

Independent Examiner's Report

To the trustees/members of The Growler Group

On accounts for the year ended 31 October 2024

Charity number:702237

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 October 2024

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.

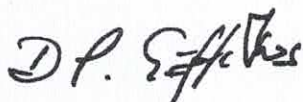
Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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: 21 August 2025

Relevant professional qualifications or body (if any): None

Address 6 New Street, Cwmbran, NP44 1EE



THE GROWLER GROUP

English Electric Type 3 Preservation Society
Owners of 37215 & Custodians of D6948

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 702237

REGISTERED ADDRESS: 8 COLERIDGE ROAD, NEWPORT, SOUTH WALES. NP19 8HY

THE 39TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 'THE GROWLER GROUP'

Held at the Tom Mitchell building Winchcombe Saturday 26th April 2025

Apologies for absence. S. Pilkington, G. Parsons, D Fawkes, A. Laws, T. Dumelow, N. Wellington

Simon Hale called the meeting to order, thanked everyone for attending and opened the meeting at 11.00 am.

Copies of last year A.G.M. minutes were given out to those present and accepted as a true account of the meeting. These were proposed as a true account of proceedings by P. Salter and seconded by G. Arnett and passed unanimously.

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE YEAR

Chairman's Report; Simon Hale,

The past twelve months have been successful for the group. Since the last AGM the elected committee has remained unchanged, other than Phil Seymour departing, and I thank Phil for his work at committee level since 2014.

Both of our locos have been in service for the most part with only a few small minor issues to report. Last August the group organised a very successful 60th Birthday celebration, with both our locos and we were blessed with some fine weather and a good turnout. Our sales team had a very profitable day and raised some much-needed funds for the group and also the day itself helped with an increase of our membership. Martin and his team at Hellfire TV made an excellent DVD to accompany, but sales of this were slightly disappointing. The GWSR and our team of volunteers all did us proud and we have received plenty of good feedback from members and non-members alike.

We further enhanced our profile last year with some exposure in the Railway Press via a couple of magazines and Gareth (Arlett) did an excellent piece on the group and our locos which was published in Railways Illustrated

Looking ahead we should have some news on a potential visit to another Railway with one of our locos this year, but I also want to make an appeal for volunteers as we have been offered a trade stand at the Severn Valley four-day event in October. So, we will need to supplement the volunteers who normally help out on galas etc, as we will have to cover the four days of the event. I can't emphasise enough that this is a huge opportunity for the group to again raise its profile and also increase our funds which are needed to maintain our locos

We are currently updating our sales site, and I am hopeful that this will be going live over the coming weeks.

Finally, I just want to say a big thanks to everyone on the committee who give up their free time to help with the running of the group. I would also like to thank all the members and volunteers behind the scenes who help out with maintaining our two locos, without this help the locos wouldn't run. There are also many members and also non-members who deserve thanks over the last year but a special mention to Steve Worthington and Joanna Whalley for kindly donating the beer for the 60th Birthday event and also to Bob Barlow and Mark Lawrence who also made generous donations to the group on the day.

Treasurer's Report Kevin Jarvis

Copies of the Treasurer's report was handed out to all at the meeting. A copy is also on the end of these minutes

Expenditure

The Group's is in a very healthy position with £168,864.33p but as 37215 tyres are getting thin, we have had a quote which come out at approx. £100,000 so will take a big chunk out of it. A good year with no large outgoings on engineering and supplies, Magazine cost up a bit. Training cost was to train key figures in how to do safety critical repairs and there will be more courses in the coming year so as we cannot continue to rely on ex B.R. trained personal.

Income

The 60 anniversary trains where very profitable and sales where good although we need more events to attend Sales via shopping portal slow a new one to go online shortly. E-Bay sales good Sold some surplus spares and our new investment account brought in £2,500 interest

Hon Membership Secretaries report; Janet Gough

Membership numbers:

Membership numbers at the end of 2024 stood at 264. (This includes 119 people who are either life members, honorary members or regular donors.) This is 15 up on the previous year.

Twenty-seven new applications were received. This is 16 more than the year before and included 2 life memberships. Twenty-five of these were taken out between the start of April and the first week in August and correspond with the start of publicity in the period leading up to and including the day of the GG Anniversary running day. There has been one new membership since.

The Membership Secretary has continued to contact members as the renewal date for their membership approaches. At the beginning of 2025 all those who failed to renew in the previous 12 months were contacted by letter, which prompted a response of 3 renewals. In total 10 people failed to renew their membership in the year 2023, compared with 15 in 2023 and 23 in 2022. No one has made contact regarding their decision not to renew.

Hon Publications Officers Report Simon Hale

As reported in the last magazine, I will be standing down as editor after 5 years in post. Whilst I thoroughly enjoyed my time as editor, I am unable to give the time required to undertake the role. I would ask that you support the incoming editor as the need for material to include in the magazine is still required as previous, as each magazine does take a lot of content in the way of articles and photographs.

