



Class 503 Wirral EMU

The Heritage Electric Trains Trust has taken the decision not to pursue with the restoration of its three car Class 503 Wirral EMU and will be retaining only the driving motor brake second car as a future project. Both the driving trailer and centre trailer cars are to be disposed of in the next couple of months.

This decision, by the Trustees, has not been taken lightly and is based on sound reasoning of the realistic position this unit now finds itself in and what prospects present themselves for the vehicles future. This comes down to the following:

- There is no prospect of the unit ever running again under its own power. The infrastructure that would permit this does not exist and the unit will never be of the standard required for main line running. The absence of any spare parts makes this prohibitively expensive.
- The support needed to fund the continued existence of the unit has failed to materialise to a significant level and current support will only fund the monthly cost of very basic storage of one coach.
- There is no alternative site for the complete unit and the opening of Margate as the One:One Collection Museum means that a poor condition unit cannot remain in store there.

As mentioned, the trailer cars are in very poor condition and would require extensive renovation to be brought up to display standard. HETT feels the display of a single vehicle in the future will offer the same interpretation value as a full unit and the reduction in associated costs will make that a more viable option over the next decade.

For the avoidance of doubt, disposal of these vehicles means that they will be sent for scrap after useful components have been recovered, but if any other organisations or preservationists would like to acquire these vehicles they should contact HETT without delay; prospective owners must be able to provide evidence that they can remove the vehicles at their own cost from Margate within two months, have a guaranteed location to take them to and can provide an indication of their future prospects and ambitions.

The Heritage Electric Trains Trust can be contacted at: hello@hett.org.uk