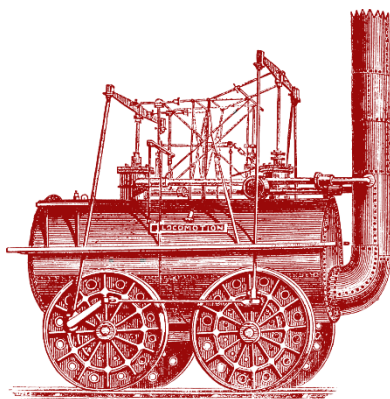


Charity Registration Number: 1177252

Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway

**Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the Year 27/09/2023 to 26/09/2024**



**Friends of the
Stockton &
Darlington Railway**
www.SDR1825.org.uk

1. Introduction

This fifth Annual Report is an account of the activities of the Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway (FSDR), for the year 27th September 2023 to 26th September 2024. The FSDR year runs from the anniversary of the opening of the railway on 27th September 1825.

The Friends became a constituted group in 2013 and a registered charity in 2018. The particular legal form of the charity is as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

This Annual Report reflects a year of progress and development following the COVID pandemic which continues to impact on activity in terms of volunteer numbers and activities. Nevertheless, significant progress is being made on a number of fronts once again in particular our participation in numerous working groups with partners in local authorities and government agencies in the planning for the S&DR bicentenary in 2025 and in putting in place a lasting legacy beyond.

Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	To advance the education of the public about the Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR) and its seminal role in the development of the modern railway through its national and international influence and the conservation of the structures, archives and artefacts of the S&DR.
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2. Acknowledgements.

As ever, the work of the FSDR would not be possible without the significant support and work of many people. We work with many individuals, communities, and organisations and while there is always a danger in missing out someone, we would in particular like to thank the following for continued support and participation;

- The Trustees and our many other volunteers within our Area Groups, those who attend our meetings and events, or simply follow us on Facebook. Those, whose physical and administrative tasks have kept the charity growing and our objectives to be worked towards.
- The staff and elected members of Durham County Council staff, Darlington Borough Council, Stockton Borough Council and the Tees Valley Combined Authority who continue to support us in our efforts and to work in partnership, together with institutions such as the staff of the SMG at Locomotion in Shildon.
- The local organisations, businesses and communities along the S&DR who have provided us with physical help and support.
- To those who have provided funding for our work, in particular this year to Husqvarna, A.V Dawson, Durham County Council, Darlington Brough Council. Stockton Borough Council, Rail Heritage Trust, Headley Trust, National Lottery Heritage Fund and the many private donations to our Save Heighington Station campaign.

3. Chair's Report.

As I write this report to be presented at our 2024 AGM in November, a quick check of the calendar tells me that by this time next year the Bicentenary and its events will be over. Hopefully we'll all have thoroughly enjoyed a festival stretching from March to October and will have many wonderful memories. 2025 is not however the end of the work of the Friends of the S&DR it is in many ways just the start. Working and lobbying with our partners in local authorities, Historic England and others over the last decade we have achieved a great deal, and after 2025 we want to see the new museum facilities prospering, the S&DR walking/Cycling trail managed and cared for, events, education and historic structural conservation on-going.

I'm pleased to say that our on-going partnership with the councils of Durham, Darlington and Stockton continues and we are represented on the Rail Heritage Board which is steering 2025 and longer-term celebration and conservation of the S&DR. As in any partnership we are often required to keep many matters confidential. The board have been helpful in many and various ways to the Friends and have this year supported us financially and have secured the transfer of the privately owned Stockton & Darlington Railway trademark to the Friends for our future use.

Time this year has therefore been spent on a number of specific, long-term projects. The first of these is a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. With generous financial support from Durham, Darlington and Stockton Councils, we appointed Tricolor Associates to help us develop this bid to identify the best way to take forward long term management of the S&DR, evolving the Friends as a single focus charitable body to develop that long term approach. Well, I'm pleased to tell you that our bid was successful and we have been awarded a grant of £238,000 to help us develop a project to take this forward and make sure what we aspire to do is both sustainable and achievable. This will include the following broad areas over the next two years.

- Appointment of a full time Project officer.
- Enhanced hours for our current Secretary.
- Production of a Conservation Management Plan for the line and creation of a GIS database to manage it.
- In partnership with Durham, Darlington and Stockton Councils the creation of a Business Plan to identify how this will be managed and funded in the medium to long term.

