

TROLLEYBUS

Vol. 64 No. 770

September 2025



The Magazine of the British Trolleybus Society



*60 years since Rotherham Closure
Almaty
Athens Trolleybuses Under Threat*

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British Trolleybus Society

No. 770. September 2025

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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 3 October 2025

Derek Lucas - "XAs, X1, Lolines and Regents". It will consist of four films:

- Hong Kong 1976-featuring buses and trams at a time when the local bus scene included plenty of traditional British double deckers -and the former London Transport XA class.
- X1 Early Days-showing the first two years of Reading Transport's London (and Southend) service.
- Loline Lament-featuring the last few weeks of crew operation on route 25 (Southcote-Donkin Hill) in 1977.
- BTS 21st Anniversary Tour- in which newly rebuilt Regent No.4 takes many familiar faces on a tour of former trolleybus routes in 1982.

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 15 October 2025, starts 19:00

Dave Hall - Archive Cine of UK Trams and Trolleybuses. In the first half it will be old archive film of UK trams (Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield, Glasgow, Blackpool and London). The second half is old archive film of various UK trolleybus systems.

West Midlands Transport Circle

BTS members are invited to attend WMTC meetings on the second Wednesday of each month (not August) at Bradmore Community Centre, Wolverhampton. Start 19.30, finish 21.45. At half-time we have a break with tea/coffee/biscuits! Visitor entry £3. Full details of upcoming talks are on the website <https://westmidlandstransportcircle.wordpress.com/>

Wednesday 8 October 2025

D J Hayes 'Black Country Freight part 1'. A look at the variety of goods transported by rail to depots in the area.

Monthly Prize Draw Winners

There was no BTS meeting in August, so a double prize draw will take place at the September meeting.

Front cover: Rotherham 39 is photographed in Hollings Lane approaching the junction with route 6 at Old Gate Lane and Park Lane. Returning on route 49 from Silverwood Colliery, which can be seen in the background, the trolleybus passed through pleasant sylvan scenery on its journey. (See his photo feature on pages 164-166)

[Tony Belton]

Bournemouth 301

On Friday 1 August, Bournemouth 301 left Hooton Park and returned to the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft on suspended tow. Preparations for it to be launched at Sandtoft will now begin. 301 has never been used in service at Sandtoft so its launch will attract a lot of interest.



By chance, a friend of John Francis' came across 301 during its journey to Sandtoft on 1 August.
[Paul Kemp]

AGM/Members' Day

Notice of the AGM and special resolutions will be found with this edition of Trolleybus. The AGM will be held in the Regal Cinema, following the Members' Day visit to the Museum. If Bournemouth 301 has passed all its electrical checks we hope to launch it into service on that day.

BTS Calendar



August 2026

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

This is a view of the London Square terminus, the most westerly point on the Newcastle Corporation trolleybus system.
London style 52 trolleybus number 488 is about to begin a cross city journey to Newham (Church Street) via Newham (St. Andrew's) via the terminal loop to South London via Newham (St. Andrew's) via Newham (St. Andrew's).
Although the trolleybuses were first numbered, they actually entered service after the 20s.

BTS Calendar 2026 Now Available

The Society's calendar for 2026 presents a selection of photographs of UK trolleybuses in interesting situations. Tony Belton has selected some wonderful photographs from his large archive and together with Tony's informative and interesting captions it is a great reminder of trolleybus operation in the UK and is an ideal Christmas present for transport enthusiasts.

Once again, 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, online, from the BTS sales stand or the Trolley Shop at Sandtoft.

[Shop Introduction – British Trolleybus Society](#)

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 £2.40 postage.

Sixty Years Ago: Closure of the Rotherham System

Story and photographs by Tony Belton

In this edition of Trolleybus we commemorate the Rotherham system, which closed on 2 October 1965.

Trolleybuses in Rotherham commenced running on 3 October 1912; the fleet consisted of single-deckers until 1956,

when twenty of the post-war Daimlers were given new double-deck bodies by Roe.

No. 1 in the music charts on this date was Tears by Ken Dodd.

So it wasn't just enthusiasts who were unhappy!



