



Strategic plan for restoration of Blaenau Ffestionog to Trawsfynydd Lake Halt

The slates and lakes line



Disclaimer and Explanatory Note

This Strategic Overview has been prepared from information provided by the Trustees and Officers of Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust to inform anyone who is interested in the restoration of the line between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd Lake Halt.

Consequently, neither the Trustees, Officers or others who have had input into this document can be held responsible for any losses suffered by persons acting or refraining from action on the material contained in this document.

Anyone considering a financial commitment of any kind based on the ambitions set out in this document should conduct such investigations as they consider necessary to satisfy themselves of the appropriateness of any financial commitment and associated risk or loss of some or all of their proposed financial investment or commitment.

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1. Executive summary

History - Nuclear power traffic ceased to run on the line in August 1995 with some maintenance trains and enthusiast specials after that date. Since then the line has been mothballed with several attempts started at restoration.

In February 2019 a new Trust was formed out of the old Railway Society with the aims to restore the section between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd Lake Halt as a Heritage Railway Operation.

When complete, B&FRHT will provide for the first time in over 30 years a rail link between Trawsfynydd and Blaenau Ffestiniog as well as opening up tourism opportunities in the area.

The plans for the Snowdonia Enterprise Zone make reference to the provision of a railway link to access the area and this plan is intended to fulfil that requirement with the support of the Welsh Government.

B&FRHT Phase 1 is to ensure that all the systems, policies and guidelines are in place to ensure that things are operated in compliance with current regulations and standards. This is also to ensure that there are robust management and financial arrangements are in place. This phase will also see research being undertaken for the development of Interpretative boards outlining key aspects of the history of the line. Separate boards will be prepared for various areas on the line.

Phase 2 will see the opening of negotiations with the line owners with the long term objective of running heritage railway operations on the line. These negotiations are likely to be protracted and be in more detail than those encountered in the past due to previous groups failures to comply with Network Rails licensing conditions.

Phase 3 Subject to receiving permission from Network Rail a complete topographical survey, ecological survey and structural survey of the line will be undertaken. The structural survey will assess in detail the condition of all 100 structures on the line as well as assessing track and drainage conditions to enable a full assessment of the rehabilitation works to be prepared.

Phase 4 onwards will see the start of work on the line post completion of the survey and a full plan of works which would be agreed in conjunction with Network Rail to ensure that the work is carried out to their standards. This includes setting out sub phases of the work for creating depots, storage and maintenance facilities. Detailed planning will determine at which phase we will see the commencement of operations between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd Lake Halt

There are 17 phases in this £14.6 to £17.85 million 10 year plan covering the restoration of 6.5 miles of running line, creation of 4 new stations, refurbishment of 1 station, alterations to 1 station and the development of a Heritage Railway Centre / Motive Power depot. A detailed explanation of these figures can be found in the Cost Details section of this plan.

No time scales are being put on these phases at this point in time as they are subject to a large number of factors. It is envisaged that the 10 years mentioned above will start once Network Rail give the trust permission to commence work on the line.

2. Introduction and background

2.1 Purpose of the Strategic plan

This Strategic Plan has been developed by Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust (“the Trust”).

It provides an overview of our plans to raise funds for the acquisition, restoration and development of the mothballed section of line between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd Lake Halt. It also is intended to be a comprehensive briefing for any interested stakeholders in how we intend to restore the line but also in what our long term plans for the line are.

For more details about us you can visit <http://www.balaffest.org.uk>

2.2 The Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust

Our vision

To restore to operational order the mothballed section of line between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd Lake Halt, create a visual and interactive experience that tells the history of the railway line between Bala and Ffestiniog.

Our mission

To create a heritage railway company for everyone that preserves the history and the skills of the steam age:

- To provide a sustainable base for both our and others collections of steam and diesel locomotives as well as any related rolling stock
- To develop a heritage railway that makes a positive economic contribution to local tourism thereby guaranteeing a sustainable future.



To achieve this mission we have identified nine elements that will be fundamental to a successful delivery, which are:

- Build relationships with internal and external partners
- Build relationships with the local community
- Retain and build our workforce, both volunteers and paid staff
- Develop the heritage and educational aspects of the railway
- Develop systems to ensure safe operation of the railway
- Restore, renew and maintain the infrastructure and property.
- Enhance our locomotives and rolling stock (when operational)
- Increase passenger service revenue (when operational)

Our Progress and achievements

Small but significant steps have already taken place. A new effective committee has been elected, some of whom have been heavily involved in the production of this document. The committee has worked hard to put the essential elements in place including:

- 1) A stable, solvent financial base that includes new banking facilities,
- 2) Formation of a new Limited Company to provide a formal legal structure;
- 3) Development of a Strategic vision that can be shared with future partners and stakeholders;
- 4) Building the profile of the Trust and its networks through registration with the Heritage Railway Association

An early success has seen one of the members acquire three permanent way trolleys and has granted their use to the Trust on the condition that the trust maintain the trolleys in full working order. The restoration of the trolleys has commenced so that they are ready to assist with the restoration of the line to working order once written permission and an agreement is obtained to do so.



