



Transport for
West Midlands



Midland
Metro Alliance

Transforming WOLVERHAMPTON

ISSUE 22 JULY 2022

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

Tram stops installed in Wolverhampton for new route



The first tram stop for the Wolverhampton City Centre Metro extension has been installed along one of the city's main streets.

The Pipers Row stop, the first new tram shelter in the city for 23 years, was installed in early July, with the second piece of new infrastructure for the terminus at the revamped railway station due to be installed later this month.

Paul Brown, Project Director at MMA, said: "It is great to see the first tram stop for the city's new Metro extension now installed. The scheme is part of a wider interchange project and will further boost the city's transport offering. The route may be small, but it is a big part of giving the city the public transport gateway it deserves linking bus, train and tram together."

Main construction on the project resumed in summer 2021 following the completion of the revamped railway station and since then all of the remaining track has been installed in Railway Drive together with the installation of the overhead lines and upgrades to a nearby substation, enhancing power provision for the entire Metro network between Wolverhampton and Birmingham.

The majority of construction activity is set to be completed by the end of July before the area is opened up, with some temporary surfacing in place, ahead of the Games. Minor public realm works will then conclude after the Games before testing and commissioning is expected to begin in the autumn with the route opening later this year.



Getting Around



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

As works progress, Railway Drive will remain closed and will be accessible to permit holders only.

Pedestrian access is being maintained at all times. However, as it is a live work site, pedestrian routes may change periodically as the work progresses.

Please see page two for an update on resurfacing work scheduled to take place on Bilston Street

For further travel advice, visit: www.networkwestmidlands.com/keepmoving



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Final piece of track is welded into place for extension

A major milestone has been reached as the last piece of track was welded into place Railway Drive connecting it to tracks on Pipers Row which were laid earlier in the project.



The significant achievement, which signals the end of track laying on the project, means passenger services to a new terminus at Wolverhampton's Railway Station are on track to commence later this year after the last 100 meters of tracks were laid.

Jamie Brownhill, Construction Manager, said: "Our teams have continued to work incredibly hard and have shown great commitment to complete this stage of the project. It is fantastic to see main construction coming to an end and the area has really transformed in recent weeks with the installation of new paving, tram stops and these last pieces of track. All of us here at the alliance share great pride in delivering such a transformative tram extension for the city."

Motorists advised to plan ahead in mid-August

Motorists are being advised to plan ahead later in August when finishing activity for the Metro extension gathers pace.

With the project now in its final stages, traffic changes will be implemented on Bilston Street overnight for five days between Monday 15 and Friday 19 August (inclusive) as works to lay a new road surface get underway.

During this time there will be no vehicular access to St. Georges Parade from Bilston Street island. A signed diversion route will be in place to allow access to frontages via Snow Hill.

Following this, Bilston Street will close at 10pm on Monday 22 August before reopening at 5am the following morning (Tuesday 23 August) to allow lining work to take place.

Our dedicated Stakeholder Liaison Officer for the route, Shervorne Brown, has been in touch with residents and businesses with further information.

Bilston Street

Overnight closures

Five days between Monday 15 and Friday 19 August

Plan ahead



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Plan ahead:

www.metroalliance.co.uk



Railway Plaza and Pipers Row take shape with new paving

If you have visited the city centre in recent weeks you will have noticed new paving that has been installed in the area close to the forthcoming Metro route on Railway Drive.

Plans to give Wolverhampton's transport corridor fresh look as part of finishing works for the new Metro extension are now starting to take shape.

Paving and kerbing works have progressed in recent weeks with much of this activity located close to newly-installed tram stops and also around the recently refreshed railway station. In addition, concrete has been poured in the section where tracks have been laid and tied-into existing rails, with final surfacing expected to be installed shortly.

This upgrade of the street scene is being completed by the MMA as part of the Wolverhampton Interchange Partnership.



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Overhead line upgrades completed for new route

The Wolverhampton project team accelerated overhead line improvement activities recently ensuring that Metro passengers would keep moving when trams returned to service in early June.

Originally plans to install the new and enhanced equipment and integrate it with the existing overhead substations would have meant a period of time when trams could not service all stops in the city centre due to electrical isolations needed for safety reasons.

However, the team managed to get the crucial work for the forthcoming extension done during the spring service suspension meaning that passengers did not face a further disruption in this area during peak times when trams returned. Work also was phased so that new West Midlands Metro drivers and essential tram testing could also take place during certain hours.

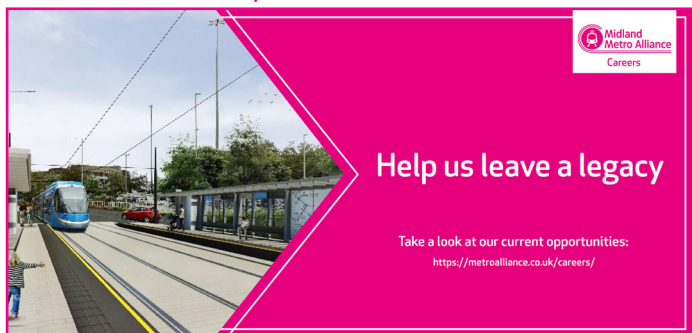
Kenny MacLeod, Senior Delivery Manager, said: "We understand the work we can do can be disruptive, so we were pleased to be able to schedule this work in such a way to minimise our impact."

We're Hiring

The alliance is recruiting for a Buyer on 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 at www.metroalliance.co.uk/careers.



Help us leave a legacy

Take a look at our current opportunities:
<https://metroalliance.co.uk/careers/>

Midland Metro Alliance
Careers

Helping to shape our future communications

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

They provided feedback on our communications, including our stakeholder newsletters, our dedicated project webpages 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 close to 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.

Re-use and recycle in action for Metro brickwork

At the Midland Metro Alliance, sustainability is one of our core values. As such, we are committed to the sustainable development of our tram extension programme, from ensuring that we reduce our carbon impact to maintaining a balance between economic success, protection of the environment and social responsibility.

Our ethos is to adopt responsible and sustainable practices in the way in which we develop and deliver the infrastructure in partnership with our suppliers and stakeholders.

We recently put these values into practice with the construction of a boundary wall for the route. This wall provides an element of acoustic protection and includes recycled materials, such as waste plastic and metal.

This reduces the need to make new materials which would deplete natural resources and helps prevent the volume of waste materials ending up at landfill.

Marcel Azubuike, Sustainability Advisor, said: "Along with additional measures, such as minimising nuisance to our neighbours with regards to noise and dust during construction, we work with our project team to design out waste and make our projects even greener".

Careers On Track: Black Country Metro apprentices celebrate success

Our apprentices 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, Connor Mallen, who, like his colleagues is helping to deliver one of our Black Country Metro extensions, 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 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: <https://vimeo.com/721364405>



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- Latest news from TfWM -

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 on Twitter for the latest updates.

New West Midlands Metro extension to Edgbaston is now open

Passenger tram services on the new West Midlands Metro extension from Library to Edgbaston began recently on Sunday 17 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 are now also 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 body panels. 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.



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