

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Project

Activity Plan – Step 1 – Where are you now?

Minerva Heritage in association with Creative Core

Mid-term Review Draft - 30 November 2020

Step 1 – Where are you now?

1. The organisation: The Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways

The Railway is owned and operated by The Ffestiniog Railway Company, trading as Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways (FfWHR). The company was established by Act of Parliament in 1832 and it is the oldest independent operating railway company in the world. The ultimate owner of the Railway is The Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railway Trust, a Registered Charity (no 23904).¹ The Railway is also supported by the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railway Societies, a combined membership of 6,500.

The main purpose of the Railway is to develop and maintain an important national asset in a way that makes it sustainable for the future². Commercial income is entirely dedicated to the continuing development of this heritage railway, including maintaining and restoring historic rolling stock and infrastructure, conserving the heritage buildings/structures, operating steam locomotives for 250,000 passengers/visitors each year and training staff and volunteers.

There are 87 full-time staff, 10 part-time staff and a fluctuating number of around 50 seasonal workers. The General Manager is supported by 10 senior managers heading Finance, Operating, Commercial (including shops, booking offices and marketing), Catering (including on train services), Infrastructure and Engineering and Caernarfon Station. Indirectly, the railway supports about 400 additional jobs through services bought in by the railway, its staff, volunteers and passengers.

There are over 500 active volunteers who are essential to the operation. They deliver professional services including legal advice, financial direction, top-level engineering input, brand and marketing strategy, and safety management. Volunteers also supply thousands of hours of hands-on work on the railway itself – on tracks, on infrastructure, and on the rolling stock in the workshops at Boston Lodge Works.

The organisation's staff and volunteers are immersed in the railway heritage – they either work directly on the heritage railway within their roles or they work to support its running. The organisation can demonstrate an historic commitment to involving people since 1955 when the first volunteers undertook to reopen the railway.

The railway has Volunteer Management Procedures and policies, Child Protection policy, Young Persons policy, 'Kids Training Week Code of Conduct' and a 'Young Persons Code of Conduct', each of which demonstrate the commitment of FfWHR to engaging people in its operation.

Partnership Working

¹ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p33

² Prideaux J 2011, *Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways, A Sustainable Future*, FfWHR

FfWHR works in partnership with a number of organisations to help deliver its business aims. These include:

- **The Great Little Trains of Wales:** a joint marketing group for the 11 narrow gauge railways in Wales. This celebrated its 50-year anniversary in 2020. The group shares information, best practice and training. Joint access to training, such as customer service training, has been seen as very beneficial³. Membership of the group has provided opportunities for additional promotion capacity and reach via shared websites, an exhibition stand at ITB Berlin, the world's largest tourism trade fair, working with the Visit Wales' Wales Way promotion and the widely acclaimed 'Community Rail in the City' campaign which was a beach and small station built in the middle of Birmingham new Street Station. A new interactive website 'Wales on Rail' will have a history section. The railways have various centre of excellence, including Boston Lodge.
- **Attractions of Snowdonia:** this marketing group comprises attractions from the region. They have just launched www.snowdonia360.com, providing visitors with a 360-mile tourism discovery route around the National Park.
- **North Wales Tourism:** the tourism association for North Wales provides a website, news and help for its members and for tourists. They work very hard for FfWHR, especially promoting the offer to groups and internationally, particularly in Japan very successfully.
- **MWT Cymru:** the tourism association for Mid-Wales provides FfWHR with access to a wealth of experience.
- **HRA - Heritage Railway Association:** FfWHR reaches a lot of people via this portal.
- **National Slate Museum (Llanberis), Careers Wales, Grwp Llandrillo Menai College, Cwmni Bro, Gwynedd Council youth engagement team:** Supported the recent NLHF Skills 4 the Future programme.

³ Steering Group Consultee

2. Heritage that it looks after i.e. what is the heritage

Tangible heritage: The FfWHR collection

*The Ffestiniog Railway is of international significance as it pioneered the use of steam power on a narrow gauge railway and clearly demonstrated the practicability of building narrow gauge railways in terrain where the building of a standard gauge railway would be impracticable or uneconomic. This led to the building of numerous narrow gauge railways throughout the world.*⁴

The Ffestiniog Railway connects the harbour in Porthmadog to the slate-quarrying town of Blaenau Ffestiniog via 13.5 miles of track that climb 700 feet from sea level into the mountains through (or under) spectacular Welsh countryside landscapes.

FfWHR completed a rebuild of 25 miles of heritage railway line between Caernarfon and Porthmadog in 2011 and is trading as The Welsh Highland Railway/Rheilffordd Eryri. The UK's longest heritage railway, this connects Caernarfon to Porthmadog via the foot of Snowdon, Beddgelert, and the stunning Aberglaslyn Pass.

There are three main stations by which passengers access the heritage railway – Porthmadog, Caernarfon and Blaenau Ffestiniog. 2019 saw the opening of a new £3.5 million Caernarfon Station. There are also the intermediate stations, including Victorian stations at Minffordd and Tan y Bwlch, dating from the great period of railway expansion at Ffestiniog. Minffordd is a classic interchange station, whereas Tan y Bwlch is a landscape imposed by Victorian engineers onto open sheep-rearing countryside. Penrhyn was a station especially significant in the late 1800s for the quarrymen who would join the train to go to work.

*Boston Lodge Works is a site of unique industrial heritage; a working site at the heart of North Wales' industrial evolution and the beating heart of Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railway*⁵

FfWHR owns and operates a fleet of rolling stock that includes 1870s carriages, and 1930s locomotives recreated from scratch at the Boston Lodge Works, the principal railway engineering works. Many of the original wagons, as many as 200, are stored in a shed at the Minffordd Lodge site.⁶ There is another smaller engineering works at the Dinas site.

Boston Lodge Works itself is a collection of heritage buildings, within which rolling stock is repaired and conserved. This function of locomotive and railway maintenance has been continuous for over 200 years, before the advent of steam power. The Top Yard quadrangle at Boston Lodge was the focal point in the early 1800s of the horse-drawn railway which hauled slate down to the coast.

⁴ Chambers Architecture and Conservation 2019, *Boston Lodge Works, Porthmadog: Outline schedule of Repair Work*, unpubl rep

⁵ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc

⁶ Steering Group Consultee

Artefacts housed at BLW include [...] iron slate wagons, gunpowder vans, beer and flour trucks; original bogie carriages [the only operational Fairlie locomotives⁷] and the first steam engine in Wales.⁸

There is also an immense curated and indexed archive, comprising photographs and 150 years of railway documentation.⁹

Intangible heritage: skills and stories

Boston Lodge Works has served the FfWHR heritage railway continuously since its inception. The works itself is a storehouse of a *vast range of technical and craft skills still used there to build the trains and carriages*¹⁰.

Intangible heritage encompasses both historic engineering skills and knowledge about the heritage of the site and how it links into the railway. The traditional heritage skills include: mechanical and electrical engineering; joinery on carriages and buildings; walling and fencing; foundry and blacksmithing skills; painting; metalwork; and joinery.

The intangible heritage at Boston Lodge Works are passed down through the workforce in a similar way to the workforce involved in the railway and rolling stock. Each individual is a living repository of train-driving and railway management skills, and there is collective understanding amongst work gangs.

There is clearly a strong volunteering tradition on this railway, and volunteers and staff in and around Boston Lodge Works are living repositories of stories relating to heritage railway and buildings conservation.

The local community includes family members who would once have worked on the railway or in the wider slate industry, or surviving families with some connection to either or both.

*The slate-quarryman is an iconic figure for many people in Wales and beyond – faithful to his language, to his workmates and his people, religious in his outlook and also progressive in his politics, well-read, cheerful and given to humour, despite the sickness which his work very often inflicted on him.*¹¹

*Quarry-workers still live in the historic settlements [...]; their employment provides a context for the relict industry, and ensures community identification with it.*¹²

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8 FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p10

9 Steering Group Consultee

10 FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p3

11 Llechi Cymru and Gwynedd Council 2019, *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales – Property Management Plan*, p73

12 Llechi Cymru and Gwynedd Council 2019, *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales – Property Management Plan*, p74

3. The Interpretation and Boston Lodge Project

*The project aims to better connect the railway with new and existing audiences... to better connect with every visitor and provide a chain of interactions that make it possible for visitors to develop interest and explore further.... The project will help improve the resilience and sustainability of the FfWHR as well as improve its relationship with the local community and visitors, and will support the continuing improvement of the contribution to the local economy.*¹³

An Interpretation and Boston Lodge Project (the Project) has been developed to achieve the following objectives as outlined in the Project Development Plan:

1. To ensure the importance of the railways' heritage, and that of the slate industry that it served, is communicated to the 250,000 plus visitors a year, who are increasingly unaware of this heritage (which will be lost if we do not act now)
2. The project will also provide Interpretation at key points across the railway network (including at BLW to support guided tours) and on the FfWHR heritage trains which currently attract 250,000 visitors each year
3. To conserve, restore and rebuild a number of buildings of historic significance at Boston Lodge Works, some of which are derelict
4. In doing so, to make them more efficient as a working site and to improve the existing conditions for the staff, apprentices, trainees and volunteers who practise heritage skills there in order to service the heritage railway
5. To open up supervised public access to Boston Lodge Works and its heritage for the first time via an activity programme which will bring significant numbers of non-traditional railway visitors for managed tours, talks and skills training and via which they can also learn about the significant heritage and series of important world firsts which have taken place at BLW
6. To address a skills shortage in the industrial heritage sector by offering traineeships, work placements, practical workshops and new volunteering opportunities

In addition, the project will:

- Improve the railway's relationship with the local community and visitors
- Support and contribute to the local economy

This Activity Plan outlines the ways in which the Project objectives will be delivered through involving a wider range of people in the heritage of the railway and Boston Lodge Works.

¹³ FfWHR 2020, *Boston Lodge Works Project: Project Development Plan*, p3

4. Strategic Context

The FfWHR operates within a complex environment which includes the tourism, legislation (railway regulations, language, public health, and skills/employability), and conservation of natural and cultural heritage. As a result, FfWHR and the project activities are influenced by and support a range of initiatives, strategies and plans.

World Heritage Site bid

The project is directly linked to North Wales' very strong slate heritage, through the Ffestiniog Railway's transportation of material out of the mountains for export, but also through the its social and cultural context (the wider cultural landscape). Through this it contributes to the Outstanding Universal Value that underpins The Slate Landscape of North Wales World Heritage Site World Heritage Site bid. The story of slate reflects modernisation and adaptation in Wales' recent history - urbanisation and industrialisation respectively ¹⁴, a story which the railway is very much part of.

The Economic Plan¹⁵ for the Slate Landscapes of North Wales World Heritage Site (WHS) bid includes the following aims which are directly relevant to the project objectives:

- Creation of sustainable and high-value employment opportunities
- Contributing to the skills and education of our young people and lifelong learning
- Supporting the development of high-quality destinations and attractions
- Ensuring a unified story and narrative
- Improving communities and sense of pride in communities
- Promoting and safeguarding unique industrial heritage, culture, language and local landscapes for all

Gwynedd Council's priorities for 2018-2023 include implementing the Gwynedd Slate Heritage¹⁶ to secure World Heritage Site status for the slate industry in Gwynedd, and regeneration activities to increase residents' ownership of their slate heritage, and the quality of tourists' experience.

Tourism environment and market position

Every visitor to FfWHR is also a visitor to the Snowdonia National Park¹⁷. The National Park is an attraction in its own right, located within the also-popular tourism areas of Gwynedd/North Wales. There are a number of operators of heritage railways and visitor attractions locally in the National Park and Gwynedd/North Wales which directly compete with FfWHR.

While visitor attractions compete for visitor spend, there is acknowledgment that a joined-up or complementary tourism offer, such as package tours or linked experience or similar, is mutually beneficial. Each of the heritage railways collaborates in the 'Great Little Trains of Wales'

¹⁴ Llechi Cymru and Gwynedd Council 2019, *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales – Property Management Plan*, p72-3

¹⁵ Llechi Cymru and Gwynedd Council 2016, *Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales World Heritage Site Economic Plan 2016 - 2020*

¹⁶ Gwynedd Council, *Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23*, p9

¹⁷ Prideaux J 2011, *Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways, A Sustainable Future*, FfWHR, p8

marketing network, and the success of FfWHR as a tourist attraction feeds into the other smaller local railways.¹⁸ Nearby heritage railways also rely on FfWHR for technical expertise and services. FfWHR has also consulted with its nearest major competitor - Llechwedd Slate Caverns – on partnership working.

The main aims of the **Gwynedd Destination Management Plan**¹⁹ include the following, which are directly relevant to the wider project:

- to increase visitor spend
- to improve the quality of the visitor experience
- to improve integration of tourism with other aspects of life
- to enhance the natural, built and cultural environment
- to provide well paid, year-round quality jobs and skills development

Welsh Government and local government priorities: skills, people development and school education

FfWHR is a partner in the **Visit Wales ‘Partnership for Growth’** tourism development programme. As part of tourism development, this programme sets out strategic aims for development of people²⁰; the following are directly relevant to the project:

- Training people with demand-led and specialist skills so that they can thrive in the tourism sector
- Applying well defined standards and skills to improve customer care and service
- Changing perceptions of tourism as a career choice to attract the talented and ambitious

FfWHR is already an important employer in the communities through which it travels, and is one of the area’s largest employers²¹. FfWHR has provided skills training and work experience for the last 12 years and is a recognised centre of excellence for carriage building. Boston Lodge Works is key to these latter roles.

The **Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23** has similar aims to that of Visit Wales:

- Create High Value Jobs is an Improvement Priority 1 for the Economy and Community Department²²
- More Gwynedd residents playing a full part in the world of work is an Improvement Priority 1 for the Economy and Community Department²³

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19 Gwynedd Council, *Gwynedd Destination Management Plan 2013-2020*

20 Welsh Government 2016, *Partnership for Growth: Strategy for Tourism 2013-2020: Strategy Progress Review*, unpubl doc

21 Prideaux J 2011, *Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways, A Sustainable Future*, FfWHR, p6

22 Gwynedd Council, *Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23*, p74

23 Gwynedd Council, *Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23*, p74

- Supporting People's Well-being through skills development via the Gwynedd Youth Service is an Improvement Priority 3 for the Children and Supporting Families Department²⁴

The project activities can support these initiatives through providing well-paid positions and other opportunities for employment and skills development.

As a coastal community, Gwynedd suffers from social and rural isolation, as young people move to cities, and new people buy holiday homes there. It is an area of high unemployment, and low attainment²⁵

The **Snowdonia National Park Authority Recreation Strategy 2012-17**²⁶ also seeks to promote appropriate and sustainable growth within the recreation sector by supporting *programmes aimed at increasing training and skills levels for local people....* The project can support this through activities which increase training and skills levels for local people within recreation, for example customer-facing roles in FfWHR.

Welsh Government and local government priorities: Welsh language

The Welsh Government envisages a million Welsh speakers by 2050. The latest figures indicate that 60% of people in Gwynedd speak Welsh daily, compared with only 11% for the whole of Wales.²⁷ This figure rises to 80% of people in the Caernarfon area, 77% of people in the Ffestiniog area, and 76% of people in the Penllyn area.

Clearly the Welsh language is strong in Gwynedd and stronger along the FfWHR route, but it is under threat from social trends - second homes and emigration.

...young people leave or fail to return to the county which, in turn, has an impact on our communities and endangers the future of the Welsh language.²⁸

The **Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy**²⁹ has the following aims which are directly relevant to the project:

- *using the Welsh language as a part of 'Brand Wales' to promote Wales to attract tourism and investment*
- *ensure that the use of the Welsh language increases, both in cultural events and in the day-to-day work of our cultural organisations*

Welsh Government and local government priorities: health and wellbeing

²⁴ Gwynedd Council, *Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23*, p56

²⁵ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p25

²⁶ Snowdonia National Park Authority, *Recreation Strategy 2012-17*

²⁷ Gwynedd Council, *Wellbeing Plan for Gwynedd and Anglesey 2018*

²⁸ Gwynedd Council, *Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23*, p74

²⁹ Welsh Government 2017, *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers, Work Programme 2017-21*

The large volunteering base that supports FfWHR includes many older people, some of whom are more at risk of social isolation. As part of the **Strategy for Older People in Wales (2013-2023)**³⁰, the Welsh Government intends to:

promote and support the development of employment and volunteering opportunities for all, including older people, and recognise their positive contribution, and include the provision of lifelong learning opportunities in order to empower older people and promote their autonomy.

Gwynedd and Anglesey Wellbeing Plan 2018³¹ states that local people would like to develop local activities in their area. The project activities can support delivery of these plans through involving local people in activity development and through volunteer and lifelong learning opportunities.

Welsh Government and local government priorities: National Curriculum for Wales 2022

From 2022, education staff will be required to design their own curriculum³². Learners should be grounded in an understanding of the identities, landscapes and histories that come together to form their ***cynefin***³³.

*... ***cynefin*** is not simply local but provides a foundation for a national and international citizenship*³⁴

³⁰ Welsh Government 2013, *Strategy for Older People in Wales (2013-2023): Living Longer, Ageing Well*, p17

³¹ Gwynedd And Môn Public Services Board 2018, *Gwynedd and Anglesey Wellbeing Plan 2018*, p6

³² Welsh Government 2020, *Curriculum for Wales Guidance*, Education Wales, p21

³³ A Welsh noun with no direct equivalent in English, the etymological origins of *cynefin* are in farming, as a description for habitual tracks and trails worn into hillsides by animals. The word is used today to convey a very personal sense of place, belonging and familiarity.

³⁴ Welsh Government 2020, *Curriculum for Wales Guidance*, Education Wales, p30

5. The value of heritage to people

The railway and Boston Lodge Works

The heritage value of Boston Lodge Works principally derives from its position as a crucial component of the Ffestiniog Railway, part of the Ffestiniog slate landscape. This is one of the key areas of the World Heritage Site-nominated Slate Landscapes of North Wales property, currently being considered on the basis of its *outstanding universal value to humanity*.³⁵ Outstanding Universal Value criteria for nomination as a World Heritage Site are met by the world-wide extensive use of slate products, and an industrial landscape shaped through quarrying and engineering, within which survives a strong minority culture with distinctive character and language.³⁶

Boston Lodge Works reflects strongly the following statement, in particular the interchange of human values:

*Above all, its narrow-gauge slate railways exhibit an important interchange of human values in that: they reflect the very earliest iron railway systems developed in South Wales; make evident how the technology was improved within the Nominated Property; and served as the model for successive developments that contributed substantially to the social and economic development of remoter regions in many other parts of the world.*³⁷

As Dafydd Wigley, The Rt Hon the Lord Wigley of Caernarfon, Privy Counsellor, writes:

*The slate railways of Northwest Wales, carved through rock cuttings or carried across mountain streams on high stone causeways, proved a model for similar systems in mountain environments across the world. Engineers, managers and technicians made informed choices about new handling systems, machinery for pumping or tunnelling, or saws for squaring slate blocks.*³⁸

The railway provides an opportunity for people to understand and learn more, not only about railway heritage but about the cultural landscape that it runs through. In a rail passenger survey 69% of people said that a visit to the railway meant that they appreciated the local landscape, and 53% of people said that they had learnt something about its heritage.

67% of respondents to the local community survey agree or strongly agree that the railway is regarded by local people as one of the greatest assets in the area and 83% agreed that knowing about the history of the railway made them feel proud of their local area.

Boston Lodge Works

Boston Lodge Works itself is important for its social / community value, as:

³⁵ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/faq/19>

³⁶ <https://whc.unesco.org/fr/listesindicatives/5678/>

³⁷ Llechi Cymru and Gwynedd Council 2019, *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales – Property Management Plan*, p53

³⁸ Llechi Cymru and Gwynedd Council 2019, *The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales – Property Management Plan*, preface

- A place where traditional skills are fostered
- A provider of training and education for young people
- A place where the sights and sounds of the past come to life ³⁹
- A place where volunteers form a deep connection with the railway ⁴⁰

The communal value of the historic machinery of Boston Lodge derives from the meanings it has for those who have worked there, and for those who have visited the workshops through the occasional organised tours. ⁴¹

The communal value of the Boston Lodge Works buildings derives from the collective experience and memory of the Boston Lodge Works staff, volunteers and residents. ⁴²

I enjoy the work and social interactions of volunteering, to be part of keeping our history and heritage alive, to learn some new skills⁴³.

The challenge and satisfaction of a completed project- seeing my other volunteers faces when the power is switched on and seeing all their hard work come to life⁴⁴.

³⁹ Alexander J 2015, *Boston Lodge Conservation Management Plan*

⁴⁰ Steering Group Consultee

⁴¹ Alexander J 2015, *Boston Lodge Conservation Management Plan*

⁴² Alexander J 2015, *Boston Lodge Conservation Management Plan*

⁴³ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁴⁴ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

6. Why now?

Organisational resilience

The most pressing current needs for the FfWHR organisation are skills development and supporting wider volunteer recruitment. ⁴⁵

FfWHR needs to improve the skills of all its staff and volunteers, to understand the skills people have that are used or under-used, to retain skills in the organisation, and to build and/or develop skills needed now and in future. Many volunteers have extensive industry and on-the-job experience, and feel qualified for their current roles. Some do not have formal certification, and there are clearly some areas (specifically building and customer-facing roles) where experience and qualifications seem to be lacking. ⁴⁶

*Is it possible to formalise the use of tools and machines – graded training and record of skills? Competency passport so everyone knows the capabilities of each volunteer?*⁴⁷

The business model is reliant on the volunteers involved at every level, including management. FfWHR has over 500 active volunteers, but the voluntary workforce is ageing, and new recruits often do not progress or stay on. The organisation of the recruitment process, and volunteer management in general, needs improvement now.

[There is] *significant demand –just need structure*⁴⁸

The project presents opportunities to offer the workforce (staff and volunteers) opportunities to use skills as well as learn new skills.

...the management of unpaid staff, and their development and oversight is a key area for skills development in Wales, more so than in the rest of the UK. ⁴⁹

The project would provide much-needed improvements to staff welfare and other facilities at Boston Lodge Works. These alone would broaden the appeal of volunteering at Boston Lodge Works and help to retain new recruits. There are also other opportunities to broaden the appeal of - and develop new routes into – volunteering. The project would provide spaces for development of skills and training. Development of the site would also provide other additional opportunities to develop skills within the FfWHR organisation, bringing in and progressing new skills, and spreading skills more widely across FfWHR.

*Now we must concentrate on staff well-being, facilities and the next move forward towards a memorable visitor experience*⁵⁰

⁴⁵ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p14

⁴⁶ Volunteer Consultation Respondents

⁴⁷ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁴⁸ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁴⁹ Creative and Cultural Skills 2013, *The historic environment and cultural heritage skills survey: Wales Report*, p5

⁵⁰ Steering Group Consultee

Building on experience and maintaining momentum

The Skills for the Future (S4F) grant from National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) enables FfWHR to devise and provide a model skills training programme to train potential members of the workforce in shortage skills needed by FfWHR itself and by the wider heritage sector.

⁵¹

Since 2018, FfWHR has delivered traineeships in a range of roles including: Mechanical Engineering, Heritage Joinery, Horticulture, Permanent Way and Interpretation. The programme is now coming to an end. While the lessons learnt and capacity of the programme has been retained by FfWHR, if it is not continued the impact of this valuable experience will be lost.

*The Skills for the Future programme that FfWHR recently participated in proved the importance of passing on heritage skills so let's carry on and strike while the iron is hot!*⁵²

Disappearing heritage skills

Heritage skills are being lost faster than they can be replaced.

*Ancient skills are still practiced every day at Boston Lodge.*⁵³

The heritage of Boston Lodge Works is being lost because older members of the workforce take their skills with them when they retire or pass on. The skills gap is increasing because it is difficult to retain many of the traditional skills and the stories associated with Boston Lodge Works without continuous on-the-job training and mentoring. It is very important for FfWHR to address this now because skills gaps can have a severe impact, including reduced capacity, disruption to workflow, and increased workload.⁵⁴

Boston Lodge Works, its staff and volunteers are the lynchpin of FfWHR - it is *where all the key heritage skills and facilities necessary to keep the railway running are.*⁵⁵ Conservation and renovation of the Boston Lodge Works site would facilitate suitable physical space and much-needed facilities to support the workforce retain and develop skills. Development of this venue provides opportunities to increase and develop the volunteer workforce pool as a target audience for transmission of the heritage skills. The project can also support heritage skills training for a wide range of people, including present FfWHR staff and volunteers.

*We have retained an apprentice who began as a Skills for the Future programme trainee, and they have learnt their skills from us.*⁵⁶

⁵¹ Anna Cullum Associates 2020, *Ffestiniog and Welsh Highlands Railway: Heritage Skills Training Programme. Evaluation Report Interim Report No 2 April 2020*

⁵² Steering Group Consultee

⁵³ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁵⁴ Creative and Cultural Skills 2013, *The historic environment and cultural heritage skills survey: Wales Report*, p10

⁵⁵ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p14

⁵⁶ Steering Group Consultee

Heritage buildings at Boston Lodge Works

The buildings do not have a viable future without a plan for repair, use and access by the public, and some are likely to be lost.

All the historic pre-1870 buildings at Boston Lodge will be conserved as part of the project.

The risk of losing important heritage buildings is now urgent, and has been prioritised accordingly.⁵⁷

Two lost buildings in the Top Yard will be rebuilt, and two new buildings provided⁵⁸. Whilst adding dedicated workspace for heritage railway conservation projects, the proposals also open up spaces at the core FfWHR site that could be used for training new staff and volunteers, facilitate work placement learning.

The focus is on sharing the heritage of Top Yard and Boston Lodge Works, and opening up the site will immerse participants and visitors immediately in the heritage of Boston Lodge Works. The proposed capital works include spaces for interpretation and for displaying unique engines and carriages for public view. The new spaces would provide opportunities for direct experience of most aspects of the working environment and its historic significance.

Because the valuable heritage of the Boston Lodge Works machinery and buildings has historically been restricted to workers, volunteers, and a very small number of invited visitors attending special events, there is a clear opportunity to expand its reach to new audiences. FfWHR used to provide Friday afternoon tours regularly, and until the recent past the site was always open for members of the railway society⁵⁹. However, this is not possible because of the nature of the site and its status as a working environment. Opening the site safely to the public again will add value to the current visitor offer, and help people find out more about the heritage of Boston Lodge Works and the railway heritage of North Wales.

Disappearing intangible heritage

Intangible heritage, principally the stories about and understanding of the heritage, is being lost faster than they can be recorded.

The heritage of Boston Lodge Works is being lost as older members of the workforce take their stories and understanding with them when they retire or pass on. Their stories and understanding are not widely shared. They tend not to be recorded either.

⁵⁷ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p14

⁵⁸ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p3

⁵⁹ Steering Group Consultee

*There are many ‘people stories’ not only from the early days of rescuing the Ffestiniog Railway but also from the rebuilding of the WHR; these need to be recorded before they are lost. There is an almost endless list as volunteering continues as do the happenings around*⁶⁰

The project presents opportunities to ‘preserve by record’ a wide range of intangible heritage now, before it is lost, and to engage a wider range of people with this heritage.

*Realise an ongoing story – i.e. apprentices – this is not a museum it is a living works*⁶¹

Lack of understanding of the heritage

The heritage is not widely shared or understood.⁶²

Many visitors leave without understanding anything about the heritage of the railway, the FfWHR organisation, or Boston Lodge Works. Many visitors do not know Boston Lodge Works exists, let alone anything about the *vast range of technical and craft skills still used there*⁶³.

Only 53% of the rail user survey respondents felt they had learnt something about the heritage (history, development of railway, slate industry, railway innovation) following their visit. Only 54% of rail user survey respondents were aware of Boston Lodge Works.

*It is the older skills that really need to be shown, such as blacksmithing with a hearth and anvil, joining parts with hot rivets, shaping components with a steam hammer, or even something as simple as drilling a hole without an electric drill. It is difficult to imagine how they built and maintained this railway in a quiet corner of North Wales, with the equipment they had back then. Being able to show people would be far better than just looking at some old things in an old building*⁶⁴

Development of interpretation at FfWHR provides an opportunity now to improve how its heritage is communicated to new and existing FfWHR audiences. Having the of Boston Lodge Works site open to the public is an opportunity to engage a greater number of and wider range of people with the heritage of Boston Lodge Works, and to build on the recent customer-facing role improvements across FfWHR, implementation of the new volunteer station host roles, and the customer service standards which are now in place.

Development of guided tours and interpretive content for Boston Lodge Works opens up routes for FfWHR to develop consistent and accurate storytelling across its wider offer, ensuring that the ad hoc, informal and sometimes inaccurate or misleading interpretation is replaced by better-organised, well-delivered and truthful interpretation. There is also an opportunity to organise the

⁶⁰ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁶¹ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁶² FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p11

⁶³ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p3

⁶⁴ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

phenomenal archive resource belonging to FfWHR, and to develop its usefulness as a resource for interpretation and a tool to communicate the heritage of Boston Lodge Works.

I love to talk to people about the engine. There is only limited time to talk with visitors so can we find time to talk to people in greater depth⁶⁵

World Heritage Site status opportunity

There is a superb opportunity for partnership working as part of a successful UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) bid.

