

Heritage railways join forces for nationwide campaign

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The North Yorkshire Moors Railway (NYMR) is spearheading a new nationwide campaign to raise awareness of the many heritage railways across the UK, collaborating with over 35 other organisations from as far afield as Cornwall, Suffolk, North Wales, North East Scotland and Northern Ireland*.

‘Love Your Railway’ is a six-week summer campaign from July 26th to September 5th, which aims to shine a spotlight on not only the important work heritage railways do with regards to conservation, education and research, but highlight how they have all been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of reduced capacities and income.

NYMR is collaborating with a host of other famous heritage railways, including The Bluebell Railway, South Devon Railway (SDR), Crich Tramway Village, Severn Valley Railway and Snowdon Mountain Railway.

Chris Price, General Manager at NYMR, said: “We’re optimistic and excited about the summer ahead, but the last 12 months have been like no other year, with lockdowns, reduced capacities due to social distancing, and staff and volunteers falling victim to the virus.

“There are more than 150 operational heritage railways, running trains over nearly 600 miles of track, which protect, conserve and bring to life part of the nation’s rich cultural heritage – giving enjoyment and learning to thousands of people every year.

“We want to do all we can to raise awareness of every heritage railway across the country and the challenges we face; all the participating railways will be posting their own social content across the six themed weeks, but we also want to encourage the public to get involved by sharing their favourite memories and inspiring imagery from their visits, using the hashtag #LoveYourRailway.”

The six themed weeks are: Heritage, Education, Volunteers, Family, Sustainability and Future.

SDR Trust Chairman Jon Morton said: “We’re delighted to support the laudable ‘Love Your Railway’ campaign to highlight the work that heritage lines all over the country do to conserve, protect, promote, entertain and educate people about Britain’s rich 200-year railway history and culture.

“Heritage railways in the South West, and across the country, have all had a rotten time during the COVID-19 pandemic with restricted operations and mounting financial losses, so we need people to visit us now like never before just to survive and keep the wheels turning.”

*The full list of railways participating in #LoveYourRailway include:

- Apedale Valley Light Railway
- Bluebell Railway
- Bodmin & Wenford Railway
- Bure Valley Railway
- Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
- Colne Valley Railway
- Crich Tramway Village
- East Somerset Railway
- Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways
- Foxfield Railway
- Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway
- Great Central Railway
- Head of Steam, Darlington
- Isle of Man Steam Railway
- Isle of Wight Steam Railway
- Keighley & Worth Valley Railway
- Keith & Dufftown Railway
- Lathalmond Railway Museum
- Lincolnshire Wolds Railway
- Lynton & Barnstaple Railway
- Mid Suffolk Light Railway
- Northampton & Lamport Railway
- North Dorset Railway
- Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway
- The Postal Museum

- Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway
- Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
- Severn Valley Railway
- Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway
- Snowdon Mountain Railway
- South Devon Railway
- South Tynedale Railway
- Spa Valley Railway
- Stephenson Steam Railway
- Vale of Rheidol Railway
- West Somerset Railway
- Whitehead Railway Museum
- Whitwell & Reepham Railway

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