, and 46820 has since been reported reinstated at CN to cover for 46178 (see later).

Corrections

The allocation list in EBN513 unfortunately repeated some old errors which had been corrected previously. Please amend as follows:

For 62526-32 read 65626-32, for 65727-30/3 read 65028-32 and add 52583 to BN.

Disposals:

Period 10

46107 46111 46801 51808 to Erith Commercials

(46111 and 51808 were recovered direct from HH to Erith 11.1.07, while 90244 – the last Lynx in the fleet – was driven away from CN on that date)

Livery and other changes

From late January, route branding has been removed from certain Chelmsford vehicles where the routes themselves do not form part of the 'Overground' network (namely 36 and 352), in order to give greater flexibility in vehicle useage. Some of the 'unusual workings' shown later may in fact be the result of this. Service 200, not part of Basildon's 'Overground' system, has been allocated a lime green colour for bus stop purposes and this colour has also been adopted on Thurrock Borough Council's maps, but vehicles will not be so treated.



above: First Marshall Dart 41653 (R653 TLM) on the new 200 in Grays. Kevin Smith
below: Surviving Mercedes 711 51807 (P407 HPU) at Warley Fords on 27 January.

Chris Stewart



47219/23 have had their rear advertisements removed.

41005/12/7 have gained LED destination displays.

Vehicle Workings:

January

- 2nd BE46811 on 352
- 3rd CF43731 on 42, BE46144 and CF60103 on 352, CR34056 on DT103/4(loan); CR34303 on 65.
- 4th CR34056 on DT104/5(loan); 66-branded CR43740 on 88; CR47101/4 on 65; CN47225 on 75/76; CR67005 on 65; CR67006 on 64. CF60102/3/4 and unidentified Olympian all on 352
- 5th CR67007 on 64.
- 6th CF42487 on 72; CF42485 on 352 after lengthy absence.
- 8th CR34012 on 65; CR34309 on 61.
- 9th CR34018 on 64; CR34303 on 65; DT43800 on 103; CR62408 on X22.
- 10th CR34302 on 64; CF42485 on 33; CR67011 on 64; CR67008 on 78 (20.48 ex Bus Stn). CF34807 on a.m. X40 (replacing failed 56002), CF65681 one trip on 41 (replacing failed 53115)
- 11th 66-branded CR43739 on 70; CR47101 on 78; CF67003 on 65; CR67006 on 78; BN51805 on 25B.
- 12th CR34012 & 34304 on 65; CR34056 on DT193, 103/4(loan); CR43740 on 67/A, CN47227 on 74. CF43729 on 42, CF42484 on late night 33,
- 13th CF34807 on 33; BN46184 on 100 (08.20 from Chelmsford), CR67004 on 64, CR67005 on 66. CF47223/9/52 all on 72, CF43730 on 48.
- 15th CR34012 on 61, CR47103 on 65. DT43800 on 66, then exchanged for CR67006. DT57002 on ECC 104.
- 16th 66-branded CR43741 on 65.
- 17th CR67007 on 65; CF43730 on 42; BN61057 & 43713 on 100.
- 18th CR34301 on 64; CF42489 on 42; CF60103 on 352.
- 19th CR34310 on 64; CF42483 on 33.
- 21st CR34301 on 1.
- 23rd CR67005 on 64. BE46823 on 352
- 24th CR47104 on 78; CR67005 on 61; CF60102 on 352 and then on 48; Merc 51803 on 352; Ex PMT Volvo coach CR60130 on 76.
- 26th CR47101 on 64 and 65; BE 46813, CF47252 and CF43729 on 352; CF42484/6 on 48.
- 27th BN51804/5/7 all on 73 together.
- 28th CF60103 believed on 45.
- 29th CR43742 on 07.28 SD-BN 22; DT43800 on 103/4; CR67006/7 on 65; CR34304 on 61; BN46808 on 100; BE46813 on 48 then 351; CF42488 on 42; CF42489 on 352; CF42485 and CF53123 on 48/48A; CF47221, 43729/31 and 60103 on 36; CF53121 on X30; CR62408 on 71.
- 30th CR34309 on DT103/4(loan); CR43716 (61 branded) on 66 with CR67008 (also on 65); 51804 on 1A; 51805 on 25B; 51807 on 200; CF42489 on 42; CF60102 on 31X; CF60103 on 72; CF60104 on 352.
- 31st CR34308 on 64A; 61-branded CR43715 on a.m. 70.

February

- 1st CF34818 on 352; CF65682 on 45 (08.28 from CF Station).
- 3rd 51805/7 on 73.
- 5th 51803 on 21; 46116 on driver shuttles; CF60104 on 72.
- 7th 51807 on 81/82; CF65681 on a.m. 618; CF43730 and 51803 on 72; 46116 on 21.

Other News

The new Chelmsford Bus Station opened officially on 12th January, with services first using it on 14th January. The *First Travel Shop* relocated there on 29th January. Essex County Council's contribution to the cost of the new bus station is quoted at £1.8m.

Accident damaged Volvo Olympian 34011 had been returned from Mainline at Rotherham by 30th January. Unfortunately a car hit Clacton Dart 46178 at the junction of Ellis Avenue and West Avenue on 26th January, as a result of which the bus collided with a wall and the driver was taken to hospital after being freed by the Fire Service.

Serious disruption occurred in South Green, Billericay on 25th and 26th January as a result of a major fire in some vehicle workshops. Routes 100 and 551 were diverted via Noak Hill as a result.

On 21st January, the section of Butt Road in Colchester between Beaconsfield Avenue and Southway had to be closed due to a gas explosion/unsafe building. All traffic, including 64/64As, had to be diverted via Beaconsfield Avenue and then down the bus lane in Maldon Road to Southway and Headgate. The result was chaotic, even though it was a Sunday. Services 1 (Greenstead-Ambrose Av) and 75 (Colchester-Maldon) were not diverted, but were delayed due to the volume of traffic on Maldon Road.

