

News about Eastern National

THE Grapevine

Special Issue

DECEMBER 1986

ON OUR OWN!

Today Eastern National has been bought by the company's management from NBC and becomes the largest private bus and coach company in the UK.

Led by managing director Geoff Clarkson and financial director Harold Taylor, a team of 11 senior managers has been successful in its bid, which took the opportunity given by the government's decision to privatise NBC subsidiaries following the 1985 Transport Act.

The financial backing for the buy out has been provided by County Bank and National Westminster Bank.

The full team includes the new board of directors: Harold Taylor becomes executive chairman and director of finance; Geoff Clarkson, managing director; Robin Orbell, director of operations and Bob Iles, director of engineering.

The 7 other senior staff involved are Fred Offord, company secretary; Gordon Cheek who is appointed fleet engineer and operating managers Geoff Dodson, Mike Holden, Maurice Jordan, David Kershaw and Gerry Nevill.

The deal was signed at NBC's London headquarters in Buckingham Palace Road by the management team and NBC chairman Rodney Lund.

The new company, Eastern National Ltd, will retain the Eastern National and Highwayman trading names and will also continue to operate National Travelworld

offices under licence from that company. Coaches will continue to operate for National Holidays, who themselves were privatised earlier in 1986.

"Eastern National is the largest NBC subsidiary sold so far, having some 500 vehicles and 1460 employees" said managing director Geoff Clarkson, "and the services provided by us will continue very much as before. We intend to maintain our prominent position of a major operator in Essex, East Hertfordshire, North and East London."

"The buy out is the culmination of an eventful year for the company" he said. "In addition to deregulation and privatisation, the company have introduced a number of minibus networks in Clacton, Chelmsford, Brentwood, Hornchurch and South Woodham Ferrers, a new depot has been opened at Walthamstow and a site acquired for a further depot in Ponders End. Construction of a new Southend depot at Prittlewell is also under way."

"We want all staff at Eastern National to participate in the new private company" he continued "and plans are being formulated to make shares available to employees. Details of the scheme will be published in due course."

"We have also arranged pension schemes, details of which appear in this issue, and a series of seminars have been held throughout the company to describe the schemes" he said.

"I look forward to a secure future with the very professional and successful team of management and employees that is Eastern National" he concluded.

PENSIONS UPDATE

Pension schemes to replace both the BEST and NBPF arrangements have been prepared through pensions advisers Noble Lowndes.

As a result of the privatisation of NBC, both BEST and NBPF will no longer be available to employees of privatised companies, but all prospective buyers of NBC subsidiaries have had to produce an alternative scheme.

At Eastern National a number of pensions advisers were approached and invited to design schemes.

PASS ARRANGEMENTS

As a result of the move of Eastern National from the NBC fold, staff passes will no longer be valid on buses of other NBC operators and National Express concessions are automatically withdrawn at the same time.

Similarly, staff from other NBC companies will be unable to travel on Eastern National buses.

Managing director Geoff Clarkson explained that the change to pass conditions was a prerequisite of the buy out, but pensioners are protected in that pensioners from other companies residing in Eastern National's area will continue to be able to travel on Eastern National buses using an Eastern National pass which will soon be distributed. Similarly, Eastern National pensioners who have moved away from Essex will be able to travel on the buses of their local NBC company in a reciprocal arrangement.

Arrangements with Colchester Borough Transport Ltd and with Southend Transport Ltd are unaffected by these moves.

The management team considered that the Noble Lowndes proposals were the best alternative to the old schemes.

At a series of seminars held throughout the company's area, senior consultant Stuart Bell, accompanied by one of the new company's directors outlined the new company pension arrangements. These at least maintain benefits afforded by the old schemes except that index linking of pensions cannot be guaranteed in any private sector scheme.

Among the benefits are improvements to the lump sum payments on retirement and to widows' pensions, which are now extended to spouses and increased. Details of these new schemes will be set out in a leaflet which will be distributed to all staff. Individual members will be provided with options of freezing their present BEST contributions or transferring existing monies into the new pensions and advice as to the better option will be given when requested.



