



PRESS RELEASE

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Railway Back in Business

The Settle to Carlisle Railway line, which was closed north of Armathwaite in Cumbria for repair a year ago, will be fully re-opened and back to business as usual from Friday 31st March. One of the first trains to make the full journey through to Carlisle over the newly repaired line will be hauled by the nation's favourite locomotive, Flying Scotsman. It will complete a return trip from Oxenhope on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. Arriva Northern's regular, diesel passenger service will make a welcome return to normal on the same day.

The severe weather events of winter 2015-16 took their toll on the railway, with a massive landslide resulting in closure of the line at Eden Brows. The last train passed through to Carlisle in February last year. Since then, there has been a replacement bus service operating at the northern end of the line.

It is not the first time that this part of the railway has presented engineering challenges. When the line was constructed in the 1870's the Midland Railway surveyors had a difficult task in deciding the best route through the Eden gorge. Shortly after construction began, a five acre landslip started and was only stopped by covering the hillside with vertical shafts filled with rubble.

Almost 150 years later, their modern counterparts at Network Rail were faced with the same challenge. Their response has been to design and construct a massive concrete and steel tunnel-like structure that sits beneath the railway, 70 metres above the River Eden. This provides a stable base across the damaged and unstable ground.

The multi-million pound project has taken over a year to complete and will safeguard the railway for generations to come. It has ensured that if the land gives way again, the railway will most certainly not.

The Rt Hon John Stevenson, MP for Carlisle, said:

"The Settle to Carlisle route is iconic and easily one of the most beautiful railway journeys in the country. It is terrific news that the line will be re-opening and credit must go to the engineers and those working to repair the line. I very much look forward to travelling on the line once more as will the thousands of tourists and commuters who appreciate the significance and beauty of the line"

Sir Gary Verity, Chief Executive of Welcome to Yorkshire, said:

"Travelling through some of Yorkshire's most stunning scenery, the Settle to Carlisle line is one of the county's most iconic railways so I am delighted to see it reopening. Credit must go to the engineers who have worked tirelessly to repair the line following last year's devastating landslide. If you haven't already, I'd encourage everyone to book their tickets and experience the railway for themselves – you won't be disappointed!"

Northern's excellent value £15 Day Ranger ticket will remain available until the 20th May. Passengers can find timetable information at www.settle-carlisle.co.uk.

ENDS

Image 1:



Northern passenger service at Ribblehead station © Stuart Petch

Image 2:



Ribblehead viaduct and Ingleborough © Stuart Petch

Editor's Notes:

The Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Company is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes the railway line and invests in projects which benefit the local economy.

More information about the Settle-Carlisle Railway can be found here: www.settle-carlisle.co.uk

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