



Volunteer Liaison Department
Swanage Railway Trust Ltd.
Station House Swanage
Dorset BH19 1HB
Direct Line: 01929 475212
Email: volunteer@swanagerailwaytrust.org.uk

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS INFRASTRUCTURE DEPARTMENT - TELECOM

The Telecom dept. was started by Frank Roberts, then a young soldier in the Royal Signals, back when the line was being first rebuilt. There was an obvious need for communications, so Frank installed the first telephones and a small exchange. As the line grew in length so the communications needed to grow with it, so with the help of volunteers and regular working parties from the Royal Signals, the system grew and developed to keep pace with the ever-changing needs. This is still an ongoing process with continuing additions and re-arrangements to make sure that we provide a service that meets the Railways requirements.

The services we provide fall roughly into three areas: -

BT FIXED LINES, MOBILE AND BROADBAND.

At Swanage Station House, we have a modern BCM (Business Communications Manager) system, which serves all departments around Swanage station. This provides all the messages and menus for incoming calls to the main number, transfer to the required extension, direct dialling in, voice mails, and calls between extensions.

There are also BT lines at the other stations and signal boxes for emergency use and external calls.

Key personnel who need communications at all times are provided with mobile phones.

There are four Broadband lines providing Internet and email at Swanage Station House, Swanage Operations, and Corfe Castle.

INTERNAL TELEPHONE SYSTEM.

Telephone communications over the whole of the Railway are provided by our internal system. This consists of three Strowger exchanges located at Swanage, Herston, and Corfe Castle interlinked with a Strowger tandem unit. In total there are 65 extensions linking all parts of the railway, and we are very proud to have a heritage telephone system that is providing a daily service, and not just a museum piece.

SIGNAL BOX COMMUNICATIONS.

Each signal box has a 'Telephone Concentrator Unit', which is basically a key and lamp unit to which all the signal post telephones are connected. These concentrators are also interconnected to provide box-to-box communication. The signalmen therefore have their own exclusive communications separate to the internal and BT lines.

We also provide the lines for the signalling equipment – Tablet and Key Token machines, track circuitry, etc.

All of this is supported by an extensive cable network, which runs the whole length of the railway. In the most visible areas we try to keep the period look by using poles fitted with cross arms and insulators to carry the wires.



We are a small group of volunteer staff. There is always much to be done in both maintaining the systems and adapting to the changes within the railway. There is a wide range of skills required from programming the BCM or maintaining the Strowger equipment, to working on buried cables or repairing overhead lines. Our work is always varied as we respond to faults, make improvements to the system and provide new facilities. The Swanage Railway operates a documented Youth Protection Policy to safeguard children. The policy of the Swanage Railway Trust is that all Volunteers should be Members. For further information please contact:

The Telecom Department Manager is Terry Otter Telephone: 01202 699683 Email: terry.otter@btinternet.com
Or contact the Volunteer Liaison Department as above.

THE SWANAGE RAILWAY TRUST LIMITED
Tel: 01929 425800 Fax: 01929 426680
Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England and Wales No. 4115126

Photographs Copyright Andrew PM Wright

Registered Office: Station House
Swanage, Dorset, BH19 1HB
www.swanagerailwaytrust.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 1087318