

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 2022

THE THAMES VALLEY AND GREAT WESTERN OMNIBUS TRUST

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

COMPANY INFORMATION – TRUSTEES, DIRECTORS and PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS

Year ended 28 February 2022

Directors / Trustees	Dr C J Billington Dr H M Bolt P M Delaney (appointed 23 January 2022) G G Green D T Sheppard P Snowden (appointed 23 January 2022) M J Williams
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

THE THAMES VALLEY AND GREAT WESTERN OMNIBUS TRUST

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

Year ended 28 February 2022

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 2022 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. 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. Two of the first Trustees & Directors remain in post. The third's appointment was terminated as required by the Articles of Association and he ceased being a member, Trustee or Director on 27 June 2020.

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. One new Trustee & Director was appointed on 4 December 2020 with two further appointments on 23 January 2022 within the current reporting year. At the end of the period, the Trust therefore had seven 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 additional 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.
- FMO938 – a 1950 Thames Valley Traction Co. Bristol LL6B single deck bus No. 556.
- 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, extended for a further 10 Year term until November 2031).
- FTA634 – a 1941 Western National Omnibus Co. Bristol K5G double deck bus No. 345 (on loan 1 November 2011 for 10 Year term, extended for a further 10 Year term until November 2031).

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- JUO992 – a 1947 Southern National Omnibus Co. Leyland PD1A double deck bus No. 2932 (on loan 1 November 2011 for 10 Year term, extended for a further 10 Year term until November 2031).
- BOD25C – a 1965 Western National Omnibus Co. Bristol FLF6B double deck bus No. 2065 (on loan 1 November 2011 for 10 Year term, extended for a further 10 Year term until November 2031).
- 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).

There were no additions or removals from the collection during the period. The loan term of four vehicles was extended for a further 10 years to November 2031 as noted above. All four vehicles are under active restoration as part of the Trust's restoration activity with the different facets on display to visitors.

As a collection, the vehicles span the Trust's region of operation and a 57-year period of manufacture 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, JUO992, 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, 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.

The ongoing impact of the COVID pandemic was such that at the start of the year (1 March 2021) the country still faced restrictions in the form of a 'road map' which charted the nature (indoor / outdoor), scale, and associated precautions (masks / sanitisation) for gatherings with progressive relaxations through to mid-summer 2021 subject to an ongoing decline in infections.

It is important that these circumstances are recalled as the restrictions and uncertainty pervaded planning for all aspects of Trust activity in the year, whether working groups in the vehicle workshops or archives, Trustee and Supporter meetings/gatherings and the public participation events across the country which in normal times attract thousands of people and are a primary source of Trust income. The impacts of COVID affecting people's confidence to go out and participate in group activities through 2021 and 2022 also need to be recognised.

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Having had to cancel important centenary celebrations in 2020-21, the Trust had approached the 2021 calendar year with optimism, planning a sequence of public events to its former timetable, celebrating centenary+1 anniversaries where appropriate. However, road map limits affecting the size of gatherings and conditions in enclosed spaces disrupted these plans. As in 2020-21, success cannot therefore be measured meaningfully 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.

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 having been stopped for several months in 2020-21. By the end of 2021, three-weekly and monthly archive days were in full flow in Berkshire and Devon respectively, and twice weekly vehicle working groups with multiple work fronts in Berkshire. Vehicle restoration in Devon has necessarily been ad hoc to fit with volunteers' shift work patterns.

Trustees continued to 'meet' remotely or with a hybrid remote/in-person mix. The availability of on-line Zoom or MS Teams systems offers useful flexibility for geographically dispersed officers. As permitted by the Charity Commission in October 2021 the Trust's Annual General Meeting was held in hybrid form.

The Trust's **archive and small object collection** is held at its bases in Berkshire and in Devon, with volunteer teams at both locations who meet on a regular basis to identify, sort and catalogue material donated to the Trust in order to make it accessible for public study. Following the restrictions necessary due to the pandemic, which meant that the teams could not meet 'in person' for several months, the Devon team have met monthly, whilst that in Berkshire have done so every three weeks, and in addition, some work has taken place off-site in between times, to, for example, make use of specialist skills to scan photographic slides. For the Berkshire team, this has amounted to about 1360 volunteer hours in the year under review and in Devon a further 232 volunteer hours have been devoted to this activity.

During the period, a number of large collections have been donated to the Trust, some from former industry employees or enthusiasts who have bequeathed material to the Trust. Whilst a large proportion of these are photographs, there is a wide range of material, both in terms of time period (from the 19th century to the 21st), geographical area, or category – not just 'paper-based', but artefacts relating to the operation of public road transport. Arrangements were developed through the period to transfer any duplicate items to the other of the Trust's sites, to facilitate research there, but also for security.

A major project was initiated to digitise 8mm cine film taken by the late Mike Stephens from the 1960s onwards and donated to the Trust. Specialist skills were engaged to clean, retime and recolour films to create archive quality and viewing copies for posterity so the risks of running fragile film through rare obsolete equipment are avoided. Work commence on material where annotations clearly show an association with the Trust's main areas of focus as this will be a particular draw for future audiences.

The resources in the Trust archive are also available to researchers. In the reporting year this was principally from Trust Supporters and has resulted in articles not only in the Trust's own publications, but also in those available to the wider public. The archive teams at both locations include people with a range of specialist knowledge, which not only facilitates the indexing of material, but also enables the Trust to answer enquiries received from those not able to visit the archive in person.

The configuration of laptops procured in 2021 as the pandemic hit, has progressed with ten full Microsoft suite licenses obtained by the Trust with zero charge following approval on the

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corporation's not-for-profit scheme. The accompanying cloud-based storage will provide the basis for shared access to resources with centralised secure storage of Trust files and archive and other data over which access can be enabled and controlled.

Right at the end of the period (18 February 2022) Storm Eunice brought a tree down on overhead power cables attached to the wall of the Trust's Berkshire Archive office ripping the end wall from the building. No persons were in the vicinity and all archive material was safe in the back store but the archive room was out of use for the remainder of the reporting year and into 2022-23 while the landlord's insurers reinstated the structure and made safe the incoming services. The former Maidenhead waiting room and ticket office also on the site, provided an alternative venue for archive work to continue minimising the interruption.

The Trust's **annual programme of events** is central to its delivery of public benefit giving people the opportunity to experience bygone travel, learn more about the heritage vehicles and the social history they represent. As pandemic restrictions eased, the Trust responded with a programme of events that could proceed in some form, even if the format had to be modified to limit close contacts.

- The normal passenger-carrying **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 below. 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, Cornwall, Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. Despite horrendous weather, parties being limited to six persons, 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 very successful post-event compilation video as described in the social media reporting below.
- **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 established 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 potential Centenary+2 event for 2022-3.
- 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

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motivator. Special risk assessments and COVID-specific measures for passengers were introduced and scheduling avoided narrow routes congested with stay-cationers and also ensured frequent departures minimised crowds in the bus station hub. 34 vehicles ran in service giving 3835 well-spaced passenger journeys with 100 accompanying dog journeys. 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 officials 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 Kingsbridge 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 souvenir 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 enabling ideas to be shared to benefit Trust events.

