



iBus: now just two more Central garages to go

iBUS is here. Buses began to be converted and driver training started at New Cross and Camberwell last month (May).

It's all systems go now as staff at London Central's Peckham and Bexleyheath garages prepare for conversion early in July and London General's Stockwell garage follows later in the month.

iBus, which helps to deliver reliable bus services and visual information to passengers, has just won the Annual Award for Excellence by the Intelligent Transport Society.

The state-of-the-art vehicle location system was designed in response to the growth in the number of London's buses. It uses a combination of technologies, including satellite tracking and GPRS data transfer, to pinpoint the position of buses and relay the information to the operator and CentreComm, London Buses' command and control centre.

DIARY DATES

iBus installation starts at Peckham on July 1 and at Bexleyheath on July 2.

Driver training dates are as follows:

Peckham – July 3 to 15

Bexleyheath – July 4 to 25.

Buses set for 'black box' kit

STATE-OF-THE-ART technology that records the performance of a vehicle from the moment the engine starts has been tested for use in the company's buses.

The initiative began last year when garage teams were preparing their entries for the company's 'passenger safety' competition.

A data recorder machine, similar to the 'black box' in an aeroplane, was trialled and this was the forerunner to a more sophisticated system to be introduced in due course.

The Clipper will keep you updated on developments in future issues.

KEY SERVICES UP FOR GRABS

BEXLEYHEATH garage has submitted bids to continue operating three of its scheduled service routes and two school buses.

Contracts for these routes and a number operated by other companies in the area are about to expire and London Buses has put them out to tender.

Route 51 employs 52 drivers and Route 469 – the garage's longest bus service at 26 miles – employs 39. The B12 has a requirement for nine drivers. Together they represent work for 25 per cent of the garage's drivers.

The new contracts begin in December of this year and January 2009.

Road manager Sandra McKinley said: "These three routes form part of the Bexleyheath Network. Obviously it is very important for us to retain all our routes and win new ones, but these three together represent a significant chunk of the garage's work."

Sandra added: "The garage has worked hard to lift results across the board, but these three services are particularly important at this time and the team has done a good job."

Sandra described the B12's performance as "fine" and said that the 51 had performed "very well" over the first few months of this year. During the last three months of 2007, however, it was dogged by roadworks in Sidcup and failed to hit its targets.

Since then the route has secured additional resources "and these appear to be working well," Sandra added.

She described the low frequency service, Route 469, as "challenging".



Route 51 is just one of the important contracts up for renewal. Here road operating supervisor Gary King and drivers Mick Curtin and Sarah Rogers smile with optimism.

The service, which operates from Woolwich Common to Bexleyheath shopping centre, is heavily patronised and there are numerous speed restrictions and traffic calming measures in place, all of which slow buses down.

"It is difficult to operate to timetable," said

Sandra, "but it is a very significant route for the garage and I am hopeful that we will retain it."

"The route requires additional resources and I would like to think that if we keep it, London Buses would consider our proposals."

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Fourteen of the successful NVQ achievers with group engineering director Phil Margrave, centre. Phil is flanked by engineering training managers Gerry Fleming and Ian Saich.

Engineering achievers

SIXTEEN employees have been honoured for successfully completing their NVQ qualifications in Vehicle and Maintenance Repair at Level 2 and 3.

The engineers gathered at the company's head office last month (May) to be presented with their certificates by Go-Ahead's group engineering director Phil Margrave.

Phil said: "These men have earned their success. The NVQ is awarded by the Institute of the Motor Industry and is a nationally-recognised qualification, which requires a lot of hard work and is essential for career development."

Level 2 awards were presented to: Nasir Abidi (Peckham), Godfrey Dunbar (Camberwell), Paul Elford (New Cross), Boldomero Garcia-Apraez

(Merton), Ronald McIlroy (Putney), Timothy Nelson (Merton), Edward Smith (Stockwell), Terence Tamplin (Stockwell), Paul Walker (New Cross) and Boyd Wayne (Merton).

Level 3: Mark Fiveash (Merton), David Hinkley (Merton), Andrew Sheead (Merton), Bernard Wall (Merton), Peter Walton (New Cross) and Robert Watson (Camberwell).

