

ESSEX BUS NEWS

Issue 532
August 2008



ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP
www.essexbus.org.uk

Essex Bus News

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Your reports and observations

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

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

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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covers

front: Final day of **Stephensons X1: 116** (A16 SOE) swings out of the Bulleid Way Coach Station, Victoria. *Richard Delahoy*

rear: Seen in Brentwood on 4 August 2008, **First London's** sole MCV Evolution 49000 (WX08SXU) brings a little more variety to vehicle types on this route, which passed from Arriva to First on 28 June. As far as is known this bus had not previously appeared on the 498, which is worked mainly by Enviros (Tridents 33501/2 and Darts 44001-6) with the occasional other interloper. *Chris Stewart*

A Crossley in Colchester - report next month. Chris Stewart

The EBN531 front cover photo was by Kevin Smith, not as shown. Apologies.

Dates for your diary

■ EBN PRESS DATES

For inclusion in EBN dated

September

October

November

reports should reach Editors by

30 August

27 September

1 November

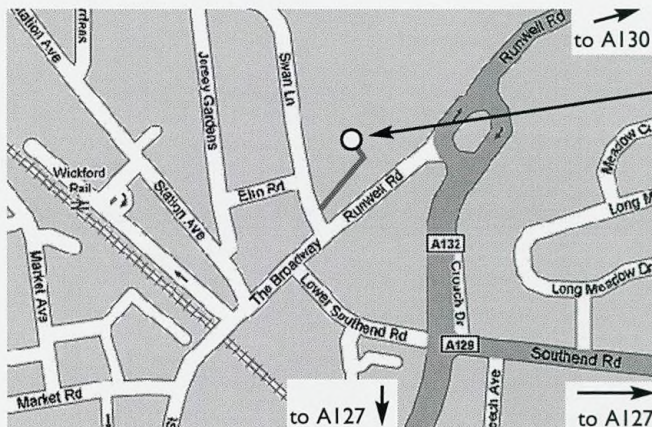
planned despatch date

18 September

16 October

20 November

Please note that the planned despatch date may change for all sorts of reasons. The actual despatch day is posted to the website as soon as it is known. Please allow reasonable time for postal delays (at least seven working days) before claiming non-receipt. Replacements can only be obtained from the Membership Secretary (see Group Directory).



Wickford
Cricket Club,
off Swan Lane,
Wickford

■ SOUTH ESSEX MEETINGS

South Essex meetings now take place at **Wickford Cricket Club**, off Swan Lane, Wickford - 5 minutes walk from Wickford Station and 5 minutes drive from the A130 and A127. In Wickford town centre, turn into Swan Lane from Runwell Road (Swans pub is on the corner); then turn right into the entrance about 100' up on the right - marked Wickford Tennis Club. This is an unmade road, so beware of potholes. Go straight ahead towards the tennis courts and then left at the end - you will see the cricket clubhouse in front of you. Car parking available on site.

Doors open at 1930 for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from 2000 to 2145/2200; a cash bar is available. *Richard Delahoy*

Autumn programme

- ▶ **Monday September 8** - Members photo evening - bring along 20/30 slides or digital images; any era or theme, so long as it's bus/coach related!
- ▶ **Monday October 13** - slide show by *Alan Osborne*, theme to be advised.
- ▶ **Monday November 10** - *Steve Nelson*, MD of NIBS, will give a talk about the company, illustrated by *Chris Stewart*.
- ▶ **Monday December 8** - slide show by *Richard Delahoy*, "20 years ago" and Christmas Social

Please note the new meeting date - **second MONDAY in the month** - and **venue**.

■ NORTH ESSEX MEETINGS

Meetings take place in the downstairs room (except as indicated) at the **Friends Meeting House, Church Street, Colchester**, just south of "Jumbo" (the water tower) and behind the Mercury Theatre. Town centre bus stops and parking are nearby. Doors open at 1930 for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from 2000 to 2200. £1 donation towards room hire, please. Slides/digital photos are preferred, but prints can also be shown.

Dave Arnold

- ▶ **Friday September 12** - to be advised
- ▶ **Friday October 10** - slide show by *Fred Lawrance*.
- ▶ **Friday November 14** - slide show by *Chris Stewart*.
- ▶ **Friday December 12** - slide show by *Gary Sharpe*.

■ RALLIES, OPEN DAYS, ETC

- ▶ **Friday/Saturday August 29-30: London Transport Museum**, Guided Tours; Acton Depot.
- ▶ **Sunday September 7: Chingford Royal Forest Vintage Bus Display & Running Day**, Royal Forest Hotel, Chingford. Featuring 40th anniversary of closure of the bus terminus. Free vintage buses from Chingford station and around Epping Forest.
- ▶ **Weekend September 13-14: Trolleybus Weekend**, East Anglia Transport Museum.

Group Directory

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A calendar year subscription is £19.50 by First Class post, 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 Shobury 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 Essex County

Council timetable books and updates. Contact:

Derek Stebbing, 'Conifers',
Thorpe Road, Weeley, Clacton, C016 9JJ
derekstebbing@yahoo.com

or visit www.essexbus.org.uk

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
c/o Barrons Chartered Accountants
Monometer House, Rectory Grove,
Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 2HN

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

lyn@barrons-bds.com

Publicity News

Essex County Council A4 timetable books for South East Essex and Southend dated May 08, West and North West Essex dated April 08 and South Essex dated May 08.

Arriva the Shires Green Line Timetable for services 724/5/6 dated 1.6.08.

Arriva the Shires A7 "Travel with a Spring in your step" for Harlow dated Spring 2008.

Arriva SC have issued similar folders for Southend, Rayleigh, Hadleigh and Basildon

Arriva A5 leaflet for service 5 dated 30.3.08.

Easybus leaflet for Stansted to London Victoria dated 20.1.08.

Excel leaflet for service 308 dated 1.11.07 features a picture of a MCV Evolution and includes a timetable and map. Also from Excel is a leaflet for Aircoach (Stansted to Ipswich) dated 3.5.08.

First Stansted Aircoach double-sided slimline dated 11th August.

National Express leaflets for services 717/727/797 (Stansted-Heathrow-Gatwick) and 777 (Birmingham-Luton-Stansted) dated 3.3.08.

New service replacing the old Stansted Flyer X30 from 17th August 08

First
transforming travel

The new **stansted aircoach** has now arrived...

Southend to Stansted Airport



X30

Introducing your brand new Stansted Aircoach X30, replacing the existing Stansted Flyer X30 on the route between Southend, Chelmsford and Stansted Airport.

This new improved bigger and better service is still fast, frequent and direct, but will ensure you have a more comfortable journey with:



- Services every hour 7 days a week (between 06:00 & 19:00 daily, except Christmas day)
- Reclining leather seats
- Wi-Fi internet access
- Air conditioning
- DVD enabled
- Additional leg room
- More luggage space
- Tables to work at
- Wheel chair access
- CCTV

Connecting to Stansted for your holiday flight? Commuting to work or simply shopping, an evening out or visiting friends?

No matter what the reason for your journey, the Stansted Aircoach X30 will make your trip easier and more enjoyable.

www.firstgroup.com
Customer Service 09456 782 977

First
transforming travel

working in partnership with

BAA Stansted

London
Essex County Council

BAA Stansted Maps dated February 2008 for Local Bus; Express Coach; Rail; and journey choices (all methods combined)

Tesco free bus services to Epping from Ongar, Woodford, Loughton and Debden dated 8.10.07 (Services are operated by Excel)

Ian Ransom, with thanks to Chris Stewart, Ian Taylor, LOTS and Arriva The Shires

Service Changes

Basildon Cab & Freight

21 Jul 08 Intacar

D

New flexible registered bus service from Service House Basildon.

Blue Triangle

7 Jul 08 375

M-S

Romford Station to Passingford Bridge new TfL service.

