

ESSEX BUS NEWS

No. 559
November 2010



ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
www.essexbus.org.uk



Contract and private hire operator, **Hardy Miles** appear to have gone out of business at the end of October. Some recent views, taken at their Aviation Way, Southend premises by *Ian Banks*:

above: a pair of BIGgies: Metrobus and Volvo Citybus in the older and more recent liveries.

right: Mercedes 0814D / Plaxton Cheetah minicoach.

below: Mercedes Sprinter line-up (with one Transit interloper).



Essex Bus News

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Your reports and observations

Members reports, quality photos (prints, slides or JPGs) and original articles are always welcome.

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.

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

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

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Dates for your diary

■ PRESS DATES

EBN dated

December

January 2011

reports to Editors by

27th November

24th December

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 be obtained from the Membership Secretary (see Group Directory).

■ SOUTH ESSEX MEETINGS

Venue: **Wickford Cricket Club, off Swan Lane, Wickford** - five minutes walk from

Wickford Station and five minutes drive from the A130 and A127. Doors open at 1930 for

Front cover:

Hardy Miles Metrobuses: BIG 8752 new to Greater Manchester PTE, and LOA 426X, new to West Midlands PTE. *Ian Banks*

VINTAGE BUS SPECIAL

Timetables Saturday 4th December

X81

Shenfield Station (Station Side) ➡	-	0852	0922	0952	22	52	1622	1652	1722	1752	1822
Shenfield, Green Dragon	-	0854	0924	0954	24	54	1624	1654	1724	1754	1824
Brentwood High Street, Stop G	-	0859	0929	0959	29	59	1629	1659	1729	1759	1829
Brentwood Station ➡	-	0905	0935	1005	35	05	1635	1705	1735	1805	1835
Warley, Warley Hill j/w Eagle Way	-	0909	0939	1009	39	09	1639	1709	1739	1809	1839
Great Warley, Thatchers Arms	-	0913	0943	1013	43	13	1643	1713	1743	1813	1843
North Ockendon, White Post Farm	-	0921	0951	1021	51	21	1651	1721	1751	1821	1851
South Ockendon, Royal Oak	-	0924	0954	1024	54	24	1654	1724	1754	1824	1854
Lakeside Bus Station, Bay N	-	0934	1004	1034	then every 30 mins at these mins past the hour	04 34	1704	1734	1804	1834	1904
Greenhithe Station ➡	-	0959	1029	1059		29 59	1729	1759	1829	-	-
Bluewater Bus Station	-	1004	1034	1104		34 04	1734	1804	1834	-	-
Bluewater Bus Station, Bay 12	-	-	1035	1105		35 05	1735	1805	1835	1905	-
Greenhithe Station ➡	-	-	1040	1110		40 10	1740	1810	1840	1910	-
Lakeside Bus Station, Bay K	1005	1035	1105	1135		05 35	1805	1835	1905	1935	-
South Ockendon, Royal Oak	1015	1045	1115	1145		15 45	1815	1845	1915	-	-
North Ockendon, White Post Farm	1018	1048	1118	1148		18 48	1818	1848	1918	-	-
Great Warley, Thatchers Arms	1026	1056	1126	1156		26 56	1826	1856	1926	-	-
Warley, Warley Hill j/w Eagle Way	1030	1100	1130	1200		30 00	1830	1900	1930	-	-
Brentwood Station ➡ (opp Stn)	1034	1104	1134	1204		34 04	1834	1904	1934	-	-
Brentwood High Street, Stop A	1040	1110	1140	1210		40 10	1840	1910	1940	-	-
Shenfield, Green Dragon	1045	1115	1145	1215		45 15	1845	1915	1945	-	-
Shenfield Station ➡	1047	1117	1147	1217		47 17	1847	1917	1947	-	-

X55

Lakeside Bus Station, Bay B	-	-	-	1007	1037	07 37	1707	1737	1807	1837	1907
Aveley High Street	-	-	-	1016	1046	then every 30 mins at these mins past the hour	16 46	1716	1746	1816	1846
Corbets Tey, Parkland Ave	-	-	-	1028	1058		28 58	1728	1758	1828	1858
Upminster Station ➡	-	-	-	1034	1104		34 04	1734	1804	1834	1904
Upminster Station, Stop B ➡	0905	0935	1005	1035	1105		35 05	1735	1805	-	-
Corbets Tey, Parkland Ave	0911	0941	1011	1041	1111		41 11	1741	1811	-	-
Aveley High Street	0923	0953	1023	1053	1123		53 23	1753	1823	-	-
Lakeside Bus Station	0932	1002	1032	1102	1132		02 32	1802	1832	-	-

Fares

Vintage Day Pass - Adult £7, Child £4

(also valid on / available from normal Ensignbus services)

Local Single & Return Fares will also be available

Concessionary Passes will be accepted, however, donations towards the upkeep of the vintage fleet would be welcomed

Ensignbus
www.ensignbus.com

01708 86 56 56
customerservices@ensignbus.com

an informal chat, with the main talk or show from 2000 to 2145/2200; a cash bar is available. Members and guests welcome. £1 donation please towards the hire of the room.

Richard Delahoy

Winter / Spring 2011 programme

► **Mondays:**

December 13th - slide show by *Richard Delahoy* "20 years ago" and Christmas social.

January 10th - *to be announced*

February 14th - *to be announced*

March 14th - *to be announced*

April 11th - *to be announced*

■ **NORTH ESSEX MEETINGS**

Venue: downstairs room at the **Friends Meeting House, Church Street, Colchester**, just south of "Jumbo" (the water tower) and behind the Mercury Theatre. Town centre bus stops and parking are nearby. Doors open at 1930 for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from 2000 to 2200. £1.50 donation towards room hire, please. Slides/digital photos are preferred, but prints can also be shown. Members and guests welcome.