● The company is launching a new and updated qualification, which is designed specifically for engineers in the bus and coach industry. Called the Transport Engineering Maintenance (TEM) NVQ, a number of employees have already responded positively to publicity and information put up in the garages.

Employee of the Year awards

Celebrating excellence

WINNERS all! A total of 59 people were nominated for the title Employee of the Year and 51 attended the company's most prestigious awards ceremony to find out who would receive the top honours.

It was the second celebration of its kind and once again the venue was the spectacular 18th century Addington Palace, near Croydon.

Managing director John Trayner opened the proceedings: "We work in a difficult business that is sometimes unfairly criticised, but many of you in this room often go that extra mile to ensure we provide the best service we can.

"Tonight is about celebrating that success and some of the people who have been shining examples of it."

Special awards

- Three third-year engineering apprentices complete their Advanced Modern Apprenticeship next month (July) and transfer to permanent positions within the garages. They are Gary McNeill, Ricky Nelson and Malachi Peters.

John pointed out that the company would be employing 12 new apprentices in July, making 32 in total.

- Awards were also presented to the top apprentice in the first, second and third years. They were Aaron Knight (first year), Andrew Marfo (second) and Ricky Nelson.

- London General convener Betty Gallacher received Transport for London's Natalia Muir award from



David Brown, former chief executive of Go-Ahead's London bus operations and now managing director of surface transport for TfL.

- And then David received an award for 25 years' service to the transport industry.

In a personal tribute, John Trayner said: "I owe this man a lot. I think the amount of effort and hard work David has put in to making transport better over the past 25 years deserves a huge round of applause and a big



thank you."

Employee of the Year – main awards

The 51 nominees who attended were:

- **Drivers** Bexleyheath – Bill Light and Kevin Grice; Blue Triangle – Chris Summers; Camberwell – Lorraine Macauley; Mandela Way – Maciej Dziubinski; Merton – Stephen Appiah, Steve Briant and Stephen Riches; New Cross – Terrence Benneworth, Zuriel Cabrera-Navarrete and Brian



Honouring some of the company's top people – above far left, Godfrey Dunbar receives his Employee of the Year award from John Trayner; above centre, Employee of the Year Selime Siret; above, Winston Cox with John Trayner; far left, Frank Dodge with John Trayner and, left, Jimmy Leacock. The last three got special awards.

- Charlton; Peckham – Alan Church and Selime Siret; Putney – Pat Mitchell and Aneta Trojniak; Stockwell – Wayne Ashe, Eugene Iwenya and Roy Lambe; Sutton – David Feist, Paul Fletcher and Lilo Paxia; Waterside Way – Stephen Polkinghorne.

- **Engineers** Bexleyheath – Darren Connolly; Blue Triangle – John Edwards; Camberwell – Godfrey Dunbar; Merton – Steve Akrasie; Peckham – Phil Foster; Putney – Ronnie McIlroy; Stockwell – Chris

- Leach; Sutton – Michael Gabriel. **Admin** Bexleyheath – Brian Hodgson; Blue Triangle – Brian Nelson; Camberwell – Barbara Smith; Docklands – Asif Latif; HQ – Nathan Wood (Purchasing) and Frank Dodge (Commercial); Mandela Way – Karl Tyson; Merton – Adrian Griffiths and Brian Goodger; New Cross – Emma Tooze; Putney – Gordon Chadwick; Stockwell – Charlie Dixon; Sutton – Ted Napper; Waterside Way – Grahame Bradley.

- **Road operating supervisors, senior controllers and controllers** Blue Triangle – Ken Gibson; Camberwell – John Kawesi; Merton – Mohammed Abdelhalim; New Cross – Michael Thompson; Putney – Steve McGrath; Stockwell – Liam O'Halloran; Sutton – Ernie Tuck.

Seven overall winners, all taking the title Employee of the Year, were: Stephen Appiah, Godfrey Dunbar, Michael Gabriel, Roy Lambe, Asif Latif, Steve McGrath and Selime Siret.

