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Motoring along in edwardian style

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Train travel Edwardian-style is on track to return to the rails in Didcot thanks to a £760,000 Lottery grant.



Project engineer Graham Drew

The Great Western Society, based at Didcot Railway Centre, has secured £768,500 to spend restoring a Great Western Railway steam railmotor - the forerunner of today's diesel and electric multiple units - and a driving trailer coach.

Steam railmotor 93, built in the 1900s, has a small steam engine built into one end and driving cabs at both ends.

It was designed for services that made frequent stops and to eliminate the need to run locomotives round to the other end of the train to change direction.

Project engineer Graham Drew said: "It has taken at least a couple of years to put the bid together and get it into the system and it has been a lot of hard work.

"It will be a great attraction. There will be people coming from all over the country to see it, because it's the only one in existence anywhere - it's unique."

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GWS chairman Richard Croucher said: "We're absolutely delighted about this award. We always felt that we had a strong case for restoring these unique vehicles."

The society has raised another £300,000 towards the project itself.

A new boiler has been made in Bradford and the power bogie in Birmingham. The restoration work on the coaches' bodies and frames will be carried out at the Llangollen Railway, in Wales.

9:31am Monday 9th July 2007

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