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## WHAT IS THE LYNTON AND LYNMOUTH CLIFF RAILWAY?

The Cliff Railway is a historic Victorian railway, which opened in 1890 and has connected the idyllic twin towns of Lynton and Lynmouth ever since. The railway is the steepest and the highest fully water powered railway in the world and a fully working testament to Victorian engineering, with no need for electricity, gas or diesel the Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway remains the UK's only fully water powered railway and one of only three examples left in the world. We're also proud to be environmentally friendly, with a number of sustainability and other awards to our name, such as the Red Wheel Heritage Award, Gold status with Green Tourism, a partner of the North Devon Biopshire, numerous local tourism awards, and the Engineering Heritage Award from the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.

Tourists flock to our unique attraction to enjoy the spectacular views across Lynmouth Bay and the Bristol Channel offered by the 862 feet of track, which rises 500 feet. Perched high on the cliff top we have the Cliff Top Cafe inside a Grade II listed building, where visitors can also enjoy food, drinks and traditional Cream Teas.

### LOCATION



**The Esplanade,  
Lynmouth,  
North Devon,  
EX35 6EQ**



## ABOUT US

### MISSION STATEMENT

To run and preserve the heritage of the Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway as a vibrant visitor attraction, an environmentally friendly mode of transport, and an essential link between the twin towns.

### PURPOSE

Promoting the area and supporting the vital economic role of transporting tourists and residents while they are visiting or going about their daily business.

### FUTURE

As part of our plan for the future we continue to embrace our heritage, maintain our sustainable and green credentials, to promote ethical tourism and continue to provide a relevant, educational and historic experience for the next generation of young engineers.

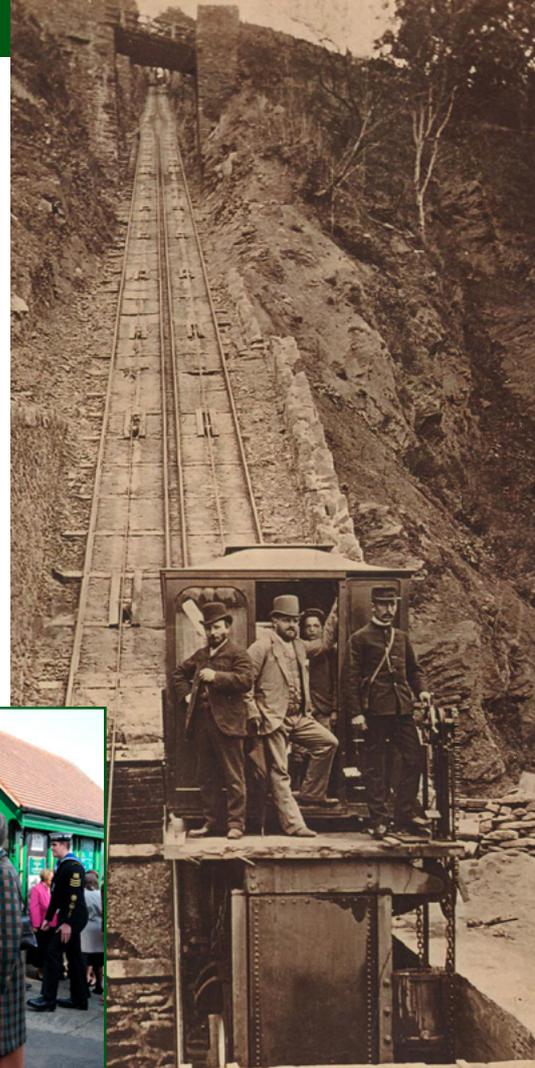
### KEY POINTS

- Steepest fully water powered railway in the world, and the UK's only fully water powered railway.
- Sustainable, environmentally friendly heritage attraction.
- Significant part of Lynton and Lynmouth's history, and an important role in the area's tourism industry today.
- Major all year round employer.