Dave Arnold

Winter 2010 and complete 2011 programme ~ slide shows

► **Fridays:**

December 10th - *Dave Arnold /*

Gary Sharpe

January 14th - *Fred Lawrance*

February 11th - *Trevor Brookes*

March 11th - *Owen Woodliffe*

April 8th - *to be announced*

May 13th - *to be announced*

June 10th - *to be announced*

July 8th - *to be announced*

August 12th - *to be announced*

September 9th - *to be announced*

October 14th - *to be announced*

November 11th - *to be announced*

December 9th - *to be announced*

■ **EVENTS**

- **Friday/Saturday November 26-27th: Guided Tours at Acton Depot. LT Museum.**
- **Saturday December 4th: Ensignbus Vintage Bus Christmas Specials: X55 (Upminster - Lakeside) and X81 (Shenfield Station - Brentwood - Lakeside - Bluewater) - not as stated in EBN558.** Connections with NXEA trains at Shenfield/Brentwood, SouthEastern at Greenhithe, and c2c at Upminster. A wide range of classic buses to ride on, including guest and 'surprise' vehicles, Christmas shopping at Lakeside and Bluewater for the family, plus, for the kids, Santa will be out and about - so watch out for him! Times opposite; check with www.ensignbus.com for latest info.
- **Saturday December 4th: "Christmas Cracker" Fayre** with bus and fire engine rides, Ipswich Transport Museum.
- **Saturday January 1st, 2011: Fourth Southend Heritage Bus Running Day.** Full details next month, and check www.stephensonsof Essex.com regularly for updates.

Information is published in good faith and members are strongly advised to check details with the organisers, as the Group can accept no liability if events are cancelled or altered.

2011 Subscriptions

Those members whose subscriptions expire with the December issue should have received a green renewal form with last month's magazine. Please complete and return that form with your payment, no later than December 20th please, or you can hand them in and pay at the Wickford or Colchester meetings in December.

We hope you have enjoyed the last 12 months of membership and look forward to receiving your renewal. If however you do not wish to renew it would be appreciated if you could return the form with a note of the reasons, to save us chasing you unnecessarily and to help us better understand members preferences.

Timetable Subscription Service

The October Essex CC timetable book was mailed to subscribers on October 23rd. If you are interested in joining this scheme, whereby we post out the Essex book each time it is issued (normally 3 times a year) and the Essex map (annual), further details are below in the Group Directory.

Richard Delahoy

Group Directory

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A calendar year subscription is £20, renewable in January.

New members may join from any month during the year, 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 £1.70 per month. E.g., a member joining in March would pay 10 x £1.70; i.e. £17.

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:

Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road
Southend-on-Sea SS1 3TT
richard@signal-training.com

Replacements for missing or defective EBNS are available from Richard.

TIMETABLE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Join this scheme to receive the Essex County Council timetable book and bus map. Send

your details and a cheque for £12 to
Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road,
Southend on Sea SS1 3TT.

Subscriptions can start with any issue of the book (usually three a year) and will be renewable annually at the same time as your Group membership subscription is due.

PUBLICATION SALES

Send orders for publications to:
Owen Woodliffe, 196 Sinclair Road,
Chingford, London E4 8PT

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

BLACK & WHITE PHOTO SALES

Lyn Watson
Willow Tree Cottage, 11 Roman Bank,
Gedney Dyke, Lincolnshire, PE12 0AR

Prints of specific EN (and predecessor) vehicles can be supplied; email with requirements:

lynw@barrons-bds.com

Options for Independent Living (OIL) Transport Conference ~ 29 September 2010

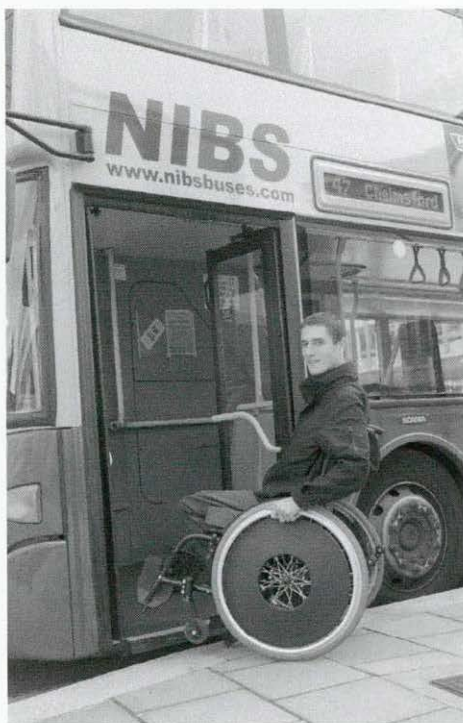
Currently 16% of the population is over 65 and this is expected to rise to 23% by 2033. There are about 10 million disabled people in the UK, 60% of whom don't have cars; less than 1 in 10 disabled people use a wheelchair, however - the term 'disability' covers a vast range of physical and mental impairments, many of them very obvious to others but some completely hidden. The OIL Group, backed by Essex CC, promotes relationships between disabled/older people and operating companies, the DfT and Passenger Focus. It has also organised successful 'Try a Bus' (and 'Try a Train') days to encourage hesitant users, recognising that one of the enormous freedoms of modern times is travel; access offers mobility, leading to independence and social inclusion. Without it, however, these same people risk being imprisoned in their own homes. The aims of this recent conference were to put "Accessible Public Transport" under the spotlight: where it's at now, how it needs to develop and what it needs to provide in the future.

Alan Pilbeam (MD, First East England) responded to the question of 'How industry and First have changed to provide an equal service for all passengers'. He began by looking at what older and disabled customers are actually asking for; in his view their requests are very reasonable - simply to get on with their lives without drama, and as far as possible to be treated the same as everyone else. Against the argument that "all you're interested in is profit", his response was that you don't make a profit without offering good service. Hence considerable investment in accessible vehicles - in 2005, 43% of the combined First East England fleets were low floor, but by April 2010 this had risen to 76% and the figure will reach 85% by December this year.

First have also put a considerable amount into training and education of staff. Much of this is about attitude - clear and plain speaking (which is not PC gone mad, but always using appropriate language and, as

just one example, enabling deaf people to lip read), not making assumptions (a disabled or older traveller is more often than not the expert in what they can and can't do themselves), speaking to people and not at them, and recognising that different problems need different solutions. There are still issues to resolve, some of which are outside the company's control - such as the contention for wheelchair spaces already occupied by children in buggies.

