

Essex Bus Magazine

Current news and historical features

Issue 702 October 2022



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

www.essexbus.org.uk



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Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 1926-2022

First  **Bus**

On the **19th September** we will
run a Bank Holiday service.

Her Majesty the Queen • 1926-2022



Along with the rest of the nation, we were deeply saddened by the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September and send our deepest sympathy to His Majesty King Charles III, all members of the Royal Family and all those affected by her death. Her State Funeral was held on 19th. Most bus companies ran Sunday / Bank Holiday services on the day of the funeral, the poster First Essex produced is shown above.



Above: Vectare's Mercedes-Benz Tourismo W12 VEC parked at Shenfield Station on 18 September 2022. **Chris Stewart**

The blind reads "HM Queen Elizabeth II" on the top line and "Thank You Ma'am" on the bottom line. The bottom line was alternating with "1926-2022" as shown in the inset.

It was only four months ago, in EBM 698, that we were celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Ironically, the cover star of that issue, First Essex Enviro 400 MMC 33983 (SN65 OFY) in Jubilee livery, had been out of service since August. It returned to service on 26 September with its lettering suitably amended to reflect Her Majesty's passing, having attended Showbus the previous day. It is seen right at Southend Travel Centre on 27th. **Richard Delahoy**. The vinyls on the front, rear and in the middle between decks have been updated. This is not obvious in this photo but close-ups are on page 20.



Richard Delahoy looks back to the start of the Queen's reign on pages 4 & 5.

Front Cover Photo: Preserved former Eastern National Bristol FLF / ECW 2300 (RWC 608) on route 68 on hire to Ensignbus in Southchurch Avenue near The Kursaal on Sunday 25 September 2022. **Martin Ruthe**. More details on pages 27, 31 & 32.

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EBM Extra

EBM is published monthly. In addition, we aim to publish two Extras each year full of historical features. These are supplied to members free of charge, subject to securing funding.

Membership Records & Data Protection

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

Reports, Articles & Photographs

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

Target Dates for EBM 703

Reports to Sub-Editors

29 October

Sub-Editor drafts to Editor

4 November

Dispatch by Printers

on or before **14 November**

The last two dates are fixed, but late news can be sent up to 5th and will be included if possible, if not it will be held over to the next month.

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

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Group Notices

Membership Renewals

We are inviting all members to renew your subscription for 2023. The past year has seen the move to full colour and members have also benefitted from the two historical Extras, fully funded by generous member donations, in addition to the usual 12 issues. We also published a special magazine supplement covering First's radical service changes in April. For 2023 we plan to publish 12 monthly editions and two Extras (for which funding has already been secured). Inevitably our costs have risen, both through the change to full colour and as a result of inflationary pressures, which will doubtless continue next year, but we are conscious that the cost of living is rising dramatically and membership of a group like EBEG is a discretionary expenditure. As a result, we are only increasing the subscription by £1 to £26 for 2023. This will result in the Group incurring a loss for the year but we will fund that from the surpluses we have accumulated over the years, as we are doing with the more substantial loss we are incurring in 2022.

A renewal slip is enclosed with this issue and we do hope you will still be able to afford to subscribe to Essex Bus Magazine for a further year. Subs can be paid by BACS (our preferred method) or by cheque as explained on the form.

We believe that EBM continues to offer excellent value for money and look forward to your renewal. If however you do not plan to renew, it would help if you could let us know (contact details on page 2) to save our time and effort in chasing the usual late payers. If you do not renew, the December issue will be your last one.

Many thanks!

Richard Delahoy, Membership Secretary / Treasurer.

Reader Survey

We are absolutely delighted by the very high number of responses to the survey announced last month and for your comments. We are still sifting through the replies and helpful suggestions but it's clear that you like most of what we do, although a few things could be tweaked. We will report more fully in a subsequent issue. Meanwhile, the survey is still open for submissions. If you are on e-mail, you should have received an invitation on 20 September, with paper copies posted to those who don't have e-mail. You can also access the survey on-line at <https://s.surveypal.com/twbzuosf>.

The Running Card by Owen Woodliffe

The following events have been advertised.

Saturday / Sunday 8/9 October: Wightrider. New Event Isle of Wight Bus Museum, St Johns Road, Ryde.

Sunday 23 October: TransportFest 2022. London Bus Museum, Brooklands.

Saturday 29 October: Halloween Event. East Anglian Transport Museum, Carlton Colville.

Friday / Saturday 4/5 November: Aldenham Transport Spectacular. Allum Hall, Allum Lane, Elstree.

Saturday 19 November: Enfield Transport Bazaar. St Stephens Church Hall, Village Road EN1 2EY.

Sunday 20 November: LT Running Day to mark 30 years closure of Hendon Garage.

Thursday 1 December: Ride the Lights Christmas Event. East Anglian Transport Museum, Carlton Colville.

Saturday 3 December: Ensignbus Christmas Heritage Running Day. Lakeside Complex.

Sunday 4 December: Christmas Cracker. Ipswich Transport Museum, Chobham Road IP1 9JD.

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

Postal Delays

Again, apologies if this issue of EBM has reached you a few days later than planned and expected. Our despatch date coincided with the first day of a planned 19 days of strike action by Royal Mail staff in the run up to Christmas. A reminder again, we confirm the publication date of each issue on our Facebook page and any delays will be advised there.

Corrections to EBM 701

Page 28. The photo by Jon Collins of Stephenson's Enviro 200 440 (SN16 ORS) was taken from a camera on the handlebars of his bike, not a helmet cam.

Page 32. The conversion of RML2722 was undertaken by Qualiti Conversions, not Lodge Coaches. There is a photo of the Routemaster on their website qualiticonversions.com. With thanks to Dave Arnold.

Further corrections and additions to EBM 701 are on pages 9 & 10, 16 and 26.

The Essex Bus Scene in 1952

by Richard Delahoy

So much has been written elsewhere about the significance of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's unprecedented reign and the changes that the country and the world have seen over the past seventy years. Indeed, for the majority of the editorial team and our members, Queen Elizabeth had been a constant throughout the whole of our lives. In our limited space, let us reflect on what the bus industry looked like in Essex when she ascended to the throne on 6 February 1952. The industry remained tightly regulated under the 1930 Road Traffic Act, a position that wasn't to change until the 1980s. Eastern National dominated much of the county but not in south Essex where Westcliff Motor Services, recently expanded by the addition of the City Coach Company and the Benfleet & District / Canvey & District businesses, held sway. Both were of course part of the nationalised Tilling Group. Westcliff however was increasingly coming under EN control and adopting EN's green livery in place of red, ahead of its complete absorption into EN at the start of 1955.

Basildon New Town was still more of a planners' concept than reality, although EN had established a small temporary depot there in Vange early in 1952 following the loss of Grays depot and services to London Transport the previous year. Southend Corporation Transport and Colchester Corporation Transport served their respective towns, Southend still running trolleybuses and restricted to just the County Borough area (the Southend Co-Ordination Area scheme didn't come into effect until 1955). Some significant independents provided local bus services, including Campbells of Pitsea (acquired by EN in 1956), Moores of Kelvedon (EN bought them in 1963), Osbornes of Tollesbury and in the northern border areas, Premier Travel. Around Braintree, Hicks Bros were controlled by EN but remained a separate operation until 1955. Heddingham & District could have been no more than a glint in the eyes of the young Donald MacGregor (he later bought Letch's business in 1960 to create Heddingham & District). On the western fringes of Essex, green London Transport Country Area buses and Green Line coaches dominated, with some red LT Central Area bus routes also extending beyond the Metropolitan area. (Of course, administratively, much of what we regard today as East London was part of the county of Essex until local government changes created the Greater London Council in 1965, but here we are thinking of the modern Essex that we cover in EBM, not places like Barking, Romford and Walthamstow). Colchester was a fascinating centre for independent bus operators, with around a dozen businesses running services into the town at the St John's Bus Park.

Vehicle wise, the revolutionary Bristol Lodekka was still at the development stage, the initial prototype having been trialled by both EN and Westcliff in 1951, and it was not to be until the year after the Queen's Coronation that production models entered both fleets. There were plenty of pre-war vehicles still in service. Deliveries of new buses and coaches to Essex fleets in 1952 included: Eastern National & Westcliff took Bristol KSW double deckers, the last of the front-engined LWL saloons and the first of the new underfloor-engined LS (as illustrated in EBM 698). Westcliff also received the last vehicles ordered by City, Leyland PD2 buses and Royal Tiger coaches.

Colchester took a pair of all-Crosley double-deckers but Southend didn't receive any new buses in 1952.

Moores were augmenting their fleet with second-hand Guy Arabs, whilst Premier Travel took three second-hand vehicles, a Dennis Lancet, a Daimler CW and an AEC Regent.

The classic Bedford SB / Duple coach combination was bought by Harris Coaches of Grays and Supreme Coaches of Hadleigh, amongst others, whilst Rose Bros of Chelmsford took a Tilling Stevens coach and Viceroy of Saffron Walden had a new heavyweight coach in the form of an AEC Regal IV.



The start of the new Elizabethan era saw traditional bus and coach designs contrasting with flamboyant modernity, as illustrated by these three vehicles delivered new in 1952. Opposite page: Representing the traditional (some would say outdated) single decker, Eastern National 4168 (TTW 572) was a Bristol LWL5G with 39 seat rear entrance ECW body.. It stands at the Clock Tower in Burnham on Crouch with an earlier Bristol K 4333 (ONO 54) behind. Both are on service 61 to Maldon via Southminster (later renumbered 91).
Omnibus Society, Charles Klapper collection.

