

# **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(new entries first with older entries retained underneath)

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## **SEPTEMBER 21 2017 – SCOTRAIL RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that ScotRail ([www.scotrail.co.uk](http://www.scotrail.co.uk)) has renewed its sponsorship my National Rail Passenger Operators' map, and hence the Rail section of this site, for another year. I am most grateful to them for their support. I can never emphasise too much how, without such sponsorship, the map could not be produced.

## **SEPTEMBER 14 2017 – GWR RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to announce that Great Western Railway ([www.GWR.com](http://www.GWR.com)) has renewed its sponsorship of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map, and hence the Rail section of this site, for another year. I am most grateful to them for their support.

## **AUGUST 10 2017 – TWO MORE COUNTIES CEASE PUBLICATIONS**

Essex is the latest English county to give up all publicity. It used to have an excellent comprehensive timetable and a separate map. In recent years it has only had leaflets for tendered services, plus the map. Now everything is being given up. Sadly, in Wales, the Vale of Glamorgan had promised a revised edition of its timetable book that had for many years featured in my 'Best Timetables' section. They now say it will not appear and all publicity has ceased. In both cases the reason is budget cuts. It doesn't stand up economically because non-advertised services will be used less.

## **AUGUST 07 2017 – SEVERN-DEE TRAVEL RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to announce that Severn-Dee Travel has again renewed its sponsorship of both this web site and also my National Rail Passenger Operators' map for another year. They are specialists in rail ticketing and group travel for schools and colleges, based at Gobowen station and can be contacted on 01691 681010 or by emailing [info@severndeetravel.org.uk](mailto:info@severndeetravel.org.uk). They also have a web site at [www.severndeetravel.org.uk](http://www.severndeetravel.org.uk). Their support is very much appreciated.

### **JULY 26 2017 – ROYAL MAIL TO GIVE UP ITS LAST POSTBUS IN AUGUST**

Looking at the Royal Mail Postbus web site ([www.royalmail.com/you-home/your-community/postbus/routefinder](http://www.royalmail.com/you-home/your-community/postbus/routefinder)) speaks volumes. It says at the top: 'There are numerous Postbus routes carrying more than 50,000 passengers a year in the UK, so hopefully we'll have a service near you.' When did anyone at Royal Mail last look at their own site? It asks you to select a region and services will be listed. There are six regions – four in Scotland and two in England. Needless to say clicking on all but one of them shows, surprise, surprise, there are no postbuses remaining, save for just one from Lairg to Tongue. I'm told it will finish in mid-August. Does it carry 50,000 passengers a year? Over 150 a day? Of course not. It is just total apathy on the part of Royal Mail who long gave up caring about transport, let alone bothering to keep the web site up-to-date. What a sad end to a once-excellent network.

### **MAY 27 2017 – BEDFORDSHIRE CEASES PUBLISHING PRINTED TIMETABLES**

Yet another authority has given up producing printed books. It's the usual 'excuse' – that few people need them – when in fact downloads and journey planners only complement printed books and certainly don't replace them. In truth authorities give up owing to either budget cuts or apathy. So who is left? A look through my entries will show that the only authorities still producing comprehensive timetable books are: Conwy; Denbighshire; Derbyshire; Devon; Dumfries & Galloway; Flintshire; Herefordshire; Isle of Anglesey; Orkney; Pembrokeshire; Rutland; and Surrey, plus the unitary authorities of Milton Keynes, West Berkshire and Wokingham. To this one could add Cornwall, which has a book covering all but the main operators' services. (Carmarthenshire also has a book, but it remains the only 12-hour authority publication in the British Isles, so can't be taken seriously). Even then it's a little dubious: Orkney's timetable expired May 7<sup>th</sup> but hasn't been published again as yet; whilst Surrey won't send timetables at any price to any non-resident. Anyway, the totals: 5 English counties plus 3 unitaries; 5 Welsh counties; and 2 Scottish authorities. 15 authorities out of a total (including the PTEs) of 138 for Britain. 11%. Pathetic!

### **MAY 16 2017 – CHESTER-LE-TRACK RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to say that Chester-le-Track has renewed both its sponsorship for this site and also for my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. I am most grateful for this. Chester-le-Track runs the booking offices at Chester-le-Street and Eaglescliffe. It sells tickets over the phone and runs a web site ([www.nationalrail.com](http://www.nationalrail.com)). Chester-le-Street is open 0730-1800 Mon-Fri (opens 0610 Mondays) and 0730-1300 Saturdays & Bank Holidays (closed Sundays). Tickets bought by phone (0191 387 1387) are posted first class free of charge. There are no card fees. Please support them.

### **MARCH 10 2017 – SHOWING GO-AHEAD GROUP MEMBERS**

I have often had users comment on the fact that I show members of the Arriva, First, Stagecoach and Transdev groups together and with a separate background colour for each group, but don't do this for Go-Ahead Group members. The reason has been that the first four groups all use their group name for each company and so all appear together alphabetically, whereas Go-Ahead doesn't. To make the grouping clear, however, I have decided to adopt a standard background colour for the Go-

Ahead Group and used it for each of its members, even though they must inevitably remain separate alphabetically. I hope users find this not just useful, but clear.

### **MARCH 03 2017 – MORE AND FIRST RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to report that both *More* (Wilts & Dorset) and First Group have agreed to renew their respective sponsorships for another year. I am most grateful for this, especially as both have supported me for many years in succession.

### **FEBRUARY 01 2017 – DOE'S DIRECTORY PRINTED AGAIN**

This web site has just received a printed version again, thanks to *Here To There Publishing* ([www.heretotherepublishing.com](http://www.heretotherepublishing.com)). It is dated February 01 2017, called 'Doe's Directory 36' and retails at £15, post-free within the UK. It is in full colour and includes the 35<sup>th</sup> edition of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. Please note it is only available from *Here To There Publishing* and not from me.

### **JANUARY 01 2017 – NEW YEAR**

I wish a Happy New Year to all the users of this site and, of course, to my sponsors, without whom the site would not exist. A special thank you, too, to the many individuals who let me have frequent updates from around the country. I am most grateful for all your assistance and support.

### **NOVEMBER 07 2016 – STAGECOACH RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am once again very grateful to the Stagecoach Group, which has renewed its sponsorship of this site for the twelfth consecutive year. Their support is very much appreciated.

### **OCTOBER 13 2016 – PINDAR CREATIVE RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very grateful to Pindar Creative for renewing its sponsorship of this site. Pindar originally sponsored the covers of my printed Directory in the mid-1990s. Pindar Creative specialises in publicity to promote sustainable travel across a wide range of media. It delivers specialist design, cartography, artwork creation, data collection and proof checking services, plus timetable and leaflet publications, road side publicity and posters. Their web site is [www.pindarcreative.co.uk](http://www.pindarcreative.co.uk).

### **SEPTEMBER 30 2016 – GWR RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that Great Western Railway ([www.GWR.com](http://www.GWR.com)) has renewed its sponsorship of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map, and hence the Rail section of this site, for another year. I am most grateful to them for their support.

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### **SEPTEMBER 06 2016 – SCOTRAIL RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

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#### **AUGUST 12 2016 – SEVERN-DEE TRAVEL RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

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#### **JULY 13 2016 – RÉSEAULTIONS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very grateful to 'Réseaultions', which has just renewed its sponsorship of this site for the twelfth successive year. A play on words (réseau is the French for network), Réseaultions is the former consultancy arm of Southern Vectis. Its main business is network design, using experience gained from the various regulatory regimes across Western Europe. See their web site at [www.reseaultions.com](http://www.reseaultions.com) for details. Its consistent support over such a long period is so very much appreciated.

#### **JULY 07 2016 – A NEW TUBE TIMETABLE**

*Here To There Publishing* is publishing a timetable covering all London Underground, DLR, Trams, Overground, TfL Rail and Emirates Airline. This will be the first time for many years that a tube timetable has existed. See under 'London Underground' in the Rail Links section.

