

Solent Omnibus News

Newsletter No. 255

June 2022



Photograph from Phil Savin. SL16 RFX on the Itchen Bridge 7th May 2022.



Editorial & Club News

Editor: Barry Turberfield, Postal address in the current membership list. Solent Omnibus Club email address: barry.barnessoc@gmail.com

Thwarted at the first attempt. Thanks to Stagecoach, my recent, first post pandemic, attempt to undertake a bus journey left me seeking an alternative train service. I suppose it was inevitable: I should have heeded all the recent chatter on social media and in the press which is full of horror stories regarding cancelled services. The issue is not confined to any particular region but is a nationwide problem for the company.

The particular service that I sought to use is a fine example of the deterioration of Stagecoach Buses and post pandemic services in general. Until recently my chosen route had been a quality contract along with Arriva and the PTE, with a combined twenty-minute headway on the common section of both routes. Stagecoach took the decision to break the quality contract by separating its route and reducing the frequency to thirty-minutes. On my day of travel, due to staff shortages, the service was reduced to a ninety-minute headway, with an amended timetable issued via their website. Sadly, the service still failed to arrive. Speaking with an employee from the relevant depot, it appears that this particular route was chosen for cancellation because Arriva cover much of the route, which leaves only a quarter of the route uncovered. This is of little comfort for the prospective passengers from the large estate and nearby village who are left with no means of transport to the local hospital, major supermarket or city centre.

I have no idea why Stagecoach is suffering nationally from a driver shortage, but in this particular case, Arriva has increased its hourly rate to £3 above that of Stagecoach - enough said! With drivers being a finite resource, this particular Stagecoach depot deploys them on tendered routes operated on behalf of the PTE. It is more profitable to run a tendered route picking up no passengers than to run a commercial service.

Keeping with Stagecoach and the accompanying photograph taken recently in Alresford, I have to say the livery is an improvement on the recently introduced corporate mishmash. However, what concerns me is the message being conveyed by 'Stagecoach supports LGBT'. Does this mean it doesn't support other sexual orientations or ethnic groups, does it only welcome LGBT aboard that particular bus, will that group of people feel especially safe riding that particular bus? I know corporate bodies must display their wokeness for fear of being cancelled, although Stagecoach might welcome more cancellations, but at what cost to the wider general paying public? It is a pity that all passengers are not welcome onboard as I now feel alienated and unwanted as a passenger, that is if a Stagecoach bus should ever condescend to turn up.

Finally, still with Stagecoach, I had the pleasure of meeting James, a relatively new driver for the company following a career change ten months ago. He was on a layover, proudly taking a photograph of his bus which had just come out of the paint shop, and he invited me onboard to admire the refurbishment. In his previous job, James had been driving his builders van behind a bus which had the standard 'fancy a change in career' advert on the rear window and he thought why not. He admitted that in his short time with the company he has become a bit of a bus nut, encouraged by other members of staff at the depot who are involved in the preservation scene. He spoke so enthusiastically about the joy of bus driving and his regret at not doing it years ago. We chatted to the point where he almost lost awareness of the time and, with an exchange of names and a shake of hands, he dashed off for the next journey. A joy to see the industry can still attract such individuals.



Committee. Chairman: Roger Watts, Secretary: James Woodcock, Treasurer: David Etheridge.

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Club News

In April, a small but select band of members gathered to be entertained by Chris Drew with a selection of photographs from his early days using square format photography. A good effort by Mr. Drew saw us entertained with his artfully taken monochromes from original square format negatives that Chris preferred back then. Several - of Bristol products - were specifically chosen for Mr. Watts, who was sadly 'indisposed'. I was able to advise Chris that the Snaefell Mountain Railway employs right hand running, (or at least did in 1990 when I was there), so a tram on the left-hand track in the picture was not, as he thought, going away from his camera but in fact coming towards it. (Adrian Willats)

The May meeting was well attended with sixteen members and a number of guests from S&DTHT and it looked back at Southampton after deregulation. Presentations were made by Roger Watts, Robert Martin, Adrian Willats and David Etheridge. The refreshment break was managed by David, Roger and James. A very convivial evening.

Two summer big nights out.

Friday 10th June, we join our FoKAB friends for a night around the Winchester area. This is an opportunity for SOC to have a private ride aboard King Alfred vehicles and visit their facilities. During our last visit we had plenty of time for photographs and tea. James Woodcock promises us another special evening, so please give him your support and help make all his efforts worthwhile.

We meet in Winchester Park & Ride East (St Catherine's) Junction 10 M3, at 7pm (19.00hrs). Parking is free in the evening,

Friday 1st July, our second summer night out. This time we will depart Portchester Community Centre at 7pm (19.00hrs) for a tour of Portsmouth. The bus for the evening will be announced nearer the time.

Please support these very special evenings.



Xelacoach 603, G3 XCL (PO59 KGG) Volvo B9TL, Optare Olympus H61/39F. New to Imperial, Southall. © Robert Winkworth.

2022/23 Diary

10th June: PLEASE NOTE THIS IS THE SECOND FRIDAY OF JUNE – Visit to FoKAB, details later.

