



# FUNDRAISING GROUP

## **Introducing the West Somerset Railway Fundraising Group.**

### **Introduction**

The two weekly tripartite meetings being held between representatives of the WSRA, WSR plc and WSSRT recognized a short time ago that it would be helpful to establish a group to lead on fundraising for the whole Railway. It was also recognized that leadership of the group should rest with the WSRA as recommended by the Coombes Report. The Group will aim to ensure co-operation between WS Railway family members over fundraising in the present 'matrix' WSR structure.

The Group has now met twice on succeeding Wednesdays and it is now appropriate to say something about the work of the Group to the wider WSR Family.

### **Group Remit**

Terms of Reference for the Group have been agreed. The Group is intended to have a long term existence but its first focus is to help ensure that the Railway survives the Covid-19 crisis. In early 2020 (pre-Covid) the WSR plc identified that annual investment of over £1M has to be attracted for the long-term prosperity of our Railway.

### **First tasks**

Our very first task is to sharpen and focus the Covid-19 Appeal based on the work to date. A new Appeal 'prospectus' is to be launched with updated and enhanced information from the WSR plc on what it believes it needs to survive the crisis. It is expected to feature enhanced ability to donate via the charitable bodies. Other features of the revised Appeal are expected to include a donor benefits 'ladder' as offered by many appeals, with benefits provided by the three organisations no matter which organization a donation has been made to during the Covid crisis.

### **And Then...**

We also expect to be sharpening and enhancing the 'Rail Renewal' Appeal, also based on additional information from the WSR plc, to ensure that donors can be better informed and have more connection to the project their donation will be routed towards. There is a clear connection between 'Rail Renewal' and Covid support in that funding the winter works programme will help support the Railway during the lean winter months.

We are also looking actively at co-operative ventures like using the WSR shop premises to support electronic selling of donated items.

We will also be working to remove barriers to fundraising and avoid missed opportunities for the Railway, if only by reflecting them to parent organisations. We have, for example, recommended that the WSR plc consider running public services during the summer season of 2020 where that can make a positive contribution to revenue and where that can be done without significant financial risk and consistent with the continuing easing of Covid restrictions. The Group would support the WSR plc in any such services.

Once we have re-booted the Appeal, we will be turning to the many useful fundraising suggestions which have been made to member organisations and passed on to us. Our task will be to identify those which appear to have the greatest prospect of a significant return. Expect to be asked to help!

We intend to issue regular updates about the work of the Group. The WSR plc have provided useful weekly updates of the progress of the various appeal funds to date and we understand that will continue. News about fundraising across the Railway will come from this Group.

## **The Group**

The present members of the Group are:

<b>Don Fraser</b>	WSSRT Trustee & Treasurer E-mail: <a href="mailto:don.fraser@wssrt.co.uk">don.fraser@wssrt.co.uk</a>
<b>Jacque Green</b>	WSRA Manager, Group Secretary E-mail: <a href="mailto:manager@wsra.org.uk">manager@wsra.org.uk</a>
<b>Diana Ricketts-Tanner</b>	WSRA Trustee E-mail: <a href="mailto:Diana.Ricketts-Tanner@wsra.org.uk">Diana.Ricketts-Tanner@wsra.org.uk</a>
<b>Robin White</b>	WSRA Trustee, Group Chair E-mail: <a href="mailto:robin.white@wsra.org.uk">robin.white@wsra.org.uk</a>
<b>Steve Williams</b>	WSR plc Director and WSSRT Trustee E-mail: <a href="mailto:steve@williamsemail.uk">steve@williamsemail.uk</a>

The Group will also be supported by **Kate Williams**, the professional fundraiser employed by the WSRA

The group brings substantial experience of successful charitable fundraising and grant applications and also includes experience from the 'other side of the fence' from grant-making bodies. But if YOU believe you have something to contribute, please be in contact. Members of the Group would be pleased to hear from any WSR supporters with comments, suggestions or offers of help about this vital area of WSR endeavour.

**Robin White, Fundraising Group Chair**

**26.6.20**