Clintona Minicoaches

1 Sep 08 5

D

Basildon to Felmores new service operating evenings only.

2 Sep 08 75

Sch

Ingatstone to Hornchurch new school service.

Docklands Buses

5 Jul 08 167

D

Ilford to Debden revised timetable.

Ensignbus

16 Jun 08 66

M-S

Ockendon to Tilbury via Grays extended Mon- Fri day

			daytime from Tilbury to Brentwood Road Estate Chadwell (updated information).
20 Sep 08	55	M-F	Upminster Station to Daiglen Drive new service
	66	M-S	Ockendon to Chadwell St Mary revised timetable.
Excel			
31 Aug 08	601	Sch	Braintree to Chelmsford Chelmer Valley School
	621	Sch	Rayne to Chelmsford St John Payne School.
			Above schoolday services withdrawn.
First Essex			
7 Jul 08	42	M-S	Galleywood to Broomfield Hospital introducing schools closed timetable for summer school holidays (updated information).
27 Jul 08	20/C	D	Southend to Hullbridge revised route in Rayleigh due to major road works and closures during school holidays.
31 Aug 08	1	M-S	Greenstead to Ambrose Avenue
	2	M-S	Colchester to Severalls Park
	8E	M-S	Monkwick to Horkesley Heath
	17/18	M-S	Clacton to Point Clear
			All the above are new evening services.
	5/6	M-S	Bockings Elm to Holland revised timetable.
	7/8	D	Clacton to Walton reverts to winter timetable.
	61/62	D	Colchester to Wivenhoe longer operating hours on Sundays.
	65/A	D	Stanway to Highwoods revised timetable with frequency increased to every 10 mins Mons to Sats.
	70	D	Colchester to Braintree 0750 ex Great Tey to commence from Braintree at 0720.
	74/B	D	Colchester to Clacton
	76	D	Colchester to Clacton
			The above Sunday services will terminate at Colchester Head Street, not operating to North Station.
	100	M-S	Chelmsford to Lakeside introduction of new Sunday timetable.
1 Sep 08	11	M-F	Highwoods to Colchester
	15	M-F	Shrub End to Colchester
			All the above are new commuter services to North Station.
	16A	Sch	Barnall to Sheepen Road St Helena School new schoolday service.
	33	D	Chelmsford to Bishop Stortford via Stansted Airport diverted to operate via Priors Green Takeley on Mons to Sats.
	60	M-S	Colchester to Prettygate new service.
	83	M-S	Colchester to Colne Engaine/Mount Bures new service.
8 Sep 08	509	Sch	Great Dunmow to Colchester
	618	Sch	Blackmore to Ingatestone
	619	Sch	Debden to Ingatestone
	620	Sch	Epping to Ingatestone
			The above school services withdrawn.
Hedingham			
23 Jul 08	581	Sch	Clacton to Colchester High School service withdrawn.
1 Sep 08	17	Sch	West Bergholt to Stanway School revised timetable.
Imperial Busways			
11 Aug 08	H1	M-S	Loughton to Harlow revised Mon to Fri timetable.
31 Aug 08	71/72	M-S	Stondon Massey to Warley new service.

National Express

4 Aug 08	737	D	Oxford to Stansted Airport, High Wycombe short working withdrawn and minor timetable revisions.
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Nelsons (NIBS)

1 Sep 08	21	M-S	North Benfleet to Basildon revised route and timetable.
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Network Colchester

18 Aug 08	93/A	M-S	Colchester to Ipswich revised timings on 0820 and 1525 schooldays journeys from Colchester.
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31 Aug 08	83	M-S	Colchester to Colne Engaine/Mount Bures withdrawn.
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1 Sep 08	701	Sch	Harwich to Colchester
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	702	Sch	Walton to Colchester
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	703	Sch	Jaywick to Colchester
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	704	Sch	Great Holland to Colchester
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The above are new schoolday services serving Lexden Road/Norman Way Schools.

Olympus Bus & Coach (Road Runner)

TBC	2/A	M-S	Harlow Town Service new service.
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Regal Busways

1 Sep 08	7	M-F	Harlow to Chelmsford revised timetable and route.
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	14/15	M-S	Wickford to Chelmsford revised timetable.
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	16	M-S	Chelmsford to Wethersfield new service.
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	34/A	M-S	Braintree Kings Park to Great Notley new service.
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	89	Sat	Braintree to Great Yeldham new service.
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	657/8	Sch	Ongar to Brentwood new school services.
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SM Coaches

8 Sep 08	M15/31	M-S	Harlow Town Services revised timetable.
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Stansted Transit

4 Aug 08	9/10	M-F	Great Bardfield to Braintree route extended to Braintree Skyline Business Park.
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3 Sep 08	104	Sch	Ashdon to Saffron Walden High School.
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	127	Sch	Felsted to Dunmow.
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New schoolday services.

Stephensons

1 Sep 08	37	M-F	South Woodham Circular new service.
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	38	M-S	Witham Town service revised timetable with reduced service off peak.
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	90	M-S	Maldon to Witham minor timetable revisions.
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	206/29	Sch	Kelvedon to Coggeshall minor route changes with 206 now serving Marks Tey in place of 229.
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	505	Sch	Great Baddow to Colchester diverted via Marks Tey minor retiming to timetable.
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	510	Sch	Southminster to Chelmsford afternoon journey diverted via Maylandsea.
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	514	Sch	Hatfield Peverel to Westcliff rerouted in South Woodham via Burnham Road instead of Huulbridge Road and Asda.
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	524	Sch	Mayland to Southend via Althorne and South Woodham New service.
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	605	Sch	Hatfield Peverel to Great Baddow new school service
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	620	Sch	Braintree to Chelmsford revised route in Braintree.
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	621	Sch	Rayne to Chelmsford via Braintree new service.
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	623	Sch	Cressing to Chelmsford extended to/from Braintree.
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	628	Sch	Witham to Chelmsford former 698 renumbered, extended from Witham to Great Totham, withdrawn between St
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630	Sch	John Payne Sch and Chelmer Valley High in Chelmsford. Heybridge to Chelmsford via Maldon and Danbury new service.
637	Sch	South Woodham to Chelmsford diverted via Sandon and Rerouted in Chelmsford with minor timetable changes.
665	Sch	Great Leighs to Chelmsford
667	Sch	Hatfield Peverel to Chelmsford
		Both services withdrawn.
676	Sch	Broomfield to Colchester diverted to serve Kelvedon with Minor timetable changes.
800	Coll	Southend to Thurrock College minor timetable changes.
801	Coll	Hockley to Thurrock College service withdrawn.
803	Coll	Romford to Thurrock College via Upminster and Rainham - new service.
815	Sch	Rochford Golden Cross to Westcliff St Thomas More School - new schoolday service.

Travel with Hunny

1 Sep 08	80	Sch	Kelvedon Hatch to Brentwood Sawyers Hall Lane new school service.
8 Sep 08	55	M-F	Harlow Circular via North Weald new service.
10 Oct 08	N55	FS	Harlow Circular new night/early morning service operating Fri/Sat and Sat/Sun only.
11 Oct 08	L55	Sat	Harlow to Lakeside new service.

Trustline

8 Sep 08	C3	M-S	Harlow to Holdbrook Estate revised timetable.
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Paul Harvey(acknowledgements to LOTS, Essex & Hertfordshire County Council, Richard Delahoy, Harlowwide and First)



An interesting survivor working from Basildon is First Essex 67036. New to Eastern Counties this Dennis Lance/Northern Counties had become a driver trainer with First Essex but is now back in passenger service. Photo taken 15th July. Peter Mansbridge

Bus Rapid Transit in action



*Our tour bus halts on the dedicated Fastrack bus-only spine road through The Bridge re-development site, currently largely still a wasteland. One day there will be 1,500 houses here, all with Fastrack real-time information displays inside so that residents will know when the next bus is due! **Richard Delahoy***

Tuesday July 15 saw just over 20 EBEG and Omnibus Society members travel across the water into Kent to experience Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in action, with a study tour of the innovative and award-winning Fastrack system, linking Dartford, Bluewater and Gravesend. We were welcomed onto bus 3815 (GN07AVB) at Bluewater by Matthew Arnold, Business Development Manager for Arriva Southern Counties. After a brief introductory talk, we toured much of the system, made all the more interesting by stops to explain particular features of the system.

