

15 February 2017

### **Save the date! Metrolink's new Second City Crossing opens soon**

Manchester's transformational new tram line is on track to open to passengers later this month, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) announced today.

Subject to final testing and commissioning, the first passenger services will run on the new [Second City Crossing](#) on Sunday 26 February.

The new line will offer new links and more frequent trams through Manchester city centre, as well as improved service reliability and greater operational flexibility.

This city crossing runs from a major [new stop at St Peter's Square](#) along Cross Street to stops at Exchange Square and Victoria, and will allow more trams to run through the city centre and across the 93-stop network.

The Second City Crossing is the final piece in Metrolink's £1.5bn 'big bang' expansion programme – which has seen extensions to MediaCityUK, East Didsbury, Rochdale via Oldham, Ashton and Manchester Airport.

Importantly, the new line will support the tram network's future growth by allowing for increased services to run on some lines as demand to travel grows.

Construction work on the new city crossing finished late last year and has been followed by a rigorous testing and commissioning process, including driver training.

When the new line opens, Manchester Airport services will run to the city centre Deansgate-Castlefield stop and, later this year, will continue to Victoria.

Services that currently terminate at Deansgate-Castlefield and Exchange Square will continue across the city centre to Shaw and Crompton and East Didsbury.

Peter Cushing, Transport for Greater Manchester's Metrolink Director, said: "The return of passenger trams to this area of the city will be a historic day and the culmination of years of hard work. I look forward to our customers right across the tram network experiencing the benefits.

"We are gearing up to make some changes to services from the launch of the new line on Sunday 26 February and you can find out more now at [www.metrolink.co.uk](http://www.metrolink.co.uk)."

Councillor Andrew Fender, Chair of the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee, was one of the [first people to ride the new route on a test tram](#).

He added: "Not only will the Second City Crossing offer more trams through the city – on a more flexible, reliable tram network – but also a fantastic new view of historic Manchester landmarks such as the Royal Exchange and Manchester Town Hall."

The Second City Crossing is part of the transformational [Grow project](#) which is seeing major investment into city centre infrastructure improvements, including [bus priority measures](#), six new and [better cycle routes](#) into the city centre and [major rail improvements](#).

The first phase of the Second City Crossing opened from Victoria through to a new stop at Exchange Square in December 2015.

Fast-tracked thanks to the European Regional Development Fund, this section of the new line allowed a six-minute daytime service to run between Shaw and Crompton, Oldham and Exchange Square from Monday to Saturdays.

The [Deansgate-Castlefield](#) and [Victoria](#) stops have also been upgraded in readiness to handle more services when the Second City Crossing opens later this month.

A campaign is now under way to remind customers of upcoming service changes from Sunday 26 February:

- Altrincham – Bury (via Market Street)
- Altrincham – Etihad Campus
- Bury – Piccadilly
- Ashton-under-Lyne – Eccles
- MediaCityUK – Piccadilly
- Manchester Airport – Deansgate-Castlefield
- East Didsbury – Rochdale Town Centre (via Exchange Square)
- East Didsbury – Shaw and Crompton (via Exchange Square)

For more information on Metrolink services visit [www.metrolink.co.uk](http://www.metrolink.co.uk), call Metrolink Customer Services on 0161 205 2000 or follow [@MCRMetroLink](https://twitter.com/MCRMetroLink) for live travel updates.

## **ENDS**

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## **Notes to Editors**

1. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is the transport delivery arm for Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and its Transport for Greater Manchester Committee (TfGMC).

2. TfGM oversees transport and travel across Greater Manchester, home of the UK's largest regional economy outside London and a diverse population of over 2.7 million people.

3. TfGM:

- is responsible for delivering the Greater Manchester Transport Fund, a £1.5bn transport investment package which will drive economic growth and create 21,000 new jobs.

- owns and manages the Metrolink network, which currently covers 60 miles and has 93 stops across seven lines – hosting 37 million passenger journeys every year.
- is delivering the Metrolink Second City Crossing – a new line through the heart of Manchester city centre, set to launch in early 2017 – and the Trafford Park extension to the intu Trafford Centre via Trafford Park, Europe’s largest industrial estate.
- is responsible for the bus priority package which is improving bus links between Leigh, Atherton, Salford, Middleton and Parrs Wood and Manchester city centre.
- builds, maintains and staffs bus stations and interchanges, and installs and maintains 12,000 bus stops and 4,000 shelters in partnership with JCDecaux.
- works closely with 30+ bus operators to ensure high quality services in the right places.
- is a key partner in Rail North – calling for increased rail devolution for the north of England, and is working to prepare for HS2 and in the £1bn+ North of England programme.
- manages the road network and co-ordinates maintenance, investment and strategic modelling to keep traffic flowing, as well as installing and maintaining traffic signals.
- is overseeing an investment of more than £40m into cycle routes and facilities through the Cycle City programme, alongside a wide-ranging programme of cycling information, education and training.
- works with Job Centres, job-seekers and local businesses to encourage sustainable commuting.

4. For more information, visit [www.tfgm.com](http://www.tfgm.com).