

# TROLLEYBUS

Vol. 64 No. 773

December 2025



**The Magazine of the British Trolleybus Society**



*Cleethorpes 54*

*Jan Spousta*

*Visiting VMCV*

*60 years ago: Walsall - Wolverhampton*

# TROLLEYBUS

The magazine of the  
British Trolleybus Society

**No. 773. December 2025**

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Printed by Barden Print, Birkby  
Huddersfield. Tel: 01484 422522

*Trolleybus should be regarded as  
overdue to subscribers if not  
received by the 20th of each  
month.*

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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](mailto:grahamebilbe@btinternet.com)

### Friday 5 December 2025

- Best of 2025, presented by Alan Butler. Share a selection of photographs taken this year, either by bringing a memory stick to the meeting or by sending to Alan at [alandbutler@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:alandbutler@hotmail.co.uk) by email, WeTransfer or other file transfer method.

### Friday 2 January 2026

- Mike Russell - Tour around the USA. Trams, light rail and trolleybuses from across the United States, spanning several decades.

### 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](mailto:trolleybus654@aol.com).

### Wednesday 17 December (start time 14.30)

- Mike Russell - Three-axle trolleybuses. An illustrated presentation on the use of such vehicles at home and abroad.

### Wednesday 21 January (start time 14.30)

- Martin Jenkins - British Trolleybuses (excluding London) in colour 1949 to probably 1966.

### 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 10 December 2025

- K Ellis presents the photo collection of the Late Alan Wigg: Wolverhampton Corporation Motorbuses.

### Monthly Prize Draw Winners for October

£50.00 Francis Terry (Oundle, Northamptonshire)  
£40.00 Chis Williams (Southampton)  
£30.00 Francis Terry (Oundle, Northamptonshire)

*Front cover: When Cleethorpes 54 was launched at the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft on 1 November, Grimsby No. 81, a 1947 AEC Regent III/Roe attended and the two posed together. Following the Grimsby-Cleethorpes merger and until 54's withdrawal they were both part of the same fleet. [DG Chick]*

## BTS 2026 Monthly Prize Draw: Please Help South Shields 204

### South Shields 204

The 2026 Monthly Prize Draw will be in support of vital renovation work on South Shields 204, the only South Shields trolleybus in preservation and the only preserved Karrier E4. The prospectus for the draw was circulated with the November edition of Trolleybus. The closing date for receipt of application forms is 14 December 2025 don't miss out!

You can scan your signed form and email it to [mpd@britishtrolley.org.uk](mailto:mpd@britishtrolley.org.uk) or post it to

BTS Prize Draw  
8 Glan Llyn,  
Llanfairpwll LL61 5YX

### Bournemouth 99 Benefits From 2025 Draw

The final draw of the 2025 Monthly Prize Draw will take place at the BTS Reading meeting on Friday 5 December 2025 and will have a total of six prizes, to make the total prizes awarded under the rules of the draw up to 49.6% of the draw subscriptions.

The 2025 MPD has provided £1,656.25 towards the renovation of Bournemouth 99 to help make it ready for the 60th anniversary of the closure of Bournemouth's trolleybus operations.

Thank you to everyone who helped towards this great result.



▲ South Shields 204 in service at Sandtoft Gathering 25 with another two BTS trolleybuses; London 1812 on the left and Huddersfield 631 on the right. Our Karrier E4 entered service in April 1937 and is still the oldest trolleybus in service at Sandtoft at present, despite the launch of Cleethorpes 54, which first carried passengers in July 1937. [DG Chick]

## Cleethorpes 54

Almost 67 years after it last ran in service, and having spent nearly ten years in a scrapyard where it was badly damaged, followed by a difficult and protracted restoration project, Cleethorpes 54 entered service at Sandtoft on 1 November, and it looked magnificent.

This AEC 661T with Park Royal H30/26R body was purchased for service in Cleethorpes when the system was inaugurated on 18 July 1937. Its ownership transferred to the merged Grimsby Cleethorpes system on 1 January 1957 and it remained in service until withdrawal in December 1958. It was taken to a scrapyard in Grimsby where it suffered the indignity of being hit by a ship, quite possibly the only example anywhere in the world of such an accident. Apparently, this unusual event occurred when a piece of a schooner fell from a crane, but "trolleybus hit by ship" is a better story! In 1968 54 was rescued by members of the East Midlands Transport Society.

