

Geoff Chidzey

Upon retirement Geoff Chidzey joined the Trust more recently, bringing a depth of engineering knowledge to the Knowstone team. He says he needed something to keep the old grey matter from seizing up, having been employed as a vehicle technician for all his working life, most recently with First group at Taunton.

His bus career started at Taunton in 1964 with the Western National Omnibus Company in the exalted position of shop boy, the lowest of the low, under the watchful eye of Headley Scrivens, Area Engineer. In the August of 1964 he was accepted into the company learnership scheme, but five and a half years later the National Bus Company was formed and learnership schemes became five year apprenticeships. Suddenly he had served his term and became a fitter.

NBC not only took over Tilling companies like Western National and Southern National, but also the UK bus interests of The British Electric Traction Co (BET) which included Devon General. Manning levels at Taunton reduced at about the same time as more men were needed at Torquay, so Geoff spent eighteen months working at Newton Road. After that he moved to Tate & Lyle as a vehicle fitter for about six months but found they were in the process of moving to Southampton. Not wanting to relocate he returned to Western National and then subsequently became employed by the Cawlett Group and finally First Group.