

THE **UNITED** — ENTHUSIAST —

Monthly publication of the United Enthusiasts Club

Issue 388 – March 2022



This month:

- ***A follow-up on Bell's Services, Westerhope***
- ***Examining a cheeky move by Mr Hillary of Crook***
- ***A look at some recent arrivals 'before they were famous'***
- ***Latest fleet and service news***

**UNITED
ENTHUSIASTS CLUB**

established 1984
with assistance of
United Automobile
Services Limited

**NORTHUMBRIA
ENTHUSIASTS CLUB**

established 1988
with assistance of
Northumbria Motor
Services Limited

Merged as **UNITED ENTHUSIASTS CLUB** in
2001 with assistance of Arriva Northumbria
Limited and Arriva North East Limited, now
collectively titled Arriva North East.

**SAMPLE Edition: Details of the club's
committee appear here in normal editions**

The Newsletter Editor's press date is 20th of
each month.

*The United Enthusiasts Club holds the personal details
supplied in membership applications in electronic and/or
paper formats. Your details will not be shared with third
parties without your permission. Should any member wish
to view and/or amend their personal details, please contact
the Membership Secretary in the first instance*

**EDITORIAL – by Jeff Tattersall, March 2022
Brightening-up**

It seems that what seems to have been an
astonishingly wet winter may finally have come to
end. It has not all been short days and poor weather,
though, particularly on the club Facebook page (and
also that of the Dewsbury Bus Museum), where one
of our members who goes by the Facebook alias
“Leyland Tiger” has been treating us to some big
cats. One by one we have seen photographs of ex
West Riding Leyland Leopards and Tigers in service
with United and Tees & District, every single one of
them, one per day. This was most enjoyable and
generated plenty of discussion and we must thank
“Leyland Tiger” for going to the effort. For those
online but not on the Facebook page, the collection
of images has been put in an album on Flickr at:
<https://flickr.com/photos/190817650@N04/galleries/72157720398787937>

As can be seen on this month's cover, we
are now being blessed with sunny spring days,
which will hopefully see people tempted out of their
houses and on to buses. The number of passengers
bound for Tynemouth on the 306 I caught last
Saturday, a good number quite clearly not regular
travellers, was most encouraging in this regard and
will hopefully be sustained and replicated around the
network.

Of course it's not just the weather that is
brightening-up – so is our newsletter! Paper
members will note a colour cover and email
members some more colour still. Alongside this is a
more modern, magazine-like look. Of course, we
aim to maintain the existing quality of content,
though don't forget that this is *your* publication. Your
articles, photographs, letters and other contributions
make it what it is. As ever, you are encouraged to
get in contact and not be afraid to try and turn your
ideas into reality. Anyway, I hope you enjoy the
updated style, brighter cover and lovely spring
weather.

Cover - Main Picture: Recent improvements in
the weather are certainly suggesting that spring
has sprung, which must surely be a good thing
for services that serve day trippers and tourists.
Service X20 serves a number of tourist hotspots
in Northumberland on its way from Alnwick to
Newcastle. Alexander Dennis Enviro 400MMC
7549 (YX17 NNC) leaves Alnwick in milky spring
sunshine. (John Young)

Cover - Lower Picture: Those of us who frequent
the Facebook pages of either the UEC or the
Dewsbury Bus Museum have recently been
treated to photographs of every ex West Riding
Leyland Leopard and Tiger in service with United
or Tees & District courtesy of “Leyland Tiger”.
One of the vehicles covered was Leyland
Leopard / Willowbrook 1160 (WWY 70X), which
is seen here in Middlesbrough on a 90 to
Northallerton in June 1992. (Robert Buckley)

Chairman's Corner

Spring is here, the sun is shining and daffodils abound. Will we see any new vehicles in the fleet this year, who knows? With current rises in fuel and many things affecting costs I feel that many companies will try to make do and mend. Sadly, we had technical problems on Thursday 17th and Jim Hulme's talk could not go ahead. My thanks to Jim for his forbearance and we hope he will return sometime in the future. However, many of us had our own memories of riding (and some driving) Ribble vehicles and so we still had an enjoyable evening. Look out for Dennis Talbot talking on Manchester Bus Museum on April 21st and Nigel Eggleton from First Bus on May 19th. If you have been on before you should automatically get a link if not contact me by E-mail.

Bruce Merrick

Photo Request

Note this is removed for the sample edition.

Dates for your diary:

Thursday 21st April - Talk on Google Meet from Dennis Talbot on the Manchester Bus Museum. This will take place at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. Please contact Bruce Merrick by e-mail for a joining link.

Saturday 14th May – *Aycliffe & District Bus Preservation Group* Darlington running day, recreating route 2B and perhaps more.

