



# WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY HERITAGE TRUST

## About this issue

Welcome to the latest edition of the newsletter for members of the Trust. As usual, it includes updates on all the main areas of the Trust's activities, as well as special reports on matters such as IT which are not normally covered.

Also included is a profile of the Trust's first Honorary Life Member, as well as profiles of two more Trustees.

As always, we welcome feedback on the newsletter, as well as ideas for future editions.

Chris Bolt  
Membership Secretary

## Chairman's review of 2025, and prospects for 2026

A Happy New Year to you all.

Now the 2025 operating season has finished, this is an opportunity to review the successes of the last 12 months and look ahead to what 2026 will have in store for the Heritage Trust.

Without doubt, the biggest success of 2025 was the introduction of carriage 6705 into traffic during the Spring Steam Gala – the first time one of our Heritage Carriages was in revenue earning service. The team at Washford especially did a great job getting 6705 through its final Fitness to Run exam.

Of particular note was the successful member's charter train on the day prior to the Steam Gala, which saw locomotive Fenchurch along with 6705 plus 1086 from the GWR (SVR) carry members from Bishops Lydeard to Minehead, stopping at Washford for a visit to the restoration workshops.

6705 also appeared at the Autumn Steam Gala as part of a mixed Passenger/Goods consist which proved very popular with our visitors, often with standing room only on some trains.

Another excellent achievement has been the award of Accreditation to the Gauge Museum by the Arts Council in recognition of the professional standards being implemented by the Heritage Trust team.

Huge credit must go to our museum team and everyone involved in completing the detailed requirements and provision of appropriate information and documentation. This helps to elevate the Trust in the eyes of potential donors and sponsors towards our future activities.

The visit of the Flying Scotsman also helped to raise the profile of the Trust as we hosted this famous locomotive in the Goods bay outside the museum as part of the planned footplate visits in June and July. The museum team did an amazing job clearing the cattle dock area of weeds and laying new walk on covers to help reduce trip hazard for our visitors.



This location was in use again later in the year during the visit of the Rail 200 Exhibition train, when visitors were invited to look inside 6705 and also visit the footplate of Pannier Tank locomotive 6435, provided courtesy of Jonathan Jones-Pratt, Chairman of the PLC.

Finally, we have been very fortunate to receive a number of significant legacies sent to the Trust in 2025, which I hope is a positive reflection of how the Trust is viewed by our members and visitors. We are truly grateful for these generous donations which enable the Trust to do all of its work.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are working on several projects to help improve the sustainability and attractiveness of the railway to future visitors.

At Bishops Lydeard, things are evolving on two fronts: the creation of a covered canopy over the Goods bay to provide cover for rolling stock outside the museum; and developing the new visitor centre on the Platform 2 side of the station, including enhanced retail facilities. Both projects require close cooperation with the PLC and we have recently reached agreement on a number of important requirements to help support the investment required by the Trust.

In the longer term, we are also hoping to create a broader attraction at Bishops Lydeard to help bring visitors to the station in its own right, regardless of whether they are travelling to Minehead. This should help to generate more revenue for the railway in future.

On the carriage restoration front, work on Toplight 3639 is already well underway, with plans to potentially start work on another carriage in the future. Also, the new welfare facilities with a rest area, toilets and washing facilities are nearly finished, much of which was built by our team of volunteers, to whom we are most grateful. You will find a more detailed update from John Waters on our activities at Washford in this newsletter.

At Blue Anchor, we hope to complete the full re-opening of the museum in 2026 following a partial opening in 2025, with limited displays, while we awaited the outcome of the recent drainage works. The good news is these works now appear to have solved the problem of water ingress and a recent inspection after heavy rains revealed a dry floor and acceptable levels of humidity in the museum.

Finally, it is no secret that the railway had a tough year in 2025 with revenues suffering from a UK wide decline in economic confidence, along with rising costs on many fronts. The Heritage Trust is working closely with the PLC and Association to try and develop a more resilient model of operating together which reflects the financial needs of the railway, but is allowable within the articles of the respective charities. I am optimistic this will bring about a more sustainable future for the railway.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find an updates from Steve Williams on Accreditation, our Business Plan, Investment & Wealth management, reviews of our Policies and Capital projects, along with more detail on how we are supporting the PLC with Financial resilience and fundraising.

