

TROLLEYBUS

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October 2024



The Magazine of the British Trolleybus Society



*Hull's 60th Anniversary
BTS Weekend
Sandtoft's Week of Opening*

TROLLEYBUS

The magazine of the
British Trolleybus Society

No. 759. October 2024

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BTS NOTICE BOARD

Reading Meetings

Held at the Reading District Oddfellows' Hall, 118b Oxford Road, Reading RG1 7NQ. Admission: Adults £3.00, Juniors £1.50. Non-members £4.00. Meetings commence at 19.30. Organised by the BTS. NTA members welcome.

Meetings Organiser Graham Bilbé, 12 Belle Avenue, Reading RG6 7BL. Email grahamebilbe@btinternet.com

Friday 1 November 2024. Dave Hall - An offbeat look at Reading Buses featuring a look around the various depots, route and vehicle launches, accidents and incidents, bad weather etc.

Friday 6 December 2024 To be confirmed.

London Meetings

Held at The Model Railway Club, 4 Calshot Street, London N1 9DA (nearest Underground station: King's Cross). See meeting details for start time. Organised by the NTA. BTS members welcome.

Meetings Organiser John Parkin, 59 Beechwood Court, West Street Lane, Carshalton SM5 2QA. Email trolleybus654@aol.com.

Wednesday 16 October 2024 (at 19:00) Around the UK in (mostly) Various Shades of Grey – David Pearson.

Wednesday 20 November 2024 (at 14:30) San Francisco Transit. The history of the cable cars, street cars, trolleybuses and Metro – Dave Hall

West Midlands Transport Circle

BTS members are invited to attend WMTTC meetings, which are held on the second Wednesday of every month at Bradmore Community Centre (Main Hall) in Wolverhampton. Doors Open 19:05, Start presentation : 19:30 prompt!, Break (around) 20:30 - 20:45; Finish 21:45: Out of venue by 22:00 Visitor fee £3.00, just turn up and bring others with you. Organised by Mike Richardes.

michael.richardes64@btinternet.com

Wednesday 9 October 2024 Coal from Cannock, looking at times when canals were all important. Presenter Andrew Tidy.

Wednesday 13 November 2024 Buses and Trains DO come together! Pictures taken where two modes of travel merge. Presenter Leon Coast.

Monthly Prize Draw Winners

August	September
£50 Simon Guppy (Bristol)	£50 Francis Terry (Oundle)
£40 Andrew Barton (Reading)	£40 Keith Manning (Knaresborough)
£30 Simon Guppy (Bristol)	£30 Colin Barker (Wilby)

New Members

A warm welcome to Nigel Knapton (York)



1938 Crossley TDD4 No. 38 leads Coronation No. 105 around the statue at the centre of Queen Victoria Square which formed the hub of the system with over one hundred journeys an hour passing through at peak times. The conductor is making ready to jump off and pull the frog for the 62 siding. [MJW collection]

The Society's calendar for 2025 presents a selection of photographs of UK trolleybuses with Roe bodywork. Chosen by Tony Belton from his large archive and with Tony's informative and interesting captions, it is a great souvenir of the Roe years and is an ideal Christmas present for transport enthusiasts.

Tony has very kindly paid the printing costs so that every penny of the proceeds of sales will go towards trolleybus preservation and restoration.

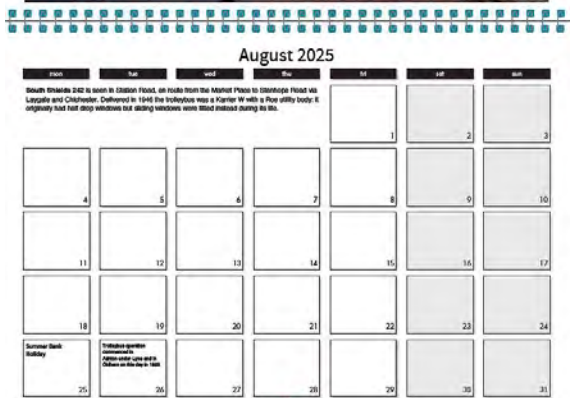
You can buy the calendar from BTS Sales, either from the sales stand or online

[British Trolleybus Society](https://www.britishtrolleybusociety.co.uk/)

Or write to

BTS Sales 1 Mentmore Road,
Leighton Buzzard, LU7 2NY

It is most important to make any cheques payable to "British Trolleybus Society". The price has been held at £12 for the calendar plus £2 postage.



