

# News

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## Transport interchange in South Shields reaches final destination

A multi-million pound transport interchange in South Tyneside will welcome its first passengers this weekend.

The £21million facility in South Shields, which incorporates a modern bus station and relocated Metro station, is to open to the public on Sunday morning.

The statement building, which is clad in striking gold-coloured copper shingle, has been under construction since April last year.

Its completion marks a major milestone in the £100m South Shields 365 regeneration masterplan being delivered by South Tyneside Council and partner Muse Developments.

Cllr Iain Malcolm, leader of South Tyneside Council, said: “We’re tremendously proud of this new facility, which has been delivered on schedule and is ready to welcome thousands of Great North Runners next month.

“First impressions count and the new interchange really does provide a smart, high quality arrival point into the town.

“Phase One of South Shields 365, The Word, has resulted in an additional 450,000 visitors a year coming to the town centre so providing first class public transport facilities and improved connectivity is vital.

“By investing in infrastructure and delivering fantastic facilities such as this we are stimulating confidence in the private sector to follow suit.

“Now we’re refining our plans for Phase Three, which will provide an enhanced retail, leisure and offer to help create a vibrant town centre experience, day and night.”

The landmark building, which is expected to be used by 7.5 million passengers a year, was designed by The Harris Partnership and constructed by Bowmer and Kirkland, who also built award-winning cultural venue The Word. The Word has welcomed over one million visitors since it opened in October 2016

Demolition of the existing Metro station and further public realm work will be completed following the opening.

David Wells, Muse Developments' regional director, said: “It’s a great day for South Shields that marks the culmination of several years’ work from the whole 365 team. The replacement of the old Metro station and development of an integrated interchange was a clear objective for the 365 regeneration programme, which has created a safer, more accessible facility for passengers, while providing a real sense of arrival for visitors.

“Complex projects like this are only successful when all partners are working together openly with the same goal in mind. It has been a pleasure to work with South Tyneside Council, Nexus, Bowmer and Kirkland, sister company, Morgan Sindall Construction and Infrastructure among others on this

phase of the wider scheme.

“At Muse, we firmly believe it’s these partnerships that deliver truly exceptional places, and the new interchange here in South Shields is one we’re extremely proud of.”

The facility will now be handed over to public body Nexus to manage.

Tobyn Hughes, managing director of Nexus, said: “This new £21m transport interchange is a landmark development for South Shields. It represents a major investment in modern new facilities.

“Seven million passengers a year will use the interchange, which heralds a step change in quality for bus and Metro users. It provides a brighter, cleaner, and more comfortable environment which will help to attract more people into South Shields for shopping and leisure.

“Metro is part of everyday life in our region and we now have an entirely new Metro station in South Shields. It’s a complete transformation in comparison to the old Metro station on King Street and I’m very much looking forward to our first Metro trains calling there.

“The development builds on the investment that Nexus has made in South Tyneside over the last few years, including refurbished stations and a new learning centre that we are building there for the training needs of our workforce.”

The project received £9.4m from the Local Growth Deal through the North East Local Enterprise Partnership. The Local Growth Deal is supporting major capital investments to promote innovation, economic and skills infrastructure and sustainable transport across the North East LEP area.