



WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY

**This sheet is purely to help you consider options,
there is no need to return it**

To potential new volunteers to try and help focus/sift down to what you might like to do, please consider some/all of the following:-

- 1) I am here because I am interested in trains. Is my interest
 - a) Driving trains (Cleaner, Fireman, Driver)?
 - b) Travelling on trains (Buffet, Quantock Belle, Travelling Ticket Inspector, Guard)?
 - c) Watching trains (Permanent Way, Admin, Cutting Back, Stations, Signalling, Gardener etc)?
 - d) Commercial eg Booking Office, Publicity, Admin
- 2) What is my current employment status that could determine my availability?
eg retired, office hours, shift work.
- 3) Have I got the availability and discipline to undertake a rostered role or is my preference for a more informal role on a 'turn up' basis eg cutting back, permanent way?
- 4) Do I want outside work for fresh air and exercise – great in the summer but not so clever in winter or do I want inside work eg Admin, Shop Sales or Ticket Sales?
- 5) Do I have any medical issues that could restrict me, particularly in Safety Critical roles? – eg signalmen may have to climb signal posts to trim lamps. TTIs can walk several miles along the train on a trip to Minehead and back.
- 6) How much time could I commit on a weekly/monthly/ad hoc basis?
Health warning – volunteering can be highly addictive – do not over commit, particularly in the early days in case of turn off.
- 7) Where on the line would I like to work and is it feasible for what I want to do?
eg – we don't overhaul locos at Bishops Lydeard.

- 8) If my first choice is not immediately available, am I prepared to compromise in the short term and help in other areas?
- 9) If my first choice is not what I envisaged, what other choices are open to me to stop me giving up altogether?
- 10) What are my views (often influenced by good for bad past employment experiences) on:-
- Responsibility/Accountability
 - Dealing with the public
 - Handling cash
- 11) How far is my journey to my preferred work area? Do my travel time and work area location mean an over onerous journey time? The Railway does not give any travelling expenses.
- 12) What skills have I acquired in past jobs or life experience and can they be utilised?
- (If the answer is none – we still need you!!)
- 13) Do I have to specialise or can I work in 2 or more departments?

This is just a flavour of things to consider and there will be many other factors that will determine your final decision of your preferred volunteer work area. The more you do, the more you will feel involved and the more people you will get to know **BUT** not to the detriment of home life – they will still want to be taken shopping and the house will not decorate itself. Volunteering is at times a delicate balancing act.

At the end of the day we are all here to play a part in whatever small team we have selected to help the big team called 'The Railway' so that we can keep steam trains rolling on the best UK Heritage Railway for a long time to come.

Today is your opportunity to become part of it – please take it but above all else, enjoy it.