#### **JULY 01 2016 – THE NATIONAL RAIL TIMETABLE IS TO BE PRINTED AGAIN**

The version of the National Rail Timetable produced by Middleton Press in May, which is a derivative of the British section of the ex-Thomas Cook 'European Rail Times', was well-received by many for its accuracy and portability, but many missed the full version for its completeness. Middleton had ceased production of the latter owing to recent editions being erroneous, but the May edition is being updated by Network Rail and so Middleton Press is to publish the summer edition for posterity, at the end of July. If sales are reasonable this will then continue with the December edition, alongside the European derivative, which will itself continue. This is good news. Small print-runs mean the price has to be quite high (£31.75 including postage). It can only be obtained by placing an order via the Middleton web site by the end of July and will not be available from bookshops. If you require further information tel: 01730 813169.

#### **JUNE 30 2016 – TAS SPONSORSHIP ENDS**

The TAS Partnership Ltd ([www.tas.uk.net](http://www.tas.uk.net)) is no longer a sponsor of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map, though it remains a sponsor of this web site until September 30. Their past support has been much appreciated.

#### **MAY 18 2016 – CHESTER-LE-TRACK RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that Chester-le-Track has renewed both its sponsorship for this site and also for my National Rail Passenger Operators' map and I am most grateful for this. Chester-le-Track runs the booking offices at Chester-le-Street and Eaglescliffe. It sells tickets over the phone and runs a web site ([www.nationalrail.com](http://www.nationalrail.com)). Chester-le-Street is open 0730-1800 Mon-Fri (opens 0610 Mondays) and 0730-1300 Saturdays & Bank Holidays (closed Sundays). Tickets

bought by phone (0191 387 1387) are posted first class free of charge. There are no card fees. Eaglescliffe (tel: 01642 200140) opens a little earlier so as to serve the first southbound GC service to Kings Cross. Please support them.

### **MAY 03 2016 – TRAVELINE CYMRU LOWERS CALL CHARGES**

In an interesting move, Traveline Cymru now offers bus information for Wales on 0300 200 2233, which is normal call rate. The rest of Britain retains the previous number of 0871 200 2233, which is premium rate.

### **MARCH 16 2016 – MORE AND FIRST RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to report that both *More* (Wilts & Dorset) and First Group have agreed to continue with their respective sponsorships for another year. I am most grateful for this, especially as both have supported me for many years in succession.

### **FEBRUARY 25 2016 – TRANSPORT HUB CEASES SPONSORSHIP**

Transport Hub – a joint venture between Polestar and Fabrik Communications – has decided to cease sponsorship of this site and my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. Their support was much appreciated.

### **JANUARY 26 2016 – MORE *HERE TO THERE* PUBLISHING DETAILS ADDED**

As *Here To There Publishing* is planning a major expansion of its publications, this time in loose-leaf format for frequent updating, I have added details of its proposed 2016 programme in the English and Welsh Counties sections (though for the latter all the publications will be for Scotland), each cross-referenced to the Links section, to avoid having to repeat all the basic details for each entry.

### **JANUARY 16 2016 – RAIL SECTION REVAMPED**

I have revamped the Rail section of this site, adding a lot of extra links to Working Timetables, maps, journey planners *etc.*

### **DECEMBER 21 2015 – TRANSDEV BLAZEFIELD CEASES SPONSORSHIP**

Transdev Blazefield has decided to cease sponsorship of this site. Blazefield was my first sponsor and maintained this support for 13 years, which was much appreciated.

### **DECEMBER 08 2015 – WEB SITE DOWN YESTERDAY**

I apologise to users for the site being unavailable for much of yesterday and part of this morning. This was owing to a technical fault with the Web Hosting agency.

### **DECEMBER 01 2015 – NEW NATIONAL RAIL TIMETABLE PUBLISHED**

The December 2015/May 2016 National Rail Timetable has been published today and is downloadable from the link shown in the Rail section of this site.

### **NOVEMBER 10 2015 – STAGECOACH RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am again grateful to the Stagecoach Group, which has renewed its sponsorship for yet another year. This is the eleventh consecutive year that Stagecoach has supported this site and it is very much appreciated.



## **OCTOBER 07 2015 – PINDAR CREATIVE RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am also very grateful to Pindar Creative for renewing its sponsorship of this site. Pindar originally sponsored the covers of my printed Directory in the mid-1990s. Pindar Creative specialises in publicity to promote sustainable travel across a wide range of media. It delivers specialist design, cartography, artwork creation, data collection and proof checking services, plus timetable and leaflet publications, road side publicity and posters. Their web site is [www.pindarcreative.co.uk](http://www.pindarcreative.co.uk).

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## **OCTOBER 06 2015 – FIRST CHANGES WEB SITES AND SOME OPERATING DIVISIONS**

First has started changing the internet addresses of its various divisions and also some of its operating names – for example First Hampshire is split into two: First Portsmouth, Fareham & Gosport and First Southampton. I have changed these in the Operator and English Counties sections and shall gradually amend the entries to conform with the changes as they are announced.

## **SEPTEMBER 21 2015 – TWO NEW SPONSORS: GWR and SCOTRAIL**

I am delighted to announce that Great Western Railway ([www.GWR.com](http://www.GWR.com)) and ScotRail ([www.scotrail.co.uk](http://www.scotrail.co.uk)) have become sponsors of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map and hence the Rail section of this site, which gives a secure future for the map following Network Rail having given up its sponsorship late last month. GWR is a re-launch of First Great Western and has an excellent new timetable book to celebrate this, details of which appear in the 'Best Timetables' section of this site. I have taken the opportunity to tidy up the list of sponsors on the Home Page and the Rail section, so they now appear in alphabetical order. They will also appear this way on the next edition of the Franchise map, which will be available early October. I am most grateful to both GWR and ScotRail for their support.

## **SEPTEMBER 16 2015 – HACON RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that HaCon (UK) ([www.hacon.de](http://www.hacon.de)) has renewed its sponsorship of both my National Rail Passenger Operators' map and the Rail section of this site. HaCon's train planning software, TPS, plans the entire railway networks of the UK, France, Denmark and Norway. It also supplies mobile apps using its timetable information system, HAFAS. HaCon is based in Hannover, Germany, and also at a UK office in Milton Keynes. I am very grateful for their continued support.

## **AUGUST 25 2015 – NETWORK RAIL CEASES SPONSORSHIP**

I am disappointed to report that Network Rail has ceased its sponsorship of both the Rail section of this site and that of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. I have been grateful to them for their past support. I hope it proves possible to obtain another sponsor as the costs of production of the map are rising as the number of editions each year has been increasing.

### **AUGUST 04 2015 – SEVERN-DEE TRAVEL RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to announce that Severn-Dee Travel has again renewed its sponsorship of both this web site and also my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. They are specialists in rail ticketing and group travel for schools and colleges, based at Gobowen station and can be contacted on 01691 681010 or by emailing [info@severndeetravel.org.uk](mailto:info@severndeetravel.org.uk). They also have a web site at [www.severndeetravel.org.uk](http://www.severndeetravel.org.uk). Their support is very much appreciated.

### **JUNE 06 2015 – TAS RENEWS DUAL SPONSORSHIP**

The TAS Partnership Ltd ([www.tas.uk.net](http://www.tas.uk.net)) has renewed its sponsorship for another year for this site and my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. Formed in 1989 it is one of the UK's leading public transport consultancies and I am most grateful for their continued support.

### **MAY 15 2015 – CHESTER-LE-TRACK RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

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### **MARCH 30 2015 – FIRST HAS NO IDEA WHAT THE WEST OF ENGLAND IS!**

I have just added details of a new map available in conjunction with the 'Avon Rider' multi-operator ticket that covers all the ex-Avon County area: Bath & NE Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. It is produced jointly by all those authorities. I am, however, amazed to read on First's web site that they define the ticket as covering all services in 'the West of England'. So to them places like Taunton, let alone Penzance, are NOT in the West of England! Where are they then?

### **MARCH 04 2015 – MORE AND FIRST RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to report that both *More* (Wilts & Dorset) and First Group have agreed to continue with their respective sponsorships for another year. I am most grateful for this, especially as both have supported me for many years in succession.

