

Transport Update for Bury Council Local Bee Network Forum

June-August 2025

Improving the Bee Network

- The latest allocation of £20.7 million of funding to support walking, wheeling and cycling [was approved](#) by members of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority in August. This comes after Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham committed to giving more healthy and green travel options to millions of residents across the city-region. The latest round of funding will support a range of interventions, including:
 - **Active travel infrastructure** - £8.6m for improved or replaced surfacing for walking, wheeling and cycling, new crossings and upgraded junctions, bus stops and traffic management.
 - **School Streets** - £2m towards maintenance on highways near to schools such as dropped kerbs, improvement of pavements and footpaths and traffic management.
 - **Bee Network crossings**- £2m for new or upgraded traffic signal junctions near schools.
 - **Cycle hire** - £1.5m towards new e-bikes and the extension of the existing Starling Bank Bike hire contract to 2028, to continue enhancing the fleet and with the potential to expand the footprint of the existing scheme.
 - **Community-led schemes** –£1.7m for schemes that help people make the switch to active travel, including bike libraries, walk to school and learn to ride schemes.
 - **Bee Network scheme development** –£2.2m for new Local Authority-led active travel schemes.
 - **Remedial works** – £1.1m for the maintenance and renewal of existing active travel schemes, including changes to existing paths and routes and addressing access issues that prevent those with mobility needs from using certain routes.
 - A further £500,000 was approved for both secure cycle parking and new route signage.
- Two new hourly night buses services are [proposed](#) on the **135 (Manchester – Prestwich – Bury)** and the **17/17a (Manchester – Middleton – Rochdale)** which would connect Bury and Rochdale town centres with Manchester city centre. The new routes will initially run on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. This reflects patronage trends which show that demand is expected to be initially lower at the start and middle of the week.
- Around 150,000 18–21-year-olds in Greater Manchester will benefit from half price Bee Network bus travel, better connecting them to work, training or education opportunities. [Set to launch](#) on 1 September 2025, young people will be able to buy a 28-day bus travelcard for £40 - half the adult fare price they would normally pay.
- Speeding drivers in Greater Manchester are now more likely to be caught as part of [new investment](#) in the region's safety camera network to improve road safety and support Vision Zero, the ambition to end all road fatalities and life-changing injuries by 2040. The upgraded cameras can capture two-way traffic and use low-light infra-red, meaning they will no longer flash at speeding drivers. There are now 88 upgraded spot speed and currently installing 25 average speed routes across Greater Manchester.
- Air quality across Greater Manchester is getting better thanks to investments in cleaner public transport. Newly-released figures show that air pollution dropped again in 2024 in the city

region. [The latest report](#) shows that 38 places had illegal levels of nitrogen dioxide, down from 64 in 2023 and 129 in 2019. As part of Greater Manchester's accelerated investment in public transport, the Bee Network is helping reduce air pollution by introducing more low and zero-emission buses.

- At its meeting in July, the Bee Network Committee [approved](#) a series of funding allocations from Greater Manchester's City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. This is set to support a wide range of interventions to improve how people move around the city region - whether by bus, bike, tram, or on foot. This includes GM wide improvements relating to:
 - **Bus stop upgrades** – £4.5m. More than 220 bus stops will be enhanced with new shelters, raised kerbs, better road markings, and improved walking routes - making bus travel more comfortable and accessible for everyone.
 - **Passenger Information Displays** – £2.7m. Real-time travel information is coming to 319 bus stops locations and five transport interchanges, helping passengers plan their journeys with confidence.
- Transport for Greater Manchester has [started](#) a procurement process to deliver up to £1.6bn of infrastructure that will help to maintain and grow Metrolink and improve rail accessibility within Greater Manchester. The contract covers Metrolink's asset renewals programme, which includes replacing key infrastructure – such as track, overhead lines and the distribution system that provides power to trams.
- Around 400,000 older and disabled people in Greater Manchester have been able to benefit from round-the-clock concessionary bus travel as part of a [new pilot](#) in August. The pre-9.30am travel restriction has been lifted on a trial basis for a month on all buses for those with a TfGM-issued concessionary travel pass. The trial is being held to look at the impact of lifting the 9.30am restriction on peak bus services and those shortly after 9.30am. At the conclusion of the trial, the evidence gathered during it, including analysing passenger feedback, patronage and pass usage, will be assessed before a decision is made on whether the move can be made permanent.

Network Updates

- Punctuality of the first buses to come under local control (tranche 1, which includes some Bury services) is now consistently above 80%, with recent data from tranches 2 (including the remainder of Bury services) and 3 also showing this target being met on a regular basis. This is up from an average of c69% pre-franchising. The latest punctuality report (published weekly here) during the period 17-23 August shows the following:
 - Tranche 1 punctuality: 88.2%
 - Tranche 2 punctuality: 83.0%
- As part of the ongoing programme of maintenance and renewal works across the Metrolink network there has been work on the Bury line to replace beams in the Whitefield Tunnel. This work has been delayed due to the discovery of bats in the tunnel but is now scheduled to take place in late October.
- Aimed at delivering joined-up, reliable services, a programme of local bus network reviews continues. Network Reviews will explore how buses can better serve communities, making improvements that would not have been possible before franchising. Work on the Bury network



progressed through initial engagement in late 2024, and we have now undertaken a detailed GM-wide connectivity assessment, identifying gaps and opportunities in the current provision. An overview of the assessment as well as a revised process for taking forward changes was considered by the Bee Network Committee in June. Subject to approval, further engagement will follow later in 2025.

Wider local updates

- **Bury Interchange** – The planning application to create a new southern access to Metrolink (including a footbridge, lift and stairs) was approved by Bury Council on 22 July. TfGM are continuing to develop the design for the main interchange in partnership with Bury Council and other stakeholders. The opportunity to include a residential development alongside the interchange continues to be developed, with initial design work progressing.
- **Elton Reservoir New Stop** – TfGM are continuing development work on proposals for a new Metrolink stop, Travel Hub and Park & Ride, to be delivered as part of the strategic allocation for circa 3500 homes and supporting infrastructure, identified in Places for Everyone. Updated designs for the stop and Travel Hub/Park & Ride area have been developed and will be shared with the master planning consultant and other stakeholders for review shortly. The designs support and maximise benefits associated with the wider scheme (for instance by supporting increased housing density around the Metrolink stop area).
- **Metrolink Stop Improvements Programme** – Heaton Park Phase 1 (shelter improvements) has received “Programme Entry”. Approval secured to submit an Invitation to Tender for a contractor to construct Phase 1. Parallel combined outline/final business case work to be progressed.