Fastrack comprises two routes and whilst outwardly similar, they have quite different origins. The first to open, route B in March 2006, was funded by Kent County Council with £15m of Local Transport Plan funding. A key part of a massive regeneration plan, the aim is to eventually have a 40km network, half of which will be on dedicated roads open only to Fastrack services and a

further 25% in bus lanes. During our tour we saw construction of a new tunnel just east of Greenhithe station that will provide access into a massive riverside site yet to be developed.

Most people associate BRT with guided buses (as in Edinburgh for example, or the Cambridgeshire scheme now under construction), whereas Fastrack uses conventional running throughout but with significant stretches of bus only road, including the spectacular and steeply graded approach road into Bluewater, bypassing the delays on Watling Street and the Bluewater access roads. This all contributes to very impressive levels of reliability and punctuality. Two weak spots remain – crossing the M25 at junction 1, where there is not space on the roundabout above the motorway for dedicated bus lanes, and on the final approaches to Gravesend town centre.



Metric self-service ticket machine for Route A. Employees of firms and (future) residents working/living in The Bridge development can use stored value smartcards to buy tickets from these machines. Others pay cash.

High quality waiting facilities are part of the Fastrack ethos. Here is one of the shelters, complete with real time info display inside, on The Bridge development on route A.



Route B runs every 10 minutes Monday to Saturday (half-hourly on Sundays) is carrying around 35-36,000 passengers a week. 60% had transferred from other bus routes, but an impressive 19% of those surveyed said they would have used a car before Fastrack opened.

By way of contrast, route A has been funded to the tune of £20m by ProLogis, developers of another massive site known as The Bridge, just west of the A282 Dartford Crossing. Here the planning consent required a dedicated busway to be operational before any housing was occupied. Route A commenced operations on June 3rd, 2007, linking Bluewater and Dartford on a more northerly alignment than route B, and including a dedicated bridge over the Dartford Crossing toll plaza. This was a bit of a disappointment for our tour passengers, as the high bridge parapets mean you don't see very much here!

Route A runs every 5 minutes in the peaks, 10 minutes off-peak (15 minutes evenings and Sundays) and, in contrast to the B, all ticketing is off bus and so the buses used on A, including our tour bus, are not fitted with ticket machines. There are in fact two distinct sub fleets within the 28 superficially identical Wright Eclipse bodied Volvo B7RLEs – 3801 to 3814 are for route B and are owned by

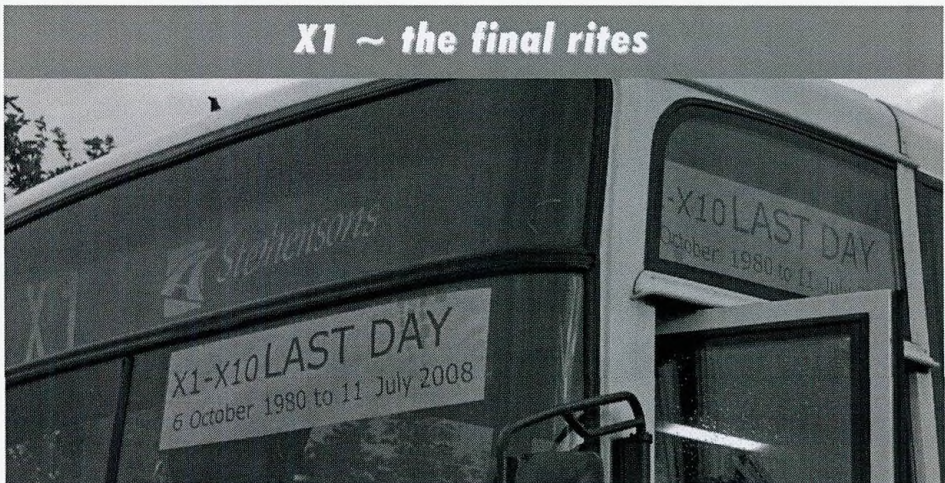
Kent CC and operated by Arriva; 3815 to 3826 are owned by Arriva for the A. The sub batches are kept to their specific routes. In addition the original prototype Arriva "bus of the future" is currently on loan to Northfleet, where all the Fastrack buses are based.

I could say much more about the system but why not take an Ensign X80 over the water to Bluewater and try it for yourself? Fastrack shows just what BRT can achieve with sufficient funding and local authority commitment to reallocate road space in favour of public transport, and provides an

interesting glimpse of what might be possible if the South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT) plans of the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership ever turn into reality.

To read more, visit www.go-fastrack.co.uk and for timetables, www.arrivabus.co.uk. There's info about SERT at www.sert.org.uk. Thanks are due to Arriva Southern Counties and to Matthew Arnold in particular for making the bus available and for hosting our visit; a donation has been made to their nominated charity in appreciation.

Richard Delahoy



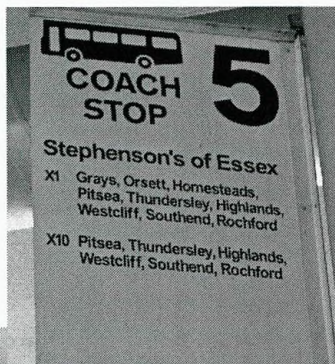
Friday July 11, 2008 saw the end of nearly 28 years of operation of an express service from Southend to London that was a child of the deregulation of the coach industry. Starting on October 6, 1980, Southend Transport and Reading Transport began a two-hourly unlicensed service between their respective towns, exploiting the new found freedom for longer distance services. Subsequently the service became licensed and could carry local as well as long-distance passengers. Reading and Southend went their separate ways in May 1982 but Southend Transport developed their end of the route until by 1986 it had a peak vehicle requirement of 64 coaches! This overstretched the company and major cut backs took place in 1987/8.

In 1992 Thamesway introduced a competing CitySaver service, but in October 1999 the rivals merged their operations under the Green Line brand, with the core service being renumbered 721. However declining traffic led First to pull out in October 2001, then Arriva abandoned the service completely from February 17, 2002.

Immediately, Stephensons stepped in with a replacement that reverted to the traditional X1 branding. However, declining loads, the cost pressures of the London LEZ and changes to drivers hours regulations finally led Stephensons to give notice to cease after Friday July 11, 2008.

Having been a passenger on the very first X1, and having been very closely involved with the Stephenson's service, it was a foregone conclusion that I had to travel on the very last one as well, making me the only enthusiast to have been there at the start and at the end.

For the fateful day, the four Plaxton bodied Volvo B10M coaches carried commemorative last day notices. Final departures from the gloomy terminus in Bulleid Way at Victoria (what would



A17 SOE at Victoria



N70 SLK at Lakeside



that eminent railway engineer think of his name being used for a *coach terminus*?!) comprised:

1650 service X10 to Rochford – A16SOE, with Colin driving

1715 X1 to Stanford Le Hope – A17SOE, Pete

1730 X10 to Rochford – A18SOE, Glenn

1755 X1 to Stanford Le Hope – N70SLK, Andy.

The hard core of committed commuter coach users are something of an extended family, so there was a definite party atmosphere about the final trips - or was it a wake? It was also the birthday of one of the regular passengers, so Andy had decorated the inside of his coach with balloons and streamers (but avoiding using the Xmas decorations permanently stored inside one of the lockers!). Departure from Victoria on the final trip was about 5 minutes late and we soon picked up the party goers (sorry, home going commuters) along the Embankment and at Tower Hill, armed with sausage rolls, crisps, cocktail sausages, quiche, cakes, donuts, nibbles, wine and beer. Arriving at Canary Wharf it was by

now raining, and we stopped there for 10 minutes whilst one of the passengers made a speech and presented driver Andy with cards and presents; a similar presentation had taken place there for Pete on the previous X1. (The other regular drivers had by then already left the company, hence the other two drivers on the last day were not X1/X10 regulars).

