

Company Registration Number: 05035702
Registered Charity Number: 1125980

THE THAMES VALLEY AND GREAT WESTERN OMNIBUS TRUST

(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
UNAUDITED

FOR THE YEAR ENDED
28 FEBRUARY 2021

THE THAMES VALLEY AND GREAT WESTERN OMNIBUS TRUST

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

COMPANY INFORMATION – TRUSTEES, DIRECTORS and PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS

Year ended 28 February 2021

Directors / Trustees	Dr C J Billington Dr H M Bolt G G Green R D Rampton (terminated 27 June 2020) D T Sheppard M J Williams (appointed 4 December 2020)
Company Secretary	Dr H M Bolt
Company Number	05035702
Charity Number	1125980
Principal/ Registered Office	Ledger Farm Forest Green Road, Fifield Maidenhead SL6 2NR
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank plc Lloyds Commercial National Clubs & Charities Centre PO Box 1000 BX1 1LT
Insurance Brokers:	TH March Insurance Brokers (Museum and event insurance) Hare Park House Yelverton PL20 7LS Tollgate Private Clients (Vehicle insurance) Tollgate House 96 Market Place Romford RM1 3ER
Independent Examiner:	T W Bennett CALIBF 16 Manor Close Bradford Abbas Sherborne Dorset DT9 6RN

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

Year ended 28 February 2021

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The trustees are pleased to present their annual directors' report together with the financial statements of the Trust for the year ending 28 February 2021 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Report Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) effective 1 January 2015.

Company Number 05035702

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Status

The Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust is a company limited by guarantee, having no share capital and registered in England & Wales on 5 February 2004. Each of the members is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £10 towards the assets of the company in the event of liquidation. It is a registered charity. The charity was incorporated on 22 September 2008 and is bound by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. In their letter of 8 December 2009, HM Revenue & Customs accepted The Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust as a charity for tax purposes under reference XT21974 from 30 August 2008.

In accordance with the Articles of Association the first Trustees & Directors were those persons notified to Companies House as the first directors of the Charity. All three directors were willing to continue beyond the first Annual General Meeting and remain in post. A fourth Director joined the Board on 13 February 2013 and a fifth on 21 March 2019. As subscribers to the memorandum, both also became members. The existing Directors can appoint a person who is willing to act to be a Director either to fill a vacancy or as an additional Director.

Under Article 31(6) and on the basis of formal legal advice, it was necessary for the appointment of one of the first Trustees & Directors to be terminated with effect from 27 June 2020. The Articles of Association were modified by Special Resolution on 31 October 2020 to clarify conditions for terminating membership and for appointing / removing Trustees & Directors who may not also be members. An additional Trustee & Director was appointed on 4 December 2000. At the end of the period, the Trust had five Trustees & Directors, two of whom are first subscribers and two others are also members. With the increasing scale of charitable activity, the Board intends to appoint further Trustees & Directors as suitable persons are identified.

Principal Activity

The company was dormant until December 2009 but has been active since, working in furtherance of its objects.

Charity's Aims and Objectives

The principal object of The Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust (TV&GWOT/the Trust) is:

- To advance the education of the public in the history of public road passenger transport and in particular in the history of those companies and types of vehicles operated through the Thames Valley and Great Western road transport corridors

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In furtherance of this object the Trust powers include:

- a) establishing and preserving for posterity a representative selection of passenger service vehicles within the Thames Valley and Great Western road transport corridors;
- b) enhancing this collection by providing secure long-term accommodation for other historic vehicles, principally those with connections to the Thames Valley region;
- c) facilitating public access to the collection;
- d) providing a focus for retention, development and training for students of all ages in the traditional crafts and specialist skills required for restoration and maintenance of the vehicles and associated relics; and
- e) raising funds (but not undertaking any substantial permanent trading activity and only in compliance with any relevant statutory regulations).

REVIEW OF THE YEAR & PUBLIC BENEFIT REPORT

At the start of the year the Trust owned the following **vehicles**:

- Four unrestored First World War period vehicles including a 1912 AEC B type which had passed to the National Omnibus & Transport Company in 1922 and then was transferred to Taunton to inaugurate a tramway replacement town bus service.
- DBL154 – a 1946 Thames Valley Traction Co. Bristol K6A double deck bus No. 446.
- NDP38R – a 1976 Reading Transport Bristol VRT/LL3 double deck bus No. 38.
- MO9324 – a 1927 Thames Valley Traction Co. Tilling-Stevens B9 single deck bus No. 152.
- LTA995 – a 1953 Southern National Omnibus Co. Bristol KSW6B double deck bus No. 1852.

During the year the Trust acquired the following vehicle which had been on long-term loan since 2015 when the centenary of motor bus operations in the Thames Valley was celebrated (TV100):

- FMO938 – a 1950 Thames Valley Traction Co. Bristol LL6B single deck bus No. 556.

The Trust also accepted an offer to acquire, without charge, the following derelict vehicle which had been bequeathed to another road transport heritage charity, The Oxford Bus Museum, but which fell outside their sphere of interest and collection policy:

- LTA893 – a 1951 Royal Blue Bristol LL6B coach No. 1264.

At the start of the year the Trust had on long-term loan from Trust Chairman, Dr Colin Billington, eleven significant historic vehicles relevant to the Thames Valley and Great Western region. The standard terms of loan agreements mean the owner remains responsible for funding storage, insurance, restoration and general operational costs. The loan vehicles comprise:

- YF714, a 1927 former Great Western Railway Road Motors Guy FBB, 32-seat, single deck bus No.1268 (on loan 1 November 2009 for 10 Year term, extended for a further 10 Year term until October 2029).
- VW203, a 1927 former National Omnibus and Transport Co Leyland PLSC3 Lion single deck bus No. 2407 (on loan 1 November 2009 for 10 Year term, extended for a further 10 Year term until October 2029).
- RU8805 – a 1929 Royal Blue AEC Reliance coach No. 3615, originally operated by Elliott Bros (Bournemouth) Ltd and being the only surviving vehicle from the Elliott era and the only surviving AEC Reliance (on loan 1 November 2011 for 10 Year term).

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- FTA634 – a 1941 Western National Omnibus Co. Bristol K5G double deck bus No. 345 (on loan 1 November 2011 for 10 Year term).
- JUO992 – a 1947 Southern National Omnibus Co. Leyland PD1A double deck bus No. 2932 (on loan 1 November 2011 for 10 Year term).
- BOD25C – a 1965 Western National Omnibus Co. Bristol FLF6B double deck bus No. 2065 (on loan 1 November 2011 for 10 Year term).
- MOD973 – a 1952 Royal Blue Bristol LS6G coach No. 1286 (on loan 15 November 2015 for 10 Year term)
- EDV555D – a 1966 Southern/Western National Bristol SUL4A single deck bus No. 692 (on loan from 12 November 2016 for 10 year term)
- OTA290G – a 1969 Western National Bristol VRT/SL6G double deck bus No. 1056 (on loan from 1 January 2017 for 10 Year term)
- FDV790V – a 1979 Western National Bristol LHS6L single deck bus No. 1560 (on loan from 1 January 2017 for 10 Year term).
- LTA748 – a 1950 Royal Blue Bedford OB coach No. 1409 (on loan 9 November 2019 for 10 Year term)

At the start of the year, one vehicle was on long term loan to the Trust from Trustee, Richard Rampton, namely:

- GRX140D – a 1966 Thames Valley Traction Co. Bristol FLF6G double deck bus No. D40 (on loan 1 March 2015 for 5 Year term).

