

MHR Directors for Re-election

Alison Houghton



I began volunteering at the Watercress Line in 2013 as part of the team restoring 75079, which gave me an opportunity of indulging my lifelong passion for steam locomotives and mechanical engineering generally. Additionally, I am a member of the Motive Power Department where I volunteer as a locomotive fireman and Training Officer for new footplate staff.

Since completing my MSc. in Ocean Physics, I have spent over 20 years in the marine civil engineering industry, working on major infrastructure developments in the fields of coastal defence, submarine cables, oil and gas and offshore renewable energy.

In 2018 I took a step back from full time employment and am now a freelance marine engineering consultant. I divide my increased free time between writing a historical novel, tending a small vineyard in the Italian Alps and helping out at the Watercress Line.

Mervyn Dunwoody



Mervyn is a professional Civil Engineer specializing in technically challenging projects worldwide, particularly in the UK, USA and Middle East. He has worked on most of the major infrastructure projects in the UK over the last 25 years and was in charge for the last 3 years of the reconstruction of St Pancras station in London to become the High Speed 1 and Midland terminus. He has a track record for delivering projects on time and within budget.

As a volunteer on the Watercress Line, Mervyn has worked for the last 7 years in the Booking Office, Catering and Education Departments. Recently, as a member of the MHR Ltd Board, he has assisted with the implementation of a new accounting and purchasing system and the upkeep of bridges and other structures.

Richard Hawkins



Richard Hawkins FRICS FCI Arb is a retired Chartered Quantity Surveyor and an arbitrator who, since 1984, specialised in the avoidance, management and resolution of disputes in the construction industry.

Richard's career in heritage railways commenced in 1973 at, what is now, the East Anglian Railway Museum at Chappel & Wakes Colne near Colchester. It was there that he and another MHR volunteer were members of a small team which was instrumental in rescuing BR Standard Class 4MT 80151 from Barry. The locomotive is currently in operation at the Bluebell Railway.

Richard was awarded a MHR 40-year long service award as a Guard in 2017. From 2005 to 2010 Richard was Guards Inspector and he was also a former director of MHRPS and MHR Limited back in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Richard's current responsibilities on the MHR Board include care of the estate on which the railway operates.

David Jones

I joined the railway as a volunteer in 2013 and am a member of the platform staff at Ropley.

In business I had a Board level career at the John Lewis Partnership where I held senior roles in Retail, Commercial and Supply Chain. I spent 5 years as the Board Member leading the Waitrose Supply Chain, which was a critical, complex 24/7 operation with over 3000 employees. I have relevant experience of a number of non-executive roles, spanning retail, sport, local government, community and voluntary, charity, regulatory and trade bodies. I am a Trustee of the Zoological Society of London and Deputy Chairman of Gloucestershire County Cricket Club.

Richard Lacey



Having studied electrical sciences at Cambridge University, Richard joined the RAF and served as a helicopter pilot and flying instructor in a wide variety of operational roles including in Northern Ireland, Kuwait, and Kosovo. He commanded both a squadron and a flying station and undertook a range of key staff jobs in the MOD. His last appointments were as Commander British Forces in both the Falkland Islands and Cyprus, retiring in the rank of air vice-marshal. After retirement he worked as director of strategy for a multinational services company for five years as their strategy director before retiring fully. He has been an active volunteer on the Mid Hants railway since 2009 working as platform staff at Ropley and as a guard and signaller. He became chairman of the MHR Ltd in September 2019