

Major railway improvements get underway around Manchester this month

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At the end of this month, railway engineers will be making major improvements to track and railway bridges between Manchester Victoria and Stalybridge and Manchester Victoria and Rochdale.

This work is part of the multi-billion-pound Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU). The project will improve connectivity in the North of England – providing faster, more reliable services for passengers travelling between York, Leeds and Manchester.

Between Saturday 31 July and Sunday 15 August, over 3000m of track is being upgraded to bring smoother, more reliable journeys. Major work will also be carried out on six bridges across Central Manchester.

This will mean changes to services between Yorkshire and Manchester. Network Rail, Northern and Transpennine Express have built a plan to keep passengers moving on trains across the Pennines as much as possible.

Some journeys may need to be completed partly by bus, primarily between Rochdale and Manchester

Victoria. The latest, state-of-the-art buses will be available to passengers so they can travel in comfort throughout.

Passengers looking to travel over this period are being urged to check nationalrail.co.uk and continue to follow Government guidance around the use of public transport.

Neil Holm, Transpennine Route Upgrade Director for Network Rail, said: "Our improvement work in Greater Manchester, starting next month, is a key part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU).

"During this complex upgrade we'll be demolishing ageing railway bridges to install new ones and upgrading track. This work is crucial to enable us to run more trains and faster trains in future as part of the wider TRU programme. Though we can't keep these railway lines open through Manchester Victoria while we do this, we've created diversionary routes so passengers can still get in and out of Manchester by train as much as possible.

"Where buses need to replace to trains, we've worked with our industry colleagues to ensure they're the best quality throughout."

Tricia Williams, Northern's Chief Operating Officer, said: "It is welcome news that the railway continues to be invested in and the infrastructure improved upon.

"To complete these initial works there will be some planned changes to our services and our message to customers is very simple – please plan ahead and check your journey before travelling.

"To minimise disruption we will be running state-of-the-art replacement buses, offering clear customer information, including via digital and social channels, and will have more colleagues at stations to provide assistance both before and during the engineering works."

Kathryn O'Brien, Customer Experience Director for TransPennine Express, commented: "We're delighted to see continued investment in the North of England's railway as part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade. And with these works this summer, we will see a better, more reliable railway for our customers.

"To complete these engineering works, some of our services will be diverted and customers may have to change trains in Manchester, so we would advise those travelling to check before they travel. To help with those affected, there will be more railway colleagues at stations to help people get to where they need to be."

The following changes to services will be in place between Saturday 31 July and Sunday 15 August:

Leeds - Manchester Victoria via Todmorden and Rochdale

- Trains will start/terminate at Moston station.
- Express buses will run between Rochdale and Manchester Victoria and between Manchester Victoria and Moston. No calling buses will run between Rochdale and Moston.

Ashton-under-Lyne - Manchester

- Trains will not run, but Metrolink services will be available to/from Manchester Piccadilly.
- On Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 August only, Metrolink services will not run on the Ashton line due to engineering work. Replacement bus services will be in place for passengers.

Liverpool Lime Street - Newcastle

- Trains from Liverpool Lime Street will be diverted to run to/from Manchester Airport via Manchester Piccadilly. Newcastle services will start/terminate at Manchester Piccadilly for onward connections.

Manchester - Leeds/York/Hull/Redcar

- Trains will divert to/from Manchester Piccadilly only

Stalybridge - Manchester via Guide Bridge

- Trains between Leeds (via Huddersfield) and Manchester Piccadilly will divert via Stalybridge and Guide Bridge.
- Buses will run between Stalybridge, Ashton-under-Lyne and Guide Bridge.

Photo credit: Network Rail