Before arriving at Sandtoft in extremely poor condition in May 1977 54 had been accommodated at three different locations, including Plumtree.

Initially Steve Collins was 54's champion and he commenced the restoration. Ownership was transferred to Andrew Fieldsend in July 1981 and almost immediately he began work on it. It was a mammoth job to undertake given its condition and it has taken over 40 years to complete, partly because Andrew has lived in Hungary in recent years,

although he has visited Sandtoft regularly with his partner, Nora.

When 54 was launched at Sandtoft's Twilight event Andrew was keen to pay tribute to Steve Collins, for all he had learned from our much-missed friend. Steve had inspired Andrew and given him the confidence to undertake such an ambitious project. Andrew also thanked the many Sandtoft volunteers who had helped him, in particular Dave Stanfield for a lot of the painting and Duncan Wedlock for applying the transfers.

Thanks to Dave Hall for some of the information used in this article.  
DGC



*Duncan Wedlock applied the transfers shortly before 54 entered service.*

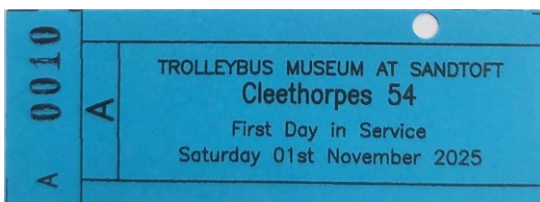
*[DG Chick]*



Left to right: the launch crew, conductor Andy Thornton and driver Miles Cartwright with Andrew and Nora.  
[DG Chick]

Cleethorpes 54 was in a very poor condition before arriving at Sandtoft in 1977, as seen in this photo taken at Plumtree on 25 July 1973.

[Robin Helliars-Symons]



The commemorative ticket which was issued to passengers on launch day.

## In Search of Perfect Curves Launched at Sandtoft

Author Andy Feather, who has been responsible for the erection and maintenance of Sandtoft's overhead wiring throughout the Museum's existence, chose the Trolleybus Museum as the site for the launch of his book, which documents his time working with Bradford's overhead crew.

The entire stock which had been ordered for sale in the Museum shop was sold before the Museum even opened for

the day! Fortunately the shop had access to an additional supply so that members of the public could purchase copies.

Andy was on hand to sign copies as they flew off the shelf.

There is to be a second volume of Andy's memoir, which will include details of setting up the Trolleybus Museum's overhead installation.

DGC

Buy now from BTS Sales online [Trolleybus books – British Trolleybus Society](#)



### BTS Calendar

#### **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. Last few left!

[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.



## Jan Spousta

In 1971 the newly-renamed British Trolleybus Society received a letter from a Czech student asking whether we would make him a member in return for the supply of news about trolleybuses. As a Communist state Czechoslovakia did not permit money transfers.

The BTS Committee agreed and Jan became a regular correspondent with Roger Clark, then the Society's Membership Secretary, and with me, as the World News Editor for Trolleybus. In 1974 Roger and I visited Prague and met Jan and his parents and friends. The three of us visited several of the country's trolleybus systems, travelling by train, coach, or occasionally by car, sometimes finding ourselves following Soviet troop transports. Jan was a fluent English speaker and we learned a lot about Prague and Czechoslovakia and the transport systems.

After his student years Jan was conscripted into the Czech army and subsequently worked for the transport union. Since the 1989 Velvet Revolution he mainly worked for the transport ministry, apart from spells employed in private industry unrelated to transport and for the EU in Brussels.

After 1989 it became easier to visit the country and easier for Czechs to travel. Over the years Jan and I travelled together visiting

transport systems and museums in the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, France and the UK and I cherish those memories.

Jan had a wide network of friends and transport professionals throughout the world. Often these contacts have benefitted the BTS and the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft.

In 2016 I attended the launch of the replica of a 1907 Mercedes-Électrique-Stoll in České Velenice with Jan, who introduced me to the project manager, Jirka Kovář. This led to the project to create a replica for the Trolleybus Museum of the Bayley-bodied Cedes which became Keighley No. 0, with Jan the link between the British and Czech teams.

