

# Work to connect Midland Main Line with new Brent Cross West railway station

August 18, 2021



Network Rail is continuing to make progress on essential railway upgrades over the August Bank Holiday to improve journeys for passengers and prepare for services to call at the new Brent Cross West station.

Between Saturday 28 August and the first service on Tuesday 31 August, teams will continue with vital work to reconfigure the track layout and improve the signalling system. This work will allow trains to call at the new station when it opens next year, linking people in the community to Central London and the Midland Main Line.

For this work to take place safely, no East Midlands Railway trains will run between Luton and London St Pancras International over the Bank Holiday weekend, and Thameslink services will terminate at Mill Hill Broadway. Replacement bus services will be in place to keep people moving.

During this time, additional improvements will take place as part of a complex project to upgrade the track at Kentish Town. The slab track in the area – which is supported by concrete rather than ballast – was laid in the 1970s. The work to upgrade it will improve journeys and reduce the amount of maintenance required.

Work will also be carried out to replace the points – movable sections of track which allow trains to safely move from one line to another – at Carlton Road junction, between Kentish Town and West Hampstead.

These upgrades will make sure passenger and freight services can continue running safely and reliably for years to come.

Network Rail has carefully planned the work which is taking place over the Bank Holiday weekend and carrying it out when the line is closed reduces the amount of future disruption for passengers.

The following changes will be in place on Saturday 28, Sunday 29 and Monday 30 August:

- No East Midlands Railway services will run between Luton and London St Pancras International. Passengers will be able to use replacement buses to connect to London Underground services.
- A reduced Thameslink service will run between Bedford and Mill Hill Broadway all weekend. Buses will replace trains between Mill Hill Broadway and London St Pancras International.
- Buses will also run between Harpenden (calling at St Albans) and Potters Bar, and between Luton Airport Parkway (calling at Luton) and Hitchin, where passengers can connect to alternative services into London.

Passengers can find out how their journeys will be affected with their train operator, via National Rail Enquiries, or by following #AugustBHWorks on Twitter.

Gary Walsh, Route Director for Network Rail's East Midlands Route, said: "This vital work over the August Bank Holiday will be a major step towards linking the new Brent Cross West station to the Midland Main Line.

"We're carrying out additional improvements whilst this section of the line is closed to reduce future disruption to services. The slab track at Kentish Town has served the line well and the upgrade is vital so services can continue running reliably.

"As we welcome passengers back to the railway, we've worked hard to minimise disruption and keep services moving as much as possible. I'd encourage anyone travelling over the Bank Holiday weekend to check their journey and plan ahead."

Neil Grabham, Customer Services Director for EMR, said: "For any customers who are planning on travelling over the August Bank Holiday weekend, please allow extra time for your journey. There are no EMR train services operating between Luton and London St Pancras International and a replacement bus service will be in place.

"We would like to thank passengers for their patience whilst this crucial engineering work takes place between Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> and Monday 30<sup>th</sup> August."

Jenny Saunders, Customer Services Director for Thameslink, said: "It's good news that Network Rail are taking the opportunity to make these essential track improvements at Kentish Town while preparing for Brent Cross West further north. The new station will be a vital addition to the Thameslink network. If you

do need to travel between Bedford and London during the Bank Holiday weekend, thank you for your patience. Please check a journey planner for details of the service changes and replacement bus options, and allow plenty of extra time. Be aware there may be further changes at short notice because of the coronavirus outbreak.”

People are advised to follow government guidance and wear a face covering in busy indoor settings, unless they are exempt. With good ventilation systems on trains, extra cleaning and improved information about quieter times, passengers can continue to travel with confidence.

*Photo credit: Mace*