

## The Latest News *January 2007*



**31/01/07**

Neil Wise reports that **Arriva Durham County** DAF SB220GS / Plaxton 4055 (S355KHN) was severely damaged in an accident yesterday. Some photos and (somewhat tasteless) video clips appear on the Northern Echo website and show the degree of damage. I hope the driver of the bus is able to make a speedy and full recovery.



Daniel Stazicker has provided some interesting Leyland Olympian photos. Firstly, former Tees & District 7281 (G758UYT) now with Poppletons, Pontefract and gradually losing Arriva NW livery. The other pair are both Roe bodied - Garnetts CUB69Y and Hewitts Solicitors TPD107X, the latter often seen on the road in the North East acting as a mobile advert and publicity unit.



A report that I forgot to put up a couple of weeks ago come from John Atkin. **Abbey Coaches, Middlesbrough** have re-registered Van Hool A308 J687DYR to YIW5672 and have repainted it and fitted dual purpose seating.

**30/01/07**

Neil Wise reports that, although due end it's loan period to Darlington, **Arriva Tees & District** Mercedes OH1416 / Wright 3027 (N750LUS) was still in use yesterday with Arriva Durham County at Darlington. Reports on the arriva\_northumbria yahoo group suggest that Optare Delta 4014 (K414BHN) is one of as many as three vehicles on loan to Arriva Northumbria.

Gary Mitchelhill reports the arrival of four more Scania Omnicities for **Go North East** at Scania Washington. These are as yet unregistered. "The 994" reports that DFDS-liveried Volvo Olympian / Northern Counties 3833 (S833OFT) was today in use on Bargain Bus work.



Steven Hodgson kindly passes on news from the **Stanley Taxis** [website](#) that they have acquired Optare Solo VU52UEE to bolster low floor availability for the MC1 (on which Steven photographed Mercedes Vario / Optare X2STX working). This bus returns to the region, having been new to Jayline, Horden and latterly operated by Pegasusbus, Guisley.

**Tees Valley, Eaglescliffe** currently have Leyland Atlantean / East Lancs URN324V for sale on [ebay](#).

**26/01/07**

Mark Gibbon reports that **Arriva Tees & District** Dennis Dart SLF / Plaxton 1650 (R425COO) has been sent up to Arriva Scotland West, while Wayne Picknett tells me that Optare Vecta 1551 (L551GHN) is heading north also. These are presumably loans, as the latest allocation sheets (for Feb) do not record their departure. They also show that Volvo B6 / Plaxton 4539 (L225TKA) is only on loan to Scotland West.

**Go North East** have now added details of some of the forthcoming major service changes on their [website](#). These changes are sure to be the subject of much discussion and interest among both enthusiasts and passengers. Gary Mitchelhill reports the arrival at Scania Washington of new Omnicities NK56KHC-F.

Not strictly north east news in the most current sense, but certainly of interest to many, is the report from Elliot Stuffins that **Stagecoach Manchester** have taken ex Stagecoach Glasgow, but new to Busways, Leyland Olympian / Alexander 14603/54 (C603/54LFT) for additional Magicbus workings required since the demise of UK North/GM Buses.

Steven Hodgson reports the arrival of even more Optare Solos at **Dunn Line (Durham), Easington Lane**. The latest two noted are YJ56AUA/C.

**24/01/07**

Neil Wise tells me that **Arriva Tees & District** had returned Mercedes OH1416 / Wright 3027 (N750LUS) to service at Redcar by yesterday and that

it was today sent to Darlington, being sent out on service 74 Teesside Airport - Hurworth from lunchtime.

**23/01/07**

Neil Wise tells me that **Arriva Durham County** Volvo B6 / Plaxton 4537 (L235TKA) failed to make it to Scotland, breaking down just outside Darlington. Stuart Gray tells me that the remaining B6s at Bishop Auckland are expected to be replaced by Ikarus bodied DAF SB220s within the next six weeks or so. He also reports the arrival at Bishop Auckland from Scotland of Optare Metrorider 2764 (N885RTN) from Scotland for spares as sister 2644 (P644FHN) is now well stripped.



Brian Taylor reports that **Go North East** have repainted Scania L94UB / Wright 4941 white, while Steven Hodgson reports that the blue Scantias are starting to receive Fab 57 brandings.

