



Trustees' Annual Report

For the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Objectives and Activities

Purposes of the charity

The objects of the CIO are to advance public education by the restoration, preservation, maintenance, operation and development of the Downs Light Railway as a heritage asset for the provision of practical education to young people between the ages of 7 to 18, in particular but not exclusively by: (a) educating young people in engineering disciplines, including civil, mechanical, electrical, design, and workshop practice; and (b) promoting science, technology and engineering focused activities and careers.

Summary of the Main Activities in relation to those purpose for the public benefit, in particular the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts

Provision of practical activities on the Downs Light Railway to further the education of young people aged from 7 years and upwards in practical engineering mediums and railway operation.

- During 2022-23, 22 students aged between 7 and 13 years from the adjacent school benefited from the provision of extra-curricular activities in railway engineering on Saturday mornings at the railway during term time. Five additional full day sessions open to all were provided for young people in school holidays. These open sessions consisted of instruction in general railway maintenance activities and dedicated locomotive driver training.
- The young people who are involved in the educational activities on the Downs Light Railway also benefit from the opportunity to demonstrate and enhance their skills by running and demonstrating the operation of the railway for visitors. To this end, the young people participated in running the railway for a school Open Day on 02/05/22. On 14/05/22 the Downs Light Railway hosted a special open afternoon for all members' families with the young people demonstrating their practical skills by taking part in a shunting competition.
- All young people participating in railway activities were given the opportunity to operate the railway for train rides at the school's "Summer Celebration" on 25/06/22.
- The charity has also worked with a UK supplier of personal protective equipment to design, develop and test the first fire-retardant coveralls (boilersuit) available in children's sizes. The first full order of these new coveralls has been delivered and they have since been worn by the young people at the Downs Light Railway.

Promotion of youth engagement and career opportunities for young people in heritage and national railways, and other STEM related industries.

- 01/07/22 a small group of Downs Light Railway volunteers and young people with their parents visited Lakeshore Railway in South Shields to participate in their 50th Anniversary celebrations. This enabled the young people to experience another commercially run railway of the same miniature gauge and engage with their staff.
- On 03/09/22 all young people were invited to exhibit the railway and demonstrate their engineering and driving skills to the attending Narrow Gauge Railway Society members on their visit to the Downs Light Railway. This gave the young people the opportunity to discuss engineering, heritage and associated railway opportunities and careers with a wide range of railway professionals and enthusiasts.

Protection and preservation of the Downs Light Railway and its heritage, as the world's oldest private miniature railway, and the only railway directly operated for, and by, young people.

- Completion of a new boiler for the Downs Light Railway locomotive BROCK to enable it to be used for the education of young people. This historic tank plus tender locomotive was built in 1973. The DLRT worked in partnership with Lakeshore Railroad, another rare 9.5-inch gauge miniature railway, who have kindly assisted with the running in of the new boiler at their location in South Shields, to support us with preparing BROCK for resuming educational activities at the Downs Light Railway post restoration.
- Ongoing maintenance to steam locomotives GEORGE (built in 1939 and on loan to the Downs Light Railway, returned Oct-2022) and JAMES BOYD (built in 1991). Ongoing maintenance to the petrol hydraulic locomotive TIM CADBURY (built in 1984). Maintenance activities involve the young people where possible, with support and instruction from our specialist volunteers.
- Maintaining and enhancing the heritage of the DLRT with the addition of past correspondence and photographs to the physical and digital archives.
- On site track works to preserve and maintain the railway at its location in Colwall, Herefordshire.
- Groundworks for new workshop and storage facilities were completed during 2021-22 and during 2022-23 were monitored and allowed to settle given the topography and hydrology of the site. These represent the initial phase of our Centenary Development Programme to enhance the heritage preservation and educational delivery at the Downs Light Railway as we head towards our Centenary in 2025, via the development of improved workshop and locomotive storage facilities.

