

TROLLEYBUS

Vol. 64 No. 763

February 2025



The Magazine of the British Trolleybus Society



*SponsorTrolley
Santander
Kyrgyzstan's Trolleybuses*

TROLLEYBUS

The magazine of the
British Trolleybus Society

No. 763. February 2025

Editor: Dave Chick

23 Pryor Close, Purley on Thames,
Berkshire RG31 6UG
editor@britishtrolley.org.uk

Assistant Editor: Dave Hall

9 Hanover Court, Fieldfare,
Swindon SN3 5BG
wiltshireman@aol.com

Production Editor:

Peter Braybrooke

6 Tubbenden Lane, Orpington,
Kent BR6 9PN
prodeditor@britishtrolley.org.uk

Preservation News Editor:

Jody White

20 Cunningham Crescent,
Chatham, Kent ME5 0ES
museumnews@britishtrolley.org.uk

World News Editor: Colin Page

worldnews@britishtrolley.org.uk

Distribution: Derek Pearson

25 Caldbeck Drive, Woodley,
Berkshire RG5 4LA
distribution@britishtrolley.org.uk

Subscriptions and

Membership: Paul Dicken

8 Glan Llyn, Llanfairpwll,
Ynys Môn LL61 5YX
secretary@britishtrolley.org.uk

Website:

<https://www.britishtrolley.org.uk>

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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 7 February 2025. Another popular meeting - our annual visit from Reading Buses CEO Robert Williams, lifting the lid on what the future holds for our favourite bus operator.

Friday 7 March 2025. Paul Lacey, well-known local transport historian and author, presents 'Behind the Bus - Views of Reading's Past'

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 19 February 2025 (Meeting starts at 14.30). Trolleybuses and Trams on film (1950s/1960s) from Online Transport Archive presented by Martin Jenkins.

Wednesday 19 March 2025 (Meeting starts at 14.30) Alan Murray – Provisionally: Austrian trolleybus systems

Monthly Prize Draw Winners

January's draw is held over until February when there will be a double draw.



Front cover: Bishkek 1866 and goat at the line 8 southern Jil. Massiv "Ak-Orgo" terminus on 19 October 2024. The goat had freed itself and soon enjoyed some of the still warm Tandyr nan bread Lars Richter and friends had just purchased at this rural looking loop. The system has since closed.

[Lars F. Richter]

Sponsortrolley

Sponsortrolley Update by David Beach

Thanks are due to fifty members who continue to fund over 90% of the costs of housing our historic vehicles. Without this support many would have to be parked outdoors. Sadly, from time to time a generous supporter has to drop out from the scheme, and even more sadly, some have passed away in the last couple of years. Recently we lost Jim Wilcox, a major supporter of Reading 113, which now finds itself with only half its storage costs covered. Another ongoing problem is that while costs have risen, the recommended minimum monthly donation of £ 5 has not kept up with inflation, so only the addition of

Gift Aid [when available] brings the income up to match the expenditure.

I am reluctant to go round all existing supporters to ask them to increase their standing orders, but very much hope that some members might join the scheme or add a month to their existing support. The BTS vehicles currently in most need for additional sponsors are Reading 113, [5 months not covered], South Shields 204 [3 months short], Cardiff 203 [2 months short] and Walsall 372 and 872 [each 1 month short].

As always, I can be reached at david.tbeach@btinternet.com or by post at 9, Middle Street, Minehead TA24 5JH



Sponsortrolley 113

Reading 113 has a unique place in the history of trolleybus preservation, having been the catalyst for the creation of the Reading Transport Society (now the British Trolleybus Society) and by projection the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft. Mike Dare, seen with 113 at Sandtoft on 31 July 2005, started it all and we are looking for the support of members to help to continue the work that Mike began.

