

Further £33 million COVID-19 support funding announced for light rail and trams in the north and the Midlands

News story

Government announces additional funding to support tram and light rail operators during the coronavirus pandemic.



- further government support to ensure local transport is available to those who need to travel
- takes total support for Nottingham, Sheffield, Newcastle, Blackpool, Manchester and Birmingham light rail systems to nearly £200 million
- funding comes alongside over £1 billion provided to support local bus services throughout the pandemic

A further £33 million of emergency coronavirus (COVID-19) funding has today (20 March 2021) been provided to support light rail and tram operators during the pandemic.

Operators will receive emergency funding of up to £33 million over the next 11 weeks, building on over £160 million in funding that has already been announced by the UK government for light rail and trams during the pandemic – and taking the total support so far to nearly £200 million.

The funding will support operators as they continue to face reduced revenues caused by low passenger numbers. It will ensure these vital services remain viable for the future, as the country prepares to ease lockdown restrictions and people start travelling more frequently.

Transport Minister Baroness Vere said:

As the country opens up in line with the [roadmap out of lockdown](#), we want light rail and tram services to be available to passengers and running as normal.

That's why we're continuing to fund these vital transport systems, ensuring that they're available now and are ready for people to use when restrictions ease.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury Steve Barclay said:

At the start of this pandemic, we promised to do everything we could to support people and businesses. That includes making sure our country's vital infrastructure is running for people who rely on it – such as key workers and those travelling to schools.

Today's funding means thousands of people across the north of England and the Midlands can continue to travel on public transport when they need to, and that trams will be ready for when the country comes out of lockdown.

Funding will be provided for the next 11 weeks, with a review of the need for further funding for these systems taking place before the end of that period.

Before the pandemic, more than 119 million journeys were taken by light rail or tram each year on systems outside of London, highlighting the importance of these transport networks across the north and Midlands.

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