

SPRING 2026

ISSUE 01

HERITAGE TRACTION PRESERVATION

THE WHEELSLIP

“DRIVEN BY HERITAGE”



Exclusive behind-the-scenes updates from Heritage Traction Preservation, including restoration progress, preservation stories, working visits, fleet developments, and the future of our historic traction.

WWW.HERITAGETRACTIONPRESERVATION.CO.UK

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Chair Trustee's Welcome

Welcome to the very first edition of The Wheelslip, Heritage Traction Preservation's brand new quarterly newsletter.

Firstly, we would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has followed along with our journey so far. Whether you support us through social media, volunteering, donations, purchases from The Goods Shed, or simply by taking an interest in what we do, your support genuinely means a huge amount to us.

2026 is shaping up to be a massive year for HTP, and we have plenty to talk about in this very first issue. From our recent working visits to the Tanat Valley Light Railway, to exciting developments surrounding British Rail Class 143 and the Pioneer Provincial Project, there is a huge amount happening behind the scenes as we continue building towards the future of the organisation.



Over the past few months our volunteers have worked incredibly hard on maintenance, cleaning, inspections, planning, and preparing both our units for the next stages of preservation. While progress can sometimes take time, every visit and every job completed moves us another step closer towards our long-term ambitions.

Within this newsletter you will find updates on our fleet, future plans, ways to get involved, fundraising projects, new merchandise from The Goods Shed, and a behind-the-scenes look at life within HTP.

We hope you enjoy reading the first edition of The Wheelslip, and once again, thank you for continuing to support Heritage Traction Preservation.

Pip Jones
Founder & Chair Trustee

Nuts, Bolts & Breakdowns

Written by David Madge
Trustee & Volunteer



Our Second Visit to TVLR

The first visit to the Tanat Valley Light Railway marked an important milestone for our group, as it was the first opportunity for us, as the new owners, to fully assess the condition of both 143601 and 143616. This initial inspection allowed us to evaluate not only the overall state of the vehicles, but also the scale of the engineering, restoration, and maintenance challenges that would need to be overcome in order to return the units to a reliable and operational condition.

Upon arrival, 143616 was found to be in a particularly sorrowful and neglected state, reflecting the effects of prolonged storage and limited maintenance over recent years. Externally the unit showed clear signs of deterioration, while internally a considerable amount of work was required before any meaningful operational testing could begin. Despite these challenges, the dedication, determination, and persistence shown by our volunteers proved instrumental in transforming the unit over a remarkably short period of time.





Progress in Plain Sight



Dirty!



Needed a good clean!

Over the course of two intensive working visits, each averaging approximately five days in duration, our volunteers committed countless hours of labour — often working late into the night with very little rest — in order to achieve what many initially believed would be impossible. Through extensive cleaning, electrical fault finding, mechanical examinations, and system testing, the team successfully brought 143616 into a clean and mostly mould-free condition. The transformation of the unit during this period was nothing short of remarkable, with the vehicle not only being cosmetically improved but also returned to an operational state for the first time in a significant period.

The successful revival of 143616 represents a major achievement for the group and demonstrates both the capability and commitment of everyone involved in the project. However, while the unit is now operational, some important technical issues still remain. Most notably, a fault within the fire integrity protection system currently prevents the engines from being started on one carriage under normal conditions. In order to rectify this issue, specialist professional attention will be required to replace the existing fire suppression bottles and ensure that the system fully complies with operational safety requirements. Once this work has been completed, it is hoped that the unit can be returned to fully independent operation.



“Tom King — Elbow Grease in Action”

Attention will now increasingly turn towards sister unit 143601, which still requires a substantial amount of work before it can reach the same standard achieved with 143616. Initial inspections suggest that a wide-ranging programme of restoration and fault investigation will be necessary across multiple systems. Following the successful revival of 143616, our next objective is to utilise the working starter batteries from 616 in an attempt to jump start the batteries on 143601. This will allow us to carry out more detailed examinations of the unit’s electrical and mechanical systems, providing a far clearer understanding of its overall condition and the extent of the work required moving forward.

