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For immediate release

**Council clarifies local position on Network Rail's closure of
A429 near Hullavington**

Due to the ongoing closure of the A429 near Hullavington for works on the railway bridge by Network Rail and the issues around the diversion, Wiltshire Council has clarified its position and the way forward for areas affected by large volumes of traffic caused by the closure.

The closure, which began on 10 February and ends on 14 March, is in place to enable Network Rail to work 24 hours a day and seven days a week to make urgent structural repairs to the bridge that carries the main Bristol to London railway. The railway line is also closed at times during the road closure.

Work started in autumn 2021 using two-way signals, but for the final phase of the work, the closure is in place to enable Network Rail to install scaffolding across the entire span of the bridge.

During the planning process, Wiltshire Council explored all options with Network Rail to undertake these works in as least disruptive way as possible, but the scope and scale of the repairs meant that the road had to be closed in order to ensure the safety of both road users and construction staff.

The official diversion for light traffic is clockwise via A350 to Chippenham, then the A420 and A46, past J18 up to the A4135 to Tetbury and the junction with the A429 just south of Cirencester, and vice versa for the anticlockwise traffic. This is a long diversion, but the council has to divert traffic on to similar A class roads, but not the motorway. There is a separate HGV diversion to the east via Swindon, as there is a weight restriction at Tetbury that prevents HGVs from using the same diversion as the light traffic.

Unfortunately, large volumes of traffic are not following the official diversion and are instead using smaller routes to the east of the closure, especially in Upper Seagry, Startly and Rodbourne. The council instructed Network Rail to deploy extra signage to discourage drivers from using these routes, and although the recent storms delayed this, the signs are now in place. The council is also imposing temporary 7.5t weight restrictions on the roads most affected.

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of Wiltshire Council, said: "We apologise to anyone affected by this closure, particularly people in Upper Seagry, Startly and Rodbourne, and the unintended consequences caused by the diversion.

"Network Rail has installed extra signage to discourage motorists from using this route, and we are imposing weight restrictions on some roads to prevent HGVs from using the routes.

"We are hopeful that this will improve the situation for these communities, and we are meeting regularly with Network Rail to ensure the scheme is on schedule."

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