

# Meet our Directors

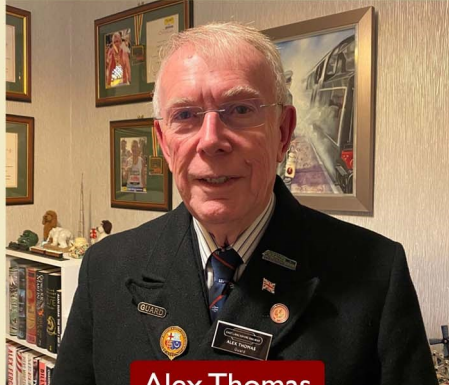
The East Lancashire Light Railway Co Ltd Board has a group of dedicated directors, who are all volunteers, giving their time freely to make sure the railway makes good executive decisions to make the railway sustainable going forward. The board has a wide level of experience where every directorate has its own portfolio and responsibilities. Learn more about the person, their skills and love for the ELR.



**Alan Lee**

## Director of Commercial Services

- Leads projects in the unique selling point areas of the ELR (such as dining services and pubs).
- Worked with railway and marine fleets, including commissioning and maintenance for 37 years.
- Brings extensive experience in Traction & Rolling Stock, project engineering & management including the Ramsbottom and Bury reinstatement of signalling.
- Has a vision of strategic development of the commercial, human and hardware resources to ensure a sustainable future for the railway for generations to come.



**Alex Thomas**

## Director of Volunteer workforce

- Develops strategies that promote the recruitment and retention of volunteers.
- Leading on the review of existing volunteer management policies, procedure, training and welfare. Helping to widen the diversity of the volunteer base. Promotes the value of volunteering and leads on volunteer engagement.
- Worked as a Strategic Business Director in the Education Sector.
- Loved railways since childhood and always dreamed of working with, and getting close to, historic locomotives.
- Passionate about the future of the railway and a strong advocate for the voice and role of volunteers to shape positive change across the ELR.



**Carl Phillips**

## Director of Infrastructure

- Oversee good governance and monitor the strategic direction and capital expenditure on Track, Signalling and Buildings spend.
- Worked in operational and customer experience-focused roles in the rail industry since leaving school. Currently works in consultancy leading a small team of global railway operators supporting businesses with operations technical excellence.
- Passionate about the operation of railways, safety culture and using continuous improvement to get the best out of people.
- Completed 20+ years of volunteering with the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators, so I am very aware of the importance of volunteers to make the railway a success.



**David Layland**

## Finance Director

- Develops and implements the ELR Finance Strategy and ensures Board governance is compliant with Charitable Objectives.
- Spent 20 years in banking, then 10 years with Post Office Counters before coming to ELR as a paid Finance Controller & volunteer Finance Director in 2008. Retired from the Finance Controller role in 2019 but continues as a volunteer Finance Director.
- Served as Membership Secretary of the ELRPS until 2009, also becoming a Trustee of the ELRPS from 2003 onwards. Became a qualified guard in 2019.



**Graham Thornton**

## Director of Traction & Rolling Stock

- Ensures the maintenance, overhaul, safe operations, and long-term planning strategy for the ELR Rolling stock fleet.
- Has 31 years of industry experience in Heavy Rail, Light Rail and Heritage sectors. Worked for 9 years at ELRCo as Works and Events supervisor and 9 years with London and North Western Railways. Also worked for 13 years with Manchester Metrolink as head of Tram Engineering.
- First involved with ELR in 1980 with Class Forty Preservation Society whose aim was to purchase and restore an English Electric type four diesel locomotive and base it on a heritage line.



**Keith Whitmore**

## Director of External Funding & Social Enterprise

- Responsible for working with outside organisations and partners to secure funding for major projects like Buckley Wells and Traction & Rolling Stock restoration.
- Extensive experience in public service, serving as a Manchester City Councillor for 33 years and former Chairman of Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority.
- Passionate about heritage railways and a longstanding supporter of the ELR from the early days. Working to help sustain the future of the ELR for many generations to come.

# Meet our Directors

The East Lancashire Light Railway Co Ltd Board has a group of dedicated directors, who are all volunteers, giving their time freely to make sure the railway makes good executive decisions to make the railway sustainable going forward. The board has a wide level of experience where every directorate has its own portfolio and responsibilities. Learn more about the person, their skills and love for the ELR.



