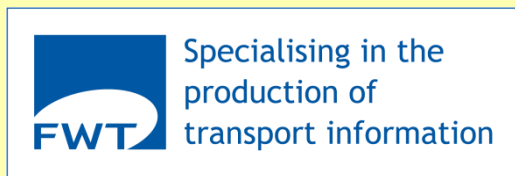


# **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(new entries first with older entries retained underneath)



**Now go back to:**

[Home Page](#)

[Introduction](#)

**or on to:**

[The Best Timetables of the British Isles](#)

[Summary of the use of the 24-hour clock](#)

[Links Page](#)

[English Counties](#)

[Welsh Counties, Scottish Councils, Northern Ireland,  
Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands and Isle of Man](#)

[Bus Operators in the British Isles](#)

[Rail Operators in the British Isles](#)

## **MAY 08 2009 – JOURNEYPLAN RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

JourneyPlan has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year, for which I am very grateful.

## **APRIL 08 2009 – NATIONAL RAIL ENQUIRIES RENEWS SPONSORSHIP OF THE RAIL SECTION**

It is excellent news that National Rail Enquiries has renewed its sponsorship of this site and, in particular, the Rail section, for another year. They are also continuing with sponsorship of my Great Britain National Rail Passenger Operators' franchise map. All editions, including past versions, remain available for all to download free of charge from the Rail section and the latest edition is also used on National Rail's own web site. Their support is much appreciated.

## **APRIL 04 2009 – POSTAGE PRICE-CHANGES**

Postage charges rise on April 06. Where possible I have adjusted prices to reflect the new rates. I cannot, of course, do so where publishers quote rates to include postage and packing and for these have to await notification (which I confess, rarely happens other than when users advise me!)

## **MARCH 22 2009 – MORE UNITARY AUTHORITIES**

In April more unitary authorities will be created. Some (Cornwall, Durham, Northumberland, Shropshire and Wiltshire) merely replace the existing County Councils for the same area, but Bedfordshire and Cheshire County Councils are each being replaced by two new unitary authorities for each former county area. Details are gradually being added to the county section as they become known.

### **MARCH 13 2009 – ESSEX TIMETABLES ON CD ROM**

Essex now produces one excellent volume covering the whole county (and including Southend) and this is featured in my 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section. It is, therefore, good news that they have gone a stage further and now offer it on CD Rom as well for just £2, inc post & packing.

### **MARCH 06 2009 – WILTS & DORSET RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

It is also good news that Wilts & Dorset has agreed to continue with its sponsorship for another year. As for all my sponsors, I am most grateful for their continued support.

### **MARCH 04 2009 – FIRST RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that First Group has agreed to continue with sponsorship of this site for yet another year. Without such sponsorship this site would not exist, so I am most grateful to them for their continued support.

### **JANUARY 24 2009 – STAGECOACH ACQUISITIONS**

In order to show the latest position I already show Stagecoach in Eastbourne as having replaced Eastbourne Buses and Cavendish and, similarly, Stagecoach in Preston as having replaced Preston Bus. However email and web details might change in due course and these will be updated when known.

### **DECEMBER 16 2008 – CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR BREAK**

I shall be away from December 19<sup>th</sup> until January 2<sup>nd</sup> so this site will not be updated during that period. I wish all users a Happy Christmas and New Year and thank you all for your support.

### **DECEMBER 09 2008 – THE COUNTER PASSES 300000**

Another milestone passed today when the counter reached 300000 individual visits to my web site, up a thousand a week throughout this year. I remain most grateful to my eleven sponsors for making this possible. Remember that in 1999, the final year of the printed versions of my Directory, each edition was updated twice yearly and sold for £5 per edition. The on-line version is updated around 500 times a year (most days see more than one revision) and, courtesy my sponsors, is free for users.

### **NOVEMBER 03 2008 – STAGECOACH AND PB BUS MARKETING RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that two sponsors have renewed their support for another year: the Stagecoach Group and 'PB Bus Marketing'. I am very grateful for their support and cannot emphasise too much how this site would not exist were it not for my sponsors. They allow what used to be a book updated and sold just twice-yearly to be a far larger on-line work, updated every day (sometimes more than once a day) and available to all free of charge. This completes the current round of sponsorship renewals for 2008 and so eleven in total continue to provide support:

Blazefield, First, FWT, JourneyPlan, National Rail Enquiries, pb bus marketing, réseaulutions, Stagecoach, TAS, Walkden Software and Wilts & Dorset.

### **NOVEMBER 01 2008 – STAGECOACH IN THE HIGHLANDS**

Now that the areas have been officially announced, I have replaced the ‘Stagecoach in the Highlands’ entry I had after Stagecoach bought Rapsons, with separate new entries for Stagecoach in Caithness, Stagecoach in Lochaber and Stagecoach in Syke. Stagecoach in Inverness, of course, remains. However, the previous series of timetables published by Rapsons and showing all operators with input from Highland Council has been retained and improved. They used to omit Stagecoach Bluebird east of Inverness and were very disappointing, but now, produced by Stagecoach, they have been totally revised and officially numbered 1-7. However, they are split between the four operators, so to make cross-referencing straightforward I have shown them all under Stagecoach in Inverness with appropriate notes.

### **OCTOBER 06 2008 – BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to say that Transdev Blazefield (Transdev Burnley & Pendle, Harrogate & District, Keighley & District, Lancashire United, York and Yorkshire Coastliner) has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year. I am very grateful for its continued support, not least as it was my first sponsor and it has maintained this support every year since - this being its eighth.

### **OCTOBER 03 2008 – RÉSEAULTIONS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that ‘Réseaultions’ has renewed its sponsorship for another year. A play on words (réseau is the French for network), Réseaultions is the former consultancy arm of Southern Vectis, the bus operations of which were acquired by Go-Ahead some three years ago. It specialises in network design, examples of its work being networks in operation in the States of Guernsey and Ceredigion. Please see their web site, available by clicking their logo on the Home Page, or from their entry in the Links section under ‘Consultancies.’

### **SEPTEMBER 02 2008 – TAS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

The TAS Partnership Ltd has renewed its sponsorship for another year. Formed in 1989 it is one of the UK’s leading public transport consultancies, with many publications, as its web site indicates. I am very grateful for their continued support.

### **JUNE 20 2008 – DERBYSHIRE RESUMES PUBLICATION**

It is excellent news to hear that Derbyshire has been able to resume publication of its timetables, no doubt as a consequence of the outcry that the abolition (see June 04, below) created! The original decision was, of course, made by councillors not by the excellent public transport team, but it is good the former have now listened. It is also a pleasure to be able to restore the county to its rightful position in my ‘Best Timetables of the British Isles’ section.

### **JUNE 04 2008 – DERBYSHIRE CEASES PUBLICATION OF TIMETABLES**

The astounding news has been announced that Derbyshire, the county in Britain that produced probably the highest quality timetables, and has done so for many years, is ceasing publications. It seems budget cuts have prevailed. In the outside world all business go through such periods, but can we assume that if ARGOS has a lean year its 1800-page full-colour catalogue will be withdrawn? No, of course not,

for it's vital for their sales. Well, so are timetables for local authorities who spend several million pounds a year subsidising bus services. Indeed, if funds are needed to keep timetables in production then if need be it is better a bus service is withdrawn than publicity is removed for all the many services in a county. This might seem stark, but it's reality and common sense: better to support 100 well-advertised bus routes than 101 routes all kept secret. And before anyone suggests internet journey planners like Traveline, no they are not a replacement for the printed book – unless Derbyshire is going to suggest that everyone taking a day out in the Peak District should in future take a laptop lest he or she changes his mind during the day and wants to examine a different route home. This really is one of the saddest days in decades. If ever the phrase 'how are the mighty fallen' were apt, it is here. I have just removed their well-earned entry in my 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section – a day I never thought I'd see.

### **JUNE 03 2008 – FWT RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that FWT, one of Britain's leading-cartographers and timetable producers, has renewed its sponsorship of this site for yet another year and I am most grateful for their continued support.

### **MAY 13 2008 – THE WEB SITE GOES 100% ACROBAT**

Following my survey two months ago (March 17 below) only one person said he preferred me to keep html pages on my site, whilst everyone else welcomed a change to 100% acrobat (.pdf) files, a change implemented today (save for the Home page). At last every page is properly laid out, appearing exactly as it does in my originals. There have been huge improvements to acrobat files of late and everyone can download the latest edition of the *Adobe Acrobat reader* (Version 8) from my Home page or many other sites. It is faster to open than earlier versions and allows almost continuous pages on screen without the jump from one page to another that used to be the case. For that reason I have also re-set all my pages to utilise the maximum depth of an A4 sheet – that is, each will print on A4 whilst at the same time leaving as small a gap as possible between text at the foot of one page and the top of the next when viewed on line. Finally, despite every page having the full colour of the html versions to show various operator groups etc, and all hyperlinks working as per normal, files are very much smaller than earlier .pdf versions, meaning each section opens in seconds. I hope all users find this a major step up in quality and I thank you all for your support and interest.

### **APRIL 11 2008 – JOURNEYPLAN RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

JourneyPlan has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year, for which I am very grateful. Its logo on my Home Page reflects its special journey planner 'planajourney' ([www.planajourney.co.uk](http://www.planajourney.co.uk)) and a reminder of this appears at the top of my English, Welsh and Scottish sections.

### **MARCH 25 2008 – NATIONAL RAIL ENQUIRIES RENEWS SPONSORSHIP OF THE RAIL SECTION**

I am pleased to be able to announce that National Rail Enquiries has renewed its sponsorship of this site and, in particular, the Rail section, for another year. I am very grateful for this. They are also continuing with sponsorship of my Great Britain National Rail Passenger Operators' franchise map. All editions, including past versions, remain available for all to download free of charge from the Rail section and the latest edition is also used on National Rail's own web site ([www.nationalrail.co.uk/tocs\\_maps/maps/network\\_rail\\_maps.htm](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/tocs_maps/maps/network_rail_maps.htm)).

### **MARCH 20 2008 – TRANSDEV OPERATORS NOW GROUPED**

I have now grouped all Transdev operators together as has been the case for some time with Arriva, First and Stagecoach subsidiaries. All the names have, of course, also been changed in the English County section.

### **MARCH 17 2008 – FUTURE OF HTML PAGES**

Further to my comment below (March 06) re better acrobat (.pdf) files on this site, a downside of the new program I am using is that changes from my original updated Word documents to html are not as good regarding tab alignment. However the improved .pdf files are now not only in colour, but are smaller files and open and/or download as rapidly as do the html – and, of course, they show perfect alignment of text throughout. I therefore intend abolishing two versions of every file and have only .pdf versions available. Do users have any objections to this? Unless I receive comment I shall implement this early next month.

### **MARCH 15 2008 – NATIONAL EXPRESS HAS A TIMEABLE FOR STAFF ONLY**

Further to my comments below (March 03) I am now told National Express has a timetable after all – but it is not for public use! I suppose it's far too good to let mere users have a glimpse.....

### **MARCH 06 2008 – ACROBAT (.PDF) FILES IMPROVE**

I am pleased to say that with the introduction of new software I am now able to offer all the acrobat versions of files on this site in the same background colours as the normal html (web) versions.

### **MARCH 03 2008 – NATIONAL EXPRESS ABOLISHES ITS TIMETABLE BOOK**

I have no interest in coaches and this site has only ever existed to show local bus information – that is buses originally defined as 'stage carriage' where you can board the bus and pay on demand. National Express is only shown as an operator owing to the fact it does have sections of some routes registered as a local bus. Scottish Citylink has always been a far more advanced system with everything virtually being so registered, hence it really consists of a large limited-stop bus network, and is all the better for it. However, it is worth commenting that with the end of the March 2007 to March 2008 National Express timetable comes the end of the timetable book and in future everything is either on-line only or will have some leaflets. Thank goodness for railways, without which I would never have seen Britain!

