

# DfT unveils plans to improve rail journeys in the North

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One of the country's largest rail improvement projects will create high-skilled jobs and more reliable journeys in Bradford, according to the [Department for Transport \(DfT\)](#).

Rail Minister Huw Merriman has today (14 March) confirmed plans to build a new maintenance facility in Shipley, as part of the Government's £3.9 billion investment into the [Transpennine Route Upgrade \(TRU\)](#).

It is set to provide around £100 million to deliver the Shipley TrainCare Centre, which will improve resilience on the North of England's rail network.

The news comes as work continues at pace to transform journeys between the key northern cities of Manchester, Huddersfield, Leeds and York, creating quicker journey times and reducing carbon emissions.

As part of a visit to Shipley today, the Rail Minister will attend the site of the new facility, meeting people from across the region who are set to work on and benefit from the project.

Rail Minister Huw Merriman said: "It's great to be returning to West Yorkshire with another significant

announcement to boost rail travel for passengers across the North, demonstrating this Government's plan to investing in infrastructure and support the region's huge potential for growth.

"Today marks my fourth visit to Bradford and its surrounding areas in the past five months, with this investment creating new jobs and more reliable services as we accelerate our multi-billion-pound Transpennine Route Upgrade to transform rail journeys for generations to come."

With construction set to begin this year, the new maintenance facility will be home to Northern's electric fleet of trains operating across West Yorkshire, bringing essential maintenance works closer to the centre of the North Transpennine Route, leading to increased reliability for passengers.

Neil Holm, Managing Director of TRU, commented: "We're delighted to reveal our plans for this major investment in Shipley, demonstrating the Transpennine Route Upgrade's commitment to supporting local communities and creating local jobs.

"This brand new depot will support rail services while we carry out essential improvements and will also leave long-lasting legacy benefits for the town going forward."

Rob Warnes, Strategic Development Director for Northern, added: "We're delighted to announce this investment in our brand new TrainCare Centre for Shipley. As the future home for most of our electric train fleets for West Yorkshire, the new site will bring a wealth of highly-skilled jobs into the region, as well as providing resilience for our network across the North.

"It will play a key part in helping us to deliver our plans for the Transpennine Route Upgrade and beyond."

The project will also boost the West Yorkshire economy by creating local employment opportunities in Bradford and surrounding towns, with 80 per cent of its workforce set to be hired from within a 40-mile radius of the route.

As many as 100 highly-skilled jobs will be supported at the site, as well as apprenticeships, building on the hundreds of opportunities created for young people as part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade so far.

Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe Leader of Bradford Council said: "We welcome this major investment in Shipley, which is another vote of confidence in the district from industry and further positions Bradford as a great place to do business.

"The new depot will be an important part of operating rail in the north of England, increasing service reliability for rail service users. A new state-of-the-art facility such as this is one of the many tangible improvements to the rail network we are supporting, delivering greener, more accessible trains across the north.

"Increasing employment opportunities and developing skills through regeneration are key priorities for the Council, so it's great to hear that local jobs will be created to facilitate this project in the immediate term, as well as 92 permanent skilled posts being created in the longer term."

Today's announcement builds on the Rail Minister's visit to Bradford in January to announce £24 million towards a new platform at Forster Square station, as well as his visit in November to release £400,000 to accelerate master plans for a new station in the city.

The new station was committed as part of the Government's Network North plan to improve local transport, made possible by reallocated HS2 funding. This will support regeneration efforts in the UK's seventh-largest city while facilitating a new rail connection to Manchester via Huddersfield – almost halving journey times and doubling both the frequency of services and capacity with up to an extra 1,000 seats per hour.

The TRU project underpins the delivery of Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), which the Government recently strengthened its support for by pledging a further £12 billion into its delivery to better connect Liverpool and Manchester through Network North. The Transpennine Route Upgrade followed by NPR demonstrates the government's commitment to investing in infrastructure to improve rail connections right across the North of England.