Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust

October 2026

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is Yorkshire Ambulance Service proposing a new ambulance station for Sheffield?
Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust is developing a business case for a new, modern ambulance station in Sheffield because the current estate is no longer suitable for the size and needs of the workforce. The Trust currently operates ambulance stations at Batemoor, Longley and Middlewood, alongside other facilities supporting fleet, Patient Transport Service and training activity. These sites were not designed for the current number of staff and vehicles, and there is limited scope to address existing constraints within the current estate.

Staff feedback has consistently highlighted concerns about overcrowding, parking, changing and rest facilities, safety and security, and the suitability of current buildings. A single modern station would help address these issues and support the Trust's wider ambition to provide safe, modern and fit-for-purpose operational facilities, as well as increase capacity for future growth in the workforce, which isn't possible on the current stations.

2. What is being proposed?
The Trust is developing a business case for one new, modern ambulance station for Sheffield, bringing together teams currently based across the three existing ambulance stations onto one site. A potential location has been identified in the Lower Don Valley, subject to business case approval, funding, planning permission and other required approvals.

The proposal would enable the co-location of 999 Operations, Patient Transport Service, Ambulance Vehicle Preparation, fleet workshop facilities and dedicated training space. The aim is to improve ambulance availability, operational efficiency and staff facilities, while supporting better patient care.

3. How would a single station improve response times?
The proposal is intended to improve response times by increasing ambulance availability and reducing the amount of time vehicles are unavailable. Co-locating fleet and vehicle preparation services would allow ambulances to be cleaned, restocked, refuelled and maintained more quickly. This would release more clinical time for patient care and reduce vehicle downtime.

Independent modelling commissioned by the Trust has considered the potential operational impact of the proposal for Category 1 and Category 2 patients across South Yorkshire and the wider YAS area. The modelling indicates that, with Ambulance Vehicle Preparation, improved efficiencies and the continued use of standby points across Sheffield, the proposal could improve mean response times in South Yorkshire by 25 seconds for Category 1 incidents and by 2 minutes and 27 seconds for Category 2 incidents.

4. How will this affect local ambulance cover in Sheffield?
Sheffield would maintain the same number of ambulance resources initially. The proposal is intended to improve the availability and readiness of those resources, rather than reduce local ambulance cover.

Ambulances are deployed dynamically by Emergency Operations Centres using real-time demand and location data. Colleagues are usually dispatched from their previous patient, hospital sites or standby points across the city, rather than directly from ambulance stations. This means response times are primarily driven by the location and availability of active ambulance resources, rather than the number or distribution of station buildings.

5. What is Ambulance Vehicle Preparation and why is it important?
Ambulance Vehicle Preparation, or AVP, means dedicated staff prepare ambulances by cleaning, restocking and refuelling vehicles so they are ready for clinicians. This reduces the time clinicians spend preparing vehicles at the start of a shift or during a shift when cleaning or restocking is needed.

Introducing AVP across Sheffield would help ensure ambulances are ready more quickly, increase vehicle availability and release more clinical time for responding to and caring for patients. To do this effectively, the Trust needs a site large enough to support AVP, alongside fleet workshop and operational requirements.

6. Why can't the existing stations simply be upgraded?
The current Sheffield stations have significant limitations, including building condition, overcrowding, limited space and parking challenges. Middlewood and Batemoor require upgrades and modernisation to meet environmental and regulatory requirements, and all three stations and the fleet workshop need expansion to meet future requirements.

There is limited scope to address these constraints within the existing estate. The Trust has considered possible locations that could provide the scale required for a modern ambulance station, including AVP and fleet facilities. The alternative to progressing a business case would be to continue with the current estate challenges, which would not deliver the same opportunity to improve ambulance availability, staff facilities or response times.

7. Which teams and services would be included in the proposal?
The proposal would bring together teams currently based across the three Sheffield ambulance stations and would support the co-location of 999 Operations, Patient Transport Service, Ambulance Vehicle Preparation, fleet workshop facilities and dedicated training space.

Patient Transport Service facilities would also be improved, including the opportunity to invest in electric vehicle charging infrastructure as the Trust develops its fleet. Dedicated training space in Sheffield would reduce staff travel time and costs and improve access to local learning and development.

8. What role will standby points play?
Standby points will remain an important part of the operating model. These locations allow ambulances to be positioned across the city when resources are not actively responding to patients. They are based on demand patterns, real-time call activity and the location of other resources.