Initiatives from First abound, though - for example the current 'please remain seated [until the bus stops]' campaign has seen a significant reduction in injuries to older passengers. New ideas include 'Safe Journey' cards for customers - which First East



Dominic Lund-Conlon boarding a NIBS
decker. *photo courtesy Steve Nelson*

England is pioneering - ('Driver, please let me know when we get to...', 'Please speak slowly - I am hard of hearing') and DriveGreen monitoring (which has resulted in considerable feedback about improved driving standards). Enhanced bus stop information and 'talking buses' will necessitate GPS installation but would greatly encourage hesitant users, Alan highlighting that the present Telematics system is virtually at capacity.

The current economic situation is already squeezing BSOG (albeit that the rail and air industries have fuel duty fully rebated) and reimbursement rates for pass holders, but greater and more innovative partnership involvement between operators and Essex CC may enable more to be obtained for less.

Steve Nelson (MD of NIBS and current Chairman of Essex CPT) then looked at 'how a small bus company invests in better facilities for passengers'. He compared 1980s 'passenger service' ('An empty bus is a happy bus') and staff selection ('Have you got a licence? OK well come in at lunchtime for an interview, as we'll need you to go out at 3pm today') with the situation after Deregulation in 1986 - allowing competition for profit and removing the protection for the incumbent operator, in time encouraging much better levels of customer service and leading to innovation. Then he looked at the implementation of the DDA in 2000. Steve stressed, though, that no amount of investment in accessible vehicles is sufficient in itself - it is still the driver who is the most important element in service delivery and consequently NIBS have long since adopted the attitude that it is cheaper and better to train than to fail. Numerous in-house tools are now available - reviewing CCTV footage, mentoring, the feedback from complaint forms and rewards for exceptional service - and the Driver CPC courses being run have proved much more worthwhile and enjoyable than many predicted. By joining forces through the CPT, NIBS have been able to secure BTEC qualifications for a large number of drivers, some of whom have never taken an exam - let alone passed it - in their lives. All of this helps to raise the profile of staff - how many times has someone used the phrase "oh he/she's only a

bus driver". In fact a driver is the approachable point of contact who is, at the same time, assessing the differing needs of the less able customer. They may not be in a wheelchair, but are they old, wearing glasses, holding on all the time, poor at judging distances?

NIBS and First were both involved in the 'Try a Bus' days and some of the results are seen on the OIL DVD which was launched at the same conference. One of these days was very important to speaker **Annette Bosworth**, born with partially impaired hearing and later suffering sight problems. She had at one time been very adept at using buses, especially conductor-operated ones in London, but changed circumstances had deterred her from trying again until recently. Now accompanied by a guide dog, her observation about trying to get off the bus against a seemingly immovable wall of people at Chelmsford Bus Station nevertheless showed that people can be as much of a barrier as design.

Other speakers dealt with the rather greater difficulties of rail travel. Whilst this was also true of the keynote afternoon speaker, **Peter White** of BBC Radio 4 'You and Yours', his general comments apply just as much to the bus industry. Peter has been blind since birth; he travels widely and is generally confident at doing so, but reinforced the message not to stereotype 'disabled' people ("Why am I sent the motorised buggy when I have no difficulty walking?"). Uncertainty is probably the biggest deterrent to disabled and insecure travellers, but he acknowledged that it isn't easy for service providers to get it right all of the time. In the end, he said, it comes down to the individual offering the service - some human help will always be required.

For a copy of the very professional DVD referred to above, please e-mail dominic.lund-conlon@essex.gov.uk whilst photos of the conference and other relevant transport topics can be viewed on:
www.lund-conlon.co.uk/gallery

*Chris Stewart
October 2010*

Service changes

Arriva East Herts & Essex

5 Dec 10	1/1A	M-S	Harlow to Katherines Circular: new service.
	2/3	M-S	Harlow to Staple Tye Circular: new service.
	4	M-S	Harlow to Latton Bush Circular: new service.
	6	M-S	Harlow to Brays Grove Circular: new service.
	7	M-S	Churchgate Street to Harlow Sumners Circular: new service.
	8	M-S	Harlow to Old Harlow Circular: new service.
	10	M-S	Harlow to Church Langley Circular: new service.
11 Dec 10	522	S&BH	Harlow to North Weald Market: new service.
12 Dec 10	250	M-S	Debden to Waltham Cross: new service
	251	M-S	Upshire to Hammond Street: new service

These services have been transferred back from TGM Group and Arriva the Shires for technical reasons.

Arriva Shires & Essex

12 Dec 10	250	M-S	Debden to Waltham Cross: service cancelled.
	251	M-S	Upshire to Hammond Street: service cancelled.

These services transferred back to Arriva East Herts & Essex "O" licence for technical reasons.

Carters

31 Oct 10	93	M-S	Colchester to Ipswich: revised route and timetable.
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HC Chambers & Sons

1 Jan 11	84	M-S	Colchester to Sudbury: revisions to timetable.
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First

17 Oct 10	2	D	Southend to Basildon: revised timetable and service extended to/from Garon Park on Sundays.
	27	D	Canvey to Garon Park: some evening journeys extended to Garon Park with modified timetable.
7 Nov 10	21	D	Black Notley to Halstead: revised route and timetable.
	132	M-S	Braintree to Witham: revised timetable.
	352	D	Chelmsford to Halstead: minor timetable changes.
	X22	D	Clacton to Stansted Airport: revised timetable with extra stop in Clacton.
8 Nov 10	63	M-S	St Michaels to Tufnell Way Colchester: minor timetable changes.
	68	M-S	Stanway to Monkwick: new service every 20 mins.
	70	D	Colchester to Chelmsford: revised timetable.
	71	M-S	Chelmsford to Colchester: revised route and timetable.
	103/4	M-S	Colchester to Harwich: revised timetable.

Imperial Bus Co

10 Dec 10	339	M-F	Blackmore to Warley: service cancelled.
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Nelsons (NIBS)

13 Dec 10	221/2	M-S	Shotgate to Billericay: revision to timetable.
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New Horizon Travel

4 Oct 10	59D	Sch	Rowhedge to Thomas Lord Audley School Colchester: new Schoolday service.
1 Dec 10	77	M-S	Aingers Green to Colchester: new service.

