



Press Release

Release date: 24th October 2016

Work Weekend & Santa Specials

This weekend sees the next Work Weekend to prepare Sittingbourne's Steam Railway for the return of Father Christmas in December.

Everyone's welcome to come along and help out at the Railway this weekend, a Works Train will depart Sittingbourne Viaduct station at 10am and return at about 4pm. Tools, training and lunch will be provided.

This is a good opportunity to find out how you can help keep the Railway running over Christmas and throughout 2017. The members are a friendly bunch and would welcome all the help they can get, 2016 has been a tough year for volunteers so the Railway really needs your help.

There will be further Work Weekends on 12/13th and 26/27th November. More information can be found at www.sklr.net or email info@sklr.net

Book now for Santa Specials - they will be running every weekend in December until Christmas. There is £1.50 off all fares for the first weekend in December (3rd & 4th). The usual Santa Specials fares are £13 for everyone aged over 3 and £10 for under 3s.

Children will receive a quality toy from Santa (there will be a selection to choose from) whilst older children and adults will receive seasonal refreshments instead.

Trains will depart Sittingbourne Viaduct station at 11am, 12pm, 2pm and 3pm, a return trip will take about two hours. Pre-booking is essential, some trains have limited space available - call 01795 428269 to book your place.

For more information on the Railway visit www.SKLR.net or call the Talking Timetable on 01795 424899, email info@SKLR.net, follow @SandKLR on Twitter or see our Facebook Group at www.Facebook.com/groups/SandKLR

Sittingbourne Viaduct station has free parking opposite McDonalds and behind KFC in Sittingbourne Retail Park and the pedestrian entrance is behind Pizza Hut, follow the amazing mural. Sat. Nav. users should use ME10 2XD or The Wall as their destination.

The station is atop a high embankment with 22 metal steps to climb. The ticket office can be found close to the top of the steps. Please arrive at least ten minutes before departure time as there can sometimes be a queue at the ticket office to collect tickets.

The first kilometre of the journey is on Milton Regis Viaduct, this reinforced concrete structure consists of 118 spans and six bridges. Constructed a hundred years ago, the Railway has invested a further £20,000 into maintenance of the structure during winter 2015/16.

Kemsley Down is the main base of the Railway, here you will find the Footplate Café, shop, toilets, picnic area, museum, displays, wildlife garden and see the other steam locomotives at the engine shed as well as two standard gauge locomotives.

The Railway's SOS Campaign has an aim to raise at least £75,000 to provide decent staff and visitor facilities at Sittingbourne Viaduct station including an access ramp. Donations can be made regularly or one-off at www.justgiving.com/SKLR and UK tax payers can contribute even more by choosing to Gift Aid their donation as the Railway is a registered charity. The Railway is also keen to hear from any companies who would like to sponsor it, please contact info@sklr.net to offer your support.

(End)

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. 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.
3. The SKLR is a registered charity, number 1057079. Postal address: SKLR, PO Box 300, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 2DZ.
4. 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 a fee but please credit 'SKLR'.

5. Press releases can be downloaded from the Railway's website: [http://
www.sklr.net/latest-news/press-releases/](http://www.sklr.net/latest-news/press-releases/)
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