As always, I must end by thanking our growing number of members and volunteers who have enabled us to achieve so much in 2025. This coming year offers more exciting opportunities for anyone who wants to get involved with the Trust's activities and you will be made very welcome.

*Mike Thompson – Chairman WSRHT*

## Heritage Carriages Restoration at Washford

### 6705

6705 was operated during the 40's weekend and the Autumn Gala and is now stabled at Bishops Lydeard. A custom-designed tarpaulin is on order to protect it from the weather, although in the near term it is anticipated that it will be moved undercover in the loco compound at BL.

### 3639

Work has progressed on 3639 on several fronts:

Most of the walls have now been removed from the carriage with the roof now supported by a scaffold structure. All that remains is one end-wall, which when removed will expose the far-end buffer beam which we can already see is badly rusted and will most likely need to be replaced. We can then plan to have this repaired.



All the compartment side wall panels have been fitted to the bottomsides, as can be seen in the picture above. Spacing between door pillars along the wall are within 1.5mm of their required dimensions and all wall frame door posts are vertical to better than 1mm over their 1.8m height. Overall length of the wall only required adjustment in the end panel by about 15mm to bring the it to its correct 17m length.

The buffer beam that was previously only bolted in place has now been hot-riveted, parts of which can be seen in the photos below:



The buffers have been cleaned and painted and have been refitted.

Work continues on the cleaning of the underframe. Large sections have now been needle-gunned and treated with rust stabiliser in preparation for painting.

We are also in the process of acquiring drawings of the underframe and bogies so that a thorough inspection can be undertaken to determine what remedial work may be required to get them into serviceable condition.



Work on the vacuum brakes is also underway, and preparations are being made to provide the necessary adaptors between our vacuum pump and the brake system to enable testing to take place.

Work has progressed well on the manufacture of the exterior doors.

Each of the 16 exterior doors is made up of over 40 separate components and many of these have now been made. The photos show just a small sample of some of the components that have already been made.



### 9037

Work has progressed on 9037. Both sides have been panelled, and a large part of the floor has been fitted. 9037 now sits on heavy-duty castors and can be moved around the workshop with relative ease.

### Welfare Building

The building's block walls have been completed, and roof timbers and internal stud frames are in place. The next step is to add the pitched slate roof to the front part of the building, and the insulated fibreglass covering to the rear flat section.



*John Waters*

## Museum Highlights: A Season in Review

### Reflecting on a Challenging Year

As we reflect on another season shaped by the ongoing “cost of living crisis”, the museum is proud to share that, despite the challenges, we have celebrated several noteworthy successes.

### Special Visits and Events

#### The Flying Scotsman at the WSR

One of the most exciting highlights was the visit of the internationally renowned locomotive, The Flying Scotsman, to the West Somerset Railway. On days when the locomotive was not running, the museum hosted The Flying Scotsman on the bay platform. Visitors were given the opportunity to access the footplate, with all footplate tours being routed through the museum itself. This event allowed us to welcome a steady stream of visitors and showcase our collection alongside this iconic engine.



#### “Inspiration” Exhibition Train at Bishops Lydeard

Another notable occasion, organised in cooperation with and support of the PLC, was the arrival of the Network Rail/National Railway Museum’s exhibition train, “Inspiration”, at Bishops Lydeard. For this event, the Trust sponsored the printing of souvenir tickets, which included both an invitation to the museum and a map to guide visitors. In the bay platform, we proudly displayed JJP’s Pannier Tank 6435 and the WSRHT’s Collet Carriage 6705, offering footplate and carriage visits to our guests.



This event was especially significant as it marked the first time the museum opened its doors in November. Over the course of that week, we welcomed an impressive 1,190 visitors—just shy of 200 guests per day. The museum and model railway teams rose to the occasion, ensuring the museum was fully staffed and operational throughout the event.