Sunday 15th May – *North East Bus Preservation Trust* Metrocentre rally 10am – 4pm, Metrocentre coach park.

Thursday 19th May - Talk on Google Meet from Nigel Eggleton. This will take place at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. Please contact Bruce Merrick by e-mail for a joining link.

Saturday 28th May – Proposed date for United Enthusiasts Club AGM at Arriva's Ashington depot - please look out for more details as they are announced here, on the website or on Facebook.

Sunday 19th June – *North East Bus Preservation Trust* Durham Father's Day rally 10am – 4pm, Howlands Park & Ride.

Saturday 16th July and Sunday 17th July – *North East Bus Preservation Trust* Beamish Bus Bonanza 10am – 4pm, Beamish Museum.

Sunday 31st July – *North East Bus Preservation Trust* Buses Through the Ages, 10am – 4pm, Bishop Auckland Market Place.

Sunday 14th August – *North East Bus Preservation Trust* Whitley Bay Rally, 10am – 4pm, Whitley Bay Car Park.

Sunday 21st August – *Aycliffe & District Bus Preservation Group* Shildon rally at Locomotion, Shildon.

Monday 29th August – *North East Bus Preservation Trust* Seaburn Rally, 10am – 4pm, Seaburn Recreation Ground.

Letters to the Editor

It is always good to hear from you. Contact the Editor via the details on page 2

Bell's Services - amendment

In my presentation of David Grisenthwaite's history of Bell's Services, his opening text on page 1 included the following description of the territory:- "Bell's Services ... functioned as a self-contained and neat operation in the triangle of land extending some 13 miles westwards to Stamfordham between the A696 Edinburgh road, the Roman military road B6318 and the main A69 West Road to Carlisle - and indeed beyond to some rather remote villages." In the caption on page 3, I should have added the

following words to enable the reader to link the above description to the roads marked on the map:-

"Here the A69 is Newcastle to Corbridge, the B6318 ('military' or Roman Wall) forks due west via Harlow Hill, and the A696 is Newcastle to Belsay."

Readers might like to add this amendment to their copies of last month's newsletter.

Philip Battersby, Middlesbrough

Bell's Services, Westerhope

Philip Battersby follows up on his article last month with this full vehicle table and picture supplement



Above: In 2003 this nostalgia item was described as a Bell's mystery tour in 1938. If so, the Pickering-bodied Daimler seen here was Bell's 24 (VD 1539). (*Evening Chronicle contributor*)

Right: The 1929 Leyland view of PLSC Lion TY 5173 for T Allen & Sons, Blyth is a far cry from the well worn machine which came to Bell's (no. 17) from United in 1936 - but the PLSC was deservedly one of the bus industry's classics. (*BCVM*)

Below: The 1930 Leyland TD1 Titans gave yeoman service for Bell's during the war years. United's LDO 64 (CK 4241), seen here as withdrawn in 1950, had been Bell's 29. (*per R J Stothard*)

Next page: The expanded table of Bell's vehicles is to the pattern contributed by David Grisenthwaite in the original draft of his Bell's history. Company papers at Durham provided extensive additional information. (*DRO*)



