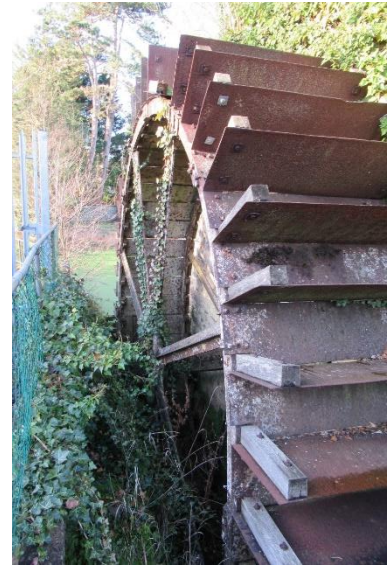


Four Mills in Avon and Somerset

Keith Andrews

We visited Avon and Somerset twice in 2018, in January and October. Here are some of the mills we saw.



Tunbridge Mill, Chew Magna: This traditional mill building on a Domesday site was still operating in 1987 as an electrically-operated grist mill. Its large undershot waterwheel was retained. At the time of our visit it looked derelict; the mill and outbuilding were being advertised for sale by auction. The notice said "Requires Complete Modernisation – Development Potential". We wonder what it looks like now.



Albert Mill, Keynsham: This ancient site, was used as a woollen mill in the 1770s, then later adapted to spinning cotton and flax. It was rebuilt as a corn mill by 1836, and then adapted for crushing lime and ochre. After a fire in 1873 it changed to dyewood processing, the chipping and grinding of imported woods which were infused to make dye materials. When it closed in 1964 it was the last remaining works of this type with its unique water-powered chipper and edge runners, and its waterwheel being the only known example of its type. This fine building is now converted to private dwellings.



Ashton Windmill: A typical Somerset tower mill dating from about 1770. It is the only windmill in the county which has a complete set of sails, stones, and machinery. The cap is turned by hand. It stopped working 1927 and was extensively renovated by a Mr Clark in the 1950s. It is now owned by Sedgemoor District Council and is open on Sundays in summer.

Stembridge Windmill: A 26ft high stone tower of about 1822: it retains enough of its machinery to see how it worked. It is the only windmill in the country to retain a thatched cap. Now owned by the National Trust, at the time of our visit it was closed awaiting renovation. The NT website suggests it is now open again and has all its sails.



Information from Guide to the Industrial Heritage of Avon, AIA 1987 and Somerset's Industrial Heritage, SIAS 1996.