### **FEBRUARY 09 2015 – TRANSPORT HUB RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to announce that TransportHub ([www.transporthub.co.uk](http://www.transporthub.co.uk)) has renewed its sponsorship of both my National Rail Passenger Operators' map and the Rail section of this site. TransportHub is a joint venture between Polestar ([www.polestar-group.com](http://www.polestar-group.com)) and Fabrik Communications ([www.fabrikcommunications.co.uk](http://www.fabrikcommunications.co.uk)), the latter being a provider of travel information solutions in the UK. Both companies provide communication solutions from software systems, timetable production, data quality tools, print and fulfilment, including marketing and passenger information. By joining the best software platform from Polestar with the strategic thinking of Fabrik, TransportHub is seeking to become the supplier of choice to this market. Their brochure is at [www.transporthub.co.uk/brochure](http://www.transporthub.co.uk/brochure).

## **JANUARY 23 2015 – SOUTH YORKSHIRE BECOMES THE FIRST PTE TO GIVE UP TIMETABLES**

It has been confirmed that South Yorkshire PTE is ceasing to produce timetables. Of course it is dressed up as good news because ‘people now get their information from the internet,’ but in truth it’s merely a cost-cutting exercise of the worst sort. Publicity is advertising. Without it fewer people will travel and so subsidies will rise. Better for an authority to subsidise 99 routes and produce timetables for them, than have 100 routes without timetables. This is a trend (see October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014, below) but is merely the uninitiated climbing on a bandwagon without thought, for many other authorities are improving their publicity, as my ‘Best Timetables’ section shows. The internet complements printed publicity and does not replace it. I have a smartphone (many don’t) but even then, on the bus, I want a printed timetable with me, and most certainly not a journey planner or internet summary. My ‘Summary of the Use of the 24-hour Clock’ section always shows total numbers involved with publicity and the latest update shows 25% of authorities have now ceased publication (or never had any in the first place).

## **DECEMBER 18 2014 – TRANSDEV BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to report that Transdev Blazefield (Transdev Harrogate & District, Keighley & District, Lancashire and York & East Coast) has renewed its sponsorship for another year. Blazefield was my first sponsor and has maintained this support ever since, this now being its fourteenth year, which is much appreciated.

## **NOVEMBER 07 2014 – STAGECOACH RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very grateful to the Stagecoach Group, which has renewed its sponsorship for another year. This is the tenth consecutive year that Stagecoach has supported this site and it is very much appreciated.

## **OCTOBER 23 2014 – CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE TO CEASE PUBLICITY**

I have been told that the new issues of a timetable book and a system map next month will be the last printed publicity that Central Bedfordshire will produce. They have made the mistake of believing that the money saved will allow extra tendered bus services to be run. No! It’s better to tender 99 services and publicise them all, than run an extra one but cease all publicity. That’s something a number of authorities have appreciated as they have improved their publicity in recent times, and it’s very disappointing that Central Bedfordshire hasn’t, not least as its timetables always appeared in my ‘Best Timetables of the British Isles’ section.

## **OCTOBER 17 2014 – SITE FAULT RECTIFIED**

I apologise for the fact this site was unavailable for much of yesterday and today. This was owing to a fault at Easyspace, which hosts the site.

## **OCTOBER 07 2014 – PINDAR CREATIVE RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

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#### **SEPTEMBER 15 2014 – TRANSPORT DIRECT CLOSES**

It was announced today that Transport Direct, the multi-modal journey planner set up by John Prescott in 2004, is to close at the end of this month. It was always rather unreliable and has been superseded by better systems. I have removed reference to the link from the County sections of this site.

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I am very pleased to report that both First Group and *More* (Wilts & Dorset) have agreed to continue with their respective sponsorships for another year. I am most grateful for this, especially as both have supported me for many years in succession. It once again shows that much of the industry does still take publicity seriously.

## **FEBRUARY 03 2014 – *DOE'S DIRECTORY* IS RE-PRINTED!**

In October 2012, after a gap of 13 years, this web site was again printed, thanks to *Here To There Publishing* ([www.heretotherepublishing.com/doesdirectory](http://www.heretotherepublishing.com/doesdirectory)). It has just been updated as an 88-page book for £10 post-free. It is interesting to remember that the original final, 32<sup>nd</sup>, edition of December 1999 only had 40 pages in total and sold for £5.00. Given 14 years of inflation and the extra 48 pages, the £10 cover-price is excellent value. Please note it is only available from *Here To There Publishing* and not from me.

## **JANUARY 21 2014 – A REDESIGN OF THE HOME PAGE**

For a while I have been conscious of the fact that my Home Page did not appear correctly with some web browsers. I have now added a quite different, more basic, Home Page which will, I hope, appear the same regardless of browser. This links through to an acrobat version of the old page, which is now effectively the site index.

## **JANUARY 02 2014 – TRANSDEV BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to report that Transdev Blazefield (Transdev Harrogate & District, Keighley & District, Lancashire and York & East Coast) has renewed its sponsorship for another year. Blazefield was my first sponsor and has maintained this support ever since, this now being its thirteenth year, which is much appreciated.

### **NOVEMBER 05 2013 – STAGECOACH RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very grateful to the Stagecoach Group, which has renewed its sponsorship for another year. This is the ninth consecutive year that Stagecoach has supported this site and that is very much appreciated.

### **NOVEMBER 01 2013 – HERE TO THERE PRICE REDUCTIONS**

Owing to a change of printer the postage costs for receipt of *Here To There* publications has been reduced. The new prices are shown in the relevant entries.

### **OCTOBER 31 2013 – MORE DETAIL ADDED TO THE RAIL AND 'BEST TIMETABLES' SECTIONS**

I have now added details in the Rail section about National Rail operators' timetables, with an emphasis on explaining what they publish and which have single books. I have also started adding a 'last revised' date for each entry in the 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section, but this cannot be added for entries changed prior to mid-October 2013 until they change again.

### **OCTOBER 31 2013 – PB BUS MARKETING CEASES SPONSORSHIP**

PB Bus Marketing has ceased its support of this site. Its past support has been much appreciated.

### **OCTOBER 17 2013 – SITE DOWN**

I apologise to users who were unable to open this site late yesterday or this morning. The site is hosted by EasySpace who, it seems, had a major Server problem, but one which has now been resolved.

### **OCTOBER 08 2013 – PINDAR CREATIVE: A NEW SPONSOR**

I am delighted to announce that Pindar Creative has become a sponsor of this site. This is a welcome return as Pindar sponsored the covers of my printed Directory in the mid-1990s. Pindar Creative specialises in producing publicity to promote sustainable travel across a wide range of media, including printed and on-line solutions. It offers a complete solution to travel information providers and delivers specialist design, cartography, typesetting, artwork creation, data collection and proof checking services. It produces sustainable travel maps, timetable and leaflet publications, road side publicity and posters, plus interactive mapping websites, digital timetable publications and mobile optimised sites. I am most grateful for their support.

### **OCTOBER 04 2013 – RÉSEAULTIONS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am once again grateful to 'Réseaultions', which has just renewed its sponsorship for the ninth successive year. A play on words (réseau is the French for network), Réseaultions is the former consultancy arm of Southern Vectis. Its main business is network design, using experience gained from the various regulatory regimes across Western Europe. See their web site at [www.reseaultions.com](http://www.reseaultions.com) for details.

### **SEPTEMBER 14 2013 – A LITTLE BIT OF FIRST SHOWS REAL INTEREST!**

I have just amended the entry for First Berkshire & the Thames Valley in the 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section. They have been there for some years owing to their excellent work, but I could not resist commenting further on their latest

edition and quote it here: “The latest Bracknell book is advertised as a 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition and explains that First Berkshire & the Thames Valley has been producing comprehensive books for a decade. ‘Everything you need to know about Bracknell’s buses in a simple and easy-to-carry format.’ Three cheers for that. What other operators show such interest in their users and the quality of their publicity? More to the point is the rest of ‘First’ listening? It seems not!”

#### **SEPTEMBER 02 2013 – HACON: A NEW SPONSOR**

I am delighted to announce that HaCon (UK) ([www.hacon.de](http://www.hacon.de)) has become a sponsor of both my National Rail Passenger Operators' map and the Rail section of this site. HaCon's train planning software, TPS, plans the entire railway networks of the UK, France, Denmark and Norway. With over 10 million downloads of HaCon's mobile apps to date, passengers in 25 countries place over 40 million daily journey planner requests using HaCon's timetable information system, HAFAS. HaCon has a team of over 180 transport planning specialists based in Hannover, Germany and their new UK office in Milton Keynes.

