



Transport for
West Midlands



Midland
Metro Alliance

Connecting SANDWELL & DUDLEY

ISSUE 15 JULY 2022

Welcome

Welcome to 'Connecting Sandwell & Dudley', a bi-monthly publication designed to keep those working and living in the area up-to-date on the progress of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension which we're building 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 work continues on Castle Hill one-way traffic restrictions remain in place with vehicles travelling in the direction of Castlegate island only with clearly marked diversion routes in place to direct traffic.

The overflow car park at Dudley Port Railway Station remains closed to allow access to the railway corridor where the Metro is being constructed.

The main Park and Ride car park, including provision for disabled and car sharing bays, remains open throughout construction for the Metro.

Cycle storage provision remains in place at Dudley Port and the station is regularly served by buses, too.

In Great Bridge, New Road will be closed for works from Saturday 16 July for up to nine weeks and Bramah Way will be shut for vehicles from Monday 1 to Friday 19 August.

Those who need to travel are being advised to plan ahead and leave more time for journeys.

Castle Hill works reach halfway milestone

Late last month, construction along Castle Hill in Dudley town centre moved forward with activity switching to the opposite side of the busy throughfare following completion of this current stage of construction.

One-way traffic will continue to be maintained in the direction of Castlegate island and all businesses in the area remain accessible and open as usual.

In order to further progress activities, MMA operatives are working six days a week on some parts of the route.

Tom Maplethorpe Black Country Metro extension Project Director said: "It's fantastic to be at this stage in the project where we're able to show off the work which has been done so far including the significant progress along Castle Hill. Businesses and the town's fantastic visitor offerings near to where we are working remain open as usual and would love to see you this summer."

Since works got underway in March 2020 a considerable amount of activity has taken place, including utility upgrades and diversions, removal of the existing road surface, creation of concrete track beds, installation of ducting for system integration and more than 350m of rail laid. These works are now being replicated on the opposite side of the street in the coming weeks and months.

New Road set to close for works

New Road

Localised closure

Saturday 16 July for nine weeks

Plan ahead



Plan ahead:
www.metroalliance.co.uk

From Saturday 16 July, there will be a localised closure on New Road in Tipton for up to nine weeks.

Bramah Way will also close, at its junction with new Road, for a period of up to three weeks from Monday 1 August, to allow for the safe operation of a crane on site.

Pedestrian access to frontages and businesses will be maintained during the works. Parking bays in the impacted area will be suspended whilst the road closure is in place.

Sedgley Road Bridge works rescheduled

Works previously communicated to take place on Sedgley Road in Tipton have been postponed until the autumn.

Tom Bissell, Stakeholder Liaison Officer, said: "We always try to give as much notice ahead of our works taking place, and you might have seen reference to this activity on social media. Due to a supply chain issue, we're unable to begin these works until later in the autumn and apologise for any inconvenience caused."



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Bourne Street Car Park Reopened



Scheduled works have now been completed by the MMA on Bourne Street near Dudley Town Centre.

The work, which was undertaken to enable Bourne Street to be opened up at its junction with Trindle Road, is now complete and the car park reopened to use by local residents again.

Andy Jacques, Senior Delivery Manager on the WBHE project, said: "The alliance endeavours to keep those impacted by our works informed and keep disruption to a minimum and we would like to thank nearby residents and businesses for their patience while we were working on Bourne Street."

Spades hit ground on The Minories

Following the alliance's recent acquisition of the Minories Car Park, excavation and initial construction works have commenced in the area.



Once completed, the area will have a new road layout and significant urban realm enhancement features similar to works currently underway on nearby Flood Street.

Jacob Hodson,
Assistant

Project Manager, said: "It is really gratifying to see our works progressing around Dudley Town Centre. The spades hitting the ground on The Minories marks is another marker that construction is continuing successfully on the Black Count for the project."

The Minories Car Park is now permanently closed, with other public parking available in the immediate vicinity on Flood Street.

WBHE project visit facilitates further transport coordination in the Black Country

On Friday 15 June, a delegation from the Black Country Transport Executive (BCTE) were taken on a guided tour of key sites on the Metro route.



During the visit, eight representatives from BCTE were taken to the site of the delta junction in Wednesbury, where the new line will begin, and also to see progress along the railway corridor. The excursion concluded in Dudley Town centre where the group were shown the recently installed track on Castle Hill.

Tom Maplethorpe, WBHE Project Director who met the delegation, said: "I was proud to share the achievements on the project to date with colleagues from the executive. The group were keen to understand the project risks and where they could support in ensuring coordination with other schemes they're involved with across Sandwell and Dudley."

Rooted in collaboration, the Black Country Transport Executive brings together officers from the four Black Country local authorities; Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton, with a team of central officers who provide support in the delivery of cross-boundary transport schemes.



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Careers On Track: Black Country Metro apprentices celebrate success



Apprentices at the Midland Metro Alliance are celebrating a major step forward in their career after reaching the halfway point of their course.

Last autumn, the alliance welcomed a cohort of new apprentices who work across its projects in office and on-site roles.

Six of the trainees are employed as track construction operative apprentices and are currently studying towards a bespoke light rail qualification which was developed by the MMA and leading organisations in the light rail industry back in 2018.

