

Next phase of Barmouth Viaduct's restoration gets underway

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Network Rail is urging passengers to plan ahead if travelling on the Cambrian Line between Machynlleth and Pwllheli during September and October, as the next stage of refurbishment of the Grade II* listed viaduct in Barmouth gets underway.

Buses replace trains for five weeks from Monday 12 September, between Machynlleth and Pwllheli, while essential upgrades are safely carried out on the iconic northwest Wales railway bridge.

The railway will be closed between Machynlleth and Pwllheli for five weeks from 8pm on Sunday 11 September to 5am on Saturday 15 October. It will then reopen for four weeks, including half term, and then close from 8pm on Sunday 13 November and reopen in time for the Christmas period on Saturday 10 December.

The essential work being carried out will secure the vital rail link's future for generations to come.

The nature of the work does mean significant changes for passengers using TfW train services.

Buses will replace trains, so passengers are urged to plan ahead, check before they travel and allow plenty of extra time.

The restoration of Barmouth's metallic elements was originally planned to take place in one go this autumn but is now being split across the next two years, to reduce the impact on rail services, the community and local economy. Dates for working on the viaduct during 2023 are still being finalised.

The work to refurbish the iconic railway structure is the biggest and most ambitious in its history. As well as upgrading the metallic elements of the Grade II* listed bridge and laying new track, additional repairs will be carried out including strengthening work to the north abutments and **further upgrades of some of the timber elements** following the major renewals of timber in 2020 and 2021.

The footpath across the magnificent viaduct is planned to remain open for the first five-week period (11 September to 15 October) but will close for the second four-week period (13 November to 10 December) to protect the safety of staff and the public.

Nick Millington, interim route director for **Network Rail** Wales and the Borders said: "We've carefully planned our work to avoid the busy summer season when tourism in Barmouth and the local area is at its height.

"We've also decided to take two shorter closures of the line this autumn, which means we can reopen the railway for the school half term and the Christmas period. We are grateful to passengers and the local community for their patience and support while we carry out this essential work."

Network Rail will be taking advantage of the autumn closure to deliver further major upgrades elsewhere along the Cambrian Line including laying new track at Felga Fach and Pwllheli Station and upgrading several other viaducts on the Cambrian line.

Photo credit: Network Rail