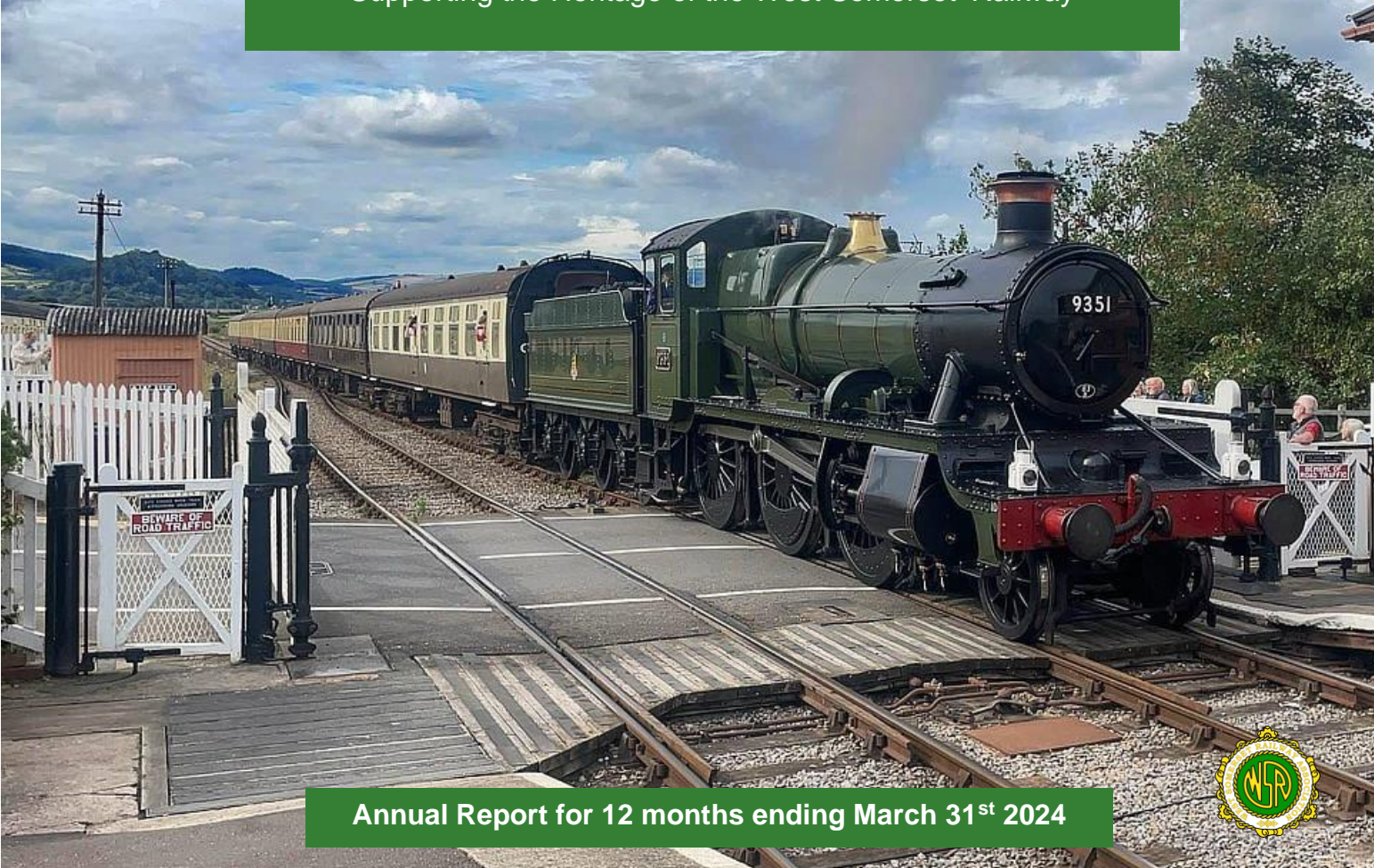


# West Somerset Railway Association

Supporting the Heritage of the West Somerset Railway



Annual Report for 12 months ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024



# Contents

Page 3 About Us

Page 7 Chairman's report - The Reality of a Heritage Railway

Page 8 Achievements and Future Plans

Page 9 Our Projects

Page 15 Volunteering and Community Engagement

Page 19 Annual Steam Rally 2023

Page 21 Supporting the West Somerset Economy

Page 24 Our Accounts

Page 25 Thank you to all our Supporters

Page 26 Meet our Staff & Trustees

# About us

The objects of the Association are to promote the heritage of the railway from Taunton to Minehead by:

- Restoring, preserving, and displaying railway locomotives, carriages, wagons and other artefacts (including documents, drawings, photographs, recordings and films) of historical interest and the buildings connected therewith.
- Promoting the cultural, environmental, and social heritage of the railway, and delivering related events and activities for the public benefit.
- Encouraging recreation, well-being or other leisure-time occupation connected with the railway, including voluntary work on the restoration and maintenance of the railway and enabling opportunities for social cohesion and inclusion.
- Promoting individual learning and training in the skills required to maintain the heritage of the railway.



The charity's aims are:

- To enable individuals and corporate organisations to have a supportive and interactive role with the West Somerset Railway;
- To channel the support of those individuals and external corporate organisations, so that it is beneficial to the development of the West Somerset Railway;
- To promote the historical and heritage aspects of the West Somerset Railway, including appropriate support to allow continued running of heritage trains on the line;
- To engage with people of all ages, and to promote the potential of active involvement in a heritage railway;
- To raise funds, through the members, through appeals, through grant applications and in any other appropriate way to support the objects of the charity;
- To work collaboratively, and in a mutually supportive and open way, with all other organisations supporting the West Somerset Railway, and in particular the West Somerset Railway plc.

The long-term goal is to ensure the maintenance of the railway's heritage equipment and infrastructure. We also work with the WSR plc and other organisations to support the key activities of the railway, to improve public access and knowledge of our services. The Association could not function without volunteers, over the last financial year they supported us with:

- Administration: nearly 500 hours.
- Steam & Vintage Vehicle Rally: at least 2,400 hours for planning, carrying out and dismantling the successful 2023 event.

Membership numbers currently stand at just over 2,500 and are showing a slow decline. The 50-50 Club has again contributed about £10,000 to general funds. Over the year, the Association raised £537,772, with the help of some substantial legacies, and continue to focus their fundraising efforts on three major funds which are discussed in more detail on the next page.

**The Locomotive Restoration Fund** was established to secure the long-term security of locomotives operating on the WSR through the refurbishment of two locomotives owned by the Association, Small Prairie 4561 and Manor Class 7821, Ditchheat Manor. The charity raised £36,559 during the year, and the available total is now £95,280. Work is now well advanced on the restoration of the chassis of Small Prairie 4561, and focus switched to the boiler. Investigations revealed that some of the work previously carried out was unsatisfactory and needed revisiting. The scope of the work was worse than expected so invites to tender for the job have been issued. It remains the primary restorative goal.



**The Preserve and Protect Fund** was established with the dual aims of providing covered accommodation for the railways' rolling stock and the heritage items of rolling stock. The fund will also help with the ongoing maintenance costs of rolling stock. Over £4,800 was raised during the year, and the fund currently holds nearly £52,000. The WSRA are in the planning process of establishing a covered area for the preservation and refurbishment of heritage items. It will also serve to improve public access by providing a facility for education and restoration. We have identified a site on WSRA land at Norton Fitzwarren, and work is underway to prepare an initial design for a suitable building.

**The Rail Renewal Fund** was established to provide funding for the replacement of the permanent way of the West Somerset Railway. Just over £37,000 was raised and over £40,000 was spent on rails, sleepers and ballast. This income included a successful appeal for donations towards the restoration of the track which was subject to an incursion of mud, near Tribble Bridge. Trustees allocated £25,000 to match donations secured from members and supporters. We were delighted that this appeal raised £25,000 in donations within two months. The money raised is held in the fund, with an intention to carry out the work in winter 2023/24.



However, we are mindful of the need to ensure the whole 23 miles of the railway are maintained in a good condition to allow the safe operation of trains.

The railway is a major heritage leisure attraction in West Somerset, with some 200,000 visitors per year, who contribute £9 million annually to the local economy. The operation of the railway is carried out by the West Somerset Railway PLC, a not-for-profit Company, which the Association works collaboratively with and supports.

As well as supporting and helping to finance things like track maintenance and locomotive and rolling stock restoration and preservation, the Association focuses on two other important areas: promotion of heritage engineering skills and volunteering. We see these as vital to our aim of promoting education.

