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RAIL EXPRESS

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GBRf unveils latest Class 69 retro livery

NEW train order plans





MODELLING SECTION

- **Cavalex Class 56 review**
  Has Type 5 been worth the wait?
- **Exciting electrics**
  ‘00’ Class 320 and ‘321’ on way
- **First IRM coaches**
  Accurascale NIR Mk.2bs assessed

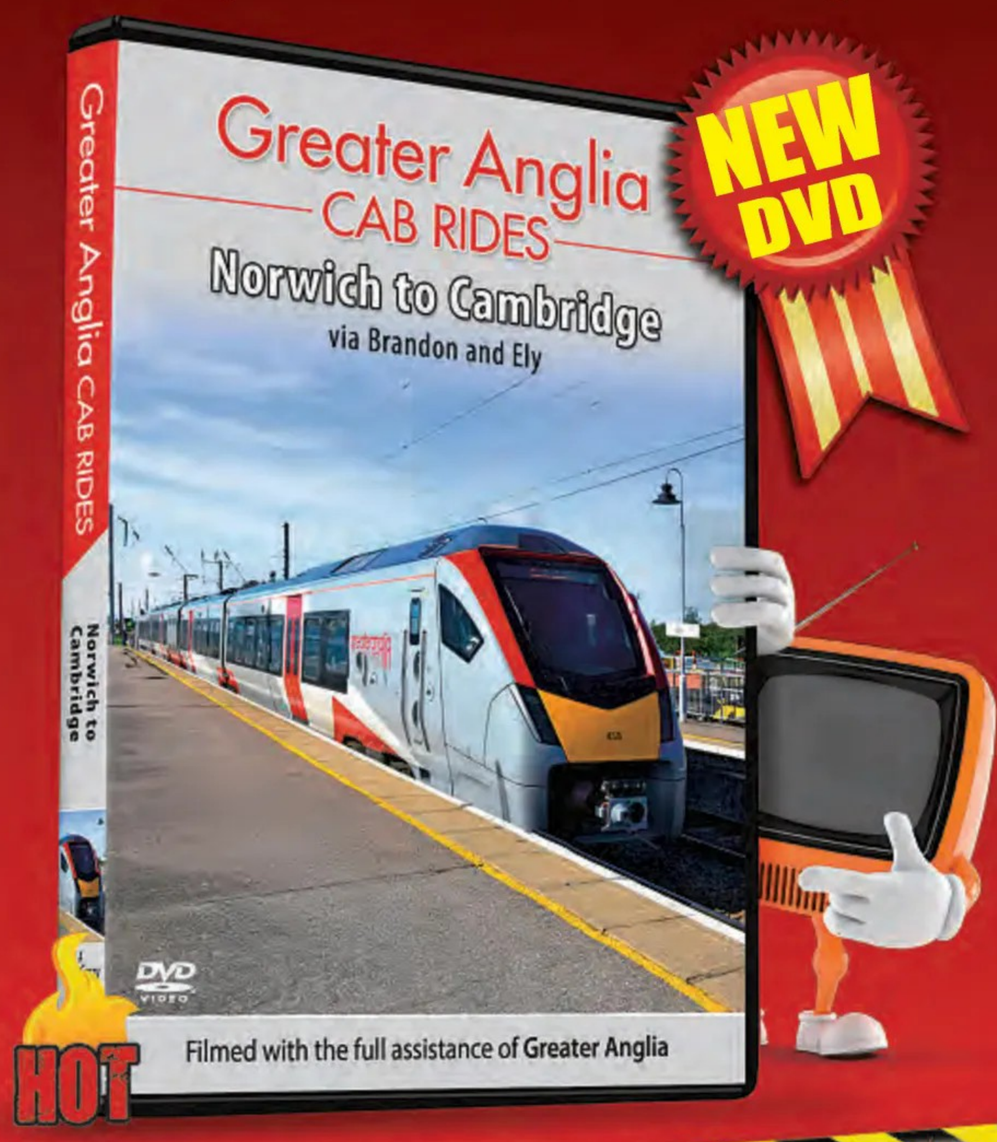
DRS withdraws final Class 37s



Greater Anglia CAB RIDES filmed in conjunction with Greater Anglia

Norwich to Cambridge
via Brandon and Ely



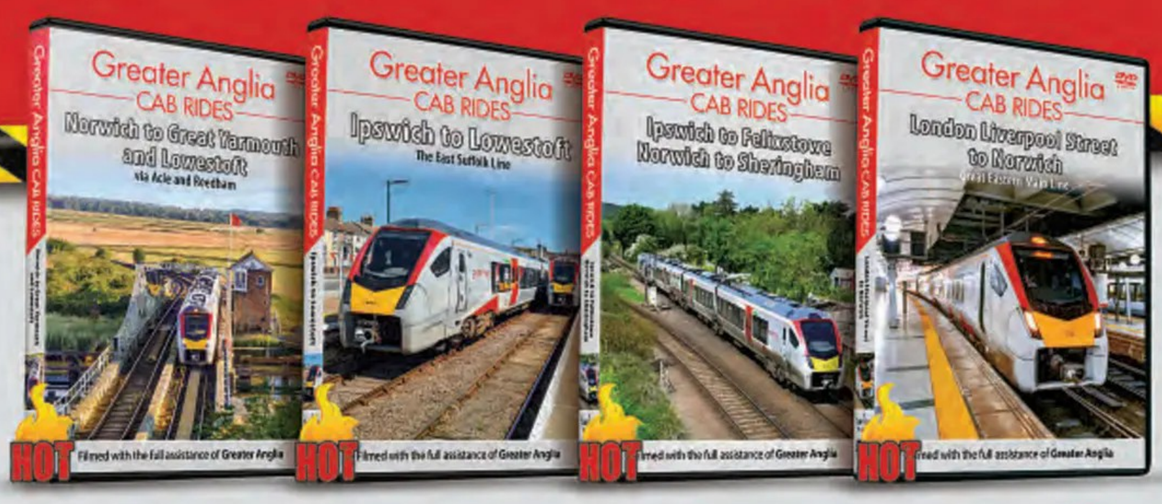


The fifth cab ride in the Greater Anglia series is Norwich to Ely and onto Cambridge - filmed on board a Class 755 bi-mode unit.

The Breckland Line has featured on numerous cabs rides over the years and this is the version filmed for Greater Anglia for driver training and route learning. Starting on diesel power, we call at Wymondham, Attleborough, Thetford, Brandon and Ely and switching to AC power, Waterbeach, Cambridge North and finally Cambridge.

The entire outward journey is shown with highlights of the return. Includes part-narration, on-screen captions, maps and live cab sounds.

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via Acle and Reedham



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Duration: 154 mins **Price:** DVD £16.95 - Blu-ray £19.95
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The entire journey is shown with highlights of the journey in the opposite direction. Passing through many traditional market towns and small villages, there is a mixture of single and double track running.

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Ipswich to Felixstowe / Norwich to Sheringham



The third Cab Ride is a contrast of lines: In Suffolk, the short but very busy 15.5 mile railway from Ipswich to Felixstowe; and in Norfolk, the longer and more scenic 30.5 mile journey orwich to Cromer, then onto Sheringham.

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London Liverpool Street to Norwich



The fourth cab ride in the series features the Great Eastern mainline in its entirety. We board 745003 working the 14.00 from Liverpool Street on a fine summer's day, calling at Colchester, Manningtree, Ipswich and Diss.

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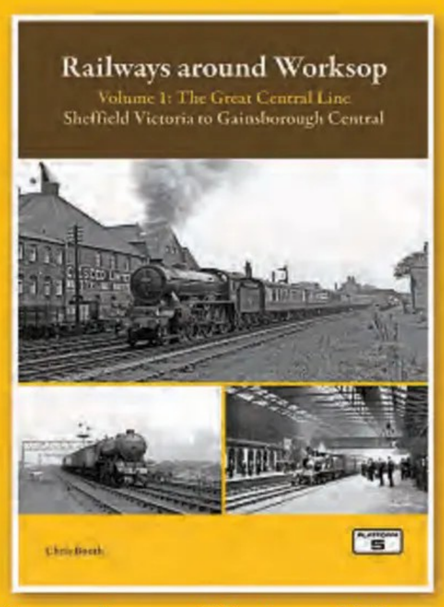
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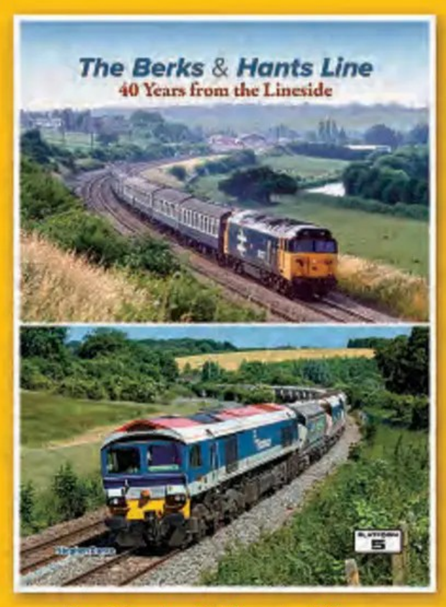
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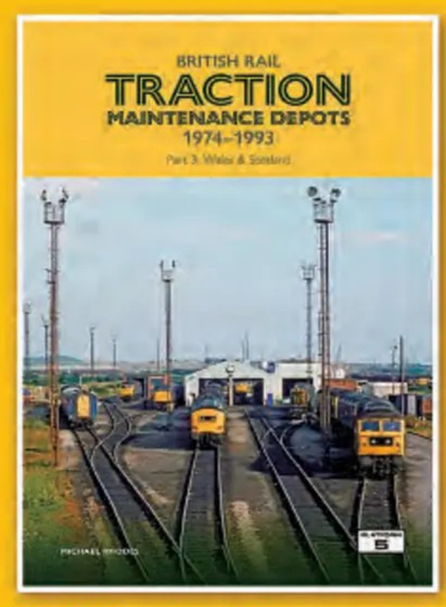
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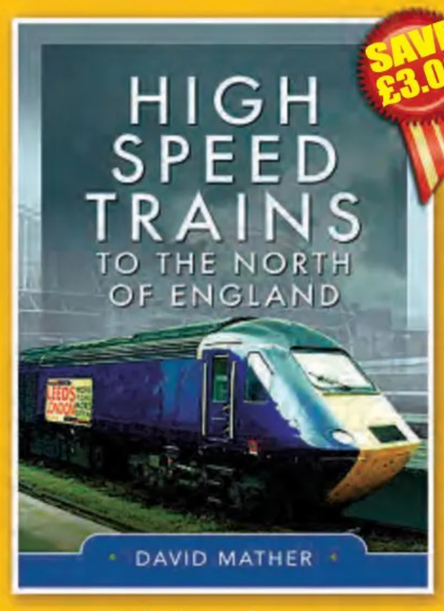
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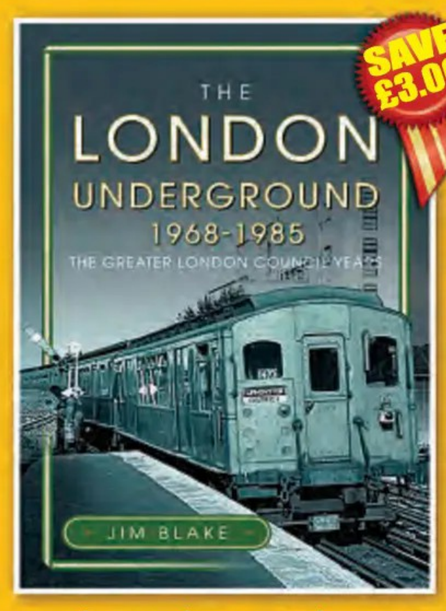
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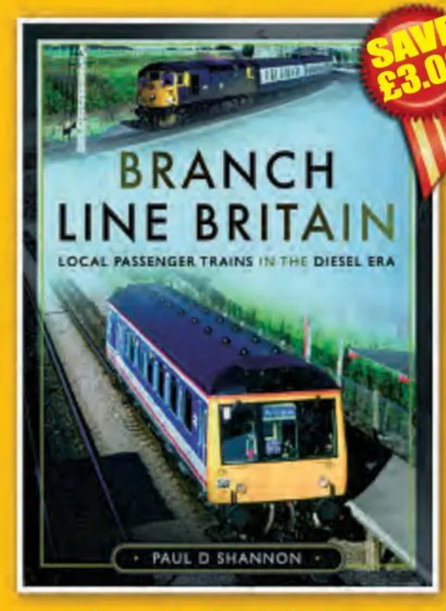
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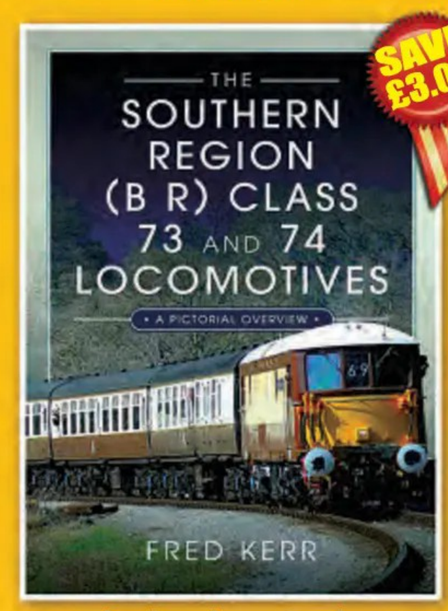
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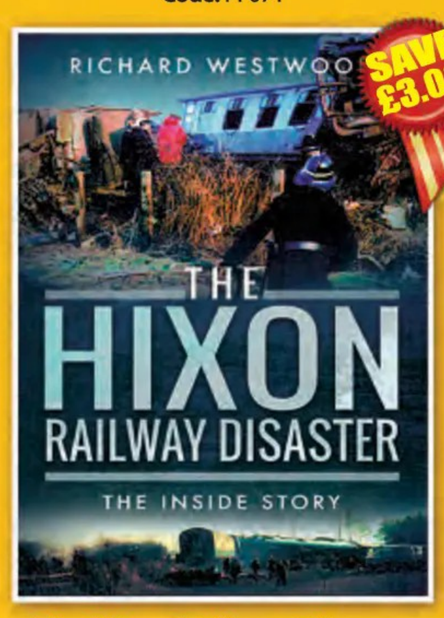
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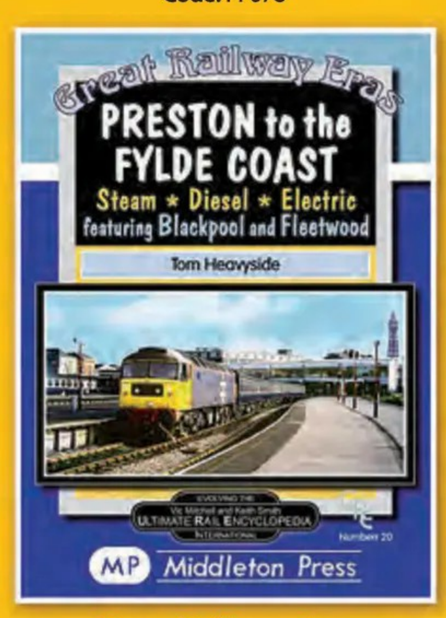
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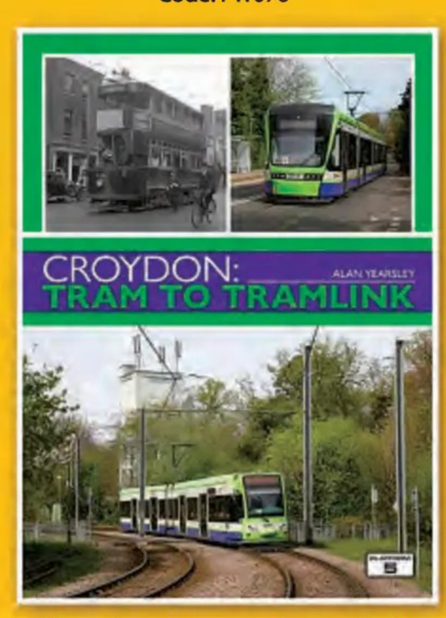
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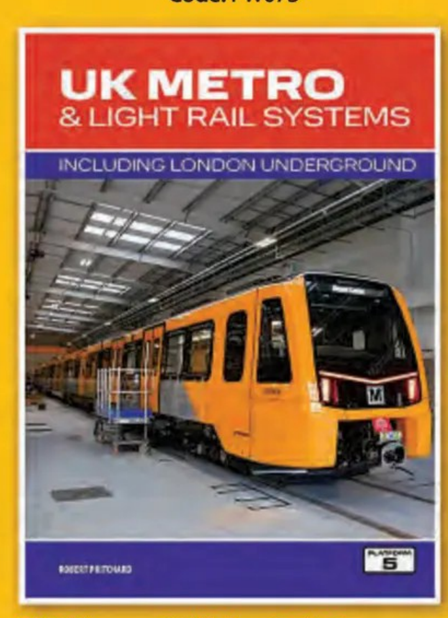
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Greater Anglia No. 755408 passes Turves, between March and Peterborough, on February 24, with the 2E76 12.00 Ipswich-Peterborough. Ryan Hayward

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RAIL EXPRESS

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RAIL EXPRESS

On February 4, Locomotive Services Group No. 37409 *Loch Awe* passes Oxford, leading the 5Z82 10.20 Crewe-Southall, with LSG Nos. D8096 (20096) and D8107 (20107) *Jocelyn Feilding 1940-2020*, as well as LSG coaches Nos. 17159, 35479 and 3330 in tow. The '20s' and one coach were being moved south for route learning duties (see *Powerscene*) while a second coach was being moved to Southall and No. 3330 was later taken to Arlington Fleet Services' Eastleigh Works by the '37/4'. Edward Longinotti



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Class 50 for Locomotive Services

By Richard Clinnick

PIONEER Class 50 No. 50050 *Fearless* has joined the Locomotive Services Group fleet on hire.

Owned by Boden Rail Engineering Limited (BREL), the '50' moved to LSG's Crewe Maintenance Depot on March 5, from Rectory Junction, where BREL has recently relocated to from Eastcroft.

The '50' will be used to cover for No. D9000 (55022) *Royal Scots Grey*, which is to be fitted with European Train Control System (ETCS), the first in its class, and which will then undergo trials.

However, before the '50' enters traffic with LSG it is being sent to Harry Needle Railroad Company's Worksop facility for assessment and repairs.

LSG has not confirmed what the '50' will be used for, and as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, there were no planned duties for D9000. The Deltic was used to haul four charters last year.

LSG has a growing fleet of diesels, with Class 47s (the company's own Nos. 47593, 47614, 47805/810 supported by preserved, but hired by LSG, Nos. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* and 47828) used on regular duties such as Statesman day trips, although these will soon be joined by Class 57s including Nos. 57311, which is due into traffic imminently, and No. 57302 is being reactivated at Arlington Fleet Services, Eastleigh Works. LSG also has Nos. 57002/003/007 in its fleet although these are not fitted with electric train supply, however No. 57003 did haul a Statesman train last year.

Additionally, LSG uses hired Class 40 No. D213 (40013) *Andania* for InterCity tours, including a recent two-day trip to Inverness (see Railtours) and has a growing fleet of Class 37s including Nos. 37401/409, 37521, 37667 of which the '37/5s' have been deployed on charters. A Class 45, No. 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman*, is also being reactivated by HNRC ahead of a main line return, which is expected to be this year.

Also in the LSG main line fleet are Nos. 20096, 20107/118/132, 43046/047/049/055/058/059, 86101, 87002, 90001/002. Additionally, No. 89001 *Avocet* will join the fleet on hire once its return to operational main line condition is complete.

IN BRIEF

SVR CONFIRMS NEW PERMANENT MANAGING DIRECTOR

JONATHAN 'Gus' Dunster has been appointed managing director of the Severn Valley Railway on a permanent basis. He had held the role on an interim basis since March 1, 2023, having retired from his previous role as Avanti West Coast executive director of operations and safety.

NEW IPORT OPERATOR

MEDLOG took over operation of the iPort open access freight terminal in Doncaster on February 4. Work is under way on Phase 2 of the terminal which will double capacity and increase the number of trains able to serve the site.

HS2 DELTA JUNCTION VIADUCT IN PLACE

AN 84-metre, 300-tonne steel viaduct section has been moved into place at HS2's Delta Junction. This is the section of two 158m viaducts that will carry HS2 trains over the M42/M6 link roads. A second operation in April will create the full 158m deck over both motorway link roads.

NEW STATION FOR ST ATHAN?

A new station could be built in St Athan, Vale of Glamorgan, Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper said on a visit to the area on February 19. He announced the Government's commitment to fund the development of a business case to look at options for a new facility.

MTR UK CEO STEPS DOWN

STEVE Murphy, MTR UK CEO, is due to leave the business on March 29. He was MTR Elizabeth Line's inaugural managing director from 2014 until his appointment to his CEO role in 2020. He had worked for MTR for 17 years. He has since been appointed as chair of Iarnród Éireann (IE).

Class 730s enter traffic in West Midlands

THREE-car Class 730/0 electric multiple units entered traffic in the West Midlands on February 12, when No. 730018 formed the 2W66 22.41 Birmingham New Street-Wolverhampton.

The West Midlands Trains EMUs were due in traffic from 2020, but have been heavily delayed due to various issues including the Covid pandemic, and software issues as per other Alstom-built Aventras.

The '730/0s' made their passenger debut in November, operating peak-time trains from London Euston, allowing the withdrawal of London Northwestern Railway Class 319s. The plan is that the '730/0s' will operate WMT trains around the West Midlands, while five-car 110mph '730/2s' will operate LNWR services.

Initially one '730/0' is in traffic each day between Wolverhampton, Birmingham New Street and Walsall (see *Units*). From April, the trains will begin to enter traffic on the Cross-City route between Lichfield and Bromsgrove, replacing the Class 323s.

No. 730018 was used for a launch event on February 8, carrying invited guests from Wolverhampton to Walsall. WMR managing director Ian McConnell said: "These modern electric trains represent a huge upgrade to the experience of travelling by train in the West Midlands.

"Not only are the Class 730s physically longer than the trains they replace, meaning they can carry more people, the carriage interiors have been designed in a spacious, metro-style to maximise space."

WMT said that the '730/0s' will replace existing four-car Class 350s on the Wolverhampton-Walsall circuit. The new trains have capacity for 546 passengers, of which 201 are seated and 345 standing, compared with 270 seated and 117 standing on the Desiro.

Meanwhile, a '323', which is also formed of three cars, has 277 seats and capacity for 120 standing passengers.

There are 48 Class 730/0s currently entering traffic, although Nos. 730023/024 were at Gascoigne Wood, 730025/026/028/029/034-043 were at Doncaster Belmont Yard and 730030-033 were at Old Dalby in storage. Meanwhile, Alstom is delivering five-car '730/2s' for testing, with Nos. 730205/210/212/217 at Oxley, and 730206 at UK Rail Leasing, Loughborough for modifications.

Full Marston Vale timetable restored

A full timetable resumed on the Bedford-Bletchley line on February 19, more than a year after services were suspended following the collapse of Vivarail, which meant London Northwestern Railway could no longer use Class 230s (*RE*321).

A partial timetable was reintroduced last November following the transfer of three Class 150/1s from Northern. Since then, four trains per day have operated in each direction during weekday peaks. Prior to that, buses had served the route since December 2022.

To celebrate the return of trains, LNWR introduced a ticket offer whereby a single journey between any two stations on the Marston Vale Line costs £1 and 50p for children.

The short platforms on the route meant that only certain trains could be used and, following the demise of the three '230s' that had been used on the line, the '150s' were sub-leased from Northern. Class 150s had been used on the line by London Midland, however staff needed to be trained on the fleet which caused the delay in the full timetable being introduced.

South Wales penalty fares

PENALTY fares were introduced on the South Wales main line from March 4, as Transport for Wales seeks to tackle an estimated £10 million in lost revenue. A three-week period of guidance began, when anyone travelling without a valid ticket or permit to travel was given information regarding potential consequences.

From March 25, anyone without a ticket receives either a £20 Penalty Fare or a fine of twice the full fare, whichever is greater.

The area covered is between Severn Tunnel Junction and Carmarthen.



➔ **DB Cargo UK. No 66112 shunts at Cwmbargoed on February 23, prior to hauling the 6C83 11.30 to Margam. This was the final loaded train to carry Welsh coal. Although Ffos-y-Fran opencast mine, which was the largest of its type left in Britain, closed on November 30, 2023, DBC trains still ran to clear the stockpiled coal from the loading pad at Cwmbargoed.** Richard Hooper.

Government provides new train fleet order update

IN an open letter to manufacturers and rolling stock leasing companies, Rail Minister Huw Merriman said Government encourages these businesses to work with open access and other UK operators to identify opportunities.

The letter was published on February 22, and follows recent criticism that inaction by the Government could see the last train manufacturing site in Britain, Derby Litchurch Lane, close (*RE*334).

Mr Merriman added in his letter that Government encourages business to look at the possibility of exporting trains.

He claimed that "despite challenging conditions we continue to face, new competitions are now under way on Northern, TransPennine Express, SouthEastern and Chiltern Railways, subject to business case approval. There are also several major fleet upgrades under way, including an upgrade of Govia Thameslink Railway's Electrostar fleets, a planned refurbishment of the CrossCountry Voyager fleet and a major refurbishment of the Pendolino fleet." The latter is due to be complete in June.

