

Bedford OB Coach

The Bedford OB was introduced in the summer of 1939 but only 73 were built prior to the onset of World War II. Production recommenced in unchanged form after the war and continued until 1950. A total of 12,766 OBs were produced, making it one of the most popular buses of its type ever.



The OB differed from its predecessor in that the chassis was specially designed for PSV use (previously an adapted lorry chassis had been used). The OB chassis has an offset differential in the rear axle with the engine and four-speed sliding mesh (crash) gearbox mounted at a slight angle to enable the propeller shaft to line up with the differential which was set to the near side of the axle. This enabled a sunken gangway to be installed along the centre line of the coach.





The OB was powered by a 27.34 horsepower petrol engine, which had been introduced in 1938, and the six cylinder overhead valve power unit had a capacity of 3519 cc and developed 72 bhp (54 kW; 73 PS) at 3000 rpm. The OB had a 4-speed gearbox and fully floating rear axle and the brakes were of the vacuum servo assisted hydraulic type.

The ash framework (see http://www.bkmuseum.com/html/1949_bedford_ob.html) was reinforced with steel whilst the floor was constructed from hardwood with softwood tongued and grooved boarding. The cab area was finished with alloy chequerplate. Seating capacity was normally 29 with overhead luggage racks provided for passengers, whilst the rear luggage boot was also used to store the spare wheel.

This particular OB was initially bought by Sunbeam of Torquay who operated it between 1949 and 1966. Ownership then transferred to Whiteways of Waunfaur near Caernarfon who operated it until it was withdrawn from service in 1975. Ownership passed to Peter Penfold of Meldreth, Cambridgeshire in 1984 for preservation purposes (acknowledgements to [John Wakefield](#)). It was acquired by the BK Museum in 1999 and an extensive restoration project was completed in 2010.