

RMA 37

ABOUT THIS BUS

New: December 1966

Number plate: KGJ 612D

Seats: 57

This bus is one of a batch of 65 'Routemasters' designed to work express services to Heathrow Airport.

These were built with electric front doors rather than an open platform. They also sported more luxurious features such as rear air suspension, a faster maximum speed, fluorescent lighting, an auxiliary heating system, twin headlamps, and a more spacious interior with deeper seat cushions.

The buses were operated by London Transport on behalf of **British European Airways** (later British Airways), between the airport and the check in at West London Air Terminal, West Kensington, including part of the M4. They were painted blue and cream initially (photo, right), and in the 1970s orange and white. To carry passengers' luggage, overhead racks were fitted inside and the buses used to tow specially built trailers.

Numbered 12, this vehicle worked on the Heathrow service, based at Stamford Brook then Stonebridge Park garages, until the last day of operation on 30/3/1979, by which time the Piccadilly underground line had been extended to the airport.

It was acquired by **London Transport** in June 1979, numbered RMA 37 ('Routemaster Airways 37'), based at Hounslow garage and used to transport staff to the bus overhaul works at Aldenham, Hertfordshire. When the works became the responsibility of subsidiary **Bus Engineering Limited** in September 1985, RMA 37 followed suit, continuing its role but based at Aldenham, until withdrawn in October 1986 because the works closed.

RMA 37 was stored at Chiswick works until sold in August 1987 to a breaker in Barnsley. Destined for scrap, it was cannibalized and rammed with a JCB!

It was purchased in October 1987 by **Shaftesbury & District**, who then embarked on six months of rebuilding and modification work, from which RMA 37 emerged certified for operation by the driver only, so that it could be used to run local bus services. RMA 37 undertook various tasks including working for Verwood Transport and Routemaster Bournemouth. It was painted in dark green and cream colours, and later light and dark green.



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Timebus Travel purchased the bus in October 1996, and painted it into the present red livery. It was used for bus services in Watford until February 1997.

In February 2005 the bus was re-powered with a brand new Cummins engine meeting Euro 2 emission standards, Allison electronic transmission and a catalytic converter. This refurbished vehicle, marketed as a Routemaster Express, is available for private hires and excursions. If you would like to hire any of our classic London buses, please contact us.



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