Bruce Lake, World News

After more than 26 years editing World News for Trolleybus, Bruce Lake has decided to stand down from the role. Bruce had been a Society member for some years and had a keen interest in trolleybus operation all over the world when he became World News Editor in July 1998.

I would like to thank Bruce for his support over so many years, making sure that BTS members are kept up-to-date with the latest news of trolleybus developments around the world.

Dave Chick

Donation

Another donation has been received in memory of the artist Stanley Osment. Stanley created a new artwork of London 1812 and donated some other works to help raise funds for the major work that

was carried out on our Q1. Our thanks to the donor, who has requested that the amount be added to the London 1812 fund.

Trolleybooks

Publication of London Operation, the latest title from Trolleybooks, is imminent. Please see the back page for more details. Keep an eye out for it appearing on the BTS Sales page on the Society's website. It will soon be available from the BTS Sales stand and the Trolley Shop at Sandtoft. Trolleybooks is the joint publications panel of the British Trolleybus Society and the National Trolleybus Association. All profits go towards trolleybus preservation and restoration.

Annual General Meeting

Members will find papers relating to the AGM with this edition of Trolleybus.

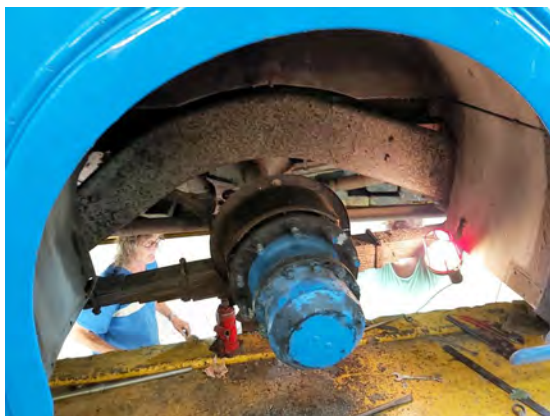
BTS Weekend and Week of Opening

By Dave Hall

The annual BTS event at Sandtoft took place over the August bank holiday weekend, 24 – 30 August. It's an event where we showcase our fleet of trolleybuses. Before the event though there was much preparation work to be carried out.

Tuesday 20 August Graham Bilbé and Ian Metcalfe commencing work on repairing Walsall 872, which had not run for six years due to mechanical defects which had proved difficult to solve. We were keen to get it back into service. The auto acceleration was faulty, the vehicle continuing to accelerate when taking your foot off the accelerator. Problem solved two days later and a test run was undertaken, only for the first notch on the acceleration to stop functioning. It was also noticeable that the rear brake was dragging!

872 features double reduction hubs



Ian Metcalfe (left) and Graham Bilbé work on Walsall 872.

which had to be completely dismantled to remove the brake shoes for re-lining. On removal of the rear wheels it was difficult to get to the rear hub to gain access to the brake drums and linings as various screws would not undo without being drilled out. After a battle lasting a couple

of frustrating days it was discovered the offside brake lining required some maintenance and was corrected.

However, the nearside brake lining



The Burntwood bungalow gates now look resplendent following the repaint by Roger Clark. Picking out the flowers in colour enhances the appearance.

was worn out and would need replacing and re-aligning. It was at this point it was realised that the problem could not be solved in time for it to run over the weekend. This was really frustrating for Graham and Ian after all their hard work.

Dave Chick and Roger Clark also arrived on the Tuesday. Dave was busy undertaking some admin work and assisting the crew constructing the Sandtoft narrow gauge railway, whilst Roger Clark carried out various maintenance jobs including painting the Burntwood gates next to our bungalow.

Thursday 22 August saw Paul Weal and I deep cleaning Manchester 1344, London 1812 and Huddersfield 631 both inside and out.