### **MARCH 03 2008 – WILTS & DORSET AND FIRST RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that both Wilts & Dorset and First Group have agreed to continue with sponsorship of this site for yet another year. To keep up-to-date daily a site like this that is free to users takes up considerable time, and remuneration can only come from external sources. Without my sponsors this site would not exist so I am most grateful to them for their support.

### **FEBRUARY 08 2008 – FIRST HAMPSHIRE DROPS AWARD-WINNING BOOKS IN FAVOUR OF LEAFLETS**

It has been a great disappointment to hear that First Hampshire has abolished its high-quality timetable books in favour of leaflets. They seem not to accept that they are selling a network. Fortunately many other parts of First understand this!

## **JANUARY 07 2008 – THE *SUNDAY TIMES* LEADS TO THE WEB SITE BEING REMOVED**

Yesterday's *Sunday Times* quoted this web site as a source of information for cheap rail fares. The journalist involved did not ask about my site beforehand and had he taken the trouble to look at it he would, of course, have known that this was not its purpose. Unfortunately the said newspaper has a large print run and over 3000 people examined the site in detail trying to find details of rail fares and as a result exceeded the amount of data transfer that my server permits each day, as a result of which the site was removed. It was only restored after I explained the reason. I apologise to users and, of course, to my sponsors as well, for this problem. I am also sorry for those readers of the *Sunday Times* who have had their time wasted in this way. I have complained to the *Sunday Times* but received no response.

## **JANUARY 02 2008 – THE COUNTER PASSES A QUARTER OF A MILLION**

Although I was not here to mention it (see December 15 2007, below) the counter passed 250000 on Boxing Day. I remain most grateful to my eleven sponsors for making this possible. It is worth noting that in 1999, the final year of the printed versions of my Directory, each edition had 40 pages of text, was updated twice yearly and sold for £5 per edition. The on-line version now exceeds 120 pages, is updated around 500 times a year (most days see more than one revision) and, courtesy my sponsors, is free for users.

## **JANUARY 02 2008 – NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE TIMETABLE**

A welcome new publication has appeared from North East Lincolnshire: its first ever timetable book. This is particularly welcome in an era when many larger authorities are giving up publications.

## **DECEMBER 15 2007 – CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR BREAK**

I shall be away from December 17<sup>th</sup> until January 2<sup>nd</sup> so this site will not be updated again this year. I wish all users a Happy Christmas and New Year and thank you all for your support.

## **NOVEMBER 03 2007 – STAGECOACH RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am also pleased to say that the Stagecoach Group has renewed its sponsorship for another year. This completes the current round of renewals for 2007 and it is encouraging to know that all eleven sponsors continue to offer such support: **Blazefield, First, FWT, JourneyPlan, National Rail Enquiries, pb bus marketing, réseaulutions, Stagecoach, TAS, Walkden Software and Wilts & Dorset.** Their support is much appreciated because, without it, this site would not exist.

## **NOVEMBER 02 2007 – PB BUS MARKETING RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that 'PB Bus Marketing' has renewed its sponsorship for another year and I am very grateful for its support. After having held marketing positions within the bus industry for some years, Phil Blair started the business in 1995, assisting bus companies and local authorities with marketing. PB Bus Marketing's work covers the production of timetables and guides, examples being several of the those that appear in my 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section, such as those for the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Rutland, Torbay and Newport Transport.

## **OCTOBER 25 2007 – HIGHLAND COUNCIL'S TIMETABLES OMIT STAGECOACH**

Throughout Britain one rightly expects that timetables published by counties or councils are neutral. They may well be produced in conjunction with specific operators, but the content is still nevertheless comprehensive. Not so from Highland Council however. Its timetables are produced in conjunction with Rapsons but exclude, without even making it clear, all Stagecoach bus services. The index, for example, shows that the only way between Inverness and Elgin is by rail – simply because the bus service is run by Stagecoach. I am told Stagecoach did not wish to pay to appear. What an appalling excuse for a so-called neutral council (which no doubt even financially supports many of the Stagecoach services).

## **OCTOBER 04 2007 – BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to say that Transdev-owned BlazeField (Burnley & Pendle, Harrogate & District, Keighley & District, Lancashire United and Yorkshire Coastliner) has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year. I am very grateful for its continued support, not least as it was my first sponsor and it has continued each year – this being its seventh.

## **OCTOBER 03 2007 – RÉSEAUTIONS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very grateful to 'Réseautions', which has renewed its sponsorship for another year. A play on words (réseau is the French for network), Réseautions is the former consultancy arm of Southern Vectis, the bus operations of which were acquired by Go-Ahead just over two years ago. It specialises in network design and examples of its work have been networks in operation in the States of Guernsey and in Ceredigion. Please see their web site, available by clicking their logo on the Home Page, or from their entry in the Links section under 'Consultancies.'

## **SEPTEMBER 13 2007 – TAS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

The TAS Partnership Ltd has renewed its sponsorship for another year. Formed in 1989 it is one of the UK's leading public transport consultancies, with many publications, as its web site indicates. I remain very grateful for their continued support.

## **AUGUST 10 2007 – THE COUNTER REACHES 225 000**

During today the counter passed 225000, having increased 25000 in the last 6 months, an average of 950 a week. I re-emphasise my gratitude to my eleven sponsors for making this possible, and look forward to passing the quarter million barrier early in 2008!

## **JUNE 24 2007 – CHANGE OF EMAIL ADDRESS**

To assist Spam filtering the email address previously quoted on each section of my web site ([update@barrydoe.plus.com](mailto:update@barrydoe.plus.com)) is being discontinued and replaced with [update@barrydoe.co.uk](mailto:update@barrydoe.co.uk).

## **JUNE 14 2007 – NORTHUMBERLAND CEASES PUBLICITY**

It is very disappointing to hear that Northumberland, which until recent years produced an excellent twice-yearly comprehensive timetable joint with Arriva Northumbria, has now given up all publicity owing to budget cuts. It had more recently produced just a small timetable of principal routes and had some maps, including a (2003) system map, but, all stocks having been exhausted and/or out of

date, it has now become the first shire county in England to cease publicity. This is a grave error, for although it has timetables on the internet, this is no replacement for printed publicity, not least in a major tourist-oriented area. To make matters worse, unlike Traveline in the SE which shows timetables, Traveline in the NE is very weak, being unable to show them. I have always maintained that it is better for a county to axe a service and use the savings to provide publicity for everything else, rather than retain every bus and advertise nothing.

#### **JUNE 07 2007 – FWT RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that FWT, one of Britain's leading-cartographers and timetable producers, has renewed its sponsorship of this site for yet another year and I am most grateful for their continued support.

#### **APRIL 19 2007 – JOURNEYPLAN RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

JourneyPlan has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year, for which I am very grateful. Its logo on my Home Page reflects its powerful journey planner 'planajourney' ([www.planajourney.co.uk](http://www.planajourney.co.uk)) and a reminder of this appears at the top of my English, Welsh and Scottish sections. This is a free planner, is very fast and accurate, and I thoroughly recommend its use.

#### **APRIL 16 2007 – NATIONAL RAIL ENQUIRIES RENEWS SPONSORSHIP OF THE RAIL SECTION**

National Rail Enquiries is continuing its sponsorship of this site and, in particular, the Rail section for another year. I am, of course, very grateful for this. They are also continuing to sponsor my Great Britain National Rail Passenger Operators' franchise map. All editions, including past ones, remain available for all to download free of charge from the Rail section. The latest edition is also always shown on National Rail's own web site ([www.nationalrail.co.uk/tocs\\_maps/maps/network\\_rail\\_maps.htm](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/tocs_maps/maps/network_rail_maps.htm)).

#### **APRIL 07 2007 – VEOLIA TRANSPORT**

Five operators have 'disappeared' from the listings and appear elsewhere under two new names. In England Dunn-Line and Paul James Coaches now trade as Veolia Transport (and that includes new York services), whilst in Wales Bebb Travel, Pullman Coaches and Shamrock Coaches now trade as Veolia Transport Cymru.

#### **MARCH 17 2007 – A NEW ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL BOOK IS MOST WELCOME**

Last March (see below, March 27 2006) I had to announce the end of an era with the demise of the comprehensive Southern Vectis timetable and its replacement with a new version showing only its own routes and without trains or ferries, let alone other bus services. It is, therefore, excellent news that the IoW Council has stepped in to produce its first comprehensive timetable – and one which will be published three times a year. It is very high quality and so has an immediate entry in the 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section, so please see there for more detail.

#### **MARCH 13 2007 – WILTS & DORSET AND FIRST RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that both Wilts & Dorset and First have agreed to continue with sponsorship of this site for yet another year. To keep up-to-date daily a site like this that is free to users takes up considerable time, and remuneration can only come from external sources. Without my sponsors this site would not exist so I am most grateful to them for their support.

## **MARCH 01 2007 – A REFINEMENT FOR THE BEST TIMETABLES OF THE BRITISH ISLES SECTION**

As from today I am now highlighting in red those entries that I consider outstanding in their field. It is particularly good to see that a number of operators and authorities are producing excellent work at a time when so many others appear to be giving up in the mistaken belief it saves money. It doesn't! Lack of a decent timetable and maps means less awareness, which in turn leads to less usage.

## **FEBRUARY 14 2007 – TRAVELINE NUMBER IS CHANGING**

I have been told (but not, of course, by Traveline!) that the Traveline number of 0870 6082608 changed on February 1<sup>st</sup> to 0871 200 2233. Both numbers run for a year but I am now showing only the new one. Calls cost 10p per minute from landlines. It is probably academic as those with the Internet rarely, if ever, have to use the 'phone version – and perhaps just as well given its likely lack of accuracy! My site tries to avoid all 0870-type numbers where possible as they are a rip-off in these days when landline calls to anywhere in the UK can be so very cheap. (I use '1899.com' - see [www.call1899.co.uk/index2.php](http://www.call1899.co.uk/index2.php) - which charges only a flat 5p for a UK call, 24 hours a day – and, yes, that really is flat, not per minute). Even 0845 calls started life as 'local rate' calls in an attempt to benefit the user by offering rates cheaper than long-distance, whereas now even these cost around 4p per minute and are merely a money-raising system for the operators for their benefit alone. In my opinion all such call rates should be a thing of the past! A useful site in this respect is [www.saynoto0870.com](http://www.saynoto0870.com).

## **FEBRUARY 02 2007 – THE COUNTER REACHES 200 000**

During today the counter will pass 200000, having increased 50000 in the last 13 months, an average of around 875 a week. I re-emphasise my gratitude to my eleven sponsors for making this possible, with a special mention to Blazefield – now Transdev Blazefield – who have supported me from the first day this site commenced in October 2001.

## **JANUARY 25 2007 – MAJOR CHANGE IN CUMBRIA**

It has been announced that Cumbria will no longer produce its single timetable after the current one expires in April 2007. Instead it is to jointly produce with Stagecoach in Cumbria an enlarged version of the timetable that Stagecoach usually produces each summer for its own services. This will include all operators and, for the first time, will have a winter edition from October or November 2007.