With the party in full swing, the rain got steadily heavier (perhaps reflecting the mood of the evening); Matthew Evans, the driver of the last ever Arriva journey, was on board, regaling us with tales of exploits on the old service. Soon after crossing the M25, I was surprised to find us turning off at the Lakeside junction on the A13. It had been a bone of contention with the commuters that the final X1 trip had diverted there, in case of any home going shoppers, until September 2006 when the service had ceased to serve Lakeside at all, but Andy had decided we'd go there for one last nostalgic visit. The passengers didn't seem to mind and some even jumped off for a photo stop there – the rain had eased off briefly – much to the amusement of the



206 BTE206V Leopard/Duple about to leave Southend Central Bus Station on the 0630 to Reading on Monday October 6, 1980. It never made it, developing an air leak on the doors and was subbed by 202 LBN202P at Chalkwell Park. All pictures: Richard Delahoy

Lakeside security staff and Ensign drivers.

with three trips each way:

Going slowly up the old A13 Grays bound, a birthday cake was duly unwrapped and candles lit, not for X1 but for one of the passengers. By now the timetable was but a distant memory, as we pulled in to Socketts Heath for the cake to be cut and Andy to enjoy some food. After about 10 minutes stopped there, with torrential rain by now drumming on the roof, a voice piped up from the back "I do need to get home tonight, please"! As we were now about 30 minutes late it did seem a reasonable request, so I took over driving to let Andy enjoy the rest of the party with his passengers. After some emotional farewells we said goodbye to the final passengers in Stanford Le Hope around 2000 and headed back dead to Rochford along roads flooded up to the kerb height in places.

So ended almost 28 years of operation – or has it? Swallow Coach Company of Rainham have expressed an interest in trying to resurrect the service, and after a 3 week gap are due to start operations from Monday August 4 on an unregistered basis,

X1 – Southend to London stopping service
X3 – Canvey to London stopping service
X10 – Southend to London fast.

This is on an experimental basis and as the operations will be unregistered, at least to start with, Swallow have the flexibility to adjust the service at will rather than wait the 8-12 weeks notice period that the local bus registration and London Service Permit rules require – but without the financial benefit of being able to claim Bus Service Operators Grant.

Time will tell whether Swallow can make more of a lasting success of the service – but the combined Southend Transport/ Arriva/ Stephenson's record of almost 28 years will be hard to beat.

(A summary history of X1 up to the year 2000 can be found on the excellent SCT61 website at www.sct61.org.uk/stxone.htm, along with pictures and staff memories).

Richard Delahoy



■ FIRST ESSEX

New and Acquired vehicles

20801	YN08 OWO	Volvo B9R	Plaxton Panther	7/08
20802	YN08 OWP	Volvo B9R	Plaxton Panther	8/08
20803	YN08 OWR	Volvo B9R	Plaxton Panther	8/08

20804/5 are to follow; 20805 is YN08 OWV, 20804 not known at present; these five new wheelchair accessible coaches are for the upgraded 'Stansted Aircoach X30' and feature: air conditioning, reclining leather seats with tables, wi-fi connection and DVD compatibility, CCTV, a new livery based on corporate grey background

60755	N420 MWY	Scania L113CRL	1827800 Wright W111 B47F	new 7/96
60756	N421 MWY	Scania L113CRL	1827801 Wright W112 B47F	new 7/96
60758	N423 MWY	Scania L113CRL	1827803 Wright W114 B47F	new 7/96

New to Rider (York) but transferred from *First Berkshire* who record dates acquired as 6.12.06 (60756/8) and 11.12.06 (60755), with transfer to *First Essex* as 30.6.08 (60758) and 22.7.08 (60755/6). 60758 has front LED destination display but 60755/6 do not.

Allocation changes

Period 4: 29 June 2008 to 27 July 2008

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

(A)=acquired, including vehicles on loan; Anc=Ancillary fleet; (S)=spare/retained (licensed); D/L(S)=spare/retained (delicensed); D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal; DS=Driving School; PS=Paint Spare

20801 new-(S); 60755 FGC-(S); 60756 FGC-D/L(S); 60758 FGC-BN; 90236 CN-sold

20203 remained in Essex beyond the date shown on the official allocation sheet, whilst 20202 went to *First Berkshire* on loan from *First London* during the latter part of July.

CN has double deckers again for the school summer holidays, with BN's 34011/2 and (nominally, at least) CR's 34311/4 on loan. In exchange, CN Lances 67010/1 are at CR with Dart 46829 at BN.

Repaints (Period 4): to follow next month

Both Harwich Solos, 53138/9, have now been repainted into standard First corporate livery and have lost their Vilagelink branding which they carried since new. CR20110 has had an extra rear fleet number added on the white band across the boot. CR56002 has X30 branding taped over, apart from the words "Stansted".

Rear adverts

CR34309, CF34815 – Pizza Hut

CR47101 – Duxford

Side contravision

BN43712 – Subway

BN43735 – to be confirmed

Cheetahs 56006/9 have been carrying 'ribbon' vinyls advertising the re-launch of the X30.

Disposals

90236, 90243 to Erith Commercials for scrap by 29th July

Area News - workings and sightings:

Numbers in (brackets) refer to route branding

Rail Replacements (July)

Manningtree-Ipswich services on 27th July involved at least the following:

BE 43729, 46816/24
CF 42483, 47223
CN 46086, 46176/86, 46828/30
CR 34307/8/9/10/4, 43740
FEC 60766, 60812/4

Clacton & Harwich

Member Robert Appleton has again kindly sent some notes from a recent family visit to Mistley. On 23rd and 25th July the double-deck allocation at Harwich (DT) was, correctly, Volvo Olympians 34280/2/4/5/6/8. Robert says 34288 is very smart inside with its interior refurbishment and retrimmed seats.

Leyland Olympian 31377 was not seen [it is actually away at A Barham & Sons in Harlow, not RTF as given in EBN531] but instead Lance 67013 continued on loan from CN. On 23rd this was noted on 13.35 Colchester - Harwich 104, light to Ramsey, 15.15 Ramsey - Harwich 103 and 16.25 Harwich - Colchester 103. On 25th it worked the 09.20 Harwich - Colchester 103 and 10.35 Colchester - Harwich 104.

On 23rd Dart SLF 43800 was on services 20/20A Harwich - Parkeston Circulars, Primo 57001 on 22A/22B Harwich - Long Meadows Circulars, and sister 57002 on 14.40 Clacton - Harwich and 15.38 Harwich - Clacton Villagelink 4. Solo CN53138 worked 13.40 Clacton - Harwich and 14.40 Harwich - Clacton Villagelink 3.

July 8th CR34290 on 17/18 to Point Clear (on loan to CN)

Colchester

Between 21st and 25 July and again from 11th to 29th August, route 67A (CR-West Mersea) will be diverted away from its Abberton 'Lion' to Peldon village section because of roadworks closing Mersea Road in Peldon. During this time, a minibus shuttle runs/will run between these two points, operated by Essex County Council's own Community Link vehicles, while the 67A will follow the B1025 Colchester Road. This will only happen Mon-Fri daytimes.

