**Cymdeithas Rheilffordd Llyn Tegid**

**Bala Lake Railway Society**

**Minutes of the 50th Annual General Meeting of the Society, held at Llanuwchllyn Station**

**and online, via Zoom: 2.30PM, 18th May 2024**

**Attendees:** Ron and Lynne Finley, Cathy Houghton, Martin Houghton, Hugh Jones, Peter Miller, Hilary Moorhouse, John Moorhouse, Bob Newton, Heulwen Newton,Mat Peacock, Simon Roseveare, Francis Stapleton, Nick Talbot, Ian Williams, Ros Williams, Tim Williams, Robin Willis*. [Sufficient members attended to pass the quorum threshold of 17].*

As is traditional, at the beginning of the Meeting, the Chairman, Tim Williams, offered the chair to the President, Peter Miller. Again according to tradition, the President thanked the Chairman for offering him the chair and passed it back.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

These were received from Julian Birley, Martin Cleaver, Dave Fildes, Bob Greenhalgh, Rob Houghton, Chris Jackson, Alan Mitchell, Daniel Newton, Dave and Ailith Rutt, Chris and Jaqueline Shanks,and Nigel Walker.

**2. Minutes from the 49th AGM (held on 20th May 2023): Approval and Matters Arising**

Cathy Houghton noted that the signal post replacement (Item 9a in the 2023 Minutes) had eventually been funded by the Draw Club. There being no other matters arising, Francis Stapleton proposed that the Minutes be accepted. The motion was seconded by Peter Miller and carried unanimously.

**3. Reports**

**a. Society Chairman’s Report**

Tim Williams submitted a written report prior to the Meeting, and summarised and expanded on some sections of it on the day.

I write this report at a time of change for the Society. As you will all now be aware from the February edition of *Llanuwchllyn Express*, our long-serving Treasurer, Dave Scotson, passed away on New Year’s Eve. Dave was first elected to our Committee as Treasurer in 1988 and served with every Chairman of the Society. It is sad to think that I am the last Chairman to have benefited from his reliable handling of the Society’s accounts and calm advice in all matters. [Tim added at the Meeting that it felt strange to be at a Society AGM without Dave being there].

I am indebted to Dave Fildes, who has taken on the unenviable task of taking over the handling of the Society’s finances for the next year. He has been working through the documents that have been passed to us by Dave Scotson’s partner, Maria Wagland, and his employer, the Tal-y-llyn Railway. I have assisted Dave Fildes with some of these tasks, hunting through the many boxes of papers for key documents, some of which were only passed over to us during May. This task is still ongoing, so it will be some time before everything has been brought fully up to date and before new systems have been set up.

However, Dave Fildes has indicated that he is unable to take on the role of Treasurer on a long-term basis and intends to step down at the 2025 AGM, so we shall be looking for a new Treasurer next year, in addition to a new Vice-Chairman to take up the role that Dave has now vacated. If you are interested, please get in touch.

Further progress has been made on the volunteer accommodation in the upstairs of the station building, for which the Society is responsible. Hilary Moorhouse has now taken responsibility for dealing with day-to-day issues, such as ensuring that we have adequate cleaning supplies and keeping the bed linen in order. With regard to bedding, we have now instituted a policy that volunteers are requested to bring their own bedding with them and to use the linen stored at the station only if it is not practical (for example, if they travel by public transport or motorbike). The aim is to reduce the amount of laundry that needs to be dealt with and put away, and which in practice is often left cluttering the place up. New kitchen units have now been installed along the end wall, to replace the previous “random collection” which was both unsightly and difficult to keep clean. Replacing the lino flooring is now the next task and it is hoped that this will be dealt with during the 2024-2025 winter period.

The Society continues to work to promote the Bala Lake Railway at model shows and other railway-related events and we have in the past year gained two very valuable volunteers, Ron and Lynne Finley, who have taken the Society’s publicity stand to a number of shows. The Society will be providing Ron and Lynne with a budget to allow them to improve the presentation of the Stand. However, we still need more people to help with promotional activities, so if you are able to take a stand to a local event or are willing to help in any way, please get in touch.

