

**LONDON BUS PRESERVATION TRUST**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MARCH 2024**

## **REPORTS**

### **Secretary**

During the past year, the Trustees have met on four occasions and the Council of Management on six occasions. The Trustees have focussed on a long-term strategy for the museum, whilst the Council of Management has focussed on the day-to-day management of the museum. During the year, the Duty Managers have established a programme of meetings to discuss a range of matters relating to managing our many visitors. They have met three times in the year and have an ongoing schedule of meetings.

Representatives of the museum have met with representatives of Brooklands Museum at Joint Management Committee meetings on three occasions and have discussed issues of mutual concern. The Chief Executive of Brooklands Museum, Tamalie Newbery, resigned towards the end of 2023 and has been replaced by Alex Patterson. There is good reason to be confident about ongoing improving relationships between the two museums.

The museum is required to submit returns to both the Charity Commission and Companies House and these returns have been submitted in good time on all occasions.

*Peter Brown   peter.brown@londonbusmuseum.com*

### **Treasurer**

As was the case last year, I am writing this some two months ahead of the AGM, in early January, in order to meet the AGM timetable. Comments relating to 2023 finances are of necessity provisional.

The accounts for December 2022, about which I spoke at the last AGM, were duly signed off by the auditors and are available on file at Companies House and the Charity Commission. If anyone would like a paper copy, please let me know. They show a deficit after depreciation of some £7,000, which represents a cash surplus of some £40,000.

In 2023, our income and expenditure ran broadly at normal levels and in balance, except that we received two significant legacies during the year, totalling some £100,000. This provides the opportunity to finance further work on restoring and improving the collection during 2024, for which a deficit budget has been proposed to your Council of Management.

As ever, we benefit from a range of sources of income. Excluding legacies, our income broadly falls into three parts. Our share of Brooklands' entry charges to visitors continues to be about one third, with a reduction in visitor numbers counterbalanced by the rise in entry prices. Our membership continues to increase, and subscriptions plus donations accounted for over a third of total income, including about £30,000 raised so far towards the restoration of T357. Our own events, bus rides and other income makes up the balance.

Brooklands have raised membership subscriptions for 2024 and, under our agreement with them, we are required to submit to the AGM an increase, which if approved will apply from April 2024. In order to restrict the impact of the increase, we propose to improve again the discount for payment by direct debit, as now used by the great majority of members. The

following new rates are proposed (current rates in brackets), including a new category for one adult and up to three children:

	Single	Double	Family (1+3)	Family (2+3)
Full price	£47 (£44)	£71 (£66)	£77	£93 (£88)
Direct debit	£42 (£40)	£64 (£60)	£70	£84 (£80)

No increase is proposed to Young Person's membership.

Overall, I'm pleased to report that our finances remain in good shape. This fortunate position is entirely due to the amazing contribution made by our volunteers – over 6,500 person-days during 2023. Thank you all.

*Peter Osborn Treasurer@LondonBusMuseum.com*

## **Curatorial**

In the past year, the team have continued to record objects on our Accession Register to meet accreditation rules. Our endeavours have made significant inroads to the outstanding backlog of unsorted and unrecorded material. We expect to complete the recording within the next year.

Several members of the team have either left us or retired but we have fortunately recruited new members. Principal collections of slides and photographs are being recorded at pace including an arrangement with an outside contractor who will digitise the collection of slides at no cost to the museum. We allow them to sell copies of the slides against royalties.

We remain open for new donations although all potential donors are advised that our archives are full and that their objects are placed with the second-hand stall. Only unique, heritage, exceptional items will be considered for the collections. Naturally, we encourage potential donors to discuss with us their proposal before bringing objects to the museum.

As many members will know and have seen, the museum has benefitted from new display cabinets built by a member of the workshop team. They are magnificent. One cabinet is dedicated to objects from members who wish to exhibit objects from their personal collection to a wider audience. If you would like to participate in the initiative then please contact the chairman with details of your objects.

The team is led by Phil Palmer who took over from Ray Thorn who stood down from the role on 1<sup>st</sup> January due to health issues.

*Raymond Thorn ray.thorn@londonbusmuseum.com*

## **Education**

Children and education continue to be important part of the activities of the London Bus Museum. We can all learn from the decisions and developments of the past and young people today have a particular interest in saving our planet by using public services instead of private cars. Education is also an important part of the Accreditation for the museum.