## **NOVEMBER 13 2006 – STAGECOACH RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am also delighted to announce that the Stagecoach Group has renewed its sponsorship for another year. This completes the current round of renewals for 2006 and it is encouraging to know that all eleven sponsors continue to offer such support: Blazefield, First, FWT, JourneyPlan, National Rail Enquiries, pb bus marketing, réseaulutions, Stagecoach, TAS, Walkden Software and Wilts & Dorset. I can never stress too much that without their support this site would not exist.

## **NOVEMBER 09 2006 – PB BUS MARKETING RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to say that 'PB Bus Marketing' has renewed its sponsorship for another year. I am very grateful for its support. Philip Blair started the business in 1995, assisting bus companies and local authorities with marketing and general PR,

after having held marketing positions within the bus industry for some years. Part of PB Bus Marketing's work is the production of timetables and guides, examples being several of the those that appear in my 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section, such as those for Plymouth, Portsmouth and Torbay, as well as new books for Hampshire and, soon, Wokingham Borough, plus operator Southdown PSV.

#### **OCTOBER 12 2006 – BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to say that BlazeField (the Burnley & Pendle, Harrogate & District, Keighley & District, Lancashire United and Yorkshire Coastliner operations, now owned by Transdev) has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year. I am very grateful for its continued support, not least as it was my first sponsor and it has continued each year – this being its sixth.

#### **OCTOBER 07 2006 – RÉSEAULTIONS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am grateful to 'Réseaultions', which has renewed its sponsorship for another year. A play on words (réseau is the French for network), Réseaultions is the former consultancy arm of Southern Vectis, the bus operations of which were acquired by Go-Ahead in Summer 2005. Its core skill is in creative network design, using experience gained from the various regulatory regimes across Western Europe. The highly successful county-wide Quality Network in Ceredigion was the latest example of the pragmatic approach to improving UK bus systems, whilst an earlier example was the network in operation in the States of Guernsey. For more details see their web site, available by clicking their logo on the Home Page, or from their entry in the Links section under 'Consultancies.'

#### **SEPTEMBER 14 2006 – ANOTHER COUNTY DROPS TIMETABLES**

Lincolnshire has just announced it has ceased publication of its timetable books and will in future only produce some leaflets to cover various corridors. It will continue publication of its system map. This is particularly disappointing for a county that has many smaller operators, most of whom are weak at providing their own publicity. Granted, the county did not keep its timetables up-to-date very well, but that was hardly an excuse. What a strange situation we have where large counties like Derbyshire, Devon, Herefordshire and Northamptonshire produce timetables to the very highest standards and keep doing so year after year, whilst others become publicity deserts. Why do the latter's rate-payers deserve less?

#### **SEPTEMBER 06 2006 – TAS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

The TAS Partnership Ltd has renewed its sponsorship for another year. Formed in 1989 it is one of the UK's leading public transport consultancies, with many publications, as its web site shows (as with all sponsors, click on its logo). I remain very grateful for their continued support.

#### **AUGUST 23 2006 – EAST SUSSEX TO CEASE COMPREHENSIVE PUBLICITY**

In a disappointing announcement, East Sussex has told me its current books will be the last and in future it will only produce leaflets for tendered services. In an area with many operators there is a need for a single source of neutral information. Rate-payers need to know at some stage what services they are 'buying back' but at the point of use all they are interested in is what routes exist and what the timetable is – whether or not it is tendered is not relevant. Meanwhile the new folders from Milton Keynes are considerably better than expected and at least that authority is carrying on producing fully comprehensive information and should put East Sussex to shame.

## **JULY 29 2006 – UNITARIES SHAME MANY SHIRE COUNTIES**

Over recent weeks I have added more entries to the 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section, such as entries for Portsmouth and Slough. It is interesting to ponder that, of the 16 English authority entries, seven are unitary. I have never been in favour of unitaries, preferring larger regions of government, but I have to say that in general they are doing better work on publicity than many a shire county.

## **JULY 18 2006 – FWT RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that FWT, one of Britain's leading-cartographers and producers of timetables, has renewed its sponsorship of this site for yet another year and I am most grateful for their continued support.

## **JULY 10 2006 – GO NORTH EAST CHANGES TO 24-HOUR FORMAT**

Go North East has announced that it is switching from 12-hour to 24-hour format at the end of this month. The only part of the Go Ahead empire still using 12-hour will be Brighton & Hove. Indeed, the only three large operators in the British Isles still using 12-hour will be B & H, East Yorkshire/Scarborough & District and Trent Barton. I predicted many years ago that the latter two would be the last remaining 12-hour operators in the land! They will never change until they are sold to (excuse the pun) more go-ahead owners! Brighton & Hove should change, however, as they are well respected and run an excellent operation and to be out of step with the rest of the country seems rather strange for a company otherwise so professionally well-managed.

## **MAY 30 2006 – CHANGE OF WEB REDIRECTION**

Until now I have employed a form of web redirection on my site that meant that when you clicked a hyperlink and visited another site via this one, my web domain address of [www.barrydoe.co.uk](http://www.barrydoe.co.uk) remained at the top of your browser screen at all times. However, some users have reported that on occasions this seemed to lead to the situation where, having reached the other site, certain pages within that site did not function correctly. I have therefore changed the system and from today if you click a hyperlink anywhere within my site the URL will always change to that of the new site and I hope this solves any previous problems in that respect.

## **APRIL 20 2006 – STANDARDS ARE FALLING: A FALSE ECONOMY**

It is disappointing to have seen some authorities cease comprehensive publicity in recent times, notably Northumberland, which for years had one of the country's best timetables, and North Yorkshire, that was late into publicity then did some good books but now only bothers with publications for four months of the year (and they usually come out late!). Milton Keynes is soon to replace its book with folders, Kent has just given up (not that it was very consistent) and others like the East Riding of Yorkshire seem unlikely to return to the decent publicity they once produced. There are rumours of timetable books disappearing in Suffolk and now Scottish Borders has told me all books have ceased with only leaflets for some tendered services likely in the future. How is it that the likes of Derbyshire, Devon and Herefordshire can continue with first-rate publicity year after year, knowing it attracts users and thereby reduces subsidy levels, whilst these others seem to think publicity can be cut like a tendered service to save money? Better to have 98 services all well-advertised than 100 services with none advertised – yes, publicity is not something that can be sacrificed any more than you would expect 'Argos' to axe its (very expensive full-colour) catalogue to save money. The good news is that some smaller authorities have actually started decent publicity. As well as the

relatively-recent superb Torbay offering we now have good books from Bedfordshire, and Portsmouth is to commence next month. I hear Rutland's will improve too. Overall, though, information provision is far too variable and it is annoying when people quote journey planners and the internet as an excuse for pulling out: these things complement printed publicity, they don't replace it. The next battle to fight is operators starting to do departure-lists only rather than proper timetables. It's another 24-hour clock-type battle with the age-old excuse that 'some people don't understand proper timetables'. Well some people can't read so do we abolish books? Truth is it's operators trying to re-invent a wheel that works perfectly well. Worst offender has been London, but smaller operators are starting to emulate – Harrogate & District the latest, and particularly disappointing coming from them. Aren't motorists lucky? They're never told by people trying to re-invent wheels that atlases or road signs aren't needed just because some people don't understand them (or, indeed, they're not needed as many cars now have satellite navigation). Come to that some bus maps are now 3 years old, inaccurate, yet still issued by operators and local authorities – imagine road atlases not being updated each year! It's a tragedy that the industry wastes so much time rather than getting on with simply offering excellent publicity in the normal form that users have been thoroughly used to since Victorian times (when we were supposedly less well educated too, though that's another story.....)

#### **APRIL 17 2006 – JOURNEYPLAN RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that JourneyPlan has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year, for which I am very grateful. Its logo on my Home Page has changed to reflect its powerful journey planner 'planajourney' ([www.planajourney.co.uk](http://www.planajourney.co.uk)) and in addition I add a reminder of this facility at the top of my English, Welsh and Scottish sections. This is a free planner (the subscriber login, which appears on entry at the top of their page, refers to others parts of JourneyPlan and not this planner). It is also very fast and accurate and I thoroughly recommend its use. Note that for Scotland there is an even more detailed version available by clicking a further link or going direct to [www.planajourneyscotland.com](http://www.planajourneyscotland.com).

#### **APRIL 06 2006 – NATIONAL RAIL ENQUIRIES RENEWS SPONSORSHIP OF THE RAIL SECTION**

National Rail Enquiries is continuing with its sponsorship of this site and, in particular, its support for the Rail section for another year. I am very grateful for this. In a separate deal they also sponsor my Great Britain National Rail Passenger Operators' franchise map (see March 14, below). I possess neither the software nor the expertise for handling mapping updates myself and use the excellent 'Image Circle' for this, so the sponsorship enables me to update the map frequently as changes dictate. All editions, including past ones, are available for all to download free of charge from the Rail section and the latest is also always shown on National Rail's own web site ([www.nationalrail.co.uk/tocs\\_maps/maps](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/tocs_maps/maps)).

#### **MARCH 27 2006 – THE END OF A SOUTHERN VECTIS ERA!**

How the mighty have fallen! Ever since I started my 'awards' for the Best Timetables of the British Isles Southern Vectis has been there. This morning the entry has gone. Until last night it said: "Southern Vectis has been producing a high-quality timetable for the Isle of Wight for many years and was, of course, renown for the much-lamented *Great Britain Bus Timetable* until its demise in 2001. Everything is on a grand scale for an island: a huge index with sub-divisions, bus station plans, town plans, copious information on other operators, ferries and, indeed, trains on the mainland let alone Island Line itself. It is also a full-colour production with colour shading used throughout to indicate days of the week or to emphasise

column-headings. Summer editions are graced by splendid cartoons on the covers, produced by local artist Rupert Besley.” This morning the summer edition arrived and I noted every single one of those attributes has been removed: no proper index; no bus station plans; nothing for other operators, ferries or even Island Line trains; and, for the first summer in years, no Rupert Besley cartoon cover. About the only operator still to charge for a timetable (and with some of the dearest fares in the country and not even a day return on offer), I never minded that when Vectis had so much to offer, but it’s astounding to see it still wants 50p for such a 70-page third-A4 book. Go-Ahead has achieved so much with neighbouring Wilts & Dorset – it’s lost the plot on publicity here, and just as they introduce a new network too. Has GA made the same mistake as First did when taking over Western National and bought something it really should never have touched?

### **MARCH 23 2006 – TRANSPORT FOR LONDON WITHDRAWS LOCAL GUIDES**

I have never thought London did a good job with publicity when compared with some of the best of the PTEs, yet it always seems to con people into believing it has a good excuse because it’s so large! It stopped issuing proper timetables some time ago but in 2004 said it was to have a series of 28 area guides, which I showed, on this site, adding the date as each was produced. They got as far as publishing 27 of the 28 – but spread over two years, hardly a good record for an organisation with huge resources and a vast budget – but have now announced the series is to cease, giving as an excuse their own lack of bothering to reprint them sufficiently frequently so as to allow them to be reasonably up-to-date. So Britain’s premier city (in size, if not quality) will now have the odd leaflet showing only first and last services and a frequency guide, plus four maps – it even gave up its full system map in favour of Mike Harris’s excellent private publication. Neither is it a case of having to obtain timetables on the internet, for TfL doesn’t allow them there either! So it seems for the time being if you want decent information forget TfL’s web site and use either Mike Harris’s ([www.busmap.co.uk](http://www.busmap.co.uk)) or the other independently-maintained site at [www.londonbusroutes.net](http://www.londonbusroutes.net), both of which I quote in my Greater London entry. These are excellent and do a better job than TfL can ever dream of. Who can convince it to hang its head in shame?

