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2025

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December 2025

**Preparations underway
for festive season!**



Plus inside...

Rail line closed for days; Remembrance; Abandoned new homes finished; Link Road latest; Rewilding on Exmoor; festive what's on & much more!

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'Flooding' halts trains for days

Trains between Barnstaple and Exeter were suspended for six days after heavy rain, including from Storm Claudia, triggered flood safety monitors along the Tarka Line.

James Crook from Network Rail said, "Our remote monitoring equipment found water had reached the closure markers at three bridges/viaducts on the route, hence why we had to close the line."

"In order to reopen the line, we needed to get a team of specialist divers to inspect the lower part of the structures affected to ensure they haven't been affected by scour. In order to do that, the water has to recede below these closure markers."

The first trains were cancelled around 4pm on Wednesday, November 12th with services resuming on the morning of Wednesday, November 19th. Passengers used buses and taxis.

Tim Steer, chair of Railfuture in Devon and Cornwall, said recent issues with packed trains and cancellations showed the line needed to be modernised.

"GWR are going from one crippling challenge to the next, whether it's overcrowding at busy times or this where the line is not even open - this Victorian infrastructure needs to be addressed now," he said.

The introduction of a fleet of new trains on the Tarka Line has been delayed, and campaigners are calling for urgent upgrades to the tracks to help prevent further closures.

David Northey, chair of the North Devon Line Rail Promotion Group, added, "For many residents the railway is not a luxury - it is an essential lifeline for work, education, healthcare and access to wider opportunities."



Above, the white marker is the flood alert level and below, the same bridge parapet underwater - photos courtesy Network Rail



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