

ESSEX BUS NEWS

The Monthly Magazine Of The ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

APRIL 1991

(Formerly the EASTERN NATIONAL ENTHUSIASTS GROUP)

ISSUE No. 324



Stephensons of Southend are operating a number of Bristol VRTs. One of them is ex South Midland TBW 452R. It is seen here still in full SM livery at Rayleigh Station on 26.2.91.

EDITOR: Ian Ranson, 102 Bradford Street, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0XU

SUB EDITORS: Southend Transport

Edward Cecil, 59 Abbs Cross Lane, Hornchurch, Essex, RM12 4XW

Thamesway

Paul Harvey, 19 Watkins Way, Shoeburyness, Essex, SS3 9NX

South Essex Independents

Mark Lloyd, 4 New Cottages, Wakes Colne, Colchester, Essex, CO6 2BY

PUBLICATIONS: Andy Meadows, 10 Harvard Court, Boston Avenue, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 9ST

PHOTO ORDERS: Peter Snell, 6 Handeville Way, Thundersley, Essex, SS7 4 LH

MEMBERSHIP: Bob Palmer, 67 Perkins Road, Barking, Essex, IG2 7NQ

SUB EDITORS

With effect from next month Southend Transport notes should be sent to Mr E Cecil, 59 Abbs Cross Lane, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 4XW.

South Essex other operators notes should be sent to Mr M Lloyd, 4 New Cottages, Wakes Colne, Colchester, CO6 2BY.

On behalf of the group may I welcome them to the editorial team and thank them for making themselves available. In return it is essential that local members pass reports to them of what is going on in the Southend area so as to ensure reports are as accurate and up to date as possible.

And Finally (to quote the outgoing sub editor) may I express our sincere thanks to Richard Delahoy for providing such excellent coverage of events in the Southend area over recent years. His reporting has always been up to date, readable and perhaps controversial but has always left the reader knowing what is going on in the area.

The Alternative Tour, Sunday 19 May 1991

In place of the anticipated Thamesway tour, this alternative tour has been arranged. It will visit Eastern National, Dons of Dunmow, Cambus and Premier Travel and includes a ride in an open top Bristol FLF. A booking form is enclosed with this magazine. Please book early to avoid dissatisfaction.

Blue Triangle Excursion Programme 1991

These excursions will be by RT or RM and generally pick up in Romford, Barking and London. Visits are mainly to rallies eg. Brighton, Southsea, Sandtoft, Showbus etc. For details and an excursion programme please contact the operator at 25 Lovell Walk, Rainham, Essex, RM13 7ND or phone 04027 55895 or 081 530 5344.

ROCHFORD MEETING

A reminder that the May meeting to be held on the 14th will feature a talk by David Whiteside and Robin Wheatcroft of bus services in the county operated on behalf of Essex County Council. Tenders, services and publicity will feature as topics and all members and guests are invited. The Freight House is the venue which is adjacent to Rochford station.

OLD MAGAZINE SALES

Back issues of all magazines produced by the group since January 1987 are available for sale by post. So if youve lost a copy or two or have only been a member for a short while and would like to complete your set then send your order to Bob Palmer. Prices are 45p each or 2.50 for six issues including postage. Supplies of early issues are running low so obtain them now.

CORRECTION

The caption on the front of last months magazine should have been dated 9.9.90.

EASTERN NATIONAL

New Vehicles

500-7 H388-95 MAR Mercedes Benz 709D Reeve Burgess B23F

These vehicles were delivered on 18.3.91. and entered service with immediate effect.

Chassis numbers are 071557, 072738, 056517, 072697, 056230, 072283, 058714 and 072895.

Body numbers are 18481-8.

Allocation Changes

3/91 200 CN-POOL; 500-7 NEW-CF; 704/5 CF-POOL; 706 CF-BE;
707-9/11/12/15/19 CF-BS; 1501/2 1769 BS-D/L(D); 1778 BE-BS;
1782 BS-D/L(D)

The above changes see the introduction of minibuses at Bishops Stortford on services 309 and 433. The Mercedes at Chelmsford are for services 42 and 48 but do stray on to other routes.