July 1st CR67003 (67) on 64
2nd CN67013 on DT104
3rd CN47224 on DT103
4th CR43741 on 71
7th CR34303 on 65 (evening), CR65687 on 75 and CR67002 (67) on 75
9th CN67013 on DT104
10th CR34314 on 65
16th/17th 'Heritage' KSW WNO479 seen in CR on private hires
18th CR65687 on 62
28th CR65652/4 on 65 (back to the "old days", so says my correspondent)
29th CR47102 on 64, CR47103 on 64A (step entrance Darts now rare on these routes).
31st CR47104 on 64

The 62 branded ONs have frequently appeared on other routes, while recently a Scania has worked 67, 71 and 75 a few times each month.

Chelmsford & Braintree

The first morning 351 and return now appears to be diagrammed for an SLF Dart which then works the 352. Examples noted have been 42489 on 29th July, 42487 on 1st August, 42482 on 5th and 42484 on 6th.

July 2nd Scania CF65683 showing X30, CF42921 (42) on 12.25 ser 31 to Maldon
8th Olympian CF34815 on 351

- 9th Scania CF65682 on X30
- 10th Olympians CF34807/15 both on 351
- 15th CF65680 and CF34807 on 33
- 16th CF46822 and CF46813 on 352
- 18th CF46812 on 352, CF65682 and CF20463 on X30
- 19th CF34818 and CF47221 on 33, CN47225 on 351
- 22nd BE51803 noted at CF depot
- 23rd CF42489 on 42
- 25th CF46826 on 47
- 29th CF42482 with mid side full high advertising vinyl on 352

August

- 4th CF31198 on 351 (and several other days that week)

CF42483 still retains 'Overground' branding for 352

Basildon & Hadleigh

BN and HH swapped Sunday workings from 6th July, the former now running the 25 and the latter the 2.

- July 2nd BN43737 (5) on 12, BN67036 on 5
- 3rd 'Gremlins' BN43714 on 81/82 (late afternoon)
- 16th BN67001 on 100
- 17th BN41645 on 5, BN61054 on 100, BN65677 (100) on 8
- 18th BN67001 on 100
- 24th Olympian BN31375 on Brentwood town 73 (p.m., until last journey) – it is many years since a double decker worked to Bishop's Hall Estate
- 25th BN31373/5 and 34011 all on 5, BN67001 on a.m. and BN67036 on p.m. 100
- 28th BN61057 on 551
- 29th CN46829 on 551 and 81/82
- 30th CN46829 on 8, BN67036 on 22
- 31st 'Gremlins' BN43714 on 5, CN46829 on 22, BN60758 on 8. BN67001 on 22, BN67036 on 100

August

- 5th BN67001 on 22
- 6th BN31375 and BN67036 on 22. CR67002 seen in depot.

Other News

CR30560 has been sent to Plaxton for repair to severe upper deck side damage.

Mercedes Sprinter 90277 is being converted at CF to replace publicity 'van' 90236, the last 709D in the fleet, which was disposed of following engine failure.

Ex Eastern National 3073 (KOO791V) was seen at work in San Francisco during July, operating with San Francisco Sightseeing Deluxe (latterly recorded with British Bus Co, San Diego, California). Reportedly looking in very good condition and still carrying its UK registration, there was a Californian registration on a slip of paper in the windscreen (TCP22409).

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to *First Essex* and to I Banks, A Bird, W Bell, M Chapman, J Collins, N Clark, T Clark, D Edwards, M Farmer, I Hardie, K Mead, N Mansfield, J Podgorski, D Pretty, I Ransom, J Salmon, 'Solo', A Timms, TBL177M, R Webb, R Whitley, the *Essex Bus*, *South West*, *First Group Fans* and *British Buses Abroad in North America* y-groups, www.bustlistsontheweb.co.uk, *Real Bus News*, LOTS, PSV Circle, *Bristol VR South West Bus News* (<http://www.geocities.com/ndl642m>).

Reports relating to *First Group* may be sent by text on 07973 509459, by fax on 01277 216745, by e-mail or by conventional post. Many thanks to all who do so.

Chris Stewart

Stephensons of Essex

Former APT Volvo B10M/Van Hool CIW 7633 has been re-registered A14 SOE. Former London commuter coach A14 SOE a Volvo B10M/Plaxton has therefore reverted to it's original N70 SLK

Stephensons

Two new Solos have arrived: EU08 WND/E, supplied by Mistral , however both were supposed to be narrow Solos, but one is a wide one. Which is which is not known as they haven't had registration plates fitted yet, but the intention is to return the wide one . This will necessitate a replacement loan vehicle until matters are resolved.

Details and fleet numbers of the ex East Yorkshire Olympians acquired, have kindly been made available by the company:-

855/6/8/9	H155/6/8/9 BKH	Leyland Olympian / Northern Counties
862-4/6/9	J562/3/4/6/9 HAT	Leyland Olympian / Northern Counties
947/9/51/52	H547/9/51/52 VAT	Leyland Olympian / Northern Counties

The 8xx ones have Gardner 6LXB engines, the others, Cummins L10.

Leyland Olympian/Leyland G292/4/5/6/7/9/311 UYK were also acquired, but are for re-sale. As mentioned last month, G294/5/6/7/9 UYK have gone to Lodge, High Easter. G292/311 UYK plus G305 UYK from the Stephensons operational fleet have been sold to Roselyn Coaches, St Austell. To correct last month C48 KBE not C46 KBE has gone for scrap.

Ian Ransom with thanks to Lyn Watson of Stephensons

Heddingham Omnibuses

Heddingham

Acquired vehicle

from Metroline Travel AV27

L366 S127 RLE Volvo Olympian MkII YU3YNA413WCO292210 /
Alexander RH H43/25F first registered 15 September 1998.

Withdrawn and sold

L199/248/9/292 HJB 464/55/6, RAH 265W Bristol VR 6XLB / ECW H74F

To Ensign (dlr), Purfleet.

with thanks to D R MacGregor of Heddingham Omnibuses

NIBS

The new Optare Solo had arrived by 10 August, registration: MX08 UZK.

A second yard is in use, about 100 yards west from the depot on the opposite side of the road.

nibs

Essex-buses y-group



I regret the passing of Hedingham on the 16 service. The above photo was taken recently in Little Waltham. My wife and I are going to make a final trip to Wethersfield and back before the end of August. Hope to get further memorial shots! John Salmon

Essex-based Ensign have imported a large number of Alexander-bodied Olympians from Dublin Bus, the latest Essex operator being Hedingham Omnibuses. RA201, seen in College Street, Dublin in 1995 when only a few months old, is now registered M273 UKN, as Hedingham, L359.

Martin Weyell





The old order on service 1

5894 at Rayleigh Station in July. Chris Stewart

5881 is seen at Thundersley, Woodmans Arms on 14th July. Peter Mansbridge



Arriva

■ ARRIVA EAST HERTS & ESSEX Limited

Allocations

7/08: 2189 withdrawn

Vehicles out

2487 (YJ 57 EJG): Arriva The Shires (BD) 2487 7/08

Subsequent histories

2231 (M291 AJC): gone for scrap from Olympus/SM Travel, Harlow (EX) by 5/08

2309 (G924 WGS ex LAZ 5929, G924 WGS): Vale, Cheetham (GM) 12/03 ex Bailey, Blackburn (LA); gone by 5/08

2329 (K709 FNO): Private owner 1/08 ex Barker Roydon (EX)

2362 (N742 AVW) gone for scrap from Olympus/SM Travel, Harlow (EX) by 2/08

Easybus fleet

It is expected that operations will be transferred from Luton to Harlow in the near future. This is an obvious move bearing in mind that the vehicles are employed on a Stansted Airport to London Victoria service.

Mark Garratt

■ ARRIVA SOUTHEND Limited

At the beginning of August service 1 was still predominantly Olympian operated, with the Scania and DAFs due from Northfleet yet to enter service at Southend.

