

Latest video and pictures show movement of new spans onto the iconic Barmouth Viaduct, North Wales

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Network Rail has successfully moved two new 160-tonne metallic spans into place onto Barmouth Viaduct, reaching a milestone in the restoration of the iconic structure.

The intricate and complex operation to transfer and position the spans following a practice run on a purpose-built mock track means that the team is making good progress with the final stage of the £30m refurbishment.

The removal and demolition of the existing metallic elements is almost complete, with the sections being transported off-site using pontoons. The final piece of the swing span has also been successfully removed.

Two gantry hoists have been lifted into place, which are appropriately named after Henry Conybeare and Benjamin Piercy, who designed the original bridge over the Afon Mawddach. The hoists are being used to

lower sections of the old bridge to be taken away for recycling and to raise and install elements of the new structure.

The work on the Grade II* viaduct is being carried out by Network Rail and Alun Griffiths, supported by a number specialist delivery partners.

The railway remains closed between Machynlleth and Pwllheli until Sunday 3 December to allow the restoration to safely continue, followed by renewal of the track near Barmouth Toll House.

Transport for Wales is operating a combination of bus replacements and train services along the Cambrian line. Passengers are advised to check before they travel at www.tfw.wales for more information.

The footpath over the viaduct will also remain closed until 3 December so teams are able to have full access while they safely carry out the essential work.

The restoration began back in 2020, with the work purposely split across several years to reduce the impact on rail services, the community and local economy. The project has already seen teams replace the timber beams, as well as additional timber-strengthening work.

Nick Millington, route director for Network Rail Wales & Borders, said “The restoration programme is progressing well despite some very challenging weather conditions including high winds, heavy rainfall and spring tides. Our teams have been working night and day, seven days a week to make sure each stage of the work is completed safely and successfully.

“There is still much more to do before the new spans are fully installed in their final position and the viaduct is ready for the final piece of the jigsaw – the renewal of the 130m of track near the old Barmouth Toll House, on the northern edge of the viaduct.

“We’d like to thank the local community and our passengers for their patience as we continue this essential work to boost the resilience and reliability of this beautiful stretch of railway line for generations to come.”

Photo and video credit: Network Rail