

Our £2.7million investment is helping Talyllyn



TR Locomotive No.1 'Talyllyn'. Credit: Luke Ryan.

Thanks to National Lottery players, the iconic North Wales railway will continue to inspire and connect people for generations to come.

Funding of £3,697,911 will provide a transformative boost to [Talyllyn Railway](#), which has been a much-loved heritage attraction for 75 years and is part of the UNESCO Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales World Heritage Site.

Originally built in 1864 to serve Bryneglwys slate quarry, it was rescued by volunteers in 1951 to become the first preserved railway in the world.

Among the railway's notable volunteers was Rev. Wilbert Awdry, author of the Thomas the Tank Engine stories. Awdry took inspiration for the fictional Skarloey Railway from Talyllyn and based several characters on its original locomotives.

Improved facilities

With our support, the Talyllyn Railway will continue to strengthen local communities, create new opportunities for learning and volunteering and remain a cherished part of Wales' rich heritage.



The railway in 1951. Credit: Talylyn Collection, colourised by Tom Marshall (PhotograFix).

The project will refurbish historic stations and reimagine them as visitor experiences that celebrate local stories.

New volunteer accommodation will create welcoming spaces to support a growing volunteer programme and engineering apprenticeships.

A community hub will offer bilingual interpretation and accessible facilities for schools and local groups and major engineering upgrades will be carried out. This includes expanded workshop spaces and improved woodworking facilities to maintain rolling stock year-round.

A heritage treasure

Today's announcement coincides with [Heritage Treasures Day](#), our social media campaign showcasing the diverse range of heritage projects across the UK that we've supported.

Andrew White, Director of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Wales, said: "On Heritage Treasures Day we're proud to announce our latest funding support for the Talylyn Railway with nearly £3.7m.

"Thanks to National Lottery players, this funding will help secure the future of the world's first preserved railway, protecting its remarkable industrial heritage and the volunteer movement that pioneered railway preservation.



Talylyn Railway. Credit: Nathan Spence, 2026.

“The investment will improve historic stations and workshops, support volunteers and apprentices and create welcoming spaces for local communities to connect with their heritage.

“As the Talylyn Railway approaches its 75th anniversary in 2026, we’re delighted to help ensure this much-loved railway continues to inspire and be enjoyed for generations to come.”

We fund industrial heritage

Since 1994 we’ve awarded over £630m to more than 1,600 industrial, maritime and transport projects across the UK.

[Discover more industrial heritage projects we’ve supported](#), from railways and ships to canals and mills.



[The Lovell Telescope at Jodrell Bank. Credit: Anthony Holloway.](#)



[January 2026](#)

[A behind the scenes tour of the newly renovated Boston Lodge. Credit: Chris Parry.](#)



[May](#)

[The Flying Scotsman, back in service. Credit: ARG_Flickr, via Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic.](#)

[**Railway 200: celebrating two centuries of remarkable heritage**](#)