He also claimed that Government "remained committed to provide as much clarity about the near-term pipeline of domestic orders as possible to rolling stock manufacturers and their suppliers, financiers and ROSCOs, so that the industry can manage its own capacity and plan its investments accordingly."

His letter included a table of currently live competitions while he also added: "we expect further competitions to take place over the next two to three years, subject to confirmation of need and business case approval. As these have not yet been confirmed and may be subject to change, all information provided here is indicative and should not be viewed as firm commitments at this stage.

"For example, Great Western is conducting initial market engagement on options for replacing its Class 15X and '16X' fleet which are approaching life expiry. Any proposals would be subject to business case approval and the outcome of any competition.

"In addition, there may also be significant opportunities from devolved administrations and open access operators.

"I have asked my officials to consider what additional information we could provide to the market in the coming months and am keen that they work closely with manufacturers, train operators and rolling stock companies as we develop our thinking. Please be assured that I remain committed to supporting a world-class UK-based engineering industry."

CURRENT LIVE COMPETITIONS

Operator	Size of contract as per contract notice	Indicative contract award date	Indicative earliest expected delivery date
Northern	Up to 450 units (around 1000 vehicles)	2025	2029
Southeastern	Core order between 350 and 570 vehicles, option for additional 70 vehicles	Early 2025 but could be brought forward	Autumn 2027 (if new)
Chiltern Railways	Between 20-70 new or converted units (90 vehicles)	Early 2025	End 2028/early 2029
TransPennine Express	29 units up to 195m long, option for further 26 units. (Nominal 174 to 330 vehicles)	Mid 2025	Mid 2029

Source: Department for Transport.

Class 93s receive ORR approval for UK operation

STADLER tri-mode Class 93s have received approval to operate in the UK from the Office of Rail and Road (ORR).

A letter granting their authority to operate was issued by the ORR on December 14, 2023. This followed an application made by the manufacturer on November 20, 2023.

This means that the locomotives can now operate on the UK's national network. Testing has been undertaken using No. 93002 in Romania to achieve the authority.

Despite speculation that 30 of the locomotives have been ordered, the letter only advises approval for ten '93s', Nos. 93001-010. So far, only No. 93001 has been delivered to Rail Operations Assets Limited. This arrived at Worksop on July 1, 2023, and since then has been undergoing static testing and training. It was moved to Crewe South Yard for a week in early January for testing with a rake of Eastern Rail Services Mk.3s, however it has yet to operate on the main line under its own power.

Owned by STAR Capital, the '93s' have not yet had their duties confirmed. *Rail Express* understands that main line testing will commence soon.



IN BRIEF

GREEN LIGHT FOR CALVERT HS2 DEPOT

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Council has granted planning consent for the construction of an HS2 infrastructure maintenance depot at Calvert, which will create 300 jobs. The depot will be constructed between Calvert and Steeple Claydon and will include workshops, offices, storage and training facilities, as well as a British Transport Police base.

A fleet of track maintenance trains will be based at the depot, and connections to East-West Rail (EWR), which passes south of the site, will allow heavy equipment and materials to be delivered to the depot by rail.

LSG '45' CHARTER CONFIRMED

LOCOMOTIVE Services Group No. 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman* will return to main line passenger duty on July 27, when it hauls the 'Diamond Jubilee Express' from Bristol Temple Meads to Chesterfield. The charter will connect with the '14s@60' event at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway, and tickets for that event are included in the charter fare. The train leaves Bristol Temple Meads at 07.00 and picks up at Bristol Parkway, Cheltenham Spa and Birmingham New Street. Tickets are £110 standard class or £150 first class non-dining.

MIDLANDS RAIL HUB MONEY

DESIGN work on a £1.75 billion Midlands Rail Hub is set to begin after Department for Transport confirmed an initial £123 million of funding. The first phase of the project will see an additional train every hour, in both directions, between Central Birmingham and Bristol, Cardiff, Cheltenham and Worcester.

This initial funding will enable design work to commence to create space for the extra services and this includes preparing designs for the infrastructure improvements.

HS2 BREAKTHROUGH AT LONGEST TUNNEL

HS2's first tunnel boring machine, launched almost three years ago, broke through at the North Portal, near South Heath, Buckinghamshire, on February 27.

***Florence*, a 2000-tonne TBM, has completed a 10-mile journey under the Chilterns, which it started almost three years ago. It is one of 10 machines excavating 32 miles of tunnel on the new railway, and was launched in May 2021.**

Parallel tunnels carrying north and southbound trains are being excavated and a second TBM, *Cecilia*, is expected to break through in the coming weeks.

GWR battery train trials begin

By Richard Clinnick

TRIALS involving Great Western Railway three-car battery unit No. 230001 have begun on the Greenford branch.

These are expected to last for 12 months, during which its performance will be tested in all four seasons. GWR engineering director Dr Simon Green told *Rail Express* on February 29, that although the trials do not necessarily need to carry passengers, the operator hopes that the '230' can be used in passenger service.

He also confirmed that initially RailAdventure will drive the '230' while GWR negotiates with unions regarding the operator's staff driving the set. The talks were described as positive and he said they mainly related to the cabs fitted to the unit.

The '230' had been carrying out testing between Long Marston, Evesham, Honeybourne and Moreton-on-Marsh. During this period, on February 14, it set a record for the longest distance covered without a charge – 86 miles. The previous record was 84 miles completed by a Stadler Class 777 under test conditions in 2022. Some 1500 hours of testing has also been completed at Long Marston.

On February 16, the '230' ran 70 miles under its own power from Long Marston to Reading, where it underwent compatibility testing and preparations before moving to West Ealing for trials on the Greenford branch. Dr Green explained that the current plan is for the '230' to be based at West Ealing, returning around once a month to Reading for maintenance.

The trials are about the FastCharge technology, originally developed by Vivarail, rather than the train which has already been proven. The system can deliver charging power of up to 2000kW, with the unit fitted with two battery racks, one on each driving vehicle, each with three 70kWh Hoppecke batteries.

The charging system can be installed between the rails in only hours. It uses short charge rails which are fully covered by the train and are only live when charging. The train charges from the charge rails using retractable shoegear fed by two trackside battery banks. These are continuously 'trickle-charged' from the grid with a 63 Amp connection, akin to a domestic supply.

GWR said that the use of batteries for extended operation has typically been constrained by their range and meant widespread implementation has not previously been possible.

At West Ealing the train will charge for 3½ minutes before restarting its journey. That will not return it to 100% but will continually boost the battery.

Dr Green said: "This work has never been done before and we're leading the way to help the Department for Transport and Network Rail understand what is required to roll out this technology on the UK's rail network.

"Only now has there been a combination of battery capability and charging technology that enables a branch line train to operate to the same timetable as a diesel unit, and yet still charge safely and with minimal impact on the local grid power supply.

"Clearly our specialist engineering team have been working round-the-clock to ensure that this FastCharge system has been fully tested and that there will be sufficient charge for the train to operate to the timetable on the Greenford branch line.

"Each branch line will vary but this is an incredibly exciting innovation and



Class 40 tour to raise funds for RBF

PRESERVED No. D213 (40013) *Andania* will haul 'The Bucket & Spade' charity charter from Crewe to Scarborough on June 5, with funds raised going to the Railway Benefit Fund.

The '40' will haul Locomotive Services Group's InterCity rake of Mk.3s and will run via Warrington Bank Quay and Manchester Victoria. There is an option to bail at York rather than head all the way to the coast. It is expected that the '40' will depart Crewe at 08.15, Warrington at 08.35, Manchester Victoria at 09.35 before arriving at York at midday and Scarborough at 13.00. The return is scheduled to leave the coast at 16.00, York at 17.00 and arrive back at Crewe at 19.25.

The Branch Line Society is supporting the RBF as the booking agent.

All seats are first class, with prices either £99 for non-dining or £199 for dining. A supplement to guarantee a seat at a table for two is available for an extra £25.

First class dining includes a full traditional English breakfast on the outward journey and a three-course supper on the return. First class non-dining is the same seats with tables with the option to purchase light refreshments from the buffet bar.

There will also be a raffle on board with all funds raised donated to the RBF.

There is no surcharge for not being a BLS member on this tour.

Treherbert line reopens after nine months

TRANSPORT for Wales trains resumed operating on the Treherbert line on February 26, after nine months of upgrade work as part of the South Wales Metro project.

Initially two trains per hour are running on the route using existing TfW Rail Class 150 diesel multiple units but the operator has confirmed that Class 756 tri-modes will be introduced on the route, which has been electrified, later in the year.

Initially trains will not call at Ynyswen which is closed while infrastructure work continues at the station.

Work has included building three new loops between Ynsyswen and Treherbert, Ton Petre and Ystrad Rhondda, and Porth to Dinas Rhondda, installing colour light signals, extending platforms and installing new footbridges. New platforms have been built at Treherbert, Ynyswen and Dinas Rhondda.



Great Western Railway No. 230001 crosses the River Thames at Maidenhead on February 27, with the 5Q23 12.14 Reading Traincare Depot-West Ealing carriage sidings ahead of testing on the Greenford branch. CJ Rich

I'm proud that GWR is at the forefront of the railway's commitment to phase out diesel-only traction by 2040."

GWR has simulated the use of battery trains on other Thames Valley branches and this could reduce emissions by 1700 tons of CO2e per year.

The operator also owns Nos. 230003-005, which had been used on the Marston Vale line until Vivarail went bust. Dr Green said that these will not be used during the trial (they are diesel trains, but are fully refurbished) but said that GWR had carried out research which shows it owns enough D-Stock vehicles to roll them out on the Thames Valley branches should this be a success.

In February 2022, GWR signed a deal with Vivarail to trial new battery-charging technology designed to support the wider introduction of battery-powered trains. However, in December that year Vivarail went into administration. GWR agreed to buy the intellectual property, rolling stock and equipment relating to the FastCharge technology.

■ An interview with Dr Green will be published in the next edition of *Rail Express*, out on April 19.

Levenmouth countdown

SCOTRAIL will begin serving the reopened Levenmouth line from June 2. Scottish Transport Minister Fiona Hyslop switched on a countdown clock at Edinburgh Waverley on February 23, to mark the milestone. Driver training began on the £116 million line, which will see the six-mile double track railway reopen to scheduled passenger services after 55 years. New stations will open at Leven and Cameron Bridge.

New Aldridge station planned

NETWORK Rail is working with Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and the West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) to build a station at Aldridge, which is planned to open in 2027.

Costing £30 million for a single platform with a 40-space car park and road access, the station will initially be served by a half-hourly service to Walsall.

Longer-term, the line could be electrified and the station upgraded as part of the planned wider reopening of the Sutton Park Line passenger services.

New open access operator Wrexham, Shropshire and Midlands Railway Company could also serve the station, NR said.

£375m signalling scheme complete

NETWORK Rail introduced new signalling equipment in the Wokingham area, after an nine-day blockade from February 10 to February 18, brought a £375 million scheme to a close.

Overall, the project has taken five years. The most recent, and final, closure saw 43 new signals installed as well as two level crossings and a junction renewed.

As part of the five-year scheme, NR moved control of the signalling equipment between Feltham and Wokingham and transferred it to Basingstoke Rail Operating Centre (ROC). Some 16 level crossings have been upgraded and more than 500 pieces of signalling equipment have been installed over an 80-mile section of railway covering Feltham, Hounslow, Shpperton, Twickenhem, Windsor & Eton Riverside and Wokingham.

Major step forward for digital signalling

The Welwyn to Hitchin (W2H) European Train Control System (ETCS) overlay was tested between February 17 and 20. This is a major step forward for the East Coast Digital Programme (ECDP) following the renewal of infrastructure and its successful commissioning prior to the testing. W2H is the first instance of infrastructure commissioning towards a 'no signal' intercity main line in Britain.

The overlay is a critical part of the ECDP delivery plan and, to achieve the end goal of no signals on the southern part of the East Coast Main Line, Network Rail needs to create a section of the route that can be operated with both conventional and digital signalling. Drivers from all East Coast Main Line operators will be progressively trained to drive in ETCS through the W2H overlay.

W2H commissioning has involved a light resignalling in preparation for system proving of the ETCS. A new proving desk and Radio Block Centre will be put in place in York ROC to enable the first overnight proving trains to operate from this spring. Migration to ETCS operations on passenger and freight services through the overlay section will begin in 2025.

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Cornish semaphores vanish in major resignalling scheme

By Richard Clinnick

MUCH of Cornwall's semaphore signalling infrastructure has been swept away in a modernisation process that was under way as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

From March 11, trains between Largin and Penwithers Junction, Truro will be controlled from a workstation at Exeter.

Siemens has installed more than 60 miles of new cabling and signalling while Network Rail has overseen alterations to trackwork, mainly in the Truro area.

The Falmouth branch and freight lines to Parkandillack and Fowey will also be controlled from the same workstation. However, the freight lines will retain a staff to be collected by a driver.

Conventional track circuits and first generation axle counters have been replaced with state of the art axle counters detecting trains along sections of line.

The work has resulted in the closure of signalboxes at Truro, Par and Lostwithiel. Par was the oldest, dating from 1879, and signalled broad gauge trains before being converted to standard gauge during the 1890s. There are no current plans to demolish the 'boxes, indeed the 'boxes at Par and Lostwithiel are Grade 2 listed structures.

Truro 'box closed on February 27, when the two-week blockade to undertake the work commenced. The first week saw the semaphores removed and track work altered, including the installation of a new facing crossover to the east of the station replacing the trailing one that was outside the 'box. This will allow trains to use the Up Main platform during disruption. Two trap points are being plain-lined as advances in Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) means that they are no longer needed.

On March 3, Par and Lostwithiel 'boxes signalled their final trains, with both structures closing the following day.



On March 2, DB Cargo UK No. 66021 passes Lostwithiel with the 6V74 09.48 Exeter Riverside-St Blazey clay train. This was the final westbound freight train signalled by the 'box at the Cornish town. The '66' returned to Westbury the following day with DBC No. 66143. Craig Munday

The second week of work, which was being undertaken as *Rail Express* went to press, included more trackwork alterations.

New bi-directional routes are being installed such as the Up main platform at Par where the Down Goods loop has been upgraded for passenger use. The former Down main Sidings connection at Lostwithiel will be plain lined.

During the second week of the work, more than 100 staff were present on the 30-mile section of Cornish main line connecting LED-style signals and replacing the semaphores.

Work was also undertaken at three remaining fringe 'boxes at Roskear (Camborne), Liskeard and St Blazey. Train describers are replacing the former block bells that had been used up until recently, and emergency alarms will be fitted.

At St Blazey, the SB7 signal is being removed to allow the Up line to become bi-directional, which will be useful for charters and freight trains as well as steam locomotive movements.

After the two-week blockade, signalboxes will remain in situ, at Liskeard, St Erth, Goonbarrow and St Blazey, while Liskeard, St Erth, Goonbarrow and St Blazey will retain semaphores. Penzance and Roskear have colour lights.

Porterbrook takes stake in Scotland's Brodie Engineering

PORTERBROOK has bought a 49% stake in Brodie Engineering, which is based in Kilmarnock and is the only active rail engineering business in Scotland.

The Ayrshire company specialises in heavy maintenance, refurbishment and overhauls for passenger and freight vehicles.

Mary Grant, Porterbrook CEO, said that the agreement would allow the company to better support fleets in Scotland, as well as across the UK. She added that the existing Brodie management would remain in place.

Brodie began operating in 1996 and works across two sites based at the Bonnyton Works and the Caledonia Works, both in Kilmarnock. The latter was acquired in 2020 after Wabtec Rail pulled out of Scotland.

CORRECTION

AN image published on Page 11 of the last edition of *Rail Express* had an incorrect credit. The picture of Nos. 37884, 68024 and Mk.5A set TP04 should have been credited to Kevin Payne. *Rail Express* apologises for the error.

LNWR Class 150 naming competition

TO CELEBRATE the full reopening of the Bedford-Bletchley line, London Northwestern Railway ran a competition to name a Class 150.

The operator wanted suggestions of names and places along the route that can be celebrated.

The competition closed on March 4, and the winning name was selected by a panel including representatives from LNWR and the Marston Vale Community Partnership.

The result had still not been revealed as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

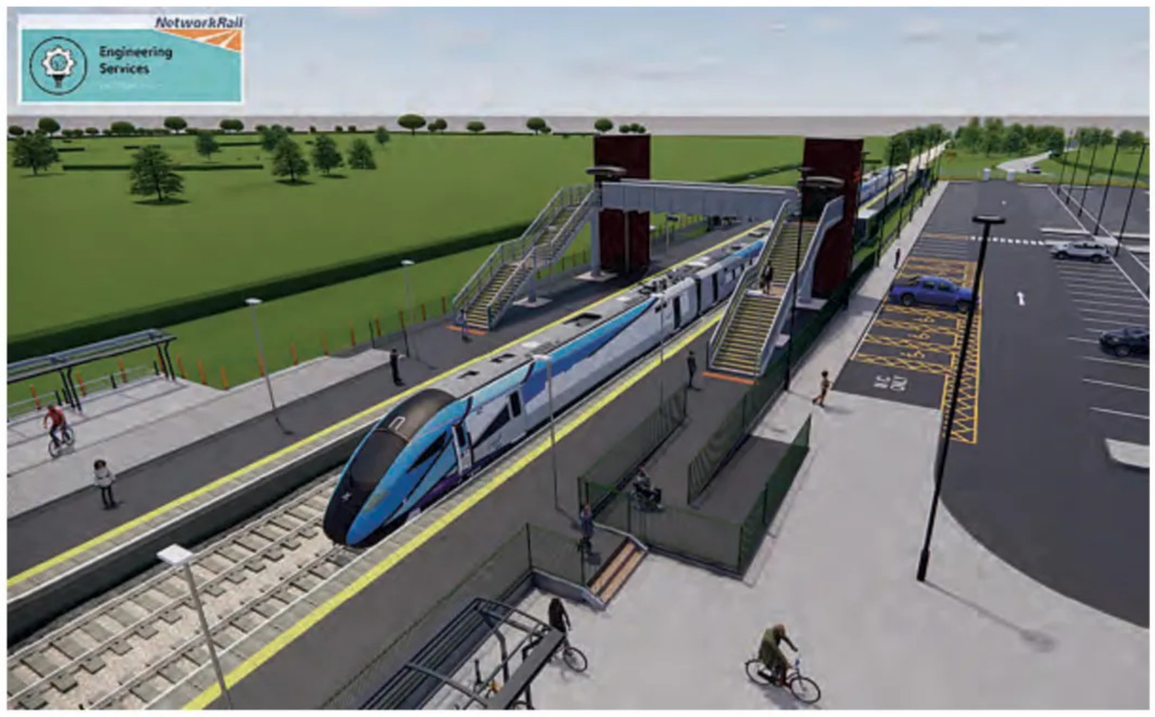
New Haxby station planned by Network Rail

NETWORK Rail, in partnership with City of York Council and the Department for Transport, submitted a planning application for a new £24 million station at Haxby, on the York to Scarborough line, on February 29.

The new two-platform station will be the town's first rail connection in almost a century, after the last station closed in 1930.

Subject to planning consent, the final detailed designs will be completed through the remainder of this year, with construction expected to begin in spring 2025 with the aim of trains serving it from 2026.

The station will feature a fully accessible bridge with lifts, steps, bike shelters and a 154-space car park, taxi rank and bus stop.



An artist's impression of the new Haxby station. Network Rail

Bidders shortlisted for new Elizabeth Line contract

FOUR bidders have been shortlisted to operate the Elizabeth Line concession, with the new contract commencing in May 2025.

The new contract will last for seven years and will have a two-year extension option.

MTR Elizabeth Line is the current operator of services which run between Shenfield and Heathrow Airport and between Abbey Wood and Reading. The first section, between Abbey Wood and Paddington, opened in May 2022, with the full service operating from May last year.

Growing reliability will be a focus for the new operator, alongside maintaining customer satisfaction, said Transport for London, which added that more than 300 million journeys have already been made on the network.

The shortlisted bidders are Arriva UK Trains, First Keolis Elizabeth Line (a joint venture between First Group and Keolis), GTS Rail Operations Limited (a joint venture between Go Ahead Holdings Limited, Sumitomo Corporation and Tokyo Metro Co. Ltd) and MTR (UK) Limited.

Howard Smith, Elizabeth Line director, said: "We have introduced new, more spacious trains, which run more frequently through 41 stations that were either newly-built or modernised, supporting hundreds of millions of customer journeys each year. The new Elizabeth line operator will play a major role in supporting us to continue that growth and success, providing high levels of customer service and satisfaction."

The new operator will work with TfL, Network Rail and HS2 to prepare for the opening of the superhub station at Old Oak Common. There is the possibility that new trains could be ordered to serve that station.

TfL intends to issue tender documents to bidders during April, with submissions expected in July.

Under the new contract, the mayor of London will continue to be responsible for setting the fares while TfL will market the services and specify the service. TfL will retain ticket sales which it said would be reinvested in the capital's transport network.



← **Exhibits are being moved between the National Railway Museum, York, and Locomotion, Shildon. On February 27, West Coast Railways Nos. 37676 *Loch Rannoch* and 47746 *Chris Fudge 29.7.70-22.6.10* top-and-tail Nos. D200 (40122), 31018 and 5987 as the 5Z29 10.46 York NRM-Shildon on the approach to their destination.** Tony Winward

IN BRIEF

'197S' ON REINTRODUCED CHESTER SERVICES

TRANSPORT for Wales (TfW) reintroduced hourly services between Chester and Liverpool, via Runcorn, Helsby and Frodsham from February 12, with Class 197s being used. This increased the number of trains from 15 per day to 30. No. 197017 was the first to operate the 1F90 05.42 Chester-Liverpool Lime Street and 1D00 06.46 return on the first day. No. 197112 was also in use that day.

ENGINE CHANGE FOR LSG CLASS 47

LOCOMOTIVE Services Group (LSG) has removed the engine from No. 47853 (47614). The engine and generator will be sent away for a full overhaul and will become part of the LSG spares pool. Meanwhile, the '47' will receive the engine from No. D1944 (47501) *Craftsman*, which was withdrawn last year following a traction motor failure.

GREATER ANGLIA ON RTT

GREATER Anglia has been added to Realtime Trains' Know Your Train service. This means that RTT users can now see which Class 720s, '745s' and '755s' are operating which trains.

HS2 FREIGHT MILESTONE

SOME 646 trains have delivered a million tonnes of construction materials to HS2's Quainton railhead, near Aylesbury, over the past 16 months. HS2 Ltd confirmed the milestone on March 1. A further 1400 trains are expected to serve the railhead over the next two years.

Lumo eyes Glasgow extension

LUMO could serve Glasgow Central from Summer 2025, by extending some of its London King's Cross to Edinburgh Waverley services.

The open access operator is working with Transport Scotland and Network Rail, to agree final route options and timings ahead of applying to the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) for access rights.

Lumo said that the extra services would use the existing fleet of five five-car Class 803s.

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No. 50049 *Defiance* leads Class 50 Alliance stablemates Nos. 50044 *Exeter* and 50007 *Hercules* through Weaverham on September 5, 2021, as the 1Z34 12.25 Preston-Bescot. This was part of the GB Railfreight 'This Time It's Personal' four-day charity charter. The '50s' took over from GBRf No. 66712 *Peterborough Power Signalbox* and were replaced by GBRf No. 66765 at Bescot Yard. Tom McAtee

Rail Express celebrates Class 50 Alliance milestone at Heritage Railway Association awards

By Richard Clinnick

RAIL Express editor Richard Clinnick presented **Class 50 Alliance** chairman Tony Middleton with the **Heritage Railway Association Mortons Media *Rail Express* Modern Traction Award** at a ceremony in Brighton on February 10.

The C50A won the award for having supplied locomotives for 100 main line tours, with the 100th train running on September 16, 2023, when Nos. 50007 *Hercules* and 50049 *Defiance* hauled the 1Z50 05.30 Swindon-Edinburgh Waverley 'Pilgrim Centurion' (*RE*330); the first having operated on November 1, 1997, when No. 50031 *Hood* powered Past-Time Rail's 'The Pilgrim Hoover' between Birmingham International and Plymouth.

The event itself, the largest of its kind organised by the HRA, was attended by more than 250 of the country's leading preservationists.

Railway of the Year was won by the **Volks Electric Railway**, with judges impressed by the authenticity, attention to detail and dedication to the unique history of Brighton's seafront line. This was the first time a railway with no steam traction had won the award.

The *Railway Magazine* Preservationist of the Year Award was awarded to **Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster** for his work as chairman of the Fifty Fund and C50A, as well as his recent work as interim managing director of the Severn Valley Railway. **The *Heritage Railway* magazine Interpretation Award** was given to the **Great Central Railway** for its 'Railways at Work' gala event.

The **National Wagon Preservation Group** collected the **Morgan Award for Rolling Stock Preservation** for their work on a train of Merry-Go-Round HAAs that are based at the Chasewater Railway.

In the **Diesel and Electric Locomotion** category, the **Severn Valley Railway** won the award for its special events programme celebrating 50 years of mainline diesel locomotive preservation.

The **Award for Innovation in Business and Customer Experience** was won by the **Keith and Dufftown Railway** for the conversion of redundant Class 108 Driving Trailer Composite Lavatory (DTCL) No. 56491 into a whisky bar known as the 'Dram Tram'. The conversion has opened a range of new business opportunities for the Banffshire-based line.