Over the weekend of 27th/28th January, the A12 Colchester Northern by pass was closed to enable the replacement of a bridge at Bergholt Road. The only First route affected badly was the X22, by the ensuing traffic delays, as all A12 traffic had to be diverted through Colchester. This also caused some delays to 65, 66, 78 as they had to cross the A12 diversion route near North Station. The bridge involved carries route 66 over the A12, but the actual replacement happened at night when buses were not running.

Elite Engineering (the old Eastern National Engineering Ltd) have now gone from their site at Rettendon.

The last of the original Bristol Olympians, 34535 (XHK235X, formerly EN 4000) has finally been withdrawn by First Eastern Counties at King's Lynn. After removal of the engine and some front windows, it was towed to PVS' Barnsley scrapyard on 6th February leaving ex Trent 34711 (A711DAU) as the last ECW bodied vehicle in the FEC fleet.

Meanwhile First Devon & Cornwall's Driving Trainer 38895 (UAR595W) is reported to have been sold for scrap following unit failure. Other former Essex vehicles with FDC are currently allocated as follows:

Volvo coach 20108 (N608APU) – Barnstaple reserve fleet, stored out of use
ECW Olympians 34809/12/3 (C409/12/3HJN) – Plymouth, outstationed at Torpoint
Darts 46159-63/5/6 (N959-63/5/6CPU) – Camborne reserve, all stored out of use
Dart 46164 (N964CPU) – Camborne, outstationed at Falmouth
Varios 52591/2/4/9 (R411/2/4/9VPU) – Camborne reserve, stored out of use
Varios 52596-8 (R416-8VPU) – Plymouth (52595 outstationed at Tavistock, 52596 at Totnes).

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to *First Essex* and to P Ashton, W Bell, A Bird, T Clark, S Coates, D Edwards, M Farmer, N Field, I Hardie, A Kelleher, F Mulley, A Nugent, D Pretty, I Ransom, C Sigston, P Smith, 'Solo', D Stewart, A Timms, R Webb, W White, R Whitley, *Essex Bus* and *South West y-groups*, *Real Bus News*, *LOTS*, *PSV Circle*, *Terminus*.

Text messages may be sent on 07973 509459, in addition to e-mail and conventional post.
Chris Stewart

■ DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in

from

Halls Coaches, Kennoway: Tiger XJI 9426

Stagecoach Warwickshire: Mercedes 709's M343 LHP N353 AVV

Olympian C964 XVC

Stagecoach West: Mercedes 711 N159 MTG, Olympian C633 LFT

Stagecoach Western Scottish: Olympians C601/2/26/53/62/63 LFT

Mercedes 709's M653/4 FYS

Sun Fun Holidays: Lynx J41 GGB H460 WWY H816 EKJ

Vehicles out

to

Olympians C615/8/51 LFT: **AZZ Travel**, Walsall

Dublin Olympian 92-D-151 now K140KNO with **Aintree Coaches**

Olympian C626 LFT: **Jack Bell**, Newtonards, N Ireland

RML2434: **Nigel Bennett**, Dublin

Bedford MUY 41X: **Chris Cartwright**, Gateshead for preservation

HK Olympian FS 6392 now L808SNO with **Fargo, Rayne, Essex**

HK Olympian FS 4861 now L762SNO with **Fargo, Rayne, Essex**

Tiger XJI 9420: **Fowlers Coaches**, Holbeach Drove, Lincs

Metrobus A144 AMO Merc M652 FYS: **Halls Coaches**, Kennoway

Olympian G526 VBB: **Herberts Travel**, Shefford, Beds.

Dublin Olympian 92-D-148 now J745 CEV with **Holloway**, Scunthorpe

RML2516 (The former DRM2516) **Marden Signs**, Benfleet, Essex

Olympians C601/62/3 LFT: **McKindless**, Wishaw

M399: **McLean Energy**, Ballachlish, Argyle

Dart N134XND: **Pennine**, Skipton, N.Yorks.

M1004, M1427: **PVS** for scrap.

Dart ANZ 8798: **Renown Coaches**, Bexhill.

T612: **Richard de Clare School**, Halsted, Essex.

Olympians P480/5 MBY: now part open toppers with **Scotguide**, Glasgow.

D10M's G133/8 PGK: **SunFun Holidays**, Earith, Cambs.

Olympian E161 OMD: **Trimmer Travel**, Romford.

■ ENSIGNBUS, Purfleet

Marshall-bodied Darts R619/20/1/2/3/4/5/6/7/38/29/30/1/2 VEG are numbered 719 etc. All are now 37 seaters with 8 tip-up seats, Hanover destinations and in blue and silver livery with the exception of 729 which is due to be painted soon.

Vehicle withdrawn:

448 Dennis Condor; to Bear Buses, Surrey for use on Surrey CC schools services.

Temporary additions, ex Stratford Blue Darts ANZ 8798/9 are transferred to sales stock. Propertyfinder Olympian E155 OMD is also withdrawn, at the end of its contract.

■ STRATFORD BLUE, Stratford-upon-Avon

Stratford Blue Travel passed to Stagecoach in Warwickshire from 1st Feb. All vehicles with the exception of the Stratford RML will return to Ensign as soon as Stagecoach transfer vehicles in.

David Harman

with thanks to Ross Newman of Ensignbus

■ ARRIVA SOUTHEND LIMITED

Arriva Southend have lost the contract for the Dengie Village Link group of services from 1st April 2007. Mercedes 411 Sprinters 1751-6 currently used on these services will be returned to Essex County Council. They are not earmarked for further work at this stage and so are likely to be disposed of.