It had been Jan's intention to retire this year but in February he was diagnosed with renal cancer. Although the surgery then was a success, during the summer the cancer was found to have spread and he spent several months in hospital, where he died on 4 November at the age of 70.

The world has lost a well-connected expert on public transport in its many road and rail forms. We have also lost a great friend who will be sorely missed.

My condolences to Jan's wife, Eva, and their daughter, Martina.

DGC

▶ *Jan Spousta (right) with Dave Chick and Roger Clark on the launch weekend of Sandtoft's Cedes replica*



## A visit to the VMCV

### Article and photographs by Francis Terry

The northern side of Lake Geneva (Lac Lemman) is lined with a series of towns, several of which were linked by Switzerland's first interurban tramway, in 1888. The route initially served Vevey, Montreux and Chillon, but was later extended to Villeneuve in 1903 and then converted to trolleybus in 1957-8. The service, operated by Transport Publics Vevey-Montreux-Chillon-Villeneuve (VMCV), was originally numbered 1, and subsequently 201 when the Mobilis Vaud network was launched in 2010. Although VMCV also operates motorbuses in the area, this has always been its one and only trolley route, accounting for almost three-quarters of the company's revenue.

In 2019, the eastern terminus at Villeneuve was extended by about 2.5 km to Rennens Hospital. This is unwired, and at first was served by a few trips per day using motorbuses. Meantime, the existing trolleybus fleet was replaced by an order for 16 Van Hool/Kiepe ExquiCity models with battery capability. These began to arrive in November 2019 and delivery was completed in May 2020. They enabled the previous fleet of Van Hool/Kiepe AG300T trolleybuses to be disposed of; in fact, several vehicles had left the active fleet in the years from 2005 onwards, when they were placed in store as surplus to

requirements or sold to Salzburg. There were also loans from VMCV to the Lausanne system.

On a visit to Montreux in May 2025, ten trolleybuses were operating the service on route 201, providing a ten-minute frequency throughout the week although a modified service runs on Sunday mornings. In the evenings, the frequency is halved to every 20-minutes and during the Montreux jazz festival a much increased service is offered. A complete trip from the Vevey terminus at the funicular station to Rennens hospital is scheduled to take 42 minutes.

Short workings seem to be rare, and there is virtually no provision for them in the overhead. Short turns may be made at the depot at Clarens, and the terminal loop at Villeneuve remains in place so that it also can be used for short turns. Re-wiring pans have been installed at the former lay-over point in the loop, and inbound trolleybuses from Rennens follow a routing which passes under the pans to re-pole, before continuing on the overhead toward Chillon.

The VMCV gives the impression of being a reliable, workaday system, with a steady flow of traffic and comfortable, speedy vehicles – in fact, just how public transport ought to be.

▶ No 810 passes through the typical urban scenery of route 201, near the boat landing stage at Montreux.





▲ A smartly turned out No.801 in the VMCV fleet passes the market hall in Montreux.

▼ At the wire-free terminus of Rennens hospital, No. 813 awaits departure time.



## Sixty Years Ago: Walsall - Wolverhampton Route 29

Story and photographs by Tony Belton

Sixty years ago, 31 October 1965, was a very sad day for the trolleybus world as this was the last day that the joint Walsall Wolverhampton trolleybus route 29 ran. The following day the route was motorbus operated; this premature conversion was caused by the extensive roadworks taking place for the construction of the new M6 Motorway. Walsall Corporation maintained the overhead on route 29 and so it was in

excellent condition. This meant that trolleybuses could show their full potential without fear of a dewirement - for Wolverhampton drivers this was a novelty as Wolverhampton overhead was not very well maintained. All photos taken on 9 June 1963.

No.1 in the charts was  
The Rolling Stones with  
"Get Off of My Cloud"



▲ Wolverhampton 638 on route 29 waits to depart Walsall Townend Street terminus whilst Walsall 309 is just arriving from Wolverhampton on a lovely day in June 1963. The route number shows up well on Wolverhampton 638 whilst Walsall 309 just shows the destination.

