



**South Western Railway  
Class 701 Arterios  
FINALLY enter traffic!**

**Regulator revokes  
West Coast Railways'  
CDL coach exemption**



# RAIL EXPRESS

Essential reading for today's rail enthusiast

**CLASS  
60s**  
withdrawn by  
DB Cargo UK

## NEW LOOK FOR CLASS 37s

**Loram and Locomotive  
Services reveal new  
Type 3 liveries**



**EXPRESS  
Modeller**

**Slam-door heaven in 'OO'**  
Hornby revamps the VEP

**NEW 'OO' GAUGE WAGONS REVIEWED IN DETAIL**

**No. 233  
DIESEL AND  
ELECTRIC RAIL  
MODELLING**

**Test building JIA grain hopper wagons**

### MODELLING SECTION

- Cavalex Class 60s  
Limited editions revealed
- TTA treat from Hornby  
New 'OO' gauge model reviewed
- 'N' gauge Kit Corner  
Test building JIA grain hopper wagons

### END OF THE LINE FOR CLASS 508s



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# Riding the ROG Loco Move#5

**Cab Ride: Newcastle to Haymarket  
via ECML and Edinburgh**

Scottish EMU moves, worked by ROG Class 37s, have been a highlight of the Scottish traction scene in recent years. Usually, the 37 heads from Derby to Kilmarnock via the WCML, works a few EMU moves and heads back the same way.

In January 2023, due to engineering works, this route wasn't available, so instead the loco was routed via the ECML and instead of one loco - both of ROG's 37/7 heavyweights were used and this is the subject of this cab ride.

We pick up the action just before Newcastle. Due to a minor fault on the lead loco 37800, a run round is required and this takes place opposite Heaton depot and with 37884 now leading, as the 37s blaze along the ECML.

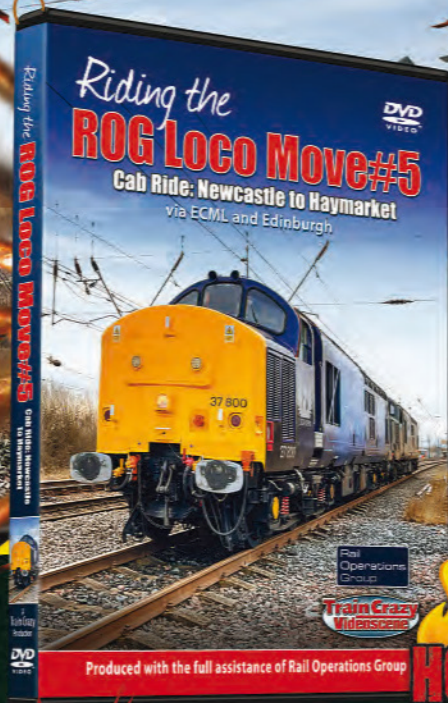
Cab rides in winter can be challenging weather-wise but this was a lucky one with bright and dry conditions for most of the way and just a couple of short showers. Instead of the usual sea of green trees and bushes that you get in summer, the wintertime colours are very different and so much more of the railway can be seen.

Highlights include the Heaton run round, into the goods loop at Berwick, passing over the Royal Border Bridge and non-stop through Edinburgh. The programme finishes at Haymarket. The full journey is shown.

Includes maps, on-screen captions and minimal narration. A thrash cam records the 37s at work and ambient sounds.

**Duration:** 160 mins **Price:** DVD £19.95 - Blu-ray £22.95 **Code:** TC163

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# SCOTTISH RAILWAY DVD OF THE YEAR!

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## Scottish Diesels 2023 Review

**2023 turned out to be another interesting and varied year for Scotland's railways, and many highlights of the year are featured here, including:** Midland Pullman HST • Colas 56s and 70s on slurry tanks and engineers workings • 50050 comes from Nottingham to rescue 37116 • 68001 on the Blackford water train • LSL BR Blue 47s 47593/47614 working the Three Peaks tour • 37418 to Oban with Caroline • XC HSTs with all three retro liveries featured • 67023, plus Tonbridge based 73961 and from Bo'ness, 37403 on Sleepers • DRS 68s on flask workings for Georgemas with Greener 68006 and Transpennine 68022 • 73970 on a daytime crew trainer trip round Fife Circle • 37403 on Railtours for BLS and SRPS and with WCRC 37676 to Inverness • ScotRail 47712 and matching Push Pull Mark IIIs and DBSO on tour • Diverted freight down ECML • 67007 on a Railtour • Colas 37s on IM workings • NMT HST with Colas 43277 • 20166 at the Caledonian Railway • Bo'ness Diesel Galas featuring 37425 and 66532 and Colas 70807 and 70813 • Class 69s in BR Green and Large Logo Blue on Weedkiller duties • Balfour Beatty's Drain Train • Caledonian Railway Diesel Gala • CS Class 92018 visits Perth on a press and training run • LNER Azuma drag with 66771 • D213 (40013) on a Steam Dreams trip round the Fife and Forth Circle • 37405+37254 work a Rail Drop Train to Balloch plus superb aerial footage of trains on the mighty Culloden Viaduct and **BONUS FOOTAGE:** SPT Subway old stock in final months of service.

**Duration:** 100 minutes **Price:** DVD £16.95 - Blu-ray £19.95 **Code:** TC164

**Download:** SD £11.95 HD £14.95

This title will be launched at the Videoscene stall at the Model Rail Scotland event on 23rd-25th February.



### Scottish Diesels Past and Present Collection

Scottish Diesels Past and Present Volumes 1 to 4 are in this set.

Highlights a visit to Eastfield depot in 1992; Deltics at Haymarket and Edinburgh in 1981; Glasgow Central, Queen Street and the suburbs in the mid-1970s with class 27s.

(Original codes: TC048 / TC060 / TC054 / TC065 (Disc 1))

**Duration:** 420 minutes (4 discs) **Price:** DVD £25.00 **Code:** TC701

### Scottish Diesels Review Collection No.1

Featuring Scottish Diesels Review years 2010, 2011, 2012 & 2013.

Highlights include 37423+37610 to Thurso; 37608+37409 on the Northern Belle; 37676+37516 to Oban; 55022 on the Fort William Alcan tanks; 47739+47729 with 15 Mk3 buffet coaches.

(Original codes: TC065 (Disc 2) / TC074 / TC084 / TC095)

**Duration:** 490 minutes (4 discs) **Price:** DVD £25.00 **Code:** TC702

### Scottish Diesels Review Collection No.2

Featuring Scottish Diesels Review years 2014, 2015, 2016 & 2017.

Highlights include: 55002 on a railtour; 55022 on a stock move; 56094 on the final Linkwood fuel train; 67s on the Fife Circle, 37401 and the Class 303 EMU at Bo'ness.

(Original codes: TC206 / TC221 / TC232 / TC241)

**Duration:** 613 minutes (4 discs) **Price:** DVD £25.00 **Code:** TC706



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DB Cargo UK Nos. 66170 and 66168 approach Tumpy Green Lane, Gossington with 6B13 05.00 Robeston-Westerleigh loaded tanks. This duty is currently handled by pairs of Class 66s until the first regeared '66/6s', which are being introduced to replace the now withdrawn '60' fleet, are released from modifications by DB. Christopher Perkins



Main picture: Displaying its new Loram UK livery, No. 37418 stands at Derby Railway Technical Centre. Colin G. Wood.  
Inset image: Locomotive Services No. 37409 Loch Awe passes Leamington Spa on January 12. Martin Turner

## FEATURES

- 76 WHAT FUTURE FOR NEW TRAINS IN THE UK?**  
Richard Clinnick analyses recent Government hearings into the situation regarding new trains.
- 82 JANUARY PICTORIAL**  
A round-up of images sent to Rail Express this month.

## REGULARS

- 16 SUBSCRIPTION OFFERS**  
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- 88 REVIEWS**  
The latest topical reviews.

## MODELLING

It's slam-door heaven as Hornby revamps its 4-VEP, limited edition Cavalex Class 60s from Rails of Sheffield, Hornby TT:120 tank wagons and DB Cargo UK aggregate wagons arrive in shops, Hornby 'OO' gauge TTA tank wagon review, Rapido's new OAA is put under the microscope and 'N' gauge SMD hopper wagons are the subject of the first of a two-part article.



## NEWS

- 8 NEWS**  
Direct Rail Services to sell its final Class 37s, South Western Railway Class 701s enter traffic at last, Office of Rail and Road revokes West Coast Railways' Central Door Locking exemption, DB Cargo UK to invest in Class 92s, ScotRail hopes to order new trains this year and TransPennine Express Mk.5As move to Long Marston for storage.
- 18 POWER BY THE HOUR**  
DB Cargo UK withdraws final three Class 60s.
- 21 SHUNTERS AND INDUSTRIALS**  
Reorganisation sees RMS Locotec leave Wolsingham.
- 22 UNITS**  
Merseyrail withdraws final Class 508.
- 26 COACHES**  
Transport for Wales introduces extended Mk.4 rake.
- 27 WAGONS**  
First-built BAA sent for scrap.
- 28 PRESERVATION**  
125 Group amends Valenta plans.
- 30 IRISH ANGLE**  
Preliminary work begins on railway reopening projects.
- 32 POWERSCENE**  
All the recent notable workings in class-by-class order.
- 85 LU WORLD**  
Industrial dispute postponed but negotiations continue.
- 86 RAILTOURS**  
No. D1015 Western Champion set for charter duties.

## RAIL EXPRESS

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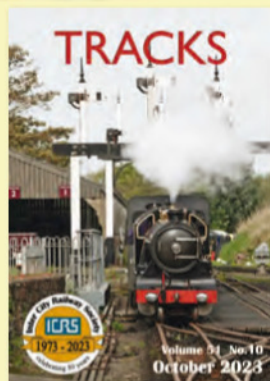


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# RAIL EXPRESS

All four operational DC Rail Class 60s stand at UK Rail Leasing's Leicester depot on December 31, 2023, having returned to the depot for the Christmas period. From left to right are Nos. 60055 *Thomas Barnardo*, 60046 *William Wilberforce*, 60029 *Ben Nevis* and 60028. DCR owns a further 15 Class 60s (Nos. 60008/009/013/022/038/057/060/061/064/070/075/080/090/098/099) which are stored pending developments. Following recent withdrawals by DB Cargo UK, DCR is currently the second largest operator of '60s' behind GB Railfreight. DBC plans to withdraw its entire '60' fleet, replacing them with regearred '66s' (RE332). Rob Reedman







# DRS to sell final six

By Richard Clinnick

SIX Class 37s which had remained with Direct Rail Services into 2024, have been put up for sale.

Five of the locomotives, Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower*, 37419 *Driver Tony Kay 1974-2019*, 37422 *Victorious*, 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* and 37716 were most recently used on railhead treatment train (RHTT) duties based at York Holgate Works, and, following the

end of that on December 15, 2023, were involved in a charity photoshoot the following day (*RE333*). The sixth locomotive, No. 37424 *Avro Vulcan XH558*, was not used on RHTT services and remains stored at Carlisle Kingmoor depot.

The company said that the decision comes as part of its commitment to the environment, fleet modernisation and adapting to operational needs.

In a statement, DRS said: "Since their introduction, the Class 37s have

played a vital role in DRS's operations, from nuclear flask trains to freight services, snow clearing and much more. These locomotives have become synonymous with versatility and are a distinctive presence on the UK rail network.

"DRS extends its deepest gratitude to the dedicated rail enthusiast community whose passion and support have made the Class 37s cultural icons."

It said that the decision to

sell them is driven by the need to modernise its fleet, something first suggested in an exclusive interview in *Rail Express* 322. DRS also wants to embrace newer technologies and meet the environmental and operational challenges of the future, it added.

Gottfried Eymmer, NTS managing director – Rail, said: "It is the end of an era for the Class 37s at DRS, they have been a firm favourite with staff and enthusiasts alike, but the time is right to focus on more modern and efficient





# Class 37s

engines such as our excellent Class 68 and '88s'."

A DRS spokesperson told *Rail Express*: "We've had many successful seasons of RHTT operations on the RA5 circuits, providing vital work to ensure the safety of the railway, using the Class 37s, but this contract has come to its natural conclusion meaning the time was right to sell on these engines."

The tender closes at 13.00 on February 15, after this edition of *Rail Express* goes to press.

The sale of the '37s' will leave DRS with a fleet of four Class 57/3s, 19 Class 66s (five sub-leased from DB Cargo UK), 34 Class 68s (five sub-leased to Chiltern Railways and 14 sub-leased to TransPennine Express until May) and 10 Class 88s.

DRS has been steadily disposing of its heritage fleet in recent months, with Nos. 37069, 37218, 37423 bought by Europhoenix at the end of 2023 (RE333), while Locomotive Services acquired No. 37401, and Andania Engineering bought No. 37402.

DRS first acquired Class 37s in 1997 when it bought Nos. 37607-612 from Eurostar after they were made redundant following the decision to cancel Nightstar operations. They were used to supplement the fleet which, at that point, comprised of Class 20s.

The operator grew its '37' fleet through the years as it won more contracts, with the Type 3s used for various duties including nuclear, intermodal and engineering trains as well as infrastructure monitoring and charter trains. DRS also hired '37s' to Northern and Greater Anglia for passenger contracts. 

## CLASS 37s OWNED BY DRS

**Once owned by DRS:** 37023/029/038/051/059/068/069/087, 37144/194/197, 37218/223/229/259/261/262, 37344/384, 37401/402/405-407/409-413/416/417/419/422-427, 37503/510/515/521, 37601-612/667/682/683/688/696, 37703/714/716/718, 37902

**Owned by DRS, for sale:** 37407/419/422/424/425, 37716

## DRS FLEET

**Class 57:** 57304/307-309

**Class 66:** 66031/091, 66108/122/126, 66421-434

**Class 68:** 68001-034

**Class 88:** 88001-010

**Note:** Nos. 66031/091, 66108/122/126 are leased from DB Cargo UK. Nos. 68010-015 are sub-leased to Chiltern Railways. Nos. 68019-032 are sub-leased to TransPennine Express until May.

← Four of the six Class 37s offered for sale by Direct Rail Services, Nos. 37419 *Driver Tony Kay 1974-2019*, 37716, 37422 *Victorious* and 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* stand in Crewe Basford Hall on January 5. The other two for sale are Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower* and 37424 *Avro Vulcan XH558*.

Tom McAtee



GB Railfreight No. 66307 was named *Ipswich Town* at the Suffolk town's station on January 12. The '66' is a former European Class 77, No. 77502, and arrived in the UK from France last year but has yet to enter traffic with GBRf. It was hauled to and from Doncaster Roberts Road for the event by GBRf No. 66782 which also took No. 66709 *Sorrento* to the ceremony. The latter carries a Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) advertising livery. The event was attended by dignitaries from the freight company, the football club and MSC, which is a major customer of GBRf and a significant user of the Port of Felixstowe. MSC also sponsors the football club's training kit. At the ceremony are, from left to right: Ipswich Town chairman Mike O'Leary; GBRf CEO John Smith; MSC managing director Dan Everitt; Ipswich Town fan Philip Drury; former player and manager George Burley; and Ipswich Town chief executive Mark Ashton. GBRf

## ScotRail hopes for train order placement this year

PROGRESS continues to be made on ScotRail's plans for a new fleet of trains, with the operator hoping to go to the market during 2024.

The plan is for every current train other than the Class 380s and 385s to be replaced. Currently the plan is for the Class 156s to be the first to be withdrawn, with SR looking to replace them with cascaded Class 158 and '170' diesel multiple units, with the latter replaced by a fleet of battery electric multiple units as electrification progresses.

The intention is for three train fleets to be ordered, Suburban, Inter-City and Rural, with the Suburban electric fleet likely to be a mix of EMU, designed to replace the Class 318, '320', and '334' electric multiple units, and Battery EMU to replace the '153', '156', '158' and '170' diesel multiple units. It is thought that the cascade will start gradually with '158s' and '170s' moving to other routes as new trains are introduced, thus allowing the oldest trains to be replaced first.

With the withdrawal of the London Northwestern Railway and Northern Class 319s, ScotRail is now the only operator of second-generation AC EMUs, with the '318s' dating from 1985.

ScotRail remains intent on the new trains having full level-boarding access, however it is understood that no decision has been made regarding a preferred design at this stage. Talks continue within the operator, and with the Scottish Government, regarding train specifications, lengths and fleet sizes.

A new fleet will also be required for SR's inter-city services, currently operated by the InterCity High Speed Train fleet. Driver's union ASLEF remains keen for the 25 trains to be removed from traffic before their lease expires in 2030, citing poor crashworthiness as the reason they need to be stood down from service. Originally the union had threatened to not allow members to drive them beyond August 12, 2023, and a new deadline of the end of 2023 had been set, however *Rail Express* understands discussions continue between the various parties regarding a solution.

RE believes that ScotRail is looking at interim solutions to replace the IC7s, however nothing is immediately available. The operator must start a procurement process for any interim fleet, meaning suggestions that Class 222s will move straight from East Midlands Railway once Hitachi Class 810s enter service are premature.

In the immediate future, SR needs to increase the availability of its IC7 fleet from 15 per day to 19, to cover for extra demand on its DMU fleet from 2025 when frequency on the Levenmouth line, which opens in June, doubles from one train per hour to two, meaning more DMUs will be required for the Edinburgh-Leven route. Likely to be '158s' and '170s', they will be replaced on inter-city routes by IC7s. Already SR is planning modifications for two power cars (No. 43128 being one), as well as three Mk.3 sets currently away at Wabtec, Doncaster and Wolverton Works, to improve reliability.



# Class 701s FINALLY enter traffic

By Richard Clinnick

MORE than four years later than planned, Class 701s have begun carrying passengers for South Western Railway, although currently only one set is in traffic per day.

SWR ordered 90 third-rail Avenra electric multiple units from Bombardier Transportation in 2017 (Alstom bought the company in 2020) after it took over the South West franchise from Stagecoach. The trains were due to enter traffic from 2019, replacing Class 455, '456', '458' and '707' EMU fleets. The first '701' was shown to the press at an event at Derby Litchurch Lane on November 15, 2019. By that point there were already delays to the project.

Covid-19 affecting driver training, and various software issues with the trains, which then also affected confidence in the fleet operating in a uniform manner, have been cited as reasons for the lengthy delays getting the '701s' into traffic.

A soft launch on January 9, saw SWR No. 701037 form the 2U91 10.25 London Waterloo-Windsor & Eton Riverside and 2U92 11.30 return. Class 701s continued operating that diagram for the rest of the week, and since that first day Nos. 701039/043 have also carried passengers. After two weeks, a second round trip was added to the diagram, with the '701' also forming the 2U93 12.53 Waterloo-Windsor & Eton Riverside and 2U94 14.00 return.

Speaking to *Rail Express* on January 23, an SWR spokesperson said that as of that date some 71 Class 701s had been accepted for traffic but only three

## CLASS 701 SPECIFICATIONS

|                                                                                                                      |                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Built:                                                                                                               | 2019-2024                                                                  |
| Maximum speed:                                                                                                       | 100mph                                                                     |
| Formation:                                                                                                           | DMS+MS+TLW+MS+EMS+EMS+MS+TLW+MS+DMS ('701/0'), DMS+MS+TLW+MS+DMS ('701/5') |
| Length:                                                                                                              | 200.96m ('701/0'), 101.46m ('701/5')                                       |
| Seats:                                                                                                               | 538 ('701/0'), 256 ('701/5')                                               |
| Seating layout:                                                                                                      | 2+2                                                                        |
| Brakes:                                                                                                              | Disc, rheostatic and regenerative                                          |
| Numbers:                                                                                                             | 701001-060, 701501-530                                                     |
| Owner:                                                                                                               | Rock Rail                                                                  |
| Notes: DMS - Driving Motor Standard, EMS - End Motor Second, MS - Motor Standard, TLW - Trailer Lavatory Wheelchair. |                                                                            |

## CLASS 701 LOCATIONS, FEBRUARY 2, 2024

|                                |                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Derby Litchurch Lane:          | 701058-060, 701503/504/529/530                                                                 |
| South Western Railway network: | 701002/004-006/012/017/019/028/031/035/036/038/042/044/045/047/049, 701508-510/512/521/527/528 |
| Workshop:                      | 701001/007/008/010, 701501/502                                                                 |
| Long Marston:                  | 701013/018/023/025/026/030/033/034/041/048/050-052, 701517-519/524                             |
| MoD Bicester:                  | 701009/011/014/015/020/021/024/027/040/053-056, 701505-507/511/513/514-516/520/522/523/525/526 |
| MoD Marchwood:                 | 701016/022/029/032/046/057                                                                     |
| Wembley:                       | 701003                                                                                         |
| In traffic:                    | 701037/039/043                                                                                 |

could currently be used. SWR remains in negotiations with unions regarding the introduction of the trains and so the operator was unable to confirm when their use would be expanded. The '701s' operate with two people on board, although the driver controls the doors, however the second person, who is safety-critical, can operate the door panels if required.

Current plans are for '701s' to be rolled out on every service on the Windsor & Eton Riverside route. Once that happens a full launch is planned, and a second route will be introduced with the trains serving Hounslow.

The SWR spokesperson told *RE* that it was likely that the 30 five-car Class 701/5s will be introduced after the 60 10-car Class 701/0s are in traffic.

Each 10-car Class 701/0 has 538 seats but there is capacity for 1250 people including standing passengers. There are two fully-accessible toilets,

six bicycles spaces and two wheelchair areas on the 10-car trains, while each five-car Class 701/5 has 265 seats, one fully-accessible toilet, three bicycle spaces and one wheelchair area.

Although they are late, the '701s', which have been branded Arterios, are by no means the only Aventras to be delayed, with the London Overground Class 710s, Greater Anglia and c2c Class 720s and West Midlands Railway Class 730s all heavily delayed too. 



South Western Railway No. 701037 stands at Woking & Eton Riverside on January 11, having arrived with the 2U91 10.25 from London Waterloo. It returned to the capital as the 2U92 11.30 Windsor & Eton Riverside-London Waterloo. Richard Clinnick





TransPennine Express Mk.5As (and some Class 68s) are being moved to Long Marston for storage having been removed from traffic last December. On January 9, Rail Operations Group No. 37884 *Cepheus* approaches Stoke Pound, Worcestershire, hauling TPE No. 68024 *Centaur* and Mk.5A set TP04 (Nos. 11504, 12710-712, 12804) as the 5Q94 08.25 Longsight-Long Marston. Kevin Truby

## TPE Mk.5As taken to Long Marston

TRANSPENNINE Express has begun moving rakes of Mk.5A sets to Long Marston for storage, even though they remain leased by the operator until May.

The moves began at the start of January, with TP03 (Nos. 11503, 12707-709, 12803) the first to move. This set, together with No. 68032 *Destroyer*, arrived from Longsight behind Rail Operations Group No. 37601 *Perseus* on January 4. Five days later, ROG No. 37884 *Cepheus* took TP04 (Nos. 11504, 12710-712, 12804) and No. 68024 *Centaur* on the same journey. A further arrival at Long Marston was that of TP12 (Nos. 11512, 12734-736, 12812) on January 11, its move from Longsight being handled by No. 68021 *Tireless*.

A move involving TP06 (Nos. 11506, 12716-718, 12806), with traction provided by No. 68029 *Courageous*, was terminated at Crewe South Yard on

January 18. This was one of two sets previously located at Gascoigne Wood and was moved to Longsight by No. 68030 *Black Douglas* on January 5. The second set, TP02 (Nos. 11502, 12704-706, 12814), was hauled from Gascoigne Wood to Longsight by No. 68025 *Superb* on January 15.

On January 30, set TP13 (Nos. 11513, 12737-739, 12813) arrived at Long Marston behind No. 68021 *Tireless*, with the '68' returning north. This was followed by set TP11 (Nos.

11511, 12731-733, 12811) from Longsight on February 1, hauled by No. 68027 *Splendid*. The '68' returned to Crewe South Yard.

The Mk.5As were removed from traffic in December (RE333) despite only entering traffic in 2019. Owned by Beacon Rail, the future of the 66 coaches remains uncertain, however Chiltern Railways has recently issued a tender notice for rolling stock, between 60 and 75 vehicles, for which the CAF coaches appear perfectly suited (RE333).

### MK.5A LOCATIONS, FEBRUARY 2, 2024

|                   |                                                         |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Crewe South Yard: | 11506/508-510, 12716-718/722-730, 12806/808-810         |
| Llanwern:         | 12802                                                   |
| Long Marston:     | 11503-505/511-513, 12707-715/731-739, 12803-805/811-813 |
| Longsight:        | 11502/507, 12704-706/719-721, 12807/814                 |
| Wolverton Works:  | 11501, 12701-703, 12801                                 |

## TfW confirms Class 756 introduction for this year

TRI-MODE Class 756s will enter traffic this year with TfW Rail, the operator has confirmed, rather than next year as originally planned.

Stadler has delivered all seven three-car '756/0s' and 17 four-car '756/1s' and these are currently either stored at Barry Island or undergoing mileage accumulation on the Great

Western Main Line as far as Swindon.

A TfW Rail spokesperson told *Rail Express* on January 24, that the units, Nos. 756001-007, 756101-117, will be used initially on newly-electrified Core Valley Lines to Treherbert, Aberdare and Merthyr Tydfil. They will replace Class 150s which will be cascaded to other routes, including replacing Class 231s

introduced last year that will instead move to other routes. However, there is no date for their introduction.

Stadler Class 398 tram-trains, currently undergoing testing, will be introduced onto CVL routes before the end of the year the spokesperson confirmed but, again, there is no confirmed date.

## More High Speed Trains depart for Mexico

MORE High Speed Train Class 43 power cars and Mk.3 coaches have been exported to Mexico as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

While most of the coaches bound for Central America were former CrossCountry vehicles withdrawn last summer, four of the six '43s' were last used by East Midlands Railway having previously been with London North Eastern Railway.

Having been stored at Great Yarmouth since late-October, although they did operate a special to Norwich in November, former XC Nos. 43007 and 43378 joined Nos. 43295, 43306/307/316/320 on their way to Mexico.

Former XC coaches exported were Nos. 41026, 41193, 42036/052/053, 42366/373/378/380, 44017/052/072, 45002/005. They were joined by slam-door Mk.3 Nos. 40750, 40902, 42408 and 42585.

Already in Mexico are Nos. 43022, 43158/170 and Nos. 41091, 41100, 42026, 42179, 42401/402/405, 44034/061/063/094.

More exports are expected, with at least one former Great Western Railway power car due to move to Yarmouth, destined for Mexico, with the remaining XC Mk.3s at the Eastern Rail Services site also due to leave.

### IN BRIEF

#### BATTERIES FOR '802/2'

FITTING batteries to TransPennine Express No. 802207 will cost £2.2 million, Angel Trains chief executive Malcolm Brown told the Transport Select Committee. The '802' is currently at Hitachi's Newton Aycliffe factory for modification and will re-enter traffic later this year.

#### C50A HRA AWARD

THE Class 50 Alliance was due to collect the Heritage Railway Association Mortons Media Rail Express Modern Traction Award at an HRA event at Brighton on February 10, after this issue of *RE* went to press. A full report will appear in the next edition.

#### LS '37/4' FOR SVR

LOCOMOTIVE Services No. 37409 *Loch Awe*, recently repainted into ScotRail livery, has been confirmed as the first visitor at the Severn Valley Railway Spring Diesel Festival, taking place on May 16-19. Further visitors will be announced in due course.

## RAIB confirms Broughty Ferry investigation

THE Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) will investigate an incident where a ScotRail High Speed Train (HST) hit a tree at Broughty Ferry at 84mph.

The accident happened at 13.17 on December 27, 2023 when the 1A37 10.46 Perth-Aberdeen, formed of Nos. 43129/133 and Mk.3 set HA20 collided with the tree. No. 43129 was severely damaged because of the impact.

RAIB said that the tree had fallen across the track from outside the railway, and highlighted that on the day of the accident *Storm Gerrit* had brought heavy rain and strong winds across Scotland and the UK.

The driver made an emergency brake application and took shelter behind the driving seat immediately before impact. The driver suffered minor injuries and while the HST had to be evacuated there were no reports of any passenger injuries.

RAIB said that the investigation will seek to identify the sequence of events that led to the accident and will consider the management of train operations during adverse weather conditions, the arrangements in place to manage and control the risks from trees falling on to the railway, how information received from members of the public relating to railway safety is handled, the crashworthiness of the train and any underlying management factors.



# ORR revokes West Coast Railways' CDL exemption

By Richard Clinnick

WEST Coast Railways' exemption to operate rolling stock without central door locking (CDL) was revoked by the rail regulator on January 10, after a judicial review rejected WCR's challenge against the decision to ban such vehicles (RE333).

This means that any coaching stock not fitted with CDL cannot be operated, however WCR is able to continue operating its trains if it uses stock fitted with the safety equipment, or if it is the operator for other companies, such as Pathfinder Tours trains using Riviera Trains stock, if it is fitted with CDL.

Having expressed its "serious

disappointment" regarding the regulator's decision, WCR has urged the ORR to reconsider its decision.

An ORR spokesperson told *Rail Express* that WCR's Regulation 5 exemption had been revoked. They said: "Rolling stock without central door locking fitted or a valid Regulation 5 Railway Safety Regulation 1999 exemption is not permitted to run on the main line. Other charter heritage operators, which use the main line railway, have made the necessary investment to install central door locking on 'hinged door' rolling stock (or have committed to do so over a transition period) and it remains open to WCR to do the same."



Preserved No. 86259 *Les Ross/Peter Pan* stands at Preston on January 27, with the 1Z86 06.39 London Euston-Carlisle. Chris Gee

## REGULATION 5 EXEMPTION

Regulation 5 exemptions, detailed on the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) website, have been granted to individual operators, and state: "The Company must ensure that the fitment of a method of centrally locking hinged doors in a closed position to the Rolling Stock shall take place in accordance with the fitment plan provided to ORR on 28 February 2023 (the 'Fitment Plan')." Individual exemption deadlines have been given to different companies (see panel) following the submission of fitment plans.

Regulation 5 states that the exemption applies to hinged door rolling stock listed in the documents, and is granted to the following conditions: the company must ensure that hinged doors are modified so that they can be securely locked and clearly labelled as not for passenger use, or they are fitted with secondary locks equivalent to those specified in the Joint TOC Document (which was entitled *Charter Train Managers Operation of Coaching Stock fitted with Secondary Door Locking*, which was prepared by DB Schenker Rail and WCR) which are protected by any anti-tamper device and labelled as being for emergency use only, or they are fitted with secondary door locks that can

only be operated by a steward of the company unless in an emergency.

Regulation 5 also states that the following applies when the stock is being used for passenger service: the operator must ensure that it has and maintains an established Safety Management System which covers the operation of the stock, the operator must ensure that competent and adequately trained stewards are provided and are responsible for monitoring hinged doors and passenger behaviour, and for the operation of secondary door locks at all times when passengers are boarding, on board and alighting the train, and that the operator must ensure that one steward shall only be responsible for either the hinged doors in any one of the stock or those hinged doors at one end of the stock and those hinged doors at the corresponding end of the immediately adjacent stock.

There are variations within the exemptions. The North Yorkshire Moors Railway's stock is only passed for 25mph operation on the national network and can only operate between Grosmont and Whitby. Hastings Diesels Limited is restricted to 75mph, although it does not have a Regulation 5 exemption as the train is fitted with the required locks.

ORR had decided early last year not to grant WCR an exemption, however the operator was granted permission to judicially review that decision and while that claim was determined the ORR granted a series of short-term exemptions, with the latest valid from December 1, 2023. However, it was made clear by the regulator that this would be subject to immediate revocation should the judicial review fail.

The judicial review judgement rejected all five claims brought by WCR, with the decision handed down on December 22, 2023.

In a statement, WCR said it had asked the ORR to maintain an exemption allowing it to operate trains until February 29, while it worked with the regulator to find a long-term solution.

WCR said it is keen to work with the regulator to identify solutions that would enable its trains to continue to operate and protect jobs.

James Shuttleworth, WCR commercial manager, said: "We are extremely disappointed by this decision. We remain committed to working with the ORR to agree how we can safeguard the future of our heritage services. We now ask the regulator to

reconsider urgently in the interests of our passengers and business partners, and to allow our exemption to run until February 29.

"We are already considering a range of options and had asked the ORR to allow the current exemption to run its course, to give us time to put forward detailed proposals.

"Our much-loved services, enjoyed by so many visitors from the UK and around the world, support a large number of businesses along our routes. The 'Jacobite' alone has become an intrinsic part of Scottish tourism, boosting the economies of Mallaig and Fort William. It brings an estimated £20 million into the UK's tourism sector to which we contribute £50m overall every year. For everyone relying on these incredible heritage services this decision is a body blow."

