



GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICESTERSHIRE

PRESS INFORMATION

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MEET IVOR AND HIS DRIVER

**The Green Engine from Wales makes
his first ever visit to the Great Central Railway
27th and 28th Feb 2010**

It's a long way from Wales on small wheels! Even so, Ivor the engine is making his first ever visit to the Great Central Railway for a brand new family event.

He isn't coming alone. Jones the steam (Ivor's driver) and Dai Stationmaster will be in Leicestershire too for a weekend of fun. You can join them to help to spot Idris the Dragon, take a ride to Mr Dinwiddy's gold mine or even learn to speak Welsh!

Ivor will also be singing with a real choir and hopes lots of children will come to see him so they can join in as well.

Steve Hallam, event organiser for the Great Central Railway said, "**We're very excited about Ivor coming to the railway for the first time. While visitors are used to seeing our big engines, Ivor is a real contrast - small, just four wheels and bright green! It's the perfect way to introduce young children to trains and they will also recognise the characters with him like Jones the Steam. We've designed the event to make it very family friendly with lots of activity including entertainment as well as the ride behind Ivor**".

Ivor the Engine first appeared on television in the late 1950s, a product of the celebrated imaginations of Oliver Postgate and Peter Firmin's Smallfilms company. His adventures continued in colour in the 1970s where he rescued sheep from snowdrifts, had a fairground organ pipe fitted instead of a whistle and even encountered circus elephants.

Ivor is the only engine of the Merioneth and Llantysilly Railway Traction Company Limited - but the GCR has checked and he has been given a weekend off from his duties in Wales!

BRITAIN'S ONLY DOUBLE TRACK, MAIN LINE HERITAGE RAILWAY
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Ivor's visit to Loughborough on the Great Central Railway takes place on 27th and 28th of February. The railway also plans to run two larger engines, 'Leander' and the 'N2' as well as Ivor to keep the whole family entertained. After experiencing the Ivor activities passengers can travel to Leicester North and back behind one of the large engines.

Tickets cost from £12 adult, £10 seniors and £7 for children. Family tickets for a single adult and up to three children are £22. Family tickets for two adults and up to three children are £32.

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NOTES

Voted number 12 on the list of the 50 greatest railway journeys in the world the Great Central Railway is the UK's only double track, main line heritage railway. It's the only place in the world where full size steam engines can be seen passing each other – just as it was when steam ruled the rails. The preserved railway celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2009, and is manned by around 700 volunteers and a small team of permanent staff. Preservation of this section of the Great Central Railway began in 1969. The route was originally part of a main line from Sheffield to London. The 8 mile preserved section between Loughborough and Leicester is fully operational and the 4 stations reflect a different period of the railway's 111 year history. Around 100,000 visitors a year come to the railway from all over the world.

Trains run every weekend of the year, bank holidays and daily in the summer. In addition, First Class Restaurant Car Services provide famous dining experiences, whilst passengers travel between Loughborough and Leicester. Childhood engine driver dreams can come true with a Drive a Train Experience. We also run a number of family events, including Santa Specials.

The railway has won a number of awards including "independent railway of the year", and a gold award for the East Midlands best visitor experience and is a quality assured visitor attraction as designated by Enjoy England.