Photograph shows from left to right, a Leyland Tiger, Leyland National and Leyland Olympian in new Eastern National livery.

MEET THE BOARD



Geoffrey Clarkson – Managing Director

Geoff Clarkson is a native of Preston in Lancashire and joined the industry in 1963 aged 16, when he became a junior management trainee with Ribble Motor Services in his home town.

He was appointed as traffic assistant central area based at Preston before moving in 1970 to Red & White in South Wales, where he became assistant area manager at Tredegar, moving to the position of divisional manager for Gwent and Dean with National Welsh in 1974.

In 1978 he joined Midland Red as assistant operations manager. When the Midland Red company was split in 1981, he was appointed traffic manager of the new Midland Red (South) company at Rugby and the following year he became manager of the Midland Red Express, Black and White and Wessex coach companies.

Mr Clarkson, who lives in Colchester, moved to Essex as general manager of Eastern National in 1984, when Charles Mercer retired, and became managing director on 1 January this year.



1975 Leyland National at South Benfleet Station in Eastern National's bright new livery.



Harold Taylor – Chairman and Director of Finance

Harold Taylor joined the bus industry in January 1967 with Midland Red as assistant accountant, moving in 1969 to East Midland Motor Services at Chesterfield where he became company secretary.

In 1972 he moved to National Bus Company centrally in London as finance officer, becoming director of finance for the group in 1977.

Mr Taylor left National Bus at the end of May to join Eastern National as financial director and he joined with Geoff Clarkson to lead the management buy out team.

Mr Taylor, who is a native of Walsall, has lived in Essex at Billericay, and more recently Margaretting since his move to London in the early 70's.

Bob Iles – Director of Engineering

Bob Iles is a second Bristolian on the board and he joined Bristol Omnibus Company as an apprentice in 1956.

After completing his apprenticeship, he became a technical assistant with the company and was subsequently promoted in 1972 to the position of district engineering superintendent at Weston-super-Mare.

Mr Iles moved to Essex in 1975 as assistant chief engineer with National Travel (South East) which was then based in Kelvedon. When that company was split up and coaches returned to the bus operating companies in the area, Mr Iles was appointed assistant chief engineer with Eastern National.

On the retirement of John Jepson at the end of 1984, Mr Iles was appointed fleet engineer. Mr Iles lives in Copford near Colchester.



Robin Orbell – Director of Operations

Robin Orbell joined the bus industry in 1967 as a traffic trainee with Bristol Omnibus Company after a period as a conductor.

He held various appointments with Bristol Omnibus, becoming district traffic superintendent Weston-super-Mare in 1973.

He moved on to join South Wales Transport, where he was area manager west in 1974 and was appointed assistant traffic manager at Potteries Motor Traction in Stoke on Trent in 1978.

In 1982 he moved to Yorkshire where he became traffic manager of the West Riding group of companies based at Wakefield before joining Eastern National in a similar capacity in July 1984.

Mr Orbell comes originally from Bristol and now lives in Laver-de-la-Haye near Colchester.



Management Changes

Following Martin Lewis's appointment with United Transport at Stockport, a number of changes in the management structure of the company have been announced.

The 6 operating areas which were formed in August 1985 will now become 4 areas to reflect the changes in vehicle allocations and the increased involvement in North and East London services.

The 4 operating areas will now be North Essex, comprising Braintree, Silver End, Colchester, Dovercourt, Clacton and Walton; Mid Essex, comprising Chelmsford, Maldon and Bishop's Stortford with South Woodham and Dunmow outstations; Basildon and East London, comprising Basildon, Walthamstow, Ponders End and Enfield, and Southend and Brentwood Districts, comprising Southend, Hadleigh and Brentwood depots.

In addition, the new position of manager (contracts and commercial activities) has been created to look after the liaison with London Regional Transport contracts, for development of Stansted, and to assume responsibility for the various commercial units of the company, including coaching and travel sales.

