

# ESSEX BUS NEWS

**Issue 524**  
**December 2007**



**Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group**

serving Essex since 1964

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

# Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

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## SUBSCRIPTIONS

A 12 month subscriptions is £19.50 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 write to:

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Replacements for missing or defective EBNs are available from Richard.

## TIMETABLE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Join this scheme to receive Essex County Council timetable books and updates. Please contact:

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[derekstebbing@yahoo.com](mailto:derekstebbing@yahoo.com)

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

## PUBLICATION SALES

All orders for publications should be sent to:

Owen Woodliffe,  
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London E4 8PT

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

## B/W PHOTO SALES

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Prints of specific EN (and predecessor) vehicles can also be supplied; email with requirements:  
[lyn@barrons-bds.com](mailto:lyn@barrons-bds.com)

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## YOUR REPORTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Members reports, quality photos (prints or slides) and original articles are always welcome. Please send them direct to the relevant Sub-Editor.

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

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.

## ESSEX BUS NEWS

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## Dates for your diary

### ■ EBN PRESS DATES

*For inclusion in EBN dated*

January 2008

February 2008

March 2008

*reports should reach Editors by*

**5 January 2008**

**2 February 2008**

**1 March 2008**

*planned despatch date*

21 January 2008

18 February 2008

17 March 2008

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).

### ■ ROCHFORD MEETINGS

Meetings 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 8 January** - Slide show by *Trevor Brookes*, "**Germany 2008**"
- ▶ **Tuesday 12 February** - Slide show by *Dave Arnold*, "**2007**"
- ▶ **Tuesday 11 March** - AGM followed by slide show by *Alan Osborne*, "**North to Brentwood**"
- ▶ **Tuesday 8 April** - *Paul Harvey* will present an illustrated talk "**Lincolnshire's successful InterConnect strategy**" followed by a current look at buses in Lincolnshire
- ▶ **Tuesday 13 May** - *Chris Stewart* will present the second part of his illustrated review of EN's depots & bus stations
- ▶ **Tuesday 10 June** - to be advised

### ■ COLCHESTER MEETINGS

Meetings take place in the downstairs room (except as indicated) 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. Slides or digital photos are preferable, but prints can also be shown. *Dave Arnold*

- ▶ **Friday 11 January** \* - slide show by *Graham Belfall*, "**Yorkshire & Lancashire**"
- ▶ **Friday 8 February** - slide show by *Chris Stewart*, "**New Zealand 2007**"
- ▶ **Friday 14 March** - slide show by *Alan Osborne*
- ▶ **Friday 11 April** \* - to be advised
- ▶ **Friday 9 May** - slide show by *Richard Delahoy*, "**20 years ago part 2**"
- ▶ **Fridays 13 June, 11 July\*, 8 August 12 September, 10 October, 14 November, 12 December**, details to follow.  
\* in upstairs room

cover: *Brr .... A Wintry Tale*. See page 18. Photo by *John G Lidstone*

## ***From the Editor ...***

The end of another year ... and the Editors thank all contributors for their news, articles and photographs in 2007, and look forward to your continued support in 2008.

Members whose Subscriptions end this month will have received a note from Richard Delahoy inviting them to renew for 2008. If you haven't returned your form and cheque yet, please do so as soon as possible. Each EBN costs just £1.62½p and we hope you agree that it offers good value for money, especially the halfpenny!

Members also enjoy preferential rates on photos from the monthly lists (more Bill Cansick and some other interesting shots to come), an extensive programme of meetings at Rochford and Colchester, the timetable subscription service, and more. Next year, we hope to resume the coach tour programme, and there are three new publications in preparation behind the scenes ... all good reasons to renew ....!

This month, Ian Ransom presents his apologies, but work commitments preclude submission of Small Operators and Publicity drafts. Mark Garrett has received no reports, so no Arriva East Herts & Essex column either .... Also, no volunteer has come forward to take over from David Tomlin on Service Changes. It would be a pity if this section were to disappear, but it *does* need someone prepared to spend a few hours each month compiling it. For a no-obligation chat on what the job entails, contact me ... **David Harman, 24 Frankfield Rise, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 5LF** or phone 01892 519550 or email [ebn@casuarina.org.uk](mailto:ebn@casuarina.org.uk).

Finally, the Editors and Committee wish all readers - members - friends in the industry and fellow enthusiast groups - a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

*David Harman*

## **MUSEUM OF TRANSPORT IN ESSEX**

### **Covered accommodation for Preserved Buses**

**The Museum of Transport in Essex has fully undercover accommodation available for up to 50 buses or trucks. There is sufficient headroom for double-deck vehicles with full security at the site.**

**Rent is £80 per calendar month**

**If interested, contact**

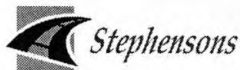
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One of the stars of the **Ensignbus X80 Running Day** on 8 December was Stagecoach East Kent's heritage fleet Regent V **MFN 946F**. This now has a Class VI licence, and is very smartly repainted in traditional livery. Unfortunately, it failed later in the day, but *Richard Delahoy* managed these photographs at Bluewater before fate took a hand.





## Southend Heritage Running Day 1 January 2008



Stephensons will have a mini running day on **New Year's Day**, with assistance from Ensign, Regal and Talisman, using a mixture of heritage and interesting newer buses.

Vehicles expected to be used (subject to availability) are:

**Ensign:** Bristol K, RT and possibly an ex Southend Tiger coach

**Regal:** Essex Pullman Optare Tempo

**Talisman:** RML and ex Colchester Atlantean

**Stephensons:** Southdown Queen Mary PD3, Southend Transport Fleetline, an Olympian, MPD Dart and possibly a guest appearance by a surprise open topper.

A **day rover** ticket priced £6 will be available on buses. **Essex concessionary fare passes** will be accepted but, as these are special services outside of the normal operations, period tickets such as weekly and monthly tickets issued by Stephensons, First or Arriva are *not* valid on January 1st.

