

# The Gelert Trust – Annual Report 2024

Registered Charity 1171674

38 Woodbourne Road,  
Smethwick B67 5LZ

## Trustees:

David Allan, Lewis Dittrich, Neil Evans, Graham Farr, Andrew Goodwin, John Kerr, Bob Menzies, Martyn Owen, Nigel Watkinson, Mark Seale, Myles Jones.

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## Introduction

2024 was another satisfactory year for The Gelert Trust. Gelert's operation at the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway (WHR) has continued, providing opportunities for both training and education, as well as operational experience.

The Trust continues to explore ways of securing Gelert's future, how best to celebrate the locomotive's rich heritage and educate a wider audience about the story of this popular locomotive. The Trust has worked closely with the WHHR to establish a clear partnership in maintaining and celebrating Gelert which has become popular both with volunteers and with visitors to the railway. When not operating or under maintenance Gelert is stored under cover in the Museum of the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway.



Photo –

## Education and Involvement

A volunteer has offered support in updating the current website. Commitment from trustees and the volunteers have opened discussions about how best to use this, both for attracting involvement and for education. It is also hoped to develop donation facilities, creating an online shop and other key elements to improve the site. Traffic will be exchanged with the Facebook page when amendments have been made.

During 2024, working parties have continued, both to deal with ongoing routine maintenance, and with ongoing engineering improvements. Work schedules always need to be well communicated to ensure that all Trustees are given the opportunity to offer their support or guidance. Continuing to improve this will be worked on during the 2025 operating season so that new volunteers can be well supported by more experienced Trustees.

The practical use of the engine for operations is always defined by the structure of the WHHR timetable. However, the WHHR has almost exclusively depended on the use of Gelert due to the non-availability of other motive power during 2024, thereby continuing to provide opportunities for training and increasing experience.

There was slight reduction in Gelert's use in normal service, from 40 to 37 days, due to changes in the WHHR timetable, so training opportunities were slightly fewer. However, the training programme was still well maintained, with 9 of the 37 operating days being also training days.

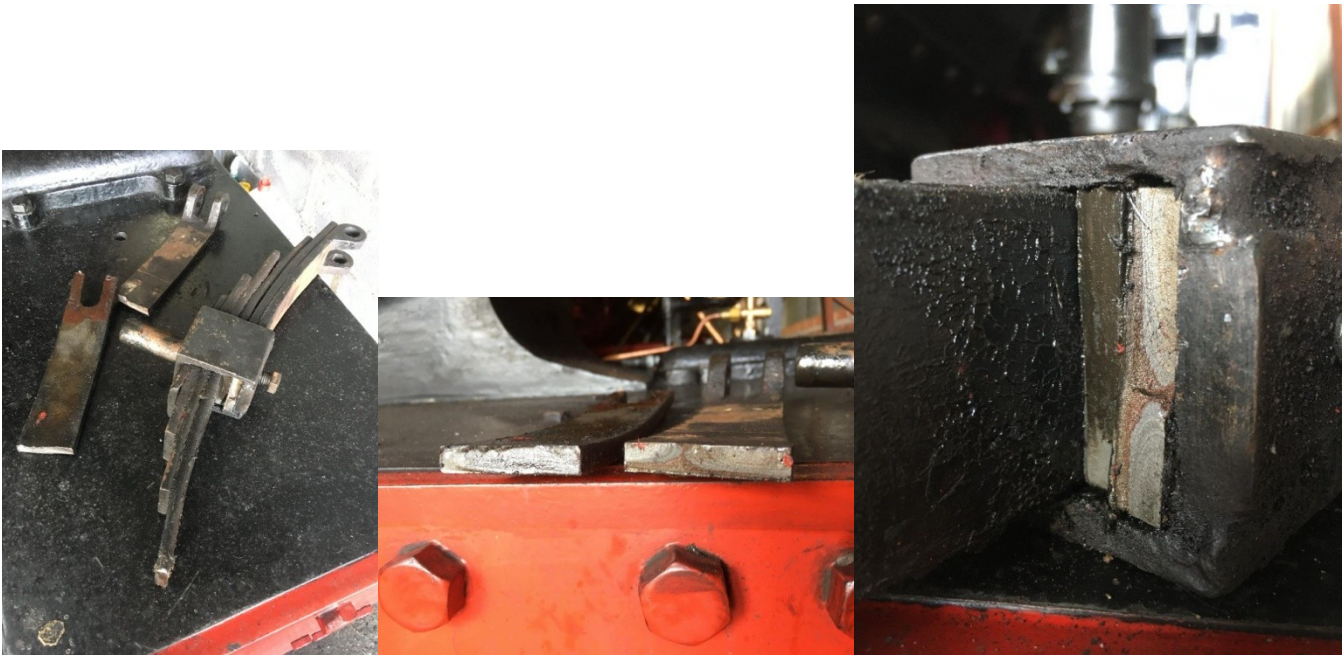
In addition, the programme of footplate experiences and taster sessions continues to be popular. This is particularly important for the Trust, to share knowledge of steam locomotive operation and maintenance with those who may not have memories of such things from their youth.



