



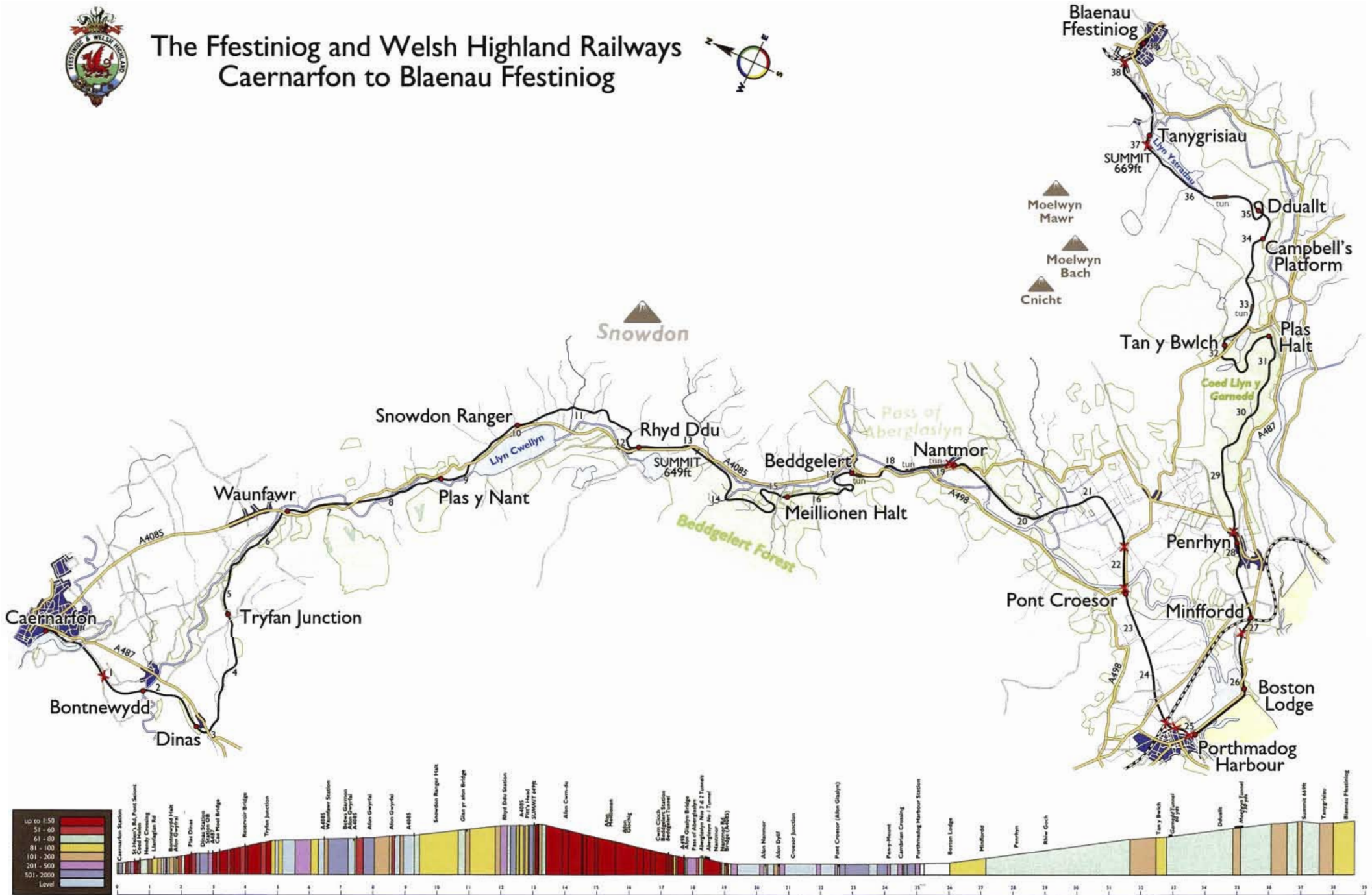
# Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways

## A Sustainable Future





# The Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways Caernarfon to Blaenau Ffestiniog



**Acknowledgements:** Map – (above) Gordon Rushton; Photographs – Front cover: Neil Cave; page 1, Bob Bloodworth; pages 2, 7, 8, 16 and back cover, John Dobson; pages 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13 and 15, Roger Dimmick; page 14, Chris Parry.



## Background

To most of those interested in railways, it has been obvious what we have been doing for the last 15 years. We have rebuilt the Welsh Highland Railway. With trains running through from Caernarfon to Porthmadog in 2011, that is no longer an aspiration - it has become an achievement. Building 25 miles of new railway has been an exciting challenge and, however difficult to achieve, was an easy concept to grasp. The future is more complex, and there is also a danger that this headline achievement overshadows the other more subtle achievements of the last 15 years.

The Ffestiniog has changed. In the 1970s and 1980s the Ffestiniog acquired the reputation of being careless with its heritage. By 2010 the Ffestiniog had been transformed into one of the world's leading heritage railways. We have established a subsidiary company, Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Limited, that has worked hard to prepare a raft of strategic level policies. We are known to and involved with the national heritage organisations, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Trust and Cadw. We have also achieved international standing - Indian Railways (who are the international leaders in railway World Heritage Sites) chose us to twin with, and when asked why could say that it was unclear which of the two organisations led in conservation management. The recent past has seen the Ffestiniog restore its unique fleet of 1870s carriages and other heritage stock, and make a start on restoring its historic buildings with the work on the Old Locomotive Shed at Boston Lodge. Moreover, Taliesin and Lyd, two locomotives lost in the 1930s, have been recreated at Boston Lodge. This focus on heritage has not been at the expense of comfort or practicality. The Ffestiniog's modern carriage fleet has been transformed and much more done to provide the customer standards increasingly expected.

Moreover, what we have actually done on the Welsh Highland is just to complete the basic track. That is a tremendous achievement by any standards, difficult to match in the commercial railway sector and unparalleled in the heritage railway world, but nevertheless it is only the first step towards building a railway that is complete as a tourist attraction. We lack the facilities, and the stations, that make a railway whole.



