

# First of eight new trams delivered ready for expansion of West Midlands Metro lines

May 14, 2021



West Midlands Metro has taken delivery of the first of eight new state-of-the-art trams arriving this year ahead of the expansion of the region's network.

The third generation Urbos tram has been shipped from the factory in Zaragoza, Spain and arrived at the Metro depot in Wednesbury on a huge 40m lorry, driven under escort.

The vehicle, which weighs 45.5 tonnes, was then carefully lowered down a specially built ramp onto the track.

The eight trams, manufactured to order by CAF, are arriving in the West Midlands over the next few months and the first five will be put into service later this year ready for the opening of extensions to the network in Birmingham and Wolverhampton city centres.

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), of which Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) is part, owns [West Midlands Metro](#).

A further 13 trams will be delivered in 2023 ahead of the opening of the Metro extension currently under construction between Wednesbury and Brierley Hill. The Metro expansion programme is being planned, designed and delivered by the [Midland Metro Alliance](#).

Increasing capacity on the Metro will support the region in its ambitious #WM2041 target to become carbon neutral within the next 20 years.

The bright blue liveried trams are able to run under power from overhead electric cables, while recharging the on-board battery ready for cable free sections of track.

Mayor of the West Midlands Andy Street said: "These are incredibly exciting times for the Metro in the West Midlands, as we undergo a huge expansion of the network after decades of under investment.

"With the extension to the Westside of Birmingham nearing completion, and diggers in the ground on both the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill and Birmingham Eastside extensions, it is clear we are going to need significantly more trams in service as we attract more and more people onto the Metro.

"Not only are our trams a quick and easy alternative to the car, but they're also far more environmentally friendly, helping to reduce air pollution and tackle the climate emergency."

The section of track between the Grand Central and Library stops in Birmingham city centre, which opened 18 months ago, was the first in the UK to see battery powered passenger trams in regular use.

Cllr Ian Ward, WMCA portfolio holder for transport and leader of Birmingham City Council said: "These brand new trams are arriving as we prepare to open our next extensions to Edgbaston Village in Birmingham at one end of the line and the new Wolverhampton railway station at the other.

"Investment in public transport like this is a vital part of our work to reduce the region's carbon footprint as well as supporting the region's economic recovery after COVID by better connecting more people to more places for both work and leisure."

The purchase of the 21 vehicles was part on [an £83.5 million deal signed in 2019](#) between West Midlands Metro and manufacturer CAF.

Also included is technical support and battery management services over 30 years, as well as an option to purchase a further 29 trams as the network grows.

*Photo and video credit: Transport for West Midlands*