The Trust already uses standby points in Sheffield and is reviewing the number and location of these as part of the business case. Current planning assumes the continued use of standby points across the city, with potential locations including Northern General Hospital, Sheffield city centre, south Darnall, Woodseats and north Hillsborough. The final number and locations will be informed by further modelling, operational planning and discussions with partners.

9. Do ambulances serve fixed areas of Sheffield?
No. Ambulances across Sheffield and South Yorkshire do not serve fixed geographies, and no ambulance is ringfenced to a specific area. Clinicians respond collectively to incidents according to clinical priority.

Once colleagues complete an incident, they are normally dispatched to the next 999 call based on their location at that time. This flexible, patient-centred approach ensures care is prioritised for those most in need and that ambulance resources remain available across the area.

10. What benefits would the proposal bring for staff?
A single modern station would provide better facilities for staff, support recruitment and retention, improve rostering and reduce inefficiencies created by operating across multiple constrained sites. Staff have already highlighted concerns about overcrowding, parking, changing and rest facilities, safety and security, and the suitability of current buildings.

The proposal would provide a safer, more modern and more efficient working environment, while also supporting training, vehicle preparation and fleet maintenance on one site. The Trust will continue to involve staff and union colleagues as the plans develop.

11. How is the proposal being funded?
The opportunity to invest in a new ambulance station in Sheffield is dependent on a successful bid for NHS England capital funding of up to £10m. The funding is subject to a competitive process and requires the Trust to submit a robust business case demonstrating how the investment would improve efficiency, staff facilities, ambulance availability, patient care and response times.

The business case is still in development and no final decision has been made.

12. What approvals are needed before the project can go ahead?
The proposal is subject to business case approval, funding, planning permission and other required approvals. If the business case is approved and funding is secured, further work would be required before any construction could begin, including planning approval and detailed development work.

The existing stations and services will continue to operate while the business case is developed and while any approvals are considered.

13. What would happen to the existing ambulance stations?
Until there is approval on the business case, the existing stations and estate will continue to operate. If the investment is approved and a new station is developed, the Trust's Estates team would consider the future of the current sites in due course.
Because any approved investment would take time to deliver, the existing stations would need to continue to be maintained during the development period.

14. How are staff, partners and stakeholders being involved?
The Trust is undertaking a programme of communication and engagement with staff, union colleagues, local authorities, NHS partners, elected representatives and other stakeholders. Staff in Sheffield have already shared feedback about current estate challenges and the improvements they would like to see.

The Trust has also updated partners, including Sheffield City Council's Scrutiny of Health Committee and MPs, and will continue engagement as the business case develops. Feedback from staff, partners and stakeholders will be considered as the proposal is developed and before any final decisions are made.

Any questions can be submitted to yas.corporategovernance@nhs.net or yas.patientrelations@nhs.net

15. When will a final decision be made?

The business case is still being developed. A final decision will depend on the outcome of the NHS England funding process, Trust approvals, planning permission and other required approvals. Further updates will be provided as the work progresses.

16. What feedback have you received from staff about their current experiences and plans for the new station?

Our staff have told us there is insufficient space on the current ambulance stations, which impacts their wellbeing, with limited space for taking meal breaks and in rest areas. Staff have highlighted concerns about parking and about safety on current stations. There are also concerns about the lack of appropriate space for discussions with managers and reviews of incidents.

Colleagues have told us that they welcome the opportunity to have appropriate facilities to support their wellbeing, with improved kitchen facilities, rest areas and having dedicated meeting space for training and learning, which the new station will provide.

17. What impact will the new station have on patients and response times?

The proposed station would support better patient care by reducing the amount of time vehicles are not available and freeing up more clinical time for staff to respond to patients. Sheffield would initially retain the same number of ambulance resources. Independent modelling shows that with Ambulance Vehicle Preparation, improved efficiencies and continued use of standby points across Sheffield, average response times across South Yorkshire will improve.

18. Will ambulance services continue while plans are developed?

Yes. Existing stations and services will continue to operate while the business case is developed and approvals are considered. Current stations would also need to be maintained during the development period.

19. How can patients ask questions or share their views?

Patients can send questions or feedback to yas.patientrelations@nhs.net or yas.corporategovernance@nhs.net. Feedback from stakeholders will be considered as the proposal develops and before final decisions are made. To support timely consideration as part of the business case development, feedback should be sent by 11 September 2026, however comments and feedback can continue to be sent into the emails above.