There is also an on-going discussion within the Committee relating to sales items (over and above the calendar and back issues of *Llanuwchllyn Express*) – items which could be developed to supplement the Society’s income, via sales at shows from the Society Stand, through the Railway Shop, and online.

The Society continues to ring-fence £10k of its funds for the planned accessible toilet at Llanuwchllyn Station. Sadly, the Company was unable to progress this project during the winter of 2023-2024 but I am assured that it is still “live” and that it will happen.

At the 2022 AGM, the Committee was tasked with investigating the introduction of a formal Code of Conduct and complaints procedure, for use by the Society in the event that a serious complaint was brought. It was felt at the time that we might need to have such documents in order to demonstrate that due process was correctly followed.

This proved to be a far more difficult task than was originally anticipated, so at the 2023 AGM the Committee reported back that agreement had not been reached on the wording of these documents and asked the AGM for further direction on the matter. It was suggested in the ensuing discussion that legal advice should be sought, so the AGM directed the Committee to consult with Peter Heywood, a Lake Railway Company Director and retired judge. He was willing to give free legal advice to us.

The ensuing meeting with Peter concluded that the Society did not require its own conduct documents, but that we should formally adopt the Railway Company’s own volunteering regulations to cover situations where people volunteer on behalf of the Society at events. The Committee has also adopted a policy whereby a member who is threatened with expulsion, under Article 3c-3 of the Constitution, has a right to appeal to a neutral and mutually-acceptable arbiter who will decide on the merits of the case.

The extension project suffered a major set-back in 2023 when the planning application was rejected by the National Park’s planning committee. A huge amount of time and money has now been spent in order to address the problems that caused the rejection. The application was re-submitted at the end of March. The Society wishes Julian Birley and his team the best of luck with the new application, which we hope will this time be successful.

Taking a step back, and looking at the situation of Rheilffordd Llyn Tegid, 2023 was another record year for the railway, despite the continuing cost-of-living crisis. This has been achieved through the hard work and dedication of the Railway’s staff, volunteers and supporters. 2024 and beyond will continue to be tough, with ever-increasing costs and difficulties in obtaining coal for our locomotives, so it is important that the Society continues to focus its efforts on supporting and promoting the Railway in every way possible.

Robin Willis proposed that this report be accepted. Bob Newton seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

**b. Treasurer’s Report**

Dave Fildes, having worked closely with Tim Williams on the accounts since he became Acting Treasurer at the beginning of the year, submitted a set of figures and an accompanying report, prior to the Meeting. The figures were produced with the assistance of the Society’s new “Xero” accounting software, so have a different format from previous years’ accounts.

For the year ended 31 March 2024:

Income:

Donations £874.83

Interest Income £273.77

Membership Income £6,092.23

Sales £158.95

**Total Income £7,399.78**

Expenses:

Advertising & Marketing £555.60

Charitable and Political Donations (£46.60)

General Expenses £2,834.24

IT Software and Consumables £257.14

PayPal Fees £17.81

Postage, Freight & Courier £199.21

Printing & Stationery £2,951.16

Rounding £28.50

**Total Expenses £6,797.06**

**Surplus (Deficit) £602.72**

Fixed Assets (£178.80)

Total Other Cash Movements (£178.80)

**Net Cash Movement £423.92**

Summary:

Opening Balance £25,522.91

Plus Net Cash Movement £423.92

Cash Balance £25,946.83

Assets:

Computer Equipment £178.80

**Total Fixed Assets £178.80**

Cash at bank and in hand:

Bus Bank Instant £21,285.91

Cash Box 1 £113.99

PayPal £19.12

Treasurer’s Account £4,527.81

**Total Cash at bank and in hand £25,946.83**

Total Current Assets £25,946.83

Net Current Assets (Liabilities) £25,946.83

Total Assets less Current Liabilities £26,125.63

Net Assets £26,125.63

Capital and Reserves:

Current Year Earnings £602.72

Retained Earnings £25,522.91

**Total Capital and Reserves £26,125.63**

Dave Fildes wrote his accompanying report as follows. It has been a fraught introduction to the role of Treasurer of the BLRS. First of all I must offer sincere thanks to Maria Wagland – Dave Scotson’s partner - for the help she has provided in forwarding any documentation that she thought referred to the BLRS. I must also offer profound thanks to Tim Williams and Cathy Houghton for their brilliant help in trying to get the figure for the year 2023-24. As Tim will explain we are not quite there but are a lot closer than we were a month ago.

When I started in the role, I had four initial major issues:

1. Access to Lloyds Bank- luckily Tim was also an account signatory, so this was the most painless of the issues.
2. Getting HMRC to accept me as the person to deal with business taxation. This was quite a long winded process, but I got there.
3. Corporation Tax was due on March 31st, 2024, for the year ended March 31st, 2023. This was a problem as I could not find a complete set of accounts for 2022-23. I managed to get the date put back a month and then cobbled together an answer to HMRC showing we owed £63.46 which is line with what we paid previously. As of May 10th, the cheque has been processed and so I believe what I have done has been successful.
4. The final major issue is the Barclays bank accounts. Unfortunately, Dave Scotson has been the main signatory for many years. The bank will not let us have access to the account as we cannot name the remaining signatory. I have made enquiries with many BLRS members who may have had access to the account, but no one has come forward. This is my major project for the coming months to gain access to our money.

Going forward, Tim has implemented a software system that seems to work reasonably well and could make life a lot easier for me and any future Treasurer. Obviously we will try to get the accounts finalised and sent out to you as soon as possible.

The bank figures as of March 31st, 2024, are

Treasurer’ account (Lloyds) £4659.77

Savings Account (Lloyds) £21285.91

Community Account (Barclays) £9926.96

Business Savings (Barclays) £234.04

Tim Williams summarised the above reports for the benefit of the Meeting, since Dave Fildes was unable to attend in person. He stressed that the above reports are provisional. Restoring access at Lloyd’s was not too difficult as Tim and Mat Peacock were also signatories on the accounts. The Society is unincorporated but still needs to file a tax return. It did so after asking for and getting an extension from HMRC.

The real problem is Barclay’s Bank – the accounts there relate to special events and accommodation. Dave Scotson was a signatory but there were no known others and Dave was unable to resolve this before he became really ill. The Society is still trying to prove its identity to Barclay’s. This is not helped by Barclay’s not telling us what they actually need by way of proof, only responding in the negative when they are not satisfied. Also, actually finding a branch open at a suitable time had been really difficult.

The Society has recently adopted Xero accounting software, as used also by the Company. One reason for doing this is to make future hand-overs of the Treasurer job a lot simpler. The figures in Dave Fildes’ first report were generated by Xero. The balances are reliable but the income and other figures may not be. Dave Scotson had not started this most recent set of accounts and we have not found all the paperwork.

Peter Miller commented that it was understandable that the accounts were not perfect, and commended Dave Fildes and Tim Williams for their work. Tim added a commendation of the Membership Secretaries: their records were excellent and had greatly assisted in the transition. There was then a discussion of possible candidates for possible missing signatories to the Barclay’s accounts, but the suggestions offered all proved to be dead ends that have already been explored. Cathy Houghton referred to another organisation with which she is involved. They had had similar trouble with Barclay’s and finally made progress only after they had sent them a formal letter of complaint. A branch visit hadn’t helped in Cathy’s case.

Peter Miller proposed thanks to Dave and Tim and that the accounts be accepted on a provisional basis. He also advocated a gesture of thanks for Maria, and Tim suggested a card be sent. Cathy Houghton seconded this proposal, and it was carried unanimously.

**c. Membership Secretaries’ Report**

Cathy and Martin Houghton submitted a report in writing in advance, and expanded on some points at the Meeting.

