

Issue 510
October 2006

ESSEX BUS NEWS



Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group

serving Essex since 1964

www.essexbus.org.uk

Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group - Directory

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YOUR REPORTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Members reports are always welcome. Please send them to the relevant Sub-Editor.

Photos (prints, slides or digital images - in JPG format) are also welcome - please send to David Harman.

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

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

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

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Dates for your diary

■ EBN PRESS DATES

<i>For inclusion in EBN dated:</i>	<i>reports should reach Editors by:</i>	<i>planned despatch date:</i>
November	1 November	10 November
December	6 December	15 December
January 2007	3 January 2007	12 January 2007

Please note that the **planned** despatch date may change for all sorts of reasons. The **actual** despatch day is posted to the website as soon as it is known. Please allow reasonable time for postal delays (at least seven working days) before claiming non-receipt. Replacements can **only** be obtained from the Membership Secretary (address opposite). None of the Editors hold spares, so there is no point in contacting them. They cannot help!

■ ROCHFORD MEETINGS

Meetings now take place in the **Committee Room** (upstairs), **Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford** (the old railway goods shed, adjacent to Rochford station). There is a large free car park and *one Great Eastern trains & Arriva Southend* services 7/8 stop nearby. Doors open at 1915 for an informal chat, with the main talk or show from 2000 to 2145. Drinks are normally available. All members and guests are very welcome. £1 donation towards room hire please. Prints, slides and digital photographs can all be shown. *Richard Delahoy*

Autumn programme:

- ▶ **Tuesday November 14** - "*EN's yellow & green years*" - a slide show by *Chris Stewart* with emphasis on the early post-privatisation livery.
- ▶ **Tuesday December 12** - 20 years ago slide show by *Richard Delahoy* celebrating the start of deregulation in October 1986.

First half of 2007 programme:

Dates booked are **Jan 9, Feb 13, Mar 13 (AGM), April 17, May 15, June 12**. Make a note in your diary NOW!

■ COLCHESTER MEETINGS

Venue: Downstairs room at the **Friends Meeting House, Church Street, Colchester**, just south of "Jumbo" (the water tower) and behind the Mercury Theatre. Town centre bus stops and parking are nearby. 20.00 to 22.00 (doors open at 19.30). Refreshments available. All members and guests are very welcome. £1 donation towards room hire please. Prints, slides and digital photographs can all be shown. *Dave Arnold*

Autumn programme:

- ▶ **Friday 10 November** - *Fred Lawrence*: 'On the Company's Expenses'!
- ▶ **Friday 9 December** - *Michael Yelton*, practising lawyer (author of "*Trams, Trolleybuses and Buses and the Law*") and bus enthusiast - topic to be advised.

■ LOTS AUTUMN TRANSPORT SPECTACULAR.

- ▶ **Saturday 4 November**: Harrow Leisure Centre, Christchurch Avenue, Wealdstone. Open 10.30 to 3.30. Admission £2. The Group Sales Stall will be at this event with a extensive selection of photos, plus books, ECC timetables etc. Nearest station: Harrow & Wealdstone on Euston main line. Buses 140, 182, 186, 258, 340 stop outside the Station/in Wealdstone High Street and the H9/H10 routes stop near the Station and at the Leisure Centre itself. Free bus service about every 15/20 mins from about 10 a.m. from Colindale (Northern Line) via Queensbury (Jubilee Line) stations.

Cover: **First Essex**: Brand new EBL/Plaxton Primo 57002 (YN56 HNF). *Stephen Barham*

From the Editor ...

The Committee have agreed to match the donation made by Talisman Coach Lines to - the **Essex Air Ambulance**. Thus, £50 from the proceeds of "The Evening Talisman Tour" has been sent to help this very worth cause. Read more about it at www.essexairambulance.org/

2006 has seen a very successful Tours programme, and thanks are due to Dave Arnold for all the 'behind the scenes' organisation, to the many operators and their staff for making us welcome, and to members and friends for their support.

EBN 510 corrections: The Regal Solo on page 22 was in Maldon, not Colchester High Street, on route 75 , and despite the electronic blinds showing '71'.

Lodge's BX04 NBY (p.27) is a Mercedes Benz 1836RL Touro integral, with bodywork by Caetano, not Irizar. Caetano and Mercedes (Daimler Chrysler) are linked via a joint venture company. Thanks to Matthew Arnold for pointing this out.

EBN 510 was very late; It left the Editors a day late, but problems at the printers made things worse. We hope this issue reaches members on time.

David Harman

Essex Service Changes

News this month includes the re-assignment of **Town & Country's** Thurrock tenders, new registrations in Grays from **Ensignbus**, and the deregistration of some of **Olympian's** Harlow routes. The latter routes have been re-registered to start a day later by a new, related concern, **Roadrunner Coaches Ltd**. LOTS say that the Olympian Coaches Ltd business has been forced to change its legal name (to **Olympus Bus & Coach Ltd**) by the 2012 Olympic Games Authority (!)

Arriva East Herts & Essex

3 Sep 06 724 Daily

Heathrow Airport, Central Bus Station - Harlow Bus Station.
Revised timetable and section of route via Stanstead Abbots withdrawn.

4 Sep 06 59 M-S

Chelmsford, Coval Lane - Harlow Bus Station

25 Sep 06 SW3 TThF

Minor timetable revision
Bishops Stortford Interchange - Sawbridgeworth (circular)
This service is withdrawn

23 Oct 06 8 M-S

Harlow Bus Station - Old Harlow (circular) Revised
timetable and route no longer serving Old

4 Sep 06 498 Daily

Romford Station - Brentwood, Sainsburys
Minor revision to M-F timetable

Arriva Southend

10 Sep 06 7 Daily

Shoeburyness, Renown - Rayleigh Rail Station
Minor timetable changes.

8 Daily

Shoeburyness, Renown - Hockley, Spa
Minor timetable changes

Beeston's

2 Oct 06 11 M-S

Sudbury Bus Station - Gosfield Lake, Mobile Home Park
Minor timetable changes?

12 M-S

Sudbury Bus Station - Halstead, Butler Road Car Park
Minor timetable changes?

13 M-S

Sudbury Bus Station - Halstead, Butler Road Car Park
Minor timetable changes?

