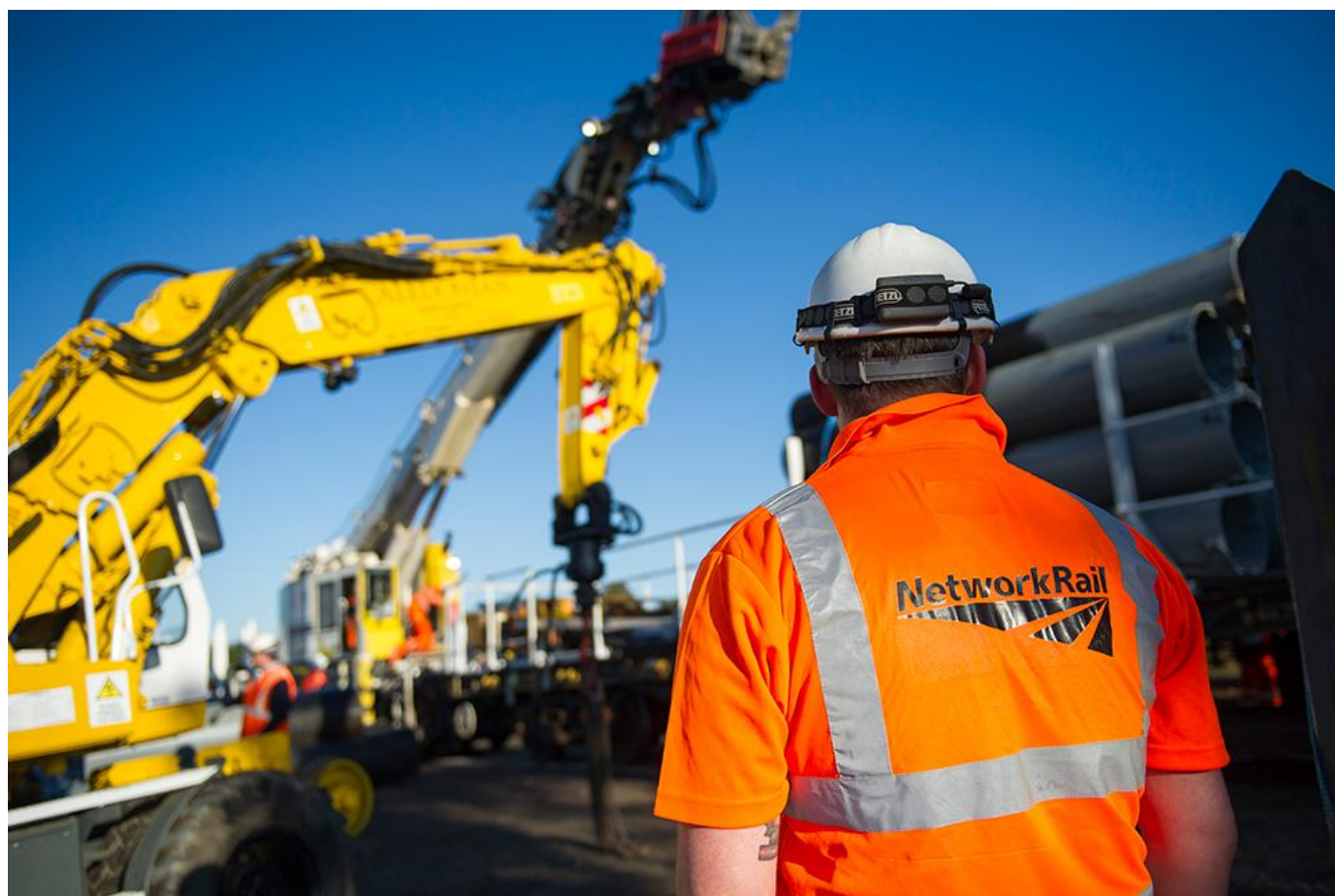


# Network Rail staff to begin a package of Christmas and New Year improvements for passengers in South West London and Hampshire

December 23, 2020



Network Rail staff will shortly begin a package of improvements for passengers in South West London and Hampshire between Christmas and New Year to maintain and upgrade the railway, and improve reliability for those essential workers still relying on the rail network every day.

People must follow the latest Government guidance over the Christmas period and stay at home or stay local to help tackle the spread of COVID-19. The new restrictions also mean that people should not travel into or out of London, which is now a Tier 4 area. If you need to travel, please continue following Government advice around the use of public transport – wear a face covering unless you are exempt, travel at quieter times and maintain a distance from other passengers wherever possible.

Between Friday 25 December 2020 and Monday 4 January 2021, engineers will carry out a major programme of work between Clapham Junction and Waterloo, which will see more reliable services and

increased connectivity for passengers on the route.

Sections of track and switches and crossings (which allow trains to move between tracks) will be upgraded at Nine Elms Junction. Resignalling work, vegetation clearance and track and bridge inspections will also take place in the area to take advantage of the lower numbers of trains running.

While that work is completed there will be a reduced number of services between Clapham Junction and London Waterloo. At both stations, queuing systems are likely to be in place and platforms 12-20 at London Waterloo will be closed. Vauxhall and Queenstown Road stations will also be closed throughout.

On the same dates, the line between Basingstoke and Salisbury will be closed while engineers strengthen Millway Road bridge in Andover and clear vegetation between Whitchurch and Andover.

Buses will run between Basingstoke and Salisbury and there will be a revised train service between Salisbury and Exeter St Davids.

Some of the other improvement work to provide a more reliable railway includes:

- Upgrades to the switches and crossings between Hook and Basingstoke and at Eastleigh West junction, which starts late in the evening on Christmas Eve and finishes on the morning of Sunday 27 December
- Testing new signals as part of the Feltham resignalling scheme, set to take place between late in the evening on Christmas Eve and finish the morning of Sunday 27 December
- New track will be laid and Cow Lane bridge near Cosham, Portsmouth will be rebuilt between Friday 1 and Sunday 3 January 2021 (plus 17 January).
- Replacing timber structures on the bridge between Fratton and Portsmouth Harbour on Sunday 3 and Monday 4 January 2021

Passengers should only travel if they have to. A summary of the amended timetable and bus replacement services are available at [www.southwesternrailway.com/christmas](http://www.southwesternrailway.com/christmas)

Mark Killick, Network Rail Wessex route director, said: "Later this week, our staff who have worked tirelessly during the pandemic to maintain and upgrade the railway for those who need it, will once again carry out a number of essential upgrades to keep the railway running reliably and smoothly for many years to come.

"This means some journeys may be different, so please travel safely, follow the latest public health advice and only travel if you absolutely have to."

Alan Penlington, director of customer services at South Western Railway, said: "The work being carried out by Network Rail this festive period is vital to ensure the future reliability of the network.

"We're asking all customers who have to travel to visit our dedicated webpage; [southwesternrailway.com/Christmas](http://southwesternrailway.com/Christmas)."

*Photo credit: Network Rail*

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