1st July: Open top bus trip round Portsmouth and Southsea, details later.

5th August: Members evening, 'Then and Now'. Photos of buses at the same location past and present.

MONDAY 8th AUGUST (Date to be confirmed): We are invited to the Southampton & District Transport Heritage Trust barbecue, 1830h at Bursledon Brickworks (if it is confirmed).

2nd September: Members evening, 'Buses Across the Water'.

7th October: 'Portsmouth and District'. Photos of any form of transport operated in the Portsmouth area, all photos welcome. Roger Watts will do the first half of the evening with Portsmouth area coach operators.

4th November: Members evening 'Open toppers by the sea – but not always'.

2nd December: Yearly Quiz. S&DTHT will be invited and possibly other groups.

4th January 2023: Roger Watts New Year Address.

1st February 2023: AGM

MONDAY 10th MARCH 2023: Joint meeting with Southampton & District Transport Heritage Trust at Woolston.

If anyone has any suggestions for meetings please get in touch with James or Roger.



Southern Motorways WUR 866K, Bedford YRQ/Van Hool C45F.

© John Bulman

LISS AND DISTRICT OMNIBUS COMPANY PART ONE – 1929 TO 1945

BY DAVID LINDSELL



3. Seven buses of the fleet at Liss Forest (courtesy of Stewart Cartwright)

Liss is situated some three miles north east of Petersfield and approximately at the midway point between there and Liphook. Liss became the centre of operations for Charles Cartwright when he founded the Liss and District Omnibus Company in 1929.

The main daily route started in Petersfield and ran north eastwards to Liphook by way of Sheet, Liss, Liss Forest, Greatham and Longmoor, where the army camp and training area was situated; along with the Longmoor Military Railway, which was in operation from 1903 to 1969. A second route was run on Saturdays from Petersfield to Hawkley via Liss.

In 1932, Charles bought the Petersfield to Longmoor, via Liss, service from A.G Lintott which he had been operating since 1930. This was a joint purchase along with the Aldershot and District Traction Company Limited.

For many years in the 1930's to 1940's number 18 Station Road in Liss was used as a waiting room for the Liss and District bus services.

The ticket system used was by Clayton Verometer machines. (see right).

The 1939 census lists Charles Edward Cartwright and Phyllis Joan Cartwright as living at Forest Side, Forest Road, Liss Forest, Hampshire. Occupations are shown as bus proprietor and omnibus driver. Stewart Cartwright, Charles's son, who still lives in the area, told me that the bus depot was situated to the rear of Forest Side and accessed via a narrow gravel track. (see picture two)

Imagine, if you will, full size buses, including a double decker, using this access until it was sold for redevelopment in 1954.

He also told me that Phyllis used to prefer to drive the 1931 Guy OU8575, (see picture three) as it had a separate cab which isolated her from some of the unsavoury passengers, who may have had too much to drink on a night out in Petersfield. She is also believed to have been only the third women in the country to have obtained a PSV licence.



In 1940, the business became a limited company. Heavy passenger loadings were carried to and from Longmoor Camp during the war years. Aldershot and District buses stopped running from Petersfield at 8pm so Liss and District ran late night buses returning soldiers to the camp. Charles said that the troops always respected his wife, who regularly drove on these services. On one occasion, a policeman directed her to take Canadian troops back to Bordon, because Aldershot and District services had ended for the day.

Most of the early fleet are shown in picture three, which was probably taken just before the war on a piece of land on the north side of Forest Road adjacent to the Longmoor Military Railway, the line of pine trees marking the railway boundary. The picture shows from left to right, OU3744 a 1929 Dennis with Wadham body (possibly Charles's first bus), OU5645 a

1939 Albion, OU8575 a 1931 Guy ONDF with Wadham B20R body, AKN44 a 1933 Albion Victor with 20 seat body, DX8100 a 1933 Dennis, ATP102 a 1937 Bedford WTB with Wadham C25F body and ARV920 a 1938 Bedford WTB with Mulliner C25F body. (see picture four)



4. ARV920, a 1938 Bedford WTB with C25F Mulliner body (Alan Farrow Flickr)

The Albions were nicknamed Big and Little and the two Bedfords, Kadie and Mary. In addition, two utility Bedford OWB's with Duple B32F bodies, EHO406 and EHO919, were purchased in 1942 and 1943 respectively.

Now to give the reader a flavour of the Liss and District timetables with reference to the Countrybus Website. The basic pre-war timetable required one bus and two drivers shifts and consisted three return trips Wednesdays and Saturdays from Petersfield to Hawkley, one return trip Tuesdays and Saturdays from Petersfield to Alton and four trips on a Petersfield circular service via Froxfield on Wednesdays and Saturdays with an extra early morning working on Saturdays.

However, the 1939 to 1940 wartime timetable, for the Petersfield to Liphook service gives nine return trips on a weekday, thirteen on a Saturday and a total of seven on a Sunday.

To make some comparison, the current Stagecoach South service 38 from Petersfield to Alton operates daily except weekends via Liss with four return trips plus there is a service 737 which runs from Bordon to Havant and the South Downs College with one return trip daily, Monday to Friday. Of course, the main difference is that these services do not cover the local villages as previously served by Liss and District.

