

Work to resume at Northolt as TfL confirms the next Tube stations to be prioritised for step-free access

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Work will resume to make Northolt Tube station, on the West Ruislip branch of the Central line, step-free after it was paused due to the pandemic. [Transport for London \(TfL\)](#) also plans to start design work on making North Acton on the Central line and West Hampstead on the Jubilee line step-free, while also addressing capacity constraints.

This follows TfL confirming in summer 2023 that it would be reviewing ten Underground stations, spread across the capital, for potential step-free access.

The ten stations, which included Northolt, North Acton and West Hampstead, were identified using an approach focused on benefits, costs, funding opportunities and impact on customers. The approach was also influenced by feedback from accessibility campaigners and TfL's consultation on step-free access, which attracted 5,500 responses. This feedback highlighted the importance of TfL addressing the gaps in areas that have few step-free stations.

Construction work was about to start at Northolt Tube station to make it step-free when the pandemic hit. Work has now been completed to re-analyse the design, construction and costing and TfL is able to confirm that this scheme will go ahead, with a construction start date of early 2025 following awarding of contracts for the next phase, completion of remaining design activities and site mobilisation. Northolt is also on the Superloop SL9 route, linking Heathrow to Harrow. TfL has one of the most accessible bus networks in the world with all routes served by low-floor vehicles and an access ramp and dedicated space for wheelchair users. Making Northolt step-free will open up new journey options for those travelling to Heathrow Airport using Superloop services.

Seb Dance, Deputy Mayor for Transport, said: "London's diversity is one of its biggest strengths and the Mayor wants everyone to be able to participate in and enjoy all that our great city has to offer.

"The Mayor, TfL and I are determined to make London's transport network as accessible as possible. We are committed to increasing the proportion of step-free Tube stations and I'm delighted that TfL has confirmed the next stations where work will get underway. This is just one of the ways we are working to build a better, fairer city for all Londoners."

Alex Williams, TfL's Chief Customer and Strategy Officer, said: "Reducing the journey time difference for those who rely on step-free access is a key goal of the Mayor's Transport Strategy. This will help create a fairer, more accessible and inclusive transport network, opening up more of London to everyone. We've been working hard to identify which Tube stations will be prioritised next for step-free access which is a critical component of delivering a more equitable customer experience for everyone who uses our services. I'm really pleased that we're now able to confirm that work will resume at Northolt and that we're starting design work at North Acton and West Hampstead as the next stations to be upgraded, building on feasibility work that started last year."

Councillor Adam Harrison, Cabinet member for a sustainable Camden, said: "To build a fairer, more equal borough, Camden must become as accessible as possible. Bringing in step-free access at West Hampstead Underground station will help us along this journey. This council used its powers in the planning process from the nearby O2 redevelopment to successfully negotiate funding for this massive advance for the NW6 community and the area's many visitors and workers."

Councillor Deirdre Costigan, Ealing Council's deputy leader and cabinet member for climate action, said: "I'm delighted that TfL and the Mayor have listened to Ealing, and one of our busiest Underground stations, Northolt, could soon have brand new lifts. Ensuring equal access to transport links means that all our residents can get to work and education opportunities, helping them to lead happy and fulfilled lives."

Emma Vogelmann, Policy and Public Affairs Manager at Transport for All, said: "In our latest report, we found that a lack of step-free access was the single most significant barrier for disabled Londoners using the Underground. Not only does this render whole swathes of the network unusable, but impacts our journey times, health, work, education, and more. The resumption of work to make Northolt step-free, as well as upgrades across the rest of the network, are therefore vital, and we are encouraged to see TfL continuing to work with disabled people to make the capital truly accessible for all."

John McGeachy, Campaigns Manager at AgeUK London, said: "Step-free stations have the ability to

transform the lives of older and disabled Londoners as well as many others. We really welcome the news work will resume to make Northolt station step-free. Increasing the number of step-free stations on the Underground network will open the capital up to people that have faced too many barriers for too long.”

TfL will provide a full overview of the London Underground step-free access programme later in 2024, once the feasibility work is completed and discussions with key stakeholders have concluded, including funding partners. TfL will make recommendations on which of the other current schemes progress and which additional stations have been selected for feasibility work in 2024/25.

Since 2016, TfL has worked to reduce additional journey times for those who need accessible routes by 40 per cent, well on the way to reaching the Mayor of London’s accessibility stretch target of 50 per cent by 2030 (from 2041). The Government confirmed in December 2023 that £43.1m from the Levelling Up Fund had been allocated to the upgrade of Colindale (Northern line) and Leyton (Central line) Underground stations, alongside contributions from Barnet and Waltham Forest councils, local developers and TfL. This means both stations will become step-free for the first time. Work has started in the vicinity of Colindale Tube station to prepare for its major upgrade and the construction contract for Leyton station is expected to be awarded in summer 2024. Work continues with third parties to deliver step-free access later this year at Knightsbridge and Paddington Tube stations (Bakerloo line entrance).