All these changes have in turn altered us, and our organisation. We have grown and we carry more passengers. In 1995 the turnover was £1.45m. By 2010 it exceeded £4m. The railway is not just bigger, but by necessity and choice has become much more professional too.

## ***The next challenge***

Our next challenge is not only to develop the Ffestiniog and the Welsh Highland, and it is not even just to develop the railways in a way that makes the most of their heritage; it is to turn the whole into a sustainable enterprise.

One way of looking at this challenge is to look at the list of projects that it entails - and an initial attempt at that follows. However becoming sustainable also implies a more fundamental look at what we do and how we do it. This paper explains the thoughts behind the plans.

The first step is to identify who are the main groups of people affected by our railway, and what they expect from it.

## ***Who does our railway affect, and how?***

There are three main groups of people affected by the railway.

The first is the public at large, those who visit and travel on the railway. This is a large group of people - typically a quarter of a million each year. Journeys on our railway give visitors the chance to see the best of Wales and of Snowdonia. They expect this and more, to travel in an unusual and interesting way, to be comfortable, and to be looked after to the best modern standards of care throughout.

The second group of people are those sufficiently interested to want to be directly involved. The degree of involvement naturally varies. 6000 - 7000 join our supporting Societies (The Ffestiniog Railway Society and Cymdeithas Rheilffordd Eryri / the Welsh Highland Railway Society) and about a thousand become active volunteers. There are generous donors, with a few even sponsoring major projects. To those donors and sponsors, and to our volunteers, the railway has become a means by which they have been able to realise their dreams. Realising dreams is hugely challenging, and the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways have proved not only that we enjoy such challenges, but that we can actually make them happen.



Different people have different dreams. These have included building lost locomotives like Lyd, restoring the railways' fleet of Victorian carriages, conserving crumbling but historic buildings, and - most obviously - building the Ffestiniog back to Blaenau and then rebuilding the whole Welsh Highland from Caernarfon to Porthmadog. For many, the dream is just contributing to keeping the railway in good heart in a world where narrow gauge railways are exceedingly rare. We have been able to encompass all these dreams and make them happen - dreams which all share the common aspect of enhancing the interpretation of the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways and their heritage.

The third group of people with a substantial interest in the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railway's vision for the future are the people of Gwynedd, naturally including their representatives and friends locally, at Westminster and in the Welsh Assembly.

To this community we are important both economically - creating jobs both directly and indirectly - and culturally. The visitor who enjoys a journey on our railway does so by experiencing Gwynedd's great invention, the narrow gauge steam railway. In this way, every visitor to our railway not only travels through magnificent scenery, but does so in a way that celebrates the culture of North Wales.

Our ability to turn this aspect of local history into something that draws in people from all over the world generates revenue that helps maintain a strong local community. But the railway is not just for visitors. The railway has enriched the lives of local people. We are delighted that this is so, and we are proud of the extent to which local groups take part in our work.

## What does sustainable mean?

Sustainable Development is classically defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. Personally I would add, 'and without losing that which is excellent and which we have inherited from previous generations'.

Sustainability has several facets. These are normally grouped into economic effects, effects on the community, and effects on the environment.

## Economics

This section considers the railway's own economics; the effect of the railway and its vision on Gwynedd is considered in the section on Community.

An economic railway is a basic prerequisite to being able to afford anything else. So, it is the obvious place to start.

We have four sources of funds. Two of these make up our annual income - these are the revenue from train operation and the ancillary income from shops or catering or from work we carry out for third parties at Boston Lodge or elsewhere. And two sources of funds have been associated with improvements - these being donations and grants.

Having several sources of funds gives resilience, but we do need to recognise that donations and grants should be for developments, and that it would be dangerous to rely on them for revenue expenses. We value our independence and would lose it if we become dependent on public support to meet day to day needs. The railway neither seeks nor receives any operating subsidy.

So a sustainable railway has to be able to survive on the income it generates. Otherwise, the debt level rises, and for any Company that is unsustainable in the longer term. Can we generate sufficient income to at least meet our annual costs?

Recently, we have aimed for a small profit each year, and we have seen our debt reduce from £1.75m in 2003 to one third of that in 2010. The level of annual profit actually has been quite small for a business of our size, particularly given the inherent uncertainties we face each year due to such factors as the weather and the state of the national economy. We use our profits both to provide an insurance against worse than expected outcomes and to contribute towards improvements in subsequent years. Our profits are always reinvested in improving the railway. The expected profit margin needs to be large enough for us to be confident that we would not be severely damaged by the level of adverse variances that could reasonably be anticipated during the year under consideration.



With annual receipts being close to annual costs, the funds for improving our railway very largely come through donations and grants. Any profits from the Ffestiniog Travel business also add to the funds for development.

We have been fortunate in attracting donors - both large and small, and both those who give as individuals directly or through legacies to the Trust and those who come through the supporting societies. To become sustainable we must continue to attract donors. Our railway is like any other enterprise, it either progresses or it declines. It is our donors that provide the capital for improvements, and it is these improvements that lead to the railway becoming progressively more interesting and generally better.

Potential donors have a very wide choice of charities (and other good causes) to support. Essentially, every donation has to be earned. We earn donations by offering our supporters a cause to support which combines four attributes. Something that is not only worthy, but also exciting. And not only do we have a track record of delivering what we have set out to do, but also of delivering it in a way that is very good value for money.

The railway has attracted many donors, including some who have sponsored complete projects, clear evidence that many consider it to be worthy. Its appeals to the general railway world have been notably successful - so a lot of new people have found the prospect of developing the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways an exciting challenge. The tasks that we have taken on - most recently rebuilding the Welsh Highland - have been huge, and they have been achieved. So it is fair to claim that we have delivered on even our most ambitious programmes. And finally, our costs are extremely low by comparison with railway industry cost averages. So donors can be confident that we will make their donations go a long way.

