



The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway was held on **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2020 at 7.00 p.m.** remotely by Zoom.

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Matthew Pease (Joint President), Jane Hackworth-Young (Joint President), Chris Lloyd (Vice President), Niall Hammond (Chair), Alan Townsend (Vice Chair and Assistant Secretary), Alan Macnab (Secretary), Ross Chisholm (Planning Officer), Peter Bainbridge (Membership Officer), Caroline Hardie (Newsletter Editor), Kelly Ambrosini, Julie Bee, Mike Brown, Sue Clarke, Catherine Gilsean, Dave Hardacre, Peter Haywood, Trevor Horner, Norman Hugill, Kirsty McGreevy, Simon Owens, Les Raw, Yvonne Richardson, Mary Smith, Richard Starrs, Barry Thompson,

#### **1. Welcome.**

Niall Hammond welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting. He especially welcomed to the new Joint Presidents, Matthew Pease and Jane Hackworth-Young. Both responded to their election as Joint Presidents. Niall Hammond paid tribute to and thanked Trish Pemberton who had stood down a Chair but would continue as a Trustee and as the Education Officer. The Annual General Meeting endorsed the tribute to Trish Pemberton.

#### **2. Apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Trish Pemberton, John Clare, Angela Pickering and Paul Bowden.

#### **3. Declarations of interests.**

Niall Hammond and Caroline Hardie declared their interests as Directors of Archaeo Environment.

#### **4. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2019**

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2019 were presented. The minutes were agreed as a true record of the proceedings.

#### **5. Matters Arising.**

##### **5.1 Recording of Volunteer Hours**

Peter Bainbridge that he had circulated a spreadsheet to enable the volunteer hours on work of the Friends to be recorded. Peter Bainbridge was thanked for his work on the spreadsheet.

##### **5.2 USP Consultants**

Ross Chisholm asked for his support for WSP Consultants to be recorded,

#### **6. Issues for discussion**

The following issues were raised for discussion.

##### **6.1 Heritage Skills.**

A potential skills project with Brightwater and Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone linked to the Stockton and Darlington Railway was raised.

## **6.2 A replica of the Royal George.**

The feasibility of creating a replica of the Royal George was raised. The Annual General Meeting considered that building a replica of the Royal George would be beyond the resources of the Friends even if grant aid could be provided.

## **6.3 Professional Fund Raiser**

The need for a professional fund raiser was considered by the Annual General Meeting which would source funding and raise the profile of the Friends.

## **7. Annual Reports**

### **7.1 Chairman and Vice Chairman**

Niall Hammond reported that the Friends Constitution permitted the trustees to elect the Chairman and Vice Chairman. The trustees could appoint an external Chairman but decided that Niall Hammond be elected as Chairman and Alan Townsend as Vice Chairman. The Annual General Meeting noted the elections. Niall Hammond also reported that according to our constitution, the Trustees would be subject to a rolling programme of re-election starting in 2022 (points 13 and 14 of FSDR constitution 2018).

The Annual Reports from the following officers were presented to the meeting and are given in the following appendices to these minutes:

7.2 Chair (Appendix 1). The former Chair, Trish Pemberton's report was submitted.

7.3 Membership Secretary (Appendix 2)

7.4 Planning Officer (Appendix 3)

7.5 Newsletter Editor (Appendix 4).

7.6 ICT Officer (Oral Report see below).

7.7 Safeguarding Officer (Oral Report see below).

7.8 Archivist (Oral Report see below)

### **7.6 ICT Officer**

No report was made. The Cultural Recovery Fund funding will look at the ICT needs of the Friends. The website needed updating and an appeal was being made for an ICT Officer to be appointed.

### **7.7 Safeguarding Officer**

No issues were raised.

### **7.8 Archivist**

Jane Hackworth Young thanked the people who had helped with the archive work especially John Raw, Mary Smith, the Etherley Incline Group and Trevor Horner. Letters relating to the railway had been transcribed and there were amazing letters at the Network Rail archives in York. Overall it was an exciting year.

## **8. Trustees Annual Report.**

Niall Hammond reported that Martin Peagam had stood down as a Trustee and Trustees meetings were being held each month.

## **9 Presentation of Annual Accounts.**

The accounts were presented to the meeting and are given in Appendix 5 to the minutes. Ian Ross was thanked for work in keeping and presenting the Friends accounts which showed that that healthy balances were being maintained.

## **10. Auditor.**

Chris Lloyd agreed to continue to act as the Auditor.

## **11. Resolutions to be considered at the meeting.**

Alan Macnab reported that no resolutions had been received.

