

Greater Anglia announces autumn timetable changes

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Greater Anglia is making a slight change to some intercity train times from this week as part of the railway's preparations for autumn.

The changes, which are made every year, are brought in to ensure that passengers still arrive in London on time in the autumn, by allowing train drivers more time to brake and accelerate if slippery conditions occur caused by autumnal weather and compacted leaves.

Leaves on the line pose problems for the railway as they stick to damp rails and passing trains compress them into a thin, slippery black layer on the rail which – much like black ice on the roads – can affect braking distance and reduce traction and acceleration.

This means train drivers must slow down earlier for stations and signals to avoid overshooting them. They must also accelerate more gently to avoid wheel spin. All this can increase journey time and lead to delays for passengers.

Greater Anglia and Network Rail work together every year to minimise the effects of autumn on train

performance.

From Monday (12 October), Greater Anglia intercity trains leaving Norwich, Diss, Stowmarket, Ipswich, and Manningtree before 7.30am will depart up to five minutes earlier, Monday to Friday only.

Greater Anglia uses automatic sanders on its trains which can deposit a layer of sand on the rails, cleaning off any leaf mulch as they go, and helping train wheels to grip.

All Greater Anglia trains also feature Wheel Slide Protection, which is like ABS in cars and helps the trains' wheels to brake more evenly, preventing wheel damage and wear that could lead to trains being taken out of service for repair.

Jamie Burles, Greater Anglia's Managing Director, commented: "We are pleased to be taking action in partnership with Network Rail this Autumn to help passengers continue to travel with confidence.

"The last six months have seen excellent levels of punctuality across the network and we will be doing everything we can to maintain this during what has traditionally been seen as a difficult season for the railway.

"We will be doing all we can, as ever, to make lives a little easier for our passengers, getting them from a to b reliably, safely, on time and in comfort."

Greater Anglia continues to ensure that rail travel is safe for staff and passengers with an enhanced cleaning regime, on stations and trains, concentrating on high-touch areas such as push buttons, grab rails and door handles.

The train operator has also introduced a wide range of measures to make it easier for customers to maintain social distancing at stations and on trains – including floor markings, one-way systems, new signs and queuing systems.

It is now mandatory for customers to wear a face covering when using public transport, to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Children under the age of 11 and people with a disability or illness which means they cannot wear a face covering are exempt from wearing them.

Photo credit: Greater Anglia

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