[Graham Bilbé]

Fifty Years Ago: End of Santander Trolleybuses

Article and photographs by Tony Belton

It's amazing to think that it is fifty years ago on 26 February 1975 that Santander, in Spain, said good-bye to its trolleybuses; to me it just doesn't seem possible! The system comprised of a 12-kilometre line from Santander to Astillero. The fleet consisted of five single-deck German MAN trolleybuses (numbered 1 to 5) and six ex-London Transport Q1s which they purchased in 1961 (numbered 6 to 11). The route was interurban in character and due to good road surfaces, the trolleybuses

were able to demonstrate their paces over certain sections. The Q1s started to shudder at high speeds. However, the MAN trolleybuses were really smooth and fast.

Please Note: Santander 8, ex LT 1812, was repatriated to the UK in 1977 and has since been restored to LT condition. This fine vehicle is part of the British Trolleybus Society collection and runs regularly at the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft.



Above: A view of the Santander-Astillero depot at Maliano with No.10 ex London Transport (LT)1810 and No.11 ex LT1829 on the forecourt with a MAN single-decker on a crew change opposite the depot. With its new crew the vehicle will make its way to Astillero. First photo taken upon arriving at Santander in September 1969.

Page 25, upper: No.11 ex LT 1829 plus an unknown Q1 at the Calle Cadiz terminus in Santander in July 1974; the trolleybuses were beginning to show signs of neglect by this time! The terminus was conveniently situated outside the local supermarket where you could get the best Lemon Meringue Pie that I have ever tasted! Memories!



Right: A brilliant view of Santander 9 ex LT 1781 passing through flood water on 13 July 1974, taken by Francis Whitehead whilst I was filming the same scene. This was a lovely fast stretch of road.

Page 26, upper: MAN single-decker No.1 is on the stand at Astillero terminus on 13 July 1974. The terminus was a clockwise three-sided turning loop. Note the fleet number is incorporated in the destination display.





Below: It's September 1969 and MAN trolleybus No.5, on its journey to Santander, at what was once an interesting trolleybus junction. An S.M.T.U trolleybus route used to approach from the left and carry on to the left of the photo as can be seen from the remains of the overhead – the two systems were never physically connected. The route carried on to Valdecilla where it would meet up with the S.M.T.U route to the coastal resort of Sardinero.



The Servicio Municipal de Transportes Urbanos (S.M.T.U) wiring had been cut back to Valdecilla where the terminus of route 6 was situated; the route would then carry on to Sardinero.



Left: S.M.T.U trolleybus numbers 21 and 17, amongst others at the depot at Valdecilla. Note the condition of the overhead. Both photos were taken in July 1969.

Below: This final view was taken on 20 April 1978 when little of the Santander system was left. The only positive item we found was No.10 ex LT 1810 converted and in use as a TROLEBUS Bar near Sardinero (continued below)

Right: Ex London Transport RF503, posing with No.10, was purchased by some members of the London Trolleybus Preservation Society to enable certain of its members to visit what remained of the Spanish systems to get as many spare parts for its London trolleybuses as possible; the trip was very successful, and we returned to the UK with the RF absolutely full! We sold RF503 upon our return to the UK.



Kyrgyzstan's Trolleybuses Part 1 Bishkek

Article and photographs by Lars F. Richter

In October 2024 two friends of mine and I visited the trolleybus systems of Kyrgyzstan. We had planned this for some years and we were shocked to hear that we might miss the Bishkek system when it was announced in 2023 that they intended to close it. After failing to run the tour in the spring of 2024 we at last managed to do it in October (just in time for Bishkek as it turned out).

The following is a report about our visit. At the start of November (about two weeks after our visit) we learned that the last three lines in Bishkek had suddenly closed for good.