By Friday evening, Bournemouth 99, Cardiff 203 and Glasgow TB78 had been towed out of the depot and put on display.

The weekend started with Huddersfield 631, South Shields 204 and London 1812 providing the service.

Manchester 1344 and Huddersfield 619 were parked up ready for service later. Over the three days the vehicles were rotated in service. We had a steady stream of visitors and the weather remained dry although it was windy at times.

The café was busy throughout the weekend, as was the museum shop, both bringing in much needed revenue. The cinema was also quite busy with constant requests for films of various UK trolleybus systems as well as modern European ones. We had two visitors from the Czech Republic too!

On Sunday we lined up the five service vehicles along with the non-operational ones on display to provide a good opportunity for visitors to take photos of our historic fleet. Monday was much the same as the previous days with a good number of visitors. I think it was a really nice weekend overall.

The Museum was also open from Tuesday 27 to Friday 30 August, the third and last weekday opening of the season. BTS members and vehicles were involved much of the week.

Graham Bilbé and Ian Metcalfe began servicing Wellington 82 whilst Francis Whitehead applied the first coats of paint to Glasgow TB78's ceiling. In the evenings I worked on applying a reviving chemical on the seat squabs of TB78 to soften them up.



Francis Whitehead paints TB78's lower deck ceiling.

On the operational side Dave Chick was Duty Manager and on Reception duties. South Shields 204 provided the majority of operational duties along with Manchester 1344 and occasionally Huddersfield 631. I was very busy in the cinema, especially on Tuesday when a group of ladies from the Trefoil Guild at Scunthorpe arrived.

On Friday 30 August David Hanchett arrived for driving duties and I did my first stint as conductor, having recently passed my test. The highlight of the day though was Newcastle 501 arriving on a two-year loan to Sandtoft. Nice to see it back again.

All things considered it was a great week at Sandtoft. We achieved a lot and we also had some nice evenings out. Volunteering at Sandtoft is very rewarding. Come and try it!

All photographs by Dave Chick

Page 186, upper: With several BTS vehicles on static display outside the David Croft Depot, the Sunday line-up was held at the north end of Sandtoft Square. Nine BTS trolleybuses are seen here. From the left: Manchester 1344, South Shields 204, London Transport 1812, Huddersfield 631, Cardiff 203, Huddersfield 619, Bournemouth 99, Glasgow TB78 and Reading 113.

Page 186, lower: South Shields 204 in service.

Page 187, upper: Walsall 872 was put on display after it emerged from the workshop.

Page 187, lower: Newcastle 501 had just arrived on suspended tow.





Hull Commemoration

An appreciation by Malcolm Wells

Hull's six-route trolleybus system was characterised by an intensive level of service throughout the day. The azure blue and white streamlined livery lit up foggy and damp winter days and shone in the summer sun. Trolleybuses carried workers, shoppers, cinema-goers and school children to and from their destinations. I travelled on three different trolleybuses on every school day between 1955 and 1960; bus to Princes Avenue, a 62 to Cottingham Road and school, and after school a 62 back to town and a 69 or 70 depending whether I was going home or to grandmother's house for tea.

My home route was the Hessle Road route to Dairycoates (70). This was typical of the other routes in running through densely populated areas. Through most of the fifties it enjoyed a peak frequency of two minutes and a four/five minute headway during the day and evening. The 1.92 mile long route needed eighteen trolleybuses to maintain the service.

Many passengers undertook very short journeys, known as "short riding", between the stops (true for all six routes). This put pressure on conductors who had to supervise passengers leaving and boarding the platform whilst trying to collect fares on both decks. Sometimes an off-duty colleague might supervise the platform, a practice frowned upon by management. In 1958 only 11 per cent of passengers rode the whole way at a 3d fare whereas 23 per cent used the shortest stage of 1 ½ d. In 1958/9 the revenue for the 70 was 57.84 pence per car mile (the best performing route) against the trolleybus system-wide average cost per car mile of 44.15 pence.

