

## First trams to Newhaven deliver wealth of opportunities



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With the launch of passenger services to Newhaven today (Wednesday, June 7), the Edinburgh Trams team stands ready to introduce its award-winning brand of service excellence to tens of thousands of new customers.

With eight new stops, the expanded tramway now provides a convenient link between the city centre and some of Edinburgh's most densely populated areas, as well as serving key destinations such as Ocean Terminal and Port of Leith.

Lea Harrison, Edinburgh Trams Managing Director, commented:

Building on the undoubted popularity of the original route, the new line opens up a wealth of opportunities for the communities it now serves.

Customers old and new can also count on the Edinburgh Trams team to help them to make the most of the new services, and we'll be out and about on the system offering help and advice on getting around and finding the most cost-effective ticket option from a range of value-for-money deals.

We'll also continue working closely with businesses along the route to ensure they don't miss the benefits of this landmark transport project that will help them attract new customers while providing a convenient way for their employees to get to and from work.

As passengers boarded the first trams bound for Newhaven from the new stop in Picardy Place, Lea also thanked everyone involved in the successful launch, and for their hard work in the run-up to the big day.

From start to finish, the Trams to Newhaven project has been a real team effort, and over the past few months the Edinburgh Trams team has worked tirelessly on extensive testing and commissioning to ensure the new route integrates seamlessly with the original line, he said.

Now we're all set to build on past successes as we enter a new era for both the tram and our fantastic city as it looks to a prosperous, greener, and even better-connected future," Lea added.



IMAGE SOURCE,CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Work began on the £207m extension in November 2019. Currently, the line begins at Edinburgh Airport and ends at York Place.

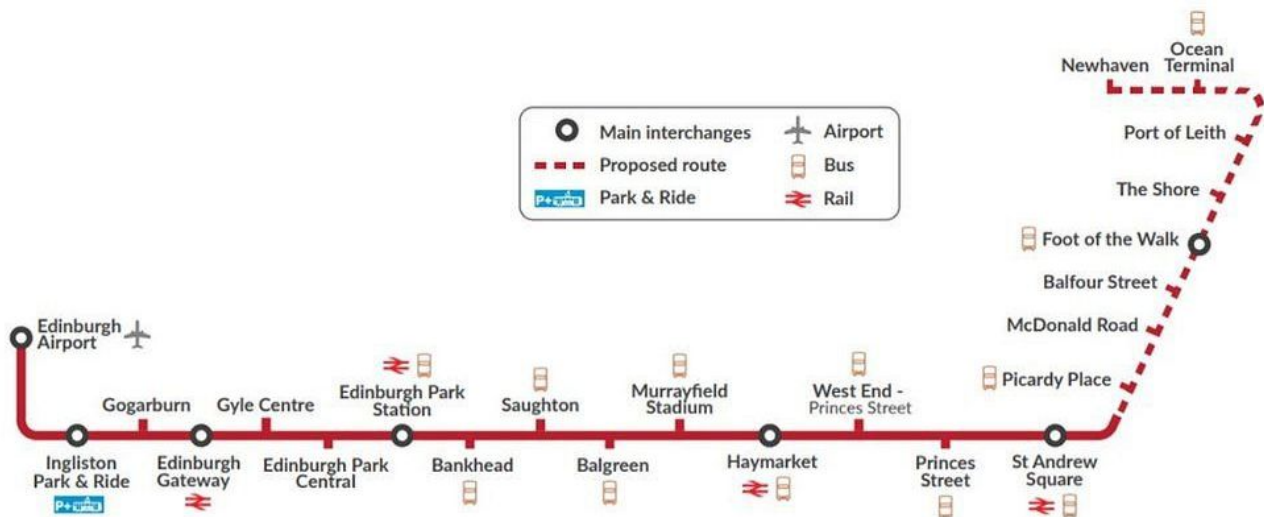
Night trials along the extended route took place over a week in March.

To mark the occasion, two historic cable wheels from the capital's original Victorian tram system were lowered into place on Thursday.

The wheels were discovered where Pilrig Street meets Leith Walk in August 2021 during excavations to prepare for the work on the extension.

New Route Map

IMAGE SOURCE,CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL



The dotted line shows the new tram route to Newhaven

Council officials hope the extension of tram services in Edinburgh will deliver "high capacity" and "clean" transport links to the north of the city and bring more jobs and affordable housing to the area.

Cammy Day, City of Edinburgh Council leader, said: "As we welcome back a piece of tram history to Leith Walk, it's fitting that we're also able to look forward to the future of Edinburgh's tram network, and the start of passenger services on the brand new line to Newhaven.

"While this is a moment for celebration, it is also a chance to reflect on the last few years, and I'd like to take the opportunity to thank residents and businesses for their patience during this major, complex project.

"We're now counting down the days to passenger services, and I'm pleased to say this project will be delivered within budget and on time.

"This is thanks to lessons learned from the previous project along with a great deal of hard work and dedication from our in-house, council team who have led and delivered the project, as well as contractors involved in the construction process."

Vic Mackinlay, Regional Officer LRTA, commented, Although publicity would make it appear that this is the current council's achievement, we know when and where the work was done and the lessons from the first project problems learnt. We miss our late LRTA member Andy Steel who looked into traffic light and crossing timing control to improve performance, but surely that expertise will again be found and put into practice to result in the whole line continuing to be as efficient as it has been up to now and serve Edinburgh and Leith with the clean public transport it deserves.



IMAGE SOURCE, CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

The trams travelled at a walking pace during the trial

Lea Harrison, managing director of Edinburgh Trams, said: "The setting of a launch date for the new line is fantastic news for city residents and visitors, but particularly communities between the city centre and Newhaven.

"In recent years, thanks to the efforts of the entire Edinburgh Trams team, our multi award-winning tramway has become one of the most popular transport systems of its type thanks to a single-minded commitment to service excellence that will continue into an exciting new era.

"As we approach this major milestone in the history of Edinburgh Trams and the city, we can't wait to welcome even more customers on board as we introduce swift and reliable services to the vibrant communities along the route, helping to unlock their full potential and providing a real boost for local businesses.

"While the project will open for revenue services on 7 June 2023, outstanding public realm works will continue in some sections.

Courtesy: Edinburgh Trams, BBC Scotland, LRTA TramForward.