3.0 The need for Fundraising

3.1 Purpose of Fundraising

The Bala & Ffestiniog aims to restore the mothballed line between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd Lake Halt through the development of a heritage railway operation.

We aim to apply for permission from Network Rail to access the trackbed and associated infrastructure (signalling etc). Once this is achieved we intend to carry out a detailed programme of works to bring the line trackbed and associated infrastructure up to current standards in order to operate trains over the mothballed section of line. We will need to demonstrate that we have the people, systems and financial resources in place to run a safe railway service – which we believe we can achieve with the support of our members and the wider stakeholder community. This is why effective fundraising will be so important.



Only by doing this, can we build the financial base necessary to carry out the significant amount of work required before we can run a single train over the line. We will learn from the efforts of the pioneering people behind preservation (albeit with a lot of additional regulatory and Health and Safety requirements!) and show that it is still possible in this day and age to start from scratch again. Our ambition is to build an exciting future, and act decisively to protect this important part of Britain's railway heritage, before the skills disappear forever.

3.2 What we will use the funds for

We will need to satisfy a wide variety of regulatory and statutory bodies such as the Office of Rail and Road, Network Rail, Natural Resources Wales, local councils and the members of the local communities that we have the resources required to run trains reliably and safely;

1. the qualified staff we need;
2. the working capital needed for a seasonal business.
3. the resources and ability to maintain the permanent way

The primary use of funds raised will be to carry out initial work in establishing the processes and procedures, generating the paperwork needed in order to meet the requirements of the many organisations involved from which we need to seek support and / or permission to operate on the railway.

3.3 Fundraising Sources

No preservation project can survive on the basis of fundraising just from its members alone and this project is no different, it will be necessary to utilise a variety of sources for fundraising both local and national. Consideration will need to be given long term to employing a full time Fund raiser for the Trust to target fundraising to a tune of £1.4 million to £1.8 million a year (average) for 10 years). These estimates are based on average figures from works carried out on other similar preservation efforts elsewhere in the country. The actual costs of the work will be determined from the schedule of works generated from the surveys carried out.

Examples:

- Welsh Assembly
- Local Council Funds
- Employment Grants
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- National Lottery Fund
- EU Structural Funds (*Brexit dependent)
- Magnox Community Fund
- Grants Online
- Government Development funds



4. Project Plan

4.1 Project timeline and delivery

The majority of the initial funds will be utilised for the furtherance of the project and enabling the trust to achieve its initial 12 month objectives.

- A safety management system
- Public liability insurance
- Qualified personnel
- Dual Signatory Bank Account Register for Gift Aid
- Register with HRA
- Establish contacts with Stakeholders
- Outline plan for Maentwrog Road
- Outline plan for full length of line
- Establish Fundraising team
- Feasibility study of the project
- Trust Rule Book
- Safety Management System
- Environmental Policy/Impact Statement
- Other relevant Trust Paperwork
- Gift Aid registration

These objectives are set with the goal of being able to commence negotiations with the relevant bodies and because the Office of Rail and Road require that the trust when operational has a management board made up of people with industry experience.

The trust will cautiously build its activity levels from a gentle start in 2019/2020, when we will seek to open negotiations with the owners

of the line with a view to obtaining permission to access the line in 2020/2021 in order to survey the line and carry out basic clearance operations in order to facilitate the assessment of the line.

As part of its efforts to engage with the local community the Trust will be looking at ways that it can support the local community in the best interests of both the community and the Trust. This will include discussing with the local community what they want from the return of the railway between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd Lake Halt.

4.2 Wider plans

While our initial efforts are designed towards ensuring the paperwork and regulatory requirements are met we have other long term general plans which will be finalised as and when appropriate:

- Educating members of the trust and members of the public about the history of the line including use of interpretation boards along the route.
- Preservation of the history of the line and being able to present it in a variety of formats in order to engage with as wide a variety of individuals and groups as possible.