- On 11 April 2021, Royal Blue LS 1286 took part in the London Bus Museum Preservation Trust Route 65 Ealing to Leatherhead flyby which proved viability for ideas subsequently 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.

In previous years event success was 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 remain meaningless in 2021-22 conditions for comparison with pre-pandemic years. However, vehicles were out on the road and seen by the public in the reporting year with passengers starting to be carried towards the year end. These metrics will therefore be revisited in future years.

Other 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 and a range of local businesses in 2019-20. Losing this with the absence of public events in the early part of the reporting year again impacted the Trust's 2021-22 income albeit to a lesser extent than in 2020-21. 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. There were signs of recovery with the success of the COVID-safe Kingsbridge event in September 2021 so these metrics will be revisited in future years.

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Vehicle Restoration work continued through the reporting year, accelerating when volunteer working groups were able to re-commence as pandemic restrictions eased. In Berkshire some 747 Supporter hours were recorded contributing to restoration efforts with a further 160 hours expended in Devon. Vehicle-specific activities included:

- MO9324 – 1927 Thames Valley Traction Co. Tilling-Stevens B9 No. 152 – the vehicle was run to test all the engineering repairs and improvements funded by the appeal, undertaken in 2020-21. A roadworthiness inspection showed new front tyres were advisable so these were supplied and fitted.
- RU8805 – 1929 AEC Reliance No. 3615 – bodywork restoration involved fitting louvre and destination panels, making patterns for the luggage bay and trials of the sunshine roof winding mechanism and completing the cab frame, door and rear panels. Radiator mouldings and adjacent corner panel, the front destination box and opening panel were fitted. Plans for the engine installation were drawn up and components 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. The extent of cracking in the engine block and head has been further investigated with specialist repair and reinstatement with recut/remade studs. Progress on the head and rocker gear mechanisms was made.
- FTA634 – 1941 Bristol K5G No. 345 – the engine was removed and sent away for refurbishment giving volunteers ready access to clean and paint the engine bay and main chassis members.
- LTA748 – 1950 Bedford OB No. 1409 – chassis cleaning and refurbishment of components progressed but volunteer working parties turned attention to the completion of TV LL 556 (returning to 1409 in 2022-23).
- FMO938 – 1950 Bristol LL6B No. 556 – body work restoration at Martin James's works 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, A panelling specialist repaired some and manufactured other new rear corner panels all of which were fitted. The bus was completely repainted with under and top coats before being driven back to the Trust's workshops 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 were modified to give the narrow configuration and volunteers prepared and installed them. Moquette of the original design was donated which, with some additional funding, ensured the complete and authentic restoration of 556 externally and internally could be completed in 2022-23. Parallel engineering work had thoroughly refurbished the brake systems.
- 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.

A significant contribution to the trust's public profile, comes from the hard work of Supporters who volunteer time in the run up to events and excursions to clean and polish vehicles inside and out, and assist with vehicle maintenance checks, lubrication, fuelling etc.

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 in the reporting year, particularly through annual renewal donations which contribute to the Trust's standing and overhead costs. Additional costs of producing an additional newsletter, *Service-19*, were also covered by donations.

The original appeal to purchase and undertake the bodywork restoration of 556 was fully subscribed within a few weeks in the course of the 2020-21 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 COVID 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, a successful outcome was 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 were pursued by the Trust to open new income streams but without success in the reporting year but these efforts have continued with more success in 2022-23 (see below). The Trust registered with Amazon Smile and began receiving spin-off charitable donations. It further set up a contactless payment device to remove reliance on cash at events and this brought significant revenue that otherwise would have been lost if reliance remained on just cash transactions.

Support from the major transport companies 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 for events in future years

Despite the pandemic disruption, the Trust continued 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

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funding sources as described above. The landlord of vehicle storage facilities also gave a rebate in light of COVID challenges facing the Trust.

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 2021-22 year the number of Supporters rose substantially from 238 at the start to 263 at the year end despite the absence of public events which normally present recruiting opportunities. This strong position reflects an almost complete renewal by existing Supporters in May 2021 and a steady influx of new Supporters throughout the year.

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 collections and their own material to research and illustrate the 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 to Supporters.

With the organisation of the Trust's archives ever improving, a growing number of *To and fro* authors draw directly on them for research and illustration purposes. This has not only enriched the scope and depth of articles within the period, but has also enhanced the magazine's role as a means of public access to our collections.

The enforced interruption in Trust events during the pandemic, then limited participation as activities resumed, continued to give editorial challenges during the period. Fortunately increased input from Supporters on historical matters has compensated for the lack of event reports and the increased average length of *To and fro* delivered in 2020-21 has continued (at around 44 pages) with a 'bumper edition' running to 52 pages in the Summer of 2021. Through the reporting year the content, contributing to the public education in the history of the Thames Valley & Great Western and successor companies, was as follows:

- Issue 24 (published April 2021) opened with the Chairman's Trust Traffic notices setting out expectations for the Trust's principal events in 2021 (Penzance, Royal Blue Run, Maidenhead and Kingsbridge) complying with the Covid-release roadmap while ensuring significant '+1' anniversaries would be celebrated. A roundup of other Trust activities and plans on restoration and archive fronts sought to inspire renewed Supporter engagement. Sadly obituaries for Supporters Graham Geoghegan and Mike Stevens were included, both gentlemen having contributed significantly to recording public transport history within and beyond TV&GWOT territories and whose collections have been left to enrich the Trust's archive. A unique Insight into life at 'the works' (Thames Valley Central Works, 1961-1966) explained the grounding for Trustee Graham Green's career in mechanical engineering from which the Trust benefits so significantly. Regular contributor Paul Lacey revealed the after-life of Thames Valley buses as gritters with Berkshire County Council. Soon-to-be Trustees Peter Snowden and Peter Delaney respectively revealed the final throes of West Country Lodekkas in photographs of the various cover-ups and modifications made in the latter years of operations, and presented a study of express coach services between London and Oxford, in contrast to the more usual services across the TV&GWOT area from the South West to London or the Midlands. Finally, the 5th and final instalment of a 1980 West Country Tour reached East Devon and Dorset.
- Issue 25 (July 2021) - With events restarting, of a fashion, the CBPS/TV&GWOT vintage bus fly-by around Penzance in April 2021 was shared in observers' spectacular photographs. A Driver's eye account of the Trust's Summer 2021 Royal Blue Run brought the epic journey alive for readers in lieu of the normal passenger experience. To

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complement the piece, the original services that took Royal Blue, with other operators, beyond its traditional boundaries in north Kent, Essex and East Anglia were described. The role of Thames Valley promoting and serving the 1951 Festival of Britain event 70 years on was illustrated and a remarkable tale of a much travelled Thames Valley Bellgraphic bus ticket secreted in a preserved vehicle for over 70 years was told. North Devon as witnessed in the 1960s was presented, then reminiscences of day trips from Plymouth into Cornwall in June 1971 by 'Travel Anywhere Bus Ticket' were recalled. History created at the turn of 1982/3 as WNOC made its final journey in Weymouth was captured. Readers were challenged to identify vehicles by their interiors in a pictorial quiz.

