

Why Dublin's reliable **light rail service** is the sustainable line to take



Dublin's Luas light rail network is safe, reliable and sustainable. It's also supporting the city's economy by improving access to jobs, education and key services.



Ben Dwars
CEO, Transdev Dublin Light Rail



Eoghan Sweeney
Deputy Managing Director, Transdev Dublin Light Rail



Dave Rooney
Operations Director, Transdev Dublin Light Rail

Early in the 20th century, Dublin was envied around the world for its large and impressive tram network, which ran in the city between 1872 and 1949.

Ireland's safe, sustainable light rail

What goes around comes around. Luas — the light rail system that replaced it in 2004 — has an even more enviable reputation as a safe and reliable way to travel around the capital. Crucially, because it's powered by 100% certified renewable energy, it's sustainable too. Over the past 20 years, half a billion passenger trips have been made on Luas (the Irish word for 'speed') and all with zero emissions.

Luas is operated and maintained by public transport company, Transdev. "Trams are the backdrop of this city," explains Eoghan Sweeney, Deputy Managing Director. "Part of Luas' appeal is accessibility because approximately one-quarter of Dublin's population live within one kilometre of a Luas stop," he says. "With over two decades of trusted partnership with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and National Transport Authority (NTA), we have delivered half a billion zero-emissions public transport journeys through the Luas — supporting a sustainable Ireland for all."

Inclusive operations and community work

Because the service is fully integrated with the wider transport network, increasing numbers of passengers view it as a more viable alternative to car use (travel time is estimated to be 37% shorter than car travel).

It's also an inclusive form of transport, notes Dave Rooney, Operations Director. "The trams are fully accessible," he explains. "It's vital to ensure that travel is made as easy as possible for anyone with a disability." To that end, staff will receive training at the Wayfinding Centre, to learn how people with access needs experience journeys on public transport.

Transdev, with a diverse workforce of over 650 staff and a growing number of female employees, is also working with the communities it serves. This includes St Aidan's School, Fettercairn, Ballyogan Community Centre and St Patrick's Athletic FC Youth Programme, plus many schools across the system. "This is a way to strengthen links between ourselves

and the people who travel on our trams — and educate young people about the service we provide," says Sweeney.

Expanding network boosts productivity

It's a service that keeps growing. Since 2009, Transdev has mobilised four extensions across the system, including the Cross City extension in 2017, which created a Luas network for the first time and enabled sustainable public transport by light rail from north, south, east and west Dublin. Expansion has also supported regeneration and development in areas of the city by improving access to jobs, education, shops, restaurants and other services. Then, in 2019, new 50-metre trams were introduced into the network. "These are one of the longest trams operating in the world and can carry nearly 400 people," says Rooney.

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Integrating urban sustainability

Yet, it's Luas' sustainability focus that is a key selling point for passengers. "It's at the heart of what we do as an operator," says Sweeney. "Our sustainability plan was first published in 2011 and is aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. It seeks to reduce waste, energy and

emissions. Light rail can help reduce Dublin's traffic congestion, lowering emissions from cars and other forms of transport. Because the system needs less space compared to road vehicles, it doesn't disrupt the urban landscape as much as highways or large rail stations might."

Ben Dwars, CEO, asserts that the company will continue to work in collaboration with its key stakeholders to deliver and continually improve services. "Luas exemplifies many of the principles of sustainable transport: low emissions, high efficiency, reduced congestion and urban integration," he says. "Luas remains a strong model of sustainable urban transportation. We're looking forward to and excited for the future where we will continue to care, share and dare."



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