



# **Ymddiriedolaeth Rheilffyrdd Ffestiniog ac Eryri The Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways Trust**

Rhif Elusen Gofrestredig / Registered Charity Number No. 29904

## **Let's Finish the Job**



*Taliesin helping to get the job finished with the Snowdonian fundraiser, 2nd April 2011.*



## **The Diamond Jubilee Appeal**

**To make the**

**Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways**

**Sustainable into the Future**





*Linda steams through Coed y Bleiddiau on a perfect winter's day in March 2014. This is the 'new', Pegler Ffestiniog. The locomotive is ex-Penrhyn Railway, the carriages are mostly built 'new' by Boston Lodge, except for the first, Carnforth-built car. Linda is now on coal, after years on oil fuel. The footpath gate is new; the Coed y Bleiddiau House (vacant since 2006) belongs to the Railway but is currently looking for a new tenant - anyone?*

**T**he Diamond Jubilee Appeal celebrates two things, the purchase of the Festiniog Railway Company in 1954 by the late Alan Pegler, with money obtained from his father, and the flowering of the project that he started to the longest steam railway in Britain, the 40 mile, Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways. For those of us who have been lucky enough to enjoy all this progress during our lifetimes, we marvel that such a rather 'risky' investment should have grown in sixty years to the vital, tourist world attraction that it has become. So to all - please celebrate the miracle, and enjoy it to the full. Though you have given generously to the Railways, you should now celebrate what has been created by enjoying travelling on both, and in spreading the word to all who will listen!

Yet there are those, most of whom will read this booklet, who know that the job is far from finished. We all remember how after each advance people like Michael Schumann rightly uttered the rallying cry to push on 'at once', or we could have stalled. For years since the 1980s we have done this, and as a result there has been a steady accrual of jobs that need to be completed to make the railways we have recreated steadfast and sustainable. It is the astonishing rebuilding of the Porthmadog Harbour terminal of the two railways that has brought matters to a head.

Now it is time, in the 60th year of our triumph, to pause and say the simple phrase,

**'Let's Finish the Job'**



*This is the Fundraising Committee of the Ffestiniog Family, assembled at the launch of the Diamond Jubilee Appeal at Beddgelert on 12th April 2014, on the **Snowdonian** train that raised £25,000 of income for the cause.*

**Richard Broyd OBE** the Group Chairman is a Trustee of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways Trust, and a stalwart supporter of the Ff&WHR since the restoration of the WHR began.

**Mike Hart OBE** has looked after the restoration of the Welsh Highland Railway from the beginning, when he was Chairman of the FR Co. As a director of the Festiniog Railway Company he is well positioned to confer between the parties to ensure that the spending is put in the right place.

**Paul Lewin** is the General Manager of a business that has grown to achieve a turnover of over £5 million per year. He is also a director of the Festiniog Railway Company.

**Dave Charlton** is the Fundraiser for and a Director of the Ffestiniog Railway Society. This body has supported the Railway for over 60 years.

**Peter Randall** is a Director of Cymdeithas Rheilffordd Eryri.

**Michael Wilkinson (Administrator)** now lives in Porthmadog.

**Gordon Rushton (Secretary)** Gordon has form on the Railways, being the General Manager from 1991 - 1996. Before then he was an FRS director and its Chairman.





*On time and on budget, Porthmadog Harbour station re-opened for traffic on 22nd March 2014, after its largest rebuilding in 151 years of passenger handling service. It was a bold, £1.3m project and needed the Cob to be widened as you can see in the middle-distance, on the seaward side of the new signal box. The new semaphore signals are not obtrusive, and will offer hours of fun for photographers. The platform blocking is very neat, and in summer there will be many sitting outside Spooner's watching the view. This is truly 'Narrow Gauge Central'!*

Porthmadog Harbour Station started handling passenger trains in 1863. The history has been well represented, as it all went through a rise to dazzling heights and then a slow decline to dereliction. In the sixty years since rescue from that dereliction, the station has been steadily improved, with canopy, shop, restaurant, bar, and extra buildings. The arrival of the restored Welsh Highland Railway caused a stir. Partly this was because the site is so confined, partly because it was awkward to place a WHR train in the platform. The problem was recognised early, but the demand for funds to complete the WHR was so strong that no money could be spared beforehand to prepare Harbour Station to cope. Numerous other sites were considered. Indeed it was not a new problem; in the old days Harbour Station practically closed in favour of Porthmadog New, sited just beyond the old flour mill - and that possibility was considered again.

No superior site could be found, and it was decided to widen the Cob at the critical point, and to construct a second platform. The price tag of £1.3 million was far outside the funds available during WHR reconstruction. The course chosen was to apply for grants and try to raise the money to match fund this. Thus was launched the Phase 5 scheme in 2010, and this has so far raised £1m, for the rebuilding of Harbour Station and other important projects, described in detail later. The grant for the job was won from the Welsh Government Station Improvement Fund, a compliment to Ffestiniog for the large amount of traffic that it handles. The matched funding came from subscribers, a compliment to the FfR and WHR supporters, who have offered so much to see the Railways revive and prosper. It is fitting to both that a description is offered about how the money raised is being spent, whilst of course, in inimitable Ffestiniog fashion, asking for more!

The founding strategy for the WHR rebuilding was to source the traffic from Caernarfon - not the FfR - to seek grants for the work, and to ensure the resulting reconstructed railway paid for itself when running. All three parts of the strategy have been achieved. Yet the WHR has operated after re-opening as if it had one arm up its back, as the constraint of Harbour Station required all trains to reverse in and out, by means of a second locomotive. Additionally, there could never be a Ffestiniog and a Welsh Highland train in the station together. Thus through traffic was stifled, up until now.



## Let's Finish the Job - Porthmadog Harbour Station



Caernarfon straight on; Harbour Station, turn left! The track layout installed and awaiting tamping. Note the point motor, left.



The signal box is on the right, and the platform neatened with its block stretches away, with semaphore signals proliferating brightly.



The Westinghouse 'L' frame, rescued and restored, is now fitted to the signalbox and ready for business at the start of its second career.



The volunteers check the critical measurement between the platform edge and the running rail. Stuart McNair (R) observes.

All this has now changed after much patient work by contractors, FFR permanent staff and volunteers. The seaward side of the Cob in the vicinity of the station was gradually filled in during 2012 and 2013 - an expensive process - with the remedial 'wave wall' work being completed as soon as the site had settled. The old structures were taken down during 2013, so that track could be laid.

