

# Essex Bus Magazine

Current news and historical features

Issue 694      February 2022



**Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group**

[www.essexbus.org.uk](http://www.essexbus.org.uk)



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## 1970s/80s Livery vs 2020s Livery





**An Osborne special this month, more details on page 3.**

**Above:** Osborne's JKE 341E, a Leyland Atlantean PDR1/1 / Massey, H43/31F, which was new in 1967 to Maidstone Corporation Transport. It was acquired by Osborne's in 1977 from Rapson's, Bora. Photographed in Colchester Bus Station on 5 September 1981. **Robert Appleton**

**Front Cover:** Two of the Enviro 400s received from First West of England, 33414 & 33415, have entered service in as acquired orange 'Excel' livery. 33415, the first to do so, is seen in Chichester Road, Southend on route 25 on 18 January. **Richard Delahoy**

**Inside Front Cover: 1970s/80s and 2020s livery comparison**

**Top:** Last month in this spot we featured a photo of Pride liveried 33425, on loan from Basildon to Colchester for a few days at the start of the New Year, at Tollgate Retail Park on 6 January 2022. Two days after that, it returned to Basildon, replaced by heritage NBC liveried 33424. It is seen, also at Tollgate Retail Park, on 10 January, taken by the same photographer **Dave Arnold**.

**Bottom:** The first of the ex-First WoE Enviro 400s to be repainted was 33412, seen at Grays Bus Station on 26 January 2022, its first day in service with First Essex. **Below:** close up of the between decks branding for route 100. Both **Richard Delahoy**.



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Owen stocks a wide range of colour photos, please send an SAE for details.

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## Subscriptions

A calendar year subscription is £25. New members may join from any month, 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 £2.20 per month. For example, a member joining in March would pay 10 x £2.20, i.e., £22. Please contact Richard Delahoy, 272 Shoebury Road, Southend-on-Sea SS1 3TT  
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## Membership Records & Data Protection

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

## Reports, Articles & Photographs

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

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## Target Dates for EBM 695

|                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Reports to Sub-Editors      | <b>26 February</b>           |
| Sub-Editor drafts to Editor | <b>4 March</b>               |
| Dispatch by Printers        | on or before <b>14 March</b> |

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

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

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# Group Notices

## Happy 80th Birthday!

Congratulations and Happy Birthday to the Group's founder, Alan Osborne, who turns 80 this month. Alan founded the Eastern National Enthusiasts Group (now Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group) in 1963, with the first issue of the News Sheet, which over the years has evolved into the current Essex Bus Magazine (but still within the same numbering sequence) being published in January 1964. All these years later, Alan is still Secretary of the Group. In Alan's honour, this issue is an 'Osborne Special'. There is an article written by Alan on the Brentwood to Epping route, but with a twist, and, although no relation, a few features on Osborne's of Tollesbury, with one photo even featuring Osborne's in Osborne Street.



An awful lot of people have a lot to thank Alan for in setting up the Group to capture so much news and information, which was of benefit not only in the short term but provides a lot of history in the longer term, most of which would otherwise have probably been lost. Furthermore, many lifelong friendships have resulted from membership of the Group.

## And introducing 'Essex Bus Magazine Extra'

Thank you to all the members who have provided material for Essex Bus Magazine. The response has been so good that we now have quite a backlog. The Committee are pleased to announce that in order to see at least some of this material published at the earliest opportunity, Alan has very generously offered to pay for an extra edition of EBM as his birthday gift to the Group and its members. This will be published at the end of March, in between the March and April EBMs, in our usual 36-page format, and will only include historical features. This also allows some articles to be extended further than if they were bound by normal EBM space restraints. A sneak preview of the cover is right. Sincere thanks to Alan for his amazing generosity. EBM Extra will be delivered to members through the post in the normal way. We hope that you enjoy it.

If we can identify other funding sources, it may be possible to publish one or even two issues of 'Extra' a year, but no promises! Any suggestions for funding would be welcomed, please contact either Ian Ransom or Richard Delahoy in the first instance.

## Welcome to New Member

Peter Nathanail, Loughborough - 1192.

## The Running Card by Owen Woodliffe

The following events have been advertised.

Sunday 20 February: The event at the Epping-Ongar Railway, North Weald, advertised in EBMs 692/3 seems to have been changed to 'End of an Era - a tribute to the passing of crew operation and end of Gibson ticket machine', with a display at North Weald Station and rides into the Essex countryside. The 'From LT to LRT display, running day and dusk photo run' has been postponed until September. [www.eorailway.co.uk](http://www.eorailway.co.uk)

Saturday / Sunday 25/26 March: Discovery Tours, Acton LT Depot.

Saturday 26 March: Heritage Operation on Route 101 (Wanstead-North Woolwich).

Saturday 2 April: South East Bus Festival, Kent Showground, Detling, Kent.

Sunday 10 April: Spring Gathering, London Bus Museum Brooklands, KT13 0QU.

Sunday 17 April: Easter Transport Festival, Museum of Power, Maldon CM9 6QA.

Saturday / Sunday 23/24 April: Magnificent Motors, Eastbourne Sea Front.



(continued over)

## Group Notices (continued)

### The Running Card by Owen Woodliffe (continued)

Monday 1 May: King Alfred Running Day, Winchester.

Sunday 8 May: Bus & Coach Day at Mid Norfolk Railway, Dereham.

Sunday 8 May: London to Brighton HVC Run.

Saturday 14 May: Theydon Bois Transport Bazaar, 1100-1500, Village Hall CM16 7IG.

Sunday 15 May: Fenland Bus Festival, Whittlesea.

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

Please check before travelling.

### More Books for Disposal

Courtesy of member John Rugg, we have a few more books to give away (you just pay for the postage) - if interested, contact Richard Delahoy (details on page 2). One copy only of each, first come, first served:

A, B, C and M - Road Numbering Revealed, Capital Transport

A 90th Birthday Celebration - Looking back over the years, Omnibus Society

First Bus Handbook, 2015 edition, British Bus Publishing

Commemorative Event of the Chelmsford - London (Bow) Route, July 2018, Omnibus Society

The Westcliff on Sea Motor Services Ltd (Peter Clark), Omnibus Society

Westcliff on Sea Motor Services, an outline history (Alan Osborne), Farley Publications

Canvey Island's Early Buses, Peter Clark

Buses in Brentwood, a brief history, Omnibus Society

Pride & Joy, my amazing 25 year journey with Brighton & Hove buses, Roger French, Best Impressions/Classic Bus

The Heyday of the London Bus - 3, Ian Allan (includes rare City Coach Co colour photo)

We also have some large posters, available for collection from Southend only:

Framed print of a Moores 1930s single deck coach, size 21" x 17"

Framed Moores timetable poster for 1950, size 22" x 31"

Framed Eastern National coach services poster, colour, featuring an LS coach at Finchingfield, size 22" x 31"

Unframed (sellotaped to cardboard) picture of a Moores (National) steam bus, 1914, with staff names printed on, size 28" x 17".

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2383 (WNO 479) was the last of the 10 Eastern National KSW open-toppers to be sold- in 2010 she was bought for preservation by John Day. Personal circumstances meant the bus changed hands again on 29 January 2022 and she left Essex, being acquired by a consortium of Norfolk-based drivers / enthusiasts (with Essex connections) who intend to maintain 2383 in her current condition. The bus is seen at the village of Wrotham, Suffolk, en route to her new home. **Chris Stewart.** Open top buses were, of course, synonymous with a trip to Southend, as was another form of transport as featured on pages 30-31.



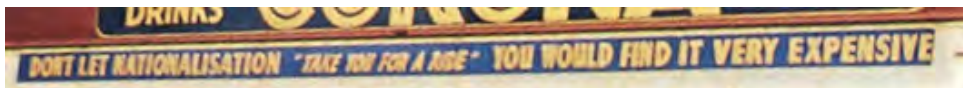
# Breaking News: City Coach Sell Out!

by Richard Delahoy

That's how our headline might have read 70 years ago had we been in existence in February 1952 to record how the previously staunchly independent City Coach Company had sold out to the State (British Transport Commission - BTC).

City's origins dated back to 1923 when William Mallender and Walter Crook set up the City Motor Omnibus Company Ltd to operate independent (some might say pirate) routes in central London in competition with the mighty LGOC. Compulsorily purchased by the newly formed London Transport in 1934, City's owners had meanwhile acquired Arthur Young's New Empress Saloons Ltd with its service from Wood Green to Southend and expanded into Essex by buying up various smaller operators around Brentwood and in Laindon. In 1935 they purchased Westcliff Motor Services' competing route also from Wood Green to Southend and the combined service - the "Main Road", running every 15 minutes - was the backbone of the City empire.

Post-war and in the light of the 1948 nationalisation of the railways and the voluntary sale to the State by the Tilling Group (owners of Eastern National and Westcliff amongst many other bus companies), City's owners joined the campaign to fight the perceived threat of a State take over and the mooted "area schemes", with publicity on bus sides:



Indeed, John Mallender wrote "There is no fun running buses any more! British Railways, London Transport and Eastern National are all state owned and could if so minded get us off the road at any time if they chose to".

