

Bank holiday rail upgrades complete between London and Scotland

May 4, 2021



Network Rail has completed essential upgrades to the railway between Euston, the Midlands, North West and Scotland over the early May bank holiday.

Between Saturday 1 and Monday 3 May, teams carried out vital work on the railway to improve passenger and freight services on the West Coast main line – the Backbone of Britain.

The improvement work in Network Rail's North West and Central region as part of Britain's Railway Upgrade Plan saw:

- 103 precast concrete beams lifted over the West Coast main line to build a new railway flyover deck for the East West Rail project* at Bletchley
- Track upgrades to improve future journeys between Preston – Penrith, Euston – Milton Keynes and on the Cumbrian Coast line
- Major signalling improvements at Trafford in Manchester
- Demolition of Siddick bridge over the railway at the Port of Workington in Cumbria
- Ongoing work to upgrade Birmingham New Street station’s signalling system
- Preparing Euston station for Britain’s new high-speed railway, HS2

Tim Shoveller, managing director for Network Rail’s North West & Central region, said: “I’d like to thank passengers for their patience while we carried out these essential upgrades to the West Coast main line and routes which feed into it over the early May bank holiday. With the majority of work done between 1-3 May, it now means less disruption for passengers over the remaining bank holidays in 2021.

“I’m immensely proud of the hundreds of Network Rail staff and our contractors who continue to make the West Coast main line more reliable for our passengers and pave the way for HS2, which will bring much-needed extra railway capacity as the country builds back better from the pandemic.”

Network Rail planners worked hard to reschedule planned maintenance to try to minimise disruption over bank holidays this year.

The bulk of this work is now complete, but there will be some further railway improvement projects later this month over the late May bank holiday (29-31 May).

While this work will be less disruptive to the majority of journeys, passengers are advised to ‘look before they book’ and plan in advance so they know exactly what to expect.

Meanwhile, travellers are reminded they must continue to follow government guidance to control the spread of coronavirus.

For more information visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers

Please check www.nationalrail.co.uk for the latest travel information.

***About the East West Rail project**

East West Rail will create a new direct connection between Oxford and Cambridge. Serving communities across the area, it will bring faster journey times and lower transport costs as well as easing pressure on local roads.

East West Rail is being delivered in three Connection Stages

- Connection Stage One: Oxford to Bletchley and Milton Keynes
- Connection Stage Two: Oxford to Bedford
- Connection Stage Three: Oxford to Cambridge

Network Rail was responsible for developing the first part of the East West Rail, connecting Oxford with Bicester, and is a partner in a construction alliance to deliver Connection Stage 1 of the project, where East West Railway Company (EWR Co) is acting as the Department for Transport's sponsor.

EWR Co is now developing the route to enable services to run to Cambridge via Bedford and will be seeking statutory powers under the Planning Act 2008, following a period of extensive consultation.

For more information you can visit: www.networkrail.co.uk/east-west-rail/

Photo credit: Network Rail