Extensive remodelling has taken place to create a second platform and loop line. This new layout allows a Welsh Highland Train to arrive, and the locomotive to run round the train, whilst a Ffestiniog train is also present. The layout is a master of innovation, allowing maximum length trains on both platforms, at the expense of only one siding. It also allows the locomotive from either line to access the coal and water facilities.

The repercussions of this change will not be felt immediately. The Welsh Highland Railway timetable is nothing like as settled as the Ffestiniog. WHR traffic patterns are still emerging. There are three train sets on the Ffestiniog, but only two on the WHR. More carriages are needed, and it may be that three train sets will eventually run on the WHR as well as on the Ffestiniog. As soon as the carriages can be afforded, they can be built, and such trains may run. This station has been made to allow expansion that is expected to take place over the coming years.

Harbour station will have to accommodate the effect of two fully laden trains arriving at Porthmadog from each line. There could be up to 500 people present. This will offer new challenges, and so the development of Harbour Station is not over yet as money is needed to expand its facilities!

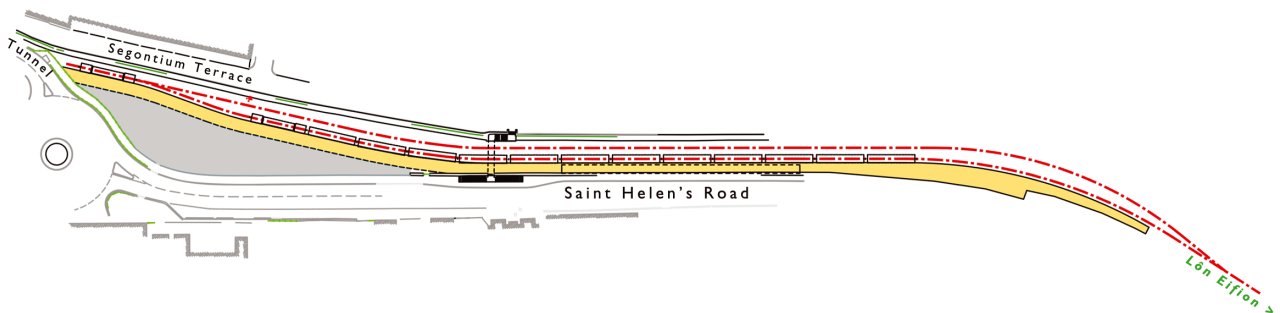
The Station has been signalled for all main moves and electro-mechanical equipment was installed. Thus controlled points are electrically operated, as are all signals. A 1930s Westinghouse 'L' signalling frame that last worked in Darlington (South) in 1972 was placed in store, whilst the world of signalling passed it by. In excellent condition it was donated by Peter Burke, allocated a second career, and adjusted to work Porthmadog Harbour Station. It had originally been decided that an array of colour lights would be provided. However a number of courageous people argued in favour of a truly authentic look, thus replica Mackenzie & Holland semaphore signals, mounted on square, Douglas Fir posts are in place. This is thanks to Ian Rudd and his team who set out to raise the extra money needed. A proper signalbox has also been built, and it looks the part. This is where all the money went, on a most magnificent Station!





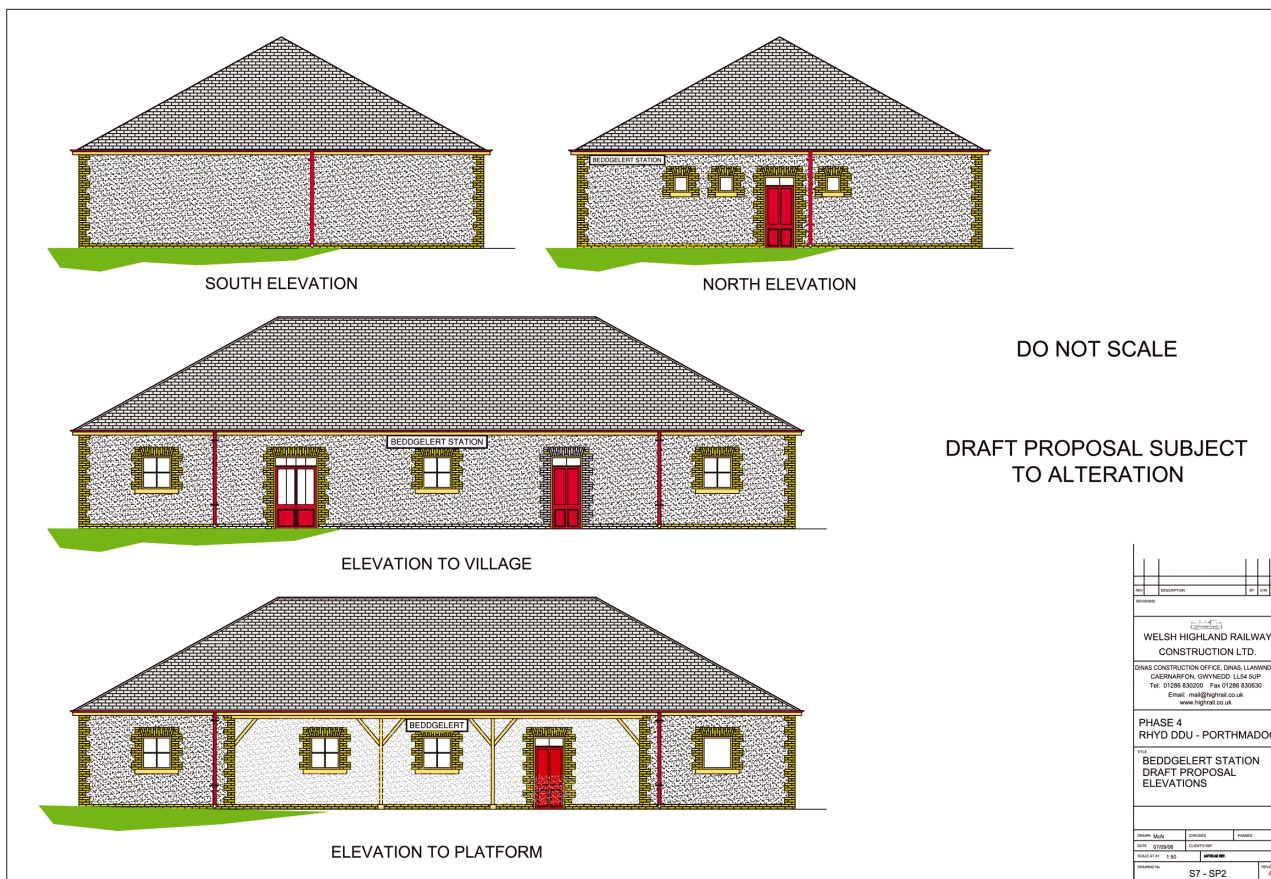
NGG16 Garratt No. 87 runs round its train at the terminus of the Welsh Highland Railway at Caernarfon, with the 3rd of the now famous Snowdonian trains in April 2012. On the left is the shop and booking office: too small for what is required, and adequate only until something better may be provided. Behind there is a toilet block, much in demand after train arrivals, for although there is a loo on the train, it seems that people prefer not to trek through the carriages to find it. There is a car park too, that will almost disappear with the permanent station, but that is hardly a problem.

