

The Medway Heritage Bus

– a project promoted by the Friends of Chatham Traction to contribute to the appreciation of local history in Medway through the restoration and use of the last surviving member of the fleet.



Painting by Alan Page

“...a unique teaching resource that affords a real wealth of teaching and learning opportunities to learners at all levels.”

Dr Kate Bradley FRHistS,
Senior Lecturer in
Social History,
University of Kent

The Medway area has a long history as a military and industrial centre deserving of recognition. One of the threads that held the Towns together was its local bus service. Chatham Traction served the Dockyard and barracks, local industries and the community.



FRIENDS OF CHATHAM TRACTION

Formally constituted in March 2007 to promote local history and heritage awareness in Medway.

The Friends' main activities are:

- Restoring and preserving the 1939 Bristol K5G double-deck bus registered GKE 68 and thereafter maintaining it for the public benefit;
- Demonstrating and recording the role played by the Chatham and District Traction Company, its predecessors and successors in serving the needs of the Medway community.

These two areas, the practical and the historical, offer many opportunities

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Become a Member
Make Donations
Apply your experience
Bring practical skills

For details contact:

Membership Secretary

Paul Kemsley

33 Caxton End, Bourn CAMBRIDGE CB23 2SS

01954 719694

Email: paulkemsley@btinternet.com

www.chathamtraction.org.uk

Charitable Incorporated Org. No.1174323



The
Rochester
Bridge Trust

FRIENDS OF CHATHAM TRACTION



Bus painting by John Watts

The only surviving Chatham Traction bus is under restoration to become an educational resource. It will be used to show how working lives, transport and leisure have changed since the 1930s.



1939



1956



2017

THE Chatham & District TRACTION COMPANY

The Chatham & District Light Railways Co. began tram operations in 1902. The system reached all areas of Medway by 1908.

It was renamed The Chatham & District Traction Company in 1929, replacing the trams with buses in 1930.

Maidstone & District Motor Services had overall control from that time and absorbed the Chatham company in 1955.

www.chathamtraction.org.uk



GKE 68

is a 1939 Bristol K5G double-decker with 54-seat Weymann bodywork. One of 37 similar buses it spent its entire service life working from Luton depot, and was withdrawn from service by Maidstone & District in 1956.



Conductresses and new buses 1953



[19 & 20 GEO. 5.] Chatham and District Traction Act, 1929. [Ch. lxxiii.]

PRODUCED BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF INLAND REVENUE

27 OCT 1929



CHAPTER lxxiii.

An Act to make provision as to the abandonment of the light railways tramways and tramroads owned or worked by the Chatham and District Light Railways Company to authorise the Company to run omnibuses to change the name of the Company and for other purposes.

[10th May 1929.]

A.D. 1929.