- Issue 26 (October 2021) - The nearly normal Kingsbridge Running Day 2021 was celebrated in the sheer joy of the driver's view from the cab of Beadle-Bedford HOD66. The event marked 60(+1) years of the Bristol SU and a companion to the West Country article in the event programme celebrated SUs in the Thames Valley. Earlier challenges for Thames Valley were described with the transfer of 15 buses and coaches from the GWR. An alarming tale of passenger road transport and criminal activity in the 1930s was told referencing evidence from the TV&GWOT archive. The role of Mercedes Minibuses as breadwinners for Western National, demonstrated them worthy of preservation. The mysteries of the Thames Valley saloons posed in 025 were resolved.
- Finally in the period, Issue 27 (December 2021) gave a fascinating insight to the evolution of licensing schemes for buses and coaches from an 1847 Act through to deregulation in the 1980s. The fate of the crew and passengers in a Western National OB attempting to cross Exmoor when a blizzard struck in 1937 was an appropriately wintry tale. Photographs from Guildford in 1972 gave a festive display of reds and greens as Aldershot & District transitioned to the Alder Valley 'wine' era with the recent NBC corporate identity also in evidence. Illustrations of vehicles transferred *from the 'Valley to the Valleys* (Thames Valley to United Welsh) provided an important record. Pictures also provided the basis for the record of the twilight years of Lodekkas in and around Taunton in the 1970s and early 1980s.

The content throughout is original and provides an important historical record from authors' research. Together the magazines issued in the current reporting year contained 32 original and exclusive features (2020-21: 40), of which 22 were historical articles (2020-21: 23). They featured and interpreted 278 images (2020-21: 246), of which 200 (2020-21: 186) 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 so popular during the year 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.

Charitable accounts have been established on eBay, Paypal and Square to diversify the routes for the Trust to secure payments with minimal charges as the providers offer favourable terms to not-for-profits / charities.

When the pandemic hit (in 2020-21), the Trust recognised communication with Supporters was a priority 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. Running to as many as 24-pages, articles, comments and curios from Supporters' were compiled in conversational style to elicit feedback and interaction between Supporters. It was extremely popular and successful so in the current reporting year (2021-22) 9th and 10th editions were circulated by email (or in hard copy for those without internet) in March and May of 2021 with a final (11th) edition rounding off the initiative at the turn of the calendar year by way of festive treat.

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Service-19 served a valuable purpose in the barren days of the pandemic but with the resumption of in-person events attracting swathes of the wider public as 2021 progressed, it was recognised that without significant additional resource the Newsletter with its limited circulation was not sustainable nor did the same need persist. The letters section in *To and fro* will however be expanded to accommodate more dialogue between Supporters and, beyond the year end, consideration has been given to a novel online forum to give a contemporary and sustainable twist to facilitate the interaction.

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 2021-22 year included addressing concerns about the use of ageing tyres on heritage vehicles and the introduction of tyre safety management procedures.

Within the period NARTM received a significant, seven-figure, legacy and TV&GWOT Chairman in his NARTM capacity was heavily involved dealing with legal and investment aspects as well as strategy for future expenditure to benefit the road transport museum movement. A principal aspect has been in relation to skills development and the potential for an apprenticeship scheme. This work has involved extensive liaison with other heritage / transport bodies and networking which has significant benefits to TV&GWOT alongside the NARTM objectives.

Heritage sector links have been maintained, 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. Government funded initiatives such as **Heritage Digital** and **Learning Through Data** have provided specific guidance through webinars and online workshops related to an online presence which Trustees have participated in and now subscribe to newsletter style policy updates. The Trust has continued to be involved with the **Land Transport Archive Network**, coordinated by The National Archives 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 progressing the LTAN survey activity in the passenger road transport sector into the scope of archive holdings.

The **website** is vital for the Trust to maintain 'virtual' contact with the public (providing up to date reference material about the Trust's objectives and constitution, activities and 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).

The Trust's **social media** continued to play a significant role in achieving public benefit throughout the period, particularly during ongoing challenges resulting from the pandemic. Social Media gave an outstanding opportunity to enhance the Trust's visibility, promote interest in its work and collections and to increase both its virtual and real world supporter base, particularly when in-person participation was limited.

The Trust's Facebook page is its primary social media presence. Its overall success may be measured by an aggregate number of 'followers' (encompassing all who subscribe to updates), though individual posts may travel way beyond that audience to achieve a higher 'reach' (the

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number of users who encounter the post) and 'engagement' (the number who react in some way). Highlights from the 2021-22 year include:

- In April 2021 the **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's cumulative coverage of the **Royal Blue Run 2021 was seen by a record 12,000+ Facebook** users with the **highest post-reach of the period being 6,597** for a 2021 Royal Blue Run update. A further innovation was to 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 September our **Kingsbridge Running Day** highlights reached **10,800 users**, another record and a video of our SU60 display generated the **highest post engagement for the year – 1,590.**

By all measures the page saw further significant growth throughout the period and remains the market leader in both the Thames Valley and West Country areas, among those for comparable groups and charitable Trusts, by a significant margin.

Since the end of the period, the Trust's **Facebook following has grown to 2,570 (+14% year on year)**. Many more users receive the Trust's content virally as a result of both organic and strategic sharing of our posts resulting in the levels of reach and engagement recorded above.

In common with most comparable organisations, the Trust's virtual following far exceeds the number actually subscribing as Supporters. During the period, several initiatives were launched (and are ongoing) to translate virtual interest into volunteering and financial support, including the use of 'teaser' content to promote opportunities to help or spend. However, the Trust recognises that a major appeal for many social media users is the ability to engage free-of-charge and without commitment, and therefore material growth in this area is not unlimited. The Trust is therefore content to continue serving this sizeable audience primarily as a means of attracting the public to attend events, as well as enhancing access to our collections thereby delivering public benefit.

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 the online arena. These communication routes are maintaining and increasing awareness of the Trust and helping engage new Supporters from far afield.

Where opportunities to **network with other organisations**, whether by making presentations or hosting visits, were eliminated by the pandemic in 2020-21, such activity resumed in the current reporting year. Group visits, which normally form part of their annual programmes, were slower to resume given the lead time for them to be organised but are once again features of the Trust's outreach activity beyond the year end. Activities within the period included:

18 September 2021 - At the request of Tally Ho Coaches, the Trust's Kingsbridge 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 trains to and from the Capital. **Anthony Mangnall MP and mayors from Salcombe and Kingsbridge plus GWR and Tally Ho company officials** and invited guests, visited the Trust's Devon museum for the launch.

30 September 2021 - Trustee David Sheppard gave an informal tour of the Trust's South Devon base to **long serving Stagecoach East Midlands employees** Richard and Lynn Hill. Lynn works as PA to the company Directors and Richard has latterly served as a Driving Instructor after a

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successful career as a Driver. Richard is also a keen preservationist having taken a lead role in preserving the company's 1961 Bristol SC4LK bus, and was keen to visit the Trust's base to further his knowledge and understanding of the type's successor, the Bristol SU.