SM Coaches

19 Nov 10	524	M-S	Harlow to Hertford: revised timetable.
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Renown Coaches

13 Dec 10	300	NTSu	Saffron Walden to Bishop Stortford: new service.
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Stephensons

20 Sept 10	550	Sch	Heybridge to Witham: minor change to timetable.
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TGM Group (Network Colchester, Network Harlow & TGM Stansted)

5 Dec 10	1/1A	M-S	Harlow to Katherines Circular: service cancelled.
	2/3	M-S	Harlow to Staple Tye Circular: service cancelled.
	4	M-S	Harlow to Latton Bush Circular: service cancelled.
	6	M-S	Harlow to Latton Bush Circular: service cancelled.
	7	M-S	Harlow to Sumners Farm: service cancelled.
	8	M-S	Harlow to Old Harlow Circular: service cancelled.
	10	M-S	Harlow to Church Langley Circular: service cancelled.
	522	S&BH	Harlow to North Weald Market: service cancelled.

These services transferred back to Arriva East Herts & Essex "O" licence for technical reasons.

From Wednesday 13th October St Osyth Road Clacton will be closed for approximately five weeks. First services 3,4,5,5B,6 & 74 and Hedingham 135 will operate a revised timetable.

*Paul Harvey
(acknowledgements to LOTS, Essex & Hertfordshire County Council,
Richard Delahoy, Harlowride & First*

Publicity News

Essex County Council have new leaflets for services 9/10 (Great Bardfield - Great Notley) dated 29.08.10; 5/31A (Chelmsford-Maldon) dated 31.08.10; 32 (Chelmsford-Ongar) dated 31.08.10; 47/146/147 (Ongar/Harlow area services) dated 29.08.10; 88/ A/B (Colchester - Halstead/Great Yeldham) dated 29.08.10; 101 (Basildon-Billericay) dated 29.08.10; 105/107/109 (Colchester - Walton) dated 29.08.10; 301/302 (Saffron Walden - Bishops Stortford/Stansted Airport) dated 29.08.10

Network Harlow have now issued colour-coded timetable leaflets for service 1 (red), 2+3 (blue), and for 4 (green), 6 (yellow), 7 (grey), 8 (purple) and 10 (pink). The latter five may be hints as to future bus branding colours.

Ian Ransom, LOTS

■ FIRST ESSEX BUSES LTD

Acquired vehicles

from First PMT

60206 Y598 KNE Scania L94UB 1838012 Wright D281 B43F
new 2/01 to First Manchester (162)

60206 has replaced fire-damaged 60755 at Colchester, incidentally working the penultimate service 72 on 5th November (the last journey being 34308). CR also received Scania 65521/37-9 (R141, 137-9GSF) from First Eastern Counties in early November, with 65522 also reported due.

Allocation changes

End of Period 8: list dated 24th October 2010

These are, and always have been, taken from the Company's allocation sheet. For operational reasons there may sometimes be discrepancies with the actual situation on the ground.

FEC=First Eastern Counties; FGC=First Group cascade, i.e. transfer to/from any other First fleet; (A)=acquired, including vehicles on loan; Anc=Ancillary fleet; RES=reserve (spare/retained, licensed); D/L(S)=spare/retained (delicensed); D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal; DS=Driving School; PS=Paint Spare

33002 RES-HH; 38790 Heritage-sold; 40733 CF-BN; 40734 CF-BN; 41730 RES*-BN; 41732 RES*-BN; 46151 BN-D/L(D); 46152 BN-D/L(D); 46172 RES-D/L(D); 47106 D/L(D)-sold; 90230 Heritage-sold;

*were on loan to First Eastern Counties at NOR

Disposals:

VR 38790 (3072: KOO790V) & KSW open top 90230 (2383: WNO479) have both been sold privately for preservation locally. The VR left the fleet on 4th October and the KSW (from storage in the new Braintree depot) on 15th. These were the last two Bristol chassis with the company and the only ECW bodied vehicle to outlive them is Olympian 34818.

Repaints and modifications

No further repaints are anticipated this year.

34314 to LED destination (front only) ex dot matrix

34311 LED fitted by 27th October.

Area News - workings and sightings

[x] indicates route branding

Clacton (CN) & Harwich (DT)

Trident 32809 remained off the road undergoing repairs as at the time of writing, replaced temporarily by Clacton's 32852.

October

4th 46182 on 76 (17.10 ex CN)

25th DT42937 on 103 (commercial)

26th DT42937 on 103 (commercial)



The new Braintree depot and office building seen from the road on 13th October.

Chris Stewart



Colchester (CR)

Severe disruption occurred to 71 on 4th October owing to a serious accident on A12 Kelvedon bypass, while 8C was affected on 6th by a fire in the old Colchester garrison.

October

- 3rd CR65653 on Sunday 64 (usually Solar)
- 4th CR65651 on 1 (usually Solar)
- 5th CF34355 on 70, CR60102 on 65
- 6th CR34301 on 65, CF34818 on 70
- 14th CR34303 on 64A
- 15th CR34056 on 64, CR34302 on 65
- 19th CR67003/6 on 65
- 20th CR67006 on 64A
- 21st CR67008 on 65
- 22nd CR65653 on 1
- 27th CR67003 on 65, CR67011 on 64
- 28th CR60102 on 64, CR67004/10 on 65

Chelmsford (CF) & Braintree (BE)

Volvo coach 20501 spent the summer at Norwich working a dedicated route 200 to Banham Zoo but the vinyls for this were removed when this service finished. Both this and 20500 have seen use on one or two unusual duties from Chelmsford since then, as given below.

With effect from 7th November, BE were due to gain Volvo B7RLE/Wright 66814-8 although 66815 was transferred in mid October to enable driver familiarisation. 66797 was in use from



ECW Olympian 34818 has defied withdrawal and, since the transfer of the 351 to Basildon operation, it has been noted on routes 36, 70 and - very unusually - the 42 as seen here passing Broomfield Post Office on 25th October. *Chris Stewart*

23rd (see below) but may have been a mechanical exchange between BE and CF.