Although significant challenges remain ahead, the progress already achieved with 143616 has provided valuable experience and renewed confidence for the future of the project. The work completed so far highlights what can be achieved through dedication, teamwork, and determination. With continued volunteer support and engineering effort.



“David Madge — Bringing the Cab Back to Life”



The Pioneer Provincial Project

The Pioneer Provincial Project represents Heritage Traction Preservation's long-term vision to return pioneer Class 143 unit 143601 to an authentic early British Rail Provincial-era appearance, celebrating both the origins of the Pacer fleet and the role these units played across Britain's regional railway network.

As the first-built member of the Class 143 fleet, British Rail Class 143 holds exceptional historical significance, making this project far more than a cosmetic repaint. Our aim is to carefully recreate the unit as closely as possible to its original 1980s condition, including Provincial livery, early-style features, and period interior details.

Since announcing the project, the response from enthusiasts, volunteers, industry professionals, and the wider preservation community has been overwhelming. The level of support shown towards preserving not only a Pacer, but the pioneer of the class itself, has reinforced just how important these units remain within Britain's railway story.

Repainting 143601 into Provincial Livery

One of the most significant stages of the project will see 143601 fully repainted into its original British Rail Provincial livery and renumbered as 143001, accurately reflecting its early operational identity.

This stage aims to visually transport the unit back to the late 1980s, recreating the appearance that introduced the Class 143 fleet to Britain's railways. Considerable research is already underway into authentic lining, branding, numbering, and period detailing to ensure the finished result remains as historically accurate as possible.

Restoring Original Provincial Features

Alongside the repaint, the project will focus heavily on reinstating original-era details that disappeared during later refurbishments and operational changes throughout the unit's mainline career.

Plans include the fitting of early-style BMAC headlight clusters, restoration of period cab features, and the recreation of several original visual elements that defined the Provincial-era Class 143 fleet. These details, although subtle, play a vital role in accurately preserving the identity and atmosphere of the early Pacer era.

Interior & Passenger Environment Restoration

The Pioneer Provincial Project also extends inside the vehicle, with ambitions to recreate the atmosphere passengers would have experienced during the early years of Provincial operation.

Future plans include the installation of bus-style seating layouts, restoration of Provincial moquette styling, refurbishment of interior panels and fittings, and the recreation of authentic passenger saloon aesthetics. The aim is to preserve not just the outside appearance of the unit, but the complete experience of travelling aboard an early Class 143.

Ultimately, the long-term ambition of the Pioneer Provincial Project is to see 143601 returned to operational heritage use, allowing future generations to experience the pioneer Class 143 as a living, working part of Britain's railway heritage.

All Signals Set For RailLive

Heritage Traction Preservation is pleased to announce that representatives from HTP are due to attend RailLive, one of the railway industry's largest exhibitions and networking events.

Attending RailLive provides an excellent opportunity for us to engage with industry professionals, suppliers, operators, preservation groups, and infrastructure organisations from across the rail sector. As HTP continues to grow, opportunities such as this are incredibly valuable in helping us build connections, explore future partnerships, and further establish the importance of modern traction preservation within the wider railway industry.

The event also allows us to continue raising awareness of the preservation of Britain's Heritage, particularly the Class 143 "Pacer" fleet, ensuring these often-overlooked vehicles remain recognised as an important part of Britain's railway history.

We look forward to sharing more from the event across our social media platforms and hopefully meeting supporters and industry colleagues throughout the exhibition.



The Goods Shed



Our online shop, The Goods Shed, continues to grow with a range of genuine railway memorabilia, preservation merchandise, and fundraising items now available through the HTP website.

Current items include authentic ex-railway artefacts from our fleet, handmademoquette cushions, signage, and our recently launched Sponsor A Seat scheme for 143616. Every purchase directly supports the ongoing restoration, maintenance, and preservation of our vehicles.

