



***Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Trust***

***Annual Review 2024-25***



# Welcome to the Annual Review of the work of the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Trust

The Trust is a body whose purpose is to assist the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway by supporting the railway's activities along the line and at its stations, as well as supporting local economic and social initiatives in Wirksworth, Duffield and the valley's constituent communities.

## Secretary's Report 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025: Anton Shone

### New main entrance and gate at Duffield

Without a doubt the past year has been one of the most impactful the Trust has seen. Our station at Duffield has relied for its access for over 20 years on a panel of old palisade fence, which has served as the gate from Chapel Street into the station car park. This gate was never wide and gave a tight right hand turn which prevented large vehicles entering, even some modern large SUVs, as car size has suffered increasingly from people buying "forts on wheels" for which their sheer size results in manoeuvring and parking problems. In any case the state of our entrance was decrepit and gave a bad public impression.

It has been the case for many years that we were aware of this problem, for example, the gate couldn't be moved to its new location without first moving the power supply and location cabinet to the mainline station. Network Rail kindly achieved this for us in 2018. In 2019 a planning application was made by Eric Boulton which was approved by Amber Valley Council on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020, this coincided with the Covid Pandemic and inevitably caused a delay. However, the bigger delay was funding. As fast as the Trust could raise funds, the cost of the project rose faster than anything that could be achieved and to make matters worse, in the spring of 2023 the water supply to Duffield Station failed in a comprehensive way. Funds and support had to be diverted to deal with this emergency. Finally, in 2024, the Trust had raised enough funds for a match funding bid to the EMR Community Fund and the successful outcome of this bid provided sufficient funds to complete the job as specified by the planning permission, which was essentially for work on Chapel Street and then for work to clear the new gateway and make good the boundary walls where the new gate was going.

At the same time we had sought a number of quotes for the works but increasing costs outstripped the available funds despite several attempts to reduce the scope. However, late in 2024 Atflows provided a compliant quote and we were able to award the work to them. Works took place in December 2024 and early January 2025 and had been substantially completed by the 11<sup>th</sup> January. In conjunction with the gate works, some tidying up took place on our side of the boundary, new signs and a new post box were fitted and the Duffield Station platform running-in board was moved so it would be visible through the gate to arriving passengers. We are delighted with the results and we are deeply grateful for the contribution which the EMR Community Fund made and for the excellent work which Atflows did constructing the gate.





The location of the gate in late 2024



The new gate in January 2025



## Other works at Duffield Station

As part of a series of works around Duffield Station during the year, considerable efforts have been made by the Trust to improve the condition of the station, including the restoration of both the Ecclesbourne Way and Railway's own interpretation boards



Interpretation Board before and after restoration

The Trust had allocated funds to renew almost all the station signage at Duffield in relation to the gate project, to make the station more welcoming and to comply with Wyvernrail signage standards. This included gate signs, door signs and a new running-in board.



New signs and new running-in board with Chair of the Trust John Stokes

In many ways, this year has been a transformative one at Duffield and this work had been on going during the lull created by the Duffield landslip, even before the new entrance and gate had been built in January 2025.

In the pictures below, the difference can particularly be seen at the south end of the station, where a crumbling Portacabin was removed for disposal, the area tidied up and a new-to-us store shed provided by Simon Scott which had a previous life serving ice cream at Wirksworth. The store is essentially for gardening equipment.





Former Portacabin store at south end before removal



New (to us) repainted store and restored south end of Duffield Station 7<sup>th</sup> June 2024

In addition to these most obvious of works, the station poster boards were renewed and the Philip Richardson memorial bench rebuilt. While these activities have no doubt resulted in a severe drawdown of the Trust's funds, they were essential and the condition of Duffield Station now, compared to its state over a year ago, is a sight to behold and represents a step change in the condition of the station. The Trust expresses its deep gratitude to all who have devoted their time and hard work to these efforts.



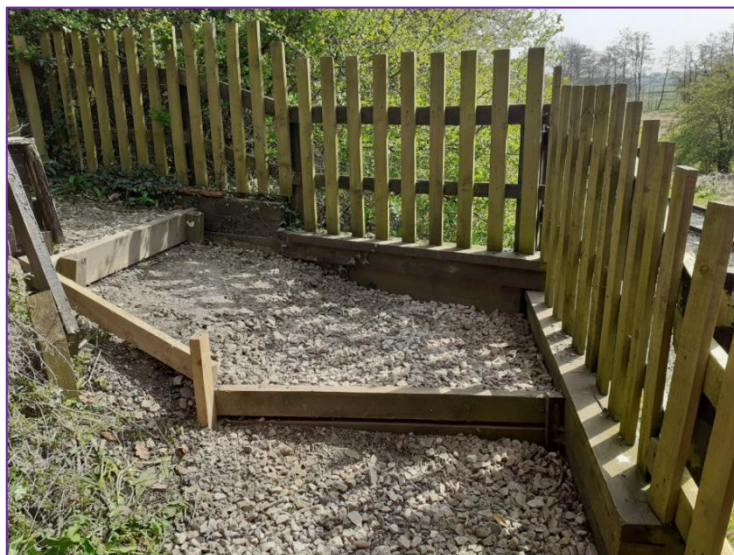
## Shottle and Idridgehay Stations

The Trust has, over a period of years, been renewing the signage, interpretation and poster boards at a number of our stations and this year new signs were provided by the Trust for Idridgehay at the request of the group which had been formed there to look after that station.



New signage provided at Idridgehay Station by the Trust

At Shottle, the signage for the station and the signal box had been renewed at the Trust's expense last year. This year essential maintenance work has taken place including the repair of the main entrance gate and the repair and repacking of the station steps. These latter require repacking annually because the embankment on which they sit is undermined by burrowing animals on a regular basis.