Terms could not be agreed for the loan to be extended so there were no vehicles on loan through to the end of the year.

As a collection, the vehicles span the Trust's region of operation and a 57 year chronology from 1912 to 1979. As a result they also represent a range of technologies giving an invaluable basis for heritage skills retention and training during their restoration and operation. During the year volunteer opportunities for restoration involved vehicles from the 1920s through to 1960s (VW203, RU8805, FTA634, LTA748, BOD25C). In addition to public access to the workshops as work progresses, the acquisition of restored and operational vehicles by the Trust (DBL154, NDP38R, MO9324 and FMO938), the completion of restoration of vehicles on long term loan (YF714, JUO992, MOD973, EDV555D) and the availability of operational vehicles also on long term loan (OTA290G, FDV790V) has enabled the Trust to develop an intensive programme of appearances at its own and others' public historic road transport events when conditions allow across the region.

Other support underpinning the Trust's activities includes the Trust Chairman's commitment to make the museum facility (archive, gallery and display area) at his West Country home available to the Trust free of charge to host Trust events and displays. Similarly facilities at his base in the Thames Valley, including siting of the former Thames Valley Traction Co.'s Maidenhead waiting room and ticket office and the use of former offices for archive storage and research, are available without cost for volunteer activity and to host public visits when circumstances allow.

Activities during the 2020-21 year were impacted significantly by the **Covid-19 pandemic** both due to laws requiring people to stay at home, limiting gatherings and avoiding indoor contacts, and caution given the older age profile of many normally active Trust Supporters. **Trustee meetings and the AGM** were held virtually via Zoom. Large scale events which thrive on the opportunities for the public to experience bygone travel in vintage buses & coaches were all but eliminated, although innovative ways to use social media to offer virtual travel were deployed successfully. The Trust took its duty of care to volunteers and the public seriously and acted promptly and decisively as plans had to be cancelled or altered. The loss of income from events was significant but Supporters were generous with annual renewals, new Supporters were attracted, and a project

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funding appeal was launched with success. Working parties for both the archives and restoration were suspended then restarted as rules allowed, albeit generally with smaller groups and a focus on individual tasks but with increased frequency to maintain progress. Communication with Supporters was prioritised as they provide the foundation for the Trust's future. In addition to the flagship magazine *To and fro*, an informal Newsletter (**Service-19**) was produced to keep Supporters in touch while normal opportunities to meet and advance Trust interests were on hold. Careful use was also made of the Trust's website and social media to keep the Trust in public view. Details about the various activities that could proceed in furtherance of the Trust's charitable objectives are described below.

Despite pandemic restrictions, **restoration progress** has been made:

- MO9324 – 1927 Thames Valley Traction Co. Tilling-Stevens B9 No. 152 – the installation and testing of the battery charging and voltage regulation system was completed in early March just before the Covid-19 national lockdown. Following removal and disassembly of the rear axle, the axle beam was taken to Imperial Engineering at Cheshunt for repairs to the stub axles and manufacture of wheel bearing spacers and replacement wheel studs. The axle was then rebuilt in the Trust's workshops with new wheel and differential bearings and re-lined brake shoes and re-installed within the chassis. Following this, the front axle was disassembled in-situ and components inspected, repaired and replaced as necessary during the rebuild and reinstatement before the year end. The magneto ignition system was overhauled and the rubber flexible drive coupling replaced and refitted, thereby completing the major mechanical restoration of this vehicle. A report describing the complex work undertaken on 152 was prepared and circulated first to principal donors then more widely to engender support for future projects.
- RU8805 – 1929 AEC Reliance No. 3615 – work continued to complete the driver's cab, nearside front canopy and front destination blind box. Work then focussed on upper body and roof panelling, installation of the opening sun-roof and construction and installation of the roof mounted luggage container which had been removed following withdrawal from service and sale to a farmer near Cannington, Somerset in 1949. Patterns for all windows were made up. At the end of the period re-panelling had commenced with the cove panels.
- VW203 – 1927 Leyland PLSC3 Lion No. 2407 – work continued on external body painting with completion of top coats and varnishing of the roof and window surrounds and undercoating then top-coating of the waist rail and lower panels. Numerous other parts for the roof luggage rack, roof mounted side advert boards, seat pedestals and mounting brackets, passenger door, entry steps and life guards were also painted and internal window surround finishers varnished. New engine valves were manufactured and fitted in guides in readiness for the engine rebuild. Machining of the head and block was undertaken and this revealed repairs to pre-existing cracks would be required.
- FTA634 – 1941 Bristol K5G No. 345 – work on chassis and mechanical overhaul on this vehicle at the Trust's Devon workshop progressed. 345's engine had not turned since the bus's recovery in 1973 from a field in West Sussex by the West of England Transport Collection. The engine was removed from the chassis shortly before the lockdown and was completely rebuilt with a replacement crank case, re-bored block and replacement pistons, relined clutch plate and replacement of gears in the oil pump. In parallel one of the Trust's Devon based volunteers refurbished the front part of the chassis and engine bay ready for the engine re-installation in the chassis which was achieved before the year end.
- LTA748 – 1950 Bedford OB No. 1409 – work proceeded on chassis restoration with the removal of major components (e.g. wheels, brake drums and hubs, half shafts, brake servo, fuel tank, prop shaft). Chassis cleaning and refurbishment of the components was progressed by volunteer working parties.

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- FMO938 – 1950 Bristol LL6B No. 556 – following success of the appeal to fund the restoration of Thames Valley No. 556 (described below), it was moved to a professional restorer to expedite the work overseen by the Trust's project team. The body framework was first exposed with rotten and damaged sections being replaced, particularly around the complex cab and blind box areas and the boot. Body corner panels and roof domes were removed by a specialist panel beater. Work to rebuild entrance and emergency door frames and re-skin the doors got underway. During the planned restoration work, an opportunity arose to reinstate the correct passenger seating based on cutting down and welding wider frames.
- BOD25C – 1965 Bristol FLF6B No. 2065 – this vehicle is undergoing a complete restoration with the engine being rebuilt in parallel with the body restoration. Following attachment of the gearbox, the engine was re-installed in the chassis in October 2020 enabling 2065 to be moved to vehicle lifts for further chassis restoration. Other work has been undertaken to replace the header tank and piping and to replace the alternator belt.
- OTA290G – 1969 Bristol VRT/SL6G No. 1056 – the Trust joined an initiative to have seating material (moquette) manufactured to original specification to suit this vehicle. The material arrived in July 2020 and all the seat backs and squabs were sent to a specialist for re-trimming.