Volunteers, supporters and partnerships will be a big part of this so we'll be consulting and asking everyone for their thoughts and help in the coming months. Parts of this development will also see us take forward a project with Darlington Council for the restoration of part of Edward Pease's house on Northgate. This will become our office and base, while the rear 'parlour' will be restored as it was in 1823 when painted by Arthur Rankley, a big improvement on its sad state at present and part of regenerating Northgate connecting town centre with Hopetown Railway Museum.

Further west our project to acquire and restore Heighington Station (the World's oldest railway station), has eaten up considerable time this year. We launched a campaign in early 2024 to raise the required funds and held discussions with several grant giving bodies. The problem is that while there are many keen to help when we own the building, finding support to buy it in the first place has been difficult. Our initial £500,000 project budget looked to be going well with public and other donations (including a fantastic offer of support from the Rail Heritage Trust), raising over £120,000 which we hoped to make up to the £500k with a bid to the Community Ownership Fund (COF). Our initial application was successful, but sadly due to an early General Election the COF has now been closed and we are left waiting for the new government to make announcements and left in limbo. We are pursuing other options and I'm still hopeful we will take this forward shortly. In the meantime, big thanks to the new Heighington Station volunteer group and their fantastic efforts to make the building look tidy on the outside. Fingers crossed we'll all still be able to enjoy food and drink in our own Georgian railway inn sometime soon!

After a year of preparation since her appointment, Niccy Hallifax the 2025 Festival Director together with her colleagues including Jill Read (S&DR 200 Coms manager), were finally able to release some of the detail for the 2025 festival at a press and publicity event at Darlington Hippodrome in September. This was an event aimed specifically at press, media and funders of the festival such as Arts Council and National Heritage Lottery Fund. I know many people were disappointed to not receive an invite and find out about the festival, but we have had input to the process through the Rail Heritage Board and we were invited to be represented, and also contribute towards the content of the press packs issued. Much detail still remains to be announced on the festival, but it will start with a major event in March and run right through to October with the journey of the 1975 replica Locomotion and its train the high point before a closing event at Stockton riverside. The programme is gradually being confirmed and filled out and people ought to check the official website and sign up for the newsletter here <https://www.sdr200.co.uk/>. Not everything we would have liked to see will happen, but the programme is looking exciting and will be part of nationwide celebrations of the bicentenary being organised by Network Rail <https://railway200.co.uk/>.

While the festival programme is now clearer there is I understand from many members worry that the event is not being advertised sufficiently and perhaps too late. Be reassured that we have been raising this issue for several years and promoting the S&DR far and wide from our own limited resources. I understand the regional tourist bodies have material ready to go early next year, and there has been a reluctance from national media to go overboard on articles and promotion too soon. Nevertheless there are many avenues being pursued to make sure S&DR200 and the heritage of our railway is widely promoted and celebrated next year.

While big S&DR festivals happen every 50 years (since 1875!), part of our plans for the future will be to hold more modest, but no less important festivals every year in September in future. This year's Festival Fringe for smaller events (<https://www.sdr200.co.uk/fringe-festival>) will provide an opportunity to develop this with a programme of guided walks, talks and other events. I'm really grateful to our members and volunteers helping to develop this and if you have bright ideas please do come forward.

Planning for the international Early Railways Conference continues where we are represented on the committee, and it will meet in Darlington in September 2025 between the evening of

Tuesday 23rd September and Friday 26th. Here all things S&DR as well as other research on other early railways will be presented and debated. You can find out more here <https://rchs.org.uk/early-railways-conference-combined/> and I do hope many of you will attend.

Our publications continue to sell well and I congratulate everyone who contributes to The Globe and has helped in reviewing and republishing our walk booklets. In addition to earning an income for future publications these are key to getting our message out to the public. In particular I draw your attention to the limited-edition S&DR art quality book being produced by ourselves at the moment as a fitting souvenir of 2025. With text by our own Caroline Hardie, photos by local photographer Peter Giroux and others and with multi-media content it's looking like excellent value for money...order yours before they are all snapped up! <https://www.sdr1825.org.uk/product/stockton-darlington-railway-book/>

I pay thanks to all of those volunteers along the 26 miles who continue to celebrate our rail heritage in whatever way they can, be it through repair works, guided walks, events, litter picking, tree planting or just trying to enthuse their neighbours and relatives to get involved. This year we marked the 199th anniversary of the S&DR opening with a well-attended public event at Toft Hill, and the launch of our revised walk booklet Shildon-Heighington, funded by our good Friends at Husqvarna, whose factory is beside the line at Newton Aycliffe. Husqvarna surpassed themselves with this event by providing the biggest most accurate 'cake' version of the S&DR possibly ever seen, as well as a second generous donation of £2500 which we will be using to re-write and publish an updated version of the Darlington circular walk.

As in previous years I once again take great pleasure in complementing our amazing volunteers and partners along the line for the work and passion they show in caring for our railway heritage. Our membership continues to grow and accounts are in healthy shape and as it seems every year I'm amazed at the passion and time given by our volunteers. There are once more too many people to thank individually, but my gratitude in particular goes to our trustees who work incredibly hard and without whom we wouldn't be pushing forward with such great promise as we are. Key to our ongoing work are our area groups who will be reporting elsewhere. But the sterling efforts of long-term groups at Etherley, West Auckland and Brusselton are now being complemented by a new group at Heighington, great progress in Darlington from the 'DIG' and a real difference to the site at Fighting Cocks, while at Stockton quayside plans are afoot to mark this key (Quay?!), part of the line in time for 2025.

Durham County Council have continued with the Levelling up Fund project to construct the S&DR walking/Cycling route with several sections now in place and completion due by early 2025. This will be accompanied by the new interpretation boards and signage running along the 26 miles. Part of the interpretation will be conventional panels, but a successful bid for just short of £250,000 to the National Lottery Heritage Fund will also allow Teesside University to produce some stunning computer graphics and VR models to enhance a journey down the line. Just as in 1825 the S&DR was the cutting edge of technology, hopefully this will attract new and different audiences to our story. One part of the new route involves the conservation of the Gaunless Bridge abutments and a new Corten steel deck across the river to carry the S&DR trail. Meanwhile the original Gaunless Bridge ironwork has been rescued from obscurity at NRM York and stands in pride of place outside the New Hall at Locomotion, Shildon in a

surprising green and white paint scheme, but based on analysis of the original bridge, this is what it looked like in 1825!

We and our partners have been fortunate to be supported in several ways by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (so keep buying those lottery tickets!). Our joint application with Darlington Borough Council was approved in late 2023, and we now have a team of three, Cait Barratt, Claire Skaife and Jess Woodley, working on community and volunteering projects along the line widening out involvement to children and the wider community. Making sure everyone along the line knows of and values the S&DR and its heritage is key to the future and ensuring our rail heritage is looked after and celebrated.

On that note I must mention 'Little Loco's Big Day' a children's book on the opening day of the S&DR written by my ever-inspiring wife Caroline Hardie. Although published independently this is allowing us to engage with a young audience and is available through the FSDR website where every purchase contributes to our charitable funds. <https://www.sdr1825.org.uk/product/little-locos-big-day/> . We are applying for grant aid to Durham Councillors at the moment to run class room sessions and give primary school children along the line free copies of the book as a 2025 keepsake.

Cait Barrat is also the coordinating project officer for the S&DR Community Grant Scheme. This has approximately £40,000 per year to give to worthwhile community projects which celebrate S&DR and rail heritage along the line. The applications are judged against published criteria and decisions made by a panel which includes the Friends. So far grants have been given for a railway mural at Fighting Cocks, a music project to recreate the sounds which would have been heard on the opening day in 1825, path improvements, creative writing and the restoration of railway vehicles. Drop Cait a line if you have an idea for a project and are interested in applying for a grant at s&drcommunitygrantsscheme@darlington.gov.uk

I conclude with some optimism for 2025 and the future. Funding for a variety of projects, NLHF bid, Pease's House, Heighington Station, education for schools, conservation management plan and many other exciting developments are all now happening or well moved forward. I also offer a note of caution however, while there is significant and substantial activity and funding from many partners large and small, if all our aspirations to have in place a world class visitor attraction are to be realised we need you our members and volunteers to keep supporting our work, and spreading the word near and far about the S&DR story and how this part of North East England changed the world.

Niall Hammond, Chair, Friends of the S&DR.

4. Membership Secretary's Report

Fees & Donations: - 27 September 2023 to 25 September 2024:-
Ordinary Members - £3422.52 (including donations of £309.23)

Corporate Members - £848.90
Total - £4271.42

Membership

Individual Members – **299**

Members on Facebook – **32.11 %**

Corporate Members – **18**

Peter Bainbridge, Membership Secretary

5. Planning Officer's Report

1. It is the job of the planning system, through Local Plan policies and decisions on planning applications, to serve the aims and objectives of the Rail Heritage Board and facilitate the proposals of the Programme and Delivery Plan of the Heritage Action Zone. Throughout the last year, the Friends have continued to try to ensure the protection, enhancement and promotion of the S&DR by responding to opportunities to comment on planning applications and other reports, with varied success.