Caernarfon was always a station site with uncertainty hanging over it. From the start, after the Councillors from Gwynedd determined that the old railway tunnel was to be used for cars, the best compromise was to put the station on the site next the tunnel. Here the two separate standard gauge tracks, one for Llanberis and one for Afon Wen, had been supplemented by sidings headed for the Quay, so there was a bit more space. The Quay beneath the Castle has become a huge car park, and this allows people to visit the town, the castle, and to travel on the WHR. Any thoughts of terminating behind the Harbour Trust building have now gone; the alternative crossing and Caernarfon Harbour Station concept is also extinct. The best idea is to lengthen the loop on the current site, and construct permanent buildings; that's good for Caernarfon and good for WHR. If the outcome should emerge of restoration of the standard gauge link back to Bangor, then the WHR is ready to extend through the tunnel to meet it.



The new layout offers enough room for 12 cars, with one Garratt locomotive accommodated in the headshunt. In fact there's a bit more room than this, and it is a less cramped layout, much better than we have presently, and things do have a habit of changing regularly. The temporary buildings that occupy the site currently need to be replaced with something better to match the magnificent railway with a superb terminal at Porthmadog. As most of the WHR traffic comes from Caernarfon, improvement is good. Discussions progress steadily with like minds in Caernarfon and Gwynedd CC - watch this space!





*These are the concept drawings for Beddgelert Station building, for the big concrete slab that has been laid there dormant. These plans have got Planning permission from the SNP, whether we shall resubmit or build what is here will not become clear until we have managed to raise the money needed to build.*

Beddgelert was a popular destination on the old WHR, and so it remains today. It was something of a surprise that around 7000 people travelled there from Caernarfon within the first month, and 70,000 in the first year of the new WHR. However, this support made it clear that Beddgelert was to become a major place to visit. It is as yet unknown how much traffic the Ffestiniog Railway will generate to this point; the new station at Porthmadog, allowing through running, will settle the matter. Beddgelert as a popular intermediate station deserves the station facilities offered by a permanent, well appointed building. The vacant concrete slab will therefore be filled when the money is available for it.

Tan y Bwlch has had steady attention over the years, as frequently trains cross there, the area is one of great natural beauty, and there are many pleasant paths to walk. However, it is nothing like as popular as Beddgelert, and the attention has never managed to boost the numbers using the station to its neighbour's levels. However the station has steadily improved, and just recently the old style footbridge has been restored.

Yet despite the restoration of the old wooden buildings at the top of the station, a 1960s scheme that ultimately foundered, left an old signalbox behind for years an inappropriate, and rather large structure that lingered on waiting to be removed. What is needed are funds on a modest scale to permit the whole station to be managed to a style appropriate to today's railway, so that the mish-mash of clashing 'furniture' is gradually assembled as a coherent whole that will please the eye, with station facilities to match. Then perhaps more people will be persuaded to use and enjoy this peaceful place set in enticing woodland of accessible natural beauty.



*Earl of Merioneth leads Blanche into the platform at Tan y Bwlch. The goods shed was converted into the Café years ago, and is patronised by visitors alighting to walk in the beautiful surrounds*





*The end of the line, with Linda running round the train. Archway or no archway, with the container on the platform, this scene we all agree could do with some serious improvement. There's plenty of business on offer here - though, this is the [Snowdonian](#) train in April 2012, and the second track is not used, so let us find the funds to sort this place out and have two train acceptance.*

**B**laenau Ffestiniog underwent major change in 1963 when the two standard gauge branch lines were joined after the establishment of the Trawsfynydd nuclear power station linked the stub of the closed GWR line to Bala. The remaining branch to Llandudno Junction had its terminus moved to its present position in the centre of the town in 1982. The Ffestiniog reopened to Blaenau Ffestiniog in 1983, to a terminus with temporary wooden buildings that were replaced with a brick structure and canopy in 1990. The joint station offered a useful exchange of traffic but there was never the surge of new traffic comparable with that experienced with the WHR. Neither has it proved to be possible to build on the island platform the all facilities that are needed. Now there is a temporary metal booking office and shop that cannot offer what is appropriate for the start of a glorious 40 mile ride through matchless scenery. Neither has the second platform face become operational, so that two narrow gauge trains may use the station at the same time.

Funds are required to provide, larger permanent buildings to become the booking office, shop and café. The opening of the WHR has had some effect on traffic at Blaenau, but the facility for



*Arriva Trains Wales serves the line to Blaenau Ffestiniog from Llandudno Junction. Although the service is sparse, many travel on this scenic railway to gain access to another. June 2008.*

through trains now enabled by the rebuilding of Porthmadog Harbour Station will bring more, seeking the delights of a circular tour that was so popular in the 1930s. Rail and coach traffic are important at this station, and there is an excellent coach interchange that can be reached 'on the flat', with the coach companies ever developing variety within their offers of excursions. Longer journey times on the 40 mile route offer the opportunity of more sales to customers for their journey. The number of passengers using trains is growing, and the prospects for increasing traffic through this station are good. Replacement of temporary facilities therefore becomes more pressing, and we need your help to make this possible.





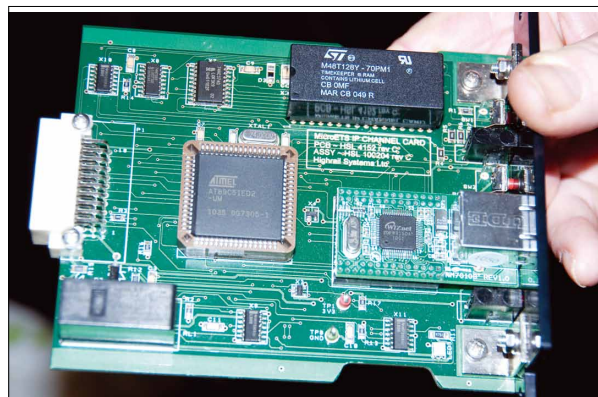
Conventional ETB has run the Ffestiniog Railway safely for years. It may be obsolescent, but it can be maintained by the FfR, it has high utility and good reliability. Extras added include remote operator working, starting signal clearance, and automatic operation of points. It was considered desirable not to have another railway (the WHR) with a different system, as staff work on both - hence the development work and the clever solution.