So, with ageing owners (and Walter Crook had died in April 1950) and apparently no obvious successors, they decided to sell on their terms. Negotiations started in June 1951 but it was not until February 1952 that the transaction was concluded, with BTC assuming ownership on 17 February 1952, placing the operations under Westcliff's control, substantially increasing the size of that fleet as a consequence. BTC paid £340,655 (£11m today) and acquired 106 vehicles plus depots at Wood Green, Brentwood and Southend (Tylers Avenue - mentioned in Doug Brown's letter last month). Those vehicles comprised 23 double-deckers and 83 saloons, with six double-deckers and six coaches on order.

But it wasn't until over a year later that London Transport gave up any hopes of taking part of the operations, a letter dated 18 May 1953 from LTE to BTC saying "it is not desirable that London Transport should take any part of the operation of the former City Coach services". The "Main Road" went on to become Eastern National's 251 service and I'll explain how that number came about in an article in Essex Bus Magazine Extra.



Our picture - by **Frank Church** - shows LT10 (CUL 804), a 1936 Leyland Tiger TS7T rebodied by Heaven in 1948, passing D3 (NVX 173), a 1949 Daimler CVD6 with Roberts body, at The Castle Hotel, Wickford. Taken in 1953, we think, the buses wear City brown & cream colours but applied in Tilling style.

# Braintree Bus Interchange Update

by Nigel Turner

Further to last month's article about the 2 January re-opening of Braintree Bus Park, now known as the Bus Interchange, some follow up observations.

During the first week, Roger French, ex M&D of Brighton & Hove visited, his observations can be viewed at [busandtrainuser.com](http://busandtrainuser.com).

In mid-January, small stand numbers were fitted on poles and timetable cases were fitted to the rear of stands 1 to 4. In the w/c 30 January departure time posters were put up on the stands and on 4 February, A.K. Hobson Ltd were erecting passenger information screens, one of which was working the next day. The official layover area is still occupied by the builders so spare buses are parked on Manor Street or stand 9.

As mentioned in EBM 693, services were allocated to stands according to the route taken out of town by the service. This took no account of clashes between services needing the same stand at the same time. The biggest issue is that Stephensons service 38 occupies stand 2 between 38 and 50 minutes past the hour but service 30 also needs it between 40 and 43 minutes past the hour. It would be quite simple to rearrange the stands to correct this and other issues but I'm not holding my breath. Indeed, a revised stand allocation was issued by ECC on 17 January but there weren't any changes, apart from route 900 (which as reported last month no longer runs and so shouldn't have appeared on the map of services per stand) was no longer included. Despite this correction there was still one obvious error in that route 42B was shown as Daily, it used to be but is now Sundays only.

Probably because they are on a large rota, First Essex drivers seem to be having the most problems with knowing which stand to use. I recently saw a 70 bound for Chelmsford which should have used Stand 5 but actually used Stand 8 to unload then moved to Stand 1 to load!

Richard Delahoy recorded in EBM 693 that he wasn't impressed by the safety aspect of the Interchange. Having considered this, I think the issue is that most passengers walk to and from the town centre and therefore the stands should have been on the west of the site rather than the east.

As reported last month, buses have to reverse off the stands but there isn't a great deal of room to manoeuvre. The driver of the 0842 Chelmsford service 70 to Colchester on Saturday 15 January discovered this the hard way. On reversing off Stand 1, one rear wheel went over the kerb on to fresh soil by the Travelodge and got stuck, thus completely blocked the exit for the next two hours, twenty minutes. Other buses consequently had fun and games, having to turn in the Interchange and leave by the entrance. As far as I could see, nobody from First Essex came to support the driver but eventually DAF recovery truck LJ21 TOW of LJ Transportation appeared and freed the bus, Volvo B7TL 32483.

There was some debate as to whether buses are allowed to exit westwards (turning right, against the traffic flow) along Victoria Street to access the bus gate that then allows them to go down Fairfield Road to South Street. The arrow pointing in the right hand direction on the two-way traffic road sign has been covered up with sticky tape, but there is not a one way sign at the Fairfield Road entrance to Victoria Street - there is one in Victoria Street just past the Interchange which implies that the road is two way between the Fairfield Road junction and the Interchange. When I was there on 29 January, all buses were turning left but whether that was drivers being cautious or official instructions, I don't know. The alternative for Chelmsford bound (and others) vehicles is to exit eastwards then travel down Railway Street to access South Street. This adds more distance and two extra sets of traffic lights. If buses aren't allowed to exit westwards, then the bus gate (only new as recently as 2020) is rendered useless.

**David Moth** adds to this: "I have seen a Stephensons bus turn right. It may easier for them as virtually all their services in Braintree are operated by Enviro 200s. At least one Arriva driver does turn right, but the majority turn left, so it is probably down to the individual driver. A comment made on one of my pictures on Flickr does make me wonder if maybe First Essex have stipulated that drivers must turn left until further notice. I have yet to see a First Essex or Hedingham bus turn right when leaving."

Right: Essex Airlink liveried 36841 on route 70 to Chelmsford indicating to turn left rather than right exiting Braintree Bus Interchange on 11 January 2022. **David Moth**



## Other Operators

by Roger A Smith

### APT Coaches, Rayleigh

KX61 JVO, a Volvo B9R with Plaxton C53F body, has gone to Rowlands and Owen Bodfordd on the Isle of Anglesey.

### Don, Great Dunmow

Alexander H85F bodied Leyland Olympian H816 CBP went to Southern Coach Lines, Newbury, Berkshire in November 2021.

With thanks to the PSV Circle.

## Service Revisions

by Paul Harvey

### 4 January 2022

**Ensignbus** have introduced minor changes to services

22 Aveley to Grays (D) the Mon to Fri journeys 0817 from Aveley to Grays & 0929 Grays to Lakeside withdrawn.

44 Lakeside to Grays (D) the 1848 journey Mon to Fri from Grays to Purfleet withdrawn.

77 Aveley to Tilbury Adsa (M-S) additional journey 0655 Mon to Fri introduced from Aveley to Tilbury Civic Square.

Z1 Aveley to Tilbury Amazon (D) the 1905 journey from Amazon advanced by 10 mins.

**Go Ahead Chambers & Heddingham** services 21, 80 & 89X revised route and timetable to serve the new Braintree Transport Interchange.

### 17 January

570 Great Dunmow to Colchester (Sch) **First Essex** revision to route and timetable.

### 23 January

7 Saffron Walden to Cambridge (M-S) Stagecoach Cambridge revised timetable operating half hourly between Cambridge and Sawston with hourly extension to & from Saffron Walden.

### 6 March

700/701 Chelmsford Chelmer Valley P&R to Sandon P&R (M-S) **First Essex** Park & Ride services withdrawn.

### 7 March

701 Chelmsford to Sandon P&R (M-S) / 702 Chelmsford to Chelmer Valley P&R (M-S) **Vectare** new Park & Ride services replacing First Essex 700 & 701.

### 27 March

352 Halstead to Chelmsford (M-S) **Go Ahead Heddingham** evening contract service withdrawn.

Bus operators are continuing to suffer from driver shortages including the Omicron variant of Coronavirus resulting in daily service cancellations. The wearing of face coverings on public transport was eased in England from 27 January.

With thanks to Omnibus Society (Eastern/Southern Branch Bulletins) & LOTS

Below: see page 10.

but which ticket  
will I need?

Now you don't have to decide.

Tap & Cap  
in Chelmsford

The fleet changes at Southend and Colchester following the cascade from Guildford proved to be far more protracted than we had expected and indeed were still incomplete at the time of writing. We give below dates of entry to service of the "new" vehicles and approximate withdrawal dates for the buses being replaced.

## **Colchester**

### **Acquired Vehicles**

Further news on the cascade of buses from Guildford is as follows:

To service (all January): 3993 6th; 4044 12th; 4047 13th; 4052 4th; 4053 29th. 3990-2 had not entered service at the time of writing.

### **Withdrawn Vehicles**

1562 last ran on Christmas Eve and was removed to Southend for sale on 8 January. 3418 was withdrawn on 26 Jan. 3415/7/20/1 remained in service at the time of writing.

Two unidentified Darts were removed from store at Southend by dealers on 31 January, probably for scrap.

### **New Park & Ride Fleet**

4125 was returned to Southend on 9 January to have its lettering added. 4123 then arrived at Southend and was used, exceptionally, as a staff shuttle on 13 January. 4125 was likewise used on 19 January, see photo opposite. We believe the contract renewal date is early March so would expect the new fleet to be in service by then in order to comply with the contract conditions.

### **Other Vehicle News**

Two of the Mercedes Sprinter minibuses used for crew shuttles were swapped over in mid-January, with 1009 now at Colchester and 1014 at Southend.

## **Southend**

### **Acquired Vehicles**

Further news on the cascade of buses from Guildford is as follows:

To service (all January except where stated): 4201 26th; 4202 2 Feb; 4204 31st, 4206 17th; 4207 11th; 4210 12th; 4211 20th. 4212 had not entered service at the time of writing.