Both Charles and Phyllis Cartwright became exhausted by operating the buses during wartime, what with fuel rationing and other shortages, that they decided to sell the company in September 1945 to Basil Williams who traded as Hants and Sussex Motor Services based in Emsworth.

In the next part, I will deal with the company operations under the Hants and Sussex Motor Services banner.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Liss: A brief history by Dick Martin published by the Liss Area Historical Society in 2010.

Stewart Cartwright (son of Charles and Phyllis)

Members of the Liss Area Historical Society.

Countrybus Website

Hants and Sussex by Alan Lambert published in 1983 by B M Lambert of Emsworth



2. Depot access track taken by the Author 9 March 2022.



David Etheridge coach of the month.

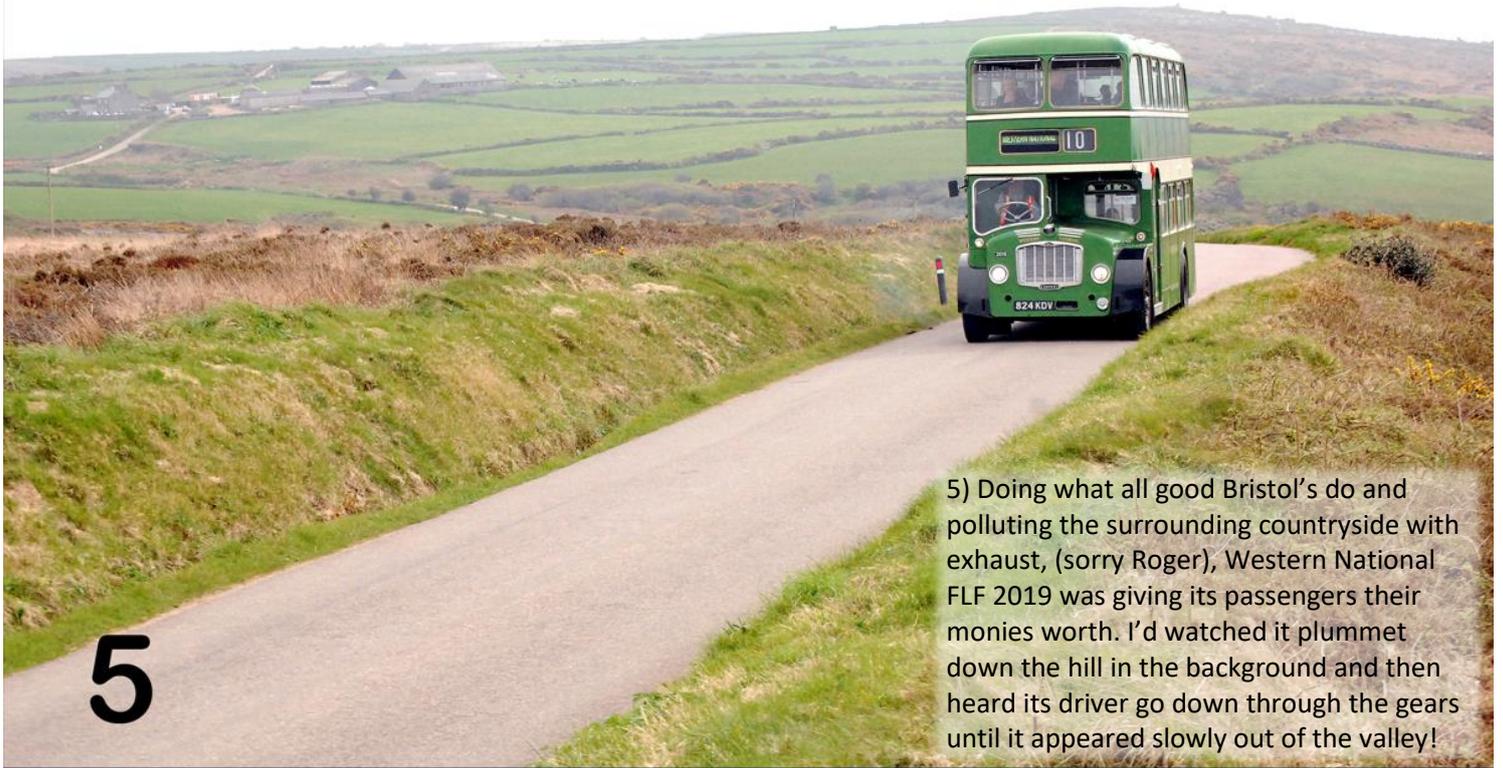
Two this time, both Volvo's.

Left: Pikes Coaches of Andover BV19LLN a Volvo B11R with Joncheere C53F bodywork purchased new, laying over in Southampton on 10th March.

Right: Stagecoach 540601 YX68 UAJ a Volvo B11R with Plaxton Elite i C71/3Ft bodywork at Southampton Parkway on 1st May on the Portsmouth to Leeds megabus service.



Set alarm for 03.30 ~ Chris Drew



5) Doing what all good Bristol's do and polluting the surrounding countryside with exhaust, (sorry Roger), Western National FLF 2019 was giving its passengers their monies worth. I'd watched it plummet down the hill in the background and then heard its driver go down through the gears until it appeared slowly out of the valley!

