

# RCL 2221

There were only 43 RCLs ("Routemaster Coach Long") built. They incorporated electric rear doors rather than an open platform. The engine was more powerful, and the top speed greater, than usual. They also sported more luxurious passenger features such as rear air suspension, fluorescent lighting, hand luggage racks, twin headlamps, and a more spacious interior with deeper seat cushions.

This vehicle was delivered to **London Transport's Country area**, painted green. During the 1960s RCL 2221 drove over Green Line commuter routes (721, 722 and 726; between East London and the City), based at Romford garage. In January 1970 the coach passed to **London Country**, still at Romford, as part of the newly formed National Bus Company. There was an overhaul (although the body was never swapped) at Aldenham Works, Hertfordshire in 1971.

The next year, following the route's conversion to one person operation, it was downgraded to a bus, with a lemon yellow waist band and London Country logo. It later worked at Reigate (routes 414, 424), Grays (route 300), Dartford, and Chelsham (route 403) garages.

The bus was bought back by **London Transport** in March



© P. Edger

1978. After being stored at various locations, and a fortnight as a driver trainer, it was converted by Chiswick works into an exhibition and cinema unit. This debuted in March 1979 painted in an attractive multi-colour '**Shillibeer**' livery (see photo, above), to celebrate 150 years of the capital's omnibuses, alongside 13 standard buses which were used on passenger routes.

In 1981 RCL 2221 was repainted to red with yellow lining. Two years later it transferred to **London Underground's** Acton works. It undertook various projects in the '80s and '90s including a; polling station (Kingston, 1983), nationwide tour for lead-free petrol (in 1989, painted white), lost property office, trip to France (1992), and lastly a London travel information centre (see photo, left).

Upon part-privatisation, the bus passed to **Tube Lines**, an infrastructure company, circa 2002. Remaining at Acton, it found use as a mobile classroom to educate employees on policies to do with health, safety and the environment.

**Timebus** purchased the vehicle in June 2008 for outdoor, static use; exhibitions, campaigns, and promotional tours. It began a year later, in our eye catching red livery (see photo, right) as the "Exhibition Bus" of our "Timebus Space" fleet (more info on our web site). It features an integral generator. If you would like to hire it (or a classic passenger carrying London bus) please make contact.



## ABOUT THIS BUS

**New:** May 1965

**Number plate:** CUV 221C

**Seats:** 18 upstairs (originally 65)

**Height:** 14 feet 6 inches (4.42m)

© Lars Richter



© E. Pring



[www.timebus.co.uk](http://www.timebus.co.uk)