2. Durham County, Darlington Borough and Stockton Borough Councils all have adopted Local Plans, each of which contains a specific policy for the S&DR. The policies maps show the main S&DR line and the Haggerleases, Black Boy, Surtees, Darlington (Coal Depot), Croft and Yarm Branches. Middlesbrough BC is preparing a new local plan, and we requested them to include a policy for the 1830 Middlesbrough extension to Port Darlington and the New Town, in order to be consistent with the other Councils. A draft plan was issued for consultation early this year, but it did not include the policy we recommended. We have asked the Council to explain this omission, before the plan enters the formal stages leading to adoption.

3. Since the last AGM we have been involved with 23 planning applications about which we submitted comments. 11 of these were carried over from the previous year. 14 have been approved to date and the rest remain to be decided. This is about the same workload as last year; I have logged 95 hours on planning duties. This work includes time spent on monitoring the three Councils' online planning registers for applications on or adjacent to the S&DR and its branch lines (we are not always notified of new applications); identifying any issues which need to be addressed; visiting the sites; submitting comments after consulting the Trustees and Friends (where time permits to meet consultation deadlines) and keeping track of changes to the proposals. In some cases, there are meetings with developers and negotiations to modify the proposals to resolve any problems. As a last resort to achieve a satisfactory outcome, we sometimes have the opportunity to attend the Planning Committee and address members, but this has not happened this year.

4. Darlington Borough Council have completed public consultation on the draft Northgate Conservation Area Appraisal and Proposed Extension. This extends the boundary to include railway heritage assets centred on the S&DR line to the east and northwest of North Road Station; this was enthusiastically supported by the Friends. Consultation on the proposed Middleton St George (Fighting Cocks) Conservation Area is planned to start in the New Year. Durham County Council expects to progress designation of S&DR Conservation Areas within their boundary next year. There are no proposals for an S&DR Conservation Area in Stockton.

5 Permission was granted after a long delay for the extension of Craggwood Holiday Caravan Park at Ramshaw. This will see mobile homes sited on the top of the embankment of the S&DR Haggerleases Branch. This was previously a very untidy and prominent tipping site but the proposed fencing, hedging and embankment landscaping will provide a welcome improvement to the setting of the Branch. Story Homes have handed over £10,000 to the Friends as a requirement of their planning permission for a housing estate at Middleton St George. This will help pay for work at Fighting Cocks Heritage Hub, Walk Booklet 6 and for publicity.

6. Three sites along the S&DR in Darlington are being developed for massive warehouse/industrial/business units. Six huge new buildings are planned to line Tornado Way between the former Paton & Baldwin complex and the A66 Bypass, overshadowing the S&DR Walking and Cycling Route. Our pleas to set development behind screen woodland planting were set aside and token landscaping will do little to relieve the visual impact of these buildings.

7. The drawn out saga of Northern Metal Recycling's 100 metre long concrete panel wall at the foot of the Brusselton East Incline continues. Officially we are waiting to be consulted by the site owner on the mural required by the County Council's planning permission. One of our members is attempting to unblock the log jam by offering a solution but matters are caught up in an impasse between the site owner and the Council's planners.

8. It remains a problem that some applicants are either unaware of policies for the S&DR or that they choose to ignore them when justifying their proposals. Particular failings continue to omit or under-represent the impact of the proposed development on the setting of the S&DR or to make provision for the Walking and Cycling Route (now called the Discovery Trail). It is important that we draw attention to these discrepancies when commenting on applications as we cannot always be sure that the planning officer responsible for the case or Committee Members are fully aware of the situation. Very few applications obtain our unreserved support but it is rare for us to object totally to an application. Wherever possible we recommend how an application could be improved to become more compliant with policy or where a financial contribution to the line's enhancement can be justified.

9. Things would have a chance to improve if we could be treated by Councils as a specialist advisor and be involved in discussions with developers before planning applications are submitted. This is a matter I asked our consultants Tricolor to include in their bid for funding to establish the Friends in having responsibility for a management plan for the conservation of the S&DR asset.

