

Guidance for Volunteers, Committee & Working Members

Western Locomotive Association Ltd
(Version 4.4)



Everything you need to know...



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1. Welcome!

1.1 Welcome to the Western Locomotive Association (WLA), which was formed as long ago as 1974, before the British Rail Class 52 “Western” diesel hydraulic locomotives were withdrawn from traffic! Since then, the WLA went on to become the proud owner of D1062 Western Courier, whilst looking after D1013 Western Ranger from its withdrawal date in 1977, until D1013 was finally purchased by the WLA in 2004. More recently, D1048 was gifted to the WLA in September 2023.

1.2 Looking after three former main line locomotives is a massive undertaking with limited amounts of cash and resources available. In fact, the WLA is totally reliant on support from its membership base and from its volunteers to look after not just the locomotives but also to run the WLA as a Company, not only as a registered charity but also as a business in its own right. Indeed, the success of the WLA is dependent upon support from people who have a cross-section of skills, whether it be from basic jobs such as scraping and painting metal, to understanding and dealing with complex engineering tasks relating to bogies and engines or helping out with difficult management and administrative issues.

1.3 The ongoing future of the success of the WLA will always be dependent upon the support and goodwill of its Member and Volunteers, working to the very best of abilities, in order to maintain our passion to preserve and operate what we believe to be amongst the very best locomotives in private railway preservation.

1.4 The WLA is very much aligned with the guidance offered to volunteers through the SVR’s Volunteer Staff Handbook, which provides essential basic information about being a volunteer on the SVR, setting out a code of practice on which staff-volunteer teamwork is based. Volunteering is fully inclusive, open to all, and welcomed whatever ethnicity, gender, age or disability for individuals, juniors, seniors and for families.

1.5 All WLA volunteers are expected to work as a team, working within a friendly atmosphere, where you and fellow volunteers are seen to be polite, respectful and helpful to each other, including to other people such as volunteers or members from other groups, paid staff and members of the public. Under no circumstances is there to be any excuse for discrimination, rudeness, harassment (sexual or otherwise) and unwanted physical contact. Anything contrary could jeopardize your membership.

2. Purpose of these Guidance Notes

2.1 This document forms part of our Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) Policy and the content is to help provide a basic overview and understanding of what’s required, if you wish to become a Committee or Working Member of the WLA, or to work alongside as a Volunteer. These notes should not be seen to be a complete and comprehensive guide to cover every aspect of your work.

3. Who is responsible for these Guidance Notes

3.1 The WLA's Board has overall responsibility for the content of these Guidance Notes. The Board works in conjunction with the WLA's Management Committee for overseeing the running and overall governance of the Association.

3.2 The WLA's Board assumes day-to-day responsibility for the content of this document and any questions about this policy should be referred to a Board member.

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

4.1 The Western Locomotive Association Ltd (WLA) is committed to encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion amongst our volunteer workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination, within our ESG framework.

4.2 The aim is for our volunteers to be representative of all sections of society and for each volunteer to feel respected and able to give their best.

4.3 The WLA, in providing services to the Severn Valley Railway (SVR) and its members is also committed against unlawful discrimination of any members, customers or the public.

4.4 Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is available as a separate document which can be downloaded from the WLA's website.

5. Environmental Policy

5.1 We are committed to driving down our energy and carbon impacts, as we believe that climate change is one of the greatest risks to our world. Our sustainability program is committed to environmentally sustainable initiatives that deliver near-term efficiency, value, and health for our business, our Members, Volunteers, and the wider community.

5.2 We encourage our Members and Stakeholders to reduce their impact on the environment by recommending the use of more sustainable materials, whilst promoting a paper-free office to give priority in becoming a digital-first business.

5.3 We seek to comply with current environmental legislation and work to minimise the impact of our activities on the environment.

5.4 The WLA complies with the Severn Valley Railway's legal and other requirements, relating to its operation as a Heritage Railway within the Tourist Sector. The WLA is committed to preventing pollution and continually improving its environmental performance, reducing its Carbon Footprint, whilst maintaining good relations with all regulatory bodies.

5.5 The WLA seeks ways to consistently improve human welfare through the protection of natural capital through the avoidance and reduction of pollution, involving Noise, Air, Water, Contamination of land and groundwater.

5.6 The WLA is one of the first railway preservation groups to actively support a carbon off-set plan which helps with wild forest revitalisation in the Highlands of Scotland. This forms a key part of our ESG Policy to remain carbon neutral.

5.7 Our ESG Policy sets out our approach to sustainability matters. At the heart of the Policy is an organisational culture that has sustainability at the core of all our future business operations and values.