Blue Triangle Buses Ltd			Loughton Station - Romford Rail Station
27 Aug 06	502	S	Service withdrawn
Carters Coach Services			
4 Sep 06	92	SDO	Ipswich - Stratford St Mary New SCC contract service with one return journey to/from Manningtree Rail Station and one connecting journey with service 755 to Colchester
Clintona Minicoaches			
2 Oct 06	98	M-F	Orsett Hospital - Lakeside Bus Station. Service operated under contract to Thurrock Council
	374	M-S	West Horndon Rail Station - Lakeside, Tesco. Service operated under contract to Thurrock Council.
	380	M-F	Tilbury Ferry - Orsett Hospital, Rowley Road. Service operated under contract to Thurrock Council (Saturday service operated by <i>Ensign Bus</i>)
8 Oct 06	100	Su	Basildon Bus Station - Lakeside Bus Station. Service operated under contract to Thurrock Council.
Ensignbus			
30 Sep 06	X80	Daily	Bluewater - Tilbury, Asda Store. Revised to operate every 30 minutes (M-S) Bluewater to Lakeside with one journey each hour on Saturday extended to Grays. Sunday and PH hourly service Bluewater to Tilbury.
7 Oct 06	380	S	Tilbury Ferry - Orsett Hospital, Rowley Road. Service operated under contract to Thurrock Council (M-F service operated by <i>Clintona Minicoaches</i>)
Excel			
31 Aug 06	316	SDO	Molehill Green - Mountfitchet School. This schools service has been withdrawn as a public service bus
First			
20 Aug 06	25E	Su	Southend Travel Centre - Basildon Hospital. Service was actually withdrawn (see 25 for Sunday service)
29 Aug 06	25	Daily	Southend Travel Centre - Basildon Hospital. Hourly Sunday service introduced (replacing the ECC part contract 25e)
	7	M-S	Walton, The Naze - Clacton, Jackson Road Reverted to winter running times
	8	M-S	Walton, The Naze - Clacton, Jackson Road Reverted to winter running times
4 Sep 06	551	M-S	Basildon Bus Station - Brentwood Rail Station. Minor revision to M-F timetable.
	825	SDO	Basildon Bus Station - St Thomas More School Afternoon journey re-timed.
Imperial Bus			
4 Sep 06	320	M-S	Tilbury, Asda - Lakeside Bus Station (circular) Saturday service reintroduced (N&P states further timetable amendment wef 11/10/06)
4 Sep 06	H1	M-S	Loughton Station - Harlow Bus Station Revised timetable and route in Harlow
National Express			
4 Sep 06	727	Daily	Norwich, University of East Anglia - Gatwick Airport, South Terminal. Minor change in Norwich to night journeys
NIBS			
2 Oct 06	221	M-F	Wickford, Broadway - the Wick (circular). Minor am timetable revision on schooldays.
Olympian Coaches			
14 Aug 06	M11	M-F	Harlow Town Station - Pinnacles, Flex Meadow Service withdrawn
	M21	M-F	Edinburh Way, River Way - Harlow Town Station Service withdrawn



EVENINGS & SUNDAYS: Blue Triangle began tendered evening/Sunday work in the Basildon area on 27 August.

above: **Evenings:** Ooh! ... it's a red bus! DP205 (BT04 BUS) is seen at dusk at Billericay Station on 30 August. *Kevin Smith*

below: **Sundays:** DP198 (EU53 PYF) on the Sunday 232 at Basildon Hospital on 3 September. Note the ECC sign in the windscreen. *Richard Delahoy*



	M31	M-S	Harlow Bus Station - Sumners (circular) Service withdrawn
15 Aug 06	600	S	Bishops Stortford Interchange - Lakeside Bus Station Service withdrawn
25 Sep 06	742	M-F	Harlow, Brays Grove (School) - London, Victoria (Bressenden Place) Commuter service: revised timetable (additionally PM short journeys Potter Street - The Stow) with the introduction of a single return journey on Saturdays.
	743	M-F	Braintree, Tesco Store - London, Buckingham Palace Road. Revised to call at Wanstead Station rather than Redbridge Station
Regal Busways			
5 Sep 06	X2	M-F	Harlow Bus Station, Chelmsford, Coval Lane New M-F service (one return journey) via Ongar and Writtle
Roadrunner Coaches Limited			
15 Aug 06	M1	M-S	Templefields, Edinburgh Way - Pinnacles, Flex Meadow Service formerly operated by Olympian Coaches.
	M11	M-F	Harlow Town Station - Katherines (circular) Service formerly operated by Olympian Coaches.
	M21	M-F	Templefields, Edinburgh Way - Harlow Town Station Service formerly operated by Olympian Coaches.
	M31	M-S	Templefields, Edinburgh Way - Katherines (circular) Service formerly operated by Olympian Coaches.
19 Aug 06	600	S	Bishops Stortford Interchange - Lakeside Bus Station Service formerly operated by Olympian Coaches.
S M Coaches			
5 Sep 06	SM19	SDO	Katherines (Shops) - Bishops Stortford. Revised timetable and route - introduction of off-peak short workings between Bishops Stortford and Harlow Bus Station
Stansted Transit			
29 Aug 06	306	M-F	Wicken Bonhunt, Coach and Horses - Bishops Stortford, Herts & Essex Hospital. Revised timetable
Stephensons			
1 Sep 06	514	SDO	Westcliff High Schools - Hatfield Peveral, Maldon Road Revised afternoon times
11 Sep 06	800	Col	Southend Central Bus Station - Thurrock College Minor timetable revision
	801	Col	Hockley Spa - Thurrock College Minor timetable revision
Town & Country			
21 Jul 06	364	M-F	Grays Bus Station - Uplands Estate, Watts Crescent School journeys withdrawn without replacement.
22 Sep 06	40	M-F	Grays Bus Station - Chafford Hundred, Armada Gate Centre. Registration cancelled and Thurrock contract transferred to <i>Ensignbus</i> .
	98	M-F	Orsett Hospital - Lakeside Bus Station. Registration cancelled and Thurrock contract transferred to <i>Clintona Minicoaches</i> .
23 Sep 06	374	M-S	West Horndon Rail Station - Lakeside, Tesco Registration cancelled and Thurrock contract transferred to <i>Clintona Minicoaches</i> .
	380	M-S	Tilbury Ferry - Orsett Hospital, Rowley Road Registration cancelled and Thurrock contract transferred to <i>Clintona Minicoaches</i> (MF) / <i>Ensignbus</i> (S).
24 Sep 06	100	Su	Basildon Bus Station - Lakeside Bus Station Registration cancelled and Thurrock contract transferred to <i>Clintona Minicoaches</i> .

David Tomlin



Docklands Buses has been taken over by the London General subsidiary of Go Ahead. MCV Evolution-bodied Dennis Dart AE06 HCC in High Road Loughton on route 167 and Optare Solo YM52 TSX in St. Barnabas Road, Woodford on route 549. The latter photograph is actually in Greater London but the route passes into Essex at the railway bridge near Roding Valley Station. The former West's Coaches garage which was just north of the bridge has now been demolished and flats are being built on the site.

Andrew Colebourne



A kerfuffle in Thurrock

LOCAL BUS SERVICES IN THURROCK

All local bus services previously run by Town & Country Buses in Thurrock, so I now be provided by Ensignbus until the end of this week (until Sunday, October 1). From Monday, October 2 until Saturday, December 9, the Town and Country 40, 98 and 380 routes on Saturdays will be provided by Ensignbus.

The Town and Country 100 (Sundays only) 374 and 380 on Monday to Fridays bus services will be provided by Clintona. In addition, the Ensignbus X80 Saturday service will be diverted to serve Little Thurrock, following the same route as the weekday 98 route.