Volunteering provides a way in which skilled older volunteers can pass their skills on to others. It also provides new volunteers with the opportunity to learn new skills. Both benefit from the development of networks and friendships, and the sense of achievement that volunteering brings. This is particularly the case in the heritage engineering skills needed to restore and maintain the railway's locomotives and stock.



# The Reality of a Heritage Railway

Geoff Garfield, WSRA Chairman

Heritage steam railways are a greatly loved part of British life. There are some 300 in existence ranging from lengthy heritage railways operating historic steam locomotives, to short electric tramways and even miniature lines. Together they play a vital role in conservation, tourism, training and regeneration across the length and breadth of the British Isles. They share a devotion to heritage rail and a passion for constant improvement in the sector. Together they attract more than 13 million visitors each year and generate £600m plus to the economy.

Financially, operating a heritage railway is a real challenge. While visitors pay for their ride, the fares generated do not get anywhere close to the cost of running a railway. The West Somerset operates a 1950's style railway, but it must meet 2024 standards of safety: that does not come cheaply. The basic operation is just about paid for out of fares paid by our approximately 250,000 visitors, given that most of the work is done by volunteers, who give their time freely. However, there are many more costs to be met. For example, our steam locos are about 100 years old, and must have major overhaul/restoration every 10 years: each can cost between £300,000 and £3million. Much of our track is of similar vintage, so it needs careful monitoring and regular maintenance to remain usable.

The railway is operated by a not-for-profit plc, and most the people who do the work are unpaid volunteers. There are over 1,000 of them: loco crew, guards, buffet staff, signalmen: most of the operating staff you will see today are volunteers., and there are many others you will not see: station staff, gardeners, administrators, maintenance workers, and many more.

To support that effort is our charity, the WSRA. We exist to care for the heritage of the line, find ways to share that heritage with visitors and the local community, and to train volunteers and staff in the heritage skills needed to operate. To do that, we raise funds, using the advantages of a charity. Our running costs are met by members donations, and by a large vintage rally we run every year. We source external funding grants and one-off donations for many of the capital costs of the heritage work we commission.

# Achievements and Future Plans

**Locomotive restoration** is a key objective. The Association owns 3 steam locos. A “small prairie” tank locomotive 4561, Ditcheat Manor 9821 and BR Standard 4MT 80064. Of these, two are undergoing active restoration, with the third, 9821 in secure storage, awaiting its turn. The work on 4561 is well under way. Restoration of the chassis at the ESR’s Williton works is almost complete, and the boiler has been moved to a specialist contractor for restoration. Meanwhile, work is starting on the water tanks and coal bunker. We are holding sufficient funds to complete this work, which is likely to total £700,000 when completed.

80064 was donated to us in 2023. It had been stored, waiting restoration on another railway for some 27 years. It is now in the Williton works being dismantled, ready for restoration to commence in autumn/winter 2024. We are actively fundraising for this work, which is expected to cost in the region of £300,000. With the support of our members, and generous donors, we expect that both of these locomotives will be restored and ready to work on the WSR in ¾ years, when they will be available to replace other locomotives that will need to be withdrawn at the end of their 10-year lifecycle. Meanwhile, 9821 in in secure storage, awaiting its turn.

**Restoring the track** is another key objective. We have invested over £31,000 last year on ballast, sleepers and rail to replace worn out components. This is an ongoing problem, and further donations are always needed.

**The coaches we ride on** are another focus for us. Most of them are about 70 years old and need regular maintenance and restoration. We own 10 coaches and over the last 2 years have spent some £15,000 on restoration work. One of our big issues is storage of the coaches: we do not have covered accommodation for them, storing outside means that they deteriorate because of weather damage, especially in salt air. We are planning to erect a storage shed on land we own at Norton Fitzwarren. Plans for this have been drawn up for us by students of the Engineering Department at Southampton University and are currently being subjected to expert scrutiny. Once this is complete, we will hold talks with the planning authority and commence major fundraising.



# Our Projects

Jacque Green, WSRA General Manager

## Preserve & Protect Fund

The Preserve and Protect Fund was established with the dual aims of providing covered accommodation for the charity's rolling stock, (particularly the Mk1 carriages) and also for the ongoing maintenance costs of rolling stock. Over £4,456 was raised during the year, and the fund currently holds nearly £56,170. The WSRA has worked closely with the WSR plc and other interested parties to agree on a strategic approach to the provision of covered accommodation, which will offer the best facility for the long-term public benefit by maximizing the opportunities to preserve and protect the heritage locomotives and rolling stock. This work has identified a site on WSRA land at Norton Fitzwarren.