In the **Rising Star** category this year, **Osian Hughes** of the **Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways** was the victor by an extremely narrow margin. Osian moved to heritage rail from the education sector and has spearheaded a fresh perspective to the marketing of the famous narrow gauge line. He was heavily involved in the development of the train 'experiences' that the FfWHR now promotes successfully.

The **Talyllyn Railway's 'Tracksiders'** group of young volunteers scooped the prize in the **Team of the Year** category (narrowly beating the C50A). The team was first formed in 1997 to encourage young people to participate in hands-on tasks at the Talyllyn. Going from strength to strength, seven of the original recruits are still active volunteers 24 years later and the Tracksiders recruit new youngsters every year.

The **Lord Faulkner Young Volunteer of the Year for 2024** is **Jonathan King** of the **Downpatrick and County Down Railway**. Jonathan is the youngest steam locomotive fireman in Ireland, has been playing a vital role in recovery from a devastating flood and became a director of the line at the age of 23.

The **Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway** won the **Award for Marketing and Communications**, while the **Infrastructure Award** was won by the **Llangollen Railway** for their Corwen station project. The completely new station returned passenger trains to Corwen permanently for the first time since 1964 and went on to serve 30,000 visitors in the first month since opening.

Seaton Tramway won the **Environmental Innovation Award**.

The Chairman's Special Award was presented to the **563 Locomotive Group** for its work returning ex-National Collection London and South Western Railway 'T3' Class 4-4-0 No. 563 to steam after more than 75 years. This also collected the ***Steam Railway* magazine Reader's Award**.



Class 50 Alliance chairman Tony Middleton (left) collects the Heritage Railway Association Mortons Media *Rail Express* Modern Traction Award from *Rail Express* editor Richard Clinnick (right) at the HRA awards in Brighton on February 10. Jack Boskett/Heritage Railway Association

The **Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways** collected the Coiley Award for Steam Locomotive Engineering for the reinterpretation of long-lost 'Double Fairlie' 0-4-4-0T No. 8 *James Spooner*.

HRA chief executive, Steve Oates, said: "This is the biggest event in heritage rail, and it's specifically designed to celebrate the achievements and successes from every part of this varied and dynamic sector.

"To see unique railways like the Volks Electric triumph over far bigger and more famous lines is proof that the heritage rail world is flourishing in all manner of different ways, despite the adversity we so often face. And to have a train of down-to-earth galvanised steel coal hoppers pick up a top award, on the same night as a gleaming Victorian express steam engine, also demonstrates the depth of passion and commitment that is key to everything that heritage rail is good at."

To read an interview with C50A chairman Tony Middleton, published in *RE*331, visit www.railexpress.co.uk/14396/100-tours-with-the-class-50-alliance/

Final call for entries in the RCTS photo competition

MARCH 31 is the closing date for the joint Railway Correspondence & Travel Society (RCTS)/Mortons Media railway photographic competition, so you have just a few weeks left to send in your entry. You can submit up to two entries in any or all the four categories using photographs taken since January 2022.

The **Overall Competition** winner will enjoy a money-cannot-buy main line cab ride courtesy of DB Cargo UK, with this most likely being somewhere in the north of England.

The winner of the **Modern Traction** section will join GB Railfreight for a session on one of its locomotive driver simulators, whilst the **Heritage Railway** winner will be entertained at the Nene Valley Railway with the visit including a tour of the sheds at Wansford and a cab ride.

For the **People and Railways** winner, your destination will be the East Lancashire Railway for a cab ride with a choice of steam or diesel traction, whilst the **Railways and the Environment** prize winner will visit the Severn Valley Railway for a look behind the scenes at Kidderminster diesel depot and a diesel cab ride.

In addition, each of the winners will receive a RCTS book and a one-year subscription to a Mortons magazine of their choice.

The second prizewinner in each category will receive a RCTS book and Mortons subscription of their choice, whilst the third placed entry will have the choice of either a RCTS book or a Mortons subscription.

A **Judges' Special Commendation** prize of Two First Class tickets and Tea for Two at the Talyllyn Railway will also be awarded to a further stand-out image deemed worthy of recognition.

For more information and to submit your potentially prize-winning pictures, please visit the RCTS website at rcts.org.uk and follow the competition link. Good luck!



Top prize is a money-cannot-buy cab ride in a Class 66 courtesy of DB Cargo UK. On April 25, 2023, DBC No. 66017 powers through Lakenham, near Norwich, with the 6M64 15.53 Norwich-Toton empty stone train. Richard Clinnick



LNER launches Eleanor livery

LONDON North Eastern Railway No. 801225 has been 'named' *Eleanor* and received a livery celebrating the operator's new mascot.

Eleanor is the name of a puppet who appears in the company's various advertising campaigns. To highlight the character and the campaigns she appears in, an event was held at York on February 13, when the branding and name was unveiled on the nine-car Hitachi electric multiple unit. The name and branding is applied to the PDTRBF (Pantograph Driving Trailer Kitchen First) vehicle No. 829225.

← **The branding and name applied to No. 801225 *Eleanor*.** LNER

New names for London Overground lines

THE six London Overground (LO) lines will be represented by a new name and line colour for the first time, with the names chosen through engagement with customers, stakeholders, historians, industry experts and local communities.

New names, line colours and maps will make it easier for customers to navigate the LO network according to Transport for London (TfL), with the aim of building ridership while also celebrating the capital's diverse communities and histories.

The changes will require an update to London's famous Tube map and follows research by TfL that found some passengers believed the LO network was confusing and would be easier to navigate if it wasn't a single colour and name.

The new lines' names are:

The Lioness Line. This is the Euston-Watford Junction route and honours the England women's team and will be yellow parallel lines.

The Mildmay Line. This is the Stratford-Richmond/Clapham Junction and honours a small charitable hospital in Shoreditch that has cared for Londoners over many years and was notable for its pivotal role in the HIV/AIDS crisis in the 1980s, earning it a respected place for the LGBTQ+ community, and will be blue parallel lines on the map.

The Windrush Line. This is the Highbury & Islington-Clapham Junction/New Cross/Crystal Palace/West Croydon route which runs through areas with strong ties to Caribbean communities and honours the Windrush generation. It will be red parallel lines on the map.

The Weaver Line. This is the Liverpool Street-Cheshunt/Enfield Town/Chingford route that runs through areas known for their textile trade and which have been shaped for centuries by diverse migrant communities and individuals. They will be maroon parallel lines on the map.

The Suffragette Line. This is the Gospel Oak-Barking Riverside route that serves Barking, home of the longest surviving Suffragette Annie Huggett, who died aged 103. It will be green parallel lines on the map.

The Liberty Line. This is the Romford-Upminster line and celebrates the freedom that is seen as a defining feature of London and also references the historical independence of the people of Havering. It will be grey parallel lines on the map.

TfL will start rebranding the lines across the capital with the full rollout expected by the end of the year, which will include an updated Tube Map, a refreshed LO network map and several on-network assets including way finding signage at 113 stations.

Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: "Giving each of the Overground lines distinct colours and identities will make it simpler and easier for passengers to get around. In reimagining London's tube map, we are also honouring and celebrating different parts of London's unique local history and culture."

London transport commissioner, Andy Lord, said: "The London Overground is one of the most successful railways in the country and has grown to carry more than three million customers a week. The network, which has grown quite considerably since 2007, is currently shown as a complicated network of orange on route maps. This can be confusing for passengers less familiar with the network and could be a barrier for some wanting to use the London Overground. These new names and line colours will simplify the maps and routes for our passengers, and it is hoped it will encourage more people to make the most of our services. It is also a great way to tell the stories of London's cultural diversity."



WELCOME ABOARD THE BIGGEST RAILWAY COMMUNITY

RAIL EXPRESS



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

Class 50 Alliance Nos. 50049 *Defiance* and 50007 *Hercules* stand at Paignton on July 29, 2023, waiting to power the 1Z52 17.00 Paignton-Ipswich GB Railfreight staff charter. RICHARD CLINNICK

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Gareth Bayer

‘Western’-themed livery and name for Class 69

Iconic British Rail carriage maroon paint scheme carried by the popular hydraulics is theme for latest GB Railfreight Class 69 retro repaint.

GB RAILFREIGHT No. 69009, which was released into active duty in October still in its green primer coat, has finally received the attention of the Arlington Fleet Services spray booth at Eastleigh Works.

The Class 69 worked from UK Rail Leasing, Leicester, on the last day of January, and was shown off to the world in its new Class 52 ‘Western’-style paint scheme on February 23. This is inspired by the British Rail carriage maroon livery with half yellow warning panels and white window surrounds as carried by 71 of the 74 members of the class between February 1962 and May 1971.

The makeover has been completed with the addition of cast number and *Western Consort* nameplates in the classic ‘Western’ GWR serif style. The choice of nameplates is interesting as No. 69009 was previously No. 56060 (D1060 was *Western Dominion*); while the next locomotive for repainting, No. 69010, was rebuilt from No. 56065 (D1065 was *Western Consort*).

However, the transposed former identities is just a coincidence, and the final choice of name was made by GBRf CEO John Smith, with *Western Consort* his favourite of the class as a young enthusiast.

The general response from enthusiasts has been positive, and the Class 69 departed the Hampshire facility behind GBRf No. 66719 *Metro-Land* as far as Eastleigh Yard on February 23, before hitching a ride behind No. 66782 to Doncaster, for eventual movement to EMD/Progress Rail Longport. This leaves No. 69010 still running around in its undercoat, and *Rail Express* understands its repaint will not take place for at least a few more weeks.

As for other Class 69s, No. 56032, only the second ‘Grid’ to be built at BREL Doncaster, has been officially renumbered as No. 69011, transferring from GBGS (for donor Class 56s) to the regular GBRG Class 69 pool at the same time. It was released onto the main line for its debut test run on February 16, working a test run to Bescot and return with No. 66765 *Julia Garn*. Finally, on February 27, No. 69008 was named *Richard Howe* after a much-regarded railwayman.

No. 69009 *Western Consort* at Eastleigh Works prior to leaving for Doncaster. Carl Watson

NEWS ROUND-UP



More High Speed Train Class 43 power cars have arrived at Eastern Rail Services' Great Yarmouth depot following lengthy periods in store. On February 16, No. 43238, which was withdrawn by East Midlands Railway in May 2021, but still carried London North Eastern Railway (LNER) colours, heads east towards Brundall on the A47 near Norwich. Also at Yarmouth is former EMR No. 43319, ex-LNER blue and yellow Nos. 43006 (43206) and 43112 (43312), and former Great Western Railway No. 43027. Richard Clinnick.

ANGEL TRAINS

TWENTY-TWO High Speed Train power cars have so far been exported, 11 to Mexico and 11 to Nigeria, and the next examples being prepared for a new life overseas are now being assembled at Great Yarmouth, awaiting their ride. This follows the departure of Nos. 43007, 43295, 43306/307/316/320/378 on the *Louise Auerbach* on February 7. These eight Class 43s are taking a circuitous route to their destination via calls at Germany, Denmark, Poland, Sweden and Canada, and will likely be somewhere between Grande Anse, New Brunswick, and Mexico by the time this issue of *Rail Express* is published.

The first power car to make its way to the Norfolk resort town was ex-Great Western Railway No. 43027, which moved from Laira depot, Plymouth, by road on February 12. This was followed by two ex-London North Eastern Railway examples from Potter Group, Ely. Nos. 43006 (43206) and 43112 (43312) made the journey on the back of a low-loader on February 15, while ex-East Midlands Railway Nos. 43238 and 43319 did the same trip on February 16. No. 43238 has notably garnered celebrity status at several points during its long career. As No. 43038, it was named *the National Railway Museum The first ten years 1975-1985*, later gaining an ill-advised albeit experimental white cab roof and full yellow ends in 1990. Under Virgin Trains East Coast it was reassociated with the NRM and given a full vinyl wrap in September 2015 to commemorate the museum's 40th anniversary. After losing these vinyls in 2019 it became the sole member of the LNER fleet in all-over red, which it retained for its brief period of use with East Midlands Railway, and which it still carries.

COLAS RAIL

Still short of power despite the hire of No. 70009 from Freightliner, Colas has now taken GB Railfreight No. 59003 *Yeoman Highlander* on long-term hire. The 38-year-old locomotive was only reactivated in September 2023, after being sidelined for two years for repairs after being damaged during a diesel multiple unit recovery attempt at Salisbury in October 2021. The sole GBRf Class 59 moved to Eastleigh Works on February 12, and then undertook several driver training runs until it was transferred to Westbury to take up its hire. It's first job as a Colas machine was a 6C21 1752 to Truro with cranes Nos. DRK 81601 *Nigel Chester* and DRK 81621/622 on February 24.

A desperate requirement for traction may also account for the change in status of Nos. 67023 *Stella* and 67027, which have been sat behind the Colas depot at Westbury since the end of the Railhead Treatment Train season in November 2023. The least active of the pair, No. 67027, has been spotted inside the shed receiving attention, that at one point even required the attendance of a road crane. It's partner, No. 67023, was dragged from Westbury to Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot (IEMD) by No. 37405 on February 6, a second visit to Crewe for the Class 67 since mid-January. The journey included No. 66850 *David Maidment OBE*, which only went as far as EMD/Progress Rail Longport.

DB CARGO

After the disbanding three pools (*RE*334), WBAE also relinquished the remaining 73 locomotives under its control over the course of February, Nos. 66001-003/005/ 009/011-013/015/020/024/027/ 028/032/034/035/047/ 050/053 /061/063/073-076/078/080/082/ 086/087/090/093-095/098/115-121/125/127/128/131/133-137/ 139/140/143/147/148/150-152/158/164/170/ 172/175/177/ 179/182/186/187/190/197/199/ 205. All have transferred to the WBAT standard Class 66 pool, as has No. 66105 (ex-WBBT). Meanwhile, freshly repainted DB red No. 66174, one of 10 GM Type 5s in line for regearing as Class 60 replacements (*RE*333), has been swapped from the WBHT allocation to WBAT in favour of No. 66164. Finally, stored No. 60017 has been downgraded from WQAA to WQBA, while No. 67028 joins nine classmates also up for sale in the lowest WQDA storage pool (ex-WQBA).

DC RAIL

By the time this issue of *Rail Express* appears in print, No. 60099 is expected to have moved from the UK Rail Leasing Leicester depot to UKRL, Loughborough, for a repaint and the completion of its reactivation work.

DIRECT RAIL SERVICES

Having owned around 20% of the 309 Class 37s built, and examples of every sub variant, in the almost 27 years since Nos. 37607-612 first arrived on the books, DRS stored its final operational locomotives during the period under review.

The month began with the immediate but expected cull of Nos. 37419 *Driver Tony Kay 1974-2019*, 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/ Concrete Bob* and 37716. They were joined at Crewe Coal Sidings and in the XDSP disposal pool by No. 37422 *Victorious*, which was also stopped on the first day of February. This briefly left No. 37407 *Blackpool Tower* (outbased at Doncaster) as the sole working representative of English Electric traction on the DRS roster.

Just over a week later on February 8, No. 37424 (37558) *Avro Vulcan XH558* was moved from Carlisle Kingmoor to Gresty Bridge between No. 68017 *Hornet* and Chiltern green No. 68014. Also on the same day, and thanks to forecasts of heavy snow in the Peak District, No. 37422 was reactivated (still XSDP) and joined No. 37407 (XHSO) on deployment to Stockport with a pair of ZZA independent snowploughs to cover the Hope Valley route. Despite a run to New Mills, the pair were not required and both returned to Crewe. This was likely the final powered move for the pair under DRS ownership and No. 37407 was also stored XSDP on February 21.

As this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, the tender results for the six Class 37s was expected to be confirmed.

›

NEWS ROUND-UP continued

EUROPHOENIX

Stored at Barrow Hill since February 2022, No. 91117, the sole remaining Class 91 in Europhoenix livery, was spotted on the back of a road vehicle being transferred to UKRL at Loughborough. *Rail Express* understands that this is for rectification work to take place. Its Europhoenix colleague, No. 91120, is on loan to the Crewe Heritage Centre and was repainted back into InterCity Swallow livery in September 2023.

GB RAILFREIGHT

Repainted into GBRf livery in August 2022, and undergoing repair since February of the same year, No. 60085 has finally been released from Toton for a test run. Now named *Snowdon*, the third GBRf 'Tug' to gain a Class 44-themed name after Nos. 60021 *Penyghent* and 60026 *Helvellyn*, was sent out on a test run to Doncaster Belmont and return on February 15 with No. 60076 *Dunbar*.

Nos. 66310-66314 have finally been registered on TOPS, the five former 'Euro' specification GMs being previously numbered 77507, 77504, 266107-2, CB 1000 and 77506 after arriving in the UK between June 2023 and January 2024. The quintet were joined by newly registered No. 66315 on February 7. The former No. 77505 (92 87 0077 505-1), which also carries the identity DE 6311 F, was another one of the 'Class 77s' (not a TOPS classification) originally built for Crossrail Benelux in 2008, but which ended up with SNCF subsidiary VFLI, later Captrain, albeit owned by SNCF's leasing arm Akiem. It moved directly to UKRL Loughbrough, arriving the following day, where it joined Nos. 66310-66314. This leaves just No. 66316 to arrive, which was previously No. 29003, one of the small number of GM Type 5s to wear the attractive red and blue HHPI livery as also carried by No. 59003 during its European adventure.

The six locomotives were only briefly together as No. 66310 departed to Doncaster Roberts Road on February 20, behind No. 66720 *Wascosa*, before heading west the next day to Longport with No. 66704 *Colchester Power Signalbox* hauling it. This was followed by the departure of No. 66311 on March 1, No. 69008 *Richard Howe* hauling the Class 66/3 to UK Rail Leasing, Leicester.

Finally, having arrived in the UK in December 2022 (as CB 1001) and January 2023 (as 77502) respectively, Nos. 66306 and 66307 have now commenced employment with GBRf. The pair were released from Doncaster Roberts Road on February 7, with the former running light from Decoy Yard to Eastleigh (0001). It returned north with a 6E15 21.17 to Scunthorpe Trent. Meanwhile, its partner worked a 6L84 21.41 from Doncaster Decoy-March Whitemoor.



GB Railfreight has finally started putting Class 66/3s imported from mainland Europe last year, into traffic. Nos. 66306-311 have all been repainted into the operator's colours and two, Nos. 66306/307, have been named. On February 20, No. 66307 *Ipswich Town*, passes Burbage Common Road, Hinckley, with the 6G16 11.48 Cliffe Hill-Bescot. The '66' was converted from No. 77502. The locomotive was delivered to the Netherlands in 2009 before being delivered to Akiem in 2011. From then until early 2023 it was used in France before arriving in the UK. Derek Carruthers

FREIGHTLINER

After several weeks at Doncaster undergoing European Traffic Control System (ETCS) fitment, No. 66591 departed the Wabtec facility on February 13, running to Leeds Midland Road. It was shortly released back to traffic afterwards, moving from DHLT stored status to the DFIN pool at the same time. Also back in revenue-earning traffic is No. 70011, which transferred from DHLT to DGLI. This had been stored in October 2023.

Meanwhile, No. 59102 *Village of Chantry* worked a 0Z59 Westbury to Arlington Fleet Services at Eastleigh on March 4. It is expected to become the second Class 59/1 in Heidelberg green after No. 59101 *Village of Whatley* was completed in December (*RE*332).

RAILADVENTURE

Located at Eastleigh Works since March 3, 2021, buffer-fitted HST power cars Nos. 43423 and 43467, both still in debranded East Midlands Trains blue, were bookended by Nos. 43468 and 43480 for a light engine move to Kidderminster (Severn Valley Railway) on February 21.



RailAdventure Nos. 43468 and 43480 pass Maidenhead on February 21, with the 0Z44 15.43 Eastleigh Works-Kidderminster, taking Nos. 43467/423 for attention at the Severn Valley Railway depot. The East Midlands Trains blue '43s' have been stored since 2020 but are being returned to traffic. RA currently uses two pairs of '43s' for various rail services moves across Britain. CJ Rich

TRANSPENNINE EXPRESS

The four Class 68s seconded to Direct Rail Services during last year's Railhead Treatment Train season, Nos. 68019/020/022/031, have been officially reallocated back to the TPEX pool from XHTP. However, only No. 68031 *Felix* saw any significant work during the month, a 5Q32 10.10 Crewe South Yard-Longsight empty coaching stock move with CAF Mk.5 set TP10 (Nos. 11510, 12728-730, 12810). Meanwhile, Nos. 68024/032, which went into store at Long Marston in early January, returned north to Gresty Bridge on February 19 with No. 68030 *Black Douglas*. It would only be a brief respite for No. 68024 *Destroyer* and this ended the month at Carlisle Kingmoor along with Nos. 68020-023/028/030. This leaves Nos. 68019/029/032 at Gresty Bridge, Nos. 68025/026/031 at Longsight and 68027 at Crewe South Yard.

British Steel trials Class 18

One of the Clayton hybrids moves to Scunthorpe, with wider use on the horizon.

THE long sojourn of the Clayton-built Class 18s at Wolverton Works finally showed signs of coming to an end during February, with the departure of two locomotives.

First to leave, on February 5, was No. 18003, which moved to British Steel's Scunthorpe Steelworks, while No. 18002 left around a week later for the former Brush workshops at Loughborough.

No. 18003 is the first of the Beacon Rail-owned locomotives to find employment since the trial of No. 18001 at Whitemoor Yard concluded a year ago. It had been in residence at Wolverton since April 2022. The use of one of the class by British Steel is unexpected as the company's management had previously indicated it was not interested in the locomotives. However, as well as allowing the firm to promote its green credentials, a drop in availability of the former Norwegian State Railways Di8 locomotives used on its internal system has prompted an evaluation. These MaK-built Bo-Bos are also provided to British Steel by Beacon Rail.

During its time at Scunthorpe, No. 18003's performance will be extensively evaluated based on reliability and battery efficiency, as well as the savings it could offer in maintenance and fuel costs. British Steel has stated that the locomotive will not be deployed on the iconic blast furnace trips with the torpedo wagons, but has already been pictured hauling trains of steel products and rails to the exchange sidings.



On February 5, No. 18003 leaves Wolverton Works by road, bound for Scunthorpe Steelworks. The '18' is undergoing trials at the site, with classmates expected to move to Network Rail virtual quarries for shunting duties. Mark Beal

Meanwhile, the drawn out process of gaining approval for the Class 18s to work on Network Rail infrastructure and fit the necessary cab equipment is nearing completion. Expectations are that around a third of the 15-strong class will be leased for use at Network Rail's major infrastructure yards, particularly those managed by GB Railfreight, which would include Bescot, Whitemoor and Eastleigh.

The Freightliner-operated virtual quarry at Basford Hall, and nearby materials recovery facility has also been suggested as another potential destination, along with two industrial companies that generate significant quantities of bulk freight.

NEWS ROUND-UP

Harry Needle Railroad Company

Shunters belonging to the Harry Needle Railroad Company continue to hold sway at Cardiff Tidal, despite declarations last autumn that the fleet would be removed from the Celsa duties at the end of October, due to a contract dispute with GB Railfreight. No. 08924 briefly departed South Wales on February 2, heading to Freightliner's Leeds Midland Road depot for tyre turning. However, just three days later, it was noted on the M5 heading back to Cardiff. The Very Light Rail Innovation Centre at Dudley is once again host to a Class 08, with No. 08892 arriving from Worksop around February 20, it becoming the third of the class to visit the facility.

Railway Support Services

Two of the shunters hired by RSS from third parties were on the move during the first half of February, beginning with the return of No. 08706 to Wishaw around February 9. Its displacement from Garston had been expected for some time following the arrival of No. 08939 back in November. The following week saw a switch at Hams Hall with No. 08899 arriving from Wishaw to allow No. 09004 to be replaced. The latter was duly returned to the Avon Valley Railway on February 16 for repairs and an exam.

INDUSTRIALS

■ Railway Support Services commenced a new hire contract with the ICL Group at Tees Dock at the end of January, replacing Ed Murray as the shunter provider. First to arrive was Thomas Hill No. 261V, the 1976-built 0-6-0DH beginning a new career following its acquisition from Imerys last summer. With the intervening period spent at Wishaw, the locomotive now carries a yellow livery in place of the previous blue, when it was numbered as P405D *Alex* and TOPS registered as No. 01571. Before arriving in the north-east, the shunter initially visited West Coast Railways' Carnforth depot in mid-January for tyre turning. A second former Imerys shunter, Sentinel No. 10150 (P406D *Isaac*), is due to join it shortly.

■ Late January saw a further RMS Locotec shunter depart Wolsingham, English Electric-built No. 3994 heading to Rowsley on January 29, before being transferred by rail to Darley Dale six days later. However, the 1970-built 0-6-0DH is earmarked for spares recovery only. Still going strong is 1961-built Sentinel No. 10070, which was released from overhaul and repaint at Chesterfield in February. The locomotive was initially moved to Barrow Hill for testing and naming, being christened *Brian Lark CME* in a surprise ceremony on February 12, after RMS Locotec's retiring fleet engineer. Shortly afterwards, the locomotive moved on again to Heysham Power Station.

■ The relocation of Boden Rail Engineering to the newly-constructed maintenance depot at Colwick has included the transfer of depot shunter Thomas Hill No. 134C, the 1964-built diesel hydraulic moving by road from Nottingham Eastcroft on December 28.

