

# Community groups invited to give an old Metro train a new lease of life

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Local communities are getting a chance to give an old Tyne and Wear Metro train a new lease of life after it's been taken out of service to make way for the new £362m fleet.

Nexus, the public body which owns and manages Metro, is keen to hear creative and innovative ideas about how an old train could be transformed into a vibrant public asset.

Community groups and not-for-profit organisations have been invited by Nexus to submit their plans and ideas for the iconic Metro carriages, which are set to be replaced by the state-of-the-art new trains from 2023.

The aim is to donate up to five Metro carriages for community use after they have been decommissioned.

Customer Services Director at Nexus, Huw Lewis, said: "The Metro trains have been real workhorses over the last 41 years but they will start to be phased out from 2023 to make way for our new trains, so it's fitting that we allow some to be donated for local communities to make use of them."

“We are seeking expressions of interest and ideas from community groups and non-profit organisations about how a Metrocar might be used somewhere as a public asset once it has been taken out of service

“What we need now are creative and exciting proposals from the public as we get ready to say goodbye to the Metro fleet.

“We are giving away up to five Metro trains. The challenge is to get your thinking caps on and consider how you would go about converting a Metrocar to a new use if you were to receive one.

“Using an old Metro as a valued community space is a very fitting way to commemorate the service they have provided since they entered service over 40 years ago.”

After more than four decades of service the Tyne and Wear Metro trains are to be retired from the network.

They will be phased out from 2023 and through 2024, when the new generation of trains begin to enter service.

Nexus is also planning to retain up to two of the original Metro prototypes – the first two trains to arrive in the region in the late 1970s – for heritage purposes. These will be donated to museums.

Stadler, the Swiss train manufacturer, is building 46 new Metro trains for Nexus, which will be delivered up to 2024. They will be responsible for servicing and maintaining these trains for 35 years, underscoring their commitment to the regional economy.

The new trains, which will be 15 times more reliable and will cut energy consumption by 30%, will have modern features including improved internet connectivity, charging points, air conditioning and a step-change in accessibility.

Among new features will be an automatic sliding step at every door of the new trains, making travel easier for Metro’s 50,000 wheelchair passengers as well as people with children’s buggies, luggage, or bicycles. Stadler is also in the process of building a new £70m Metro depot at Gosforth as part of the new fleet project.

Community groups can find out more and download an expression of interest form at [Community trains | nexus.org.uk](https://communitytrainsnexus.org.uk).

*Photo and video credit: Tyne and Wear Metro*