



Annual General Meeting 2024
To be held at 7.30pm on 12th September 2024
online via Zoom

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. To approve the minutes of the 2023 AGM
3. To receive and approve the Accounts for the year ended 31st July 2024
4. To re-elect Yvonne Hin as Trustee
5. To re-elect Glyn Pollington as Trustee
6. To approve the appointment of Andrew Hedges as independent examiner
7. To receive and approve the Trustees' report

No official motions having been received from the membership, the meeting will conclude with an informal (un-minuted) discussion.

2. Combe Rail AGM 2023 minutes 14th September 2023 19.30 by Zoom

present

Trustees: John Burch, Richard Heacock, Glyn Pollington Members: Gary Best, Peter Fisher

1. apologies: M. Brockington, N. Jackson, N. Williamson, A. Cooke, M. Faultless
2. approve 2022 minutes: proposed Peter Fisher, seconded GB
3. approve 2022-2023 accounts: proposed Glyn Pollington seconded Peter Fisher
4. re-elect JB: proposed Gary Best seconded Glyn Pollington
5. re-elect RH: proposed Peter Fisher seconded Gary Best
6. approve Andy Hedges as auditor: proposed Glyn Pollington seconded Peter Fisher
- 7 approve Chair's report: proposed Gary Best seconded Peter Fisher

3. AUDITED ACCOUNTS

1st August 2023 - 31st July 2024

1st August 2022 - 31st July 2023

INCOME

subscriptions BACS	110	130
subscriptions Paypal (net)	415.18	540.76
Gift Aid	-	399.93
VAT repayment	235.50	804.30
Grants/sundry	345.73	50
TOTAL	1106.41	1924.99

PAYMENTS

HRA subscription	90	75
insurance	179.84	179.84
heritage activity (inc VAT)	1242	4750.80
printing	147	-
venue hire	180	-

TOTAL	1838.04	5005.64
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opening bal 1st Aug 2023	3126.31	6206.96
income	1106.41	1924.99
expenditure	-1838.04	-5005.64
closing balance 31st July 2024	2393.88	3126.31

Report of the Trustees of Combe Rail CIO for 2023-2024

Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees of Combe Rail in 2023-2024 were Richard Heacock (Treasurer) Yvonne Hin (Secretary) Lewis Daniels, John Burch (Chair) Glyn Pollington and David Luggar. Under UK charity law, two trustees must be elected/re-elected at each AGM. Yvonne Hin and Glyn Pollington are standing for re-election. No additional applications to become a trustee were received from the membership.

2024 Chair's Report by John Burch

Chair of trustees, Combe Rail

Following the 2023 AGM on 14th September last year the next project was to progress the demonstration track panel plan. The impact of Covid had not only brought our original plans to a halt, but also provided financial challenges for the West Somerset Railway. Members will recall that we had been made a kind offer of a donated track panel by the WSR, but other more pressing priorities moved this to the back burner. Finally in November 2023 we reached agreement with the WSR that if we paid the cost of the transport to the site, they would find the labour to disassemble a track panel for transport. We also asked that the 32ft rail sections each be cut into two. This would a) make them easier to transport and b) would allow us to provide a demonstration fishplate joint at our demonstration site.

So, it was then that at 1107 on Tuesday 7th November a DAF CF tri axle flat-bed truck provided by Taunton based R & A Commercials arrived at the Lee Bridge access point to deliver our completely knocked down (CKD) track panel. The truck was fitted with an Italian built Fassi lifting crane. Myself and fellow Combe Rail Trustee Glyn Pollington accompanied the truck onto the track bed. We then attempted to drive as far as possible with the load, but it soon became clear that the overhanging foliage was going to prevent the truck from getting too far along the track bed. We reluctantly decided to drop the track components at a suitable location until we could find an alternative means of transporting them to our build site. An hour and 15 minutes later the operation was completed. The track panel includes a mix of GWR and BR (WR) chairs. This may not seem appropriate, but the Ilfracombe line came under WR control in its final decade and GWR trains had running rights along

the line. The heavy track sections were laid across the sleepers to secure them. The fishplates and rail clips were safely stored at a different location.

The weather conditions deteriorated in the weeks after that and our CKD components remained at the Lee Bridge end of the line until weather improved. In the mean time we sought a solution to our need to move the items to the build site. We were delighted when Andrew Moulton from North Devon District Council came to our aid. Andrew looks after the foot/cycle way on the old track bed and offered to find us a contractor to move the CKD components and cover the cost too! We just had to wait for a mutually convenient date when the contractor could fit the work in between other contracts.

