

Stakeholder resource pack

Metrolink works

19 October to 1 November 2026



Every journey. Every day.

Deansgate-Castlefield & Trafford Bar - Tram improvement works

From Monday 19 October to Sunday 1 November, major tram improvement works will take place at Deansgate-Castlefield and Trafford Bar.

During this time:

- **No trams will operate on the Altrincham, Trafford Park and Eccles lines**
- Services operating on the East Didsbury/Manchester Airport lines will terminate at Firwood. From Firwood you will then need to board an express shuttle bus service to continue your journey into the city centre.
- Services operating on the Rochdale line will terminate at Exchange Square.
- Tram services will resume on these lines from start of service on Monday 2 November.

What will operate:

Trams:

- East Didsbury – Firwood
- Manchester Airport – Firwood
- Rochdale Town Centre – Exchange Square
- Shaw and Crompton – Exchange Square (peak)
- Bury – Ashton-under-Lyne
- Bury – Etihad (peak)
- Victoria – Etihad (after peak)

Express shuttle buses:

- **Every 10 minutes:** Sale - Stretford - Trafford Bar - Deansgate-Castlefield - Piccadilly
- **Every 15 minutes:** Chorlton - Firwood - Deansgate-Castlefield - Piccadilly
- **Every 15 minutes:** MediaCityUK - Deansgate-Castlefield - Piccadilly
- **Every 15 minutes:** Trafford Centre - Trafford Palazzo - Parkway - Village - Imperial War Museum - Wharfside - Deansgate-Castlefield - Piccadilly

Ticket acceptance:

- Tram season tickets (7-day, 28-day and annual) will be accepted on some Bee Network buses, and on Northern Rail routes between Eccles, Altrincham, East Didsbury and Manchester Airport and the city centre.
- Your alternative travel ticket options may be cheaper during this period of disruption so check before you renew a season ticket pass.

Key messages

The key message for anyone travelling during the works is **whatever journey you're making, plan ahead and allow additional time for travel.**

- **What is happening:** TfGM begin the next phase of major Metrolink improvement works on Monday 19 October and continue until Sunday 1 November. There will be significant disruption across multiple lines: during this time, no trams will run on the Altrincham, Eccles and Trafford Park Lines, and the East Didsbury and Airport lines will only run as far as Firswood.
- **Planning your journey:** We are sorry for the disruption caused. We understand journeys will look different and may take longer than usual, so we encourage customers to plan ahead, allow extra time and consider all available travel options. We have changed our travel options following customer feedback from the summer works:
 - **Make the most of the Bee Network app journey planner:** This will give you all the various options of how to get from A to B or use the Bee Network website to check out or dedicated journey planning website.
 - **Get on a Bee Network bus:** In many cases, the best alternative is to catch a Bee Network bus. Existing yellow buses connect many of the communities served by trams, with a hopper fare costing just £2 which you can pay with the convenience of Tap and Go. Weekly, monthly, and annual tram season tickets will also be accepted on a select number of Bee Network bus services during this period. You can find the nearest bus stops and plan your journey on the Bee Network app.
 - **Take an express shuttle bus:** The shuttle bus services – operating between key locations rather than calling at all stops – will have a different timetable, stopping pattern, and frequency to the regular tram service, and people should expect the journey will take longer than it usually would, so are encouraged to set off earlier. Valid Tram and 1-day Bee Bus tickets will be accepted on these shuttle bus services.
 - **Try the train:** If you can get to where you're going by rail, it may be quicker to catch the train from your nearest station. Ticket acceptance will be in place for tram season ticket holders on Northern services between Altrincham / Navigation Road and Manchester city centre, East Didsbury and Manchester city centre, Manchester Airport and Manchester city centre, Eccles and Manchester city centre.
 - **Consider cycling or walking:** Active travel could be an option for all or part of your journey. This includes hiring Starling Bikes, half of which are e-bikes. Starling Bike hire rides starting or ending at stations near the tram works will be free for trips of up to 20 minutes during this period.
 - **If you normally purchase a Tram season ticket** but are unsure at this stage as to what journeys you will make during the disruption, we advise purchasing alternative ticket options during this period of disruption.

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- **Why is this happening:** The tracks near Trafford Bar and Cornbrook need replacing to allow us to operate safely into the future. This is a complex job on the busiest part of the network – where the Altrincham, Eccles, Trafford Park, East Didsbury and Airport Lines all converge to continue into the city centre. It is one of the busiest sections of light rail in Europe, with a tram passing through every 30 seconds. We can only carry out work of this scale by closing a larger section of the network, which is why the programme is being delivered in phases. To minimise future disruption, we also complete as much additional work as possible while these closures are in place. To maximise the closure, we will also complete work on the Eccles line and at Deansgate-Castlefield viaduct. This forms part of a £150 million investment programme to improve the reliability and resilience of the Metrolink network. Customers are already seeing the benefits, with renewed sections of track allowing speed restrictions to be removed and journey times to improve.

