

February upgrades underway in North West as part of £78 million electrification scheme

February 14, 2024



Network Rail says that railway engineers across Wigan and Southport are currently delivering a range of major improvements, including electrification work, level crossing renewals, and signalling upgrades.

The work, which is part Network Rail's **Wigan to Bolton electrification scheme**, will improve travel across the North West by enabling cleaner, greener, and quieter electric trains to run on the line.

As part of enabling work for the project, a bridge will be rebuilt and railway drainage systems upgraded. Network Rail will also prepare for the installation of new signals, which will allow engineers to move forward with the £78m project, ensuring the track is ready for Northern's longer, electric trains when they are introduced.

Other improvements across the region will see engineers renew three level crossings (Pool Hey, Wyke Cop, Chapel Lane), enhance Burscough Signal Box and upgrade a number of signals across Parbold, increasing the reliability of train services passing through the area while making it safer for local communities.

The improvement work means changes to train services between Wigan North Western, Ince, Hindley, Westhoughton, Lostock and Bolton:

- A continuous closure until Sunday 18 February.

- Saturdays and Sundays in February.
- Sundays in March.

Phil James, North West route director for Network Rail, said: “We understand there is no ideal time to close the railway and want to thank passengers for bearing with us while we complete these major upgrades.

“The work is a vital part of our rail improvement plan across the North West which will not only help to improve the reliability of train services, but also take us one step closer to a greener, faster railway.

“I’d encourage anyone travelling to plan their journey ahead of time via National Rail Enquiries or with their train operator.”

Network Rail said that it had worked closely with train operators to keep customers on the move via rail replacement buses, and urged passengers to plan their journeys at www.nationalrail.co.uk.