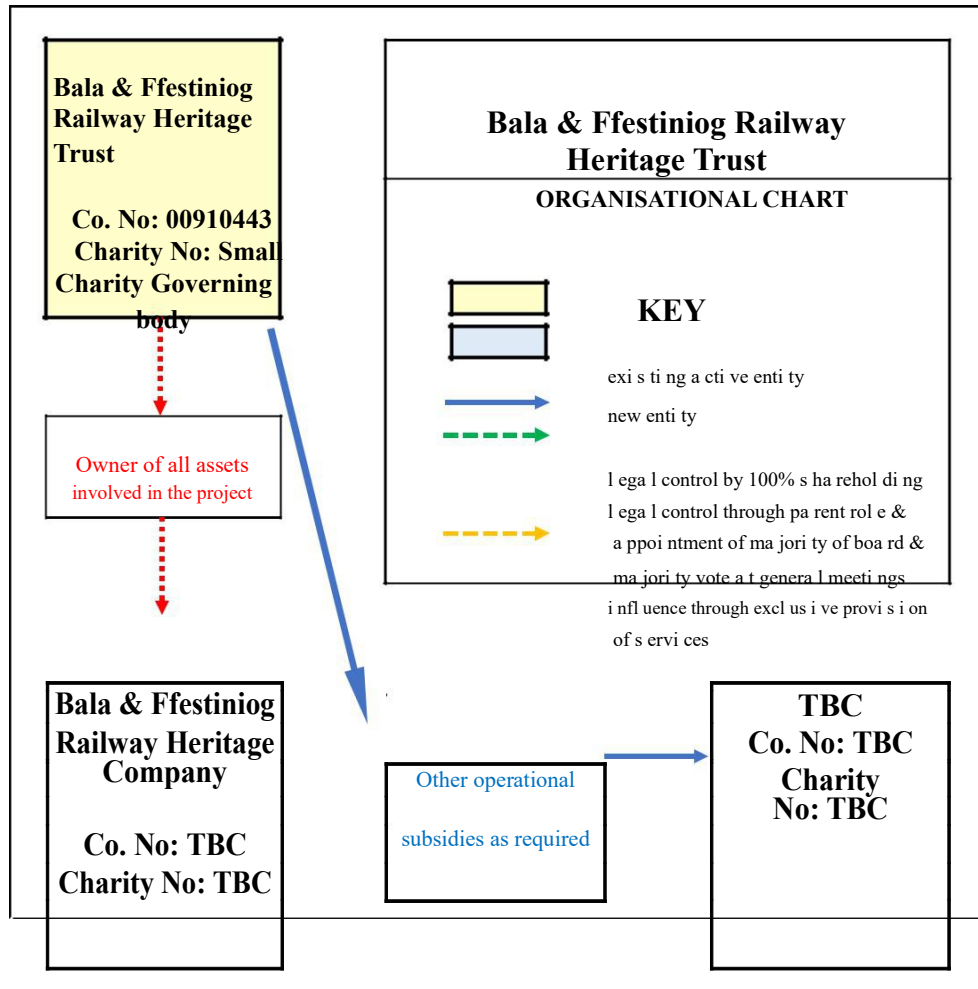


- Creation of a Permanent Way vehicle fleet that can be used to restore the line to operational use.
- Creation of a Permanent Way team with the required level of competence and expertise to bring the mothballed infrastructure up to current standards for operation of a regular heritage railway system.
- Creation of plans for the support of the local community in order to maximise the benefit of the railway to the area including supporting creation of other tourism attractions in the area.
- Acquisition of historical objects related to the Bala & Ffestiniog Railway with a view to creating a Heritage Museum
- Creation of architectural drawings for planning permission and organizational purposes of line formations, stations and any other buildings necessary for the safe operation of the line.
- Exploring the potential opportunities for a commuter service between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd Lake Halt to serve the Snowdonia Enterprise Zone opening employment opportunities for individuals in Blaenau Ffestiniog. Alternative commuter services include having heritage trains connect with the main Conwy Valley Line trains at Blaenau Ffestiniog in order to create travel opportunities to Llandudno Junction and beyond.

5. Legal structure and governance

5.1 Legal structure

The group legal structure is comprised of the following entities. The operating arrangements for each legal entity are further described in Section 5.



Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust

Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust is registered as a trust with the companies house and is governed by its members who appoint a committee at the annual AGM. This committee then runs the Trust guided by the members decisions at the AGM.

Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Company Ltd

Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Company will be the operational company of the trust which will be 100% owned by the Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust and will be managed by a Chief Executive Officer appointed by the committee

Other Companies

Other companies will be formed as required for the operational necessity of the Trust.

5.2 The Committee

The committee members of Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust will retain strategic oversight and management responsibility for the project, overseen by the members of the Trust. Operational responsibility will be delegated to the Subsidiary management teams as appropriate.

The committee of Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust is comprised of:

Shane Barry (Chairman)

Shane is currently employed with South Central Ambulance Service as an Associate Ambulance Practitioner responding to 999 emergency calls on a near daily basis as part of his shift work.

This experience results in a strong ability to manage chaotic emergency situations and delegate tasks to individuals with a view to achieving the overall goals of saving lives and preventing any further injuries.

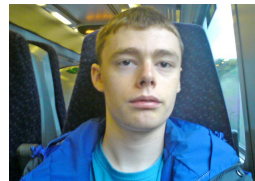
Prior to that he has had experience of managing a Scout District responsible for 250 adult volunteers and almost 1500 young people. This involved co-ordinating a volunteer management team of 20 individuals and multiple projects ongoing at the same time designed to benefit the young people of the District.

In his spare time Shane is working on developing the Trust and moving the project forward. Shane in addition to being the Chairman continues to organise the Project Management aspect of his role and works very hard to move things forward.