#### **AUGUST 14 2013 – NETWORK RAIL RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to be able to say that Network Rail ([www.networkrail.co.uk](http://www.networkrail.co.uk)) has renewed its sponsorship of the Rail section of this site and also that of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. I am most grateful to Network Rail, together with my other three sponsors, for allowing the map to continue.

#### **AUGUST 09 2013 – SEVERN-DEE TRAVEL RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to say that Severn-Dee Travel has again renewed its sponsorship of both this web site and also my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. They are specialists in rail ticketing and group travel for schools and colleges, based at Gobowen station. They can be contacted on 01691 681010 or by emailing [info@severndeetravel.org.uk](mailto:info@severndeetravel.org.uk) and they have a web site at [www.severndeetravel.org.uk](http://www.severndeetravel.org.uk). Their support is very much appreciated.

#### **AUGUST 07 2013 – WALKDEN SOFTWARE PROVIDES A NEW FARES FINDER**

One of my sponsors, Walkden Software, ([www.busfare.co.uk](http://www.busfare.co.uk)) has provided a new ‘Fare Search’ system for Warrington Borough Transport (Network Warrington) and it is well worth all operators taking a look at this via the link on the Warrington site ([www.networkwarrington.co.uk/fare-search](http://www.networkwarrington.co.uk/fare-search)). We take it for granted that it is easy to find rail fares on line, yet so few bus operators allow this – indeed many merely give a few sample fares at best. What shop keeps its prices a secret? This is major step in the right direction and one I hope others will emulate.

#### **JULY 30 2013 – HIGHLAND MAPS WITHDRAWN**

The maps to which I referred below on June 22 have been withdrawn owing to multiple errors. They will be re-issued in October, though, as per my comments, I cannot see why it is worthwhile to do so.

#### **JUNE 30 2013 – FWT CEASES SPONSORSHIP**

After ten consecutive years, FWT, Britain’s leading-cartographer, has ceased its sponsorship of this site. I have been very grateful for their past support.

#### **JUNE 22 2013 – NEW HIGHLANDS PUBLICATIONS DISAPPOINT**

The new timetables for Highland Council have been issued – or, rather, new maps. These have been long-promised and maps with timetables were expected. Instead there are six maps of the one-line-per-route type which makes routes out of Inverness look like five-lane motorways and which lack all clarity in built-up areas. The only timetable information on each is a frequency-guide and, of course, in this part of the world, many services only run perhaps once weekly. Frankly these maps are a total waste of time and effort, because there is also a Highlands System Map issued which shows more or less the same information. If this were not all disappointing enough, the map is no longer joint with Orkney, Shetland or Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles) Councils.

### **JUNE 13 2013 – TAS RENEWS DUAL SPONSORSHIP**

The TAS Partnership Ltd ([www.tas.uk.net](http://www.tas.uk.net)) has renewed its sponsorship for another year, both of this site and my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. Formed in 1989 it is one of the UK's leading public transport consultancies and I am very grateful for their continued support.

### **JUNE 06 2013 – OXFORDSHIRE GIVES UP PUBLICITY**

I have been told the extremely disappointing news that Oxfordshire, which had a series of excellent timetables, has given everything up owing to budget cuts. Whatever budget cuts an authority faces it must appreciate that what remains must be advertised – yes, even if the publicity means a bus has to be cut. Better to have 99 services and advertise them than run 100 and advertise none of them.

### **MAY 03 2013 – CHESTER-LE-TRACK RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to announce that Chester-le-Track has renewed both its sponsorship for this site and also for my National Rail Passenger Operators' map and I am particularly grateful for this. Chester-le-Track runs the booking offices at Chester-le-Street and Eaglescliffe. It sells tickets over the phone and runs a web site ([www.nationalrail.com](http://www.nationalrail.com)). Chester-le-Street is open 0730-1800 Mon-Fri (opens 0610 Mondays) and 0730-1300 Saturdays & Bank Holidays (closed Sundays). Tickets bought by phone (0191 387 1387) are posted first class free of charge. There are no card fees. Eaglescliffe (tel: 01642 200140) opens a little earlier so as to serve the first southbound GC service to Kings Cross. Please support them.

### **APRIL 15 2013 – SOMERSET GIVES UP TIMETABLE BOOKS**

Somerset has for long been saying its series of thirteen books, last published in May 2012, would be updated in May 2013 but that the format was 'not yet known.' Well it is now: total abolition in favour of mere leaflets. That makes it the only county in the West Country to cease proper comprehensive books with maps. Tourists will no longer know what the network on offer is. This is a major disappointment.

### **MARCH 11 2013 – FIRST AND WILTS & DORSET RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to report that both First Group and Wilts & Dorset have agreed to continue with their respective sponsorships for another year. I am most grateful for their continued support, especially as both have supported me for many years in succession.

### **FEBRUARY 02 2013 – MIXED FORTUNES FOR THE START OF 2013**

Little has happened this year so far, but I have been told that Worcestershire has ceased all publicity whilst the October 2012 timetable for CT Plus Guernsey turns



out to be in 12-hour clock. It's always a battle to convince counties that printed publicity is still necessary and is only complemented by the internet, whilst it never ceases to amaze me how a respected operator can suddenly revert to a mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century format on a whim. I was intrigued to note that when the same operator, CT Plus, took over services in Jersey this January its timetable was in 24-hour clock. Further investigation shows that CT actually wanted to use 12-hour in Jersey but the authority talked them out of it (actually, I'm told, showing CT the stats from this web site to show how 12-hour is virtually dead!). I asked Guernsey why they hadn't similarly tried to talk them out of it, but they were totally uninterested! More to the point, though, why are CT acting like cowboys?

#### **DECEMBER 31 2012 – CT PLUS TAKES OVER IN JERSEY**

I have today added details of Jersey's new operator, CT Plus Jersey, to the site. It is pleasing to note a timetable book has already been published and is of a decent quality. I wish all users a Happy New Year and thank you all for your support.

#### **DECEMBER 12 2012 – TRANSDEV BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to report that Transdev Blazefield (Transdev Harrogate & District, Keighley & District, Lancashire and York & East Coast) has renewed its sponsorship for another year. I am most grateful, not least as Blazefield was my first sponsor and it has maintained this support ever since, this now being its twelfth year.

#### **NOVEMBER 23 2012 – NEW FLEETNAMES ADDED FOR FIRST GROUP**

First Group companies now have new local fleetnames. No list was available for the whole country so I approached Giles Fearnley, their Managing Director UK Bus, who kindly arranged for a list to be drawn up and sent to me. I have now added all these fleetnames and am grateful for First's cooperation in arranging this.

#### **NOVEMBER 10 2012 – NOTTINGHAM EXPRESS TRANSIT REVERTS TO 24-HOUR**

Last year (December 30 2011) I had to explain that Nottingham Express Transit was being removed from my 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section as the new consortium that runs the trams in Nottingham had changed to 12-hour clock – making it the only tram system in the British Isles to use the mode. This was because the consortium had Wellglade amongst its members and Wellglade is the owner of the ever-head-in-the-sand TrentBarton. Fortunately another member is Keolis, who have put pressure on to effect a change and it is good to hear they have been successful and NET is reverting to 24-hour at the next timetable issue. It seems amazing that we have to fight such battles in 2012!

#### **NOVEMBER 08 2012 – STAGECOACH AND PB BUS MARKETING RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am grateful to the Stagecoach Group, which has renewed its sponsorship for another year. As with Réseaulutions, below, this is the eighth consecutive year that Stagecoach has supported this site and that is very much appreciated. I am also pleased to announce that 'PB Bus Marketing' has renewed its support for this site. I cannot emphasise too strongly how, without such sponsorship, this site would not exist.

