



The St John's Street bridge in Lichfield

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Warning to lorry drivers as Cross City Line bridge among "most bashed"

Lorry drivers have been reminded to take care after a bridge on the Cross City Line was named among the "most bashed" in the UK.

The bridge, in St John's Street, Lichfield, was struck by vehicles 11 times in 2021/22, causing hours of delays to West Midlands Railway services due to essential structural checks following each incident.

Network Rail has released a new animation urging HGV drivers to 'Wise Up, Size Up' by knowing the height of their vehicles and choosing suitable routes

before they head out on the road. Last year there were more than 1,800 bridge strikes nationally, costing Network Rail almost £12million in delay and cancellation fees.

The retro-inspired cartoon centres on three high-sided vehicles navigating a low bridge in increasingly wacky ways, from pole-vaulting over it, to tunnelling underneath it. The animation is designed to warn HGV drivers that life is not like the cartoons and to take a moment to think before taking a risk when approaching low bridges.

[View embedded content here](#)

Network Rail works with a number of railway industry partners to tackle bridge strikes, including Highways England, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and hauliers. While incidents have reduced in recent years, numbers have steadily started to creep up again - coinciding with an estimated increase in traffic volume on Britain's roads.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE, chair of Network Rail said:

“Bridge bashers cause serious safety issues on the transport network for both road and rail users. Every incident can delay tens of thousands of passengers while we inspect the bridge and repair any damage – creating a huge cost from public funds.

“During this very busy time of year for deliveries, we urge operators and drivers to properly plan their routes, know the height of their vehicles and be

vigilant for road signs showing the height of bridges.

"We will report those who don't to the Traffic Commissioners, and they risk losing their licenses and livelihoods. Network Rail always looks to recover the entire repair and delay costs from the driver and the operator."

Network Rail's 4E's initiative - education, engineering, enablement and enforcement - aims to ensure haulage companies and their drivers are provided with the knowledge and tools they need to avoid striking bridges.

As part of this ongoing initiative, Network Rail has a team of bridge strike 'champions' covering each route across Britain, who raise awareness of the issue by visiting haulage companies and lead in managing bridge strike risk locally.

About West Midlands Trains

For further information on this release, email press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast Main Line to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street and Birmingham Snow Hill.

For more information on these services visit westmidlandsrailway.co.uk or londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

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