We see about 20,000 children each year and most of these come in groups from schools. Frequently we can see 80 to 100 children per day coming to the bus museum during term

time. We have a lot to offer and the enthusiasm generated from a school visit frequently results in families visiting the bus museum at a later date. Where possible, our stewards provide a guided tour for school groups and this can make sure they cover all the interest points relevant to the studies of the children.

The Childrens' area is very popular and many of our young visitors come again and again specifically to enjoy this facility. The occasional trails that we offer, the specimen bus tickets and the free badges are much appreciated. In fact, I am told that our children's activities are better than those provided by other museums and this feedback is great. Children also appreciate going on a bus and this is even better if they can enjoy a bus ride with their families at a later date.

Reception and Early Age children find it difficult to come to the Bus Museum by coach and so 5 or 6 times a year, we take a bus to local schools for a small fee to cover our costs. Many of the children have never been on a bus let alone a double decker. We now have schools we go to on a regular basis.

One area I have been working on recently is to receive people with autism on work experience. Each person with this spectrum is different so I seek to provide individual support although this is on an occasional basis and not every day due to staffing issues. I have a Church DBS check which is registered on the Update Service and this is helpful to those who wish to come to the museum with support issues.

Our relationship with the Brooklands Museum education and engagement department continues to be good. Laura Barclay, the Learning and Engagement Officer, has now moved on to another job but her place has been ably taken by Annette Hetherington who is very supportive of us and provides me with regular information as to who is visiting the bus museum and when.

Brooklands Museum have an annual STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) day in the Autumn and we were again able to host the workshop provided by Balfour Beatty in our Boardroom and they ran their robotic dog up and down our staircase as part of this. STEM is a key part of the National Curriculum for teenagers and the STEM days are designed to help young people choose their study option and careers for the future.

I continue as the Safeguarding Office for the London Bus Museum and now attend the Brooklands Museum Safeguarding meetings and have done their training. There have not been any major issues regarding Safeguarding over the last year but we are all keeping our eyes open in case any situations arise. At the end of the day, we make sure that we are not left on our own with children and vulnerable people as they are the responsibility of parents, guardians, teachers and carers who come with them.

The Donated Items stall continues to do well and we have made about £15,000 in clear profit this year. Many thanks to Melvin Phillips who heads up this work and spends a lot of time collecting and sorting out donations. He also arranges many sales through Ebay and Transport Auctions of London (Michael Wickham) who can obtain good prices for valuable memorabilia

items. I have to say that, as we are all getting older, the movement of heavy books is becoming a problem for the team and extra help is always appreciated.

Paul Raven-Hill continues to provide talks on behalf of the museum and this is done on Zoom and in person.

*Bob Bailey     bob.bailey@londonbusmuseum.com*

## **Rolling Stock**

The workshop itself has been transformed and has at last neared the great intentions of 12 years ago when we moved from the relative chaos of Redhill Rd to a purpose-built section of the Museum. Through several iterations, and with the assistance of many under Tony Bentley's direction, we now have distinct and laid out areas covering the many aspects that the workshop volunteers undertake. Service and repair bays, woodworking and metalworking shops together with material storage. It would be great were it 50% bigger and, if it were, then it would be great if it were 50% bigger etc.

Whilst we have lost a few volunteers as age takes its toll, we have gained many more and as such we have even been able to move further ahead than we expected. Earlier this year (2023) we were hit hard when Workshop Manager Owen Wright was laid low for a number of months and thereby rendered difficulties in our inspections and servicing of vehicles. The assistance of Falcon Coaches through Trustee Richard Telling together with Volunteers Dave Simmons, Andy Kaufman, John Gray and Simon Greatwood ensured that not a single required bus use had to be cancelled. Owen is back with us now but on enforced light duties.

Vehicle wise T448 is now really looking the part and 2024 will see it "on the road" in Post War Country Bus Lincoln Green and Broken White. The rebuilt AEC 7.7L engine, now fully overhauled, will be reunited with the body/chassis shortly.

Behind T448 the horse bus overhaul progresses well, although delayed whilst Alan Gaskell has built and fitted out the mezzanine display cabinets. Meanwhile, contrary to some thoughts, NS174 has not remained untouched. Much work has been undertaken to provide carburation and the magneto ignition, whilst a bonnet has also been fabricated. The remainder of the seats have been manufactured and the time for internal painting and Rexine approaches.