Photo -

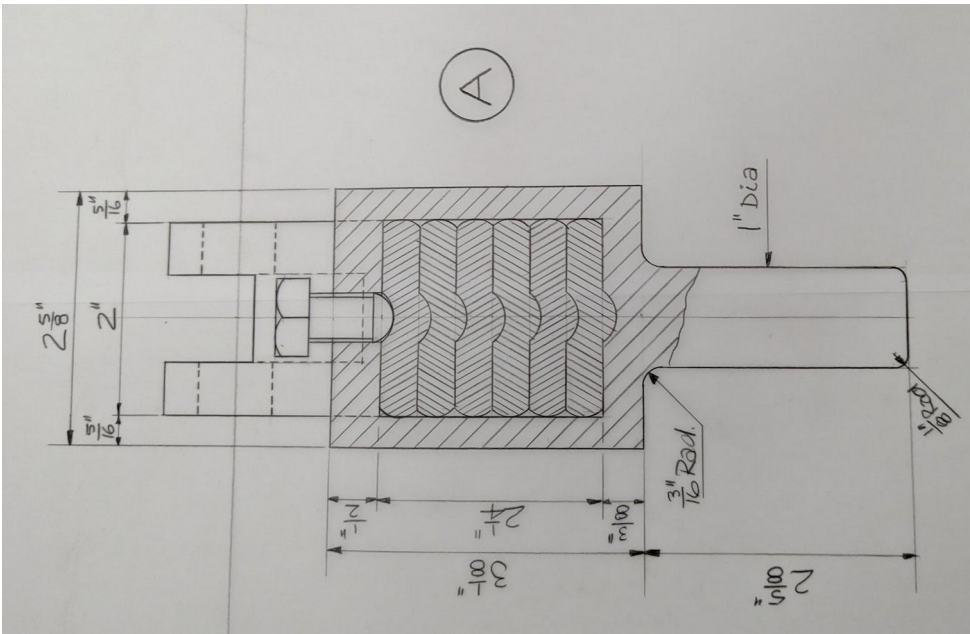
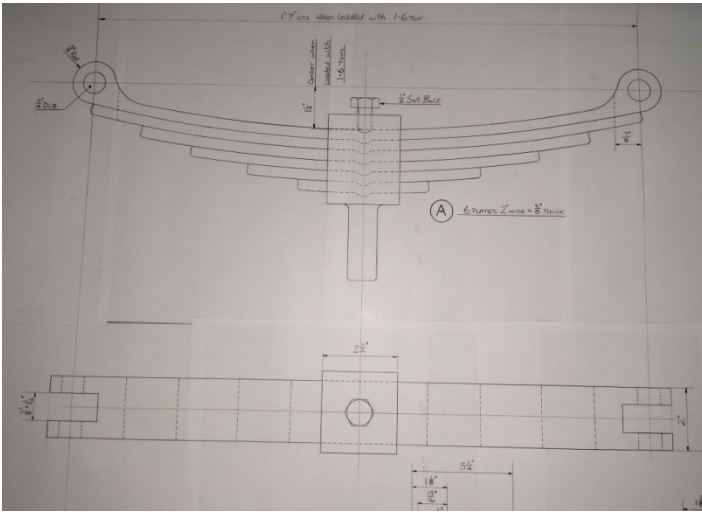
## Engineering and Maintenance

Gelert performed well during the 2023 season. However, there was one significant issue that the Trust had to deal with. During the early part of the season Gelert's pony truck leaf spring broke whilst in service. The operating crew at the time dealt with the failure well and the locomotive was safely disposed of and a plan to repair was put together working with the Welsh Highland Railway Ltd. The photos below show the damaged spring:



Using drawings from the trust's archives we were able to get new leaves from the spring specially made and have the spring repaired. Along with the repair two spare springs have been made in case of a future failure. The drawing used for the repair came from a collection of drawings made when the locomotive was first restored. Below are the images of the drawing used:





Once completed the new spring was fitted by volunteers in the Welsh Highland Railway Ltd Locomotive Department and included support from trustees, the new spring arrived within a few weeks enabling the locomotive to host a driver experience day. Below are the images of the new spring fitted to the locomotive:



Following the spring replacement the locomotive performed well throughout the season with only regular maintenance performed by the crew operating the loco. During the end of the season the locomotive went through the usual winter maintenance in preparation for the following year.

## Funding and Finance

The financial viability of the operation of Gelert remains a key priority for the trust. In 2024 the Trust continued its work with the WHHR to investigate the WHHRs contribution to the locomotive ten-year overhaul, which is now only two years away. The trust believes that the best way to celebrate and educate others about Gelert is through its continued operation in a public environment where adults and children can see, hear, and smell the locomotive, interacting with it and being inspired by an industry of yesteryear, inspiring the community of today. Our work with the WHHR and ensuring there is a financial commitment for Gelert remained a key priority for 2024, alongside seeking to develop a raft of other funding initiatives





Photo -

## Social Media

Following from last year the Trust uses a Facebook page as its main media outlet, it is used not only to promote Gelert but also to detail the volunteer work which goes into maintaining and running it. Regular updates have been posted of the winter work and advertising when Gelert has been running on the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway. Included in these updates are means of inquiring about volunteering in any aspects of Gelert at the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway. It attracts a significant and growing audience and engagement, of which the main age groups are 25-34 and 65+. The posts are regularly shared into groups dedicated to Railways such as ours giving us a bigger reach into showing Gelert and its history. The Facebook page has grown with it now having now has 1,812 likes compared to 1,087 likes by the end of 2023.

Facebook is regularly used for organizing volunteer work parties particularly in the wintertime when the major maintenance is undertaken. An email group overlaps with that of the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway and is also used for internal organization of work parties so Gelert can be maintained using the volunteer labour we have most effectively. Discussions continue how to improve promotion of Gelert and The Trust, using both this and the development of the website.

## Preserving Gelert's History

The trust is committed to developing methods of safely storing key documents to the continuing story of Gelert. An online 'cloud' system is being used to manage historical archive documents, such as drawing, previous orders, key letters and correspondence and keep current trust documents such as meeting record, financial records, and any current records of the trusts activities, which will then form an historical record in the future.

This will also be used for collecting and preserving information on the history and continuing story of Gelert. It is planned for the website to display much of this information so that it can be available to as wide an audience as possible.

The information boards provided in 2021 to give passengers details of the historical significance of Gelert when not in use and on display continue to be updated with information on Gelert's history.

## The Future

Discussions continue on how to promote Gelert and the Trust, the use of the Facebook page has been a continued success with engagement expanding.

Growing involvement in the work of the Trust is also an ongoing priority. The Trustees will continue to seek to appoint further Trustees in the coming year, both to increase numbers, and particularly to increase participation by younger members.

The trust believes that the best way to celebrate and educate others about Gelert's history, and the traditional skills involved in operating and maintaining it, is through its continued operation in a public environment where adults and children can see, hear, and smell the locomotive, interacting with it and learning about an industry of yesterday, inspiring the community of today, aided by modern tools where appropriate.

Even after the end of the pandemic, it has continued to be a challenge to engage and encourage new volunteers to work with the trust in the maintenance and development work on Gelert, and recovery is taking some time. However, it is pleasing that progress has continued to be steady during 2024.



Photo -



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name  
**The GELERT Trust**

No (if any)  
1171074

## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period  
from

Period start date  
01/01/2024

To

Period end date  
31/12/2024

### Section A Receipts and payments


	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Dontions	-	-	-	1,060	950
Gift Aid received	-	-	-	-	630
Gift aid interest	-	-	-	-	17
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	-	-	-	1,060	1,597
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total receipts</b>	-	-	-	1,060	1,597
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Bank charges (Robbery)	60	-	-	60	60
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	60	-	-	60	60
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total payments</b>	60	-	-	60	60
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	- 60	-	-	1,000	1,537
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	-	-	-	-	5,451
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	- 60	-	-	6,451	5,451



## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	6,451	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		L C DITTRICH	3/7/25