Stagecoach Long Service Awards - Trustee David Sheppard compèred a series of events attended by staff, industry figures and opinion formers for different regions through the year, on each occasion including an overview of the Trust's work.

9 October 2021 – Stagecoach East in Cambridge - c.400 staff,

30 October 2021- Stagecoach East Midlands, Lincoln – c.500 staff and delivered alongside the company's heritage vehicle a 1961 former Lincolnshire Road Car Bristol SC4LK

19 February 2022 – Stagecoach North East, Newcastle – c. 600 staff.

22 October 2021 - Trustee David Sheppard gave an informal tour of the Trust's South Devon base to **BBC Home Affairs Correspondent** Ben Woolvin and his party of ten. Ben and his family are regular attendees at the Trust's Kingsbridge Vintage Bus Running Day and have been keen to encourage a growing interest in buses among the children.

14 December 2021 – Trustee Colin Billington gave a talk to the **Great Western Society's** Bristol Branch on Great Western Road Motors. The talk drew extensively on records from the Trust archives and covered the GWR Guy bus (Fleet No. 1268) on long-term loan to the Trust.

The pandemic restrictions meant that **the volunteer effort** in relation to archive and vehicle working groups and preparing for and running public events was necessarily suspended in 2020-21. While Trustees, the webmaster and some members of the Berkshire archive team were active from home the activity fell significantly short of the 17,300 volunteer hours recorded for 246 individuals in 2019-20. The road map in place at the start of the reporting year (March 2021) provided the basis for activities to resume, albeit with precautions, and the Trust was fortunate that Supporters returned eager to get back involved. This voluntary effort is the backbone of the Trust's ability to deliver public benefit and preserve the collections for posterity. Aggregate figures for the current reporting year 2021-22 show 205 individuals helped with Trust activities, **contributing 10,500 volunteer hours**, with 120 of these volunteers (2019-20; 210) involved in crewing the 77 different vehicles (2019-20: 121) which attended TV&GWOT events.

The Supporters' group is a primary source of volunteers, providing 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. Of the **264 people registered as Supporters** at the year end, a significant proportion have been actively engaged in working groups, participating around events, contributing as advisors or research correspondents and helping fund projects. Trustees wish to thank Supporters and other volunteers for their continuing input and help in ensuring the success and future sustainability of the Trust.

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ACTIVITY & PUBLIC BENEFIT IN 2022, BEYOND THE 2021-22 REPORTING YEAR END

With the pandemic restrictions on movement and gatherings receding and the confidence of individuals to mix and organisations to plan activities returning, the Trust approached the 2022-23 year with optimism. Trustees recognised the importance of re-engaging Supporters to enthuse them and to enlist their energy to undertake the many tasks that keep the organisation running and able to educate the public in the history of Thames Valley, Great Western and successor companies.

To this end Supporters were invited to a series of **Supporter Open Days** at the Trust's Devon and Berkshire premises on **5 March and 26 & 27 March** respectively. Some 108 Supporters participated over the three days and were brought up to date with archive, vehicle, administration and event activities and opportunities for involvement as they were taken on tours around the premises. The days included lunch and the chance for Supporters to catch up with one another as well as a trip out on Trust vehicles over Gara Bridge in Devon and through Windsor and the Great Park in Berkshire. There was the opportunity to review the archive cine film recently digitised from Mike Stephens's collection. Each day concluded with a group discussion where Supporters were able to contribute ideas and suggestions as to how the Trust can expand and strengthen its work.

The **Supporters' Group** has continued to flourish with 28 new Supporters coming on board in the seven months beyond the year end. This is a significant inflow with many joining at events and/or seeking access to Trust publications like *To and fro'* (including back numbers). Three further editions of the **Supporters' magazine *To and fro'*** have been produced containing a further 18 original and exclusive features, of which 13 were historical articles. They featured and interpreted 205 images, of which 142 were historic and/or from the Trust's archives.

Engagement of Trust Supporters as volunteers in vehicle restoration and maintenance **working groups** is flourishing, with an expanded cohort and twice-weekly sessions in Berkshire. Archive activity in Berkshire was set back at the start of the 2022-23 year because of the repairs to the archive office necessitated by damage in storm Eunice on 18 February. By mid-summer the archive team was back to three-weekly sessions with additional work being done by Supporters in their own homes and complemented by a monthly gathering of the archive working group in Devon.

The Trust's **archive and small object collection** has continued to receive significant donations as collectors and people who formerly worked in the industry are increasingly recognising the Trust as a dependable custodian of materials related to the Thames Valley and Great Western/National Omnibus & Transport companies and successors. The resources available in the Trust archive are also being made available to researchers and the use and availability of materials further encourages donors. To this end the Trust's registration on **The National Archives ARCHON database** (Code 3565) is an important step in raising its profile and accessibility. The archive teams at both locations include people with a range of specialist knowledge, which not only facilitates the indexing of material, but also to answer enquiries received from those not able to visit the archive in person. In previous periods enquiries have mainly come from Trust Supporters and have resulted in articles not only in the Trust's own publications, but also in those available to the wider public. Beyond the year end external enquiries have also come through for example from a researcher interested in a specific collection he knows to be held in the Trust's Berkshire archive and in Devon from a Councillor interested in drawings and photographs of Kingsbridge Bus Station from which to develop a historical display of the quayside site from the 1930s to the present day.

A key element of accessibility is the recording and cataloguing of the collection in a manner that is consistent across the Trust locations and in line with Sector standards for accreditation. Policy and procedure development and systems to utilise secure, centralised digital storage from Trust-owned laptops has progressed further and remains a priority in the 2022-23 period. In addition Trustees have attended National Archives' seminars on the use of their Manage Your Collections facility in Discovery as a readily accessible starting point for third party online access.

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A spin-off of improved archive practices is the ability to identify duplicate materials. In the first instance duplicate items are relocated to the other of the Trust's sites, to facilitate research there and give back-up security. Beyond that copies surplus to requirements can, subject to the donor's explicit permission, be offered for sale to raise funds towards the purchase of archival quality storage and preservation materials. The necessary systems to process this have developed beyond the 2021-22 year end with archive revenue being generated in this way on sales stands in the summer of 2022.

A full programme of events has taken place for the summer season beyond the year end.

There have been some challenges due to competing events (not just within the transport heritage sector) as many individuals and organisations have tried to reinstate plans thwarted for two years by the pandemic. The significant increase in fuel prices combined with the rising cost of living have been a matter of concern, but the Trust has been encouraged by the enthusiasm and generosity of owners to bring their vehicles considerable distances at their own expense to participate in events and similarly for enthusiasts and the wider public to come along.

In addition to its normal **vintage bus running day events**, the Trust took on a major programme of activities with **Victoria Coach Station to mark its 90th anniversary**. An official event to mark the anniversary, a running day, a static display and the production of a book to chart the history to date have placed significant additional demand on Trustees but have raised the Trust's profile with new audiences. With new publications and surplus material from the archive supplementing the Trust's sales stock, opportunities have been taken to attend third party events with a sales stand, widening awareness of the Trust in other regions.

