



MEDIA RELEASE

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Full selection of images before and during repairs can be downloaded here (© National Trust for Scotland): <https://we.tl/t-o76aaDxV4z>

Repair Work Starts On Historic River Dee Bridge

Specialist teams have begun the intricate task of repairing Mar Lodge's historic Victoria Bridge, a lattice girder bridge built in 1905 over the River Dee.

Owned by conservation charity the National Trust for Scotland, the Mar Lodge Estate is one of the most important areas for nature conservation in the British Isles and in 2017 it was awarded National Nature Reserve status – making it the largest NNR in the UK.

Repairs to the category B listed bridge are expected to take up to 17 weeks, with the entire structure being dismantled and taken off-site, piece by piece. Planning around the removal, and reinstatement of the bridge has been made even more challenging due to the delicate landscape where the bridge is located, particularly the protection of the waters of the River Dee.

The full £900k cost of the repairs are being generously supported by income from an endowment provided by the National Lottery heritage Fund. The work includes new cast iron sections which will be installed to replace sections that have fallen into disrepair, structural repair to the bridge piers, and repainting the entire structure. This conservation work will see the bridge repaired and restored to its former glory, allowing members of the public to make full use of the crossing.

With work now underway, the bridge will be closed to pedestrians, cyclists, horses and vehicles until 21 December. The nearest alternative crossing to access Mar Lodge Estate is at the Linn of Dee bridge, three miles west of Victoria Bridge.

David Frew, Operations Manager at Mar Lodge Estate National Nature Reserve, said: "Victoria Bridge is a crossing place which the team at Mar Lodge Estate, locals, hillwalkers, cyclists and equestrian riders all make great use of. During storm Frank in 2015 many homes, businesses and landscapes were affected, and our historic white bridge suffered structural damage.

"At the Trust we take care of, maintain and protect our properties and landscapes, so that visitors can explore the places we love. The repairs would have not been possible without the extremely generous support we've received at Mar Lodge Estate from the endowment provided by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

"We appreciate the public's patience, support and understanding while works are underway, and apologise for any inconvenience caused during the 17-week period. We're really looking forward to welcoming visitors back to the bridge in December."

For more information on Mar Lodge Estate National Nature Reserve visit nts.org.uk.

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Editor's Notes:

The National Trust for Scotland is the conservation charity that over 90 years has saved, maintained, and shared many of the country's most loved places, rich with history, heritage, nature, and culture. The charity celebrates Scotland's heritage and with almost 100 places in its care, there's a place for everyone to love.

The National Trust for Scotland relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage that people from Scotland and across the world all love, ensuring its future for everyone to enjoy.

From coastlines to castles, art to architecture, wildlife to wildernesses, the National Trust for Scotland protects the national and natural treasures we all love. Support the National Trust for Scotland and help them protect the places we all love Become a member at www.nts.org.uk.

We would be grateful if, when referring to the National Trust for Scotland that our name is not shortened to 'the National Trust'. We are an independent organisation, separate from the National Trust. The National Trust for Scotland is commonly shortened to NTS or 'the Trust'.



About the National Lottery Heritage Fund



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Dualchais
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Using money raised by the National Lottery, we **inspire, lead** and **resource** the UK's heritage to create **positive and lasting change** for people and communities, now and in the future. www.HeritageFund.org.uk.

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