

MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST LIMITED.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL - 1983

1983 could be justifiably described as the most important year since the beginning of the preservation era on the Middleton Railway. The year has seen the transfer of our base of operations and the beginnings of the establishment of our long awaited depot and museum.

The year started off well with the news that our application for an Inner City Grant had been successful and that we were to receive £20000 from this source towards the construction of a station and depot at Tunstall Road. Arrangements were made to couple this grant to a Community Programme scheme and by the end of May six people were being employed to build our station building. Work on this building was sufficiently complete to enable it to be used for the first time for the 'Santa Specials' in December.

Claytons had earlier closed their Dartmouth Works which the Trust had used as an operational headquarters since the beginning and it became inevitable that we would have to vacate the site. Notice to quit came in July and with the aid of almost superhuman effort from some members, we finally moved out to our new headquarters during the first weekend of October. To have turned what was a virgin site into an operational base, including laying track and erecting fencing, in just ten weeks was a tremendous achievement by any standards. However, much work still remains to be done to complete the depot, including laying in additional siding space.

Two new additions to the locomotive fleet during the year are basically similar diesels built by John Fowler in the mid-sixties. They are both privately owned and in working order. Whilst our diesel fleet goes from strength to strength, we are now suffering from the effects of years of mortgaging our steam locomotives and heavy repairs are necessary on many before they will work again. Only two steam locos. saw service in 1983 - No.53 'Windle' and No.2003 'John Blenkinsop'. Persistent problems with the boiler of No.385 have prevented it entering service. Work commenced on major overhauls to No.59 (Sentinel) and No.2702 'Matthew Murray'.

A continued decline in passenger figures has given cause for concern although the special events appear to have maintained a satisfactory level of visitors. Because of this decline, some operating economies, such as the substitution of a diesel for steam on some Saturdays, have been necessary. A concerted effort must be made to reverse this trend in 1984. Freight traffic has continued to run on an as required basis although its level of operation is relatively small.

For 1984, the Middleton Railway Trust is looking to further consolidate its operations at the new depot at Tunstall Road where for the first time all the stock is on view to the public. Work is to start on the erection of the first stage of the loco. shed and the provision of adequate parking facilities. Much additional work is planned but this will be dependent on the necessary finance and volunteer labour being available.

PROXY VOTES

If you are unable to attend the Annual General Meeting you may appoint a proxy by completing the attached slip.

I confirm that I will not be able to attend the AGM.

I have read the items on the Agenda and we should appoint as my Proxy to vote on my behalf at the meeting. He will vote for me at his discretion in accordance with the instructions I have given him.*

Signed

* If you have any particular instructions on voting please note on the reverse of this slip.

This notice should be returned to the Secretary, Mrs E. I. Brampton, 81 Bradford Road, Wakefield, WF1 2AA to arrive 7 clear working days before the A.G.M.