October

- 4th CF31198 on 70
- 5th CF34355 on 70
- 6th CF66799 on X30, Olympian/ECW 34818 on 70 (and again on 7th/8th, 08.55 ex CR)
- 7th CF34355 on 42
- 9th CF53134 on 42, 46120 on 41
- 10th CF30558 on 70, 47101 on 36, BE43359 on 42
- 11th CF53115 on BE131
- 13th CF34355 on 42, 46120 and 46154 at BE
- 15th Volvo 20500 on 525 (instead of usual Yellow School Bus)
- 20th 47104 still in use (last reported 30th Sept on 51), 46120 on 21/352/70X then BE driver shuttle
- 22nd Volvo 20501 on 618 (instead of YSB), 34818 showing 36X in CF Bus Station, 46120 on 352, 46154 on 50, CF66794 on X30
- 23rd CF66797 on 132, 47104 on CF shuttles
- 25th BN40734 on 41, CF66797 on 132 (and 26th)
- 27th BE34613 on 132 (and 28th)
- 29th 46120 on 56, 47101 on 41/51, 47104 on 45, CF34355 on 42, 34818 on 55

Basildon (BN) & Hadleigh (HH)

With Basildon having taken over the Brentwood-Chelmsford 351, the re-allocated 40733/4 were joined by the remaining step-entrance Darts and R/X-registered Marshall Darts (including 41730/2 on their return from loan to FEC). The evening 551 which often saw a double decker is now more commonly worked by various Scania saloons, although 31376 has also been noted. Hutton Village short 551s and a new school contract C26 have been worked by MPD Darts.

October

- 5th HH41761 and HH42440 on 24
- 6th HH32860 on 21A
- 7th HH41737 on 24, HH46145 ex 20
- 9th HH32857 on 21, BN40733 on 100
- 10th BN42551 on 100
- 13th CF40737 on 551, HH41737 on 20, HH46177 on 21, BN65630 on 5
- 15th BN43846 on 256, HH46187 on 21, BN46828 on 551
- 16th HH32860 on 21
- 18th HH41741 on 24, HH46180 on '16', HH46158 on 20
- 19th HH46180 ex 821, HH46151 still in use, CF40737 on 551
- 20th BN66817 on 100
- 28th HH33002 noted on test and then on 21, BN40734 on 25, BN41741 on 24, 46145 believed still in use on 20

November

- 1st HH33002 on 27, BN31456 on 25C, BN40733 on 25B, BN41653 on 5, BN41730 on 551, BN41732 on 351 (not unusual), BN46151 still in service, BN46172 being cannibalised at BN, BN46827 on 551, BN65671 on 100, BN66801 on 8, BN66824 on 8A
- 3rd HH46157 on 24, BN66819 on 25
- 4th BN46153 on 100, BN41736 on 551, HH46169 still in use on 21, BN66800 on 21

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to First Essex and to Anon, P Ashton, A Bird, N Clark, T Clark, J Clayton, J Collins, D Edwards, M Farmer, D Flatman, J Podgorski, D Pretty, I Ransom, J Salmon, 'Solo', A Timms, TBL177M, L813OPU, R West, the Essex, East Anglia, South

West and British Buses Abroad in North America yahoo! groups, Essex and East Anglia Google groups, www.buslistsontheweb.co.uk, Real Bus News, LOTS, PSV Circle, 'Terminus' and Bristol VR South West Bus News (<http://ndl642m.blogspot.com>).

Reports relating to First Group may be sent by text on 07973 509459, by e-mail to shenfield252@gmail.com or by conventional post. Many thanks to all who do so.

Chris Stewart

Arriva

■ ARRIVA EAST HERTS & ESSEX LIMITED

At the beginning of September, responsibility for operation of services 250/1 in the Waltham Cross area was transferred to **Arriva The Shires** and consequently five Optare Solos and four Dennis Darts were transferred from Harlow to Ware.

Vehicles in

- from Arriva Kent Thameside 3404 8/10
 3382 P324 HVX Dennis Dart 212BR5TGD13462 Plaxton 969.2HWN5774 B34F 9/96
 (This was originally recorded in error as 3380, received in 6/10)
 from TGM, London 10/10
 2511 CE52 UWW Optare Solo M850 19000000000966 Optare B27F 10/02
 3910 BK58 URL Mercedes-Benz O530 62808023116238 Mercedes-Benz DP37F 11/08

Vehicles out

- 2483-5 (YK07 BCZ, BEO, BEU), 2486/7 (YJ57 EJF/G), 3366 (J64 BJN), 3372 (K322 CVX), 3381 (P330 HVX), 3413 (P833 HVX): Arriva The Shires (Ware) 9/10
 2488 (YJ57 EJK): Arriva The Shires (Ware) 10/10
 3844 (N624 FJO): -?-, Milton Keynes 8/10
 3910 (BK58 URL): TGM Group, London 9/10.

Summary of vehicle positions - October 2010

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Transferred to TGM Group Limited - | Volvo B6LE 3250/1/5
Dennis Dart SLF 3417/39/40 |
| Arriva East Herts & Essex (Harlow) - | Optare Versa 2406/7
Optare Solo 2453-60/65-67/73/74, 2511
Volvo B6LE 3240/49/53/4/6/7
Dennis Dart SLF 3229-31/95, 3416/35/83, 3828
Dennis Dart 3371, 3382, 3414
Volvo B7RLE 3856-60/73/74
MB Citaro 3907-10 |
| Arriva East Herts & Essex (Ware) - | MB Citaro 3901-6
Dennis Dart SLF 3833 and 3418 are awaiting disposal at Ware depot |

Transfer of service registrations to **TGM Group Limited** under the brand name of **Network Harlow** commenced in early September with services 1, 2 and 3. As already recorded, service 1 has been branded as Red Route 1, with Dennis Dart SLF/Wright Crusader 3417 (P417 HVX), 3439/40 (R169/70 GNW) receiving the all red livery. Services 2/3 have been branded as Blue Routes 2 & 3, with Volvo B6LE/Wright Crusader 3250/1/5 (V250/1/5 HBH) receiving the all blue livery. All six vehicles are operating under TGM discs PF1092908.