### Stephensons of Essex

### January 1, 2008 – special services

#### 3: Canvey - Benfleet - Hadleigh - Southend

|                                 |          |       |          |       |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------|----------|-------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Canvey, Haystack                | XI       | 9:45  | XI       | 10:45 | 11:15 | then  | 16:45 | 17:45 |
| South Benfleet, Station         | ex Grays | 9:56  | ex Grays | 10:56 | 11:26 | every | 16:56 | 17:56 |
| Tarpots Corner                  | 9:34     | 10:04 | 10:34    | 11:04 | 11:34 | 30    | 17:04 | 18:04 |
| Hadleigh, Victoria House Corner | 9:43     | 10:13 | 10:43    | 11:13 | 11:43 | mins  | 17:13 | 18:13 |
| Southend, Travel Centre         | 10:07    | 10:37 | 11:07    | 11:37 | 12:07 | until | 17:37 | --    |
| Southend, Travel Centre, stop B | --       | 10:15 | 10:45    | then  | 15:45 | 16:15 | 16:45 | 17:15 |
| Hadleigh, Victoria House Corner | 10:10    | 10:40 | 11:10    | every | 16:10 | 16:40 | 17:10 | 17:40 |
| Tarpots Corner                  | 10:18    | 10:48 | 11:18    | 30    | 16:18 | 16:48 | 17:18 | 17:48 |
| South Benfleet, Station         | 10:26    | 10:56 | 11:26    | mins  | 16:26 | Grays | 17:26 | Grays |
| Canvey, Haystack                | 10:37    | 11:07 | 11:37    | until | 16:37 | XI    | 17:37 | XI    |

#### 7: Shoeburyness - Southend

|                                       |       |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Shoeburyness, The Renown              | 9:50  | 10:20 | every | 16:50 | 17:20 |
| Thorpe Bay Station                    | 10:00 | 10:30 | 30    | 17:00 | 17:30 |
| Southend, Travel Centre               | 10:09 | 10:39 | mins  | 17:09 | 17:39 |
| Southend, Victoria Station, forecourt | 10:13 | 10:43 | until | 17:13 | 17:43 |

## 7: Shoeburyness - Southend

|                                 |       |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Southend, Victoria Station      | 10:20 | 10:50 | every | 17:20 | 17:50 |
| Southend, Travel Centre, stop H | 10:24 | 10:54 | 30    | 17:24 | 17:54 |
| Thorpe Bay Station              | 10:33 | 11:03 | mins  | 17:33 | 18:03 |
| Shoeburyness, The Renown        | 10:43 | 11:13 | until | 17:43 | 18:13 |

## 7: Southend - Hospital

|                                      |       |        |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|--------|-------|
| Southend, Travel Centre, stop K      | 10:14 | hourly | 17:14 |
| Southend Hospital, Prittlewell Chase | 10:26 | until  | 17:26 |
| Southend Hospital, Prittlewell Chase | 10:28 | hourly | 17:28 |
| Southend, Travel Centre              | 10:40 | until  | 17:40 |

## 61: Southend - Fossetts Park

|                                 |       |      |       |        |       |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| Southend, Travel Centre, stop L | --    | 8:42 | 9:42  | then   | 17:42 | 18:12 |
| Fossetts Park, B&Q              | 08:30 | 8:55 | 9:55  | hourly | 17:55 | 18:25 |
| Southend, Travel Centre         | 08:42 | 9:10 | 10:10 | until  | 18:10 | --    |

## 251: Rayleigh/Eastwood - Southend

|                         |       |       |                                 |       |       |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|---------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Rayleigh Station        | 09:50 | --    | Southend, Travel Centre, stop L | 16:10 | 17:10 |
| Eastwood, Jones Corner  | 10:00 | 9:50  | Eastwood, Jones Corner          | 16:25 | 17:25 |
| Southend, Travel Centre | 10:15 | 10:05 | Rayleigh Station                | 16:35 | --    |

## X1: Grays - Tarpots Corner

|                                      |       |       |                                |       |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Grays, Treacle Mine                  | 09:00 | 10:00 | (Starts Southend as service 3) |       |       |
| Tarpots Corner                       | 09:30 | 10:30 | Tarpots Corner                 | 16:50 | 17:50 |
| (Continues to Southend as service 3) |       |       | Grays, Treacle Mine            | 17:20 | 17:50 |

## Special FREE feeder service: Chelmsford - Canvey

|                          |          |                          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| Chelmsford, Rail Station | 08:40    | Southend Travel Centre   | 17:45    |
|                          | non-stop | (NOT Canvey)             | non-stop |
| Canvey, Haystack         | 09:35    | Chelmsford, Rail Station | 18:45    |

**Getting to Southend:** some buses used on the running day will be running feeder trips to Southend, as shown above. In addition, connections are available by:

**First X30** from Stansted, Chelmsford and Rayleigh (normal fares apply). From north Essex, use *one* trains to Chelmsford then X30.

**c2c Rail** from London etc - connect at Benfleet or Southend Central. A normal Sunday service will be operating on c2c and this is the best way from London.

*one* trains from Billericay to Southend Victoria. Due to engineering works there are no through trains from London - see one publicity for details.

Any updates to this information will be available at [www.stephensonsof Essex.com](http://www.stephensonsof Essex.com).

## Service 35 ~ a sorry tale

Over the course of 2007, EBN has carried various reports of changes to service 35, Southend to Chelmsford, culminating in the collapse of the route in October. Elsewhere in this month's issue we record that Regal Busways are now providing a partial replacement. It is perhaps apposite therefore to record the sorry tale. Some facts are still not entirely clear, so please excuse the lack of precision in some areas.

Numbered 11 for most of its existence, the Southend - Rayleigh - Rettendon - East Hanningfield - Gt Baddow - Chelmsford route can be traced back to 1922 and was operated successively by the National Omnibus & Transport Co, Eastern National, Thamesway and latterly First in Essex. Southend and South Essex have never had a particularly strong affinity with Chelmsford, so that even in the so-called "good old days"

of the bus industry, the service generally only ran hourly, in contrast to the frequencies on routes from Southend to say Grays or Romford. Travel to/from the many factories in Chelmsford did however generate a good level of peak traffic, with some duplication needed.

The hourly service survived deregulation although the Sunday operations were subsequently taken over by Essex CC in January 1991 and currently continue as Regal 11A.

The commercial weekday service was not very remunerative and with a running time of around 75 minutes, the hourly headway could not be scheduled efficiently, thus making it expensive to operate. At one stage it was joined with the 33 as a through Southend - Bishops Stortford service,

The old regime: **First Olympian 34807** (C407 HJN) at East Hanningfield on the Thursday before withdrawal: 28 December 2006. *Chris Stewart*





numbered 33 from May 1995 to March 1998 and then as the Diamond Service, but it reverted to just Southend to Chelmsford in June 2000. In November 2005 it was renumbered 35 and vehicles generally interworked with the Chelmsford - Brentwood service 351.

