

## **BSHG Report to SRA AGM 2018**

It's been another good year for our class 117, mileage for 2018 was 1,129 miles and she's now done a total of 16,572 miles since arriving at the SR in 2005. The unit finished the year fully operational and by the time I read this, readied for the winter at Boat.

The main highlight this year has been her role in a Bollywood film filmed around the railway! Filming is not as glamorous as you might think, though, and involved a lot of sitting about in two of the hottest days of the year! Otherwise, we seem to have settled into a good regular timetable pattern which gives the public and enthusiasts a chance of some different traction on the Strathspey Railway.

The centre car, SC59511, has been the focus this year and restoration work has re-started with roof vents and leaks repaired/sealed to keep out the wet, and two coats of Steel Grey paint applied. Our appreciation goes to Jimmy Smith for the excellent work on the roof. There is quite a bit of welding work required to the bodywork now and a local welder will be employed to carry this out. We have refilled the tanks and tested the toilets, a couple of minor leaks inside the coach have been found, but the tanks themselves seem sound.

The first-class section has been stripped internally of damaged roof, side panels and window frames, etc., all due to the wet getting in over the past few years. The old Lino has also been removed (not an easy job). Seats had been removed a few years ago and the frames will need cleaning & re-painting, the seat squabs and backs have already been reupholstered by a local firm in Newtonmore. They are currently stored in the 107 but we will probably need to find somewhere perhaps a bit less damp.

In the middle section, all seats have been removed and the old lino lifted. It's planned to install a small bar/counter to enable a catering service to be provided for drinks and snacks, etc. Small tables and chairs will also be installed. The small second-class section at the other end will remain second class but will need a similar strip and refurbish to the rest of the coach.

CS Joinery of Grantown has been employed to carry out the interior work required and so far, their results have been good. They have been re-panelling the sides and roof starting at the first-class end and have been pro-active with putting forward ideas and suggestions.

New safety flooring will also be required throughout. Our current thought is to use the same type as recently laid in SC51367 with perhaps a different colour in first-class.

There's also fair bit of internal electrical work required to lighting etc.

We have not looked below the solebar yet and we'll have some work to do like overhauling the vacuum cylinders, checking brake rigging and blocks. Testing the dynamo and fitting batteries will also need done plus two Smiths heaters will need to be fitted and tested.

All this work has been made possible thanks to the Strathspey Railway Association with support from the SRC. Where we can't get the work done in-house, we always endeavour to employ local tradesmen.

Work has not stopped on the power cars, SC51367 & SC51402. They recently received an "A" Exam, plus some other regular maintenance work carried out. The engines were steam cleaned and the process of fitting new step boards was completed. A programme of

replacing the gauges has also started, with Ken Donaldson refurbishing and certifying them for us for which we are very grateful.

SC51367 is looking pretty good inside now with the new lino fitted in the saloon, the guards compartment floor receiving a repaint plus slight re-organisation and the driving cab repainted. SC51402 is looking a bit rough though, so she is next to be tackled.

We have a growing group of regular volunteers and supporters building up around the unit and the Blue Square Heritage Group would like to thank in particular; Jimmy Smith, Alistair Convery, Iain Robertson, Gerry Healy, Brian Burgess and Tom Spink. We would also like to thank you all and the Board for your support. But, as we do every year, we would like to invite any of you to come and join us to help keep this, now vintage, unit going (she will be 60 years old in 2020!). Thank you.