

Rail services prepare for strike next week

July 20, 2022



Rail operators are preparing their customers for next week's RMT strike, issuing warnings and informing of adjusted timetables.

As some railways warned their services were not fully back on line, such as LNR, following record-breaking temperatures which saw services brought to a standstill, rail bosses were already telling the public to prepare for the impact of industrial action.

RMT will strike next on Wednesday, 27 July. Two further dates are 18 and 20 August.

ASLEF has said its drivers will strike on 30 July.

Only around half of Britain's rail network will be open on 27 July, with a very limited service running on lines that will only be open from around 7.30am until 6.30pm.

Northern said it had **published a timetable** for its "skeleton" service for 27 July, and issued a Do Not Travel notice.

Tricia Williams, chief operating officer at Northern, said: "We've taken on board learnings from the

previous RMT strikes last month and have done everything we can to offer a skeleton service on the parts of our network where we're able to – but our advice remains not to travel.

“The timetable we have put in place has been agreed with Network Rail, who have had to consider the requirements of other train operators and freight services on the network.

“We apologise in advance for the disruption and inconvenience that the RMT’s industrial action will cause. Services are also likely to be disrupted on Thursday, 28 July given the impact of the strike on fleet displacement across our 550-station network. Customers should check online before they travel.

“We continue to be keen to speak to the RMT to find a resolution and avoid any future strikes.”

Chiltern warned there would be an “extremely limited availability of staff”.

There will be no service north of Banbury or beyond Oxford Parkway. Services will finish much earlier than usual.

Passengers seeking to travel to Leamington Spa, Oxford or Birmingham New Street on this day can join its hourly CrossCountry service at Banbury, which its terminating services will connect to.

Andrew Haines, Network Rail chief executive, said: “Despite our best efforts to find a breakthrough, I’m afraid there will be more disruption for passengers next week as the RMT seems hell-bent on continuing their political campaigning, rather than compromising and agreeing a deal for their members.

“I can only apologise for the impact this pointless strike will have on passengers, especially those travelling for holidays or attending events such as the UEFA Women’s Euro 2022 semi-final (Wednesday 27) and the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games (Thursday 28). It is frustrating to yet again ask our passengers to change their plans and only make essential journeys.”

Steve Montgomery, Chair of the Rail Delivery Group, said: “We are incredibly disappointed that the RMT and Aslef leadership are continuing with this action, disrupting the summer plans of millions – including those attending the Commonwealth Games.

“While we will do all that we can to minimise disruption to passengers, our advice is to only travel if it is necessary, and if you are going to travel, please plan ahead. If you’re not able to travel, you can use your ticket either the day before or up to and including 2 August, otherwise you will be able to change your ticket or claim a refund.

“We have a responsibility to bring our railway up to date and give our passengers a more punctual and reliable service so that we’re able to give our staff the pay rise they deserve. But it is wrong to continue asking taxpayers to shoulder more of the burden when they have already contributed £600 per household during the pandemic, or to expect passengers to fund it by paying more for their tickets, when they too are feeling the pinch.

“We ask the RMT and Aslef’s leadership to continue talking so we can come to a deal that works for our

people, our passengers and for taxpayers.”

As always, the best advice is to check if you intend to travel.