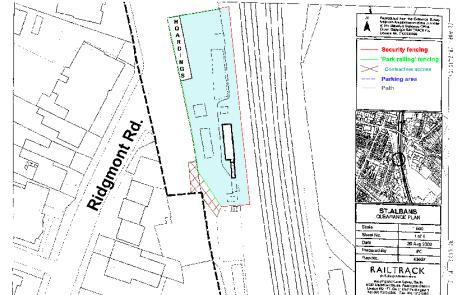




Newsletter 11<sup>th</sup> July 2004  
Volume 1, Issue 4

# Outside the Box

St Albans Signal Box Preservation Trust  
[www.sigbox.co.uk](http://www.sigbox.co.uk)



## Good news and bad:

- More lease problems
- The Charity is now registered
- Further Grant applications underway

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## Some good news - and some bad

Welcome to the belated fourth newsletter of the St Albans Signal Box Preservation Trust. Progress has still been slower than we expected - but there has been some.

Network Rail have sent us the 'heads of terms' for a lease for the signal box. The rent is a very reasonable one peppercorn, and other terms and conditions seem to meet our needs. So its good news and our thanks go to Network Rail for providing another stepping stone on what is becoming an interesting journey.

The terms of the lease were sent to The Heritage Lottery Fund for their comments before we send our formal

application in to them.

Now the bad news. The HLF will not allow lottery money to be spent on properties that are held on a lease that has a break clause in it - as the property could be reclaimed by the landlord, and the grant would have been for the benefit of the landlord, not the charity.

Network Rail believed they wouldn't be able to provide a lease without the break clauses - just in case the property was needed for railway uses.

However, after further consideration and reference to the Office of the Rail Regulator, they should soon be able to provide a lease acceptable to all.

## Charity Status

The Charity Commission has now confirmed our status as a registered charity. Our Charity reference number is 1104535.

The objects of the Company had to be changed slightly to ensure that they were compliant with a registered charity and now read -

'The objects of the charity are to secure for the benefit of the public, the preservation, restoration, use and maintenance of the building known as St. Albans signal box and the equipment contained therein. To use the signal box and equipment as a

working museum, exhibiting items and demonstrations of railway signalling history and practice, and other general railway interest.'

The new objects were agreed unanimously by the board.

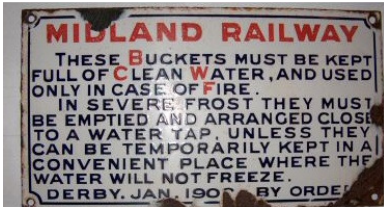
As the charity commission has officially registered our status the treasurer is now reclaiming gift aid tax repayments from the Inland Revenue. It's good to see the Inland Revenue giving rather than receiving!

St Albans Signal Box Preservation Trust is a Company limited by guarantee registered in England No. 04653488.  
Regd. address - 5 Ridgmont Rd.  
St Albans, Herts, AL1 3AG  
Regd. Charity no. 1104535



## Dating the box!

Well, when was it built then?



*All Midland Railway relics gratefully received!*

The St Albans South signal box was prefabricated in the signal works at the northern end of Derby station, and erected in 1892. The same basic design was in use from 1870 to 1929.

Throughout that period the basic structure and hipped roof remained largely unaltered, the main changes being in window size, pane pattern and style of weather boarding used.

These major changes occurred in 1884, 1900 and 1906, dividing Midland boxes into four types (1-4). The St Albans box is a type 2(a). The (a) denotes the style of windows with the largest number of glazing bars.

All type 2(a) signal boxes have since

been demolished or succumbed to rot in the supporting timbers due to lack of foundations.

The box was extended with an extra bay in the early 1920's - but no records can be found. The panels were probably taken from another box that was being replaced as they are all identical.

The walkway is of the pre-1899 type, with wrought iron brackets, and the railings attached to the front of the planks. This runs the whole length of the box, so putting the extension date in doubt - it may have been earlier.

If you have any information, please let us know. We want the restoration to be as authentic as possible and dating the structure is a large part of the puzzle.



## Grant applications

The Architectural Heritage Fund have generously granted us a project administration grant of £4,000, to be disbursed over 12 months. This is to cover our non-professional costs involved in taking the project forward.

This will be of particular help to us as we only have a few pounds in the bank. We will be able to use this money for our administrative costs, and enable us to gain wider support with improved newsletters sent to a wider audience.

Landfill tax credit scheme help is being sought from Lafarge Aggregates UK and a decision is expected from them soon.

## Listed building

The building is listed grade II and the listing states -

'C1863. Midland Railway signal box of three bay type. Timber framed with weatherboarded ground floor, outer bays containing small framed windows. 1<sup>st</sup> floor fully glazed with two bays of 3 lights and one bay of 2 lights: small paned sliding casement windows. Hipped slate roof. Wooden flight of steps with plain banisters give access across to first floor side entrance. Iron bracketed balcony to front. This is a good unaltered example of a 3 bay Midland Railway Signal box contemporary with the opening of the main line through to St Pancras.'



*The ground floor weights*

*Butterley signal box at the Midland Railway Centre*



## Become a 'friend' of the Signal Box

Its subscription time!

We have deliberately put off asking for further subscriptions as the project was looking a little precarious! However, now that the lease issue has been resolved and charity status granted the project is back on track. Please, please, renew your subscription as soon as

possible as we really need your support. A minimum of £10 is all we are asking - and some letters of support would be good too!

We're still not able to access the signal box due to safety issues, but as soon as we can, you'll be the first to know, and we look forward to meeting you there!