



Department for Transport

Light Rail and Tram Statistics: England 2014/15

About this release

This statistical release presents the latest annual information on light rail and tram systems in England during the 2014/15 financial year. The release covers usage, infrastructure and revenue.

This publication covers eight urban systems that are predominantly surface-running (see table on p2 for a list of systems covered). Smaller systems, e.g. heritage railway and airport transit systems, are not included. London and Glasgow undergrounds and Edinburgh Trams are also not included, but tables on these are available online.

In this publication

Summary figures	p2
Passenger journeys	p2
Vehicle mileage	p4
Revenue	p5
Vehicle occupancy	p5
Passenger satisfaction	p6
Background	p7



Photograph: Department for Transport

In 2014/15, light rail usage in England continued to rise with record numbers of passenger journeys and vehicle miles since comparable records began in 1983.

In 2014/15, 239.8 million passengers journeys were made on the eight light rail and tram systems in England, a 5.6% increase on the previous year.

59% of these journeys were inside London, on Docklands Light Railway and London Tramlink.

Vehicle mileage in England has increased by 3.4% on the previous year to 18.4 million mostly due to development of the Manchester Metrolink.

239.8 million
passenger journeys

↑5.6%
since 2013/14

Passenger journeys:



18.4 million
vehicle miles

↑3.4%
since 2013/14

Summary figures

Table 1 summarises the latest light rail annual figures. Figures for England are shown for each tram system in London and England outside London.

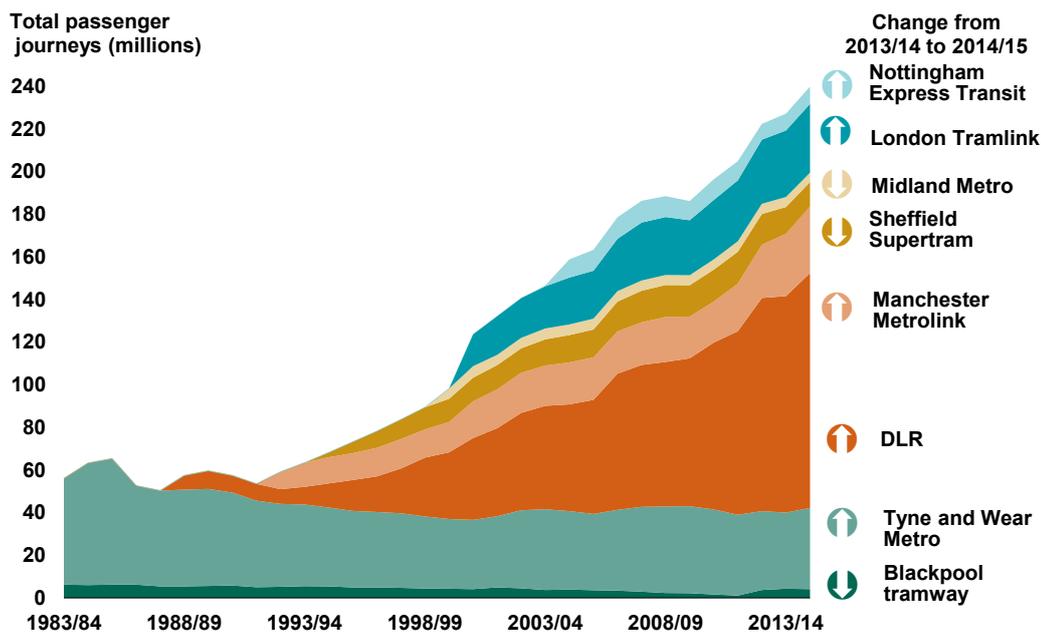
Table 1: Summary of the latest annual light rail figures (2014/15) compared with the previous year (2013/14)

