# London's new DLR trains set to boost capacity and accessibility by 2026



The first of 54 new Docklands Light Railway (DLR) trains has entered service in London, marking a significant step forward in modernising the city's transport infrastructure. According to Transport for London (TfL), these new trains are designed to substantially improve reliability, capacity, and comfort for passengers. The state-of-the-art trains feature walk-through carriages, air conditioning, live travel information, mobile charging points, and dedicated spaces for pushchairs, bicycles, luggage, and wheelchair users—a clear enhancement in accessibility and passenger convenience.

This fleet replacement is part of a broader investment plan funded by £260 million from the government’s Housing Infrastructure Fund, a £500 million loan from the National Wealth Fund, and over £5 million from London City Airport. The £900 million project underlines the commitment to support sustainable transport growth and accommodate increasing passenger numbers, particularly in key developing areas such as Stratford, Woolwich Arsenal, the Isle of Dogs, and the Royal Docks.

The new trains, produced by the Spanish manufacturer Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles, S.A. (CAF), are expected to increase DLR capacity by over 50%, with some sources suggesting a capacity boost exceeding 60% once all units are operational. This will facilitate travel for roughly 100 million annual passengers in east and south-east London, many of whom rely on the DLR for commuting and access to new homes and jobs in emerging urban areas.

TfL plans to fully replace the ageing DLR fleet by the end of 2026. This older stock includes trains that have been in service for over 30 years, increasingly prone to reliability issues. The introduction of the new trains follows a temporary timetable adjustment made in June to phase out the oldest units safely. As the new trains are brought in, service frequency and passenger comfort are set to improve considerably.

However, the rollout has faced some challenges. Most of the fleet, including 36 of the 40 trains already built, experienced delays due to technical issues and the collapse of a TfL contractor responsible for the depot to house the trains in London. Despite these setbacks, TfL continues to assure that the entire new fleet will be in service by summer next year, with the first trains already operational.

Technological upgrades accompanying the new trains include modern on-board control systems and an upgraded signalling system, supported by a series of contracts awarded to the technology firm Thales. These enhancements promise more frequent and reliable journeys in East London, supporting the DLR's expansion and operational performance, which TfL has been developing since 1994.

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan emphasised the importance of this development, highlighting that the new trains will not only boost capacity and reliability but also support urban growth in areas undergoing significant housing and employment expansion. London's transport commissioner, Andy Lord, echoed these sentiments, noting that the new trains will deliver more comfortable, frequent, and accessible services, helping the DLR keep pace with the capital's rising transport demands.

