

# Network Rail prepares for main stage of £1.2billion East Coast Main Line upgrade

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- Three-day closure at London King's Cross from Friday 26 until Sunday 28 February (inclusive) paves way for main stage of £1.2billion East Coast Main Line upgrade starting next week
- No Thameslink or Great Northern services south of Potters Bar, New Barnet and Gordon Hill this Friday with further changes over the weekend
- Further work will take place between March and June to improve the track layout at King's Cross and reopen a disused railway tunnel - making it easier for trains to enter and exit the station
- The work is part of the East Coast Upgrade, which will transform journeys between London, Cambridgeshire, the North of England and Scotland

As major work takes place at London King's Cross as part of a £1.2billion upgrade of the East Coast Main Line, Network Rail, Thameslink and Great Northern are reminding passengers who need to make essential journeys that no trains will be running to or from London King's Cross, Moorgate or St Pancras International via Finsbury Park this Friday, Saturday and Sunday (26-28 February inclusive).

Teams are making temporary changes to the signalling system at King's Cross during the three-day

closure, paving the way for the main, three-month stage of the £1.2billion East Coast Upgrade to take place between March and June. This will allow half of the station to be closed so that the vital improvements can be carried out, whilst Great Northern and Thameslink services continue.

The following changes to services will be in place:

- **Friday 26 February** - Trains to and from Cambridge and Peterborough will start and end at Potters Bar, where passengers can use replacement buses to connect to alternative rail or London Underground services. Trains to and from Welwyn Garden City will start and end at New Barnet and services to and from Stevenage via Hertford North will start and end at Gordon Hill, with replacement buses running to Alexandra Palace.
- **Saturday 27 February** - Trains to and from Cambridge and Peterborough will start and end at Stevenage. Trains to and from Stevenage via Hertford North will start and end at Gordon Hill.
- **Sunday 28 February** - Trains to and from Cambridge and Peterborough will start and end at Hitchin. Services to and from Stevenage via Hertford North will be extended to Letchworth Garden City and will start and end at Gordon Hill.

Passengers who need to make essential journeys are strongly advised to check in advance via National Rail Enquiries, at [EastCoastUpgrade.co.uk](http://EastCoastUpgrade.co.uk) or on the Thameslink and Great Northern websites and allow plenty of time.

Between Monday 1 March and early June, teams will carry out work to improve the track layout just outside King's Cross station. The complex work will see the current layout, which was laid 40 years ago, lifted, replaced and realigned, creating smoother, more punctual and more reliable services for passengers.

Work will also take place to reopen a railway tunnel, which has been out of use since the 1970's. This will provide two additional tracks, reducing congestion and making it easier for trains to enter and exit the historic transport hub.

The work taking place at King's Cross over the next three months is the main stage of the East Coast Upgrade works at the station and follows months of activity. Once the work is completed in June, teams will have installed more than 6km of new track and 15km of overhead lines, which are used to power trains.

Ed Akers, Principal Programme Sponsor for Network Rail's East Coast Upgrade, said: "The work we are doing over the next three months is a crucial piece of the puzzle on the East Coast Upgrade.

"Untangling the complex track layout just outside of King's Cross and reopening a railway tunnel which has been closed for over 40 years will make it easier for trains to enter and exit the station, improving journeys for all those travelling to and from the station.

"This, when coupled with upgrades elsewhere along the route, such as improving the power supply and the construction of a new dive under tunnel near Peterborough, will mean faster and more frequent services, better connecting towns and cities across the country and offering more choice for passengers.

“We continue to work closely with train operators on this industry leading project to make sure that the impact on those who need to make essential journeys is as little as possible.”

Jenny Saunders, Great Northern and Thameslink Customer Services Director, said: “This work at King’s Cross will improve reliability for everyone using the East Coast Main Line and enable improvements for long-distance services.

“However, with no trains running south of Potters Bar, New Barnet and Gordon Hill this Friday and other changes over the weekend, passengers making essential journeys will need to take buses to connect with services into London and this will take longer. Full details are available on our Great Northern and Thameslink websites.”

Rail Minister, Chris Heaton-Harris, said: “The impressive work to not only replace and realign track, but to reopen a tunnel closed 40 years ago, underlines our determination to deliver major upgrades for passengers.

“As passengers return to our railway, these upgrades will make journeys in and out of one of Britain’s most historic stations more punctual and reliable, and I want to thank all those keeping services running as the work is carried out.”

*Photo credit: Network Rail*