At last year’s AGM, we reported that the Society had a membership of 390 people and 24 dogs, and since then, numbers have continued to fall. Currently the membership is 360 people and 25 dogs, however in the last 12 months we have processed 21 new member application forms, compared to 19 in the year prior to the 2023 AGM.

The Secretaries thanked all those who have joined or stayed with the Society over the last year, for their support. The difference in overall numbers this year is mainly due to a combination of Couples only joining or renewing one person instead of two, and a much higher number of Families leaving than joining. As the current economic situation continues to affect working age members more than senior ones, the Society continues to be top-heavy with Senior Members, and realistically this is unlikely to change in the near future.

Overall, we think the Society is weathering the current economic storm pretty well, and its worth pointing out that membership numbers are still higher than they were prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

As we expected, the increase in fees from 25 May 2023 created additional work dealing with people who had forgotten to increase their Standing Orders and regular payments. Most members have email addresses, and promptly paid the outstanding balance in response to an email from us. A small number of mainly older members don’t have email addresses. As the cost of postage has increased a lot in recent years, the decision was made to accept the renewal at the “old” rate but they were sent an explanatory letter and new Standing Order form along with their membership cards. Some responded by paying the balance after getting the letter and some added donations so overall this decision had minimal impact on the Society’s finances!

As always, we’d like to say a very big thank you to everyone for keeping us busy and also thank everyone who added a donation to their subscriptions this year. It is much appreciated. Cathy Houghton added that there is no question that the Society Stand is a good way to recruit members. She commended Ron and Lynne for all their work and for recruiting two new members at a Model Show very recently.

The Draw Club runs from January to December, and at the end of last year it had raised £356.33 for the Society. During the year, many of the winners chose to donate their winnings to the Bala Lake Railway Trust with a total of £222.54 being passed to them. Cathy and Martin thanked all involved. However, the number of numbers in the Draw fell slightly in 2023 and again this year. They would be delighted to receive welcome new number-holders. It costs £2.50 per number per month, so one number costs £30.00 per year and you can have as many numbers as you wish. Paying for one number a month is cheaper than buying a cup of coffee, and its healthier as you won’t be tempted to buy a piece of cake to go with it!! Please contact us for an application form if you’d like to join in.

Lynne Finley proposed that this report be accepted. Robin Willis seconded the motion, and it was carried without opposition.

**d. *Llanuwchllyn Express* Editor’s Report**

Nick Talbot sent in a report in writing in advance. He wrote that the next issue (No.181) would be due in May 2024 but it will certainly not be out before the tail end of the month as I have reports yet to receive, such as one from the General Manager.

The print in the last issue was noticeably dark. This was due to the use of a different printing machine at Solopress. Nick now has details of exactly which machine he needs the Express to be printed upon and so hopefully future issues will not suffer this problem.

Nick expressed his gratitude, as ever, to all contributors - especially David Jones whose quarterly report is the backbone of the journal, to Rob Houghton for his notes that enable the compilation of the Loco Dept Report, to Cathy & Martin Houghton, Tim Williams, and Mat Peacock for their input and support - and to John Roberts for allowing recent issues of the *Express* to use a selection of his historic images from standard gauge days.

Nick’s report went on: “However, I am finding it increasingly hard to fill the pages with words. Articles are always welcome. What else might I like to receive? Current day photographs which have not been extensively published on social media - showing day to day events at the BLR and especially showing developments and volunteer activity. Historic insights/articles/photographs. Volunteers: words describing how you became a volunteer at the BLR and what it means to you.”

He asked if he should produce a 2025 version of the calendar. It would probably be in the same format as previously. It would be possible to get one in production for July 2024, and the sale price would likely be £10. Postage was becoming an issue, but Nick felt that edging above £10 would be the wrong move. In response to a question from Mat Peacock about printing costs generally, Nick replied that he had no concerns at present.

Bob Newton proposed that this report be accepted. Robin Willis seconded the motion, and it was carried without opposition.

