

Minutes of the 18th Annual General Meeting
of the Poulton & Wyre Railway Society (PWRS)
held at Wyre Council Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde
on Wednesday 8th October 2025 at 7.00pm

The meeting was opened by Peter Banks, the Secretary, in the absence of David Evans, the Chairman, due to his work commitments.

1. Report by the Chairman, David Evans.

Geoff Ogden summarised the report which is produced here in full.

Well, it's another AGM. Another year and it may seem that it's another year that not that much has changed. And to a point, you are correct. We still haven't heard anything totally positive or constructive about our line and what might be able to be done to either get it back as part of the national network or to becoming a heritage railway, or even a bit of both. I do admit that fact.

It is fairly pointless to do much where Network Rail will simply redo, when the business case for reinstatement is made, so we have been busy attending to other more relevant items, such as the L & Y carriage, Fowler, DMU and Pigeon Carriage and great in roads have been made on all if these. Also reorganising the site at NPL to serve us better and many other lesser items too, whilst still keeping a watching brief on Thornton Station itself too.

Other officers will cover all these in much more detail in their individual reports, but it is just to say that whilst we aren't yet getting the ribbon ready for the first train to break through, other things have been done instead and continue to be done, too.

I have had a very successful meeting with our new MP Lorraine Beavers and she has even kindly joined our happy band too. The meeting was scheduled to last 20 minutes, but lasted for well over an hour instead with her being fully supportive throughout it. I have asked for another similar meeting to involve a section of the committee shortly and that request is currently with her office.

I have given several illustrated talks regarding the PWRS and our work and I and others have also attended two local model rail exhibitions, one in Preston in March with good feedback and another more recently at Highfurlong with again, a good response.

Even more recently, I attended the excellent Rail 200 events at Stockton and Darlington and at Locomotion at Shildon, saw the new train from Greenway Initiatives that aims to use this very responsive train to help reopen at least 11 railway lines this year and the organisation behind it were VERY interested in our efforts and our set up. I have been in touch and await their response.

So whilst it might seem that there isn't a huge amount to see from last year to this, there actually is, it's just all been happening in other places than we are at, but they all now know about us and want us to sit at their tables, which is excellent.

But it does look like that forces other than the government and such similar political offices might now be at play here and could get us "over the line" as it were, in the not too distant. I sincerely hope so and we on the committee will do all that we possibly can to make that a reality.

I am only sorry that work commitments force me to have this read out on my behalf rather than there in person, but may I fully assure you that my commitment for getting Fleetwood and Thornton, "Back on Track" is every bit as robust as it was when we first formed in this very building and I think maybe in this very room, way back in 2006.

2. Attendees.

There were 20 members present, who were signed in and the names and membership numbers were recorded.

3. Apologies for absence.

Pat Rand, Ray Dennard, Gerry Fenner, Frank Atkinson, Jim Kay, David Bibby, John Goodier, James Thompson, Jimmy Rogers, Geraldine Rogers, David Evans

4. Position of President.

The Committee has been notified that Eddie Fisher has chosen to resign from his position as Chairman of the Society.

He was one of the original members of the movement, back in 2005, to restore the railway from Poulton to Fleetwood and has been involved with promoting the project and lobbying politicians over the years.

Initially the plans were to restore Thornton Station from its derelict condition and then clear the railway corridor in order to re-open the line as a private Heritage railway. Eddie served on the Trust and Society committees of Poulton & Wyre Railway and acted as Chairman for many years. He instigated publicity with many press interviews and articles and arranged meetings with Wyre and Lancashire councils in order to gain their support and funding. Unfortunately this evaporated after the financial crisis of 2008 and the future was uncertain, but Eddie and the Society carried on through many ups and downs.

Due to work and family commitments Eddie stepped back and was made President, allowing him to continue to lobby the vast number of contacts he had made and eventually, through our local M.P., we secured a visit from the P.M. Boris Johnson, who promised funding under the Restoration of the Railways scheme. Another great blow came with the Labour government in 2024 scrapping the scheme and the possibility of re-opening the railway has diminished once more.

Eddie has promised to keep his ears open for any news regarding the line and is remaining in contact, as a member of the PWRS. The Committee wish to record their thanks to Eddie for his many years of efforts and service, without which we would not be where we are today.

It has not been proposed at this time to invite or appoint anyone to replace him in the post.

5. Acceptance of 2025 AGM Minutes.

This was proposed by Geoff Ogden and seconded by Nick McCrudden and accepted unanimously by the Members.