	Passenger journeys		Vehicle miles		Passenger revenue	
	2014/15 figure (m=millions) and change compared with the previous year				Revenue % change in 2014/15	
England	239.8m ↑	5.6%	18.4m ↑	3.4%	£307.6m ↑	4.4%
London systems	142.5m ↑	7.3%	5.6m ↑	1.6%	£168.2m ↑	5.6%
Docklands Light Railway	110.2m ↑	8.5%	3.6m ↑	1.1%	£143.8m ↑	6.3%
London Tramlink	32.3m ↑	3.5%	2.0m ↑	2.6%	£24.4m ↑	2.1%
England outside London systems	97.3m ↑	3.1%	12.8m ↑	4.0%	£139.4m ↑	2.9%
Nottingham Express Transit	8.1m ↑	2.9%	0.8m ↑	14.9%	£8.8m ↑	3.9%
Midland Metro	4.4m ↓	-6.1%	1.0m ↓	-1.4%	£7.7m ↓	-4.9%
Sheffield Supertram	11.5m ↓	-8.5%	1.4m ↓	-1.2%	£12.6m ↓	-10.5%
Tyne and Wear Metro	38.1m ↑	6.7%	3.5m ↑	2.2%	£47.9m ↑	4.4%
Manchester Metrolink	31.2m ↑	6.6%	5.6m ↑	7.8%	£56.8m ↑	7.8%
Blackpool Tramway	4.1m ↓	-5.9%	0.5m ↓	-6.5%	£5.6m ↓	-10.8%

Light rail passenger journeys

Passenger journeys on light rail systems increased by 5.6% in 2014/15 to 239.8 million when compared with the previous year (see chart 1). Since 2004/05 passenger journeys have increased by 51%.

Chart 1: Light rail passenger journeys by system: England annually from 1983/84 (table [LRT0101](#))



Further Statistics

on the London Underground, Glasgow subway and Edinburgh Trams are available in tables [LRT9901](#), [LRT9902](#) and [LRT9903](#) respectively.

Factors impacting on the figures shown in table 1, can be found in background information (p7).

In context

These eight light rail systems accounted for 2.7% of all journeys made by public transport in Great Britain in 2013/14 (table [TSGB0102](#)).

Detailed statistics

on passenger journeys can be found in table [LRT0101](#).

Information on accidents involving light rail vehicles where they run on the public highway is covered by the Department's reported road casualty statistics. For further information please contact roadacc.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk

The increase in passenger journeys has mainly occurred in London with a 97.6% rise in passenger journeys to 142.5 million since 2004/05 (see chart 2). In England outside London there has been a 12.4% increase in passenger journeys over the last 10 years with network expansions in Manchester counteracting declines in passenger journeys in Nottingham, Midlands and Sheffield. Some of these areas where passenger journeys have declined have been affected by engineering works.

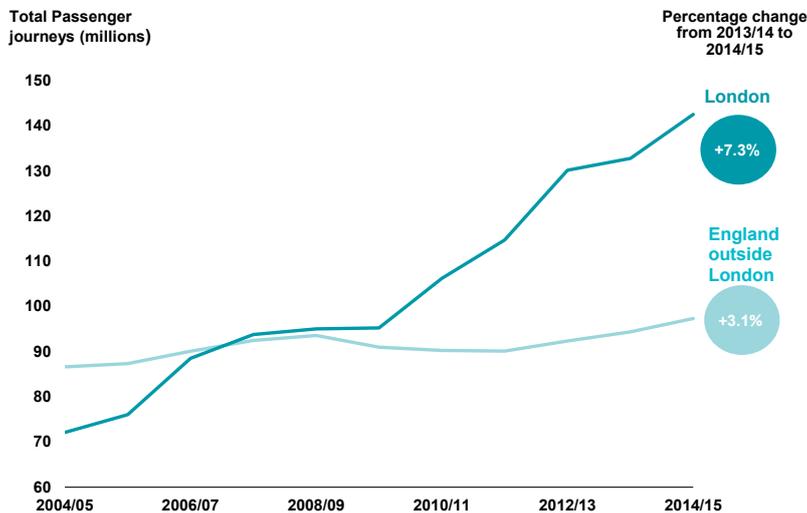


Chart 2:
Light rail passenger journeys: London and England outside London annually from 2004/05 (table [LRT0101](#))

Passenger journeys on Docklands Light Railway (DLR) in London have been increasing since the early 1990s and increased by 8.5% in 2014/15 to 110.2 million, 10.2% above the level reached for the 2012 Olympics.

