

“We’re aware that Wessex route can sometimes be one of the worst affected in terms of signalling issues and completing this work will help prevent those incidents and will allow us to increase capacity for trains

with fewer delays, improved safety and lower running costs.

“We’d like to thank customers for their patience and bearing with us.”

During the railway closure we will also be painting canopies at Windsor & Eton Riverside, renewing the footbridge at Ashford station, renewing Star Lane Level Crossing, clearing vegetation along the line, as well as litter clearance and surveying our infrastructure.

Passengers are being reminded to check before they travel and visit nationalrail.co.uk for further information.

Christian Neill, South Western Railway’s service delivery director, said: “We are sorry for any inconvenience caused by these closures, but these works are essential for the maintenance and improvement of the railway, and customers can look forward to more reliable services once this new signalling system is fully delivered. We advise customers to check before travelling and to allow extra time to complete their journeys using the rail replacement buses that will be operating.”

Steven Hawker, Great Western Railway’s station manager for the North Downs Line, said: “These works are essential to maintaining and improving the railway and while it has been timed for half-term to interrupt as few customers as possible, we thank our customers for their patience during this time.

“Great Western Railway services between Reading and Gatwick Airport will be affected from Monday 13 to Friday 17 February as well as Sunday 19 February, so we encourage passengers to check their journey beforehand.”

This work is part of a £375m programme, covering 80 miles of railway and 500 pieces of signalling equipment which started in 2021. Follow up work will continue during phase five of the project which is due to be completed in early 2024.

Photo credit: Network Rail