



## Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway Group Press Pack 2016

**'It's All About Choo'!**



For immediate release

January 2016

## **R&ER Railway Tells Coach Operators And Group Travel Organisers 'It's All About Choo'**

The Lake District's oldest steam railway, offering the longest and most scenic steam train journey in the Lakes, is telling group travel organisers and coach operators that 'it's all about choo' in 2016.

National Coach Tourism Awards Winner 2015, Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway, is one of the most flexible tourism attractions in Cumbria when it comes to accommodating coaches and groups and has lots of experience of catering for the needs of international groups. It channels all of this expertise into creating highly attractive group experiences and a range of itineraries backed by first class catering and easy stop-off solutions. All of this is delivered in the quieter Western Lake District, which has a rich cultural heritage dating back to Roman times.

Whether a group wishes to stay for three hours, or thirty minutes, there is a warm Cumbrian welcome awaiting them at both Ravenglass and Dalegarth (near Boot) stations. Visits can be even longer, if a group wishes to use a station as a base not just for a journey on a narrow gauge line, but also as one from which to explore the stunning landscape around the seven-mile line and its nine stations.

The award-winning and Green Tourism Silver accredited railway celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of its narrow gauge line in 2015 and can transport passengers back in time, to the compelling age of steam travel. In 2016, it is offering groups some key opportunities at which to not only enjoy 14 miles of atmospheric travel on a line that undulates over topography that takes them from coastal plain, under the shadow of mighty fells and through hidden valleys, but also enjoy major activity-packed events.

These include: TeddyFest, from March 25 to April 10; Family Fun Weekend (April 30 to May 2); a Beatrix Potter™ 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary tea party with Peter Rabbit™ (July 28); Peppa Pig™ Weekend (October 1 and 2); Ghost Trains (October 28 and 29); Santa Schools experiences (November 23-2, November 28-December 2, December 5-9 and 12-15); and Santa Express travel (November 26-27, December 3-4, December 10-11, December 17-19 and December 19-22).



Smaller and special interest groups can also enjoy Photography Days on May 17 and September 6, Explore the Mills, Huts & Circles of Eskdale with the National Trust (June 1 and July 1) and Steam to the Hills with a Lake District National Park Ranger (June 2, August 4 and September 1).

Groups wishing to round off a day in the Lakes with something a little different can indulge in Fish and Chips Nights, involving both train travel and a delicious fishy feast. These will run on April 15, May 13 and June 17.

There are also opportunities for group travellers to enjoy a Statesman Rail Excursion around the Cumbrian Coast, with the option of adding on a trip on the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway. These Lakeland Coast Statesman excursions can be booked via Statesman Rail and will run on June 4, 11, 18 and 25 and July 2 and 30. Contact 0345 310 2458 or visit [www.statesmanrail.com](http://www.statesmanrail.com) to book and see the wide number of stations, from across the country, at which passengers can board and disembark.

Itinerary options, built around combining a trip on the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway with a visit to another attraction, are also available. Steam on the Wildside (R&ER and Muncaster Castle and Gardens), Railway and Cruise (R&ER and Ullswater 'Steamers' – the sister attraction to R&ER), and Western Lake District (R&ER plus an attraction like Haig Mining, Jennings Brewery and National Trust Wordsworth House), are all extremely popular combined exhibition options.

As 'It's All About Choo' in 2016, a bespoke itinerary option, purpose-built for your group and perhaps incorporating a tour of the Railway Museum, an itinerary built around history, photography or walking, or an indulgence in a cream tea at one of the railway's cafes, could be just the ticket.

Another option could be to visit the Railway Museum, reopening after stage two of a development and refurbishment programme in summer 2016, and incorporate a visit the new 'Engine Shed'. This would allow the group to understand the railway's story, which stretches back to 1875 and had its routes in iron mining, but which has seen evolved in an exciting and, at times, dramatic fashion, to make it the visitor attraction it is today.