Right: A classic design for underfloor engined chassis, the Burlingham Seagull body is seen here on a Leyland Royal Tiger, FJN 209, one of six ordered by the City Coach Company but delivered new to Westcliff in summer 1952. It is seen here in later life with EN fleet names and number 138, thought to be at Euston in 1962. Note the open boot at the back.

Robin Jenkinson collection



Below: Like the LWL, also to a long-standing design was Westcliff Motor Services UEV 842, a Bristol KSW5G with a lowbridge ECW body. Seen at Victoria Circus in Southend on the 4A from Wakering, it has an old Westcliff blind of the style used pre-war fitted to its passing point box, presumably awaiting delivery of the correct blind. That, and the sparkling condition, suggest that the picture was probably taken shortly after delivery in November 1952. **Richard Delahoy collection**

A short feature on route 4A, including a photo of a Westcliff Bristol K / ECW on the route at the same location, is on the inside rear cover.



Follow Ups to EBM 701

A Final Word on the 'Grimsby Steps' MWs

David Edwards writes:

I can add some further information to Richard's excellent article in EBM 700 and the follow up last month. From 1973 until operations were transferred to the reopened Silver End depot in 1974, and after the two 'Grimsby Step' MWs, 1337/8, had been transferred from Halstead to Colchester, Kelvedon depot became an outstation of CR for engineering purposes, as National Travel South East had moved into KN and taken over the engineering facilities. This was when I became familiar with these two MWs as they became regular loan vehicles to KN. I can confirm that they remained in their original form and thus stuck out in my mind as they were different to KN allocated sisters 1336/40. I was still at school at that time and used to catch the 1545 ex Chelmsford service 53, boarding at Witham at 1610. Standard journeys at xx15 from CF were usually RE worked but this was an extra school journey operated by a KN OMO MW. 1336/40 & Dual Purpose 1425 could be on there, but the CR loans would also show up thus giving variety and hence my familiarity with 1337/8 - I knew at that time that the step arrangement was different but at that age didn't understand why! So they worked side-by-side at both CR & KN with other vehicles of the same batch, which no doubt must have confused both drivers and passengers - I wonder how many accidents occurred with passengers tripping up the step when turning to go into the saloon after paying the driver, or drivers getting out of the cab and having a drop onto the lower step?



The above photo from my collection, photographer unknown, shows KN's 1336 at one end of the line-up (left) and on-loan 'Grimsby Step' 1337 at the other, with Bristol RELL 1516 and Guy Arab 2015 in the middle, against the back fence at KN on a Group tour on 28 April 1974. I wonder if the boy (does anyone know who he is?) is looking at 1337's steps and thinking "they look different"! As an aside, little did I know at the time that I would one day own 1516. 2015 was last reported in the USA although I haven't seen an update on it for c five years.



The design of the steps meant that there was enough room for the doors to clear the first step (hence no need for the 'cut-out' at the bottom of the doors) giving passengers a wider step to get on, and consequently a better footing. But it meant that ECW had to construct modified doors for these two. I have found in my collection a photo of 'Grimsby step' 1337 with the doors open (far left). Although the photo isn't very clear and unfortunately doesn't show the full entrance, the steps, with the wider platform, are clearly different from those in my own photo of preserved, standard 1340 (near left).



Above: Newly delivered MWs at Eastern National Central Works, Chelmsford. Two with normal style doors, but the one on the left of the photo with 'Grimsby style' without the 'cut-out', so these are almost certainly one of 516/7 (later 1337/8, 2727/8 VX) on the left and both of 518/9 (later 1339/40, 2729/30 VX) on the right (2730 VX nearest the camera), all of which were delivered in November 1960.

Below: The open door of Eastern National's first Dual Purpose Bristol MW, 478 (215 MHK), illustrates why the 'cut-out' was needed on standard entrance MWs. It is exiting Clacton Bus Station on route 130 on 17 May 1964. Three months later this would be renumbered 1400. Behind is one of the ex-Wilts & Dorset Bristol Ks 1051-6 (DMR 836/8/9/40, EAM 612/3, renumbered 2202/4-8 in August 1964) which had been acquired in June 1963. Both **Bob Beaumont**



700 & 701

Andrew Colebourne writes:

Robert Downton's photo of George Ewer's only Harrington Crusader bodied Bedford SB13, CLK 701B, was illustrated on page 13 of EBM 701. It is interesting in having the next registration to Grey Green's ex-demonstration Bedford VAL CLK 700B, both being out of the Ewer registration sequence, which seems to have been in the 460/470s at the time. So, was 701 also an ex-demonstrator?

Owen Woodliffe confirms that CLK 701B was indeed also a demonstrator. Furthermore, it was the Ewer Group's only Harrington Crusader IV - they had large batches of I and II models.

He continues: 701 was sold in January 1969 to V. Pilbeam, t/a Harwich and Dovercourt Coaches, and is seen the next year in my photo, right, emerging into Northdown Street from Eastern National's King's Cross Coach Station after working a Prins Ferry service from Harwich. It was still in Grey Green livery but with Harwich and Dovercourt Coaches fleet names.

Viv Pilbeam supervised the Prins Ferry service at Harwich and was first call for reliefs when the Essex Coast Express operators, Grey Green, Eastern National and Suttons under whose licence the service operated, could not provide vehicles, since loadings varied enormously. At peak times Eastern National provided FLFs, usually coach seated, which displayed the Harwich EAX route number 80. (There will be an article on route 80 in a future issue of EBM.)

H&D also bought Bedford VAL SYX 577F, Leopards 447 GYR & YYX 595H and Bristol WLT 588G previously in George Ewer fleets.

CLK 701B was later painted into H&D livery and received fleet number 6. It is seen below at Sheepen Road Car Park, Colchester in November 1973. It is likely that it had worked in on a college run bringing students to Colchester Institute of Higher Education. It stayed with H&D until 1975. **Andrew Harvey-Adams**



Andrew Colebourne continues:

When I sent the photo of Burton of North Finchley's ex Grey Green MUL 701P (also included on page 13 last month) I commented that the 204 number seemed to be a fixture in the destination box. Inspired to check the operator's address in my (only) copy of the Little Red Book, I found it was 204 Long Lane, Finchley, so mystery solved! 204 is an end of terrace Victorian / Edwardian house, so presumably the owner's home. Unlike other entries in the book where fleet size and types of vehicles are given, there is no other information for Burton. I went to school in Finchley but have no recollection of seeing vehicles of this operator. (A photo of MUL 702P is on page 11.)

Returning to CLK 700B mentioned above, which, as Andrew wrote last month was an ex-demonstration Bedford VAL14 with Duple Vega Major C49F body, new at the end of 1964. Andrew noted that there don't seem to be any online pictures of it at all. **Allan White** does have a photo of it, but it is one he purchased and he does not own the copyright, so unfortunately we are unable to include it. If anyone else has a photo we could use we would be grateful.

Allan continues:

I was interested in Andrew Colebourne's note on page 8 of EBM 701 in his list of new to Essex operators with 700 in the registration: "PPU 700 Commer Avenger AW C33F Wiffen, Finchingfield; there is a picture of this on Flickr with subsequent owner Hulls Lea Valley Coaches, where were they based?" I have now looked at the picture which I had not seen before. The PSV Circle gives the history of the vehicle as new to Wiffen, Finchingfield in January 1950, then to J&H Hull (Lea Valley Coaches), Cheshunt, in May 1951. In December 1961 it was sold to Thurgood, Ware (Dealer) and subsequently scrapped.

My memories of Hull's Coaches (as I knew them) are very scarce as I was not spotting coaches in that era (1950s to early 1960s). I moved to Cheshunt in November 1954 from Edmonton at the age of seven. I am in the process of writing my life story and by coincidence was recently doing some work on this era and I quote the following line from it "Once a week on a Friday evening Mr Hull the greengrocer would come round and Mum would get fruit and veg for the week from his van parked opposite the house". Mr Hull also had a shop in Cheshunt High Road and I always assumed that he also ran Hull's coaches as Mum took me and my brother on several day trips with them in the 1950s and I'm sure they were booked locally. Hull's Coaches were taken over by Streets of Hertford, probably in 1963, and Streets then started to use the 'Lea Valley Coaches' fleet name on some of their coaches. The company was sold to Don's in 1970 who also carried on using the Lea Valley Coaches fleet name and the Streets office address in Hertford. This can be seen on my photo right, taken in Waltham Cross Bus Station in August 1974, of Bedford VAL / Plaxton SIH 783E, new to Streets in June 1967.



Routes 27 & 35

Dave Tomlin writes:

I read with interest Richard's article regarding route 27 and route 35. When I was at Basildon garage circa 1964/65 I worked a Saturday only duty which took in route 35. I am assuming that we must have worked from Basildon Bus Station to Tilbury Ferry as either a 53 or 153, although given that we used a 'Tram' (a Bristol LS or MW / ECW) it is possible that we worked to Grays as a 53A, via Horndon on the Hill, and then ran dead to Tilbury Ferry. From Tilbury Ferry we worked as route 40 to Chelmsford via Brentwood and Ingatestone and from Chelmsford we then worked a 35 to Basildon Bus Station.

I still remember standing next to my driver chatting to him as we came along the Runwell Road from Rettendon Turnpike towards Wickford on a pleasant sunny day as we worked our way to Basildon Bus Station.