10. In the coming year we propose to discuss with Darlington Council planners our concern about the diminishing rural gap along the railway between the town and Newton Aycliffe. Approved residential developments, industrial developments and the Burtree Solar Panel Farm will reduce the gap to just over one kilometre (at present it is almost four kilometres). In 1825 the S&DR passed through almost entirely undeveloped countryside but its success brought about the creation of the towns, industries and commerce that we know today. However, we feel that it is important that the rural sections of the active line that remain should be protected as a legacy of the original setting and character of the line.

11. Once again I am again very grateful for help given to me by individual Friends and those in the various local interest groups for their detailed knowledge, visiting sites, taking photographs, talking to residents and notifying me of any issues they come across whilst 'out there' and think needs attention.

Ross Chisholm, Planning Officer and Trustee

6. Editor and Webmasters Report

The Globe

Two Globes have been produced this last year in December 2023 and July 2024. Hard copies are sent by Peter Bainbridge to those who expressed a preference and copies have also been sent to the British Library. To all those who have submitted articles in the last year, thank you on behalf of all our readers. If you would like to submit something S&DR related in the future, ask me for our guidance notes – this can save time later. The deadline for contributions for our next Globe is 28th November 2024.



We print 100 hard copies a year, although most members prefer a PDF copy. Currently there is no additional cost to members who request a hard copy, but I do think we will need to review that in future.

Badges



This last year we have also had rather attractive dark red and gold badges made, modelled on Hackworth's plug wheel. New members will receive a badge while stocks last. Additional badge can be purchased for £2.50 in our online shop here, or at any events: <https://www.sdr1825.org.uk/product/friends-sdr-badge/>

Walks booklets

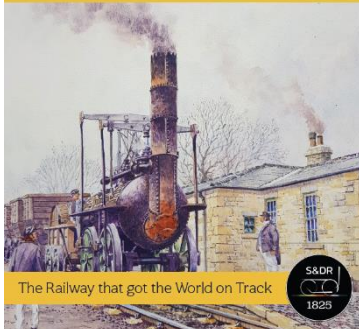
This year we have updated one of our self guided walk booklets thanks to sponsorship from Husqvarna (and a fun launch at Locomotion thank you Husqvarna and Locomotion). That was the Shildon to Heighington stretch. The revision of the Darlington Circular is underway; look out for your invite to try out the walk soon. Once the Darlington Circular is complete we will have updated four booklets:

-  West Auckland to Shildon,
-  Shildon Circular,
-  Shildon to Heighington and,
-  the Darlington Circular

and produced attractive folders which can be used to hold complete sets of walks booklets (or Globes).

These are all for sale on our web site. <https://www.sdr1825.org.uk/store/>

Shildon to Heighington
Stockton & Darlington
Railway Walk No.4



The next booklets to be reviewed will either be Witton Park to West Auckland or Darlington to Fighting Cocks/Goosepool. The timetable is set by the new walking and cycling route being constructed. Options for different routes at the Stockton end are still being considered with support from Barry Thompson.

Coffee table book

At the time of writing, we have had 123 subscribers plus an additional 80 ordered by A. V. Dawson in Middlesbrough (who will have their logo included as part sponsors of the book).

Subscriptions received so far, excluding those purchased by A.V. Dawson, have raised £4,225 excluding postage costs. That will help towards the printing costs. The text (by me, Caroline Hardie) and photography (by Peter Giroux) is nearly finished and the content is being reviewed by a small editorial team before going to wider consultation. I am thrilled that we have also had contributions from other photographers and artist John Wigston, plus poets Ann Cuthbert, Lizzy Lovejoy and Hary Gallagher as well as music by Sam Slatcher.

The book should be ready in January or February 2025. I hope that local bookshops plus Locomotion will stock it. Sadly if Hopetown continue their policy of not selling books we won't be able to sell it there, nor will we be able to sell the guided walk booklets that cover the Hopetown buildings!

S&DR Music



The project to replicate the musical sounds from the opening day is complete. This also includes videos of the musicians playing the authentic 1825 period instruments. Just visit our web site and you'll see a short cut link to the S&DR music page here:
<https://www.sdr1825.org.uk/>

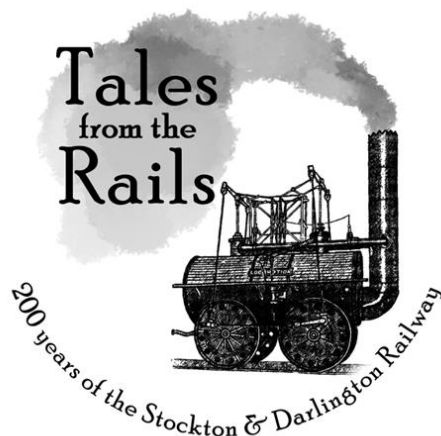
The musicians are Queen Victoria's Consort and the music arranger Steve Robson. The music and videos are free for you to download. Why not use this music at your next S&DR event?