No.	Reg. No.	Make	Body	Seats	New	To Bell's	Notes	From Bell's
	NL 9131	Ford		14, ex 8	5/25	new	car originally?	7/27
	TY 667	Chevrolet		6	2/26	new	car?	12/30
	TY 3683	International			9/27	new		-/29
	TY 3689	International		20	11/27	new		9/29
	TY 4944	International		20	8/28	new		3/31
	CN 4084	Gilford		20	8/29	new		-/31
	CN 4111	Gilford		20	9/29	new		-/31
1	HX 1271	AEC Regal	Hall Lewis		8/30	3/31	ex demonstrator	7/37
7	TY 8352	AEC Regal	Willowbrook	B32F	3/31	new		7/37
8	VK 4837	AEC Regal	Willowbrook	B32F	7/31	new		7/37
	TY 4634	Albion PK26	Cowieson	B26	5/28	11/31	United, T R Gray	10/35
10	UP 1833	Albion PKA 26	per Albion	B28F	9/28	5/33	NGT 470, G R Hunter	7/37
	TN 3493	Guy BB	Guy	B31R	6/26	5/34	Newcastle CT 83	3/36
	TN 3494	Guy BB	Guy	B31R	6/26	5/34	Newcastle CT 84	7/37
12	UP 1888	Daimler CF6	Hoyal	C25F	10/28	4/35	Glenton Friars	7/37
14	UP 1889	Daimler CF6	Hoyal	C25F	11/28	4/35	Glenton Friars	7/37
15	CM 7389	Leyland PLSC3	Leyland	B36R	5/27	3/36	Birkenhead 66	7/41
16	CM 7385	Leyland PLSC3	Leyland	B36R	4/27	3/36	Birkenhead 70	6/37
17	TY 5173	Leyland PLSC1	Leyland	B30F	4/29	10/36	UAS LL 22, T Allen	6/37
18	TY 5174	Leyland PLSC1	Leyland	B30F	4/29	10/36	UAS LL 23, T Allen	6/37
20	JR 5091	AEC Regal II	NCB	DP32R	5/36	new		11/37
22	TY 9938	Daimler CH6	Willowbrook	B32R	10/32	6/37	UAS DF 3, Longstaff	7/41
24	VD 1539	Daimler CP6	Pickering	B32F	7/32	6/37	UAS DF 6, Longstaff	c.11/47
23	TY 9660	Daimler CH6	Willowbrook	B32F	6/32	7/37	UAS DF 2, Longstaff	10/46
25	TY 7185	Daimler CF6	Willowbrook	B32F	4/30	7/37	UAS D 49, Longstaff	7/41
26	VD 400	Daimler CF6	Hoyal	B32R	3/31	7/37	UAS D 53, Longstaff	6/39
27	VD 402	Daimler CF6	Hoyal	B32R	3/31	7/37	UAS D 51, Longstaff	7/41
28	TY 8361	Daimler CF6	Willowbrook	B32R	4/31	7/37	UAS D 54, Longstaff	6/42
26	VD 1538	Daimler CP6	Pickering	B32F	4/32	6/39	UAS DF 8, Kelly & Briggs, to replace VD 400	8/47
29	CK 4241	Leyland TD1	Leyland	L24/24R	4/30	8/39	Ribble 771 (UAS LD 66)	1/45
30	CK 4237	Leyland TD1	Leyland	L24/24R	4/30	8/39	Ribble 767 (UAS LD 65)	1/45
31	TY 5982	Leyland PLSC3	NCME (1934)	B32R	5/29	5/40	UAS LL 21, County	7/41
39	VF 7609	AEC Reliance	Dodson	B32F	2/30	6/42	UAS AK 39	1/47
31	GHN 187	Bristol K5G	NCME	L27/26R	7/42	1/45	Utility UAS BDO 27	1/51
32	GHN 188	Bristol K5G	NCME	L27/26R	7/42	1/45	Utility UAS BDO 28	4/49
33	NG 2284	Leyland TS4	United	B32R ex C30R	6/32	10/46	UAS LT 73; LTO 93 with oil engine	2/51
39	VN 1502	AEC Reliance	United	B32F	6/30	1/47	UAS AK 54, Redwing	c.12/48
40	HHN 202	Bristol L5G	ECW	B35R	8/47	new	(UAS BLO 202)	1/53
-	VF 5193	Bristol B	United	B32F	6/29	11/47	UAS B 93	1/48
-	AHN 813	Leyland TS7	Burlingham	B30R	6/35	1/48	UAS LTO 9; rebodied ECW B35R 2/49	1/53
-	LHN 933	Bristol K6B	ECW	L27/28R	6/50	1/51	UAS BDO 133	1/53

Despite its age and the burdens of wartime, the second No. 39 (VN 1502) gave two years' service to Bell's in the straitened conditions of 1947-48. It is seen here at Stamfordham. This ex-United AEC Reliance had been new to Redwing, Redcar in 1930. (Robert C Davis)



In 1947 one standard postwar Bristol L5G was delivered new to Bell's as part of a large United order. This was no. 40 (HHN 202), nominally United's BLO 202. The country terminus where the crew were waiting for time was Mattfen. (D S Giles)



In Bell's final years an almost new double-decker took over the Throckley service in 1951. This was BDO 133/BBL 58 (LHN 933). It was still on the same working at the end of the decade when this view was taken circa 1958-59, several years after Bell's had ceased trading. The simple United bus-stop plate served to identify the Newcastle terminal point in Newgate Street. (Geoffrey Holt)



Armstrong's operation of the Bell's country services from 28th August 1954 is strikingly demonstrated by the smartly attired LTN 472, an ex-Newcastle Daimler CVD6 of 1948. It too is seen at the city's Newgate Street terminus, probably in 1957. (Alan B Cross 93753)



Armstrong's RPT 127, an ex-Venture Transport Atkinson, was seen in an unidentified village circa 1966-67. The destination "Walridge" is displayed, with "Westerhope" added in the nearside windscreen. Bell's used the 'Walridge' spelling throughout but the Ordnance Survey maps show the double-L version 'Wallridge'. (Richard Stothard)



