

Essential railway repairs in Whaley Bridge

February 15, 2023



Network Rail is investing £5.1 million to replace the Grade II listed Whaley Bridge, which takes the railway over Buxton Road. There will be a 10-day closure of the railway from Saturday to allow for the essential repairs.

The heritage structure, which was built in 1863, needs to be replaced to keep rail passengers and the Whaley Bridge community safe for years to come.

The project is progressing well and has now reached the point the railway must be closed above for crucial components of the listed structure to be replaced.

It means that from this Saturday 18 February until Tuesday 28 February 2023, there will be no trains between Hazel Grove and Buxton.

During that time:

- the existing railway lines will be lifted,
- the old bridge structure will be removed,
- the new steel ribs will be craned into place,
- pre-cast concrete panels for the new bridge deck will be installed,
- then new tracks will be laid ready for trains to run again from start of service on Tuesday 28 February.

Passengers are urged to check www.nationalrail.co.uk if they're planning to travel on the Buxton line during the 10-day closure.

Rail replacement buses will be in operation to keep passengers on the move between Hazel Grove and Buxton.

However they will not be able to serve Whaley Bridge station itself because of the road closures needed for the project*.

Rob Stephens, Network Rail principal route engineer, said: "We've reached the stage the railway needs to close in this important project to make Buxton Road bridge fit for the future. While rail replacement buses will be in operation to keep passengers on the move, journeys will take longer and I'd advise people to check National Rail Enquiries so they know exactly what to expect while travelling between Buxton and Hazel Grove between 18 and 28 February.

"I'd also like to thank residents and businesses in Whaley Bridge for their continued patience and support while we carry out this major bridge upgrade, which will secure the town's vital railway link for generations to come."

Chris Jackson, regional director at Northern, said: "All investment in rail infrastructure that improves the customer experience and service reliability is very much welcomed. I'd like to thank customers for their patience while this essential work is carried out and apologise for any short-term inconvenience caused."

Pedestrians are also reminded that from this Thursday (16 February) there will be no access under the bridge until Sunday 5 March.

Buxton Road will remain closed until Friday 31 March and work is expected to be complete by April 2023.

Network Rail is working carefully with High Peak Borough Council and Historic England to make sure the work is carried out in consideration of the bridge's heritage status.

The team will preserve around one third of the original structure and replace the rest of the bridge in keeping with its original design.

This important preservation lengthens the time the work will take compared to a more straightforward modern bridge replacement.

You can find out more about some of the conservation work carried out across the railway network at: www.networkrail.co.uk/working-with-railway-heritage.

*Travelling to and from Whaley Bridge?

The car park at the station will be closed during the railway bridge improvements. Unfortunately rail replacement buses are unable to serve Whaley Bridge due to road closures.

Valid rail tickets will be accepted, at no additional cost, on High Peak Buses (services 60, 61 and 190) for travel towards New Mills Central. For more information, including bus times, please visit: www.highpeakbuses.com

Photo credit: Network Rail