

Update on the Position of General Manager and plc Board Members

Kevin Powell our General Manager will be leaving us on March 5th to take up an exciting new post in the railway industry in London. Our railway is so different now and even though Kevin is leaving us in person his legacy will remain for us to continue and build upon. He is sorry to be leaving and happy to continue to help in some voluntary capacity.

I know that many people felt that it was almost inevitable that someone who did well in this post would quickly be sought after elsewhere in the railway industry but it is a credit to everyone on our railway, as well as to Kevin, that this happened. There is now a challenge for the Management Team and the Board(s) to keep things going in the meantime and prepare for the new operating season. To ensure that we have close local leadership during this time Angus Maude, who is local, will swap to become the plc Chair and I will take his seat as Deputy Chair (as I am based over 200 miles away!).

We have also been able to make some new Board appointments. The following have been co-opted to the board: Alan Rose – Safety, and Janet Crampton – Community Engagement. Kevin Powell – Operations and Russell Lord – Infrastructure have also been invited to join as co-optees. We still hope to appointment a Finance Director shortly.

The Board will be re-emphasising to everyone that safety has to remain top priority during this time of change the need being to focus on ensuring that we don't lose sight of the need to maintain and develop our safe systems and practices during this interim period. We are always seeking extra volunteers to work on aspects of safety whether practical, administrative or technical – so please come forward if you can help.

Kevin is happy to talk about his move and I, Angus, and the rest of the Board are happy to discuss the interim and future arrangements.

I also note with gratitude the support that the Wensleydale Railway Association have given over the past year and assure colleagues that the future of our railway is very good. The Railway Council will shortly be publishing the 5 year strategy, we will soon be launching the share prospectus and have an improved operating timetable for the coming season continuing to introduce more quality loco hauled trains– this year should see many more of our long-standing needs addressed.

However we must not be complacent and central to our growth is continuing and accelerating the improvement of our infrastructure. If you possibly can, I would ask that you consider making a special donation to the Wensleydale Railway Association's Track Appeal. This has already raised over £47,000 and has enabled us to both tackle some priority problems on the Leeming Bar- Redmire stretch and start on the Castle Hills (Northallerton) - Leeming Bar stretch this winter – with the excellent help of volunteers of course.

To make a donation to the track appeal please see:
www.wensleydalerailwayassociation.com

Best wishes,

Ian

Ian Sesnan,
Chairman,
Wensleydale Railway plc,