Charity Governance

- The transfer of assets and operations of the former Charitable Trust (513882) was completed early in the reporting period and the old charity was dissolved on 14/04/2022.
- Due to an offsite incident away from the railway involving a member of the board of trustees, educational activities on site in Colwall were suspended by the landlord on 16/09/22. This serious incident was reported to the Charity Commission. During the period of suspension, as well as dealing with the incident follow-up, the trustees also carried out a governance and policy review, developed plans for enhancing future educational activities, continued to preserve the onsite heritage and engaged with external railways and professional bodies.

Statement of Public Benefit

The Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of education and heritage protection.

Contribution made by volunteers

The Downs Light Railway Trust is a volunteer led organisation, with no paid staff. In addition to the five trustees, there are several other regular and occasional volunteers who contribute their time and expertise to the running of the Downs Light Railway. These include instruction in miniature railway operation, contributing track maintenance expertise, help with fundraising and at events, and contributing time, expertise and equipment for special projects such as infrastructure or engineering works.

In 2022 – 2023, our non-trustee volunteers carried out instruction for educational activities, assisted with track maintenance, helped at events and assisted with locomotive maintenance and engineering works.

Achievements and Performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole

The Downs Light Railway Trust has made a difference to the lives and educational experience of the young people who engage in our activities, through the development of their practical STEM skills. Our feedback from parents and carers demonstrates that our activities are extremely beneficial to those young people who take part, through enhancing their skills, confidence and teamwork, and raising their awareness of STEM and heritage related careers.

Heritage rail is a vital component of our cultural heritage and tourism industry and currently heritage railways are finding it challenging to attract young people. Our activities through education and engagement of young people represent the delivery of wider benefits to society by raising the awareness of heritage rail as a career or volunteering opportunity, to support the ongoing operation and preservation of our industrial and cultural heritage.

Unfortunately, due to the suspension of our educational activities on site by our landlord less than halfway through the reporting year, several of our educational, community engagement and onsite heritage preservation plans were postponed and have therefore been carried over to the 2023-24 reporting year and beyond. This includes working in partnership with Colwall Orchard Group to run an apple harvest event at the railway celebrating Colwall's local cultural and natural heritage.

Financial Review

The charity's accounts are set out below. The accounts are prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis and were subjected to an independent examination.

The suspension of activities on the Downs Light Railway site from 16/09/22 had a significant negative impact on the charity's income due to cancelled activities and events. The trustees placed the highest priority on resolution of the underlying issue and resumption of activities (in the following reporting period) so as to minimise the financial and reputational impact. The trustees are of the opinion that the charity remains a going concern, with plans underway to recruit new expertise on a volunteer basis to secure our educational offering.

Policy for Holding Reserves

The Charity holds two specific reserve funds, identified as the Locomotive Maintenance Fund (LMF) and the Centenary Development Fund (CDF). Funds raised in anticipation of development or acquisition costs are also held on reserve until the time of such expenditure.

The LMF provides a sinking fund of unrestricted monies for the purpose of planned preventive maintenance costs on the assets.

The CDF is a restricted fund whose use is restricted to expenditure incurred towards achieving the Centenary Development Programme.

Statement of Financial Activity

Downs Light Railway Trust

Receipts & Payments Account

	31/03/2023	31/03/2023	31/03/202	31/03/2022	Notes
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total	
Receipts					
Donations	£452	£600	£1,052	£0	
Grants/Funding	£2,010	£0	£2,010	£0	
Sales	£455	£0	£455	£0	
Other	£10	£125	£135	£0	
	£2,927	£725	£3,652	£0	
Payments					
Administration	-£2,456	£0	-£2,456	£0	
Operations	-£2,572	-£498	-£3,070	£0	
Publicity	£0	£0	£0	£0	
	-£5,028	-£498	-£5,526	£0	
Extraordinary Items					
Transfer from DLRT 513882	£6,072	£54,011	£60,083	£8,555	2
Transfers of Funds	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Net movement of funds	£3,971	£54,238	£58,209	£8,555	
Total Funds b/f	£4,555	£4,000	£8,555	£0	
Total Funds c/f	£8,526	£58,238	£66,764	£8,555	