Five of the new VDL SB200/Wright due for Northfleet depot (and displacing the Scania and DAFs which will come to Southend) are in store at Short Street.

There is an on going programme for about a dozen Dart SLFs to receive Hanover front, side and rear displays. So far vehicles from the P FPK and T NMJ batches of Darts have been seen with completed displays.

From 27th July Rayleigh High Street has been closed to all traffic between Crown Hill and Hockley Road due to major gas works. Services 1, 7, 8 and 9 from Rayleigh Station are unable to serve the High Street and Websters Way bus stops and are therefore turning right at the top of Crown Hill. A temporary bus stop is in operation for service 1 opposite Rayleigh library, whilst service 7, 8 and 9 are serving a reinstated eastbound stop in Eastwood Road. The closure is expected to last four to six weeks. Buses towards Rayleigh are unaffected.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Essex Bus y-group.

Network Colchester

Vehicles In

From Excel

Scania N113 / Northern Counties H47/33F, all new to Liverline.

204 H804 RWJ	1816855	new 2/1991
234 G34 HKY	1816847	new 2/1990
237 G37 HKY	1816853	new 1/1990

The Scania's have been transferred from fellow TGM-Group company Excel. They are for new school routes from Dovercourt and Clacton into Colchester which begin in September (services 701-4). Prior to use with Excel the vehicles had been with Fargo and Arriva North West.

From Burtons, Haverhill

502 W442 CWX Optare Solo B30F VN6373

Vehicles Out

801 N541 TPF Dennis Dart/East Lancs has been transferred to Burtons at Haverhill.

Vehicle News

Dart/East Lancs M526 MPM has been renumbered from 309 to 806. Dart SLF/Pointer SN54 HWZ has been renumbered from 361 to 521. Its route 1 branding has been replaced by generic low floor branding. 521 has also received LED displays at the front and rear, replacing blinds. Dart SLF 362 has also had its route 1 branding removed.

Vehicle Workings

Omnidekka 101 and Tridents 155/6 worked excursions in connection with the Essex Scout Jamboree 2008 at Kirby-le-Soken during the final week of July.

Network Colchester is to provide Colchester United FC Supporters Association services to all home games from 16th August 2008 (the first home game of the new football season). Services are planned to operate from the Clacton, Chelmsford, Braintree and Halstead areas. At the time of writing routes and times had yet to be announced.

Unusual Sightings

July 22nd 108 on 105.

24th 386 on 1

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy, John Podgorski and Essex Bus y-group.

Stansted Transit

New is Alexander Dennis Dart/MCV AE08 DLF. Acquired vehicles are D164 FYM a Leyland Olympian/ECW from TGM, Heathrow and S45 UBO a Volvo B10M/Plaxton from Sefton Council. Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton T223 SAS has not been sold and remains here.

Ian Ransom

stansted transit

Regal Busways

Accident damaged Leyland Olympian OUI 6275 (JTY 372X) and Dennis Dart K832 SFT have gone for scrap. Dennis Dart J104 DUV and Leyland Olympian A639 WDT have also been sold. Leyland Fleetline/Alexander SHE 557S has gone to South Yorkshire Transport Trust for preservation. Dennis Dart M69 CYJ is numbered 509.

Ian Ransom

regal busways



Regal Busways's ex-Brighton Dart M69 CYJ on the 3A to Chelmsford at Leigh Church on 25th June. The destination display (non-scrolling) was showing "Up the Albion"! John G Lidstone

The last step-entrance vehicle in the Ensign service bus fleet was 620, a former London Northern Northern Counties-bodied Dart. This has now been sold to Eastonways of Ramsgate.

David Harman



Ensignbus

■ DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in *from*

CIS, Southend:	Olympian A17 ALS
Go-Ahead North East:	Solos S255 KNL T466/8 BCN
Metroline:	DMS 13/14/15/18/21/22/24/25/27 AV24/25/28/36
Stagecoach Devon:	Olympians H724/5/63 KDY H492 LNA
Stagecoach Manchester:	Olympians J122 AAO, A28 ORJ, F285 DRJ, C207 CBU.
Stagecoach South East:	Darts J517/36 GCD K565 NHC Volvo B10M F302 MYJ
Stagecoach West:	Lance K312 WMV
Heddingham Omnibuses:	Bristol VR's HJB 455/56/64W, RAH 265W.

Vehicles out

Dart K565 NHC:	ACL Travel, Somerset.
Olympians J841/43/51 TSC	and Volvo B10M F302 MYJ:
	Black Velvet Travel, Hants.
Olympian 92-D-133	now J942 CEV with Halifax Joint Committee.
Olympian S127 RLE:	Heddingham Omnibuses.
Olympian C649 LFT:	Moxons Tours, Notts.
Volvo B10B's N659/60 EKD:	People's Bus, Liverpool.
Scania M298 TWB and M953 DRG:	TWH, Ongar, Essex.
Olympian A17 ALS:	Mr A Haner, Peterborough for preservation.
Olympian H763 KDY:	Interrecruit, Peterborough.
M1084:	Direct Location Services, Surrey.
Dart R863 MCE:	South East Coachworks.
Metrobus E971 SON and Olympian 91-D-1062:	Erith Commercial for scrap.
Dart NDZ3160:	PVS for scrap.

■ OPERATIONAL FLEET

Acquired vehicle

from Nottingham City Transport 514

714 P514 CVO Dennis Dart SLF SFD322BR1TGW10304EL B20801 B44F new 10/1996

Disposals

Northern Counties-bodied Dart 620 has been sold to Eastonways, Ramsgate. This was the last step entrance bus in the service fleet (as opposed to rail replacement fleet).

David Harman with thanks to Ross Newman of Ensignbus

Small Operators

A&B, Basildon Toyota/Caetano JUI 9570 (K770 JRA) has been withdrawn, as this operator has surrendered their licence.

AIRPORT MINIBUSES, Colchester LDV Convoy P926 GOM has been withdrawn.

AMBER, Rayleigh DAF MB230/Van Hool N753 VCY has been acquired from APT, Rayleigh and has been reregistered TNJ 214. The new registration for the former YNJ 214 a Bova Futura, is unknown.

APT, Rayleigh Acquired vehicles are from Tranzcare, Manchester X409 NSE a Scania K124/Irizar and Dennis Javelin/ Neoplan DCZ 3813 (R459 ECR) from an unknown source. S6 PCL a Dennis Javelin/Neoplan has been sold to MG Coaches, Waltham, East Yorkshire, while MIL 8584 (new as A6 XEL) has gone to Winn Brothers, Northallerton.

ARROW TAXIS, Maldon Ford Transit ML05 KSY has been withdrawn

BARKER, Roydon Vehicles sold are PIL 3178 (C205 HSD) a Duple 425 to Beeline, Billingham, Mercedes Benz L508D to a

private owner, Neoplan H203 AOD to Pats YTravel, Blackheath and K709 FNO an Iveco 59-12/Dormobile to a private owner.

BIG RED BUS, Billericay

Have surrendered their operators licence. AEC Routemaster/Park Royal SMK 688F was here.

BOBS, Clacton-on-Sea To clarify recent events W403 HOB a Mercedes Benz Vario/ Autobus was acquired and re-registered B2 CBT. The original B2 CBT a Toyota/Caetano is back to its original L25 CAY.

CD HIRE, Harlow Ford Transit N442 HTW has been sold to a private owner.

CEDRIC, Wivenhoe The move from the premises at The Avenue, to a new depot on the A120 is expected to happen during the school summer holidays. FJ03 AAZ a Volvo B12/Berkhof has been acquired from Harry Shaw, Coventry. Leyland Olympian/ECW C669 LJR has been withdrawn. Volvo B10M/ Jonckheere R15 CED has been repainted white, a normal



Harlow-based SM Coaches have two of these box-like Vehixel-bodied Iveco 150E school buses, one of which is seen outside the Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green. Martin Weyell



Talisman Coachline ex-Colchester decker line-up. Paul Smith

indication that the vehicle is expected to be sold.

