



# Press Release

## West Somerset Railway Presents a Great Western Routes and Branches Spring Steam Gala.

The West Somerset Railway's 2018 Spring Steam Gala will take as its theme 'Great Western Routes and Branches', marking the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the GWR being nationalised and becoming part of British Railways. It is also now over half a century since the sight and sound of Great Western steam engines working on the lines of South West England faded from daily life.

There will be visiting locomotives working on the line between Bishops Lydeard (near Taunton) and Minehead. These will include the American-built S160 6046, BR(W) 57XX class 0-6-0T no. 7714, BR(W) 6959 'Modified Hall' Class 4-6-0 no. 6990 'Witherslack Hall', GWR 14XX class 0-4-2T no.1450 and Autotrailer no. 178 and GWR 94xx class 0-6-0PT no. 9466. The visiting engines will be supported by a selection of our home fleet, including 6960 'Raveningham Hall', 7822 'Foxcote Manor' and Somerset and Dorset 53808.

Other attractions during the event include a military freight train, complemented by a military vehicle display at Minehead station.

Crosville motors will be running a Sentinel steam bus 'Elizabeth' between Minehead and Dunster Station with set down only in Dunster Village. Built in 1931 'Elizabeth' is the only steam bus in Europe still in revenue earning service and will operate on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> March. Also, on the Saturday and Sunday it will be possible to have a look behind the scenes in the workshops at Williton and Minehead to see locomotives and rolling stock under overhaul.

The railway museums at Bishops Lydeard, Washford and Minehead will be open for visitors and there will be model railways in action at Bishops Lydeard.

For those wishing to eat and drink, there will be licensed buffet cars on most trains and the 'Quantock Belle' dining train will serve breakfasts, lunches and afternoon teas on selected services. Quantock Brewery will have a bar at Minehead station. Light refreshments can be obtained at all stations except Doniford with cafés at Bishops Lydeard, Williton and Minehead.

Rover tickets are a perfect way to enjoy the Railway Galas and to travel behind the visiting and home fleet locomotive in operation over the 4 days, or to get out and about on early days in spring. On Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> March only young persons aged 5 to 17 can travel for a flat fare of £2.00 if accompanied by a fare-paying adult

or senior. Discounted rover tickets can be purchased in advance from [www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk](http://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk) or via 01643 704996. Single and return tickets and rovers can be purchased at stations on the day of travel.