

# Belfast Grand Central Station

**FINAL** Stakeholder Newsletter: August 2024 Issue

## Operational Opening of Belfast Grand Central Station Bus Services commencing from Sun 8<sup>th</sup> September

*Phased opening - passengers to check timetables before travelling.*

Rail Services - date to be confirmed

Construction work on the new world class Belfast Grand Central Station is at a stage which will soon allow the public to have the opportunity to see inside Ireland's largest state of the art integrated transport hub for trains, coaches and buses.

From next month, services will be introduced in phases with buses currently operating from the Europa Buscentre to move over first on **Sunday 8th September** followed by rail operations, date to be confirmed. Public Realm work around the station will continue in to 2025.

Extensive training is underway for staff in preparation for the move alongside a comprehensive testing, training and commissioning programme for the connecting rail line and new signalling technology.

***Link to video of first test train arriving into BGCS***



This is a really exciting milestone for everyone. The new station, and associated railway, signalling and public realm is a game changer set to inspire people to use more sustainable transport options creating a better connected, cleaner and healthier region for everyone.

Over the coming weeks there will be a number of changes for passengers. These are being carefully planned:

- To facilitate completion of all the essential commissioning and testing;
- To allow services to bed in;
- To give the public time to get familiar with the new station
- To facilitate the ongoing public realm works.

Passengers and parents of pupils returning to school after the summer break are urged to plan their journey in advance, pre buy their ticket and allow extra time for their journey particularly travelling through the Belfast area.

## **Belfast Grand Central Station Phased Opening**

### **Bus Services Only - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September**

The Europa Buscentre will close on **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September**. Services operating from the Europa Buscentre will transfer to the new station with the first service operating on Sunday the 8th September at 5am.

We will keep passengers updated as the project progresses.

### **Cross Border Enterprise Rail Services**

**There will be a new 2 hourly cross border rail timetable in place from Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August.**

This is to accommodate the new hourly Enterprise Belfast / Dublin services due to be introduced later this year.

When the new Grand Central Station opens, all Enterprise services will operate to and from the new station and will no longer serve Lanyon Place Station.

The current bus substitution arrangements will also continue for cross border passengers until the station opens and the train line reopens between Belfast and Lisburn.

### **Local Train Services arrangements until opening date**

**Currently the rail line is closed between Lisburn and Belfast Lanyon Place** to complete the engineering works to connect the track and install new signalling for the new station as well as take forward the required safety testing, commissioning and training. It also facilitates the construction of the new bus stands.

**Until Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August: Travelling to / from Belfast City Centre and to / from Lisburn Train Station including rail halts along Lisburn Road:**

- Travelling from stations on the Bangor, Larne or Derry~Londonderry lines into Belfast, get off at either York Street or Lanyon Place Stations and either walk, cycle or use scheduled Metro

or Glider services to interchange between Belfast Stations (including Botanic and City Hospital) or access the city centre.

- Botanic and City Hospital Train Stations are closed.
- Express bus substitution services operate between Lisburn Train Station and Europa Buscentre until Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September and Grand Central Station from Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September.
- Bus substitution services operate between Belfast Lanyon Place and Europa Buscentre serving stops adjacent to City Hospital, Queens University and Botanic.  
Route as follows:
  - Lanyon Place – Northern Mall, Great Victoria Street – Bradbury Place – Lisburn Road - University Road – Bradbury Place – Bruce Street – Lanyon Place Station
- Adelaide, Balmoral, Finaghy, Dunmurry, Derriaghy, Lambeg and Hilden rail halts will be closed. Passengers for these stations can use scheduled Metro/Ulsterbus services along the Lisburn Road.
- Valid rail tickets will be accepted on scheduled bus services.

#### **From Tuesday 27 Aug until further notice**

#### **Travelling to and from Belfast City Centre and to/from Lisburn Train Station including rail halts along Lisburn Road:**

- Travelling from stations on the Bangor, Larne or Derry~Londonderry lines into Belfast, get off at either York Street or Lanyon Place Stations and either walk, cycle or use scheduled Metro or Glider services to interchange between Belfast Stations (including Botanic and City Hospital) or access the city centre.
- Botanic and City Hospital train stations are closed.
- Express bus substitution services operate between Lisburn Train Station and Europa Buscentre until Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> Sept and Grand Central Station from Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> Sept.

#### **Monday to Friday:**

- Bus substitution services will operate between Belfast Lanyon Place and Lisburn Train Stations serving rail halts along the Lisburn Road to serve nearby schools.