CM3 CARS, South Woodham Ford Transit T411 RFL is now with a private owner.

CREST, Rochford Mercedes Benz 609D/Devon Conversions M937 XKA has gone to Croft Minicoaches, Glasgow

DON'S, Gt Dunmow Bova Futura SF05 YKK has joined the fleet from Jay Coach Travel, Greengairs.

FLORIDA, Halstead Optare MetroRider N633 LFR has been acquired from Lancashire United. Also acquired is ex Stagecoach, but new to Hong Kong, H493 LNA (ES 7623) a tri-axle Leyland Olympian/Alexander.

GODWARD, Basildon Acquired are Leyland Olympian/N Counties F442 AKB, together with Volvo Olympian/ East Lancs P338/40/50 ROO, which started life with Harris Bus, West Thurrock.

NAKITAS, Wickford Iveco 35-12 M12 ERL has gone to Five Links Kids Club, Laindon (Non-pSV) and Ford Transit MV05 YFD to a private owner.

HARDY MILES, Rochford LDV 400 BIG 8775 has been re-registered to its original M758 BEU. Scania/Irizar N854 DKU is

now BIG 8775. Ford Transit MT55 LTN has been acquired from a private owner.

HUNTERS MINIBUSES, South Ockendon LDV Convoy S557 SMJ has gone to Ladycars, Leyton.

LODGE, High Easter Recent acquisitions are N982 TPG a Mercedes Benz 811D/ Mellor from Bailey Travel, Uxbridge and BX06 UMT a Setra S415HD from Gibsons, Moffat. Scania K124/Van Hool 46 AEW is back to its original W20 DGE and sold to Mason's Cheddington.

MALCOLMS BLUE BUS, Clacton-on-Sea Further to June EBN K632 SWP is a Mercedes Benz 709D/Plaxton acquired from Total Recruitment, Thetford and was new as K4 SBC.

MASTER TRAVEL, South Ockendon Volvo B10M/Caetano FLZ 6855 (F204 PNR) has been withdrawn. Former Eastern National H609 OVW a Mercedes Benz 709D/Reeve Burgess has gone to a private owner.

MILESTONE Canvey Island Volvo B10M/Plaxton K20 FTG has been sold to Bryn Melyn, Ruabon.

NEW HORIZONS, Frating A second Optare Excel from Claribel, Birmingham is V390 KVV. Mercedes Benz Vario YX05 DJJ

has gone to Hughes, Ashford, London.
OLYMPIAN/SM TRAVEL, Harlow Dennis Dart/Duple G350 GCK has gone for scrap. Acquired from Holmeswood Coaches, Ormskirk are T288/879/90 CGU Iveco 391E/Beulas. Van Hool T815 NIL 2993 (E444 MMM) has been withdrawn. Scania K113/Irizar KKZ 7562 (L230 RDO) went in part exchange to Holmeswood, while Iveco/Marshall M291 AJC, M159 RBH and N742 AVW have gone for scrap.

P&M, Crays Hill Two Volvo B12/Plaxton acquired from Park, Hamilton are SF06 WDK/WDU (new as KSK 979/976). Volvo B10M/Van Hool T9 TGM has been sold.

PHILLIPS South Woodham Ferrers Volvo B10M/Van Hool G200 RRN has gone to C&R Travel, Abertillery, Mercedes Benz 0814D/Autobus FX03 GKP has gone to Ted Wilford, Peterlee.

SAINT CLOUD, Rochford HUI 3584 (new as D390 XCD) a LAG Panoramic has been withdrawn.

SMITH, Horndon-on-the-Hill Ford Transit S808 LTF has been sold to a private owner.

SOUTHEND RADIO CARS Iveco 49-10/ Frank Guy R424 TKU and W498 VLW

have been acquired.

STANSTED CARRIAGE, Birchanger LDV Convoy P881 VBE has been sold to a private owner.

SUPREME, Southend A second ex Ensign MCW Metrobus is F775 EKM.

SWIFT CARS Chelmsford DAF/Van Hool RJI 6621 (new as OGE 8Y) and VW Transporter KP02 LRJ have been sold

TRUSTLINE, Harlow Acquired for the Galleon Travel fleet is A860 KFP a Volvo B10M/Plaxton

VICEROY, Saffron Walden Vehicles exported to Cyprus are Iveco CC95/ Indcar N795 JBK and Mercedes Benz 412D P646 SBD

WARD, Alresford Scania L94/Van Hool T732 JHE has been sold to Ausden Clark, Leicester

*Ian Ransom with thanks to PSV Circle,
 John Podgorski.*

My apologies for the lack of Non-PSV news recently, but other commitments have reduced the amount of time I have to prepare items for EBN. I hope to be able to catch up soon.

Preservation Notebook



Former Eastern National and Thamesway National YEV307S, latterly with West Sussex County Council has returned to Essex and preservation with Adrian Hughes as part of the Colne Estuary Preserved Buses fleet. *Steven Hughes*

North Weald Rally ~ 6 July 2008



VR 3107 (UAR597W) - Carl Lemon, LN 1898 (DAR120T) - John Wilson, RE 1516 (FWC439H) - David Edwards, MWs 392 (OWC182D) - Gerry Serpell-Morris and 350 (573UVX) ??, LDLX6G 2510 (236LNO) - Craig Mara, KSW5G 1407 (VNO859) - ??1407 Pres Group, LS5G 1237 (859ETW) - Bob Salmon in conjunction with Gordon Clayton; WMS AJN825 - 825 Group with thanks to the vehicle owners for taking part in the line up. *Chris Stewart*



In his comments in EBN 531 about the Essex Coast Express and Kings Cross Coach Station, Andrew Colebourne wonders which express services in North East Essex were worked by the FLF coaches. In the early seventies the X50 Harlow – Clacton/ Walton service was certainly worked by these fine vehicles as can be seen by the accompanying photograph from my collection showing AVW401F during a comfort stop at Braintree.

The route had originated as the No.12 service of Hicks Bros., running from Bishops Stortford to Clacton, being extended in stages by ENOC. I don't know when the FLFs first appeared on this route but it was certainly no stranger to double deckers in earlier times. The late John Farmer (an early Group member) was a driver at Braintree during the 1950s and thanks to his detailed records we can get a flavour of what might

have masqueraded as your holiday "coach" in those days.

Although normally employed as a bus driver, three or four times each summer he would be required to supplement the Clacton service. For instance his journeys for 1956 were as follows-

On Saturday July 7th 1956 he drove Bristol LS bus 402(568 CTW) dead to Great Dunmow to relieve the service vehicle from that point at 9.27am. He returned as a relief on the Saturdays only 1.30pm from Clacton as far as Braintree by which time he had accumulated 10s 6d in tips – that's 52.5p for our younger members. After a break he then went on to do his allocated bus service duty for the day from 4.15pm to 11.0pm.

On Friday August 10th he was allocated a newish Lodekka bus 1494(325GPU) and a conductor from Silver End depot. Again



starting from Dunmow he also had to work back there in the evening.

The following day, Saturday August 11th was a very busy day and John again had 402 but had to run dead to Harlow to start there at 8.45am to work through to Jaywick Sands. He noted that he was accompanied by three other vehicles on the service. His return journey was the 1.40pm from Clacton as far as Braintree only after which he did an evening excursion to Rayleigh (for the Speedway), finishing at 11.40pm. His final trip for 1956 was on Tuesday August 21st when he signed on at 5.45am to work a round trip at 7.00am to Halstead and back, followed by a journey to Witham. Unfortunately his bus, Guy Arab 1191(OVW756), broke down at Notley and

by the time he got back to Braintree his next trip had been covered. He was therefore allocated a relief journey to Clacton accompanied by three other vehicles. Interestingly, his bus on this occasion was KSW5G 1407(VNO859), John being the leading light in its preservation two decades later.

