

# Essex Bus Magazine

Current news and historical features

Issue 689      September 2021



**Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group**

[www.essexbus.org.uk](http://www.essexbus.org.uk)



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## Route 68 Running Days





**Above:** Ex City Coach Company, Westcliff Motor Services & Eastern National Leyland PD1/1 / Alexander LEV 917, preserved as Eastern National 2102, inside Ensignbus's workshop at Purfleet on 18 June 2021 having work undertaken to prepare it for an amazing return to revenue earning service after 56 years! It was new in 1946, entering service the next year, and was converted to open top in 1958. Alongside are two 'pre-war' RTs which are long term restoration projects, RT54 nearer the camera and RT44.

**Chris Stewart**

**Front Cover:** A rather bright bus on a gloomy day in the front cover photo this month! First Essex 33425 received this overall wrap for 'Pride in Essex' at Mardens. More details on page 7. It is seen on route 25 at Eastwood Rise on 28 August 2021. **John G Lidstone**

## Route 68 Running Days

Ensignbus ran two vintage open-top mini-running days on route 68 this summer, on 15 & 29 August. More details and photos on pages 27-28.

**Top Left:** London Bus Company's AEC Regal / Beadle HKL 836 on 29 August on Marine Parade, Leigh, passing a fine pair of art-deco houses on the 1030 departure, having picked up a good load at Leigh station.

**Bottom Left:** And here is 2102 on its first day in revenue earning service since 1965 on route 68 on Sunday 15 August, on Marine Parade, Southend (as opposed to Leigh), just west of the Kursaal and heading back to Southend Pier. Both **Richard Delahoy**





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Owen stocks a wide range of colour photos, please send an SAE for details.

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## Subscriptions

A calendar year subscription is £25. New members may join from any month, but subscriptions will always run to December from whichever month the member chooses. Those joining from February to December inclusive will pay a pro-rata subscription calculated at £2.20 per month. For example, a member joining in March would pay 10 x £2.20, i.e., £22. Please contact Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road, Southend-on-Sea SS1 3TT  
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## Membership Records & Data Protection

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

## Reports, Articles & Photographs

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

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## Target Dates for EBM 690

|                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Reports to Sub-Editors      | <b>2 October</b>               |
| Sub-Editor drafts to Editor | <b>8 October</b>               |
| Dispatch by Printers        | on or before <b>18 October</b> |

The last two dates are fixed, but late news can be sent up to 9th and will be included if possible, if not it will be held over to the next month.

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

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# Group Notices

## Chelmsford Meetings

We would like to restart our regular meetings in central Chelmsford but cannot do so as we no longer have an organiser. There was no response at all to the appeal for help in the magazine last October. The venue is still available and speakers are available but we need someone to take responsibility for arranging dates and speakers, booking the venue, bringing along the projection equipment, opening up, etc. Historically, meetings have been held on a Thursday evening once a month, but alternative days/times might be possible, subject to availability of the meeting room. Unless we can find a member willing to take this on, meetings cannot resume!

If you think you could help, please contact the chair, Ian Ransom, by e-mail to [ianransom2008@googlemail.com](mailto:ianransom2008@googlemail.com).

## The Running Card by Owen Woodliffe

The following events have been advertised.

Sunday 19 September: 100 Years of United Counties O.C. Market Place, Northampton. Northampton Transport Heritage.

Saturday / Sunday 25/26 September: Trolleybus Weekend, East Anglia Transport Museum.

Saturday 25 September: Showbus, Hertfordshire Show Ground, Redborne.

Saturday 2 October: Theydon Bois Transport Bazaar. Village Hall. 1100-1530.

Sunday 3 October: Chesham & Amersham Running Day. Chesham Broadway. [www.amershammotorbussociety.co.uk](http://www.amershammotorbussociety.co.uk).

Sunday 10 October: South East Bus Festival, Kent Showground Detling. [www.southeastbusfestival.wixsite.com/sebf](http://www.southeastbusfestival.wixsite.com/sebf).

Sunday 17 October: Cambridgeshire Road Run, Wisbech-Cambridge-March. Eastern Counties Bus Preservation Group.

Sunday 24 October: Transportfest, London Bus Museum Brooklands.

Saturday 30 October: Plumstead Garage 40th Anniversary Open Day.

Friday / Saturday 5/6 November: Aldenham Spectacular. Alum Hall Elstree.

Saturday 4 December: Ensignbus Heritage Running Day.

Events are published in good faith. However, the Group cannot be responsible for any changes due to future circumstances. Please check before travelling.

## Omnibus Society seeks Covid Stories

The Omnibus Society is inviting bus industry operators, employees and passengers to share their experiences during the pandemic. The industry organisation is looking for personal stories; funny, moving, inspirational and everything in between, for a special project titled "The Covid Journey". Everyday stories of how lives changed will be curated, alongside the more inspiring ones, such as witnessing local residents clapping on a Thursday as their local bus passed along their street - recognising the passenger transport sector as essential workers.

The challenges for bus and coach operators to survive and operate during the last year and a half have been significant, not just for companies, but also for the staff involved. Recognising this, the Omnibus Society is keen to capture all these experiences to create a record for future generations.

At the launch of "The Covid Journey" Project, Omnibus Society President Martijn Gilbert said: "The pandemic has had a massive impact on the world of passenger transport and the people who work within it. Transport's key workers, and the companies they represent, have had to adapt to many challenges. This has driven change in many areas, including some positives, and there is no doubt a whole lot more to come, but now seems like a good time for us all to reflect on our work and to document and celebrate this."

The Omnibus Society's "The Covid Journey" Project invites everyone to record their experiences during this period from the road passenger transport perspective. Operators and individual alike are encouraged to share their experiences, be that from the viewpoint of a driver, engineer, scheduler, depot allocator or even passenger. It is hoped to capture as many insights as possible to create a unique Road Passenger Industry Covid Jigsaw.

For full details on how to contribute please visit the Omnibus Society website [www.omnibus-society.org](http://www.omnibus-society.org). The Society is offering a first prize of £500 for the best submission and a second prize of £250. All the submissions will be stored as a resource at the Bus Archive and will be available for those interested in looking back at this period of social history in the future. It is also hoped that a selection will be published. The deadline for submissions is 31 October.

About the Omnibus Society:

"Founded back in 1929, the Omnibus Society covers all aspects of the bus industry. Instead of focusing on one specialised area, we cover a wide range of subjects and give our members access to the realities of the bus industry. Our aim is to enable everybody with an interest in buses to find out not just what is happening but why it is happening."

# EBM 688: Corrections & Additional Information

## Bus Back Better

National Bus Strategy - we can now confirm that Thurrock Council have also decided to pursue the Enhanced Partnership route, meaning that none of the local authorities in our area are planning to move to the 'nuclear option' of franchising bus services. The next stage is for each of the authorities to submit their first 'Bus Service Improvement Plans' and then to await a government response to see what funding will be allocated.

## FLF Gearboxes and '688 for EBM 688'

**Alan 'Tebzy' Tebbit** has written in, plus he took the below photo.

"With regards to the ongoing saga of four or five speed boxes on the early FLFs, I have discussed this with Chris Critchett, who served his apprenticeship at Prittlewell Works, and went on to be foreman. He can't recall ever converting gearboxes on those buses, and is sure that he never dealt with a four box. I think it safe to assume that only 2700/1 were thus fitted. I did once drive the 'other' 70 seater, Bristol LD LX6G / ECW 2510 (236 LNO), on a staff outing to Brighton, for the HCVC Rally, and seem to remember that it had a four speed box, but I could be wrong.

"I was pleased to see Leyland Olympian 4500 (B688 BPU) as the subject of '688 for EBN688'. This was sold to Metrobus, where it acquired a standard bus front for some reason. I never drove it for Eastern National, but it returned to Essex, when it was purchased by Brentwood Coaches, being re-registered LIL 7230, number 12, and was my allocated vehicle when I worked at their Little Waltham yard. Although basically a local school bus, I did some distance runs with her, including Oxford, Lincoln, Warwick, Brighton, Hastings and Blackpool. On two occasions I did a private hire from a Romford school to Whipsnade Zoo. The first year it was on a VR, the second on the Olympian. The acceleration and speed differential between the VR and the coach Olympian, meant that the scholars had an extra 75 minutes at the Zoo on the second occasion!" Right, after re-registration, at the Southend Bus Rally.



## Summer Special: Open Toppers. Part 1: Historical - KSWs

A correction to page 28 of last month's issue, the photo of WNO 484 was taken at Brunswick (its home garage), Swansea, not Ravenhill. The South Wales Transport Russell Street offices are behind.

## First Essex

A clarification re the caption to the photo of 69908 in EBM 688. The removal of part of its super rear advert for route 100 that covered the window actually happened by November 2019, as reported at the time in EBN 668.

## Ensignbus

To clarify the notes last month on the acquisition of StreetDeck EBS1972, SK18 TKY. This had been RATP's solitary StreetDeck and was last operated by them on 23 November 2020, it then returned to Wrightbus in December. Therefore, strictly speaking, when acquired by Ensignbus in April, it was from Wrightbus, not RATP. (With thanks to LOTS.)

## Service Revisions

by Paul Harvey

### 27 June 2021

Z5 Dartford Station to Tilbury Amazon (D) **Ensignbus** new unregistered contract service for Amazon staff recruits for training. Additional journeys introduced from 1 August. Service withdrawn from 28 August.

### 4 July

Z3 Woolwich Arsenal Station to Dartford Station (Sun) **Ensignbus** new unregistered contract service one journey at 0610 from Woolwich only. Service withdrawn from 22 August.

