

NARTM Newslink

The magazine of the National Association of Road Transport Museums

Issue 116 – November 2022



Coventry Collection...

NARTM Chairman's Corner

Dennis Talbot

As I write this column we have just held the 2022 AGM and Conference, disappointingly entirely using Zoom, but it was still a good meeting – it appeared that way from the chair anyhow. 31 member organisations attended, representing almost 40 member organisations and we had some good discussions. Along the way some of us learned how useful the 'raised hand' feature on Zoom is – clicking that button moves your picture to the top left of all the faces on the screen and shows a yellow hand so the chairman can easily see who wants to make a point next. Please take the time to read through the minutes.

Of course the plan had been to have an in person meeting at the excellent Acton Depot of the London Transport Museum, just as we used to do before all the lockdowns. However, although Covid is less of a concern the series of rail strikes, including one planned for the day of the meeting, lead to our decision to move the meeting online. Current plans are to meet at Acton in early March 2023, but that will be confirmed in the January edition of Newslink. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the rail strikes are there can be little doubt that they are damaging public confidence in rail travel and at a time when demand was starting to build after the pandemic. Bus and tram passenger numbers are also still down compared to pre-Covid levels though there are reports of passengers being unable to get on full buses on the guided busway that runs not far from our house; that was a common situation up to early 2020.

We obviously discussed the Neil Millington legacy in the meeting and I read out a message of appreciation from Philip Kirk of The Bus Archive following our donation of £50,000 to their appeal. We also had some progress to report following initial talks with the Heritage Skills Academy who run courses for over 100 apprentices who are learning skills relevant to heritage vehicles. These vehicles are mostly cars at present and many of the skills learnt will be transferable to our larger vehicles; in addition we hope to be able to include some specific training in due course.

Reading through the magazines sent by members across the country (thank you!) there are common themes that visitor numbers to museums are at least equal to 2019 numbers and in several cases ahead. Reports of events held during the summer almost all note 'Most successful ever', and 'Long queues for our bus services', all of which is very encouraging. We touched on this during the Conference and most members had observed an increase in visits by family groups which is also welcome.

However, at the end of the Conference I felt I should sound a cautionary note. We see every day on the news that the economy is not in great shape and that we are facing a 'cost

Front cover: Coventry 334 CRW (Daimler CVG6), GKV 94 (Daimler CVA6), EKV 996 (Daimler CWA6) and EVC 244 (Daimler COG5) at Yardley Wood Bus Garage in 2021 (Roger Burdett).

of living crisis'. The effect of this on all of us is that our costs will rise – fuel, energy, food, property costs are all likely to go up, while we may see a reduction in visitor numbers if people find they have less disposable income. That means it is a good time to look again at your budgets and monitor income and expenditure carefully. If after doing those checks you find that all is well, then carry on improving your buildings and museums and keep restoration projects moving forward. If you think that cash flow may be adversely affected for a while then maybe now is the time to be a little less ambitious in the interests of long term survival. I hope I am wrong, but if this makes a few people take another look how the money comes in and goes out then it was worth writing the paragraph.

Business Rates are an area of cost which will almost certainly increase next year as we have all seen reduced rates bills in the last three rating years and are currently paying 50% of the full amount due. There is another revaluation due as well and we understand that the new Rateable Values will be announced before the end of the year. You may also have seen that a few museums have been very successful in entering claims and achieving significant savings on their rates bills. The principle used is that museums are often valued on the basis of the size of their buildings but the case was made that the turnover of a museum is often much lower for a given size of building than it would be if that building was in industrial use. This led to the museums concerned seeing much lower rates bills. Whether this principle will be applied to all museums remains to be seen. You may well be contacted by firms who will offer to enter a claim on your behalf on a no win no fee basis, but be aware if the action is successful the firm will take a substantial percentage as their fee, although of course you would still end up with a lower cost.

On the same day as our AGM, the Roads and Road Transport History Association, a NARTM member since 2020, held an Extraordinary General Meeting. Sadly the main item on their agenda was to wind up the Association. Fewer people have been willing to help run the Association and given the dwindling and ageing membership it was decided it could not continue. Attempts to promote the Association drew a response to the effect that it was 'not relevant', which is a great shame as they had carried out a lot of useful research and produced the large book 'The Companion to Road Passenger Transport History', which we have offered to NARTM members in the past.

This is a warning to us all of the need to draw in new and younger people to help run NARTM and our individual member organisations and also that we must ensure that we are all relevant to the public. News above of increased visitor numbers and interest in our projects suggest that we are relevant and of interest, but we need to be aware of what might happen. It was good to hear at our conference of four new teenage members now working at The Trolleybus Museum and others can tell similar stories. It was also noticeable how much interest there was in our recent '80s Flashback' in Manchester compared to themed events in recent years which have focussed on past operators or earlier decades. And even the 1980s is around 40 years ago!

This is the last Newslink of 2022 so while it is early, on behalf of your Committee, I will wish you all a Happy Christmas and all good wishes for 2023.

NARTM Members Focus



North West Museum of Road Transport

The North West Museum of Road Transport has its roots in the 1960s when a group of local enthusiasts formed the St Helens Transport and Trolleybus Society (STATS), to preserve one of the former St Helens trolleybuses then in service in Bradford. Having obtained the trolleybus, no. 387, it needed a home and space was rented in an aircraft hangar at RAF Burtonwood Airbase near Warrington. With this accommodation, STATS was able to acquire further vehicles, and other large vehicle owners joined the group during the 1970s with buses and coaches, commercial vehicles and even trams. Quite a large and varied collection of vehicles was amassed, and some of these remain in the museum today. To manage this collection, the North West Museum of Transport Limited was incorporated in 1982, and this is the charitable company that runs the museum today.

Due to its location within the Airbase, the hangar was not ideal for the public to view the vehicles and the long-term plan was to have a museum that would be accessible and open to the public. Matters came to a head in 1986 when notice was given to quit, so new premises had to be found.

Fortunately the former St Helens Corporation tram and bus depot at Hall Street in St Helens town centre was vacant. The previous occupiers, Merseyside PTE, had transferred all remaining maintenance operations to their depot at Jackson Street in 1984. The company took a lease on the premises from owners St Helens Council in 1986, and the Burtonwood collection was moved in. The depot became the St Helens Transport Museum and was at last open to the public. With a large number of St Helens Corporation buses in the collection it seemed very appropriate for them to return home!

The depot comprised the original but much extended tram, trolleybus and bus depot dating from 1899, and an adjoining workshop building with walk-in pits, stores and machinery as it had been left by the PTE. The overall area of the building is just over 5000 square metres (1.25 acres) so there



was plenty of space and facilities for maintenance and restoration.

On moving in, the condition of the depot was far from ideal. The age of the building, the lack of maintenance during the period of disuse and the theft of lead from the roof gave the museum members a lot of work in trying to stem further deterioration. Eventually the state of the roof caused the museum to be closed to the public in 1996, although the collection was still housed there with limited access. Efforts were made to source funds for repairs and eventually, with considerable help from St Helens Council, grants were obtained from several sources to allow what is now the display hall to be completely renovated and re-roofed. The refurbishment started in 2005 and while this was going on, the building had to be cleared and alternative accommodation was found for the vehicles. Unfortunately it was necessary at this time for a number of museum-owned vehicles to leave the collection for new homes, but this did enable some of these to be fully restored elsewhere. That left a viable core of about 30 museum-owned vehicles. The rest of the vehicle collection was (and is) owned privately, and accommodation charges for these remains a major source of income.

With renovations completed and the display hall transformed, the museum was reopened to the public in 2006 as the North West Museum of Road Transport. In addition to regular weekend opening, special events have been held, featuring bus running days, motorbike gatherings, car shows etc., and events aimed at family groups at Easter and Christmas. We even hosted a couple of beer festivals years ago!

The museum is also home to the Rainhill Model Railway Club, and their clubrooms are located at the back of the museum. They joined us about ten years ago. The members of the club are also members of the museum, and there is a good relationship between the two groups. The club takes an active part in our special events by demonstrating their railway layouts to visitors, and the museum provides a free bus to their public exhibitions at Rainhill.