#### **OCTOBER 31 2012 – DOE'S DIRECTORY IS PRINTED AGAIN!**

I am delighted to be able to say that, after a gap of 13 years, this web site is again being printed, thanks to *Here To There Publishing* (see below (October 05) for full contact details). *Here To There* told me many people without internet print off

sections in libraries etc and have said they would like to see it printed again, so *Here To There* has obliged ([www.heretotherepublishing.com/doesdirectory](http://www.heretotherepublishing.com/doesdirectory)). The current version shows this site as of late September. Amazingly it includes every section, not least this Special Announcements section - every entry from the start of the section below (October 2001) to the August 31 2012 entry - and this alone occupies 40 pages of what is now a 148-page book. It is interesting to remember that what was then the final, 32<sup>nd</sup>, edition in December 1999 only had 40 pages in total and sold for £5.00. Given 13 years of inflation, let alone the extra 108 pages, the £7.50 cover-price of the new version is excellent value. It is £10 including postage, but please note it is only available from *Here To There Publishing* and not from me.

### **OCTOBER 06 2012 – RÉSEAULTIONS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very grateful to 'Réseaultions', which has just renewed its sponsorship for the eighth successive year. A play on words (réseau is the French for network), Réseaultions is the former consultancy arm of Southern Vectis. Its main business is network design, using experience gained from the various regulatory regimes across Western Europe. Visit their web site at [www.reseaultions.com](http://www.reseaultions.com) for further details.

### **OCTOBER 05 2012 – HERE TO THERE CHANGES**

From October 12 the address of 'Here To There Publishing' ([www.heretotherepublishing.com](http://www.heretotherepublishing.com)), will be Apartment 4, 38-40 Stonehills, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL8 6PD. Tel: 01707 246232; fax: 01707 246498; email: [general@heretotherepublishing.com](mailto:general@heretotherepublishing.com). There are many exciting developments on the way of which details can be seen by visiting their web site.

### **OCTOBER 05 2012 – SEVERAL AUTHORITIES CEASE PUBLICATION**

It has been very disappointing to hear the news this week that Staffordshire will no longer publish its fine series of timetable books but instead will produce local maps. The excuse is that timetables change too much which, to me, points to an even greater need for publicity, not its abolition. Then came the news that the excellent Torbay timetable just published for the winter will be the last, owing to budget cuts. I told them that they have misunderstood the golden rule for authorities: that however much you have to cut, you must retain a publicity budget to advertise what remains. Put bluntly, it's better to have 49 tendered services well advertised than 50 kept secret. Finally, I have been showing for a very long time the impending publication of a joint timetable for Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees, but this week was told that although it is not formally abolished, it is very unlikely ever to appear. I can confirm, however, that Caerphilly County Borough Council DOES intend producing its long-planned series of four timetable books, even though they are currently on-hold.

### **AUGUST 31 2012 – SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL RESUMES PUBLICATIONS**

It is very good to see that Scottish Borders has just published its first timetable book for some years (for Galashiels & Central Borders) and that it is to be the first of five covering the whole council area. The map is also being updated and should be available in September.

### **AUGUST 24 2012 – NETWORK RAIL BECOMES A SPONSOR**

I am very pleased to be able to announce that Network Rail ([www.networkrail.co.uk](http://www.networkrail.co.uk)) has agreed to become a sponsor of the Rail section of this site and also a sponsor of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. They have replaced *RAIL* magazine, who sponsored the map for two years but were unable to do so for a third. I have

been grateful for their support and similarly very grateful to Network Rail for taking over and, together with my other three sponsors, allowing the map to continue.

### **AUGUST 20 2012 – SEVERN-DEE TRAVEL RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am delighted to announce that Severn-Dee Travel has renewed its sponsorship of both this web site and also my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. They are specialists in rail ticketing and group travel for schools and colleges, based at Gobowen station. They can be contacted on 01691 681010 or by emailing [info@severndeetravel.org.uk](mailto:info@severndeetravel.org.uk) and they now have a web site at [www.severndeetravel.org.uk](http://www.severndeetravel.org.uk). Their support is very much appreciated.

### **JULY 23 2012 – ARGOS ISSUES ITS NEW CATALOGUE: LESSONS TO BE LEARNED**

This weekend *Argos* issued its latest catalogue. 1762 full-colour pages with a large index, printed by the hundred thousand, available at all its stores by the box-load and advertised on-line. Do you see the potential parallel with the bus industry? Of course every item it sells is also shown on-line, yet *Argos* still recognises the value of having a single book covering everything it offers, so users can browse. In short, many bus operators make all the excuses *Argos* could, but doesn't, for not having a single volume showing the networks they operate. Much of the bus industry is still way behind the times with marketing and could learn so much from other retailers like *Argos*.

### **JUNE 29 2012 – FWT AND LOGAN INTERACTIVE RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that FWT, one of Britain's leading-cartographers and timetable producers, has renewed its sponsorship of this site. Logan Interactive has also renewed. Logan is the provider of software for JourneyPlan, used by Traveline North East & Cumbria and also by Translink (Ulsterbus and Northern Ireland Railways). I am most grateful for the continued support of both organisations.

### **JUNE 09 2012 – TAS RENEWS DUAL SPONSORSHIP**

The TAS Partnership Ltd ([www.tas.uk.net](http://www.tas.uk.net)) has renewed its sponsorship for another year, both of this site and my National Rail Passenger Operators' map. Formed in 1989 it is one of the UK's leading public transport consultancies and I am very grateful for their continued support.

### **MAY 07 2012 – CHESTER-LE-TRACK RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that Chester-le-Track has renewed both its sponsorship for this site and also for my National Rail Passenger Operators' map and I am particularly grateful for this. Chester-le-Track not only runs the booking office at Chester-le-Street but it also now staffs Eaglescliffe after having rebuilt the booking office – a most impressive major improvement to the station, now served by Grand Central. It sells tickets over the phone and runs a web site ([www.nationalrail.com](http://www.nationalrail.com)). Chester-le-Street is open 0730-1800 Mon-Fri (opens 0610 Mondays) and 0730-1300 Saturdays & Bank Holidays (closed Sundays). Tickets bought by phone (0191 387 1387) are posted first class free of charge. There are no card fees. Eaglescliffe (tel: 01642 200140) opens a little earlier so as to serve the first southbound GC service to Kings Cross. Please support them.

### **APRIL 30 2012 – POSTAGE PRICES UPDATED**

I have, where possible, updated postage prices to take into account today's change in Royal Mail prices. However in most cases, where post-inclusive prices are

quoted, this has not been possible as only the operator or relevant authority can let me know its desired total price.

#### **APRIL 28 2012 – HERE TO THERE PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED**

I have now seen the first two volumes from 'Here To There Publishing' – those for Essex and Northumberland – and they have immediately found a place in my 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section. Do please read my comments for in summary, as I say under Essex, they form the best news in the field of public transport information since the demise of the Southern Vectis *Great Britain Bus Timetable* in 2001.

#### **APRIL 06 2012 – HERE TO THERE PUBLICATIONS NOW INCLUDED IN MAIN ENTRIES**

I mentioned below (February 11 2012) the excellent work of 'Here To There Publishing' ([www.heretotherepublishing.com](http://www.heretotherepublishing.com)), run by Suzy Scott from 15 Titchmarsh Close, Royston SG8 5DD (tel: 01763 252868; email: [suzy@heretotherepublishing.com](mailto:suzy@heretotherepublishing.com)) which aims to publish complete sets of timetables covering much of Britain. The initial books cover Essex and Northumberland, both of whom used to have excellent books of their own but which have given up. I now include details of these in the English Counties section. The Essex 884-page book includes both Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock whilst that for Northumberland (244 pages) includes the Tyne & Wear Metro and ferries. In all cases one update to the book is mailed free of charge. New is a pre-paid mailing list service ([www.heretotherepublishing.com/prepay](http://www.heretotherepublishing.com/prepay)) for those who want items sent automatically on publication. The latest catalogue lists 34 possible future books and this is one of the most exciting projects seen for many a year. At long last a group that is treating printed timetables seriously.

#### **MARCH 08 2012 – WILTS & DORSET RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that Wilts & Dorset has also 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.

#### **MARCH 06 2012 – FIRST RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very pleased to report that First has agreed to continue with its sponsorship for another year. As for all my sponsors, I am most grateful for their continued support, but First was literally the first of the big bus groups to sponsor me and this is their tenth successive year, so I am particularly grateful for this.

