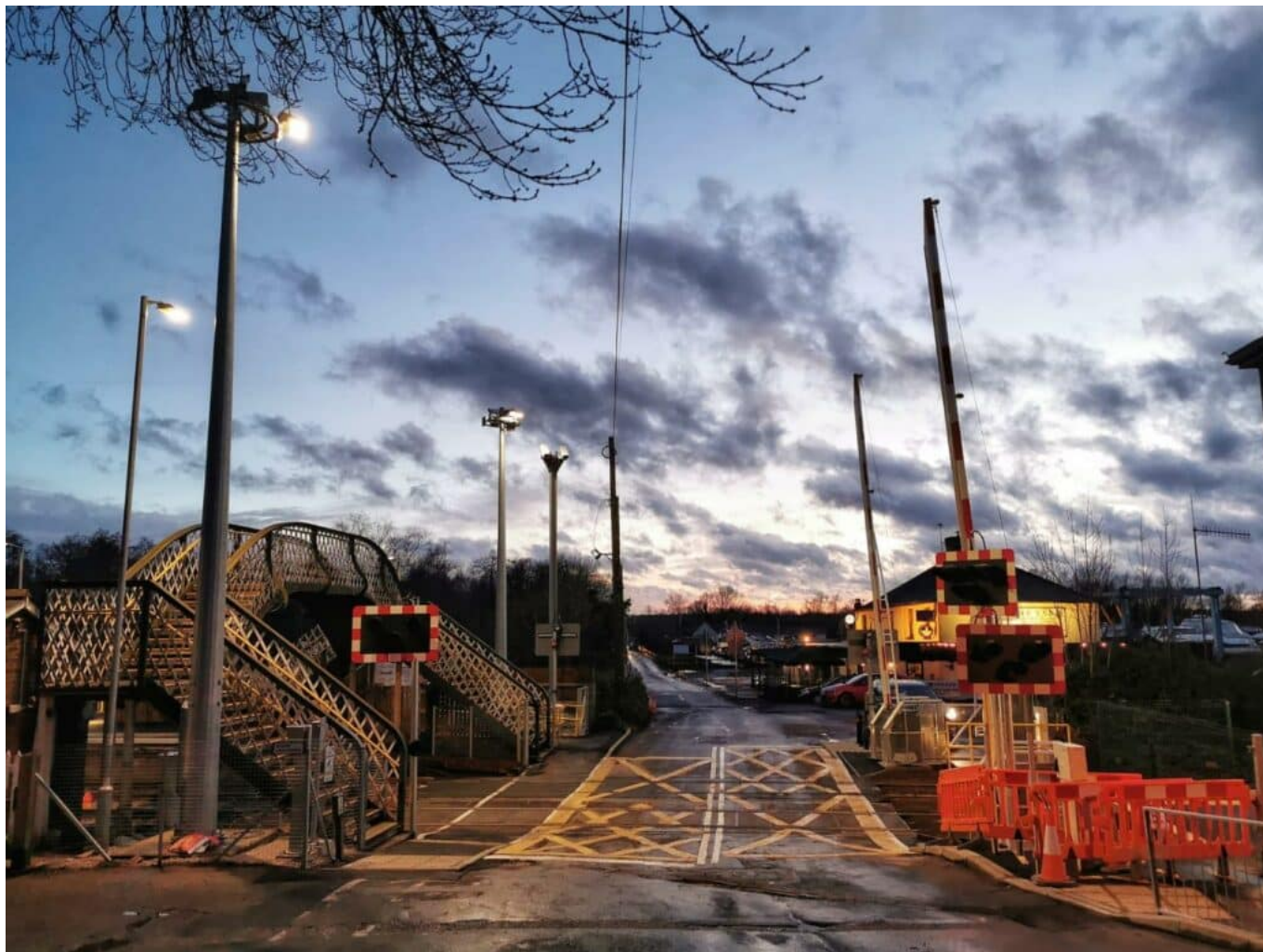


New signalling system introduced on the Wherry lines

February 17, 2020



Over 130 years of signalling history came to an end today on the Wherry lines with the reopening of the Norwich to Yarmouth line following completion of work to introduce a new computerised signalling system, improving reliability of train services. A section of the East Suffolk line from Beccles to Lowestoft also reopened today.

Having been closed since 1 February engineers have switched the signalling system over from the old, Victorian mechanical signals which have been in place for over 130 years, to the modern computer-based system.

Works on the Norwich to Yarmouth line took place at level crossings including Brundall, Lingwood Chapel Road and Station Road to introduce full barriers and crossing lights along with upgrade work to several user worked crossing such as Acle Marshes to improve crossing safety. The work also saw the new signals powered up along the lines and signalling engineers transferred the last of the local signal box controls to

Colchester as part of the modernisation programme.

Signalling work has also been happening on the Norwich to Lowestoft line as well as track upgrade works at Lowestoft and a points renewal outside of Oulton Broad North enabling railway trains to be guided from one track to another.

With the reopening of the Norwich to Yarmouth and Beccles to Lowestoft lines, engineers are now focused on delivering just over three kilometres of track renewals at Hasingham, to ensure a better journey for passengers. Final works are taking place to Cantely, Strumpshaw and Oulton Broad North level crossings to bring them into use when the Norwich to Lowestoft line is expected to reopen on 24 February.

The line from Reedham to Yarmouth, which serves Berney Arms, which has been closed since end of 2018, will also reopen to passengers on 24 February using the new signalling system.

Ellie Burrows, Network Rail's route director for Anglia said: "I am really proud of everyone who has dedicated themselves to the upgrade of the Wherry lines despite the challenging weather conditions over the last two weekends.

"The completion of the re-signalling work is a significant milestone for the history of the Wherry lines. and we are in a really good position to complete the track works at Hasingham and reintroduce train services on the Norwich to Lowestoft line on 24 February.

"A big thank you to all passengers for their continued patience while we complete this modernisation programme."

Scott Kelley, a Director at engineering consultancy Atkins, said: "This is a significant milestone in a pioneering project which will see the biggest deployment to date of a new, cutting edge signalling system that will help deliver a safe, efficient, reliable and future proof railway.

"Working closely with Network Rail and our supply chain partners, we look forward to completing the transformation of this important route which will serve communities right across Anglia."

Jamie Burles, **Greater Anglia** managing director said: "We're very pleased that the line has re-opened as scheduled so customers can once again use the train for their journeys. We appreciate customers' patience throughout these works. Together with Network Rail we are modernising the railway in this part of our region, with brand new trains and signals, which should improve reliability and punctuality for customers."