

One month to go before work to upgrade a major railway junction in Bristol gets underway

June 10, 2021



Today (Thursday 10 June) marks the one-month countdown before work starts to transform the way trains come in and out of Bristol Temple Meads.

Network Rail will be replacing the tracks and installing a clever new layout at a major junction just North of Bristol Temple Meads station – known as Bristol East Junction, paving the way for more train services to move more people, more reliably.

Over an eight-week period from Saturday 10 July to Friday 3 September, Network Rail engineers will be cutting out the old track, digging out the ballast (the stones that support the track) and removing the old signal gantry. This will be followed by laying new track and ballast, installing new signalling equipment and creating a clever new track layout.

Much of the track and engineering components at Bristol East Junction were laid in the 1960s and need to be replaced. Once upgraded this junction will increase capacity and flexibility, making it easier for more trains to get into and out of Bristol Temple Meads more reliably.

As part of the upgrade of Bristol East Junction, an extra line is also being introduced which will support new suburban services as part of the West of England Combined Authority's (WECA) MetroWest scheme. Once complete, this scheme will provide over 4,000 additional seats on trains every day in the area.

To reduce the impact and duration of this work, Network Rail has already completed certain preparatory elements of this work, enabling this to be completed in eight weeks instead of 12.

The work is part of the [Bristol Rail Regeneration programme](#) that will see improvements to the iconic Bristol Temple Meads station over the next three years, supporting the city's Temple Quarter development.

Changes to train services

As a result of this significant piece of work, there will be a number of timetable changes to train services, including bus replacement services at times.

Train companies are working with Network Rail to finalise the timetable for this summer and passengers are advised to check before travelling and where possible plan ahead of their journeys. More information can be found at [GWR.com/Bristol](https://www.gwr.com/Bristol) and [crosscountrytrains.co.uk/Bristol](https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/Bristol)

Trains between London Paddington and South Wales or to the Midlands and North via Bristol Parkway, or to the South West via Taunton will continue to operate throughout this period.

There will also be no impact on long-distance train services to/from Bristol Temple Meads for the first four weeks, but some local stopping services will be different.

Saturday 10 July to Friday 13 August

- No direct trains between Bristol Temple Meads and Cardiff Central or Gloucester – these trains will stop at Bristol Parkway instead
- Severn Beach trains will run from Lawrence Hill (except Sundays) – alternative road transport will run to/from Bristol Temple Meads

Saturday 7 August and Monday 9 to Friday 13 August

- No trains can run between Bristol Temple Meads and Bath Spa – alternative road transport will be provided instead, adding around 30 minutes to journeys
- CrossCountry trains won't stop at Bristol Temple Meads

Sunday 8 August

- No trains can stop at Bristol Temple Meads – alternative road transport will run to/from Bristol Parkway, Bath Spa, Taunton, Weston-super-Mare or Severn Beach

Saturday 14 to Monday 30 August

- No trains can run between Bristol Temple Meads and Bath Spa – alternative road transport will be provided instead, adding around 30 minutes to journeys

Tuesday 31 August to Friday 3 September

- No trains can stop at Bristol Temple Meads – alternative road transport will run to/from Bristol Parkway, Bath Spa, Taunton, Bedminster or Lawrence Hill

Jonathan Davies, Network Rail Project Director, said: “Bristol Temple Meads station is an integral transport hub for the West of England and we are committed to improving the reliability and capacity of the railway for the benefit of our passengers, the city and wider region.

“Much of the track and engineering components at Bristol East Junction were laid in the 1960s and need to be replaced. Our work to upgrade this important junction is a highly complex engineering project which has taken years to plan and we are excited by the benefits it will bring to our passengers once complete.

“We recognise this work will result in changes to train services and we are working closely with the train operating companies to ensure passengers can still get to where they need to go, and we encourage passengers to plan ahead and check before they travel, particularly during this period.

“We would like to thank in advance our passengers and local residents for their patience while we undertake this important, transformative work at Bristol East junction.”

Matt Barnes, GWR Regional Development Manager, said: “This work will in time help us to deliver 4,000 more train seats a day into the city, on more services through Bristol and help to reduce the conflict between long-distance and local stopping services, helping to maintain the reliability of our trains.

“We will continue to operate trains through Bristol during the period, but there will be some alterations to timetables and journey frequency, so please do check what is best for you if you’re travelling during the period.”

Sarah Kelley, CrossCountry Regional Director, said: “We know that punctual and reliable journeys are important, and this project is all about delivering that for our local and long-distance rail users travelling to and through Bristol.

“Through great cooperation with our industry partners we’ve managed to limit the impact of these works on our passengers’ journeys. However, there may be delays and alterations on some days, so we’re asking everyone to check their journey carefully before setting out.”

For more information about this work and the wider Bristol Rail Regeneration programme, please visit <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/our-routes/western/bristol-rail-regeneration/>

Photo credit: Network Rail