On 22nd October 1961 the city terminus for the Throckley 80 service was moved about 400 yards northward into Percy Street, with a second stop opposite the Haymarket bus station. On 28th April 1968 service 80 was renumbered 340, and on a very wet December 18th in the same year U 554 (554 LHN) was at that point and awaiting departure. (PB neg 4624)



The Armstrong business was sold to the Tyneside PTE in August 1973 and the former Bell's country services became part of the (Tyne and Wear) PTE revised network on 19th May 1974. All the variants used the number 74, as shown here at Stamfordham with ex Economic Bedford YRQ/Willowbrook 844 (GGR 344N) notably devoid of passengers. (*Official, per C R Warn*)



The PTE's co-ordination schemes introduced major changes on 21st March 1971 when new services 70 and 71 to Throckley via Westerhope and Walbottle replaced United's 340 and the former Corporation service 3. The new services did not at first cover the section to Throckley via Fell Top although such provision was in due course belatedly made. Nevertheless, the former Newgate Street city terminus was still a focal point, as seen here on 30th September 1989 with Busways Alexander-bodied Leyland Atlantean 536 (MVK 536R). (*PB neg 7243*)



Callerton and Fell Top continued to be linked to Westerhope and Newcastle by the Stamfordham country services originally developed by Bell's. In another view from 30th September 1989 we see passengers alighting at the road end for Callerton village. By this time the operator was the Blue Bus Services division of Busways. (*PB neg 7232*)



Before they were Famous

An occasional look at vehicles joining the Arriva North East fleet in their past lives by Jeff Tattersall



VDL SB200/Wright 2579 (CX06 BHK) has recently joined the fleet from Arriva North West & Wales. Back in July 2008 it was working on Merseyside in the original Arriva livery and is seen from the vantage point of St George's Hall, leaving Queen Square bus station in Liverpool.



Now 1537 in the Northumbria fleet at Jesmond, VDL SB200/Wright 3082 (MX61 AVK) is one of seven examples recently displaced from Southport by new deliveries. It is seen on Lord Street on 30/12/20 with some appropriate seasonal decals applied.



Sister 3087 (MX61 AVP) is now 1542 in the north east, though at the time of writing has yet to enter service. On 4th July 2020, it was seen in Ormskirk bus station, working the lengthy 375 Southport – Wigan service. Note the subtle "Southport Links" branding towards the rear of both vehicles.



VDL SB120/Plaxton 2610/2 (CX56 CEA/J) have spent most of their working lives at Arriva North West's Winsford depot, though did move around a little before heading over to Durham. The former is seen in a dull Northwich working service 29 to Over in December 2015.



Darlington is now home to the trio of ex Yorkshire Tiger Scania Omnilinks. These had been new to Centrebus's Leeds-based White Rose Bus Company and by 2013 had moved to the ex Yorkshire Rider (via Stagecoach) Huddersfield operation, which was a Centrebus/Arriva joint venture. 762 (YT60 YYO) is seen leaving Wakefield bus station on the 231 back to Huddersfield.



After the above operations had become Arriva-owned, Yorkshire Tiger, all three gained the distinctive Tiger identity. 760 (YT60 YYM) is seen in Holmfirth, having arrived from Wakefield on the 436 on 10/09/16.

Mr Hillary of Crook

Philip Battersby tells us about a brave and cheeky effort to try again

A second look

The photograph shown here is a fragment of a picture which accompanied a short article in these pages in July and November 2015. The point then was United's 1927 Chevrolet PW 9947, but is now the little bus which was tucked in behind it. This was identified as UP 201, an International new in September 1927 to Hillary of Crook. The chassis manufacturer was the American firm International Harvester who had some success in Britain in the late 1920s. The picture was taken at the George Street terminus in Bishop Auckland.

The Hillary business

The Hillary family were a serious competitor against United on the Bishop Auckland and Crook route. In November 1926 a United management report had this to say: "An owner Hillary operates two buses between Crook and Bishop Auckland running via the more direct road via Newton Cap Bank. He has cut the fare by 10% and as our vehicles go a longer way round he is doing us a lot of harm." Newton Cap bank was a fearsome proposition and was the reason why the United route was via Witton Park. In 1927 with more and better buses, and doubtless spurred by the competition, United then tackled the Newton Cap route but also retained the Witton Park variant.

The known Hillary fleet is shown on page PA8/37 of the PSV Circle's United fleet history Part 1C (1931-34). Our UP 201 is listed as withdrawn/sold in December 1927, which narrows the date of the picture to that autumn. The other listed Hillary vehicles were:-

PT 8650 Graham Dodge 14-seat, 11/26

UP 1521 Reo, 7/28

UP 3136 Gilford CP6 20-seat, 7/29

UP 3137 " " " 9/29.