In parallel with restoration activities **maintenance of the operational fleet** has continued. For example:

- Roadworthiness inspections and servicing of DBL154 and FDV790V.
- Vehicle inspections and rectification work (e.g. steering joints, tyres etc.) funded by owners of several private vehicles brought regularly to Trust events in readiness for future use.
- With the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions meaning the majority of the vehicles owned, loaned to and used by the Trust were not run for over a year, a plan to start and test vehicles regularly was implemented ensuring that electrical, hydraulic, air and fuel systems remained in full working order. Battery trickle chargers were fitted on operational vehicles.

A remarkable feat by a small group of Trustees and Supporters through the summer of 2020 was to **rescue and recover** 1951 Royal Blue Bristol LL6B No. 1264 which had been donated to the Trust by The Oxford Bus Museum (see above). The vehicle had been abandoned in a Devon field since 1979 but is remarkably complete with the potential to provide some parts for 1929 Royal Blue Reliance No. 3615 currently undergoing restoration by the Trust. Social distancing and other restrictions added to the complexity of the recovery which involved several visits to prepare the vehicle for transportation but it succeeded without incident as a result of thorough logistical planning and cooperation between the Trust and a number of external parties. Video shared on the Trust's Facebook page and publicity on the website resulted in significant positive responses picked up and disseminated in the enthusiasts' press. It is the Trust's intention to store this vehicle in the dry to preserve it for potential restoration in the future taking advantage of facilities offered free of charge.

The Trust **Supporters Group** was established in 2015, for anyone interested in the work of the Trust and wishing to provide financial and/or volunteer support. During the 2020-21 year the number of Supporters rose from 223 at the start to 238 at the year end despite the absence of public events. In addition the Trustees are sad to report the deaths of four Supporters during the period - Graham Geoghegan, Peter Pribik, Michael Stephens, and John Whitehead. Each was significant for their individual contribution to the Trust and for their activities variously as preservationists, researchers, photographers, collectors and authors capturing the passenger road transport heritage the Trust seeks to preserve. The Trust is grateful to have benefitted from

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materials bequeathed from individual estates but the knowledge and vibrant engagement of the gentlemen themselves will be missed.

During the period, the Trust produced four editions of its **quarterly Supporters' magazine, *To and fro***'. The magazine comprises a mix of Trust news, reports on activities and original, high quality articles on historical topics within the Trust's scope. The latter are produced by Supporters, some of them regular correspondents, who are able to make full use of the Trust's archives and their own collections to research and illustrate their topics. The result is a high quality publication which inspires and furthers interest in our core topics, exploits and showcases the Trust's collections, and has a lasting and cumulative value.

The enforced break in Trust events during the pandemic (and therefore the loss of retrospective reports normally carried in *To and fro*) gave significant editorial challenges during the period and might have resulted in shorter publications were it not for the efforts of Supporters to compensate with higher volumes of historical articles. In the event, the average length of *To and fro* increased from 40 to 44 pages during the period, with a 'bumper edition' reaching 52 pages beyond the period end in the Summer of 2021. The content, contributing to the public education in the history of the Thames Valley & Great Western and successor companies, was as follows:

- Issue 20 was published in March 2020 and included the Chairman's Trust Traffic Notices setting out in print TV&GWOT's 2020 (pre-pandemic) vision for the year ahead. These were anchored in articles capturing history in the form of recollections of the fast changing Thames Valley bus scene of the 1980s and 90s thanks to the Bee Line; an account of the origins and history of coach stations in Exeter as a new skyline emerged at its former Paris Street site, another instalment of a 1980 photographic tour as it continued into Cornwall, a taste of the vehicles and operations that have given sightseeing tours around Plymouth (Britain's Ocean City) over the years; and a collation of Supporters' photographs marking 50 years since Western National's hold on Trowbridge's Conigre depot was relinquished to Bristol Omnibus. The edition also included memories of Trevor Leach, an outstanding preservationist, transport historian and Supporter.
- Issue 21, published in June, recounted a special journey of a South Midland Coach to Madeira Drive, Brighton in 1958 in place of an account of a 2020 HCVS London to Brighton Run. On the theme "Wish you were there?" postcards with bus and coach interest from around Devon and Cornwall were reproduced as consolation for the cancelled 2020 Royal Blue Run. Archive material was used to explain the complex dealings underpinning the centenary of the formation of the NOTC and fascinating insights were gleaned from GWR Road Motors Records of allocations for nearly 500 vehicles across 60 depots from 1919-1929. The tours operated by Plymouth City Transport for nearly 40 years were examined complementing the sightseeing insights in the previous edition. Sadly an obituary was published for Peter Pribik a Thames Valley man, perfect gentleman, and long term owner of Thames Valley KSW No. 748 as well as stalwart Trust Supporter.
- Issue 22, was published in September and included more vintage postcards, each featuring contemporary buses at West Country (South Devon) locations where readers might wish they could be holidaying. This was complemented by the serialised 1980 photographic tour to the West Country which continued into South Devon. Across the country but for a similar era, the complexities of running a service from Reading, through London to Southend against a backdrop of deregulation, demonstrations and diversions in the early 1980s were revealed from Trust archives. An illustrated history of Thames Valley Route 18, Maidenhead to Marlow, also covered the vehicles that suited the constraints. The progress of Guys from Thames Valley's Oxford-based fleet to South Midland as a Red & White legacy was described. A look at the 'face' coverings worn by buses over the years brought topical interest.

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- Finally in the period Issue 23, published in December, featured the operational history of Royal Blue Bristol LL6B No. 1264 (LTA893) and its remarkable recovery by the Trust through the lockdown summer of 2020. Connections between Royal Blue and flying in the form of Coach Air Services were described. The owner of Western National SUS No. 603 reflected on the diamond anniversary celebrations of the marque in 2020 that should have been. A lucky passenger recalls the 1978 tour by the Cotswold PSV group in Western National No. 262 deep into the West Country as 50 years in preservation are celebrated. The evolution of services by The Fowey Bus & Taxi Service in 1973 and their vehicles through the town's narrow streets was observed and a pictorial journey charting the origins of Plymouth City Transport's country routes from the 1960s to 1991 was recorded. An obituary for John Whitehead was included reflecting on his life as a preservationist, and in contributions to the historic record such as through the Trust archives.

These magazines contained 40 original and exclusive features (2019-20: 41), of which 23 were historical articles (2019-20: 18). They featured and interpreted 246 images (2019:20: 273), of which 186 (2019:20: 157) were historic and/or from the Trust's archives.

Back numbers of *To and fro* are normally sold at modest cost on the Trust's sales stand at events but the 'Shop' facility on the Trust's website proved popular during the year such that some editions are now out of print. Sales not only generate useful revenue but also encourage wider engagement with the Trust and extend the access to material in Trust archives.

At the start of the year, successful **public events** from previous years were **scheduled** to be repeated and expanded in 2020, for example at Penzance (April) and Kingsbridge (September). With 2020 being the centenary of the formation of the National Omnibus & Transport Company (**NOTC**) on 13 February and of the Thames Valley Traction Company (**TVTCo.**) on 10 July, both of which are central to the heritage TV&GWOT preserves, special events were also planned.