WCR said it would contact passengers with bookings that were affected if that service is not expected to operate. Passengers are advised to contact the operator via enquiries@westcoastrailways.net for more details.

On January 27, the first 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' ran with No. 86259 *Les Ross/Peter Pan* hauling the 1Z86 06.39 London Euston-Carlisle with WCR No. 47746 *Chris Fudge* 29.7.70-22.6.10 on the rear. The train was formed of air-conditioned Mk.2s fitted with CDL, many of which had not operated since the Windermere shuttles in 2018. The train was formed of Nos. 1961, 3326/350/352/392/395, 3431, 6115, 6724, 9493. The Mk.1 could be used as it doesn't carry passengers.

Other WCR coaches with CDL includes Nos. 5453, 3313/360/362, 6100/103/115. *Rail Express* understands that work is underway to fit the Northern Belle set with CDL. 

## EXEMPTIONS FOR OTHER OPERATORS

| Operator                                               | Number of vehicles listed | Exemption deadline |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| The Great Scottish and Western Railway Company Limited | 10                        | February 7, 2025   |
| Hastings Diesels Limited                               | 9                         | March 31, 2028*    |
| Locomotive Services Ltd                                | 19                        | March 31, 2028*    |
| North Yorkshire Moors Limited                          | 33                        | March 31, 2028     |
| Riviera Trains                                         | 2                         | March 31, 2028*    |
| Venice Simplon-Orient-Express Limited                  | 14                        | February 21, 2025  |
| Vintage Trains                                         | 14                        | November 29, 2024  |

Note: \*Only has a Regulation 4 exemption



# Tyne & Wear Class 555s delayed again

NEXUS has confirmed that the introduction of Stadler Class 555s on the Tyne & Wear Metro has been delayed again, with no date for their introduction confirmed.

Reports by the BBC suggested that the trains, of which five have so far been delivered (Nos. 555003-005/013/015) would not enter traffic until next year. The first one to arrive in the UK, No. 555003, was delivered on February 28, 2023, and has been undergoing testing ever since. They were originally due to enter traffic towards the end of last year.

In a statement published on January 25, Nexus said: "before entering customer service, around 22,000 standards and clauses must be complied with, 90,000 individual tests completed and 480 of our people given extensive training. All of this is to

ensure that the new trains work safely and seamlessly.

"With the testing process well underway, we've identified that further testing of some of the systems on the new trains in very specific conditions is required, and we are working together with our partners at Stadler on this.

"Identifying any issues that need to be ironed out prior to entry into customer service is really important and shows the value of our robust testing process. This unfortunately will impact the current delivery timescales but we won't know the extent of this until the additional testing is concluded. We will still continue to make progress with the wider testing programme while this is happening."

Nexus said that Stadler was working with suppliers to source spare

parts of the existing fleet and that heaters had been acquired from the airline industry and which have been adapted to protect the fleet through the winter. This has improved fleet reliability, Nexus said.

Meanwhile, construction of the new '555' depot at Gosport has been completed.

The purpose-built facility features inspection roads and pits, a separate wheel lathe building and a wash plant. There is a storage area for spare parts and materials. VolkerFitzpatrick carried out the work.

The facility also has a component drop to enhance maintenance efficiency, monorail cranes on both light maintenance roads and an overhead crane on the heavy maintenance roads for lifting roof components.

## Busy time for Harry Needle Railroad Company

AN engineering study and assessment of the two ex-Network Rail Class 73/9s is being undertaken by Harry Needle Railroad Company after the locomotives were delivered to Worksop on January 12 (see *Power By The Hour*).

Speaking to *Rail Express* on February 2, HNRC Managing Director Harry Needle said that the work is being undertaken to determine the best way in which Nos. 73951 and 73952 can be reinstated.

Elsewhere, HNRC is fitting new wheels to No. 57002 *Rail Express* after it was acquired by Locomotive Services

Group, with the '57/0' currently located at Worksop. Mr Needle also revealed that No. 37609 is having bodywork and power unit repairs at Worksop, before returning to the main line. It will be joined by No. 37602 which is currently having new wheelsets fitted at HNRC's Barrow Hill facility.

He said that No. 08700, which had been on hire at Ilford, is now the Worksop shed pilot, while No. 08877 will undergo tyre-turning and a D-exam before re-entering traffic. He added that No. 08527 is undergoing repairs to a shifted crank while

receiving an E-exam, and that No. 08653 is currently at Shackerstone undergoing bodywork repairs, while it will also receive a new engine.

As for the HNRC Class 20 fleet, Mr Needle told *RE* that both Nos. 20311 and 20314 are undergoing E-exams, after which they will be made available for hire. No. 20906 has returned to Barrow Hill from Hope for new bogies and a new engine. Former HNRC Nos. 20901/905, now owned by Balfour Beatty, are currently at Barrow Hill being prepared for their new owners, Mr Needle said.



Rail Operations Assets Ltd No. 93001 left Worksop for the first time on January 8, when it was moved to Crewe South Yard for static testing. The tri-mode locomotive was coupled to a rake of six Eastern Rail Services Mk.3s for various tests ahead of main line running, which is expected to begin within weeks. Rail Operations Group No. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* has been allocated to haul the '93' and support main line testing and was used to take the Stadler-built locomotive to Cheshire. On January 12, the '37/9' powers through Barton, near Burton upon Trent, taking the '93' back to Worksop as the 6Q26 10.20 from Crewe South Yard. Paul Keightley

### IN BRIEF

#### HITACHI TO SELL UK SIGNALLING BUSINESS

HITACHI and Mer Mec have signed an agreement for the sale of Hitachi Rail's signalling business unit in the United Kingdom. It is also selling similar businesses in France and Germany. This follows the European Commission and the UK's Competition and Markets Authority decision in October 2023 to approve Hitachi's acquisition of Thales GTS, provided it divested main line signalling businesses in France, Germany and the UK.

#### GBRF LAUNCHES LONDON GATEWAY TO IPORT TRAIN

GB Railfreight has started a new intermodal flow between London Gateway and iPort Doncaster. The train uses brand-new FEA-G intermodal flats, each able to carry six 20ft containers. Five trains per week will operate in each direction.

#### INTERIM MD FOR SWR

STUART Meek will replace Claire Mann as South Western Railway interim managing director when the latter leaves for her new role as Transport for London chief operating officer. Mr Meek will start his new role on March 19. He is currently SWR COO.

#### NEW NORTHERN DIRECTOR

JASON Wade has been appointed Northern regional director for the North East. He is currently head of retail operations at the operator. He replaces Kerry Petters who will be Northern regional director for Yorkshire, Humberside and the East Midlands.

#### TRANSPORT FOR WALES OFFERS REFUGEE SUPPORT

TRANSPORT for Wales launched a partnership with refugee and asylum seeker charity Oasis, on January 31, to donate equipment and provide employment support.

### 'Pay as you go' trials planned

MORE than 90 stations across the West Midlands and Greater Manchester will be part of 'pay as you go' pilots.

Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper confirmed the trials on February 1. He said that stations across the two regions will be fitted with technology enabling passengers to tap-in and tap-out as part of the Government's plans for rail reform.

The West Midlands trial will cover 75 stations and uses existing Swift smartcards. The Greater Manchester scheme will cover 17 stations on the Glossop-Manchester Piccadilly and Stalybridge-Manchester Victoria routes. This will use contactless bank cards and devices.

No date was given for when the technology would go live.



# DB Cargo UK explains fleet strategy

By Richard Clinnick

DB Cargo UK plans to invest in its Class 92 fleet while having '66s' as the backbone of its locomotive fleet, chief executive Andrea Rossi has revealed.

In a message to the operator's staff, seen by *Rail Express*, he explains the reasoning behind the decision to withdraw Class 60s, sell 10 '67s' and put the final '90s' owned by DB up for sale (RE333).

He said: "We have recently carried out a wholesale review of our locomotive and wagon fleets, again with a view to optimising their management and deployment.

"The reality is, we don't need all the locomotives and wagons we currently have on our books, many of which have been out of service for quite some time already and are being held in storage in depots and sidings across the UK.

"So, in 2024 we are going to be disposing of those we don't need – either selling them, or scrapping them,

depending on their condition.

"The numbers are quite big, but don't be alarmed – as mentioned, the vast majority of those we'll be disposing of have been out of operation for quite some time.

"We will still have more than enough wagons and locomotives to meet current and predicted customer demand going forward."

He explained the thinking: "The rationalisation and better deployment of our locomotive fleet will save us millions of pounds a year and create some much-needed headroom in our maintenance and engineering teams, enabling us to maintain our remaining locos in a more proactive and planned way."

Mr Rossi said that the DB had already started the process of regearing '66s' to give them a higher tractive effort (RE332). Ten have been identified, Nos. 66149/156/161/167/171/174/181/183/194 and 66221, with the latter the first to be modified. They will be renumbered from Nos.

66651 onwards, with No. 66221 set to become No. 66651. Mr Rossi explained the decision to regear the '66s': "This will ensure they can pull some of our heavier traffics and will therefore enable us to continue phasing out our ageing and less reliable Class 60s."

He also said that the '67' fleet would be reduced and that the '90s' had been phased out. However, as for the '92s', he explained: "The '92s' will continue to be part of our locomotive fleet given our continued commitment to operating international traffic. We even plan to invest in our Class 92s to bolster our existing provision to allow international traffic to be a growth area for us."

As for the charter market, he confirmed that DB would focus on contracted services with Belmond and operating the Royal Train and that the company would step back from ad hoc requests which he said were becoming more and more complex and often take much-needed resources away from the core business.

Regarding the wagon fleet, Mr Rossi said: "We're taking a similar 'right size' approach to our wagon fleet and again disposing of those we don't need. This will help us focus on maintaining only the wagons that truly generate revenue.

"We'll be reducing the number of wagons we hire in and making better use of the ones we retain by tackling issues like short-sets.

"Over the past 12 months we've seen an 87% reduction in the number of instances of short sets, where, usually for a number of different reasons, we cannot run a customer's full complement of wagons.

"Running short sets is incredibly frustrating for both our customers and ourselves and has a really negative impact on our bottom line.

"This dramatic and sustained reduction in short sets is a perfect example of how by working together we can reduce waste and improve customer service, making us more efficient all-round." 

## New Bradford Forster square platform

GOVERNMENT is providing £24 million towards the construction of a new platform at Bradford Forster Square. The Department for Transport said that once it was complete, and subject to future funding, it could enable an extra five London North Eastern Railway trains to serve the station per day.

The platform will be operational next year.

## Exceptional Eurostar growth in 2023

EUROSTAR said it carried 18.6 million passengers last year, up 22% compared with 2022, as numbers returned to pre-Covid levels.

The cross-Channel operator put the results down to strong demand on the London-Amsterdam, Brussels and Paris routes and says it's on target for the group's ambition of 30m passengers by 2030.

The operator said that London-

Amsterdam saw 38% growth followed by 33% on the London-Brussels route and 25% on London-Paris. Eurostar CEO Gwendoline Cazenave said that eight million passengers travelled to the French capital, 2.2m to the Belgian capital and 1.1m on the Dutch route.

She also confirmed that Eurostar's cross-Channel terminal at Amsterdam Centraal will close for six months from June 14, for renovation. When it

reopens there will be a new terminal available. She said that during the works there will be three direct trains per day from London to Rotterdam and Amsterdam, however on the return there will be a connecting service at Brussels-Midi, providing a 48-minute to 108-minute connection between the Amsterdam-Rotterdam-Brussels train and the Brussels-London train.



West Coast Railways No. 37685 *Loch Ark* leads failed GB Railfreight No. 60026 *Helvellyn* through Dringhouses, York, on January 23, with the 160-minute-late 6H12 06.24 Tyne Dock-Drax Power Station, which the '37' hauled as far as Sudforth Lane Sidings (Whitley Bridge). The WCR Type 3 had been scrambled from Newcastle, where it had been stabled, after the '60' failed at York. Jack Bowley



## Privately-funded alternatives to scrapped HS2 section discussed

Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham and Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper have had a “constructive” discussion about privately-funded alternatives to a scrapped section of HS2.

Mr Burnham told MPs that there had been talks about the future of the scrapped section of HS2, as he stressed doing nothing would create “a major transport headache”.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak cancelled the plan to extend HS2 between the West Midlands and

Manchester in October 2023, amid spiralling costs (£330).

Mr Burnham and West Midlands Mayor Andy Street have commissioned a group of private sector organisations to consider how to finance major rail improvements between Handsacre Junction, Staffordshire, where HS2 will end, and High Leigh, Cheshire, which is on the planned route for Northern Powerhouse Rail between Manchester and Liverpool.

The coalition is chaired by Sir David Higgins, a former chairman of

HS2 Ltd, and includes businesses such as Arup, EY, Arcadis and Mace.

Mr Burnham told the Commons’ Transport Select Committee: “We’ve had a constructive discussion with the secretary of state this morning about the work that we’re doing.

“It’s good that the Government is at least listening to what we’re saying.

“Into February and then March I think the outputs of the work the group is doing will become more known.”



TransPennine Express No. 802213 *Unity* proudly displays its new livery on January 22. TPE

## TransPennine Express unveils *Unity*

TRANSPENNINE Express unveiled a dedicated Pride livery on No. 802213, to kick-start the operator’s first ever Week of Inclusion and

partnership with The Proud Trust.

The five-car bi-mode was also named *Unity* on January 22. It carries the most up-to-date Pride Progress

Flag that includes a five-striped chevron to the left side of the flag representing LGBTQ+ people of colour and the trans community.

## TfL consults on Docklands Light Railway extension

TRANSPORT for London launched a consultation on plans to extend the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) to Beckton Riverside on February 5. The preferred route is a cross-river extension of the DLR from Gallions reach to Thamesmead via Beckton Riverside and working with the Royal

Borough of Greenwich and the London Borough of Newham to create two brand-new stations.

TfL said that the plans would support the delivery of new transport links, homes and regeneration in Thamesmead and Beckton. The next stage after the consultation will be

progressing the scheme towards the Outline Business Case. The aim is for an affordable solution to be agreed by next year, enabling construction to commence in 2028 and the extension to open early in the next decade.

The consultation runs until March 18.

## Ebbw Vale to Newport trains commence

REGULAR passenger trains are running direct between Ebbw Vale and Newport for the first time in more than 60 years.

The new service, operated by Tfw Rail, was launched by Deputy Climate Change Minister Lee Waters on February 1, as he visited Llanhilleth station.

Thirty trains will run between Ebbw Vale Town and Newport. The first train, the 2000 06.35 Ebbw Vale Town-Newport, was formed of No. 150281. The first train to run in the opposite direction was the 2N51 06.43 Newport-Ebbw Vale Town, formed of Nos. 153382 and 153913.

To allow the new service to be introduced, a passing loop was extended between Crosskeys and Aberbeeg and new platforms were constructed at Newbridge and Llanhilleth.

Journey times are around 49 minutes, with a return ticket costing £8.10.

### IN BRIEF

#### LNER RAISES £20,000 FOR CALM CHARITY

LONDON North Eastern Railway (LNER) has raised a further £20,000 for its charity partner Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM), meaning more than £550,00 has been raised by LNER for the suicide charity. The latest sum was raised by LNER match-funding the £10,000 donations made by passengers from their Delay Repay compensation, and credit earned through the Perks loyalty scheme, between October and December 31, 2023.

#### MEMORIAL BENCHES REPLACED

TWO historical memorials have been restored to their former glory by five volunteers at Poppleton station. Benches bearing plaques commemorating signallers who had worked close to the station had become rotten and worn down over the 40 years since they were originally restored. Two new benches have been installed, displaying the original plaques.

#### USA DEAL FOR NR

NETWORK Rail Consulting’s US subsidiary, Network Rail Consulting Inc, has won a \$73.2 million (£57.5m) contract to provide systems engineering services to California’s high-speed rail program. The first dedicated HS line in the United States will see 200mph trains link the Los Angeles basin with San Francisco, with later branches to Sacramento and San Diego.

#### HS2 BRIDGE SLIDE

HS2 Ltd engineers have begun a project involving sliding a 0.3-mile-long bridge deck into place above the Misbourne Valley, Buckinghamshire, as part of the Wendover Dean Viaduct.

## Shortlist for HS2 mass transit system

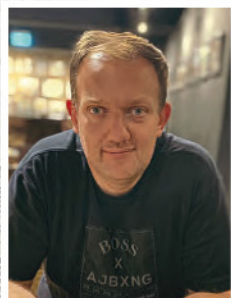
DOPPELMAYR Cable Car UK Limited and POMA S.A.S have been shortlisted by HS2 Ltd to operate and maintain the new mass transit system at Interchange station in Solihull. The contracts will require the winning bidder to work with HS2 Ltd to deliver the Automated People Mover (APM) and maintain its cable system for a 25-year period. The contracts will be worth £204 million at 2024 prices.

The system will have four stops and connect HS2’s Interchange station, the National Exhibition Centre (NEC), Birmingham International station and Birmingham Airport. It is planned that the APM will accommodate at least 2100 passengers per hour in each direction, with a future capacity provision for 3900 passengers. The end to end journey time is expected to be six minutes. It will be constructed on a viaduct that will cross both the M42 motorway and West Coast Main Line. Piers will range from six to 14 metres.



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*Rail Express* is the leading title for enthusiasts, written by enthusiasts, and provides all the very latest information you need to know. The current scene is comprehensively covered in the traction and rolling stock news pages, while in-depth features are supported by the best photography. Our *Rail Express Modeller* section also provides news, reviews and guidance for the ever-changing modelling scene. You simply cannot afford to miss an issue!

RICHARD CLINNICK, EDITOR



South Western Railway No. 701037 (left), stands at London Waterloo on January 11, having arrived with the 2U92 11.30 from Windsor & Eton Riverside. On the right is SWR No. 701042, which was being used for training. RICHARD CLINNICK

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DB Cargo UK No. 60074 *Luke* hauls the 6E01 10.05 Wolverhampton Steel Terminal-Boston into Heckington on January 17. Tim Clarke

# Final curtain for DB Class 60s?

Undisclosed issue causes DB Cargo UK to remove final three '60s' from service several months ahead of schedule.

THE discovery of a problem relating to the running gear of No. 60062 *Sonia* during routine maintenance has resulted in

both Nos. 60024/074 being prematurely sidelined at Warrington Arpley and Toton respectively on January 18.

While the New Year had begun with two active Class 60s and No. 60062 undergoing a 'B' exam at Toton, the month would not end well for the endangered DB locomotives, with all three downgraded from WCAT to the WQBA third level storage pool.

No. 60024 *Clitheroe Castle*

had been a solid performer on the Tunstead-Lostock-Arpley-Tunstead circuit since taking over from No. 60062 in December, while No. 60074 *Luke* had been a regular on the Wolverhampton/Toton-Boston steel flow. Both were in service on January 17, and their planned trains were cancelled the following day. While the services returned with Class 66 motive power on January 19, albeit with shorter trains,

the Brush Type 5s did not. Initial reports suggested that the withdrawal was a temporary measure, and it may still be, but hopes for a quick return to service were quashed with a change of status for the trio in the final week of January. DB had stated its intention is to remove the three from traffic in April once sufficient 'high output' Class 66/6s were available (RE332), but mechanical issues may force a rethink. **E**

## NEWS ROUND-UP

### ANGEL TRAINS

HIGH Speed Train power cars Nos. 43306/307/316/320 moved to Great Yarmouth on January 23, in preparation for the arrival of the next ship. They joined Nos. 43007 and 43378 which had remained at the East Coast outpost, and all six began to be transferred the short distance to the docks a few days later. They were joined on January 31 by former London North Eastern Railway/East Midlands Railway No. 43295, which was moved by road from Ely Papworth on the back of an Allelys' low-loader. The seven Class 43s were being loaded on the Liberian-registered *Louise Auerbach* for export to Mexico as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

### COLAS RAIL

Stored since June 2021, No. 56087 was

the final member of the Colas fleet to be removed from Nottingham Eastcroft to Boden Rail's new Colwick depot at Rectory Junction on January 2.

### DB CARGO UK

A major shake-up of the DB GM Type 5 fleet has seen three pools disbanded. The main recipient has been the WBAI standard Class 66 roster, which had already been boosted to 18 by the addition of most of the former RHTT-allocated locomotives in December. It has now been further expanded to 54 examples with the addition of Nos. 66069/084/096, 66129, 66207/244 (ex-WBAE), 66026 (ex-WBAI) and 66 004/006/007/014/017/019/021/030/040/051/054/060/065/066/068/077/079/083, 66109/124/142/160/162/165/168/169/176/188/198 (ex-WBAR). The latter, previously

dedicated to locomotives with remote monitoring, is now without an allocation. Meanwhile, WBBE (Stop/Start, RETB-fitted GMs), comprised of Nos. 66099-103/105/106/110-112/114 is replaced by WBBT (RETB only) and WBLE (Stop/Start Lickey Bankers), formed of Nos. 66055/056/057/059) has now made way for WBLT (Lickey Bankers only).

The reintroduction of former 'Euroshed' No. 66026 to action on British metals leaves just one ex-Euro Cargo Rail '66' to return to service. It was the tenth and final member of the group repatriated between 2021 and 2022, but is the ninth to return to traffic, leaving just ex-Euro Cargo Rail No. 66224 in the WBAI pool. The latter arrived in the UK a full year before its classmate but has not yet been released into service.

The WBHT pool for the regear Class 66/6 conversions has also seen its full complement of 10 Class 66s move over, Nos. 66149/156/161/167/174/183 swapping from WBAE and Nos. 66171/181/194, 66221 from WBAR. However, as of the end of January, only Nos. 66167/174/181/183/194 and the prototype No. 66221 were at Toton.

The final pair to transfer were Nos. 66200/206, which are now allocated to the new WBVT Victra Railfreight hire pool for shunting duties at the Cemex quarry at Peak Forest.

No. 66164 has become the latest member of the fleet to emerge from the Toton paintshop in DB red, while soon to be renumbered No. 66221 has also been spotted almost complete in the same paint scheme.

No. 67028, the sole operational



# Makeovers for Locomotive Services and Loram Class 37/4s

One of the great 'what ifs' of the 1980s has now been answered with the repainting of Locomotive Services No. 37409 into the beloved ScotRail InterCity scheme with Caledonian blue stripe as applied to Nos. 47461 Charles Rennie Mackintosh and 47701-717.

Matching its Mk.3 and Mk.2f Driving Brake Standard Open (DBSO) push-pull set, which is powered by the on-hire Crewe Diesel Preservation group No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*, the Locomotive Services Class 37/4 has also been reunited with the *Loch Awe* name that it took over from No. 37026 between August 1986 and July 2002. The '37/4' was released from Eastleigh Works on January 12 and hauled Nos. D8096 (20096) and D8107 (20107) *Jocelyn Fielding 1940-2020* as the 0297 10.27 Eastleigh Works-Crewe Diesel Maintenance Depot.

While Scottish passenger Class 37s gained InterCity Mainline and, even, the top link Swallow livery they famously never received the blue-stripe InterCity variant. *Rail Express* understands that a second LSL '37/4' will also receive the livery.

Over at Derby, Loram Rail has outshopped Steve Beniston's hired-in No. 37418 in the same striking corporate wrap as applied to several former Direct Rail Services Mk.2f coaches for a short-lived series of promotional outings back in 2020. The former large logo Class 37/4 also lost its *An Commun Gaidhealach* nameplates at the same time. No. 37418 was also dedicated with these nameplates in 1986. However, they were removed in 1991 after its repaint into Railfreight Petroleum livery and subsequent renaming as *Pectinidae*. Its first duty as Loram's mascot locomotive was a 6Z37 to Toton Yard with freshly rebuilt JNA-Y 'Hawk' ballast hoppers on January 25.



Carrying ScotRail colours, Locomotive Services No. 37409 *Loch Awe* passes Kings Sutton on January 12, with LS Nos. D8096 (20096) and D8107 (20107) *Jocelyn Fielding 1940-2020* as the 0297 10.27 Eastleigh Works-Crewe Diesel Maintenance Depot.

Robert Boulton-Jefferys

Class 67 from the recent tender offer (see RE333) has succumbed to the inevitable. It was removed from active duty at Crewe EMD and placed in the WQBA pool during the first week of the new year.

## DIRECT RAIL SERVICES

The 'blue' team's two-and-a-half decade-long adventure with English Electric traction draws closer to the end with the official transfer of Europhoenix Nos. 37069, 37218 and 37423 and Locomotive Service No. 37401 away from the DRS XSDP disposal pool to EPUK and LSLO respectively. All four had already made the physical move to their new owners in December.

The two Class 37/0s were the part of the second tranche of EE Type 3s to be acquired by the Kingmoor-based operator, both being purchased in

September 2001 from EWS along with Nos. 37059/068, 37144, 37223/262, 37340/384. Meanwhile, No. 37423 was the first Class 37/4 to join DRS in March 2006 and it was put through the same upgrade programme as Nos. 37069 and 37218 at Brush, Loughborough, that saw it gain a radical new look with light clusters and top headlight plus a revised cab interior. Finally, No. 37401 joined the operator in January 2011 as part of a deal that saw it purchase all 13 remaining Class 37/4s on EWS' books: Nos. 37402/405/406/410/411/416/417/419/422/425/426/427.

As for the remaining six members of the DRS 'heritage fleet', XHSO pool Nos. 37419 and 37716 remained sidelined at Crewe Coal Sidings during January with the traction motor and engine issues highlighted in the last issue, while XSDP pool No. 37424 *Avro Vulcan*

*XH558*, which remained unsold from the previous tender, spent the month at Carlisle Kingmoor. Nos. 37407/422/425, all XHSO, all saw action during the period under review, the trio being used on route learning and snowplough test runs. The month ended with Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower* seconded to Doncaster for various duties, No. 37422 *Victorious* operational at Kingmoor, albeit reportedly only running with one operational compressor, and No. 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* stopped at the same location requiring an exam. The latter is unlikely to be authorised.

## FREIGHTLINER

Having acquired the six-strong Class 59/2 fleet from DB in November 2020, the last vestiges of the 'traffic red' era have been swept away with the

outshopping of No. 59201 in standard Genesee & Wyoming orange and black at Arlington Fleet Services, Eastleigh. It departed the Hampshire facility after its makeover on January 6.

The operator's foreign legion has increased to 21 with the dispatch of two further Class 66s for use in Poland. This follows the export of No. 66526 in October 2023 and a further 18 locomotives between 2008 and 2018. No. 66529 (to become No. 92 70 0066 526-3) was moved from Leeds Midland Road to Immingham Docks on January 3 by No. 66617 under a 0D66 headcode. It was followed by No. 66955 (to become No. 92 70 0066 955-0) on January 17, the Class 66/9 being dragged east by No. 66555 as a 0D64 to the North Lincolnshire port. Two further Class 66s are expected to move to Poland in this batch, Nos. 66599 and 66956.



## NEWS ROUND-UP Continued

Finally, a further Class 66/5 has been stored with No. 66591 being placed into the DHL pool. This locomotive is at Wabtec Doncaster for European Train Control System (ETCS) fitment. Meanwhile No. 70009 has been transferred from DfG to the COLO pool having begun its hire to Colas Rail, based out of Rugby.

**GB RAILFREIGHT**

Following a three-week reprieve, British Rail blue No. 56081 has been transferred to EMD (Progress Rail) and a likely next spot in the queue for rebuilding as a Class 69, albeit not for GBRf. It moved to Longport on January 25, running light under its own power as a 0256 from Old Dalby. Its colleague, large logo No. 56098, had a more eventful month, being seconded to Colas Rail on January 7 for a planned two-week hire, being deployed on the Carlisle-Chirk logs. Unfortunately, reliability issues saw the Doncaster-built Type 5 returned to GBRf after just one week, where it took up residence at Old Dalby. It got a chance to redeem itself on January 31, heading on hire to DC Rail to cover for No. 56301 at UKRL Leicester undergoing repairs. Its first duty was a 6Z82 08.06 Chaddesden-Brandon aggregates working.

GBRf took delivery of No. 57303, the fourth of its fleet of five planned Class 57/3s, from Porterbrook on January 18, following the completion of handback work by previous operator Direct Rail Services. Now allocated to the GBBS pool, the former Alan Tracy ran east to Leicester as a 0257 from Crewe Gresty Bridge.

Also new to GBRf is No. 77506 (92 87 0077 506-9), the latest

European specification arrival from the continent. This arrived at Immingham from Cuxhaven in Northern Germany on January 26, and had already moved by road to UK Rail Leasing's Loughborough site the following day. Originally delivered to Rotterdam in 2008 for intended service with Crossrail Benelux, this never took place, and the locomotive would eventually join SNCF subsidiary Akiem in 2011. It is expected to become No. 66314.

Meanwhile, earlier arrivals Nos. 66307 (ex-77502) and as yet still unregistered 66310 (ex-77507) are both in the news. The former was named *Ipswich Town* at an event at its namesake station (see *Headline News*), while the latter has been outshopped in standard GBRf livery at Loughborough.

**HARRY NEEDLE RAILROAD COMPANY/LOCOMOTIVE SERVICES**

Reported in RE327 as joining the HNRC fleet and stored at Worksop No. 57002 *Rail Express* has finally been deregistered from the DRS XDSP pool, instead moving to Locomotive Service's LSLO allocation. No. 37059 has been transferred from the LSLO to HNRL pool.

Bought by HNRC last year (RE330), former Network Rail Nos. 73951/952 were transferred from store at Kidderminster as the 0258 11.39 to Worksop on January 12, courtesy of Locomotive Services No. 37401 and Andania Engineering No. 37402. The denamed Class 37/4s departed the same day as the 0259 17.24 with Nos. 20901/905, now owned by Balfour Beatty to Barrow Hill.



Locomotive Services No. 37401 and Andania Engineering No. 37402, both recently bought from Direct Rail Services, pass Elford on January 12, with the 0258 11.39 Kidderminster-Worksop, taking Harry Needle Railroad Company Nos. 73952/951 to their new owner's depot. The '73s' were acquired from Network Rail last year. Paul Keightley

**NETWORK RAIL**

Out of action at the head of the New Measurement Train since September 2021 after spells at Loram Derby, Nemesis Rail at Burton-upon-Trent and the Melton Rail Innovation & Development Centre (RIDC) in conjunction with its European Train Control System Level 2 upgrade, No. 43062 finally resumed its rightful place at the head of the Mk.3-based formation on January 28. Its first working was a 1Q34 10.22 Derby-Hull with ex-London North Eastern Railway/East Midlands Railway No. 43272 on the rear.

**RAIL OPERATIONS GROUP**

The highly anticipated testing of Stadler Rail-built No. 93001, now redesignated from MBEL to the operational GROG pool, has begun. No. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* moved the pioneer Class 93 from Worksop as the 6Q42 06.47 to Crewe South Yard on January 8. After five days of static testing, it returned to the Harry Needle Railroad Company facility behind the same Class 37/9 as the 6Q26 10.20 Crewe South Yard-Worksop. Nos. 93002-92030 have also been added to the rolling stock library, all to the MBEL private owner electric allocation.



Still leased by TransPennine Express until May, Nos. 68024 *Centaur* and 68032 *Destroyer* have both gone into store at Long Marston. The pair being moved, along with matching Mk.5A sets (see *Headline News*), from Longsight by Rail Operations Group motive power on January 9 (by No. 37884 *Cepheus*) and January 4 (by No. 37601 *Perseus*) respectively. On January 9, No. 37884 leads No. 68024 and Mk.5A set TP04 (Nos. 11504, 12710-712, 12804) through Lower Moor, Worcestershire, with the 5Q94 08.25 Longsight-Long Marston. Still leased by TPE, the '68s' and coaches were being moved for store. Steve King



# RMS vacates Wolsingham

A reorganisation of operations has prompted the shunter hire company to leave the Weardale Railway.

THE long association of RMS Locotec with the Weardale Railway, and particularly the maintenance depot at Wolsingham, is set to end as part of a restructuring by the company.

With many of its current hire duties and staff based in the Midlands or the south, RMS is to centralise its operations and move away from the line in County Durham, thereby reducing travel and transport costs. Recent years have also seen associated companies establish other bases of operations, such as Eastern Rail Services in Great Yarmouth and Positive

Traction in Chesterfield, reducing the need for Wolsingham.

As a result, a mass transfer of shunters away from the north east began in January, a process that commenced over the festive period with the movement of English Electric-built No. 2150, otherwise known as Nederlandse Spoorwegen Class 600 No. 653, from Wolsingham to Yarmouth Carriage Sidings. Next to make the move to East Anglia was 1976-built Hunslet 0-6-ODH No. 7541 on January 4, with older stablemate No. 6294 of 1965, which is TOPS-registered as No. 01573, following

five days later. Neither Hunslet has seen use for some years, and they were joined in Yarmouth on January 11, by 1964-built chain-drive Sentinel No. 10177.