A further Mercedes Sprinter shuttle at Southend is 1019, BF67 WGV, in the current Arriva livery and first noted in use on 31 January. It is a temporary replacement for the plain white one, 1000, BT66 UAL, which was damaged after a First Essex bus reversed into it in Southend Travel Centre.

### **Withdrawn Vehicles**

3817/9, 3963/4/5 - date not known; 3822 - 27 Jan and collected by Ensignbus the next day; 3818 - collected on 3 Feb by a group of drivers from Kent who are planning to preserve it (back in Fastrack livery); 3960 - 2 Feb. 3935 remained in service at the time of writing. 3963 and one unidentified Colchester Dart were removed by a dealer on 24 January, probably for scrap.

### **Other Vehicle News**

See under Colchester notes for use of Colchester Park & Ride buses on staff shuttles in Southend and the swap of minibuses 1009 & 1014.

3816, the Volvo B7RLE in Southend Transport livery, remains in service and it appears that the plan to convert it to a trainer (for which parts were delivered to Southend last year) has fallen through.

Correcting last month's photo caption on page 22 (top), the shot of 4206 showing the "Farewell Arriva Guildford" message was actually taken on arrival in Southend, not on departure from Guildford.

## **Harlow**

### **Acquired / Renumbered Vehicle**

Further to EBM 693, Optare Versa V1100 2990, YJ09 MKD acquired from High Wycombe in December 2021, was renumbered 4180 on 30 January, to bring it into the same number sequence as the other Versas.

### **Vehicles on Loan**

3609 and 3613, KE55 GVZ / CVH, both Arriva the Shires Scania L94UB / Wrightbus Solars, the former seen working from Harlow between 12 and 25 January 2022 and the latter between 12th and 19th. 3609 was then working from Ware on 27th & 28th.

Optare Versa 4185 from Stevenage was seen in use at Harlow on 12th and 13th.

Optare Versa V1100 2401, YJ57 EKF, is another vehicle to be acquired by Arriva Herts & Essex from Guildford, following the closure of that depot in December last year. However, at present it seems to be allocated to Ware, it was on Ware services on up to and including 26 January and then again on 31st. In between, it was on Harlow routes 509 on 27th and 59 the next day.

#### Withdrawn Vehicles

3815/26/74 were noted at Guildford on 19 December 2021. They were in course of sale to Hardwick's, so it seems probable that they were taken to Guildford as outward crew ferries for drivers taking back cascaded vehicles, and left there for convenience of onward collection. They had been in service right up to moving to Guildford, 3815 last used on 18th and the other two on 17th.

With thanks to Matthew Evans, Keith Sadler (who has just celebrated 44 years continuous service since first joining Colchester Corporation Transport as a conductor - congratulations Keith! Can any other EBM reader/contributor beat that record?), John Card, Adam Kelleher, the M&D & East Kent Bus Club and Bus Lists on the Web.

Below: The upgrading of the Colchester Park & Ride fleet to newer buses (to meet the renewal contract specification) has been very protracted and they were still not in service at Colchester as we went to press. The Enviro 200 MMCs have come from Gillingham and have been repainted black and fitted with air-conditioning but still lack the vinyls for route branding. Here, 4125, SN67 WUP, was in use as a staff shuttle at Southend on 19 January 2022 (or rather, at the time of the picture, had just been jump started after it had failed in the travel centre whilst on shuttle work!). **Richard Delahoy**



And finally, an advert that would most certainly **not** be permitted today - even if conductors were reintroduced onto the buses!

**WE ARE NOW ENGAGING YOUNG LADIES**  
Aged 18 or over, and single, as  
**CONDUCTORS**  
Ask for details at our Bus Garage, 87 London Road, Southend

### Acquired Vehicles

Correction to EBM 693, 33411, 33416 and 33418 were delivered to Basildon on 9 January 2022, not late December 2021. This also affects the fleet summary on pages 26-27 of last month's issue.

33415 was the first of the recently acquired ex-First West of England Enviro 400s to enter service, on school route 561 on 11 January, still in acquired orange 'Excel' livery (photo on front cover). 33414 followed on 24 January, on route 100, also still in orange. 33412, the first to be repainted, see below, entered service, also on route 100, on 26th.

### Allocation Changes

BN-Basildon; CF-Chelmsford; CR-Colchester; HH-Hadleigh; FG-First Group cascade (to / from another First company); oos-out of service, sh-driver shuttle.

### Period 10 2021/22 (26 December - 22 January)

32087 CR (oos)-CR, 32540 BN-BN (oos), 32547 CR (oos)-CR, 32673 CR (oos)-CR, 33095 HH (oos)-Disposal, 33415 BN (oos)-BN, 33561 BN-BN (oos), 37017 CR-CR (oos), 42933 CF-CR(sh), 42939 CF-CF (oos), 66794 CF-CR, 66813 CR-CF, 67904 BN (oos)-BN

42933 has been in use as a driver shuttle at Colchester. Its last day in passenger service at Chelmsford was 13 January.

### Disposals

33095 January 2022.

Further to EBM 692, 41521 was collected from Quayside depot Colchester by its new owner on 30 January 2022..... and moved all of 50 yards to the yard next door! Current plans are for it to be used as a source of spares for preserved sister 41522.

### Tap & Cap

On Saturday 29 January 'tap&cap' was introduced on all services within the Chelmsford fare zone except for X10, X30 and Park & Ride. Passengers can now just tap their contactless cards on the card reader, allowing a more flexible approach to paying for bus travel and ensuring people never pay for more than they need. The first bus ride on the first day of travel in a week will cost £2.50 (reduced from a previous single fare of £3.20), second is £1.50, third and fourth are £1 each and any subsequent journeys that day will not be charged, so the daily fare is capped at £6. In any week, the first day of travel is limited to £6, then £5 each for the next three days, and £1 each for the final three days, to give a weekly cap of £24. More details in the table below. A week renews each Monday, not from the first day of travel.

Linked to this, return tickets are no longer available within just the Chelmsford fare zone. Daily tickets can still be purchased from the driver using cash (or contactless) but the price has increased from £5 to £6 to match the cost of the first day of travel cap, so if traveling more than one day a week are not a good option. A weekly ticket at £24 and a four-week ticket at £80 can still be purchased, but only through the app. Again, there is no advantage to buying the former as opposed to using tap&cap. The special £1 fare within only the City Centre zone remains. Similar arrangements are in place for child fares. More details of the scheme are available on the First Essex website.

| Tap each time you get on the bus...      | Day 1                            | Day 2                                  | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5                                  | Day 6 | Day 7 |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------|-------|----------------------------------------|-------|-------|
|                                          | ...you'll never pay more than £6 | ...you'll never pay more than £5 a day |       |       | ...you'll never pay more than £1 a day |       |       |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> tap                      | £2.50                            | £2.50                                  | £2.50 | £2.50 | £1                                     | £1    | £1    |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> tap                      | £1.50                            | £1.50                                  | £1.50 | £1.50 | FREE                                   |       |       |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> tap                      | £1                               | £1                                     | £1    | £1    |                                        |       |       |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> tap                      | £1                               | FREE                                   |       |       |                                        |       |       |
| any further taps that day                | FREE                             |                                        |       |       |                                        |       |       |
| ...you'll never pay more than £24 a week |                                  |                                        |       |       |                                        |       |       |

## Repaints

33412 is the first double-decker to be repainted into normal 'Essex Bus' livery, seen at Mardens on 12 January 2022. Like poppy liveried 32673, illustrated in EBM 691, it only has two shades of green; the mid-shade, used on the majority of the front on the six single-deckers to have received this livery, has not been used. Instead the lighter-shade continues to the front, but with a darker-shade 'wedge' at the top front. The darker-shade is, like on single-deckers, also used at the back, and on the dash under the windscreen. The lighter shade is also on the top half of the rear. As on the single-deckers, there are three thin yellow dividing lines, and 'Essex Bus' fleet names. Branding for route 100 (between Basildon and Lakeside only) is on the between decks panels. 33413 was the next to be done, delivered from Mardens to Basildon on 28 January. However, this does have the third shade of green, the wedge at the top front which is dark-shade on 33412 is mid-shade on 33413. Comparison photos of the two versions are on page 13 and other photos of 33412 are on the inside front cover, pages 1 & 14 and rear cover.

## Area News & Workings

### Colchester

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CR except where stated. All dates January 2022 except where stated.)

32669 had its Halfords overall advert removed on 16 January and is now back in Midland two-tone blue.

Further to EBM 693, on loan 33424's last day at service at Colchester was on 21 January when it was on school route 17. It was back in use at Basildon, on route 25, on 26th.

Out of use 30564 and 32485 have both been moved from Quayside depot (Colchester) to Westway (Chelmsford), dumped at the front next to each other and being stripped for spares. 32485 has had many internal parts removed.

News of the Harwich routes (4 - 31 January 2022).

