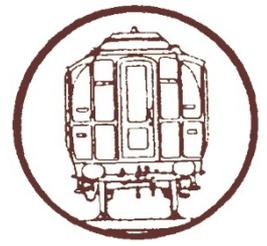


WEST SOMERSET STEAM RAILWAY TRUST LIMITED

Registered Charity No. 265564
President: Lady Elizabeth Gass



Registered Office: The Railway Station, Bishops Lydeard Taunton,
Somerset. TA4 3BX
Registered in England No. 1079916
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West Somerset Steam Railway Trust Business Plan 2020-2022 2020 Update.

Introduction

1. This is the third Business Plan produced by the West Somerset Steam Railway Trust ('the Trust'). It covers the three calendar years 2020, 2021 and 2022. It will be rolled forward on an annual basis for sharing with Members at the Trust's AGM each year. This document updates the Business Plan for 2020. Implementation of the Plan has been significantly impeded by the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and therefore a number of the business objectives have had to be deferred or delayed until such time as current restrictions are relaxed and normal activities can be resumed. The Business Plan assumes that the full railway will not be reopened until March 2021 at the earliest.

The Objects and Mission Statement of the Trust

2. The West Somerset Steam Railway Trust Ltd is a charitable company established in 1972 and is one of two charities directly involved in supporting the West Somerset Railway.

3. Its current charitable objects are *"to promote education by furthering interest in and appreciation of railway lines, equipment, buildings, and construction and steam or other traction engines of historical engineering or scientific importance particularly by preserving and displaying the same."*

4. As part of developing its management of the Museums at Bishops Lydeard and Blue Anchor, the Board of Trustees is seeking formal accreditation of the Gauge Museum from the Arts Council. This will be followed by Blue Anchor Museum in due course. In order to achieve this, it will be necessary to update our Objects and Powers. Accordingly, proposals will be put to the 2020 AGM for consideration.

5. In support of its successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Gauge Museum in 2018, the Trust also developed and agreed the following Mission Statement:

"To encourage and engage with visitors through interpretation of the social and economic and physical impact of the railway in Somerset and the West Somerset Railway corridor in particular. To inform and inspire the next generation, particularly through the STEM subjects, the science, technology and engineering of railways and its relevance to mathematics as well as history, geography and economics."

6. This mission statement can be applied to all of the Trust's activities.

The Activities of the Trust

7. The Trust currently has four main areas of activity:

- preserving and displaying heritage items relating to railways and the West Somerset Railway (WSR) in particular, and interpreting and curating all the heritage assets owned by the Trust;
- restoring the heritage carriages owned by the Trust for display and operation on the railway
- managing the museums at Bishops Lydeard and Blue Anchor and
- promoting the development and education of young people through the management and display of the model railway, Gauge Junction and other model railways within the responsibility of the Trust.

8. These are carried out in accordance with an agreement with the West Somerset Railway PLC which came into effect on 1 January 2017. This agreement includes sub-leases on the Blue Anchor museum building and the Goods Shed at Bishops Lydeard, and provides assurance about future access by the Trust to the railway both for the restoration of heritage carriages and the operation of restored carriages. In support of this cooperation, the Trust is a member of the WSR Partnership Development Group and its various subgroups, including the WSR Heritage Committee.

9. The Board of Trustees is chaired by Chris Austin OBE, and at the end of July 2020 there were 7 Trustees. Following the retirement of Alan Meade, a new Trustee will be appointed to represent the Model Railway Group. The work of the Trust has expanded over the last 12 months and therefore, fresh attempts have been made to recruit additional Trustees. It is anticipated that further appointments will be made during 2020.

10. About 50 volunteers also work regularly on Trust projects, in particular on the restoration of carriages which takes place at Williton and stewarding in the Museums (including the model railway in the Gauge Museum). The Trust put a new Volunteer Policy in place in 2016, which was updated in 2017. This covered both recruitment and induction and the requirements of the PLC in respect of training and assessment to ensure compliance with safety legislation. All Trust volunteers are required to hold a valid PLC staff card (which among other things ensures that appropriate insurance is in place), and those working in the workshop at Williton (or when the Trust duties or activities require them, from time to time, to be on or near the running line,) are required to hold a Personal Track Safety certificate.