#### GWR Shuttle Trains:

Adding further excitement, on both Tuesday and Friday of the “Inspiration” week, four shuttle GWR trains operated from Taunton to Bishops Lydeard, arriving directly into the platform outside the museum and enhancing the visitor experience even further.

## Visitor Numbers

Visitor numbers were certainly affected by both events, but we closed the season with 12,881 visitors, up from 12,375 in 2024—a modest increase, but still notable given these challenging times.

## Museum building upgrades

We have upgraded the electrics in the museum and model railway areas to comply with modern codes, to provide more flexible lighting and, in another first, heating in certain areas of the museum making the building more comfortable for both visitor and team. The next project, which has been approved and awaiting contractors, will be the installation of a new wider emergency exit and ramp.

## New Displays

Throughout the past season, we have continued to introduce additional easy exchange storyboards, most recently installing three on the lower floor that depict the 200-year history of the railways.

## Plans for 2026

Several projects are scheduled for the upcoming closed season, all aimed at further enhancing the visitor experience. Among these initiatives is the creation of a virtual tour feature, allowing visitors with limited mobility to explore the interior of 9038 and the model railway located on the upper floor. The interactive television display has been consistently updated with engaging content for visitors to watch and read. We are also planning a new welcome desk, which will integrate our growing and successful retail section. As our museum continues to evolve in the coming year, we invite you to stay informed about our latest developments.

## Blue Anchor Museum

Blue Anchor was open throughout 2025, without museum stewards, and visitor book comments show it was well received. We will monitor the building over winter and plan to complete the full fit-out by early 2026 for a grand opening. Robin Wichard, BA Station Master, and his team have been invaluable, unlocking and securing the museum daily so it is open whenever trains run—not just weekends and events as before. We are installing a footfall counter so we can more accurately record visitor numbers in 2026.



## Acknowledgments

Thank you to all members who visited this season. We look forward to seeing you again in 2026. If you have not visited, please do and make yourselves know to the duty steward.

*Ian Camp*

## **Update on Governance and Business Planning**

### **Accreditation**

Following the successful award of Accreditation to the Gauge Museum, which has also been featured in the latest edition of Heritage Railway, the team will now be turning its attention to ensuring that we implement the full suite of policies and procedures approved by the Arts Council and the Trust Board. Additionally, we will be meeting with the South West Museums Development Officer, Rachel Bellamy, to discuss the approach to accreditation of Blue Anchor Museum which we anticipate will be fully operational in time for the 2026 season. We intend to pursue accreditation of Blue Anchor during the next 12 months in order to have both our museum sites quality assured and working to national standards.

### **Business Plan Refresh 2026**

Updating of the current Business Plan is underway. The 2026 programme will be even more ambitious than the previous two years reflecting the growth in the Trusts business agenda and the increasing importance and visibility of the charity both within and outside the WSR. The change in our financial status will of course provide additional impetus and opportunity for delivering on our objectives. The timetable is to get a draft update to the Trust Board for the end of January and then to have the draft Plan refresh approved at the March Board meeting. This will then be circulated to Members and more widely across the Trust and WSR.

### **Finance, Investment and Wealth Management**

(see also the report from Don Fraser below)

Members are aware that the financial status of the Trust has led to an increase in the range and scope of governance (financial and non-financial) requirements that the charity now has to meet. Two of the key developments that have emerged in the last six months are the establishment of the Finance and Investment Committee as a formal Sub Committee of the Board. This has now had two meetings, arising from which we now have an Investment Policy and are working on an Investment Plan together with enhanced banking arrangements. The second development has been carrying out a market testing exercise to appoint a Wealth Management and Financial Planning organisation to support the Board through the Finance and Investment Committee in the strategic management of its funds. By the time this Newsletter is published, it is anticipated that, following a series of structured interviews, there will be a recommendation to the Trust Board.

### **Policy Review**

The work to review our Policies and Procedures particularly in the areas of museum management and financial governance continues. Members may have noticed that we have removed a number of old policy documents from the website in order to avoid confusion. We will be reinstating these in due course once they have been through the Finance and Investment Committee and signed off by the Board.

