

BLUEBELL RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY

LONG TERM PLAN 2004

Introduction

The long-term plan is a structure plan which the society aspires to implement over the next twenty five years. It is intended that it should also reflect the core objectives of the society that are laid out in the current edition of the rulebook.

It is divided into sections that correspond to the departments on the railway, but with a general overview of the staffing needs of the whole railway.

The plan is reviewed and revised tri-annually by the trustees of the society in consultation with the departments that they represent.

It should be noted that the aims expressed in this document are not set out in order of achievement.

The railway recognises an obligation to respect the environment in which it operates and in particular will continue to provide sympathetic consideration to the flora and fauna that occupies the lineside and adjacent land. It will pursue any initiatives that can be introduced to improve compliance with generally accepted environmental control methods.

A special effort to improve the appearance to visitors of stations, yards, depots and the lineside will be made with the aim of achieving significant improvements in the shortest possible timescale.

Departmental Aims

1. Extensions

a) Kingscote to East Grinstead

- i. Complete the construction of the line from Kingscote to East Grinstead by the end of 2006.
- ii. Construction of a new station or provision of rail interchange facilities at East Grinstead.

b) Ardingly Branch

- i. Undertake a feasibility study into the reconstruction of the line from Horsted Keynes to Ardingly and Haywards Heath.
- ii. Undertake limited maintenance to drainage, fences, structures and trackbed to prevent further deterioration.

2. Locomotive Department

All locomotive operation, restoration and maintenance will continue to be based at Sheffield Park.

- i. The locomotive department will continue to provide and maintain sufficient locomotives of period, size and variety to enable authentic and profitable train operation.
- ii. Skilled workshop staff, close attention to training, a new pit (that could also be used for washouts) and improved loco yard lighting will reinforce mechanical and operational efficiency.

3. Carriage & Wagon Department

All carriage and wagon restoration and maintenance will continue to be based at Horsted Keynes.

- i. To provide and maintain appropriate sets of coaches, incorporating an appropriate mix of 1st and 3rd class provision to enable authentic and profitable train operation. Whilst acknowledging that sets including a mixture of types such as Bulleid and Mark 1 are both prototypical and inevitable, the aim is to create representative sets as follows:
 - a. BR Standard Steam Stock (Mark 1)
 - b. Bulleid
 - c. Maunsell
 - d. LSWR
 - e. LCDR
 - f. LBSCR
 - g. SECR
 - h. Metropolitan Railway
- ii. To restore, maintain and store under cover where practical Pullman Cars and special Saloons.
- iii. To improve provision for the carriage of mobility-impaired passengers
- iv. To restore and maintain vans and goods vehicles for display and demonstration purposes, and engineers vehicles for engineering purposes
- v. To provide additional covered accommodation adjacent to the existing shed.

4. Signal and Telecoms Department

- i. Complete the re-signalling of Horsted Keynes.
- ii. Complete the signalling of Kingscote and the extension to East Grinstead.
- iii. To replace the Signalbox at Sheffield Park with an appropriately designed Signalbox and to resignal the station
- iv. Establish workshop and storage facilities in permanent buildings. This releases the vans for restoration and use in traffic. It also allows for a centralised store rather than having them fragmented around the railway

5. Museums and Archives

- i. To enlarge and expand the railway's museum and archive collections with particular emphasis on the Southern Railway and its constituent companies.
- ii. To update the way in which exhibits are displayed to provide more educational benefit.
- iii. To investigate methods of funding.
- iv. To investigate the suitability of a building, with appropriate security and atmospheric control.
- v. To catalogue and make available Bluebell archives.
- vi. To microfilm plans and drawings and make them available to all departments.

6. Stations

a. Sheffield Park

Sheffield Park will remain of LB&SCR appearance and all works done will be sympathetic to that period. It is the headquarters of the railway.

- i. To review the use of the site with a view to providing additional facilities for the Locomotive and Museum Departments and improved or additional attractions for our visitors
- ii. To reinstate the canopy on platform 1 from the barrier to the gentleman's toilet.
- iii. To expand the museum building whilst keeping the original facade.
- iv. To provide toilet facilities on platform 2 and disabled toilet on platform 1.
- v. To provide covered accommodation for the Golden Arrow and other passenger coaching sets and locomotives.
- vi. To complete the running shed.
- vii. To improve the appearance of the station by achieving a uniform style for platform surfacing and fencing

b. Horsted Keynes

Horsted Keynes will remain of Southern Railway appearance and all works done will be sympathetic to that period.

- i. To complete the building on platform 1 & 2
- ii. To screen the carriage shed from the approach road and tidy up the rail side approach from New Road bridge.
- iii. To replace the zinc roofing on the platform canopies like for like.

c. Kingscote

Kingscote will, after the extension is completed, revert to being a typical country station of the early days of British Railways Southern Region.

- i. To resurface the forecourt in a combination of cobbles and gravel.

- ii. To establish in conjunction with the museums department, a goods display on the dock with ancillary items in the goods shed and preserved wagons in the dock roads.

7. Staffing

This section of the plan applies to all departments of the railway. The railway values its volunteer resources as the most vital ingredient in its continued success. Because of this, the aim is to focus on the following key requirements:

- i. Provision of messing and sleeping accommodation to the best possible standard. The objective is to provide improved or new facilities throughout the railway to meet the needs of individual groups which may in some cases be combined with similar facilities for the paid employees of Bluebell Railway plc. Delivery of this objective will be through a process of volunteer consultation and against a prioritised order of needs.
- ii. Continuation of existing training initiatives and development of new initiatives taking into account the existing skills of volunteers and the work undertaken. Priority will be given to those who undertake safety critical work and this will be achieved by a process of national accredited awards assessed against Rail Academy and best practice standards which have been adapted for heritage railway applications.

The Trustees of the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society
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