

Election of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Membership Trustee

Chairman

Only one nomination for the post of Chairman was received and Keith Leppard is duly elected.

Vice Chairman

Only one nomination for the post of Vice Chairman was received and Neil Glaskin is duly elected.

Membership Trustee

Only one nomination was received for the post of Membership Trustee was received and Andrew Graham is duly elected.

Their election statements are below for information.

Keith Leppard - Chairman



I am a long-standing BRPS and C&W member, volunteering there in the 1970s and again since 2018. I was part of the team that restored Hastings Brake 3687 to traffic last year and am now working on the Maunsell Restaurant Car, part of the SR Coach Group's efforts to increase the availability for traffic of our unique collection of Southern coaches; I am also that Group's Publicity Officer.

I was elected as a Trustee in June 2023 and serve on the Society's Rolling Stock Committee; I took over as its Chair in January 2026. I stepped-up to be the Society's Acting Vice Chair in June 2025. Last year, I chaired a joint BRPS/Plc working group looking into restructuring options for the railway to address long-standing problems in both our finances and our management structure. I am now leading the implementation effort for the chosen plan.

This is a very important time in our railway's history. If you entrust me with the role of Society Chair, I will work tirelessly to ensure that our railway has a bright future, which I believe must see us focus on our core strength: giving an authentic railway heritage experience to our visitors.

Neil Glaskin – Vice Chairman



I am pleased to have been nominated as Vice Chairman again, having briefly served in this role in 2022, resigning under the then Articles of Association upon my appointment as Operations Director. I was also a Trustee from 2006 until May 2019. I have worked as a volunteer since I was 14 and have undertaken many roles in the Operations and Commercial Departments and am

currently a Duty Operations Manager, Guard, Shunter and Signaller. Away from the Railway, I am a member of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport and have a career working in the public transport operator sector in both the bus industry and local authority.

Andrew Graham – Membership Secretary



I have had a connection with the Railway for over 60 years, first visiting in 1965, and my wife (who is a volunteer) and I have continued to enjoy and support it.

Joining as a volunteer in 2022 I have served as a Leading Porter at Kingscote and East Grinstead, gaining wide experience working with the public, members, staff and fellow volunteers. In 2022 I also joined the Membership Department as Deputy Assistant Secretary, carrying out member recruitment and renewals. I have helped deliver practical improvements, including a new online application process and expanded payment options, making membership administration more efficient and functional.

With a professional background in accounting, auditing and IT consultancy, I bring organisational, financial and problemsolving skills. My leisure time includes watching football, music, travel and visiting heritage railways. There are many changes both under current consideration, not least the “Change of Direction” and “Electronic Communications”, and in the future. I am keen to contribute positively to the Railway’s ongoing modernisation, supporting change that improves efficiency, delivers value for money and enhances the experience of members.

Election of Trustees

Seven nominations have been received for the four Trustee posts and so an election is necessary. The seven candidates are:

The ballot form is at the end of this booklet. Spare ballot forms will be available at the AGM for Joint Members.

Annette Courtenage-Dennis	Tim Preston
Peter Gilbert	Ben Wetherall
Jamie Hooper	Alex Widdowson
James Parker	

Members attending the AGM should bring the ballot form to the AGM to be handed in on arrival. **Please remember to bring your membership card and show it when signing in.** Members who are voting by proxy should submit their ballot form with their signed proxy form. Any ballot forms received in the post without a signed proxy form will be disregarded.

Please note that in accordance with Article 19.8, the ballot box will **close 30 minutes after the start of the Annual General Meeting.**

Trustee Election Statements

Annette Courtenage-Dennis



Employee of Plc

I have been a Trustee for 3 years now and I am grateful to all of you who voted for me. I hope I can rely on your votes this time. We still face financial challenges and as I write this, the world is becoming a more challenging place which will put even further burdens upon us and if this railway is to continue, then we need to continue to appeal to a much younger generation. If one family who comes to the ice rink, or dinosaurs or circus, sees the steam engines and then comes back, as I did with my family, they are the Railway's future volunteers, Trustees and Directors. Many of these events are drawing in large numbers of people as do our galas and it will be interesting to see how many new members have joined the Stepney and 9F clubs as a result of these events,

As the only female Trustee, at the present time, I can provide a different perspective as we face these challenging times and hopefully encourage more like minded ladies to come forward in the future. I look forward to representing you and the Railway.

Peter Gilbert



Hi I'm Peter Gilbert, I've been a member of the loco department since the late 80's as well as started to build a 5" gauge Maid of Kent Loco, due to family comments around the early 2000's myself and my family moved to sunny Spain to which I still kept up to date with on how the railway was running.

After returning back to the UK due to aging family I returned back to the fold of the Loco department and restarted my journey with-in the department and the railway. During my time away the railway has revolved into multi evented attraction for the public and enthusiasts to enjoy,

With this in mind I have made some enquires with the management about the plans to build a 71/4 railway somewhere around railway to which I've had a positive reaction and i think this attraction may open up a new avenue to new member of all ages. As I'm now retired at the ripe old age 56 I will be able to dedicate more time to loco department and railway and move the railway forward in to the future.

Jamie Hooper



Shareholder in Bluebell Railway Plc

I am a member of the BRPS, volunteer with the Northern Infrastructure gang, and a shareholder.