## **12. Any other business.**

### **12.1 Shildon Institute**

Jane Hackworth-Young referred to the efforts to save the Shildon Institute. Crowd funding had been started. The response to save the Institute was phenomenal and it was hoped that an event would be held on Good Friday 2021 to reopen the Institute which depended on the Covid-19 pandemic.

A silver key to open the Institute was missing. Matthew Pease agreed to see if the key can be found.

### **12.2 Save Platform One Public House at Middleton St. George.**

Catherine Gilsean thanked the Friends for their help to save the Platform One public house. Platform One had been registered as an Asset of Community Value, a statement of Significance had been completed and a Steering Group set up to save Platform One. Efforts were being made to establish the Fighting Cocks Heritage Hub in the area of the public house. Catherine thanked Richie Starrs for his work on the Heritage hub.

### **12.3 Darlington Forest Project**

Ross Chisholm referred to tree planting of 9,000 saplings along Tornado Way which was on the route of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. The planting was part of the Darlington Forest Project.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the Annual General Meeting ended.

## **APPENDIX 1 FORMER CHAIR'S REPORT NOVEMBER 2020**

This is my final report as chair of the Friends after six years in the role and I would like to say that it has been a pleasure to see the Friends grow in influence and to see how far the project to cherish and celebrate the Stockton & Darlington Railway has progressed, not just nationally but also internationally.

Some of the key things this year include our contributions to the official work of the Rail Heritage Board, most recently as members of the executive and to the different work streams that are now ongoing. These include: work on branding and interpretation; proposals for the 2025 celebrations; proposals for the walking and cycling routes and work on the preservation of the heritage itself.

We have worked closely with Richie Stars our HAZ delivery manager on a range of activities, including a Historic England Heritage Schools project, delivering talks to parish councils and other groups, putting our first Heritage Festival on jointly with the Bishop Auckland HAZ and putting together a successful bid to Historic England to access funding to help us work on issues related to Heritage Crime and community engagement – again, involving working with the education community. We have secured access to £3000 of Historic England education funding and approximately £40,000 of funding for the Heritage Crime and Community Engagement projects.

More recently, Niall Hammond secured a grant of £35,000 from the government's Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage and amongst other things this will allow us to look at how the Friends can develop in the future to take on the role of managing in a sustainable way the areas of the S&DR that lie outside the main 'honey pots' at Locomotion, Head of Steam and Preston Park.

We have also been working with the wider community e.g. with the Middleton-St-George Parish Council to develop a heritage community in the village that is intent on saving its S&DR linked pub and cherish its S&DR heritage. We have seen the creation of a group to look after the end of the line at Witton Park/Phoenix Row and most recently a new one – WASH – for the area around West Auckland and St Helen's Auckland. BIG has been very active and created an excellent installation with interpretation at the Mason's Arms crossing in Shildon. Over in Stockton, a group has been working on the Yarm branch line, and a new walk booklet been launched. All of this is celebrated on our new You Tube channel, which was developed to help us cope with the impact of covid on the Heritage Festival and allowed much of it to go on line.

There have been some disappointments too. For example, a major event planned for Darlington by the local mayor for the 27<sup>th</sup> September had to be considerably scaled back and the time and effort to develop the main Friends' celebration by Barry has had to be postponed but will most likely be going ahead next year.

I hope many of you will take the time to look through the report that has just been circulated to you on the Heritage Festival. It shows what can be achieved by a dedicated group of people with imagination and 'get up and go' in the kind of difficult times we are living through at present. I would like to thank everyone personally who gave me their support to make this project the success that it was.

Finally, I would like to welcome our new president, the right honourable Matthew Pease and our new, second vice president, Jane Hackworth-Young. It is wonderful to have two such direct descendants of the original founders of the S&DR so closely involved with our project as it goes forward. I would also like to welcome our new chair and vice chair to their roles – Niall Hammond as chair and Alan Townsend as vice chair. May they get as much pleasure from their new roles as I have had from mine, and from my new role as trustee with oversight of education.

Trish Pemberton

## **APPENDIX 2 MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT**

### **Membership Secretary's Report – 27.09.2020**

#### **2018 to 2019**

Ordinary Members – 104 of which 7 advised that they were not renewing and 12 did not respond so were noted as lapsed members.

Corporate Members – 17 of which 2 advised that they were not renewing.

#### **2019 to 2020**

Ordinary Members – 140 including 5 lapsed members who rejoined and 50 new members.

Corporate Members – 20 including 5 new members.

Fees & Donations :-

Ordinary Members - £1914

Corporate Members - £1000

**Total                      £2914**

An increase of £535 on previous year.

Membership renewal invitations were issued to Ordinary Members on 03.08.2020

Membership renewal invitations were issued to Corporate Members on 01.08.2020.

Renewal date was 27.09.2020.