Light rail passenger journeys per head

In England, the average number of light rail journeys per head was 14.2 in 2014/15, a 37% increase since 2004/05. The main factor for this increase has been a 74% increase in London caused by an almost doubling of passenger journeys per person on the DLR. As a result average passenger journeys per head in London was 47% higher than in England outside London (see chart 3).

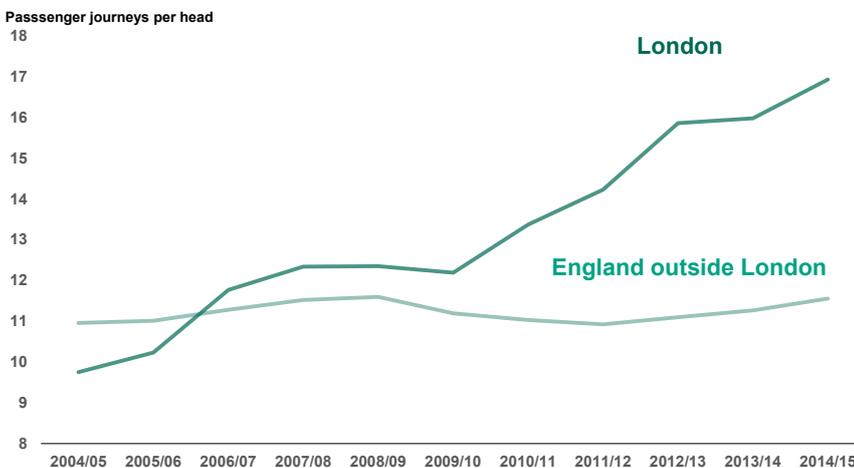


Chart 3:
Light rail passenger journeys per head: London and England outside London annually from 2004/05 (table [LRT0109](#))

Detailed statistics

Figures for passenger kilometres and passenger miles annually from 1983/84 can be found in tables [LRT0103](#) and [LRT0104](#) respectively.

Some characteristics of light rail systems users can be obtained from the National Travel Survey. Figures are available on request from national.travelsurvey@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Journey length

The average light rail journey in 2014/15 was 4.2 miles in England. On the two London systems, average journey length was lower (3.4 miles) than England outside London (5.3 miles).

Passenger journeys per head were calculated as passenger journeys divided by the number of people in the respective Passenger Transport Executives/ higher tier authority.

Average passenger journeys per head outside London have remained constant. However the underlying 48% increase on Manchester Metrolink counteracts decreases in three systems and ranges between 34 journeys on Tyne and Wear Metro to 1.6 journeys per head on Midland Metro.

Detailed statistics

on passenger journeys per head can be found in table [LRT0109](#)

Light rail concessionary journeys

In England, 12% of all light rail passenger journeys were concessionary. Concessionary journeys as a share of all passenger journeys have declined by 1 percentage point from 2013/14. The decline is mainly due to a 80% reduction in concessionary passenger journeys in Blackpool due to concessionary boardings being restricted to Blackpool Borough residents only.

Detailed statistics

on concessionary light rail journeys can be found in table [LRT0102](#).

The proportion of journeys that were concessionary ranged from 32% in Sheffield to 5% on the DLR.

Further information on concessionary revenue can be found in table [LRT0302](#).

Concessionary travel represents a relatively small proportion of passenger journeys when compared with buses (34%). All light rail and tram schemes in England currently offer free off-peak travel to older and disabled residences in their local authority area; this is on a statutory basis in London and a discretionary basis elsewhere whereas this is statutory on buses everywhere in England.

Detailed statistics

on concessionary bus journeys can be found in table [BUS0105](#).

Light rail vehicle miles

Vehicle mileage on light rail systems has also increased over this period as a 51% increase in passenger journeys has been met by 37% increase in vehicle miles since 2004/05 (Chart 4).

Detailed statistics

on vehicle miles can be found in table [LRT0106](#) and also in kilometres in table [LRT0105](#).