Covid-19 caused the museum to close while the various restrictions were in place but, thanks to a series of local support grants, the loss of visitor income was mitigated. The museum reopened in May 2021, but only on Sundays as there were fewer volunteers available to staff the museum. Despite being open only once a week, visitor numbers have



been greater than before the pandemic, and this has been maintained. To attract more visitors and provide an experience of travel on a vintage vehicle, a free bus service runs each Sunday giving short rides. The programme of special events bounced back with a Summer Family Fun Day, with fairground rides, kids activities, craft stalls and free bus rides, and this was highly successful in bringing in large numbers of visitors. The format was repeated for a Christmas weekend event and at Easter this year. Car shows and bus running days are also popular. We find that visitors are mainly family groups with children, and our displays are being adapted to suit their interests and provide interpretation and interaction. School visits are looked after by a dedicated team.

The museum is operated by a group of volunteer members. Since the pandemic, the number of active members has reduced, but new members are joining and getting involved. Some recently-joined volunteers are bringing their experience in skills such as marketing and IT, which is very welcome.

Being located in St Helens town centre, the museum is easily reached by public transport. We are one of the few visitor attractions in St Helens and make our contribution to the local visitor economy networking groups.

There are over 100 vehicles in the museum, of which 36 are owned by the Company. Although the majority are buses, the collection also consists of fire appliances, lorries and light commercials, cars, motorcycles and pedal cycles. Electric traction is represented by a milk float, a modern battery Tecnobus minibus once used in St Helens, a Blackpool tram and the St Helens trolleybus that started the museum project all those years ago, on loan from Sandtoft. The collection also includes the last Leyland Lynx, and a Maltese bus converted to a glamper and owned by a local celebrity which featured in a recent TV series! There is no official collecting policy, but the main aim has been to represent buses that operated in the North West of England and North Wales. Cars and other vehicles are represented on merit and potential interest to visitors.

Several restoration projects that have been completed on the museum's buses in past years include Salford City Transport AEC Reliance 109, Warrington Corporation PD2 no. 50, a pair of Widnes Corporation PD2s and Leyland National no. 1 (recently reactivated for 50 years of the Leyland National), Chester Corporation Guy Arab 47 (the last one built) and Chester City Transport Dennis Dominator 99. Although no major projects are in progress at present, several vehicles have been improved with repaints and interior renovations. Restoration work on private vehicles at the museum has also been carried out by their owners.



NARTM News and Information

News and information, from the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs and the Association of Independent Museums.

Thanks as ever to Joyce and Paul Jefford for supplying a regular news feed of useful items from the above organisations.



Steps to Sustainability applications open

AIM is pleased to be working with Social Enterprise Academy on the third round of Steps to Sustainability. Funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund, the programme will help your organisation to be ambitious, forward-thinking and deliver exciting new projects.

The programme is open to small to medium heritage organisations in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland who have an income-generating idea that is not yet fully formed and need the resources and support the Steps to Sustainability programme offers to pursue this idea.

NCVO governance self-assessment checklist

The governance wheel from NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) is a simple tool that helps boards of voluntary organisations quickly get a sense of how well they're functioning and fulfilling their roles. The governance wheel links to the Charity Governance Code and can be used as a starting point for reviews based on the Code.

New Success Guides

Three new Success Guides have been published on the AIM website:

Setting up a new museum - aimed at those thinking about setting up a new UK museum. It's structured around the AIM Hallmarks, an excellent checklist to plan your development.

Museum Displays and Interpretation - take a strategic approach to interpretation. Even if you're only planning one display or exhibition, you need to consider how it fits into the rest of the museum, how it will communicate with your audiences and what story you want to tell.

Fundraising - intended to help small and medium-sized museums to fundraise as successfully as possible and aimed at anyone working in a museum, whether staff or volunteer, since there is a role for everyone in the fundraising process.

More news from AIM and other organisations is available on our website under Preservation News

Print deadline for next issue: 12 January 2023

FBHVC News

DVLA Ian Edmunds

We are pleased to be able to report positively on the continuing recovery by DVLA from the difficulties and backlogs of the pandemic.

Now with additional leased premises both in Swansea and in Birmingham plus the recruitment of significant numbers of new staff at these sites their turnaround times on most of the paper transactions are back to pre-pandemic levels. There are no significant backlogs remaining. By way of confirmation of this encouraging news our Chairman tells me that a recent application for the renewal of his driving license including C1 entitlement was returned within 12 days.

Understandably when sending important and potentially irreplaceable documents to DVLA in Swansea many people make use of a Royal Mail 'signed for' mail service. As normality returns I have been able to obtain a definitive comment from DVLA. They are very clear – "sending important documents using Royal Mail's 'Signed For 1st Class' service should allow us to track receipt of the application at the Agency".

There is another important point to be made regarding DVLA mail operations. Even with the undoubted success of their digital services they still receive a colossal volume of physical mail, some 80,000 items per day on average! To assist with the sorting and distribution of this there are over 40 different post codes for their various driver and vehicle services. A list of those most applicable to the needs of the historic vehicle community is below.

First registration applications for an age related number, (imported vehicle, or 'found vehicle' with no known previous GB registration number) –

1st Registration Team, DVLA, Swansea SA99 1BE

V765 and Reconstructed classic applications –

K&R, DVLA, Swansea SA99 1ZZ

Changes to a registered vehicle (including date of manufacture) –

CCU, DVLA, Swansea SA99 1BA

Skills Karl Carter

"Apprentices are exceptionally motivated"

The statement above is not just my view of the training at the Heritage Skills Academy, it is the wording of the Ofsted report following the full review of the Heritage Engineering Apprenticeship in April this year.

The two day inspection by Ofsted gave a fantastic endorsement for the hard work that The Heritage Skills Academy (HSA) team have undertaken over the last four years.

It has not just been the setting up of the course and the development of the two training facilities at Bicester and Brooklands, but two of those years have been during a pandemic!

With over 150 apprentices now in training at HSA we were all a bit apprehensive about the review by Ofsted which is an important event in any education establishment.



But there was no need to worry as the overall effectiveness of the course was designated as GOOD by the inspectors.

The report also includes five further categories including the quality of the education, apprentices and leadership and management. All those categories were GOOD.

The other two categories were behaviour and attitudes and personal development and both of these were OUTSTANDING.

BUSINESS RATES - Museums Association calls on Valuation office Agency to reflect tribunal's decision in its methodology

Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (Twam) has won a landmark case against the Valuation Office Agency over the rateable value of three of its museums. The judgment means that Twam will only have to pay nominal business rates for Shipley Art Gallery, Laing Art Gallery and South Shields Museum and will benefit from substantial backdated and future savings. The original rateable value of the three properties was £94,500, £193,000 and £62,500 respectively. This has been reduced to £10 for each museum.

The Lands Chamber of the Upper Tribunal dismissed a bid by the VOA to reflect the social value the venues provide to the local area within their rateable value. The tribunal ruled that the museum's rateable value could not be based on the socio-economic benefits that the museums provide, because that benefit is to the community and not to the museum operator. The judgment also ruled that it is not possible to quantify the social value of that public benefit to the local authority. It was therefore determined that the three venues should not be penalised with large rates bills for providing benefits to the local community.

Jackie Reynolds, Twam's head of finance, governance and resources, said: "We are delighted to see the original decision in our case being upheld. We fundamentally believe that museums should not be penalised with large rates bills for simply delivering the benefits that we clearly do for our local communities."

Grading Survey

Our progress has been limited by covid and more recently by other demands on the time of members of the grading survey team. We are now renewing our efforts to update the information we keep on vehicles in the collections of our members. In January our database manager Gerry Tormey will send to each NARTM member a summary listing of vehicles we currently have in our database. You will be asked to update the lists and Gerry will provide guide notes on how to do this. Once we have an up to date listing the grading team can start the grading survey proper.