Organisation and planning of a trip to launch TV&GWOT's "**SU60**" celebrations, commemorating 60 years of the Bristol SU bus and coach design was substantially complete and scheduled for 29 March 2020, to recreate a 1974 tour by the now-defunct Plymouth Bus Club, in which a Bristol SU coach (No. 1207) was hired and used to traverse the former Western National Kingsbridge depot routes across the South Hams. The two original organisers, now TV&GWOT Supporters, had worked closely with Trustees to research and plan the route and timetable. Photographs of the occasion from their collections were used to create a souvenir booklet, with the intention of recreating each photograph on the day. The imposition of what would turn out to be the first of several lock-downs prevented the event going ahead but it is 'oven-ready' for a future date.

The Trust's annual Royal Blue run was to be an epic five-day venture travelling to Essex to the original NOTC headquarters before continuing back across the country through Hampshire, Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire taking in the principal NOTC depot towns. A rolling programme of pop-up exhibitions was planned for each town, at publicly accessible venues chosen for high footfall. Exhibition material was planned to celebrate both the local transport heritage while also placing it in the context of the NOTC centenary. This was to give local relevance to the public, offer a visitor trail between venues, and provide a link to the Royal Blue coach run spectacle that was to pass through the towns in mid-summer. Planning was advanced and a National Lottery Heritage Fund bid was being finalised.

For the TVTCo. centenary in July, a vintage bus running day centred near the original station terminus in Reading was planned with special services around Maidenhead where the original headquarters were based. A Trust Supporter and TVTCo. expert was bringing out a new pictorial history to coincide with the anniversary and the Trust was working with other Supporters, several with direct experience of the industry, to produce a book describing the public transport enterprises that served the market after the TVTCo. entity disappeared with the ascendance of the National Bus Company in 1971.

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These approaches to the milestone events were novel and designed both to provide for wider public engagement and to advance the educational purposes of the Trust. However, as the Covid-19 pandemic took hold, it became clear in March 2020 that **the Trust had to cancel plans for large gatherings or for offering public rides** in the confines of preserved buses and coaches.

The Trust acted early and decisively and despite some disappointed observers the decisions were vindicated by the ongoing restrictions on movement through the remainder of the year. In particular the early decisions have ensured the Trust has not forfeited expenditure on preparations even though a large number of volunteer hours had been expended on planning and preparation for what would have been the Trust's largest events programme in its history.

Other 2020 planned events that were affected included a special one-off event "Belles and Buses" planned for May in conjunction with the Northern Belle Trust to celebrate the bus and ferry links of the Rame Peninsula. Regrettably the subsequent demise of the Northern Belle means that event cannot now take place.

Plans had also been underway for the Trust to support the Great Western Society with its transport heritage event at Didcot in early summer 2020. The cooperation between the complementary charities will be resurrected in future years.

Rather than miss the important milestones, the Trust hoped to run the NOTC and TVTCo. events in 2021 as *Centenary+1* celebrations and similarly mark the first manufacture of the Bristol SU buses 60+1 years on at Kingsbridge in the September.

While the above explains what the Trust could not do by way of public benefit in the 2020-21 year, **alternative ways were nevertheless found to maintain activity on the Trust's traditional event dates** and raise its profile in positive ways that are educational and enjoyable. The success of associated Social Media innovations is described more fully later in this report.

- Instead of the Penzance event (third Sunday in April), a virtual bus running day was mounted on the Trust's public Facebook page which combined video footage from 12 vehicles at previous events in the form of a quiz.
- A virtual Royal Blue run was orchestrated over the intended weekend (from the third Friday in June), each day offering video clips (many previously unseen) of past runs.
- For the Kingsbridge event (third Saturday in September) the Chairman, together with other Trustees, took his Western National Bristol FLF No. 1969 to Kingsbridge Bus Station to meet Coleridge Community Bus Trustee, Chris Newland, and make a donation in recognition of the Coleridge Bus Trust's participation in the 2019 Kingsbridge Vintage Bus Running Day. FLF No. 1969 was then driven along the John Hobbs Memorial Run route from Kingsbridge to Dartmouth again providing a surprise spectacle to cheer local residents and holiday makers. A press release with photographs raised the charities' local profiles, reassuring residents that the vintage bus running day would return to the town for the public to enjoy in future years. Video footage taken over the driver's shoulder gave Facebook viewer's an exciting cab ride along this spectacular route. This was exceptionally well received in terms of the quantity of views and quality of comments and engagement.
- From the Thames Valley the Trust's Bristol K No. 446 took part in the national Showbus 'flyby' run (on 27th September 2020) which replaced the static event normally attracting several hundred vintage buses. Organised remotely with some 76 individual vehicles making their own way in both directions along the route between Beaconsfield and Wheatley using the A40, the convoy was impressive maintaining the Trust's public and sector profile. Bristol K No. 446, new in 1946, was the oldest vehicle on the run and was featured prominently in the enthusiasts' press.

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In previous years event success has been measured in terms of (a) **passenger journeys** for members of the public carried on vintage bus services by Trust vehicles or on vehicles attending Trust events (24,758 in 2019-20), (b) the number of **(vehicle) days** Trust and Trustees' vehicles participating in TV&GWOT events were on the road on public display (262 vehicle days in 2019-20), and (c) the associated **mileage** covered (19,692 miles in 2019-20). Such metrics are meaningless in 2020-21 conditions and the representation around the country at all, utilising novel forms of public engagement, and the positive reaction to the Trust's efforts are taken to point to success in delivering the Trust's charitable objectives.

However, the free availability of online content means the ability to raise funds as part of these events and educational activities is minimal. Measures in 2019-20 were the sale of over 1,700 **programmes** (at £4-6) at Penzance, Didcot, Tavistock and Kingsbridge events containing articles of historic interest and some 250 sales (£12.95) of the TV&GWOT **book** written for the Reading Motorbus centenary event. Similarly **advertising** opportunities in event programmes drew revenue from the major transport companies including in 2019-20 First Group, Plymouth Citybus, Tally Ho Coaches of Kingsbridge, Transport for London (Victoria Coach Station), Stagecoach South West, Reading Buses and Thames Travel. Losing this again impacted the Trust's 2020-21 income. A further knock-on effect without events was the loss of a catalyst for local and regional press and broadcasters to engage, as they normally would, publicising the charitable activities. The indirect benefits, encouraging greater public interest and involvement in the Trust more generally, were also lost.

The Trust's collections have necessarily been closed to the public, so there have been **no group visits** to either our Thames Valley or West Country facilities in the 2020-21 year.

A priority for the Trust, despite ongoing pandemic uncertainty, was therefore to **plan for a return to holding public events** of the quality and significance for which the Trust is known with important heritage vehicles restored and maintained to exemplary standards. To this end a project was conceived to engage Supporters and others in that vision:

- An illustrated report was prepared and disseminated explaining the remarkable engineering steps taken by the Trust to rectify issues with the 1927 Thames Valley Tilling-Stevens bus 152 which had been funded through an appeal launched in 2017. The quality of the work and the diverse skills employed to ensure the future safe use of this important vehicle were demonstrated.
- Against that backdrop, an appeal was launched in June/July 2020 to acquire and restore Thames Valley Bristol LL 556 (FMO938), previously on loan to the Trust, to enable it to take pride of place in what was then anticipated to be the Thames Valley Traction Co. Ltd's *Centenary+1* celebration in 2021. Within a few weeks the initial target was achieved enabling the vehicle to transfer to Trust ownership and for restoration to commence. The transformation of the vehicle as rotten timber framing was revealed and replaced, in-service damage (for example distorting the boot area) was repaired, new curved and shaped rear lower corner panels were formed and panelling was applied in readiness for a full repaint to Thames Valley specification, was covered on the Trust's website and in *To and fro'* (see also above).