If you just want your group to enjoy a return steam departure from Ravenglass, either making an immediate return journey, or alighting at the arrival station and enjoying the facilities, café and gift shop for a while, you can access a group travel price of £8.50pp (£4.50pp for children) for the 80-minute each way). This is for a minimum of ten people, with the trip paid for in one transaction.

2016 will see the Eskdale Room at Dalegarth Station hosting with a display of panels that explain the links between Beatrix Potter™ and the Eskdale Valley. This will provide added interest for all groups, whatever their reason for visiting.

To discover if a day out with the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway would suit your group, contact the Railway to arrange a complimentary visit to pre-plan your itinerary. The Railway also organises familiarisation trips for tour operators and journalists, which you may be able to join. Call 01229 717171 or visit [www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk](http://www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk) to download a brochure and booking form. ENDS

**Press calls: Jane Hunt, Catapult PR, 01253 891114 – [jane@catapultpr.co.uk](mailto:jane@catapultpr.co.uk)**

## **Notes to Editors**

Whatever you decide to do whilst allowing your group to enjoy a vintage day out and a memorable immersion in the scenery, tastes and lifestyle of the Lakes, you can enjoy free coach parking at Ravenglass (the end of the line most suitable for coaches), free wi-fi at main stations, reserved carriage seating for your group (indoor or outdoor and if pre-booked), free food and travel for drivers and guides, and a meet-and-greet service and tailored group menus on request. There are also fast-track café options for groups that need them. All facilities are fully accessible for passengers of all levels of mobility.

The location is a full day out option for those planning two or three day itineraries, or longer tours of the Lake District. At Ravenglass, the nearby attraction, Muncaster Castle and Gardens, completes the full-day option and offers cultural links to Kinds of England and to William Shakespeare, as well as a Hawk and Owl display. This tour is also available through Mountain Goat mini tours, with departures from Windermere.

Both the Turntable Café (Ravenglass) and the Fellbites Café (Dalegarth), are licensed, have their own on-site bakeries and serve a range of home made dishes and cakes, as well as delicious menus specifically designed for group travellers. Whether you require a full meal, a snack, or a cream tea, you can arrange something to suit. The Turntable can seat 50 in a reserved area upstairs and Fellbites seats 60 on its lower floor.

Your passengers will all receive a complimentary line guide, to help them interpret their 40-minute journey each way, and can make the most of picnic and play areas and excellent gift shops at both Ravenglass and Dalegarth. You can also arrange private charter and private carriage bookings, if you wish, and download a free commentary App from the Group Travel Brochure, from Spring 2016.

Carriages are reserved, so groups are seated together and, for large series tours, private charter trains are arranged, with personalised header boards. Smaller, specialist groups can hire the 16-seat private coaches, whilst younger parties can enjoy the view from the Ratty coach!

There are language packs available in French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese, for international visitors.

The 'Steamers' has China Welcome accreditation from Capela, having undertaken a course awarded VisitBritain's GREAT China Welcome Charter Mark. It also has Welcome Host accreditation.

Coach drivers receive a food and drink voucher and a site map and there is free travel for group leaders. The driver, and a guest, can enjoy another day with the Railway, at their leisure, whilst tour operators can receive a privilege pass, to enable them to try before they buy.

FIT options, perfect for families and walkers, are also available.

Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway's peak operating time is between March and November. Drivers can reach Ravenglass Station (CA18 1SW) within 60 minutes, if travelling from the Central Lakes along the A590 and A595, and within 80 minutes, if leaving the M6 at Junction 36. If travelling to Dalegarth (CA19 1TF) from M6 Junction 40, the journey is also likely to take 80 minutes. Drivers are advised that the station is accessible from the Central Lakes via the high passes. Coaches should not attempt to travel up the valley from the main coast road (A595). You will find free minibus parking and a drop-off point for coaches at Dalegarth.

Coaches and groups must pre-book for their experience at Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway, whether they are stopping for a refreshment and short stop-off, or for a full steam rail experience. Call 01229 717171 or complete a booking form at [www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk](http://www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk)

## **Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway Announces Three Great Events To Entice Group Travellers In 2016**

Idyllic Lake District narrow gauge railway, Ravenglass and Eskdale, has announced three not-to-be-missed events for 2016 that should have group travel organisers and coach operators circling dates on their calendar.