5.8 Our Environmental Policy is available as a separate document, which can be downloaded from the WLA's website.

6. Becoming a Working Member

6.1 To become a working member, you must be a fully paid-up member of the WLA and you must also be a member of the Severn Valley Railway (SVR) for insurance purposes. You must also register with the SVR's Volunteer Liaison Office (VLO) and undertake an induction course with other members who wish to become a Working Member on the SVR.

6.2 Before working "on-site" at the SVR you MUST sign-on at one of the signing-on points, which are located at Bridgnorth MPD, Bewdley MPD & Kidderminster TMD. In all cases, you are confirming that you are fit to work, working in compliance with the SVR's rules & regulations and not under the influence of drugs and alcohol. **All safety rules must be obeyed.**

6.3 If you just wish to do just one or two days' work with an existing WLA Working Member then, that is acceptable, so long as you work under supervision. People below the age of 18 may also help as a Working Member but must be closely supervised by their responsible person and not undertake safety critical work which can only be carried out by competent, skilled people.

6.4 On occasions, it may be possible to work on WLA components from home, with permission from a Director or the Maintenance & Standards Engineer.

6.5 The **normal place of work** for Working Members will either be at our workshop facilities at Bridgnorth Motive Power Depot (Bridgnorth MPD) or at Kidderminster Traction Maintenance Depot (Kidderminster TMD).

6.6 When working at Kidderminster TMD, you will need to have an **Induction Course** to familiarise yourself with all the safety aspects unique to this purpose-built building such as open pits, cranes, emergency exits, lighting, power supplies etc.

6.7 Before undertaking any actual work, please make sure that the tasks are required with one of the regular Working Members. Please bear in mind that some aspects of work may be “work in progress” with an existing Working Member who may be acting as a “Project Manager” and therefore, do not assume that any work can be just carried out without cross-checking first. If you are not sure, please ask!

6.8 Whilst we appreciate that many of us have our own preferences for working on a particular locomotive, you must be prepared to help out on any one of our locomotives, should the need arise.

6.9 If you happen to be working alone on a locomotive or on a WLA site, then please make sure that you inform someone on the SVR that you are **working alone**, so that they can check on your safety from time to time. Unless you are specifically qualified (eg PICOS), you cannot work completely alone on any SVR site. When working on a locomotive, it is important to check if a “Not to be moved” board is required on the locomotive, preferably with your name tag attached, which must be removed once the work has been completed.

6.10 Please be prepared to follow instructions on any tasks that require specific requirements or where the Working Members need to work as a team. Under no circumstances is the authority of the person in charge of work to be disregarded or undermined. Likewise, when working as a team, then you must fully co-operate and help to the best of your ability to ensure that work can be completed safely and competently.

6.11 Any work carried out by you as a Working Member should be recorded, with a brief detail of work undertaken provided to your Project Manager. Please note that it is extremely important that any maintenance work carried out on the locomotives is recorded and signed off. A “Repairs Arising Sheet” should be completed and returned to the WLA Maintenance & Standards Engineer. Any doubt in completing or filing this form, please ask!

6.12 When working with other Working Members, you will be expected to work in a friendly and courteous manner. Please bear in mind that you will be working with people with differing backgrounds and skill sets, which helps make the WLA the success that it is today. A degree of understanding will be required to “accept people for who they are” and that not everyone will think the same way as you!

6.13 Existing Working Members must understand that new Working Members or prospective Working Members will help to secure the future of the WLA and therefore, it is absolutely essential that these Members are made to feel welcome and treated in a friendly, courteous and helpful manner.

6.14 Whatever your position within the WLA there is no room for undeserved criticism, rudeness or ridicule to another Member and if you feel that you are being victimised or bullied in any way by any individual(s), you must notify the person in charge of work and/or report the matter to a Director of the WLA, preferably in writing, outlining the circumstances. In serious circumstances, any Member may risk suspension or expulsion, if it is found that there have been instances of bullying or similar.

6.15 From time to time, there may be the need to **purchase goods or services** for the WLA. Some members may wish to purchase items themselves and claim back from the WLA. Other items may be purchased directly by the WLA or on behalf of the WLA by the SVR. For items under £1,000 the purchase must be approved in advance by at least one Director. For items over £1,000, then a purchase order form will need to be raised against a quotation, with approval of at least two Directors. For items over £5,000, the Directors would normally expect to see three alternative quotations before approval.

6.16 Payments for goods and services paid for privately by WLA Members will normally be paid for by BACS or cheque, against a valid receipt, approved by a Director. No reimbursement will be made without documentation (preferably an invoice), for expenses incurred by individuals on behalf of the WLA.