**E**lectric Token Block (ETB) working is used on the Ffestiniog Railway, and it has served the line well. All train crew are well aware of the need to take the token from the machine to allow them into the next single line block section; it is their guarantee and comfort. The FfR system connects the section token instruments together by means of the telegraph wires that run along the trackside. The system is conventional and has proved reliable, with ingenious extra facilities 'attached', although it has become more difficult to find parts as the system has been replaced on the National Network.

The WHR has no telegraph wires, indeed there is no mobile phone signal in parts. Running began with a 'staff and ticket' system of safe passage; one with little flexibility for running outside a standard timetable. Conventional ETB was too expensive to install over the 25 miles between Porthmadog and Caernarfon, and thus a hi-tech solution was sought to permit the train crew still to hold a conventional token, obtained from a 'normal' machine. Roland Doyle's organisation, Highrail systems, has pioneered a method of connecting uniquely the two ETB machines together via the Internet, thus one machine can communicate with another to release a token safely, and no telegraph wires are needed. It is a system like this that will replace 'staff and ticket' working, and funds are sought for it.



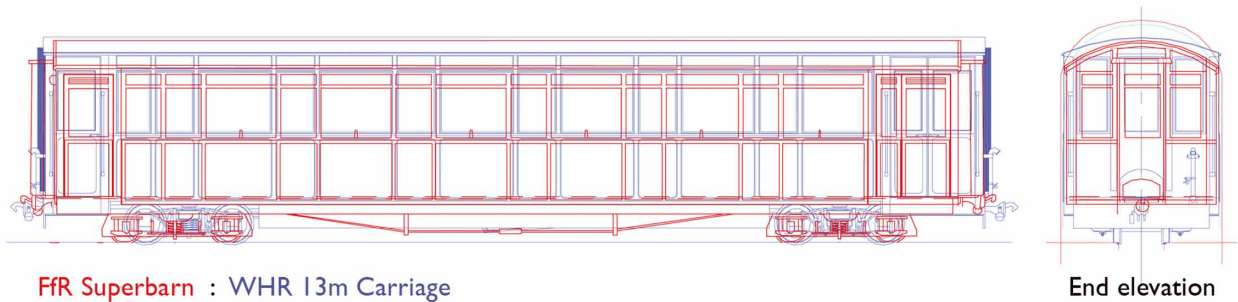
This is a Pont Croesor - Beddgelert token obtained from the cabinet after permission from Control. There's only one, so it's quite safe, though trains may enter the section with a 'ticket' - ask Google.



This is one of the Highrail System's cards that has been designed to obtain unique and checked internet communication with the ETB machine at the other end of the section, and so to release a token.



## Comparison: FfR Superbarn &amp; WHR 13m Carriage



No. 14, looking good and still going strong. This carriage is well cared for, and was the design ancestor of today's Barns.



Boston Lodge will turn out underframes for cars of all different sizes and gauges if you give them a drawing - and a bit of cash.



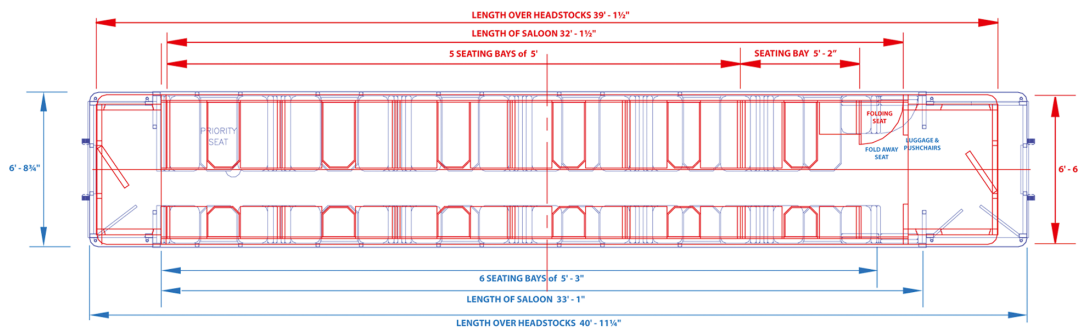
One of the original cars was built as a Pullman and named Bodysgallen. It is the only 2ft gauge Pullman car in the world, and is a comfortable favourite with customers, who enjoy its sumptuous interior.

Ffestiniog carriages in the preservation era have the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway in Devon to thank for their design style. One carriage, left at Snapper Halt when the line was dismantled in the 1930s, came to Boston Lodge. It was restored and adapted to the FR loading gauge by the late John Halsall and Fred Boughey. There was an urgent call for more carriage accommodation at that time, as the reopening line was attracting much patronage and the carriages then available could not cope. Fred set about working with H.L. Watson & Co of Birkenhead on a prefabricated wooden panel system of carriage body manufacture. Thus the 'Barns' came about, with distinct lineage to their L&B ancestors. The Barns, and No.14 (the L&B car) are very much in operation today.

FfR carriages continued to develop to meet the needs of customers, and the Railway's ability to manufacture them. A brief foray of buying 'outside' and building in metal gave way to a reversion to wooden car bodies, supported from metal hoops, after Norman Bond's 'Team X' demonstrated that a well equipped workshop for stout metal underframes could work with a skilled wood-workshop to build car bodies. Modern materials, careful though, and experience about limiting the effect of rot and corrosion, have brought a series of new cars, excellent in their design and durability, comfortable to travel in, and economical to build.

The decision was made in 1991 that carriages for the WHR would take full advantage of the more generous NWNG loading gauge. At that time the thought was that the FfR may be opened to match the NWNG loading gauge - a proposal later dropped. The first 12m cars were built by Winson Engineering and their increased internal dimensions and Barn style design made them highly attractive. The carriage loading gauge decisions may appear to have been in error in today's context, as we are left with carriages that will only fit on one railway. It was what followed from this that has made all the difference, and has led to major advances in all





carriage construction at Boston Lodge that you are being invited to support.

Carriage dimensions have not kept pace with people. It is easy to remember, even in the 1960s, that incoming charabancs from the Mill towns would be loaded into the vintage coaches at over 50 people in each. That is unlikely today, people are a lot larger. Norman Bond and his team have managed to 'push the envelope' on the FfR cars, as can be seen from the comparison drawing above. This has great relevance to today's construction plan. That extra room in the original WHR cars has been all but matched in the FfR Super Barns. All have extended such that the Ffestiniog cars' saloons now come within 1 foot of the length of the WHR saloons. Nominal seating capacities of 40 are the same, and of course all cars are corridor throughout.