When the express X30, Southend - Chelmsford - Stansted Airport was introduced in December 2004, initially it had relatively little impact on loadings on the 35 due to the premium fares charged (more than twice the 35's price) but with the introduction of free concessionary pass travel in April 2006, loadings on 35 dropped as passengers switched to the faster and more comfortable X30 (this route has to accept passes as it is registered as a limited stop local service, in contrast to longer distance coach services). Over the Southend to Rayleigh section, 35 duplicated other (mainly First operated) services, likewise between Gt Baddow and Chelmsford. As a result, the only revenue directly attributable to the 35 was for through journeys (few in number) and traffic originating in Rawreth, Battlesbridge, Rettendon, East Hanningfield and Howe Green, all areas of very low population.

It was therefore not very surprising when First announced the complete withdrawal of the 35 after operation on December 30, 2006. The last days - and indeed, the very last First bus - were illustrated in our January 2007 issue.

What was perhaps surprising was the announcement by Stansted Transit that they were taking on the route with a virtually unchanged timetable, still requiring three buses to operate. They were likely to take even less money than the previous First service, as Stansted Transit tickets were not inter-available on other buses on the urban corridors at each end of the route and hence they would not even pick up their proportionate share of local traffic revenue. With an operating centre over 20 miles from the nearest point on the route, even their lower cost base than First was not going to make the sums work. This led to a reduced two-bus, 90 minute headway timetable being introduced from July 21st, 2007, after initial

suggestions that they were going to withdraw the service completely from that date, but it was always doubtful how viable the service could be.

What was far more surprising then was the news that Crown Coaches Ltd had agreed to take over the service from Monday September 3rd, continuing the two-bus, 90-minute headway, still running Monday to Saturday and still with significant dead mileage at the start and end of the day. Crown was a relatively small operator with a 6 vehicle O licence. Latterly their only other local bus operations were on 2 routes in Basildon, 104 (Langdon Hills to Basildon, hourly Monday to Saturday) and 106 (Langdon Hills to Laindon Station, peaks only), requiring one bus and serving an area right on the south west fringes of Basildon that had been largely abandoned/ignored by First. Interestingly, they were the only surviving commercial operator in Basildon other than First, Arriva and Nelsons - see below for more on Crown's bus services. Taking on the 35 was therefore a big step and, it is believed, was linked to a change in management and possibly ownership of the company.

TEMPORARY TIMETABLE  
Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2007

## **CROWN BUS 35**

### ***The Village Highwayman***

- Chelmsford Bus Station
- Great Baddow
- East Hanningfield
- Rettendon / Battlesbridge
- NEW! Rawreth ASDA
- Rayleigh High Street
- Southend TESCO's RBS
- Southend Central Bus Stn

Crown Bus Information Line  
**01702 4 66 66 5**

# CROWN BUS

## Service 35

# The Village Highwayman

Southend - Westcliff - Hospital - Tesco's - Rayleigh - ASDA - Rawreth -  
Battlesbridge - East Hanningfield - Gt Baddow - Chelmsford Bus Station

Monday - Saturday (Except Bank Holidays)

Southend - Chelmsford

|                                     | 35    | 35    | 35    | 35    | 35    | 35    | 35    | 35    |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Southend Bus Station Stand E        | 07.00 | 08.30 | 09.50 | 11.30 | 12.50 | 14.30 | 16.00 | 17.45 |
| Southend Tesco's Store / RBS        | 07.15 | 08.45 | 10.05 | 11.45 | 13.05 | 14.45 | 16.15 | 18.10 |
| Eastwood Kent Elms Corner           | 07.17 | 08.47 | 10.07 | 11.47 | 13.07 | 14.47 | 16.17 | 18.12 |
| Eastwood The Oakwood PH             | 07.23 | 08.53 | 10.13 | 11.53 | 13.13 | 14.53 | 16.23 | 18.18 |
| Rayleigh Town Centre Eastwood Rd    | 07.33 | 09.03 | 10.23 | 12.03 | 13.23 | 15.03 | 16.33 | 18.28 |
| Rayleigh Station Forecourt          | 07.38 | 09.08 | 10.28 | 12.08 | 13.28 | 15.08 | 16.35 | 18.30 |
| Rawreth ASDA Store                  | 07.40 | 09.10 | 10.30 | 12.10 | 13.30 | 15.10 | 16.40 | 18.35 |
| Battlesbridge The Hawk PH / Station | 07.43 | 09.13 | 10.33 | 12.13 | 13.33 | 15.13 | 16.43 | 18.38 |
| Retendon The Bell PH                | 07.45 | 09.15 | 10.35 | 12.15 | 13.35 | 15.15 | 16.45 | 18.40 |
| East Hanningfield The Windmill PH   | 07.52 | 09.22 | 10.42 | 12.22 | 13.42 | 15.22 | 16.52 | 18.47 |
| Great Baddow The Blue Lion PH       | 08.03 | 09.33 | 10.53 | 12.33 | 13.53 | 15.33 | 17.03 | 18.58 |
| Chelmsford Bus Station Stand 3      | 08.15 | 09.45 | 10.55 | 12.45 | 13.55 | 15.45 | 17.15 | 19.10 |

# CROWN BUS

## Service 35

# The Village Highwayman

Chelmsford Bus Sta - Gt Baddow - East Hanningfield - Battlesbridge - Rawreth  
ASDA - Rayleigh - Tesco's - Hospital - Westcliff - Southend

Monday - Saturday (Except Bank Holidays)