Route as follows:

- *Lanyon Place Train Station*
- *Northern Mall, Gt Victoria Street (Out) Bruce Street (Rtn)*
- *Bradbury Place (Botanic)*
- *Elmwood Ave/City Hospital, Lisburn Road*
- *Adelaide, Lisburn Road*
- *Kings Hall, Balmoral*
- *Finaghy Crossroads*
- *Dunmurry, Tesco*
- *Derriaghy*
- *Lambeg*
- *Hilden*
- *Lisburn Train Station*

This shuttle service will operate approximately every 10mins at peak times (morning and afternoon/ evening) and every 30 minutes off peak.

**Weekends only:**

- Bus substitution services operate between Belfast Lanyon Place and Europa Buscentre serving stops adjacent to City Hospital, Queens University and Botanic.  
Route as follows:
  - Lanyon Place – Northern Mall, Great Victoria Street - Bradbury Place - Lisburn Road - University Road - Bradbury Place – Bruce Street - Lanyon Place Station
- Valid rail tickets will be transferable to these services and passengers will also have the option to buy a ticket on board.
- From Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September, new smart School Travel Passes will also be transferable to the bus substitution services and pupils will simply tap on to travel.
- Regular Metro and Ulsterbus services operating along the Lisburn Road will also be enhanced.

**Bus Timetables and City Centre Bus Stop Changes**

Adjustments to Ulsterbus / Goldliner and Metro timetables are currently operating to help maintain bus service reliability and performance during increased traffic pressures on the city centre network. The location of some city centre stops has also changed these will continue until further notice.

These are necessary to maintain service reliability as public realm improvements around Grand Central Station are delivered requiring road and lane closures.

More information is available at the links below:

- [www.translink.co.uk/metrostopchanges](http://www.translink.co.uk/metrostopchanges)
- [www.translink.co.uk/ulsterbusstopchanges](http://www.translink.co.uk/ulsterbusstopchanges)

**Public Information Sessions**

Public information events will be held at a number of our bus and train stations from Wednesday 21st August where our team will be able to help passengers plan their journeys through this next phase.

Full details of these will be posted on our webpage and on our social channels

[www.translink.co.uk/bqcs](http://www.translink.co.uk/bqcs)

**Bus stations:**

Venue	Date / Time
Europa Buscentre	Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> August, 7.30-9.30am
Europa Buscentre	Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> August, 3.30-5.30pm
Europa Buscentre	Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> August, 7am-9am
Europa Buscentre	Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> August, 4pm-6pm

## Train Stations:

Lanyon Place	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> August, 7am-9am
Bangor	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> August, 4pm-6pm
Lisburn	Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> August, 7am-9am
Lurgan	Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> August, 4pm-6pm
Portadown	Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> August, 7am-9am
Newry	Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> August, 4pm-6pm
Larne	Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> August, 7am-9am
Carrickfergus	Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> August, 4pm-6pm
Antrim	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September, 1pm-3pm
Ballymena	Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September, 4pm-6pm
Lanyon Place	Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> September, 4-6pm