Above: The Mexborough & Swinton Adwick Road and Conisbrough Low routes were jointly operated with Rotherham Corporation. This view shows Rotherham number 8, a 1949 Daimler with East Lancs body, passing Mexborough & Swinton's Rawmarsh depot in Dale Road on 19 March 1961. Mexborough & Swinton's Sunbeam no.37 can be seen parked inside the depot. These two routes, which were operated by single-deckers, closed on 26 March 1961 leaving Rotherham's twenty Daimlers that had been given double-deck bodies by Roe to continue for another four years.

Page 165 Upper: A short sharp cloudburst on 19 March 1961 enhances this view of Rotherham Daimler number 7 at the Denaby Level Crossing. A steam train can be seen in the far distance.

Page 165, lower: Ex single-deck 92, now in the guise of rebodied Roe number 36, is on route 6 on its way from Thrybergh terminus to Kimberworth via Pumping Station. The trolleybus is on Park Lane approaching Hollings Lane which is at the junction with the Silverwood Colliery route.

Page 166, upper: Roe rebodied 39 ex single-deck 82 is photographed on route 49 in Fitzwilliam Road heading towards Effingham Square. The vehicle is arriving at Rotherham where it will terminate before returning to Silverwood Colliery

Page 166, lower: Forward four years to September 1969 when Don Jones, Norman Wayne (both in the photograph) and myself visited Spain. At the Tolosa-San Sebastian trolleybus depot we found ex Rotherham Daimler number 84, one of two that they had purchased in 1960; numbered 9 in the Tolosa fleet it was out of service and awaiting scrap. We attempted to negotiate with the management to purchase the vehicle for preservation but to our astonishment they wanted the exorbitant price of £500 which was far beyond our reach!

I wonder how much £500 is worth in today's money?





Trolleybuses in Almaty

Article and photographs (except where shown) by Lars F. Richter

In October 2024 Lars visited Kyrgyzstan's three trolleybus systems with two friends and his reports have appeared in Trolleybus. During this trip they also visited Kazakhstan.

Our main aim for this trip were the tram systems in Kazakhstan. We did stay in Almaty twice, before we flew to Bishkek (Frankfurt – Almaty and back were our long-distance flights) and again after our return from there. The trams in Almaty no longer run and the modern (quite short) metro is not very exciting. But the trolleybus system is fairly large. Last year 99 new Chinese trolleybuses appeared (after a prototype in 2022) and much of the bus fleet has been replaced with similar looking CNG buses. Under 150 of the older Neoplan Kazakhstan trolleybuses remain in service but they really do show their age on the outside (built 2008-2013). We headed to the depot (#1 – the only active one) again and this time it took a little more time to gain access. A small number of the old Yutong-Neoplan vehicles are stored here (the rest seem to be kept at the disused depot #3 together with two older vehicles which may be kept as future museum exhibits – we did not visit there, maybe we should have tried...). They told us that some of the older vehicles might get refurbished as they wanted to increase trolleybus services in the future (more lines?).

To ride the trolleybuses and buses one needs to buy a chip card. It is easy to put money on these cards as there are hundreds if not thousands of machines all

over the city where one can “charge” all sorts of cards and pay for other services with cash (only!) but getting these cards is not easy. Luckily, we saw a big sign for their main distribution office whilst taking photographs outside Almaty #2 railway station (our “hotel” was behind the station). On the short but modern metro one can also use this card but they also sell their own plastic tokens (yes, we took many home as souvenirs). There are some very long trolleybus lines but traffic during the day is rather dense. Taking photos in such traffic is tricky as the trolleybus drivers don't leave much space between them and the car in front in fear of some car squeezing in (we experienced the very same problems in Bishkek and Osh). We used Yandex taxis again a lot to save time.

Next year we plan to visit Uzbekistan, Armenia and Tajikistan (maybe even Mongolia). More trolleybuses (but only one system in each country). We enjoy travelling to these “exotic” locations.

Meeting different people and trying local food and beer is as much part of the fun as riding and photographing trolleybuses and trams. With booking.com you can also experience how local people live (unless you book into hotels that is).

We enjoyed Soviet-era housing with and without (terrible looking and noisy) lifts and with and without central heating on full blast (in Kazakhstan it was on and in Kyrgyzstan it was not). Buying your own breakfast in a supermarket can also be fun and local canteens (stolovayas) are always cheap and cheerful.