Pool 1754 was noted in Colchester depot on 14.3 minus blinds as was 3064.

Service Changes

- 36 Further to 323/3 an extra commercial service on Monday to Fridays at 2301 ex South Woodham was introduced.
- 96 Additional commercial journeys on Saturdays at 0705 ex Maldon and 1825 ex Burnham were introduced from 29.3.91.
- 301 The 1500 ex Bishops Stortford was advanced by 10 minutes from 17.3.91.
- 306 The morning service was rerouted via Berden and Little London from 17.3.91.
- 309 Converted to minibus and revised to operate between Bishops Stortford and Heath Row from 17.3.91.
- 350/1 Revised peak hour and Saturday afternoon services introduced from 8.4.91.

To correct 323/3 services 33 etc were revised from 17.3.91. with the Sunday service between Bishops Stortford and Stansted Airport being withdrawn.

Highwayman Services 1991

This year services will run on Saturdays only between 25.5.91. and 21.9.91. and will operate as follows:-

- 804 Southend- Basildon- Chelmsford- Colchester- Ipswich- Norwich
- 805 Chelmsford- Braintree- Colchester- Lowestoft- Gt.Yarmouth-

Hemsby

806 Canvey- Basildon- Maldon- Colchester (Feeder Service)
814 Maldon- Sth Woodham- Rayleigh- Wickford- Basildon (Then 824)
815 Clacton- Colchester- Witham- Chelmsford- Basildon (Then 825)
817 Braintree- Shenfield- Brentwood- Romford- Basildon (Then 827)
824 Basildon- Brighton- Seaford- Eastbourne- Hastings
825 Basildon- Worthing- Bognor- Portsmouth- Southsea
827 Basildon- Bournemouth- Weymouth

General

On a number of mornings during March early morning services from Colchester were reported as delayed or cancelled on BBC Essex. On 5.3 and 13.3. CBT operated the journeys on 6/6A for at least part of the day. On 14.3 a service 7 schools journey was being operated by CBT.

The Evening Gazette reports that Halstead bound journeys on service 311 may return to the Bus Park in Braintree following complaints about the walking distance to Coggeshall Road from the Rail Station.

Vandals struck again at Braintree Bus Park on 18.3 when the hanbrake was released on 1782 causing it to roll down the slope and demolishing a garden wall across the road. This vehicle was due to be withdrawn anyway and damage to the vehicle was not severe (which is more than could be said of the wall).

Bristol VR 3059 is being cannibalised for spares at Colchester.

Publicity

Timetable leaflets for services 3,4 dated 11.2.91 and service 34 dated 11.2.91.

Summary of services 309 & 333 dated 22.4.91. and summary of services 333 & 433 also dated 22.4.91.

Booklets for Buses serving Bishops Stortford and Buses serving Stansted Airport both dated 17.3.91.

Real Ale Runabout leaflet dated 8.1.91 to 25.6.91.

Highwayman Holiday Routes dated 25.5.91. to 21.9.91.

ChelmerCard leaflet dated 18.2.91.

Subsequent Disposals

1200 (BNO 686T) Sold by Weedon, Gosport, by 2/91.

1714 (WNO 563L) Withdrawn by Hastings & District, Hastings, 1/91. To Thames Transit Ltd., Exeter, 3, 1/91. Thought to be operating temporarily in Portsmouth for Portsmouth Transit before large scale minibus conversion implemented.

2710 (90 TVX) Reported now to be a PSV again with Top Deck Travel, Horsell Common, 2/90. Seats H13/16F.

THAMESWAY LTD

These notes are correct to 7th April

PLEASE NOTE

Thamesway Ltd have advised the group that they are now not in a position to provide information on the Company's activities to the group, because it is not a commercial activity. Therefore I request members to submit reports on any matter relating to Thamesway, especially in the BD/WW/PD areas, to enable this section of the newsheet to continue - this means you - if you see something then report it to the sub editor, address on the cover of the Mag.