The process has engaged and enthused a wide range of existing and new Supporters which can be capitalised on at the future event.

Other activity initiated to maintain levels of engagement through the year in light of pandemic constraints included:

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- A blog article (on 27th March 2020) to mark the closure of Taunton's historic bus station prepared collaboratively by Trust Chairman Colin Billington and Trustee David Sheppard. Colin gave a personal account of the bus station's role in forming his own interest in buses and coaches, as well as its significance as a terminal through the decades. Nine of Colin's own historic photographs were published for the first time. The article and associated publicity generated 523 engagements online, and hard copies were distributed to Supporters without internet access as part of the Trust's KIT (Keep In Touch) initiative during full Covid-19 lockdown.
- Development of an informal *Service-19* Newsletter to engage and unite Supporters particularly through periods of isolation and restriction. It grew from a 'keep-in touch' newsletter built around the Trust's blogposts marking the NOTC Centenary on 13th February and closure of the Taunton Bus Station posted on 27th March. With eight 20-page editions produced in the 2020-21 year, these have included a variety of themes around the Trust's core interests and developed a dialogue of queries with a sharing of knowledge to provide answers. Distribution by post and email ensured inclusivity and some 67 Supporters contributed material during the period. Inputs displayed a remarkable depth and breadth of knowledge and interests related to the Trust's core areas of public benefit and educational activity. It is hoped that these newly discovered seams of expertise and talent can be developed within *To and fro* once normal patterns of activity remove the need for *Service-19* to continue.
- Weekly Zoom sessions hosted by Supporter Luke Farley and Trustee David Sheppard (from April to June) united friends and fellow Supporters during lockdown. Themed 'show and tell' opportunities resulted in slideshows and discussion of artefacts from the various collections of those on the call. These were greatly appreciated by all who took part, some of whom were new to the world of online video conferencing. The concept was promoted by the Trust Chairman Colin Billington to the NARTM committee and samples were presented as a feature to the virtual attendees from around the UK at the NARTM AGM on 24th October 2020.

TV&GWOT Chairman, Colin Billington, is also Deputy Chairman of the **National Association of Road Transport Museums** (NARTM). He also performs two specific functions for NARTM in a voluntary capacity – (1) the development of strategy for and management of NARTM's lobbying of regulatory bodies and responses to relevant public consultations, and (2) responsibility for NARTM guidance to its members on the provision of free bus services in furtherance of the charitable aims of NARTM's members. Activity in the year included clarifying the outcome of legislative changes on tyres and measures applicable to heritage vehicles. The Government response to the consultation on the proposals to ban tyres more than 10 years old on steering axles of heavy vehicles (buses, coaches and heavy goods vehicles [HGVs]) was published on 15 July 2020 and confirmed that the exemption proposed in the initial consultation document for Vehicles of Historic Interest (i.e. vehicles more than 40 years old which have not been substantially modified during the past 30 years) would be carried forward into the proposed legislation, although the exemption would not apply to commercially used vehicles nor to HGVs where the exemption would only apply to HGVs built before 1960. The NARTM submission to the consultation had been prepared by TV&GWOT Chairman, Colin Billington, following wide consultation with NARTM members. This had further proposed extending the exemption to non-commercially operated buses and coaches over 20 years old as this was the age at which, typically, vehicles became available for preservation, having been withdrawn from commercial use. This proposal was not included in the Government's proposals for further legislation so will result in a significant financial barrier to ongoing preservation of vehicles built less than 40 years ago. The revised legislation came into force on 1 February 2021. Colin Billington also participated in the NARTM committee and AGM meetings online. Dissemination of sector guidance via NARTM for museums and archives has been a valuable guide for Trust actions in mounting events and resuming activities as pandemic restrictions ease.

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Other links have been forged, for example with the **Archives and Records Association**, which have produced a variety of webinars and online training courses which Trustees have participated in to advance skills and knowledge required for the Trust both in general and specific to Covid-related measures. Topics covered included archive accreditation, different aspects of collection care, maintaining and exploiting digital collections, and **The National Archives** catalogue service Discovery. A place was secured on The National Archives' Novice to Know-how certified course on digital preservation to further enhance Trustee skills. Towards the end of the year the Trust was invited to join the newly formed **Land Transport Archive Network**, coordinated by The National Archive as an informal network for archivists, curators, custodians and researchers, interested in the care and use of archives relating to any aspect of any form of land transport: including vehicles, operators, personnel, passengers, manufacturers, freight and infrastructure. TV&GWOT Trustee Helen Bolt is leading the LTAN survey activity in the passenger road transport sector into the scope of archive holdings, alongside her study on the University of Plymouth MA in Archival Practice, all of which bring spin-off benefits for the Trust.

The **website** has increased in importance for the Trust to maintain 'virtual' contact with the public (providing up to date reference material about the status of events, the collection and opportunities to get involved as a Supporter as well as access to educational materials through the online shop facility) and is complemented by the **Facebook** page (providing real time updates on Trust activities). In addition to the website, which continues to be the principal point of first enquiry and summarises the Trust's objectives, organisation, activities, collections, events and opportunities for volunteers, we communicate immediate news and responses to queries and comments through Facebook.

During the 2020-21 year, platform-wide changes occurred in the way Facebook pages were administered and their performances measured. Most significantly, page 'likes' (of which the Trust's page had 1,813 at the start of the period) were translated into 'followers', a more relevant measure encompassing all who subscribe to updates. Since the end of the period, the **Trust's Facebook following has grown to 2,260**. Many more users receive the Trust's content virally as a result of both organic and strategic sharing of our posts. Our Facebook page remains the market leader in both the Thames Valley and West Country area among those for comparable groups and charitable Trusts by a significant margin.

The challenges of the pandemic, especially the enforced cancellation of Trust events, called for great innovation to ensure the Trust's public benefit remit was fully satisfied to the very best of its ability. **Social Media** gave an outstanding opportunity and the Trust fully exploited this to fill the void left by the necessary cancellation of its events. The following are some key examples from the period showing a timeline of adaptability and innovation through the current period and beyond:

- We hosted **the world's first 'Virtual Vintage Bus Running Day'** on 19 April 2020 (in lieu of Penzance Running Day), in the form of a 10 minute video montage featuring rides on more than a dozen of our regular performers, recorded by our Supporters prior to the pandemic. This reached more than 4,900 users and resulted in 270 reactions, comments and shares. The format we devised and pioneered has since been emulated by several of our equivalent organisations around the country and such consolations came to be expected by the enthusiast community throughout the pandemic.
- In June 2020, careful re-packaging of our existing video content allowed the Trust to present an entire **weekend 'virtual festival' of Royal Blue Run footage** in place of the 2020 run itself.

