

## Moving ahead The Tisbury crossing-keeper's hut



*A group of our employees and a lineside neighbour have restored an original 19th century London & South Western Railway crossing-keeper's hut.*

*Tisbury Gates, west of Tisbury station on the Salisbury-Exeter line, was an original gated level crossing, where the gates were normally closed against road traffic and opened by a crossing-keeper only when traffic needed to cross.*

The crossing-keeper lived in a nearby house and operated the crossing signals from a small building next to the crossing – the hut. Local signalmen claim that the crossing-keeper had the villagers trained to use other routes across the line after 10pm, so that he could get an undisturbed night!

The hut was built in 1859 when the line was opened, and finally closed when an automatic half-barrier crossing was installed in 1985.

**Network Rail**  
Case study

Being disused, the hut's condition deteriorated, until 2009 when Nigel Scrivens, our Signalling Maintenance Manager for Salisbury, asked if anything could be done to save it from eventual demolition.

From this, a group of Salisbury signal maintenance staff and Bob Cowley, owner of the old crossing-keeper's cottage, formed Salisbury Signalling Heritage Group in order to restore the building themselves under a Network Rail community scheme licence. By 1 October, a safety fence was in place and the formalities approved.

Work started immediately and, despite the hard winter weather, the Salisbury Signalling Heritage Group restored the exterior by March. They made sure that the new windows matched the original pattern, and the exterior was refurbished and painted in London & South West Railway colours. They even restored the original sign.

The group are now working on the interior, and are on the look-out for an authentic coke stove (and hopefully some authentic railwaymen to sit in front of it!).

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