The first is the action-packed **Family Fun Weekend (April 30-May 2)**, an event that has established itself as one of the best value-for-money experiences in the Lake District year. This year's event will be packed to the rafters with things to do, see and photograph, with full details to be revealed as the event approaches. Resident vintage engines Synolda, Katie and Bonnie Dundee will definitely be out on show and running mini-trips up the line, whilst the Bay Radio roadshow will be entertaining families and visitors to the railway on the Saturday. There will be other entertainment throughout the weekend, as well as guided walks that everyone of moderate fitness can enjoy.



The second must-do for a coach operator or group travel organiser is to allow their group to be part of the **Beatrix Potter Anniversary Tea Party**, taking place at the Railway on July 28. The event will help celebrate 150 years since Beatrix Potter's birth and will see Ravenglass and Eskdale hosting its own Railway Tea Party with special guest, Peter Rabbit. This should prove irresistible to children, and British, Japanese and Chinese visitors in particular, with overseas visitors being particularly keen on all things Beatrix Potter. When this is coupled with a steam train excursion, it should be a highly popular booking option.

Last but not least is a weekend of sheer joy for little ones, as toddler's favourite, Peppa Pig, makes her very first appearance at Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway for the **Peppa Pig Weekend (October 1 and 2)**. Groups can reserve carriages for travel on special Peppa Pig trains, be thrilled by a meet-and-greet with Peppa and enjoy time in the activity marquee, meeting Peppa Pig in person and having their photo taken. Other entertainment will also be available and children will receive a Peppa Pig gift on arrival.

For more information about how to help your group make the most of these experiences, please call 01229 717171 and discuss options. More information about the Railway and the 14-mile return steam train journey that you can enjoy, travelling from the Lake District's only coastal village at Ravenglass, to the edge of the tallest mountains in England at Dalegarth, can be found at [www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk](http://www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk)

ENDS

**Press calls: Jane Hunt, Catapult PR, 01253 891114 – [jane@catapultpr.co.uk](mailto:jane@catapultpr.co.uk)**

## **Ravenglass And Eskdale Railway Offers Combined Itineraries To Suit Choo And Your Group**

The Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway is showing that two stops can be even better than one, by offering some easy-to-book combined attraction group ticket options for 2016.

The heritage railway is leaving it up to choo when it comes to which to plump for, if you want to give your group a full day out, or maximise their time in the stunning Lake District.

Both combined-attraction group itineraries include an idyllic heritage journey on the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway, which will help you explore hidden valleys – Miterdale and Eskdale – see mighty Muncaster Fell, experience the chugging of your little loco on the steeper gradients of the undulating journey and wildlife spot as you travel the narrow gauge line under the power of steam. With a chance to then visit the playground, enjoy a picnic or eat in one of the cafés, make time for some retail therapy in the beautiful gift shops, or perhaps explore Boot village, or the Roman bathhouse at Ravenglass, this is a fun experience even if you don't decide to team it up with one of two options.

The first – **Steam on the Wildside** - is a combined visit to the Railway and local visitor attraction, Muncaster Castle and Gardens, where your group can also visit the Hawk and Owl Centre. With this combined ticket, you have the option of either visiting both attractions on the same day, or visiting one on one day and the other at a different time in your Lake District schedule. This is particularly helpful for those visiting on a Saturday, when the Castle at Muncaster Castle and Gardens is usually closed.

During your trip to Muncaster, you can explore the Meadowvole Maze with the children, learn about the history of the castle and Tom Fool, explore gardens described by Ruskin as the 'Gateway to Paradise' and enjoy Hawk and Owl Centre bird of prey displays.

This combined attraction group experience costs £15 per adult, or £10 per child, and is for pre-booked coach parties only. The saving here on buying two separate group tickets is £3 per adult.

