

Rail passengers advised to avoid travelling by Greater Anglia trains during rail strikes planned for 1 and 5 October

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Greater Anglia is advising rail passengers, including football fans and people travelling to work and school or college, to avoid travelling by train on Saturday 1 and Wednesday 5 October as national rail strikes are set to cause widespread disruption.

People travelling to the London Marathon on 2 October will also be affected, as the 24-hour strikes have a knock-on effect the following day, with first trains affected and no services before 0700 or 0730.

Rail unions ASLEF and RMT have rescheduled strikes postponed due to the death of Her Majesty The Queen, to next month.

Members of the train drivers' union ASLEF are striking on Saturday 1 and Wednesday 5 October.

They will be joined by RMT union members, including Greater Anglia's conductors, train cleaners and station staff and Network Rail signallers and maintenance teams, in their national rail strike on 1 October.

This will severely disrupt Greater Anglia services, with the company only able to run a fraction of its services – and no services at all between Cambridge and London Liverpool Street or on regional or branch lines.

A heavily reduced service will run between London Liverpool Street and Norwich, Colchester, Southend Victoria and on the Stansted Express service between Stansted Airport and London Liverpool Street.

On 1 October, services will only operate from 0730 and with all last trains setting off before the end of the working day and final whistle in most cases in order to be at their final destination by 1830.

All of East Anglia's top football teams – Norwich City, Ipswich Town, Cambridge United, Peterborough United and Colchester United – have fixtures on 1 October, as do Tottenham Hotspur, West Ham and Arsenal.

Fans are strongly advised to make alternative arrangements, as are students travelling to school or college and people commuting to work, because Greater Anglia is only able to run a heavily reduced service.

On 1 October, due to engineering work there is a rail replacement bus service between Colchester and Ingatestone connecting with the heavily reduced train service.

There will be no rail replacement buses to replace trains not running due to the strike.

Jamie Burles, Greater Anglia managing director said: "We are very sorry that once again our customers will be disrupted by strikes, which this time will affect football fans and some people from our region competing in the London Marathon, as well as school or college students, commuters and business travellers.

"We're only able to run a fraction of our usual services, so our advice again is to avoid using our trains on strike days.

"The rail industry is working hard to resolve these disputes and talks will continue with ASLEF and RMT in an effort to avert the strike."

GA said that anyone who has pre-booked tickets to travel on 1 or 5 October can change them, use them to travel on either the day before or up to two days later, or apply for a refund by going back to their original retailer.

Passenger assistance will be available as usual for all trains which are running. Anyone requiring assistance who cannot avoid travelling by train on strike days should plan their journey and book assistance in advance if possible.

GA is currently finalising details of the strike day timetables and will publish them on its website when they are ready, which is expected to be early next week.

Further information is available from greateranglia.co.uk/strikes which will be updated as details are

finalised.

Other train companies affected by strikes on both days are Chiltern Railways, CrossCountry Trains, LNER, East Midlands Railway, c2c, GWR, Northern Trains, Southeastern, Transpennine Express, Avanti West Coast and West Midlands Trains, Hull Trains and London Overground.

Network Rail, South Western Railway and GTR – which includes Great Northern, Thameslink and the Heathrow Express – and will be affected by strikes on Saturday 1 October.