

# National Railway Museum in York and Locomotion in Shildon announce dates for reopening

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After 119 days of lockdown, the National Railway Museum in York and Locomotion in Shildon, County Durham have announced plans to reopen to the public this summer.

Locomotion will reopen on Tuesday 28 July and the National Railway Museum will reopen the following week on Tuesday 4 August.

Both sites have undergone a rigorous cleaning regime prior to reopening and additional site-wide cleaning will continue to take place each day. Visitors will be encouraged to observe social distancing measures and the wearing of facemasks will be recommended.

In a significant change designed to keep the sites safe and comfortable, visitors at both sites will be required to book a timed slot in advance. Tickets will be free and available from the museum websites, but overall visitor numbers will be limited each day to avoid overcrowding.

Tickets for Locomotion can be booked now, with National Railway Museum tickets available from Monday 20 July. Both sites will begin a phased reopening, initially on a limited number of days each week, before a gradual return to daily opening.

At York, the Great Hall which is home to world-famous locomotives such as *Mallard* and a replica of Stephenson's *Rocket*, will be first to open. The main gift shop and the Great Hall café will also reopen from 4 August, although steam rides, the miniature railway and the under-five's play area will remain closed for the time being.

In the coming weeks, the remaining museum areas such as Station Hall, the Warehouse and outdoor spaces are also due to reopen.

At Locomotion, the main collection building which features more than 40 historic rail vehicles will open from 28 July. The café will also reopen with a limited capacity, serving a reduced menu. The model railway, steam rides and cab access will return at a later date.

A one-way system will be in operation at Locomotion to ensure visitors can observe safe social distancing. Demonstrations of Rowland Emmett's popular mechanical sculpture 'A Quiet Afternoon in the Cloud Cuckoo Valley' will increase, to be held hourly.

Judith McNicol, Director of the National Railway Museum said: "We know that our sites – with their large, open buildings, outdoor spaces and car parking, can be great places for people to begin to re-engage with culture with confidence. We are cautiously reopening in stages at both museums, to ensure the safety of our guests and colleagues.

"At Locomotion and the National Railway Museum, we have dramatically enhanced our cleaning processes and introduced practical measures to allow visitors to maintain social distancing whilst enjoying the best of our collection. Although visitors may notice a few changes when they return, they can be assured of a warm welcome and the chance to enjoy our unrivalled collection of railway and engineering achievements."

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the National Railway Museum welcomed more than 750,000 visitors each year with Locomotion receiving around 200,000.

The National Railway Museum and Locomotion are part of the Science Museum Group of national museums, which temporarily closed all five sites on 17 March following government advice.

To book a free ticket for the National Railway Museum, visit: [www.railwaymuseum.org.uk](http://www.railwaymuseum.org.uk).

*Photo credit: National Railway Museum*