Manager North Essex will be Mike Holden, who will move his office from Clacton to Colchester early in the new year. He will be assisted by planning & schedules officers Len Wilson, who will continue to look after Colchester, Dovercourt, Clacton and Walton depots, and George Jones, who will move from Braintree but who will still maintain responsibility for Braintree and Silver End schedules and will assist at Bishop's Stortford.

David Kershaw adds Bishop's Stortford to his portfolio to

becoming manager (Mid Essex and East Herts). Eric Carter will remain as his planning & schedules officer with assistance from George Jones.

Gerry Nevill will add the operational responsibilities for Walthamstow, Ponders End and Enfield to his present area of Basildon and Thurrock. Dave Boyce will continue as planning & schedules officer for the old Basildon and Thurrock area.

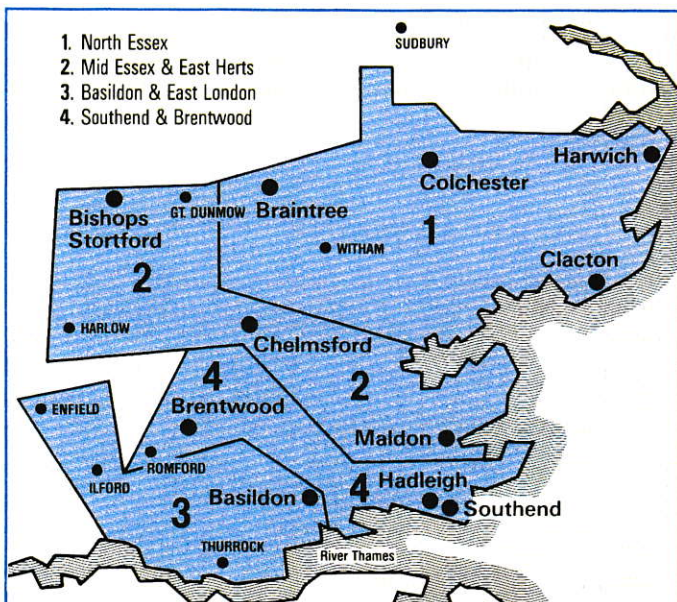
Maurice Jordan, currently manager for Southend & District, will take charge additionally of Brentwood and will be aided by planning & schedules officer Chris Duncan who recently joined the company from Southend Transport, and schedules assistant Nick Blackall.

Geoff Dodson becomes manager (contracts & commercial activities). He will be based at head office in Chelmsford. To assist in his responsibilities for the commercial operation of the London Transport tendered services from Brentwood, Walthamstow, Enfield and Ponders End, Nick Parker will be his planning & schedules officer, retaining the role that he currently has in the old Brentwood & Havering district.

Explaining the changes, director of operations Robin Orbell said that the creation of the 6 operating districts in 1985 and the consequent decentralisation has proved their worth, particularly in the preparation for deregulation.

"With decentralisation it would have been impossible to introduce the number of new networks required on 26 October" he said "but with the departure of Martin Lewis, the opportunity has been taken to revise the responsibilities of the managers and to strengthen our commercial management."

EASTERN NATIONAL OPERATING AREAS



NEW FLEET ENGINEER



Gordon Cheek

Gordon Cheek has been appointed fleet engineer reporting to Bob Iles, who has become director of engineering. Gordon joined the company in 1966 and following the completion of his apprenticeship was appointed to chargehand docks in central works, from where in 1975 he was promoted to mechanical superintendent Braintree and Silver End.

He became assistant engineer (operations) in 1983 and assistant engineer in 1985.

Gordon, who lives in Silver End, plays football for a local team each week during the winter.

Highwayman Arrives—By Appointment



Highwayman coach at Buckingham Palace on 25th November after conveying Essex County Cricket Club to receive the County Championship trophy from Prince Philip.



We understand that Driver Vic Lonton of the Coaching Unit was unable to negotiate a special Coach Parking rate!

THE Grapevine

News about Eastern National

No. 24

June 1990

IT'S THAMESWAY IN THE SOUTH

Thamesway is the name of the new company which will take over operations from the South Essex and Brentwood & East London districts on 29 July this year. The division of Eastern National into two operating companies was announced by Chairman Graeme Varley in May, a month after the company joined Badgerline.