PRESERVATION

The discovery of power unit problems with No. D4118 (08888) have brought its hire spell at the Gwili Railway to a premature end, with February 6/7 bringing its return to the **Avon Valley Railway** for attention.

The engine requires a partial strip down to inspect all six cylinders as well as fit new seals and gaskets, but it is hoped to have the work completed by the spring. Also from the Diesel Electric Shunter Company stable, No. 08359 is due to leave the Bodmin & Wenford Railway in March, initially also to Bitton to undergo maintenance before going out on hire again.

Valley Rail Preservation has added a fourth shunter to its fleet with the purchase of No. 08769 from the Dean Forest Diesel Association. However, rather than join Nos. 08202, 09004 and 09015 at the Avon Valley, the company has reached agreement with the **Dean Forest Railway** for No. 08769 to remain at the line on a long-term basis. The coming months will see the shunter, which carries work-stained BR green as No. D3937, receive significant attention, although its *Gladys* nameplates have already been removed as part of the sale. Meanwhile, restoration work continues on No. 09015 at Bitton and this now carries Departmental grey.

Also with a new owner is No. D4107 (09019), which has been acquired by the Diesel & Electric Preservation Group from JJP Holdings. The Class 09 will continue to be based on the **West Somerset Railway**, where it has been located since entering preservation 11 years ago, with the DEPG having been responsible for its maintenance for a number of years already.

The transfer of Sentinel No. 10111 into preservation at the **Eden Valley Railway** was completed on February 14, with road movement from Sellafield. The 1963-built 0-6-0DH, which carries No.2, has been donated following its replacement by the Clayton CBD80s.

The latest addition to the industrial fleet based at the **Swindon & Cricklade Railway** is John Fowler 0-6-0DH No. 4240015. Dating from 1962, it arrived on February 9, following acquisition from Peter Briddon and transfer south from Darley Dale.

David Russell

Class 777s into temporary store at Long Marston

Brand-new Merseyrail units placed in storage pending commissioning.

THE most recent six Class 777 Stadler electric multiple units to arrive in the United Kingdom from Poland have all been taken to Long Marston, where they are being held prior to being sent to Kirkdale for commissioning before entering service.

The Merseyrail depot is only able to deal with a limited number of sets undergoing/awaiting commissioning and the six sets in store are likely to be moved to Kirkdale in pairs in the coming weeks.

RailAdventure's four High Speed Train power cars (Nos. 43465/484 and 43468/480) took No. 777029 and then Nos. 777043/045 from Walton Old Junction (Warrington) to Long Marston on January 30, and February 1 respectively. On February 14, DB Cargo UK No. 66142 *Maritime Intermodal Three* hauled Nos. 777037/039/041 from Dollands Moor to Wembley Yard, after which the three '777s' continued north as the 6Q77 13.30 Wembley Yard-Walton Old Junction behind Nos. 43468/480. The next day saw the pair of power cars take the three units from Walton Old Junction to Long Marston.

Put into traffic on February 6, was No. 777034, bringing the number of sets which have operated in service to 38; see table below for full fleet status details.



The first of six Merseyrail Class 777s to move to Long Marston for temporary storage was No. 777029. On January 30, the '777' is shunted by RailAdventure Nos. 43465/468/480/484. On the right are stored South Western Railway Class 701s, four ex-CrossCountry Mk.3s and two rakes of Mk.5As last used by TransPennine Express. Jack Boskett

MERSEYRAIL CLASS 777 – FLEET STATUS

In service: 777001-020/022-026/028/030/031/034/036/049/140/142/144/146/148/150/152.
At Kirkdale (for commissioning): 777021/027/032.
Stored at Long Marston (awaiting commissioning): 777029/037/039/041/043/045.
Still to arrive in UK from Poland: 777033/035/047/051/053.
Still to arrive in UK from Switzerland: 777038.

DMU

CLASS 150 SPRINTER

FIRE damaged Northern No. 150218 left Newton Heath by road on February 21. It has been moved to Brodie Engineering, Kilmarnock, for repairs.

CLASS 156 SUPER SPRINTER

FRESH from its C6 overhaul at Wolverton, Northern No. 156490 returned to Heaton on February 5. Heading the opposite way as the 5Z56 05.41 Heaton-Wolverton the next day was Northern No. 156469.

CLASS 165 TURBO

HAVING undergone Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) work, Chiltern Railways Nos. 165020/034 were released from Bristol Barton Hill on February 7 and ran back to Banbury to resume duties with Chiltern Railways.

CLASS 166 TURBO

RUNNING as the 5Q81 08.50 Wolverton-St Philip's Marsh, Great Western Railway No. 166218 returned from its refurbishment on February 7.

February 3 saw GWR No. 166203 leave Wabtec, Doncaster for St Philip's Marsh after its C4 overhaul, with GWR No. 166208 heading north to Doncaster for attention on February 11. Another set, GWR No. 166205, was released on February 16 and was noted passing Chesterfield running almost two hours late en route back to St Philip's Marsh.

CLASS 170 TURBOSTAR

THE last Class 170 on TfW Rail's books, No. 170208, left Cardiff Canton for Derby Etches Park and transfer to East Midlands Railway on January 28. The unit had last been used by TfW Rail the previous month.

CLASS 197 CIVITY

ENTERING revenue-earning service on February 10 was TfW Rail No. 197120, its first working being the 1H79 05.52 Chester-Manchester Airport. Six days later, TfW No. 197118 also made its passenger debut.

The first appearance of a '197' in traffic on the Maesteg branch took place on February 15, when No. 197050 operated the 2L63 17.23 Cardiff Central-Maesteg and 2L68 18.18 return.



East Midlands Railway Class 158s continue to operate long-distance services with little fanfare. On February 24, EMR No. 158777 passes Turves with the 1R76 13.53 Norwich-Liverpool Lime Street. Class 170s have been introduced on a handful of trains on these routes, having been cascaded from other operators. Ryan Hayward

EMU

CLASS 319

THE last of the former London Northwestern Railway '319' sets remaining at Northampton King's Heath, No. 319214, was moved to Cockshute Yard in early February. Work is taking place to strip the unit in advance of its disposal to Newport.

During February, the last three former Northern Class 319s at Allerton were sent for scrap. First to depart was No. 319369, which departed for Sims, Newport behind Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* on February 7. Seven days later, ROG No. 37884 *Cepheus* took the last two sets, Nos. 319379/386, away for disposal, when it worked the 5Q77 07.58 Allerton-Sims, Newport.

CLASS 390 PENDOLINO

ON February 2, Avanti West Coast No. 390011 *City of Lichfield* emerged from its refurbishment at Widnes, its place being taken by No. 390043 which was released later in the month. Being refurbished at the end of the month, and due for release on March 2, was No. 390047.

CLASS 398

MORE of the TfW Rail tram-train sets which have been at Melton Rail Innovation and Development Centre (RIDC) for testing have departed for South Wales. Nos. 20142 *Sir John Betjeman* and 20189 were used for the movements of Nos. 398005 (January 26), 398001 (February 2) and 398003 (February 9). The planned transfer of No. 398002 on February 16 failed to take place.

CLASS 450 DESIRO

FOLLOWING on from the recent repaint of the last South West Trains liveried Class 444 (*RE*334), the last Class 450 still to carry South West Trains colours, No. 450031, entered Bournemouth depot's paintshop on February 6 for application of South Western Railway grey.

CLASS 458 JUNIPER

RETURNING north for rectification on January 29 was No. 458424, GB Railfreight Nos. 57305 and 47749 *City of Truro* sandwiching the unit as the 5Q58 17.11 Bournemouth-Alstom, Widnes. It arrived back at Bournemouth on February 22, GBRf Nos. 57303 and 57306 *Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate 175* having dealt with its movement from Widnes.

On February 9, No. 458515 ran from Wimbledon Park to Bournemouth for preparatory work to be carried out in advance of its conversion to Class 458/4. It moved to Widnes on February 13, with GBRf Nos. 57303/305 providing traction. The two Class 57s had earlier in the day worked the 5X62 05.24 Wembley Yard-Bournemouth with No. 458416 (ex 458516), which had been released from Widnes on February 12.

CLASS 465 NETWORKER

EMERGING from Wabtec, Doncaster on February 10, following overhaul, was No. 465930, which departed for its home depot, Slade Green, behind Rail Operations Group No. 37884 *Cepheus*.

CLASS 466 NETWORKER

ON January 26, Nos. 466023/035 were hauled from Wabtec, Doncaster to Slade Green by GB Railfreight No. 66756 *Royal Corps of Signals*, which then returned north the next day, as the 5Q89 11.30 Slade Green-Wabtec, Doncaster with Nos. 466003/042 in tow.

CLASS 507 & 508

AFTER a short spell at Crewe South Yard, where they had arrived on January 22, Nos. 507004 and 508104 undertook their journey to the scrapyard on February 5, when No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* hauled them to Sims Metals at Newport Docks for cutting up. A further two sets were dispatched to the South Wales disposal facility on February 19, Nos. 507013/032 being moved by No. 37884 *Cepheus* as the 5Q78 06.11 Birkenhead North-Sims, Newport.

CLASS 701 ARTERIO

DELIVERED to Eastleigh Traction & Rolling Stock Maintenance Depot from Alstom, Derby on January 26, was No. 701528, GB Railfreight No. 47749 *City of Truro* undertaking the move. The following month saw the last two five-car sets emerge from Derby, both of which were moved by GBRf No. 69008 to Eastleigh. No. 701529 departed Derby on February 9, and last-built No. 701530 on February 16. Two of the lower numbered five-car sets, Nos. 701503/504, remain at Derby, along with ten-car Nos. 701005/058-060. No. 69008 took No. 701002 from Derby to Eastleigh on February 2, this being the fourth time the set has left Derby.

No. 69008 also carried out other Class 701 moves during February. Taken from Eastleigh to Bicester were No. 701508 (February 1) and 701521/527 (February 14). On February 7, No. 701010 was taken from Worksop to Wembley, after which the '69' hauled No. 701003 from Wembley to Eastleigh. It also took No. 701057 from MoD Marchwood to Eastleigh on February 19.

Making its first appearance in service between Waterloo and Windsor & Eton Riverside was No. 701028 on February 6. It is the fourth set to carry passengers, the others being Nos. 701037/039/043.

CLASS 710 AVENTRA

FEBRUARY 5 saw No. 710374 taken from Ilford to Willesden by Rail Operations Group Nos. 37510 *Orion* and 37884 *Cepheus*. Here it joined No. 710270, which was, at the time, the only other '710' yet to be put into service; it subsequently entered traffic on the Euston to Watford Junction route towards the end of the month. No. 710374 undertook its first test runs on the West Coast Main Line on February 20.

CLASS 720 AVENTRA

DURING February, several undelivered Class 720s were shuffled between Alstom, Derby and Worksop, where they are having some work undertaken. Heading to Worksop behind GB Railfreight No. 69010 on February 1 was No. 720138, and this was followed by three similar moves using No. 69008: taking Nos. 720101 and 720502 on February 8, 720143 and 720519 on February 15 and 720142 on February 21. Heading the opposite direction, from Worksop back to Derby, were Nos. 720102 (February 8) and 720138 (February 15), both hauled by No. 69008. A further move, that of No. 720101 as the 5Q13 11.01 Worksop-Derby Litchurch Lane on February 23, used GBRf Nos. 57305 and 57306 *Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate 175* as traction.



East Midlands Railway No. 810001 has been undertaking testing on the East Coast Main Line in recent weeks. On February 7, the five-car bi-mode leaves Peterborough with the 5Q32 13.26 to Newark Northgate. When the trains enter service next year they will operate on the Midland Main Line. Stuart West

CLASS 730 AVENTRA

THE long-awaited introduction of Class 730 electric multiple units in the West Midlands took place on February 11 (see *Headline News*). One diagram is currently in operation, and on weekdays the set is booked to work the following services:

2W03	06.18	Wolverhampton-Birmingham NS
2W04	07.11	Birmingham NS-Wolverhampton
2A07	07.48	Wolverhampton-Walsall
2W14	09.07	Walsall-Wolverhampton
2A17	10.18	Wolverhampton-Walsall
2W24	11.37	Walsall-Wolverhampton
2A27	12.48	Wolverhampton-Walsall
2W34	14.07	Walsall-Wolverhampton
2A37	15.18	Wolverhampton-Walsall
2W44	16.37	Walsall-Wolverhampton
2A47	17.48	Wolverhampton-Walsall
2W54	19.07	Walsall-Wolverhampton
2A57	20.18	Wolverhampton-Walsall
2W64	21.37	Walsall-Wolverhampton
2W67	22.48	Wolverhampton-Walsall

Used on the diagram in the first week were No. 730018, followed by No. 730006. Both had previously seen use on former '319' workings into/out of Euston. Making its first appearance in service February 14, on the 2B06 06.56 Bletchley-Euston, was No. 730044.

Several moves between Oxley and Melton Rail Innovation and Development Centre (RIDC) took place during the month, all carried out using Rail Operations Group No. 37510 *Orion*. On February 8, the English Electric Type 3 brought Nos. 730030/031, which had been at the RIDC since September 2023, back to Soho before taking Nos. 730010/021 to the RIDC. Their stay was much shorter; they returned to Soho on February 19, with Nos. 730013/018 heading the opposite direction as the 5Q58 14.46 Soho-Melton RIDC.

Several new five-car (Class 730/2) sets have emerged from Alstom, Derby. No. 730210 arrived at Oxley on January 30, followed by Nos. 730212 (February 9), 730127 (February 16) and 730211 (February 23). No. 730206 was taken to Brush, Loughborough for attention on February 14. All these moves were, again, carried out by ROG No. 37510 *Orion*.



Pioneer Class 805, No. 805001, has received full Avanti West Coast colours following its return to Hitachi's Newton Aycliffe factory following initial testing on the main line. The five-car bi-mode stands at the North East facility on February 17. Steven Barker

IET

CLASS 802

AFTER more than six months at Arlington, Eastleigh, undergoing crack repairs, Great Western Railway No. 802011 was released on February 16,when it ran to Westbury and then on to North Pole depot.

CLASS 805

ON February 2, Avanti West Coast accepted its fifth Class 805 IET, No. 805009. Others accepted so far are Nos. 805002/004/005/008. Test unit No. 805001, which was moved back to Newton Aycliffe on October 4, 2023, has lost its base white livery in favour of full Avanti colours.

CLASS 810 AURORA

HAVING returned to Hitachi's Newton Aycliffe factory in December, No. 810001 formed the 5D10 14.07 Merchant Park Sidings-Peterborough and 5Q10 17.00 Peterborough-Melton Rail Innovation Development Centre (RIDC) on January 29. The following month saw the new unit, the first of 33 bi-mode sets on order for East Midlands Railway, undertake main line testing from Melton RIDC to Peterborough. When ordered in 2019, the first sets were expected to enter service in the first quarter of 2023.

Seen outside Hitachi's Newton Aycliffe facility on February 23 were Nos. 810003/005, both carrying EMR livery.

Off-lease Class 175s head to Ely

ANGEL Trains has begun moving its off-lease Class 175 fleet to Ely Papworth for storage. The first two examples, Nos. 175004/009, arrived from Landore under their own power on February 22.

Earlier in the month (February 12), Rail Operations Group Nos. 37510 *Orion* and 37800 *Cassiopeia* took No. 175114 from Holyhead to Central Rivers for attention before being returned on February 21 by No. 37510 with No. 37884 *Cepheus*. Also at Central Rivers is No. 175116, which arrived from Crewe on January 24.

The Class 175s, which entered service between 2000 and 2001, were taken out of use by TfW Rail last year. All 27 sets are presently listed on Angel Trains' website as being available for lease and/or disposal.

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DEPOT TALK

Correct to February 23, 2024

Allocations
170208 CF-DY
197120 HQ-CH
319369/379/386 sent for disposal
321334/341 HQ/SAXU-GW/VRMU
321407/419/428/440 HQ/SAXU-GW/VRMU
507004/013/032 sent for disposal
508104 sent for disposal
701002 newly delivered HQ/HYHQ
701028 HQ-WD
701529/530 newly delivered HQ/HYHQ
720101/138/142/143 newly delivered HQ/EBHQ
720502/519 newly delivered HQ/EBHQ
730005/008/009/014/018/044 HQ-BY
730210-212/217 newly delivered HQ/EJHQ
777034 HQ-KD
777037/039/041 newly delivered HQ/HEHQ
777150 HQ-KD

Liveries
BR blue/grey: 455868
South Western Railway: 450031, 458416

Named
801225 *Eleanor*
802213 *Unity*

Renumbered
458516-458416

Formations
458416:67616+74016+74116+67716

Now in passenger traffic
197120
701028
730005/008/009/014/018/044
777034
777150

Back in passenger traffic
334040

Sold
MCL Solutions, Gascoigne Wood: 321443
Varamis Rail: 321440

Stored/stopped locations
Bournemouth: 458416
Brodie Engineering, Kilmarnock: 150218
Cockshute Yard, Stoke: 319214
Derby Litchurch Lane: 720101/102/138, 720502
Eastleigh Traction & Rolling Stock Maintenance Depot: 701002/003/057, 701529/530
Ely: 175004/009
Gascoigne Wood: 730023/024/038
Holyhead: 175114
Long Marston: 777029/037/039/041/043/045
Loughborough: 730206
MoD Bicester: 701508/521/526/527
Oxley: 730211/212/217
Reading: 230001
Taff's Well: 398003
Wembley: 701010
Widnes: 458515
Willesden: 710374
Worksop: 720142/143, 720519

Disposals
Sims Metals, Newport: Arrival dates:
February 5: 507004, 508104;
February 7: 319369;
February 14: 319379/386;
February 19: 507013/032

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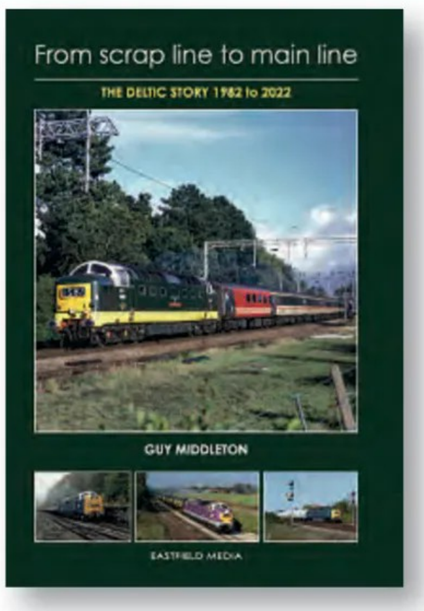
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Gareth Bayer

End of the line for the 'Shenfield Shark'

Having survived three-and-a-half decades dumped adjacent to Shenfield station, there is no happy ending for the 75-year-old ballast plough brake van.

THE long-running saga of the 'Shenfield Shark', No. DB 993733, has come to an end with its disposal after around 35 years.

Having been seemingly forgotten after being detached with a hot box at the Essex station in the late-1980s, various attempts had been made to recover the ZUW ballast plough brake van over the past decade for preservation. However, with the adjacent platform roads being wired at 25kV ac and the questionable structural integrity of the 1956-built wagon, owner DB Cargo UK was left with no choice but to cut it up on site. This was completed over the weekend of February 24/25.



➔ **No. DB993733 stands at Shenfield on December 30, 2021, where it had stood more than 30 years before being scrapped over the last weekend in February.** Richard Clinnick

DEVELOPMENTS

■ DB CARGO UK: While some of the ancient YKA 'Osprey' and YWA 'Salmon' track panel carriers have recently started to go for scrap (*RE*332), DBC apparently sees a future for some vehicles. On January 26, Nos. DB 996468/939 departed DBC's overhaul/repair operation at Stoke-on-Trent after receiving attention. They had both arrived at the former Marcroft Engineering facility on April 6, 2023. They were followed on February 2, by YKA Nos. DB 996405/666. While the latter had only been on site since May 22, 2023, No. DB 996405 had arrived at Stoke as far back as April 4, 2018.

■ COLAS RAIL: At 39.54m (130ft) in length, Plasser & Theurer's Unimat 09-4x4/4S dynamic tampers are one of the most impressive examples of on track plant currently working in the UK. The fleet is now 12-strong with the addition of two more machines for Colas since the beginning of 2024. Having arrived through the Channel Tunnel, on January 10, No. DR 75016 (99 70 9123 018-2) was collected by DB Cargo UK No. 66172 and moved north as the 6Q01 08.55 Dollands Moor-Acton. The orange track machine was later transferred to Plasser's West Ealing facility for commissioning. The second example, No. DR 75017 (99 70 9123 019-0), made a similar journey on February 23, forming the load for DBC No. 66054 working the 6Q01 13.56 Dollands Moor-West Ealing.

Notably the pair reuse numbers initially applied to Plasser & Theurer AL230 liners (the tamping process required separate vehicles in these early days) that were built between 1965 and 1971 and formed part of the first generation of track machines purchased by British Rail. Their 'numbersakes' are long gone, Nos. DR 75016 and DR 75017 were scrapped on site at Derby St Marys in January 1983 and Hitchin in March 1979 respectively. The last of the pioneering AL230s, No. DR 75022, survived until April 1990 before it was cut at Spekeland Road, Liverpool. Of the other 10 'new generation' Unimat 09-4x4/4S tampers, Colas operate Nos. DR 75008-11, acquired between 2018-20, while Swietelsky Babcock Rail (SBRail) roster Nos. DR 74001/2 and 75012-15, which arrived between 2013 and 2021.

■ GB RAILFREIGHT: February 5, brought the latest arrival of new equipment for GBRf in the form of 20 Greenbrier Europe-built FEA-G 'twin' container flats from the factories in Świdnica and Oława, Poland. Having made their way to Dollands Moor, Nos. 81 70 4663 301-320 continued their journey behind No. 66304 as a 4Z92 03.45 to Peterborough Yard.

■ NETWORK RAIL: Still turning heads in its newly-applied Loram Rail livery (*RE*334) and now reunited with its *An Comunn Gaidhealach* nameplates, No. 37418 managed to squeeze a couple of JNA/MRA shuttles in during the period under review, between NR saloon No. 975025 *Caroline* diagrams. On February 7, the Class 37/4 was tasked with moving rebuilt JNA-Y 'Hawks' Nos. 81 70 5831 225-228 to Toton North Yard as the 6Z37 17.00 from Loram's Derby Railway Technical Centre site. It was out again on February 19, with Nos. 81 70 5831 229-232 in tow and working under a 6Z37 06.39 headcode to Toton. The '37' returned the same day with a 6Z38 09.23 to Derby RTC comprised of MRA donor wagons Nos. 501310/30/68-70. Also, two other recent MRA deliveries have been: on December 12, No. 37418 worked a 6Z38 14.23 Toton-Derby with Nos. 501027/87/199-201. Eight days later it was in charge of Nos. 501306/26/356-8, working as a 6Z38 11.50 to Derby.

Following reports of Class 37s on snowplough test runs (*RE*334), Direct Rail Services dispatched Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower* and 37422 *Victorious* and ZZA ploughs Nos. ADB 965203 & ADB 965243 on February 8, to Stockport as cover for the Hope Valley route in case of heavy snowfall. The formation was not required, but did still work the 7Z92 10.30 to New Mills South Junction and return before later returning to Crewe Gresty Bridge as the 7Z93 19.03 ex-Stockport.

Updating last month's column, the dates of the various snowplough duties were as follows: Nos. 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* and 66434 on December 14 (7Z76), Nos. 37425 and 37422 on January 17 (7Z96 southbound) and January 20 (7Z96 northbound).

■ TOUAX RAIL: TEA No. GERS 89024, which hitched a lift on the 6Z73 Margam-Liverpool EMR on December 16 as far as Warrington Arpley, has finally made it to DB Cargo UK's maintenance facility at Stoke-on-Trent. The freshy refurbished tanker arrived at its destination on January 26.

■ VTG RAIL: Repatriated to the UK in 2021 for use on the DFDS/iPort 'Humber Express' container service between Immingham and Doncaster, the 22 IXA (UIC code Sdffgss) 'Mega3' container wagons have been dispatched from storage at York to Gascoigne Wood for likely scrapping. Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* hauled the 6A16 11.07 from York Yard North on February 17, with Nos. 37 80 4905 001-022. Built in 2002 by Babcock Rail at Rosyth with Strategic Rail Authority funding, the piggyback pioneers (then TOPS coded KAA) were leased from NACCO and were initially used to carry Blue Circle Cement swapbodies between Hope and Selby and Westbury and Southampton. Unfortunately, these trains ceased when the Strategic Rail Authority money ran out and the fleet was eventually exported in 2008. Victa Railfreight and VTG Rail (the owners after acquiring NACCO) returned them to this country for use on the short-lived service from Immingham to Doncaster iPort that aimed its sights at the container traffic being carried by road vehicles on the congested M18 motorway. This came to an end in early 2022 and the wagons were in store at York by the middle of the same year.

■ PRESERVATION: TTA No. VTG 60580, the sole remaining two-axle former BP/Ineos tank wagon at Gascoigne Wood, has been preserved. Latterly in use as an internal user, it moved to the Telford Steam Railway in the third week of January. Meanwhile, Touax (ex-GE Rail Services/Cargowaggon) IVA No. 23 80 2398 590-1, still branded from its previous life carrying Ford car parts, moved from Ellesmere Port to the Bodmin & Wenford in mid-December for use as a stores van.