Vehicle Workings

All journeys on route 6A are operated by one vehicle, (usually Vario 1188), with the exception of the 1849 journey from Leigh Station. The vehicle that operates this runs off service 1 (1725 from Shoeburyness). The short lived 6A timetable introduced with the also short lived controversial C2C rail timetable from the 11th December 2006 had the 1849 journey running earlier. A result of this change was that the 1725 Shoeburyness to Hadleigh service 1 was curtailed to terminate at Thames Drive in order for the bus to get to Leigh Station for an earlier time.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Matthew Arnold.



■ EXCEL, Stansted

Dennis Javelin/Plaxton R128 XWF has returned to Stansted from the Manchester base. It is expected to be disposed of as non-standard in due course. The National Greenway IIL 4821 acquired as part of the Clockwork Travel fleet has gone to Hardwick, Barnsley for scrap.

■ STEPHENSONS of ESSEX, Rochford

Further Leyland Olympian/Alexanders, ex-Stagecoach are F621 MSL, G707 TCD. Former Southend Fleetline MRJ 233W has passed its MOT and while part of the heritage fleet, will see use on some schools work. Three former Lothian Leyland Olympians are being acquired, details next month.

Olympian F630 MSL was involved in an accident at East Tilbury, while working an Asda Contract on 30th January. Also in the wars was former Lothian Leyland Olympian B752 GSC, written off while running empty near Mayland. It is planned to withdraw two of the former London Olympians, but this may change as a result of recent accidents.

The company has won the tender for replacement Village Link services on the Dengie peninsula. As Government grant money is no longer available, this will be a reduced version of the current network provided by *Arriva Southend*. It is reported that four narrow Solos are on order, but final confirmation is awaited. Also on order is a Dart MPD.

Lyn Watson, Ian Ransom



Stephensons services 230 / 240

above: SLF Dart P749 HND in Shenfield; 19 January.

below: The usual bus: Volvo B10M/ Alexander PS M233 TBV in Brentwood High Street on 13 January. Chris Stewart



Vehicles In

From Classic, Annfield Plain

307 (YJ51 JWW) Optare Solo M850 Optare 190645 B29F new 10/2001 to Crystals, Dartford
This vehicle entered service on Wednesday 7th February, its first journey being on the afternoon contract service from Tendring Technical College to Wix.

From Burtons, Haverhill

708 (S108 HGX) Mercedes-Benz 0814D Plaxton new 1/1999 to Crystals, Dartford.

Vehicle Workings

The current regular workings of step-entrance Darts 800/1/2/3/6 are:

- 2 (Severalls Park-Gt Horkesley)
- 728 (East Bergholt school contract)
- 730/1 (Bildeston/Hadleigh-East Bergholt/Mistley)
- 90C (Ipswich-Sudbury) M-Sat eves only.
- 93/C (Colchester-Ipswich).
- 95 (Ipswich-East Bergholt)

Unusual Sightings

- Jan 10th 904 on 109.
- 12th 526 (1 branded) on 83 & 175.
- 16th 515 (2 branded) on 105.
- 30th 907 on 175.

Rail Replacement – A record of vehicles used on ONE railway rail replacement throughout January 2007.

- 6th 102 worked one return trip to Ipswich from Colchester and then a return trip to Harwich from Colchester.
- 7th 101 and 248 worked between Shenfield and Wickford.
100 and 102 worked between Colchester and Ipswich.
- 15th 100/1/2 worked between Colchester and Ipswich.
- 20th 217 and 247 worked between Colchester and Ipswich.
- 21st 100/1/2 and 217/47/8 worked between Marks Tey and Ipswich.
- 28th 101/2 and 246 worked between Stansted and Cheshunt and Hertford East and Cheshunt.

Other News

Trident 100 has been reregistered from T50 BCL back to its original registration V337 DBD.

On 31st January the forecourt at Colchester General Hospital was closed for maintenance. Service 5 and Monkwick bound 8/A's which normally call at the main entrance had to stop on Turner Road.

Fleet list ~ February 2007

100	V337 DBD	Dennis Trident	Alexander	H51/29+17F	1999
102	YN06 TFZ	Scania Omnidiekkka	East Lincs	H47/33F	2006
105	HX51LRJ	Dennis Dart SLF	Caetano Compass	B40F	2001
106	HX51LRK	Dennis Dart SLF	Caetano Compass	B40F	2001
107	HX51LRL	Dennis Dart SLF	Caetano Compass	B40F	2001
108	HX51LRN	Dennis Dart SLF	Caetano Compass	B40F	2001
109	HX51LRO	Dennis Dart SLF	Caetano Compass	B40F	2001
302	M722 CGO	Dennis Dart	Plaxton Pointer	B35F	1995
303	M723 CGO	Dennis Dart	Plaxton Pointer	B35F	1995