That leaves us without a second vehicle for 1926 and/or without a replacement for UP 201 at the end of December 1927, so the list is surely incomplete. The seating capacities of UP 201 and UP 1521 are not recorded, but 14 or perhaps 20 would be fair probabilities.

Sale to United

The Hillary business was sold to United by an agreement dated 1st January 1931 and worded to take effect the same day. It is one of those United purchases which enthusiasts have perhaps hardly noticed because it brought no vehicles into the fleet, no new service into the route network and no additional premises. It was nevertheless significant, if only for the substantial sum of money involved, which was £2,000. Add two noughts for an approximation of today's value!



The vendors were George Thomas Hillary, Ethel Annie Hillary and Albert Hillary, all described as being of Roseberry House, Crook, and trading as Express Omnibus Service. George and Ethel were presumably husband and wife. The fleet history PA8 names the operator as G T Hillary and Brothers and the trading name as Majestic Express, in which case Albert was presumably the brother but the evidence on which this is based is not known.

As had become the usual pattern, the vendors were required by the terms of the agreement to support the purchaser's licence transfer applications to the local authorities, here named as Crook and Bishop Auckland. What is rather strange is that the agreement was for United to buy the licences and goodwill of the services and to pay the whole purchase price to the vendors immediately. But you could not *buy* the licences, surely? And if the granting of those or the replacement licences to you had not yet been done, you would surely not hand over the money? This suggests to me that the takeover had already been approved by the licensing authorities, or at least reliably promised, and that the agreement amounted to completing the paperwork after the event, as sometimes happened. Possible support for this notion is the PSV Circle fleet history's

recorded withdrawal of the two Giffords UP 3136/7 in December 1930, which must mean at least that Hillary had known in advance not to relicense them for 1st January.

Limitations imposed

There is a sinister sound to what is usually referred to as the 'period of restraint', but agreements for sale and purchase did include significant limitations. You paid the vendor to go away, not to take the money and buy more buses with which to compete against you. The agreement with the Hillarys therefore included the standard clauses in which they agreed for a set period not to be involved in bus operation in the specified area. In their case this was for three years. It ruled out any form or degree of controlling interest, but did allow the vendors to be "paid servants" of a bus proprietor as drivers or conductors. In this particular instance United did also agree to "favourably consider" an employment application by George Hillary.

A final paragraph to the agreement required the vendors to pay the sum of £100 for each and every breach of the terms, should any occur. This was to be as "liquidated damages", not as a penalty, which was surely a subtle distinction.

What next?

In most cases of sale, including this one, we don't know what the vendors did next by way of work, although there are some examples of men who were taken on by United and stayed until retirement several decades later. Whether or not George Hillary took up the opening contained in the agreement is not confirmed, but if he did it is unlikely that it lasted beyond the next episode. You would expect that once you had entered into a legal agreement of this sort that it would be wise to conform precisely to its requirements. George Hillary took a more adventurous approach.

Have a go!

The limitations imposed by the agreement would cease on and from 1st January 1934, after which Hillary could have resumed bus operation without rancour. That could not have been said in the spring of 1933, when he made a licence application to the Traffic Commissioners who had succeeded the local authorities for this purpose on 1st April 1931.

The application in the name of George Thomas Hillary appeared in *Notices and Proceedings* on 16th March 1933 under the file number TAR 1509/1. This identifies Hillary as being then a new operator as far as the commissioners were concerned. He sought a new daily half-hourly service between Crook and Bishop Auckland, with

single and return fares and various reduced rate season tickets. Supporting representation was to be made on his behalf by Crook Urban District Council.

It was to be another matter when other parties saw the published application, and objections were then lodged by the London and North Eastern Railway, by United and by Messrs Baldwin and Barlow who were the proprietors of the Heather Bell service operating Stanhope to Bishop Auckland. At the hearing at Newcastle on 20th April 1933, United will have with some force made clear to the commissioners that Hillary was still bound by the terms of the agreement made with the company on 1st January 1931. It would surely have come as no surprise (except perhaps to himself) when Hillary's application was refused.

We might also ask which buses Hillary would have used to operate such a service? He is not known to have had any after 1930, as you can see above.

Why?

We will never know why Hillary made this attempt. It was hardly a wise thing to do. Perhaps he thought that with the support of Crook UDC he had good hopes of gaining the Traffic Commissioners' approval, and that as there was less than a year remaining of the restrictive period, United would not take offence too deeply? Despite the £100 damages clause? If so, he was undoubtedly wrong!

And finally ...