638 is a 1950 Guy BT with an eight-foot wide Park Royal body (note the white steering wheel which alerts the driver that the vehicle is eight foot wide!) 309 is a 1947 Sunbeam W with Weymann body, ex-Hastings 41.

Page 231, upper: Walsall 354 shows not only a very crammed Wolverhampton in the blind box but a route number 29 as well! Photographed at Wolverhampton St James Square terminus with an unknown Wolverhampton trolleybus behind.

354 is a 1950 Sunbeam F4 with Park Royal body, ex-Ipswich 122.

Page 231, lower: Walsall 308 on route 29 at Willenhall passing the Royal George PH on its way from Walsall to Wolverhampton.

308 is a 1947 Sunbeam W with Weymann body, ex-Hastings 39; certain parts of this vehicle still exist as they helped with the restoration and preservation of Hastings 34.





▲ Wolverhampton 624 on route 29 is at the same location as Walsall 308 (above) but going in the opposite direction. 624 is a 1950 Sunbeam F4 with Park Royal body.

▼ Walsall 305 on route 29 side by side with Wolverhampton 640 on route 29 at Wolverhampton St James Square terminus.

305 is a 1947 Sunbeam W with Weymann body, ex-Hastings 36. 640 is a 1950 Guy BT with an eight-foot wide Park Royal body.





▲. Wolverhampton 425 on route 29 at Wolverhampton St James Square terminus.

425 is a 1946 Sunbeam W rebodied by Roe in 1960

▼. Walsall 304 on route 29 is departing Wolverhampton St James Square terminus where it will turn right into Horsely Fields on its way to Walsall. This rear nearside view clearly shows the colourful used ticket box; I was told at the time they were the colours of Walsall F.C. Could anyone confirm please? 304 is a 1947 Sunbeam W with Weymann body, ex Hastings 33.



# MUSEUM & PRESERVATION NEWS

Edited by Dave Hall



This month's column is full of good news of trolleybuses where restoration has been completed or is well on the way.

## **London 1764/Johannesburg 589**

589 is a BUT 9641T with an MCCW H40/31D body which was assembled in South Africa. It entered service on 7 June 1948 and survived in service until 1 July 1974. It was preserved in Durban for many years and arrived in the UK in 2009 following large donations from enthusiasts to cover both the cost of transportation and its subsequent restoration. On arrival in the UK it was in poor condition, having been attacked by metal thieves whilst in Durban.

It was initially stored in the Reading area where work commenced on its restoration. Progress was slow and so it was moved to Dorking on 8 November 2016 where a fully professional restoration job has now been completed. 589 was transported from Dorking to Sandtoft on 13 October 2025. It has been modified to give it the appearance of a London Transport SA3 class trolleybus for a period of time. All the parts that will be required to convert it back to Johannesburg 589 were boxed up and have been delivered to the Museum.

However, before it is painted in London Transport livery, it will need a fair amount of electrical and mechanical work to be carried out.

## **Cleethorpes 54**

After a major restoration, this vehicle was finally launched into service at Sandtoft at the Museum's Twilight event on 1 November 2025. See article in this edition.

## **Bournemouth 301**

A Sunbeam MF2B with Weymann H37/28D which entered service on 1 November 1962. It was the last new trolleybus to enter service in the UK and it was also the last trolleybus to run at the closure of the system on 20 April 1969. It was purchased by the BTS from the Bournemouth Passenger Transport Association in 2016. It

was hoped to launch 301 in service at the Bournemouth Trolleybus Pageant event at Sandtoft in 2019 but suffered a major electrical failure whilst on test a few days before the event.



*BTS member David Bowler, who lives in Switzerland, has been the Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft's furthest-travelling member of traffic staff for several years. David "retired" from volunteering at the end of the Isle of Axholme Running Day, although he hopes to be back. At the briefing session that starts every open day at the Museum, David was thanked for his dedication and he was presented with a card signed by his colleagues. Sandtoft's Traffic Manager, Chas Allen, said "I'd like to thank David for his contribution to the Museum over the many years he has been coming - his total travel expenses don't even bear thinking about! - and I'm sure we all send him our best wishes for the future." David is seen on that day holding a replica Sunbeam badge against Bournemouth 301.*

*[Keith Burbidge]*

Following electrical repairs and an external repaint being completed at Keighley Bus Museum, 301 moved to

Hooton Park in August 2021 where Keith Baynton has carried out a thorough internal refurbishment and arranged for the window rubbers to be replaced. The BTS is extremely grateful to Keith for conducting this work free of labour charges. It returned to Sandtoft on 1 August 2025 and since then Graham Bilbé and Ian Metcalfe worked hard to prepare 301 for service, but it has a few issues requiring attention and cannot yet be used by the public.

