

Millions invested into West Midlands railway improvements

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More than 6km of railway track is being replaced across the West Midlands as the rail industry works together to build back better after the coronavirus pandemic.

Network Rail is investing more than £3m to renew track along key routes to get the railway in the best possible condition for passengers ready when coronavirus travel restrictions can be eased.

The work will take place during this latest period of national lockdown – when only essential journeys are permitted – so fewer passengers will be affected the railway closures needed for the new track to be built.

As old track will be torn up and new modern railway lines laid, some routes will be shut and rail replacement bus services will be in operation instead.

Dave Penney, Network Rail's Central route director, said: "While passenger numbers are still low, we're making sure the railway across the West Midlands is in the best possible shape ready to welcome passengers back when lockdown measures can be eased.

“For those who are still travelling by rail for reasons permitted by government, I’d urge people to check National Rail Enquiries before they set off on their journey so they know what to expect.”

Alex Warner, chairperson of the Grand Rail Collaboration, representing train operators across the West Midlands, said: “This investment in the West Midlands rail network will allow us to welcome passengers back to comfortable and reliable journeys as soon as we’re able.”

Those using the rail network for essential journeys should leave more time to complete their journeys and check before travelling at www.nationalrail.co.uk or with their train operator: CrossCountry, Chiltern Railways, London Northwestern Railway or West Midlands Trains.

Photo credit: Network Rail