Ensignbus 66 route will start between Chadwell St Mary and Lakeside via Tilbury and Little Thurrock. It will be partially subsidised by Thurrock Council to provide peak services to Little Thurrock.

The Ensignbus 55 service will start on the Grays Riverside Loop (Wharf Road, Argus Street, Derby Road) and will be subsidised by Thurrock Council. All other bus services in Thurrock provided by other operators are unaffected and will operate as normal.

For more information or queries, contact Thurrock Council's Passenger Transport Unit on 01375 413886.

ALL TOWN AND COUNTRY BUSES RUN THIS WEEK:

THIS WEEK, UNTIL SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1

All local bus services previously run by Town & Country 40, 98, 100 (Sunday only) 374 and 380 - are being provided by Ensignbus. Imperial Buses are operating two of the Town & Country school contracts and Ensignbus the remaining three.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2 TO SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9

Town & Country 40, 98 and 380 on Saturdays will be provided by Ensignbus. Town & Country 100 (Sunday only) 374 and 380 on Mondays to Fridays will be provided by Clintona.

IN ADDITION:

- Ensignbus X80 will be diverted to serve Lenthall Avenue (following the same route as the weekday 98)
- Ensignbus 66 will start between Chadwell St Mary and Lakeside via Tilbury and Little Thurrock (partially subsidised by Thurrock)
- Ensignbus 55 will start on the Grays Riverside Loop (Wharf Road, Argus Street, Derby Road), subsidised by Thurrock Council.

The two other supported services - Arriva 64 on Sundays and First Essex 389 are, of course, unaffected by all this kerfuffle and continue unchanged until December 9.

Putting residents first

THURROCK COUNCIL
www.thurrock.gov.uk

In mid-September, Thurrock Council terminated all Town & Country's tendered local bus services and school contracts. The last days of operation were as follows:

Friday 22 September

- 40A Chafford Hundred, Armada Gate & Grays Bus Stn (Mon-Fri peaks).
- 98 Chafford Hundred Station & Orsett Hospital via Grays (Mon-Fri).

Saturday 23 September

- 374 Grays Bus Stn & West Horndon via East Tilbury (Mon-Sat).
- 380 Orsett Hospital & Tilbury Ferry (Mon-Sat)

Sunday 24 September

- 100 Lakeside & Basildon via Grays and Orsett (Sundays). (main M-S service is unchanged - operated by First).

The 364 (Uplands Estate & Purfleet School), on which T&C only had two schoolday trips to/from Purfleet School, last ran on the final day of the Summer term (21 July). Thurrock have not offered this for re-tender in the summer, so there will be no replacement service. Ensignbus continue to operate the main Mon-Sat service (Lakeside - Grays), and Arriva Southend the Sunday service (both numbered 64).

From 25 September until 1 October, the local bus services were provided by Ensignbus, who also covered the three Aveley School contracts. Imperial ran the other two (to Palmer's College and Grays Convent School), one of which has been let to them until July 2007. From 2 October, temporary contracts were awarded as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 40A, 98, 380 (S) | Ensignbus |
| 100 (Su), 374, 380 (MF) | Clintona Minicoaches |

These run until December 9, the original planned re-tender date. Details are awaited of the operator(s) of the remaining school contracts.

Town & Country's Essex CC school contracts continue to operate. The c2c Rail Tilbury Town-Tilbury Riverside service also continues, although Clintona were asked to cover this in the event that T&C were not operating.

Turning to the fleet, Town & Country's Operator Licence had been curtailed to 11 vehicles from 25 June. Excels 106/101/2/7 (P323 KAR, R375/7/8 DJN), Dart 103 (T439 EBD) and Vario 105 (T457 NNH) all departed in July. The only vehicles noted at the depot on 30 September were B6 104, Olympian 211 and the KSW, but Olympian 213 was observed on the c2c service and others may well have been out on rail replacement duties.

Since then, B6 108 has been advertised for scrap or parts (as it has a blown engine and defective gearbox) on eBay. (The Wayfarer 3 ticket machines have also been disposed of via eBay). 108 was the only vehicle present in the depot as at 7 October. Older disposals that have gone unrecorded are Olympian 209 (C815 BYY) and accident-damaged Dart/Northern Counties 101 (L112 HHV). The latter probably went for scrap - does anyone know?

Metrobus WYW 57I and Lynx F558 NJM were reported in EBN509 (p23) as acquired from Carousel, High Wycombe, but this was not so; these vehicles actually passed to Country Bus & Coach, New Haw, Addlestone.

Reports of the current fleet / recent disposals would be welcome.

The local press have reported events with varying degrees of accuracy. The (mostly accurate) announcement (see previous page) of what Thurrock Council describe as a 'kerfuffle' comes from the *Thurrock Gazette* for 29 September. (They overlooked the c2c which is a 'local bus service' and which continues at present).

David Harman, with thanks to Richard Delahoy, Dave Stewart of LOTS and Bill White

Ensignbus drafted in two Dart/Carlyles with Pointer fronts, to help maintain the former Town & Country services. These had previously served in the Stratford Blue fleet but have been replaced by newer stock. 699 (ANZ 8799) is seen in Tilbury on the 380. *Kevin Smith*



■ FIRST ESSEX

New/acquired vehicles

Period 6

60129	R345 GHS Volvo B10M-62 48062	Plaxton C55F	9712VUM7238	new 12/97
60130	R344 GHS Volvo B10M-62 48061	Plaxton C55F	9712VUM7086	new 12/97
60031	R346 GHS Volvo B10M-62 48063	Plaxton C55F	9712VUM7239	new 12/97

New to Kelvin Scottish, ex First PMT Ltd

Period 7

57002 YN56 NHF Enterprise Bus Ltd/Plaxton Primo chassis 130028, body no 6590

Delivered 2.10.06 – 57001 has been retained by Plaxton Ltd for display at Euro Bus Expo 2006 at the NEC, Birmingham from 7th-9th November (see www.eurobusexpo.com). A demonstrator, YN06 CYE, is to cover for it, allowing the two to enter service on Monday 9th October. This has been given temporary number 57000, and is in an all-over metallic blue livery; (the previous demonstrator, YX55 DSE - see EBN499, was metallic tan-brown).

Allocation changes

Period 5: 28th August to 30th September 2006

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

(A)=acquired, including vehicles on loan; Anc=Ancillary fleet; RES=spare/retained (licensed);

D/L(RES)=spare/reserve (delicensed); D/L(D)=delicensed for disposal; DS=Driving School

46116 D/L(D)-CN; 46120 CN-D/L(D); 46805 CN-D/L(D); 46827 BE-CN; 47219 CF-BE;
51475 RES-D/L(D); 51809 D/L(D)-sold; 52582 RES-sold; 60031 FGC-RES;
60129 FGC-RES; 60130 FGC-RES

note: 46116 was never in fact delicensed

Repaints (Period 6 -all to standard Group livery)

By members' observation: 34018 46829 46830

Disposals (Period 6)

51809, 52582 – confirmation awaited

VEHICLE WORKINGS

The 18.05 Brentwood Station-Basildon 551 has recently shown up a variety of vehicles – Olympian 30559 on the 27th September, Scania 65631 on the 28th and similar 65626 on 2nd October. Other unusual sightings are noted below.