In October 2023 we were delighted to form a partnership with the Engineering Department of Southampton University, with the intention of carrying out a feasibility study of the proposed site and preparing an initial design for a carriage shed and associated facilities. After extensive work by the students and their supervising professor, and a sub-group of the Trustees, the initial design has now been completed, and work is underway to test its suitability.



## Hawksworth Inspection Saloon W80976W

Our Inspection Saloon is one of 7 built in 1948 to the design of Frederick Hawksworth who was the last Chief Mechanical Engineer of the Great Western Railway. It was allocated to the Taunton District Engineer for track inspection, and used for that purpose until the late 1960's, when it was installed with computers and carried out surveys all over the country. It was restored and purchased by the WSRA. The Saloon became in need of further work on upholstery and internal fittings, and so we reached an agreement with the Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway that will see the carriage running on their railway for 3 years in exchange for an internal re-fit and the all-important covered storage when not in use.



(WSRA)

## The Quantock Belle

The Quantock Belle is a unique dining train dating back to the 1950's which comprises of 4 carriages: Jupiter (the generator car and pantry); Orion (kitchen car and seats 31); Meteor (1st Class dining carriage); and Aries (Bar carriage and seating).

The dining carriage is hugely popular with both the local community and tourists and is an essential part of the Railway experience. It is staffed entirely by volunteers from the WSRA and runs regularly throughout the season securing valuable income for the maintenance and running costs of the railway.



(WSRA)

## Rail Renewal Fund

The West Somerset Railway track uses 53,000 sleepers and well over 40 miles of rail. The rail has a life of between 50 and 100 years. Much of our track is at the very end of its life and we urgently need to renew it. This is very costly, particularly if bullhead rail is to be used.

The Rail Renewal Fund was established to provide funding for the maintenance and replacement of the permanent way of the West Somerset Railway. Just over £26,670 was raised during the year, and over £31,200 was spent on the purchase of rail, sleepers and ballast. We also held a total of £50,000 following a successful appeal for funds to assist the restoration work on the track at Tribble Bridge, where £25,000 was donated by the WSRA to match funds of £25,000 raised from members and supporters. It had been planned to spend this money on track replacement at the site in the winter of 2023/4., but weather conditions and other issues prevented the work from being completed before the start of the 2024 running season. The WSR plc will carry out this work in winter 2024/25.



## Other Projects

We also supported a number of smaller projects to maintain and enhance the stations, contributing over £8,000 to support volunteer-led projects, such as repainting, and improving the facilities for visitors as well as contributing to the cost of equipment for the volunteer gang which supports the maintenance of the line.

We see supporting volunteers as an important role for us. To do this, we have paid for volunteer training, and made arrangements that the redundant ex WSRA-owned coach stored at Blue Anchor, which is unsuitable for restoration as a railway vehicle, will be re-purposed as sleeping accommodation for volunteers.

In order to further our objective to facilitate education in the heritage of the WSR, we developed a community engagement programme. This involved employing two workers, on fixed term contracts, who engaged with local communities, schools and other groups. This promoted educational visits from different groups, varying from primary schools to groups supporting people living with dementia, arranged by, and in some cases subsidised by, the charity.





## The Locomotive Restoration Fund

The Locomotive Restoration Fund was established to secure the long-term security of locomotives operating on the WSR through the refurbishment of two locomotives owned by the Association, Small Prairie 4561 and Manor Class 7821, Ditcheat Manor. £26,773 was raised for this fund during the year, and the available total is now just under £61,300.

Work is now well advanced on the restoration of the chassis of the Small Prairie 4561, and the team we established to supervise the restoration turned their attention to the restoration of the boiler. Their investigations revealed that some of the work previously carried out needed revisiting. It also showed that the scope of the work was probably beyond the capacity of Williton restorations, so invites to tender for the job were issued. Having received the estimates and carried out due diligence on the contractors who provided them, trustees decided that the work should be carried out by E Riley & Company, Haywood, Lancashire. It is intended to have the locomotive back in steam as soon as possible. The date will depend on the work required, and the speed at which our contractors can carry it out. Trustees have agreed a capital expenditure plan that will see significant funds committed to this locomotive from legacies already held. For more information and updated progress see <https://wsra.org.uk/4561-blog/>





During the year we were one of the railway charities approached by the owners of the unrestored BR Standard 4MT locomotive 80064, who wished to find a charity which would provide a home for the locomotive and carry out restoration to running condition as soon as possible.