How you can help

- Share the supplied social media assets through your own channels, including local community groups, resident networks, staff updates and customer-facing channels.
- Include the newsletter copy in resident, customer, staff or stakeholder communications, where relevant, and tailor it for your local audiences where helpful.
- Direct people to the Bee Network [website](#) and app for detailed travel advice, express shuttle bus information, ticketing options and the latest service updates.
- Reshare Bee Network updates before and during the works, particularly when key reminders or changes to travel advice are issued.
- Encourage people to plan ahead, allow extra time, check before they travel and consider all available travel options, including Bee Network buses, shuttle buses, rail, walking and cycling.
- Display or circulate any posters, digital screens or internal notices in places where residents, customers, staff or visitors are likely to see them.
- Brief frontline, customer service and reception teams so they can signpost people to the most up-to-date travel information.
- Let TfGM know about any key local audiences, events, venues or organisations that may need targeted information during the disruption period.

Sample newsletter text

Below is draft newsletter copy for partners to use or adapt in resident, customer, staff and stakeholder communications.

Major Metrolink improvement works: 19 October to 1 November

From Monday 19 October to Sunday 1 November, Transport for Greater Manchester will carry out major tram improvement works at Deansgate-Castlefield and Trafford Bar.

- During the works, there will be significant disruption across parts of the Metrolink network. No trams will operate on the Altrincham, Eccles and Trafford Park lines.
- Services on the East Didsbury and Manchester Airport lines will run as far as Firswood only, where customers will need to use express shuttle buses to continue towards the city centre.
- Services on the Rochdale line will terminate at Exchange Square.
- Tram services will resume on these lines from the start of service on Monday 2 November.

The key advice for anyone travelling during the works is to plan ahead, allow extra time and check before travelling. Express shuttle buses will operate calling at key locations only on the busiest parts of the network. In some areas, customers may need to use existing Bee Network bus services, rail, walking or cycling options instead. Capacity has been boosted on key affected routes, including the 263.

If you normally purchase a Tram season ticket but are unsure at this stage as to what journeys you will make during the disruption, we advise purchasing alternative ticket options during this period of disruption as alternatives such as the £2 bus fare may be cheaper. Ticket acceptance is in place for annual, monthly and weekly Metrolink season ticket holders on affected Northern rail and Bee Network bus routes.

The works are needed to replace track near Trafford Bar and Cornbrook, helping Metrolink services continue to run safely and reliably in the future. They form part of a £150 million investment programme to improve the reliability and resilience of the network.

For the latest journey planning advice, replacement bus information, ticketing details and service updates, visit the [Bee Network website](#), check the Bee Network app, or follow [@BeeNetwork](#) on X.

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Social media

We have prepared sample social media posts for you to use or adapt on your own channels. The Bee Network will also share updates before and during the works, with the latest travel advice and service information. Please follow [@BeeNetwork](#), reshare relevant updates and tag us in your posts where appropriate.

	Sample social media posts
General	Major Metrolink improvement works will take place from Monday 19 October to Sunday 1 November. There will be significant disruption across parts of the network, including the Altrincham, Eccles, Trafford Park, East Didsbury and Airport lines. Please plan ahead, allow extra time and check before you travel on the Bee Network App or at beenetwork.com/major-works-october
General	Planning to travel by tram between 19 October and 1 November? No trams will run on the Altrincham, Eccles and Trafford Park lines due to major works. The East Didsbury and Airport line services will stop short of the city centre, running to Firswood. Express shuttle buses, boosted Bee Network bus services and ticket acceptance are in place on affected lines to help you make your journey. Allow extra time, and visit the dedicated customer information page to plan your journey on the Bee Network App or at beenetwork.com/major-works-october
General	From Monday 19 October to Sunday 1 November, major works will again take place at Trafford Bar and Deansgate-Castlefield. This means that no trams will operate on the Altrincham, Eccles or Trafford Park lines. East Didsbury and Airport line services will stop short of the city centre, running only as far as Firswood. Express shuttle buses and ticket acceptance will be in place to help you make your journey during the disruption: beenetwork.com/major-works-october
General	Travel on the Altrincham, Eccles or Trafford Park lines? From Monday 19 October to Sunday 1 November, no trams will operate on these lines as work takes place at Deansgate-Castlefield and Trafford Bar. Express shuttle buses will operate limited stops and ticket acceptance will be in place on some rail and bus services. Check the Bee Network App or website on how you can make your journey during the disruption: beenetwork.com/major-works-october