The cost of producing the 'hard copy' of the magazine has remained uniform of late. The run is for around 250 copies at the moment (Some members have a pdf copy) and the charge for the copies at present is £386. It is the cost of the postage that is ever increasing unfortunately and for the last two editions the postage charge when you include enveloping etc was £244. So, at the moment it is costing per quarter £630 for each magazine.

I have received good feedback about the magazine during my time as editor, so it still does have a place in the overall membership package offered by the group, but please let's keep it that way by continuing to support it. Lastly, I want to thank everyone who has contributed during my time as editor, there are way too many people to thank here, but without all the photos and articles provided by members (and non) there would not be the quality of magazine that we can produce so please keep it up!

Hon Sales Officers Report Andrew Laws

Apologies for not being able to attend this AGM, I am currently away on a family visit.

The Sales income for the Growler Group comes from four main income streams. These are:

Having our Sales Stand at the GWSR Galas - Steam Gala, Diesel Gala, Anniversary Running Day and Mixed Traction Gala.

Online Sales via our web portal on the GG website (although this is currently offline pending an overhaul)

Sales to Members of GG branded clothing and items via the GG Magazine. We have also sold scale size custom made BR class 37 nameplates that we will also be advertising in the next Growler magazine

eBay Sales - Thanks to Alan Lea who manages this and posts everything out.

This has made a significant proportion of our sales income. We sell mostly donated books and GG branded items. It is worth noting last year that eBay dropped all of their listing fees for the things that we sell. So, we have benefited from this. eBay sales contributed £1495.32p to Growler Group funds.

Thank you very much to Members who have donated items that we have been able to sell and raise funds for the GG. This is very much appreciated.

Hon Publicity Officers Report Gareth Arlett,

2024 was a big year for the Group as we celebrated the 60th birthdays of both our locomotives and, in August, we had a very successful running day to celebrate this. In the run-up to announcing the day I designed a couple of new leaflets to use on our sales/events stands – one specifically about the 60th running day but also a more general leaflet to promote what we do in a more traditional format. These, coupled with the promotion done across our website and social media sites, led to a very successful day. However, with the ‘cost of living crisis’ biting they haven’t necessarily led to an increase in memberships – although over the past year the activities at Galas and other events have garnered some renewed interest in what we do, if not physical memberships.

Also, in the run up to the 60th Anniversary event we were afforded a headline feature in the September edition of Railways Illustrated. This edition came out in the shops just before the event and saw then RI editor, Andy Coward, head to Toddington for a day and interview myself about the Group and the locos. Feedback on this was very positive from those inside and outside the Group. We also, now, have a photo event booked with RI in May 2025 where both locos will be utilised at Gotherington. However, other publications have not been so forthcoming.

The latter half of the year, and into 2025, has seen my attention drawn elsewhere after the death of my Father and so activity has been fairly minimal while I have dealt with his estate. The website has continued to be updated as and when required, and I must thank those who have kept the Facebook site ticking over and, to Richard Drewitt for keeping the ‘X’ account so active! After a discussion during our recent DMG meeting I have had a brief email conversation with the GWSR’s new Marketing Director, Jack Boskett, about how we can increase the general promotion of all things Diesel at the GWSR (which remains very steam-centric on its marketing materials) but also how changes in social media practices are affecting promotion and visibility. Through this I will be investigating how our social media profile might be expanded further and also be more visible to the younger generation of enthusiast. Activity across our social profiles has remained at a constant, healthy level throughout.

I crewed our first Diesel Driver Experience of the year earlier in the month and managed to distribute a handful of leaflets to the participants and their accompanying passengers. Feedback on these events is always very good so having a small amount of marketing material during our own DE events could be an easy way of picking up a quick membership – even if this is just the leaflet holder with the leaflets being placed in the buffet coach, or where everyone congregates.

In June, a few of us will be heading to Crewe to attend a railway and transport collector’s event that we have been invited to have a stand at in 2026 to see if it would be an avenue of event we look at to attend in future – not only to sell but also to promote the group. I have sadly been drawing a blank with trying to get a stand at model railway events – despite the GWSR and other railways seeming to get a presence fairly easily. However, availability of people to staff a stand at such events has proven difficult to identify, as with Sales Stand, and so may be something that we leave for larger events.

We are to look into giving free membership to people who do the class 37 driver experience course

Technical Officer's Report,

37215

Main issue has been straight air brake valves. Three changed during the year. Two of the three have been repaired.
Suffered some oil in the compressed air system following compressor change but settling down now. Needs to be monitored.
One brake cylinder changed. Several now need overhauling.
Brake pull rod bracket repaired and refixed.
Temperature strips applied to all motors following discovery of motak grease in suspension tubes. Nothing out of the ordinary to report so far.
Fuel filters changed/cleaned.
Verbal quote regarding new tyres from Buckfastleigh. Purchase price of £4K per tyre x 12. Fitting charge of £6/7K per axle. Total cost of about £90K + VAT.