After investigation of the locomotive and spare parts available, and consultation with the board of the WSR plc, trustees decided that the locomotive would be ideal for the railway and could be restored in a relatively short time. It would provide a replacement for some locomotives of the WSR's home fleet which will be withdrawn in the next few years as their boiler certificates expire.

After various discussions with the owning group, 80064 fund, we were delighted to agree that the locomotive, several spare parts, and a sum of money would be donated to the WSRA. The locomotive was moved to Williton restorations in December 2023. Trustees have commissioned Williton Restorations to carry out the necessary work, which we anticipate will take 3-4 years. We are very grateful to the members and supporters of 80064 fund for this donation, which was formally agreed on 30 April 2024.

Loco 7821 is currently on display at Swindon, where a group of volunteers keep it in good condition. It is still our intention to restore this locomotive to working condition. However, as extensive work is needed to restore it, trustees felt that it was better to carry out the relatively easier restoration of 80064 first.



## A Charity Embedded in the Community

Volunteering is crucial to the railway but is also important because it helps to support the many elderly residents in the local area. We work with just over 1,000 regular volunteers including around 300 volunteers who work in our Restoration workshops and will be helping to complete the work on 4561. The average age of a volunteer is 62 years.

Recent statistics from SCF highlight the fact that there are an estimated 4,000 pensioners in Somerset rural villages with no access to transport. Older people are at risk of isolation, loneliness, lack of mobility, ill-health (both mental and physical) making them vulnerable and in many cases disadvantaged. Monitoring and feedback from volunteers highlight the importance of the railway with 85% of volunteers stating that they had learned a new skill. Motives for volunteering varied greatly (volunteers were allowed to tick more than one box):

- 88% expressed a love of steam trains
- 85% suggesting that they wanted to give something back to the community
- 77% wanted to make friends
- 76% wanted to feel useful
- 74% wanted to have fun
- 59% wanted to learn a new skill
- Others included: being part of a team; building self-esteem, keeping active.



## One of our Youngest Volunteers

### Liam Hedditch

I chose to volunteer because the WSR is only down the road from me and as a child I was basically brought up on the railway. I would spend all my time with my nan watching the ins and outs of everything and watching my dad and grandad fire and drive steam engines. Riding on the trains was part of everyday life for me, so when it came to volunteering there was no other place I'd rather choose!

I started volunteering in 2017 on the model railway. As soon as I turned 16 I started on the cleaning gang, cleaning and learning about engines. After this I started an apprenticeship here at the railway in customer service in the main office in Minehead. I have learnt so much about the railway and what it takes to keep it going and met the best of people and made the best of friends, I really wouldn't change it for the world.

Now I volunteer in the steam department, and my role is a Passed Cleaner which allows me to fire steam engines up and down the line. Being the youngest fireman at 18 years of age shows that not every young person wants to sit in and not get out there and chase their dreams. It's nice to show that the preconception of railways being for the older generation is not accurate and that the younger generation is still as much engaged as the older generation are with the hobby and lifestyle of it all!

I think the most enjoyable part of my role is getting out there and doing what I love most which is being out on the steam engine trundling up and down the line through the beautiful countryside, whilst putting smiles on people's faces, but also keeping history alive. Old machines have still got a long life in them, and I love showing times of a bygone era to the younger and future generations.



## Local Volunteers – Linda Trott

I chose to volunteer for the railway because as a local girl born in Bishops Lydeard the railway has always been a part of my life....but I guess having a brother with 40 year's service on the line kind of helps.

Following the loss of my dear husband recently it was the perfect time for me to give something back to the community I have lived in for so many years. I signed up in December 2023 and completed my obligatory shifts to acquire my full staff status over the Christmas period; enjoying the Santa trains and Winterlights Specials with the highlight of a footplate ride on December 17<sup>th</sup> with my brother Paul. What an incredible and exhilarating experience!

I volunteer at the DEPG, the Diesel and Electric Preservation Group based in Williton and also at Williton Station as a booking clerk. Two very different roles but ones I enjoy immensely. Working with diesel engines is noisy, oily, dirty and great fun. In the station office it's totally different as it is customer facing but I can share the joy of families experiencing steam (or diesel) travel which is quite delightful.

I think the biggest strength that I offer the railway is my sheer enthusiasm for steam travel. With a long background of customer service, I can happily engage with people and hopefully pass on my enthusiasm.



# Railway Walks

In 2022 we launched a new project called 'Railway walks' to help us reach out to disadvantaged groups by offering fully funded, specially planned day trips. Over 23-24, Community Engagement Coordinator Robin Wichard hosted a visit from Minehead Dementia Action Alliance, for those living with the illness and their carers. The project was attended by 15 people living with dementia and 11 carers. The group enjoyed a train ride to Blue Anchor where they were given a walking tour of the station and investigated some 1930-40 artefacts. They were shown the signal box and were given a talk about how the point system works and visited the station museum.

At Christmas we organised another trip with 17 people from the Watchet Area Homes from Ukraine group who joined us for the Winter Lights train. They were given a talk about the history of the line, before joining the light up Christmas train. At the end of their journey the group were given the opportunity to visit the cab of Odney manor. The visit took place just after a Russian attack on several Ukrainian cities. Feedback reiterated that the visit was a very welcome distraction from worrying about those still in Ukraine. Everyone expressed their gratitude and one of the visitors noted that 'the whole ride was truly magical...a beautiful experience'. The Railway Walks support people in breaking the cycle of loneliness, improving physical health and wellbeing, learning about our local history and developing skills.





# Annual Steam Rally 2023

The WSRA Steam and Vintage Vehicle Rally was held at Norton Fitzwarren on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> August 2023 and was a hugely successful event securing just over £40,000 for our current restoration projects.

In 2023 the rally attracted 5,694 visitors, which broke down to 47% adults, 22% elderly and 27% children. This was a little lower than the previous year and was a consequence of the poor weather we experienced on the Saturday.

Guests got to enjoy and explore full size and miniature steam locomotives, vintage cars, motorbikes, commercial and military vehicles, tractors and working exhibits and models. There were arts and craft stands, refreshments, parades, live music, a display of yesteryears and modern farming techniques, heavy horses, Brake van rides, Cab rides in a diesel shunter, model train rides – to name but a few!

The event brings the community together to celebrate our history. The use of steam is largely considered to be one of the most important inventions of the industrial period. It made it possible to easily work, live, produce, market, specialise, and viably expand without having to worry about the presence of waterways. At the same time, steam railways dramatically reduced travel times and helped increased productivity. It helped transform the economy and the places we grew up in.



Feedback from visitors was overwhelmingly positive:

- *Brilliant day and amazing event. The ground was very good and the odd rain shower wasn't an issue. Have to say the West Somerset Railway Association tent was brilliant. My son who is gluten free never had the opportunity for cake at large events but not today, the staff there had GF food well catered for. Thanks to everyone for your hard work, we had a fantastic time. The train ride from West Somerset Railway Bishops Lydeard was an added bonus!*
- *It was our first visit to the show and we had a totally brilliant weekend from the moment we arrived on Friday evening to the time we left on Sunday – every Marshall / member of security/ rally volunteer we encountered was most polite and helpful and we are recommending this event to our friends for next year! The band of volunteers who organised and staffed this event should be very proud of themselves.*



# Supporting the West Somerset Economy

We operate in West Somerset District, an area that has considerable economic challenges. The largest town, Minehead, which is the destination of most people who visit the West Somerset Railway, has a population of 11,757 (2021 census). Its population is considerably older than the rest of Somerset (34% over 65, compared with 25% for Somerset and 19% nationally).

Retaining young people in the town is seen as a critical challenge, as is in-work poverty, with wage levels low. Tourism is crucial to the local economy, with 55% of jobs related to this activity, (National Careers Service). Butlins alone contributes some £60 million of economic value to the town, supporting over 1,000 jobs and attracting 400-500 thousand staying visitors per annum. This is in addition to the estimated £53 million of tourism benefits from some 118,000 staying visitors and over 900,000-day visits to Minehead generally (Careers Inspiration).