#### **FEBRUARY 17 2012 – ANOTHER COUNTY GIVES UP PUBLICITY**

Wiltshire has informed me it has ceased production of its timetable books and its system map. This did not come as a great surprise as they were out-of-date – in the case of the map, 2008! Whilst technically it no longer publishes anything in printed format, it has all timetables on-line and will print a copy of anything requested, so I now show it as producing just 'leaflets.' Sadly this is a large county where the operators themselves produce little but leaflets. It's an irony that in Dorset, for example, Wilts & Dorset publish books and so too the county, yet W & D have only ever had leaflets in Wiltshire. Why must bus users have to suffer like this? Are there areas of the country where no atlases exist for motorists and where they are told that someone will run off the odd page of one on request?

#### **FEBRUARY 11 2012 – AN EXCITING NEW SERIES OF TIMETABLES**



For some time I have in my 'Links' section mentioned 'Here To There Publishing', but it is worth a special mention now that it is getting close to issuing its second catalogue of timetables. Run by Suzy Scott from 15 Titchmarsh Close, Royston SG8 5DD (tel: 01763 252868; email: [suzy@heretotherepublishing.com](mailto:suzy@heretotherepublishing.com)) the aim is to publish complete sets of timetables covering much of Britain. Some of this will be new for areas where counties currently do nothing, whereas at the other extreme there will be a single book for Surrey putting together that county's current six books and done because Surrey now refuses to mail its timetables to those outside the area, even for a fee. For full details see its web site at [www.heretotherepublishing.com](http://www.heretotherepublishing.com).

#### **FEBRUARY 10 2012 – THE DEMISE OF VEOLIA TRANSPORT UK**

Veolia Transport UK (including Veolia Transport Cymru) has now vanished as a name and almost certainly won't be missed! Its remaining operations in England are now part of Astons Coaches whilst its few Welsh services are now Crossgates Coaches. The Veolia name continues in that the excellent Transdev Blazefield Group is officially Veolia Transdev UK but, without going into the politics of European mergers and sales, that latter organisation had no connection with the quite separate and discredited Veolia Transport UK and Veolia Transport Cymru.

#### **DECEMBER 30 2011 – NOTTINGHAM EXPRESS TRANSIT**

I have included the Nottingham Tram timetable in my 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section for some years – the only metro timetable to qualify. Sadly, it is now disqualified as the new version remains unique in the British Isles, but for the wrong reason – it has just changed to the 12-hour clock. Is this the influence of its new involvement with the ever-head-in-the-sand 'TrentBarton'?

#### **DECEMBER 06 2011 – TRANSDEV BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to report that Transdev Blazefield (Transdev Harrogate & District, Keighley & District, Lancashire and York & East Coast) has renewed its sponsorship of this site for another year. I am most grateful, not least as Blazefield was my first sponsor and it has maintained this support ever since, this now being its eleventh year.

#### **NOVEMBER 09 2011 – PB BUS MARKETING RESUMES SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that 'PB Bus Marketing' has once again decided to sponsor this site and I am very pleased to have them back. 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 those that appear in my 'Best Timetables of the British Isles' section.

#### **NOVEMBER 08 2011 – STAGECOACH RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am grateful to the Stagecoach Group, which has renewed its sponsorship for another year. As with Réseaulutions, below, this is also the seventh consecutive year that Stagecoach has supported this site and I am most grateful for this loyalty.

#### **OCTOBER 08 2011 – RÉSEAULUTIONS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very grateful to 'Réseaulutions', which has just renewed its sponsorship for another year- its seventh in succession. A play on words (réseau is the French for network), Réseaulutions is the former consultancy arm of Southern Vectis, the bus



operations of which were acquired by Go-Ahead in 2005. Its main business is network design, using experience gained from the various regulatory regimes across Western Europe. See their web site, available by clicking their logo on the Home Page, for further details. Réseaulutions has sponsored this site for seven years now - and for three years prior to that, in pre-Go-Ahead days, so did Southern Vectis - and such loyal support is very much appreciated.

#### **SEPTEMBER 24 2011 – 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. I am very grateful for their continued support, not least because it has also recently renewed its sponsor my rail franchise map.

#### **SEPTEMBER 01 2011 – A NEW SPONSOR**

I am delighted to announce details of a new sponsor, Severn-Dee Travel, specialists in rail ticketing and group travel for schools and colleges, based at Gobowen station. They have agreed to sponsor both this web site and also my Passenger Operators' map. They can be contacted on 01691 681010 or by emailing [severndeetravel@gmail.com](mailto:severndeetravel@gmail.com) and their support is very welcome indeed.

#### **AUGUST 29 2011 – THE SITE HAS A NEW HOST**

I was warned late last week that the *Mail on Sunday* was to give details of my web site yesterday, which is why I took temporary action to reduce the Home Page size to limit download size, should many people look at it. This site was never designed for thousands of people to attempt access in one day but, of course, if only less than 0.1% of readers of a newspaper act on a reference that can happen! It did indeed, and my site was temporarily suspended by my ISP (PlusNet) at 0400 this morning for exceeding data transfer limits and I apologise to anyone who could not access it after that time. An explanation to PlusNet brought forth a rapid reinstatement, but it was really time to upgrade, and so today the site has been moved from PlusNet (where it was merely free space as part of my email & internet package) to a paid site at Easyspace which permits unlimited data download and so will overcome this problem for the future.

#### **AUGUST 28 2011 – TEMPORARY CHANGE TO HOME PAGE**

I apologise for the temporary reduction in detail on the Home Page, including the omission of my sponsors' logos. The full page will be restored within a few days. Links for access to all other sections of the site remain functional.

#### **JUNE 06 2011 – A NEW SPONSOR**

I am delighted to welcome a new sponsor of my site: Logan Interactive, which is the provider of software for JourneyPlan, used by Traveline North East & Cumbria and also by Translink (Ulsterbus and Northern Ireland Railways).

#### **JUNE 03 2011 – 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 09 2011 – A NEW SPONSOR**

I am delighted to announce that a new sponsor, nationalrail.com (Chester-le-Track), has agreed to plug the gap on the rail side brought about by National Rail having withdrawn its sponsorship last year. Chester-le-Track operates the railway station at Chester-le-Street in Durham on the East Coast Main Line. On a national scale the business is known as nationalrail.com after its web domain, which was registered shortly before ATOC decided to use the National Rail brand after the breakup of British Rail, and it has been pleased, as a major online source of impartial rail information, to take the place of ATOC. Station Master Alex Nelson employs seven staff, including three apprentices, at the station and it is expected that a second station will be operated by nationalrail.com this year at Eaglescliffe, meaning it will then be employing nine people across the two sites. The team is able to sell tickets throughout the network and a new switchboard system handles calls with a no-menu credit/debit card booking number of 0191 387 1387, open daily except Sundays: 0620-1800 (MO), 0730-1800 (MSX) and 0730-1300 (SO + Public Holidays). Tickets are usually mailed out first class same day without extra charge. It does not deal with straight train enquiries, for which users should ring National Rail on 0845 7484950. I am particularly grateful to Chester-le-Track in light of the fact they are already a part-sponsor of my Passenger Operators' map, having taken that over when ATOC also withdrew its sponsorship of that in 2010.

### **MAY 02 2011 – DEVON LEADS THE WAY AGAIN**

In the current economic climate too many local authorities are taking the lazy way out and saving money by cutting timetables and/or maps. Devon's approach is far more positive. The May 2011 timetables have abolished spot colours and hence are black & white only, removed some optional information, slightly revised some table banks to save pages and they are to last until May 2012 unless too many changes occur – but each volume has retained its colour system map and all the town plans. The size - and hence the cost - has been significantly reduced yet without loss of information for users and the county is to be congratulated for taking this approach.

### **APRIL 20 2011 – THE COUNTER PASSES 375000**

Today the counter reached 375000 individual visits to my web site. I remain most grateful to my eight 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 whereas this 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.

### **APRIL 09 2011 – JOURNEYPLAN WITHDRAWS SUPPORT**

After eight consecutive years JourneyPlan has had to withdraw its sponsorship in the current financial climate. I have been very grateful for all their past support.

