



### **Honk for Hope – Mike Elkin**

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## Editorial & Club News

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This topsy-turvy year continues, and as I write this editorial on the 14th September, the temperature outside is 28° and the country has just gone into 'rule of six' semi lockdown.

In this edition, I have taken the opportunity to print an extended version of Mike Elkins' item from the SOC August virtual meeting in which the first 'Honk for hope' coach protest had reached London. Shortly afterwards, a glimmer of hope for part of the industry arrived in the announcement of £40m from central government for school transport. Those coach and bus operators with a mixture of work will at least see some benefits from schools returning at the beginning of September perhaps 'Honk for hope' should be replaced with 'Pupils for profits'. For those coach operators more dependent upon the tour/excursion market, the future still looks bleak especially with the onset of winter, and the harbingers of doom are predicting the worst for the core demographic of this type of service.

The number of bus passengers also appears to be rising, primarily among the young with the reopening of colleges. However, despite the best efforts of operators to convince me otherwise, I remain sceptical about onboard safety. Whilst I am delighted to see students at our local sixth form college adhering to the facemask rule, they are very much in the minority. Simple observation of passengers from the pavement clearly shows a lack of enforcement of the facemask rules and stories abound of passengers removing their mask once past the driver. Standing just last week outside a bus station emphasized the issue: a bus with no social distancing provision on the seats, no driver protective screen and no driver PPE, departed with fifteen passengers only one of whom wore a mask and that was only covering the mouth. It is all well and good for operators to take to social media proclaiming their hygiene standards, if the reality once out on the road tells a different story. With operating margins being squeezed, profits dropping and a hint that the larger operators are now seeking to embrace the route franchising option, surely getting the support of enforcement agencies and proving to passengers that the rules will be enforced is the first step to increasing passenger confidence and numbers. Otherwise, the next protest we see in Westminster will be double-decker buses emblazoned with 'Beep for benefits'.

### 2021 Photographic Competition

As many members have been unable to get out-and-about with their cameras in 2020 and the likelihood that social distancing will still be in place for the 2021 AGM, the format will be different and the competition will be a one-off special. The theme will be:

#### 'In memory of Bob Gray'

Members are invited to enter one photograph of a preserved vehicle. The photograph must be taken by the entrant.

Photographs should be submitted to the normal email address as jpegs or by post to my home address (details on the current membership list). The closing date for entries is Sunday 6th December 2020. The competition entries will be placed into a slide show, similar to the virtual meetings, and distributed by email for members to vote. Results will be announced and the shield awarded at the AGM or in the February edition of the news sheet.

Solent Bus News is produced bi-monthly by The Solent Omnibus Club and welcomes articles and comments from its membership, other interested parties and the PCV industry. Articles, comments, fleet news and photographs can be submitted via email at [barry.barnessoc@gmail.com](mailto:barry.barnessoc@gmail.com)

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

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## Nostalgia – Chris Drew

From the mid 60s to the early 70s I spent a lot of my summers working on a friend's caravan near St Eval Camp on the northern coast of Cornwall. There were always things that needed repairing or repainting because of the salt laden air. It was also a cheap holiday. I lived rent free for the time I was there so long as the jobs on the list got done.

St Eval was situated on the northern side of the Vale of Lanherne whilst the southern edge was filled with St Mawgan airfield which at the time was still an operational RAF base. Often a quiet night's sleep were shattered the local Nimrod pilots practiced circuits and bumps for hours on end. Plates and glasses would walk across the table while cutlery danced a tattoo with each other in the drawers. All this was followed by the stench of un-burnt fuel as the re-built Comet headed out to sea on yet another circular flight to the opposite end of the runway.

The other points of reference were St Columb Major at the eastern end and Mawgan Porth beach to the west.

Then there were the buses I had come to photograph. Passing along narrow lanes with high stone walls either side with just a thin covering of foliage. Standing in the caravan doorway they can be heard across the Vale but sometimes, they took some finding. I thought it would be a good idea to consult a timetable. I found one at the local NAAFI along with everything else you might ever need, brilliant place! Now coming from London where timetables weren't needed, it seemed at first sight as if it had been put together with the aid of an 'enigma' machine. Even with a Phd. in joined up



writing the various summer holidays spent in the area would turn out to be full of surprises.

First rule: all buses go to Newquay even if they're passing me going in the wrong direction. On the odd occasion that they don't have Newquay set on the blinds, then they seem to be heading for that well known beauty spot of 'SERVICE'. Even when I thought I'd mastered the time-table, luck was still to play a huge part of almost every shot and looking back, I wouldn't have had it any other way.

A case in point 1) After a lunchtime swim at Mawgan Porth, a quick check of the time-table by the beach shop and was given to understand that there was no bus would be calling at the stop for at least an hour. With that I set off to walk the couple of miles to the caravan. That's when 621 made its appearance and as if to add salt to the wound, the blind was set for St Eval Camp, this was rare. The upside of the situation was that the Perkins engine was making such an effort to do the climb that I had enough time to get the camera out and take the shot. Do I think I got the better end of the deal? My feet didn't think so when I finally staggered in through the caravan door!

2) In 2013 I visited my old haunts again. Nostalgia is a powerful feeling but gone were the rumble of a Gardner or Perkins engines and not a Bristol in sight, surely the quintessential country bus. At least the buses are still green and they have a timetable which makes sense. The walk up the hill to take this shot took somewhat longer than in my youth but the Western Greyhound Mercedes arrived for its photo to be taken on schedule with a correct blind set for Padstow via the coast road and I would recommend it to anyone wanting a spectacular ride.

May 1933

When Mr. G. A. Cross applied to the Southern Traffic Commissioners for the renewal of the licence for his Ellson-Gosport Ferry service, incorporating with it the service operated over the same route by Mr. H. Mason, the Gosport and Fareham Omnibus Co. alleged that under a clause of the Gosport and Fareham Omnibus Act other bus businesses in Gosport were precluded from changing hands.

The Commissioners over-ruled this objection and it is stated that the company is appealing against the decision.

## Honk for Hope – Mike Elkin



Wheeler's BJ69 WTL, Volvo B11R with MCV C55F body, new September 2019.

On Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020 420 coaches from all corners of the UK joined forces at Heston Services on the M4 to create one convoy which took them through the centre of London as far as Tower Bridge & then return via the same route. The reason behind organising this was to try and get coach operators noticed by the government in these hard times of Covid shut down.

The coaching industry is not just about day trips, it covers rail replacement, express services, school services and government contracts to name a few. Bus operators have been given grants to help them get through this situation yet the government does not recognise that coach operators fall into any of the categories that have had grants issued. When you think that nowadays a new double deck coach costs just short of £500,000, this vehicle has to be working constantly to pay for its finance along with other business costs.