The shortest distance between the sixteen stops on Hessle Road was a mere 133 yards, the longest 312 yards. This enabled trolleybuses to display their acceleration and braking strengths. Very rarely was there a stop without a waiting passenger or where someone wished to alight. The highest permitted speed of 25 mph between Boulevard and the Dairycoates terminus was rarely achieved except perhaps on Sunday mornings. The only advantage of shopping with my mother as a boy on Hessle Road was

the ability to watch the constant stream of trolleybuses at work!

Punctuality at peak times (mostly) was non-existent thanks to the presence of a busy level crossing on all six routes and a lifting bridge on the Holderness Road route. Long queues which included me homeward bound from school formed nightly at city centre termini were the norm. Often three or even four 70s might arrive at once and would attend to various parts of the queue with Stafford Rayner (city centre duty inspector) ignoring the rule book in order to deal with such large numbers. On one occasion a future chairman of the Transport Committee (Mac Staveley), then a motorman, was instructed to go all the way to Dairycoates without any passengers on board.

Several people (including myself) tried to jump the queue (not always successfully) by attempting to leap upon the platform as the trolleybus turned slowly into Chariot Street from Paragon Street. The only bonus was that, once on board, the trolleybus might be warm. Unlike many systems Hull's trolleybuses had possessed saloon and cab heaters from day one having survived a lively debate at the Ministry of Transport in 1936 before approval. When the 70 was replaced it was if an old friend had died.

The management was progressive. Faced with the mounting cost of its crews a radical new trolleybus intended for one man operation was introduced in 1953. This was no.101, a Sunbeam MF2B with Roe H54D bodywork. It did a six-week stint on every route. I never rode on it along Hessle Road but did persuade my parents to forgo an F4 on a 69 to take no.101 which was behind.

There were no works specials but there were many football and rugby league extras on winter Saturdays. Hull City's Boothferry Park ground lay around the corner from the 69 terminus at Meadowbank Road. Before floodlights were introduced matches started much earlier and the build-up coincided with workers going home after working on Saturday mornings. Trolleybuses were drafted from other garages but Coronations (except when no. 101 was on the 69 for a six-week

stint in late 1953) were never used. When Hull City played Manchester United in a sixth-round cup tie the 69 was augmented from 11.30 am with a trolleybus about every sixty seconds which was all that the Saner Street substation could cope with. Fans tried to jump off the platform as a trolleybus slowed for the roundabout at the Anlaby Road/Boothferry Road junction. After the match a trolleybus would set off empty along Anlaby Road to ensure that passengers would not be left as full trolleybuses sped past them.

On the same Saturdays Hull Kingston Rovers were at home at Craven Park located alongside the Holderness Road garage. Attendances were not as large as football matches but the Holderness Road trolleybuses were kept very busy. Specials terminated opposite the ground but rather than turn there drivers preferred to drive the short distance to the Ings Road terminus in order to turn.

On alternate Saturdays Hull RLFC were at home. Extras, including those from other garages including Holderness Road worked to Boulevard as a 71. After unloading passengers on Anlaby Road trolleybuses turned left into Boulevard to reach a much-disliked reverser at Malm Street which was supervised by an inspector. Occasionally a trolleybus would overshoot the overhead and need pushing back manually, sometimes with assistance from Airlie Bird fans!

Summer Saturday afternoons could find me outside the Ferens Art Gallery in Queen Victoria Square where, until the 64/8 route was diverted in 1959, every trolleybus in service could be seen, many twice within an hour. In 1957 some 101 journeys were scheduled to pass through the square every hour.

The Whit Monday Sailors' Orphans Homes gala at Newland attracted as many as 20,000 people. The 62 was the main service and needed extra vehicles including diesels (normal policy was only to operate extra trolleybuses on trolleybus routes). Vehicles were provided from other garages in a reversal of the sports fixtures arrangements.

Every October saw the annual Hull Fair (largest in England) in Walton Street. Extra trolleybuses for the northern end of Walton Street displaying "FAIR ONLY" worked to Chanterlands Avenue South where they turned across a short length of dual

carriageway although passengers alighted at a temporary stop on Spring Bank West. The southern end of Walton Street was served by the 69 trolleybuses which worked through to Meadowbank Road. Diesels helped out on the 69. Crowds started to appear in the early evening (afternoon on the Saturday) and did not disperse until 11 pm. All routes had their finishing times extended to midnight. A "TO THE FAIR" notice was placed in the nearside front windscreen of trolleybuses.

