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Ms Sian Berry AM
Chair
Transport Committee
City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
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Tuesday 10 May 2022

Dear Sian,

Many congratulations on your appointment to Chair of the London Assembly Transport Committee. I am writing to provide the latest in my 4-weekly updates on the Crossrail project.

On 4 May Transport for London (TfL) confirmed that the Elizabeth line will open on Tuesday 24 May 2022. The Elizabeth line will transform travel across London and the South East by dramatically improving transport links, cutting journey times, providing additional capacity, and transforming accessibility with spacious new stations and walk-through trains.

The new line is set to be crucial to London's recovery from the pandemic, helping avoid a car-led recovery by providing new journey options, supporting regeneration across the capital, and adding an estimated £42bn to the UK economy.

When the central section opens Howard Smith, the Elizabeth line Director, will be accountable for the railway reporting to Andy Lord TfL's Chief Operating Officer. As planned, I will step down as CEO of Crossrail. Jim Crawford, Crossrail Programme Director, will lead the completion of the remaining programme works, including Bond Street station. It has been a tremendous privilege to lead this organisation and I look forward to the opening of the railway.

Safety

Delivering a safe railway remains our priority and this is reflected in the overall safety indicators that remain within those set by the programme. The final crucial stages can bring challenges and distraction, but the programme has continued to maintain a good safety record in both operations and delivery.

MOVING LONDON FORWARD





Trial Operations

Following the completion of the mass volunteer exercises, the project began the period of timetabled running on the Elizabeth line, on 28 March, running trains through the central tunnels at a frequency of 12 trains per hour. This period has helped support an increase in reliability across the railway, sufficient for an opening date to be declared.

In parallel with the timetabled running, further upgrade works have been carried out. There was a 52-hour blockade over the Easter weekend, which included some installation works of the communications systems, tunnel ventilation systems upgrade and the ELR200 software drop. The latter has had a positive impact on reliability by removing around half the identified operational restrictions.

All the technical files for the opening of the railway were also submitted to the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) for review and sign off.

Elizabeth line opening (Stage 3)

Once open, the Elizabeth line will operate 12 trains per hour between Paddington and Abbey Wood from Monday to Saturday 06:30 to 23:00. Work will continue in engineering hours and on Sundays to allow a series of testing and software updates in preparation for more intensive services anticipated to commence in the autumn.

The Elizabeth line will initially operate as three separate railways. All services between Reading and Heathrow to Paddington and Shenfield to Liverpool Street, currently operating as TfL Rail, will be rebranded to the Elizabeth line from May. Customers travelling between Reading or Heathrow into London will need to change at Paddington for services into the central section of the route, and customers from Shenfield into London will need to change at Liverpool Street. Services from Reading, Heathrow and Shenfield are anticipated to connect with the central tunnels in autumn, at which point frequencies will also be increased to 22 trains per hour in the peak between Paddington and Whitechapel. The frequency of trains will increase to 24 trains per hour when full Elizabeth line services are operational, with work currently underway to achieve this.

All Elizabeth line stations will be staffed from first to the last train, with a 'turn up and go' service offered to anyone needing assistance. Step-free access is in place from street to train across all stations between Paddington and Woolwich.

Full Elizabeth line services

After the opening of the central section, direct services from Reading, Heathrow and Shenfield are expected to connect with the central section in autumn 2022, with full services across the entire route introduced by May 2023.

The start date for full Elizabeth line services is linked to improved reliability growth, and successful commissioning of further upgrades to signalling and rolling stock software planned for after the opening of the central section of the railway.

Focus and challenges

The timely delivery of assurance is critical to the opening of the railway, and this requires the completion of the remaining assurance evidence. Final safety checks have now been completed by the London Fire Brigade (LFB). This will enable the release of the final sign-off by the ORR to commence services.



Preparations are underway to ensure, following the opening of the central section, the integration of services from the east and west with the central section in the autumn. The works to support this are being progressed with the Delivery Control Schedule (DCS) 1.3

continuing to be developed. When finalised the DCS 1.3 will provide a baseline to measure performance and outline all remaining works to the final stage of the programme.

Operational readiness

TfL Rail delivered a Public Performance Measure of 92.3 per cent during Period 13 (9 January – 5 February 2022), with the overall Moving Annual Average trend ending the year (2021/22) at 94.2 per cent.

Passenger services between Liverpool Street and Shenfield and between Paddington and Heathrow are operated by nine-car Class 345 trains. Services between Paddington and Reading are operated by a combination of nine-car and seven-car Class 345 trains. The seven-car trains will be progressively converted to nine-cars during May 2022 for all but three residual seven-car trains which will remain in use until the start of through-running services into the Elizabeth line central section (Stage 5b).

Surface stations

Network Rail station upgrade works on the east continue at Ilford and Romford. Ilford's entry into service is currently forecast for summer 2022, with good progress being made in relation to the ticket hall slab replacement and associated demolition works. Romford station has experienced delays with gaining acceptance of the fire strategy and design as well as general assurance to enable handover, however all parties are collaborating to achieve the earliest possible opening date.

The opening of the central section is a seminal moment in this project. I am certain that Londoners and visitors from around the world will be amazed by this new line and I am excited to see customers using it for the first time in a matter of days.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Wild
CEO, Crossrail Ltd