This is an important exercise and your support is appreciated

Ray Bignell

Like previous business rate wins by the Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery and York Museums Trust, the case has implications for the broader museum sector in England and Wales. It should change the way that the VOA calculates the amount that many museums in England and Wales are liable for, leading to savings for most museums but especially for loss-making institutions.

However, it is likely that museums hoping to benefit from the ruling will need to engage in their own appeals because their rateable value will not be reduced automatically. Sector bodies are calling on the VOA to change its methodology in response to the tribunal's decision.

MA policy manager Alistair Brown said: "This is a really positive outcome for Twam after a lengthy legal case. Many other museums can and should benefit from this landmark ruling – but it would be a waste of the sector's resources for hundreds of individual appeals to now be launched. Instead, we want to see a new VOA methodology for setting rates which reflects the tribunal's decision, and we will be pursuing discussions with the VOA jointly with the Association of Independent Museums and the National Museum Directors' Council to make this a reality."

Twam was advised by Colin Hunter of property consultancy Lambert Smith Hamilton, Stuart Ward of Stuart Ward Solicitors and Jenny Wigley QC of Landmark Chambers. Hunter said: "This is a victory for common sense and drives a coach and horses through the VOA's assertions of implied value attached to museums. It will come as welcome news to occupiers across the cultural and heritage sectors and offers much-needed clarity."

Geraldine Kendall Adams 8 August 2022

Membership Renewals

Covid and its aftermath caused a lot of disruption including communication between NARTM and its members. Some established contacts were lost and email addresses changed which resulted in several organisations not renewing membership. We suspect in at least some cases this is a communication failure and we want to make sure we don't lose any members for that reason. If you are unsure please check with the appropriate person in your group that your membership has been paid for 2022-3. If not, and you need to receive the renewal documentation, please contact Ray Bignell at bignell2057@gmail.com

If renewal is not received by the end of 2022 it will be assumed you no longer wish to remain as NARTM members.



Victoria – the Nation’s coaching hub becomes a vibrant museum to celebrate its first 90 years!

TV&GWOT (The Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust) has had a hectic 2022 with celebrations to mark the 90th Anniversary of Victoria Coach station superimposed across its normal portfolio of events (i.e. Penzance with the Cornwall Bus Preservation Society, Didcot with the Great Western Society, and Kingsbridge down the narrow lanes to picturesque coastal destinations).

It was an honour to join with the Victoria Coach Station team to celebrate the magnificent achievement of the Grand Opening on 10th March 1932 of Victoria Coach Station which has stood the test of time and still supports the demands of modern coach operations in 2022.

90 years to the day, Andy Byford then as TfL’s Transport Commissioner, led the warm tributes to the coach station and its staff with a backdrop of vintage coaches and National Express’s most modern Caetano Levante 3.



On 16th June, TV&GWOT’s annual Royal Blue Run set off as part of the 10am mass departure, with the vintage coaches bound for Birmingham and from there to Gloucester, Portsmouth and Henley-on-Thames following traditional routes over the weekend.



Celebrations returned to Victoria Coach Station on Saturday 24th July with a running day combining heritage services to Hammersmith, as if commencing a long journey west, with Airbus services which traditionally picked up passengers at the Hammersmith Terminus. Meanwhile, from outside VCS, RT and RM buses ran services to the Aldwych for the London



Transport Museum. Inside VCS TV&GWOT launched a new book charting the coach station development initially transforming passenger facilities from the open yard in Lupus Street to handling 25million passengers annually as the foremost coaching hub across Europe with 225,000 domestic and international fully accessible departures (*ref. VCS Annual Report & Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020*).

Far from being an odd mix, the combination of vintage coaches, airbus services and iconic RT and RM London buses made for an exciting day as vehicles not only shared the streets around VCS but also shared passengers of different ages who in turn shared their passions for different aspects and eras of our bus and coach heritage.

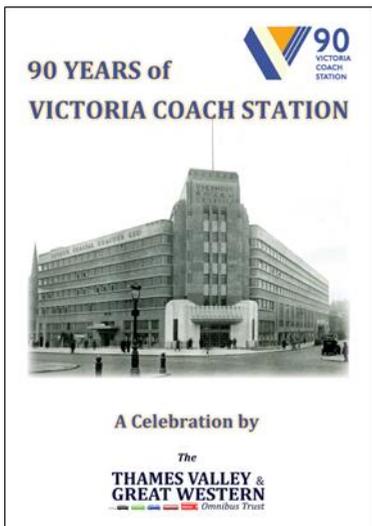
While TV&GWOT and the London Bus Museum brought together the vehicles and schedules, the concept came from the enthusiasm of the VCS team who were keen to give visitors an authentic experience, departing on coaches under the arch into Elizabeth Street and returning via ‘Sammy’s’ arrivals off Eccleston Street. The day’s success was in no small part due to the enthusiasm of VCS staff who accommodated the running day within a normal operational day.



The welcome was equally warm on 24th September when coaches were drawn from across England, Scotland and Wales to provide a static display in the principal coaching lanes at VCS. The distances travelled were matched by former staff who travelled 100s of miles to revisit their past and reminisce, sitting quietly on a coach or recounting tales to those on the TV&GWOT stand. The fact the event went ahead at all was testament to the resilience of the VCS team – just days before they had had to relocate VCS operations to satellites across London for one day only to overcome the road closures necessitated by the funeral for the late Queen Elizabeth II. Exhausted, they nevertheless fulfilled the display commitment and ensured visitors were not disappointed.



Had the rail unions not called strike action for early November, the NARTM AGM would have been hosted by London Transport Museum at their Acton depot and delegates would have been treated to a behind the scenes tour of VCS on the following day. All being well, the spring meeting may revive this great opportunity.



Meanwhile NARTM members can treat themselves to TV&GWOT's new book "90 Years of Victoria Coach Station – A celebration" for just £15 (+£3 post & packing). Different aspects of the coach station development and operational heritage are illustrated, drawing in part on the London Coastal Coaches collection held by the Bus Archive (to which a contribution from each sale is made). In addition, the express services between the Thames Valley and VCS have been documented for the first time based on new research. Wheels to the West records the changes in the design of vehicles over the decades. Readers are transported back to see life at VCS at different points through the last 90 years using many previously unpublished photographs – a busy summer's day in 1962 seen from within VCS and the rail strike of 1982 are examples, with pictures of coaches serving the whole country.

Just scan the QR code for more details and to purchase via Paypal, or send payment with your address details to TV&GWOT, Ledger Farm, Forest Green Road, Fifield, Maidenhead SL6 2NR.



<http://www.tvagwot.org.uk/event-victoria2022.htm#VCS90> Book

Membership report autumn 2022

Thank you to all of you who have already renewed your membership, there has been a very good response to date. If you have not yet renewed and may not have seen the renewal request please let me know and I can resend the documents. As mentioned in the last NewsLink membership this year is half price to help members with rising costs.

Although we have attracted some new members in recent years there are groups with preserved buses who are not members. Experience shows that having a personal introduction works better than an unsolicited approach so if you have contact with a bus group who are not members please consider raising the subject of membership with them. If they show interest I can follow up with documentation etc.

Thank you

Ray Bignell

NARTM member survey 2021

First let me thank all of you who contributed to the online survey for the calendar year 2021. This was the fourth year we've done a survey so we're gradually building up a bank of data. Unfortunately we experienced a problem this year with getting the survey to members due to the number which were rejected with the comment "looks like spam". I hasten to add that these messages were generated by the email systems inbuilt controls and not by our members. Since the survey is integrated into the gmail architecture it isn't possible to use an alternative route. I intend to investigate other options for next year to try and get round this problem.

As a consequence there were less responses than in previous years which makes it difficult to make numerical comparisons with previous years although the numerical data provided is still useful. However there were policy questions in the survey, many of which were designed to explore how members were coping with the impact of Covid. Below is a brief summary of the responses to these questions.



Events returned in 2021. This was the Great Central Bus Rally at Quorn in May organised jointly by NARTM member Leicester Transport Heritage Trust .

