

Reliability improvements ahead for Essex rail passengers

September 14, 2020



Reliability improvements to Clacton on Sea's rail line are scheduled to take place from this weekend and at weekends throughout October which will result in fewer delays and cancellations for passengers.

Nearly 3/4 mile of track will be replaced along with 1512 sleepers and 5520 tons of ballast to improve rail journeys on the branch line between Alresford and Great Bentley. Works will also start on a major upgrade of the signalling system.

Just like road surfaces, track gets worn from constant use every day. Network Rail's engineers carry out inspections and repairs regularly, but over time the track becomes so worn that a full replacement is the only option to avoid speed restrictions that cause delays and cancellations.

The work begins on 12 September every weekend until 18 October and affects services between Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea / Walton-on-the-Naze. Follow up works take place on Sunday 25 October.

Passengers travelling on these dates should check how their journey will be affected before they travel.

Ellie Burrows, Network Rail's route director for Anglia, said: "We're carrying out renewals and upgrades on this line to improve reliability. The track replacement work will complement our re-signalling programme and ultimately reduce the number of delays and cancellations passengers experience on their journeys in this region."

Jamie Burles, Greater Anglia managing director, said: "We know that our customers would rather travel by train than bus, but we will make sure they are still able to complete their journeys, even if part of it is by bus, during this major works. People are able to socially distance on our rail replacement buses, as well as on our trains. Please remember to wear a face covering at our stations, and on trains and buses, unless you are exempt.

"Together with Network Rail we are transforming rail travel in Essex, as they modernise the signalling and track and we are introducing brand new longer state-of-the-art trains to replace every single one of our old trains across the whole of our network.

"Please check our website and social media for updates about alternative travel arrangements during these works."

Further works will take place in February 2021 as part of the re-signalling programme which includes a 23-day work programme from Saturday 20 February to Sunday 14 March.

Photo credit: Network Rail

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