Page 168, upper: Training vehicle 1173 at Depot #1, 3 October 2024

Page 168, lower: 1198 on line 25 turning amongst many parked cars at the busy Margulana Street loop, 23 October 2024 (late running buses on lines 6 and 11 sometimes avoid going into this most western terminus).

Page 169, upper: 1243 on line 25 in Abay Avenue near Abay metro station (after trying to overtake a car in slow traffic and damaging its poles in the process - took the driver some 30 minutes to repair the “shoes” on the spot, yes we waited in the rain hoping for a recovery vehicle to appear), 23 October 2024

Page 169, lower: 7004 on line 1 sitting at the very busy most southern terminus in Kozhabekova Street, 3 October 2024

Page 170, upper: 7076 on line 25 on Abay Avenue passing Dairan metro station, 3 October 2024







7008 on line 5 in the railway station #2 loop passing Abylai Khan monument, 3 October 2024





Almaty 7211 line 7 near Almaty-1 station 11 July 2025. Note that this vehicle appears to be fitted with curtains, all fully closed. [Vit Hinčica]



Almaty 7055. July 2025, near centre

[Vit Hinčica]

Athens Trolleybuses Under Threat

News report compiled by Colin Page, photographs by Gunter Mackinger

In July, the Deputy Minister of Transport in the City decided that the existing trolleybus operation should be phased out in its entirety by 2027. Although the topic has been under discussion for many years and it is recognised the trolleybuses have been in decline both in terms of numbers of operational vehicles (around 130 in mid-2025) and extent of the network the decision appears to have been made with little consultation with others involved in the service. He quotes many aspects being detrimental to their continued use. Old age of vehicles and infrastructure, difficulty of obtaining spare parts, overhead being an eyesore in such an historic centre (removal giving "aesthetic improvement"), difficulty in providing maintenance and driving staff; indeed, a feeling that trolleybuses are now seen by the public as old fashioned. They would be replaced by electric and hybrid motor/battery buses.

However, July saw temperatures in Athens in the low 40 degrees for prolonged periods. This caused significant overloading on the batteries of the new electric buses that are now running in the centre due to overloading of the air conditioning equipment, such that around sixty out of a fleet of 240 buses were taken out of service. The former Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Transport then pointed out that this is the first real test of electric bus operation and has been found wanting, which makes removal of the tried and trusted trolleybuses not the decision to make. Also, he advises that the Ministry has never made any announcement to withdraw trolleybuses and highlights that the Company's administration is preparing a tender for acquiring seventy-five new trolleybuses.

When Gunter Mackinger visited Athens from 7 to 11 April this year the system's future looked bright.



 VanHool/Alstom trolleybus 7040 on line 4 at Stadiou street



◀ Trolleybus 8075 on line 3 overtakes trolleybus 8076 on line 11 (both Neoplan/Kiepe) on Patision 28 Oktovrion

▶ A long row of trolleybuses awaiting further service inside Rouf Depot is headed by Nos. 6095 and 6092



◀ Trolleybus 8086 on line 5 followed by articulated 9003 on line 14 (both Neoplan/Kiepe) at Lamprini terminus

MUSEUM & PRESERVATION NEWS

Edited by Jody White



Thank You from Jody White

Unfortunately, due to a vision issue, I must say good-bye to 'Trolleybus' and all the wonderful readers and contributors to my column 'Museum & Preservation News'. Over several years, I have had the great pleasure to meet and speak to some very interesting people, who very generously provided updates from their own trolleybus experiences, in addition to those from trolleybus organisations and museums. Also, I have had the good fortune to work with Dave Chick and Dave Hall.

Thank you all. Good luck in the future and God bless each one of you!

Note from the Editor

I would like to thank Jody for doing a great job for Trolleybus. Her first Museum & Preservation News column appeared in April 2018 and she produced 89 editions of the news column as well as several articles. Jody has found new sources of information and has always been completely reliable in meeting deadlines. I am very grateful to Jody for the work that she has done for the Society.

I am also grateful to Assistant Editor Dave Hall who has stepped in at short notice to cover the M&P News role.