Corrections & Additions

More from **Andrew Colebourne**:

In Alan Moore's photo of Hedingham's 470 (EU05 CLJ) at the top of page 19, the bus is in Prince's Esplanade; the High Street starts adjacent to the former Eastern National enquiry office building, now the 'Revved Up' bikers' tea bar on the corner of Kino Road where the depot itself was situated. The grey building in the picture is the former Kino Cinema, now, and for many years, an amusement arcade.

I don't know if the cinema was named after the road or vice-versa. The bus stop for Eastern National buses starting from here, Walton "Bus Station" on blinds and in timetables for Clacton and Jaywick, was alongside the Kino building on the left of the picture. Buses for Colchester and elsewhere picked up on the other side of the Kino Road triangle formed around a large municipal toilet block, which is still there. Nowadays the entrance to that side of the triangle is closed to vehicles and is part of the pavement, although the bikers park their bikes on it! [Photos of before and after at Walton Depot and Bus Station were included in recently published EBM Extra 2.]

Editor's note: Last month Andrew also kindly provided a list of various London Transport buses with 700 fleet numbers and registrations that worked into Essex as a follow up to '700 for EBM 700'. We didn't include these, partly because it was peripheral to our area of coverage and also due to space being very tight last month (as it usually is!). However, Andrew thinks that AEC Regal T700 does deserve mention as it was allocated new to the Green Line Brentwood service, so must have been seen daily in Essex. Andrew also mentioned, and we included last month, that Eastern Counties LH700 (VVF 700H), a Perkins-engined Bristol LH ECW B45F new in December 1969 was allocated to Ipswich so may well have operated into Essex, although he couldn't find any web pictures of it on services into Essex.

Andrew was correct, as the below photo by **Robert Appleton** testifies, LH700 (VVF 700H), in Tilling red and cream livery, at Rigby Avenue, Mistley in August 1970. This complements nicely Robert's photo of LH697 (VAH 697H) taken on the same route in the same road in May 1977, but in NBC red livery, which was on the inside front cover of EBM 697.



Roger Tuke writes:

The Colchester Borough Transport traffic poster of the 1982 Sightseeing Tour of Colchester on page 32 includes a drawing of CBT's first converted open topper Leyland Atlantean / Massey 48 (YWC 648F), not Atlantean 55 (JHK 495N) as stated. 55, which has an ECW body, was, from memory, not converted so until 1989. Interestingly both still exist. 48 after service with Bulley's / Rallybeam in both Felixstowe & Torquay, followed by many years with Maghull Coaches in Liverpool was after withdrawal exported to Jesada Teknik museum in Thailand via Southampton docks. 55 after sale by Arriva, first spent time in Essex with Talisman Coachlines before export to Xiadas Coaches of Larnaca in Cyprus for sightseeing tours of Paphos. Re-registered TKUC 099.

48 is seen above right, a year earlier then the poster, blinded for the tour at Butt Road, Colchester on 6 August 1981. **Richard Delahoy**



702 for EBM 702

Right: Pullman Coaches EIN 702 at St Paul's, London in the early 1950s. A 1936 AEC Regent (the chassis was from London Transport STL1093, registered CGI 137 and withdrawn in August 1950) with a 1951 Heaver FC35F body. B Parsons (Pullman Coaches) of Leigh-on-Sea moved to Loughton in May 1952. The coach passed to Young, Grays by July 1957 then GHJ Best (Reliance Coaches), Plymouth in March 1958 and was last licensed June 1959.

Robert Downton Collection

Some info from PSV Circle.



Below: Further to the photo of MUL 701P after it had left the Ewer Group in last month's issue, here is the next in sequence, Leyland Leopard / Plaxton MUL 702P, whilst still with the Group in World Wide livery. At Harwich Station on a single journey the photographer **Fred Lawrance** was driving on Sunday 27 May 1984 between Dovercourt Caravan Park, Harwich and Colchester to London Victoria. At the time, the coach was being used Monday to Friday on a commuter service to London and was parked overnight in the Colchester area.



Below: Regal Busways EU10 OJE, a 2010 Man14.24 / Alexander Dennis Enviro 200, B37F. At the Herongate terminus of route 565 on Christmas Eve 2010. This was numbered **702** the following year.

Adam Kelleher



Service Revisions

by Ian Ransom

24 August 2022

137 Clacton Shopping Village - Clacton Pier Avenue **Hedingham**. The enhanced service for Clacton Air Show only operated on 25 August.

27 August

20 (Daily) Walthamstow Central Station - Debden Sainsburys. TfL contract passed from **CT Plus** to **Stagecoach London**.

397 (Daily) Crooked Billet Sainsburys - Debden Torrington Drive. TfL contract passed from **CT Plus** to **Stagecoach London**. (Business of CT Plus purchased by Stagecoach.)

1 September

351 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Warley Eagle Way **First Essex**. Minor timetable revision.

414 (Sch only) Great Dunmow - Saffron Walden High School **Stephensons**. Extended to start from and terminate at Felstead, Garnetts Lane.

2 September

667 (Sch only) Ilford High Road - Chigwell West Hatch School **Stagecoach London**. Revised timetable.

3 September

BP1 Special Service on this day only, from Basildon Bus Station to Upper Mayne, Basildon Pride Festival, operated by **First Essex**.

4 September

754/756 (M-S) Sudbury Bus Station - Colchester Bus Station **Chambers**. Revised timetable.

5 September

694 (Sch only) Langham - East Bergholt High School. ECC contract to **Go Ahead** replacing cancelled **Ipswich Buses** commercial service.



Above: Ipswich Buses cancelled commercial school service 694, Langham - East Bergholt High School, at the end of the summer school term on 19 July 2022. With Langham in Essex and the school in Suffolk, it took some time for Essex County Council to decide to put the service out to tender. It is shown as operated by Hedingham on the essexbus.info website, but on the Hedingham and Chambers website, it is shown as operated by **Chambers** and this has been backed up by personal observation. Chambers 804 (YN55 PZF), a Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka, at Foxhall Fields in East Bergholt on 4 October, running light to East Bergholt High School to work the 1545 school contract 694 to Langham. **Robert Appleton**

8 September

Chelmsford Racecourse shuttle **Ensignbus**. Shuttle service in connection with events at Chelmsford Racecourse from Chelmsford Railway Station additionally registered to operate on 8, 10, 15, 24 and 29 September.

15 September

KEV002 (Sch only) Basildon - Brentwood Council Offices **Kevendys Travel**. NEW SERVICE on schooldays only.

22 September

DigiGo (Daily). Essex County Council operating area expanded to include Great Dunmow, Stebbing, Great Sailing and Great Canfield.

29 September

BUCHS (Sch only) Pitsea Broadway - Brentwood Council Offices **Michael Martin**. Service withdrawn, this was the formal date, in practice it may have been replaced by KEV002 from 15 September (see above).

3 October

59/590 (M-F) Saffron Walden - Audley End Railway Station. **Central Connect** commenced operation of former **Stephensons** commercial service, under contract to Essex County Council.

22 October

68 Southend Pier - Leigh on Sea **Ensignbus**. Special hourly service during half term holidays, operating until 28 October, using a closed top Routemaster.

30 October

7 (M-S) Cambridge Emmanuel Street - Saffron Walden Station Street. **Stagecoach East**. Revised timetable.

30 October

From this date **First Essex** are making changes to their commercial network. Fuller details will be published next month.