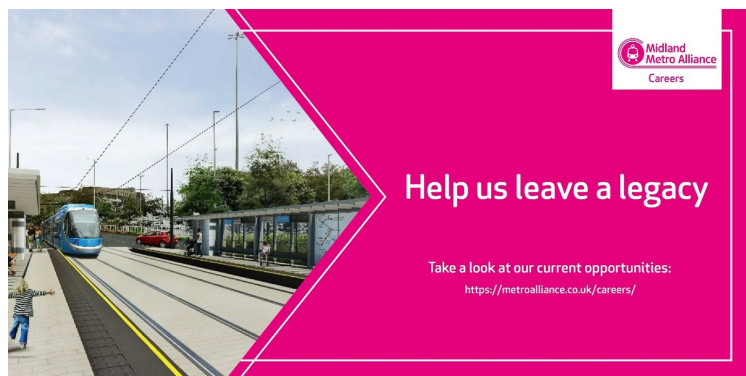
Reflecting on his experiences so far as a trainee at the MMA, Connor Mallen, who, like his colleagues is helping to deliver the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension, said: "Being an apprentice is all about

hands-on experience which suits me and the way I like to learn. It is great to be able to put questions to more experienced colleagues and find out more about the job from them. Working on this Black Country Metro extension has given me the chance to get tickets to work on a variety of construction jobs. I feel I am picking up skills which will help me in my career going forward."

Fellow track operative apprentice, Keith Munyoro, added: "When I was at school, I knew I wanted to get into engineering. The opportunity to work for the alliance has provided a chance for me to do this. After my apprenticeship, if possible, I want to stick with the MMA and move up to lead my own team and maybe even get into management."

You can watch a short video highlighting their successes [here](#).

We're Hiring



The alliance is recruiting for a Buyer for our Black Country Metro extension project.

The purpose of this role is to provide our delivery teams with materials, plant and service supply. This will involve taking primary responsibility for placement of orders and communicating internally across the business, with external suppliers and other bodies as directed by the construction team.

There are many exciting opportunities at the MMA, find out more here: [Careers – Midland Metro Alliance](#)

Helping to shape our future communications

Residents and businesses attended focus sessions to help shape the Midland Metro Alliance's communication material for the future.



They provided feedback on our communications, including the Connecting Sandwell and Dudley newsletter, our dedicated webpage and

social channels, on what works and gave suggestions for future content.

Some of their ideas will be incorporated in future communications for those living and working along the route.

If you were unable to attend but would still like to provide feedback please email news@metroalliance.co.uk with your thoughts or to request a digital feedback pack.



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Get set for the Games

As the region 'Gets Set for the Games', now is the perfect time to start planning so that you're ready too.

The organisers and Transport for West Midlands are helping locals and visitors alike to prepare to 'Get Set for the Games' with an online hub which will provide the most up-to-date information and the tools you need to plan and prepare for the busy and exciting summer ahead as the Games comes to Birmingham.

The Games will shine a spotlight on Birmingham and the West Midlands, meaning over a million people from across the globe will be travelling to the region to enjoy not only the sporting events but everything else it has to offer. So, whether you are on your way to work, going on a night out or taking the family out for a day trip, be aware that the road and public transport network are going to be significantly busier than usual.

Plan your journeys ahead of time to minimise delays and disruption before, during and after the Games and check back with the 'Get Set' hub frequently for more location specific information.

You can access the hub at: www.birmingham2022.com/getset

Top tips to keeping moving during the Games:

- Plan ahead and allow extra time for your journey.
- The busiest times will be just before and just after the events take place - could you plan your travel outside of these times?
- For local journeys, avoid the traffic by walking or cycling.
- Use the road and rail network maps to see which junctions or services are likely to be busy on which days and at which times.
- If you live close to a road event, be aware that road closures and diversions will be in place on these days.
- Follow [@GetSet2022](https://twitter.com/GetSet2022) on Twitter for the latest updates.



New West Midlands Metro extension to Edgbaston to open on Sunday

Passenger tram services on the new West Midlands Metro extension from Library to Edgbaston are set to begin from this Sunday (17th July).

Phase two of the Birmingham Westside Metro extension takes the line along Broad Street to Hagley Road adding three stops along the way at Brindleyplace, Five Ways and the end of the line at Edgbaston Village.

The extension is opened in time for the Commonwealth Games and will offer the many visitors arriving in the city over the next few weeks a convenient and frequent service to the many hotels, hospitality businesses and entertainment venues in the area. Trams will also be calling at all stops in Birmingham city centre including Grand Central, restoring the convenient link to regional and national rail services, and Library.

The older trams in the West Midlands Metro fleet have been undergoing an extensive repair programme as a result of cracks found in the bodypanels. Now enough vehicles have been repaired to allow passenger services to resume on the line through Birmingham city centre and the new Westside extension.

The Westside extension development has been led by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), part of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), working with construction and design partner Midland Metro Alliance, operator Midland Metro Ltd and Birmingham City Council.

The Westside extension, including phase one between Grand Central and Library which opened in 2019, has cost £149 million. Main construction of phase two carried on through the Covid-19 pandemic to completion earlier this year.

The new extension will support local businesses vastly improving connectivity to the wider region.

Services will run every 12 to 15 minutes, with peak time frequency to increase as more trams become available for service following repair. Timetables and fare information is available on the West Midlands Metro website.

TfWM and Safer Travel police officers will be out on Broad Street to assist and advise people on road safety during the first weekend of tram operation next Friday and Saturday evenings (July 22 and 23). Teams from Metro will also be around throughout the week to support passengers using the service.

There remains some public realm work to complete following the opening as well as some work to prepare for future public transport infrastructure along Hagley Road.



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