

# Tyne & Wear Metro announces it is England's first railway with tactile paving on all platforms

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The Tyne & Wear Metro has said it is England's first railway to have tactile paving on every platform.

The paving provides an important accessibility upgrade for blind and partially sighted people.

Nexus, which runs the Metro, says it upgraded its remaining 12 stations as part of a year-long project.

- **Second phase of state-of-the-art £70m depot for new Tyne and Wear Metro complete**
- **Another milestone for Tyne and Wear Metro's new Stadler trains**
- **Turbo Power Systems to start building key components for new Tyne and Wear Metro trains**

It means that all 60 stations on the network now have tactile surfacing, which create a visual and physical alert to the presence of a platform's edge to aid people who are visually impaired – as well as step-free access from street to platform.

Major Projects Director at Nexus, Cathy Massarella, said: "I am delighted to say that Metro is the first railway in the country to have tactile paving on every platform edge. This provides a major accessibility

improvement for customers who are blind or partially sighted.

“We worked closely with RNIB, Guide Dogs, and other local disability campaigners to bring this project to fruition. Forty-eight stations on our network already had tactile strips and this project was all about bring this in at a further 12 stations so that all 60 stations have this feature.

“It is a huge stride forward in making our network safe and secure for people who are visually impaired. It means that **Metro** corresponds with the national accessibility guidance set by the Department for Transport.

“**Metro** has a very high accessibility standard. We have already invested in tactile paving, dual height handrails and anti-slip surfacing to improve accessibility for customers with disabilities. All of our stations have step-free access from the street to the train door.

“When our new trains arrive they will have automatic sliding steps, allowing for seamless boarding, eliminating the gap between the train and the edge of the platform. The new **Metro** fleet will be transformational in terms of improved accessibility.”

Lewis Winton, RNIB Regional Campaign Officer for the North East, said: “Tactile paving is not just an accessibility measure, it is fundamental to the health and safety of passengers and pedestrians. There should be no train platforms without tactile paving. The feature is essential in enabling blind and partially sighted people to travel independently and safely.

“We are delighted that the Tyne and Wear **Metro** has become the first rail network in England to have tactile paving installed on all its platforms and we would urge all rail networks to follow suit.”

The final two stations to see tactile edges installed were Whitley Bay and Tynemouth, both of which needed listed building consent. Whitley Bay will see a further £2m invested by Nexus this summer to restore its historic glass canopy roof.

The work has been carried out at the following **Metro** stations: Monument, Manors, St James, Jesmond, Gateshead, Heworth, Four Lane Ends, Regent Centre, Byker, Chichester, Whitley Bay and Tynemouth.

The project was carried out ‘in-house’ by the Nexus Capital Delivery department.

Nexus is now working on the installation of tactile paving on all of the staircases at stations across the **Metro** system.