The following week saw attention turn to extracting Class 08s from Wolsingham, with January 16-19 seeing Nos. 08423, 08874, 08885 and 08936 all head south, while No. 08573 duly followed on January 26. All five are now stored undercover on track panels inside Stagecoach's Chesterfield bus depot, with RMS Locotec keen to point out that this is a busy privately-owned site that will not entertain visits by enthusiasts hoping to view them. Of the five, only No. 08423 is operational, and this initially assisted in the unloading of some of its sisters from the low-loader. 

## INDUSTRIALS

■ The past couple of months have seen the southern half of the Shipley yard of Crossley Evans cleared of scrap with this section of the site due to be redeveloped as electric multiple unit stabling sidings. As a result, 1960-built Sentinel No. 10023 has been scrapped on site, it had resided amidst the junk in this area, and sometimes beneath it, for over a decade. The company still retains two operational shunters, Hunslet No. 7159 *Prince of Wales* and Ruston & Hornsby No. 459519 *Venom* (TOPS registered as No. 01508), although both are without work after the cessation of DC Rail scrap traffic in 2016. The duo have recently been moved under the road bridge that spans the site, making them difficult to observe. Also believed to still be on site are the derelict Ruston 88DS pair of Nos. 284838 and 425483, which are buried in bushes alongside the disused main line connection.

■ The transfer of Fowler No. 22928 and Ruston & Hornsby No. 443642 to St Blazey was completed in late December, the duo having previously moved by road from the Bodmin & Wenford Railway to Par Harbour earlier in the month. Both are now owned by MPower Kernow CIC, which is a new venture aimed at creating a technical training centre for engineering and other skills. Both are positioned between the turntable and fuelling point at St Blazey depot, with the Ruston 48DS located inside a small shed while the 1940-built Fowler 0-4-ODM is outside on a line leading to the turntable.

■ A new arrival at the Stoke haulage yard of Reid Freight Services during early January was 1981-built Hunslet No. 8999 *Redwing*, the 0-6-ODH having most recently been at the Humber refinery of Phillips 66. Also currently at the yard is another Hunslet product, 1978-built No. 8902 having been the last Harry Needle Railroad Company-owned shunter stored at Long Marston.

## NEWS ROUND-UP

### HUNSLET

With maintenance completed, No. 08615 was returned to Shotton steelworks on January 16, after some five months away at the Hunslet workshops. This in turn allowed No. 08401 to be released from its cover

duties and it was noted returning to Barton-under-Needwood the next day.

### RAILWAY SUPPORT SERVICES

Newly repainted in RSS colours, No. 08629 was an unexpected arrival at Daventry in the second week of January,

shunters at the rail freight terminal having been provided by Hunslet since the end of 2009. Soon afterwards, it was noted marshalling Class 325s at the new Royal Mail terminal. No. 08580 has joined No. 08507 at Whitemoor Yard, restoring the two shunters hired to GB Railfreight.



RSS No. 08507 shunts a rake of wagons at Whitemoor, March, on January 19. This '08' has been joined by RSS stablemate No. 08580 at the Cambridgeshire yard. Keith Partlow

## PRESERVATION

THE 31-year stay of No. 08238 at the Dean Forest Railway came to an end on January 11, with its removal from Lydney after sale by the line's diesel association. Next day saw it unloaded at the **North Yorkshire Moors Railway**, where it replaces the recently departed No. 08495 following its sale to West Midlands Railway. Prior to the move north, No. 08238 received a fresh coat of BR blue, although the

repaint was not quite completed on one side in time, it also being devoid of numbers.

The two-month hire of No. 09107 to the Telford Steam Railway was concluded on January 16, with the locomotive returned to the **Severn Valley Railway**, it being unloaded at Kidderminster. The shunter had been drafted in as cover for the line's Polar Express operations.

Sellafeld Ltd has donated Sentinel No. 10111 to the **Eden Valley Railway**, the 0-6-ODH having been displaced by the introduction of the two Clayton CBD80s. Although dating from 1963, it was modernised by Hunslet Barclay in 1997 and is fully operational. Transfer to Warcop, along with a quantity of spares, was awaited in late January.

A new arrival at **Peak Rail** on

January 22, was Baguley 0-4-ODM No. 3027, the 1939-built former brewery locomotive moving over from the Chasewater Railway. Three days later, it was joined by No. 07010, this having departed from the Avon Valley Railway the previous afternoon. Initially unloaded at Rowsley, it was due to move to Darley Dale to undergo contract repairs after several years out of traffic.





Merseyrail No. 508104 stands at Hooton on January 14, having arrived with the 2H66 19.22 shuttle from Ellesmere Port. These shuttles were operating due to engineering work north of Hooton. This was the last surviving Class 508, and it was withdrawn two days later. Phil Chilton

# Final Merseyrail Class 508 withdrawn

Last Class 508 is retired, while ‘507’ fleet is reduced to 21 units.

MERSEYRAIL withdrew its final three Class 508 electric multiple units from traffic in January, with the final set stopped by January 16.

The operator had originally planned to withdraw the final three-car EMUs in December.

Two sets undertook their last passenger runs on January 3, when No. 508108 was in action on West Kirby services, while No. 508114 operated on the Hunts Cross to Southport circuit. The following morning, the two units ran to Birkenhead North from West Kirby and Kirkdale respectively. Subsequently, on January 15, they were collected by Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* which then took the pair on their final journey, the 5Q78 06.11 Birkenhead North-Sims, Newport.

The stoppage and disposal of these two ‘508s’ left just No. 508104 in traffic, and this set remained in action until January 16. Its final passenger working was the 2N51 18.53 New Brighton-New Brighton (via the Liverpool loop line), after which it formed the 5B39 19.48 New Brighton-Birkenhead North empty stock working. It departed Birkenhead North with No. 507004 on January 22; the pair being hauled to Crewe South Yard by ROG No. 37884 *Cepheus* in advance of their final disposal.

The removal of the final sets from traffic in Merseyside does not quite mean the end for Class 508 passenger operations; of the 43 trailer cars removed from the sets when they were reduced from four vehicles to three upon transfer from

the Southern Region between 1982 and 1985, 38 remain in service with South Western Railway, formed in Class 455/7 sets. All are scheduled for withdrawal when the Class 701s enter full service.

The accompanying table provides details of what happened to all 43 of the ‘508s’ when they were stopped by Merseyrail. Of the units renumbered into the 5082xx and 5083xx series, these were all removed from service by Merseyrail in the second half of the 1990s when the network suffered a downturn in traffic. The 12 sets converted to Class 508/2 for use with Connex SouthEastern had all ceased operating in Merseyside in 1996.

Withdrawn between 2006 and 2008, most were scrapped by Raxstar at Eastleigh Works in 2013. Exceptions were No. 508212, acquired for training purposes by the Fire Service College at Moreton-in-Marsh in 2011, and two driving cars (Nos. 64649 and 64712 from 508201/209) similarly obtained by the Seacombe Services Training Centre at Seacombe near Birkenhead. Two other cars continue to see main line use as translator vehicles for rolling stock movements – Nos. 64664 and 64707 were previously the driving vehicles in 508207.

The three ‘508/3’ sets (formerly Nos. 508102/135/142) were reactivated for use by Silverlink in 2002/03, all having previously been out of use for several years. Removed from traffic by London Overground in 2009, they were scrapped by Raxstar at Eastleigh in June 2013.

Class 507s still in traffic in late January were Nos. 507001-003/007/010/011/013-018/020/021/023/028-033. No. 507004 had been stopped earlier in the month. 

## CLASS 508 FLEET

|        |                                                                                                       |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 508101 | Renumbered 508201 August 1998                                                                         |
| 508102 | Renumbered 508301 December 2002                                                                       |
| 508103 | Sims Metals, Newport December 18, 2023                                                                |
| 508104 | Awaiting disposal from Crewe South Yard                                                               |
| 508105 | Renumbered 508202 April 1998                                                                          |
| 508106 | Renumbered 508203 June 1998                                                                           |
| 508107 | Renumbered 508204 May 1998                                                                            |
| 508108 | Sims Metals, Newport January 15, 2024                                                                 |
| 508109 | Renumbered 508205 July 1998                                                                           |
| 508110 | Sims Metals, Newport August 17, 2020                                                                  |
| 508111 | Sims Metals, Newport October 5, 2023                                                                  |
| 508112 | Sims Metals, Newport November 6, 2023                                                                 |
| 508113 | Renumbered 508206 August 1998                                                                         |
| 508114 | Sims Metals, Newport January 15, 2024                                                                 |
| 508115 | Sims Metals, Newport July 9, 2023                                                                     |
| 508116 | Renumbered 508207 June 1998                                                                           |
| 508117 | Sims Metals, Newport October 2, 2023                                                                  |
| 508118 | Immingham Railfreight Terminals October 2002 (64666, 71500)<br>CF Booth, Rotherham April 2009 (64709) |
| 508119 | Renumbered 508208 July 1998                                                                           |
| 508120 | Sims Metals, Newport December 18, 2023                                                                |
| 508121 | Renumbered 508209 May 1998                                                                            |
| 508122 | Sims Metals, Newport March 20, 2023                                                                   |
| 508123 | Sims Metals, Newport February 13, 2023                                                                |
| 508124 | Sims Metals, Newport October 9, 2023                                                                  |
| 508125 | Sims Metals, Newport October 9, 2023                                                                  |
| 508126 | Sims Metals, Newport September 8, 2023                                                                |
| 508127 | Sims Metals, Newport August 29, 2023                                                                  |
| 508128 | Sims Metals, Newport October 5, 2023                                                                  |
| 508129 | Renumbered 508210 September 1998                                                                      |
| 508130 | Sims Metals, Newport October 2, 2023                                                                  |
| 508131 | Sims Metals, Newport December 18, 2023                                                                |
| 508132 | Renumbered 508211 May 1998                                                                            |
| 508133 | Renumbered 508212 April 1998                                                                          |
| 508134 | Sims Metals, Newport August 17, 2020                                                                  |
| 508135 | Renumbered 508302 April 2003                                                                          |
| 508136 | Sims Metals, Newport December 11, 2023                                                                |
| 508137 | Sims Metals, Newport November 6, 2023                                                                 |
| 508138 | Sims Metals, Newport August 17, 2023                                                                  |
| 508139 | Sims Metals, Newport November 27, 2023                                                                |
| 508140 | Sims Metals, Newport October 11, 2022                                                                 |
| 508141 | Sims Metals, Newport November 27, 2023                                                                |
| 508142 | Renumbered 508303 March 2003                                                                          |
| 508143 | Sims Metals, Newport September 2022                                                                   |



## DMU

### CLASS 121 BUBBLE CAR

MAKING its first solo outing in England since its acquisition and rebuild for Locomotive Services, Class 121 No. 55022 *Flora* undertook a circular test run from Crewe, running via Chester, Shrewsbury, Telford and Stafford on January 22.

### CLASS 150 SPRINTER

LAIID up since September 26, when it was damaged after suffering an electrical fire while undertaking an empty stock move between Manchester Victoria and Newton Heath, No. 150218 remains out of action at its home depot awaiting repairs. Also, still out of traffic, having been damaged by fire after a collision with a stolen mini digger on the track on May 22, 2022, are TFW Rail Nos. 150242/279 at Landore.

### CLASS 156 SUPER SPRINTER

OUT of action since it was involved in a collision with a tractor on the Ormskirk branch on September 5, 2023, No. 156413 arrived back at Newton Heath on January 6 after repairs at Wolverton. The set re-entered traffic with Northern on January 19.

### CLASS 158

DAMAGED in a collision at Cardiff Canton during 2023, TFW Rail No. 158834 returned to Cardiff Brickyard Sidings by road from Alstom, Derby on January 22, following attention.



Freightliner No. 66539 leads the 5Q76 07.58 Northampton-Sims, Newport, on January 24, taking former London Northwestern Railway Nos. 319457/433 on their way for scrapping. The '319s' left Northampton behind Rail Operations Group No. 37884 *Cepheus*, however the '37' failed at Bristol Parkway requiring the '66' to rescue it. Chris Perkins

### CLASS 165 TURBO

CHILTERN RAILWAYS No. 165022 ran from Banbury to Bristol Barton Hill on January 10, for Train Protection Warning System upgrade work.

### CLASS 166 TURBO

HEADING north for C4 overhaul, Great Western Railway No. 166205 ran from St Philip's Marsh to Wabtec, Doncaster on January 14. Six days later, GWR No. 166211 arrived back at St Philip's Marsh from its refurbishment at Wolverton.

### CLASS 175 CORADIA

FOLLOWING attention at Ilford, where it had arrived exactly a month earlier,

No. 175108 departed for Crewe on January 15, although its movement was terminated at Bletchley, and it continued to its destination the next day.

Earlier in the month (January 3), Nos. 175101/110 ran from Chester to Landore for handback work including debranding.

### CLASS 197 CIVITY

HAULED from Telford Railfreight Terminal to Crewe by Freightliner No. 47830 *Beeching's Legacy* on January 2 was TFW Rail No. 197122. A further drag on January 23, saw No. 197113 moved from Wolverton to Crewe by Freightliner No. 66592

Johnson Stevens Agencies.

Put into revenue-earning service on January 6 was No. 197107.

## EMU

### CLASS 319

FOLLOWING the final '319' passenger working on January 2 (the 2C31 20.52 Wigan North Western-Liverpool Lime Street, operated by No. 319368), No. 319369, which had ended its diagram at Springs Branch the previous day, formed the 5Z85 11.45 Springs Branch-Allerton empty stock movement on January 11, ending Northern's use of the fleet.



GB Railfreight No. 69010, still carrying primer colours ahead of a planned repaint, hauls former Greater Anglia Nos. 379022/008 over Brookhouse Viaduct on the former South Yorkshire Joint Line on January 16, as the 5Q22 10.45 Worksop Up Yard-Doncaster Mail Terminal. This is a weekly move taking stored '379s' to Doncaster, where they are powered by overhead line electrification to run their electrical systems before being returned to store at the Harry Needle Railroad Company facility at Worksop. This was the first occasion a Class 69 was used. Dafydd Whyles





Nos. 319372/385 were sent for scrap on January 9, Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* taking the pair to South Wales on the 5Q76 08.18 Allerton-Sims, Newport. Nos. 319368/381 followed behind the same loco two days later. Their scrapping leaves just three of the recent Northern retirees, Nos. 319369/379/386 to be disposed of. A further set which was stopped in December 2019, No. 319371, can be found at Long Marston.

Former London Northwestern Railway Nos. 319433/457 made their final journey on January 24, when they departed Northampton for Sims Metals, Newport behind ROG No. 37884 *Cepheus*; issues with the '37' saw it assisted by Freightliner No. 66539 from Bristol Parkway. One former LNWR set, No. 319214, remains at Northampton.

## CLASS 323

JUST over two months after its arrival at Allerton, and still carrying West Midlands Railway colours, No. 323208 entered service with Northern on January 8. Its first working was the 2F68 05.46 Liverpool Lime Street-Wigan North Western. A further two sets arrived on January 10, Nos. 323212/220 having formed the 5Q36 10.01 Wolverton-Allerton; the pair had been at Wolverton for handback work to take place.

## CLASS 390 PENDOLINO

RELEASED from refurbishment at Alstom, Widnes on January 6, was No. 390005 *City of Wolverhampton*. Replacing it on site was No. 390001 *Bee Together*, which then emerged on January 20. Receiving attention at the end of the month was No. 390011 *City of Lichfield*. The last set, No. 390013

*Blackpool Belle*, is due to be completed by the end of June.

## CLASS 398

ON January 5, No. 398004 was taken from Melton Rail Innovation & Development Centre (RIDC) to Pontypridd by Nos. 20142 *Sir John Betjeman* and 20189, the final leg of its move to Taff's Well depot being undertaken with No. 398007. A second move from the Melton RIDC site to Taff's Well involving No. 398005 on January 12, ran into issues on the Old Dalby branch and was cancelled.

## CLASS 444 DESIRO

WITH the arrival in early January of No. 444045 at Bournemouth Traincare for repainting into South Western Railway grey, no '444s' remain in service in the former South West Trains white colours. One set, No. 444040, is still to be painted and this is due to be done shortly – the set received vinyls for the franchise launch in 2017.

## CLASS 458 JUNIPER

OVERNIGHT testing of '458/4' sets in 12-car formation took place on January 8-10, using Nos. 458423/425/428. Testing on the Lymington Pier branch using No. 458425 also took place on January 10/11.

Departing Alstom, Widnes on January 22 following its '458/4' conversion, was No. 458404 (ex 458504). The unit was taken to Wembley and then on to Bournemouth the next day by GB Railfreight Nos. 57305 and 57306 *Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate 175*. The two Class 57s then formed the 5Q58 17.11 Bournemouth-Widnes, conveying No. 458520.

## CLASS 465 NETWORKER

The latest '465' to be sent to Wabtec, Doncaster for overhaul is No. 465930, which was hauled north from Slade Green by GB Railfreight No. 69010 on January 20.

## CLASS 701 ARTERIO

ON its delivery move, South Western Railway No. 701527 was hauled from Alstom, Derby to Eastleigh TMD by GB Railfreight No. 69010 on January 9.

## CLASS 720 AVENTRA

VENTURING out of Alstom, Derby for the first time on January 18, Greater Anglia No. 720102 was hauled to Workop for storage by GB Railfreight No. 69010.

The first use of c2c Aventras at weekends took place on January 20, when Nos. 720605/610/612 were all in service as five-car sets on Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness services. The next day saw Nos. 720610/611 in action.

## CLASS 730 AVENTRA

JANUARY 16 saw West Midlands Railway Nos. 730003/048 arrive at Oxley from Alstom, Derby behind Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia*. No. 730048 is the final three-car '730' to emerge from Derby, while No. 730003 had returned for attention in August 2023.

A fourth diagram was introduced into and out of Euston with effect from January 22, and this sees a pair of '730s' operate throughout the day in addition to the three pairs used on peak hour services. The new diagram, which has been covered by Class 350s in recent months but was operated by Class 319s until mid-2022, is as follows:

|      |       |                              |
|------|-------|------------------------------|
| 2B00 | 05.31 | Bletchley-Euston             |
| 2T05 | 06.54 | Euston-Tring                 |
| 2T06 | 07.40 | Tring-Euston                 |
| 2K13 | 08.39 | Euston-Milton Keynes Central |
| 2K14 | 10.00 | Milton Keynes Central-Euston |
| 2T31 | 11.24 | Euston-Tring                 |
| 2T32 | 12.15 | Tring-Euston                 |
| 2K31 | 13.09 | Euston-Milton Keynes Central |
| 2K32 | 14.30 | Milton Keynes Central-Euston |
| 2T51 | 16.05 | Euston-Tring (returns empty) |
| 2K49 | 17.39 | Euston-Milton Keynes Central |
| 2K50 | 19.00 | Milton Keynes Central-Euston |
| 2B59 | 20.24 | Euston-Bletchley             |

On the first day of Class 730 operation, Nos. 730005/014 were used on this working, of which No. 730005 was making its debut passenger runs. Other sets recently put into service have been Nos. 730015 (January 2), 730020 (January 8) and 730002/022 (January 15). It brings the total number which have carried passengers to 16, Nos. 730002/005-007/010-016/018-022.

## CLASS 777

THE two Merseyrail sets which arrived at Walton Old Junction (Warrington) on December 18, Nos. 777032/034, were tripped to Kirkdale on January 9, by Nos. 43468/480 and 20007 and 20142 *Sir John Betjeman* running in top and tail formation. Arriving in the United Kingdom in January were Nos. 777029/043/045 and the three units were moved to Wembley by DB Cargo UK No. 66190 *Martin House Children's Hospice* on January 24. Power car Nos. 43468/480 then headed their move north to Walton Old Junction (Warrington), with Nos. 43465/484 on the rear, later that day.

New into traffic on January 18 was No. 777025. January 22 saw an increase in the number of weekday diagrams on the Southport line from one to four.

## IET

## CLASS 802 NOVA 1

HEATON derailment victim, TransPennine Express No. 802207, which ran from Newton Aycliffe to Doncaster Carr in November following completion of repairs, has returned to the Hitachi site for a trial fitment of batteries in place of one of its engines. Following testing, the set is expected to return to traffic with TPE towards the end of the year.

## CLASS 805

UNDERTAKING its delivery run from Hitachi's Newton Aycliffe factory, No. 805008 formed the 5Q32 08.21 Merchant Park Sidings-Oxley, running via Peterborough and Leicester, on January 8. A similar move involving No. 805009 took place on January 15.



Avanti West Coast No. 805009 passes Colton, Rugeley, as the 5Q32 08.21 Merchant Park Sidings-Oxley. The five-car bi-mode, assembled by Hitachi at Newton Aycliffe, was on its delivery run and had travelled via the East Coast Main Line. Brad Joyce





Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* hauls former Northern Nos. 319385/372 through Besford on January 9, with the 5Q76 08.18 Allerton-Sims, Newport for scrap. Northern withdrew its final '319s' at the start of January. Steve King

## DEPOT TALK

Correct to January 26, 2024

### Allocations

153330/332/360 sent for disposal  
156417 NH-HT  
197107/115 HQ-CH  
197121 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ  
319361/366/368/370/372/381/  
383/385 sent for disposal  
319433/457 sent for disposal  
323212/214/220 SO/EJHQ-AN/EDHQ  
331101/106/107/112 NL-AN  
398004/014/015 newly delivered  
HQ/HLHQ  
508108/114/120/131 sent for disposal  
701037/039/043 HQ-WD  
701526-528 newly delivered HQ/HYHQ  
710375 HQ-WN  
720102 newly delivered HQ/EBHQ  
720509 HQ-IL  
730002/015/020/022 HQ-BY  
730046/048 newly delivered HQ/EJHQ  
777017/022/025/028 HQ-KD  
777029/043/045 newly delivered  
HQ/HEHQ

805010 newly delivered HQ/HFHQ

### Liveries

**Avanti West Coast:** 805008/009  
**TfW Red Dragon:** 197120  
**South Western Railway:**  
444004/037/045, 450059/099,  
450118, 458404

### Named

800028 *Sir Peter Parker/Oliver Lovell*  
802210 *Hailes Castle*  
802213 *Unity*

### Names removed

323212 *Bromsgrove*  
323214 *Wylde Green*  
323220 *Lichfield Trent Valley*

### Change of ownership

321341, 321407/419/428 Eversholt  
to Varamis Rail

### Sold

**Great Central Railway:** 153308

### Renumbered

458504-458404

### Formations

180101: 50901+54901+55905+  
56901+59905  
180102: 50902+54902+55902+  
56903+ 59902  
180103: 50903+54907+55906+  
56902+59903  
180105: 50905+54905+55901+  
56905+59901  
458404: 67604+74004+74104+67704

### Now in passenger traffic

180103  
197107/115  
701037/039/043  
710375  
720509  
730002/015/020/022  
777017/022/025/028

### Stored/stopped locations

**Bournemouth:** 458404

**Crewe:** 197113

**Crewe South Yard:** 175108, 507004,  
508104

**Eastleigh:** 701526-528

**Kirkdale:** 777021/032/34

**Landore:** 175005, 175101/10

**Long Marston:** 701518/24

**MoD Bicester:** 701520/522/523/525

**Old Dalby:** 810001

**Oxley:** 730048

**Taff's Well:** 398004/05/14/15

**Workshop:** 720102

**Walton Old Junction:**

777029/043/045

### Disposals

**Sims Metals, Newport:** Arrival dates:

December 18: 508120/131;  
December 19: 153330/332;  
December 20: 319366/383;  
December 22: 319361/370;  
January 8: 153360; January 9:  
319372/385; January 11:  
319368/381; January 15:  
508108/114; January 24: 319433/457



IN BRIEF

RIVIERA LATEST

IN order to assist DB Cargo with driver training, seven coaches – First Open (FO) No. 3325, Tourist Standard Open (TSO) Nos. 5929/52/61, 6024/51 and Brake Standard Open (BSO) No. 9526 – were moved by No. 66015 from Burton to Wembley Yard on January 16, before seeing use on runs round Kent from Hither Green over the following week.

Now fitted with Control Emission Toilet (CET) tanks, Mk.2f FO No. 3304, TSO No. 5985 and BSO No. 9504 returned from Knottingley to Burton behind No. 66205 on January 15.

VINTAGE TRAINS ADDITION

THE Tyseley-based charter fleet has been expanded with the addition of Mk.1 First Open (FO) No. 3110 which has been acquired from Riviera Trains by Vintage Trains.

HST EXPORT

MOVED from Ely Papworth to Great Yarmouth by road in January, in preparation for export to Mexico, was former East Midlands Railway Mk.3 Trailer Standard (TS) No. 42408.

Eastern Rail Services stock moves for hire contracts

FOLLOWING their recent hire to Locomotive Services for use on Steam Dreams charter trains, Mk.2f Tourist Standard Open (TSO) Nos. 5919, 6046 and 6173 returned from Crewe to Great Yarmouth behind No. D6851 (37667) *Flopsy* on January 11. Still in use with Locomotive Services is Brake Standard Open (BSO) No. 9513.

Six Mk.3 vehicles have been hired by Rail Operations (Assets) in connection with Class 93 testing (RE333). Restaurant First Open (RFO) No. 10229, Tourist Standard Open Buffet (TSOB) No. 10413, First Open (FO) Nos. 11078/095, Tourist Standard Open (TSO) Nos. 12021/091 were collected by Europhoenix No. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* on January 6 and hauled to Crewe. Following completion of the first phase of testing, the six coaches were taken from Crewe to Castle Donington by the same locomotive on January 18.

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First extended TfW Rail Mk.4 set enters traffic

TfW begins extending its locomotive-hauled rakes.

THE first appearance of a six-coach Mk.4 rake in traffic with TfW Rail occurred on January 20, when lengthened set HD01, powered by DB Cargo UK No. 67029 *Royal Diamond*, operated the 1V34 07.09 Crewe-Cardiff Central.

The set was extended to six vehicles (five passenger coaches plus a Driving Van Trailer) during an exam at Arriva Traincare, Crewe, and had undertaken a test run from Crewe to Hereford and back on January 19.

Another extended rake, HD03, has been undergoing major exam work at Crewe; this set was the first to be made up to six vehicles, this being carried out at Landore, but its return to service has taken longer than planned. It has recently been joined at Crewe by HD07 which is to be extended as part of an exam. Both sets are expected to be back in use in the next few weeks.

The table below details the formations of TfW Rail's Mk.4 fleet. One set, HD08, has yet to be made up or put into traffic; the TSO(E) and DVT have been used as barriers for stock movements, while the other four coaches are presently at Bristol Barton Hill pending reactivation.

TRANSPORT FOR WALES MK.4 SETS - JANUARY 2024

| Set   | TSO(E) | TSO(D) | RSM   | FO(D) | TSO    | DVT   | Status                            |
|-------|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| HD01  | 12225  | 12315  | 10325 | 11323 | 12454  | 82226 | Returned to traffic on January 20 |
| HD02  | 12219  |        | 10328 | 11324 | 12304^ | 82229 | In traffic                        |
| HD03  | 12217  | 12324  | 10312 | 11325 | 12446  | 82216 | Crewe (undergoing major exam)     |
| HD04  | 12211  | 12310  | 10318 | 11319 |        | 82201 | In traffic                        |
| HD05  | 12224  | 12326  | 10321 | 11320 |        | 82200 | In traffic                        |
| HD06  | 12222  | 12323  | 10330 | 11321 |        | 82227 | In traffic                        |
| HD07  | 12210  | 12316  | 10301 | 11322 |        | 82230 | Crewe (undergoing exam)           |
| HD08  | 12215  | 12308  | 10305 | 11316 | 12526  | 82220 | Not yet formed                    |
| Spare |        |        |       |       |        | 82204 | At Landore                        |

Additional cars:

12449 (for HD02), 12434/452/461/477 (for HD04-HD07)

Note ^: 12304 is a TSO(D)

DB Cargo UK. No. 66205 passes Raynors User Worked Crossing, Stenson, on January 15, with the 5Z45 09.00 Knottingley TMD-Burton Wetmore Sidings, hauling Riviera Trains Mk.2f Open First (FO) No. 3304, Standard Open (TSO) No. 5985 and Brake Standard Open (BSO) No. 9504. The TSO has been modified with opening windows in response to criticism that passengers cannot hear the traction hauling railtours. Vincent Hardy

DEPOT TALK

Correct to January 26, 2024

Allocations

10593 sent for disposal

Liveries

Welsh Ambulance Service: 82226

Named:

1953 *Caerdydd*

Formations

HD01: 12225+12315+10325+11323+12454+82226

Stored/stopped locations

Castle Donington: 10229, 10413, 11078/095, 12021/091

Eastleigh Works: 1203, 3122/140, 10416

Great Yarmouth: 5919, 6046, 6173, 42408

Long Marston: 11503-505, 12707-718/734-736, 12803-806/812

Longsight: 11502, 12704-706, 12814

Disposals

C F Booth Ltd, Rotherham: Cut date: January 18: 12480

J. Watson, Metal Recyclers, Stafford: Arrival date: January 12: 10593



# First-built BAA ends its days at EMR Kingsbury

Introducing a modern, new look to steel trains in the early 1970s, the pace of Bogie Steel AB disposals has picked up in recent months, and has now claimed the prototype.

THE first BAA air-braked steel carrier, No. 900000, which was built in Ashford in 1972, has been sent to EMR Kingsbury for scrapping.

The first 49 of what would eventually become a fleet of 305, 40ft, 100-tonne wagons were built between September and December 1972 to diagram 1/441 / lot 3792 primarily for carrying steel slabs. Numbered No. 900000-900049 they were painted all-over bauxite and featured a narrow fishbelly frame design.

They were notable in being fitted with a vacuum through pipe allowing them to be consisted with older vehicles. Under TOPS these would become BAB, although from the mid-1980s the now obsolete pipes began to be removed with the consequent recoding as BAA.

Other distinctive features of the new design were the heavy duty FBT-6 bogies with a two-metre wheelbase, adapted from the 90-tonne French Y25,



Hauled by an unidentified Mainline blue Class 60, pioneer No. 900000 passes Kingsbury on June 1, 2002. The wagon has now been sent for scrap. Gareth Bayer

as well as tall reinforced ends, removable side stanchions and a floor made up of perforated 'U' channel sections to improve heat dissipation.

Later builds, which were shared between Ashford and Shildon, featured different end designs, while the final 36 wagons built had several dimensional differences. Some wagons, including No. 900000, had been converted with cradles for carrying steel coil, although

most were returned to slab use by the 2000s.

A prototype for a 50ft length variant, the BBA, debuted in 1973 and this led to a production order for a further 689 vehicles.

The fleet has steadily declined in recent years, with around 230 still extant in 2023. However, the scrapman had yet to claim the historically and numerically significant No. 900000. 

## DISPOSALS ROUND-UP

The full list of scrapped wagons to report during the period under review is:

### C F Booth Ltd, Rotherham:

MFA 391368/508, MHA/MPA 39 4031/4/72/194/262/314/5/5 65/609/11/713/49/823/46/9 21/53/98, 396006/29/64/73 (ex-Doncaster Decoy)

### EMR Attercliffe: MFA

391302/16/412/20/510, MHA/MPA 394005/29/144/59/204/8 5/6/626/34/852 (ex-Toton), BBA 910019/79/87/91/238/77/321 /37/43/50/445/508/14/49/89 (all ex-Scunthorpe Trent Yard)

### EMR Kingsbury: MHA/

MPA 394037/40/9/178/311/ 9/43/63/400/512/710/4/29 /817, 396047 (ex-Toton), BAA 900000/20/55/120/7, BBA 91 0012/113/90/308/60/86/4 30/72/96/506/7/26/75/8, BDA 950026/467, BEA 950568, 951022/29/32/133 (all ex-Scunthorpe Trent Yard)

### Margam: BAA 900209

Mossend: MFA 391107/26/5 5/280/407/541/603/35/40/55 /82, MHA/MPA 395113/273

### St Blazey (on site by

Henry Orchard & Sons): CDA 375054/72/6-8/94/108



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## DEVELOPMENTS

■ **DB CARGO UK:** On site since November 27, WIA five-unit car carrier No. 85 70 4971 045-5 was finally released from DBC's Stoke-on-Trent maintenance facility on January 15.

