

# CAF opens first UK rolling stock maintenance depot

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CAF has opened its first rolling stock maintenance depot in the UK.

Chester Traincare Depot will provide maintenance services for the Wales and Borders rail network's current Class 175 and new CAF-built Class 197 DMU fleets.

The Hoole Bridge facility was transferred from Alstom to CAF on June 1 when the company took over maintenance of the 27 Class 175 DMU fleet for Transport for Wales (TfW) under a Train Services Agreement (TSA). The 12-month contract is CAF's first heavy rail TSA in the UK.

Heavy maintenance and materials management of the entire CAF-built fleet of 77 Class 197 Civity DMUs will also be undertaken at the traincare depot under a 11- year maintenance services contract.

Light maintenance of the 21 ERTMS-equipped 197s operating on the Cambrian Line will be carried out at Machnylleth depot in Powys.

The mainstay of inter-urban, long-distance and rural services, the CAF 'Made in Wales' Class 197 fleet built

at the company's state-of-the-art facility in Newport, South Wales, is due to enter service in the coming months.

The fleet will initially operate on routes in North Wales and the Borders, before being rolled out on services in South and West Wales.

Chester Traincare Depot employs a team of over 70 engineers, maintenance technicians, materials management and project support staff.

CAF is investing in a depot modernisation programme, part-funded by TfW, to optimise workstreams and compatibility with the new Class 197 fleet.

The first phase to install new servicing equipment, including an AdBlue, CET and water systems, is nearing completion.

Starting this month, improved roof access, an advanced Shore Supply System and new vending solutions for material handling will be installed.

In 2023 planning will commence on equipping the facility for the Class 197 overhaul programme.

Matt Jones, CAF UK Rail Services Operations Manager, said: "As the OEM of the new Class 197 fleet and with extensive expertise of the Civity trains, CAF is looking forward to establishing a long-term collaborative relationship with TfW.

"Our knowledge of the Civity platform, combined with the depot upgrade programme designed to optimise our rolling stock maintenance processes, will provide TfW and its customers greater train reliability, safety and reduce vehicle down-time, increasing overall availability."