

Railway bridge travelling through Leamington Spa this Easter

April 12, 2022



Engineers are preparing to drive a new railway bridge through the streets of Leamington Spa this Easter.

Network Rail will replace Rugby Road railway bridge over the A445 as part of a £2.4m project aiming to improve future journeys for passengers and freight between Nuneaton and Leamington Spa.

During a full railway and road closure from late on Thursday 14 April to early Tuesday 19 April, the existing 118-year-old bridge will be removed by a huge 96-wheeled transporter vehicle known as a SPMT (self-propelled modular transporter).

Then the new structure, which has been built in recent weeks at the nearby Potterton Sports Fields, will be driven down the A445 and lifted into place before the railway is reinstated above ready for trains to start running again on Tuesday 19 April.

An animation has been created to ensure the bridge will fit when it's driven along the A445 and lampposts and street signs have been temporarily removed.

The upgrade involves:

- The removal of the old bridge, weighing 372 tonnes
- Installation of the new 60-tonne bridge
- 800 tonnes of railway foundation stone (ballast) being laid on the new bridge
- Tracks being reinstated over the new stone so trains can resume running

Paul Randall, scheme project manager for Network Rail, said: “Replacing Rugby Road railway bridge is a complex engineering project and I’d like to thank residents and businesses in advance of this major work.

“There will be some disruption to rail and road travel during the £2.4m upgrade. That’s why we’re advising passengers to travel either side of the bank holiday weekend and to check National Rail Enquiries to plan their journeys in advance.”

To carry out the work safely, the railway between Nuneaton and Leamington Spa will be closed from Friday 15 to Monday 18 April, with replacement bus services in operation to keep passengers moving.

People are being advised to travel either side of the bank holiday on Thursday 14 and Tuesday 19 April and to plan ahead at www.nationalrail.co.uk.

The footage below shows a very similar project taking place in Warrington over August bank holiday 2021.

Jonny Wiseman, customer experience director for West Midlands Railway, said: “This important work will mean safer journeys for passengers and remove the need for the restrictive speed limits which currently impact services.

“I would like to thank our customers for their patience while this major piece of engineering is carried out. Replacement buses will be in operation and I urge people to check their journeys before setting out.”

John Robson, CrossCountry regional director for West Midlands and the North West, said: “Investment in infrastructure such as this is really exciting as it helps to improve passengers’ journeys. I’d like to thank our customers for their support and patience and advise people to check their journeys before travelling.”

Dozens of local people attended a public information event about the project in March.

There they learned how a speed limit of 20mph is currently in place for trains because of the existing bridge’s condition.

When the new structure is installed the speed limit can be lifted meaning faster, more reliable journeys for passengers in time for Commonwealth Games events this summer.

Network Rail is working with Warwick District Council and Warwickshire County Council to minimise disruption to the community during the essential work.

An information helpline has also been set up for people to find out more on the [Warwick District Council](#)

website.