Media release: XX March 2024



**Showstopping ‘Gala Weekend’ planned**

**for May Day Bank Holiday**

One of the UK’s best-loved heritage attractions - the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway – has unveiled plans for a special Steam Gala Weekend over the May Day Bank Holiday

Themed around ‘*Something Old, Something New’*, the three-day spectacle will take place from Saturday 4 to Monday 6 May 2024, with visitors set to marvel at a spectacular display of resident steam and diesel engines spanning 130 years, including *Katie* (1896), *Synolda (*1912), *River Esk* (1923) and *Whillan Beck* and *Perkins* (both 1929).

From the modern era, there is the visiting *St Egwin* from the Evesham Vale Light Railway in Worcestershire and *Mr Hallworth*, built in 2023 for the Perrygrove Railway in the Forest of Dean. *St Egwin* is a 0-4-0 tender-tank built 2003, while it’s the first-ever chance to see *Mr Hallworth*, which is a brand-new saddle tank just delivered in December.

IMAGES

A full yellow timetable will operate with at least 13 daily departures from Ravenglass. Weekend ‘rover’ tickets will allow passengers to hop on and off different trains, with 1, 2 and 3 day passes available. Added extras will include the captivating ‘double-headed’ trains.

The Gala Weekend also sees the launch of a brand-new Volunteer Hub - in conjunction with the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway Preservation Society (RERPS) – to give anyone interested in volunteering a behind-the-scenes look at what’s involved. It will include tours of the workshop and engine shed, as well a ‘shuttle’ train to Murthwaite Sidings to see a track laying demonstration (on Saturday and Sunday only).

Meanwhile, the Old British Railways signal box will be open and staffed throughout the three days. There will also be free entry to Ravenglass Railway Museum and the chance to become a ‘driver for a donation’, with 15-minute bookable slots being made available.

A 7¼ in gauge miniature railway will also be in residence in the railway workshop, run by the local Harrison and Johnson families. That’s in addition to opportunities for people to meet the drivers and pose for photos with the flagship locomotives.

Stuart Ross, General Manager (Visitor Experience) at the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway, says: “*What a weekend it will be! Our Gala Weekends have become an annual highlight for the railway, bringing together heritage rail enthusiasts from outside the area with local people and families of all ages. We are particularly looking forward to seeing a mix of historic locomotives alongside brand-new visiting engines.”*

Tickets can be booked online in advance or purchased on the day at Ravenglass or Dalegarth stations.

For further information about events and timetables, visit [**www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk**](http://www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk) or call 01229 717171.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Images attached:

For further information, contact: Heather Sewell, **hsewell@cumbriatourism.org** / 07795 487003.

[**Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway**](https://ravenglass-railway.co.uk/) is a family-owned business operating one of the oldest and longest narrow-gauge railways in England, on the Western Coast of the Lake District. Affectionately known as La’al Ratty, the railway is surrounded by stunning views and walks and is based in Ravenglass, the only coastal village in the Lake District National Park.