Did you lose significant income compared to a 'normal' year: 60% yes, 40% no. In some cases the losses were significant but we agreed not to quote specific numbers.

Did you receive financial support from government funds (any source): 45% yes, 55% no.

What funding sources did you access: a variety were listed including covid recovery funds and local authority schemes. Reduced business rates were secured by some as were restart funds. The HLF recovery fund was also listed. However, it is clear that a majority of respondents either could not access support or did not pursue it.

Did you make a special appeal to your members for financial support: 35% yes, 65% no. Possibly many felt their members were already providing regular support.

Did you make any special arrangements for members e.g. Zoom meetings, special bulletins: this was about 50/50

Did you make more use Zoom or similar : 60% yes, mainly for board / management meetings but some for member briefings. Pre-covid the numbers are likely to be a lot lower.

Did you increase your use of social media in the year: about 55% yes, 45% no

LEZ / ULEZ: we asked if members were expecting to run services in affected areas in 2022 or 2023. Less than 20% said yes.

We also asked if you had been consulted by local authorities on plans for LEZs in your area. Only 15% said yes which probably reflects the fact that many areas are not yet implementing these plans.

What are your priorities for 2022: Not surprisingly there were varied answers but the ones most often mentioned were restoration projects, fund raising and organising events. Quite a few mentioned upgrades to depots and / or equipment and to websites and social media.

Overall the results reflect a difficult year but it was noticeable how many groups were pressing on with their usual activities, organising running days and restoring vehicles. Even this reduced number of respondents listed 168 vehicles under restoration and 80 events organised. Hopefully 2022 will have seen a further improvement in activity.

Ray Bignell

Among recently completed restorations are these two Burlingham bodied Leylands from the Ribble fleet photographed at the Merseyside Transport Trust open day in July.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ROAD TRANSPORT MUSEUMS
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Saturday 5th November 2022

Held by proxies lodged with the Company Secretary
commencing at 1300 hrs.

Members present:

Proxies received:

MEMBER ORGANISATION

Aldershot & District Bus Interest Group
Aston Manor Road Transport Museum
Aycliffe & District Bus Preservation Society
Bristol Road Transport Collection
Buckinghamshire Railway Centre
Bus Archive
City of Portsmouth Preserved Transport Depot
Colin Billington Collection
Friends of King Alfred Buses
Greater Manchester Transport Society
Leicester Transport Heritage Trust
Leyland Society
Medstead Depot Omnibus Group
Mike Sutcliffe Collection
North West Museum of Road Transport
Oxford Bus Museum
Paul and Joyce Jefford Collection
Plymouth City Transport Preservation Group
Ribble Vehicle Preservation Trust
Roger Burdett Collection
Stedham Garage Group
Thames Valley & G.W. Omnibus Trust
The Provincial Society
Western Isles Transport Preservation Group
Working Omnibus Museum Project

DELEGATES

Laurie Powell
Alan Bishop
Ian Wiggett
William Staniforth
Rick Sutcliffe
Philip Kirk
(Laurie Powell – see above)
Colin Billington
David Morgan
Dennis Talbot
Simon Gill
Mike Sutcliffe
(Laurie Powell – see above)
Mike Sutcliffe
Clive Arnold
Chris Butterfield
Paul Jefford
Philip Heseltine
Ray Bignell
Roger Burdett
(Laurie Powell – as above)
Helen Billington
Gerry Tormey
John Macleod
(Laurie Powell – see above)

In attendance: Dave Stubbins (Secretary)

Other persons viewing proceedings by zoom:

MEMBER ORGANISATION

Aberdeen & District Transport Preservation Trust	Ian Souter
Angus Transport Group	Ian Forbes
British Trolleybus Society	Paul Dicken

Dennis Society
Devon General Omnibus Trust
Friends of Chatham Traction

Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust
London Bus Preservation Trust Limited
London Transport Museum
National Tramway Museum
Paul and Joyce Jefford Collection
Scottish Vintage Bus Museum Lathalmond
Southampton & Dist. Transport Heritage Trust

Swansea Bus Museum
The Teesside 500 Group
The Transport Museum Wythall
Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft
Workington Transport Heritage Trust

Tim Stubbs
Paul Jenkins
Richard Bourne
Michael Hodges
Michael Forbes
Steven Booth
Leon Daniels
Katariina Mauranen
(*Ian Souter - see above*)
Joyce Jefford
(*Ian Souter- see above*)
David Hutchings
Tom Lingwood
John Adams
Bill Woodward
Denis Chick
David Chick
Mike Morton

Apologies for absence:

Friends of King Alfred Buses
Lincolnshire Road Transport Museum
Midland Road Transport Group
National Tramway Museum
Paul and Joyce Jefford Collection
Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft
West Country Historic Omnibus & Transport Trust
Western Isles Transport Preservation Group

James Freeman
Steve Milner
John Peck
Malcolm Wright
Paul Jefford
Chas Allen
Robert Crawley
Calum Maclennan

1 Welcome and introductions

The Chairman welcomed 25 Delegates representing 31 Member Organisations to the zoom meeting. The Secretary had received proxies from a further 2 Member Organisations.

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from 8 Member Organisations

3 To accept the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 30th October 2021

It was proposed by Ray Bignell, seconded by Colin Billington and resolved nem con that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 30th October 2021 be and they are hereby accepted.

There were no matters arising.

4 A statement by the Chairman

The Chairman made a statement which is appended to these Minutes.

5 To receive and accept the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st July 2022

Dave Stubbins explained the changes necessary to the Accounts this year due to the massively increased income from the Neil Millington legacy. He explained he would talk to a simplified set of accounts prepared by Mike Sutcliffe. He thanked Laurie Powell who had been able to produce the Statutory Accounts in the required format, which eased the process significantly. The auditors made no adverse comments or recommendations regarding the accounts which was excellent. Dave then took members through the main points of the accounts. This included mention that the value of our investments had reduced since they were made, but that this reflected the difficult global situation at the time and was not something of concern as values should recover in the medium to long term.

It was proposed by Paul Jenkins, seconded by Roger Burdett and resolved nem con to accept the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st July 2022.

6 Election of Directors

It was proposed from the Chair that as there were no other nominations that retiring directors Colin Billington, Gerry Tormey and Ian Wiggett be and they are hereby re-elected to the Board of Directors.

7 Appointment of Auditors

It was proposed by the Chairman that in view of our long term relationship and their knowledge of the NARTM business that Fortus be reappointed as Auditors. Seconded by Simon Gill and resolved nem con that Fortus be reappointed as Auditors.

8 To consider any other competent business - None was raised.

There being no other business, the Annual General Meeting was closed at 1325 hrs.



Minutes of the NARTM Members' Business Meeting
Saturday 5th November 2022 at 13.25 hours
By Zoom

Members present: as per AGM

Dennis Talbot thanked members for attending and apologised that once again the meeting was being held only using Zoom. The plan had been to meet at the London Transport Museum' Depot at Acton but the planned rail strikes would have made that very difficult. In the event the strikes had been called off at the last minute, but too late to reinstate the meeting. It is now planned to meet at Acton in the spring, ideally with Zoom capabilities.

1) Minutes of the Members' Meeting held on 2nd April 2022 and matters arising.

The minutes of the meeting, having been circulated to members, were and they are hereby accepted as a correct record of the proceedings. Proposed by David Morgan, seconded by Joyce Jefford.

There were no matters arising.

2) Topics for discussion

a. Neil Millington legacy update

The Chairman said that he had already given an update on the legacy in his report to the AGM so there was little further to report but progress would be described in the next part of this meeting

The one donation made so far from the legacy had been to The Bus Archive, a very useful nationally connected resource which supports other organisations across the country. Philip Kirk had hoped to join the meeting but due to a 'domestic emergency' had had to send apologies in the last hour. He had provided the following short statement,

"The Bus Archive was delighted to be awarded this donation from NARTM. As many NARTM members will know, we are in the process of fitting out a new, enlarged building in which to store our ever-expanding collection of unique records, publications and photographs for the road passenger transport industries.