### **Capital Projects**

The Trust capital programme continues with individual projects in various stages of development. Elsewhere in this Newsletter, John Waters has provided an update on the construction of the new staff welfare facilities at Washford. We also intend to start some new work within the Heritage

Carriages Programme by establishing formal project teams to support Richard Gibbs in the completion of 9037 and to undertake an option appraisal exercise to identify and agree the best location for the exhibit as part of our Museum collections, and also to begin work on scoping and design of the Ambulance Carriage section of 3639.

There is considerable activity with regard to developments at Bishops Lydeard. Architects' drawings are being finalised for the Covered Canopy in the Cattle Dock next to Platform 1 and the adjacent grass area. We are about to seek the agreement of the PLC and the Trust Board following which the next stage will be to complete local surveys, confirm planning consent status (hopefully as a permitted development) and proceed to drawing up tender documentation. This will enable us to place 6705 undercover as well as to showcase either a small locomotive and/or a heritage goods wagon.

We have also had good news from the PLC regarding the proposed Visitor Centre adjacent to Platform 1. This initiative is fully supported by the Company who see it as a significant addition to the visitor experience and will also create a better hospitality offer by moving the Cafe to the new Centre. There is much work still to do on the specification and the project will need a formal Business Case, but the financial, legal and commercial principles have been agreed.

Last but not least at this point in time, Ian Camp has been leading on the development proposals for staff and visitor welfare facilities at the rear of Platform 1. The absence of these has long been a problem but, following the external disability access audit in January 2025, we are now close to a solution which is fully supported by the PLC.

### **WSR Matters**

Following a series of discussions between the PLC, the Association and the Trust, we are establishing a number of collaborative groups to address issues which are crucial to the wider sustainability of the railway over the next few years. These include:

- Financial Resilience Group. This will focus on ideas and initiatives for income generation to support the operational and development requirements of the PLC using the charity's expertise around fundraising.
- Joint Fundraising Group. This will be the "driving force" for collective fundraising in support of FRG but will also enable us to ensure that we avoid competition and duplication in relation to external fundraising for the various projects that both the Association and the Trust wish to pursue.

We are also anticipating that the PLC will, for the first time in some years, be publishing a Corporate Plan and this will provide the opportunity for us to ensure that key objectives are consolidated across the railway.

*Steve Williams*

*Vice Chairman and Company Secretary*

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### **Report on Finance and Investment**

The finances of the Trust ended 2025 in a very healthy position. This was due to some large receipts of cash from the legacies notified to us in the previous two years and reported in the

2024 Annual accounts. We still have a large amount to receive which we expect to get during 2026.

As a result of this a Finance and Investment Committee was established during 2025 to manage these large sums and protect the long term financial position of the Trust. Given the large number of options available, this is a considerable challenge. We have not been tempted to book flights to Las Vegas and try and increase the value at the Roulette Tables or Poker, neither have we decided to take the cash out and hide it under our mattresses! After contacting a number of Wealth Management organisations and IFAs (Independent Financial Advisers) we received seven proposals. This was narrowed down to 4 who we have recently interviewed at length. After a lot of consideration and debate this has now been cut down to 2 who will be reinterviewed in the near future.

The big challenge when meeting these people is what do you ask them, how to decide what option to take and what is best for the Trust. Never being in this position before it was quite an onerous task. By the time of the 2026 AGM we will be able to report in greater detail what has been decided and actioned but rest assured the future well being of the Trust is looking very positive.

*Don Fraser*  
*Treasurer*

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## Learning and Education

The learning team have been busier than ever over the last few months with outreach learning visits and digital resource packs becoming increasingly popular among schools, offering a low-cost way for children to access railway history. Our free resources have been particularly in demand, allowing us to reach out to schools well beyond easy visiting distance. In fact, 2025 saw our learning resources reach as far as the US.

The Academic year got off to a great start with several school visits during the autumn months, accessing a variety of our different learning sessions and thoroughly enjoying all of the experiences that the museum has to offer. Once again, we were entirely upstaged by our mannequins, which continue to be one of the museum’s most popular attractions!