I will say that the Palace of Westminster part way through the convoy demanded that coach drivers were not to 'honk their horns' and police were instructed to fine any that did!!

Rather than take a vehicle or two I decided that I would go by train and support the industry on the ground. I made my way by rather uncomfortable train from Havant to London Waterloo with a god damn awful face mask on whilst social distancing from the other 6 people in my carriage. Once in London I made the short walk across Westminster Bridge to Parliament Square where I set up camp for the next 4 hours!



Left: Preserved ex Shearings Volvo/Van Hool.

Right: Murray & Son Neoplan Starliner.





The Convoy was led quite aptly by recently preserved ex Shearings Volvo B10M Van Hool Alizee P306 VWR. This vehicle was new to Wallace Arnold but passed to Shearings with the takeover of W.A. This vehicle has been preserved into the livery portrayed on the Corgi OOC model which was based on this very coach.

My favourite coach entered in the protest was the VDL FHD2 Futura HY17 THE belonging to Waterside Tours, based in Hythe, Southampton. This coach will always hold a place in my heart as in my former life in coach sales, this was the first new vehicle that I sold. As all of the Waterside vehicles, this was presented in immaculate condition. (See front cover)

The vehicle that travelled the furthest on the day was a Neoplan Starliner 2 belonging to Murray & Son Coach Hire from near Motherwell, Scotland with the personal registration plate BM03 MAS.

I hope you enjoyed my snippet of the day, if you want to see more they are in an album on my flickr site

<https://flic.kr/s/aHsmPyftW1>

*(This article originally formed part of the August virtual meeting. All photos by author).*



AC Travel, Gosport. Left: OE16 WJC Neoplan N2216/3SHDL C49Ft. New to Pride of the Clyde, acquired from NMC. Right: X27 ACT Volvo B11R/Jonckheere JHV C53Ft. New to Parks (KSK 948), acquired from Glen Valley (BU14 EHB).



Angela Holidays, Lowford. R600 ACL, VDL FHD2-122 C44Ft, new 2017.

# 50 years old, Many Happy Returns? – Chris Drew



"This is the most advanced bus in the world. As Great Britain's largest motor manufacturer we are delighted to be playing a major part in the provision of first-class public transport which plays such a major role in increasing the operational efficiency of a modern industrial nation."

So pronounced Lord Stokes, the chairman of the British Leyland Motor Corporation at the formation of a new company owned 50/50 by that organisation and the National Bus Company. The project called for the building of a new bus factory in Workington, Cumberland. And so, Leyland National Co. Ltd. was born. The plant was set to cover 10-acres of a 40-acre site on the Lillyhall Trading Estate at Workington. By 1971 there was work for 400 people with the hope that that figure would rise to 525 after five years. Added infrastructure such as a dual carriageway was built to link up with the M6 for ease of materials in, buses out.

It was a scary moment when I heard that the Leyland National was about to celebrate its 50th anniversary of its entry into service. I can so clearly remember chasing London Country's SuperBus examples around Stevenage on my motorbike when they were new. It's just one more sobering thought when I think of the time that has elapsed since our first meeting!

As a simple enthusiast, I had a magpie's liking for all things shiny which I now regret was to the detriment of many older types that were disappearing fast. My first impressions of the Leyland National were one of a more European looking bus than had been seen on these shores before. That was not surprising as it was styled by the Italian designer Giovanni Michelotti with one eye towards sales in the Common Market. Its design though, didn't carry the grace of Marshall's BET lines or even the balance of the latest fare from ECW but it has stood the test of time and in some lights looks better now than when new. All of that though couldn't cover up the bone shaking ride and mechanical problems which left it a very poor second to the bus it was meant to replace, Bristol's RE.

The Leyland National brought with it a couple of interesting features. Integral construction for instance, a system that never quite caught on in the UK although it did have some successes, the Routemaster and Bristol's LS are but two, even if the former was considered out of date when designed and the latter had sales restricted to the nationalised companies. The second and potentially most disastrous feature was its power unit. It was explained to me by a friend who was a fitter working for Bristol at Bath garage. To a non-mechanic it made sense and went like this.

"I'm asked to change something at the top of the engine. I remove the head, do what I have to do, fit a new gasket or two and replace the already mentioned head, couple of hours at most. With the 510 fixed head power unit in the National, the

same job might mean dropping the engine out, draining the sump, removing the crank shaft and a piston or two, do the job and reverse the process, more like a day's work."

He likened it to taking a piece of grit out of your eye using a certain lower appendage that normally resides in the trouser area! He'd thought that one out! He was also a brilliant bass player and the photograph of A)1420 (JHU861L) was taken in the spring of 1976 after a gig played at Bath University when we delivered his PA back to a lock up shed in the yard sometime after mid-night.

When production commenced it was possible to get a National in colours that approximated to some company liveries of the day. Northern General and Ribble had early deliveries in dark red while light red, dark green were also available being a near match but simplified version of existing operators' liveries. This all happened before the memo arrived from 'on high' at the National Bus Company dictating the use of just two colours: poppy red and leaf green. At London Transport's insistence, London bus red was added to the colour card, and their fleet eventually amounted to over 500 examples acquired between 1973 and 1980 and you don't argue with a customer that size. As more municipalities and PTEs became interested in the National so their liveries began to appear in the streets. Two examples, Cardiff chose a bright orange while Portsmouth had their, still (nearly) traditional white and maroon as seen with B) 107 outside Eastney depot.

Although the National was going to be a one size fits all bus, its integral construction meant, that for a standardised bus, it could sometimes be configured to fit an operator's needs with fewer problems than otherwise might have cropped up. C) In the first photo it shows an example of one for British Airways with the front entrance turned through 90 degrees making it possible to drive end on to the loading stairs. This technically made the bus a 'half-cab.' D) The second shot taken at the 1974 Commercial Motor Show shows how the body-shell could be fitted out as a major incident centre and ambulance. After the show, it was converted back to a bus and entered service with Midland Red.



In 1978, Leyland brought out a simplified model (10351B/1R) which was intended to replace the Bristol LH light bus used on rural routes around the NBC area. It was to be available in a single length (10.3m) and had a revised interior that had minimal lighting and without the rear roof-mounted heating unit in previous models. Heating was moved back to under the seats where it had always been. These vehicles were lighter and cheaper which helped make for extra sales. The example in E) is Crosville SNL644 leaving the depot at Morfa Nefyn in north Wales.

