

## 'New Dawn' for EMR's passengers as Aurora welding starts

April 22, 2021



East Midlands Railway (EMR) has marked the milestone of welding beginning on its new Aurora fleet by releasing a new video about the exciting project.

The video, which features shots from across the East Midlands, footage of welding and interviews of EMR staff, also highlights the challenges the company will face as it works on introducing the new start-of-the-art bi-mode fleet to the region.

EMR's new Intercity fleet of 33 five-carriage trains, which will be able to run on electricity and diesel, is being built by Hitachi Rail in County Durham and financed by Rock Rail East Midlands.

Around 40 newly qualified welders and painters at the plant in Newton Aycliffe, will be completing the high-tech aluminium carriage shells. While the welcoming and comfortable interiors of the fleet have been designed by Derby-based supplier, DGDESIGN.

EMR is also investing to upgrade its depot at Etches Park in Derby where the Aurora fleet will be maintained – ensuring the need for highly-skilled jobs in the region that it calls home.

When it enters service in 2023, the Aurora fleet will offer significant advances on the existing fleet, with passengers benefiting from more seats and modern interiors.

The trains will also include features that passengers have said they want to see, including air conditioning, free WiFi throughout, plug sockets and better passenger information screens.

EMR has created a new video (below) which sets out the challenge of bringing the new state-of-art trains to the region.

Rachel Turner, Head of New Trains at East Midlands Railway, said: “The start of the welding process is an exciting milestone in the journey to bring our new state-of-the art Aurora trains to East Midlands Railway customers.

“We are also working in partnership with Hitachi to provide more opportunities and significant investment to Derby and the wider East Midlands. This includes working with Derby-based supplier, DGDESIGN, to create unique, comfortable and welcoming interiors for the Aurora as well as investing to upgrade our depot at Etches Park so it can continue to provide highly-skilled jobs and maintain the fleet for many years to come.

“Our joint commitment will not only ensure that the fleet meets the needs of our customers but also that EMR can continue to support the communities we serve.”

Jim Brewin, Head of UK & Ireland, Hitachi Rail said: “The £110 million investment at Hitachi Rail’s UK factory, which includes brand new painting and welding capabilities, ensures the Aurora fleet are truly British-built trains.

“These new intercity trains will deliver a real step-change for East Midlands Railway passengers, with more seats and modern passenger facilities. Therefore our partnership with East Midlands Railway is going to deliver tangible benefits for both the British economy and rail passengers.”

*Photo credit: East Midlands Railway*