6. Matters arising from 2025 Minutes.

There were no matters arising.

7. Annual Report & Review of the past year by Geoff Ogden.

Geoff gave a detailed report of the work done in the past twelve months complete with a comprehensive slide show of illustrations of the progress made on our assets.

Starting with the DMU's.

All the rubbers around the windows were perished to various extent and they have now all been replaced.

Many electrical faults and incorrect wiring has been sorted.

Wooden door cards have been repaired or replaced.

The passenger heating system has been overhauled, improved, tested and re-assembled.

The corridor connection between the two units was corroded and parts missing and these are in the process of being welded and painted.

The outside of both units has been painted by hand with two coats of zinc primer, two undercoats and three top coats to produce a superb finish.

Fowler Diesel Shunter.

A short length of track was laid for testing of the mechanical operation and braking systems.

There have been several problems with the engine unit, which are being slowly eliminated. The fuel system has been overhauled and the cylinder valves replaced. However more work is required to check for suspected leakages.

Pigeon Carriage.

Internal it has now been refurbished to an excellent standard.

The four doors are in the process of being repaired and painted.

New special curved hinges are required, which have been sourced from the Stainmore Railway.

L & Y Carriage.

The sides and ends have been removed and a new bottom frame built on trolley bogies in the large barn, which will enable the unit to be rolled in and out when required for the future re-construction.

New hardwood flooring has been purchased and stored.

We are continuing research and obtaining quotations for procuring parts which will be required.

On the NPL site we are slowly re-organising. The dilapidated wooden portacabin, formerly a tool store and mess room, is being demolished to allow for rolling out of the L & Y carriage onto the concrete base and three containers are being moved to allow access for HGV vehicles to this area. One container will become a joinery workshop with a large planing machine. The tools and equipment will be stored in the barn.

At a recent discussion with NPL Estates M.D. Mark O'brien, the need to construct a new Northern access road onto the Hillhouse Enterprise Zone is becoming urgent in order to develop the site. Until this access is established, the Zone cannot be fully developed. This involves crossing the railway corridor, so until it's future is established it is holding them up. Wyre council are in the process of producing a revised 10 year plan and Mark is therefore setting up a focus group in order to lobby and pressure the council to make an early decision and, because of our knowledge, he has invited us to join the group.

8. Secretary's Report by Peter Banks.

Firstly I would like to pay tribute to Rick Rossall, who sadly passed away in August after a short illness with cancer. He led the team at Thornton Station for many years, restoring and improving the site beyond recognition, before moving on to the NPL site where he had many contacts from his former employment at I.C.I.. He was instrumental in obtaining the site initially for the Fowler shunter and for developing it over time with the acquisition of buildings and containers. He organised the start of the restoration of the Pigeon carriage and the L & Y vintage carriage. He researched the carriages, sourced parts and carried out extremely competent repairs and renovation.

Rick also served for many years on many of the Committees in various positions and was a good friend to all who knew him at the PWRs and well respected for his knowledge and work ethic. He will be greatly missed by all his colleagues.

The Committee have been very busy this year in our efforts in promoting the Society, in raising funding for our projects and in keeping the membership informed.

During the year I dealt with the applications, invitations and arrangements for our involvement at several promotional events, both in the Community and elsewhere, for the Society.

We had a stall at the Preston Model Railway exhibition held on March 1st and 2nd, also at the Stainmore Railwayana event at Kirby Stephen on August 16th and at the Blackpool & North Fylde Model Railway exhibition on 20th & 21st September. We displayed our updated information boards to publicise our Society and the work we do and made sales of railway books, DVD's and other items to raise funds and also had conversations with the general public and established some good contacts with other railway groups.

Of course we also attended our main event at Fleetwood Festival of Transport (Tram Sunday) on 20th July which was again a great success; and held our Annual Open Day where we welcomed members and guests on 17th August. Both these events were organised with a good deal of hard work and went well on the day.

We also arranged Experience Days, whereby we invited groups for pre-arranged visits to our site at NPL, Hillhouse. We hosted members of a local U3A group and a party of ex- NORWEB Engineers, who were given presentation talks and guided tours of all of our assets.

We were invited to visit West Lancs. Light Railway at Hesketh Bank on 26th June to have a guided tour of their railway and workshops, which we found very interesting and enlightening.