## 16 August

21 Brentwood to Ongar (M-S) **NIBS** service retimed Mon to Fri between 0800 & 1530 to improve reliability.

31 Brentwood to Bishop Hall Estate (M-S) **NIBS** Mon to Fri peak hour timetable revised to improve reliability.

## 23 August

AZ1 Woolwich Arsenal Station to Amazon Dartford (D) **First Essex** new unregistered contract service for Amazon employees only, four journeys each way from Woolwich at 0630, 0800, 1800 & 1900 and from the Amazon site at 0615, 0715, 1845 & 2015 operating via Plumstead, Abbey Wood, Belvedere, Erith & Slade Green.

AZ2 Thamesmead Town Centre to Amazon Dartford (D) **First Essex** new unregistered contract service for Amazon employees only, four journeys each way from Thamesmead at 0645, 0815, 1815 & 1915 and from the Amazon site at 0615, 0715, 1845 & 2015 operating via Plumstead & Erith.

The above services were both registered with TfL London Service Permits by First Essex within Greater London. These services are both sub-contracted to other operators arranged by First Travel Solutions. Operators being used are Stagecoach London, Go Ahead London and Horseferry Coaches.

## 27 August

492 London Victoria Coach Station to Norwich via Stansted Airport (M, F, S, Su) **National Express** new coach service, one journey each direction.

## 29 August

1 Shoeburyness Renown to Rayleigh Station (D) **Arriva Kent Thameside** revised timetable to improve reliability.

1 Shrub End to Greenstead Estate (M-S) **Arriva Kent Thameside** minor timetable change, to alter timing point at Greenstead loop to start at the library not Hamlet Drive.

8 Monkwick to Highwoods (D) **Arriva Kent Thameside** minor timetable changes to section between Colchester Town Centre & Monkwick.

92 Ipswich to Manningtree (M-S) **Ipswich Buses** the Suffolk One extension on schooldays withdrawn resulting in the 1630 departure from Ipswich retimed to 1635 and the 1720 departure from Manningtree retimed to 1730.

93/A/C Ipswich to Colchester (M-S) **Ipswich Buses** revised timetable and rerouted in Colchester via Highwoods Approach, Mill End, Turner Road & North Station Road. Further information on page 15.

## 1 September

### First Essex

8/A Pitsea to Laindon (D) revised Mon to Fri timetable, each service operating every 20 mins, providing combined timetable of every 10 mins on common section of routes.

20 Southend to Hullbridge (D) minor changes to the Mon to Fri timetable to improve reliability.

21/B Southend to Canvey Newlands (D) minor changes to the Mon to Fri peak hours timetable to improve reliability.

22 Canvey Leigh Beck to Basildon (D) minor changes to the Mon to Fri timetable to improve reliability.

25 Basildon to Southend (D) minor changes to the Mon to Fri timetable to improve reliability. The 0656 Basildon to Southend and the 1522 Southend to Basildon withdrawn on schooldays, replaced by service 825 (see below).

27/A Southend to Canvey Leigh Beck (D) minor changes to the Mon to Fri timetable to improve reliability.

28 Southend to Basildon (D) minor changes to the Mon to Fri timetable to improve reliability.

31/B/C/D/X Chelmsford to Burnham on Crouch (D) minor changes to the Mon to Fri timetable.

37 Warley to Bishop Hall Estate (D) the Mon to Fri timetable revised to improve reliability with daytime service continuing to operate every 15 mins. Further information on page 7.

42/A/B Galleywood to Broomfield Hospital / Stansted Airport / Braintree (D) minor changes to the Mon to Fri timetable at peak times.

45/A Writtle to Moulsham Lodge (D) minor changes to the Mon to Fri timetable.

54/56 Broomfield Hospital / North Melbourne to Beaulieu Park (D) minor changes to the Mon to Fri timetable.

57 Galleywood to Beaulieu Park (D) minor changes to Mon to Fri timetable.

61 Highwoods to Wivenhoe (D) revised Mon to Sat timetable to improve reliability.

65 Highwoods to Stanway (D) revised Mon to Sat timetable to improve reliability.

67/B/68 Colchester to West Mersea (D) revised Mon to Fri timetable with school day service 67C open to general public.

71/72 Chelmsford to Colchester via Witham (D) minor changes to Mon to Fri timetable.

100 Chelmsford to Lakeside (D) service split into two sections operating Lakeside to Basildon & Basildon to Chelmsford. Service will operate every 20 mins Mon to Sat with extra journeys at peak times. On Sundays will operate every 30 mins. Extra earlier journeys will be introduced in the mornings. Improved frequencies introduced mid evenings every 30 mins. Further information on page 7.

102/103/104 Colchester to Harwich (D) revised Mon to Sat timetable operating every hour during the day with most journeys operating as service 104. Further information on page 9.

350/351 Chelmsford to Brentwood (D) service 350 journey withdrawn and replaced by a 351 journey. Reduced timetable introduced operating every hour during the daytime on Mon to Sat. Further information on page 7.

561 Basildon to Chelmsford St John Payne School (Sch) revised school day timetable with two journeys operating in each direction.

820 Rayleigh to Hullbridge (Sch) withdrawn.

825 Westcliff High Schools to Basildon (Sch) extended to & from Southend replacing withdrawn journeys on service 25 (as reported above).

84/784 Sudbury to Colchester (M-S) **Go Ahead Chambers** the 1550 journey from Colchester Norman Way School to depart at 1545.

602 Witham to Great Baddow High School (Sch) **Stephensons** new timetable introduced.

605/A Boreham Village to Great Baddow High School (Sch) **Stephensons** new timetable introduced with service 605 for years 7 & 8 while the 605A is for years 9 to 12 & 6th Form.

753/754 Colchester to Bury St Edmunds via Sudbury (M-S) **Go Ahead Chambers** minor timetable changes between Sudbury & Bury St Edmunds.

All **Arriva** and **First Essex** school special services with 'S' in front of the service number, except FE service S33, did not return at the start of the Autumn Term, they were either withdrawn completely or incorporated into their main routes. School services are once again open to the general public for the first time since before the first lockdown in March 2020 (although, in practice, they are seldom used by the general public).

## 5 September

### Go Ahead Hedingham

4 Clacton to Jaywick Tower Camp (D) revised to operate every 15/20 mins during the daytime. Serving Morrison's from Jaywick between 0915 & 1250 and returning between 0935 & 1310. Additional Sunday journey introduced at 0903.

5/A Clacton to Bockings Elm (D) minor timing changes with the 1543 from Clacton (service 5) operating 10 mins earlier as service 5A.

6/A/B Clacton to Point Clear (D) the following journeys will be revised, 0935 Point Clear to Clacton will operate via St Osyth Beach, 1223 from Clacton will operate to St Osyth Beach and return at 1250, section to Point Clear withdrawn. The 1823 from Clacton and 1850 from Point Clear withdrawn. No change to 6A or 6B.

7 Clacton to Great Clacton / St Osyth Beach (M-S) will only operate Mon to Fri 0725 Bockings Elm to Clacton and 1650 Clacton to St Osyth Beach Mon to Sat, both journeys via Constable Avenue.

74 Clacton to Colchester (D) the 1614 journey from Colchester to Clacton will operate at 1619.

X76 Colchester to Clacton / Jaywick Sands (M-S) the 0806 journey from Jaywick via Clacton to Colchester will operate Mon to Sat all year round. The 1502 journey from Clacton will operate 15 mins later on schooldays. Most journeys during the daytime will no longer serve Jaywick.

97/98/99 Clacton to Walton (D) the 0642 service 98 from Walton has minor adjustments to running times. Extra journeys will operate to Frinton & Walton as service 97B from Stephenson Road and 99A via Little Clacton & Thorpe le Soken from Stephenson Road.

134 Clacton to Holland on Sea (M-S) winter timetable introduced.

136/137 Clacton to Burrsville Park Circular (D) journeys between 1400 and 1600 and the 1734 from Clacton will only operate to Stephenson Road. The 0732 Stephenson Road to Clacton, 0757 Clacton to Stephenson Road and 0858 Brook Retail Park to Clacton withdrawn.

## 7 September

35 Debden Broadway to Chelmsford (Tue) **First Essex** new service operating on Tuesdays only during school term one journey in each direction.

## 12 September

9 Harlow to Potter Street (D) **Arriva Kent Thameside** increase frequency to every 20 mins Mon to Sat.

10 Harlow to Church Langley / Hertford (D) **Arriva Kent Thameside** increase frequency to every 20 mins on Sats. Journeys to & from Hertford withdrawn.

508/509/510 Stansted Airport to Harlow (D) **Arriva Kent Thameside** minor timetable changes to peak journeys to improve reliability.

## 13 September

COG1 Coggeshall to Kelvedon Rail Station (M-F) **Coggeshall Community Transport** resumption of service exactly as prior to the pandemic following its suspension except the Tuesday & Thursday midday service remains suspended.

As from **1 August 2021** Registered Local Bus Services operated entirely in Hertfordshire are now administered by Hertfordshire County Council instead of the Office of the Traffic Commissioner in Leeds. This is part of the established 'Intalink' Partnership which satisfied the requirements of the National Bus Strategy 'Bus Back Better' through the Enhanced Partnership approach.