The **chronology of Trust events and events attended by the Trust** since the start of the 2022-23 year until October is as follows:

- **Friday 10th March 2022** marked 90 years to the day since the Grand Opening of Victoria Coach Station (VCS) and TfL officials, VCS staff and representatives of the principal coach operators using VCS, gathered to reflect on the hundreds of millions of people who have passed through the nation's coaching hub over the decades whether as passengers, coach drivers or staff keeping VCS operational day and night, 365 days a year. TV&GWOT organised an accompanying display of heritage coaches from the 1950s, including Trust Chairman's Royal Blue LL No. 1250, which were positioned alongside National Express's most modern Scania Caetano Levante 3 coach. Andy Byford (as Transport for London Commissioner) addressed the assembled crowd launching the **VCS90 year of celebrations**, accompanied by Andy Lord (Chief Operating Officer), Liam Wilson (Coach Station Manager) and Louise Cheeseman (Director of Buses).
- The **Penzance running day on Sunday 17th April 2022** returned to a passenger-carrying format after the fly-by adopted in 2021 to comply with COVID restrictions. 30 buses and coaches were entered and together provided 5268 free passenger journeys to local residents, enthusiasts and visitors staying in the area for the Easter weekend. The event, organised jointly with the Cornwall Bus Preservation Society, had a souvenir programme with an 18-page feature charting changes in buses and coaches around West Cornwall over 100 and more years as depicted in postcards since the turn of the 19th century. It also provided an account of the CBPS restoration of a Bedford YRQ to represent the local Grenville Motors fleet and included an original Modern Cornish Bus Driver's Song by Gray Lightfoot, an amusing take on Gilbert & Sullivan's Pirates of Penzance. Bus, rail and other local businesses supported the event with advertising providing encouragement for the renewed viability of these activities. TV&GWOT Trustees and Supporters took eight vehicles from the Trust's Devon base. Trust Supporters took advantage of the holiday weekend to join TV&GWOT and CBPS on a tour of the West Cornwall peninsula on the former Service 300 route.

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- Given the importance of recognising the Thames Valley Traction Co. Ltd centenary which fell during the pandemic, and with the major part of restoration of the Trust's Thames Valley vehicles complete, the Trust entered all three of its Thames Valley vehicles for the **HCVS London to Brighton Run on 8th May 2022**. The vehicles parked together at the beginning and end of the day and travelled in succession making an impactful display for photographers and bystanders of the Thames Valley heritage and TV&GWOT's preservation achievements. This was the first outing for the newly restored Bristol LL6B No. 556 to which Supporters had contributed financially and with substantial volunteer effort and some 40 Supporters joined the iconic London-Brighton run.
- On **Sunday 15th May 2022**, Trust Chairman's Bristol FLF No. 1969 took a party of Supporters from South Devon to the **Taunton Vintage Bus Running Day** organised by Trustee Peter Snowden. 1969 ran services between the event base at Sheppy's Cider to both Wellington and Bishops Lydeard (the inland terminus of the West Somerset Railway), in total carrying some 284 passengers while a sales stand generated a useful level of income (until the rain came).
- Joint working with the Great Western Society, a feature of pre-pandemic operations, resumed for the **Didcot Transport Rally and Vintage Bus Running Day on 22nd May 2022**. Trust Supporter, Jonathan Radley, led the organisation and coordination of 22 buses and coaches which combined a static display with free passenger carrying services on former GWR Road Motors' routes to Wallingford, Wantage, Upton & Blewbury and Abingdon. In addition a shuttle service was operated between the station and heritage railway entrance and the rally site in Ladygrove Park so that in total some 2990 passenger journeys were given. The souvenir programme included a feature illustrated with photographs and postcards depicting GWR Road Motors' vehicles across TV&GWOT's principal territories demonstrating the links between GWR and the Trust's scope, focusing particularly in on the GWR Guy No. 1268 on long-term loan to the Trust's collection. This was the first outing in passenger carrying service for the Trust's trio of Thames Valley vehicles (Tilling Stevens No. 152, Bristol K6A 446 and Bristol LL6B 556). They were accompanied by Trust owned Reading Bristol VRT No. 38, Royal Blue LS6G No. 1286 on long-term loan and Trust Chairmans Eastern National Duple 425 No. 2240, with Supporters also bringing their own vehicles to participate.
- The **Royal Blue Run from Friday 17th to Sunday 19th June 2022** commenced with a Grand Departure from Victoria Coach Station as a feature of the VCS90 celebrations. Some 16 coaches with 60 or more people travelling as passengers or crew, participated in some or all of the 3-day event which reached compass points from London in the East, Birmingham in the North, Gloucester in the East and Portsmouth in the South. The run was an intricate combination of joint Royal Blue/ Greyhound, Associated Motorways, Elliott Bros era, and Tourist (later Royal Blue) routes. Remarkably only short stretches had been covered in any of the 20 previous runs underlining just how extensive the coaching network once was. On Friday the run ended in the Birmingham area passing Digbeth Coach Station, the home of National Express celebrating 50 years of 'white' national coaches in 2022. On the second day the fleet of coaches stopped at Gloucester's historic Docks for a mid-day break and the run concluded at Fawley Hill near Henley-on-Thames, home to the steam railway and memorabilia accumulated for posterity by the late Sir William McAlpine, courtesy of Lady Judy and the Fawley Hill Railway Society. Many photographers captured the vintage coaching scene along the way, sharing images online via social media amplifying the public engagement.
- On **Sunday 26th June 2022**, TV&GWOT contributed to the vintage bus display at **Reading Buses' Open Day** taking its former preserved VRT No. 38 which was new to Reading Buses in 1979 as well as Thames Valley LL No. 556 to showcase the restoration work undertaken by the Trust. The event raised funds for local homeless charity *New*

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Beginnings. Eight Supporters travelled to the event from TV&GWOT's base but many tens more were at the event and congregated at the Trust's sales stand, which provided an important local opportunity for keeping in touch as well as recruiting new Supporters and distributing educational material.