307	YJ51 JWW	Optare Solo	Optare	B29F	2007
309	M526 MPM	Dennis Dart	East Lancs EL2000	B35F	1995
310	N540 TPF	Dennis Dart	East Lancs EL2000	B40F	1995
311	N541 TPF	Dennis Dart	East Lancs EL2000	B40F	1995
333	G613 BPH	Volvo Citybus B10M-50	East Lancs	H49/39+20F	1989
334	G614 BPH	Volvo Citybus B10M-50	East Lancs	H49/39+20F	1989
335	G615 BPH	Volvo Citybus B10M-50	East Lancs	H49/39+20F	1989
337	G617 BPH	Volvo Citybus B10M-50	East Lancs	H49/39+20F	1989
340	AY55 DKA	Scania Omnidekkka	East Lancs	H47/33F	2005
346	F246 MTW	Leyland Olympian	Leyland	DPH43/29+17F	1988
347	H47 MJN	Leyland Olympian	Leyland	DPH43/29+17F	1991
348	H48 MJN	Leyland Olympian	Leyland	H47/31+17F	1991
349	H49 MJN	Leyland Olympian	Leyland	H47/31+17F	1991
351	HX51 LSN	Dennis Dart SLF	Caetano Compass	B40F	2001
354	Y40 TGM	Dennis Dart SLF	Caetano Compass	B30D	2001
355	Y50 TGM	Dennis Dart SLF	Caetano Compass	B30D	2001
360	SN54 HWY	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2004
361	SN54 HWZ	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2004
362	SN54 HXA	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2004
363	SN54 HXB	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2004
364	SN54 HXC	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2004
365	SN54 HXD	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2004
366	SN54 HXE	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2004
367	SN54 HXF	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2004
386	W906 UJM	Volvo B10-BLE	Alexander ALX300	B44+34F	2000
387	W907 UJM	Volvo B10-BLE	Alexander ALX300	B44+34F	2000
528	AY54 FPZ	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2004
529	AY54 FRC	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2004
530	LK55 KZZ	Alexander Dennis Dart	Alexander Dennis Pointer	B37+22F	2005
708	S108 HGX	Mercedes Benz 814D	Plaxton Beaver 2	B27F	1998
903	W903 UJM	Volvo B10-BLE	Alexander ALX300	B44+34F	2000
904	W904 UJM	Volvo B10-BLE	Alexander ALX300	B44+34F	2000
905	W905 UJM	Volvo B10-BLE	Alexander ALX300	B44+34F	2000

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy, John Podgorski, Keith Sadler



Service 481 (London-Chelmsford-Ipswich-Felixstowe), worked by **Galloway and Dunn Line**, was subject to severe disruption over the weekend of 27-28/1/07, due to the A12 Colchester Northern By-Pass being closed, to enable the replacement of an overbridge near West Bergholt. The 481 (and all other traffic of the A12) had to be diverted through Colchester, via Cymbeline Way, Colne Bank Avenue, Cowdray Avenue and Ipswich Road.

John Podgorski

Regal Busways

The other two Optare Tempo's are YJ56 WVC/WVY. YJ56 WVC is numbered PO2, while YJ56 WVY is numbered PO3. Your sub-editor is told PO stands for Pullman Optare. YJ56 WVX had been numbered PO1 by mid-January.

Ian Ransom

Essex Small Operator News

10.8.4 Saffron Walden Acquired in November was LDV Convoy R727 HOX. Bedford YNV/Van Hool KAZ 6901 (C413 DML) has been withdrawn.

ADTAX Saffron Walden Acquired from a private owner in late 2006 was BN52 BBK a LDV Convoy. It replaces similar R549 PER, which has been sold.

ADVANCE MINIBUSES Hockley Mercedes Benz 412D/ABC SIL 7048 (N988 DEY) was sold to Basic Travel, Hoddesdon in late 2006.

A&J MINIBUS Rochford Acquired some time ago, but only now reported is Ford Transit X704 ARD, this has since been withdrawn. Also withdrawn are Ford Transits D28 WVV, G90 XFP and H829 DRY.

ANITAS Stansted To correct EBN 512, the new Mercedes minicoach is registered RY56 ERN. Unusual for this fleet was the acquisition of DAF SB400/Van Hool YJ04 HHY from Armchair, London. Mercedes Benz 0814D/Plaxton V3 ERN went to Optare (dealer) in part exchange for RY56 ERN.

AMAYESING Grays A third Ford Transit is EF05 JOA.

APT Rayleigh New in late 2006 was ScaniaK94/Irizar YN56 NSE. This is a 70 seat schoolbus (or Skoolbus!). Acquired in September was M68 DLN a Mercedes Benz 811D/Wadham Stringer from Learning Trust, Leyton. Vehicles sold are BIG 8732 (H179 EJU) a Dennis Javelin/Caetano and L47 ORC a Volvo B10M/Jonckhree. The Volvo is now with Flowsecure, Ipswich.

ASHES EURO TRAVEL Cressing Acquired is VW LT35 Y98 LMO.

ASTROCABZ Maylandsea In by January 2007 was Ford Transit Y649 DHF

BARKER Roydon Acquired in November were LDV Convoys T923 GJH (not in use) and T494 OCL. Plaxton 425 L345 MKU has been reregistered SBZ 3276. DAF SB2300/Caetano D521 WNV has been converted to a mobile home. Mercedes Benz 307D/Reeve Burgess D104 XAN has been sold.

BPH TRAVEL Elmstead Market Acquired from New Horizon, Wivenhoe is W192 RRE a LDV Convoy.

CEDRIC Wivenhoe Bova Futura R50 TPB has been repainted in fleet livery, from Moffat & Williamson colours.

CHELMER VALLEY CARS Chelmsford More vehicles recently reported are Non PSV Ford Transits T615 TVW, W556 SRX, EA52 XFY and Citroen Relay C12 CNX (KG51 WGO) and PSV licensed Ford Transits EO03 XKJ and YH53 KWY

CHELMSFORD TAXIBUS Chelmsford Ford Transit EJ56 YOT is new

CLIFFORD & LESLIE Southend This recently established operator has Ford Transit/Dormobile K120 JCH.

CM3 CARS South Woodham Ferrers Ford Transit W361 AEV is here.

COUNTY Brentwood Acquired from Taj, Wembley is T200 TAJ (AK52 EBC) an Ayatts A2E. T100 TAJ has also been seen in Brentwood and is assumed to be acquired.

CROWN Benfleet Group member John Rugg reports that recently acquired Mercedes Benz 709D/Alexander Belfast, carries 104/106 route livery and normally displays X2 Northampton on it's destination blind!

DONS Gt Dunmow Leyland Olympian/ East Lancs A486 HKB is back in use, Leyland Leopard/Plaxton(rebuild) A62 OJX previously reported as sold, is still here. Recently acquired is Bova YJ05 XWP.

EAGLES TRAVEL Harlow Acquired from Walsall Social Services is N874 WOC a LDV 400.

