

# Great Western Railway extends Hitachi Rail's maintenance contract

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Great Western Railway (GWR), Eversholt Rail, and Hitachi Rail have announced an extension of their maintenance partnership, which will bring millions of pounds in investment in the UK supply chain and improve train service reliability for GWR customers.

Hitachi Rail's successful and innovative train maintenance has earned the company a contract extension, worth over £300 million, to maintain the GWR West of England fleet of 36 Class 802 Intercity Express Trains until 2028.

The decision to extend the contract was based on Hitachi Rail's previous success, which has seen the fleet increase its reliability performance by over 94% since its introduction. This steady improvement in reliability is a result of continuous investment in digitally optimised maintenance since 2018. This 'always improve' approach was exemplified when Class 802s delivered its best ever period performance during the summer of 2022, achieving 28,357 Miles per Technical Incident (MTIN).

Hitachi Rail will also continue to invest in digital maintenance capabilities to enhance performance for GWR passengers. This investment includes innovative digital solutions, such as [onboard digital monitoring](#),

which can reduce bogie and wheelset maintenance downtime by 50%.

The partnership will help maintain over 500 highly skilled jobs at West of England depots, with the majority of Class 802 maintenance taking place at Laira depot in Plymouth. Maintaining the trains closer to key stations like Penzance, Exeter, and Plymouth will improve train availability and fleet optimisation, while benefitting Laira depot with steady rate of work.

The contract extension also ensures an annual UK supply chain investment of £70 million that will come directly from maintaining GWR's Intercity Express Train fleet. Hitachi Rail's prioritisation of people and the UK supply chain through its maintenance business delivers a yearly economic benefit of £462 million across the UK.

Jim Brewin, Chief Director UK & Ireland at Hitachi Rail said: "This major contract extension demonstrates our partners' confidence in Hitachi Rail's UK maintenance operations and rolling stock technology, which was 2.7 times more reliable than the industry average in 2022.

"As intercity travel continues to recover strongly following the pandemic, we are proud to enhance our maintenance services for GWR and Eversholt Rail. This includes the incorporation of industry-leading digital tools and expanding Hitachi's presence at Plymouth's Laira depot."

Simon Green, GWR Engineering Director said: "Since the introduction of this Intercity Express Train fleet almost five years ago, they have made a massive contribution delivering more services and seats and have allowed us to respond positively to changes in demand for leisure travel across many of our long-distance routes.

"The award of this contract means we have continuity in the maintenance of our Class 802 fleet, and we look forward to continuing to work with Hitachi to deliver this fleet into service every day."

Paul Sutherland, Client Services Director at Eversholt Rail said: "We are pleased to have secured this maintenance contract extension with Hitachi Rail for the Class 802 fleet. Hitachi Rail's approach to maintenance and their investment in digital maintenance solutions will continue to serve the West of England routes with a high performing service for years to come.

"This contract continues to build on our strong partnership with both Great Western Railway and Hitachi Rail to deliver the best services to passengers in the South West."

*Photo credit: Hitachi Rail*