■ DISPOSALS: The last week of January and the first three weeks of February again saw the usual flow of redundant steel carriers and two-axle ballast and spoil wagons to scrapyards in the Midlands. Meanwhile, in the South West, cutting was completed on the china clay CDAs, following a pause since mid-December, which *Rail Express* understands was due to contamination from leaking wagons. Finally, SEA/SPA plate wagons Nos. 460578 and 460904 were rescued from EMR Attercliffe in December and are now at Wishaw being prepared for a new duty.

CF Booth Ltd, Rotherham: MFA 391562, MHA/MPA 394010/48/96/113/45/70/2/358/501/15/90/605/10/60/77/731/830/82/4/928/97, 396043 (ex-Doncaster Belmont)

EMR Attercliffe: BBA 910061/2/117/99/240/56/84/306/42/45 6/70/7/563/85, BLA 910039 (ex-Scunthorpe)

EMR Kingsbury: MFA 391138/45/258/405/613, MHA/MPA 394036/70/90/100/80/206/50/61/305/72/85/527/30/52/72/6/627/818/54/69/977, 396015/33/48/66 (ex-Toton), BBA 910002/33/64/181/204/15/45/352/8/76/83/91/412/515/56 (ex-Scunthorpe)

St Blazey (on site by Henry Orchard & Sons): CDA 375074/87/93/9/107/16/8/21. The final pair, Nos. 375075/112, were cut up on January 26.

Second Midland Pullman HST planned

Locomotive Services to create short set for West Highland specials

LOCOMOTIVE Services Group is creating a second Midland Pullman High Speed Train set, made of five vehicles, for use on weekend charters to Fort William and Mallaig.

Currently, LSG has 12 Mk.3s in Midland Pullman colours, comprising two catering cars, 10 Trailer First (TF) and two former Trailer Guard Standard, reconfigured with First Class seats (TGF) – one of the latter coaches, No. 44081, was previously in Rail Charter Services livery.

A further TF, No. 41208, is being overhauled at Arlington, Eastleigh, for Midland Pullman use, while the three TFs used on the Staycation Express, Nos. 41160/166/187, were brought south from Crewe to Eastleigh by Nos. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie* on February 21, with No. D1924 (47810) *Crewe Diesel Depot* also dead in the consist. These coaches will provide sufficient First Class accommodation for both Midland Pullman sets.

The full-length set requires two catering cars (Nos. 40801/802), so at least one of the two other Trailer Restaurant First Buffet (TRFB) vehicles presently at Eastleigh will be reactivated for use in the second set. Looking ahead, if the short rake were to be extended to a full-length set, LSG still has other coaches, primarily at the Severn Valley Railway and at Carlisle Upperby, which can be returned to traffic (see table).

LOCOMOTIVE SERVICES INTERCITY HST COACHES

Number	Type	Livery	Status/location
40106	TSB	FG	Stored – Kidderminster (SVR)
40221	TRB	EMT	Stored – Carlisle Upperby
40801	TRFB	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
40802	TK (was TRFK)	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
40804	TRFB	RCS	Stored – Arlington, Eastleigh
40808	TRFB	FG	Stored – Arlington, Eastleigh
40902	TRFB	FG	Sold – exported to Mexico
41059	TF	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
41063	TF	EMT	Stored – Carlisle Upperby
41108	TF	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
41117	TF	EMT	Stored – Carlisle Upperby
41149	TF	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
41160	TF	RCS	Moved to Eastleigh February 21, 2024
41162	TF	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
41166	TF	RCS	Moved to Eastleigh February 21, 2024
41167	TF	FG	Stored – Eastleigh Works
41169	TF	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
41176	TF	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
41182	TF	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
41183	TF	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
41187	TF	RCS	Moved to Eastleigh February 21, 2024
41208	TF	EMT	Overhaul – Arlington, Eastleigh
42100	TS	EMT	Stored – Carlisle Upperby
42220	TS	EMT	Stored – Carlisle Upperby
42319	TS	GWR	Stored – Kidderminster (SVR)
42583	TS	GWR	Stored – Kidderminster (SVR)
44047	TGS	EMT	Stored – Carlisle Upperby
44078	TGF (was TGS)	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
44081	TGF (was TGS)	BP	Operational – Midland Pullman
46006	TC	FG	Stored – Arlington, Eastleigh
46012	TC	FG	Stored – Kidderminster (SVR)
46014	Sleeper (was TC)	RC	Operational – Chairman's train

Livery codes: BP – Blue Pullman, **EMT** – East Midlands Trains, **FG** – First Group, **GWR** – Great Western Railway, **RCS** – Rail Charter Services, **RC** – Red/Cream.

■ The number of locomotive-hauled vehicles in ScotRail colours has been increased from six to seven, with First Open No. 11087, which previously carried InterCity livery, having its red stripe changed to blue. E

West Coast Railways offers Mk.2 'air cons' for sale

FOURTEEN Mk.2s located at Southall have been put up for sale by West Coast Railways. All have been stored at Southall for many years and retain either InterCity or Virgin Trains colours. Several are former Cargo-D vehicles, although they never saw any active use with that company before it ceased trading in 2011.

The full list of coaches offered for sale are: Mk.2f RFB – 1252/53, Mk.2e TSO – 5815/88, Mk.2f TSO – 5925/58/78, 6009/29/45/73, 6134/51/54.

Meanwhile, a rake of WCR Mk.1s were moved from Southall to Carnforth on January 30. With three locomotives, Nos. 47815 *Great Western*, 47245 *W.E. Day 75th Anniversary* and 33029, at the head of the train, the rake comprised First Open (FO) Nos. 3058, 3136, 99121/122/125/128, Tourist Standard Open (TSO) Nos. 4960, 5032, Brake Corridor Composite (BCK) No. 99304, Miniature Buffet (RMB) No. 99311 and RK (Kitchen Car) No. 99712.



The first rake of Mk.5A coaches to lose TransPennine Express livery is TP03, formed of Nos. 11503, 12707-709, 12803, which lost its colour scheme at Long Marston. On February 22, the set is hauled through Worcester Shrub Hill, for attention, by No. 68026 *Enterprise* as the 5Q32 15.43 Long Marston-Longsight. The coaches had moved to Long Marston for temporary storage earlier in the year. Speculation suggests Chiltern Railways could take on some, or all, of the Mk.5As, however nothing has been confirmed.
Harry Wykes

IN BRIEF

MORE ERS ACQUISITIONS

EASTERN Rail Services (ERS) has taken delivery of a pair of Anglia Railways liveried Mk.2f First Open (FO) coaches formerly owned by Locomotive Services. Nos. 3277/295 arrived at Great Yarmouth in early February. Both were previously stored at Rowsley (Peak Rail).

Also joining the ERS fleet is former Data Acquisition & Testing Services (DATS) Mk.3a Restaurant First Modular (RFM) No. 10237. Hauled from Burton Wetmore to Loram, Derby, by Rail Operations Group No. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* on February 8, it is intended to become part of the firm's Mk.3 charter rake, however it has been fitted with a Dellner coupling ahead of a 'special project'. It was due to move to ERS' Yarmouth facility after this issue of *Rail Express* went to press. The coach is no stranger to charter work; as long ago as 2007, when part of the Direct Rail Services fleet, it was used on 'Stobart Pullman' trains.

TRANSPORT FOR WALES MK.4 UPDATE

THE second extended Mk.4 set, HD03, returned to traffic in its extended form with No. 12446 added to the set, on February 6. The next set to be dealt with, HD05, has had No. 12452 added to its formation, but, as of late February, had still not been released from Crewe. Another coach, No. 12477 which will be added to HD05 in due course, was brought north from Landore to Crewe by Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* on February 8. Acting as barriers were Nos. 12215 and 82220, which returned to Landore behind the same '37' on February 20.

DEPOT TALK

Correct to February 23, 2024

Liveries
Eastern Rail Services blue + branding: 10237
TransPennine Express branding removed: 11503, 12707-709, 12803

For sale
1252/53, 5815/88, 5925/58/78, 6009/29/45/73, 6134/51/54

Stored/stopped locations
Derby Railway Technical Centre: 10237
Great Yarmouth: 10229, 10413, 11078/095, 12021
Long Marston: 11505/511/513, 12713-715/731-733/737-739, 12805/811/813
Longsight: 11503, 12707-709, 12803

David Rapson

Powerscene

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

CLASS 20

Still serving a real purpose in its 67th year, No. 20007 ran light from Kidderminster to Long Marston on February 5, to act as a standby during the main line test runs of Great Western Railway battery unit No. 230001 (see *Headline News*). The Type 1 returned to the Severn Valley Railway on February 16, on the 6Z79 09.30 Long Marston-Wembley behind RailAdventure power cars Nos. 43468/480.

February 4 found Locomotive Services Nos. 37409 *Loch Awe*, D8096 (20096) and D8107 (20107) *Jocelyn Feilding 1940-2020* travelling south with three coaches on the 5Z82 10.20 Crewe-Southall (see *Coaches*). Next day, the Type 1s left Southall with Mk.2 No. 17159 on a route learning journey to Canterbury West and back via Maidstone East, Ashford, Deal and Tonbridge. Similar trips ran on each of the next three days before the LS '20s' and the Mk.2 formed the 5Z91 08.37 Southall-Crewe. The duo was next in action on February 19, taking three coaches from Crewe to Toton for tyre turning prior to heading back to Crewe with the same vehicles four days later.

The combination of Nos. 20142 *Sir John Betjeman* and 20189 had Railvac No. 2 for company on the 6X47 11.37 Butterley Midland Railway Centre-Toton on February 1, before collecting TfW Rail 'tram-train' No. 398001 from Old Dalby and transporting it to Pengam and on to Radyr late on February 2.

A similar move, this time with TfW Rail No. 398003, ran as the 6Q21 15.40 Old Dalby-Pengam on February 9.

CLASS 37

During February the operational '37/4' sub-class diminished to just four locomotives, Nos. 37401 and 37409 belonging to Locomotive Services (LSL), Harry Needle Railroad Company No. 37405, which is hired by Colas Railfreight, and Colas' own No. 37421. Stored pending disposal were Direct Rail Services Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower*, 37419 *Driver Tony Kay 1974-2019*, 37422 Victorious, 37424 *Avro Vulcan XH558*, 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/ Concrete Bob* along with Nos. 37605, 37716 and 57301. Prior to its removal from service No. 37407 hauled Beilhack snowplough ADB965581 on the 7Z40 10.28 Doncaster West Yard-Scunthorpe and back on February 2. Six days later Nos. 37407/422 had snowploughs ADB965203/243 for company on the 7Z92 06.10 Gresty Bridge-Stockport, later heading to New Mills South Junction.

Meanwhile, No. 37405 (COFS) powered the 6J91 11.05 Stafford-Rugby with track machine DR73913 on February 1, and the 6Z37 11.13 Bescot-Rugby on February 22, with Kirow crane DRK81612 and runners. In between those jobs, Network Rail No. 97304 *John Tiley* and HNRC No. 37405 traversed the Cambrian on February 16, on the 6C54 02.01 Chirk-Aberystwyth and 6C56 15.48 return, handling those trains from and to Coleham with Colas No. 56113 working between Chirk and Coleham. Colas Nos. 37219 and 37421 reached Oban with their test train on February 1 and Mallaig the following day, although No. 37219 was alone when reaching Tweedbank early on February 7.

Preserved No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach,* hired by Loram, passed Corby with saloon No. 975025 *Caroline*, whilst running between Derby and Cricklewood on February 20. The following day the pair left Bedford for Peterborough via Stratford, Ipswich and Ely before moving on to visit Goole, Hull and Scarborough on February 22. Rail Operations Group No. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* had five Mk.3 coaches in tow on the 5L48 08.35 Castle Donington-Great Yarmouth on February 9, while Locomotive Services Nos. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie* and D1924 (47810) *Crewe Diesel Depot* handled the 5Z84 08.36 Crewe-Eastleigh Arlington with two translator vehicles and three High Speed Train Mk.3s on February 21. LS Nos. D6851 (37667) and 37409 were then tasked with moving an 11-coach set from Eastleigh to Crewe the next day.

CLASS 40

'The Whistling Highlander', a two-day tour from Crewe to Inverness and back, left the Cheshire town on February 24, with No. D213 (40013) *Andania* at the head of 10 coaches with support from No. D1935 (47805) *Roger Hosking MA 1925-2013* at the rear. The outward journey ran direct to Inverness while the return on February 25, the 1Z14 09.00 Inverness-Crewe, was routed via Aberdeen, Kirkcaldy and Falkirk Grahamston to rejoin the West Coast Main Line. The pioneer EE Type 4 No. D200 (40122) was moved from the National Railway Museum, York to Locomotion, Shildon along with No. 31018 (D5500) on February 27, sandwiched between West Coast Railway Nos. 37676 *Loch Rannoch* and 47746 *Chris Fudge 29.7.70-22.6.10*.

CLASS 43

With a number of Merseyrail Class 507 units still in traffic, the most recent Class 777 sets to be delivered to the UK have been put to store (see *Units*). For instance, on February 1, the four Rail Adventure power cars Nos. 43468/480 and 43465/484 moved a trio of '777s' on the 6Q47 07.52 Walton Old Junction-Long Marston. A similar stock transfer occurred on February 15, when Nos. 43468/480 took the three sets to Long Marston that they had brought north from Wembley the previous day. The same power cars hauled 10 IFA wagons forming the 4Z44 05.00 Gascoigne Wood-Wembley on February 9. The two power cars not to have seen use with Rail Adventure, Nos. 43423/467 (both still sporting rubbed-down East Midlands Trains blue livery), were taken from Eastleigh Works to Kidderminster on February 21, sandwiched between Nos. 43468 and 43480, for attention at the Severn Valley Railway.

CLASS 47

West Coast Railways No. 47815 *Great Western* had a varied month beginning on February 10, when it replaced Bulleid Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* at Hellifield, going forward in 'top and tail' mode with WCR No. 57315 on the 1Z87 14.17 Carlisle-Manchester Piccadilly and reversing at Preston. Six days later, accompanied by another two-tone green locomotive, No. 57009 *G J Churchward*, the pair appropriately traversed Great Western metals with saloon No. 999506. After leaving Southall depot at either end of the saloon, Nos. 47815 and 57009 formed the 2Z01 10.08 Hayes & Harlington-London Euston via Willesden South West Sidings thence heading to North Pole International via Kensington Olympia later heading for Didcot, Swindon and Reading before returning to Southall. Next day, No. 47815 was a last-minute substitute for No. 86259 *Les Ross/Peter Pan* when the electric locomotive was found to have been blocked in the sidings at Rugby by a track machine. The Type 4 handed over to 'Black Five' No. 44871 and 57601 *Windsor Castle* at Carnforth, later taking the tour from Preston back to London arriving early. A week later No. 47815 replaced No. 44871 at Peterborough on the 1Z21 15.53 York-London King's Cross tailed by No. 47802.

Statesman Rail tours ran to Appleby on February 3, with the 1Z81 08.20 from Stoke-on-Trent powered by Nos. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* and D1924 (47810) *Crewe Diesel Depot* and again on February 17, with the 1Z18 08.07 from Leamington Spa in the care of Nos. D1935 (47805) *Roger Hosking MA 1925-2013* and D1924 (47810). Both return journeys ran via the Carlisle avoider to join the West Coast Main Line at Upperby Bridge Junction. ›



↑ **West Coast Railways No. 47815 *Great Western* stands at Didcot Railway Centre on February 16, with saloon No. 999506 and WCR No. 57009 *G.J. Churchward*. The WCR locomotives had arrived with the 2Z03 13.35 from North Pole International. The saloon was carrying senior executives to inspect sections of the Great Western Railway network that will be affected by planned High Speed 2 works, requiring diversions to other terminals including London Euston, which the '47' and '57' visited during the same day.** Steve King

↓ **On February 19, GB Railfreight No. 60085 *Snowdon* runs north from York with the 6N71 11.45 Doncaster Decoy Yard-Tyne Yard engineer's train. This was one of the first trains the '60' had hauled in more than two years, having spent that period undergoing repairs at Toton.** Duncan McEvoy





The final GB Railfreight Class 56, No. 56098, spent the start of the year hired to Colas Railfreight (*RE*334). Following that, the Type 5 was hired by DC Rail, where it remained as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press. On February 3, the '56' approaches Queen Adelaide, near Ely, with the 6M89 09.01 Middleton Towers-Ravenhead Sidings sand train.
Ryan Hayward

GB Railfreight No. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle/Caisteal Dhùn Eideann* had six JNA wagons in tow running as the 6Z57 10.18 Barrow Hill-Mountsorrel on February 14, six days after teaming up with No. 57310 to move stored electric multiple units Nos. 379017/026 from Doncaster Royal Mail Terminal to Worksop. During a month of regular light engine runs between Crewe and Rugby, Freightliner No. 47830 *Beeching's Legacy* found time to haul No. 70006 from Burton Wetmore to Basford Hall on February 20.

Diversions away from the main East Coast route caused by overhead line issues, gave Newark 'Thunderbird' WCR No. 47812 employment overnight on February 14. The Type 4 was sent to Holgate Sidings, York, to await the arrival of the 1M80 21.43 Low Fell-Willesden Princess Royal Distribution Centre (PRDC) mail formed of Class 325 No. 325004. 1M80 then ran via Leeds to Doncaster where No. 47812 collected No. 325002 on the 1E06 22.45 Willesden PRDC-Low Fell and repeated the trip in the opposite direction as far as York. The same moves occurred the following night albeit with the units on the opposite trains. During the afternoon of February 25, London North Eastern Railway No. 91110 *Battle of Britain Memorial Flight* ground to a halt at Stevenage when powering the 1D17 14.03 London King's Cross-Leeds. The service was terminated and No. 47812 ran light engine to Stevenage ready to drag the empty train to Neville Hill.

DEPOT TALK

Correct to February 23, 2024

Allocations
37407/419/422/425 XHSO-XSDP
37716 XHSO-XSDP
56032 GBGS-GBRG
60017 WQAA-WQBA
66001/005/009/011/012/024/032/035/047/061/076/094/095, 66117-121/127/158/175/177/179/190, 66205 WBAE-WBAT
66311 newly registered RR/GBSD
66312 newly registered RR/GBSD
66313 newly registered RR/GBSD
66314 newly registered RR/GBSD
66315 newly registered RR/GBSD
66316 newly registered RR/GBSD
66591 FD/DHLT-LD/DFIN
67028 WQBA-WQDA
70011 FD/DHLT-LD/DFGI

Renumbered
56032 - 69011
66221 - 66651
77506 - 66314
77505 - 66315
91000 - 91105

Liveries
DB Cargo red: 66221
Maroon: 69009

Named
60085 *Snowdon*
69009 *Western Consort*

Names removed
43027 *Acton Castle*

Stored/stopped locations
Chesterfield (private site): 08423, 08573, 08874, 08936
Crewe Coal Yard: 37407/19/22/25, 37716
Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot: 66091
Great Yarmouth: 43027, 43206/238, 43312/319
Haymarket: 43129
Kidderminster: 43423/467
Laira: 43029/94, 43122/153-155/186/194
Loughborough: 91117

CLASS 50

The only example of the type to find main line use during the month was No. 50008 *Thunderer*. On February 1, the locomotive took a trip from Knottingley to Goole and Selby before heading back to its current base. It left Knottingley again on February 12, bound for Chaddesden where, two days later, it collected seven Mk.3s to form the 5Z50 11.05 Chaddesden-Old Dalby. It was off again on February 22, running light from Knottingley to Darlington to attach the not-so-mobile Robel Mobile Maintenance Train ready for dragging to York Works.

CLASS 55

While there are no immediate tours planned for Locomotive Services No. D9000 (55022) *Royal Scots Grey*, the locomotive undertook two return trips between Crewe and Chester on February 13, hauling Mk.1 No. 1666. The initial outward journey ran as the 5D41 09.00 from Crewe, while the second trip was noted returning to Crewe as the 5K44 15.06 from Chester passing Beeston Castle at 14.25 and running almost an hour ahead of schedule.

CLASS 56

On hire to DC Rail (with Nos. 56091, 56103 and even the hired-in 56301 currently out of action), GB Railfreight's large logo blue No. 56098 had charge of the 6M89 09.01 Middleton Towers-St Helens (Ravenhead South) on February 3, and returned to the Merseyside environs seven days later. On February 6, No. 56098 handled the 6Z44 15.45 Wembley-Acton Yard and three days later the 6L92 11.08 Chaddesden-King's Lynn. During the second part of February, however, No. 56098 was confined to the regular conveyance of stone from Willesden to Quainton Road.

Colas Railfreight No. 56096 hauled the Grangemouth to Sinfin Sidings (Derby) tanks on half a dozen occasions during the month, while amongst some irregular services No. 56049 *Robin of Templecombe 1938-2013* had three timber wagons in tow on the 6Z20 10.46 Carlisle Yard-Doncaster Roberts Road on February 3, and was recorded atop the 6K07 10.00 Dunblane-Carlisle Yard autoballasters on February 11. Colas classmate No. 56051 *Survival* was in action that same day with just two timber wagons forming the 6Z56 10.39 Carlisle Yard-Gascoigne Wood. The same 'Grid' passed Bathgate on February 19 providing motive power for the 6K30 05.00 Airdrie-Motherwell long welded rail train.

CLASS 57

A short Northern Belle set was used for filming on February 21, when West Coast Railways Nos. 57601 *Windsor Castle* and 57315 ran as the 1Z50 06.20 Carnforth-Blackburn, going forward as the 1Z51 09.03 Blackburn-Carnforth via Preston. Four days earlier No. 57601 had 'tailed' the 1Z86 06.35 London Euston-Carlisle from Carnforth with 'Black Five' No. 44871 at the head of the train. WCR No. 57314 *Conwy Castle* returned to action on February 24, with No. 47826 on the 1Z29 05.30 Bristol Temple Meads-Carlisle tour, while that same afternoon No. 57010 powered the 5Z86 13.59 Burton Wetmore-Crewe empty stock in readiness for the following day's football charter from Liverpool to Wembley (see Class 86). Acting as London North Eastern Railway 'Thunderbird', WCR No. 57012 rescued No. 800112 when the latter failed at St Neots on February 13, when running as the 1Y08 05.39 Sunderland-London King's Cross, the Class 57 taking the bi-mode Azuma to Bounds Green. On February 20, Colas No. 70809 failed when hauling the 6E36 17.06 Millerhill Yard-Doncaster and No. 57012 was sent from Newark to clear the East Coast Main Line by assisting 6E36 into Crag Mill Loop.



Direct Rail Services has officially dispensed with its Class 37 fleet, however some of the final duties involved the Type 3s moving snowploughs across the north of England. On February 2, DRS No. 37407 *Blackpool Tower* passes Stainforth and Hatfield, bound for Scunthorpe, with the 7Z40 10.28 Doncaster West Yard-Scunthorpe Trent Junction-Doncaster West Yard. Matt Fisher

Direct Rail Services No. 57309 *Pride of Crewe* turned its hand to freight work on February 20, hauling the 6G94 12.22 Basford Hall-Bescot and again on February 22 and 23. It also powered the 6Z97 17.37 Toton Yard-Bescot on the second occasion and had Railvac No. 2 in tow on the 6X95 14.56 Bescot-Toton yard on February 23. DRS Nos. 57304 *Pride of Cheshire* and 57308 *Jamie Ferguson* moved two snowploughs from Carlisle Kingmoor to Crewe Gresty Bridge on February 7, while GB Railfreight Nos. 57305 and 57310 *Pride of Cumbria* travelled from Leicester to UK Rail Leasing, Loughborough, on February 19, where No. 57310 was taken in for a repaint. South Western Trains Class 458s continue to go to Alstom at Widnes for refurbishing and reforming into four car sets. On February 12, GBRf Nos. 57303 and 57305 left on the 5Q62 18.46 Widnes-Wembley with refurbished No. 458416, returning next day with No. 458515. A similar stock transfer occurred on February 21, when unit No. 458424 left Widnes between GBRf Nos. 57306 *Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate 175* and 57305.

CLASS 59

On hire to Colas Railfreight, No. 59003 *Yeoman Highlander* took three Kirow cranes (DRK81601/21/22) from Westbury to Truro on February 24, returning light engine early the next day. Destined for attention at Leeds Midland Road depot, Freightliner No. 59104 *Village of Great Elm* partnered No. 66572 and three cement presflos on the 6M36 12.16 Westbury-Basford Hall on February 9. Both locomotives ran light to Leeds on February 12 and returned next day with No. 66416. Meanwhile, FL No. 59002 *Alan J Day* remains out of use at Midland Road depot.

CLASS 60

Partly balancing out the loss of the last three DB Cargo Class 60s, GB Railfreight example No. 60085 returned to traffic on February 19, after spending the last two years at Toton. Now named *Snowdon*, the locomotive hauled the 6N71 11.45 Doncaster-Tyne Yard, repeating the act the next day. The 6N71 trip was double headed on February 12, by Nos. 60026 *Helvellyn* and 66759 *Chippy* before No. 60026 provided traction on each of the following two days. Amid suggestions that it was possibly the first member of the class to work a train from the sidings, No. 60095 took charge of the 6E38 11.25 Arcow Quarry-Leeds Hunslet on February 2.

