

Bridge View Light Railway

Charity Commission for England & Wales registered #1202818.

Mill Hill, Baginton, Warwickshire CV8 3AG

 www.bvlrail.org.uk

 @BVLRail



Trustees Report & Financial Statements

for the BVL Rail Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Year ending **June '24**

Issued **March '25**



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1. Introduction

The Bridge View Light Railway (BVLR) is a 7 1/4 inch gauge heritage-themed miniature railway running alongside the river Sowe in Baginton, near Coventry. Construction and operation is entirely by a group of enthusiasts and volunteers who welcome visitors to come and have a ride on our trains, discover our community project and to explore the grounds.

The trustees present their annual report with the financial statements of the charity for the period 24th April 2023 to 1st June 2024, this being the first full financial year of charitable operation with an additional 2¼ month period preceding this from incorporation to align with our recognised financial year period. Subsequent years shall be the usual 12-monthly.

Accounts have prepared on a receipts and payments basis with the financial statements prepared in accordance with the charity's constitution, applicable law and with respect to 'The provision of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP, FRS 102 effective from January 2015).

Incorporation

The Charitable Incorporated Organisation [foundation model] was incorporated on the 24th April 2023 with the Charities Commission for England & Wales as number: 1202818.

Charity Names

- Bridge View Light Railway CIO
- Bridge View Light Railway - *working name*
- BVLR - *a commonly used abbreviation*

Trustees during this period in the order of Name, Role and Date of appointment:

1. Robert Richmond, Chair, 16th April 2023 - current
2. James Cobbett, Trustee & Honorary Secretary, 16th April 2023 - current
3. Roy Parker, Trustee & Honorary Treasurer, 17th April 2023 - 4th July 2024
4. Peterson Cobbett, Trustee, 17th April 2023 - current
5. Simon Hayward, Trustee, 16th April 2023- current

Principal Address:

Bridge View Light Railway, Mill Hill, Baginton, Warwickshire CV8 3AG

Objects as defined in section 3 of the Constitution:

The objects of the CIO are to advance public education in the subject of railways and railway engineering by the construction and operation of a miniature railway to utilise traditional railway practices.

Governance & Trustees

Our charity operates in accordance with our formal Constitution, supported by a range of policies and statements. These policies range from offering guidance, informing best practice or stipulating correct procedures that must be adhered to on a range of matters. Our policies are based upon recognised best practice and a mentality promoting

continuous improvement; the trustees recognising their content needs to be robust, workable and tailored to the nature of our work.

There are currently five trustees, with a defined minimum of three and maximum of twelve, as selected by the trustees with regard to their skillsets, knowledge and experience to perform their duties.

Involvement and transparency by volunteers and interested parties is encouraged with hard-copies of reports and documents available from an information board onsite. Upon election trustees are personally given packs of all required documents and access to these electronically if requested. Volunteer attendance at AGMs is encouraged through a format of being socially beneficial in addition to conducting the required formal charity business.

Risk Management

The trustees have a duty to identify, assess and manage the risks to which the organisation may be exposed to and where practicable ensure appropriate controls are in place for financial, physical and reputational risks. The usual prerequisite financial controls, budgeting and authorising signatories are all in place.



The trustees recognise their duty of care in respect of the safety of all persons using our railway and venue. To ensure continued safety, risks are continually assessed, welfare standards maintained, and operating procedures are regularly reviewed and improved.

Day-to-day operation of the charity and railway through which we achieve our objects is governed by comprehensively-written railway operating procedures which alongside our policies are one of many ways to reduce operational risks. We educate volunteers and review their ability to undertake activities through an assessed 12-stage internal training programme, in addition to participating in the national Proficiency Scheme provided by the 7¼" Gauge Society educating in the operation of railways. We are proud to encourage and demonstrate our high achievement rate in this scheme as it contributes to achievement of our objects.

Whilst our trains are smaller than that of Narrow and Standard-Gauge railway charities, robust safety systems and maintenance are still essential for continued operation, even during the winter months, as all carry passengers using similar engineering equipment.

We benefit from affiliations to several national federations and societies to share best practice, participate in formal training schemes and be informed of Health & Safety Executive bulletins.

2. Delivering public benefit; our Achievements

During the period from July 2023 to June 2024, the BVLR successfully operated 27 public open days with trains operating. Of these, seven were designated event days with varied educational themes. All open days provide a welcoming and engaging environment for members of our local community and those from further afield.

Public feedback has regularly identified visitors from South Warwickshire and North Oxfordshire in addition to our locality. It is concluded this is because of a limited provision of similar ground-level miniature railways open to the public in South Warwickshire; the nearest in this direction being near Evesham (25-30 miles away), Oxford (50) and Northampton (30).