The Slate Landscape of North Wales WHS has been on the tentative list since 2012. Inscription on the UNESCO list would bring increased audiences and exposure to these heritage assets.⁶⁶ Given the fundamental intimacy between the slate landscape, the Ffestiniog railway and Boston Lodge Works, there are many opportunities to connect storytelling into the WHS. It is advantageous to develop a range of activities that can deliver this connection now, so that the visitor offer is suitably well-prepared when WHS inscription is announced. FfWHR is already engaged with the WHS bid partners (Llechwedd Slate Cavern, National Slate Museum and Penrhyn Castle).⁶⁷

FfWHR is one of three major projects identified for new interpretation of the slate story⁶⁸

Development of Boston Lodge Works at this time would enable FfWHR to organise and better-position its heritage interpretation and engagement programme to maximise the WHS opportunity. It is an opportunity to use the WHS brand to tap into local interest, to reach wider audiences, and to promote the Boston Lodge Works archive.

Curriculum for Wales 2022

Appetite in schools for learning about local landscape, identity and history will significantly increase from 2022.

Education staff will be required to design their own curriculum from 2022⁶⁹. School-age learners should be grounded in an understanding of the identities, landscapes and histories that come together to form their *cynefin*.⁷⁰

Development of the railway's interpretation as well as at the Boston Lodge Works site presents opportunities to engage local school-age learners, and teachers with the heritage of the railway and Boston Lodge Works. It can do this through interpretation of its historic significance and context, local connections, how the local area is reflected in the current site, and the roles that people have had – demonstrating both the past and present relevance of FfWHR as a major

⁶⁵ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁶⁶ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p5

⁶⁷ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p6

⁶⁸ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p4 and p18

⁶⁹ Welsh Government 2020, *Curriculum for Wales Guidance*, Education Wales, p21

⁷⁰ A Welsh noun with no direct equivalent in English, the etymological origins of *cynefin* are in farming, as a description for habitual tracks and trails worn into hillsides by animals. The word is used today to convey a very personal sense of place, belonging and familiarity.

employer and centre of excellence. Longer-term this is an opportunity to promote volunteering and employment with FfWHR amongst a broad local audience. The ability of FfWHR to use Boston Lodge Works itself is crucial to this.

7. Changes since Round 1

Anticipated changes to the Activity Plan since the outline proposals at Round 1 include:

Round 1	In this plan	Why the change?
Change to roles – 2 x Engineering Supervisors	1 x Engineering Volunteer Supervisor 1 x Training Events and Workshops Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that the roles are better defined – so that one role has responsibility for work party/projects on a very practical level, supervising and managing the work volunteers, and the other has responsibility for arranging the training, skills development and workshops The roles better reflect the activities that will be undertake
Change to role – Lead Tour Guide	1 x Interpretation Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that there is someone with overall responsibility for the oversight of the interpretation scheme and the development of the guided tours
Change to role – Activity Planner	1 x Work Placement Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that there is someone with overall responsibility for the recruitment, training plans and welfare of all work placements (whether this be trainees, work experience of volunteers) Activity reporting responsibilities will be shared across the staff roles and be coordinated by the Project Management Trainee
Additional activities	Work placements and outreach – 2C Volunteer Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that the Project attracts a wider range of volunteers To ensure that new volunteers have a point of contact when first approaching the organisation To ensure that volunteers are directed to their area of interest by liaising with the appropriate staff roles
Additional activities	Volunteer Projects – 3F Becoming and trainer and workshop leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that staff and volunteers receive appropriate support and training to lead workshops To ensure that the delivery of training is high quality and consistent
Additional activities	Skills Training and Workshops – 4C Schools workshops and experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation strongly indicated the need for the Project to engage with schools Local teachers keen to see opportunities for pupils to engage more deeply with the railway’s heritage
Additional activities	Guided Tours of Boston Lodge Works – 5C Virtual Tour of Boston Lodge Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified in consultation Provides a way to improve and widen engagement with this heritage

8. Changes you will make during your project

To be completed

9. How this activity plan was created

This Activity Plan was developed between August 2020 and XX 2021. It was developed through extensive research and consultation including:

- Project inception meeting and site visit
- Background document review
- Comparator and competitor review
- Steering Group workshop
- Volunteer workshops
- Rail passenger survey (825 responses)
- Local community survey
- Staff and volunteer survey (133 responses)
- Snowdonia National Park Young Ambassador consultation
- Guided tour pilots x 2
- Consultations with stakeholders
- Significant input from client team, project team and consultants

10. Challenges due to COVID-19

Can't think beyond reading, writing and maths at the moment 'need to put their hand gel on'
(local teacher in consultation)

Principle challenges with the creation of this plan have arisen from the effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Challenges largely relate to the consultation process and the inability to deeply engage, in particular potential audiences, in plan development. The key areas that this has affected include:

Audience	Challenge	Mitigation
Families (at weekends and school holidays)	A guided tour pilot was programmed for October Half Term but this was cancelled owing to the 'fire-break' lockdown in Wales and ongoing meeting/travel restrictions in the UK.	2 x guided tours were piloted with local people and with railway society groups for which a great deal of feedback was gathered. This combined with the rail passenger surveys has provided a good indicator of need/interest/demand.
Schools in communities on the FfWHR routes	School teachers have been hard to reach. It has not been possible to consult school children.	A local teacher has supported the translation and issue of a questionnaire to local headteachers. Consultation

		outcome is expected December 2020.
Young people in Gwynedd looking to develop skills	Inability to engage effectively in the Careers Wales Business Engagement Programme to obtain feedback on Work Placement Opportunities	FfWHR has supplied films for access by young people in schools, that have been distributed by Careers Wales. Feedback is expected over the coming months however the effects of COVID-19 may continue to hamper efforts due to school priorities.
Older people at risk of social isolation	No contact made with people representing this audience.	Pursue Age UK and Gwynedd Council's Adults and Older People Services will be pursued further in December 2020. However, the effects of COVID-19 may continue to hamper efforts due to more pressing audience needs.

Audiences

11. Audiences for heritage now

Current audiences for heritage can be divided most simply into the **internal audiences** (staff and volunteers) and **external audiences** (visitors, local community), though there is some crossover.

The ways in which they engage with the heritage of the railway, and the degree to which they engage, vary from superficial to deep engagement. The Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways have a wide appeal and attract varied audiences visiting with different motives, although many are ‘steam enthusiasts’. There are also many regular visitors who are frequent visitors to the region.

There is potential for all current audiences to be developed further through their involvement and engagement with the heritage.

Internal audiences (current)

Audience	Staff
Why?	<p>All posts across the organisation, from Operations Manager to Works Managers, Customer Services Manager through to customer-facing staff are involved with the engagement of people in the railway’s heritage. The booking office and buffet car steward roles include many volunteers who perform both, and as front-of-house they are the face of the organisation.</p> <p>They are able to support and drive organisational resilience through skills transfer, training and awareness-raising activities, as well as delivering heritage engagement activities. Staff are also essential for the delivery of heritage engagement activities, including those with the local community.</p>
How and why are they currently engaged with the heritage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer-facing staff are the face and voice of the organisation and communicators of the heritage message • Day-to-day conservation and preservation of heritage • Sense of community and family
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It’s a job” • Lack of opportunities for ongoing training • Lack of knowledge about the heritage • Time • Balancing organisation need for working efficiently against engagement of people in heritage
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees and work placement opportunities to inspire, encourage and provide skills for the next generation of railway employees • Skills transfer to new members of staff, trainees, work placement and volunteers • 'Inclusivity' and internal communication, making sure the members from each department group know what is going on in the others • Understanding of current skillsets and areas for development • Delivery of consistent messaging to audiences • Better engagement with a range of audiences (customer service training)

Audience	Staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capturing their knowledge and stories • Engagement with local community • Social opportunities e.g. events

Audience	Volunteers
Why?	<p>There are 500 active (up to 1,000 in total) volunteers who broadly undertake activities in four departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops and locomotives • Operations, controllers, guards, signalmen • Infrastructure: track, signalling, buildings, parks and gardens • ‘Incidental’: interpretation (tour guides/station hosts), archives, administration steering groups and committees, and volunteers who help with marketing activities <p>Volunteers are a dedicated, passionate, knowledgeable, skilled and essential group. They conserve and preserve intangible heritage – skills, knowledge and histories – as well as the tangible heritage – buildings and collections. There is an opportunity to build on their positive experience and goodwill.</p>
How and why are they currently engaged with the heritage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passion and commitment for the railway • Want to be at the railway because of their own interest • Through the heritage skills that they have acquired and utilise • Considerable knowledge of the heritage • Wide range of involvement with the heritage through a wide range of roles – some starting with small projects and then moving on to larger ones
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway’s history and heritage • Lack of time • Some have very specific leisure interests - <i>If they could be enticed away from their core interest, driving, firing or whatever project they are working on, they might well be willing to help with visitors</i>⁷¹ <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of management structure, including coordinator and volunteer roles • Lack of structured programme and opportunity to progress and/or re-use learnt skills • Inadequate space and facilities • Limited volunteer offer – focussing largely on engineering and practical tasks – which limits diversity of volunteers
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills mapping to support further training – both ‘on the job’ as well as for specific competencies and qualifications • Pathways, progression and repeat opportunities • The development of a wider range of opportunities to suit a wider range of people interests • Formalised volunteer roles • Training to support audience engagement with heritage • Involvement with the project’s capital works • Projects that have meaningful output

⁷¹ Project Steering Group consultation

Audience	Volunteers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communication • Social opportunities • Advocacy and involvement with local community

External audiences (current)

Audience	Families (at weekends and school holidays)
Why?	<p>The primary market segments for North Wales will continue to be UK family holidays, UK short breaks and activity holidays. This group represent casual visitors on a day out looking for an enjoyable experience.</p> <p>Each year 250,000 visitors use the railway as a visitor attraction. Most of these (200,000) ride the trains and passengers. 52% of passenger survey respondents were visiting with family / relatives. 21% of passenger survey respondents were specifically looking for somewhere to take their children. 69% of children in passenger survey groups were aged 12 or under.</p>
How and why are they currently engaged with the heritage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train rides and visiting stations to watch the trains • Engaged with the heritage as part of an enjoyable day out
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway’s history and heritage • Time – limited due to holiday • Distance from the railway – due to holiday • Cost of activities <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety on the railway and at Boston Lodge Works (latter not suitable for young people during work hours) • Lack of communication about opportunities to engage/become more involved • Lack of audience-appropriate interpretation
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active engagement with the history and ‘living’ heritage e.g. events, tours, hands-on engagement • Entertaining activities that tie in with motivation for visit • ‘Gentle’ immersion through interpretation and tours • High quality, value for money activities that promote deeper engagement

Audience	Adults on holiday (increasingly during the shoulder season)
Why?	<p>39% of passenger survey respondents were visiting with their partner This group represents casual visitors on a day out.</p>
How and why are they currently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come with some interest or knowledge about the history and heritage of the railway

Audience	Adults on holiday (increasingly during the shoulder season)
engaged with the heritage?	
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway’s history and heritage • Time – limited due to holiday • Distance from the railway – due to holiday • Cost of activities <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not aware of opportunities to engage/become more involved • Lack of interpretation
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional engagement with the railway beyond a visit to a station or trip on the train • High quality, value for money activities that promote deeper engagement • Increase knowledge of the slate and railway heritage • People to think about volunteering

Audience	Tour groups and international visitors
Why?	NUMBERS
How and why are they currently engaged with the heritage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come with some interest or knowledge about the history and heritage of the railway
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway’s history and heritage • Time – limited due to group restrictions <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boston Lodge is not accessible physically or practically • Numbers of people that can be accommodated at one time
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional engagement with the railway which adds value to a visit to a station or trip on the train • Engagement that can fit in with their trip programme • Increased knowledge of the slate and railway heritage

Audience	Spectators watching the trains and visiting the stations
Why?	There are an estimated 50,000 people outside/around stations. Interested in the ‘spectacle’ or stop to observe as part of their visit to the area
How and why are they currently engaged with the heritage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement is limited to ‘spectator’

Audience	Spectators watching the trains and visiting the stations
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway’s history and heritage • Not necessarily interested in engaging with the railway or its heritage • Time – limited to their activities <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to capture their interest is limited
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepening knowledge and understanding of the industrial heritage, including the slate and railway heritage

Audience	Special interest groups
Why?	Interested in ways they can tie in existing interest/activity with a visit to the railway e.g. Meirionnydd Vintage Tractors Society. Low in numbers but important.
How and why are they currently engaged with the heritage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have linked interest in railway e.g. landscape/old buildings/photography • Meet at the railway
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway’s history and heritage • Not necessarily interested in engaging with the railway or its heritage • Time – limited to the activity that is their primary motivation <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity/opportunity to deepen their engagement is limited
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their existing activity interest • Specific, targeted offer • Opportunity to deepen knowledge and understanding of the industrial heritage, including the slate and railway heritage • Opportunity to become volunteers

Audience	Ardent rail enthusiasts
Why?	28% of passenger survey respondents identified themselves as ‘Train enthusiasts’. Current audience that is strongly engaged with the railway and its heritage (cross over with volunteers). Have an interest in trains/locos.
How and why are they currently engaged with the heritage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have linked interest in railway e.g. landscape/old buildings/photography • Meet at the railway
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway’s history and heritage • Not necessarily interested in engaging with the railway or its heritage • Time – limited to the activity that is their primary motivation

Audience	Ardent rail enthusiasts
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific, targeted activities • Deepens engagement with the railway through events or volunteering

Audience	Local people attending special events
Why?	Attend through events such as Victorian Weekend
How and why are they currently engaged with the heritage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have linked interest in railway e.g. landscape/old buildings/photography • Meet at the railway
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway’s history and heritage • Not necessarily interested in engaging with the railway’s heritage • Time – limited to the activity that is their primary motivation • Perception that this is an ‘English Railway’ <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to capture their interest is limited • Limited information in Welsh - railway announcements are rarely bilingual
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific, targeted activities • Deeper engagement with the railway through events or volunteering • Low-cost / discounted opportunities

12. Potential new audiences

Potential audiences can be broadly divided into **visitors** and **local community**. While some of these audiences might have previously been engaged with the railway, their involvement has usually been limited to incidental or one-off events. They represent the greatest opportunity for project to widen and diversify its audience base.

During 2019, FfWHR prepared a framework to market to target groups more effectively. 12 target groups were identified to work with. Their differing needs and how they might use the railway as part of their visit were examined. The 12 target groups were not exclusive and many people fall into several categories. Heritage is not currently a big part of the framework, and so there is a good opportunity to expand and enhance its role.

Visitors

Audience	Non-traditional railway visitors
Why?	<p>North Wales accounts for a third of tourism in Wales. Over 7 million people visit Gwynedd every year. Only 250,000 of these visitors come to the railway (about 3.5%), although 4% of visitors to Gwynedd state that 'Trains' are the principal reason for their visit.</p> <p>According to the Gwynedd Visitor Survey 2009, the following proportions of visitors stating their main reasons for visiting Gwynedd as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenery / landscape (54%), • Coast (48%), • Previous visit (44%), • Peace and quiet (35%), • Sightseeing / attractions (28%). <p>There is clearly then good potential to attract some of the 'current non-visitor' tourist market (the other 96.5%).</p>
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway's history and heritage • Lack of interest in the current offer
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free access interpretation at stations • Specific targeted activity offers

Audience	People visiting from centres of urban deprivation
Why?	<p>Postcodes provided by current visitors show that a significant quantity of current visitors come from urban centres, principally in the North West. Across Gwynedd, 21% of tourism visitors arrive from Manchester alone.</p>
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway's history and heritage • Lack of time – normally visiting as part of a holiday • Cost of activities • Transport <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p>

Audience	People visiting from centres of urban deprivation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited capacity to develop relationship
What activities can be developed for them?	Activities which support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tying in with existing activities High quality, value for money activities that promote deeper engagement Online engagement, including tours Targeted marketing to attract these visitors

Local community

Audience	Local people with family connections
Why?	<p>There are many people in Gwynedd, particularly in Blaenau Ffestiniog, with historic family connections to FfWHR and the wider slate industry. These include families of FfWHR employees past and present, and the families of current slate miners and employees of other railways.</p> <p>There are unknown or untold stories that could contribute to the understanding of the railway and its heritage and through their telling and collection improve the railway's relationship with the local community.</p> <p>Existing routes to connect with this audience include the events stream. FfWHR normally offers a wide mix of events that are open to all. Some of those pitched more towards the local community include the <i>Cwrw ar y Cledrau</i> beer festival, and the <i>Trailffest</i> trail running event.</p> <p>In normal circumstances, FfWHR also provides a loyalty card scheme, <i>Y Cerdyn</i>, for local residents which offers significantly reduced travel on all rail journeys.</p>
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception that this is an 'English Railway' Lack of knowledge of the railway's history and heritage <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited information/engagement in Welsh Limited capacity to develop relationship
What activities can be developed for them?	Activities which support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a relationship with local community Capture of local stories, memories and ephemera to support interpretation Interpretation that features more local community stories Local people to feel pride in the heritage on their doorstep Volunteering to tell 'my' story

Audience	Schools in communities along the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways
Why?	<p><i>To get school groups coming in would be brilliant</i> (Steering Group consultee)</p> <p>There are 99 maintained schools (primary and secondary) in Gwynedd.</p>

Audience	Schools in communities along the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways
	<p>Although there is an awareness of the FfWHR many do not currently understand its potential as a valuable education resource:</p> <p><i>But the railway's got nothing to do with the quarry in Blaenau</i> (consultation with local teacher)</p> <p>The FfWHR routes travel out from Caernarfon, south-east past Snowdon and through Snowdonia onto Porthmadog and then through the Vale of Ffestiniog to Blaenau Ffestiniog, passing through towns and villages along the way. Many schools are in this catchment area, and some have stations in their village or town.</p> <p>There will be pupils in local schools, particularly around Blaenau Ffestiniog and Porthmadog, with historic family links to the railway. Some older family members will have been employed on the railway itself or in the slate industry it served. Some family members are employees of FfWHR. A small number of families around Blaenau Ffestiniog include active slate workers.</p> <p>There is opportunity to tie in with the introduction of the new curriculum in Wales, raise awareness of the local heritage, as well as opportunities offered by Careers Wales to highlight employment opportunities to young people.</p>
<p>Barriers to engagement with heritage</p>	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception that this is an 'English Railway' • Time • Suitable links to the curriculum • Cost • Difficulty persuading local schools to get involved/teach children about the railway's heritage <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited information in Welsh and railway announcements are rarely bilingual • No capacity to develop or deliver activities
<p>What activities can be developed for them?</p>	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalise on the new curriculum which focusses on learning about local context • Cross-curricular, bilingual resources that support understanding and learning about the heritage – background information, reading and source material • Interpretation of the heritage in their locality • Practical, education skills sessions, workshops and experiences • Wider engagement with the local community – schools can facilitate wider connections with adults e.g. grandparents • Work with consortium adviser • Motivating and inspiring young people about career choices by working in partnership with organisations like Careers Wales who already have connections with local schools through their 'Business Engagement' outreach programme

Audience	Young people in Gwynedd looking to develop skills
Why?	FfWHR has been providing trainee- and apprenticeship opportunities for the last 12 years across a range of roles. There is an organisational need to expand the roles and therefore the offer. Young peoples' skills development and achievement of qualification is a priority for the Welsh Government, Gwynedd Council and Snowdonia NPA.
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel – especially not driving or other lack of access to a car • Lack of knowledge of the railway's history and heritage • Lack of engagement • Lack of knowledge of the opportunities that the railway presents • Literacy and numeracy skills <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication of work opportunities at the railway not reaching the desired audience • Lack of dedicated support/management, especially when concerning young people with additional needs • Limited capacity to develop relationship
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work placement opportunities • Careers fairs/programmes • Outreach at STEM events • Young people to understand the range of jobs and job pathways in the local area, and barriers that have been overcome • Tying in with apprenticeship and trainee programmes as offered by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and North Wales Training

Audience	Older people at risk of social isolation
Why?	<p>Providing employment, volunteering and life-long learning opportunities for older people are targets for the Welsh Government. Many older people are already involved with the railway, but there is a need to diversify the offer and opportunities to enable those at risk of social isolation to engage.</p> <p>Older people are more vulnerable to isolation. Gwynedd is among the counties in Wales facing the highest risk of loneliness. Those aged 65+ living in Porthmadog itself face a higher risk. Around Ffestiniog, those aged 65+ living in the Bowydd and Rhiw areas have a higher risk of being lonely.</p>
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge of the railway's history and heritage • Lack of information and support to access opportunities • Travel – in particular lack of access to a car • Public transport <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of suitable opportunities to engage • Lack of dedicated support/management • No capacity to develop or deliver activities
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with third sector organisations/adult services to open up avenues to offer opportunities • Family history research to support railway interpretation

Audience	Older people at risk of social isolation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral history collection to enhance the railway’s understanding of its heritage • Research in archives

Audience	Adults working or living in stressful environments
Why?	FfWHR needs highly-skilled people who have good contacts in the industry in order to strengthen the organisation.
Barriers to engagement with heritage	<p><i>Audience barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Lack of knowledge of the railway’s history and heritage • Lack of knowledge of the opportunities that the railway presents <p><i>Organisational barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication about opportunities to work at the railway • Lack of dedicated support/management
What activities can be developed for them?	<p>Activities which support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different way to spend leisure time • Something that is in contrast to their hectic day jobs • Transfer/learning from the skills

Our Activities

13. Current activities and perception of offer

This section sets out the range of activities that currently engage people with heritage and the perception of the offer.

Training and employment

FfWHR is major local employer, with 87 full-time staff, 10 part-time staff and around 50 seasonal workers. FfWHR also provides some opportunities for people to obtain skills training and work experience. This happens in partnership with local schools, the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, and Railway Industry apprentice training (Young Rail Professionals). Furthermore, in 2018-20, FfWHR supported 20 heritage skills trainees through the NLHF-funded 'Skills For the Future' training programme.⁷²

The outcomes of this programme were positive for FfWHR and the participants:

I've come out better equipped to deal with the real world (Trainee, Year 1)

They brought knowledge and understanding to the team with new ideas to move forward (FfWHR staff member)

People don't realise that the railways have opportunities for employment and that you have the opportunity to learn skills (local teacher in consultation)

There were however many areas for improvement recommended including a better induction process, improved mentoring and support, meaningful integration with the organisation and production of meaningful and usable output:

Wanted it to be a real experience. 'Look what I did'. Wanted it to be something that I could show to people at the end (Trainee)

Volunteering

*It is jolly good fun!*⁷³

*You are part of 'The Ffestiniog family'*⁷⁴

Volunteer roles are many and varied. Many volunteering opportunities are currently aimed at people with an interest in practical or engineering work. 'Lifelong interest in railways' is cited as

⁷² Anna Cullum Associates 2020, *Ffestiniog and Welsh Highlands Railway: Heritage Skills Training Programme, Evaluation Report Interim Report No 2 April 2020*

⁷³ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁷⁴ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

one of the main reasons that people currently volunteer at the railway. Others volunteer because they want *to be able to pass on professional skills to younger people*⁷⁵

Participants value volunteering as a chance to be active and constructive, making valuable contributions to heritage conservation, the social interaction that contributes to mental health and wellbeing, and the satisfaction of completing manual tasks and complex projects to a high standard. Many volunteers feel they have sufficient skills and training to undertake the roles they are given.

*Most of us have multiple differing types of working volunteer roles on the railway.*⁷⁶

*Most of my training has resulted from long experience*⁷⁷

*Training and support on the engineering side is a lot less formal. Learning something often requires being able to find and work with the right people*⁷⁸

*Why do we come from all over, past other railways to come to Ffestiniog – this could be the best railway in the world. We want to give back to the railway, building the railway to make it better for the future of the railway*⁷⁹

*We have a lot of laughs, overcome challenges and achieve a lot*⁸⁰

An annual ‘Kid’s Week’ helps draw in younger volunteers to the organisation, although these tend to *attracts kids from elsewhere* (rather than the local area) (consultation with local teacher). New volunteers need a good welcome and a good initial experience when on-boarding, as well as opportunities to develop further.

*Volunteers will only get involved if they are welcomed AND welcome. It’s very easy to chase away volunteers who are new to the railway and it is a shame when a good potential volunteer doesn’t stay*⁸¹

We need team leaders to lead working parties. We need undercover facilities to undertake works out of the weather, and have some degree of warmth (it can be quite unpleasant trying to work on vehicles in very low temperatures). We need undercover facilities that are separate from the day to day works at Boston Lodge or Minffordd as currently a significant amount of time is spent, moving kit from site to site, or moving locomotives / equipment from a storage area to a work area at the start of the working party only for us to return all to the original positions at the end of the working party. We need somewhere dry, warm, with seating & a kettle for tea time / breaks. We need access to equipment (lathes, drills,

⁷⁵ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁷⁶ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁷⁷ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁷⁸ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁷⁹ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁸⁰ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁸¹ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

*riveting equipment etc). We need access to a tool kit – multiple times we don't have the correct or exact tool which again means we spend time trying to locate or borrow one.*⁸²

I'd volunteered for years and didn't know you could work in heritage. Sheer chance led me to this. (Skills for the Future volunteer)

Outreach to Schools and Young People

FfWHR used to market strongly to schools groups. FfWHR used to worked closely with Llechwedd for school visits including the School Venture Weeks programme. Many schools did both attractions. A 'Slates to the Sea' education package used to be offered, mostly at schools on residential courses. Currently FfWHR sometimes works with Plas Tan y Bwlch (the Snowdonia National Park Environmental Studies Centre), although this has not been possible in 2020.

A 'Kids Training Week' is held annually in early August, under normal circumstances. The activity provides volunteers aged 14-16 with a taster of volunteering with FfWHR life. Typically 40 places are offered to young volunteers, who live in the railway's hostels and other local accommodation. The participants are supported by adult volunteers who act as House Parents and as Project Leaders. The adults usually have plenty of experience of FfWHR, including former participants in this annual event, and this helps to communicate the special nature of the railway to their charges. Since 2007 the 'useful jobs' have been replaced by projects designed to offer opportunities to develop life-skills, self-confidence, enhanced job prospects and recognised national qualifications. Training projects include a wide variety of activities: in 2009 these including building a replica carriage for the FR Heritage Group, building a storage shed using concrete blocks, painting, carriage cleaning at Porthmadog Harbour Station each morning, carpentry, and gardening. FfWHR encourages local children to take part in this event as they do not require a residential facility, but the week is often oversubscribed with names put down years in advance.

Since 2017 FfWHR has visited colleges and jobs fairs, STEM events and Careers Wales events, to speak to students and raise awareness of the training offer. Taster days (x6) were offered to colleges so that students could be bussed in, but there was no response from the colleges in either 2018 or 2019.

Interpretation (rail passengers, station users and casual spectators)

FfWHR engages its audience through a narrow range of interpretive media. The railway shop is well stocked with books about local and railway history, and passengers can purchase guidebooks on the Welsh Highland Railway or the Ffestiniog Railway.⁸³ Apart from print publications, there is almost no interpretation about the railway and its heritage for visitors or

⁸² Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁸³ Headland Design Associates 2019, *Ffestiniog Railway: Interpretive Strategy: August 2019*, unpubl doc

passengers.⁸⁴ The FfWHR website provides a comprehensive account of the railway history, but the account is hidden deep in the menu structure.

Many visitors to stations are not passengers, but they still encounter the railway heritage as it hauls in or passes by. Of the small number of local people to respond to the rail passenger surveys, most have been frequent (3 times or more) visitors to the stations. There is very little presently to engage these casual spectators.

39% of rail users surveyed said their main reason for visiting the railway was to view the landscape and culture. 94% rated their experience as 'good' or 'excellent' and 88% stated their intention to return. However, only 53% of rail users learnt something about the heritage (history, development of railway, slate industry, railway innovation) following their visit. The organisation engages visitors with heritage principally by showcasing the steam narrow gauge railway and its invention on the Ffestiniog Railway, and its subsequent development across the world.

*They leave without any explanation of the history and significance of the Railway, or how it has shaped this part of Wales, including the landscape through which the trains journey.*⁸⁵

At present there is no formal customer-facing interpretation programme. Drivers and guards will typically engage visitors in conversation, and staff on trains answer passengers' questions about the railway and its history. Such interpretation is *ad hoc* and the delivery can sometimes be inaccurate or misleading. An unusual by-product of the ongoing coronavirus epidemic is that the service was reduced and less intense, giving volunteers time to talk to and engage and customers. The implementation of volunteer hosts at stations in 2020 has been very positive for FfWHR.

*Everybody is a spokesperson for the railways. Some in an informal way and others through formal tours or presentations. Suitable training for both aspects would be a good idea.*⁸⁶

*We want facts to become myths, not the other way round*⁸⁷

*Passengers often ask the loco crew questions about the railway and I enjoy sharing my knowledge and experiences of the railway with them.*⁸⁸

*I love to talk to people about the engine. There is only limited time to talk with visitors so can we find time to talk to people in greater depth*⁸⁹

*What seem to interest the passengers is people doing a job you don't really see any more*⁹⁰

⁸⁴ Headland Design Associates 2019, *Ffestiniog Railway: Interpretive Strategy: August 2019*, unpubl doc

⁸⁵ FfWHR 2019, *NLHF Round 1 Submission*, unpubl doc, p3

⁸⁶ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁸⁷ Steering Group Participant

⁸⁸ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁸⁹ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

⁹⁰ Volunteer Consultation Respondent

*Volunteer hosts at stations have become mini tourist information centres and I cannot see us ever being without them again.*⁹¹

Pre-COVID 19, staff would typically engage passengers in one of its many heritage events such as the Victorian Weekend. This had to be replaced in 2020 with a more modest Bygones Weekend. During this 2020 Bygones Weekend, members of railway societies were given a tour of Boston Lodge Works. 98% of people awarded the tour with the highest rating, stating that the ‘behind-the-scenes’ access and tour guide explanation among the reasons for their enjoyment. Attendees appreciated the knowledgeable staff, the informative nature of the tour, and the historical and social value of the site as a busy place of work.

