

Passengers are reminded to check before travelling to the West this August bank holiday

August 21, 2019



Wales and Western's rail network will benefit from £9.4m worth of investment over the August bank holiday weekend (Saturday 24 to Monday 26 August inclusive), as 1,600 Network Rail staff will work a combined total of 17,392 hours to carry out vital upgrades to improve rail performance for passengers and freight.

Part of the work taking place on Sunday 25 August is the electrification of the South Wales Main Line, which, when complete will enable Intercity Express Trains to run between London and Cardiff under electric power, reducing journey times for passengers and releasing fewer carbon emissions into the environment.

To enable this work to be carried out, rail replacement buses will be in operation between Bristol Parkway and Cardiff Central on Sunday 25 August until 2pm. From 2pm onwards, trains between London Paddington and South Wales will be diverted between Swindon and Newport.

Work will also be taking place between Didcot Parkway and Oxford on Sunday 25 August which means that

rail replacement buses will operate from the start of service until 11:30am, when train services will resume.

The railway network on Wales and Western will be open as usual for the vast majority of the bank holiday, however there will be some minor changes to some of the very first and last services between Exeter and Exmouth, Maidenhead and Slough, Tilehurst and Pangbourne, and Swindon and Cheltenham. Buses will be in operation to replace these services; passengers are advised to check with their train operator or National Rail Enquiries before travelling.

Mike Gallop, Western route director for Network Rail said: “We understand that there is never a convenient time to close parts of the railway and that bank holiday engineering work affects many people who will be wanting to make the most of the long weekend.

“Larger pieces of engineering work, such as the electrification in Wales this weekend, are planned for bank holidays because they are quieter periods for the railway, with fewer passengers travelling by rail.

“Passengers want and deserve a more reliable railway, and over the August bank holiday, 1,600 railway workers will be out on the track and working behind the scenes to make sure we are delivering for passengers.

“Thank you for your patience while we carry out these vital upgrades.”

GWR’s customer service manager for South Wales, David Bailey said: “In December we plan to implement the biggest timetable change on this network since 1976, enabling us to take advantage of the full benefits that new Intercity Express Trains are bringing; delivering more seats, and more frequent and quicker journeys.

“In order to help achieve this however Network Rail has been working to continuing the electrification of the line over the last few Sundays and this continues this weekend, and we would like to thank passengers in advance for their patience.”

Full details of the changes to GWR services are available here

www.gwr.com/travel-updates/planned-engineering

A breakdown of how some journeys will be affected can be found by visiting nationalrail.co.uk/August and following #AugustBHworks on Twitter.