

Network Rail completes major track investment in Cornwall

February 8, 2021



Over the past five weeks, Network Rail has completed a £3 million track investment in Cornwall, renewing the track on the St Ives Bay line between Carbis Bay and St Ives.

The railway line reopened on Monday (February 8) following the successful completion of work to lay around 1.5 miles of new track and install 3,600 new sleepers and over 400 tonnes of new ballast – which is the stones that supports the track.

Network Rail engineers worked day and night to complete the work and to minimise disruption to residents living near to the railway, electric & solar lighting was used which is completely silent, uses no diesel and produces no CO2 emissions.

Lee Hildreth, Network Rail project manager, said: “We are delighted to have completed our work on the St Ives bay line which marks the biggest track upgrade in the county for over 60 years.

“Despite a number of challenges, particularly the severe weather Cornwall has faced over the past month, it is really pleasing to have finished this important work which will undoubtedly have a positive impact on

the local community by helping to provide a more reliable railway for passengers in Cornwall.

“We would like to thank the local community for their patience while we have completed this work and look forward to welcoming passengers back onboard.”

Mark Chorley, GWR Regional Station Manager, West, said: “We are pleased to resume train services on the St Ives Bay line today after a five-week period of upgrades. The work will help to keep our services on the branch line running reliably and provide a smoother ride for our customers.

“While Network Rail upgraded the line, we continued to keep our customers moving, but with a longer, road journey. We thank them for their patience during this time and look forward to welcoming them back on-board our trains.”

GWR is operating a reduced timetable during the latest national lockdown and customers should follow Government guidelines, only travelling for work if essential or for other legally permitted reasons. Find out more at [gwr.com/safety](https://www.gwr.com/safety).

The train operator has been providing rail services throughout the pandemic and has worked to ensure these are as safe as possible. This includes increased cleaning regimes and the use of a virucidal spray; extra staff at key stations to offer help and guidance; and processes in place to help customers maintain a safe distance where possible, such as restricting the number of reservations available.

Richard Burningham, Chair of Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership, said: “We greatly welcome Network Rail’s investment in the St Ives Bay line which is a really important for the local economy, particularly at St Ives and Carbis Bay but for west Cornwall more widely.

“It’s a very busy line – in 2019 more than 660,000 journeys were made on the line – and it will hopefully be just as busy, if not busier, when COVID restrictions are lifted.”

Derek Thomas, MP for St Ives West Cornwall and The Isles of Scilly, said: “I have the great honour of welcoming the G7 summit later this year and the focus will be recovering from Covid and how we can deliver a low carbon green economy.

“That is why the investment in the St Ives Bay line is so welcome and so important because all of us will be thinking about reducing journeys on road and how we can use the railway more.”

Photo credit: Network Rail