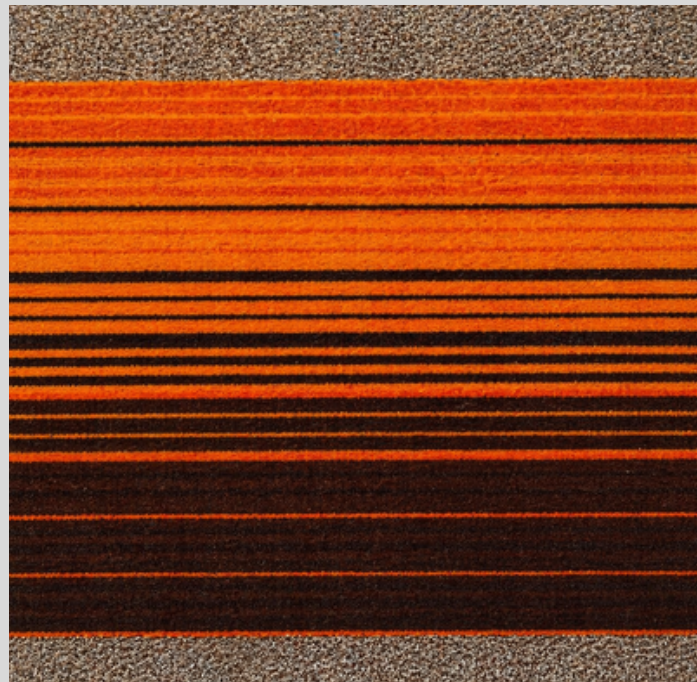
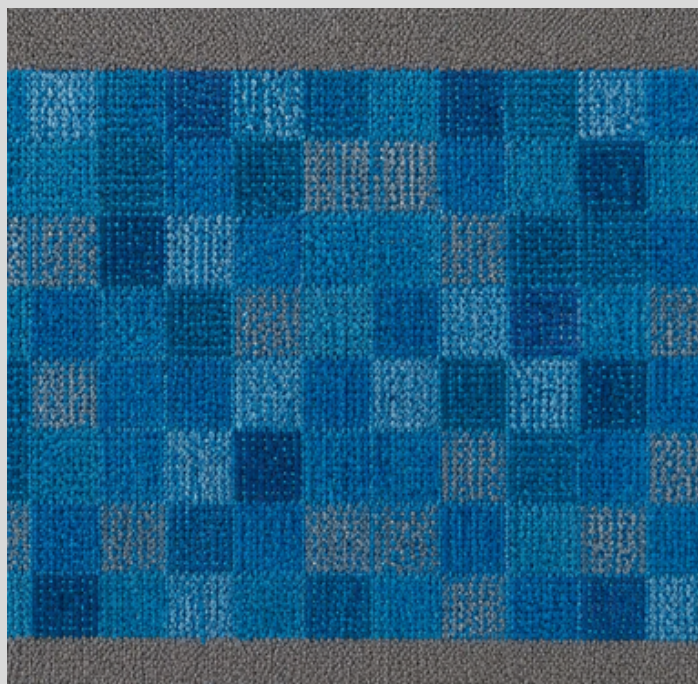


Looking Lovely & Clean!

The Pacer Heritage Collection "Valley Commuter" Cushion -Limited Edition-

Elevate your space with a piece of railway history. Introducing the "Valley Commuter" Moquette Cushion from the HTP Pacer Heritage Collection. This limited edition cushion is handmade by David, featuring original moquette from Class 143 601. Support preservation efforts with every purchase.

[Pre-Order Yours Now](#)



The Pacer Heritage Collection "Nodding Donkey" Cushion -Limited Edition-

Bring iconic British railway design into your home with the "Nodding Donkey" Cushion. Part of the Pacer Heritage Collection, this handmade cushion uses authentic moquette famously seen on Pacers. A unique way to own a piece of history and support Heritage Traction Preservation.

