

Network Rail begins major £3.7 million work on Wakefield railway bridge upgrade this month

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Network Rail is starting work this month on a £3.7million project to upgrade the railway bridge at Doncaster Road in Crofton.

Work will begin on Monday 19 October to fully reconstruct the bridge, which carries the Knottingley to Leeds line, to make sure it remains fit for purpose for years to come. The railway bridge, which was built in 1880, has been struck by high sided vehicles over the years, which has caused structural damage.

Network Rail engineers will demolish the bridge, then build a stronger one at a slightly raised height, which will help to reduce the number of bridge strikes. Collision protection beams will also be installed, which will help to prevent damage. These improvements will mean that passenger services, as well as critical freight trains, can continue running safely and reliably.

This work will have no impact on passenger train services and the main part of the project will take place over the Christmas period. The upgrade is expected to complete in February 2021.

For this work to be carried out safely, Doncaster Road will have some traffic restrictions:

- There will be five overnight full closures each Saturday from 21 November (21 November, 28 November, 5 December, 12 December and 19 December). The road will close from 19:00 on Saturday until 07:00 on the Sunday morning each week. Pedestrians and dismounted cyclists will continue to be able to go under the bridge and drivers will be diverted.
- From Sunday 22 November until Saturday 30 January, there will be a partial road closure and one lane will be closed from 07:00 until 19:00, Monday to Friday. Traffic lights will operate during these times.
- The road will close at 19:00 on Tuesday 22 December until 19:00 on Wednesday 30 December. There will be no access under the bridge at this time and two shuttle buses will be provided for pedestrians, one of which will have space for wheelchairs and bikes.
- There will also be five overnight road closures on each Saturday in January 2021. Doncaster Road will close from 19:00 on Saturday until 07:00 on the Sunday morning each week.

Matt Rice, Route Director for Network Rail's North and East route, said: "This work to upgrade the bridge at Doncaster Road is vital for the railway and for the community in Crofton. It will mean train services can continue running safely and reliably for generations to come.

"We've carefully planned the work to make sure that Doncaster Road remains open whenever possible, especially at busier times. Key parts of this project can only be carried out safely when the road is closed, and we apologise to drivers, residents and businesses in Crofton for any inconvenience."

Network Rail is strongly advising drivers to know the height of their vehicle, as bridge strikes are entirely avoidable. They can cause damage to the railway and delays to train services, and cost taxpayers millions of pounds every year.

People can find out more about Network Rail's 'Wise Up, Size Up' campaign to help combat bridge strikes using the following

link: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/safety-in-the-community/railway-safety-campaigns/wise-up-size-up/>

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