



# Trustees' Annual Report

For the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

## 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.

- Following the ending of the suspension of operations (from 16/9/22) by the landlords following an off-site safeguarding issue, railway maintenance and operations restarted in June 2023 and educational activities resumed in September 2023.
- During 2023-24, 15 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. These open sessions consisted of instruction in general railway maintenance activities and concentrated on track maintenance.
- The charity has also involved new volunteers with expertise in steam locomotive operations and maintaining the railway infrastructure.
- 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.
- Steam locomotive BROCK was returned to the DLR from the South Shore Railroad on 19 February 2024 and students attending hobby periods are enjoying engaging with this locomotive. Ongoing maintenance to steam locomotives BROCK 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.
- Specification of two new works carriages for The Downs Light Railway. The existing works carriages are reaching the end of their life so the Trustees have worked with a miniature railway engineering company to design their replacements. Arrangements are being made for a visit by the appointed

engineering company to view the track to inform the design, and to discuss how the carriages will be used by the young people and the railway volunteers.

- In June 2023 the Trustees engaged an external miniature railway expert on a voluntary basis to review the track and associated infrastructure. A new track maintenance plan was then produced and implementation began over the summer of 2023 starting with a concentrated effort by railway volunteers to improve the railway track bed. This included the installation of “gravel boards” to help contain stone ballast under the track and improve operational track stability.
- A second external miniature railway expert was engaged on a voluntary basis to review the railway’s Safety Management System and provide feedback to the Trustees.
- A new Personal Track Safety qualification was developed, and sent out to external miniature railway experts for review.
- A fresh assessment of the type of new workshops and storage facilities has taken place during the year as we head towards our Centenary in 2025. Ongoing discussions were held with our landlord, The Downs Malvern and Malvern College about new railway buildings for our Centenary Development Programme. New buildings will 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. In early March 2024, Trustees arranged a site visit to another miniature railway to view their buildings with our landlord to inform the development planning.

#### Charity Governance

- The previous Chair resigned on 24/05/23 and a new Chair was appointed.
- The suspension of educational activities was lifted by the landlord and the Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission was updated.
- The Trustees completed reviews of key Charity policies over the summer of 2023 in readiness for restarting educational activities in September 2023.

#### 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 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 instructors in miniature railway operation, steam locomotive maintenance and operations instruction, track maintenance expertise, help with fundraising and at events, and contributing time, expertise and equipment for special projects such as infrastructure, site maintenance or engineering works.

In 2023 – 2024, our non-trustee volunteers carried out instruction for educational activities, assisted with track and site maintenance, 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, teachers 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. This is particularly important as we head towards the 200th anniversary of passenger rail in 2025.

## **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 (report attached).

The suspension of activities on the Downs Light Railway site from 16/09/22 resulted in continued loss of income in the reporting year. Following resumption of activities in Summer 2023, the Trustees believe that the direct financial impact does not jeopardise the future provision of educational activities.

### **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

	31/03/2024	31/03/2024	31/03/2024	31/03/2023	Notes
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total	
<b>Receipts</b>					
Donations	£447	£50	£497	£1,052	
Grants/Funding	£808	£0	£808	£2,010	
Sales	£455	£0	£455	£455	
Other	£52	£651	£703	£135	
	£1,761	£701	£2,463	£3,652	
<b>Payments</b>					
Administration	-£2,976	£0	-£2,976	-£2,456	
Operations	-£1,642	£0	-£1,642	-£3,070	
Publicity	£0	£0	£0	£0	
	-£4,617	£0	-£4,617	-£5,526	
<b>Extraordinary Items</b>					
Transfer from DLRT 513882	£0	£0	£0	£60,083	
<b>Transfers of Funds</b>	£2,000	-£2,000	£0	£0	1
<b>Net movement of funds</b>	<b>-£856</b>	<b>-£1,299</b>	<b>-£2,155</b>	<b>£58,209</b>	
Total Funds b/f	£8,526	£58,238	£66,764	£8,555	
<b>Total Funds c/f</b>	<b>£7,670</b>	<b>£56,939</b>	<b>£64,609</b>	<b>£66,764</b>	

Registered Charity no. 1195660

HMRC reference ZD17159

**Downs Light Railway Trust**  
**Statement of Assets & Liabilities**

		at y/e	31/03/2024	31/03/2023	
<b>Assets</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Cash Resources</b>					
Petty Cash	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Bank – General	£2,972	£0	£2,972	£3,880	
Bank – LMF	£4,698	£0	£4,698	£4,646	
Bank – CDF	£0	£56,939	£56,939	£58,238	
	£7,670	£56,939	£64,609	£66,764	2
<b>Other Monetary Assets</b>					
- Receivables	£1,300	£0	£1,300	£40	
	£8,970	£56,939	£65,909	£66,804	

**Significant Assets**

	<b>Cost (opt)</b>	<b>Value (opt)</b>
- 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	31/03/2024	31/03/2023
<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Short-term Liabilities</b>				
- Uncleared payments (payables)	£53	£0	£53	£0
<b>Other Liabilities</b>	<b>re Fund</b>	<b>Timing (opt)</b>	<b>Amount (opt)</b>	
- [None]				

**Notes**

**Note 0**

These accounts are drawn up on a receipts and payments basis

**Note 1**

The transfer from the Centenary Development Fund to general funds followed written permission from the donor to treat the unspent £2,000 donation as unrestricted funds.

**Note 2**

Cash Resources represent	<b>Fund ID</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>31/03/2024</b>	<b>31/03/2023</b>
- General Administration Fund	General	Unrestricted	£2,972	£3,880
- Locomotive Maintenance Fund	LMF	Unrestricted	£4,698	£4,646
- Centenary Development Fund	CDF	Restricted	£56,939	£58,238
			£64,609	£66,764

Registered Charity no. 1195660

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# Structure, Governance and Management

## Governing Document

Constitution dated 21 April 2023.

## 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 Nick Dodson	<i>Chair</i> (Acting Chair till 24-May-2023)
Dr Henry Fletcher Winstanley	<i>Treasurer</i>
Dr Eleanor Jane Brown	
Mr Trevor Stanley Nall	Retired 18-Sep-2023
Mr Timothy Edward Pennock	Suspended 16-Sep-2022, resigned 24-May-2023

## Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved this report.  
Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

### Signature(s)

<b>Full name(s)</b>	Mr Nicholas Dodson	Dr Henry Fletcher Winstanley
<b>Position(s)</b>	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

31/03/2024

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 31/03/2024.

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:

76 B

Date:

14/01/2025

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.