

WINTER WORK - HOW YOU CAN HELP...

(addendum 28/01/19)

We have now secured funding to allow a number of vital infrastructure projects to go ahead and we now need your help on the ground to prepare the line for the forthcoming season. The engineering period is already underway with our usual infrastructure workforce out working on the track, lineside, signals and structures. We hope to complete our work and hand back the line to Operations on 28th March.

If you are interested in helping with any of the following tasks please contact 01643 700400 (messaging service - leave name / number) or email leadadmin@wsrail.net

CUTTING BACK IN THE CUTTINGS

We have recently given a small group of staff training in rope work to tackle the more difficult areas of the line. We plan to run cutting back sessions at weekends starting on **Saturday 9th February** (at Washford) - **then each weekend to the end of March**. We need help clearing up the 'cuttings' in the cuttings: this work is physical but not heavy lifting; moving the brash cut from the slopes on to a fire by the line.

WASHFORD CUTTING DRAINAGE AND SLOPE REPAIR

Following a minor landslip last year and now with improved drainage at the top of the banks (courtesy of the new cycle path and many WSR staff hours), we need to make improvements to the trackside drain and repair the slope which slipped. **Starting Monday 11th February**, we plan to dig out the old drain and install a new larger drain. We also plan to install gabion baskets at the foot of the slip and these will need building and filling with stone. We have a small team of digger operators who will support this work and we will use trains to bring in materials which will need off-loading. The work is physical but not overly heavy. Work is planned for both weekdays and Saturdays.

SCRAP & TIDY TRAINS

We have run a number of rail scrap collection trains and general tidy trains already this month. We plan to continue with this again from **10th February (Norton) and 16th February (MD)** - and each weekend following this. To get involved with the tidy trains on any weekend please email sec@wsrail.net - you will need a staff ID and PTS training to take part.

WHAT ELSE ARE WE DOING?

As well as the work described above, our professional infrastructure staff and volunteers are busy carrying out track work throughout the line:

- The loading area at Bishops Lydeard is being relaid to improve the level for when we unload or load vehicles from road transport. The road surface and car park will also be improved. This has been mostly funded by WSRA.
- A set of points at the entrance to the loco shed will also have some fettling and re-timbering

- To remove sidewear from the rail gauge face we are turning or replacing rail on a number of curves. At the same time replacing broken sleepers where tie bars were previously installed.
- Although we have not been able to fund the full project, we still plan to carry out work at Blue Anchor: a new half-set of switches at the Washford end points and extensive re-timbering throughout - including re-sleepering on the up loop.
- A team will also be working along the line tackling the slurred ("wet") beds by digging them out and replacing with ballast.
- The Land Management gang will be tree felling between Bishops Lydeard and Williton ensuring overhanging limbs and dead trees are made safe or brought down.
- The Signal and Telegraph department will be carrying out work at all the signalled stations, cleaning and adjusting the mechanical systems and making improvements to electrical supplies. The Blue Anchor gates will also be overhauled.
- Avill river bridge will have work carried out to strengthen the footing on the central pier and parts of the arch will be rebuilt but specialist contractors.
- FOMS are funding repairs and painting the Minehead station canopy.
- Williton Station are funding a new cover for the old water tower well.

Some of this work listed above requires a more comprehensive induction but we welcome all volunteer support - please get in touch to organise a more detailed induction to these gangs.

VOLUNTEERING BEYOND THE WINTER WORKS

Our maintenance teams generally meet at the following times:

WEEKDAYS - Signal & Telegraph / Restoration & Maintenance / (NEW) Permanent Way (track)

WEEKENDS - S&T / Permanent Way / Cutting Back

Our greatest need is in the Permanent Way (track work) area, which is physical but hugely satisfying work. If you are considering gym membership, this is definitely a free alternative - but not all work within the gang is arduous - there are plenty of other tasks which don't require so much muscle.

For more information and job descriptions:

<https://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk/volunteer> > Infrastructure Engineering

If you are not already a member of the WSR you will need to enroll as a volunteer to help - please see the bottom of this page: <https://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk/volunteer>

Many tasks require PTS (personal track safety / half-day) course to work on the line and lineside - please contact training@wsrail.net or leave a message on 01643 700396

ADDITIONAL PERMANENT WAY (TRACK) WEEKDAY GANG

From April this year we plan to set up a new regular gang on weekdays, based at Bishops Lydeard, to look after the Norton Fitzwarren to Williton section. This gang will carry out fishplate and sleeper maintenance as well as crossing clearance and drainage clearance. If you are interested in join this gang please contact 01823 700400 (messaging service - leave name / number) or

leadadmin@wsrail.net