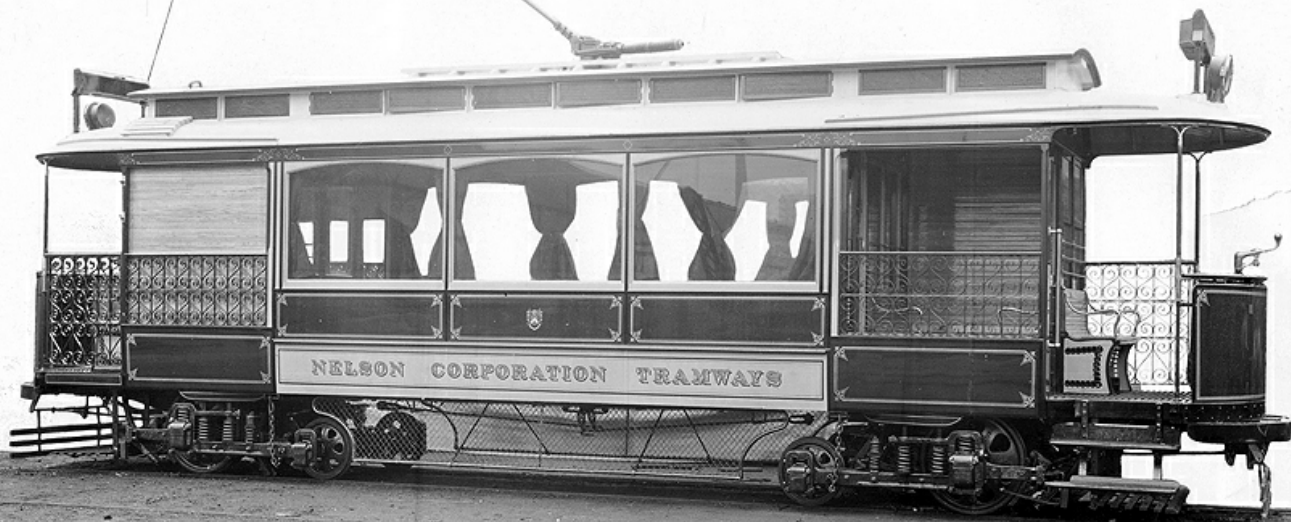


# Nelson Corporation Tramways



1903 - 1933

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Cover Illustration: No. 8 was a single-deck combination car built in 1903 by the Electric Railway & Tramway Carriage Works. (LTHL collection).

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A horse omnibus was recorded serving Nelson as early as 1850, when an infrequent service from Colne to Burnley, travelling via the main roads, commenced. The service was apparently not a commercial success and the section between Nelson and Burnley was replaced by the steam trams of the Burnley & District Tramways Company, although the horse drawn omnibuses presumably continued to ply between Colne and Nelson.

The tramway was promoted under the Burnley & District Tramways Order of 1879 and was built to link Burnley with the towns to the west and north. It ran from Padiham through Burnley town centre and out via Reedley and Brierfield to the terminus in Nelson town centre.

In 1882 Nelson had obtained powers to build a steam tramway running from the George & Dragon in Barrowford to the town centre to connect with the Burnley & District steam trams, but in the event it was never constructed.

On the 1 March 1900, Burnley and Nelson Corporations, Padiham and Brierfield UDCs and Reedley Hallows Parish Council jointly purchased the Burnley & District undertaking with a view to electrifying the system.

The majority of the steam tramway had been single-track and, in 1901, work began on doubling the track and relaying it to a gauge of 4ft, which had been used by neighbouring authorities. However, plans to link up with these systems never came to fruition and the tramway remained isolated

from its neighbours. The section to Padiham was opened on 16 December 1901, just four weeks after the steam tramway had been closed and shortly afterwards in 1902 the section to Nelson was opened, permitting through running between the two towns. The section of the old steam tramway between Nelson town centre and the Burnley boundary, having been purchased by Nelson Corporation, was now leased back to Burnley Corporation.

At the same time, Nelson Corporation was planning to construct its own tramway system. Authority had been granted under the Nelson Light Railways Order of 1901 to build a line from the town centre along Leeds Road to the boundary with Colne (which would connect with the proposed Colne Corporation tramway), with a branch line, running along Scotland Road past the depot at Charles Street, through Barrowford to Higherford Bridge.

On the 23 February 1903, the tramway was opened with much civic ceremony. The 2.75 miles of tramway was predominantly single-track with passing places, although the sections between the Higherford Bridge terminus and Bankhouse Street, and the section between Bank Street and the Fleece in Barrowford were double-track.