Invitations to Tender have now gone out for the building work and mobile racking and we should be in a position to start work early in 2023."

Dennis said it was good to hear our first donation was appreciated and a formal handover would be arranged once there was progress on the ground at The Bus Archive. It is not proposed to make any further donations at this time until the scope, parameters and conditions for funding applications had been set out; this was to ensure that any funds would be applied in a fair and even handed way.

b. Skill Shortages and Apprenticeships

Colin Billington introduced this topic by explaining his own experiences. He said that when at Victoria Coach Station in the summer he realised it was 50 years to the day since he bought his first vehicle – a salutary point but a very pleasurable 50 years. Since then he and the team of helpers, part time workers and sub-contractors had restored 16 vehicles, 10 more were part restored, 8 were in progress and 11 awaited restoration – so some serious work completed, but much more to do. He said this was worrying as several long term helpers and contractors were now retiring or closing their businesses.

Colin's restoration base is in Berkshire and while the situation there is not yet desperate he can see that there could be a 'precipice' ahead as lots of skills will quickly disappear. He had met recently with the Heritage Skills Academy (HSA) and had circulated his notes of the meeting. Katariina Mauranen of the LT Museum had joined the meeting along with Peter Osborn of the London Bus Museum at Brooklands where the meeting had taken place.

Katariina, who is currently making a proposal for a scoping study to examine skills requirements, would like to carry out a straw poll among NARTM members asking the following questions:

- i. Does your organisation currently suffer from a shortage of skilled workforce?
- ii. Do you expect there to be such a skills shortage in the short to medium term?
- iii. Does your organisation do restoration work in-house with your own skilled workforce (paid or volunteer) and your own workshop facilities?

The results of the poll amongst the 33 delegates present were that all but 2 or 3 said they were suffering, or expected to suffer, a shortage of skilled workers and 21 said they did restoration work in house.

Katariina thanked everyone for taking part in the poll and said the background was to help the LT Museum obtain funding for a project to establish the scope of the issue and what could be done. They didn't want to solve the issue just for the LTM, but recognised that this was an industry wide issue.

At this point Ricky Sutcliffe had to leave the meeting but said that the Bucks Railways Centre were planning to take on apprentices to build their skill base and bring people back into the industry.

Colin went on to explain that The Heritage Skills Academy (HAS) (see: <https://www.heritageskillsacademy.co.uk/>) has 2 bases, the head office is at the Bicester Heritage site (see <https://bicesterheritage.co.uk/>) which has a cluster of companies restoring cars, light vehicles and aircraft. HSA at Bicester focusses on the mechanical

and electrical aspects, while at Brooklands the focus is on coachbuilding (timber and metal framing, sheet metal forming and fixing), welding and trimming skills. Between the two they cover most aspects of restoration needed by NARTM members and the Brooklands facilities are of a high standard. There is a high degree of crossover in the skills used on car restoration and those needed on buses, although more complex air and electrical systems are not covered at present.

Next step was to find out how HSA could help NARTM set up a specific scheme to deal with larger vehicles and associated skills. HSA set up suitable syllabuses and could look at amending these to include specific skills. They would then advertise for and screen potential apprentices. Selection would be done jointly as an employer – it is important to note that NARTM or its member organisations would need to employ the apprentices so that they had employment contracts in place to cover all the normal terms and conditions of employment. That could be difficult for some, but would be essential. Employers are responsible for covering the cost of apprentices' salaries, holiday pay and other benefits as well as travel expenses for the week long sections of the courses, which last for 3.5 years in total.

The HSA also vets employers' premises to make sure they comply with Health and Safety requirements and other relevant working conditions. The HSA draws down funding from Government to cover their admin and training costs. The Apprenticeships consist of week-long training sessions at the HSA premises and then 5 week periods at the employer's base putting those skills into practice. The HSA also monitor progress of the apprentices to make sure that those on the courses really want to learn and make progress within the industry and are not just there to get a salary – they do weed out some on the scheme.

It was realised that the employment situation could be quite difficult and it was suggested that existing sub-contractors might actually employ the apprentices, using them on NARTM members' work and for other clients, and suitably reimbursing NARTM or its members for the time spent on other work.

One of Colin's sub-contractors had already had an apprentice which didn't work out well as the apprentice didn't meet the required standard, but the contractor would be willing to try again. However, he specialises in panel work and metal bending and a wider range of skills would need to be covered.

Katariina added that very few NARTM members would be able to take part in the HSA scheme, because full time staff are needed to work with and support the apprentices and very few would have that in place. Therefore working with contractors would be the way forward. Colin agreed that even with a number of skilled volunteers on site at his base most days that would not meet the HSA requirements.

Colin said he had looked at this 2 years ago and found a college in Bristol who specialise in commercial vehicle work, but really more modern vehicles – there may be an opportunity to work with them to cover air and electronic systems working alongside the HSA on more traditional aspects.

Colin asked for questions. David Hutchings asked about the exams used by the HSA – were they internal, City & Guilds or BTEC for example? Colin said he would ask. David also asked how we could verify that if a contractor was working with us and other customers, how would we confirm the amount of work done on ‘our’ projects? Colin felt the only certain way would be to have a known and trusted contractor, such as one he had known for many years. David agreed and said one of their members had already experienced this; the job taking longer than planned at a high cost and being hard to manage.

Tim Stubbs asked if he could share this with his Dennis Society colleagues and Colin said he would send Tim a copy of his report direct.

Ray Bignell said that in view of the large sums spent by the classic car owners with contractors if a link could be made through the FBHVC? Colin said that FBHVC had been involved in setting up the HSA at Bicester and have a director responsible for the relationship. At Bicester there are a good number of small businesses who have come together and they feed off each other, so definitely worth exploring this with FBHVC.

Katariina added that the vintage car sector have the money and would therefore be likely to be the principal employers of apprentices in future. She added that HSA do teach basic electrical skills, but in future more recent vehicles have complex electronics, her volunteers at Acton would not know how to solve problems on their recently acquired bus from 2005 for example. Dennis added that it was often hard to obtain replacement parts for such vehicles and Katriina agreed that in a museum context that was not really the right way to carry out restoration anyhow.

Dennis added that until he had spoken with Colin he had not appreciated the scale of the HSA – they have between 100 and 120 apprentices, so this is not a small operation. While NARTM could not provide unlimited funds, part of the legacy could provide a valuable input to help include our buses coaches and other larger vehicles.

Roger Burdett said he had worked on setting up a training scheme in the West Midlands 2 years ago, but failed – it had been really difficult to get trained trainers to move to carry out the training in that area. Roger uses several contractors and employs up to 6 people. In his view bodywork skills were not hard to find, but heavy engineering skills were short – engine and gearbox rebuilds for example. He felt that Bicester was a good set up and worth working with. However, he questioned how many NARTM members would be in a position to pay the rates charged – Reliance for example charge out at £46 per hour and Roger charges at £27 per hour, because of his own input and enthusiasm. If we set up a relationship with Bicester, would we be able to encourage NARTM members to use it?

Dennis said there was a possibility that NARTM might subsidise members' restoration projects, but that would also take a lot of careful work to decide what should be subsidised and how it would all be managed. Roger added that the heritage railway sector used apprentices, but they were often PLCs and much better funded than most NARTM members. Roger said he was going to contact the Severn Valley Railway to see how their apprenticeship schemes had worked over the last 10 years and to check retention rates of the apprentices.

Roger concluded that in his experience Bicester would be the only viable base for a scheme that NARTM could develop. Finally, in just 8 months a mature apprentice had developed sufficient skills in timber work to reframe a Bristol L, so these schemes can work well. He also confirmed that the aborted West Midlands scheme had involved Fuzz Townshend, TV presenter, who is actually based at Bicester.

Steven Booth agreed this was a very interesting discussion. He wondered if as well as full apprenticeships there might be some 'conversion courses' open to people already skilled in construction work and its principles. He also asked if we had a view of the supply chain – were there contractors looking for apprentices who would want to join in any scheme?

