



Transport for
West Midlands



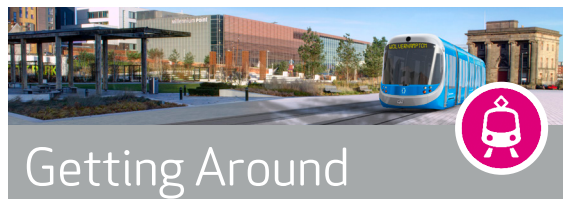
Midland
Metro Alliance

Eastside EDITION

ISSUE 3 JULY 2021

Welcome

Welcome to 'Eastside Edition', a new newsletter designed to keep those working and living in the area up-to-date on the progress of the Birmingham Eastside Metro extension to Digbeth, which is being designed and delivered by the Midland Metro Alliance on behalf of Transport for West Midlands (TfWM).



Getting Around

We appreciate that everyone will have a different journey; the following is to assist you to plan ahead:

As progress on Lower Bull Street, West Midlands Bus services are diverted to nearby bus stops in the city centre.

Lane restrictions in place on Digbeth High Street as Metro and street scene improvements begin in this area. Those travelling through the area should plan their journeys and allow extra time.

From Saturday 24 July, there will be changes to Metro services while work is carried out to tie-in the exiting track to the Birmingham Eastside Metro Extension. There will also be track replacement work taking place on Corporation Street at the same time.

Further details, including temporary changes, can be found in the main story on the right.

If you do need to use public transport during this time, you can get the latest updates on bus, train or tram services by visiting: wmnetwork.co.uk/networkoverview

The busiest times to travel are varying as Covid-19 measures change. Please check with public transport operators before any essential travel.

Existing Metro line in Birmingham City Centre to be future-proofed this summer

The West Midlands Metro line in Birmingham City Centre is to receive essential upgrades and maintenance alongside ongoing activity to extend the tramway to both Digbeth and Edgbaston with track replacement along Corporation Street to begin this Saturday.

For the duration of the planned maintenance works along Corporation Street, beginning Saturday 25 July and expected to wrap-up in October, tram services will continue to serve Birmingham city centre at a temporary terminus at Bull Street in the Colmore Business District. Those requiring onward travel within the city centre will be able to use their Metro tickets on a variety of nearby bus services.



Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) is committed to investing in the Metro and along with game-changing new lines which will transform public transport in the West Midlands, has also committed to ensuring the existing Metro line sees similar investment. Midland Metro Alliance (MMA) is planning, designing and delivering these Metro enhancements on behalf of TfWM.

Michael Anderson, Metro Programme Director for TfWM, said: "As we prepare for passenger services to a new terminus in Edgbaston Village later this year, the Corporation Street track replacement will allow for an improved ride quality as well as reducing the need for any future maintenance. This investment in line one, which follows other upgrades in the Wolverhampton area of the route, would be needed in the future but by carrying it out at the same time as the first works for the Birmingham Eastside Metro extension, overall disruption is reduced."

Maria Ion, Project Director at MMA, added: "The activity currently underway on Lower Bull Street will see a complex piece of tramway infrastructure installed at the junction of Bull Street and Corporation Street. When connecting these tracks to the existing ones, a considerable amount of track would need to be upgraded anyway, so by combining the works we're improving the current line and preventing additional impacts on those living, working and visiting Birmingham city centre."

There will be the following changes to West Midlands Metro's normal timetable to allow this work to be completed:

- On Saturday 24 July, trams will terminate at St Chads from 21:30 until the end of service
- On Sunday 25 July, tram will terminate at St Chads from 19:00 until the end of service
- From Monday 26 July until October 2021, trams will operate between Wolverhampton St George's and Bull Street only. There will be no services between Bull Street and Library.

More information on Metro services can be found by visiting www.westmidlandsmetro.com whilst project updates on the track replacement are hosted at a dedicated webpage, www.metroalliance.co.uk/cstr.



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Testing success for Lower Bull Street tramway infrastructure

The tramway junction, which will allow Metro services to travel in different directions at the junction of Lower Bull Street and Corporation Street has moved a step closer to installation following quality tests on the production of precast concrete pieces.

Victor Henoux, Assistant Delivery Manager, visited the manufacturers to understand the production process as well as to ensure there are no discrepancies with the design. Testing is an important part of the process as it is a chance for the team to communicate with the suppliers and meet the manufacturers.



"This delta junction is a complex piece of track so we really want to have confidence and quality control," Victor explained.

Part of the production process involves a mock-up being made on the site of the manufacturers in order to align the track to the exact specifications. This will make sure that all the slabs fit together with the correct design alignment. It also allows the team to check the interfaces between the steel works and the slabs as they come from two different manufacturers.

Victor added: "This delta junction is very complex because of the geometry of the installation. There will be three switch and crossings and they have to be perfectly aligned together. With this type of work we have the pressure of time which is why we ensure the accuracy and the details in advance."



Stakeholder Liaison Team keep Corporation Street locals up to date with socially distanced event

Ahead of track replacement activity beginning this coming Saturday (24 July), the alliance's dedicated stakeholder liaison team held a socially distanced event on Corporation Street on Thursday 15 July.