However, it was able to operate a demonstration run for BTS members who had gathered for the BTS Annual General Meeting on 18 October 2025. It will enter passenger service early in the 2026 operating season.

### **Ipswich 26**

This Garrett Type 'O' with Strachan & Brown 30 seat dual entrance bodywork entered service on 27 June 1926 and was withdrawn in 1945. It was purchased privately and taken to Pen Mill where it was converted for use as a summer house.



*Above and right: The restoration of Ipswich 26 is progressing very well at the Long Shop at Leiston and it has just received its first coat of paint.*

*[Long Shop Leiston]*

Many years later 26 was rescued by the Leiston Long Shop Museum and taken to its premises on 24 August 1987. It was loaned to the Ipswich Transport Museum, arriving there on 11 February 1995. It was stored outside under sheeting whilst awaiting restoration/conservation. It was eventually decided the restoration work would be carried out by volunteers at the Long Shop Museum and it returned there on 21 July 2021. The body and chassis were separated so that newly manufactured parts could be fitted to replace those missing or damaged. The bodywork was completely reframed before repainting could take place. In recent months, the body and chassis were reunited and it's looking good. The body has now received its first coat of paint.



*Page 236 upper: London 1764/ Johannesburg 589 arrived at Sandtoft on 13 October and was on display at the Isle of Axholme Running Day a few days later.*

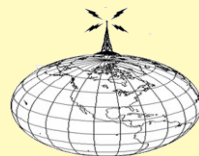
*[Dave Hall]*

*Page 236, lower: BTS members were treated to a demonstration run on Bournemouth 301 prior to the AGM and it is seen proceeding down the back road on its first circuit.*



# World News

Edited by Colin Page



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

## **CHINA Hangzhou (772)**

One of the first Geely (also referred to as Jili) C12E trolleybuses is 6-5963, seen in service on the 151 in the middle of October. Twenty-two are rostered on this route, with eight allocated to the other route K155.

Four carry different retro liveries and have fleet numbers from the previous trolleybuses which wore them.

## **CZECH REPUBLIC Hradec Králové**

In the middle of September Škoda Electric won the tender for 31 trolleybuses. The framework agreement enables purchase of up to 18 32 Tr 12m rigid and 13 33 Tr 18m articulated vehicles, equipped with a battery-powered auxiliary drive, allowing off-wire operation of around 15 kilometres.

## **CZECH REPUBLIC Ostrava (760, 765, 768)**

D P Ostrava a.s. signed a framework agreement with Škoda Electric on 20 October 2025 for the delivery of up to 16 26 Tr rigid trolleybuses with bodies by Solaris, equipped with batteries and with 15km off-wire capability. 14 form the main order with an option for another two. Delivery will be in 2027.

## **CZECH REPUBLIC Praha (pic 769, 771)**

The prototype Bozankaya SNG 12T trolleybus, allocated fleet number 510, started the final session of homologation tests on 15 October 2025. This involved carrying passengers in service for 20,000 km of operation, without problems. The date was coincidentally the 53rd anniversary of the closure of the original trolleybus system. The original intention had been to run on the section of route 58 between the original Letňany terminal and Čakovice station as a dedicated service 60 but this was changed to use the entire length of the 58 from Palmovka to Miškovice as a rostered duty.

The start date for these final tests was delayed as pieces of equipment specific to DPP's specification had to be fitted, calibrated and synchronised with measurement devices and which were not installed when the trolleybus was built. At the insistence of DPP the heating test, including air conditioning, had to be completed before the loading test could proceed. This proved difficult as ambient outside temperatures continued to be unusually warm for the autumnal time of year.

