

West Bridgford U.D.C.



1914 - 1968

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Cover Illustration: No. 4 (FNN102) was a 1939 AEC Regent III with Park Royal H31/25R lowbridge bodywork that remained in the fleet until 1965. (John Huddleston).

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West Bridgford was a small community that lay to the south of Nottingham, across the River Trent. Although Nottingham Corporation operated a tramway system it did not reach as far as West Bridgford, but stopped just short on the city side of the Trent Bridge. As a result the town council decided to promote a Bill in Parliament, which would give them powers to operate motorbuses to connect with the Nottingham tramway system, and, after overcoming objections, the Bill was passed on 14 July 1913.

Some six months later, on the 28 January 1914, the first service commenced. Five Dennis chassis had been purchased (Nos. 1-5), with Dodson open-top 33-seat bodies, and the first vehicle was put to work connecting the Nottingham Corporation trams at Trent Bridge to Julian Road, via Radcliffe Road and Trent Boulevard. Two days later, on the 30 January 1914, a second service between Trent Bridge and Caernarvon Road, via Musters Road and Melton Road was opened, and, on the 14 February 1914, a third service from the Three Lamps on North Road, via Loughborough Road to Trent Bridge was inaugurated. On the 11 May 1914 a further service from the Trent Bridge to Trevelyan Road commenced, but just over one month later, the service to the Three Lamps was discontinued due to lack of patronage.

Two months later the Great War of 1914-1918 broke out and by November of that year all of West Bridgford's chassis had been impressed by the War

Department, leaving the little UDC with no bus fleet. The Council learned that chain-driven vehicles were not being commandeered by the War Office, and so five such chassis were purchased from Alldays & Onions and fitted with the Dodson bodies and registrations that had been retained from the original Dennis chassis, becoming the new numbers 1-5. As the vehicles arrived so the services were resumed, with the Trent Boulevard service being the first on the 8 February 1915.

In October 1915 a sixth vehicle, another Alldays & Onions chain-driven chassis was delivered, but due to a revision of routes was virtually redundant, since it took only five of the buses to work the services. As a result the Loughborough Road route was re-introduced in December to provide work for the extra vehicle, but by 1917 had been abandoned again. This time a diversion from the Caernarvon Road route via Loughborough Road was introduced on alternate journeys.

Following the end of the War, the existing fleet was renovated and repainted but was still inadequate for the increase in passenger numbers.

An order was placed for two Straker-Squire double-deckers for delivery, but such was the demand for new buses after the War that it was not until 1920 that they were finally delivered, by which time more buses had been ordered.

By 1925 West Bridgford was under attack from private operators, including Barton Brothers, who operated a service from private land in Nottingham to West Bridgford, which circumvented the stage carriage provisions. It did not involve a change of vehicles at Trent Bridge and was therefore more convenient for passengers. In time the Barton service began to affect the finances of both Nottingham and West Bridgford Transport Departments, virtually forcing the two neighbouring authorities into joint running, which finally commenced on 18 March 1928 when the new joint service (No. 11) from the Greyfriar Gate terminus in Nottingham to Melton Road began. Numbered 11 to 15, the five joint services required each authority to provide fifteen buses, thirteen for service and two spares. West Bridgford had purchased ten vehicles in 1927-1928 in preparation, a mixture of ADC and AEC single-deck chassis, all of which sported Hall Lewis 32-seat dual entrance bodies.

During 1930 there were several changes to the joint routes; the terminus of the No. 11 service was moved to Valley Road and all the journeys via Loughborough Road were transferred to service 15, which had to be revised accordingly. Journeys dropped from the 15 route were covered by a new service No. 24, which ran along Bridgford Road and Musters Road, terminating at the Melton Road junction. All these service changes resulted in an increase in West Bridgford's takings and an agreement had to be reached with Nottingham Corporation Transport about dividing the

revenue. Around this time it was found that the single-deckers purchased a few years earlier were becoming inadequate for the increase in passenger traffic and so a return to double-deckers was made and all subsequent orders (except for a solitary AEC Regal in 1947) were for double-deck vehicles, although in 1967 with passenger numbers falling, single-deckers once more made an appearance. The first new double-deckers were two ST-type AEC Regents (Nos. 18-19) with Ransomes H27/22R bodywork, delivered in 1930 with four more Brush-bodied AEC Regents (Nos. 20-23) arriving in 1932-33. In 1934 the first oil-engined vehicles arrived sporting Park Royal bodywork with Birmingham-style straight staircases, which became the standard for all deliveries until 1949.

