

World's oldest operating narrow-gauge locomotive in action at Alstom's The Greatest Gathering

- Built in 1863, Prince will be joined by Trangkil No. 4, the last narrow-gauge steam locomotive built in the UK for industrial use in 1971
- Visitors to Alstom's three-day festival will be able to ride behind steam engines from Ffestiniog, Statfold Barn and Perrygrove heritage railways

12 June 2025 – Alstom, global leader in smart and sustainable mobility, is delighted to announce the inclusion of narrow-gauge exhibits at [The Greatest Gathering](#), showcasing their rich history and significance in the wider railway story over the past 200 years.

Alstom's three-day festival in Derby will be the world's largest-ever gathering of historic and modern rolling stock. It forms part of the wider festivities for [Railway 200](#), a year-long celebration marking the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR) on 27 September 1825 – and a journey that gave birth to the modern railway.

A 2 ft gauge railway line will be installed on site to offer rides behind Prince and Trangkil No. 4

Ahead of The Greatest Gathering, a team of volunteers from Alstom, [Ffestiniog Railway](#) and [Statfold Barn Railway](#) will install a 2 ft (610 mm) demonstration line on the site of Britain's biggest railway factory. Prince, the oldest operating narrow-gauge locomotive in the world – built in 1863 – will then be able to haul passengers in two of the Ffestiniog Railway's original carriages.

Recently overhauled to take part in both Railway 200 and Ffestiniog Railway 70th anniversary celebrations, Prince has been a key part of the world's oldest narrow-gauge railway since its delivery over 160 years ago. In fact, it was the first steam locomotive to operate on the Welsh railway when it was rescued from closure 70 years ago. After the event, Prince will return to its home in North Wales to recreate those first steps in UK railway preservation.

A narrow-gauge railway is one where the track width is less than the usual 4 ft 8 ½ in or 1,435 mm – known as standard gauge. A key part of the railway story over the last 200 years belongs to the many and varied smaller gauge railways which transported goods and passengers, often in more challenging terrain than their larger, standard gauge cousins.

In Britain alone, there were more than a thousand narrow-gauge railways, serving everything from slate quarries to seaside resorts. These lines were often lifelines for the communities they served, and many have since become beloved heritage attractions. It's only fitting that their history is showcased at Alstom's Railway 200 event, where visitors can experience first-hand the charm, ingenuity and enduring legacy of narrow-gauge steam.

Joining Prince on the demonstration track will be Trangkil No. 4, the last narrow-gauge steam locomotive built in the UK for industrial use in 1971. Manufactured in Leeds and exported for use on



the Trangkil Sugar Mill in Indonesia, the locomotive returned to the UK in 2004, where it is part of the Statfold Barn Railway near Tamworth.

A 15 in gauge railway line will be installed on site to offer rides behind Katie and Anne

In addition to the 2 ft gauge railway, Britain's biggest rail celebration will present a complete 15 in (381 mm) minimum-gauge railway, inspired by Sir Arthur Heywood's experimental railway at Duffield Bank near Derby.

The 15 in gauge railway will feature Katie, the first locomotive built by Sir Arthur for the Eaton Hall Railway in 1896 and now owned by the [Ravenglass and Eskdale Preservation Society](#). Katie will be joined by Anne, built more than 100 years later by Exmoor Steam Railway and operating at Litchurch Lane courtesy of the [Perrygrove Railway](#).

The minimum-gauge railway will also include an adapted carriage that can offer level boarding for those with mobility challenges. The track itself is being provided by the [Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway](#), typical of the 15 in gauge lines operating around the UK today.

The Greatest Gathering takes place on Friday 1, Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 August 2025 at Alstom's historic Litchurch Lane Site in Derby. Britain's oldest remaining train factory will be home to in excess of 50 rolling stock exhibits from the past, present and future of the railways, with the site itself opening to the public for the first time in almost 50 years.

Miniature railways

Alongside narrow-gauge heroes, standard-gauge legends such as Locomotion No. 1, LNER Class A4 Sir Nigel Gresley and the world's fastest diesel locomotive have already been confirmed as attending.

In addition, visitors will be immersed in the world of miniature railways – typically categorised as models of full-sized prototypes. For example, a 5 in ridable railway operated by the [Derby Society of Model and Experimental Engineers](#) and a display from the [Ground Level 5" Gauge Main Line Association \(GL5\)](#) will take place along the length of one of Litchurch Lane's gigantic workshops.

Elsewhere, entrants to the [Railway Challenge](#) – organised by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (iMechE) – will showcase the skills, expertise, knowledge and business acumen of rising stars in the rail industry. Now in its 14th year, it requires participants to design and manufacture a 10 ¼ in gauge railway locomotive in accordance with a set of strict rules and a detailed technical specification. Students from the University of Derby, along with Alstom apprentices and graduates, will present [The Derby Express](#) at The Greatest Gathering, adjacent to the University of Sheffield's locomotive.

A full list of exhibits planned for Alstom presents The Greatest Gathering can be found on the event's official website: www.alstom.com/greatest-gathering

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Notes to Editors

- Covering 90 acres, Alstom's Derby Litchurch Lane Works is one of the world's largest rolling stock factories, and the only UK facility that designs, engineers, builds and tests trains for domestic and export markets. The factory was opened by the Midland Railway in 1876 and the city of Derby has been building trains continually since 1839. In 2022, Derby was chosen by the Government as the home of Great British Railways following a vote by the public between contender cities.

About Alstom

Alstom commits to contribute to a low carbon future by developing and promoting innovative and sustainable transportation solutions that people enjoy riding. From high-speed trains, metros, monorails, trams, to turnkey systems, services, infrastructure, signalling and digital mobility, Alstom offers its diverse customers the broadest portfolio in the industry. With its presence in 63 countries and a talent base of over 86,000 people from 184 nationalities, the company focuses its design, innovation, and project management skills to where mobility solutions are needed most. Listed in France, Alstom generated sales of €18.5 billion for the fiscal year ending on 31 March 2025.

For more information, please visit www.alstom.com.

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