

Railway Paths



Press release from Railway Paths Ltd 16/7/19

BENNERLEY VIADUCT SECURES NATIONAL LOTTERY SUPPORT

The charity Railway Paths Ltd has received confirmation that The National Lottery Heritage Fund will contribute £99,500 towards the Bennerley Viaduct project it was announced today. The project aims to repair and restore the historic structure and make it accessible for the public to use and enjoy and will be delivered by the viaduct's owners Railway Paths Ltd with support from the Friends of Bennerley Viaduct and Sustrans.

The project will bring Bennerley Viaduct into use for the first time since the railway it carried was closed in 1968. The viaduct survived attempts to demolish it in the 1970s, as well as a Zeppelin attack during the First World War. It is now one of only 2 wrought iron viaducts left in the country and is Grade II* listed by Historic England.

Instead of carrying trains again the project will connect the viaduct to the local path and trail network so that people will be able to walk across it from one side of the Erewash Valley to the other. To do this an access ramp will be built at one end and steps at the other and a new decked surface will be installed onto the existing structure. A range of important repairs will also be carried out to the 142 year old viaduct to ensure its lifespan is significantly extended.

Opportunities for the local community to get involved in the project will be provided through a range of events and activities including a volunteer work programme whereby people will be able to personally contribute to the repair and care of the viaduct.

The project is planned to start in August with works starting in autumn and continuing through to spring 2020.

As well as the generous support of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, financial support for the project to enable it to happen has been secured from the following organisations:

- Railway Heritage Trust
- Historic England
- HB Allen Charitable Trust
- Charles Hayward Foundation
- Pilgrim Trust
- Broxtowe Borough Council
- Railway Ramblers

Commenting on the news of The National Lottery Heritage Fund award, Will Haynes of Railway Paths Ltd said: "We're delighted that we've received this support thanks to National Lottery players. Through this funding, along with other funding we have managed to secure over the last year, we are now finally in the position, subject to obtaining the necessary permissions, to be able to deliver a project to repair, restore and re-open Bennerley Viaduct and give this important industrial monument the new lease of life it deserves."

Commenting on the award, Jeff Wynch, Chair of the Friends of Bennerley Viaduct said: “We would like to thank The National Lottery Heritage Fund and all the other bodies that have provided the financial support for this project to go ahead. Railway Paths Ltd are to be congratulated on developing a plan which will fulfil the long-held hopes of the Erewash Valley communities to restore, preserve and celebrate this major example of Victorian engineering.”

Notes to editors

About Railway Paths Ltd

Railway Paths Limited is an independent UK-wide charity formed in 1998 in order to manage and develop land previously owned by British Rail, with the aim of creating traffic free paths. We look after 755 structures on the disused railway lines in our ownership including historic viaducts, bridges and tunnels and have significant expertise in their preservation and restoration and bringing them into use for cycling, walking and wheel-chair use. We work closely with Sustrans, the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle, often developing and delivering projects together.

About the Friends of Bennerley Viaduct

Formed in 2015, the Friends of Bennerley Viaduct is a thriving and growing group of local people who are passionate about this amazing structure. The Friends follow in the footsteps of others in the community who have campaigned over many years to avert demolition, to restore, preserve and celebrate the viaduct and bring it back into use for local people and the wider public.

About The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we Inspire, lead and resource the UK’s heritage to create positive and lasting change for people and communities, now and in the future. www.heritagefund.org.uk.

Follow @HeritageFundUK on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and use #NationalLotteryHeritageFund

Further information

For further information, images and interviews please contact:

Jeff Wynch, Friends of Bennerley Viaduct (07443 452908 j.wynch@btinternet.com).

Bill Tomson, Railway Paths Ltd (0115 853 2953 bill.tomson@railwaypaths.org.uk).