

Transport Update for Bury Council

February 2026 – March 2026

Bee Network updates

Major programme to boost capacity, reliability and resilience of tram network

Transport for Greater Manchester will undertake a significant Metrolink programme of work this year to build the capacity and resilience of tracks, trams and workforce.

This is part of a £150m programme of work to maintain, upgrade, and improve tram infrastructure to make sure the Bee Network continues to deliver safe, reliable and accessible services for millions more people into the future

In parallel, a significant recruitment drive is underway to take on and train up new tram drivers, building extra capacity and resilience in the workforce.

To support this, from Monday 30 March (until autumn 2026) a temporary timetable will be introduced across the tram network. This will see tram services running every 15 minutes (non-peak), supported by a peak service running every 7.5 minutes at the busiest times on the most popular lines.

During this temporary change, more double trams will run on the network to increase capacity in the busiest areas where it is most needed.

As work is carried out throughout the year, TfGM and Metrolink operator KAM will use this opportunity to deep clean, maintain and make improvements to trams which are not being deployed on the network. This should improve the reliability of trams, as well as improve the overall passenger experience.

You can find out more [here](#).

You can also find more information about up-coming works in the 'Metrolink engineering works' section of this newsletter and on our [Tram Improvement Works webpage](#).

9.30am rule for free bus travel lifted for older and disabled people

Older and disabled concessionary passholders resident in Greater Manchester no longer have to wait until 9.30am to get on board a bus in Greater Manchester as the time restriction for concessionary travel is lifted.

It follows two successful trials last year.

You can find out more information [here](#).

Bus Network Development Engagement

TfGM are undertaking a refreshed process for planning and improving the Bee Network bus network. It maintains the same commitment to evidence led planning and strong local insight, while providing a more structured way to ensure services evolve in line with local priorities, population growth, and community needs.

This shift enables a more coordinated, dynamic, Greater Manchester-wide approach. Rather than reviewing each district in isolation, Network Development introduces a rolling, regionwide programme of improvements that can be delivered on an ongoing basis. This approach will support the city region's long-term ambitions whilst still being informed by and developed with local communities.

Throughout February TfGM sought councillors' input to inform how future interventions are prioritised. This survey closed on Monday 2 March.

Further updates on how this process will move forward will be provided.

Local updates

Metrolink improvement works

On Sunday 8 March, track repair works took place on the Bury line. This meant no trams operated between Whitefield and Bury, and a bus replacement service was used between those stations.

On Sunday 29 March, Sunday 26 April, and Sunday 3 and 10 May there will be no service through Victoria Station until 10 am. Services from Bury to Victoria will run as normal until then, but passengers will have to walk to Exchange Square or get a replacement bus to Piccadilly to continue their journey.

As part of the works mentioned above, from Friday 3 April to Monday 6 April there will be no services on the Altrincham line. Trams from Bury will run to Ashton-under-Lyne or Etihad Campus every 15 minutes.

Bury Interchange Redevelopment

Following planning approval being secured, detailed design for the first phase of works to create a new southern access to Metrolink (including a footbridge, lift and stairs) plus platform improvement works has been completed and is currently under review by TfGM.

Outline design for the main interchange has been completed, and traffic modelling is progressing to inform associated highways design proposals.

Elton Reservoir New Metrolink Stop and Travel Hub/Park and Ride

TfGM are continuing development work on proposals for a new Metrolink stop, Travel Hub and Park and Ride, to be delivered as part of the strategic allocation for around 3,500 homes and supporting infrastructure, identified in Places for Everyone. TfGM will continue to work with Bury Council, the site developers and other stakeholders to develop these proposals as part of the wider masterplan for the site.

Metrolink Stop Improvements

TfGM are currently in the process of seeking a contractor for Heaton Park Phase 1 Stop Improvements (predominantly new shelters and associated renewals), with bids to be received by the end of March 2026.

The overarching business case for the wider Metrolink Stop Improvements Programme is progressing. Design development for all stops identified in the business case has been programmed in for the next financial year. This includes stops on the Bury line other than Heaton Park, as well as further potential improvements across the network.