New Museum & Preservation News Editor Needed – Could it be You?

This column is an important way for the Society to keep members informed about museums and trolleybus preservation and restoration around the world.

The Museum & Preservation News Editor looks out for news and photographs and keeps in touch with correspondents. A good standard of English is needed as is an ability to meet monthly deadlines. To apply or to learn more please email editor@britishtrolley.org.uk

Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft

Sandtoft Gathering 2025 and its Preview Day were very successful, with large

numbers of visitors and a good number of trolleybuses in service, including three which had not been used for some time (Rotherham 37, Maidstone 56 and Reading 113). More than 2,000 passenger journeys were made.

There was plenty for visitors to see, including 84 cars, 25 buses and coaches, 1 lorry and 6 bicycles.

Events

- **Saturday 6 - Sunday 7 September Blues & Twos Weekend**, featuring retired emergency vehicle displays and demonstrations.
- **Saturday 20 - Sunday 21 September Funfair Weekend**, with fairground attractions and rides!
- **Saturday - Sunday 5 October Yorkshire Buses Weekend**, also commemorating the end of Rotherham trolleybuses 60 years ago.
- **Saturday 18 October Open Day**
- **Sunday 19 October Isle of Axholme Running Day**

Keighley Bus Museum Fire

On Saturday 26 July 2022, Dalton Mills, famous for its use in the Peaky Blinders TV series, caught fire. It is located close to Keighley Bus Museum and unfortunately, the wind blew embers from the fire on to the roof of the museum, damaging roof voids across sections of the building. One section of the roof had been alight and caused smoke to enter the building, which was flooded with water whilst the fire was being fought, but luckily none of the vehicles were badly affected. A big clean-up operation has been taking place subsequently and the building is closed to all but the museum board members until the building is deemed safe. All planned events at the museum have been cancelled until further notice as a result.

Apart from the many fire fighters involved in putting out the fire, Mick Gissing, who works as a volunteer at

Keighley Bus Museum also lent a hand. He prepped the nearing-vintage fire engine stored at the museum and made the short trip to the fire, where he stood on a forklift truck and used pumps to tackle the flames off Dalton Lane. Mick's quick-thinking, and the diversion of some firefighters to the museum, prevented the roof from severe damage. The roof was in a poor condition already and a fund to rebuild it was being built up. It will now need a new roof. A 'Just Giving' fund has been set up and if you wish to contribute then paste this link in your browser:

https://www.justgiving.com/charity/kbmt?fbclid=IwY2xjawL5nzJleHRuA2FlbQlxMQABHIEGAg6DW7A1KAPpUm1KLZwcXQXHJ3TU_yiEwhxEJFsvZL5pgpnIOAnPUeoG_aem_oB9s8EvsCaf_gJ2bzCgZWA

There are six trolleybuses currently housed at the museum namely: -

- Bradford 704 Karrier W new in May 1945 rebodied by East Lancs in 1959.
- Bradford 758 BUT 9611T new in 1950 with Weymann bodywork (owned by the Bradford Trolleybus Association and currently being restored).
- Bradford 845/847 Sunbeam F4 new 1950 ex Mexborough & Swinton single-deck vehicles before being sold to Bradford in 1961 and rebodied by East Lancs as double-deck vehicles in 1962/63.
- Similar vehicle 844 (Bradford and the UK's last trolleybus) is normally accommodated at the museum but is currently on loan at the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft.
- Keighley 5 Straker-Clough chassis with Brush bodywork new in 1924.
- Teesside 2 Sunbeam F4 new in 1950 and rebodied by Roe in 1964.

Cardiff & South Wales Trolleybus Project

Unusual for Wales a heatwave, while most welcome, has been a bit unbearable which has meant jobs take longer, but one mustn't complain. 243 has received the most input as with the inside now devoid of its books and racking, the offside window refits have progressed apace and as we approached the end of July all the offside saloon windows both plain and those with sliders have received new window rubber. Before moving to the nearside, the in-house



Cardiff 243's driver's cab offside window with its new window rubber. [Keith Walker]

window-fitters found a large offside plain glass in front of the cab door was in need of new rubber, which has been completed. By the last week of July there were only three nearside windows with sliders to renew and it is hoped this task will be completed soon.

