

First South Wales Metro tram-train arrives at new depot

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The South Wales Metro has taken another important step forward with the arrival of the first brand new tram-train to Transport for Wales' (TfW) new depot in Taff's Well.

The Class 398 tram-train was delivered by road to the new Taff's Well depot overnight on Tuesday 21 March.

The tram-trains have been built by Swiss manufacturer Stadler at its factory in Valencia, and have been undergoing extensive testing for several months at Network Rail's Rail Innovation and Development Centre in Leicestershire.

The 36 tram-trains will be a key part of the South Wales Metro, providing more capacity and more frequent services that will be greener for the environment and more accessible for customers. They will enter service in 2024 on the Treherbert, Aberdare, Merthyr and City lines, after the completion of the Core Valley Lines transformation work, which includes the Treherbert Line transformation project announced yesterday.

Through working with train manufacturers Stadler and CAF, TfW is investing more than £800 million into brand new trains for the Wales and Borders network. The first new trains began operating services on the network in late 2022.

Dan Tipper, Transport for Wales' Chief Infrastructure Officer, said: "The delivery of the first tram-train to our new Taff's Well depot is a major milestone in the development of the South Wales Metro and the culmination of a significant effort from TfW colleagues and our industry partners over the last few months.

"We're on a transformational journey at TfW and these new trains are a key part of improving the customer experience, so that we can encourage more people to travel sustainably on public transport. These are modern trains, with high quality features that will offer our customers more accessible, reliable and greener transport."

The transformation of the Core Valley Lines for the Metro has been part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund through Welsh Government, and will enable faster, more frequent services between Cardiff and the heads of the valleys.

The investment in the Metro will significantly improve connectivity providing access to jobs, leisure and other opportunities for the people of Wales, through unifying rail, bus and active travel routes.

Photo credit: Transport for Wales