■ **DIRECT RAIL SERVICES:** The latest trainload of low level waste in 'cabriolet' sheeted containers has been collected from the former experimental Steam-Generating Heavy Water Reactor site in Dorset. Nos. 68016 *Fearless* and 68002 *Intrepid* were tasked with the southbound 6Z62 01.00 Crewe-Winfrith on January 23, that included just seven PFAs, Nos. DRSL 92703/21/33/60/6/84/98. They returned north the same day as a 6Z95 15.51 to Crewe Coal Sidings. Previous trains have loaded to 10 of the diminutive PFAs.

■ **GB RAILFREIGHT:** Two of the IIA biomass hoppers sent to WH Davis on November 9, reportedly for shortening as HYA aggregates hoppers, were returned to traffic in the second week of the month. On January 8, Nos. 37 70 6955 248-9 and 37 70 6955 282-8 were the load for No. 69008 working a 4N66 0946 from Davis' Langwith Junction site to Tyne Dock.

Also heading back to service after attention at the same location was FWA 'Ecofret 2' set Nos. 8370 4520 256-6, 83 70 4521 064-3 and 83 70 4520 257-4. This was collected on January 18, by No. 66770 running under a 4N65 headcode as the 11.30 to Doncaster Decoy.

Correcting last issue's column, the delivery of 20 FEA-G flats on December 16, was not the 'penultimate' batch. As reported in both RE328 and RE330, GBRf took up the option to extend the order to 400, not 300. The latest group of 10 'twins' to arrive, Nos. 81 70 4663 281-300, were moved north to Ferme Park on December 31, by No. 66752 *The Hoosier State* as a 6M45 from Dollands Moor. They had originally been set to move north to Peterborough on January 3, but were still in North London as of the end of the month.

■ **NETWORK RAIL:** The first month of the new year brought not one but two exciting surprises atop the regular 'Hawk' delivery and donor transfers centred around Loram Rail's workshops. January 12 marked only the third different Class 37 to power these trains after Nos. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach* and 37901

*Mirrlees Pioneer* as Colas Rail No. 37254 *Cardiff Canton* was hired to haul a 6Z37 10.15 Derby Railway Technical Centre-Toton North Yard comprised of converted JNA-Y Nos. 81 70 5831 212-217. The return 6Z38 12.25 to Derby was formed of Network Rail MRAs Nos. 501301/21/41-3. These are the first NR yellow examples to head for modification.

The reason for the locomotive substitution became clear on January 25, when the regular motive power in the form of No. 37418 reappeared leading a 6Z37 10.05 Derby-Toton. Having swapped its large logo colours for Loram Rail's striking livery, it had Nos. 81 70 5831 218-224 for company as it negotiated the crowds at Derby. It returned later the same day with a 6Z38 12.20 to the former RTC site with another five-car set of yellow side tippers, Nos. 501307/27/59-61. The pace of conversions suggests that the programme will be completed sometime in March.

The winter months traditionally bring the excitement of snowplough test runs, currently employing Direct Rail Services traction. With heavy snowfall increasingly rare this is the main opportunity to catch these

vehicles in action. On December 1, Nos. 66091 and 66424 *Driver Paul Scrivens* 1969-2021 were sandwiched between ZZA independent ploughs Nos. ADB 965203/42 for a 7Z37 11.08 Kingmoor to Appleby and return. This was followed by the oddball pairing of Nos. 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* and 66434 on a 7Z76/7Z77 York Yard North to Malton and back with ZZAs Nos. ADB 965217/240. The Regional Railways Class 37/4 was back on similar duties in the new year, partnering No. 37422 *Victorious* on a 7Z96 19.30 Carlisle Kingmoor-Crewe Gresty Bridge with Nos. ADB 965203/43. The pair returned to Kingmoor three days later as a 7Z96 12.33 from Crewe Coal Sidings with the same two NR ploughs in tow.

One other interesting move took place on December 11, as sub-leased TransPennine Express Nos. 68019 *Brutus* and 68020 *Reliance* were recorded at Crewe moving a single Beilhack snowplough, No. ADB 965577. This is one of six converted at Stratford in the mid 1980s by mounting a PB600 plough on a Class 40 bogie (ADB 965576-81). Four others were similarly modified from Class 45 bogies (ADB 966096-9).



# 125 Group amends Valenta plans

Group changes plan for which power car will receive a Valenta engine.

IN a change to its original plan, the 125 Group is to retro-fit a Valenta power unit to No. 43048, rather than No. 43044 as previously envisaged.

Multiple issues with No 43048, including some which manifested during a main line move from Butterley to Doncaster to turn No. 43089 in advance of the group's inaugural tour on October 28, last year, have resulted in a decision being made to remove No. 43048 from traffic and transfer its VP185 power unit to No. 43044. The latter power car has a set of bogies which have a life of over 500,000 miles and its bodywork is in good condition, having been repainted into InterCity Executive livery at Neville Hill when it was acquired in 2021.

Problems with No. 43048 include a blocked cooler group, traction motor faults and wiring issues while it is also due maintenance. Parts from its cooler group will be used to restore a spare cooler group for use in No. 43044. Consequently, No. 43048 will be stood down until such a time it receives a Valenta engine.

In the meantime, returning No. 43044 to use is a bigger priority, and No. 43025 is also being made ready for a return to the main line. The former GWR power car last operated on Network Rail metals on March 22, 2019.

Meanwhile, the 125 Group has put its locomotive-hauled Mk.3a Restaurant First Modular (RFM) No. 10206 up for sale as surplus to requirements. The coach was used with prototype HST power car No. 41001, which has since returned to the National Railway Museum, and is incompatible with its HST power cars or coaching stock, although it was originally built as an HST coach (No. 40507). It is located at Ruddington. 

## 125 GROUP POWER CAR FLEET

| Number | Power Unit | Livery | Location                  | Status                    |
|--------|------------|--------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 43025  | MTU        | FG     | GCR(N), Ruddington        | Being returned to service |
| 43044  | -          | ICE    | GCR(N), Ruddington        | To be returned to service |
| 43048  | VP185      | EMT    | Midland Railway Butterley | Stopped                   |
| 43089  | VP185      | EMT    | Midland Railway Butterley | Operational               |
| 43159  | MTU        | MML    | Midland Railway Butterley | Operational               |

Livery codes: EMT – East Midlands Trains, FG – First Group, ICE – InterCity Executive, MML – Midland Main Line

## MULTIPLE UNIT DEVELOPMENTS

**SECOND '153' ARRIVES AT GCR**

The Great Central Railway's second Class 153, former Angel Trains No. 153308, was unloaded at Quorn & Woodhouse following its arrival from Ely Papworth on January 9. Although the unit and No. 153371 have been acquired for commercial training work, there is still likely to be an opportunity to ride on or even drive the units on occasions; they are likely to see use during diesel galas, and driver experience courses using the '153s' will also be offered.

The GCR has recently announced

a voluntary redundancy scheme with a view to saving some £250,000. Compulsory redundancies have not been ruled out if there is not enough interest in the voluntary scheme.

**SEVERN VALLEY '108' UPDATE**

FOLLOWING the return to traffic of a two-car power twin set (Nos. 51941 and 52064) in December, bogie work has been taking place on Trailer Brake Standard Lavatory (TBSL) No. 59250 at Kidderminster, as well as refurbishing the 'Travelling Tavern' bar which is located in the brake area.

**4-CIG RESTORATION BEGINS**

WORK has begun on the restoration of the first car from 4-CIG No. 1753 at Nemesis Rail, Burton. Driving Trailer Composite (DTC) No. 76048 has had its crash pillars examined and repaired, and its bodywork is also being attended to with window frames and doors being sent away for restoration. The unit, which is in the custodianship of the Network SouthEast Railway Society, will be restored in Network SouthEast colours.

## Deltic launch delayed

PLANS for No. D9015 *Tulyar* to operate its first trains for over 26 years as part of the Deltic Preservation Society's Annual General Meeting at the Great Central Railway on March 23, have failed to come to fruition.

Repairs to classmate No. 55009 *Alycidon* have taken longer than expected, meaning that electrical work on *Tulyar* will not be completed in time. It is now hoped that No. 55009 will appear at the March AGM, with No. D9015 moving from Barrow Hill to the GCR for running in later in the year.

In the meantime, work continues on No. 55009 at Barrow Hill to resolve issues which occurred on its outings in 2023, with circuit testing taking place on January 20. Further work was due to take place later in the month.



The Crewe Diesel Preservation Group's No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* leaves Ely on January 27, heading the 1223 07.52 Crewe-Norwich, leading the Locomotive Services ScotRail Mk.3 set, with Mk.2f Driving Brake Standard Open (DBSO) No. 9707 on the rear. The set visited East Anglia on a two-day charter, which ran from Cheshire to Norfolk, visiting King's Lynn, Ipswich, Felixstowe Beach, Felixstowe Beach Junction before reaching Norwich via Ipswich Europa Junction. On the second day, the '47' returned to Crewe, but ran via Ipswich, the East Suffolk Line back to Lowestoft, then to Norwich before heading to Sheringham and Great Yarmouth from where it returned to Crewe via the Wensum Curve at Norwich and a reverse at Ely. Ryan Hayward





No. 423417 *Gordon Pettitt* stands at London Waterloo on January 27, becoming the first slam-door Mk.1 to visit the station in 6820 days. The preserved 4-VEP was hauled to the terminus by GB Railfreight No. 73109 *Battle of Britain 80th Anniversary* and No. 73119 *Paul Taylor*, while invited guests travelled from Woking aboard South Western Railway No. 450046. A ceremony at Waterloo saw former general manager of the Southern Region Gordon Pettitt reunited with the electric multiple unit that carries his name. The EMU is in the custodianship of the Southern Electric Traction Group, which organised the event and which is continuing with the 4-VEP's restoration to main line operational condition. A feature on the project will appear in a future edition of *Rail Express*. Chris Milner

## DIESEL DIARY

# Glorious to visit West Somerset Railway

No. 50033 *Glorious* will attend the West Somerset Railway diesel gala on June 6-8. This will be the English Electric Type 4's first visit to another preserved railway since it moved to the Severn Valley Railway from Tyseley in 2018, when it was placed in the custodianship of the Class 50 Alliance.

Previously, the '50' had been out of action for 14 years but was rapidly returned to use with

external restoration taking place the following year. The locomotive spent 2023 undergoing attention at Kidderminster, work which is expected to be completed shortly.

The same weekend is likely to see No. 50008 *Thunderer* visit the North Norfolk Railway with London Underground's 4-TC set, for its recently announced Rail & Ales event.

Two other newly-announced events are those north of the

border at Bo'ness and the Caledonian Railway; note that the first day of the Bo'ness gala (May 24) is a running evening rather than a full day of operations.

In addition to its July gala, the Gloucestershire-Warwickshire Railway has announced two 'double up Sundays' which will see a pair of Class 37s, Nos. 37215 and D6948 (37248) in action double-headed on August 11 and September 29.

## 2024 GALA DATES

**April 11-13:** Ecclesbourne Valley Railway/Peak Rail (joint event)

**April 12-14:** Kent & East Sussex Railway

**April 26-28:** Great Central Railway

**May 10-12:** Swanage Railway

**May 16-19:** Severn Valley Railway

**May 18/19:** Great Central Railway (Heritage Railcar weekend)

**May 24-26:** Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway

**May 25-27:** Mid-Norfolk Railway

**June 6-8:** West Somerset Railway

**June 7-9:** North Norfolk Railway (Rails & Ales)

**June 14-16:** North Yorkshire Moors Railway

**June 20-23:** Keighley & Worth Valley Railway

**June 27-29:** East Lancashire Railway

**July 12-14:** Gloucestershire-Warwickshire Steam Railway

**July 12-14:** Mid Hants Railway

**July 20/21:** Midland Railway – Butterley (Rail Riders Show)

**July 25-28:** Ecclesbourne Valley Railway (14s@60)

**August 2-4:** Spa Valley Railway

**August 2-4:** Caledonian Railway

**September 6-8:** Great Central Railway

**September 13/14:** East Lancashire Railway

**September 14/15:** Dean Forest Railway

**September 20-22:** Epping Ongar Railway

**October 3-6:** Severn Valley Railway

## IN BRIEF

### 'CHOPPER' RETURNS TO SEVERN VALLEY

AFTER a spell at the Churnet Valley Railway for use on Polar Express specials, No. 20048 returned to the Severn Valley Railway on January 24. The Churnet Valley's motive power shortage should be alleviated later this year with the return to traffic of No. 47292, which arrived from Ruddington in 2022 for a five-year visit.

### A1A PROGRESS

POWER unit work on No. 31514, which was bought by A1A Locomotives in 2016, continues at Butterley. Meanwhile, discussions are taking place regarding a potential visit to another line for No. 31108, which has not operated since the Covid-19 pandemic and recently underwent a repaint (retaining Railfreight grey), later in the year.

### WSR CROMPTON LATEST

A defective cylinder head was removed from No. D6575 (33057) at Williton on January 13. The Class 33 is also due to receive some bodywork attention and repairs to its exhaust system in the coming weeks.

### WENSLEYDALE '14' REPAIRS BEGIN

WORK on returning No. D9513 to serve at Leeming Bar has begun. The '14' arrived from the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway in 2023 after being acquired by a Wensleydale Railway volunteer.

### 'ED' TEST RUN

MOVED from the Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway to the East Kent Railway on loan in November 2023, former European Passenger Services No. 73130 undertook a test run at its temporary base on January 21. This also doubled up as an outing to check for any clearance issues.

### RODNEY REPAIRS

JANUARY 5 saw No. 50021 *Rodney* lifted from its bogies at Alington, Eastleigh to enable one of its bogies to be stripped in advance of a wheelset swap being carried out.

## COACH NEWS

### MK.1 RETURNS TO EPPING ONGAR

THE overhaul and rebuild of Mk.1 Brake Corridor Composite (BCK) No. 21059 has been completed by Rampart Engineering at Barrow Hill, with the coach returning to its Epping Ongar Railway base at the end of January. Out of action since the mid-1990s, when it was located at the Midland Railway Centre, it is now ready to take up duties during the 2024 season. Moving the opposite direction for renovation was Tourist Standard Open (TSO) No. 4947.

### REPAIRS FOR MK.1 CK

GWIL Railway resident Mk.1 Corridor Composite (CK) No. 16232 was sent to the East Somerset Railway in January for repairs to be carried out by Cranmore Traincare Maintenance Services.



# Preliminary work on two railway reopening projects underway

Work progressing on various projects, although delays likely.

WORK is progressing on two lines that are to be reopened, as well as on the Limerick to Foynes project. The restoration of the Athenry to Claremorris line is at an early stage with the removal of vegetation and debris being undertaken.

A project that will also bring operational benefits to this route when it reopens is the installation of a loop at Oranmore between Athenry

and Galway, for which €9.3 million has been authorised. Iarnród Éireann (IE) identified the reinstatement of a loop in the 13-mile section as essential because it will improve operating flexibility not only on services between Galway and Limerick/Dublin but also on the Athenry to Claremorris line.

Progress with restoration of the Waterford (Belview) to Rosslare Strand line (The South Wexford line) is also at an early stage. While refurbishment of road level crossings and improving their lighting and repainting road markings is progressing, *Rail Express* understands that an early restoration of the Barrow

Bridge to full working order (it is currently locked open for shipping) may not be achievable. Reopening of the above lines may take longer than previously anticipated, with a realistic timescale now of around five years instead of two years for both schemes (RE333).

A separate project, but one that will bring added benefits to passengers on the South Wexford line when it reopens, as well as existing services, is a new transport interchange at Waterford which is currently under construction. Located in the area between the existing station and the site of Abbey Junction, it will have two 200-metre-long platforms, a

105-metre-long platform canopy plus a large concourse with the usual station facilities and a footbridge at both ends. With a more convenient interchange with buses and taxis, and a new pedestrian bridge across the River Suir linking directly with the city centre, passengers travelling by foot will benefit too.

Work on the restoration of the Limerick to Foynes line is progressing, but a delay with the reconstruction of a river bridge at Adare is being caused by a planning dispute. IE wants to make the structure higher in anticipation of higher water levels in the future, but is facing local opposition. **E**

→ Running 12 minutes early, GM No. 071 Great Southern & Western Railway heads north through Thomastown, on the Waterford line, on January 7, hauling the 09.50 Belview Port-Portlaoise Permanent Way depot loaded rail train. Angus Duncan



## NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS (NIR)

### ■ TRAFFIC AND TRACTION:

Windhoff MPV No. 11 was used across the system for crew training purposes during the period under review. Demand for travel in the period before Christmas was such that many services experienced capacity issues. For instance, the 09.38 Londonderry-Belfast Great Victoria Street (GVS) on Sunday, December 17, was full and standing by the first stop at Bellarena which required a 10.49 Coleraine-Belfast Lanyon Place relief to operate. *Storm Pia* on December 21, saw widespread disruption to services with the line between Belfast and Bangor closed temporarily from start of service due to a fallen tree at Marino. Bustritution was introduced with 10 vehicles requested and services resumed later the same day. Locomotive-hauled De Dietrich/Mk.3 sets were positioned at Portadown during the total possession (see right). Also based there to replace a locomotive-hauled train in the event of a failure were units Nos. 3001/05 which were called upon to work between

Portadown and Connolly on a regular basis. GM No. 233 failed at Lanyon Place on January 6, before departure of the 20.05 to Connolly. A diesel multiple unit substituted. No. 233 was repaired and was back in service by January 17. The extras that operated between Lanyon Place and Connolly at weekends prior to Christmas were retained and planned to run until February 1. These were 09.36 and 21.06 ex Lanyon Place on Saturdays, 17.05 on Sundays. 12.21 and 18.20 ex Connolly on Saturdays, 13.00 on Sundays. Iarnród Éireann (IE) ICR diesel multiple units and NIR 3000 series units were diagrammed for these extra services. The 06.05 GVS-Londonderry on January 10 and 12, each terminated at Bellarena due to a train fault and signalling problems respectively with the return workings starting from there with road transport being used between Coleraine and Londonderry. The DMU forming the 16.10 GVS to Londonderry on January 17, failed at Lanyon Place and the service was cancelled. Later the same day the DMU working the 18.38 from

Londonderry was reported to have been failed at Coleraine and replaced by the Portrush branch set for the remainder of the journey, with the service omitting its booked stops at Ballymoney and Cullybackey. A bus was used for branch services until a unit was available.

■ **INFRASTRUCTURE:** A Total Possession to allow work to progress unimpeded on projects at Belfast Grand Central Station (BGCS) Lisburn and Derriaghy was in force between Belfast and Portadown during the Christmas and New Year period, with bustitution in use between December 27 and January 2. The work at BGCS saw installation of trackwork at the station throat which included a short section of the 'Third Line' on the down side. Work continued at Derriaghy on the new down platform and the extension to the up one. At the Portadown end of Lisburn station more new points and crossings using concrete sleepers were installed and bi-directional running will be possible when the project is complete not only

through each platform and the down outer loop but also to and from the branch line to Antrim which is currently mothballed. The extension to platform 3 (down loop platform) required the removal of part of the redundant signal cabin to provide sufficient clearance between the building and the platform edge. The demolished section at the rear had served as an alcove and the section was sympathetically repaired following the work. The temporary buffer stop at the Portadown end of platform 3 which had been positioned near the three-car stop board has been moved further along but short of the end of the platform which when fully commissioned and signalled will accommodate a six-car unit. New signals have been erected at the Portadown end of the platforms for up departures.

■ **NEWS:** No Translink bus or rail services ran on December 15, 16, 22 and January 18, as members of the GMB, Unite and Siptutrades unions withdrew their labour in the campaign to win a cost-of-living wage increase.



## IARNRÓD ÉIREANN/IRISH RAIL

■ **TRAFFIC AND TRACTION:**

Mileage accumulation and testing of the new ICR diesel multiple unit intermediate cars continues with set No. 22x10 being used on a regular basis as a test unit with runs normally undertaken between Dublin and Cork. GM No. 072 was in charge of a stock transfer from Laois Traincare Depot to Inchicore on December 14, which featured new cars Nos 22516-518. No. 088 was used for the diesel operated Railway Preservation Society of Ireland (RPSI) Santa Specials between Connolly and Maynooth plus the empty coaching stock workings on December 16 and 17, the stock remaining overnight at Connolly due to a power outage at Inchicore. Some 7413 passengers were conveyed on the 18-train programme. The RPSI's ex CIE/IE locomotive No. B134, which is at Inchicore, continues to receive attention and will be subject to a full test programme before being released from the works. *Storm Gerrit* caused disruption to services on December 27, with bus transfers used between Rosslare Europort and Enniscorthy in the morning until a landslide near Enniscorthy had been stabilised and debris removed. GM No. 218 which is being used to test Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as fuel has been in regular use on front

rank passenger duties but failed at Portlaoise on December 28, while working, with a Mk.4 set, the 12.25 Cork-Dublin Heuston. Carrying Belmond livery, No. 216 rescued the train and hauled it to Heuston. No. 071 hauled No. 220 from Portlaoise Permanent Way Yard to Inchicore on January 4. The problem with No. 218 had been fixed by January 8, as it was active on this day on Heuston-Cork Mk.4 passenger duties. No. 216 was also active on Cross-Border Enterprise duties during the period under review and other locomotives noted were Nos. 206/227/233 and 8209. GM Nos. 074 and 084 were active on ballast duties in the Mallow area during the period January 15-17 topping and tailing eight hoppers. A total possession of the Cork-Cobh/Midleton lines was in force on January 13/14 in connection with the Cork Area Commuter Rail Programme infrastructure project.

■ **NEWS:** The North Tipperary Community Rail Partnership is a lobby group promoting the use of the Killonan Junction to Ballybrophy line. Each January the group uses service trains to convey parties from Cloughjordan, Nenagh and Birdhill to Limerick and return for an ice show and this year the event was on January 4 and 5. DMUs Nos. 2601 and 2602 were used

with ICR DMU No. 22x60 making a rare appearance for the type on the branch working the evening services on the first day. Bridge strikes by road vehicles continued to bring disruption during the period under review until each structure was inspected and declared safe. The line between Dublin Pearse and Lansdowne Road stations was closed temporarily at 11.30 on December 22, because of a damaged bridge. A similar problem occurred on January 5, between Portlaoise and Ballybrophy at around 16.00 and in the Drogheda-Laytown section at around 15.45 on January 9, while there was damage to a bridge between Charleville and Mallow at 07.45 on January 19.

■ **FREIGHT:** GM No. 083 was stabled at Westport over the Christmas period as the locomotive was to be used to work a timber train to Waterford early in the New Year. However, it was called upon to run light to Ballina on December 27, to assist in starting No. 215 as this locomotive was booked to work the 10.05 Ballina-Dublin Port IWT container train the next day, which it did. Meanwhile, No. 083, after its visit to Ballina, returned light engine as far as Claremorris where it was recessed before returning to Westport. Container traffic during the period under review experienced tonnages

which varied according to customer requirements. The Dublin Port-Ballina IWT container train on December 28, hauled by No. 072 had a full load while No. 076 worked an 11.25 Waterford-Ballina train of empty container wagons later the same day. No. 072 hauled a Ballina-Dublin Port IWT train on December 29, which had a light load as had an ex-Ballina train on January 2, that was hauled by No. 215. No. 083 hauled a Westport-Waterford loaded timber train on January 3, returning north with the empty wagons the next day. No. 082 headed the 11.25 Waterford-Ballina XPO service on January 3, which conveyed six boxes and four tank containers. On January 4, No. 072 was in charge of a fully loaded Ballina-bound IWT train. No. 076 hauled the 11.05 Westport-Waterford loaded timber train on January 10, while a fully loaded IWT Ballina-Dublin Port train two days later was hauled by No. 072. Also, on January 12, No. 215 was in charge of another fully loaded Ballina-bound IWT service. No. 080, in ex-works condition, worked a loaded Ballina-Waterford timber train on January 15, while No. 082 hauled a loaded timber train two days later from Westport to Waterford. Nos. 215 and 071 each hauled fully loaded Ballina bound IWT trains on January 18 and 19 respectively.



On January 5, GM No. 071 *Great Southern & Western Railway* passes Waterford West cabin hauling the 10:30 Portlaoise-Belview Port empty rail train. Finbarr O'Neill



# Powerscene

Our authoritative class-by-class review of newsworthy locomotive workings.

## CLASS 20

On January 5, Nos. 20142 *Sir John Betjeman* and 20189 left Kidderminster with barrier vans prior to collecting three-car TfW Rail Citylink tram-train No. 398004 ready to set off as the 6Q21 15.40 Old Dalby-Pengam and later 6Q22 23.45 Pengam-Pontypridd. Further moves for the Type 1s were scheduled for January 12, when problems with No. 398005 caused the trip to Pengam to be cancelled and the locomotives moved on to King's Norton. A week later, on January 19, Nos. 20142 and 20189 duly returned to Old Dalby only for a points failure

to thwart their efforts once again. Success was finally achieved on January 26, when Nos. 20189 and 20142 sandwiched No. 398005 on the 6Q21 15.40 Old Dalby-Pengam.

Instead of the usual quartet of RailAdventure High Speed Train power cars supplied to move a pair of new Class 777 electric multiple units from Warrington (Walton Old Junction) to Kirkdale TMD late on January 9, Nos. 43468+43480 were surprisingly accompanied by Nos. 20142+20007. Locomotive Services' Nos. D8096 and D8107 *Jocelyn Feilding 1940-2020* took charge of the 5Z97 09.16 Crewe HS-

Eastleigh Arlington Works hauling four coaches before heading back to Crewe the next day along with No. 37409 *Loch Awe*, the latter newly repainted into erstwhile ScotRail livery.

## CLASS 31

Privately-owned Brush Type 2 No. 31128 *Charybdis* ran from Grosmont on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway to the Wensleydale Railway on January 10, to collect No. 47701 following its use there over Christmas. Late that evening the pair ran south as the 5Z31 22.32 Northallerton to Burton Wetmore. A light engine journey, despite the reporting number.

## CLASS 37

With six Eastern Rail Services Mk.3 coaches in tow, Rail Operations Group No. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* powered the 5Q42 13.30 Great Yarmouth-Crewe South Yard on January 5. Three days later the '37/9' was the centre of attention as it journeyed from Worksop to Crewe with brand-new Rail Operations Assets (Ltd) tri-mode No. 93001 sandwiched between two barrier vehicles. The same entourage returned to Worksop Down Yard on January 12. Further stock transfers took No. 37901 from Crewe to Castle Donington on January 18, with the same half dozen coaches it had delivered to Crewe from Yarmouth two weeks earlier, while on January 23, it

was entrusted with two barrier vehicles on the 5L47 05.48 Derby Railway Technical Centre-Ely Papworth.

One of several West Coast Railways Type 3s on weather standby duties during the month, No. 37685 *Loch Arkaig* was in the limelight on January 23, when sent from Newcastle to York to rescue GB Railfreight No. 60026 *Helvellyn* and the 6H12 06.24 Tyne Dock-Drax biomass hoppers. The English Electric Type 3 made a valiant effort in clearing the line hauling the failed Class 60 and its heavy train to Sudforth Lane. Stable companions Nos. 37706 and 37518 *Fort William/An Gearasden* top and tailed the 6Z37 19.20 Carlisle Yard-Carnforth with crane No. DRK81601 and runners on January 8. Another crane transfer, the 6Z37 13.56 Rugby OTPD-Bescot with Kirow crane DRK81612 was hauled by Harry Needle Railroad Company No. 37405 on January 18.

Privately-owned No. 37418 raised a few eyebrows on January 25, when running into Derby station sporting its new red and white Loram livery whilst in charge of the 6Z37 10.05 Derby RTC-Toton Yard. After travelling south with independent snowploughs late on January 17, Direct Rail Services Nos. 37422 *Victorious* and 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* returned the ADB965203/243 on the 7Z96 12.33 Crewe CLS-Carlisle Kingmoor three days later breasting





Shap Summit at 16.30. Merseyrail's last Class 508 EMU No. 508104 undertook its final passenger work on January 16 (see *Units*). Late on the evening of January 22, along with set No. 507004 it was towed away by ROG No. 37884 *Cepheus* on the 5Q78 23.40 Birkenhead North-Crewe South Yard.

## CLASS 43

Former CrossCountry power cars Nos. 43285 and 43321, now leased by Colas Railfreight, undertook a training run from Slateford to Aberdeen and back on January 5, and several other jaunts, including a visit to Leven on the soon-to-reopen Levenmouth line, during the following week until heading to Preston on January 14 and back to Derby Railway Technical Centre the next day. Network Rail No. 43013 *Mark Carne CBE* and Colas No. 43357 formed the 1Q15 06.44 Derby RTC-Landore on January 16, before Nos. 43013 and 43321 took the New Measurement Train to Holyhead and Liverpool Lime Street on January 25. Wick and Thurso are places rarely visited by High Speed Train power cars but Colas Nos. 43272 and 43277 reached both towns with a test train from Inverness on January 21. The four RailAdventure power cars took new Merseyrail electric multiple unit No. 777029 (delivered only six days previously) from Walton Old Junction to Long Marston on January 30.

## CLASS 47

Railtours are somewhat thin on the ground at this time of year. Nonetheless, Locomotive Services Nos. 47593 *Galloway Princess* and D1924 (47810) *Crewe Diesel Depot* 'top and tailed' the 1Z56 07.57 Hereford-Appleby on January 6, while Crewe Diesel Preservation Group No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* and LSL No. 47810 reached Appleby with a special from Chester-le-Street (via

Leeds) on January 20. The return journey ran as the 1Z21 12.34 Appleby-Leeds via Carlisle Upperby, the Tyne Valley to Chester-le-Street and on to Leeds via York and Castleford. A two-day East Anglian Push-Pull tour set off from Crewe bound for Norwich on January 27, with No. 47712 in charge. King's Lynn was reached at 12.39 and thereafter the train ran via Ely and Ipswich to Felixstowe before heading for an overnight stay in Norwich. On the Sunday morning (January 28) the tour continued via Ipswich to the East Suffolk line, Beccles and Lowestoft, back to Norwich and then to Cromer and Sheringham. The final leg of this ambitious tour ran as the 1Z27 16.13 Norwich to Crewe via Acle to Great Yarmouth and back over the line through Berney Arms before heading west via March, Peterborough and Nuneaton to terminate at Crewe 13 minutes early.

West Coast Railways No. 47812 rescued the 1D30 19.33 London King's Cross-Leeds when No. 91111 *For The Fallen* failed near Ranskill on January 3, the Type 4 hauling the train to its destination. WCR No. 47848 then took on the role of Newark 'Thunderbird' and rescued Freightliner No. 66953 and the 4E30 05.10 Felixstowe North-Leeds Freightliner Terminal from Claypole Loop on January 16. The Type 4 was back in Leeds during the evening of January 22, hauling No. 91000 (91105) and the stock of the 16.45 Leeds-London King's Cross which had terminated at Doncaster following an overhead line issue. Newly repainted and restored to use, WCR No. 47760 assisted No. 47812 to move No. 86259 *Les Ross/Peter Pan* from Burton Wetmore to Lichfield Trent Valley on January 23. The electric locomotive had undergone winter maintenance at Nemesis Rail prior to taking up duty on the Cumbrian Mountain Express. A triple-header

empty stock move on January 30 found WCR Nos. 47815 *Great Western*, 47245 *V.E. Day 75th Anniversary* and No. 33029 at the head of the 5M43 10.19 Southall-Carnforth.

Freightliner No. 47830 *Beeching's Legacy* transferred TFW Rail diesel multiple unit No. 197122 on the 6Q97 10.07 Donnington Railfreight Terminal-Crewe Carriage Sidings on January 2. The Type 4 was back on the main line on January 24, running light from Basford Hall to Rugby via Birmingham International, appearing four times at the latter location during the day and reappearing there on January 25. Aside from its regular perambulations around the network with multiple unit transfers, GB Railfreight No. 47749 *City of Truro* was at Wembley on January 15 preparing to haul Caledonian Sleeper No. 92014 to UK Rail Leasing Loughborough.

## CLASS 56

For the week beginning January 8, GB Railfreight No. 56098 was hired to Colas Railfreight for working with No. 56049 *Robin of Templecombe 1938-2013* on the 6J37 12.52 Carlisle Yard-Chirk timber train. All went well until January 12, when No. 56098 suffered a fault at Hellfield. The train continued its journey, but No. 56049 struggled with the load and came to a stand on Whalley Viaduct. With various rescue plans coming to nothing, Nos. 56049/098 eventually limped into Blackburn station at 01.49. Colas No. 56105 arrived on January 14, and all three 'Grids' plus loaded wagons moved forward as the 6J37 16.00 Blackburn-Chirk, with Nos. 56049/098 deposited at Chester Middle Yard awaiting collection. Rescue arrived the next day in the form of No. 37405 which took the '56s' to Rectory Junction where No. 56049 was left. Thereafter, Nos. 37405, 56094/098 departed for Leicester. On January 25, Colas

Nos. 56049 and 56105 passed Appleby with the Chirk logs while No. 56098 was back in action on January 30 on hire to DC Rail and taking charge of the 6Z82 08.06 Chaddesden-Brandon.

