

21 years on the tracks for Hull Trains

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Hull Trains has been making direct rail travel to London from East Yorkshire easier for 21 years, with the operator celebrating the milestone anniversary.

Their first train from London King's Cross set off on its maiden voyage in September 2000, a year that would see 80,000 passengers between the capital city and Hull Paragon Station. The importance and popularity of the services to the local community was demonstrated in 2005 when Hull Trains counted its one millionth passenger on board.

In 2018, this figure had increased to 10 million, one year after it had been named Best UK Train Operator. Hull Trains has consistently ranked among the top performing train operators in the UK according to customers, with the most recent National Rail Passenger Survey scoring them above industry average for passenger satisfaction.

It has been a quite remarkable journey for open-access operator Hull Trains who, as part of FirstGroup, run direct services every day of the week from Hull and the Humber region to London. In 2019, the business began to increase its capacity from four to five units, and more seats per train, with a £60 million investment in its Paragon fleet which completely replaced the old fleet. The high-tech bi-mode, electric and diesel, trains which were assembled by Hitachi in the UK are one of the most modern and innovative

trains on the UK's rail network.

Andy Mellors, Managing Director, Non-Franchised Businesses - FirstGroup Rail Division, said: "At the heart of Hull Trains' success has been our customers; the strength of feeling towards Hull Trains from the local community, I believe, is unrivalled. Even during the challenging period we have recently faced as a result of the pandemic, the people of Hull and East Yorkshire were unwavering in their support. We would like to thank customers and stakeholders for their support over the last 21 years.

"Likewise, colleagues at Hull Trains remain just as committed to delivering first class customer service as they did when we first started. Our colleagues are what makes travelling on a Hull Trains service so special."

This commitment shown by colleagues has not gone unnoticed over the years: in 2017 Hull Trains was awarded the title of Customer Service Team of the Year.

Following what has been a challenging period for the business as a result of the worldwide pandemic, the future is now bright for Hull Trains. "Passenger numbers are continuing to increase which is great news for the city of Hull and East Yorkshire as direct rail connections to London have played a major role in strengthening the regional economy," added Mr Mellors.

On Friday October 8th, a special event is being planned at Hull Paragon Station with a commemorative 21st anniversary design being unveiled on the fifth and final unit of the Paragon fleet. The train will depart at 10:33 from Hull Paragon station on its maiden journey with its new livery.

Photo credit: Hull Trains