

## **THE RIGA CHARTER**

### DEFINITIONS

1. The concept of running heritage railways embraces all aspects of historic railway operation and equipment. It provides a significant development in demonstrating and preserving for posterity historic railway technology and its associated skills and traditions. All of these acquire cultural significance over time as they are superseded by successive technological advances.
2. All the scientific and technical skills and facilities needed to preserve and operate historic railway equipment should be used to safeguard railway heritage.

### AIM

3. The intention in preserving and restoring historic railway items and associated working practices is to safeguard them, whether as significant technological artefacts, evidence for transport history or a means of perpetuating traditional skills.

### PRESERVATION

4. Maintenance of all aspects of their equipment and operation on a continuous basis is essential for the survival of heritage railways.
5. Identifying socially useful purposes for historic railway items will help facilitate their preservation but such use should involve the minimum degree of change to the items necessary.
6. A heritage railway should reflect its own history and that of the communities it serves.

### RESTORATION

7. The processes involved in conservation or restoration of historic railway items are highly specialised operations and should aim to respect the integrity of the original item. Such conservation or restoration should also be preceded by historical research into available authentic documentary or other sources on the history and make-up of the item.
8. Where possible historic railway items should be conserved or restored using materials and techniques appropriate to the period in which the item was produced and used. The best scientifically-approved contemporary substitutes for such materials or techniques may be used if the historic ones prove to be inadequate or no longer available.
9. Conservation or restoration of an historic railway item should be varied out to accord with its condition at the most significant period in its working life



- which may or may not be its original date of creation. This period will be established on obtaining appropriate expert advice.
10. Added mandatory safety equipment should if possible blend harmoniously with the conserved or restored item but the fact that it is an addition or alteration to the original make-up of the item should be clearly indicated.
  11. Any other necessary later modifications to the item that are introduced for whatever reason should be as sympathetic as possible to the make-up and appearance of the original item. Ideally any such modification should be reversible and any significant original parts removed should be retained for possible future re-use.
  12. Every stage in the conservation or restoration work on an historic railway item should be systematically recorded and the resultant record of these processes retained for the life of the item.