### **MARCH 08 2011 – RATP TAKE OVER PARTS OF TRANSDEV**

Late last week changes occurred that affected the way some operators are grouped in my Operator section. Transdev merged with Veolia and as part of the deal had to sell off Yellow Buses, London United and part of London Sovereign to RATP. Yellow Buses therefore ceased to be 'Transdev Yellow Buses' and now appears in the usual format I use for operators not part of the big groups (Arriva, First, Stagecoach and Transdev), viz, as 'Bournemouth Transport' with Yellow Buses as a fleetname. Transdev London United merely changed to London United, however it will now run some services previously operated by Transdev London Sovereign, which latter operator remains, albeit with a new (Edgware) address, under Transdev. Transdev is an excellent group, running spotlessly-clean vehicles; Veolia is the exact opposite! So we can but hope that Veolia will be brought up to the high standard of Transdev

rather than Transdev being 'watered down'. As for RATP, it is an unknown in Britain, nevertheless here in Bournemouth there is a sense of disappointment that the 'Transdev Yellow Bus' era has been so short and, again, we can but hope RATP serves us as well.

### **MARCH 03 2011 – FIRST AND WILTS & DORSET RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to report that both First Group and Wilts & Dorset have agreed to continue with their respective sponsorships for another year. I am most grateful for their continued support, especially in the current economic climate.

### **FEBRUARY 04 2011 – UPDATED RAIL MAP**

The 18<sup>th</sup>, February, edition of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map is now available for downloading from the Rail section. I was working on changes to the map but the sudden demise of Wrexham & Shropshire at short notice last week required a new edition as soon as possible. This edition shows routes taken by operators at least once daily Monday-Friday and a note on the map explains this criterion. Previously I had done this for some routes (such as London Midland running to Stoke-on-Trent avoiding Stafford, as it does daily with the 1829 from Euston) but not shown other similar cases such as CrossCountry running via Andover. I am not, of course, attempting to show odd routes used occasionally at weekends owing to engineering work. A few previous errors have also been corrected and some operator-ownership names updated.

### **JANUARY 08 2011 – REVISIONS TO THE RAIL SECTION**

I have revised the layout of the Rail section and hope users find this beneficial.

### **DECEMBER 15 2010 – SOME OPERATORS NEVER REPLY TO EMAILS**

Noting that I was showing timetables three years old for two operators – EST Bus and Roy Brown's Coaches – I emailed them to ask if they had more up-to-date versions. Neither replied – yet the email addresses I used were the ones shown on their respective web sites. In the case of EST Bus I asked the ever-helpful local council who gave me an internal email address. They didn't reply to that either. I sent each email four times over a 10-day period just to be 'safe'. I have now deleted their email addresses from my site as I wouldn't want users to waste their time trying to contact them. So why do these operators bother showing email addresses if they have no intention of replying? Cowboys!

### **NOVEMBER 03 2010 – STAGECOACH RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that the Stagecoach Group has renewed its sponsorship for another year. This site would not exist were it not for my sponsors and I am particularly grateful to those like Stagecoach who have renewed many years in succession to allow it to continue.

### **OCTOBER 13 2010 – UPDATED RAIL MAP**

The 17<sup>th</sup>, December, edition of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map is now available for downloading from the Rail section. This shows the Drumgelloch-Bathgate line which opens December 12th and which is already shown in advance on journey planners. Please remember that, courtesy my four sponsors, everyone is now entitled to download a copy to view on-screen and also print for private or commercial use.

## **OCTOBER 09 2010 – STAGECOACH ENTRIES RECAST**

My Arriva and First entries have for some time matched the names used by those groups on their web sites, but those for Stagecoach have remained based on the old company names. Recent changes in the way such companies are now grouped within Stagecoach led me to feel, with the agreement of Stagecoach itself, that it was time I recast all my entries to use the up-to-date groupings – albeit still showing the various fleetnames under each. In fact users will notice that the entries I show do not quite match those used on Stagecoach's web site, because the latter is itself rather out-of-date and is to be re-organised along slightly different lines in early 2011. However, to save users telling me they think some of my fleetnames are in the wrong groups, I can only say in advance that my new entries have been seen by Stagecoach HQ and received their blessing as being wholly accurate!

## **OCTOBER 06 2010 – 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 2005. Its main business is creative network design, using experience gained from the various regulatory regimes across Western Europe. See their web site, available by clicking their logo on the Home Page, for further details.

## **OCTOBER 04 2010 – TRANSDEV BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to report 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, particularly as it was my first sponsor and it has maintained this support every year since, this now being its tenth year.

## **SEPTEMBER 16 2010 – SITE RE-NAMING**

There has been increasing confusion in recent times regarding material available only on-line – particularly maps – with a number of authorities and operators telling me about maps they publish, yet where afterwards I find out that these are only published on-line. By definition all those using this site have the internet and can easily see for themselves by using the links I provide what is published on-line. This site, however, has always been for the provision of information about *printed* timetables and maps. It is particularly important with maps, where very few users of home computers will have the ability to print out a large-sheet map in full colour and so users need to know if they can obtain a printed copy from the relevant authority or operator. To avoid future confusion this site has now been re-named *Doe's Directory of Printed Bus & Rail Timetables, Web Sites and Enquiry Offices*.

## **SEPTEMBER 03 2010 – 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, not least because it has also recently started to sponsor my rail franchise map (see June 30 2010, below).

## **JULY 20 2010 – THE END OF AN ERA AS ISLE OF WIGHT TIMETABLE ENDS**

I was told today by the Isle of Wight Council that its excellent comprehensive book, currently covering April to early September, will be the last. For many years Southern Vectis produced some of the finest timetables in Britain which always included other operators, ferries, trains and mainland connections, but it all came to



an end in March 2006 when SV was sold to Go-Ahead and they decided to produce a volume showing only their own services. Fortunately, a year later the IoW Council came to the rescue with a new book showing everything that SV used to – and so well produced that it immediately made it into my Best Timetables of the British Isles section. I always hoped that common sense would prevail and that SV would cease its own and give the money to the Council to ensure the better one continued, but, instead, SV has stubbornly stuck to its own volume and the market has clearly not been large enough to support both – not least in the new economic climate – and so the better publication has to be dropped. The IoW Council say they will only be able to produce a folder for Wightlink services. There will be no single publication showing ferries, the Cowes floating bridge, the Island's trains as well as all buses – and this on an island dependant on tourism. It's as crazy as Argos giving up its catalogue!

#### **JUNE 30 2010 – FOUR NEW SPONSORS ALLOW RAIL MAP TO CONTINUE**

Further to the entry below, I am pleased to announce that I now have four new sponsors for my Great Britain National Rail Passenger Operators' franchise map and a new (16<sup>th</sup>) edition has been launched today. It is available for downloading from the Rail section as usual. The new sponsors are: Chester-le-Track ([www.nationalrail.com](http://www.nationalrail.com)), the rail agency based at Chester-le-Street station; MyTrainTicket.co.uk ([www.mytrainticket.co.uk](http://www.mytrainticket.co.uk)), the new ticket retailer; *RAIL* magazine ([www.rail-magazine.com](http://www.rail-magazine.com)), a fortnightly publication and Britain's leading industry magazine; and TAS ([www.tas.uk.net](http://www.tas.uk.net)), now in its 21<sup>st</sup> year and one of the UK's leading public transport consultancies (TAS also sponsors this web site). I am most grateful to them for allowing the map to continue. There is another major improvement in that as from this edition users may not only download copies for private use, but anyone – including all sections of the rail industry – may download and produce wall-chart versions if they wish without requiring further permission. The agent quoted in the Rail section is still available for producing such versions if required but users may go to any third party to produce such a version. The map will continue to be published every time there is a change to the network and will therefore remain 100% up-to-date as before.