Technical Report 37248

Various issues over the year with creating a brake at both ends.
Eventually changed both Brake Feed Cut Off Valves. OK now.
One broken gauge glass changed.
All wipers changed.
Fuel filters changed/cleaned.

Changes to the Constitution and of the Trustees P. Smith

Peter explained the reasons for changing the constitution and the trustees as set out to members in the last magazine. It was to encourage people who would want to join the committee but did not want to take on the full roles as trustees. The group would have 5 trustee's one being elected from the membership with the other posts going to the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary, clause 17 and 18 of the Group's constitution would be amended to accommodate this.

The Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary would be elected for 2 years with the Vice Chairman and membership choice the following year for also 2 years

Peter to amend the required paperwork to be sent to the Charity's commission.

All non-trustee roles on the committee to be appointed by the Trustee's

These changes were proposed by S. Hale, seconded by D. Hancox and passed unanimously in accordance with clause 7 of the constitution

Election of the Trustees for 2025

Everybody standing was asked that their membership was up to date, and they conformed with the Charities Commission rules to stand.

Janet Gough was proposed by S. Hale seconded by D. Hancox and passed unanimously to be the 5th Trustee nominated by the membership

Chairman, Simon Hale, Secretary, Alan Lea, Treasurer, Kevin Jarvis, were proposed for election for 2 years by A. Turner, seconded by G Arnet and passed unanimously.

Vice Chairman Peter Smith and Janet Gough for 1 year by D Tabor and seconded by P. Salter. And passed unanimously.

The rest of the Committee with non-Trustee roles will be appointed at the next meeting of the trustee's

Any Other Business

As we had 10 people at the A.G.M. we had a quorum.

We are to investigate having the A.G.M. available online next year for any members who cannot get to Winchcombe for it.

We need to give 14-day notice for an A.G.M. as we could not do it that is why the date was changed.

Our constitution is made from a Charity Commission template, so they have no problems with it.

No conflict of interest that are not already known about.

37248 going to S.V.R. gala in October will work a passenger turn the Saturday afterwards on an advertised service train at no cost to use, we will get running fees we will try to have a sale stand, raffle on it. Hire arrangement to be arranged with SVR.

D6700 coming to Todd for diesel gala only staying 2 weeks to include a freight and photo charter No extra passenger runs when at Todd. Possible triple head at the gala

S. Hale then thanked everyone for attending and then closed the A.G.M. at 11.56 a.m.

THE NEXT A.G.M. WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY 21ST MARCH 2026 AT 11.00 a.m.

10 members attended with 4 of those non-committee members.

Treasurers Report 2024 (1st Nov. 2023 – 31st Oct. 2024)

Expenditure	£	Income	£
Magazine & Postage	2391.83	Cash @ 1/11/23	36.99
Membership Supplies	128.70	Lloyds A/C @ 1/11/23	86575.95
		Nat West A/C @ 1/11/23	1543.46
Spares	0.00	Loco Fund @ 1/11/23	62841.39
Loco repairs and engineering	444.48	Paypal A/C @1/11/23	560.55
Loco Supplies	466.64	Loco Fund Donations	4070.00
Transport	315.77	Loco Fund Interest	2267.11
		Gift Aid	0.00
D6948 Running Fees	5755.86	Donations	1681.00
Training	1440.00	Give As You Earn	550.00
Website	122.32	Membership	3543.22
60th Anniversary Train	1500.00	GWR Running Fees	10337.00
Merchandise Stock	724.75	Spares Sale	1200.00
Leaflets	98.00	eBay	1495.32
Sum Up Machine	94.80	60th DVD's	129.85
Card Fees	19.01	On-Line Merchandise	284.43
Loco Fund @ 31/10/24	65108.50	Amazon	0.00
Cash @ 31/10/24	222.95	Shopping	331.11
Lloyds A/C @ 31/10/24	101369.14	GWR Steam Gala	254.19
Nat West A/C @ 31/10/24	1603.46	GWR Diesel Gala	485.93
Paypal Balance @ 31/10/24	560.28	GWR Mixed Gala	287.00
		215 Anniversary Day	154.00
		60th Day Sales	392.50
		Autumn Gala	306.89
		60th Day Tickets	2225.45
		60th Day Raffle	294.00
		60th Day Beer	519.15
TOTAL	182366.49		182366.49

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at the end of the period:

Cash Funds £168,864.33 (see analysis above)

Assets Retained for the Growler Group's Own Use: Physical Assets held are locomotive 37215 purchased in 1994 for £8225. The group also holds Sales Stock with an estimated value of £1000.

Shares to the value of £31,430 are held in the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway PLC in exchange for a thirty years lease for the use of space within the diesel locomotive shed located at Toddington on the G.W.R.

Other notes: All funds unrestricted