



West Somerset Railway Association

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A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered Charity No.1041901
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WSRA News Release

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Association to remove four members

The Association Trustees have taken the regrettable decision to give notice of termination of the membership of four members for actions not conducive to the best interests of the charity.

The four members, Ken Davidge, Jeff Price, Paul Whitehouse and Robin White, have all been involved in the continuing campaign against the Trustees and Association policy, and have elevated the differences within the charity to the point where the Trustees believe they have brought the Association and the Railway into disrepute.

It should be made perfectly clear that this action has NOT been taken because the individuals concerned disagree with the policies of the Trustees; they are quite entitled to hold opposing views to the Board. However, all four have made very public statements regarding the integrity of the Trustees and their intentions and have courted the attentions of the media, whether it be the press, television or Internet forums. They have now failed to unseat the sitting Trustees on two separate occasions, costing the charity large amounts of money in advice and postal expenses, and still show no sign of ending their hostility; they are, in fact, threatening to escalate their actions. There has to come a point when this behaviour is no longer considered acceptable in the best interests of the charity, and that point has now been reached.

Speaking of the decision, Association Chairman Peter Chidzey said, "It is deeply disappointing to have to take this course of action. Though it is not unprecedented, it is very unusual to have to follow this route and one we have delayed for perhaps too long in the hope that common sense would prevail. However, the very public actions of these members in escalating disagreements into a campaign of misinformation and unfounded innuendo has reached a point where I firmly believe the Association is being brought into disrepute. All are welcome to their own views, but that does not entitle them to conduct trials by social media, aggressively canvass and harass passengers travelling on the Railway and to publicly attempt to damage the reputation of the charity.

"Their continued attacks on individual Trustees and the Board in general are prejudicial to the orderly conduct of the Association, and they are seeking to place undue pressure on the Trustees through their hostile actions. We have to remember that we are a heritage railway charity and not a political organization. We need to focus on our heritage and educational objectives and not on the relentless personality politics in which these members have for too long been indulging."

The procedure being followed for the removal of members is that laid down in the Articles and the members concerned were advised by recorded delivery post that removal will take place in 28 days' time from the date of the decision, the Board Meeting of Thursday 4th June. In this situation, there is the right for members to make representations to the Board during that 28 day period and the four individuals concerned have until Monday 6th July to make any such representations.

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