On 510 the decals displaying the name 'LAMIS' have been removed, being replaced by the maker's name on the front. Possible demonstration runs in other countries are now being considered before it returns to Turkey.

## **CZECH REPUBLIC Ústí nad Labem (759)**

A framework contract was signed with Škoda Electric at the end of October for the supply of up to thirty 18m 33 Tr trolleybuses, with SOR bodies. They will be provided with two driven axles and camera mirrors (similar to previous deliveries) and with an off-wire-range of 12km. The delivery date has not been declared. Six charging points are included in the order. They will replace older trolleybuses and enable expansion of the existing network which doesn't have trolleybus infrastructure.

## **CZECH REPUBLIC Zlín–Otrokovice (763)**

With the two tender proposals put forward by Zlín–Otrokovice (DSZO) rejected by the Government's Office of Protection of Competition (UOHS) in reply to objections which had been raised by potential suppliers, (as referred to in 763) DSZO put forward a third proposal in early 2025. In September 2025, the UOHS upheld this tender declaring that it would not intervene in the details relating to an objection. This leaves Zlín to determine how and with whom it procures new fleet additions. The legal details and reasoning of the declaration are long and complicated and thus deemed outside the scope of reporting in this column. However, they have implications about the costs of trolleybuses sourced from a single (internal) supplier and

real or perceived cheaper costs of trolleybuses from foreign suppliers, both of which affect new purchases. Also, the impact of costs and engineering that simple electric buses are having against classic trolleybuses with IMC equipment and the associated provision of overhead and power suppliers, may all together define and affect the future of the trolleybus as an identifiable mode of transport.

### **FRANCE St Etienne (765, 771, 772 pic)**

One of the first deliveries of new Solaris IV Trollino 18 trolleybuses carries the fleet number 7002.

### **ROMANIA Baia Mare**

Five new Solaris 18T articulated trolleybuses were delivered around 1 September 2025. They went into service on the two routes 50 & 54.

### **ROMANIA Medias**

Five new Solaris Trollino 12s with Medcom electrical equipment entered service in mid-September for Meditur SA. They have batteries for off-wire running and a capacity of 97 passengers with 31 seated. Fleet numbers include 372 and 375. They may be additions to this small fleet as motorbus route 4 between Kaufland and Str. Stadionului was being converted to trolleybus operation at the same time and numbered T4. It connects with the other three routes, T1, T2 (as T2M and T2V) and T3, which were returned to operation in July 2024 following two years of overhead renewals. However, T1 has been operating with motorbuses together with two short extensions of T2.

### **RUSSIA Yekaterinburg (762)**

With 50 trolleybuses of type 6254.00, delivered by Sinara between November 2024 and February 2025, and 49 Olgerds from Belkommunmash delivered during 2024, Yekaterinburg City Transport has placed an order for fifty more trolleybuses, to be delivered by the end of February 2026. They will be supplied by the Ufimsky tram-trolleybus plant from Ufa, Russia. They are of the Gorozhan model, with off-wire operation for 30 km. It is based on the Belarusian trolleybus MAZ-203. Other specified features include a camera system and on-board contactless payment. The city wishes to update the entire trolleybus fleet by 2026.

### **SPAIN Castellón de la Plana (754)**

The six available trolleybuses cannot cover the diagrams of six on the entire run of line T1 TRAM between Universitat and Grau and the two for the short-working morning trips (M to F to 14:30) between Universitat and Parque Ribalta. Consequently, newly delivered Irizar electric buses are also used as required. An extension of T1 from Grau eastwards to Platja is operated as a shuttle with the electric buses. The roadway is being reconfigured to a segregated layout, similar to the main T1 route. When this is completed, the extension will form an integrated part of T1 running between Estació Intermodal via Grau to Platja but worked by electric buses. The trolleybuses will continue to work between Universitat and Grau until the end of 2028 when they will be withdrawn as the concession ends. T1 will then become a through route between Universitat and Platja.

On the trolleybus route the overhead from the penultimate stop at Av. del Mar / Institute to the turning loop at Grau Rotonda Centenari is no longer in use because two charging masts have been installed, presumably for the electric buses. Power supply to the overhead between the railway station at Est. Intermodal and Parque Ribalta is presently not available as the overhead has been demolished by a truck collision and awaits reconstruction pending insurance settlement.

