



'THE SOUTHERN SIX'- ALLIANCE OF SOUTHERN PRESERVED RAILWAYS

28th February 2023

Yesterday, we saw a very special meeting at The Bluebell Railway between various leading members from six preserved railways based in the South of England.

“The Southern Six” are promoting cooperation and solidarity between their different railways to become a strong and united group. At a time of economic change and ever-increasing demands on the heritage industry, the idea of this alliance is to generate solutions and put those ideas into action. As a collective, the alliance hopes to adopt a uniform approach where, as a group, it can produce the best possible results for all parties concerned.



The first meeting was very positive and produced much thought and discussion on how to move forward; with ideas shared and the intention formed to create strategies to cope with various areas of need for this year and beyond for each railway within the alliance.

The group will meet every two months. This is a positive step forward in utilising the skills, communication, and resources of all the railways involved. It will provide a strong and much-needed platform for discussion and support whilst meeting the current demands that our industry faces.

The group will consist of:

The Bluebell Railway, The Kent & East Sussex Railway, The Mid Hants Railway, The Spa Valley Railway, The Isle of Wight Steam Railway & The Swanage Railway

Photographed here at Sheffield Park after the first meeting (L to R)

Robert Patterson (*Swanage Railway*) Jonnie Pay (*Spa Valley Railway*) Steve Backhouse (*Isle of Wight Steam Railway*) Lisa Boyle (*Bluebell Railway*) Chris Knibbs (*Bluebell Railway*) Robin Coombes (*Kent & East Sussex Railway*)

Amanda Squires (*The Mid Hants Railway*) was, unfortunately, unable to attend the first meeting due to work commitments.