Special awards were also presented to: Winston Cox for his long and distinguished career, latterly in recruitment at Camberwell; Frank Dodge, the company's oldest serving employee at 77, working in the commercial department, and Jimmy Leacock, the company's longest-serving supervisor. He works at Peckham as an SGA and is past retirement age.

Finally, Nita Patel and Debbie Gilding were given a huge round of applause for organising the event.

ALARM AS NUMBER OF BUS ACCIDENTS RISE IN LONDON

Safety must come first

A **TIMELY** reminder has been issued to drivers to ensure they drive safely and remain alert behind the wheel.

The prompt comes as the number of accidents involving London's buses has risen over the past 12 months and a number of these accidents are due to bus drivers falling asleep at the wheel.

Across London as a whole, buses account for just two per cent of all vehicle mileage, yet they account for 20 per cent of all fatal pedestrian accidents.

In London Central and London General alone there were 4,835 claims against the company from March last year to the end of February 2008. Of those, 732 were from passengers. Third party settlements have cost £4.1 million. That figure excludes the cost of repairs to vehicles and lost mileage.

Concern

Risk and safety manager Andrew Smith said: "Operators are examining ways of dealing with rising numbers of accidents across the board, from falls on buses to accidents involving pedestrians and other road users.

"Of particular concern is the increase in the number of fatal accidents involving bus drivers.

"It does not mean that the bus driver was at fault on every occasion, of course. But there is a belief that some accidents could have been less serious, or avoided altogether, if the driver had been more aware of the road.

"Any accident involving personal injury

is distressing, but fatal accidents usually have even greater repercussions in that they impact emotionally on the families of those involved.

"If a bus driver is involved, and at fault, there could well be an impact on his or her livelihood."

Andrew's warning comes just months before the introduction of the new Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) as well as much tougher PCV tests.

"Most drivers do their jobs professionally," said Andrew. "They are careful and they drive safely with consideration for their passengers and other road users.

"Driving a bus is among the most responsible of jobs. It's not like driving a

van delivering parcels. Bus drivers are responsible for lives in a way that virtually all other drivers on the road are not."

Andrew emphasised that all drivers "have a duty to recognise their responsibilities to their passengers and other road users".

"Drivers should ensure they are rested properly and that they are alert and vigilant when they are on the road. There is so much to be aware of these days, especially when driving in London, but the vast majority of drivers do their work without incident.

"Drivers should also seek medical advice if they are at all concerned about health issues impairing their driving. In short they should ensure they are fit, safe and alert. People's lives depend on it."

Monitoring standards

THE capital's bus drivers are monitored continually by Transport for London and by the operating companies.

TfL uses mystery travellers and the government-sponsored Driving Standards Agency, whose assessors comprehensively monitor and mark drivers throughout London. Mystery travellers and DSA assessors make reports, which are acted upon by the operating companies.

The Go-Ahead Group uses its own mystery travellers and DMIs and has programmes in place to cover remedial training, formal evaluations and one-to-one assessments.

And now, following a pilot scheme set up last year, the training school at Camberwell is set to begin a targeted accident prevention course for selected drivers. The course will look at types of accidents and the cost in both human and cash terms.

Gently does it – driving with quality in mind



A **BRAND** new course designed to encourage drivers to save fuel and drive smoothly will begin next month (July).

It is being set up against the backdrop of dramatically rising fuel prices, the introduction of the new Driver CPC – Certificate of Professional Competence – and a more rigorous QIC regime.

Driver training manager Eric Dale said all of London Central and London General's 3,500 drivers would take part in the course and that it would eventually form the basis of one of the modules required for the CPC.

"Smooth driving is the key objective of the course," said Eric, "because it has a major bearing on saving fuel and the safety of passengers.

"Statistics show that far less fuel is used when a driver accelerates and brakes carefully. It is also far less likely that a passenger will have an accident."

The course will take place over one day and will comprise two classroom and two practical on-road sessions. A total of 12 drivers at a time are expected to attend and it is planned that they will be split into groups of three with a driving instructor and using four training buses.

- The Driver CPC is being introduced across the European Union from September and will require drivers to complete 35 hours of training every five years if they want to continue to drive professionally. The 35 hours is likely to be split into five one-day periods, each of which will cover a different module or subject.

