

# The Severn Valley Railway gears up for an Easter reopening

February 1, 2021



From April 2<sup>nd</sup>, visitors will once again be able to travel along the historic Severn Valley Railway, through the Shropshire and Worcestershire countryside. Opening in time for Easter, the Severn Valley Railway 2021 spring season has offerings to cater for the visitor and enthusiast market alike.

There are two special events already in the calendar for the first months of reopening, which will appeal to heritage rail enthusiasts. First up is the Spring Steam Up, a four-day event from April 15th with the chance to clock up 96 miles of steam travel behind seven different locomotives. Tickets for the day enable visitors to enjoy three round trips of the line, with each leg of the journey hauled by a different locomotive, including one double headed leg. Some very clever planning means that visitors will be able to ride behind every locomotive running on that day. The fleet for the event will be made up of seven SVR locomotives and one VIP guest star locomotive, which will be announced soon. This will be one of the final showcase appearances for No 6960 Raveningham Hall, before the popular locomotive is withdrawn from service pending overhaul.

For fans of internal combustion, the railway continues its tradition of producing exciting diesel events and its Spring Diesel Bash will run for four days from May 13th. The packed timetable will showcase the best of

the Severn Valley Railway's sizeable diesel fleet. The railway expects to put tickets for this event on sale in the coming weeks.

Following a successful run of services in 2020, including a sell-out Christmas season, the railway will continue its hugely popular excursion trains from April 2<sup>nd</sup>. The services include two departures from Kidderminster and one from Bridgnorth on most days. The Explorer, Flyer and Adventurer offer a full day out on steam-hauled services, while diesel fans can enjoy the extremely popular Pioneer service, which returns on selected dates.

For the first time since March 2020 Hampton Loade and Arley stations will be reopened to serve The Explorer. Departing from Kidderminster, this excursion visits every station on the line on its journey to Bridgnorth. Acting in accordance with government guidelines since their closure, station teams at Arley and Hampton Loade have been busy keeping these historic stations in peak condition ready for the return of passengers. Whilst the stations are not open to the general public, those who book onto The Explorer will be granted exclusive access to these Severn Valley gems.

Helen Smith, the railway's general manager, said: "We're really looking forward to our spring reopening and welcoming visitors back, in line with government restrictions. We've put a huge amount of effort into planning an itinerary of named trains and special events to start our 2021 season. We're particularly pleased to be able to offer two large events for our enthusiast visitors, who we know are keen to get back to the railway. It is very important to the SVR to be able to offer these events, as a thank you to our loyal followers who have supported us throughout these trying times."

"We're taking every care to ensure we can operate in a COVID-secure way, using tried and tested methods, including private compartments, complimentary hand sanitiser and social distancing measures on platforms. We know from the feedback from passengers in 2020 that our practises meant they could relax and enjoy their day, certain that we were looking after their safety."

Visitors to the SVR in 2020 left glowing reviews, describing the railway as "friendly, welcoming and helpful as ever", and saying that it provided "a fantastic day out on a COVID-safe railway".

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. The offer applies should the railway cancel the event, Government restrictions prevent the ticket holder from travelling, or a member of the party tests COVID-19 positive or is required to isolate.

Tickets for services in April, May and June and the Spring Steam Up event are on sale at [www.svr.co.uk](http://www.svr.co.uk). Alternatively, customers can call 01562 757900 to book.