Aquired Vehicles

MHS 25/32P, WSU 452S Leyland Leopard Alexander Y B53F
These vehicles were noted in BN depot on 20th March and have been aquired for Driver Training Duties. Previously T247/254/310 in the Central Scottish fleet and 1408/14/52 ex Kelvin Central whom they were aquired from. WSU 452S is being used from Hadleigh Depot.

Vehicles on Loan

Noted in use during March were Midland Red West Iveco E951/2 LAE on Driver Training. It is presumed these vehicles replaced E922/3 KEU. Eastern National 0121 (B259 CHK) Peugeot Car is operating as a ferry vehicle from BD depot.

Repaints

Noted recently repainted in new livery is 1882.

Vehicle Disposals

Bristol VR's 3065/67/73/74/82 3206/17 were noted at Bath depot of Badgerline Ltd early March, of which 3082 was in service without Badgerline fleetnumber. It appears 3206 may be for spares only. LN 1738 was still operating from HH depot during March, while 1748 has been in use at WW recently.

Bristol VR 3207 has been aquired by Fords Coaches of Althorne. Noted parked at BN depot on 12th March were 1116/24/26, 1721/25/42/43/61 and 3211. The remains of 1737 is still at HH.

Service Revisions

Basildon Area commencing 8th April 91

151 Weekday evening service withdrawn.

501/11 Diverted to operate via Basildon Hospital Grounds (double run)

505 16-32 Cranes Industrial Estate to Basildon withdrawn.

506 Weekday evening service withdrawn.

510 New Weekday evening service between Pitsea Station and Felmores via

- Vange, Clayhill Road, Basildon and Whitmore Way.
- 521 Now to operate Southfields Fenton Way to Felmore East Tyefields with revised timetable and no evening service.
- 551 Revised timetable Saturday early evenings.

Also to note from Sunday 7th April ECC contract 152/3 Chelmsford to Gray will be operated by Harris Bus instead of Thamesway. This therefore means Basildon depot will be closed on Sundays, joining Brentwood Depot. ECC contract 506 Basildon to Laindon Weekday evenings will be operated by District Bus.

Publicity

- 151 dated 8-4-91
 501/10/11 dated 8-4-91
 501-6/10/11 dated 8-4-91
 520/1/242 dated 8-4-91
 551 dated 8-4-91

General

Further to last months comments about ECC Sunday Savers , now that Thamesway donot operate Sunday 152/3, the company donot issue or accept Sunday Savers in South Essex now. With the exception of PD & WW the only vehicles to operate on a Sunday now are 6 minibuses from HH on service 3, 2 minibuses from SD on service 20 and 2 big buses from SD on service 2, one wanders when HH and SD will be closed on a Sunday?

Usually Workings

- 9-2-91 Two 30X on service 193 in Romford, the 362 was not operating due to snow.
- 22-2-91 BD304 on service W14 as W42.
- 20-3-91 E952 LAE on Driver Training duties at Chelmsford Bus Station.
- 21-3-91 D/L (D) 1748 on LRT service 20.
- 30-3-91 D/L (D) 1748 noted in use at WW.

What the Papers say

All change on the buses in town

THE Thamesway bus service is to undergo major changes in the Basildon area.

The changes, which will swing into action from April 8, involve some buses being withdrawn completely.

The evening 151 service will be stopped and partly replaced by the 510 service between Basildon and Pitsea.

The 4.32pm 505 service from Cranes Farm Industrial Estate to Basildon bus station and the evening 506 service will be stopped. This will be partly replaced by the new 510 Felmore shopping Centre to Basildon and Pitsea.

There will also be a new 510 evening service between Felmore Shopping Centre and Pitsea and the 521 service will operate from Southfields Fenton Way to Felmore East Tyefields on a revised timetable.

New timetables are available from Basildon bus station or on 0268 287541.

Changes for the Easter weekend:

Buses will be run on a Sunday service tomorrow a normal Saturday service on Saturday, a normal Sunday service on Easter Sunday and a Sunday service on Easter Monday.

Southend Transport

These notes are correct to April 4.

Vehicles

ACQUIRED:

All of the LN's noted last month (716-26) have now entered service, except for 717. However 718/20/4 are now in store as a reserve fleet. Olympian 258 entered service in the last week of March, initially without side and rear electronic number displays. 257 will follow shortly. Tiger coach 557 is also now in traffic, with 558 to follow soon. Routemaster 118 has been delivered from Southampton but has yet to go into service.

SUBSEQUENT DISPOSALS:

DMS's with Ensign: we have identified one of the outstanding queries from last month's notes - MLK 620L (ex ST 303; originally 312) was withdrawn by Ensign in 11/90.

Also still with Ensign at the time of the sale to the Hong Kong CNT Group (but completely forgotten about last month!) were 'genuine' ST Fleetlines JTP 386/7/9/93/4/7P (ST 206/7/9/13/4/7), which can thus be recorded as a transfer from Ensign to Frontrunner South East Ltd.

Services

The service changes noted last month as starting on Monday March 25 in fact started on Tuesday March 26. To amplify/correct those notes:

3 The Sunday service actually consists of a half hourly day time service (0815 - 1500 approx) between Southchurch White Horse and Thames Drive (some extended to Hadleigh), which then turns into an hourly Shobury to Canvey operation from mid afternoon (first ex Shobury 1525, to Benfleet only; first Canvey arrival is at 1749).

250 The number 250 is used for all journeys through to Wickford and Basildon - last month's report that 251 would be shown on Wickford terminating journeys was wrong. The 250 also diverts at Little Wheatleys via the Thamesway 26 loop working instead of following the main road Thamesway 250/251 route.

Another change not reported last month was that 63 gained additional M-F peak journeys from March 26, to give a 15 min peak headway.

General

Easter operations saw a Sunday service provided on Good Friday and Easter Monday, with additional 7's between Southend and Shobury to give a half hourly headway. Fleetlines and Olympians also substituted for LN's on certain busy routes. In addition, ECC contract routes 23A and 23C, nominally withdrawn after contract expiry on March 24, were operated on Good Friday, prior to Essex Thameside taking up the new contract (see below).

Publicity news: new standard leaflets, cover dated March 26, were issued for service groups: 2, 3/3A/5/13, 14/22/250, 63. Coach services are featured in a new 795 issue (30/3/91) and a summer X1 etc leaflet will come out dated 29/4/91 (to include the extra summer Sunday journeys as per last year, plus the diversion of more journeys via West Thurrock's Lakeside complex, and the extension of some off peak X1's to Victoria Coach Station, to connect with National Express)

OTHER OPERATORS - South East Essex

District Bus, Wickford: has two more minibuses, G145/8 GOL, both Ivecos with Carlyle B25F bodies: presumably they are fleetnumbers 8/9. A proper printed timetable book has been published, price 30p (plus postage); dated April 1st (no, this is not a wind up!) it is A5 size, with 22 pages and a photo of a Sherpa on the cover.

Essex Thameside Minicoaches, Canvey: as noted last month, has won ECC contracts for 23C (an amalgam of ST 23 and 23A) to run M-S evenings (2 buses, starting April 30) and Suns (1 bus, started March 31). This operator has acquired ex Lynxline Bristol RELH/ECW DP49F RBW 84M for the service (retaining its Circle Services overall advert livery), although one of S&M Coaches ex Barton & LC-SW AEC Reliances was noted in use on April 1st (displaying route number C23 not 23C).

Stephensons Coaches, Rochford: has acquired ex Crosville Wales Leopard/Duple DP49F's JMB 330/7T and ODM 501V, which will run in a white and green livery and will in due course oust earlier Leopards TUB 1M and LMA 59P and RELH LHT 166L (anyone interested in this for preservation?). Lynxline RELH RBW 84M has already gone, as noted above.

Also acquired - definitely not for operations! - is "classic" ex Royal Blue RELH coach OTA 640G, latterly with Buffalo of Flitwick. It is available for sale for preservation (£1,500 + VAT) or alternatively it may be broken for spares: anyone interested should contact John Stephenson on 0702 541511 (days) or Lyn Watson (0245 322227) evenings.

A further service change was that 22 ceased to run over the Southend to Newington Ave section after March 22 (this part being replaced instead by new route 222, noted last month); due to a quirk in the licencing system however, the Newington Avenue service will have to be operated from April 8 to 12 & 15/16.

AND FINALLY . . . this really is finally, as these will be the last notes that I compile. Sadly, pressure of time and the increasing difficulty of trying to keep up with the rapidly changing bus scene mean that I have had to relinquish the post of sub editor. It is also increasingly difficult to find the time to help to run a bus company, act as Chairman of a very active rail user group and keep down a full time job whilst trying to have some sort of social life! My thanks to the loyal but small band who have plied me with news over the past few years - I know that you will continue to support my successor. I hope that my column has been interesting and - sometimes - amusing. We can all take our hobby too seriously at times!

COLCHESTER BOROUGH TRANSPORT

Vehicles

New Olympians 48 and 49 arrived on 15.3.91 and 47 arrived on 18.3.91. All three entered service on 2.4.91. Chassis numbers are 11702/5/3 and body numbers are 1134/2/3. 47 is in CBT Coachways livery and has coach seats.

A Portsdown bodied Dart demonstrator arrived on 4.3.91 it is registered H908 DTP it is fitted with a Cummins engine and Allison Automatic gearbox. Chassis number is 9/SDL 3002/253 and body number is 3198/91. It was numbered D33 by CBT and it left on 10.3.91.

Atlantean 66 was withdrawn by 9.3.91. and it left for Boons by 16.3.91.

Lynx 28 has been painted with an overall advert for the Colchester Mortgage Centre, replacing Merorider 12. Basic colours are white and blue.

Lynx 28 and 29 were part of a London & Country order (LCSW as was) not London Buses as reported in 322/14.

Scammell recovery vehicle 93 was withdrawn and removed from the depot on 28.3.91.

A fleet list as at 1.4.91 is available from the Director of Operations on receipt of an SAE.

Publicity

Timetable leaflets for services on the 7 and 8 groups dated 8.4.91.

Preserved Buses

A group member has asked if members can provide details of any CBT vehicle in preservation. He has details of three vehicles a Roberts bodied Daimler 4 (OHK 432), PD2 (9667 VX) and open top Atlantean 48. Are these the only ones or are there more? Answers via the magazine editor please.

HEDINGHAM OMNIBUSES

Fleet Allocation 4/91

Hedingham	84-89,95,98,103,105,113,114,126,133,135-7,150,156,160 166
Little Tey	96,100,115,116,121,122,124,134,138,145,149,155
Walton	81,125,147,148,151,159,161-3,165
Kelvedon	139-44,146,152,157,158
Burnham	111,154
Tendring	94,112,153,169-77
Pool	74,76 (kept at Burnham)
D/L	164,167,168

Bedford YMT 131 does not appear on the allocation list.

Ex Alder Valley minibus L153 is used on a contract for Windsor School, Clacton and replaces the Kemp Travel minibus which was

not purchased.

Services

- 19 Revised to start from and terminate at Steeple Bumstead with effect from 24.4.91.
- 98 The Heddingham operated journey was withdrawn after operation on 28.3.91.

OTHER OPERATORS

BISS Operated a short term service between Bishops Stortford and Birchanger during roadworks. (See EN notes EBN 321,323).
DISTRICT BUS The 1633 ex Shotgate and 1649 ex Billericay on service 106 were withdrawn with effect from 2.4.91.

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL PUBLICITY

Timetable leaflets are now available for services 32,36,95/96 dated 18.2.91; 59/349 dated 17.3.91; 74/78,321 dated 10.2.91 these include details of commercial services.
A leaflet giving details of Easter services in the County was also issued.

SNOW REPORT 1991

Apologies for the reminder of the worst snow to have fallen in Essex for some years but at least bus services were provided on the majority of routes, a fact overlooked by much of the press. On Wednesday the 6th of February most of Essex awoke to find a thin covering of snow which within 36 hours had reached a depth of 7 or 8 inches across most of the county to give an idea of how services were affected the following are extracts from members observations:-

7.2.91. 1205 Service 119 to Clacton and 133 to Bishops Stortford departed 15 mins late from Colchester although the 1035 ex Maldon was 45 minutes late. Chambers 1000 from Bury arrived 20 minutes late. In the afternoon with the rush hour starting at 1300 North Hill and Balcerne Hill soon became blocked and by mid afternoon 20 minute journeys were taking up to two hours! The last CBT services left the town at 1600 although some buses were not back at the depot at 1800. EN were still operating a limited service with one VR displaying 88 Colchester Head Street. Unusual workings were the order of the day with Mr 11 on service 4 and a highlight of On coach 46 on service 83 although it is doubted this service got beyond Marks Tey. Braintree operated a daytime service but no evening service operated on the 311.

8.2.91. Eastern National were operating town services in Chelmsford with attempts being made to operate some longer distance services. In Colchester CBT did not operate while EN were operating a reduced service. For instance service 7 could not get beyond Blackheath and service 119 was operating to Shrub End.

Some town services were operated on Braintree town services but

no other services were operated.

9.2.91. In Colchester EN were operating hourly on most routes between 0900 and 1630 although 82 and 87 did not operate and the 103/4 terminated at Maningtree. CBT operated between 0900 and 1800 although some estate roads were closed.

BE 4017 operated as a shuttle on service 311 with some town services operating.

10.2.91. Vehicles noted operating in the Braintree area were 1120, 1309 and a minibus. CF 1121 operated on service 451.

11.2.91. The same situation as on 9.2.91. although CBT ran until 1930. Services in the Chelmsford and Braintree areas were almost back to normal.

12.2.91. Services started to return to normal although in Colchester a train failed on Hythe Gates this also resulted in East Gates being blocked as the train was "in section". The fuel supply for CBCs gritting lorries also froze meaning most of the roads were untreated causing a spate of accidents.

13.2.91. By the end of the day all services were back to normal. The financial impact was felt by all operators with EN reporting a drop in revenue of 50,000 against a normal week with increased engineering costs.

ENOC 2954

3934 (LPU 624) THE STORY OF A MODEL

This vehicle a Bedford OB has recently appeared in the shops as a model manufactured by Corgi.

3934 was part of a batch 3933-39 (LPU 623-9) delivered in 1947 to Eastern National. In 1952 3935-7 were transferred to United Counties with the Midland Area of Eastern National and the remainder 3933/4/8/9 were renumbered to 183/2/4/5 by EN in 1954. All were withdrawn in 1957 and sold to AMCC Ltd (dealer) of Stratford, London.

The batch with United Counties were numbered 114-6 and were in service until October 1953 when they were sold to Thusgood Ware. 114/5 saw further service with Turner & Butcher, Kenninghall while 116 went to East Anglian operator Peter Hopton.

Turning to the model the fleetnumber is in the wrong position and for the perfectionist, the model could be repainted green/cream as opposed to cream/green as photographic evidence shows this vehicle at Colchester in 1950 in the green/cream bus livery.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THIS MONTHS MAGAZINE WERE RECEIVED FROM:-

S Burden, A Colebourne, R Dennis, B Gilliam, J Harvie, I Mayoh, M Jameson, A Osborne, P Snell, G Toon, M Weyell, Eastern National, Hedinghams, LOTS, PSV Circle and the Badgerline Enthusiasts Group.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE MAY MAGAZINE SHOULD REACH THE EDITORS BY 29.4.91.

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Thamesway 314 (H315 LJN) is seen in Southchurch Rd on 26.2.91. on route 29B heading for Newington Ave the most hotly contested route in Southend.

Please note that Dave Arnold is still sub editor for Central and North Essex independents, he was omitted from the new style front in error.