



A timeless scene at Horsted Keynes – see 'Five Minutes with Neil Glaskin' Photo: Jon Bowers

The Bluebell Times

A Newsletter for Bluebell Railway Members, Staff and Supporters

June 2022

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What is your perfect Bluebell vision? Asked to sum up the Railway, perhaps it is a multitude of pre-grouping locomotives hauling an array of vintage carriages to East Grinstead throughout the year, passengers admiring open views and a smooth ride, the service frequency allowing breaks to admire the well-restored stations and museums along the way.

But have we ever delivered that – all at once? The 1960s was the era of the tank engine, when a BR Standard 4 was considered indecently large – but limited workshop facilities would see locos set aside when needing little more than a retube. By the 1980s the Railway could routinely field 10 – 12 locos each year, yet carriages would often be a Mark 1 still in BR blue and grey livery, and gems such as the Metropolitans were rotting outside, with proper storage facilities still decades in the future. Fifteen years ago, we ran 52 weekends per year over double the original length of line, but the lack of opportunity for extensive track maintenance saw the p/way – particularly south of Horsted Keynes – deteriorate slowly, and then rapidly. Today we are very tight for locos and run a somewhat curtailed service – but the p/way is much improved and for the first time we can get all our vintage carriages, operational and awaiting restoration, under cover.

The point being – while the Bluebell has done many wonderful things, it is a somewhat rose-tinted vision to imagine having done them all *simultaneously*. Being the best we can in all areas simultaneously should be what we aspire to. It is the challenge for all of us – members, staff and supporters – to help, in whatever way we can, to deliver that aspiration. Because the risk otherwise is that while, from time to time we will continue to be excellent in parts, it will remain a fragmented picture of never being able to deliver all parts of our vision at once.

Tom James, Editor

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From Mee to You

By Geoff Mee, chairman, Bluebell Railway Plc

Over the last 20 years the Bluebell has experienced a significant reduction in annual visitors from a high of 190,000 in 2005 to a low of 140,000 in 2019. This has been compounded by the effects of the last 2 years of the Covid pandemic which without government subsidy and generous donations from our members could have resulted in bankruptcy.

This reduction in visitor numbers of 50,000 per year at an average spend of £20 per visitor means a missed income of £1m per annum. Think of the restoration work that we could do with that money.

For many of these years we have relied on a varied collection of locomotives pulling a diverse and often mismatched collection of carriages to provide a train journey through some stunning scenery but with limited added value to give an exciting day out for a diverse range of visitors.

Now is the time for a radical re-appraisal of what the underlying rationale for our existence is and what the development of our future strategy should be to ensure our continued existence. We need to grow our reputation as well as our visitor numbers to retain our reputation as one of the Premier Heritage Railways in the world.

I have written this article as a discussion document in preparation for a new Business Plan which will retain our heritage principles but redefine our offering to a new generation of visitors. People born in the last 50 years will have no steam railway memories and for whom nostalgia of itself may well be of early diesel travel and does not constitute a compelling attraction in comparison with other leisure attractions. For what we charge for our basic product we need to offer a day out and not just a two-hour train ride.

The following is not a definitive plan, but I am hoping it will stimulate a debate about our direction of travel and will build on the outputs from the workshops held early this year, the Vision and Mission Statements drafted by Plc board director Bob Pamment [See back pages – Ed.] and adopted by the

joint boards and a very good paper produced by the Friends of Kingscote on increasing visitor numbers.

The Vision is that we build on the Bluebell being a Living Museum able to tell a chronologically accurate history of railways in the South East, a live version of the National Railway Museum coupled with the historical context of Beamish, Iron Bridge and the Weald and Downland museums. The proposals are designed around a two-train weekend timetable which can be flexed with the seasons, holidays etc. The term-time weekdays would need to be a pared-down service built around our different visitor demographic.

Importantly we need as much as possible whole trains that tell the story of railways through time and this means co-ordinating the programmes for Loco and C&W to produce a series of period experiences from 1870s through time to 1960s and beyond. Hauled by both steam and diesel traction, the latter being nostalgic in itself for later generations.

Let's take a journey from East Grinstead with a family arriving by train with two young children. They arrive at the station and enter the Bluebell via direct access from the main line station without having to cross over roads etc and is fully accessible. The first things that they see are a static undercover display of a Bluebell Locomotive e.g. "Captain Baxter" at the entrance to the Bluebell Arch entrance to the station proper. A temporary building at present but with plans for a more substantial new but heritage station planned for the future.

They then have a choice, Take the "Main Line Service" all stations to Sheffield Park or jump onto the Push-Pull set to Kingscote which leaves shortly afterwards arriving into the cattle dock at Kingscote.

Once at Kingscote there are two new attractions. A fully functioning Goods yard on the Up side, complete with a pick up goods train, cattle dock and a hand crane, recreating the feel for the rural goods station that Kingscote used to be. Next on the Down side is Stepneys' Club House, an indoor area for young people with an uprated café (replacing the

Well House) and a refurbished playground area for young kids and space for older kids with a zip wire, climbing frames etc. We retain the picnic area but with the option of converting it on a couple of occasions a year to a 1950s era village fete.

If you had continued along the Main Line, you would arrive at Horsted Keynes Station, the largest on the heritage rail network, coupled with our magnificent workshops and Heritage Skills Centre. The station is all now a hub of activity, You can change here for the local train of 4 wheel vehicles hauled by a Terrier (as an optional add-on to get to Sheffield Park in period style) or on alternate weekends a Birdcage set hauled by a P class. On Platform 1 you can see a real pick-up goods train and take a footplate experience ride or a brake van ride (both pre-bookable as optional extras).

You can take a guided tour of the workshops and trimming facilities where the detail behind preservation can be explained (and hopefully encourage more volunteers). Possibly, on selected dates an up-close view of track maintenance, including our Tamper to explain what it takes to keep us open.

In the end all this leads to where it all began at Sheffield Park where many visitors will still arrive by road (possibly on the bus at weekends from Haywards Heath). As you leave the car park the first thing that you see is the static undercover locomotive that started this all off "Sharpthorn" with a descriptor panel of the Bluebell Journey and how this little locomotive played a major part in many parts of the journey.

You then see the Miniature Railway in the picnic area and visit the gF club HQ. Further up the access roadway you come upon what look like railway carriages from the outside but are storage and staff facilities for the Catering and Retail teams. Then on to the hustle and bustle of the main station with Museum, SteamWorks! and enhanced Bessemer catering outlets and the shop.

