

ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

Report of the Directors & Trustees
including Unaudited Accounts for the Financial Year 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024
for Staffordshire Narrow Gauge Railway Ltd trading as Amerton Railway

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Report of the Directors & Trustees for 2023/2024 Financial Year

Company Data	
Registered Office & Operating Base	Amerton Railway : Stowe-by-Chartley : Staffs : ST18 0LA
Contact Details	www.amertonrailway.co.uk : enquiries@amertonrailway.co.uk 01889 271337
Company Registration	Registered at Cardiff No. 2147443
Charity Registration	Registered in England & Wales No. 1015635
VAT Registration	695 8007 96

Directors & Trustees 2023/24	
PM Gully : Chairman Director Operations	Resigned Chairman : 10/5/23 Resigned Director 4/11/23
SP Bell : Director Engineering	Resigned 5/12/23
PJ Calvert : Director Finance & Safety	
KJ Douglas : Director IT	
LE Hodgkinson : Company Secretary & Membership	
G Martin : Roster Manager & Training	
J Strike : Gazette Editor	Resigned as Director 27/4/23
T Eivers : Director Events	
Independent Examiner	
K Hays : The Accountsmith : 10a The Fillybrooks : Stone ST15 0DJ	

Governance & Management

Structure

The Company is limited by guarantee without share capital and is a Registered Charity with operation governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Company is managed by a Board of Directors elected by the Membership in accordance with the Articles of Association. Stafford Borough Council is entitled under the 'Isabel Agreement' to appoint 1 Member of the Board (but has not done so). The company Organisational Structure is described in the Safety Management System (SMS) and the Operational Staff Group (all unpaid volunteers) work under the direction of the Board Members with specific responsibilities for areas of service.

Risk Management & Financial Control

The Board agrees an Annual Base Budget for each Financial Year that estimates Income & Expenditure, identifies Project Costs and Reserve Balances. The Board meets monthly to review performance against the Budget, analyse variances and limit future spending if income is significantly under planned or costs significantly over.

Charitable Objective

"To promote and further the education of the public in the history of the Narrow Gauge Railway and General Transport Heritage of the UK with special emphasis on the Staffordshire Area". In planning and managing railway activities the Trustees have regard to how the activities meet the charitable objective.

Principal Activities

- The development and operation of Amerton Railway to provide the public with experience of travelling on a traditional narrow gauge railway and educate visitors about Staffordshire's narrow gauge railway heritage.
- The preservation and restoration of narrow gauge locomotives and rolling stock with particular regard to those with Staffordshire connections particularly WG Bagnall locomotive Isabel, the Railway's 'flagship' locomotive
- Co-operation with other narrow gauge railway operators and the Heritage Railway Association in general promotion of narrow gauge railways to the public

Principal Assets

- The Company operating base is the Amerton Railway, a 17 acre site comprising land and buildings owned by the charity at Stowe-by-Chartley near Stafford. The Railway Main Line is 0.8 mile long with the Railway Works, Running & Carriage Sheds and locomotive yard at Amerton Station. The Company owns :
 - Steam Locomotive : W G Bagnall "Isabel" jointly owned with Stafford Borough Council.
 - Steam Locomotive : W G Bagnall "No. 1" in un-restored condition
 - Diesel Locomotives Baguley-Drewry "A10" Baguley "Golspie" and Hunslet "Gordon"
 - A range of passenger & freight stock and engineering plantThe Company has custody of
 - Kerr Stuart Wren "Lorna Doone" on long term loan from Birmingham Science Museum
- Various privately owned locomotives and stock are based at the Railway and Operating Agreements provide that the Company paying maintenance costs in return for free use.

Review of the 2023/2024 Year

Operations/Finances

The Railway was operated from April to the end of October.