[Get This Piece of History](#)

All Aboard!



A membership with HTP helps to support the ongoing preservation of our fleet for generations to come, memberships can be purchased through our website! All membership are valid for 12 months

Supporter	Contributor	Active
Supporter Membership is the entry point for individuals who wish to back the work of Heritage Traction Preservation and help safeguard historic railway traction for the future.	Contributor Membership is for individuals who wish to play a more active role in supporting the work of Heritage Traction Preservation beyond general support.	Active Membership is the highest level of involvement within Heritage Traction Preservation and is intended for individuals who play an active role in supporting the practical preservation
£10	£20	£30
Supports the work of Heritage Traction Preservation. Regular email updates and newsletters on fleet progress. Early news on key announcements, vehicle movements, etc Discount on merchandise (Where offered) Recognition as a Supporter Member	All benefits of Supporter Membership, plus: Invitations to selected member days, site visits behind-the-scenes opportunities (subject to availability) Priority notice for volunteering opportunities	All benefits of Contributor Membership, plus: Eligibility to volunteer on approved projects Access to internal project updates, briefings & Information Opportunity to represent the organisation at events Recognition as an Active Member within the organisation

The Supporters Raffle



The Supporters Raffle is your chance to win one standout prize, a combined package of both a Sponsor a Seat and an Active Membership.

This means not only securing a permanent place on one of our vehicles, but also gaining deeper access into Heritage Traction Preservation, with behind-the-scenes insight, updates, and the opportunity to step closer into volunteering.

At just £1 a ticket, every entry directly supports the restoration and future operation of our Class 143 fleet. It's more than just a raffle, it's your chance to leave your mark and be part of the journey. (Can be purchased via the Goods Shed on our website)

ONLY £1 PER ENTRY

Pain In The Pacer

This period's award for causing the biggest headache across the HTP fleet goes to the ever-problematic Fire Integrity System.

What initially appeared to be a straightforward issue quickly turned into one of the most persistent faults we have encountered in recent months, resulting in unexpected engine shutdowns, random fire bell activations, and a fair amount of confusion whilst fault finding.

To make matters even more interesting, one of the fire bottles also decided to discharge itself unexpectedly... cough cough... we still have absolutely no idea who managed that one... (Well done Pip.)

Despite the chaos, the issue has provided valuable experience for the team as we continue learning the finer details of maintaining and preserving 1980s railway engineering — where faults rarely appear alone and almost never make sense the first time around.

“Tools Consumed During Repair”

- Time
- More Time
- Much More Time
- Will
- Patience

“Fault Stats”

- Fire Bells Activated: 4
- Engines Shut Down: 3
- Volunteers Confused: Countless
- Actual Fires: Thankfully 0
- Fire Bottles Accidentally Discharged: 1



“The pain in question..!”

The Cutting Torch

Looking back at Britain's
withdrawn railway vehicles

Class 141 104



There are certain railway accidents that become remembered not because of their scale, but because of how avoidable they were.

The story of Class 141 104 is one of them.

Today, the unit is almost entirely forgotten.

No vehicle survives. No museum display tells its story. Most railway enthusiasts know the Class 141 simply as “the first Production Pacer” — awkward, noisy railbuses that acted as the stepping stone towards the much larger Class 142, 143, and 144 fleets.

But buried inside old inquiry reports and fading operational paperwork sits the story of one particular unit whose life ended in circumstances that perfectly captured the chaos, pressure, and confusion surrounding parts of the British railway during the late 1980s.

141104 was not an old train. It had only been built during 1984 by Leyland as part of British Rail's first true production Pacer fleet. Formed of vehicles 55504 and 55524, the unit originally entered service as 141003 before later being renumbered into the 1411xx series following refurbishment. Like the rest of the fleet, it had recently emerged from overhaul work by Hunslet Barclay during 1989, receiving BSI couplers and the distinctive West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive red and cream livery.