A busy station with its new purpose following on from the review being carried out by BRPS chairman Paul Churchman and a special team. The loco

workshop has some restricted dates and times for guided tours to show in real time what it takes to keep us running.

Sheffield Park is the starting point for our on-train dining experiences including new offerings like the Directors' Dinner, an all-inclusive table d'hôte dining experience in one of the two Directors' Saloons recreating a Revival Experience and an opportunity for some serious dressing up by our customers 20s / 30s style.

Events suggested by Volunteer workshops and others for evaluation which could be incorporated into the plan.

- ➔ Film Festival
- ➔ Sparkling Wine Festival
- ➔ Foodie Fest
- ➔ Period Circus in lower car park
- ➔ Diwali Express, tag to SteamLights
- ➔ Vintage Car Weekend (with RAC club)
- ➔ Autumn Tints special with Sheffield Park Gardens and Southern through train
- ➔ Easter Special at Kingscote (lambs, chicks Maypole dancing, tea tent)
- ➔ Live theatre in the events tent (there is a stage version of "Brief Encounter" and "The Railway Children")

There is a cost in terms of both cash and volunteer time attached to many of the ideas given above but others could be tried and established without too much expense. It would need a small team, like the one we have put together to review the Sheffield Park operation, to do more detailed thinking and planning.

I hope that this will stimulate some debate which we can use to develop the next stage of the Business Plan. The boards are getting together in the summer to develop further the good work that has already been done.

Geoff

BRPS Annual General Meeting

By Paul Churchman, BRPS Chairman

This year's AGM had a somewhat low turnout [*119 signed in and 60 proxies – Ed*], which was disappointing but not surprising given we only had one six months ago – and also there was the Road Meets Rail event on at the Railway and many people were enjoying the delights of traction engines and ales at Horsted Keynes. For those that did attend, I thank you and it was good to see everyone. As I will explain more in *Bluebell News*, the format of the AGM has become tired and we need to refresh it and revitalise it. After the AGM, myself and a number of the Society Board discussed this, and we have a good concept for next year which I did outline at the meeting.

The AGM needs to be something our members want to attend and it is important that we actually make something worthwhile and showcase our Railway to our members. There is always the business side that we are legally compelled to do, but we can also make this an interesting event. If we are going to survive and attract new people and keep the people we have engaged, it must evolve. The days of looking at men in brown suits talk at us from a dusty school stage are gone!

As you all know there were no elections and there were some retirements. Being my first AGM and doing things the way I do, I made some mistakes – two to be precise. I failed to introduce everyone

sitting on the top tables (until reminded at the interval) and I also failed to introduce Neil Glaskin as the new Vice Chairman, something which is truly unforgivable as I spent much time asking Neil to stand for Vice Chairman and he is my best man at my wedding in July. Neil, welcome back – I hang my head in shame and thank you for stepping up and I look forward to your valuable input on the leadership of the Railway. Neil has previously been Operations Director then Retail Director and was a trustee for 15 years and is Chief Guards Inspector – so has a wealth of experience and understanding of the Bluebell.

We said farewell to Chris Saunders after serving as a Trustee since 2007; and to Steve Bigg who having served as Vice-Chairman since 2016, suddenly found himself in the role of Acting Chairman in March 2020 following the sudden resignation of Graham Aitken. That this was at the same time as the country was suddenly placed into lockdown and the Railway closed could not have been a more challenging task but Steve kept his cool and led us through all the difficulties, working in partnership with the Trust and the Plc to make sure Bluebell survived the crisis.

[See page 5 for "Five Minutes With ... Neil Glaskin" – Ed]

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

50 Years Gordon Callander, Robert Hayward, Chris Majer, David Noel, Ray Oliver, Roger Price and Ian Wright

40 Years Graham Flight, Adrian Hopgood, Joanne Gurr, Barry Jones and Fred (Alan) Pragnall

25 Years Chris Bassett, Claire Emsley, Clive Knight, Liz Groome, Ruth Lee, Michael Mackie-Clark and Mick Sargeant

10 (+) Years Lesley Berry, Bob Burchell, Chris Chambers, Kevin Clarke, Chris Dymond, Ben Gray, Tim Gray, Jim Harris, Geoff Hempstead, Mike Hopps, Fraser Hutchinson, Mike Jackson, Andy Kelly, Jan Kozminski, Steve Loeber, Charles Melton, Colin Morse, Richard Ogilvie-Herald, James 'Clarence' Reeves and James Wake

Our congratulations and grateful thanks to you all for your contribution to the Railway. This represents around 950 years – almost as long as the Supreme Station Master who did a thousand years in 'The Joy of Return' which was staged at Horsted Keynes many years ago!

Gavin Bennett, BRPS General Secretary

Five Minutes With ... Neil Glaskin

Name

Neil Glaskin

Role

Vice Chairman, Bluebell Railway Preservation Society

Chief Guards Inspector and Shunter

How long have you been involved with the Bluebell Railway?

I joined the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society in 1990 and started as a volunteer on the day before my 14th birthday in 1991.

How did you first become involved?

I was interested in railways from a very early age, one of the Thomas the Tank Engine generation, my parents would bring me to visit the Bluebell and I knew I wanted to volunteer in some way so as soon I was old enough I signed up. I started working at the Railway as a junior porter at Sheffield Park.

What is your professional career and does it overlap with your Bluebell role?

In my day job I'm Commercial Manager for local bus operator Compass Travel. We are the largest independent bus operator in South East England with buses operating across Sussex and Surrey, two of our bus routes serve the Bluebell Railway. Chris our Managing Director is also a BRPS member and the business likes to support the Railway where we can. We often supply buses for special events.

What does your BRPS role involve?

My role as Vice Chairman is to support the BRPS Chairman and cover for him if he's unavailable to attend any meetings as well as supporting the work of all the Trustees.



How often do you volunteer at the Railway?

I'm normally at the Railway at least one day of each weekend doing something and then one or two evenings a week are taken up, either attending a meeting or doing Railway work at home.

Are you involved in any other departments or areas of the Railway?