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- By September 2020, restrictions had eased sufficiently to allow bespoke footage to be taken and shared online during a socially-distanced journey from Kingsbridge to Dartmouth, in lieu of Kingsbridge Running Day. Much of this was broadcast live from the cab of Bristol FLF No. 1969, giving viewers a **virtual 'Driver's Eye View' of the route**. This was watched by over 8,500 Facebook users (a record within the period) and received 687 comments, reactions and shares.
- In April 2021 (beyond the current period) a **Penzance Flyby event** was designed as a visual spectacle for locals with social media coverage to the wider world at the heart of the concept. Collectively, our coverage reached more than 5,900 users and attracted 466 comments, reactions and shares.

The Trust acknowledges the skills and creativity of social media lead, Trustee David Sheppard, and the technical help of the webmaster, Supporter Gerry Tormey, which underpins the Trust's success in engaging the public in this area. These communication routes are maintaining and increasing awareness of the Trust and helping engage new Supporters from far afield. These connections will be important to draw people to Trust events once pandemic restrictions ease.

In addition to the work of the Trustees, in normal times activities rely on **the voluntary help** from others who increasingly have come forward to marshal at events, prepare and crew vehicles giving rides to the public, and work on maintenance and restoration projects. In addition, key Supporters lead and organise the archive work at both locations, coordinate the Supporter' Group, and apply professional design skills to the magazine. Figures for 2019-20 showed **246 individuals helped** with Trust activities, **contributing 17,300 volunteer hours**, with 210 of these volunteers involved in crewing the 121 different vehicles which attended TV&GWOT events. The Supporters' group normally provides a focus for like-minded individuals to identify with the Trust objectives and have the satisfaction of contributing to a shared endeavour while bringing educational benefit and enjoyment to the wider public but the opportunity was to a large extent denied due to the pandemic. However, of the 238 people registered as Supporters at the year end, a very significant proportion have engaged with lockdown activities such as funding the restoration of 556, contributing to the *Service-19* Newsletter and *To and fro*', and working on archives from home. While hours and working groups cannot be measured in the established way, Trustees wish to thank Supporters and other volunteers for their continued help, patience and financial support through this difficult period.

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ACTIVITY & PUBLIC BENEFIT IN 2021, BEYOND THE YEAR END

At the year end (28 February 2021) the country still faced ongoing restrictions and uncertainty about the wisdom and viability of gatherings in the months ahead. Although the Trust planned for a sequence of public events to its former timetable, celebrating centenary+1 anniversaries where appropriate, limits affecting the size of gatherings and conditions in enclosed spaces disrupted these plans. As in 2020-21, success cannot be measured using traditional metrics such as passenger numbers, volume of programme sales etc but instead the Trust has maintained a constructive presence focussed on what can be done.

Despite the strictures, the **Supporters' Group** has continued to flourish with 15 new Supporters coming on board in the seven months beyond the year end. Three further editions of the **Supporters' magazine *To and fro*** have been produced containing a further 26 original and exclusive features, of which 16 were historical articles. They featured and interpreted 227 images, of which 156 were historic and/or from the Trust's archives.

In addition two editions of ***Service-19*** were issued early in the year while movements were still restricted. A final edition is planned for autumn 2021 and there is interest in a more formal publication to capture the many gems the ad hoc newsletters have contained.

Engagement of Trust Supporters as volunteers in archive and vehicle restoration and maintenance **working groups** was **gradually restarted** as permitted by the Government's Covid road-map. Covid-safe practices and precautions remain in place but at the time of writing (October 2021), three-weekly and monthly archive days are in full flow in Berkshire and Devon respectively, and twice weekly vehicle working groups with multiple work fronts in Berkshire.

The Trust's **archive and small object collection** has received significant material as collectors and people who formerly worked in the industry have sadly died or are no longer able or wishing to care for it. Increasingly the archive is providing a comprehensive basis for research and production of educational material relating to the public transport heritage as evidenced by articles in *To and fro* and ***Service-19***. Recording and cataloguing the collection continues to progress with collaboration between Berkshire and Devon bases and work to standardise storage, referencing and cataloguing practices in line with Sector standards for accreditation.

Since the year end the following **events have taken place**:

- The **Penzance running day on Sunday 18th April 2021** was transformed into a fly-by for locally based vehicles as overnight stays were banned. Trustee Melvyl Williams, also chairman of the Cornwall Bus Preservation Society, scheduled a rolling display of vintage buses which travelled without passengers between Penzance, St Just, Hayle, Helston and Marazion culminating in a cavalcade grand finale of the 22 participating vehicles through the town. The spectacle entertained people in the vicinity as well as through the extensive real-time online coverage shared on the Trust's Facebook page as noted in the Social Media reporting above. TV&GWOT Trustees and Supporters took five vehicles in a day trip from the Trust's Devon base.
- The **Royal Blue Run from Thursday 17th to Monday 21st June 2021** marked the centenary (+1) of the registration of the National Omnibus & Transport Company (NOTC) and 140 (+1) years from the origins of Royal Blue. It was also the 20th such Royal Blue and Associated Motorways Run re-creating the experience of bygone coach travel using traditional vehicles on authentic routes and, appropriately, involved 20 preserved coaches. The route linked National depots from their origins in Chelmsford with the home of Royal Blue in Bournemouth and area depots throughout the West Country in Dorset, Devon,

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Cornwall, Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. Despite horrendous weather, parties limited to six, accommodation restrictions, and an epic 750 mile route, the vehicles and their crews triumphed – testament to the owners' care and commitment. Heads were turned across the country and live footage was posted online on the Trust's facebook page with a post-event compilation.

- **The Thames Valley Traction Co. (TVTCo.) centenary(+1) celebration targetted for 10th July 2021**, proved difficult to plan for given scepticism and uncertainty around the Government's road-map. The announcement to extend bans on large gatherings ruled the event out so instead Trustees took Thames Valley 446 on a symbolic tour beginning at the site of the TVTCo. headquarters in 1920 in Maidenhead (now Waitrose), passing the former bus station (to be pictured with a modern Thames Valley-branded vehicle) and touring key locations through Bray and into Windsor passing the former Windsor & Eton Central station terminus, the Castle and Guildhall. Coverage on the Trust website and on Facebook drew positive responses and interest in a Centenary+2 event.
- Based on considered consultation with local councils, bus operators, and local information centres, it was decided to proceed with the **Kingsbridge Vintage Bus Running Day on 18th September 2021**. The interest and life it brings to the local community was a primary motivator. Special risk assessments and Covid-specific measures for passengers were introduced and scheduling avoided narrow routes congested with stay-cationers and also ensure frequent departures minimised crowds in the bus station hub. At the request of Tally Ho Coaches, the running day was combined with a launch of their new integrated Transport service (funded by Devon County Council and Great Western Railway) connecting Salcombe to Totnes via Kingsbridge by bus with the national rail network. Anthony Mangnall MP and mayors from Salcombe and Kingsbridge plus company official and invited guests, visited the trust's museum for the launch before travelling in the oldest participating vehicle driven by Trust Chairman Colin Billington so their arrival at the bus station signalled the start of the Running Day.