The four operational DC Rail Class 60s Nos. 60028, 60029 *Ben Nevis*, 60046 *William Wilberforce* and 60055 *Thomas Barnardo* have been fully employed of late, generally on aggregate traffic to Aylesbury and Quainton Road for HS2 construction. On February 19, however, No. 60055 was in the Peak District ready to haul a train of limestone as the 6Z69 03.42 Tunstead-Leicester Humberstone Road, having covered the 6M89 09.01 Middleton Towers-St Helens (Ravenhead South) two days earlier. Similarly, No. 60046 hauled the 6Z82 13.13 Peak Forest-Brandon on February 22 and returned empty JNAs from Chaddesden to Peak Forest four days later. Previously, on February 14, Nos. 60055 and 60046 had traversed the Bletchley to Bedford Marston Vale line at either end of just three wagons forming the 6Z60 11.39 Willesden to Chaddesden. The Cappagh blue No. 60028 paid a visit to the Chessington branch on February 8, arriving with the 6O15 12.01 from Willesden DCR and later hauling the 6M17 20.03 return having worked the 6Z70 09.15 Willesden to Grain the previous day.



Having delivered TfW Rail No. 398003 from Melton Rail Innovation and Development Centre to Pengam on February 9, Nos. 20142 *Sir John Betjeman* and 20189 pass Tredington, Warwickshire, the following day with the 6Z24 12.22 Pengam Reception Sidings-Kings Norton, moving translator wagons. RailAdventure uses the '20s' to take the tram-trains from the test site to South Wales, with the '398s' due to enter traffic later this year. John Stretton

CLASS 66

On February 7, GB Railfreight Nos. 66306 *SCS Logistics* and 66307 *Ipswich Town* undertook their first revenue earning duties having left Doncaster Roberts Road depot that morning. No. 66306 ran light to Hampshire to work the 6E15 21.17 Eastleigh Yard-Scunthorpe Trent Yard passing Oxford at 22.50, while No. 66307 set off on the 6L84 21.41 Doncaster Up Decoy-Whitemoor that evening. It returned to Doncaster the next morning in the company of GBRf Nos. 69001 *Mayflower* and 66775 *HMS Argyll* and was part of another trio along with Nos. 66304 and 66781 *Darius Cheskin* forming the 7M18 07.20 Doncaster Up Decoy-Toton Yard. Yet to commence work in the UK, No. 66310 was hauled from UK Rail Leasing, Loughborough to Doncaster on February 8, behind No. 66720 *Wascosa* and to EMD Longport in the care of No. 66704 *Colchester Power Signalbox* on February 20.

Normally to be found in the southern counties, Colas Railfreight Nos. 66847 *Terry Baker* and 66849 *Wylam Dilly* were on engineering duties in a possession at Wrexham on February 11. They travelled back to Crewe and then to Westbury next day in the company of No. 70814. A while later, on February 22, No. 66847 was back in the north passing Accrington with discharged tanks forming the 6E44 10.05 CR Ribble-Haverton Hill, while that same day No. 66846 was noted at Alnmouth shortly before midday atop the 6S31 07.20 Doncaster-Millerhill Yard. Continuing its travels around the network, No. 66846 accompanied No. 70803 into the Royal Duchy of Cornwall with the 6C25 19.17 Westbury-Burngullow Junction on February 26.

DB Cargo UK No. 66113 was recorded dragging Royal Mail electric multiple unit No. 325004 from Doncaster early on February 1, forming the 1E06 22.45 Willesden Princess Royal Distribution Centre-Low Fell. DB classmate No. 66040 replaced West Coast Railways No. 47812 at Doncaster early on February 16, and hauled No. 325002 forward on the 1M80 21.43 Low Fell-Willesden PRDC. Early the following morning Nos. 66040 and 325002 formed 5K07 00.19 Willesden PRDC-Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot. No. 66005 *Maritime Intermodal One* was charged with hauling three Mk.2s on the 5Z45 09.00 Knottingley TMD-Burton Wetmore on February 9, while five days later No. 66142 *Maritime Intermodal Three* powered the 6Q14 08.09 Dollands Moor-Wembley with a trio of new Merseyrail Class 777 Stadler EMUs. Particularly noteworthy was the running of the 6C83 11.30 Cwmbargoed-Margam on February 23 hauled by No. 66112. Not only was it the last train to leave Cwmbargoed but the very last train of Welsh mined coal (see *Headline News*).

CLASS 68

No longer required by TransPennine Express, No. 68027 *Splendid* powered the 5Q94 08.56 Longsight-Long Marston with Mk.5A set TP11 on February 1. Another working of 5Q94 ran on February 8, when No. 68026 *Enterprise* deposited set TP07 at Long Marston. That same morning Direct Rail Services Nos. 68017 *Hornet* and 68014 shepherded No. 37424 *Avro Vulcan XH558* from Carlisle Kingmoor to Gresty Bridge prior to the 'Greener' No. 68014 hauling the lengthy 6G94 12.22 Basford Hall-Bescot empty JNAs. No. 68030 *Black Douglas* ran light to Long Marston on February 13, to collect classmate No. 68024 *Centaur* and haul it to Longsight depot. Having been shorn of their TPE markings, the coaches forming set TP03 left Long Marston for Longsight behind No. 68026 on February 22.

CLASS 69

Following a repaint into pseudo-Western Hydraulic maroon livery (see *Headline News*), GB Railfreight No. 69009 *Western Consort* left Eastleigh Arlington for Doncaster Roberts Road behind No. 66782 on February 23. GBRf No. 69002 *Bob Tiller CM&EE* ventured from Hoo Junction to Sittingbourne on February 26, travelling via Sidcup, Tonbridge, Folkestone East and Shepherdswell, repeating the trip the following afternoon. GBRf No. 69011 (using the body of 56032) undertook an initial test run with No. 66765 *Julia Garn* from EMD Longport to Bescot and back on February 16, and is likely to be repainted before No. 69010 which was still at work in undercoat at the end of February. On February 29, No. 69010 hauled stored electric multiple unit No. 379005 from Doncaster Royal Mail Terminal to Worksop.

CLASS 86

Locomotive Services No. 86101 *Sir William A Stanier FRS* undertook a test run from Crewe to Liverpool Lime Street and back on February 9, in preparation for a football excursion on February 25. Running in connection with the EFL Cup Final between Chelsea and Liverpool, Nos. 86101 and 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* 'top and tailed' the 1Z90 09.38 Liverpool Lime Street-Wembley Central. Another charter, the 1Z86 09.24 Liverpool South Parkway-Wembley Central was unusually 'top and tailed' by AC electric locomotives with No. 86259 *Les Ross/Peter Pan* leading from Merseyside, while West Coast Railways No. 86401 *Mons Meg* brought up the rear prior to hauling the 1Z87 return charter. Unfortunately, both trains had to be diverted to run from Lime Street via Earlestown and Warrington Bank Quay on the outward trips following an overhead line issue at Halton Junction.



➔ **Class 86 haulage between Liverpool and London returned to the West Coast Main Line on February 25, as two footexes ran taking Liverpool fans to Wembley for the Carabao Cup final against Chelsea. Locomotive Services No. 86101 *Sir William A Stanier FRS* powered one train, accompanied by No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*, while West Coast Railways used Nos. 86259 *Les Ross/Peter Pan* and No. 86401 *Mons Meg* on the train it operated. The preserved '86/2' passes Acton Bridge with the 1Z86 09.24 Liverpool South Parkway-Wembley Central.** Andy Parkinson



➔ **Locomotive Services No. 37409 *Loch Awe* leads LS Nos. D8107 (20107) and D8096 (20096) *Jocelyn Feilding 1940-2020* through Whitnash, Warwickshire, on February 4, with the 5Z82 10.20 Crewe-Southall. The '20s' and a coach were being moved south for route learning duties, while a second coach was being moved to Southall, and a third was destined for Eastleigh Works.** Mark Miller

CLASS 88

Half of the 10 Direct Rail Services Class 88 bi-mode locomotives have been sidelined for some time, Nos. 88008 *Ariadne* and 88009 *Diana* since last year for example, while No. 88003 *Genesis* has lingered at Gresty Bridge since early January, as has No. 88004 *Pandora* at Motherwell, while No. 88007 *Electra* was stopped waiting for an F-exam in mid-February. Meanwhile two Class 88s have had regular partners during the month. Nos. 88002 *Prometheus* and DRS 68003 *Astute* covered the Crewe-Bridgwater diagram on three occasions while on February 15, they were noted in charge of the 6M23 13.22 Hunterston-Sellafield. On February 9, Nos. 88005 *Minerva* and DRS 68007 *Valiant* ventured south with the 6O62 01.00 Crewe-Dungeness whilst covering the 02.00 Crewe-Bridgwater and 14.08 return on February 16 and 27. E





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David Russell

Dean Forest Class 31s find new home

One 'Goyle' will become a spares donor



No. 31235 is set to donate its bogies to classmate No. 31210 before being scrapped. Both '31s' have moved to the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) from the Dean Forest Railway. On August 29, 2014, the '31' stands at Thuxton, paired with No. 45133, during the Mid-Norfolk Railway's Summer diesel gala. The '31' was previously based at the MNR where it operated until October 2014, when it suffered what turned out to be a terminal failure. Richard Clinnick

OFFERED for sale towards the end of 2023, the Dean Forest Diesel Association's two Brush Type 2s, Nos. 31210 and 31235, have moved to a new base at the Great Central Railway (Nottingham) after being placed in the custodianship of the Type 1 Locomotive Company rather than being sold. The pair of '31s' left Lydney Junction by road for Ruddington during the first half of February.

The two Class 31s have very different futures in store. No. 31210, which had been at the Dean Forest Railway since 2002, has undergone an extensive and thorough restoration over the past 10 to 15 years and now sports 1980s Railfreight grey but requires wheelset replacement before it can run again. It is planned to use the bogies currently under No. 31235 to return No. 31210 back to working order, after which, following stripping, No. 31235 is likely to be sent for scrap.

Work to complete No. 31210 at Ruddington will be undertaken once repairs to the Type One Locomotive Company's No. D5830 (31563) have been finished; the locomotive is being reassembled following work and recently had its radiators refitted.

No. 31210 has yet to operate in preservation; it last saw use as part of Immingham's Petroleum (FPCI) pool in 1991 and its most recent passenger working was on September 9, 1990, when, with No. 31201 *Fina Energy*, it hauled a Cleethorpes to Carlisle charter organised by Crowle Community Hall.

The past 10 years have seen a change in fortune for No. 31235. Bought for preservation in 2000, it was a regular performer at the Mid-Norfolk Railway until October 2014, when it was sidelined following a crankshaft failure. It was sold to Harry Needle Railroad Company the following year for a potential return to main line operation which never came to fruition; instead, having never left the MNR, it was resold and moved to the Dean Forest Railway in 2018.

The third Class 31 previously resident at the Dean Forest Railway, No. 31466, was sold to North Yorkshire Moors Railway member Peter Best in 2023. It is now a permanent resident at the NYMR.

DIESEL DIARY

More gala visitors revealed

PAYING its first visit to the Kent & East Sussex Railway this April will be the Diesel Traction Group's Clayton No. D8568 and No. 37714 from the Great Central Railway. The visitors will work alongside Nos. 20087 and Class 14 No. D9504 at the line's first diesel gala for some years.

The Great Central Railway will host A1A Locomotives' No. 31108 at the end of April; the '31' will be making its first visit away from its Butterley base since the Covid-19 pandemic. Deltic No. 55009 *Alycidon*, currently running as No. 55013 *The Black Watch*, which is due to arrive in time for the Deltic Preservation Society's AGM, will be the other guest.

Due to appear at the Swanage Railway in May is a Class 69, courtesy of GB Railfreight. Further guests will be announced in due course.

The Severn Valley has announced two main line visitors for its spring diesel festival in May. Locomotive Services will be supplying No. 37409 *Loch Awe* in ScotRail colours (*RE*334), while Freightliner is to provide a Class 70. Nine examples from its fleet of 19 – Nos. 70005-009/013/014/017/018 – have yet to haul a passenger train. Freightliner is also providing a locomotive for the East Lancashire Railway's event at the end of June in the form of the only Class 47 still on its books, No. 47830 *Beeching's Legacy*. June will also see 'Peak' No. D182 (46045) head from the Severn Valley to the West Somerset Railway along with the previously announced No. 50033 *Glorious*.

The final visitor for the '14s@60' gathering at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway has been revealed; No. D9553, which last saw regular use in the late 1990s, will be making the journey south from the Caledonian Railway. Six locos should be in use, with resident Nos. D9525/37 being joined by Nos. D9504/29/51/53. Following the event, No. D9537 will be stopped for overhaul.

2024 GALA DATES

April 11-13: Ecclesbourne Valley Railway/Peak Rail (joint event)
April 12-14: Kent & East Sussex Railway
April 13/14: East Lancashire Railway (Western Region weekend)
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 1/2: Llangollen 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
October 5/6: Llangollen Railway (Heritage Railcar weekend)

Two Class 503 cars set to be scrapped

TWO cars from the last surviving former Merseyrail Class 503 electric multiple unit are likely to be scrapped, leaving just one driving car from the once 43-strong fleet in existence. With the One:One Collection museum, where the unit is currently stored, unable to house the complete set once it opens to the public, the Heritage Electric Trains Trust (HETT) has taken the decision to dispose of the driving trailer and centre car from the set.

Both vehicles are in very poor condition, and with no prospect of the unit operating ever again, the HETT says that one vehicle will offer the same interpretation value (which is part of its remit as a charity) as a complete set. Financial support for the '503' is only sufficient to fund the basic storage of one vehicle, unlike its 4-SUB which receives enough support to finance some restoration work as well as storage costs.

The surviving Class 503 has had a chequered history since it was acquired by Wirral Borough Council, having been retained by British Rail for special duties until 1988. Stored at Kirkdale for several years, it was subjected to vandalism before it was decided that only one vehicle from the set would be housed at what is now Wirral Transport Museum in Birkenhead.

A change of ownership saw the other two move to Coventry Railway Centre, which subsequently became the Electric Railway Museum. By 2003, the third car no longer featured in the Birkenhead museum's plans and was saved from scrapping by SERA (the Suburban Electric Railway Association). It moved to Coventry to join the other two vehicles, and although some restoration work took place, this later stalled. The closure of the Coventry site saw the unit pass to a new organisation, the Heritage Electric Trains Trust, which reached agreement for it to be housed at the former Hornby factory, where it moved to in 2018.

While the HETT plans to dispose of two cars for scrap, it is willing to talk to others who may wish to acquire them – prospective purchasers will have to provide evidence they have a new home for the vehicles and can remove them from Margate at their own cost within two months. The situation with the '503' highlights the difficulties often encountered in EMU preservation; lack of support has already seen several vehicles scrapped, and other units have struggled to find homes.

MULTIPLE UNIT DEVELOPMENTS

SWINDON & CRICKLADE DEMU DISPOSED OF

THE Swindon & Cricklade Railway disposed of its hybrid Class 207/205 Diesel Electric Multiple Unit which was created after the Driving Trailer from the line's Class 207 set, No. 1302, was destroyed in an arson attack in 2016. A replacement vehicle was obtained, No. 60822, which was previously part of No. 205023 and had been stored at Throckmorton airfield. Also acquired at the same time for use as a spares donor was Trailer Standard No. 60669.

Although restoration work on No. 60822 commenced, and there was even a trial run undertaken with Class 207 power car No. 60127 in June 2019 in advance of bodywork repairs being carried out, work stalled owing to the Covid pandemic; the line has since conceded that it does not have the time or resources to complete the restoration.

The part-restored '205' Driving Trailer No. 60822 and spares donor No. 60669 departed for scrap on February 9, while '207' power car No. 60127 has been sold and will be moving to a new, as yet unspecified, home later in the year.

PACER STRIPPED

WORK has begun on stripping No. 144010 at the East Lancashire Railway in advance of its transfer to the Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Training Centre at Bury. The engine has been removed from Driving Motor Standard (DMS) No. 55810, while the bodyshell of Driving Motor Standard Lavatory (DMSL) No. 55833 will be separated from its underframe prior to transfer to the site. Removed components will provide spares for the ELR's No. 144009.

CLASS 108 CHANGES HANDS

MOVED from the Telford Steam Railway to Peak Rail in 2023, Derby Lightweight Class 108 power twin comprising Nos. 51950 and 52062 has been purchased by the Rowsley Class 108 DMU Group. It will remain at Peak Rail for the foreseeable future; work on the unit is continuing to take place and following final testing, it is planned to undertake driver and guard training during 2024.

SEVERN VALLEY DMU LATEST

REPAIRS to Trailer Brake Standard Lavatory (TBSL) No. 59250 have been completed at Kidderminster, enabling it to join power car Nos. 51941 and 52064 to make up a three-car set which saw use during the half-term week in February.

COACH NEWS

MK.2 GOES FOR SCRAP

USED as a camping coach at Rogart on the Far North line for more than 25 years, Mk.2b Corridor First (FK) No. 13479 was dispatched from the Churnet Valley Railway to J.Watson & Sons, Stafford for scrap on February 5. Components from the coach, which left Rogart for the Strathspey Railway in 2020 and was subsequently acquired by the Churnet Valley Railway, are to be used to assist in the restoration of No. 13470, which was also based at Rogart between 1994 and 2020.

The Churnet Valley has also recently taken delivery of another Mk.2 from the Strathspey Railway, Tourist Standard Open (TSO) No. 5145. Moving the opposite direction around the same time was Mk. 2 Corridor Composite (CK) No. 15663.



A photo charter was held at Bury on February 9, re-creating the 1970s BR blue era of Manchester's railways. From left to right are Nos. 40135, 40012 *Aureol,* 25279, 08164 and M50517. Chris Gee

IN BRIEF

PEAK GENERATOR PROGRESS

WORK on repairing a main generator for No. 45132 is progressing; as the generator came from No. 45015, the armature shaft had to be machined to accept the ETH alternator from the '45/1'. This has now been completed and further work is being carried out in advance of rebanding and testing.

No. 45132 last ran at the Mid Hants Railway in March 2000, when it had to be taken out of traffic after its main generator failed, causing major damage. It moved to the Epping Ongar Railway in 2014, but following restoration, unfortunately its main generator experienced another failure on a loaded test run in August 2019.

DEPG HYMEK LATEST

FURTHER inspection work on the transmission of No. D7018 at Williton has revealed that it has suffered damage to one of its directional clutches. This will entail having to remove the Hymek's transmission to enable repairs to be undertaken; fortunately, the Diesel & Electric Preservation Group has another transmission, from which it is planned to swap over the clutches.

If all goes to plan, it is hoped that No. D7018 will be ready for testing early next year, enabling it to return to service during March 2025, which marks the 50th anniversary of it being bought from British Rail for preservation.

TYRE TURNING FOR 'CHOPPER'

NEWLY repainted at the Severn Valley Railway, the Class 20 Locomotive Society's No. 20205 ran from Kidderminster to Tyseley for tyre turning on February 20, with No. 20007 for company. The 'Chopper', which retains BR blue livery, had gained wheel flats while operating at Peak Forest during 2023.

REPAIRS FOR TEDDY BEAR

HAVING initially visited for its diesel gala in June 2023, Class 14 No. D9520 remains at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, where it has been receiving attention to its generator after running into issues while operating during the line's beer festival during October.

ENGINE WORK BEGINS ON NYMR '24'

AS part of its restoration being undertaken at Grosmont, engine work has begun on No. D5032 *Helen Turner*, with the cylinder heads being overhauled. In addition, the Sulzer Type 2's buffers have been sent away for overhaul and new skirts have been fitted.

REPULSE PROGRESS

ELECTRICAL work continues on No. 50030 *Repulse* at Peak Rail. The locomotive now has working cab instrument lights and headcode marker lights at the No. 1 end.

Murray Brown

New railtour company plans operations

Railtourers set to have more options if embryonic proposals materialise.

DISCUSSIONS with interested parties, which will see a newcomer to the railtour scene, are well under way.

GB Railfreight is the planned operator for these services with the stock hired from Eastern Rail Services. The new operator clearly has southern England in its sights, although *Rail Express* understands that it will be considering destinations north of the Thames as well.

The intention is that the stock, air-conditioned Mk.2s, will carry blue and grey livery. The new tour promoter is currently seeking paths and has tabled proposals to use the former international platforms at Waterloo, used by Eurostar until 2007. Network Rail has yet to adjudicate on this request.

RE understands that privately owned traction will be sought, as well as utilising the main freight companies' power.

There is no planned introduction date as negotiations are still in progress.

As of now, the new tour operator is nameless although many potential names are in the pot for consideration.



No. D213 (40013) *Andania* passes Red Bank on February 24, hauling the 1Z13 08.12 Crewe-Inverness InterCity 'Whistling Highlander' charter. The '40' returned south the next day, running 'over the top' to Aberdeen, down through Dundee and the Central Belt before heading south on the West Coast Main Line. Terry Eyres

BLS to mark Class 507 withdrawal

THE Branch Line Society is running 'The Class 507 Farewell' on May 12. Nos. 507001 and 507003 are expected to participate. The tour will start and end at Birkenhead North.

Bookings are available at www.branchline.uk/current-fixtures.php

Slight change of name

IT'S nearly the same but slightly different! Pathfinder Tours is being rebranded – in future it will be marketed under Pathfinder Railtours.

47375 to haul two-day Hungarian tour

RETRO RAILTOURS is helping the Brush Type 4 Fund advertise its 'The Frontier Brush' charter in Hungary, which will use exported Class 47, No. 47375. The tour takes place on June 8 and 9 with highlights including a two-day trip taking the '47' on a circular trip around the eastern half of Hungary, breaking new ground for the class.

Included are: The Szolnok, Szajol, Nyíregyháza and Miskolc avoiding line, which rarely, if ever, sees passenger trains; The Aszód-Vác route which is rare for diesel locomotive-hauled trains and the Vác-Rákospalota-Újpest via Veresegyház lines, which see very few locomotive-hauled trains at all. All told, this offers around 435 miles of Class 47 haulage.

The price for the two-day tour is £250. Instalment payments are also available. Initially, interested participants should send an email to bt4f.tickets@gmail.com stating the full names of those you wish to book for, and whether you would like to pay in full, or in instalments. You will then be provided with details of how to pay.

A taste of what's to come from UK Railtours

WELWYN-based tour operator, UK Railtours, has issued a few tasters for the summer months. These are:

Saturday, June 22: 'The Return of the Jolly Fisherman'. London St Pancras, stations to Leicester, then to Skegness. RailAdventure High Speed Train Class 43 power cars and 125 Group Mk.3s

Sunday, July 14: A tour to the north west, with freight lines included. Possibly including a visit to a heritage line.

Saturday, July 27: The Dean Forest Railway is the destination of this tour from London

Sunday, July 28: Some unusual tracks in East Anglia are on this itinerary.

Sunday, August 11: A circular tour of the Great Western network with some freight lines as an attraction.

FORTHCOMING TOURS FOR APRIL

Date	Tour Name	From-To	Motive Power	Promoter
1	Torbay Riviera Pullman	Hull, stations to Derby-Paignton	LS HST	MP
3	Historic Oxford	London Victoria-Oxford	DBC '67'	BBP
4	Garden of England	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
4	Cambrian Coast Express	Reading, stations to Shrewsbury-Pwllheli	DBC '67' & NR '97/3'x2	PR
5	Moving Murder Mystery	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
5	North Wales Coastal Pullman	Plymouth, stations to Bristol-Llandudno	LS HST	MP
7	Historic Bath	London Victoria-Bath	DBC '67'	BBP
11	Golden Age of Travel	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
11	Royal Windsor Statesman	Cannock, stations to Cheltenham Spa-Windsor	LS '47'x2	SR
12	Moving Murder Mystery	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
12-14	Cornish Riviera Pullman	Berwick, stations to Chesterfield-Penzance	LS HST	MP
13	Grand National	London Victoria-Liverpool South Parkway	DBC '67'	BBP
13	Torbay & Dartmouth Pullman	Penzance, stations to Bodmin Parkway-Dartmouth	LS HST	MP
13	Harbourmaster	London Paddington, stations to Bristol Parkway-Milford Haven	DBC '67' & GBRf '66'x2	UKR
17	Historic Bath	London Victoria-Bath	DBC '67'	BBP
18	Garden of England	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
18	Cambrian Coast Express	East Midlands Parkway, stations to Shrewsbury-Pwllheli	DBC '67' & NR '97/3'x2	PR
18	Settle & Carlisle Coastal Pullman	Wolverhampton, stations to Chester-S&C to Carlisle	LS HST	MP
19	Moving Murder Mystery	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
18	Spirit of Travel Lunch	Manchester Victoria, Rochdale, Hebden bridge, Brighouse circular	WCR '47'/'57'	NB
18	Champagne Afternoon Tea	Manchester Victoria, Rochdale, Hebden bridge, Brighouse circular	WCR '47'/'57'	NB
20	Settle & Carlisle Circular	Worcester Shrub Hill, stations to Crewe – S&C, return via WCML	LS '47'x2	SR
20	Neasden Nonsense	Tonbridge, Bromley, London Victoria-London branches-Neasden	Hastings '201' DEMU	UKR
23	Highland Clansman Pullman	Chester, stations to Lockerbie-Aviemore	LS HST	MP
24	Historic Bath	London Victoria-Bath	DBC '67'	BBP
25	Golden Age of Travel	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
26	Moving Murder Mystery	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
27	Settle & Carlisle & Blackpool Pullman	Dundee, stations to Edinburgh-S&C-Blackpool	LS HST	MP
27	Shrewsbury in Springtime	London Paddington, Slough, Reading, Didcot-Shrewsbury	DBC '67'	UKR
27	Shrewsbury Mini Tour	Shrewsbury-Mickle Trafford-Northwich-Crewe-Shrewsbury	GBRf '66'	UKR
28	Champagne Afternoon Tea	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP

Operators: BBP – British Belmond Pullman, MP – Midland Pullman, NB - Northern Belle, PR – Pathfinder Railtours, SR – Statesman Rail, UKR – UK Railways.