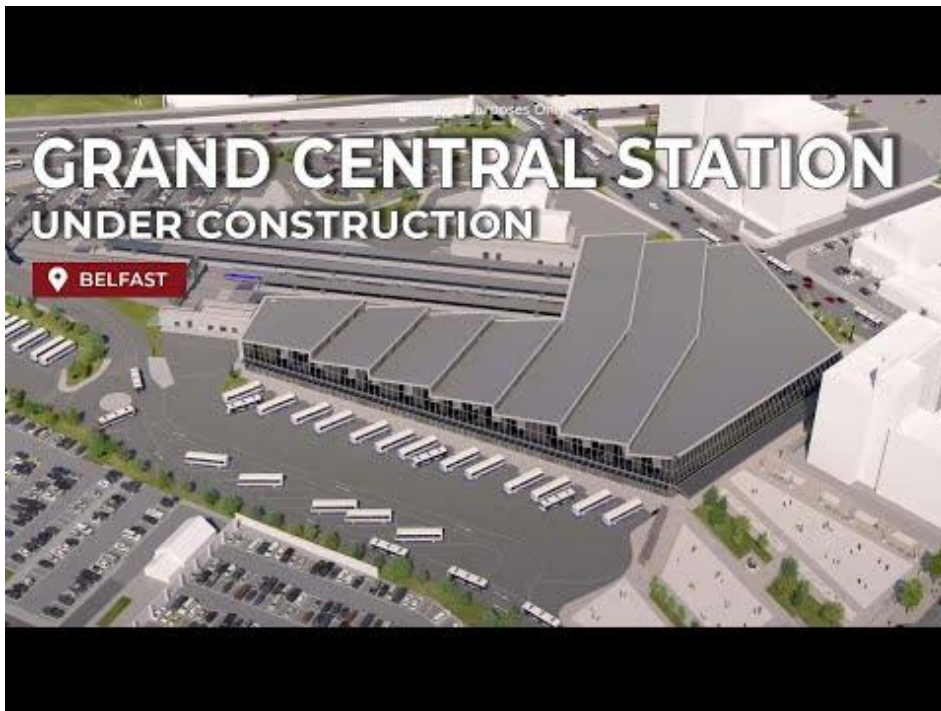
## Public Realm Street Works

**Public Realm Works** surrounding the new station are ongoing and will continue through 2025 to significantly upgrade the streets and enhance pedestrian safety making it easier and more accessible for all.

Various **bus service enhancements** as well as **pedestrian and bus passenger priority** measures are now live. Use of public transport is encouraged to access this city. Road users are advised to expect some delays.

Passengers should check the website [www.translink.co.uk](http://www.translink.co.uk) or Journey Planner before they travel and allow some extra time for their journey. Additional info at <https://www.trafficwatchni.com/>

**Click here to view how the area will look once completed.**



**The following closures are currently in place.**

### **Grosvenor Road Lane Closure**

There is a **lane and footway closure heading west on Grosvenor Road**. The closure begins before the Durham Street junction and ends at the junction with the A12 (Westlink).

This lane and footway closure is due to complete before operational opening of the new station.

The left turn onto Durham Street and onto the A12 (Westlink) slip road from Grosvenor Road will remain operational throughout this period.

### **Glengall Street Footway and Cycle Lane Closure**

There is a **footway and cycle lane closure** from the Europa Car Park entrance on Glengall Street along Glengall Street to the corner of Great Victoria Street and then round the footway to the start of the vehicular access in front of the Europa, adjacent to the ATM.

The works are due to complete before operational opening of the new station.

### **Great Victoria Street Partial Footway Closure**

To facilitate a new crossing at the eastern end of Glengall Street and across Great Victoria Street, there is a partial footway closure between 20 Great Victoria Street (Tesco Express) and 32 Great Victoria Street (Greggs).

The works are due to complete before operational opening of the new station.

### **Great Victoria Street / Grosvenor Road / Howard Street / Fisherwick Place Junction**

Works are ongoing to install temporary footway extensions and enhancements to crossings at the Great Victoria Street / Grosvenor Road and Howard Street junction.

To facilitate the widened footway, adjacent to the Fitzwilliam Hotel on Great Victoria Street and Grosvenor Road, **the existing left turn lane from Great Victoria Street onto Grosvenor Road has been removed**. As part of these works, an enhanced 6m wide pedestrian crossing on Great Victoria Street will facilitate safer and easier crossing for the increased number of pedestrians.

There will also be **various lane closures on Great Victoria Street, Grosvenor Road, Howard Street and Fisherwick Place** until the end of September.

During this time, lane closures will be in place at off-peak times between 9:30am and 4:00pm. An inbound and outbound lane will always remain open on all roads at this junction during these works.

There will also be a **closure of Grosvenor Road** from the Durham Street junction to the Great Victoria Street junction on **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August**.

During this closure, no through traffic will be permitted, however business access will be maintained. An alternative route will be signposted with eastbound traffic being diverted via Durham Street, Glengall Street and Great Victoria Street, and westbound traffic being diverted via Fisherwick Place, College Square North and Durham Street.



## Park and Ride Services

Translink is encouraging people to consider the use of Park and Ride sites across NI – there are around 60 sites across NI with approximately 10,000 spaces offering convenience and flexibility with no parking hassles.

In addition, dedicated high frequency services operate from major park and ride sites including Sprucefield, Cairnshill, Black's Road and Ballymartin.

A dedicated campaign to promote these sites is continuing with variable message signs in key areas to promote strategic locations. More information is available at:

<https://www.translink.co.uk/parkandride>

## Summer Events

Translink is continuing to work with event promoters to provide travel for various summer concerts and sporting events. For more details visit <https://www.translink.co.uk/events>

To facilitate bridge refurbishment works at Adelaide station, pedestrian access across the railway line at Adelaide is now closed until Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August and diverted to the existing footbridge at the National Stadium at Windsor Park, with local signage being erected to inform users.

## Pedestrian and Bus Passenger Priority Measures

Temporary bus lanes are now in place as significant public improvement works around the new Belfast Grand Central Station intensify.

The lanes will be available to buses, motorcycles, bicycles and permitted taxis during the periods of operation and to all vehicles at other times. Lanes will be clearly marked with white lines and the associated signs. And any accessible parking spaces that are affected will be relocated.