At the time, British Rail was trying desperately to modernise local rail services on almost no budget.

Pacers were never intended to be luxury trains. They were cheap, lightweight survival machines designed to keep regional railways alive. Using Leyland National bus technology mounted onto basic railway underframes, the Class 141 quickly developed a reputation for rough rides, excessive noise, poor suspension, and mechanical unreliability. Passengers often hated them.

But they worked.

And for many communities across Yorkshire, they kept local trains running at a time when entire routes still faced uncertainty.

By late 1989, however, 141104's story was about to become tied forever to one of the strangest and most unsettling operational failures in modern British railway history.

The accident itself happened during major engineering and signalling works at Huddersfield station. Extensive remodelling work meant that normal signalling equipment at the east end of the station had been completely disconnected. Instead of conventional signalling operation, trains were being manually talked through the area under temporary handsignalling arrangements.

The original engineering possession had already overrun beyond what many staff expected. Signal and Telecommunications work continued far longer than originally planned, forcing days of prolonged manual operation. Even within the inquiry, there are repeated references to concern surrounding the sheer scale of the temporary arrangements.

And yet despite this, pressure remained to keep the railway moving.

British Rail managers discussed reducing services. Alternative operating arrangements were suggested. But concerns over delays, cancellations, and public criticism ultimately resulted in the decision to continue running a near-full passenger service through Huddersfield during the blockade.

What followed was a slowly developing chain of assumptions, miscommunication, and procedural drift that would eventually destroy 141104.

The rules themselves were clear enough on paper.

British Rail Rule Book instructions stated that:

- handsignalmen were responsible for ensuring routes were correctly set,



- points operators acted only under instruction,
- and all communication regarding routes should flow through properly controlled channels.

But in reality, the working arrangements at Huddersfield had evolved into something far less structured.

The inquiry later revealed that operating supervisors had effectively become the central controlling figures on the ground, despite the role itself existing in a strange grey area between formal rules and practical necessity. Procedures varied depending on who was on shift.

Responsibilities became blurred. Staff made assumptions about what others had already checked.

And critically, not everybody fully understood the temporary system being used.

On the night of 6 November 1989, Relief Signaller Leslie Oates arrived to take over as operating supervisor. The problem was that Oates had only just returned from leave and had little time to familiarise himself properly with the altered layout and temporary procedures. Even within the inquiry evidence, concerns were raised that he should have been brought in earlier during daylight hours simply to properly understand the site.

Instead, much of the briefing occurred informally, in darkness, during live operations.

And that mattered.

Because one set of points — Points 339B — effectively controlled whether trains departing Platform 5 would head safely onto the Down Main line or directly towards a stationary train standing near Signal HU77.

Several experienced staff later described those points as absolutely critical.

Yet no one physically confirmed their position before 141104 departed. That is the single detail that defines the entire accident.

The signalman assumed the operating supervisor had checked the route.

The operating supervisor assumed staff near Signal HU77 had already dealt with the points.

Meanwhile, personnel near Signal HU77 believed the route had already been correctly set elsewhere.

In reality, nobody checked Points 339B at all.

At approximately 22:00, Driver Alan Howitt received authority to pass Signal HU95 at danger with instructions that “the road is set up for you”. Ahead of him, standing near Signal HU77, was the delayed 19:25-

Scarborough to Liverpool Lime Street service formed of Class 156476.

Howitt eased the Pacer away from Platform 5.

The gradient falling away from the station allowed the lightweight Class 141 to roll forward easily before power was applied. He later stated he was concentrating heavily on looking for staff around the engineering works while repeatedly sounding the horn during departure.

Then came the moment that would later define the inquiry.

“I looked down and saw the points were laid towards the stationary train and I just thought oh my God, and just banged everything on”.

He immediately applied the brakes and abandoned the cab to warn passengers moments before impact.

The lightweight Pacer slammed directly into the stationary Class 156. The damage was catastrophic.