The West Somerset Railway is crucial, attracting around 200,000 visitors annually. It is rated by Trip Advisor as a key activity for local visitors, rated 4.5/5 by over 2700 reviewers, who emphasized the nostalgic, heritage experience, and the friendliness of volunteers.



The Association's work supports these two elements of the railway, helping to develop this key local economic driver. Our partner operating company, West Somerset Railway PLC, is already one of the major employers in West Somerset, with about 45 people employed in managerial, administrative, marketing, engineering and various specialist fields, supported by the volunteers, who carry out most of the daily work of operating the railway and welcoming the visitors.

West Somerset was the lowest ranking district in the whole country in the Social Mobility Index (January 2016), a measure that compares the chances that a child from a disadvantaged background will do well at school and get a good job. (Department for Education social mobility report 2016).

We believe that the Association has a part to play in improving social mobility, through engaging young people with the railway, where they can learn heritage skills from staff and experienced volunteers. This can allow them to develop their interest into a career, either through the volunteering route, or through engineering apprenticeships, which we have been able to offer in the Restorations workshop.

There are examples of this on the following pages. These successes have convinced us that we can develop more pathways to help other young (and not so young) people in the future.

### **Somerset Facts and Figures**

- 22% of working aged people in West Somerset have no qualifications (Somerset West and Taunton Economic Development Strategy 2020-24)
- 14% of Somerset children under 16 are from low income families (2021 census)
- 47,806 Somerset People live in one of the 20% most deprived areas in England, an increase of 7,806 since 2015
- 4,000 pensioners have no transport
- Full time earnings in Somerset are lower than the region and national figures
- Between 2017 -2022 population has risen by 3,600. 17% of Somerset population are children aged under 16 and 25% are aged over 65

From: Somerset Intelligence

## Jared

I was previously a volunteer with another charity in a fundraising aspect and wanted to change to something closer to home and close to my heart, something much more hands on, and something that really excited me. After a family day out to Minehead on the train, I saw the hard work and dedication that the volunteers were putting in, whilst surrounded by the incredible backdrop of the railway. I saw how happy they were whilst dedicating their time, and I knew there and then I wanted this to be the next chapter in my life.

After first applying in April 2023, it was a quick onboarding process then an induction day. My first volunteer turn was July 2023 and haven't regretted a day since! I am a Travelling Ticket Inspector, or TTI for short. I'm still in my training phase at the moment, but I volunteer on the train and on the platform providing any assistance with our travelling passengers, along with anywhere else necessary on the day.

I hugely enjoy the interaction and networking with our guests. As I'm the face of the railway our customers will see most on their trip, we get to meet first hand a huge selection of people from all walks of life, I've met 3 week olds to 97 year olds, students to barristers, yet everyone has the same thing on their mind - they all want an exciting trip to the seaside on one of the best heritage railways in the country, and for me to be a small part in that memory -making moment. What more could a volunteer ask for?





# Accounts

## West Somerset Railway Association

### Consolidated statement of financial activities *(incorporating an income and expenditure account)*

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Income from:	Notes	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Donations and Legacies	3	89,239	291,801	<b>381,040</b>	189,318
Other trading activities	4	-	144,713	<b>144,713</b>	182,497
Investments		-	12,019	<b>12,019</b>	3,429
Other income		-	-	-	500
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>89,239</b>	<b>448,533</b>	<b>537,772</b>	<b>375,744</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising Funds		-	111,059	<b>111,059</b>	84,972
Charitable Activities		103,720	182,981	<b>286,701</b>	269,097
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	6	<b>103,720</b>	<b>294,040</b>	<b>397,760</b>	<b>354,069</b>
<b>Net (expenditure) / income and Movement in Funds</b>	8	<b>(14,481)</b>	<b>154,493</b>	<b>140,012</b>	<b>21,675</b>
<b>Reconciliation of Funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		270,848	1,945,673	<b>2,216,521</b>	2,194,846
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>256,367</b>	<b>2,100,166</b>	<b>2,356,533</b>	<b>2,216,521</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 20 to the accounts.

# Thank You to all our Supporters

The WSRA would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has contributed to the charity over the last 12 months – we simply would not have been able to achieve so much without your continued support.

The funds we have received have allowed us to continue with the refurbishment of the Small Prairie 4561, to support the annual Steam Rally, to run Railway Walks for disadvantaged and vulnerable local communities, and to pay for station repairs and heritage items and repairs. We also supported the vital works scheduled to take place at Blue Anchor station.