So, on the morning of Friday 1st March 2024, Andy Adams arrived at Lee Bridge to meet Glyn and I once again. He had his powerful John Deere tractor fitted with a load arm and towing a trailer. The sleepers and rails were carefully loaded on to the trailer and within about 20 minutes we were on our way. Because of the limited space to turn the tractor and trailer at our build site, Andy actually very skilfully reversed the trailer all the way to the site including through Slade Tunnel. Just over 30 minutes later we had arrived on site and began unloading the CKD components nearby the build site. We needed to place the components a short distance from the track bed site because we will need to completely re-lay the ballast bed before we can lay the sleepers and then put the track in place.

One of our other projects has been to update the 4 QR coded interpretation points along the track. On Sunday 5th May 2024 I fixed our new vinyl QR code stickers to 3 of the 4 plates. Unfortunately, the plate adjacent to the track bed build site had become detached from the track bed wall during the storms in the Winter months. This has been recovered and is now in safe keeping awaiting re-installation.

The big day this year came on Saturday 20th July when Combe Rail commemorated the 150th anniversary of the opening of the line with a special free show at the Landmark Centre in Ilfracombe. We had a display of 3 model railway layouts, including one of Ilfracombe station. We also had 5 stands and even had a visit from Queen Victoria and Prince Albert and their entourage! It was a good day and we saw a constant procession of visitors who wanted to find out more about our work. We certainly picked up some new members on the day and had some fascinating discussions about the line gathering more interesting historical information.

To top off the day I had been invited to give a talk about the railway at the adjacent Ilfracombe Museum that evening. It was standing room only for my well supported presentation which was most satisfying. The museum had put on a brilliant display for the 150th anniversary and their existing railway displays made for a fascinating accompaniment to our exhibition next door.

One piece of good news gleaned at this event was that we were shown photographic evidence that our Outer Home signal lamp has actually been lit. We had become concerned since installing the signal and post that the solar powered light hadn't been working. Our contractor, Greenspace, seemed to think this was because the lamp may have been left stored in the dark at the fabricator's works during the period in the winter of 2022/23. It was thought the battery may have been exhausted by not being connected to the solar panel during this time. My observations since it had been installed had shown no signs of life. It seems though that recent sunshine has brought new life to the lamp and it has been photographed operating at last! It would be nice to arrange a formal 're-commissioning' of the lamp by Sue Bidgood who donated the signal arm to Combe Rail following the passing of her brother, who had been the keeper since the closure of the line.

So, what next? Well, the main priority will be to actually construct our demonstration track panel. This will need a group of volunteers. We have already secured the assistance of our good friends at the Bideford and Instow Railway group who will loan us their ballast cleaner. The project will almost certainly require several work party dates because we need to clean and re-lay the ballast, then lay the sleepers and finally put the rails in place. We desperately need some volunteers so any members who can spare some time so that we can try and co-ordinate a work party or two would be much appreciated.

Once that project is completed, we'd like to arrange some tours of the track bed following the very successful trial run last year. Finally, I'd like to thank my fellow trustees for their hard work in keeping Combe Rail alive. In particular I'd like to thank Glyn Pollington for coming out to get his hands dirty on several occasions to help move our track panel into place. I must also once again say a very big thank you to Richard Heacock for continuing to produce the excellent illustrated and well received Devon Belle newsletter.

John Burch

Chair of trustees, Combe Rail

Approved by the Trustees 16th August 2024

Combe Rail CIO - Annual General Meeting 12th September 2024
Ballot Paper/ Proxy Form

If you are unable to attend the AGM, but wish to exercise your membership right to vote, you can use this form to do one of three things:

- 1) appoint a proxy to attend the meeting and vote on your behalf
- 2) appoint the Chairman to vote as they see fit
- 3) register your votes for or against, on the agenda items (below)

Proxy forms should be sent to: The Secretary, Combe Rail, Flat 5, Holly House, Avenue Rd, Ilfracombe EX34 9AT or by email info@combe-rail.org.uk to arrive no later than 2pm on 10th September 2024

1) I,.....

membership number.....being a member of Combe Rail

hereby appoint (name)

of (address).....

as my proxy, to vote in my name and on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of Combe Rail on 12th September, and at any adjournment thereof.

	FOR	AGAINST
2) I appoint the Chairman to vote as they see fit (place cross in box)	☐	☐
3) I wish to register my votes as follows (place cross in box)		
Item 2: Approve minutes of 2023 AGM	☐	☐
Item 3: Approve draft accounts for year ended 31st July 2024	☐	☐
Item 4: Re-elect Yvonne Hin as Trustee	☐	☐
Item 5: Re-elect Glyn Pollington as Trustee	☐	☐
Item 6: Approve the appointment of Andrew Hedges as independent examiner of the accounts	☐	☐
Item 7: Approve the Trustees' Report	☐	☐

Signature.....

Date.....