

Reopening date announced for Ryde Pier Head station

April 18, 2023



Network Rail and South Western Railway (SWR) have said that the station and line between Ryde Pier Head and Ryde Esplanade stations will open no later than 10 June, in time for the start of the summer holidays and the Isle of Wight Festival.

Work is progressing well and is now entering the final stages with engineers reinstating 172 metres of track and 280 sleepers following the repairs and painting of the steelwork.

The reopening of Ryde Pier Head station will provide a timely boost in supporting tourism during the Island's busy summer holiday season and thousands of festival goers attending this year's Isle of Wight Festival which takes place between Thursday 15 and Sunday 18 June.

The 143-year-old, 686-metre-long Victorian pier has been closed to Island Line services since October 2022 for a programme of steelwork strengthening and track renewals.

Over the course of the winter, engineers braved the elements and continued refurbishing and strengthening the pier structure, however, the challenges of working in a marine environment including

high tides and severe weather conditions throughout December and January meant work had to be temporarily paused for safety reasons. This resulted in the programme timeline being extended into the spring.

Despite this, Island Line customers have been able to benefit from SWR operating two trains per hour between Ryde Esplanade and Shanklin stations since 2 April. From 10 June, this service will be extended to include Ryde Pier Head station every hour.

Further follow up work to extend the life of the pier will be carried out over a number of weeks in October when fewer customers are travelling. Engineers will install 396 metres of new track and 660 sleepers, while also realigning the track to provide smoother journeys along the pier and renewing signalling equipment to improve reliability.

Mark Killick, Network Rail's Wessex route director, said: "We're pleased to announce that Ryde Pier Head station will reopen to customers in time for the summer holidays, which we know is a particularly busy and important time on the Isle of Wight.

"We're sorry this work has taken longer than we had hoped, primarily due to the challenging winter weather conditions. We have remained focused on making sure that despite these challenges Ryde Pier Head station is open throughout the busy summer season.

"We'd like to thank local residents and customers for their patience while we've carried out this huge programme of work to restore the pier, giving it a new lease of life."

Mark Dunn, SWR's Island Line general manager, said: "We're very pleased that the line between Ryde Pier Head and Ryde Esplanade will re-open on Saturday 10 June to support the many tourists and festivalgoers we're expecting.

"Once complete, these works will significantly improve customer journeys on the Island's iconic pier and we are grateful to our customers for their ongoing patience as we work closely with Network Rail to complete them as soon as possible."

Photo credit: Network Rail