

Essential repairs underway to boost reliability of unique Lincolnshire bridge

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Network Rail is carrying out essential repair work to improve the reliability of the unique Keadby Canal Bridge in North Lincolnshire.

Earlier this month, a structural fault was found on the bridge and the signaller was unable to close it, causing disruption for passengers travelling on the busy line between Doncaster and Scunthorpe. Essential work is now taking place to make sure the bridge can continue operating reliably for years to come.

Engineers are carrying out a full inspection of the bridge and installing a live monitoring system to get more information on the issue. This will allow them to develop detailed designs for long-term repairs, including work to realign some of the equipment.

For this work to take place safely, teams need to limit the use of the bridge. Network Rail has carefully planned the work with the Canal and River Trust to minimise disruption as much as possible for canal users and allow train services to continue.

Matt Rice, North and East Route Director for Network Rail, said: “Keadby Canal Bridge is a fascinating, one-

of-a-kind piece of engineering – but that means when something goes wrong, it can take a little longer to fix.

“I must thank our partners at TransPennine Express, Northern and the Canal and River Trust for their support as we work quickly to resolve the problem, while at the same time keeping both trains and boats moving safely.”

The bridge will remain closed to canal traffic and will open for a short period on alternate days. Boat users are advised to arrive at the bridge at 12:00. These changes are expected to be in place until the work is completed.

This work will not impact on train services and the level crossing will remain open for people in the community.

The complex bridge – also known as Vazon railway bridge – slides open to allow boats travelling on the Stainforth and Keadby canals to pass through, then back across so that train services can resume. When the bridge is open for water traffic, pedestrians can also use the level crossing to safely cross the railway.

Sean McGinley, Regional Director for Canal & River Trust, said: “We are working closely with Network Rail to keep disruptions to boaters to a minimum and allow them to continue their journey whilst the important safety works are carried out. The Vazon Railway Bridge is a unique feature on this canal and part of the rich heritage of the area. We are looking forward to seeing it in full working order once again.”

Kathryn O’Brien, Customer Experience Director for TransPennine Express, commented: “We are pleased to see this work is happening with such a key part of infrastructure in the Keadby Canal Bridge, so that our customers travelling on our South route can have a more reliable journey. While our services won’t be impacted by these works, we would still advise them to check before they travel.”

Photo credit: Network Rail