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



### 'Pride in Essex' Livery

33425 went to Mardens on 9 August and then was at the 'Essex Pride' event in Central Park, Chelmsford on 21st, as seen right, **Mitch Jones** with thanks to Gareth Jones. It has received a multi-coloured rainbow wrap for 'Pride in Essex', on a yellow at front and pink at rear base. It has the new 'Essex Bus' fleet name, but with 'Bus' in white, not the usual green, and the seaxes in the first 'E' of 'Essex' in rainbow colours, not the usual green. It re-entered passenger service on 24th, on route 5 all day. On 4 September it was on a shuttle service between Basildon Bus station and Festival Park for the 'Pride in Basildon' event. Below Right: Rear view of 33425 leaving Mardens on its journey back to Basildon depot on 20 August 2021. **John G Lidstone**

### Routes 100 / 351 & 37

As reported in 'Service Revisions' above, from 1 September 2021, route 100 is split into two sections, Chelmsford Bus Station - Basildon Bus Station and Basildon Bus Station - Lakeside Bus Station, to improve punctuality and reliability. This seems a sensible move, since volume of traffic and problems on the M25 and on the Queen Elizabeth Bridge between Essex and Kent often lead to gridlock around Lakeside and Grays, especially on Friday afternoons / evenings and played havoc with the timetable. At least the Chelmsford - Basildon section will no longer be affected by these. The downside is that through passengers will now have to change buses at Basildon. The two sections of route have been given adjacent stands at Basildon Bus Station, buses to and from Chelmsford use Stand C and those to and from Lakeside use Stand D. Allowance has been built into the timetable for connecting buses, for example, the 1110 Mondays to Saturdays from Chelmsford is due to arrive at Basildon at 1206, the next departure from Basildon to Lakeside is at 1215. The Monday to Friday service is reduced from a basic every 15 minutes to basic 20 minutes, with Saturdays and Sundays unchanged at 20 and 30 minutes respectively.

Also from 1 September, Route 351 was reduced from half-hourly to hourly during parts of the day, and on Mondays to Fridays was de-linked from route 37, therefore longer vehicles can again be used on it (longer vehicles already operated on certain journeys which did not then work onto the 37). The double-decker route 350 variation, which had been introduced for social distancing, was replaced by 351 journeys from the same date. The same vehicles now work on the 37 during the day M-F, with a shuttle car used for driver changes.



## Allocation Changes

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

### Period 5 2021/22 (25 July - 21 August)

32640 CF-CF (oos), 37027 CR (oos)-CR, 37134 CR (oos)-CR, 63332 CR-CR (oos), 66826 CF-CF (oos), 69912 BN-BN (oos)

Fire victim 63332 (as reported last month) is sheeted over at the back of the yard awaiting a decision on its future.

66826 has been withdrawn and is being stripped for spares after suffering nearside front accident damage.

Also, 31785 (CR), 32260 (BN), 32482 (CF), 33086 (BN), 66872 (CF) and 67902 (BN) were out of use for all or nearly all of August, but returned to service in early September (66872 was used on 2-6 August and 67902 was used on 2 & 3 August).

### Early Period 6 Transfers

Some transfers took place over the Bank Holiday weekend, 28-30 August, in advance of schools returning and timetable changes from 1 September. The remaining mid-length Enviro 200s at Hadleigh all went to Chelmsford (resulting in some Darts at CF being withdrawn from service), 47650 went from Basildon to Hadleigh (and was on 20 & 27 on 28th) and 66760 & 66813 moved from Basildon to Chelmsford. However, the net loss of four vehicles at Hadleigh caused problems and one of the withdrawn Darts, 42895, was reinstated after only six days and transferred there, it was on route 26 on 2 September. Another, 42956, followed on 4 September. Full details of these transfers next month.

## School Services

The below reports are for the first few days of the Autumn Term only, 1-3 September 2021. Not all services were yet fully running.

### Colchester

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CR. All dates September 2021 and all both mornings and afternoons except where stated)

**17, two-vehicle route:** Nothing 1 September. 30567 (2nd am), 31785 (2nd, 3rd am), 37139 (3rd am).

**67C:** Nothing reported on 1-3 September.

### Chelmsford

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CF. All dates September 2021 and all both mornings and afternoons except where stated.)

**525:** 36838 (2nd am, 3rd), 36841 (1st am).

**570:** 32551 (1st am), 32631 (2nd am), 32641 (3rd).

**620:** 32482 (3rd), 32642 (2nd).

**S33:** 36841 (2nd am).

### Basildon

(All vehicles listed below allocated to BN. All dates September 2021 and all both mornings and afternoons except where stated.)

**561, reduced from three-vehicle route to two-vehicle:** 32526 (1st, 2nd, 3rd am), 32532 (3rd), 32539 (1st).

**625:** 33424 (1st-3rd).

**725:** 47656 (1st-3rd).

**825:** 32540 (3rd pm), 33504 (1st am, 2nd am), 33507 (3rd pm), 33551 (1st pm), 33562 (2nd pm).

### Hadleigh

(All vehicles listed below allocated to HH. All dates September 2021 and all both mornings and afternoons except where stated.)

**820:** this service has been withdrawn.

**822:** 33136 (3rd pm), 33384 (2nd pm), 33405 (2nd am), 36216 (1st am, 3rd am), 47650 (1st pm).

**827:** 33401 (2nd am), 37985 (1st), 37986 (3rd), 63163 (2nd pm).

## Other Area News & Workings

On 24 and 31 July 2021, there was a music festival called 'Fantasia' in Maldon. Various local operators were involved in a park & ride between Chelmsford, Burnham and Heybridge. These were Ensignbus, First Essex, Fords, Havering Transport and Ipswich Buses.

### Colchester

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CR. All dates August 2021 except where stated.)

News of the Harwich routes (4 August-1 September)

This reporting period covers the summer school holidays, so a reduced number of double-deckers, and more single-deckers were in use, including all ten of Colchester's Volvo / Wrightbus B7RLEs, all twelve of Colchester's ADL Enviro 300s and nine StreetLites. Double-deckers were one Volvo B7TL / Alexander ALX400 (32068), two Volvo B7TL / Transbus ALX400s (32478, 32485), 16 Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Geminis and two Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Geminis (37136, 37140).

The Sunday 102 allocation was double-deck operated, apart from 15 August when 66810, 68828, 67756 were used. On Bank Holiday Monday 30 August 32478, 37010 and 37016 were on 102.

Tuesday 31st was the last day of the existing timetables, with 32068 on 0605 Harwich - Colchester 104, 66798 on 0714 Harwich - Colchester 103, 32485 on 0920 Mistley - Colchester 103, plus 37054, 63340, 67735 on 103/104 all day.

The 103/4 timetable was revised from Wednesday 1 September, with nearly all journeys now the 104 variant, with only two 103 journeys each way remaining (and one of those is a short working on M-F). The workings that day were as follows, with 103s highlighted in bold. 67750 worked 0605 Harwich - Colchester 104, 0720 Colchester - Harwich 104, 0900 Harwich - Colchester 104, 1030 Colchester - Harwich 104, stayed on 104 all day, finished on 1930 Colchester - Harwich 104.

32628 worked 0700 Harwich - Colchester 104, 0830 Colchester - Harwich 104, stayed on 104 all day, then finished on 1900 Harwich - Colchester 102 and 2035 Colchester - Harwich 102.

**66803 worked 0715 Harwich - Colchester 103**, dead to Berechurch, 0900 Berechurch Lethe Grove - Colchester 67, 0930 Colchester - Harwich 104, stayed on 104 **but its duty also included 1530 Colchester - Harwich 103**, then 104 again **until finished on 1825 Colchester - Harwich 103**.

**37005** worked 0610 Colchester - Maldon 75, 0711 Maldon - Colchester 75, dead to Berechurch, 0825 Berechurch Lethe Grove - Colchester 67, dead to Mistley, **0920 Mistley - Colchester 103**, then used as required, worked on services 62 and 75 in the afternoon.

On Mondays to Fridays, excluding 0920 Mistley - Colchester 103, there are now 14 journeys each way, previously there were 15. On Saturdays there were 16 journeys each way, now 14 Colchester - Harwich and 15 Harwich - Colchester. So overall only a small reduction. There is now a regular hourly off peak service on service 104, previously during the day the Monday to Friday frequency was very irregular, and the Saturday frequency was every 55 minutes over common sections of the routes. The Sunday timetable is unchanged.

On the Clacton routes:

74B: 30567 (31st), 32068 (24th), 32478 (9th), 32485 (26th), 32547 (17th), 32628 (3 September), 32629 (2 September), 32669 (10th), 37007 (11th, 13th, 25th, 4 September), 37010 (23rd), 37015 (12th), 37017 (28th), 37020 (21st), 37034 (17th), 37035 (27th), 37042 (14th, 19th), 37054 (18th, 20th), 37139 (1 September).

76 (in date order): unusually, three vehicles on 15th: 37053, 37062 and 67750. 37139 (22nd), 66803 (29th), 67737 (Bank Holiday Monday 30th), 37016 (5 September).



Above: a photo of service 103 on a section of the route which is separate to service 104. 66801 (MX05 CCI) on 1150 Harwich-Colchester 103 at Bradfield Church on 19 August 2021. **Robert Appleton**

## Chelmsford

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CF. All dates August 2021 except where stated.)

The Park & Ride Enviro 200 MMCs continue to work on other routes as well as P&R, still principally the 31 group of routes plus also the 42 group. 67190 was unusual on 351 on 11th. With the changes to the 351 from 1 September noted above, more appeared on the route, 67193 & 67195 on 1 September, 67191 on 2nd and 67190 on 3rd.

From the start of the school term on 1 September, X30 liveried Scania's have once again worked on route 70, 36838 reported on 1st, 36840 on 2nd.

Other unusual / interesting workings: 67164 on X30 (15th). 66846 seen on driver training in Witham High Street (12th).

## Basildon & Hadleigh

(All vehicles listed below allocated to BN except where stated. All dates August 2021 except where stated.)

Like CF44537 reported last month, HH47529 has also lost its super rear advert for Essex & Suffolk Water. It had only received it last October, as reported in EBN 679. It is not known when it was removed, it still had it on 6 January, although by that time the part over the rear window had been removed, and it was seen without it on 24 August.