11. Membership of the Trust is open to anyone donating at least £12 a year. There are currently 92 Members.

12. During 2019, the Trust made good progress with the Gauge Museum Project. In partnership with our external consultants Smith and Jones, the redesign and reinterpretation work was completed and installation of the new layout, materials and artefacts was begun before the impact of Covid 19 brought the programme to a halt. At the same time, Trust volunteers led by Geoff Evens undertook extensive work on repainting and repairs to the internal fabric of the building. Unfortunately, the formal launch of the redesigned Museum also had to be postponed and it is hoped that it might be possible to hold it in early 2021 if Government regulations allow.

13. The Education and Learning Programme under Helen Anson and her team of Learning Assistants was rolled out to schools, colleges and other community groups during 2019. Over 1000 children and family groups attended the Museum and the WSR as a whole as a result of their work. This includes two revenue earning school visits,

14. The Board welcomed Alan Smithers who is also the Stationmaster at Minehead as a new Trustee. Alan has subsequently become Curator of Blue Anchor Museum. In autumn 2019, the Board of Trustees began a process to look at the future role and content of the Museum at Blue Anchor. A consultation document was produced and has been responded to by volunteers. This will be progressed, as circumstances allow, in late 2020. External repairs to the Museum were begun in late 2019 but have been suspended. It is hoped that these will be completed over 2020 summer period.

15. The Heritage Railway Association held its annual 2019 Young Persons awards ceremony again and James Pearson from the Model Railway Group was a very creditable runner-up.

16. 2019 was another good year for the Trust financial position. In addition to funds from membership subscriptions, Museums and Galas, the Trust benefited from a number of significant donations. The Trust also (as part of a wider initiative across the WSR) ran a Heritage Infrastructure Appeal Fund in support of sustaining the WSR and aiding financial recovery. As part of its contribution towards the sustainability of the West Somerset Railway, the Trust was able to make available targeted funds of £40 K for use in heritage infrastructure renewal with a particular focus on the trackwork at Blue Anchor Station which obviously enables the Museum there to continue to be available to passengers and visitors alike.

17. During 2019, work continued on coach BCK 6705 which is now substantially complete apart from its corridor connections. Arrangements are in hand to source these to enable the coach to run as part of a set. Aspirations for the vehicle to be used on the WSR during the 2020 season have now been deferred until next year. In the meantime, work on coach TK 3639 has commenced but clearly the current situation means that the work programme has been temporarily halted until such time as access to the WSR can be reinstated.

18. The Trust Chairman made a significant contribution to the planning, preparation and implementation of the successful Taunton shuttle pilot in 2019 working in collaboration with the PLC, GWR and Network Rail. The Trust was also a member of the Gala Planning Team.

19. 2019 saw the Trust move to a new accounting period of January to December for its Annual Accounts. In addition, significant work was undertaken to update all of the Board role profiles and to create new profiles for Curator, Archivist, Model Railway Operators and Learning Assistants.

20. Work on compiling role profiles for Trustees and for volunteers in functional roles within the charity was substantially completed in 2019 with further work planned in 2020 (see below).

21. The Trust was delighted to host an exhibition of artwork by the late Peter Barnfield organised by Ginny Barnfield in July last year. It was a successful event and generated a lot of interest in the Trust and the railway and raised a total of £2250 in donations. The Trust also sponsored a book by Ian Coleby and other authors recognising the 40th anniversary of the West Somerset Railway in its current form with book sales doing well in both WSR shops and online. A second print was completed in 2020 before the emergence of Covid 19 and the Trust hopes to sell these in 2021.

Visitor Numbers

22. For Blue Anchor Museum and the Model Railway, visitor numbers up to 30 December 2019 were as follows:

	Blue Anchor	Model Railway
2017-18	2,663	12,902
2018-19	1,963	11,99
		7

23. The decrease in numbers at Blue Anchor is mainly down to the impact of the reduced train service in operation at the beginning of the 2019 season which meant that for a period, all trains stopping at Blue Anchor only used the up platform. The Museum was therefore closed at this time. The decline in visitors to the model railway is down to fewer opening days, due to not opening in November and December 2019 as Santa Special visitors were not allowed on Platform 1 and to the loss of some key operators which has reduced the number of opening days possible.

