



Transport for
West Midlands



Midland
Metro Alliance

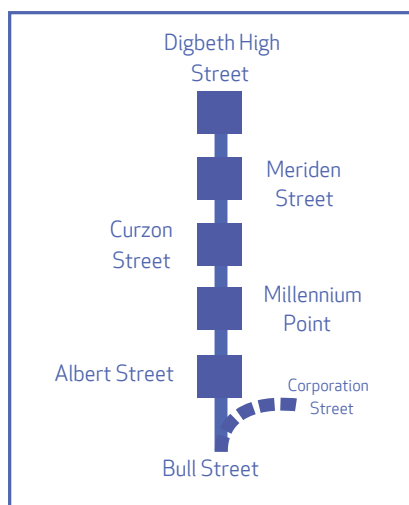
Eastside EDITION

ISSUE 23 | MARCH 2025

Welcome

Welcome to 'Eastside Edition', a 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).

When complete, four new tram stops will connect passengers from the existing Metro line at Bull Street to High Street Deritend in Digbeth, via Curzon Street Station, helping to connect more of the region to high-speed rail services.



Getting Around



For the latest information, advice and live info on the region's roads follow the @wmroads Twitter feed and for wider transport updates follow @transportforwm.

ICYMI: A round up of construction activity from the previous issue

We highlighted the transformation of Albert Street, with this area of the city centre, re-opening to vehicular traffic just after the start of the year.

We shared new drone footage which gave a bird's-eye view of construction for Metro.

We celebrated massive progress on Moor Street Queensway with the first phase of works here almost completed.

What you need to know

Welcome to the latest edition of the Eastside Edition newsletter - your regular update on all that is going on as our team deliver the Birmingham Eastside Metro Extension to Digbeth.

As per usual, I'll provide a quick recap of recent progress on this first page with everything covered in more detail later in the newsletter.

Lower Bull Street, Dale End and Albert Street

- Works in Dale End, which mean some single lane running in places, are progressing well, as are finishing works on Albert Street - with the team celebrating a massive milestone with the first tram stop frameworks being installed this month;
- There's still some localised restrictions on pavements around this area as work continues - next will be installing glass panels and the systems integration with the wider-Metro network;
- Speaking of systems being integrated, **the overhead line equipment (OLE) for the route between Lower Bull Street and Albert Street is set to go live next month on Saturday 21 April at 1am;**
- This means that, in anticipation for testing and commissioning to begin, the overhead lines recently installed for the route will be live;
- We have written to those in the area to make them aware, but we also wanted to use this newsletter as another reminder of this fact;
- Remember, once these lines are live, if you're a business immediately next to the route, **you must liaise** with our colleagues at West Midlands Metro for a permit to do things like work on your building or have your windows cleaned if your building has OLE fixings attached. You can find out more at: <https://westmidlandsmetro.com/using-the-metro/permit-to-work/>

Moor Street Queenway

- As you may have seen in the media, in the last week or so, or if you've been walking through the area, the big news in Moor Street Queensway was the installation of the switch and crossing for the forthcoming temporary terminus near the Clayton Hotel with the equipment lifted into place on Thursday 20 March;
- There's more on this milestone **over the page and on page three** along with insights from the Mayor, Transport for West Midlands Executive Director, Anne Shaw, our very own Project Manager, Hamish and even insights from our friends at the Clayton Hotel who had a bird's-eye view to the lift!

As per usual, I'll be in touch with any important changes but please don't hesitate to contact me in the meantime, and remember, you can keep up-to-date on progress for the route between newsletter issues over on our social media channels.

Enjoy the issue!

Tom Bissell,
Stakeholder Liaison Manager.



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It's all going on near the Clayton as switch and crossing lowered into place!

The Birmingham Eastside Metro Extension project has reached another significant milestone with the installation of the switch and crossing infrastructure for its temporary terminus outside the Clayton Hotel last week.

This key piece of infrastructure is one of the final elements of track to be delivered in the current phase of work and will pave the way for testing and commissioning of the extended tramway in coming months.