September

- 1st Dart CN46819 on DT working, route 104.
- 3rd Dart CR47105 on 64A (Sunday - usually low floor).
- 4th Dart DT46802 on pm 103
- 5th DT46802 on 103; CR46829 on 64A; CR46830 on 66
- 6th Lance CN67010 on 17.
- 9th Dart CR47105 on 78 (usually Olympian).
- 11th CR34302 on X22, CF34818 on 351 (11.52 from Brentwood), CF60102 on 352, 46116 on 352. DT46802 on 104, Dart CR47101 on X22, CR47102 on 78, CR67008 on 65.



Primo's are go !

above: 57002 (YN56 NHF) illustrates the coach-style door in the open position

below: Demonstrator 57000 (YN06 CYE) with the door in the closed position. The old order in the form of Mercedes 51780 and the Harwich High Lighthouse are in the background. *Stephen Barham*



12th CR34056 on DT104 (loan), CR34308 on 71, CR47101 on 78, CF47223 on 36, CF43731 on 31X, Cheeta BE56003 on Southend X30, CF56006 on Braintree X20.
 13th DT51803 on 103/104, CR34303 and CR62408 on X22, CR65679 on 65, CR67006 on 64.
 14th Lance CF60104 on 33, SLF Dart CF43731 on 352, Dart BE46822 on 352
 15th DT43800 on 104 (16.35 ex CR), CR62408 on X22, CR67007 on DT104 (loan), BE46817 on 50, CF43729 on 42, CF43730 on 36, BE46827 on 35.
 16th Olympian CR34309 o/l to DT, 46116 on 37, CF56006 on X20.
 17th Scania CR65679 on X22.
 18th CF43730 on 72, CR46829 on 65, CR46830 on 78/64, CR47105 on CN duty 75/76.
 19th CN46806 on 75/76, CF56007 on X20, Lance CR67007 on DT working 104 (loan)
 20th CR43742 on 61, CR46186 on 75 (18.00 ex CR), CR46830 on 66A.
 21st CR34304 on DT104 (loan), Route 66-branded CR43744 on 67/A (day), CR46830 on 64, CR65679 on X22
 22nd CR46830 on 65, CR47101 on 67.
 23rd ECW Olympian CF34815 on 351 (14.05 CF-BD and return), CF47227 on 42, Scania CF65680 on 352. CN46810 on 75/76, Scania CR62408 on X22, CR67004 on 64A
 25th Olympian CR34310 on X22, CR46131 on 76 (17.10 ex CN), CR46829 on 66A and 78, CR46830 on 61, Scania CF65682 on 35 (15.02 ex SD).
 26th 46116 on BE 21, CF46143 on 56, CF46826 on 41, CR62408 on X22, BN61057 on 100.
 27th Olympian CR34305 on X22, CF56006 on X20, CR47102 on 78, CR47105 & 46830 on 65
 28th CR34303 on X22, CF56005 on X20
 29th Dart MPD DT43800 on 31 (21.10 CF-MN and return), CR67006 on 64A.

October

2nd CR46830 and CR47104 on 78, CR47103 on 64
 3rd CR67002 on 65, CR34304 on X22
 4th CF47229 on 352, CR65679 on X22.

Visitor's view – 5th October

Member Robert Appleton regularly sends welcome reports of his visits to North Essex. On Thursday 5th, he also drove to Chelmsford to sample the Park & Ride service, arriving at the P&R site just before notices were displayed that the car park was full – so parked down the road to Sandon village and walked back to catch 65028 into town. The popularity of the scheme is such that the 325 space extension is clearly now needed urgently.

At Colchester, unusual sightings between 13.30 and 14.30 were CR47103 on service 65 (normally low floor Scania) and CR47106 on service 78 to Brightlingsea (normally Olympian). At 14.00 Magdalen Street was congested with traffic queuing in both directions, delaying services 64/64A and also 74/76/103/104; he reports that Colchester-Harwich 103/104s can often be 15mins late in Mistley, despite on time departure from Colchester bus station.

At Harwich, new Primo 57002 was parked over the pit in the depot. In addition, he noted: Olympians 34280/2/4/6/8 working the five daytime duties on services 103/104 Harwich - Colchester. 34290 worked Harwich-Manningtree school contract, light to Ardleigh, 08.28 Ardleigh - East Bergholt 193, light to Harwich, 14.20 Harwich - Manningtree 103 and Manningtree - Harwich school contract.

Darts 43800 and 46802 parked outside the depot, both presumed serviceable.
 Mercedes 51780 on Harwich-Long Meadows 22A/22B, with 51803 on Harwich-Parkeston 20A/20B.

Solos 53138/9 both on Harwich-Clacton Village Link services 3/4.

Apart from the continued absence of 34285, it is good to see that the problems listed in EBN509 September had been resolved.

OTHER NEWS

The former Thamesway Romford depot in Bryant Avenue, Harold Wood, was closed by *First London* on 29th September, with route 193 and its Solos transferring to Dagenham.

Whilst on holiday in Yorkshire during September, member Tony Spindler was delighted to come across Bristol MW5G 1348 (208YVX) working a Wensleydale Vintage Bus Tour from Ripon to Hawes via Redmire. The service was operated by Chris Bulmer's *Vintage Omnibus Services* on Tuesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 1st August to 30th September. Leaving Riverside Caravan Park, Ripon at 09.30, the timetable shows arrival in Redmire (for the Wensleydale Railway) at 11.15 with two round trips (three in August) Redmire-Aysgarth-Hawes-Askrigg-Redmire before returning to Ripon. The other vehicle advertised for the service was a somewhat more local Bristol L5G from the United fleet, LHN823, which appeared in 'All Creatures Great and Small' on TV as well as in 'Heartbeat'. 1348 was new in January 1962 (chassis number 184.184) and spent much, if not all, of its life at Colchester – delicensed for disposal in September 1977, it was sold in 1978, passing twice through the hands of W North (dealer), and remains in ENOC Tilling green and cream.

First Eastern Counties Bristol-built Olympian 34535 (XHK235X) was alive and well on the 15.25 Hunstanton to King's Lynn on 18 September.

Sources: Own observations, with many thanks to First Essex and to R Appleton, W Bell, A Bird, T Clark, J Clayton, J Collins, D Edwards, M Farmer, I Hardie, A Kelleher, F Monck, J Podgorski, I Ransom, J Salmon, C Sigston, 'Solo', A Spindler, J Stewart, G Toon, R Webb, R Whitley, J Wilson, Essex Bus and South West y-groups, Real Bus News, LOTS, PSV Circle, Terminus.