Preservation and Display of Heritage Items

24. As part of the Gauge Museum Project, Project Team members have since early 2020 been working on a number of key developments which are designed to improve our management of the Gauge Museum, our collections and their conservation together with the way in which the Museum is used by visitors and volunteers alike. These include:

- The development of the new Collections Management Policy and support procedures,
- Preparation of a new Collection Care and Conservation Policy and procedures,
- Development of a new Museum Guide for visitors to take away,
- Preparation and implementation of a business case for the introduction of MODES software which will support collections management, conservation, archiving and research activities within the Museum. An expert subgroup has been established to oversee the coordination of all this work as part of the Gauge Museum Project Team,
- Development of a Museum Management Plan,
- Acquisition of materials and means to operate the Museum in a way which meets the current and future Covid 19 guidance and requirements,
- Continuing with working groups to improve the internal fabric and condition of the Gauge Museum building in preparation for reopening.

25. In 2019, the Trust began to explore the possibility of gaining formal accreditation of the Gauge Museum from the Arts Council. The benefits of accreditation are not only that the Trust would be operating the Museum to recognised heritage standards but that this would also aid with future fundraising. Preliminary work with the Arts Council identified what was required in terms of next steps (see Corporate Management below) and these will be taken forward after the 2020 AGM.

26. Inevitably, the impact of the pandemic has led to a reworking of the Gauge Museum Implementation Plan which was submitted to the National Heritage Lottery Fund for agreement in June 2020. This was approved and provides the basis for hopefully, completing the Project in line with the original timetable of February 2021 but with flexibility to continue beyond that if necessary.

Education and Learning Programme

27. Early 2020 saw the launch of an outreach programme for primary schools and the completion of two further revenue earning school visits before lockdown occurred. As a result, the National Heritage Lottery Fund agreed to the redeployment of Helen Anson to support other core elements of the Project which are being progressed as “desktop work” until such time as the Learning and Education programme can properly resume in full. It has however been possible to produce material for website and social media platforms including home learning packs, a contribution to WSR TV and further work on resource boxes for primary schools to be made available when circumstances allow.

28. The impact of the Learning and Education Programme has been almost universally commended for the quality and scope of its content and the way in which it has been presented. The Board of Trustees fully recognised the contribution that Helen Anson has made in her role as Learning Officer both within the Trust, with stakeholders on the WSR and most importantly, with schools and other community groups in the local area. Accordingly, it is the intention of the Trust to seek additional funding to extend the Learning and Education programme under Helen’s leadership by a further 12 months from December 2020.

Heritage Carriages

29. Perhaps the hardest hit area as a result of the pandemic has been the work on restoring our heritage carriages. Since March 2020, it has not been possible to make any progress whatsoever with the Williton site being locked down in line with Government requirements. It is hoped to make a gradual return to working during the Autumn subject to both Government guidelines and PLC agreement. Once that happens, the focus will be on:

- Ensuring that access to the Williton site and resumption of working can be safely achieved in the context of Covid 19 requirements,
- Completing the final touches to the restoration of coach BCK 6705,
- Continue the restoration of former ambulance coach TK 3639. Access has been provided and available components sorted to identify the extent of work required.

30. The working assumption the Trust has is that the WSR will not return to full operational running over the whole length of the line before March 2021. That gives further opportunity to conclude commercial agreements with the PLC for the use of coach 6705 and also the sleeping car.

31. The Trust concluded a new Agreement with the PLC for the use of facilities on the Williton site to run for 12 months from January 2020. A new Agreement will be required with the PLC from January 2021 onwards.

32. Work is continuing under the leadership of Chris Austin to examine options for provision of covered accommodation for the Trusts heritage carriage fleet. This includes work with the West Somerset Railway Association in relation to the potential move the Peterborough Wagon Shed currently owned by Network Rail to an as yet unspecified site on the WSR. Inevitably, this work has been held up by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The Trust will also work with the PLC to explore other alternatives including the short- term provision of either/or canvas or poly tunnels whilst seeking more permanent solutions.

The Model Railway

33. As with other elements of Trust activity, the Model Railway Group (MRG) has had to suspend operation of the layout since mid-March 2020. It is not clear when it will be possible to resume operating and also when visitors will be allowed access. In the meantime, senior members of the Group are undertaking routine maintenance in line with WSR Covid 19 requirements and the MRG contribution to the Reinterpretation work as part of the Gauge Museum Project.