## CLASS 57

Aside from its role as one of the London North Eastern Railway 'Thunderbird' locomotives based at Newark Northgate, West Coast Railways No. 57012 found employment moving Volker crane No. DRK81613 and runners on the 6Z57 12.58 Grindleford-Frodingham back on January 3. Similarly unusual was its use 10 days later to haul Grand Central Super Voyager No. 221142 on the 5Z48 11.28 Crofton-Monk Bretton. The purpose of the trip along this freight only branch was to undertake coupling trials. Before the end of the month there was another rescue mission for No. 57012 when the 1Y00 04.40 York-London King's Cross failed before departure and No. 57012 hauled the Mk.4 stock and locomotive No. 91127 *Neville Hill* to the depot in Leeds after which it was named.

With no Northern Belle trips in the winter months, WCR No. 57601 *Windsor Castle* accompanied stablemate No. 47237 on the 6Z57 13.45 Carnforth-Carlisle Yard on January 25, returning another Volker crane, No. DR81601, from tyre-turning (see *Class 37*). After a lengthy spell undergoing overhaul, WCR No. 57315 undertook a test run from Carnforth to Hellfield and back with No. 47854 *Diamond Jubilee* on January 26. While still unnamed, No. 57315 now sports Northern Belle colours. The sight of two duo-green Type 4s atop maroon coaching stock greeted observers beside the West Coast Main Line on January 25, when WCR Nos. 57009 *G J Churchward* and 47815 *Great Western* ran south with the 5V42 11.23 Carnforth-Southall.



Crewe Diesel Preservation Group No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* propels the 1Z23 07.52 Crewe-Norwich through Little Downham, near Ely, on January 27. The '47/7' and the Locomotive Services push-pull set visited several East Anglian destinations over January 27/28, including King's Lynn, Ipswich, Felixstowe, the East Suffolk Line, Great Yarmouth and Sheringham. Ryan Hayward





A line-up of GB Railfreight power at UK Rail Leasing's Leicester depot on January 10. From left to right are Nos. 57310 *Pride of Cumbria*, 57306 *Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate 175*, 57305 and 47749 *City of Truro*. Rob Reedman



A daylight journey with empty Great Western Railway sleeper coaches on January 16, passed Teignmouth at 10.27 behind GWR No. 57602 *Restormel Castle* running as the 5270 07.02 Penzance Long Rock-Exeter St Davids. The return trip was recorded leaving Truro at 15.20 and No. 57602 twice repeated the duty during the following week. GB Railfreight Nos. 57305 and 57306 *Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate* left Bournemouth for Widnes on January 23, top and tailing South Western Railway electric multiple unit No. 458520 having arrived there at midday with SWR No. 458404. Six days later, however, Nos. 57305 and 47749 *City of Truro* were in partnership taking SWR No. 458524 from Bournemouth to the Alstom plant at Widnes.

## CLASS 60

The last three Class 60s operating for DB Cargo UK were put to unserviceable store on January 25. Nos. 60062 *Sonia* and 60074 *Luke* were already at Toton TMD, No. 60062 having last worked before Christmas, while No. 60024 *Clitheroe Castle* was residing at Warrington, its last working being the 6F06 21.50 Lostock Works-Warrington Arpley on January 17. No. 60074 also hauled its last DB Cargo freight that day handling the 6M08 20.21 Boston Docks-Wolverhampton Steel Terminal as far as Toton, handing over there to No. 66155. Two years have elapsed since GB Railfreight No. 60085 arrived at Toton TMD for attention, although the signs are that it will be in traffic again this year. Meanwhile, on

January 27 the 6E17 12.32 Liverpool TML-Drax biomass passed Acton Bridge behind Nos. 60095, 60087 and 66703 *Doncaster PSB 1981-2002*.

## CLASS 66

Passing Stafford during the morning of January 9, DB Cargo UK No. 66192 formed the 5Z24 08.00 Wolverton-Crewe giving a proving run to seven empty Royal Train coaches later heading back to Wolverton. DB stablemate No. 66190 *Martin House Children's Hospice* powered the 6Q14 08.09 Dollands Moor-Wembley, via Barnes and South Acton, on January 24, with new Merseyrail electric multiple units Nos. 777029/043/045, handing over to the four RailAdventure power



RailAdventure Nos. 43465/484 lead Merseyrail electric multiple unit No. 777029 through Ladywood on January 30, forming the 6Q45 07.49 Walton Old Junction (Warrington) to Long Marston. On the rear were RA Nos. 43480/468. The '777' had been sent to the Warwickshire facility for storage. Jack Boskett

cars at Wembley. The transfer of three Mk.2 coaches from Knottingley to Burton Wetmore was accomplished by DB No. 66205 on January 15 (see *Coaches*), the locomotive returning to Knottingley with a trio of similar vehicles, while the following morning DB No. 66015 left Burton for Wembley with a set of Riviera Trains Mk.2 coaches for use on Class 1 training runs for DB Cargo staff. DB No. 66172 *Paul Melleney* took charge of a new track machine No. DR75016 on the 6Q01 08.55 Dollands Moor-Acton Yard on January 10.

Engineering work on the Barnstaple branch found GB Railfreight Nos. 66784 *Keighley & Worth Valley Railway 50th Anniversary 1968-2018* and 66787 *Three Bridges ASC* top and tailing the 6G72 02.13 Westbury-Eggesford on January 10, whilst the Colas Railfreight pairing of Nos. 66846 and 66849 *Wylam Dilly* had charge of autoballasters from Westbury at Okehampton early on January 16. Similarly rare was the appearance of GBRF Nos. 66764 *Major John Poyntz Engineer & Railwayman* and 66772 *Maria* at Weymouth with a Snow and Ice Treatment Train on January 26, the pair departing back to Totton Yard at 11.05. Nos. 66782 and 66709 *Sorrento* took No. 66307 from Doncaster Roberts Road to Ipswich on January 12, the latter ready to receive the name of the local football club (see *Headline News*). No. 66770 departed from the W H Davis premises at Shirebrook bound for Doncaster hauling

## DEPOT TALK

### Pool codes

WBHT DB Cargo UK Class 66 Re-gear  
WBVT DB Cargo UK Class 66 Victa Hire  
for shunt duties at Peak Forest

### Allocations

20118/132 BH/HNRL-CD/LSLO  
37059 CD/LSLO-BH/HNRL  
37069 KM/XSDP-LR/EPUK  
37218 KM/XSDP-LR/EPUK  
37401 KM/XSDP-CD/LSLO  
37402 KM/XSDP-HQ/MBDL  
37423 KM/XSDP-LR/EPUK  
57002 KM/XSDP-CD/LSLO  
57303 KM/XSDP-PG/GBBS  
60010/066 WQAA-WQBA  
60024/062/074 TO/WCAT-WQ/WQBA  
66004/006/007/014/017/019/021  
/030/040/051/054/060/065/066/0  
68/077/079/083, 66109/124/142/1  
60/162/165/168/169/176/188/198  
WBAR-WBAT  
66010/041/044/070/085, 66185  
WBRT-WBAT  
66026 WBAI-WBAT  
66055-057/059 WBLE-WBLT  
66067/069/084/096, 66129,  
66207/244 WBAE-WBAT  
66099, 66100-103/106/110-112/114

### WBHE-WBBT

66104 WBRT-WBBT  
66149/156/161/167/174/183 WBAE-  
WBHT  
66171/181/194, 66221 WBAR-WBHT  
66200/206 WBAE-WBVT  
66591 LD/DFIN-FD/DHLT  
67001/003/004/009/011/018/019/0  
26/030 WQBA-WQDA  
70009 DFGI-COLO  
90019-021/034/026/028/029/034-  
037/039 WQBA-WQDA  
93001-030 Newly registered HQ/MBEL  
93001 MBEL-GROG

### Liveries

DB Cargo red: 66164  
Freightliner orange: 59201  
GB Railfreight: 66310  
Loram red and white: 37418  
Northern Belle: 57315  
ScotRail InterCity: 37409

### Named

37409 *Loch Awe*  
66307 *Ipswich Town*

### Names removed

37401 *Mary Queen of Scots*

37423 *Spirit of the Lakes*

### Renumbered

91105-91000

### For Sale

37407/419/422/424/425, 37716  
67001/003/004/009/011/018/019/0  
26/028/030  
90019-021/024/026/028/029/034-  
37/039

### Sold

GB Railfreight: 73138  
Harry Needle Railroad Company:  
73951/952

### Exported

66529, 66955

### Newly imported

77506

### Stored/stopped locations

Leicester LIP: 37069, 37218, 37423  
Long Marston: 68024/032  
Longport: 56081  
Toton: 60062/074  
Warrington Arpley: 60024





three FWA flats on January 18, and the following day No. 66756 *Royal Corps of Signals* took empty FYAs from Tees Dock to MoD Kineton.

### CLASS 67

DB Cargo UK Nos. 67021 and 67006 *Royal Sovereign* escorted No. 92029 from Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot to Wembley on January 5. A similar duty befell No. 67006 on January 12 when hauling DB No. 92011 *Handel* between the same two locations. DB No. 67024 commenced Class 1 driver training duties with Riviera Trains' Mk.2 coaching stock on January 17, leaving Hither Green for Faversham, Ramsgate, Ashford and Tonbridge and later covering the same ground in the opposite direction with the odd change of plan the following week. On January 27, No. 67024 took the coaches from Hither Green to Dollands Moor.

### CLASS 68

Ten locomotives currently form the TPEX pool (formerly used on TransPennine Express services). Two examples reside at Long Marston, No. 68032 *Destroyer* being the first to arrive on January 4, having arrived from Longsight with Mk.5 coaching set TP03 behind Rail Operations Group No. 37601 *Perseus* (see *Headline News*). Five days later, TPE No. 68024 *Centaur* and TP04 set travelled south behind ROG No. 37884 *Cepheus* as the 5Q94 08.25 Longsight-Long Marston. In the meantime, TPE



The 'Night Riviera' stock operated during daylight hours on several occasions during January, for training purposes. On January 25, Great Western Railway No. 57602 *Restormel Castle* approaches Marsh Barton with the 5Z71 12.55 Exeter St Davids-Long Rock. David Mitchell

No. 68030 *Black Douglas* hauled set TP06 from Gascoigne Wood to Longsight on January 5. No. TPE 68021 *Tireless* took TP12 to Long Marston on January 11, but then ran light back to Longsight depot before collecting TP13 from Crewe South on January 16, and hauling that to Longsight and subsequently to Long Marston on January 29. The Manchester depot took delivery of set TP02 on January 15,

which arrived from Gascoigne Wood behind TPE No. 68025 *Superb* while it released TP05 on January 25, when the coaches were removed to Long Marston by TPE No. 68026 *Enterprise*. Amid all this manoeuvring, set TP06 only reached Crewe South Yard on January 18 when TPE No. 68029 *Courageous* failed near Stockport and was recovered by 'Thunderbird' No. 57308 *Jamie Ferguson*.

### CLASS 69

Hauling railhead treatment train (RHTT) sets from Tonbridge to York Works on January 3, were GB Railfreight Nos. 69001 *Mayflower* and 66793. The Class 69s are finding a variety of new jobs to earn their keep and as such No. 69008 formed the 4N66 09.46 Shirebrook (W H Davis) to Tyne Dock with two IAs on January 8, while No. 69010 hauled a South Western Railway



GB Railfreight No. 56098 was hired by Colas Railfreight at the start of January and finished the month on hire to DC Rail. On January 9, the large logo blue '56' leads Colas classmate No. 56049 *Robin of Templecombe 1938-2013* through Greengates, on the Settle & Carlisle line, with the 6J37 12.52 Carlisle Yard-Chirk logs. Tom Swift



DB Cargo UK No. 67024, carrying Pullman colours, approaches Tonford Bridge public foot crossing, near Canterbury, on January 19, with the 5Z01 09.20 Hither Green-Hither Green driver training trip. The '67' hauled the seven Riviera Trains Mk.2s via Sole Street, Ramsgate, Canterbury West and Tonbridge. Nick Pullen



Freightliner No. 59204 passes Ellerhayes, near Exeter, on January 11, hauling the 6C28 12.48 Exeter Riverside-Westbury empty stone working. One of the longest trains to operate in Devon for many years, the train was used to move 20 JHA hoppers that had been stored in Riverside Yard for several years. This was in addition to the standard 18 wagons on the train. Daryl Hector





Class 701 electric multiple unit from Derby Litchurch Lane to Eastleigh the following morning. By January 15, No. 69010 (still unpainted) had six JNAs for company on the 6Z80 09.37 Mountsorrel-Barrow Hill prior to hauling a pair of Class 379 EMUs from Worksop to Doncaster Royal Mail Terminal the next day and back to Worksop on January 17. Further work for No. 69010 included hauling Southeastern EMU No. 465930 from Slade Green to Doncaster Wabtec (January 20) and the transfer of East Midlands Railway EMUs between Kettering and King's Heath depot, Northampton on January 23. No. 69009 arrived at Eastleigh Arlington shortly before midnight on January 30, for repainting.

## CLASS 70

On long-term hire to Colas, No. 70009 was paired with Nos. 66846 and 70803 on the 6024 09.39 Hinksey-Eastleigh Yard autoballasters on January 5, the Freightliner Class 70 having travelled from Rugby to Bescot the previous afternoon and then to Hinksey Yard early on January 5. Nos. 70805 and 70009 moved six railhead treatment train (RHTT) wagons from Swindon to Westbury on January 12 while No. 70009 was in South Wales on January 21 atop the 6C97 08.10 Pyle-Westbury long-welded rail train. Five examples of the Colas fleet, Nos. 70801/808/812/814/815, could be found at Rectory Junction depot at the end of January, No. 70801 having been out of service since last August.

## CLASS 73

Following a spell in store at Arley on the Severn Valley Railway, the former Network Rail 'Ultra 73' Electro-Diesels Nos. 73951 and 73952, now owned by Harry Needle Railroad Company, were taken from Kidderminster to Worksop Down Yard between Nos. 37401 and 37402 on January 12. The winter chill brought out the snow and ice

treatment trains (SITT) on January 10, with GB Railfreight Nos. 73107 *Tracy* and 73136 *Mhairi* leaving Tonbridge in the early hours for Newhaven, Three Bridges and Dorking, while GBRF Nos. 73201 *Broadlands* and 73213 *Rhodalyn* departed a little before midday for Epsom, London Bridge and Tattenham Corner. Another GBRF pairing of Nos. 73109 *Battle of Britain 80th Anniversary* and 73202 visited Hastings and Redhill the next day. On January 20, GBRF Nos. 73119 *Paul Taylor* and 73109 were recorded at Dover and Strood, while GBRF Nos. 73128 *O.V.S. Bulleid C.B.E* and 73141 *Spa Valley Railway 25 Year Anniversary* took their trains from Tonbridge to Canterbury West and Ramsgate on January 22. A job with a difference on January 27, saw Nos. 73109 and 73119 top and tail 4-VEP unit No. 3417 *Gordon Pettitt* on the 5Z73 10.42 Strawberry Hill to Waterloo in connection with former British Rail Southern Region general manager Gordon Pettitt's birthday.

## CLASS 86

InterCity tour 'The Ayr Extension' ran from Crewe to Glasgow Central 'top and tailed' by Locomotive Services Nos. 86101 *Sir William A. Stanier F.R.S.* and 87002 *Royal Sovereign* on January 13. A round trip to Barassie Junction followed before the pair worked the return journey as the 1Z32 16.11 Glasgow Central-Crewe. Preserved Nos. 86259 *Les Ross/Peter Pan* and West Coast Railways 47746 *Chris Fudge* 29.7.70-22.6.10 were at either end of the Cumbrian Mountain Express from London Euston to Carlisle on January 27, the AC electric locomotive giving way to No. 34067 *Tangmere* at Carnforth. WCR No. 86401 *Mons Meg* was given an occasional exercise on January 15, to swap the mini-snowplough weather standby locomotives at Carlisle. The '86/4' hauled Type 3 No. 37516 from Carnforth and returned with No. 47804.

## CLASS 88

Class 88s are a rarity in Dorset, yet Direct Rail Services No. 88002 *Prometheus* found its way there along with No. 68003 *Astute* on January 9, the DRS pair forming the 6Z62 01.00 from Crewe CLS and 6Z95 15.51 return. The same duo put in an occasional appearance on the Isle of Anglesey on January 16, taking a single flask on the 6D43 07.30 Crewe CLS-Valley NE. On January 12, Nos. 68034 *Rail Riders 2020* and 88007 *Electra* had two escort coaches and a PFA in tow forming the 6Z20 07.34 Carlisle Kingmoor-Drigg.

## CLASS 91

January 10 was a notable day for the type with No. 91105 emerging to work the 1A13 06.56 Skipton-London King's Cross having been temporarily renumbered to 91000. Less than two weeks later, the locomotive struck an object on the overhead line near Wakefield whilst powering the 1A41 16.45 Leeds-London King's Cross and the service terminated at Doncaster. Nos. 91130 and 91107 *Skyfall* departed from Neville Hill early on January 10, for a test run to Doncaster and back, No. 91130 having been out of action for some while. **B**

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# Slam-door heaven in 'OO'

## Hornby revamps the VEP



**6 Newsdesk:** 4-VEP EMUs make the news  
Hornby's revamped Class 423 4-VEP model arrives at the same time No. 3417 *Gordon Pettitt* returns to the main line. New special edition Cavalex Models Class 60s are announced by Rails of Sheffield.

**8 Newsdesk:** New in the shops

A variety of new models arrived in the shops during the currency of this issue of *Rail Express Modeller*, including TT:120 TTA Class A tank wagons and DB Cargo aggregate hopper wagons.

**12 Review:** Hornby's revamped 4-VEP

Hornby releases its revamped Class 423, 4-VEP EMU with revised tooling and an upgraded mechanism. In our headline review for this issue, we examine the changes made to the model and how much Hornby has improved it.

**18 Review:** TTAs tested and checked

The new Hornby 'OO' gauge TTA tank wagons are given a thorough examination in a comprehensive review.

**25 Review:** Awesome OAA from Rapido

A pioneer of the Railfreight era is tested and proves that fixed axleguards on long wheelbase stock is not an issue for 'OO' gauge layouts.

**30 Modelling:** 'N' gauge SMD hopper wagons

In the first of a two-part article, the N Gauge Society's Scottish Malt Distillers J1A wagon kit is test-built to the painting stage. Read more to see how we got on with this complex, and at times, fiddly kit.

**RAIL EXPRESS MODELLER EDITOR**

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# Return of the Class 423, 4-VEP

FROM TIME to time, the release of a new model will coincide with a completely unrelated event on the mainline, and so it has proven to be the case when 4-VEP No. 3417 *Gordon Pettitt* was hauled from Strawberry Hill to London Waterloo by two GB Railfreight Class 73s on January 27. The unit, affectionately known as 'Gordon', has been under restoration at Strawberry Hill depot by the Southern Electric Traction Group; a special work unit set up to restore No. 3417 which is owned by the Bluebell Railway.

No. 3417's trip to Waterloo, the first visit of the type to the station in nearly two decades, was preceded by another milestone in January, and that was its return to the National Rolling Stock Library.

The release of the 'face-lifted' Hornby 4-VEP model came at the same time and these events should raise awareness of third rail traction in the hobby. One of the Hornby models is finished in Stagecoach SWT livery, the last operator of No. 3417 when it was withdrawn from regular service in April 2005, and has the same external features as No. 3417. No. 3417 remained in traffic to operate charter trains before being placed in long term storage and eventual sale to the Bluebell Railway.

## Fundraising efforts

The Southern Electric Traction group needs further funds to complete the complex restoration of No. 3417 to enable it to operate on the main line.



↑ No. 3417 *Gordon Pettitt* brings back memories of BR slam-door EMUs when it returned to Waterloo station for the first time in nearly two decades on January 27. It retains the heritage BR electric blue livery applied to the unit by SWT in May 2004.

Ben Jones of Heljan donated an 'O' gauge GB Railfreight Class 73 model to the group to assist with its fund-raising efforts. Donations can be made through its website at [www.setg.org.uk](http://www.setg.org.uk).

The revamped Hornby model of the 4-VEP is a good match for No. 3417, offering potential for a limited-edition model to raise funds for the group in a similar manner to the fundraising by Accurascale and IRM for worthy causes. How about it, Hornby? 📧



← Heljan donated an 'O' gauge Class 73 to SETG to assist with fundraising. The model was handed over to SETG members Steve Upton and Chris Buckland at Waterloo by Heljan's UK manager, Ben Jones. Photo: Paul Bigland.



↑ A limited-edition model of No. 3417 could be produced using the revamped Hornby model released in January because the external features are a very good match. Such an initiative could be used to raise funds for the continued restoration of No. 3417. No. 3417 was recorded at Portsmouth Harbour on June 25, 2004.

## NEW CLASS 60 LIVERIES



↑ In January, Cavalex Models received a pre-production sample of its forthcoming Class 60 locomotive and announced several new liveries around the same time. DB Cargo No. 60062 *Steel on Steel - Sonia* together with GWR green No. 60081 *Isambard Kingdom Brunel* are special editions for Rails of Sheffield. The price for No. 60062 is to be confirmed.



↑ The model of No. 60081 will include etched number and nameplates along with original Wipac running light detail. The DCC-ready model is priced at £194.95. DCC sound is also available for £294.95.



↑ A special edition Class 60 for the National Railway Museum's railway icons range and one which fits an earlier era for the Class 60: 1991-1995. Prices start at £194.95 for a DCC-ready model. A £30 deposit secures any of the three special edition models and they are due for delivery towards the end of 2024 with the main range of Cavalex Models Class 60s. [www.railsofshffield.com](http://www.railsofshffield.com)

## CLASS 47S ON THEIR WAY



↑ Heljan has reported that its Class 47 models are on their way to the UK. The first batch covers early to mid-life locomotives including BR green, BR blue and sector liveries. Models will be available in DCC-ready and DCC sound versions with prices starting at £249.00. [www.heljan.co.uk](http://www.heljan.co.uk)



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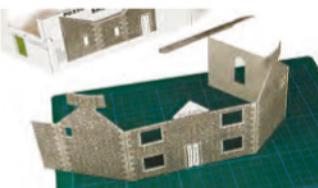
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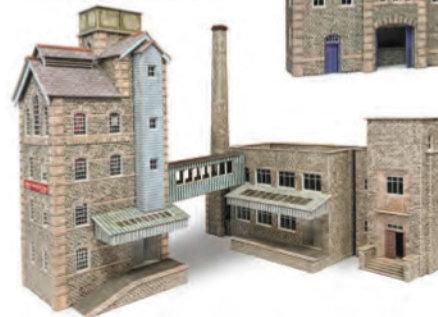
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# Railway modelling is as healthy as ever

WHILST there appears to be some gloom being spread across social media by some observers in the hobby, manufacturers are continuing to deliver brand-new and innovative models, with several notable arrivals

taking place during January.

Cavalex Models' Class 56s, a reworked 4-VEP EMU and new 88DS shunters from Hornby have landed in the first weeks of 2024. A busy year is in store with Accurascale with several

new models due in the first months of the year, and Heljan also has a large programme of new releases for 2024 to look forward to, starting with the Class 47. Include a new exhibition at the NEC in April; the launch of the ElectraRail

Graphics ([electrarail.co.uk](http://electrarail.co.uk)); West Hill Wagon Works opening a new store in Kirkby In Ashfield in Nottinghamshire ([westhillwagonworks.com](http://westhillwagonworks.com)) and it is easy to see that the hobby is evolving rather than in serious decline.

## EFE RAIL SR 'BOOSTER' LOCOMOTIVE ARRIVES



➤ The first new locomotive tooling produced under the EFE Rail label arrived in the form of the Southern Railway 'Booster' electric locomotive which has not been produced as a hi-fidelity model until now. Five versions were released covering the changes made to the locomotives during their 30-year operating life.



➤ The new 'Booster' will be reviewed in the next issue of *Rail Express Modeller* where it will be put through its paces for layout performance, checks for closer-to-scale compatibility and fidelity to the prototype.

## DB CARGO HRA WAGONS FROM BACHMANN



➤ The DB HRA is a cut down HTA coal hopper wagon originally built for EWS and retains most of the features of the design including the bogies and the shape of the hopper. It has been released in both 'N' and 'OO' gauge by Bachmann, with four different wagon numbers available in both scales. The models will be reviewed in a future issue. [www.bachmann.co.uk](http://www.bachmann.co.uk)

## 'ALCAN' ALUMINA PCAS IN 'OO'



➤ The long-term flow of alumina from Blyth to the aluminium smelters at Lynemouth in Northumberland and Lochaber near Fort William is a popular one for modellers and enthusiasts. The latter flow continues to this day using four-wheel PCA tank wagons which were introduced in 1988 for British Alcan. They have finally come of age with a new 'OO' gauge model being released by Revolution Trains.



➤ The models are available in several different forms reflecting changes during their long service history, including logos of the various owners. Fourteen runner packs of four wagons have arrived in the shops and are priced at £169.50. [www.revolutiontrains.com](http://www.revolutiontrains.com)

## TT:120 TTA TANK WAGONS



➤ Hard on the heels of the Hornby 'OO' gauge TTA tank wagons reviewed elsewhere in this issue, comes the 'TT:120' scale version finished in three liveries. The Total oil version numbered as No. PR58260 is the one that differs from the three released in 'OO' gauge.



➤ TTA No. BP067765 appears in BP green in 'TT:120' as well as 'OO' gauge. The new wagons are basically the same as their 'OO' gauge counterparts including walkways and the underframe. The models are priced at £24.49. [www.hornby.com](http://www.hornby.com)



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# Hornby face-lifts its 4-VEP

Described as a 'problem child' by Hornby, the 4-VEP model has now emerged from the shadows and has been reworked to remove the issues encountered with the original model. How successful has the revamp been?

## A little history

SOUTHERN ELECTRIC modellers regard the Hornby Class 423 4-VEP as an important model given how common the full-size units were on the Southern Region. They operated over almost every electrified route and were most common on secondary and middle suburban services outside the Greater London area until the Connex South Central franchise modified a small number to operate short distance inner suburban services (4-VOP).

The revamped Hornby model covers the post-1988 version, of which 191 four-car units were formed, renumbered as 3401-3591. This was fewer than the original fleet size, but numbers were affected by casualties from collisions and fire damage.

The 4-VEP face-lift project commenced in late 1987 and included interior refitting with new trim, lighting and a PA system. Rebuilding of one First Class compartment for Standard Class passengers in the DTCs had been started previously following downgrading and this was continued. To further increase seating capacity, the MBSO brake van section was reduced in size for an additional passenger saloon seating 18. This modification was not always carried out when internal refitting was completed due to budget constraints.

Side windows varied on a small number of face-lifted units where the sliding ventilator type was replaced with single panes of glass. The larger windows in the new MBSO saloon were also single pane except a few examples



Services between Alton and Aldershot to Waterloo and Ascot were once dominated by 4-VEPs. No. 3417 and No. 3459 were noted on October 11, 2002. They are 'face-lifted' units with rebuilt MBSOs where the guard's van was reduced in size for a new passenger saloon which provided 18 additional seats.

where recovered sliding ventilator types were used.

Two other small details are worth mentioning. It does not follow that the square framed headlights were fitted to the 4-VEPs at the same time. Some face-lifted 4-VEPs were found without headlights as late as the end of 1991. Nos. 3421 to 3451 had their set numbers applied below the cab windscreens instead of the usual position above the windows.

The first batch of the revamped Hornby 4-VEP covers the privatisation period and not the time in which the rebuilt units worked for Network SouthEast. During their use by franchises, units were often reformed and transferred between train operating companies. The two featured models are not affected by the formation of 4-VOP units.

## Stagecoach SWT No. 3455

Records indicate that face-lifting of No. 3455 (originally No. 3048) was

completed in 1988 and the unit painted in SWT livery in June 1999. It was removed from traffic at the end of 2004 giving this model a 1999-2004 time slot. The model is finished in typical condition for a SWT unit making it ideal for renumbering to create a fleet of 4-VEPs for an SWT themed layout.

The four-car model is correctly numbered with the MBSO from set No. 3045. Pre-TOPS number was No. 7748 which was one of the second batch of 4-VEPs to be built and like the first, they featured external lifting lugs which are not present on the model.







## Southern No. 3514

Rebuilding and renumbering from No. 3137 to No. 3514 is documented as completed in the summer of 1990. It was painted in Southern livery in 2001, the only 4-VEP to be so treated, preventing renumbering of the model to represent the operator's other 4-VEP units. It was withdrawn in the summer of 2004 and scrapped in the autumn.

It is a good match for the body shells and features the declassified DTC compartments which are correctly located nearest the end vestibule. All four vehicles are correctly numbered.

## What has changed?

Hornby has put a great deal of work into the model and the upgrade is a dramatic improvement over the original version. There is now a metal underframe fitted to the MBSO which is the vehicle with the drive bogie and electronics. The motor block has been moved to the opposite end of the MBSO to minimise its impact. On an original condition unit without the rebuilt guard's van, it's almost completely hidden.

Roof ventilators are closer to the correct size and improvements have been made to the cab fronts with the correct shape of gangways, cab windscreens and recesses for the brake pipes.

Trailing bogies no longer have the inside bearings which reduces drag considerably. Inner couplings are fitted to close coupling cams and have much



MBSO No. 62136 of Southern No. 3514. The motor block and drive bogie are situated at the guard's van end.



TS No. 70899 of SWT No. 3455. The livery is well applied and with the correct colours.

better electrical connections. Not only do they look better but are easier to couple together too, reducing the chance of damage.

## How does it look?

The retooled cab front and other detail improvements have further captured the essence of this important Southern Region multiple unit. Although the basic shape and dimensions of the original model were fine, details such as cab windows, gangways, roof ventilators and technical details were far from satisfactory. Hornby has done an

excellent job of the upgrading, although a couple of points have been missed.

On the MBSO of the face-lifted units, the commode and door handle of one passenger door is still missing. The air horns remain undernourished and there is a slight irregularity apparent in the roofs of all four cars.

On the plus side, the interiors are very well detailed and enjoy good interior illumination. The corridor compartments of the DTC vehicles are also properly modelled and include good seating detail. All of this can be observed through the clear flush

## MODEL FEATURES:

- Model represents a 'face-lifted' unit.
- Single MBSO drive bogie.
- Diecast MBSO underframe.
- Interior illumination and detailing.
- Illuminated running lights and headcode box.
- Inner couplings with electrical connections.
- Metal wheels with pinpoint axles.
- Finely detailed underframes.

glazing which is neatly seated in place with no traces of adhesive. Printed details include 'No Smoking' and 'First Class' notices and in some cases, several different types are present as could be observed on the full-size trains. Set No. 3514 had restricted door drop lights for operation on the Oxted line and the related window bars are printed in place.

## Model performance

The heavier MBSO underframe and improved drive bogie, which has the wheel axles running in metal bushes, delivers excellent performance in both models. The driving experience is smooth and controllable after a short running-in spell. Illumination is also of the right level and the neat manner in which the running lights can be controlled with a sensor in the cab roof is a nice, innovative touch.

Wheels in the trailer bogies are fully concentric and free rolling with their pinpoint axles. However, they are of cast metal, with a textured surface, rather than turned making them noisy during operation. It is fair to say that wheels remain an area for significant improvement in 'OO' gauge and we are not just picking on Hornby in this regard.



The DTC vehicle with upgraded driving cab front and gangway. The headlight cover is round rather than square within a square frame.



## Closing notes

The revamping, or should we say 'face-lift' of the Hornby 4-VEP is undoubtedly a success. Virtually all of the issues encountered with the original model have been resolved and the good points from the original such as detailed underframes, passenger saloon seating and neat glazing have been retained. Small details add to the finesse of the model including front foot steps, the cab front brake pipes and neat shoe beams fitted to the DTC vehicles.

Livery application is neat overall, and colours appear to match photographic references. Printed

details are well researched and neat in appearance. The list price for the four-car set is quite competitive compared to similar four-car models. Southern Electric modellers will welcome the return of this invaluable multiple unit type which will fit most BR and Privatisation era third rail layout themes. What we need is another Network SouthEast example or two. 

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## Glazing and interiors

Clear glazing with minimal edges is fitted to all four vehicles. Behind the 'glass' is a detailed interior with the correct high-density seating in open saloons. This is better appreciated with the interior lighting.



