

DARLINGTON INTEREST GROUP OF FOS&D

Statement to Meeting of members of the Friends Thursday 5 September 2024 concerning maintenance of Skerne Bridge.

Darlington Interest Group have carried out a number of litter picks and tidying of overgrowth of bushes and weeds at a number of sites on the part of the 26 mile route through Darlington over the past 18 months.

One of these sites is Skerne Bridge.

A few months ago one of our members became concerned at the amount of self seeded plants that were thriving in gaps in the masonry of the bridge.

Some weeks ago Network Rail undertook to carry out maintenance of this issue which involved a closure of the Line to enable access.

When there did not seem to be a noticeable difference, and most plants still remained, we assumed that perhaps weed killer had been used.

However the plants are still thriving, so we are left wondering what work was actually carried out.

At our meeting on 29 August, members expressed concern about:

- the damage being done to the bridge structure by the plants
- as Network Rail is responsible for maintenance of this Listed Building, is this situation of concern to them, and are they planning to carry out further work
- we have concerns about the danger of to passers by of falling masonry that could become loosened by these plants
- we ask that the Friends take this matter up with Network Rail and request that we can be kept informed.