Garage in bid to keep key routes

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General manager Karl Blair echoed Sandra's remarks and said that the B12 was operating "very well indeed" and that the 51 had shown consistent improvement since the beginning of the year.

"This is down to the whole team, but I would like to congratulate controllers in particular because they have really made the additional resources work."

Drivers in the top 10

Karl also congratulated the garage's drivers for coming tenth in London Buses' Driver Quality Monitoring (DQM) 'chart' over the past year to the end of March.

He said: "This is a remarkable achievement for our drivers and I am very proud of the work they have done because the assessment involves more than 80 London garages.

"Driving standards will play an important part in the new QIC2 quality standard regime being introduced by London Buses and sustained performance can only be of benefit to this garage."

Bexleyheath is number two in the London Central / London General DQM league. Waterloo, London General's dedicated artic garage, is number one.

Appointments

TWO new engineering appointments have been confirmed.

Chris McKeown has been appointed engineering manager for Bexleyheath and New Cross garages and Belcher Penfold takes over the engineering manager's position for Blue Triangle and Docklands.

Chris has held various engineering roles within the Go-Ahead Group and most recently he was engineering manager at Metrobus.

Belcher is well known within London Central and London General and has been deputising for the engineering manager at Blue Triangle and Docklands.



A NUMBER of operational appointments have been made following the restructuring process at Blue Triangle.

Charlie Scott has been appointed as general manager. Operating manager is Mark Cambridge. Nigel Wood, Merton's operating manager, is seconded to Blue Triangle for six months to manage the transition to the new garage structure.

As a result, John Petts has been seconded to Merton as operating manager and Martin Packer goes to Camberwell as accident prevention manager and assistant operating manager.



MEMBERS of the engineering technical team have welcomed a new colleague to their ranks.

Tom Godfrey joined the company in March as technical assistant. He is based at head office in Merton and is responsible for the upkeep of all engineering records, taxation of buses, daily fuel monitoring and much more.

Tom has a financial background, having worked in purchase ledger for a publishing company in King's Cross prior to his appointment with Go-Ahead.

Tom is a keen angler and supports Swindon Town football club.

Tribute to 'old soldier' George

GEORGE HEYWOOD retired on June 4. By the time the Clipper is published he will have started a new life on the Kent coast in Cliftonville.

One of London Central's most well-respected characters, George made his own special contribution to Camberwell garage and the bus industry in London.

Acknowledged at company and Transport for London awards ceremonies, George was present at yet another special event last month to celebrate his career.

He is one of a tiny number of TfL workers to have their names put on a bus. George's appears on WHY 3 to mark his work as the garage's first hybrid bus type trainer.

George joined the industry at Catford as a conductor in 1962. He became a driver after two years and later broke his service to join the British Army with the Royal Corps of Transport.

He rejoined the industry in 1973 as a driver at Camberwell, but maintained his links with the army for many years by joining the Territorials.

George has suffered three heart attacks, but they didn't stop him getting fit enough to return to driving or carrying out union duties for many years.

George, who is married to Marie and has 13 grandchildren, said: "I won't be driving buses any more. Marie and I are looking forward to relaxing, walking along the coast and possibly getting involved in the local community. I shan't just be putting my feet up."

Camberwell general manager Bill Roberts said: "There will be a vacuum in the life of the garage when George goes. Everyone knows George and he has been responsible for helping many members of staff over the years.



A rare honour in London – George has a bus named after him. He was the first of Camberwell's hybrid bus type trainers.

"He is much respected, not least by managers because he has played a big part in the progress of Camberwell garage. Everyone here wishes George all the best in retirement."



Good luck, mate. Brian's friends and colleagues at Bexleyheath wish him all the best for the future.

No regrets, says Brian

"I CAN honestly say I've not regretted one minute" – the words of Brian Maddocks when he spoke about his career on the buses before retiring in April.

The former garage administrator at Bexleyheath was looking back over 39 years. He joined as a conductor at New Cross before turning to driving and then going on to inspector duties at Victoria, followed by similar work in south division.

Following a break in service he rejoined the industry in 1993 as a garage support assistant at New Cross before transferring to Bexleyheath.

