



# Swanning Around

A Look At What's Happening Around The Swanage Railway

Issue 64 – July 15<sup>th</sup> 2020

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We're back in business!

But at a much reduced timetable, and with Covid-19 restrictions, refreshed and retrained staff, and we've attained the new Visit Britain standard and have been awarded the 'Good to Go' mark.

The 'We're Good To Go' industry standard and supporting mark means businesses can demonstrate that they are adhering to the respective Government and public health guidance, have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment and checked that they have the required processes in place.

Since the previous issue of Swanning Around, some restrictions associated with keeping us safe from Covid-19 have been eased, with the result that there has been some resumption of activities around the railway. Good job too, or there wouldn't be much to report! Read on!

**The latest news is that steam-hauled trains will resume from Saturday 18th July.**

A statement from Swanage Railway Chairman Gavin Johns:

***All departments involved have pulled out all the stops to make steam happen from Saturday. We will be running a series of training / practice runs from Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> until Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July using 31806 and the second set of coaches.***

***On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July and Sunday 19th July the current timetabled service (4 round trips from Swanage - the Plum timetable) will be steam hauled by 31806.***

***From Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July, Norden for Purbeck Park\* will reopen for customers with similar COVID-19 arrangements as Swanage in place. Customers will be able to book journey's between stations on trains to suit themselves. The Plum timetable remains in use for the time being.***

***We will now need staff for Norden as well as Swanage and Martin Trott has already asked for volunteers to assist. The SM at Swanage will be the controlling manager for Norden as well.***

***The risk assessment will be updated and Norden will be checked on Friday morning to make sure everything is in place.***

***We are keeping services under review, so that we can respond to customer needs in a way that is consistent with Government coronavirus requirements and our risk assessments.***

***Once we have experience of operating Norden and Swanage a review will be undertaken into reopening Corfe station and whether there is sufficient demand in the peak summer to add further journeys or an additional train.***

***In addition our first weekend of operation has enabled us to review the workings at Swanage and to reduce the number of stewards required to ensure customer safety. Because we require customers to have allocated seats it enables us to see more easily what seats are in greater demand and so from Monday one full coach will be reconfigured into pairs of reservable seats next to windows to avoid selling a block of four to a party of two. Seats for the next two weeks go on sale shortly.***

***As ever the website is the best place to check out the current timetable and developments.***

***The Board wants to thank all staff for their fantastic support in getting our summer service running and supporting developing it as we gain experience of running during these unusual times.***

\*Dorset Council has chosen to brand its part of Norden as 'Purbeck Park'. We referred to it in a previous issue of Swanning Around. We will now start referring to the location as Norden for Purbeck Park in publicity material, so that passengers are aware.

What all this means is that extra station staff will be required, particularly to be stewards at the open stations, initially at Norden. If you are a Swanage Railway volunteer and are available to help with this, get in touch with the Passenger Services Manager Martin Trott to indicate your availability.

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It would appear that many people think it's all over and they can do what they want.

It isn't! And they can't!



We are operating our trains in line with regulatory and government guidance, and social distancing limits the number of seats available. See the Swanage Railway website for details.

<https://swanagerailway.co.uk/re-opening-services>

Book in advance on line! It's cheaper!

And please don't think we are out of trouble financially—we are not! Although we may be able to cover immediate additional costs by restarting services, the restricted nature will ensure that we are unable to make the sort of surplus needed to cover all fixed costs and to carry us over until all restrictions are lifted and we can run full trains again.

We had an initial target of £360,000 required to see us through this pandemic, and people's generosity has provided **£238,927.67** up to 14th July, around two thirds of the target. Please keep donating, if you are able.

<https://www.saveourservice.co.uk/>



**SAVE OUR  
SERVICE**



Picture: Andrew P M Wright

Further details at

<https://swanagerailway.co.uk/>

So what's been happening around the railway while we wait for the trains?

Refreshers for staff commenced from 4th July, with daily trains running to ensure staff competencies are valid, and confirming that the infrastructure is all in full working order.

A week of refresher trains allowed staff to get back into the swing of things, and the first train left Swanage on July 4th, with driver Peter Frost seen here receiving the single line token from signalman Jim Russell



This is the nearest you'll be getting to Page 3 in this issue, with a nice pair of beauties here! Class 33 "Cromptons" D6515 on the train, and 33 111 in the siding.

Volunteers were also in action that day smartening the steam locos. T9 30120 gets the treatment here..

Both these pictures: Andrew P M Wright



Getting the service started requires attention to Covid-19 restrictions, including social distancing and cleaning.