Although the under-cab cleaning has been fairly successful there are still awkward areas to address, but our latest recruit Bob Davies has commenced applying Hammerite Hammered silver.

Our decker 262 has taken a back seat but its upper deck emergency door refurbishment has been completed with its hinged doors painted and the treadplates fitted. Its locking mechanism was replaced and to complete the job the external operating handle had its paint removed to reveal its brass work, which we think is

best. To end 262's report we are inspecting the hardwood timber around the windows



Cardiff 262's upper-deck emergency door, now completely restored [Keith Walker]

on the upper deck and rectifying where necessary.

Keith Walker



Ipswich Corporation Transport Ransomes "Orwell" electric tower wagon with ICT 1948 AEC Monarch tower wagon, reunited outside Ipswich Museum [Stephen Cobb]



Picture: Neil Lewin, Rod Bramley collection

Ipswich Transport Museum

The former Ipswich Corporation Ransomes "Orwell" electric tower wagon, dating from 1922, has arrived at the Ipswich Transport Museum from Carlton Colville.

Owned by the London Trolleybus Preservation Society it has been placed on extended loan for display at the ITM and joins the former ICT horse drawn tower wagon and the ICT 1948 AEC Monarch tower wagon which are already part of our collection.

Stephen Cobb

Commemorating Rotherham's Trolleybuses – Sixty Years On

The Rotherham Trolleybus Group's anniversary tour of the former Rotherham area trolleybus routes will be on 11 October 2025, departing Rotherham Railway Station at 11:00.

The tour will use a preserved vintage bus from South Yorkshire. [Availability permitting of course!]

Anyone can join the tour, but reserving a place is essential. Book now by emailing David Hanchett david.hanchett@talktalk.net

World News

Edited by Colin Page



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

CZECH REPUBLIC Praha (752, 768, 769)

An announcement was made in July 2025 that agreement had been reached between the Praha Transport Dept (DPP) and SOR regarding compensation for the late delivery at the beginning of 2024 of the fifteen SOR TNS 18 trolleybuses for route 58 (fleet numbers 401 to 415). The delay had been caused with procurement problems incurred by Cegelec, supplier of the electrical equipment, because of the war in Ukraine. The calculation of the assessed damages was further complicated by alleged 'snagging' defects on those trolleybuses that had been delivered. Rather than a monetary settlement being made, DPP will take delivery of the four TNS 12 trolleybuses which SOR had constructed for Zlín (qv). They will be based at the Řepy depot and be used on new routes 51, 52 and 53.

After replacement of electrical equipment by Škoda Electric to Praha specification delivery will be by March 2026. The completed vehicles will then correspond to the Škoda 32 Tr model but referred to as an SOR TNS 12 model. Škoda Electric is facilitating the project from their Doudlevice factory.

An eye-witness observation at the beginning of August of work on new routes reports that for motorbus service 131 becoming trolleybus 51, many traction poles have been installed but no wiring. The conversion of 137 to 52: traction poles and wiring have been installed along Na Václavce. 176 to 53. Some road-side excavations for traction poles from Strahov Stadion and around Naměstí Kinských. Indications are that the western end, along Jiráskuv Most over the river Vltava to Karlovo náměstí terminus, will not be wired.

CZECH REPUBLIC Zlín–Otrokovice (761)

The four SOR TNS 12 trolleybuses originally intended for DSZO and which are now going to Praha have a chequered story. On 1 March

2022 Zlín–Otrokovice Transport Company (DSZO) placed an order with SOR for these trolleybuses, after the tender of November 2021. When war broke out in Ukraine in February 2022 Cegelec faced delays as they needed to design and source alternative equipment, such as printed circuit boards. The trolleybuses were constructed but then faced further delays because of having to homologate these vehicles which were now in a different configuration to the accepted Jihlava model. DSZO cancelled the order on 29 November 2023, hence their availability for Praha. Meanwhile DSZO have also been involved in financial compensation discussions with SOR culminating in three diesel-powered buses being supplied in the agreed settlement.