Services commenced with six (Nos. 1-6) Brush open-top double-deckers, joined later in the year by two single-deck combination cars (Nos. 7-8)

wearing a livery of red and white, which was later changed to brown and cream. In practice the Nelson owned trams confined themselves to operating between Higherford Bridge and Colne, whilst Burnley Corporation trams operated the 'main line' from Burnley to Nelson town centre (they were prevented from travelling through by a low bridge at Colne). In 1912 two low height tramcars (Nos. 10-11) were purchased, which would pass under the low railway bridge at Colne Station, thus enabling through running, agreement on which had been reached in 1911. Subsequently all new tramcars were to this design.

On the 1 September 1923, Nelson Corporation introduced its first bus services. Designed to operate as feeders to the tramway system the routes ran from Market Square to Cloverhill; to Waldhouse Road, and to Marsden Hall Road. They were all one-man operated until 1932, when the practice was outlawed under the Road Traffic Act. Nelson Corporation never expanded its bus network and the services remained as tramway feeders until the 1 April 1933, when they and the tramway (which had remained intact) were amalgamated with neighbouring Burnley and Colne Corporations to form the Burnley, Colne & Nelson Joint Transport Committee, bringing the 30 year history of Nelson Corporation Transport to an end.

## Tram Fleet List 1903-1933

This listing is in the format - Fleet No; Type; Trucks; Builder; Seating.

### 1903

1-6	Double-deck open-top 4-wheel	Brush A	Brush	22/18
7-8	Single-deck combination bogie	Brill 22E	ERTCW	38

Nos. 1-3 built in 1902.

Nos. 1-8 top-covered at a later date.

Withdrawn **unknown** (5), **by 1916** (1-4) **by 1925** (6-8).

### 1904

9	Single-deck combination bogie	Brill 22E	ERTCW	38
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Withdrawn **by 1925** (9).



Nelson Car 2 was built in 1902 by Brush of Loughborough and seated 40. It is seen here at Reedyford ready to depart for Colne sometime before 1916 when it was withdrawn. (LTHL collection).

**1912**

**10-11 Double-deck balcony Brill 21E UEC 55**

Nos. 10-11 were of lowheight construction.

Nos. 10-11 to Burnley, Colne and Nelson Joint Transport Committee 4/33 retaining fleet numbers but with the addition of an 'N' suffix.

**1916**

**1-4 Double-deck balcony Brill 21E UEC 55**

Nos 1-4 were of lowheight construction.

Nos. 1-4 to Burnley, Colne and Nelson Joint Transport Committee 4/33 retaining fleet numbers but with the addition of an 'N' suffix.

**1925**

**6-8 Double-deck balcony Brush Brush 55**

Nos. 6-8 were of lowheight construction.

Nos. 6-8 to Burnley, Colne and Nelson Joint Transport Committee 4/33 retaining fleet numbers but with the addition of an 'N' suffix.



## Nelson Corporation Tramways 1903-1933

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Nelson Corporation car No. 1 was this 55-seat top-covered 'lowheight' tram built by the United Electric Car Company of Preston in 1916.

## Bus Fleet List 1923-1933

This listing is in the format: Year into service; Fleet No; Reg. No; Chassis; Chassis No; Body; Seating.

### 1923

1-2	TC5222-23	GMC K16	18483/82	Leaver	B17F
3	TC5313	GMC K16	18155	Leaver	B17F
4	TC5402	GMC K16	20467	Leaver	B17F
5	TC5805	GMC K16	20466	Leaver	B17F

Withdrawn **unknown** (2), **1928** (3), **1929** (4-5), **1930** (1).



One of the five GMC K16 buses with 17-seat bodywork by Leaver which introduced bus services to Nelson in 1923. (Commercial Motor Archive).