- Steam and Everything Goes Galas (EGG) + Carshow ran successfully
- An increased focus on Events with a Events Group saw Easter Egg Hunt, Pirates & Princess Day, Teddy Bear Days, Isabel & Friends Day & A Haunting of Amerton Railway (Halloween) operated which boosted revenue on those days. £5900 was spent on Events support mainly on props and facilities that have a significant lifespan
- Santa Specials increased revenue to £32 660 from £24 800 in 2022
- The Station shop was revamped and product lines improved and increased raising revenue to £4880 from £3475 the previous year
- Donation Income of £3865 includes £3200 to fund the purchase (£2200) of Brake Van 6 from Chasewater Railway and provide a £1000 Maintenance Fund
- Increased training focus led to increased availability of Footplate Crew & Guards

Conservation : Restoration : Maintenance

- 4 railway based steam locomotives had steam tests and routine maintenance was carried out on locomotives and rolling stock.
- Work was largely completed to return privately owned Baguley Dreadnought back into service
- Work continued on the restoration of Baguley Golspie
- Brake Van 6 was purchased from Chasewater Railway to replace a Loan Agreement. A member has generously funded the purchase and taken on ownership and paid in money for a Maintenance Fund
- Galvanised metal roofs were put on a number of wagons as weather protection

Infrastructure

- Nature Walk Project was progressed towards completion including fencing 'The Mine'
- Ticket Office Shop Refurb including new flagpole and carpark banner flag.
- Museum Enhancement Project was completed and commissioned with the exception of Interpretation Boards with enhanced facilities to engage children
- Hedging works were undertaken to provide long term sustainability and costs shared with adjacent landowner
- Tree Planting was undertaken by Forest of Mercia funded by Natural England grant and free of charge to the Railway
- IT Data Storage was moved onto a more sustainable and cost effective platform and wifi Broadband was adopted using Starlink to improve card acceptance facilities

Systems

The Railway has commenced updating its Safety Management System (SMS) developed in 2013/14 and better aligning it to Office of Rail & Road (ORR) updated guidance issued in August 2023

People

The Railway information and discussion group sngr@groups.io was used for Board Communications and to keep in touch with the volunteer Staff Group. Pete Gully, John Strike and Steve Bell all longstanding Board Members stepped down during the year and the Railway thanks them for their very considerable contributions over many years.

A key focus was Training & Competency issues as the Railway needs to qualify more Drivers to ensure services can be maintained and enhanced.

Forward Planning 2022 to 2028

2022 to 2024

Heritage Walk Project : Largely completed by March 2024 with opening targeted for mid 2024 to enhance the offer to customers.

Chartley Building Museum Project Phase 1 : Completed and opened for Easter 2024

Golspie Restoration: Continuing

Development of Events : The Events Group led by a Director delivered activities to improve events and enhance revenue.

2024 (New)

Wagon Preservation & Restoration Plan 2024 : To record condition of non operational rolling stock and identify priorities and timescales for restoration

Replace Sheep Bridge : Look at options and potential for external assistance to replace decayed bridge

Covered Siding : Implement structural engineers report to improve roof structure

Coach 3 : Independent Competent Person (ICP) has been asked to review findings from 2018 and make updated recommendations for actions needed to put the Coach into service.

Welfare Building at Amerton : This has been raised by Operational Staff and considered by the Board : The Portakabin option behind the Chartley Building is not really an option on cost (both purchase cost and installation) and Planning Consent grounds. The Works has a kitchen area that would provide food warming etc facilities and we will acquire tables and chairs so using the Works floor area in the winter would be the best option as the Works has heating.

Safety Management System Upgrade : Update and bring to full compliance with ORR 2023 Guidance

2024 Onwards

Chartley Building Museum Project Phase 2 : A HLF (Heritage Lottery Fund) Bid for £10K will be developed to complete the Interpretation and Interactive elements of the Museum and improve the access area from the platform

Permanent Way Works : An external survey by Alan Keef Ltd identified a series of work that need to be considered in 2023/24. Inhouse surveys have identified works to be carried out in the 2024/25 year

Industrial Railway Development : New line Amerton Station to Stump Junction
Deferred to 2023-25