Chelmsford - Southend

|                                      | 35    | 35    | 35    | 35    | 35    | 35    | 35    | 35    |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Chelmsford Bus Station Stand 1       | 07.00 | 08.30 | 10.00 | 11.30 | 13.00 | 14.30 | 16.00 | 17.45 |
| Great Baddow The Blue Lion PH        | 07.12 | 08.42 | 10.12 | 11.42 | 13.12 | 14.42 | 16.12 | 17.57 |
| East Hanningfield The Windmill PH    | 07.23 | 08.53 | 10.23 | 11.53 | 13.23 | 14.53 | 16.23 | 18.08 |
| Retendon The Bell PH                 | 07.28 | 08.58 | 10.28 | 11.58 | 13.28 | 14.58 | 16.28 | 18.15 |
| Battlesbridge The Hawk PH / Stn      | 07.32 | 09.02 | 10.32 | 12.02 | 13.32 | 15.02 | 16.32 | 18.17 |
| Rawreth ASDA Store                   | 07.38 | 09.08 | 10.38 | 12.08 | 13.38 | 15.08 | 16.38 | 18.21 |
| Rayleigh Station Forecourt           | 07.43 | 09.13 | 10.43 | 12.13 | 13.43 | 15.13 | 16.43 | 18.25 |
| Rayleigh Town Centre Eastwood Rd     | 07.45 | 09.15 | 10.45 | 12.15 | 13.45 | 15.15 | 16.45 | 18.27 |
| The Eastwood, The Oakwood PH         | 07.53 | 09.23 | 10.53 | 12.23 | 13.53 | 15.23 | 16.53 | 18.35 |
| Eastwood Kent Elms Corner            | 07.58 | 09.28 | 10.58 | 12.28 | 13.58 | 15.28 | 16.58 | 18.38 |
| Southend Tesco's Store / RBS         | 08.00 | 09.30 | 11.00 | 12.30 | 14.00 | 15.30 | 17.00 | 18.40 |
| Southend Central Bus Station Stand E | 08.15 | 09.45 | 11.15 | 12.45 | 14.15 | 15.45 | 17.15 |       |

Two former Stagecoach Alexander bodied Mercedes 709Ds were acquired from Ensign, N977NAP and M340LHP; the former had its Stagecoach livery adapted and branding added, announcing the service as the "Village Highwayman", as illustrated in our September issue. A third bus was also obtained, it is understood on hire from S&M Coaches, Wadham Stringer bodied Dart H908DTP, still in the blue & silver livery of its previous operator, Stratford Blue.

It was not long before reports of unreliability began to appear, with journeys missing due to vehicle or driver non-availability or curtailed in order to give the drivers meal breaks. A notice in the buses only a fortnight after taking over admitted "... we have experienced many hurdles, causing disruption to your

local bus service". The unreliability appeared to worsen and publicity was issued for a revised timetable from October 22, just running between Rayleigh and Chelmsford and requiring only one bus. Optimistically, a timetable had earlier been submitted that would have seen the service diverted in Southend via Hobblythick Lane, Westcliff Plough and Hamlet Court Road (similar to the Sunday 11A contract journeys) from November 12th, still running every 90 minutes. Indeed, this timetable appears in the current Essex County Council timetable books, so future researchers should beware!

However, the company was not able to continue operating. It is not absolutely clear when the route finally ceased, but the last day may have been Thursday October 18th. I

## PASSENGER INFORMATION

IT APPEARS THE 35  
SERVICE IS NOT  
RUNNING TODAY  
WE WILL UPDATE YOU  
AS AND WHEN WE HAVE  
MORE INFORMATION

photographed a notice in Chelmsford bus station on Saturday 20th, placed by the staff at the First enquiry office, saying "It appears the 35 service is not running today" and a similar notice was reported the previous day. Press reports then emerged that Crown Coaches had ceased trading altogether, and hence the Basildon area routes had also stopped running. The last day of those two services is not clear. The *Southend/Basildon Echo* newspaper of October 26th carried the headline "Commuter woes as Crown shuts down" and included reported quotes from Anthony Thipthorpe, referred to as a director of the company, blaming more than 30 incidents of vandalism to its fleet in the past four weeks - costing £30,000 - for forcing it to shut down. The newspaper however noted that the police had no record of any of these crimes being reported to them. The newspaper also said the company had recently relocated to a yard by Sadlers Farm roundabout on the A13 at Benfleet. Previously they had operated from a yard in Stock Road, Southend, shared with Supremes.

There were also questions about the regulatory position of the Crown operations on 35. Local bus services have to be registered with the Traffic Commissioner and cannot operate unless properly registered. The Stansted Transit registration is now recorded as cancelled on the VOSA database but the effective date is unclear as the

cancellation does not seem to have been published in Notices & Proceedings. The Crown registration for service 35 was not published in Notices & Proceedings until the December 5th edition (long after it had ceased again!), and quotes a start date of September 3 but this contradicts the entry that appeared on the VOSA on-line database on November 21, which quoted a start date of November 5th. Such inconsistencies in the publicly available information are not helpful! Searching today (December 5), the VOSA database contains no reference to the 35 at all, and shows the Laindon services as still registered, presumably because the company have failed to submit cancellations.

So where has all this left the poor passenger? Wickford based Nelsons quickly took on the 104 & 106, utilizing a bus otherwise employed on school services. The 104 operates to the former Crown Saturday times (hence with no afternoon or evening service) and the 106 is also similar to the previous version but slightly curtailed. Services commenced on October 30th running free, until the formal registration was accepted from November 5th.

Regal diverted most trips on their kickstart-funded route 1 (Canvey - Battlesbridge - Rettendon - Chelmsford - Oxney Green) via East Hanningfield from Saturday October 27th, quickly restoring a service to and from Chelmsford for that village. Regal subsequently commenced a two-hourly Southend to Chelmsford service, the 3, from December 3rd, interestingly running out of Southend via Westcliff, Leigh Broadway and Hadleigh before going through Rayleigh, thus restoring service to Rawreth Lane, an area of increasing development to the north west of Rayleigh. Leigh etc gain their first ever service to Chelmsford in the same way that Regal's 1 has for Canvey and Benfleet, but this time without the benefit of any subsidy. With a though journey time of 92 minutes, First's X30 will continue to attract much of the end to end traffic and indeed, was stepped up to half-hourly at certain times of day from September 3rd, and larger coaches operate certain trips (see the August & September EBNs), both to cope with the loadings. But at a fare of £6 single/£9 return, X30 remains an



**Regal Busways' ex-London Dart 505 (J105 DUV) in Chelmsford on new route 3.**  
Roller blinds have been replaced with an LED display to add a touch of modernity.

*Kevin Smith*

expensive option for those who have to pay a fare, especially if you also have to catch a local bus to get to one of the very limited stopping points.