The second combined-attraction option, '**One Happy Family**', involves visiting both Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway and its sister attraction, Ullswater 'Steamers'. This itinerary allows your group to enjoy a return steam journey on the Railway and a one-hour cruise on what is often described as England's most beautiful lake, set amidst stunning scenery and in the shadow of mighty Helvellyn. Again, there is flexibility as to when you take the second half of your combined experience, as long as you do so within the same calendar year.

This combined-attraction experience costs £14 for an adult, or £7 for a child and is for pre-booked groups only. The saving here is £2 for an adult and 1.50 for a child.

Both experiences can be purchased from Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway (01229 717171), or Muncaster Castle (01229 717614). Booking forms can be found at [www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk](http://www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk) and [www.muncaster.co.uk](http://www.muncaster.co.uk)

ENDS

**Press calls: Jane Hunt, Catapult PR, 01253 891114 – [jane@catapultpr.co.uk](mailto:jane@catapultpr.co.uk)**

**Notes to Editors**

Group tours are based on a return steam rail journey from Ravenglass Station (Dalegarth station and one-way pick-up is not suitable for coaches, only for mini-tours with smaller operators travelling independently, or in mini-buses operated by companies such as Mountain Goat. Groups are classed as ten people, or more, who book in advance. Fares for such groups are from £8.50.

Walking Tours are also available for small groups wishing to visit the village of Boot, a waterfall, ancient watermill and Roman fort or Bathhouse. These are bespoke tours and are available on request only. The cost is from £8.50, for groups of over ten people.

FIT rates are available on a discounted voucher system, based on the commercial rate.

Joint attraction visits are available with attractions such as The Lakes Distillery, The Rum Story, The Beacon and Old Hall Farm, with prices of from £12 per person.



## Itineraries and timings Ravenglass, Lake District

Two main stations at the end of the line, Dalegarth and Ravenglass. 40 minute journey each way. Options for short journeys and walking tours from seven intermediate stations. Lunch option at Dalegarth and Ravenglass Stations with free Wi-Fi. Museum at Ravenglass Station.

### STEAM RAILWAY HALF DAY TOURS ( TOTAL TIME)

- Return steam Railway journey from Ravenglass and traditional English Cream Tea or Fish and Chip lunch option at Dalegarth Station (2/3 hours)
- Return steam Railway journey from Ravenglass and visit the village of Boot, England's oldest working Cornmill and St Catherine's Church (3/4 hours)
- Return steam Railway journey, tour of Railway Museum and tour of Muncaster Castle & Gardens (3/4 hours)
- Return steam Railway journey and visit to The Rum Story or The Beacon (3/4 hours)
- Single full or part Railway journey and walk back to Ravenglass. Walking tours only (minimum 3/4 hours). Visit the waterfall at Dalegarth (allow 2 hours)

### STEAM RAILWAY FULL DAY TOURS

- Return steam Railway journey with lunch stop at Dalegarth Station. Visit Muncaster Castle in the afternoon and watch the Bird of Prey show
- Return steam Railway journey and visit The Lakes Distillery for tours and shopping. Lunch option.
- Return steam Railway journey and visit The Pencil Museum for tours and shopping in Keswick. Lunch option.
- Return steam Railway journey and visit Old Hall Farm for farm tour and vintage steam museum. Lunch option.





## 行程与时间

# Ravenglass, Lake District

路线两端设有两个主要车站 Dalegarth 与 Ravenglass。单程为 40 分钟。可选择短途旅程和从七个中途站出发的步行路线。可选择在 Dalegarth 和 Ravenglass 站享用午餐，车站设有免费 Wi-Fi。Ravenglass 站设有博物馆。

