

Essential track upgrades take place in the East Midlands

May 23, 2023



Passengers are urged to check before travelling as track upgrades take place on both the Midland Main Line and Derwent Valley Line from Saturday 27 May to Sunday 11 June.

Over the 16 days, teams from Network Rail will upgrade drainage, replace sleepers, specialist equipment which supports the rails, and ballast, the stones used for drainage and track support, in Clay Cross tunnel, Derbyshire. The ten tunnel shafts will have special coated rails put under them to make them more resistant in poor weather.

Milford tunnel in Derbyshire will also benefit from a complete track upgrade, which includes replacing over a mile of ballast, there will be a total of 52 engineering trains and 16,107 tonnes of ballast used on both schemes.

Once complete, passengers will benefit from a more modern and reliable railway.

This essential work in both Clay Cross tunnel and Milford tunnel will result in a reduced service between Sheffield and London, leading to extended journey times for passengers. Buses will replace trains between

Derby and Matlock along the Derwent Valley Line.

For CrossCountry, an hourly train service will be in operation between Derby and Chesterfield. Trains will divert via an alternative route with extended journey times. East Midlands Railway will run a reduced service between London St Pancras International and Sheffield via a diversion. Rail replacement buses will also run between Derby and Chesterfield. Passengers are encouraged to check before travelling and to allow additional time for their journey.

Passengers are also reminded to leave extra time to travel on Monday 29 May, as there are large football events taking place in London and services are expected to be busy.

Steve Hopkinson, Route Director for Network Rail in the East Midlands, said: "This important scheme is essential to maintaining a safe, reliable, and smooth service for passengers and freight users through the tunnels.

"I'd like to thank passengers for their patience whilst we complete this essential engineering work and urge anyone who is planning to travel to check National Rail Enquiries or their train operator's website before setting off."

Passengers are also reminded that the ASLEF union will be on strike on May 31 and June 3, which will prevent EMR and CrossCountry services from operating on those days.

Neil Grabham, Customer Services Director for East Midlands Railway, said: "We are asking any customers planning to travel over the Summer half term, between 27 May and 11 June, to plan ahead and allow plenty of time to complete their journeys.

"There will be fewer Intercity services to Derby, Chesterfield and Sheffield, and journey times will be extended.

"Rail replacement buses will be in place on the Derwent Valley Line, between Derby and Matlock, with the exception of the ASLEF Strike days on 31 May and 3 June, where there will be no services. There are also changes to services on Friday 2 June, due to the RMT strike, customers are advised to check the EMR website for full details.

"We would like to thank our customers for their patience whilst Network Rail carries out this essential upgrade of the tracks at both Clay Cross and Milford tunnels."

Photo credit: Network Rail