With the onset of World War II in 1939, services had to be curtailed, due to shortages of staff and fuel, most initially ceasing at 9.00pm, but by 1940 the last bus was around 10.30pm to alleviate overcrowding. Works services introduced for the duration of the conflict included services from the LNER Station at Gedling to the Ministry of Supply at Rudlington, and to Ransomes and Marles factory at the quaintly named Bunny.

Following the end of the War, services slowly began to get back to normal, although restrictions continued until 1947 due to the demand for new buses. By this time the West Bridgford fleet was entirely double-deck and numbered 21 vehicles, some of which were loaned to Nottingham Corporation to meet the demands of increased postwar traffic.

The first single-deck vehicle for a number of years was purchased in 1947. It was an AEC Regal (No. 26) with Brush dual-purpose 35-seat bodywork, for use on a new service (No. 1), which, in the event, turned out to be poorly used and was drastically reduced in late 1949.

Early in the 1950's Nottingham Corporation began to build Clifton Estate on land between Ruddington, Clifton, Wilford and the River Trent in an area already served by Barton Brothers and South Notts. Since the only suitable access was via the Trent Bridge and West Bridgford, the plans by Nottingham Corporation to run buses to serve the new estate were opposed by both existing operators and by West Bridgford UDC, through whose operating area the new route would pass. In the end, after a lengthy battle in the Traffic Courts, Nottingham won the right to operate around 50% of the journeys with South Notts and West Bridgford 25% each. The new estate could only be reached via a low railway bridge, necessitating the use of lowbridge double-deckers, and so West Bridgford arranged for two of the 1936 AEC Regents to be converted to lowbridge layout by Willowbrook in 1952, with a third in 1953.

In 1958 the Clifton Bridge was opened and Nottingham Corporation applied to run their share of the Clifton Estate routes over the new bridge, as did South Notts. When the Nottingham application was granted, but the South Notts application refused, the Company produced a joint timetable

with West Bridgford UDC encouraging people to travel via Trent Bridge on the joint operators vehicles.

By 1960 West Bridgford was still an avid AEC customer, ordering more AEC Regents, this time the Mark V model, bodied by East Lancashire, who were to be favoured with all the remaining orders from West Bridgford. In 1962 a rear-engined Daimler demonstrator (7000HP) made an appearance, but the Council decided to remain loyal to the conventional front-engined double-decker.

Towards the end of the 1960's, in common with most operators, the small undertaking was experiencing a drop in the amount of people travelling by bus and three AEC Swift single-deckers were ordered. The intention was to operate them as one-man vehicles in order to reduce operating costs, but the Transport Department was prevented from doing so by union pressure. In the end the Council decided to cut its losses and dispose of the undertaking, and it was eventually sold to Nottingham Corporation, the last West Bridgford UDC vehicles running on the night of Saturday 28 September 1968. The last service (No. 21) being operated at 11.05pm from South Parade to Alford Road by AEC Regent V No. 38, bringing to an end over 50 years of municipal operation by West Bridgford UDC.

Bus Fleet List 1914-1968

This listing is in the format- Fleet No; Reg. No; Chassis; Chassis No;
Body; Seating.

1914

1-5	AL3017-21	Dennis	??	Dodson	018/15R0
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Nos 1-5 chassis impressed by War Department; bodies and registrations to
new Nos. 1-5 in 1915.

Withdrawn **1914** (1-5).

1915

1-5	AL3017-21	Alldays & Onions	??	Dodson	018/15R0
6	AL4316	Alldays & Onions	??	Starey & Woolley	018/15R0

Withdrawn **1920** (1-5), **1921** (6).



West Bridgford's first buses were a batch of five Dodson bodied Dennis chassis which didn't last too long! They were requisitioned by the War Department when they had been in service less than 12 months. This is No. 1 (AL3017) with O18/15R0 bodywork. (Bus Archive).

1916

7 AL4656 Alldays & Onions ?? Starey & Woolley 018/15R0

Withdrawn **1921** (7).

1920

8-9 AL7991-92 Straker-Squire ?? General Seating 025/21R0

10 AL8921 Straker-Squire ?? Straker-Squire 025/21R0

No. 10 re-numbered 5 in 1926.

Withdrawn **1926** (9, 10[5]), **1927** (8).