Podcast – Tales from the Rails

We have now generated 9 podcasts in the hope of reaching a slightly different audience. These were on (click on the title if you want to listen):

1. [The Opening Day of the S&DR](#)
2. [The Importance of the S&DR](#)
3. [Heighington Station – the World's Earliest Railway Station \(with Niall Hammond and various interviews\)](#)
4. [Building Bridges \(The Gaunless and the Skerne Bridges – with Anthony Coulls\)](#)
5. [Locomotion No.1 \(with Michael Bailey\)](#)

6. [Hopetown \(various interviews\)](#)
7. [Getting America on Track \(with Jonathan Ratcliffe\)](#)
8. [Celebrating the S&DR \(with Sam Slatcher, Lizzie Lovejoy and Quenn Victoria's Consort\)](#)
9. Educating Early Railway Workers and The Stute (with Dave Reynolds and Jane Hackworth-Young (no link as it was still being edited at the time of writing))



They have been downloaded over 2,000 times but I'm not sure how that relates to listening numbers when the podcast isn't downloaded.

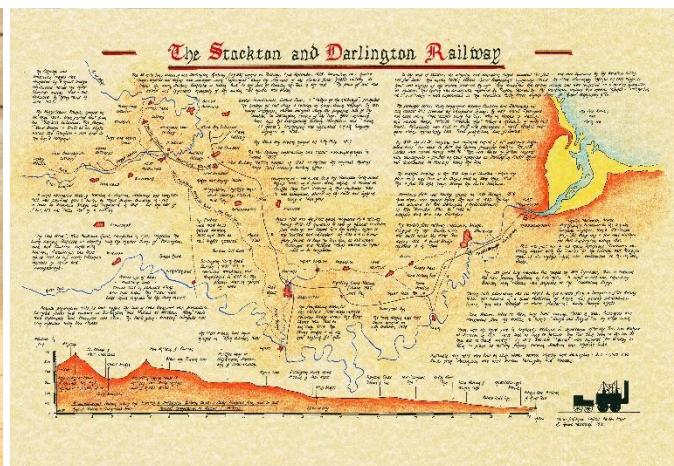
I'll be honest, they are a lot of work! It takes time to write the content and it probably takes even longer for them to be edited – editing is the job of Archie MacKay of SW Durham News – a big thank you to him for doing this. We are keeping all the howlers for a special edition called Fails on the Rails.

You can access all our S&DR podcasts here: <https://talesfromtherails.podbean.com/> Please forward this link to as many people as possible and spread the word; it will make all the hard work

worthwhile.

Website

The web site is mostly busy accepting orders for the coffee table book, accepting donations for Heighington Station, renewal or new of memberships and regular and frequent requests for talks in 2025 amounting to 1-2 requests a day at times. We have had approaches in the last year from organisations wanting help with 2025 activities, with members of the public carrying out family history and especially media organisations looking for help in generating content for documentaries in 2025.



Sales from the online shop vary but was particularly active when Andrew Simmons made a number of limited edition pens to support our Save Heighington Station campaign. These have raised through the web site £350, although Andrew has also sold many direct at events and now through eBay. Thank you to Andrew for doing this and to George and Cindy Alderslade who donated attic timber from their station master's house at St. Helen Auckland

for the Station Master's pen. Thank you also to Andrew who has now purchased a debit card machine for the Friends so we can accept debit card payments at events.

We have also been donated beautiful maps of the S&DR by Jean Hattersley printed from original artwork by Bob Hattersley. The funds raised will be split between the Friends and a cancer charity. We were also given prints of John Dobbin's Opening ay of the S&DR by staff at Hopetown and these too are available in our online shop.

