

## Today's vehicle and driver



We will be travelling in a luxuriously-appointed Alexander-Dennis Enviro400 MMC from the fleet of award-winning operator Tyrer's Coaches of Adlington. There are two such vehicles in the fleet, which were new in October 2017 – YX67VHA and YX67VHB. With 86 seats, there should be enough room for everyone today.

Our driver today is Andy,

who is no stranger to the concept of a LUPTS tour, having previously driven on the 2013 event. His day job is Operations Manager for Tyrer's, where he puts his highly-regarded Transport degree from the prestigious Liverpool John Moores University to good use. Away from work, he has recently contributed articles on seats and interior décor to *Buses* magazine.



## Schedule

LIVERPOOL Tithebarn Street	d	08:10
LIVERPOOL Edge Lane	d	08:25
LEIGH King Street	a	09:30
	d	10:05

Optional:  
**Vantage Route VI:**  
Leigh  
Ellenbrook

d 10:05  
a 10:21

ELLENBROOK Newearth Road	d	10:25
LEEDS Middleton Railway	a	11:55

**Train:**  
Moor Road  
Park Halt  
Moor Road

d 12:20  
a 12:28  
d 12:35  
a 12:45

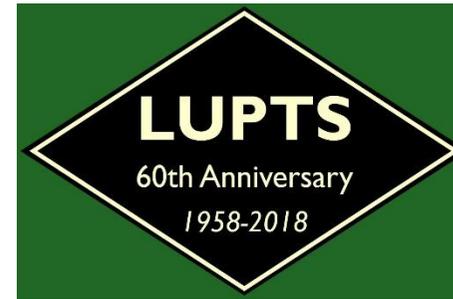
LEEDS Middleton Railway	d	13:15
BAILDON Shipleigh Glen Tramway	a	14:20

**Preserved bus  
from Keighley Bus Museum:**  
Shipleigh Glen  
Keighley

d 15:15  
a 15:45

KEIGHLEY Bus Museum	d	16:45
HEBDEN BRIDGE Albert Street	a	17:30
	d	18:25
BIRCH Services	a	19:20
	d	19:30
LIVERPOOL Edge Lane	a	20:35
LIVERPOOL Dale Street	a	20:50

**Contacts today:** Charles 07712 834035, Graham 07946 077496



The 42nd LUPTS Annual Bus Tour



**Saturday 5 May 2018**

Welcome to today's tour, the 42nd in the series since they began back in 1977. Today's trip takes us back to some places we've visited in the past as well as some new attractions. We hope you enjoy your day with us.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the formation of LUPTS as a student society, although of course it ceased to have any formal link with "Uni of" (as the young people call it these days) in 1991. The opportunity has been taken in this itinerary to point out some key locations in LUPTS history which we will encounter today, although it may be some time before official blue plaques are displayed.



Site of Edge Lane Works, first visited by LUPTS in 1959. Across the road was the petrol station which would put whatever amount you asked for on a receipt.

We leave Liverpool via Edge Lane and then make our way onto the East Lancashire Road, the UK's first purpose-built inter-city highway, opened by King George V in 1934. Our first stop is in **Leigh**. You may

recall that the publicity flyer said we'd go to Tyldesley – this was changed when a planning team visited Tyldesley on a Saturday morning (not that it's probably any better at other times of the week).

We will set down outside the Leigh Town Hall and pick up from the bays on King Street, just outside the bus station. We have about half an hour here. Time for you to have a look at comings and goings at the bus station – Stagecoach, First, Jim Stones, Diamond, Warrington – or grab a coffee at one of a number of nearby emporia. For those looking for toilet facilities, note that the ones in the bus station are of the 'Pay and Display' variety (© Tim Jenkins).

Amongst the buses you will see are those run by First using the 'Vantage' branding, which we have shamelessly plagiarised today. En route to Manchester, these use a guided busway, part of the '**Leigh-Salford-Manchester Bus Rapid Transit**' scheme, although the guided bit runs out long before Salford. The guided section is built on the trackbed of the former 'Tyldesley Loop' railway line, which closed in 1969, making Leigh one of the biggest towns in Britain without a railway station. The busway opened for traffic in April 2016.

The route is operated by First using hybrid-powered Wright-bodied Volvo B5LHs. Today, you may if you wish have a ride on the full length of the guided busway, but it is at your own expense (fare £2.80; English Senior National Bus Passes valid) and we cannot be held

responsible if you are not on the scheduled service. You can catch the VI service from bay A at the bus station. Departures are every 15 minutes and you must be on a service no later than the 10:05. You catch the bus as far as the Newearth Road/East Lancs Road stop, which is the first stop the bus makes once it leaves the guided section. The tour bus will pick you up from there at 10:25.

