



WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY HERITAGE TRUST LIMITED

Registered Charity No. 265564
President: Lady Elizabeth Gass

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www.wsrht.co.uk

West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust

Informal Question and Answer Session Following 2021 AGM on Saturday, 18 September 2021

Question-Chris Austin

How many Members does the Trust currently have and what changes have taken place more recently?

Answer-Don Fraser and Steve Williams

Don Fraser replied that, over August and September 2021, the Trust had about 240 subscribed Members. Steve Williams reflected on the events of the previous 12 months in relation to membership numbers and it was thought that there would be further changes as many of those who joined for a particular purpose leading up to the 2020 AGM may not renew. Nonetheless, the Trust was in a healthy position regarding Membership and the changes to Membership approvals as contained in the new Articles of Association would ensure that the Board were able to maintain appropriate scrutiny over applications.

Question-John Anson

Why did the Board think that there was such a low attendance at the AGM from Members and so few proxy votes? Do Trustees think that there needs to be greater and more continuous engagement with Members throughout the year?

Answer-Mike Thompson, Martin Brown and Steve Williams

Martin said that John makes a good point. However, there have been low turnouts at the PLC and Association AGM's this year significantly influenced by Covid 19 and the Government restrictions/guidance in place at the time. His experience of engagement with other charities indicated a similar profile.

Mike Thompson agreed that more could and should be done with Members throughout the year and not just limited to the AGM. The Board would think about how best to engage more effectively with the core group of long time Members together with those who joined more recently to support the continuation of the Trust. A similar approach was needed with volunteers.

Question-John Anson

Could voting forms be provided as Word documents in future rather than in PDF format?

Answer-Don Fraser

Yes

Following the conclusion of the Question and Answer session, Mike Thompson summarised an emerging new initiative around Platform 1 at Bishops Lydeard station involving the cattle dock siding and potential covered accommodation for Heritage carriages, thoughts about an extension to the Gauge Museum and proposals around future use of Station House including hospitality and heritage display. These had been discussed with the PLC who were supportive of the development of a business case. More information would follow.

Members were then invited to look at the display of Victorian items and other historical memorabilia at the back of the Hall. These form part of the resources being made available by Helen Anson and the education and learning team for primary schools and community groups.

The informal meeting then concluded.