#### **MAY 15 2010 – NATIONAL RAIL ENQUIRIES FAILS TO RENEW SPONSORSHIP**

National Rail has refused to renew its sponsorship of the Rail section of this site and have also refused to continue support for my Great Britain National Rail Passenger Operators' franchise map – a map they used on their own web site and which is still available on this one for users to download free of charge. A few months ago in *RAIL* magazine I criticised their new web site which was redesigned late last year and, as a result, in my opinion went from being one of the best in the country to one of the worst. Many senior people in the rail industry agreed with my comments. Of course National Rail denies that these two events are linked! I am now looking for a new sponsor for the map so to allow it to continue, as many users have said how useful they found it, not least the fact it is always up-to-date, averaging three editions per year. I am grateful for the past support of National Rail but regret the way their decision was handled.

#### **MAY 07 2010 – NEW 'BEST TIMETABLE' ENTRIES**

Two new timetables qualify for an entry in my Best Timetables of the British Isles section: those for Conwy and Monmouthshire. Meanwhile I felt it necessary to remove Surrey. It did excellent work over the years but has recently removed a number of maps from its books at the same time being inconsistent with its table presentation and type faces. All authorities are under financial pressure but it does not imply the need for such negative treatment. There has also been a number of



excellent re-issues of other timetables (such as the latest from Metrobus) so the section has had a significant update.

#### **APRIL 07 2010 – UPDATED RAIL MAP**

All editions of my National Rail Passenger Operators' map are available for downloading from the Rail section and today a new, 15<sup>th</sup>, edition has been added to show changes from the summer timetable, effective late May. Please remember that everyone is entitled to download a copy to view on-screen and also print for private use. However, under copyright terms, except for ATOC and its National Rail members, copies for commercial use, including wall-chart versions, may only be obtained by going to Map Marketing Limited, who have the sole rights for this purpose. Full details of how to contact them are on the Rail Links section.

#### **MARCH 06 2010 – SPONSOR SCORES A FIRST FOR THE BRITISH ISLES IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**

For many years one of my sponsors has been Walkden Software. Owner Terry Walkden provided software for Bus Éireann so the public can look up any bus fare for any journey in the Republic – a facility much needed in Britain. Most operators will tell you the prices of rovers on line, but hardly any permit a point-to-point fare to be found, and this when operators prefer those joining buses to have the right fare where possible! What other industry keeps its prices so secret? If this software works for an organisation as large as Bus Éireann it will certainly work for any British operator. I gather almost 2500 users a week are currently looking up fares – and the site was only launched in January. To try it, simply return to the Home Page (link above) and go down to the Walkden Software box ('Bus Éireann – click here for fares'). I hope many operators will try this and appreciate its potential value for their users. Terry can be contacted at [info@busfare.co.uk](mailto:info@busfare.co.uk) or see his web site at [www.busfare.co.uk](http://www.busfare.co.uk).

#### **MARCH 06 2010 – THE COUNTER PASSES 340000**

Today the counter reached 340000 individual visits to my web site. I remain most grateful to my ten 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 whereas this 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.

#### **MARCH 03 2010 – FIRST RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

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

#### **MARCH 02 2010 – WILTS & DORSET RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that Wilts & Dorset 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 26 2010 – WEST YORKSHIRE PTE GIVES UP PRINTED MAPS**

It is very disappointing to hear that West Yorkshire PTE is not producing its usual series of maps for 2010 other than on-line. Apart from the fact some people do not have internet, even those of us that do find printing maps difficult – certainly it's not possible with home equipment to produce the large sheet-size in colour. This

defeats the object of maps being available to take out for day trips. Having them on-line as a supplement to a printed version is fine, but not instead of. I am told there will be a limited number printed for those who ask or apply by post and that those who object should write to [CustomerFeedback@wypte.gov.uk](mailto:CustomerFeedback@wypte.gov.uk). I sense this has been foisted on management as a fait accompli by 'powers that be' and the former hope that as many complaints as possible will be received so as to effect a change of heart. No doubt users will oblige!

#### **JANUARY 25 2010 – HOSPITAL UPDATE**

Following my return the site is now being updated again. Thanks for your patience.

#### **JANUARY 14 2010 – HOSPITAL**

I shall be in hospital from January 19<sup>th</sup> for approximately five days so this site will not be updated during this period and possibly not until early February. I know users will understand. Many thanks.

#### **JANUARY 01 2010 – SWINDON'S MAP AND STAGECOACH'S CONDITIONS OF CARRIAGE**

It is good to see that Swindon Borough has recommenced publication of its system map & guide with a January 2010 edition. It is also most interesting to see that Stagecoach South West has published a 20-page booklet setting out its complete Conditions of Carriage. I have not mentioned it in their entry as it is perhaps not relevant to timetables, but it is worth recalling that not many decades ago all operators would have had such a section in their timetable books, yet now few even refer to such conditions. The railways are legally obliged to publish such a work. Are bus operators exempt or merely too apathetic to bother?

#### **DECEMBER 17 2009 – CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR BREAK**

I shall be away from December 17<sup>th</sup> until January 1st 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 11 2009 – THE COUNTER PASSES A THIRD OF A MILLION**

Today the counter reached 333333 individual visits to my web site. I remain most grateful to my ten sponsors for making this possible.

#### **NOVEMBER 20 2009 – PB BUS MARKETING WITHDRAWS SUPPORT**

'PB Bus Marketing' has decided not to renew its sponsorship this year. I have been very grateful for its support over recent years.

#### **NOVEMBER 05 2009 – STAGECOACH RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that the Stagecoach Group has renewed its sponsorship for another year. Once again I cannot emphasise too strongly how this site would not exist were it not for my sponsors, allowing as they do what used to be a book updated and sold just twice-yearly to be a far larger on-line work, updated daily and free of charge to all users.

#### **OCTOBER 28 2009 – TRANSDEV BLAZEFIELD RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to report 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, particularly as it was my first sponsor and it has maintained this support every year since. This, indeed, is its ninth year.

#### **OCTOBER 03 2009 – 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 2005. Its main business is creative network design, using experience gained from the various regulatory regimes across Western Europe. 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 11 2009 – 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.

#### **SEPTEMBER 03 2009 – WEST LOTHIAN CEASES PUBLICATION**

West Lothian Council has for some years published an excellent timetable, one which always had an entry in my Best Timetables section. I am now told this has ceased and only tendered service leaflets and the map remain.

#### **SEPTEMBER 01 2009 – THE COUNTER PASSES 325000**

Today the counter reached 325000 individual visits to my web site. 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 whereas this 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.

#### **AUGUST 29 2009 – REVISIONS FOR THE 'BEST TIMETABLES' SECTION**

I have been using red to show the best timetables and black for the others in my Best Timetables section, but it has led to the majority being red with only a few black entries and gave the wrong impression about the back ones, as if they somehow should not be there! I have therefore revised the section, still using red for outstanding publications, but then blue for excellent and green for very good and this allows me to show more clearly the really top rate authorities and operators whilst still according due recognition for others that are nevertheless very high quality.

#### **AUGUST 01 2009 – NEW NEWBURY ENTRY**

I have always shown Reading Transport as a single operator with fleetnames *Reading Buses* and *Newbury Buses*. However I have added a new operator in the Newbury area, Newbury & District (sometimes known as Weavaway) and felt that it would be inevitable that users might think that Newbury & District was the main operator, Newbury Buses, rather than remembering that the latter was, in fact, Reading Transport, so to clarify this I have changed the Reading Transport entry and now show Reading Buses and Newbury Buses as two separate operators. This particularly assists in the English Counties section as, under West Berkshire, Newbury & District is distinct from Newbury Buses (and, indeed, Reading Buses, which also operates in its own right into West Berkshire).

### **JULY 25 2009 – COTSWOLDS AONB SITE**

Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire are not known for decent publicity so it is good news to be made aware of the web site of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which has downloadable timetable guides. See the Links section for details.

### **JULY 17 2009 – 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 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 – RÉSEAUTIONS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am pleased to announce that 'Réseautions' 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 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 Counties 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 (removed from the Operator Section in October 2016). 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 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 – RÉSEAULUTIONS RENEWS SPONSORSHIP**

I am very grateful to 'Réseaulutions', which has renewed its sponsorship for another year. A play on words (réseau is the French for network), Réseaulutions 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 'Réseaulutions', which has renewed its sponsorship for another year. A play on words (réseau is the French for network), Réseaulutions 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 TrentBarton. 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 TrentBarton 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 Counties 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 Counties, 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.