1979 saw the introduction of the National 2. It differed from its predecessor mainly by having a wider choice of engines, along with a new nose molding giving it a more bulbous look and a grille to cool the new front-mounted radiator. It also had a revised rear end with new lights and a different engine door. In photo F) it shows one of many two door National 2s bought by London Transport for use on the busy 'RED ARROW' route in central London. The National 2 was powered by initially the 0.680 engine then later the TL11. The Leyland 510 engine was no longer being offered, yippee some garage engineers might have said!

In 1981, Eastern Counties National LG781 was fitted with a Gardner 6HLXB engine as an experiment after being damaged in an accident. This was to prove the prototype for many future engine conversions. Leyland ended up being taken to court by Gardner accused of not offering their engine as an option in the fast selling National. The case went the way of Gardner and as a result began to offer the Leyland National 2 with, from 1982, initially the 6HLXB and later the 6HLXCT.



The very last National 2 built was a dual purpose 52 seater and it went to Halton Borough in November 1985 and now preserved.

From a passenger's point of view, yes, one was always grateful to see a bus when it was needed, job done you might say. From a personal point of view, the lack of decent padding on the seats would often mean an undignified excursion of your own, especially if seated anywhere near the rear wheel arch.

Now 50 years old, the specs have become a little rose tinted and folks will queue up at rallies for a white knuckle ride. Mind you, I might not have needed specs if the afore mentioned white knuckle ride had not detached my retinas on my journeys from Aldgate to Romford in the early days!



### 30 years ago (First published in news sheet No.8 March 1979)

New vehicles were flooding in to replace time expired vehicles, and making good the Wartime losses. All was not plain sailing however as Hants and Dorset found out. New Bristol K6A's (TD896 - 914) were delivered but not to H & D, they went, in H & D livery to London Transport who kept them for the best part of a year. They were the first H & D Bristol's without AUTO-VAC tanks. However the following month H & D received a diverted order - this time one originally intended for South Africa in the shape of 1219 - 1224 Leyland PD2/1 's. Their H30/26R Leyland Bodies were the first new Highbridge vehicles for 20 years. They worked the Fawley - Southampton routes for most of their 13 years.

Southdown too had some unusual new vehicles in the shape of 82-91, Dennis Falcons with B30R bodies by the same manufacture. They spent the whole of their P.S.V. life working Hayling Island Services. 82 was an exhibit at the 1948 Commercial Show.

By contrast Portsmouth Corporation were breaking up some of their 1932 Crossley Condors. The seats from their English Electric bodies were then used to replace slatted wooden seats in the Wartime Bedford owb's (1943) and Daimler CWA6's (1944).





**Provincial OCG 444. Photograph Michael Dryhurst, words Roy Jetten.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 20 JO 5404 AEC Regent 1    Weymann H52R 7/32, | 21 JO 5405 AEC Regent 1    Weymann H52R 7/32, |
| 22 JO 5406 AEC Regent 1    Weymann H52R 7/32, | 67 JBK 668 Bedford SBO    Duple C36F 7/54,    |
| 68 OCG 444 AEC Regent    Reading FC35F 8/55,  | 69 PCG 436 AEC Regent    Reading FC35F 5/56   |

Mr White set about during the mid-fifties updating the small Private Hire fleet of coaches operated by the parent company, Provincial Traction. First to arrive was an all-new Bedford coach in 1954, the following saw a dramatic change of policy.

In 1955 Mr White decided to make use of three former City of Oxford Regent chassis that had been in storage since the late forties. His intention was making two good chassis from three, after being re-conditioned and extended, the chassis was then fitted with an AEC 7.7 engine. After fitting with a new Reading full front coach body it was numbered 68 and re-registered OCG 444. Though the body was 7'.6" wide, by omitting the lining panels allowed extra shoulder room, which part compensated the benefits of an 8' wide body.

In 1956 a further similar chassis was constructed and fitted with a similar coach body, this was to become number 69, and re-registered PCG 436.

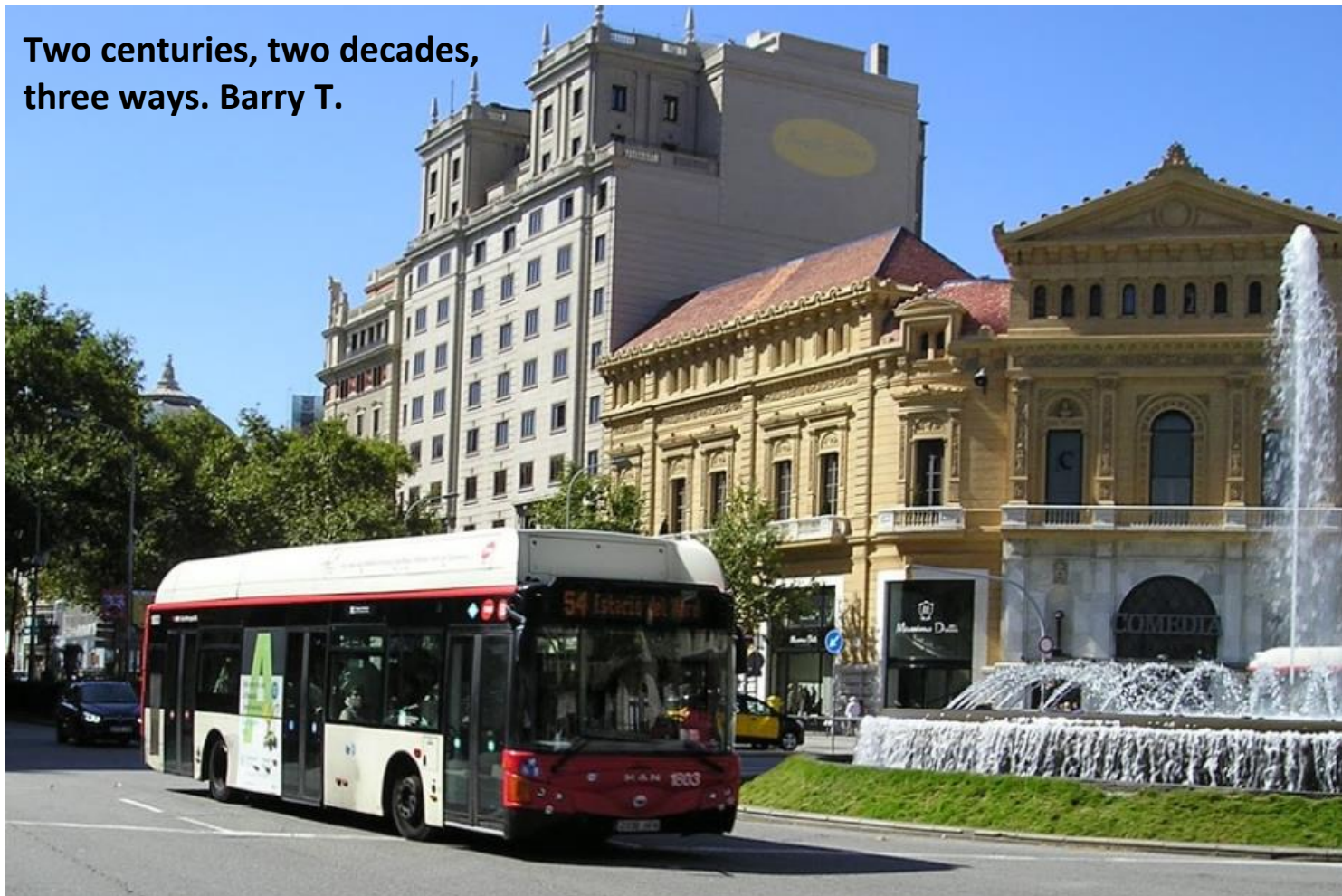
One could not fail to recognise the similarity of both coaches in appearance to Duple Coachwork. Both could on occasions be used on stage carriage work by fitting a pay desk on the front bulkhead. In this mode they would be 'On Hire To Gosport & Fareham Omnibus Company'.