Meanwhile all other operations continue under Arriva East Herts & Essex discs but application has been made to and approved by the Traffic Commissioners to transfer the remaining local services (4, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 522) to TGM Group Limited on 1st November.

However a later application has been made and approved to transfer all the local services (1-4, 6-8, 10, 522) back to Arriva East Herts and Essex on 5th December. It is understood that this is due to a legal obligation. Included in this reorganisation is the transfer back to Arriva East Herts & Essex of the registrations based on Ware depot, this being effective from 13th December. It is believed that these arrangements are of a short term nature.

Removal of Arriva fleetnames from vehicles has only slowly taken place.

Mark Garrett

TGM Group

■ NETWORK COLCHESTER

Dart SLF 362 was on loan to Network Harlow from 1st November.

B10BLEs 901/902 and Tridents 195/196 have had their route branding for service 8 removed.

Scania/Northern Counties 234 (G34 HKY) has been withdrawn and sold. Scania/Northern Counties 237 (G37 HKY) recorded sold last month has been reported at a Barnsley breaker.

Rail Replacement:

Sunday 17th October between Witham and Ingatestone: 101-3/5/6, 155, 195.

Sunday 24th October between Witham and Ingatestone: 101-6, 131, 195, and between

Cambridge and Stansted Airport: 902-5.

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

■ TGM STANSTED

Olympian/Alexander 239 (F639 LMJ) is currently on loan to Network Harlow.

Scania/East Lancs 869 (N169 PUT) unusually worked service X5 (Ipswich - Stansted Airport) on 14th October.

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

Centrebus

The small Harlow-based coach operation, Galleon Travel (2009) Ltd., inherited from Trustline from 23rd August 2009 has been sold to Matthew Bowden-Scott. Mr Bowden-Scott is also a director of Road Runner Buses Ltd. It seems to have been merged into the Roadrunner Coaches / Road Runner Buses/ Olympus Bus & Coach (t/a Olympian) operations, based at Temple Bank (off River Way).

The Centrebus Harlow base has moved from River Way to a yard off Harolds Road at the Pinnacles Trading Estate.

New route C3X which began on 25th October is worked by 396-7 (YJ60 LRA, LRE) Optare Solo M950 B33F, with existing fleet Solo 367 (V110 LVH) also in attendance. The 524 began on 20th September and an elderly Dart L712 JUD (112) previously withdrawn and based in the Midlands, has returned as the regular vehicle.

LOTS

Heddingham Omnibuses



MD, Robert MacGregor, together with other bus operators, feature in an ADL promotional video, entitled "Star Quality ~ Enviro 200 ... the movie". It includes footage of Heddingham L385 in action around Tollesbury, piloted by our own Dave Arnold.

See www.enviro200.com/
Running time is 6m18s.

David Harman

Olympus / Roadrunner / SM Coaches

A number of Roadrunner's buses are parked overnight at and around the SM depot at Burnt Mill, probably due to lack of space at the Temple Bank depot. By late October, all four Volvo B7TL double-deckers were in use by SM on their routes 18 (to Bishop's Stortford) and 19/20 (to Epping and Ongar) as well as appearing at times on Olympus routes M2 and M4 as well. This seems to have been because some of the SM fleet was off the road. One of the B7TLs, W462 BCW has been repainted to white with a blue skirt and 'Townlink' names.

Another former London Scania N113CRL/Wright Pathfinder (not Volvo as in EBN 558) is RDZ 1707, ex- Helms, Eastham in October. This is repainted white/blue but with no fleetnames.

Dennis Dart SLF/Marshall R809 OYS (DMN 28R) is being used for spares. Dart P685 RWU caught fire while on route 524 in late August and has been withdrawn. Darts M233 AKB and N602/6/7 KGF are now out of use.

Ian Ransom and LOTS

Regal Busways

Three new 7.8m slim-line Solos arrived in September: YJ60 KBX-Y-Z. They are in the new red livery and are, in theory, for use on routes 211/2/3 and 381/2. They were noted on Sunday 24th October, on the Harlow town services, which should also be a regular haunt. Another three are due.

Formerly with New Enterprise, Tonbridge, but new to Southend Transport, Leyland Olympian/Leyland H263 GEV has been in use here, it is not certain if it has been acquired, or is on loan. The second loaned Solo mentioned in EBN557 is YJ59 GGO.

Dennis Dart/Plaxton K832 SFT has been sold

Ian Ransom and LOTS

Stephensons of Essex

Being acquired for the Stephensons heritage fleet is the former Eastern National Olympian coach, 4511 (D511 PPU), latterly with the Southern Belle Steamer and Packet Co. of Great Yarmouth.

To assist in its restoration, Stephensons need pictures of the lower saloon interior, which it is thought has been altered since the coach was new, as there are two odd seats behind the staircase. Was this area previously a luggage rack?

Ian Ransom with thanks to Lyn Watson

Other operators

A&D MINICOACHES, Basildon This operator has ceased operating, and Mercedes Benz Sprinter MF51 CLJ and LDV Convoy EK03 KZU, have been sold.

ACCESS ANYONE, Leigh-on-Sea Acquired is Mercedes Benz Sprinter GN51 YCC.

BLUE DIAMOND, Harlow Acquired are Mercedes Benz Sprinter DE04 UEX and Fiat Ducato DU56 YHO (non PSV). Vehicles sold are DAF 400 J53 JGV, Mercedes Benz 709D/Dormobile K543 OGA and Dennis Dart/Plaxton M96 WBW.

CEEFA COACHES, Basildon Setra S315GT C20 WNU (BX54 EDR) has been sold to Chiltern Travel, Ilford.

CHARIOTS, Stanford-le-Hope Acquired from Kent Coach Travel, Sheerness is BIL1878 (E309 OPR) a Volvo B10M/Van Hool.

