

East Coast repairs nearly complete

1

SERVICES are returning to normal on the East Coast Main Line, after a kilometre of overhead lines came down near St Neots two days ago. The incident is now being described as a 'dewirement', and a Network Rail investigation has been under way.

Although two of the lines affected reopened yesterday, trains continued to be delayed and diverted. After a further night of repairs, three of the four lines are now open to electric trains and most operators are reporting near-normal services this morning.

The incident was the second of its kind within a few days, because about a kilometre of overhead lines collapsed on the Midland Main Line at Radlett, south of St Albans, last week.

Network Rail said sections of the Midland conductor wires have been examined in a laboratory to see how last week's failure occurred. The company has not commented on claims by the RMT union that failures of overhead lines are the result of maintenance cutbacks.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said: "The chaos on services hitting hundreds of thousands due to cancellations out of central London as a result of the lines down overnight reinforces RMT's demand for a full review of OHL maintenance and emergency staffing numbers and capacity to cope with this growing infrastructure issue and a massive backlog of essential works."



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