



5th September 2024

Press Release from the Western Locomotive Association

Class 52 Diesel Hydraulic D1013 Western Ranger lifted for the first time in 52 years!

Saturday 31st August 2024 was a big day for the Western Locomotive Association (WLA) and for its Class 52 diesel hydraulic locomotive, D1013 Western Ranger.

For the first time in over 50 years, D1013 was lifted on the jacks at the Severn Valley Railway's Kidderminster Traction Maintenance Depot and its "B" end bogie removed – the overhaul of D1013's bogies being one of the last major tasks in the locomotives on-going major overhaul.

It is the WLA's plan to return D1013 Western Ranger to service in 2025. The locomotive has been undergoing a major long-term overhaul since being taken out of service on 10th October 2009.

D1013 entered service, in maroon livery with small yellow warning panels, following its construction in Swindon Works, nearly 62 years ago on 13th December 1962.

The locomotive saw just over 14 years of active service before being withdrawn in February 1977, when it hauled the last ever diesel hydraulic service train on BR, along with D1023 Western Fusilier, British Railway's Western Tribute Rail Tour on Saturday 26th February 1977, which ran from Paddington to Swansea to Plymouth and back.

Whilst the remainder of the fleet were withdrawn on Sunday 27th February 1977, D1013 lasted another day, being officially withdrawn on Monday, 28th February 1977, having been used the day before to shunt Polybulk wagons at Laira, and then towing D1010 Western Campaigner and D1048 Western Lady to Newton Abbot shed for safe keeping. Only when Ranger's engines were switched off outside the Newton Abbot' shed was the diesel hydraulic era on BR finally over.

The locomotive's last revenue earning service had been on Wednesday 23rd February 1977, on the mundane 6Z65 06.15 Tavistock Junction to St. Erth trip working followed by the return 6Z65 09.30 St. Erth to Hackney and the 6Z66 Hackney to Tavistock Junction.

D1013's last passenger service had been the 1A49 22.10 Penzance to Paddington as far as Plymouth on Tuesday 22nd February 1977 – the last ever timetabled Western passenger working.

During its short life, the locomotive travelled 1,320,000 miles.

(Source – Cast of Thousands, Adrian N Curtis)

cont'd/.....

The locomotive was subsequently purchased from BR by businessperson Richard Holdsworth, who negotiated an agreement with the WLA (the owners of D1062 Western Courier), to oversee and operate the locomotive. It was later purchased by Roger Smith in 1995 before eventually becoming under the ownership of the Western Locomotive Association in 2004.

D1013's last visits to Swindon Works were between 1st October 1971 and 14th January 1972 for intermediate repairs; and between 14th August 1972 and 30th November 1972 for unclassified repairs - collision damage repairs to "B" end with both ends also being repainted.

Prior to this, D1013 had visited Swindon Works between 22nd January 1970 and 3rd February 1970 for unclassified repairs and for a double bogie change, when it certainly would have been lifted.

So, its last lift may have been 52 years ago, but maybe even 54 years ago in 1970!

As D1013 now approaches the end of its overhaul and with both bogies being removed, whilst on the jacks and over the pit, some of the main tasks to be conducted are as follows:

- Draining of fuel tanks, cleaning of fuel tanks and repaint, replacement of fuel tank hoses.
- Electrical checks on large compressor plus oil and filter changes.
- Vacuum brake equipment removed, overhauled, and refitted.
- Modifications to nose end air receivers (as D1062) – remove, hydraulic test, certify & refit.
- Refit new heat exchanger to transmission hoses.
- Replace Buffer Beam Vacuum Bags at both ends.
- Remove and replace Air Brake Hoses at both ends.
- Remove drawgear at both ends, conduct NDT checks and refit.
- "A" end valences modifications.
- Rebuild of "B" end engine and Turbo.

As D1013's bogies have not been removed since BR days in 1970, a great deal of assessment and work is planned based on our experiences during work on D0162 Western Courier's Bogies.

Firstly, a thorough clean will take place, and the removal of years of muck and oil could reveal additional faults. Once cleaned, various components will be removed, the Cardan Shafts being taken out first.

Then the Thrust Brackets will be lifted out for assessment. This will lead to more cleaning as access becomes more achievable. The areas around the Thrust Pads on the Bogies will be subject to crack testing.

The Bogie will then be lifted onto blocks to allow for the removal of the Primary Suspension Springs, then yes you have guessed it, more cleaning.

cont'd/.....

This work has been in the planning for the last 12 months, with parts already being purchased. Unfortunately, the local Western supply shop, Swindon Works, closed many years ago. This means that suppliers have had to be found that can manufacture items bespoke and to exact specifications.

Parts purchased already include:

- Primary Springs
- Cardan Shafts
- Spring Hangers for the Equalising Beams
- Equalising Beam Pedestals
- Bushings

We have also allowed for the refurbishment of the Lateral Dampers and the Thrust Brackets will require attention.

As we get deeper into the work, other items are bound to be required. All the above form part of the work to replace worn out parts.

While we have access, areas such as the Underframe will get painted along with much of the Bogie itself.

Once “B” end Bogie has been completed, there is a small matter of “A” end bogie!

This part of Ranger's overhaul is one of the WLA's biggest investments in terms Working Member's time and effort as well as the cost. This however will help ensure Rangers long-term future as an operational locomotive.

The WLA is grateful to all those who have contributed towards the bogie overhaul costs, raising almost £40k through D1013's Bogie Appeal Fund. This remains open as there will be additional unexpected costs as the work proceeds.

The Bogie Appeal Fund can be found at <https://d1013bogieappeal.uk/>