

VIDEO – Trams will start running at the end of this month



The end is now in sight. After seven years of construction work the tram line is complete, the trams are here, and now you can get on board.

Transport Convener Councillor Lesley Hinds announced this morning that fare-paying passengers will be able to start using the tram on 31 May 2014 when the first service leaves the Gyle Centre at 5am heading for York Place.

The Edinburgh Reporter was at the Gyle Centre tram stop this morning to speak with Transport Minister Keith Brown MSP, Transport Convener Councillor Lesley Hinds and CEO of Transport for Edinburgh, Ian Craig.

The 14km route with its 15 stops has been completed for some time now, and in recent weeks we have become used to the sight of trams on the line during the necessary testing phase. And now you will be able to start using the tram as a means of transport to help you get from Edinburgh Airport to York Place, or anywhere else along the way.



The journey along the full route will take around 35 minutes. Passengers should find it smooth and there ought to be room for passengers and their luggage. Trams are powered by electricity and they have no carbon emissions on the street. Regenerative braking allows them to use energy otherwise wasted.

You will be able to use your Ridacard on the tram as well as on the bus, since Transport for Edinburgh will run both Edinburgh Trams and Lothian Buses.

Wheelchair users and those with young children in prams should find the tram very accessible as there is no step between the tram and the platform. At all tram stops there are ramps or lifts to make the journey as easy as possible.

You must buy a ticket or validate your Ridacard before getting on the tram and every tram will have a ticket inspector to check that all passengers have paid. If you buy an annual Ridacard it costs £612, which means that your daily travel costs could be just over the cost of one single ticket currently £1.50. A Ridacard offers you free transport on the Airlink bus and will now cover travel on the tram too.

Around 130 people are employed by Edinburgh Trams.

Teachers can download a lesson plan [here](#) to help them teach schoolchildren about trams and how to use them.