- 9 (M-S) Basildon Bus Station - Brentwood Railway Station. Revised timetable.
- 20 (Daily) Southend Travel Centre - Hullbridge Anchor. Revised timetable.
- 21 (Daily) Southend Travel Centre - Canvey Newlands. Revised timetable, journeys via Westcliff schools renumbered 21S.
- 22 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Canvey Leigh Beck. Revised timetable and minor route change in Basildon.
- 25 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Southend Travel Centre. Revised timetable.
- 27 (M-S) Southend Travel Centre - Canvey Leigh Beck. Revised timetable.
- 28 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Southend Travel Centre. Revised route and timetable.
- 31/331/332 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Burnham Clock Tower. Revised timetable.
- 37 (Daily) Brentwood Rail Station - Bishops Hall Estate. Revised timetable.
- 47 (M-S) Chelmsford Oaklands Park - Broomfield Hospital. Revised route and timetable.
- 70/370 (Daily) Chelmsford - Colchester Bus Station via Braintree (70 Chelmsford - Braintree only). Revised timetable.
- 71/371/X71 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Colchester Bus Station via Witham (71 Chelmsford - Witham only). Revised route and timetable.
- 75 (Daily) Colchester General Hospital - Maldon Morrisons. Revised route and timetable.
- 86 (Daily) Colchester General Hospital (Jump Street on Sunday) - West Mersea High Street. Revised timetable, withdrawn between Colchester city centre and Colchester General Hospital on Monday to Saturday.
- 87 (Daily) Great Horkesley Malvern Way (North Station on Sunday) - Brightlingsea Victoria Place. Revised route (some schooldays journeys only) and timetable.
- 88/A/B (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Halstead Conies Road. Revised timetable on Monday to Saturday.
- 100 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Lakeside Bus Station. Revised timetable.
- 103/104 (M-S) Colchester Bus Station - Harwich Railway Station. Revised timetable.
- 200 (M-S) Basildon Bus Station - Grays Bus Station. Revised timetable.
- 300 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Basildon Bus Station. Revised timetable.
- 336 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - South Woodham Ferrers Asda. Revised timetable.
- 351 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Warley Eagle Way. Revised timetable.
- B1 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Laindon Fenton Way. Revised timetable.
- B2 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Laindon Fenton Way. Revised timetable.
- B3 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station (two early M-S journeys start at Basildon Hospital) - Pitsea Tesco. Revised timetable.
- B4 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Pitsea Tesco. Revised timetable.
- B5 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Pitsea Broadway. Revised timetable.
- C3 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - North Melbourne Wickfield Ash. Revised timetable.
- C4 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Chelmsford Railway Station via Writtle. Revised timetable.
- C5 (Daily) Chelmsford Rail Station - Moulsham Lodge Heath Drive. Revised route and timetable.
- C6 (M-S) Chelmsford Bus Station - Great Baddow BAE Systems. Revised timetable, withdrawn on Saturdays.
- C8 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Beaulieu Park Shardelow Avenue. Revised timetable.
- C9 (Daily) Chelmsford Bus Station - Beaulieu Park Centenary Way. Revised route and timetable.
- C11 (Daily) Chelmsford Rail Station - Springfield Sainsburys (evenings extends to Beaulieu Park Beaulieu Gardens). Revised timetable.
- C12 (M-S) Chelmsford Bus Station - Springfield Sainsburys. Withdrawn after operation on 29 October.
- S1 (Daily) Colchester Highwoods - Wivenhoe Railway Station. Revised timetable.
- S2 (Daily) Stanway Tollgate - Colchester Highwoods. Revised timetable.
- S3 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - West Bergholt Queens Head. Revised timetable on Monday to Saturday.
- S4 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Greenstead Library. Revised timetable on Monday to Friday.
- S6 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Shrub End (one evening journey extends to Layer-de-la-Haye). Revised timetable on Monday to Saturday.
- S7 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Colchester St Michaels. Revised timetable on Monday to Saturday.
- S8 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Monkwick Gosfield Road. Revised timetable on Monday to Friday.
- S9 (Daily) Colchester Bus Station - Rowhedge Heath Road. Revised timetable on Monday to Saturday.
- S10 (Daily, University term times only) Colchester Bus Station - Wivenhoe Park. Withdrawn after operation on 29 October.
- S33 (Sch) Ongar Four Wantz - Debden Park High School. Renumbered to 633 with a revised timetable.
- X10 (Daily) Basildon Bus Station - Stansted Airport. Revised timetable on Monday to Saturday. Withdrawn on Sundays.
- X30 (Daily) Southend Travel Centre - Stansted Airport. Revised route and timetable.

With thanks to Robert Appleton, Peter Clark, Richard Delahoy, Paul Harvey, Essex County Council and the Omnibus Society.

Industrial Action

Further to last month's report of a planned strike at Southend on 5 September, strike action was suspended pending another ballot on a revised pay offer and a full service ran. Southend staff subsequently voted to accept the pay offer.

Colchester

Enviro 200 3993 (GN07 DMF) was transferred away to Gillingham on 17 September.

Park & Ride bus 4123 was unusually on service 133 on the morning of 9 September but broke down at Stansted. It was on the 133 again on 13th.

Due to a shortage of serviceable buses, Southend's Enviro 400 6510 (SN66 WJF) was received on loan on 17 September; it went directly to Colchester from the Arriva paint shop at Gillingham but returned to Southend on 21 September and was replaced by VDL SB200 3759 (Y108 DZK).

Southend

Further repaints into the latest Arriva livery are Enviro 400s 6510/4 and Versas 4208/12, 4240/8/51. On repaint, the Versas are losing their rear photo graphics (e.g., 4251 had been 'Sunset'). Below: As reported last month, 4249 (KX13 AUR) was the first of the 2013 batch to be repainted, it is seen at Southend Travel Centre on 27 September. It is on route 2, which, as reported in EBM 699, is the split off Travel Centre-Shoeburyness section of the Rayleigh-Shoeburyness 1 (which is now Rayleigh-Travel Centre). **Richard Delahoy**



As noted above, after repaint 6510 went directly on loan to Colchester on 17 September but returned to Southend on 21st with 3759 going on loan to Colchester on the evening of 21st to replace it.

Harlow

Enviro 200 MMC 4101 (YX17NYS) in Sapphire livery, has had its front repainted from purple to light blue (it retains purple at the front on the sides). It has also received branding (on a pink background) for routes 508/509/510.

Two vehicles were on loan from Ware on Tuesday 6 September, Solo SR 1520 (KX13 DHO) on route 9 (tracking as 3820) and Versa 2403 (YJ58 PFU) on route 2 (tracking as 3776).

Unusual were 4008 on route 9 on 13 September and 4081 on 59 on 29th.

3776 does not appear to have operated since 30 August and 1466 since 5 September.

With thanks to John Card, Adam Kelleher, Keith Sadler, Jonathan Thompson, the M&D & East Kent Bus Club and Harlowwide.

New Vehicles

Further to EBM 701, 47696 & 47697 have now had decals added. A correction to the caption to the interior photo of 47696 on page 20 last month, the photo was taken at Quayside, Colchester, not Westway.

Acquired Vehicles

37613	WX58 JXY	YV3S4J8269A129913	AC425	H45/29F	11/08	First Bristol 37613
37621	WX58 JYG	YV3S4J82X9A130272	AC433	H45/29F	11/08	First Bristol 37621

Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini. Arrived from Hoeford, Fareham, First Hampshire & Dorset, depot on Sunday 2 October 2022 and went straight into service the next day, on S2 and 87 respectively. In all over purple livery from their time at previous operator First Bristol on 'citylines' routes 3 & 4 (branding for the routes since removed). See photo on opposite page.

Further to EBM 701, an extra ex-Arriva Enviro 400 to be delivered in August was 34463 on 11th (so seven, not six, were delivered in August). Deliveries in September were 34464 (1st), 34452 (6th), 34459 (9th), 34461 (13th), 34457 (15th), 34460 (16th), 34456 (after 16th, by 23rd), 34465 (after 23rd, by 29th).

34456, had been the last to be delivered to Mardens for repainting, on 12 September, although the 14th to be delivered to HH. 34465 actually became the last to be repainted, by 20 September, and the last to be delivered to HH.

Dates of entry into service, September unless stated (routes in brackets): 34452 17th (27), 34455 12th (20, 827 & 27), 34456 3 October (20 & 27), 34457 20th (27 & 20), 34458 7th (27 & 20), 34459 13th (20 & 27), 34460 (21 & 20) 6 October, 34461 16th (27 & 20 and 21 (Canvey version)), 34463 6 September (27), 34464 (20 & Z3) 9th, 34465 (20 & 27) 10 October.

The conversions of these buses also included removing the ramp fitted where the centre door was and fitting one at the front.

Below: 34462 (LJ59 LYW) attended the 50th and final Showbus at the Hertfordshire County Showground on 25 September. Its green hand poles are clearly visible. **Richard Delahoy**. Platinum Jubilee liveried 33983 and shuttles livery 44172 (shuttles livery) were also there from First Essex. Richard later dashed back to Southend to capture photos featured on page 32 and the rear cover!





Above: Newly acquired 37621 (WX58 JYG) at Chelmsford Bus Station on route 370 on 5 October 2022. **William Morrison**

Allocation Changes

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

Period 5 2022/23 (24 July - 20 August) - Additional to EBM 701

34451 Acquired-HH (oos), 34463 Acquired-HH (oos), 47696 New-CR (oos), 47697 New-CR (oos)

Period 6 2022/23 (21 August - 24 September)

32484 CF (oos)-CF, 32641 CF (oos)-CF, 33098 HH (oos)-Disposal, 33133 HH-Disposal, 33134 HH (oos)-Disposal, 33232 HH-Disposal, 33373 HH (oos)-Disposal, 33383 HH (oos)-Disposal, 33384 HH-HH (oos), 33385 HH-HH (oos), 33401 HH (oos)-Disposal, 33402 HH-HH (oos), 33403 HH-Disposal, 33405 HH (oos)-Disposal, 33546 BN-BN (oos), 33561 HH-BN, 33983 BN-BN (oos), 33987 HH-BN, 34451 HH (oos)-HH, 34452 Acquired-HH, 34453 Acquired-HH, 34455 Acquired-HH, 34456 Acquired-HH (oos), 34457 Acquired-HH, 34458 Acquired-HH, 34459 Acquired-HH, 34460 Acquired-HH (oos), 34461 Acquired-HH, 34462 Acquired-HH, 34463 HH (oos)-HH, 34464 Acquired-HH, 36216 HH-HH (oos), 36837 CF-CF (oos), 42487 CF (oos)-Disposal, 42895 CF (oos)-Disposal, 44004 CF-CF (oos), 44662 CF-CF (oos), 66759 BN-CR, 66795 CF (oos)-Disposal, 66799 CF (oos)-Disposal, 66812 CF (oos)-Disposal, 66815 CF (oos)-Disposal, 66872 CF (oos)-Disposal, 66936 CF(DS)-off loan, 67164 CF (oos)-CF, 67167 BN (oos)-BN, 69919 BN (oos)-BN

Disposals

33098, 33373, 33401, 33405, 66815 - details in EBM 701.

33383 and 42487 (the last Transbus Dart) towed to Ensignbus on 15 September 2022.

33232 and 33403 to Ensignbus on 22 September. Unusually, these were driven rather than towed.

33134 to Ensignbus on 23 September, also driven.