## LYNTON & LYNMOUTH CLIFF RAILWAY TIMELINE:

- 1881** Idea of the Cliff Railway first introduced, in a letter to the Lynton and Lynmouth Recorder
- 1888** Lynmouth and Lynton Lift Company formed through an Act of Parliament with perpetual rights to extract water from the West Lyn River promoted by Sir George Newnes, a wealthy Victorian publisher
- 1890** Railway officially opened on Easter Monday by Mrs Ada Jeune, the local Lady of the Manor and has connected Lynton & Lynmouth ever since
- 1852** The year of the Lynmouth Flood Disaster. The railway's importance in the rescue effort was marked by a visit from the Duke of Edinburgh
- 1979** Chief Engineer and Manager, Ashley Clarke joined the company as an apprentice
- 1990** At the centenary of the Cliff Railway, it was calculated that it had travelled the equivalent of 10 round-the-world trips
- 1997** North Devon Conservation Society Conservation Award for the project of 'Renovation and refurbishment of the railway and its approaches'
- 2000** The start of a complete track refurbishment which was undertaken during winter maintenances. It took 6 years and was completed in 2006
- 2006** Visited by Princess Anne
- 2002** Second visit by the Duke of Edinburgh
- 2011** Extensive carriage refurbishment undertaken during the winter of 2011-2012
- 2014** Engineering Heritage Award from the Institution of Mechanical Engineers for the oldest total loss water powered funicular railway in the UK
- 2015** Second visit by Princess Anne to mark the 125th anniversary of the railway
- 2018** Awarded BRONZE in Devon's 2018 Large Visitor Attraction of the Year category with the Devon Tourism Awards
- 2019** Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway launch the National Cliff Railway Day
- 2020** Celebrated 130 years of continuous service and the original top wheel system completely redesigned and replaced
- 2021** Awarded Gold status with Green Tourism and became a member of the North Devon Biosphere Business Partner scheme
- 2021** Awarded the Red Wheel Heritage Award from The National Transport Trust
- 2022** Partial track replacement scheme undertaken during the winter maintenance schedule.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### HOW DOES THE CLIFF RAILWAY WORK?

The Lift works on a simple balancing system. The two cars are attached by cable which runs around a pulley wheel at the top. Each car has a 700 gallon water tank which is full of water. When the drivers have signalled to each other and the brakes have been taken off, the bottom car discharges enough water to make the top car the heavier one, it then descends pulling the lighter car to the top.

### WHY IS THE CLIFF RAILWAY SO ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY?

Water and gravity are the motive power; the lifts need absolutely no other fuel to operate. Water is taken from the West Lyn River (approximately one mile upstream) and then piped to storage tanks at the top station. It is used as ballast. It is not treated or polluted in any way. After use it is discharged onto the beach at Lynmouth, about 100 metres away from the point where the West Lyn reaches the sea.

What's more, the lifts do not create any emissions. This means their carbon footprint has not changed since the lift opened. We are probably one of the most environmentally friendly tourist attractions in the country and have been for well over a hundred and thirty years.



## HOW MANY PEOPLE VISIT THE CLIFF RAILWAY?

We are one of the South West's most popular attractions, and see huge numbers of visitors each year. The highest number of passengers ever carried by the railway in one year is 470,000.

