

LSWR Coach bodies

The Swanage Railway has three six-wheeled LSWR coach bodies dating from the later part of the 19th Century. These have been grounded for many years, with the long term objective of restoring them on new or adapted underframes to run as a vintage train.

Early London South Western Railway (LSWR) coaches like those on other railways drew heavily on stage coach design and were usually mounted on 4 wheel chassis. These continued to be built until the 1870s. From the mid 1870s, six wheel chassis were employed in an attempt to increase capacity usually by use of an additional compartment. All were wooden bodied, timber panelled with raised mouldings to cover panel joints and fitted with timber boarded roofs covered in canvas. They were mounted on pitch pine underframes, later superseded by steel.

On the LSWR, 6 wheel coaches continued to be built until the early years of the 20th century, albeit for secondary duties. The LSWR and Southern Railway 'cut and shut' many old 6 wheel coach bodies on to bogie underframes, while others like these three examples were sold to householders as holiday bungalows or out houses.

The Swanage Railway Stock Book, by George Moon and Robin Brasher, has been extensively drawn upon for the individual coach histories. For further information on LSWR carriages, reference should be made to the series on LSWR Carriages by G R Weddell. The photo is by Mike Stollery.

LSWR Six compartment third no. 0695



0695 at Norden, 12 August 2009

0695 was built in 1885 to LSWR diagram DB 66, entering traffic as a 34ft long third class coach. In December 1904, it was cyphered, i.e. written off the books and, as it was not completely worn out, placed on the duplicate list. It was finally withdrawn and sold at Highcliffe, near Christchurch in 1921.

In domestic use it had an outbuilding attached and thus served until 1976, when it was acquired and brought to the Swanage Railway, becoming the first item of 'rolling stock' bought for the Railway. It remains in private ownership.

It was initially taken to Corfe Castle, then to Swanage, where it was used as a store for many years. More recently, it has been moved to its current position at Norden for the use of personnel working at Norden.