And so it began. Just as well I'd put a lunch together the previous evening because I was in no state to do it now. Do all the usual ablutions, make a large flask of coffee and get out the door in an hour. Set the sat-nav, not because I don't know the way but because it gives me an estimated time of arrival at the site for the first photograph of the day. In all, 14 places had been sorted for photography and by the end of the day, I'd only failed at two of them. The day was the Penzance 14th VR Revival & Vintage Bus Running Day operated jointly by the Thames Valley and Great Western Omnibus Trust and the Cornwall Bus Preservation Society



1) This was a shot I hadn't banked on. On the A30 just after Bodmin I caught up with MCO658 new to Plymouth Corporation in 1956 as its number 58. It was delivered as a closed top vehicle but roof damage in 1961 lead to this conversion. It's hard to believe this Leyland PD2/12 with sometimes hated Metro-Cammell bodywork is now 65 years old and still with its original owner. It ran on the Penzance circular all day.



2) Operating the first 16 of the day from Penzance to Carbis Bay via Nanledra and St Ives, Western National Bristol LH 3131 finds its way down from the moors.



3

3) A well-known regular performer at these rallies is Beadle bodied Bristol L6B EMW284, once 279 in the Wilts & Dorset fleet. It's owned by Lionel Tancock from Bristol and has been since 1983.

8) First Kernow service 300 runs from Penzance to Land's End along some very scenic roads. ADL 400 33601 once worked in West London on routes belonging to Metroline. As with the other buses on this route, it's had part of its lid removed although I can testify that the weather was good old Cornish stair-rods for a lot of the day....as can be seen by the clouds in the background! It was seen passing the Tregiffian Burial Chamber, a Neolithic or early Bronze Age cremation grave. When it was discovered a century ago, the road had to be re-aligned. Not bad, a bus, the weather and a history lesson all in one go!



8



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4) Entered by Plymouth Citybus, Western National Bristol LHS 1557 worked from Penzance on the famous route to Mousehole. In 1989, it was re-painted in Harvey's Blue Bus livery as homage to the original operator of the route. It spent 20 years in the fleet of Zoar Coaches of St Keverne before being acquired for preservation by its present owner. It was seen climbing up onto the moors from Gurnard's Head.

6) Re-painted in pre-NBC Western National livery in 2004 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the company, its owners, the Cornwall Bus Preservation Society have kept it that way. It was seen near the standing stones of Morvah, just abt Middle Earth!



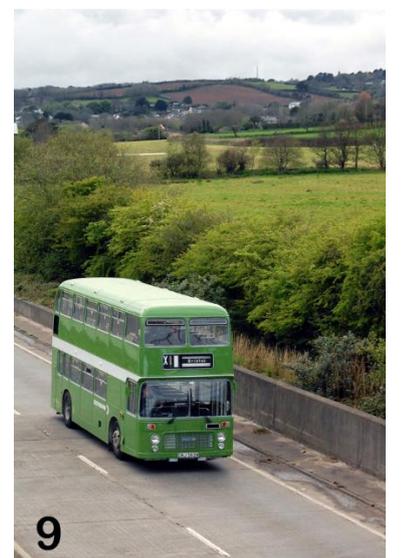
6



7

7) Also entered by the CBPS, a slightly more modern WNOG Dennis Dart. 401 joined the fleet when under the ownership of Badgerline and worked out of Plymouth. The narrow bodywork by Plaxton came in hand when plying the lanes of Devon.

9) This was one that wasn't on the featured list. Southdown 583 Bristol VRT leaving Penzance on the A30 at the end of the day



9

Guernsey.....a holiday in 2018 and again in 2022.

Graham Starke



Why Guernsey? Well, I had been to Jersey on family holidays and again in my early 20s for a much livelier time and later visited Alderney which was oh so quiet. So, from a long while back I decided that Guernsey must sit somewhere in the middle and a visit had to be made. The fact it took about 40 years to get to the island shows I do not like to rush into things.

We booked with FlyBe, but boarded a Blue Island plane at Southampton for the 35 min flight. (not by error but it did confuse us a bit) Now, I am not that good with flying, as in my opinion it defies all logic, so I sat there with a false grin and the seat belt on for the entire journey.

At the time of our arrival CT Plus were in control of the local bus services and the place was full of Dennis Darts in a vibrant green and cream livery. Most were East Lancs (of the Spryte, Myllenum or Esteem type make your own mind up from the photos) with the occasional Caetano Nimus "Slimbus" to break things up a bit. All this made a change from the Plaxton and Alexander bodied Darts that I normally encounter. But wait what was that in all over white? The first batch of 12 Wright StreetVibes had recently arrived and were starting to replace the more elderly members of the fleet. I am all for progress but the bland colour scheme was disappointing and I spent a good deal of time photographing the green ones at every opportunity. Talking to one of the drivers, he happily advised that the new Wright buses were not suited to some of the routes as without the front overhang some bends and junctions could not be taken in one go. A press report at the time said these were uncomfortable both for driver and passenger however I thought the seats were o/k at least for the short journeys. Although this year we found one vehicle had a loud annoying rattle when on tick over.