Locomotive Services No. 47593 *Galloway Princess* trails the 1Z56 07.57 Hereford-Appleby across Ribblehead Viaduct on January 6. Leading the train was D1924 (47810) *Crewe Diesel Depot*, with the large logo '47' hauling the return later in the day. John Longden

William Watson

IE plans new stations and improved capacity to Limerick

New stations planned for Dublin and Limerick and a feasibility study for the Limerick to Athenry line.

IARNRÓD ÉIREANN (IE) plans to build new suburban stations in west Dublin and a park and ride facility on the outskirts of Limerick.

The proposed locations in Dublin are at Cabra, between Islandbridge Junction and Glasnevin Junction, and at Kylemore, near Inchicore, on the Heuston to Cork main line.

The Limerick facility is planned to be sited at Ballysimon between Ennis Junction and Killonan Junction and located near to the Limerick Southern Ring Road.

In order to progress the projects, IE has appointed consultants AtkinsRealis to investigate where the best site for each would be as well as the designs and costs. The company will also undertake a feasibility study into the possibility of increasing capacity on the single-track Limerick-Ennis-Athenry line which is the southern part of the Western Rail Corridor. Passenger loadings continue to be very good and an increase in service levels are planned but would be difficult as there are only two loops on the 59¾-mile route, at Ennis and Gort. During the steam era there were as many as seven loops but as traffic patterns changed the number gradually decreased as rationalisation was carried out over the years. E



On January 26, DART Pride Nos. 8115, with 8315 on the rear, form the 10.25 Bray-Malahide at Clontarf Road. Finbarr O'Neill

NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS (NIR)

■ TRAFFIC AND TRACTION: Storm Isha on January 21, brought 80mph winds and rain with fallen trees and other debris causing disruption to services systemwide for most of the day. No. 4419, the leading driving car of six-car diesel multiple unit No. 4019 was damaged by a tree while working a Belfast-bound train on the Londonderry line. Damage sustained included the breaking of the off-side windscreen and frontal bodywork where a large branch penetrated the DMU. The coupling was also damaged. The driver and passengers were uninjured, and the train continued to Belfast after the damage had been inspected at Antrim. On January 22, the 15.38 Londonderry-Belfast Great Victoria Street (GVS) worked by six-car DMU No. 4015 was brought to a stand near Templepatrick loop between Antrim and Mossley West after an engine fire was detected at the rear of the train. Emergency services attended but passengers were safely removed to the nearby Ballymartin Park and Ride facility from where buses transferred them to their destinations. The line was temporarily closed and bustitution was in use until unit No. 4015 was removed to York Road later that evening. Tree damaged No. 4419 was repaired and unit No. 4019 had returned to traffic by January 27, although No. 4419 bore the scars of its encounter as the unit was required to be returned to service as quickly as possible. No. 4015 remained out of service as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, with 2xthree-car DMU formation substituting for the absent unit. Iarnród Éireann Track Recording Vehicle EM 50 No. 700 traversed the NIR system during late January. It arrived north from Dundalk on January 26, and was stabled overnight at Adelaide Traincare depot. The vehicle returned to IE metals from Ballymena Infrastructure depot on January 29. The Ireland vs Italy Six Nations rugby match at the Aviva stadium, Dublin, on Sunday, February 11, saw heavy demand for travel from Belfast and intermediate stations to Connolly. DMUs Nos. 3004+3005 and an IE eight-car 2900 Class formation were active on the route to augment the locomotive-hauled trains.

■ NEWS: Progress continues at Belfast Grand Central Station (BGCS) with the planned opening later this year of the rail element of the transport interchange and the closure of Great Victoria Street station. Recent work carried out in the area of the station throat included extensive groundworks (*RE*334), but tracklaying was paused as it was found necessary to excavate an area parallel to the existing down line from Central Junction in the Westlink Junction area and install extensive reinforced concrete foundations prior to track or lineside equipment being installed. Information sourced from the contractor stated that 1400 piles had been required to support the main station structure, the site having poor ground conditions and underground water courses. As of mid-February, the eight platform roads were in position and track was in place from the ramps to just beyond the Busway overbridge where stopboards were erected. On February 1, Translink bus and rail employees again withdrew their labour in the ongoing campaign for a cost-of-living increase, however, a planned strike on February 15, was cancelled as negotiations could start following the return to Stormont of the Northern Ireland Executive which manages public sector pay.

IARNRÓD ÉIREANN/IRISH RAIL

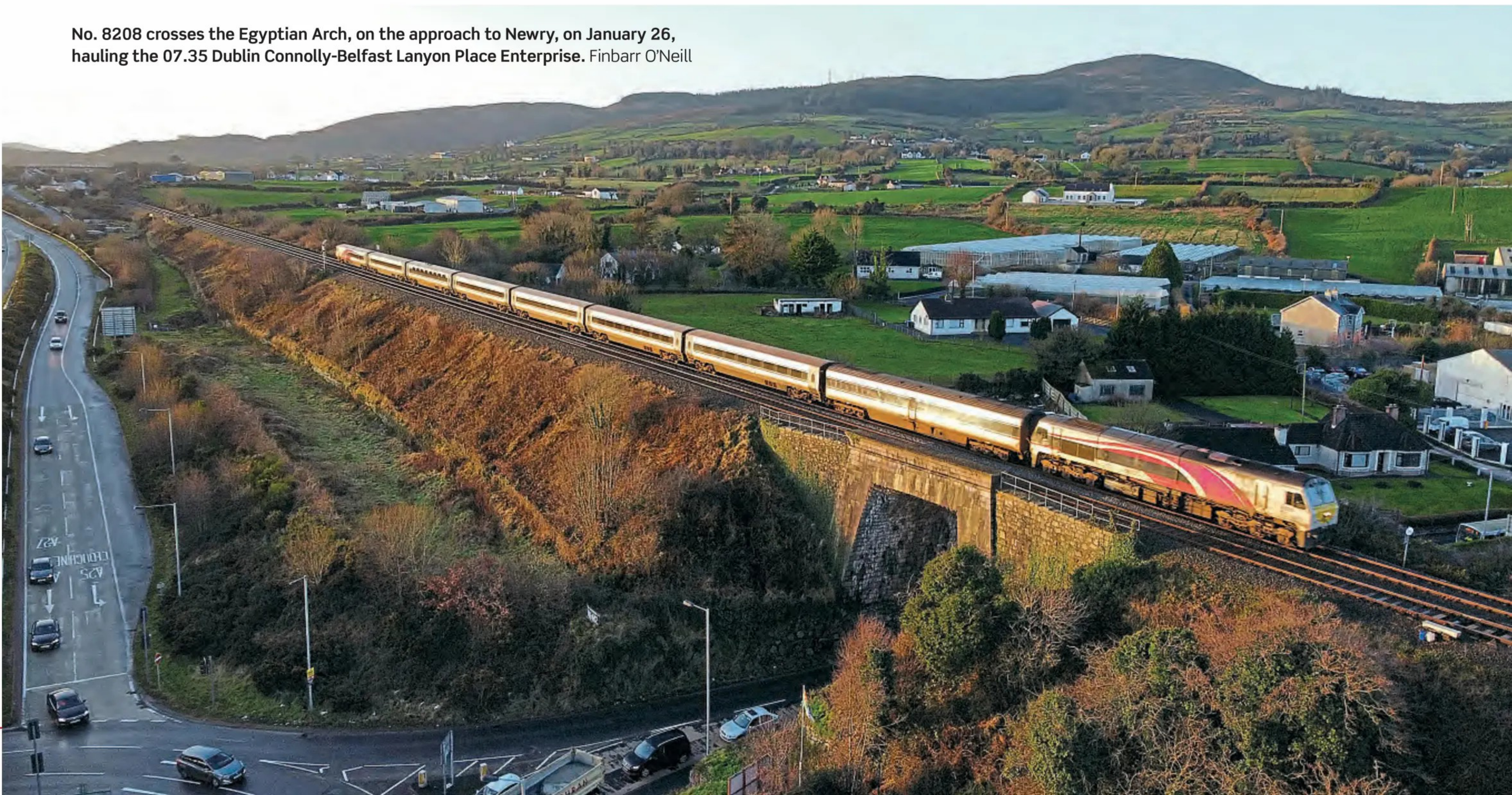
■ NEWS: The reopening of the Waterford (Belview) to Rosslare Strand line received a boost in late January, when IE CEO Jim Meade stated that the company and its insurers were in negotiations with the owners of ships that had caused damage to the Barrow River bridge. The most recent collision occurred in February 2022. Mr Meade added that as well as returning the 1906-built bridge to full working order he also planned to modify the operation of its opening section from being controlled by the cabin on the structure to a central control point.

■ FREIGHT TRAFFIC AND TRACTION: Freight tonnage continued to vary during the period under review according to customers' demands. The IWT container service between Ballina and Dublin Port proved to be the most consistent performer with many of the 18-wagon trains being fully loaded each way. The XPO container service between Waterford (Belview) and Ballina continued to experience varied loads in each direction. Timber traffic between Ballina/Westport and Waterford was consistent but not quite as regular as the container flows with the 12-wagon trains being fully loaded on each trip. 071 Class locomotives continued to dominate freight haulage with No. 071, carrying retro IE livery, a regular performer. On January 24, it was in charge of a XPO service while No. 080 headed a Waterford bound timber train. No. 071 worked a Ballina-Dublin Port IWT train the next day, while No. 076 hauled a fully loaded Dublin Port-bound IWT train on January 26. This locomotive returned to Ballina on January 27, with a fully loaded IWT train which conveyed 15 tank containers and three boxes. No 078 hauled the 10.05 Ballina-Waterford timber train on January 29, while No. 071 worked the 11.30 Belview-Ballina XPO service which conveyed 15 loaded wagons. This was also the load on the Ballina-Belview XPO train on January 30, which again featured No. 071 while No. 076 had a fully-loaded Dublin Port bound IWT service the same day. February 1, saw No. 071 haul a Ballina-Dublin Port IWT train which conveyed 18 empty tank containers, two 20ft boxes and eight reefers. No. 215 was traction for the 10.05 ex-Ballina IWT service on February 2, and No. 084 headed a Ballina-Waterford timber train on February 3. The ex-Belview XPO service on February 5, which had 16 loaded wagons, eight boxes and eight tanks, was hauled by No. 080. No. 215 had a fully loaded Ballina-Dublin Port bound IWT service the same day while No. 076 hauled an empty Waterford-Westport timber train. On February 6, No. 071 hauled a Belview-bound XPO train which had seven loaded wagons, the locomotive returning to Ballina the next day with the 11.30 ex-Belview XPO train. Also on February 7, No. 215 headed a Ballina-Dublin Port IWT service, while No. 071 hauled a fully loaded 10.05-ex Ballina IWT train on February 8, and another fully loaded one in the opposite direction the following day. No. 072 headed a Ballina bound IWT service on February 10, which had 15 loaded tanks and three reefers while No. 078 hauled a Ballina to Waterford loaded timber train on February 12. No. 076 was in charge of a fully loaded Dublin Port bound IWT train the next day.

■ TRAFFIC AND TRACTION: GM No. 082 hauled a Tara wagon and three bogie flats from Inchicore to North Wall for storage on January 20, as siding space was required at the works. Storm Isha on January 21, saw widespread disruption to services with temporary speed restrictions (TSRs) imposed as required until the winds abated. Services on the Howth branch were suspended at around 18.00 until the next morning after the overhead line equipment was damaged. Also, on January 22, GM No. 218 was noted hauling an empty Mk.4 set, featuring Driving Brake Generator No. 4001, northbound at Charleville on the Heuston to Cork main line. No. 233 was used for driver training duties in the Greater Dublin area on January 26.

On February 1, a bridge strike in the Mallow area at around 09.45 saw services suspended until the structure was inspected and declared safe. Another bridge strike the next day at around 19.45 between Thurles and Templemore caused services to be suspended on the Heuston-Cork main line until the structure was inspected and declared safe. The Cork Commuter Area Infrastructure Programme, which includes the construction of a new platform 6 at Cork with associated trackwork alterations is continuing with work generally being carried out at weekends. February 3 to 5 was a bank holiday in the Republic and to facilitate the work all services south of Mallow were replaced by buses, with normal services restarting on February 6. Mallow hosted a varied selection of stock on February 4; Nos. 216, 218 and 229 were each powering Mk.4 sets while No. 232 was spare. Three ICR diesel multiple units were in attendance as was DMU Nos. 2611+12+03+04. On February 6, the 09.25 Cork-Heuston failed between Mallow and Limerick Junction. The Mk. 4 set, DBG No. 4006, propelled by No. 222, was returned to Mallow by No. 232 which had run light to the failure location. Passengers were transferred to the 10.25 ex-Cork service at Mallow. Services between Grand Canal Dock and Hazelhatch/Newbridge were suspended from around 09.30 on February 9, because of a landslip with normal operations resuming at around 18.00. The unit working the 08.20 Heuston-Portlaoise on February 14, was delayed in section after a bridge strike was reported between Portarlington and Portlaoise. Normal services resumed after the structure was inspected and declared safe. Carrying retro IE colours, GM. No. 073 was noted receiving attention at Inchicore Works later the same day with the locomotive's engine removed. Also on February 14, Westport was host to two locomotives; No. 085 was in charge of a loaded timber train while No. 082 visited the western railhead as part of a route refresher trip. The first of 41 new Hyundai Rotem ICR DMU intermediate cars No. 22516 entered revenue earning service on February 16. The car has been incorporated in unit No. 22x16 and the first working for the strengthened set was the 06.47 Portlaoise to Heuston service.

No. 8208 crosses the Egyptian Arch, on the approach to Newry, on January 26, hauling the 07.35 Dublin Connolly-Belfast Lanyon Place Enterprise. Finbarr O'Neill





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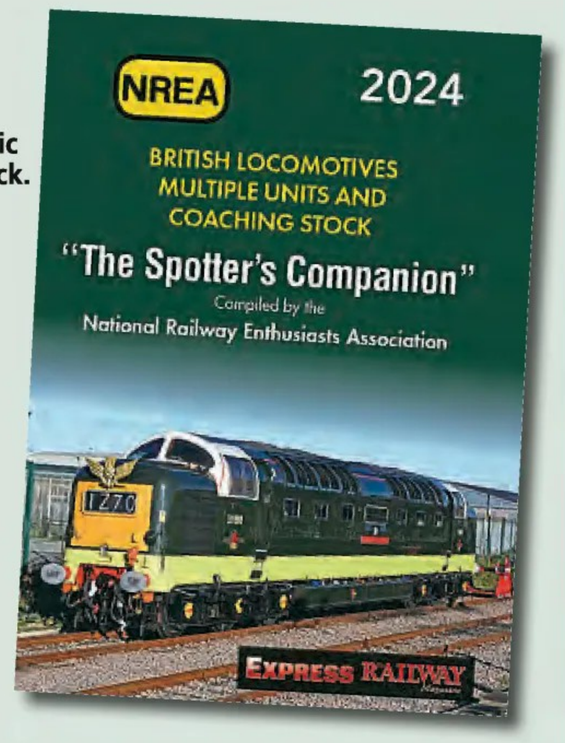
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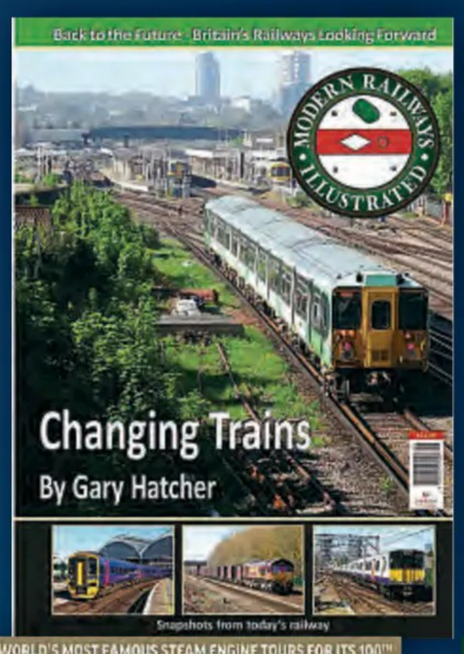
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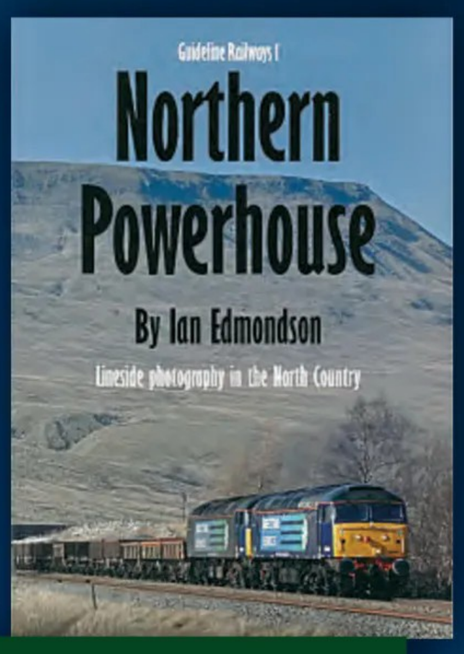
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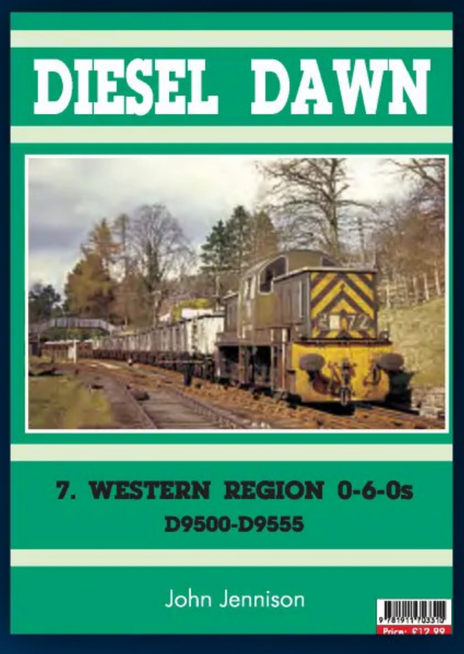
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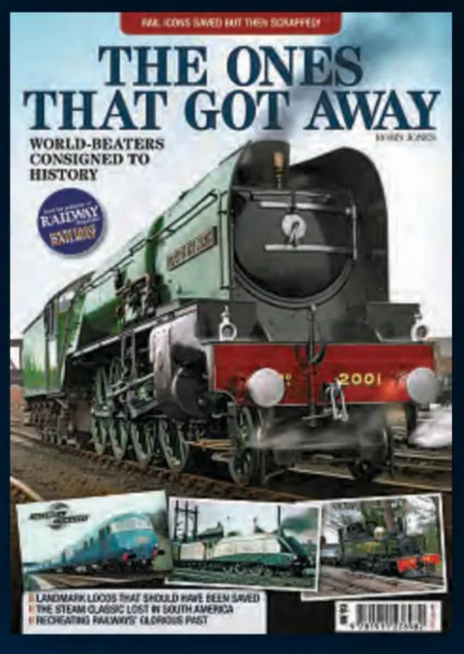
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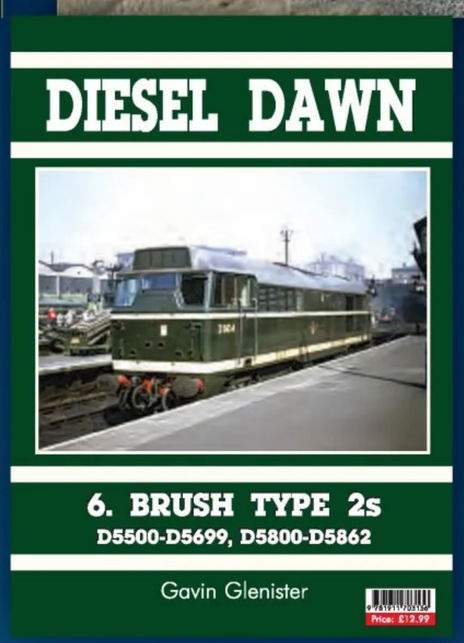












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5 Newsdesk: Subs, Dusty Bins and Goyles announced
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↑ With the first batch of 57-foot Mk.1 suburban coaches in production, and due for delivery in the coming months, attention has turned to the BR maroon liveried stock. Twelve different coaches for the Midland and Scottish Region are announced, with delivery expected in early 2025.

Maroon Mk.1 subs

A MISSING livery from the first batch of 'OO' gauge Mk.1 suburban coaches has been announced by Accurascale, which incorporates some interesting changes made in coaching stock liveries by BR at the time. Lined maroon livery was applied to coaching stock from around 1956 onwards, with suburban stock receiving the livery by 1959, with lining being applied depending on regional preferences. Livery changes also saw the introduction of the yellow stripe for First Class accommodation which is offered on some models of the Composite stock.

Midland Region coaches in both lined and plain maroon are added to the range including Second Class, Brake Second, Composite and Open coaches. Scottish Region vehicles will include Second Class, Brake Second and Composite vehicles, with the composite sporting a yellow First Class stripe.

Delivery is expected in the first quarter of 2025 (the usual caveats apply) and Accurascale has held the price per coach to £64.95. M **www.accurascale.com**



↖ An impression of how the new coaches will appear can be made using the new IRM Mk.2b stock featured elsewhere in this issue. The Mk.1 suburban coaches will enjoy the same high specification including interior lighting, carefully modelled interiors and a wealth of fine detail applied to bogies and underframes. A removable roof will make populating the stock with passengers simple to do.

DUSTY BINS IN 'OO' ANNOUNCED

REVOLUTION TRAINS has responded to demand from 'OO' gauge modellers for a 4mm scale model of Class 320 and Class 321 25Kv AC EMUs, by announcing new models in time for Model Rail Glasgow. The company has already released the EMUs in 'N' gauge. Development of the new models is at the early stages, with CAD design being undertaken at the time of writing.

Little is known about the model's precise specification, other than working running lights, inner couplings with electrical poles for in-set lighting and control, along with a working but non-conducting pantograph. We can assume that flush glazing, detailed interiors and careful positioning of drive components will be included, the latter particularly important for EMUs with little space to conceal a conventional drive. Price indications are £300 for a three-car Class 320 and £350 for the four-car Class 321, with various liveries planned. The order book should now be open at **www.revolutiontrains.com** for advance orders.



↑ ScotRail and SPT modellers will be delighted by the news of a 'OO' gauge Class 320 from Revolution Trains. ScotRail No. 320303 approaches Westerton on April 22, 2021 in immaculate Saltire livery. This unit will have been refurbished with universal access lavatories by this date, and fitted with bogie dampers for high speed running.

BACHMANN CLASS 30S AND 31S

BACHMANN'S spring announcement was revealed the day after last month's issue went to press, so news of brand-new Class 30 and 31 models could not be included due to Bachmann's strict embargo on news releases.

The 'OO' gauge models fill what is considered to be an important gap in the Bachmann Branchlines range, given that it has offered a detailed 'N' gauge model of the Class 31 for some time.

Two Class 30 locomotives are offered in BR green livery with details appropriate to the design of the locomotive. Era specific detail is also applied to the Class 31s which includes original locomotives with bufferbeam fairings and body trim, as well as refurbished Class 31s where those fittings have been removed and headcode panels plated over. Liveries include Trainload Petroleum, Railfreight red stripe and BR blue, with several numbers being issued for each livery.

The new models will follow the same format of recently retooled and new locomotive models, with three grades being made available. The DCC-ready version starts at £199.99, with the digital sound version priced at £309.99. A premium grade model with advanced features attracts a £50 premium over the sound version. **www.bachmann.co.uk**



↑ Class 31s are added to the Bachmann Branchlines range with several different versions being offered with era -specific detail. The advances in electronics and detail applied to the retooled Class 20 and Class 47 will also feature on the new models.



← The range includes both refurbished and original condition Class 31s such as the BR blue model which has bodyshell trim, buffer beam cowls and glazed headcode panels.

'ALCAN' ALUMINA PCAS IN 'N'?

EXPRESSIONS of interest are being sought by Revolution Trains for an 'N' gauge version of the 'Alcan' alumina tank wagons recently released in 'OO' gauge. It is anticipated that the models would follow the same format as the 'OO' gauge models with packs of four differently numbered wagons being offered for around £149.95, although the final price would be determined when the costs of producing the model have been determined. The same five liveries would be offered, including Alcan, RioTinto Alcan, Lochaber Liberty and Alvance.

The decision to produce such a model will be based on the indicated level of demand, so making your interest known at **www.revolutiontrains.com** by filling out the expression of interest form as soon as possible, is important. The deadline is April 30, 2024.



→ GB Railfreight No. 66736 *Wolverhampton Wanderers* crosses The Water of Leith on the 14-arch Slateford viaduct with the North Blyth Alcan – Fort William Alcan service on September 17, 2015. The wagons were branded with red RioTinto Alcan legends at the time.

‘O’ gauge livery samples from Heljan

NUMEROUS new Heljan ‘O’ gauge models progressed to the livery sample stage in time for display on the company’s stand at Model Rail Glasgow.