1921

11 AL8922 Straker-Squire ?? Straker-Squire 025/21R0

No. 11 re-numbered 6 in 1926.

Withdrawn **1926** (11[6]).



West Bridgford No. 8 (A7991) was this 1920 Straker-Squire with General Seating 025/21R0 bodywork. (Bus Archive).

1922

1	NN2615	Straker-Squire	??	Straker-Squire	OL54R0
12	NN2353	Straker-Squire	A6179	Straker-Squire	OL54R0

No. 12 re-numbered 4 in 1926.
Withdrawn **1927** (1, 12[4]).

1923

2	NN6000	Straker-Squire	A6329	Straker-Squire	052R0
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Withdrawn **1928** (2).

1924

3	NN7000	Straker-Squire	??	Straker-Squire	052R0
7	NN9000	Straker-Squire	??	Straker-Squire	052R0

Withdrawn **1927** (7), **1928** (3).



No. 12 (NN2353) was a 1922 Straker-Squire with Straker-Squire 54-seat bodywork. (Bus Archive).

1926

5-6	RR5201-02	AEC 413	413111/16	NCME	B30R
9	RR5203	AEC 413	413114	NCME	B30R
10-11	RR3585-86	AEC 409	409034/33	Brush	H54R0

Withdrawn 1933 (11), 1934 (5-6), 1936 (9-10).

1927

8	RR5722	AEC 413	413212	NCME	B30R
12	RR7634	ADC 416A	416406	Hall Lewis	B32D
14-16	RR7635-37	ADC 416A	416404-05/07	Hall Lewis	B32D

Withdrawn 1936 (8), 1937 (12, 14, 16), 1938 (15).



No. 15 (RR7636) was an ADC 416A with Hall Lewis B32D bodywork dating from 1927. (Bus Archive).

1928

1	RR8112	ADC 416A	416515	Hall Lewis	B32D
2-3	RR8715-16	ADC 416A	416752-53	Hall Lewis	B32D
4	RR8115	ADC 416A	416516	Hall Lewis	B32D
7	RR8113	ADC 416A	416517	Hall Lewis	B32D
17	RR9386	AEC 416	416950	Hall Lewis	B32D

Withdrawn 1938 (7), 1939 (1-4, 17).

1930

18-19	V03877-78	AEC Regent	661767-68	Ransomes	H27/22R
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Withdrawn 1940 (18), 1947 (19).

1932

20-21	V06818-19	AEC Regent	6611721-22	Brush	H28/24R
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Withdrawn 1947 (20-21).

1933

22-23 V09371-72 AEC Regent 6612057-58 Brush H30/26R

Withdrawn **1948** (22-23).

1934

5-6 ARR831-32 AEC Regent 06612770/69 Park Royal H27/25R

Withdrawn **1949** (5-6).

1935

11 BNN924 AEC Regent 06613643 Park Royal H31/25R
24 BNN925 AEC Regent 06613644 Park Royal H31/25R

Withdrawn **1949** (11, 24).

1936

8-10 CRR91-93 AEC Regent 06614384-86 Park Royal H31/25R

Nos. 8-9 rebuilt by Willowbrook to L27/25R in 1952.

Withdrawn **1957** (8-10).

1937

12	DRR9	AEC Regent	06615292	Park Royal	H31/25R
14	DRR10	AEC Regent	06615293	Park Royal	H31/25R
16	DRR11	AEC Regent	06615294	Park Royal	H31/25R

Withdrawn **1960** (12, 14), **1962** (16).

1938

7	ENN699	AEC Regent	06616026	Park Royal	H31/25R
15	ENN700	AEC Regent	06616027	Park Royal	H31/25R

Withdrawn **1962** (7), **1963** (15).

1939

1	FNN101	AEC Regent	06616908	Park Royal	H31/25R
4	FNN102	AEC Regent	06616909	Park Royal	H31/25R

No. 4 rebuilt by Willowbrook to L27/25R in 1953.

Withdrawn **1963** (1), **1965** (4).



1938 AEC Regent with Park Royal 56-seat bodywork No. 15 (ENN700) gave 25 years of service before being withdrawn in 1963. (LTHL collection).