[I learned about] *the scope of work needed to keep locomotives running, including work for other railways*⁹².

I’m not an engineer or an historian, but have reasonable knowledge of the site, the sort of work that was carried out and what was achieved. I’ve been happy to take members and groups of visitors round in the past; but have struggled to explain the technicalities of the engineering side. (Volunteer consultee)

There has never been other-than-occasional public access to Boston Lodge Works. In a rail passenger survey 80% showed moderate (44%) or great (36%) interest in learning about Boston Lodge and FfWHR’s heritage and history. 86% of people had moderate (35%) or great (51%) interest in having a tour of Boston Lodge Works. Furthermore, 89% of people had moderate (36%) or great (53%) interest in seeing traditional heritage workers/craftsmen / engineers / joiners at work.

Website, social media and email

FfWHR relies on digital marketing, providing communications well in advance of physical arrival at the access points as well as post-visit. FfWHR keeps in touch with customers via subscription email newsletters and it maintains a website⁹³ rich in content, including an account of the railway history. There is a separate website for an historic photograph archive, which FfWHR is using to crowd-source photograph cataloguing.

FfWHR has active social media channels via YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, all accessible via the website homepage. The organisation has 21,372 Facebook followers, 14,000 Twitter followers, and 9655 Instagram followers. Posts appear regularly across all three social media channels. The latest YouTube video, ‘A Year in the Life of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways’ had over 1,500 views within a week of its debut.

⁹¹ Steering Group Participant

⁹² Bygones Weekend Survey Respondent

⁹³ <https://www.festrail.co.uk/>

59% of rail users heard about the reopening through the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways website, compared to 14% via social media. 72% of English-language local community survey respondents found out about the survey via Facebook compared to 44% of the small Welsh-language sample. Around 25% of the visitors to the 2020 Bygones Weekend (see above) found out about it through social media/website. The website is not fully compatible with W3C accessibility standards, registering a handful of errors and alerts ⁹⁴.

⁹⁴ <https://wave.webaim.org/report#/https://www.festrail.co.uk/>

14. Comparator and Competitor Review

To better understand the outline activities as set out in the Round 1 submission, and how they might be developed for project delivery, a comparator and competitor review was undertaken. This review was intended to examine good practice as well as highlight challenges and opportunities for engagement with heritage.

- Comparators were selected from projects across the UK where similar activities have taken place.
- Competitors were selected from organisations in the local area who already provide similar activity offer/s to those proposed for the project. Where appropriate, competitors are identified as potential partners.

A common finding from the projects reviewed was that it is important to be realistic about the level of staffing and length of time required to deliver any given mix of activities and outputs. If projects set ambitious targets, then the budget needs to be large enough to deliver those targets, especially if they are going to deliver quality engagement and meet outcomes. If it is not possible to secure the necessary funding to support ambitious programmes, then it is necessary to scale back not only expenditure on staffing and other resources, but also activities and outputs.

1 Trainees to deliver core roles

Relevant Examples	Key Takeaways
<p>Comparators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorset Wildlife Trust: Conservation Skills Programme • Heritage Engineering Skills: Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums • Historic Environment Scotland Engine Shed • Museum Futures Trainee, Atkinson Museum • Skills for the Future, FfWHR 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often favours people with existing skills and qualifications • Barriers to engagement include lack of public/own transport, lack of organisational capacity and staff understanding • Organisational capacity is low, particularly in trainee managers and skills development • High investment of time and funds • Strain on organisational capacity • Need full training plans to ensure quality of placement and delivery of funder outcomes • Managing varying degree of need • Turnover of trainees is typically high • No guarantee of future employment at the organisation <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring new ideas and vibrancy to organisation • Upskill individuals and provide qualifications to enable them to go on to other places of work • Allow trainees to co-curate their learning programme • Develop organisational capacity, particularly in skills development and training • Trainee programme can be a route to strengthening relationships with local community • Offer training opportunities at all levels of the organisation
<p>Competitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Heritage Training Group • Skills for the Future 	

2 Work experience outreach / work placements

- Projects consistently engage parents through school-age children.
- Well-planned work with schools provides a highly effective vehicle for engaging with audiences –not just teachers and pupils, but also parents and local people more generally.
- Links between local schools and museums / historic sites can be strengthened, with parents taking their children to the museum / historic site.

Relevant Examples	Key Takeaways
<p>Comparators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coniston Copper HLF project • Hands on Heritage: Youth Engagement at Amgueddfa Cymru • Skills for the Future traineeship: Foundations in Heritage (TWAM) • Tay Landscape Partnership: St Ayles Skiff Project 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time- and resource-heavy • Requires work placement packages, and training plans • Competition with other workplaces already providing placements • Careful planning required to ensure delivery of outcomes for audiences and funder <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive impacts on organisation • Provides routes into local community • Co-creation opportunities with placements • Makes valuable contribution to heritage by providing extra resource • Developing partnerships with local education providers • Outreach and education events can take place far beyond the core venue • CPD events can attract skilled volunteers into the organisation
<p>Competitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering at Coleg Llandrillo 	

3 Volunteering

- *Heritage Railways ... rely on large amounts of volunteer labour and goodwill to operate.*⁹⁵
- Volunteering cannot be seen as free labour by the organisation or the volunteers.
- Audiences must strongly inform planning of each of the developing interpretation strands so that the anticipated positive outcomes for volunteers can be delivered.
- Adapting programmes during project delivery is important to maintaining an excellent experience for volunteers.
- Introducing volunteers to the programmes benefits from moving prospective volunteers up the pyramid of engagement via taster sessions and tours.
- Volunteering strands have the potential to develop and generate further activities and ideas for engagement projects. Further activities should be informed by the ‘why are we doing this?’ question, and mapping it to the organisation’s and volunteers’ needs and aims.
- Participation in and enjoyment of the NLHF activities each present genuine marketing opportunities.
- A successful volunteer programme creates a legacy need to source further similarly rewarding opportunities

⁹⁵ *Heritage Railway* 263 Jan/Feb 2020, p3

- Consideration is needed to reconcile competing programme aims: providing new entrants to the workforce to stem an imminent skills crisis conflicts with recruiting people with additional needs.

3A - Interpretation - Researching and digitising archives

- Researching / digitising archives, including oral histories, will improve the accessibility of the collection for the public. There is an opportunity for it to become far easier to use, for the public and the organisation.
- Dealing with the legacy of large archives, and oral history archives, is likely to require an ongoing position so that they are useable in any meaningful way.
- Getting archives and oral history projects over the line usually requires outside professional assistance.

Relevant Examples	Key Takeaways
<p>Comparators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London Archaeological Archives Research Centre • Wigan Archives and Local Studies 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied programme needed to ensure ongoing offer for volunteers • Ensuring that new skills learnt are retained/reused • Time- and resource-heavy, particularly staff capacity to support volunteers • Noise and space – need to reconcile sociable needs with ability to concentrate and supervise <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to heritage for people and for organisation • A new route into volunteering with FfWHR • Creates opportunity for connecting with new people and communities • Provide new material for interpretation • Digitally recording and publishing heritage (i.e. 3D scanning) is an effective means of reaching anyone with an internet connection
<p>Competitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangor University Archives and Special Collections 	

3A - Interpretation - Oral history

Relevant Examples	Key Takeaways
<p>Comparators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking Out: Recalling Women’s Aid in Scotland • Our Social Networks, Bangor 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time- and resource-heavy: project support might require a number of skilled volunteer roles • Deadlines and formats can be challenging • Deciding interpretive outputs early on may not reflect strengths of final archive • Resources could be under-used without dedicated staff • Reaching new audiences can be challenging <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral history projects can engage older people • Capture the tales and experiences of current volunteers • Staff and time resource to make oral history archive accessible is rare opportunity • Projects record and improve access to heritage for people and for organisation • Using oral history collection is often very positive for public engagement • Creates opportunity for connecting with new people and communities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mencap Cymru could be a potential partner, given their recent experience with oral history projects and their ongoing work with sections of the community who are not currently engaged
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3B Interpretive guiding

Relevant Examples	Key Takeaways
Comparators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland Castle Heritage Hunters NLHF project Coniston Copper NLHF project, Lake District Portadown Heritage Tours: Peace IV, Northern Ireland 	Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that new skills learnt are retained/reused Time- and resource-heavy Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community involvement is a key component of presenting a guiding offer to visitors Guided tour programmes can build on new archive research undertaken by volunteers during the project A team of trained guided walk leaders can form a valuable part of an ongoing volunteer-led activity programme Creates opportunity for connecting with new people and communities Provides skills
Competitors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Heritage Training Group Skills for the Future 	

3C Volunteer led engineering / heritage projects

Relevant Examples	Key Takeaways
Comparators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steaming Ahead, Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway 	Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varied programme needed to ensure ongoing offer for volunteers Space restrictions Skillset to deliver projects not always available Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access to heritage for people Creates opportunities for connecting with new people and communities Provides skills
Competitors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bala Lake Railway historic items restoration; and Talylyn Railway 	

4 Skills workshops, experiences and lecture program

Relevant Examples	Key Takeaways
Comparators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beamish Open Air Museum: Hands-on Heritage Skills and Traditional Experiences Lincoln Castle: Heritage Skills Centre 	Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of offers required to meet range of interests and price points Need flexibility to meet demand Group size dictates nature of experience and level of engagement Requires suitable trained professionals to deliver Resource-heavy (staff/equipment/space) Competitive environment Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of engagement opportunities for different aspects of heritage Income generation Providing social value in public sector contracts is something companies, i.e. civil engineering firms, should be familiar with Awareness training can take place on and off-site, and in local schools
Competitors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Llangollen Railway, Denbighshire Gwili Steam Railway, Carmarthenshire Toolbox Talks at Grand Promenade NLHF project, South Tyneside 	

5 Guided tours (during capital works; and wider tours around shops, foundry, sheds and yards)

Relevant Examples	Key Takeaways
<p>Comparators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grosmont Engine Shed Tours (North Yorks Moors Railway) Heritage Distillery Visitor Tour: Jameson Distillery Bow St, Midleton, Co. Cork, IE ⁹⁶ Heritage Railway Workshop Tour: Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, West Yorks ⁹⁷ 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live working environment and safety Requires careful planning and programming Children often excluded from tours Ongoing COVID situation affecting group sizes A range of offers may be required for range of interests and price points Tours should be available in Welsh and English <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-trained volunteers as part of ongoing activity delivery team Meaningful involvement of staff and volunteers through co-curation Tours can be easily adapted and added to over time Virtual tours can maximise engagement To integrate UNESCO WHS information To present guided tours as led by expert local people with historic family links to the slate industry The Llechwedd Slate Caverns organisation is clearly a potential strong partner
<p>Competitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Llechwedd Slate Caverns 	

In addition to physical tours digital recording and then publishing of material – film, sound, images, 3D images, virtual tours – is a range of means by which to promote online access to heritage. High-quality engagement through digital media can encourage in-person visits, but it also allows many more people to than is possible through a visit in person to the site. It means that people who are unable to visit in person can also engage with the heritage.

⁹⁶ <https://www.jamesonwhiskey.com/en-UK/visit-us>

⁹⁷ <https://kwvr.co.uk/workshop-tours/>

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Project

Activity Plan – Step 2 – Strategic Decisions about the engagement of people

Minerva Heritage in association with Creative Core

Mid-term Review Draft – 30 November 2020

Step 2 – Strategic Decisions about the engagement of people

Aims for activities

The overarching aim of this NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project (the Project) is to:

“...share and involve people in the story of the railway. Storytelling will connect thousands of railway visitors with its history and the industry it served. It will help people understand the area’s pioneering spirit and global impact and explain how the industry has shaped the landscape and community over 200 years. Through building restoration and first-hand experiences, people will have the chance to delve deeper into the railway’s heritage. People will learn new skills and become immersed in the living, working world of the historic Boston Lodge Works in Porthmadog.”

The aims for activities developed as part of this project will support this. These aims have been developed through consultation, surveys, information gathering and analysis.

The shared overarching aims for Activities and Interpretation are:

- 1. Support visitors to learn about the history and heritage of the railway and Boston Lodge Works**
 - Activity – range of audience appropriate first-hand/first-person events and experiences
 - Interpretation - accurate, relevant and audience appropriate storytelling, grounded in the Welsh language, culture and landscape
- 2. Engage and inspire volunteers to ensure the story grows into the future**
 - Activity – accessible volunteer roles and progression opportunities in a positive environment that changes lives through greater wellbeing
 - Interpretation - showcases volunteer history, roles and stories
- 3. Work in partnership with the local community to better engage and involve them with the railway and its heritage**
 - Activity – activities curated, informed by and developed with the local community
 - Interpretation - represents the local community voice and culture
- 4. Inspire people to think about a career with the railway or Boston Lodge Works**
 - Activity – outreach and work placements that increase knowledge of FfWHR as employer and science - technology - engineering - arts - maths (STEAM) opportunities
 - Interpretation - highlight roles, progression and science - technology - engineering - arts - maths (STEAM) relevant experience
- 5. Support the resilience and sustainability of the organisation**
 - Activity – upskilling in conservation and communication to create a highly-skilled, diverse workforce that delivers a high-quality visitor experience
 - Interpretation - calls to action and promote sustainability stories

Alignment with organisation and with NLHF outcomes

The aims for Activities and Interpretation align with those objectives of the Project and will deliver NLHF NLHF as follows:

ACTIVITY AND INTERPRETATION AIMS	PROJECT OBJECTIVES	NLHF OUTCOMES
Support visitors to learn about the history and heritage of the railway and Boston Lodge Works	1, 2, 3, 5	1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9
Engage and inspire volunteers to ensure the story grows into the future	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Work in partnership with the local community to better engage and involve them with the railway and its heritage	1, 2, 6	All
Inspire people to think about a career with the railway or Boston Lodge Works	3, 4, 5, 6	1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9
Support the resilience and sustainability of the organisation	2, 3, 4, 5, 6	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9

The Activity and Interpretation Engagement Strategy

In addition to meeting the aims of the project and the NLHF outcomes the activities aim to deliver the ‘Engagement Strategy’ (ref Interpretation Plan). This strategy acknowledges the interests and motivations of target audiences and provides ‘next step’ pathways for deepening their engagement with heritage. Activities principally aim to deliver engagement levels 3-5.

Engagement level	Description	Activities/Interpretation
Engagement 1	Not yet engaged. These elements are to enhance the visitor experience before arrival and should make the visitor more at ease and better informed.	Digital - pre-visit information Marketing Booking websites Pre-learning sites
Engagement 2	Passer-by, incidental. These elements are designed for passers-by using the landscape for sight-seeing, walking, biking or due to an inquisitive nature.	Platform locations Shared car park interp Larger public spaces Paper based literature Live interpretation on platform
Engagement 3	Captive audience. This stage is layered to allow passengers to engage with the heritage in a low key way or dig deeper when their interest is piqued.	App Live interpretation on trains Digital pick up In carriage interpretation Photo sharing Outreach Virtual Tour of Boston Lodge Works
Engagement 4a	Takeaway. This visitor is content with the experience and will leave with the opportunity	Digital literature from downloaded data and web

	to utilise digital information as they reflect on their trip.	
Engagement 5a	Touching base. Final engagement is light touch communication of future offers and activities to encourage a re-visit and word of mouth recommendations.	Ongoing marketing messages and events info
Engagement 4b	Actively engaged. This level of visitor engagement feeds a deeper hunger for knowledge and experience. Visitors will be offered engaging opportunities to think, feel and do.	Storytelling Guided Tours Skills workshops Work placements Schools workshops and experiences
Engagement 5b	Embedded engagement. This final level is to be embedded within the organisation, looking for opportunities to be more deeply involved for a sustained period of time.	Volunteering Traineeships Staff role Specialist heritage learning

Activities for audiences

Following 'Step 1 – Where are we now', development phase consultation and the need to engage a wider range of people in the heritage, target audiences for activities and interpretation have been determined.

Primary audiences for activities are:

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Families (at weekends and school holidays)
- Adults on holiday (increasingly during the shoulder season)
- Local people attending special events
- Local people with family connections
- Schools in communities on the FfWHR routes
- Young people in Gwynedd looking to develop skills
- Older people at risk of social isolation

Secondary audiences for activities are:

- Ardent rail enthusiasts
- Adults working or living in stressful environments

All other audiences identified during Step 1 will be accommodated by Interpretation (ref Interpretation Plan).

Audiences and the activities that have been developed for them are identified in the table below:

	Activity Plan activities																							
	1A: Project Management trainee	1B: Operations Management trainee	1C: Interpretation trainee	2A - Work placements	2B - Work placement outreach	2C - Volunteer outreach	3A - Developing Interpretation: Researching and digitising archives	3B - Developing Interpretation: Tell me a story	3C - Developing Interpretation: New interpretation at hubs, mini-hubs and interpretation points	3D - Developing the guided tour of Boston Lodge Works	3E - Learning to be a guide	3F - Becoming a trainer and workshop leader	3G - Engineering volunteer skills and knowledge transfer programme	4A - Specialist heritage learning	4B - Project awareness workshops	4C - Schools workshops and experiences	4D - Public workshops	5A - Capital works tours	5B - Storytelling guided tours	5C - Virtual tour of Boston Lodge Works	Interpretation			
Current Audiences																								
Staff	x	x	x				x	x	x					x	x	x			x	x	x			
Volunteers	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x	x	x			
Families (at weekends and school holidays)																				x	x	x		
Adults on holiday (increasingly during the shoulder season)																	x			x	x	x		
Tour groups and international visitors																				x	x	x		
Spectators watching the trains and visiting the stations																						x	x	
Special interest groups																						x	x	
Ardent rail enthusiasts							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	
Local people attending special events																	x		x	x	x	x	x	
Potential Audiences																								
Non-traditional railway visitors																							x	x
People visiting from centres of urban deprivation																							x	x
Local people with family connections							x	x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x	x	x	
Schools in communities on the FfWHR routes				x	x												x					x	x	x
Young people in Gwynedd looking to develop skills	x	x	x	x	x												x						x	
Older people at risk of social isolation							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x									x	
Adults working or living in stressful environments							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x					x	

Proposed activity summary

The Activities for the project have been developed from outline ideas as presented at Round 1. They have been developed in respect of extensive research and consultation.

1. Strand 1 - Traineeships

Description
Building on the experience and learning from the ‘Skills for the Future programme’ the Project will deliver 3 x trainee posts that contribute directly to the project delivery and organisational need. These positions would be ideally suited to graduate level (or equivalent) individuals or those at the start of their career, including young people. The trainees will:

- Be recruited as a cohort to allow cross-organisational learning and mutual support
- Experience all aspect of the business and project operation, in addition to their specific area of specialism
- Be managed by the Skills and Work Placement Officer, receive specialist day-to-day supervision and professional mentoring from within the organisation
- Be graduate level (or equivalent) individuals or those at the start of their career, including young people seeking opportunities in Gwynedd. These positions may attract existing staff and volunteers
- Develop specialist skills that support management, restoration, preservation and communication of the heritage
- Provide structured development and training to support progression into jobs at FfWHR or other organisation

Target audience

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Young people in Gwynedd Looking to develop skills

Need/opportunity

(Need a) *support mechanism. Have a role to manage the programme and mentoring and support is required. One person to oversee the trainees (Steering Group Consultee)*

Need

- Staff member to manage and oversee, support varying degrees of need
- Professional mentoring
- Sharing experience amongst trainees
- Bespoke learning programme and individual action plans – including basic introduction and essential skills training, specialist training and specific projects
- Qualifications/structured training and development opportunities

Opportunity

- To build on the Skills for the Future programme that FfWHR successfully took place in 2018-20
- Heritage industry-related roles
- Developing a workforce for the future
- Potential to tie in with apprenticeship offer at Grŵp Llandrillo Menai
- Welsh Government funding for employers taking on apprentices (from 2021)
- Brings new ideas and vibrancy to organisation
- Upskill and provide qualifications
- Allow trainees to co-curate their learning programme

Barriers to engagement

Often favours people with existing skills and qualifications

Mitigation

The positions are designed to provide higher level opportunities in order to retain/re-attract graduate level (or equivalent) individuals to Gwynedd

High investment of time and funds

Dedicated staff to manage and oversee learning programmes and individual progression

Strain on organisational capacity	Staff member to add to organisational capacity
Managing varying degree of need	Staff member to have equality and diversity training and to develop personal learning plans that highlight additional needs
Travel	Offer suitable wage for duration of placement
NLHF outcomes	
1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9	
Specific activities to be delivered as part of strand	
<p>1A - Project Management Trainee A three-year Trainee Project Manager (TPM) position will work with the Project Manager to administer the NLHF project and ensure that essential reporting and data collection is collected and submitted in a timely fashion. They will receive professional mentoring from within the organisation. The trainee will be supported through a programme of training and development (including appropriate qualifications).</p> <p>1B - Operations Management trainee A two-year Trainee Operations Management (TOM) position will work with the Operations Administrator and the Engineering Volunteer Supervisor to process orders for materials and equipment and undertake engineering volunteer administration (including database management). They will receive professional mentoring from within the organisation. The trainee will be supported through a programme of training and development (including appropriate qualifications).</p> <p>1C - Interpretation trainee A two-year Trainee Interpretation Officer (TIO) position will work with the Interpretation Officer. They will support the delivery of the NLHF project by coordinating volunteers, including volunteer administration and database management, to develop and collate content for the railway and Boston Lodge Works interpretation. They will receive professional mentoring from the Interpretation Consultant. The trainee will be supported through a programme of training and development (including appropriate qualifications).</p>	

2. Strand 2 – Work placements and outreach

Description
<p>Work placements will be offered over the course of the project to contribute to Project delivery, learn practical work-place skills and support the organisation's operations. Work placements will be offered across the organisation according to business need including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure • Works • Marketing • Interpretation • Administration <p>A programme of work placement outreach, supported by marketing activity and volunteers, will be undertaken in partnership with Careers Wales and North Wales Training and universities, in order to support recruitment to the placements.</p>

Target audience	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers • Schools in communities on the FfWHR routes • Young people in Gwynedd Looking to develop skills 	
Need/opportunity	
<i>Guys over that way struggle with [work placement] opportunities (North Wales Training)</i>	
Need	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum enrichment in schools • Bilingual resources for presentations to schools/colleges • Bespoke work placement plans • Staff member to manage and oversee, support varying degrees of need 	
Opportunity	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To tie in with Careers Wales ‘Business Engagement’ schools outreach programme • Motivate and inspire young people about career choices • To show young people the range of jobs and job pathways in the local area, and barriers that have been overcome • To build on existing Kids Week offer • Positive impacts on organisation • Provides routes into local community 	
Barriers to engagement	Mitigation
High investment of time and funds	Dedicated staff to manage and oversee learning programmes and individual progression
Strain on organisational capacity	Staff member to add to organisational capacity
Managing varying degree of need	Staff member to have equality and diversity training and to develop personal learning plans that highlight additional needs
Other workplaces provide placements	Provide an attractive proposition with detailed work placement plans
Travel	Offer travel expenses for duration (this expense can be covered if working in partnership with North Wales Training)
NLHF outcomes	
1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	
Specific activities to be delivered as part of strand	
<p>2A – Work placements A programme of 20 x work experience placements for 14-18 year olds over the course of two years – 10 x per year for a minimum of 1 x week - that supports FfWHR operations and NLHF project delivery.</p> <p>2B – Work placement outreach Outreach to promote work placements at the railway and Boston Lodge Works. An outreach programme, in partnership with Careers Wales and North Wales Training and universities, will</p>	

encourage and recruit young people into the work placements offered in Activity 2A.

2C – Volunteer outreach

Outreach to promote specific volunteer roles and opportunities at the railway and Boston Lodge Works, in line with the project delivery and the needs of the organisation. Material will be generated for the website, liaise with marketing and work in partnership with Gwirfoddoli Cymru (Volunteering Wales) in order to promote volunteering and recruit a wider range of new and diverse volunteers. Marketing support required. Promote and deliver the volunteer award and development days.

3. Strand 3 – Volunteer projects

<p>Description</p>
<p>A range of volunteering roles will be formalised and offered over the course of the project. Volunteer roles will be offered to the existing FfWHR volunteer base but advertised in the local community and through Gwirfoddoli Cymru (Volunteering Wales) in order to recruit a wider range of new and diverse volunteers (see Activity 2C).</p> <p>Volunteering will fall into two main areas: Interpretation (developing interpretation, guiding and training and workshop delivery) and Engineering.</p> <p>Interpretation: Volunteers developing interpretation will focus on the development of new interpretation at Boston Lodge Works and across the railway network, therefore Project specific. Other roles relate to the development of guided tour content and learning to become a guide and learning to deliver workshops and training. The work of the interpretation volunteers will be coordinated by the Interpretation Trainee with the support of the Interpretation Supervisor and the Training Events and Workshops Supervisor.</p> <p>Engineering: A model for engineering volunteering will be developed for work parties, to ensure that skills and knowledge transfer is at the heart of projects. Work parties will be developed according to the business need and to provide progression opportunities for the volunteers involved. This will ensure that ‘the job gets done’ in terms of heritage conservation, but that people gain new (some certified) skills and see the emergence of volunteer leaders/supervisors. The development of the model will be created by the Engineering Volunteer Supervisor, supported by the Training Events and Workshops Supervisor.</p>
<p>Target audience</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Volunteers • Ardent railway enthusiasts • Local people with family connections • Older people at risk of social isolation
<p>Need/opportunity</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>too often the emphasis is on getting the jobs done rather than encouraging the volunteers (volunteer consultation)</i>

- *a new starter needs someone to take them under their wing, give them tasks, training and supervision (volunteer consultation)*
- *To use my expertise for the good of the community and to utilise my knowledge for the benefit of the organisation (volunteer consultation)*
- *Ability to present historical information to visitors (training required from staff and volunteer survey)*
- *Formal training of volunteers to operate workshop machinery and to act as workshop supervisors (training required from staff and volunteer survey)*

Need

- Volunteer coordinator/manager – support, motivation, communication, organisation, point of contact
- Mentoring support from existing volunteers
- Diversify volunteer base
- Balance between ‘on-the-job’ learning and training for competencies and qualifications
- Relate specific roles and pathways for volunteering to skills audit and track progression
- To programme projects – varying time commitment, scheduled (avoid clashes)
- Interpretation volunteers to generate content for new interpretation and the guided tours
- Engineering volunteers to deliver project according to organisational need
- Improved facilities and space for social interaction

Opportunity

- To build on positive experience and goodwill of existing volunteers
- For current, highly skilled volunteers to support and train new volunteers
- To create projects that have meaningful output and outcome
- To offer a structured and varied programme that ensures an ongoing offer for volunteers – both existing and new volunteers
- To retain and reuse skills – return on training investment

Barriers to engagement	Mitigation
High investment of time and funds	Dedicated staff to manage and oversee the volunteers in the specialist areas
Space	New spaces for volunteers are being created as part of the capital works programme
Managing varying degree of need	Staff member to have equality and diversity training and to develop personal learning plans that highlight additional needs
Time	Provide projects that vary in scale to suit participants varying time commitment
Travel	Offer travel expenses for duration
NLHF outcomes	
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	

Specific activities to be delivered as part of strand

Interpretation

3A – Developing Interpretation: Researching and digitising archives

5 x volunteers will be recruited to undertake research and digitisation of archives at Gwynedd Archives and within the FfWHR archive to support the development of content for the interpretation across the rail network and Boston Lodge Works. Will be overseen by the Interpretation Officer but coordinated by the Interpretation trainee.

3B – Developing Interpretation: Tell me a story

5 x trained volunteers will collate and record memories and stories from FfWHR staff and volunteers, and from local residents with personal, family or historic connections to the railway. The stories will contribute to the interpretation across the rail network and Boston Lodge Works and be preserved on an online accessible platform. Will be overseen by the Interpretation Officer but coordinated by the Interpretation trainee.

3C – Developing Interpretation: New interpretation at hubs, mini-hubs and interpretation points

5 x volunteers will support the development of activities will support new permanent interpretation at key connection points along the FfWHR route using information from the archive research (Activity 3A) and oral history (Activity 3D) and undertake training to support new displays beyond the life of the Project. Will be overseen by the Interpretation Officer but coordinated by the Interpretation trainee.

3D – Developing the guided tour of Boston Lodge Works

The guided tour content and range of tours available will be developed initially by 5 x volunteers, supported by the Interpretation Officer. The tours will be piloted and tested prior to their offering to the public and will continue to evolve as a result of feedback from the participants.

3E – Learning to be a guide

Guided tours at Boston Lodge Works (Activity 5B) will be delivered by a body of trained volunteer guides. 20 volunteer guides will be recruited and trained to deliver the guided tours. Will be overseen by the Interpretation Officer. The training will be extended to all ‘hosts’ and all customer-facing staff and volunteers working across the railway.

3F – Becoming a trainer and workshop leader

10 x volunteers will be recruited to support the delivery of skills training and workshops. To support the work of the Training Events and Workshops Supervisor.

Engineering

3G – Engineering volunteer skills and knowledge transfer programme

Building and improving on the well-established work parties that take place at the railway a programme will be developed by the Engineering Volunteer Supervisor that uses specific work parties and projects to facilitate the development of volunteer leaders and transfer of skills.