Both remained in service until April 1969, when both in the same month were sold to a local dealer for scrap.



YRV301 (1962) Bedford SB5 . Duple Super Vega C41F . Ex-Byng . Portsmouth . Bought by Nick from Westbury scrapyard for £600 , sold onto Matt & Yade then scrapped . Photo Nick Dray.

## Two centuries, two decades, three ways. Barry T.



It is very seldom that I visit a foreign location more than once but Barcelona is an exception. The first occasion was in 1973 travelling by coach, a French registered Mercedes Benz 0305, from Boulogne via Paris and Madrid. In 2010 it was a lot quicker, with a cheap Easyjet flight and short 'Aerobus' hop into the city centre aboard a three-axial Neoplan. The 2019 journey was a long, tiring, day trip from London St Pancras via Paris on Eurostar and French TGV right into the heart of Barcelona.

In 1973 the city was a commercial hub with a vast expanse of docks and it traded on its Gaudi connection to attract a small number of tourists. The south of the city, towards the docks, was generally out-of-bounds to tourists after dark, apart from those seeking the comfort of a lady for the night. By 2010 the dock area had been gentrified and now housed a large marina and expensive shopping centres, whilst the city at large had become trendy, resulting in a major increase in tourists. 2019 was a shock: the city was overrun by visitors and large numbers of migrants from Africa, boosted by day visitors from cruise ships. The one constant throughout has been the never-ending building of Gaudi's La Sagrada Familia Cathedral, construction work having commenced on 19th March 1882 and projected to be completed within the current decade.

The metropolitan area of Barcelona has 164 municipalities covering an area of 636 sq km with a population of 5.5m. Passenger services are provided by Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona (TMB) with a fleet of 1140 buses and it has additional responsibility for the metro, tram, regional railway, urban railway, city sightseeing buses and the funicular railway. The bus network carries 203m passenger per annum on 109 routes (three D routes, eight H routes, seventeen V routes, seventy-four red routes, seventeen night services and three sightseeing routes).

Horse-drawn trams were introduced to the city in 1872, followed by steam trams in 1877. Buses were introduced in 1906 with the first permanent urban bus service beginning in 1922. Services were affected by the ravages of the Civil War. Many of the tram lines were damaged by air-raids and were sabotaged. In addition to this, there was very little capital available with which to run the transport system. In the aftermath of war, the network was gradually repaired and reinstated. In 1951, the municipal government gradually began to take over the management of transport services which had previously been run by private companies and by 1958 what has become TMB had been formed.

Today the fleet is fairly modern, thanks in no small part to funding from the European Investment Bank with a €73.5 million loan in 2019 for the purchase of 254 buses. This is in addition to €32.5 million invested by TMB in 2018. The last major



upgrade took place in the early 2000s and by 2007 the entire fleet was low-floor and wheelchair accessible. Today the investment is centred around environmentally friendly vehicles. The latest funding will provide the city with 116 new electric buses, 63 hybrids and 75 using latest generation compressed natural gas. The renewal will also cover Barcelona's 20 diesel-powered double-decker tourist buses, which will be replaced with hybrids. The first 105 arrived in late 2019, this year will see another 75 and in 2021 the final 74. These arrivals will complement the 350 existing hybrid buses already in the fleet. Much of the new fleet will be provided by MAN Truck & Bus Iberia, SA, although in 2020 an order was placed for 14 Solaris Urbino Electric and 9 Irizar iZe electric artics for service on route H16.

The TMB operation is best described as functional with the operational fleet, colour schemes and infrastructure meeting the needs of a modern-day city without any major efforts to promote itself. The city architecture does however provide a wonderful backdrop for the bus photographer providing you can avoid the crowds.



A Société des usines Chausson with Pegaso engine from the 1973 visit.



A Pegaso 6035 artic again from the 1973 visit.



TUSsal (Transports Urbans i Serveis Generals, Societat Anònima Laboral), MAN NL223 with Caetano body on route B20 from the Barri Oliveres suburb into the city centre Sant Pere terminus. Photographed in 2010 outside La Sagrada Familia Cathedral.



This small MAN was used in 2010 to transport shoppers from the city centre to the up-market shopping areas. Fitted out in rather lavish style with tables, table lamps with frilly lampshades and window curtains.



Left: Aerobus Scania K360 with Castrosua Magnus body at the Plaça de Catalunya city centre terminus in 2019.



Right: TMB 3613. Solaris Urbino artic hybrid H18 on the Passeig de Colom segregated busway opposite the marina in 2019





# Stagecoach News

Nationally, 200 admin staff are to be made redundant.

## Services

Winchester service 67, East Meon road closure from Monday 3rd to Friday 7th August inclusive, services diverted via the A272 in both directions and were unable to serve East Meon Church stop and Langrish.

5<sup>th</sup> August a collision on the A27 eastbound near Farlington-service 700 towards Bognor were divert via Cosham, also delays to services 20/21/23 as traffic diverted onto local roads.

Service E1/E2 Eastleigh, road works commenced 10<sup>th</sup> August, all services were diverted to and from Eastleigh Bus station via Woodside Ave, and Leigh Road for approximately 3 weeks. Shakespeare Rd unserved during this time.

Service 69, roads works commenced on August 10th for approximately 7 days, all services were diverted from Swanmore, New Rd to Shedfield in both directions via Forest Rd, and Gravel Hill, and not operate through Waltham Chase, between 09.30 and 15.00.

