

Teamwork helps to stop trespass in North Yorkshire

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A new passcode-protected gate is helping to keep people off the tracks at a level crossing in North Yorkshire, after Network Rail worked with local authorities to introduce the measure.

The new electric-powered gate guards the approach to Green Lane level crossing near Trinity Fields in Knaresborough to stop people from illegally trespassing while still allowing specific people access to their private land.

This innovative anti-trespass measure was put in place after Network Rail worked with Harrogate Borough Council to secure it as a planning condition for the new housing development to keep residents safe as more people live in the area.

Until recently, an average of 20-25 people such as dog walkers or joggers illegally used the level crossing each day and in 2022, the gates were recklessly left open 20 times, posing a real risk for children, vulnerable people and animals.

Authorised users – the people who have specific permission to use the level crossing to reach their private

lane – have been given the keycode and briefed on how to use the new system safely.

Darren Lord, North & East Route Level Crossing Manager for Network Rail said: “We’re really proud to have worked with Harrogate Borough Council and the housing developers to champion this simple, quick-thinking solution which will vastly reduce risk and improve safety for the community.

“The railway isn’t the place to take a shortcut and we have to put safety first. With the new gate in place, the level crossing will be able to do what it was designed for – to help people safely cross over the railway on to their private land and remove the risk for the public.

“You can never predict when the next train is coming, so entering the railway where you’re not supposed to can be incredibly dangerous and lead to fatal or life-changing injuries. We’re here to lead the conversation on railway safety and set a good example for future generations.”

Councillor Tim Myatt, Harrogate Borough Council’s cabinet member for planning, said: “We want to ensure all residents are kept as safe as possible.

“By working with Network Rail and the housing developer to introduce this anti-trespass measure we can help prevent people illegally trespassing on to the railway.

“This measure will also help ensure the gate is not recklessly left open, reducing the risk for children, vulnerable people and animals.”

Until now, access through the level crossing has been controlled by the individual calling the signaller using the crossing’s telephone and waiting until they’re told it’s safe to cross. At all level crossings, people should:

- Stop, look and listen. Follow signs and instructions.
- It’s easy to get distracted, especially by phones, music and conversation.
- Check both ways before crossing. If there is a train coming, don’t cross.
- Understand the warnings (lights, barriers, alarms).
- Cross quickly, keeping children close and dogs on a lead.

Find out more at [Level crossings for pedestrians – Network Rail](#).

Photo credit: Network Rail