Network Patronage and Performance

Please note that reporting now follows a monthly format. The summary is based on data from December.

Patronage is reported annually. The table below shows the annual growth of patronage across all modes, comparing January 2025 with January 2026.

Service Area (Patronage)		Last year (Jan 25)	Now (Jan 26)	Commentary
Bus	Patronage (rolling 12 months, millions)	168.9m	176.3m	While growth slowed through the autumn, passenger numbers remain 8% up year on year in Tranche 1 (Feb 25 to Jan 26) and 10% up year on year in Tranche 2 (Apr 25 to Jan 26).
Metrolink	Patronage (rolling 12 months, millions)	45.9m	46.3m	Metrolink recorded its busiest January on record, with 3.7 million passenger journeys, 4% higher than Jan 2019 and 1.3% higher than Jan 2025.
Rail	Patronage (rolling 12 months, millions)	56.2m	56.0m	Cancellations decreased for TPE, Avanti and EMR, although Avanti remains high at 8.3%. Northern cancellations increased period- on- period to 5.5% but is still significantly lower than the 21.1% experienced in period 10 24/25 including P- codes. This year, no trains were pre-cancelled



				in the period. Cross Country had the highest cancellations at 9.1%.
Highways	Highway journeys (rolling 12 months, millions)	1812m	1837m	An ongoing issue affecting motorway speed- enforcement cases has resulted in the cancellation of some offences.
Active travel	Cycling trips (rolling 12 months, millions)	47.0m	54.6m	Starling Bank bike hire rides are 33% year on year, with 624k rides during the 12 months to Jan 26. Demand significantly exceeds the business plan target (512k rides). Bike availability increased during January to an average of 862 bikes, from 797 bikes during December.
	Cycle Hire (rolling 12 months, thousands)	470	624	

Performance is reported monthly. The table below shows the monthly change in performance (punctuality and reliability) across Bus, Metrolink, Rail and Highways. More information about bus punctuality data is [available here](#).

Service Area (Performance)		Last year (January 2025)	Now (January 2026)	Commentary
Bus	Punctuality	71.9%	82.7%	Bus reliability continues to improve, with 82.7% of buses running on time during Jan 26. This is above the 80% target and is the highest level of reliability outside the school summer holiday period, representing a more than 10-percentage-point improvement versus Jan 2025 (71.9%). All franchise areas are showing improvement.
	Reliability: Bus km operated	97.7%	98.9%	
	Zero-emission bus fleet (% of total bus fleet)	14.3%	22.6%	



Metrolink	Punctuality (trams departing less than 2 mins late)		89% (P11 24/25)	88% (P11)	Rolling stock issues were the largest cause of lost mileage in P11 (57%), followed by electrical issues (15%) and driver availability (11%). .
	Reliability: Operated mileage (number of tram vehicle miles operated compared with the number of scheduled miles)		97.0% (P11 24/25)	98.2% (P11)	
Rail	Northern (NTL)	PPM*	75.2% (P10 25)	76.0% (P10)	Period 10 saw improvements in punctuality (RT, PPM, T3) across all operators. Northern short-forming remains high, especially in North Manchester (around 1 in 5 trains).
		Cancellations	9.7% (P10 25)	5.5% (P10)	
	TransPennine Trains (TPT)	PPM*	77.0% (P10 25)	82.2% (P10)	
		Cancellations	8.9% (P10 25)	4.6% (P10)	
Highways	Journey time reliability (measures the % of journeys completed within the typical journey time, plus a tolerance of 25%).		93.9%	93.9%	An ongoing issue affecting motorway speed-enforcement cases has resulted in the cancellation of some offences.

*Public Performance Measure (PPM), measures % of services arriving at destination, having called at all scheduled stops, within 5 minutes of the planned arrival time.

** P10 = Period 10 and P11 = Period 11, both defined as a four-week reporting period instead of a monthly one.

<https://tfgm.com/ways-to-travel/bus/punctuality-report>