- Install turnout into Amerton Station Loop 2022-23 : Now 2023/24
- Groundworks and lay railway during 2023-4 running season : Now 2024/25
- Apply for planning permission and funding for Stock Storage Building late 2023 and build as soon as practicable

Deferred to 2025 onwards

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st March 2024 which are set out on pages 7 to 10.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees 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.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- 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 charity 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 Trustees 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 given 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 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

have not been met or to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

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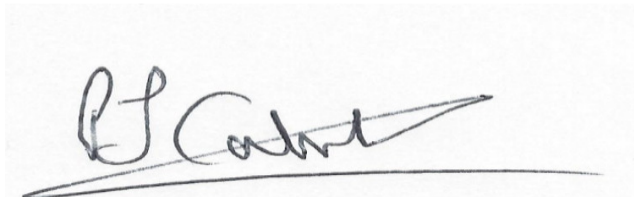


Karen Hays Independent Examiner 30/12/2024
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BALANCE SHEET 31/3/2024		
Total Fixed Assets (7000)	2022/23	2023/24
	280 904	272 984
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank & In Hand (6100) : <i>Unrestricted</i>	47 159	45 645
Cash at Bank & In Hand (6100) : <i>Restricted : Henschell Fund</i>	31 022	31 672
Stock (6200)	6308	10 411
Current Assets Total	84 489	87 728
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable (1301)	0	0
VAT Liability	-2274	-1981
HSBC Mortgage (8000) : Due in One Year	5374	5716
HSBC Mortgage (8000) : Due in more than One Year	21 496	15 504
Total Mortgage Liability (8000)	26 870	21 220
Total Current Liabilities	24 596	19 239
Net Current Assets	59 893	68 489
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	340 797	341 474
Total Net Assets	340 797	341 474
Funds		
Profit/Loss	-13 447	678
Total Funds	340 797	341 474

For the Financial Year 2023/24 the company was entitled to exemption under S477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and no member has required the company to obtain an audit of its' accounts in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The Directors & Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an Independent Examination is sufficient.

This Directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the Companies Act 2006 with respect to Accounting Records and Preparation of Accounts and the Accounts have been prepared in accordance with provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime. It was approved by the Board of Directors and signed on its behalf by:



Peter Calvert Finance Director & Trustee 30/12/2024

Notes to Balance Sheet

Tangible Fixed Assets & Depreciation : The purchase or gift of Fixed Assets are capitalised and included in the balance sheet. Annual Depreciation rates write off assets over their estimated useful life.

- **Freehold Land** : Not Depreciated
- **Buildings & Workshop** : 10% Straight line
- **Plant and Machinery etc** : 6.75% Straight line
- **Bagnall Isabel & Rolling Stock** : 5% Straight line
- **Civil Works & Permanent Way** : 5% Straight line

PROFIT & LOSS ACCOUNT 31/03/2024		
Income : Passenger Sales (1000)	2022/23	2023/24
General Ticket Sales (1100)	22 839	22 322
Santa Specials	24 809	32 660
Goods Sales (1200)	3475	5444
Subscriptions (1300)	1622	1990
Interest (1510)	155	876
Land Income (1600)	391	316
Donations Grants etc (1800) : Donations	3546	3552
Land Covenants (Restricted) (1831)	60	60
Interest Henschell Fund (Restricted) (1920)	106	651
Misc Income	1117	2317
Total Income	58 120	70 190
Cost of Goods Sold : Stock (6300)	-1813	-4103
Gross Profit	59 933	74 293
Expenses		
Operations & Maintenance (2000)	26 258	29 484
Infrastructure & Engineering (3000)	14 546	9945
Finance & Management (4000)	22 126	26 231
Mortgage Interest Payments (4800)	2140	2477
Total	65 070	65 661
Depreciation (5500)	8423	7919
Reconciliation Discrepancies (6690)	-113	35
Restricted Funds : Henschell Fund (5000)	0	0
Total Expenses	73 380	73 614
Profit/Loss	-13 447	678

Notes to Profit & Loss Account

Income Notes : General

- Income is shown net of VAT.
- Sale of Goods is shown under Income and costs shown in Cost of Goods Sold.
- Grant income is not recognised until any conditions for receipt have been complied with. Grants received for specific purposes set out by the grant provider are treated as Restricted Funds.