### Goodbye to Iggy

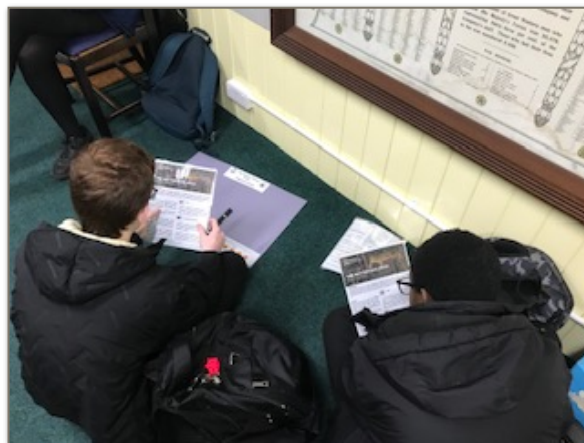
We completed our work with the theatre company Emerald Ant in September, with a visit to Abbotsway Special School, where Iggy once again demonstrated how barriers to learning can be significantly reduced through Art, Drama and History. Thanks to the training provided to our volunteers as part of the project, we will be able to start the new season with a greater understanding of how we can support visitors with additional needs.



### The Inspiration Train Visit

The season came to a magnificent conclusion with the arrival of the Inspiration Train in late November, which allowed us to extend our opening later than usual and to welcome visitors from both primary and secondary schools across the local area. In addition to the exhibition carriages, our visitors were invited to join us in the now beautifully warm museum to find out more about the potential future role that railways can play in supporting biodiversity and fight against climate change.

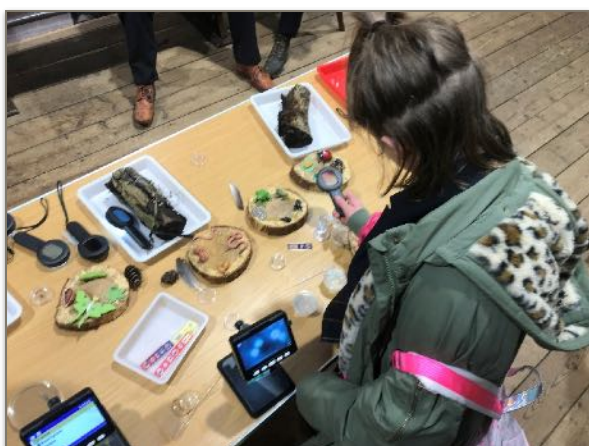




### Talking Nature

After just over a year of hard work from a dedicated group of volunteers, the Talking Nature project is finally drawing to a close, with the garden displays due to be completed by the end of January ready to launch the new garden learning area in the spring.

While the project itself is nearing completion, its impact will be felt for many years to come. In addition to the new outdoor learning environment and garden exhibition, we have been able to extend our learning programme further, now offering schools a series of science-based learning sessions and STEM investigations based on biodiversity, classification and conservation: a fitting legacy to celebrate the 150th anniversary of railways. Developed with the support of local schools and based on ideas and feedback from the students themselves, the new sessions promise to be an exciting and hands-on addition to our ever growing learning offer.



## **Trustees appoint first Honorary Life Member of the Trust**

Trustees recently made changes to the Membership Rules to create a new class of member - Honorary Life Members. Appointments to this class will be made by the Trustees in accordance with clear criteria, which are based on outstanding contributions to the work of the Trust.

As a charitable company, members of the Trust are in effect shareholders with rights set out in both the Articles and company law. So Honorary Life Members will have the same right to attend and vote at General Meetings as all other members. The new Rules are attached, and will be published on the website. There are no changes to the rights and obligations of existing ordinary members.

The first person appointed as an Honorary Life Member is Andy Forster, who has been providing expert advice in particular on the Heritage Carriages Project. Andy has provided the profile below.

### **Andrew (Andy) Forster. BSc (Hons), C Eng, M I Mech E.**

#### **Background**

I was born in Radyr, just north of Cardiff.