Peter Bainbridge  
Membership Secretary  
30.09.2020

## APPENDIX 3 PLANNING OFFICER'S REPORT

1 It is the job of the planning system, through Local Plan policies and decisions on planning applications, to serve the aims and objectives of the Rail Heritage Board and facilitate the proposals of the Programme and Delivery Plan of the Heritage Action Zone. Throughout the last year, the Friends have continued to ensure the protection, enhancement and promotion of the S&DR by responding to opportunities to comment on emerging Local Plans, on other studies and on planning applications.

2 All three Local Plans (Durham County, Darlington Borough and Stockton Borough) contain a specific policy for the S&DR and we have submitted comments at all stages in the consultation process. The Stockton Plan was formally adopted in 2019; the Durham County Plan followed in October this year. Darlington Council submitted its Draft Plan to the Secretary of State in August and the period for objections ended on September 17<sup>th</sup>. Their officers are still assessing the objections and other comments received and an Examination in Public is expected to take place next year. All the plans contain policies for the S&DR that we support, although we have drawn attention to the absence of the Coal Depot and Croft Branch Lines from the Darlington Local Plan Policies Map.

3 We have responded to a number of planning applications. Successes include;

- Negotiating for development near the S&DR/GNR Crossing to identify part of the line with parallel quickthorn hedges;
- Working with Middleton St George Parish Council to register the Platform 1 Public House (formerly the Fighting Cocks Inn) as an Asset of Community Value;
- Ensuring the provision of a footpath and cycleway along the line as part of housing development at Haughton Road;
- Working with Darlington Borough Council on railway themed public art and tree planting at the Haughton Road roundabout;
- Persuading developers to make provision for the inclusion of the walking and cycling route within their proposed housing development at Allens West after over four years of campaigning;
- Securing improvements for proposals for new building, extensions and landscaping next to the Brusselton Incline at Low West Thickey Farm.
- Negotiating the agreement of the Craggwood Holiday Homes site at Ramshaw near Evenwood to improving part of the public footpath following the Haggerleases Branch and to provide information boards.

4 In addition to the above we have;

- Responded to the invitation from Darlington Borough council to comment on its draft Woodland and Tree Strategy.
- Submitted comments on the Pre-Submission Draft of the Middleton St George Neighbourhood Plan.

Since the AGM in September 2019 I have logged approximately 175 hours in performing my duties as planning officer. This includes time spent on monitoring the three Councils' online planning registers for applications on or adjacent, to the S&DR and its branch lines; identifying any issues which need to be addressed, visiting the sites and submitting comments after consulting the Trustees and Friends. In some cases there are meetings with developers and negotiations to modify the proposals to resolve any problems. I attach the job description which sets out my duties in detail.

I am very grateful for help given to me by individual Friends and those in the various local interest groups, BIG, SIG etc, for their local knowledge, visiting sites, taking photographs, talking to local residents and notifying me of any issues they come across whilst 'out there' and think needs attention.

I am prepared to continue this office to the best of my abilities for the foreseeable future but the time has come for me to sound this clarion call for someone to assist me in the leg and admin work. If there is anyone interested in this important aspect of the Friends activities, please contact me to have a discussion about what is involved.

Ross Chisholm  
Planning Officer and Trustee  
FSDR  
19 11 2020

## **FRIENDS OF THE STOCKTON & DARLINGTON RAILWAY PLANNING OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **JOB PURPOSE**

To ensure that the views of the FSDR are submitted to the local planning authorities regarding planning applications and the preparation of local plans. It is the duty of the planning system to ensure that new development is carried out in such a way that it secures the protection, enhancement and promotion of the heritage assets of the S&DR wherever possible.

### **DUTIES OF THE POST**

#### **Planning Applications**

- 1 To identify and monitor relevant planning applications;
- 2 To identify issues relating to individual applications and make recommendations;
- 3 To consult Friends/Trustees as appropriate to meet consultation deadlines;
- 4 To submit comments to the relevant local planning authority;
5. To attend and speak at Council Committees and meetings with Council Officers and developers as necessary;
- 6 To report the outcome of applications and any consequences for the Friends;

#### **Local Plans**

- 7 To advise the Friends of the content of local plans consultation exercises and make recommendations;
- 8 To attend public meetings, workshops and exhibitions and represent the views of the Friends;
- 9 To submit the representations of the Friends in accordance with the statutory procedures and seek to negotiate changes with the Local Planning Authority;
- 10 To participate in the Examination in Public as necessary;
- 11 To report the outcome of the plan to the Friends;

#### **General**

- 12 To obtain and present the views of the Friends in other relevant consultation exercises by developers and local authorities;
- 13 To advise the Friends of any relevant changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and to respond to opportunities for consultation;
- 14 To prepare a monthly written planning report and present it to the regular Friends meeting.
- 15 To prepare a written planning report for the Friends Annual General Meeting.

