

23-day stretch of intensive engineering work around Clacton-on-Sea

February 3, 2021



Passengers in the Clacton-on-Sea area will benefit from a significant upgrade in reliability and safety when a computer-based signalling system goes live as Network Rail continues major upgrade work, including a 23-day stretch of intensive engineering works starting later this month.

The new computer-based signalling system will control the movement of trains more effectively and provide better live passenger information.

This will replace the current system which uses mechanical levers and pullies to change signals and track points, to allow trains to switch between tracks. The new system will be controlled from a powered signal box at Colchester.

During the 23-day works from Saturday 20 February to Sunday 14 March, alterations will also be made to the overhead line equipment, and the track layout will be remodelled and updated to cater for a modern railway with powered switches and crossing controlled by the new signals.

A rail replacement bus service will be in operation between Clacton-on-Sea/Walton-on-the-Naze and

Colchester Town on Saturday 20 and 27 February and 6 and 13 March, and between Clacton-on-Sea/Walton-on-the-Naze and Colchester on Sunday 21 and 28 February and 7 and 14 March.

Mid-week during the intensive works there will be Monday to Friday rail replacement bus service between Clacton and Frinton-on-Sea. Trains will run between Walton-on-the-Naze and London.

No full-sized or electric bicycles or e-scooters are allowed on rail replacement buses, although fold-up bicycles are allowed.

Anyone wishing to travel across these routes, during the works is advised to plan ahead and check before travelling with nationalrail.co.uk or greateranglia.co.uk.

Ellie Burrows, Network Rail's route director for Anglia, said: "Keeping the tracks in good condition is vital to running a safe and reliable railway for our passengers and that is exactly what we're here to do.

"I'm sorry for the disruption that 23 days of engineering works will cause for passengers. Completing these large-scale projects and maintenance in one coordinated effort, will help reduce the overall amount of disruption for many years to come."

Jamie Burles, Greater Anglia managing director, said: "This work is essential for improving the reliability of the Clacton and Walton-on-the-Naze lines. In combination with our brand-new trains, which we will be introducing into passenger service on the route later this year, we and Network Rail are completely modernising rail services in this area.

"Throughout the works, we will make sure people can complete their journeys, although part of it may be by rail replacement bus. We'd remind people to check before they travel and allow extra time. Updates on the project can be found on social media using #Clacton2021.

"Current Government advice is to stay at home and only to travel for legally permissible reasons such as for work or medical appointments. Greater Anglia is committed to keeping travellers safe with increased cleaning and sanitisation and measures to make it easier to socially distance. Passengers are reminded it's compulsory to wear a face covering on our trains, stations and rail replacement buses."

Photo credit: Network Rail