Only three trolleybus lines were still in use during our visit:

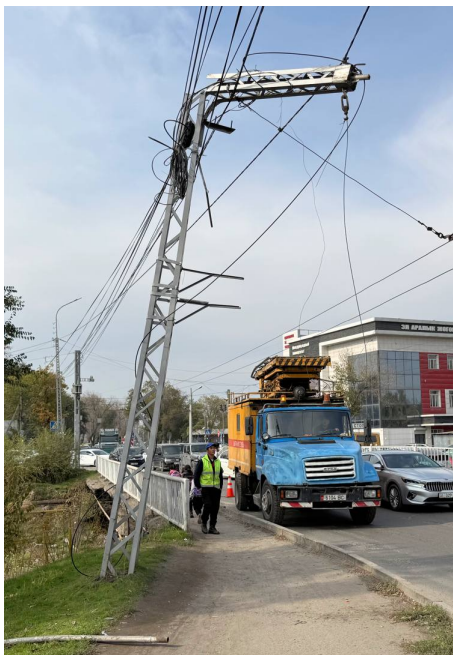
- 8 (residential area "Ak-Orgoo" – Timur-Frunze Street – Moscow Street – Abdrakhmanov Street – Chuy Avenue – Lermontova Street – Lenin Avenue – Tokmakskaya Street – Alamovsky- Street – Alam Microdistrict -1")
- 11 (Jal Microdistrict – Manas Street – Western Bus Station)
- 14 (Jal Microdistrict – Manas Street – Osh Bazar – Kirkstrom).

The mayor had decided (as in Moscow) to purchase battery buses to replace the trolleybus system. 120 such vehicles are expected to come from China by 2025. Both depots are to be converted for battery bus operation.

Only the younger vehicles were seen in service (BKM 321 and Trolza-5275.03 "Optima", the 35 green VMZ-5298.01 "Avangard" were all parked up withdrawn, three of them had already gone to Naryn). Other older trolleybuses went to Naryn and Osh. The already converted trolleybus lines (like almost all bus lines) were served by modern midi buses (CNG), which also come from China. The overhead line systems on the disused lines were mostly still in place (but we did not travel along all of the old lines).

There were around 40-50 trolleybuses in daily service. However, most of the time during the busy hours of the day one is stuck in traffic. The very long line 8 was probably the most interesting during our

stay: it travelled through rural suburbs with fields and goats, small commercial areas,



Above: A wrecked traction pole, with the wires still up and trolleybuses running, on the bridge over the Ala-Archa river on Lev Tolstoy Street, 22 October 2024



Above: Directly across from the other wrecked pole this one also had collapsed. Various service vehicles are seen in attendance. Line 11 trolleybuses still managed to pass this spot.

big industrial areas, the city centre with culture and commerce, then industry again, suburbs and finally residential areas.

Note that the routing of these lines was changed in the last few months due to ongoing road construction. A journey on line 8 easily took 1.5 hours during the rush hours. The overall infrastructure looked rather dilapidated, and the overhead line crews were observed mending poles and overhead lines. We ended up spending a number of days in Bishkek (longer than expected due to unplanned changes in our itinerary for the Naryn and Osh sections) and explored the remaining three lines at length.

One member of our small group speaks some Russian and we thus had no difficulties entering the two depots. They knew time was up (but said it would not be



Above: Depot #1 sign (part view) on display, 22 October 2024.

until early 2025) and in depot #1 eagerly showed us everything they had (but not the KTG- freight trolleybus as this was parked inside tightly packed in with other vehicles - most serviceable vehicles of course were out on the road).

A visit to depot #2 was then arranged and we more-or-less could walk around that facility (now used for storage only) on our own. Riding the trolleybuses we noticed that most drivers (there are no conductors) sell tickets without handing out physical tickets. Others did hand out tickets and on one occasion we were simply handed a booklet of tickets so we could rip out any tickets we needed (yes, I did take more than the three we actually purchased). There are no day tickets.

Traffic was so terrible in the city centre that we used cheap Yandex taxis a lot (you order and pay them with an app). The three trolleybus lines we experienced did not really pass any very exciting monuments (for photo backgrounds) but we tried to go to various locations where the traffic allowed for good photos. We are glad we saw the Bishkek trolleybuses but of course wished we had gone there when they still had many more lines in operation. But the vehicles used in Bishkek will apparently live on.

Bishkek residents are outraged by the city authorities' unilateral initiative. In the past few weeks alone, government agencies have received more than three hundred appeals from citizens to stop the destruction of an ecological mode of transportation.