34. Following the retirement of Alan Meade in early 2020, a formal review of the MRG organisation, roles and functions was commissioned by the Board of Trustees and was presented to the Board in July 2020 by the interim Manager, Matt Jackson. The Board approved the recommendations in the Review for implementation. This included the recruitment and appointment of a new MRG manager and Deputy. Subject to satisfactory outcome, it is anticipated that this process will be completed by Autumn 2020. One of the key components of the Review was to recognise that the layout required a level of year-on-year investment and this is being built into the Trust financial planning for 2021 and beyond.

Blue Anchor Museum

35. Subject to easing of Covid 19 restrictions, it is anticipated that RAMS will be in a position to complete the external repair works to the Museum roof and facings. It is not envisaged that the Museum will reopen before March 2021, but the Trust will keep this under review in conjunction with the PLC.

36. The Board of Trustees has authorised the next stage of preparation for the Blue Anchor Museum Development Project. A Project team is being established to develop a specification which will be supported in due course by formal fundraising.

37. Following a number of retirements, the Museum needs to increase the number of available volunteers for the roster in order to be able to optimise opening days in conjunction with the 2021 timetable. A recruitment drive will be undertaken in Autumn 2020.

Corporate Development

38. There has been a significant amount of work undertaken on the corporate development of the Trust both in 2019 and the first part of 2020 the latter influenced by the necessary changes to Trust activities brought on by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic .

39. Unfortunately, it proved necessary to postpone the 2020 AGM and this will now be held on Saturday, 19 September 2020.

40. As a result of wishing to seek formal accreditation for the Gauge Museum from the Arts Council, preliminary feedback clearly pointed to the fact that, in order to be successful, the Trust would need to alter its charitable Objects and Powers to more explicitly reference museums, heritage and learning and education. Accordingly, work has been undertaken to draft revised Objects and Powers. These have been submitted to the Charity Commission for agreement which was received in May 2020. These proposals will now be put to the next AGM for endorsement in order to be able to proceed with accreditation.

41. In line with decisions made by the Board Trustees, the Treasurer is leading work to review the Trust's digital arrangements including new systems for electronic donations, upgraded Wi-Fi and computer hardware. The Board will also review a number of its policies over Autumn 2020 where these are out of date or require amendment due to changes in legislation and/or WSR updates e.g. SMS.

42. The Board of Trustees is undertaking a review of areas where the Board needs to be strengthened to reflect the current and future work programme required both within the Trust and across the WSR as a whole. It is intended to make additional appointments to the Board in 2020 to reflect those needs.

43. The Trust has been participating in a joint steering group with the Association and PLC to develop the new arrangements for volunteer recruitment across the WSR in preparation for reopening the railway. Progress has been made in finalising role profiles, developing a generic induction programme and organising the necessary social media and other components to enable prospective volunteers to access the information they need. It is intended to launch these arrangements in conjunction with the lead in time for reopening the whole of the railway which is anticipated at this stage to be around March 2021.

44. In order to benefit from access to best practice, innovation and external expertise, the Trust has been strengthening its relationships with the Heritage museums network across the South West with particular focus on the South West Heritage Trust and the South West Heritage Museums Development. Specifically, the Trust has been able to:

- Receive helpful guidance and feedback on aspects of the Gauge Museum Project,
- From July 2020 join a new initiative to "Promote Our Museums through Visit Somerset"
- Benefit from regular guidance and advice on managing Museums during Covid 19
- Receive helpful information around fundraising and sources for funds
- Participate in a digital media survey which may in turn facilitate the ability to improve the way in which the Trust is able to use social media and other platforms both in relation to its business model and its interaction with visitors and the general public

45. In early 2020, the PLC commissioned a review of its current structure by John Bailey from the Heritage Railway Association in which the Steam Trust participated. What is now known as the Bailey Report has been published and the PLC is in the early stages of putting together a programme of work to address the issues and options around restructuring, the first stage of which will be a wide-ranging consultation exercise with shareholders, stakeholders and other parties. It is anticipated this will begin in Autumn 2020. The Board of Trustees has made it publicly clear that it wishes for the Steam Trust to remain a small independent charity working within the WSR family and supporting the PLC both in its current and any future form.

46. Publication of the Report has also led to the re-establishment of the Partnership Development Group (PDG) from June 2020. Current Chairmanship of PDG is with the Steam Trust pending arrangements for any changes associated with Bailey Report recommendations.