With the funds for development coming largely through donations and sponsorship, and the grants that those funds have released in turn through match funding, it is essential that our future aspirations and programme continue to be exciting enough to attract donors. The aim of a sustainable railway offers donors the expectation that the good work that their gifts makes possible should last a long time. And the basic aim, to complement the track that has been built against all the odds with all the other facilities that we need to run a proper railway, is something that I hope will appeal.



## Community

The railway affects the local community both culturally and economically. The railway showcases the steam narrow gauge railway - demonstrating both its invention in Gwynedd on the Ffestiniog Railway and the way in which it subsequently developed throughout the world. The identity of our part of Wales is clearly defined, strongly Welsh and largely Welsh speaking. The railway plays a cultural role in demonstrating and interpreting the heritage of Gwynedd to both those living in, and to those visiting, North Wales. We are quite unlike those enterprises and attractions that offer a product that is much the same everywhere, and which thereby dilute local distinctiveness.

We play a role in providing skills training and experience through a range of schemes - including arrangements with local schools, the Duke of Edinburgh's scheme, and taking a part in Railway Industry apprentice training. All these have a common aspect. They show young people that when confronted with a challenge they can actually achieve more than they expected. I hope that these collaborative arrangements will expand further. I would also like to see a closer link with schools so that the railway can play a greater part in interpreting local heritage to local children. The railway can be both a source of pride in what previous generations of Gwynedd people have achieved, and a hands-on opportunity to participate in a historic undertaking that is highly relevant to today's community.

The economic role is equally important. It is not easy to find high quality jobs in Gwynedd - particularly outside the public sector. The railway is not just one of the largest direct employers, but one that has become a noted centre of excellence in areas such as carriage building and so offers people the chance to develop skills that otherwise would not exist in such a remote area. Moreover, the railway also supports about a further 400 jobs locally through services bought in by the railway, its staff, volunteers and passengers. That is highly significant in an economy the size of Gwynedd's - a major contribution to the economic strength of the community. A local community needs such strength to maintain its distinct identity, including its language.

This contribution to the local community is very largely funded by our donors and by our passengers. So it represents a net inwards contribution to North Wales. Benefactors and passengers on the railway, many from outside the area, provide the funds for the railway to operate and to be improved, and the



benefits flow into the local economy.

The benefits to the community at large in an economically deprived area are the basis for grants which we then use as match funding to make our donations go further. We will continue to seek capital grants wherever we can. The large indirect benefits result in the economic return on grants received for capital works being remarkably high - approaching 100% pa. That is quite exceptional, and provides a good basis on which we can both demonstrate the benefits to the local community of what we have delivered to date, and make a case for what we want to do in future. Overall, the railway is contributing around £15,000,000 a year to the Gwynedd economy.

Personally, I put our relationship with the community around us very high in my list of priorities. I hope that they will increasingly see the railway - and our railway community - as a major asset both culturally and economically. That is an important part of becoming sustainable.



## Environment and Conservation

The railway provides green access to the protected landscapes of Snowdonia and of Gwynedd, and forms a major part of the historic environment.

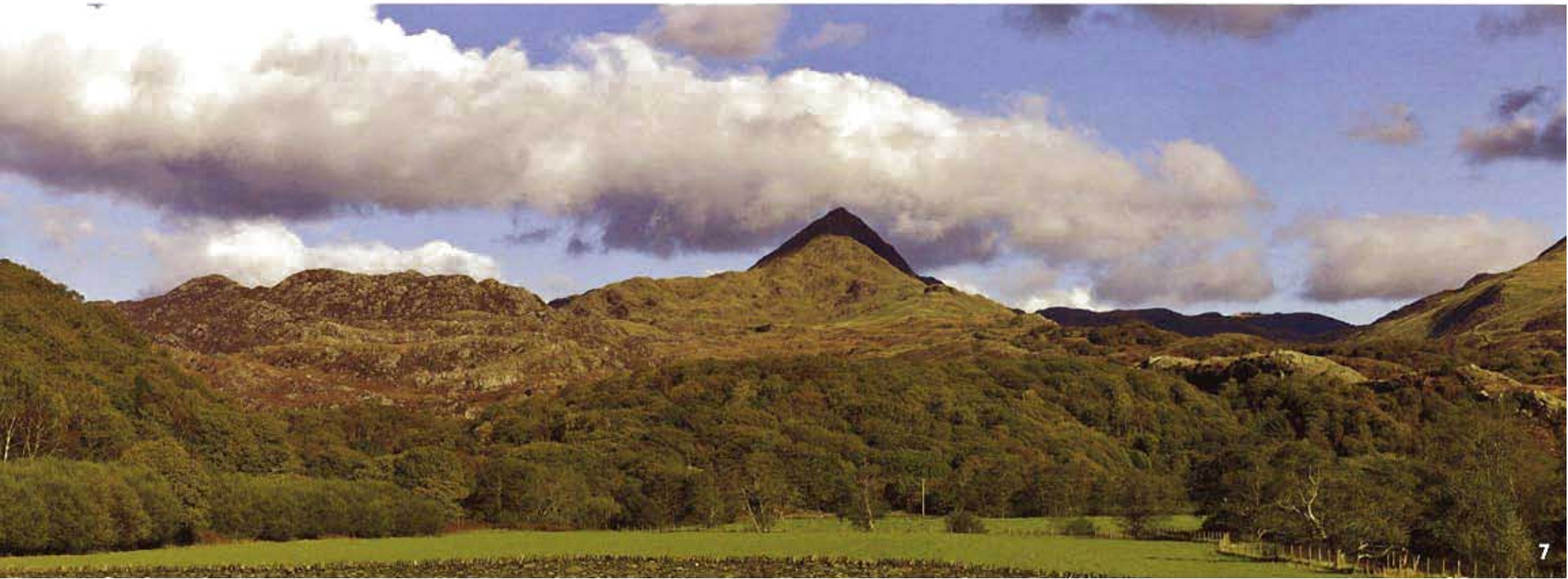
The railway is an astonishing survivor of an independent strand in railway development, separate from the increasingly centralised evolution of the main line networks. Internationally it is probably the most complete survival of a Victorian Railway entity. This permeates the whole railway - its organisation (a pre-Victorian Statutory Company), its routes, its structures and buildings, its self sufficient workshop facilities, its archives, and of course its trains.