Eastern National Limited will continue to provide services in the Mid Essex & Herts and North Essex districts and will operate approximately 210 buses.

Thamesway will operate about 260 vehicles in the south of Essex and in London.

A central services company, Gurna, will provide secretarial, accountancy, internal audit and payroll functions for both companies.

The reorganisation of the company continues the move towards a more direct local management structure and develops the change to a decentralised company which started when the operating districts were formed in 1985.

Mr Varley explained that in the current operating environment, with competition from other bus operators, particularly in South Essex, and from road and rail in parts of North Essex, the changes should enable management attention to be focused more closely on new requirements.

During 1989, as reported in the last issue of Grapevine, there was a significant decline in passengers. Unfortunately this has continued in 1990, due not only to competition but to the recession in the retail trade.

Mr Varley said that both companies have a good future, provided they respond to changes in the market, and staff can have an assured future as a result of the change.

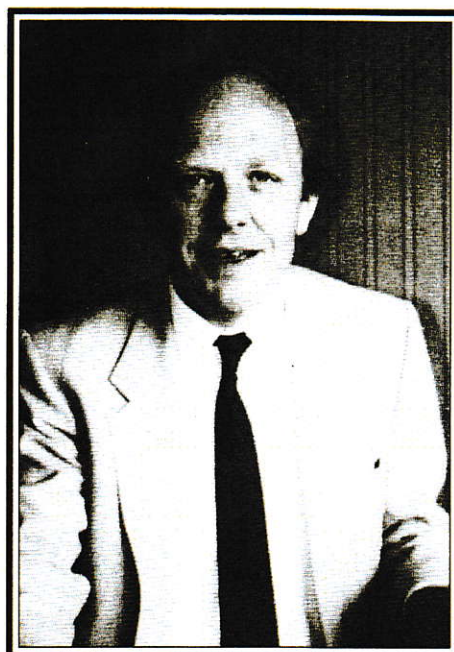
Managing Director Geoffrey Clarkson will become a non-executive director of

both operating companies and remains with the company until the end of July to ensure its smooth transition into the new arrangements.

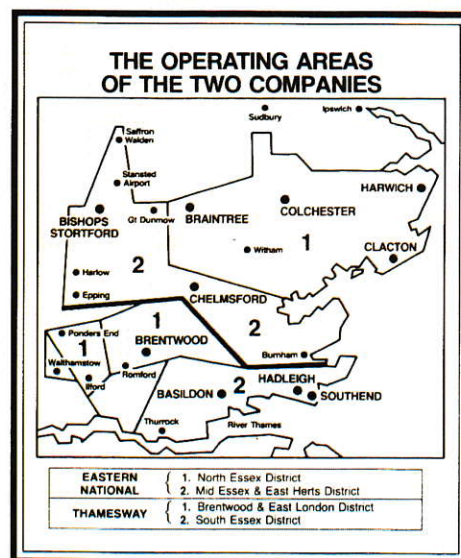
Eastern National's Operations Director, Robin Orbell, becomes Managing Director of the smaller Eastern National company which will continue to be based at New Writtle Street, Chelmsford.

The Managing Director of Thamesway, which will be based in Basildon, is yet to be appointed.

Geoffrey Wilcox, currently Company Secretary and Chief Accountant of Eastern National will head Gurna which will continue to be based at New Writtle Street.



Geoffrey Wilcox, who will head the Gurna Ltd, Central Services Company.



All three units remain part of the Badgerline group, and the changes should better equip the companies to develop a sound base for the future, explained Mr Varley.



Robin Orbell, Managing Director designate, Eastern National Ltd.

THAMESWAY

News about Eastern National

Grapevine

No. 25

SPECIAL EDITION
EASTERN NATIONAL – THAMESWAY – GURNA

29 July 1990

TURNING POINT!

This edition of 'The Grapevine' is significant for two reasons. Not only is it the 25th issue of Eastern National's house magazine, but it also marks a turning point in the history of the company.