20 August service 67 Petersfield, Cheriton, Winchester. Road closure at Cheriton all services were diverted until 24th August. Cheriton, and Hinton Ampner villages were not served during the period.

20 August, Winchester/Eastleigh E1. Flooding underneath Allbrook bridge and subsequent road closure, all services were diverted via Otterbourne (E2 route) and did not serve Colden Common or Twyford.

22 August, 67 Winchester/Petersfield. Due to the A32 being closed between West Meon Hut and West Meon turning for road works buses did not serve West Meon.

23<sup>rd</sup> August, 64 Winchester. Bishops Sutton was closed with no prior warning, services were diverted via the A31 in both directions, Alresford High Street and Bishops Sutton were not served.

14<sup>th</sup> September Portsmouth service 39. Extra buses were deployed from Havant and Weacock Farm to assist with loading's.

12/13/14th September Havant/Portsmouth 700, 30/31 services were diverted due to traffic congestion on Hayling Island. Solent Road & Bulbeck Road bus stops were not served.

Winchester, all services. Most days in August and September, services delayed due to traffic congestion in City centre due to the narrowing of the one-way system to allow for pedestrian social distancing.

NK07 HBD drove under Headbourne Worthy Railway Bridge at 8.10am on the 10th September 2020 whilst carrying school children. The bridge has a 12ft height restriction; the bus was travelling at 11 mph. Photographs © BBC News & Hampshire Chronicle.





## Fleet News

### Chichester

Volvo B7TL 16931 16932. Trident 18502. ADL E40D/Enviro 400 10001 10008 10009 19097 19098 19881 19882 19883 19884 19885 19886 19887 19900. ADL Enviro 400MMC 11272 11273. ADL Enviro 200 36014 36016 36017 36018 36019 36823 36824 36918 36919 36920 37269 37274. ADL Enviro 300 27556 27569 27570 27648 27649 27650 27651 27652 27653 27654 27661 27662 27663 27741 27742 27836. ADL E30D/E300 (Gold) 27837 27838 27839 27840 27841 27842 27843 Optare Solo Slimline 47645 47646 47648. Optare Solo 47586 47587. Optare Solo SR 47932 47933. Reserve Fleet 19886 19887 19900 16933 16935

### Portsmouth

Trident 18518 18523. ADL Enviro 400 19034 19039 19055 19063 19071 19077 19078 19090. Scania/Enviro 400 15987 15988 15989 15990 15991 15992 15993. ADL Enviro 200 36825 36826 36827 36828 36829 36830 36831 36832 36925 37276 37277 37278 37279. Dart SLF 35117 35118. ADL E200MMC 11.8m 26146 26147 26148 26149 26150 26151 26152 26153 26154 26155 26156 26157 26158 26159 26160 26161 26162 26163 26164 26165. ADL Enviro 300 27557 27655 27861 27862 27863 27864 27865 27866 27867 27868 27869 27870 27871 27872 27873 27874 27875 27876 27877 27878. Reserve Fleet 17740 18514 18516 18517.

### Winchester

Trident 18078 18513 18521. ADL Enviro 400 19159 19160 19161 19163. ADL Enviro 400MMC 10889 10890 10891 10892 10893 10894. Dart SLF 34629 34631. Dart/Enviro 200 36023 36024 36025 36026 36027. ADL E20D/Enviro 200MMC 37406 37407 37408 37409 37410 37411 37412 37413 37414 37415 37416 37417 37418 37419 37420 37421 37422 37423 Enviro 200MMC 10.8m 26041 26042 26043 26044 26045 26046 26047 26048 26049. ADL Enviro 300 27558 27559 27560 27561 27562. Optare Solo 47312. Reserve Fleet 18084 18118 18188 18310 18504 18512 18520 19099 19158 19162 19193.

### Awaiting Disposal

16934 22850 22851 22852 22855 22857 22858 22862 22743 22750 35255 36015 36029 47541 47625 47737 47738.

### David Lindsell Andover sightings.



18526 (GX06DYB) a Dennis Trident 2 with Alexander ALX400 H47/28F body.

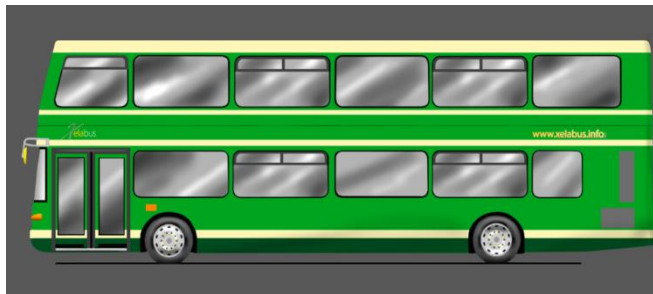


35260 (GX56OGL) a Dennis Dart SLF with B38F Pointer 2 Body.



Salisbury Reds 1636 (HF66CFE) in Stonehenge Livery a Alexander Dennis Enviro 400 MMC, is seen at Andover Bus Station with the 19.30 Active 8 Service to Salisbury via Tidworth on the 5 July 2020.





# Xelabus

Information courtesy of Phil Blair.

Additional reporting from

David Etheridge, Robert Winkworth and Phil Savin

Three long wheel based Enviro 200 single decks will joined the fleet at end of August – 437, 438 and 439 fleet numbers in full livery. Two ALX Double Decks from Ensign are joining the fleet end of the month – 557 and 558 fleet numbers in full livery as “spare buses”. Six ex Lothian Gemini B7 Double Decks are joining the fleet at end of month – 560 to 565 fleet numbers.

All above are as a result of increased contracts from September.

Fleet No	Bus Type	Registration No
436	Enviro 200	G5 XEL
437	Enviro 200	G6 XEL
438	Enviro 200	G7 XEL
557	Volvo ALX	G11 XEL
558	Volvo ALX	G12 XEL
560	Gemini B7	PB04BUS
561	Gemini B7	G13 XEL
562	Gemini B7	G14 XEL
563	Gemini B7	G15 XEL
564	Gemini B7	G16 XEL
565	Gemini B7	G17 XEL

Trident 543 will enter service in silver livery advertising a new business to be known as Xela classics.

We have purchased three vintage buses from Seaford and District – Open Top Eastbourne PD2, Closed top PD2 and Open top AEC Reliance ex Maidstone and District (AFE 709A (325 NKT)). This will be a new business offering specialist transport alongside our special events section.