20 double-deckers worked on 103/104 during this period, the two remaining Volvo B7TL / Alexander ALX400s (32068 & 32087), 16 Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus and two Volvo B9TL / Wrightbus (37138 & 37140). Most of these were on 0920 Mistley - Colchester 103, but there was a welcome increase of double-deckers working through to Harwich on 104, in date order: 37042 (4th and 31st), 37138 (8th, unusual for a Saturday), 37020 (10th), 37010 (13th), 37006 (14th), 37037 (21st), 37062 (24th), 37004 (26th) and 37035 (27th).

All 12 Volvo B7RLEs on the CR allocation, including 66794 recently transferred from CF, and all 12 ADL Enviro 300s on the CR allocation worked on 102/103/104 during January, but only three StreetLites did (63333, 63335 and 63337). In addition, Volvo B7RLE 66811 operated on 31st, its first day in service at CR after loan or transfer (not yet known which) from CF. The normal double-deck 0920 Mistley - Colchester 103 was operated three times by single-deckers, 66801 on 11th, 67737 on 12th and 67735 on 31st.

Clacton routes. 74B has seen a lot more single-deckers in the last month. 32068 (20th), 32530 (21st), 32531 (10th), 33424 (13th, on loan from Basildon, marking a return of NBC livery to Clacton), 37006 (12th, 25th), 37007 (14th), 37035 (11th), 37036 (22nd), 37037 (18th, 31st), 37140 (17th), 63334 (19th), 66794 (27th), 66803 (5 Feb), 66804 (29th), 66816 (15th, 26th), 66828 (24th), 66971 (2 Feb), 67736 (28th), 67739 (4 Feb).

76 (in date order): 67756 & 67779 (both 16th), 32628 (23rd), 37034 (30th), 66971 & 67805 (both 6 Feb).

Right: One of only two ALX400 bodied Volvo B7TLs left in service at Colchester, the other being fellow ex-Leicester 32087, 32068 is seen on route 61 at Wivenhoe Station on 11 January 2022.

**David Mott**

### Chelmsford

(All vehicles listed below allocated to CF All dates January 2022 except where stated.)

Out of service 42927 and 42939 are being stripped for spares. As noted above, they have been joined at Westway by 30564 and 32485 from Colchester. The Westway paint shop has closed down. The last bus to be repainted there was 69429 into the short lived white based Urban 2 livery in October 2020 (see EBN 679). Since then, green 'Essex Bus' repaints have all been done at Mardens.



Unusual / Interesting workings. X10: 42945 (1 Feb), 44081 (10th), 69024 (1 Feb). X30: Blue 67161 (1 Feb), 67171 (12th, 13th), 67164 (16th, 17th), P&R liveried 67189 (2 Feb, see photo next page).

Essex Airlink Scania's often appear on school route 620.

32482 on 71X (27th) and reported on 57 (29th).

44005 on driver training (2 Feb).

44900 on 70A (17th).

66830 a long vehicle on 40 (22nd).

DS66848 on driver training in South Woodham Ferrers (27th).

67169 on Park & Ride (18th).

Black Park & Ride Enviro 200 MMCs continued on school route S33 throughout January and thus also on Tuesdays only 35 as follows: 67189 (18th), 67190 (11th), 67194 (1 Feb), 67196 (25th).

### Wandering Park & Ride Vehicles

The photo of 67189, top right, unusual on route X30 on 2 February 2022, was taken by **David Edwards** from the front passenger's seat of the driver shuttle minibus.

Right: 67194 is now back at Chelmsford after nearly three months away, first at Hadleigh and then at Basildon. It is seen on route 8 at Basildon Bus Station on 18 January 2022. **William Morrison**

With the news on page 7 that First Essex have lost the Chelmsford P&R contracts it remains to be seen what these vehicles will be used on after 5 March.



### Basildon & Hadleigh

(All vehicles listed below allocated to BN except where stated. All dates January 2022 except where stated.)

47655 has had its Christmas wrap removed (by 21 January).

Route 9 continues to be mainly Enviro 400 operated, in the last month there have been one or two StreetLites each day, although on 21st it was all double-deck operated. Also Mini-Enviros 44908 (1 & 4 Feb) & 44909 (31st).

On 14 January, three non-Enviro double-deckers were very unusual on the same day, Volvo / Geminis 32526 & 32539 and Trident / President 33086. Other non-Enviro double deckers reported have been 32249 (10th, 12th, 20th, 24th), 32260 (11th, 22nd), 32526 (15th, 21st, 24th, 1 & 3 Feb), 32539 (17th, 18th, 28th), 33086 (29th).

Routes 94/A continued to be mainly operated by either two StreetLites or one plus a mini-Enviro 200. On 18 January 33555 replaced 44909 on the 0900 service from Basildon, but then 44909 was back on the 1500 from Basildon. Other double deckers: 32526 (29th), 33553 (15th), 33557 (22nd, 4 Feb), 33558 (1 Feb), 33570 (5 Feb).

Double-deckers on route 100 (Basildon to Lakeside): 32539 (unusual Volvo / Gemini, 21st), 33414 (24th), 33507 (15th), 33544 (11th, 12th, 13th), 33553 (22nd), 33557 (20th), 33558 (Sunday 23rd), 33567 (17th), plus from 26th, branded 33412 each day except at weekends. On Saturday 29th, 33412 was on 25.

Other Unusual / Interesting workings. Orange 33414 on school route 625 (1 Feb). 44908 on 251 (30th). HH47527 on school route 822 (11th). 47658 (4 Feb), 67901 (20th), 69901 (21st), 69906 (14th), 69916 (19th), 69918 (24th) on school route 625. HH69515 on school route 827 (25th). HH69517 on 27 (31st). 69919 on school route 561 (21st).

With thanks to Robert Appleton, Stephen Barham, Dale Bell, Jon Collins, Richard Delahoy, Robert Downton, David Edwards, Richard Lewis, John Lidstone, William Morrison, Paul Paske, John Podgorski, Derek Stebbing, Chris Stewart, Rob Webb, Robert West, First Essex, Bustimes, Facebook, Essex Buses Google group and Terminus.

## Recently Acquired Enviro 400s

33412 was the first of the Enviro 400s acquired from First West of England for the Basildon to Lakeside section of route 100 to be repainted. It is seen at Mardens on 12 January 2022.



33413 was the second of the batch to be repainted, but it differs from 33412 in having a mid-shade of green 'wedge' at the front upper deck instead of a dark-shade. Also at Mardens, on 28 January. Later that day it was seen parked in Basildon Depot yard. This version of the livery is to become the standard one.



A rear, nearside view of 33412, again at Mardens on 12 January, showing the light green used to contrast with the dark green on the back.



All John G Lidstone

Upstairs on 33412 on route 100 on 26 January, illustrating the non-corporate interior and the luxury leather seats in these vehicles. Seat pitch is very generous and comfortable but inside is a bit tatty and in need to a decent deep clean on these 15 year old vehicles. Between the seats, just visible at the lower left of the photo, is an audio entertainment panel.

**Richard Delahoy**



## STEPHENSONS NIBS buses by Richard Delahoy

### Fleet

Solo 330 (MX59 AWF) from the NIBS fleet is currently being converted to become a second NHS vaccination bus, to service locations which the larger Scania can't reach. Ironically, it was already in a blue & white livery! This was from its time with Galloway. It is seen below on route 21 in Brentwood High Street on 31 December 2020. **Adam Kelleher**

Enviro 200 415 (LK07 BEI), also from NIBS, has now been sold to a buyer in the Nottingham area.

News of the once numerous Dennis Darts is that 403/4 (EU03 CFX/Y) are now in the reserve fleet and 406 (SN56 AYH) is on hire to Lodges Coaches wef from 10 January 2022, meaning that only two Darts remain in service - 407 (EU07 FRN) and 460 (EU05 CZA), both at Haverhill depot.

### Operations

The Frating operating centre has now been authorised and Stephensons took over full operation of the former New Horizon school services from 31 January (last month's magazine refers). Both NIBS 706 (P054 OOD), reported last month, and 705 (P054 ADV) - both Volvo B7TL / East Lancs - are now working from Frating. The two New Horizon Volvo B7RLE single-deckers (HF54 HGD/Y) have not been used.

With thanks to the companies.



## Acquired Vehicles

Further to EBM 693 more Volvo B9TLs confirmed at Clacton depot are:

LX59 DCV Volvo B9TL Wright Eclipse Gemini 2, ex Go Ahead London WVL328

LX59 DCZ Volvo B9TL Wright Eclipse Gemini 2, ex Go Ahead London WVL328

At CN end of December 2021 and stored there awaiting single door conversion and repaint before entering service later in 2022.

Originally supplied to London Central December 2009 in H39/23D layout.

