

# Network Rail trials mid-week engineering work on East Coast Main Line

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Network Rail and train operators are advising passengers to plan ahead and check before travelling as teams carry out vital work to upgrade the railway between Grantham and Doncaster.

Routine engineering work is usually carried out on weekends and Bank Holidays as historically, this has been a time when fewer people travelled.

However, the pandemic has seen travel trends change, with increased demand on weekends for long-distance services using London King's Cross.

Research carried out by the Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) showed that in February, nationally the number of weekend rail journeys were 21% higher than pre-pandemic levels, reflecting strong leisure demand. On the East Coast Main Line, recent data from LNER shows that Fridays and Sundays are now proving to be the most popular days for people to travel. To reflect this new pattern for rail travel, Network Rail and East Coast Main Line train operators will trial carrying out the work mid-week to reduce disruption for passengers.

The work will take place on Tuesday 16 and Wednesday 17 May and will see improvements to the tracks, as well as to overhead line equipment, which provides power to trains. Work will also take place to improve drainage along the route.

Once complete, the work will create a more modern and reliable railway for passengers, with improved resilience.

To allow the work to be carried out safely, the following changes to services will be in place on both 16/17 May:

- LNER will be running a reduced service during this time, with extended journey times, and coach replacement services operating between Peterborough and Doncaster and intermediate stations (Retford, Newark Northgate and Grantham).
- Hull Trains will be running a reduced service with extended journey times. Services are unable to call at Retford and Grantham due to the diversionary route between Doncaster and London King's Cross. Train services are being run with extra capacity to compensate for the reduced service.
- Lumo services will be running a reduced service between Edinburgh & Newcastle only. However, for customers wishing to travel to/from London, some services will run to/from Doncaster and connect with Hull Trains services, with through-tickets available to customers.
- Grand Central will run a reduced service. Services which do run will go via diversionary routes, extending journey times.

Passengers can check their individual journeys by visiting [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

Paul Rutter, Route Director for Network Rail's East Coast route, said: "We're really pleased to be carrying out this trial.

"We know that passenger travel patterns have changed post-pandemic, with higher demand for travel on weekends to and from London King's Cross railway station, so carrying out the work mid-week will mean fewer travellers are impacted by our upgrades.

"However, there will still be changes to services on Tuesday, 16 and Wednesday, 17 May, so our advice is to plan ahead and check before travelling via National Rail Enquiries."

A spokesperson on behalf of train operators on the East Coast Main Line, said: "We are always looking at new ways we can improve the experience for our passengers and this trial is an example of just one way the industry has worked together to do something to respond to new trends and keep people moving.

"Services will still be running on the affected dates, but diversion routes and longer journey times will be in place, so please make sure you plan ahead and allow extra time for your journey."

*Photo credit: Network Rail*