

**BRITAIN’S GREAT LITTLE RAILWAYS**

**Minutes of 2023 Autumn General Meeting held at the Hastings Miniature Railway, Rock-a-Nore Rd, Hastings TN34 3DW on Tuesday 10th October**

**Railways represented**

Alexandra Park Woodlands Railway, Bentley Miniature Railway, East Herts Miniature Railway, Eastleigh Lakeside Miniature Railway, Exbury Gardens Steam Railway, Hastings Miniature Railway, South Downs Light Railway, Watford Miniature Railway.

1. **Welcome by the Chairman, Iain Dinnes**

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Dan Radcliffe and his team for hosting the meeting and welcomed all those railways that were able to attend.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Barnards Railway, Beer Heights Light Railway, Beckonscot Light Railway, Brickworks Miniature Railway, Bridge View Light Railway, Brookside Miniature Railway. Cleethorpes Coast light Railway, Crewe Heritage Centre, Echills Wood Railway, Evesham Vale Light Railway, Exmoor Steam Railway, Fairbourne Steam Railway, Fancott Miniature Railway, Ferry Meadows Railway, GLMR, Great Laxey Mine Railway, Grosvenor Park Miniature Railway, Hambleton Valley Miniature Railway, Hollycombe Steam Museum, Hotham Paek Railway, Ingfield Light Railway, Lappa Valley Railway, Littlehampton Railway, Miniature Railway Workshop, Moors Valley Railway, Museum of Power MR, Mizens Miniature Railway, North Weald & District MR, NBR Engineering, Rhyl Miniature Railway, Rileys Miniature Railway, Riverside Miniature Railway, RHDR, Rudyard Lake Railway, Sherwood Forest Railway, Scarborough North Bay Railway, Shibden Miniature Railway, South Devon Miniature Railway, Stapleford Miniature Railway, Summerfields Miniature Railway, Swanley New Barn Railway, The Lizard Light Railway, Thompson Park Miniature Railway, Whitfield Light Railway.

1. **Minutes of the 2023 Spring General Meeting**

The chairman asked the members if they had any issues with the minutes and as there were none, he then asked for the minutes to be approved. Proposed Roger Brown and seconded by Rob Hart and the resolution was carried unanimously.

1. **Matters arising from the minutes.**

None

1. **Treasurers Report**

**Outlook for the next 2 years**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Income** | **2023 rate (£35/£65)** |  | **2024 rate (£35/£70** |  | **2025 rate (£35/£75)** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Subscriptions** | **£2,825** |  | **£3,020** |  | **£3,225** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Expenditure** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Production of leaflets** | **£2,928** |  | **£3,198** |  | **£3,492** |
| **Admin** | **£246** |  | **£246** |  | **£246** |
| **Total expenditure** | **£3,174** |  | **£3,444** |  | **£3,738** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Potential loss** | **-£349** |  | **-£424** |  | **-£513** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Note: The production of leaflets for future years has been calculated on an increase of 9.2% per annum based on previous increases.** | | | | | |
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|  |

This outlook provoked much discussion on brochures and posters which I have included in the minutes under Item 10.

The conclusions from a Treasurers viewpoint were:

The 2024 subscription round should be completed by the end of December which will enable us to focus more time on optimising the brochure/poster knowing exactly which railways will be included on it. (This year one railway ended up on the brochure although they finally did not pay their subscription).

Thus a 2024 subscription form is included with these minutes. Our Treasurer asks all members to pay by BACS transfer it at all possible. (Sort Code: 09 01 54 Account No: 44041087 - Please indicate in the payment the name of your organisation). The 2024 rates are £70 if your railway is included on the brochure/poster and £35 if is not. He also requests that you fill in the form, it is in Word format so is easy to complete and email it back to him ([Roger@ehmr.org.uk](mailto:Roger@ehmr.org.uk)).

1. **Replacement of A. Corke as Director BGLR**

Dan Radcliffe volunteered to take on the role.

Proposed by Roger Brown, Seconded by Julian Chivers – passed nem con

1. **Legislative Update and HRA Update**

**HRA**

The HRA have produced a new guidance note on equality. If you want more information on its contents, please contact the Chairman.

**Coal**

It was reported that Hargreaves would be providing Welsh Steam coal only until the end of this year.

A couple of the railways present had tried New Heat Briquettes (Able Fuels Ltd - www.ablefuels .co.uk). Burns very well but very hot and could produce fire bar problems – not smokey but a little smelly. Recommended only for an emergency. Current cost £569/Ton.

1. **Request for copy for October Newsletter**

Please let Tony have any articles as soon as possible. ([dublorunner@gmail.com](mailto:dublorunner@gmail.com)

1. **Review of any safety incidents during past 6 months**

None reported.

1. **Review of 2024 Brochure/Poster**

It is obvious from the Treasurer’s report that expenditure on the brochure is BGLRs largest cost.

Discussion

* Many members stated that the present distribution of 1k per railway was excessive and that each railway should request now many they want 1000, 750, 500 or 250. Railways that did not reply to request would be allocated 250 by default.
* If the subscription round is complete by the end of December, then this information can be collated in January.
* This could result in a reduced print run and lower costs and will also enable us to obtain comparative printing costs in good time.
* Some brochures would be kept in reserve at various hubs around the country if people wanted more during the season.
* Some railways thought that the brochure was not very practical and would prefer a poster.
* It was agreed that the previous poster format needed a complete update with a much smaller map and more room for railway information.
* Addition of a QR code on the poster would send the person to the BGLR website where more information was available on the railway.
* One idea was to produce the poster in a .pdf format so that a railway could print off their own posters at the size most suitable for them. This would reduce the printing costs but the artwork would have to be paid for.
* Rob Hart to investigate the cost of the artwork for such a change.

If the subscription round can be completed by the end of December this will give us time to sort out the above. No decisions were made at the meeting due to the low attendance, but the comments will be followed up by an email to all members so that we can proceed to a conclusion of a 2024 brochure/ poster in January ready for printing and distribution in early March.

1. **Location of 2024 AGM and Spring General Meeting**

The turnout for the last 2 meetings has been pathetic despite one being held in the North and one in the South. Is this a post COVID, high travel cost phenomenon that we have to live with?

It is possible that the 2024 AGM and Spring General Meeting could be the last chance to see whether our old meeting format of like-minded individuals enjoying chatting with each other, riding on a miniature railway, collecting their brochures and attending a meeting still works. To best achieve this, we need a venue in the middle of the country to give everyone the best chance of attending. Those railways that meet this criteria should expect a phone call from our Chairman asking for a volunteer host.

**AOB**

None.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12.40