Activist Darya Nesterova told The Times of Central Asia that the city government deliberately underestimates the number of passengers traveling on trolleybuses.

"City Hall is violating the law. We have regulations according to which such projects must be submitted for public discussion. The townspeople should comment that the mayor's office has behaved very willfully. They did not listen to the opinion of city deputies or the people; they immediately started cutting trolleybus wires, although they had no legal right to do so," Nesterova said. According to her, the destruction of one of the modes of public transportation is sabotage.

"Bishkek City Hall in 2018 took a loan from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to upgrade the trolleybus network. This loan the city will repay for another five years. In addition, the bank's money was used to purchase 50 new trolleybuses capable of serving the city. Therefore, all the talk about the outdated electric fleet is illogical," Nesterova said.

The public doesn't understand how the capital's authorities will explain themselves to the creditors—the EBRD gave a loan to reconstruct trolleybus lines in Bishkek. Bishkek wants to transfer the trolleybuses to the city of Osh, but this contradicts the bank's credit terms.

In the meantime, concerned Bishkek citizens have written a letter to Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov asking him to

save Bishkek's trolleybuses, which have been an integral part of the capital for 73 years.

To be continued. Subsequent parts will look at trolleybuses in Naryn, Osh and Almaty.



Above: Training vehicle ZiU 1513 in depot #1, 16 October 2024. Training had stopped many months before.

Below: BKM 1622 on line 11 on Manas Avenue at Frunze Street, 16 October 2024.





Above: "Avangard" 1706 awaiting its fate in depot #2, which was full of stored trolleybuses, 16 October 2024.

Below: Trolzas 1808 and 1810 were no longer needed when seen in depot #1 on 16 October 2024.

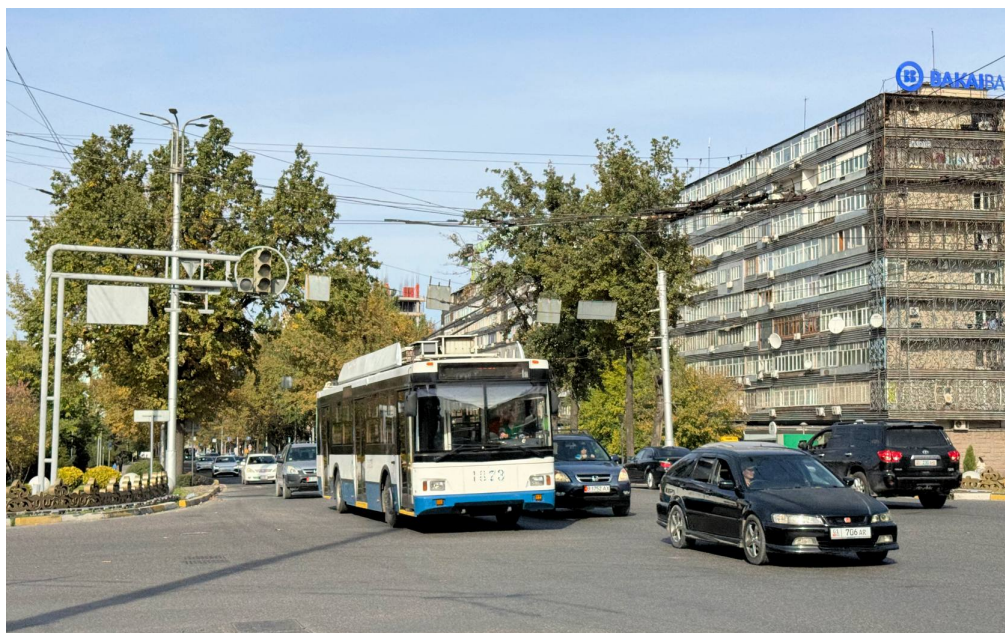




Above: Trolza 1845 on line 11 approaches the western bus station on Jibek Jolu Avenue, 20 October 2024.