33133, 42895, 66795, 66799, 66812, 66872 also to Ensignbus in September, exact dates not known (the Dart and Volvos had gone from Chelmsford scrap line by 21st).

33383 and 42487 on to Hardwick, Barnsley later in September.

42895, 66795, 66799, 66812 and 66872 on to Shelton Motors for scrap later in September.

Further to EBM 700, 42923 also passed from Ensignbus to Shelton Motors for scrap in July or August (see correction to Ensignbus disposals on page 26).

33385 towed to Ensignbus 6 October.

Vehicle on Loan

Further to EBM 698 (with a slight correction as to which depot it had come from in EBM 699), Volvo B7RLE / WrightBus Eclipse Urban driver trainer 66936 (WX55 UAC) returned to First Bristol during September.

Around the Depots

(All vehicles listed below allocated to relevant depot. All dates September 2022 except where stated.)

First Essex peak vehicle requirement (PVR) figures for September 2022:

	Mon-Fri Schooldays	Saturdays	Sundays
BN - Basildon	66	53	32
CF - Chelmsford	80	63	29
CR - Colchester	61	48	26
HH - Hadleigh	54	43	25
Totals	261	207	112

These represent an increase of five over the figures we reported in EBM 698 (CR +3, HH +2), reflecting the August ECC contract wins and other service changes. With thanks to Sean Menzies for extracting this data from Bustimes files made available under the BODS (Bus Open Data Service) Regulations.

Colchester

On the 'scrap line' at Quayside on 1 September were 32539 (having been moved back to its position of a few months ago) and 66971. On 20th, 32539 was being cannibalised for spare parts. 67742, last in service on 4 August, is at ADL for accident repairs and a new radiator.

News of the Harwich routes (1 September - 5 October). The 0715 Harwich - Colchester 103, the three all-day duties starting with 0605 and 0705 Harwich - Colchester 104 and 0930 Colchester - Harwich 104, plus the Saturday and Sunday duties were mainly worked by a pool of single-deckers during this period: Volvo B7RLEs 66759/800/1/4/16/970/69515 and Enviro 300s 67736/8/9/41/50/55/79/805. Only five StreetLites reached Harwich: 47656/7, 63336/8/42. Only four Volvo B7L double-deckers reached Harwich working part of the all-day duties: 32526 on 1130 Colchester - Harwich 104 and 1300 return, 32547 on 1635 Harwich - Colchester 104 and 1805 return, both on 23 September, 37053 on 0730 Colchester - Harwich and 0900 return on Saturday 24 September, 37027 on 1635 Colchester - Harwich 104 and 1805 return on 4 October. The bus off service 86 that works 1935 Colchester - Harwich 104 only had seven Volvo B7LTs: 32530/42/629/76/37016/36/42. This journey was worked mainly by single-deckers from the above pool, plus additionally 63342 on 29 September and 63338 on 5 October. In contrast the Monday - Friday 0915 Mistley - Colchester 104 was double deck every day, worked by 13 different Volvo B7LTs and two Volvo B9TLs, 37133/6. On the last day of this reporting period, 66821, a Period 7 transfer from BN, worked one of the all-day duties starting with 0930 Colchester - Harwich 104. Clacton routes. 74B has been worked mainly by Volvo B7LT / Wrightbus Eclipse Geminis with occasional similar bodied Volvo B9TLs.

There continues to be variety on route 76, in date order: 66816 (11th), 37042 (18th), 32530 (Bank Holiday Monday 19th), 37036 (25th), 32669 (2 October), 37027 (9 October).

Chelmsford

Further to last month, on 21 September all vehicles listed as being in the scrap line had gone (see Disposals above), with the exception of 66837, which was still there on 28th, joined by long-term VOR 44662.

32482 (15th), 32642 (5th) very unusual on X30.

Because of some X30 Scania's being off road, there was a brief period of former X10 Enviro 200 MMCs being regularly used on the route: 67160 (27th), 67171 (26th) and 67164 (23rd, 28th, 29th, 30th). 36841 on 371 (4 October). 67196 on S33 (7 October). Sightings of Driver Trainers: 66825 in Hatfield Peverel (22nd), at Braintree Interchange (28th & 1 October); 69148 in South Woodham (5th), at Southend Travel Centre (27th), in Colchester (29th); 69151 in Springfield (9th).

Basildon

The fourth and final stage of the redevelopment of Basildon Bus Station commenced on 20 September, with bays Q-U now out of use and bay V continuing to be out of use. The two temporary stops in Southernhay in front of the railway line doubled to four (T1-T4).

Surprise arrivals from Hadleigh were ALX 400 bodied Tridents 33384 and 33402 which entered service from here on 26 September. However, at time of going to press they hadn't been used since 5 October. 33402 briefly re-introduced Barbie livery to Basildon.

A fire, unusual in starting in a nearside headlamp, badly damaged the front of hybrid Volvo 7900 69918 whilst on route B1 at Great Knightleys around 0730 on 7 October. Thankfully, no injuries were reported.

Few single-deckers reported on route 9, 47653 (10th), 47654 (8th, 22nd) and 67195 unusual on 17th, although on just one evening round trip from Basildon to Brentwood and back.

Other unusual / interesting workings: 32260 on 100 (17th), 33186 on 100 (9th, 10th, 17th, 22nd & 27th), on 25 all day on 11th - the route not unusual but a Trident / President being used on a Sunday these days is (and again in use on a Sunday, on B1, on 2 October). 44908 on 300 (27th). 44909 on 100 (24th). 44910 on 200 (6 October). 47654 on 200 (9th), 100 (29th & 6 October). 66821 on 100 (17th). 67168 on 16 (13th). 69907 on school route 625 (9th). 69904 on 16 (1 October). 69906 (27th), 69912 (23rd, 2 October) and 69918 (26th) on X10. Two double-deckers on 251 on 2 October, 33553 and 33987 (plus mini Enviro 200 44910).

Hadleigh

The era of Tridents at Hadleigh has come to an end. The transfers and disposals listed above left just Westcliff Motor Services liveried 33191 in use, but its last day of service was 3 October on routes 20 & 27. For the second time Barbie livery has come to an end at Hadleigh.

Not previously realised is that Trident / ALX 400s 33401-5 (VX54 MTV/YZ/MUA/B) were low-height vehicles, 13' 10" (standard-height ones are 14' 5 or 6"). This may explain why they did not have rear lower deck windows, although Volvo B7TLs of the same height with ALX 400 bodywork do have.

A burst water main closed the A13 westbound between Tarpots and Sadlers Farm on 14th. Basildon bound 28s were diverted from Hadleigh going down Essex Way, past Benfleet Station then up Canvey Way then normal route, and 22s served Benfleet station then turned and went up Canvey Way. All 21s were turned short at Benfleet Station and two shuttles were running from Benfleet Station to Canvey. There were delays of over 60 minutes on services 21, 22, 27 and 28. This continued on 15th, but the road had reopened by the morning of the 16th.

Service Vehicles

Last month, Ford Transit Engineering Van SN17 NXZ was accidentally listed twice, but correctly shown both times as allocated to CF. Its Sema number is 90648 and SN17 NWR has Sema number 90647. Since last month, Ford Toureno MT19 CZD has moved back to CF from CR.

With thanks to Robert Appleton, Stephen Barham, Jon Collins, Ian Dann, Richard Delahoy, Robert Downton, David Edwards, Mark Graves, John Lidstone, David Moth, Ross Newman, John Podgorski, Derek Stebbing, Chris Stewart, Rob Webb, Robert West, Bustimes, Bus Lists on the Web, Facebook, Essex Buses Google group and Terminus.

Below: Last month we reported that by 25 August 2022, the rear half of the original Queen Street, Colchester garage structure had been dismantled, including all of the roof, but roof girders remain at the front. The building is now roughly back to where the Theatre Royal had previously stood. This photo was taken that day. **John Podgorski**



33983

As mentioned on page 1, the front, side and rear vinyls on Platinum Jubilee bus 33983 have been amended following the passing of Her Majesty. Photos featuring the original vinyls were on the front cover, inside front cover and page 18 of EBM 698. A close-up for comparison of before and after on between decks on the offside is shown below. The 'before' photo was taken at Mardens on 20 May 2022 by **John G Lidstone**, all others on this page were taken at Southend Travel Centre on 27 September by **Richard Delahoy**.



Above: 33983 leaving the Travel Centre returning to Basildon, passing Airlink liveried Enviro 200 MMC 67163 (YY66 PAO) on the same route. Behind is Mini Enviro 200 44005 (LK57 EJJ) on route 3 to Chelmsford. Below: The front of 33983 below the windscreen.



Further to EBM 701, for the new school year starting on 5 September, in a surprise move, Ipswich Buses reinstated no less than five of the DAF DB250 / East Lancs Lowlanders! They are 55/56/57 (PN52 XBO/K/J) and 58/59 (PJ53 OLA/OLB) for use on school services / contracts in Suffolk. However, one does work into Essex on school days: 0813 Ardleigh - East Bergholt High School 693 via Lawford, Mistley New Road, Manningtree, then over the border to Cattawade, Brantham, and East Bergholt East End, arriving at East Bergholt High School at 0851. The return journey leaves the High School at 1545. On 16 September, 59 worked both journeys. On 27 September 55 worked the afternoon journey. On 4 October 58 worked the afternoon journey.