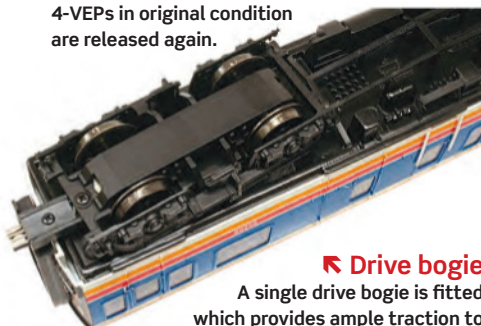
## Cab front

The reworked cab front is a big improvement over the original model. Flush glazed windscreens are fitted with separate wipers, and they are of the correct size and shape too. Gangways are also much improved with the end door not being as far recessed as the original.



## Drive mechanism

Hornby relocated the drive to the opposite end of the MBSO in the revamped model which will be a better location for it when models of 4-VEPs in original condition are released again.



## Drive bogie

A single drive bogie is fitted which provides ample traction to power all four vehicles. The underframe is now composed of cast metal with fine plastic details making the reworked MBSO considerably heavier. Consequently, traction tyres are no longer needed.



## DTC compartments

The partitions and sliding doors of the DTC compartments have been opened out, greatly improving the appearance of this area of the model. Note the printed livery details and window bars which were fitted to Central Division 4-VEPs working the Oxted line due to limited clearances on the route.



## Inner couplings

The close couplings and cams fitted to the inner ends of the set are much improved, with a neater appearance and a more robust electrical connection between couplings.



## Inner coach end detail

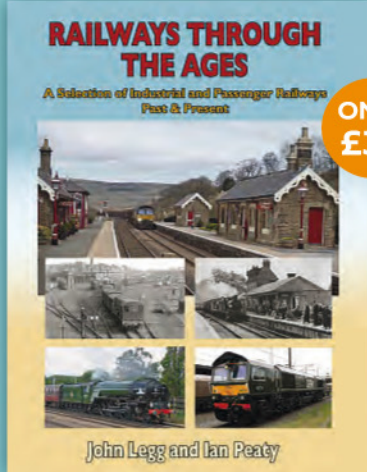
The profile of the gangways, different to locomotive-hauled Mk.1 stock, is well modelled along with other end details such as the roof overhang, water tank filler pipes and printed information.



## Trailer bogies

Changes have been made to the trailer bogies too. The inside bearing wheels have given way to more traditional pinpoint axle wheelsets which has reduced rolling resistance. Whilst there is a very good level of detail on the outside frames of the bogies, including neat shoe beams on the DTC's outer bogies, there are no brake blocks or brake linkages modelled.





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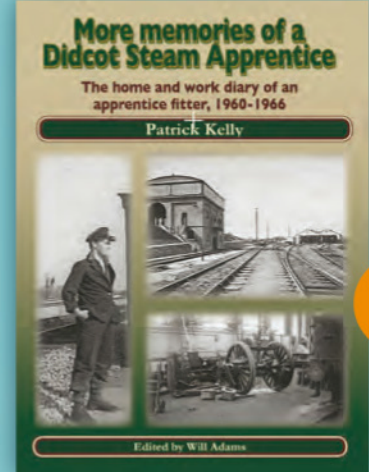


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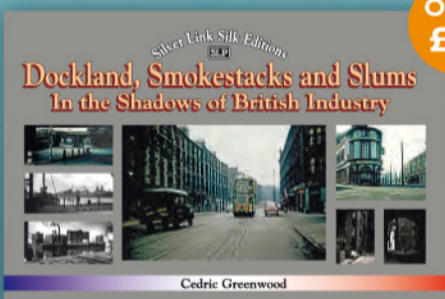


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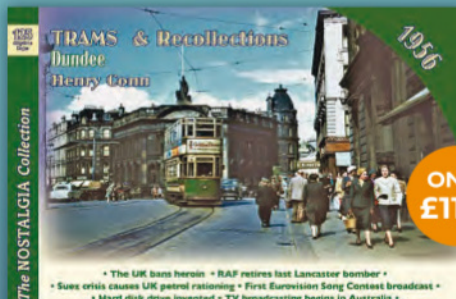


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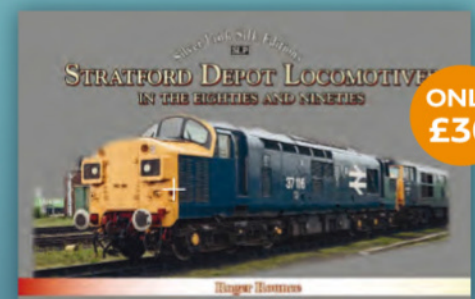


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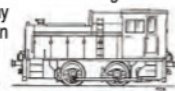
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# TTA treat from Hornby

Delicately detailed new models of the TTA tank wagon arrived from Hornby last December, and are already showing as 'sold out'. How well does this new '00' gauge model measure up?

## The model

HORNBY has done an excellent job with its brand-new model of the classic four-wheel monobloc tank wagon. It very much looks the part, with some very fine detailing.

Hornby states that the new model will allow it to produce, as closely as possible, much of the 45t/46t four-wheel tank wagon fleet. Although some changes will be made to reflect different builds of the wagon type as seen with No. ESSO 56046, it seems to be heading towards a one-size-fits-all platform where the underframe is concerned.

In fairness, the model appears to be a replica of the Diagram TT088 family, including Class A petrol tanks in the SUKO 672xx, and Class B tank wagons in the BP and SUKO 656xx and 657xx number range. It should be noted that the numerous suffix letters applied to the Diagram TT088 classification are a nod towards variations present in this group of former Shell-Mex & BP (SMBP) wagons. The SUKO and BPO versions of the model matches those built by Powell Duffryn in 1966/7 including the top walkway and end ladders.

The modelled wagons with numbers relating to Norbitt-Pickering builds have quite different underframes, even though they appear to be the same at first glance. Further, the end ladders are at opposite ends in relation to the cranked brake lever.

Five TTAs will not present much of a challenge to EWS Class 37/4 No. 37411, not even on the steeply graded Highland line. The train was destined for the oil terminal at Lairg which took regular deliveries of heating oil and other products by rail until a few years ago. Autumn colours dominate the scene at Tomatin where this picture was taken in November 2003.

There are many different 45t/46t monobloc tank wagon types due to the huge number constructed for various operators by different builders, making this a huge subject far beyond a product review. Those variations include brake lever type, the associated hangers, position of brake components and also the fitting of Bruninghaus suspension in the early 1980s.

Repairs and overhauls can also introduce some variation in wagon fleets. Hornby has clearly chosen to minimise tooling to keep costs down which means some models will only loosely match the applied number and livery. This fits its market where entirely detail- and era-specific models are not seen as necessary. Nonetheless, there is a large proportion of the TTA fleet which matches the model and that would include some BP examples finished in the green livery as applied to BPO 67765.

## Tank barrel

Several pieces make up the tank barrel with the joins carefully hidden along seam lines present in the full-size vehicles. This allows different ends to be tooled to accommodate different ladder arrangements as seen on the ESSO version. The joins are very well hidden and the tank sections very well



Three different models made up the first release of the brand-new TTA wagon from Hornby. A closer inspection shows that they are not specifically detailed to match the applied livery and wagon number. The tooling appears to better fit former SMBP wagons (TT088) built by Powell Duffryn in 1967.

shaped. They are also very tidy with no signs of flaws such as unevenness along the sides. The dished ends of the tanks are also well modelled and shaped.

Top walkways are neatly etched and well attached to the tank barrel. It appears that one type of walkway has been done so far, as a one-size-fits-all fitting. The different end ladder arrangement of ESSO wagons has been modelled accurately and well too.

## Underframe

The main character of the four-wheel monobloc tank wagons is the manner in which the tank is set into the underframe. This has been modelled well by Hornby with the curved underside of the tank present in the underframe tooling. The barrel assembly is fitted to the underframe

by crosshead screws located under the NEM coupling pockets. Removing the barrel is simple, allowing the model to be worked on to create different types such as lagged and coiled tanks with conical ends.

Metal three-hole disc wheels are fitted which run in plastic at the rear of the axle box mouldings. The models are free-rolling, and the wheels reasonably concentric. In common with many other manufacturers' wagon models, the wheels do not have a profiled inner face, being completely flat. The axles are 25.5mm long which would suggest that things could be tight for closer-to-scale wheels. However, the wheels exhibit some side play in the underframe which has a measurement of 22.5mm between the axle guards which should be sufficient room for finescale wheels.







↑ R60207 is dressed as No. SUKO 67004 with Shell markings and small Trainload Petroleum logos which places this wagon in the mid-1980s to the 1990s time slot. The number relates to a Norbitt-Pickering wagon built in 1967. The livery is a very loose fit to the model due to differences in the underframe between the Powell Duffryn design the model is based on and the large fleet of SUKO-registered wagons built in several batches by Norbitt-Pickering in the mid-1960s.

One of the three sample models was slightly three-legged when checked on a glass surface. Whilst this is of little significance when run on the supplied wheels, it was found that slackening off the screws slightly corrected the problem, which is important for 'EM' and 'P4' gauge modellers.

The clasp brake mouldings are very finely executed along with brake equipment and pipework which includes a through vacuum brake pipe. The brake shoes align with the outside edge of the wheels and would be fine for 'EM' gauge, although finer scale modelling will require them to be relocated.

Axle guards are finely tooled and reasonably thin too which gives the underframe a good end-on appearance. Neat Oleo buffers with sprung metal heads are fitted to the headstocks. A cosmetic tail-lamp and air brake hoses are included in the box.

A very welcome feature are the Bruninghaus springs, applied to the full-size wagons from the early 1980s which means the underframe could be used, at least loosely, to model a variety of other wagons including those built on redundant underframes. It will be interesting to see if any new tooling is done by Hornby to further expand this range, including older suspension features.

## Livery details

Hornby has researched livery colours and company logos well. The applied liveries are authentic to the wagon number including warning notices and TOPS panels. Printing is sharp, well defined and legible in most instances, including the small details on the wagon solebars and axle box cover colours too.

In the case of the BPO tank wagon, a simple renumbering to one of the green examples of the BPO 673xx

wagons would immediately make the model nearly perfect. There might be a little more work with the others, but it is likely that the logos could be removed on the SUKO wagon to create either a BP or SMBP version of the wagon in the same number range. Transfers are widely available for 'OO' gauge TTA tank wagons.



↑ The top walkways appear to be a common component applied to all three models and do not reflect the differences in walkways applied to TTA wagons. It fits the BP green model the best and a close fit to the other two.



↑ R60208 models an ESSO-registered wagon, and the end ladder fits Class A tank wagons that operated from the Fawley refinery which ceased to be served by rail in 2016. The end ladder detail is properly modelled, although the top walkway is the same type used on the other two wagons. No. ESSO 56046 is a Norbitt-Pickering wagon built in 1965 and again is a loose fit to the underframe tooling.



↑ R60209 is adorned in the colourful BP green livery with yellow solebar together with a Trainload Petroleum logo, a livery developed in the 1980s when rules on tank wagon liveries were relaxed. It carries the number No. BP 67765 which was also a Norbitt-Pickering wagon constructed in 1966. It is a loose fit similar to the SUKO-registered model.



← End ladders and top walkways are composed of finely etched metal and consistently coloured to match the tank barrel.

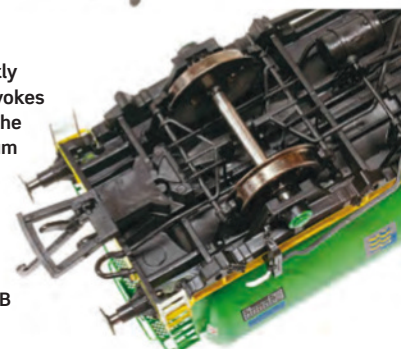
→ The end ladder arrangement as applied to ESSO TTA wagons.

→ Clasp brakes are neatly modelled including the yokes and safety loops. Note the modelled through vacuum brake pipe which can be removed for this trio of models if desired. It will allow the modelling of TTB wagons.

↑ The underframe is a model of the type built by Powell Duffryn and is close in detail to some underframes built by Metro Cammell too. It could be used to produce certain bitumen tank wagons used by Shell and Esso. It is correctly shaped with an impression of the tank barrel being set into the frames.



↑ Axle guards are moulded from plastic yet are quite thin in section and beautifully detailed with Bruninghaus springs and axle box detail.



↑ Livery printing and assembly quality is good with little in the way of rough edges or clumsy assembly work. The TTAs look good and will satisfy the needs of most modellers whilst giving the enthusiastic detailing modeller a solid foundation to create other TTA/TTB types.





No. BPO 37263 at Inverness on August 22, 2005. This is a 1965-66 Norbitt-Pickering TTA wagon with its BP logos painted over and is the same type that the Hornby BPO-registered model loosely represents. The access ladders are mounted at the opposite end to that on this wagon type. They should be at the opposite end to the cranked brake lever.

## Assembly and finishing

The quality of all three models is excellent, with good assembly quality and finishing. The finely etched metal walkways and ladders are consistently coloured to match the barrel assembly. No flaws were detected in the livery finish and the overall appearance is eggshell, the perfect base for weathering work.

It is hoped that Hornby realises that its range of TTAs has huge potential for adding a big range of different types of tank wagons to its

catalogue. Newer wagons built on the underframes such as scrap metal wagons, aggregate and ballast types are also in reach too.

Tooling of different tank ends could be done, along with new walkways, to produce lagged and coiled tanks for heavier petroleum products and bitumen. Some additional types of top walkway would add further potential too. Tooling a Norbitt-Pickering underframe and the older suspension systems too would considerably open up the range of wagons Hornby could add to this range, and with greater detail accuracy too.

In the meantime, we have a lovely model of a TT088 design on a Powell Duffryn underframe which covers quite a few BP and SUKO wagons. Further, it is an excellent base model for the modeller to apply conversions and changes to the underframe features thanks to its straightforward design. 

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Close-up detail of the ESSO-registered wagon's end ladder detail.



TTA No. ESSO 56124 photographed at Cardiff Canton in 1993. It was being used to deliver diesel fuel to the depot. Note the traffic stars and the patch where the ESSO logo was removed.



You do not need a lot of TTAs to model some traffic flows including those that ran to the small terminals at Fort William, Lairg and Oban. On May 29, 2006, the weekly delivery to Fort William consisted of five TTAs. The BPO-registered tank wagons are of different types, and this is evident from the top walkways.



Rail traffic from the Fawley refinery used TTA wagons for various flows including diesel fuel deliveries to various motive power depots. No. ESSO 56117, photographed at Eastleigh on July 11, 2003, is the type being represented by one of the models. Again, the use of common parts means that the underframe is different to that of the model and the end ladder is at the opposite end of the wagon.



Hornby announced a Total Oil version of the TTA for 2024, to be produced in a pack of three wagons. No. PR58248 was built by Powell Duffryn in 1966 and would be a very close, if not exact match to the ESSO model. Note the pipework at the right-hand end of the wagon.



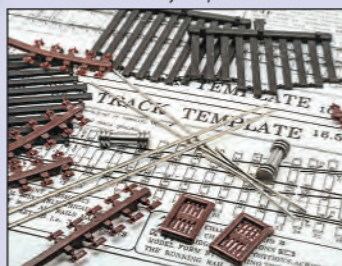


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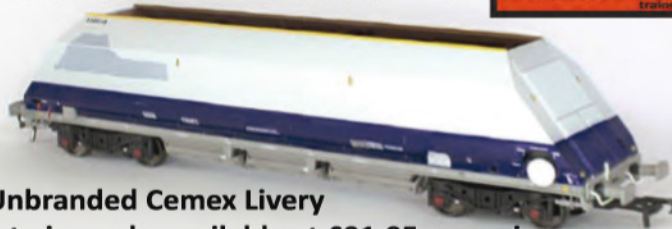
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# Railfreight pioneer from Rapido Trains

The Diagram 1/191, 45t Open AB wagon, a pioneer of the BR Railfreight era, is the latest model of interest to D&E modellers to be released by Rapido Trains UK.



The model has been produced in number with several different liveries being applied to it including several Railfreight models; a 'Civil Link' branded ZDA and later EWS versions too. 1970s modellers are not forgotten with BR bauxite and OPEN AB versions being included.



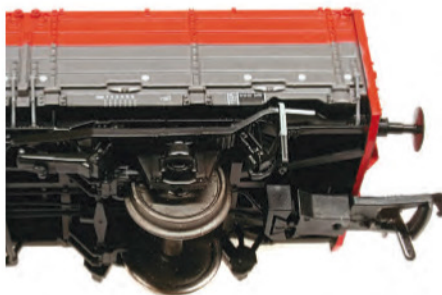
Just 100 Open AB/OAA wagons were constructed in 1971, being followed by the OBA design. The new Rapido Trains '00' gauge OAA is an excellent representation of the wagon, with a beautifully moulded body and delicately detailed underframe with fixed axleguards.



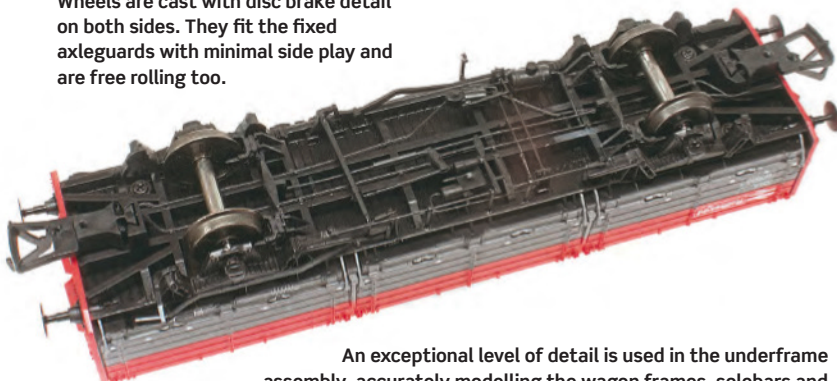
The sample model is finished in classic Railfreight livery as No. 10020. The shade of red used on the model was a touch pink as if a weathered colour was sampled.

## First impressions

CONSTRUCTED in 1971, the Open AB wagon, or OAA in TOPS language, is a welcome addition to the range of highly detailed wagon models produced by Rapido Trains. OAAs were the first of a number of air braked open general purpose wagons constructed on 20ft 9in underframes and were closely followed by the similar OBA open wagon.



Wheels are cast with disc brake detail on both sides. They fit the fixed axleguards with minimal side play and are free rolling too.



An exceptional level of detail is used in the underframe assembly, accurately modelling the wagon frames, solebars and linkages to the brake calipers. The axleguards are fixed which is a first for a model of the BR Railfreight era long wheelbase wagons.

Just 100 wagons were constructed at BR Ashford with a body composed of three wooden drop-side doors, removable stanchions and fixed steel ends. The design was intended to be as flexible as possible with the door arrangement allowing the entire length of the wagon to be opened for loading. Other innovations included disc brakes and door controllers which is why there are no door bangers fitted to the OAA, unlike the OBA.

Rapido's brand-new model is the first fully accurate representation of this small fleet of wagons which has been overlooked by other manufacturers except for the rather loose version produced by Hornby (yes, it is still in the catalogue).

Rapido has applied the fine tooling techniques used in its pre-group wagon models to full effect in the sides to

capture the feel and character of the OAA well. The highly detailed nature of the model created an excellent impression upon unboxing and initial layout tests were also very favourable.

## Bodyshell moulding

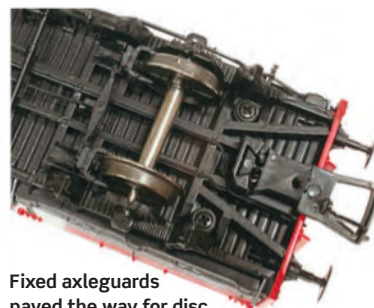
Injection moulded plastic has allowed a thin-sided body to be produced with well-defined external door detail which includes sharp door controller, planking and strapping detail. The door hinges and where they are located in the lower body slots are so well tooled that it looks as if the doors could be removed along with the stanchions. The moulding is stable with no signs of the body bowing inwards.

There is some planking detail on the interior of the body, applied to the sides. The floor is also planked, moulded in a separate floor panel

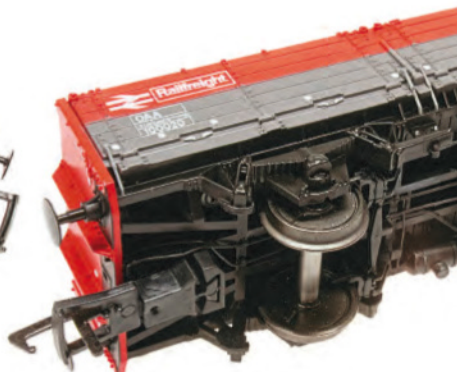
## MODEL FEATURES:

- Injection moulded plastic body with metal floor.
- Sprung Oleo buffers.
- Fully concentric metal brake disc wheels.
- Fixed axleguard mouldings with full detail.
- Drop side door detail faithfully represented.
- Fine brake and underframe detail including the framing.
- Alternative disc brake calipers for 'EM' and 'P4' gauge.

which is composed of cast metal for additional ballast weight. The overall shape and proportions of the body match the full-size wagons well, including the ends and headstocks.



Fixed axleguards paved the way for disc brake fittings and all of the suspension components to be properly modelled. Spare brake calipers are supplied in the box allowing closer-to-scale-wheels to be fitted without the problem of the calipers fouling the wheels.



Headstocks are correctly shaped and are fitted with neat models of Oleo buffers. Note the wagon framing and brake pipework.



## Underframe detail

The most impressive detail applied to this model is found in the underframe, with most of it out of sight when the model is placed on the layout. Some modellers debate if such detail is necessary when it cannot be seen. Well, the beautifully modelled framing which is fixed to the underside of the wagon floor with fine screws does the same job as a solid moulding, so why not include it? The airbrake cylinder and linkages are visible, so there is little more work needed to complete the picture. Strangely enough, when it's not present, there is a sense that the model is incomplete!

Rapido Trains has modelled the disc brake caliper detail, a feature missing from most models of this wagon family. To make life easier for 'EM' and 'P4' modellers, a spare set of calipers is supplied in the box which fits the same mounting hole but slightly offset to



As general merchandise traffic declined in the 1980s, OAA wagons were transferred to departmental fleets and recoded as ZDA. No. 100068 carries the Fiskind name 'Squid' and was in use as a spoil wagon loaded with old sleepers on April 27, 1991. Note the red headstocks and faded condition of the wagon.



Rapido Trains has the chance to produce different versions of the OAA, including those fitted with mesh sides such as No. 100070 photographed on block traffic bound for Acton on June 28, 2004. Note the colour of the ends and lower edge of the body.



Another modification which could be included in a future run of the OAA model is the extended end modification as applied to No. 100085 which was recorded on March 1, 2004, painted in EWS maroon.

accommodate the wider gauge.

Axlguard detail is well defined, although a little heavy in places, particularly the spring moulding. They are fitted with wheels that are properly profiled on both sides including brake discs instead of the common flat rear faces. They are mounted on stepped axles measuring 26.7mm in length, with a wide middle section and narrower pinpoints. The axles have one wheel bonded to the axle making their use for 'EM' gauge awkward.

## Running qualities

When the sample model was test-run, the first quality issue arose and that was the running characteristics of the wheels. They rolled freely, even though the model is not fitted with pinpoint bearings. However, they are noisy, and that is due to the wheel tyre having a very coarse finish instead of a polished one. A few minutes turning with fine wet and dry paper applied to the surface of the tyre soon solves the problem.

Otherwise, the low, even weight distribution of the cast floor which brings the wagon's weight up to 73g makes it a very sure-footed model. It should be noted that second-radius curve performance has been achieved with fixed axle guards which has allowed so much of the fine underframe detail to be modelled.

## Assembly and finish

Rounding up this review of the OAA is a close look at the quality of assembly and finishing. The first is excellent apart from one trace of CA glue ghost on the underframe. Finishing is good overall too except for a touch of raggedness along the plank line between red and grey planks. Given how worn and patched these wagons became, this is a minor point easily rectified with weathering and pin washing along the recessed plank lines.

Livery colours are fine to a point on the test sample. Whilst the shade of Railfreight grey appears to be of the right shade, the red shade is too pale, with a hint of pink, for a pristine wagon. The assumption is that the colour was chosen for its faded qualities which again will help the weathering of the model.

Printed details are very good, sharp and opaque. They are well-applied over the planked detail and are quite fine in appearance. Overall finishing is eggshell which suits the model well.

Closing notes are positive about this model which is the finest of any of the BR Railfreight era wagons currently available. It might prompt a rework of currently available OBA and OCA wagon models and, who knows, could the underframe parts be used to produce models of other important wagon types from the same era such as air braked vans built for the 'Air-Braked Network', later Speedlink? 

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# Kit Corner:

## Test-building a JIA grain hopper wagon in 'N' gauge

The N Gauge Society sells a range of very useful rolling stock kits, two of which are perfect for modelling 1980s grain traffic. The iconic Scottish Malt Distillers (SMD) PIA/JIA is subject to a test build in this edition of Kit Corner.

ONE OF THE ICONIC wagons of the Railfreight era was the brightly coloured blue and white Scottish Malt Distillers Polybulk bogie hopper wagons (referred to as Distillers Polybulks in this article).

They were introduced in 1983 following the success of a similar design built by Fauvet Girel in 1981 (Diagram E518).

Coded as Diagram E538 and TOPS PIA-Y, they entered traffic around the same time as a second batch of the Fauvet Girel design (Diagram E561) which, like the 1981 batch, carried a colourful livery of green and grey with yellow 'Grainflow Polybulk' legends.

Both wagon types were used on barley traffic for the Scottish distilling industry, working primarily up the east coast from East Anglia in Speedlink trains via Millerhill until the traffic was lost in 1991 when the Speedlink network was abandoned. They found use in the transport of other commodities following the loss of grain traffic.

### The kit

Both Diagram E518 and E538 wagons can be modelled using N Gauge Society's kits (9a and 9b) which are available to members through the society's shop ([www.ngauesociety.org](http://www.ngauesociety.org)). The Distillers Polybulk wagons are built using Kit 9b which includes full size side overlays for the livery making finishing considerably easier than it might have been.

The superstructure is composed of injection moulded plastic including the top of the hopper and sides which appear to be the same as those supplied in kit 9a for Diagram E518, probably to save tooling costs. One-piece Y25 bogies and metal wheels are also included along with a choice of standard couplings.

The model is finished with a number of etched nickel-silver fittings including access ladders, hand rails

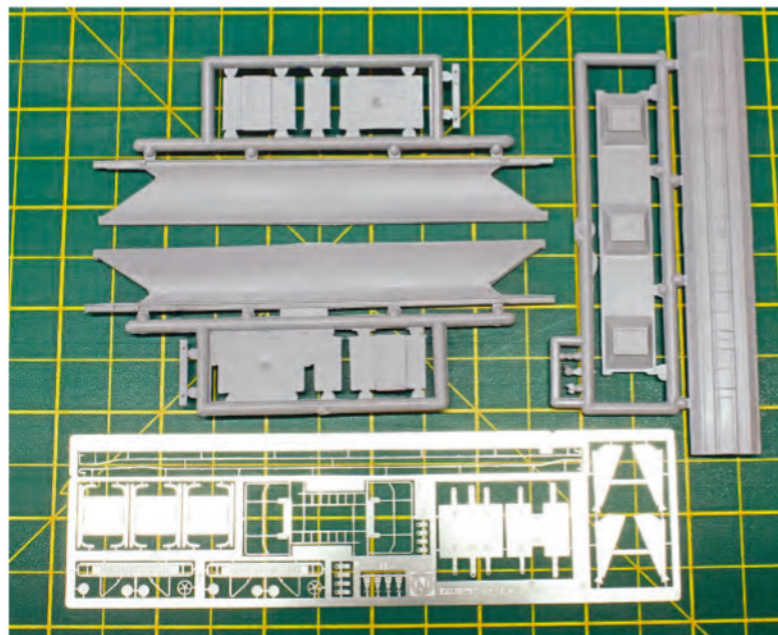


Test running of the SMD JIAs built from the N Gauge Society's kit. This test revealed that one ferry hook was interfering with a wagon bogie, tilting the wagon to one side. An important point to look for during tests which is simple to correct.

and ferry fittings. It is unlikely to suit someone venturing into kit building for the first time, but as the test built of two kits demonstrated, it is a satisfyingly challenging project which produces something close to the full-size wagons – with a little filing and finishing!

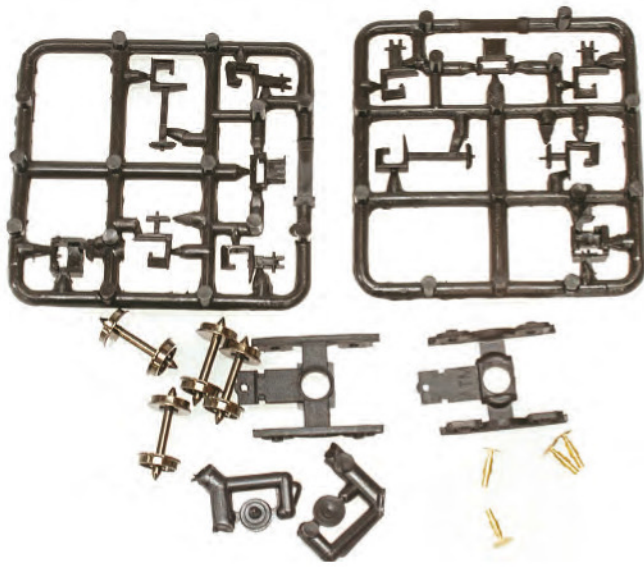
Work commenced by reading through the comprehensive instructions. It is worthwhile to check for anything that might trip up the unwary modeller. There are a couple of details which need care, such as the use of the end platform hand rail etches. Another area that may challenge a less experienced modeller will be the reprofiling of the hopper top. Not as easy as the instructions suggest.

The parts were laid out on the workbench and checked to see that all of them were present. A dry run assembly of the main wagon structure was completed to see how the parts go together and the degree of cleaning required for assembly. Once satisfied, construction could be started.



A mix of injection moulded plastic and etched nickel-silver parts is used to build up the main structure of the wagon. The etchings are particularly fine in appearance and delicate too!





↑ A very helpful feature of the kit is the provision of one-piece Y25 bogies that only require couplings of the required length to be fitted. Brass buffers and metal wheels are also included in the kit.

## Cleaning up the parts

Each of the sides, end plates and bogie pivot floor pieces were easily detached from their respective sprues. Cleaning consisted of removing flash from the edges with a fine cut file and running bonding surfaces along Grade 800 abrasive paper to ensure the surfaces are clean and slightly roughened for gluing.

The supplied etches required little or no preparation work, being clean and with very fine etched tabs securing them to the fret. The etchings were left alone until the main superstructure and bogies were completed along with balancing the model so it rides at the correct height at both ends and is level across its width.

## Bogies and wheels

The very first assembly job is to prepare the bogies, which is quite normal for bogie rollingstock construction. They are needed to check that the wagons sit level after the main structure is completed but at a point when adjustments can be undertaken. The wheels are easy to clip in and choice of coupling length can be left until the end of the project. Note that the bogies rely on a push pin to secure them to the pivots.

## Hopper assembly

While the hopper parts are relatively crude, they are also quite thick which builds up into a rigid, stable structure. Nonetheless, it is important to be careful with solvent cement during assembly.

Assembly work is simple at this stage. Apply one side to the hopper roof and allow to set, checking that the side is parallel with the roof. Any bowing of the side, in or out, is not desirable.

The upper hopper end plates follow, and they have to be carefully positioned at their desired angle so the lower plates will fit too. Follow up with the opposite side moulding and check all is square before everything hardens.

Continue with the outer floor/bogie pivot plates which should be fitted absolutely level and true. Double check that they are fitted with the pivot closest to the hopper and so there is about 1mm of rebate at the wagon ends to accept the headstocks moulding. If

## TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Tools and materials include the following in addition to the usual work bench hand tools:
- Grade 800 and 1200 abrasive paper
- 'Plastic Weld' solvent cement or similar
- High viscosity cyanoacrylate adhesive (CA glue)
- Twist drills ranging from 0.3mm to 1mm diameter
- Pin vice
- White plastic primer aerosol (Halfords)
- Ballast weight (lead-free shot etc)
- 20thou styrene card
- Plastic putty such as Squadron.

this has been done correctly, the pivot should be aligned with the main ferry hook base in the solebars.

Double check the hopper assembly is square and adjust before the parts harden completely. Further, the outer floor/bogie pivot plates must be level across the wagon between the solebars and parallel with them too. If they are sloped in any angle, the wagon will not sit level on its bogies. It will show a tendency to tilt from one side or the other. Consequently, two or more wagons of the same type won't align with each other correctly when run in a train.

