

## A34 Wolvercote Viaduct Replacement Newsletter Issue 7 - September 2009

**Welcome to the seventh issue of the A34 Wolvercote Viaduct Replacement Scheme Newsletter. Just by travelling through the area you will be aware of the significant progress made to date.**

Our main objectives on this project are to ensure the safety of members of the public and our workforce, to minimise the impact of the works on the local communities and ensuring that delays to the road user are kept to the absolute minimum. The protection of the environment during construction is also a key issue and the team has developed control procedures that will operate throughout the construction period.

If you have any query or concern regarding this scheme then do not hesitate to get in contact with the team via our Helpline on 0845 602 2547. We will be pleased to see you at our next Public Meeting on Tuesday 13th October 2009 (see back page for further details) where you can discuss the scheme with us.

Please remember the average speed cameras on the A34 are 'live' so please be careful. Also be aware that changes to the roadworks layout are frequently made. These are designed to keep both road users and our workers safe.

### Project Background

The existing viaduct was originally built in the early 1960s. The viaduct has deteriorated over the years and requires frequent maintenance. Due to the rising cost of the maintenance and the delays it causes to the traffic, it was decided to replace the Viaduct with a new one.

We have constructed a temporary viaduct to the

**This newsletter includes the following sections:**

**Project Background**

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east and diverted the southbound traffic onto it. We have demolished the old northbound viaduct and are currently building a new one in its place. This was completed on Saturday 26th September 2009 and southbound traffic diverted.

### Community Relations

In the last issue of the Newsletter we mentioned that Costain, the contractor working on behalf of the Highways Agency to build the new A34 Wolvercote Viaduct, sponsored a local girls football team, St Edmunds. We are pleased to say that the girls won all the games in their league and the final of the Highworth tournament. Well done to all.

A class from Year 3 of Wolvercote Primary School visited the site on 9th July and received a presentation on the project and watched the work taking place. They thoroughly enjoyed their afternoon and are producing safety posters which will be judged and prizes awarded. The team has also assisted the school by making some raised garden beds, re-locating a shed and a few other improvements to the school playing field.

### Environmental Issues

#### Ecology

The discovery of a nest with eggs in a storage container has sharpened the mind of our team

on the importance of the environmental and ecological obligations. The scaffolding team were tidying up their area ready for the next weeks work when they discovered a nest with two eggs in one of the containers.

Being ecologically aware they put the container back 'to near where we found it'. Fortunately the nest owner, a pied wagtail, was watching and promptly returned to her nest and laid another egg. She now has a 5 metre 'cordon sanitaire' fenced off in the centre of the compound with work going on around and above her. The eggs have all successfully hatched and the birds have flown the nest.

## Archaeology

The archaeological watching brief has so far revealed two Roman ditches and an occupation evidence immediately adjacent to the A40. It is likely that these features represent the extreme south western extremities of a domestic settlement previously identified under the present A40 embankment. Recent discoveries comprise post-medieval linear feature on the north south alignment, possibly a field boundary within the footprint of one of the pier bases to the viaduct.

It has become clear that the surviving archaeology is concentrated to the north east of the site, with heavy truncation in the vicinity of the railway line. To date no archaeological features have been identified to the north west of the canal, probably due to this area sitting within the floodplain of the River Thames.

The potential for further discoveries to the southeast remain high especially for further evidence of the Romano-British settlement, and possibly for other post-medieval features associated with the recently identified field boundary ditch.

## Progress And Forthcoming Programme

Over recent months the following work has been undertaken:

- Temporary viaduct opened to traffic on 9th March 2009;

- Demolition of old northbound viaduct (March to May 2009);
- Foundations and piers for new northbound viaduct (May - July 2009);
- Steelworks delivered and installed (June – July 2009);
- New northbound carriageway constructed (July - September 2009).

The next three months will see the following work taking place:

- Completion of the new Northbound viaduct
- Traffic will be diverted from the existing viaduct to the new Northbound viaduct
- Demolition of the old southbound viaduct;
- Construction of the foundation and piers for the new southbound carriageway.

It is planned to slide the carriageway of the temporary viaduct onto the new southbound piers in spring 2010.

## Traffic Management

The following restrictions remain in place:

- A34 lanes narrowed; two lanes will be kept in operation in both directions during the day and at peak times;
- A34 night-time single lane closures;
- A34: there is a 40 mph speed restriction in place for the safety of road users and construction workers;
- A40 lanes narrowed; one lane will be kept in operation in both directions during the day and at peak times;
- A40: there is a 30 mph speed restriction for the safety of road users and construction workers.
- The new northbound viaduct will be opened to traffic during October which will enable the demolition to commence of the old southbound viaduct;
- The average speed camera system on the A34 helps maintain traffic flows through the roadworks and reduces incidents and accidents.

## A40 Cycle/Footway

The A40 north cycle and footpath will close in October with the start of the demolition of the old A34 southbound viaduct.

A temporary cycle/pedestrian operated signal crossing will be installed to assist cross of the A40 carriageway until demolition is complete.

During work hours a member of the construction staff will be at the gate entrance to ensure pedestrians and cyclists can cross the site entrance safely.

Further short-term closures will be signed in advance giving plenty of notice to users.

The Oxford Canal towpath remains closed but the bridleway is open.

## Contacting the Highways Agency

You can also get in touch with the Highways Agency about the Viaduct Replacement:

Email: [A34WolvercoteViaduct@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:A34WolvercoteViaduct@highways.gsi.gov.uk)

Tel: **08457 50 40 30**

Web: [www.highways.gov.uk](http://www.highways.gov.uk)

Post: **Highways Agency, Major Projects,  
Woodlands, Bedford MK41 7LW**

## Project Helpline

If you have any questions, please contact Trevor Spice, Costain Community Relations Manager on our helpline.

Our aim is to ensure that the minimum of inconvenience is caused to you. We promise to respond quickly through personal contact and with a quick resolution.

**Project helpline number:**

**0845 602 2547**

Costain's 24 hour project helpline is available to answer questions and give details of construction work or visit the HA Website.

For general information about motorways and trunk roads please call

Information line:

**08457 50 40 30\***

Email: [ha\\_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk)

Live traffic information

**08700 660 115\***

[www.highways.gov.uk](http://www.highways.gov.uk)

24 hours a day, 365 days a year

\*Calls from landlines to 08457 and 08700 numbers can cost up to 8p per minute but are free from some landline providers; mobiles usually cost more. Please check costs with your service provider.

## Forthcoming Public Meeting Tuesday 13th October 2009 at 7pm

The Project Team will be holding a number of meetings throughout the construction period to give the public an opportunity to discuss the works.

Meetings will start promptly at 7pm. It is intended that Costain staff will give a brief description of the general works and forthcoming works. This will be followed by question and Answer session to allow members of the public to ask specific questions.

The meeting will be held at:

**Wolvercote Young Peoples Club  
St Peters Road, Wolvercote**

## Safety at roadworks



**The Highways Agency is working with the industry and road users to reduce the risks of working on the roads.**

For the safety of roadworkers and all road users, when you are approaching roadworks:

- Keep within the speed limit – it is there for your safety.
- Get into the correct lane in good time – don't keep switching.
- Concentrate on the road ahead, not the roadworks.
- Be alert for works traffic leaving or entering roadworks.
- Keep a safe distance – there could be queues in front.
- Observe all signs – they are there to help you.



If you need help using this or any other Highways Agency information, please call **08457 50 40 30** and we will assist you.