

# Rapid railway renewals on West Coast main line in North London

April 1, 2021



Three years' worth of work to upgrade drainage, track and signalling equipment over a seven-mile stretch of railway in North London has been completed in just eleven days by Network Rail.

On Thursday 1 April a more reliable railway reopened for passengers after the rapid renewals on the West Coast main line.

The upgrades have included:

- Drainage improvements in the Victorian-built Kensal Green Tunnel to prevent delays from flooding during bad weather
- Major track renewals between Primrose Hill and Willesden Junction
- Installation of new signalling equipment
- Removal of graffiti and scrap metal from beside the railway

Network Rail teamed up with train operators to close two out of four lines on the West Coast main line while fewer passengers were travelling.

This amount of work would normally have taken three years of consecutive overnight weekend shifts to complete at a cost of around £19.8m.

The super-fast approach over 11 days brought costs down to £6m – saving the taxpayer approximately £13.8m.

James Dean, Network Rail's West Coast South route director, said: "I'd like to thank our passengers and lineside neighbours for their patience whilst we completed this work on the economically important West Coast main line.

"I'd also like to pay a huge credit to our train operators and industry colleagues for enabling us to carry out this work at short notice and get the railway in the best possible shape for passengers when they return. This is all part of our commitment to build back better as the country emerges from the pandemic."

Gus Dunster, executive director of operations and safety at Avanti West Coast, said: "We are pleased to have been able to play our part to facilitate Network Rail's upgrade works on the approach to London Euston. These upgrades usually have to be completed one project at a time, but as a result of the collaborative efforts of industry colleagues we were able to complete multiple projects, while operating our services for our customers who needed to travel.

"We would like to thank everyone who travelled with us during this time for their patience. The work will help to make journeys more reliable for our customers when we look forward to welcoming them back in the near future."

Lawrence Bowman, customer experience director for London Northwestern Railway, said: "This intense period of improvement work will improve the reliability of this crucial part of our rail network and reduce the likelihood of disruption as more people begin travelling again.

"I would like to thank our customers for their patience during the work and urge returning passengers to double-check their train times as some departure times may have changed."

*Photo credit: Network Rail*