

## Dyer & Butler completes restoration of Victorian footbridge in Lewes

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Dyer & Butler, a multi-disciplined engineering services specialist focused on essential infrastructure including airports, railways and highways, and part of M Group Services, has completed a project to carry out repairs and preventative maintenance on the Victorian wrought-iron style structure of Pells footbridge in Lewes.

The 120-year-old pedestrian bridge is one of the heritage footbridges on the Network Rail East Coastway Line that runs along the south coast of Sussex to the **east** of Brighton, and has linked the local communities between Pelham Terrace and Landport Road in Lewes since 1898.

Network Rail and Dyer and Butler were able to put up scaffolding in just one day, piggybacking on an already planned weekend closure for rail maintenance to avoid further disruption.

The structural work carried out by Dyer & Butler included installing extra steel underside the bridge to

strengthen it, before sand blasting the bridge to remove paint and corrosion. The bridge has also received a fresh coat of protective paint, while new parapet infills were installed and timber decking was replaced with maintenance-free, glass-reinforced plastic equivalents, which have a lifespan of 50 years. The solid steel cladding on the sides of the bridge was also replaced with a see-through mesh to make the bridge brighter and safer.

Maria Caulfield, MP for Lewes, helped add some sealant before the scaffolding was removed and it was reopened to the public. "I was pleased to be able to add the finishing touches to the refurbished pedestrian bridge between Pelham Terrace and Landport Road which has carried people over the railway line for well over 100 years," she said.

"It is excellent for travellers that the work was able to be done without any additional disruption being caused to journey times."

Works delivery manager for Network Rail Stephen Gillen added: "We recognise there's never a good time to close such an important link for the community, however this work was vital.

"We're very grateful to residents for their understanding and patience while this work was carried out, which means the bridge can continue to play an important role in connecting residents for years to come."

Dyer & Butler contracts manager Jeff Taylor added: "The scaffolding meant we were able to completely contain the bridge to carry out the work without disrupting train services. This bridge is so important to the area because it links the two communities either side of the railway and it's an incredibly busy walkway for people walking their dogs by the river and those using the local park or the popular Pells pool."