**e. Company General Manager’s Report**

Owing to recent pressures of work, David Jones was unable to produce a report for this year’s Meeting. Mat Peacock proposed an informal vote of thanks and support to David for all his work, and this was supported by all present.

**4. Elections**

Tim Williams introduced this section by reading out the list of candidates and nominators. As the Society has now moved onto a three-year election cycle, only one third of elected positions were up for election or re-election.

**Dave Fildes** stood for election as Treasurer, for one year (nominated by Peter Miller and Hilary Moorhouse).
**Bob ‘Shell’ Greenhalgh** stood for election as a Vice-President (nominated by Peter Miller and Tim Williams).

**Rob Houghton** stood for re-election as a Committee Member (nominated by Nick Talbot and Dave Fildes).
**Chris Jackson** stood for re-election as a Vice-President (nominated by Dave Fildes and Peter Miller).
**Mat Peacock** stood for re-election as Secretary (nominated by Tim Williams and Nick Talbot).

**Francis Stapleton** stood for re-election as Heritage Advisor (nominated by Hilary Moorhouse and Tim Williams).

There was an opportunity for statements and questions before the ballot. Mat Peacock said that he would continue to try to answer all communications received Monday-Saturday within 24 hours and do his best otherwise. He also spoke in praise of Francis Stapleton for all his help implementing Committee ideas when nobody else was anywhere near Llanuwchllyn. Peter Miller spoke in support of Chris Jackson as a long-standing supporter of the Railway (he was one of the class of ’73) and an excellent contributor to Committee Meetings. Tim Williams added that Chris would have been here but for a clash with the AGM of the *Colonel Stephens Society*. Tim also commended all that Dave Fildes has done for the Society, not least since taking over the Treasurer role. Francis Stapleton spoke about his role as a guard and as a lone voice of Heritage Reason.

Robin Willis proposed that there be a single vote for all the candidates. This was approved in a preliminary vote, though Mat Peacock abstained on the grounds that a secret ballot is more democratic and an efficient system for a secret ballot was now in place (see also the Minutes of the July 2023 Committee Meeting, Item 3). All the candidates were elected unanimously (it being possible, under the Constitution, for candidates to vote for themselves).

An additional vote was then conducted to give Ron and Lynne Finley the status of non-executive Publicity Officers, so that they would be fully empowered to carry out financial operations and access records, and in recognition of their contribution to the Society over the last year. This would be for a term of three years. Mat Peacock proposed the motion. It was seconded by Cathy Houghton and carried unanimously.

**5. Appointment of Independent Financial Auditors**

Martin Cleaver, who had been Auditor in the past, had notified the Committee that he would be willing to continue. He also reported that he had not seen last year’s accounts (and last year’s other auditor, Roger Hine, confirmed in a conversation after Dave Scotson’s funeral that he had not seen them either). Tim Williams added that he and Dave Fildes had Dave Scotson’s 2023 AGM report and hand-written ledger but not his intervening calculations. Peter Miller asked if these accounts had been approved at the 2023 AGM and Tim replied that they had, subject to audit. They would therefore have to be audited at a later date. Nick Talbot proposed that Martin Cleaver continue as Auditor. Hugh Jones seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

**6. Society Projects**

**a. Accomodation**

Hilary Moorhouse said that the kitchen floor has been measured so that Tim Williams and John Moorhouse can lay new lino (see also Item 3a above). There still seems to be a lot of extra bedding left upstairs. Hilary is restricting the Society’s store of bedding to what will fit in the storage boxes (John commented that the rest makes great rags for the engine shed). Hilary asked the membership not to leave any more bedding at Llanuwchllyn.