Since last issue, Route 9 has continued with a mixture of double-deckers (usually Enviro 400s) and StreetLites, with the number of each varying day to day. Most extreme were one Enviro 400 and five SLs on 23rd and five Enviro 400s and no SLs on Saturday 28th (which *maybe* the first time the Brentwood to Basildon route has been all double-deck operated since Leyland Nationals started to replace Bristol FLFs on route 151 in the late 1970s). Other types of double-decker: 32526 (13th, 24th), 32532 (9th, 2 September), 32539 (11th, 18th, 3 September), 32540 (16th), 33086 (1 September), plus particularly unusual single-deckers 67165 (20th) and 67901 (16th). Routes 94/A continued to be operated by a StreetLite and a mini-Enviro 200 or two StreetLites. Only two sightings of double-deckers since last issue, 33574 on 14th and 33557 on 4 September. On the 11th 44908 was replaced by 47653 on the 0900 ex Basildon until 47653 was involved in an accident in Hullbridge Road on the 1300 from Basildon. The 1400 ex South Woodham Ferrers did not operate and 44908 took over again from the 1500 ex Basildon. 47653 was then out of use for a couple of weeks before returning to service on 28th, on route 9.

Other unusual / interesting workings: non-Enviro 200 MMCs on X10: 47650 (16th), 47656 (12th), 69901 (3 September), 69906 (13th, 15th, 27th), 69908 (22nd), 69914 (11th) & 69918 (14th); 44910 (13th) and 33572 (31st) on 100; 33548 a double-decker on 16 (31st); HH44002 on 25 (16th); HH69518 (18th) on evening 27; 44909 (Bank Holiday Monday 30th) and 44910 (29th) on 251, 44908 on 25 (2 September).

Top Right: As reported in EBN 685, 32476 returned to First Eastern Counties in April after nearly a decade with First Essex in exchange for 31785 as Ipswich depot requires low-height vehicles. It is seen at Ipswich Old Cattle Market bus station on 2 August, working on service 88 Ipswich - Stowmarket. 'Ipswich Reds' fleet names have replaced the 'Essex' fleet names on the sides below the lower deck windows and the small 'Essex' has been removed from after 'First' above the driver's cab. **Robert Appleton**. This bus has since been repainted into Ipswich Reds livery.

## Unusual Blind Displays

Middle Right: Some First Essex drivers stumbled on a since removed unusual display programmed into the LED blinds of buses at Hadleigh - 'Barbie Bus'! 63168, which is too new to have ever been in Barbie livery, on 25 June 2021 at Southend Travel Centre between trips, shortly before the driver put up the more conventional 28 Basildon Bus Station display. **Richard Delahoy**

Bottom Right: 69917, one of three Volvo Hybrids still in original livery, in between duties on route 100 at Chelmsford Bus Station on 14 August 2021. **Dale Bell**





## Controversial Advert



On the same day that the above photo of 37134 on route 65 in Colchester Bus Station was taken, 31 August 2021 (**Adam Kelleher**), the advert it is seen carrying became national news due to the controversial wording and arrows pointing to passengers in their seats. Transport for London, Channel 4 and the Global media group were criticised on social media for the advertising campaign. A TfL spokesperson stated: "We have reviewed the ad campaign and decided that it should not continue to run on our bus network. It will be removed as soon as practicable." The Advertising Standards Authority said it had received 26 complaints about the advert. Naked Attraction is a dating show on Channel 4. A spokesperson for the channel said: "This ad is based on a Channel 4 entertainment programme. It was not our intention to cause offence and we apologise if it has done so." (With thanks to the BBC website.)

The advert is a national campaign, not just in London, hence the advert appearing on some First Essex buses. Hedingham seemed to have been aware of the controversy in advance, as, on the same day, their 803 was seen with the advert, but with the white arrows covered by black tape. It is assumed that following what is happening in London and Channel 4's statement that these adverts will soon be removed all over the country.

Right: The odd journey on service 73 at 2050, Maldon Milton Road to Chelmsford, is normally worked by a Volvo B7RLE as it works off the 2010 Chelmsford to Maldon 31, but during August has at times been worked by an Enviro 200. 44598 is at Maldon Road, Hatfield Peverel around dusk at 2110 on 3 August 2021. **David Edwards**

With thanks to Robert Appleton, Stephen Barham, Jon Collins, David Edwards, Will Jesney, John Lidstone, John Podgorski, Robert West, First Essex, Bustimes, Facebook, Essex Buses Google group and Terminus.





### Southend

A second Mercedes Sprinter minibus arrived in early August 2021 for staff shuttle duties, 1014, BF67 WGM. It is in Arriva livery in contrast to the existing 1000 which is overall white. Right, 1014 at Short Street depot on 9 August. **Matthew Evans**

The Optare Versas are about to start a programme of refurbishment and repainting into the current Arriva livery. They are expected to be treated two at a time.

### Colchester

The StreetLite loaned from Northfleet, 4334, was returned there on 26 August.

Ex Park & Ride Enviro 200 4071, withdrawn here in July, has now been transferred to Gillingham depot after being repainted from black to the current Arriva light blue livery. The other P&R buses will follow suit; we will confirm details of their replacements at Colchester in next month's issue. Meanwhile, the current P&R buses continue to be used regularly on service 77.

### Harlow

Arriva have abandoned plans to introduce Green Line route 720 (Stansted Airport - London Liverpool Street). As reported in EBN 672, the new service had been due to commence on 1 April 2020 but was deferred due to the first Covid lockdown.

Thanks to Keith Sadler, Matthew Evans, Richard Lewis and Peter Mansbridge.

Below: The livery Southend's Versas will receive (4182 is already in this livery), Arriva Harlow Optare Versa 4232 on route 59 passing Chelmsford Railway Station on 16 August 2021. **David Moth**



## Fleet

Acquired are two further ADL Enviro 200s, YX16 OBP/R. These are MMC models (the first for this fleet), ex Abellio London. Currently B24F, they will be up-seated to B29F or B30F and allocated to NIBS; fleet numbers to be 401/2.

Volvo B7TL / East Lancs double-deckers 701/3 (PA04 CYK, PO54 ACX) have been withdrawn from the NIBS fleet and sold to Vale Travel, Aylesbury.

At the sister Galloway fleet, the two VDL SB180 / MCV saloons, 204/5 (Y160 GDO, GFA) have been withdrawn. That leaves 203 as the sole VDL chassis in the combined group.

Right: 20 August 2021 was the first day out for the first Stephenson's Scania / Enviro 400 to be repainted, 601 (EU12 HXW). Thanks to its regular driver Chris Staley for help with the photo. **John G Lidstone**

The NHS mobile vaccination centre bus, Scania OmniCity 7056 (YN56 FEQ), commenced service in its new role in mid-August. Initially it was based at the Chelmer Valley Park & Ride car park, then Lakeside shopping centre and after that was expected at Clacton Shopping Village. In **Matthew Evans's** photo below it had just arrived in car park 8 at Lakeside on Saturday 21 August. The centre doors are covered by a gazebo when the bus is in use.



With thanks to Matthew Evans and the Companies.



### Vehicles Back in Fleet

|     |          |                                                |
|-----|----------|------------------------------------------------|
| 298 | OU57 FHA | Engine repaired - back in service by 13 August |
| 875 | PN09 ENE | Repaired accident damage by 29 July            |

### Significant Allocations

|     |         |              |
|-----|---------|--------------|
| 510 | HD - KN | by 1 August  |
| 510 | KN - HD | by 17 August |
| 910 | KN - CN | by 20 August |
| 911 | KN - CN | by 3 August  |
| 911 | CN - KN | by 13 August |
| 911 | KN - CN | by 17 August |



### Fleet News

291, EU06 KCX, is still withdrawn. 268/298/514/616/852/875 have been returned to operational status over the past few weeks. Loan Volvo B7TL / East Lancs 506, PJ02 PYW, has been unused at HD since mid-June. Both Solos were used extensively from KN depot in August, with service seen on 63 in Colchester being relatively unusual.

### Service News

Clarifications to service 63 news last month, all of the extended 63s originated at Mason Road and followed the full route to West Mersea then onto East Mersea. The fast bus from East Mersea to Colchester at 1045 and all others from East Mersea did not call at West Mersea or Peldon but ran via B1025 direct to Abberton.

From 5 September service changes were applied in Clacton, with small changes to routes 4/5A/6/7/74/X76/97/98 and also 136/7 buses leaving Pier Avenue between 1400 and 1600 and the 1734 will not run circular and will all stop at Stephenson Road. Service Breeze 134 officially concludes on 4 September but in reality on fine days the open topper may continue to appear. Hedingham will provide buses to & from Sigma Sixth Form, Jaywick Lane. Other minor school route changes are to 84/375/751/753 with 752 cancelled.

### Other News

Hedingham provided buses for the Air Show to celebrate 150 years of Clacton, with Clacton Common Car Park being used for the parking with extras on services 136 and 137 providing the transport to Pier Avenue, there was no separate dedicated Park & Ride service this year. Due to the rotational nature of 136/7 duties there were many types running on this service including the oldest being President 579 and the newest Enviro 200 265 observed on the first morning. Buses did not have special displays as the services were standard (albeit extra) services.



With thanks to John Podgorski and the Hedingham website.

Left: Chambers 872 (PN09 EMK) on layover at Colchester Bus Station on 31 August 2021, with 'Boomerang' branding for services between Bury St Edmunds, Sudbury and Colchester. A Scania N230UD / Optare Olympus new to Metrobus in 2009. Converted to single-door, refurbished, and transferred to Chambers in 2018.

Above: the refurbished upper deck of sister 871 (PN09 ELU), 28 October 2019.