"I've enjoyed every minute," said

Brian. "It's a great industry and I'll miss it. My wife Amy is retiring as well and we've been planning to do lots of things together."

They are off to Majorca for three weeks soon and hope to visit one of their daughters in San Diego later in the year.

The couple have two daughters, four granddaughters and three great granddaughters – "We have a marvellous family and I'm spoiled rotten," said Brian.

Operating manager George Morton said: "Brian is one of those people you can always rely on, a thorough professional. We all wish him well in retirement and we'll miss him."

Veteran Bill says farewell

EMPLOYEES at Peckham garage said farewell to one of their most popular colleagues in April.

William 'Bill' Whittington began his career on the buses as a driver at the old Peckham garage 28 years ago. He transferred to nights in 1993.

Operating manager Brian Villis said: "He was one of the best. Bill had an excellent work record and was thoroughly professional. He had a good sense of humour and was very popular among his colleagues.

"We would have liked him to have stayed on."



Nick King in action.

'Rust' beats Nick on virtual drive

IT WAS Nick King's big chance to be crowned the best driver in London ... but by his own admission he didn't do too well.

It was all a bit of fun organised by Sony Computer Entertainment to launch a new PlayStation 3 game, which features the streets of London.

Nick played the game at Sony's London venue competing with police and ambulance drivers, cabbies and van drivers.

"It was really good fun, but I realised how rusty I am at computer games. I used to play at college and was pretty good," said Nick, "but since I've been working I haven't had much time."

Nick, who is based at New Cross and has been a bus driver for a year, added: "We were looked after very well by Sony, but I suppose you could call it virtual reality. Afterwards it was back to the real world."

Spotlight on HELPFUL STAFF

CAMBERWELL

● ROUTE 45 driver Leon Gibbons is praised by passenger John Golding for his smooth driving.

● A MR HASSAN praises Route 35 driver Bastou Sanni for greeting his passengers and for his "considerate" driving.

NEW CROSS

● ROUTE 436 driver David Sellwood is praised for waiting for passenger Ian McColl to reach the bus and then for waiting until he was seated before driving off. "I am using crutches due to a recent knee injury," writes Ian, who conveys his gratitude. The passenger also describes David's driving as "impeccable".

● PASSENGER John Love praises Route 321 driver Andrew Taylor for the smoothness of his driving.

● 'GUARDIAN angel' is how driver Adebayo Adenehga is described by passenger Sally Marie. Adebayo helped Ms Marie recover property she had mislaid on a bus.

● IF PASSENGER Guy Pain were a judge, he says he would award New Cross's Denise Baker the prize for best bus driver in London. Mr Pain writes that Denise was "extremely courteous and friendly ... she saw me running to catch her bus and waited with the door open".

PECKHAM

● PASSENGER Dennis Keane describes how Route 37 driver Jose Da Costa Martin was threatened by a youth who refused to leave the bus. Mr Keane said the youth was banging on the safety screen "and the driver responded very well".

Janet has a point

‘Fencing’s all about good balance and agility . . . it’s a bit like chess at speed’

IT’S A long way from embroidery, but equally enjoyable, says Janet Lloyd about her most recent interest – fencing.

Janet, who is accident prevention assistant to manager Paul Baily at New Cross, is also a former badminton player, so she is used to quite strenuous exercise.

“I was looking for something a bit more unusual to do that would keep me active,” explained Janet. “I’ve always enjoyed the old swashbuckling movies where there were sword fights and that made me think of fencing.

“I’ve been doing it for about 15 months now and it’s great. Not only is it good exercise, but a world away from the working day.”

She has one two-hour session a week, which begins with an hour of exercises followed by coaching

(her coach is 80 years old and a former champion) and a bout.

Janet is a member of Blackheath Fencing Club and says it takes some weeks just to master the basics of lunges, parries and ripostes.

“It’s all about good footwork, agility and balance,” said Janet. “I’ve heard it said it’s a bit like chess at speed.”

Bouts last anything up to 10 minutes, even longer for more experienced fencers, and points are scored by ‘hitting’, or touching, an opponent with the point of the foil.