The scheme for one man operation on the Beverley Road route had been still born. However, Mr Pulfrey (General Manager) sought to take advantage of a national agreement for single deck one man operation by obtaining approval in November 1958 for ten thirty-five feet long dual door single-deck Sunbeams with Roe bodies for the Chanterlands Avenue routes (61 and 65) as part of a fleet renewal programme with ten vehicles every two years. Yet within six months the order was not placed and abandonment was approved.

1957/8 had seen the first trolleybus deficit (although profits returned for the next three years). Housing clearance policies were transferring residents from trolleybus routes to areas beyond the overhead whilst television was having an adverse effect on cinema and theatre-going. Trolleybus ridership had fallen from 53.1 million in 1949/50 to 29.9 million in 1959/60 with the prospect of further reductions. The fleet had dropped from 89 in 1955 to 75 in 1960. Trolleybuses were costing 40.20d per mile compared with a figure of 33.26d for diesels.

Reluctantly, the abandonment decision was confirmed by the City Council in January 1960. The 70 to my great disappointment went first in January 1961 whilst no. 101 with me on board worked the last 63 journey on 31 October 1964. Trolleybuses had carried 887,587,582 passengers and had earned surpluses of £474,000. They are missed: my lunchtime 50th anniversary presentation at the Hull History Centre attracted over 100 people!

*Captions to the atmospheric photos for this article are to be found on page 193.
Photographs are from the NTA/BTS collection except where indicated*









Page 190, upper: Having unloaded Hull Rugby League fans Crossley No. 44 turns into Boulevard en route for the reverser at Malm Street. Meanwhile 1947 Sunbeam W No. 90 passes on its way to Meadowbank Road.

Page 190, lower: A typically busy Saturday afternoon in August 1957 sees five trolleybuses at the northern routes' stands in King Edward Street. The position of the 63 stop makes it impossible for more than one vehicle in the siding at a time.

Page 191, upper: The same location on a peaceful evening with a well-illuminated trolleybus at each stop. Note W H Smith's shop where the writer obtained his monthly Buses Illustrated on the way home from school.

Page 192, lower: The well-lit interior of Sunbeam W No. 77 greets a large number of passengers at the 70 barrier in Paragon Street in December 1958. A typical scene seen every day en route from school to home. The Brush body on No. 77 has yet to be refurbished.

Page 193, upper: Sunbeam No. 96 eases its Roe body past Leyland TB4 No. 22 before turning across the reservation to collect homeward bound supporters who can be seen in the background, from Boothferry Park, home of Hull City AFC.

Page 193, lower: Under the watchful eye of an inspector Crossley No. 31 is about to turn at the Newland Avenue terminus. The presence of a further five trolleybuses and diesels indicate that it is Whit Monday 1958 and the gala at Newland Sailors' Children's home is taking place.

Above: A typical example of the delays resulting from a level crossing closure.

Three King Edward Street bound Coronations are part of the queue at the Stepney crossing on Beverley Road
[MJW collection]

MUSEUM & PRESERVATION NEWS

Edited by Jody White



The Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

Newcastle 501 has returned to Sandtoft on loan from Beamish for two years. It is the sole survivor from a batch of 30 Sunbeam S7s with Northern Coach Builders bodywork supplied in 1948. Following testing the Museum hopes to launch 501 into service during October. Look out for announcements on the Sandtoft website and Facebook page.

Future Events

The season is almost over, so don't miss your last opportunities to ride on a trolleybus at Sandtoft this year.

- Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 October Accessible and BUT Weekend Open Days
- Saturday 19 October Open Day
- Sunday 20 October This is a Premium Open Day and not included in the unlimited readmission offer. Organised by the Doncaster Omnibus & Light Railway Society, attractions include motor bus tours, displays of visiting vintage vehicles and sales stands, plus all the Museum's usual attractions.
- Saturday 2 November Twilight Open Day. The final public open day of 2024. Please note that the opening hours are different on this day. The Museum will open at 11.30 and close at 18.00.

www.sandtoft.org

Cardiff & South Wales Trolleybus Project

Report submitted by Keith Walker

Work on the restoration of Cardiff 243 and 262 progressed well throughout July.