Chris Stewart



■ ARRIVA SOUTHEND LIMITED

Internal Transfers

Southend based Dart SLF 3326 (T826 NMJ) is currently on loan to Grays to cover for the refurbishment of route 256 Cadets. Volvo B6 3606 (L606 EKM) is now at Southend in the place of 3326.

Vehicle Workings

6236 is the DAF nominated for the 498 school bus as GY64, but in practice any of the batch 6224-36 will be used.

Further to last month, Vario 1188 remains the vehicle allocated to SD62 which operates route 6A. However, anything can and will appear, especially on Wednesdays when 1188 is required for route 10.

Other News

By 27th September, at least Cadets 3502/5/7/9 had new, manual destination blind winding equipment fitted with the rest of the batch expected to be converted by early October.

Withdrawn Olympian 5393 (Southend United all-over advertisement) has been removed from Short Street, Southend for scrap. It has been reported that Arriva Durham County Volvo Olympian/East Lancs 7429 (M693 HPF), whose roof was damaged in a low bridge accident in Middlesbrough on 6 August, has received the roof from 5393.

Correction to EBN509

3974 has actually gone in to the Kent Thameside fleet at Dartford but may appear at Grays from time to time.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Matthew Arnold and David Harman

■ **STEPHENSONS, Rochford**

New vehicle

The new Dart is expected shortly.

Acquired vehicles

M231 TBV Volvo B10M / Alexander transferred from Excel in exchange for Dart K716 KGU.

A further F-reg long wheelbase Olympian is due from Ensign.

Vehicles sold

C807 BYY	Olympian / ECW
C28 CHM	Olympian / ECW
B248 NVN	Olympian / ECW to M & E Coaches
A18 SOE	Volvo B10M ? Plaxton (registration retained)
K716 KGU	Dennis Dart / Plaxton transferred to Excel.

C28 CHM was the last ex-London Olympian in plain white. No more London Olympian disposals are planned in the short term

Probably the least photographed livery in the Stephensons' fleet is that carried by C106 CHM, an ex London Olympian. The white, blue and red Tesco colours restrict it to normal use on the free services to Tesco Pitsea (Mon/Wed/Fri, from Canvey) and Barking (Tues/Thurs). The blinds show its other regular service, the college days only 800, Southend to Thurrock College. It is seen here at rest at Stephensons depot on June 18.

Richard Delahoy



Vehicles on hire

Following MOT expiry, Enviro 200 SN54 GRU was returned off hire. The hire was not as previously reported as a result of the accident to EU05 CZA, but because of late delivery of the new Dart. The Uno Dart R651 VBM has also been returned off hire.

Other vehicle news

It is expected that former Southend Fleetline MRJ 233W should enter service before the New Year

All coaches are being repainted in the new X livery, and all existing buses in plain white are scheduled to be painted into the current livery with green skirts and roofs.

■ EXCEL, Stansted

New vehicles

EU56 FTO Dennis Dart MPD / Plaxton

A further new Dart is expect this month, as are the MCV Evolutions. A second Ayats Bravo double-deck coach for airport transfer/rail replacement work is due soon. This will be the first such vehicle to DDA specification.

Acquired vehicles

K716 KGU Dennis Dart / Plaxton transferred from Stephensons.

Vehicles sold

M231 TBV Volvo B10M / Alexander transferred to Stephensons.

Acknowledgments to Lyn Watson

Colchester

Vehicles in

From Burtons main fleet

905 (W905 UJM) Volvo B10BLE/Alexander B44F

Vehicle Workings

As there is now only one Vario in the fleet, a Dart/East Lancs from 800/1/6 is normally used as a substitute on route 730/1.

On 21st September an incident at Middleborough caused diversions to routes 2, 5 and 8/ A via the gyratory around the old Royal London building, instead of using the Middleborough bus lane.

Unusual sightings

Sept 4th 511 on 8E (usually SLF/Pointer); 904 on 83 (usually Dart SLF).

8th 102 on 2.

12th 515 (2 branded) on 8.

13th 802 (8 branded) on 730 and 811 on 83 (now usually Low Floor).

14th 802 on 2; 811 on 83 and 515 on 8.

15th 515 on 8E.

18th 904 on 8.

19th 513 on 1.

20th 511 on 1.

21st 803 (8 branded) on 83.

22nd 903 on 83.

27th 907 (2 branded) on 8.

Other Vehicle News

Darts R60/70/80/90 BCL (512-515) are reverting to their original registrations, HX51 LRK/L/M/O. S50BCL (105) will likewise revert to its original registration (HX51 LRJ) but this has not occurred yet.

Trident 100 (T50 BCL) has yet to enter service at Colchester but on 22nd September entered the Magdalen Street paintshop. It is being converted to single door layout.

Omnidecker 102 has suffered rear accident damage and has been repaired by East Lincs. It had re-entered service on route 8/A by 5th October.

Dart SLF/Caetano 994 (X194 FOR) is now with Centrebus, Leicester.

Lynxes 352/3/6 were resold by Stephenson's to Wealden PSV who in turn resold them to O'Sullivan, Hospital, Eire. Lynx 357 had been broken up by Stephenson's by September 2006.

Other News

Burtons have closed their Newmarket depot, with operations transferring to Haverhill.

Peter Mansbridge with thanks to Richard Delahoy, John Podgorski



Stagecoach in Peterborough (Viscount Bus & Coach Co. Ltd.) took over operation of **Galloway European's** middle journey on Service 484 in both directions from Friday 1 September. This comprises the 0840 ex Walton-on-the-Naze and 1530 ex Victoria Coach Station, operating daily. The 1530 ex VCS is worked by the 1220 arrival from Lincoln (service 447) and stays overnight in Walton. The 0840 ex Walton-on-the-Naze then forms the 1330 to Grimsby ex VCS (service 448). The normal allocation is one of 53001-5 (GU52 WSX-Z/TA/C), Volvo B12Ms with Plaxton Paragon C49Ft bodies.

Acknowledgements to Graham Lord, national_express y-group

Stagecoach 53001 (GU52 WSX) in Church Road, Walton, on 6 October. *Wayne Bell*



DEALER STOCK MOVEMENTS

Vehicles in

	<i>from</i>
Arriva Midlands:	Scania H803 RWJ Olympian F255 YTJ, E161 OMD
Arriva TOLST:	M555
Arriva the Shires:	Dart N134 XND Volvo B10M ADZ 4731
Blue Triangle:	Dart P746 HND
Brighton and Hove:	Darts M65/8 CYJ, M95/6/7 WBW, L720 OMV
Brylaine Travel:	Lynx XAZ 1293
London General:	NV166/7/74/5/7/8/86
Damien Lowe:	RML2632
Master Travel:	M1396
Metroline:	DML520/1/2/3/4/8.
Mullaney's Coaches:	T986
Stagecoach East:	Mercedes 709's M340 LHP N316 XRP Olympian A547 HAC.
Trustline:	Dart P738 RYL, Metrobus M1392

