Media release: 12 Februrary 2024

Logo, company name

Description automatically generated A blue sign with white text

Description automatically generated

**Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway**

**scoop national heritage award**

[**Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway**](https://ravenglass-railway.co.uk/) has been crowned as a winner at the Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards 2024 in Brighton.

As well as scooping the top accolade in the Marketing and Communications category, the affectionately named ‘La'*al*Ratty’ was also highly commended in the category for ‘Railway of the Year’.

Staff from the iconic Cumbrian attraction travelled to the special gala event in East Sussex on Saturday 10 February to celebrate outstanding achievements across the heritage rail sector. The evening featured cult trainspotter and social media sensation Francis Bourgeois as the guest speaker, with an audience including heritage railway staff and volunteers from across from the country.

A group of people posing for a photo

Description automatically generatedRavenglass and Eskdale Railway was selected for its high-impact event marketing and communications, including River Esk’s 100th Centenary Gala and its seasonal ‘winter warmer’ trains. An array of activity including social media content, digital communications, PR and printed publications all contributed to a 50% increase in visitors between Boxing Day and New Years Day, as well as a 20% uplift in visitor numbers for the annual gala.

Head of Marketing and Business Development at Lake District Estates, Rachel Bell, says: *“This is a fantastic achievement for Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway and the wider Lake District Estates teams. Congratulations to everyone involved – this wouldn’t have been possible without all the hard work of our colleagues, volunteers and associates, and the support of our visitors! It really is a team effort and another win for Cumbria to be proud of against some very tough competition!”*

A train on the tracks

Description automatically generated

Stuart Ross, General Manager (Visitor Experience), Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway, adds: “*This is an award given because of provable results and I’m so proud of everyone involved. Our marketing team do a phenomenal amount of work on our behalf, to showcase our historic railway and tell the stories which has made it a must-see attraction for almost 150 years. Good job!”*

Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway is one of the most scenic narrow gauge railway routes in the UK. Along the seven-mile journey, passengers can enjoy panoramic views of the Cumbrian coast and dramatic mountain scenery between the Lake District National Park’s only coastal village in Ravenglass – also part of two World Heritage Sites - and Dalegarth in the stunning Eskdale Valley.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Images attached:

1. The team from Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway (left to right)- Clement Holland, host Francis Bourgeois, Ben McGregor, Stuart Ross, Karen Robinson
2. River Esk 100th Centenary Gala – *credit Charlotte Graham*

For further information, please contact: Heather Sewell, [**hsewell@cumbriatourism.org**](mailto:hsewell@cumbriatourism.org) / 07795 487003.

[**Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway**](https://ravenglass-railway.co.uk/) is a family-owned business operating a heritage, narrow gauge steam railway on the Western Coast of the Lake District. The railway is surrounded by stunning views and walks and is based in Ravenglass, the only coastal village in the Lake District National Park.