

ESSEX BUS ENTHUSIASTS GROUP

Annual Report 2016

I am pleased to say that 2016 was another successful year for EBEG. We continued to publish 12 issues of our popular magazine, all of 36 pages and continuing with full colour inside and outside covers. The magazine continues to offer a mix of current news and historical features led by our Editor and his team of sub-editors who really do a first class job. We also receive first class service and support from our printers, DirectCDs. If you feel a topic or operator is under represented, could you supply news, photos or articles to help us continue producing the popular magazine? Please contact our Editor Maurice Austin. Developments in the magazine during the year included a well subscribed letters page. We continue to sell the magazine at the Ian Allan bookshop at Waterloo London which is very popular. An Editorial Team meeting wasn't held this year but one is planned for April 2017.

The group has now set up a Facebook page to improve our communications with members and to introduce the Group to a wider audience, this can be found at fb.me/essexbus. The "From the archives" feature every Friday is attracting a lot of interest. Our website also continues to provide information about the Group.

Membership held up well, at the end of the year we had 268 members, having recruited 14 new members during the year. We are still looking for someone to fill the role of Publicity Officer, can you help to recruit more members for us? This is one reason our recruitment efforts are quite low key. If you think you could help in any way please contact any committee member for an informal discussion. Subscriptions were held in 2016 and for 2017 at £21 with the magazine essentially breaking even, although we do continue to face increasing external pressure on costs.

Owen Woodliffe our Sales Officer attended the South East Bus Festival at Detling, Basildon Bus Rally and Canvey Running Day with the group sales stand. Selling of items through eBay continues as a source of additional income. The group recorded a profit of £370 on sales.

Our photographic service offering black & white prints from the Group's extensive negative collection continues to be available. Our thanks go to Robin Jenkinson for overseeing this service.

Meetings continue to have a mixed attendance. The North Essex meetings in Colchester continue to attract good audiences. The Mid Essex meetings commenced in Chelmsford from January to replace the South Essex meetings. Overall a small loss of £53 has occurred through venue hire. The members' donation towards the hire of premises for monthly meetings was increased to £2 from January 2016. Ours thanks go to Dave Arnold and Maurice Austin for their continued efforts in organising the dates, venues and guest speakers. We are seeking a volunteer to take over the Mid Essex role from Maurice for 2018, if you're interested, please contact Maurice.

We continue to provide coach tours to various transport operators, this year a full day "Suffolk Panther" trip to a selection of operators in Suffolk during May. The regular Talisman evening trip during June didn't take place this year. Thanks to our Tours Organiser Keith Woods for continuing to organise these trips, despite fewer operators hosting Enthusiasts visits. Our 2017 plans are available on the Group's website.

Two new group publications are being developed by Alan Osborne featuring Eastern National & Thamesway operations in the London area, essentially photographic albums with text. These should be available during 2017. Work also commenced on a new First Essex Fleet Handbook late in 2016, which should be available by Spring 2017.

Our major project of digitising as much of the Group's output continues as time permits, including all news-sheets back to 1964, out of print publications etc. The second stage of the project, to set up a website to act as a repository for all manner of archive material, is proceeding slowly but hopefully will be available towards the end of 2017. The project is being led by Richard Delahoy, if anybody has any relevant material which could be used please contact Richard in the first instance. Our thanks are expressed to Richard for taking the lead on this positive project.

The Group's accounts continue to show a healthy position, we ended the year with total reserves of £11,984 after suffering a small trading loss of £240. The costs of the digitisation project are expected to be covered out of reserves we created in 2014 and trading surpluses in 2015, with £1,500 of our reserves earmarked for the next phase of the digitisation work. The accounts have been reviewed by our Independent Examiner Ian Ransom, and given a clean bill of health. Many thanks to Ian for undertaking this work. The accounts and his report will be presented to Members at the AGM and are available on request from the Treasurer, Richard Delahoy, for those who cannot attend.

Your Committee have met twice through the year as is usual with ongoing communication through e-mails and telephone calls. I would thank them all for their work and support towards the Group. I have decided to stand down as Chairman of the group at the AGM due to personal reasons.

Finally it leaves me to say a big "thank you" to all members for their continued support of the group, whether just as a subscriber to the magazine, others attending meetings and supporting trips, or supplying news and photos for EBN or helping to run the Group. Thank You!

Paul Harvey
Chairman
February 27, 2017