My job would just not be possible without host of volunteers and their myriad skills. It's certainly not just fitters, mechanics, wood and metalworkers, bodywork preparation specialists, but electricians, electronic experts, driver, shunters, storeman and even cleaners who are working tirelessly behind scenes at not just LBM, but at our outstations of storage.

To all them and all at the other Museum departments a massive "Thank you" for making it happen.

*Roger Stagg     Roger.stagg@Londonbusmuseum.com*

## **Facilities**

May I firstly introduce myself as having taken the responsibility from Gerry Job (Operations) as the position of Facilities Manager.

The progress within the museum through the year has been steady with bringing equipment and services into play.

The high bay lighting has been introduced and that is ongoing which will help with our ongoing energy bills.

There have been many issues re the heating plant within the workshop and dehumidifier these are now working but require ongoing service contracts.

We have had issues with the Cubic gate (exit gate) which, with a close relationship with Cubic, has now resolved the issues and is now being monitored.

The condition of the building fabric is still being monitored. However, some new leaks have been noted.

A wicket gate has now been installed in the workshop roller shutter. This is to help to maintain the heat within the workshop hence reducing the heating cost.

*Ian Reddick Ian.reddick@londonbusmuseum.com*

### **Managing Director LBM**

We have had a very good year's trading although with slightly reduced sales due to the lower footfall since the post Covid boost.

The release of Bachmann, formerly EFE, Cravens RT models made December sales, particularly on the Internet, usefully buoyant and these are selling out fast with only 500 of each version produced.

Thanks as always to the Shop Team for all their efforts throughout the year and also our front of house stewards as counter staff.

*Gerry Job Gerry.job@londonbusmuseum.com*

### **Volunteer Coordination**

- 8 New volunteers during 2023
- 1 inactive due to other commitments
- 3 volunteers retired/withdrew

Currently 167 volunteers

*John Owens John.Owens@LondonBusMuseum.com*

### **Marketing**

#### **Events**

- Spring Gathering 2023 attracted around 2200 visitors. There were 103 vehicles including T357 which arrived on a low-loader and was positioned in prime position in front of the Paddock suitably barriered off to launch the crowd fundraising for the vehicle's preservation. Queues formed at the entrance causing us to open the Event earlier than planned. As with the other Events, Adrian Palmer, Paul Raven-Hill and Simon Douglas Lane were central to the acceptance and positioning of vehicles. In all there were 43 traders on site, the majority in the Traders' Market Marquee. Much was

made of T357 to the extent that a 12, rather than an 8-page Event Programme, was produced.

- Summer Festival displayed 63 vehicles and had 1300 visitors. Attendance was not helped once again by rail disruptions as well as particularly high temperatures. Mr Whippy reported good sales but apparently the higher the temperature, the fewer the sales. There were fewer traders as there was no Marquee provided.
- The weather for TransportFest 2023 was a transformation, with blue skies and glorious sunshine replacing the flooding of 2022. The fine weather brought out 1,897 visitors and a display of over 100 vehicles. Central to the display were 9 Guy Special buses lined up for the first time in years in celebrations of their 70 years anniversary. 5 Breakdown Tenders headed a grand parade of 5 heavy duty service vehicles.
- Three Running Days, expertly organised by Peter Osborn, were held prior to our main events in March (Route 175), June (Route 65) and in September (Route 38) with local media informed and covered by Press Releases and interviews on BBC Surrey, Spring Gathering being mentioned in a news report. Running Days are now entitled Heritage Bus Operations as the Route 38 event was in association with Heritage Week.
- The now well established “Bus-about” at Elmsleigh Shopping Centre in Staines was held on 1st April. RT3491 attended along with Simon Douglas Lane, Graham Hayward, Colin Read and Paul Raven-Hill. In a reciprocal arrangement the digital displays within the Centre showed advertisements for LBM.
- The Chairperson of the *Fédération Internationale Véhicules Anciens (FIVA)*, a worldwide organisation dedicated to the protection, preservation and promotion of historic vehicles, established in 1966 and active in more than 80 countries. The visitors were suitably impressed by LBM.
- Graham Lunn has worked as Traders’ Manager for very many years, inviting and organising traders to all our Events but sadly he retired at TransportFest and will be greatly missed.