## HOW MANY STAFF WORK AT THE CLIFF RAILWAY?

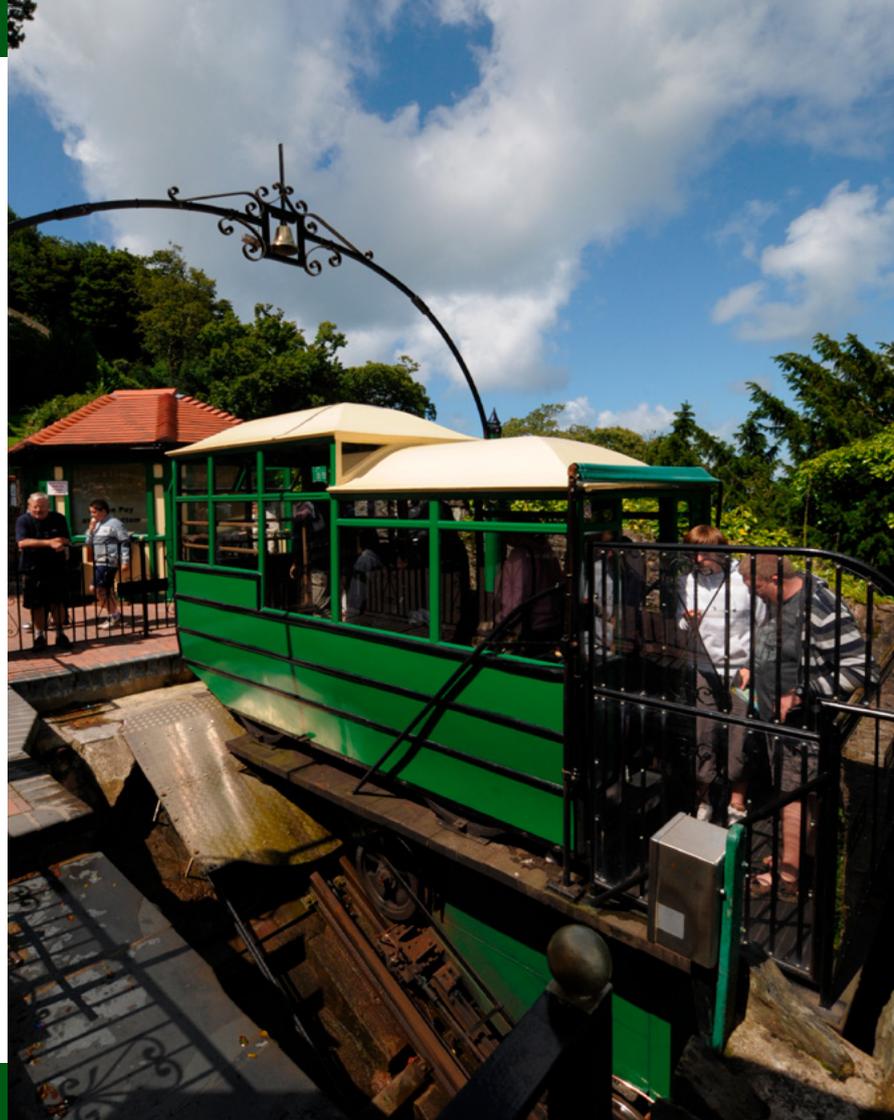
The Cliff Railway and the Cliff Top Cafe jointly employ 19 staff for driving, visitor sales, maintenance, cafe service and office administration. We encourage local employment and have several longstanding staff within the team.

## HOW IS THE RAILWAY MAINTAINED?

The lift closes every winter, when the carriages are removed and all cables and wheels are inspected and replaced as required.

## WHAT ELSE IS THERE TO DO IN LYNTON AND LYNMOUTH?

Walkers love the area, thanks to its position close to the heart of Exmoor and place on the South West Coast Path, with unforgettable spots of coastal scenery such as the Valley of Rocks. There are also boat trips from the harbour, the Lyn & Exmoor Museum, the Lynton to Barnstaple Heritage Railway, the Glen Lyn Gorge, the Flood Memorial Hall, a putting green, play park, beaches, wooded walks and a wealth of cafes, restaurants and pubs.



# AWARDS



## RED WHEEL HERITAGE AWARD

The National Transport Trust has awarded the Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway the coveted 'Red Wheel' award. The award recognises the railways importance as a Transport Heritage Site and has been awarded in recognition of the unique water powered nature of the railway. The Red Wheel heritage plaque seeks to highlight the most important sites of transport heritage and the cliff railway now joins the 125 heritage sites across the UK that have achieved 'Red Wheel' status.



## 'GOLD' STATUS WITH GREEN TOURISM (2021)

Green Tourism has awarded Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway a 'Gold' status. This recognises that the Cliff Railway is achieving the highest category for sustainable and ethical tourism. The award demonstrates a hallmark of 'green quality' and an ongoing commitment towards responsible, environmentally-friendly practice, including the conservation of the local environment, its economy, the support of local ethical suppliers, and ensuring a happy, valued, and eco-aware workforce.