Peter Barclay has spotted former **Cleveland Transit/Stagecoach Hartlepool/Redby** Leyland Lynx F604UVN for sale on [ebay](#).

**20/01/07**

Bryn McGloin tells me that **Arriva Tees & District** yesterday had Dennis Dart SLF / Plaxton 1650 (R425COO) on Redcar's service 48. It is not known if this is a loan or transfer from Loftus.



Robert Hall tells me that **Arriva Northumbria** have withdrawn Hexham Optare Metrorider 2639 (P639FHN). 2638 (P638FHN) was to have replaced it, but was found not to be in any better condition than 2639, so 2612 (P612FHN) came from Blyth instead, as shown by Steven Hodgson's photo. His other photo shows that vehicle on the Newcastle-Blyth expresses are now carrying promotional fare information in the windscreen.



Steven Hodgson reports that **Go North East** have repainted Volvo B7TL / Wright 3964 in pink, leaving 3963 to be done. Also pictured is former Go NE Dennis Dart / Marshall 8098 (M808GFT), seen today in Walsall with Go West Midlands.



Chris Redpath has provided details of the latest movements at **Stagecoach North East**. Other than routine ins and outs for maintenance and the like, the majority of the moves concern Olympians. 14672/3 (H672/3BNL) are in reserve from Sunderland, 14182/92 (G182JHG, H192WFR) in reserve from Darlington and 16431/3/6 (VLT255/528, 647DYE) in reserve from Stockton, along with Volvo B10B 21033 (L33HHN). Pictured above are former 14605/46 (C605/46LFT) now working for A2Z as listed several days ago.

Paul Thompson of **Leven Valley, Middlesbrough** tells me that his fifth new Cummins-engined Optare Solo T12GAJ "St Columba" entered service yesterday. This is to be the last new Euro-3 engined vehicle for this fleet. Paul hopes to be operating all services (other than a single school contract) with low floor vehicles by the end of 2007.

**Northumbria Coaches, Ashington** are currently selling ex Arriva Leyland Lynx II 5019 (H338TYG) on [ebay](http://ebay), rather than using it for spares.

**16/01/07**

Neil Wise tells me that **Arriva Durham County** are about to send Volvo B6 / Plaxton 4537 (L235TKA) to Scotland too - lucky them?! The latest on the VOSA site shows that some Viva Bishop Auckland routes will change from 11/03/07 - presumably this will answer time-keeping difficulties on some routes.

**13/01/07**



It would seem that competition between **Arriva Northumbria** and **Go North East** is hotting up again. As of today Arriva have introduced reduced price returns and route weeklies on the Cramlington - Newcastle corridor and part of the Tyne Valley corridor and have taken a more active stance to marketing these than previously. In response, Go North East have extended their free accompanied child on Saturday offer on the Bargain Bus routes and are matching some of Arriva's reduced fares. Further developments will be watched with interest!

Stuart Gray tells me that **Arriva Durham County's** Bishop Auckland depot is now home to DAF SB220 / Ikarus 4083 (J926CYL) after a short spell at Darlington (thanks also to Andrew Lawson for reporting this). Volvo B6 / Plaxton 4539 (L225TKA) is expected to go to Scotland next week and Optare Vecta 1527 (L527FHN) has suffered engine failure (this will make at least one regular reader of this page cry!).



Brian Taylor reports that **Go North East** Volvo B10M / Plaxton driver trainer 7060 (N760RCU) has donned a new training livery. Note that it is red-based - the Red Arrows B10Ms could very easily be re-vinyled like this once their X2 careers are over (when the new Mercedes Citaros are delivered). It will be interesting to see if this happens. Daryl Mitchelhill reports that Pink Panther Solos 457/63 are in use at Percy Main (I noted 463 myself this morning), while brother Gary reports 448 also working (cheers also to Baz for noting that some of these were in use). Steven Hodgson notes the repaint of Volvo B7TL 3965 into pink, while I have noted Volvo B10BLEs 4844/7 in orange and white respectively.



Steven Hodgson has passed on the above photo taken by Mark McCann of **Northumbria Coaches** Leyland Lynx J657UHN now repainted and numbered 33. It will be interesting to see what work Northumbria find for such fine machines. Thanks to Mark and Steven for the ongoing supply of information.

