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Passengers urged to check journeys during flood prevention work on West Coast Main Line

Rail passengers are being urged to plan their journeys as major work to protect the West Coast Main Line from flooding begins today.

Railway drainage upgrades are taking place until January 12 to improve future journeys between Milton Keynes and Rugby. The work will prevent heavy rain from flooding tracks, making the economically important rail route more reliable for passengers and freight.

During the improvements, trains will be diverted via Northampton to bypass the 4km of trackside drainage work. This will extend journey times, with London Northwestern Railway running fewer services between Crewe and Euston. Some passengers will need to change trains at Rugby to complete their journeys.

James Dean, Network Rail's West Coast South route director, said:

"This major work on the West Coast main line is vital to protect it from the risk of future flooding. We always try to do our work with the least disruption to passengers as possible, and during this project we can keep people on the move by using a diversionary route.

"There will be fewer services, longer journey times and some passengers may need to change trains, so I'd urge people to please check National Rail Enquiries before they travel."

Lawrence Bowman, customer experience director for London Northwestern Railway, said:

"This essential maintenance will improve the reliability of our rail infrastructure and reduce the likelihood of delays in the future. I urge customers to plan their rail travel in advance during the West Coast Main Line work near Milton Keynes in January when some journeys will take longer."

Gus Dunster, executive director of operations and safety at Avanti West Coast, said:

"As Network Rail carries out essential works near Milton Keynes in January, there'll be changes to our services and extended journey times to and from London Euston.

"We strongly recommend you make a reservation, plan your journey in advance as well as check the National Rail Enquiries website before travelling."

To combat Covid-19, passengers must wear a face covering in train stations, on train services and any replacement bus services. Those who fail to do so

face a fine of £200.

Ends

About West Midlands Trains

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West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast Main Line to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street and Birmingham Snow Hill.

For more information on these services visit westmidlandsrailway.co.uk or londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

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Press Contact

press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

0330 095 5626