

New signals point the way to more reliable services for passengers on Surrey and Berkshire's royal railway

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Network Rail has completed almost a week of engineering work on the line from Staines to Windsor and Eton Riverside to improve services and boost the reliability of the railway for decades to come.

Over seven days between Saturday 6 to Friday 12 March, engineers completed critical work to upgrade the existing signalling infrastructure, including installing foundations for 21 new signals along a five-mile stretch of railway.

Signals are the traffic lights of the railway, operating as part of a wider system that controls the safe and smooth running of trains. The work forms part of a long-term upgrade project to replace signalling dating back over 40 years. Once complete, it will improve the reliability and resilience of the railway, allowing more reliable services.

Mark Killick, Network Rail Wessex route director, said: "I'd like to say thank you to our passengers and those living close to the railway while we completed this work. No matter how important, every time we

close the railway it means people have to change their lives around for us and we are grateful for their patience.

“The existing signalling dates from the 1970s, so it’s harder and harder to maintain and keep operating reliably. This work is part of a long-term signalling improvement project which will see us upgrade the infrastructure to a new, state-of-the-art system which will offer a huge improvement in reliability for passengers.

“Work to install and commission new equipment across 80 miles of railway will continue until mid-2024, transforming key areas of the network including Feltham, Hounslow, Shepperton, Twickenham, Windsor & Eton Riverside and Wokingham.”

Alan Penlington, SWR’s Customer Experience Director, said: “Last week’s engineering work between Staines and Windsor & Eton Riverside marks an important milestone for the Feltham and Wokingham re-signalling programme which will improve reliability on the network for years to come. I’d like to thank all those affected by these works for their patience whilst the railway was closed.”

In addition to the signalling upgrade work, engineers also completed vital repairs to brickwork on the A30 Staines bypass bridge which crosses the railway between Staines and Wraysbury station, and completed track maintenance on the railway bridge at Black Potts Ait, an island on the River Thames near Windsor.

For more information about the Feltham and Wokingham Re-signalling Programme visit networkrail.co.uk/FWRP.

Photo credit: Network Rail