COOKS, Rochford Acquired from Mayne, Buckie is M17 YNE, a Bova Futura MHD 122.410, now reregistered SV08 HVG. Bova Futura FHD12-340 N841 THO has been sold to a dealer.

DAVES MINIBUSES, Harwich Ford Transit Y719 XEO has been sold.

DONS, Great Dunmow After a long period out of use, Leyland Atlantean/Alexander MVK 538R, has been sold to Tyne & Wear Preservation group for preservation.

ESSEX LIMOS, Rayne A second Optare Alero, used as a partybus is YN53 WYZ ex Darlington Borough Council.

EXCELLENT CONNECTIONS, Stansted Airport Ford Transit BJ07 XFH has been sold to Cramond Coaches, Edinburgh.

FLAGFINDERS, Braintree Another former Lothian acquisition is Volvo Olympian/Alexander P418 KSX. Renault Master/Rohill V240 JKE has been sold to Freeport Shopping Centre, Braintree (non PSV).

FORD, Althorne Acquired from Stephensons, Rochford, is former Hong Kong Leyland Olympian/Alexander L808 SNO (FS6392).

GROUP TAXIBUS, Chelmsford Acquired are Mercedes Benz Sprinter/Stanford HX04 VRR and WX55 OHB.

HAILSTONE, Wickford Mercedes Benz 711D/Crystals M183 VAR has been sold to Waylands, Ellough. Ford Transit EA02 ELH has also been sold.

KB COACHES Wickford Ayatts A2E Y171

PDG has been reregistered K13 BUS.
KINGS, Stanway Short term loans from Moseley, South Elmsall are FP51 EUN, Volvo B10M/Jonckheere Mistral 12m C49Ft from 28 Sept. 2010 until 29 Oct. 2010 when it was exchanged for WA05 OSD, Bova Futura FHD 12.340XE C48Ft, which is expected to stay about a month. (Both are in all-white livery).

KOOL CARS, Canvey Island Acquired some time ago, but only just reported is Iveco 49-10 S697 SKM.

LCB TRAVEL, Harlow Optare Alero YN04 XZR has been acquired from Harrogate Community Transport, for use on the Zip service in Harlow.

LODGE, High Easter New here is JW10 DGE (carried on the vehicle as JW 10DGE), a Setra S416GT-HD carrying a gold livery, in celebration of the company's 90th year of operations.

LOGIC TRANSPORT, Nazeing Mercedes Benz 811D/Reeve Burgess F173 CKW has been sold to Philips Coaches, Alford.

MALCOLMS BLUE BUS, Clacton-on-Sea Rare Bristol B21/Alexander Belfast WOI 607 (B117 LDX) has been sold to Tourmaster, Crowland.

NEW HORIZON, Frating The proposed move of premises to Wix, is reported to have been cancelled and operations will remain at the current base. A further ex Wilts and Dorset DAF DB250/Optare acquired is L129 ELJ.

P&M COACHES, Crays Hill Volvo B10M/Jonckheere S134 KRM, has been sold.

RONDA COACHES, Rochford Mercedes Benz 711D/Plaxton K392 BVS, has been acquired from BJS, Gt Wakering. Mercedes Benz 609D/Whittaker A19 HWT (new as E735 VWJ) has been sold to Keiths of Derby.

SJH, Crays Hill Mercedes Benz 811D/Optare F367 BUA has been sold.

SOUTHEND RADIO CARS, Southend

Acquired from an unknown owner is P479 OGV a Fiat Ducato. R424 TKU, an Iveco/Frank Guy has been sold.

SUPREME, Rettendon MCW Metrobuses E750 SKR and F773 EKM have been reinstated.

TALISMAN, Gt Bromley Scania/Irizar YT10 WLH has been acquired from Scania, dealer. It was with On A Mission, Bedfordshire, who are no longer in business.

THE CRICKETERS, Fordham Heath Fiat 49-10/Leicester Carriage Builders P193 SRP has been sold.

THORNS OF ESSEX, Rayleigh LDV Convoy FA04 FLC has been sold.

TONY GLEW, Great Tey Mercedes Benz 709D/Wadham Stringer N837 LGA has been sold.

TURNERS, Little Maplestead Acquired are former Stagecoach United Counties Leyland Olympian/Alexander F635 YRP and similar ex Stagecoach Hampshire Bus H817 CBP, former Stagecoach Devon Dennis Dart/Plaxton N978 RCD, and from Arriva Merseyside: Volvo B10B/Wright M518 WHE, M547/8 WTJ. Leyland Tiger/Duple G800/2 RNC have been sold.

WALKERS, Stanford-le-Hope Ford Transit YE55 HNN has been acquired.

WEBB, Highwood It is reported that this operator, has ceased trading. Three Volvo B10M were in use, two with Ikarus bodywork IUI 2733/5 (F635 EDH, G720 ONX) and Plaxton bodied TIW 2801 (FUA 392Y).

*Ian Ransom with thanks to Colin Sigston,
Roger Smith, Alan Timms, Peter Mobbs
(Kings Coaches), PSV Circle*

Tales from the cab - and the platform : Part 2



Doug Brown recalls more eventful trips that did not go quite according to the rule book!

Part 1 was in Essex Bus News issue 558, October 2010.

Jim, my conductor, missed the bus twice more after our Widford roundabout incident. On one trip we arrived at the Brentwood terminus and while passengers were alighting, I decided to use the toilets close by. Jim, whose three pastimes were women, horse racing and beer, as you'll recall from part one, also decided that as the betting shop was by the bus stop, it would be a good idea to have a little flutter. The problem with Jim was that when he entered a betting shop, he was on another planet and instead of being a conductor, he became a jockey.

I came back to the bus and assumed he was on board, so I drove off on our dead run to our next starting point, about five miles away at the shirt factory at North Ockendon. When I got there I found I was talking to myself - then I thought "betting shop"! I decided that as my passengers would be weekly ticket holders going home, I would not need a conductor until I got to Brentwood Station, where I could pick Jim up again. So I explained this to my passengers and away we went. All was going well until I got to the waterworks at Great Warley, where I picked up a "jumper" - Inspector Ernie. He gave me a nice smile and a wave and gave the starting signal when he got on. But I did not move - I waited until panic set in. This took all of about six seconds, when I got five bells - emergency stop! He came running to the cab and said "Where is your conductor?". Me: "At Brentwood Station". Inspector: "What's he doing there?" Me: "Well, it took him longer to get a bet on than it did for me to have a pee. I have his ticket machine and box here in the cab so if you

want to get busy, get the fares in". He then said "I don't have much choice, do I." He was *not* happy!