Vehicles out

	<i>to</i>
	Olympian F253 YTJ: Alder Valley Travel , Alton, Hants.
	Metrobus A620 BCN: A & S Bone & Sons , Hook, Hants.
	Olympian G525 WJF: ASD Coaches , Strood, Medway
	Olympian H908 PTW: Brylaine , Boston, Lincs.
	RML2457: Carousel Buses , High Wycombe, Bucks.
	Olympian E500 LFL: Carterton Coaches , Witney, Oxon.
	NV175/78: Castle Buses , Liverpool
	Dominator H805 AHA: Cedar Coaches , Bedford.
Heddingham Bristol VR CJH 115V:	CSABA Transport , Sturovo, Slovakia
Fleetline UKV 473R:	The Double Decker Ltd , Dubai
Volvo D10M's D200/4 ELJ:	Dunn-Line , Nottingham
Dart K870 LGN:	Eastonways , Ramsgate, Kent
Dominators H259 MFX J267 SPR:	Fourways Coaches , Chelmsford
Olympians E914/5/7 DRD:	Peter Godward Coaches , Chelmsford
Lances L403/4 BFX:	Goomies Coaches , Watford, Herts.
Deltas J203 VHN and G508 XBL:	Harris Coaches , Blackwood, Wales
M1396:	Alec Head Coaches , Peterborough.
Hong Kong Olympian FS5383/4	now L735/6 SNO with Herberts Travel , Bedford
Deltas G502/4/9 XBL:	Islwyn Borough Transport
RML2588:	London Heritage Travel , Ely, Cambs.
NV166/167/177:	Mullaney's Coaches , Watford, Herts.
Dominator H265 MFX:	Nelsons , Wickford, Essex
Lynx K101 JMV:	Northumbria Coaches , Ashington.
Hong Kong Olympian EL7976	now G374 FWC with On-A-Mission Coaches , Soulbury, Beds.
NV174/186:	Peoples Bus , Liverpool
L225, M577:	PVS for scrap.
Olympian F621 MSL:	Quantock MS , Taunton, Somerset
Dublin Olympian 91-D-1079/1123	now H649 PVW/ J706 CEV with
Mercedes 709 N301XRP:	Rambler Coaches , Hastings
Darts P738 RYL, P746 HND:	Renown Coaches , Bexhill, East Sussex
Dublin Olympian 91-D-1078	now H610 PTW with Rodgers Coaches , Corby, Northants.





Ensignbus

BUGGYBUSBUGGYBUSBUGGYBUS

Timetable from
30th September
2006

55

Grays
Wharf Road
Argent Street
Grays

77

Tilbury
Chadwell St Mary
Grays
West Thurrock
Lakeside

83

Chadwell St Mary, Brentwood Road Estate
Soccketts Heath
Grays
West Thurrock
Lakeside

ROUTE 66

Chadwell St Mary, Brentwood Road Estate
Tilbury ASDA
Grays
West Thurrock
Lakeside

X80

Chadwell St Mary & Tilbury
(Sun & Public Holidays)
Grays (Sat & Sun)
Chafford Hundred
Lakeside
Bluewater

www.ensignbus.com

Ensignbus

The start of new routes 55 and 66, and the assumption of former Town & Country work has brought a variety of vehicles to the area:

above: ex-Centra Dart DP41 (W141 WGT) at Basildon on the only day Ensignbus operated the ex-T&C Sundays-only 100 (1 October).

top left: former Metrobus Dart L720 OMV on ex-T&C 374 in Grays.

bottom left: former Metroline London Northern Dart / Marshall Capital 738 (R738 VEG) with pink 'Route 66' branding, seen here in Tilbury.

Kevin Smith

At short notice, Ensignbus also took over all Town & Country's Thurrock tenders from 25 September until 1 October: routes 40, 98, 100 (Su), 374 and 380. From 2 October, short-term tenders (until December) were awarded for:

- 40 Chafford Hundred, Armada Gate & Grays Bus Stn (Mon-Fri peaks).
- 98 Chafford Hundred Station & Orsett Hospital via Grays (Mon-Fri).
- 380 Orsett Hospital & Tilbury Ferry (Sat only; Mon-Fri service provided by Clintona)

See Service Developments and 'A kerfuffle in Thurock' on earlier pages.

■ STRATFORD BLUE, Stratford-upon-Avon

Vehicle acquired: *from Arriva the Shires*

- 134 N134 XND Dennis Dart 9.8SDL3054/2769 Plaxton 9510HXN4431 B27F
New 9/1995 to Stuart, Dukinfield. This was last in the MK Metro fleet.

Vehicles withdrawn

- 698 ANZ 8798 } Dennis Dart / Carlyle Dartline (with Plaxton Pointer fronts): both to
- 699 ANZ 8799 } Ensign dealer stock.

■ ENSIGN WORKING MUSEUM, Purfleet

In response to a member's request, details of the Ensign Museum fleet are shown below.

TD161	KR 1728	Leyland TD1 / Short Bros.	new to Maidstone & District
T499	ELP 223	AEC 10T10 / LPTB	
TD895	HLJ 44	Bristol K6A / ECW	new to Hants & Dorset
RT8	FXT 183	AEC Regent III	
RT624	JXC 432	AEC Regent III / Weymann	
RT981	(JXN 9)	AEC Regent III / Weymann	now registered CSL 498
RT1239	KGK 708	AEC Regent III / Park Royal	
RT1431	JXC 194	AEC Regent III / Cravens	
RT1499	KGK 758	AEC Regent III / Cravens	
RT2911	MLL 658	AEC Regent III / Weymann	
RT3232	KYY 961	AEC Regent III / Weymann	
RT3775	NLE 882	AEC Regent III / Weymann	
RT4421	NXP 775	AEC Regent III / Weymann	
RLH61	MXX 261	AEC Regent III / Weymann	
RF315	MLL 952	AEC Regal IV / MCW	
RF603	NLE 603	AEC Regal IV / MCW	
RM25	VLT 25	AEC Routemaster / Park Royal	
RM1348	348 CLT	AEC Routemaster / Park Royal	
RM758	209 UXJ	AEC Routemaster / Park Royal	
RM1799	799 DYE	AEC Routemaster / Park Royal	
RCL2220	CUV 220C	AEC Routemaster / Park Royal	
RCL2226	CUV 226C	AEC Routemaster / Park Royal	
RML2405	JJD 405D	AEC Routemaster / Park Royal	
RMA58	NMY 655E	AEC Routemaster / Park Royal	
MB90	SMM 90F	AEC Swift / MCW	
DMO3	CRU 184C	Daimler Fleetline / MCW open-top	new to Bournemouth CT
DMS1002	GHV 2N	Daimler Fleetline / Park Royal	
DMS2646	THX 646S	Daimler Fleetline / Park Royal	
375	B115 ORU	MCW Metroliner open-top	new to Shamrock & Rambler
280	5280 NW	Leyland PD3/5 / Roe	new to Leeds CT
	BCJ 710B	Leyland Tiger Cub / Harrington Grenadier	new to Wye Valley Coaches
140	JTF 218F	Leyland PD2/27 / East Lancs	new to Darwen CT *
250	A250 SVW	Leyland Tiger / Duple Carribean	new to Southend CT

* on loan to East Lancs Coachbuilders

David Harman

with thanks to Ross Newman and Paul Dickson of Ensignbus, essex-buses y-group

20 years ago ~ rising to the challenge of deregulation

Twenty years ago, with de-regulation and privatisation about to fundamentally alter the face of the bus industry, the Group - then still called the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group - was privileged to be addressed by the then General Manager, Geoffrey Clarkson, in March 1986.

