



Volunteer Liaison Department  
Swanage Railway Trust Ltd.  
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## USEFUL INFORMATION FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS CARRIAGE & WAGON DEPARTMENT

We have the responsibility of looking after the Railway's carriages and wagons (collectively known as rolling stock). Amounting to well over 100 vehicles, many were operated by the Southern Railway or could be found in this part of England, although there are examples from the Great Western, Midland and Eastern Railways. Broadly speaking this total can be broken down into 4 categories:-

**COACHES:** Running Fleet -- those used in day to day service  
Historic Fleet -- older vehicles, many of which are awaiting restoration

**WAGONS:** Infrastructure -- those used on a regular basis to keep the Railway operational  
Other/historic -- those used for storage, freight trains etc.

Most items are owned by the Swanage Railway Trust or Company, others by individuals who allow the Railway free use in return for the vehicle being maintained. The first wheeled passenger vehicle to be delivered was a large parcel van called a PMV and numbered 1234. It was built by the Southern Railway in the 1930's and had spent its later years as a Staff Van for BR's Permanent Way Dept. It arrived during the summer of 1976 and is still in service with the same Department, but this time on the Swanage Railway!

### WHAT, WHERE, WHEN AND WHO?

**WHAT** do we do? A lot depends on what vehicle is in the workshop. In the past we have carried out major overhauls to some of our coaches and although we now tend to use off-site contractors to speed up the process, there are still a number of tasks we do in house. These include body repairs, repaints, internal refitting such as upholstery and all the running repairs associated with the intensive timetable that we operate on the branch. Where wagons are concerned the cost of transport and the fact that most projects are not time critical means that we can undertake all the usual general repairs as well as complete rebuilds which then involves carpentry, glazing and roofing skills. Where possible we salvage as much as we can and if new parts have to be made then we do so using materials that will last, taking advantage of technological improvements that have been made in the decades since the vehicle was constructed. Our efforts in this particular field have not gone unnoticed as we were judged first in the Heritage Railway Association's Best Preserved Wagon Competition in 2000 and 2001.



**WHERE** do we do it? We are lucky to have the use of the only large rail connected building on the branch, namely the Goods Shed at Swanage to carry out most of our work. Facilities are somewhat basic and work plans have to be carefully thought out so that we make the most efficient use of the building, which can only accommodate one coach and a wagon on its single track.

**WHEN** and **WHO** does it? The Locomotive, Carriage & Wagon Manager runs the Department and manages the two paid staff, who tend to work on weekdays. The Volunteer Coordinator looks after the volunteers, who work mainly at weekends with the two leaders liaising closely so that the project runs smoothly. Volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds, with many having no previous railway vehicle restoration experience – however, we all need to start somewhere. Not all come from Dorset; we draw people from neighbouring counties such as Sussex, Hampshire and Somerset. It is also worth emphasising that there are no rules governing how often you volunteer; a half day a month is always welcome. The Swanage Railway operates a documented Youth Protection Policy to safeguard children. The policy of the Swanage Railway Trust is that all Volunteers should be Members. For further information please contact:

Contact the Volunteer Liaison Department as above.

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