Although I have no recollections of the visits, in the late 1950's I was often taken down to Radyr station in a pushchair by elder siblings to watch the trains.

From a young age I had an interest in models and I enjoyed fiddling with mechanical items, my father would bring home old pocket watches from a watchmaker he knew so that I could take them apart in an attempt to make them go.

Apart from playing with the family Hornby Dublo 3 rail train set, I do not recall any particular interest in steam locomotives or railways. Modelling evolved from Airfix kits to balsa wood boats, glow plug engines and radio control. Soon a skill in working in metal developed and a 3-1/2" gauge model of the Canterbury and Whitstable Rly locomotive "Invicta" took shape whilst I was in my mid-teens. I have enjoyed having a home workshop for machining various things in metal ever since.

#### **Education and pre-WSR career**

I obtained with some difficulty a degree in "Mechanical Engineering and Energy Studies" from University College Cardiff.

After university I joined Rolls-Royce (1971) Ltd at Bristol for post Graduate training, followed by working as a Development Engineer, firstly on the Adour engine for Hawk and Jaguar aircraft, later on the Pegasus engine for the US Marine Corps AV8B (Harrier).

I moved to Minehead in 1988 to be closer to the WSR, leaving Rolls-Royce and joining a small laboratory equipment manufacturing business in Exbridge to keep me fed and watered.

#### **WSR career**

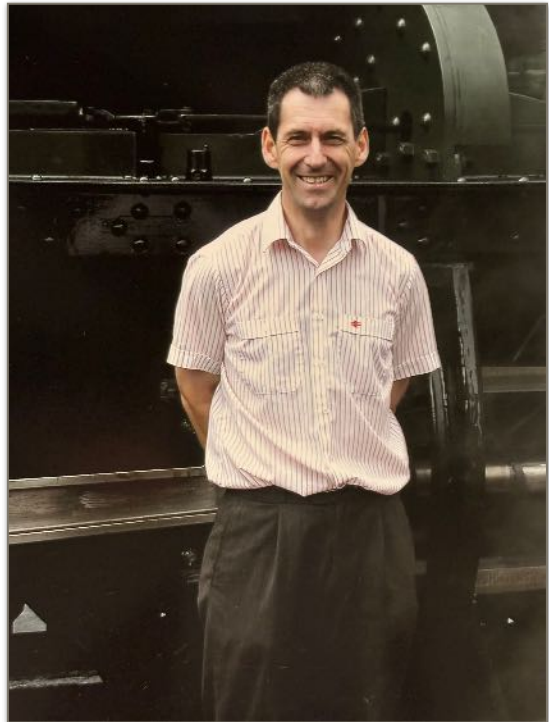
WSR shareholder from 1976.

WSR Ltd Director 1986 to 1989.

WSR plc Associate Director 1989 to 2016.

WSR Chief Mechanical Engineer 1989 to 2016.

I started volunteering on the WSR in July 1979 and joined the ranks of steam footplate staff soon after, progressing onto the training as a DMU driver in July 1980. I have been active on the WSR ever since and what a wonderful experience it has been, meeting so many people who also enjoy the heritage railway industry, and to be able to work with all those items of historical significance on the best heritage railway in the UK. The Minehead branch has now been operated by the WSR for longer than British Railways and Bristol and Exeter Railway added together, it is also the only heritage railway that operates over the entire route mileage built by two separate railway companies and some of a third. It has been a privilege to have been a small part in making that happen.



When I first became a volunteer on the WSR things were dire and getting worse, as the situation improved in the mid 1980's I dreamed that a time may come when trains would run reliably on time, representative ex mainline locomotives would be the norm, the entire line would be correctly signalled, the turntable would one day be installed and finally some of those wonderful toplight camping coaches would be restored and returned to passenger service. I have seen the first four dreams come to fruition, and the fifth is just over the horizon.

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## Special reports

### Gauge Junction model railway

In looking back on the 2025 season, we wanted to take the opportunity to provide an update on the Gauge Junction model railway group activity. Last year the group saw some very positive steps in the right direction with our operating availability being increased from around 65% in 2024 to 85% in 2025. This is an amazing achievement thanks to all the MRG volunteers for doing their bit to make it possible.