Other buses working into Essex on 16 September on services 92/93/A were:

60 (PJ54 YZT) Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka worked the all day duty on Ipswich - Manningtree 92, joined by Scania OmniCity 35 (YR61 RTV) on 1740 Ipswich - Manningtree 92 and 1830 return. 61 (PJ54 YVU) Scania N94UD / East Lancs OmniDekka and 41 (YR61 RVF) Scania OmniCity on Ipswich - Colchester 93/A. However, as the month progressed it became clear that the 80 seat capacity of the Scania OmniDekkas was needed on school services, so 93/A was normally worked by one OmniDekka and one OmniCity, with another OmniCity working the all-day duty on 92.

On Monday to Friday schooldays 1645 Ipswich - Colchester 93 and 1810 return is a regular single deck working; on 16 September this was Enviro 200 82 (YX63 LGF). On Saturdays, the normal allocation on 92/93 is single deck, although Scania OmniCities are used occasionally.

The new school year for Ipswich School started on 6 September. Contract journeys departing from Ipswich School at 1625 on 13 September for destinations in Essex were worked by:

1 (SGZ 1001) Volvo B7R / Jonckheere Modulo on 10 to Tendring, Frinton and Holland-on-Sea.

2 (SGZ 1002) Volvo B11RT / Caetano Levante on 6 to Halstead and Castle Hedingham.

46 (SGZ 3346) Scania OmniCity on 2C to Colchester and Langenhoe.

47 (SGZ 3347) Scania OmniCity on 2A to Colchester Tollgate and Feering.

51 (SGZ 3351) Scania OmniCity on 2B to Langham and Colchester Braiswick.

76 (LX58 LML) ADL Enviro 200 on 3 to Dedham and Dedham Heath.

With thanks to Ipswich Transport Society Journal, Ipswich Buses website, Ipswich School website.

Below: 1 (SGZ 1001) was originally registered FL02 ZXX, new in May 2002, so now just over twenty years old, and the oldest vehicle in the Ipswich Buses fleet. On 27 September 1 was again on the 1625 contract 10 from Ipswich School, pictured just after coming over Manningtree level crossing. On 29 September 1 worked both the morning and afternoon journeys on this contract. **Robert Appleton**



Acquired Vehicles

531	LX59 DCF Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 2 ex Go Ahead London WVL323
536	LX59 DCZ Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 2 ex Go Ahead London WVL328 - see photo on opposite page
538	LX59 DDE Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus Eclipse Gemini 2 ex Go Ahead London WVL330
	RE66 VOB Mercedes 514CDI Sprinter minibus M16 ex City of Oxford

Vehicles on Loan

646	LX09 FCD Alexander Dennis Enviro 400 from Konectbus
647	LX09 FCE Alexander Dennis Enviro 400 from Konectbus

Vehicles Withdrawn

253	EU04 BVF Transbus Dart SLF B37F	Withdrawn late August
254	EU05 AUR Transbus Dart SLF B34F	Withdrawn early September
565	W425 WGH Volvo B7TL / Plaxton President	Withdrawn at KN
9011	EK58 EFA Ford Tourneo minibus	Withdrawn August, to private buyer

Significant Allocations

276	CN	Entered service 29 September
277	KN	Entered service 6 September
287	CN - KN	by 2 September
512	KN - HD	by 9 September returned to CN by 15 September
520	CN - KN	by 7 September returned to CN by 16 September
521	KN - CN	by 7 September
523	CN - HD	by 5 September back to KN by 20 September
525	CN - HD	by 6 September
531	HD	Entered service 31 August
536	CN	Entered service 9 September
538	CN	Entered service 5 September
573	KN - CN	by 8 September, operated in CN then back to KN by 15 September
821	KN	Allocated to depot but date into use unknown
823	KN	Entered service first week of September
911	CN - KN	by 3 September

Fleet News

Ex Go Ahead London Volvo B9TL / Wright Eclipse Gemini 2s which have been converted to single door and repainted into new livery have started to enter service. 531 is at Sible Hedingham and 536/8 at Clacton. Mentioned in the EBM 701 report was 643 (LK09 FLP) which entered service on 2 September from Clacton primarily on the X76 and 74 routes. Ex GAL commercial fleet Scania / East Lancs OmniDekkas YN56 FFA/B/C have been numbered 821/2/3 in the fleet and still carry Brighton & Hove livery with Hedingham vinyls added and 823 entered service from Kelvedon on schools services for the new term. Konectbus 646 (LX09 FCD), the dual door Norwich P&R Enviro 400, worked the Stour Valley School services during the majority of the month. From 20 September, similar 647 (LX09 FCE) worked out of Chambers Sudbury depot on schools route 716. A Mercedes Sprinter minibus has been acquired to replace Chambers 9011 (EK58 EFA) Ford Tourneo minibus for a school contract. 9011 has been withdrawn and sold to a private buyer. 525 was repaired at CN and worked from KN for a day before returning to HD for service. HD had to borrow Chambers 875/7 (PN09 ENE/O) for a few days week commencing 5 & 12 September. 875 worked the 88 service on 8 September and 877 also worked on the 89 service on 9 September. Later in the month 871 (PN09 ELU) worked out of Clacton on school duties from 20 September. 277 (YX57 BXE) entered service from Kelvedon on 6 September schools then the following day on full service. Sister 276 (YX57 BXD) entered service on 29 September from Clacton depot. 513 (LB02 YXE) has reportedly suffered a serious fire.

Service News

From 4 September, route 3, Harwich to Clacton, had some morning services deleted and was cancelled on Sundays and Bank Holidays. Route 5/A had the final journey of the day deleted. Services 97/98 had additional Sunday & Bank Holiday services added, as did service 137. There were also changes to routes 2/4/6/9/74/X76/105/107/134/135/136/137 to assist vehicle positioning with the new routes started in August / September. Slight timetable changes were also implemented by Chambers on all routes and also some Saturday journeys have been reinstated. See page 13 re school route 694.

With thanks to John Podgorski & the Hedingham website.



Above: East Yorkshire in Maldon - Heddingham 587 (PL51 LDU) & 277 (YX57 BXE) at Tesco on the morning of 9 September 2022 in different versions of East Yorkshire livery (the latest version is on the Enviro 200). **Dave Arnold**
 Below: Newly acquired 536 (LX59 DCZ), see previous page, gleaming at Pier Avenue, Clacton on 17 September. **Mark Lloyd**



Fleet News

Two of the acquired ex-London Scania OmniCities, YT59 SFF/Y, have entered service at Frating depot in London red, converted to single door. SFY is seen below at Frating depot on 5 September 2022. **John Podgorski**



YR59 FYU has also been converted to single door and is in fleet livery but had not entered service when these notes were prepared. No decision has yet been made about which of the many buses of this type that Stephensons acquired earlier this year will be retained long-term and hence no fleet numbers have yet been allocated.

Further Scania OmniCities acquired are YR59 NPA and YR59 NPG from Powell's Bus Company (HCT Group - they were new to CT Plus in London) in administration. They will probably only be used for spares.

Sales from the NIBS fleet comprise:

Volvo B7TL 705 (PO54 ADV) is now withdrawn and sold to Axe Valley Coaches, Devon. Latterly it had been working on former New Horizon routes out of Frating.

Similar 706 (PO54 OOD) has likewise been withdrawn and sold to Flagfinders, Halstead.

The pair of Wheel Forward StreetLites, 341/2 (MX11 CZR, MX61 BCE) have been sold to Lugg Valley Travel, Hereford.

Service News

Out of our area but a significant development, in response to the significant cuts being made by Stagecoach in Cambridgeshire at the end of October, Stephensons have announced that they will be saving the section of service 12 that runs between Newmarket and Cambridge, continuing to operate the 'fast' Newmarket - Cambridge service, broadly at the current route and frequency. Further details next month.

With thanks to the companies and John Podgorski.

Opposite page top: Unusual working: NIBS 525 (LX08 ECN) outside Manningtree School before taking up service on Stephensons route 721 on the afternoon of 21 September 2022. **Stephen Barham**



Below: As reported in EBMs 699 & 701, ECC school route 804 transferred from Stephenson's to sister company NIBS at the start of the Autumn 2022 term. Enviro 200 MMC 401 (YX16 OBP) was waiting in the afternoon sunshine on 14 September outside West Hatch School, Chigwell for departure to Loughton and Debden. **Owen Woodliffe**





Ensignbus

omnibus suppliers to the world

by Mark Lloyd

Dealer Stock Movements September 2022

Vehicles In

From **Brighton & Hove**: Mercedes-Benz Articulated Citaros BL57 OXN/P, BP57 UYE/UYK

From **Cardiff Bus**: Scania CN57 FKD

From **Dawson Rentals**: Enviro 200s SN59 AXA, KX10 DVN, YX11 AEC/HPL

From **First Essex**: Darts SN03 WME, WX05 RUW; Volvo B7RLEs MX05 CBU/CCD/CDN/CKD; Tridents LT02 ZBZ/ZCA, LT52 WXX, LK53 EZC. These are ex-First Essex 42487, 42895; 66795, 66799, 66812, 66872; 33133, 33134, 33232, 33383. See page 17.

From **HCT Yorkshire**: Enviro 200s YX15 XMJ, YX65 RHF

From **Metrobus**: Scania YN56 FDO

From **Mullanys Coaches**: Enviro 200 AE56 OUM; Enviro 400 HP06 BUS

From **RATP London**: Scania YT59 SGX

From **Rotala**: Scania YT13 WKZ

Vehicles Out

Scanias YT61 GOX/GPZ: **Atlantic Travel, Bolton**

Volvo B7TL HF03 ODS: **A S Bone, Hook, Hants**

Enviro 400 SK07 DYB: **Chalkwell, Sittingbourne**

Enviro 400 LJ09 CCF: **Delaine, Bourne**

Volvo B9TL LX59 DAA: **First Eastern Counties**

Enviro 400s LJ59 LXR/S/LYK/O/P/S/T/U/V/W/LZE/F: **First Essex**. These were listed with First Essex fleet numbers last month.

