

Greater Anglia draws up Braintree – Witham Line improvement plan

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Plans to improve reliability on the Braintree – Witham rail line have been drawn up by Greater Anglia.

The plan commits the rail operator to exploring every improvement and opportunity to prevent cancellations on the branch line when there is disruption on the mainline south of Witham.

Currently this line is vulnerable to cancellations when the mainline is disrupted because most trains come from the mainline to form the Witham – Braintree branch line trains.

Additionally, there is just a single track from Witham to Braintree, so a train which runs late from Braintree will delay the next train to Braintree. Any delays continue with those trains, spreading across the network and affecting other services – such as London Liverpool Street to Clacton.

Therefore, if mainline services run late this can lead to knock-on cancellations on the Braintree branch line to help get services back to their correct schedule.

The new plan states that every effort will be made to ensure Braintree is staffed to help keep passengers

informed, as well as finding ways to reduce the time taken in implementing a replacement bus service when required.

The train operator will also investigate opportunities that may allow trains to go faster along the branch line.

Richard Packer, Greater Anglia's Head of Operational Services, said, "Even saving a minute or two would significantly improve reliability because it would allow a bigger gap between one train leaving the single line section and the next train entering it, giving the service more resilience.

"We are committed to exploring every possibility for the future, as well as making all the improvements we can now, so that we can provide a much better service to passengers on this line."