

Vital rail upgrade works start today on the Great Eastern Main Line

October 17, 2020



A programme of vital upgrades is planned in the run-up to Christmas to make rail services between Norwich and London more reliable.

Works are taking place at various points on the line between Ipswich and London at weekends starting from today (17 October) to 22 November and passengers are advised to check before they travel.

The work involves:

- The replacement of 4 switches and crossings units, which allow trains to switch from one track to another at Colchester
- Replacement of worn track at Manningtree
- At Stratford and Maryland, works will take place to upgrade the overhead line electrification with a new auto tension system that adapts to temperature changes
- Upgrades to the power systems between London and Shenfield as part of the preparation for the start of Elizabeth line services.

The programme of work will result in fewer delays and cancellations on the busy main line, which is a vital part of Anglia's rail network. Delays on this line have a knock-on effect on branch lines, so passengers across the region will benefit from the upgrades.

Network Rail's route director for Anglia, Ellie Burrows, said: "The main line to London is a critical part of the rail network in the Anglia region. We're committed to improving reliability for our passengers and these upgrades are vital to making that happen, not just between Norwich and London but also for the connecting branch lines."

Jamie Burles, Greater Anglia Managing Director, said: "These works will help to improve punctuality and performance along this vital part of the line."

"We will be running a rail replacement bus service while the work takes place. Passengers should check before they travel, allow more time for their journey and wear a face covering when travelling by train or rail replacement bus. We would like to reassure customers that we constantly monitor passenger numbers to ensure people can socially distance on buses as well as trains."

"We would like to thank customers for their patience while this work takes place."

The upgrade of the overhead line equipment between Stratford and Maryland will continue over Christmas 2020 and weekends in January and February, completing by Easter 2021. More information for works planned at Christmas and in 2021 will be announced later this year.

Photo credit: Network Rail

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