The future of Regal's 3 is dependent on traffic and revenue. They have sourced two secondhand Darts for the service [K877UDB and K832SFT] and I wish them well in their endeavour to open up new markets. What is noticeable is the absence of any direct intervention by Essex County Council to provide services to areas otherwise unserved during the hiatus immediately after Crown had ceased. Whilst it was not immediately clear if Crown had indeed ceased running, many commentators were surprised by the lack of any emergency contracts, even allowing for the tightness of ECC's budgets. As it is, Rawreth was without any service for over six weeks.

Somehow I don't think we have yet heard the last of this story . . .

#### **Crown's other bus services**

Crown had started their Basildon/Laindon

services in May 1996. Originally 104 (via Kathleen Ferrier Crescent) and 105 (via Laindon Link) each ran hourly, with morning and evening positioning trips to/from the then operating centre in Armstrong Road, Benfleet as service 110. For a short period, between March and June 1998, when a 103 variant was introduced, Crown ran every 15 minutes between Basildon & Laindon. The services had been introduced following public pressure to restore services to areas previously served by District Bus, but withdrawn by Thamesway in November 1995. For a short while from 19 February 1996 Crown also ran a M-F peak service between Canvey, Leigh Beck & Benfleet Station. It was cancelled from 10 April 1996 and the extent to which it operated is not known, although it definitely ran for some of the time. The peak service to Laindon Station started in March 1998 as 102 when it replaced parts of 104/105, and was later renumbered 106. 105 had been withdrawn at the end of 2002.

*Richard Delahoy, with thanks to Peter Clark for additional information and for checking certain points*

## ■ FIRST ESSEX

### Acquired vehicles

Ancillary vehicle 90345 (at HH) is an Iveco van registered P446UEH (new to *First PMT*) and painted in full 'Barbie' livery. It is lettered for 'Property Maintenance' and has a 'cherry picker' fitted. 90354 is a Ford registered W397PAE.

### Allocation changes

*Period 8: 29 October 2007 to 25 November 2007*

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

**(A)=acquired, including vehicles on loan; Anc=Ancillary fleet; (S)=spare/retained (licensed); D/L(S)=spare/retained (delicensed); D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal;**

**DS=Driving School; PS=Paint Spare**

51780 (S)-FGC to *First West Yorkshire Ltd at Halifax*

thereby bringing to an end the era of the Mercedes 709D in public service (51803, a Mercedes 711D, remains in the fleet as do Publicity Van 90236 and Recruitment Bus 90237 which are both 709Ds).

67037 DS(BN)-DS(CF)

### Repaints (Periods 8):

65651 53125 46818 65678 53126 41017 41650

34807, which has been returned to service after accident damage, has only had a front end repaint and remains in 'Barbie 2' albeit without the 'fades' forward of the front wheel arches.

### Vehicle workings:

6th/7th December were difficult for Essex railways - firstly c2c needed emergency replacement buses between Leigh and Basildon following a train failure, and First Essex Olympians 34807/15 were amongst those sent. Next morning tree damage closed the line at Ingatstone and then later at Billericay - at about 12.00 buses reported at Shenfield included 34807/15 again, First London (VDN)34215 and (DC)21121 plus Stansted Transit J202VHN and NIBS H229LOM. Trains were running again by 13.20.

### Chelmsford & Braintree

November sightings

3rd X30 CF56006 seen in Romford on a private hire

7th CF56003 on 45, CF42483 on 42

14th CF34815 on 72

17th CF46116 & CF42483 on 31/31X, CF43730 on 352, CF43715 on 71, CF65681 on 33

21st CF34815 on 351

24th BE46144 on 42, CF34818 on 351 (10.05 and 14.05 ex CD)

26th CF46129 on 33, CF43729 on 72, CF60104 on 31/31X

28th CF47220 on 352 (14.00 ex HD)

30th green CF47252 on 352, CF34807 on 36

December

1st BE46812 on 47, BE46811 & BE46129 on 351

### Colchester, Clacton & Harwich

Scania's now seem to appear quite often on 61 and low floors have been "creeping in" on daytime weekday 67s. Mercedes 709D 51780 continued to appear on local routes around CN

during November until its departure to Halifax.

The diversion of route 66 in West Bergholt ceased by 5th November.

On Sunday 11th, Colchester High Street was closed in the morning for the Remembrance Day service at the War Memorial. On Sunday 18th, Colchester High Street was closed until 20.00 for the Christmas Fair and lights switch-on. On both occasions services were diverted as follows:

Greenstead bound 1A, 64/A, Colchester bound 70, 75 - Southway, St Botolph's Circus, Magdalen Street. Then: 64/A to normal route, 1A Brook St then normal route and 70 Brook Street, East Hill, High Street, Queen Street to bus station.

Highwoods bound 2C, Monkwick bound 8C, University bound X22, Stanway bound 65, Wivenhoe bound 62, Brightlingsea bound 78, West Mersea bound 67B and Clacton bound 74 all operated Middleborough, Balkerne Hill, Southway; then 65 to Headgate, Crouch Street onto normal route; X22, 8C, 62, 67B, 74, 78 Southway, St Botolph's Circus, onto normal routes; 2C - as X22 etc, then Magdalen Street, Brook Street onto normal route.

#### November sightings

14th CR65679 on 61

15th CR62407 on X22

16th CR43741 on 67 (daytime)

19th CR43742 on 62; CR62409 on 61

21st CR65650 on old haunt of 65, but then moved back onto 64A

22nd CN67010 on CN18 (Lances now appear quite often on CN17/18), CR43744 on 88

23rd CN34314 on CR71

26th CR46829 on 76 (17.10 ex CR - rather than a Scania to work the ECC 74B)

27th CR43716 on 67 (day); CF53130 on DT4, CF56005 on X22

#### December

1st CR34302 on 65

3rd CR34290 on 64A, CR65654 on 66

4th CR47101 & CR67008 on 65

#### Basildon/Hadleigh

##### November

15th BN46808 on 73, BN52581 on 81 (Darts aren't that unusual on the 73 but in theory Varios don't normally get on the 81/82)

21st BN46170 on 551 (returned from loan to CR)

##### December

7th BN31374 on 100 (12.00 ex CD)

#### Other News

Olympian coach 4503 (MIB6189, B691BPU) has sadly made its final journey from Ards Tours, Newtownards, Northern Ireland to Hamill's scrapyard at Ahoghill, where it was noted on 28th November. Anyone with internet access may wish to look at Gordon Hawkins' site <http://northernirelandbusimages.fotopic.net/p46940269.html> and adjacent photos.