Fundraising

47. The Trust has received further donations towards its Heritage Rail Renewal Appeal from funding organisations and Just Giving which, as at July 2020 has enabled the Board to earmark a further £10,000+ towards heritage sustainability on the WSR. Precise allocation of these funds will be agreed with the PLC during autumn 2020. Of particular significance was the receipt of a donation from the Peall Trust for £15,000 of which £7500 will be allocated to the Heritage Rail Renewal Appeal with the balance being committed to other Trust priorities.

48. Following submission of project and financial reports to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Trust was able in November 2019, to access a further £16,000 of the overall project sum of £40,000. This leaves a final £4000 to be drawn down in 2020. The Trust also released the first £10,000 of its contribution to the Gauge Museum Project in early 2020 with a final £10,400 to be made available in line with Project objectives. It may be that elements of this final contribution are carried forward into 2021 dependent on progress with project completion.

49. The Trust has also been successful in acquiring a Discretionary Grant funding from Somerset West and Taunton Council of £7500. This will help to cover the costs of leases, licences and insurance during 2020 in recognition of the loss of income due to Covid 19. The Trust is very grateful to the Council for its assistance and support.

50. As part of its response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Trust submitted a bid in July 2020 to the National Heritage Lottery Fund Emergency Appeal. This was to cover the cost of implementing Covid 19 response requirements across the totality of Trust activities on the WSR. The outcome is anticipated in August 2020.

51. In mid- 2020, agreement was reached across the PLC, Association and the Steam Trust on the establishment of a Joint Fundraising Group led by the Association to drive the fundraising effort to raise money as part of the Covid 19 Emergency Appeal established in March 2020. The Group is in the early stages of its work and has established clear processes and a new revised approach to the fundraising appeal. The Trust Treasurer represents the charity on this Group.

52. The Steam Trust has continued with its Heritage Infrastructure Appeal but understandably donations have been lower so far in 2020 with the majority of funds being directed to the PLC itself and the Association. However, the Trust will continue with this work as part of the joint initiative referred to above.

53. In terms of its fundraising efforts for its own activities, in addition to the activities referred to in the preceding paragraphs, the Trust will be making applications for funding from a variety of sources beginning in the latter half of 2020 with a focus on:

- Extension of the Learning and Education Programme into 2021 (see later paragraphs)
- Blue Anchor Museum development
- Heritage Carriages Restoration
- Phase 2 Gauge Museum
- Model Railway improvements and rolling stock acquisition

54. The preparation, publication and sales of the book to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the reopening of the WSR went very well in 2019 and has found a further reprint. A second book is under consideration for late 2020/early 2021.

Accounts, Income and Expenditure

55. The 2019 Annual Accounts were completed and then subsequently signed off by the Trust accountants, Monahans in July 2020. Because of the delay in holding the AGM, the following information must be treated as draft pending Member approval. The Accounts cover the period up to December 2019 in accordance with the previously agreed decision to realign the accounting year period to be that of January to December.

56. As at the end of December 2019, the balances in Restricted Funds were as follows:

Coach TK 3639 Restricted Fund	15,579
Coach 9038 Restricted Fund	78,865

Horse Box Restricted Fund	2,861
Museum Restricted Fund	21,016
Signal Box Heritage Restricted Fund	465
HLF Grant	12,094
WSR Appeal	34,271
	165,15
	1

57. Similarly, the balances in Unrestricted Funds were as follows:

Unrestricted Funds

General Fund	28,044
Heritage Carriages Project (HCP)	32,330
BCK 6705	171,314
	<u>231,688</u>

58. Income for 2020, because of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, has inevitably slowed significantly in terms of general donations. The Trust has been/expects to be, the recipient of several targeted grants related to Covid 19 recovery during the year and is collaborating in this area with the PLC and the WSRA on a major bid to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. The result is expected by the end of August/early September 2020. Expenditure has been kept to a minimum consistent with ongoing commitments e.g. Gauge Museum Project and the Board of Trustees will continue to adopt a cautious approach to any further investment other than through the Heritage Rail Appeal fund for the remainder of the financial year.

