

Barmouth Viaduct Restoration

Frequently Asked Questions – December 2021

1. Why are you restoring Barmouth Viaduct?

We know how much the iconic Barmouth Viaduct means to the community and the local economy. Our £30m restoration is the biggest upgrade in the viaduct's history. This will help protect our industrial heritage and safeguard this vital transport link so it can continue to serve local people and attract visitors to the area for generations to come.

At over 150 years old, the viaduct is currently in poor condition. Many of the timber elements of the viaduct have decayed significantly over time and a large proportion of the metallic elements have corroded.

Our programme will see us completely restoring the viaduct in a way that does not threaten its industrial heritage and its Grade II* listed status. This means that we will replace its components on a 'like-for-like' basis so that it retains its magnificent appearance. We've been working closely with Cadw, Gwynedd County Council and other stakeholders over several years to develop and agree our plans.

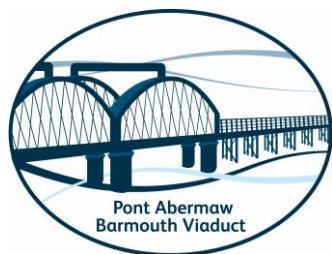
2. When will the work take place?

To reduce the impact on the local community and tourism in Barmouth, we've carefully planned our work to take place over three years. Thank you for bearing with us during this work.

The first closure took place in 2020. The railway closed on 12 September 2021 for work to continue on the timber elements of the bridge. The railway will now reopen on 29 December, 17 days later than planned, so engineers can safely carry out the extra repairs. As work has progressed this autumn, the appointed contractors and Network Rail engineers have had the opportunity to thoroughly examine the condition of the structure. Unfortunately, a number of additional timbers under the railway and the walkway have been found to need replacing due to deterioration. The walkway will remain closed until early 2022.

3. What does the work consist of?

Our work includes replacing a large number of the timber and metal elements of the viaduct, as well as the entire 820m length of track across it.



We started replacing the timber elements of the viaduct and associated track in 2020, this work takes two years and continued in 2021. Our principal contractor is Alun Griffiths Ltd.

During 2022, we'll replace the metallic spans of the viaduct and the associated track. We'll also be upgrading the track at the north and south end of the viaduct in 2022.

4. Will the swing bridge be operational after completion?

For operational and safety reasons, the bridge will not swing after the work but all key mechanisms associated with the swing bridge will be retained in situ in accordance with the Grade II* listing of the structure. This approach has been agreed with Cadw and Gwynedd Council.

5. Why didn't you do all the work during the national lockdown?

Our work has been planned years in advance, with access to the railway and the supply of materials agreed far in advance with our supply chain, Transport for Wales and other partners, so re-programming it simply wouldn't have been possible.

6. How do you make sure you're complying with Government guidelines re Covid-19?

In 2020, we made several changes to the way we worked to make sure we followed Government guidance.

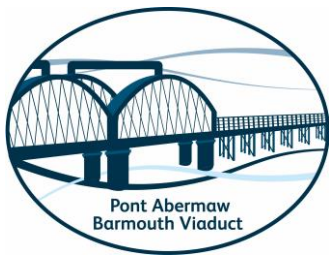
This included employing Covid-19 marshals to ensure all staff adhered to the new ways of working; staggering breaks for staff so that we didn't have a large number of employees in the breakout areas at the same time and using facemasks and visors for staff when they're carrying out tasks where social distancing is simply not possible.

We are constantly reviewing the way we work to make sure we are following the latest Government guidelines. We will make any changes as and when required.

7. Where are the site compounds located?

To access the viaduct easily throughout our work, we set up our site compounds over the summer months. There are two site compounds relatively close to the viaduct: one on the northern side and one on the southern side. The third is situated in the town of Barmouth, near Marine Parade.

For those of you who live near one of the compounds, we will do our best to keep any disruption to a minimum. At times, the machinery we're using and the activities we're delivering will inevitably generate some noise. We're sorry for any disturbance. All our staff and contractors are briefed on working responsibly in the



community. Please do get in touch if you have any concerns, via our national helpline on 03457 11 41 41 or by contacting crwales@networkrail.co.uk.

8. How will passengers continue to travel during the temporary closures of the viaduct?

We understand how important the Cambrian Coast Line is for local people and visitors to the area so we carefully planned three shorter closures of the line, over three years, and outside of the peak tourist season.

We have worked closely with Transport for Wales to provide bus replacement services between Pwllheli and Machynlleth stations, and all stations in between. There is also an additional bus service for local school pupils to take them to and from school. Our advice for passengers is to plan ahead and allow additional time for travelling. Please check the latest Government guidance before travelling.

9. What will the temporary closures mean for pedestrians and cyclists who use the viaduct?

Due to the safety of the public and staff, we need to completely close the footpath whilst we temporarily close the viaduct. The walkway will remain closed until early 2022 so that we can carry out further repairs. We know that many people walk and cycle across Barmouth Viaduct on a daily basis so there is never an ideal time to close it. However, investing significantly in the viaduct now will help reduce future maintenance requirements, preventing future periods of planned and unplanned disruption and safeguarding the future of the viaduct for all users.

Will the footpath along the viaduct be refurbished at the same time?

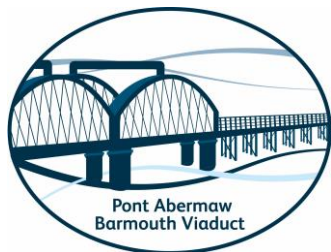
The maintenance of the walkway is the responsibility of Gwynedd Council. During the course of our work, we will look to repair and replace any elements of the walkway and handrailing of a safety critical nature.

10. What hours will you be working?

Some of our preparation work is dependent on the tides, as we need a low tide to work on certain parts of the viaduct. You may see us working at different times throughout the day, including some work at night time.

During the temporary closures of the viaduct, we will work 24/7 to maximise the time we have on site. Our staff are always briefed to keep any disruption to a minimum, but we're sorry if we do cause any inconvenience to the local community.

The timings of our work are subject to change. This sometimes happens due to unavoidable factors such as weather conditions.



11. Will the timber come from a sustainable source?

We will be replacing the timber elements with a sustainably sourced tropical hardwood. This timber has been specifically chosen for its structural properties and durability in marine environments, following trials of different hardwoods on similar structures in similar environments. It is also resistant to the sea worm attacks previously encountered on the structure.

The timber will be FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)/PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) compliant with a full chain of custody on delivery to site. This will enable us to check the history of the timber right back to the point it was grown to ensure it has originated from a sustainable location.

12. Where will the steel come from for the metallic phase?

We will ensure we follow Government guidance for steel procurement for major projects.

13. Who can I contact if I have any further questions?

If you have any further questions, please contact us via our national helpline on 03457 11 41 41 or by emailing crwales@networkrail.co.uk.