60 YEARS

Just one month after the 60th anniversary of the commencement of Eastern National's operations sees the division of the company, which itself was born out of the splitting of the original National Omnibus and Transport Co. Ltd.

'National' had its origins in Chelmsford, where Thomas Clarkson had begun building steam buses in 1903. His company started running buses in London in 1909 as the National Steam Car Company, the title changing in 1920 to the National Omnibus and Transport Company Ltd. following the successful development of his business.

In 1930, the separate Eastern National, Southern National and Western National companies were formed to correspond with the areas served by the four main railway companies which had purchased half the share capital of 'National'.

TODAY

Now, 60 years on, a momentous decision taken by the company's parent Badgerline Holdings Group sees the southern half of Eastern National's operation formed into a new company, called Thamesway Ltd.

The northern part of Eastern National's operations will continue to trade as Eastern National Ltd.

It is significant that in 1930, EN started up with 255 vehicles. Today, each of the new companies will have around that number.

LOCAL MARKETS

Announcing the restructuring in May, Chairman, Graeme Varley, said: "The background to this change is the need for management attention to be focussed more closely on the changing requirements of the local markets for bus services, so as to respond constructively to the challenges these present". He went on: "Staff will be aware that there was a significant decline in the numbers of passengers carried in 1989 and unfortunately this is further continuing in 1990. It is considered that a successful future for the company and its staff can best be secured by concentrating management attention more locally".

EASTERN NATIONAL

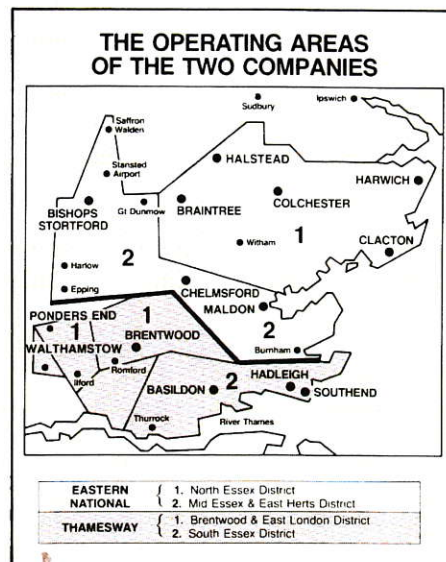
Operations in mid and north Essex continue under the Eastern National name, with no change to the logo and house styles. The two existing operating districts of North Essex and Mid Essex and Herts comprise the smaller Eastern National company, whose headquarters remain in New Writtle Street, Chelmsford.



This is the new logo, devised by publicity agents, Command Publicity. All buses, bus stops, publicity etc, will carry the new logo, which depicts the fact that the company will be operating north of the Thames. In fact, it takes in the current South Essex and Brentwood & East London operating districts. Its head office will be in the Basildon area.

GURNA LIMITED

Secretarial, accounting, internal audit, payroll, insurance, pensions and various other "central services" will be carried out by a new unit, called Gurna Ltd. This was the name of the original holding company of Eastern National.



EASTERN NATIONAL'S M.D.



ROBIN ORBELL really needs no introduction, having been with Eastern National since 1984. He lives at Laver de la Haye, near Colchester.

He joined the industry as a traffic trainee with Bristol Omnibus Company in 1967 after a period as a conductor. He held various appointments with Bristol Omnibus South Wales Transport, Potteries Motor Traction and West Riding before coming to Eastern National. "This is a new challenge", he said, "and will help bring the experience of Eastern National into closer contact with local needs."

THAMESWAY'S M.D.

PETER EDWARDS, age 40, joins Thamesway from Badgerline Ltd where he has been Regional Director, Bristol. He joined Badgerline in 1987 in a similar position at Weston-super-Mare and Wells and prior to that was employed at National Express Ltd, National Travel (East), and West Midlands P.T.E. where he started in the industry in 1971 as a Graduate Trainee. Mr Edwards is married with four children. "I am pleased to be in Essex," he said, "Thamesway will quickly move forward to ensure the future of bus services and jobs in South Essex. Changes will need to be made to get the buses nearer to the people, but I know we will be successful. I look forward to meeting those of you I have not met as yet on my travels".



