

Half of Britain's rail lines will be closed during next week's strikes

Network Rail has confirmed that half of Britain's rail lines will be closed during next week's strikes.

No passenger services will serve locations such as Penzance in Cornwall, Bournemouth in Dorset, Swansea in South Wales, Holyhead in North Wales, Chester in Cheshire and Blackpool, Lancashire.

There will also be no passenger trains running north from Glasgow or Edinburgh.

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Open lines include the West Coast Main Line from London to Scotland via locations such as Birmingham and Manchester.

The strike days are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday next week.

The number of passenger services on those days is expected to be limited to around 4,500 compared with 20,000 normally, the PA news agency said.

Members of the Rail, Maritime and Transport union at Network Rail and 13 train operators are to strike for three days next week in similar disputes over pay, jobs and pensions.

Lines will only be open between 7.30am and 6.30pm, meaning services will start later and finish earlier than usual.

Passengers "who must travel" are urged to "plan ahead" to ensure they can complete their journeys within this window, Network Rail said.

Last services from London to Scotland will leave in the early afternoon.

Steve Montgomery, who chairs industry body the Rail Delivery Group, said: "These strikes will affect the millions of people who use the train each day, including key workers, students with exams, those who cannot work from home, holidaymakers and those attending important business and leisure events.

"Working with Network Rail, our plan is to keep as many services running as possible, but significant disruption will be inevitable and some parts of the network will not have a service, so passengers should plan their journeys carefully and check their train times."

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