ECUADOR Quito (767)

Of the 60 Yutong trolleybuses landed at Manda on 31 March 2025 only forty-six were released by the Customs Administration (SENAE). The other fourteen were held for unknown reasons and consequently only released at the beginning of June after representations from the City. On 16 June they joined the first deliveries on routes C4 Quitumbe – La Colón and C6 Quitumbe – El Recreo, which are operated on the local BRT trolleybus corridor as shorter, complementary lines, next to the main C1 El Recreo – El Labrador line.

ESTONIA Tallinn (763, 765)

At a meeting of the City Council in July confirmation was announced to purchase the remaining option for the thirty Škoda trolleybuses which were included in the order for seventy at the end of 2024. The contract for these option vehicles awaits final financial agreement. The initial 40 (to be delivered in May 2026) will reopen the system on routes 81, 82, 84 and 85. The 30 additional trolleybuses will enable the original trolleybus route 9 to be reinstated from Kopli to Mustamäe (bus route 72) which ceased on 2 May 2017. Bus route 42 would then be

converted to trolleybus operation, with wires installed along Paldiski and Laagna streets.

GEORGIA Sukhumi

An announcement was made in July that the operator in St Petersburg is to donate ten trolleybuses to this Black Sea operator. Routes 1 and 3 run from a coastal central terminus towards the west, with eleven trolleybuses, all built in 2010. 122/5/8/30/40/1/46 are ZiU 682G and 134 to 137 are Trolza 5275.07 Optima types. Scrapping of 14 trolleybuses from the same batches (13 ZiUs and 1 Optima) around 2021 led to the closure of the lengthy scenic coastal route 2 running from the west through the centre to the east. As well as improving the service on the two existing routes the new management in City Hall are also anticipating that the donation will enable this route to be reopened.

ITALY Pescara (753)

On 5 July 2025, the Italian ministerial body Ansfisa (responsible for operational safety of railways and trams) issued the certificate enabling trolleybus operation of the delayed intercity 8 km long trolleybus line to start between Pescara and northwards to the town of Montesilvano. It is numbered V1. Installation of the overhead was completed in 2017, but operational opening has not been possible until now because of numerous problems. Six Van Hool trolleybuses were delivered at the end of 2022, which was to be the original opening date. They were put into store pending clarification of the situation with this supplier who had just gone into administration. They are ExquiCity 18 articulated vehicles with Kiepe electrical equipment and battery off-wire capability. They are numbered FO1 to FO6 and painted in a two-tone green livery with La Verde titles, translating as green. This spring, the public transport operator in the Abruzzo region, TUA, ran electric buses on the route to demonstrate its suitability for use. This was followed by running the trolleybuses brought out of store, which were observed by Ansfisa and led to the authorisation certificate. Then, following final training and acceptance trials, the service was due to open to the public at the beginning of August. Future plans envisage extensions to Francavilla al Mare and San Giovanni Teatino, as well as a connection to the airport. However, new vehicle procurement is under

consideration since Van Hool are no longer in business.

KAZAKHSTAN Almaty (751)

Having purchased 212 Yutong ZK6128BEVG trolleybuses with off-wire capability in 2023 and 2024 (7000 to 7211) to replace all older vehicles, the fleet is fully modernised. However, the overhead and electrical supply equipment has seen little attention in recent years. The new trolleybuses are often seen running in battery mode because of local problems with the overhead which contributes to slowing journey times when changing modes. The city operator has embarked on an extensive programme of infrastructure renewal which has already manifested itself in new traction poles on the long stretch of route 7 from the centre to Almaty 1 station. There are no plans to extend the trolleybus network but the depot housing all the trolleybuses will be modernised.

LITHUANIA Vilnius (767)

VVT (Vilniaus viešasis transportas) announced on 10 July 2025 that Solaris Bus & Coach was the successful winner of the tender (published in October 2024) for the supply of seventy-three new Trollino 18 articulated trolleybuses. The unsuccessful bidder Škoda Electric offered their 33 Tr model (SOR TNS 18). Not just cost but power consumption, warranties and technical provisions were considered. Financing has been provided by European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Nordic Investment Bank. Deliveries will start and end in 2026. They incorporate air conditioning, USB ports, bicycle stands and a camera system, with an off-wire traction capability range of 20km per charge. They will enable all the remaining Škoda 14 Tr and 15 Tr and Solaris Trollino 15AC trolleybuses to be withdrawn. VVT have indicated that the increased numbers of these and the new rigid trolleybuses now available will enable service frequencies to be increased and that seven new lines will be introduced, albeit using significant off-wire running.