As well as my role on the BRPS Board I am Chief Guards Inspector. Working with three other inspectors we carry out the competence assessments on all the Guards and Shunters on the Railway. My favourite job on the Railway is as a Shunter. When I first qualified we were still doing the famous Monday shunt with a steam loco but they are mainly on a Thursday now with the og. Most shunting is done out of the public gaze but on special events we have been able to do some demonstration shunting which has been fun to show off what we do. Over the years I have also worked in the catering department and done occasional days in the loco department, occasionally I also help the wagon gang at Horsted Keynes as an unskilled labourer. I was a Trustee and Director for 13 years before taking a short break.



Do you have a nickname?

Not that I know of!!!

What's the best part of your job?

That's hard to answer having only just taken up the role but I hope I can make a difference. I want the Railway to make sure it considers its people, members, volunteers and staff in the decisions we make. People are key to our success, I believe that we all start on the Railway because we are interested in trains but we stay because of the people.

What is your earliest train memory?

I think it is when my Dad took me to London by train and we went to all the big stations, I got to look in the cab of an Inter-City 125 train. My parents weren't really into railways but always supported my interest. Although my Dad passed away when I was quite young my mum was very supportive in giving me a lift to and from the Railway each weekend, before I was old enough to drive myself, and taking an interest in what I was doing at the Bluebell.

Do you have a model railway at home or in the garden?

I have a small 16mm live steam garden railway, it was my lockdown project. Although I had actually bought the equipment 18 years earlier I'd never got round to doing much with it, the good weather and the time off work gave me the chance to build the railway. I have collected some OO models of Bluebell locos over the years but my involvement in the Bluebell doesn't leave much time for a model railway.

What's the funniest or best thing that's happened to you at the Bluebell Railway?

In 30+ years of working at the Railway there has been so many! One of the great things about working on the Bluebell Railway is you meet so many people and make some really good friends and share some great times. Some of the best moments were when I qualified as a Guard and a Shunter, the 50th anniversary gala was a high point for me having put a lot of work in to make it happen. I was very proud to be invited to the



Top to bottom:

1992 – With the late Mike Lee as Junior Porters at Sheffield Park. Photo: David Neal

2021 – Shunting at Horsted Keynes. Photo: Laurie Anderson

2021 – As Guard, with Driver Ben Wetherall and Fireman Laurie Anderson. Photo: Joe Jenner

garden party at Buckingham Palace when the Bluebell was awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. I have also had some great experiences at Railway, I've even been lucky enough to drive a steam loco under supervision on a few occasions, but some of the best times are when you are working with good mates to get the job done.

Do you have a favourite locomotive, coach or wagon – and what are the reasons?

With such a big collection that's a difficult one to answer. I'd probably have to say that "Normandy" is my favourite engine. It was the regular shunting engine when I started as a Shunter and was perfect for the job. My favourite carriage is 1309, it is a beautiful vehicle and has a lot of character.

What is the biggest challenge facing the Railway at the moment and how can it be tackled?

There are going to be a lot of challenges over the next few years. Recruiting and retaining enough volunteers is going to be challenging but very important to ensuring the Bluebell Railway survives and flourishes. The increasing cost of all fuels is putting pressure on everyone and this will affect people coming to the Railway to volunteer. That combined with all the demands on people's time and other opportunities for people to spend their spare time mean we need to do what we can

to make volunteering attractive so people want to spend their time and money coming to the Bluebell to do it.

Anything else you want to tell us?

Just that I am looking forward to my new role on the Bluebell Railway and I hope that over the next few years I can help make some positive changes to take the Railway forward.

BLUEBELL BITES

Bus or train?

Train

In the vanguard or in the guard's van?

Definitely in the guard's van, or even better out shunting

Wealden Rambler or Golden Arrow?

Golden Arrow, our Pullman train has to be one of the finest trains on any heritage railway anywhere

Downton Abbey or The Railway Children?

The Railway Children. I was involved off screen as a shunter when the remake was filmed on our Railway.

Tea or coffee?

Tea! Its what keeps me and the Railway running.

Summer of Events

By Ruth Rowatt, marketing and communications manager

MODEL RAILWAY WEEKEND

2 – 3 July

Don't miss the Model Railway Weekend at The Bluebell Railway on the 2nd and 3rd of July. During the successive lockdowns, many people dug their boxes of model railway out the loft and rediscovered the skill and enjoyment in creating and operating the miniature worlds. Many discovered model railways for the first time and its popularity has soared.



Whether you are new to model railways or an old hand, this popular and successful show should be in your calendar.

With an impressive and comprehensive variety of layouts complete with stunning steam and diesel locomotives, access to non-public areas like the Locomotive Maintenance Shed at Sheffield Park Station and the Carriage and Wagon Workshop at

Horsted Keynes Station, traders and other displays, it's well worth a visit. And of course, there are full-sized steam trains running too!

More information and updates will be added to the website as we get closer to the event. For tickets visit: www.bluebell-railway.com/model-railway-weekend/

FENCHURCH'S 150TH BIRTHDAY BASH

29 – 31 July

Don't miss this exciting 3-day weekend, packed with fun for everyone! This event will celebrate the small but mighty class of engine, built locally at Brighton Works during the reign of Queen Victoria.

'Fenchurch', probably the first Terrier to enter service in 1872, is hoped to be back in service and running for its 150th anniversary! To celebrate we are hosting a 3-day celebration with Fenchurch and Friends as the stars!

Alongside our own engines we will have a special visitor coming all the way from the Isle of Wight 'A1X' (Terrier) Class W11 'Newport' which should appeal to the enthusiast.

Vintage vehicle displays will help mark transport history since Fenchurch was built. Trails and activities for children will make this event a real learning adventure. Our popular annual Toy and Rail Collectors Fair will be held on Sunday too. With book signings by children's authors and an



array of educational STEM demonstrations and tours, it is a great family day out.

Plus, bark like a terrier locomotive! The Bluebell Railway is dog friendly. A fun dog show will be running on the Friday and Saturday. Classes include a terrier class (of course), but there are classes for non-terriers and terriers in disguise too!

More information and special tours will be added to the website as we get closer to the event. For tickets visit: www.bluebell-railway.com/terrier-gala/

THE GOLDEN ARROW

August and September

Bluebell Railway's Golden Arrow train is the perfect setting for a special meal with friends or an intimate meal for two.

We have now released new August and September dates for our Golden Arrow Silver Service Dining Trains. These tickets are in high demand, and will sell quickly, therefore we would advise booking now to avoid disappointment.