### **MARCH 14 2006 – UPDATED RAIL MAP**

The fourth edition (the first for 2006) of my Great Britain National Rail Passenger Operators’ map is now available for downloading from the Rail section. It is worth re-emphasising that this map only exists as an acrobat file, which users may download and/or print for private use, but if a professionally-produced printed version is required I have an arrangement with Map Marketing Ltd and details of this are in the Rail section.

### **MARCH 13 2006 – WILTS & DORSET RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that Wilts & Dorset has also agreed to continue with its sponsorship of this site for yet another year and I am, as always, most grateful.

### **MARCH 04 2006 – FIRST RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that First has agreed to continue being a sponsor of this site for yet another year. As always, I cannot express too strongly my gratitude for such support, without which this site would not function.

### **JANUARY 26 2006 – NO NEWS IS NOT BAD NEWS!**

Not having ever had a ten-week period with no announcements it seemed best to add a note to say that this is because there has been nothing worthy of comment! It is true that the counter passed 150 000 in the last few days of 2005, but I was away at the time and so unable to record the event on this page as I would normally have done.

### **NOVEMBER 15 2005 – YET ANOTHER NEW SPONSOR**

I am pleased to announce yet another new sponsor for the site: 'PB Bus Marketing' (tel: 023 8061 4777 or email: [enquiries@pbbusmarketing.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@pbbusmarketing.co.uk)). Philip Blair held marketing positions within the bus industry but started his own business in 1995 assisting bus companies and local authorities with marketing and general PR. PB Bus Marketing undertake research, design and print and also distribute cost-effective and attractive guides – examples being those used by Ipswich Buses, Newport Transport, Thamesdown and Yellow Buses, as well as for local authorities at Plymouth and Torbay. (Note that both the Ipswich Buses and Torbay Council guides appear in my Best Timetables section). PB also works with supermarket retailers and is able to obtain funding towards timetable production as well as create information for shoppers for stores across the whole of the UK.

### **NOVEMBER 12 2005 – A NEW SPONSOR**

I am delighted to announce yet another sponsor for this web site, to whom I am very grateful: the Stagecoach Group. All Stagecoach operators have been grouped together and highlighted for some time in the Operators' section with, of course, hyperlinks to the relevant parts of the Stagecoach web site for each one. It is excellent news that another prestigious group should wish to join and this, for the first time, brings the total number of sponsors to ten: Blazefield, First, FWT, JourneyPlan, National Rail Enquiries, réseaulutions, Stagecoach, TAS, Walkden Software and Wilts & Dorset.

### **NOVEMBER 11 2005 – THE FIRST 'FIRST' TIMETABLES TO WIN AWARDS!**

Yes, it's like the old joke about London buses: for some years there has never been a timetable from First that merits an entry in my Best Timetables section and then three appear in the same week! First in Berkshire & the Thames Valley, in Northampton and in Worcestershire & Herefordshire have all come up with superb timetables this month. It is very welcome news. See that section for details.

### **OCTOBER 19 2005 – A NEW SPONSOR**

I am delighted to announce the site has a new sponsor to whom I am very grateful: 'réseaulutions'. A clever play on words (réseau is the French for network) its core skill is the creation of effective bus networks. For urban areas they improve the balance between usage and costs, partly by reducing peak vehicle requirements and bus-hours, whilst for more rural areas Quality Networks provide a different approach. In recent times they designed the new network for the States of Guernsey taking into account a very cheap fares policy and the introduction of a new fleet of vehicles. For more details see their web site, available by clicking their logo on the Home Page, or from their entry in the Links section under 'Consultancies.'

### **OCTOBER 05 2005 – BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am also pleased to say that Blazefield Holdings (the ever-excellent Burnley & Pendle, Harrogate & District, Keighley & District, Lancashire United and Yorkshire Coastliner operations) has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year. I

am very grateful for its continued support, not least as it was my first sponsor and it has continued each year – this being its fifth.

### **SEPTEMBER 23 2005 – TAS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

The TAS Partnership Ltd has renewed its sponsorship for another year. Formed in 1989 it is now one of UK's leading public transport consultancies, with many publications, as its web site shows (click on its logo). I remain very grateful for their continued support.

### **SEPTEMBER 01 2005 – ANOTHER STEP FORWARD!**

Further to the last announcement of ten days ago, Denbighshire County Council has just confirmed they are going over to 24-hour clock next month. So the only authorities in Britain that will be using 12-hour from then will be the small unitary of North Lincolnshire in England and Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion in Wales.

### **AUGUST 22 2005 – ONE STEP FORWARD, ONE STEP BACK!**

Further to the last announcement of six days ago, Ceredigion County Council has just told me that, on their own admission against all professional advice, they have changed to the 12-hour clock following surveys. As every survey result I have ever seen shows a large majority in favour of 24-hour I find it hard to believe the folk of Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion alone in the UK want 12-hour.

### **AUGUST 16 2005 – A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE**

I know many in the past assumed my liking for the 24-hour clock, and the pressure I put on operators and counties to change, was a bit of a hobbyhorse. It was merely something in which I sincerely believed and I like to think I played some small part in the change which, over the last 20 years, has seen usage climb from a mere 60% of publishers to today's 97%. This week has seen a significant milestone reached with Wiltshire County Council saying it will switch, starting with a new series of books. Wiltshire is the last shire county in England to use 12-hour. Indeed, the only authority of any description in England now using 12-hour is the small unitary of North Lincolnshire. In Scotland all are 24-hour, whilst in Wales there remain two counties using 12-hour: Carmarthenshire and Denbighshire. ATCO (the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers), in its excellent publication 'Printed Public Transport Information - A Code of Good Practice' (2003) has the following paragraph: 'The 24 hour clock is now universal for rail and flight times and should be used in bus and coach timetables for consistency and ease of understanding' which sums it all up very well. For the sake of consistency, and to prevent confusion, the days of 12-hour are over. With ATCO and DIPTAC agreeing, how long will it now be before the bus industry really is 100% consistent? Amongst larger bus operators usage now runs at 97% and of the bus groups all have a 24-hour policy except for Go Ahead, which allows each of its subsidiaries to choose, and just Brighton & Hove and its old North East heartland retain 12-hour. As Go-Ahead is an excellent group I personally would very much like to see change there. The others are East Yorkshire, Lincolnshire Road Car and Trent - which between them will almost certainly be the last three in Britain, if not in the world, to change! So the day is almost here when I can be silent on the issue for ever, and the relevant table on this site can be withdrawn as defunct!

### **JUNE 17 2005 – THE COUNTER REACHES 125 000**

The last few months have seen such a dramatic increase in the usage of this site that I am no longer reporting counter 'milestones' every 10 000 but shall leave it

until multiples of 25 000! Today the counter will pass 125 000, the last 15 000 having been achieved in only 78 days – an average of over 1300 a week, nearly double the weekly usage of this time last year. Once again I emphasise my gratitude to my nine sponsors for making this possible.

#### **JUNE 08 2005 – FWT RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that FWT, Britain's leading-cartographer, has renewed its sponsorship of this site for yet another year and I am most grateful for their continued support.

#### **MAY 06 2005 – NATIONAL RAIL ENQUIRIES RENEWS SPONSORSHIP OF THE RAIL SECTION**

National Rail Enquiries has decided to support the relatively-new Rail section for another year by way of sponsorship and for this I am very grateful.

#### **APRIL 15 2005 – JOURNEYPLAN RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that JourneyPlan has agreed to continue being a sponsor of this site for another year. As always, I remain very grateful for such support, without which this site would not function. Clicking their logo will take users to their Home Page from where their rail or multi-modal journey planners can be purchased and downloaded.

#### **MARCH 30 2005 – THE COUNTER REACHES 110 000**

Today the counter on my site passed 110 000 - only 74 days since it turned 100 000 and an average of 945 per week during that period.

#### **MARCH 26 2005 – A NEW RAIL MAP**

No map has been produced showing all Britain's rail operators and allowing each of their respective routes to be distinguished, so I am pleased to be able to announce the publication of one I have produced myself. This is ONLY available on this web site. Go to the Rail section and see the entry 'Barry Doe's 2005 Great Britain Passenger Rail Operators' map' under 'Miscellaneous.' The map is in acrobat (.pdf) format and as well as downloading users of this site are welcome to print out copies if they wish.

#### **MARCH 26 2005 – A NEW ENTRY FOR THE BEST TIMETABLE SECTION**

After a period of several months with nothing new to report it is pleasing to be able to add a newcomer to this section – the Gower timetable published by the City & County and Swansea.

#### **MARCH 08 2005 – WILTS & DORSET and FIRST RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that both First and Wilts & Dorset have agreed to continue being sponsors of this web site for yet another year. As always, I cannot express too strongly my gratitude for such support, without which this site would not function.

#### **JANUARY 15 2005 – THE COUNTER REACHES 100 000!**

This evening the counter on my site passed 100 000, a significant milestone and achieved in just over 3 years since the launch of this site in October 2001. Once again I emphasise my gratitude to my nine sponsors for making this possible.

#### **DECEMBER 05 2004 – 24-HOUR USE REACHES 97%**

I have undertaken a total revision of web site information. This so rapidly gets out of date, particularly for counties. In addition it is of interest to note that the number of operators using 12-hour clock has dropped to single figures for the first time – 97% now use 24-hour, the same percentage as for counties, councils and PTEs. Other sections have been changed and it is worth mentioning that the Links, Best Timetables and Rail sections do all change frequently as with other sections.

#### **NOVEMBER 15 2004 – NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: FROM WORST TO BEST!**

I have updated the Best Timetables section today and one entry of note is the appearance of an award for Northamptonshire, for years one of England's worst counties for publicity but transformed in such a short time into one of the best! This relatively-new section (see October 24 below) is updated regularly as new publications of quality come on stream and, as with most other sections, the date of the last revision is shown at the top.

#### **OCTOBER 26 2004 – SOUTHERN VECTIS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that Southern Vectis has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year, for which I am most grateful.

#### **OCTOBER 24 2004 – THE BEST TIMETABLES OF THE BRITISH ISLES SECTION RETURNS**

The reason for the return of this section – and why it did not appear even earlier – is explained in the section itself, but I am sure it will be as controversial as it always was in the printed editions!

#### **OCTOBER 23 2004 – COUNTER REACHES 90000**

Today the counter on my site passed 90000.

#### **OCTOBER 18 2004 – BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that Blazefield Holdings (the excellent Burnley & Pendle, Harrogate & District, Keighley & District, Lancashire United, Sovereign and Yorkshire Coastliner operations) has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year. I am very grateful for its continued support.

#### **OCTOBER 04 2004 – A RAIL SECTION RETURNS, SPONSORED BY 'NRES'**

Of the 32 editions of the original publication the last five were entitled *Doe's Directory of Bus & Rail Timetables*. Following requests I have again added a Rail section. This is more akin to a Links section as addresses *etc* are not given, mainly because, unlike in the bus industry where many operators have still to develop web sites, the rail industry is comprehensive in this respect. I am most grateful for the support of National Rail Enquiries who are sponsoring this section.

#### **SEPTEMBER 09 2004 – TAS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

The TAS Partnership Ltd has renewed its sponsorship for another year. Formed in 1989 it is now one of UK's leading public transport consultancies, with many publications, as its web site shows. (As usual clicking on its logo will take you there). I remain very grateful for their continued support.

### **SEPTEMBER 06 2004 – CAERPHILLY BOROUGH COUNCIL SUCCESS**

I have been expecting a new map from Caerphilly for a time, so it was a very pleasant surprise to see that instead it has published a first-rate A4-sized single-volume timetable with maps. Caerphilly has always been one of the best of the South Wales councils – indeed, for a major conurbation stretching from Swansea to Newport and including many major Valleys, the standard of publicity from the majority of them is appalling. This puts it in the 'top league' equalling anything produced in England or Scotland, for which they are to be congratulated.