**b. Fundraising and Recruitment**

At the Committee Meeting on 18th April, it was decided to purchase the 7.25” gauge track that had been offered to the Society by the estate of the late Paul Perryman. This track has been stored at Llanuwchllyn for a long time, was a major attraction at ‘Bala Re-railed’ and had been offered to the Society at an extremely good price. Just prior to the Meeting, Tim Williams received a document from Joe Stevens with detailed proposals for installing some of this track on Platform 2 at Llanuwchllyn. It would remain there until such time as the platform was needed for the more intensive services through to Bala Town. Joe also proposed adding a 5” gauge ‘third rail’ to the track. The Meeting welcomed this proposal but agreed with Tim Williams that the Society should not spend any more of its own money on the project. However, the Society must insist on receiving due credit from signage for providing the track, and there should be a donations box too.

Also at the 18th April, it was decided to fund a storage unit of some sort at Llanuwchllyn, subject to Company permission. This would be used primarily for the Publicity Stand, to make it easier for volunteers to collect what they needed. Owing to recent pressures of work, it has not yet been possible to approach David Jones about this, but Tim Williams hoped to do so within a few weeks.

Mat Peacock and others spoke in favour of trying to recruit more members to the Society. Mat had provided a table featuring the headline figures from the accounts since he had become Secretary. However, last year’s balance plus regular income minus expenditure did not equal this year’s balance for any year in the sets of accounts featured\*: Mat thought this was because the income column included money raised on behalf of the Company but the transfer of this money to the Company wasn’t included in the expenditure column, but in the footnotes. He stated that he would be checking up on this after the Meeting.

However, the expenditure, balance and membership figures still showed, he felt, that fundraising was a priority – and the easiest way to do this was to recruit more members. Mat stressed that he did not want the Society to have a large bank balance simply for the sake of it, but so that it could respond to sudden opportunities and urgent Company requests. He cited paying for the transport of the Statfold coaches as a good, recent example of this. The Meeting strongly supported the need to publicise the work of the Society and to recruit new members at any opportunity.

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| **Reports from AGM**  | Regular Income\* | **Expenditure** | **End-of-year balance** | **Human Members** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **2020** | £5,637.04 (note 1) | **£2,649.44** | **£25,569.38** | **370 (Note 2)** |
| **2021** | £6,487.31 | **£3,462.59** | **£26,386.78** | **420** |
| **2022** | £9,677.59 (note 3) | **£4,669.40** | **£31,056.18** | **420** |
| **2023** | £7,064.73 | **£10,513.33 (note 4)** | **£26,289.42** | **390** |
| **2024** | £7,399.78 | **£6,797.06** | **£26,125.63** | **360** |
| **2025** |  | **£9,916.00 (note 5)** |  |  |

**Note 1:** the 2020 income figure does not include the bequest of £11274.06, but the end-of-year balance does.

**Note 2:** the highest membership ever recorded pre-2020 was 347.

**Note 3:** this includes profits from the one-off 'Mince Pie Trains' (£2544.01).

**Note 4:** this includes the money spent on renovating the volunteer bathrooms (£7047.25), which will gradually be repaid from Accommodation fees.

**Note 5:** this is a provisional figure, the total of (a) the Society’s contribution to the disabled toilet project (£10,000 minus possible donations), (b) the 7.25" track (purchased in April 2024, after the year-end) and (c) a one-year Xero trial subscription. Other expenditure (such as regular operating costs, usually around £3k) will need to be added to this figure.

There was considerable support for significantly increasing the Society’s visibility at Llanuwchllyn and at the Railway in general, and for making best use of the Publicity Stand. Problems relating to recruiting volunteers for the Stand were discussed. Hugh Jones suggested that we should approach members in specific areas for their own local events. Mat Peacock thought that taking layouts to Shows with a small amount of publicity material – as Ron Finley and Tim Williams had been doing – was a successful alternative to sending a full stand and should be developed further. Hilary Moorhouse said that a very small leaflet or card explaining the benefits of membership very clearly and simply would be useful.