Starting at Sheffield Park Station, this premier dining service includes a three-course meal and travel on a steam-hauled train through the beautiful countryside of the Sussex Weald to East Grinstead. Your journey will last approximately 3½ hours.

Visit the website for more information on menus and how to book: www.bluebell-railway.com/golden-arrow/



Events past: No. 80151 approaching New Coombe bridge with the 10.15am train from East Grinstead during the Road Meets Rail Event on Sunday 29 May. Photo: Peter Edwards

A New Home for No. 30064

By Paul Churchman, BRPS chairman Photo by Ben Jenden

Many members and supporters of the Railway will have fond memories and feelings for locomotive No. 30064, the “Yankee Tank”. It is deeply rooted in the history of the Bluebell Railway through the 1970s.

However, as you know, like many heritage railways, we have so much rolling stock and locomotives we simply will never be able to restore them all, let alone maintain everything that we have running now. Within the Carriage and Wagon Department we have recently agreed a disposal list of vehicles and we have seen the first of those vehicles leave the Railway for new homes, still in preservation.

The Yankee Tank is sat at Horsted Keynes in a deteriorating state, something for which the Railway must take responsibility. I want to address in the longer term getting everything undercover.

In the meantime, we need to deal with the here and now. No. 30064 will require a considerable sum spending on it very shortly to remove asbestos. That will only deal with that problem – the loco will still be sat there. There is no slot within the next 20 years to get this locomotive into the works as we have structured an overhaul plan to suit the current and future needs of the operation of the railway and to give us a spread of small, medium and large locomotives in line with the Society’s aims and objectives.

The Railway has received an offer to sell No. 30064 to a private individual who wishes to restore it and have it running in the next 5-6 years. This approach is something that we must take. As part of the true preservationist movement we must not allow something to sit and rot if there is someone else willing to take it on and restore it to its glory. This way we will hopefully be welcoming this locomotive back on to our rails to operate in the next 5-6 years.

The Society and Plc Boards have already approved the sale of 30064, but before we move to complete this deal, I wanted set out why we are doing this.



This is not the thin end of the wedge and will not turn into selling our historic collection: it is just we will simply never realistically restore this engine and therefore it is right to sell it to someone who will.

I have agreement from all Boards that the money will go to the Bluebell Railway Trust and this money will be ring-fenced for locomotive restoration.

Volunteering Update

By Graham Aitken, volunteer co-ordinator

Do you like to sit down and drink tea? If yes, a golden opportunity has arisen for you, or a member of your family or a friend, to volunteer as the new Deputy Membership Trustee of the BRPS. This is a new post created to assist the Membership Trustee and the membership team.

As well as drinking tea, you need to enjoy meeting people, have a good telephone manner, be computer literate and have the ability to work as a team member looking after the 10,000 members of our Society.

Full training will be given at Sheffield Park in the membership office on Sundays. Once trained you could change this day to one that suits you better.

Further details can be obtained from Don Brewer Membership Trustee: don.brewer@bluebell-railway.com or by direct phone line to the membership office 01825 724893 on Thursdays or Sundays.

If you would rather **sell** tea, plus other drinks, and refreshments to our visitors in either the on-train buffet car, at Horsted Keynes or East Grinstead buffets or at the Kingscote kiosk, we need **YOU** to apply now by contacting the volunteer.coordinator@bluebell-railway.com

Visitors are going thirsty and hungry! Your railway needs **YOU** to stop this from happening!

FIND OUT MORE DAYS

Why not join us? We are a volunteer-led organisation. If you wonder whether you might be interested in volunteering in any capacity on the Bluebell, you can sign up for one of our [Find Out More Days](#):

- ➔ Saturday 11 June
- ➔ Sunday 10 July
- ➔ Saturday 13 August
- ➔ Sunday 11 September
- ➔ Saturday 8 October

To guarantee a place on these popular Find Out More Days, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteer.coordinator@bluebell-railway.com as soon as possible, giving details of your name, an idea of what you would like to do, if known, and the date of the of the tour you wish to join.

Timetable for each Find Out More Day

- 10:30am Meet at Sheffield Park station and spend 90 minutes visiting and learning about what volunteers can undertake there.
- 12:15pm Break, with opportunity to buy lunch in the Bessemer Arms.
- 1:00pm Travel by train to Kingscote, spending 30 minutes there, fact finding.
- 2:09pm Travel to Horsted Keynes, spending 75 minutes there finding out about our Carriage & Wagon and Infrastructure departments.
- 3:38pm Board the train back to Sheffield Park and discuss which roles you may be interested in undertaking, in order that next steps can be arranged for you to join us.
- 4:05pm Arrive back at Sheffield Park and finish.

The Jewel in the Crown

Words and photos by Bob Darvill, Jewel in the Crown project manager

Following the feted renovations in the Ladies and Gentleman's restroom facilities, visitors will have observed the arrival of scaffold structures around the station. These signal the increased on-site activity as "The Jewel in the Crown" project accelerates from its start.

Early work is focused on the visually important building frontages, including the Station House. The preparation of woodwork including removal of old paint in poor condition and smoothing surfaces is already largely complete. The porch and various windows have received undercoats and new paint in period-correct, Southern Region colours is already enhancing the upper gables.

During planning, the unusual bespoke cast-iron gutters which adorn the building were a concern. These custom-made fixtures would increase costs significantly if not repairable, but intervention was essential due to corrosion, leaking joints and fractured components. Just how easy would they be to detach and dismantle? Careful work from a cherry picker has allowed the first of these to be unbolted and transported to our selected specialist restorer. A trial sample has already been successfully cleaned and restored and we are confident about returning all these gutters and components for refitting once the paintwork is complete.

Whilst maintaining access to the subway from the Booking Hall, platform 5 has been substantially

closed to visitors. This will enable the platform canopy support structure to be repaired and restored. Our electrician has been meticulously identifying and disconnecting the various ducts, conduits, wires and cables attached to the woodwork. Temporary racks have been employed to safely support this heavy spaghetti of wiring, enabling attention to be turned to the woodwork.

In the coming few weeks the removal of the roof covering will enable the repair of rotted and decayed support structure components prior to painting. Eventually the metal and glass roof can be restored by our chosen experts. The rarity of traditional skills, techniques and compatible materials for the platform roof led to a long search for solutions now concluded. Through our specialist we are in the process of procuring dedicated tooling capable of reproducing the traditional profiles in the correct gauge of metal. Once in production, this will enable the restored platform structures to be fully returned to their former glory.