262 The nearside received more external double feather edged beading, using as much salvaged items, but nearing a time when we'll have to order

more for the offside and our single-decker 243.



Cardiff 262's nearside double feather-edged beading being fitted.
[Keith Walker]



Jeff White fitting a refurbished brake drum to Cardiff 262.
[Keith Walker]

243 All the brake drums were removed to examine the condition of the shoes, and we were in for quite a surprise as both sets of shoes needed renewing. The inner front hub seal grease, meant to retain, had failed. The complete hub was stripped down and rebuilt. Four sets of shoes were in good condition but two of the rear brake drums were sent to have



Cardiff 262's inner brake drum surface being manually blended.
[Keith Walker]

their inner surfaces skimmed. Unfortunately, due to the outer profile of the drum it couldn't be accommodated in the workshop equipment, so they were returned and Keith Walker spent a day manually smoothing out the inner faces - then caused a stir by the amount of dust cleaning up the outer faces ready for painting! Most of the wheels have been prepared for painting, which is now ongoing.

In addition, the project would like to do some membership promotion to like-minded enthusiasts. For bi-monthly up to date reports, forwarded by hard copy or pdf file, the prices are: £18 Membership, Family £23 or just £6 young person up to 21, details from our Membership Secretary, 42 Heol Trelai, Caerau, Cardiff CF5 5PE. Your support would be greatly appreciated.

Bradford Trolleybus Association Meet the BTA at Keighley

The Bradford Trolleybus Association is holding a members' meeting at Keighley Bus Museum, starting at 14.30 on Saturday 12 October. Everyone welcome, whether a member or not.

There will be no admission charge but the BTA would appreciate donations towards the continuing restoration of Bradford 758, the Association's Weymann-bodied BUT9611T trolleybus, which saw service from January 1951 until July 1971, by which time it was the last rear-entrance trolleybus in service in the UK.

Come and see the progress that has been made towards the day when 758 will be able to return to service at the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft. Talk to the BTA Committee about the work in progress. Browse round the fascinating collection of almost 130 vehicles, including buses, trolleybuses, cars and other road vehicles on display at the Museum. The museum building was purchased by Keighley Bus Museum Trust earlier this year.

Keighley Bus Museum is within walking distance of Keighley station.

5, River Technology Park, Riverside, Keighley BD21 4JP

The BTS Burntwood Bungalow

The sectional garage has been erected on the site of the former goat shed. Once the Sandtoft District Railway rolling stock has been moved into the building, space will be released in the annexe.

Stan Collins, STCL Health & Safety Director, has carried out an inspection of the bungalow and made some recommendations which the BTS Committee is acting upon. It has been decided to form a small management committee to deal with day-to-day Burntwood issues.

Hull Civic Society

Hull's Trolleybuses 60th Anniversary

Hull's trolleybus system closed on 31 October 1964. Hull Civic Society presents a 60th Anniversary Exhibition at the Carnegie Heritage Centre on 19 and 20 October 10am to 4pm. The Society hopes to display models, pictures and other memorabilia and will be showing films. The closure of the Hull to Hornsea and Withernsea rail links on 19 October 1964 will also feature. There will also be model railways, stalls, a book sale and more.

Carnegie Heritage Centre, Anlaby Road, Hull HU3 6JA.

World News

Edited by Bruce Lake



AUSTRIA Linz

From 12 August trolleybus line 46 has been extended to the new Hafenportal terminus, which is shared by bus line 27. This is the first new trolleybus line in Linz since 2000, when the section to the Baintwiese terminus was opened.

The Hafen terminus had been used since 1974 but the extension was required because of new developments in the port. The city therefore decided to move it closer to office buildings and the port park (Hafenpark). The new loop will also benefit tourists who seek out the harbour for its unique collection of giant paintings on buildings, collectively called the Mural Harbour Gallery.