### 蒸汽火车半天游 (总时间)

- 蒸汽火车往返旅程，从 RAVENGLASS 出发，可选择在 DALEGARTH 站享用传统英式松饼下午茶或炸鱼薯条午餐 (2/3 小时)
- 蒸汽火车往返旅程，从 RAVENGLASS 出发，参观皮靴村、英格兰内最古老并仍然运作的磨坊和 ST CATHERINE'S CHURCH (3/4 小时)
- 蒸汽火车往返旅程，游览铁路博物馆和 MUNCASTER CASTLE & GARDENS (3/4 小时)
- 蒸汽火车往返旅程，参观 THE RUM STORY 或 THE BEACON (3/4 小时)
- 单程全程或部分火车旅程，步行返回 RAVENGLASS。只含步行游 (最少 3/4 小时)，参观 DALEGARTH 的瀑布 (预留 2 小时)

### 蒸汽火车全天游

- 蒸汽火车往返旅程，于 DALEGARTH 站停站享用午餐。下午参观 MUNCASTER CASTLE 并观赏 BIRD OF PREY 演出
- 蒸汽火车往返旅程，参观 THE LAKE DISTILLERY 以进行游览和购物。包含午餐选择。
- 蒸汽火车往返旅程，参观位于 KESWICK 的 THE PENCIL MUSEUM 以进行游览和购物。包含午餐选择。
- 蒸汽火车往返旅程，参观 OLD HALL FARM 游览农场与怀旧蒸汽博物馆。包含午餐选择。



Language packs are available in French, German, Japanese, Dutch, Spanish and Chinese.

With excellent, licensed cafes, serving home made food, snacks and cakes, at both ends of the line and fabulous gift shops, picnic areas and playgrounds and things to do around both stations too, R&ER provides a great visitor experience.

Groups seeking access for wheelchair users will also find new access policies for 2016, thanks to specialist access training undertaken by the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway team. This includes the introduction of a site map, to make movement around the stations easier. There is accessible seating both on grass and beside picnic tables, a wide accessible pathway from the car park to the booking office, moveable seating in café and tearoom and a wheelchair for customer use. Wheelchair adapted coaches can be booked in advance and guide dogs are welcome in all areas. There are large print café menus and hearing loops available.

The geography of the Western Lake District makes it easy to arrange trips to several top attractions over the course of a few days. Take a look at the options and see what appeals, and then discuss your schedule with the team at Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway.

**January 2016**

## **Narrow Gauge Railway Coaxes Groups Wishing To Travel Under Their Own Steam**

Lake District visitor attraction, the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway, is starting 2016 with great advice for groups wishing to travel on the track, rather than the tarmac.

The visitor attraction is highlighting how group travellers can think differently this year and travel by train, rather than hiring a coach, or booking a coach itinerary. This may suit groups wishing to travel in a more sustainable way, rather than burning up petrol, or appeal to those who simply love train travel through and through.

Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway points out that Northern Rail services operate from major cities like Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle, as well as from locations such as Preston and Wigan and accommodation hubs including Grange-over-Sands, Morecambe, Blackpool, Whitehaven, Maryport and Carlisle. Northern Rail services also serve East Lancashire and Yorkshire towns, for those groups travelling from across the Pennines.

Using a Northern Rail service, groups can travel on a Cumbrian coastal line that runs to Ravenglass, either from the north or from the south. There, they can disembark and head to the Ravenglass and Eskdale railway station at Ravenglass, to then travel on to Dalegarth, enjoying a steam or diesel journey as they do so. All passengers will see fabulous scenery from both their Northern Rail train and their Ravenglass and Eskdale carriage.

Group travel rates apply to Northern Rail services, as well as travel with Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway. More information can be obtained by calling 0845 124 3345 or emailing [specialised.sales@northernrail.org](mailto:specialised.sales@northernrail.org) Bookings for the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway can be taken on 01229 717171, or by completing the booking form at [www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk](http://www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk)

Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway's marketing manager, Rachel Bell, says: "We do all we can to encourage people to travel in a more sustainable manner and know that those who test the water, by travelling with a group, are then more likely to gain the confidence to use train travel, for the whole of their itinerary, when travelling independently or with family and friends. We hope some groups will travel to us via the Northern Rail network and then encourage others to do the same."