FARGO Rayne Recent additions are former Hong Kong Leyland Olympian/Alexander L762/808 SNO (F54861/6392), (these are similar to the vehicles operated by Talisman) Volvo B10M/Plaxton GIL 8879 (D101 VRM) from Happy Days, Stafford and Ford Transit EJ03 NCJ, which was with Airport Carz at Stansted. Scania L94/Irizar R448 YDT has gone to Vision Travel, Waterlooville

FARNHAM HIRE SERVICES Farnham Irisbus X636 GJU has been acquired

FORD Althorne Dennis Lance/Optare N407 MPN has been acquired, it was with Brighton & Hove. Former Southend Fleetline MRJ 241W has gone to the North West for non PSV use. Some seats were taken by Stephensons for the ongoing preservation of MRJ 233W.

GAMBLE TRACKLINE Colchester Ford Transit Y504 GYA has arrived from 1car1, to whom sister Y504 GVC has been returned.

GARDNER Boreham Acquired from Ruffle, Castle Hedingham in July was R121 XWF a



above: **Beestons** Scania Omnicity YN56 EZX, seen here on the 87 route in Colchester Bus Station.

below: On the 261 in Brentwood: **Clintona's** new low-floor Mercedes 616Cdi (Sprinter) BX56 VTF.

Kevin Smith



Mercedes Benz 0814D/Plaxton. This operator also keeps a couple of vehicles at Regal's depot in Cooksmill Green. Vehicles are no longer kept on a regular basis at the Widford home address, hence the change of title.

GLEW Gt Tey Acquired from Wicks, Braintree in November was AKZ 3675 (FHJ 841Y) a Volvo B10M/Berkhof.

HARDY MILES Southend BIG 8751 is now on a red MCW Metrobus. This is thought to be a recent addition, as it was previously on C344 BUV, which was in fleet livery.

KEANE Canvey Island Ford Transit M380 AJN is numbered 8.

LODGE High Easter Scania L94/Irizar T200 LCT went to Bob Vale (dealer), Great Kingshill, during the summer. A second MAN 11.190/Optare is M75 WYG.

LOGIC Nazeing A new Ford Transit is DV56 LUF. Acquired in late 2006 were NIW 8795 (A655 UGD) a Volvo B10M/Plaxton from Group Travel, Bodmin, M203 VWF a Mercedes Benz 814D/Plaxton from Hailstone, Basildon (reregistered ELZ 4545 after arrival here) and R515 SCH an Iveco CC95/Indcar from Cotton, Satash.

Vehicles reregistered are ASV 237 (N784

ORY) a Dennis Javelin/Caetano to IIW 372, the former IIW 372 (WXI 5174, D885 UDY) a LAG Panoramic is once again WXI 5174.

MARINA CARS Chelmsford Recently acquired are Ford Transit RA04 YHW and Mercedes Benz Vito T369 UHH.

MASTER TRAVEL South Ockendon Volvo B10M/Caetano FLZ 6855 (F204 PNR) has been acquired from Lewis, Greenwich. DAF SB3000/Ikarus P703 NHJ went the other way.

MELS MINIBUSES Horndon-on-the-Hill

Reports that this operator had ceased were incorrect and Ford Transits P197 PVX and S808 LTF are here.

NAKITAS Basildon New is Ford Transit CN55 NHC.

NEW HORIZON Alresford New is Mercedes Benz Vario/Eurocoach AE56 SPV. A new garage to hold two vehicles has been constructed at the Alresford home address.

OLYMPIAN Harlow Mercedes Benz 0814D/Plaxton S6 APH was acquired in December. Iveco/Marshall minibuses withdrawn are L723 PHK, M731 AOO and M735 AOO.

P&R TRAVEL Harlow Acquired is Iveco Daily Bus FX51 GJY

Dart / Northern Counties L110 HHV, new to London Northern, but latterly with Town & Country, has passed to NIBS and has been smartly repainted in their red/yellow scheme. It appears to have been fitted with the petrol station-style digital number display, taken from one of the withdrawn Mercedes minibuses. Seen here in Basildon. *Kevin Smith*



RUFFLE Castle Heddingham Acquired in November was P446 OLP a LDV 400 minibus. Scania K93/Plaxton J288 NNC has been sold to Lewis, Brandon, Suffolk.

SBC Southend Scania L94/Van Hool R862 SDT now carries SBC fleetnames, it previously carried Manga Hall Travel names.

STANSTED COACH & CARRIAGE Stansted

This business was formerly known as Autohire and recent additions are LDV 200 N798 CMJ, LDV Convoy/Jubilee N956 XAW and LDV Convoy P881 VBE

STANSTED HOTEL SPRINTER It appears that this company has ceased operating and indeed a number of its former minibuses have been advertised for sale,

STANS Gt Totham Acquired is Bedford/Plaxton XIL 8166 (D142 HML) from Emblings, Guyhirn

SWIFT CARS Little Waltham The first full size coach here is SIL 6721 (new as D556 XTG) a LAG Panoramic, acquired from Gardner, Boreham, in August.

TALISMAN Gt Bromley As illustrated last month Volvo B10M/Van Hool LSU 788 (D601 GHY) has been acquired. It was previously with Transport Multi Services, Sheerness.

TOWNCARS Clacton Acquired from Lodge, High Easter is M131 SKY a Toyota/Caetano. Ford Transit EN02 NUA is with the associated Colchester firm

TOWN & COUNTY Grays One further disposal is M104 PVN a Volvo B6 now with LA Coaches of Sale

TURNERS Wickham St Paul Recently acquired are MAN 16.290/Jonckhree VBZ 1450 (K234 WNH) from Company Coaches, Ferrybridge and Citroen Relay T180 JRD from Airlinks.