Official reports described how vehicle 55524 suffered severe underframe distortion, with the entire body lifting and shifting on its mountings during impact. The BSI coupler was heavily damaged, securing bolts on battery boxes sheared away, and the engine bell housing fractured leaving the engine itself hanging supported at only one end.

Trailing vehicle 55504 also sustained structural damage caused by violent body movement during the collision. Even the heavier Class 156 suffered major impact damage, including fractured engine components and severe damage around the gangway and coupler areas.

Dozens of passengers were injured. And yet, incredibly, the accident could have been far worse.

Later investigation estimated the impact speed at around 20mph. The inquiry also concluded that visibility conditions and the layout itself made it effectively impossible for Driver Howitt to identify the incorrectly set points in sufficient time to stop safely.

The inquiry itself became remarkably blunt. It criticised:

- poor briefing,
- inconsistent procedures,
- informal deviations from rules,
- weak management oversight,
- unclear responsibilities,
- and failures in route checking.

Perhaps the most damning line came later in the report:

“If Mr Oates had understood better what precisely was required of him, the accident would not have happened.”

For 141104, the story ended there.

Despite only recently emerging from refurbishment, the unit was deemed beyond economical repair. Quietly withdrawn from service, the damaged vehicles were later stripped for components before being scrapped during 1993.

Its entire life had lasted barely five years.

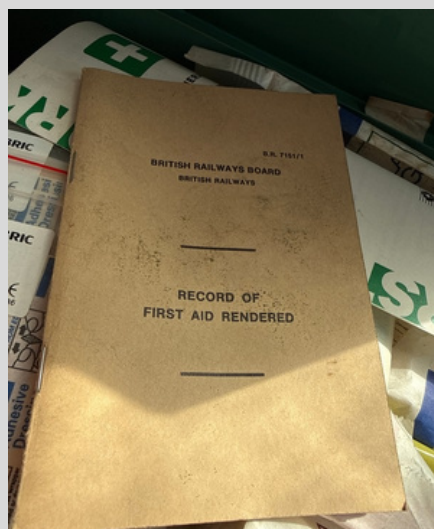
Today, nothing survives of the train.

Yet in many ways, 141104 perfectly represents the era that created it.

A lightweight train built cheaply to keep regional railways alive. Operating during a period of shrinking budgets, overstretched infrastructure, and enormous operational pressure. A train born from improvisation, ultimately destroyed by improvisation.

And somewhere in the darkness outside Huddersfield station, beneath temporary lights and disconnected signals, Britain's first production Pacer experiment suffered one of its defining tragedies.

A Historic Discovery!



Whilst carrying out cleaning and inspection work aboard Class 143616 during a recent visit to the Tanat Valley Light Railway, the HTP team uncovered several remarkable surviving artefacts from the unit's operational career.

Among the discoveries was an original Arriva Trains Wales hi-vis vest, still tucked away within the vehicle many years after the unit's withdrawal from frontline passenger service. Featuring the familiar Arriva branding and safety messaging once seen daily across the Welsh railway network, the item provides a genuine snapshot into the everyday life of the unit during its mainline years.

Alongside this, volunteers also uncovered a complete British Railways standard first aid box, still mounted within the vehicle and retaining much of its original contents. Even more remarkably, the box still contained its original British Railways "Record of First Aid Rendered" booklet, alongside historic bandages, dressings, and medical supplies dating back decades.

The first aid box itself remains in beautifully authentic condition, complete with original BR labelling and contents charts still attached to the inside lid — something increasingly rare to find intact aboard preserved rolling stock today.

Finds such as these are an important reminder that railway preservation is about far more than simply saving trains. Hidden within units like 143616 are countless small pieces of operational history that tell the story of the staff, passengers, and railway culture that surrounded them throughout their working lives.