### **AUGUST 27 2004 – NETWORK COLCHESTER**

Local services in Colchester have been operated by Arriva until this weekend and appeared under 'Arriva Southern Counties' in the Operator section. Arriva has sold the operation and it is now listed separately as 'Network Colchester' (owned by Burton's Coaches of Haverhill).

### **AUGUST 27 2004 – TRANSPORT FOR LONDON CHANGES AREA GUIDES**

Who else but TfL would do it?! Yesterday they announced they are abolishing proper timetables and that the only printed publicity will be the 34 Area Guides. Now it turns out the 34 Guides have become 28, with, of course, new areas, of which just one has been published! Some of the old 34 never even made the second series and were nearly 3 years out of date, so how long will it take TfL to bring out the new set of 28?

### **AUGUST 26 2004 – TRANSPORT FOR LONDON ABOLISHES TIMETABLES**

In a major retrograde step TfL has announced that it is abolishing all proper timetables from September 01 and from that date only the 34 Area Guides (which themselves only show summaries and are often out-of-date owing to infrequent updates) will be available. Furthermore, on-line, only departure times from bus stops will be available. In a disingenuous statement TfL's Head of Customer Services says that the money saved by not having to provide timetables will be "re-invested in further improvements to transport information."

### **AUGUST 10 2004 – NEW ALL-WALES TIMETABLE**

I do not normally mention new timetables as it would open the floodgates to my being requested to mention every new publication as each appeared, but a special mention of the new All-Wales timetable is well-deserved. For details see the top of the Welsh Counties section. A 354-page volume it is perhaps the most exciting new venture since the demise of the much-lamented Southern Vectis 'Great Britain Bus Timetable'. It includes rail, air, ferries and coach as well as bus and, as will be seen, is supported by nine Welsh counties as well as by Herefordshire. The publisher has offered a special deal to users of this site of post & packing free on quoting 'DOE' when ordering – and, again, as will be seen, payment is not sent with the order but an invoice is sent with the superb guide, to be settled by cheque or BACS. How forward-looking compared with some counties and operators who are less than happy to post anything they produce, even if payment is offered in advance! This deserves to succeed and I trust will be well-supported.

### **AUGUST 08 2004 – SOME LOCAL AUTHORITIES STILL FAIL TO ASSIST**

When I posted the fact that the counter had passed 80000 - see below - I sent an email to all counties, PTEs and operators reminding them of the existence of this site and asking each to check his entry. I received many responses and updates for which I am grateful. However, I have spent recent days checking all the web site addresses on my site and whilst those for operators were almost wholly correct, there were many changes required for counties. Some counties for which I was saying their web sites did not refer to public transport now had full details, whilst others had changed addresses – and yet while I had received automated receipts for my emails and hence know that they had seen my request, none of these had bothered to check the accuracy of his entry. This is disappointing considering those with entries are beneficiaries and it is in their own interests to ensure what I list for them is accurate. You can lead a horse to water, but.....!

#### **JULY 29 2004 - COUNTER REACHES 80000**

Today the counter on my site passed 80000.

#### **JUNE 24 2004 – FWT RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that FWT, Britain's leading-cartographer, has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year. I am most grateful for their support.

#### **MAY 10 2004 – JOURNEYPLAN AND FIRST RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that JourneyPlan and First have both renewed their sponsorship of this site for another year. I am very grateful for their continued support.

#### **APRIL 25 2004 - COUNTER REACHES 70000**

Today the counter on my site passed 70000.

#### **APRIL 06 2004 – MERSEYSIDE PTE SWITCHES TO 24-HOUR CLOCK**

Yes, the one we all thought would never change! *Merseytravel* was the only PTE to use 12-hour clock, but is now changing to 24-hour.

#### **MARCH 31 2004 – HEREFORDSHIRE SPONSORSHIP ENDS**

Today sees the end of Herefordshire's sponsorship, which it was always known would only be for the one year. It was the first county to support me in this way and I have been very grateful indeed for that support from this most positive of counties.

#### **MARCH 29 2004 – WILTS & DORSET SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that Wilts & Dorset has become a sponsor of this site. The company has improved a great deal since it was taken over by the Go-Ahead Group last year and it is a pleasure to be able to report their support, for which I am most grateful. One advantage of the Go-Ahead Group is that publicity is left to local management and this has permitted the retention of the very high quality timetables that the old W & D produced.

#### **MARCH 08 2004 – NORTHAMPTONSHIRE CHANGES TO 24-HOUR FORMAT AND HAS A MAP**

At last, some splendid news! Northamptonshire was one of the few counties in England never to have had a System Map, but that has been put right with an excellent version now available. Furthermore, the county is to publish comprehensive timetables – these will appear throughout this year – and are changing to 24-hour clock format at the same time. This leaves only two counties in England still using 12-hour: North Lincolnshire and Wiltshire.

#### **JANUARY 21 2004 – APATHY REIGNS!**

On January 12 the counter on my site passed 60000. I took the opportunity of contacting virtually every operator and local authority listed on this site to tell them, asking each to check his entry. Around 300 did so, many replying with corrections and suggestions, but the statistics for the site reveal that around 100 did not bother. What a commentary on the apathy that still pervades a sizeable chunk of the industry today.

#### **JANUARY 12 2004 – AUTHORITY WEB SITE DETAILS NOW COMPREHENSIVE**

I always show an operator's web site if it has one, but whilst it is obvious that every local authority does have a web site, I have not always referred to it. This is because quite a few show virtually nothing about public transport – indeed just a few in Wales and Scotland have no reference whatsoever to it on their web portals. I believe the time has come to show all and shame those who make no effort to offer even basic information. After all, every ratepayer contributes towards public transport and it is absurd that many authorities provide excellent information such as timetables, maps and links to external sites, whilst others offer nothing. As from today all is revealed and every authority has its efforts shown. The sole contribution from one Welsh authority is to say, under the heading 'Buses': 'contact Stagecoach Red & White'. Not only is that a name Stagecoach no longer uses, but the county seems to ignore all other operators! If it couldn't be bothered to show bus routes or even have a link to Traveline, it could at least list all the operators that run in the county so as to suggest even-handedness.

#### **JANUARY 09 2004 – DERBYSHIRE EXCELS AGAIN!**

I do not normally comment on the quality of the publicity covered by my web site lest it opens the floodgates of expectation that I might offer detail of every change! However, the publication of a full-colour system map for Derbyshire deserves comment, not just because it is excellent, but because such a publication emanates from a county that already provides probably the highest standard of publicity ever offered by any local authority. Not only that, but it has been consistent in this role for many years. Perhaps the most amazing thing, however, is that none of its zeal seems to rub off on some counties – not even its near-neighbours! Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire have given up producing maps; Northamptonshire has never ever been known to have had one! Why do they never look across the fence to see how it should all be done? Meanwhile Derbyshire is to be heartily congratulated for its unbroken record of excellence in the field of transport publicity. Come to that some of its local operators like Trent Barton could well do with a spot of emulation.....!

#### **DECEMBER 15 2003 – RE DECEMBER 13<sup>th</sup>!**

Re Courtney Coaches, below, I was right! Having emailed them Saturday the 13<sup>th</sup> a reply was received Monday, the 15<sup>th</sup>!

#### **DECEMBER 13 2003 – SOME OPERATORS SHOULD GIVE UP THE INTERNET!**

In recent weeks I have added a number of new operators to the site, emailing them to tell them what I have done, where to find their entries, and asking them to check their details. I point out that my site is sponsored so is free advertising for them. None replied. If we were talking 'cowboys' one might expect it, but why would a 'cowboy' go to the trouble of having a web site and a listed email address? I really do believe some operators think the internet is the 'done thing' but have no intention of actually using it properly. I have little doubt some only even look at their 'In Box' every month or so! Indeed only this week I received an automatic receipt from a large operator in the NW saying he had just read my email – of last May! Meanwhile I have today added another operator, this time one with an excellent web site – Courtney Coaches of Bracknell. I am sure he will reply, for his site says that a response to emails is sent within 3 days. It is good to see someone setting standards.

#### **NOVEMBER 08 2003 – ALL HYPERLINKS CHECKED**

Over the last week I have checked every hyperlink I show on the site. Some needed amending, some deleting and some new ones appear. Whilst most authorities and operators keep me informed there are still some that say they will but do not and only a comprehensive trawl can get this right. The major operator about whom I referred on September 19, below, still has not inserted his correct email address. I wonder if he wonders why he never receives any emails? What a way to run a company!

#### **OCTOBER 23 2003 – PROBLEMS WITH THE SITE LAST NIGHT**

I apologise to those who were unable to read my English County section yesterday evening. My Server had a fault and I was unable to upload any large files, but did not find that out until I started to do so, meaning that section was corrupted. I was able to insert a short file instead, containing a brief note to the effect that the .pdf file could still be used for that section as I had not started to upload that at the time. All is back to normal this morning and I have now been able to update that and the other sections.

#### **OCTOBER 03 2003 – SOUTHERN VECTIS AND BLAZEFIELD RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that Southern Vectis and Blazefield Holdings (Burnley & Pendle, Harrogate & District, Keighley & District, Lancashire United, Sovereign and Yorkshire Coastliner) have both renewed their sponsorship of this site for another year. I am very grateful for their continued support.

#### **SEPTEMBER 19 2003 – A TEMPORARY BLIP FOR NORTHUMBERLAND**

Readers may well note that the excellent single-volume timetable published by Northumberland has been replaced by leaflets. This is a temporary measure for the winter and I am told comprehensive books will appear again next summer – though note the plural, as there will indeed be a series rather than one. This is partly to enable them to be more-up-to-date, allowing volumes to be reprinted when required rather than just summer and winter, but also an attempt to permit more local marketing. Derbyshire, Herefordshire and Northumberland have led the country with their consistently-high-standard productions over many years without a break so it is good to hear that the current demise for Northumberland is only temporary.

#### **SEPTEMBER 19 2003 – YOU CAN LEAD A HORSE TO WATER .....**

Last week I discovered an operator whose email address was wrong, yet he even showed the incorrect one on his own web site! Not knowing the correct one, I faxed

him to point this out. However, even the quoted fax number did not work and I had to trace the correct new number! The operator did not bother to reply to my fax nor has he corrected the details on his web site. This is not an operator within the big groups but nevertheless neither is he a 'tiny independent' - far from it - and it is sad that this cowboy approach still exists within the industry.

### **SEPTEMBER 16 2003 – ANOTHER NEW SPONSOR**

This afternoon The TAS Partnership Ltd became a sponsor of the Directory and I am most grateful to them, as I am to all my sponsors, for their support. TAS was formed in 1989 and is now one of UK's leading public transport consultancies, with many publications of its own. A visit to their web site (obtained, as is the norm, by clicking their logo on my Home Page) is most rewarding. Their clients include transport groups, local authorities and PTEs, the Department of Transport and the Welsh and Northern Ireland Assemblies plus the Scottish Executive.

### **SEPTEMBER 14 2003 – THE WEB SITE REACHES 50000 VISITS**

During today the counter reached 50000. The weekly average use is now 630 visits, or 33000 a year, and the number of sections read is averaging 63000 annually. 700 of these visits and 3100 section downloads are mine, as I make a visit and check each page every time a change is made to be sure it has been uploaded correctly. Put another way, the printed Directory was published every 6 months and therefore readers received two updates a year whereas users now receive 3100 updates a year for free! The running MONTHLY average use by others is 2700 visits and 5000 sections read. These visits are made by users in 28 countries and around 40% are to download acrobat (.pdf) files. I thank everyone for his or her continued support and interest.