The event also marked **SU60+1** with eight SUs, almost matching Kingsbridge's maximum allocation, parking between services at the former Western National depot and participating in an SU cavalcade around the town as a grand finale to the day. The accompanying programme included specially produced articles on West County SUs (by Trustee David Sheppard) and on the history of Totnes-Kingsbridge-Salcombe bus services (by Trustee Colin Billington and Supporter Bryan Gibson) putting the activities of the day in heritage context.

In addition to Trust events, participation in third party activities resumed, particularly picking up learning for Trust events.

- On 11 April, Royal Blue LS 1286 took part in the London Bus Museum Preservation Trust Route 65 Ealing to Leatherhead flyby which proved viability for ideas rolled out at Penzance.
- On 5 September – Western National LWL 1613 with a TV&GWOT Trustee crew participated in the Devon General Society's Devon General Remembered event at Tiverton, running amongst all Devon General vehicles and representing Western National on what was once a jointly operated service 217 to Bampton. This was the first passenger carrying experience since the start of the pandemic and helped inform good practice guidance provided to crews at Kingsbridge two weeks later.

The return of more familiar Trust events in Summer and Autumn 2021 was matched with our usual extensive **social media coverage** but now with the wider following arising from the reputation gained by the Trust's Facebook account during the 2020-21 reporting period (and, no doubt, new

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users attracted to the platform among our actual Supporters). Consequently, the Trust's cumulative coverage of the **Royal Blue Run 2021 was seen by a record 12,000+ Facebook** users and our Kingsbridge Running Day highlights reached 10,800 users, another record. Further innovations outside the period include a trial of Facebook's "Premiere" feature, in which followers were invited to 'attend' a virtual launch-screening of our 2021 Royal Blue Run **highlights video**. Around one hundred did, and gave the video sufficient traction to reach over 1,400 users in total.

In the months beyond the 2020-21 period end **restoration work** has continued:

- MO9324 – 1927 Thames Valley Traction Co. Tilling-Stevens B9 No. 152 – the vehicle has been run to test all the engineering repairs and improvements funded by the appeal. A roadworthiness inspection showed new front tyres were advisable so these have been supplied and fitted.
- RU8805 – 1929 AEC Reliance No. 3615 – bodywork restoration has involved fitting louvre and destination panels, making patterns for the luggage bay and trials of the sunshine roof winding mechanism. Radiator mouldings and adjacent corner panel, the front destination box and opening panel have been fitted. Plans for the engine installation have been drawn up and components have been retrieved from store.
- VW203 – 1927 Leyland PLSC3 Lion No. 2407 – once painted the windows were re-installed and the varnished internal timber finishers fitted. On the engineering front the dynamo has been overhauled due to seized brush carrier and bolts and the extent of block cracking has been further investigated with specialists. Progress on the head and rocker gear mechanisms has been made.
- LTA748 – 1950 Bedford OB No. 1409 – chassis cleaning and refurbishment of components has progressed but volunteer working parties have turned attention on the completion of TV LL 556.
- FMO938 – 1950 Bristol LL6B No. 556 – body work restoration at Martin James's works has continued with the fitting of new mouldings, removal of windows and stripping of window pans in readiness for painting, complete remake and fitting of boot doors, and wing repairs, The panel specialist repaired some and manufactured new rear corner panels all of which have been fitted. The bus was completely repainted with under and top coats before being driven back to Fifield where the windows were refitted with new window rubbers in October 2021. Following a 'final push' appeal to also tackle the interior, seat frames of the correct design have been modified to give the narrow configuration and volunteers are preparing them for installation. Moquette of the original design has also been donated which, with some additional funding, will ensure the complete and authentic restoration of 556 externally and internally can be completed.
- OTA290G – 1969 Bristol VRT/SL6G No. 1056 – the re-trimmed seats were fitted in 1056 and after roadworthiness checks it was driven to Devon by Supporters so it could take part in the vintage bus running day in Kingsbridge in September.
- MOD973 – 1952 Bristol LS No. 1286 – some minor repairs were made prior to the Royal Blue Run (adjusting the drag link end, rethreading boot door hinge fixings and re-securing the entrance grab-rail). At the end of a successful run, an issue was audible which was traced to problems with the dynamo positioning / saddles. This was dismantled and reinstalled correctly to solve the problem.

Ahead of the Kingsbridge event in September, all participating vehicles were required to have MoTs or roadworthiness inspections (as appropriate to their age / taxation class). This applied equally to Trust loan vehicles and Trustee-owned vehicles made available for the event. Commercial inspection services and those of suitably qualified Supporters were deployed with defects and any resulting rectification required being recorded. Necessary remediation was carried out before

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vehicles were used on passenger service. This was a major task after such a period of inactivity to ensure events could be held safely.

Delivery was also taken of sets of destination blinds made to Trust specification by Tearne's, a long-standing original maker of linen blinds whose business closed in 2021. Trustees Colin Billington and David Sheppard spent considerable time ensuring the design and layout were historically accurate and covered destinations frequented in Trust Running Days. Deploying these around participating vehicles will add to the authenticity of Trust running days, and particularly in the scenes captured by photographers.

Generous **funding of the Trust** by Supporters continued beyond the 2020-21 year end, particularly through annual renewal donations which contribute to the Trust's standing and overhead costs. Additional costs of producing *Service-19* were also covered.

The original appeal to purchase and undertake the bodywork restoration of 556 was fully subscribed within a few weeks in the course of the reporting year and work proceeded as described above. Although showcasing the newly painted bus for the TVTCo+1 centenary was within reach, plans were thwarted by the Government's delay to the road-map which meant public gatherings exceeding 30 people were still banned on the intended event date. The disappointment was turned to an opportunity to include refurbishment of the interior in the project before the next occasion for its public unveiling. A new "556 – The Final Push" appeal was therefore launched in August 2021 with a leaflet illustrating the quality of the bodywork restoration and seeking funds for seat frames of the correct design to be modified for the narrow 556 configuration, and for timber seat bases to be manufactured and upholstered with moquette to the original specification. Early responses enabled work to commence and, with the donation of the required moquette, in October 2021 a successful outcome is anticipated.

The Trust has also pursued grants and was awarded £400 by the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead from its voluntary organisations funding scheme to raise awareness within the local communities of the significance of Maidenhead to the origins of the TVTCo. a century (+1 year) ago and to the links to sustainable public transport today with the 'Thames Valley' name resurrected for services in the Maidenhead, Windsor and surrounding areas.

Further grant funding opportunities are now being pursued by the Trust to open new income streams. Similarly the Trust has registered with Amazon Smile and is beginning to receive spin-off charitable donations. It has further set up a contactless payment device to remove reliance on cash at events.

Support from the major transport companies has returned in the form of advertising in the Kingsbridge event programme in September 2021. Support from Tally Ho Coaches, Go South West (Plymouth Citybus) and Stagecoach was augmented by Great Western Railway in relation to the integrated transport initiatives. Other local advertisers have also returned encouraging the Trust to include this pre-pandemic funding model in future years

Despite the pandemic disruption, the Trust continues to be well resourced financially benefitting from its prudent reserves policy. The Trustees have been able to limit the Trust's expenditure in anticipation of unpredictable and limited opportunities to generate income while also diversifying its funding sources as described above.