DHC 784E, Leyland PD2A/30(701081), East Lancs (6531) H32/28R, new to Eastbourne 1967. ©Robert Winkworth

## Services

Cancelled: PH1098723/114, operating between Gosport, Cunningham Drive and Itchen College, Middle Road, service number 193 from 31 August 2020. PH1098723/116 operating between Portchester Precinct and Itchen College, Middle Road, service number 195 from 31 August 2020. PH1098723/113 operating between Whiteley, Yew Tree Drive and Itchen College, Middle Road, service number 192 from 31 August 2020. PH1098723/117 operating between Hamble Square and Itchen College, Middle Road, service number 196 from 31 August 2020. PH1098723/61 operating between Eastleigh Bus Station and Hedge End, Freegrounds X4 effective from 10 August 2020, amend Route and Timetable.



YY66 PDX on the X4 having just crossed Cobden Bridge on the four and a half mile diversion necessitated by the closure of Mansbridge on the A27 from 10th August for three weeks.



New Xelabus Enviro 200MMC G5 XEL. ©Bob Winkworth



### Current operational fleet

Ft No.	Reg	Pre Reg	Chassis No.	Make	Euro	Model	Seats	New
424	L6 XEL	FF56 BLU	SFD.111AR16GY10117	AD		Enviro 200 Classic	28	Britannia Parking
425	YY66 PDV		SFD1D1AR6GGY15478	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	28	
426	YY66 PDX		SFD1D1AR6GGY15479	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	28	
427	YY66 PDZ		SFD1D1AR6GGY15483	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	28	
428	YY66 PEO		SFD1D1AR6GGY15484	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	28	
429	YY66 PFA		SFD1D1AR6GGY15485	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	28	
430	YY66 PFO		SFD1D1AR6GGY15557	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	28	
431	YY66 PFU		SFD1R1AR6GGY15558	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	28	
432	YY66 PFV		SFD8S1AR6GGY15559	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	32	
435	SN65 OHH		SFD1D1AR6FGY15149	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	28	
436	G5 XEL	YX18 KUG	SFD7S1AR6HGY16426	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	39	First South West
437	G6 XEL	YY67 HBE	SFD7S1AR6HGY16447	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	39	Ex McGills
438	G7 XEL	YX18 KUF	SFD7S1AR6HGY16425	AD	5	Enviro 200 Classic	39	First South West
440	SN60 CNU		YV3R6M3299A133777	Volvo		B7 RLE Wright	44	Docherty
441	SN60 CNV		YV3R6M3299A133617	Volvo		B7RLE Wright	44	Docherty
442	G15 SSP	YX68 UNY	SFDCL1ER9JGY16891	AD	6	Enviro 200 MMC	41	
450	G3 XEL	YJ61 LNA	NMC220LKCRB100093	BMC		Condor		
530	J12 XEL			Volvo		Wright Gemini		
538	J80 BPC			AD	4	Trident		
539	SK52 OHB		SFD54EBR22GX32432	AD	4	Trident Plaxton	79	Lothian
542	SK52 OGW		SFD54EBR22GX32422	AD	4	Trident Plaxton	79	Lothian
543	SK52 OGY		SFD54EBR22GX32421	AD	4	Trident Plaxton	79	Lothian
544	J16 XEL	DX61 EOM	YV3T1R924CA151846	Volvo	HYB	B5LH Wright	68	Bakers
545	J18 XEL	DX61 EOO	YV3T1R921CA151805	Volvo	HYB	B5LH Wright	68	Bakers
546	J20 XEL	DX61 EOP	YV3T1R922CA151845	Volvo	HYB	B5LH Wright	68	Bakers
547	J15 XEL	YN04 UJU	YS2N4X20001847156	Scania	6	Omnidecker EL	90	Nottingham
548	J17 XEL	YN04 UJV	YS2N4X20001847324	Scania	6	Omnidecker EL	90	Nottingham
549	J19 XEL	YN04 UJW	YS2N4X20001847325	Scania	6	Omnidecker EL	90	Nottingham
550	J7 XEL	YN05 WFB	YS2N4X20001850890	Scania	6	Omnidecker EL	90	Nottingham
552	L7 XEL	YN05 WGD	YS2N4X20001851033	Scania	6	Omnidecker EL	90	Nottingham
553	J8 XEL	YN05 WFF	YS2N4X20001849862	Scania	6	Omnidecker EL	90	Nottingham
554	N321 KES	YN05 WFG	YS2N4X20001849863	Scania	6	Omnidecker EL	90	Nottingham
557	G11 XEL	WU02 KVJ		Volvo		Wright Gemini		
558	G12 XEL	WU02 KVV		Volvo		Wright Gemini		
560	PB04 BUS	SN56 AGO	YV3S2G62X7A116865	Volvo		B7TL Wright Gemini	82	Lothian
561	G13 XEL	SN56 AGU	YV3S2G6287A116895	Volvo		B7TL Wright Gemini	82	Lothian
562	G14 XEL	SN56 AGV	YV3S2G6237A116898	Volvo		B7TL Wright Gemini	82	Lothian
563	G15 XEL	SN56 AGX	YV3S2G6257A116899	Volvo		B7TL Wright Gemini	82	Lothian
564	G16 XEL	SN56 AGY	YV3S2G6287A116900	Volvo		B7TL Wright Gemini	82	Lothian
565	G17 XEL	SN56 AGZ	YV3S2G6296A115656	Volvo		B7TL Wright Gemini	82	Lothian

**Phil Savin clicks whist he collects from the paint shop.**

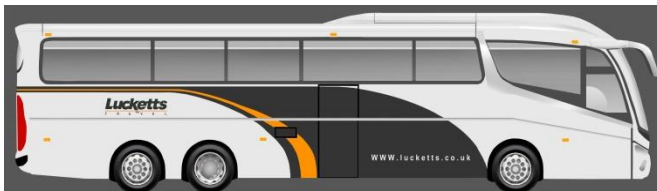


SN56 AGX (G15 XEL)

Right: SN56 AGU (G13 XEL)



SN56 AGO (PB04 BUS)



## Operator News



### AC Travel, Fareham

Vehicles in, V16 BUS NG09 UFB, Ford Transit, ex De-Vall. PJ03 TFZ (Y26 ACT), Transbus Trident, ex Blackpool.

### Barton Peveril Sixth Form College

The college will subsidise bus travel for all of its students. Annual bus passes on Xelabus and Bluestar services will be reduced from £650 to £350 as a result of this subsidy scheme.

### Bluestar

Three Enviro400s (E40D MMC) costing over £500,000 have been added to the fleet: HF20CFM, HF20CFN, HF20CFO. These may have been a reallocated Go North East order, but I have seen no confirmation of this. Go North East cancelled the three Enviro 400's and nine of 31 Wright StreetDeck's (The StreetDeck's went to Oxford and Thames Transit). *David Etheridge.*

### First Bus

Somerset Passenger Solutions, Somerset operated First Hampshire & Dorset, HY07 FTA in May 2020 for 14 days before moving to First South West.

