

LOWDHAM RAILWAY HERITAGE

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 17 SEPTEMBER 2021

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees who served during the year	Alison Glazebrook Paul Harrison David Moore Frances Moore John Sutcliffe Janice Yelland-Sutcliffe	(Appointed: 1 March 2021) (Appointed: 29 December 2020)
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Charity number	1163610
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Companies House reference number	CE004716
Type of registration	Charitable Incorporate Organisation (CIO)

Principal address	Station House Station Road Lowdham Nottingham NG14 7DU
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Independent examiner	Paul Smith 11 Tim Lane Burton Joyce Nottingham NG14 5DR
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Introduction

The trustees present their report for the year ended 17 September 2021.

The financial statements have been prepared on a cash received and paid basis, in accordance with the charity's governing document and using the exemptions available under the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)" (as issued in October 2019).

Charitable objective

To preserve and restore for the benefit of the public the historic Victorian signal box once operational at Lowdham station in Nottinghamshire, together with the equipment contained therein, and to provide the public with access to the signal box and other relevant exhibits in order to provide demonstrations of railway signalling history and practice designed to educate and inform the public.

Key objectives

The trustees consider that the key objectives of the charity are to:

- Secure the future of the disused signal box at Lowdham.
- Relocate the signal box to allow public access to it.
- Restore, as far as possible, the signal box to a condition reflecting its use in the late 1950s.
- Allow public access to the signal box and the exhibits contained therein.
- Demonstrate the operation of railway signalling.

Achievements and performance

The year started with the final safety checks required by Network Rail being completed just in time for the booked night for the move of the signal box from its original location on Network Rail land to a new permanent home on 24th October 2020. This was completed successfully, with substantial progress achieved in making the structure weathertight for the winter.

Although we were subject to Covid restrictions to varying degrees throughout the period, our restoration fell into the 'work at commercial premises that cannot be done from home' category. Our volunteers always worked in a well-ventilated and socially distanced way to reduce the impact of the pandemic. We are happy to report that as far as we are aware, no instances of Covid infection occurred as a result of our work.

We spent a lot of time at a local workshop stripping, restoring, oiling, and painting the many window frames for the signal box, and they were all refitted just after Christmas 2020.

The spring of 2021 was taken up with timber restoration. Luckily there was not too much rot, but there was some around a front sill which had previously been replaced with cheap softwood by British Rail. Two of the main exterior beams needed some sections replacing, together with a

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number of smaller sections of timber repairs. We replaced many of the lower weatherboards, putting as many serviceable originals as possible on the front and ends of the signal box, and using new boards for the back. To get the job done quickly and cheaply we used off-the-shelf boards, with the intention of replacing them in a year or two with properly manufactured ones that will cost about four times as much and have a long lead time. Sadly, the temporary ones have shrunk, and will probably have to be replaced sooner than we had originally anticipated.

The major job of the spring following this work was the design and construction of the staircase. Here, the aim was to build something that would look right, be as true to the original design of the Midland Railway as possible and meet modern building regulations. We took an original Midland Railway drawing and rotated the staircase by 90 degrees so that it would fit within the plot of land available. We then raised the handrail to the height required by Building Control and added an extra intermediate rail. We retained the open structure of the stairs but added extra discreet bars that would meet the regulations. Finally, we beefed up the handrails to cope with the additional traffic of the visiting public when compared to the original specification designed to accommodate just the appointed signalmen with occasional visitors. Overall, we are very happy with the outcome, which has received many compliments.

Once the staircase was complete, the whole signal box needed repainting. As paint was stripped, we found that the original colours from 1896 had a dark brown throughout the interior, and on the external frame. There was a pale yellow on the weatherboarding. We also found many layers of green on the frame, and various shades of cream on the boarding. There was also evidence that the signal box had spent a short while in two-tone grey, probably in the 1950s, before reverting to green and cream. Although the period we have chosen to portray is the 1950s, we decided upon the green and cream colour scheme as that was most popular in a Facebook poll which considered what would look good as well as what was historically authentic. As we were doing this, we decided that the upper cladding needed replacing as the existing cladding had largely rotted at its base. We ordered a quantity of accoya wood, given its durability, and used it to replace most of the back and windward end. We then re-used the best of the original cladding on the front and end that does not get the worst of the prevailing winds.

We rebuilt the lever frame and set about restoring the interior. In choosing to portray the signal box in the 1950s, before the goods yard closed in 1964, we are able to show a variety of signalling equipment, including much of that originally installed, but also some of the piecemeal modernisation that had occurred by that date.

We were very lucky to be given a 1969 photograph of the interior of the signal box on the day of signalman Jack Hammond's retirement, after 46 years of work on the railways without a single day off sick. Significantly, it shows all the equipment on the block shelf, and we have been able to recreate it almost exactly.

