

WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY



INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

DEPARTMENT: Station Duties

INTRODUCTION: Station duties on the WSR vary enormously from station to station. For example at Minehead, staff may be required to turn their hand to almost anything, particularly at Gala-type weekends, while duties at some of the less busy stations may be less onerous.

SOME GENERAL DUTIES EXPECTED:

- To be one of the first points of contact with the public.
- To develop an extensive and intimate knowledge of the railway.
- To be able to answer questions about timetables, fares and local tourist information.
- To assist train staff on arrival and dispatch of trains and for terminal staff to assist in watering up, rubbish disposal and closing doors and windows as required.
- To assist in the safety of members of the public at stations.
- To assist in the safe arrival of trains and in their prompt departure.
- To develop full knowledge of the Rule Book.
- To assist in keeping station areas clean and tidy.
- To ensure members of the public do not access the lineside.
- To assist in tending garden areas (if applicable)
- Watering up trains at start of each day.

RESTRICTIONS: There are no specific restrictions but volunteers need to be aware that there will be busy periods on platforms in all weathers. Volunteers will need to retain a positive, versatile and flexible approach to duties and to members of the public, remaining cheerful at all times.

Volunteers will need to provide and wear an appropriate (smart) uniform of any style stretching from 1930 to 1950, though nothing bizarre. Volunteers should also provide an approved pattern high visibility vest in ORANGE. Overalls and safety boots may come in handy for dirty jobs. A railway-type whistle may also be useful.

OTHER INFORMATION: Volunteers are advised to travel up and down the line a few times to get better stations and attraction knowledge. This will enable you to become familiar with the stations and operations.

Some general information about stations is given here:

MINEHEAD: Probably the busiest station on the railway, owing to its being the headquarters of the PLC and the location from which the operation is run. Staff may be asked to staff the enquiry office, answering telephone queries on every topic under the sun, as well as those from travellers in person. There is a PA system here on which station announcements are made, although scripts are proved for the regular train announcements. First thing in the morning, staff may be required to assist in watering up the train for the day.

BISHOPS LYDEARD: After Minehead, the next busiest station, except during August, when it usually outstrips Minehead. While there is no enquiry office here (Booking Office and Station Staff will normally deal with such as there are). Trains have to be watered up first thing if steam is running from both ends in the morning. Stations announcements are made as at Minehead. Barriers at the end of the platforms have to be manned when train

or light engine movements are made around the station. The station has to be kept clean and tidy.

OTHER STATIONS: While there are not the same requirements as the two terminal stations, Station Masters will normally welcome any assistance offered. In particular, at the stations where there is a passing loop (Blue Anchor, Williton and Crowcombe Heathfield), extra staff are of great assistance in ensuring the punctual and safe passage of trains, especially if there are passengers transferring between trains. For those keen on gardening there will often be stations gardens which can be worked on between trains.

MORE INFORMATION: Can be obtained from the Station Masters at the individual stations.

HOW TO APPLY: By telephoning the New Volunteer Co-ordinator on 01823 433856 leaving your name and address, or
By downloading the on-line application form and posting to the address on the form, or Completing the form on-line and emailing it to volunteers@wsrail.net