Below: 1869 on line 14 on Chuy Avenue (ave = prospect in local parlance) showing some of the Soviet architecture by Toktogul Satylganov Philharmonic Square, 19 October 2024.





Above: 1873 on line 11 in Manas Avenue (at Chuy Ave), 20 October 2024.

Below: 1880 on line 8 having just passed under the railway tracks on Young Guard Boulevard, 22 October 2024 (the not so beautiful southern appendix of this grand "bul'var")



MUSEUM & PRESERVATION NEWS

Edited by Jody White



Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft Vehicle Update

December and January saw a considerable amount of work on trolleybuses at the Museum.

Rotherham 37 has been in the workshop for its rear resistance bank to be removed. Following assessment, it was decided that it will need to be sent away for repair.

Bournemouth 297 has undergone some refurbishment; flaking paintwork was removed from the front and rear internal domes prior to a quick repaint. Most of the window rubbers were replaced on 15 and 16 January and the work was completed the following week.

Bradford 844, Britain's last trolleybus to operate, now owned by Keighley Bus Museum, has had its loan to Sandtoft extended by five years, until the end of 2029.

Reading 174 After nearly a year standing between the depot and the workshop, the trolley gantry has been taken away for assessment. The power pedal was removed for inspection, but it cannot be repaired and will need to be recast.

London 1348 now has two new rain shields that are awaiting fitting. The wheels have been painted and touching up the damage to the paintwork due to removal of the Jubilee advertisements has started. Volunteers to rub down the lower saloon ceiling before it can be tidied up would be welcomed.

Newcastle 501 was moved into the workshop for investigations. These showed that 501 has fallen victim to the curse of the faulty resistance banks, which have now been removed ready for repair.

Sandtoft District Railway Progress

Productive working weeks took place during November, December and January, with the SDR really taking shape. During November the work carried out included drainage investigation, preparation and

ground levelling for the Central Station



Greg Thornton allowed his Class 66, which is stored with the Sandtoft District Railway rolling stock, to be driven by a rather unsavoury-looking character during the December working week. [Chris Proctor]

platform area, and grass clearance around the pond and Showground Station site. Points were installed next to the locomotive shed.

In December the working party continued the drainage work, resulting in the drain outside the workshop entrance being widened. During January work on levelling the ground in preparation for a footpath to be created to lead to the Central Station was completed and a start made on fencing the area.

The two northernmost storage bays on the Burntwood site were demolished. One of them had no roof and was in poor condition. The contents of the other were transferred to other units. All timber in good condition will be used for some of the temporary fencing which will be erected to screen this area from the railway when it opens.

At the end of the December working week a container was delivered. It will be painted and will have a pitched roof added to prepare it for use to store some of the

rolling stock as well as becoming the Showground Station building.

BTS Vehicles

Bournemouth 99's faulty resistance bank has been collected by Graham Bilbé, Roger Clark and Francis Whitehead and taken for refurbishment.

Cardiff & South Wales Trolleybus Project

First, best wishes to the trolleybus fraternity from the Welsh trolleybus restorers!

Since our last update work at Barry bus museum has been very progressive on both 262 and 243, starting with their booms. We started by stripping off the booms' heat-affected rubber insulation tape. When completed the four booms were wire-brushed back to steel then primed with Hammerite red oxide followed by a topcoat of Black Hammerite smooth, ready for applying fresh insulating tape.

262's ongoing problem with the upper deck ceiling necessitated removing two panels. The offside timber roof structure was renewed as well as the addition of extra support timber, then the area was painted and the original insulation was removed and as we had excess bubble wrap this was substituted. Then the ceiling panels (prior to refitting) had their inner surfaces painted with smooth silver Hammerite and presently their joints are having their beadings refitted.

For some time, the handrails at the top of the rear stairways have been secured, the horizontal one across the two rear windows and the one down the stairway are now in place, and to complete we found the correct horizontal handrail and its end pieces for the rear platform window.

With room for storage limited in our area we have tended to use both vehicles, so just prior to Christmas a good tidy-up was completed.