Dennis asked Steven to say a few words about the GVVV scheme working with recovering former drug addicts, not the same sort of scheme but maybe some useful experiences. Steven said the Back on the Road scheme had a full time coachbuilder / social worker they had trained. Those on the course contribute to live projects and the scheme had been running for 25 years. A handful had become interested and had joined GVVV as volunteers.

Dennis summarised the discussion and asked anyone with specific contractors in mind or an interest in joining the scheme to contact Colin and Katariina so that we can make progress and report back in the spring.

c. Business Rates

Dennis said he hadn't a lot of news, but understood that there was a new set of valuations due out by the end of the year. Appeals against previous business rates bills would have to be lodged by 31st March 2023. Three larger museums in York, Exeter and now Durham had had their business rates bills reduced significantly and it is hoped this might be applied across the museums sector, basing rates on turnover and not size of premises. How likely that will be in the current financial situation is not known.

David Hutchings quoted a new building in Hampshire, rated without noting the planning restrictions that it could not be used commercially, but the VOA only took account of this when it was brought to their attention, so make sure the VOA are aware of any relevant restrictions as to use of the building.

d. Clean Air Zones

These are slowly being introduced in several areas. The Greater Manchester one was currently suspended, but a new scheme will be drafted. The previous scheme failed due to protest from local traders who would not have been able to afford compliant newer vans.

Steven Booth said the Glasgow LEZ began in June, but it is not yet being enforced with fines. GVVV were engaged with the City Council, who have indicated that as well as non-commercial vehicles over 30 years old being exempt, they would look at including those over 20 years, which would include some of the GVVV active fleet. This would probably be an annual renewal and time limited overall.

David Morgan spoke about Winchester. Four years ago he spoke to the Council who effectively said they didn't have the resources to implement an LEZ scheme and David wondered if that might be the case in a lot of other smaller towns and cities.

Leon Daniels reminded members that he had written the London LEZ, including exemptions for historic vehicles and that had largely become the template for other schemes. Local authorities get exemption requests from all kinds of groups, and it is easier for them to say NO. Leon warned that while the first generation of people setting up LEZs may be sympathetic, future generations may be less so and it was important to be consistent in our approach and go for the same exemptions in all areas, so that becomes the accepted standard. NARTM must continue to be vigilant and lobby their local authorities in a consistent way.

Leon also said that London area Running Days were granted exemptions by TfL, but he stressed it was important only to ask for these exemptions occasionally. It was important to have them though, so that younger people could bring their 20 -30 year old buses. He again stressed that these requests should be used sparingly. Dennis agreed and reminded members that in a previous TfGM consultation the people involved hadn't even considered there might be any vehicles over 30 years old still in use.

Phil Heseltine mentioned enhanced bus partnerships which might contain clauses about emissions standards of vehicles allowed to use bus infrastructure. Simon Gill said a similar situation existed in Charles St Leicester, and the new St Margaret's Bus station, which they had applied to use very occasionally – just on one day per year.

e. Safeguarding

Dennis had nothing new to report other than to remind members of the need to have a Safeguarding Policy in place and observed to protect vulnerable people who visit our sites and events. Steven Booth agreed and said it was important to have a Safeguarding Coordinator in each organisation.

f. Mobilising Mobile Heritage

Simon recapped what this was about. NARTM had joined the National Transport Trust to work with them on a strategy to address issues facing all transport heritage sectors. There were challenges in public perception of heritage transport, often linked to the use of fossil fuels. Mobile heritage was not protected or viewed in the same way as built heritage.

Simon had attended the inaugural meeting in the spring and Ray had attended the second. It was obvious that all sectors were concerned at a loss of heritage items – those sold off by the National Railway Museum and Science Museum for example. The NTT wanted to collect data to assess the scope of the sector and NARTM, with its database was ahead of other sectors. It is important that this data is up to date.

We need to demonstrate what we can bring to the economy, in tourism and working with commercial interests to the benefit of all. The NTT are developing a Charter which could be used in approaches to world-wide bodies such as UNESCO. Also looking at a Green Wheel scheme for carbon reduction and environmental accreditation. A key point is to reduce, but not to eliminate the sector's carbon footprint – we all need to think about our contribution.

There has been little progress since early summer, but we need to look at changing how we operate – good maintenance, switch off engines and so on. Include positive messages in event programmes. Maybe we need to look at reducing the number of vehicle events held each year.

Steven Booth agreed with Simon about the overlap with other themes discussed, including the importance of the educational aspects of what we do. David Morgan said that King Alfred now had their monthly management meetings entirely by Zoom, which was reducing miles travelled by members quite significantly while not affecting the quality of the meetings. Dennis agreed and pointed out how many road miles would have been saved by holding the current meeting on line, but he did feel that a lot more was gained by meeting face to face, especially before and after the actual meeting. Zoom and Teams were good tools for regular meetings of people known to each other, less so when debating ideas with others you only meet occasionally. Should NARTM move to alternate Zoom and physical meetings?

Mike Morton said that the recent Leyland National events in Workington had used a park and ride scheme from the edge of the town and he also explained the Group's carbon capture tree planting involvement. They also planned to encourage visitors to travel by rail and service bus to future events, which again links to the educational aspects of what we are doing. Dennis said that the Manchester Museum of Transport also encourages visitors to travel by public transport and then catch a free heritage bus to the museum, but it was important that your insurers are aware that the free bus services you have paid to insure are bringing people to an event with an admission charge – even if the passengers don't have to enter and pay a fee. Just one to be

aware of.

Regarding the point about reducing the number of events, David Hutchings said he had felt for some time that there were too many events and that there should be more coordination between the organisers.

Dave Stubbins added that had the present meeting gone ahead at Acton then probably 90% would have travelled by rail rather than car. That would not be the case in other locations but we should encourage future hosts to provide links to main train services. Colin reminded members to check their Articles of Association as many do not permit Zoom type meetings so they would have to be held physically – Dave added that is why NARTM had to ask for proxies for this meeting.

After a break the subject of Zoom meeting and protocols were raised. It was felt that today's meeting was working well, especially if those speaking have used the 'raised hand' feature and announce who they are before speaking. In future it was hoped that physical meetings would also allow others to join by Zoom or similar, though Leon noted that hybrid meetings didn't often work well. Dave Stubbins said he would send out a survey to those present to check what worked well and not so well.

g. Working with bus operators

Simon Gill said that the bus industry was going through a hard time, with reduced passenger numbers and driver shortages which lead to poor reliability. He felt it would be useful to encourage NARTM members to work with local operators to promote the industry and shared heritage. Many already do this and have good local relationships, maybe not always replicated at national level. When speaking to operators he suggested using the idea that heritage bus services can often introduce non-bus users to the world of travelling by bus. This can also link to some of the topics discussed above. Simon said it was useful to build similar links with local government at various levels and older buses are often a source of public interest.

Paul Jenkins said that Devon General had good relations with Stagecoach South West and that had given a promotional opportunity at the opening of the new Exeter Bus Station when their bus appeared prominently in the background of all national media views of Prince Charles opening the station. At other shows young children are attracted to double deckers and this gives a friendly introduction to the idea of using buses.

David Morgan said it was important to schedule free heritage service away from regular timetabled services, to avoid public confusion and loss of operator revenue. Dennis agreed and confirmed that they fit around regular departures at a city centre terminal, at times when an allocated stand will be vacant. Steven said that First Glasgow had recently supported their Open Weekend by putting posters in their buses which boosted visitor numbers.

Roger said that National Express in the West Midlands had a heritage vehicle society

and a Heritage Director – they were using a Birmingham standard bus as an apprentice project and had 12 vehicles in their heritage collection. It was suggested that Ray contact them to become the next NARTM member!

Simon agreed and said that in Leicester they had recently been invited to display 4 of their buses ahead of the new bus station opening and that had generated media interest. Ian Souter said that despite UK Government initiatives (Bus Back Better?) 75% of peak (early 1950s) bus passengers in the UK had been lost, in stark contrast to other European countries. Where NARTM members can help is in showing what public transport could offer without relying on the private car. Simon replied that it was unfortunate there in no national; ‘bus champion’ who could be the industry spokesman.