Shottle Steps: repairs to step boards and repacking

## Wirksworth

After long disuse the south weighbridge was cleared of vegetation, painted and restored by the Trust. The location of the building gives a much better impression now, at the approach to the station than it did



through the years of its disuse and as an eyesore, easily visible from passing trains and passers-by on Wash Green Bridge



Before restoration in late 2024



After restoration in early 2025

### **Community Support by the Trust**

The Trust continues to support the Duffield Community Association who undertake good works around the village and who are responsible both for the village's annual carnival and for its Christmas lights and decorations. The carnival, held in Eyes Meadow, attracts several thousand people to the village in a normal

year and this brings attention and income to the village, its shops, pubs and cafes, helping to support the community: a key policy role of our Railway.

### **Sources and uses of funds**

At the start of the Trust's year, which runs from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024, the Trust held £5,711.91 unrestricted funds and expenditure has been related to payments for the entrance and gate works of £14,440 including £9,750 of restricted funds (grant in aid). This was the largest project which the Trust has ever undertaken; other costs were for a major upgrade of station signage at a cost of £338.77; then smaller items such as a replacement clock, repairs in general and paint for the replacement shed for Duffield Station; publicity (website) and membership of the Duffield Community Association.

The Trust is not a charity, but a support organisation. Historically, income is mainly generated from talks given by the Trust's officers to a range of organisations from the Derbyshire Masons to the Wirksworth Probus. In addition, Trust income is generated from the sale of "A History of Wirksworth" by Anton Shone, other book sales, donations and collection type items. At the end of the year on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 the Trust's unrestricted funds stood at £1,475.27.

### **Looking forward**

Our work for the forthcoming year will continue to focus on the improvement of Duffield, as this a part of a strategic process of developing the passenger business at this station, through improved access and expanding the car park.

In terms of seeking grant-in-aid, the Trust is seeking match funding for a further step in the strategy, which would involve the removal of spoil from the south apex of the Duffield Station Car Park by train. This will allow the car park to be expanded to its full extent and as a useful follow on, the spoil removed at Duffield will be used to level the sloping ground behind platform 2 at Shottle in order to create an event area.

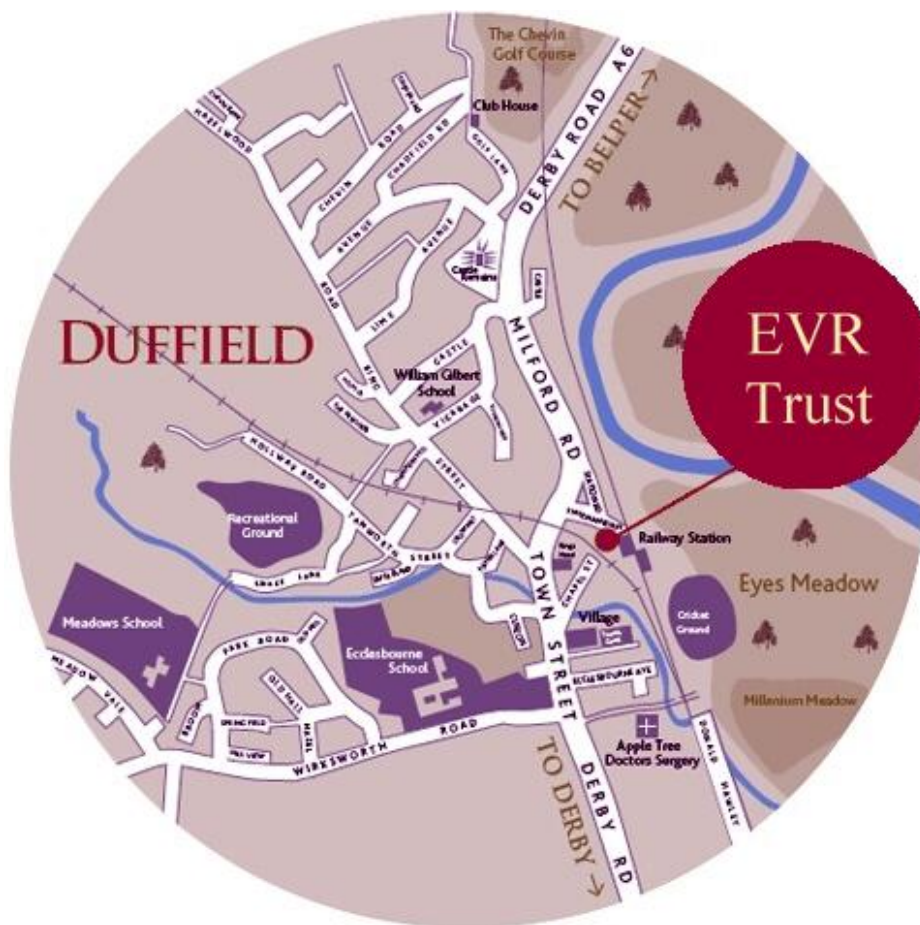
### **A word of thanks**

The Trust wishes to thank the following people for their work and engagement this year: East Midlands Railway for grant-in-aid and Atflows for the improvements and gate works at Duffield; all volunteers and staff for their continued efforts in keeping our railway running, often with the most limited resources and in all weathers.

Trust Commendations are herewith given to Ken Underhill, Joe Hallford-Marsden, George Dixon, David Newby, Tony Joyce, Keith Godley, Tony Watt, Ben Field and James Hallam for their particular contributions in and around the railway this year and towards projects: our most grateful thanks.



## Location of the Trust



All photographs are by kind permission of members of the Trust unless otherwise credited.

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# *The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Trust*

Supporting the work of the EVR in the community

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