

Network Rail continues mid-week engineering trials in the North East

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Rail passengers in the North East are being urged to check before travelling as the next phase of **Network Rail's** mid-week engineering trials take place in the region.

On Wednesday 21 June, teams from Network Rail will be carrying out vital track upgrades on the route between Newcastle and Berwick-upon-Tweed. The work will see improvements made to the track near Longhirst level crossing, near Morpeth, and at Widdrington, just south of Alnmouth.

The work will help to create a more modern and reliable railway for passengers and help to keep train services running smoothly.

The work is taking place mid-week as recent data from LNER shows that Fridays and Sundays are now proving to be the most popular days for people to travel on long-distance, high-speed services to and from London King's Cross.

To reflect this new pattern for rail travel, Network Rail will be carrying out this work on a Wednesday, as opposed to on a weekend, to reduce disruption for passengers and impact fewer travellers.

To allow the work to take place safely, there will be major changes to services on Wednesday 21 June, as well as minor changes on the evening of Tuesday 20 June and in the early morning on Thursday 22 June. Passengers are urged to check before travelling via National Rail Enquiries or with their train operator, and to allow additional time for their journey.

Buses will replace the majority of rail services between Newcastle and Berwick-upon-Tweed/Alnmouth and Chathill. LNER services will run between London King's Cross and Newcastle, and then between Alnmouth and Scotland. A small number of services will run on a diversionary route between Newcastle and Edinburgh.

Jason Parrish, head of planning for Network Rail's East Coast Route, said: "It is fantastic to see the next phase of mid-week engineering trials get underway on the East Coast Main Line.

"These trials are being carried out after research showed that there is a higher demand for travel on weekends to and from London King's Cross station. By doing this work on a weekday, it will mean fewer passengers are impacted by these major upgrades.

"I'd like to thank passengers for their patience, and I would urge anyone travelling to plan ahead and check with National Rail Enquiries or their train operator before setting off."

A spokesperson on behalf of train operators on the East Coast Main Line, said: "These upgrades will lead to smoother, more reliable journeys between Newcastle and Berwick-upon-Tweed and these trials show how we can work collaboratively to improve passenger experience.

"Buses will replace most trains, whilst a small number of services will run on a diversionary route. Our best advice to passengers is to plan ahead and allow extra time for their journeys."

Photo credit: Network Rail