

The six months of major improvement work to be rolled out across Anglia's rail network

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Network Rail has announced a huge package of improvement work across the region's rail network to improve reliability of train services for passengers.

The work will take place on regional and main lines and will focus on improving the number of trains on time and reducing delays because of problems such as signal failures, track and overhead wires faults.

Over the next six months, Network Rail's engineers will carry out the following pieces of work as part of the improvement package:

- Track renewal and resignalling work on the Clacton on Sea branch line to improve reliability throughout Autumn this year
- Renew track near Elmswell on the Ipswich to Bury St Edmunds line from July to September to maintain safety and improve reliability
- Renew track at Colchester and Needham Market on the Norwich to London mainline in the Autumn to maintain safety and improve reliability
- Renew track at Somerleyton to maintain safety and improve reliability
- Replace the overhead wires at Stratford to improve reliability, especially in hot weather. This work will take place at Christmas
- Transport for London (TfL) works to lengthen platforms 16 and 17 at Liverpool Street will begin over the Christmas period to make more platforms available for the new, longer Elizabeth line trains
- Network Rail works for the Crossrail programme will continue with station upgrades taking place at Ilford and Romford this autumn. Details on any further line closures will be shared as soon as the plan is finalised.

Ellie Burrows, Network Rail's route director for Anglia, said: "I know passengers want to see improvements to the rail network in Anglia, and we've planned in a package of work to do just that. We have tried to minimise the impact on journeys by grouping projects together where we can but this amount of work simply cannot be carried out without some closures.

"I also know that passengers like to know about how their journeys are going to be affected in good time, and that's why we've announced this package of works scheduled for the next six months, which should help people to plan ahead more easily. While the government advice is still to only use public transport if absolutely necessary, I hope this information will be crucial as and when restrictions are lifted."

Jamie Burles, Greater Anglia managing director said: "It is important that Network Rail carries out this work to make our railway more reliable. We will make sure that passengers can always complete their journeys, even if part of it is by rail replacement bus.

"We will keep passengers updated about alternative travel arrangements through our website and the Greater Anglia app.

"We would remind customers to wear face coverings if they have to travel on all forms of public transport including our trains and rail replacement buses."

Howard Smith, TfL Rail Operations Director, said: "Starting work to extend the platforms at Liverpool Street over Christmas will allow us to introduce the longer, nine-carriage new trains for passengers between Liverpool Street and Shenfield next year. Along with the progress being made at Ilford and Romford stations by Network Rail, customers using this section of the route will see some real benefits."

There will be rail replacement buses and changes to timetables while this work takes place. Passengers are currently asked to only use public transport if absolutely necessary but information will be available from train operators as and when restrictions are lifted on travelling. Passengers are also reminded that in line with new Government guidance, face coverings must be worn for the full duration of journeys on the

public transport network.

Photo credit: Network Rail