In total the online shop has had 222 orders (up from 85 in 2022-3) the considerable increase due to the coffee table book. The top sellers apart from the coffee table book are:

-  New membership
-  Locomotion Pens
-  The Railway that got the World on Track book (we had a reprint of this done in January 2024 to make sure we have enough to get us through 2025)
-  Membership renewal

A new archive was added to the Friends' web site – the Mike Satow archive These are stunning black and white images that record the construction of the replica Locomotion No.1 in 1975. If you haven't had a scroll through yet, you'll find them here:

<https://www.sdr1825.org.uk/archives/the-mike-satow-archive/>

And other stuff....

Little Inventors

We have agreed to help with this project which is part of the S&DR Festival. This is to generate short videos about the railway (we will do this at Heighington) and issue a challenge to school children to invent a solution to a rail-related scenario. Five of the 'best' ideas will be brought to life in an exhibition and possibly also working with local businesses.

Discover Game

This is a digital game exploring the S&DR. As part of that there will be a series of short videos. I have agreed to do one on women of the railways.

S&DR competitions

We are involved in running two S&DR competitions.

1. Write on Track is the creative writing workshop. We're looking for poetry, short stories and memoir pieces related in some way to trains and railways. These don't need to be specifically about the Stockton & Darlington Railway - we just want to see a clear link to railways, tracks and trains within the work. You can find out more at the Tracks Darlington web site www.tracksdarlington.co.uk/wot-home
2. The SDR200 Research on the Rails competition is being organised by the Cleveland and Teesside Local History Society and the Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway for original research into the S&DR. The best entries will be published in their journals (The Globe and Cleveland History), or we may decide to publish a separate new, joint publication. The original research can be on any subject connected to the history of the Stockton & Darlington Railway up to 1863, including its impact beyond that date. It can be about people, technology, events, archival research, impacts – the choice is yours. There are more details being circulated with these papers.

The prize will be up to £1,000, provided jointly by Cleveland & Teesside Local History Society and The Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway and awarded to the author(s) of an essay which fulfils the criteria of the competition and which in the opinion of the judges merits the award.

The editor is one of the few people in the Friends who regularly gives talks on the S&DR (the others are Niall Hammond and Alan Townsend). We do these in return for donations to the Friends. In the last year I have given 3 talks in Darlington, one in Heighington, 1 in Newton Aycliffe, 1 in Tudhoe, 1 in Shildon, 1 in Durham and 1 judging of a poetry competition (which I really enjoyed!) and I've done readings and family activities at Hopetown, on the Story Train in Stanhope, in Darlington as part of the S&DR takeover day and the library takeover day. The requests are increasing as we approach 2025. Currently I am booked for 15 in 2025, so if anyone else wants a talk on the S&DR in 2025, do get in touch soon.

Institution of Mechanical Engineering



The IMechE are awarding the S&DR an innovation in engineering award and as such three plaques are likely to be put up next year at Shildon, Darlington and Stockton. Ideally I'd also like one at the New Inn Cross Roads or Etherley Incline, but this may not be possible. I also nominated the painting of George Stephenson in Pease's Parlour by Rankley to TVs the Repair Shop for conservation but I am sorry to say they have not responded despite being chased up several times. They have missed an opportunity to mark 2025 in their

programme. I have also worked with IMechE on exploring options for an exhibition on engineering and have now passed this on to Niccy Hallifax, the Festival Director.

S&DR Film

Film producer Austen Atkinson of Fitztooth Ltd, continues to tout the idea of a film about Hackworth and the S&DR to various commissioning agencies. However I am no longer confident that this is going to result in a production, as the industry is in a very poor state and few businesses are spending money on film making. Further a story populated by middle aged white men polluting the atmosphere is proving to be a hard sell. Austen continues to speak to documentary film makers such as Discovery and this might bear fruit.

Caroline Hardie

October 2024

Caroline Hardie Trustee, editor and webmaster

7. Annual Accounts.

Reflecting the continued development of the charity, income and expenditure continue to rise. This includes grants for various projects and a continuing three year management agreement with Durham County Council for Brusselton Incline. Work by charity officials continues to provide detailed accounting of reserved funds for various project and areas of work and so clearly identify unreserved funds. An audit is not required under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011, but an independent examination is necessary. The trustees have requested this from Hardman Ross of Durham City, and their report dated 21st July 2025 is appended after the income & Expenditure statement below.