Amy Walker, Stakeholder Liaison Officer, said: "Working with our colleagues in the Construction and Communications Teams, and partners like West Midlands Metro, we have been working hard over recent weeks to ensure all in the area are aware of what will be going on along the street and why. Thursday's event was an additional great opportunity to get the message out there and let people know they could still get around and visit the fantastic shops and businesses here during our works." Anyone wanting to get in contact with the team is able to do so by emailing communications@metroalliance.co.uk.

Continued Covid-19 measures in place for Metro services

As restrictions ease, services are likely to be busier. The safety and well-being of our customers and team members remains our number one priority and we will continue to do everything we can to prevent the spread of Covid-19).

Our colleagues will continue to wear face coverings, as we believe that wearing face coverings on public transport – particularly busy services – has an important role to play in protecting vulnerable members of the community and our colleagues, and we urge our customers to join in this collective effort. There will also be members of the team out and about on the network handing out masks, where needed.

An enhanced cleaning regime will continue, and tram doors will be opened automatically at all stops to help reduce surface contact and keep air flowing through our trams. More information about the measures we have in place and details of how you can help stop the spread of the virus is available here:

[Latest Advice – West Midlands Metro](#)

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News from TfWM: West Midlands bus passengers to get lower fares as Covid restrictions lift

Passengers thinking of returning to buses as Covid restrictions lift will be able to save money on fares following a new agreement with operators. Some fares will now be the lowest they have been in more than a decade.

Beginning Monday 19 July, bus operators and Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) have agreed to reduce the n-bus multi-operator fares across the board – ranging from a 60p saving on a day ticket to £140 on the 52-week fare. The nbus day fare is now £4.20 the same price as it was in 2012. While the last time a one-week nbus ticket was as low as £15.80 was 2008.

As passengers begin to return to the network, transport operators have stepped up cleaning on buses, trains and trams, as well as at stations and facilities across the network to help keep passengers and staff safe. Passengers are also being asked to continue wearing face coverings when using public transport.



The introduction of lower fares comes as the West Midlands Combined Authority ramps up the Open for Business Safely campaign to support those businesses, especially those in the hospitality and tourism sectors, who have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic. The campaign highlights safety measures taken by firms including bus companies keeping up their strict covid cleaning regimes to give people the confidence to use them safely.

For a full rundown on the fares and information, as well as the latest Covid 19 travel advice, visit the TfWM website at www.tfwm.org.uk.

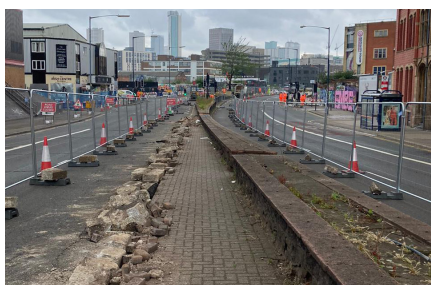
Summer in the Square

Colmore BID, the organisers of Colmore Food Festival, have partnered with Retail BID and Birmingham City Council, to establish a new outdoor seating space for people to enjoy at anytime during the summer months in Victoria Square. The colourful beach huts will be open for business on the dates below, featuring some of the city's top hospitality venues selling an assortment of food and drink:

- Thursday 29 – Saturday 31 July
- Thursday 5 – Saturday 7 August
- Thursday 12 – Saturday 14 August
- Thursday 19 – Saturday 21 August
- Thursday 26 – Monday 30 August (Bank Holiday)

Michele Wilby, CEO of Colmore BID said: "Colmore Food Festival is the pinnacle of our annual events calendar and while it could not take place this year due to the uncertainty surrounding Covid restrictions, we could not let the occasion pass us by, so developed the smaller scale Summer in the Square. Summer in the Square allows for increased outdoor seating in the District in a safe and measured way, providing space for people to catch up with friends and colleagues, while adhering to guidelines. We can't wait to see the square buzzing with activity once again."

For more information, including a programme of events for Summer in the Square please visit www.colmorebusinessdistrict.com.



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Construction Update leaflet gives updated look at transformation of Digbeth High Street as work ramps up on site

Further info on the transformation of Birmingham's 'creative quarter' was shared with those living and working in the area as Birmingham City Council and Midland Metro Alliance published a Construction update publication recently.



YOUR DIGBETH HIGH STREET

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



Making a positive difference



The leaflet, which was also delivered to those living and working in the area, advises of the story so far with the Metro and public realm work which will see Digbeth High Street transformed into a pedestrian friendly space.

Ahead of working getting underway on 6 July, engagement specialists from both the council and the alliance also visited premises along the route and surrounding streets to answer any questions that they might have. Birmingham City Council are asking those with any questions about the planning of this scheme, to email EconomyBusinessSupport@birmingham.gov.uk.

Those travelling along Digbeth High Street will have noticed preliminary works for the urban realm and Metro schemes are now well underway, with the team initially busy with removing the busy thoroughfare's central reservation with this activity already about 30 per cent completed. In addition, mitigation measures, designed to assist public transportation around Rea Street and Bradford Street have been successfully implemented.



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