### **SWITZERLAND Bern**

On 4 August 2025 work started on the electrification of route 10 from Bern Bahnhof to Koniz Schlieren in anticipation of operation by trolleybuses. New overhead wiring is being installed between Monbijou and Bruhplatz, with about 180 traction poles being erected.

Three power and rectification plants are being provided. The sections of route from the Bahnhof to Monbijou and between Bruhplatz to the terminus at Schlieren will be unwired and the double articulated trolleybuses will run in battery mode. A new turning circle is being installed at the outer terminus. Existing stops are being reconfigured to optimize access and remove obstacles, with some having structural alterations made. Trolleybus operation is scheduled to start in mid-October 2026.

### **SWITZERLAND Shaffhausen (763)**

Changing events mean that trolleybus operation, along the solitary route 1, could end by the end of this year (2025), as soon as

delivery of the replacement fleet of battery buses from the Spanish manufacturer Irizar e-mobility has been made and which are now due in December. The trolleybus route runs from Neuhausen Herbstäcker, heading eastwards through Zentrum to Waldfriedhof. However, wires were removed in 2024 from the section around Neuhausen (Bahnhofstraße) towards Herbstäcke due to roadworks. Since then, the service from Neuhausen Zentrum to Herbstäcke has been covered by a shuttlebus. The auxiliary diesel engines of the 7 HESS SwissTrolley 3 trolleybuses (101 to 107) delivered in 2011 were replaced by traction batteries soon afterwards, but these do not have sufficient and reliable capacity to make the off-wire return trips to Herbstäcke. Four trolleybuses run the weekday service.

### **USA Philadelphia (755)**

A tender was issued by SEPTA in mid-October for the supply of 38 trolleybuses to replace the existing fleet of 38 New Flyer/Kiepe Electric trolleys from 2007/8. Delivery will be during 2029. This confirms the previous announcements made in mid-2024 saying the trolley fleet would be replaced as part of the move to Zero Emissions Bus plan by 2040. Also it removes the possibility that the renewal could have been stopped because of financial constraints elsewhere throughout the Authority.

The network consists of three routes, 59, 66 and 75 with services provided on all days of the week. The open depot is located at the Frankford Transit Center station on route 66. The quadruple set of wires at the beginning of line 66 is used by just nine express services each day. These are often operated by motorbuses.

### **USA Seattle (759, 762)**

The programme continues to upgrade the traction batteries of the entire fleet of 174 New Flyer trolleybuses using Kiepe equipment with IMC capability. This has caused King County Metro to reconsider how the trolleys will

feature in the future transport system and its plan to achieve zero-emissions instead of just using battery driven buses. The latest KCM budget therefore gives a boost to funding trolley projects, particularly the restoration of two routes to overhead operation. The wired network comprises routes 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 36, 43, 44, 49 and 70. Routes 2 and 12 have been operated by diesel motorbuses when overhead wiring was removed where they crossed the construction of the new RapidRide G line and which opened in 2024.

On route 2 a significant length of wiring and traction poles were removed around 12th Ave. and E. Madison Str. This gap is now being replaced, with an anticipated return to trolley operation in late 2026. Much of route 12 to Interlaken Park parallels the RapidRide G line along Madison Street. The overhead wiring was removed between 15th Avenue and E. Madison Str. when construction of G line started. The substituting motorbus service was then diverted along E. Pine Str. Plans are in hand to replace wiring and reopen the route to trolleybus operation by 2029. However, the possibility of using the off-wire facility provided by the new batteries 'across the gap' is being investigated to bring this reopening forward.

Plans to electrify motorbus route 48 running between Mount Baker and University District were made in 2014. Much of it already runs under wires with short sections not covered but Metro have indicated that completion will not be before 2032.

Seattle – The Urbanist.

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### **Rear Cover captions: Twilight at the Trolleybus Museum Photos by DG Chick.**

*Upper:*

*As the daylight fades, Maidstone 72 waits for conductor Stan Collins to pull the frog.*

*Lower:*

*Only half an hour later the light has disappeared as Derby 172 turns at the same spot on a demonstration run.*

