

Anna Holbrook and Claire Mahoney,  
Network Rail Industry Programme Directors,  
Greater Oxford Area

**Councillor Bethia Thomas**  
**Leader of the Council**

[Bethia.Thomas@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:Bethia.Thomas@whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

Via email

Tel: 01235 422422  
Abbey House  
Abbey Close  
Abingdon  
OX14 3JE

16 August 2024

Dear Anna and Claire,

Like many of my district's residents, I'm disappointed with Network Rail's latest failure to stick to its promises around the closure of Botley Road.

Access to vital services in Oxford has become a significant challenge for many in the Vale, particularly our residents and business owners in Botley, the A420 corridor and the west of the district.

Many people who are struggling to go about their daily lives, with simple, usually short journeys to work or school now taking hours. The hardest hit are those with mobility issues who struggle to take advantage of the pedestrian routes into Oxford.

We all appreciate and are grateful for the benefits the improvements will bring, but disruption on this scale must be managed more carefully. It was disappointing, for example, that the news back in July was disseminated as a note at the end of a wider press release around rail travel disruption rather than giving local residents, businesses and councillors a clear message on the impact of the road closure, and an indication of what the next steps are or how long the work is expected to last - something that we are still in the dark about a month down the line.

We do appreciate your regular weekly updates and understand you may currently need to wait for guidance from the Department for Transport before you can confirm any new plans. However, we would be grateful if you could indicate as soon as possible when we might expect to hear some concrete news about timescales.

Yours sincerely



**Councillor Bethia Thomas**  
**Leader of the Council**