## SILVER - DEVON'S LARGE VISITOR ATTRACTION (2020)

The Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway has been awarded SILVER in Devon's 2020 Visitor Attraction of the Year category with the Devon Tourism Awards, the Cliff Railway was also Highly Commended in the Tourism Innovation category. The announcement was made during the Devon Tourism Awards Ceremony in March 2021. The annual competition, now in its 11th year, saw over 124 entries across Devon tourism business with awards presented in 24 categories the category winner, Gold, was awarded to Pennywell Farm, Buckfastleigh.



## PARTNER OF THE NORTH DEVON BIOSPHERE

The Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway is a proud member of the North Devon Biosphere Business Partner scheme. The North Devon Biosphere was UK's first UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve and is here to inspire a positive future by connecting visitors with nature, culture, heritage and the landscape that makes this North Devon & Exmoor region worthy of the UNESCO designation. The Cliff Railway is committed to a number of conservation pledges, including wildflower planting areas of the site, installing bird boxes, conservation events, and the promotion of ongoing sustainability and green values within tourism.



## HRA LARGE GROUPS CATEGORY WINNER (2021)

The Heritage Railway Association has declared the Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway as the category winner for 2020's 'Large Groups' award. The award was presented in recognition of the ongoing development of the railway, particularly the recent work in redesigning and replacing the top wheel system and our ongoing commitment to heritage, and sustaining the attraction for future generations.

## AWARDS



### NORTH DEVON BUSINESS AWARDS FINALIST (2019)

The North Devon Business Leisure and Tourism Awards has declared the Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway as a category 'finalist' in the 'North Devon Visitor Attraction' category 2019. The event partners, North Devon Journal, Western Morning News, Devon Live and Business Live made the presentation at the High Bullen Hotel in recognition of the Cliff Railways contribution to tourism in North Devon



### HRA (RUNNERS UP) 2019 / 2020

The Heritage Railway Association has highly commended the Lynton and Lynmouth 'Cliff Railway Day' Event with a runners up award in the Special Events category in the 2020 presentations. The HRA has previously recognised the Cliff Railway as runners up in the Outstanding Visitor Attraction and Large Groups categories in the 2019 presentations. The HRA awards are presented in recognition of the hard work and commitment to heritage, within these railways, and sustaining heritage attraction for future generations.



### BRONZE - LARGE VISITOR ATTRACTION (2018)

The Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway has been awarded BRONZE in Devon's 2018 Large Visitor Attraction of the Year category with the Devon Tourism Awards. The announcement was made at the Visit Devon Awards Ceremony at Highbullen Hotel, Golf & Country Club in November 2018. The annual competition, now in its 9th year, saw over 164 entries with just 78 selected as finalists. Exeter's Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery was awarded Silver, and the Gold category winner was Sidmouth's, Donkey Sanctuary.



### ENGINEERING HERITAGE AWARD

The Institute of Mechanical Engineers has awarded the Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway the 'Engineering Heritage Award'. The award, presented in September 2014, recognises the railway's importance as the oldest total loss water powered funicular railway in the UK, and the innovations of the 'Dead Man's Handle' which is an integral part of the fail-safe braking system on the railway since 1890. The cliff railway is the 98th winner of the award and sits alongside iconic previous winners of the award such as the Jaguar E-Type, London's Tower Bridge, the Thames Barrier and Concorde



### PRESIDENTS SHIELD CONSERVATION AWARD (1997)

The North Devon Conservation Society awarded the Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway the 'Presidents Shield' in the Annual Conservation Awards 1997. The Society awarded the Presidents Shield in recognition of the renovation and refurbishment of the Cliff Railway and its approaches that had occurred in the previous season.



### ?WHICH - THE UK'S BEST CLIFF RAILWAY

Which? readers have rated 50 of the most-visited historic attractions in the UK. The reader poll gave Lynton and Lynmouth Funicular Cliff Railway in Devon a customer score of 83% and rated them the UK's BEST cliff railway. The ?Which readers poll consider the top attractions are those that bring history to life, with immersive and interactive exhibitions.



