



# JOINT NEWS RELEASE

19 April 2017 - IMMEDIATE

## **WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY APPOINTS A NEW KEY MEMBER TO ITS SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**RICHARD Jones, currently Operations Officer at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway and a former General Manager of both the Swanage and Bodmin & Wenford heritage railways, has been appointed to the new post of Head of Operating at the West Somerset Railway (WSR).**

Richard – who has been actively involved in the heritage railway movement since 1973, and celebrates 40 years as a volunteer at the WSR this year – starts his new role from 1 June.

The newly-created role of Head of Operating completes a review of its senior management structure by the WSR plc Board, which has seen previous appointments made to similar posts with overall responsibility for Customer Services, Mechanical Engineering, Infrastructure and Finance. As Head of Operating, Richard will be responsible for providing leadership and a strategic review and overview to the work of the Operating Department, and for managing all the operational workforce of around 200, some paid staff but the majority of whom are volunteers.

### **WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY**

The Railway Station, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5BG  
Tel: 01643 704996  
E-mail: [info@wsrail.net](mailto:info@wsrail.net)

[www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk](http://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk)

### **KEIGHLEY & WORTH VALLEY RAILWAY**

The Railway Station, Haworth, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 8NJ  
Tel: 01535 645214  
E-mail: [admin@kwvr.co.uk](mailto:admin@kwvr.co.uk)

[www.kwvr.co.uk](http://www.kwvr.co.uk)

Richard, who has a strong railway background in both the heritage railway movement and on the national railway network, started as a volunteer at the (then) Dart Valley Railway in 1973, aged 13, and has been actively involved with the West Somerset Railway since 1977.

He is a former Director of both the West Somerset Railway plc and West Somerset Railway Association, and has had two spells as Editor of the *WSR Journal*, and was previously employed by the WSR as Project Manager (New Works) from 2006-08. For several years he was also the Chairman of the WSR's Special Events Planning Team, responsible for co-ordinating the team in planning and staging the hugely successful programme of galas that are a feature of the Railway's calendar. He is also a steam and diesel locomotive, and diesel multiple unit, driver on the WSR.



**RICHARD JONES**

*Photo: courtesy of Andrew P.M. Wright*

Prior to becoming a full-time railwayman – where he also served as a Driver and Guard with Virgin Trains and FM Rail – Richard spent nearly eighteen years in the teaching profession, latterly in senior management roles. As part of his current operating responsibilities at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, Richard is qualified as a Responsible Officer and Signaller.

Richard explained: “Whilst it is with some sadness that I will be leaving the KWVR, where I have thoroughly enjoyed my operations role and time there, and have made many friends, I am absolutely delighted to be joining the West Somerset Railway as its new Head of Operating. I am excited by the opportunities presented by new role, and there is much to do, but I am really looking forward to the challenge. I know the WSR well – like the KWVR, it is an excellent heritage railway with a unique and special atmosphere.”

**WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY**

The Railway Station, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5BG  
Tel: 01643 704996  
E-mail: [info@wsrail.net](mailto:info@wsrail.net)

[www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk](http://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk)

**KEIGHLEY & WORTH VALLEY RAILWAY**

The Railway Station, Haworth, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 8NJ  
Tel: 01535 645214  
E-mail: [admin@kwvr.co.uk](mailto:admin@kwvr.co.uk)

[www.kwvr.co.uk](http://www.kwvr.co.uk)

"Richard brought a wide range of skills to the KWVR, applying experience and intelligence to his role," comments Ross Graham, Chairman of the Keighley & Worth Valley Light Railway Limited. "We can understand the reasons for his departure but will be sorry to him leave. I am confident that he will prove to be a great asset to the WSR, a railway to which he has a great attachment, and we all wish him every success at the WSR."

Paul Conibeare, General Manager of the West Somerset Railway, says: "I am looking forward to Richard joining our Senior Management Team. We had a strong field of applicants for this important new role, but it was the unanimous decision of the interview panel to offer Richard the post. Given his skills and experience, we are confident he will build on the strengths of our Operating Department, and provide a robust and sustainable team to help deliver the ever-growing needs of England's Longest Heritage Railway."

End

RPJ/v3/FINAL

**WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY**

The Railway Station, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5BG

Tel: 01643 704996

E-mail: [info@wsrail.net](mailto:info@wsrail.net)

[www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk](http://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk)

**KEIGHLEY & WORTH VALLEY RAILWAY**

The Railway Station, Haworth, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 8NJ

Tel: 01535 645214

E-mail: [admin@kwvr.co.uk](mailto:admin@kwvr.co.uk)

[www.kwvr.co.uk](http://www.kwvr.co.uk)