## Withdrawn Vehicle

291 EU06 KCX long term off road, now being stripped for spares.

## Significant Allocations

256 CN - KN by 4 January 2022 back to CN by 19 January

261 HD - KN by 4 January 2022

262 KN - CN by 13 January 2022

266 KN - CN by 18 January 2022

294 KN - CN by 8 January 2022

513 HD - KN by 11 January 2022

911 CN - KN by 29 December 2021

## Fleet News

609, SN61 CZZ, passed through Clacton depot being a Konectbus repaint. 642, LK08 FLN, started on Clacton town services by 5 January 2022 and was spotted on X76 duties in Colchester by 12th and sister 641, LK08 FLL, also by 14 January. These two vehicles along with 643, LK08 FLP, were new to First Capital in the DN335xx series but passed to Go Ahead as EN class when Northumberland Park depot was sold by First in March 2012 on the way to First closing operations in London by September 2013. First Essex also has ex-London vehicles from this number series, although they were acquired via First Leicester, not directly from London. These buses are shorter wheelbase chassis than the original new Hedingham purchases and the Konectbus recent transfers. The ex EN class vehicles seated 67 in London whereas the Hedingham new purchases seated 80. The EN vehicles thus have First interiors with corporate purple and First seat moquette. At least 641 & 642 worked for Ensignbus out of Bexleyheath garage late 2020 on rail replacement and Amazon contracts. More information on these operations would be appreciated to share in a future report. The vehicles seemed to revert to GAL use in 2021 until withdrawn and transferred to Hedingham. Additionally, two further examples, one believed to be native to London General and another EN class, are joining Konectbus as dedicated dual door Park & Ride buses for Costessey Park & Ride which is currently operated by Volvo B7TL / Wrightbus Geminis.

With thanks to John Podgorski, Robert Appleton & the Hedingham website.

Right: Seen on a foggy morning 642, LK08 FLN, arriving at Colchester Bus Station on service 74 from Clacton (the 1115 arrival) to then complete a circuit of Colchester town centre to take up the X76 service returning to Clacton departing Head Street at 1119. The neat single door conversion can be seen in this view taken on 15 January 2022.

Mark Lloyd





## Dealer Stock Movements January 2022

### Vehicles In

From **Arriva Southern Counties**: Volvo B7RLEs GN07 AVF/K/M

From **First West of England**: Volvo B7TLs LK53 LYR/Z/Y/LZA-C

From **Go Ahead London**: Enviro 200s YX61 FZT, LX09 AZG/J/L/AYJ, SN57 DWG, Volvo B9TLs LX59 DAA/O/U/DBO/V/Z

From **Lothian Buses**: Volvo B9TLs SN59 BGK/O/V/X-Z/BHA/D-F

From **Metrolink**: Volvo B9TLs LK59 CWR/CXP

From **Stantons of Stoke**: Scania YN53 CFE/RYZ

### Vehicles Out

**Chalkwell, Sittingbourne**: Enviro 400 LJ09 CAV

**Coastliner Buses, Blackpool**: Enviro 400s LJ09 CAE/CCD

**Connexions Buses, Harrogate**: Scania LX59 CRJ, YN56 FBV

**Finches Coaches, Wigan**: Enviro 400 LJ09 CCU

**First South West**: Volvo B9TL LX60 DXB

**Galleon Travel, Roydon, Essex**: Enviro 200s LX07 BXV/BYA, SN57 DWV/Z, Solo MV07 DWM - see next page.

**Greenslades Coaches, Exeter**: Volvo B7TL LK53 LZA

**Manchester Tours**: Enviro 400 LX08 DXP - converted to half open top

**Redfern Travel, Mansfield**: Scania YN53 CFE/RYZ

**Stantons of Stoke**: Volvo B9TLs SN09 CUC/G

**Sussex Coaches, Steyning, Sussex**: Volvo B7TL LK53 LZM

**VG Autos, Leicester**: Volvo B7RLEs SN04 NHU/Y/NJE

**York Pullman**: Volvo B9TLs SN09 BHD-F

### To Shelton Motors for scrap

Trident LV52 HFW, Volvo B7TL W543 WGH, Enviro 200 SN57 DWG

## Ensignbus Fleet

### Disposal

Correction to EBM 693, it was Enviro 200 790, LJ56 ONN, that passed to Aintree Coaches, not 792, LJ56 ONS.

With thanks to Ross Newman.

Below: Enviro 200 MMC 706, YY18 THN, on route 88 at Grays Bus Station on 26 January 2022. **Richard Delahoy**



### Acquired Vehicles

LX07 BXV Alexander Dennis Enviro 200, B29D, new to London General SE12 03/07

LX07 BYA Alexander Dennis Enviro 200, B29D, new to London General SE16 03/07

SN57 DWV Alexander Dennis Enviro 200, B32D, new to Blue Triangle SE29 10/07

SN57 DWZ Alexander Dennis Enviro 200, B32D, new to Blue Triangle SE33 10/07

Acquired from Ensignbus January 2022, ex Go-Ahead London, same fleet numbers.

BYA was seen in Harlow Bus Station on 29 January in use as a driver shuttle, still in full Go-Ahead livery and legal lettering. DWV entered service on 4 February on Debden Circular 542/A still in all over red, but with fleet names and TfL roundel removed, blinds not in use, route number in windscreen.

MV07 DWM Optare Solo M880SL, B28F, new to Bluebird Coaches 10 08/07

Acquired from Ensignbus January 2022, ex Go-Ahead Salisbury Reds (although in blue livery from its time with Damory Coaches). It was new as T10 BHN. It is seen on the left in the line-up below.

### Re-registration and Repaints

MetroDecker YJ21 FDD was seen on 7 December 2021 re-registered to CT21 GAL. At the time it was still in Green Line livery but has since been repainted to Central Connect livery. Solo KX58 AYF, reported as acquired last month, has also been repainted into fleet livery and entered service on route 351 on 1 February 2022.

### Withdrawn Vehicles / Disposals

Solo CE52 UWR has been withdrawn from service, it is thought to have last operated in September 2021.

Further to the report in EBM 689 of Scania CN230UB / Scania SGZ 1087 (ex YN56 NNE) being withdrawn from service, it went to Shelton Motors for scrap in November 2021.

### New Depot

Further to EBM 691, Central Connect moved into their new depot at Stansted Distribution Centre at Start Hill in early January 2022. It is on the former Audi site, not the previously planned smaller former Mercedes-Benz site next door. It has taken over the office and engineering functions from the existing Hailes Farm, Low Hill Road, Roydon depot plus operation of Bishop's Stortford area routes 7/A, 306, 351 and 386. The rest of the routes remain at Roydon. Authorisation at the new depot is for 20 vehicles, the authorisation at the old one has been reduced to 25 vehicles. Below: An interesting line up of vehicles were present at the new depot on 29 January: L-R newly acquired Solo MV07 DWM, Scania YP59 OEX, Dart Trainer KP02 PVO, Scania YP59 OEM, recently repainted and re-registered MetroDecker CT21 GAL, Scania YP59 OEV and Galleon VDL coach SS16 GAL. **Owen Woodliffe**

With thanks to John Card, Richard Delahoy, Melvyn King, Ross Newman, Allan White, Owen Woodliffe, LOTS and Bus Lists on the Web.



## Photo Feature: Osborne's of Tollesbury by Robert Appleton

### G. W. Osborne and Sons

George William Osborne operated a horse drawn carrier's service in Tollesbury. His first motor vehicle arrived in 1919, a Ford Model T with a modified horse bus body. This operated a Tollesbury - Colchester bus service. A service to Maldon commenced in 1922, and to Witham in 1930. The business expanded over the years with local bus service work, school contracts, works contracts, private hires, tours, excursions, plus contracts with the Army for troops based at Colchester Garrison. A new garage building was constructed in 1965 on the depot site in New Road, Tollesbury. The business was always a partnership, not a limited company, the partners were family members.

The business was sold to Hedingham and District on 7 February 1997. Go Ahead Group bought Hedingham and District on 5 March 2012. Go Ahead Hedingham cancelled their commercial bus routes serving Tollesbury, and closed Tollesbury depot on 22 July 2016. However, the bus routes were revised, and continued under contract to Essex County Council, worked from Kelvedon depot. See EBN 628 for details of the closure of Tollesbury depot and EBNs 684 & 686 and EBM 687 for more photos.

Top Right & Right: Front and rear views of 25, GVX 658B at Tollesbury in March 1968. An AEC Reliance 2MU3RA / Duple Continental C42F, new to Osborne's in January 1965. It was their second 36' long coach, following similar 14 FOO (16) new two years earlier. At the time of this photo its livery was blue and pale grey but it was later repainted into the normal livery of two shades of red and white. It remained in the fleet until sold in March 1977.

Right: An Osborne's bus turning into Osborne Street, Colchester, from St Botolph's Street, in December 1967. 14, XEV 186F, was a Bedford VAM5 / Strachans, B46F, new to Osborne's in October 1967. Many of the photos in this feature were taken at the 1961-2012 Colchester Bus Station but this one was taken entering what was to become the replacement bus station 45 years later.

Fleet numbers had only started to be used from 1957 (number 1 being 2406 F, a Park Royal bodied AEC Regent V bought new then). From 1967, some numbers started to be reused. The original 14 had been BWC 439, a Bedford SB3 / Duple coach that lasted from July 1962 to July 1967. Subsequent 14s were NVW 400M (Bedford YRT / Willowbrook), LJY 939P (Bristol LH / ECW) and DFS 800S (Seddon Pennine VII / Plaxton - see page 21).