The complex operation saw the large and intricate switch and crossing unit carefully lowered into its final position. The technology installed allows for a temporary terminus to be operational and means passenger services to Moor Street Queensway and Albert Street are able to begin operating earlier.

Speaking of the milestone, Mayor of the West Midlands, Richard Parker, said:

"The Birmingham Eastside Metro Extension is making great progress. It will connect more people in Birmingham and the Black Country to our transport network, linking directly to Curzon Street and high-speed rail.

We're already seeing the impact, with businesses and new developments in Digbeth and Eastside preparing for better transport links. This isn't just about laying new tracks; it's about giving people better access to jobs, education, and leisure, making everyday journeys easier. Good transport unlocks opportunity, and I'll keep pushing to deliver a network that works for everyone across the West Midlands."

Anne Shaw, Executive Director of Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), added:

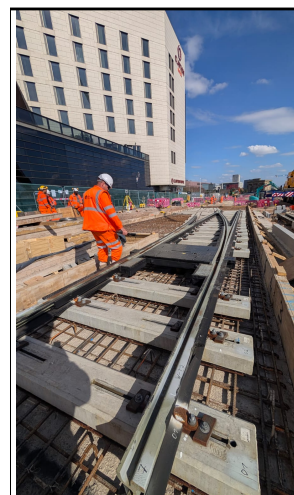
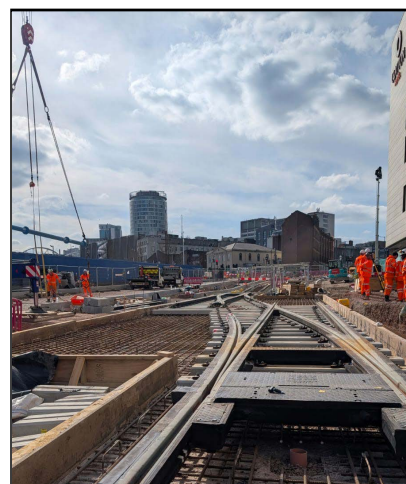
"The installation of this piece of equipment is a massive sign that the phased opening of this Metro route is coming ever closer.

The transformation of the Moor Street and Albert Street areas, so far delivered in less than a year, is remarkable and I'm excited that locals and visitors to Birmingham will be able to benefit from an even better-connected public transport hub linking buses, trams and trains as construction begins to wrap-up."

Hamish Falconer, MMA Project Manager, provided insight into the on-site construction activities:

"From a construction perspective, the lifting into position and installation of this switch and crossing is a significant undertaking. The successful install involves careful lifting operations using specialist machinery, followed by precise alignment configuration and welding.

The team and I are especially proud of this delivery milestone and the swift transformation of the entire Moor Street Queensway area where our works only commenced around 11 months ago."



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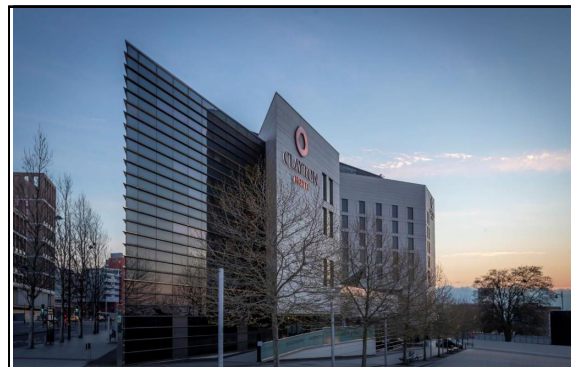
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The team at the Clayton Hotel share their thoughts on the area's transformation.

It hasn't just been our talented delivery crew who have had an up-close view for the transformative works taking place in the Moor Street Queensway - the team at the nearby Clayton Hotel have had a birds-eye view of the Metro works with their hotel overlooking the site since main construction began last April.