Altrincham Line	No trams will run on the Altrincham Line between 19 October and 1 November. Shuttle buses run every 10 minutes: Sale - Stretford - Trafford Bar - Deansgate-Castlefield – Piccadilly. Bee Network Buses include: 245, 263, 286, 249. Trains from Altrincham to Manchester approximately every hour on weekdays and Saturdays, and every two hours on Sundays. Ticket Acceptance is in place on Northern trains and Bee Network services on affected routes for 7, 28 day and monthly pass holders. Alternative £2 bus ticket fares may be cheaper. Allow extra time for your journey and plan ahead using the Bee Network App or at: beenetwork.com/major-works-october
Eccles Line	No trams will run on the Eccles Line between 19 October and 1 November. Shuttle buses run every 15 minutes: MediaCityUK - Deansgate-Castlefield – Piccadilly. Bee Network Buses include: 10, 30, 33, 50, 51, 67, 100. Trains from Eccles operate to Manchester approximately every hour on weekdays and Saturdays and every two hours on Sundays. Ticket Acceptance is in place on Northern trains and Bee Network services on affected routes for 7, 28 day and monthly pass holders. Alternative £2 bus ticket fares may be cheaper. Allow extra time for your journey and plan ahead using the Bee Network App or at: beenetwork.com/major-works-october
East Didsbury and Airport Lines	Trams on the East Didsbury and Manchester Airport lines will terminate at Firswood between 19 October and 1 November. Express shuttle bus services run every 15 minutes and operate Chorlton - Firswood - Deansgate-Castlefield - Piccadilly. Bee Network Buses include: 15, 86 Trains operate between East Didsbury and city operate to Manchester approximately every 15 minutes on weekdays, every 20 minutes on Saturdays and every hour on Sundays.

	Ticket Acceptance is in place on Northern trains and Bee Network services on affected routes for 7, 28 day and monthly pass holders. Alternative £2 bus ticket fares may be cheaper. Allow extra time for your journey and plan ahead at using the Bee Network App or at: beenetwork.com/major-works-october
Trafford Park Lines	No trams will run on the Trafford Park line between 19 October and 1 November. Express shuttle buses run every 15 minutes: Trafford Centre - Trafford Palazzo - Parkway - Village - Imperial War Museum - Wharfside - Deansgate-Castlefield – Piccadilly Bee Network Buses include: 30, 100, 250 Ticket Acceptance is in place on Bee Network services on affected routes for 7, 28 day and monthly pass holders. Alternative £2 bus ticket fares may be cheaper. Allow extra time for your journey and plan ahead using the Bee Network App or at: beenetwork.com/major-works-october

Assets preview

Posters Download link: https://tfgm.sharefile.com/public/share/web-s1f3db2acba3040b6a07111a17c5b9a69	 Major tram improvement works 19 October – 1 November: - Altrincham, Eccles and Trafford Park lines will close. - Airport and East Didsbury trams will also not run through to the city centre. 2 – 4 November: - Some tram routes will be diverted through the city centre. See your alternative travel options: beenetwork.com/major-works-october    
Social Media Videos Square and Story format MP4 files.	Creative for Altrincham, Eccles & Trafford Park lines

What we are doing to keep Greater Manchester moving

- We are delivering a co-ordinated operational response with Metrolink, Bee Network bus operators, rail partners, highways, and local authorities throughout the disruption period.
- We are monitoring the transport network from TfGM's Control Centre so we can review and respond to any emerging issues.
- We have listened carefully to the feedback people gave us during the summer closure. Customers told us they wanted clearer information, faster replacement journeys and more travel options, and we've used that feedback to shape our plans for this autumn.
- We are keeping customers informed through the Bee Network website and app, including journey planning advice, express shuttle bus information, ticketing guidance and live service updates.
- We are providing express shuttle bus services with more direct routes calling at key locations only to help keep people moving during the works.
- We are adding capacity on selected Bee Network bus routes on affected corridors at peak times.
- We are putting ticket acceptance arrangements in place on selected Bee Network bus services and affected rail routes for customers with eligible Metrolink 7-day, 28-day and annual travelcards and tram season tickets.
- We are advising where alternative travel options may be cheaper - such as a £2 bus hopper fare - so customers can check before they buy.
- We are accepting payment at selected express shuttle bus stops between the hours of 7am and 6pm to cover peak travel times and make it easier to travel.
- We are putting local information on the Metrolink stops, customer notices and on digital channels to explain service changes, express shuttle bus arrangements and alternative travel options at a local level.
- We are deploying customer information and frontline teams at key locations to help customers understand their options and signpost them to the latest travel advice.
- We are sharing regular updates through social media, travel updates, stakeholder briefings and partner communications so people are encouraged to plan ahead, allow extra time and check before they travel.

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- We are working with partners to share localised travel advice with residents, businesses, staff, students, visitors and service users who may be affected.
 - We are supporting football fans travelling to and from Old Trafford on October 25th, with a range of alternative public transport options will be available, including replacement bus services, Bee Network bus services, ticket acceptance on selected rail services and a programme of dedicated football shuttle buses.
 - We are continuing to review feedback from customers and stakeholders during the disruption period so information and support can be updated where needed.