59. The Trustees have made no further changes to the Reserves Policy as set out in the Previous Business Plan. However, the Board is still very much aware of the potential risk to financial stability of any significant and sustained downturn on income that might impact on the current reserve levels. Close attention is therefore continuing to be paid to ensuring that funds remain above the minimum target levels set by the Trustees at the end of the Plan period. Additional expenditure will therefore continue to be dependent on developing new or additional income streams. Traditional reliance on donations, legacies and membership income will not, of themselves, secure the Trusts ongoing requirement to invest in its heritage assets and activities.

60. Because of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the Fundraising Plan is being reviewed to reflect the reality of WSR closure during the majority of 2020 and cautious assumptions about the ramp up of visitor interest in the first part of 2021. Many of the initiatives in the previous Plan were unable to be realised and so a different approach aligned to the new Business Plan objectives will be adopted.

61. The previous Business Plan also contained a number of assumptions about predicted income for 2019 and then 2020. 2019 indicative targets were broadly met but any rational forecasting for 2020 is impossible to do. It is intended therefore in the next iteration of Business Plan after this one to reintroduce a forward look on the Trust finances once the railway is fully back in operation.

Shareholdings

62. During 2019 and in the first half of 2020, the Trust received a steady stream of legacy bequests of PLC shares which has added to its portfolio holding. There is ongoing work in place to update the Trust PLC shareholding register and this is being undertaken jointly by the Treasurer and Company Secretary.

63. Additionally, and as part of its repositioning of the Trust to reflect its core purpose and functions in 2020, the Board has reviewed its shareholdings in 4160 Ltd and their value together with its shares in the Ffestiniog Railway. The Trust is making arrangements to dispose of the Ffestiniog Railway shares which it recognises may be of no current value. A decision on 4160 Ltd will be made at a later date.

Membership

64. Membership of the Trust remained largely static in 2019 and the early part of 2020 with membership renewals that were not taken up being replaced by new applications such that the current Membership stands at 92. However, since early July 2020, there has been an uptake of interest in Trust membership and it is anticipated that total Membership will exceed 100 people shortly. As with volunteers, the Board of Trustees will look at new ways of attracting additional Members over the next 12 months in order to be able to sustain the charity, attract new skills and capacity and widen the appeal of the Trust both locally within Somerset and beyond. The Trust will be reviewing its Membership procedures to establish whether a Membership reminder and renewal system would be useful to Members.

65. As previously stated, the working assumption is that the WSR will return to full operation from March 2021 but it is unlikely that that will be confirmed before the end of the 2020 calendar year. With that in mind, the Trust Board will be looking to take forward the following business objectives during 2021. These fall into three main categories:

- Schemes that are taken/deferred from, 2020,
- New Projects that commencing 2021
- Anticipated WSR developments that will impact on the Trust and require our engagement in them.

These objectives will be kept under constant review given the uncertainties around the timing of reopening together with the ability of the Trust to deliver given that the WSR will need to undergo a period of recovery post Covid 19 and continuing to re-establish its financial, service and business sustainability.

Preservation and Display of Heritage Artefacts

66. The Trust expects to make progress in the following areas:

- Completion of all the policy work around collections, conservation, archiving and organisation supported by the MODES technology acquired in 2020. The expert subgroup established as part of the Gauge Museum Project Team will continue to lead the development of this work,
- Development of proposals for improved storage of artefacts, materials and other items as part of a Phase 2 Project submission for the Gauge Museum,
- Beginning to apply the learning, discipline and process from the Gauge Museum to Blue Anchor Museum as part of its development,
- Starting to work towards a practical model of running “One Museum on Two sites” in line with Board of Trustees intentions. This will also be a positive aid to achieving accreditation initially in the Gauge Museum and then subsequently at Blue Anchor.

Museums

67. The Trust expects to achieve completion of the Gauge Museum Project by February 2021 and preparing the Museum to be open for visitors in time for the 2021 operating season. This will include arrangements for the formal launch which was postponed in April 2020. This will include programming any outstanding remedial works relation to the internal and external fabric of the building, subject to fundraising and agreement with the PLC as landlord.

68. The Board will also be taking forward the project plan for the development of Blue Anchor Museum This will include establishing a project team and plan by early 2021, preparation of formal fundraising applications and, subject to funding outcomes, taking forward the initial phases of work. There will also be a revaluation of the artefact collection to be displayed at Blue Anchor from 2021 onwards. This is because a major private owner will be taking back their collection from the Museum and this is anticipated in Autumn 2020.