Elsewhere at Horsted Keynes, substantial work has progressed in laying ducts, cables and drains rerouting underground services from the dock area to the far side of the tracks. The dock area will shortly be resurfaced. Meanwhile, research is ongoing with specialist contractors to best deal with restoration work in the subway, but that will be a story for another time.



New Additions to the Museum Website

By Chris Wilson, Bluebell Railway archive volunteer



[105283] - Fenchurch leaving Horsted Keynes on 23 May 1964 shortly after arrival at the Bluebell Railway. In virtually the same condition as it left British Railways except the leading number 3 on the smoke box number plate has been painted over as has the emblem on the tank sides. R.C. Riley

This month we have added another 1,656 images to the [museum website](#), bringing the total available to 17,333.

Over a thousand of the latest additions were taken by David Esau. This is the second part of his Southern photographs following on from those we added earlier in the year – see the March issue of *The Bluebell Times*.

We have added the next group of stations, signal boxes and infrastructure images taken by John Scrace, there are 172 'F' locations.

With the anticipated return to traffic of Fenchurch we have added a collection of 67 colour images of the loco to the website. The earliest being taken in May 1964 shortly after arriving at the Bluebell. These

photographs come from high resolution scans of colour slides taken by R.C. Riley, John Scrace and Joe Kent.

Another new addition to the site this month is the 'Colin Saunders collection'. Unfortunately, we know very little about this collection other than at some point the negatives were given to the late Klaus Marx when he was the Bluebell Railway Archivist and a label was fixed to the front of the box which said 'Colin Saunders, early 1950s'. The collection consists of 199 images of mainly ex Brighton locos, nearly half the collection are photos of Brighton Atlantic's. If you can tell us more about Colin Saunders and this collection, please email photos@bluebell-railway-museum.co.uk

The remainder of the new images are from the camera of Joe Kent.



[159039] – ca. 1952 32424 Beachy Head entering Horsted Keynes, possibly with the 16.18 London Bridge to Brighton. Colin Saunders collection

VIEWING AND ORDERING

To view and order go to www.bluebell-railway-museum.co.uk and click on the Archive tab. There are various searching methods, including by locomotive number or class and location. The content key search allows you to see all the images of a particular type, for example, all the images taken of Fenchurch. Use the New key to see all the latest images including those mentioned and shown here and the Nearly New key to see what we added last month.

Following feedback to the editor, we are also publishing the photographic reference number with each photo, to give another method of locating the photos published each month in *The Bluebell Times*.



CORRECTION CORNER

Following on from the photograph taken by Joe Kent that featured in the last issue of *The Bluebell Times* we would like to thank all those that got in touch to let us know that the photo at Brighton station did in fact show a 6-PAN unit no. 3034 and not two 2-BIL units.

News in Brief

MID SUSSEX DC VISIT THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN

We had a VIP visit from Mid Sussex District Council to talk about the work that we are doing on The Jewel in the Crown and the story of OP4.

In the picture on the right is Judy Holmes, Deputy CEO and Head of Planning. Next is Kathryn Hall CEO for Mid Sussex. They are accompanied by Bluebell Railway Commercial Director Paul Lelew and Infrastructure Director Barry Luck.

We talked about solar panels on the roof of OP4 and the longer-term plans for commercial opportunities at Horsted Keynes.

Kathryn was also keen to work with the Bluebell for opportunities for students from the local sixth form college for work experience and the Mid Sussex planning team are looking to work with us on economic development.

FOSP HELP THE WEARY PASSENGER FIND A SEAT

Words by Graham Aitken Photos by Sue Elliott

Many a weary passenger at Sheffield Park will have taken a break on one of the eight fully refurbished benches, looking magnificent as you will see from the accompanying "before and after" photos. Thanks for these must go to Sue Elliott and Dennis Matthews from the Friends of Sheffield Park (FOSP), who have created a production line to ensure that our benches are brought up to a superb standard and then kept that way. There are a further four to be refurbished and the plan is to introduce them to our visitors bottoms during the year. Why not try them out for yourself!

GOODS DIVISION REVEALS ITS NEXT PROJECT

Words and photo by Matt Lander

While work continues on the group's existing projects, thoughts are turning to the next wagon to be restored.

With that we're asking for donations towards our next main project [Southern Railway Conflat D 39617](#). Built in 1933 this vehicle was used for the transportation of containers and road vehicles and as such would make an excellent addition to our goods train.



It's in comparatively good condition to many of our other vehicles but unfortunately restoration isn't cheap and we're estimating £5,000 to return this back into traffic. This will only be possible with your donations so please follow the link below to help out.

Donations can be made with Gift Aid, via the Bluebell Railway Trust: www.bluebell-railway.com/donate/ and choose "Wagon Repair Fund" from the drop-down for the destination for your donation.

AWAKE THE GIANT

Words and photo by Andy Taylor

Members of the volunteer fundraising and engineering team spent a day at Horsted Keynes on 14 May planning the move of the loco back to Sheffield Park and the next steps in its restoration.