He spoke very frankly about the challenges facing the company and their plans to adapt to the new deregulated, competitive environment. Twenty years on, it makes fascinating reading. Some events worked out much as expected, others turned out very differently indeed! Therefore, to mark the 20th anniversary of deregulation, we are presenting the notes that Richard Delahoy made during the talk and wrote up immediately afterwards. They were not checked with Mr. Clarkson at the time or subsequently but are believed to be an accurate record of his talk; they are written in the present tense, as the talk was. Where necessary, Richard had added comments in square brackets to amplify what was said, but we have not made any other attempt to update or comment on events in the light of subsequent events.

INTRODUCTION

When Mr. Clarkson came to ENOC he had identified areas to improve - road staff efficiency (already largely achieved) and an overstaffing in administration jobs (now corrected with the loss of 56 posts). Then he re-organised the company - the old division into North and South was artificial and not sufficiently effective. Therefore he split the company into six smaller areas which can recognise the different market conditions in their own area, including the labour market [ie, he saw scope for different local terms & conditions in each area/depot]. That reorganisation is now complete. [The areas were Brentwood & Havering, Basildon & Thurrock, Southend & District, Chelmsford & Maldon, Braintree & Uttlesford and Colchester & Tendring].

CENTRAL WORKS

Mr. Clarkson mentioned the split off of

Central Works as a stand-alone company, EN Engineering Ltd. Annual tests are now the sole responsibility of depots, leaving CW to only do repaints, accident repairs, special one off jobs, eg reflooring VRs, and unit reconditioning. 45% of CW's work is now for outside bodies such as Southend Transport, Colchester Borough Transport, local hauliers, Cambus, LCBS, and even Ensign. He believes EN Engineering is one of the few NBC engineering companies which has a real chance of survival. There is also a fair chance that it will be set up as a regional stores for East Anglia and the South East, as is happening at Bristol.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

The final stage of his reorganisation has been on the travel agencies - money has been spent to improve facilities (eg at Colchester). He had bought two new travel agencies last year [in Manningtree and Hadleigh, Suffolk] and EN now have nine ABTA accredited branches.

SERVICE REGISTRATIONS

The company has registered 75% of present mileage but with dramatic cuts in evening/Sunday/ early morning services. The aim was to keep the commercial network as large as possible in area; in some cases EN have registered off peak services (which can be operated cheaply on a marginal cost basis) leaving the peak journeys to go out to tender - the thinking is that independents will not have surplus vehicles to quote for peak work, so EN will win the tenders. Some new facilities in new areas have been registered, but he was unwilling to give details.

Essex County Council tenders will be on a similar basis to the LRT ones, ie all revenue to the County [gross cost contracts], which he thought to be a good thing. His view was that Essex had achieved good value for money in the past with subsidies and the County staff were very professional.

As far as post-deregulation competition is

concerned, he felt a problem was trying to convince the crews that competition *would* happen [and therefore that they need to be more responsive to customer needs]. Staff meetings at garages had met with a variable response. He discussed the reason why the Southend co-ordination scheme would have to end, but felt that joint agreements would eventually come back, perhaps after minor changes in the law. The Southend Travelcard would however remain and he saw no legal objection to that, provided that the scheme could be open to any operator providing a service in the area who was prepared to put in the necessary effort - admin, sales outlets, etc (he thought that this might need a test case somewhere in the country to establish this point beyond doubt). He did not believe that there would be widespread competition between major operators.

He accepted that EN's publicity needed to be more "with it" and said there will be a "dramatic new initiative". Publicity would be tailored to local areas but with an overall EN image. Destination screens will be opened up to full depth on all vehicles by October [to display intermediate points as well as the ultimate destination].

PRIVATISATION

Clarkson confirmed that he was seeking to put together a management/staff buyout - currently they were consulting advisers. It could happen as soon as October, certainly by the year-end. He hinted that the price tag could be £10m. He said only two NBC companies might go private in the near future - and those would be for seasonal cash flow reasons. The fight to avoid the break up of EN into two separate companies was a "close run thing" and he had had to make a presentation to the Government's advisers. A split up would have been "a disaster". He confirmed that the logic behind keeping EN whole is to give them more muscle to take on London Transport. Overall he felt that no-one would make much money in 1986 or at least the first half of 1987, but then things might level out.

LONDON SERVICES

The rationale for tendering was that the

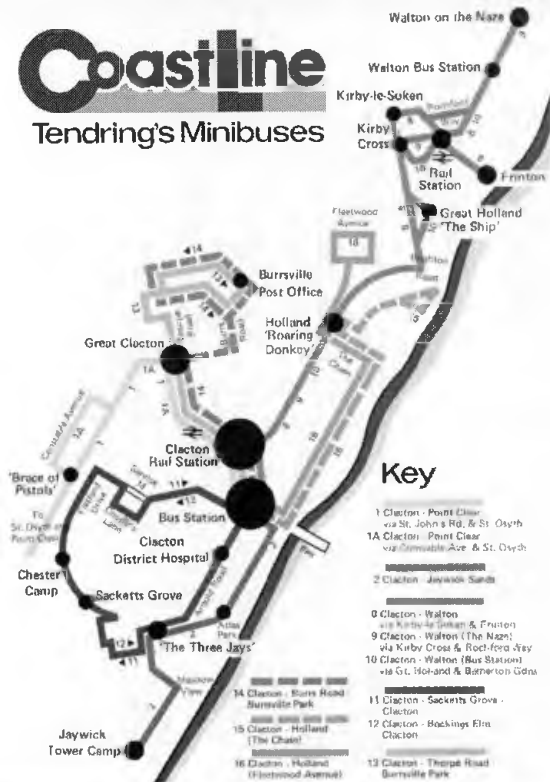
present area of operations is only Essex and a bit of Hertfordshire, and there is a need to make up for what will be lost in the traditional area. The W9 [Enfield to Muswell Hill] was only tendered on the basis that the Bedfords were automatics - they could not stand the pace otherwise! [These were Bedford YMQS with Wadham Stringer bodies, 1051-4/7]. On W9 there had been a 37% increase in traffic in the first six months of EN operation and in two months an additional bus will be allocated. They are also talking to LRT about increasing the frequency on 193 [Romford to Hornchurch - then operated by two VRs from Brentwood]. For the newly won 275 (Walthamstow to Barkingside), they may open an outstation in the Walthamstow area with 10 VRs of the W reg. batch; initially 2 may go to into Enfield for route learning. [Enfield depot - ED - was at the London Borough of Enfield's transport depot].