The railway equally is a major element of the historic environment in Gwynedd, together with the industries it served and the towns and villages it sustained. It falls within the Glaslyn and Ffestiniog historic landscapes.

Many of our historic assets are part of the direct heritage of the Ffestiniog Railway, and of the Welsh Highland Railway and its predecessors. Naturally, there is a particular affection for those assets. But there are also many historic

assets from other railways that were built in the Ffestiniog's image. Those are equally part of the story of how enterprise in this part of Wales brought transport to many rural areas throughout the world. That story is just as important, and those assets equally worthy of conservation.

As part of the sustainable railway we will aim to conserve our historic buildings and other key structures such as boundary walls, and to complete the conservation of our historic carriages. We have a large collection of historic narrow gauge freight vehicles, which need conservation even though they have little economic function. We will aim always to have examples of the railways' iconic locomotives - most notably the England engines and the Double Fairlies - in working order. Conservation implies having the facilities to minimise the decay in historic assets. A central part of this programme is the aim to build maintenance and storage facilities so that every carriage and every locomotive can be properly looked after undercover every night.

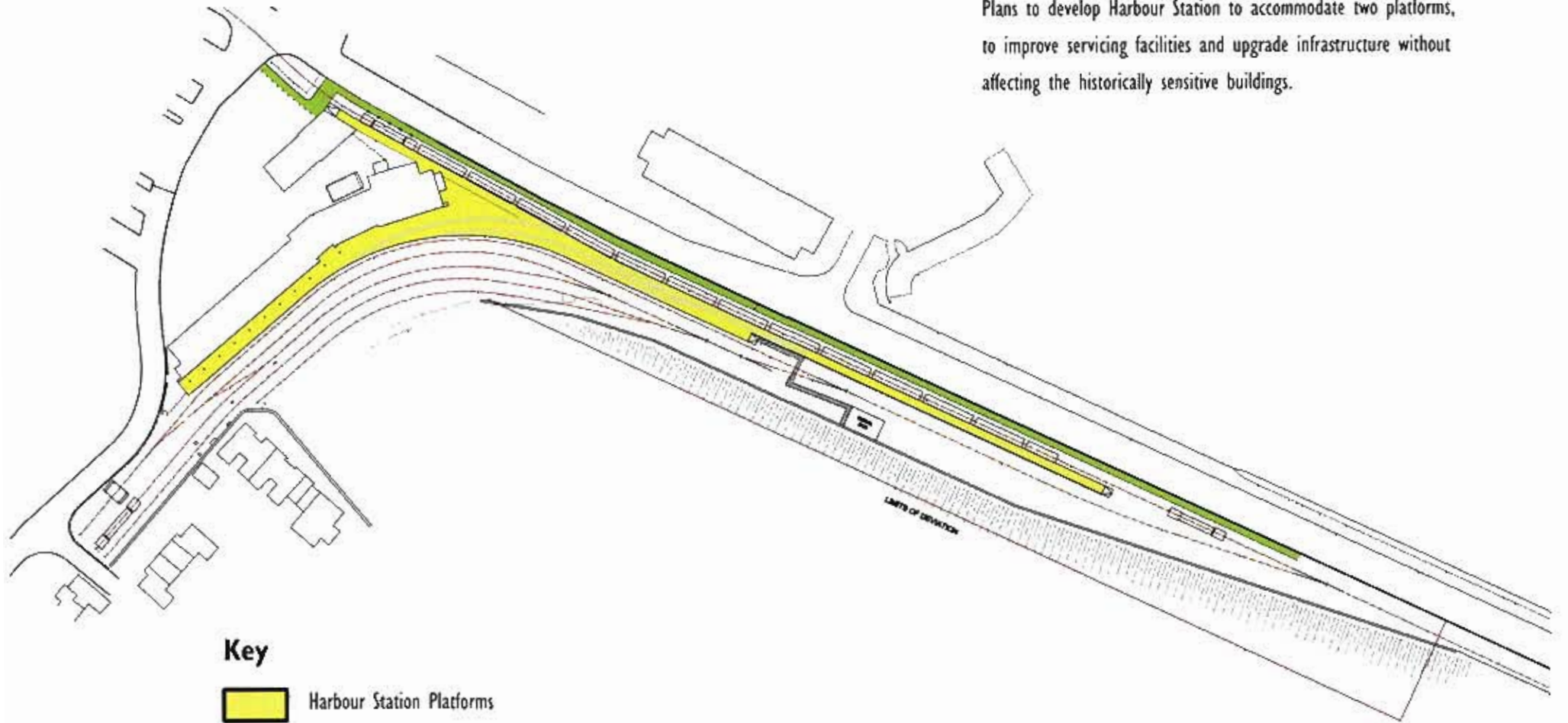


The railway also runs through many areas protected for their biodiversity, in particular five Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Glaslyn, Coedydd Dyffryn Ffestiniog, Coedydd Nanmor, Coedydd Beddgelert a Cheunant Aberglaslyn, Afon Gwyrfai a Llyn Cwellyn), several of which are also designated as Special Areas of Conservation (the European designation). We do have some notable trees and other flora on our land (like the sessile oak on Minffordd platform). However, the railway's key contribution is probably the access that it provides to these areas of special interest in both landscape and biodiversity terms. Access is an important objective for the National Park, and for the statutory agencies involved in biodiversity and landscape, and the railway is the means by which everyone can gain access to Snowdonia and its surroundings with minimal adverse impact on the environment. While they are on our trains our passengers do not leave gates open on farms, or disturb wildlife, or trample sensitive plants, or erode paths. The trains are accessible to all, including those in wheelchairs.