Both **Robert Appleton**



The roadworks causing the diversion of service 92, Ipswich - Manningtree via Stutton Lane, mentioned last month continued into August, with 8.9m long ADL Enviro 200 72 (LX58 LMM) used again on 2/3 August. The normal route resumed two days earlier than planned, on 4 August, when Scania OmniCity 46 (SGZ 3346) was used. 10.8m long Enviro 200 76 (LX58 LML) was used on 5 August, but thereafter service 92 settled down with a Scania OmniCity working the all-day duty, starting with 0709 Manningtree - Ipswich 92, and finishing with 1720 Manningtree - Ipswich 92. The last journeys on service 92, 1740 Ipswich - Manningtree and 1830 return, are normally worked by an Enviro 200, but on 25 August 160 (SN57 DDF), a Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipse, worked these journeys.

Service 2/A Clacton - Mistley, and Colchester routes 4 & 11 continued with a mixture of 8.9m and 10.8m long Enviro 200s during August. EBM 688 page 20 gave details of the Enviro 200s that work these services. One additional Enviro 200 seen was 104 (SN16 OGK) on 23 August, complete with 'Whitehouse's Own' route branding for Ipswich town service 8.

Service revisions from 31 August for services working into Essex:

Service 92: 1610 Suffolk One College - Ipswich - Manningtree, 1720 Manningtree - Ipswich are withdrawn, replaced by 1635 Ipswich - Manningtree, 1730 Manningtree - Ipswich.

Service 93/A: revised timetable and rerouted in Colchester:, it now leaves Ipswich Road at Rovers Tye, operates via Highwoods Approach, Brinkley Grove Road, Mill Road, and Turner Road to serve the General Hospital and North Station, then using North Hill to enter / leave the Town Centre. Ipswich and Colchester Hospitals have been under common management for some time, so Suffolk residents may need to travel to Colchester General Hospital for tests, treatment etc., so this re-routing should prove useful.

Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka 61/2 (PJ54 YZU/V) returned from refurbishment and repaint at Hants & Dorset Trim in time for the revised services 92 & 93/A, thus joining sister 60 (PJ54 YVT) also refurbished and repainted by Hants & Dorset Trim earlier this year. Thus 61/62 have lost their light blue/white/green livery as illustrated in EBM 687 page 24. The Ipswich Buses website now refers to the refurbished buses used on these services. The photo right is of 60 in Colchester Bus Station on 31 August, waiting to depart on 1635 Colchester - Ipswich 93 (Robert Appleton). On the same date sister 61 worked the all-day duty on service 92. On 1 September all three were in service, with 61 on 92, and 60/62 on 93/A.



From the start of the new school term on 3 September, Ipswich Buses will operate new service 693, Ardleigh - East Bergholt High School. This is the replacement for Carters Heritage Buses service 193 which finished at the end of the previous school term on 20 July. The route and times are unchanged. Also, service 194, Langham - Boxted - East Bergholt High School, has a new route in Langham, and is renumbered 694.

On 29 August Ipswich Buses were involved in rail replacement work for c2c. Scania OmniCities 44 (YR61 RRZ) and 47 (SGZ 3347) worked between Pitsea and Upminster.

With thanks to John Podgorski, Ipswich Buses website, Ipswich Transport Society Journal, Ipswich Buses Enthusiast Facebook Group and Bustimes.



### Acquired Vehicle

KX11 EEH 10.8 metre ADL Enviro 200 from Dawson Rentals, for single door conversion into the fleet.

### Disposal

Further to EBM 688, Enviro 200 YX10 BFO sold to Flagfinders.

### Rail Replacement

On Sunday 15 August 2021 at dinner time **Stephen Barham** was called out to help Greater Anglia in a rescue. A class 321, repainted, refurbished and fitted with a new traction package (now termed Renatus), had broken down above the station road bridge on the B1352 at Lawford on its way to Harwich. Stephen took DB10 PAN out to pick up and help passengers from the train, down the steps by the bridge (which are normally used by Network Rail staff to access the railway) on to the bus and then all stations to Harwich. A step ladder can just be seen leaning against the side of the train. The lack of windows to the left of this is where accessible toilets were fitted when refurbished.

This is a good opportunity to congratulate Stephen on his 50 years service in the bus industry. The next day after he took this photo was the anniversary of him starting an apprenticeship with Eastern National at Queen Street garage, Colchester on 16 August 1971, co-incidentally also a Monday. After seven years he moved to Eastern National's Harwich depot as a mechanic / engineer. He left in 2013 and is now a driver with his son Adam's Panther Travel. Thanks also to Stephen for his regular reports for EBM.



Below: On 17 August 2021 train services were disrupted at Thorpe-le-Soken due to a points failure, and Panther Travel were working a Thorpe-le-Soken to Walton-on-the-Naze rail replacement service. Two Enviro 200s, DB10 PAN (again) and SB09 PAN are seen on Church Hill in Ramsey, on the way from Parkeston depot to Thorpe or Walton to start the rail replacement service. **Robert Appleton.**

With thanks to Adam Barham.



### Acquired Vehicles

305 YX69 NWB Alexander Dennis E20D / Enviro 200 MMC B41F, new to Weavaway (Tappin), Newbury, 09/19

316 YX16 OBO Alexander Dennis E20D / Enviro 200 MMC B24F, new to Abellio London 8138, 04/16

317 YX16 OBS Alexander Dennis E20D / Enviro 200 MMC B24F, new to Abellio London 8141, 04/16

Acquired from the original owners.

305 remains in Weavaway livery but with fleet names removed. Its fleet number follows on from the Volvo B7RLEs 301-4. It first operated on routes 14 & 13 on 31 August 2021, as seen in the photo below at Upshire Village Hall taken by **Steven Quy**.

316 and 317 both arrived on 1 September, and retain all red livery. 316 entered service on 3 September, also on routes 14 & 13.

With thanks to Bus Lists on the Web and Bustimes.



## Other Operators

by Roger A Smith

### Barker, Roydon

YN56 BEJ, a Neoplan N316/3SHDL, C61FT, has been acquired from Barnett, Slough, Berkshire and has been re-registered to X1 TGL.

### Carters Heritage Services, Great Bromley

As Carters are no longer operating school service 193 (Ardleigh - East Bergholt High School), Alexander ALX400 bodied Dennis Tridents LK05 GGJ and LK05 GFV have gone to Ensignbus, Purfleet (dealers). As reported above, Ipswich Buses are providing a replacement service for route 193, numbered 693, from the start of the school term on 3 September 2021. Carters will be concentrating on Private Hire work with Routemaster RML2266 (CUV 266C).

### Enigma, Wivenhoe

Beulas C48FT bodied Iveco391E FN02 VCD has gone from here.

### Flagfinders

As reported above, ADL Enviro 200 YX10 BFO has been acquired from Panther Travel. It is in all white livery.

### Keane Travel, Orsett

SN57 DFK, a Volvo B9TL with Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini H48/32F bodywork is here, ex Lothian Buses, Scotland.

### London Bus Company, Northfleet, Kent

Vehicles from this fleet work the Shenfield-Brentwood-Ongar-North Weald 339, which operates in conjunction with the Epping-Ongar Railway but had not run since February 2020 half term (19th-23rd) until it re-started on 10 July this year. RCL2260 was amongst Romford (RE) garage's allocation for a time in 1966/67, used on Brentwood to Aldgate 721, and now forms part of the London Bus Company's working fleet. It is seen, right, turning past Shenfield's 'Green Dragon' pub on Sunday 1 August. The 339 will operate until October and the timetable can be found at [www.eorailway.co.uk](http://www.eorailway.co.uk). **Chris Stewart**

Below right: RF401 also on the 339, at Two Brewers, Ongar on 30 July 2021.

**Robert Downton**

### SBC Engineering, Leigh-on-Sea

2941 VU (ex KP04 GJK), a Neoplan N122/3L (CH79DT) has gone to Ellison Coaches, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire.

### Suffolk Travel, Great Tey

This operator has moved to an address in Addison Way, Great Blakenham, Suffolk.

### Ugobus, Essex County Council

Mercedes-Benz Sprinter KE19 ZSZ is the regular bus on route 40 in Witham.

With thanks to Robert Appleton, John Podgorski, Chris Stewart and the PSV Circle.

Below: line-up at Lodge's open day on 22 August 2021 including on far right C20 DGE in 2020 Centenary livery. **Richard Delahoy**







Above: 'Arrow Dengie Dart' AR08 BUS on route D4 in East End Road, Bradwell-on-Sea, Southminster on 18 August 2021. **Chris Stewart**

Below: Lodge's Mercedes-Benz Tourismo JW20 DGE picking up passengers from the Clacton Air show on 26 August 2021. **Alan Moore**





## Acquired Vehicles

Further to last month, recently acquired Optare Solo KX57 KGA was new to Stagecoach Midland Red (South) in Goldline livery and specification for their Warwickshire operation, although it later received standard Stagecoach livery. It is now in a modified version of standard livery, with red, orange and light blue areas removed, as seen right at Station Road, Ware whilst on Ware local services on 12 August 2021. It is to replace RGZ 7808, see below. Its high spec interior, including high backed leather seats, is seen in the second photo, taken at the same time. Both **Owen Woodliffe**



## Withdrawn Vehicles / Disposals

The five Scania L94UB / Wrightbus Solars NK53 UNW, NK53 UNY, YN04 GMG, YN04 GNU, YN05 WKC, all in Trustybus livery, that were parked up at North Weald Airfield in September 2020 on standby if required for service (see EBN 680) went to Shelton Motors, Ely for scrap in February this year, as did sister YN05 WKD, also in Trustybus livery.

Solo RGZ 7810 to Shelton Motors for scrap May 2021. Following the report in EBM 687 about Solo RRZ 5463 being removed from the depot on a low-loader on 24 June 2021, this also went to Shelton Motors for scrap. Solo RGZ 7808 has been withdrawn after sustaining accident damage.

