

A decade of progress for Metrolink

January 3, 2020



It's been a decade to remember for Greater Manchester's Metrolink network with unprecedented expansion leading to soaring popularity.

In the ten years since 2010, the number of annual passenger journeys on the network has more than doubled, rising from 19.2m in 2010 to 45.5m in 2019.

The same period saw a large-scale expansion of the network, known as Phase Three, which boosted the size of the network significantly from 39km in 2010 to 97km in 2019 while adding 55 new stops to the existing 38. The number of trams has also grown from 36 in 2010 to 120 in 2019, with more to come in 2020.

The network has expanded into seven of the ten Greater Manchester boroughs, serving areas such as Wythenshawe, Didsbury, Oldham, Chorlton, Droylsden, Ashton, Rochdale, Chorlton and MediaCity, as well as a second city crossing with a new stop at Exchange Square and fully refurbished stops at Deansgate Castlefield and St Peter's Square.

New signalling systems have been introduced, enabling real time passenger information on stops, as well as apps, new ticket vending machines and payment improvement schemes – such as zonal fares and

contactless payment – to make travelling by tram even simpler for customers. Free on-board Wi-Fi was also introduced in March 2015.

Transport for Greater Manchester's Head of Metrolink, Danny Vaughan, said: "Metrolink is a fantastic light rail system that has played a major role in regional development and as we look back over a decade of significant achievement, I feel very proud to have been involved.

"Success on this scale doesn't happen by chance. It's a reflection of a lot of hard work and almost £2bn investment over the last ten years and, as a system entirely owned, managed and run at a local level, it's a blueprint for how Greater Manchester could run other transport systems in the future.

"The future also looks bright, as we await the opening of the Trafford Park line in April 2020, the arrival of new trams before the end of the year and explore new pathfinder schemes for expansion and tram-train technology.

"As we continue to grow and carry more people, there's no doubt Metrolink's future as a world-class transport network is assured."

The expansion of Metrolink has been part of a much wider development of Greater Manchester's public transport network which has seen major schemes delivered such as the Bus Priority Package, the GM Electric Vehicle (GMEV) scheme and the get me there smart ticketing scheme as well as the launch of many brand-new pieces of infrastructure such as cycle hubs, interchanges and bus stations.

In 2017, Greater Manchester also welcomed its first Cycling and Walking Commissioner, Chris Boardman, and has already taken significant steps in delivering his vision for a joined up regional cycling and walking network by delivering schemes such as the Stretford Cycleway.