VICEROY Saffron Walden Recently acquired are HOI 7544 (new as E125 BRG) from Flagfinders, Braintree and BH52 HAY a Mercedes Benz 1836 RL. Touro from Redby, Tyne & Wear.

Dennis Javelin/Neoplan M913/4 OVR were sold to Dawsonrentals (dealer), Milton Keynes in October.

WALKERS Stanford-le-Hope Ford Transit W473 TBH is here

WESTONS TAXIS Clacton Here and not previously reported is W177 HDX a Mercedes Benz 110CDI.

WICKS Braintree Vehicles reregistered are Bedford YNT/Plaxton PIB 2344 (C746 DVG) back to C746 DVG and Leyland Tiger/Van

Hool A147 RMJ to PIB 2344.

YELO Braintree Ford Transit P210 FVO has been sold

GOLDEN BOY Roydon Are providing transport for Pearson Publishing in Harlow, linking their offices in the town, with the Rail and Bus Station.

NON PCVs. (With thanks to *John Podgorski*)

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL.

Recent new welfare buses are: Ford Transit/Euromotive M16L: EU 54 XAA, EO 06 AUF, FGP. Iveco 45C/Euromotive M15L: EU 04 KWP; GN 05 VPW, UYF, XWW; GN 55 HNW, KZL, NTM, OCY, TUV. Vauxhall Movano/Euromotive M11L: EO 04 UWV. Sold are: LDV Convoy B16FL/UVG P358 RGV. Ford Transit M14 N308/12 FWC, S966 XAV. Ford Transit/Euromotive M14 P717 OAV. Ford Transit/UVG B16FL P709 MOO. Iveco 59/Bedwas B16FL N516 JGS. Iveco 45/Euromotive M15L T368/70/2/3 JPW. Iveco 45C/Euromotive M15L AP 02 LMK (written off with fire damage).

The welfare fleet (apart from pool vehicles) carries a white/pink 'Community Link' livery. Two former bus routes are also operated, as community bus schemes; these are: 172 (Easthorpe-Colchester); 325 (Stisted-Braintree). Both are Weds only, and were contracted to Heddingham pre 8/05.

New for the Essex CC Youth Service is Ford Transit M16 EF 05 OLC. ECC Youth Service buses sold are Ford Transit/Red Kite M16 M302 LOD, R781 NPR.

FIVE 4 TWO CARS, Colchester.

Has Mercedes Benz Sprinter SWB/Urban M8 DY 52 AFF

FIVE SEVENS TAXIS, Colchester.

New are Nissan Primastar M8 EU 56 CZA-C. Sold are Ford Tourneo R714 FJN, Ford Transit LWB/Advanced M8 S361 RBJ, and Ford Transit SWB M8 S548 WKY.

MICRALINE CAB SERVICES, Colchester

New are Fiat Ducato/Urban M6L DY 05 RAU; M8L DS 55 VKH, DN 06 EWJ.

P&L MINIBUSES, Colchester.

New is Fiat Ducato/Urban M8L DU 06 FWE. Sold is Ford Transit SWB M8 S267 MOV.

PANTHER CARS, Colchester.

Has Ford Transit SWB M8 AY 05 WRG.

Ian Ransom, PSV Circle, Essex buses y-group, John Podgorski, Dave Arnold, Colin Sigston

Hitchin Depot



One of the Tilling Group's legacies from the 1930s and early 1940s was a series of much enhanced depot and bus station facilities throughout England and Wales, designed in a familiar house style by the Group's Architect & Surveyor H J Starkey. It seems quite likely that some financial assistance was derived from the Government's 'New Works' programme to combat unemployment in the 1930s, but the benefits to passengers and crews were also significant. Although Eastern National had several such buildings, the closure and redevelopment of Halstead, Maldon and Chelmsford together with the elimination of the former Midland area Bedford Bus Station and Aylesbury depot left Hitchin and Huntingdon as the only working examples. Parts of Clacton's Jackson Road Bus Station remain in use for staff facilities, the non-depot parts of Walton survive (the toilet

block and a shop - right) while Dovercourt became the town's library in 1967. Huntingdon is still in use with Cavalier's Huntingdon & District (www.huntsbus.co.uk), having been substantially extended by United Counties after the 1952 takeover of the Midland area. Hitchin (Fishponds Road) defied a number of recent closure proposals, having gone through United Counties' and Luton & District's hands to become part of Arriva the Shires, until 13 January 2007 when operations ceased. It has continued in use for a few more weeks, however, pending completion of replacement maintenance facilities at Stevenage.

Opened in 1939, the land had been bought in February 1937 for £1,850 and two cottages were demolished to make way for it. As built, there were never proper staff facilities and an old Leyland TS (MJ282) was sited at the rear of the depot in 1942 to act as a rest room. The staff appear to have come to an arrangement

to use the upstairs of a local Co-op building in the town's Bancroft, with a formal lease being taken out by EN in 1950. Meantime the depot gained a wooden structure at the rear in 1954, the old bus presumably being removed at this time. It was well into United Counties' days before proper staff facilities were created, when the depot was extended quite substantially in the 1950s and the pits were relocated to the rear. The present stores with staff accommodation above date from that time. One result was that more buses could be kept inside, the forecourt often previously being quite congested.