69. Completing proposals for a Phase 2 Project for the Gauge Museum following a similar process to that outlined above,

70. In discussion with the PLC and other WSR organisations, looking at the possibility of a rotating programme of vehicle static display within the Gauge Museum to include the possibility of locomotives, freight rolling stock and other heritage carriages.

Education and Learning Programme

71. As previously stated, the Trust intends to extend the Education and Learning Programme into 2021 and to retain the services of Helen Anson as Learning Officer. Funding for this initiative will be identified in Autumn 2020.

72. With the return of primary schools from September 2020, every effort will be made within the framework of Government and local guidance on Covid 19 to re-establish effective working with the schools. However, given the real focus will be on 2021 in terms of being able to welcome visitors

back to the whole of the railway, that will be the timeline within which the full programme will be reactivated. The Trust also intends to take a wider view of Community outreach with the Programme and offer opportunities to a range of organisations to learn about the railway through heritage, history, economics, tourism and leisure. The ability to offer the Gauge Museum as a venue for these activities will also be particularly important.

Heritage Carriages

73. It is hoped to have BCK 6705 fully complete and a commercial agreement reached with the PLC to run the vehicle on the WSR during 2021. The Trust also intends to offer the sleeping car for defined events (e.g. Galas) and to examine the possibility of running with other heritage vehicles e.g. the Hawksworth saloon.

74. Work on the former ambulance vehicle TK 3639 will continue supported by active fundraising to complete the work.

75. The agreement with the PLC for the use of facilities at Williton will be renewed for 2021.

76. The Trust had intended in 2020 to review the remaining fleet of carriages to be restored with a view to taking some difficult but necessary decisions about the number of vehicles to be worked on then to have a plan to deal with the remainder. This has had to be deferred but will be returned to next year. The PLC have suggested that they would be interested in heritage carriage rake of around 7 vehicles. The Trust will therefore look to consider selling those vehicles which are surplus to its needs or donating them to another charity with similar objects to its own.

77. Depending on progress in discussions with the PLC and the WSRA, it is hoped that a clear plan for both the short and longer term provision of covered accommodation for heritage rolling stock will be able to be taken forward during 2021 in order to protect the Trust's assets and provide a basis for being able to display both in restoration and restored vehicles more effectively to the visiting public and enthusiasts alike

Safety Management

78. The PLC is reviewing the entirety of the Safety Management System (SMS) to prepare for reopening the railway in 2021. The Trust will do all that is necessary to support and comply with any revised SMS requirements and to update its policies and their application accordingly including any issues of competency, equipment et cetera.

79. With the changes in Trustees referred to in Paragraph 39 above, the Board intends to appoint a Trustee with specific responsibility for leading on safety management, culture and application across the range of Trust activities. It is hoped to have made an appointment on this basis by the end of 2020.

The Model Railway

80. Following the MRG review in 2020, the Trust intends to support the Group in progressive improvements to and replacement of, those elements of the layout which are time expired including additions to rolling stock. The Trust will now more vigorously promote active fundraising for MRG and also take advantage of the social media opportunities and the skills of MRG operators in publicising the work of the Group thus opening up the MRG to a wider audience on a sustained basis. This will also be an aid to ongoing recruitment of younger volunteers.

Corporate Development

81. Dependent on the outcome of the 2020 AGM, the Board of Trustees will proceed with implementation of changes to its charitable objects and powers and their application.

82. This will enable formal accreditation of the Gauge Museum followed by Blue Anchor Museum to be pursued and achieved hopefully, dependent on Arts Council timescales for decision-making, by the end of 2021.

83. The Board of Trustees will have, subject to successful appointments, strengthened its capacity, skills sets and competencies to incorporate a number of additional responsibilities at Board level.

84. The Trust will continue its work with WSR family organisations and in particular across five key areas:

- New volunteer recruitment and induction
- Joint Fundraising
- Partnership Development Group
- Supporting the PLC in implementing its restructuring proposals
- Sustaining access to the national rail network through the Taunton Shuttle initiative and other opportunities.

85. The Trust will continue to benefit from its membership of South West Museums network and the South West Federation and use this to continuously improve its stewardship of Trust assets and management of the organisation to reflect best practice and quality standards in the sector.