Events and Community Engagement

Our charitable objects are primarily met through our events dedicated to railway history and engineering, with the foremost of these being part of the National Heritage Open Days scheme (HOD) with interpretation displays, museum artefacts, demonstrations and opportunities for visitors to get 'hands-on' with selected, safe, activities. The advertising support of HODs allows us to reach new audiences and those further afield.

In the third quarter of 2023, particularly September, our HOD events received a recorded high of 90% of visitors on the day being new to our project and not visited previously. The usual minimum £1.50 donation for a train ride was waived to align with the inclusive ethos of HODs, allowing low-income families to benefit from a low-cost day out.

To promote the national event theme 'Creativity Unwrapped' we offered our facilities without charge to a local artist and exhibition of textile work for a free community event. This was furthered by two craft days allowing local artisans to showcase their skills but also providing much needed visitors to our project during otherwise quiet months of the year on account of the wintry weather.

In the fourth quarter of 2023, surrounding these craft days, we organised themed Halloween and Christmas events. Following input from local school Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) representatives our events were considerably arranged to promote inclusion for all visitors, especially young children and those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) where practicable. Halloween and Christmas 'Santa Specials' in particular promoting quality family time, storytelling and parent-child activities in addition to the usual railway activities offered. Such activities are in keeping with our ethos and commonplace at miniature and heritage railway attractions alike.

In the first quarter of 2024 the focus shifted to railway maintenance and preparation, bringing volunteers together to undertake important tasks such as track repairs and levelling. This inclusive initiative allowed volunteers, young people and individuals with

SEND to learn maintenance skills at their own pace then when appropriate participate, fostering a sense of achievement and community spirit.

In the second quarter of the year we reopened to the general public with family-focused community events during Easter educating on nature, sustainability and the environment around the railway. Additionally, on Father's Day, we invited families to visit and offered complimentary rides for fathers, which was warmly appreciated.

Although concentrated around the spring period, we offer education and training opportunities for volunteers both working for our project and on their own related projects using our onsite workshop and test facilities. The topics of railway safety, maintenance and operations are core to our detailed 12-stage training programme offered without charge to volunteers and supporters. Our training is delivered by experienced volunteers using a variety of supervised practical, peer 1:1 and written assessments to suit individual needs. Learners benefit from transferrable skills due to the programmes basis on industry practices recognised by the HSE and national federations. Beneficiaries of such training have noted it's an excellent source of hands on CV employability experience for those seeking employment and apprenticeship opportunities in the fields of engineering, transport, construction and customer service.

Through the Secretary, we are also registered to offer training and assessment for the national Proficiency Scheme provided by the 7¼" Gauge Society to educate in the operation of railways; this flexibility allows easier access to this qualification in addition to their own dates and assessment locations.



Future projects and works

Our main focus is to maintain and improve current facilities for the benefit of all, with attention paid to improving disability access in what is a predominantly unmade garden environment.

As volunteer availability permits, we're designing and installing visitor interpretation boards focused on specific aspects of our railway and railways in general. These will greatly assist in educating visitors on open days and also to offer insight to the railways operation for those enjoying the grounds whilst we're closed and no volunteers present to directly engage with the public.

Other projects include:

1. Improved railway signals and onsite telecoms, for safety critical communications.
2. Improved rolling stock storage, ventilation, battery handling and charging, identified in a recent risk assessment to reduce injury and prolong the lifespan of our rolling stock assets.
3. New water supply main to improve volunteer facilities and compliance with the 'six-pack' regulations.
4. Improve site electrical infrastructure and install energy-saving controls.
5. Reach out to funding sources and grant awarding bodies to support our work.

Feedback from volunteers has highlighted a shortfall in the sociability of volunteering at the project with a reduction in pre-arranged social events for volunteer to reduce loneliness and strengthen bonds. Railway operations require good teamwork and communication, essential for efficiency and safety, so any opportunities to improve this ethos reduce risk to the charity. Albeit not one of our charity objects, this inclusion is recognised to reduce loneliness and build confidence in volunteers of varying ages.

Over the coming years we look forward to finding our part in the local community, with registration as a charity being seen as a formalisation of our activities, giving a clear purpose and overall direction for our efforts in pursuit of our now defined objects.



3. Finance Report (July 2023 - June 2024)

Financial Overview

Our primary sources of income during this period were:

- Donations
 - The charity is grateful for a number of small donations received throughout the year. The donation boxes and our pre-loved stall continue to be successful. The charity benefits greatly from the involvement and enthusiastic support of its many volunteers, details of which are given in our annual report. In accordance with accounting standards, the economic contribution of general volunteers is not measured in the accounts.
- Donations for train rides

These funds were used to support the day-to-day running of the railway and to organise our community events. Our key expenses included:

- Insurance
- Buildings, infrastructure, track and train maintenance
- Rental payments to our landlord for the use of our site

Despite these costs, we have maintained a stable financial position while continuing to provide enriching visitor experiences. We remain grateful for the dedication of our volunteers and the generous support from visitors and public donations.