A driving technique that took me by surprise was the continued use of the pavement when confronted with an oncoming vehicle, in fact one bus driver used the pavement even when there was nothing else about. The roads are extremely narrow and often bounded by unyielding granite walls, but at least the kerbs were not too severe, all the same you feel for the tyres and tracking. One taxi driver told us that no one uses the pavements anyway as there are more cars than population on the Island. On the subject of

cars, it seemed the Fiat 500 was the favourite as they were everywhere along with the more rasping Abarth versions and as for those Porsche and Ferrari owners they must be so frustrated and never get beyond second gear.

Of the private transport companies, we tracked down Intransit who were operating a vintage Albion and a number of more modern Cheetahs and Optimos. Their web site showed that a second Albion was being restored so a visit just had to be made. Once found the staff were very chatty and explained that the completed Albion was out earning its keep whilst proudly showing us the second one. They had fitted a modern diesel engine and gearbox (I think a new DAF unit) and were working on upgrading the braking system. The body was a shell but they were confident it would all be up and running within a few months. Their enthusiasm did not make me doubt the prediction. Another private company was Island Coachways, but their fleet escaped my camera except for a Ford Transit sat at the airport on our return.

All in all, the island was such an enjoyable place to visit that a return trip was arranged for 2020.....and then came Covid!

We booked a flight with Aurigny for the April time and when they had to cancel, we had a choice of a full refund or rebook for 2021. So, we rebooked, thank you they said and that will be another 20 quid! The same thing happened when April 2201 arrived and we rebooked yet again and paid the extra charge. So far, the price had gone up twice and we hadn't even seen the plane. Strange how the hotel could manage to keep the same price.

We boarded Aurigny G-OATR at Eastleigh (sorry Southampton International Airport) at 08:20 and had a pleasant flight. A taxi to the hotel soon confirmed that pavement driving was still a required and acceptable practice for all road users. His pet hate was the number of Chelsea tractors on the Island and all the road works and road closures during the school holidays.

We were at Cobo Bay on the opposite side to St. Peter Port, so our first bus ride to the centre of things was provided by a Wright Street Vibe and driven by a Scottish lady who helpfully advised we should buy a Puffin Card from the travel shop. This we did, for it allows you a reduction from the £1.25 flat fare to one of only 75p.....bargain. Oh yes, the buses are now cashless, which must be a good thing for the staff. This time the Town Terminus in St. Peter Port was full of Wright buses, still in all over white but with a few coloured vinyl streamers stuck to the sides to enliven them a bit. We saw two Darts, of the East Lancs variety, one in the old green and cream and one with overall adverts and they appeared to be used as crew buses and were not seen in service. There were also at least three M/Benz Sprinters in use, all with mainland registrations, and in all over white. These appeared randomly on the various services and seemed to cope well with the low number of off-peak passengers.

There we were with a bus time table, a Puffin Card and a mental plan of what we wanted to see and do. Simple as they say, now factor in all the service cancellations that were listed on every stand and you suddenly realise how short of drivers they are. CT Plus were running a concerted recruitment programme with coverage on the local television, newspapers and on their buses. They say it is all down to illness and they would like to see the minimum age for pcv driving down to 18 in keeping with the rest of the UK. They are offering between £35 and £40k per year! What's not to like I hear, driving about in a new bus, hardly likely to exceed 25 mph, no cash to worry about and a pleasant environment. One of the drivers (a Geordie) told me that more and more drivers were leaving and returning to the mainland and that the shortage was not all covid related. Our taxi driver, on the way back to the airport, had a much stronger view of things. In his opinion the problem is threefold with no restrictions on bus driving hours, the expectation to work long hours and the local cost of living that was out of control. He also considered that CT Plus were a rubbish company to work for, and before long Guernsey would end up like Monaco a place full of rich tax exiles (his words not mine). To add to the gloom the night buses had just been suspended due to violence towards drivers, both astonishing and saddening that night time in Guernsey was no different than anywhere else.

Besides all this we had a great time on the Island and managed a trip to Herm where the only motor transport were trailers towed by quad bikes or a tractor. We had a look for puffins on the southern cliffs but the nearest we came to a puffin was the picture on the CT Plus travel card.

Back to Guernsey, Island Coachways had a cream 33 seat coach out on private hire and Intransit seem to have reduced their operations still keeping the preserved Albion but no mention of the work in progress on the other one and all mention of it has disappeared from their web site.

Once out of St. Peter Port the traditional bus stop poles and flags were few and far between with in most cases just the word BUS painted on the road or pavement. It did not seem to matter what side of the road you were on as a cheery wave was all that was required for a bus to stop.

Another interesting feature of the island was the good driving standard and above all the general courtesy afforded to pedestrians, if you stood by the kerb drivers would more than likely stop and wave you across. In fact, on one day, I stopped and turned around to see where my wife had got to and then noticed a car had stopped obviously thinking I wanted to cross, I almost felt obliged to cross over. It made a change from the drivers in Southampton that delight in ignoring red traffic lights and there were no e scooters to run you over.

