

## **Telford Steam Railway.**

One big development at the railway over the last twelve months was the extension to the platform at Spring Village. This took many hours of dedicated hard work by our volunteers. The newly extended platform enables Polar Express trains with 4 coaches, to get all 8 doors onto the platform, which helps our passengers disembark. Previously we could only get 5 doors onto the platform.

Platform improvement work has also been undertaken at Lawley Station.

Several weekends were spent clearing trackside vegetation which keeps encroaching on the track.

Old rail was brought to Horsehay and Dawley from Doseley, some sent for scrap and some will be re used in the future. Drainage work on the section of track between the Horsehay and Dawley Station and the footpath crossing between Pool Hill Road and Suffolk Way, will be starting in late April / May by an outside contractor. We will inform all residents either side of the trackbed that may be affected by this work.

Work was also done to refurbish the Furnaces Tearoom, the Railway House toilets and the path to the toilets in the Spring Village Yard was re laid with pavements.

The Summer season was again very busy we were open to the public every weekend from Easter to the end of September.

Another successful Polar Express Event in November and December, attracted thousands of visitors, with many very positive responses. Being able to use the Ironbridge Park and Ride site again really helped. Tickets are already selling well for this year.

We held our AGM at the Horsehay Village Hall in March 2023, which was well attended by members. Reports from the various departments were well received and 3 new directors were elected to the Board, making a board of 7.

We are most grateful to Forkers, the company who were doing the work for Severn Trent along Poolside, who used our yard as a site office, for donating a defibrillator for public use, which is attached to the outside wall of the loco shed. Included in this work was connecting our toilets to the mains.

Work on rebuilding the Horsehay and Dawley Signal Box has not yet started as we are now awaiting planning permission to proceed. We have raised some of the funding required and have enough to start building, but still require additional funds to get the project finished.

An appeal has also been launched to raise money to get the Steam Tram back working. It needs a new boiler which will cost in the region of 20k. This is the tram that runs on a circuit around our yard, but was the one that some may remember used to run in the Telford Town Park.

Another big project that is underway is the conversion of a BSO ( Brake Standard Open ) Coach into providing facilities for disabled visitors who cannot access our usual coaches. This coach has a double door and will have a ramp to make wheelchair access possible as well as refreshment facilities. This is the red and white painted coach that is often in the platform at Spring Village Station.

A successful volunteers open day was held recently which attracted several new members and volunteers. Our volunteers are usually on site on Tuesdays and Thursday daytime and evening, as well as at weekends. New volunteers always welcome.

Our flagship locomotive 5619, which has been out on hire to Llangollen Railway last summer, is back home in our loco shed, awaiting minor repairs before it can be in steam this summer.

Our programme of events for the season opened over the Easter Weekend and will run through to the end of September. We have planned the most extensive list of promotions ever, which started with the Adventures of Alice over Easter. Check our website for details.

Paul Sanderson