## WHAT DO YOU CHARGE PRESS FOR LOCATION FILMING?

Nothing! We do not charge for location filming and welcome any film companies or television crews who wish to film or incorporate the railway in their production. We will work to accommodate your needs before we open to the public or while we are open as part of our daily running. We can even recommend local accommodation providers who will charge a discounted rate for press using their services.

## ROYALTY FREE IMAGES

We are willing to support you with images of the Cliff Railway for use within associated articles. All images must be credited Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway.



## RECENT FEATURES:

**Channel 5** *Kate Humble's Coastal Walks*  
**UKTV** *The Architecture The Railways Built*  
**Channel 5** *Walking Britain's Lost Railways*  
**Channel 4** *Devon & Cornwall*  
**BBC** *Countryfile*  
**BBC** *Escape to the Country*  
**ITV** *Britain's Best Walks with Julia Bradbury*  
**2018 Film** *'Winter Ridge'*  
**2018 Film** *'Louisa: An Amazing Adventure*  
**Channel 4** *Four in a Bed*  
**BBC** *Antiques Road Trip*  
**BBC** *Spotlight*  
**BBC** *Great British Railway Journeys*

## MEDIA CONTACT

if you would like to discuss filming the Cliff Railway or require images for articles, please contact:

**The General Manager** Ashley Clarke

**T:** 01598 753486

**E:** [ashley@cliffrailwaylynton.co.uk](mailto:ashley@cliffrailwaylynton.co.uk)

## KEY STAFF BIOGRAPHIES



### ASHLEY CLARKE

Ashley started on December 7th 1979 as an apprentice Engineer to Bob Jones whose grandfather was the builder of the railway. He took over as Chief Engineer when Bob retired in 1990 and later became the On-Site Manager and Engineer in 2002. In 2017 Ashley took on the role of General Manager and Chief Engineer, and is at present the railway's longest serving team member, having been working here for nearly 40 years.

His duties include overseeing the daily running, staff and maintenance of the railway and looking after the company's many customers. Outside of work his interests include classic cars, fishing, caravanning and his Staffordshire bull terrier, Ziggy who goes to work with him every day.



### ADAM COLLIER

Adam started in May 2011 and has become a valuable and knowledgeable member of the Cliff Railway team. Adam was promoted to Supervisor in October 2017 and his daily duties include opening and closing the railway, driving duties when required and daily maintenance of the lifts and the site. In his spare time he enjoys spending time with his family, mountain biking and walking.



### BOB SHADDICK

Bob has a long association with the Cliff Railway, being a direct descendant of the builder Bob Jones who was his great great grandfather. Bob was invited onto the board of directors in 2017 and alongside these duties he also provides a key marketing role. His interests include hiking, travel, golf and classic car trials.



## TRIPADVISOR TESTIMONIALS

*"Amazing piece of Victorian technology connecting Lynton and Lynmouth Beach! Outstanding views! The staff very friendly and helpful."*

**Edita S, Burntisland**

*"We were a party of ten, ages were from 80 to 18 months - and everyone loved it. Lynton and Lynmouth are delightful, the views are breathtaking - a photographer's dream! The cliff railway is amazing. Dog friendly. Very nice, well informed, helpful staff. Really worth a visit."*

**Beverley P, Reading**

*"As we arrived in Lynton & Lynmouth we stopped at the Cliff Top Cafe for lunch before taking the cliff railway down to Lynmouth. The sun was shining so we sat outside to enjoy the wonderful views and the great food. Two of us had toasties and one had soup. They were all excellent as was the service. By the end of the week we decided that it was the best food we had had all week."*

**AnitaManchester, Cambridge**

*"For any transport or engineering enthusiast, a preserved funicular linking twinned towns is a must-ride, and this is no exception."*

*"Be clear, it's popular too, but queues clear quickly due to frequency of service and the view of the working funicular from the harbour below is equally enthralling as the view from the carriage during the ride."*

*"This is 120 year old machinery still going strong and ecological as it is powered by a local river and just diverts natural flow to harness energy. Amazing Victorian engineering still relevant today."*

**APRogers1970, Merstham**





#### MEDIA CONTACT

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