The Association would like to extend their gratitude to the many trusts, foundation and corporations that have offered us support. Grants donated between April 2023 – March 2024 include:

Heydown Trust  
Anthony & Elizabeth Mellows Charitable Settlement  
Sir John and Lady Heathcoat Amory Charitable Trust  
GWR Customer and Community Fund  
Minehead Rotarians  
Somerset Community Foundation Main Grants  
George, John & Sheila Livanos Charitable Trust  
Ninesquare Charitable Trust

Worcester Bosch  
Co-op Community Fund  
Hilary Awdry Charitable Trust  
Tesco Groundworks  
Castle Charitable Trust  
The Bernard Herridge Charity  
Astor Foundation  
Ecclesiastical Giving



# Meet our staff & trustees

## Trustees

Geoff Garfield; Chairman

A retired pharmacist, with extensive managerial experience in large multiple businesses and the NHS, and as a management consultant and senior team coach. Now volunteers as a railway signalman and chairs the organising committee of the annual steam rally.

Mike Lea; Treasurer (resigned Jan 24)

A chartered accountant for some 32 years, most recently as senior partner of Smith & Williamson in Bristol. Vastly experienced in charity finance matters and trustee of 10 other charities in the Southwest.

Diana Ricketts-Tanner (resigned Sept 2023)

A member of the WSRA for over 10 years, and subsequently a volunteer on Williton Station. Diana has a keen sense of community and personal experience of the mental and physical health and well-being benefits of active volunteering. She is a part-time legal administration consultant.

Jeff Price

Involved with heritage steam locomotive operation and overhaul for over 30 years and a WSR volunteer in the loco department for over 20 years. Director of a small engineering company using traditional process whilst also embracing modern solutions.

Mike Sherwood (appointed Sept 23)

A career in international medical device project management & operations consulting before volunteering for the WSR in 2009. Now a fireman in the Steam MPD with close to 500 footplate turns completed.

John Glover (appointed sept 23)

An active railway supporter for some 35 years, with extensive experience of railway operations. Currently employed by the West Somerset Railway in the operations department.

Edward Martin

A long-standing supporter of the railway and successful local businessman with many relevant skills to support the railway from administration to IT skills. He is currently retraining as a signalman for WSR.

Alan Smithers (resigned May 2023)

A life member of the WSRA since the 1990's and an active volunteer on the railway since 2015.

David Fowler (resigned Aug 2023)

A lifetime member of the Association and long-term volunteer, David has been supporting the railway since the 1980's. He has many useful skills and experience to bring to table having worked in geology, oil industry and in Higher Education.

Denise Parker

An active WSR supporter for almost 20 years, currently employed by the West Somerset Railway in on-train catering supervision and management. A 'people person' with various roles in the local community including that of scout leader.

Barrie Childs (resigned Sept 2023)

An active supporter of the WSR. A previous WSRA Trustee, with a background in computer programming and small business, now close to retirement with more time to devote to the WSRA.

Will Foster (appointed Oct 2023)

A retired Accountant who has extensive experience in managing teams and projects within the financial services and retail sectors who has been a volunteer Travelling Ticket Inspector since 2011.

### **Staff**

Jacquie Green – General Manager

[jacquie.green@wsra.org.uk](mailto:jacquie.green@wsra.org.uk)

Keith Sandford – Membership Administrator (retired

Dec 2023) [keith.sandford@wsra.org.uk](mailto:keith.sandford@wsra.org.uk)

Kathryn Sims – Book Keeper

[kathryn.sims@wsra.org.uk](mailto:kathryn.sims@wsra.org.uk)

Kate Williams – PT Fundraiser

[Kate.williams@wsra.org.uk](mailto:Kate.williams@wsra.org.uk)

Alison Thornton – Administrator (joined Jan 2024)

[alison.thornton@wsra.org.uk](mailto:alison.thornton@wsra.org.uk)





## Contact us

For more information, visit our website [www.wsra.org.uk](http://www.wsra.org.uk)

### West Somerset Railway Association

Registered Office:

The Railway Station,

Bishops Lydeard,

Taunton,

Somerset

TA4 3BX

Registered Charity No. 1041901

Company No. 2968284 registered in England and Wales

Telephone 01823 433856

Office opening hours are Tuesday to Saturday 10.00am - 16:00pm.