RUSSIA Khabarovsk (750)

Following the delivery in 2022 of 17 MAZ-203T70 trolleybuses, operation is expanding with the delivery in 2024 of 16 Volgabus 5270T "Peresvet" types. On 16 July 2025 new route 9 to Poselok Berezovka was introduced (replacing bus route 58) and adding to the four routes (1 to 4) and a

seasonal line (28) introduced between 2023 and 2025. Route 3 was however temporarily cancelled at the end of 2024. All the trolleybuses have off-wire running capability as none of these routes is fully wired.

RUSSIA Vladivostok (754)

A renaissance in the small operations in this city was witnessed on 30 May 2025 when trolleybuses returned to the centre after 17 years, with the reinstatement of route 4 between Admiral Smirnov 14 in the north and Funikuljor (funicular) in the centre. The previous operation of this route was entirely under wires but some of the renewed service towards the centre now runs on batteries as wires on the main highway were removed around 2010. The fleet was renewed at the beginning of this year with 16 Trans-Alfa VMZ-5298.01 "Avangard" trolleybuses with an off-wire capability of 40 km. They displaced the older fleet of twelve similar trolleybuses many of which were twenty years old. Savings made with the initial purchase together with new funding has enabled a further four to be purchased, which have an enhanced off-wire running capability of 100 km. Two of the older fleet have been retained in the reserve fleet, one of which may become the museum trolleybus. The other routes (5 and 11) continue to operate in the northern area of the city. The north end of the 4 joins them and shares much of their wiring before branching eastwards towards Admiral Smirnov.

While extending the route mileage is a laudable objective there are only about fifteen qualified drivers available. For the time being therefore operation of route 4 is being inter-worked with motor bus route 99 and consequently only three trolleybuses are actually needed. A driver-training programme is in hand to enable the twenty trolleybuses to be used. A charging station is to be installed at Admiral Smirnov to bolster supplies.

Future extensions proposals could see trolleybuses running the 2.5 km to the south (along the main highway) to the stop at "Prospekt 100-letija Vladivostoka".

A longer-term extension would take trolleybuses 20km to the tourist destination of Lesnaya Zaimka, much of which would be off-wire.

SWITZERLAND Zurich (765)

Delivery was taken at the end of May 2025 of the first of 13 HESS lighTram 25 DC double articulated trolleybuses ordered in the 2022 framework agreement. It has been allocated fleet number 1 and after final fitting out and running-in tests was due to go into public service on 6 July 2025. 2 and 3 arrived in mid-July.

With the commissioning of the last of the thirteen new HESS lighTram 19DC trolleybuses delivered in May (210 to 222) withdrawal has continued of the series 1 Swisstrolleys nos 144 to 161. Following 148, 154 and 155 in late 2024 144/7/51/53/56/57 and 159 were withdrawn early this year. The battery packs in these (which replaced the auxiliary motors in 2017 and 2018) have been installed in the series II Swisstrolleys built in 2013. It is planned that when the series I double-artics 61 to 77 are withdrawn their battery packs will then be installed in series II trolleybuses built in 2012.

Tram track construction outside the hauptbahnhof from mid to end of July caused stops to be closed. Route 31 ran in two sections on either side of the station and forty-six ran in battery mode from Nordstrasse stop to Limmatplatz.

With thanks to: Československý Dopravák, DPCHJ, DPMP, Plzenské trolejbusy, Škoda Group, Sustainable Bus' Trolley:motion, Roger Overin

Rear Cover, upper: A treat on Gathering Preview Day was to observe Maidstone trolleybuses 56 and 72 in service at the same, sometimes running one behind the other and sometimes with one on the inner circle while the other was on the outer. [DG Chick]

Lower: Bradford 758 seen at Keighley Bus Museum on 30 August 2020. A good deal of progress has been made in the intervening five years, but work has been interrupted because of the fire reported in Museum & Preservation News [Dave Hall]