In the 1931 sale agreement, the Hillary address (as noted above) was shown simply as Roseberry House, Crook. In *Notices and Proceedings* some two years later the house name had the spelling "Rosebury" and was additionally identified as being in Hardy Terrace. This part of the application is reproduced below. Does any local member know if the house still exists? "Hardy Terrace" appears in the modern street atlas as being along (or just off?) High Hope Street. It is unfortunate that urban house names have nowadays largely fallen out of use, and perhaps the house is there but with the name not displayed?

I acknowledge with gratitude Bob Kell's assistance some years ago in supplying the original photograph of United's PW 9947, and for drawing my attention at that time to the Hillary vehicle behind.

No. 77.—16/3/33.

4

TAR 1509/1

Application by **Mr. George Thomas Hillary, "Rosebury House," Hardy Terrace, Crook, Co. Durham**, for a road service licence to provide a **new** service of stage carriages between Crook and Bishop Auckland, on the following route :—Via Howden-le-Wear, High Grange, Toronto and Newton Cap.

Vehicle & Timetable News

Compiled and edited by Alex Kennedy

NEW VEHICLES

None to report

ACQUIRED VEHICLES:

None to report

ALLOCATION CHANGES P2 (27/02/22):

VDL SB200/Wright:

1409 Blyth – Ashington
1432 Blyth – Ashington
1461 Blyth – Ashington
1497 Blyth – Ashington
1543 Reserve – Jesmond
2579 Acquired – Reserve

VDL SB120/Plaxton:

2610 Acquired – Reserve
2612 Acquired – Reserve

Optare Solo:

2801 Disposal – Removed from fleet
2806 Jesmond – Disposal
2810 Disposal – Removed from fleet
2827 Disposal – Removed from fleet
2833 Reserve – Darlington

Scania OmniCity:

4653 Disposal – Removed from fleet
4655 Darlington – Disposal
4660 Disposal – Removed from fleet
4661 Disposal – Removed from fleet
4662 Disposal – Removed from fleet
4664 Disposal – Removed from fleet

DAF SB3000/Plaxton:

9993 Disposal – Removed from fleet

ALLOCATION CHANGES P3 2022:

Note that the 'Mothballed due to COVID-19' category removed, with VOR/under repair vehicles once again listed separately to the reserve fleet.

Volvo B9TL/Wright:

7406 Redcar – Reserve

VDL SB200/Wright:

1408YK COVID reserve – Disposal
1476 Durham – Darlington
1477 Durham – Darlington
1478 Durham – Darlington
1509 Durham – Darlington

VDL SB200/Plaxton:

1534 COVID reserve – Under repair
1535 COVID reserve – Under repair
1536 COVID reserve – Disposal

Temsa Avenue:

4712 Reserve – Redcar

Scania OmniCity:

4645 Reserve – Disposal
4647 Reserve – Disposal
4648 Reserve – Disposal
4650 Reserve – Disposal
4651 Reserve – Disposal



At Durham covering for vehicles away for refurbishment, ex Arriva NW&W VDL SB120/Plaxton 2612 (CX56 CEJ) leaves Durham for Crook on the X46. (Geoff Stainthorpe)



Another of the ex Arriva NW&W VDL SB200/Wright in use at Jesmond is 1541 (MX61 AVO). These vehicles are making fairly regular appearances on the lengthy 685 Newcastle – Carlisle service. Note the Southport Links logo still in place above the door. (Geoff Stainthorpe)

4654 Reserve – Disposal
4655 Reserve – Disposal
4656 Reserve – Disposal
4657 Reserve – Disposal
4658 Reserve – Disposal

VDL SB120/Plaxton:

1923 COVID reserve – Under repair
1924 COVID reserve – Under repair

Optare Solo:

2815 COVID reserve – Reserve
2820 COVID reserve – Durham
2832 Darlington – Reserve
2835 Reserve – Darlington
2836 Reserve – Darlington
2839 Reserve – Durham
2841 Reserve – Darlington
2851 COVID reserve – Reserve
2866 Darlington – Durham

2867 Darlington – Durham
2868 Darlington – Durham
2869 Darlington – Durham

ADL Mini Pointer Dart:

1800 Reserve – Ashington

Ancillary vehicles:

9942 Durham – Removed from fleet

ALLOCATION CHANGES P3 (27/03/22):

Note that due to space constraints the allocation sheets for this period will appear next month.