Enviro 200s YX65 RHK/O: **First Worcester**

Volvo B7TL HF04 JWG: **Fowlers Holbeach Drove, Lincs**

Darts SN03 WME, AE56 OUM; Trident LK53 EZC: **Hardwicks Barnsley**

Volvo B7TL HF03 ODU: **Mr J Hawkins, Dartmouth**

Scanias LFZ 8054/6, Y8 YEL: **Lewis Coaches, Greenwich**

Volvo B9R KX58 NBO: **New Adventure Travel Cardiff**

Scanias YT59 SGO/U/SKK/V, YT09 ZCL: **Newport Transport**

Scanias YT61 GOU/GPX: **Grant Palmer**

Scania CN57 FKD: **PC Coaches, Lincoln**

Scanias YN56 NDO, YT61 GPE: **Redfern Travel Mansfield**

Scania YT61 GPY: **Rogers Coaches Northampton**

StreetLites HF13 FZL/M/N/O/P/R/S/T, HF14 BWM/N/O/P/U/V/W/X/Y/Z/BXA: **Rotala**

Enviro 400 HP06 BUS: **Shiel Buses, Fort William**

Volvo B7TL HF04 JWI: **Squarepeg, Leeds**

Enviro 200s YX61 EMV, GN07 FDE: **Stantons of Stoke**

Volvo B7RLE MX06 VPG: **Warwickshire Travel**

To Shelton Motors for scrap

Mercedes-Benz Articulated Citaros BL57 OXN/P, BP57 UYE/K

Tridents LN51 GOA, LK53 EYR, VX54 MTV/MUB

Volvo B7RLEs MX05 CBU/CCD/CDN/V/CKD. Dart WX05 RUW

Volvo B7TLs KP51 WBO, YN53 EFJ

Enviro 400H SN61 DAO

Additions / Corrections to last month

YT59 RYW was included in the Scanias acquired from **RATP London** but there is no such vehicle.

HF03 ODR was a fourth Volvo B7TL to go to **Squarepeg Buses, Leeds** (along with HF03 ODT/V/W).

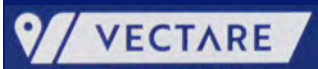
EU05 AUP (to Shelton Motors for scrap) was a Dart, ex **First Essex** 42923, not a Volvo B7L.

Services

A further vintage open top bus running day was held on route 68 on Sunday 25 September, although this time it was vintage vehicles only, with fares going to the RNLI. The same vehicles operated as on 28 August 2022, namely RT3435 from the London Bus Company, RM371, 946 WAE (the B type replica) and former Eastern National Leyland PD1 2102 (LEV 917), but they were joined by the big surprise of the day, former Eastern National Bristol FLF / ECW 2300 (RWC 608), as featured on this month's front cover. See also pages 31/2. 368 (68 EB), the unique open top Enviro 500, was parked near the pier but not used in service.

For half-term week, from 22-28 October, a special hourly service will operate on the 68 using a closed top Routemaster.

With thanks to Ross Newman.



by Chris Stewart

Repaint

Mini Enviro 200 MMC 317 (YX16 OBS) has been repainted from all red to fleet livery. It is seen right in Brentwood High Street on route 61 on 22 September 2022. **Chris Stewart**

The registration of this bus is only two letters on from the similar NIBS vehicle on page 25.



Below: Further to the photo on page 1, **Steven Quyy** took this photo of Enviro 200 MMC 306 (YX22 OGR) at St Margaret's Church in Downham on 12 September to commemorate Her Majesty The Queen. Note the Union Flag at half-mast on the church tower.



Acquired Vehicles

MX12 DZE ADL E20D / Mini Enviro 200, B28F, new to TLC Travel, West Bowling 12664, 04/12

Acquired from CT Plus. Previously operated for Powell's of Hellaby (who sold out to CT Plus in July 2018) and Manchester Community Transport (MCT Travel). It entered service on Monday 26 September on routes 542/A. It has been given fleet number 1420.

It is seen below in as acquired livery, but with LED blinds in use, on route 5 at Harlow Bus Station on 28 September 2022. **Tony Higgs**



YX10 AYF Volkswagen Transporter T5 / Bluebird Tucana. Also ex HCT, previously operated in London but more recently in Yorkshire. Seen on route H4 on 24 September repainted from all over yellow to Central Connect livery.

L8 XEL and L9 XEL, reported as acquired last month, have received fleet numbers 1418 and 1419 respectively.

Withdrawn Vehicles

Enviro 200 1411 (LK08 DWA), which was only acquired in June this year, has been withdrawn after being involved in an accident.

Other News

Except for some non-running 418s in the first half of September, leaving several people being stranded at St Margaret's Hospital in Epping unable to return to Theydon Bois and Abridge, reliability has improved with no further major cuts observed.

The number of double-deckers in use daily has slightly declined again with more single-deckers appearing on Epping routes again.

The peak hour service on the 420/A has returned to the 20 minute frequency.

A double-decker is now regularly on the 505 on Saturdays. No Solos were seen in Harlow during September.

Further to last month, tracking systems are up and running again.

With thanks to Wayne Bell, John Card, Tony Higgs, Owen Woodliffe, Harlowwide and Bus Lists on the Web.

Last month we reported on the acquisition of Mini Enviro 200s L8 XEL and L9 XEL from McNairns coaches. The former was illustrated at Harlow Bus Station, with its McNairns fleet names removed. Right is L9 XEL, numbered 1419, still with the fleet name on the nearside (and with half of a fleet name on the offside) at Bishop's Stortford on 3 September 2022 on route 315. **Andrew Harvey-Adams**



StreetLite 1201 (CC10 BUS), according to the destination blind a little lost, exiting Braintree Interchange on 9 September (it was probably just running out of service from route 9). **David Moth**



Mini Enviro 200 1414 (YX12 FPY) was new to Nicoll, Laurencekirk in July 2012. It was acquired from Tyrers Coaches, via Ensignbus, in June this year, as reported in EBM 699. It is seen at Bishop's Stortford Interchange on 12 September. **Wayne Bell**



Other Operators

by Roger A Smith

Barker, Roydon

Recently acquired is 129 DFT, an AEC Regal with Plaxton C41F body, previously with Go-Goodwins, Eccles, Greater Manchester. This vehicle was originally registered in 1959.

Group Taxibus, Rayne

This operator's licence has ceased (not continued) and the fleet of Ford and Renault minibuses has been disposed of.

M&M Staffing, Cooksmill Green

MM18 BUS, a Neoplan integral C51FLT, reverted to its original registration of OU18 ZTB and is now with Bay Travel, Lochgelly, Fife.

SBC Leisure, Leigh-on-Sea

A recent arrival here is SK20 AUU, an ADL Enviro 400 H49/37F, formerly with Beestons, Hadleigh, Suffolk. First noted in Southend on 31 August.

Swallow, North Weald

Withdrawn from service here is BV19 LSD, a Volvo B11R with MCV C55F body, now with Slane, Newtownhamilton, Northern Ireland.

Thorns of Rayleigh, Benfleet

SN55 DVA, an ADL Enviro 300 B60F, is here from Southern Coachlines, Newbury, Berkshire.

With thanks to the PSV Circle and
Richard Delahoy.

Right: An appropriate photo now that we have a king, with also appropriate first two letters of the registration. Kings Coaches Mercedes-Benz Turismo KC19 ABC crosses the River Dart on the Floating Bridge at Dartmouth on 18 September 2022, photo taken from the Dartmouth Steam Railway. The bridge is known as such as it is unable to guide itself (it has no steering mechanism) and pulls itself across the river by means of cables which lay on the river bed and are lifted up and pass through each side of the floating platform dropping back onto the river bed behind it. There is a further crossing down river of this provided by boats which is known as the Lower Ferry.

Sandra Edwards

Right: EBM 691 included a photo of a Lodge's coach (Mercedes-Benz Turismo AL17 DGE) on the Isle of Wight, so here's a photo of one on the Isle of Man. Another Turismo, BV19 YKU, on 29 July 2022, outside The Empress Hotel, where the coach party were staying, as was the photographer.

Dave Arnold



Letters

Doug Brown from Brentwood (DB from BD)

A few years before I was a bus driver at Eastern National Brentwood depot from 1962 to 1968, the new 70-seaters arrived, the first being 1541, later 2510 (236 LNO). These nearly caused a strike as conductors thought that they should get extra money for ten more seats, but eventually they accepted them. Route 262 was normally LD operated but one day I had LDL 2510 on it. We were parked up at Bishop's Hall Estate, King George Road, when three passengers got on and went to the front seats. My conductor Harry followed them with his ticket machine ready. I heard Harry ask the passengers where they were going. "To Brentwood" they replied. Referring to the longer than usual bus Harry asked, "Why didn't you walk there as you are halfway there already?"!

A Brief History of 2300

by Adam Kelleher

2300 (RWC 608) has been owned by Julian Patterson since 2020, and he kindly lent her to Ensignbus for operation on 25 September, as illustrated on this issue's front & rear covers and the next page.