**1925**

<b>6</b>	<b>TC9148</b>	<b>GMC K4</b>	<b>16800</b>	<b>Leaver</b>	<b>B26F</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>TC9968</b>	<b>Leyland A13</b>	<b>35161</b>	<b>Leyland</b>	<b>B26F</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>CW5639</b>	<b>Leyland A13</b>	<b>35392</b>	<b>Leyland</b>	<b>B26F</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>CW5651</b>	<b>Leyland A13</b>	<b>35393</b>	<b>Leyland</b>	<b>B26F</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>CB4969</b>	<b>GMC K4</b>	<b>18787</b>	<b>Leaver</b>	<b>B26F</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>TD1760</b>	<b>GMC K4</b>	<b>19593</b>	<b>Leaver</b>	<b>B26F</b>

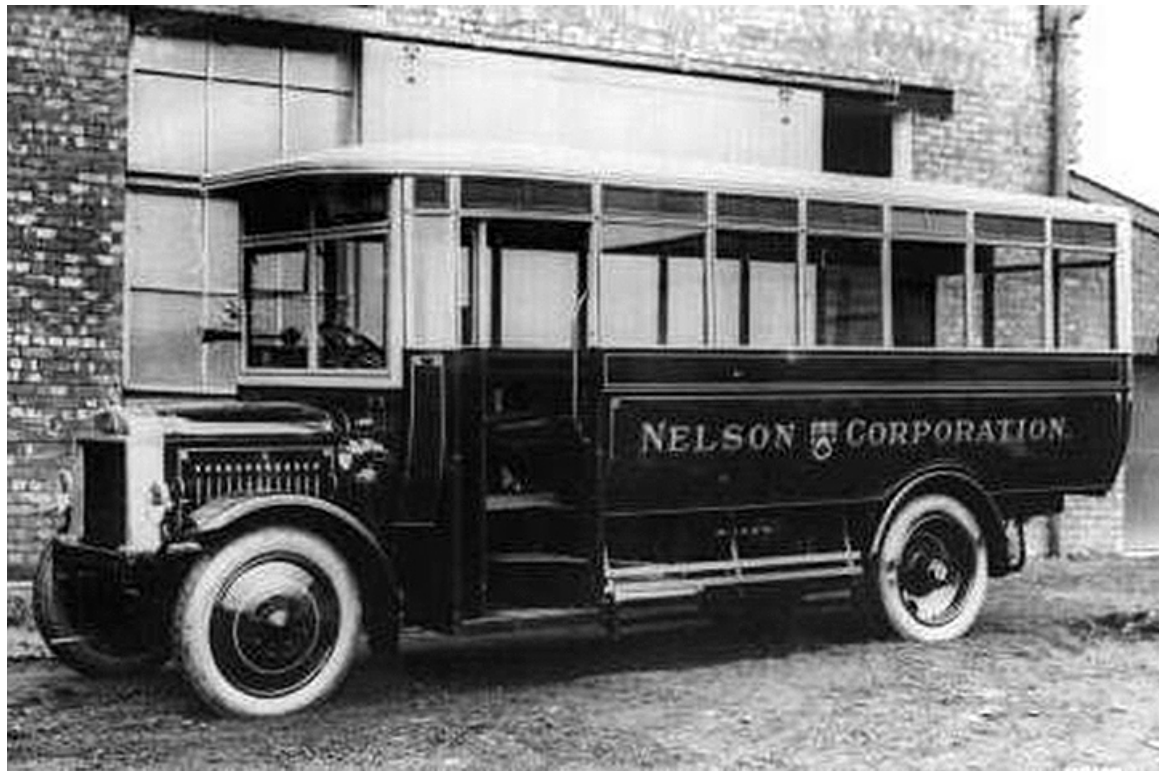
No. 8 to Burnley, Colne & Nelson Joint Transport Committee 4/33; retaining fleet number but with the addition of an 'N' suffix.

Withdrawn c. 1928 (7), 1930 (6, 11), 1931 (10), 1932(9).

**1927**

<b>12-14</b>	<b>TD8352-54</b>	<b>Leyland PLC1</b>	<b>45497-99</b>	<b>Leyland</b>	<b>B26F</b>
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Nos. 12-14 to Burnley, Colne & Nelson Joint Transport Committee 4/33; retaining fleet numbers but with the addition of an 'N' suffix.



Nelson Corporation's No. 8 (CW5639), a 1925 Leyland A13 with Leyland 26-seat bodywork. It survived long enough to pass to the Joint Committee in 1933, although the rest of the 1925 purchases had been withdrawn by then. (LTHL collection).

**1928**

**15-16 TE5958-59    Leyland PLSC3    47722-23    Leyland    B32F**

Nos. 15-16 to Burnley, Colne & Nelson Joint Transport Committee 4/33; retaining fleet numbers but with the addition of an 'N' suffix.