For those electing to remain on the tour vehicle, you will have the delights of a tour through the eastern suburbs of Leigh and on through Astley before meeting up with the rest of our tour party. Both groups should look out for the short section of remaining railway viaduct near Leigh town centre, all that is left of its former railway infrastructure. From our pick up point, we make our way to the M62 and across the Pennines into



Shortly after joining the motorway, we cross over the route of the 'Mancunian' railtour, the biggest loss-making venture in LUPTS history. [Information correct at the time of writing.]

Yorkshire. The journey will take approximately 1½ hours.

We approach the **Middleton Railway** through the back-to-back houses of the Hunslet district of the city, formerly home

to a number of legendary locomotive builders. The original Middleton Railway was founded in 1758 and the operation is claimed to be the world's oldest continuously working public railway. Originally built to serve the local coal industry, its use declined significantly in the period after World War 2. However an active enthusiast group – many of them students from Leeds University – ensured that the line was preserved and regular operation of steam passenger services began in 1969. An engine shed museum has been established and this includes representative engines from each of the Leeds loco builders. Today's visit allows sufficient time for a round trip on the 1.5km line to Park Halt, and a chance to look at the museum and avail yourself of food and drink at the cafeteria.



Liverpool tram 869 spent its first night in preservation at the Middleton, with LUPTS members sleeping on board to provide security.

Leaving Middleton, we take the M621 and the Leeds Western Ring Road for the one hour journey to Shipley. Passing through the town centre, we turn over the River Aire, with views of Salt's Mill to our left.

The **Shipley Glen Tramway** was opened in 1895 by a local publican, and was one of a number of attractions in the Glen. Sadly, the wooden toboggan run and the fairground have gone, so we will have to limit ourselves to the tramway. Built to the unusual gauge of 508mm (1ft-8in), this 400m long funicular railway takes you up gradients of up to 14% at a sedate 12km/h. Since our last LUPTS visit (1999), the line has been taken over by a charitable trust. The rebuilt tramcars are now just single units with a theoretical capacity of 18, although we have been advised that they try and discourage adults from sitting three abreast, so actual capacity may be less. Don't worry – the line runs a very frequent service so you shouldn't have to wait long for the next car. A sweetshop at the upper station would be grateful for your custom.

There is a small museum dedicated to the line by the bottom station, with a collection of interesting old photographs. Note that the tramway has no café or toilets, but these facilities are available across the road from where we park our bus in **Roberts Park** (no relation). Make sure you get back to the bus promptly if you take this option.

A preserved bus will be waiting for us for the next stage of our journey, north west along the A650. Look out for the former Saltaire tram and trolleybus depot on the right hand side, now The Hop bar and restaurant shortly after leaving Shipley, and also the Leeds and Liverpool Canal as we skirt Bingley.

Our next stop is the **Keighley Bus Museum** in, er ..., Keighley. Since our last visit in 2009, there has been some development work at the museum and quite a big change round in exhibits. There are about 50



Saltire depot featured in the LUPTS trolleybus tour, where the driver was persuaded to do several loops round some unused wiring, with predictable sparking effects.

vehicles in the museum. These are predominantly buses, the rarest of which is a 1924 Straker-Clough trolleybus, which has had some cosmetic work done on it since we were last here. Amongst non-bus exhibits are a Shelvoke and Drewry bin lorry and an Austin Metro masquerading as a police car. We have about an hour at the museum before we depart. Toilets have not improved significantly in the last nine years and their usage is not recommended for use by those of a delicate disposition. Because of the cramped nature of the museum site and side roads, our tour bus may have to pick up at the end of Riverside on Dalton Way.

Leaving Keighley, we initially head south along the Worth Valley, catching sight of the railway every now and again. We continue over Oxenhope Moor with some impressive scenery (weather permitting) before dropping down into **Hebden Bridge**. The bus will



The 1992 tour bus – an AEC Regent from the Blue Triangle fleet – boiled over between Keighley and Hebden Bridge and the radiator had to be filled with water from puddles using empty Tango cans.

drop us off in Albert Street and will pick us up from the same point, unless our driver has been fortunate enough to snaffle one of the nearby parking bays on Market Street, by the

Visitor and Canal Centre. There is time for you to sample pub and/or chip shop facilities. [Regrettably, more detailed information in this regard is unavailable due to a recalcitrant Peugeot 206 on the planning trip, but I'm sure you'll find something to suit you.] Alternatively, take a stroll down to the canal or just round the town to observe the local population of "artists, writers, alternative practitioners, teachers, Green and New Age activists" and other groups.

Back on the bus at 18:25 prompt for the journey through Todmorden, Littleborough and Rochdale before picking up the motorway. A brief stop will be made at Birch Services for ablution purposes. We stay on the motorway for our journey back to Liverpool, dropping off at the same places we picked up at the start of the trip. I dare say a public house type premises may be frequented back in Liverpool.