

Incoming torrential rain prompts West Coast main line travel warning

October 27, 2021



Rail passengers travelling on the West Coast main line between England and Scotland and on Cumbrian branch lines are being warned of major travel disruption due to very wet weather.

Torrential rain risks flooding tracks in Cumbria and cross-border routes with over 100mm of rain expected to fall in just 24-hours in some places from tonight (Wednesday 27 October).

Network Rail emergency speed restrictions will be in force from 7pm this evening (October 27) until 8am on Friday 29 October on the following routes to keep passengers and freight moving safely.

- West Coast main line between Carnforth and Shap
- Cumbrian Coast line between Carnforth and Whitehaven
- Lakes line between Oxenholme and Windermere
- Settle to Carlisle line between Settle and Carnforth

Specialist Network Rail weather forecasters are monitoring the railway network closely so frontline response teams can be sent to deal with any incidents as soon as they happen.

Phil James, managing director for Network Rail's North West route, said: "Safety is our priority and we constantly monitor the weather to react to what mother nature throws at the railway.

"As the current forecast is for torrential rain our specialist extreme weather action teams are on standby to immediately deal with any flooding. I understand that speed limits can be frustrating and will mean longer journey times for people, but we have to put them in place to keep passengers and freight moving safely.

"I'd urge everyone planning to travel on the West Coast main line or on the Cumbrian branch lines over the coming days to please check National Rail Enquiries for the latest travel information."

Avanti West Coast and TransPennine Express are both running reduced services and are advising people not to travel during the bad weather.

Gus Dunster, executive director of operations and safety at Avanti West Coast, said: "Due to the heavy rain forecast, we'll be operating an amended timetable to and from Scotland on Wednesday 27 and Thursday 28 October. As we're expecting disruption to our services customers travelling north of Preston on these dates are advised not to travel and instead amend their journey or claim a fee-free refund from their point of purchase.

"We are working closely with Network Rail and TransPennine Express to monitor the weather and recommend customers check the National Rail Enquiries website for the latest updates."

Matthew Golton, managing director for TransPennine Express, said: "It is likely that heavy rainfall and severe weather conditions will cause significant disruption to our West Coast main line services over the next few days and we are advising customers not to travel on this route unless their journey is absolutely necessary.

"The safety of our customers is our number one priority, and we will continue to monitor the situation with Network Rail over the next few days. Anyone that experiences a delay may be entitled to compensation with more information available at: www.tpexpress.co.uk/help/delay-repay-compensation."

Network Rail Scotland has also issued its own advice to passengers warning about the impact of the extreme weather north of the border.

Those who travel on the affected routes over the coming days are advised that journeys will take longer than normal.

Passengers should regularly check www.nationalrail.co.uk for the latest on the worsening weather and how it could impact their journeys.

Photo credit: Network Rail