**Margaret Gardiner**

## Director of Customer Services

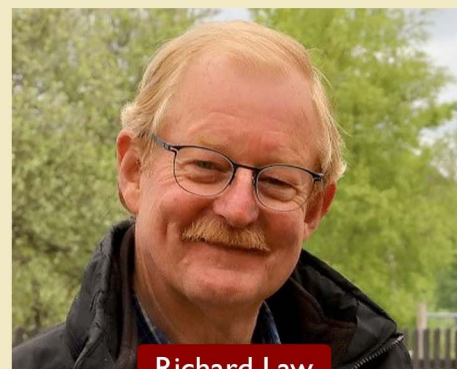
- Has strategic responsibility for the ELR's customer services, with a strong focus on the customer experience. Works alongside other directors, heads of service and external parties
- Worked extensively as a teacher. Many roles, including child protection and safeguarding, involved working with other agencies such as social services and law enforcement.
- Became enthralled by the power and beauty of a steam engine when attending a Santa Special event as a visitor. Decided there and then to contribute to the living history that the railway gives to everyone.
- Brings honesty, enthusiasm, positivity and a different perspective to the visitor experience.
- Hopes to give all customers the best service possible and to be a model of excellence in all areas of the customer experience.



**Mike Kelly**

## Chairman

- Ensure Board Governance is compliant with Charitable Objectives, develop successful ELR strategies, oversee sustainability and protect the reputation of the railway.
- Apprentice bricklayer at 15 years of age, secured a degree in construction and climbed the ladder, advanced into executive management in local government and reached the level of chief exec at Bury Council.
- Enjoyed 10 years indirectly working with the ELR growing to admire the passion, dedication, and work of volunteers. Following retirement, he wanted to be part of the ELR journey.
- Committed to preserving and protecting the history and culture of the ELR as a successful volunteer centered organisation.



**Richard Law**

## Director of Operations and Safety

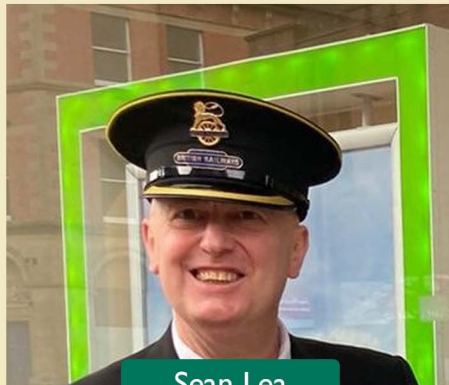
- Guides the ELR to safety systems and a safety culture that are second to none.
- Joined British Railways civil engineers, caring for the old Victorian works in cooperation with operations managers throughout Britain. Was Infrastructure Manager for Regional Railways N.W. Went on as a consultant and worked on railway projects in S.E Asia, Eastern Europe and on the London Underground.
- When asked on how he joined ELR: "I walked down to Helmshore station and asked 'is there anything to do?' The rest is history".



**Roy Chapman**

## Director of Development & Strategy

- Responsible for ELR business governance and to ensure charitable objectives, strategic development of investment projects across the ELR.
- Experience in heavy, light rail and tram-train operations and transport management, gained during 35 years in the industry.
- Was a member of the ELR back in the 1970's. RAF service and railway career meant ceasing as an active member. Returned to the ELR in 2011, when current employer TFGM, knowing of interest in railway history and knowledge of the area it served, asked to be the liaison with the ELR.
- Has a strong interest in railway history and heritage and in particular the L&YR.
- Also has a 20 year record in developing Community Rail across the North West and especially in Gtr Manchester.



**Sean Lea**

## Non-Executive Director

- Involved in developing the ELR's commercial retail sales operation and looking for best practice across heritage railways. Works alongside the General Manager to champion the ELR Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policies.
- Since graduating with a Degree in Business Management, spent 35 years at Senior Management Level within the retail, leisure and hospitality industry around the UK.
- Started volunteering from the age of 13 for Heritage Railway. Joined ELR in 2017 initially as a TTI and then passed as a Guard in 2021.