Although it seems to have happened only once to John I understand that it was a common occurrence for drivers arriving at Clacton on the Saturday service and, expecting an afternoon off in the sun, to be told to take their bus to the Railway Station and shuttle to and from Butlins Holiday Camp until it was time to take their passengers back to Braintree.

Nigel Turner

A BIG GUY IN GRAYS

2387 (TM 1401) was a solitary Guy FCX six-wheeler with Dodson body delivered in 1927 to the National Omnibus & Transport Co. I think it was the first covered-top

double-decker in the fleet, although the 64-seat body retained an open rear staircase. The photograph by W. Noel Jackson, (courtesy of Alan B. Cross) shows it

SERVICE No. 31.—Grays, Purfleet and Rainham—continued.

Sundays.																																																						
Grays, K.A. dep.	p.m.	1	0	2	3	0	3	1	0	4	0	5	3	0	6	1	5	6	4	5	7	3	0	7	3	5	8	0	8	3	0	8	3	0	9	0	9	1	5	9	5	0	1	0	1	0	2	5						
W. Thurrock	1	1	5	2	4	5	3	2	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	6	3	0	7	0	7	4	5	7	5	0	8	1	5	8	4	5	8	4	5	9	1	5	9	3	0	1	0	5	1	0	3	5	1	0	4	0		
Purfleet, P.O	1	2	5	2	5	3	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	4	0	7	1	0	7	5	5	8	0	8	2	5	8	5	5	8	5	5	9	2	5	9	4	0	1	0	1	5	1	0	3	5	1	0	4	0			
Purfleet, R.R	...	3	0	3	0	3	0	4	0	5	1	0	...	6	4	5	7	1	5	8	0	...	...	9	0	...	9	3	0	...	9	3	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Lennard Ar's	...	3	5	3	5	3	5	4	5	1	5	...	...	6	5	0	7	2	0	8	5	...	...	9	5	...	9	3	5	...	9	3	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		
Rainham arr.	...	3	1	5	3	5	5	5	2	5	...	...	7	0	7	3	0	8	1	5	...	...	9	1	5	...	9	4	5	...	9	4	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Rainham dep.	...	3	2	0	4	0	5	3	0	...	...	7	0	7	3	5	8	1	5	...	...	9	2	0	...	9	5	0	...	9	5	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Lennard Ar's	...	3	3	0	4	1	0	5	4	0	...	...	7	1	0	7	4	5	8	2	5	...	...	9	3	0	...	1	0	0	...	1	0	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Purfleet, R.R	...	3	3	5	4	1	5	5	4	5	...	...	7	1	5	7	5	0	8	3	0	...	...	9	3	5	...	1	0	5	...	1	0	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Purfleet, P.O	1	3	0	3	4	0	4	2	0	5	5	0	6	0	7	2	0	7	5	5	8	3	5	8	5	8	3	0	9	4	0	9	5	1	0	1	0	9	4	5	1	0	2	0	1	0	3	5	1	0	5	0		
W. Thurrock	1	4	0	3	5	0	4	3	0	6	0	6	1	0	7	3	0	8	5	8	4	5	8	1	5	8	4	0	9	5	0	9	1	5	1	0	2	0	9	5	5	1	0	3	0	1	0	4	5	1	1	0		
Grays, K.A. arr	1	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	6	1	5	6	2	5	7	4	5	8	2	0	9	0	8	3	0	8	5	5	1	0	5	9	3	0	1	0	3	5	1	0	1	0	4	5	1	1	0	1	0	5	0			

Grays, King's Arms

1d	The Red Lion
1½d	1½d
2d	2d
2½d	2½d
3d	3d
4d	4d
5d	5d
6d	6d
7d	7d

FARE TABLE.

South Stifford, Mill Lane	1d
West Thurrock, Fox and Goose	1d
Jurgen's Works	1½d
Purfleet, Post Office	2d
Purfleet, Rifle Range	2d
Lennard Arms	1½d
Southall Bridge	1½d
Rainham	1½d

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apparently in the Bedford area, but it was later transferred to Grays. (Midland Area route 8 was Bedford - Moggerhanger - Sandy - Biggleswade).

Following the formation of the London Passenger Transport Board in 1933, the Grays area became a border town, with part falling within the "Special Area". The LPTB was entitled to compulsorily acquire services operating within the "Special Area", and accordingly, on 31st August, three ENOC services were relinquished:

- 31 Grays - Purfleet - Rainham (Su)
- 36 Grays - Aveley - Rainham - Romford (Daily)
- 40 Grays - the Ockendons - Upminster - Romford (Daily) joint with the LGOC

The timetable opposite is from the NOTC Chelmsford, Colchester and Grays Districts booklet dated August 1928. At that time, the 31 was worked daily.

Another route, the 38, Grays - Purfleet (Daily), also fell within the "Special Area". However, acquisition of this by the LPTB was delayed until April 1934, by which time they had mopped up a multitude of small operators also working on it: R.Clark, Mrs Coe, F R Harris, J Harvey, Smith & Godden, Day & Bedingfield, and Cecil Rudkins (Tilbury Safety Coaches).

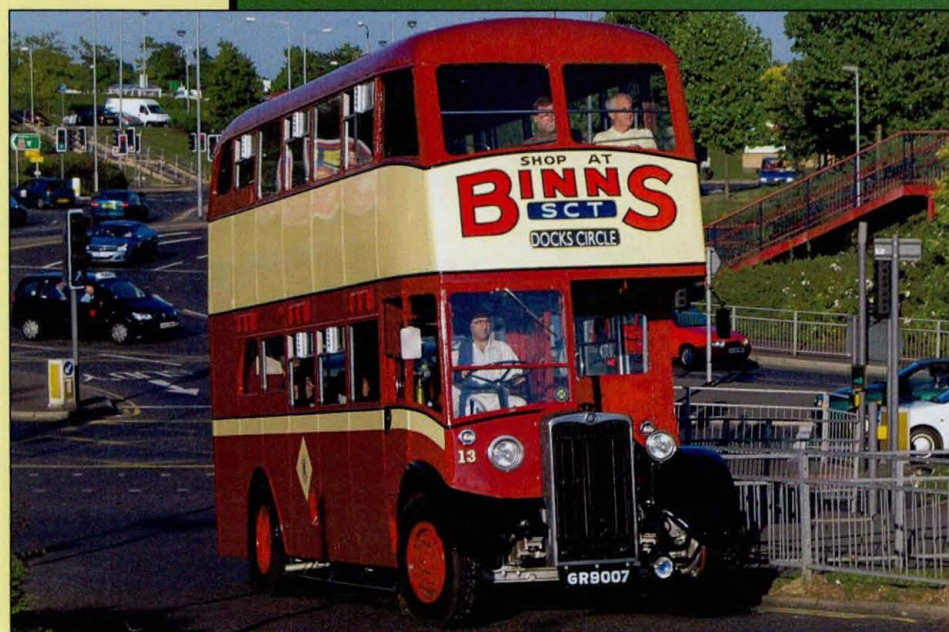
In September 1933, the Guy appears to have passed to the LPTB too. The reasons for this are unclear, but it is assumed they simply did not have enough existing spare vehicles to cover the ex-ENOC Grays routes.



The FCX was not a common type. Perhaps, like many 'one-off's, the ENOC example was not looked upon with great affection by those who had to drive or maintain it, and Chief Engineer, William Morison may have been glad of the opportunity to get it off the books.

In the event, the LPTB didn't keep 2387 long; it was sold to a dealer, A.J.Maffey in October 1934, and no further owner is known.

David Harman



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