

The Crampton Locomotive Trust

Annual Report – 2025.

1. Finances.

The Trust continues to rely on the generosity of the private donors who have stepped in, when requested, to provide funding for specific needs. By donor request, these funds have been provided directly to those providing the services, rather than passing through the Trust's bank account with the extra bureaucracy that this would entail. To date, VAT has been paid on all such sums, but steps will shortly be taken to reclaim taxation.

The Trustees have agreed to change our bank account, leaving Metrobank and opening a new account with CAFbank. Our ongoing correspondence and assistance from the owners, the Charities Aid Foundation, has led to the conclusion that such a move would be of benefit to the aims and objectives of the Trust.

The Trust is in the process of organizing a new system of appeals for public and private donations to the locomotive project. Details of the system will be published in due course on the Trust's new website: www.cramptonlocomotivetrust.org A brief summary follows:

a. Membership of the Crampton Supporters' Association.

For a donation of £10.00, individuals may become Supporters of the Trust, and will receive a membership card, renewable for £10 for subsequent years. They will be entitled to access the Supporters' Area of the website, enabling them to read 'The Big Wheel' online magazine and to send in comments or request to write articles and/or send photos for publication. They will also be entitled to attend meetings and take part in special visits or excursions. They may propose themselves, with support from other members, for adoption as Trustees and/or offer their services to give practical help to the Trust.

b. Sponsorship of Components of the Locomotive.

Individuals, or groups, may pay for major items essential to the construction of the locomotive. In addition to the facilities offered to individual Supporters, they will receive an A4 full colour certificate recording their donation, updates on the making of the component, and an invitation to visit Northern Heritage Engineering, tour the works and be photographed with their sponsored component.

c. Corporate Sponsorship.

Commercial Companies, Trade Unions, Academic Organisations and Charitable Organisations will be approached by the Trust, requesting sponsorship for our objectives. Any sponsorship will entitle the organization to publicise their donation and use our logo in their publicity in an appropriate manner, and the Trust will likewise publicise their support.

d. Apprenticeships and Training Courses.

The Trust is committed to assist, in any practical way, the establishment and development of any training course which enables trainees to acquire the skills necessary to build, repair and maintain heritage railway vehicles and equipment. Any donations, or help in kind, will be recognized on our website and in the Big Wheel online magazine. Representatives of such organisations would also be entitled to Supporter status, and to referral, where appropriate, for adoption as Trustees.

2. Trustees.

After ten years of assistance to the project, Martin Staniforth has had to step down as a Trustee. We thank him for his support and advice, and wish him well in his demanding work in diesel and steam locomotive restoration.

Fortunately, we are able to welcome Seb Brennan and Alan Saunders as new Trustees. Seb brings not only much needed expertise in administration, but also considerable knowledge of railway history, operations and impressive expertise in 2mm scale railway modelling. Alan is an academic with links to 7 universities and considerable experience in organizing academic and practical training courses.

3. Locomotive Construction.

After years of preparation, and, notably, the production of a full set of engineering drawings and a certified boiler design, the Trust took the major step forward of commissioning the actual construction of the replica Crampton Locomotive. The locomotive will be built by Northern Heritage Engineering Ltd. of Darlington, a company with a wealth of experience in steam locomotive construction and in using modern innovation alongside traditional skills.

The firm is headed by Mark Ashton and David Wood, and has recently featured prominently in railway history by constructing an entire replica train for the 200th. Anniversary of the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. The success of this event is in no small measure due to their hard work and multiple skills. Other notable projects have been the construction of the replica of the locomotive 'Blythe' for the Southwold Railway and the ongoing 'Mountaineer' replica for the Ffestiniog Railway. They have particular expertise in designing and constructing steam boilers, and so it was natural that the first phase of Crampton construction was its impressive and unusual boiler and firebox.

Mention must also be made of the use of 3D computer modelling in concert with traditional milling and machining work. It will be possible to transfer Graham Morris and Dave Potter's drawings to a CAD 3D programme and actually move parts together on the screen to check whether they fit perfectly or not. This facility will save hours of work.

The boiler contract was signed in September, and work began almost immediately with the cutting and rolling of the boiler barrel and the cutting and shaping of the outer firebox. It's now up to us to ensure that finance is available for each stage of this first task. Completion of the boiler will be followed by the cutting and construction of the frames, including the unusual curved spacers. William Cook are already interested in tendering for the patterns and casting of the wheelsets, and a South African firm will produce the tyres.

4. Support for Trainees.

A meeting will be arranged with the Institute of Mechanical and Electrical Engineers to explore the possibilities of sponsorship for the locomotive construction and also for co-operation in promoting training courses for students wishing to acquire heritage railway skills. Until then, interest has been expressed in modest sponsorships for individual students, especially regarding the Stainmore East project.

5. New Website.

Thanks are due to Guy Willets, our new Webmaster, who has prepared an excellent new website which is due to go online very shortly. The new site gives full details of the project and also a full background to Thomas Crampton and his work, including many new illustrations. A revised section allows for full details and photos of the forthcoming boiler work to be displayed, and there will be full details of how to contribute to the cost of the project, including commercial sponsorship.

Mike Pease

Chair

October 2025