

## **Inaugural Coldharbour Mill Bus Rally draws the crowds**

The first vintage bus running day organised by the West Country Historic Omnibus and Transport Trust (WHOTT) at Coldharbour Mill on 29th May attracted many enthusiasts, most of whom also enjoyed tours around the working wool museum. Eight buses provided 20 departures on five routes in glorious Devon sunshine, and WHOTT's exhibition bus was also in attendance with a display of Exeter Tramways.

Robert Crawley, Chairman of WHOTT said "Given the busy nature of the local roads, we started small with ample opportunity to grow and were delighted by the response. We are indebted to the volunteers who spent time drawing up the timetable or gave up their bank holiday to marshal the crowds, and of course to the entrants without whom the event could not have been a success. We provided a free bus connection from Tiverton Parkway Railway Station which attracted several visitors by train, and were especially pleased to welcome those who arrived in classic cars to add variety to the day."

Star of the show was a 1932 Leyland TD4 with rare Santus body, ex Wigan Corporation, entered by Peter Hearn of Barnstaple. This contrasted with the newest vehicle, an ex-Devon General minibus entered by Harry Blundred of Transit Holdings fame. Other vehicles came from Bere Regis & District, Crosville, Exeter Corporation, London Transport, Thames Valley, Southern and Western National and travelled from as far afield as Okehampton, Minehead and Weston-super-Mare.

### NOTES TO EDITORS

WHOTT was formed in 1998 to establish a museum devoted to the history and development of public and commercial road transport in the West Country. It became a charitable trust in 2000 and now has sixteen vehicles in its care, covering the period from 1929 to 1998, including traditional half-cab single and double-deck buses, luxury coaches, minibuses and commercial vehicles. It also has a growing archive facility that can be visited by appointment.

From 2003 to 2014 the Trust organised an annual transport rally in Exeter, but in 2015 it moved its base to Coldharbour Mill and this is the first time it has hosted a major event on this site.

The Trust's next event will be a running day at Dorchester on 14th August.

Anyone who shares the aims of WHOTT is invited to become a member. Further details can be found at [www.busmuseum.org.uk](http://www.busmuseum.org.uk) or from Robert Crawley on 01395-567795.