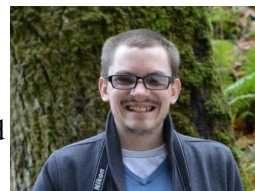
Daniel Newton (Secretary)

Daniel Newton is a qualified casual Lifeguard and is a Volunteer Sales Assistant in Nightingale House Hospice. He is well organised having been to university and gained a degree and Masters in Creative Media. He is good at keeping files and course work in order and at keeping to schedules.



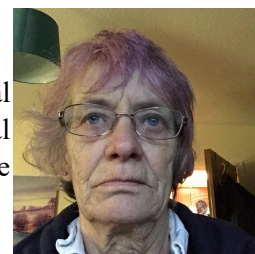
Dale Williams (Environmental)

Dale Williams has spent 17 years working as a retail assistant for Spar (UK) the convenience retail chain owned by the Blakemore family. He has previously volunteered on the Ffestiniog Railway in both Parks & Gardens and as an on train Buffet Steward though he has not been recently due to lack of transport and time. He now volunteers for the Statfold Barn Railway in Tamworth where he is a Signaller, Guard and Photographer.



Liz Humphreys (Fundraising)

Liz Humphreys is one of our local committee members who used to drive local buses in the area so is a familiar face to many. She is interested in the local history and naturally of steam! She also considers herself to be the master of the random....



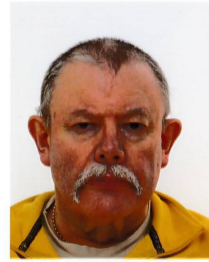
Steve Richards (Treasurer)

Steve Richards spent 33 years in the Financial Services Industry and a further 10 in a government agency that dealt with grants/support for business. He also volunteers at two other organisations, one of which (Bath Rugby Heritage) he is the team leader and bank signatory. He also volunteers at the Swindon & Cricklade railway where he is training as a fireman and part of the team restoring 6984 Owsden Hall.



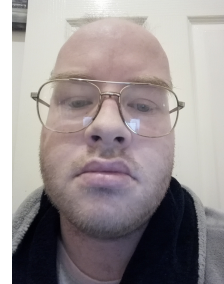
Robert Newton (Safety)

Robert Newton is a Full time Maintenance PAT tester Maintenance Electrician 1969 - 2013. His railway experience includes being a permanent Way worker with Llangollen, Bala Lake, Welsh Highland and Tallyn Railway since 1994, a TTI on Llangollen 1996 - 2008 and currently Booking Office Clerk on Bala Light Railway 2016 – Present



Dan Hornby (PR)

Dan Hornby is currently a bus driver, worked as a manager in 2 restaurants, qualified welder and fabricator, qualified boat builder, 10 years experience in another railway society, a director and temp chairman of another railway society, currently setting up another society with friends for a charitable project as yet to be unveiled publicly, good leadership skills and determination



The constitution allows the Trust Committee to appoint additional members as and when required until the next AGM.

6. Business model

6.1 Industry expertise

The business model has been developed by the trustees of the trust in consultation with companies house and the Charities Commission.

6.2 Operational structure and trading activities

The current and future operations of the legal entities in the group structure are as follows:

Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust

Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Trust owns and lends the assets of the trust, namely steam locomotives, diesel locomotives, rolling stock and equipment used by Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Company. The operational assets are lent to the company under a formal loan agreement, with conditions such as maintenance included in the agreement.

This loan agreement will also cover a payment for the use of the assets to the Trust in order to enable the trust to generate further funds for acquisition of further relevant assets.

Bala & Ffestiniog Railway Heritage Company Ltd

The company will operate the assets of the trust and will also be engaged in encouraging and promoting public interest in preservation of anything related to railways. This is achieved by:

- Maintaining and restoring the collections of assets on loan from the Trust.
- Operating heritage services on the railway between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd Lake Halt.
- Maintaining the formation of the line between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd.
- Generating an operational surplus with a % of this surplus to go to the Trust to enable the trust to acquire further assets, the intention being for the balance of the surplus being reinvested into the company in order to develop for the future.



6.3 SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- A new committee elected by the members with strong support from the members
- A new operational entity leaving behind negativity of previous entity.
- A strong stable financial base proportional to the Trusts current activities.

Weaknesses

- Lack of current track access agreement.
- An ageing membership profile - need to encourage younger members to join
- No fundraising system in place
- Lack of engineering or surveying experience on committee

Opportunities

- Significant tourism opportunities in the area
- Visit Wales tourism adverts creating opportunities.
- Snowdonia Enterprise Zone can create commuter traffic from Blaenau Ffestiniog to Trawsfynydd Lake Halt

Threats

- Permission to access line may be refused by Network Rail
- Local community may not want the project due to past history of Trawsfynydd Railway Company.
- Lack of funding
- Onerous National Park Conditions

6.4 Addressing the SWOT

Our current lack of track access agreement is not something we can address in the short term, however the work we are currently undertaking is designed to ensure that we reduce the chances of being refused access to the track when the appropriate time comes to request access from Network Rail.