Volvo B7TL/Wright:

7414 Durham – Disposal

7415 Jesmond – Durham

Volvo B9TL/Wright:

7406 Reserve – Under repair

VDL SB200/Wright:

1429 Blyth – Ashington

1462 Blyth – Ashington

1463 Blyth – Ashington

1475 Blyth – Ashington

1539 Reserve – Jesmond

1540 Reserve – Jesmond

1541 Reserve – Jesmond

1542 Reserve – Jesmond

Temsa Avenue:

4719 Reserve – Under repair

VDL SB120/Plaxton:

1923 Under repair – Disposal

1924 Under repair – Disposal

Optare Solo:

2815 Reserve – Disposal

2824 Jesmond – Reserve

2834 Jesmond – Reserve

2845 Jesmond – Reserve

2851 Reserve – Disposal

INTO SERVICE:

VDL SB120/Plaxton:

2610 (CX56 CEA) at Durham by 05/03/22.

NOTES:

Vehicle movements due to take place at the end of this month as noted above include the transfer of all non-'Max'-branded Pulsars from Blyth to Ashington along with operation of service 2, and several Durham Pulsars being swapped with Solos from Darlington to reduce the number of minibuses appearing on full-size services at Darlington. Pulsars 1539/40/2 (MX61 AVM/N/P) were yet to enter service at Jesmond as Solo replacements at the time of writing, while B7TL 7415 (LF52 UOY)'s intended transfer to Durham to replace sister 7414 (LF52 UOX) which has engine issues has also not yet occurred.

The latest allocation sheet has also removed a footnote stating that Solos 2802/21 (YK08 ERU/TX) were due to move south to Tunbridge Wells as per others last month, and they currently remain in store at Blyth.

The vehicles acquired from Merseyside last month are all now in service, and are intended to cover vehicles away for refurbishment. Durham



Due to move into reserve from 27/03/22, Optare Solo 2845 (YJ58 CAU) was still working hard for Jesmond on 19th March, bringing a good load in to Newcastle from Forest Hall on the 55, blinds set ready for the next round trip. (Jeff Tattersall)



In use at Blyth between filming duties for ITV's "Vera" was Durham's VDL SB200/Wright 1531 (MX12 KWN). It is seen leaving Blyth on service 2, operation of which is transferring to Ashington from 27/03/22. (Geoff Stainthorpe)

Pulsars 1527/33 (MX61 KXF/WP) are away for refurbishment, believed to be at Thorntons, though it is not yet clear what livery they will return carrying.

Redcar depot's seasonal double deckers have mostly continued to only see very sporadic use over the past few weeks. B7TL 7424 (LJ55 BPZ) has remained in active service, as has Park & Ride DB300 7609 (NK59 DMO). Sister 7610 (NK59 DMU) returned to service at Redcar on 17/03/22 but has only been seen on college services, while B7TLs 7425/6 (LJ55 BRV/X) have only emerged occasionally from the depot.

With a new series of TV drama Vera currently being produced in the region, Arriva have again provided vehicles for filming. Pulsars 1513/31 (NL63 VRG, MX12 KWN) and Enviro400 driver trainer T69 (LJ59 ADV) are known to have participated in a shoot in Morpeth on 17/03/22, with at least 1531 sporting fictional 'Throughbus' fleetnames. 1531, a Durham-based vehicle, saw service at Blyth depot the following day at least before returning to Durham, who had been using Blyth's Max-branded sister 1502 (NK12 FLP) in exchange for the duration.

Hydrogen-powered Wright Streetdeck demonstrator LX71 AOS ultimately did not enter service and was returned to Wrightbus on 15/02/22 requiring repairs, though it is understood it may return.

Repeated vandalism and anti-social behaviour has caused Darlington services 5/5A to regularly be removed from Eldon Lane over the past month. Other Darlington services affected in recent weeks have been the X26/X27, which due to a road closure on the A6108 from 13/03/22 have had to operate direct from Scotch Corner to Colburn and Catterick, then coming back on themselves to terminate in Richmond; this has required a revised timetable to be implemented temporarily and is expected to last for six weeks.

REPAINTS/ROUTE BRANDING:

ADL Enviro400:

7521 (NK09 FVR) Christmas vinyls removed by 08/03/22.

INITIAL & SUBSEQUENT DISPOSALS:

None to report.

UNUSUAL WORKINGS:

04/03/22: Stockton Pulsar 1420 (NK09 EJJ) was used on Redcar service X4 (Middlesbrough – Whitby). Ashington had Blyth VDL DB300/Wright 7617 (NK61 EBF) on loan, working services X21/X22 Newcastle – Ashington / Newbiggin.

07/03/22: Darlington had Stockton Pulsar 1494 (NK61 CZH) on loan, working services 7/X66 (Darlington – Durham/Middlesbrough).

08/03/22: Durham B7TL 7418 (LJ55 BTV) worked on loan to Darlington on service 7 (Durham – Darlington).

