



# Press Release

Release date: 20th October 2014

## Work Weekend

In preparation for Sittingbourne's Steam Railway's Santa Specials, maintenance and repair work needs to be carried out across the Railway and that is the focus of this weekend's Work Weekend.

A Works Train will depart Sittingbourne Viaduct station at 10am to carry workers to Kemsley Down where the jobs will be assigned, tools and training will be provided. At about 1pm, a free lunch will be served in the Footplate Café and at about 4pm, the Works Train returns to Sittingbourne Viaduct (the journey takes about 15 minutes).

Everyone's welcome to come along and help out, free day membership will be provided for non-members. Please dress in layers as the weather can be unpredictable, also wear clothes that you don't mind getting dirty or damaged.

There's plenty of work to be carried out, such as gardening, building repairs and general maintenance of the track, coaches, wagons and locomotives. No previous experience required.

Further Work Weekends will be held on 8/9 and 22/23 November.

Santa Specials will be running on 6/7, 13/14 and 20-22 December, departing Sittingbourne Viaduct station at 11am, 12pm, 2pm and 3pm. Fares are £12.50 for everyone aged over 3 and £9.50 for the under 3s and includes a present from Santa or seasonal refreshments. There is a discount of up to £1.50 off all fares on all trains running on 6/7th December.

Visit [www.sklr.net](http://www.sklr.net) for more information and to download a booking form or call 01795 428269 to speak to Alan, our booking office manager, who can take your booking over the phone. Pre-booking is essential as these trains are popular, especially those closer to Christmas. It also helps Santa to ensure he has the right number and selection of toys and gifts.

The Railway's SOS (Sort Out Sittingbourne) Campaign continues with an aim to raise at least £75,000 to provide decent staff and visitor facilities at Sittingbourne Viaduct station. Donations can be made regularly or one-off at [www.justgiving.com/SKLR](http://www.justgiving.com/SKLR) and UK tax payers can contribute even more by choosing to Gift Aid their donation. The Railway is also keen to hear from any companies who would like to sponsor it, please contact [info@sklr.net](mailto:info@sklr.net) to offer your support.

A special fundraising event will be held on Saturday 8th November at Screen @ The Avenue in Sittingbourne - SOS Film Night will show the classic movie 'The Titfield Thunderbolt' based on the early days of railway preservation. Visit [www.avenuetheatre.co.uk](http://www.avenuetheatre.co.uk) for more information and to book tickets. Profits will be split between the Railway and The Avenue Theatre.

For more information visit [www.SKLR.net](http://www.SKLR.net), or call the Talking Timetable on 01795 424899, email [info@SKLR.net](mailto:info@SKLR.net), follow @SandKLR on Twitter or see our Facebook Group at [www.Facebook.com/groups/SandKLR](http://www.Facebook.com/groups/SandKLR)

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#### Information for the media:

1. The Railway is rare in the preservation world as it was donated by the then mill owners, Bowater's United Kingdom Paper Co Ltd, in 1969 for preservation and still uses original locomotives, equipment and buildings. The SKLR is now the longest continuous operator of the railway and is operated and maintained entirely by volunteers.
2. The Railway was forced to close by its previous landlords in December 2008. Following the sale of the site to Essential Land in 2010, the Railway was able to reopen in October 2010 to celebrate 40 years of public operation. In 2011, trains operated between Milton Regis (Asda) Halt and Kemsley Down. May 2012 saw the full reopening back to Sittingbourne Viaduct station. The 2013 Season was the first full season operated since 2008.
3. Following a fire in June 2014, the last of the Railway's usable buildings was destroyed at Sittingbourne Viaduct, prompting the relaunch of the Railway's SOS Campaign - this time to Sort Out Sittingbourne - with the aim of raising £75,000 to improve visitor and staff facilities at Sittingbourne Viaduct station.
4. The SKLR is a registered charity, number 1057079. Postal address: SKLR, PO Box 300, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 2DZ.
5. Photographs of the Railway can be found on the Press Officer's website: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/stopem/> . To download images – click on the photo, click on 'ALL SIZES', 'Original' and then 'Download the Original size'. Feel free to use them without fee but please credit 'SKLR'.

6. The Press Officer is available for interviews and recording sessions at the Railway or studios. Other members may be requested for interview through the Press Officer.
7. Media enquiries to Paul Best, Press Officer, telephone 07973 192938 or email [stopem@stopem.net](mailto:stopem@stopem.net)