All Robert Appleton

### Three ex-London Transport Buses

21, MXX 186, an AEC Regent III / Weymann, H30/26R, new in 1953 as London Transport RT3671. Acquired by Osborne's in 1964. At Tollesbury depot on 18 October 1970 during a PSV Circle tour from Colchester, in the twilight of its days with Osborne's - it was withdrawn in April 1971. In total, five ex-London RTs and one Leyland RTW were operated and another is illustrated in our Colour Archives feature on page 24.



Tollesbury depot on a Sunday afternoon in March 1968. Nearest the camera is 37, MLL 801, an AEC Regal IV / Metro-Cammell B39F, new in 1952 as London Transport RF264, acquired by Osborne's in 1965. To its left (not an ex-LT vehicle) is 11, 2211 MK, an AEC Bridgemaster 2B3RA / Park Royal H43/29F, new in 1960 as an AEC demonstrator, acquired by Osborne's in 1961, one of three AEC demonstrators owned. RFs were a popular choice in this fleet that favoured AECs for its heavyweight buses and coaches, with seven being operated, the last leaving the fleet in July 1971.



Further London cast-offs of a later generation which joined the fleet were three DMS models.

2, KUC 228P, a Daimler Fleetline CRL6 / MCW, H45/32F, converted from dual-door to single-door, was new in 1975 as London Transport DMS1228. Acquired by Osborne's in 1983, it lasted until the Hedingham takeover and became L263 but was sold the following month. Photographed in Colchester Bus Station on 5 March 1990. It was Osborne's fourth number 2, the earlier ones being an RT (HLX 222), a Tiger Cub bus (3652 NE) and an ex Eastern National FLF (BVX 676B).



All Robert Appleton

### Three Bristol VRs

Dissatisfied with its Bristol VRTs, the Scottish Bus Group sold three buses that were only three years old to a dealer, ahead of the well-known SBG/NBC VRT for FLF swap of 1973. Osborne's bought two, numbering them 26, NAG 588G, and 27, OCS 581H, the latter seen here in March 1978. Both Bristol VRT/SL6LXB / ECW, H43/32F, they had been new in 1969 to Western SMT. Acquired by Osborne's in January 1973, both lasted until the end of 1984. Eastern National acquired sisters NAG 583/6G & OCS 576H (via Eastern Counties) in Autumn 1973.



Following these two conventional VRs, Osborne's snapped up both VRX prototypes of 1966. 29, GGM 431D, to what became the Bristol VRSL6G designation, with ECW H45/35F body, was 33ft long with a Gardner 6LX engine mounted longitudinally at the rear offside corner. It saw service with Central SMT while sister 30, HHW 933D, ran for Mansfield District before both were sold by Bristol Commercial Vehicles to the Bristol Omnibus Co in 1970. BOC then sold both to Osborne's in 1973. Photographed in June 1978. HHW was withdrawn in 1979 and GGM lasted to the end of 1986 but sadly missed out on preservation.



Further Bristol VRs were later acquired, including 11, OSR 191R, a VRT/LL3/6LXB with Alexander H49/34D bodywork, new in 1977 to Tayside Regional Council and again disposed of by its unhappy Scottish operator when only three years old. Acquired by Osborne's in November 1980 it became Hedingham L265 but we believe it was only used for spares by them. Photographed on 23 May 1981.



Chris Stewart wrote about Scottish VRs in Essex in EBN 627, July 2016.

All **Robert Appleton**

All taken in Colchester Bus Station

### Three Coaches

43, WOO 458F, was a Bedford VAM14 with Duple Viceroy C45F body, new in October 1967 which lasted in the fleet until January 1979. It is seen at Tollesbury garage on 5 February 1974. A photo of the two ex-Doncaster Reliances alongside, 8625/9 DT, bought for spares only, was on page 30 of EBM 687.

**Richard Delahoy**

14, DFS 800S, a Seddon Pennine VII / Plaxton Supreme, C49F, new in 1978 to Scottish Omnibuses (Eastern Scottish). The Seddon Pennine 7 met the Scottish Bus Group's requirement for an underfloor engined coach with a Gardner 6HLXB engine. It was one of three acquired in February 1988 (14/16/19, DFS 800/5/8S); it was photographed in Colchester Bus Station on 6th of that month. They only lasted just over a year, withdrawn in March 1989 and replaced by ex-Alder Valley Leyland Leopard / Duple MNK 427/9/30L which took the same fleet numbers.

**Robert Appleton**

59, RTW 148R, a Bedford YMT / Duple Dominant I C53F, bought new by Osborne's in 1976. Photographed exactly six years earlier than the coach above, at the same location on 6 February 1982. Withdrawn March 1991.

**Robert Appleton**

### Acknowledgements

British Bus Fleets No. 4 East Anglia by R.N. Collins, G.R. Mills, G.W. Watts (Ian Allan).  
Hedingham & District Omnibuses by G.R. Mills (M. W. Transport Publications).

Osborne's Buses from Tollesbury by G R Mills, 1995.  
Bristol Commercial Vehicle Enthusiasts Website by Rob Sly:bcv.robsly.com  
Bus Lists on the Web.  
With thanks to Richard Delahoy for additional information.



# Blind Spot: Osborne's of Tollesbury

by Richard Delahoy

We've illustrated a variety of destination blinds but have never considered the production process behind the supply of blinds. However, the chance rescue many years ago by our resident blinds expert, **Bob Williamson**, of a number of papers relating to orders placed with King & Flack Ltd of Holloway offers a small insight. Most of the papers we have relate to Eastern National or Westcliff blinds (and we'll examine those in a subsequent issue) but one caught my eye, in the form of this order sheet for Osborne's of Tollesbury.

Osborne's purchased a number of former AEC demonstrators and whilst the bus is not specified in this order for just one blind, it clearly relates to AEC Renown 8071 ML, fleet number 18. That was built by AEC / Park Royal in 1962 and after appearing at the Commercial Motor Show at Earls Court that September, it spent time on loan to London Transport at Northfleet on route 480, in country bus green, nominally numbered RX1. It then passed to Osborne's and is recorded as joining their fleet in November 1963.

And so to the blind specification: the order has come from Park Royal Vehicles, with delivery required by "25.10.63. certain", suggesting a possible collection date for the bus by Osborne's. 8071 ML had (and still has) a three-part display as shown here and the order specifies it is for the "U/S front lower destination box". The upper destination box was covered by the Osbornes fleet name, although the one seen in this picture was not the original - initially it had larger lettering apparently painted onto the destination box glass.



So what became of 8071 ML? It remained in the Osborne's fleet until August 1979 when it was sold for preservation in Oxford. It appeared at some rallies, restored to LT country area green, but was then sold on to a buyer in Holland in 2000, where it has remained ever since.

The papers rescued by Bob related to Essex are now safe in our archive.

*OSBORNE'S TOLLESBURY*

CUSTOMER: PARK ROYAL VEHICLES LTD

SCHEDULE NO. K.983

ORDER NO. 1.83750 ✓

MEMORANDUM OF PARTICULARS.

LIST OF NAMES.

*1963*

As per Customers List herewith.

Destination blind and lettering for U/S front lower destination box as follows

| Destination                            | Size   | Lettering      | Lines   | In Sight    |
|----------------------------------------|--------|----------------|---------|-------------|
| Tollesbury via Laver & D'Arcy          | 2 1/2" | DEEPLY LETTERS | 2 LINES | IN 7" SIGHT |
| Colchester                             | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | IN 7" SIGHT |
| Tollesbury via Stanway Zoo             | 2 1/2" | "              | 2 LINES | "           |
| Witham                                 | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Tollesbury via Kelvedon & Tiptree      | 2 1/2" | "              | 2 LINES | "           |
| Private                                | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Goldhanger Fruit Farms                 | 2 1/2" | "              | 2 LINES | "           |
| Ever Ready                             | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Relief                                 | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Schools                                | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Schools (Malden)                       | 2 1/2" | "              | 2 LINES | "           |
| Schools (Tiptree)                      | 2 1/2" | "              | 2 LINES | "           |
| Contract                               | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Malden                                 | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Tollesbury via Mill Beach & Goldhanger | 2 1/2" | "              | 2 LINES | "           |
| Goldhanger                             | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Mill Beach                             | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Excursion                              | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Laver                                  | 3 1/2" | "              | 1 LINE  | "           |
| Birch via Stanway Zoo                  | 2 1/2" | "              | 2 LINES | "           |

Delivery:- 25.10.63. certain

*LENGTH OF SIGHT. = 32" WITH 1 3/4" RAD CORNERS.*

Here's the detail for the order (right).

My photo below shows 8071 ML resting in Tollesbury Square on 26 April 1976, between trips. The bus looks immaculate and had perhaps just been repainted. But look closely at the window line of the first bay upstairs, and compare this shot with photos of it in earlier years and it seems that the front dome has been replaced, possibly by one from an AEC Bridgemaster - note the step in the line of the top of the cream band (and lack of ventilator in the dome), perhaps as a result of a low bridge incident whilst with Osborne's? Does any reader know more, please?

Quality of linen: P110  
Style of lettering: Standard  
The above makes up a complete: 20 Destination Screen  
Number of screens required: 1  
Size of letters: Single Line 3.1/2"  
Double Line 2.1/2" Each Line.

