

National Railway Museum & Locomotion Welcome First Visitors of the Year

May 19, 2021



The National Railway Museum in York and Locomotion in Shildon has reopened for the first time this year, as national COVID restrictions are eased.

Since tickets were released two weeks ago, 10,219 people have booked their free tickets to visit the National Railway Museum, with another 5,441 people booking to visit Locomotion in Shildon.

The railway museums are part of the Science Museum Group which temporarily closed its five sites across the UK at the end of 2020, as a result of the COVID pandemic.

As well as seeing the museums' famous locomotives and carriages, visitors at Locomotion and the National Railway Museum will be able to see a new photographic exhibition called *Railway Heroes* which celebrates the work of railway workers during the pandemic.

At the National Railway Museum, people will be able to take part in a new audio trail which reveals details of York's railway heritage. Visitors to Locomotion will be able to see the original *Locomotion No.1* which goes on display in the museum for the first time and see the museum's newly restored historic buildings.

Visitors to both museums are being asked to observe social distancing, wear a facemask (unless exempt) and book online in advance. Ticket numbers will be limited to timed slots to help keep people safe and entry will remain free of charge.

Judith McNicol, Director of the National Railway Museum, said: "I would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone who has booked a ticket, whether they are regular visitors, or those travelling to see us for the first time. The response so far has been really encouraging with more than 15,000 people registering to visit and we are really looking forward to reopening for the first time this year."

Ahead of reopening, staff and volunteers have carried out additional cleaning with hand sanitiser and signage in place to help with social distancing.

The National Railway Museum will be open 10.00 –17.00, Wednesday to Sunday. Locomotion will open 10.30 –16.00, Wednesday to Sunday. During school holidays, both museums will open seven days a week – Monday to Sunday.

Entrance to both museums is free but visitors must book online in advance and observe social distancing and follow marked routes.

To book tickets for the National Railway Museum, visit: www.railwaymuseum.org.uk/visit.

To book tickets for Locomotion, visit www.locomotion.org.uk/visit

Photo credit: Charlotte Graham