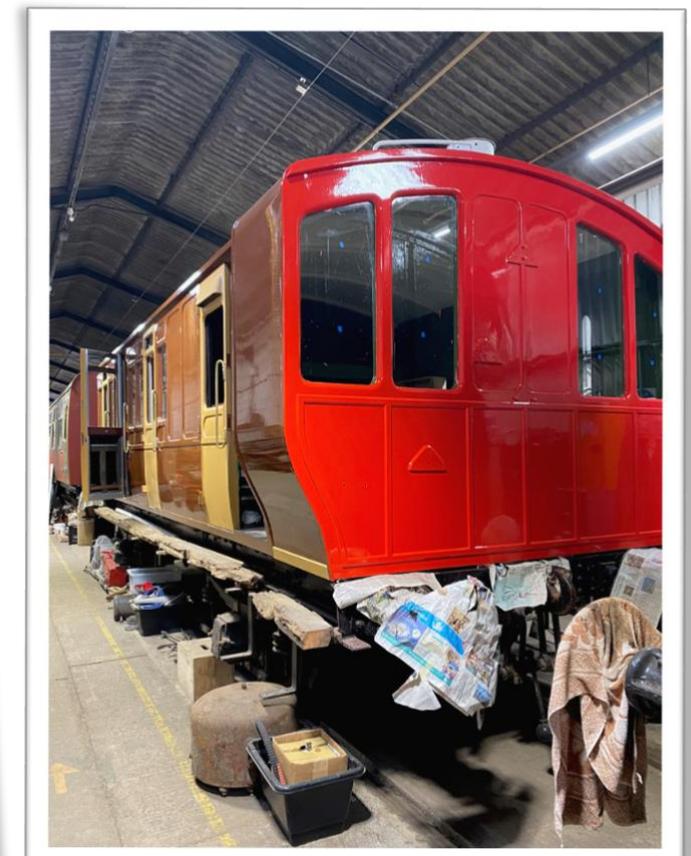
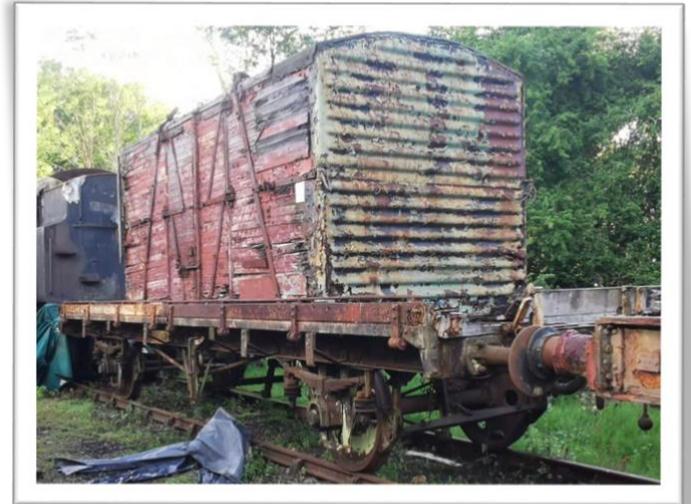
If you would like to help funding this project please contact andy.taylor@bluebell-railway.com or visit www.bluebell-railway.com/brps/awake-the-giant/

FENCHURCH RETURNS!

The underframe of Stroudley A1 No. 72 "Fenchurch" returned to the Railway in late May, following an extensive overhaul at Statfold Engineering. The photo below (by Tom James) shows the newly-returned locomotive; meanwhile, work on the boiler is progressing in the Railway's own workshop.

... AND CARRIAGE 949 RACES IT TO COMPLETION

Meanwhile at Horsted Keynes, contemporary [Stroudley Brake 3rd carriage No. 949](#) also nears completion. (Below right – photo Tom James).



Railway Cuttings

By Paul Bromley, communications director

The Bluebell Railway's appeal to visitors has reached celebrity status.

Rosie Nixon, the editor of Hello! magazine, visited the railway with her family on Sunday 15 May.

She posted pictures and video on her [Instagram feed](#) including a picture with Kingscote station foreman Roger Dudman.

She wrote: "Over the last 8 years, I have spent many many hours, like today, messing around on steam trains. Going up and down branch lines, checking out goods yards and inspecting restored engines. I've listened to [my husband] impart valuable information on valves, cylinders, gradients and timetables, as our boys listen intently and share his enthusiasm. Honestly, I'm an expert now too!!"

"Today I had the most wonderful chat with Roger, Station Foreman at Kingscote station and a preserved railway volunteer for the Bluebell Railway for the past 47 years. 47 YEARS! He's seen a lot and still loves what he does, even on a soggy day. What a legend ... Basically, trains are cool and we should support preserved railways."

Sussex World reporter Katherine Hollisley-McLean also came to the railway with her family including her children and her father.

She wrote that she had lived in Sussex all her life apart from a year working in America but had never visited the Bluebell Railway.

Katherine's column "One thing or a mother" appeared in the Worthing Herald newspaper dated Thursday 19 May and was also published [online](#).

Katherine wrote: "I loved all the old posters and signage, and the fact the staff were dressed in period costume. It really was like stepping back in time. I felt like an extra in Downton Abbey all day."

She said there was plenty to keep her children occupied including a fun activity sheet.

"But the fun doesn't stop there," wrote Katherine.



She added: "There's a museum on platform 2, with yet more activities for children. There's a quiz sheet for them to complete, and they get a badge at the end. The man working in the museum (I'm so sad I didn't get his name as he was fab) was so kind and patient with my children, explaining to them how old phones worked, and helping them with the quiz, it really added to the experience. You have literally never seen somebody as excited as my son when he got the badge - he was actually squealing!"

Katherine's family also visited SteamWorks! and commented: "Basically, there were things with buttons to press, and levers to pull, and my children were sold!"

She summed up her trip as: "A few years too late, maybe, but now it's full steam ahead on visits to the Bluebell Railway."

Walking the Forest Row Line

Words and photos by Alan Postlethwaite



In July 1963, I did two weeks of industrial training at 'Cuttens', then an electricity Grid Control Centre near Forest Row. I took lodgings nearby with an elderly lady who was retired from India, her bungalow and exotic garden taking one back to the days of the Raj.

A visit to the railway station was a 'must'. The line from East Grinstead to Ashurst Junction was single

track with a passing station at Forest Row. In late BR steam days, one commuter train to London Bridge departed here at 7 am, arriving back at 7.50 pm. It just fitted the longest goods siding. In 1963, the only remaining goods was coal. The mellow station building was a delight, so too the rustic fence. The dark green bus was a type RT on route 409 at one of the outermost termini of London Transport.

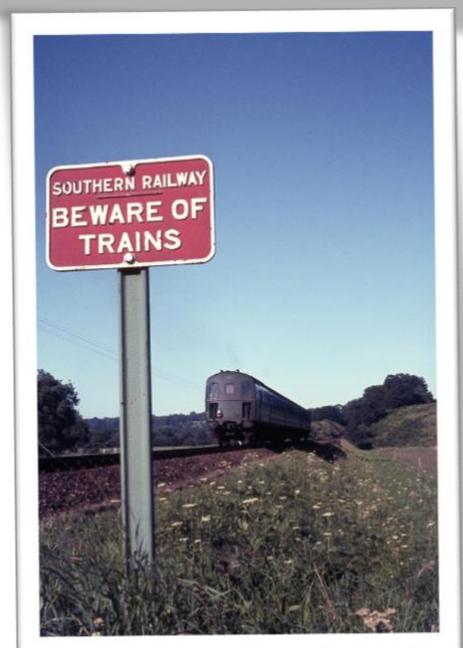


My only previous visit to Forest Row was at Whitsun 1953 on a Scout camp to Broadstone Warren. We travelled down from London in an old Army truck. At Forest Row, two of us were put down to buy provisions in the village shop, to be packed into reinforced brown paper bags. As novices, we duly put the eggs at the bottom and piled the heavy stuff on top. As we trudged up the hill to the camp site in the heat of the day, the eggs cracked, sending rivulets of albumen down our shorts into our shoes. Omelettes were on the menu that evening, laced with egg shell. What safe and sanitised lives we lead these days! To its credit, everything on the Bluebell line is always spotless.