We have recognised that a large number of our current members are under the age of 60 however without encouraging new recruits at the younger end of the membership profile we run the risk of not being able to sustain the number of members we need to make the project viable. As a result the intention at the next AGM in 2020 is to change the membership fee structure to encourage the creation of an under 18 junior members club and a reduced fees level for students who are in full time education (mainly aimed at those in 18 to 25 bracket but student fees will be applicable to all age groups). We envisage that these changes will result in an increase in member numbers to offset the decline in the individual fee per member. Existing members will be encouraged to donate the difference in the old and new fees to the trust to offset some of the decline in individual income.

We are currently working on the fundraising aspect of things and one of our plans is to recruit a volunteer with experience of applying for grants to support the project.

It is our intention to recruit two more members to the committee to provide direct support in the areas of engineering and surveying to help with compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

7. Financial Information

7.1 Existing finances

The Trust was incorporated in December 2018 and formally approved by the members at an AGM on 3rd February 2019. The finances for the Trust comes from the closing balances of the Blaenau Ffestiniog and Trawsfynydd Railway Society that was disbanded at the same AGM.

The subsidiary businesses will be created as and when required by the trust for operational necessity and its income will come when it is operational on the line. Until then it will rely on the fundraising efforts of the Trust to provide it with necessary assets to fulfil its role of restoring the line to operational status. Once the line is operational trading income will come from train passenger tickets, photography specials, dining and buffet sales and open day events. Surpluses earned have been used to restore our collection of locomotives and rolling stock to running standards in accordance with the aims of the charity, as well as to improve the specialist engineering facilities on site. Some of these surpluses will be transferred to the Trust with a view to acquiring further assets in the future.

Currently with 65 members the Trust has a regular income of £1,300 a year and plans are in place to change the membership fee structure to encourage more younger members and family groups which should hopefully increase this figure.

7.2 Financial assumptions

The financial model is driven by numerous assumptions, the most important of which have been listed below.

The Trust: Revenue Assumptions

In the short term the Trusts revenues will result from members fees annually, donations from members and non members, specific fundraising appeals based on specific acquisition targets.

The Society: Expenditure Assumptions

Expenditure is being kept to a minimum with none of the members of the committee currently claiming expenses, remuneration or a wage of any level.

Regular payments out are the £40 a month for postbox rental.

8. Marketing the Fundraising efforts

We plan to deliver cross-channel marketing activity to launch the fundraising efforts, and will leverage various campaign ‘milestones’ to ensure our messaging evolves. We will maximise opportunities to continue to engage with the regional, national and broadcast press.

The share offer campaign will involve:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Groups, networks and societies | We have identified a range of suitable target groups, including various rail societies, enthusiast groups, and organisations such as University of the Third Age, and we will be contacting these groups directly offering speaker opportunities, and communications via their own newsletter/social channels |
| Regional press | Targeted PR activity to regional press titles in the Wales / Blaenau Ffestiniog area |
| National press | Targeted trade and national press activity, including a ‘relationship building’ approach with key national titles |
| Radio and TV | Provision of ‘visual storytelling’ opportunities for broadcast media, including opportunities to film from a steam engine |
| Social Media | Maximise the potential of social media channels – already achieve strong engagement across Vintage Trains’ Twitter and Facebook pages, we plan to increase reach and engagement through paid advertising to specific and relevant audiences |
| Celebrity endorsement | Liaise with a well-known ‘celebrity’ ambassador to lead our campaign activity |
| Events | A launch event at Blaenau Ffestiniog or other suitable location to mark the launch of the fundraising efforts, and we will be inviting key stakeholders, potential subscribers and press to this private event. |
| CRM | we already have a database of over 200 previous members, and we plan to deliver a campaign of email activity to launch the ‘Founder’s Club’ – an opportunity only available to previous and current members offering exclusive incentives if donations are started before a specific date. |
| Leaflets and collateral | We are producing a range of leaflets and collateral to promote the share issue. Leaflets will be handed out at various events, and the brochure will be sent to select key stakeholders and potential subscribers. |
| | |

We have undertaken a market segmentation exercise to determine the different market segments, their sizes, and how we will market to them. This has identified a total potential reach of 680,000+ subscribers:

| Description | Segment size | Assumed reach |
|--|--------------|--|
| Rail enthusiasts | M | Steam Railway magazine, circulation 32k, RAIL magazine, 20k |
| GWR enthusiasts | S | 3-5k |
| Current and ex-railway staff | M | 200k |
| Railway clubs | S | 10k |
| High net worth individuals | S | 500 |
| Wales business | S | 200 |
| Previous Members | S | 200 |
| Parents / grandparents (preserving history for kids) | H | Reach via Facebook advertising – 100k (utilising the budget we have available) |
| Traditionalists / days out | | Reach via Facebook advertising – 100k (utilising the budget we have available) |
| Rail commuters | H | Reach via Facebook advertising – 100k (utilising the budget we have available) |
| Young idealists | H | Reach via Facebook advertising – 100k (utilising the budget we have available) |
| Engineers | L | 10k (via specific engineering publications) |