Scania CN230UB / Scania SGZ 1087 hasn't run in service for some time. It is now considered beyond repair and should leave the fleet soon.

Correction to EBN 684: re the sale of Optare Versas Y112 PZX/Y, PLF to Desi Coaches - although Watford is one of the areas Desi Coaches operate in, they are based at Harrow, Middlesex.



## Vehicle News / Repaints

Further to EBNs 680/1 Scania N230UD / Scania OmniCity double-decker YP59 OEX has finally entered service (exact date not known, but by April 2021) and is in Central Connect livery with route 420 branding. However, in mid-June it collided with StreetLite CC11 BUS in Harlow Bus Station and went to ADL Harlow for frontal rebuild, with the SL going to Mardens for rear end repairs. Both are still out of service.

Solo SGZ 2223 from First Barbie to Central Connect livery over weekend of 14-15 August.

Right: Enviro 200 CC55 BUS, in Central Connect livery but without fleet names on the front or offside, on route 410 in Hoddesdon on 5 August 2021.

## Allan White

With thanks to Owen Woodliffe and LOTS



## 30 Years Ago - Harwich Ford Transits

by Robert Appleton

Seven 16-seat Dormobile bodied Ford Transit VE6s 0750-6 (D750-6 RWC) were new to Eastern National at Chelmsford and South Woodham for routes 37, 38, 42 and 57 in October 1986. The last two later transferred to Brentwood and remained there with the creation of Thamesway in July 1990. In September 1991, the remaining five with EN, by then all at CF and on paper without the leading zero in their fleet numbers, were transferred to Harwich for the conversion of local routes to minibus operation.

Harwich - Dovercourt - Long Meadows circulars 22A/B commenced on 2 February 1987 in response to competition from Coastal Red. The routes jointly ran every 30 minutes Monday-Saturday daytime. 22A ran clockwise in Dovercourt and the Long Meadows Estate, 22B ran anti-clockwise. 22A/B were not suitable for operation by 11.3m long Leyland Nationals and were initially worked by Ford Transit 190DI / Carlyle B20F 0601 (C601 NPU), which was named 'Barbara's Bus' after its regular driver Barbara Thompson who had been a conductress at Harwich depot. Later 0601 was replaced by Bedford YMQS / Wadham Stringer DP33F 1054 (TJN 977W) which in turn was itself replaced by brand-new Mercedes-Benz 709D / Reeve Burgess B23F 0245 (F245 MVW) in late 1988. In 1990 0245 was replaced by 10.3m long Leyland National B41F 1500 (PJT 255R). From 2 September 1991 22A/B was increased in frequency from every 30 minutes to every 15 mins using two of 750-754. 751 is seen, top right, on the 22A on Main Road Harwich on 14 September 1991. Note the DT depot plate and fleet number plate (still with leading zero) on the bumper and the 'Little Green Bus' logos.



Harwich - Dovercourt - Parkeston Quay 120 was a long standing route, for many years numbered 117, operated by full size buses, running every 30 minutes Monday-Saturday daytime. From 2 September 1991 it was renumbered 20, the frequency was increased to every 15 minutes and it was converted to minibus operation using two of 750-754. 753 is seen right on route 20 at Harwich Depot also on 14 September 1991. It still has a Chelmsford advert on the side. Both photos Robert Appleton.



Thus Harwich used four of Ford Transit minibuses on Mondays-Saturdays with one spare.

In addition, Eastern National gained Monday-Saturday contracts from Suffolk County Council for evening services in the Ipswich area starting on 2 September 1991, using minibuses from Braintree, Clacton, and Harwich depots. At Harwich on Mondays to Fridays one of the minibuses on 22A/B finished early enough to work 1650 Harwich - Colchester 104, 1805 Colchester - Mistley 104, dead to Ipswich, 1934 Ipswich - Stowupland 86, 2029 Stowupland - Ipswich 86, 2145 Ipswich - Kesgrave 83, 2202 Kesgrave - Ipswich 83, 2215 Ipswich - Stowupland 86, 2303 Stowupland - Ipswich 86 and finally dead back to Harwich.

750-754 were replaced at Harwich during 1994. In March, Harwich received Mercedes-Benz L608D / Robin Hood B20F 252 (C230 HCV) from Western National and four-month-old Mercedes-Benz 709D / Plaxton Beaver B23F 656 (L656 MEV) from Clacton. They replaced 750 & 751, officially to Pool, although 750 went to Braintree for temporary use on the Country Car service. In June, 752-754 were delicensed for disposal and were replaced by Mercedes-Benz L608D / Reeve Burgess B20F 213/214/215 (C213/214/215 HJN). These had been at Haven Road, Colchester for the Autumn 1993 - Spring 1994 'Colchester Bus War' with Colchester Brough Transport, although they had been new to Clacton for the Coastline minibus network. 213-5 themselves did not last long at Harwich, but the continuing story from summer 1994 is beyond the scope of this article.

All five of 750-754 were sold in September 1994, three years after they had been transferred to Harwich. Details of their disposals is in the Group's Fleet Record Volume 2, free as a PDF from <https://www.mdsbooks.co.uk/downloads>. With thanks to Adam Kelleher.

# All in a Day's Work

by Richard Delahoy

Welcome to this new occasional series where we'll take a look at bus operations through the medium of crew duties.

Part One takes us to Eastern National's Basildon garage in 1968. Our archives include a file of duty sheets, not a complete set sadly (there are no Saturdays for example, and none covering the 26, 151 & 251 routes except on Sundays) but enough to give a good flavour of the work. Predominately this was crew work - driver plus conductor - of course, although there were a small number of OMO (one-man-operated) duties for nine single-deck buses. The depot's allocation in October 1968 consisted of 93 vehicles in total for a PVR (peak vehicle requirement) of 82.

Inevitably, most duties contained at least some town service work, but mostly leavened with some longer distance or more rural services, to ease the burden in the days when the town services were very busy. Indeed, Ted Miles has written elsewhere how it was not unusual for a conductor to issue over 1,000 tickets in a shift! Ted has also written about the duties on the Southend to London X10 limited stop service in EBNs 546 & 572 so I won't repeat those here. [E-mail me if you'd like pdf copies of these issues]

For the larger operators, both nationalised and in the municipal sector, working hours were fixed by national negotiations, although the actual pay rates and allowances etc., were subject to local agreement. In the examples we have, most duties are 8 hours 40 minutes,

although a few are shorter. The example shown left is one of the shorter ones at 8 hours 12 minutes and offers some interesting variety, including driving buses from two other depots. Let's decipher the duty card, for duty 17 (M-F):

| <u>BASILDON GARAGE - SCHEDULE 1</u> |                                      |                |                                        |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------|
| <u>DUTY 17</u>                      |                                      | <u>MON-FRI</u> |                                        |
| SIGN ON 0542                        |                                      |                |                                        |
| D1                                  | dep.Gar 0552                         | dead           | arr. BN 0554                           |
|                                     | dep. BN 0559                         | 34c            | arr. CD 0724 (garage bus in CF Garage) |
| CR                                  | dep. CD 0732                         | 153            | arr.CRM 0835                           |
|                                     | dep.CRM 0840                         | 153            | arr. CD 0943 (garage bus in CF Garage) |
|                                     |                                      |                | off duty 0943                          |
| 54 minute relief                    |                                      |                |                                        |
|                                     | dep.Gar 1037 walk to stand. T/O.1042 |                |                                        |
| CN                                  | dep. CD 1042                         | 53             | H/O arr. BN 1132 (show TF)             |
| D13                                 | dep. BN 1145                         | 241            | arr.KRP 1204                           |
|                                     | dep.KRP 1212                         | 241            | arr. L 1244                            |
|                                     | dep. L 1252                          | 241            | H/O arr. BN 1305 (show KRP)            |
|                                     | dep. BN 1305                         | walk to Gar.   | SPARE DUTY                             |
| SIGN OFF 1344                       |                                      | FINISH 1354    |                                        |
| spreadover 8.12                     |                                      |                |                                        |
| t.o. & 7.18                         |                                      |                |                                        |
| rel 54.                             |                                      |                |                                        |

We need to have a good alarm clock, to be up and off to the depot in Cherrydown, close to the town centre bus station, ready to Sign On at 0542.

We're allowed 10 minutes to prepare our bus (and meet up with our conductor). The card tells us it is running number D1 but we're not the first bus out - that was over an hour ago. The duty inspector will tell us which actual bus is allocated to this running number - no doubt an FLF Lodekka.

We're allowed just 2 minutes to drive round the corner into the bus station, where we stand for 5 minutes before setting off at 0554 on route 34C.

The card uses codes to describe each location and some of these are more obvious than others. 'BN' is actually Basildon Bus Station, not the depot, even though the depot code for engineering purposes is BN, as shown by the red plates on the front and back of our bus. Arriving in Chelmsford, the codes distinguish between CD (Chelmsford Bus Station) and CF (the depot, adjacent to the bus station and integral with it). So, after dropping off our passengers at 0724, we are instructed to move the bus round into the depot to park it up. It will later be taken by another crew. But we can't dawdle, as we are due to depart again at 0732, but the bus running number simply says 'CR', indicating that we take a bus that is based at Colchester depot and had left there as the 0610 departure on the 153 with a Colchester crew, who will have arrived at 0725 and left the bus on the stand ready for us.

This trip takes us to 'CRM' - Corringham Social Club - where we terminate and turn round ready for the 0840 back to Chelmsford. So that's twice through Basildon on through trips. We are due back into Chelmsford at 0943 and the duty card tells us once again to park the bus in the garage, this time without the two-minute allowance!