- **The Thames Valley Traction Co. (TVTCo.) centenary celebration** was thwarted by COVID restrictions in 2020 and then again a year on in 2021. Sadly plans for a large-scale event in Maidenhead for the Centenary+2 also had to be withdrawn when it became clear that there were insufficient visiting vehicles (given so many competing demands at the time) for confidence that the level of service available would be adequate to match demand. The disappointment was assuaged to an extent by a tour for Supporters of former Thames Valley depots using Bristol K6A 446 and LL6B 556. Some 42 Supporters took up the invitation with others adopting important photographer roles at picturesque points along the route. The Fifield archive team drew on its resources to chart authentic routes and extract former Thames Valley depot records for the accompanying souvenir publication. Articles by Thames Valley historian and Trust Supporter, Paul Lacey, documented the route network as it existed when Thames Valley Traction Co. operations began in 1920 and tabulated its evolution through to 1970. A leaflet produced in-house for passengers was later developed into a booklet publication to provide a permanent record with additional content recording the work to restore and maintain the Trust's Thames Valley vehicles. This booklet was professionally printed bringing revenue on the Trust stand and via sales online.
- A **VCS90 running day** operated on **Sunday 24th July 2022** with a mix of vintage coaches (co-ordinated by TV&GWOT) operating west from VCS to Hammersmith alongside more modern Airbus service vehicles and RT and RM buses plying between VCS and the Aldwych for the London Transport Museum (co-ordinated by London Bus Museum with who TV&GWOT worked in cooperation). The focus was on an authentic VCS experience for passengers and crews and the event was extremely successful and resulted in extensive social media coverage across diverse groups. All but one of the vintage coaches (a 1951 East Kent Leyland) were supplied by TV&GWOT Trustees and Supporters. The Trust also had a marquee and sales stand within VCS for the launch of the new book authored by TV&GWOT Chairman, Colin Billington – *VCS90 – A Celebration*. As well as the history of the coach station depicted in pictures from the London Coastal Coaches Collection held by the Bus Archive and reproduced with permission, the book includes photographs of the scene in 1962 and associated with railstrikes in 1982 taken by a former employee. In addition, specific TV&GWOT themes such as the development of Express Services between the Thames Valley and London VCS and the changing colours and shape of coaches serving the West Country over the decades were featured. Popular on the day, the book has gone on to be well reviewed and has continued to raise income for the Trust at events and through online sales through the year. As of the end of October 2022, some 325 copies have been sold.
- On **Saturday 20th August 2022** LT Routemaster buses made their annual pilgrimage to **Imber**, a village on Salisbury Plain abandoned by decree during World War II and taken over by the military for essential wartime purposes. Remarkably the event proceeded despite the obstacle of a railstrike facing visitors who normally arrive via Warminster station. TV&GWOT was consulted as part of the organisers' efforts to secure long-distance coach feeder services instead, although not having an Operator's license meant the Trust could not participate in a commercial service. The Trust was however invited to take Royal Blue LS No. 1268 across the Plain to Imber, a first for a preserved coach, carrying Trust Supporters. This was a fascinating excursion and gave the opportunity for the Trust to have a sales stand while also benefitting from a generous charitable donation from the organisers from this one-off format for the event.

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- The **Kingsbridge Vintage Bus Running Day on 17th September 2022** saw the town return to a bustling hub for some 37 buses and coaches providing free services to locals and visitors to coast and country villages across the South Hams. 6112 passenger journeys almost reached pre-pandemic levels with a record 129 dogs carried. The souvenir programme, so popular it sold out on the day, included a 23-page feature about the Bristol-marque buses operated by the local bus & coach company Tally Ho through its history. The many photographs give glimpses of the local scene across the decades. Collaborations were renewed with the owners of Loddiswell Station who sold refreshments in aid of the local Explorer Scout Unit and with the Coleridge Community Bus, an independent service connecting remote residents to the East of Kingsbridge Estuary with the town, to which a donation was made. The event benefits from dedicated support from volunteers preparing vehicles over many days in the run-up to the event and an excursion on the Sunday to Dartmouth by bus & coach included a trip on the Kingswear ferry and Dart Valley steam train so they could relax and reflect on the success of their efforts promoting the Trust and generating revenue for its wider programme of preservation and restoration.
- A **static display of vintage coaches at VCS on Saturday 24th September** was the culmination of the VCS90 celebrations. The spectacle of coaches drawn from across England, Scotland and Wales filled four of the principal running bays at VCS enabling visitors to admire the vehicles at close quarters and marvel at the lavish interiors conjuring memories of bygone travel. The event followed just days after the funeral of the Late Queen Elizabeth which had necessitated an unprecedented closure of the coach station due to road closures and relocation of services to satellite hubs. Despite this onerous recent workload on staff, the static display was accommodated with their usual hospitality ensuring the public and many retired staff who travelled to the event from across the country to enjoy the day of nostalgia were not disappointed. TV&GWOT organised 15 coaches to attend dating from 1947 to 1988, liaising with TfL's coach station staff and producing an event brochure sold alongside the Trust's commemorative VCS90 book. Within the display was Royal Blue LS No. 1286 on long-term loan to the Trust alongside Trust Chairman Colin Billington's Royal Blue LL 1250 and National Express Rapide Duple 425, No. 2240.
- **Sunday 25th September 2022** was the 50th and last **Showbus** gathering, this year at the Hertfordshire County Showground. Traditionally the largest gathering of vintage buses and coaches in the country, the organisers were particularly keen for vehicles seen at the earliest shows return. The Trust therefore took Thames Valley Bristol K6A No. 446 as it made regular appearances when originally in the custody of Ward Jones, now a Trust Supporter and from whom TV&GWOT acquired the vehicle. Given the nationwide participation, the Trust also had a stand in the commercial area and advertised within the programme drawing attention to the Trust and the new VCS90 book which was sold alongside surplus archive stock and memorabilia.
- **Sunday 30th October 2022** was the final Flowers Hill Depot Open Day for the year organised by the **Bristol Vintage Bus Group** many members of which also support TV&GWOT with vehicles and event preparation. The Trust reciprocated its support taking a sales stand for the indoor market area. The dual focus was to keep the Trust's profile in the eye of those with allied bus and coach interests while also promoting the VCS90 book.

Metrics to measure success in pre-pandemic years can be re-examined in 2022-3. 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 – 16,927 to date in 2022-23 compares with 24,758 in 2019-20; (b) for the number of **(vehicle) days** Trust and Trustees' vehicles participating in TV&GWOT events were on the road on public display - 236 vehicle days to date in 2022-23 compares with 262 in 2019-20; and (c) the associated **mileage** covered – 18,285 miles to date in 2022-23 compares

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with 19,692 miles in 2019-20. The differing nature and number of events in the two periods accounts for the differences.

Other measures include the sale of some 1,150 **programmes** (at £4-6) at Penzance, Didcot, and Kingsbridge events containing articles of historic interest compared with over 1,700 in 2019-20 (when there was an additional Tavistock event) and some 325 sales (£15) of the TV&GWOT **VCS90 book** so far, where 250 copies (£12.95) of TV&GWOT's Reading Motorbus centenary **book** were sold in 2019-20. Sales of the latter are ongoing including 17 beyond the 2021-22 year end indicating this should be a continuing revenue stream.

While measures are not at the levels seen pre-pandemic this reflects a degree of caution on the Trustees part, in the extent of print runs and the level of event promotion to ensure arrangements remained manageable and COVID safe. The Trustees are confident that the 2022-23 performance to date is a sound basis for future growth and evidences the resurgence in public interest in TV&GWOT activity post-pandemic.

Opportunities to engage a wider network of individuals and organisations have multiplied beyond the year end and, despite the workload, the Trustees have responded recognising the importance of the raised profile and financial income to the Trust that such activities bring. In the 2022-23 year to date activities have included:

2 April 2022 – Use of **Reading Transport VR No. 38** owned by the Trust to transport members of the **British Trolleybus Society** on a tour of former trolleybus routes in Reading organised by BTS member and Trust Supporter, Dave Hall - 38 BTS members took part.

9 April 2022 – Trustee David Sheppard was the guest speaker at the **South Devon Railway Association annual dinner**, held at Birdie's Kitchen in Buckfastleigh. He addressed around fifty members of the Association, including the daughter of the late Reverend W. Awdry, creator of The Railway Series, speaking about the forthcoming 150th anniversary of the opening of the Buckfastleigh, Totnes and South Devon Railway. He gave a lively account of his own 30+ years in preservation and outlined the work of the Trust, particularly its connections with the Great Western Railway and South Devon.