Other fundraising sources include Welsh Assembly, Co-op Trust funds, Local Councils, Magnox, Welsh National Trust, National Lottery, Heritage Railway Fund

One thing that needs to be borne in the marketing efforts is the benefit to the local community from the investment made to restore the line and rebuild the stations. The All Party Parliamentary group for Heritage Railways report titled “Report on the Value of Heritage Railways” has shown that Heritage Railways across the country have benefited the local community to the tune of 2.7 times the railways turnover. This means that with the railway aiming to invest on average £1.4 to £1.8 million a year in renewals and new buildings the benefit to the local community can go up to £3.78 million to £4.86 million a year during the rebuilding phase and the Trust's aim will be to ensure as much of this spending as possible will be in the local area.

These benefits will come from a combination of the Trust utilising local resources for any contracts being let out, the spending by the volunteers while working on the project and the spending by visitors coming to see for themselves the progress on the project and staying to enjoy other tourist attractions in the region.

Another significant benefit to the local area will be the training provided by the Trust in a wide variety of skills to ensure the successful running of the Railway. These skills will range from NVQs up to

training to competently drive one of our steam or diesel locomotives or both.

As things currently stand the local community is already benefiting from the Trust's plans with individual committee members and Trust members making regular trips to the region and spending money on accommodation, food and other amenities and this will continue for the foreseeable future.

9.0 Economic Case

9.1 The economic case cannot yet be fully ascertained as the full extent of costs have not yet been calculated as these will themselves depend on a wide variety of factors such as the cost of rehabilitation of the existing infrastructure with what facilities to provide where and at what location.

8.
9.2 Long term the reports will need to consider non-economic benefits to the local area when generating an economic case. These will need to bear in mind the findings of the Report on the value of Heritage Railways by an All Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Railways from July 2013.

This report will take into account the direct and indirect benefits to the local communities in the area as well as any support that the Trust can provide to maximise those benefits to the local communities.

9.3 It is also likely that B&FRHT (Phase 4 and the complete programme) will bring other benefits to the area. These tend to be harder to quantify, some involve estimating changes in land-use as a result of EWR. These sorts of potential impacts, not quantified in this report, include:

Enabled development: housing, or commercial development (or redevelopment), which is enabled as a result of the scheme.

Other wider effects on labour markets, investment and supply chains, these are also areas where EWR has the potential to generate benefits that are beyond those in the transport market.

9.4 B&FRHT will continue to consider the wider range of benefits and impacts of the project and will continue to work with relevant parties on how the B&FRHT will help support and enable plans for growth in the area.

10. The Strategic Case

10.1 B&FRHT Phase 5 is intended to facilitate economic growth, new housing and employment opportunities in the local area through the provision of improved rail connectivity, opportunities for tourism generating direct and indirect support to local businesses.

The Scheme

10.2 When complete, the B&FRHT programme will provide a rail link between Trawsfynydd Lake Halt and Blaenau Ffestiniog restoring the connection to the national network and enabling through trains once again whether they be freight or passenger.

Strategic objectives for B&FRHT Phase 5

10.3 The B&FRHT has created some strategic objectives for the line

These allow for the opportunity for the railway to improve local connectivity and serve as a driver of economic growth and new housing. The objectives of the railway are to:

- Improve public transport connectivity between Trawsfynydd Lake Halt and Blaenau Ffestiniog;
- Stimulate economic growth, housing and employment through new and reliable train services and encouraging tourism within the region;
- Consider and plan for future demand and economic growth; and
- Provide a sustainable transport solution to support economic growth in the area to support locals without access to cars.

11.0 Local support

- 11.1 A restored rail link has been on the agenda of local authorities in the region since the original rail connection was closed with several other attempts being made to restore the link to working order. There was also attempts to run a summer only service using a DMU to generate tourism by running trains to initially Maentwrog Road and later Trawsfynydd Lake Halt.
- 11.2 The local councils are known to support projects that have an objective of improving employment in the region and the Trust intends to work with the councils to maximise the benefits of the Heritage Railway Operation to the region.
- 11.3 The line is listed under the Campaign for Better Transports publication - 'The case for Expanding the Rail Network under Annex 3 Priority 2. A priority 2 listing is a feasible project which requires further development or changed circumstances to assist the project being taken forward as a strategic national case for improvement of the UK's rail infrastructure.

12.0 Costings

12.1 The most recent cost estimates for the restoration of a mile of line ranges between £1/2 million and £1 million which gives an immediate estimated cost of £3.25 million to £6.5 million to restore the line to full working order. These costs are based on a volunteer lead effort.

12.2 The line will require the creation of a Heritage Rail Centre and costs of this are still to be completed pending clarification of the specification for the Heritage Rail Centre. Based on the recent costs for the GCR Shed appeal an estimate of £5 million has been put on our budget but this is approximate and requires a specification to finalise the costs.