We have seen a strong increase in visitors as well with over 8000 visitors recorded during the year. Looking back at previous years this looks to be our busiest year since before the covid pandemic.



In 2025, we have been lucky enough to welcome some new operators to our team which has played an important part in achieving the increase in operating availability which is great news. There is still more to do in this area, and we are looking for more new operators for 2026. Please if you are interested or know someone that might be contact us on [mrg@wsrht.co.uk](mailto:mrg@wsrht.co.uk) with details.

On the maintenance side, we are currently planning our closed season 2026. We are looking to undertake some scenic improvements and some minor track modifications to ensure

the layout is good to go for the start of 2026 operating at the end of March.

This year we have put a new reporting system in place for our operators to report problems as they happen, which has helped the maintenance team to respond to issues more quickly. This will help us to decide what areas we need to focus our efforts on to make sure the layout will be reliable in 2026.

*Matt Jackson & Rob Morley*

## IT developments

Matt Sutton, website manager, and I started a programme of updating the Trust's Information Technology in the middle part of 2025. The first phase of activity for todays and our future needs has seen the moving of the Trust's email platform across to Microsoft 365; this completed at the end of December. Given the charity status of the Trust, Microsoft provide free usage of this platform.

For those unfamiliar with MS 365 it is a service offering the latest versions of Microsoft's productivity apps (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook), cloud storage (OneDrive), and collaboration tools (Teams), with continuous updates, AI features (Copilot), and security, available for personal, family, business, and enterprise use, providing access across multiple devices like PCs, Macs, tablets, and phones.

This move will enable Trustees and key members of the Trust to fully collaborate in managing the day to day running of the Trust more effectively. The next major update phase is to centralise all the Trust's important information and data using another MS product, SharePoint. This will ensure that everything is stored securely and backed up in the case of any failure of our systems.

Also, part of the IT programme will be a refresh of the web site to remove redundant material and update other material where appropriate.

Future plans include extending the Trust's presence on social media platforms to cover other demographics. At present this is through Facebook and Instagram, but increasingly other platforms appeal to different age groups. We must seek to reach these groups in the most effective ways possible. We are also exploring the creation of a member's area on the website and introducing e-commerce to make financial transactions with the trust easier.

2026 promises to be a busy time!

*Chris Darke & Matt Sutton*

## Meet the Trustees

In this edition, we profile Don Fraser, the Trust's Treasurer and Ian Coleby, its longest-serving Trustee. In the next edition, we will finish the profiles with ones of Mike Thompson and Steve Williams, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

### Don Fraser

I became the Trust treasurer in 2018. Born and bred on Merseyside I have always had an interest in railways. This started in the 1950's after reading the small Thomas the Tank Engine books in the local library I was taken to every week when my mother was renewing her library books. Locally then we had a wide range of locos to see GWR, LMS and the occasional ER mainly hauling large freight trains from the docks.

For an unknown reason I decided I wanted to be an Accountant but did not have any "O" levels on leaving school which made it difficult. I did succeed in my ambition via Home Study and Day Release and qualified as a Cost and Management Accountant. I ended studying for longer than my whole school life! My work took me to Devon via Hampshire and I retired in 2017 after 50 years of number crunching. Married with 2 children and 4 grandchildren, I still found plenty of time on my hands and saw an advert for this role, attended an Interview with Chris Austin and Steve Williams and got selected. Chris Bolt, whom I was replacing organised a very good handover and I started with what was seen as a 2 day a month role. The Trust has changed very much since then, as has this role, following Grants to develop the Gauge Museum and Covid, the receipt of funds via Legacies and changes in accounting reporting requirements for Charities. I now spend much more than 2 days a month on Trust activities.

The Trust is a very well run organisation via the 10 Trustees and an increasing number of volunteers and is well respected across the West Somerset Railway and I enjoy being a part of it. Since retiring my wife and I decided to ditch foreign holidays and see the United Kingdom, firstly trying a motor home and then a caravan. This has allowed us to visit a lot on interesting places including other heritage railways. After talking to volunteers at some of those and mentioning being a VWSR based volunteer has led to a few guided tours behind the scenes and also picking up a few ideas.