**1930**

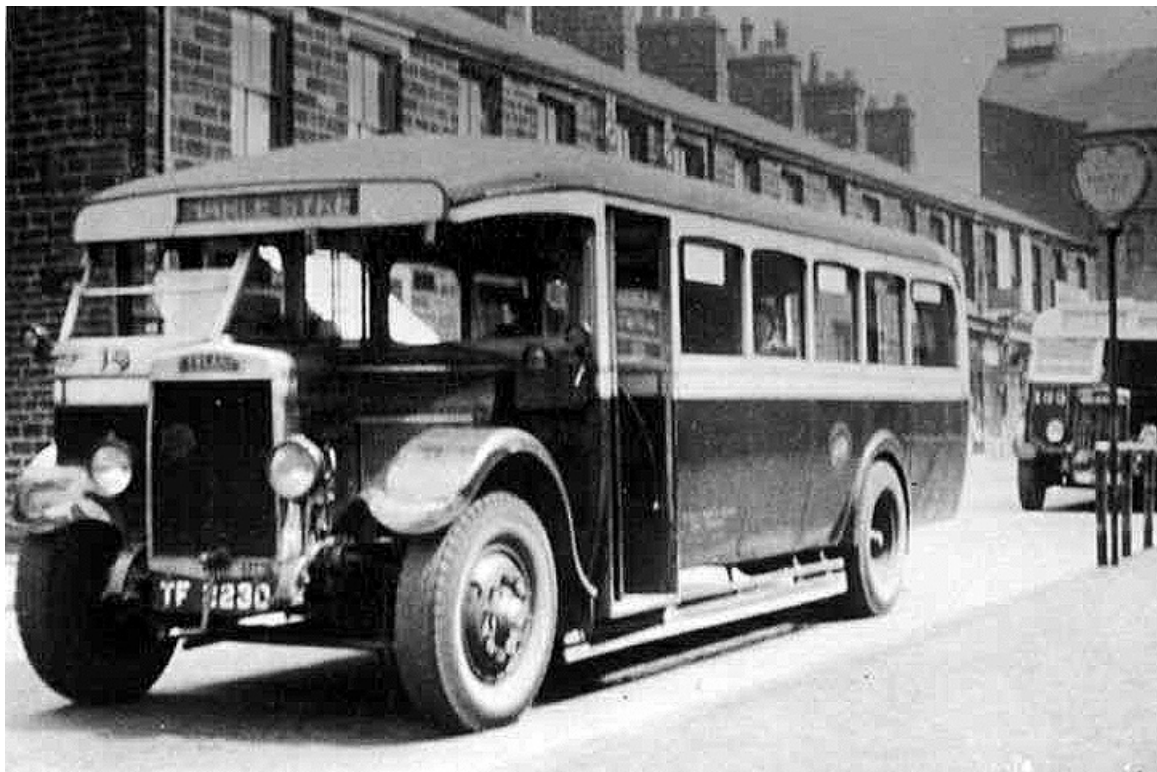
**17    TF2166    Leyland LT2    50802    Leyland    B32F**  
**18    TF2230    Leyland LT2    51159    Leyland    B32F**  
**19    TF2922    Leyland LT2    51160    Leyland    B32F**  
**20    TF2973    Leyland LT2    51146    Leyland    B32F**

Nos. 17-20 to Burnley, Colne & Nelson Joint Transport Committee 4/33; retaining fleet numbers but with the addition of an 'N' suffix.

**1931**

**21-23 TF5657-59    Leyland LT2    51650/52/51    Leyland    B32F**

Nos. 21-23 to Burnley, Colne & Nelson Joint Transport Committee 4/33; retaining fleet numbers but with the addition of an 'N' suffix



Nelson Corporation No. 18 (TF2230) was a 1930 Leyland LT2 with Leyland 32-seat bodywork. (LTHL collection).

**1932**

**24      TF8859      Leyland LT4      1781      Leyland      B32F**

No. 24 to Burnley, Colne & Nelson Joint Transport Committee 4/33;  
retaining fleet number but with the addition of an 'N' suffix.

**1933**

**25      TJ201      Leyland LT5      2287      Leyland      B32F**

No. 25 to Burnley, Colne & Nelson Joint Transport Committee 4/33;  
retaining fleet number but with the addition of an 'N' suffix.



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*In producing this booklet reference has been made to the following publications: Directory of British Tramways; Turner, PSL, 1996; PSV Circle Fleet Histories, RC5, 1958; PC4 1976; PC4A, 1987; Burnley, Colne & Nelson Joint Transport, Catlow, Wyvern, 1985.*

*Illustration courtesy Commercial Motor Archive.*

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