At last, time for our break! Breakfast in the staff canteen will be most welcome "relief" in our 54-minute break, after five hours since signing on. Suitably fed and rested, and no doubt having picked up some gossip from the other crews there, we are allowed a very generous five minutes to walk back to the departure stand - 30 seconds is probably more realistic. We are due to take over a Clacton (CN) car, due in at 1040, having left Clacton over 2 hours earlier. This time we are only heading for our home base of Basildon but the bus works through, hence the note "show TF" - to ensure that the destination blinds are set for Tilbury Ferry, the ultimate destination for this service 53 journey. (A photo of FLF 2701, allocated to CN, on route 153 with Tilbury Ferry on the blinds, at Chelmsford Bus Station, was on page 22 of last month's EBM).

Arriving in Basildon at 1132, we hang about in the bus station for a few minutes before taking over bus running number D13 for the 1145 town service 241 to "KRP" - Kenneth Road, Pitsea, brought in from Laindon by duty 13. Our conductor is not looking forward to lots of short stage riders on the town service but luckily for us, our stint on the town is quite short. Hopefully the bus will be an LD Lodekka and not one of the more inconvenient lowbridge style KSWs, which are much more taxing for our conductor. Arriving at Kenneth Road, we turn round and go back through the town and on to Laindon Station, turn there and return to the bus station - remembering to "show KRP" as instructed.

Handing over to the crew on duty 25 in the bus station at 1305, we walk back to the depot, but our day isn't quite over yet. The duty ends with a short period of "spare" for just over half an hour. That's hardly any time to do any productive work, so we must hope that the inspector will let us go early and not hold us back until the 1344 sign off time. If we are unlucky, we might be asked to run a bus round to the bus station and back for a changeover. But we might have already agreed to sign up for some overtime this afternoon - crew shortages are endemic and there is always plenty of overtime on offer. Indeed, the company have had to institute planned service cuts because they can't resource the full timetable. We will hardly need the 10 minutes signing off allowance as we've not brought a bus into the depot, although the conductor will have to cash up and pay in, before finishing at 1354, 8 hours 12 minutes since we started, 't.o.d.' time on duty, being 7 hours 18, plus 54 minutes relief.

## The Buses

At this time (October 1968), Basildon's allocation of 93 comprised 10 Bristol KSWs, 24 LD Lodekkas, 33 FLF Lodekkas, 7 LS saloons (5 of which were *not* fitted for OMO), 8 MW saloons plus a 9th for contract work, 2 RELH dual purpose saloons, 3 of the superb coach-seated FLFs for the X8/X10, and finally 5 coaches (3 MW & 2 RELH).

## The Routes

Basildon crews operated a huge list of routes at the time, including 2C, 14E, 15/C, 26, 34/A/B/C/D, 53/A, 94A, 141, 142, 142, 144, 145, 147, 148, 151, 153, 158, 159, 230, 231, 233, 241, 243, 244, 245, 247, 248, 250, 251, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, X8 & X10. Many are works trips to the Industrial Areas on the north side of the New Town. That's a lot of route learning!

The first part of our duty on 34C was one of the more unusual ones. The main service on 34/34A was from The Knares, south west of the town centre, through Basildon, Wickford, then either Ramsden Bellhouse (34A) or Brock Hill (34), Ramsden Heath and Gooseberry Green to Billericay Station. Each ran hourly, to give a 30-minute headway. Our 34C was one of just two journeys on Mondays to Fridays that continued on from Billericay (not serving Gooseberry Green) via the 53 route through Stock and Galleywood to Chelmsford. With a diversion to serve the Hoffmann's Works, our trip from Basildon took no less than 85 minutes.

There's not room here for a full description of the 53 and 153, suffice to say that 53 ran Clacton - Colchester - Chelmsford - Billericay - Basildon - Homesteads - Stanford Le Hope - Grays - Tilbury Ferry, whilst the 153 variant started at Wivenhoe, then as 53 but via Corringham rather than Homesteads and running direct through Chadwell St Mary (omitting Grays) to Tilbury Ferry. There was also the occasional 53C variant and a summer Saturday limited stop 453. The combined schedule involved buses from Clacton, Colchester, Kelvedon, Chelmsford and Basildon depots and was possibly the most complex of all EN's operations at the time. A story for another day!



# Summer Special: Open Toppers. Part 2: Contemporary

## 1. Southend - Route 68

From the late 1980s a Southend seafront service had only continued as a result of subsidies from Essex County Council and latterly Southend Borough Council, running just once an hour, operated variously by Southend Transport or Eastern National. Stephenson's Coaches took over in 1993 and ran the service every summer for twelve years (initially tendered, then with some limited Council funding and finally fully commercially), latterly as part of the City Sightseeing brand. 2005 was the first year since 1949 that no open top buses ran on Southend seafront, and apart from some limited services in 2006 (SBC Leisure) and 2012 (Linkfast), it was not revived until Go-Ahead London surprisingly re-introduced route 68 in summer 2017. They also ran the service for the 2018 & 2019 seasons before Ensignbus took over in 2020. This year Ensignbus have been running 368-371 on the routes (details in EBN 684 & EBM 688).



Above: Taken early in the day before parked cars obscured the view, Go-Ahead London PVL224 on Western Esplanade by The Leas on 13 July 2019. A black & white version of this photo was in EBN 664, but it is worth reproducing in colour and in 'widescreen' format.  
Below: Go-Ahead London Enviro 400 E14 leaving the pier for Leigh Broadway on 3 August 2019. Both **Richard Delahoy**



Below: Go-Ahead London Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Gemini WV183, passing Palmeira Arches at Westcliff, home to an excellent selection of seafront cafes. 31 August 2019.

Bottom: Turning out of Hartington Road onto Marine Parade on 24 April 2021, Ensignbus Ayats Bravo 371 is demonstrating the diversion used at very busy times when Southchurch Avenue southbound to the Kursaal gets gridlocked. Instead, buses divert via the perimeter of the Seaway car park as described in EBN 686. Southend Corporation trolleybuses used this section of road from 1929 until 1951, albeit usually turning left towards the Kursaal rather than right towards the Pier. The building behind the bus is the Cornucopia, reputed to be the smallest pub in Essex (at least before the era of the micro-pub) with its distinctive roof and weather vane.

Both: **Richard Delahoy**







Left: Ensignbus Ayats Bravo 370 departing from the terminal stand at the Pier, passing MRM1, the Ensignbus-built promotional vehicle built from the running units of a Mini car. It is not licenced for public use but is usually at the Pier as an advert for the service. 26 July 2021. **Richard Delahoy**

Bottom: A nearside view of 368 was on the front cover of last month's EBM. Here is an offside shot, taken on the evening of 25 July 2021, on a test run over route 68, the day before it entered service, at Leigh Broadway. A photo of 370 at this location appeared in EBN 684.

Below: 368 at Mardens on 13 April 2021, after single door conversion, but prior to fitting out and repaint.

Both **John G Lidstone**

Another Ensignbus vehicle operating on route 68, in 2020, is on the inside rear cover.



A vintage open-top bus mini-running day was held on route 68 on Sunday 15 August 2021, featuring the replica B type, RM371 and the star of the show, ex City Coach Company, Westcliff Motor Services & Eastern National Leyland PD1/1 / Alexander LEV 917, preserved as Eastern National 2102. A photo of this bus at the Clacton Bus Rally on 7 June 2009 appeared in last month's magazine, but this was the first time it has been used in revenue earning service since its last summer in Southend in 1965. It is kept at Canvey Transport Museum, but owned privately, and was on loan to Ensignbus. Right: at Western Esplanade where in 1965 the famous 'Never Never Land' stood (**Ian Banks**). The area of land below Royal Terrace overlooking today's Adventure Island attraction was originally known as 'The Shrubbery'. For most of the year it was a tranquil green park with a stream feeding waterfalls and seats for people to sit and relax but each summer season things would change and the park was turned into a whole new attraction. Owned and operated by Southend Council, the park was transformed to include model cartoon characters, goblins, smoke breathing dragons, fairies with magical castles, thousands of multicoloured lights and a model railway running throughout the park, one of the trains pulled three carriages a First Class, Second Class and No Class! (With thanks to 'Southend Timeline' website.) A late summer / early autumn trip to see the Southend lights, visit 'Never Never Land', enjoy freshly cooked hot doughnuts and ride on an open-top bus was one of the highlights of the year for children growing up in the Sixties!



A montage of photos of 2102 on 15 August taken by **Richard Delahoy** is on the next page. The nearside bench seat was removed and a Ticker machine was fitted, which had the result that the bus was tracked on Bustimes.

Right middle: Ex-London Transport and Lothian Buses RM371 at Leigh Station.

Right: replica B1439, 946 WAE at Chalkwell Shelter, with Ross Newman driving.

Both **Richard Delahoy**, both 15 August.

A second open-top mini-running day was held on route 68 on 29 August, this again featured 2102 and the B type replica plus tri-axle MCW Metroliner 372 (A112 KFX) and London Bus Company's RT3435 (LYR 854) & AEC Regal / Beadle HKL 836. The RT was illustrated on last summer's running day held on 6 September 2020 in EBN 678, HKL is illustrated on this month's inside front cover.







## 2. Clacton - Route 134

by Robert Appleton

Route 134 is an unusual open-top service as it is not a summer only special service, but a normal route that runs all year round that is worked on an enhanced timetable by an open-topper in the summer.

Route 134, Clacton - Holland Haven circular, was introduced on 4 October 1999 (as reported in EBN 427) running Mondays to Fridays. The first timetable that I can find in my collection is dated 5 September 2005. At that time, it ran half hourly from Holland Haven Roundabout 0900 to 1400 finishing at 1430. There was a break in service at 1115 to 1215 at Pier Avenue, Clacton. At some point it became more accurately described as Clacton - Holland-on-Sea circular. Instead of Holland Haven Roundabout, the service started / finished at Holland-on-Sea Viking Way, the furthest point from Clacton of this circular service. Holland Haven is a nearby country park not actually served by the 134.