ENDS

**Press calls: Jane Hunt, Catapult PR, 01253 891114 – [jane@catapultpr.co.uk](mailto:jane@catapultpr.co.uk)**

January 2016

## **Ravenglass And Eskdale Railway Has Education Options For Schools And Personal Fulfilment**

An exploration of landscape, mining heritage, Roman history, conservation, geology and natural tourism await pupils heading to the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway in 2016. The topics can be covered either as in-house programmes, or as part of a field project that the school may be tackling.

At the same time, those who enjoy weaving learning experiences into their adult leisure time can visit the Railway and build a bespoke tour around interests such as history and heritage, industry, Roman history, the Harbour Story, conservation and geology and walking through history.

The Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway is a natural hub for such studies. Its history stretches back to 1875, when it was originally built to a three-foot gauge to carry iron ore from Eskdale's mines. It became affectionately known as La'al Ratty (Little Railway in local dialect). The Eskdale iron mines were driven into the hillside above Boot in 1845, whilst the nearby Beckfoot Quarry was mined for granite that was pink in colour because of the presence of the mineral haematite.

The first passenger traffic was carried in 1876 and this continued until 1908. Mining was then on its knees, because of a lack of demand for iron ore and passenger numbers also tumbled. There was little surprise when the railway closed in 1913.

But, in 1916, model makers Basset Lowke and Proctor Mitchell converted the line to a 15" gauge and the railway began to carry passengers in the August of that year. It also transported goods and services to local farms and even the Royal Mail. After World War 2, it was purchased by the Keswick Granite Company, whose quarries closed in 1953. In 1960, the Railway was put up for sale at auction and saved from the scrap heap by Lord Wavell and Colin Gilbert.

This history is now immortalised in a Ravenglass Museum that has seen some major developments in 2015. The Museum opened in May 1976, to preserve, display and interpret local railways, in particular the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway.

Thanks to funding from FLAG and Copeland Community Fund, stage one of a planned museum refurbishment was completed in 2015. A National Lottery Heritage Fund grant, awarded late in 2015, has enabled the Railway to plan stage two of this refurbishment and the museum is closed over the winter months, whilst this work is carried out. It will re-open in summer 2016 in a form that will enable all of its artefacts, buildings, rolling stock, locos and ephemera to fully contribute to both education and an understanding of local people and life in the Western Lake District.

This work will make the museum a magnet for schools and special interest groups. The policy of allowing one teacher to travel free with every 10 paying pupils will continue and there will be more depth and substance to the education programme that can be delivered. Until then, groups seeking to dive into the past, in order to explore the present, are welcome to visit the Railway and request relevant information and assistance for their projects.

This could revolve around a visit to the new engine shed and a chance to find out more about the four steam locos in regular service – River Irt (1874), River Esk (1923), Northern Rock (1976) and River Mite (1967). River Irt is the oldest working 15-inch gauge locomotive in the world and is now over 100 years old. The other locos have inspired elements of loco design the world over and also acted as overseas ambassadors for R&ER.

Alternatively, groups may wish to create a bespoke education tour that involves interaction with local experts, walks in the landscape, or insights into the Railway's collection. Attending various events staged by R&ER throughout the year can assist this end, if groups are able to be flexible about their dates of travel. Out of hours guided tours can also be arranged on request.

For more information about the education programme, the various Key Stage materials available and the re-opening of the Ravenglass Museum, please contact 01229 717171 or head to the Museum website at [www.ravenglassrailwaymuseum.co.uk](http://www.ravenglassrailwaymuseum.co.uk) and keep watching the latest news posts.

ENDS

**Press calls: Jane Hunt, Catapult PR, 01253 891114 – [jane@catapultpr.co.uk](mailto:jane@catapultpr.co.uk)**

### **Where To See Us In 2016**

Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway will be exhibiting at the following exhibitions and will be delighted to see you there, to answer your questions and suggest how we can make your tour work best for your group:

Britain & Ireland Marketplace – January 26  
UKinbound Convention – February 10-12  
Explore GB – March 3-4  
British Tourism & Travel Show – March 16-17  
Great for Groups North – September 14  
Group Leisure – October 20  
World Travel Market – November 7-9