The advance in carriage development, and the gauge limits imposed on the WHR cars mean that new construction will be of Super Barns that can 'go anywhere'. The WHR will have two complete 10 car sets, and the current build-plan is for a third set of Super Barns, for which cars are being made now. This new set is planned to come complete with another superb Observation Car to match the popular *Glaslyn*. That and the Pullman *Bodysgallen* really manage to turn heads on the WHR; they are way beyond people's expectation for a little narrow gauge railway. But, we're not little any more!

We need to get on with building more carriages - it's urgent, and the search funds to do this is being pursued vigorously. If both Railways do not present the number of seats on demand, then traffic could be turned away. Contingencies offer the vintage cars for a spell in summer traffic, but tourist customers choose the corridor cars in preference, as journey times have now increased as distances are longer. The rise in through journeys from the completion of Harbour Station is hard to predict. We need new carriages, and we would like to have them soon. We have had much help in the past - so there's hope!



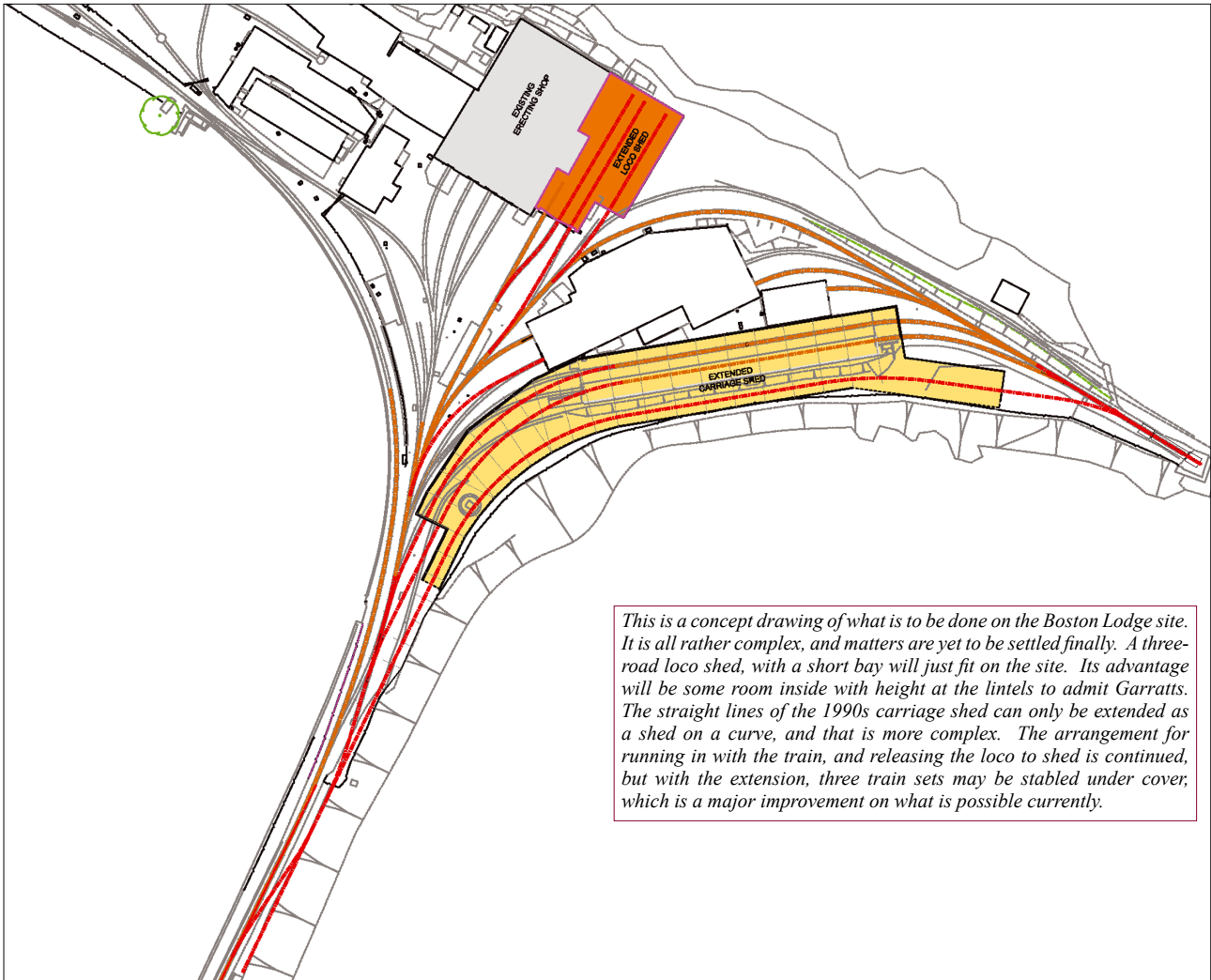
Norman Bond sits inside the first of the Super Barns, No. 103. With this car the Team X surpassed all that had gone before on the FfJR.



The WHR Observation Car was named *Glaslyn* by HM The Queen. This vehicle has a fabulous view out of the back and wows everyone.



Linda hauls modern coaches round Duallt Tank Curve through the beauty of Wales. It is these coaches that the customers choose first and we need to build more of them, and look after the vintage as well.



*This is a concept drawing of what is to be done on the Boston Lodge site. It is all rather complex, and matters are yet to be settled finally. A three-road loco shed, with a short bay will just fit on the site. Its advantage will be some room inside with height at the lintels to admit Garratts. The straight lines of the 1990s carriage shed can only be extended as a shed on a curve, and that is more complex. The arrangement for running in with the train, and releasing the loco to shed is continued, but with the extension, three train sets may be stabled under cover, which is a major improvement on what is possible currently.*



*It is just possible to get a Garratt into the loco shed, but then the locos are packed in rather tighter than sardines in a can*



*Earl of Merioneth stands waiting for her fire to be lit on oil in this 2005 view outside Glan y Mor. Behind, Palmerston gets steam up on coal.*

Garratts it is said, cannot fit inside the loco sheds - in fact they can, just. It's the Erecting Shop they won't get into. The only reason locomotives insinuated themselves into the Erecting Shop is because the FfR managed to acquire rather too many for the shed next door. Then the WHR came into town and matters got out of hand.

The 'something' that needs doing about this is the arrival of a new locomotive shed. A roomy building is required with adequate, well-lit pits to get under the locomotives and in to lubricate the motion when needed. Simple things like lighting up under cover, adequate illumination and ventilation, oil, air, water, other supplies easily at hand, smoke extraction, and space round the locomotive to see what you are doing, and to clean the tubes. Then, locomotives at Boston Lodge may be steamed in comfort. After all there are four locomotives entering traffic each day, and often others on test or warming up for future duty.