ALL CHANGE AT HEAD OFFICE

An announcement at the end of October heralded major changes at the head offices of Eastern National, Gurna and Thamesway.

From 1 March next year Eastern National and Thamesway will become trading divisions of **Essex Buses Ltd.** At the same time Gurna will become the Finance Department of Essex Buses.

For staff at depots and customers there will be little apparent change, with the green and yellow of Eastern National and the purple and yellow of Thamesway being retained, and services will not alter as a result of the head office changes.

For the eagle-eyed, however, the legal lettering on the sides of vehicles and the small print on company stationery will alter to reflect the new legal position.

For staff, pay and conditions will continue to be governed by agreements made through the negotiating bodies of the two companies. The central committees will continue as now in each of the divisions, as will disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Following Bill Hiron's appointment as Managing Director of Eastern Counties at Norwich, Alan Barrett moves from Southend & District to become Managing Director of Thamesway. Robin Orbell continues as Managing Director of Essex Buses Ltd. Geoff Wilcox becomes Finance Director of Essex Buses, and Gordon Cheek Engineering Director.

Explaining the changes, Mr Orbell said that the desire to continue to look for overhead cost savings had revealed duplication of effort in the Engineering, Planning and Marketing departments of the two operating companies, and at Gurna the need to retain three separate companies' accounts caused unnecessarily complicated working arrangements. "As always, we seek cost savings which will not damage our ability to earn revenue," said Mr Orbell, "so changes that can be made which leave our commercial service network intact and improve our profit margins are the best way of managing the company."

A number of staff in the head offices take up new jobs, and details are included below:

In addition to the appointments of **Robin Orbell** as MD for Eastern National, **Alan Barrett** as MD for Thamesway, **Geoff Wilcox** as Finance Director and **Gordon Cheek** is appointed Engineering Director.

Steve Smith continues as Operations Director for Eastern National division, and **Derek Trotman**, Director, Basildon & District for Thamesway joins the Essex Buses Ltd board. Other appointments are as follows:

Finance Department

Management Accountant
Accounts Manager
Accounts Clerk
Bought Ledger Clerk
Technical Services Manager
Senior Technical Services Assistant
Technical Services Assistants

- Roger Martin
- Barbara Coates
- Jo Quilter
- Maureen Lumley
- Marilyn Roberts
- Colin Braybrook
- Andrew Deacon
- Ross Sadler

Payrolls Manager
Senior Payrolls Clerk
Payrolls Clerks

- Howard Richman
- Tina Paterson
- Paul Shaw
- Helen Sadler
- Emma Hatley

Operations Department

Planning Manager
Planning Officers

- Eric Carter
- Nick Parker
- Dave Boyce
- Kevin Briggs

Engineering Department

Technical Assistant
Insurance Officer
Engineering Records Clerk

- David Cornell
- Alan Dixon
- Graham Martin

Marketing Department

Marketing Officer
Marketing Assistants

- Colin Riches
- Keith Fletcher
- Sarah Hunt

Roadside Publicity Assistants

- Martin Farmer
- George Winters

(**Eric Carter** and **Kevin Briggs** will be primarily responsible for Eastern National depots, and **Nick Parker** and **Dave Boyce** for Thamesway).

Theresa Mayes continues as Secretary to **Robin Orbell** and **Steve Smith**, **Alison Gooday** as Secretary to **Alan Barrett** and **Geoff Wilcox** and **Lynne Maxted** as Secretary to **Gordon Cheek**. **Joyce Ashby** continues as Receptionist.

REFURBISHED TRAVEL OFFICE



The Chelmsford Travel Office has had a facelift, and customers and staff alike are well pleased with the result. Travel Office Supervisor, Nanette Wallace, and Simon Badcock wait for their first customers on the successful experimental Christmas late night opening.