Each passenger of ours is a visitor to the National Park, and by the same token travelling on our trains gives each passenger the chance to see and to appreciate the agencies' work in conserving protected areas. Historically, many of these areas were more open than they are now. Unfortunately, there are places where the vegetation has grown up to the point where it obscures the views from the train, and so restricts the extent to which our passengers (their visitors) can see these protected landscapes, and appreciate their biodiversity. I hope that we will be able to work together with neighbours, statutory agencies and the National Park to restore these wonderful views of the landscape, and give passengers (visitors) the chance to see the biodiversity present alongside the train.



Plans to develop Harbour Station to accommodate two platforms, to improve servicing facilities and upgrade infrastructure without affecting the historically sensitive buildings.



**Key**

-  Harbour Station Platforms
-  Cob footpath alongside platform
-  Existing tracks shown grey
-  Limits of deviation shown as red line



Tactically, the railway must be careful in its use of energy and generally avoid waste. I do not see that as anything special. It is no different from the challenge facing any other person or enterprise as a result of climate change. Strategically, as a means by which the public can access protected landscapes, the railway is quite strong in green terms. The main alternative is the car, and the railway (even a steam railway) has a smaller carbon footprint than the cars our passengers would otherwise have used.

## ***What would the sustainable railway mean in practice***

This vision statement sets out principles, and not any detailed list of proposals. That is deliberate. The railway aims to help people realise their dreams, and everyone has different dreams.

What actually happens will depend on which relevant ideas appeal most strongly to our donors, sponsors and other friends, and therefore attract funding and support. So what follows is a personal view, and provides just one illustration of how the sustainable railway might develop.

The principle is clear. It is that each project we set out to do should contribute to making the railway more sustainable. A balance is required but improving economics, enhancing the railway's position as the narrow gauge railway experience, conserving its heritage, and helping to interpret the railway's achievement are all important. These factors will guide decisions on whether to adopt a specific scheme, or not.

The railway must attract visitors in a very competitive world. We offer a combination of steam, scenery and Snowdonia. Gwynedd is remote, and so people have to make a special effort to reach us. The special effort will only be made if the visitor experience is sufficiently rewarding and welcoming. We need to set ourselves a standard, sufficient to draw visitors to spend the time needed to properly appreciate the railway and its surroundings.

I find it difficult to justify aspiring to any standard other than to be the best narrow gauge railway experience that there is - anywhere. Most visitors want - at least initially - a railway experience that is comfortable and easily assimilated. The railway must set the standard as a travel experience for tourists. It also could offer more - the chance to experience genuine Victorian travel (at

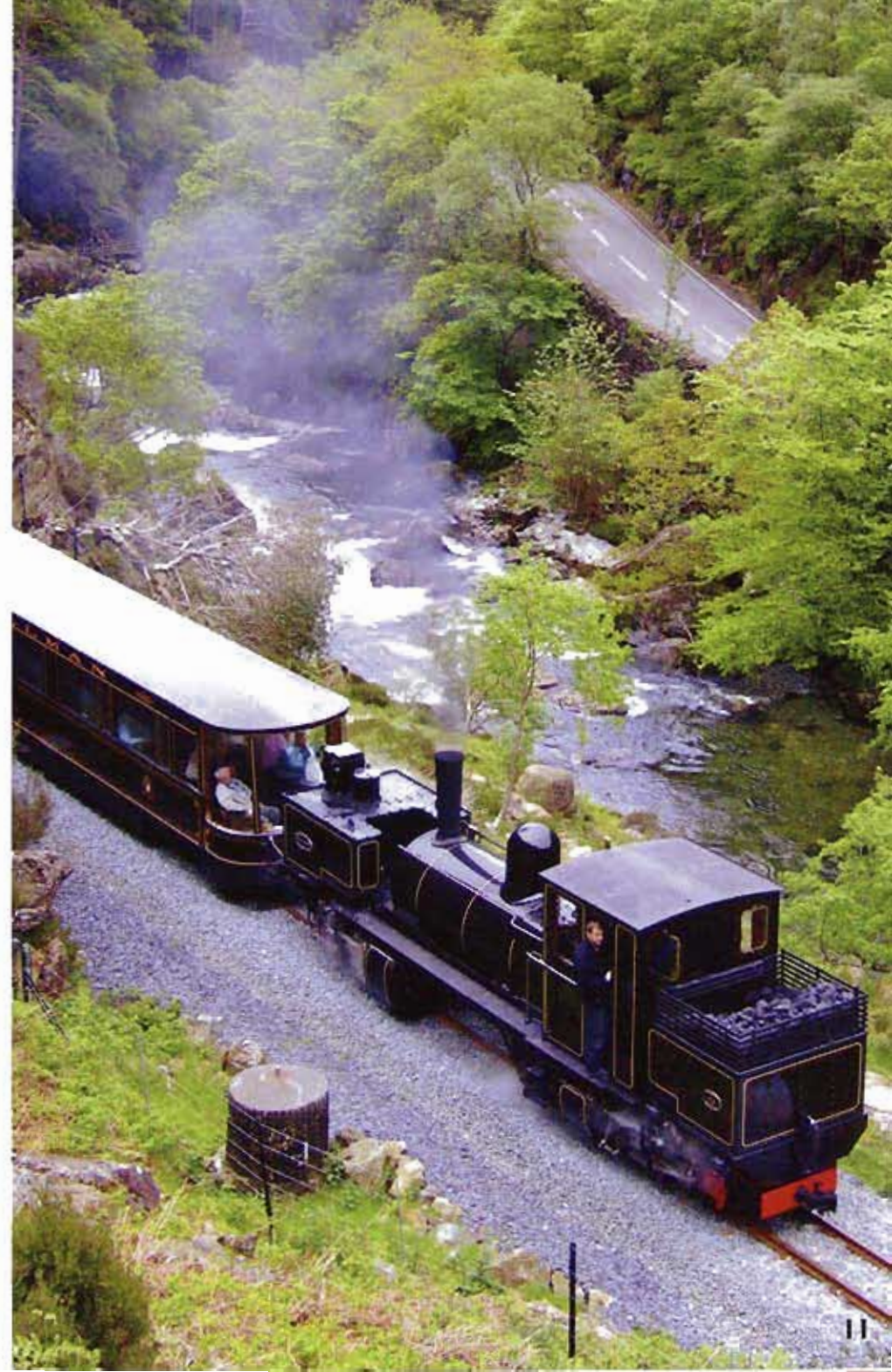
Victorian comfort levels), and a more interactive involvement with the railway and its historical and cultural impact. So there is the prospect of offering an experience that can be enjoyed at different levels. That in turn gives us the chance of attracting more repeat visits, and the chance to encourage more visitors to become supporters.