Registered Charity no. 1195660

HMRC reference ZD17159

Downs Light Railway Trust
Statement of Assets & Liabilities

		at y/e	31/03/2023	31/03/2022	
Assets	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total	Notes
Cash Resources					
Petty Cash	£0	£0	£0	£54	
Bank – General	£3,880	£0	£3,880	£501	
Bank – LMF	£4,646	£0	£4,646	£4,000	
Bank – CDF	£0	£58,238	£58,238	£4,000	
	£8,526	£58,238	£66,764	£8,555	1
Other Monetary Assets					
- Receivables	£40	£0	£40	£60	
	£8,566	£58,238	£66,804	£8,615	

Significant Assets	Cost (opt)	Value (opt)	
- Petrol-hydraulic locomotive TIM			
- Steam locomotive JAMES BOYD			
- Steam locomotive BROCK			
- 4No. passenger carriages			
- 5No. works carriages			
- Laid trackwork (approx. 650m)			
- Tools and Equipment			

		at y/e	31/03/2023	31/03/2022
Liabilities	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
Short-term Liabilities				
- Uncleared payments (payables)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other Liabilities	re Fund	Timing (opt)	Amount (opt)	
- [None]				

Notes

Note 1

	Fund ID	Type	31/03/2023	31/03/2022
Cash Resources represent				
- General Administration Fund	General	Unrestricted	£3,880	£555
- Locomotive Maintenance Fund	LMF	Unrestricted	£4,646	£4,000
- Centenary Development Fund	CDF	Restricted	£58,238	£4,000
			£66,764	£8,555

Note 2

Transfer of assets from charity no. 513882 was completed in the period.

Non-monetary assets transferred had an estimated replacement value of £134,044.

Cash-equivalent assets transferred were:

	Fund ID	Type	31/03/2023	31/03/2022
- General Administration Fund	General	Unrestricted	£4,544	£555
- Locomotive Maintenance Fund	LMF	Unrestricted	£1,528	£4,000
- Centenary Development Fund	CDF	Restricted	£54,011	£4,000
			£60,083	£8,555

Registered Charity no. 1195660

HMRC reference ZD17159

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Constitution dated 31 August 2021. (An amended Constitution was adopted on 21 April 2023, shortly after the reporting period).

Constitution

The charity is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Trustee selection methods

New Trustees are appointed by Resolution of a meeting of the Trustees. Selection is based on required skills, experience, and needs of the Trust. There is no provision in the Constitution for nominated or ex officio trusteeships.

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name

Downs Light Railway Trust

Registered Charity Number

1195660

Charity's Principal Address

Downs Light Railway Trust
The Downs Malvern
Brockhill Road
Colwall
Worcestershire
WR13 6EY

Trustees

Mr Timothy Edward Pennock

Chairman (suspended from 16-Sep-2022)

Dr Henry Fletcher Winstanley

Treasurer

Dr Eleanor Jane Brown

Mr Nick Dodson

Acting Chair (from 15-Oct-2022)

Mr Trevor Stanley Nall

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved this report.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature(s)

Full name(s)

Mr Nicholas Dodson

Dr Henry Fletcher Winstanley

Position(s)

Acting Chairman

Treasurer

Date



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
Downs Light Railway Trust

On accounts for the year
ended

31/03/2023

Charity no
(if any)

1159660

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2023.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination using checklist CC32 which is the guidance for examiners as stated by the Charities Commission.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date: 31/10/2023

Name:

Timothy Kenneth Bone

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Chartered Institute of Management Accountants
ACMA
ID: 1-JNDL

Address:

16 John Williams Close
Priorslee
Telford
TF2 5AA

Section B

Disclosure

No concerns to report.