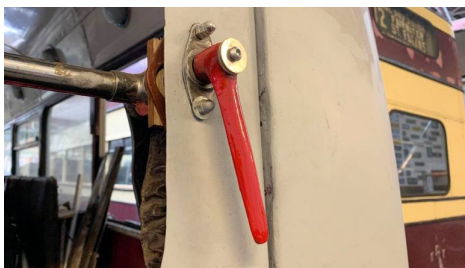
243 has been the domain of "Team Heatley" (Bob and Chris). Having found that the rear emergency door handle was fitted incorrectly they turned it around giving it a coat of red paint. All the lighting



*Cardiff 243, showing the destination box fixed.
[Keith Walker]*

electrics internal and external were tested and after minor faults all is in good order.

Both main destination box glasses were refitted after quite a struggle with their window rubber, and talking of window



*Cardiff 243's door handle refitted and painted.
[Keith Walker]*

rubber, the long outstanding debate on ordering the 50+ metres special profile for the saloon was resolved when a Norwich company was selected and just prior to Christmas we received the rubber, so hopefully a start can be made in the New Year. In anticipation of the rubber fit, we have made a start on removing the internal window surrounds, stripping off paint and applying primer. Externally the final bits of body beadings were fitted at the front wheelarches.

Keith Walker 1 January 2025



Bournemouth 297 is seen on 16 January after most of the window rubbers had been replaced.

[DG Chick]

World News

Edited by Colin Page



Numbers in parentheses indicate the previous edition of Trolleybus containing news of that operator

BULGARIA Ruse (749)

Despite a new network timetable being introduced on 1 December 2024 with increased frequencies, the overall level of service is still less than that before Covid-19. Trolleybuses are used on nine of the 25 lines in operation during weekdays. Frequencies are generally 1 to 2 per hour with up to 4 per hour at peak hours. Lines are 2, 9, 13, 21, 24, 27 and 29 with the SOR battery trolleybuses taking over lines 12 and 20 from motorbuses from July 2024.

23 trolleybuses fulfil peak hour requirements. The fleet comprises 15 SOR TNS 12/Rail Electronics CZ trolleybuses delivered in 2023. Of the 22 NAW/Lauber/BBC-SAAS 91T trolleybuses, dating from 1986 to 1990 and bought from Lausanne between 2019 and 2021, about 15 remain in operational use.

CZECH REPUBLIC Brno

On 14 November 2024, the first of 20 2-axle SOR/Škoda trolleybuses arrived and was given fleet number 3331. Nine more followed in late November. They completed their first operations on line 31 on 4/5 December 2024. The delivery of the remaining ten was due to follow in January 2025.

On 18 November four SOR 12TN trolleybuses (fleet numbers 3067-3070) also entered regular service. Electrical equipment is supplied by Rail Electronic CZ and installation was completed in Brno's own workshop. Six more have since been delivered and after electrical equipment has been fitted their first use was expected at the beginning of 2025.

Consequently only 12 of the Škoda 21 Tr remained at the end of 2024. 3030 is being retained as a museum trolleybus. 3061 was sent to ZHTA Jihlava in September for similar duties.

ECUADOR Quito (760)

All 60 Yutong trolleybuses were due to be delivered by the end of January 2025. The order has been increased by an additional twenty.

ESTONIA Tallinn (762)

TLT operated the traditional special Joulu (Christmas) services on 24 and 25 December 2024 including one provided by a trolleybus (Joulutroll). 446 (the artic Solaris T18 fitted with traction batteries and retained by TLT) ran on four round trips alternately on trolleybus routes 1 and 3 between Mustamäe and Estonia (the centre), running from 11:00 until 13:50.

The website announcements for the services featured Solaris T12 333 but this was one of the trolleybuses which was listed for



NEW TROLLEYBUSES FOR ESTONIA

Škoda Group created this image of a 33 Tr to illustrate its successful bid to supply Tallinn's new trolleybuses.

[Škoda Group]

sale so it is likely it was just used to illustrate Joulutroll in the destination box.

