Evolving Our Membership for the Future

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At the Watercress Line, our members are at the heart of everything we do. Your loyalty, enthusiasm and continued support make it possible for us to preserve, maintain and celebrate our remarkable heritage Railway.

Earlier this year, we carried out a membership survey to hear directly from you about what you value most and how we could improve your experience as members. Your feedback has been invaluable, and as part of our long-term planning, we have listened carefully and acted upon what you told us.

We also want to be open and honest with you. Like many heritage railways and charities across the country, we are facing rising operational costs. At the same time, membership numbers have been gradually declining, meaning our income from memberships no longer covers as much of the costs of keeping the Railway running as it once did.

To ensure that the Watercress Line remains strong, sustainable and open for future generations, we have taken the opportunity to review and refresh our membership offering. These changes are designed not only to safeguard our financial future but also to provide clearer benefits, better value and more choice for our supporters.

Introducing New Membership Fee Structure

In the New Year, we will be introducing three new membership tiers, each designed to suit different ways of engaging with the Railway.

Classic Membership £35 per year	Railway Companion £50 per year	Digital Supporter £20 per year
All the benefits you already enjoy:	Everything from the Classic Membership, plus:	Designed for non-local members who live further afield or who prefer a digital connection, you will receive:
50% off standard travel	**25% off Gala event tickets**	**Three digital issues of** *Watercress Line News* each year
Free travel on our Open Weekend	**Discounts in our shop and café** (discounts may vary throughout the year)	**Exclusive** behind-the-scenes videos and online content
Three issues of Watercress Line News each year.	Early access to event bookings and special experiences	
Invitation to the AGM of the Watercress Line Trust		

Senior, Junior and Five-Year Memberships Being Phased Out, Family Membership Changing

As part of this transition, we will also be retiring our five-year membership option. Existing five-year memberships will, of course, continue to run their full course until expiry, but from the New Year onwards, new five-year memberships will no longer be available for purchase.

To simplify our structure and make things fairer, we are discontinuing the separate Senior and Junior membership rates. However, at renewal, existing members in these categories will be offered a Classic Membership at a discounted rate for the first year.

We are also working on a refreshed Family Membership offer, but be assured that we will continue to offer the existing format in the meantime.

From the New Year, our updated membership tiers will come into effect.

Members will receive full communication from us in the coming months, and full details will also be available on our website in the New Year.

These changes come as part of our wider plans to improve how we communicate, deliver benefits and sustain the Railway for the future. They reflect not only your feedback, but also the rising costs of operation and our commitment to providing value and a first-class experience for all supporters.

We understand change is never easy, but by making these adjustments now, we are ensuring that the Watercress Line can continue to thrive, evolve, and remain a cherished part of Hampshire's living railway heritage for many years to come.

WE'RE HERE TO LISTEN

We know you may have questions about these updates, and we want to make sure your voice continues to be heard. We welcome emails to discuss the changes and hear your feedback. Please email us at **membership@watercressline.co.uk.**