The Boston Lodge site is short of space for a narrow gauge Nine Elms, but there is enough room to get a fair sized new shed by clearing the complete footprint of the current shed, and making it all rather wider.





*Brown Marshalls Car 15 dates from 1872. Brilliant restoration, unique to have it in traffic, but unfortunate if not housed securely.*



*Boston Lodge built WHR car No. 2043 when new. It is wasteful if beautiful new cars like this are built and cannot be kept under cover.*



*Dinas Car Shed, not long enough, but it is a simple building, so with the right amount of cash, the storage problem can be solved.*



*Fortunately the size of the site allows expansion. The reason it wasn't bigger was that this was all the FR could afford in 1990.*

Carriages cost a great deal of money to build, and in addition, the Ffestiniog is unique in using in general service, admittedly only in high summer, carriages that date back to 1863. In more frequent service are the first bogie carriages to run in Britain, the 1872 built, Brown Marshalls & Co. cars, Nos 15 and 16. Their fellows, Nos 17-20, built a little later, are still venerable by any standard. Progress was made when these cars found storage in the Old Boston Lodge Engine Shed that was refurbished for the purpose. Their exposure to weather is now less, but as covered carriage storage is at a premium, newer cars remain exposed to the elements for much of the year.

There is a certain irony in our building carriages new for traffic, and then having to leave them out in the weather. The team of restorers and constructors, led by Norman Bond is quite able to use the resources offered to keep the fleet in service. However, the message is clear. There are about 40 vehicles in the Ffestiniog fleet, and nearly 20 in the WHR fleet. If three vehicles per year are rebuilt, then each must last not less than 20 years in traffic between overhauls; the sums are relentless.

Keeping cars under cover prolongs their life in traffic. The Talylllyn, who carefully placed their cars in a shed every night said it doubled time in service to 40 years. If that was true, and applied to the FfR/WHR it would release considerable resources, say somewhere up to £90,000 each year. Not only could a new carriage nearly be built for that each year, but the construction figure shown within the Appeal would be paid back within 10-15 years! Perhaps the message is now clear enough, that it pays handsomely to place rolling stock under cover for as long as possible, and the Appeal supports the car shed extension.

The construction proposals are directed at two places, as there are two car sheds. One is at Dinas, and it is too short for the train sets in operation - it was all that could be afforded at the time; so initially it needs lengthening. The other shed is at Boston Lodge. Built in the 1990s, on land reclaimed from the Traeth, it was a major advance, as trains return from Porthmadog to be stabled under cover, with the locomotive then going to shed. But it too was as much as the FfR could afford at the time, though the capacity was less than desired. The Boston Lodge Car Shed needs widening and lengthening. There's room, and the work is practical; the Railway just needs to money to do it.

Once more carriages are stored inside, we shall all take some satisfaction, as this is a most effective planned investment.



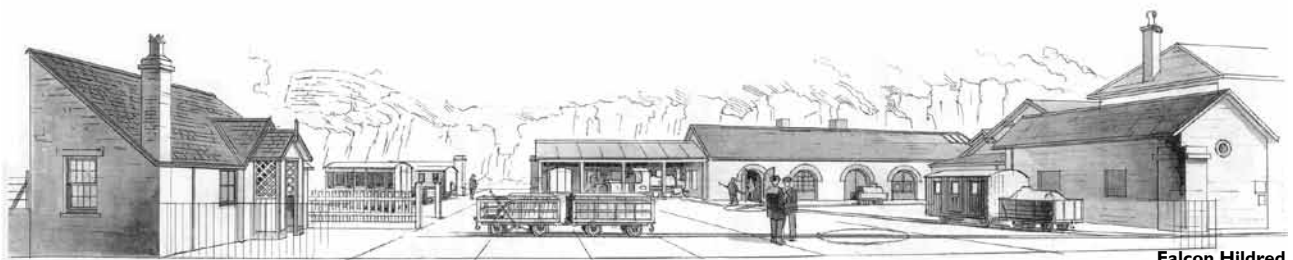


*This delightful archive picture by Roger Dimmick, shows the elderly FfR locomotive Prince, together with a typical Welsh Highland Railway train, running through the delightful setting of Tryfan Junction. No doubt you are not fooled. Here is one of the iconic NWNG stations restored to glory, as a historic building should. It was lovingly reconstructed by CRhE volunteers and is a tribute to the late John Keylock.*

**Roger Dimmick**

Not so much is made of the store of historic buildings to be found on the 40 miles railway between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Caernarfon. Yet these buildings are an asset we wish to expand and conserve. They span a wide area of interest: as a delight to visitors, satisfaction for conservationists, and fulfilment for bodies like Cadw. And these buildings stretch back: Boston Lodge was first functioning in 1811, and really got into its stride as an engine manufactory in 1879 with the construction of *Merddin Emrys*. It is the oldest railway workshop in the world. All along the Ffestiniog Railway, robust, stone built buildings are to be found; the same is true from Dinas to Rhyd Ddu on the old North Wales Narrow Gauge. The 1922 WHR is in contrast, as the railway was created with the minimum of expenditure. For the restoration the spirit of the original buildings has been reflected in excellent recreations that recapture exactly the feeling of what that railway was like.

Stone buildings take a lot more effort and expense, which is why the excellent job of restoring the ruined Tryfan Junction station building was significant. The task on the Ffestiniog has been going on longer, driven by the requirement that the space inside them is needed. One particular scheme, supported by the Ffestiniog Railway Society, is the restoration of the Boston Lodge Top Yard. This area has interesting buildings, but in the past was littered with temporary structures, with the standing area overburdened with recovered mechanical signalling equipment, some of it dating 50 years back to the Beeching closures of fully signalled branch lines. Now a scheme to restore the Yard is in progress, and the outcome will match a recent, previous restoration of the historic locomotive shed, so that it may house the FfR historic collection of carriages. An impression of what Top Yard will look like is given underneath.



**Falcon Hildred**





*Plas Smart gets the restoration work it needs to play its part in the Top Yard restoration project.* **FR Co.**



*Once stables, smithy, and now a store, the massive piles outside have all gone, except for that which they cannot bear to part with.*



*Such glory outside the Boston Lodge Old Engine Shed is the reason why people are prepared to give generously.* **Roger Dimmick**



*A genuine WHR 'tin' shelter at Pont Croesor. True, it doesn't take the expense and resources of bricks and mortar, but CRhE were quick to offer such structures that give such an authentic air.*

Restoration of historic buildings is particularly expensive in resources, as anyone restoring your local cathedral will soon tell you. Aside from the fight to provide cover appropriate to the items that need to be stored, and the buildings that are needed to offer customers the facilities they expect to find, there is another: to preserve the stock of historic buildings on the Railways in a sustainable manner. This almost always means a quality job, otherwise it needs to be done again in too short a time.