Fill the joins in the ends with Squadron putty and do the same for any gap along the join between hopper roof and sides.

## Balancing the model

The models were placed on track numerous times to check they would run together and at the correct height.

It was noted, that despite the careful assembly of outer floor/bogie pivot plates to the main structure, the wagons tended to tilt and wobble during running tests using the five-digit command control system (fingers!). The solution is to create a form of triangular or three-point support through both bogies similar to three-point compensation for four-wheel wagons. At one end, the bogie is left to pivot in any plane it wants, and care was taken to ensure that it could do so without side-play. This bogie will rotate to ride over any irregularities in the track, ensuring the model stays on the rails. > B.



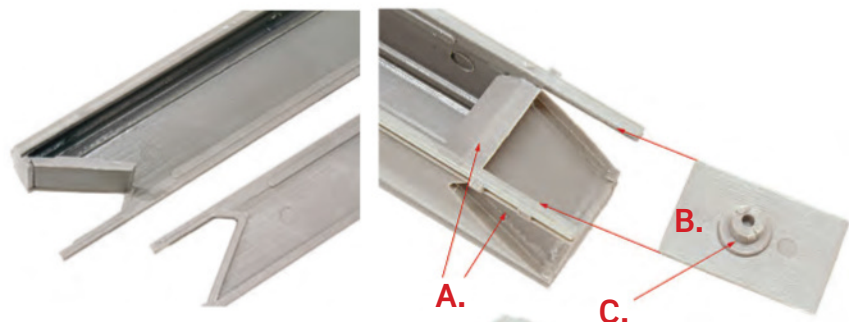
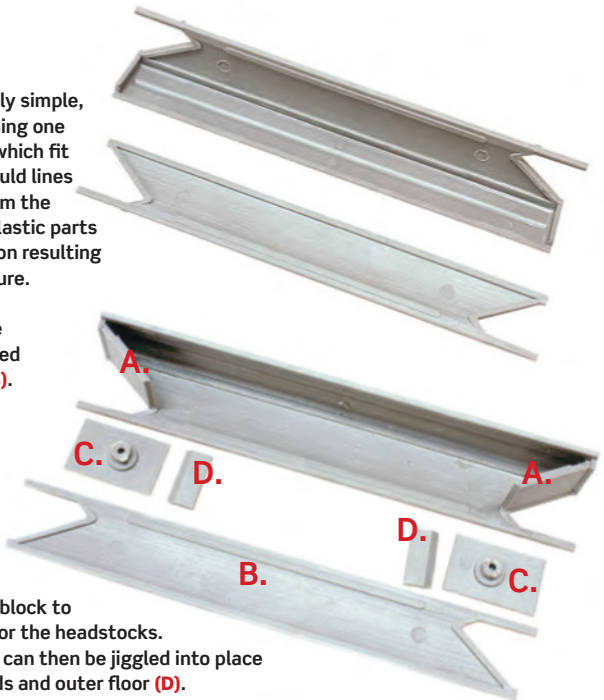
↑ When first unpacking the kit, it appears that the supplied hopper side transfers, designed to apply the complete SMD livery in one hit, are too long for the body mouldings. In fact, they are fine and can be used as stiff card overlays to complete the hopper ends.



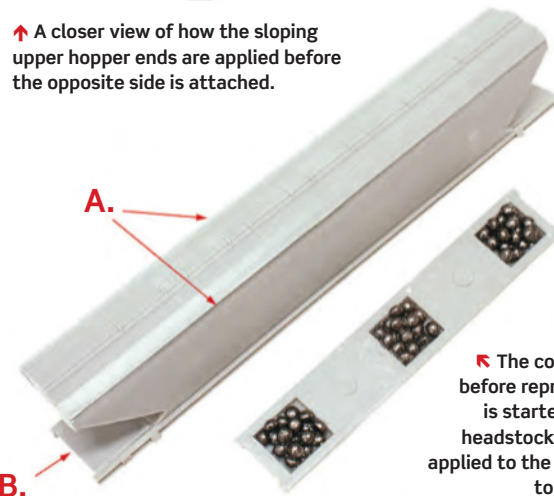
↑ Common parts shared with Kit 9a for the superstructure dictates that some reshaping of the hopper will be needed to better match the Distillers Polybulk.

→ Assembly is relatively simple, commencing by attaching one side to the roof panel which fit together well after mould lines have been removed from the joining surfaces. The plastic parts are quite thick in section resulting in a rigid wagon structure.

→ The hopper ends are applied next (A) followed by the opposite side (B). This creates a strong assembly to which the outer floor with bogie pivots (C) can be applied. They are fitted with the offset towards the hopper and aligned with the solebar ferry hook block to create a small rebate for the headstocks. The lower hopper ends can then be jiggled into place between the upper ends and outer floor (D).



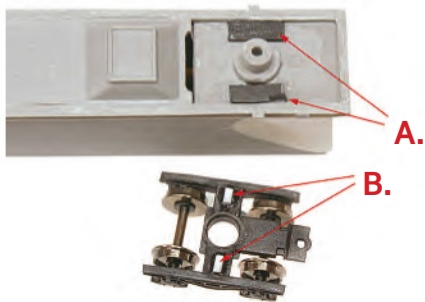
↑ A closer view of how the sloping upper hopper ends are applied before the opposite side is attached.



↑ Note the position of the upper and lower hopper ends (A). The outer floor/bogie pivot plates (B) slide into place with the off-set pivot nearest the hopper (C). It had a touch of moulding flash on it which needed paring off.

↖ The completed hopper assembly before reprofiling of the shoulder (A) is started. Note the recess for the headstock mouldings (B) and ballast applied to the discharge chute moulding to add weight to the wagon.





↑ Levelling the wagons is required because they tend to tip to one side. This is done by adding 20-thou styrene pads to the underframe (A) and corresponding pivot points on top of the bogies (B). This arrangement allows this bogie to tilt up and down while the bogie at the opposite end can move in all planes, creating a three-point levelling system. It prevents the wagons from tilting and wobbling from side to side.



↑ Alignment with similar types of wagon is one of the checks made on the layout before the models' hoppers are filed to a more accurate shape.



↑ Ride height checks look at solebar levels and the height from the rails at each end of the model. Do they ride smoothly at this point? If not, this is the time to make adjustments before delicate details are applied.

basic compensation which will ride level and without side-to-side wobble. Care has to be taken to maintain the correct ride height when making this change.

## Shaping the hopper

Time has arrived for the most awkward part of building this kit. A good quality smooth cut file and several grades of abrasive paper are needed.

First, smooth down any unsightly joins between the end hopper plates and sides as well as along the top of the solebars at the outer ends. Complete the finishing of the hopper ends by smoothing off the Squadron

filler which must be pretty hard by this time.

Pare away the rib along the top edge of the sides (shoulder) along with the moulded hand rail along the top of the hopper.

This job rounds off the shoulder of the hopper, yet leave a slight change in angle with the flat top section on either side of the loading hatch detail. Also, the bottom or tumblehome of the hopper can be reshaped a little using abrasive paper. Although there is plenty of plastic to cut into, be careful not to remove too much or over-curve the top shoulder. The middle section of the

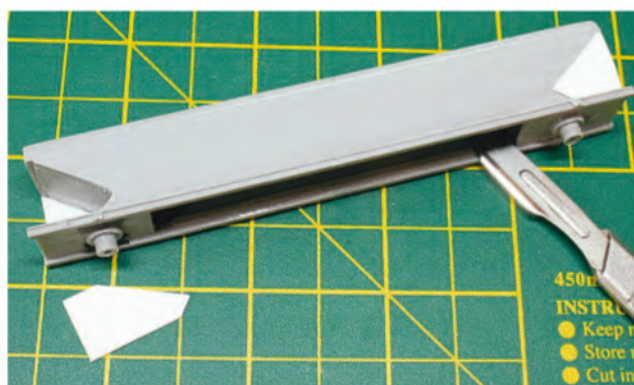
hopper sides is left until the ends of the hopper are extended and shaped using 20-thou styrene.

This is all completed using gentle file strokes, cleaning swarf from the file and model at frequent intervals. Check often to see that the curve is even along the sides. It is one of those jobs which is done slowly and for which there is really no absolute technique other than using skill and reference photographs to achieve the desired shape.

Because of the use of common components, the result will be a compromise anyway, so if the exact profile is not achieved, don't worry; when paint and transfers are applied, it will look pretty good.



↑ Reshaping of the hopper shoulder (A) is completed with a fine cut file and abrasive papers. The middle part of the side is filed to create a slightly flattened shape along its length (B).



↑ Cutting out and piecing in new sections of hopper side to create the correct shape at the ends.



↑ More checks to see that the modifications made to this point of the project look right. Some filler will be needed to blend the new sections in place.

## Hopper end plating

The printed sides supplied with the kit show that the hopper is not long enough nor has the correct end plate detail. Rather than use the printed detail to complete the sides, they were used as a template to make up end plating from 20-thou styrene which was glued into place and carved in-situ to the correct shape using the printed side. It's another tricky task, but creates the correct – more or less – shape to the hopper ends. The printed sides can be used as transfers once the model is finished, primed and given a base coat of paint.

## Etched metal fittings

Perhaps the most delicate part of the project arrives with the etched metal fittings. They are particularly fine and etched in quite thin metal.

Several challenges were encountered with the etchings, one being the delicacy of half etched fold lines. The metal at this point is so thin that there are only a couple of chances to get it right before they break due to bending fatigue. The care and time needed to apply the parts places this kit into a category known as a 'craftsman's kit' by US-outline modellers, along the lines of the much-missed Rail Yard Models kits. The difference for this project is we are working in 'N' gauge which makes this project all the more challenging! The parts are best fitted with CA glue, preferably a higher viscosity glue applied using a piece of wire.

The very first task with the etched fret is to cut out the top walkway hand rails and place them to one side for safe keeping.

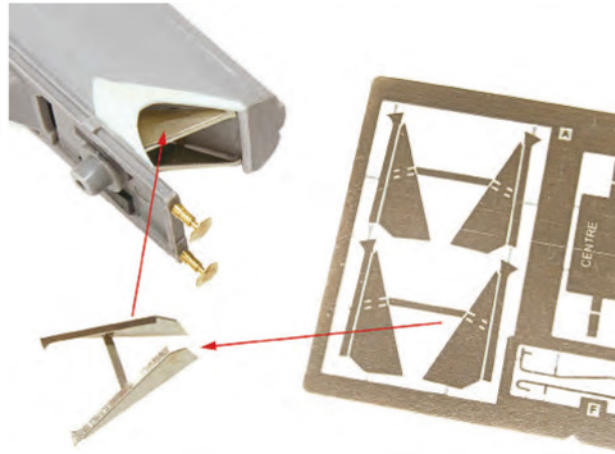




↑ Using the drilling template to accurately drill out mounting holes for the top hand rails.

Cut off the section of etch marked as a drilling jig for the hand rails and apply it to the model to drill 0.4mm diameter holes for mounting them accurately. This is done carefully and slowly to ensure the holes are all in line and in the right place. The hand rails are then added after being folded to shape and secured with tiny amounts of CA glue which also fills the holes.

The distinctive hopper end supports are located on the metal fret. They are quite easy to remove, fold to shape and install. The fit against the



↑ Folding up and fitting the end hopper support plates. There is a tiny piece of styrene fitted between the plates to complete this detail.

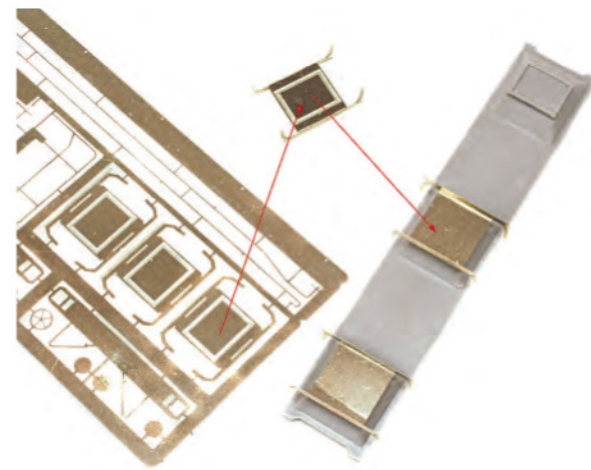
hopper end plates was excellent, with minimal filing needed for a close fit.

The end platforms were added next, again with CA glue, in a manner to make the job easier than suggested

in the instructions. The ladders were detached and fitted separately before the hand rail etchings were added to the wagon ends and the separately etched cross walkway applied. Here is one of the greatest weaknesses in the design, and that is the fold between hand rails and the mounting plate of the etch. It can be strengthened with tiny fillets of styrene card. The completed model will need some care in handling once they are fitted. The innermost grab rails are also applied, shaped from 0.3mm wire to replace the etched ones.

Attention turns to the floor and discharge chute moulding of the hopper which is fitted with the two baseplates for the discharge and brake wheel brackets. They are folded up and glued in place. For strength, consider adding 0.3mm wire between them. Once the moulding is fitted, add the wheels to it.

Final work to finish the model ready for painting includes applying the ferry hooks/ferry fittings which are tiny. As the instructions suggest, it is best to take time over the etched details and make sure the glue has secured them.



↑ Fitting the discharge chute detail to the floor moulding.

## Preparing for primer and paint

As you might have deduced from reading this, the completed model with its metal fittings is a delicate one and from this point onwards, needs very careful handling.

Parts hopefully won't come adrift during washing and cleaning ready for priming. Halfords plastic primer was used sparingly. It has slight filling properties, making it ideal for the job. Both white and grey primer could be used, the white being a better base for the wagon's white and blue livery.

## Lessons learned for the future

Would I build more of this kit? Well, one of the two wagon kits was part-built before starting on the second one, which followed a few construction steps behind. The second model is better because of the lessons learned from assembling the first kit. Modelling techniques always improve as each kit is constructed.

Handling of the wagon hopper assembly became ever more difficult as detail was added due to the delicate nature of the etched hand rails and ladders. Further, the ends of the etched parts wanted to catch anything they could and become detached. Certainly, the models will not withstand too much handling even after priming and painting.

What would I do next time around when building more JIA kits for lime traffic? Look to strengthen the design further.

The fold between end hand rails and the base would be reinforced with solder rather than glue. The top hand rail etch would be replaced with 0.3mm brass wire folded to shape or a length of 10- by 20-thou strip which will resist bending and look neater! To answer the question: Yes, the test build of this pair of kits has been a success overall and will result in a couple more to complete the collection.

In the second part of this feature, the models are prepared for painting with primer after some test running. Painting follows along with the use of the overlays and patching work to remove the SMD legends. For this pair of wagons is destined for lime traffic to work alongside CBA wagons and not grain! 📧



↑ The level of detail in the kit-built model compares well with the EFE Rail 'Clay Tiger' wagon. The top hand rails are not really satisfactory though and need adjustment or replacement.



↑ More main line testing of the models prior to priming and painting. It shows that little is needed in the way of further adjustment before committing to paint and transfers, a subject to be covered in the next issue of Rail Express Modeller.





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# What future for new trains in the UK?

**Richard Clinnick** reports on recent discussions between Government and the railway over new rolling stock.

THERE seems to be a log jam when it comes to ordering new trains or refurbishing fleets.

This looks already like it will cost Derby Litchurch Lane its future, with questions likely to be asked of other factories, and indeed various facilities, if decisions are not made soon.

As it stands, several operators have signalled their intention or aspiration to order new fleets, although only one operator on the national network, London North Eastern Railway (LNER) has so far placed an order this decade with 10 ten-car tri-modes on order from CAF (RE332). HS2 has also got an outstanding order for 54 trains, for the new railway, that are being constructed by an Alstom/Hitachi joint venture.

The operators that have signalled their intent to acquire new fleets include Chiltern Railways, Great Western Railway, Hull Trains, London Underground, MTR Elizabeth Line, Northern, ScotRail, Southeastern and TransPennine Express, yet so far nothing has been ordered.

It is known that a cascade of seven Class 221s from Avanti West Coast to CrossCountry is planned, and that the latter is planning a major revamp of its Voyager fleet for what is expected to be their first significant refurbishment since their introduction in 2002. It is also expected to be their last.

Further to this are various notices by Chiltern Railways and

Govia Thameslink Railway expressing interest in acquiring new fleets which would suggest that the 13 rakes of Mk.5As withdrawn by TPE after less than four years in traffic, and the 30 four-car Class 379 electric multiple units withdrawn by Greater Anglia after around a decade after their introduction, could find new homes. Both cascades have so far been denied by the operators.

However, the introduction of these various new fleets could see the market flooded with redundant rolling stock, although much of it is reaching the end of its working life.

Nevertheless, the state of the rolling stock market and the need to refurbish existing fleets has reached Government, with questions being asked. On December 7, 2023, Labour MP Grahame Morris raised the question in parliamentary debate. He asked the secretary of state for transport to make a statement on expediting the contract process for refurbishing existing UK trains.

The Secretary of State, Mark Harper, was not involved in the debate, with Rail Minister Huw Merriman instead left to explain the situation. He replied: "The Department [for Transport] works closely with rolling stock owners and train operators to understand when new and refurbished trains are likely to be required, and to ensure a regular flow of work for train manufacturing companies.

Trains are major assets, with a lifetime of 35 to 40 years, so there will naturally be peaks and troughs in procurement cycles. The average age of the current fleet is 17 years.

"The Department has overseen the procurement of more than 8000 new vehicles for the Great British mainline railway since 2012. Some of those are still being produced, including Alstom trains for South Western [Railway] and West Midlands Trains. Passenger travel habits have changed over the past three years, and while numbers are showing signs of improvement, we are still seeing reduced passenger revenue on the railway. We are aware that Alstom is facing difficult trading conditions. It is consulting its unions and employees on possible job losses. While it must be a commercial decision for Alstom, the Government has been working with the company to explore options to enable it to continue manufacturing at its Derby site. Officials from my department and the secretary of state for transport have held regular meetings with senior management at Alstom. We have also convened a cross-Whitehall group to advise on ways to support continued production at Derby and how best to support those workers who could lose their jobs."

Mr Merriman claimed that it remains a fact that the market for passenger trains is competitive. He also

claimed that the DfT cannot guarantee orders for individual manufacturers. "Nonetheless, we expect substantial continued demand for new trains," he added. He also claimed that contract orders are expected between late this year and early next year for Chiltern, Northern and Southeastern.

His highlighting of the SWR and WMR orders failed to mention that both are significantly delayed. The former is the high-profile Class 701 order of which 60 ten-car and 30 five-car electric multiple units were ordered in 2017 when the First Group/MTR joint venture won the South Western franchise previously operated by Stagecoach. The '701s' were designed to replace the Class 455s, '456s', '458s' and '707s', however it was only on January 9, 2024, that No. 701037 became the first to carry passengers in revenue-earning traffic. The '701s' are currently operating a limited service on the Windsor & Eton Riverside line ahead of a wider introduction later this year. However, these EMUs should have begun entering traffic in 2019, allowing the trains they were ordered to replace to be withdrawn by 2020. Instead, while the 24 two-car '456s' have been withdrawn and scrapped, only nine Class 455s have been disposed of, while the '458s' are now being retained (albeit reformed back to four-car sets) instead of the '442s'. The '707s', which had yet to enter traffic when it was announced their

↓ Orders for new trains are drying up, and, as *Rail Express* went to press, production of the final Aventra vehicles was being completed at Derby Litchurch Lane, with concern for the future of the facility. London Northwestern Railway Class 730s are the final Aventras to be built, and they are yet to enter traffic. On January 15, LNWR No. 730205 passes Colton, Rugeley, with the 13.05 Nuneaton-Crewe mileage accumulation run. Brad Joyce







Electrification and modifying existing fleets with new technology are some of the suggestions made by the rail industry to combat the need for additional rolling stock. Northern operates eight Flex bi-mode Class 769s converted from Class 319 electric multiple units first introduced in 1988. On January 4, Northern No. 769434 stands at Stalybridge having arrived with the 2W68 19.29 from Southport, while TransPennine Express No. 185132 calls with the 1P38 19.03 Hull-Manchester Piccadilly. The station has been electrified as part of the TransPennine Route Upgrade, albeit no electric trains yet serve the station. Phil Wallis

replacements had been ordered, are cascading to Southeastern where they have been rebranded 'City Beam', with 28 of the 30 five-car EMUs with their new operator. The final two trains, Nos. 707024/030, had been stood down by SWR before being returned to traffic until enough '701s' were available.

As for the WMR Class 730s, again, these are heavily-delayed having been due in service in 2020. The first sets, the three-car Class 730/0s, made their debut in November last year, however they are operating London Northwestern Railway services from London Euston (RE332) rather than the Cross-City services. This enabled WMR to remove the final Class 319s from service while waiting for the five-car LNWR Class 730/2s to be delivered. Much like the '701s', driver training delayed due to Covid, combined with various software issues have resulted in the late introduction of the fleets.

Mr Morris replied to the rail minister claiming that: "without immediate plans to allow companies to bid for new contracts, make no mistake, thousands of skilled jobs in the UK will go. The urgency stems from the crucial role of the Alstom factory in Derby. It is the UK's only end-to-end, design, build and test train manufacturing facility, making it integral to the UK's rail manufacturing industries."

He said that 3000 people are directly employed by Alstom while 15,000 jobs in the supply chain rely on the factory's continued production. Speaking at a Transport Select Committee the day before, Nick Crossfield, Alstom's managing director, said it was clear that Government needed to decide now on how and where it wants trains built in the future. "If this Government do not expedite the bidding process, trains will not continue to be manufactured in the

UK. They will start to be manufactured in North America, South America or South East Asia," said Mr Morris.

He did suggest that the final contract was for the Elizabeth Line, which is incorrect, and that this would end rail manufacturing in the UK "as we know it", even though WH Davis continues to build wagons, and that components are also imported to this country for new train orders at Derby.

Iain Stewart, the TSC chair is also the Conservative MP for Milton Keynes South. In the same debate, he claimed: "The fact is that the medium and long-term prospects for the sector are positive. What we are facing is a short-term lull. I impress the urgency of working with the rolling stock companies (ROSCOs) and others to try to bring forward some refurbishment contracts that Alstom and others can bid for to help smooth out these peaks and troughs in the sector." In his reply, Mr Merriman revealed that the secretary of state had written to the ROSCOs last September to encourage them to discuss with the various operators and manufacturers the opportunities to ease short-term challenges such as refurbishments or major overhauls.

The issue of train manufacturing and refurbishment is not exclusive to Derby and Alstom. Ian Mearns, the Labour MP for Gateshead told Mr Merriman: "I believe that the retention of British manufacturing capacity has to be regarded as strategically important for the United Kingdom. Will he go forward by granting all companies the opportunity to bid on new rail upgrade plans, such as Crossrail, Southeastern, and even the extensive Network North plans? Time is of the essence, and swift action from the Government can make a significant difference in securing the future of the UK rail manufacturing industry." ➤

## HS2

THE Government's decision to axe building HS2 beyond Birmingham could have a detrimental impact on the 54-strong train order for HS2.

Alstom chief executive Nick Crossfield said: "There is a great deal of uncertainty on HS2. The announcements about Phase 2 caused a level of uncertainty, certainly in my business. We have the order to produce the rolling stock for Phase 1, and Phase 2 was an option there, too. Where we sit today, we don't have complete clarity on the timing and scope of the order. The original order was for 54 very high-speed trains. Production is due to start on 26. Based on announcements and decisions that have been made, influenced in particular by what I might call the Euston question, there is some uncertainty as to precisely how many trains will be required and over what time period they will be produced. That is a conversation that is going on right now with HS2 Ltd and has not yet concluded."

The 'Euston question' refers to whether the trains will actually service that terminus or whether they will only ever reach Old Oak Common. As it stands, the latter will be an interim terminal when the new line opens between 2029 and 2033. As a result of the decision to use the West London station as an interim location, Transport for London (TfL) has suggested it would need more Elizabeth Line Class 345 electric multiple units, with five brand-new nine-car trains the minimum requirement to service an increased number of trains operating from the new station, however, no order has been placed.

Angel Trains chief executive Malcolm Brown told the transport select committee: "The rail system is like any system: it is a system, and if you make a change to part of that system it will have knock-on consequences. You have to look at it holistically. It is about rolling stock, but it is also about the depots and stations. It is the whole system. With the changes that have been made, rightly or wrongly, this is now the moment to step back and assess the full system, and say, "What do we need, and where do we need it?" But don't forget that there is a system.

"It is not all about London to Birmingham. There is a system. West coast serves many different places that HS2, in its own microcosm, was not going to serve. The tilting Pendolinos run up to Glasgow, and if you don't have those, the journey time lengthens by about 24 minutes. It is the equivalent of moving Glasgow about 30 miles north - metaphorically; I am not suggesting we do that - or London moving to Brighton. It is going to take longer. There is a lot of focus on HS2, but there is a complete system there that has to be looked at and reassessed, now that the decision appears to have been taken."

Mr Crossfield also explained that even if all 54 trains were not needed, they could not be moved elsewhere because it was a fixed-price contract for a defined number of trains to a specification. Following the decision to axe the new railway north of the Midlands, a conversation will be needed to see if the scope of the initial contract is valid, he told the TSC.



NEW TRAINS







Mr Merriman highlighted the CAF factory in south Wales, where the LNER fleet will be constructed and where TFW Rail's Class 197s have been assembled, as were many of the WMR Class 196s and Northern '195s' since its official launch in January 2020. He also highlighted the Hitachi factory at Newton Aycliffe which is finishing the Class 805 and '807s' for Avanti West Coast and the East Midlands Railway Class 810s, after which it has an empty order book; and the Siemens facility at Goole, which is not yet open, but which will assemble around half of the new London Underground Piccadilly Line trains. If Transport for London can order trains for other deep Tube lines as originally envisaged then these would likely be produced at Goole, however that relies upon TfL funding and that is another story! Mr Merriman pointed out: "We now have four train manufacturers. We cannot just award a contract to one manufacturer."

Speaking at the TSC the day before, Angel Trains chief executive Malcolm Brown said: "It is obvious that post pandemic, and during the pandemic, there was a drop-off in passenger numbers. We have certainly seen them grow back to a reasonable level in the UK. That, needless to say, has had a sort of pause effect on rolling stock manufacturing in the UK. Having said that, a number of rolling stock orders are in play just now, actually on the factory floor. We have trains with Alstom that are currently being built in Derby. We have trains that have been delivered, as well. Thankfully, now, we can see the market starting to re-emerge. There are a number of orders on the stocks, as it were, that are ready to go, whether for Southeastern or TransPennine Express, but we need to get those under way. I would describe the market as having had a bit of a lull, but I can see some shoots of recovery coming."

At the same meeting, David Clarke, the technical director of the Railway Industry Association (RIA), said that he agreed that there were shoots of recovery, however the issue was that they are not going to come soon enough. "We surveyed our members recently, and 83% expect a hiatus in work in the next 12 months. That is particularly acute in the rolling stock part of the industry."

He said that opportunities have not been taken up. RIA, he said, issued a report last July (RE329) that highlighted three areas: "New build trains; the

◀ **On January 8, Avanti West Coast No. 805008 passes Barkston, Lincolnshire, forming the 5Q32 08.21 Merchant Park-Oxley delivery run. Hitachi is constructing 23 trains for AWC and 33 for East Midlands Railway, but after that there is currently only the 54 trains for HS2 to be delivered in a joint venture with Alstom, from the factory that opened in September 2015, and even now there are concerns that deal could be amended following the axing of the new railway north of Birmingham.** Paul Clark

## REPLACEMENTS NEEDED

Some 2600 vehicles will be 35 years old by 2030, Railway Industry Association (RIA) technical director David Clarke warned the Transport Select Committee on December 6. "If you think about the procurement times, if you are going to replace those 2600 by 2030, you need to start now. Why wouldn't you start now, because that would put some work into the facilities in the UK, whether new build or refurb?"

He explained: "There are a lot of relatively young trains because of the boom in orders over the last 10 years. Broadly, the main line is about 16,000 vehicles, so roughly half of the fleet was replaced in less than 10 years. That would mean you would be unlikely to replace the other half in the coming years, which is why we end up in a potential quiet period, if not a bust."

refurbishment of trains, which is sometimes forgotten; and the suppliers to both of those. All those sectors are seeing no new orders."

"We called for decisions to be made and suggested that there should be a focus on the 2600 vehicles that will be 35 years old by 2030, of which 1600 are diesel trains – an obvious opportunity to take some of the oldest trains off the network. The only order since then has been 10 trains for LNER, which really doesn't touch the sides of the gap in the market."

Alstom's Mr Crossfield described the situation, in the short-term, as "very challenging; in the next two to three years it will be hugely challenging. Medium to long-term it is quite an attractive market. Particularly in the longer term, from, say, 2027-2028 onwards, the UK market for rolling stock is predicted to be the second largest in Europe."

"Drilling down even further, the market for commuter rail in the UK from 2027-2028 onwards is probably the fastest-growing market in the European geography. Medium to long term, there are good prospects and high potential, but the short term is hugely challenging."

He also highlighted technology and his concerns around that. He said: "the other grave concern that I have about the UK market for rolling stock is that not just in volume but in technology this country is way off pace in terms of decarbonisation. In most of the major developed rolling stock markets in the spaces around Europe, and around the world, where most of the major OEMs operate, decarbonisation is accelerating at a pace that we do not see in this country. If we are to build a capability here and not be a net importer of that technology in future, we need to accelerate our efforts to introduce new technologies, as well as securing a much more stable volume pattern going forward."





By the end of the decade there will be around 1600 vehicles aged at least 35 years old. Although there are ambitions to replace many at the likes of Northern and Great Western Railway, no orders have yet been placed. On December 18, 2023, Northern Nos. 156401 and 156404 stand at Manchester Victoria. Phil Wallis

Mr Brown told the TSC that placing orders all at once would create a ‘boom and bow wave’ and said that a reasonable beat rate to respond to market demand would be better than manufacturing trains just for trains’ sake. “There is a need: we need to replace a number of ageing trains, to get the beat rate going and get them out there,” he added.

Mr Crossfield spoke of the Southeastern order and explained the timeframes of such deals. He said originally that deal was due to have come to the market before the pandemic but was moved because of Covid-19. “There are specific conversations about bringing those opportunities to the market now but bear in mind that between an invitation to tender hitting the market, and actually cutting metal on a train, there is a lead time of three years. The procurement process is 12 months, and it takes maybe 18 months to mobilise a manufacturing programme – the procurement and engineering.”

He spoke about the modernisation and repurposing of exiting vehicles, of which he said discussions have been happening. He explained: “In terms of lead times, it is a much quicker initiative to get up and running with factories and productive facilities. There is a rationale and logic to it, because overall spending is constrained in terms of new fleet. Traditionally, the UK has had a quite healthy level of investment in new fleet, but there is a valid market that would fill a short to medium-term gap in the refurbishment of existing fleets. “Again, decarbonisation can be part of the modernisation of a fleet. The Voyager fleet, a high-profile diesel fleet, is an example: you could hybridise it and essentially life-extend it. Those, primarily, are the two types of

MAIN LINE FLEETS ON ORDER/BEING DELIVERED

| Fleet       | Numbers                                | Manufacturer   | Operator                     | Status             |
|-------------|----------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Class 93    | 93001-010                              | Stadler        | Rail Operations (Assets) Ltd | Testing            |
| Class 99    | 99001-030                              | Stadler        | GB Railfreight               | Under construction |
| Class 196/1 | 196101-114                             | CAF            | West Midlands Railway        | Entering traffic   |
| Class 197/0 | 197001-051                             | CAF            | TfW Rail                     | Entering traffic   |
| Class 197/1 | 197101-126                             | CAF            | TfW Rail                     | Entering traffic   |
| Class 398   | 398001-036                             | Stadler        | TfW Rail                     | Testing            |
| Class 701/0 | 701001-060                             | Alstom         | South Western Railway        | Entering traffic   |
| Class 701/5 | 701501-530                             | Alstom         | South Western Railway        | Entering traffic   |
| Class 720/1 | 720101-144                             | Alstom         | Greater Anglia               | Entering traffic   |
| Class 720/5 | 720501-589                             | Alstom         | Greater Anglia               | Entering traffic   |
| Class 730/0 | 730001-048                             | Alstom         | West Midlands Railway        | Entering traffic   |
| Class 730/2 | 730201-236                             | Alstom         | London Northwestern Railway  | Testing            |
| Class 756/0 | 756001-007                             | Stadler        | TfW Rail                     | Testing            |
| Class 756/1 | 756101-117                             | Stadler        | TfW Rail                     | Testing            |
| Class 777   | 777001-039/041/043/045/047/049/051/053 | Stadler        | Merseyrail                   | Entering traffic   |
| Class 805   | 805001-013                             | Hitachi        | Avanti West Coast            | Testing            |
| Class 807   | 807001-010                             | Hitachi        | Avanti West Coast            | Testing            |
| Class 810   | 810001-033                             | Hitachi        | East Midlands Railway        | Testing            |
| TBC         | TBC                                    | Alstom/Hitachi | HS2                          | Order placed       |
| TBC         | TBC                                    | CAF            | London North Eastern Railway | Order placed       |



Over the years, many new trains have been introduced on the national network that have been constructed abroad, and Alstom has warned that this could further increase if Derby Litchurch Lane was to cease manufacturing vehicles. On January 5, Stadler-built No. 777049, constructed in Poland, stands at Bebbington with the 2C28 13.01 Chester-Chester. Robert France



conversation going on: the acceleration of new rolling stock mandates and trying to agitate the market for modernisation and refurbishment of existing fleets.” He went on to elaborate: “We have been discussing some of the acceleration opportunities with fleet providers, and part of the modernisation or life extension of those assets is giving them decarbonised capability, which will give them an extra, say, 10 or 12 years of use. By doing that we hope to take the burden off new fleet replacement, because it is an extremely expensive capital item.”

