

Metro engineers lend a helping hand at Beamish Museum

March 29, 2023



The iconic tramway at Beamish Museum has had a helping hand from engineers at the Tyne and Wear Metro.

A Metro maintenance team, who were there as part of an annual Nexus volunteer day, carried out essential repairs on the Beamish tram network's overhead power lines.

Their knowledge and expertise were a big boost for the world-famous open-air museum in County Durham, who look after a fleet of crowd-pleasing trams and trolley buses.

The works were vital as Beamish get ready for their busy summer season, when thousands of visitors flock there travel on the historic tramway.

Nexus, Metro's operator, brought in advanced equipment which is normally used on the Metro system for nightly maintenance tasks, to undertake the works, which involved the replacement of span wires and electrical insulators.

The visit was a follow up from a similar event in December 2021 when Metro engineers conducted a safety critical inspection on the Beamish tramway.

Service Delivery Manager at Nexus, Malcolm Irving, said: "It was great to be back at Beamish Museum as part of our volunteer day to help with some of the repairs on the famous tramway.

"We undertook some inspections in 2021 and there some small overhead line repairs which we carried out on this visit.

"Three teams of our engineers used our special mobile raised platforms to undertake the works. We replaced span wires, insulators, and did some other routine maintenance. This all helps Beamish to get ready for their summer season. Our team had a great day, and we were delighted to help them out."

Beamish Tramway, opened in 1973, serves to re-create the experience and atmosphere of tramway operation of an earlier generation, whilst providing an essential means of transport for visitors around the site.

The original 1973 route comprised a single track from the Depot at Foulbridge to the boundary of the Town site.

This was extended into the growing Town in 1975, and then extended beyond Foulbridge to the new Visitor Entrance in 1988, bringing the route to a mile in length, with passing loops at all three stops. Then in 1993 a major extension completed the circle from Town via Pockerley (with a further passing loop), up a steep gradient through Birch Wood, back to the Visitor Entrance.

The route is now some one and a half miles in length, with four passing loops.

Find out more at www.beamish.org.uk

Photo credit: Tyne and Wear Metro