1945

25	GNN410	Daimler CWA6	12127	Brush	H30/26R
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Withdrawn **1967** (25).

1947

2-3	HNN772-73	AEC Regent III	09611681-82	Park Royal	H31/25R
17	HNN774	AEC Regent III	09611683	Park Royal	H31/25R
18-20	HNN775-77	AEC Regent III	09611755-57	Park Royal	H31/25R
26	HNN781	AEC Regal	06625210	Brush	DP35F

Nos. 2-3, 17-18, 20 to Nottingham Corporation 9/68 (re-numbered 168-169, 172-174 respectively).

No. 19 re-seated to H33/27R by 1962.

Withdrawn **1955** (26), **1962** (19).

1949

5-6	KAL684-85	AEC Regent III	9612E4228-29	Park Royal	H31/25R
22-23	KAL686-87	AEC Regent III	9612E4230-31	Park Royal	H31/25R

Nos. 5-6, 22-23 re-seated to H33/27R by 1963; to Nottingham Corporation 9/68 (re-numbered 170-171, 175-176 respectively).



No. 26 (HNN781) was a 1947 AEC Regal with Brush dual-purpose 35-seat bodywork. It was withdrawn in 1955. (LTHL collection).



1949 AEC Regent III No. 22 (KAL686) with Park Royal 56-seat bodywork. It became Nottingham Corporation No. 175 in 1968. (LTHL collection).

1954

11	ORR139	AEC Regent III	6812A086	Willowbrook	L27/28R
21	ORR140	AEC Regent III	6812A087	Willowbrook	L27/28R

Nos. 11, 21 to Nottingham Corporation 9/68 (re-numbered 198-199 respectively).

1955

24	CCX777	Daimler CWA6	12193	Duple	L27/28R
27	CCX779	Daimler CWA6	12195	Duple	L27/28R
28-30	TRR951-53	AEC Regent V	MD3RV051-53	Park Royal	H33/28R

Nos. 24, 27 ex-Huddersfield JOC (Nos. 217, 219 respectively; new 1945)
Nos. 28-30 to Nottingham Corporation 9/68 (re-numbered 274-276 respectively).

Withdrawn 1965 (27), 1967 (24).

1958

31-33	XV0329-31	AEC Regent V	MD2RA463-65	Reading	L31/28R
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Nos. 31-33 to Nottingham Corporation 9/68 (re-numbered 200-202 respectively).



Side by side in the depot are No. 24 (CCX777) an ex-Huddersfield Daimler CWA6 with Duple L27/28R bodywork dating from 1945 and No. 21 (ORR140) a 1954 AEC Regent III with Willowbrook L27/28R bodywork. (John Huddleston).

1960

34-35 334-35GNN AEC Regent V 2D2RA942-43 East Lancs H35/28R

Nos. 34-35 to Nottingham Corporation 9/68 (re-numbered 277-278 respectively).

1962

36 136NAL AEC Regent V 2D2RA1142 East Lancs H37/28R

38 138NAL AEC Regent V 2D2RA1143 East Lancs H37/28R

Nos. 36, 38 to Nottingham Corporation 9/68 (re-numbered 279-280 respectively).

1963

19 ACP421 AEC Regent III 09611275 Park Royal H33/26R

No. 19 ex-Halifax Corporation (No. 47, new 1945); received seats from former No. 19 (HNN776).

Withdrawn **1967** (19).



Ex-Halifax Corporation 1945 AEC Regent III (ACP421) with Park Royal 56-seat bodywork was acquired in 1963 and numbered 19. The former No. 19 had been withdrawn in 1962 and the seats from this vehicle were fitted to ACP421. (LTHL collection).

1964

39-40 639-40UV0 AEC Regent V 2D2RA1511-12 East Lancs H37/28R

Nos. 39-40 to Nottingham Corporation 9/68 (re-numbered 281-282 respectively).

1965

41-42; BRR241-42C AEC Renown 3B2RA185-86 East Lancs H44/31F

Nos. 41-42 to Nottingham Corporation 9/68 (re-numbered 393-394 respectively).

1967

43-45 NAL543-45F AEC Swift MP2R090-92 East Lancs B46F

Nos. 43-45 originally carried registrations KRR243-245E when delivered but entered service as shown; to Nottingham Corporation 9/68 (re-numbered 704-706 respectively).



In 1967 West Bridgford ordered 3 AEC Swift single-deckers, No. 44 (NAL544F) with East Lancs 46-seat bodywork is seen here en route to Clifton. It passed to Nottingham Corporation in 1968 as their No. 705. (LTHL collection).

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