In marketing terms, aspiring to a standard of international pre-eminence requires clarity in objective and presentation. In my view our objective should be for the railway to be widely recognised internationally, and for a visit to the railway to be acknowledged to be one of those few things that really ought to be experienced at least once in a lifetime.

The other side of our annual account is of course our costs. The railway is tightly managed, and our cost rates are low by railway industry standards. Management is focussed on this need. The railway needs to provide excellence, but cannot afford waste or to keep any unjustified assets amongst its core assets. Basically, we can justify a fleet of five trains. Initially, the aim will be for each train to have eight high quality modern carriages - to satisfy the customer need for a comfortable and easily assimilated introduction to our railway. Other carriages can be used to strengthen trains to twelve carriages as necessary. These five trains require a core fleet of three steam and two diesel locomotives on each railway that are capable of hauling the longest trains we normally run. There is of course a role for other locomotives, and rolling stock, but they need to be justified and paid for separately on heritage or other grounds.

One special aspect of our railway is the emphasis on volunteering. In total, we have about 1000 volunteers. We benefit from people volunteering to carry out railway jobs which provide a contrast to their normal lives, and also - greatly - from people who bring great professional skills in areas such as railways, engineering, planning, law and accountancy. Those volunteers have produced a quality of input that no enterprise of the size of our railway could normally attract let alone afford. We have committed supporters prepared to leave well paid jobs elsewhere so they can play a larger role in the railway. Our Trustees, Company Directors, Trust and Company Officers, Society Directors and many others all give their time freely and individually absorb the costs they incur in serving the railway.

A railway that enjoys challenges and helps people make their dreams come true is a natural focus for like minded people to meet. That in turn is the basis for a community, so it now seems natural to talk about the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland family. Our volunteers look to us both to provide an environment where friendships can grow,



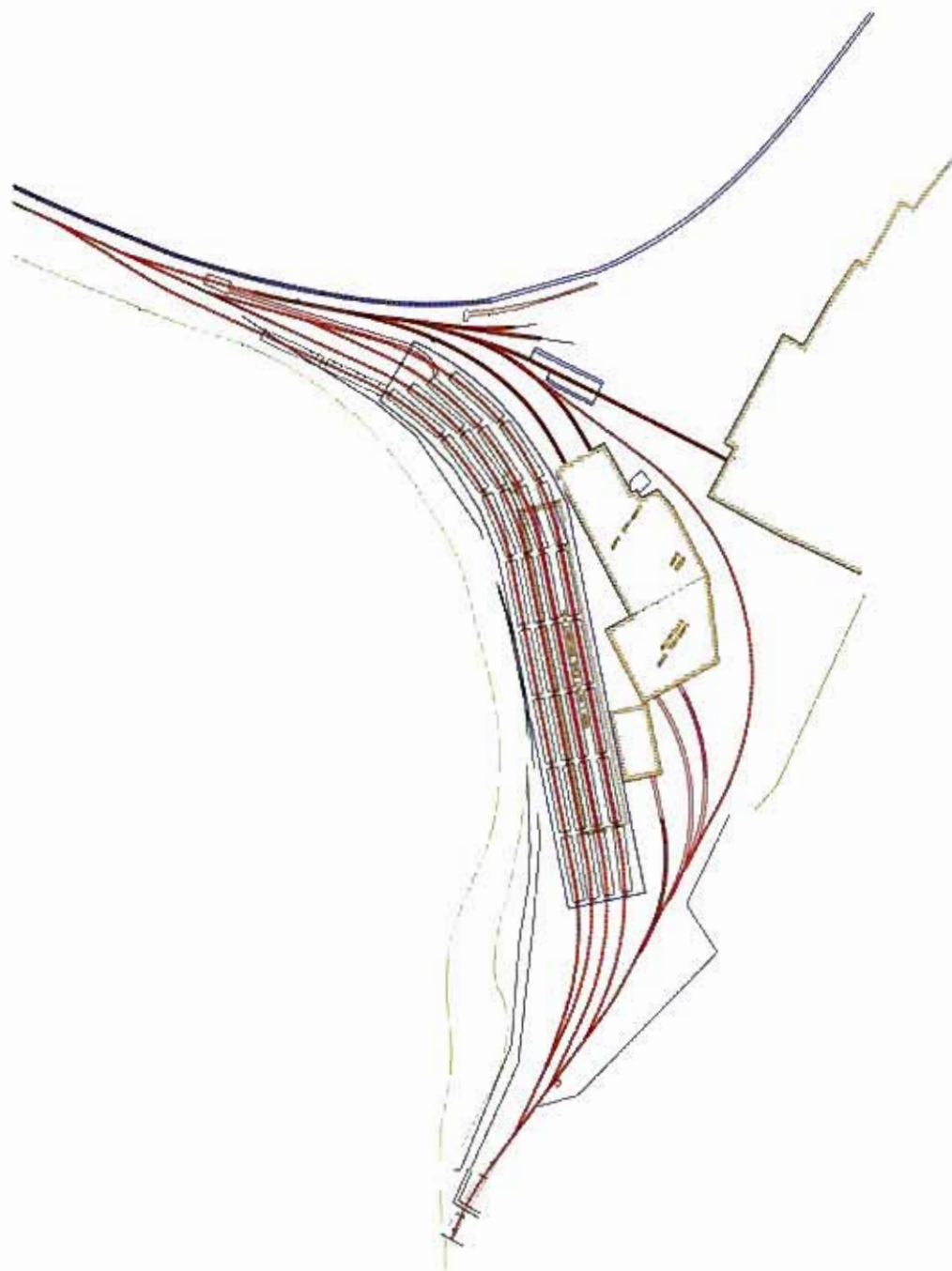
and to continue to offer interesting challenges for them to realise with the help of their friends. The Ffestiniog Railway Society hostel at Minffordd, and the specially arranged kids' week, are just two initiatives that have helped draw in young volunteers, leading to a well balanced age profile. This really matters, and I hope that we will see similar initiatives developed on both railways over the next ten years. To be sustainable we must generate potential successors for all those carrying out key roles today.