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RISKS

The Trustees of The Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust are fully aware of and implement policies to address any risks appropriate to the Trust. The risk management strategy comprises:

- A regular (at least annual) review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the Trust faces in terms of its overall operations and with respect to specific activities;
- The establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the Trust should those risks materialise.

This work has ensured that financial sustainability in the short (1-3 years) and medium (3-5 years) term is assured because of the reserves held, the funding terms of loan agreements, and securing of commercial advertising associated with key events which all serve to protect the Trust from financial risk.

Non-financial risks related to health and safety are under constant review with additional consideration of Covid-safe measures. For workshop activity competence is assessed and work supervised as appropriate and expenditure is made where necessary to ensure that equipment is maintained to the required standards. Public educational events such as running days follow best practice guidelines such as that issued by the National Association of Road Transport Museums. It is also recognised that safe and professional conduct of such events is critical to managing reputational risk and measures are therefore addressed in earnest.

The principal risk identified by the Trustees for ensuring the level of activity is sustainable remains the potential for Trustees becoming over-burdened. Spreading the workload more widely was helping ensure the burden on Trustees was manageable, enabling them to fulfil their strategic as well as day to day roles. However, restrictions in the pandemic did put additional burden back on Trustees who were equipped to maintain the Trust's profile and core functions from home office environments. The Supporters group was established expressly to provide a pool of volunteers willing to help in a variety of ways. There had been considerable success with help at events with regular working groups established at both South Devon and Thames Valley bases to work on archives and on vehicles but this was halted in the period due to the pandemic. Fortunately signs beyond lockdown are for continued enthusiasm and engagement and Trustees are working hard to develop inclusive plans. This valuable resource will be further developed enabling team leaders to take responsibility for organising the Trust's work in specific areas. This is intended as a stage in identifying potential additional Trustees and will again be prioritised in line with the strategic plan.

The widespread impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was not previously foreseen and risks had been linked to individual events or activities. The reserves policy and Trustee actions, together, had been sufficiently prudent to protect the Trust against these perceived risks and have proved adequate through the reporting period and beyond. The consideration of risks has therefore been continued beyond the 2020-21 year end to address more fundamental risks to the style of Trust activity, sources of heritage funding and the availability of volunteers.

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PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Charities Act 2006 introduced the requirements for charities to demonstrate they provided public benefit. In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have recognised this and considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'Public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. Emphasis has been placed on access and affordability as demonstrated in this report. We have sought wide involvement from all within the community and have used social media with considerable success while also providing material accessible to those without internet access.

The Trustees have reviewed the objects, goals, services and objectives of the Trust in this light and can confirm that The Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust serves the public benefit. Details of the Trust's charitable activities are provided in the Review of the Year above. The approach has had to be modified in the period in light of the Covid-19 pandemic but the Trustees remain confident that the novel and alternative approaches have delivered significant public benefit to the extent that is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances and can confirm this remains the Trust's priority.

Trustees & Directors

The Trustees who are also Directors who served during the period were:

Dr C J Billington

Dr H M Bolt

G G Green

R D Rampton (position vacated with effect from 27 June 2020)

D T Sheppard

M J Williams (from 4 December 2020)

POLICIES

Pay policy for senior staff

The Directors/Trustees comprise the key management personnel of the Trust in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the Trust on a day to day basis. All Directors give of their time freely and no Director received remuneration in the year in respect of their responsibilities as Directors & Trustees. Details of Directors' expenses and related party transactions are disclosed in Notes 9 and 10 to the accounts.

The Trust has no employees. All work is carried out by volunteers and Supporters who also give their time without charge.

Investment policy

The Trustees have adopted a cautious policy on investment and available funds (restricted and unrestricted) have been held in an interest bearing account with our bank, Lloyds Bank plc. In order to maximise the return whilst maintaining free cash liquidity, a sweep operated on a daily basis between the current and deposit accounts leaving a current account balance of £6,000 at the end of each day. This facility was removed by Lloyds for all account holders in 2021 and transfers are now managed by the Trust's Treasurer. Due to wider economic circumstances deposit rates have been depressed but that same uncertainty undermines confidence in other financial instruments so other alternatives had not been pursued. The investment policy and security of reserves remains under review and a proportion of the reserves were placed on money markets via Lloyds Bank to secure a better rate of interest in May 2018 securing an improved level of interest. The action was accompanied by renewed assurance from Lloyds on the security of the capital sums.

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Reserves policy and going concern

The cumulative current reserve funds at the end of the period are £186198 (2020: £176352) in the Restricted Funds and £72754 (2020: £71101) Unrestricted Funds. The Trust's policy had been to hold unrestricted reserves to a level: (a) sufficient to cover risks outside the Trust's control (e.g. inclement weather) associated with the major events carried out by the Trust within the year; (b) to provide for the development and expansion of the Trust's educational and training activities; and (c) to build up reserves to provide match funding as required by grant making bodies for future projects. Previous vehicle acquisitions (e.g. Southern National Bristol KSW 1852) and future potential underline the need for significant reserves to be held to address (c) in particular. The Trustees had therefore considered that the ideal level of reserves should be at least £40000 when major projects are in the offing. The prudence of this policy has been confirmed with the Covid-19 pandemic when restrictions on activity from March 2020 meant that all the Trust's public events and gatherings (the principal mechanism for delivering public benefit and raising funds) for the 2020-21 financial year have had to be cancelled. The reserve funds mean the Trust is able to cover its standing support costs and develop new ways to engage the public and generate fresh revenue streams whilst also progressing the Trust's objects with advance funding held in restricted funds for this purpose.

In view of the ongoing uncertainty about Covid-19 and the potential for its resurgence and/or the emergence of other similar pandemics, as well as the impact on the economy and uncertainty over future charitable giving and leisure practices for the general public, the Trustees now consider reserves of at least £55000 should be maintained and built on where possible for the foreseeable future. The policy will continue to be reviewed annually with a view to reducing the reserve level once the picture is more certain.

Five of the seven restricted funds have zero or positive balances at the year end with formal commitments from benefactors to provide financial support sufficient to cover all outgoings on restoration projects and associated educational/event activity. RF6 which ring-fences funding for Southern National No. 1852 has a small negative cash balance but has a notional fixed asset value of £1000 (reflecting its purchase price). RF7, relating to Thames Valley No. 556, has a negative cash balance but again this is less than its (conservative) capital valuation based on purchase price (£5000) and furthermore funding pledges cover the restoration costs beyond the year end, more than offset the shortfall. In the cases of RF4 (Reading VR No. 38) and RF5 (Thames Valley No. 152) shortfalls in direct funding to the restricted funds have been offset by modest contributions from general unrestricted funds

The policy on expenditure is not to commit to any item of expenditure unless income is guaranteed or can be covered by existing reserves taking due account of risks and uncertainties involved.

The Trustees have reviewed the circumstances of the Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust and consider that adequate resources continue to be available to fund the activities of the Trust for the foreseeable future. The Trustees are of the view that the Trust is a going concern.

This report was approved by the board on 30 October 2021 and signed on its behalf.

Dr C J Billington

Director