



Minutes of Meeting held Thursday, 1st February

Location

Darlington Cricket Club, South Terrace,
 Feethams, Darlington DL1 5JD

7.00 pm

Members Present:

Niall Hammond (NHa, Chair), Caroline Hardie (CH, Webmaster & Globe Editor) Alan Townsend (AT Vice Chair), John Raw (JDR Trustee), Peter Bainbridge (PB, Membership Secretary) Ross Chisholm (RC Planning Officer), George Alderslade (GA Trustee), Barry Thompson (BT Trustee), Jonathan Ratcliffe (JAR, Secretary), Paul Boden, Keith Gregory, Jane Hackworth Young (JHY), Cllr. James Atkinson (JA) Peter Gibson MP (PG), Francis Annet, Steve Sidgewick, John Carr, Richard Barber, Neil Parker, David Waite, Alan Hudson, David Thirwell, Gillian Bryant, Keith Halifax, Dave Middlemas, Leigh Taylor (LT), Tim Taylor (TT), Mary Smith (MS), Peter Cooper, Fiona Cooper, Yvonne Richardson, Alan MacNab, Richard Cowen, Ed Chicken, Angela Pickering, Dave Pennington, Steve Green.

1	<u>Welcomes & Apologies for absence.</u> Apologies . Matthew Pease (President), Chris Lloyd (Vice President) David Parker, Carol Parker, John Dinsdale, Margaret Fenwick, Trevor Fenwick, Ian Ross (Treasurer), Stephen Bainbridge, Sue Fleury, Maggie Beadle, Malcolm Dunstone, Rose Drew, Trevor Horner, Paul Harle, Catherine Yates	Responsibility
2	<u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</u> Railway Tavern. Richie Starrs. Minutes corrected to not include the company.	JAR
3	<u>Matters Arising</u> Item 4 & 5 S&DR Trademark update was given by NHa, this is in the process of being transferred to the Friends.	
4	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> Peter Gibson, MP sits on the Towns Fund board discussed under item 5, chairs report.	
5	<u>Chair's Report</u> NH updated the meeting on the Tricolor study on how to move the Friends into a building management trust. Letter confirming their appointment has been sent to	

	<p>them and an initial meeting will be held in early March to start the process moving. Friends are in discussion with DBC regarding the base of operation for the friends after the news that there was no funding remaining to restore the Lime Cells on Station Road, Darlington for our use. Current proposal from DBC is for the Friends to be gifted the portion of Pease House purchased under the Towns Fund scheme. Trustees are negotiating with DBC to ensure that the Friends will not be left with a liability. PG informed the meeting that Minutes of Towns Fund committee should be available on DBC website and he will ensure that they have been uploaded.</p> <p>Cllr. James Atkinson asked what the backup plan for a registered address if Pease House falls through. NHa said that Heighington Station could be another option. DCC have had an extension on the money from March until September for the walking and cycling route project. There will be two further consultations which the members will be updated on. Niccy Hallifax has requested that the Friends be discrete regarding the events of 2025 to prevent leaks from impacting on the marketing plan. NHa gave a brief introduction to the Aycliffe business group and have meetings planned with Hitachi, Husquavarna and several other businesses regarding support for projects, including the purchase of Heighington Station. RC pointed out that there are difficulties with establishing the walking and cycling route and there is a lack of funds in Darlington area and issues identifying a complete set route through the borough. There has been a meeting with SBC and there may not be a walking and cycling route set by September 2025. NHa said that it will still be signed throughout the whole route. NHa has written to Lord Houchen regarding the route around MSG and the airport and has not had a satisfactory response so far. BT clarified that Richie Starrs has insisted that there will be a route mostly set in Darlington by 2025 JA asked if there is a genuine commitment to the walking and cycling route in Darlington. NHa has numerous records of DBC & SBC having committed to the route but it may not be complete by 2025 but long term it will be in place. LT pointed out that there is a million pound pot of money that's available Cllr Scott Durham has mentioned at a recent council meeting. NHa to raise this with DBC. John Carr asked if there has been discussions with PT operators. NHa stated that this is in discussion.</p>	<p>NHa</p> <p>NHa</p> <p>Darlington Members</p> <p>JAR</p>
6	<u>Heighington Station</u>	