Index: 2004/05 = 100

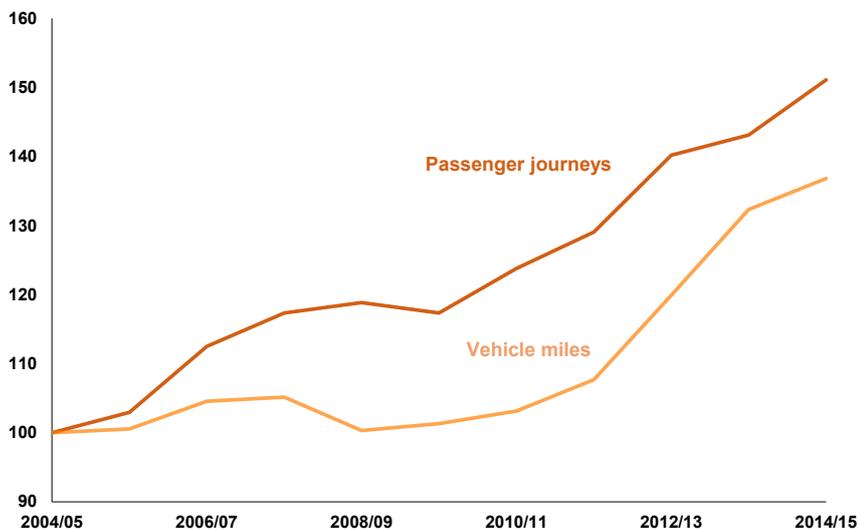
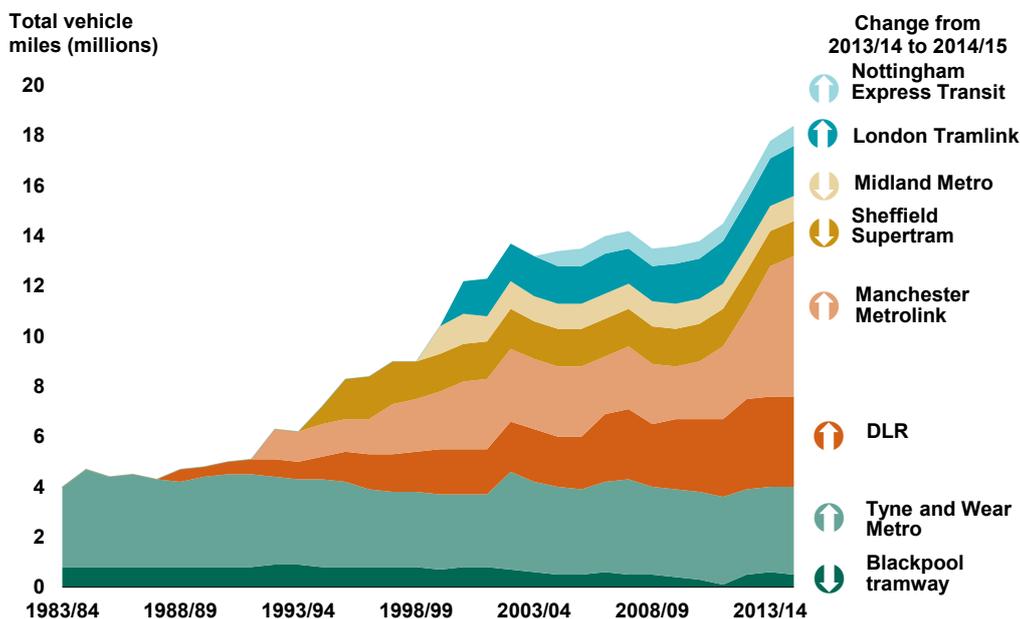


Chart 4:
Light rail passenger journeys and vehicle miles index: England annually from 2004/05 (tables [LRT0101](#) and [LRT0106](#))

On route length open for passenger traffic by system can be found in kilometres in table [LRT0203](#) and in miles in table [LRT0204](#).

In London vehicle mileage has increased by 59% in the last 10 years to 5.6 million miles whereas in England outside London mileage has increased by 29% to 12.8 million miles (see chart 5).

Chart 5: Light rail vehicle miles: England annually from 1983/84 (table [LRT0106](#))



Infrastructure

197 route miles ↑ 4.6%
 367 stations ↑ 4.3%
 454 carriages ↑ 5.1%

All increases from 2013/14 to 2014/15 comes mainly from the continuing expansion in Manchester.