Photo Of The Quarter



Location: Pontlottyn

Date: 5 July 2019

Working: 2R18 16:02 Penarth – Rhymney

Operator: Transport for Wales

Photographer: Martin Loader – hondawanderer.com

Captured approaching Pontlottyn on 5 July 2019, this fantastic photograph shows both of HTP's preserved Pacers — 143616 and 143601 — working together on Valley Lines duties during their final years of mainline service.

A massive thank you goes to Martin Loader for allowing us access to his incredible photography collection. He truly is a fantastic photographer, and we highly recommend checking out his work whenever possible.

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Why Preserve “Modern” Traction

-Pip Jones

A lot of rail enthusiasts — and even people with no real railway interest at all — can appreciate the sight of a big, noisy steam locomotive storming through the countryside. It truly is iconic. Equally, many people recognise the unmistakable sound of a High Speed Train passing at 125mph, something that became a symbol of modern British engineering for decades.

But in our eyes, the railway in all forms is truly magnificent.

Britain's railway history is one of the most important parts of our industrial and cultural heritage, and because of that, we believe as much of it as possible deserves preserving — not just the glamorous parts.

For many people, modern traction was their railway experience. Units like Pacers, Sprinters, and countless other diesel multiple units carried millions of passengers every year across Wales, the South West, the Midlands, and the North. They may not have carried the romance of steam, but they became part of everyday life for generations.

The Class 143 in particular became one of the most recognisable regional trains in Britain. Love them or loathe them, they worked tirelessly for over 30 years and played a vital role in keeping regional rail services moving.

Preserving modern traction is about making sure future generations can experience this era of railway history properly, hearing the sounds, seeing the interiors, smelling the engines, and understanding what ordinary railway travel looked and felt like during the late twentieth and early twenty-first century.

As time moves forward, more and more of these vehicles are disappearing forever. What was once common suddenly becomes rare almost overnight.

At Heritage Traction Preservation, we believe every chapter of railway history matters. From steam locomotives and first-generation diesels to Pacers and modern regional units, they all tell the story of Britain's railway network and the people who relied upon it every single day.

Because one day, what feels modern now will simply become history.

The Pacer Network

A brand new recurring series within The Wheelslip, remembering the iconic routes once operated by the Class 143 fleet. Each edition will explore a different line, celebrating the sights, sounds, and memories of the Pacers across Britain's regional railway network.

Part 1 The Riviera Line Exmouth-Paignton

The first route in our new Classic Pacer Routes series looks at one of the most recognisable Class 143 strongholds: the Devon route between Exmouth and Paignton.

For many years, Class 143 Pacers were a regular sight on local Great Western services across Devon, especially on stopping services linking Exmouth, Exeter, Dawlish, Teignmouth, Newton Abbot, Torquay and Paignton. GWR's Class 143s remained in traffic until December 2020, with examples later entering preservation, including units that had worked the Paignton and Exmouth corridor.



Class 143 618 sat at Dawlish Warren, Now preserved at the Plym Valley Railway

The Route

The Exmouth to Paignton service formed a classic Devon cross-county working, linking the Exe Estuary with the South Devon coast and Torbay.

Typical calling points included:

Exmouth, Lympstone Village, Lympstone Commando, Exton, Topsham, Newcourt, Digby & Sowton, Polsloe Bridge, St James Park, Exeter Central, Exeter St Davids, Starcross, Dawlish Warren, Dawlish, Teignmouth, Newton Abbot, Torre, Torquay and Paignton.

The route gave the Pacers a bit of everything: estuary running, city stops, busy commuter flows, seaside holiday traffic, and the famous sea wall between Dawlish Warren, Dawlish and Teignmouth. The Great Scenic Railways guide describes the line from Exeter as hugging the Exe Estuary and coast, which is exactly why Pacer photographs from this route became so popular with enthusiasts.



