

Trams to Newhaven – final piece of track is laid

The final piece of track connecting Edinburgh's existing tram line to the new section extending it to Newhaven has been laid.

Passengers will use the tram between St Andrew Square and Newhaven from next spring, and the last section of rail has now been laid at Picardy Place. Two-way traffic will also permanently resume between Great Junction Street and Duke Street this week.

The finishing touches including removing most of the fencing and filling excavations around lamppost columns along Leith Walk, will be done before the sites close for Christmas. All main infrastructure work is now complete with testing and commissioning to commence in the new year.

The Trams to Newhaven team had originally anticipated that two-way traffic would return to the full length of Leith Walk this week, but say that recent freezing weather has impacted the necessary surfacing and paving works, as well as concrete supply.

As a result, two-way traffic is expected to be introduced to the length of the street next month. Vehicles can still travel in both directions between London Road and Pilrig Street and the council says the project remains within budget and on schedule to be operational by spring 2023.



Cllr Scott Arthur, Transport and Environment Convener, said: “This is a landmark moment in the Trams to Newhaven project – we now have a continuous line running from the airport to Newhaven, which will be carrying passengers in a matter of months.

“As we near completion the route is really taking shape – it will truly transform travel to the north of the city and boost the local economy. Not only will the tram provide a high capacity, sustainable form of transport for thousands each day, but improvements to the streetscape will create much more welcoming spaces for people walking, wheeling and spending time along the route.

“The project team has worked extremely hard to get to this stage, despite the Covid pandemic and industry-wide issues with labour and materials. While recent freezing weather has regretfully had a slight impact on plans, the majority of infrastructure work is complete, and the project remains on schedule for delivery on time and in budget by spring 2023.

“I’d like to thank all those living and working near their route for their patience. I look forward to delivering a tram service to your doorstep in the near future, and to the benefits it will bring you and the wider city.”

Progress on the Trams to Newhaven project to date includes:

100% of tram track laid (4,585 metres)

100% of overhead lines poles installed (215)

99% of communication ducting (4,579m)

95% of drainage (4,369m)

Seven of the eight new tram stops complete

