

£1m upgrade at Box Hill & Westhumble station, home to National Trust landmark Box Hill

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Network Rail engineers will shortly begin work on a £1m project to refurbish the canopy and footbridge over the railway, close to the National Trust landmark.

Box Hill & Westhumble railway station is situated in the village of Westhumble in Surrey, with Dorking town centre two miles to the North. The station is approximately half a mile from Box Hill which is named from the ancient box woodland found on the steepest west-facing chalk slopes overlooking the River Mole.

The western part of the hill is owned and managed by the National Trust, the famous charity who look after places of historic interest or natural beauty.

Engineers will conduct steelwork repairs on the footbridge, high water pressure jet washing, and using high-quality paint on the structure. This work is required due to the age and condition of the present structure and to protect the safety of those using the bridge and the trains operating below.

To preserve the Grade II listed building, new roof sheets will be installed, canopy columns will be refurbished while the timbers on the canopies will also be repaired. Passengers will benefit from these improved facilities which will enhance their experience when using the station.

The project also includes the installation of new decking on the footbridge to improve safety when crossing the railway and new guttering which will reduce the risk of flooding.

Shaun King, route director for Sussex said: “The work at Box Hill & Westhumble will improve safety for passengers and the local community and I’m delighted that we are providing travellers with the station that they deserve. It’s an attractive building and the upgrades will retain the station’s unique character.

“I’d like to thank all users of the station for their patience while this work is carried out.”

Box Hill & Westhumble station was Grade II Listed as a Building of Special Architectural or Historic Interest on 30th December 1980. It is operated by Southern and served by both Southern and South Western Railway, who run services to London Victoria and London Waterloo respectively.

Chris Fowler, Customer Services Director for Southern, said: “On behalf of our customers at Box Hill and Westhumble I welcome Network Rail’s considerable investment to keep this historic and much-appreciated structure safe for their use into the future. Thanks also to Network Rail for avoiding disruption by planning to do the work outside station opening hours.”

Alan Penlington, SWR’s customer experience director, said: “The improvements at Box Hill & Westhumble are great news for all customers using the station. It’s wonderful to see the plans to refurbish the footbridge and the work Network Rail are carrying out will ensure a more pleasant experience at the station for years to come.”

The name of the station has changed several times over the years with the styles ‘Box Hill’, ‘Boxhill’, ‘Westhumble’ and ‘West Humble’ used in varying combinations for signage, timetables, and railway maps, with many inconsistencies. In 2006, the name ‘Box Hill and Westhumble’ was formally adopted after consultation with local residents.

The project starts on the 14 June 2021 and is expected to finish by the end of November 2021.

Photo credit: Network Rail