Skills of volunteers will be audited to identify current skills held and gaps in their skillset. For each work party/project a training plan and individual learning plans (with progression pathways) will be developed. This will ensure that the current skills of volunteers are passed on to others, including new starters. Further training requirements will be identified by Training Events and Workshops Supervisor who will arrange for specific training to be delivered. Work placements will be involved in the work parties and projects.

There will be 3 x work parties/projects per year over the course of the Project that will explore this model. Up to 12 volunteers per party/project, some of which will naturally move on to the next project. Initial projects for developing the programme include:

- Renovation of x 12 slate wagons
- Renovation of lift wagon turntables

Further work parties/projects will be developed in consultation with the volunteers, to ensure that they are included in the decision-making process and so that future projects can accommodate and nurture skills development.

4. Strand 4 – Skills training and workshops

Description

A programme of skills training and workshops will be delivered as part of the Project to provide opportunities:

- For staff, volunteers, trainees and work placements to develop skills
- To explore the specialist skills that are being undertaken as part of the capital works programme
- For a wider audience, including local communities (in particular schools), and railway visitors to have deeper, meaningful heritage learning experiences

Where appropriate, workshops and training will be documented by way of short video, to be used in marketing material (online, including social media), support the development of a Project record and provide material for future volunteer training. Workshop plans will also be developed so that they can be delivered and repeated by new staff/volunteers beyond the life of the project.

Target audience

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Families (at weekends and school holidays)
- Adults on holiday (increasingly during the shoulder season)
- Ardent rail enthusiasts
- Local people attending special events
- Schools in communities on the FfWHR routes Gwynedd YP
- Young people in Gwynedd looking to develop skills
- Older people at risk of social isolation
- Adults working or living in stressful environments

Need/opportunity

When working on the locos what seem to interest the passengers is people doing a job you don't really see any more. I get a lot of questions about what it's like working on the engines because people know very little about it. I think the same can be applied from an engineering perspective. Lots of people are probably familiar with the modern engineering techniques you can see at Boston Lodge. It is the older skills that really need to be shown, such as blacksmithing with a hearth and anvil, joining parts with hot rivets, shaping components with a steam hammer, or even something as simple as drilling a hole without an electric drill. It is difficult to imagine how they built and maintained this railway in a quiet corner of North Wales, with the equipment they had back then. Being able to show people would be far better than just looking at some old things in an old building (volunteer consultation respondent)

Our children spotted a kids week train at Tan y Bwlch, led to then attending and helping with Kids Week food and projects with Alan Norton including benches, Bobby Box (Porthmadog Signal Box), Relay and Signal box at Porthmadog, Gweithdy Project and currently Tan y Bwlch bridge repainting (volunteer consultation respondent)

We will be using slate as a waste material in the ground, as flooring material, as wall structure and elsewhere as wall coverings and roof. There is also historic slate on site which we will record and lift. We will also be building slate rubble walls and slate hanging - there are skills of interest there too.

Need

- Experiences that showcase and highlight skills that are being undertaken by the railway at Boston Lodge Works
- Workshop space that is relevant to current and historic activities
- Dedicated training space for workshops
- Suitably trained individuals/professionals to deliver the training

Opportunity

- Visitor survey said:
 - 56% would like to learn how to drive a train
- Schools expressed an interest in on-site, hands-on workshops
- To build on Kids' Week capacity
- To generate income generation to support the business

Barriers to engagement

Mitigation

High investment of time and funds

Dedicated staff to manage and oversee the skills training and workshops

Cost of participation

Training for staff and volunteers will not be charged but provided as part of their ongoing development.

A range of offers required to meet range of interests and price points will be offered to other professionals and volunteers and the public.

<p>Certification for public facilities at Boston Lodge Works</p>	<p>Identify relevant quality assurance certification e.g. Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge</p>
<p>NLHF outcomes</p>	
<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 7</p>	
<p>Specific activities to be delivered as part of strand</p>	
<p>4A – Specialist heritage learning</p> <p>A specialist heritage learning programme for FfWHR staff, volunteers and other participants e.g. staff and volunteers working on other heritage railways, will support skills understanding and development both within the organisation and the wider heritage sector. There will be 20 workshops over the course of the project, each lasting between 1-2 days, per year for up to 12 participants. Courses will be delivered by current staff and volunteers where the skills are present. Course material will be developed for each in order that courses can be repeated in the future. Where necessary, as projects demand, external professional instructors will be recruited to deliver the courses. The programme will be informed by the staff and volunteer skills audit, the training requirement for the volunteer engineering projects and gaps in staff skillset. In particular, the training programme will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riveting (slate wagons) • Blacksmithing (slate wagons) • Train driving • Engine maintenance • Carriage restoration • Communication and interpretation of railway heritage – for all hosts and customer facing staff and volunteers <p>FfWHR’s marketing staff will record material from the sessions to use to promote volunteering during the Project and at FfWHR. The material will also be used to support new volunteer training.</p> <p>4B – Project awareness workshops</p> <p>Specialist heritage contractors will demonstrate skills and equipment during the capital works, explaining the history and significance of those skills, and how these fit into the NLHF project and the work of FfWHR. FfWHR staff and volunteers will be invited to contribute where there are crossovers into their areas of work.</p> <p>12 x 2-3 hour workshops with up to x 12 participants will take place at weekends. They will raise awareness of the heritage skills used, advocate for the project and encouraging more people to think about volunteering. The workshops will be for FfWHR staff and volunteers, other contractors working on the capital works, and offered to the local community. Workshops will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage masonry skills • Heritage project management – lifting and recording historic building fabric for replacement • Heritage joinery skills • Use of slate, i.e. roofing, walling • Lime render • Heritage paints • Track-laying • Metal structures and cladding • Electrical engineering <p>FfWHR’s marketing staff will record material from the sessions to publish online as short videos to</p>	

promote awareness of the significance of FfWHR and the Project, record Project activity and used to train new volunteers, especially the volunteer tour guides who can include detail in the guided tours.

4C - Schools workshops and experiences

A schools workshops programme will be developed, to take place on school premises with follow-ups at Boston Lodge Works, to explore FfWHR's heritage and history, in particular its local and regional significance, but focus on the range of roles that are undertaken at Boston Lodge Works to encourage young people to think about a work placement at the railway. The workshops will showcase a range of working roles at the railway including heritage railway skills, e.g. carriage painting, which can be demonstrated both in school and in the training suite at Boston Lodge Works (where practicable) using low-cost, low-technology equipment. 10 x volunteers will be trained by the Training Events and Workshops Supervisor to deliver this activity. Volunteers will be bilingual, or translation services will be provided.

The programme will be offered to primary age pupils in local schools, to showcase the offer at FfWHR and engage the local community. The programme will comprise:

- Pilot workshop development in partnership with 1 x local school: 3 sessions with 1 x local school
- Main programme: up to 8 during NLHF Project delivery with x 20 participants at each

Bilingual workshop plans and resources will be developed so that the sessions can be delivered in future by other/new volunteers.

4D - Public workshops

Paid experiences that highlight the work at FfWHR and Boston Lodge Works, will encourage the local community and visitors to think about volunteering and allow the organisation to explore avenues for income generation. Workshops will be delivered by trained volunteers. 12 x 2-3 hour workshops will be delivered during the project, to paying participants drawn from visitors and local residents. The experience of this activity will enable FfWHR to develop a programme of paid-for experiences that can be continued after the life of the NLHF project. Workshops will include:

- How a steam engine works
- How to drive a steam train
- Blacksmithing
- Hot riveting

There will be a specific offer for families with children at weekends and during the school holiday and there will be provision for adult visitors during the week.

5. Strand 5 – Guided tours of Boston Lodge Works

Description

A programme of guided tours will be developed to tie in with the new interpretation.

'Behind the scenes' tours during the capital works fit-out of Boston Lodge Works will raise awareness of the Project and the work of FfWHR, especially at Boston Lodge Works, among invited groups of stakeholders, FfWHR staff and volunteers, project partners, local residents and businesses. Tours will include an introductory talk by a member of the Project Team, and will each have specific focus to reflect the nature and interest of the invited group and/or specific areas of the conservation work.

A public-facing guided tour programme will provide visitors with deeper engagement with the railway’s heritage. Visitors will be escorted by volunteer tour guides around Boston Lodge Works, showcasing its history, current role, and focus on demonstrating and showcasing heritage skills.

A virtual tour will be made available on the FfWHR website to access online. The virtual tour will be promoted through existing FfWHR social media and other channels.

Target audience

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Families (at weekends and school holidays)
- Adults on holiday (increasingly during the shoulder season)
- Ardent rail enthusiasts
- Local people attending special events
- Local people with family connections
- Schools in communities on the FfWHR routes

Need/opportunity

“can we arrange that tours allow looking into the machine shops” (volunteer consultation respondent)

“maybe a digital tour. Needs to be available at any time not dictated to by a volunteer timetable” (volunteer consultation respondent)

People like stories and to have a storyteller – this is a very Welsh thing, it’s in the creation of the whole country. To have a storyteller tour guide is very Welsh (Steering Group Consultee)

[Tour] *“Brings the history of the site to life”* (Bygone Weekend Participant)

Everyone’s got to be trained by the same person in the same way – everyone that goes away gets the same experience (Steering Group Consultee)

- 86% of FfWHR rail users surveyed were interested in a tour of Boston Lodge Works.
- 89% of FfWHR rail users surveyed were interested in seeing traditional heritage workers craftsmen / engineers / joiners at work.
- Of community survey respondents living locally (in Gwynedd), 89% were interested in a tour of Boston Lodge Works, rising to 92% for those responding in the Welsh language.
- Of community survey respondents living locally (in Gwynedd), 25% were interested in Welsh-language tours of Boston Lodge Works, rising to 92% for those responding in the Welsh language.

Need

- Interpretive guiding and essential customer-facing training for staff and volunteers
- Supervisory role
- Develop ‘script’

- Co-curation of tours with existing staff and volunteers (to capture knowledge/stories) and local community
- Embed Welsh language and culture

Opportunity

- To present early history and operation through people, skills and achievements – past, present and future
- Storytelling/live interpretation approach
- To be offered as part of a package
- Well-trained volunteers as part of ongoing activity delivery team
- Meaningful involvement of staff and volunteers through co-curation
- Tours can be easily adapted and added to over time
- Virtual tours can maximise engagement

Barriers to engagement	Mitigation
Live working environment and safety	Use only established safe routes through Boston Lodge Works site Utilise safe work zones that separate tour guide routes except in specified areas where tour groups observing work safely are programmed Ensure that existing safe works procedures and methods statements reflect the new guided tour activity Establish safe maximum size and guide : visitor ratios for tour groups Design appropriate risk assessment and safety procedures
Requires careful planning and programming	Design appropriate risk assessment and safety procedures Plan guided tours in advance Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of when and where tours are taking place
Children often excluded from tours at comparator sites	Each tour group party should have a maximum number of children, where that number is the same as the number of additional guides necessary to enable safe transit to / from welfare facilities during the tour for families with children. Virtual tour should be accessible for and contain interest for younger viewers

NLHF outcomes

1, 2, 5, 8, 9

Specific activities to be delivered as part of strand

5A – Capital works tours

12x ‘behind-the-scenes’ tours (one per month) will take place at weekends during the capital works phase. Tours to be led by the General Manager and Project Manager, with construction and specialist contractors as appropriate to highlight the specific conservation work. They will provide invited guests with access to the capital works and insights into the wider project benefits, raise awareness of the conservation, restoration and building (including the skills used) and communicate the need for conservation.

They will showcase the NLHF Project to a wider audience including partners, stakeholders, the local community and local businesses. A further 12 x tours, specifically for staff and volunteers will ensure that the whole organisation is kept informed of the Project’s progress.

Tours will be bespoke delivered according to the focus of the particular group. Tours will be offered to the following groups:

- Partners
- Stakeholders
- Other heritage railways
- Teachers/staff at local schools, colleges
- Local community
- Local businesses

5B – Storytelling guided tours

Storytelling guided tours will reveal the historic Boston Lodge Works and tell the story of the people that work there. The tours will be developed by the Interpretation Officer with support from an external trainer, the Interpretation Trainee and volunteers. Volunteers will receive training to deliver the guided tours.

The escorted chargeable tours will be developed to tie in with and enhance the on-site interpretation. Tours will last up to 45 minutes, escorting small groups of visitors (20 maximum) along agreed, well-planned safe routes through specific zones of the Boston Lodge Works, with a focus on demonstrating heritage skills and activities.

There will be specific tours for target audiences including:

- Family tours – x 10 per year (Easter, May half-term, Summer and October half-term)
- Adult tours – x 26 per year (one per week)
- Bespoke/ad-hoc tours for specific groups and Welsh language tours – x 20 per year

There will be ongoing assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of the tours in order that they evolve according to target audience needs and interests over time and to accommodate information about new projects being undertaken at Boston Lodge Works.

5C – Virtual tour of Boston Lodge Works

Time-lapse record and virtual tour of Boston Lodge Works during the capital works phase and then following the interpretation fit-out will be made available on the FfWHR website to increase and widen access to the experience. The virtual tour will be promoted through existing FfWHR social media and other channels.

Managing the activities

The Project Steering Group will assume oversight over the delivery of the Activity Plan, with new and existing staff members responsible for day-to-day delivery.

6. New positions

These new staff roles have evolved and refined since the Round 1 submission presented anticipated roles. The new staff roles reflect the scope and scale of the project activities where revised since that

stage. It is clearer now how much staff training, audience engagement and volunteer development is proposed, and how those can best be allocated amongst proposed positions.

The new staffing roles to deliver the project comprise:

- 1 x Project Manager (3-year FT (1.0) post) who will: provide day to day project management (including coordination of Consultants and management of Project Costs), supported by a Project Continuity Coordinator who will support the PM's induction and ensure continuity between the initial project concept and development phase. The PM will coordinate the input of the Activities team during the delivery phase including ensuring that they can deliver activities in the context of an operational workshop and active building site.
- 1 x Work Placement Supervisor (3-year PT (0.6) post) who will:
 - manage the trainee positions;
 - administer trainees' qualifications;
 - develop and maintain bespoke training plans for trainees;
 - develop and maintain work placement training plans;
 - deliver outreach to recruit work placements and volunteers; and
 - liaise with the FfWHR marketing department to support advertising and recruitment
- 1 x Engineering Volunteer Supervisor (2-year FT post) who will:
 - develop the engineering skills learning and knowledge transfer programme;
 - arrange work parties and projects;
 - develop training plans in individual learning plans for volunteer and work placements;
 - supervise volunteers and work placements; and
 - manage the health and safety and welfare for all programme participants
- 1 x Training Events and Workshops Supervisor (2-year FT post) who will:
 - arrange 10 x heritage learning courses per year;
 - develop and maintain workshop plans and materials;
 - arrange staff and volunteers to support and deliver events and workshops;
 - arrange for contractors/professionals to deliver events and workshops; and
 - liaise with FfWHR marketing to record events and workshops
 - deliver training to become a trainer and workshop leader
 - programme and deliver specialist heritage learning, schools workshops and experiences and public workshops
- 1 x Interpretation Supervisor (2-year FT post) who will:
 - supervising the interpretation trainee (activity 1c);
 - develop training plans and individual learning plans for interpretation volunteers (across activities 3A, 3E, 3G, 3F and 3B);
 - develop training plans in individual learning plans for interpretation work placements;

- managing interpretation volunteers (across activities 3A, 3E, 3G, 3F and 3B)
- liaising with Interpretation contractors
- supporting interpretation volunteers to develop tours (3F)
- support delivery of the virtual tour

Support to deliver the activities

7. Volunteers

Volunteers remain central to the delivery of the organisation and Project aims. Specific roles (**descriptions to be developed**) will be created for:

Interpretation

- Archive and digitisation
- Tell me a story (memory collection)
- Developing new interpretation
- Developing the guided tour
- Guided tour leader
- Training and workshop leader

Engineering

- Work party/project

Volunteer strategy and training plan to be completed

8. Partnerships

Key partners involved in the delivery of this Activity Plan will be:

- **Careers Wales** – in order to support work placement outreach and engagement with schools
- **North Wales Training** – in order to support and recruit work placements
- **Bangor University** – in order to support and recruit traineeships and work placements
- **Gwirfoddoli Cymru (Volunteering Wales)** – to recruit a wider range of people to volunteering opportunities
- **Local school** – TBC, to develop the schools workshops and experiences
- **Snowdonia National Park** – in particular the Young Ambassadors
- **Local businesses**

9. Marketing and promotion of the activities

To be completed

Costs

At a glance:

New staff costs	Training for staff	Paid training placements	Training for volunteers	Travel and expenses for staff	Travel and expenses for volunteers	Event costs	Equipment and materials	Other costs	Professional Fees
420000	7000	144000	7500	400	2600	2000	7800	2360	1500

Notes:

- Bank of PPE to be available for use by volunteers, visitors, work placements and visitors to Boston Lodge Works
- A hardship fund will be established to enable volunteers to claim travel and expenses for their participation in the Project

Evaluation and measures of success

To be completed with input from evaluation consultants

Sharing lessons learnt

To be completed

Longer-term benefits

To be completed

Sustainability

To be completed



Step 3 – Action Plan

Activity: detailed description	Audience	Benefits for people	NLHF Outcome	Resources	Costs in Delivery Phase budget	Timetable	Targets and measures of success	Methods of evaluation
1. Traineeships								
1A 1 x Project Management Trainee To work alongside Project Manager at Delivery phase and mentored internally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Volunteers Young people in Gwynedd Looking to develop skills 	FFWHR has a large historic built estate. Ensures that the learning from this project is retained within FFWHR/heritage sector Entry opportunity for heritage work poss of employment at FFWHR qualifications gained	1, 4, 7, 8, 9	Time input of FFWHR staff (recruitment and mentoring); time input of Project Manager Office space (Plas Smart) and mess facilities	£62,000 for 3 year traineeship if paid Living Wage for over 25s of (notional) Year 1 £8.50ph = (£17,720 pa) Year 2 £9.00ph = (£18,720 pa) Year 3 £9.50ph = (£19,760 pa) plus 10% allow- ance for employer NI and pension contribution. Recruitment costs £500 IT - £1000 Safety gear - £100 Training/qualification - £1000 per year	Jul 21 - Jun 24 Duration: 3 years from start of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective in attracting quality candidates (S list of 6) qualification gained quality of trainee experience trainee makes increasing contribution towards project management over 3 years; good understanding of project; planning ability; effective communication; good project progress reports to PM and Board submitted regularly trainee moves into further training or employment at FFWHR or elsewhere (other h. railway, l authority, national parks, CADW etc) 	regular formal appraisals trainee evaluation at key stages
1B 1 x Operations Management trainee. To work alongside BLW Works Administrator and the Engineering Volunteer Supervisor and mentored internally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Volunteers Young people in Gwynedd Looking to develop skills 	rare opportunity to develop transferable skills specific to the heritage world. Will give an understanding of the heritage/specialised supply chain. May appeal to someone who had not previously considered a career in heritage	1, 4, 7, 8, 9	Time input of FFWHR staff (recruitment and mentoring); time input of BLW staff in providing training. Office space and mess facilities Possibly share training of trainee with other heritage railways	£41,000 for 2 year traineeship Recruitment costs £500 IT - £500 Safety gear - £100 Training/qualification - £1000 per year	Jul 22 - Jun 24 Duration: 2 years from start of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective in attracting quality candidates (S list of 6) qualification gained quality of trainee experience trainee moves into further training or employment at FFWHR or elsewhere (other h. railway, l authority, national parks, CADW etc) 	regular formal appraisals trainee evaluation at key stages
1C 1 x Interpretation trainee. To work alongside the Interpretation Supervisor and be mentored by Interpretation Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Volunteers Young people in Gwynedd Looking to develop skills 	trainee will learn about how to develop heritage interpretation, recruit and work with external experts and volunteer groups (archives and tour guides) qualifications gained possibility of employment with FFWHR	1, 4, 7, 8, 9	Time input of FFWHR staff (recruitment and mentoring); time input of Interpretation Supervisor time input of BLW staff in providing training. Time input of Interpretation Consultant Office space and mess facilities	£41,000 for two year traineeship IT and software - £600 Recruitment costs - £500 Uplift to Interpretation consultant's fee to mentor Mentoring covered by Interpretation Plan costs Training/qualification - £1000 per year	Jul 21 - Jun 23 Duration: 2 years from start of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective in attracting quality candidates (S list of 6) qualification gained quality of trainee experience trainee moves into further training or employment at FFWHR or elsewhere (other h. railway, l authority, national parks, CADW etc) 	regular formal appraisals trainee evaluation at key stages
2 Work placements and outreach								
2A Work placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers Schools in communities on the FFWHR routes Young people in Gwynedd Looking to develop skills 	reach out to more people pre-work experience so they know what we do and "routes in" to heritage work/volunteering recruitment of volunteers	1, 4, 5	Time input of Work Placement Supervisor time input of railway/BLW staff to host Website page; induction/lunch/social activities; mess facilities	Allowance for PPE for work placements (to contribute to shared pot) = £500 £50 pw allowance for 20 x participants. North Wales Training supply £50 subs to participants to cover travel	Jul 22 - Jun 24	engaging 20 young people per visit; 20 x work experience places per year	number of work experience places per year feedback from work experience (staff, volunteers and young people)
2B Work placement outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers Schools in communities on the FFWHR routes Young people in Gwynedd Looking to develop skills 	reach out to more people pre-work experience so they know what we do and 'routes in' to heritage work/volunteering recruitment of volunteers	1, 4, 5	Time input of Work Placement Supervisor; Development of materials for outreach; Website page	Travel for outreach by Work Placement Supervisor - £80 per year (for two years £160); Design and print of materials for outreach - £180 Staff time Translation costs £500 In-kind contribution from FFWHR marketing for video outreach	Jan 22 - Jun 24	4 outreach sessions per year	number of outreach visits made number of young people engaged feedback from sessions
2C Volunteer outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers 	reach out to more people so they know what we do and the variety of 'routes in' to heritage volunteering	1, 5, 6, 8	Time input of staff time input of Project staff, according to role Development of materials for outreach; Website page; induction/lunch/social activities;	Travel for outreach by Work Placement Supervisor - £80 per year (for three years £240); design and print of materials for outreach - £180 Translation costs £500 £1,000 for awards and development days in-kind contribution from FFWHR marketing for video outreach	Jul 21 - Jun 24	4 outreach sessions per year	number of outreach visits made number of volunteers recruited
3. Volunteer Projects								

3A Developing Interpretation: Researching and digitising archives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Volunteers • Ardent railway enthusiasts • Local people with family connections • Older people at risk of social isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new thread of volunteering activity - a new route into engagement with FFWRH 	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time input of Interpretation Supervisor (recruitment, organisation) and Interpretation Traineeship; a place to meet; mess facilities, access/travel to archive materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5x Interpretation volunteers • Volunteer training (£450) from external trainer - Gwynedd archives? • 1d training per volunteer • 3d per volunteer • Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £100 • Camera / SD card storage equipment = £250 	<p>Jul 21 - Dec 22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a new volunteer team that meet regularly. Aim to attract 5 volunteers to this group by end of delivery phase • Support development of interpretation that will appeal to many different audiences (250k) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feedback from volunteers (regular surveys) • feedback from audiences of their work (eg new tours, exhibitions) • Passenger and visitors surveys • - all audiences feel their interests have been catered for
3B Developing Interpretation: Tell me a story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Volunteers • Ardent railway enthusiasts • Local people with family connections • Older people at risk of social isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new thread of volunteering activity - a new route into engagement with FFWRH 	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time input of Interpretation Supervisor (recruitment, organisation) and Interpretation Traineeship; a place to meet; mess facilities, access/travel to archive materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5x Story collection volunteers • Volunteer training (£450) from external trainer / Interpretation Consultant • 1d training per volunteer • 3d per volunteer • Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £100 • Recording equipment - £250 	<p>Jul 21 - Dec 22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a new volunteer team that meet regularly. Aim to attract 5 volunteers to this group by end of delivery phase • Support development of interpretation that will appeal to many different audiences (250k) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feedback from volunteers (regular surveys) • feedback from audiences of their work (eg new tours, exhibitions) • Passenger and visitors surveys • - all audiences feel their interests have been catered for
3C Developing Interpretation: New interpretation at hubs, mini-hubs and interpretation points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Volunteers • Ardent railway enthusiasts • Local people with family connections • Older people at risk of social isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new thread of volunteering activity - a new route into engagement with FFWRH 	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time input of Interpretation Supervisor (recruitment, organisation) and Interpretation Traineeship; a place to meet; mess facilities, access/travel to archive materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5x Exhibition Volunteers • Volunteer training (£450) from external trainer / Interpretation Consultant • 1d training per volunteer • 3d per volunteer • Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £100 	<p>Jul 21 - Dec 22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a new volunteer team that meet regularly. Aim to attract 5 volunteers to this group by end of delivery phase • Support development of interpretation that will appeal to many different audiences (250k) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feedback from volunteers (regular surveys) • feedback from audiences of their work (eg new tours, exhibitions) • Passenger and visitors surveys • - all audiences feel their interests have been catered for
3D Developing the guided tour of Boston Lodge Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Volunteers • Ardent railway enthusiasts • Local people with family connections • Older people at risk of social isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new thread of volunteering activity - a new route into engagement with FFWRH • learning new transferable skills (a route to employment) • combats isolation/greater wellbeing 	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time input of Interpretation Supervisor (recruitment, organisation) and Interpretation Traineeship; a place to meet; mess facilities, access/travel to archive materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5x Tour Development volunteers • 1d training from external trainer - how to develop a guided tour • 1d training support for co-curation • 1d training provided by external trainers [3d external trainer/s @ £450pd] • Volunteers continue to develop content over 3d, piloting and testing tours • 6d total each • Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £100 	<p>Jul 22 - Jun 23</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a new volunteer team that meet regularly. Aim to attract 5 volunteers to this group by end of delivery phase • Support development of the guided tour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation of training by volunteer guides • visitor feedback from tours
3E Learning to be a Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Volunteers • Ardent railway enthusiasts • Local people with family connections • Older people at risk of social isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new thread of volunteering activity - a new route into engagement with FFWRH • learning new transferable skills (a route to employment) • combats isolation/greater wellbeing 	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time input of Interpretation Supervisor (recruitment, organisation) and Interpretation Traineeship; a place to meet; mess facilities, access/travel to archive materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20x guiding volunteers • 8d external training • customer care training (1d = £450) • equality training (1d = £450) • how to deliver guided tours (2d = £900) • 'Train the trainers for key team members' to be delivered by Interpretation Supervisor • Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £100 	<p>Jan 23 - Jun 24</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 volunteer guides recruited and trained over the course of the delivery phase • Guides enjoy the training • Interpretation Supervisor feels competent to deliver effective training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation of training by volunteer guides • visitor feedback from tours
3F Becoming a trainer and workshop leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Volunteers • Ardent railway enthusiasts • Local people with family connections • Older people at risk of social isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new thread of volunteering activity - a new route into engagement with FFWRH • learning new transferable skills (a route to employment) • combats isolation/greater wellbeing 	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time input of Training Events and Workshops Supervisor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training provided by Training and Events Workshop Supervisor • Customer care and equality costs covered in Activity 3B • 4d training; 10x 4 x £10pd = £400 • Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £100 	<p>Jun 22 - Jun 24</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 x volunteer trainers and workshop leaders • Volunteers enjoy the training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation of training by volunteers • visitor feedback from tours
3G Engineering volunteer skills and knowledge transfer programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Volunteers • Ardent railway enthusiasts • Local people with family connections • Older people at risk of social isolation • Adults working or living in stressful environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an opportunity to learn transferable skills from experts in a safe and inspiring environment • A new/rejuvenated route into volunteering at FFWRH 	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time input of the Engineering Volunteers and the Training Events and Workshops Supervisors • A place to work; access to equipment (Blacksmith shop, Iron foundry, old machine shop); training; access to showers and rest area • safety equipment/materials for projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 x working parties (1 party per 2 x Quarters) • 12 volunteers per party; 10d per party = 360 volunteer days • Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £500 • Allowance for PPE (to contribute to shared pot) = £1000 • Materials for projects £2K 	<p>Jun 22 - Jun 24</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 x volunteers • Volunteers enjoy the training • XX heritage assets conserved and restored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • volunteer recruitment and retention • feedback from volunteers
4 Skills training and workshops								