Cancellations of Existing Services Granted Under Short Notice PH0006159/477, operating between Portsmouth, The Hard/Gunwharf and Southsea, The Strand service number 6 effective from 30 August 2020. PH0006159/409, operating between Portsmouth, The Hard and Eastney, Ferry Road given service number 16 effective from 30 August 2020.

Route 7 5<sup>th</sup> August, Bevois Valley Road closed, diversion - Dorset St, The Avenue & Lodge Road outbound. Meggeson Ave closed, diversion via Woodmill Ln, Witts Hill, Mousehole Ln & Townhill Way. Above Bar St closed, diversion via East Park Terrace & New Rd both directions.



Fuss-free travel the new 'Tap & Cap' contactless payment method with a credit card, also Express Mode for Apple Pay, offering an alternative, quicker and easier way to avoid paying by cash. First Hampshire Twitter account is currently suspended!

### Hampshire County Council

Additional school transport covid funds of £1,091,288 have been allocated by the Government. Nationally Local Transport Authorities in England will receive over £40m from the government to pay for additional dedicated home-to-school transport in the autumn term.

### Lucketts

New covid 19 working conditions.

All drivers will be issued with masks, gloves, visors, antiviral wipes and hand sanitiser; It is mandatory to wear the masks, gloves and visor whilst checking tickets, loading luggage or temperature checking; It is not mandatory for the driver to wear the gloves, mask or visor whilst driving; Driver protective screens will be fitted to all vehicles. The vehicle capacity will be reduced to up to 50%/0.8 meters with the following conditions in place: The wearing of face coverings is mandatory for all passengers and strongly recommended for all drivers; Plastic visors will be issued to all drivers and it is mandatory that these are worn during any interaction with customers – boarding and alighting/loading luggage; Seats not available will be clearly marked out of use and signage will be displayed throughout each vehicle; Fogging will take place daily; An air filtration unit will be fitted to all vehicles; Driver screens will be fitted to all vehicles; Hand sanitiser will be available onboard.

### Southampton City Council

A pop-up bus lane has been installed on Bitterne Road West.

### TV Travel

PH2032936 Operating centre, North Side Yard, Botley Road, North Baddesley, Southampton, SO529GD. Authorisation for 3 vehicles.

### Wheelers

BF15 JJO, Ford Tourneo now with Oakley, Plymouth.

YX12 FRC, YY64 TZX, AD E20D, to Compass Bus.

Decision taken at Public Inquiries Public Formal warning, the following undertakings were added to the licence: By 8 January 2021, the VMS system or process will be modified such that a declaration of roadworthiness is made on every PMI prior to the vehicle returning to service; By 8 January 2021, the workshop foreman, will acquire an irtec PSV Inspection Technician licence; From today, detailed brake test results will be scanned and included within the PMI documentation.

### National News

#### First Bus

21 battery-electric Optare Metrodecker EVs are now operating P&R in York. Combined with 12 earlier Versa EVs, they will result in around 30% of the First York fleet becoming zero-emission. More battery-electric buses are on order for other First operations in Yorkshire. Nine Yutong E10 single-deckers are to join the Leeds fleet. They will later be complemented by five other double-deckers for a park-and-ride service in the same city.

### National Express

Item 7 on their new travel advise website, 'On board toilets will remain open and will be cleaned regularly using fogging and antiviral solutions.' Do they really mean that? I personally would prefer the door closed this isn't France after all (Ed).



## August -September Special Measurers service changes – David Etheridge

Covid19's effect on the Solent Bus Network.

The main change to services this period has been the reintroduction of school services from early September, too many to list here. A couple of years back operators converted most of the remaining registered closed school services to normal stopping service after a decision that fuel duty rebate would not be paid on closed school services. Towards the end of August there was a rush to convert most school services from normal stopping services to closed school services as contract school services and registered closed school services do not have to comply with social distancing regulations, so all seats can be used. Also face coverings are not compulsory on these services although most operators and schools/colleges are requiring pupils to wear them.

There have also been a number of extra school and college journeys added especially for colleges most of which are operating a two shift system with a lunch time changeover requiring extra journeys. Some journeys on regular services have been renumbered into the school bus series and converted to closed school services. So please note that most school journeys will no longer pick up any adult passengers brave enough to travel on them.

All the registrations for one college were cancelled with the services now being operated as direct contracts to the college so no longer registered services.

Both First and Stagecoach had spare buses and drivers ready to operate short notice reliefs if required during the first weeks of September.

The DfT official traffic / passenger data for week commencing 7th September shows that bus usage outside London was at around 55% of the 2019 loadings throughout the week including the weekend; rail usage was running at around 40%. Traffic was at about 93% Monday to Friday, 101% Saturday and 107% Sunday, cycling had dropped back to around 120% during the week but was maintaining 170% at weekends, it will be interesting to see if this higher usage is maintained now darker and colder mornings and evenings are on the way.

By monitoring web sites, Traveline and other information that came my way here is a list of changes to all Solent area bus services between the 24th August and 20th September.

### **First Bus Portsmouth / Fareham.**

- 1 Southsea – The Hard: 20/09 Mon to Fri frequency increased to every 8mins and service end 37mins later.
- 2 The Hard – Paulsgrove: 03/09 school days 2A journeys reinstated.
- 3 Fareham – Portsmouth: 20/09 Mon to Fri frequency increased to every 8 mins.
- 6 Portsmouth – Southsea: Service cancelled from 30/8.
- 7 Portsmouth – Wecock Farm: 01/9 7A and 7C school journeys reinstated. 20/9 last pm 7C journey withdrawn.
- 9, 9A Fareham – Gosport: 01/9 Sat/Sun frequency decreased to hourly.
- 11 Fareham – Alverstoke: 01/9 Pre Covid-19 timetable re-introduced Monday to Friday, still reduced timetable Saturday.
- 12 Tipnor – Fratton: 01/9 Last journey M-F changed to sch holidays only.
- 13, 14 Portsmouth – Baffins: 03/09 school days journeys to Portsmouth College reinstated.
- 15 Portsmouth – Eastney: Service renumbered 25 30/8 – see details below.
- 16 Portsmouth – Eastney: Service cancelled from 30/8.
- 25 Portsmouth – Hayling Ferry: 30/8 New service replacing 6, 15 and 16 every 45min Mon to Sat and 90min Sundays.
- E1, E2 Fareham – Gosport: 20/9 Mon to Fri frequency increased to every 5 mins and service end 20mins later.