I walked the line from Forest Row to Withyham on 28 July 1963, changing the film to Kodak 35 mm slides, my only venture into colour. Hartfield station is framed here by a lovely bridge made of what looks like Kentish ragstone. The DEMU has come from Tunbridge Wells West.

The day as a whole was sombre, the DEMUs heralding the end of the steam age. Finding the new DEMUs unprepossessing, I used wild flowers and a colourful cast iron sign to enhance this composition near Withyham.



Withyham's building, seen here from the road approach, was similar to Hartfield. The style is still recognisable as 'LB&SCR rural' but much plainer than, say, Forest Row or Grange Road; half-rendered and with none of the exquisite brickwork. The lean-to on the left might have been a wash-house.

For my second week at 'Cuttens', I took lodgings near Dormans. I stayed in the home of the editor of the Kentish Mercury, who commuted by car to Deptford. In the olden days, people who lived between New Cross and the Medway were called Kentish while those who lived beyond were the Maids and Men of Kent, a demarcation possibly going back to Jutish times. These days, modern Jutes can commute at mercurial speed to St Pancras while North Bluebellians commute seamlessly to Blackfriars. We call it progress. My heart, however, remains with all the lovely old LB&SCR lines that radiated from East Grinstead in the days of steam.



The final slide shows the start of the Forest Row line, looking east at East Grinstead (High Level). The upper goods yard on the right is the site of the terminus of the original branch line from Three Bridges.



On This Day, 10 June

By Tony Hillman, assistant museum curator

Three pictures from the Bluebell Photographic Archive taken on 10 June. Thanks to Martin Elms, John Creed, Richard Peirce, Roger Merry-Price and Chris Wilson for finding the pictures and providing the notes



On Saturday 10 June 1950, I3 Class 4-4-2T No. 32077 heads away from Eastbourne towards Hampden Park hauling the final leg of the 11.40pm (Friday) Manchester (London Road) to Hastings. The train was hauled by four different engines in the course of its journey, an LMR engine (probably a Black Five 4-6-0) from Manchester to Mitre Bridge Jct. and a Stewarts Lane U1 onwards to Brighton. After four of its coaches were detached, it departed for Eastbourne behind U1 Class 2-6-0 No. 31900 on Brighton Duty 739 arriving at 6.32am. It then departed at 6.41am on the final leg of the journey behind 32077 on Eastbourne Duty 797.

The I3 Class 4-4-2T is regarded as one of the most important developments in British locomotive design during the 20th Century. Two early designs by Douglas Earle Marsh, Classes I1 and I2, proved unsuccessful, but the I3, a tank version of the B4 class 4-4-0, was to prove a success. The first two locomotives were built at Brighton Works, one with a traditional saturated boiler in October

1907 (No. 21) and one with a Schmidt superheater in March 1908 (No. 22). The LBSCR Directors were not convinced that the extra build cost associated with superheating was worthwhile, so four more were built with superheaters, and six without, in 1909/1910. By mid-1910, after comparative trials, the Board was duly convinced and five more were built in 1910, followed by a further 10 under Lawson Billinton in 1912/1913, making a class total of 27. Billinton wanted to convert the remaining members of the class to superheating; No. 21 was upgraded in 1919, and the rest in 1923-1927 after the creation of the Southern Railway. From 1925 the I3s were replaced on express trains by King Arthur and River classes and later by electrification: after this they were relegated to secondary duties elsewhere on the Southern and further afield. The first withdrawal was in 1944 and the rest between June 1950 and May 1952.

Photo: John J. Smith [40840]



Around fifty minutes after the previous picture, ex-War Department (WD) 2-8-0 No. 77101 was photographed just south of Hampden Park station with the 5.30am Lewes East Sidings to Eastbourne freight.

The engine was built at the Vulcan Foundry, Newton-le-Willows, in September 1943 as one of a class of 935 constructed for war service. They were designed by R. A. Riddles who was later responsible for the BR Standard class engines. The concept was to produce a powerful locomotive that was simple to construct and maintain, but economic to build and not required to have a long service life.

Immediately after delivery 77101 was loaned to the LNER and based at March shed. In November 1944 it was returned to the WD and sent to France. Between November 1945 and February 1946 it returned to the UK. In March 1946, along with 24 others it was taken into stock by the Southern Railway and allocated to Bricklayer's Arms. Here its duties were mainly on Central Division freights, but it would also have made an appearance on freight trains through Ashford to Dover.

In November 1950, WD No. 77101 was renumbered as BR No. 90564. In 1951 it was decided to transfer all the ex-War Department engines away from the Southern: No. 90564 was sent to Agecroft shed near Manchester, where it remained for the next 10 years. In 1961 it went to the nearby Gorton shed and was withdrawn from there in November 1964.

A total of 733 of the class worked for British Railways, numbered from 90000 to 90732. The majority of the rest remained on the continent, mainly the Netherlands. In the UK the class worked predominantly in the North West and North East on heavy freight, particularly coal trains. The last one was withdrawn in September 1967. There is only one survivor of the class, which was obtained from Swedish Railways in 1973 by the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway and numbered 90733. At the moment it is not operational.

Photo: John J. Smith [40841]



For our final picture this month we revisit Goudhurst station (see *The Bluebell Times*, January 2022), but on Saturday 10 June 1961, the last day of scheduled passenger services on the Hawkhurst branch.

