

Major upgrades to cause railway travel disruption

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MAJOR railway upgrades at Dartford Junction will cause travel disruptions for passengers over the February half term next year.

Rail passengers in south east London and Kent have been warned to plan ahead as the line will close for essential track repairs.

From Saturday, February 14 to Sunday, February 22, Southeastern and Thameslink services between Gravesend and Dartford towards Crayford, Barnehurst, and Slade Green will be replaced with accessible buses. Services will operate as usual in the direction of London along the Sidcup, Bexleyheath, and Woolwich routes.

Passengers are advised to allow additional time for their journeys, particularly during peak hours,

when queues for the replacement buses may be expected.

Advice regarding travel, including bus timetables and ticket acceptance, will be made available soon.

Rail engineers will be working on a crucial £10 million track upgrade at Dartford Junction, which is said to improve the reliability and performance of the busiest railway junction in Kent, thus ensuring better journeys.

The upgrade involves the renewal of 10 switches and crossings (also known as points), which facilitate track changes for trains, and the installation of about 400 yards of new rail between Slade Green and Dartford. The affected stations will also undergo some refurbishment, and station improvements – including the installation of new tactile paving at Dartford station to improve accessibility – will be carried out simultaneously with the line closure.

The main work on the junction is

scheduled for the nine-day closure from February 14 to 22, 2026.

Additional weekend closures will be necessary both before and after the main work, with preparatory work on Saturday, February 8 and Sunday, February 9, and follow-up work on Sunday, March 1 and Sunday, April 5.

David Davidson, chief operating officer for the South Eastern Railway, said: “The work at Dartford Junction, where 650 trains pass every day, is a vital investment in the long-term resilience and efficiency of one of the busiest junctions of our network.

“We’ve deliberately chosen the half term to minimise disruption, when schools are on holiday and fewer people are commuting.

“To make the most of the time available, we’ll also carry out additional improvement work to deliver even more benefits for passengers, including installing tactile paving at Dartford station.”