Stagecoach Long Service Awards - Trustee David Sheppard compèred a series of events attended by staff, industry figures and opinion formers for different regions through the year, on each occasion including an overview of the Trust's work.

29 April 2022 – Stagecoach Yorkshire in Sheffield - c.400 staff,

14 May 2022 – Stagecoach North East in Newcastle – c. 500 staff.

18 June 2022 – Stagecoach North East in Newcastle – c. 500 staff.

26 May 2022 – Trustee Helen Bolt participated in the **Francis Clark annual seminar for charities** covering latest Charity Commission developments including legal matters, prevention of cyber-crime and fraud, and updates on accounting and VAT specific to the sector. The availability of professional advisors and other charities large and small for networking makes this a valuable forum to ensure the Trust's public benefit is delivered in a compliant manner.

5 June 2022 – Trustee David Sheppard drew the raffle for **Exmouth Museum** at the culmination of the town's celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. He spoke about the importance of making history accessible and relevant in the future and gave an outline of the Trust's approach in this regard.

11 June 2022 – Use of newly restored **Thames Valley L No. 556** to transport principal donors and special guests to **Alexander Devine Children's Hospice** in Maidenhead from remote parking for their 15th anniversary 'thank you' event. Some 90 passengers were carried on return trips through the day.

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6 July 2022 - Trustee David Sheppard gave an informal tour of the Trust's South Devon base to retiring **Showbus** organiser, Martin Isles, and former **BBC Spotlight Editor**, Ed Goodridge, both enthusiastic followers of the Trust's work and keen to find out more about the collections.

16 July 2022 - 24 people from the **Kingston Historical Society** visited the Trust's Devon base for a talk about local transport history and the activities of the Trust, a tour of the archive and workshops and a trip on Trust Chairman's Bristol SUS (Western National No. 600) through the Avon Valley area of outstanding natural beauty.

22 July 2022 – the Trust's Devon facilities provided the base for 25 **town criers** from the UK and overseas to travel to Plymouth for an international competition in the City Hall. Trust Chairman, Colin Billington, used his Western National Bristol L No. 1218 to transport the town criers and consorts in their finery.

23 July 2022 – the Trust hosted the **Provincial History Research Group of the Omnibus Society** at its Berkshire base for their AGM. Trustee Peter Delaney gave a talk about the Trust's archive collection in the former Maidenhead ticket office now owned by the Trust and re-erected on its Berkshire site showing interesting artefacts held in the collection. The digitisation of the late Mike Stephens cine films by the Trust was of considerable interest as they feature OS Tours, some 50+ years ago - an online presentation to regional groups and potential funding of further work resulted.

24 July 2022 – Trustee David Sheppard performed the official opening of **Paignton Festival on behalf of the BBC and Torbay Old Wheels Club**. On display were his and his father's 1962 Bristol SUL4A coaches, former Western National Nos. 420 and 425 (270/5 KTA). They had been brought together to mark the 60th anniversary of their delivery that month, as explained in David's opening speech and the event programme.

7 October 2022 – some 20 members of the **National Transport Trust** visited TV&GWOT in Berkshire for a talk on the collection to see the workshops and take a tour of Windsor in Bristol LS Royal Blue No. 1286 (on long-term loan to the Trust). The tour ended with TV&GWOT neighbour, David Buck, who gave rides on his full scale railway steam engines over track in his grounds.

12 October 2022 – the **Berkshire group of the Vintage Motor Cycle Club** came by their own stylish mode of heritage transport to visit the Trust for a talk, tour of the facilities and trip around Windsor in Bristol LS Royal Blue No. 1286 (on long-term loan to the Trust). 18 BVMCC members took part in the event suggested by Trust Supporter Victor Youel.

18 October 2022 – a group of TV&GWOT Supporters worked with Trust Chairman Colin Billington to assist the **Great Western Society** repatriate a former **GWR fire tender** from the **Science Museum at Wroughton** to Didcot. Extensive planning in the months before, detailed risk assessments and provision of road transport meant the Trust was able to help the organisations achieve their heritage objectives.

25 October 2022 – the Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport (Central Southern Region), through Trust Supporter and CILT Board member Richard Mallett, invited TV&GWOT to be represented at their regular meeting as a basis for exploring how the Trust might provide interest to members and how members might use professional skills to help support the Trust. Trust Chairman, Colin Billington attended, networking with CILT members and learning from the evening with Mark Hopwood, CBE, Managing Director of GWR.

In the months beyond the 2021-22 period end **vehicle restoration work** has continued:

- MO9324 – 1927 Thames Valley Traction Co. Tilling-Stevens B9 No. 152 – Starting/running issues were investigated and tackled with some work on the autovac and attention to a

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carburetor defect. Packing of selector springs in the gearbox stabilised issues with reverse gear. Fan belt adjustments and work on spark plugs improved running / reducing mis-firing. Work to improve seat fixing and floor covering/mouldings was undertaken. A larger steering wheel, as probably fitted original was sourced and installed to improve driver control.

- RU8805 – 1929 AEC Reliance No. 3615 – a support system for rear of the engine and clutch housing was developed. A new driver's seat was manufactured. Roof opening vent gear, roof cove panels and air vents progressed. Preparations were made to separate body and chassis for drive-train installation.
- VW203 – 1927 Leyland PLSC3 Lion No. 2407 – advertising boards were sign written, exterior painting completed and internal timber finishers installed. Repairs to cracks in the cylinder head and block were repaired and heat treated for the engine to be re-assembled.
- BOD25C – 1965 Bristol FLF6B No. 2065 – an opportunity arose to obtain new tyres, tubes and flaps to fit to the vehicle.
- LTA748 – 1950 Bedford OB No. 1409 – Extensive work undertaken by volunteers includes:
 - Rubbed down, undercoat and paint black the chassis, rear axle, rear springs and front bulkhead as well as painting the engine, gearbox, water pump and fan.
 - Remove, strip, clean and fit new diaphragm/gaskets to fuel pump. Refit to engine.
 - Remove, check, clean, paint and refit dynamo and starter motor and carburetor (including new gaskets).
 - Remove and paint exhaust manifold, refit.
 - Front hub/brake assemblies - strip, clean, paint and reassemble. Hone brake cylinders. New seals fitted to brake cylinders. Rear brake assemblies - strip, clean and paint and reassemble. New brake wheel cylinders fitted. Rear hubs fitted.
 - Fuel tank painted and new fuel sender unit fitted. Tank bolted to chassis.
 - New tubes and flaps. Front wings prepped and primed; bonnet side panels primed.
 - Interior lighting re-wired.
 - Propshaft fitted and work ongoing.
- FMO938 – 1950 Bristol LL6B No. 556 – The exterior restoration was completed early in the 2022-23 period with signwriting comprising fleet names and numbers, and legal lettering. Curved seat back panels were formed and the seats were re-trimmed and fitted.
- DBL154 – 1946 Bristol K6A No. 446 – starting issues were resolved by refurbishing the starter motor.
- MOD973 – 1952 Bristol LS No. 1286 – minor repairs (e.g. wiper motor) undertaken.
- LTA995 – 1953 Bristol KSW6B No.1852 – preparation has commenced for a major restoration of this Trust- owned vehicle which has been in dry storage since being acquired from Haynes Motor Museum. Trustee Colin Billington and Supporter Alan Neale have inspected the vehicle and tested electrical and mechanical systems. Next stages include the development of a costed restoration plan and identification and pursuit of potential funding opportunities.
- EDV555D – 1966 Bristol SUL4A No. 692 - charging issues address with re-wiring and replacement dynamo.
- FDV790V – 1979 Bristol LHS6L No. 1560 - new front tyres fitted.

