



THE WEST LANCS LETTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST LANCASHIRE LIGHT RAILWAY

ISSUE 53 FEBRUARY 2026



Welcome to West Lancs Letter No.53!



During the winter months we occasionally socialise at the Hesketh Arms in Rufford.

This time was a very special occasion, a few hours before Alan Moore's 90th birthday!



Alan makes short work of blowing out the candles on his cake.



Not quite as old, but likewise in fine fettle, Terry's 1964 Triumph Herald graces the car park.



Older than all of us and our vehicles, Montalban is shunted in typical winter weather.



Just in time the model railway shed gets its permanent roof covering.



It all fits - just!



The closed season gives us time for maintenance of the loco fleet. Here *Sybil* is receiving attention to a minor leak at a rivet.



The job requires lifting of the saddle tank, a task requiring care and attention to detail - note the barriers and hard hats!



Another job on *Sybil*, with Clive attending to a minor problem with the fireman's side sight-glass.



Meanwhile Paul works on *Irish Mail's* frames, replacing metal worn away over decades of service.



More work on *Irish Mail*, this time making a platform for drilling rivet holes.



The drill in action on the new boiler barrel, with two happy volunteers.

January and February is when the track gang get stuck in with all the jobs needing doing before we re-open:





Down the line at Delph the foundations for the Squeal Shed take shape, ready to house the track spraying equipment



More happy workers, this time restoring one of our tipper wagons.



Andy and Mike install a new barrier rail to protect access at the loco shed.



Irish Mail's frames on the turntable, ready for shunting into the workshop.



If it rains, just put up a gazebo and carry on...



The coaches get a makeover, with frames being installed for new inside panelling.



Concentration and a steady hand for cutting the plywood to size.



Barry varnishes the panels, and basks in the warmth of the heater speeding the drying.



How do you cut a big plank of valuable mahogany for the beading? Answer: very carefully.



Meanwhile Liam builds up a new cash box for the burger van. Yes, we still take real money!



The train toys get a makeover at home, with the help of a cricket match (England lost) and zero-alcohol beer.



Signs of Spring at last! The new season can't be far away, and so much still to do!



Jack and Charlie give a coat of paint to some new station signs.



Maybe this work of natural art belongs in a gallery rather than on a wagon? Perhaps entitled 'Slumber Stack'.

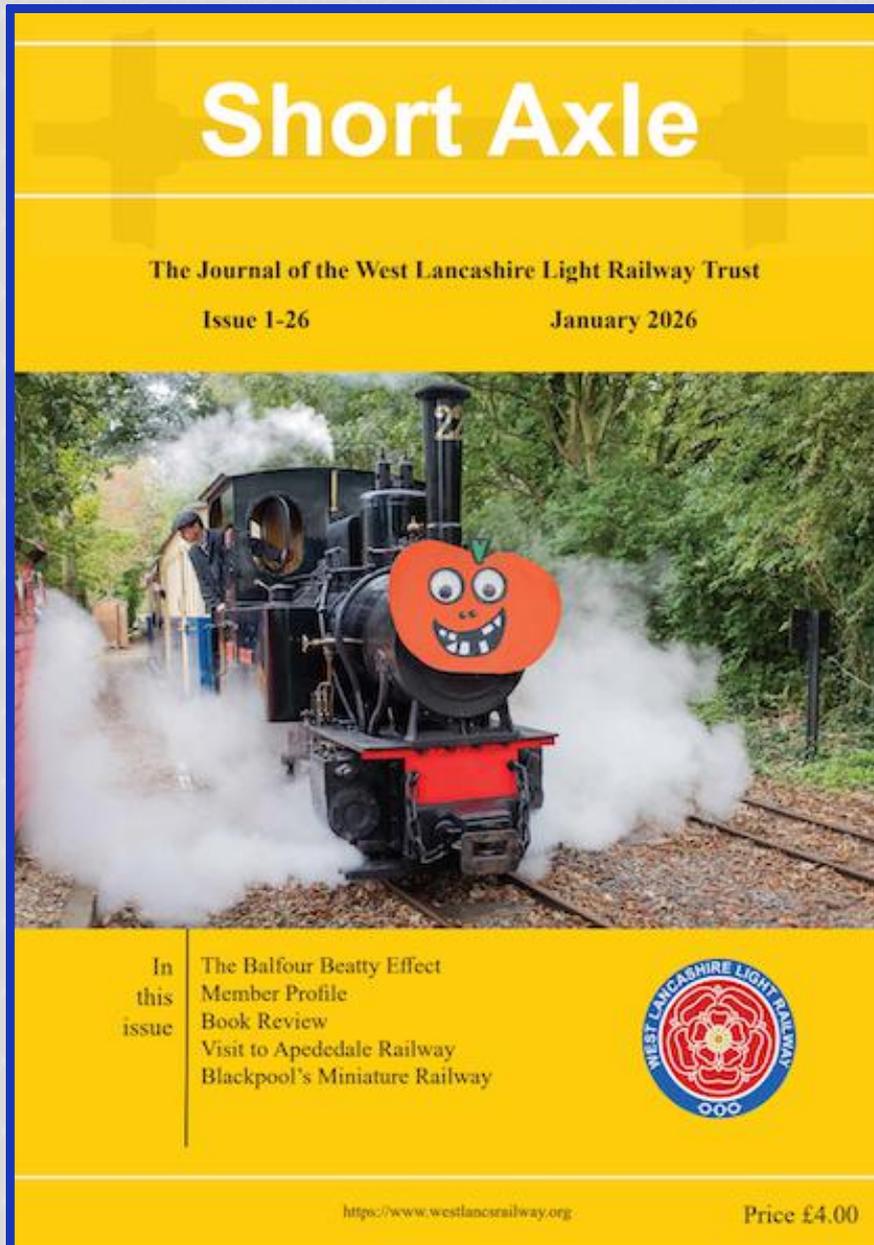


The tea-room staff plan next season's offerings, with the essential canine supervision and mugs of tea.



'Two soups madam?' New products are carefully taste-tested, ready for our customers to enjoy.

And finally...



The latest *Short Axle* has been published, and will be circulated to members shortly, along with an Appeal leaflet to help fund 'Y Caban', our new multi-purpose building.

Copies will also be available in the Shop when we re-open in March.

The image on the front page shows Simon enjoying installing an extractor fan in the toilet block. Note the well-placed pencil.

DON'T MISS IT!

We re-open on Sunday March 29th!



Download our 2026 leaflet [here](#)



With the 2026 season about to start we need more volunteers to run our trains and help to maintain and improve our facilities.

If you would like know more, visit our website [here](#) or contact Mike Spall at chair@westlancsrailway.org.



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