Eight bids were received for the withdrawn Solaris T12 and T18 trolleybuses. It was announced on 9 December that the successful bidder was the operator in Chişinău, Moldova. 21 (of 24 12m long offered) and 17 (of 18 18m long offered) were sold. All shipping and legal costs were financed by the purchaser.

Simultaneously, TLT announced that Škoda Group has been awarded a tender for the delivery of up to 70 trolleybuses. Initially the company will supply 22 18-metre 33 Tr and 18 12-metre 32 Tr trolleybuses, to be delivered by the beginning of 2026. The contract also includes total maintenance and servicing responsibilities.

FRANCE Lyon (750)

Prior to receiving new deliveries, the trolleybus fleet was reduced by October 2024, when all remaining 2-axle Cristalis 12m trolleybuses (from 1801 to 1869 and delivered between 2000 to 2004) were taken out of service. Last duties were on lines C14 and C18. 1839 has been retained as a museum trolleybus. With the seven 2-axle MAN short trolleybuses still out of service, which were dedicated to line S6, there are only articulated trolleybuses now running in the city.

GERMANY Esslingen (759)

As a result of the demise of Van Hool and following new and intensive discussions on the form that new electric buses should take the municipal council announced in mid-December 2024 that a new tender was to be issued for the supply of 52 (instead of the previous 48) battery trolleybuses. Delivery must be concluded by the end of 2026 in order to maintain the validity of subsidies given by the Federal government which were to be used for the Van Hool contract.

GERMANY Solingen (756)

An order was confirmed in mid-December 2024 for the supply of 24 battery articulated trolleybuses from Solaris. All are scheduled for delivery in the second quarter of 2026. The tender, published on 17 March 2023, specified a requirement for 30 vehicles but was subsequently reduced according to need. An interesting feature of the order is the use of electrical equipment produced by the Polish manufacturer Medcom (type ANT 250-600). Their equipment is already in use on electric buses and has been selected for these trolleybuses because Kiepe Electric (via its new owner Heramba IG) has apparently

withdrawn from supplying the European market.

In mid-September 2024, the last two 2-axle BOB Solaris trolleybuses (212 and 215), entered regular service. SwissTrolley 957 returned to service in July 2024 after a long period out of action while 962 was withdrawn in August after suffering accident damage.

HUNGARY Budapest (761)

Two Solaris Trollino 12 trolleybuses were bought in December 2024 from Landskrona (their 6992 and 6993), for spares only.

HUNGARY Szeged (759)

The four new SOR TNS 12 trolleybuses (T400 to T403) went into regular service on 10 October 2024, two days after their official presentation.

MOLDOVA Chişinău (757)

38 of the Solaris Trollino T12 and T18 trolleybuses auctioned by TLT (Tallinn) in December 2024 are heading here after the operator's successful bid, as detailed under Tallinn's heading. This considerably aids the operator's intention to update the fleet by second-hand acquisitions.

SERBIA Beograd

On 25 December 2024 an unexpected item on the agenda of the city council meeting announced that the trolleybuses are to be abolished and replaced by electric buses with services provided by a private company. This was despite a submission being made just weeks before that new trolleybuses must be provided. No details to enact this decision were provided. Trolleybuses have long been out of favour in the Serbian capital and means of rescinding this decision could be difficult.

Six trolleybus routes are operated with a seventh, previously operated by motorbuses, also being operated by trolleybuses and all using a fleet of nearly 100 trolleybuses.

SLOVAKIA Prešov (757)

Thirteen months after the first was delivered to the Prešov Public Transport Company, the four SOR TNS 12 trolleybuses 801 to 804 entered service on 23 December 2024.

SWEDEN Landskrona (762)

The new Solaris Trollino IV trolleybuses were presented to the public on 12 December 2024 and entered service on the 15th. 1891 is named Elton, 1892 Elise and 1893 Elina. From the original five trolleybuses 6990 and 6994 remain in service. 6991 is retained as a museum vehicle and 6992 and 6993 left on 9

December 2024 for transport to Budapest as spares.

