

Installation of 1,400 metres of new track in Hampshire

May 21, 2020



- The line between Eastleigh and Fareham and will close for improvement works between 23-29 May
- Engineers will install almost a mile of new track between Fareham and Botley
- Passengers will benefit from a more reliable railway and better performing train journeys

Passengers are reminded to only travel by rail if they have to as this bank holiday weekend begins the closure of part of the Botley line in Hampshire for important upgrades to help improve the railway's reliability and train performance.

Network Rail engineers will install 1400 metres of new track between Fareham to Eastleigh over seven days from **Saturday 23 May** until **Friday 29 May** using modern components that should last up to 60

years.

Engineers will work in shifts around the clock for approximately 10,000 hours, which is much more efficient than closing the railway for at least six full weekends, as well as being less disruptive to passengers and local residents.

A 'New Track Construction' train which uses a continuous, automated process to quickly lay sleepers, align and secure rails into place will be used to install part of the track in the Tapnag tunnel between Fareham and Botley.

While the work is carried out, there will be no trains between Fareham and Eastleigh. Buses will replace South Western Railway (SWR) trains calling at Eastleigh, Hedge End, Botley and Fareham.

Great Western Railway services between Portsmouth Harbour and Cardiff Central will be diverted via Netley. Southern services will be diverted via Swanwick.

There will also be limited car parking at Fareham station, so passengers are advised to use alternative local car parks.

Mark Killick, Network Rail Wessex route director, said: "We apologise to those affected during these essential upgrades. We are continuing to work on and invest in the rail network to make it more reliable for passengers, so it is vital that we deliver these improvement works between Fareham and Eastleigh.

"Please continue to follow Government advice and avoid public transport where possible. If you do need to use the railway, follow the guidance on social distancing and wear a face cover, allow more time for your journey, and where there is engineering work taking place, check in advance if your journey is affected."

Alan Penlington, Customer Experience Director at South Western Railway, said: "We know these works will be disruptive for those passengers who still rely on our services, but it is vital they go ahead to make our railway more reliable.

"We are committed to keeping key workers moving during this difficult time, and will be running replacement buses to ensure those that need to travel, can."

In line with Government advice, Network Rail continues to proceed with engineering work that is required to maintain a safe and operational railway.

Passengers who do need to travel over the bank holiday weekend are advised to plan their journeys and check before travelling with the train operator or National Rail Enquiries.

Photo credit: Network Rail