The majority of these events have been arranged primarily to raise funding in order to further the progress of our restoration projects, but also additionally to promote ourselves in an effort to increase the membership, with the object of getting more working volunteers on site and hopefully recruiting members to fill the Committee vacancies. Unfortunately, due to the loss of members and the time constraints of the remaining individuals, the Committee are presently struggling to carry out all the administration duties of the Society. We have therefore been unable to produce a magazine, or update our Website and Facebook or to publicise ourselves as we would like. We are, however, trying to keep members informed by e mail and by producing newsletters. I am, therefore, appealing to members to consider coming forward or recruiting family or friends who may be interested, in order for us to keep our project moving forward. No experience is necessary and training will be given. Obviously anyone computer literate would be great but any help, however small, with the tasks we undertake would be gratefully received.

We are still hoping the railway line from Poulton to Fleetwood will be used in the future but it is thought extremely unlikely, even if it was re opened, that we would be involved. Our existing clearance licences have been kept active, but we have decided however, that we have done as much as we possibly could to help keep the railway corridor open. Therefore, we will now just keep Thornton Station and Jameson Road tidy at a minimum cost to the Society, in order to maintain our presence where we are visible to the public.

The Society have accepted donations of railway books for some time and our collection of railway books is now over 1000, as we are constantly receiving new donations. These are kept in the library container at our site. We are still accepting donations of good quality books and are attempting to sell them to raise funds wherever possible. Please ask if you are interested in purchasing any and wish to arrange to view them or require any information. We are also receiving items of railway heritage and interest which may be sold or displayed in a future museum.

I would like to thank those who participated in the annual fundraising Raffle which was held recently and drawn at the NPL Open Day. I would also like to convey our thanks for your support by being members and for all the donations given in order to allow us to continue with our work, and to all the volunteers who freely give up their time to work on our projects and further our objectives.

9. Annual Financial Report by Susan Cox.

BALANCE SHEET APRIL 2024 – MARCH 2025

INCOME	2023/24	2024/25
Membership	1810.00	1620.00
Donations	1044.91	3073.60
Sales	1110.97	1197.47
DMU income	103.14	120.05
Fundraising inc Lottery	851.00	0.00
Pigeon Carriage	286.12	557.42
L&Y Carriage	2590.00	433.68
VAT	70.62	125.95
TOTAL	7866.76	7128.17

EXPENDITURE

NPL	708.56	851.94
DMU	1366.34	2228.22
Fowler	85.00	210.86
L&Y carriage	4958.52	42.02
Pigeon Carr	925.01	1438.31
General expenditure	496.14	340.00
Insurance	2251.91	1120.00
Admin	350.29	249.23
TOTAL	11141.77	6481.18

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2024 TO 31 MARCH 2025

	01-Apr-24	Current period to 31st March 2025
Bank Santander	27491.28	28154.73
Cash	276.90	269.84

Floats	150.00		150.00
	£27,918.18		
Represented by	27918.18 Opening balance	Bank	28154.73
	7128.17 Income 2024/25	Cash	260.44
	35046.35	Floats	150.00
	6481.18 Less expenditure		
	£28565.17		£28565.17

10. Membership Report by Nick McCrudden.

Thank you all for taking the time to attend this year's AGM and for your continued support with membership renewals and generous donations.

Membership numbers have slightly declined over the years. A few years ago we had 200 members but we finished last year with 117.

This year from August 1st has gone off to a very encouraging start with 114 member, including 14 members that have been with us from the start on April 27th 2006. The Labour M.P. for Fleetwood, Lorraine Beavers, has been a member for several years and has renewed on Tram Sunday. We have had a few new members but we are actively looking for younger volunteers to take the Society forward.

Our goal is still to campaign for the railway line to be opened from Fleetwood to Poulton for trains to Preston or beyond and we all hope this will happen soon.

Thank you once again for your continued support.

11. Election of Trustees.

Executive Committee Principal Officers and Committee Officers.

Presently in position:- Chairman: David Evans. Secretary: Peter Banks.

Membership Secretary: Nicholas McCrudden. Treasurer: Susan Cox.

Other Trustees: (Up to 11 other members). Nigel Kirkpatrick.

As set out in the PWRS Constitution, one third of the Trustees seek re-appointment en masse by the members. These are David Mills and Geoff Ogden.

As there are no nominations this will leave eight vacancies on the PWRS Executive Committee.

12. Vote by members to re-appoint the retiring Committee members.

The members voted unanimously in favour.

13. Any Other Business.

Dave Barton, who looks after our Website, stated that he intended to be more pro-active and will make enhancements and improvements and will also arrange to take over the Facebook from Simon Miller and put more information on.

Peter Banks, Secretary