

Mayor of London sees first new, state-of-the-art DLR train

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Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, and Andy Lord, London's Transport Commissioner, have visited Beckton Depot to see the first of 54 new, state-of-the-art DLR trains that promise to provide thousands of customers with more frequent, reliable and comfortable journeys from 2024.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: "I am delighted to be here at Beckton depot today to see the first of our brand new DLR trains that will provide Londoners with more frequent, reliable and comfortable journeys from 2024.

"The DLR is a vital transport option for parts of our city, contributing to making the capital a more accessible place to live, work and visit as well as supporting new jobs and homes. With over 90 million journeys made each year it is currently the busiest light railway in the UK and its modernisation forms a key part of my vision to make London a greener, fairer and more prosperous city for all."

The trains will go through rigorous testing to ensure they enter service smoothly and reliably without impacting customer service next year. Testing will initially take place in overnight engineering hours and during some planned closures, but later this year, test trains will run during the day in gaps between

normal services.

Andy Lord, London's Transport Commissioner, said: "These new state-of-the-art DLR trains will transform journeys for our customers and help support future growth in east London, which benefits the UK's economy as a whole. The trains will now go through testing ahead of introduction in 2024 to ensure they provide the reliability both we and our customers expect. I look forward to seeing these across the network and helping contribute to the DLR's continuing success."

The 54 new trains are being designed and built by Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles, S.A (CAF) after Transport for London (TfL) awarded the contract in 2019 following a comprehensive procurement process that focused on deliverability, technical expertise and value for money.

Richard Garner, CAF UK Director, said: "CAF is proud to be supporting the modernisation of the DLR as part of the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy.

"Our new driverless trains have an interior which brings a modern, spacious feel, allowing passengers to see and walk the full length of the train. The additional capacity will enhance the overall comfort and journey experience."

Thirty three of the new trains will replace the oldest rolling stock, some of which are more than 30 years old and coming to the end of their design life, and twenty-one will boost capacity across the DLR network. Eleven of these extra trains have been funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities after TfL was successful in securing funding as part of the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund. These will be used to further increase capacity supporting the development of thousands of new homes around the network, particularly in the Royal Docks.

The new trains feature a walk-through design that will increase capacity on each train by 10 per cent as well as the latest audio and visual real-time travel information, air conditioning and mobile device charging points. The new trains will also provide better facilities for those with mobility impairments with three multi-use areas in addition to three dedicated wheelchair spaces. These multi-use areas can also be used to accommodate pushchairs, bicycles and luggage. The new trains will also feature a brand new moquette seat fabric called Poplar.

Richard Graham, Managing Director of KeolisAmey Docklands, said: "KeolisAmey Docklands are pleased to be working with TfL to commence the testing the new trains on the DLR network. These trains will provide improvements to customers' journeys and deliver great benefits for our communities in east London. We look forward to bringing the first of these new DLR trains into service in 2024."

With more than 90 million journeys made each year, the DLR is the busiest light railway in the UK. The new trains will provide more frequent direct services to the growing employment centre and cultural hub at Stratford, allowing people from across southeast London to reach new jobs in east London without the need to travel through Zone 1. It also serves Canary Wharf, a vitally important centre for the financial and professional service industries, where it links with the Tube network and the new Elizabeth line, which has recently seen its 100 millionth journey.

The DLR operates across six Opportunity Areas in London, which have the potential to provide more than 124,000 homes and 200,000 jobs. There are around 45,000 of these homes either already under construction or with planning permission within walking distance of the DLR. The additional capacity the trains will deliver is essential to support further sustainable growth beyond that already permitted, particularly in parts of the Royal Docks and the Isle of Dogs where the DLR is such a vital transport option.

The modernisation of the DLR is a key part of the Mayor's Transport Strategy to make London a greener, more accessible place to live, work and visit as well as supporting new jobs and homes. The investment in improving public transport will help reduce reliance on the car and contribute to the Mayor's target of 80 per cent of journeys made by public transport, cycling or walking by 2041 and make TfL the green heartbeat of London.

TfL is investing in other parts of its infrastructure to keep them safe, clean and reliable to encourage even more customers back. In addition to new DLR trains, TfL is replacing the ageing Piccadilly line fleet with new trains that are creating jobs in Goole, Yorkshire. The Four Lines Modernisation programme is delivering more frequent, reliable and faster journeys to the Circle, District, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines. The project to modernise and expand Bank station will also soon be completed, transforming customer journeys at the heart of the city.

All the new DLR trains are expected to enter service by 2026.



Photo credit: Transport for London