

Greater Anglia transforming Ilford Depot ready for new trains

January 8, 2021



A major scheme to prepare Ilford depot for the arrival of more of Greater Anglia's new trains is progressing.

To accommodate the train operator's longer new trains and to facilitate their care and maintenance as more come into service during 2021, the Essex depot - built in the late 1940s - is undergoing a series of modifications and upgrades.

The redevelopment heralds a new era for East Anglia's railways, with better facilities to house and maintain Greater Anglia's new electric commuter trains being built by Bombardier.

Special high-level walkways will be installed to give engineers access for maintenance and repairs - as the new trains have more components on the roof than the existing trains they are replacing.

In addition, the depot will gain upgraded toilet maintenance facilities, as all the new trains will have large tanks to collect waste, rather than emptying it onto the tracks.

The entire redevelopment is due for completion in 2021, with a new storage shed, additional train stabling facilities and upgraded carriage wash still to be completed.

Martin Beable, Greater Anglia's Engineering Director, said: "The coming months will be an exciting and busy period as we progress this major project to prepare the depot for more new trains.

"At the same time, the team continues to work hard maintaining and repairing our existing trains to ensure a reliable and punctual service."

The first of Greater Anglia's brand-new electric commuter trains entered passenger service in Essex last month.

Greater Anglia is getting 133 five-carriage commuter trains made by UK manufacturer Bombardier, which will mostly run into London Liverpool Street from Essex, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Ipswich.

The new five-carriage Class 720 Bombardier AVENTRA trains, which can be used as five carriage trains or coupled together to form ten-carriage trains, are longer with more seats.

They have USB and plug points, fast free wifi, air conditioning, improved accessibility features including a disabled toilet on every train, better passenger information screens and dedicated cycle spaces.

The trains are the first in the UK to have underfloor heating which works with an overhead heating and ventilation system to improve passenger comfort and increase foot room for passengers sitting in window seats.

They feature regenerative braking which delivers energy back into the electrical supply network, rather than wasting the energy, through heat, as is the case with conventional systems.

Photo credit: Greater Anglia - New walkways at Ilford depot