



The Early National Bus Company (NBC) Years



Provincial Bus Community



On 1st January 1970 the Swain Group sold Provincial to the NBC. The first result of this was that the Gosport and Fareham Omnibus Company's address was transferred to Hants and Dorset at The Square Bournemouth. It was decided to run the company as a separate entity from H&D however, and therefore Provincial retained some of its independence. The first vehicle activity was the arrival of a number of second hand vehicles from other NBC subsidiaries in June 1970, entering service between July 1970 and January 1971. These were: -

Fleet No.	Reg. No.	Chassis	Body	Source
67	970 CWL	AEC Regent V	Weymann	City of Oxford
60,66,68,69,80	972,74,75-78 CWL	AEC Regent V	Park Royal	City of Oxford
4-5	XNU 421-2	Bristol LS	ECW	Midland General
6	SNN 71	Bristol LS	ECW	Mansfield District

No 6 was found to have crack in its chassis and was scrapped before entering service. As a replacement for SNN 71, a substitute No 6 arrived in the shape of 318 EDV a Bristol SUL 4A from Western National. No 56 never operated with this number but was renumbered as 67 as part of the December 1970 renumbering scheme before entering service.



No 4 XNU 421 looks smart in it's Provincial livery at Hoeford.

Photo: Fred York



Bristol SU No 6. (318 EDV) turns out of Trinity Street Fareham. Photo: Fred York

An order was placed in 1971 for six Roe bodied Daimler Fleetlines, these would have been the first rear engined double deckers in the fleet. I think it was a great shame that in the event these were transferred to Hants and Dorset. I would have loved to see one of these in Provincial livery.



The Fleetline order for Provincial eventually went to Hants and Dorset and operated around Poole and Bournemouth. One such example is seen above VRU 128J.

Photo: Malcolm Audsley

What was delivered to Provincial were six Bristol RELL6G single-deckers. These were the first new vehicles delivered under NBC control and arrived in 1971. They were in a revised version of traditional Provincial livery and numbered 1-6 (BCG 101-106J).



Bristol RELL6G No 6. (BCG 106J), passes through Newgate Lane Bridge.

Photo: Fred York

1970 also saw large numbers of withdrawals of old Provincial vehicles. Notable amongst these was 34 (BOR 766) the last of the 1936 AEC Regents. I believe this must have been by far the oldest NBC double decker operated anywhere in the country. The first two Deutz engined rebuilds (59,61 EHO 965/6) were also withdrawn, plus a number of the Guy's.

A partial fleet renumbering also took place in December 1970 clearing the way for new deliveries and closing some gaps. Route reorganisation and re-numbering also started to take place.

In 1971 two ex Wilts and Dorset Bedford SB13 coaches with Duple C41F bodies arrived. 57/58 (BMW 135/6C). This was followed by a further example 55 (BMW 139C) in 1972.

From Eastern Counties came 31-33 (URB 557-8/PNN 774). These were ECW coach bodied Bristol LS, which originated with Midland General and Mansfield District.

In 1972 a further six new Bristol RELL6G's were purchased numbered 7-12 (ECG 107-112K). These differed from the first batch by having red seats instead of green. One of these is now preserved 12 (ECG 112K).



Bristol RE No. 12 (ECG 112K), Looking very smart.



No 10 (ECG 110K) waiting at Gosport Ferry before starting out on route 1 to Fareham Peak Lane, the extended terminus at Fareham West End. This bus was re-painted into traditional livery with garter and scroll for the Provincial Centenary in 1978. It was also renumbered 100 for the occasion.

Also in 1972 two ex Southdown 1963 Leyland Leopards with BET specification Marshall B45F bodies were acquired 29-30 (105-6 CUF).



1972 saw the start of real NBC standardisation when then the first of many Leyland Nationals arrived in NBC corporate leaf green livery. These were first unrelieved but later a white band was added which greatly improved their appearance. They were numbered 13-17 (HOR 413-17L). From this time onwards the other vehicles were gradually re-painted in the NBC green thus removing the last traces of traditional Emerald Green from the fleet. Further batches of Nationals were then delivered each year up to 1980 but that, as they say, is another story.



December 1970 Partial Re-numbering Scheme

New No	Old No	Registration	Type
21	19	FCR 442	Arab 6LW
22	49	FCR 447	Arab 6LW
23	9	HWO 344	Arab 6LW
24	12	HWO 334	Arab 6LW
25	40	FCR 445	Arab 6LW
26	41	FCR 446	Arab 6LW
27	32	EOR 878	Arab 5LW
28	17	EOR 875	Arab 5LW
29	NIC	MAX 132	BL LS6G
30	N/C	MAX 134	BL LS6G
34	4	XNU 421	BL LS6G
35	5	XNU 422	BL LS6G
36	6	318 EDV	BL SUL4A
37	N/C	HOR 676E	Arab SD
38	N/C	MHO189F	Seddon
39	N/C	MHO190F	Seddon
42	N/C	MHO191F	Seddon
43	N/C	MHO 192F	Seddon
44	N/C	MHO 193F	Seddon
45	N/C	MHO 195F	Seddon
47	N/C	MHO 196F	Seddon
48	23	RAA 17G	Seddon
49	25	RAA 18G	Seddon
50	N/C	MHO 197F	Seddon
51	N/C	RAA 19G	Seddon
53	N/C	RAA 21G	Seddon
54	15	RAA 16G	Seddon
55	28	MAX 131	BL LS6G
56	37	AAW 326B	Bedford SB
57	47	OTT 74	BL LS6G
58	N/C	OTT 33	BL LS6G
59	14	270 MHO	AEC D/D
60	N/C	972 CWL	Regent V

New No	Old No	Registration	Type
61	33	CHO 449C	Arab Deutz
62	36	HAA 771E	Arab Deutz
63	N/C	FCR 199	Arab 6LW
64	N/C	FCR 200	Arab 6LW
65	N/C	FCR 201	Arab 6LW
66	N/C	975 CWL	Regent V
67	N/C	970 CWL	Regent V
68	N/C	976 CWL	RegentV
70	N/C	SCG 622	Arab 5LW
71	N/C	SCG 623	Arab 5LW
72	N/C	HHA 84	Arab Deutz
73	N/C	EOR 877	Arab Deutz
74	N/C	GHO 595	Arab Deutz
75	N/C	EHO 870	Arab Deutz
76	N/C	941 EOR	Arab Deutz
77	1	883 HHO	Arab Deutz
78	2	884 HHO	Arab Deutz
79	N/C	972 CWL	Regent V
80	N/C	978 CWL	Regent V

N/C indicates 'no change'.