This was the first time that 2300 had been in revenue earning service since 1981 and the first time in Southend since the year before that, although in 1999, to mark the start of the season of operating open top route 67 by Stephenson's, 2300 together with preserved open top KSW 2380 (WNO 478) gave free rides on the first journeys before Stephenson's Bristol VR / ECWs VHB677/8S took over.

RWC 608 was a Bristol FLF6B / ECW coach (CH37/18F) delivered to Eastern National as 1641 in April 1963. She was renumbered 2605 in August 1964. She was a regular performer on route X10, Southend to London. In March 1968 she was sold to Tillings Transport and renumbered T2605. The EN number plate was retained with 'T' as the garage plate. However, despite the renumber and receiving Tillings legal lettering, she never operated for Tillings and was on permanent loan back to Eastern National, allocated to Southend, before being formally re-acquired in February 1970. She kept her Eastern National fleet names during this period. A year later (February 1971) she returned to Tillings (now Tillings Travel) and was renumbered 9605. The next month, the two rear single seats downstairs were removed to provide extra luggage space for operation on coach-air express services, although she was only used on these during the 'summer peak season' and she was stored at Prittlewell during the off season. She returned off lease to Eastern National in February 1973 but almost immediately went on loan to United Counties. She returned to Eastern National in January 1975, now back to being referred to as 2605, but was not used in service in coach guise again. Instead she was stored, with work commencing in March 1976 to convert her to a stage carriage vehicle, which involved being re-engined to FLF6G and re-seated with bus seats to H38/32F configuration. This was completed by July 1976 and she was renumbered into the bus series of FLFs as 2937. She re-entered service at Hadleigh in September.

In 1978 Eastern National decided to replace its four remaining open-top Bristol KSW / ECWs 2379/82-4, which since 1974 had only operated in Southend, with more modern FLFs (FLFs were in the process of being withdrawn from normal service at the time). The first to be chosen was 2937, which was completed by June 1978 and renumbered 2300 (so keeping the same first two digits as the KSWs but going back to 00). The conversion included a top deck front windshield formed from the original front windows and new swept down front offside and nearside windows. Handrails were provided around the rest of the upstairs and the top of the stairwell. The seating wasn't altered. Livery was NBC white with green relief, the same as the KSWs had carried since 1974, but with the newer red & blue on white NBC symbol, including on the front grille.

She re-entered service in this guise in mid-June on Southend seafront service 67 (which normally required three vehicles) replacing 2379. (2379 was delicensed for disposal, but kept in store at Prittlewell for over a year before being sold to the Eastern National Preservation Group (ENPG) in September 1980. Ironically 1340, illustrated on page 6, and 2300's sister RWC 607, fleet number 2936, originally 1640 then 2604, which featured in the recently published EBM Extra 2, were sold to the ENPG at the same time.) Conversion of the FLFs to open top was carried out utilising spare works capacity only (as had been the conversion of coach FLFs to buses, hence why 2605 returned to EN in January 1975 but did not re-enter service as 2937 until September the next year) and so for the 1978 season, 2300 was the only open top FLF in use and ran alongside the three remaining KSWs on route 67.

By April 1979, the three further FLF open top conversions had been completed, these were 2301 (RHK 348D, ex 2863), 2302 (MVX 885C, ex 2848) and 2303 (NTW 943C, ex 2850), and so the Southend open top operation during the summer of that year was all FLF. However, in a surprise move, the three remaining KSWs were not withdrawn, but operated a Clacton open top service for the first time since summer 1973, on route 121. (A photo of 2382 in service on 121 in Clacton in 1979 was in EBM 688.) The pattern of the FLFs

in Southend and the KSWs in Clacton (only 2383/4, 2382 had become a Show Bus and was used on special events) was repeated in summer 1980.

In all three years 1978-80, the open top vehicles at Southend started off the summer season being operated by Eastern National but, due to staff shortages at Eastern National's Southend depot, Southend Transport took over operation of route 67 during each summer, including hiring most of the EN vehicles to operate them (2300 was hired for all three years). This also resulted in occasional appearances of EN vehicles on ST operated open top route 68. This then led in summer 1981 to Southend Transport taking over route 67 completely from Eastern National, so 1980 proved to be the last year of Eastern National open toppers in Southend after many years of operation. As they were surplus at Southend, three of the open top FLFs (2300-2) were allocated to Clacton for the 1981 summer season, replacing the KSWs of the previous two years, although service revisions meant that they operated on routes 117/8 rather than 121. They retained their SD depot plates except 2300 received a CN plate (at the front only) during August.

2303 was not used at CN and was stored at Prittlewell Depot, but this led to disaster when it and KSW 2382 were among a number of vehicles destroyed in an arson attack there on 26 August 1981. 2383/4 were delicensed for disposal the next month and 2300-2 followed just two months later. All three remaining open top FLFs were sold in June 1982, 2301-2 to Ensignbus, Purfleet, but 2300 to the ENPG. 2300 has been in preservation ever since.

The conversion of the four FLFs to open top cannot be looked back on as a success. In retrospect, it seems a strange decision to convert them when crew operation was rapidly on the way out (not long afterwards Southend Transport converted Daimler Fleetlines to refresh their open top fleet). 2300 operated for four years, 2301-2 for three and 2303 for only two. Two of the four KSWs they were supposed to replace lasted with EN and its successor companies for far longer. 2383/4 survived being delicensed for disposal in September 1981 and from summer 1982 started to appear at events such as carnivals and rallies and later even returned to service at Clacton. 2384 was eventually sold in October 1998 but 2383 lasted until 2010, over 30 years since the FLFs were converted to replace her! But it is very pleasing that the original FLF conversion is still with us and that she returned to service at Southend in 2022.

Photos of 2300 in previous issues have been in EBN 520 (August 2007) and EBN 608 (December 2014).

Right and below right:

Upstairs on 2300 at the first stop on route 68 near the pier, 25 September 2022.

Both **Richard Delahoy**



Rear Cover captions

Completing the hat trick. After photos of open toppers on the rear covers of the last two EBMs, 2300's appearance on 25 September provides the perfect reason to also include them this month.

Top: Before and after the KSWs. 13 years separated the last appearance of Eastern National's Leyland PD1/1 / Alexander 2102 (LEV 917) on Southend seafront services in 1965 and the first appearance of Bristol FLF / ECW 2300 (RWC 608) on them in 1978. In between the KSWs reigned supreme. This was the first time ever that these two buses have operated in service together. Also at the first stop of the route near the pier, with RT3435 (LYR 854) behind. **Chris Stewart**

Bottom: Rear view of 2300 at the same location.

Richard Delahoy

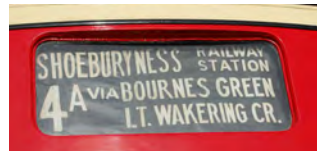


History Starts Yesterday

by Richard Delahoy

Recent events can quickly assume historical significance. One (minor) such event in 2022 was the ending of service 4A between Great Wakering and Shoeburyness.

Latterly just a Sunday contract supported by Essex County Council, route 4A had run between Southend, Great Wakering and Shoeburyness since about 1929. Initially a Westcliff Motor Services route, the number was first used from 1924 for an infrequent Southend - Barling - Little Wakering service that became 4B by July 1931 and is today part of the 14. From 1929 the 4A number was also being used for an hourly circular (one way only - journeys in the reverse direction were numbered 5A), Southend - Wakering - Shoebury - North Shoebury - Southend. By February 1936 the circle had been severed and 4A now ran hourly, daily, from Southend as far as Shoebury station via Great Wakering. And that's how it remained through the war, the establishment of the Southend Co-Ordination Agreement (between Westcliff, Eastern National and Southend Corporation) in



1955 and deregulation in 1986 (when the Co-Ordination Agreement was abandoned and the route was registered by Southend Transport). One minor change was the extension from the traditional terminus at Shoebury Railway Station, round the corner to East Beach, from April 1988. However from October 2003, most 4As were diverted by Arriva to Landwick rather than Shoebury, with the latter section being only served in the peaks, evenings and all-day Sundays. Route 14 was established to take over the existing 4B via Barling and the 4A section on to Shoebury. Initially an Arriva operation, the 14 was tendered by Essex CC from November 2005 with Stephensons winning the contract, which they still hold today.

The peak journeys ceased in November 2005 and the solitary evening service in September

2016, leaving 4A as just a Sunday operation, ECC supported and running hourly daytime only, until reduced to 2-hourly in April 2020. As we reported in EBM 696, Arriva gave up the operation in March this year and a short-term contract was awarded to Arrow Taxis (Essex Dart). ECC then let a substantive contract from mid-July, with Arriva regaining the service, but with the route diverted to Landwick (to match the M-S Arriva operation of 7/8) and thus the section from Wakering Church through to Shoebury East Beach was no longer part of the 4A. It is still served by the aforementioned infrequent 14 Monday to Saturday. Incidentally, although running to & from Southend, both 4A and 14 are Essex contracts rather than for the unitary Southend Council as they exist primarily for people living in Barling and Wakering, outwith Southend Council's administrative area. Southend don't support any bus services!

Top Right: the Westcliff blind display as seen in AJN 825.

Above: Westcliff Bristol K6B CIN 323 at Victoria Circus. **EBEG collection**

Right: Arrow's Mercedes Sprinter AY17 UVM at East Beach on the final day of their short-term contract, 10 July 2022, ending over 90 years of route 4A in Shoebury.

Richard Delahoy





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