**7. Model Show (21st and 22nd September 2024)**

Mat Peacock sent in a written report prior to the Meeting. He organises the event, with assistance from Vaughan Jones, on behalf of the Company, which provides the financial backing and insurance. He provided a provisional Show roster – several additional exhibitors had not yet fully confirmed. Flyers (printed in English on one side and in Welsh on the other) were now available. Members were encouraged to take batches of them from the Railway (or to contact Mat for a supply) to distribute wherever was appropriate. The venue was now full, assuming that nobody was to drop out.

One very important point was that the Show was going to have to be much more strict this year with regard to dogs at the School. The School authorities have made it clear in no uncertain terms that only Guide/Assistance Dogs will be allowed on School property. We must comply or risk losing the only suitable local venue.

Layouts so far confirmed were: Boston Lodge Jn. (16mm, electric); Enwin's Industrial Layout (00 Gauge); Cwm Parciau (00-9); Bryncrug (0-16.5); Afon Adit (0-9); Tanner's Hill (N); Puffin Colliery (00 and 00-9); Bayview (00 Gauge); Porth Penrhyn (00 and 00-9); Goldford Aston (00-9); Marion Turner layouts (Z and T); Sanderling on Sea (00 Gauge); Wormhill (N); Coed Helen (N); Llangower (00-9); Black Drake Wharf (7mm std); Halfpenny Green (00 Gauge); Campbell's Quarry (16mm, electric); Tutherside (00-9) – n.b. this layout is appearing at several other events in Wales this year, including the FR model show this weekend, so might get swapped for one of the owner’s other models); 16mm Live Steam Modular; Mikesbiltom and Fredby Depot (00 Gauge); Rhos-y-Gwaliau Rd (00 Gauge); Wrapton (00-9); Normington (N); Alswear (00-9); Pentre (16mm dual gauge live steam).

Traders so far confirmed were: Sawyer Models; Elaine's Trains; Enwin's 3D Models; North Western Models; Andrew McDougal 0-16.5 Models; Maid Marian Locomotive Fund; Porterhouse Models; Grainge and Hodder Baseboards; Steve Currinn Books and Models; Richard Sterne Electronics; Raven Eve Designs; Collector Stash; 7mm NG Society. Assuming we have enough volunteers, the Society Stall will also attend.

Mat was feeling very positive about the Show overall, but he was concerned by the rising cost of accommodation in the Bala area and (perhaps not un-related) a shortage of volunteers. Our list of volunteers for the 2024 Show was significantly shorter than it had been at this same point in 2023. Particularly worrying was the set-up period on the Friday evening: just about enough people have offered their help with staffing the Show when it is open to the public on the Saturday and Sunday.

As usual, finding standard-gauge layouts set in Wales had been particularly difficult. Also not easy to find were small firms that also manufactured their own products, another type of company Mat was keen to recuit. But he had had some success this year. Mat had also been reaching out to craft firms not specifically selling railway-related items, to add to his trader list. Although recruiting traders was never easy, and any interest from the trade is not to be sniffed at, it was also necessary to avoid inviting directly-competing businesses, given that we are not a large show in terms of visitor numbers. Mat had already had 20 expressions of interest from layout owners regarding the 2025 Show.

Hugh Jones thanked Mat for his work on the Model Show, partly because it is an important fund-raising opportunity for the *Maid Marian Locomotive Fund*.

**8. Any Other Business**

Bob Newton had done some research into the cost of defibrillators (he had proposed at the 18th April Committee Meeting that the Society should pay for one to be installed at Llanuwchllyn). They seemed to vary in price between £780 and £2500. The nearest defibrillator to the Railway currently is at Llanuwchllyn Village Hall. Bob’s case was that, given the rising number of visitors, the likelihood of a medical emergency was also surely increasing. Tim thanked Bob for looking into this and said that he would ask for the Company’s view as soon as an opportunity arose.

**9. Close**

Tim Williams thanked all those who had attended the Meeting and those who had helped set it up and would be helping to clear up afterwards. He invited those present to join the 4.45 ‘mixed’ to Llangower.

**The Meeting concluded at 4.03 PM. The Minutes were recorded by Mat Peacock.**