4A Specialist heritage learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Volunteers Ardent rail enthusiasts Adults working or living in stressful environments 	skills training for wide range of people (young people, heritage sector staff and volunteers); respite and dressing; social involvement and wider network of meaningful relationships	1, 2, 3, 4	Time input of the Engineering Volunteers and the Training Events and Workshops Supervisors mainly internal instructors but recruit external trainers/contractors where necessary Safety equipment/clothing Materials average of £100 per session Advertising/promotion rule of thumb courses that provide benefits to the Railway (eg skills training for staff and volunteers or volunteer recruitment and development initiatives) will be free of charge. Other courses/experiences will be subject to charge	20 workshops for up to 12 participants each Delivered by staff and volunteers External instructor fees - £3,000 Allowance for PPE for participants (to contribute to shared pot) = £500 Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £50 In-kind marketing support from FWHR Marketing Dept Some income generation from course charges	Jul 22 - Jun 24	Positive feedback; evidence of progression from attending workshop (eg to signing up for newsletter, becoming a supporter or volunteer, attending another skills workshop). 20 workshops with 12 x people attending each	feedback forms, monitoring whether attendee has progressed to further engagement with FWHR after attending a workshop	
4B - Project awareness workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Volunteers Ardent rail enthusiasts Local people attending special events 	attendees will feel informed about and engaged with the project. They will learn about further opportunities to get involved. It may spark interest in volunteering	1, 2, 3, 4	time Project Manager to organise and coordinate contractor input. Time input of contractors (written into their contracts); time away from job for staff marketing/advertising	Staff time provided FOC by contractors as part of their brief Marketing support from FWHR Marketing Dept	Jan 22 - Dec 23	12 x workshops over the course of the project. 12 people attending each session.	feedback from attendees (with mechanism to incorporate lessons learnt in future workshops)	
4C - Schools workshops and experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers Schools in communities on the FWHR routes Gwynedd YP 	attendees will feel informed about and engaged with the project. They will learn about further opportunities to get involved. It may spark interest in volunteering	1, 3, 5	Time of Training Events and Workshops Supervisor Volunteers to support delivery marketing/advertising	propose full cost recovery through charging for workshops @ BLW £1500 to support local school involvement in the development of the workshops and experiences £1500 to support external Professional Heritage Educator to create resources Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £50 Translation Costs £500 In-kind marketing support from FWHR Marketing Dept	Jul 23 - Jun 24	9 x school sessions with 20 pupils at each 10 x volunteers trained Positive feedback from teachers and pupils	feedback from attendees (with mechanism to incorporate lessons learnt in future sessions)	
4D - Public workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults on holiday (increasingly during the shoulder season) Ardent rail enthusiasts Local people attending special events Adults working or living in stressful environments 	attendees will engage with and learn about the heritage of the railway. Public will learn about further opportunities to get involved. It may spark interest in volunteering	1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9	Time of Training Events and Workshops Supervisor marketing/advertising	propose full cost recovery through charging for workshops @ BLW. Initial £500 set-up costs Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £200 In-kind marketing support from FWHR Marketing Dept Full costs recovery	Oct 23 - Jun 24	12 x workshops over the course of the project. 12 people attending each session.	feedback from attendees (with mechanism to incorporate lessons learnt in future workshops)	
5 Guided tours of Boston Lodge Works									
5A - Capital works tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Volunteers Ardent rail enthusiasts Local people attending special events Local people with family connections 	attendees will feel informed about and engaged with the project. They will learn about further opportunities to get involved. It may spark interest in volunteering	1, 3, 5	access by service train Time input of General Manager and Project Manager and marketing input	General Manager and Project Manager to lead tours, with construction manager and specialists as appropriate 12x tours for visitors Allowance for PPE (to contribute to shared pot) = £250 12x tours for FWHR staff and volunteers Marketing support from FWHR Marketing Department (promotion by email and telephone invitation)	Jan 22 - Jun 23	12 x tours (open invite and for specific groups) during the capital works phase with 20 people attending each one 12 x tours for staff and volunteers with 20 people attending each = c 480	Feedback from guides and visitors	

5B - Storytelling guided tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Volunteers • Families (at weekends and school holidays) • Adults on holiday (increasingly during the shoulder season) • Tour groups and international visitors • Ardent rail enthusiasts • Local people attending special events • Local people with family connections • Schools in communities on the FWHR routes 	<p>formalises and step change increases in number of visitors to the site. Visitors and others will be safer on the site. General public will be aware of availability of tours and will learn more about the heritage</p>	<p>1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9</p>	<p>Time input Interpretation Supervisor and Interpretation Trainee Volunteer input</p>	<p>Training and volunteer training expenses covered under Activity 3B Volunteer Expenses hardship fund - £200 Allowance for PPE (to contribute to shared pot) = £250 Marketing budget- £1000 Marketing support from FWHR Marketing Department</p>	<p>Jul 23 - Jun 24</p>	<p>56 x tours during project delivery with maximum of 20 people attending each = c 1,120</p>	<p>Feedback from guides and visitors</p>
5C - Virtual tour of Boston Lodge Works	<p>All</p>	<p>Provides access to the heritage for a greater number of people</p>	<p>1, 3, 5</p>	<p>Time input of Interpretation Supervisor and Interpretation Trainee Marketing support</p>	<p>Translation costs £500 Virtual Tour Production £500 In-kind contribution from FWHR marketing for virtual tour production and promotion</p>	<p>Apr 23 - Aug 23</p>	<p>Hits on website/YouTube</p>	<p>Comments</p>

#NAME? **NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Project**

START END NLHF R2 PTS END BLW FIT OUT END INTERP FIT OUT END OF NLHF 3 YEAR DELIVERY PERIOD

ACTIVITY PLAN PROGRAMME	2021	2022	2023	2024												
ACTIVITY NUMBER	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4

1 Traineeships

1A	Project Management trainee	Jul 21	Jun 24												
1B	Operations Management trainee	Jul 22	Jun 24												
1C	Interpretation trainee	Jul 21	Jun 23												

2 Work placements and outreach

2A	Work Placements	Jul 22	Jun 24												
2B	Work Placement Outreach	Jan 22	Jun 24												
2C	Volunteer Outreach	Jul 21	Jun 24												

3 Volunteer Projects

3A	Developing Interpretation: Researching and Digitising Archives	Jul 21	Dec 22												
3B	Developing Interpretation: Tell me a story	Jul 21	Dec 22												
3C	Developing Interpretation: New Exhibitions at Hubs and Mini-Hubs and other Interpretation Points	Jul 21	Dec 22												
3D	Developing the Guided Tour of Boston Lodge Works	Jul 22	Jun 23												
3E	Learning to be a Guide	Jan 23	Jun 24												
3F	Becoming a trainer and workshop leader	Jun 22	Jun 24												
3G	Engineering Volunteer Skills and Knowledge Transfer Programme	Jun 22	Jun 24												

4 Skills Training and Workshops

4A	Specialist heritage learning	Jul 22	Jun 24												
4B	Project awareness workshops	Jan 22	Dec 23												
4C	Schools Workshops and Experiences	Jul 23	Jun 24												
4D	Public Workshops	Oct 23	Jun 24												

5 Guided Tours of Boston Lodge Works

5A	Capital works tours	Jan 22	Jun 23												
5B	Storytelling Guided Tours	Jul 23	Jun 24												
5C	Virtual Tour of Boston Lodge Works	Apr 23	Aug 23												

STAFF POSTS		START	END	2021	2022	2023	2024
Project Manager	Jul 21	Jun 24					
Work Placement Supervisor (P/T)	Jul 21	Jun 24					
Engineering Volunteer Supervisor (F/T)	Jul 22	Jun 24					
Training Events and Workshops Supervisor (F/T)	Jul 22	Jun 24					
Interpretation Supervisor (F/T)	Jul 21	Jun 23					

OTHER PROFESSIONAL POSTS		START	END	2021	2022	2023	2024
Mentors for trainees	Jul 21	Jun 24					

Appendix: Consultation Report

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project

List of Consultees

Name	Role	Organisation
Adrian Strachan	Volunteer	FfWHR
Alan James	Volunteer	FfWHR
Alan Norton	Volunteer	FfWHR
Alasdair Williams	Volunteer	FfWHR
Aled Lloyd	Head of development	Snowdonia NPA
Andy Savage	Volunteer	FfWHR
Bernard Penfold	Volunteer	FfWHR
Bill Fazakerley	Volunteer	FfWHR
Bob Rainbow	Volunteer	FfWHR
Bob Zeepvat	Volunteer	FfWHR
Brian Coppins	Volunteer	FfWHR
Bruce Brayne	Volunteer	FfWHR
Chris Barry	Volunteer	FfWHR
Chris Franklin	Apprenticeship Manager	Llandrillo Menai
Chris Jones	Volunteer	FfWHR
Dafydd Thomas	Volunteer	FfWHR
David High	Volunteer	FfWHR
David Palmer	Volunteer	FfWHR
David Rankin	Volunteer	FfWHR
David Witcomb	Volunteer	FfWHR
Edwina Bell	Heritage Project Manager - Boston Lodge	FfWHR
Emma Stringer	Local teacher	
Glenn Williams	Carriage works manager	FfWHR
Graham Cole	Volunteer	FfWHR
Graham Little	Volunteer	FfWHR
Guy Meakin	Volunteer	FfWHR
Gwenan Pritchard	Wales Slate Coordinator	Gwynedd Council
Howard Wilson	Volunteer	FfWHR
Iain Wilkinson	Director of volunteering	Festiniog Railway Company
Ian Cook	Volunteer	FfWHR
James Gresham	Volunteer	FfWHR
Jim Comerford	Volunteer	FfWHR
John Edwards	Business engagement advisor	Careers Wales
Dr John Prideaux	Chair of Trust and FRCo Board	Festiniog Railway Company
Jonathan Robinson	Volunteer	FfWHR
Jonathan Walsh	Volunteer	FfWHR
Julian Scarisbrick	Volunteer	FfWHR
Kaz Spring	Training Programme Manager	FfWHR
Mark Temple	Volunteer	FfWHR
Matt Wolstenholme	Volunteer	FfWHR
Michael Hadley	Volunteer	FfWHR

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project

Myk Hammo	Volunteer	FfWHR
Nia Jeffreys	Councillor Porthmadog East	Gwynedd Council
Nick Booker	Volunteer	FfWHR
Nicola Jones	Skills for the Future Trainee - Interpretation	FfWHR
Norman Bond	Volunteer	FfWHR
Owen Abbott	Volunteer	FfWHR
Paul Bradshaw	Volunteer	FfWHR
Paul Davies	Volunteer	FfWHR
Paul Lewin	Operations Manager	FfWHR
Paul Molyneux Berry	Volunteer	FfWHR
Paul Wood	Volunteer	FfWHR
Pete Tarver	Volunteer	FfWHR
Peter Jamieson	Volunteer	FfWHR
Peter Tarver	Volunteer	FfWHR
Phil Hamsom	Volunteer	FfWHR
Phil Hawkins	Volunteer	FfWHR
Richard Horne	Volunteer	FfWHR
Richard Stagg	Volunteer	FfWHR
Rob Bishop	Volunteer	FfWHR
Robert Shrives	Volunteer	FfWHR
Roger DE	Volunteer	FfWHR
Rosalind Hamson	Volunteer	FfWHR
Sam Miller	Volunteer	FfWHR
Stephen Greig	Customer Services Manager/Caernarfon Station	FfWHR
Stephen Roscoe	Volunteer	FfWHR
Theo Rumens	Volunteer	FfWHR
Tim Elsby	Volunteer	FfWHR
Tony Williams	Boston Lodge Works Manager	FfWHR
Ulrich Dammgen	Volunteer	FfWHR
Vic Whittaker	Volunteer	FfWHR
Will High	Volunteer	FfWHR

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project

Bygones Weekend Surveys

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project

Bygones Weekend Survey

Introduction

In 2020 COVID 19 forced the cancellation of the traditional annual Victorian Vintage Weekend. It was replaced with a more-easily managed event called 'The Bygones Weekend'. This ran 9-11 October 2020.

Each event day included an outdoor tour of the Boston Lodge Works site. Up to 20 Ffestiniog Railway Society / Welsh Highland Railway Society members took part on these tours. Project leaders explained the NLHF project progress, buildings restoration and development.

Surveys were distributed to participants. 50 responses were collected.

Survey Responses

What did you think of your guided tour of Boston Lodge Works today? Please circle - 1=poor, 5=great

Please explain your rating

1 2 3 4 5

The tour participants overwhelmingly gave the tour a top 5 rating. Only one rated it 4. They appreciated the behind-the-scenes access and felt that the tour guide(s) explained the site very well and that the tours were very informative.

"Brings the history of the site to life" (Participant)

What one thing do you think people should know following a tour of Boston Lodge Works?

Tour participants felt that visitors should leave understanding that:

- The site is historically important
- Boston Lodge Works has a continuous heritage of serving the railways
- This Lodge Works is a busy working environment
- There is a huge amount of time and effort that goes into it
- What future projects and volunteering opportunities are.

If only one building/part of Boston Lodge Works could be included on a tour what would it be and why?

Responses varied immensely as to which one part of Boston Lodge Works should be included on a tour. The Erecting Shop, Loco workshop and Engine Sheds were consistently mentioned. The Assembly Shed, Works Shed, Carriage Shed and Blacksmiths were also mentioned. The Top Yard of the Erecting Shop was singled out for special mention by a handful of respondents.

What makes Boston Lodge Works unique?

Its special qualities were felt to be:

- First works still in use
- The work in progress
- The skills and expertise of the people who work there
- Completeness of the works, its variety, size and scale of the site
- Self-sufficiency
- Eclectic collection of stock
- That it complements appreciation of the heritage railway

Is there anything specific you saw that helped you better understand the Boston Lodge Works story?

Elements which helped participants understand the Boston Lodge Works story included:

- A well-explained tour (i.e. Paul's knowledge, the guide, first-hand experience of the tour guide, knowledge of the staff)
- Understanding the entire site (i.e. the whole yard, all of it, reclamation of land to build the carriage shed, the old tracks, how the old and new interact; the erecting shed shows how it all comes together)
- Explanation of/history of the buildings (i.e. Erecting shop, The restored Blacksmith's shop and interior, chimneys, old forge, Locomotive sheds and their development, stables, workshops, how much of it is original)
- Old machinery (including boilers)
- All the work going on, and projects under way

"Seeing it all together showed the WHOLE story"

Was there anything you found out about the railway or Boston Lodge Works that you didn't know before?

This particular audience, which included Ffestiniog Railway Society / Welsh Highland Railway Society members, learned some things they didn't know before:

- Locomotive history and ownership
- Persistent locomotive issues
- The scope of work needed to keep locomotives running, including work for other railways
- Understanding the site and its development, including its modern building conservation
- The horse-drawn history of the site
- The level of craftsmanship on site
- Penrhyn Road

“Too much to list”

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project

Rail User Surveys

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project

Rail User Surveys

Introduction

Rail users on the Ffestiniog Railway and the Welsh Highland Railway were invited to complete an online 'Survey Monkey' questionnaire. The survey questions explored responses to interpretation, activities and marketing. The survey was sent to rail passengers that had visited the Ffestiniog Railway and Welsh Highland Railway services during July-October 2020. 66 users responded to the Welsh Highland Railway survey, and 759 users responded to the Ffestiniog Railway survey.

Summary of Survey Responses

Q1 During your most recent visit, how would you rate your overall experience of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways (FfWHR)?

- 72% consider these attractions to be 'Excellent'
- 22% consider these attractions to be 'Good'

Q2 How did you hear about the reopening of the Ffestiniog Railway?

- 59% of respondents heard about the reopening through the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways website.
- 14% through social media
- 10% word-of-mouth

Q4 How often have you been on the FfWHR trains/visited the stations, including your most recent visit?

- 42% of Ffestiniog Railway users and 48% of Welsh Highland Railway users were first-time visitors
- 42% of users had never been on the Welsh Highlands Railway
- 41% of Welsh Highland Railway users were repeat visitors
- Most Welsh Highland Railway users had visited stations along the route
- 61% of Ffestiniog Railway users had never visited Caernarfon station and 41% had never visited Blaenau Ffestiniog station

Q10 What was your view on the ticket prices?

- 69% of people consider the pricing to be 'Reasonable'

Q11 Prior to your visit, did you expect to see Welsh signage along the Railway?

- 81% of people expected to see Welsh signage on the railway

Q12 Did the use of Welsh signage along the Ffestiniog Railway enhance your experience?

- 54% of people said that the used of Welsh signage enhanced their experience

Q13 During your most recent FfWHR train journey, what was the main reason for your visit?

- 21% wanted somewhere to take the children
- 57% of people cited ‘holiday’ as the main reason for their visit
- 28% identified as ‘Train enthusiasts’
- 39% ‘Wanted to view the local landscape and culture’

Q14 As a result of your most recent visit, to what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- 69% strongly agreed that they appreciated the local landscape following a visit
- On average, 53% of the respondents learnt something about the heritage (history, development of railway, slate industry, railway innovation) following their visit
- 29% disagreed that they saw Wales differently because they understood more about its industrial history following a visit
- 91% of people felt that industrial heritage was interesting and accessible

Q15 Children I brought with me on the train journey...

- 78% of respondents to the WHR survey did not travel with children
- 52% of respondents to the FR survey did not travel with children
- The majority of people travelling with children responded ‘agree’ to the prompts concerning enjoyment of learning and interactions with the heritage and staff and volunteers

Q16 Please give 3 words to describe your most recent FfWHR visit?

Top 10 answers

Enjoyable	238
Interesting	230
Relaxing	181
Fun	161
Safe	107
Scenic / Scenery	95
Exciting	70
Beautiful	69
Informative	51
Friendly	44

Q17 How likely are you to visit the FfWHR again?

- 88% of people were likely or very likely to return

Q18 Are you aware of the existence of FfWHR's Boston Lodge Works in Porthmadog which have serviced the Railway since it began?

- 54% of people were aware of Boston Lodge Works

Q19 Boston Lodge is the Engineering Works which has served the Railway since the 19th century. A project is currently underway which will allow visitors to visit in the future. Please rate the following in terms of your interest levels?

- 86% of people had moderate (35%) or great (51%) interest in having a tour of Boston Lodge Works. **This response received the (joint) second greatest weighted average in the dataset.**
- 89% of people had moderate (36%) or great (53%) interest in seeing traditional heritage workers craftsmen / engineers / joiners at work. **This response received the greatest weighted average in this dataset.**
- 78% of people had moderate (37%) or great (41%) interest in a hands-on experience in heritage craft skills / engineering / joinery
- 83% of people had moderate (29%) or great (54%) interest in learning how to drive a train. **This response received the (joint) second greatest weighted average in the dataset.**
- 42% of people showed moderate interest in attending a talk
- 69% showed little (30%) or no (39%) interest in learning Welsh language for a railway/engineering workplace
- 80% showed moderate (44%) or great (36%) interest in learning about Boston Lodge and FfWHR's heritage and history
- 73% showed little (25%) or no (48%) interest in volunteering. **This response received the lowest weighted average in the dataset.**

Q20 How likely are you to visit Boston Lodge Works when it is open to the public?

- 79% were likely or very likely to visit Boston Lodge Works when open to the public

Q21 If you are not likely to visit Boston Lodge Works when opened, could you provide your reasons?

- People not likely to visit Boston Lodge Works when open to the public cited distance as the main barrier

Q22 Do you live locally (defined as Gwynedd County)?

- 97% of respondents were not local to Gwynedd

Q23 If you are a local resident (Gwynedd County), please rate how important the Railway is to you?

- The small number of local rail users were very positive about the importance to the community of the railway, in particular because it provided a place for their family to visit

Q25 How long did you stay in the area?

- Most visitors to Gwynedd were staying for over 3 nights, with a 5-7 night stay being most popular

Q26 What kind of accommodation did you stay in?

- Self-catering was the preferred accommodation for visitors to Gwynedd. This reflects the findings of the Gwynedd Destination Management Plan, which are that “*Gwynedd has a disproportionate dependence on non-serviced accommodation...*”¹

Q27 Who did you travel with during your most recent visit?

- 52% of respondents were visiting with their family/relatives
- 39% were visiting with their partner

Q28 How many children were in your travelling group on your most recent visit?

- Groups visiting with one child only far outweighed the groups visiting with 2, 3 or 4.
- 69% of children in groups were under the age of 12

Q29 Are you?

- 57% of responses were from men

Q30 Are you?

- 77% respondents were aged over 45, with 45-54 the largest single age group. This broadly reflects the wider visitor profile for Gwynedd².

Q31 Are you?

- Most visitors were either employed (58%) or retired (25%)

Q32 Are you or is anyone in your travelling party disabled?

¹ Gwynedd Council 2013, *Gwynedd Destination Management Plan 2013-2020*, Appendix B p21

² Gwynedd Council 2013, *Gwynedd Destination Management Plan 2013-2020*, Appendix B p21

- Just over 1 in 10 users were either disabled themselves or in their party

Q33 Are you Welsh?

- 10% of the respondents were Welsh

Q35 Do you...

- Around 1.5% (13) of the respondents reported Welsh as a first language, 3% (25) as a second language, and 7.5% (64) were currently learning Welsh

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project

Steering Group Workshop

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project

Steering Group workshop

Introduction

An online workshop was facilitated by Creative Core/Minerva Heritage on 18 September 2020. The purpose was to inform and guide the NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge project. Steering Group members followed up the online workshop with detailed written responses via email. The following Steering Group members contributed:

- Paul Lewin
- Kaz Spring
- Edwina Ball
- Iain Wilkinson
- Glenn Williams
- Stephen Greig
- Tony Williams
- John Prideaux
- Alex Spring
- Dylan Ham

Activity and Interpretation: Aims and Objectives

Project objectives taken from the R1 bid were discussed re activities and interpretation.

Objective	Activity and Interpretation can...
To ensure the importance of the railways' heritage, and that of the slate industry that it served, is communicated to the 250,000 plus visitors a year, who are increasingly unaware of this heritage (which will be lost if we do not act now)	<p>Need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better record, understand and communicate this 'at risk' heritage (people are dying and taking their stories with them)• Make heritage relevant to audience interest• Provide a framework to deliver better information that enables people to understand more about heritage <p>Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transform communication of heritage to 250k people• Improve ad-hoc and inaccurate presentation• Increase local knowledge• Help visitors to engage more deeply in the local community, railway, its history and the history of the region• Increase visitors so increase income – sustainability• Provide an enjoyable experience

<p>To conserve, restore and rebuild a number of buildings of historic significance at Boston Lodge Works, some of which are derelict</p>	<p>Need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help visitors understand what they are looking at • Raise awareness of conservation need and why the buildings are important • Open up otherwise inaccessible buildings/spaces for better use <p>Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present and raise awareness of the conservation, restoration and rebuilding • Communicate the need for conservation resources (people and funds) • Record the capital works have been carried out (conservation by video/time-lapse) • Provide digital content for website/social media channels to increase reach • Train volunteers in conservation related skills (supporting roles e.g. clearing) • Hard hat tours to share progress with visitors, volunteers, staff, interest groups, professionals
<p>To ensure that the buildings of Boston Lodge Works work more efficiently and improve the existing conditions for the staff, apprentices, trainees and volunteers who practise heritage skills there in order to service the heritage railway</p>	<p>Need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better communicate with staff (including volunteers) and incorporate views and feedback • Better organise and fit-out the spaces for their proposed uses • To retain the historic ambience of the working spaces and practices <p>Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase the confidence and knowledge of the staff • To recruit more volunteers – through word-of-mouth recommendations
<p>To open up supervised public access to Boston Lodge Works and its heritage for the first time via an activity programme which will bring significant numbers of non-traditional railway visitors for managed tours, talks and skills training and via which they can also learn about the significant heritage and series of</p>	<p>Need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An activity programme that is sustainable and easy to manage • Tours need to be viable and support sustainability • Define different layers of skills training • Define aims of audiences • Communicate the skills of people <p>Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create tours that support the business • Trained/sustained group of volunteers to support the business • Offer different levels of engagement – tier the activities – for different audiences

<p>important world firsts which have taken place at BLW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the whole story of the people and place and immerse people in it
<p>To provide interpretation at key points across the railway network (including at BLW to support guided tours) and on the FfWHR heritage trains which currently attract 250,000 visitors each year</p>	<p>Need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretation at smaller sites and on trains • Support people getting off trains to engage with story/undertake wider exploration/activities • Tie storytelling into slate landscape of North Wales • Raise awareness of wider heritage of railway – more than just trains • Appeal to more people. • Provide something for everyone, including enthusiasts <p>Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the railway story at new sites and on the trains • Tell the story of the railway and Boston Lodge Works • Support roving interpretation e.g. app • Spark people’s interest in heritage of North Wales • Promote the railway as the best way to see the landscape • Encourage repeat visits
<p>To address a skills shortage in the industrial heritage sector by offering traineeships, work placements, practical workshops and new volunteering opportunities</p>	<p>Need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve skills of all staff and volunteers • Understand the skills that people have now that are used/not used • Retain skills • Build skills that are needed <p>Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps in skills • Offer opportunities to use skills as well as progression to new skills • Make the railway and North Wales more attractive as a place to work • To understand how people progress from early stages of volunteering to develop further
<p>To improve the railway’s relationship with the local community and visitors to support and contribute to the local economy</p>	<p>Need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To define ‘local community’ • To communicate the current and historic importance of the railway • To engender local pride and ownership in their history and their railway

	<p>Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involve more local people in the railway• Share local community stories• Aid local community genealogical research• Increase numbers of volunteers within 30-mile distance from railway• To readdress perception - 'little toy train'• Support word-of-mouth local community recommendations• Connect with local business networks
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Current & potential audiences

Target audiences set out in the R1 submission were discussed and prioritised:

High/primary priority

Staff (current)

- Need to skills map
- Improve and develop skills
- Understand what they want from their job
- Ensure staff are involved and well-communicated to
- Staff event

Volunteers (current)

- Want to be at the railway because of their own interest
- Aware of the railway's history but some lack knowledge
- Need to skills map, offer progression and repeat opportunities

Families (at weekends and school holidays) (current)

- Engage with railway through visits to stations and train rides
- Looking for an enjoyable experience
- Need to ensure their safety
- Do not understand the history of the railway
- Visits, tours and gentle immersion

Adults on holiday (increasingly during the shoulder season) (current)

- Usually have some interest in heritage
- Few have understanding of railway heritage

- Casual visitors looking for an enjoyable experience
- Need to offer engagement opportunities that are appropriate
- Possible source of volunteers

Spectators watching the trains and visiting the stations (current)

- People outside/nearby quieter stations
- Opportunity to deepen engagement

Local people attending special events (current)

- Need to define what 'local community' is

Local people with family connections (potential)

- Need to define what 'local community' is

Young people looking to develop skills (current with potential to increase)

- Apprentices and trainees already engaged with organisation
- Can support activities
- Can support local community engagement e.g. genealogical research

Older people at risk of social isolation (current with potential to increase)

- A lot are already involved with railway
- Opportunity to support activities e.g. research

Adults working or living in stressful environments

- Looking for highly skilled with good industry contacts
- Strengthen the organisation by attracting skilled people
- Offer leisure opportunities as alternative to day job

Low/secondary priority

Tour groups and international visitors (current)

- Currently less important
- Can be engaged through visits to Boston Lodge Works

Special interest groups (current with potential to increase)

- Low in numbers but important
- Varied and specific interests
- Have linked interest in railway e.g. landscape/old buildings/photography
- Railway as meeting place

Ardent railway enthusiasts (current)

- Currently less important
- Already strongly engaged
- Describes many volunteers
- Need specific offer

Stories

If you were writing a book about the Ffestiniog railway what would you turn these headings into?

A – Chapter B – Page C – Paragraph D – Sentence

Story	Mark A, B, C or D	Story	Mark A, B, C or D	Story	Mark A, B, C or D
How it all began	A A A	Place of inspiration	A - The Conclusion B B	Stories of locomotives and carriages	A B A
Building the Cob	B in A above B A	A place of firsts	A B A	First locomotives – Princess & Mountaineer	Part A above B C
Maddocks	C in A above B B	Spooner's book on the railway	D B D	Fairlie engines	Part A above A B
Porthmadog Harbour	B in A above B B	Railways in South America, Darjeeling and Calcutta	A (why exclude Africa, Most of India, Australia, America) B B	Still being made today	Part A above (and concluding chapter (A place of inspiration)) B C
Horse drawn railway (gravity) 1832	A A B	Landscape and the natural environment	A A B	Slate wagons	B B B
Locomotives on the railway 1863	A A A	Slate	In A above A B	Restoration of the railway	A C B
Boston Lodge	A A	Use of slate	In A above B	Slate production decline	Under A slate C

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Story	Mark A, B, C or D	Story	Mark A, B, C or D	Story	Mark A, B, C or D
	A		B		C
1807 quarry for cob	C in A top B C	Quarries at Ffestiniog	A A Blank	Railway closed	A B C
Barracks building for 150 men	C in A above or in BL C/B B	Significance of the industry	In A above B/C B	Act of Parliament thought to be needed to close the railway	D B C
Function of buildings on site	Part of A (BL) A B	Wider slate landscape	In A above B C	1954 Old engine shed opened and restoration began	Part of volunteers / restoration B
History of the site & development	Part of A (BL) A A	Workers & railway	Probably under restoration <i>“include the social history and railway people aspects; what was it like for the people working there and exactly who were they? The people of the railway was such strong theme that continued to be repeated content on the day we travelled on the train with the interpreters.”</i> A C	Ffestiniog trust formed	D C D
Passengers	A B B	Different jobs	As above B B	Quarrymen adjusted the timetable to suit them	??D C D

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Story	Mark A, B, C or D	Story	Mark A, B, C or D	Story	Mark A, B, C or D
Today	A B A	Volunteers	B As above B B		
Carriage 16 office for Lloyd George	D (detail) B C	Stories of the staff	B as above B A		

Stories

If you were editing a book about the Ffestiniog railway which 12 stories would you argue to keep in your book

“Trouble is, it all seems important. But mostly for me the people and capturing this before it’s too late! Sustainable stories; What about ‘Ballast Island’? Ancient Rain Forest Tan Y Bwlch. Underground tours. Maenofferen – unseen treasures!”

