



Wensleydale Railway plc Senior Leadership Opportunity

Chairman - Volunteer position

Overview

The Chairman provides strategic leadership to the Board of Directors. With a record of robust corporate governance and astute financial stewardship, ideally gained in the rail industry, you'll define the culture and strategic direction of the Wensleydale Railway in line with the Mission and Vision statements. Guided by a keen understanding of the Railway's needs, your passion and energy will foster an engaged, collaborative and accountable management team that relentlessly champions safety, pursues the highest standards of governance and compliance, and proactively delivers the Wensleydale Railway Vision.

Our Mission

To preserve, operate and develop the Wensleydale Railway as a living, immersive heritage line that celebrates the history of rail in the Yorkshire Dales, enriches our communities, supports local tourism and provides a safe, authentic, educational and enjoyable experience for all who travel with us.

Our Vision

To advance the Railway so that it grows alongside its communities: evolving sustainably, improving its resilience and expanding its reach as opportunities arise, ensuring it remains a valued part of the region's future.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership: Leading the Board in shaping the Railway's Vision and Strategic Plan.

Governance and Oversight: Ensuring the Board functions effectively and in compliance with the WR plc's Memorandum and Articles of Association and relevant legislation.

Safety Culture: Promoting and driving a strong safety culture within the Railway, ensuring compliance with the Safety Management System (SMS), Rule Book and other health, safety and environmental regulations.

Ambassadorial Role: Acting as an important public face and advocate for the Railway, representing it to the Office of Rail & Road (ORR), government bodies, media and the wider community.

Stakeholder Engagement: Building and maintaining strong relationships with paid staff, volunteers, shareholders, external partners and funding bodies.

Management Liaison: Working closely with and supporting the General Manager, setting objectives and monitoring delivery of operational goals.

Fundraising and Business Development: Supporting efforts to secure funding, grants, and promote membership and business development opportunities, to ensure long term financial sustainability.



Skills and Experience

Leadership: Strong, inclusive leadership skills to motivate fellow directors, paid staff and the extensive volunteer workforce.

Governance Knowledge: An excellent understanding of corporate and charity governance issues.

Sector Knowledge: Knowledge of the heritage rail or wider heritage sector, including an understanding of day-to-day operations, safety frameworks and good practice.

Business Acumen: Experience in strategic planning, business management and financial oversight.

Communication: Confidence in public speaking and strong interpersonal skills to articulate a compelling vision. Project a visible presence at all levels to build effective working relationships and foster a 'one team' culture.

Integrity and Diplomacy: Personal integrity, tact and diplomacy to handle diverse stakeholders and potentially challenging or sensitive situations.

Media Skills: Training and experience including interview techniques, crisis communication and strategic messaging will be highly desirable.

Working Conditions

This is a non-executive volunteer position. Home working will be appropriate for routine business. Attendance at monthly Board meetings is expected, with participation in relevant governance or operational sub-committees as required. Site visits to depots, workshops and operating locations are encouraged to maintain oversight and engagement with teams and assets.

Remuneration

As a volunteer position, the role does not attract a salary. Reasonable expenses may be claimed for travel and incidentals actually and necessarily incurred while performing duties on behalf of the Wensleydale Railway.

How to Apply

If you have the expertise, energy and dedication to guide our remarkable Railway through its next exciting chapter, in a role that's both challenging and profoundly fulfilling, we'll welcome your application. Please submit a short résumé outlining your experience and suitability for the role, contact details and present CV to: j.trueman@wensleydalerailway.com.

Interviews will take place in person or via video call at a time to be agreed.

We look forward to hearing from you.