### **AUGUST 01 2003 – HARTLEPOOL TOO!**

Further to yesterday's news, below, Hartlepool has now changed to 24-hour format as well. Just Carmarthenshire, Denbighshire, Merseyside PTE, North Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Wiltshire to go! As 96% of bus operators are now 24-hour is it too much to hope that these final few will now reconsider for the sake of consistency alone, rather than risk confusing users around the country, all of whom now take 24-hour for granted?

### **JULY 31 2003 – REDCAR & CLEVELAND SWITCH TO 24-HOUR**

Redcar & Cleveland have produced their first 24-hour timetable this month. This is most welcome news and leaves Hartlepool, North Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Wiltshire, together with Merseyside PTE, as the only English authorities using 12-hour format. Merseyside PTE has switched its rail timetables to 24-hour this month and tells me it will now reconsider its bus publicity. In Wales, Carmarthenshire and Denbighshire are the only authorities still using 12-hour. Just 4.8% left - who, I wonder, will be the last to change?

### **JULY 27 2003 – WEB SITES CHECKED**

I have been through all sections trying the web links to see if each still works and checking those for whom I had no link to see new ones exist. It is surprising how many operators and authorities change addresses without notification or redirection or even delete sites altogether. I hope I am now comprehensive again but, as always, shall appreciate notification of any errors.

### **JULY 01 2003 – FWT RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that FWT, Britain's leading-cartographer, has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year. I am most grateful for their support.

### **JUNE 18 2003 – LINKS SECTION IMPROVED**

I have today updated and expanded the Links section, including improving the layout, with all entries within each sub-heading now in alphabetical order.

### **MAY 26 2003 – DIRECTORY WEB SITE RECORDS 40000 VISITS**

The counter turned 40000 on the site's Home Page today. This implies a further increase in the weekly average from 565 to 600, or 31000 visits a year. The number of sections read, as opposed to visits, is averaging 60000 a year. 600 of these visits and 2500 section downloads are, in fact, mine, as I make a visit and check each page every time a change is made to be sure it has been uploaded correctly! This leaves a running MONTHLY average use by others of 2500 visits and 4800 sections read. These visits are made by users in 28 countries and roughly 1400 different people use the site each month. Over a year I estimate around 2000 different users access the site.

### **MAY 10 2003 – POSTAGE RATES**

I have today attempted to adjust postage costs, where shown, to take account of the change in Royal Mail prices this last week. I have only been able to do this where prices quoted by operators and authorities were clearly just the basic stamp cost. Where a handling charge is built in I have to await advice from the respective mailer.

### **APRIL 29 2003 – ANOTHER NEW SPONSOR**

I am delighted to announce that JourneyPlan have today become my latest sponsor. They have been listed in my Links section for some time and I am most grateful for their support. Clicking their logo will take users to their Home Page from where their rail or new multi-modal journey planners can be purchased and downloaded; the multi-modal version is a subscription that includes monthly updates. The planner produces integrated multi-modal advice for UK national rail, coach and domestic flights. They have a number of versions that allow their planners to be used at home, in the office or on the move, on PC, Pocket PC or Palm PDA. JourneyPlan also provides travel and route information through initiatives such as Traveline Scotland and Translink Northern Ireland, in addition to a host of local projects.

### **APRIL 18 2003 – BACKGROUND COLOURS ADDED FOR THREE GROUPS**

I have added appropriate background shading to the companies within the three main groups (Arriva, First and Stagecoach). This assists scrolling through the site quickly but also allows me to add notes at the start of a section – such as the reference to the Stagecoach Library of timetables. Unlike the general background colour for each page, which does not get carried over to pdf files, this shading does. I have also taken the opportunity of changing some of the First entries to better-match the areas First uses on its web site. Any such changes have, of course, also been carried across to the county sections.

### **MARCH 28 2003 – DIRECTORY WEB SITE RECORDS 35000 VISITS**

The counter has now turned 35000 on the site's Home Page. This implies a further increase in the weekly average from 500 to 565, or 29000 visits a year. Sections read now total almost 57000 per annum. Thank you for your continued support.

### **MARCH 27 2003 – ANOTHER NEW SPONSOR**

This afternoon *First* became a sponsor of this site for the next year. They are the first of the big bus groups to have supported me and I am very grateful indeed for this.

### **MARCH 18 2003 – DIALLING-CODES FOR FAX NUMBERS ADDED**

To save valuable space in the printed version of my Directory, where I showed both telephone and fax numbers in an entry I only showed the dialling-code for the telephone number (unless, of course, that for the fax number was different). However, several users made the valid point that if the code were repeated for every fax number that would allow the whole number to be easily copied and pasted into a fax printer/machine. I have, therefore, added codes to all fax numbers.

### **MARCH 17 2003 – SPONSOR LAUNCHES MAJOR NEW SOFTWARE ON THE WEB**

One of my longest-standing sponsors, Walkden Software, has launched a major new web site. The *BESS* logo (Bus Enquiry Search System) on my Home page takes you straight to this new site, which is at [www.busfare.co.uk](http://www.busfare.co.uk). Currently running only a demonstration utilising an out-of-date Solent Blue Line fares database it nevertheless shows the full potential of the program which at a stroke calculates the optimum places at which to change for any multi-leg journey, shows the total fare, quotes cheaper options like Explorers and also permits any farechart to be called up in full. Any operator could add this to his own website and thereby offer a major benefit to his customers. Do please give the site a try. What a huge bonus this would be for Traveline, which currently offers no fares!

### **MARCH 08 2003 – SOME STATISTICS**

On January 25 (see below) I said that the number of visits to this site now averages 26000 a year. Readers may be interested in a little more detail. The number of sections read, as opposed to visits, is averaging 51000 a year. 500 of these visits and 2000 section downloads are, in fact, mine, as I make a visit and check each page every time a change is made to be sure it has been uploaded correctly! This leaves a running MONTHLY average use by others of 2100 visits and 41000 sections read. These visits are made by users in 28 countries and roughly 1400 different people use the site each month. Over a year I estimate around 2000 different users access the site.

### **MARCH 06 2003 – NEW SPONSOR**

This afternoon Herefordshire Council agreed to be a sponsor of this site for the next year. I am very grateful indeed for their support. The logo on the Home Page links to their normal web site but also note the new Herefordshire Journey Planner, which is shown in the Herefordshire entry.

### **MARCH 04 2003 – REORGANISATION OF THE DIRECTORY AND ADDITION OF PDF LINKS**

Following reader suggestions I have removed the 'How to Use' section from the Home Page, together with the historical and technical notes, and inserted them into a new 'Introduction' section, which also incorporates the Company, Fleetnames and County names paragraphs, originally shown on this page. This site is produced directly from Word 2000 originals for ease of daily updating, and the transformation to HTML format tends to result in tabs and some line spacing not being as accurate

as in the original, so, apart from the Home Page, every page is now available in Acrobat (pdf) format by clicking the pdf links shown in **green**. This allows better formatting and will also permit readers to more-readily save and/or print a copy. Email and web hyperlinks **will still work within the pdf files** in the usual way (except from images).

### **JANUARY 25 2003 – DIRECTORY WEB SITE RECORDS 30000 VISITS**

The counter has now turned 30000 on the site's Home Page. This implies a slight increase in the weekly average from 475 to 500, or 26000 a year. Thank you for your continued support.

### **DECEMBER 15 2002 – CHANGES TO ARRIVA ENTRIES**

At the request of Arriva I have rearranged my entries so they correspond to the groupings Arriva uses on its own web site. So, for example, the sub-divisions for London and Yorkshire have gone and Southern Counties has appeared.

### **NOVEMBER 27 2002 – MAJOR UPDATES TO WEB ADDRESSES**

I have examined all web addresses and updated many, including showing, where possible, more-detailed links direct to public transport pages within local authority sites. I have also been given direct operator web addresses for all Arriva companies by Arriva HQ, which will save users having to enter the site via [www.arriva.co.uk](http://www.arriva.co.uk) every time.

### **NOVEMBER 20 2002 – HARROGATE & DISTRICT WINS 'BUS OPERATOR OF THE YEAR' AWARD**

It is a pleasure to be able to record that Harrogate & District – part of the Blazefield Group and one of this site's sponsors - has won the 'Bus Operator of the Year' award for 2002. A superb operator with a modern fleet, good publicity and low fares, this was well-deserved.

### **NOVEMBER 15 2002 – DIRECTORY WEB SITE RECORDS 25000 VISITS**

Late yesterday the counter turned 25000 on the site's Home Page. 20000 was reached on September 02 so the average use has settled down to 475 per week. The printed book was published every 6 months and this now runs at over 12000 visits per half year. Yes, it's all rather small compared with *Yahoo*, but not bad for a specialist information page! Many thanks to all those - operators, counties and private individuals - who continue to offer updates.

### **NOVEMBER 08 2002 – WILTS & DORSET ENDS SPONSORSHIP**

Wilts & Dorset's sponsorship for this web site has expired today. Whilst I am grateful to them for the support they gave during the past year it is disappointing to note that they lacked the courtesy to even respond when invited to renew, despite several reminders. I remain very grateful to my other sponsors – Blazefield Holdings, First Great Western, FWT, Southern Vectis and Walkden Software – for their continued support. It cannot be stressed enough that without sponsorship this web site could not exist because web sites, unlike books, produce no income!

### **OCTOBER 30 2002 – BACKGROUND MUSIC**

I have added a few more operators today and I wonder if, among them, the web site for the Boomerang Bus Company deserves a prize for the most attractive background music – not least for a site that says it is still under development!

### **OCTOBER 28 2002 – TRACKING DOWN CONNEX JERSEY!**

I have now been able to add details for the new Jersey network. It was not easy! The States web site gives full times and a map, but no operator name or contact details. I emailed the States to ask for a timetable and they said it was nothing to do with them and I needed to phone Connex. At least they supplied the number. That brought forth a new timetable – quite a good one with old-style Conditions of Carriage, right down to ‘BBC time is taken as standard time’ and ‘Passengers must wear a shirt or similar’! However there is still no address or contact details so I had to go back to the said telephone number to ask. Details are now on my site in the Operator and Channel Island sections. Incidentally, how odd that a new (French) operator running a service in Jersey, which is outside Britain, should refer to ‘BBC time’ for one wonders what that really is? Television programmes often begin early and the clock on screen is often inaccurate so one assumes they mean the radio ‘pips’. ‘Rugby time’ would probably be a better expression.

### **OCTOBER 18 2002 – CHANGE OF SECTION TITLE and NEWS OF NEW SPONSOR**

For some time I have been unhappy with the title ‘Latest News’ for this section. In a sense the latest news is, of course, provided by updates to the main pages, which often occurs more than once each day! This section was really always intended for special announcements of interest, which is why it sometimes goes a number of weeks without an update. For that reason I have now re-named it ‘Special Announcements’ and I hope this removes some confusion as to its intended use.

I am also delighted to announce that Southern Vectis, one of the country’s leading bus operators and one-time publisher of the *Great Britain Bus Timetable*, has joined as a sponsor, for which I am most grateful. See the Links Page for details of the Journey Planner ‘Xephos’ which is an SV product.

### **SEPTEMBER 16 2002 – MORAY COUNCIL COMMENCES PUBLICATION**

Good news from Scotland: Moray Council has published its first timetable book (for Speyside) and three more will follow within a few weeks to complete coverage of the area. Sadly the System Map that was joint with Aberdeenshire and Stagecoach Bluebird, and was to have been re-printed this year, is now delayed – probably until 2003 – but the new books are most welcome.