Maintaining and developing the volunteer resource and our skill base will be key objectives for the next ten years.

Developing our customer offer, focusing on quality core assets, and encouraging our volunteers, are general themes. They increase potential revenues, and restrain our costs while maintaining quality. Financial security rests on making a small profit each year. Our debt has reduced in recent years, and I would like to see this reduced still further. My view would be that we should aim for a slightly higher profit of at least 5% of turnover each year, and reduce debt further so that it is limited to that needed to cover the yearly variation in cash flow, before we can consider ourselves properly sustainable.

These are overarching concepts. The route to realising the sustainable railway will largely depend on a series of projects.

The projects include prioritising repairs to and restoration of our large stock of traditional buildings, which we struggle to maintain. I would like the aim to be to see the sort of improvement in this area in ten years time that we have seen in carriages over the last ten years. The job might not be finished by then, but it should be well in hand. Historic steam locomotive schemes attract a lot of support. There are several that we hope will feature over the next few years, on both railways, and are likely to form part of separate appeals. The proposed large diesels are less glamorous but would allow us to recover trains, to operate more economically at times of low demand, and to give us further options to reduce fire risk in a world affected by global warming. The project list also includes more carriages to meet demand, to improve standards, and to allow heritage stock to be carefully husbanded. The plan should allow the remaining nineteenth century heritage carriages in the day-to-day fleet to be transferred to the heritage fleet within five years. Crucially, it should provide us with the five eight-coach sets of modern carriages we need, all up to the standards that our customers want.



All these are important parts of moving towards a sustainable railway. However most of the planned projects, and most of the planned spend, concentrate on two needs where we are currently weak.

The first need is to improve our maintenance facilities, so that our assets can be looked after properly. This will reduce costs by extending the time between overhauls, and conserve historic material. It will equally provide the quality facilities that our staff and volunteers deserve.

The maintenance need is most obvious for locomotives and rolling stock. We intend to build new carriage and locomotive sheds at Boston Lodge. The carriage shed is likely to be given a very high priority. At Dinas we plan both to enlarge the carriage shed and to build a completely new running shed in the north yard. We are already negotiating the purchase of the remainder of the building currently used as a locomotive shed at Dinas, so this can be used as a bigger running shed in the short term and as a base for volunteer restoration projects long term.

If we are successful in these projects they should vastly improve the working environment for our maintenance staff and volunteers, and provide the facilities to allow every locomotive and every carriage to be put away under cover every night.

Infrastructure needs are just as important and just as much in need of improvement. The Outdoor Engineering Department is split between several locations - none of which are adequate. Moreover their presence in some places - Boston Lodge in particular - inhibits other developments, especially the restoration of some of the world's earliest railway workshops. We intend to concentrate Outdoor Engineering at Minffordd (with a small out base at Dinas) - starting with decent mess and other staff facilities and continuing with



undercover storage for vulnerable equipment and with works trains to modern standards.

The second need is to invest in our stations. Nearly all our customers join the railway at one of our three main stations - Porthmadog, Caernarfon and Blaenau Ffestiniog. These all need to be easy to reach, with plenty of parking, and then have very good customer facilities to make customers feel welcome. It goes without saying that the railway operating facilities also need to be adequate. At the moment, all our main stations fall far short of these basic requirements. Changes in each case would impact on the local community as well as the railway, so I see these projects becoming a joint effort by the railway and other local interests. As a result, I can identify the need for action but any solution described will be the starting point in a discussion, rather than a description of what eventually results.

Caernarfon station is no thing of beauty. It relies on Portacabins for passenger facilities and its platform limits train lengths throughout the Welsh Highland. It is near to, but separated from, the castle (a World Heritage Site) and the town centre. A station under the castle walls with access straight into the centre

of the town would transform Caernarfon's standing into a place worth visiting for many more people. A better station in Caernarfon would not only help the railway, but also draw in more people to take an interest in the town's other attractions. Just opening the Welsh Highland, despite the poor facilities initially provided, reversed the long running decline in visitors to the castle. There is huge potential for building something that brought the town's attractions together into a coherent whole.

Porthmadog Harbour Station is cramped. The limitations in the track layout are obvious, with trains now running on both railways, and it is the track layout that has excited most attention. It is much easier to overlook the constraints

that apply to parking, the booking office, catering, shop, and circulation space. Porthmadog is the place where most of our passengers start their journey and improvements to all these aspects are urgently required. There are plans that start to address these issues, and I hope that the constraints can be successfully resolved as part of the town's process of adapting to the by-pass.