The Grapevine

NEWS ABOUT EASTERN NATIONAL

No. 67

Summer 1997

MANAGEMENT RE-SHUFFLE AT ESSEX BUSES

Essex Buses Ltd., which operates both Eastern National and Thamesway services throughout North and South Essex respectively, announces that following Robin Orbell's leaving the Company and Thamesway's Managing Director Alan Barrett being promoted to Managing Director of Eastern Counties, Bill Hiron, formerly Eastern Counties' MD is now Managing Director, East Anglia, responsible for all three companies.

Director/General Managers have been appointed for both Eastern National and Thamesway.

Stephen Smith, formerly the company's Operations Director, takes over at Eastern National, while Ian Humphreys, former General Manager, Thamesway, London, takes over as that company's Director/General Manager. Derek Trotman, formerly Director Basildon & District, becomes Eastern National's Operations Director.



Bill Hiron, MD, East Anglia.

Prior to his appointment as MD of Eastern Counties, Bill Hiron was Managing Director of Thamesway, based at Basildon. He joined that company from Midland Red South (part of the Stagecoach group) where he was also MD. Prior to that, he was Manager of City of Gloucester Buses.

A graduate from Loughborough University, with a degree in Transport Management and Planning, Bill Hiron worked for a period with the Trent Bus Company in Derby. He then

undertook the National Bus Company Graduate Training Scheme prior to joining City of Gloucester Buses. Following that, he became Commercial Director of the Midland Red South bus company in Rugby and was appointed Managing Director of that company in May 1993.

Ian Humphreys was Thamesway's Operations Manager with responsibility for London Transport contract work before becoming General Manager at the Ponder's End depot.

Stephen Smith, formerly Traffic Manager then Operations Director of Eastern National, joined the company in 1995 from Buckinghamshire County Council, where he was employed as Passenger Transport Projects Officer. He has been in the bus industry since 1972 when he joined Halifax Corporation and after training with Doncaster Corporation in 1974, joined West Yorkshire PTE as a schedules compiler on completion of a business studies course in transport at Newcastle Polytechnic.



Stephen Smith, DGM/EN.



Derek Trotman recently presenting CitySAVER drivers with their NVQ's.

He moved to South Yorkshire PTE in 1978 as Principal Traffic Officer, rising to Traffic Manager at the largest operational garage in Sheffield.

Nine years later, he moved to Badgerline as Operations Manager at Bristol's Marlborough Street location and in 1989 he moved again to Metroline Travel Ltd, then part of London Buses, as Garage Manager at Cricklewood and Edgware, later becoming Commercial Services Manager.

Derek Trotman, has risen through the ranks with a vast experience in the bus industry both at grass roots level as a bus driver himself and at management levels. He was also at one time, Branch Chairman of the TGWU at Basildon and then Deputy Fleet Chairman.

Derek started in the bus industry in 1967. Prior to that he was involved with heavy goods vehicles and was also for a period, a racing driver driving Formula Ford vehicles.

A Message from Bill Hiron...

It is exciting for me to be coming back to Thamesway after eighteen months absence, assuming responsibilities for Eastern Counties and Eastern National in addition. I hope to renew many old friendships over the next few months.

The senior management restructuring is complete in both Eastern National and Thamesway, and we now have an energetic team in place to take us into the 21st century.

There are many challenges ahead - cost control remains ever important as fuel duties and other costs continue to escalate. However, the tide in both national and local politics, not to mention public opinion, is now turning strongly in favour of public transport.

It is our job to convince opinion-formers that bus priorities

and other infrastructure improvements, coupled with continuing investment in new buses and better information provision by bus companies, are the only ways to attract people back out of cars.

This however, must not be at the expense of basics. It will not encourage bus travel if our services are unreliable, our buses dirty or unheated or our staff surly and unfriendly.

We need to work hard over the coming year to improve service quality, and that will mean all of us continuing to question old-established ways of doing things.

I look forward to meeting some of you over the coming months, perhaps at the Employee 'Roadshow' to be held in Chelmsford at the County Hotel on 16 September.