Story	Add ticks	Story	Add ticks	Story	Add ticks
Building the Cob	11	A place of firsts	11	First locomotives – Princess & Mountaineer	11
Maddocks	11	Spooner’s book on the railway		Fairlie engines	111
Porthmadog Harbour	1	Railways in South America, Darjeeling and Calcutta		Still being made today	1
Horse drawn railway (gravity) 1832	11	Landscape and the natural environment		Slate wagons	11
Locomotives on the railway 1863	11	Use of slate	11	Slate production decline	
1807 quarry for cob		Quarries at Ffestiniog	1	Railway closed	1
Boston Lodge barracks building for 150 men	1	Significance of the industry	1	Act of Parliament thought to be needed to close the railway	1
Function of buildings on the Boston Lodge site	1	Wider slate landscape		1954 Old engine shed opened and restoration began	11
History of the Boston Lodge site & development	11	Different jobs	11	Ffestiniog trust formed	1
The Railway today		Volunteers	1	Quarrymen adjusted the timetable to suit them	

Activity need and opportunity

The R1 activity proposals were discussed and the need and opportunity they will address:

	Activity	Why is this activity NEEDED?	What is the OPPORTUNITY this activity will address?
1	Trainee Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level skills • Share workload • Opportunity for individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train and retain • Supports knowledge (of organisation and railway heritage) transfer
1A	Project Management trainee – To work alongside Project Manager at Delivery phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gap in knowledge and experience • Difficult to get heritage project managers • To have a designated person responsible for projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-place based experience and mentoring • Positive contribution to organisation • Address gap in qualification provision • Create sustainable in-house project manager for future projects
1B	Operations Management trainee – To work alongside BLW Works Administrator. Mentoring by PM/Activity Planner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administering railway engineering workshops • Plan production in the workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post required for future sustainability • To provide genuine workplace experience • Heritage skills development
1C	Interpretation trainee – To be mentored by Interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure interpretation continues to evolve, change and respond to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post required for future sustainability

	Activity	Why is this activity NEEDED?	What is the OPPORTUNITY this activity will address?
	Consultant and supervised by PM/Activity Planner	<p>changes in future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a heritage interpreter that is part of the railway and has ownership over projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To offer real life experience • Offer entry-level workplace experience
2	<p>Work experience/work placements (14-18 year olds) – Outreach and organised programme of work placements at BLW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage young people to come to the railway. • Raise awareness of opportunities to train / work for the railway • Raise awareness of local employment • To facilitate learning about the importance and history of the railway • Can no longer rely on volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find employees of the future • Sow seeds for the future volunteering • Tie in with careers advice evenings and STEM events • Inspire young people • To ensure skilled work force • Engage local community
3	Volunteer Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer supervisors • Structure to support more volunteers • Local community volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create quality volunteers and volunteer opportunities • Pathways for work
3A	<p>Developing Interpretation –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • researching and digitising archives • oral history from local residents and previous generation of railway pioneers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent and accurate storytelling across volunteers • Increased digital provision • Better explain the history – early years but what has gone on since • Tell story of railway and Boston Lodge works • Push boundaries and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering • Involve local community who are interested in what’s happening • To address ‘sloppy’ ‘unprofessional’ interpretation • Combine

	Activity	Why is this activity NEEDED?	What is the OPPORTUNITY this activity will address?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evolving the content of Tours developing new temporary and permanent exhibitions at key connection points 	<p>create exhilarating and exciting tours and exhibitions</p>	<p>experience, knowledge and passion of staff and volunteers</p>
3B	<p>Learning to be a Guide (volunteer recruitment and training program)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> customer care training equality training conservation skills delivering learning and interpretation and community engagement train the trainers for key team members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent recruitment, training and management of volunteers Capture interest of visitors Focus on detail of roles (staff and volunteers) and departments Sustainable volunteer pool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create good, knowledgeable guides To branch out into a new area of expertise and staffing To create an essential team for the company and provide new roles for volunteers
3C	<p>Special volunteer led engineering/heritage projects - Providing an opportunity to learn transferable skills from experts in a safe and inspiring environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality not quantity Supervision and teaching Meaningful opportunities that tie in with organisational need Heritage needs to be cared for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide real-world experience Attract future board members Transfer skills Inspire others Sustainable human resource Undertake projects that cannot be undertaken by staff Volunteers to take ownership over the project

	Activity	Why is this activity NEEDED?	What is the OPPORTUNITY this activity will address?
			– treat as their own
4	Skills workshop, experiences and Lecture Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create meaningful opportunities • Provide opportunities to suit people’s specific interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide experiences that change lives • Varying level of engagement • Channel people into volunteering
4A	<p>Skills Workshops & Experiences - Skills workshops/experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 1/2 - 2 days to include: slate shunt, engine driving, coupling, oiling an engine, blacksmithing (slate wagons, fenceposts), how a steam engine works, sign writing/gilding, photography, how to tap holes/thread a screw, riveting (slate wagon), making an oil can 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate income (to cover costs rather than make profit) • Develop skills and fill skills gaps • Enable people to understand what makes the railway work • Skilled volunteers • Keep the heritage skills alive • Engage visitors in the history (and history in the making) • Something to suit motivation and interest of visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable people to take part and engage more • Convert attendees into volunteers • Encourage repeat visits • Develop skilled volunteer workforce • Offer something other than exhibits – it’s an attraction worth visiting • Undertake work for the company • Repeat and expand customer base
4B	Awareness Training – Contractors to give short training sessions (2 hours max) about the activities taking place and specialist skills being used for the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the project for volunteers/supporters/local community • To share knowledge and plans, be transparent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital engagement with project • Gain the support and ideas of

	Activity	Why is this activity NEEDED?	What is the OPPORTUNITY this activity will address?
	capital project		supporters, possibly gain more contracts
5	The Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vital for the sustainability of the organisation. • Help people to understand that the heritage is important • Raise awareness internally as well as wider • To address the fact that myth can easily become 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage people to volunteer • Encourage understanding about managing a heritage site
5A	Tour of the restoration works - Changes during project to reflect conservation work and interests of audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share knowledge of project with organisation/staff – • Maintain interest in the project • Encourage further support and funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of why organisation is there, and why it is so important • Capture wider interest
5B	Programme of Guided Tours – Guided Tours: suite of planned, escorted tours for visitors of 1-3 hours. Content changes to reflect ongoing interpretation work by LTG and volunteers and interest of audience. Building on tested formula for BLW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the Cycle of stories to share – • Offer something for repeat visitors and families • Offer something for a range of audiences – according to event/customer type • For the facts to be presented as myth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of why organisation is there, and why it is so important • Capture wider interest

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project

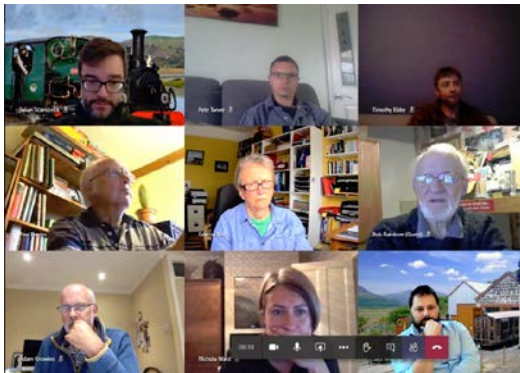
Volunteer Workshops and Survey

NLHF Interpretation and Boston Lodge Works Project

Volunteer Survey

Introduction

Two 2-hour focus groups were held online with volunteers on 28 and 29 September 2020. The purpose was to test and reflect on outline activity ideas, and to inform volunteer strategy and Activity plans. A digital survey form was distributed to attendees and non-attendees after the workshop to ensure the consultation went out as widely across the FfWHR volunteer community as possible. 16 and 21 volunteers attended the digital workshops, and 45 written responses were received after the event.



Volunteer Roles: What roles are there now?

Most of us have multiple differing types of working volunteer roles on the railway.

As driver and fireman "I interface with passengers all the time

Volunteers themselves refer to the following roles:

- Advising the Railway on historic buildings and archaeology
- Archives
- Book reviewer
- Brakesman (Gravity Train)
- Buffet
- Build projects
- Builder
- C2 Project Engineer
- Carriage restoration
- Civil engineering
- Commercial department projects
- Company Archives
- Customer-facing at Events
- Design work for the Railway's electrical infrastructure
- Digitisation / cataloguing
- Drains Gang
- Driver
- Duty Supervisor
- Electrical Technician
- Electrical Working Party (working with FR site staff in the implementation of electrical installation, testing and repairs)
- Equipment maintenance
- Events organisation and preparation
- Exploring providing an in-train website
- Fireman (on WHR)
- FR Heritage Group Facebook
- FR Society Archivist
- Front of House roles eg exhibitions, host groups
- Fund-raising
- Ganger (supervisor) of North Wales Group Black Hand Gang (involved in fencing, lineside vegetation clearance, drains, maintenance of station buildings, installing new infrastructure)
- Gardening

- General building works
- Gravity Brakeman
- Gravity Team
- Guard
- Heritage interpretation group
- A group of volunteers work on permanent way projects across both the Ffestinog and Welsh Highland Railways
- Infrastructure restoration
- Locomotive Engineering
- Machinist
- Magazine editor
- On-board catering
- Organise volunteering events (i.e. Megabash, Gigabash³ and Young Volunteer's Training Week)
- Proof-reader
- Publishing books targeted at loco enthusiasts
- Qualified Guard, Controller and Signaller with the Operating Department
- Qualified signaller
- Rest of the World Gang
- Shift work (running)
- Shunter
- Society Archives Team
- Station host
- Team-X, working as a volunteer group since the early 1990s on the wooden aspects of the heritage carriage fleet
- Tour Guide (Boston Lodge)
- Track
- Track maintenance, tracklaying, and associated tasks (Rest of the World Gang)
- Wagon inspection assistant
- Wagon Tracks Project , building and fitting out the shed in Minffordd
- Wooden Waggon Federation (Leader and others): a dedicated team looking at the wooden aspects of the FR heritage waggon fleet
- Wagon Tracks Working Party Organiser
- Woodwork in Carriage Workshops.
- Working Party Leader
- Workshop hand

³ a large 'gang' of volunteers gather to work together to either tidy up our stations at the beginning of the year or prepare our stations ready for the winter close down

- Young Volunteers Week Volunteer

Specific area groups given the same task repetitively, so they can work with less permanent staff supervision

Volunteers are prominent at senior levels within and around the organisation, frequently combining these senior roles with other operational or incidental roles:

- Associate Editor of FR Magazine
- Buildings steering group
- Chair of WHR Society and legal responsibilities
- Chairman
- Chairman of the Ffestiniog Railway Society
- Comms group
- Construction safety
- Deputy Chair of the FRS
- Director
- Director of the Trust
- FR Society Director
- Leader of Friends of Tan y Bwlch Station
- Project Manager
- Representing WHR society on local support group
- Team S is a volunteer team of civil engineers that inspects and manages the civil structures
- Trust Treasurer

As a retired Deputy Chairman of the Company who also holds a senior position in the mainline rail industry I provide links between FfR Co and Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies at the highest levels, and also assist the Ffestiniog in its entries to the National Railway Heritage Awards, so far as I can as a Trustee of that charity

Volunteer Roles: Do volunteers feel qualified for their current roles?

I have been working as a volunteer electrician for over 20 years, and under the supervision and testing provided am adequately competent to do installation work.

A lot of the high scores come from volunteers with extensive industry and on-the-job experience. They clearly feel qualified for their current roles. Some state they do not have formal certification, and there are clearly some areas (specifically building and customer-facing roles) where qualifications seem to be lacking.

- Very – 10/10 (electrical engineer)
- 10/10 (catering)

- 10/10 (civil engineering)
- 10/10 (chartered (retired) electrical engineer so fully qualified with sixty years of experience)
- 10/10
- 10/10
- 10/10
- 10/10 (accountancy)
- 10/10 (executive)
- 10/10 (executive)
- 10/10 Worked with archaeological sites and historic buildings for nearly 50 years
- 9/10
- 9/10
- 9/10 (archive volunteer)
- 9/10- a retired professionally-qualified engineer, I do not now have formal Electrician certification. I have mainline railway technical and safety experience
- 8/10 (loco and works volunteer)
- 8/10 (Carriage restoration/building volunteer)
- 8 out of 10. I qualified for all roles by hands-on experience. I have to be competent be allowed to do what I do, but there is always more to learn
- 9/10 I feel well qualified for the driver role - if I did more I could definitely be more proficient but the railway provided the support and regular ongoing training for me to maintain and safe and robust level of qualification.
- 8 or 9/10. Edited my local archaeological journal for the last ten years, and *TSR* for nearly four years
- Operating Department roles – 9/10
- 8/10 (EWG)
- 8/10
- 8/10
- 8/10
- 8/10
- 8/10
- 8/10
- 8/10 (RWG)
- 8/10 (RWG)
- 8/10 – every day's a school day
- A prejudiced 8
- 8, I do not have any formal qualifications, only DIY experience, so I do not undertake any projects where I have no experience unless training is provided
- 8.5/10
- Was 8/10 (electrical working party)

- 7 or 8/10 (archive volunteer)
- Worked on track at FR from c1970-80, and at WHR since 2006. I would say 7 or 8/10 for that
- About 7/10 (building)
- 7/10
- 7/10
- 7/10 (RWG)
- 7/10
- 6/10: working under supervision means we are unable to determine selection of working weekends or days. For some higher-level questions we (Wooden Waggon Federation) are early in the learning process for
- 6/10 (RWG)
- 6/10 (RWG)
- 5/10 (archives)
- 5/10 (building)
- 5/10 (locomotive engineering)
- 5/10 (wood-working)

Volunteer Roles: Do volunteers feel they've received sufficient training/support for their role?

A good number of responses were positive:

- Yes [x18]
- Yes – constantly when working on a BHG project, I am shown what to do and how to do it safely. I received training before starting on-board services too and work with paid staff.
- Yes I believe I have, however I am unsure on what abilities are reflected on the FFWHR matrix. I used to be aware of this during time as paid staff & subsidised volunteer though these roles were 10 years & 7 years ago
- Yes – trained by professional electrical engineers 'on the job' over many years.
- Yes but not from the FR/WHR
- Generally, yes, although day to day jobs can be very different
- Generally yes, but there are some areas where I feel I am competent but don't have a current paper qualification.
- Yes. If I was to pursue a more complex role in S&T then I would require more training
- Yes, where required, training is thorough and there is no pressure to do anything you are not comfortable with.
- Always

- Mostly on-the-job experience over many years. Some training with specialist equipment from FWHRC
- I consider that I have. You would need to ask my colleagues

Where referred to, support is considered to be good or very good:

- Support – good. I have led a few building renovation type projects (and one new build), and always had great support.
- The support in the carriageworks has been brilliant
- I get a lot of training and support in my loco crew role
- We receive all the support and training we have needed so far
- Every job I have done here I have had the right training or equipment provided
- From an organising point of view, support with ordering is always forthcoming, and sometimes help to access workshop space too, though understandably this sometimes vulnerable to commercial pressures.

Some of the other reflections – either ambivalent or slightly critical - were from people holding senior positions in the organisation:

- Almost
- Duty Supervisor role needs better definition of required competencies (e.g. should I have first aid training – probably but I don't).
- Little training and learned in the role
- Most of my training has resulted from long experience.
- Much of the organisational work I do is similar to work I did when employed (now retired)
- No
- No training other than previous knowledge
- Over 11 years I have picked up a lot of skills through regularly volunteering at Boston Lodge, often this has been a quick how to with safety pointers, then a lot of learning from your mistakes as you go along.
- Practical work has been learnt on the job whilst volunteering on the railway.
- Support has been variable and dependent on the quality of the permanent staff.
- The company did not really provide (governance) training as such but all staff are helpful
- Training – not much
- Training and support on the engineering side is a lot less formal. Learning something often requires being able to find and work with the right people.
- Training on the whole has been reduced from previous years, a retrograde step from both the point of view of safety and efficiency as well as attracting new volunteers.

A small number of written responses reflected particular situations, i.e. having only just started

- Yes, but not yet for Archives
- Yes, except Boston Lodge Guiding which is self-taught from years of experience working there on the permanent staff and as a volunteer and temp; plus years of research into its history.

Needs, interests, motivations and barriers: Why do you volunteer?

Broadly speaking, the main motivations are:

- Being in North Wales
- Being involved with / Helping this railway
- Escape from normal life
- Fun
- Interest in history
- Interest in maintaining heritage
- Learning new skills
- Love for steam trains
- Satisfaction / appreciation from others
- Social interaction with people of similar interest
- Working outdoors

I want to be with a group of people engaged with a team getting something done.

Why do we come from all over, past other railways to come to Ffestiniog – this could be the best railway in the world. We want to give back to the railway, building the railway to make it better for the future of the railway.

I volunteer for selfish reasons!

It is jolly good fun!

It's very personal what you get out of volunteering.

The full list of written responses is:

- A change of scenery. A chance to be active and a part of a valuable resource
Enjoyable activities.
- A number of reasons - for my wellbeing as I enjoy the work and social interactions of volunteering, to be part of keeping our history and heritage alive, to learn some new skills, and to see steam trains!
- A number of reasons, it is a beautiful part of the world, I love the work and the people, I like doing constructive things with my time off work
- As an interest, and to help keep the railways going
- Because I (and my wife) enjoy it and feel that it does help the Railway
- Because I am passionate about the railway and it presents the opportunity to do something completely different to my everyday life – escapism if you like
- Because I enjoy working outdoors in stunning scenery with a team of like-minded people
- Because I love North Wales and the Ff&WHR

- Because it is so different from 'normal' life and gives me much satisfaction
- Being involved in an organisation with such a pedigree is reason enough
- Chance to make a difference to the FR. I first visited in 1994 when I was 18 and have been doing 50-70 days a year ever since.
- Change from the day job (engineer on the main-line railways but it's mostly in front of a computer screen).
- Covers my hobby interests & a chance to work with people of similar interest
- Enjoy woodworking & want to support FR
- Enjoyment of the company (people) they work with
- Feel like doing something worthwhile, helps to move the railway forward.
- Felt as if their efforts were appreciated.
- Get appreciation from the activity, sometimes the best day of your life others can be not so good.
- Getting to the end of a project gives me a feeling of satisfaction and that's why I do it.
- Good fun, learn new skills, good company in a very well run organization
- I enjoy including and especially the people aspects.
- I enjoy the tasks, the company I work with and particularly passing on skills to new volunteers
- I have always volunteered
- I initially started volunteering on the loco crew because I was encouraged to by my mother who had been a fireman on the Ffestiniog in the 1980s. Since then I was hooked by the friendly and professional attitude of the staff and volunteers, the amazing scenery, and the fascinating history of the railway. My partner who has no interest in Railways describes the FR as "magical", I think that about sums it up.
- I initially turned up as my dad was a volunteer. I kept coming back because the jobs are interesting, the people are great, the industrial archaeology and history is very much of interest to me, and the part of the world is spectacular.
- I love North Wales
- I love the FR and wish to contribute in some small way
- I volunteer because I enjoy and get satisfaction from my work which helps to preserve and sustain the historic railway atmosphere of the FR in North Wales and its place in the industrial history of Great Britain.
- I volunteer for a number of reasons. In no particular order, I have an interest in heritage railways (many thanks to my father for this). I have been involved with working at the FR since I was 12/13 (17 years now) when I attended Kids training weeks, so I have 'grown up' volunteering so it is just something that is engrained and I do. My friends do it. It is something that is so different to my career (as a project manager I drive a laptop / phone), a weekend working party is not like that, it is physical, engaging, sometimes challenging but rewarding working within a

team to achieve the repairs or works. I enjoy working with my hands. It is good to go and volunteer and see the extended railway family and friends.

- Important to me as it is a key part of the railway history
- Initially due to a lifelong interest in railways but it was also an alternative to my employment in administrative work
- Interest in railways, keeping active (physically & mentally), friendship. New learning & skills To put something back in the Railway that has given pleasure to my family over many years.
- Interest in the railway from the age of 5. Our children spotted a kids week train at Tan y Bwlch, led to then attending and helping with Kids Week food and projects with Alan Norton including benches, Bobby Box (Porthmadog Signal Box), Relay and Signal box at Porthmadog, Gweithdy Project and currently Tan y Bwlch bridge repainting.
- Interest in the WHR / FR
- It is a complete system doing (more or less) what it has always done - moving people along a 40 mile network
- It is the best heritage railway in a fabulous part of the UK
- It occupies a prominent position in the historical development of narrow gauge railways.
- Lifelong interest in railways and the Ffestiniog in particular born out of visiting the railway at a young age and being entranced by genuine working railway experience
- Lifelong interest in railways, especially the FR
- Long term supporter of the railway and volunteer >50 years. Just enjoy doing something different
- Love of railway
- My dad has always been involved; I grew up alongside the railway and was naturally drawn in. I enjoy learning and working with old construction techniques, the satisfaction of carrying out restoration projects and working with like minded people
- One volunteer – ex-train driver is now getting involved in the archives
- People who have changed roles in work from field-based to desk-based
- People with railway history
- People, friends, FR family.
- Satisfaction from what they achieve
- Started volunteering on P.W. as a school boy in 1961 and have been hooked ever since
- There are local volunteers here, although they have moved here to be close to the railway once they started volunteering. Some come from a long way off, a lot of Manchester men involved, but some have travelled from further - Penzance, Germany.

- To be able to pass on professional skills to younger people
- To get the satisfaction of completing useful manual work using my professional skills.
- To help the railway when they are short of local assistance.
- To help the railway and to help the sustainability of the railway volunteers
- To help keep the WHR / FR running and I enjoy being a navvy!
- To support full-time staff, to run and preserve railway in a good condition for public to enjoy safely and wish to return
- To support historically important railway heritage.
- To use my expertise for the good of the community and to utilise my knowledge for the benefit of the organisation
- Wanted to volunteer for a long time.
- We get a lot from it: education, experience and life skills.
- Work with a great group of people who have all become good friends, doing something I think is worthwhile, making use of my skills.
- Working with like minded, congenial people on a project which I consider valuable and interesting
- You are part of 'The Ffestiniog family'. Once you have volunteered you are part of this group of people from 1954 and before

Needs, interests, motivations and barriers: What do you like about your current volunteering role?

What do we mean by the best railway in the world? – Unique projects, unique features (gravity railway)

- Also the opportunity to train up the next generation, both on the locos and in the workshops. I have encouraged many to consider engineering as a job as well as volunteering.
- Being able to get to the railway and do work that is a mental challenge, and to some extent a physical one as well, where I am no longer in a leadership or responsibility role, but I can still see the success of what I do – even if it is just installing a lighting circuit and seeing the lights switch on for the first time
- Being able to see things look a bit different at the end of the day and passengers saying thank you when you settle a problem for them.
- Communicating with members
- Companionship of likeminded individuals, the camaraderie and new friendships made, as well as satisfaction of doing a job well.

- Comradeship: being part of the Ff&WHR extended family. Satisfaction in seeing conservation and improvements achieved.
- Doing the work, seeing a project completed, having a laugh!
- Doing something useful in good company
- Every day presents new challenges and opportunities to learn, but it is great fun. There is never a dull day. The Ffestiniog is a busy and challenging railway to work on, I like how that pushes you to be better at what you do. I really enjoy teaching newer volunteers new skills both as loco crew and on the engineering side. Passengers often ask the loco crew questions about the railway and I enjoy sharing my knowledge and experiences of the railway with them.
- Fresh air, the range of work and the people I am with
- Getting involved in a variety of tasks and being outdoors
- Good at picking up innovative and unusual projects – i.e. the ‘gravity train’, unique to this railway
- Helping to educate and entertain the public about the Railway’s fascinating history. Working with great colleagues of all age groups.
- I am made to feel that my input is valued and appreciated
- I can do it without having to go to the railway all the time
- I enjoy the company of similarly minded people, in the workplace and in social settings, who are of differing ages and backgrounds.
- I enjoy them all, variety is an important part of it, but I get a great sense of accomplishment out of all of them
- I find it interesting to be involved in the governance structure of the railway.
- I find the work fascinating, as I end up reading a lot of the material I am cataloguing as I take an interest in history and in particular local history.
- I learn new skills and work with a great set of staff
- It has given a massive amount to me in social terms, in challenges to deliver, and in a feeling of ownership of the completed projects I have led or been a part of
- It is continuing with a series of projects in which I have been involved for a great many years.
- It was very satisfying to complete the maintenance of the whole of the telephone system in a weekend with everything working well
- Meeting all kinds of different people, some involved with the Railway others with a passing interest.
- Meeting and learning from the other members
- Meeting and working with like-minded people and having a specific project on which to work.
- Meeting new people and feeling I have done something worthwhile

- My several various roles give me the opportunity to see the Railways from different aspects. I particularly like leading Team S which gives me an unparalleled opportunity to help conserve the fabric of the FR as designed by Spooner.
- Pioneering engineering in beautiful scenery
- Professional railway atmosphere, engaging with the public and recreating the past
- Really enjoyed learning new skills, teaching skills and watching them be taught to others
- Really important social element after the work day
- Really rewarding, we all like building things and I enjoy the process of managing the volunteers and work seeing them develop
- Running a station in a wonderful location
- Satisfies all my reasons for volunteering
- Seeing carriages rebuilt/created running on the railway
- Social aspects get people to return
- Technically satisfying and fulfilling, working with long established friends, as well as meeting new participants
- The balance between learning skills, and increasing the knowledge of the history behind the vehicles being worked on. While I could do woodwork at home in the name of DIY (or even attempting to build similar things), it would not supply the teamwork, or have the right tools available for the job, and the financial backing for those tools and materials required.
- The challenge and satisfaction of a completed project- seeing my other volunteers faces when the power is switched on and seeing all their hard work come to life. Building their skill base
- The people especially
- The people, the work. It's great seeing the volunteering outcomes improving both the look and infrastructure that supports the railway. If I can help to keep its history for future generations then I am happy.
- The roles I carry out fit in with my life and as I am retired, I can be flexible.
- They all provide great satisfaction – if I didn't like it I could walk away
- Using long term corporate knowledge
- Variability - no day is the same
- Very active role so involved.
- Very fulfilling to achieve the results planned for
- We are organised, we have clear projects which we deliver, we are recognised and thanked, and we have social activities around our work programme which we take part in together, so that the electrical team is a social as well as a work group.
- We have a very good team we work with (Waggon Tracks), we have worked together for several years now and it's a pleasure working with everyone. We have a lot of laughs, overcome challenges and achieve a lot. I like doing the physical

work, the mechanical work & the problem solving – how do we achieve what we need too. I like being based at Minffordd or Boston Lodge, I like that we work sociable hours, where we have access to loos, somewhere dry to have a cuppa / lunch, that we have undercover areas to work to stay out of the weather. (Note: these are some of the reasons why im stepping away from the footplate works.

- Work with comrades
- Working as a team outdoors
- Working with the RoW Gang and the variety of work

Needs, interests, motivations and barriers: What do you need to volunteer?

Consistent responses include:

- Ability to get on with people
- Access to the workshops/equipment
- Accommodation
- Clothing/PPE
- Enthusiasm
- Information
- Management/ support
- Money/fuel
- Motivation
- Skills to contribute
- Time
- Transport

A new starter needs someone to take them under their wing, give them tasks, training and supervision. That role can be very rewarding but also rather stressful, and often slows down progress on the project. Can be worth it if you 'win' a long-term volunteer, but it can be a waste of time if you never see them again. Need to think about how to achieve a high win rate.

We need team leaders to lead working parties. We need undercover facilities to undertake works out of the weather, and have some degree of warmth (it can be quite unpleasant trying to work on vehicles in very low temperatures). We need undercover facilities that are separate from the day to day works at Boston Lodge or Minffordd as currently a significant amount of time is spent, moving kit from site to site, or moving locomotives / equipment from a storage area to a work area at the start of the working party only for us to return all to the original positions at the end of the working party. We need somewhere dry, warm, with seating & a kettle for tea time / breaks. We need access to equipment (lathes, drills, riveting equipment etc). We need access to a tool kit – over the years William High and myself were subsidised volunteers we built up a set of tools which forms part of the basics we need

during working parties but multiple times we don't have the correct or exact tool which again means we spend time trying to locate or borrow one.

- A level of management appropriate to the tasks being undertaken
- A sense of community, a sense of paying back some of our industry gained experiences, a sense of humour and above all working with a set of like-minded people with an interest in narrow gauge railways.
- Ability to commit time *“if something needs to be done, I will make myself available, but I have flexible job options and I use annual leave to help.”*
- Ability to get on with / motivate people
- Access to the workshops and permission to use the equipment.
- Accommodation to stay over – it's too far to drive there and back in one day, clothing and time to do it.
- A job to do and the right instruction, the right clothing, Not to leave my lunch behind!
- An ability to get on with others.
- An open mind and some good boots!
- An understanding and sympathetic partner / wife etc
- Appropriate clothing and PPE
- As a team – teammates, tools, skills (/teachers), raw materials, work space, access to the archives to confirm certain features to be replicated.
- As an individual – the interest and desire to carry out the tasks, and a bit of PPE.
- Cheap but adequate accommodation, suitable tools, supervision
- Commercial knowledge/acumen
- Energy
- Enthusiasm
- Enthusiasm and a hands on approach
- Enthusiasm and determination
- Equipment
- Equipment and materials tend to be provided.
- For newcomers, a willingness to learn
- Funds to afford travel and accommodation (this is not large really)
- Getting time off work is not always easy
- Good health
- Good leadership and clear aims
- Good mental attitude! Willingness to learn and be flexible
- Good pipe and advance information
- Hi viz kit
- I need more spare time.
- Ideally a car and/or the means to fund transport to the railway

- In my area, a background in electrical installation work.
- Interest and enthusiasm
- It helps to have a good and informative brief for the task in hand
- Marketing and presentational skills
- More time and money!
- Motivation, willing to work as a team, be prepared to thin on ones feet
- My own toolbox of mechanical and electrical construction tools – Electrical Working Party provides what I do not own
- Patience
- Probably nothing more than good communication with the F&WHR organisation in its widest sense
- Self-motivation is useful.
- Set of suitable overalls, safety boots, wet weather clothes and your lunch
- Some volunteers are natural communicators and are good at delivering the story.
- Somewhere to stay
- Somewhere to stay, somewhere to keep my stuff, undercover workshop space out of the Welsh weather, somewhere to sit for a nice cup of tea.
- Support from the managers in the various departments with which I am involved. This is forthcoming.
- The free time, we book a year in advance usually, around any special events.
- The incentive of being involved in an interesting and worthwhile project which is well lead and managed.
- Time
- Time away from ‘real’ life.
- Time! That will improve in 2021 when I’ve retired
- Time. Anyone can volunteer and help out, just need to have time!
- To be given a job and the relevant briefing and left to get on with it.
- Tool Operator & supervisor competencies, cooperation from staff, workshop space, access to keys, Welfare Facilities
- Verbal and written fluency, numeracy, strategic thinking etc.
- Volunteering takes up a large portion of my spare time.
- Volunteers do provide their own overalls, boots and PPE, but PPE is always readily available
- Workspace

Needs, interests, motivations and barriers: What are the facilities like?