## **Marketing**

- A new wooden display A1 poster frame replaced a somewhat dilapidated one at the Main Entrance to Brooklands Museum which is more in keeping with those used by Brooklands. Based on the original “Welcome to LBM” and “Goodbye from LBM” designs and a further “Goodbye” was placed outside LBM.
- Eight half page, A5 Landscape advertisements appeared in *Buses* magazine over the year featuring the LBM Events and the Museum’s Shillibeer Place Shop.
- 15,000 Three Event Flyers were distributed over the year to the media whilst Colin Read and his helpers including Adrian Palmer and Peter Milner, distributed them further afield in reciprocal arrangements with other museums and societies. A2 poster versions of the Flyers were displayed in LBM in A-frames.
- 2,000 copies of A5 leaflet posters were printed for each of our three Events. Designed by David Bowker.

- In keeping with the intention of using Running Days to promote LBM and our special Events, 2,000 A5 Portrait leaflets and 2, A2 posters for each Running Day, were produced. David Bowker designed the leaflets.
- Brooklands arranged for 8 internet influencers to visit the site during the summer schools' half term. LBM contributed to the entrance fees but none of the eight made their presence known at LBM. However, a Podcaster did attend the Museum at another time and posted a very positive video of LBM on YouTube alongside other videos of our museum.
- A photographic opportunity was set up in response to a request from a photographer/journalist from *The Daily Telegraph*. Asked to provide 3 Routemasters being prepared for an event, we were able to provide an RM, RLH and an RT parked in staggered formation with Jim Eades acting as bus cleaner atop a flight of steps, mop in hand. The result was published two weeks later, a quarto sized colour picture with accompanying caption commenting on three Routemasters being prepared.
- The one millionth visitor stepped across the Museum's threshold at approximately 10.45 on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April at Spring Gathering. A variety of gifts were presented along with a family membership for a year.
- LBM was invited to be involved in promotional filming for Brooklands by providing an open platform bus with conductor in uniform. Grahame Bath starred as both driver and conductor and the resultant film shown on digital displays but more importantly, in local cinemas.
- The badges handed out to children remain a firm favourite with visiting families and include two seasonal variations and two Treasure Trails keep the children involved. Further Christmas Lights displays were set up for 2023 bringing smiles to visitors as well as the installers and the driver of RM140.

*Deryck Fill*     [deryck.fill@londonbusmuseum.com](mailto:deryck.fill@londonbusmuseum.com)

## **Fundraising**

Three projects were in hand this year, namely T357, and applications to the Arts Council for digitising our considerable collection of photographs and separately our increasingly fragile collection of Engineering Drawings.

The T357 restoration project was launched at Spring Gathering in April 2023 and at the end of 2023, funds raised total just under £32,000 which is a magnificent effort: crowdfunding, a donation hub by the bus in the modern hall, the 1400 bus ride with special tickets and generous donations from members and interested parties alike have all helped: the total projected cost is £350,000 with the Museum raising £175,000 (including £30,000 from reserves) for our application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a match funded sum of £175,000: I would like to have at least £85,000 raised before I apply to the HLF, but we can and will manage this, even in times of national financial difficulties. By the time the AGM occurs I hope to be able to update the project total: my thanks to all who have donated, and for the T357 project team for all their hard work: T357 was the project the membership had at the top of the list so let's make it a reality!

## DIGITISING OUR PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

We were unable to meet the one year time limit criteria for this fund so the Trust is kindly funding this.

## DIGITISING OUR ENGINEERING DRAWINGS COLLECTION

This is an application to the Arts Council for around £7,000 to have our Engineering Drawings available on line for research and general interest purposes: our South East Museums Development adviser changed twice and so that has delayed things a bit but at the beginning of 2024 the small fundraising team of David Harman, Richard and Mia Hastings and yours truly met to finalise our application with advice from our current SEMD adviser and again I may have news by the time the AGM takes place. The application process is complicated and frustrating and basically, too many applications and not enough money!

## Social Secretary

Bearing in mind the time scale, a most successful Volunteers' Lunch with over 100 present took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and my thanks to Sharon Burton and her team for the excellent food and drink (temperance!) provided. By the time the AGM takes place the annual New Year Lunch at Silvermere will have taken place on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The canteen is provisioned weekly and I am amazed at the prodigious consumption of biscuits: my local Tesco's gaze at my trolley!: thank you to Sharon and Steve Edmonds who cover for me when I am away and to Ian Reddick for dealing with coffee and tea provision.

