

Engineering work means changes to South Western Railway trains between Hounslow and Barnes

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Network Rail says its engineers will be working hard this summer on an essential project to bring more reliable journeys to South Western Railway customers travelling from stations between Hounslow and Barnes via Brentford.

Engineers will be out on track improving signalling between Saturday 13 to Tuesday 16 August, meaning buses will replace trains on that line for four days, including two working days.

Network Rail's managing director for Wessex route, Mark Killick, said: "This is part of a massive £375m scheme to improve the railway in the area. Resignalling schemes like this one, and the track work that goes with it, are one of the best ways we have of improving the reliability of our network, so it's really important we do the job and I'm grateful to our customers for their patience.

"By doing this work over four days, rather than splitting it up between weekends, means we can get much more done and we can make more progress on improving the railway with less disruption to our

customers.”

Christian Neill, customer experience director for South Western Railway, commented: “The modernisation work that Network Rail is carrying out will significantly boost the reliability and performance of the railway for many years to come.

“The decision to close the railway for four days, including two working days on the Monday and Tuesday, has not been taken lightly. We urge all customers intending to travel from Saturday morning until the end of Tuesday to check before they travel and make use of the alternative transport options available.

“We’d like to thank those customers impacted by these works for their patience and understanding as this vital upgrade is carried out.”

The £375m Feltham and Wokingham resignalling scheme covers more than 80 miles of railway and over 500 pieces of signalling equipment.

The work in August, on the railway known as the Hounslow Loop, will see bases for new signals – the traffic lights of the railway – installed along with new cabling.

The programme, which will finish in 2024, is replacing fault-prone 1970s signalling infrastructure that controls the safe movement of trains, with a modern equivalent that will be much more reliable.

Once all those renewals and upgrades are complete, we will move control of the signalling system from Feltham and Wokingham to the state-of-the-art Wessex Rail Operating Centre (ROC) in Basingstoke.

The programme reached the halfway stage over the May bank holiday when new signalling kit was switched on in the Ascot and Virginia Water area, with new signalling technology on the Hounslow Loop set to go live in August next year 2023, before the final phase in Wokingham is switched on in 2024.