The 1 July 1949 fleet allocation, published many years ago by EBEG, shows Hitchin (with grey background to its depot plates under EN control – UCOC changed this to brown with black edges) as having 23 vehicles, all but five of them lowbridge double deckers (to cope with the very low railway bridge near Hitchin Station, and

Pictured on the forecourt of Hitchin depot: 3170 (VX 5305), an all-Leyland TD1, new to the Silver Queen Motor Omn. Co., Clacton as their L12 in 1930. The body was rebuilt by Beadle in 1941. It lasted until 1951 and became a poultry house in Stretham, Cambs in 1952.
EBEG Archive, photographer unknown



Hitchin allocation ~ 1 Jul 1949

							<i>wdn</i>
							<i>UC no. by UC</i>
2847	VW8822	Leyland TD1	EL (1944)	L30/26R	1929	orig Ld L48RO	n/a
3002	TM6904	Leyland LT2	EL (1944)	B29R	1930	orig Strachan	n/a
3013	TM6408	Leyland TD1	Beadle (1941)	L24/24R	1930	orig Ld L48R	514 by 5/52
3147	TM9048	Leyland TD1	Beadle (1941)	L24/24R	1931	orig Strachan	n/a
3410	AEV780	Dennis Lancet	Beadle (1942)	B29R	1933	orig ECOC body	n/a
3425	AEV795	Leyland TD2	ECOC	L28/28R	1933		n/a
3550	BTW489	Dennis Lancet	Beadle (1943)	B32R	1935	orig ECOC/rb 1942	n/a
3656	ENO934	Leyland TD4	ECW	L24/24R	1937		562 Apr 53
3670	ENO948	Bristol JO5G	ECW	B31R	1937		189 Apr 53
3707	FEV176	Leyland TD5	ECW (1949)	L27/26R	1937	Brush L28/28R	570 Dec 56
3710	FEV179	Leyland TD5	ECW (1949)	L27/26R	1937	Brush L28/28R	573 Jan 57
3720	FNO793	Bristol JO5G	ECW	B31R	1937		223 Nov 53
3751	GNO695	Bristol K5G	ECW	L26/24R	1938	later L24/24R	
						later EN 1271	n/a
3752	GNO696	Bristol K5G	ECW	L26/24R	1938	later L24/24R	630 Oct 57
3820	JEV411	Bristol K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940		672 Apr 53
3822	JEV413	Bristol K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940		674 Oct 56
3824	JEV415	Bristol K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940		676 Jan 53
3825	JEV416	Bristol K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940	rebodied 1953	677 Sep 61
3829	JEV420	Bristol K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940	rebodied 1952	681 Nov 61
3830	JEV421	Bristol K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940		682 Jul 55
						to ENOC	
3941	MPU2	Bristol K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1947		724 Oct 63
3951	MPU12	Bristol K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1948	rebodied 1960	728 Dec 64
3999	NNO99	Bristol K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1948		758 Jan 66





above: JEV413 - one of the well-known batch of 1940 K5Gs with ECW L55R bodywork, 3822 was later UCOC 674, and was a Hitchin bus in 1949 and 1952. Seen in Hitchin's Bancroft in April 1952, followed by 1936 TD4/Brush 3652 (which became UC 561, not a Hitchin bus, withdrawn 1953). *Alan B. Cross*

opposite: BTW495 - a 1935 Leyland TD3/ECOC which was only operated by UCOC for the month of May 1952, but had gained fleetnumber plates (543) in this photo at Letchworth Station. Not a Hitchin vehicle at the time of takeover.

Photographer unknown

Hitchin allocation ~ 1 May 1952

						EN no.	wdn	
223	FNO793	Bristol	JO5G	ECW	B31R	1937	3720	Nov 53
304	KNO603	Bristol	L5G	ECW	B35R	1946	3900	
341	ONO990	Bristol	L5G	ECW	B35R	1950	4076	Oct 64
350	ONO998	Bristol	LL5G	ECW	B39R	1950	4084	Jul 65
562	ENO934	Leyland	TD4	ECW	L24/24R	1937	3656	Apr 53
564	ENO939	Leyland	TD4	ECW	L27/28R	1937	3661	Feb 56
570	FEV176	Leyland	TD5	ECW	L27/28R	1937	3707	Dec 56
573	FEV179	Leyland	TD5	ECW	L27/28R	1937	3710	Jan 57
575	FEV181	Leyland	TD5	ECW	L27/28R	1937	3712	Dec 56
625	GNO689	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L24/24R	1938	3745	Jul 55
629	GNO693	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L24/24R	1938	3749	Jul 55
672	JEV411	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940	3821	Oct 56
674	JEV413	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940	3822	Oct 56
676	JEV415	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940	3824	Jun 60
677	JEV416	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940	3825	Sep 61
682	JEV421	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1940	3830	Jul 55
716	KNO598	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1946	3895	Apr 63
724	MPU2	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1947	3940	Oct 63
758	NNO99	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1948	3999	Jan 66
788	ONO55	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1949	4034	Mar 66
827	RPU525	Bristol	KS5G	ECW	L27/28R	1950	4115	Oct 67

to ENOC

to ENOC

to U Welsh

to Luton CT

to ENOC



above: **United Counties 724** (MPU 2) Bristol K5G/ECW of 1947. This was new to ENOC as 3941. A Hitchin bus in 1949/52, but not in 1961, it was withdrawn 1963. Photo taken in Hitchin's Bancroft.

Photographer unknown

below: **United Counties 771** (NNO 103). New to ENOC as 4003, a 1948 K5G seen here in Hitchin Bancroft. A Hitchin bus in 1961 but not in 1952, withdrawn 1965.