### **SEPTEMBER 04 2002 – TORBAY COUNCIL CEASES PUBLICATION**

Torbay Council has once again joined the ranks of the few authorities that produce no publicity. It has said it is ‘suspending publicity until the network becomes more stable’. One might think there is even more need for publicity when conditions are unstable!

### **SEPTEMBER 02 2002 – DIRECTORY WEB SITE RECORDS 20000 VISITS**

During today the counter will turn 20000 on the site’s Home Page. Whilst such numbers are rather academic it is nevertheless an indication of the support I have received since the launch of this site in late 2001, for which I am grateful.

### **AUGUST 15 2002 – GO-AHEAD GIVES UP!**

Go North East has abolished its series of A4 books and reverted to individual leaflets. They have as a result lost their maps and any index to places served. This is extraordinary for such a large operation – but then the fact they remain one of the few to continue using 12-hour clock shows their outdated approach to life.

### **AUGUST 06 2002 – CAMBRIDGESHIRE CEASES PUBLICATION OF BOOKS**

It is disappointing to hear that Cambridgeshire, which has produced timetable books for many years, has decided to switch to the production of tendered service leaflets only.

### **JULY 22 2002 – NEW LINKS PAGE AND MORE SUPPORT FOR THE DIRECTORY**

I am pleased to be able to add this new page to the site. I shall appreciate any suggestions for additions to the links shown on it. I am also pleased to be able to announce the support of leading-cartographer FWT for the Directory.

### **JULY 20 2002 – NEW BOOKS FOR FIRST**

First in the Potteries has published its first book for many years. Similarly First in Cheshire & The Wirral has a book and, owing to this, I have now separated the latter from the former and show the Birkenhead address, even though the operation remains a part of the Potteries administratively.

### **JULY 17 2002 – TORBAY'S TIMETABLE INACCURATE**

I have been informed that the new Torbay Council summer timetable has major errors that warrant its being re-printed but, far from that, the council is still insisting on the full 40p to purchase a copy! I contacted them some months ago to tell them about this web site, asking them to keep me up-to-date, but they failed to reply to my email. No doubt they want their 40p (plus postage) first!

### **JULY 16 2002 – SURREY'S MAP RETURNS**

After a gap of two years it is most pleasing to see a new System Map from Surrey, dated Summer 2002.

### **JUNE 28 2002 – NEW OPERATORS AND STAGECOACH EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGES**

Further Scottish operators have been added. These have web links and I have also, thanks to some users, been able to add links for some existing operators. In addition Stagecoach has changed most of its email addresses and I am grateful to them for supplying me with the correct details.

### **JUNE 10 2002 – 96% OF OPERATORS NOW 24-HOUR**

Silcox Coaches has now switched to 24-hour and Oxford Bus is about to do so. This puts the percentage total of operators using the mode to 96% - the highest figure ever.

### **MAY 31 2002 – TRANSPORT *for* LONDON WITHDRAWS SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE**

It took a great deal of effort to obtain from Transport *for* London the latest subscription prices for their timetables and Area Guides but I gather that now, without informing me and despite the fact they know this web site exists, they have

withdrawn the subscription service for the 34 Area Guides. This is all the more extraordinary given that the 2002/3 series has only just commenced publication. It is a pity that the excellent work Mayor Ken Livingstone has achieved in improving the services themselves has not rubbed off on the out-of-touch subscriptions department!

#### **MAY 22 2002 – HAMPSHIRE REPLACES ANOTHER TIMETABLE WITH A MAP**

Hampshire replaced its excellent Basingstoke timetable with a map and frequency-guide a few years ago. It has now done the same with its New Forest timetable, which has just appeared for 2002 as a map only. It also has a very vague frequency-guide and so, as a timetable, is useless. One hopes there will not be a further downgrading of the high-quality work that this county once did.

#### **MAY 20 2002 – FIRST NOW HAS A 24-HOUR POLICY**

First now has a 24-hour policy, meaning that all the big groups – Arriva, First and Stagecoach – are now 100% 24-hour. The only large operators still using 12-hour are Brighton & Hove, East Yorkshire Motor Services, Go North East, Halton Borough Transport, Lincolnshire Road Car, Oxford Bus, Trent and Truronian. For how much longer will they alone insist on they are in step?

#### **MAY 07 2002 – MIKE HARRIS MAPS AND POSTBUSES**

I have abolished the 'Miscellaneous' entry at the end of the Operator section. It was initially added when the Southern Vectis Great Britain Bus Timetable was in existence but in recent times had only two entries: the Greater London maps published by Mike Harris and Postbuses. It makes more sense to add the former to the Greater London entry (especially as Transport *for* London no longer publishes a single London-wide map of its own) and the latter into the Operator section, cross-referenced under Royal Mail Postbuses.

#### **MAY 03 2002 – GREATER LONDON**

Changes have continued daily since the entry below, but I thought it worth a note to point out the series of 34 Transport *for* London area guides listed under Greater London is being updated, with Area 13 (Harrow) having appeared first. The last in the old series was published May 2001 but there are still some dating back to 2000 in the current list. The new series each carries only the cover date 2002/3.

#### **APRIL 19 2002 – GENERAL UPDATE**

This is just a general update following the entry below of April 02. Many changes have occurred, including the demise of Aventa, the switch by Cardiff Bus to 24-hour clock with the issue of the latter's new timetable and the addition of details of the times of opening of Traveline throughout the country. Most pages have been updated each day and a good deal of information continues to come from users, to whom I am always grateful.

#### **APRIL 02 2002 – GENERAL STATEMENT**

Having achieved most of the immediate changes to the format of the site that I had wished there will now be a period of 'settling down' when I shall concentrate on accuracy of what is shown rather than format changes. For that reason there may be no entry in this section for a while, but, of course, the sections will continue to be updated daily depending on what the postman brings or what counties, councils, PTEs and operators tell me by phone, fax or email that day! Please keep updates

coming in. However small the error please email me to have it corrected. Many thanks.

### **MARCH 25 2002 – MAJOR CHANGES FOLLOWING A NEW POLICY FOR TRAVELINE**

Now Traveline is National there is no point in showing it under many counties, councils and PTEs as they switch over to using it exclusively. Not least it masks the excellent work being achieved by some who insist on retaining their own line, which can afford the benefit of local knowledge. I am aware that (English) counties now fall into three categories: a) those which continue to offer a full enquiry service based on local knowledge; b) those which at least retain a special line for general information, ordering timetables *etc*, and c) those which refuse to quote a telephone number at all in any timetable or map and which appear to want everyone to revert to posting a letter in order to contact them! I have therefore removed Traveline to the top of each section and, under each entry show a county enquiry number in **BLACK** to cover a), one in **RED** to cover b) or none to cover c).

### **MARCH 23 2002 – MAJOR CHANGE TO SITE LAYOUT**

I have revamped the Home Page, incorporating the previous 'How to Use the Directory' section. This has also been rewritten to make it more suited to a web site than the original, which had been largely unchanged since it appeared in the printed versions. (NB: 'How to Use' since moved to 'Introduction').

### **MARCH 19 2002 – SOUTH YORKSHIRE PTE EXCELS WITH SUBSCRIPTION DETAILS**

I have updated the prices for South Yorkshire's subscription system, which now offers up to 3 years at a reduced rate. No other body comes close to this sort of efficiency and helpfulness – though West Yorkshire PTE comes in a close second. How sad that some counties are giving up subscriptions. They have something to learn from South Yorkshire.

### **MARCH 18 2002 – EMAIL ADDRESSES: IT COULD ONLY HAPPEN IN THE BUS INDUSTRY!**

As I add new operators I test their web sites and email addresses and I let the operators know they are now on my site. Rarely does any new operator have the courtesy to reply. Quite a few email addresses do not work! I then fax the operator to point this out. As before, rarely do they even reply. However one recently did, to say he thought it worked but does not know how to set up his email correctly and is far too busy to do anything about it. Did he never wonder why he had not received any messages? I have deleted his email address but left the web address – but his email is still shown on that, and, of course, still doesn't work. No wonder the industry is in a mess when we have owners and managers like this!

### **MARCH 17 2002 – AMENDMENTS TO 24-HOUR TABLE**

My 24-hour table was updated as I added new operators but I have had a check by examining every entry and found I had a few errors. These have now been corrected. Unfortunately it shows 25 and not 23 of the 361 operators and councils/PTEs still use 12-hour – but it's still 93% who don't! Brighton & Hove Bus & Coach is undertaking a survey so yet one more may change soon.

### **MARCH 14 2002 – EXPANSION 'FINISHED'!**

This week I have been through all the timetables and maps I possess for British counties and councils and examined who operates within them and added many new operators, as promised. I have not added everyone who has a frequent route, of course, but have now included all those who run some sort of 'reasonable network' – particularly for other-than-urban areas. As usual, once an operator has been selected he then gets an enquiry number entry under every county, council or PTE in which he operates. The exception is where an operator only runs a less-than-daily service into an area – though even here there can be exceptions. For example South West Coaches operate no frequent service into Wiltshire but it does have a relatively high number of routes, therefore it is included. Incidentally, all this means that since the launch of this web site the number of operators included has increased by 25%. However, the work is never over and if you think an operator I have omitted deserves an entry do please let me know. Many thanks.

### **MARCH 10 2002 – MORE EXPANSION**

I am now adding more operators to the site. This work will proceed gradually and I wish to maintain a balance so that reasonable-size operators are all included without opening the floodgates to every single one! It has to be somewhat subjective.

### **MARCH 05 2002 – I WAS THREE YEARS OUT OF DATE!**

A user has just emailed me to say the latest timetable for Hartlepool Borough Council is a 2001 edition and not the 1998 version I had on my site. This is a good illustration of what I have to endure from a few apathetic councils. They have all been told of this site and asked to check their entries. We must assume either Hartlepool checked, saw I was three years out-of-date but didn't think that worth mentioning, or, more likely, they didn't think it worth having a look in the first place. Another example: recently I added several new operators to my site. I contacted them to all to ask that they checked their entries in both Operator and Council sections and let me know if they were correct. None even had the courtesy to reply! I cannot force councils or operators to be helpful to the public or even act in professional or courteous manner, so these are good examples as to how much I rely on users to keep me up-to-date. I emphasise we are only talking about a tiny minority. The vast majority of operators, counties, PTEs and councils are keen on the site and keep me well informed, but only local knowledge and feedback will help me overcome the problem of the 'cowboys'! Many thanks.

### **FEBRUARY 28 2002 – FURTHER DETAIL FOR LANCASHIRE BOROUGHES AND SOME WELSH COUNTIES**

There are some authorities like Derby City where all public transport is handled by the county and only a cross-reference to the latter is needed. However there have been two 'grey areas' for some time: firstly Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool, in Lancashire, and secondly Blaenau Gwent managing all transport procurement for Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen. In the first, the two boroughs manage their own affairs and have their own publicity, but merely disseminate the latter via Lancashire itself. I have been unhappy with merely cross-referencing because users might like to know which operators run services in the two boroughs - and also each has a web site - so I have now given each a full entry (as well as supplying a cross-reference to the county for publicity). Similarly it seemed silly to list operators under Blaenau Gwent that actually only ran services in Monmouthshire – and also Monmouthshire now has its own excellent timetable – so, again, whilst keeping a cross-reference to Blaenau Gwent, I now show full entries for each of the four counties.