FRIENDS OF THE STOCKTON & DARLINGTON RAILWAY

INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

YEAR - 27/09/2023 to 26/09/2024	2023/2024	2022/2023
INCOME:-	£	£
Membership Subscription and Donations	4,634.16	
Sale of Walk Booklets, Etc	8,062.82	
Sale of The Globe	0.00	
Raffle/Talks Proceeds	50.00	
Gift Aid Recovered	3,835.98	
Amazon	0.00	
Miscellaneous	1,611.68	
Brusselton Reservoir Con Mgmt Plan & Training	0.00	
Historic England Heritage Schools Project	0.00	
Fighting Cocks Project	7,999.00	
Royal George Project	0.00	
BIG Mason Arms Project	0.00	
National Lottery Heritage - Culture Recovery Fund Grant	0.00	
National England Capacity Grant (Via Darlington BC)	0.00	
Darlington RHQ	0.00	
Management of Brusselton & Mason Arms	5,000.00	
Brightwater Grant	0.00	
Darlington BC	17,148.00	
AV Dawson	0.00	
A Townsend/Jane Hackworth Young Donation	2,500.00	
Heighington Station Project	35,626.39	
Business Development		
	86,468.03	41,615.00

Less: Expenditure	£	£
Zoom/Room Hire	659.08	
Training	0.00	
Printing/Books	4,417.95	
Subscriptions	417.40	
Insurance	194.59	
Officers Expenses/Salary	8,577.67	
Event Fees	155.80	
Stripe Expenses	216.11	
Miscellaneous	5,743.25	
Brusselton Reservoir Con Mgmt Plan & Training	0.00	
Historic England Heritage Schools Project	0.00	
Fighting Cocks Project	2,156.33	
Royal George Project	0.00	
BIG Expenses	90.00	
National Lottery Heritage - Culture Recovery Fund Grant	0.00	
National England Capacity Grant (Via Darlington BC)	0.00	
Management of Brusselton & Mason Arms	3,125.11	
Brightwater Grant	0.00	
Darlington BC	0.00	
AVDawson	0.00	
Heighington Station Project	3,419.00	
Business Development	8,000.02	
	37,172.31	35,587.00
Surplus/(Deficit)	49,295.72	6,024.62
Reserves Brought Forward	35,668.10	
Reserves Carried Forward	84,963.82	

FRIENDS OF THE STOCKTON & DARLINGTON RAILWAY

BALANCE SHEET

YEAR - 27/09/2023 to 26/09/2024

26 SEPTEMBER

CURRENT ASSETS:

£

Current Account - 26/09/2024

84,963.82

CURRENT ASSETS:-

Debtors:-

CURRENT LIABILITIES:

84,963.82

Non

FINANCED BY:

Revenue Reserve 2017/2018

2,359.98

Revenue Reserve 2018/2019

3,983.05

Revenue Reserve 2019/2020

625.07

Revenue Reserve 2020/2021

23,101.09

Revenue Reserve 2021/2022

-428.71

Revenue Reserve 2022/2023

6,027.62

Revenue Reserve 2023/2024

49,295.72

84,963.82

Difference

0.00

Restricted/Unrestricted Reserves Balance

NB:- Outstanding Reserved Funds Balance

59,265.64

Reference and Administrative Details:

Registered office:

Marian Cottage
Lartington
Barnard Castle
Co. Durham
DL12 9BP

Trustees serving in the year:

N Hardie-Hammond – Chair
A R Townsend – Vice Chair
R Chisholm – Planning Officer
C Hardie – Webmaster & Editor
P Bainbridge – Membership Secretary
J D Raw
J G Alderslade
J B Thompson
N J Hugill
Y Richardson

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'N Hardie-Hammond', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Signature:

Full Name: Neil Hardie-Hammond

Position: Chair

Date: 21/07/2025

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE FRIENDS OF THE STOCKTON & DARLINGTON RAILWAY

I report on the accounts of the Charity, registration no. 1177252, The Friends Of The Stockton & Darlington Railway, (FS&DR) for the year ended 26 September 2024 which are as set out on the enclosed pages.

Respective Responsibilities of FSDR Trustees and Examiner

The FSDR members are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The members consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the FSDR and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

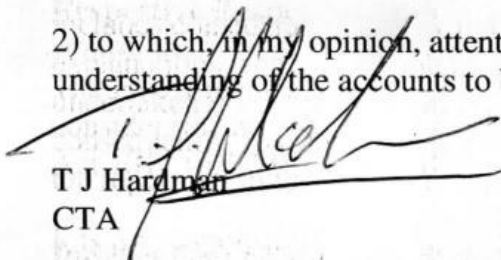
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act;
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.


T J Hardman
CTA

7 Elvet Waterside
Durham DH1 3DA
21 July 2025