For the works we have undertaken on the shed at Minffordd I would say the facilities are good. We have access to an excellent mess room facility, we are not in the way of day to day operations. At Boston Lodge we do have good facilities during the Christmas – New Year

period where we have access to much of the works without impeding day to day business. However at any other time I would say mid level facilities at best. Much of the works we can undertake can only take place due to working party leaders having good relationships with key stakeholders (works managers / foreman etc) and are trusted by these individuals so these key stakeholders have faith that we will not impede their operations

there are times when it can seem not fit for purpose anymore, but it is our history!" – this respondent makes the important point that this heritage reflects Victorian attitudes to work which are very different from today. Often-dangerous and harsh environments are part and parcel of the slate industry and railway story; of course visitors and other participants do not have to experience these first-hand to such an extent that they suffer!

Some participants had nothing but praise for the facilities:

- Absolutely fine
- At Tan y Bwlch they are fine
- Excellent – normally working at Boston Lodge. Minffordd is now also excellent
- Excellent. The envy of most other heritage railways.
- Good
- Good
- Good
- Ideal
- Minffordd hostel is excellent.
- On-the-job messing and toilet facilities, which are essential to being a successful operation, are always good.
- The facilities for volunteers are excellent; from hostels for younger volunteers to mess facilities for the older generation.

Some participants had recommendations or concerns, principally reflecting the perceived need for workspace, lockers adequate welfare, and equipment:

- A dedicated electrical workshop is lacking, where we could do preparation work for later installations.
- A lot depends on what the job is and where it is being done; sometime we are a long way from a toilet.
- Adequate, I suppose
- Adequate. The staff are always helpful
- At Minffordd Annexe where archives are housed they are pretty appalling because of severe over-crowding
- At the moment we can't use the 'den' and the replacement is very rudimentary (understandable)

- Basic but comfortable, I stay in the railway hostel. The tools provided are good quality, and there is a ready supply of hot drinks and always toilet facilities in the main.
- Basic, though generally acceptable
- Boston Lodge Works is a crowded site, very busy, with paid staff in week and volunteers over the weekend.
- Boston Lodge satisfactory, Minffordd good
- Brew facilities are perfectly adequate
- Current facilities are pretty good but lack of space for dedicated volunteer projects is always a problem.
- Early days so difficult to tell but not at a level that would put me off volunteering
- Facilities for the workforce could always be better but we've grown to accept that as we are working in what is believed to be the oldest working engineering workshops in the world where there is plenty of inevitably going to be muck and oil about and that keeping them to an acceptable standard may be a challenge. Facilities for the visiting public have to be tip top!
- Generally ok, like any space that has been there a long time (parts of it 170 years) there are times when it can seem not fit for purpose anymore, but it is our history!
- Generally pretty good, but you have to remember we're volunteering for a charity so it is not market leading but that is all part of the fun
- Generally satisfactory
- Good but I do use my own electrical tools. Messing facilities are a little basic and may deter some less motivated people from offering their services
- Good in the most. Boston Lodge Works needs a lot of work for staff accommodation. Port needs work but space not enough
- If only there for minimum time (weekends) a lot of time and effort goes into setting up and tidying away so its tidy for the week staff
- Inadequate.
- In normal non-COVID times, they're fine for me (an able-bodied male with a locker of my own) although there is a shortage of mess-room space which means we can't all have lunch at the same time (can encourage cliques). However, for new starters without a locker (there's a major shortage) it's not ideal.
- Lack of space restricts the volunteer workshop and it would be nice to have a dedicated secured covered space.
- Messing areas could be improved (noted both are included in present plans).
- Not relevant to what I do
- O.K. although some areas could be improved e.g. mess facilities
- Often basic
- Okay
- Poor!

- Reasonable
- Reasonable, when they can be accessed
- Sometimes the mess facilities are inadequate for the number of volunteers, especially true if it's raining.
- Somewhat cramped, relying on desk-share in a well-filled storeroom with available desk space of 1m x 0.5m
- The carriageworks are well set up, are clean and tidy when you turn up so you only have to clean up after yourself (not before as well), equipment is stored where it lives in good working order, and there is a space available to store some work without getting in the way of the permanent staff and projects. The metal working areas need this.
- The mess facilities are very dated and undersized for the number of people now working at Boston Lodge. There is limited locker space for volunteers to keep overalls etc on site. Workshop space is also limited which means lots of time is taken up getting things out and putting them away when working on volunteer projects. Priority is often given to paid staff work for obvious reasons. So we essentially have to work around them.
- Toilet/washing facilities for females/disabled aren't great.
- Variable but mainly adequate
- We struggle with space for projects.
- Work areas fine. Mess rooms and locker/changing facilities in need of improvement

Needs, interests, motivations and barriers: How could volunteering be improved?

"For what I do, I struggle to think of any changes I would want."

Some volunteers are clearly very happy with their experience.

Some consistent areas of improvement were recommended:

- Appreciation from the organisation
- Communication, information and feedback
- Company/volunteer liaison
- Dedicated volunteer supervisor role
- Diversity amongst volunteers
- Improved facilities
- Planning
- Skills progression
- Space, including dedicated space for volunteer work
- Staff/volunteer relationship
- Support

significant demand –just need structure

The full list of written responses is:

- ‘Trust’ – Need to build up relationship with the work staff
- A supervisor whose primary role is to nurture volunteers rather than to get crap jobs done. Yes, both of these can be achieved with the right inspiration but too often the emphasis is on getting the jobs done rather than encouraging the volunteers. But the supervisor might need to be a paid role, as many volunteers come to the railway to get away from the stress of management. It’s not something I would volunteer to do on a regular basis.
- A dedicated space for volunteer work to take place. Being able to send volunteers off for organised training which isn’t reliant on the project supervisor/leader, allowing them to concentrate on the work in hand. This would help to get new volunteers involved and develop existing ones, basic sort of things for which training would be useful are, angle grinders, bench grinders, pillar drills, radial arm drills, gas heating equipment, pneumatic equipment, welding, band saws. Equally new individual volunteers would integrate easier in to established groups if they came in with some training. This isn’t a complete fix as it would still be up to a project supervisor/leader to monitor the quality of work produced with these skills. Training and refinement are two different things.
- Making life easier and more coordinated for organisers to encourage more people to take up organising work, the convoluted and under defined system at present possibly puts people off being involved with organising as it can often be frustrating.
- Again time and money. Buildings and kit are always evolving, again it all takes time and money.
- Always comes down to communication. Business plans to feedback to/from staff. Accommodation sometimes an issue.
- Any improvement on current standards is difficult to suggest.
- Apart from an improvement in facilities, I'd say that for new starter it can often be difficult to know what is going on, and so some people may miss out on getting involved with things that interest them. For someone a bit introverted like myself it can be a little difficult to just go around asking people what I can do. The other issue is that getting trained on some equipment often relies on word of mouth or getting on with the right people. If you mostly volunteer at a weekend you may never make those connections, especially if it requires talking to paid staff. Some more formal training system for workshop equipment would be useful
- Archives are a difficult challenge as now housed and organised
- Better ‘domestic’ facilities
- Better communications with the Company

- Better facilities
- Better facilities for those volunteers who carry out work on a specific item of rolling stock or similar large items, ideally a workshop for volunteers.
- Better organisation & storage of engineering equipment and supplies.
- Better overall management of the volunteer population. Most people like to get involved with a range of things but that takes organisation.
- By constant improvement but mainly feeling that the organization appreciates and motivates good volunteers.
- By keeping in touch on a regular basis
- By the organisation upping its overall game on most HR matters
- Communication with volunteers could be improved.
- Covid
- Dedicated resource to support volunteers to support training of volunteers and skill progression at Boston Lodge
- Dedicated space would allow more volunteer time and activity.
- Definitely more space
- Does the volunteer understand the Company business plan / policies?
- Free tea/coffee and better discounts in Spooners, or a proper staff facility at the port!
- Generally – more enthusiasm from some permanent staff (NOT carriage works staff)
- Group courses to develop skills together
- Information on upcoming projects and timing. Preferable a choice of tasks
- Is it possible to formalise the use of tools and machines – graded training and record of skills. Competency passport so everyone knows the capabilities of each volunteer.
- More attention to keeping volunteers informed and supported
- More encouragement. Difficult to start volunteering in new roles.
- More frequency would encourage more volunteers to get involved.
- More publicity – present team is word-of-mouth only.
- More support from the permanent staff to provide materials and equipment in a timely fashion for the job that needs to be done.
- Mutual Improvement Classes exist in Ops and Boston Lodge but not in Infrastructure. This should not be allowed to happen.
- Need a Volunteer Coordinator.
- Need to timetable the space for projects.
- New role ‘Volunteer Supervisor’
- Newsletters are not as good as on the Severn Valley Railway, for example.

- No clear pathway from the kids week into more developed volunteering. Is there a way to make the next steps more obvious?
- Not all of the department managers/supervisors demonstrate their appreciation of the volunteer workforce; some struggle to find the time.
- On my side we do very well not much improvement needed – we are self sufficient in most of what we do.
- Paid staff need to tolerate volunteers more.
- Planning in advance so there's enough work to do, and logistics so the kit required in in place
- Properly recognise why people volunteer and make sure the leaders of volunteers “play up” to those requirements.
- Realistically, I'm not sure without additional funding or finding more people willing to give time to organising working parties and supervisors. If I lived closer and wasn't working full time I'd do a lot more!
- Safety Management System and key policies are inadequately shared with volunteers
- Shorter and less arduous turns with proper coaling facilities in place for footplate crews.
- Some people in the works don't want volunteers (thought that it takes away their work)
- Some volunteers need to understand that training and competence is expected before being allowed to progress and that they may have to adapt to the needs of the railway
- Some younger recruits might be welcome.
- Something special just for volunteers, not sure what, but something that can't be bought
- Sometimes, though not from the black hand gang, activities take time to be organised and minimal feedback afterwards.
- Supervision needs to be improved
- Targeting younger people – including students needing practical experience
- Too big a question! The simplest answer is to feel involved and wanted.
- There is a volunteer co-ordinator, but they should do more to link new people to available projects.
- Volunteer catering staff could be given more information in ‘key points’ about the history of the railway and things they pass to share with the travellers, to make the journey even more enjoyable
- Volunteer liaison roles between staff and volunteers would be really valuable, volunteers as a whole would feel more appreciated then would come back for more.

- Volunteering is a two-way street, some see themselves as lucky, others are told that they are lucky. This can create friction. Distinct positive change in how we are now told we are appreciated.
- Volunteers need to be planned in, not just turning up expecting to be incorporated
- We have a volunteer co-ordinator but unsure how much interaction this role has with the project / working party leads. I believe that a closer working relationship between these individuals would ease the path to volunteering as new volunteers would have greater visibility of the various teams & projects and attend. From my time on the footplate (fireman) I believe that there were certain instances when the company put itself before the volunteers. I do not feel this is the case across the board. However I feel that volunteers would be benefitted from some sort of union (for lack of a better phrase) or group that is recognised by the company and have regular engagement to raise issues on behalf of volunteers. In terms of physical assets with the works undertaken by the waggon tracks team I believe key items to improve volunteering as follows: Workspace that is undercover and separate from the day to day operations of the main workshops so that neither party is impeding the other. Access to tools / equipment.
- Work staff don't have the time to give enough time to the volunteer training

Needs, interests, motivations and barriers: Is there anything that prevents you from volunteering more?

Consistent barriers referred to were:

- Access to workshops
- Accommodation
- Energy / Age
- Lack of money
- Lack of time
- Other commitments (including paid work)
- Travel distance from home to the railway

The full list of responses are:

- A full time job and living in the south of England
- Accommodation
- Age
- Anno domini and distance from Porthmadog
- Appreciation – don't need to be told 'thank you' we get it from doing. But when there is no support to get on it feels like we are not appreciated so this needs to be addressed.

- COVID. Other than that I can volunteer as much as I like. I only work 80% FTE at work to give me more time to come to Boston Lodge.
- Distance from home
- Distance from North Wales means I can only visit for a few extended weekends
- Energy.
- Generally most weekends do have something available to join in with elsewhere on the railway though- but a dedicated area to allow for a more continuous stream of volunteer projects on the go would help.
- Having to go to work
- In normal times, space in the diary, even for retired people
- Insufficient spare time.
- It is costly to come from Germany
- It's difficult to get in the background carriage works, it's okay if you want to join a group but if you want to work alone you are not welcome.
- Lack of time
- Lack of time due to other activities
- Life pressures – work, spending time with my other half, volunteering in other organisations (I am a surf mentor for the Waveproject), other hobbies which can be done closer to home and without the need for a 12-hr work day on a locomotive.
- Life, family commitments, work and distance from Porthmadog
- Living 150 miles away
- Living 190 miles away from Porthmadog, and not having a second home in the district!
- The long and arduous working days without any rostered breaks (as above). Many other tasks at home and distance to travel for day visits
- My current full time employment.
- My marriage!
- No – except current Covid restrictions which will go away.
- No. I spend far more time on FR matters and business than makes sense, but that is the pull of the Railway.
- Normally I visit for 2/3 days at a time it is too far to travel and if there isn't room at the hostel I cannot afford to do the volunteering
- Not enough days in the week!
- Not having enough time, and the distance. When I retire I will do more.
- Old age
- Only time really
- Our free time, cost of fuel to and from Minffordd
- Restrictions on volunteer work in the workshops.

- Sometimes barriers are put up which more structured and recorded training for volunteers would prevent.
- The difficulty in securing workshop space, even when you are allocated some it often has to be cleared beforehand, and everything put back after which consumes a significant amount of time. Being able to leave a job at the end of a volunteering stay and have it there to go back to a week or two later would encourage more volunteering.
- Time – shortage of. I am 76 years old and the journey from home takes about two and a half hours so dropping in just for a day is not possible. Most of our electrical volunteers travel from the South East of England so this will affect how much time myself and our team can contribute. We tend to have eight or ten working parties throughout the year
- Time and family commitments
- Time and money
- Time! I have many other hobbies and responsibilities and my time is limited
- Weekend access to the carriageworks is limited to the team X weekends, due to availability of supervisors.
- Within reason, No. Limit on total time
- Work life volunteering balance, I feel that I have it about right for me. But then in a normal year it's at least one weekend a month, a couple of weeks of annual leave and then a day or two at home working on the Trust piece and other for organising working parties
- Yes - but I have other interests including a wife and two dogs

Interest in project opportunities (interpretation)

Interpretation	1 (Not interested)	2	3	4	5 (Very interested)
Researching and digitising archives	11111 11111 11	11111	11111 1	11111 111	11111 1
Oral history from local residents and previous generation of railway pioneers	11111 11111 11111 11	11111 11	11111 111	1111	1111
Oral history from staff, volunteers, trainees	11111 11111 11111 1	11111 1	11111 11111	11111 1	11
Developing the content for Boston Lodge tours	11111 11111 11111	11111 11	11111	11111 1	11111
Developing new temporary and permanent exhibitions at key connection points on the railway	11111 111	11111 1111	11111 111	1111	11111 111
Leading guided tours of Boston Lodge Works	11111 11111 1111	11111 1	11111 111	11111 1	11111
Supervising other volunteer guides	11111 11111 11111 111	11111 1111	11111 11	111	1

Interest in project opportunities (engineering)

Engineering	1 (Not interested)	2	3	4	5 (Very interested)
Specific conservation projects	111111	11111 1	11111	11111 111	11111 11111 111
Leading skills workshops/experiences for the public (e.g. slate shunt, engine driving, coupling, oiling an engine, blacksmithing (slate wagons, fenceposts), how a steam engine works, sign writing/gilding, photography, how to tap holes/thread a screw, riveting (slate wagon), making an oil can)	11111 11111 111	11111 11111	11111 11111 1	11	111
Training other volunteers in engineering/specialist skills	11111 11111 11	11111 1	11111 1	11111 11	11111 1
Developing content for Boston Lodge tours	11111 11111 11	11111 1	11111 11111 1	11111 1	11
Leading guided tours of Boston Lodge Works	11111 11111 1111	11111 111	11111 111	11111	111
Supervising other engineering/specialist volunteers	11111 11111 1111	11111	1111	11111 1	11111 1

Volunteers suggested the following opportunities as needed

“This bid presents a marvellous opportunity to start to provide more than just a train ride.”

- A main interest to me is to see stations with interpretative panel not only of whole line(s) but about the station itself - age , travel along with perhaps decent period posters and volunteering posters - most stations have spare boards just crying out for some filling!
- Any scope for Permanent way exhibits/material?
- As stated on the attached information, the heritage interpretation of the works will only be effective if much of the effort is directed towards the educational groups market – tailoring the lectures/tours/ presentations appropriately to curricula and requested content to fit in with college, school and university studies of industrial history, engineering, etc.
- Better provision for training volunteers and keeping them properly skilled for the tasks they are expected to undertake
- Civil engineering is harder to interpret than locomotives, for example. However, leaflets and interpretation boards would be a good start. Occasional special trains giving access to remote locations on the route might be a possibility. A book on the history of FR civil engineering which might be something that would be of interest.
- Defined pathways from a being member of the public with a newly found interest in FR heritage to a productive volunteer in a specific heritage work area. This could include a diagrammatic explanation of the pathway and experienced volunteers to speak to and guide the individual along a pathway.
- Do we need training on how to deliver more effectively. Half of the project (interpretation) should be how to deliver information
- Existing tours are aimed at enthusiasts and interested people. We need to push out to other visitor groups.
- Explain the archives and how to access them. Making access more user friendly. Providing small museum of relics as part of Boston Lodge Project.
- Focus on people telling stories but is there opportunities for interactive displays – learning at their own pace.
- I am already working on the electrical engineering drawing CAD records which were nonexistent in 1997. I keep these updated so that future engineers can see where all the sites electrical services are fed from and how they are protected. The drawings are held by several people and sets are kept on site
- Important to link stories to people’s interests – example a visitor who makes railway wheels today
- IT / social media/ web development / presentation / writing bids / funding proposals / marketing content etc

- Make more use of hand held devices – codes. How can we use devices to engage visitors with the story?
- much good work being done around the country using the new technology as discussed in the meeting - Apps, Holograms, Diorama, VR; these should be investigated perhaps as an Experience+ for the future
- Need to use the volunteer local contacts for oral history
- On station grades need review
- Ownership at this stage by committed and regularly active volunteers will lead to it being looked after in the long term.
- Permanent way – general maintenance and routine inspections
- Professional tuition would really help the railway make better use of its volunteers.
- Rolling stock – general maintenance and routine inspections
- Slate industry links how the railway interacts with slate and community. An opportunity to show how the railway is related to the community, can we engage them better. The railway doesn't relate to its community. Local man and son (locals) came to blacksmiths shop and saw where their grandfather worked. Families linked to the railway are still in the community.
- Station masters/mistresses could be developed to help travel info and historic storytelling
- Take tour visitors on a journey through manufacturing history (focus on early skills) – powerful to see a working process
- The ability for volunteer projects to be worked on without completely packing them up at the end of the weekend/days work. The ability for new volunteers, and those interested in starting, to be steered towards those projects and project groups.
- The design and practical work involved with creating a volunteer workshop so that it is somewhere which is fit for purpose.
- The need to restore the sense of enclosure, which had been lost by the demolition of the Waggon Repair Shop, the Blacksmith's Shop Extension and the wall alongside the mainline.
- The possibility for skills training to take place in the Shops.
- The possibility for the Shops to be accessible to visitors as part of a tour.
- The use of the reinstated Waggon Repair Shop and Blacksmiths Shop as a repair shop for the historic wagon fleet.
- There are plenty of opportunities and an almost endless list of a whole variety of tasks and roles that can be undertaken by volunteers.
- There is plenty to do, it's about getting groups organised to do it.
- These could be good opportunities to get people involved with real projects, rather than a meaningless experience.

- Volunteer linked to buildings and front of house. Take every opportunity to talk to customers.
- We need to collect oral history of the volunteer story
- What skills do we have that we could share and get people involved?

Volunteers suggested the following opportunities as something they would like to be involved in

“I love to talk to people about the engine. There is only limited time to talk with visitors so can we find time to talk to people in greater depth”

- Boston Lodge track maintenance gang
- Build a rake of Quarrymans carriages.
- I am a professional statistician, so I'd welcome any opportunity to help with data collection (e.g. surveys) or analysis.
- In my current role I've written and supported a number of substantial bids (up to £500k plus) and would be pleased to help with either writing or checking / proofreading parts of the current bid
- Long term rebuild of Mountaineer with experienced leader.
- More opportunities to learn and use specific skills such as machining, painting, lining and sign writing and so on.
- There's no museum to relate the slate-based railway
- Whilst I'm not too keen on the idea of leading a tour, I am quite knowledgeable about the history of the railway and Boston Lodge. So being involved in creating tours or just answering people's questions might be something I'd be interested in.
- Wish more opportunities for workshop duties were possible, incl. using machine tools if one has the skills.

Volunteers identified the following risks or issues

“I'm not an engineer or an historian, but have reasonable knowledge of the site, the sort of work that was carried out and what was achieved. I've been happy to take members and groups of visitors round in the past, but have struggled to explain the technicalities of the engineering side.”

- Competencies and records – some records are available. Could be potentially be done with all volunteers but the cost is prohibitive. Best way to do this would be group courses to develop skills together. There are difficulties getting competencies at the weekend due to week staff and courses are geared to week day workers.
- Concern about the balance between visitor attraction and working on the tasks needed and that Boston Lodge Works is not a working museum.
- Fear that increasingly tight competency rules will make it difficult for volunteers to gain, maintain and demonstrate competency on a wide range of workshop equipment. There is a significant time and cost penalty in regaining competence.
- I was head of Physics and taught some D.T. during my teaching career. I can therefore use taps and dies to produce threaded components

- Not sure volunteer-guided tours are the best thing. People not always available, maybe a digital tour. Needs to be available at any time not dictated to by a volunteer timetable
- Part of tour guides' training would need to cover how to best deal with different audiences.
- Some felt that they want to be able to get on with the tasks - courses could get in the way of volunteers getting stuff done / achieving things. Others agreed there is a fine balance between giving opportunities and getting on with the tasks.
- Space is a premium so getting people involved in real projects is more useful
- The visitor's time in the Blacksmiths Shop H2 will be important for breathing life into their experience of the old Top Yard. The only other historic buildings that will be accessible to the visitor will be the Foundry H4 and the Brass Foundry H6. Will there be activity in here that the visitor can observe?
- There's a high level of expectation from volunteers, this is not that easy. We're not short of volunteer opportunities, it just needs planning
- To get sufficient numbers to man the site people will have to be recruited without that depth of knowledge that the current volunteers have. An official history should be issued so that misinformation can be eliminated. I would recommend that each guide carried a notebook or pad to record any questions that they did not know the answer or thought that their answer was not completely satisfactory. These questions could then be answered and circulated with the other guides so increasing the knowledge base and improving the tours for visitors.
- Tour guides' training should include reading up more about the subject to help them give their own 'take' on the information.
- Very poor mobile signal would be an issue for technological solutions that rely on a signal
- Volunteer projects need to be realistic, volunteers need to make a positive difference.
- What is the visitor experience to be? Apart from the Small Loco Shed Ops 8 the visitor will not see inside any other part of the works but must view only the outside of the buildings with an explanation reliant on visual aids or the word of mouth from guides. This seems to be rather unengaging if the intention is to offer an 'immersive' behind the scenes experience that hooks the visitor. Seeing the action is vitally important. For instance is it not possible to erect a visitor 'viewing platform' in the Erecting Shop and Carriage Works?

People should know the following about the history of the railway and Boston Lodge Works (asked only to interpretation volunteers):

“We have an amazing amount of history we need to give bits to get them hooked”

- ‘I had a great time and learnt something’ – this will create return visitors
- 40-mile railway
- A basic history of the railways should be easily available for those who are interested in it, from that they can be guided to further information if they wish to learn more.
- All of which led to its being copied by other railways in so many of the colonies.
- All staff would have been Welsh speakers – Welsh is what you would have heard.
- And FR.Co. is STILL the original legal company established by Act of Parliament in 1832 (before "Ltd." or "PLC" was ever used) -the world's oldest rly. co. still in active business
- BL has lots of history, a huge diversity of stories told at BL not standardised and in some cases true.
- BL is the oldest railway workshop in the world
- BL's range of engineering skills;
- Boston Lodge built on quarry used to provide construction material for the Cob. Cottages 1 & 2 were the original barracks. Workshops built some of the locos and carriages. Also capable of manufacturing almost everything required by the railway including slate waggons and track components. Many original buildings exist.
- Boston Lodge is probably most famous for its use of Double Fairlie locos. Whilst these weren't the first built, they were probably the first successful articulated locos in the world. In the 1870-80s Boston Lodge built two Double Fairlies for the railway. This shows the skills this relatively small workshop when the line was at its peak. Since being saved for preservation the railway has continued to construct locos at Boston Lodge, long before high profile new loco projects such as Tornado were even thought of.
- Conventional workshop but part of a wider story
- Do you mean volunteers or visitors? - Key dates, events, key personalities, finance – how was it financed for example; impact on the local people, region, political and historical contexts – who was the Prime Minister for example in 1836? Why the FR and the NWNCR/WHR were built; and a whole of other stuff
- early horse drawn days;
- Even after the railways peak the history of Boston Lodge is still fascinating, especially when financial pressures created a more make do and mend approach. It is often said the railway never threw anything away, and if you go into the brass foundry today you can still find parts from engines taken off over 100 years ago. During WW1 the works became a national shell factory and was staffed almost

entirely by women. The work would have been almost completely new to the women living in the area at that time. Again in WW2 part of the works was leased to a local foundry for “war work”. This famously resulted in the loco Palmerston being dumped outside the blacksmith shop to power the machinery.

- Everything but especially the people
- Everything from the horse stabling days
- FH and WHR restored the Spooner graves at Beddgelert Church in 2020
- First ever successful use of steam loco's on a public railway of such a small track gauge
- First to practically used narrow gauge engines – still building locos from notes
- For the old company (before 1946) most of the stories around the works and the drivers are written down in that ['Little Giants'] book. However there are tapes done in the 1960s interviewing Tom Davies, one of the old Drivers, that I think are stored by the FR at the National Library of Wales. Further there was an interview of 3 employees done by the BBC for the centenary of the line in 1936, but the BBC are not very cooperative in searching their archives for such unusual gems and so I could not get access to that either. I think we have to remember that those are not the only stories, there was chat in the meeting of talking to old member of the works staff from the restoration period and this should be tackled by the railways Heritage Group volunteers perhaps as history was being made then and still is being made - we all are part today of the continuing story
- From the need for the Cob, the links to important and unexpected persons such as Shelley and Mrs Gaskell right up to the way we produce carriages and locomotives today and how we are providing for Apprentices for tomorrow.
- Goes back to before the locomotives Horses and Gravity
- having the story helps to engage visitors with snippets. Without the story we are just another railway.
- Historic buildings still in use as historically. Blacksmith shop inside building interpreted conservation and history
- How the BL site came in to existence with the construction of the Cob (and why the Cob was built – for land reclamation and a road crossing of the estuary)
- How the Cob caused a sheltered calm anchorage for the transshipment of slates from the Dwyrdd boats to the sea going ships that developed into quays being built which then resulted in some quarry owners bringing slates straight to the quays. This was the beginning of Porthmadog
- I think the history of the site, its importance to the local area, and influence on narrow gauge railways across the world is incredibly interesting.
- importance in the slate industry;
- Important: storytellers need to adapt story to be relevant. Many passengers only for a ride to fill a day of the holiday and not really care for an ‘old’ story

- It is easy to put passengers on a train from Port to Blaenau and back, without them been given much flavour as to why the works, the cob, the railway existed in the first place, and the transitions it has been through in its original working life and since. We have spent a lot of time dragging interesting artifacts out of the undergrowth and bringing them inside to preserve them – which is great, but now we need to get those bits which have been restored back into the public eye.
- Its ability to make a handsome profit on such narrow rails when the big Victorian engineering debate was between Stephenson's 4' 8-1/2" and Brunel's 7' 0-14" gauges (both those greatly feted engineers said steam loco's could not be a success on our 1' 11-1/2" gauge!)
- Its capabilities now and the huge achievements in the last 30 years.
- Its early significance as a pioneer and having international influence
- Its pioneering roles.
- its Welshness and how its staff came significantly from Minffordd and Penrhyndeudraeth and where Lein Bach is still viewed as “their” railway
- Key points in history – weapons factory – look at the full time line
- Kids Week and what it leads to
- life on the Welsh Highland
- 'Little Giants' book: most of the pre-1946 stories around the works and the drivers
- longevity of its history
- Members didn't all know about BL. No idea of what is built and created at BL.
- Often described as unique. The FR was a world leader in the development of narrow-gauge railways for industrial use. Development of Double ended steam locomotives to provide economical yet powerful units to replace smaller locos which in turn replaced horses. The use of gravity trains and the necessary infrastructure which followed the contours of the land. Development of iron framed carriages – first in the world.
- People think the carriages are older than they think they are. When people find out they were built here recently they are fascinated
- pioneering use of narrow gauge steam locomotives and the impact on world development of railways;
- Railway vital part of the economy – lorries of the day
- Realise an ongoing story – apprentices – ongoing stories – not a museum it is a living works.
- Recording Yesterday for Tomorrow publication
- See attached Tour “Flow diagram” sheet developed from many previous Boston Lodge Tours' experience.
- Since the railway was preserved, Boston Lodge has gone from holding the railway together on a shoestring, to an engineering centre of excellence. Not only building

locos and coaches for the Festiniog and Welsh Highland Railways, but other lines across the UK too.

