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Opening of Woolfold Viaduct in the Kirklees Valley

Published: 2nd May 2012 12:42

Walkers, cyclists and horse riders are invited to join the fun at the opening of the new Woolfold Viaduct in the Kirklees Valley.



Woolfold Viaduct: Opening on Monday

The ribbon-cutting will be on Monday 7 May at 10.30am, followed by exhibitions, walks, talks, bike rides and the unveiling of three new sculptures of local people.

Tottington Council first mooted the idea of turning the former Holcombe Brook branch railway into a path in 1972. It was an obvious opportunity to provide an attractive off-road route from Greenmount, Tottington and Brandlesholme to Bury town centre.

For many years a gap remained where the old Woolfold Viaduct was demolished in 1974. Re-bridging it would not be cheap but in December 2007 Sustrans's Connect2 programme, of which the Woolfold project formed part, was awarded £50m of lottery money following a competition and TV vote. This brought £450,000 from the Big Lottery, which alongside £260,000 from the Department for Transport, £100,000 from Viridor Credits and a contribution from Bury Council, meant the project could go ahead.

There was a lot of work still to be done on design, land acquisition and obtaining consents but work finally started on site in February 2011.

After the tape-cutting on Monday 7 May, the Tottington Wildlife group is offering a family nature walk (with prizes) up the valley to Greenmount Old School where the Greenmount Community Association will be hosting a celebration of the new bridge and the Kirklees Valley including:

An exhibition on how the bridge came about

A display on the three new sculptures of Reg Harris, Ralph Rooney and David Swithenbank which have been placed on the east side of the viaduct.

A display on last year's excavation of Tottington Mill and the launch of an attractive new booklet by Oxford Archaeology on calico printing, which uses Tottington Mill as a main example

An exhibition and talk by the South Lancs Bat Group, which has carried out a lot of surveying in the valley

A local history exhibition by Tottington Civic Society, which covers manufacturer Samuel Knowles, a promoter of the railway.

Materials relating to Ralph Rooney, whose book has recently been re-printed and will be on sale.

Information on the Ranger Service and how people can get involved in helping look after the Kirklees Valley

A display on Local Nature Reserves, of which the valley is one

A Sustrans stall (the transport charity which has helped bring about and source much of the funding for the project)

Refreshments

NB: The bridge is around 100 metres from the end of Darlington Close and 600 metres west of Brandlesholme Road. Visitors arriving for the ceremony by car are asked not to park on Brandle Avenue or Darlington Close.

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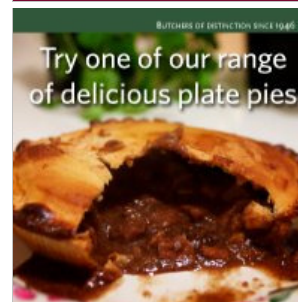

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