The Plc stated last October, after reporting a substantial loss for the year to December 31 2024, that they would need the Trust to provide further finance in the year to come. We were informed that as at September 2025, the Plc had incurred an additional loss of £564,000 for the year to December 31 2025 in addition to the losses incurred in both 2023 and 2024

I was a self-employed businessman for over 40 years and believe I can bring that experience to the Society as it moves towards amalgamation with the Plc. I raised my concerns by email to Trustees and Directors of the BRPS, Plc and Trust in November, but believe wider events since then have heightened the concerns the members should be aware of.

I write this in late-March, and it's apparent that the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, the increase in petrol/diesel prices, and possible reduced availability, may mean that budgets set over the winter may be unattainable due to reduced footfall and visitor spend. I ask you to support my nomination so that I can assist in addressing these issues.

James Parker



I am standing as Trustee to represent a fresh, grounded voice at a pivotal moment. With significant changes ahead, we must act decisively to secure a strong and sustainable future.

I began volunteering with the 9F Club and later completed an engineering apprenticeship within the railway. Working across multiple departments, I firmly believe no role is more important than another, every contribution matters.

While I may be younger than many trustees, I bring energy and modern technical expertise from my day job, helping align current operational frameworks with our traditional values. Preservation is at our heart, but we must remain a leader in safety and compliance. I have also been a Driver with Southern Railway for over a decade.

I am not an outsider, I am one of you. This railway has given me friendships and a strong sense of community, which is why I care deeply about its future.

Transparency is essential. Members deserve clear, honest, and timely communication. I will improve communication, review HOPS, and ensure the volunteer handbook supports and protects working volunteers. I will also report progress monthly, even when we fall short.

Doing nothing is no longer an option. Together, we can change direction quickly.

Tim Preston



I have been a volunteer since 1996. Much of that time has been spent in the Carriage and Wagon department, including the restoration of LSWR 1520 and more recently the setting up of the Southern Railway Coach Group. I sit on the Society's Rolling Stock Committee and was the project manager for the design and construction of Operation Undercover 3 at Sheffield Park. Projects I have been involved with have only been successful with significant input and collaboration from a wide group of volunteers and staff from across the railway. Collaboration is something I would want to focus on as a trustee.

I work as a director for a global construction consultancy business, working on major capital projects. During my career I have provided advice to the Heritage Lottery Fund and other Government agencies on grant funding investment decisions. Having recently moved to part time working, I have more time to give back to our railway.

As we change our governance structure, we need to focus on our heritage objectives to shape the way we present our railway to the wider public and other commercial opportunities. Getting this right will provide a firm foundation for our railway's future success.

Ben Wetherall



I have been a working member since 1994 in the Loco Department working up from Cleaner, making it to Driver in 2004 and since the first Diesel arrived, mixed traction Driver.

In this time I was also employed by the Permanent Way department for a season and in the early 2000s was employed in the Loco Works as a Fitter, later promoted to Leading Fitter being heavily involved in both the C Class and the E4s last overhauls.

I created and currently run the Thumper Gang, responsible for restoring the Bluebell's Oxted Unit which has grown into arguably the most active vehicle restoration group on the railway.

Professionally I currently work on the Belmond British Pullman as a Travelling Technician, carrying out routine maintenance whilst at the depot and on train engineering support when out in service.

Having seen and worked at the railway for over 30 years, I hope to bring a strong, fair and unwavering voice to the Trustees, keeping the best interests of the railway's continued existence and ethos at the forefront.

Alex Widdowson



My name is Alex Widdowson, and I have been a working member since I was aged 8 starting in the 9f club. I have also worked in the Catering and Carriage and Wagon departments, as well as being on the loco roster.

I have seen the Railway inside and out, been in the thick of it as well as from the outside looking in. I also have extensive experience of travelling to other heritage railways and making friends with the staff of those railways.

I believe I can bring a new, young and modern approach that will benefit the Bluebell, whether keeping the authentic preservation of the Bluebell, keeping our historic goals or supporting the Plc in making money from the day to day running bringing in more families to keep our railway going through these tough times, and preserving the Railway for future generations thus ensuring a bright future for the Bluebell.

BLUEBELL RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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Minutes of the 4th Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 21st June 2025 at Sheffield Park Station, commencing at 4pm.

Present: Mr Bill Brophy, Mr Charles Hudson MBE (Vice Presidents), Mr Roy Watts MBE (Chairman), Mr Gavin Bennett (Secretary), Mr Don Brewer (Membership Trustee), Mr Ian Watson (Finance Trustee), seven Trustees and 181 members. 124 proxy votes were declared.

Apologies for absence were received from 16 members. Apologies were also received from Chris Welch (Plc Finance Director) and Paul Seller (Plc Chairman) who both had prior engagements.

Welcome: The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and urged them to keep hydrated in the very warm marquee and to step outside if it became too stifling. He welcomed the Plc Directors who were present and introduced them.

In Memorium: The names of the 99 members who had died since the last AGM had been circulated beforehand, with one deletion whose death had been exaggerated (Bluebell News had been returned 'deceased') and two additions - Bob Saill and Martin Skrzetuszewski - who had both died recently. Members stood in silent memory of those who had passed.

AGM Minutes 2024: The minutes of the 3rd Annual General Meeting were amended to show the correct date for the 2nd AGM. They were proposed by Charles Hudson, seconded by Tom James and approved with three abstentions.