Besides my own personal role and reasons for why I volunteer to do this I find it interesting to see what other folks do and often very different to what they have done in the past.

In addition to ensuring the accurate reporting of the Trust finances and management of funds I wish to ensure that when the time comes to do away with my abacus etc I can hand things over to my successor knowing they are joining a well run Charity with many interesting things planned for the future.



## Ian Coleby

I spent my career at the UK Hydrographic Office working on the operational and side of chart production. Alongside work I developed a lifelong interest in railways, engineering and heritage, joining the West Somerset Railway as a volunteer in 1983, initially as a signaller and later serving as a Trustee, PLC Board member and briefly Chairman of the PLC. In 2017 I became Editor of the West Somerset Railway Journal. At home I have built an extensive OO gauge layout and I am building a 7.25" gauge garden line.



What is my main reason for supporting the WSR and the Heritage Trust? The WSR is a living part of West Country history and the Heritage Trust plays a vital role in safeguarding its authenticity. The Trust ensures artefacts, records and stories are preserved, protected and properly interpreted rather than being lost or diluted. I believe heritage should be accurate, accessible and actively used to educate and inspire. Supporting the Trust helps protect the Railway's long-term identity, not just its day-to-day operation.

What am I hoping to achieve as a Trustee? The Trust has recently received a significant bequest which presents a rare and important opportunity. Over the next one to two years we must ensure those funds are used wisely and strategically to help secure the long-term future of the Railway and maintain operations between Minehead and Bishops Lydeard. Personally, I will continue to publish material that documents and illustrates the Railway's history and records what we are preserving for future generations.

What I enjoy about the Heritage Trust is working with knowledgeable people who care deeply about accuracy and preservation; the sense that we are protecting genuine history rather than simply recreating nostalgia. Turning artefacts and information into something meaningful and educational. Being part of something that will endure long after us.

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Further information about the work of the Trust can be found on the Trust's website [www.wsrht.co.uk](http://www.wsrht.co.uk) and on its Facebook page.

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If you have moved house, changed your email address, or are no longer eligible for Gift Aid, please inform the Membership Secretary, Chris Bolt, at [members.wsrht.co.uk](mailto:members.wsrht.co.uk).

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If you would like to check what information we hold for you, please use the same address.

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All photos © West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust, with particular thanks to John Waters, Helen Anson, Matt Jackson and Ian Camp.



**West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust**

**Registered Charity No. 265564**



## **Membership Rules**

**(as amended 28 November 2025)**

1. There shall be two classes of Member.

**(a) Ordinary members**

2. Ordinary membership shall be open to individuals and organisations on payment of a minimum monthly donation. This may be paid annually, quarterly or monthly in advance.
3. Applications for membership shall be made in the form and in accordance with a method specified by the Directors. The membership form shall be available on request and published on the Trust's website. The Directors may only refuse applications for membership under the provisions of Article 10(2).
4. The minimum annual donation shall determined from time to time by the Directors in accordance with Article 11(5) and notified to Members. Membership will commence on receipt of the first payment.
5. Ordinary members will have the right to attend, and vote at, general meetings of the Trust. Each ordinary member shall have one vote.
6. The Directors may from time to time determine additional privileges for Members who donate more than the minimum monthly donation determined under Rule 4.

**(b) Honorary life members**

7. The Directors may appoint individuals as Honorary life members, in accordance with criteria established from time to time.
8. Honorary life members are not required to make a donation.
9. Honorary life members will have the right to attend, and vote at, general meetings of the Trust.

**(c) General**

10. All members are entitled to receive copies of the annual accounts and any annual report of the Trust. They shall also be entitled to receive copies of newsletters produced by the Trust from time to time.
11. Communication with members will be in electronic form unless a member has no email address or has specifically requested other forms of communication.
12. Members should notify any change of postal or email address to the Trust.

Made by the Trustees: 28 November 2025