

LNER hiccups in an otherwise first-class service

We strolled to our leather armchairs for the journey and deposited our luggage then I hooked up my laptop ready for use. I picked up a paper to pass the time before coffee arrived.

There had been no queue to check in luggage, problems over the weight of the luggage.

Also, there was no hassle over security screening and the stress that entails and no scrambling for a seat in a departure lounge full of passengers waiting for delayed planes, no queue to board, no boarding passes required and no need to show your passport.

Oh, and the train left on time.

This was travel minus stress. An office at 125mph on the East Coast main line between Edinburgh and London.

However, the wi-fi did not co-operate and there was no cooked breakfast because of a reported staff shortage.

We accepted a bacon roll and they did offer selections from the all-day menu later in the journey.

On the way back we sat down and were scanning the menu only for the chef to ask for it back. Cooker problems we were told. Later, he offered a vegan wrap – which were not popular with passengers – or a Scottish beef and horseradish sandwich on bland, tasteless white bread, a poor alternative to a cooked meal.

Yes, the hand cooked crisps and treacle muffin, plus tea and coffee, were dispensed but come on LNER. First class means what it says. The toilet also didn't have a working soap dispenser. Another minus point.

However, the train was on time and it only takes over four hours London to Edinburgh and the wi-fi worked coming home. Phew.

Despite the hiccups, I still find this the best way to travel between two of Britain's Capital cities and the journey time by plane – providing it is on time – is about an hour longer.

I'll plump for the rail option any time but LNER, please get your act together.



PICTURE: Jim Smith with the new Azuma train now running on the East Coast service