6.17 No goods or services may be ordered through or on behalf of the WLA without the approval at Director level.

6.18 Travelling, hotel, meals and refreshment expenses will normally be paid from your own account although consideration can be given by the Directors in exceptional circumstances, approved in advance.

6.19 No WLA Member may receive rewards or stand to gain any personal benefit from any supplier, without approval of the WLA Committee.

6.20 Regular Working Members are recognised by the SVR and are entitled to benefits such as free car park passes, travel passes and free tickets. However, to retain these benefits you must be seen to be a regular Working Member each year (whichever Group you work with or belong to). Where Footplate Crews are concerned, your duties are considered by the SVR to be a privilege and therefore, you must be prepared to help out with the Group or the SVR as a Working Member in general, and not just solely on the Footplate.

7. Committee Members

7.1 Should a Committee post become vacant during the year; you may agree to be co-opted on to the Committee, if you feel that you have the skills for the post and you agree.

7.2 Each Committee Member is elected to the respective post each year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), through a Proposer and a Secunder, followed by a show of hands. In theory, it would be possible to have more than one person to be put forward for any one post. Prior to the vote, you will be given the opportunity to say a few words as to why you would like to put your name forward.

7.3 Your work as a Committee Member will either take place from your home or place of work or on a WLA/SVR site. Committee Meetings are normally held three or four times a year and usually held at the SVR Kidderminster Museum or held as Zoom meetings but may take place at other locations.

7.4 Committee Members are expected to attend at least 50% of our Committee Meetings to help ensure that there is a Quorum present (so 2 out of 4 meetings at least, should be attended), and absence may be logged officially against this requirement without good reason to attend. Attendance should be by default face to face as this is the best way to conduct business, but a virtual option, (using technology if available), will be provided for those who cannot attend in person.

7.5 All Committee Members are expected to attend the AGM and provide both an electronic report to the Secretary in advance and a verbal report of their duties of the year to Members in attendance. If it is not possible to attend, you will need to let the Secretary know in advance and submit an electronic report to the Secretary, where your report will be provided to the Membership verbally, on your behalf. The AGM is normally held at the SVR Kidderminster Museum or in Central Birmingham in November of each year.

7.6 Our focus is to promote strong governance within our ESG framework, providing transparency and sound management at all levels of our organisation, ensuring resilience and long-term preservation of value for our business.

7.3 The WLA is committed to high ethical standards and executive leadership that promotes a culture of integrity.

7.5 The WLA will always endeavor to cultivate a strong stakeholder relationship through transparency, open communications, and responding to stakeholder input.

7.6 The WLA will establish clear and effective governance for business planning, incorporating ESG, set goals, establish accountability and action plans, through regular Board and Management Committee meetings.

7.7 As a WLA Committee Member you must undertake your work to the best of your ability and in circumstances where you feel that you need any help and assistance, you must be prepared to ask.

7.8 During your role of a Committee Member, you must act at all times in the best interests of the WLA and not let your position become compromised by accepting rewards or stand to gain any personal benefit from any supplier, without approval of the WLA Committee.

7.9 As a Committee Member you will need to work as part of a team and to be seen as polite and helpful as possible to other WLA Members with any aspects of your responsibilities.

7.10 When attending meetings or working with other WLA Members you will be expected to treat others with respect, to work in a friendly manner and to understand that any form of verbal abuse or unwarranted personal criticism will not be accepted or tolerated.

8. ESG and our reputation

8.1 Our Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) Policy is fundamental to our reputation as a business. Reputation is built through frequent and repeated interactions with stakeholders. When those interactions are positive, our business, and our reputation, can thrive. In an uncertain economic climate, positive reputation is one of the key drivers to long term success.

8.2 Good governance goes beyond having the right policies and procedures in place. It's about embedding compliance in our activities, understanding how regulations affect your volunteer work. This document, attempts to set out our expectations, as clearly as possible.

9. Summary

9.1 You can be assured that any positive contribution for the good of the WLA will be very much appreciated, not just by the people you work with but by the Board, Committee and the Membership as a whole.

9.2 The ultimate aim of the WLA is to ensure that all WLA Members have an enjoyable, worthwhile and rewarding experience, contributing towards our ongoing passion to achieve the very best locomotives in preservation.

Thank you!

The Western Locomotive Association Limited is the owner of D1013 Western Ranger, D1048 Western Lady and D1062 Western Courier on the Severn Valley Railway, and is a Company Limited by Guarantee Registered number 3873466
Registered office: 5 Prospect Place, Millennium Way, Pride Park, Derby, DE24 8HG

The WLA is registered as a charity under number 1115058