

# 150-year celebrations of the Terrier locomotive

March 11, 2022



This year marks the 150th anniversary of the first Terrier locomotive entering service. The popular London, Brighton and South Coast Railway (LB&SCR) A1 Class locomotives were originally designed to haul commuter trains on the heavily congested lines in South and South-East London.

These included routes to and from London Bridge and London Victoria, as well as operating on the East London Railway under the Thames through the Brunel-designed Thames Tunnel. Six locomotives were built for these services during 1872 and deemed to be ideal for the purpose. A further forty-four were built between 1874 and 1880.

To mark this important anniversary, a group of heritage railways and The Terrier Trust are collaborating to stage a programme of events so that the remaining examples of this diminutive locomotive can be enjoyed throughout the year. The first events in the programme have now been announced.

The Isle of Wight Steam Railway (IoWSR) is home to 'Newport' and 'Freshwater'. 'Newport' is in steam at the railway and 'Freshwater' is currently being overhauled. Island Heritage Train Days will take place in May, June and August, each featuring 'Newport'. On 17 and 18 September, the IoWSR's Autumn gala will

take place, celebrating the Ventnor West branch line. It is hoped that 'Freshwater' will return to steam at this event.

The Kent & East Sussex Railway (K&ESR), based in Tenterden in Kent, is home to two Terriers. 'Poplar' was one of the original 1872 engines and the railway has worked with owners The Terrier Trust to bring the engine back into service for her 150th birthday. Her first public appearance is planned for 2 to 5 June 2022 at the K&ESR, where she will run throughout the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend. The railway is also working with The Terrier Trust and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets on an innovative educational programme for schools in the inner-city area after which the engine was named, and it is hoped that the locomotive will be able to visit East London during the course of the year.

The Terrier Trust's other Terrier, 'Knowle', was returned to service in 2021 by the K&ESR and has since visited a number of other heritage lines. It will be returning to Kent to run side-by-side with 'Poplar' for celebrations over the Jubilee.

The Bluebell Railway is home to Terriers 'Fenchurch' and 'Stepney'. The Bluebell will be holding a Terrier gala event from 29 to 31 July and 'Fenchurch' – the first Terrier to enter service back in 1872 and currently in the final stages of overhaul – is expected to feature. Visitors will also be able to meet 'Stepney' who is on static public display. Full details will be announced in the coming weeks.

Further dates for the diary, including visits by operational Terrier locomotives to other heritage railways, will follow as part of the celebratory programme and will be confirmed in due course. A website is now live providing the latest news on the Terrier 150 celebrations, the current schedule of events planned, and details of the ten Terrier locomotives that survive to this day – [www.terrier150.co.uk](http://www.terrier150.co.uk).

Please note that the dates for the return of locomotives from overhaul are based on current estimates and could be subject to change due the complexity bringing these Victorian locomotives back to working order.

Steve Backhouse, General Manager of the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, said: "We're delighted to be working with our friends at other heritage railways to support the Terrier 150 celebrations. These much-loved locomotives played a key role on the Isle of Wight's railways and we look forward to them playing a starring role during 2022."

Shaun Dewey, General Manager of the Kent & East Sussex Railway, said: "We very much look forward to seeing 'Poplar' return to service on the Kent & East Sussex Railway and celebrating its 150th Birthday. It will be a fitting tribute to the skills of all our staff and contractors who have worked so hard to ensure these locomotives have a future on the Kent & East Sussex Railway, for the enjoyment and education of all."

Tom White, Chairman of The Terrier Trust CIO, said, "Survival for 150 years can only be considered a miracle. Stroudley's design for a suburban tank engine which not only had good acceleration, but was lightweight, powerful for its size and reliable, proved a great success and 50 were built. Although displaced from suburban work by larger locomotives by 1900, many were redeployed and proved equally successful on branch lines.

“Decades after other locos built in the 1870s had been scrapped, Terriers remained in daily service on British Railways until 1963 on the Hayling Island branch because no other locos met the strict weight restrictions on the lines they made their own. Today 20% of the class survive and they attract a large following wherever they appear. We are all eagerly looking forward to the many 150th anniversary celebrations planned throughout 2022 to celebrate this Victorian miracle.”

*Photo credit: John Faulkner, taken at the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, 2021*