

Work to start on replacement of Norfolk railway bridge

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Works to replace a bridge at Eccles Heath, which was damaged in a road traffic incident in 2017, are set to start at the end of this month.

Network Rail's engineers will replace the bridge deck and parapets at the bridge at Eccles Heath, between Attleborough and Snetterton. The road has been closed to keep everyone safe since the incident three years ago in November 2017.

The bridge carries the road over the busy Norwich to Thetford rail line between Harling Road and Eccles Road stations and was damaged beyond repair in the incident.

After exploring all options to repair the existing structure, engineers decided that a full replacement was the only option owing to the age, design and construction of the bridge. A replacement will bring the bridge up to modern safety standards. A timescale was originally set for the work to begin in 2022 but recognising the impact of the road closure on the community, this has been brought forward.

Site set up and preparatory works are under way until the end of the month, when the main works begin

until the 18 December. Buses will replace trains for two weekends, Saturday 31 October – Sunday 1 November and Saturday 7 – Sunday 8 November, and passengers are advised to check before they travel.

Ellie Burrows, Network Rail's route director for Anglia, said: "When incidents like this occur, we always try to make a repair and reopen the road as soon as we can. On this occasion the damage was so extensive that a replacement is the only way forward to maintain safety for everyone. We understand the importance of getting this done quickly and I'd like to thank our railway neighbours and our passengers in advance for their patience while we carry out this work."

Jamie Burles, Greater Anglia Managing Director, said: "It's good news that these important repairs are brought forward. We will be running a rail replacement bus service while Network Rail work to repair the bridge. Passengers should check before they travel, allow more time for their journey and wear a face covering when travelling by train or rail replacement bus."

"We would like to thank customers for their patience and understanding while this work takes place."

Photo credit: Network Rail

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