You can provide your own caption for this one!

Note that some table bays are out of use to maintain distancing.



For the start of services on 11th July, one-way movement is employed using barriers, as in this picture at Swanage, with platform staff to give direction.

Picture: Andrew P M Wright





Operating the first passenger train since lockdown on 11th July falls to driver Ian McDavid and secondman Andy Croggon, and, like the rest of us, they're looking pleased to be back!

Picture: Andrew P M Wright

The diesel service will be running until 17th July, then it's steam from Saturday 18th, using U class 31806, seen below on the 15th setting out from platform 1 at Swanage on the first of a number of refresher trips prior to Saturday's public services. 33 111 is waiting in platform 2, ready to go on the diesel services for the day.

Picture from the Swanage web cam.





Meanwhile, in a leafy backwater of Corfe Castle, the heritage carriages group is busy maintaining their B van, with Steve Wise and Keith Powell rubbing down prior to re-painting.

Another fine day on 7th July permits proper social distancing by working outside. Pete Short works on a seat, Graham Taylor is doing something with a window mechanism, and Paul Kingston is doing luggage racks. Bit by bit, the second Maunsell carriage is coming together.





Swanage Railway's official photographer Andrew P M Wright was out and about on 4th July and found Tony North self-isolating at Corfe Castle, digging a hole. Couldn't go down the pub, so had to find something to do!

But what for?

Below is the answer. A new signal post was planted in the hole, and is seen here to the right of 31806 on one of the refresher trains with driver Paul Williams, entering Corfe Castle station on 15th July. Members of the Track Team pause from their strimming and stand clear.

The new signal will replace the shunt signal on the ground to enable trains for Wareham to start from the Down platform in the Up direction under proper signalling.





Harmans Cross signal box gets plenty of weather, and has needed some attention from the painters, as seen in a recent Swanning Around. Some of the wood could not be painted 'cos it was rotted and gone! And the window fell out!

So carpenter John Piper was on hand on 14th July to replace the repaired windows and the surrounding woodwork on the west side.

Does the picture on the right tell you something about the demographic for Harmans Cross signalmen?

The old landline phone has been replaced by this one with those humungous buttons. Does this mean that signalmen are old codgers, or perhaps it is designed to help younger folk who only use mobiles, as the instructions for use are pinned to the wall!

Probably the former!

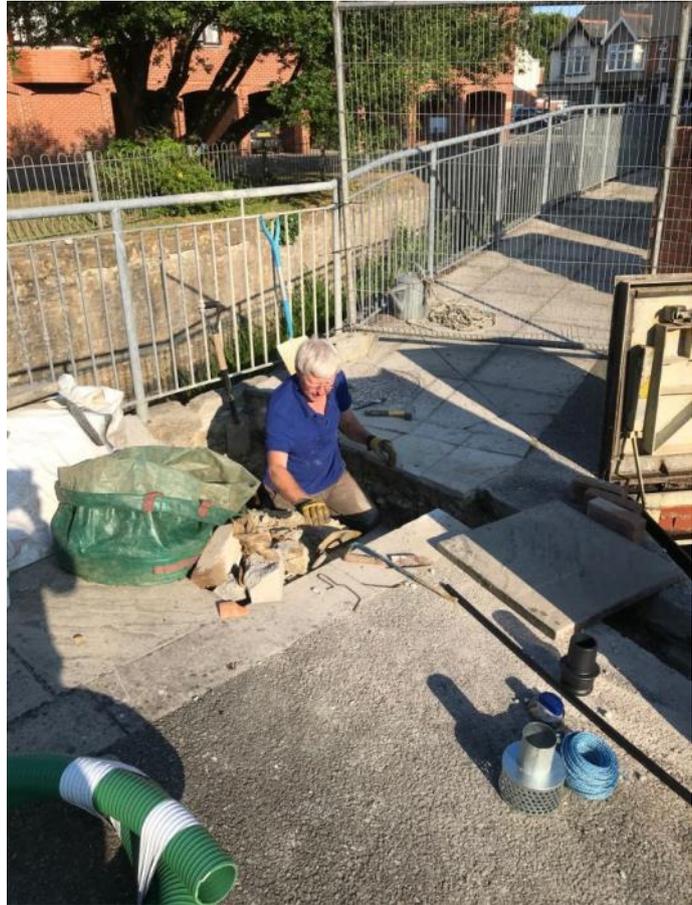
(Ed.—I used it. Much better for the old codgers!)