Your sub-Editor's brother John can vouch for the good condition of former 2841 (MVX878C), the FLF with Dreadnought Coaches of Alnwick, having arranged a brief visit and ride round the block in it on 8th November courtesy of the very helpful proprietors Paul and Claire Gilroy. It mostly sees wedding use, with other Lodekkas (not ex EN) in use on the town tour.

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to *First Essex* and to A Bird, T Clark, J Clayton, D Edwards, M Farmer, I Hardie, G Hawkins, G Norris, J Podgorski, D Pretty, J Salmon, 'Solo', J Stewart, R Webb, R Whitley, the *Essex Bus*, *South West* and *British Buses in North America* y-groups, [www.bustlistsontheweb.co.uk](http://www.bustlistsontheweb.co.uk), *Real Bus News*, LOTS, PSV Circle.

Reports relating to *First Group* may be sent by text on 07973 509459, by fax on 01277 216745,

by e-mail or by conventional post. Many thanks to all who do so.

Chris Stewart

**Acquired vehicles** *ex-Dublin Bus RH202-4 via Southdown PSV (dlr) - new and updated information*

- L361 M144 UKN** (95-D-202) Volvo Olympian SLVYC21SCO25857  
Alexander (Belfast) D10.07 H47/27D new 3/1995, reregistered 10/2007
- L362 M146 UKN** (95-D-203) Volvo Olympian SLVYCNC21SCO25860  
Alexander (Belfast) D10.08 H47/27D new 3/1995, reregistered 11/2007
- L363 M294 UKN** (95-D-204) Volvo Olympian SLVYNC214SC025860  
Alexander (Belfast) D10.09 H47/27D new 3/1995, reregistered 11/2007

## **Vehicles sold**

- L122 A122 PAR** Leyland Tiger/Plaxton Express C53F

## **Other news**

A convoy of Volvo B10M/Plaxton's, L281, L291, L298, L309, L311, L323 and L329 transported children to the pantomime at the Civic Theatre, Chelmsford on 10 December.



With the Leyland name fast disappearing from coach and bus fleets it is worth recording that the first Leyland Lynx saloon was introduced into the fleet in the summer of 1988, and has now covered in excess of one million kilometres.

The original clutch of four Mark I and Mark II's are still operational and all giving reliable

service. The Cummins engine is fitted to the first three whilst the fourth Lynx has the larger and more powerful Volvo unit.

They were all extensively used on services 88 and 89 in their earlier years, but now are more likely to be found on school contract work. Their high seating capacity makes them capable of being employed on most school contracts.

Operational Lynx fleet as at December 2007.

|      |      |     |      |                           |      |
|------|------|-----|------|---------------------------|------|
| L150 | F150 | LTW | 1988 | Leyland Lynx LX112L1O2R/R | B51F |
| L196 | H48  | NDU | 1990 | Leyland Lynx LX2R11C15Z4R | B51F |
| L200 | J295 | TWK | 1991 | Leyland Lynx LX2R11C15Z4S | B51F |
| L206 | 3724 | KBC | 1991 | Leyland Lynx LX2R11U18Z4S | B47F |

Additional pre-owned Lynx:

|      |      |     |      |                           |      |
|------|------|-----|------|---------------------------|------|
| L322 | G222 | DKA | 1989 | Leyland Lynx LX2R11C1524R | B51F |
|------|------|-----|------|---------------------------|------|

*David Harman with thanks to Mr D R MacGregor and Ian Ransom*



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## ■ ARRIVA SOUTHEND LIMITED

### New Vehicles

3997-9 (GN57 BOU/BOV/BPE) Enviro 200 10.2 m.

These were delivered to Dartford during the first week of December for commissioning. One is likely enter service at Dartford temporarily but the other will see service at Grays and could appear on any of the TfL routes operated from Grays..

### Vehicles on Loan to Dartford from Southend

3181 (P181 LKL) Dart SLF/Plaxton

3323 (T823 NMJ) Dart SLF/Plaxton

3388 (P258 FPK) Dart SLF/Plaxton

These vehicles are at Dartford to cover for Low Emission Zone (LEZ) compliant Dart SLFs transferring from Dartford to Grays following a PVR increase on route 370.

The loss of 3181 and 3388 at Southend is being covered by the arrival of Dart SLFs 3307/8 from Maidstone (see EBN523). However, the knock-on effect of this is that Southend route 13 will now not become a low floor route until Spring 2008, once 3181 and 3388 return to Southend. This will happen after new Enviro 200s for route 370 are delivered to Grays in April. 3323 is at Dartford on a more temporary basis and is expected to have returned to Southend before Christmas. In the meantime Dennis Dart/East Lancs 3006 (L508 CPJ) has been temporarily returned to service at Southend.

### Route 29

The rebranded service 29 (Southend – Belfairs) was launched on Friday 30th November at 1400 outside the Woodcutters Pub. Repainted Dart SLFs 3391/2/421/31 (P261/2 FPK, P421/31 HVX) have had route 29 branding applied.





Displaying *the twenty-nine* / 29 branding are 3421 (P421 HVX) and 3431 (P431 HVX), in Southend on 28 November. Ian Banks



These four branded vehicles have been named by pupils at Fairways Primary School. The names are reported as *Blue Bird*, *Pride of Fairways*, *Friends of Fairways* and *Bus Lightyear*.

### Unusual Sightings

3rd November Dart SLF 10.7m 3303 (Y303 TKJ) on Tfl Route 256 usually DAF SB120 10.2m  
7th November Dart SLF 10.6m 3270 (R270 EKO) on Tfl Route 346 usually DAF SB120 9.4m

### Other News

Work is well underway, at St George's Hospital Hornchurch, on a new turning facility for buses on route 256. Vehicles on route 256 have been running out of service to turn and stand at Elm Park since August 2004.

*Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Matthew Arnold, John Podgorski and Essex Bus y-group*



Volvo Citybus 335 (G615 BPH) has been physically renumbered 215. It now also carries Green Route 2 branding. Dart 302 (M722 CGO) has received rear end repairs.

