

# Trustees Annual Report 2023-2024

## Lowdham Railway Heritage

CIO 1163610

### Aims

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.

### Progress in the Year from Oct 2023 to Sept 2024

Last year we progressed these projects: on-going restoration work, erecting the new telegraph pole, replacing the temporary wooden cladding on the lower half of the rear wall, restoring and fitting a pair of gate stops. Further electronics components have been purchased

In the early part of the year, we completed the assembly of the telegraph pole furniture, and arranged supervision from Network Rail to safely erect it in the traditional way, using block and tackle, and lots of muscle, rather than spending money on hiring a Hiab lorry. The telegraph pole really adds to the visual interest of the outside of the box, as telegraph poles with insulators are almost unheard of outside the heritage railway scene.

In the summer, we were offered at a very reasonable price a pair of Midland Railway gate stops and the automatic stop rising mechanism. This is a machine on the floor downstairs that raises the gate stops in the road as the gates approach them to avoid road users tripping over them. The machine and stops were rusted solid, but fully restored to operation in time for the September Heritage Open Days.

Since the year end, we have replaced the **weatherboarding** on the lower back face of the box with proper boards with an overlap. The old boards were available cheaply, and more importantly, quickly, to make the box weatherproof but unfortunately, have since shrunk, leaving gaps.

The box nameboards were dismantled and painted.

We have had a number of special-interest groups book private visits. In May we welcomed Calverton U3A, Pentagon Local History Society, WEA, and Lowdham Primary School. In June, we welcomed the GCR trackside group and Derbyshire Archaeological Society.

The year finished with Heritage Open Days, which were very successful as last year. Our normal visitors are either local, or have a railway connection. HODs bring in people from further afield who have an interest in heritage of any variety. This year, we interspersed the open days with a 'signalling gala' with an intensive Monday morning timetable from 1954, made more interesting by the late running of a key train!

In October, a steam excursion from Birmingham to Lincoln passed Lowdham, and open days to see the train were very popular.

Next year we see two significant railway anniversaries, the Newark Brake Trials of 1875 (150 years) and the first commercial railway, the Stockton to Darlington which opened in 1825 (200 years). There will be two new information boards out on the station platform, and we will try to incorporate information about the two anniversaries into our open day script.

We would like to acknowledge the support we have received from the public, and from the railway community. It has been a real pleasure to welcome visitors to the box, and to bring so much to life. A special joy is when former railwaymen or signalmen visit.

## Future projects / progress since year end

There is a lot of work to do on the **simulator project**, although very little further expense.

Also next year, we plan to replace the Up distant lever with an uncut lever, and to fit a weight bar outside so it feels right. We have been promised a three-aspect colour light head, similar to that which formed the Down Home and intermediate distant (repeater for the starter) and used to be at the far side of the dual carriageway bridge.

There is some work to be done on cranks to the lead-out in front of the box,

We have joined a partnership with openSignalBox.org, a group of enthusiasts with signalling, electronics and computing skills aiming to produce a free-to-use toolkit to help create signalling simulations. We now have most of the electronics we will need to make it all work – just a large chunk of time and effort now. Progress on the 3D games software part of the sim has been disappointingly slow.

We are actively pursuing the possibility of licensing the old dock siding from NR/EMR, but no progress has been made in the year.

Eventually, we would like to replace the plastic **gutters and downpipes** with cast iron, although that will be an expensive project requiring grant aid.

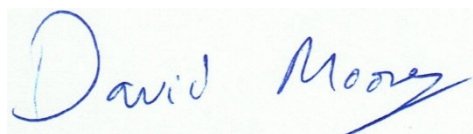
## Finance

In 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.

In the year, we spend around £2,000 on restoration, cladding, telegraph pole parts, simulator parts and the gate stops mechanism, and this brings the big restoration expenditure close to an end.

As of December 2024, we have almost £700 in the bank and no large foreseen costs, with the insurance for the year already paid.

## Approved by the trustees



David Moore, Chair of Trustees

5 December 2024

## Accounts for Lowdham Railway Heritage, 2023-2024

Lowdham Railway Heritage was incorporated on 17 Sept 2015.

### Income

Gift Aid Donations	700.00	
Small Donations	1,019.82	
Nochex Donation	38.64	
Tax reclaim	444.53	
Sale of signs etc	10.00	
<b>Total income</b>		<b>2,212.99</b>

### Expenditure

Restoration	1,049.68	
Telegraph Pole	150.44	
Simulator parts	488.99	
Vintage parts	305.00	
Running costs	851.24	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>2,845.35</b>
<b>Deficit for the year</b>		<b>632.36</b>

### Balance Sheet

Bank at start of year	2,119.83	
Nochex at start of year	19.22	
<b>Start of year funds (1/10/23)</b>		<b>2,139.05</b>
Surplus for the year		632.36
Bank at end of year	1,506.69	
Nochex at end of year	0.00	
<b>End of year funds (1/10/24)</b>	<b>1,506.69</b>	<b>1,506.69</b>

### Current Assets

<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>0.00</b>
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### Current Liabilities

<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>0.00</b>
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<b>Cash + Assets - Liabilities</b>	<b>1,506.69</b>
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