Expenses Notes

- The Profit figure is determined by Income less Expenditure but Capital Purchases are not included in the Expenditure figure

Capitalisation

No capitalisation undertaken

Expenses Notes : General

- Expenditure is accounted for on an Accruals basis and is classified under category headings.
- *Operations & Maintenance* : The costs of running the Railway and the purchase and maintenance & restoration of Rolling Stock
- *Infrastructure & Engineering* : Costs of Building, Permanent Way and Plant purchase and maintenance
- *Finance & Management* : The Costs of mortgage & loan repayments and the governance, promotion and utility costs of operating the Railway

Taxation : No corporation tax liability arises in respect of the year since the Company has been accepted as a charity within section 467 Corporation and Income Taxes Act 2010. The exemptions afforded by section 466(2) are available as all income and gains are applied to charitable purposes.

Fund Accounting : Unrestricted Funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Directors/Trustees to further the objects of the charity. Restricted Funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity where restrictions are specified by the donor or when funds are raised for restricted purposes.

Stocks: Stock : Goods for Resale and fuel has been valued the lower of cost and net realisable value.

General Notes

Accounting convention : The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standards for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008), the Companies Act 2006 and the requirements of the Accounting and Reporting by Charities; Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), issued in 2005.

Going concern : The Trustees believe that there are no material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the company to continue as a going concern and therefore the going concern basis remains appropriate in the preparation of the Financial Statements.

Donated Assets & Services : The company has the use of Rolling Stock owned by third parties which are not capitalised in the Balance Sheet and the benefit to the company has not been included in the Profit & Loss Account. Donated services are included in the Profit & Loss Account Intangible Income and an equivalent amount of expenditure.

Trustee Payments

Payments for Services : Payments to IT Director/KJ Douglas made 2014 to 2023 for Web Hosting etc ended in 2023 as a fully commercial data storage platform was sourced due to considerable increases in cost for small scale data hosting

Restricted Fund

The Henschel Fund holds funds donated under the Charities Aid scheme to restore a Feldbahn locomotive owned by Trustees J Strike & SP Bell and 2 Members. The Railway will have a number

of years use of the locomotive free of charge once restored. During the year Expenditure was £0 and Income was TBC(Account Interest)

SP Bell and J Strike resigned as Trustees during the course of the year

Trustees Rolling Stock Provided to the Railway Free of Charge

Trustee	Stock : <i>Stock shown in Italics is not currently operational</i>
PM Gully (part year)	Hunslet 'Wren' Jennie is owned by a connected person and managed at the Railway by PM Gully. Clayton BE locomotive (6 Tonne)
L E Hodgkinson	<i>Baguley Diesel Locomotives : Dreadnought & Hesperus</i> Ruston LBT Littleton Diesel Locomotive <i>Fauld Wagon</i>
J Strike (part year)	Motorail Diesel Locomotive : Ruston 48DM Diesel Locomotive <i>Henschel "Feldbahn" Locomotive : Jung Diesel Locomotive : Eastriggs Riding Van</i>
K J Douglas	<i>Hibberd Diesel Locomotive</i>
S P Bell (part year)	Deutz Diesel Locomotive : Clayton BE locomotive (4 Tonne) <i>Henschel "Feldbahn" Locomotive : Jung Diesel Locomotive</i>

The stock owned by J Strike, K J Douglas and S P Bell are jointly owned with other Members of the Company. year. *SP Bell, PM Gully and J Strike resigned as Trustees during the course of the Year*

SHARE CAPITAL

The company is Limited by Guarantee and does not have a share capital. The liability of the members is limited to £1 each. .

CONTROLLING PARTY

In the opinion of the Trustees as each Member has one vote there is no Controlling Party and the Company is managed by the Board of Directors as a collective body.