At the station, Jim was waiting. He came up to my cab so I said "don't make excuses, you are redundant, I have Inspector Ernie collecting the fares". Jim's face took on the scream mask! The outcome was that we both got a disciplinary letter; Jim for abandoning the bus and me for driving off without the starting signal and operating the bus without a conductor. But we got off, as I said if it was not for Inspector Ernie reporting us, no one would have known anything about it.

The next time Jim missed the bus was at Blackmore. I left him in the lower deck while I got in the cab and drove off. At the first stop about two miles up the road, I did not get the starting signal so I went round the back and found him missing. I asked my passengers if he was on the bus when they had got on. They said he was not. I thought he must still be at Blackmore, but there were no betting shops there. I thought I would have to go back for him and was wondering where I was going to turn the bus round, when a police car pulled up behind the bus with blue lights flashing. I wondered if I'd run him over. The police driver beckoned me over and asked "Do you recognize this man in the back, sir?". It was Jim. Without dropping my guard, I said "No officer, I can honestly say I have never seen that man before in my life. Who is he?". They thought it very funny. Then I shouted at Jim "What the hell are you doing in the back of a police car when you are supposed to be on the back of this bus!".

When Jim got out of the police car, he explained that after I'd got into the cab, he had got his racing paper from under the stairs but dropped it and it fell into the road. He thought he had time to retrieve it before I moved off, but I was too quick for him and he could not catch me. He was just about to go into the pub until I came back for him, when he saw the police car and stopped it to ask for a lift!

When the new deckers (FLF Lodekkas) with doors came in, I was able to contain Jim a lot better. Every time I left the bus with Jim inside I closed the doors. He could get out by pressing the emergency button, but he could not close them again. So if I came back and found the doors open, I knew Jim had escaped again and it was time to look in the nearest betting shop or pub for a bus conductor - or, as I called him, my bus jockey.

Tales of garage life

We had a driver at the garage whose sideline was selling condoms. He used to buy them by the gross and supply the canteens of Brentwood, Chelmsford, Southend and Wood Green. His motto was the opposite to the ice-cream man which was "stop me and buy one". His was "buy me and stop one". He carried them in a small briefcase wherever he went; he often got out of the cab to utter to the passengers the immortal phrase, "Something for the weekend, sir?".

On the late shift in the summer we often went over the depot wall to the municipal swimming pool next door for a bit of skinny dipping. One day the fountains stopped working and they had to drain the pool to find the problem; it turned out the blockage was caused by used condoms. The council took on another lifeguard to keep a check on the public, but we knew it was not them.

We had a bus cleaner by the name of Percy whose whole life was centred round the Army. He used to holler and shout just like a drill sergeant. Obviously us bus crews used to play up to him and every Sunday we had what he called Church Parade - at 6am he would have us marching up and down the depot shouting his orders. One Sunday two police cars came into the depot and when the police got out they were laughing. It would seem many residents in the street next door had wanted to know if World War Three had started! Percy was told to keep his voice down a bit and from that point on, all drill stopped.



This view of 2859, RHK344D in Basildon Bus Station shows off the characteristic rear of the FLF with its central emergency door which was not entirely successful in the quest to keep Doug's conductor where he should be!

Bill Cansick, EBEG Collection, September 1972

We had another cleaner Marie, who convinced herself that she was Queen of England and could only be addressed as "Her Mage". She also said she had the title deeds to Buckingham Palace. I said to her, how about if I call you "Dieu et mon droit"; "what's that?" she asked" so I explained it is what appears under the Royal Coat of Arms. "Oh, that will do" she said. About six months later after she had left the bus company, I read in the *Brentwood Gazette* that the application by the hotel chain Queens Moat House for a drinks licence had been opposed by Queen Mage. It would seem she went to court as the Queen to try to stop the licence. I don't think I stopped laughing for a week!

The toilet block took up a lot of space at the depot and we were told to reverse buses as close to the wall as possible. But before reversing, you had to look to see if any toilet windows were open and if so, take this into consideration. One day a driver started to reverse and the windows were shut, but at the same time another driver was opening them. When the bus and windows came into contact, the whole frame was pushed inside and crashed on to the floor of the urinals. Three drivers came running out in a panic with their trousers round their ankles thinking the whole toilet block was about to be demolished with them inside!

Edited by Richard Delahoy



Driver Brown at work with Bristol LS bus 1202, VNO870, ready to depart from Tylers Avenue garage in Southend for Wood Green. But not just on any trip, Doug recorded this as the last bus to leave Tylers Avenue as a garage, the garage closing the following day. The ENEG news-sheets of the era are surprisingly vague, simply recording in the October 1964 issue that the garage was closed "at the end of July". Surprisingly, in the timetable issued only a month earlier (cover dated 28th June 1964) there was no mention of the impending move to the new terminal at Southend Seaway. Does anyone have the precise date that Tylers Avenue closed? Our promised feature on the garage will be appearing sometime during 2011. The bus illustrated, 1202, only had a further year's service left in the EN fleet before sale to the dealer who took many EN vehicles of this era, Sid Twell of Ingham, Lincolnshire. *Doug Brown collection*



above: Eastern National coaches on parade at the Canvey rally: 1404 (VHK 177L), 392 (OWC 182D) and 2614 (AVX 975G).

below: A selection of Eastern National / Westcliff vehicles successfully attended the IOW Bus Museum's running day on 17th October. K5G AJN 825 and RELH 1516 (FWC 439H) made the trip from North Essex while RELH 1404 came from the East Anglia Transport Museum, Carlton Colville.

rear cover: AJN825 is seen at Yarmouth the day before the running day with member and owner of 1516, David Edwards at the wheel. *all: Chris Stewart*