Spacing between lines: To suit 7" sight Size.

Spacing between destinations: To Suit 7" Sight Size.  
Width of screen when cut: 33"  
Length of longest name not to exceed: 36"  
White warning space at top and bottom: 6"  
Screens to be arranged at either end with hem:  
Screens to be stamped:  
Schedule drawn up by: Details examined by:  
Special Details.

Please Note the sight has 1.3/4" radius corners.

Behind the bus is a rather nice Wolseley 1500; my Mk 1 Ford Cortina was probably parked just behind me. I rarely visited Tollesbury, sadly. As mentioned above, Osborne's sold out to Hedingham in February 1997 but they continued operating from the large, covered depot in Tollesbury until 2016. The depot was finally demolished last year, as illustrated in EBN 684.



As this issue is an 'Osborne Special', this picture from the early days of the East Anglia Transport Museum at Carlton Colville seems appropriate. Prominent on the left is LYR 997, one of five ex-London Transport AEC 'RT' type AEC Regents that Osborne's operated over the years. LYR was the last one to join their fleet, in June 1965 as fleet number 39 and lasting until sold for preservation in June 1972. The East Anglia Transport Museum had meanwhile been established on its present site on the outskirts of Lowestoft in 1965 and first opened to the public in May 1972. These pictures by **Frank Church** are undated but are from those very early open days.

LYR had been bought by Keith Patten, who remains its owner to this day, and it is today based at the Canvey Island Bus Museum but initially it was at Carlton Colville. It has remained in Osborne's livery throughout and celebrates 50 years in preservation this summer. It features the characteristic roofbox body, fitted on overhaul in 1960. Here it is joined by Leyland Titan TD1 DR 4902 and Blackpool 'standard' tram 159. The Titan is something of a 'ringer' - it was new to the National Omnibus & Transport Co in 1929, passing to Southern National when NOTC was split up, then to Chivers Jams of Histon for staff transport. When they withdrew it in 1958 it was painted into a fictitious Tilling red livery to represent Eastern Counties and was presented to the Clapham Transport Museum. When Clapham closed it moved to Carlton Colville but today is in the Science Museum store at Wroughton where it languishes, unrestored.



In this second picture, we see a line up of trolleybuses in one of the first buildings erected on the museum site. From left to right, they are:

CPM 61 - Brighton Hove & District 6340, AEC / Weymann  
YTE 826 - Ashton-under-Lyne 87, BUT / Bond  
NBB 628 - Newcastle 688, BUT / Metro-Cammell  
LCD 52 - Maidstone 52, BUT / Weymann (ex-Brighton)  
EXV 201 - London Transport 1201, all-Leyland.

All but the first one remain at Carlton Colville today.  
CPM 61 is in the Science Museum collection, in store.

After the Christmas holidays, schools returned in early January, and here is a snapshot of Ipswich Buses (in fleet number order) operating in north-east Essex in the morning peak on Monday 10 January. Fifteen buses, almost 20% of the total Ipswich Buses fleet of 79.

- 34 (YR61 RSV) Scania OmniCity on 0803 Ipswich - East Bergholt High School - Manningtree 92, 0920 Manningtree - Ipswich 92.
- 44 (YR61 RRZ) Scania OmniCity on 0813 Ardleigh - East Bergholt High School 693.
- 46 (SGZ 3346) Scania OmniCity on Ipswich School contract 2A from Feering / Colchester Tollgate.
- 47 (SGZ 3347) Scania OmniCity on Ipswich School contract 2C from Langenhoe / Colchester.
- 48 (SGZ 3348) Scania OmniCity on Ipswich School contract 2B from Colchester Braiswick / Langham.
- 59 (PJ53 OLB) DAF DB250 / East Lincs Lowlander on 0821 Langham - East Bergholt High School 694.
- 60 (PJ54 YZT) Scania N94UD / East Lincs OmniDekka on 0810 Ipswich - East Bergholt High School - Colchester 93A.
- 61 (PJ54 YZU) Scania N94UD / East Lincs OmniDekka on 0755 Colchester - East Bergholt High School - Ipswich 93.
- 70 (YX59 BZL) ADL Enviro 200 and 245 (YJ05 XNY) Optare Solo on Colchester North Station - Highwoods Circular 11, both continued on Colchester service 4.
- 72 (LX58 LMM) ADL Enviro 200 on Ipswich School contract 3 from Dedham / Dedham Heath.
- 73 (YX59 BZN) ADL Enviro 200 on 0830 Clacton - Mistley 2, 0940 Mistley - Clacton 2.
- 74 (DU60 LOI) ADL Enviro 200 on Ipswich School contract 10 from Holland-on-Sea / Tendring.
- 75 (GD10 MVM) ADL Enviro 200 on 0720 Thorington Crossroads - Suffolk Rural College Otley contract RC1.
- 76 (LX58 LML) ADL Enviro 200 on Ipswich School contract 6 from Castle Hedingham / Halstead.

The two Optare Solos, 241 (YN04 LWK) and 245 (YJ05 XNY), have made regular appearances in Essex. From Monday 17 January to Friday 21st, both worked on Colchester routes 4 & 11 each day. On Saturday 22nd, 245 worked on Clacton - Mistley 2/A, and 241 worked the all-day duty on Ipswich - Manningtree 92. This was due to engineering work on the railway that closed the Colchester - Harwich and Manningtree - Harwich Town railway lines, plus Manningtree level crossing. 241 was able to negotiate the 9ft 6in high railway bridge adjacent to the level crossing, so Ipswich Buses were able to operate the full route of service 92. Then on Sunday 23rd both 241 and 245 went under the railway bridge when they worked the Ipswich Station - Manningtree Station - Colchester North Station rail replacement services. On Saturday 29th it was the turn of 245 to work on service 92, in this photo 245 was negotiating the Manningtree railway bridge on 1425 Ipswich - Manningtree 92. **Robert Appleton**



On 22 January, Ipswich Buses worked rail replacement services Ipswich Station - Manningtree Station and Ipswich Station - Colchester Station, alongside other operators. Noted on these services were Scania OmniCity 33 (YR61 RRV) and Scania N94UD / East Lincs OmniDekkas 60/61/62 (PJ54 YZT/U/V). Due to the closure of Manningtree level crossing these buses on the Ipswich Station - Manningtree Station service had to operate via the A12, Birchwood Corner, Dedham Lamb Corner, Ardleigh and Lawford. A week later on 29 January, 60/61/62 were used again, along with Scania OmniCity 41 (YR61 RVF).

The allocation on Saturdays to Ipswich - Colchester service 93 has had some variety:  
 8 January: 71 (LX58 LMO), ADL Enviro 200, and 160 (SN57 DDF), Volvo B7RLE / Wrightbus Eclipse.  
 15 January: 33/43 (YR61 RRV/RVL), Scania OmniCity.  
 22 January: 101 (SN16 OGG), ADL Enviro 200 and 154 (BF65 HVU), Mercedes Citaro.  
 29 January: 43/45 (YR61 RVL/RVE), Scania OmniCity.

With thanks to Stuart Ray, Ipswich Transport Society Journal, Ipswich Buses Enthusiast Facebook Group, Bustimes.

## From Brentwood to Epping ... with a twist by Alan Osborne

### Brentwood to Epping Take 1: 15 Miles

Back in the 1960s and 1970s, a most popular way to travel the 15 miles from Brentwood to Epping via Ongar was on the top deck of a green London Transport country area RT on route 339, the journey scheduled to take 51 minutes. The 339 was introduced on 5 September 1934, when the new garage at Epping (EP) was opened. It replaced the former London General Country Services and National Omnibus & Transport Co. service N9.

The City Coach Company of Brentwood acquired the Regent Bus Service (F. H. Fuller) on 12 June 1936, but since their route (Coxtie Green to Warley) was entirely within the London special area it soon passed to London Transport as route 339A on 21 August. The 339A was later absorbed into the 339 from 13 December 1939.



Both photos this page by **Alan Moore**.

All colour photos by **Alan Osborne**

Above: RT3520 (MLL 830) in King's Road, Brentwood on 3 July 1974, with the station in the background, still with 'British Railways' signage. On the 339 from Warley Fords to Harlow via Ongar and Epping.

Right: taken seconds later, the rear view of RT3520.



When Harlow garage (HA) opened on 22 May 1963 (replacing Epping) the distant spur working to Coxtie Green was withdrawn, passing to Eastern National and incorporated into service 260. Below: Seen in Brentwood High Street in June 1974 is 1326 (1264 EV), an ECW B45F bodied Bristol MW5G dating from 1959, bound for Coxtie Green on service 260. The 260 was often double-deck operated.



On 4 December 1982 London Country Bus Services revised the 339 as '339 EXPRESS', from Harlow via North Weald, Ongar and Stapleford Abbots to Romford. Much of the route was limited stop and the deviation via Epping Town and the station was withdrawn. The route was renumbered '501 EXPRESS' on 12 May 1984, so the 339 was no more. Below: Seen unloading in St. Edwards Way, Romford in April 1983 is London Country RP7 (JPA 107K), a 1971 Park Royal DP45F bodied AEC Reliance.





