

[Press release: Prompt action prevents A14 bridge closure](#)

A lorry which struck the underside of a low bridge could have caused chaos on the A14, were it not for the swift recovery work of Highways England traffic officers and their partners.

The vehicle hit the underside of the Huntingdon Railway Viaduct, which carries the A14 over the rail line and through the town, at 1.15am last Wednesday (22 August). The bridge has a 4.4 metre (14ft 6in) height restriction in place on it, with the HGV too big to pass beneath.

A lane was closed on Brampton Road following the crash, which could have seen the bridge beams damaged and made the viaduct unable to support its weight, let alone the 77,000 drivers who cross it daily on the A14, closing both the road and railway beneath it too. Such damage would have seen the bridge need assessments which could take six months, with the repair and inspection work likely costing around £2 million.

Fortunately the damage was only superficial, and Highways England traffic officers, along with contractors Kier, Cambridgeshire Police and Cambridgeshire County Council, were quick to act at the scene, minimising disruption before the morning rush hour hit prevent the town centre road being closed fully. With the lorry trapped beneath the steel beams of the bridge, they released air from the tyres to move it back.

Highways England service manager Austin Adkins said:

Hopefully this will serve as a reminder to drivers of tall vehicles that they need to take extra care on their journeys, particularly with low bridges, as hitting them can easily be avoided yet have a far reaching impact. I want to thank our operatives and partners who worked together to swiftly resolve what could have been a hugely disruptive incident, even with the damage being minimal.

The Huntingdon Railway Viaduct will be demolished after the new £1.5 billion A14 link between Cambridge and Huntingdon opens in December 2021, with new link roads making it easier to travel to, from and around the town.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.