Mr Clarke was less hopeful, stating: “There are glimmers of hope and some opportunities in the market, but they have not yet been converted into orders. Until they are orders they do not exist.”

## THE FUTURE

Alstom’s Mr Crossfield told the TSC: “The overriding objective is that it is imperative to maintain capability to cover a short-term period. As I said earlier, from 2026-27 onwards the market for UK rolling stock grows. It is the second largest market in Europe. For the UK commuter, who is our bread and butter, the growth rate from 2027 onwards is 28% per annum. That is a market everybody wants and it is a market that we will supply. The question we are addressing right now is how we are going to supply that market. Are we going to supply it from an embedded, vertically integrated

## CURRENT OFF-LEASE FLEETS

| Fleet       | Numbers                      | Number of vehicles | Last operator        | Built     |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Mk.5As      | 11501-513, 12701-739/801-814 | 66                 | TransPennine Express | 2017-2018 |
| Class 175/0 | 175001-011                   | 22                 | TfW Rail             | 1999-2000 |
| Class 175/1 | 175101-116                   | 48                 | TfW Rail             | 1999-2001 |
| Class 379   | 379001-030                   | 120                | Greater Anglia       | 2010-2011 |

**Note:** These are complete fleets. The Mk.5As are sub-leased by TPE until May.

manufacturing facility in the UK, with all the engineering and software capability that we need in this country to deliver those trains into service?”

The alternative, he explained, was to use an international supply chain and have a light front-end “finishing veneer” in this country.

He went on to suggest that decisions regarding replacing rolling stock are often made too late, citing Chiltern Railways. “It almost suggests the need for a consolidated rolling stock strategy that sits above the current five- to-eight-year franchises that these train operators sit on. The rolling stock assets that we are talking about have a useful working life of between 25 and 40 years. That is typically a 30-plus year asset. A pandemic of 12 months is a mere blip in that time period, so do not pivot a long-term investment strategy on the basis of a 12-month pandemic. Because they have that length of lifecycle, they go way beyond the commitment that any operator has in the market today. An operator will have eight years or 10 years, and his or her

decision making is based on what it takes to keep the franchise or, let’s say, extract the maximum value from the franchise over that time period, which might not necessarily be agitating to change rolling stock in the middle of the franchise.”

As for where that decision should sit, he said that the DfT is the perfect body to do that.

Productionising units rather than undertaking more trials is required says Mr Brown. Highlighting the project to convert a TransPennine Express Class 802/2 to battery power for a trial, he said: “We need to get productionised units in. There is no point doing another test case on whether we can move a train with hydrogen: we know we can move a train with hydrogen.

“Let’s get on with it, and let’s get the productionised units out there, but also think of it as a system. If you go to battery, how are we going to charge it? Where are we going to charge it? How are we going to connect to the National Grid? Just now, there is a timeframe of about seven years, I believe, for certain parts to connect. There is no

point having a battery train if we have nowhere to charge it. I need to think of the whole actual system, but the investment is there, and it is willing.”

Mr Crossfield also hinted at the conversion of Voyagers to bi-mode. In his closing remarks to the TSC, he said of the recent CrossCountry National Rail Contract: “It is not completely missed because in the conversations we have been having about some of the immediate refurbishment opportunities, there has been a specific conversation about that fleet. There is an opportunity to retraction that fleet and extend its life.” Asked if there was an option to convert into bi-mode, he said: “It is a discussion that is out there, and we have positioned it.”

The industry may have a long-term future, but again there is so much talk, and meanwhile jobs at Derby remain at risk. Even the ROSCOs are desperate to get trials out of the way and for tests to be replaced by orders.

Longer-term the future looks bright for new trains, but the journey to reach that point looks fraught with pain for the railway. 

Concerns about the loss of train manufacturing in a recent Transport Select Committee hearing had a large focus on Derby Litchurch Lane, however there are currently two other sites producing trains, albeit assembling rather than full construction. On January 4, TfW Rail Nos. 197010, 197106 and 197110 stand at the CAF depot at Chester. These were all assembled at the Spanish firm’s Newport facility that was officially opened in early 2020. Robert France







1

**Richard Clinnick** presents a selection of images from around the rail network submitted to *Rail Express* this month.

**1** GB Railfreight No. 66702 *Blue Lightning* passes over the River Aire, near Gowdall, on January 26, with the 6N61 Drax-Tyne Coal Terminal. Martyn Fordham

**2** One of the new Merseyrail Class 777s passes through Vauxhall on January 9, forming the 2G30 09.04 Ormskirk-Liverpool Central. Under construction in the background are the new Everton stadium and *Titanic Hotel*. Finbarr O'Neill

**3** GB Railfreight No. 56098 receives mechanical attention during a charity photoshoot at UK Rail Leasing's Leicester depot on December 29, 2023. The '56' subsequently went on hire to Colas Railfreight for a week in early January. Chris Gee

**4** Great Western Railway 'Castle' High Speed Trains are largely confined to Penzance-Plymouth trains, other than one per day reaching Exeter. On January 19, GWR No. 43093 *Berkeley Castle* heads west through Restormel, leading the 13.42 Plymouth-Penzance, with No. 43198 *Driver Stan Martin 25 June 1950 - 6 November 2004/Driver Brian Cooper 15 June 1947 - 5 October 1999* on the rear. Craig Munday

3







2



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# The continuation of RMT industrial action

Strikes postponed but negotiated solutions remain elusive.

PLANNED industrial action was postponed during the late afternoon of January 7, when the RMT announced that there had been "positive discussions".

For much of the previous week Transport for London (TfL) had been preparing passengers for disruption – advising them to "only travel if their journey is essential" – which was due to start impacting services during the evening of January 7.

The industrial action, which had been announced on December 22, would have severely impacted London Underground services the following week. The strikes were staggered across a range of different specialisms and grades, with each striking for two days. Some engineering train drivers had already walked out on January 5 and 6, with LUL's network control staff on January 7, who were also due to remain on strike the following day. Engineering, maintenance, stations, train operators and signalling and service control staff were due to walk out two days each between January 8 and 11.

This particular action related to remuneration, one of three issues that remain outstanding between

RMT members and TfL. The decision to suspend the strikes was as a direct result of an intervention by the mayor of London Sadiq Khan. An additional £30 million was reportedly being offered to seek a resolution.

"Our industrial action threat meant that extra money was found for funding, due to the mayor's intervention, said the RMT in a statement.

However, Khan was lambasted by Conservative members of the Greater London Authority, for "caving in" to union demands. These were the same political opponents who had been criticising him the day previously, for being an "utter failure" for presiding over the 140th day of strike action since he became mayor in 2016.

This most recent postponement of the strikes follows a repeating pattern of action being called off at the last minute. Previous strike action, intended for October 4 and 6 had also been called off after talks at the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS). Then, progress had been made, preventing a loss of 200 jobs, changes to rosters which may have caused gaps in coverage, and the proposed downgrading of station staff roles.

## OUTSTANDING ISSUES

By and large, the RMT represents lower paid grades, such as station, engineers and maintenance staff. Whilst some

management grades are also union members, it should also be noted that the RMT does represent a minority of train operators, who are comparatively better paid. Many will have transferred from the station side and simply haven't changed union membership to the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF). The RMT has two strike mandates in two wholly separate disputes with TfL; one on jobs and pensions and the other regarding pay.

"We still remain in dispute over outstanding issues around pensions and working agreements and will continue to pursue a negotiated settlement," said RMT general secretary Mick Lynch.

The most recent pay agreements between the RMT and TfL was a 4% consolidated for 2022 and 4.4% consolidated for 2023. During which time inflation has been as high as 11% (autumn 2022), with food inflation currently running at around 8%. Meanwhile, the RMT takes umbrage with senior managers receiving a bonus pot of £13 million. It also objects to the TfL commissioner, Andy Lord, receiving an 11% pay rise, which increases to £395,000 per annum, whilst the latest pay offer is a below inflation 5%.

The RMT is frustrated that pay bands have been frozen. It also objects to some staff, for example train

maintenance staff who are amongst the lowest paid grades, being employed privately, therefore needing to pay their own travel costs, instead of being issued with travel passes.

The Department for Transport is seeking to transfer the current pension into a local government scheme demanding higher contributions for inferior retirement payments. RMT reports that TfL has confirmed it will run a consultation rather than agreeing with DfT demands.

Statements from both sides indicate that positive talks have started and are ongoing. An RMT spokesperson stated: "We continue to have productive meetings with TfL around pay, bandings for different grades and underpins. We remain in dispute seeking a negotiated settlement."

In comparison TfL commented: "Discussions have resumed between TfL and all of our unions on the pay deal. They started on January 12. We'll continue talking and hope to conclude those discussions with a deal that everyone can accept that will avoid any further industrial action."

However, the RMT has been more specific as to the ultimate cause behind the recent industrial disputes. "The Tory government bears ultimate responsibility for this dispute as they have cut TfL operational funding by £600m," it said in a statement. **E**

## Metropolitan 4LM due for completion in 2025

THE 4 Lines Modernisation (4LM) programme, which will achieve Grade of Automation 2 (GoA2) across most of the London Underground's (LU) sub-surface railway, is due to be completed in early 2025. The aim of the project is to enable services to operate closer together, improving passenger journey times and reliability.

The next section to be upgraded, Signal Migration Area 8 (SMA8), is considered to be the most complex section of the Metropolitan Line. Stretching between Finchley Road and Preston Road, it incorporates trackwork around Neasden Depot and the Jubilee Line. The section is due to be commissioned during 2024.

Launch dates for previous SMAs have slipped by more than 32 months. Previously, the final section, SMA14, was due to launch in May 2022. Much of this delay can be attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic, although early sections of the programme were already launching up to three months later than previously intended due to teething issues back in 2019.

The next section, SMA9 heads northwards beyond Preston Road towards West Harrow and Moor Park. It includes the integration of Chiltern Railways main line trains with the new signalling system for the

first time. The system has already undergone significant testing and is also currently due to be upgraded during 2024.

Further sections of the signalling upgrade, SMA13 (beyond Moor Park to Amersham, Chesham and Watford termini) and SMA14 (to the Uxbridge terminus) are projected to be completed in early 2025. Based upon past slippage, this may run into the 2025/26 fiscal year.

Meanwhile, the District Line sections that remain to be completed have been significantly curtailed since originally envisaged. The limit of SMA10 has been reduced from Chiswick Park and the Richmond terminus to just reach Stamford Brook. SMA11, that was intended to reach Ealing Broadway, has been deferred entirely. And SMA12, which would have extended to the southern termini of Wimbledon, has instead been limited to East Putney. The reasoning being that any benefits are significantly outweighed by the cost. After all, due to capital investment budget limitations and with 24 Tube Stock due to be introduced on track west of Stamford Brook, it arguably makes sense to defer any resignalling project until after the new Piccadilly Line trains are introduced in 2025.



The Design Museum is displaying a cab front of a Siemens Deep Tube train, which is on a long-term loan, at its High Street Kensington site. Luke Hayes for the Design Museum



# 'Western' debut looking likely for June

The long-awaited return to main line charter work for the DTG Class 52 looks set for this summer.

No. D1015 *Western Champion* could be back hauling charters this June if the Class 52 passes its planned proving runs and its certification process is completed. This involves another, heavier, loaded freight, a full speed run with passenger stock, and the certification process.

The inaugural, and hugely welcome, return of the 'Western' is pencilled in as an East Anglian start, with Paignton as a likely destination.

The Diesel Traction Group (DTG) has spent hundreds of man-hours in repairing the problem experienced when the locomotive last operated a main line test run on September 17, 2021, which forced its withdrawal for major attention.

This latest test, the first of several booked test runs, occurred on January 10, when the Class 52 hauled the 6M42 09.20 Avonmouth Hanson Siding-Penyffordd Cement empty tanks. GB Railfreight No. 66714 *Cromer Lifeboat* was the train engine, thus allowing the '52' to provide the power. *Western Champion* was detached at Haresfield Loop and returned light engine to its home base at Kidderminster. GBRf will provide the facilities to allow the Class 52 to try out a heavier freight duty.

When back hauling charters, GBRf will operate the locomotive and supply drivers. 



No. D1015 *Western Champion* powers past Haresfield, Gloucestershire, on January 10, hauling the 6M42 09.20 Avonmouth Hanson Siding-Penyffordd Cement empty tanks, acting as the first of a series of main line test runs ahead of its return to hauling charters. GB Railfreight No. 66714 *Cromer Lifeboat* is immediately behind the Class 52. The 'Western' was detached in Haresfield Loop before returning to Kidderminster. CJ Rich

## BLS now aims for Cornwall

'KERNOW' is the title of a four-day Branch Line Society charter that will run from Yorkshire to cover the many lines in Cornwall, which rarely see locomotive-hauled trains.

Traction will be provided by the Class 50 Alliance, which will supply two locomotives, while DB Cargo UK will also supply Class 66s for the charter.

Doncaster is the starting point, with pick-ups to Bescot. Passengers will have to book their own accommodation at one location only for the three nights away.

All the passenger branches are due to be covered, as well as the freight lines to Fowey and Parkandillack. Bere Alston, the branch from Plymouth, is also on the itinerary. 'Kernow' is the Cornish name for Cornwall and this is one of the most comprehensive tours to Cornwall for many a year.

## Spring and summer tasters from UK Railtours

PRELIMINARY notifications from UK Railtours for diary action has the following tours earmarked:

**Saturday April 20:** A tour using Hastings Diesels' No. 1001 diesel electric multiple unit, with a tour around the Aylesbury area.

**Saturday May 11:** A seaside special from London with Skegness as the likely destination.

**Monday May 27:** A very special enthusiast train to the West Country featuring heritage traction and rare track.

**Saturday June 8:** Something quite unique for the enthusiast to the North East of England.

**Saturday June 15:** London to Berwick-upon-Tweed for the Holy Island of Lindisfarne and various other off-train options.

## The 'Master Cutler' rides again

MARKING the 125th anniversary of Marylebone station, Retro Railtours is running 'The Master Cutler' tour on March 15.

The train will comprise two of RailAdventure's four current High Speed Train Class 43 power cars with a rake of

the 125 Group's Mk.3 coaches.

Starting at Sheffield, there are pick-ups at Chesterfield and Leicester before the route to Birmingham is traversed and on to Marylebone.

A mini tour is then available, with an out and back to Banbury to allow

London-based passengers a ride on a reformed HST set.

The standard fare is expected to be £95 while the First Class fares have not been confirmed.

Retro Railtours: [www.retrorailtours.co.uk](http://www.retrorailtours.co.uk)

## First Riviera Trains shallow window Mk.2 'air-con' is ready

THE first of three 'air-con' Mk.2 carriages, owned by Riviera Trains, to be fitted with shallow opening windows, has been completed (see *Coaches*).

The vehicle, No. 5985, was to be

sent to West Coast Railway's Carnforth facility for repainting as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, as it currently carries the former Anglia turquoise livery.

The work on the windows

was undertaken at DB Cargo UK's Knottingley depot. Riviera Trains is endeavouring to cater for the locomotive enthusiast sector so that passengers can hear the locomotive at work.



## FORTHCOMING TOURS FOR MARCH

| Date  | Tour Name                            | From-To                                                           | Motive Power              | Promoter |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------|
| 1     | Moving Murder Mystery                | London Victoria-Kent circular                                     | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 2     | Portsmouth Harbour Statesman         | Whitchurch, stations to Severn Tunnel Junction-Portsmouth         | LS '47'x2                 | SR       |
| 5     | Whitby Jet                           | Shrewsbury, stations to Derby-Whitby                              | LS HST                    | MP       |
| 9     | Whitby Jet                           | Barrow in Furness, stations to Brighouse-Whitby                   | LS HST                    | MP       |
| 6     | Historic Oxford                      | London Victoria-Oxford                                            | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 7     | Golden Age of Travel                 | London Victoria-Kent circular                                     | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 7     | Thunderbirds are Go!                 | Derby, stations to Newcastle-Edinburgh (one way only)             | GBRf '57/3'               | BLS      |
| 8     | BWC 2                                | Bo'ness-Fort William                                              | No. 37403                 | BLS      |
| 9     | BWC 2                                | Fort William-Oban                                                 | No. 37403                 | BLS      |
| 9     | Cwm and Glo                          | Burton on Trent, stations to Severn Tunnel Junction-Cwmbargoed    | DBC '66'x2 Top-and-tail   | PT       |
| 10    | BWC 2                                | Fort William-Mallaig-Bo'ness                                      | No. 37403                 | BLS      |
| 11    | International Rescue                 | Linlithgow, Edinburgh-Carlisle-York-Derby (one way only)          | GBRf '57/3'               | BLS      |
| 10    | Mother's Day Champagne Afternoon Tea | London Victoria-Kent circular                                     | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 13    | Historic Bath                        | London Victoria-Bath                                              | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 14    | Garden of England                    | London Victoria-Kent circular                                     | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 15    | Moving Murder Mystery                | London Victoria-Kent circular                                     | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 15    | Cheltenham Gold Cup                  | London Paddington-Evesham                                         | WCR '47'/'57'x2           | NB       |
| 16    | Spirit of Travel Lunch               | Coventry, Birmingham-circular                                     | WCR '47'/'57'x2           | NB       |
| 16    | Champagne Afternoon Tea              | Coventry, Birmingham-circular                                     | WCR '47'/'57'x2           | NB       |
| 21    | Royal Windsor Statesman              | Chester, stations to Birmingham International-Windsor             | LS '47'x2                 | SR       |
| 23    | Moving Murder Mystery                | London Victoria-Kent circular                                     | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 23    | Gateway Galloper                     | London KX, stations to Nottingham-Midland freight terminals/lines | GBRf '66'x2 Top-and-tail  | UKR      |
| 24    | Champagne Afternoon Tea              | London Victoria-Kent circular                                     | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 27    | Historic Bath                        | London Victoria-Bath                                              | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 28    | Garden of England                    | London Victoria-Kent circular                                     | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 28    | Portsmouth Harbour Statesman         | Chesterfield, stations to Bedford-Portsmouth                      | LS '47'x2                 | SR       |
| 29    | Moving Murder Mystery                | London Victoria-Kent circular                                     | DBC '67'                  | BBP      |
| 29-31 | West Highland Push-Pull              | Crewe, Preston, Carlisle-Edinburgh-Oban-Largs                     | No. 47712 & Push-Pull set | IC       |

**Operators:** BBP – British Belmond Pullman, BLS – Branch Line Society, IC – Inter-City, MP – Midland Pullman, NB – Northern Belle, PT – Pathfinder Tours, SR – Statesman Rail, UKR – UK Railways.

## Many attractions for UK Railtours at Shrewsbury

JUST announced by UK Railtours is 'Shrewsbury in Springtime', booked to run on Saturday April 27. Starting from Paddington, with a GB Railfreight Class 66 for traction, the tour heads to Shrewsbury via Reading and Oxford.

The off-train options are varied and include Attingham National Trust stately home, Iron Bridge,

Blists Hill Victorian Museum and a boat ride on River Severn.

The return is via Hereford, Maindee Hereford Loop, Swindon to Paddington, including some additional loop lines.

However, the best part is the add-on 'Shrewsbury Circular' mini tour, a 100-mile trip round Cheshire and

Lancashire involving some freight lines. This tour proceeds via Chester to Mickle Trafford, Northwich, then onto the freight-only line through Middlewich to Sandbach, after which it continues to Crewe. However, the special avoids Crewe station by taking the Manchester and Salop Independent freight lines before joining the route back to Shrewsbury.

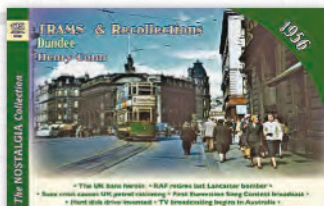


Locomotive Services Nos. 86101 *Sir William A Stanier FRS* and 87002 *Royal Sovereign* were deployed on an Intercity charter, the 'Ayr Extension' from Crewe to Barassie on January 13. The charter had been due to run to Ayr, however, a recent fire at the adjacent hotel meant the charter couldn't reach its planned destination. With the '87' leading, the 1Z30 12.32 Glasgow Central-Barassie Junction passes Howwood in Renfrewshire. Simon Jones

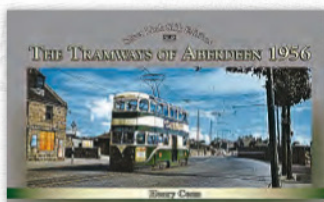


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## British Rail Traction Maintenance Depots 1973-1993: Part 3: Wales & Scotland

Published by Platform 5  
[www.platform5.com](http://www.platform5.com)  
ISBN: 9781915984159  
Price: £21.95

THE third and final book in the series by renowned railway photographer Michael Rhodes is sure to prove popular as it takes in depots across Wales and Scotland, featuring many classic traction at depots well known to enthusiasts.

Much like the first two books in the series, this one is not an extensive collection of every depot, rather it features images captured during the author's visits to the depots. Indeed, in his introduction, Mr Rhodes says: "This series is not a text book or historical summary of all the depots, but rather a recollection of hundreds of hours of misspent youth. Some major depots hardly feature because I made few visits to them or didn't take any photographs there."

The sites covered in the Wales section are Holyhead, Llandudno Junction, Cardiff Canton, Margam, Landore, Ebbw Junction and Severn Tunnel Junction and all feature the typical traction you would expect during the period the book covers. Each depot has a brief write-up including history and how it could be reached while some depots also feature excerpts of Mr Rhodes' notebooks showing what was 'on shed'.

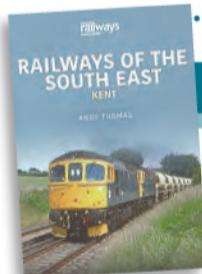
As you would expect from his work, many pictures ooze atmosphere. Coal-stained Class 37s, railway staff with an indifferent attitude to the photographer walking around the site and images from inside and out at various sheds (most now, sadly,

closed) present a snapshot of the period.

Depots covered in Scotland are Inverness, Aberdeen Ferryhill, Dundee, Dunfermline Townhill, Grangemouth, Haymarket, Eastfield, Glasgow Works, Polmadie, Hamilton, Motherwell and Ayr.

Class 40s, Deltics and grubby large logo '37s' feature across the Scottish sheds, as do Diesel Multiple Units. Despite the time period in the title, there is an image with a Class 66, but this is done as a comparison rather than to fill space.

Most images in this 96-page A4 book are black-and-white, but there are colour shots too, and for those who like the railways of the period, this is well worth adding to your bookshelf. **(RC)**.



## Railways of the South East Kent

Published by Key Publishing  
[www.keypublishing.com](http://www.keypublishing.com)  
ISBN: 9781913870812  
Price: £15.99

BEING brought up in the North West and now based in the East Midlands, the railways of the South East are not that familiar to me, but this book gives a good overall photographic tour of the county's rail network.

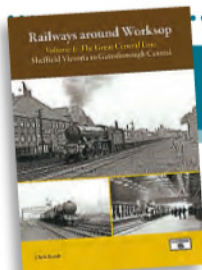
As with the previous Sussex volume, the photographs have been well chosen and the author is a photographer who tries to ensure that his pictures include plenty of the surrounding landscape, rather than

just focussing on the trains being photographed.

The pictures predominantly focus on locomotive-hauled passenger and freight workings, featuring a wide variety of locomotive designs, some of which remain in traffic, while others have long since disappeared from the railway scene. The photo reproduction of the images within the book are generally very good, with well written and suitably detailed captions to

accompany the pictures.

This is another truly excellent photo album, showing the railway network around Kent to good effect and presented in an attractive manner. As with all Key Publishing's photo books, the publication is 96 pages with a softback card cover and this volume is priced at a £15.99, which is very reasonable for the content within it. Overall, an enjoyable photographic journey across the county. **(AMC)**.



## Railways around Workso: Volume 1: The Great Central Line Sheffield Victoria to Gainsborough Central

Published by Platform 5  
[www.platform5.com](http://www.platform5.com)  
ISBN: 9781915984074  
Price: £29.95

WORKSOP has always been an important centre for railways ever since the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway arrived in the town in 1849. Only 15 miles from Sheffield and Doncaster, and 25 miles from Nottingham, it was served by both the Great Central and Midland Railways during steam days and in later years was the focal point for the region's coal traffic.

This first volume looks at the former GCR line between Sheffield Victoria and Gainsborough Central, together with the Clabrough Junction to Sykes Junction route.

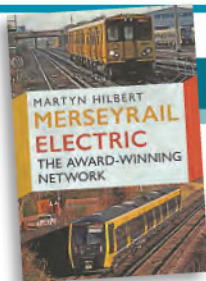
Author Chris Booth is local to the area and a railway historian. He worked as a signaller at Workso for more than 40 years and has used his extensive research and own insight into the railways. He has used more than 200 images from steam and diesel eras, including using various photographers, to provide an incredibly detailed history of the area.

This 176-page publication features six chapters: Sheffield to Gainsborough, Further Works, The Leverton Branch, Into the 20th Century, After Nationalisation and The 1990s and Beyond.

The book is a work-of-art in terms of its 'scorched Earth' approach to the subject. Beyond the usual text and images, there are 'before and after' shots, maps, handwritten notes, adverts and posters all showing the various developments in the region.

The story is also brought right up-to-date with rare images from inside the Harry Needle Railroad Company facility at Workso showing stored locomotives, coaches and brand-new electric multiple units. Even if this is not an area you're interested in, the detail and knowledge soon draws you in. This book is highly recommended. **(RC)**.





### Merseyrail Electric: The award-winning network

Published by Fonthill Media  
[www.fonthillmedia.com](http://www.fonthillmedia.com)  
 ISBN: 9781781559093  
 Price: £20.00

THIS book from Fonthill Media provides an illustrated history of the Merseyrail network, written by Martyn Hilbert. The author has followed the Merseyrail network and its various developments extensively over many years, and is something of an authority on Merseyrail, its trains and operations.

This newly-published book is a great summary of the history of the network, while also bringing the story up-to-date.

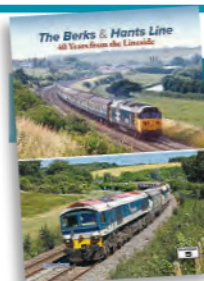
The self-contained third-rail electric railway, operating in and around Liverpool and the surrounding area, is a rather unique piece of the rail network. And times are certainly changing, as the BR-built Class 507s and '508s', dating from the late 1970s, that have plied the network, make way for the new Class 777s which are now rapidly replacing the older order, with the last of the Class 508s being withdrawn in January and the Class 507s expected to follow suit during this year.

The book is extensively illustrated throughout the 96 pages, and overall the

photo quality and reproduction of the images is excellent. It is split into six main chapters, these being In the beginning; Onwards; Operations; The Northern line; The Wirral line; Merseyrail Miscellany. The text is interesting and well written, and the photo captions provide lots of additional information to help the reader get a better understanding of the scene they are looking at.

One thing that I did find rather odd was that the preparation for the book was completed in December 2022, just a matter of weeks before the new Stadler Class 777s first entered service between Liverpool Central and Kirkby in January 2023. Although the new trains are featured within the book, I found it strange that their entry into passenger use – a significant moment in the history of the Merseyrail network – was missed by a narrow margin.

Other than the above point, this is a very good companion guide to the Merseyrail network and has been very well put together. Recommended. (AMC).



### The Berks & Hants Line: 40 Years from the Lineside

Published by Platform 5  
[www.platform5.com](http://www.platform5.com)  
 ISBN: 9781915984173  
 Price: £23.95

ACCOMPLISHED photographer Stephan Dance has produced a book that provides a 128-page detailed pictorial exploration of the popular Berks & Hants line.

He uses more than 200 images from a period stretching more than 40 years to cover the railway from Reading to Westbury, including the various changes in not only traction but also infrastructure.

There are 12 chapters, focusing on: Reading to Hungerford, Hungerford to Crofton, Crofton to Savernake, Savernake to Fairwood Junction, Westbury, doubles and more, steam specials, boats, weather and light, autumn, crossings, liveries and a Then and Now chapter.

The introduction provides a brief

history of the route and a map.

Images are all high-quality colour shots which show not only the train but also the attractive scenery that this route is known for.

A variety of traction and operations are included, with fans of Class 47s, '50s', '59s', '60s', '66s' and High Speed Trains unlikely to be disappointed. Freight, passenger and stock moves all feature within the book.

Captions are comprehensive, including the train, its working and details about the location, and indeed the service.

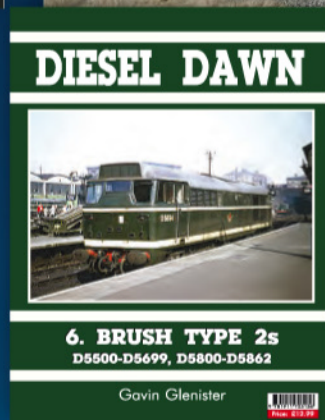
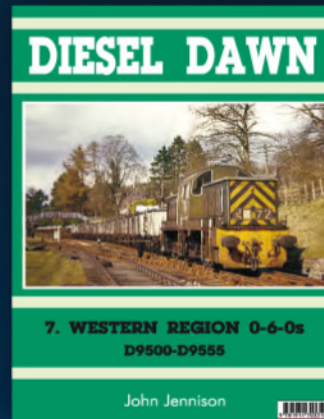
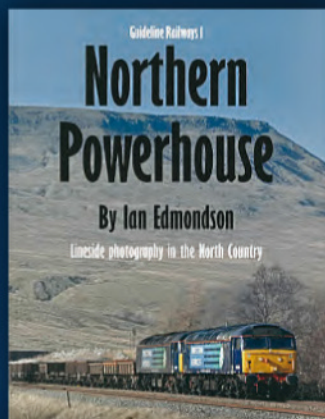
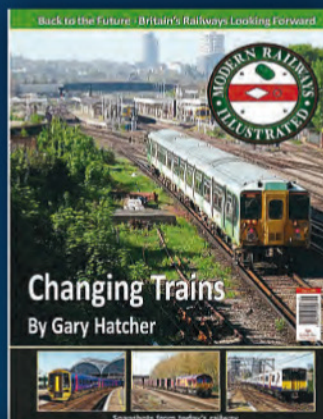
It may seem a niche subject for such a relatively short route, but the scenery and traction combined make this a book well worth perusing. Recommended. (RC).



### Got something to review?

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Blists Hill Museum, the splendour of Attingham Park or relax in the serenity of a River Severn Cruise.

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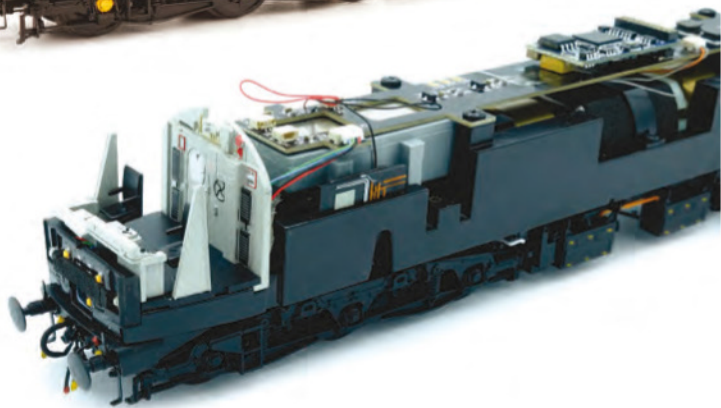


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