The Loughton routes [20, 167, 206, 242 and 275] will require another 20 buses in May/June, and he had learnt that day that EN had won another two north London routes [107, 259A] which would need 22 more buses. Thus by the year-end they would have 60 buses in London, all on 3-year contracts. [He did not specify where these routes will be operated from, but did say that they would *not* operate out of Loughton LT garage alongside LT crews; in fact, the base was established in Walthamstow at the London Borough of Waltham Forest's depot. See also notes below re garages].

The W9 livery will become the standard for all their London tendered operations; initially buses will carry a vinyl depicting London scenes between the decks, to be replaced when advertising contracts are obtained. He commented that advertising is money they cannot do without. The overall philosophy is to get established in the London suburbs now, in anticipation of deregulation there in say three years' time. They could then look at ideas such as developing routes off of the end of the 251. Other likely areas of expansion are Stansted (but they will not compete with Green Line on inter-airport links) and links with the

Coastline

Tendring's Minibuses



proposed Docklands Airport and Docklands Light Railway.

There will be no dramatic expansion in coaching - he does not plan to go in for ultra high specification coaches or continental work - but commuter services will be gradually developed/expanded.

TICKETING

The company will be completely converted to electronic ticket machines by October at a cost of circa £0.5m. Brentwood goes live on Sunday March 16; the trial installation at Bishops Stortford had just been replaced with better machines. He saw this investment as vital to obtain accurate data when negotiating on concessionary fare schemes,

MINIBUSES

He is not sold on them as the cure for all the industry's ills! Therefore EN will use them selectively. The new Clacton network is planned to start on 21/4/86 [it was 10/5/86 in practice, with 25 Mercedes L608D - 0200-24]. Clacton was chosen for five key reasons:

- it has the highest OAP ratio in population of any town in the area;
- the lowest ridership of any town that EN serves;
- short distances mean people walk when bus frequency is only 30 or 60 mins;
- it has a higher than average number of taxis; and
- it had been impossible to get full-sized buses into Frinton (minibuses have broken the "Frinton barrier" for first time).

Without minibuses, it was likely that *none* of the Clacton network would have been registered. They will use the brand name Coastline. "Silver Queen" was only discarded as an identity as the Chief Engineer was worried about the cost of obtaining a good silver livery finish. Minibus drivers will be on lower pay scales; existing drivers who transfer will get a one off payment.

**More buses, more often,
calling at more places.
Starting Saturday 10th May 1986**



**Clacton, Walton and Frinton's
new, exciting minibus service**

Other minibus locations will be: Brentwood town services; Witham town services; Chelmsford - a very small number. Possibly also services to rail stations at commuter times [Woodham Ferrers?]. Also a minibus service will start in Manningtree, hopefully in April, with one bus and two drivers; they will probably hire a Transit from Alder Valley for this. Overall he feels that minis will only survive in small towns: they won't succeed in the Leicester type environment.

VEHICLES

Mercedes were chosen for minibuses as they are capable of a 25 capacity, plus he thinks they are more robust than Transits and therefore will achieve a five year life. The cost was circa £450,000 for the 25. The 15 dual purpose Olympians currently in delivery [4007-21] will go to the longer stage routes such as the 11, 251 and 70. The three coach Olympians [4510-2] will not be exactly the same as the present ten - they will have the "Ebdons" style front and a revised rear. They are due in May and will go one each to Chelmsford, Braintree and Silver End to displace their existing ones to Southend and Basildon to complete the 400 conversion,

The four Tigers on order had just been delivered [1130-33] and are in the new standard Highwayman livery of yellow with green stripes. One will be entered in the Brighton coach rally.

To free up buses for London contracts, five secondhand Leyland Nationals have been bought from South Wales. Only intended for spares, two or three are quite good and may enter service [none did, in the event]. The company is currently negotiating with two NBC companies for 20 Nationals/VRs. The 1987 order is not yet fixed but will include up to 50 more Mercedes. Overall, the aim is to improve the specification of the fleet - "we are not in the cheap end of the market".

LIVERIES

The Chief Engineer says there are currently 18 different versions at present, not counting overall advertisements! City Commuter will stay; the W9 style will be adopted for London Regional Transport services; minibuses will be yellow/white with area

colour vinyls - Clacton in blue, Brentwood may be 'City' brown, etc; all coaches will be in new yellow/green Highwayman style except those in National Express or Holidays white. It will take two years to get the entire fleet into new colours.

WESTCLIFF MOTOR SERVICES

He confirmed that this company had been set up as a subsidiary of EN; its future use will depend on the competitive scene. It will enable EN to activate another company in a hurry if needed. There are no plans to use it yet but he has "ultimate intentions". Vehicles might appear in WMS livery but not necessarily in Southend!

DEPOTS

Two-thirds of the Southend garage site is sold to Sainsburys and must be vacated by October. Southend United had bid for old Prittlewell depot but could not offer new premises in return, so no sale could be agreed. Therefore the rebuilding of PL will commence in May to replace SD (the cost of c.£850,000 will be more than met from the sale of SD). His reply to a question was rather confusing but implied that at one stage both SD and PL could be in use at the same time, but only one would open on Sundays.

Wood Green is nominally sold to a DIY chain but if the sale fails through, it is likely to be reactivated for maintenance only. It will not become an operational base as they cannot find drivers of sufficient quality in that area. He would like to relocate Colchester if the right price can be obtained for the site. A South Woodham Ferrers outstation should start in two months with one bus in the Asda premises. Eventually the aim is to have two full size buses and one minibus there.

How different it all now looks with the benefit of 20 years' hindsight!

Richard Delahoy

EASTERN NATIONAL

Enthusiast's Guild



OVER THE WALL ~ (2)

25 May 1986: East Midland Motor Services 954 (C954 HWF). This was one of the batch of five Ford Transits with Dormobile van conversions that were delivered to East Midland but never placed in service by them. They were transferred to Eastern National in May 1986. The East Midland livery was NBC green and white; the Minibus fleetname style being similar to that used by the pioneer of NBC minibus usage - Devon General.

29 June 1986: Eastern National re-registered them in chassis number order as C601-4 NPU (from C951/3/2/5/4 HWF) and numbered them 0600-4. They were painted in the dark green and chrome yellow scheme with Hornchuch Hoppa and Eastern National Citybus fleetnames, for use on LRT route 193 from 2 August 1986.

David Harman / Photos: Arthur Nugent



PCV HOLDER ?

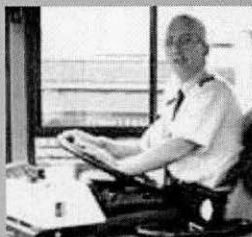
➤ Full and Part-Time Drivers required

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

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

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

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



➤ Full and Part-Time PCV Fitters

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



➤ Rail Controllers/Customer Service Assistants

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

For more details of any of the above vacancies, contact:

Stephensons: Bill Hiron 01702 541511

Excel: Graham Hayden 01279 681800



excel  **Stephensons**