Light rail revenue

Light rail and tram revenue increased by 4.4% in real terms to £307.6 million in 2014/15 compared with 2013/14. Average revenue per journey has decreased by 1.5 pence (1.2%) in real terms to 128 pence in 2014/15 prices between 2014/15 and 2013/14.

Average vehicle occupancy on light rail and tram systems

The average tram occupancy increased by 4.6% from 2013/14 to 54 passengers per tram, but is still 4.9% lower than the record reached in 2011/12 (57 passengers per tram). This increase in occupancy is driven mainly by London (see chart 6) with 9.4% and 7.0% increases in average occupancy on DLR and Tramlink. In England outside London, three tram systems have reduced vehicle occupancy, Manchester has remained the same and both Midlands and Tyne and Wear Metro had increased average occupancy in 2014/15.

Detailed statistics

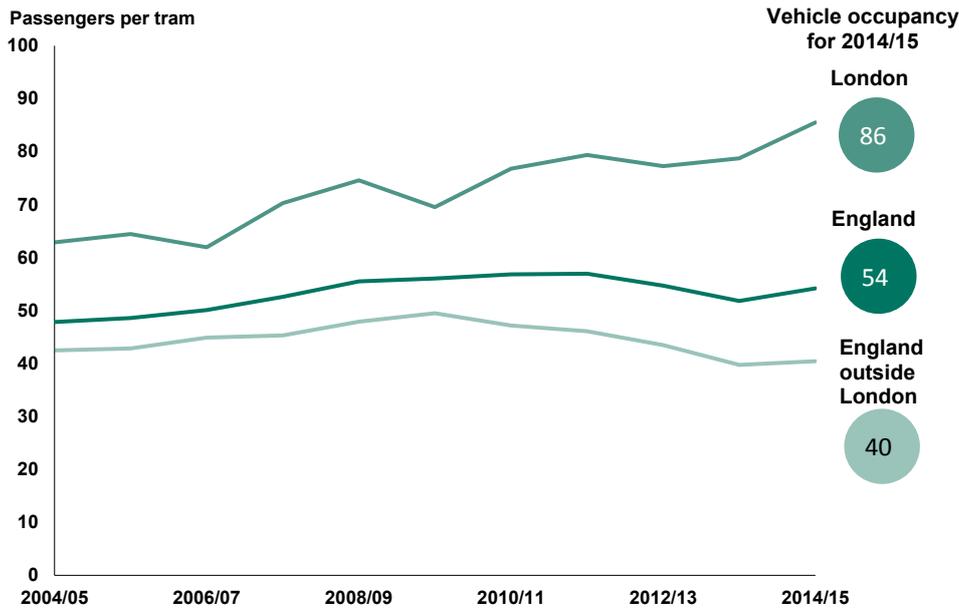
on passenger and concessionary revenue at 2014/15 prices by system can be found in tables [LRT0301](#) and [LRT0302](#) respectively.

Detailed statistics

on average vehicle occupancy can be found in table [LRT0108](#).

Average vehicle occupancy is calculated as passenger miles divided by vehicle miles to estimate persons per vehicle.

Chart 6: Light rail estimated vehicle occupancy: England annually from 2004/05 (table [LRT0108](#))



Vehicle occupancy figures reflect infrastructure development to accommodate growing passenger numbers. Similar levels of increase in vehicle mileage and passenger numbers results in steady vehicle occupancy.

Detailed statistics

on average vehicle occupancy can be found in table [LRT0108](#).

Passenger satisfaction on light rail and tram systems

The Department for Transport collects information on light rail and tram system usage, infrastructure and revenue. Transport Focus measures the passenger experience of using light rail systems, gathering satisfaction levels at both overall and individual level. Comparing these two datasets allows a more complete understanding of light rail systems as a whole.

English passenger experience on five light rail systems outside of London were surveyed by Transport Focus in both 2013 and 2014. The five systems surveyed were: Blackpool Tramway, Manchester Metrolink, Midland Metro, Nottingham Express Transit and Sheffield Supertram.

In 2014, overall journey satisfaction across all systems surveyed was high at 90% and ranged from 85% in Manchester Metrolink to 96% in Nottingham, which was higher than both the National Rail Passenger Survey (81%) and Bus Passenger Survey (88%).