Tim Stubbs recalled a previous heritage bus service, timed 10 minutes after the service bus, which in the vent pulled out just behind them. On stopping to let it go, the bus driver told the heritage crew to carry on as he was happy for them to do all the work...! In Manchester Dennis said that the next door operator, Go North West, regularly used the museum for staff meetings, free of charge, and the museum can park some buses with them during its own events. Bill Woodward from Teesside said they also worked closely with Stagecoach on two open days, providing heritage buses from across the North Est. Previous events at the transporter bridge had also attracted TV interest.

Roger said he had heard a Midlands based bus museum had recently turned down a 1 hour documentary about their museum, which he found surprising. Leon Daniels agreed and said how popular and beneficial the two series of ‘Secrets of the Transport Museum’ had been – we need to grasp such opportunities, The London Bus Museum operated free bus services in London specifically to attract interest from families and not just enthusiasts ahead of their LBM events. It was important to explain to passengers why the buses were there and where they could see more.

Dennis mentioned recent TV work they had done, specifically Antiques Road Trip where the show visits interesting heritage locations and one of the presenters, David Harper was so interested he made two videos for YouTube about the museum. Steven agreed and said that contacts were key, but so was having a people angle to the story, not just vehicles.

h. Museum Accreditation

Another topic to keep on the radar; Dennis said that Accreditation was a scheme supported by NARTM and he had recently submitted their application and had heard informally that it had been successful. That was after completing a new requirement, a ‘Collections Development Policy’, which could be a watch out for others. The portal used for applications and other communications with the Arts Council is called Grantium and is a bit daunting initially, but not bad when it has been used a few times.

i. Gift Aid and Making Tax Digital

Laurie Powell noted that if basic rate income tax had been reduced it was worth noting that the gift aid rate would also have been reduced. With changes of Chancellor we now had to wait until the Autumn Statement later in November. Laurie also advised members that if you don't make a Gift Aid claim under the main section in any one year then you are not able to make a Small Claims (GADSD) claim the following year. Worth noting following Covid if only a small amount has been donated, it is still worth claiming Gift Aid so you don't lose the future entitlement to the gift aid on small donations.

On Making Tax Digital, HMRC haven't yet publicised this, but it is coming in for the self-employed and rental income in April 2024 and accounting records must be kept digitally and submitted quarterly. This will apply to Charities from April 2026, though that could change. Charities will have to keep digital records, but those can be on spreadsheets and you don't have to rush out and buy an accountancy package. However, at the latest you need to be using a digital system for the year leading up to April 2026 so that everything is ready for the first submission in July that year.

j. Future Operation of vehicles

Dennis said we had covered most of the points he wanted to cover already. It was simply a matter of being vigilant and monitoring fuel availability, driver and skills shortages, legal issues and public perception to ensure that our historic vehicles can continue in operation in the future.

k. Volunteers and Volunteering

It had already been mentioned that NARTM could use more volunteers as it gets working with the legacy funds, but this applies to individual members too. Dennis asked if members had seen a reluctance of older members to return post-Covid or if they had seen some new members?

Dave Chick from Sandtoft said they had lost a few members but had had some new volunteers, including 4 teenagers who had arrived separately but now formed a young team which was very encouraging. That had been helped by opening for a full week in August, enabling more people to visit and they would expand that. Katriina said that the LT Museum had had a similar experience with numbers, but she felt that older people will reduce involvement over time anyhow and the period of Covid just made it appear this was a sudden drop. Katriina also pointed out the potential issues around safeguarding with younger teenagers. She also said that it was good that there were four as it could be very hard to be the first of an age group working with mostly older people and that could discourage people from even thinking of taking part. It is important to listen to what the volunteers want - when volunteering elsewhere she had wanted to get involved with physical work, but had been told she could make the tea or work in the shop – so she left!

She went on to say that some volunteers came in to the LT Museums during the week when they could work alongside staff, but volunteers also came in at weekends; a monthly working group on train restoration had proved popular with 'younger' people (under 60s!) of working age.

Ian asked about the four teenagers at Sandtoft and what had attracted them. Dave felt it was that they were interested in buses, there were not many local opportunities and they wanted to get some hands on experience of working with the vehicles. They did have a safeguarding policy and procedures in place. Simon said in Leicester a teenage girl had joined, bringing her family along too and she had now set up an Instagram page for LTHT aimed at children called 'Dennis and friends' and she was introducing other characters. The parents now operate the website too.

David Hutchings said that in Southampton there is a Volunteers Service, a help group for volunteer organisations. Many were involved with health care and had professional management but David felt it was a useful forum and wondered if there were similar Services in other cities. Topics discussed had included recruitment and managing volunteers. Dennis said there was a similar group in Manchester and many of their objectives were to place vulnerable people with organisations where they could help and get involved. The Museum currently had three such volunteers who came with their carers and did some simple cleaning tasks, one was now confident enough to come in on his own. This was a very good thing to do, but it had to be right both for the volunteer, for the other volunteers and visitors as well.

Dave Stubbins raised another aspect of the volunteering issue and that morning he and Ian Souter had attended a meeting of the Roads and Road Transport History Association. Ian said that The R&RTHA was founded in the early 1990s with a broad interest in road transport of all types and their Journal, now available online contains many interesting and useful papers. The R&RTHA had unfortunately voted to close at the end of 2022. They had tried hard to engage with academics, explained that they were aging and couldn't continue without help but help was not forthcoming. It was said they were seen as 'Male, pale and stale' and the areas they were interested in were seen as not relevant to the areas that the current road transport industry felt it should be interested in. Membership had fallen and the costs of running two conferences each year had risen astronomically post-covid so it was not sustainable and the need to close was agreed, It was also difficult to get people to present papers and travel to those meetings. Ian knew of other societies in a similar position where people would not come forward to take on the running of the organisation. He likened this to a library burning down as knowledge held by all the members was being lost. The R&RTHA had tried to get other groups to take on their work, such as the Omnibus Society and the Railway and Canal Historical Society who may pick up some of the business of the R&RTHA. Dennis thanked Ian for his information about the R&RTHA and said that it was

important to learn that this could happen to any organisation if it didn't look ahead and try to plan its future.

Dave Stubbins said that this was very relevant to NARTM as several directors had been through surgical procedures recently, including himself. As NARTM had developed, the directors with some assistance had operated at the required level, running the conferences and sharing information. With the arrival of the legacy that had changed and there would be significantly more administrative work ahead. Dave said that we need to persuade others to come and work with the NARTM Committee, to learn what happens and to be ready to take matters on and step up in due course. Dennis agreed and stressed the importance of getting more help now, with the legacy and all the responsibilities of using that in fair and productive ways. While we had heard some positive stories of new volunteers today, very few wanted to work on the important back office functions, but it is very important that we get people coming forward to start the process of selecting the right ones and training them in the ways our organisations run from day to day.

If anyone is interested in working more actively with NARTM, an email from you would be most welcome. Simon agreed – in Leicester they did have some people coming forward, but the trustees were now almost doing a full time job for the Trust as well as their own full time jobs. He talked about the need to encourage potential officers as well as waiting for them to volunteer.

I. Dealing with Increasing Costs

Dennis spoke about the current increases in costs for all of us, at home and in our organisations. Will our visitors have enough disposable income to continue to visit and spend money with us? We all need to be aware of what it costs to run our operations day to day and month to month and are we getting in the income to sustain that. Once the overheads are covered then funds can be allocated to restoration projects and improvements – but not if the money isn't coming in as it used to.

3) Reports on member services

a. Membership & Recruitment

Ray Bignell reported that he had received the large majority of membership renewals and thanked members. The email renewal process had worked well in his view. We do often find that emails do not go to the right person so if you think you should have seen the renewal but haven't, please contact Ray after the meeting. He preferred to use personal email addresses rather than 'info@' or similar as those often do not get passed on.