Translating that mission into practical actions means that this restoration has to be expensive - doing it on the cheap doesn't achieve the long-term aims. Thus it is necessary to allocate the right resources to these projects. Fortunately there are a number of people within the FRS and CRhE who are passionate about seeing quality restoration of buildings. The consistent success of pioneers, Parks and Gardens brought a family concentration upon this task, as in the 1990s they soon found that buildings needed to be added on to the front of their name to make the progress they wanted. Their example has spread, and it is now not difficult to find easy acceptance of the need for quality buildings in which to house 'the toys'.

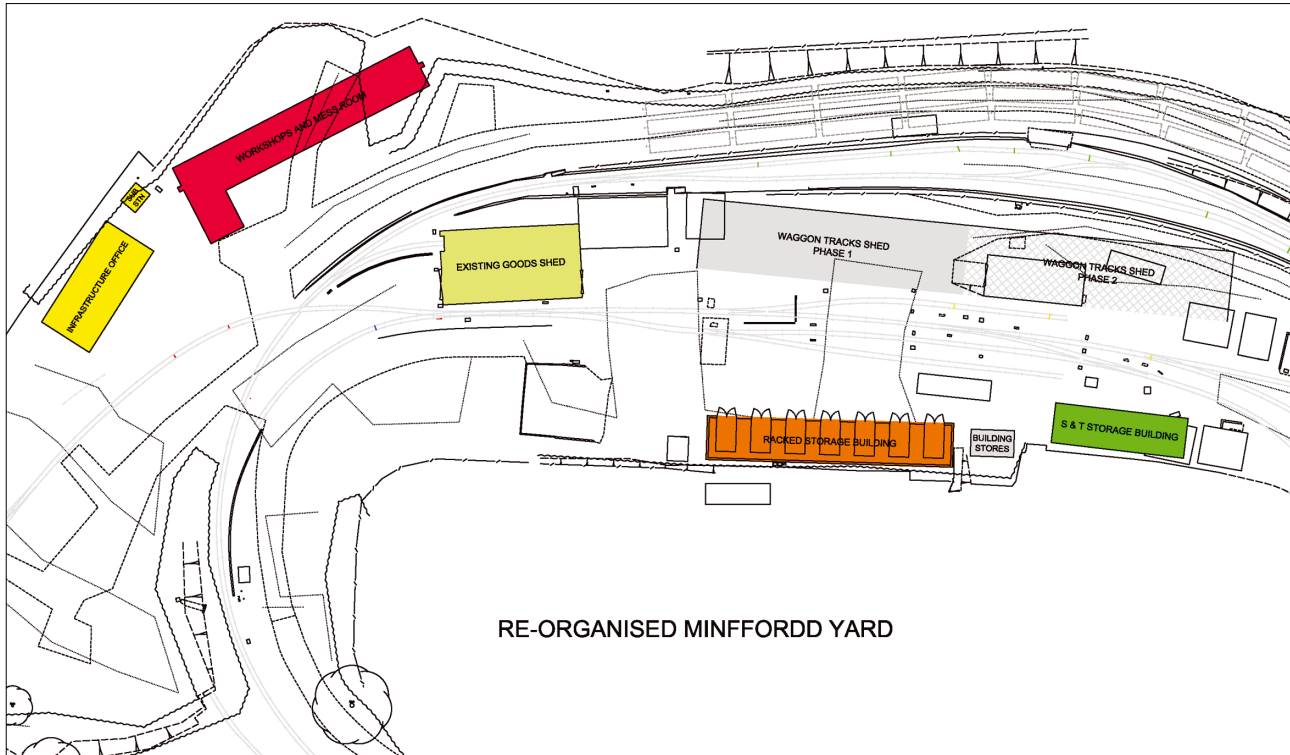
On the Ffestiniog, successful projects, like the restoration of the Boston Lodge Old Engine Shed to house the unique vintage carriages have led to a steady progression of projects to restore old buildings for a purpose, but of course also admitting the need to build new where it makes sense to do so. Thus the Boston Lodge Top Yard project.

On the WHR, the North Wales Narrow Gauge buildings are delightful and distinctive. The Tryfan Junction project is just the start of a potential number of restorations that may be attempted according to resources available. It so happens that the WHR's lack of resources led it to providing basic facilities that we have been able to reproduce in places like Pont Croesor, Nantmor Halt, Meillionen Halt, Rhdy Ddu, and Waunfawr. Some of these will eventually need traditional structures on a permanent basis.

Taken across the board, the 40 miles of railway has upon it a wealth of building assets. On both the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways the process of restoring, rebuilding, and recreating fine buildings has become a tradition that extends in its ambition. Of course how long that takes depends entirely on the funds that become available to do it.

That, is over to you.

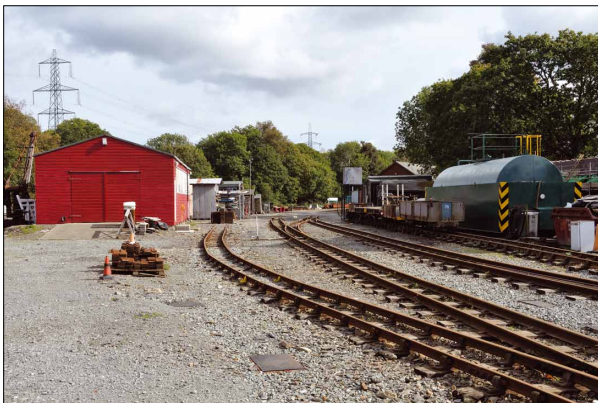




*The reorganisation will be incremental, and subject to change, according to changing circumstances. The demand is predictable from a maintenance and renewals point of view, but how the infrastructure will behave is not, and neither are the challenges likely to be thrown down by the weather. Now 50% of trains run out towards Porthmadog, perhaps we shall see the development of a second exit emerging near to Lottie's crossing.* **Stuart McNair**



*Looking past the old goods shed, in the future the racked storage building will be sited on the left, and the new office will appear in the distance along the line of the track.*



*On the left, in due time the whole area will be taken up with the large Waggon Track shed, Phases 1 & 2. The view here is likely to change radically.*

Minffordd Yard was originally a cut slate store, and exchange point with the Cambrian Railways. Gradually in the early preservation era, it became the place where items went to die. A potentially useful storeground, alas it became a hideous mess, that in recent years has steadily improved, with an outflow of scrap metal equivalent to a small iron foundry. As oil has been ousted by coal it has become neater still. The old slate shed has been de-cluttered and upgraded at the Minffordd Station end, and the track area is neat and tidy at the Porthmadog end.