Value for money satisfaction (61%) was at an similar level to bus passengers (63%) and much higher than rail passengers (46%) in 2014.

Transport Focus

Transport Focus is an independent transport user watchdog. For more information see <http://www.transportfocus.org.uk/>

Transport Focus statistics are not National Statistics.

Detailed statistics

Transport Focus Tram Passenger Survey can be found [here](#).

Table 2: Passenger satisfaction, passenger journeys and passenger journeys per head by light rail system in 2014 (table [LRT0109](#))

Light rail system	Overall journey satisfaction ¹	Passenger journeys (millions)	Passenger journeys per head
Nottingham Express Transit	96%	8.1	26.0
Blackpool Tramway	95%	4.1	28.9
Sheffield Supertram	92%	11.5	8.5
Midland Metro	90%	4.4	1.6
Manchester Metrolink	85%	32.3	11.5

¹ Source: Transport Focus

Overall journey satisfaction tended to increase with both decreasing total passenger journeys and increasing passenger journeys per head. Therefore, light rail systems used more often by a smaller number of people had the highest overall journey satisfaction. Furthermore, high value for money satisfaction tended to be associated with higher passenger journeys per head and lower total passenger journeys.

Detailed statistics

on passenger journeys can be found in table [LRT0101](#).

on passenger journeys per head can be found in table [LRT0109](#)

Background information

Factors impacting on annual light rail figures

The figures for Midlands Metro, Manchester Metrolink and Sheffield Supertram are likely to be affected by the following factors:

- Midlands Metro underwent rail replacement works from September 2014 to March 2015 resulting in restricted services.
- The extension to Manchester Airport Opened on 3rd November 2014, adding 15 stops and 9 route miles to the network. Furthermore, Manchester Metrolink's Victoria station re-opened in February 2015 after being closed for a year for renovation.
- In Sheffield engineering works between April and September 2014, as part of a 5 year £32 million rail replacement project, meant that trams were replaced by buses in certain areas of the tram system.

Manchester Metrolink mileage figures represent total mileage of each tram 'set' and when one train is formed of two sets, the kilometres travelled will be counted twice. Therefore, figures for the years after 2011/12 are not directly comparable with earlier ones (or with other systems) as the proportion of double sets has increased in recent years.

Further information

On the methods used to compile these statistics and background information about the systems covered can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/light-rail-and-tram-statistics-guidance

Users and uses of these statistics

These statistics are collected to provide information on light rail systems within England to enable monitoring of trends in passenger journeys, service provision and revenue. They help to provide a comprehensive picture of public transport usage in Great Britain. Within DfT they are used as background information in the development of light rail policy (for example passenger journeys figures were included in the DfT review 'Green Light for Light Rail' published on the DfT website in 2011), for ministerial briefing and to answer public enquiries. Outside DfT, known users include researchers, academics and Parliamentary groups with the main known use as context for reports related to light rail .

Feedback received from users suggests that they are generally satisfied with these statistics, in relation to their uses. However, we welcome feedback on the content, format or timing of the statistics by email to bus.statistics@dft.gsi.gov.uk or on (020) 7944 3094.

Strengths and weaknesses of the data

These figures are compiled from data provided by operators of the eight light rail and tram systems in England. Passenger journey figures are derived from different sources (most commonly ticket machine data), vehicle mileage is based on scheduled timetables less known lost mileage, and revenue figures are from operators' financial records.

A complete response has been received for many years. Data requested should be readily available to operators, or easy for them to extract. Returns are validated by comparison with previous years and seeking explanation where differences are large or unexpected. This means that figures for each system should be broadly comparable over time, and therefore we consider them appropriate for the uses outlined above.

As the figures are provided by eight operators, there are some differences in the methods used to count journeys or to estimate passenger or vehicle kilometres, which may affect comparisons between different systems. Although the effect of this is difficult to assess we consider it is unlikely to materially affect comparisons. On occasions operators may revise their methodology which could impact on the trends shown. As a result year-on-year changes should be treated with caution, though the effect on broad patterns is likely to be minimal.

Next release

The next Light Rail Statistics release is due to be published summer 2016.

National statistics

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs: www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html

For details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release: www.gov.uk/government/publications/light-rail-and-tram-statistics-guidance