### Unusual sightings:

November

15th 517 on 1.  
20th 528 on 83  
21st 904 on 1 and 307 on 2 (daytime)  
22nd 307 on 2 (daytime)  
23rd 300 on 2 (daytime)  
30th 346 on school contract 611 (usually saloon).

### Other news

Former Colchester Lynx 38 (G38 YHJ) has been bought from Arriva Cymru (SLC38) for preservation (in Arriva colours) by Simon Charsley.

*Peter Mansbridge with thanks to John Podgorski  
Crosville Enthusiasts Club Review*

## Ensignbus

Omnibus suppliers to the World

### DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in

from

**ChesterBus:** Darts P341/2/3/4 OEW L160 PDM K59 LLG  
**Flights Hallmark, Bristol:** Olympians P338/40/2/4/6/9/50 ROO  
**Metroline:** AV30/1, Darts R864/5/6/7/8/9MCE, R692MEW  
**Stagecoach South:** Mercedes N661VSS  
**Stagecoach Manchester:** Olympians J167 UNH H604 LNA  
**Travelmasters, Sheerness:** Bristol VR's AIG 6623/4

Vehicles out

to

Dorchester VIW 8496: **Aintree Coaches**, Liverpool  
Volvo B10M's F303/9MYJ: **Black Velvet Travel**, Southampton.  
Olympian G648 EEV: **Charlton Services**, Charlton, Oxon.

Dart L160 PDM: **Eastonways**, Ramsgate, Kent  
 Dart K58 LLG: **Galleon Travel**, Harlow, Essex  
 Olympians G515/7VBB: **Imperial**, Rainham, Essex  
 Scania N754 OAP: **Irvines Coaches**, Law, Lanark  
 RT2911: **London Bus Co.**, Dagenham, Essex  
 Darts T63/4/5 KLD: **Renown Coaches**, Bexhill, East Sussex  
 Olympian F259 YTJ: **Stansted Transit**, Stansted, Essex  
 Dublin Olympians 91-D-10107/110 now J860/1 CEV with **Town Lynx**, Holywell, Flintshire  
 Olympian J836 TSC: **Weardale MS**, Stanhope, Co.Durham

Metrorider P422 VRG: **Erith Commercial**  
 DMS25 (Fleetline) : **PVS** for scrap.

# ■ **ENSIGN BUS Co., Purfleet**

Reported as acquired from Reading Transport is a batch of low-floor Optare Spectras. These include YJ51 ZVL and YJ51 ZVO, formerly 733/6 in the Reading fleet, now numbered 103/6. Reading blue/white *daytrack/nightrack* livery is retained at present. They are intended to replace Metrobuses on rail replacement work in the London area, when the low emission zone (LEZ) regulations begin in April 2008. More details next month.

*David Harman, with thanks to Ross Newman, Ensignbus and [www.buszone.co.uk](http://www.buszone.co.uk)*



Recently supplied to **Imperial** by Ensign, is former Kentish Bus Olympian G521 VBB. Branded for the Loughton - Harlow H1 route, it is seen entering Lakeside Bus Station. Does anyone know anything about route H2 - or is this a shoppers excursion? The destination blinds are (mostly) printed in an unusual black on lime-green scheme.

*Kevin Smith*

## ***A Wintry Tale***

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I was the last available person in the garage this day in winter 1976/77, when the Transport General Manager required transport to go and see 363 on its side in a ditch at the Shepherd & Dog on service 10. So Percy Nicholls (Driving Instructor) took me off duty and I had my first ever driving lesson in snow - with the TGM as my only passenger!

We reached the stricken Fleetline without incident, apart from me with a cricked neck, having to keep my head down very low over the steering wheel in order to be able to see forward through the tiny triangle cleared by the useless wipers the PD3s had. The cab was warm, as I remember as the demister was okay. But it had been slow progress for the last part, as driving, heavy, wet snow piled up across the windscreen and forward visibility was very low indeed. Concentration was the name of the game, especially as I didn't know the roads very well at all. It was not an easy, or enjoyable journey, but one I'll never forget driving!

The previous night, I had been on the Traffic Office Log. Relatively new driver Martin Page had unfortunately drawn the short straw for the infamous haunted 'last Pag' (last trip to/from Paglesham on service 10). I told Martin before he set out that he should take his time, and be safe, no matter how late that meant he ran (back). I said he'd have overtime and, if necessary, I'd delay closing the Office until his return, also that he should phone me if he was in difficulty (no radios, or mobiles then).

When I heard his voice, my heart sank - fearing what difficulty might have befallen him. He said he was having trouble seeing where he was going - I told him to watch for roadside trees, posts etc and especially to be wary where ditches might be. As I

said that, there was a cry of "'oooh - oh - oh my God - where's the bus - oh NO" on the other end of the phone. It was as if he knew I could see, so he told me nothing more. I told him - what's happening - tell me - have you any passengers? He said he was empty, but that the bus had slipped away off the road whilst he'd been on the phone. (Best laid plans, eh??!)

Oooh dear. I called out the Duty Crew and they recovered Martin, but not the bus. At that stage, 363 was hardly damaged at all, as it landed very softly on a soft bank covered in soft snow at about a 45 degree angle. Only the skirt was slightly rumpled. But, two days of recovery attempts with metal hawsers and ropes by tractors and HGVs wrecked the entire body, which was rebuilt at Tickfield Works over many months (as new). I think even the Army was present - the field opposite the bus was strewn with vehicles of all sizes, mostly dragging chains, ropes and hawsers through 363's bodywork to try and drag it back onto the road again.

In desperation, the Fire Brigade was called in and in an amazing 20 minutes - this was what the Transport General Manager had wanted to see - it was righted by revolutionary new air bags which had been tucked under and inflated in just minutes.

As soon as the bus was righted, then my ordeal started again, as I had to drive the TGM back to the Garage again (I noted that my Driving Instructor didn't choose to drive 315 back, either; I later changed to bus 316 and passed my test in a much more professional driving school with (now late) Brian Moxham, whose claim to fame was driving Lowlander 326 across Canada for the Commonwealth Games.

*John G.Lidstone*

***Cleared for take-off ... another visit to King's Cross Coach Station***

Some more recollections, but first, a correction necessitated by my 256k of grey cell RAM becoming overloaded with 30 years-worth of trivia: the Kings Cross Model Shop was of course in York **Way**. **York Road** was somewhere else - in Shenfield - on my walking route to primary school!