Above: In 1976 London Country Bus Services were experiencing a vehicle shortage and a number of replacement buses were hired. In Epping High Street in April 1976 is Southend Transport 343 (CIN 443C), a Massey bodied Leyland PD3/6 new in 1964. It is bound for Harlow which became the revised terminal for the 339 when the new HA garage opened.

**Brentwood to Epping Take 2: 8,200 Miles**

For this journey we first take a sea voyage across the Atlantic Ocean to New York (distance 3,462 miles). Thence onward by train across America to reach Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada (distance 2,426 miles). To attain our starting point we board a Translink Skytrain on the Millennium line to the district of Burnaby and alight at Brentwood station. This is the terminus of the Coast Mountain Bus Company service from UBC (University of British Columbia), which is route 25 (that's 251 without the 1!).



To go from there to Epping initially involves a flight of 8,200 miles over the Pacific Ocean, across the equator to arrive in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia on the previous day. To attain our desired destination, from Flinders Street station we take a Mernda line train to Epping. Before the terminus we alight at Preston, nearby is the Northland Shopping Centre where Reservoir Bus Company route 556 is our final ride to Epping.

However, in other cases the situation is reversed such that a long foreign journey can be taken much more quickly in England. Thus a journey from Boston to New York took just 34 minutes on Lincolnshire Road Car Co. service 8A in 1972. Today it is even quicker, just 29 minutes on Brylaine Interconnect number 5 on its way to Lincoln (timetable available on Internet).

Opposite bottom: This September 2007 view in Brentwood (BC, Canada) shows the bus terminus close to the shopping mall in the Town Centre. On view is V7229, a 1996 New Flyer D40LF of the Coast Mountain Bus Company on route 25 to Brentwood Station. Just add a 1 and it really does feel like home.

Below: Northland Shopping Centre in Preston, Victoria, Australia is the departure point for Reservoir Bus Company 15, a Volvo B10M on route 556 bound for Epping. February 2000.



Since 2012 it has once again been possible to ride on an RT from Brentwood (commencing at Shenfield) to Epping on route 339, on the London Bus Company's service linked to the Epping-Ongar Railway. However, the photo right was taken prior to this, over a weekend running day on old RT routes (including fellow Brentwood route 247, run by red RTs) over 12-13 April 2009. Ensignbus Cravens bodied RT1499 (K GK 758), with the 5 bay window layout, new in 1948, at Epping (UK!) Underground Station.



# New Trains for Southend Pier

by Richard Delahoy

Southend-on-Sea is famous for having the longest pleasure pier in the world, at one and a third miles long - due, of course, to how far the water recedes at low tide. It wasn't always that long, having been extended and rebuilt over the years, but has been graced with five different versions of a railed transport system, respectively horse drawn, electric, electric, diesel and now battery electric. This is a very brief tribute to those different systems.

Construction of a wooden pier started in 1829 (under powers granted by an Act of Parliament) to allow boats to bring visitors keen to enjoy the new craze for sea-bathing at the embryonic settlement of New South End (being part of the long established Prittlewell Parish). Opened in 1830 and 1,500' long, it was still far short of deep water except at high tide. Gradually extended to 1.12 miles, in 1846 a

horse tramway was opened to save passengers the increasingly long walk. The privately owned pier began to fall into disrepair and in 1875 ownership was taken over by the Local Board of Health, a forerunner to the local council. The railway track became unsafe and had to be closed from 1881 to 1884. A new iron pier was then built alongside - the same structure that we enjoy today - opening in 1889. Crompton & Co of Chelmsford won the tender to build and equip a single-track electrified railway, only the sixth permanent electric railway in Great Britain. Starting with just one car, eventually the fleet built up to 32 cars, mainly open toast rack style, and the track was doubled.



Eventually these needed replacing and in 1949 a fleet of four 7-car trains was introduced, built by A C Cars of Thames Ditton with a very modern styling owing something to London Transport tube train design. These are the trains that many of us grew up with and it was a major shock when the line was abruptly closed in October 1978 when the track was found to be too dangerous to use. This followed the disastrous fire that had destroyed much of the pier head beyond the railway two years earlier.

After repairs, a single track was reinstated and two new trains built by Severn Lamb entered service in May 1986. Diesel powered, each with a motor / luggage car and six passenger cars, they have kept the service alive for the last 36 years but are now life-expired and Severn Lamb have constructed their replacements, battery powered and reintroducing the traditional light green and cream livery of their 1949 predecessors (and of the Corporation trams, buses and trolleybuses in the 1930s). The first was delivered last September but commissioning has been a very protracted affair and the second had yet to appear in Southend at the time of writing. Testing was taking place in late January when I photographed the first unit, seen on the opposite page. No firm date for entry into service has yet been

announced, possibly in mid-February, meanwhile Alpha unit of the 1986 stock has been withdrawn, with its carriage bodies now being used as shelters at the sea end of the pier and the driving trailer car due to go into the Pier Museum. Do come to Southend and ride on these new trains, we're sure you'll enjoy the experience!

The top picture from my collection is a well-known postcard image, dated 1872, although that date has been questioned recently and it may be a montage of two images from different dates.

Left: Toastrack 8 from the first electric fleet is preserved and was exhibited out in the open on the Pier deck at one stage (picture taken on 6 March 2004) but is now in Chelmsford City Museum. **Richard Delahoy**





In the twilight years of the 1949 stock, driving car 7 leads its seven-coach train out of the pier head station in autumnal sunlight on 16 November, 1974.

Some cars have survived into preservation:

2 & 22 - Southend Pier Museum;

21 - Old Leigh, The Hatch café (ex Lynn Tait Gallery);

7 - stored unrestored in the Southend area;

11 - part restored, now in store;

8 - Mangapps Railway Museum (cut down to freight/stores carrier).

The replacement 1986 trains initially ran in a red and cream livery but were later repainted into this blue and cream scheme. This is Bravo unit, named *Sir William Heygate* after a prominent Southend resident who was a major proponent behind the building of the original pier. The other was named *Sir John Betjeman* to honour the former, much-loved, Poet Laureate.

This photo was taken in the last year when both were in service, on 20 May 2021. The diesel powered driving cars were at the southern (seaward) end of each unit, this is the driving trailer car.



And finally, here is the first train of the 2021 stock undergoing commissioning testing on 19 January 2022 (hence the high-vis jacketed engineer, monitoring the automatic speed reduction system). The train was un-named at this stage but was expected to be formally named in mid-February, just after this issue's publication date. The actual name will be revealed next month!

All **Richard Delahoy**



Above: Regents at Rest. RLH61, three RTs and a (Leyland) RTL are posed inside Ensign's Purfleet depot during a photo shoot organised by Time Line Events on 5 February 2022 to recreate the atmosphere of a London bus garage. **Richard Delahoy**

Below: Vectare Enviro 200 MMC 305, YX69 NWB, has been repainted from Weavaway silver and dark blue to fleet livery. Seen on route 13 on 9 January 2022. **Steven Quy**. It was illustrated in Weavaway livery, also on route 13, in EBM 689.



#### Rear Cover: First Essex Depot Contrasts

**Top:** A colourful Basildon Depot yard on 22 January 2022. From right to left, 33415 in First West of England 'Excel' livery, 69904 in 'City Country Connections' route 100 livery, 67168 in Urban livery, 33412 in 'Essex Bus' (with route 100 branding) livery and two more Enviro 400s in 'Excel' livery. **Nick Street**

**Bottom:** The sad sight of the rear of Eastern National / First Essex's former Queen Street Depot, Colchester, being demolished on 21 January 2022. Photographer **Mark Lloyd** heard a massive crash and the digger had pulled the end off the building including the masses of ivy, exposing the old steelwork.

## 694 for EBM 694

Right: A photo of EN Leyland Tiger / Alexander TE 1123 (A692 OHJ), taken on 21 July 1990 outside Harwich depot, was included in this feature in EBM 692. This was in the dual purpose version of the livery introduced in 1986. The livery that superseded this, the Badgerline inspired one introduced in 1993, did not have a dual purpose version, so sister 1125 (A694 OHJ) is seen in normal bus livery, and now with dayglo blinds, opposite Rigby Avenue in Harwich Road, Mistley on 16 July 1995, working from Harwich depot on Sunday service 102 Colchester - Harwich.



Below: Eastern National Leyland National 1782 (PEV 694R) at Sudbury bus station on 5 March 1983. Allocated to Halstead depot (HD), operating service 328 Great Cornard - Sudbury, which was possibly the last Eastern National service to reach Sudbury in Suffolk. Halstead depot closed a year later on 3 March 1984. The livery style is unusual. Early Eastern National LNs had this design with the white band on sides and rear but not the front (but this was with white NBC symbols and Leyland badge on front) but this was later amended so that the white band continued under the windscreen. Then, in 1980, NBC decreed that the white band should be dropped altogether on single-decker repaints to save money. By March 1983, 1782 was yet to receive a full 1980s repaint, but the front only had been done. It finally received one in May 1984 after it had transferred to Colchester. Both **Robert Appleton**





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