Some progress has been made with the proposed water supply for the water tower. Work on the drainage over in Chestnut Mews, where the sump for our spring water supply is located, conveniently allowed Malcolm Munro to tack on some pipework requirements, and at almost no cost to the railway.

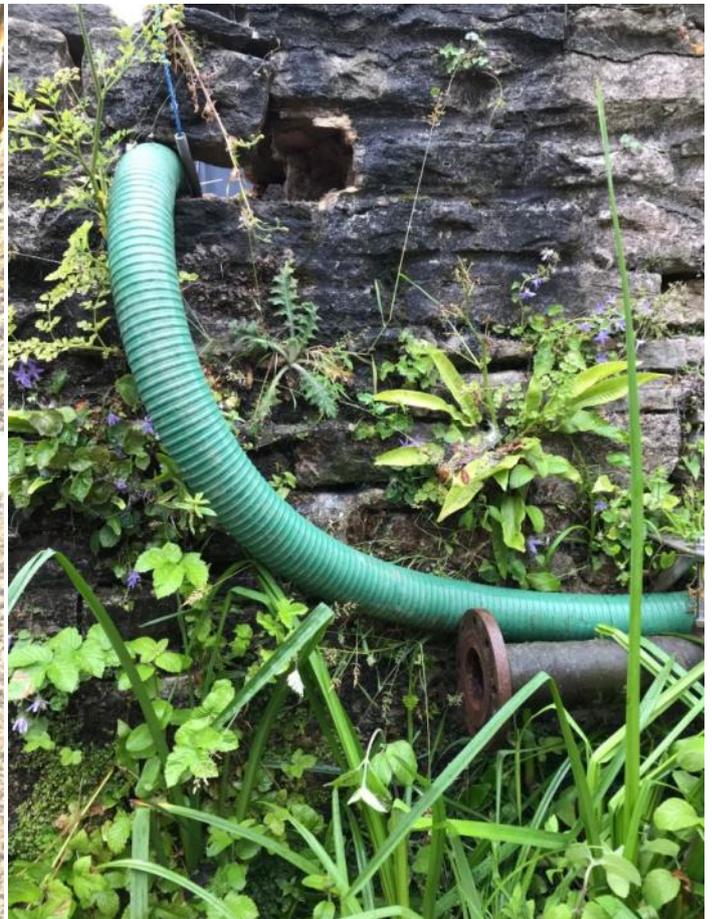
The result was that we now have a pipe from the sump to the steel pipe already installed to the railway. Just needs a flange to connect it.

On the right, the contractor is in a bit of a hole, and he's put our green pipe in from the sump in front of him out through the wall behind him.



The two ends of the pipe can be seen, in the sump and outside the wall, waiting for a filter in the sump and a flange to connect to the steel pipe hiding in the vegetation.

All pictures provided by Malcolm Munro





Another opportunity for you to provide your own caption! Passed cleaner James Forster can be seen shovelling muck out of the inspection pit in the goods shed road, but what is Loco Carriage and Wagon Manager James Cox up to? Strange place for praying! Or perhaps he's giving the submersible pump a good talking to!

Picture provided by Gary Cox

Clive Hardy has posted out Long Service badges to August's recipients. If you haven't received yours and you'd like to do so sooner rather than later then email Clive at - [clive.hardy@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:clive.hardy@swanagerailway.co.uk) - with your address.

August's Long Service badge recipients are :-

- Jonathan BURKE – Porter - 5 years
- Joe TITCOMBE – Passed Fireman - 5 years
- Kenneth CITROEN – Tickets - 10 years
- Gary COX – Fireman – 10 years
- Peter PARASCANDOLO – Signalman - 10 years
- Robin WHITE – Signalman – 10 years
- John COLLARD – Passed Cleaner - 15 years
- Pauline ROBINSON – Operations Assistant - 15 years



As usual, volunteers are required in all departments, so,

If you fancy volunteering for something, or need more info about a project, department, or anything else on the railway, then contact **Volunteer Liaison Officer Mike Whitwam** on

[iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk](mailto:iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk)

or the volunteer contact phone number

**01929-475212**, where you can leave a message.

You will get a prompt response.

**NOTE: All new volunteers MUST go through Mike Whitwam for induction and registration before they can start on the railway.**

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If you are not a member of the Swanage Railway, don't be put off! Contact us and volunteer (or at least make an enquiry)! You know you want to! You will be most welcome!

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Compiled and edited by John Denison

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Swanning Around also appears on line at:

<http://www.srstaff.co.uk/swanningaround>

and

<http://swanagerailway.co.uk/volunteers-diary>