

25 November 2019

Hammersmith Bridge – Update on repair works

Dear residents and businesses,

The next phase of repair works to our 132-year-old bridge has now begun.

As you know from previous correspondence, we have commissioned an on-going comprehensive structural integrity review of the bridge. Working with Transport for London (TfL), we hired world-class bridge engineers from California and specialist engineers in structural integrity from the oil rig industry. The review quickly began to discover concerning levels of corrosion throughout different parts of the suspension structure.

Earlier this year, using the latest micro-sound technology, our engineers found micro-fractures hidden in the cast-iron pedestals which hold the suspension structure in place. For the first time there was a possible risk to public safety, so we immediately closed the bridge to motorised traffic.

What else might we find?

Our engineers are continuing to find different structural failures as they dismantle the inner workings of the bridge structure.

We will never put the public at risk, so if we have to immediately close the bridge to pedestrians and cyclists we will – although I stress, we have not found a need to do that and we are working on plans to minimise disruption should that need to happen.

We have limited bridge access to keep the public and our engineering team safe throughout the duration of this phase of works, which is scheduled to finish on 1 June 2020.

That means pedestrians and cyclists will be asked to walk across just one of the bridge's two footpaths while the heavy machinery is in place and structural parts of the bridge are being dismantled. No motor vehicles of any type will be allowed access, including the pedicab and motorbikes – not even being pushed.

Possible temporary bridge for pedestrians and cyclists

We're working with TfL to examine the feasibility of putting in place a temporary bridge for pedestrians and cyclists so we can complete all the necessary work in the quickest possible time.

There has been much talk of a temporary bridge for motor vehicles. That is simply unworkable. Such a bridge would be highly disruptive, it would involve taking over private land, and it would add tens of millions of pounds to the final bill. And after all of that, it would not be capable of taking any significant amount of traffic.

Minimising disruption and speeding up repairs

Our team are doing everything they can to keep noise and disruption to a minimum. Everyone working on the site understands the need to be considerate, so no noisy works will take place outside regular working hours – 8am to 6pm during the week and 8am to 4pm on Saturdays.

Grit blasting works in January and April will inevitably be noisy, but to reduce noise we'll be using encapsulated scaffold areas and all generators will be housed inside cabins, positioned as far away from residents as we can. We'll try to make sure that all deliveries will be made within working hours and will be escorted by traffic marshals onto the site. We are fencing off the work site for safety and there will be no work on Sundays. There will be no changes to parking restrictions.

All the work will be filmed. We will post videos online at www.lbhf.gov.uk/bridge so residents who are curious to see how the detailed restoration work is progressing, especially inside the bridge's moving parts, will be able to.

In the meantime, TfL has extended its Dial-a-Ride scheme to help residents with mobility needs who live near Hammersmith Bridge. For more details, visit www.lbhf.gov.uk/dialaride

Problems with the works?

The works are being carried out on behalf of TfL and Hammersmith & Fulham Council by Kier. If you have any questions about the repair works, please call TfL on **0343 222 1234**. (Charges apply - calls from landlines are typically charged between 2p and 10p per minute and calls from mobiles typically cost between 10p and 40p per minute. Connection charges may apply.)

Thank you for your patience and understanding while we restore our beautiful Hammersmith Bridge and make it fit for purpose for generations to come.

Kind regards,

Ian Hawthorn

Assistant Director

Environment Special Projects and Highways