

End of an era as the old Gosforth Metro depot closes

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It was the end of an era for the Tyne and Wear Metro last week as the old depot at Gosforth closed its doors for the final time.

Stadler have transferred their maintenance teams across to the brand new £70m depot which has been built on the same site.

The 100 year-old facility, home to the Metro's rolling stock for 43 years, will be demolished.

Staff have had a nostalgic final week in the old train sheds and maintenance shop, first constructed in 1923, as they prepared to move out.

It marks the start of a new era for Metro train care as it gets ready to welcome the first new Stadler train in a few weeks' time. The new depot will be used to look after the existing Metro fleet, as well as the trains when they start to arrive.

Nexus, the public body which owns and manages Metro, said the closure of the old depot was another milestone that paved the way for Metro's bright future. It has 46 new trains on order from Stadler.

Head of Fleet and Depot Replacement Programme at Nexus, Michael Richardson, said: "Moving out of the old depot marks the end of an era for Metro, and the start of its bright new future as we get ready to take delivery of our first new train from Stadler.

"We have looked after the Metro fleet at Gosforth for 43 years, but the facilities we were using had become dated, so the move to the new depot is long overdue.

"The Stadler team are leaving behind a building that dates back to 1923, and have moved into a new, more modern, state-of-the-art train care facility. It really is transformational for Metro and its workforce.

"There has been a nostalgic goodbye to the old depot all this week, but we are excited to see the new one being brought into use. The new depot will be used to care for the current Metro fleet, and the new trains

as they start arriving in north east England.”

Paul Patrick, Managing Director of Stadler Rail Service UK, said: “Over the last century, the old Gosforth depot has served the rail network in the north east well, but to ensure that it continues to thrive, Stadler has built a fantastic new facility for the new state-of-the-art Stadler trains, which will significantly improve public transport in the region.

“This is a momentous occasion as we transition from the old to the new, and I am confident that the new depot and fleet will enhance the passenger experience, making rail more attractive, promoting modal shift, and contributing to regional and national environmental targets.”

The new Gosforth depot has been designed to ensure maximum availability and reliability of the Metro fleet for decades to come.

It will vastly improve the working environment and become home to a wide range of activities, including preventative and corrective maintenance, overhauls and train presentation. There will be storage for spare parts and material supplies and office space for training and support functions.

The building will promote sustainability, providing an attractive environment for employees. It will make best use of natural light, and all work spaces will have windows. Energy efficient lighting will be installed throughout the premises and solar panels on the roof will reduce overall energy consumption. Water recycled on site and rainwater will be harvested and used for train washing facilities and toilets.

There will be a dedicated, secure area for bikes, and showers will be provided for people cycling to and from work. Charging bays for electric cars will be installed.

The new Metro trains will cut energy consumption, will have modern features including charging points, air conditioning and a step-change in accessibility.

Among the 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.

The new Gosforth Metro depot has been constructed on behalf of Stadler by Volker FitzPatrick.