

# Manchester Piccadilly escalator trials virus busting technology

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Space-age technology is being trialled at Manchester Piccadilly station to give passenger escalators added protection from COVID-19.

A new sanitising system has been installed inside a station escalator to continually coat its handrail with an invisible layer of disinfecting particles each time it goes around\*.

A device inside the escalator mechanism works by extracting oxygen and nitrogen from the air to produce plasma particles which are applied onto the handrail to kill and prevent 99.9% of hidden viruses and bacterial pathogens.

The protective covering lasts up to six hours, with visual and audible displays to show the system is working.

This creates a reassuring shield for commuters and day trippers who use the handrails for safety, showing the public returning to rail travel that touchpoints are clean.

Kyla Thomas, station manager at Manchester Piccadilly, said: “We’re really proud to trial this virus-busting technology on one of our busiest escalators. It’s an added layer of protection already in place through our rigorous cleaning activities and social distancing measures.

“Not only does our space-age cleansing system prevent the spread of bugs, but it also gives passengers confidence they can hold the handrail without slips, trips and falls. Should the trial be successful we’ll be looking to roll it out to the other escalators in the station.”

Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris MP, said: “As passengers continue to return to the network, it is vital that they are safe as they travel.

“This new sanitising system, along with a range of enhanced and rigorous cleaning measures, is an important way of giving passengers confidence on our railways.”

The new sanitizing system is just one of many measures being implemented by the rail industry to keep passengers safe.

London Euston station has been trialling a system which instead treats the escalator handrail with ultra-violet light.

\*The OXONOX AIRSTAIR’s design ensures that the handrails of the escalators don’t have to be switched off during the day for cleaning, so passengers are no longer inconvenienced by shutdowns.

*Photo and video credit: Network Rail*