Photographer unknown



Hitchin allocation ~ 31 Dec 1961

EN no. wdn

452	HN730	Bristol	LS5G	ECW	DP41F	1953 orig DP39D		
454	HBD634	Bristol	LS5G	ECW	DP41F	1953 orig DP39D		
458	HBD638	Bristol	LS5G	ECW	DP41F	1953 orig DP39D		
460	HBD640	Bristol	LS5G	ECW	DP41F	1953 orig DP39D		
688	JEV427	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R8	1940 rebodied 1953	3836	Jan 62
727	MPU11	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R8	1948 rebodied 1959/60	3950	Nov 64
757	NN098	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1948	3998	Sep 65
771	NN0103	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1948	4003	Nov 65
788	ONO55	Bristol	K5G	ECW	L27/28R	1949	4034	Mar 66
829	RPU527	Bristol	KS5G	ECW	L27/28R	1950	4117	Jan 68
503	NBD902	Bristol	LD6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1956		
510	NBD909	Bristol	LD6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1956		
513	NBD912	Bristol	LD6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1956		
514	NDB913	Bristol	LD6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1956		
518	NBD917	Bristol	LD6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1956		
553	SBD553	Bristol	LD6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1959		

Hitchin allocation ~ 31 Dec 1969

145	WBD145	Bristol	MW6G	ECW	DP41F	1961		
282	TBD282G	Bristol	RELH6G	ECW	DP49F	1969		
309	NBD309F	Bristol	RELL6G	ECW	B53F	1968		
310	NBD310F	Bristol	RELL6G	ECW	B53F	1968		
322	RBD322G	Bristol	RELL6G	ECW	B53F	1968		
474	JBD992	Bristol	LS6B	ECW	B45F	1954	orig B43D	
498	MAX108	Bristol	LS6G	ECW	B45F	1954	ex Red & White	
503	NBD902	Bristol	LD6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1956		
510	NBD909	Bristol	LD6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1956		
513	NBD912	Bristol	LD6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1956		
638	638BRP	Bristol	FLF6B	ECW	H38/32F	1963		
639	639BRP	Bristol	FLF6B	ECW	H38/32F	1963		
640	640BRP	Bristol	FLF6B	ECW	H38/32F	1963		
671	CNV671B	Bristol	FS6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1964		
672	CNV672B	Bristol	FS6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1964		
704	GRP704D	Bristol	FS6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1966		
705	GRP705D	Bristol	FS6B	ECW	H33/27RD	1966		
894	CNH714	Bristol	KSW6B	ECW	L27/28R	1951		
895	CNH715	Bristol	KSW6B	ECW	L27/28R	1951		
896	CNH716	Bristol	KSW6B	ECW	L27/28R	1951		

several low bridges in Luton and elsewhere). The saloons were an elderly rebodied Leyland Lion LT2, two rebodied Dennis Lancets and two Bristol JO5Gs. The 'deckers' were seven Leyland TDs and 11 Bristol K5Gs, mainly pre-War examples. The Leyland TDs, particularly the TD5s, were always popular and five were still allocated when UCOC took over on 1 May 1952. By then, the saloons were all Bristols (one JO5G, two L5Gs and one LL5G) while a KS5G had joined the Ks.

From the December 1961 list, only 16 buses (all Bristol/ECW) were allocated since two workings on the ex ENOC route 52 to Luton had been transferred to that depot (always the 'parent' of Hitchin), although numbers

increased again through to the 1970s. Five former Eastern National K5Gs remained (two rebodied since takeover) as did one ex EN KS5G, sharing the depot with six Lodekka LD6Bs and four LS5G saloons. LDs were first allocated around 1956/7 for the lucrative 52 group Luton-Hitchin-Letchworth-Baldock-Stotfold routes. Biggleswade also gained new vehicles at this time for their Hitchin services as Birch Bros remained a potent competitor on their Rushden-Bedford-Hitchin-Welwyn-London corridor. For many years, Hitchin regularly provided a dual purpose LS5G or LS6B for the Stevenage-Clacton service as well as an extensive summer excursion programme.



Chris Stewart
took this series
of photographs
of Hitchin on
23 January 2007,
ten days after
operational
closure.



The takeover of a number of Birch Bros services in 1968 and reallocation of work had prompted an increase in numbers again by December 1969, when 20 vehicles were allocated, but although there were still a few ex EN vehicles in the UCOC fleet none of them remained at Hitchin (the last KSs having been withdrawn by 1968). The double deckers were three KSW6Bs, three LD6Bs, four rear entrance FS6Bs and three FLF6Bs - notice the exclusive use of 6 cylinder AVW and BVW engines, in contrast to the Gardner 5LWs more commonly associated with the Eastern National era. The saloons were two LS, an MW6G dual purpose and REs - Hitchin's staff proved much more receptive to one-man operation than some of the larger depots, and by December 1976 the only double deck was FLF 639.

Eastern National services in Hitchin can be traced back to Road Motors Ltd's pioneer route from Luton to Letchworth via Hitchin, started in May 1912 using a Milnes Daimler which had previously been operated in Kent. National acquired Road Motors in 1925, adding what became the 12 and later the 52 to their Bedford area network which included the 8A between Biggleswade and Hitchin, and the 9 group between Bedford, Hitchin and Letchworth (first started in 1919). The 29 between Hitchin and Stotfold was introduced in 1924 and further routes were acquired with 'Biggleswade Blue' in 1929. For a short while, there was a joint EN/Eastern Counties Hitchin-Cambridge service. On the formation

of ENOC in 1930, Hitchin had outstations at Deamer's and Prime's garages in Queen Street. London Transport leased a garage in the town from 1933, mainly for Green Line services.

The acquisition by United Counties of Birch Bros' remaining route (203/203M Rushden-Hitchin-Welwyn-London) in 1969 followed the closure of Birch's Henlow Camp depot the year before. Opened in 1938, this had previously operated a number of services to or via Hitchin, as well as excursions from the town to destinations such as Great Yarmouth, Stratford upon Avon, Margate and Southend. In another Essex connection, four Guy Arab double deckers (GYL981-4) were sold to Moore's of Kelvedon in 1951 and were later rebodied by Strachans, seeing service with Eastern National until 1965/66.

By courtesy of Mr Brian Barraclough (Chief Engineer) and Mr Michael Mundy (Engineering Manager) of Arriva the Shires, I was very grateful for the opportunity of photographing the depot on 23rd January, before final closure.

Chris Stewart

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Arriva the Shires management at Luton and Hitchin

'The Years Between'

Roger Warwick's series of United Counties' histories

Alan Parfitt



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