The emergence of the 40 mile railway calls for a major re-think of how the track and infrastructure is maintained. There will be an increase in demand, bearing in mind that the Caernarfon-Dinas portion was laid at the end of the last century. Minffordd represents an opportunity to have a centralised Outdoor Engineering centre, with excellent rail connections, good road access, and room to lay out compounds for activities like the construction of points and crossings, the palletised storage of track components etc. under cover, and a properly organised rail stack with mechanical handling.

This is a gradual operation, with bit-by-bit investment in items as they are needed, enabling efficient and effective infrastructure and track maintenance, and stabling for the engineering trains and their wagons - most important.





*The two Funkeys have done well, but when they go wrong they are expensive to mend. Vale of Ffestiniog is useful on the Ffestiniog, but only half as useful on the WHR. The steep gradients limit the Caernarfon Castle to six cars, and even with that load on a warm summer's day, she threatens to become a steam engine. We need something larger.*

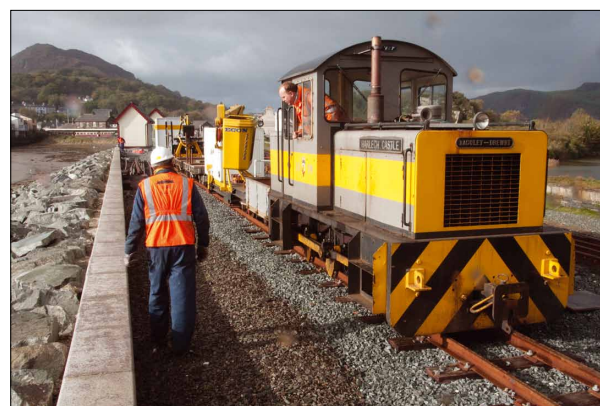
It was not anticipated that the sound engineering policies of similar fleets of main line locos, with interchangeable parts, would allow steam to be so reliable. In the Garraway Era the Ffestiniog was festooned with plug-in points to summon help during failures. Rescue diesels were essential to maintain reliability right up to the purchase of the delightfully named Funkeys in 1993. Recently steam has done more, diesel less, partly because coal is more economical than oil, partly because on the WHR steam can handle the loads, whereas diesel cannot. And there is the problem - there is no easy answer for obtaining a 2ft gauge diesel of about 700hp (what WHR would need), except by building a new one - and that is expensive.

There's another change. The engineering trains now have rather heavy wagons from South Africa. The older diesels, already strained on the FfR, have limited usefulness on the WHR. Even the Baguley locos are not powerful enough to be 'universal'.

It is possible to manage the situation; there's nothing immediately urgent. However, the idea of having the funds to be able to take full advantage of opportunities presenting themselves - as was done with the Funkey locos - needs to be taken. It may be we shall end up building new, or perhaps like times before something will come along. There has been careful observation of what could be done with those Romanian 760mm gauge diesels - we'll see.



*Slate wagons were very manageable, but these great beasts of wagons from SAR require some grunt to move them. The small disels have a problem with this on the WHR.*



*The Baguleys have been excellent locos, Harlech more than Criccieth. They will continue to do service on the FfR but the power and speed needed for WHR limits them.*





## The Diamond Jubilee Appeal

to make the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways  
Sustainable into the Future

| The Diamond Jubilee Appeal - the spend over 10 years            |  | £                 |
|---|--|-------------------|
| Caernarfon, Porthmadog Harbour, and Blaenau Ffestiniog Stations | Reconstruction, passenger amenity and commercial major works | 3,200,000         |
| Boston Lodge & Dinas Sheds                                      | Car and locomotive sheds                                     | 1,300,000         |
| Carriages   | A rolling programme of new cars                              | 1,200,000         |
| Boston Lodge Top Yard   | Restoration for volunteer projects                           | 250,000           |
| Historic Buildings  | Conservation and rebuilding                                  | 500,000           |
| Intermediate stations   | Building new and enhancing old                               | 700,000           |
| Minffordd Yard  | Outdoor engineering centre                                   | 350,000           |
| Signalling on WHR   | Improvements to match FfR                                    | 200,000           |
| New diesel locomotive   |  | 750,000           |
| <b>Total over 10 years</b>                                      |  | <b>£8,450,000</b> |

### The Target Amount

You will have seen from reading through this document that the precise amounts required to meet our aspirations are not available. That is deliberate, as the jobs are not all finite. The lessons were learned from restoring the Welsh Highland Railway that two things are required:

1. A clear strategy of the items we are sure are necessary to better the Railways when opportunities presents themselves (as they do).
2. Enough funds to deal with essentials, but also to match potential available grants and donations.

That is why the detailed description has been given in the pages of this booklet of what's wanted to make the Ff&WHR sustainable.

The whole lot adds up to a large amount - over £8 million. Impossible it may seem until you recollect that over the last ten years we have been completing a project costing £28 million! In our haste to reach the next target, we have left behind on the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland a host of things that 'we'll do tomorrow'. It's now 'tomorrow' - let's do them, let's finish the job to make sure these wonderful railways that we have rescued and restored have the most secure future that we can give them. Ten years is a long time - and Phase 5 raised £1 million in two years, and that was added to grants and donations!

### The Secret

Your subscriptions are the secret of success. Many people giving standard amounts over long periods achieve substantial sums to match grants that can be obtained. The government allows us to claim Gift Aid on everything you give, and a sponsor adds 10% to the subscription overall, thus for every £1 you give, the Ff&WHR Trust gets £1.35. So thank you to all who have given so far, and we now ask you for more.

### How to Subscribe

A form needs to be filled in - there's one with this booklet, or there's one on the leaflet, or there's one on the website. This is sent to the Administrator at Harbour Station. The form has a Gift Aid declaration - please fill it in. The form also has a Banker's Order to fill out. We chose a Banker's Order because the amount is fixed, and cannot be changed without your permission. The completed form once sent in will allow us to do everything required. Better still, we'll be inviting you on a special visit, so that you can come and see what your money is being spent on.

### Thank You

It is quite right for the Trust to be saying 'thank you' for your help and support now, and into the future. This is the 60th year since our Railway was 'saved', and look at what has been achieved!

**[www.adventurefrwhr.co.uk](http://www.adventurefrwhr.co.uk)**