The photographer has recorded SECR C Class 0-6-0 No. 31256 entering the station with a Paddock Wood train, whilst SECR H Class 0-4-4T No. 31530 waits to cross with a train bound for Hawkhurst. There are no other details, but we believe the C is hauling the first up passenger train of the day, the 7.33am from Hawkhurst comprising SECR Push Pull Set No. 656. If correct the H is on the first down passenger train, the 7.24am from Paddock Wood, the formation of which, out of sight of the camera, is almost certainly SR Maunsell Push Pull Set No. 609.

No. 31256 was built at Ashford Works of the South Eastern & Chatham Railway in 1900 to the design of Harry Wainwright. 109 C class locomotives were built, No. 31256 surviving until July 1961, one month after the picture was taken. Fortunately fellow classmate No. (31)592 was preserved and

can be found on the Bluebell Railway. No. 31530 was also designed by Harry Wainwright and built at Ashford Works, but in 1905. It was withdrawn in March 1962. A fellow classmate, No. 31(263), also survives on the Bluebell Railway.

Push-Pull Set No. 656 was formed in late 1956 and was a replacement for the 1937 set which carried the same number. The two coaches, from a steel-panelled SECR trio-C set (No. 633) were numbered 3542 and 5499. A regular on the Hawkhurst branch in later years, it outlasted the branch by only a few months, being withdrawn in January 1962 as the penultimate former SECR Push-Pull set. Unfortunately no Southern pre-grouping Push-Pull sets survive.

Photo: David Esau [156224]

Vacancies

Applications are invited for the following posts:

FINANCE DIRECTOR

As a Plc Board member, the Finance Director has the professional responsibility for the management of the company's trading and to oversee the work of the Finance Manager and to assist the other departments where financial advice is required. This involves the management of the budgets together with provision of the year-end financial statements, to liaise with the auditors and to produce the annual cashflow budget for Board approval.

You would be required to attend Board meetings and to provide monthly board reports incorporating comparisons with budgets and recommend actions required to ensure the company's cashflow remains on budget; profit and loss accounts on special events and products; and oversee the company's insurance and banking relationships.

The applicant would be expected to have a current knowledge of UKGAAP and VAT legislation and will be required to correspond with outside governing bodies.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate accounting competences to meet the professional requirements of the position.

SAFETY & ASSURANCE DIRECTOR

As a Plc Board member, the Safety and Assurance Director has professional responsibility for ensuring implementation of the requirements of the safety management system across the Railway and for the strategic direction of the department.

A key function of the role is to Chair the Bluebell Operating and Safety Review Group and also to act as lead contact with regulatory authorities

The Safety Director delegates day-to-day management of the department to the Safety Compliance Officer.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate technical competences to meet the professional requirements of the post.

PERSONNEL DIRECTOR

The successful applicant will be responsible for leading the organisation's HR function for paid staff and volunteers, designing and directing learning and development programmes and employee engagement.

To develop a strategy for the Bluebell Railway around Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) working with the Board and managers.

The Personnel Director is expected to attend board meetings and contribute to the company's business decision-making.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate qualifications to meet the professional requirements of the post.

HOW TO APPLY



If you believe you have the right qualifications and experience for any of these jobs, please send your CV to lisa.boyle@bluebell-railway.com



The Bluebell Times

*A Newsletter for
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feedback about this issue or
suggestions for future articles
or features, contact:*

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Tom James*

bluebelltimes@bluebell-railway.com

Tail Lamp

If you've enjoyed this issue of The Bluebell Times, feel free to pass it on to other people you think might also want to read it.

To find out when the next issue is out and for other updates about the Bluebell Railway, check our [website](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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- ➔ Alan Postlethwaite
- ➔ Ruth Rowatt
- ➔ Andy Taylor
- ➔ Chris Wilson



The Bluebell Railway Operating Company (Plc): Statement of Mission & Goals.

1) The Mission:

To operate and develop a safe and enjoyable heritage railway experience that educates, entertains, and inspires its visitors as it immerses them in the world of railway operation and development and tells the story of the way of life at the golden age of railways. To undertake this in a sustainable way by the deployment of a highly valued blend of volunteer and paid staff and in a manner that has the minimum adverse impact on the environment.

2) Goals:

To delight our visitors by:

1. Safely operating passenger train services using heritage locomotives, predominantly steam, and rolling stock that represents the range of types employed from the Victorian era through to the 1960s.
2. Operating non-passenger trains that will tell the story of the goods traffic that at one time underpinned the existence of the passenger railway.
3. Providing a range of on-train dining experiences.
4. Adopting and demonstrating heritage operational practice where permitted and practicable.
5. Exhibiting locomotives, rolling stock, signalling equipment and other railway connected artefacts in an interesting, and where possible, interactive manner.
6. Exhibiting the craftsmanship associated with the operation and engineering of heritage assets.
7. Providing safe, hands-on experiences that will satisfy the inquisitiveness and energies of younger visitors.
8. Generate and maintain the nostalgic ambience associated with rail travel of the past.
9. Striving to be accessible to as broad a customer base as can be safely achieved commensurate with all the other goals.



10. Providing good value for money.
11. Being polite, courteous, and respectful.
12. Embracing equality and diversity throughout our railway community.
13. Actively seeking feedback from visitors on the quality of the visitor experience.
14. Continuously researching ways to enhance the visitor experience in line with the heritage brand.

To support our Staff (volunteer and paid) by:

1. Making safety part of everything we do.
2. Operating the company in accordance with a sound business plan.
3. Formulating an effective marketing strategy.
4. Adopting a high integrity communication strategy throughout the company.
5. Being respectful, polite and courteous.
6. Providing training and encouraging the development of skills and competencies.
7. Encouraging 360-degree feedback.
8. Encouraging work of a high quality and effectiveness.
9. Acknowledging the contributions of individuals and groups.
10. Encouraging a culture of openness, trust, transparency, and inclusion.
11. Encouraging the study of railways and associated social history.

To protect the environment by:

1. Continuously researching ways to reduce the carbon footprint of the Bluebell Railway operation and adopting environmentally friendly practices.
2. Development of infrastructure and other assets in a manner that is in keeping with the surroundings and in co-operation with the local community where appropriate.



3) The Implementation:

Key to delivering the above goals is the following:

1. Safety Management System
2. Business Model
3. Business Plan
4. Service Plan
5. Capital Projects Planning Group
6. General Instructions
7. Local instructions
8. Employee Handbook
9. Volunteer Handbook
10. Staff (paid and volunteer) Communications, Training and Development Plan
11. Staff appraisals.

End of Document.

1st March 2021