

Major upgrade works taking place early in 2021 on the Great Eastern Main line

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Essential upgrade works will be taking place on the Great Eastern main line in January and February between London Liverpool Street station and Shenfield and on the Southend Victoria line to improve reliability for passengers.

Major renewals works will continue to replace the overhead line electrification system between Stratford and Maryland to install a new auto tension system that allows the overhead wires to adapt to temperature changes, meaning fewer delays and cancellations for passengers.

Other maintenance works will be taking place along the line at the same time on several footbridge structures at Seven Kings, Goodmayes and Brentwood as well track maintenance at Ilford and Shenfield. Works on the Southend Victoria line include track refurbishment, earthworks and removal of redundant overhead line structures.

These works will take place over the following weekends in January and February:

- Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 January 2021
- Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 January 2021
- Saturday 30 and Sunday 31 January 2021
- Saturday 06 and Sunday 07 February 2021
- Sunday 14 February 2021*
- Sunday 21 February 2021

The works will affect TfL Rail and Greater Anglia services between London Liverpool Street and Shenfield and Great Anglia services between Shenfield, and Southend Victoria/Southminster.

*Separately, track works are also taking place between Colchester and Ipswich on Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 February which will also affect service on the Great Eastern main line.

Passengers expecting to travel on the Great Eastern main line to/from London Liverpool Street and on the Southend Victoria line on these dates are advised to check before travelling with www.nationalrail.co.uk, www.tfl.gov.uk or www.greateranglia.co.uk and continue to follow guidance to stay COVID safe while using public transport.

Ellie Burrows, Network Rail's route director for Anglia said: "We're planning to do a lot of work early in the new year which means we have to close a large section of the main line for several weekends for which I apologise.

'We are planning to complete the major overhead line renewals work at Stratford by Easter 2021 so that the new systems are in place for the warmer summer months, improving reliability for passengers and reducing the risk of cancellations and delays from heat related speed restrictions.'

Jamie Burles, Greater Anglia Managing Director, said: "A rail replacement bus service will operate while the work takes place. Passengers should allow more time for their journey and check before they travel. We would like to thank customers for their patience and apologise for any inconvenience caused.

"We are already seeing the benefits of major improvement work which was carried out on the Southend Victoria line. The infrastructure is more resilient in the summer months meaning more trains are running on time. This work is the final part of the upgrade project and while there is never an ideal time for engineering work to take place, we are pleased it will be finished in time for the spring.

"We are working with Network Rail to modernise the railway in East Anglia. As part of this, we are replacing every single train in our fleet with a brand new one. The first new train on the Southend line came into service in November 2020 and we will continue with the roll out next year.

"We'd like to reassure customers that they can travel safely with us whether it be by train or bus and remind people to wear a face covering over their nose and mouth for all of their journey, including on buses, trains or stations."

More information can be found by visiting our project webpage here: www.networkrail.co.uk/anglia-ole-renewals

The work at Stratford and Maryland is the final part of the upgrade of overhead wire systems that have been taking place along the main line up to Chelmsford and on Southend Victoria line; replacing old overhead systems that were installed in the 1950s with modern auto-tension systems that prevent wires sagging in the summer months.

Photo credit: Network Rail

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