	<p><i>Presentation attached.</i></p> <p>CH presented the history and significance of the station NHa presented the plan for how we're planning to buy it. Press release to go out in next couple of weeks Support petition going live on website Just giving donation page Please approach trustees with sponsorship ideas. Please pass on any contacts for press or people who may be interested in supporting the campaign. It's going to be a tall order but we can't afford to lose more buildings. Alan Macnab suggested the Toronto globe and mail who wrote a scathing article in 2013 on the state of the S&DR should be updated. JA asked what will happen to the fundraising money if there's an issue? Donors will be given the option of having a refund or donating it to other projects if we are unable to raise enough to go ahead. JDR pointed out the event in Heighington on March 9th was an opportunity to raise awareness. John Carr asked about planning considerations and Hitachi's interest. Suggested that the signal box could have an exhibition on the history of signalling after it's decommissioned. Press release to be distributed to the members. LT/TT suggested that the Friends work with the community and the railway press, will pass on links to railway press.</p>	<p>RC</p> <p>NHa/JAR</p> <p>LT/TT</p>
7	<p>Planning Officers report Updates on report: DCC Wall at Shildon Northern Metal Recycling DCC have updated that the hedge will be removed and the mural will be designed with this in mind. The Friends will be consulted on design and their Enforcement has been done on the height of scrap exceeding limits and falling onto trackbed. Mary Smith has updated Ross that at Phoenix row there has been issues with the planning officer, RC will speak with MS about arranging a meeting with the owner and the planning officer over issues with the planning officer not being happy with the track being laid. Darlington area: RC &CH have had a positive meeting with DBC conservation officer about extending the Northgate conservation area to cover more S&DR heritage sites, report coming out in late February. Middlesbrough have announced draft local plan, the Friends had asked for a policy to be in place to cover the 1830 extension into Middlesbrough as had been done by DCC, DBC & SBC. The draft local plan hasn't included this. RC will raise this with MC.</p>	

	<p>A question was asked about the £10,000 incoming from DBC from section 106 agreement with developer. Money has to be paid before the first house is occupied. The money is to be spent on research and information relating to the S&DR.</p>	
8	<p>Officers report CH updated on her report. Hard copies of Dec 23 globe are available. Bob Hattersley maps are available through the Friends. Profits split between Friends and Kidney cancer charity. An enamel Membership badge is available for free to all members. S&DR podcast will be in production soon. Contributors are sought. Web sales up due to Hattersley maps becoming available. National early railway conference Papers have been settled for 2025 ERC NHa giving opening address. Hotel accommodation has been sought. Local day rates may be available but are still in discussion regarding impact on the conference budget. Education committee Short lesson plans already available on website. Niccy Hallifax is interested in work regarding teaching plans. Paul Harle & AT has attended some meetings. Meetings have collated 11 projects and programs in place currently. JHY & BIG have engaged with schools previously. BIG, WASH, EIG are concerned that they may tread on CB toes. Action for JDR to approach Cait Barratt or Locomotion Education officer to see if they are duplicating any other work. AT to send JDR email address.</p>	
9	<p><u>Publications</u> See attached report</p>	
10	<p><u>Reports from area groups</u></p> <p>Items from Area groups. <u>Stockton.</u> The news that the Waterfront development and Town hall refurbishment was not going to be complete in time for 2025 was met with general dismay by the meeting. Work still to be done on finding a suitable walking and cycling route. Report to be typed up and circulated with minutes Scoria blocks purchased from Bridge House have been moved to Fighting Cocks for reuse. Tittybottle park, Eaglescliffe – a plan for marking the route of the S&DR through the park is in progress.</p>	JAR

	<p>Yarm Station remnants have been found during some recent building works but they were removed before the site could be examined by the Friends and the stones have disappeared..</p> <p><u>Barnard Castle</u> Barnard Town Council and Montalbo School have made progress on the celebrations in BC in 2025 JHY gave update on S&DR play.</p> <p><u>Darlington Group</u> Meetings take place in last Thursday of the month in Railway Tavern. Darlington Friends are encouraged to join them JAR to put meetings on website. Facebook page is available. Area groups to send JAR details of meetings for advertisement</p> <p><u>Middleton St. George/Fighting Cocks</u> MSG group holding meeting on Feb 19th to discuss the 2025 events in MSG. Details going on Parish Council website. RC updated on the mural at Fighting cocks. Working with Parish Council to organise the installation in the summer.</p> <p><u>Etherley Incline Group/WASH/BIG</u> <i>Report attached</i> MS updated the meeting on the Phoenix Row meeting. A planning application has been made for some land that includes a section of the trackbed to extend the garden of the converted Methodist Church. The owners don't feel that the Friends have supported them as well as they could have and were disappointed that the agreement to erect a section of replica track hadn't been signed. Owners will mark the location of the track bed with stone blocks in place of the proposed section of replica track.</p>	<p>Area Group Leaders/JAR</p>
	<p><u>Opportunities for Member Participation in 2025 events</u></p> <hr/> <p>An update was given by JHY regarding the S&DR play. A director has been appointed and JHY is working with the Castle Players to produce in venues across the line in 2025 as part of the wider festival.</p>	
	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <hr/> <p>TT asked if NHa had received the email from Dave Reynolds re: book launch on 10th Feb. NHa confirmed him & CH would be attending on behalf of the Friends. NHa offered the Friends congratulations on the success of the Shildon Railway Institute project.</p>	<p>.</p> <p>NHa</p>

	JDR asked about inviting Niccy Hallifax to the April meeting. NHa to invite Niccy Hallifax to the April meeting. Questions will be posed in advance if this is confirmed.	
11	Date & Time of next meeting. 7pm Thursday 7th March 2024 Darlington Cricket club	ALL