



Volunteer Liaison Department
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USEFUL INFORMATION FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT - SIGNALMEN

SIGNAL BOXES

There are three signal boxes on the Swanage Railway. The largest is at Swanage and has a 40 lever Westinghouse frame controlling the arrival and departure of trains at the terminus, shunting movements around the station, yard and engine shed, and also acting as the nerve centre of railway operations. It was built from scratch by our volunteers and was commissioned in February 2003, having won the prestigious Westinghouse Signalling Award for 2002 as part of the National Railway Heritage Awards. It contains a Tyers No. 6 Tablet Machine to control the single line section between Swanage and Corfe Castle, and a Tyers Key Token Machine to control the section to Harmans Cross when that signal box is open. The lever frame came originally from Brockenhurst "B" Signal Box and fortunately was rescued after its closure in 1978.



Next up the line is the signal box at Harmans Cross which contains a 22 lever Stevens frame. This 'box was also built from scratch and was commissioned in July 1997, winning the Westinghouse Signalling Award for that year. It contains two Tyers Key Token Machines, one controlling the section to Swanage the other controlling the section to Corfe Castle. Harmans Cross is basically a passing loop, being presently the half way point on the single line railway where two passenger trains can pass. There are also two sidings where wagons can be stabled, and which can also be used as a refuge for additional trains during special events. The lever frame originates from Gunnersbury Signal Box in Middlesex and came to us when that 'box closed in 1980.

Our third signal box, also built from scratch, is situated on the Down platform at Corfe Castle Station and was commissioned in April 2011. The new signal box allows more versatility at the Station as well as controlling movements further up the line, and will be the future interface with Network Rail at Basingstoke ASC, thus enabling a regular service between Swanage and Wareham. This 'box has a 32 lever Westinghouse frame which has been made up from a mixture of former Brockenhurst "A" and Broadstone frames. The former was rescued when the current panel was installed at Brockenhurst in the 1970's, and the latter was found lurking in the basement of the old Bournemouth signal box as strategic spares. The new 'box contains the other Tyers No. 6 Tablet Machine which is used when Harmans Cross 'box is closed, a Tyers Key Token machine used when Harmans Cross is open, and a Tyers No-Signalman Key Token machine for the section to Norden. The new Corfe Castle signal box was awarded the top position for Signalling in the 2011 National Railway Heritage Awards. We also think that the view from our new signal box is the best in the Country with the ruins of Corfe Castle in full view from its windows. This replaces the old 'box which was part of the station building on the Up platform and which had been used by British Railways from 1956 until the Branch was closed in 1972, and by Swanage Railway since 2005. Originally there had been a signal box on the site of the new 'box; this had been demolished by British Railways in 1956 as it became unstable.

SIGNALMAN TRAINING

We have a very competent and well trained team of over 40 Signalmen who will assist you during your training. If you have no previous experience of railway operation your training will start by working as a Porter, usually starting at Corfe Castle Station. This will give you an insight of railway operations, and once qualified as a Porter you move on to a series of several modular classroom based instruction sessions held at Corfe Castle station which cover all aspects of railway signalling as used on the Swanage Railway; these are each followed by a short exam. Practical training starts in Harmans Cross signal box and is sandwiched between the classroom modules so that you attain theoretical and practical experience simultaneously. Starting from scratch your training will take between six and twelve months depending on your commitment.

Having passed out and gained experience in the signal box at Harmans Cross you can then move on to train at Corfe Castle. After sufficient experience has been gained in those 'boxes, usually twelve months total, you can move on to train in our senior signal box at Swanage. We have Signalling Inspectors from Network Rail who monitor our training and who will also do your "passing out" in the signal boxes, as well as maintaining continuous assessment of all our Signalmen. Once qualified, you will be expected to do a minimum of fifteen turns each year to maintain your knowledge. The minimum dress code for our Signalmen is black shoes, black trousers (or skirt for ladies), white shirt and a tie. A medical examination might be required; good vision with spectacles is permissible but colour blindness is not. 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:

The Signalling Training Officer is Mike Whitwam Telephone: 01929 475212 or Email: mike.whitwam@corfestationf2s.com
Or contact the Volunteer Liaison Department as above.

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