

My application to join the RVRSA

1. I would like the following type of annual membership (please tick):

a. Standard adult:

Full year (starting 1st April) £20.00

Joining 1st July onwards..... £15.00

Joining 1st October onwards£10.00

b. Additional member at same address:£10.00

c. Full annual junior membership (under 16) £10.00

2. My details are:

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email: Telephone:

3. Additional people at same address are:

4. I am paying (please show total amount): £_ _

5. I am paying by (please circle payment method):

cash, cheque or postal order - payable to Rother Valley Railway Supporters Association; or standing order; or online bank transfer (BACS).

6. Sign this declaration: I pay the above total, and agree to my details being held on computer files solely for the use of the Rother Valley Railway.

Signature

Date

Visit us

We are open to visitors every Sunday from around 10am till 4pm, free of charge.

Although no trains are running yet, you can see the new station developing, view our collection of vintage railway vehicles, and look around our visitor centre and small shop. We have a large collection of secondhand railway books and magazines, and various items for sale including pre-loved model railway items.

How to find us

We are just across the car park from the mainline railway station in Robertsbridge.

By bus: routes 304 and 305.

By rail: on the Charing Cross to Hastings mainline.

By road: Robertsbridge is just off the A21 London to Hastings Road. In the very centre of the village, take the turning called Station Road and turn into the main station carpark (pay and display applies).

Our address is:

Robertsbridge Junction Station, Station Road, Robertsbridge, East Sussex TN32 5DG.

Tel: 01580 881 833 Email:

membership@rvr.org.uk

RVR's website is www.rvr.org.uk and you can also find us on Facebook.

Prize Draw: every month - see RVR's website!

(Version Jan 2020)



Welcome to the Rother Valley Railway. RVR is working to reinstate and reopen the railway between Robertsbridge and Bodiam, where we join the famous Kent and East Sussex Railway. This distance is about 3.5 miles and will involve crossing three busy roads including the A21.



Above: One of five bridge renewals so far completed, west of Northbridge Street (GC). Below: the RVR project showing the 'missing link' between Northbridge Street and Junction Road.



Trains? No passenger trains are running at the moment. But when the project is completed, services will run eastwards from Robertsbridge into Kent once again, with the first regular passenger trains since 1954. Read on to discover more about the RVR, and how you can help restore the railway.

The Rother Valley Railway Supporters' Association is helping make the exciting RVR project happen. Based at Robertsbridge Junction Station, we help raise the profile of the scheme, help fund RVR activities, and maintain what has been achieved so far. There is a free quarterly magazine, *The Phoenix*, sent to every full member to keep people fully up to date. (Additional members do not receive their own individual copies.) An electronic version is also available. Membership is open to all, and you don't have to be a volunteer if you don't want to (though you have to join if you want to volunteer).

Volunteer with us. Day to day work on the railway is mainly done by supporters. We are restoring several old railway vehicles, we run the visitor centre/shop, and maintain the track and land. We are always looking for additional volunteers – anyone with a have-a-go spirit can do something useful. There's so much to do! Just come along any Sunday and take a look around. You need to be 16 or over unless supervised.

Achievements so far. RVR began reinstatement between Bodiam and Quarry Farm in 2004, and extended track further to Junction Road in 2010. It is now used by K&ESR trains on special occasions. RVR have now begun building the Junction Road to Austen's Bridge section – another half a mile.

In the west, RVR completed the Robertsbridge section to Northbridge Street in 2013, and its new platform at Robertsbridge soon after. It got planning permission for the missing middle section in 2017.

The missing link. To complete the whole join-up project, RVR has applied for a Transport and Works Act Order. This is awaiting a public inquiry, due to start in May 2020. Once granted, construction can be completed and operating can begin. Trains will run through to Tenterden once again, from a brand new station at Robertsbridge which is already part-built.

History of the line. Back in 1896 a group of local businessmen and landowners secured an Act of Parliament to build a railway from Robertsbridge to Tenterden (in fact the terminus was at Rolvenden). Soon afterwards however, Parliament passed the Light Railways Act 1896 and this was a much cheaper and simpler way to build and operating new rural railways because it relaxed many of the strict requirements providing speeds were low. The Rother Valley (Light) Railway Act was abandoned, and the scheme went ahead under the new LRA instead, being the first to do so and the only preserved railway originally constructed to these standards. The Company's engineer was Holman Frederick Stephens – the Colonel - who became general manager in 1899 and managing director in 1900 until his death in 1932.

The Rother Valley Railway opened for goods traffic on 26 March 1900 and for passengers on 2 April. In 1901 the line was extended into Tenterden and the

former terminus renamed Rolvenden. In 1904 the line was renamed the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

The railway was further extended to a junction with the SECR at Headcorn, opening on 15 May 1905. It survived the 1923 Grouping and thus remained independent until taken over by British Railways in 1948. But it lost money from the 1920s onwards.

The whole branch closed to passengers in 1954, and the Tenterden to Headcorn section was lifted in 1955. Freight traffic continued on the rest until June 1961 when the line was closed completely, apart from the short section between the mainline at Robertsbridge and Hodson's Mill, which continued as a private siding until 1969. The Kent and East Sussex Railway Preservation Society was formed in 1961 to reopen the whole branch. By 1974 they had succeeded in reopening the section between Tenterden and Rolvenden. However, they had been refused permission by the government to reopen the western end, from Bodiam to Robertsbridge, and this track was lifted in 1972. The eastern end was extended in stages to reach Bodiam in 2000.

RVR returns. A new organisation, the Rother Valley Railway (East Sussex) Ltd was formed on 22 May 1991 to reconstruct the line west of Bodiam. It is now known as the Rother Valley Railway Ltd, and is owned by a charity, the Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust. The Trust leads the whole project. All planning permissions are in place. RVR now need an Order from the Secretary of State to authorise completion. This procedure is well underway.

Join us today. RVR is social enterprise. Nobody gets paid anything. Nobody makes a profit. We do this because we love railways and can also see the clear benefits to the local communities in years to come.