

Railway between Didcot Parkway and Oxford to remain closed until after Easter

April 5, 2023



The railway between Didcot Parkway and Oxford will not reopen until after Easter as Network Rail engineers continue their assessment of Nuneham viaduct in Oxfordshire.

The line is closed for safety concerns as monitoring equipment detected increasingly significant movements of the viaduct, which crosses the River Thames between Culham and Radley, despite Network Rail doing stabilising works in recent weeks.

Detailed inspections of the bridge are now underway, but it is expected that the railway will remain closed until late April.

To help keep passengers moving GWR, CrossCountry, Chiltern Railways and Network Rail, are working closely together with a revised timetable in operation for the duration of the line closure, with a rail replacement service and local shuttle services running.

Those travelling between London Paddington and Oxford/North Cotswolds will need to change at Didcot Parkway for replacement bus services, adding about 40 mins to journey times. Passengers travelling

between the midlands and south coast will also need to use replacement bus services between Oxford and Didcot Parkway.

A shuttle train service will also operate between Didcot and Appleford and Culham, and between Radley and Oxford. Trains will continue to operate largely as planned between Hereford/Worcestershire and Oxford.

David Davidson, Network Rail's interim Western route director, said: "We are sorry for the disruption this has caused for passengers and advise them to continue to check before they travel.

"Safety is our top priority and our engineers are now working round the clock to identify what can be done to make this viaduct safe for passenger and freight trains to run again.

"We are disappointed that the work we've done so far hasn't been successful and our efforts haven't been helped by the wettest March in over 30 years. We will continue to provide updates as we work to reopen the line as quickly and as safely as possible."

Passenger journey information:

CrossCountry will run a full service north of Oxford other than the 5.15am Southampton to Manchester service which will start at Banbury and 8.25pm Manchester to Reading service which will terminate at Birmingham.

A limited Crosscountry service will operate between the south coast and Didcot Parkway with a rail replacement service running between Didcot Parkway and Oxford.

Great Western Railway services between London, Oxford and the North Cotswolds are impacted with services terminating at Oxford; as well as the Didcot Parkway and Oxford shuttle.

Rail replacement services are operating a fast service between Oxford and Didcot Parkway and a stopping service calling at Radley, Culham and Appleford. These services are expected to be extremely busy.

Tickets are being accepted on:

- Avanti West Coast, Chiltern Railways, London Underground, and West Midlands Railway via any reasonable route
- Stagecoach S6 bus services between Swindon and Oxford
- Thames Travel X2 and X32 bus services between Didcot and Oxford

Photo credit: Network Rail