Both railways at Blaenau Ffestiniog are part of the rather brutal reconstruction of the town's railway corridor in the 1980s. The resulting station has never attracted the number of customers that the railway hoped for. There have been three different booking arrangements - all temporary - and the present one (while an improvement on its predecessors) relies as at Caernarfon on a Portacabin. Everyone wants something better. There is also common agreement

that Blaenau needs something to give it a major lift economically, and that the railway is the one internationally famous asset on which the town could build. With the railway, the town itself (one of the best surviving nineteenth century industrial towns in Britain) and the quarries, could Blaenau be turned into much more of a destination? Sadly, schemes for developing the station and regenerating Blaenau have followed one other, without significant practical effect, and demonstrate how difficult it is to find an outcome that meets the town's other aspirations while providing the facilities the railway needs if it is to become a focus for regeneration. This is a pity, as Blaenau could become an alternative to Porthmadog as a place to access the railway, and more people starting their journey at Blaenau could give Blaenau the economic boost it





needs. I hope that a scheme will soon emerge that receives broad support from Blaenau, Network Rail and ourselves, and which will be fundable with help from the Welsh Assembly.

That leaves the intermediate stations. Economically, there is less urgency to tackle these but they do contribute greatly to the character of the railway. Beddgelert is a station waiting for its station building. I do hope that it is not still waiting in ten years time. Other intermediate stations are less important as a source of traffic, but can be important as destinations. Careful attention to detail can help with them all, and in several cases there is great potential to improve the station environment to emphasise heritage aspects. That is particularly true at Minffordd and at Tan y Bwlch, both essentially Victorian stations from the great period of Ffestiniog expansion.

Minffordd is a classic interchange station. Work is planned here to reinstate bull head track. Tan y Bwlch Station represents a Victorian imposed landscape in what was formerly open sheep country. A lot of the Victorian station survives including much of the planting, but the present station fails to capture the charm or the essence of the original. It is perhaps the place on the whole railway with the greatest potential for a visionary restoration. There has already been generous support for restoring Tan y Bwlch, and a group of those particularly interested in the station are working on options. We look forward to an option emerging that is sustainable, in all respects.



## Conclusions

We have reached the stage where we are the longest heritage railway in Britain, have built new sections of railway that have confounded the sceptics (and at a cost that is extraordinarily low by railway industry standards), have established an international reputation in conservation management, and become a very major part of the local economy.

This has very largely been achieved through voluntary effort, and through generous sponsorship and donations. If the big society is a way of describing voluntary activity that produces large benefits for the community, then the railway really is a supreme example of such a big society.

What has been achieved is impressive, but on its own it is not enough for the railway to become sustainable.

We struggle to make a small profit each year. In terms of projects to be carried out we need better customer facilities and station improvements to increase our revenue, and better maintenance facilities so that we can maintain our assets at lower cost.

Achieving these aims will bring conservation as well as economic benefits – as heritage assets last longer when well maintained and stored under cover.

Achieving these aims will equally allow us to play an even more important role in the economy and in interpreting the culture of the community of which we are a part – Gwynedd.

These aims will be achieved through our supporters, both those who give their time and those who contribute funds, continuing to believe that the railway is something that is worthwhile, exciting, provides good value for money and achieves what it sets out to do. We have helped people realise dreams, and will continue to do so.

If we can realise these aims I would like to think that we can leave something for the next generation that really is sustainable, and on which they can build.

John Prideaux  
Chairman of The Ffestiniog Railway Trust and of the Ffestiniog Railway Company.  
March 2011.



## Outline Project List

1. Porthmadog Harbour Station, widening to create a second platform and re-signalling	£1,000,000
2. Boston Lodge, New Carriage shed	£400,000
New locomotive Shed	£600,000
3. Minffordd, Outdoor Engineering office, under cover storage and works train	£350,000
4. Historic Buildings, nominal sum	£500,000
5. Blaenau Station, nominal sum	£1,000,000
6. Diesel Locomotives, sufficient to have two large diesels on each railway	£750,000
7. 10 carriages, completely rebuilt or new	£1,200,000
8. Caernarfon Station, nominal sum allowed	£1,000,000
9. Dinas, New Loco Running Shed	£700,000
Extend carriage shed	£300,000
10. Intermediate Stations, both Railways	£700,000
11. Signalling improvements on the Welsh Highland	£100,000
	<b>Total: £8,600,000</b>

All estimates notional at this stage.

More detail is available on the web site [www.phase5.org.uk](http://www.phase5.org.uk).

## Useful Contacts

The railway has survived and developed through the generous support of many people. We hope that you will want to help. There are many ways of helping, and the following contacts can help you take the next step.

### **To contribute to the current appeal aimed to realise the projects outlined in this vision:**

Please make cheques payable to 'Ffestiniog Railway Trust' and if you are a UK tax payer, ask for or enclose a gift aid declaration and send them to:

P K Jordan, Treasurer,  
Ffestiniog Railway Trust,  
Lime Tree Lodge, Thorpe Road,  
Mattersey, Doncaster, DN10 5ED

We have received a very generous offer to encourage contributions. The effect of this offer will be to add 10% to all contributions made to this appeal.

Full details of the appeal on the website at [www.phase5.org.uk](http://www.phase5.org.uk)

### **To enquire about sponsorship or to leave a legacy to the Trust**

The Secretary, Ffestiniog Railway Trust, Harbour Station, Porthmadog,  
Gwynedd, LL49 9NF

Legacies should be made out to the Trust at this address, please.

### **To join the Ffestiniog Railway Society**

Martin Cowgill, Registrar,  
Ffestiniog Railway Society  
4 Penny Meadow, Capel St Mary,  
Ipswich, Suffolk, IP9 2UU  
[registrar@ffestiniograilway.org.uk](mailto:registrar@ffestiniograilway.org.uk)

### **To join Cymdeithas Rheilffordd Eryri / The Welsh Highland Railway Society**

Rob Merrick, Broombarrow Corner,  
Rignall Road, Great Missenden, HP16 9PF  
[whrs@shandon.me.uk](mailto:whrs@shandon.me.uk)

(Please note: If you decide to contribute to the current appeal then this includes the right to membership of one (bronze or silver membership) or both Societies (gold membership)