This comprehensive upgrade of the DLR network reflects London's ongoing efforts to modernise its transport systems, providing faster, greener, and safer journeys while catering to the needs of a diverse and growing population.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.aol.com/news/dlr-trains-begin-london-125529469.html?guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly9uZXdzLmdvb2dsZS5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAIBAce9d0ZJy4ugruZW_NieZw_ybw44ooHHXg28E7lwgbVCxghN4ksFUqGs7RNyCl3ihQ_HDxVkhdNQOauMJyUH-J1Js7pS9nhOQ5f54X_DwBX01MhG6qgTFLcrugOtkrqldZqMdVn9cMg24F5-qo9fVpE9F1WyfOCyZKShORpzH&_guc_consent_skip=1760929101), [[4]](https://londonist.com/london/transport/new-dlr-trains), [[7]](https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/articles/cjd1pk2vnxjo)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.aol.com/news/dlr-trains-begin-london-125529469.html?guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly9uZXdzLmdvb2dsZS5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAIBAce9d0ZJy4ugruZW_NieZw_ybw44ooHHXg28E7lwgbVCxghN4ksFUqGs7RNyCl3ihQ_HDxVkhdNQOauMJyUH-J1Js7pS9nhOQ5f54X_DwBX01MhG6qgTFLcrugOtkrqldZqMdVn9cMg24F5-qo9fVpE9F1WyfOCyZKShORpzH&_guc_consent_skip=1760929101), [[2]](https://tfl-newsroom.prgloo.com/news/order-placed-for-additional-11-new-state-of-the-art-dlr-trains), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/tfl-new-dlr-trains-delayed-spain-b1210508.html)
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* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.aol.com/news/dlr-trains-begin-london-125529469.html?guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly9uZXdzLmdvb2dsZS5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAIBAce9d0ZJy4ugruZW_NieZw_ybw44ooHHXg28E7lwgbVCxghN4ksFUqGs7RNyCl3ihQ_HDxVkhdNQOauMJyUH-J1Js7pS9nhOQ5f54X_DwBX01MhG6qgTFLcrugOtkrqldZqMdVn9cMg24F5-qo9fVpE9F1WyfOCyZKShORpzH&_guc_consent_skip=1760929101), [[7]](https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/articles/cjd1pk2vnxjo)
* Paragraph 5 – [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/tfl-new-dlr-trains-delayed-spain-b1210508.html)
* Paragraph 6 – [[3]](https://www.thalesgroup.com/en/news-centre/press-releases/thales-modernization-londons-docklands-light-railway-improve-journeys)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.aol.com/news/dlr-trains-begin-london-125529469.html?guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly9uZXdzLmdvb2dsZS5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAIBAce9d0ZJy4ugruZW_NieZw_ybw44ooHHXg28E7lwgbVCxghN4ksFUqGs7RNyCl3ihQ_HDxVkhdNQOauMJyUH-J1Js7pS9nhOQ5f54X_DwBX01MhG6qgTFLcrugOtkrqldZqMdVn9cMg24F5-qo9fVpE9F1WyfOCyZKShORpzH&_guc_consent_skip=1760929101), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/new-dlr-train-tfl-sadiq-khan-caf-b1250578.html), [[7]](https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/articles/cjd1pk2vnxjo)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.aol.com/news/dlr-trains-begin-london-125529469.html?guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly9uZXdzLmdvb2dsZS5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAIBAce9d0ZJy4ugruZW_NieZw_ybw44ooHHXg28E7lwgbVCxghN4ksFUqGs7RNyCl3ihQ_HDxVkhdNQOauMJyUH-J1Js7pS9nhOQ5f54X_DwBX01MhG6qgTFLcrugOtkrqldZqMdVn9cMg24F5-qo9fVpE9F1WyfOCyZKShORpzH&_guc_consent_skip=1760929101> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://tfl-newsroom.prgloo.com/news/order-placed-for-additional-11-new-state-of-the-art-dlr-trains> - Transport for London (TfL) has exercised an option to purchase 11 additional state-of-the-art Docklands Light Railway (DLR) trains, bringing the total to 54 new trains. Funded by the Government’s Housing Infrastructure Fund, these trains aim to increase capacity and support the development of thousands of new homes and jobs, particularly in the Royal Docks and the Isle of Dogs. The new trains will feature a walk-through design, real-time travel information, air conditioning, and mobile device charging points. All 54 new trains are expected to be introduced by the end of 2026, boosting overall capacity on the network by more than 60%.
3. <https://www.thalesgroup.com/en/news-centre/press-releases/thales-modernization-londons-docklands-light-railway-improve-journeys> - Thales has signed two contracts to support the Docklands Light Railway's (DLR) fleet replacement programme, aiming to deliver more frequent and reliable journeys in East London from 2023. The first contract involves supplying and integrating on-board control systems for a new fleet of 43 trains, increasing the DLR’s rolling stock capacity by 20%. The second contract focuses on upgrading the DLR's signalling system to support the new trains, enhancing service capacity for East London passengers. Thales has been working with TfL since 1994 to support the DLR's expansion and operational performance.
4. <https://londonist.com/london/transport/new-dlr-trains> - The first of 54 new Docklands Light Railway (DLR) trains has entered service, featuring walk-through carriages, real-time travel information, air conditioning, and mobile device charging points. Produced by Spanish company Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles, S.A., these trains will gradually replace the existing DLR stock, some of which is over 30 years old. The new trains are expected to increase overall capacity on the network by over 50%. The rollout of the new trains was initially due to start in April 2024 but has been delayed by approximately 18 months.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/new-dlr-train-tfl-sadiq-khan-caf-b1250578.html> - The first of 54 new Docklands Light Railway (DLR) trains has entered service, featuring air conditioning, walk-through carriages, smartphone charging points, and seats at the front where passengers can pretend to drive the train. The upgrade is expected to boost capacity by more than 50% on the DLR network, which carries about 100 million passengers a year in east and south-east London. A total of 54 new trains, each with five carriages, are due to enter service by the end of 2026, though several may be delayed beyond this date.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/tfl-new-dlr-trains-delayed-spain-b1210508.html> - Transport for London (TfL) has spent over £900 million on new Docklands Light Railway (DLR) trains, but the majority of them are currently stuck in Spain. The 54 air-conditioned trains were slated to begin entering into service in April, but the project has been hit by difficulties, with 36 of the 40 already built stuck in Spain. These delays are attributed to technical issues and the collapse of a TfL contractor responsible for a depot required to store the trains in London. TfL insists that the new trains will begin entering service as quickly as possible and that all 54 new trains will be running by summer next year.
7. <https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/articles/cjd1pk2vnxjo> - The first of 54 new Docklands Light Railway (DLR) trains is now in service, featuring air-conditioned carriages, mobile device charging points, and dedicated spaces for wheelchair users. These modern, high-capacity trains are designed to meet the needs of a growing city and will replace the oldest trains in the DLR fleet, some of which have been in service for more than three decades. The full replacement of the older fleet is expected by the end of 2026, with additional new trains introduced as quickly as possible to further boost capacity.