The extension included the construction of a double-track line of about 600 m. The terminus is the only new stop on the section. The existing Hafen loop was disconnected and has been taken down.

Linz is also planning to build a completely new trolleybus line across the city, but the construction itself has not yet started. The double-articulated trolleybuses ordered from Van Hool will no longer be built because of the company's bankruptcy.

BRAZIL São Paulo

Following delivery of the prototype in June,

construction has commenced of the first ten of the 92 four-axle articulated Mercedes-Benz trolleybuses with bodies by CAIO and Eletra electrical equipment. They will be numbered in the 8600 series. The vehicles are 21.5 m long and offer space for up to 146 passengers including 60 seated.

Ten three-axle diesel articulated vehicles are also being converted for trolleybus operation. They will also receive electrical equipment from Eletra and motors from WEG. EMTU already has experience with the conversion of diesel buses, six such articulated Volvo/Busscar B10Ms built in 2001 were converted in 2011 and given numbers 8150-8155. Three of them are still in use today. In total, EMTU's trolleybus fleet comprises around 80 units, the most recent cars were built in 2013 and 20 articulated trolleybuses from Mercedes/Caio/Eletra. Ten trolleybus lines are operated mainly in their own lanes.

CZECH REPUBLIC Usti nad Labem

All 33 Škoda 27 Tr IV battery-powered articulated trolleybuses ordered have now been delivered, numbered 638-670. After the use of the 15 Trs officially ended in March as part of a farewell trip, all Irisbus Citelis/ Škoda 25 Trs

have now also been withdrawn. This means that only Škoda trolleybuses with different Solaris body variants are now in use.

ECUADOR Quito

The Chinese manufacturer Yutong is the winner of the tender for 50 articulated trolleybuses for the BRT system. Delivery of the high-floor vehicles for boarding at elevated platforms will commence next year, replacing some of the Daimler-Benz O 405 GT articulated vehicles, all of which have been in use for more than 25 years and have covered more than 1 million kilometres. The new vehicles will have a capacity of 160 passengers. The contract with Empresa Pública de Pasajeros de Quito was signed in June 2024, with a total value of around USD 27 million.

GERMANY Esslingen

Further to the reported difficulties following the bankruptcy of Van Hool, the failure to deliver the new trolleybuses poses a significant problem to the town's plans to replace the fleet of older MAN and Mercedes-Benz motor buses that were to be replaced by the new trolleybuses, making the public transport services 100% electric.

The condition of the Federal Ministry providing a subsidy for the project (in the

amount of €27.4 million) assumes that the deliveries will be completed by the end of 2025.

A new tender for the supply of vehicles is being prepared and negotiations are in hand with the subsidy provider to extend the deadline to the end of 2026. According to provisional information, the feedback so far on this shift has been positive, but a contract confirming the extension has not yet been signed.

HUNGARY Szeged

Although the first three SOR TNS 12 trolleybuses (numbered T-400 to T-402) with Rail Electronics CZ electrical equipment were delivered in March and the fourth in June, it was unlikely that any would enter service before September. The Czech manufacturer significantly extended the homologation process and the vehicles were handed over with a number of technical and administrative deficiencies. The delay has been caused partly by a change of equipment supplier, which was originally to be Cegelec. T-403 remained in the Czech Republic, where it was to undergo the homologation process in cooperation with an external testing laboratory, which was then to be confirmed by the Hungarian approval authority.

All four vehicles have appeared on the streets of the city only as part of test drives with provisional licence plates, with each of the trolleybuses traveling between 550 and 850 km. In the meantime, penalties

for late delivery of vehicles have reached the maximum ceiling, which was set at 20% of the purchase price of the vehicles. Fortunately, the loss of the subsidy, which was imminent if the trolleybuses did not run by the end of May 2024, was avoided as a result of the agreed shift to the financing of the contract by the state.

ITALY Genova

Test running of the first of 112 new Solaris Trollino 18 IV trolleybuses commenced in Pizeň on 9 September. They will receive fleet numbers 2201 – 2312 and will be used for major network expansion. The current fleet strength is 17. Deliveries will commence this month and will conclude at the end of 2025.