On the day of departure, the predicted fog arrived and messed up all the flights in and out, such that we provisionally booked another night in the hotel just in case. As it happened our flight took off right on time at 13:30, but others were delayed or even cancelled. The plane home was

supplied by Blue Island, their G-ISLM, it was the type with two wings and two propellers and seated 72 passengers.

Finally, would I visit again, and the answer is a resounding yes but not for a while.



A modern line up at the Town terminal, April 2022.



One of the three Sprinters that I came across.



Caetano and East Lancs at St. Peter Port in the April sunshine.



The Albion restoration project at the Intransit yard in 2018.



OPERATOR NEWS

Company and fleet news always welcome from operators, members & enthusiasts,
email barry.barnessoc@gmail.com

BAILEY'S BUSES, Portsmouth Report from Matt Forbes.

They've taken a pair of Mercedes O295 Citaros from Q-Park at Heathrow – these being BD15 XZJ/XJL and are running around in all-white unbranded colours at the moment. Another arrival is another (old-style – O530) Citaro. This one has been repainted into their turquoise and cream livery and is carrying GX12 KHG. At the moment, I've been unable to trace the original plate for this, but it's ex-Bus Vannin, so is suspected to be from their KMN 2xxU batch which have recently been disposed of by the IoM company.

BEAT THE STREET, Romsey.

Increase at existing operating centre: 29 Premier Way, Romsey, SO51 9DQ (Romsey Coaches depot). New authorisation for 7 vehicles.

BLUESTAR

YJ07 JTX, VDL SB120/Wright B39F, new to Marchwood, sold to Shelton Motors for scrap.

Go Ahead Unilink failed to get funding from the Zero Emission Bus Regional Area fund (ZEBRA) for fleet replacement.

COLISEUM

Directors: A Lawman, A Carter, T Stables. New operating centre, Broadcut, Fareham, PO16 8TB. Authorisation for 16 vehicles.

Updated fleet list now on the SOC website. (Graham Starke).

GARD (Southampton Mini Link)

Sold AD Dart/Pointer. GX54 DVY to Sussex Coaches. New operating centre: Xelabus, Unit 10 Barton Park, Eastleigh. New authorisation for 2 vehicles. Remove operating centre, Lower Kingston Farm, Ringwood.



SN57 DWK Enviro 200 B32D new to Blue Triangle in Vincents Walk on the 14 to Chartwell Green. © Phil Savin.

FIRST BUS

PH0006159/433 Operating between Hambledon, The Gardens and Havant Campus service 654 effective from 27 March 2022. To amend Route and Timetable.
PH0006159 From Fareham Railway Station to Gosport Bus Station via HMS Collingwood No. C1 / C2, 2nd July 2022 only.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The county has missed out on funding from the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

NORTHSIDE TRAVEL SOLUTIONS

Director Timothy Lewis, 38 Hillyfields, Nursling, Southampton, SO16 0XP. Operating Centre, Canterton Lodge, Botley Road, North Baddesley, SO52 9DD. Authorisation for one vehicle.

PORTSMOUTH CITY COACHES

An extensive interview with Mike Elkin in a recent addition of Route One contained a fleet list, which I have reproduced here.

Registration	Chassis	Body	Seating+stand
UUF329J	Leyland Leopard	Plaxton Elite	22
T759JYB	DAF	Bova Futura	45
M300ELK	Scania	OmniCity	42
M600ELK	Scania	East Lancs OmniDekka	90
M500ELK	Scania	East Lancs OmniDekka	90
M800ELK	Scania	East Lancs OmniDekka	90
M900ELK	Scania	East Lancs OmniDekka	90
GN06GDO	Scania	OmniCity (artic)	53+82
CU06CKY	Ford	Transit	16
M555ELK	ADL	Enviro200	37
SF57JSY	Mercedes-Benz	Sprinter/Koch	25
M400ELK	Scania	OmniLink	51+37
K777SSE	DAF	Van Hool Astromega	85
ORV992	Volvo B11RT	Plaxton Elite-i	65
N77RJE	Volvo B9R	Caetano Levante	48
N77PCC	Scania	Irizar i6	53
YS16LND	Scania	Irizar i6	53
YS16LNE	Scania	Irizar i6	53
YS16LNF	Scania	Irizar i6	53

PORTSMOUTH

Cheaper bus tickets and faster bus journeys are one step closer thanks to a partnership that has been approved by Portsmouth City Council this week.

The Enhanced Partnership between bus operators in the city and Portsmouth City Council will be submitted to central government next month, and sets out ways to fund new, cheaper, tickets and make bus journey times shorter and more reliable. This is a fundamental part of the National Bus Strategy designed to increase bus use and deliver a wide range of economic, health and social objectives. Portsmouth is planning to create a better bus service and the partnership establishes a formal agreement between the

council and bus operators Stagecoach and First bus that will support the delivery of Portsmouth's Transport Strategy. The partnership recognises lower bus fares are the top priority for residents, and will seek funding for new, cheaper, tickets available on both First and Stagecoach buses. It also proposes measures to make bus journey times shorter and more reliable, improve passenger satisfaction and offer better evening, Sunday and early morning journeys.