- Some early geography of the area, leads to slate, leads to slate mines, leads to transport need to cob to railway to port. Horsedrawn and note famous names said it could not be donw, leads to steam and Bug Bogeys for early tourism – new coaches as world leaders, double engines and their story, leads to successful business. 2nd phase decline/war/closure – reopening and deviation, return to Blaenau Ffestiniog, doing same for WHR, improving passenger experience, volutneering and travel business, giving the world famous...
- Some of the history of the 1950's onwards
- Some of the important unique points about the FR;
- Some of the prehistory of the site.
- Story about building the Welsh highland railway
- Sustainability
- The continuing story – i.e. the fact that the railway and works have always changed and developed to meet various deferent challenges and demands of period.
- The first workshops at Boston Lodge supported the construction of the Cob and its associated tramway as far back as 1809. This makes the oldest railway workshops still in operation. Story of how from humble beginnings building waggons for the horse worked railway, Boston Lodge grew to the point it was building its own locomotives is a fascinating one. Especially given its relatively remote location in a quiet corner of North Wales. The Ffestiniog Railway was incredibly important to the fortunes of the local area. It allowed the quarries of Blaenau to grow, replacing the pack horse as the primary means of transport. The Harbour of Porthmadog existed only to ship roofing slates around the world. Without the FR to transport them from the quarries the town would be completely different. At its peak the FR was moving 140,000 tons of slate a year in waggons carrying 2 tons each. An impressive feat for a small railway. It influences can clearly be seen today in famous railways such as the Darjeeling Himalayan railway in India, or the Cumbres and Toltec in the USA.
- The gradual decline during the interwar period
- The historical engineering achievements together with the interface between the FR, the Works and local communities in terms of their social history.
- The history particularly the people of the Railway are very valuable assets. There are many hundreds of stories allied to the railway but importantly they need to be told in an engaging and fun way that attracts the young without alienating the old. A difficult balance but humour always wins out! As an example I always point out the swimming pool tank that served Plas Tan Y Bwlch with sea water. What fun it must have been to have such a facility in those days.

- The horse drawn tramway was built to reduce the cost of shipment of slate to the ships. It is all due to the slate.
- The importance of the railway to the development of the local and national economy both when it supported the local slate industry and later after 1954 as a tourist attraction without which the town of Porthmadog and its hinterland would be very different now. The place of the FR in the development of narrow gauge railways internationally.
- The often-forgotten period during the 1970s / 80s when the railway struggled to keep up with passenger demand whilst trying to build the first brand new railway in United Kingdom in decades.
- The railway attracted some very talented engineers and influenced railways all over the world. When it purchased its first locos in 1863, it was widely believed that engines that small would not be capable of useful work. They were such a success that the railway had to purchase 2 more a few years later. Four of those engines still survive working on the same railway, maintained in the same workshops, and kept in the same engine shed built for them in 1863. Only a year later it started a public passenger service, the first on a narrow gauge railway anywhere in the world. Again these coaches are still in use and maintained at Boston Lodge. It pioneered the use of bogie coaches in the UK in 1872. These days virtually every train you will travel on uses bogie coaches.
- The railway was carrying goods and passenger 40+ years before there were road vehicles in common use);
- The revival by preservation pioneers in the 1950s, 1960s
- The skills needed to restore the railway and build new locos, carriages and other rolling stock from scratch or to restore such equipment up to museum standards.
- The Victorian and Edwardian heyday
- There are myths and legends interwoven into the railway stories. This is an engaging element to use for story-telling.
- There is a large amount of history in the slate mining regions of N Wales and the railway played a big part in that – as a history project it has immense scope and I know that an great number of people are amazed at what exploits were carried on in the mines and in the transport network around the slate mines
- They should learn about the history of the railway and the works, but particularly in the light of what made it such a special place in the railway world as a whole
- We tell the story of BL from start to finish, cob ruined eco system, created Porthmadog, lodges
- What did the railway do for the local communities – Sunday school trips, links to other railways [via?] Caernarfon.
- What it does now and how unique it is.

- What the FR is doing today – apprentices, new locos, working with the local 16+ college
- When does heritage stop – the story of volunteers
- Why and how was the railway created? Irish money was used to develop a Welsh business that benefited from a harbour accidentally created by an English MP.
- Why does the railway exist – social and economic reasons
- Why it is there and what it has done as various times since it opened.

“sell the sizzle not the bacon”

People stories that stand out include:

“There are also the host of fascinating, talented and in some case frankly weird people who have been involved with Boston Lodge Works in the preservation era”

- Apart from the original contractor and Spooner, there are strong links between the old Company staff and restoration days.
- Avion Williams family owned a quarry – slate man, knows where slate comes from by looking at it. Had cancer and Alan got him a trip on the gravity train. Be prepared to do something different
- Bessie Jones,
- Difficult to answer as there are so many especially from the less-controlled days of the restoration
- Do you mean on the FR or the WHR? At Boston Lodge? The Spooners, Maddocks, Colonel Stephens, James Cholmeley Russell, the train crews, the primitive nature of the works even in the 1930s/40s/50s
- Eileen Clayton
- Eileen Clayton
- Evan Davies
- Exceptional surveying by James Spooner, giving a 12-mile constant gradient for the gravity slate trains through difficult and (then) very remote terrain
- For example the Davies family -Tom, Wil, David etc.
- Fred Howes
- Fred Howes, the former Civil Engineering Manager, has produced several DVDs highlighting the track and the route
- Garraway
- George Percival Spooner [?]
- Glenn Williams
- Ian Smart (Plas Smart)
- Kate Roberts lived local
- Len Heath Humphreys – the 17 year old.
- Len-heath Humpries
- Maddocks (built Porthmadog)
- One of the many delegations that visited to learn its success was from the Czar of Russia.
- Paul Dukes
- Peppers ghosts to tell the story
- Spooner family members died from typhoid, buried at Beddgelert.
- Spooners
- Stories of passengers who have ridden the line

- The current Company/Trust Chairman who has made the organisation “get its finger out” to work to ensure it still exists in 50 years time.
- The current GM who takes a week holiday so he can drive an engine
- the Garraway era
- The involvement of the ‘common man’ in the FR in terms of how they worked and lived. This would provide a social thread with links across the local area to other forms of heritage.
- The tunnelers
- There are many ‘people stories’ not only from the early days of rescuing the Ffestiniog Railway but also from the rebuilding of the WHR; these need to be recorded before they are lost. There is an almost endless list as volunteering continues as do the happenings around it.
- There is scope for delving into the community and finding those whose families were involved in the FR in Old Company days.
- This is an area that needs covering in any training schemes for interpretation volunteers.
- William Williams
- The story of William Williams is an interesting one. Very much a home-grown talent, he was born in Tremadog around 1835. His grandfather was a blacksmith and is thought to have worked on the construction of the town with William Madocks. By 1851 his family were living at Boston Lodge. William and his brother Owen were apprentice fitters and his father an engineer at the works. In 1863 he is recorded as being trialled as a driver on the new steam engines, and by 1870 he is driving Little Wonder the ground breaking Double Fairlie. He also built the first loco at Boston Lodge in 1869 the little model loco Topsy that is on display in Spooners Bar. In 1875 he becomes the works manager then finally the Locomotive Superintendent in 1880. It’s in this role he leaves his greatest legacy by completely rebuilding the 5 George England locos. By this time these locos were completely worn out from the huge growth in traffic the railway had achieved. It was likely they would have to be replaced, but Williams worked out he could salvage many parts and incorporate them into an improved design. He started with Palmerston in 1888 and finished with Princess in 1893. All accomplished at a fraction of the cost of new engines, and apart from new boilers, all built at Boston Lodge. Four of these engines still exist today in much the same condition Williams rebuilt them in. If it wasn’t for his resourcefulness, they would have been scrapped after only 30 years service. Instead they are still working over 150 years later.
- Williams was dismissed in 1909 after 62 years service with a very generous pension of £1 a week. He died in Porthmadog in December 1915. He had 5 children. His son William G also worked for the FR as a fitter and the loco foreman. His other son

John R trained as a civil engineer and went to India with George Percival Spooner, he ended his career working in the loco department of the East Bengal Railway.

People should know the following about what happens at the railway and Boston Lodge Works, from an engineering perspective (asked only to engineering volunteers):

“Telling this engineering tale might not be as exciting as demonstrations of the blacksmith's art in the revitalised smithy but it is important none the less”

- ‘Gravity train’ is unique to this railway
- A lot of people love steam locomotives and all that goes with them and how they work. I drive steam locomotives in our local park and the young children who never saw steam on the main line railways are always amazed at how coal and water are turned into motive power. On our annual open day we sometimes allow youngsters to drive small steam engines – under close supervision and to see their faces when it moves is pure magic. I know some who bring their mums and dads every week to watch and to ride on a train pulled by a steam engine. We have four volunteers now on our park railway who were once watchers and are now drivers
- And of course the Welsh Highland Railway much of which was rebuilt by volunteers
- As much as they want to know. Those interested will get immersed to whatever extent they want to and will learn from others.
- Capabilities, competences, the range of construction work that can be taken on ie. that we can build new locomotives and carriages and carry out contract work for outside organisations
- Civil engineering of the Railways: he continuous downhill gradient that Spooner engineered to allow the loaded slate trains to return by gravity is as much a part of the FR as the Double Engines, Boston Lodge and Porthmadog Harbour (with its ships, boatyards and seafaring folk).
- Continuous story of the works.
- Electrical working party and the theoretical design for their work
- Emphasis on the ‘making of things from base materials’ – can we arrange that tours allow looking into the machine shops (although full access can clearly not be allowed)
- Everything
- An understanding of why people do it. I personally am not keen on the engineering workshops/experiences for the public; an insight from a guided tour with an invitation to sign up would be a better way to encourage practical engagement. In my experience it is very difficult to have a new starter produce any useful work on day one that isn’t mundane, they start with some basic stuff and work their way up

from there, it may be mundane but the social engagement and skills development is the driving force for their continued involvement, not the sort of work you give them to start with.

- From cradle to grave, we design in house, fabricate in house, assemble in house. The works staff are a very complete team and little work is required to be 'subbed out' with reasons only being resource availability or space availability.
- From small waggon repair to building its own engines
- History of horses to today
- History of its development from wagon works to locomotive building works. The linkage with the development of the slate trade. The linkage to engineering progress in the 19th century. How the engines are operated day to day, how they are maintained in general. Ditto carriages & wagons. The service it provides internally and externally today
- History of quarry to build cob
- How exactly do you maintain a railway that is 190 years old especially when structures these days are designed for a 100-year life?
- How steam engines work, how they are constructed, maintained and repaired at the Works. How the railway is operated to the benefit of the general public.
- I remember when they started – stories of other people's development. Hearing stories to encourage how others have developed into roles
- I think for our operation the having a go at driving a steam engine stuff works as a start up taster, with encouragement after to engage in some of the other work. This sort of thing needs to be driven by new teams rather than existing ones so as to not dilute the current volunteer efforts to a point where achieving conservation projects becomes tediously slow due to other more 'commercial' priorities.
- I think as well as the history people should know that this is one of the most important preserved railway workshops in the UK. Boston Lodge is still building locos and coaches using both modern and old techniques. They are not just preserving the past but building the future too. In one workshop someone could be building a brand new first class pullman coach, while in another someone could be riveting a humble 150 year old slate waggon back together. The layout of the site allows this to be portrayed perfectly as you travel from the old top yard through to the more modern workshops.
- I think people can guess a little of what happens at BLW but they will always be interested in the details, environment, history, and day to day jobs.
- Keeping the old skills alive, hot rivetting, boilersmithing, fitting, using machine tools that are not computer-driven, steam loco design
- Learn how engineering processes produce & maintain the equipment the railway uses day-to-day.

- Made aware of the unique skills needed for heritage railways – both steam & other motive power, together with the need to keep these skills alive.
- Mechanical engineering that can restore, rebuild, improve, and build new locomotives, carriages and wagons to meet the ever changing needs of the business, whilst still retaining and improving the historic profile of the railway, and basing it all in the oldest railway workshop in the world, in use since 1811, and the only one anywhere to have built steam locomotives in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries (including members of the double fairlie class in all three centuries, from 1879 to 2021 (so far!))
- Moelwyn Tunnel
- Not only current day, but wartime munitions work
- Oldest railway workshop in existence.
- Opportunity to take people on a journey through the BWL from horses to modern works.
- Permanent way history and development.
- Somehow that can-do-and-deliver spirit has rekindled since preservation, and the achievements of the railway since 1954 are something that is as important in its history as the Victoria Spooner era was.
- Steam locos and boggie carriages.
- Stories about characters and their influences working and worked at BLW – Victorian workers to modern day (Jed Perks)
- The activities which have not changed since past times and then the technical understanding and new technologies which are needed, often in the background, to make the heritage operational.
- The civil engineering skills to build the Deviation, re-engineer the centre of Blaenau Ffestiniog, restore the Welsh Highland from nothing, and redevelop both Harbour Station and Boston Lodge
- The Deviation Project
- The early history, traditional skills (hot riveting, carriage works, mechanical techniques, manual tools, blacksmithing...).
- The history of innovation, skills, tools, and sheer range of tasks undertaken and available to be undertaken.
- The restoration of the Garretts for the WHR and the fact that these are still the only locos able to operate a full length WHR train. There is still no modern diesel that can do the same!
- The setting, route and civil engineering of the Railways – civil engineers have an inside view on how Spooner was able to create the continuous downhill gradient that enabled gravity trains to run which are such a key part of the FR heritage and present day experience.

- The signalling engineering skills to develop and install a very low cost, but flexible, control and signalling system for both railways
- The traditional skills, for example hand painting and lining, traditional joinery – ancient skills still be practiced every day at Boston Lodge.
- This is an incredible small business, at the forefront of engineering development in its heyday in the 1860s to the 1880s.
- Tornado talked about as the first modern loco but we have 3 before that and 2 since.
- We built the engine in 1859, we are part of the continuity of the history. Working history – 52 years of story to tell

These particular skills or people should be highlighted:

- Ability to work with limited resources and seek help from others if needed
- Allan Garraway, who gave up a promising career in BR to lead the restoration of the FfR, and saw it from dereliction to its return to Blaenau, over almost three decades. Allan's input on the motive power side was a major issue in the early days of restoration, as well as leading the business for so long.
- BBC Interview of 3 employees for the centenary of the line in 1936 [but the BBC are not very cooperative in searching their archives for such unusual gems and so I could not get access to that either]
- Bob Le Marchant
- Boilermakers, turners, fitters, carriage builders and painters are skill areas 'lost to view' which are worthwhile showcasing
- Designing/ patterns & casting, Metalworking, woodworking, electrical, painting/upholstering/ finishing.
- Fred Howes – bring in the track from a pretty rough state to near perfection over 40-odd years. He became Vice President of the Permanent Way Institution for Wales, the first heritage railway person to achieve such an honour.
- Gerald Fox
- Having seen lots of 16-year olds progress into volunteering it is amazing. The Ffestiniog family moves out into other roles in other railways
- Hot riveting; the ultimate team work exercise.
- Interpersonal skills. Volunteers will only get involved if they are welcomed AND welcome. It's very easy to chase away volunteers who are new to the railway and it is a shame when a good potential volunteer doesn't stay.
- Machinists, fitters, foundry workers from the past, blacksmiths, coach-builders & coach-painters, loco crews, PW. crews.
- Mike Schumann
- Mike Schumann – building the deviation, and being a leading role in the restoration of the WHR, in both finance and engineering
- More of the old trades which are no longer in normal every day use such as steam engineering, lathe and milling machine operation, boiler making , pattern making and general high quality woodwork and cabinet making. Also top quality coach painting is a skill which is now almost gone since modern buildings are painted by roller and spray
- Morris Jones – who saved the railway's motive power in the 20s and 30s, stayed to the bitter end in 1946, and then came back in 1954 and got it all going again
- Neil Clayton – who has single-handedly championed the restoration of the railways electrical systems over 30 years.

- Norman Bond – who restored the vintage carriage fleet, and developed the carriage works to be able to build pretty much anything that would fit in the building, up to the restoration of a Metropolitan Railway Carriage that now runs on the underground again
- Old member of the works staff from the restoration period should be tackled by the railways Heritage Group volunteers. History was being made then and still is being made - we all are part today of the continuing story.
- One current train driver started off having paid for an experience, and has now been a driver for many years
- Paul Dukes – who kept the railway going through its growth period, even though it eventually outgrew him.
- Paul Lewin who, as well as running the business, has enabled the restoration of almost all the vintage locomotive fleet
- Paul Wood has a job on the national railway because of experience from the Ffestiniog volunteering
- Phil Girdlestone who pioneered “modern” steam technology.
- Tapes done in the 1960s interviewing Tom Davies, one of the old Drivers, that may be stored by FR at the National Library of Wales.
- The fabrication skills at the workshop. There are not many jobs on any of the locomotives that cannot be handled in house. There are not many preserved railways that can achieve this.
- The No. of younger employees at the railway, many of the workshop staff have been through apprenticeships at the works, mostly local people, these young people are keeping historic skills alive and in time will pass them onto the next generation.
- The skills of recreating Steam Engines and new carriages to a very high standard.
- Theo Rubens – Came through kids week
- Those that can weld, use the engineering machinery or have woodworking capabilities and have design capability.
- Those who are doing the same work as was done in past times.
- When working on the locos what seem to interest the passengers is people doing a job you don't really see any more. I get a lot of questions about what it's like working on the engines because people know very little about it. I think the same can be applied from an engineering perspective. Lots of people are probably familiar with the modern engineering techniques you can see at Boston Lodge. It is the older skills that really need to be shown, such as blacksmithing with a hearth and anvil, joining parts with hot rivets, shaping components with a steam hammer, or even something as simple as drilling a hole without an electric drill. It is difficult to imagine how they built and maintained this railway in a quiet corner

of North Wales, with the equipment they had back then. Being able to show people would be far better than just looking at some old things in an old building.

- Why do we come from all over, past other railways to come to Ffestiniog – this could be the best railway in the world. We want to give back to the railway, building the railway to make it better for the future of the railway.
- Will Jones
- Will Jones – carrying his track skills over from the old to the new company, so that it all got running again, at least as far as Dduallt by the time he retired

Local Community Survey

Introduction

Local people (defined as living in Gwynedd) were invited to complete an online 'Survey Monkey' questionnaire. The survey questions explored responses to interpretation, activities and marketing. The survey was advertised via local Facebook groups during October-November 2020.

112 users responded to the English-language survey. 12 users responded to the Welsh-language survey. A further 35 responses were filtered out from the English-language survey results because they were not submitted from local residents.

Summary of Survey Responses

Q2 If yes [to Q1: Do you live in Gwynedd?], which community do you live in?

The largest number of English-language respondents selected 'Other' (33%) rather than a specific community. Those that selected a specific community tended to select Porthmadoc (21%), Penrhyndeudraeth (10%), Beddgelert (8%), Caernarfon (6%) or Dolbmaen (4%).

The other 6 communities referenced had only 1 or 2 respondents for each.

The largest number of Welsh-language respondents selected 'Other' (50%) rather than a specific community. Those that selected a specific community selected either Caernarfon (16%), Beddgelert (8%), Dolbmaen (8%), Porthmadoc (8%), or Penrhyndeudraeth (8%).

Q3 How often have you been on the FfWHR trains/visited the stations, including your most recent visit?

Only a very small proportion of English-language respondents have never been on the FfWHR trains (12% and 8% for WHR and FfR respectively).

Of Welsh-language respondents, 25% had only been on the FfWHR trains once. 53% had been on the WHR more than once. Of 58% (7 people) using the FfR more than once, 6 had used it 3 times or more.

Most English-language and Welsh-language respondents had been to Porthmadog Station 3 times or more (99% and 88% respectively). Caernarfon was the least-visited station amongst the English-language group (50%). Blaenau Ffestiniog was the least-visited station amongst Welsh-language respondents.

Q4 The historic Ffestiniog & Welsh Highlands Railway has been serving industry and visitors for almost 200 years. To what extent do you agree with the following statements.

- I know something about the history of the railway
- I am aware of the technological innovations that began in my local area
- I think that industrial heritage is interesting and accessible to the lay person
- I am aware of my local area's own distinct history and heritage

English-language respondents either agreed (50%) or agreed strongly (25-37%) with each of these statements. There was little noticeable differentiation across the four options.

The Welsh-language respondents responded less strongly to knowing something about the railway's history (33% agreed; 33% strongly agreed), slightly less strongly to the technological innovations question (50% agreed; 17% strongly agreed); the weighted scores were also lower. The Welsh-language respondents felt that industrial heritage was accessible (42% agreed; 50% strongly agreed), and that they were aware of their local area's distinct heritage (33% agreed; 50% strongly agreed).

Q5 How interested are you in finding out about...

- How the railway has developed over 200 years
- The global impact of the railway
- The people of the railway (workers, families)
- The development of locomotives
- The buildings of the railway
- The nature and landscape around the railway
- How the railway served the slate industry
- What happens at the railway today

Both the English- and Welsh-language respondents tended to be either very interested or interested in these aspects of the heritage. The nature and landscape around the railway were most popular (92% positive) amongst English-language users; development of locomotives was the least popular (28% negative). Development of locomotives was the least popular with Welsh-language users also (25% negative).

The Welsh-language respondents responded noticeably very strongly to how the railway served the slate industry (33% interested, 67% very interested). The weight of the responses was, however, spread evenly across the options otherwise, with little to indicate clear winners or losers.

Q6 My impression of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highlands Railway is that:

- I can learn about the history of the railway there

- It provides an entertaining day out
- It is a good place to take friends and family who are visiting me
- It is affordable
- It is a good place for local families to visit
- It is only for train enthusiasts
- It is more for men than women
- The railway is not sufficiently accessible
- The Welsh language is not prominent enough
- Welsh language on display is written by native Welsh speakers

English-language respondents tend to view FfWHR as an entertaining day out (51% strongly agree; 43% agree), and as somewhere to take visiting friends and family (53% strongly agree; 39% agree). It is also viewed as a good place for local families to visit (27% strongly agree; 65% agree).

English-language respondents did not agree that the railway was only for people with a heritage interest (53% disagreed; 38% strongly disagreed), or that it had the greatest appeal for men (53% disagreed; 26% strongly disagreed).

The Welsh-language respondents emphatically view FfWHR as an entertaining day out (50% strongly agree; 50% agree). Whilst they considered that it was somewhere to take visiting friends and family, this was less weighted than for English-language users (33% strongly agree; 58% agree). While still good place for local families to visit, this was marginally less of an emphatic response than amongst the English-language users (8% strongly agree; 83% agree). Welsh-language users felt that the Welsh language should be more prominent (25% strongly agree; 50% agree), and felt less that the Welsh language used was written by native speakers (42% disagreed) than did the English-language survey users.

Q7 My impression of the links between the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highlands Railway and the local community is that:

The history and railway makes English-language respondents proud of their local area (65% agreed; 20% strongly agreed). But people did not generally agree that their family had a direct connection with its history (38% disagreed; 33% strongly disagreed).

It was noticeable that people as a whole were ambivalent about whether the railway worked in accordance with the needs/interests of local people (43% disagreed; 42% agreed); and whether the railway tells the story of the local community well (49% disagreed; 42% agreed).

The Welsh-language respondents mostly agreed (83%) that the local community receives discounts and special offers. Noticeably, the small number of respondents did not

consider that they had any direct connection with the railway (50% disagreed; 50% strongly disagreed).

Q8 Boston Lodge is the Engineering Works which has serviced the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highlands Railway since 1842. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

- I know where Boston Lodge Works is
- I know something about the history of Boston Lodge Works
- I know something about what Boston Lodge Works does today
- I'd like to find out more about Boston Lodge Works
- I think the natural environment around Boston Lodge could be improved
- I would be interested to visit Boston Lodge Works

English-language respondents would be either interested (45%) or very interested (42%) to visit Boston Lodge Works. This group felt more strongly about the potential to improve the environment around Boston Lodge Works (62% agreed; 25% strongly agreed) than they were interested to find out more about it (50% agreed; 30% strongly agreed).

The strongest negative responses were to have knowledge about the history of Boston Lodge Works (21% disagreed; 17% agreed); and about its role today (21% disagreed; 16% agreed).

The Welsh-language respondents were keen to know more about Boston Lodge Works (42% agreed; 42% strongly agreed). They would be either interested (75%) or very interested (17%) to visit Boston Lodge Works.

Q9 Do you know where Boston Lodge Works is located?

91% of English-language survey users responded 'Yes', compared to 100% of Welsh-language respondents.

Q10 A project is being developed to help people discover more about the railway and Boston Lodge Works. What would you be interested in doing or seeing?

The most popular potential activity amongst English-language survey users was 'Watching People working using traditional heritage craft skills / engineering / joinery' (47% interested; 42% very interested).

Learning more about the Railway's history came next (56% interested; 33% very interested), followed by learning more about Boston Lodge Works (49% interested; 33% very interested).

Tours around Boston Lodge Works were received positively, with 33% interested in an English-language tour and 43% very interested. 18% of English-language survey users were interested in a Welsh-language tour and 13% very interested.

The Welsh-language respondents were very keen on a Welsh-language tour of Boston Lodge Works (42% interested; 50% very interested); on 'Watching People working using traditional heritage craft skills / engineering / joinery' (42% interested; 50% very interested), and in finding out more about the railway's heritage and history (42% interested; 50% very interested).

Volunteering tended to be viewed unfavourably or with ambivalence amongst both groups, but there was interest expressed in all three of the suggestions nonetheless (40-50% positive).

Q11 If you would not be interested in visiting Boston Lodge Works or cannot contribute, please provide your reason/s...

No responses in either language

Q12 Do you have a personal connection with or story to tell about the railway or Boston Lodge Works?

No responses in either language

Q13 We are looking for members of the local community to help shape plans for the project. Would you be interested in helping?

No responses in either language

Q14 If you have any further comments or suggestions for how you might want to get involved with the railway, please let us know.

No responses in either language

Q15 How did you hear about this survey?

English-language survey users found out via Facebook (80%), the FfWHR website (10%) or 'Other' (10%).

Welsh-language respondents found out via Facebook (58%), or 'Other' (42%).

Q16 Please could you tell us more about yourself?

Amongst the English-language survey users there was a very slight gender bias towards male (M/F split 51%/45%). There were also responses for other (1%) and prefer not to say (3%). Among the Welsh-language survey users 58% were female, 33% male, and prefer not to say (8%).

Q17 Please could you tell us more about yourself?

The age group split amongst English-language survey users is as follows:

55-64 years	39
Over 65 years	26
45-54 years	21
35-44 years	17
25-34 years	5
Prefer not to say	2

The age group split amongst Welsh-language survey users is as follows:

55-64 years	0
Over 65 years	1
45-54 years	5
35-44 years	2
25-34 years	3
Prefer not to say	1

None of the respondents were under 24.

Q18 Please could you tell us more about yourself?

The employment status of respondents to the English-language is as follows:

Employed	45
Retired	38
Self-employed	17
Parent/Carer	3
Prefer not to say	3
Other (please specify)	2
Unemployed	1
Student	1

The employment status of respondents to the Welsh-language is as follows:

Employed	7
Retired	1
Self-employed	1
Prefer not to say	1
Unemployed	1
Student	1

Q19 Please could you tell us more about yourself?

6% of English-language respondents considered themselves to have a disability.

Q20 Please could you tell us more about yourself?

Respondents mostly considered themselves White/British.

Q21-22 Welsh and Welsh language

Of the English-language responses:

- 60% answered 'No' when asked 'Are you Welsh?
- 32% answered 'Yes' when asked 'Are you Welsh?
- 19% speak Welsh as a first language
- 16% speak Welsh as an additional language
- 29% are currently learning Welsh

Of the Welsh-language respondents:

- 100% answered 'Yes' when asked 'Are you Welsh?
- 100% speak Welsh as a first language

Guided tour consultation

To be written up

Session with Snowdonia National Park Young Ambassadors

To be written up

Staff survey

To be written up