## **FEBRUARY 25 2002 – OPERATOR WEB SITES COMPLETE**

Further to the entry for February 24, below, I believe I have now completed the work to show web sites for all operators but, once again, of course, if any reader knows of others I shall be pleased to hear.

## **FEBRUARY 25 2002 – TWO MORE OPERATORS**

I have added two operators today: E & H Horsburgh and Munro's of Jedburgh. Whilst sadly both are in the current normal league of modern operators who publish only leaflets and produce no map of any sort, it is at least refreshing to see their leaflets show a full address, a telephone and fax number, an email address and a web site (one with full timetables), much of which is totally ignored by many of the larger operators! Some East Yorkshire Motor Services leaflets do not even state the *town* in which some of the services run, with leaflets merely referring to the Bus Station as a terminal point, whilst I am fed up with 'First' showing leaflets that give little clue as to the part of the country in which the service operates, now that company titles are gone. Why does so much of the bus industry lack common sense?

## **FEBRUARY 24 2002 – MORE WEB SITES**

I believe I have now listed the web addresses of all English and Welsh Counties and Scottish Councils now – provided they have public transport sections, of course – but if any reader knows of others I shall be pleased to hear. I shall now commence trying to find sites for some of the smaller operators in order to make the Operator section comprehensive too.

## **FEBRUARY 22 2002 – NATIONAL EXPRESS AND ADVANCE DATES**

I have had several counties let me have dates for the next edition of maps and I am showing these, noted as 'expected publication dates'. In addition I am also showing the March-September 2002 edition of the National Express Timetable as it is already available. I shall continue with this as a policy, giving advance information for maps or timetables, or dates for timetables issued in advance and already available.

## **FEBRUARY 14 2002 – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN SCOTLAND**

The names of the councils that rely on Strathclyde PTE for all their transport procurement and publicity have been added. Note that this does not mean I ought to show the boroughs within England that make up the PTEs or TfL, because the metropolitan counties and Greater London do actually officially exist as geographical entities, whereas Strathclyde does not.

## **FEBRUARY 12 2002 – TOTAL REVISION OF LAYOUT**

Having completed to the best of my knowledge the improvements listed below of adding web sites, map dates and so on, I now move to the next revision: an overhaul of the way the Directory is presented. It has now broken away from the sections of the old printed version and is, I hope, better-suited to a web site. I have split the old County section into two: basically England and the rest, both to shorten each (for more rapid loading) and to allow for more precise definitions of what each site shows. PTEs and Greater London are now placed in their respective alphabetical positions amongst the English Counties (Strathclyde PTE amongst Scottish Councils of course) remembering that the English Metropolitan Counties still exist – it was only their councils that were abolished. For further information on this please see 'County Names' in the 'Introduction' section. Users now only have to go to a single country within the British Isles to find everything. Incidentally I have

even changed the title of the web site slightly (not its address of course) – though I am rather proud of the fact people still seem to refer to it just as ‘Doe's Directory’!

### **FEBRUARY 08 2002 – STAGECOACH NAMES**

I have always shown Stagecoach companies like Stagecoach in Gloucester, Wye and Dean *etc* as fleetnames of Cheltenham and similarly Bassetlaw as a fleetname of Chesterfield. This was with good reason: for publicity one can obtain everything from the main address I quote and it seemed pointless to list separate depots which would make the obtaining of timetables more difficult. However I have always appreciated that the choice was arbitrary – that is, I could equally well have called Stagecoach in Sunderland a fleetname of Newcastle rather than the other way round - and it could lead users to think the one I quoted as a main title was in some way the ‘main company’. To get over this and avoid confusion I am now showing all the companies separately (except in the few cases where there really is a ‘minority operation’ within a larger one, as with Sussex Bus) but still cross-referencing each to a single address. This does have two added advantages: each now has its own enquiry number shown in the County, Council & PTE sections and each has its own email address and web site details now shown. I must re-emphasise, however, that this is not the same as the situation that exists within ‘First’ where the names are not true operating names at all. For a further explanation please see ‘**COMPANY and FLEETNAMES**’ in the ‘Introduction’ section.

### **FEBRUARY 07 2002 – TRANSPORT for LONDON (under GREATER LONDON)**

Following another suggestion I have now added the titles and dates of all 34 of *TfL*'s Area Guides.

### **FEBRUARY 07 2002 – THE LINK TO MY EMAIL ADDRESS**

Following a suggestion I have now added the link to my email address to each page, thereby obviating the need for users to return to the Home Page to pass a comment or update details. I am grateful to all those who contact me.

### **FEBRUARY 05 2002 – TORBAY PUBLISHES A BUS TIMETABLE!**

Many thanks to all those who have offered map updates over the last few days. The latest news is that a book has been produced by Torbay – yet another council that until now had published nothing at all. I gather it is never on view as they insist on their 40p for it, but it is none-the-less welcome!

### **FEBRUARY 03 2002 – HYPERLINK UNDERLINING REMOVED**

As an experiment to try to improve clarity I have removed the underlining of hyperlinks (the blue email and web addresses). I shall welcome any feedback on this and can always revert to underlining should users prefer.

### **FEBRUARY 01 2002 – MAP DATES ADDED**

I have received several requests to show the dates of all maps and this has now been done. There are a few gaps in my knowledge here, and some maps only show a year date and a few no date at all. I shall therefore very much welcome any further information users can offer. Many thanks and I hope everyone finds this a useful additional feature.

## **JANUARY 31 2002 – WEB SITE DETAILS COMPLETED AND EURO DETAILS FOR IRELAND**

I hope the web site work is now complete for both sections! I have also changed the prices shown in the Irish Operator section to show Euros now that the punt has gone, though these are estimates as the timetables themselves will still refer to punts until they are re-printed for 2002.

## **JANUARY 29 2002 – WEB SITE DETAILS**

The general announcement on this page in early November 2001, below, said that web site details would be added in due course, and I am pleased to announce that I have now made a start on this. The County, Council & PTE sections have some details today and the Bus Operator section will start to show the same later this week. I originally intended only showing web details for those that offer full timetables but, on the grounds that sites are under continual development and improvement, I have decided to show all links – provided, of course, in the case of council web sites, that they do have a public transport section of some sort. I shall very much welcome updates and additions for these and thanks all users in anticipation for this. One thing I have learned since starting this project is that there are two aspects in which it is all too similar to when I had the printed Directory: that some councils and operators, despite knowing of the existence of my site, never bother to keep me up-to-date and seem to prefer me to show incorrect information; and that 'ordinary' users often do their job for them, for which I am most grateful!

## **JANUARY 24 2002 – NEWBURY BUSES**

Newbury Buses now has its own entry rather than being listed merely as a fleetname of Reading Transport. This assists seeing where each operates in its own right in the English Counties section.

## **JANUARY 24 2002 – BUSES MAGAZINE READERS**

Welcome to all new users of this site following the mention of its existence by *Buses* magazine. This no doubt includes many ex-readers of the original printed version of the Directory. Welcome back!

## **JANUARY 12 2002 – STAGECOACH REVISIONS**

Email addresses have been added for all Stagecoach companies and a revision of their enquiry lines has also been undertaken in the County, Council & PTE sections.

## **JANUARY 05 2002 – NEW OPERATOR**

Aventa Passenger Logistics has been added, now that they provide town services in Horsham.

## **DECEMBER 21 2001 – MORE DETAILS FOR PTE MAPS**

I have previously listed only the total number of system maps published by each PTE but this has now been expanded to show the names of each area.

## **DECEMBER 20 2001 – 24-HOUR CLOCK FIGURES REACH 93% FOR ALL CATAGORIES**

The 'Summary of the Use of the 24-hour Clock' page now shows 93% of operators and authorities utilising the mode for their timetables, the highest the figures have ever been.

#### **DECEMBER 07 2001 – CORRECTION OF MAJOR OMISSION**

It was brought to my attention that Glyn Williams Travel had been omitted in error from all sections. This has now been corrected.

#### **DECEMBER 03 2001 – FAX NUMBERS CHANGED!**

On faxing many bus operators this afternoon to tell them about the web site I found quite a few fax numbers were out of date. These have all been corrected, but it points to the need for everyone to let me know of any change, however small, for this site to be 100% effective. Many thanks in anticipation of that!

#### **NOVEMBER 30 2001 – FIRST and STAGECOACH IN SOUTH WALES**

First/Stagecoach in South Wales have both provided 'red' numbers so the process is now complete.

#### **NOVEMBER 30 2001 – MORE INFORMATION FOR PTEs**

Following on from the addition of 'red' telephone numbers, as announced below, it no longer seemed logical to omit enquiry numbers for operators in PTE areas. I have therefore added this detail today.

#### **NOVEMBER 29 2001 – RED ENQUIRY NUMBERS COMPLETED**

The process commenced yesterday – see item below – is now completed! It seems that just two operators have no other number than Traveline – First in South Wales and Stagecoach in South Wales. Any further clarification on this would, however, be appreciated.

#### **NOVEMBER 28 2001 – RED ENQUIRY NUMBERS INTRODUCED**

From today I am starting to show enquiry numbers in red where the operator has switched to Traveline (0870 6082608) for all timetable enquiries, with the red number shown being that for information about fares and other general matters. See the 'How to Use' section in the 'Introduction'. (Traveline number since changed- see announcement for FEBRUARY 14 2007, above).

#### **NOVEMBER 26 2001 – ADDITIONAL SPONSOR**

I am pleased to announce that Walkden Software has become a joint-sponsor of this site. Please see the Home Page for details, including, of course, a link to their Home Page. The RouteMaster Software is an exciting new development in the provision of fares information, including a journey-planner that works by lowest fare as opposed to fastest journey time, and this should be of great interest to all authorities and operators.

#### **OCTOBER 2001**

I am delighted to be able to provide all the information previously shown in my *Directory of Bus Timetables & Enquiry Offices* on this new web site. It is almost two

years since the final edition appeared in print, but this site will have several advantages.

Firstly, it is free! Many loyal subscribers paid for all thirty-two editions and it is a great pleasure to be able to offer this to them, and everyone else, free in the future.

Secondly, rather than a new edition every 6 months this will be new every few days! As I receive items or am updated by operators, counties, councils, PTEs and, not least, the 'ordinary reader,' I shall update the relevant section.

Thirdly it allows emails to be sent by clicking quoted entries – something no printed page could ever do!

In the Preface of the last edition I explained that my personal circumstances had led to my having less time to produce such a book - but I confess I also naïvely thought that the introduction of the National Traveline number (0870 6082608) implied there would be less need for it. (Traveline number since changed- see announcement for FEBRUARY 14 2007, above).

I could not have been more wrong for Traveline has been a disaster. It is expensive to use, largely inaccurate, staffed by people with little local knowledge and lacked the ability for people to ring the area they wished to contact without going through the lengthy process of waiting to be put through - though a new facility on the web at [www.traveline.org.uk/powercodes.htm](http://www.traveline.org.uk/powercodes.htm) does now allow one to find the relevant codes.

Sadly, as will be seen in the main sections, a large number of authorities and some operators have given up their own lines in favour of Traveline. That was a major mistake. Fortunately many local lines do exist and the Directory will allow people to obtain this information once again.

On the subject of the 24-hour clock the transition is nearly complete! In 1989 only around 60% of operators and councils used 24-hour format. By my last edition in 1999 it was around 88%. Now it is 92% - and others are to follow with Cardiff Bus, for example, saying they are going over to 24-hour next April.

Indeed, the number of major operators using 12-hour is now down to single figures. Only a few head-in-the-sands now remain and, ignoring the wishes of their users, will probably do so for some time – but the task is nearly complete.