*Simon Douglas Lane* [vehicle.entries@londonbusmuseum.com](mailto:vehicle.entries@londonbusmuseum.com)

## Membership

Membership has remained buoyant despite economic headwinds and exceeded 1,000 for the first time in 2023. Present total is 1,023 (962 in 2022, 886 in 2021). Besides the traditional enthusiasts, there is a welcome increase in Double and Family memberships, reflecting the more general appeal of LBM (and Brooklands) as a good-value day-out if you make two or more visits per year. Bonuses include the quarterly *LBM Magazine*, *LBM E-News* and *Friends of the Classic London Buses Newsletter*, shop discounts etc.

A regular complaint from members concerns non-receipt of a new membership card. Memberships become due for renewal **monthly**, but new cards are mailed **quarterly** with the *LBM Magazine* to save on the significant postal cost of sending them separately for 8 of the 12 months. Thus, two-thirds of every quarter's renewals are sent in advance of the actual renewal date to ensure continuing members always have a current card. Cards are "pop-outs" from the letter accompanying the Magazine. **Please check** that letter before recycling it with the envelope as it **may** include your membership card pop-out!

A second concerns not receiving *LBM Magazine*, *E-News*, *Friends of the Classic London Buses Newsletter*, etc. The usual cause is that we do not have your current postal and/or email address. Please check and if we don't, an email to [membership@londonbusmuseum.com](mailto:membership@londonbusmuseum.com) or letter to the Museum, will rectify matters.

Finally, the Members' Area of the website ([www.londonbusmuseum.com](http://www.londonbusmuseum.com)) contains an increasing range of material for members: the AGM papers etc.; many back issues of successive Cobham Bus Museum / London Bus Museum newsletters and magazines, all kindly scanned-in by Dave Jones (can you fill any gaps?); back issues of *LBM E-News*, *NARTM Newslink* are also downloadable. A Members' Diary lists all events at the Museum, plus Running Days, Open Days etc. in and around London, and there are details of Members' trips and shop discounts. To access the Members' Area, your username is your membership number, and password is your postcode in lower case with no spaces. Contact [membership@londonbusmuseum.com](mailto:membership@londonbusmuseum.com) in case of difficulties with this.

David Harman [membership@londonbusmuseum.com](mailto:membership@londonbusmuseum.com)

## Information Services

2023 saw significant steps taken to improve LBM's Information Services infrastructure although members, volunteers and visitors will have noticed few if any visible signs of this.

At the start of the year, the broadband connection was so slow as to make the internet unusable at times. Wi-Fi connectivity varied from just about acceptable to poor / non-existent depending on location around LBM. The router-based firewall provided limited protection against cyber-attacks.

Three improvements have been made:

1. After evaluating various options, a private circuit (fibre) connection was selected as the most cost-effective. This was commissioned in August with help and co-operation from Ian Reddick and Brooklands. Capacity is easily expandable should demand require.
2. A mesh Wi-Fi system has been installed to improve access to the connection.
3. A hardware firewall has been installed to provide robust, real-time defence against cyber-attacks.

Improved external and internal connectivity combined now supports reliable, secure high-speed internet connections in and around LBM and has, for example, made card verification via the new card payment terminals and the T357 donation terminal almost instantaneous.

The LBM website has been steadily rationalised and content reviewed and updated. Visitor and page counts have steadily increased, with the Heritage Event Days and Special Event pages attracting record numbers of visitors to the website - and we hope to the events themselves.

2020	96,157 page-views	29,392 unique visitors
2021	227,784 page-views	66,507 unique visitors
2022	228,514 page-views	70,722 unique visitors
2023	264,129 page-views	88,756 unique visitors

As with all websites, the LBM site is a 'work in progress' and the programme of work will continue in 2024.

For 2024, this improved infrastructure will support and facilitate moving to a mainly cloud-based Information Services architecture possible, and Aaliah Haq, our new IT Trustee is providing valuable assistance with this. Key features include:

1. Centralised storage and back-up of LBM data in place of storage on personal devices
2. Device / location-independent access to LBM data to facilitate efficient volunteer working.
3. Shared email platform to improve communication within the volunteer team.
4. Enhanced data security / privacy measures to ensure LBM remains compliant with all relevant legislation.
5. Voice telephone lines to begin using the fibre connection to save money and provide better facilities.

*David Harman membership@londonbusmuseum.com*