



CARLISLE WAVERLEY VIADUCT TRUST



Briefing Document (May 2019)

The origin of Carlisle Waverley Viaduct Trust is that of a campaigning organisation dedicated to the restoration of the Waverley Viaduct and its re-opening as a public bridleway. The Trust was incorporated as a company on the 2 July 2015 and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 25 July 2016.

Background

The reasons for this campaign have been publicised at length over the years but they are summarised below.

1. For 40 years the viaduct was open to the public and used extensively by the communities on both sides of the River Eden: local residents, walkers, fishermen, dog owners, joggers etc.. The viaduct is a substantial and majestic structure but 'temporary' barriers are in place rendering it an unused asset to the city of Carlisle. Properly utilised, it can open up recreational walking routes and further serve as a traffic free transport link between two sides of a city divided by the river.
2. The viaduct is a Grade 2 listed structure and £303,000 pounds were spent on it in 2014, bringing it back to the standard when closed to railway traffic.
3. Highways England, which owns the viaduct, spent this money. They have indicated that they wish to see the viaduct brought back into use as a traffic free crossing of the river. They will retain ownership and continue to maintain the structure.
4. They have agreed that if CWVT carry out the necessary work to waterproof the deck and construct a safe route across the viaduct, with suitable surface and fencing, then they will grant us a lease at a peppercorn rent for 25 years.
5. The outcome of a public petition in 2010 which over 2000 people signed and newspaper polls have demonstrated that the public are overwhelmingly in favour of the re-opening of the viaduct for public access. Well over 90% of those polled voted in favour.
6. It is acknowledged that a handful of those who voted in the polls were against re-opening. The only known supporters of continued closure is a handful of the residents of the hamlet of Stainton; Whilst recognising that they have genuine concerns about anti-social behaviour, the Trust submits that their fears are misguided and based upon instances of historical difficulties.
7. The call for re-opening within the wider community is overwhelming but the continuing presence of the barriers and need to activate communication between city and county councils and all interested parties has adversely delayed positive progress but such progress is now being made.

How will we achieve our aim?

- Either reaching an amicable agreement with the landowners concerned for access and egress on the northern end of the viaduct or, if agreement is not forthcoming, requesting the local authority to impose a Public Path Creation Order, such orders being appropriate to create a public bridleway.
- Building on the support of several city and county councillors and funds pledged so as to provide a specification acceptable to Highways England to install waterproof decking with associated draining system, parapets and fencing.
- Enlisting the input of our councils and the community to apply for the necessary funding.
- Obtaining all necessary permissions from planning and heritage perspectives.
- Negotiating the terms of a lease from Highways England, enter into a lease, comply with necessary health and safety and regulatory requirements and obtain insurance.
- Seek tenders and commission the works.
- Reopen the viaduct as soon as practical and within a set timetable.
- We ask for the continuing support and commitment from our city and county council members and engagement from their officers to achieve our goal and produce a great benefit for the City of Carlisle.

The current situation at May 2019

After long negotiations with the council planners the cycle/footpath plans were about to be passed when the Environment Agency objected on the grounds that they had not completed their flood plans for the area after the 2016 floods. However they were agreeable to us continuing with our original plan for a footpath link in the interim and the city council agreed to this. See the **Current Plan** link on the main page for details of the revised scheme.

Registered office: 13 Beaver Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA2 7PS

A Company limited by Guarantee with charitable status. Company number: 09668596. Charity No.1168423

Directors: R A Bain, C Bowditch, J Bowman, S J Crichton, B A Maxwell, D Ramshaw, J S R S Riddle, R M Tringham

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Edward Hunter Davies OBE, Author, Journalist and Broadcaster