

Network Rail to futureproof signalling in Middlesbrough

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Network Rail begins a £45million project this month to upgrade signalling in Middlesbrough.

The project will see the renewal of about six miles of equipment, during which time the control over the system will move from two traditional signal boxes to Network Rail's Rail Operating Centre in York.

The two signal boxes – Middlesbrough, just outside the station, and Whitehouse, near Middlesbrough Dock – are being demolished as part of a scheme to futureproof the railway. The nearby signals are currently controlled by levers and switch panels inside these boxes, with the last major work taking place over 40 years ago.

To ensure the safety of engineers, the line will be closed from Saturday 13 to Monday 15 November, with no trains to/from Middlesbrough station during this time. Bus replacement services will be put in place.

Operations director for Network Rail's North and East Route, Chris Gee, said: "While signal boxes and lever frames are iconic reminders of our railway heritage, we need to invest in modern techniques to improve reliability for passengers and create a railway fit for the future.

"This work has been planned carefully to avoid any unnecessary disruption whilst still allowing our teams to work safely on site. I'm pleased that we've been able to work closely with Northern and TransPennine

Express to keep passengers moving as we complete this essential work.”

Further work to complete this project will be carried out later in the month, meaning buses will replace trains between Middlesbrough and Whitby on Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 November.

Customer experience director for TransPennine Express, Kathryn O’Brien, said: “It’s fantastic to see continued investment in our railway infrastructure and these upgrades that will be taking place around Middlesbrough will improve reliability for our customers who use our services in that part of the world. To keep customers moving, we will be running rail replacement services between Northallerton and Redcar Central. While these improvement works are ongoing, we’d advise our customers to plan ahead and check before they travel.”