

Tyne and Wear Metro's just the ticket for Bernard the robot dog

March 27, 2023



The Tyne and Wear Metro was just the ticket for Bernard the robot dog, who amazed customers and staff alike when he went walkies on the network with a team from the University of Sunderland.

Bernard turned heads as he trotted down to catch a train at the city's University Metro station, with his proud owner, [Professor John Murray](#), Academic Dean of the Faculty of Technology, at the controls.

As one of the most advanced canine robots in development, Bernard is one very busy pooch, travelling from Sunderland into Newcastle to deliver one of his popular research talks.

It was the computerised canine's first ever outing on Metro.

Nexus, Metro's operator, said he was probably its first ever robot customer on the system.

Bernard, who was built by Boston Dynamics in the USA, joined the University of Sunderland in 2021 to promote technology and the University's [Faculty of Technology](#) at open days and outreach and recruitment events.

He showcases what technology can do and how it can be used in an applied way to solve tasks.

Prof Murray said: "I think the passengers were surprised to see a robot dog on the Metro and many were keen to have their photo taken with him. During the journey there were many questions about what he's for and what he can do.

"Bernard certainly agrees with their colour scheme! Normally we take him to events in the car, so it was good to get him out and about to see how we can take him around the city and meet new people."

"Bernard certainly gives his Tyne and Wear Metro experience a 10/10! The staff were all very excited to meet him and get to know more about him. He certainly caused a buzz and enjoyed the attention."

Customer Services Director at Nexus, Huw Lewis, said: "It was fantastic to welcome Bernard the robot dog onto the Tyne and Wear Metro.

"What an amazing piece of technology that the University of Sunderland has to showcase what can be achieved with modern-day robotics.

"Bernard certainly turned a few heads when our customers spotted him heading down into the station and then along the platform to wait for a train. They couldn't wait to take a few selfies, and they were really in awe of what they were seeing. There was a mixture of delight and surprise. He is welcome on Metro any time because he made a lot of people's day, whether young or old."

Huw added: "The visit showed just how far robot technology has advanced. Bernard even managed to make our trains show their age, and his yellow colour scheme was a nice nod to the modern new fleet of Stadler trains we are bringing into service later this year."

Photo and video credit: Tyne and Wear Metro