As I was living and working in Greater Manchester until November 2013, I did not observe this service until 2014. Then, it was single deck operated, with Optare Excel, Dennis Dart, and Enviro 200s being used. It still ran Mondays to Fridays 0900 to 1430 so that the bus could work a school contract before and after these times.

Right: Optare Excel L1150 203 (with TY, Tollesbury depot code) on route 134 in Pier Avenue, Clacton on 7 March 2014. This was new to Trent in 2000, and came to Hedingham via Konectbus.

Below right: Mini Pointer Dart 284 (W782 VMV) also in Pier Avenue, on 5 September 2014. This was new to Metrobus in 2000, and came to Hedingham via Brighton & Hove, whose livery it still carries.

Both **Robert Appleton**

I did not note the exact date that the route was converted to double-deck operation, but I have a photo of 1514 (YN55 PZV) taken in September 2016, so it possibly changed with the start of the new school term that month, due to loadings on the school contract workings before and after the 134 start and finish times.

On 25 July 2019 the timetable was amended to operate all day on Mondays to Fridays and a Saturday morning service was added. Open top operation was due to start on Saturday 27th, but due to the heavy rain on that day, 525 (LX05 EZH) deputised.

Open-top operation with 500 (PL51 LDJ) thus began on Monday 29th, running until 2 September 2019 (weather permitting). On 3

September 2019 the 134 timetable reverted to operate 0900 to 1430 Mondays to Fridays, although with the Saturday morning service retained. Mark Lloyd's photo of 500 in Station Road, Clacton, taken on the first day of service, appeared on the front cover of EBN 664. This vehicle had been new to London Central as PVL250 in February 2002 but was acquired from East Yorkshire (653). It had been converted to open-top whilst with East Yorkshire after sustaining upper nearside front deck damage after hitting a tree in 2013. It entered service with Hedingham in East Yorkshire cream and maroon livery but with Hedingham vinyls (see photo next page).





Above: 500 in Station Road, Clacton on 30 July 2019 **Robert Appleton**

Since the start of the pandemic and the introduction of lockdowns there have been various amendments to the timetable of route 134.

28 March 2020: emergency timetable introduced.

1 June 2020: improved timetable, hourly frequency, morning only.

29 June 2020: All-day timetable re-introduced for summer 2020, frequency increased to half-hourly and the period of operation extended to be 0900 to 1745 with 500 used (weather permitting). On 500, the 'Open Topper hedingham' lettering illustrated in the above photo was replaced by a 'Clacton Breeze' logo on both sides (but retained on the front), with the 'hedingham' fleet name being added beneath the driver's cab on the offside. The logo depicted the pier in silhouette against a bright sun, the Pier being identified by the pier entrance, helter-skelter ride and the Jolly Roger café at the pier head.

1 September 2020: autumn - spring timetable resumed.

11 January 2021: special timetable, hourly frequency, mornings only.

12 April 2021: normal timetable resumed.

29 May to 4 September 2021: summer timetable (right) with 500 operating (weather permitting).

6 September 2021: autumn - spring timetable resumed.

From 28th May 2021 hedingham

**Clacton BREEZE**

**Holland-on-Sea Circular/ The Clacton Breeze** via Clacton Town Centre

**Mondays to Saturdays**

**134**

| Route Number                   | 134  | 134  | 134       | 134 | 134  | 134  |
|--------------------------------|------|------|-----------|-----|------|------|
| Holland-on-Sea, Viking Way     | 0900 | 0930 | 00        | 30  | 1700 | 1730 |
| Holland-on-Sea, Roaring Donkey | 0904 | 0934 | then at   | 04  | 34   | 1704 |
| Clacton, Rail Station          | 0910 | 0940 | these     | 10  | 40   | 1710 |
| Clacton, Pier Avenue           | 0916 | 0946 | minutes   | 16  | 46   | 1716 |
| Clacton, Pier                  | 0920 | 0950 | past each | 20  | 50   | 1720 |
| Holland-on-Sea, Viking Way     | 0930 | 1000 | hour      | 30  | 00   | 1730 |

The Clacton Breeze will run on Bank Holiday Monday 31st May 2021 & 30th August 2021

| Route Number                   | 134 | 134  | 134       | 134 | 134  | 134  |
|--------------------------------|-----|------|-----------|-----|------|------|
| Holland-on-Sea, Viking Way     |     | 1030 | 00        | 30  | 1700 | 1730 |
| Holland-on-Sea, Roaring Donkey |     | 1034 | then at   | 04  | 34   | 1704 |
| Clacton, Rail Station          |     | 1040 | these     | 10  | 40   | 1710 |
| Clacton, Pier Avenue           |     | 1046 | minutes   | 16  | 46   | 1716 |
| Clacton, Pier                  |     | 1050 | past each | 20  | 50   | 1720 |
| Holland-on-Sea, Viking Way     |     | 1100 | hour      | 30  | 00   | 1730 |

Some days, the Clacton Breeze may not run due to weather conditions and vehicle availability. A closed top bus will run on route 134 for the duration of the day and passengers can not be given that the open top bus at 09.00 and 09.30 from Holland-on-Sea will also run on school days.

**Clacton ROCKS**

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**Clacton BREEZE**

View our latest timetables and fare information at [www.hedingham.co.uk](http://www.hedingham.co.uk) t. 0330 1020801





Above: As described in EBN 686, June 2021, for this year 500 has received further vinyls on its East Yorkshire livery, promoting 'Octopus Ahoy', an art trail in Clacton, as seen in Pier Avenue, Clacton on 13 July 2021. It retains the 'Clacton Breeze' logos introduced in 2020. Right: upper deck of 500. Both **Adam Kelleher**

500 was not the first open topper that Hedingham had operated in Clacton. In April 1999 Hedingham acquired L302 (UWV 615S) from Brighton & Hove, a Bristol VRT/SL3/6LXB with ECW convertible open-top CO43/31F body, new to Southdown in 1978. It worked as an open topper from the end of May 1999 to September 1999 on Hedingham service 130 Clacton - Clacton Common Factory Shopping Village. A photo taken by Phil Ford was on the cover of EBN 422. The roof was refitted in October 1999 and L302 continued to work on service 130. There are no reports in EBN of L302 running again in open-top form in the summers of 2000 and 2001. In March 2002, L302 was sold to the owners of Clacton Common Factory Shopping Village, then shortly afterwards to Carters Coach Services. Rob Sly's excellent BCV website lists several further owners for UWV 615S and today it is preserved. It made its first public appearance for a number of years at the Worthing Bus Rally on 25 July 2021 and will be undergoing ongoing restoration over the winter.

Right: L302 at the 1999 Clacton Carnival demonstrating the special livery it received for the Clacton Common service.

**Mark Lloyd Collection.**

With thanks to Mark Lloyd and Adam Kelleher



### 3. Great Yarmouth

As reported in EBN 685, First Eastern Counties have two ex-Essex vehicles operating on their Great Yarmouth open top service. The first is ex-First Essex part open top Dennis Trident / Plaxton President 32905, W905 VLN, which has been re-registered to CRZ 166. This had been the only open topper at Great Yarmouth but this year the open top service has been expanded beyond the town to Hemsby and it has been joined by 37000, ex-Ensignbus 392, an open-top Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini. A third vehicle this year is FEC's existing Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 32348, which was already in the Great Yarmouth fleet, which has been converted to part open top and has been re-registered from LK53 LZL to CRZ 266. All three have been repainted into an Urban 2 'Coastal Clipper Cabriolet' two-tone blue and yellow livery. In mid-July these were joined by a fourth, on loan, temporary fleet number 35014, DAF / Plaxton President LJ51 DKN from Original London Sightseeing tour fleet, DLP261, new to Arriva London as DLP61, all red with temporary stickers, including "I'm helping out on Coastal Clipper Cabriolet for the great British summer" on side panels between decks.

Below and opposite. Despite the three different registrations, this is the same bus, in 2007, 2020 and 2021. Ensignbus's 392, 392 MBF, new in closed top form to London General with registration LX53 AYY, became surplus to requirements with the acquisition of the Volvo B7L / Ayats Bravos 369-371 and was sold to First Eastern Counties earlier this year. It was re-registered back to its original mark before sale. It was re-registered again by FEC to CRZ 366 and it received fleet number 37000, as well as a subsidiary fleet number Cabrio 3 (the other two owned FEC open topplers are Cabrio 1 & 2.)

In the top photo opposite it is passing the Hope Hotel, originally an 18th Century coaching inn, on Marine Parade, along Southend seafront between the Kursaal and the pier, on 11 July 2020, as noted above, Ensignbus's first year of running Southend open-top service 68. **Richard Delahoy.**

In the bottom photo opposite it is traveling along Great Yarmouth seafront on 1 June 2021, having had an unfortunate encounter with a seagull. **Paul Harvey**

Below: In its original form exiting London Liverpool Street Bus Station on 14 July 2007. Many Essex commuters would arrive by train at Liverpool Street and catch the 11 to their offices. **Peter Horrex**

**Rear Cover:** ex-First Essex 32905 (a closed top bus when with FE) in Great Yarmouth. Top: Outside Britannia Pier on 21 August 2019 (in its original open top livery) with a Dotto train in the foreground. **Adam Kelleher**

A similar Dotto train service was run in Southend in 1993 by a private operator and in 1994/5 by Southend Transport. More recently, a local businessman had hopes of starting a route from Shoebury Common to Southend in 2020/21 but nothing came of that plan.

Bottom: near the Pleasure Beach on 1 June 2021. **Paul Harvey.**

With thanks to East Norfolk Bus Blog.

**Part 1: Historical - KSWs appeared last month.**











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