The city will receive £48.3m from the Bus Service Improvement Plan. The city will also receive funding in association with Hampshire and First Bus for thirty-four new vehicles from the Zero Emission Bus Regional Area fund (ZEBRA)

QV EDUCATION

PH1136975 From Boundary Oak School to Bath Lane (Lower) Effective date: 26 April 2022, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon, term time only.

STAGECOACH

Transfers along the coast, 10945 Worthing to Farlington, 15989 Farlington to Worthing. (*Shaun Daniels*)



A lorry that got stuck near a bridge on the A3090 caused severe delays after the road was forced to be shut. Emergency services closed the A3090 Winchester Hill in Romsey in both directions because of a 'police incident' on Tuesday afternoon (March 22). Stagecoach buses experienced 'severe traffic' and congestion in the town centre. Many of their services were delayed.

WINCHESTER COLLEGE

A tour company has been blasted for its "inhumane" treatment of 50 students from the University of Winchester who were left stranded at a service station for seven hours. the students left marooned near Folkestone after their coach caught fire while on route to Croatia for their societies' end of year tour. After being promised a backup coach would arrive by ILOVETOUR, the company which organised the £400 week-long holiday, Jen and her friends were later told they'd have to either fork out for flights or turn around and head home. iGo Travel are based in North London their strapline is "Book your most reliable coach service with us!" (*Ed*)



36827 (GX62BBU) an ADL ENVIRO 200 on loan for at least 2 weeks from Portsmouth and branded for route 39 Havant and Waterlooville. Seen on service 1 to King Arthurs Way in Bridge Street, Andover on the 5 April 2022.

Noted in Andover Bus Station on the afternoon of the 5 April 2022 was ADL ENVIRO 200 36920 (YX63GYC) on loan from Chichester and branded for The Witterings, route 52/53.

(*David Lindsell*)

XELABUS/XELACOACH (*Graham Starke*)

N 321 KES has been repainted back into fleet livery and looks very fresh, or even still wet.



YV 03 PZF looks to have had a recent coat of paint.



Below: The Van Hool, PDL 298, has in fact been kicking around with Seaview since 2015. New to Chalfont as WA 09 AZC, and came to Seaview via Parnham's. The Seaview vinyls had been removed and the fleet number 605 applied.



Below: Photographic proof that I am not going around the bend. This Van Hool, had just left the Red Funnel terminal (complete with Kassboher Setra lettering) and it sort of crept up on me hence the odd shot. You can also pick out 603 on the near side corner, I assume this is a Xelabus fleet number.



551 - YN06 TGF is now L 6 XEL, 554 - YN 05 WGF - N 321 KES is now J 12 XEL and in fleet green, 556 - YU 52 XVL is another ex-Sleaford Scania/East Lancs, still in white, 435 - SN 65 OHH has changed from green to purple ready for King Edwards graphics to be applied.....and possibly a reg. change. The Seaview Optimo SN 57 EHH was on site.

The company trading assets of long-established coach operator Seaview Services of Sandown on the Isle of Wight have been acquired by Eastleigh-based Xelabus.

Eight vehicles and five staff form part of the deal. The Seaview Services name will be retained, but a revised logo has already been introduced and the business will fall under a new Xelacoach brand. In addition, Xelabus has sourced a pair of PSVAR compliant, Euro VI Mercedes-Benz Tourismos from Mistral Bus and Coach to upgrade the Seaview fleet.

The previous owners of Seaview Services opted to sell the business "with a view to its well-known name continuing on the island," says Xelabus.

Managing Director of Xelabus Gareth Blair adds that the Hampshire company has been looking to establish a coaching division "for some time." Such a step sits well alongside its operation of a large number of home-to-school and college contracts. "We regularly receive requests for coach hire for longer distances," adds Mr Blair.

He continues: "This acquisition provides Xelabus with a platform for further growth in the private hire, coach tours and corporate markets, as well as strengthening our network in Hampshire." The Xelacoach brand on the mainland will develop "over the next six months," he advises.

Seaview was established as Newell's Express Motor Service in 1922 as a bus operator between Ryde and Sandown, adopting the Seaview Services name later. (Route One)



YY66 PDV in Eastleigh bus station. © Robert Winkworth.

First Bus news from Shaun Daniels

SV22 UZC Wright Streetlite DF SC5DSRDYU22000050 B38F Delivered 4/2022 Fleet No. 63401
SV22 UZD Wright Streetlite DF SC5DSRDYU22000051 B38F Delivered 4/2022 Fleet No. 63402
SV22 UZE Wright Streetlite DF SC5DSRDYU22000052 B38F Delivered 4/2022 Fleet No. 63403
SV22 UZF Wright Streetlite DF SC5DSRDYU22000053 B38F Delivered 4/2022 Fleet No. 63404
SV22 UZG Wright Streetlite DF SC5DSRDYU22000054 B38F Delivered 4/2022 Fleet No. 63405
SV22 UZH Wright Streetlite DF SC5DSRDYU22000055 B38F Delivered 4/2022 Fleet No. 63406
SV22 UZJ Wright Streetlite DF SC5DSRDYU22000056 B38F Delivered 4/2022 Fleet No. 63407
SV22 UZK Wright Streetlite DF SC5DSRDYU22000057 B38F Delivered 4/2022 Fleet No. 63408
SV22 Fleet No. 63409
SV22 Fleet No. 63410
SV22 Fleet No. 63411
SV22 Fleet No. 63412
SV22 Fleet No. 63413
SV22 Fleet No. 63414
SV22 Fleet No. 63415
SV22 Fleet No. 63416
SV22 Fleet No. 63417
SV22 Fleet No. 63418
SV22 Fleet No. 63419
SV22 Fleet No. 63420
SV22 Fleet No. 63432
SV22 Fleet No. 63433

