

News story: Grayling and Burnham hail Greater Manchester tram network as model for new opportunities

- Transport Secretary and Mayor celebrate success of Metrolink tram network and commit to working on further proposals for expansion.
- Grayling underlines importance of close collaboration with Mayor to deliver HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and bus reform.
- Range of ideas for expansion of Greater Manchester tram network, including innovative tram-train, could see greater local control for Transport for Greater Manchester.

A shared commitment to expanding the Greater Manchester tram network through tram-train services, enabling faster, more reliable journeys across the network and cutting congestion, will be welcomed by the Transport Secretary and Greater Manchester Mayor today (25 January 2019).

Chris Grayling will announce on a visit to the new Wharfside Metrolink stop – part of the £350 million Trafford Park Line extension supported by government through the Greater Manchester Devolution Deal – that the Department for Transport, Network Rail and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) are working to explore a range of proposals for expansion.

This could include an innovative tram-train system in Greater Manchester and underlines a shared agreement on the opportunity for greater local control of transport services. Proposals will be brought forward by TfGM before the summer.

Both the Transport Secretary and the Mayor will also agree on the need for a positive, collaborative approach to help unlock the potential of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail, and continue to make real progress in reforming Greater Manchester's bus network.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Metrolink has been transformative for Greater Manchester and I want to see the network expand.

A Greater Manchester tram-train also has the potential to seamlessly integrate our existing rail and tram tracks and services. We will work closely to explore proposals which would see Transport for Greater Manchester running more services, underlining our belief in greater local control.

Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham said:

Greater Manchester is a growing city-region, but our transport network and infrastructure is holding us back. The people of Greater Manchester deserve a transport system that works for us both now and in the future.

Greater Manchester leaders recently shared our vision for the future of the city-region including our plan for jobs, homes and growth. Bringing innovative tram-train to Greater Manchester with greater local control and better integration of our transport system is a key part of this vision and I'm pleased that the government supports this ambition.

I also welcome the government's commitment to working together to deliver bus reform and secure the best possible outcomes for Greater Manchester and the north from both Northern Powerhouse Rail and High Speed 2.

Using existing rail and tram infrastructure, a Greater Manchester tram-train system could increase rail capacity, reduce congestion, improve air quality and deliver more seamless, frequent journeys for passengers across the city-region.

[News story: Animal medicine seizure notice: Belgica De Weerd stand at The British Homing World Show.](#)



411 boxes/pots intended for sale were seized as they were unauthorised veterinary medicines.

These products were all labelled for use on pigeons and included treatment indicated for worms, trichomoniasis (canker), coccidiosis and respiratory infections.

The sale and supply of these products is an offence under Regulation 4

(Placing a veterinary medicinal product on the market) and Regulation 26 (Possession of an unauthorised veterinary medicinal product).

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[Press release: Grading under review for Bespoke Supportive Tenancies Limited](#)



The Regulator of Social Housing reports that Bespoke Supportive Tenancies Limited (BeST) has been placed on its Grading under Review list today (25 January 2018).

It notifies that at the time of the last [Statistical Data Return](#) the provider had fewer than 1,000 homes and therefore does not have a current published regulatory judgement in accordance with our established procedures.

The regulator is currently investigating a matter regarding the provider's compliance with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard. The outcome of the investigation will be confirmed in a regulatory notice, once completed.

The [GUR list](#) is available on the website.

1. The [Regulatory standards](#) can be found on the RSH website.
2. The Regulator of Social Housing promotes a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs. It does this by undertaking robust economic regulation focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer. It also sets consumer standards and may take action if these standards are breached

and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants. For more information visit the [RSH website](#).

3. See our [Media enquiries page](#) for press office contact details. For general queries, please email enquiries@rsh.gov.uk or call 0300 124 5225.

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[Press release: Need to fell some trees? Branch out and try Felling Licence Online](#)

The Forestry Commission is urging anyone applying for a tree felling licence to make use of its new Felling Licence Online service. The recently launched service allows customers to apply for, track, manage and print their approved felling licences online. This is a major step forward in a process which previously relied on paper-based application forms being completed and sent back via post.

Becoming an online service brings the application process in line with other official government systems, and makes sure customers have greater visibility of what stage their application is at, at all times.

Tree felling without a licence, when one is required, is an offence. While not every tree felling project requires a licence it's important to check if you need one, and to apply in good time. This includes tree felling for conservation reasons, even if you have an agri-environment grant agreement in place. It also covers hedges as well as woodlands, although gardens are exempt. A full list of exemptions can be found on [GOV.UK](#) along with access to the application service and guidance on how to use it.

The Forestry Commission tested the online service with external agents prior to its launch. Neil Chamberlain, Senior Forestry Consultant at Maydencroft Limited, was one of those who tested it and said:

I've been using the online felling licence system as a pilot user for a while now and it has significantly reduced the time it takes to submit licences. The online maps are great and the instant acknowledgements mean I know it has been received.

Since its launch in October the Forestry Commission has received over 300 applications online, which have either been approved or are going through the approval process.

To apply for a free felling licence online, you can do so at www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-online-for-a-felling-licence

Press release: Shanghai maths exchange shows power of international partnership

An exchange scheme that gives teachers in England the opportunity to share experiences with counterparts from Shanghai has positively influenced the teaching of maths in our schools, [a report has concluded](#).

A long-term study on the Shanghai – England Maths Teacher Exchange, carried out by Sheffield Hallam University, has concluded the project – the first of its kind – has had a positive influence on the way maths is taught in the schools that took part.

The findings have been published in the same week as the world's education leaders gather in London for Education World Forum, and as the latest delegation of teachers from Shanghai visit schools across England to showcase their mastery teaching approach.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Standards are rising in our schools, with 84% of pupils now attending good or outstanding schools compared to 66% in 2010. We have looked towards the best education systems in the world to help drive this improvement and our work with China has been a key part of this.

As this report shows, the Shanghai – England Maths Teacher Exchange has been a positive influence on our schools, with the lessons learned from it having demonstrable effects in classrooms. There has, for example, been a marked increase in the number of primary schools using whole class teaching rather than seeing pupils split by attainment.

As we go forward, we will continue to work with our peers in Shanghai to share the practices that our high performing education systems are based upon.

The report is based on a longitudinal study carried out between 2015 and 2017 that aimed to assess benefits for schools and pupils.

It found:

- Teachers valued the exchange as a positive professional development experience;
- Outcomes for teachers included enhanced subject and teaching knowledge and increased confidence;
- Participants also reported that they could apply experience gained from the exchange to other aspects of the curriculum;
- The study also looked at the effect an early version of the programme had on attainment and showed positive effects at Key Stage 1 for those schools that adopted the programme in full.

All findings around attainment should be viewed on the basis that the programme has evolved since the evaluation period.

The Shanghai – England Maths Teacher Exchange was launched in 2014. Since its inception over 700 teachers from England and Shanghai have participated in the exchange.

85 teachers from Shanghai are currently in England taking part in the return leg of the most recent phase of the exchange.

Afshah Deen, who is a year 2 teacher at Parkland Primary School in Wigston, Leicestershire, and took part in the exchange, said:

“Seeing maths teaching in Shanghai and observing how lessons are planned and then discussed and refined by teachers there has been the most interesting and rewarding professional experience of my career.

“I’ve literally questioned everything I’ve done for the last eight years of teaching. It’s really inspired me to be a better maths teacher.”

The maths exchange programme also supports our work to take the total number of English schools benefitting from the East-Asian style maths Teaching for Mastery programme to 11,000 by 2023.