Finance

86. For 2021, the Trust expects to have reworked its Fundraising Plan and to have updated its assumptions around income and expenditure assuming that the railway is fully functioning. The positive impact of the Covid 19 specific grants will be felt in full in this year. It is also hoped that with improvements to both Museums we will see an increase in donations. The ability to take donations electronically / contactless will, it is hoped, offset an expected drop in Cash donations as people are now getting used to not using cash. In addition we should see funds coming in as a result of school visits.

87. The Trust does not feel it would be sensible to produce any definitive proposals for 2022 at this juncture. However, what the Board of Trustees does believe is that:

- If all goes to plan, then the WSR will have experienced its first full operating season along the whole length of the railway. The learning from this can then be translated into the preparations for 2022,
- The PLC will have made substantial progress in restructuring itself to a model which is reflective of the principles of the Bailey Report but very much based on what is the right solution for the PLC and the WSR as a whole,
- The Trust will have at least a short-term solution to covered accommodation in place for some if not all of its heritage rolling stock,
- The Trust will have made a decision about which heritage carriages it wishes to retain and made significant progress on sale or donation of those which are seen to be surplus to requirements,
- The Trust Board will be more reflective of modern concepts around gender, diversity and age than perhaps it is at the current time,
- Both Museums will be fully accredited and able to attract a greater level of interest including a wider range of fundraising opportunities,
- The Trust can demonstrate that as a small independent charity, it can continue to “punch above its weight” in terms of its contribution to the collective sustainability of the WSR,
- Trust finances continue to be robust and their stewardship continues to be effectively managed including the application of an updated Fundraising Plan reflecting this Business plan’s objectives and the changing environment within the WSR.

Risks and Challenges to Delivery

88. Delivery of this Plan depends on a number of factors, some of which the Trust can only influence to a limited extent.

89. The biggest risk is that no vaccine or effective medication is developed for Covid 19 and that we still have restrictions in place next March. That would mean another year of restricted numbers and the need for fundamental reappraisal of our plans.

90. The second biggest risk is coal, which will no longer be produced in the UK from 2022. Imported coal is of poorer quality and more expensive, and there is no longer a distribution network in place, with the disappearance of most major coal users. Environmental fundamentalism may also mean that younger visitors in particular may no longer be prepared to ride on trains that burn fossil fuels that are banned elsewhere. This would change the nature of the heritage railway market extensively, and could also confine steam locomotives largely to museums, again changing the way the Trust would need to think about what exhibits it presents and how.

91. Beyond these factors, the pace and nature of progress depends critically on the future availability of resources, both financial and manpower, including:

- The railway remains a functioning operation and going concern over the next two and half to 3 years,
- income being increased, in particular through implementation of the revised Fundraising Plan supported by recruitment of new Members, increased donations and legacies in order to meet our aspirations,
- the ability to write convincing bids for additional funds for specific projects,
- the number of volunteers being sustained and increased to reflect the enhanced range of activities of the Trust;
- major development costs being incurred only when resources are available or have been identified;

- carriage restoration costs or obligations only revealed by progress with restoration of individual vehicles (this should diminish as further experience is gained by the restoration team);
- other unexpected costs being contained, and in particular administration and other running costs being contained broadly at current levels; and
- grants and related expenditure such as acquisition of artefacts for the museums being determined on a basis which matches income.
- the proposed collective approach to joint working with the Association and the PLC proving successful and proportionately beneficial to all parties,
- the success of the PLC in continuing to attract increasing numbers of visitors to the railway and (with Trust support) to rebuild the railway's reputation,
- the willingness (and ability) of the Board Trustees supported by Members where required to make difficult decisions particularly around assets where there is a need to change historical perceptions and aspirations e.g. heritage carriages
- the ability to reflect safety management requirements across all relevant activities and to proactively apply not just the rules but the learning within a safety culture which is one of continuous improvement,

Evaluation and review

92. The Trustees will continue to review and roll forward this Plan annually. In particular, the Trustees will want to ensure that:

- the activities of the Trust are the most appropriate way of delivering its aims, consistent with its charitable objects;
- they represent an optimal outcome in terms of their importance to the railway,
- they are deliverable against the availability of volunteer and financial resources.

Evaluation methodologies will be developed in 2020/21 to facilitate reporting of delivery against objectives in future business plans.

Board of Trustees