Four new bus lanes operate as follows:

- Howard Street – 24-hour bus lane on the approach to the Gt Victoria Street junction. The left turn into Gt Victoria Street will be for buses only.
- Gt Victoria Street – 7AM to 7PM, Monday to Saturday, bus lane up to the junction with Bruce Street.
- Bruce Street – 7AM to 7PM, Monday to Saturday, bus lane up to the junction with Dublin Road.
- Dublin Road – 7AM to 7PM, Monday to Saturday, bus lane up to Shaftsbury Square.

In addition, there is a bus lane on North Street, which will operate from 7AM to 7PM, Monday to Saturday, from Bridge Street to Royal Avenue. The accessible parking bays for Blue Badge holders on North Street are being relocated, towards Bridge Street and into Royal Avenue.

A proposal for a temporary bus lane on the Lisburn Road, 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM, Monday to Friday, from Jubilee Road (City Hospital) to Sandy Row is still being finalised.

Enforcement will be in operation to ensure that the traffic flows as freely as intended.

## Marketing / Communications Campaigns

### Ticketing Developments – Contactless accepted across bus and rail network

Contactless payments were recently launched on all Ulsterbus and Goldliner services across Northern Ireland enabling faster boarding and an enhanced customer experience. This now means passengers can choose contactless payments on all bus and train journeys across the network enhancing integration, convenience and payment flexibility.

Other digital ticket options are also being heavily promoted as we prepare for the opening of Grand Central Station including the mLink mobile app, Smartcards, online ticketing, and Ticket Vending Machines. While cash will still be accepted, our aim is to get more passengers to prepay to speed up journeys and enhance convenience.



### Grand Pianist Competition

Translink is calling on pianists across Northern Ireland to compete for the opportunity to perform at Belfast Grand Central Station this autumn. 'The GRAND Pianist' competition, open to all amateur players of any age and ability, will see regional heats happening across Northern Ireland, as part of a regional roadshow. A concert piano will travel to five rail and bus stations throughout August and September, ahead of the Grand Final at the magnificent new world class station in Belfast.

More details at <https://www.translink.co.uk/betterconnected/grandpianist>

Please like and share to help promote this competition.





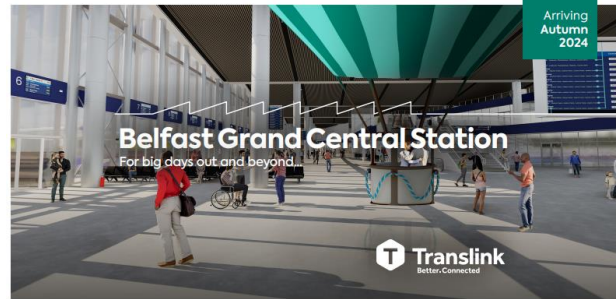
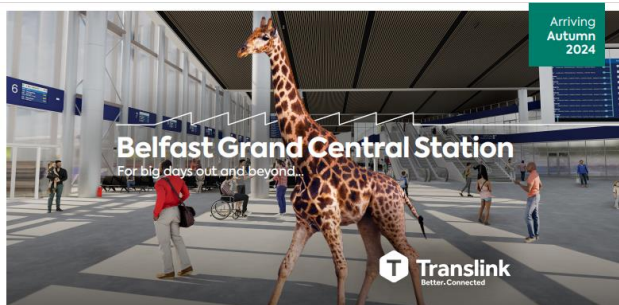
**The Grand Connection Video Series**  
*A Behind the Scenes look at works at Grand Central Station*

*Watch our new Grand Connection videos that will take you on a behind the scenes journey to showcase the people and the 'Grand Expertise' at work. Learn more about the different project parts that need to come together to deliver this world class integrated station.*



## Advertising Campaigns

Key marketing campaigns continue aimed at driving modal shift including Summer offers and Climate themed campaigns. The new campaign to promote the opening of Belfast Grand Central Station has also started to roll out across NI – see creative below.



## The Grand Connection Roadshow

The Grand Connection Roadshow visiting towns and cities across Northern Ireland will finish this month. Feedback has been highly positive with a much public interest in the station opening. Final dates listed at <https://www.translink.co.uk/bgcs/roadshow>



We would like to thank all our stakeholders for your patience while we work to deliver this exciting project to further transform NI's transport infrastructure for a better future for all. Keep up to date at [www.translink.co.uk/bgcs](http://www.translink.co.uk/bgcs)

Further project information can be found at [www.weaverscross.co.uk](http://www.weaverscross.co.uk) or contact: [feedback@translink.co.uk](mailto:feedback@translink.co.uk)