



Community Benefit Society (8486)

A RAILWAY OWNED BY THE COMMUNITY FOR THE COMMUNITY

Alford Valley Community Railway
Alford
AB33 8AD

TRUSTEES REPORT AGM 27th APRIL 2023

A warm welcome to the second trustees report covering the last 12 months of the Alford Valley Community Railway Ltd (AVCR).

Following last years AGM the board met early in May to discuss progress with the lease and where we stood with the builders which were due to start by the end of May 2022. Funding from Place Based Investment Program to finish the station for phases 1 and 2 was secured. Sadly with no lease in place the builders were stood down.

Work continued behind the scenes for the next couple of months to secure the lease and to obtain the license to work for phase 1 and phase 2.

With things moving in early July a promised lease date was hinted at but sadly with last minute hitches it delayed us getting the keys and access. A grant from Vattenfall was secured and this part funded the new station windows and doors.

Finally late on August 11th it was confirmed that the lease was agreed and would start on 12th August 2022 and that we could collect keys. The Trustees met at the station on the 12th for photos for the press release. Now we could finally get started on our aim to restore a much loved local attraction. We would like to thank our contacts at Marr Area Office of Aberdeenshire Council in helping us to secure the lease.



*Funded by Foundation Scotland from the
Vattenfall – Unlock our Future Fund*

By the end of August the board appointed two trustees, Karl to cover track and Neil for workshop engineering.

As a board we are lucky to have people to fill these roles who have experience within the railway world through Ferryhill and the Strathspey Railway and have great contacts.

With work about to start volunteers were sought and we have been very fortunate with the response that we now have a regular group who turn up each week and get on with the various jobs come rain, wind and snow. First tasks were to clear the station building ready for the builders and the mammoth job of clearing the track bed.

From September onwards the track bed was cleared, trees were felled and by late November the builders finally moved onsite to start phase 1 The Station building.

This required them to totally strip the building so that renovation could commence this has seen:

- new windows and doors.
- new insulation in walls and ceiling.
- complete replaster boarding of the building.
- full rewire of station and engine shed.
- new Air Source heat pump and associated heating system.
- Refurbishment of the roof of the station and engine shed.

Work is still in progress although most work is completed but the following is still outstanding:

- Refit of toilets including disabled facilities and baby changing.
- Installation of fire alarm and security system.
- CCTV.
- Repainting of outside and inside.
- Complete refit of the kitchen.
- Refurbishment of Haughton Park Terminus (new shelter, fence etc)

Late November saw the Alford Christmas Festival take place and the railway was asked to provide a coach for Santa. In order to achieve this our dedicated volunteer had to re-lay the track into the shed so that the coach and engine could be moved.



In December we were lucky to be awarded a Just Transition Grant of £50,000 for new sleepers this was after a public vote from within the Aberdeenshire area.

Over the past few months our volunteers have concentrated on track and stock to prepare both for running. New sleepers have been laid throughout the station and yard area and ballast will shortly be laid. The engine shed was cleared to enable it to be rewired and scrap metal sent for recycling.

As we look forward to the coming year it will be another busy year completing the station building, the Houghton terminus and with trains running at some point hopefully in the Summer and Santa Specials. We are also looking forward this year to taking part in Doors Open in September giving people the chance to see behind the scenes. We will be updating the business plan. Our first major step towards this goal is a visit by the Office of Rail and Road.

Can I take this opportunity on behalf of the board to say a huge thank you to each and everyone of our dedicated volunteers without you we would not be where we are today. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do.

To the local businesses for your support, whether that be giving of your time to help, feeding the volunteers, or helping in any other way to support the railway.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow board members for their continued work throughout the year despite all the obstacles we have had to deal with, there now is light at the end of the tunnel and perhaps we may see trains run later this year.

John Fincham
April 2023

Trustees and Associate members as of March 2023

Gloria Malcolm	Yvonne Buckingham	Jan Bewick	A/M
Carol Sinclair	Karl Stevens	Bob Heath	A/M
Neil Howie	John Fincham	Bob Humphrey	A/M