Ahead of the Trust events and other outings through 2022, 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 use. Commercial inspection services and those of suitably qualified Supporters, particularly Trustee Graham Green, were deployed with defects and any resulting rectification required being recorded.

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Necessary remediation was carried out before vehicles were used on passenger service. This is a major task, particularly so since some vehicles were seeing first use since COVID restrictions had limited their use.

Former Exeter Corporation Transport Massey-bodied Guy Arab IV double deck No. 74 (974AFJ) was donated to the Trust in July 2022, with a quantity of spares by Trust Supporters. Sponsorship for ongoing care of the vehicle was secured and initial inspection showed the vehicle to be in good mechanical order although some bodywork repairs / improvements are required for it to be used to carry passengers at public events in 2023-24. The bus was new in July 1960 passing to Devon General as No. 275 in April 1970 and on to Western National in January 1971.

In his role as Deputy Chairman of the **National Association of Road Transport Museums** (NARTM), Trust Chairman Colin Billington has continued involvement in the work investigating skills development and the potential for an apprenticeship scheme in light of the seven-figure legacy vested in NARTM. This work has significant relevance to TV&GWOT alongside the NARTM objectives. Beyond the 2021-22 year end, detailed discussions have proceeded with the Heritage Skills Academy towards establishing an apprenticeship scheme appropriate to buses and coaches and other large commercial vehicles in collaboration with the London Bus Museum (Brooklands) and London Transport Museum (Covent Garden and Acton)..

Generous **funding of the Trust** by its increasing number of Supporters has continued beyond the 2021-22 year end, particularly through annual renewal donations in June/July 2022 which contribute to the Trust's standing and overhead costs.

The original appeal to purchase and undertake the bodywork restoration of 556 and contributions to the "556 – *The Final Push*" appeal were generally made as lump sums or monthly instalments. Those monthly contributions have been completing their term beyond the 2021-22 year end but it is gratifying that some contributors have opted to continue their regular donations. Others are enquiring about future opportunities to provide project support and, to this end, preparatory work has begun as described above to plan the restoration of 1953 Southern National Bristol KSW6B No. 1852 (LTA995) which was purchased from Haynes Motor Museum in 2017. Now the Trust has a strong track-record in successful vehicle restorations and project execution, the aim is to augment Supporter donations with matching grant funding and work to scope the requirements and identify funding sources has commenced in earnest beyond the 2021-22 year end.

The revival of support from the major transport companies in the reporting year 2021-22 has been a significant contributor to the Trust's programme of events enabling public benefit to be prioritised. Further work to develop messaging that is effective in associating the pleasures of a vintage bus day out with the economic and environmental benefits of increased bus usage in daily life is underway. In turn it is hoped this will ensure relationships with the transport companies can flourish. The advertising from other local businesses around events is also valuable and new ideas are being explored to match products and services to event audiences thereby encouraging increased advertising revenue.

Other opportunities for grant funding are also being identified and pursued. A presentation of the archive cine-films digitised in the 2021-22 reporting year to a visiting group has led to the promise of a donation of £2,500 from the Omnibus Society from a related legacy to help fund the digitisation, preservation and public access to other films in the collection.

Despite the pandemic disruption, the Trust has recovered well and continues to be well resourced financially underpinned by its prudent reserves policy. The Trustees were able to limit the Trust's expenditure through the pandemic period in anticipation of unpredictable and limited opportunities to generate income while also diversifying its funding sources as described above. As a result, although growth was set back, the Trust did not suffer financial harm from the pandemic constraints.

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The return to a full programme of activity beyond the 2021-22 year end has been measured with new ventures such as books and sale of surplus materials pursued to ensure a broader range of income streams involving a wider range of donors / purchasers. This approach will continue through the remainder of 2022-23

RISKS

The Trustees of The Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust are fully aware of and implement policies to address any risks as appropriate. 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.

With the return of inflation beyond the 2021-22 year end, Trustees have explored different investment instruments other than high street banks to limit the risk of reserves being devalued by interest rates significantly below inflation. The approach is cautious balancing the need for capital protection under the Financial Services scheme and access to funds to spend on the Trust's charitable work, with good rates of return on term investments. Advice from specialist financial advisers has been obtained as this is not an area of Trustee expertise.

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 to 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 pandemic period. Now that restrictions have been lifted, the regular vehicle restoration and maintenance working parties and archive working groups have been re-established and additional Supporters have become involved. However, the railway and other public sector strikes have also had a significant impact and have restricted attendance and required re-scheduling of several of the Trust major public events. Team Leaders are increasingly taking responsibility for organising the Trust's work in specific areas which is a deliberate policy to manage risks and over-dependence on individual Trustees. 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, have protected the Trust against these perceived risks and are now embedded in the Trustees' approach

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to managing all aspects of Trust activities and resources. The consideration of risks has therefore been continued beyond the 2021-22 year end to address more fundamental risks to the style of Trust activity, sources of heritage funding and the availability of volunteers, particularly bringing younger people on board.

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 for a variety of audiences 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. Renewed activity as restrictions lifted has confirmed the public appetite to learn about and experience this aspect of our passenger road transport heritage and the Trust has demonstrated its ability to meet and stimulate the demand.

Trustees & Directors

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

Dr C J Billington
Dr H M Bolt
P M Delaney (appointed 23 January 2022)
G G Green
D T Sheppard
P Snowden (appointed 23 January 2022)
M J Williams

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. Work carried out by volunteers and Supporters is done so 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 nominal current account balance 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

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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. The action was accompanied by renewed assurance from Lloyds on the security of the capital sums. Beyond the 2021-22 year end inflation rates from international and domestic causes, have not been matched in the interest rates of return offered by the high street banks and, in consultation with professional financial advisers, the Trustees have pursued alternative platforms providing access to better interest bearing accounts which still offer the security and flexibility required for the Trust reserves.

Reserves policy and going concern

The cumulative current reserve funds at the end of the 2021-22 period are £195,023 (2021: £186,198) in the Restricted Funds and £87,973 (2021: £72,754) Unrestricted Funds. The Trust's policy has 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 appropriate level of reserves should be at least £40,000 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 had to be cancelled and were only slowly restarted in 2021-22. 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 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 £55,000 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 £1,000 (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 (£5,000) and funding pledges to 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 firm view that the Trust is a going concern.

This report was approved by the board on 13 November 2022 and signed on its behalf.

Dr C J Billington
Director