*Alan Osborne* recalls the Coach Station when it first opened. The neighbourhood, whilst not on par with more fashionable parts of London, was fairly presentable. The alleyway to the Coach Station was enhanced with wooden benches and potted plants. The general decline, and vagrant problem seem to have begun when leases on nearby shops expired and they became empty for long periods.

The **Coach-Air** services used Kings Cross for many years. You caught a coach to the airport (Southend, Stansted or Luton), and then caught the plane.

Why did people do that instead of flying from Heathrow or Gatwick? Answer: because it was considerably cheaper. *British European Airways* (BEA), the state-owned short-haul carrier and its European counterparts held the lion's share of landing/ take-off slots at Heathrow and Gatwick, and for a long time they enjoyed a cosy monopoly. The second-tier carriers could only obtain slots at more inconvenient regional airports, for which coach connections were a necessity. Overall journey times were longer, but it was a trade-off against lower fares. This was a market, principally comprising the leisure traveller, which Eastern National successfully exploited. Another coach-air service was the *East Kent - Skyways* route to Lympne (later Lydd), which ran from VCS.

The earliest reference I can find to the Coach-Air services is in the EN timetable dated 1 June 1958. A service was run from the Euston Square Coach Station to Southend, to



*On a deserted stand "A": early FLF bus 2734 (181 XNO) off the 251 'Main Road' allocation, substitutes for a coach version on the X10. courtesy Lyn Watson*



## COACH-AIR

from  
**LONDON**

Eastern National  
Coach Station King's Cross \*  
via  
Southend Airport  
in conjunction with  
British United Air Ferries Ltd.

## To CALAIS, OSTEND, ROTTERDAM AND BASLE

\* also from the Midlands and the North via Cambridge

*Dare I say it - a fine pair of Bristols! A Silver City Airways Bristol Superfreighter and an Eastern National Bristol LS pose on the tarmac at Southend Airport. The coach has the special Coach-Air side boards that were used for a time. (From timetable dated 27 September 1964). For the record, Silver City had Bristol 170 Mark 32 "Superfreighters": G-AMWA (new 1953), G-AMWB-C-D-E-F-H-J (1954), and G-ANWK-L-M-N (1956). G-ANWK was the subject of an 'Airfix' kit which some members (like me) may remember from their childhood. The Superfreighter could carry three cars and 12 passengers or two cars and 23 passengers. It was ugly but practical.*



## COACH-AIR

from  
**LONDON**

Eastern National  
Coach Station King's Cross  
via  
Southend Airport  
in conjunction with  
Channel Airways Ltd.

## To OSTEND, ROTTERDAM, PARIS AND CHANNEL ISLANDS

*By the time the 1966 timetable appeared, the picture had been updated to show a Channel Airways Carvair (the successor to the Superfreighter), plus the replacement for the LS - an MW dual-purpose from the first batch. The 'COACH AIR SERVICE - LONDON - SOUTHEND AIRPORT - THE CONTINENT' side boards continue. The driver still wears the long, white dustcoat, and white-topped cap, neither of which would have been out of place alongside a charabanc of the 1920s.*



*View up the exit ramp at Kings Cross, with the charting office etc. on the far left. EBEG Collection*

connect with *Air Charter* flights to Calais, Ostend and Rotterdam. A return to Calais was £6.17s.0d, and 23-day excursions to Ostend and Rotterdam were £7.7s.0d, and £11.4s.0d., respectively.

By 1961, *Air Charter* had become *Channel Air Bridge Ltd.*, but the same pattern of services prevailed. *Channel Air Bridge* and *Silver City Airways Ltd.* ('Silver City' was the nickname for the New South Wales mining town of Broken Hill), had merged in 1963 to form *British United Air Ferries Ltd.* In the same year, Basle became a new destination, but this was short-lived. 1963 also saw the transfer of the Coach-Air services to the new Kings Cross Coach Station.

In 1964, Paris, Jersey and Guernsey were added, and coaches ran in conjunction with *Channel Airways* as well as BUA.

By 1966, connections for flights to Jersey, Guernsey, Ostend, Rotterdam and Paris (*Channel Airways*), and Geneva, Calais, Rotterdam and Ostend (BUAF) were advertised, with coaches now starting at VCS and calling at Kings Cross 25 minutes later.

The VCS back projection was fairly quickly dropped, probably because of traffic delays. Express services from other parts of Essex were now introduced to connect with flights from the Southend hub.

Geneva was dropped in 1967, and Calais in 1968, although the latter returned in 1969. In 1967, a service to Lympe, for Paris was advertised but this appears to have run only in that year.

In 1968, *Channel Airways* began flying additionally from Stansted to the Channel Islands, with EN again provided the coach connection. By 1970, they appear to have switched all flights to Stansted, and the BUA connections had been dropped. Coach-Air had by now been evicted from the timetable books, but a summer 1970 brochure lists the X60 from Kings Cross, X61 from Dagenham via the A12, and the X28 from Southend.

My researches stop at this point, other than to note that *Channel Airways* got into financial difficulties in 1971. Can anyone complete the Coach-Air story?

*David Harman*



# PCV HOLDER ?



## > **FULL AND PART-TIME DRIVERS REQUIRED**

Stephensons of Essex and our associated company, Excel Passenger Logistics are expanding fast and we have vacancies for drivers at our Maldon, Rochford and Stansted depots.

**NEW!!! > Driver vacancies at our new Witham Depot - Full and Part time**

Full and Part time drivers are needed for school services, weekend rail replacement, together with work and private hires.

If you're over 25 and have held a PCV licence for two years or more, we'd like to hear from you.

We offer attractive rates of pay, varied work, and a friendly working environment.

## > **FULL AND PART-TIME PCV FITTERS**

We also have vacancies for experienced fitters at our Maldon, Rochford and Stansted depots.

## > **RAIL CONTROLLERS / CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSISTANTS**

Part-time vacancies exist at Excel for station-based staff on weekends and occasionally evenings, so even if you haven't got a PCV licence, you can still help ensure the smooth running of our rail replacement services.

For more details of any of the above vacancies, contact

|              |               |              |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Stephensons: | Bill Hiron    | 01702 541511 |
| Excel:       | Graham Hayden | 01279 681800 |