14/03/22: Stockton covered a Darlington journey on evening service 1 (Darlington – Tow Law) using Pulsar 1482 (NK61 CYV). Ashington had Jesmond Solo 2601 (YJ61 JFF) on service 35 (Newbiggin – Morpeth) and Blyth DB300 7612 (NK59 DMX) on services X21/X22 (Newcastle – Newbiggin/Ashington).



Working on loan to Ashington on 4th March was Blyth-based VDL DB300/Wright 7617 (NK61 EBF). It is seen leaving the Haymarket on the X22, its livery for the Daft as a Brush charity very much in evidence. (Geoff Stainthorpe)



Another colourful allover advert livery is that for Adventure Valley carried by Durham-based Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 1331 (YJ09 CVD). It is seen performing its regular duty on Durham city services 61 and 62, the latter serving the attraction advertised. (Jeff Tattersall)



Now twenty years old, Volvo B7TL/Wright 7485/6 (LJ51 DJD/GZ) continue to work hard, their age well hidden courtesy of being early examples of a body style that Wright used for many years and helped by the refurbishment they received when they arrived in the region in 2014. 7485 works a 43 out of Durham to Esh Winning, while 7486 is seen leaving Morpeth for Woodhorn on the 35. (Jeff Tattersall, Geoff Stainthorpe)

TIMETABLE / SERVICE INFORMATION:

No new leaflets have been noted this month. The service changes tabulated below have been announced:

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Service	Route	Date	Details
2/2A	Red Hall – Branksome	10/04/22	Most journeys revised to additionally serve stop north of Jedburgh Drive junction, with timing changes.
6	Durham – Cockfield	10/04/22	Frequency increased from every 20 to every 15 minutes.
7	Durham – Darlington	10/04/22	Mon-Fri frequency increased from every 20 to every 15 minutes.
7/7A	Stockton – Yarm	10/04/22	Revised timetable now serving new stop on Everingham Road.
8	Darlington – Spennymoor	10/04/22	Minor timing changes on early evening journeys from Spennymoor.
15	Roseworth – Ingleby Barwick	10/04/22	Earlier journey from Ingleby Barwick towards Stockton introduced.
46/46A	Newcastle – Great Park	27/03/22	One journey per hour runs as 46A via Hollywood Avenue. Sunday and early evening journeys withdrawn.
51	Newcastle – Whitley Bay	27/03/22	Timetable revised and extended from Whitley Bay town centre to Metro station.
51A	Newcastle – Holystone Park	27/03/22	Timetable revised and diverted to serve Hadrian Lodge.
52	Newcastle – Cramlington	27/03/22	Timetable revised. Hourly evening service introduced.
53	Newcastle – North Shields	27/03/22	Timetable revised and diverted via Cobalt Business Park, omitting New York Road.
54	Newcastle – Whitley Bay	27/03/22	Timetable revised and diverted via Cobalt Business Park, omitting New York Road. Early morning/evening journeys to Shiremoor extended to Boundary Mills.
55	Newcastle – Forest Hall	27/03/22	Minor daytime timing changes. Sunday frequency reduced to hourly and Sunday evening journeys withdrawn.
56	Durham – Bishop Auckland	10/04/22	Minor timing changes on Mon-Fri morning peak.
57	Ashington – Whitley Bay	27/03/22	Mon-Fri 0649 journey from Tillmouth Avenue to Ashington revised to operate 5 minutes earlier.
57/57A	Durham – Hartlepool	10/04/22	Minor timing changes on Mon-Fri morning peak.
64	Arnison Centre – Sherburn	10/04/22	Frequency increased from every 20 to every 15 minutes.
86	Bishop Auckland – Toft Hill	10/04/22	All journeys except schooldays-only Trimdon Village – Bishop Auckland College withdrawn.
306	Newcastle – Whitley Bay	27/03/22	Minor timing changes to morning peak.
308	Newcastle – Blyth	27/03/22	Minor timing changes to morning peak. Early morning and evening journeys to Billy Mill extended to Silverlink.
X7	Newcastle – Blyth	27/03/22	Timetable revised, diverted to serve Amersham Road and serves all stops between Newcastle and Balliol Business Park.
X8	Newcastle – Blyth	27/03/22	Re-routed via South Beach and serves all stops between Newcastle and Balliol Business Park. Late evening service withdrawn.
X9	Newcastle – Blyth	27/03/22	Re-routed via Bebside, Cowpen and Isabella. Late evening service introduced.
X10/X11	Newcastle – Blyth	27/03/22	Minor timing changes.
X12	Middlesbrough – Newcastle	10/04/22	Minor timing changes on Mon-Fri morning peak.