63109, 63110, 63053, 63062 & 63190-92 to Weymouth. 67182-188 & 67198, 99 & 200 to Hilsea. 37580-3 & 5 - 6 to Hoeford when winter timetable happens. 32093 and 32766 on last year at Hoeford before scrap.

A post by area manager Carol Sim of 33968 in the Jurassic coaster livery for Weymouth.



Bus usage and service changes Solent Bus Network May & June 2022. David Etheridge

Bus Usage and Traffic levels post pandemic.

From the official Dft Transport use totals for week ending 13th May bus usage outside London was at 82% of pre pandemic levels, London was slightly behind this at 79%.

On the Railways, National Rail was at last showing recovery at 75% but again London was lagging behind with the Tube at 69%.

Overall traffic was nearly back at pre-pandemic levels at 99% although cars were only at 94% with the shortfall made up of vans at 112% and HGVs at 106%.

Cycling was again showing growth now the weather is improving at 131%.

Bus service changes in the Solent region for May & June 2022.

Now that the Traffic Commissioners have reverted to the 42-day notice period for service changes longer notice of service changes is available. From information from various websites here are the service changes for May and June 2022.

First Bus Portsmouth / Fareham.

20 Fareham – Wickham: 29/5 Hail and Ride section introduced at Hill Park between Marlow Close stop and junction of Hill Park Road / Highlands Road.

First Bus Southampton.

No changes.

Go South Coast Bluestar.

2 Southampton – Fair Oak: 29/5 Mon to Fri am Boorley Green to Southampton journey to start from new Boorley Park Estate,

3 Southampton – Eastleigh: 29/5 All journeys diverted to serve new Boorley Park estate with minor retiming.

Go South Coast Unilink.

U1N Southampton – Wessex Lane/Eastleigh: 29/4 Night buses Friday & Saturday evenings reintroduced.

Go South Coast morebus.

New Forest Tours: 25/6 2022 season starts to 18/9 with minor retiming from 2021 season for reliability.

Stagecoach Andover.

1 Andover – King Arthur's Way: 16/5 evening journeys via East Anton rerouted to use new East Anton bus gate.

6 Andover – East Anton: 16/5 rerouted to use new East Anton bus gate.

Stagecoach Havant & Chichester.

No Changes.

Stagecoach Winchester.

No Changes.

Xelabus.

No Changes.

BLUESTAR

Over the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend, we will be running a slightly varied level of service. Take a look below to see how things will be running:

Thursday 2nd June: A Saturday service will run on all Bluestar routes except QuayConnect & Bluestar 6 which will run to a Sunday timetable. There will be a Sunday service on all Unilink routes.

Friday 3rd June A Saturday service will run on all Bluestar routes except QuayConnect & Bluestar 6 which will run on a Sunday timetable. There will be a Sunday service on all Unilink routes, except the U1N which will be running a normal service.

Saturday 4th June, a normal Saturday service will run on all routes. Sunday 5th June, a normal Sunday service will run on all routes.

Tales from 226 No.2

These are short pieces of personal recollections from my time at 226 Portswood Road. I have always had a terrible memory for names, so if any reader would like to fill in the gaps or add to the recollection, I'm more than happy to print the information. Barry T.

What do you do after the traffic staff have been on strike for five weeks? The answer for Paul Cordell and me was to be handed a deck of cards. One card for every bus, each containing information on the advertisements supposedly displayed on the inside and outside of the bus and the date there should be removed. Needless to say, very few proved accurate. The bigger problem we had was how to get between the rows of buses and crane our necks to see what was plastered between decks. We made the task last far longer than necessary; I can honestly say we sat down on every bus Southampton owned. (Paul was last seen working for Hampshire Bus behind the information desk at Winchester bus station in the 1980s).



First Bus SN14 FFC working the M1 from Eastleigh bus station. © Barry T.



Xelacoach SM57 EHH © Robert Winkworth

Phil Savin at Brooklands



VD 3433



GW 713



ERA 220Y



Left: XO 1048

Right: Tea and smoke stop on way to Brooklands 10/4/022



David Lindsell - Andover Diary



I have discovered that St Mary's Church in Andover has a new Church Bus. It was formerly, Stagecoach London 18484 (LX55BEY) a Dennis Trident 2 with ALX 400 body.

Shaun Daniels in Southampton & Winchester 20/4/22.



Above and below, photographs from Winchester.



Above and below photographs from Southampton.