**09/01/07**

The latest fleet movements are now underway at **Arriva North East / Northumbria**, as reported by Neil Wise, Ian Wilson, Mark Gibbon, "Dave" and Paul Francis. DAF SB120 / Wright 1914-7/20 (W319PPT, W69/72/6/81PRG) have moved from Stockton to Peterlee (1920 in place of 1922 as 1922 has suffered a mechanical failure), while Peterlee have lost Optare Delta 4097 (G258UVK) and DAF SB220 / Ikarus 4083 (J926CYL) to Darlington, with Deltas 4009/93 (K409BHN, G254SRG) expected to follow. Optare Vecta 1557 (L102MEH), Mercedes OH1416 / Wright 3027 (N750LUS) and Optare Metroriders 2621/37/8 (P621/37/8FHN) have all come off at Redcar, though 2637 has moved to Darlington to replaced failed sister 2634 (P634FHN). Scania L113 / East Lancs 282 (N282NCN) has gone from Ashington to Jesmond, with Jesmond losing Volvo B10BLE / Wright 4502/3 (V502/3DFT) going to Blyth to see off Optare Metrorider 2612 (P612FHN) and Leyland Olympian / ECW 7227 (C59CHM), though 2612 at least continues in use at present.

Many more entries have appeared for **Go North East** on the VOSA website. It would appear that the new network will combine some existing services - should all be very interesting. Steven Hodgson reports that the Pink Panther Optare Solos are currently delicensed at Saltmeadows.

As reported by Steven Hodgson, Elliot Stuffins and others, legendary **Stagecoach North East** Leyland Olympian / Alexander 14605/11/5/8/31/9/45/6/51/8 (C605/11/5/8/31/9/45/6/51/8LFT) have been sold via Ensign to A2Z Travel, Walsall. I can recommend the West Midlands Buses Fotopic site [link](#) for views of them now.



Steven Hodgson reports that **Classic, Annfield Plain** have taken delivery of new Volvo B12B / Plaxton YN56SGO in National Express livery, presumably to replace or augment one of the ex Arriva Northumbria DAFs at Washington. Also, recently acquired is Volvo B10M / Plaxton W900BCL.



Steven Hodgson has provided the above shots of the two most recent deliveries at **Kingsleys, Birtley**. Brand new MAN 14.220 / MCV AE56OUU was still receiving the finishing touches from the bodybuilder when photographed, while Solo MX56AOO looks resplendent in Kingsleys livery.

**07/01/07**



**Go North East** have repainted Volvo B7TL / Wright 3962 into pink! Not really sure what route this will be for, yet.

**05/01/07**



The VOSA site shows that **Go North East** would appear to be making major changes to services in a variety of areas, especially Derwentside, from 25/02/07. So far only service cancellations are logged, so it would seem to be too early to guess what the end result will look like. What does seem certain, however, is that it will be a step on the road to making the entire front-line fleet low floor, alongside the fifty new buses due over the next month or two. I wonder what the future holds for the Optare Sigmas, like 4779 above?

Alex Betteney reports that **Tees Valley, Teesside** now have former Arriva Scotland West Volvo B10M Citybus / East Lancs H675GPF in stock and in use on the 876.

Steven Hodgson has passed on a report from Coach & Bus Week stating that **Kingsley, Birtley** have taken delivery of another MAN, this time an 11.8m 43 seater. Identity and bodbuilder to be confirmed.

**02/01/07**

Firstly, a happy new year to all from me, and...

The management and staff of **The Eden, West Auckland** would like to wish all contributors and readers of Jeff's Bus Lane a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. 2007 is to be a very special year, as it will be the 80th Anniversary of The Eden, and some special events are planned to commemorate the event, including a classic bus rally which will be staged in June at Bishop Auckland town centre (more details later), also there will be the opportunity to buy a The Eden @ 80 fleece together with other souvenirs which will be available after mid January. Anyone wanting more information on The Eden's anniversary souvenirs or the Rally can contact Graeme Scarlett or Traffic Manager Carl Irwin at [TheEden80@aol.com](mailto:TheEden80@aol.com)