SWITZERLAND St Gallen (738)

In mid-December 2024, on the western part of lines 3 and 4, three km of new overhead was brought into service between Zürcher Strasse and Vonwil. This allows double articulated battery trolleybuses to be used on year-round operation on these two inter-working lines. Hitherto diesel buses were needed to assist service duties during winter months. However, major construction works in the area of Rosenbergstrasse (just west of the centre) has necessitated dismantling of the overhead which will not be replaced until mid-2026.

Eastwards on lines 3/4 work starts in January 2025 for the installation of new overhead from Heiligkreuz (terminus of the 6 and the erstwhile terminus of the old line 3) along Langgasse to the Sonnrainweg stop. From there lines 3/4 will continue off-wire as now. With 400m of overhead now installed between Zürcherstrasse to Hagenstrasse, battery trolleybuses on line 8 can now use the overhead of line 2 from Schlössli and Stöcken Wendeplatz and on to the existing turning loop of the 8 at Stöcken.

On line 6, to the western terminus of Bach St Georgen, on 3 December 2024 the Federal Office of Transport approved installation of a short length of new overhead from line 5 on Teufener Str. to Berneggstrasse on Gottfried-Keller-Strasse, the first stop on line 6 after leaving the 5. (News-editor's comment – presumably to provide a short length of wiring to permit de- and re-poling without interfering with traffic on line 5).

SWITZERLAND Schaffhausen

Until very recently, Verkehrsbetriebe Schaffhausen (vbsh) anticipated closure of its single trolleybus line 1 in 2028 to 2029, to be replaced by a fleet of battery-electric vehicles. Vbsh already has 15 Irizar electric buses in service. However, faced with the disruptions likely to arise from extensive construction projects planned along the route and which

would require the dismantling and temporary relocation of the overhead wires, it has been decided to withdraw the trolleybuses from 2026, to be replaced by more Irizar battery buses. The seven 14-year-old Hess SwissTrolley 3 trolleybuses would be sold.

UKRAINE Ivanko-Frankivsk (750)

The first of the six Škoda 24 Tr trolleybuses donated by the Jihlava Public Transport Company in October 2024 has been put into service, after a ceremonial presentation to the mayor on 18 December 2024. 62, the oldest and the sole Irisbus Citybus with Agora body (the others are Citelis types), was repaired and refurbished then repainted in white and grey with a burgundy stripe. It went into service on line 1 on the last day of 2024, 41 years to the day after the first trolleybus service started on this line.

There are around 60 trolleybuses available for use, with 29 Belkommunmash vehicles (BKM 321) from 2019 providing the main operations.

UKRAINE Lviv

The Lviv-based manufacturer plant of Elektronmash GmbH received an order in 2021 from the Lviv transport provider for the retrofitting of 11 vehicles with additional batteries for service operation. The selected trolleybuses came from the batch of 50 Electron T191 vehicles supplied in 2019/2020. The first conversion (168) re-entered service at the beginning of 2023, followed by 163 with 164 the third, returning at the end of 2024. Their use is occasional, since all 11 are needed for regular service.

The fleet consists of 60 Electron T191s, with the first ten supplied in 2014-2016. Plus, eight low-floor LAZ E183D1 trolleybuses from 2007 and around 20 Škoda 14Tr form the fleet. Ten trolleybus lines are served in addition to eight tram lines.

With thanks to: Československý Dopravák, Plzeňské trolejbusy, Škoda Group, Sustainable Bus Trolley:motion

Rear cover upper: The expansion of Winterthur's trolleybus system includes higher-capacity vehicles such as No. 406, seen on 18 December 2024. [Jordan Gondeau]

Rear cover, lower: Before the new Hess trolleybuses started to arrive the fleet had comprised 24 Hess Swisstrolley 3s supplied in 2010 and 2014, such as No. 116 in the foreground, and ten Solaris Trollino 18s which arrived in 2004/5, which are being sold for further service. An example is seen in the background of this photo, which was also taken on 18 December.

[Jordan Gondeau]