We are also fortunate in being given three pieces of equipment originally in use at Lowdham. A block instrument and bell were retained by a former signalman when they were removed in 1973, and following his death over 20 years ago, his family gave them to us. Additionally, a power indicator was kept by the young British Rail employee who removed them in the course of his work, and he gave it to us

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Public benefit

We have worked with the East Midlands Railway Station Adopters on a number of projects. The most ambitious so far was events to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the opening of the railway in August 1846. As the progress on the box was such that we would be able to welcome our first visitors in August, we decided to hold a full week of open days for the event, and this was very successful. We had around 300 visitors in the week and found that most were still interested in staying longer after their 30-minute booked slots. Almost everyone said that until then, they had no idea what a signaller did, or that it was such a critical, responsible, and involved job.

Since August 2021, we have continued with interior works – gradually improving the way we simulate the operation of the signal box and connecting up signals outdoors to be operated by the levers, and electrical equipment inside so that it works realistically.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the support we have received from the public, and from the railway community. We would also like to thank the band of hard-working volunteers who have jointly given over 1,000 hours of effort to the project during the course of the year, the Covid pandemic notwithstanding.

Financial review

The key features of the year from a financial viewpoint were the significant costs associated with the move of the signal box in October 2020 to its new location and its subsequent restoration.

The grant of £4,000 towards the costs of restoration from The Pilgrim Trust awarded last year was received this year. We also applied for and were awarded a grant for £3,000 from the Garfield Weston Trust, also received this year. Other significant sources of income were Gift Aided donations from a couple of generous supporters (£13,300) and the reclaimed tax on it (£4,700). A further £600 was donated by visitors.

Although the income from sales did not exceed the cost of sales, we ended the year with £750 of stock that was sold early in the next financial year (Nov 2020).

The significant one-off cost this year was that associated with the moving of the signal box. In round figures, this was £16,000 for the physical move (truck and crane hire, contractors, road closure, etc.), and a little over £6,000 for the consultant engineers to plan the move and satisfy Network Rail's requirements. We spent nearly £6,500 on the restoration (which included £750 of vintage parts) and £1,250 on building the new staircase.

For future years, we expect our running costs to be around £1,000, most of which is insurance, and our income to be mostly visitor donations, with some additional expenditure on paint, maintenance, and minor improvements.

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Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Lowdham Railway Heritage

I report to the trustees on my examination of the receipts and payments of Lowdham Railway Heritage (the charity) for the year ended 17 September 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (a charitable incorporated organisation), you are responsible for the preparation of the receipts and payments account in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not required to draw up full accruals accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act) and further that the charity is not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act but is eligible for independent examination. I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination, I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income is less than £250,000, your examiner does not need to be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. However, you have elected to have the financial statements examined by a person qualified by virtue of s145(3) of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I have relevant knowledge and experience.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. The receipts and payments accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. The receipts and payments accounts do not comply with the requirements of the 2011 Act; or
4. Full accruals based financial statements should have been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).
5. I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.



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12 April 2022

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Receipts and Payments for the year ended 17 September 2021

There are no restrictions placed on any of the funds received by the charity	2021 £	2020 £
Receipts		
Grants	7,000	1,962
Gift aided donations	13,295	5,376
Other donations	607	40
Gift aid tax reclaimed	4,740	-
Sale of cast signs	1,480	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	27,122	7,378
Asset and investment sales	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
Total receipts	<hr/>	<hr/>
	27,122	7,378
Payments		
Restoration costs	5,163	3,340
Relocation costs	22,377	-
Cost of cast signs	1,572	-
Tools	640	178
Vintage parts	754	-
Running costs	823	-
Staircase materials	1,257	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	32,586	3,518
Asset and investment purchases	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
Total payments	<hr/>	<hr/>
	32,586	3,518
Net (payments)/receipts	(5,464)	3,860
Bank balances brought forward	<hr/>	<hr/>
	6,587	2,727
Bank balances carried forward	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,122	6,587

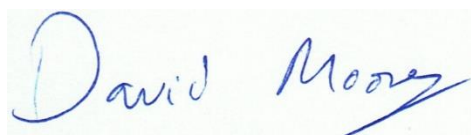
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Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 17 September 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Cash funds		
Barclays Bank plc	966	6,567
Nochex	157	20
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,123	6,587
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Assets retained for the charity's own use		
Gate wheel	200	200
Signal	50	50
Chain pulleys	50	50
Ground frame	100	100
Land	5,900	5,900
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total fixed assets	6,300	6,300
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Liabilities	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total net assets	7,023	12,887
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Approved by the trustees on 12 April 2022



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Trustee