

A new dawn! East Midlands Railway new Intercity fleet to be named Aurora

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East Midlands Railway's new Intercity fleet will be known as Aurora after the name was chosen from more than 2,000 competition entries.

The Aurora fleet includes Japanese bullet-train technology and will provide fast, comfortable and state-of-the-art journeys between London, Sheffield and Nottingham from 2023.

Aurora appealed to the judges who were won over by the name's two meanings which mirror the ethos and technological advancements of the new trains.

Aurora is the name of the Roman goddess of the dawn, representing the new start Aurora provides for the railway serving the East Midlands and South Yorkshire. It is also inspired by the Northern Lights, created by the transfer of the sun's solar energy - matching Aurora's ability to run under electric power.

The new state of the art Aurora trains, are financed by Rock Rail East Midlands and will be built by Hitachi Rail UK in County Durham. They have the ability to run using electric overhead lines wherever possible, taking advantage of the £1.5 billion Midland Main Line Upgrade and will ultimately replace the diesel train

fleet.

As a result, they are quieter and greener, meaning lower carbon emissions and a better environment for passengers, stations and communities along the route. Passengers will also see major improvements, including more seats and fresh, modern interiors alongside air conditioning, free WiFi, plug sockets and better passenger information screens.

Construction is due to start later this year with the first units due to start Main Line testing in mid-2022, with the first entry into passenger service due in early 2023.

Will Rogers, Managing Director at East Midlands Railway, said everyone at the company was delighted with the reaction of the public to the competition.

He said: "It's fantastic to see the level of excitement that surrounds the introduction of the Aurora fleet to the region. We love the winning name as it really fits the project and its aim to bring a new start for the Midland Main Line and our passengers.

"We know our passengers are looking forward to the introduction of the Aurora fleet and the modern, comfortable and greener journeys they will provide."

Jim Brewin, UK Country Lead, Hitachi Rail, said: "It's fantastic to see such a high level of engagement in East Midlands Railway's competition to name the new fleet. The 'Aurora' is a brilliant winning name, and well suited to the fleet that is being delivered – the latest model of our new intercity trains.

"The new trains will benefit 65 suppliers across the UK including a number in the East Midlands and will be built at our factory in County Durham, supporting hundreds of jobs in the region. We look forward to delivering the Aurora Fleet, providing fast, efficient and environmentally friendly journeys for its passengers."

Mark Swindell, CEO Rock Rail and Director Rock Rail East Midlands, said: "Rock is delighted that the new and aptly named Aurora fleet is set to transform the journeys for passengers along the routes between London, Sheffield and Nottingham.

"Together with our institutional investor partners we are committed to supporting more sustainable travel and the Aurora's greener credentials will help the UK's drive towards reducing carbon and other harmful emissions."

Photo and video credit: East Midlands Railway

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