The trustees have established from risk-monitoring that we should continue to embrace our charitable objectives but must expand our efforts to recruit new volunteers for long-term stability and provision of work to achieve our objects.



Basis of Preparation

As detailed in the introduction, the accounts have been prepared in accordance with:

Accounts have prepared on a receipts and payments basis with the financial statements prepared in accordance with the charity's constitution, applicable law and with respect to 'The provision of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP, FRS 102 effective from January 2015).

The Charities Act 2011.

1. Accounting policies - These accounts have been prepared on the receipts and payments basis. Expenditure is inclusive of VAT.
2. Trustees - All trustees and volunteers are voluntary, unpaid staff. No remuneration or other benefits, except expenses defined above were paid to the charity's trustees or people connected with them. Out of pocket expenses shown here are usually reimbursements for items purchased for direct use by the charity in scenarios where two-part authorisation BACS or Cheque are not accepted such as supermarkets, hardware or online retailers.
3. Food & drink (Subsistence) – Figures shown for this Natural Category are items purchased for consumption and use onsite, such as volunteer refreshments, cleaning products, office stationery and etcetera.

Change of Accounting Policy

The accounts present a true and fair view and no changes have been made in the accounting policies adopted in these notes.

Changes to Accounting Estimates

No changes to accounting estimates have occurred in the reporting period.

Material Prior Year Errors

No material prior year errors have been identified in the reporting period.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life, all on a reducing balance:

- **Electrical & Telecommunications Equipment** – 20%
- **Furniture, Fixtures & Buildings** – 20%
- **Rolling Stock, Locomotives and Carriages** – 20%
- **Tools, Plant Equipment** – 20%
- **Trackwork** – 20%
- **Other** – 20%

Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost or net realisable value after making due allowances for obsolete and slow-moving items.

Cash at Bank and in Hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash, current account, and deposit accounts / fixed-term accounts with a maturity of twelve months or less from the date of opening where applicable.



Preparation of the Accounts on a Going Concern Basis

The Trustees have at the time of approving the financial statements a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

Receipts & Payments Balance Sheet

	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 £
Receipts					
Charitable Activities	9,446	-	-	9,446	-
Other Trading Activities	625	-	-	625	-
Donations, Legacies and Grants	878	-	-	878	-
Other Contributions	385	-	-	385	-
Sub Total	11,334	-	-	11,334	-
Asset & Investment Sales					
None	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	11,334	-	-	11,334	-
Payments					
Cost Of Charitable Activities	473	-	-	473	-
Marketing & Operations	347	-	-	347	-
Volunteer Welfare	120	-	-	120	-
Insurance & Safety Checks	1,206	-	-	1,206	-
Utilities & Rent	2,841	-	-	2,841	-
Plant & Machinery	297	-	-	297	-
General Maintenance	625	-	-	625	-
Signalling, Comms, Site Electrics	275	-	-	275	-
Track Maintenance & Procurement	498	-	-	498	-
Train Maintenance & Procurement	1,063	-	-	1,063	-
Stock Purchases	601	-	-	601	-
Sundry Expenses & Membership Fees	60	-	-	60	-
Sub total	8,406	-	-	8,406	-
Asset and Investment Purchases					
None	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	8,406	-	-	8,406	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	2,928	-	-	2,928	-
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds last year end	5,511	-	-	5,511	-
Cash funds this year end	8,439	-	-	8,439	-

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 £
Cash funds				
	Current Account	8,243	-	-
	Petty / Cash Retail Float	196	-	-
	Total cash funds	8,439	-	-
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
Other monetary assets	None	-	-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
Investment assets	None		-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
Assets retained for the charity's own use	Buildings	Unrestricted	-	-
	Electrical Equipment	Unrestricted	-	268
	Fixtures, Buildings	Unrestricted	-	-
	Furniture	Unrestricted	-	-
	Model Carriage or Wagon	Unrestricted	-	2,472
	Model Locomotive	Unrestricted	-	2,622
	Motive Power, Rolling Stock	Unrestricted	-	471
	Other	Unrestricted	-	47
	Rolling Stock	Unrestricted	-	-
	Telecommunications Equipment	Unrestricted	-	196
	Tools, Plant Equipment	Unrestricted	-	668
	Trackwork	Unrestricted	-	-
	Retail Stock	Unrestricted	700	-
		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
Liabilities	None		-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		ROBERT J. RICHMOND	27/03/25	
		JAMES G. COBBETT	26/03/25	

This report was approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf.