

# Severn Valley Railway's locomotive shed open for business once more

September 8, 2022



The **Severn Valley Railway's** locomotive shed at Bridgnorth has been officially reopened after months of fundraising, meticulous planning and hard work.

The £475,000 project was delivered on time and on budget and will transform the way the engineering team looks after the railway's fleet of steam locomotives.

The improvements include a new insulated roof with translucent panels as well as insulated cladding on the walls. State-of-the-art LED lighting now provides infinitely better illumination and will also be many times more efficient to power, which is particularly welcome as energy costs soar. The second-hand 6.3 tonne crane will save the team time and money every month.

During the opening ceremony, engineering team leader Will Marsh pressed the button to set the overhead travelling crane in motion, watched closely by some of those who'd made significant donations to the £475,000 project, along with volunteers and staff who'd helped deliver the project.

Jenny Constant and her husband Graham were amongst the invited donors. She said, "We've been in here

so many times and seen how dark and wet it is and we thought this is something that would benefit the work force from day one.

“We can’t offer practical help as volunteers but we can offer financial support, and we’re glad to do it. We feel part of the SVR family and are made to feel so welcome.”

Fellow donor Robin Childs added, “I saw the impossible conditions that people here were working in. They’re preserving the locomotives that I love, so giving some money to the new roof and facilities was obviously going to help.”

The £475,000 required for the project was raised by the SVR Charitable Trust, attracting thousands of donations and several awards from grant-making organisations.

“The difference the translucent sheets have made to the light inside the shed is remarkable,” said volunteer project manager, Antony Bartlam. “Paired with the new lighting, this will make a positive difference to the working environment. The fact that we now have the crane in place will make lifting heavy components much simpler and easier, and will avoid the complex shunting operations that used to be necessary.”

“The expertise that Antony has brought as our volunteer project manager has been key to the success of this work,” said Helen Smith, the SVR’s managing director. “He’s delivered this major project on time and on budget. A special thank you also to the many other volunteers who’ve assisted at different stages; without their help we would have faced much higher costs. This is a wonderful example of teamwork at the SVR, and is truly something to celebrate.”

An extra ‘flash fundraising’ appeal by the Charitable Trust raised a further £16,000 in just two weeks towards the cost of installing an epoxy resin floor coating. This provides a much more robust and safer surface than the old, damaged and uneven one.

“We are extremely grateful to everyone who has donated to fund this much-needed project,” said the CT’s executive director Shelagh Paterson. “Because of donors’ generosity, the SVR now has a lighter, brighter and safer workplace, helping to safeguard the future maintenance and overhaul of its steam locomotive fleet.”

*Photo credit: Anthony Carwithen*