

Fewer rail delays between London and Cambridge following completion of track works

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Over two miles of track has been replaced on the West Anglia Main Line which will reduce the number of delays caused by track faults for passengers travelling between Liverpool Street, Stansted and Cambridge.

The work was completed over two weekends in the Harlow area and included replacing 300 tonnes of ballast, the stones that keep the track in place and help with drainage, and over 5000 tonnes of sleepers.

Track gets worn from constant use by trains every day, even more so on busy main lines. Engineers carry out inspections and repairs but eventually the tracks need to be replaced to avoid faults that cause delays and cancellations.

Network Rail's engineers used the high output track relaying system (HOTRS) train which quickly replaces existing rails and sleepers with high-performing new ones. The HOTRS works like a conveyor belt, the front part of the train runs on the old rails, while the rear runs on the new rail that the system has installed. This means more track can be replaced within the timeframe, which is essential on the busy main line where track wears out faster.

Ellie Burrows, Network Rail's route director for Anglia, said: "The tracks wear out faster on the busy main lines and that's why we carry out a regular programme of replacement across the network. Renewing the tracks helps to prevent faults that lead to speed restrictions and cancellations, meaning our passengers can get to where they need to be without delays."

In line with Government guidance, passengers are urged to minimise travel and those who do need to travel should check in advance whether their route will be affected by the engineering works taking place.

Photo credit: Network Rail