

Full throttle for the SVR's first diesel event of the year

February 11, 2021



From the 13th to the 16th May, diesel fans will be able to experience a special event of epic proportions at the Severn Valley Railway. In the largest gathering of diesel motive power at the SVR since 2019, the 2021 Spring Diesel Bash offers visitors the opportunity to travel 100 miles in one day behind their pick of locomotives!

Extensive planning has gone into coordinating a safe event that allows enthusiasts to travel over as many miles as possible behind their favourite locomotive classes; and there will be plenty to choose from. Visitors will select one of four train sets, each running three round trips. Train 1 will be hauled by Class 50s and tickets for this go on sale at 9.30am on Friday 12th February. The other three trains will be hauled by combinations of locomotives that include Classes 42 and 52 Hydraulics, Sulzers and English Electrics. Two visiting locomotives are also planned, and details will be announced in the coming weeks.

In addition to the round trips, extra shuttle services are scheduled to operate between Kidderminster and Bewdley, hauled by Class 14 and Class 17 locomotives, enabling visitors to clock up valuable extra diesel miles.

The Engine House will be open to visitors as part of the ticket price. To reduce the risk of overcrowding and maintain visitor safety, at scheduled intervals throughout the day, passengers will be allocated a timed opportunity to get off at Highley to explore The Engine House, delve into the intriguing history of Britain's railways and visit the shop and restaurant. Passengers will also be able to leave the train at Bridgnorth and Kidderminster to make use of the station facilities.

The Spring Diesel Bash also offers the chance to see the debut of Class 17 D8568 in BR blue livery. This Clayton Class locomotive is the sole survivor of the Clayton Type 1s, of which there were originally 117. This unique locomotive spent all of its working life in Scotland before being sold into industrial use which enabled it to survive long enough to be preserved by the Diesel Traction Group at the end of its industrial career. In January 2020 D8568 arrived at the SVR for work on the Paxman engines, attention to its bodywork and the repaint into BR blue livery.

Pre-booking onto a chosen service is essential, as tickets are limited. Compartments are available for households of four to six, whilst tables are available for bookings of one or two. Children under four, who do not take up a seat, travel free. Due to the ongoing pandemic, passengers are unable to change trains and will be required to use their reserved seats throughout the day.

Helen Smith, the railway's general manager, said: "We have worked hard to put together an event that not only protects our visitors but will also offer an unforgettable experience. We're taking every care to ensure we can operate in a Covid-secure way, using tried and tested methods, including reserved seating, complimentary hand sanitiser and distancing measures on platforms. We know from passenger feedback in 2020 that our practises meant people could relax and enjoy their day, knowing that we were looking after their safety."

To ensure passengers can book with confidence, the SVR is backing every ticket with a COVID Guarantee, so that ticket holders can transfer to an equivalent event or date, or receive a full refund.

Tickets for the Class 50-hauled train only will go on sale at 9.30am on Friday 12th February at www.svr.co.uk. Alternatively, customers can call 01562 757900 to book. Ticket availability for other trains will be announced on the SVR's social media platforms and website.

Photo credit: Severn Valley Railway