

## In The News | 31st August 2023 | Latest Rail News

August 31, 2023



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The East Coast Digital Programme (ECDP) progressed further over bank holiday weekend, with digital upgrade work successfully completed in Hertfordshire.

New technology was installed between Welwyn Garden City and Hitchin, preparing the network for digital signalling. The new equipment will detect trains and allow them to communicate constantly with signalling control.

Peterborough's power signal box has also been closed as part of the billion-pound programme, moving to the new Service Delivery Centre (SDC) in York's modern Rail Operating Centre. This will enable trains to move more efficiently across junctions, reducing delays.

Ricky Barsby, Network Rail's head of access and integration for ECDP, called the work "another step forward to a digital East Coast railway that is more reliable and greener."

[Read the full story here.](#)

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A High Speed Rail Group study has revealed that Leeds residents fear the city is "falling behind" after it was apparently cut from the route by government in 2021.

The study (involving interviews with focus groups) looked at perceptions of transport investment in Leeds. The Yorkshire Post reported that residents were cynical about plans for major infrastructure projects, believing ministers had failed to prioritise their city.

While the Department for Transport states it is still looking at how it can include Leeds in HS2, residents complained of "over-promising and under-delivery". Most participants reported that cars were their primary mode of transport, as public transport was too unreliable. They also commented on "stark differences" between rail transport in the North and South.

A spokesperson for High Speed Rail Group said that its research sent a "clear message" about the need for transport investment across the North.

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Further strike action is planned between September 1 and 2, with members of both the Aslef and RMT unions set to participate.

The Times reported that 20,000 RMT members will strike on Saturday 2, affecting 14 train operating companies. General secretary Mick Lynch said that the action had been called because RMT had not received an improved or revised offer from the Rail Delivery Group.

A separate strike, called by Aslef, will see train drivers walk out on Friday 1, affecting 16 companies. The union has also issued an overtime ban on Saturday 2, which it says will "seriously disrupt the network."

The planned walkouts are part of the ongoing dispute about pay and working conditions.

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Finally, a former railway signal house in Darlington has avoided demolition, and will instead be turned into flats.

BBC News reported that plans to demolish the building had already been approved when its owner had a change of heart, after learning that other local railway attractions were set to be restored.

The Signal House on Whessoe Road stands next to a Stockton and Darlington Railway engine shed, built in 1861. Plans to convert it into a multi-occupancy house have now been approved by Darlington Borough Council. Once complete, it will feature bedrooms, bathrooms, and communal spaces over two storeys, housing 22 people.