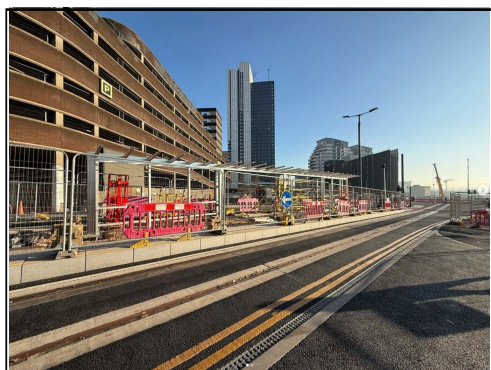
With their prime location being just a five-minute walk from The Bullring and overlooking Moor Street Queensway, the 4-star hotel have had a front-row view for many milestones taking place across 2024 and 2025, including tram tracks slowly crossing the busy thoroughfare, first tram stops (more on this below) and, of course, the installation of the switch and crossing as detailed on the previous page.

Dara McEneaney, General Manager at the Clayton Hotel on Moor Street Queensway, said: "It's encouraging to see the tangible progress being made with the Metro extension. While we appreciate there's some inevitable short-term disruption during construction, we're excited about the long-term benefits this enhanced connectivity will bring to our hotel guests."



"It's really positive to hear that our friends at the Clayton Hotel are pleased with the swift progress being made for the delivery of the Eastside route. We understand that our works can be disruptive and we work hard to minimise this impact wherever possible."

Rose Rees, Head of Engagement & Skills, Midland Metro Alliance



Tram stops are here on Albert Street and overhead lines are to go live next month!

In a clear sign that the first phase of the Birmingham Eastside Metro extension is approaching completion, the first tram stops have been installed for the Albert Street stops.

Last week, the team were busy installing the framework for one of the two stops at Albert Street, which has taken shape in the last twelve months. In coming weeks, additional finishing works will take place, including installing glass panels and connecting systems, such as passenger information displays to the wider Metro technology network.

Elsewhere, the overhead line equipment is in its final stages of commissioning by our engineers ahead of this equipment being energised next month on **Saturday 21 April at 1am**.

Colleagues inspire future STEM talent via Metro visit

We recently partnered with the Engineering Development Trust (EDT) to host a successful "Routes into STEM" event for young people in Birmingham. This initiative aimed to ignite an interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields and provide insights into potential career pathways within these crucial sectors.

The event offered local students a unique opportunity to engage with professionals from the MMA, participate in interactive activities, and gain a deeper understanding of the diverse and exciting opportunities available in STEM. This collaboration underscores our commitment to fostering the next generation of talent and addressing the growing demand for skilled individuals in these vital industries.

The positive impact of the event was highlighted in feedback received from Ellen Pugsley, Individual Programmes Lead at EDT, who expressed her gratitude, stating, "Thank you to you and the team with your support for the Routes into STEM course."

The MMA remains committed to supporting similar initiatives and fostering a pipeline of talented individuals who will contribute to the continued growth and development of the engineering and technology sectors.



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West Midlands Metro passenger numbers bounce back to beyond pre-Covid levels

The West Midlands Metro is more popular than ever with tram passenger numbers now higher than they were before the Covid pandemic.

New data from the Department for Transport (DfT) shows 8.3 million journeys were made in the past year, a 53.7% increase over 2023, and passing the 8 million recorded in 2019.

This increase in passenger numbers follows significant investments in the Metro system, including the Westside Extension in Birmingham, which added five new stops between 2019 and 2022, and the Wolverhampton city centre extension, which now provides seamless connection with the railway and bus stations.

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), part of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), continues to grow the tram network, working with the Midland Metro Alliance (MMA) to build the Black Country extension and a new link to Digbeth in Birmingham.

The tram extensions are being funded by the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), awarded by the DfT to better connect people to education, leisure and job opportunities across the region.

The growth in passenger numbers has been welcomed by Richard Parker, Mayor of the West Midlands who highlighted the importance of continued investment in transport infrastructure to support the region's future development.

He said: "Passenger numbers on the Metro are back to where they should be, and that's a direct result of the investment in our network. Topping 8.3 million journeys shows that people trust the Metro to get them to the places they need to be including work and school. The tram is an essential part of my vision to create an affordable, reliable and accessible transport network – which is why I was pleased to confirm the next stage of the Black Country Metro extension recently. I will keep pushing to make transport better for everyone, making sure it connects people to the jobs, services and opportunities they need."



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