### **First Bus Southampton.**

- 2 Southampton – Millbrook: 06/9 Mon to Fri frequency increased to every 6mins.
- 3 Lordshill – Thornhill: 06/9 Saturday frequency increased to every 10mins and service end thirty mins later at 00.03.
- 9 Southampton – Sholing: 21/9 schooldays three journeys diverted via Cranbury Road to avoid congestion outside Ludlow School.
- 13 Southampton – Harefield: 14/9 Mon to Fri frequency increased to every 30mins.
- M1 Southampton – Marwell Zoo: 14/9 service officially withdrawn for 2020 season.

### **Go South Coast Bluestar.**

- 2 Southampton – Fair Oak: 30/8 earlier first bus Mon-Fri 04.56 Eastleigh to Southampton and 05.30 Southampton to Fair Oak.
- 5 Romsey – Boyatt Wood: 30/8 Romsey to Eastleigh section increased to hourly.
- 6 Southampton – Lymington: 30/8 reverts to pre Covid-19 timetable.
- 17 Weston – Adanac Park: 30/8 the Tue to Fri short journey Southampton to Guernsey Close to terminate at Lordshill Centre.

### **Go South Coast Salisbury Reds.**

- X7/X7R Salisbury to Southampton: 30/8 reverts to pre Covid-19 timetable.

### **Go South Coast morebus.**

38 Ringwood – Ferndown: 06/9 revised timetable with all journeys via Heatherlands.

X3 Salisbury – Ringwood – Bournemouth: 06/9 reverts to pre Covid-19 timetable.

X6 Poole – Ringwood – Bournemouth: 06/9 reverts to pre Covid-19 frequency with Ringwood to Bournemouth section and Sunday service reinstated.

Ringo 1&2 Ringwood Locals: 06/9 reverts to pre Covid-19 timetable although service end still at 14.15.

### **Stagecoach Havant & Chichester.**

23 Leigh Park – Southsea: 30/8 to pre Covid-19 timetable with Sat frequency increased to every 12mins and Sunday to every 15mins also later finish all evenings.

30/31 Havant – Hayling Island: Monday to Saturday increased to every 15mins, Sunday to every 30mins sch days extension to Oaklands School reinstated.

37 Havant – Petersfield: 30/8 pre Covid-19 timetable with school journeys.

38 Petersfield – Alton: 30/8 pre Covid-19 timetable with school journeys.

700 Portsmouth – Bognor Regis: 30/8 Sunday frequency increased to 30mins.

Hoverbus: 27/9 Mon to Sat service to end one hour earlier for Hovercraft winter schedule.

### **Stagecoach Winchester.**

1 Stanmore – Winnall: 30/8 later bus Fridays and Saturdays.

3 Winchester – Harestock: 30/8 Monday to Friday frequency increased to 15mins, later bus Friday and Saturday, school days journey from Winnall reintroduced.

4 Highcliffe – Teg Down: 30/8 one hour earlier start Monday to Friday and two hour later finish Monday to Saturday .

5 Winchester – Badger Farm: 30/8 Monday to Friday frequency increased to 10mins and later bus Friday and Saturday.

6A Winchester – Abbots Barton: 30/8 service suspended due to road closure, see 95 for partial replacement.

7 Winchester – Sparsholt: 30/8 Monday to Friday frequency increased to hourly with extras school days.

46 Winchester – North Baddesley: 30/8 extra school days journeys added.

63 Owslebury – Winchester: 30/8 days of operation changed from Monday & Thursday to Tuesday & Friday and minor timing changes.

64 Winchester – Alton: 30/8 college days extension to Peter Symonds reinstated. 20/9 schooldays pm X64 journey Alton to Alresford added.

66 Winchester – Romsey: 30/8 later bus Friday and Saturday.

67 Winchester – Petersfield: 30/8 Pre Covid-19 service reinstated but with the limited day journeys operating Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday instead of Monday/Wednesday/Friday.

69 Winchester – Fareham: 30/8 minor retiming Monday to Friday.

85 Winchester – Andover: 30/8 extra college journeys added. 20/9 extra pm College journey added.

86 Winchester – Whitchurch: 30/8 Monday to Friday increased to hourly, first journey Saturday retimed to run fifteen minutes later.

95 Winchester – East Stratton: 30/8 Days of operation changed from Tuesday & Friday to Monday and Thursday, minor retiming and diverted to serve Abbots Barton.

E1/E2 Winchester – Eastleigh: 30/8 last two journeys from Winchester given five minutes extra running time.

Spring Winchester – Springvale: 30/8 later bus Friday and Saturday.

### **Xelabus.**

X4 Eastleigh – Hedge End: 30/8 reverts to pre Covid-19 frequency with Sunday service reinstated.

X6/X7 Eastleigh – Hiltingbury: 30/8 reverts to pre Covid-19 frequency with Sunday service reinstated and the X6 rerouted from Velmore to Eastleigh via Barton Peveril College.

X9 Eastleigh – Bishops Waltham: 30/8 reverts to pre Covid-19 frequency with service extended from Eastleigh Bus Station to Barton Peveril college when college open.

X10 Bishops Waltham – Southampton: 30/8 reverts to pre Covid-19 frequency.

X11 Southampton – Lordswood: 30/8 reverts to pre Covid-19 frequency.

X15 Eastleigh – Hamble: 30/8 = minor retiming and service extended from Eastleigh Bus Station to Barton Peveril College when college open.

I propose to keep these going for three more issues (Oct, Nov, Dec) as at present the TC's and DfT intention is that operators will revert to their registered timetables from 3rd January 2021, although this may be changed by the second spike of Covid-19 which is on the way however much Boris and Friends wish it away.

If the 3rd January date goes ahead and DfT ends the support to operators (currently ongoing with DfT having told operators they will get eight weeks notice of withdrawal) I expect plenty of revised registrations for 3rd January during November as travel patterns and loadings have changed beyond all expectations since March.



## "Buses & Model Railways Part 19"

### Adrian Willats visits early 2019 exhibitions at Guildford, Eastleigh and Alton.

A wide selection of model PSVs feature in this latest episode, reflecting the variety of layouts to be seen at three different shows, all staged annually in the winter months.





## The Robert Martin Collection



Left: Reading Transport buses outside the railway station. The bus stops are no more as they stop round the front of the station.



Right: Tappins Rapid Transit National MK 653GSU in Reading



Left: View of a Devon General Mercedes 709 new in 1988 and one if it Ford Transits/robin Hood new in 1986 at Exeter bus station.



Right: First Provincial Ford/ Marshall M202XTR new in 1994

## The John Bulman Collection



Hants & Sussex AML 80H



Hants & Sussex J53 GCX