LITHUANIA Vilnius

The first 20 of the 91 SOR/Škoda 32 Tr battery trolleybuses (numbered 2770-2789) ordered by Vilniaus viešasis transportas (VVT) entered service on 22 August. Completion of delivery of the order will be during 2025. The contract includes the supply of spare parts needed for regular maintenance in the first five years of operation.

There were 130 Škoda 14 Tr trolleybuses still in service, some of which were 39 years old. When all the new 32 Trs have been delivered their number will be reduced to 70 and there will be a new tender for 73 trolleybuses to provide for the elimination of the type by the end of 2026.

POLAND Gdynia

Some of the services which were discontinued because

of the economic situation and rising fuel and electricity prices have been served again since February 2024.

Of the 99 trolleybuses in the fleet, more than 80 are equipped with batteries. The 22 Solaris Trollinos built between 2009 and 2011 had their nickel-cadmium emergency batteries replaced by two LiFePO₄ battery modules in 2018 and 2019, allowing these trolleybuses to travel 20 km without overhead. With the acquisition of five Solaris Trollino from Lublin, 3001, among others, was withdrawn at the end of 2022. It was the first Solaris Trollino and it is now intended to be kept as an historic vehicle. In addition to the three other Solaris Trollinos built in 2001, the Solaris Trollino 3043 and 3044, which had been converted from buses, were also retired. The two ex-Tychy trolleybuses now serve as de-icing cars 39770 and 39771.

All 18 articulated trolleybuses and a few rigid trolleybuses from the last deliveries have received new registration plates with the background colour light green instead of white, in common with registrations issued for battery-electric and hydrogen vehicles since 1 January 2020.

On 23 August PKT announced a tender for the purchase of five trolleybuses, with the funding coming from the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management.

UKRAINE Industry

Bogdan Motors, which was founded in 1993 following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, has ceased trading following the bankruptcy of its parent company. Some of the last new Bogdan trolleybuses were delivered to Lutsk, where the company's plant was located. The assets of the bankrupt undertaking were sold to a local construction company in July.

UNITED KINGDOM Reading

Reading may have only one or two traction poles remaining following the removal of former trolleybus traction poles on Kentwood Hill. Of the seven that

remained only two were still being used for street lighting and it is believed that all have now gone.

There is an isolated traction pole still on Northumberland Avenue on the 1963 extension.

USA Seattle

King County Metro has ordered a major battery upgrade for its IMC® trolleybuses from Kiepe, which are charged while driving. Delivery of the battery packs is scheduled to start at the end of this year, and Kiepe will also

provide up to five years of on-site service support, power electronics overhaul and customer training at the repair centre in King County.

Kiepe has developed an improved battery pack for up to 170 XT40 and XT60 trolleybuses delivered to

three times as powerful, ensures optimal use of IMC technology.

Kiepe is working closely with King County Metro on this project to optimise the energy efficiency and performance of the city's trolleybuses, while reducing the cost of infrastructure



Solingen Solaris Trollino 18 No. 867 of 2021 waits with poles down for a battery departure from Burger Bahnhof terminus on 22 June. [Martin Eady]

King County Metro between 2014 and 2017.

Four pilot vehicles have already been equipped with new traction batteries and more powerful battery chargers. The new technology can be seamlessly integrated into existing buses. The new battery pack replaces the previous 26 kWh lithium-ion energy storage system (ESS). The triple capacity of the traction battery enables longer operation without overhead lines. In addition, the improved charger, now

maintenance and service expansion.

With thanks to: Busportal, Alan Butler, Dave Chick, Československý Dopravák, Plzenské Trolejbusy, sustainable-bus.com, Škoda Group, Jan Spousta, Trolleybus Trollino, Trolley:motion, Urban Transport Magazine

Page 199, upper: One of Brno's new Škoda 32 Trs, 3317, is seen at Mendlovo náměstí on 1 September. [DG Chick]

Page 199, lower: After travelling from Burger Bahnhof on battery power, Trollino 18 No. 861 rewires at Burg Seilbahn. BOB is an acronym for Batterie Oberleitungs Bus (battery trolleybus). [Martin Eady]





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