12.3 The line will require the restoration / creation of a 6 halts / stations on the 6.5 mile section including Blaenau Ffestiniog itself. The remaining halts / stations will be:

- Tan-y-Manod
- Manod
- Llan Festiniog
- Maentwrog Road
- Trawsfynydd Lake Halt

Based on the costs of the new build Corwen Station of £1 million for the station means that with 5 more stations required brings costs up by another £5 million along with a contribution to Blaenau Ffestiniog estimated to be another £1 million bringing total station costs to £6 million.

| Work Item | Cost |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Legal Fees & Initial work | £62,500 |
| Track Clearance Work | £100,000 |
| 6.5 miles track | £3.25 - £6.5 million |
| 5 new Stations / Halts Work at | £5 Million |
| Blaenau Ffestiniog Maentwrog Road | £1 Million |
| Heritage Centre | £5 Million |
| Total Funding needed | £14.6 - £17.85 Million |

12.4 This will necessitate the fundraising of £1.425 to £1.75 million a year on average over 10 years in order to achieve these targets.

12.5 Rather than try to raise all the money in one go it is intended to split the fundraising into smaller chunks with a suggested division on page 21. This will make raising the funds easier to explain as well as show a more visible and tangible progress as time goes by for the members and grant awarding bodies.

12.6 The projects are broken down as follows:

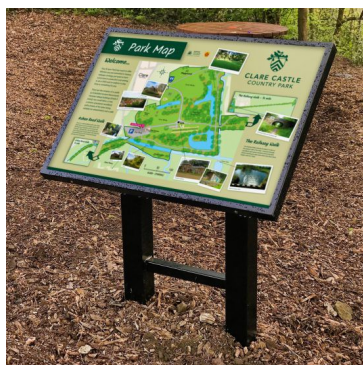
Fundraising Phases:

| | |
|---|---------------|
| 1- Legal Fees / planning costs | £62,500.00 |
| 2- Negotiations with Network Rail (Costs included in Phase 1) | |
| 3- Line Clearance / Survey Costs | £100,000 |
| 4- Line mile 1: | £500,000 |
| 5- Line Mile 2: | £500,000 |
| 6- Line Mile 3: | £500,000 |
| 7- Line Mile 4: | £500,000 |
| 8- Line Mile 5: | £500,000 |
| 9- Line Mile 6: | £500,000 |
| 10- Line Mile 6.5: | £250,000 |
| 11 - Heritage Rail Centre | £5,000,000 |
| 12 - Tan - y - Manod | £1,000,000 |
| 13 - Manod | £1,000,000 |
| 14 - Llan Ffestiniog | £1,000,000 |
| 15 - Maentwrog Road | £1,000,000 |
| 16 - Trawsfynydd Lake Halt | £1,000,000 |
| 17 - Blaenau Ffestiniog | £1,000,000.00 |

Phase 1:

The initial phase will be intended for the preparation of paperwork required in order to satisfy any regulatory requirements for obtaining permission to return to the line. This will include the development of training courses and materials, the line rule book, any policies and procedures, health and safety documentation and any other relevant paperwork and forms that are necessary.

It is also the intention for the Phase 1 to be used to research, fund and create Interpretation boards to help show what used to exist in the area and to help bring the history of the line to the forefront of the public mind.



The example to the left is a 500mm by 500mm which costs £525 plus VAT and Delivery (source: www.interpretationpanels.co.uk). These can be used in conjunction with QR codes on each individual panel allowing readers to access further information online as well as pointing them towards our website in the hope of encouraging them to become members or to contribute to the project.

It is suggested that these be installed at Trawsfynydd Lake, Llan Ffestiniog, Manod, Maentwrog Road and Blaenau Ffestiniog. Smaller versions could also be installed at other significant points along the line and indeed at important areas outside the mothballed section of the line to increase awareness.

Phase 1 costs will also cover any legal fees required for signing any agreement with Network Rail and other stakeholders such as the Snowdonia National Parks Authority, Natural Resources Wales, local councils etc. Due to the extensive nature of talks that will be required it is envisaged that the individuals handling the talks on behalf of the committee will see reasonable out of pocket expenses covered for the duration of the talks.

In order to prepare ourselves for working with Network Rail and being able to start work as soon as permission to access the line is obtained we will be starting PTS training early in the process. A training programme is currently being prepared and the intention is to ensure it is approved by Network Rail for use on the heritage sections of the line.

| Description | Estimated Costs |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Interpretation Boards (Entire line) | £10,000.00 |
| Legal Fees | £40,000.00 |
| Training Costs (mainly PTS initially) | £10,000.00 |
| Negotiation expenses | £2,500.00 |
| | |
| Total | £62,500.00 |

Phase 2

Phase 2 sees the opening of formal negotiations with the line Network Rail with a view to negotiating long term access to the line and the creation of an operational line with a heritage focus but also allowing for developments in support of the local community,

Phase 3

Pending successful completion of Phase 2 we would then move onto a line survey and line clearance phase which will involve clearing the mothballed sections of line of vegetation, overhanging trees etc with a view to carrying out a detailed survey of the line to be able to properly cost and specify the next few phases. The costs of this work includes costs for disposing of waste that cannot be recycled either internally or externally.

The intention is to use Maentwrog Road as a base for these clearance works with all such waste and debris transported to Maentwrog Road on the trolleys for separation into recyclable waste and non recyclable waste. Some of these costs can potentially be recovered by selling the removed trees and branches as logs and kindling. There may be other scrap that can result in a monetary value for the trust.

The plan would be to initially clear Maentwrog Road then clear Maentwrog Road to Trawsfynydd Lake Halt before reversing direction and heading north towards Blaenau Ffestiniog.

| Description | Estimated Costs |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| | |
| Survey Costs | £10,000.00 |
| Initial Clearance Costs | £90,000.00 |
| | |
| Total | £100,000.00 |

Phases 4 to 10

These phases cover the restoration to operational order the track bed itself following the initial line clearance works which will necessitate a complete lifting of the track work and sleepers followed by a lifting of the ballast. The ballast will then be sieved to remove dead ballast, soil and other debris to ensure that there is adequate drainage and support in the formation. A permeable membrane such as Terram will then be put down and the sieved ballast topped up with fresh ballast will then be placed back on the track bed. Damaged or unusable sleepers will be replaced with new sleepers and the track relaid followed by tamping to ensure the ballast is adequately placed on the bed and ensure the tracks are more durable.

Phase 11

This phase covers the work for the Heritage Rail Centre / Motive Power Depot at Maentwrog Road. The work required for this phase will be extensive as it will involve the restoration of the existing goods shed onsite, repair of the damage caused in previous preservation efforts, development of requirements for the site followed by development of a track plan and designs for all required buildings on site. The work on this site will be extensive and will need to be overseen by a dedicated project manager.

Phases 12 to 16

These phases centre around the the buildings and stations that will be required to ensure an ability to run a service on the line. These phases will require extensive work starting with ascertaining ownership of the individual sites, discussions with the current owners regarding acquiring the sites or finding alternative sites, the space available if we can use the sites followed by design work for a replacement station and eventually building the stations should we be able to.

Phase 17

This will involve discussions between Network Rail, Ffestiniog Railway and the Trust to come to an agreement supporting all three organisations using the station and allowing for all three to be in the station at the same time. One option referred to before by the Ffestiniog Railway was to give up the middle narrow gauge line and replace it with a standard gauge line with appropriate changes to the grading of the lines to ensure a level platform interchange.

13.0 Cost details

13.1 Assumptions: The costs for regenerating the track work are based on those produced by the redevelopment of the Welsh Highland Railway which came to between £1 million and £2 million a mile which included extensive contractors use and work involving rebuilding bridges and other infrastructure which we do not believe we will need to do at this point in time. This does mean that the timescales for the project will be longer to go with the lower overall project cost. Overall costs would be expected to double if a faster timescale was needed which would involve significant use of contractors.

In our case this will necessitate the following:

- Removal of all vegetation
- lifting the track,
- lifting the ballast,
- sieving the ballast to remove soil and unusable ballast,
- putting a membrane down to reduce weed / vegetation growth,
- rehabilitation of the drainage etc.
- relaying the ballast and topping it up
- then relaying the track.

A lot of this work can be done using volunteers however it will still remain an expensive undertaking. The membrane referred to above is called Terram and comes in rolls of 4.5m by 100m at a cost of £240 plus vat per roll. To cover a 6.5 mile line we will require approximately 106 rolls at a cost of £25,440 plus vat.

13.2 The costs for regenerating the stations on the line is based on the most recent works by the Llangollen railway while building Corwen Station. The works there came to approximately £1 million and therefore we are allowing £5 million for our 4 new stations, 1 refreshed station and 1 with additional facilities.

In our case this will necessitate the following:

Design work for 4 stations (in conjunction with various bodies)
Build work for 4 stations (sympathetic but green designs)
Repair / maintenance work at 1 station
Redevelopment work at 1 station

Some of this work can be carried out by volunteers but due to regulatory requirements the building work and some fitting out work will be carried out by contractors to comply with those requirements.

13.2 The costs for creating a new Heritage Railway Centre / MPD are unfortunately difficult to estimate as there has been no similar project recently in a volunteer led society. As there was no similar such facility on this location we will then have a lot of work to do for it.

In our case this will necessitate the following:

Design work for Heritage Railway Centre
Build work for Heritage Railway Centre

Some of this work can be carried out by volunteers but due to regulatory requirements the building work and some fitting out work will be carried out by contractors to comply with those requirements.

Specific requirements for this site will include creating facilities for maintenance, disposal of controlled emission toilets waste, cleaning and storage facilities as well as parking space for volunteers and visitors.