Normally there is a referee to score and ensure fair play, but Janet’s club has electrical kit that detects hits as well.

Janet, who has spent more than £300 on essential protective clothing and her foil, said she wanted to progress and ‘fight’ competitively.



Fencing’s a world away from the working day, says Janet.



Dave Barber is a road operating supervisor based at Bexleyheath. He has worked in the bus industry for 22 years and is one of the company’s most well-known and respected characters.

Q What is your favourite pastime?

A Coarse fishing.

Q Which well-known celebrity would you most like to meet and why?

A Sir Trevor McDonald because he’s been all over the world and interviewed some of the world’s greatest figures like Nelson Mandela, and I’d like to talk to him about them.

Q Which television show would you most like to appear in?

A Go Fishing.

Q What is your least favourite chore?

A Cleaning windows.

Q Which character trait do you least like in other people?

A People who do not keep their word.

Q Which character trait do you least like about yourself?

A When I get tired I get short tempered. I try to curb it.

Q Your favourite film (any era)?

A Random Harvest, from 1942 with Ronald Colman and Greer Garson.

Q If you had your time over again, which career would you like to pursue?

A I started out in the ambulance service and then came over to the bus industry. I’d be happy to do it over again.

Q If you could donate £1,000 to charity, which one would it be?

A National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Q If you were the prime minister’s top adviser, what would you suggest he does next?

A Withdraw British troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Q What was the happiest time of your life?

A The present. I am happy with my job and the stability of life at home.

Q Name one person (dead or alive) you consider to be ‘great’ and why?

A Sir David Attenborough, because he’s brought the natural world into our living rooms. He presents educational natural history programmes in an entertaining way and gives us all the opportunity to see the beauty of our planet.

Q Who would you single out for a knighthood and why?

A David Beckham, because he’s a good ambassador for football and does a lot for youngsters, especially with his academy in Greenwich.

Paul claims crown from five-times champ

ANGLERS at Bexleyheath garage welcomed Paul Sharkey as the new champion at an awards event in March to mark the close of the 2007 / 08 fishing season.

Paul took the crown decisively from colleague Derek Comrie who has been the undisputed garage

club champion for the past five years.

Paul said: “Derek has been the man to beat. There are so many other good anglers here as well that coming top over the season is quite an achievement. All I’ve got to do now is hold on to the cup,

but the competition will be tough.”

Derek said: “Paul deserves his victory. He’s done consistently well for a long time now and the best of luck to him.”

Top three: garage champion Paul accumulated 735 points; runner-up was Colin Jones with

680 points and third was Derek with 645 points.

Other awards: best fish – Marco Quickenden, most improved angler – Mick Kearsley, best newcomer – Dean Ruffle and the final award for anglers’ angler went to Dave Barber.

In loving memory



A large number of staff at Peckham joined Gbemisola Asani and her two children to commemorate the life of her late husband Wasiu at a plaque presentation last month (May).

Wasiu, who died following an accident just over a year ago, was noted for his professional approach to the job. He had been a driver at the garage since 2002 and made many friends.

Gbemisola and the couple’s two children are seen in our picture with Marie James, left, who was largely responsible for organising the event, union rep Mick Taylor and general manager Trevor Johnson.



The victorious team – from left, Lee Farrow, Dave Varney, John Trayner, Richard Harrington, Jeff Handford, Cliff Grant and Geoff Robertson. Roy Sayers is absent from the picture.

Winning ways!

THE company’s golfers pulled off a great victory when they beat members of Mitcham Golf Club for the second time in seven years.

Transport team secretary Jeff Handford said: “We’re absolutely delighted. The Challenge Shield match is always very competitive

with both teams playing a high standard of golf.”

Transport team players in alphabetical order: Lee Farrow, Cliff Grant, Jeff Handford, Richard Harrington, Geoff Robertson, Roy Sayers, John Trayner and Dave Varney.

Joanne and sister raise £600 in ‘Race’

CONGRATULATIONS to New Cross driver Joanne Fowler who completed a Race for Life event on May 11 and, along with

her sister, raised £600.

Joanne thanked all those who sponsored the duo and raised money for Cancer Research UK.