A unidentified Class 142 leaving Dawlish Station, Credit to Richard & Gill Long

Class 143 Usage

The Class 143s became strongly associated with Devon local services under First Great Western and later GWR. They were commonly seen on the Paignton – Exmouth diagrams, often working alone as two-car units, but also appearing coupled to other DMUs such as Class 150s or Class 153s when capacity or diagramming required it. Enthusiast route summaries from the period also record Class 143s as regular local stopping stock on Paignton to Exmouth services.

Their job was simple but relentless: frequent stopping services, short dwell times, heavy seasonal passenger loadings, and constant use across a route that mixed commuter railway with tourist railway. They were not glamorous, but they were ideal examples of what Pacers were built to do: keep regional services moving at low cost.

Class 142s On The Route

Before the final Class 143 years, Class 142 Pacers also appeared in the South West. First Great Western received twelve Class 142 units in 2007, with operations beginning that December. They were sub-leased from Northern Rail, partly to cover Sprinter refurbishment and to allow Class 158s to be re-formed as three-car sets. These 142s were based at Exeter TMD and worked alongside other local DMUs on Devon and Cornwall routes including the Avocet Line, Riviera Line and Tarka Line.

Some Class 142s returned north in late 2008, with the remaining units returning to Northern by November 2011 after replacement by cascaded Class 150s. That makes the Class 142 period in Devon relatively short compared with the long-standing Class 143 presence, but they still became a memorable part of the local scene.

Why This Route Matters

The Riviera Line showed Pacers at their most familiar: not special event trains, not rare workings, but ordinary everyday railway workhorses.

They carried commuters into Exeter, families to the seaside, railway staff to work, students, shoppers, holidaymakers and enthusiasts. During summer, a Pacer could be packed with passengers heading for Torbay. In winter, the same unit might be rattling along the sea wall through spray, wind and rain.

For many passengers, this was simply what local rail travel in Devon looked and sounded like.

Love them or loathe them, the Class 142s and 143s became part of the Devon railway landscape. The Exmouth to Paignton route gave them one of the most scenic regular workplaces in Britain, from the Exe Estuary to the Dawlish sea wall and onwards into Torbay.

For this reason, the Riviera Line feels like the perfect place to begin our Classic Pacer Routes series: a route where the Pacers were ordinary, everyday, hard-working trains, and where their memory remains strongly tied to the sound, sights and rhythm of local railway life in the South West.



Class 143 617 leaving Newton Abbot. Now preserved at the Tarka Valley Railway

Distant Signals



Work will continue across both British Rail Class 143 and 143616 during future visits to the Tanat Valley Light Railway, with ongoing efforts focused on cleaning, maintenance, cosmetic improvement, inspections, and long-term restoration planning. Each visit continues to bring steady progress, whether through major engineering work or the smaller behind-the-scenes tasks that are equally important in preserving historic railway vehicles.

A major focus moving forward will remain the Pioneer Provincial Project, which has already generated a remarkable amount of interest and support across the railway preservation community. As plans continue developing, we hope to begin taking further practical steps towards recreating 143601 in its original Provincial-era condition, preserving not only the vehicle itself but also an important part of Britain's regional railway history.

The continued support shown by enthusiasts, volunteers, followers, and the wider railway community has been genuinely incredible, and every message, purchase, share, donation, and contribution helps move the organisation forward. Although there is still a significant amount of work ahead, the long-term ambition remains clear — to preserve, restore, and eventually operate an important part of Britain's modern railway heritage for future generations to experience and enjoy.

Stay On The Right Track

Want to keep up to date with everything happening at Heritage Traction Preservation?

By subscribing to our website, you will receive regular updates directly from the HTP team, including fleet progress, restoration updates, working weeks & weekends, exclusive behind-the-scenes content, future announcements, and much more.

Subscribers may also receive early access to announcements, supporters-only content, and exclusive discounts across The Goods Shed online store.

Whether you are a long-time railway enthusiast or simply interested in supporting the preservation of Britain's modern railway heritage, subscribing is one of the easiest ways to stay involved with the journey.



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Sorry
Not in Service

143616