

Where?

The experiences all take place at the Apedale Valley Light Railway, near Newcastle-under-Lyme in North Staffordshire – not far from M6 junction 16. Visit www.avlr.org.uk for full location details.

How to book

Footplate rides do not need to be pre-booked.

For Driver Experiences, call us on 0845 094 1953, or e-mail to info@mrt.org.uk. Please let us know which experience you are interested in, and your preferred date. We will then get back in touch with you to discuss and arrange your booking. A deposit will be required in advance.

Other important information

Participants for any of the driving experiences must be aged 21 or over. To ensure safety for all, participants must be able to understand and obey instructions and guidance given to them by our staff. We have a zero-tolerance for alcohol or drugs – any participant under the influence of either will be turned away.

Participants must be fit enough to climb on and off locomotives without assistance. These are participation railway experiences; you may get dirty, possibly cold and wet. Wear clothes which you don't cherish and which can be washed!

Participants are welcome to bring spectators to watch.

Put yourself in the picture



Driver and footplate experiences at Apedale



Footplate rides

Fancy seeing what the railway looks like from the sharp end? Footplate rides are available as follows:-

- Diesel locomotive - £10.
- Steam locomotive - £20.

The price is for a round trip on the locomotive, and includes the normal train fare.

We can provide footplate rides on most days when the railway is operating - check the main leaflet for diesel dates and steam dates. There will be some days when we cannot provide footplate rides because there just isn't the space for extra people on some of our smaller locos. Please get in touch to enquire, or if you are interested in a specific locomotive.

Footplate rides don't need to be booked in advance; just turn up and pay on the day in our shop.

There is a minimum age of 16 for footplate rides.

Industrial Diesel Driver

Your chance to get hands-on with some of the locomotives from our collection! The experience starts at 1300, meeting your host for a safety brief. You will then receive tuition on a number of our historic diesel locos, and when ready, you'll be in charge! You will have the Apedale Field Railway and some wagons to test your new-found skills. Your experience will end at approximately 1800.

The Industrial Diesel Driver experience costs £100. The experience is available on most Saturdays with the exception of railway gala days and when the Santa trains are running. Please check the back page for how to book and other important information.

Driving Experiences - Steam

We offer two Steam Loco Driver Experience packages.

Morning Steam Footplate Experience

Your day begins at 0830 with meeting your host for the safety brief. You will then be part of the team preparing the locomotive and lighting the fire. You will assist the crew with making the loco ready for service - needs to be ready for the first train at 1130! You will be on the footplate as a passenger for the 1130 and 1200 scheduled trains. In between the scheduled trains, you will be able (with instruction and guidance) to drive the locomotive. Your experience will end at approximately 1300.

Afternoon Steam Footplate Experience

You will meet your host at 1400, and he will give you a safety brief and introduce to the crew on the steam loco. You will travel with them as a footplate passenger on the afternoon trains. After the 1600 train, you will be able (with instruction and guidance) to drive the locomotive. At approximately 1730, the locomotive will be returned to the shed area, where you can assist the crew with the various tasks which have to be carried out on a steam loco at the end of each working day. Your experience will end at approximately 1800.

The cost for either the morning or the afternoon footplate experience is £150. This experience is available on most dates when we are operating steam locos, with the exception of annual galas and the Santa trains. Check the main leaflet for details of these dates. Please refer overleaf for how to book and other important information.