

One year countdown to public control for South Yorkshire tram system

March 24, 2023



South Yorkshire will have a publicly owned, publicly operated tram network from March 2024, when Stagecoach's operating contract for Supertram ends.

The change in ownership forms part of the region's wider ambitions to upgrade Supertram, as part of a fully integrated public transport network.

SYMCA recently secured a £100 million Government grant to modernise parts of the system, including track and infrastructure improvements and better facilities for passengers.

South Yorkshire's Mayor, Oliver Coppard, said: "This time next year our iconic Supertram will begin its new chapter in public hands, an exciting step on our journey to fixing our public transport.

"A fully integrated, affordable and reliable transport network underpins everything we want to achieve in South Yorkshire; building a bigger, better economy, reaching our net zero targets and creating better places to live, grow up and grow old.

“This is a downpayment on our ambitions for public transport in South Yorkshire, and how we can help build a system that works for our communities for a generation to come.”

South Yorkshire leaders approved proposals to create an ‘arm’s length’ company to run the region’s tram system in October 2022, and work is now underway to establish frameworks at South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) to manage the network.

Opened in 1994, South Yorkshire’s Supertram system cost £240m and now serves major residential and employment sites in Sheffield. A Tram Train project extended the network to Rotherham in 2018. More than 9.5 million people travel on Supertram every year.

A 2018 consultation on the Future of Supertram found strong public support for proposed investment running at 88% of local residents, businesses, visitors and community groups. A majority of respondents (68.3%) stated they would travel by car if the tram was no longer available.