## APPENDIX 4 NEWSLETTER EDITOR'S REPORT

The Globe was issued in December, April and July. December 2020's edition will be released after the AGM. We have some hard copies available for the Local Studies libraries at Darlington and Stockton when they are open again. December's issue will be circulated as a PDF as normal, but those members who elected to have a hard copy when they took out membership this year will be sent one once they return from the printers in addition to their PDF copy.

Due to Covid, the events section in the Globe this year have been much reduced and in December's edition will be non-existent. Hopefully the next edition, due out in April, will return to having an events section, although our ongoing lack of an events co-ordinator makes this difficult.

Many thanks to all the contributors who have donated articles and other content, especially to those who have continued to make regular well-researched contributions despite considerable obstacles including ill health and Covid restrictions. We have had some excellent research some of which was given an additional airing during our Heritage Festival. It is our intention to update and renew our web site and there will be a permanent home for many of those articles when that happens.

If anyone wishes to buy hard copies of back editions, they are available for £3 plus p&p. Contact me at [caroline@aenvironment.co.uk](mailto:caroline@aenvironment.co.uk) to arrange payments and delivery. If we are ever allowed public events again, they will also be for sale there.

The deadline for the next issue is March 22nd . Please ask to see the guidance notes for contributors before writing a submission – it can save a lot of time.

**Work on Enriching the List** with Historic England (assessing whether sites are suitably designated for protection or not) is underway and needs informed volunteers to contribute their knowledge of sites along the line and any historic photographs of those sites that they also own copyright of. The research published in The Globe is particularly helpful here because it has advanced our knowledge of individual structures and places including their historic significance (for example research into the S&DR inns and the Skerne Bridge by Brendan Boyle). The first batch of sites to be assessed is in New Shildon. We will be recruiting people to help with this process but in the meantime, if anyone wishes to contribute please contact me (email address above). Invites are being sent to all paid up members to attend a zoom presentation on the Shildon sites (this will have been sent by the date of the AGM).

### **Royal George Update**

The feasibility study into building a replica Royal George was completed by Jim Rees, formerly from Beamish Museum, in October. This was carried out on our behalf by Jim and earlier Rob Shorland-Ball made a start but had to withdraw due to Covid restrictions. The study was funded by Darlington Borough Council for which we are very grateful.

In essence Jim's conclusion is that it is feasible to carry out the building of the replica technically and it is desirable because of its historic importance. It will never make anyone rich and fund raising will be challenging but not impossible! The process must be managed carefully and will require considerable up-front work to get the design and specification right to avoid problems with the replica's function and maintenance and to avoid disputes with the contractors over outputs. This means that the role of project manager will be vital and so if we were to go ahead with this project we must also budget for a project manager – this will be too onerous a task for volunteers.

The estimated costs have gone up by a considerable amount since Rob Shorland-Ball looked at this issue on our behalf earlier. At the top end of the likely budget, the costs come out at c. £1.3m to

cover everything (research, admin and procurement, project management, building of locomotive, 2 carriages and 2 chaldrons, testing, delivery). Obviously, the commissioning process would tighten up these costs, but it is useful to have a magnitude of scale now. There are some suggestions for fund raising in the report and the Trustees have agreed that this is a substantial challenge for which we need professional support, and we are currently obtaining advice on this. It is worth noting however that while the lottery will not fund the building of replicas, they might if it is part of a wider heritage interpretation scheme, so the extent to which that is possible may depend on where it is eventually going to be housed.

Both Locomotion at Shildon and the Darlington Borough Council have said that they would be interested in housing the replica and both are raising funds for 'a wider heritage interpretation scheme'. Quite how this would work and how it could be shared between the two sites would need to be worked out in the future.

Meanwhile, contributions are already being made towards this project by some Friends and we wish to thank in particular Dave Pennington who has made financial donations and helped start the Royal George collection which is a series of gifts designed to raise funds that can be obtained at <https://www.therailwaystation.shop/the-royal-george-collection/>. He has commissioned original artwork by Stephen Bainbridge of the Royal George, and this has been used to create prints and greetings cards. He also donated a postcard of the Royal George originally published by Salmon printers in Kent. With Charles Salmon's permission we have reissued this postcard and purchases of this will also go into the Royal George fund.

**On other matters**, we have had a donation of some S&DR books by Jan Taylor of Darlington. These will be accessioned into our library if we finally find ourselves a permanent home.

**Recruitment** An attempt to recruit Facebook followers and members into vacant posts such as events co-ordinator, fund raising officer, publicity and marketing etc. has resulted in precisely zero offers of help. One offer to carry out publicity was withdrawn within days after the person concerned was offered a full time job.

CH 30.11.20