To encourage members to join Ray had tried writing to other groups, with little success, but he asked that if members know of other local groups who might

benefit from joining NARTM, please have a word with them and pass details on to Ray if they show interest.

The Online survey is now in its 4th year; data gained from the survey is really useful when talking to other national bodies to illustrate the scope and size of NARTM and its members. Unfortunately the survey mails often bounced back, because receiving email servers considered it to be Spam, For future surveys Ray would look at using different software that may be less likely to be rejected. Results received so far are summarised in the next Newslink but as an example, 60% said that income was down in 2021 compared to a similar period just before Covid. Members reported an increase in the use of Zoom for committee meetings, and less than 20% said there were active preparations in their areas for LEZ scheme implementation.

Paul Dicken, British Trolleybus Association asked if it would be possible to use NARTM lists of email addresses to send their newsletter to other members. Dennis thanked other members who already send their magazines to NARTM either by post or electronically and he had started to send the GMTS Journal electronically as well. However, the distribution list used the same email addresses as Ray has had some issues with – so it is really important to make sure we have the correct address for your organisation. To avoid issues with emails it would be possible to set up a NARTM WhatsApp group, Facebook or Instagram page to exchange messages – but we haven't yet found someone willing to take that on.

Ray said he had had a lot of updated datasheets back and the next Newslink would have a fully updated list of contact details, with more individual addresses rather than the generic ones. He said that many members have websites (and social media presence) so events are often listed there. Paul replied he was only suggesting circulation by email, he had found the 'info@' addresses often were not forwarded properly. He felt searching all the websites would be time consuming. Dennis confirmed that all members' information and links were available on the NARTM website and the new list in Newslink would be available in January. Addresses on that list were either not personal, and therefore not covered by GDPR, or had been cleared for use by NARTM and its members internally.

Dennis suggested that all members check the entries in the August Newslink are correct. Dave wondered if we could have more than one address for each member – a person and 'info@'. Ray and Ian agreed that was possible. A discussion about using linked documents in SharePoint or One Drive ensued. Often external users without a Microsoft account were unable to open files attached from One Drive. Laurie said there had been a problem with ntlworld, now resolved.

b. Website

Gerry asked members to check their entries on the NARTM website were up to date. He also reminded members to check events listed – they were linked to your website information, so up to date.

c. Newslink

Dennis asked for any comments about Newslink, and thanked Joyce and Paul for sending all the AIM and FBHVC items – 248 so far this year. Gerry said that all that news info appears on the website

d. Scoring and Grading

We need to update the information on the NARTM vehicle database, as some is several years out of date. A follow up meeting was planned with a new request for database updates to all in January. We also need more regional coordinators to supplement the existing team if we are to make progress with the Scoring and Grading Scheme. Colin emphasised it is very important to have this information up to date and was happy to contact some members by telephone.

Dennis asked if some on the call today could contact Ray and then agree to contact other groups in their area.

Roger is valuing the Wythall collection at present so he would ask about that being forwarded to Gerry, copy to Simon please.

4) Date, format and venue of future meetings

Dave said we hoped to meet at Acton in March and asked Katariina to confirm dates for March 2023, which would need to avoid Acton Depot Tours. **It appeared that the 4th March would be a possible date.** Katariina would double check. Sundays were easier at Acton, but Saturday dates were generally better for traveling.

Dennis asked Katariina if Zoom facilities would be available – Katariina would confirm, but the internet there was not great.

5) Any other business

David Morgan said that King Alfred had finally resolved a supply of Setright tickets from a company in Hove. Minimum quantity was 50 rolls and best contact was through him.

Dave Stubbins asked for feedback on the meeting format, especially any issues conducted by Zoom. He would send out a survey and was happy to arrange some basic zoom training if there was a need.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 1655 hrs.

NARTM Around the Museums

Compiled by Dennis Talbot

A few items of interest gleaned from the newsletters and magazines of the NARTM members. Please keep sending them and if yours isn't quoted here, maybe that's because we don't receive a copy?



From 'Priory Press', the magazine of the Friends of Ipswich Transport Museum

Very topically and after a long restoration, the Museum's Morrison battery electric coal lorry is now ready for road testing. It will be interesting to hear how it performs when it can escape from the building. Preparations have begun for restoration of the Ipswich Ransomes Trolleybus number 44 which was recently recovered from the Science Museum collection.

From 'KBMT News', the magazine of the Keighley Bus Museum Trust

Sad news comes that the museum has been given notice to leave its Riverside building and they are having difficulty finding suitable alternative and affordable premises. We wish them every success in their quest. On a brighter note their 30th Anniversary event was a great success.

From 'MTT News', the magazine of the Merseyside Transport Trust

More reports of a 'best ever' Burscough Open Day held in fine and sunny weather on 31st July which included a feeder service from Ormskirk and a Countryside Circular.

From 'The Conrod', the magazine of the Lincolnshire Vintage Vehicle Society

It isn't often that three Lions dating from 1927, 1929 and 1930 are seen in operation together. The two Lincoln buses and one from Lancashire United worked well on a circular route from the Lincoln museum in September. Unusually, the museum also holds a car running day, when visitors are offered rides in the cars which included an Austin 12 and a 16, a Ford V8 and an Austin Allegro – remember them?

From the Albion Magazine

Plans are afoot to display a First World War memorial plaque which commemorates the 'Albion Men' who marched off to war but never returned and which has been in store for many years. There are further plans to repatriate an early Albion tonneau car which has been in England since the 1970s.

From 'Broadway Bulletin', the magazine of the Friends of King Alfred Buses

Amongst other interesting tales is a description of how the well-known King Alfred Albion Victor coach dating from 1935 has recently been fitted with an electric starter motor. Apparently Mr Chisnell of King Alfred felt that electric starters were an unnecessary expense and Dave Hurley who owned the coach in preservation for many years coped without too. After a lot of detailed engineering work the Albion now starts 'on the button'. A job well done.



From 'The Journal', the magazine of the Greater Manchester Transport Society

Two newly restored buses took to the road during the '80s Flashback' in October. These were a 1985 Metrobus with Northern Counties body and coach seats and a 1984 Leyland Olympian; both have been restored to original condition over many years. A grant enabled the purchase of a large format scanner which is being used to scan large posters for the collection and also for the opportunity to sell them as a range of products from posters and coasters to fridge magnets.

From the Newsletter of the Southampton and District Transport Heritage Trust

Those of us lucky enough to have a museum or workshop building can only admire the Southampton Heritage Trust for their efforts in improving the site at Bursledon (remember meeting there 3 years ago?). They have been bringing stone and bricks to the site, crushing it and spreading it over the parking area to improve the softer areas. Sounds like hard labour...

From 'Leicester Wheels', the magazine of Leicester Transport Heritage Trust

The Trust continue to build their relationship with the Great Central Railway, basing events at the Quorn Station site, in particular a popular Midland Red event in October. They also apologise for any delay in responding to emails, which number well into three figures each week – join the club!

From 'Terminus', the magazine of the Eastern Transport Collection

The magazine relates that due to long term plans for housing development they will need to move at some point from the rented barns they have used for over 30 years. A long search has revealed a suitable site and once a few hurdles have been overcome we look forward to receiving confirmation that the move will go ahead.

From the East Anglian Transport Museum Newsletter

In May the Museum celebrated its First 50 years with a very successful event which 1051 visitors attended in one day. There have been very significant developments through those 50 years and they continue with expansion into the 'New Field'. By the end of that day over 780 thousand visitors had been to Carlton Colville, an impressive total. The magazine also carries a report from 1965 about moving Blackpool tram to Carlton, now 57 years ago.

Back page top: JYC 855 Leyland Tiger with Harrington Body, new in 1947 to Blue Motors. HUF 303 Leyland Tiger with Park Royal Body, new in 1947 to Southdown.

© Roger Burdett.

Back page bottom: Midland Red D9 EHA 424D, new in 1966 and Midland Red C5 780 GHA, new in 1959 © Roger Burdett.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ROAD TRANSPORT MUSEUMS

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