The displayed models cover a lot of ground including LMS 50ft inspection saloons and a swathe of early Mk.2 coaches. Literally a swathe because the run of brand-new models consists of 28 coaches in 14 different liveries, including BR blue/grey, Network SouthEast and Regional Railways. Early BR modellers will appreciate the BR maroon and green versions, whilst up-to-date operations are covered by West Coast Railways maroon and Network Rail versions.

More Mk.1 BGs are in the pipeline with livery samples arriving in February too, featuring liveries not offered previously, with BR blue and grey, ScotRail and departmental coaches included in the range. General Utility Vans (GUV) are also being rerun in both classic liveries such as BR blue, faded BR blue and Satlink colours. A Rail Express Systems NOX is also included in the run. All of the models are subject to revision as details are tweaked and liveries checked for accuracy. It all adds up to being a busy year for Heljan which has also taken delivery of its retooled ‘00’ gauge Class 47 and a new run of Class 57s. M

www.heljan.co.uk





↑ **EWS No. DM45029 is just one of a broad collection of saloons that covers the 1940s through to Privatisation. Liveries include the featured EWS scheme along with BR blue, BR crimson and cream and ScotRail liveries.**

← **Modellers will be awaiting the 50ft LMS inspection saloon with considerable anticipation. Particular attention has gone into the interior, which is equipped with a detailed kitchen, guard’s office, together with individual mouldings for tables and seating.**



↑ **Departmental stock has not been overlooked, with a model of RTC No. ADB 975290, Test Car 6.**



↑ **Mk.2 coaches are due from Heljan this year, with livery samples arriving during February. There will be 28 different coaches covering five types, including this Mk.2 FK in Network Southeast livery. Parts to model Mk.2 and Mk.2a stock are included in the range.**



↑ **The GUV re-un includes a Rail Express Systems NOX van riding on Commonwealth bogies.**



↑ **Departmental BGs are also included in the rerun of the Mk.1 BGs from Heljan. The additions to the range cover a range of liveries from BR maroon through to Privatisation liveries.**

ACCURASCALE EXPANDS WITH HATTON’S ORIGINALS

CLASS 66s are not the only model from the Hatton’s Originals range to make it to the Accurascale stable. The news of Hatton’s closure was followed by an announcement that Accurascale had acquired tooling for the 50ft Warwell wagon and Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST among other things. The pre-ordered models announced by Hatton’s last year are also being fulfilled, with the Warwells in transit and due for delivery in April. The Andrew Barclay locomotives are at the decorated sample stage, with quite a few liveries to choose from, some of which could be adapted to freelance or modern industrial themes. Delivery of the models which are priced at £99.95 will be towards the end of the year. Hatton’s pre-orders are protected and will be delivered from the limited production run.

www.accurascale.com



↑ **Another Hatton’s Original model to appear under the Accurascale label is the Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST industrial locomotive in 14- and 16-inch format. Normally, we do not feature steam in these pages, even though many diesel classes rubbed shoulders with main line steam during the transition era. Small industrials outlasted main line steam to continue running alongside diesels in industrial settings, making the reissue of the Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST important for D&E modelling.**



↑ **The batch of Warwell wagons announced by Hatton’s last year is being produced by Accurascale with eight models due to arrive during the currency of this issue. Many were sold out in short order including the modern KWA fitted with Gloucester bogies. The models are priced at £25 each.**

RUSTON 88DS LOCOS MAKE THE NEWS

An additional Ruston & Hornsby 88DS shunting locomotive has been added to the range of ‘O’ gauge models being produced by Accurascale, bringing the number up to 10 models. The Ruston 88DS is Accurascale’s first ‘O’ gauge locomotive which is being produced in a variety of industrial liveries, along with a BR green and BR blue example.

Tarmac Roadstone No. 655/29/38 is the latest to be announced and will follow the same pattern as those announced previously. The model will be equipped with a heavy die-cast chassis with a five-pole motor and drive designed to replicate the locomotive’s slow speed operation. The bodyshell is set to be detailed with etched metal fittings including grilles, lamp brackets, door handles and builders’ plates.

Internally, the model will feature a fully detailed cab fitted with a removable roof. They will be DCC-ready and fitted with a power pack for smooth operation.

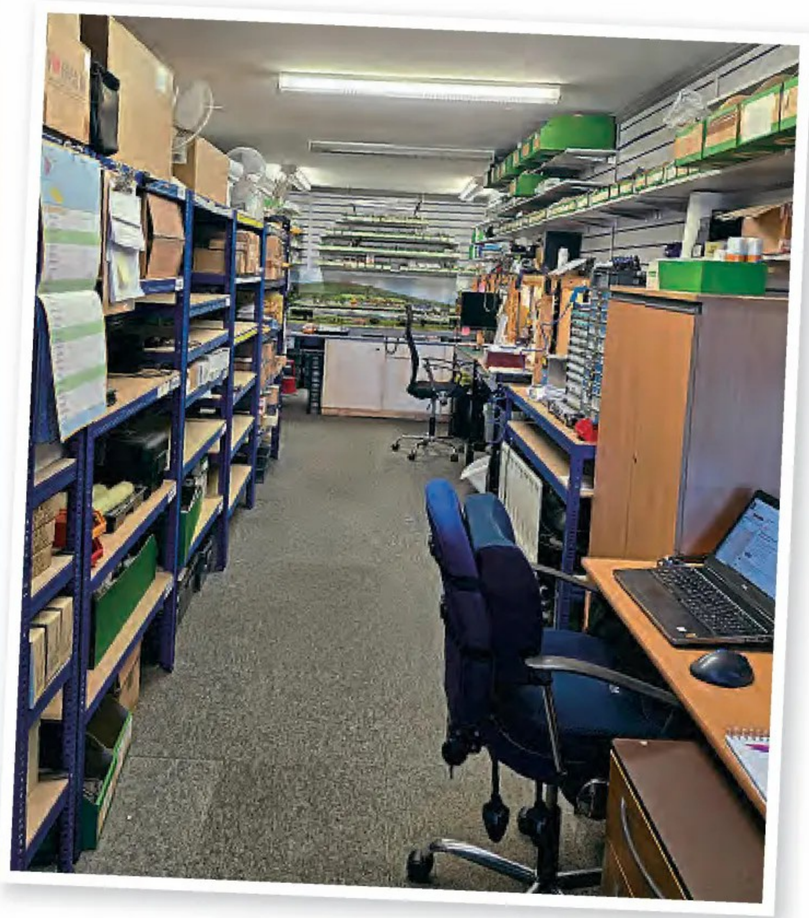
The Tarmac model is being sold as an Accurascale ‘Exclusives’ model but is offered for the same price as the rest of the range at £229.99.

Further to the Ruston 88DS story, the Hornby ‘00’ gauge model commenced delivery in February with several models making it to the shops during that time. North British Distillery No. 4 lags slightly behind the other models.



↑ **Accurascale adds Tarmac Roadstone’s Ruston 88DS locomotive to its ‘O’ gauge range. The full-size locomotive was based at the Hayes depot from 1967 until 1990 when it passed into preservation.**





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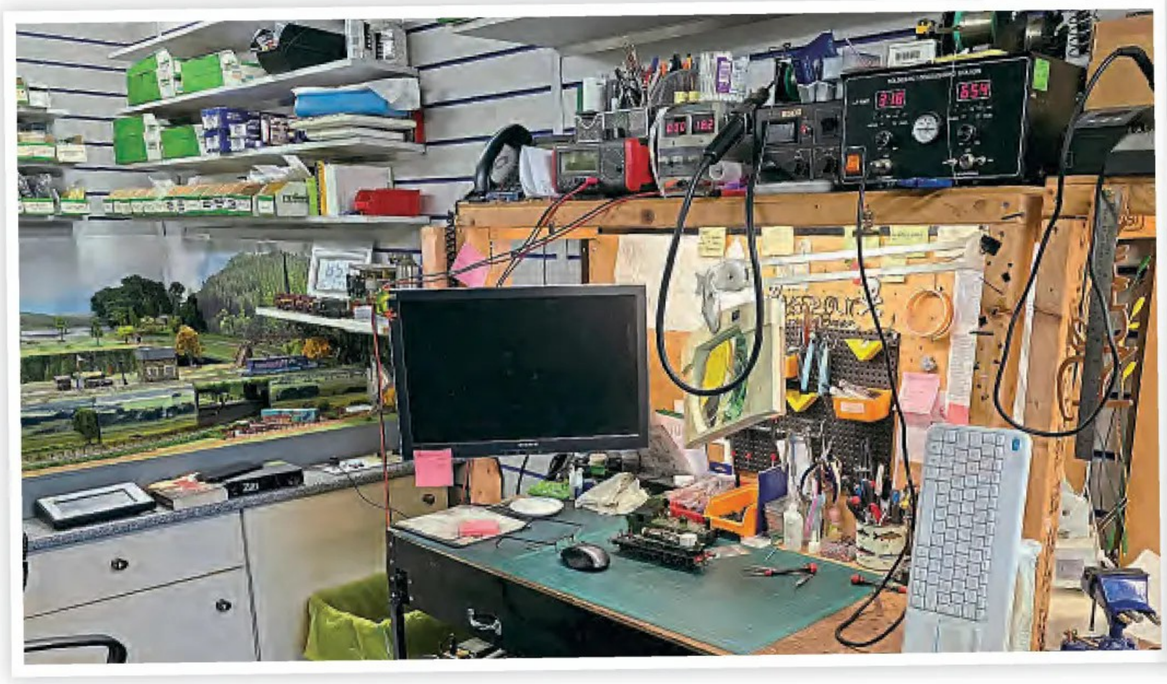
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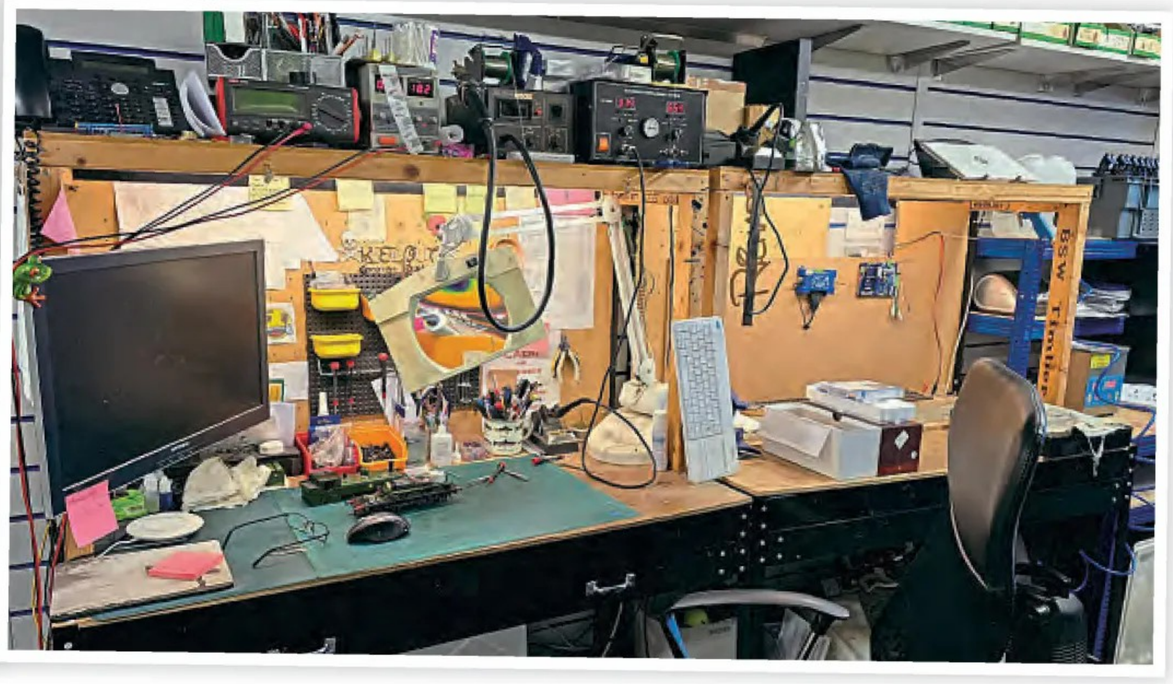
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Cavalex's debut diesel: The Class 56

A first locomotive model is both an anxious and an exciting time for the manufacturer and the modeller alike. How well does the debut diesel from Cavalex Models measure up?

First impressions

SLIPPING THE TIGHT cover from the bright orange box revealed a soft foam liner and an immaculate model of No. 56023 secured to a transport cradle. Immediately, the model's crisp and tidy appearance formed the first of many good impressions of the first Cavalex Models diesel locomotive.

Exquisite levels of detail applied to a correctly proportioned bodyshell revealed that Cavalex Models has a winner on its hands. It represents exceptional value priced at £190 for a DCC-ready version, including working cooling fans and sophisticated electronics.

The sample model is of Trainload Coal No. 56023, one of the first series of Class 56s constructed in Romania in the 1970s which externally differed from the BR built locomotives. The new model enjoys all of the locomotive specific detail of the series including the cab shape, bufferbeam cowls, bodyside grille work and cab side windows to mention a few.

Model specification

Enclosed within the model is some of the most advanced technology yet to be applied to a regular-release model which is not priced as a special or enhanced edition. Working cooling fans with DCC control; a power bank and advanced running light operation are just few of the technical features.

The circuitry allows a range of running light effects to be usedm including separated control of the headlights and forward marker lights for mainline, yard operation and light engine operation. This takes advantage of a 21-pin MTC decoder connection and advanced decoders such as the ESU Lokpilot 5 which have sufficient function outputs to control all of the onboard features.

When a sound version is operated, sensors detect when the model is entering curves and activates flange squeal sounds, a feature which may also be triggered manually too if desired.

Detailing and assembly

As mentioned in the introduction, the model enjoys some of the most refined levels of assembly and finish for the price point, with livery colours on both the review sample of No. 56023 and a visiting model owned by a friend, (No. 56019) being applied to a very high standard over individually fitted details.

Those fine fittings include the correct pattern of mesh over the radiator side grilles which allows a view of the internal body members and the radiator itself. Detail applied to the cab fronts is also well assembled and coloured, with some very fine mouldings being used on the multiple working cables and their fittings.

Bufferbeam detail is both fine and durable, including the air hoses and plug-in coupling guard which fits the NEM coupling pocket. The shape and fit of the bufferbeam cowl are good and the bottom edge of the cab meets it with a minimal seam line. The round Oleo buffers fitted to No. 56023 are exquisite, the best yet seen on a mass-produced model. They have the correct shape to the buffer heads and are lightly sprung too.

Bogie assembly

Numerous small fittings including separately fitted axle journal and spring mouldings are used to build up the layers apparent in the full size locomotive's bogie sideframes. The brake fittings are perfectly modelled with linkages and the bogies are neatly finished off with etched metal cab footsteps. Despite the delicacy of the detail, it is robust as tested by the fitting of the drop-in 'EM' gauge wheels sets produced specifically for this model.

The conversion also demonstrated how well engineered the bogies are, with stub-axle current collection through the end of the axles and metal bearing cup strips built into the side frames. It is a low friction system used extensively elsewhere in Europe and North America, but still to gain significant traction in British outline 4mm scale modelling. The same bearing cups also support the axles instead of the usual inside bearings fitted to the bogie inner frame.

Model performance

The models ran superbly straight from the box and as reported in the 'EM' gauge conversion guide (see p56, M16) the model was sure-footed from the start with the drop-in wheel sets too. Being able to commission a model so quickly for closer-to-scale layout operation is a big win and the brilliant balance between the high level of detail and simplicity in the design of the bogies makes the model a pleasure to work on.

The large five-pole motor and finely balanced gearing delivered realistic performance including very slow speed control for those modellers wanting to replicate the slow speed control needed to simulate discharge operations of MGR wagons.

Some modellers may comment on the use of an unpowered centre axle in each bogie, but as Cavalex Models points out, it is a floating axle with strictly defined movement that will assist with road holding and traction on uneven track. Layout testing quickly established that the Cavalex Models Class 56 is more than capable of lifting trains longer than the prototype would be expected to routinely handle in life. The floating middle axle performed well, although the large 'EM' gauge layout with its 80ft of mainline run had no vertical track undulations (bumps) of sufficient size to really test this feature of the model.



Fancy a heavy weathering session with the new Cavalex Models Class 56? No. 56019, represented by one of the first batch of models, was found at Warrington Arpley in worn condition on a dull November day on November 25, 1997.

Closing commentary

The Cavalex Models Class 56 achieves five-star status based on its specification and performance measured against its price point. It is an extremely good value for money model which delivers all that was promised by the manufacturer during its development. The reality is that its features and attributes are so extensive, to list them all in a review is not easy to do.

The key ones are its superb running qualities, high level of technical specification (did I mention that the operational lighting was also subtly coloured?) and excellent quality of assembly where individual parts are well seated and do not have those remnants of sprue seen on other models.

Another important point that should be made relates to the design of the model. Cavalex Models has put a lot of thought into the design to achieve a high level of fidelity to the prototype and with exquisite detailing, but has not made it too complex. To remove the body only requires the release of four clips, and sprung contacts between body and chassis do the job of linking wires.

This makes the model a pleasure to work on for renumbering, wheel conversions and weathering. With No. 56023 and the other models comes a caveat! Be aware of locomotive-specific detail when planning to renumber to a different member of the class. For example, note lack of the two small ports on the roof of No. 56023, which is correct for that particular locomotive but present on most other Romanian Class 56s. It makes the use of reference photographs important to see if it they are present or not when planning to renumber this model. M



No. 56023 was an interesting choice for one of the two Trainload Coal locomotives in the range. It was painted in Trainload livery in 1988, only to wear it in traffic for a touch over five years before being withdrawn in December 1993. The locomotive was just 16 years and five months old when withdrawn. It was one of the few Class 56s to run without the two small ports in the roof and they are not fitted to the model.

MODEL FEATURES:

- Locomotive and era specific detail applied to each model.
- Four axle drive (A1A-A1A).
- Five-pole motor with twin flywheels.
- All-wheel stub axle current collection.
- Comprehensive operational lighting.
- Subtle lighting and colour – not too bright.
- Working cooling fans.
- Etched metal grilles and small details.
- NEM coupling pockets.
- 21-pin MTC DCC interface.
- Power bank.
- Removable decoder bay panel in roof.



Cavalex Models has researched the Class 56s very carefully to ensure that locomotive-series specific detail is correctly applied. This requires several toolings for the bodyshell to model the cab features which differ between the various builds.



A long-term survivor among the Romanian-built Class 56s was No. 56019 which was over 26 years in traffic before being withdrawn in October 2003. The livery is correct for this locomotive, including the red buffers and coupling guard, which was applied in May 1988. Although it became faded and grimy over the years, the livery was a hold out until withdrawal in 2003.

❐ Produced by Cavalex Models
www.cavalexmodels.com

£ RRP
From £189.95



The model of the Romanian batch or Series 1 is faithfully modelled including the recessed marker lights, rubber sealed cab side quarter lights, the shape of the cab and the cab side hand rails.



The bodyshell moulding has excellent proportions especially around the complex lines and curves of the cab. The rake of the cab windows is perfectly represented on this style of cab, along with the bufferbeam cowls and the flush horn grilles.

CAVALEX MODELS CLASS 56 IN DETAIL



↑ Cab interior

Much effort was put into the glazing to ensure it is as clear as possible and without distortion. It is needed to fully appreciate the cab detail which is easy to reach because the body is simply clipped to the chassis with no connecting wires.



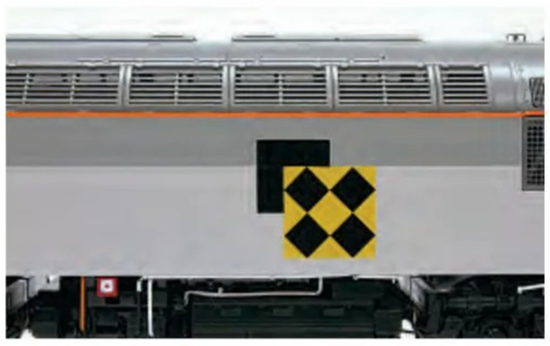
↖ Chassis

A heavy cast metal chassis supports the five-pole motor, drive mechanism and the electronics too. An MTC 21-pin DCC decoder interface is fitted which can be accessed through a removal panel in the roof, even though the body is simple to unclip and remove from the chassis. Sprung contacts complete the lighting circuits built into the body.



↑ Cooling fan grilles

A woven mesh effect has been etched into the metal radiator fan grilles and to good effect. The cooling fans are clearly visible behind them.



← Shoulder grilles

A neat bit of tooling are the see-through shoulder grilles which assist with sound transmission from a speaker when sound is installed. The speaker bay is located behind them. Normally, one cannot see through these grilles on the full-size locomotives.



↑ Etched grille work

Locomotive-specific detail has been applied to the radiator grilles which are etched in metal and of the correct mesh pattern to suit the locomotive series. Square mesh was applied to the Romanian locomotives. A representation of the radiators is modelled in the chassis block which is visible through the grilles along with the body frame members.

➔ Bogie side frames

The level of detail applied to the bogie side frames is exquisite, with layers built up from small fittings including suspension springs, brake fittings and the etched metal footsteps.





↑ Cooling fans

DCC-controlled working cooling fans are sometimes offered as a premium feature in some models, but not with the Cavalex Models Class 56 where they are fitted as standard to all models.



← Trainload Coal livery

Livery application is even and smooth on the sample model with consistent colour applied to individually applied parts.



↙ Railfreight red stripe livery

This is a model which will bring back memories too. The shade of Railfreight grey is excellent, consistently and evenly applied without any flaws. Printed details are excellent on both models.



We return to the appreciation of No. 56019 in its twilight years with EWS. Note the features of the Romanian locomotives including the bufferbeam cowl similar to that fitted to Class 47s; cab side window style, shape of the cab and square mesh applied to the radiator bank intake grilles. The bodyshell frame members behind the mesh are round. No. 56019 has gained a small black sheep logo at some point too.



No. 56019 waits for the road south at Warrington Arpley with a rake of HEA coal wagons. Sadly, it did not survive the cutting torch, being dismantled shortly after withdrawal.

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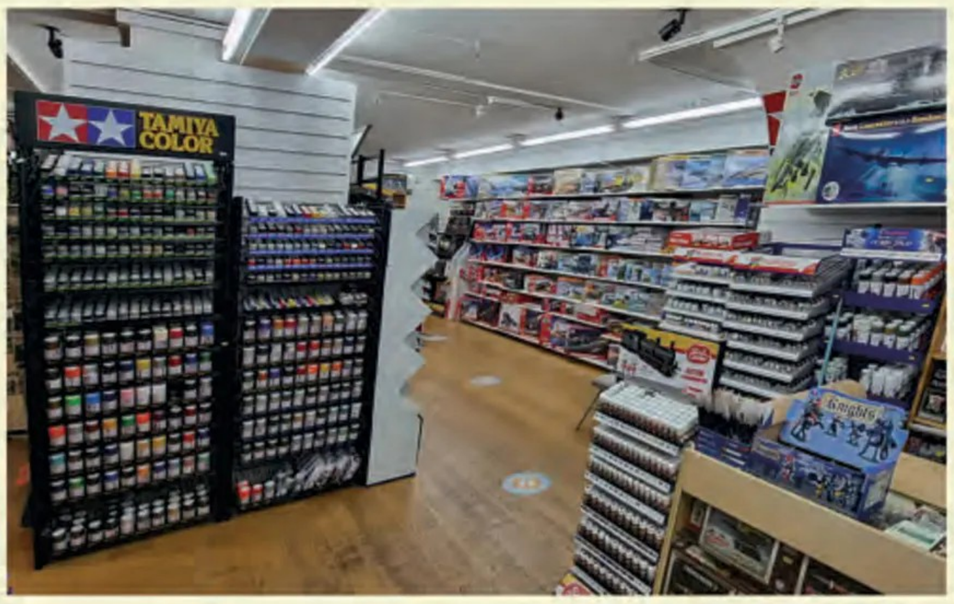


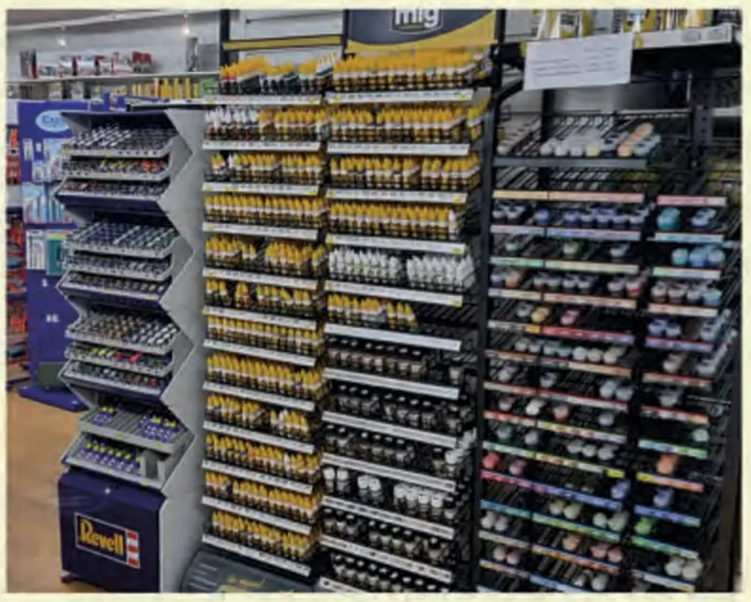












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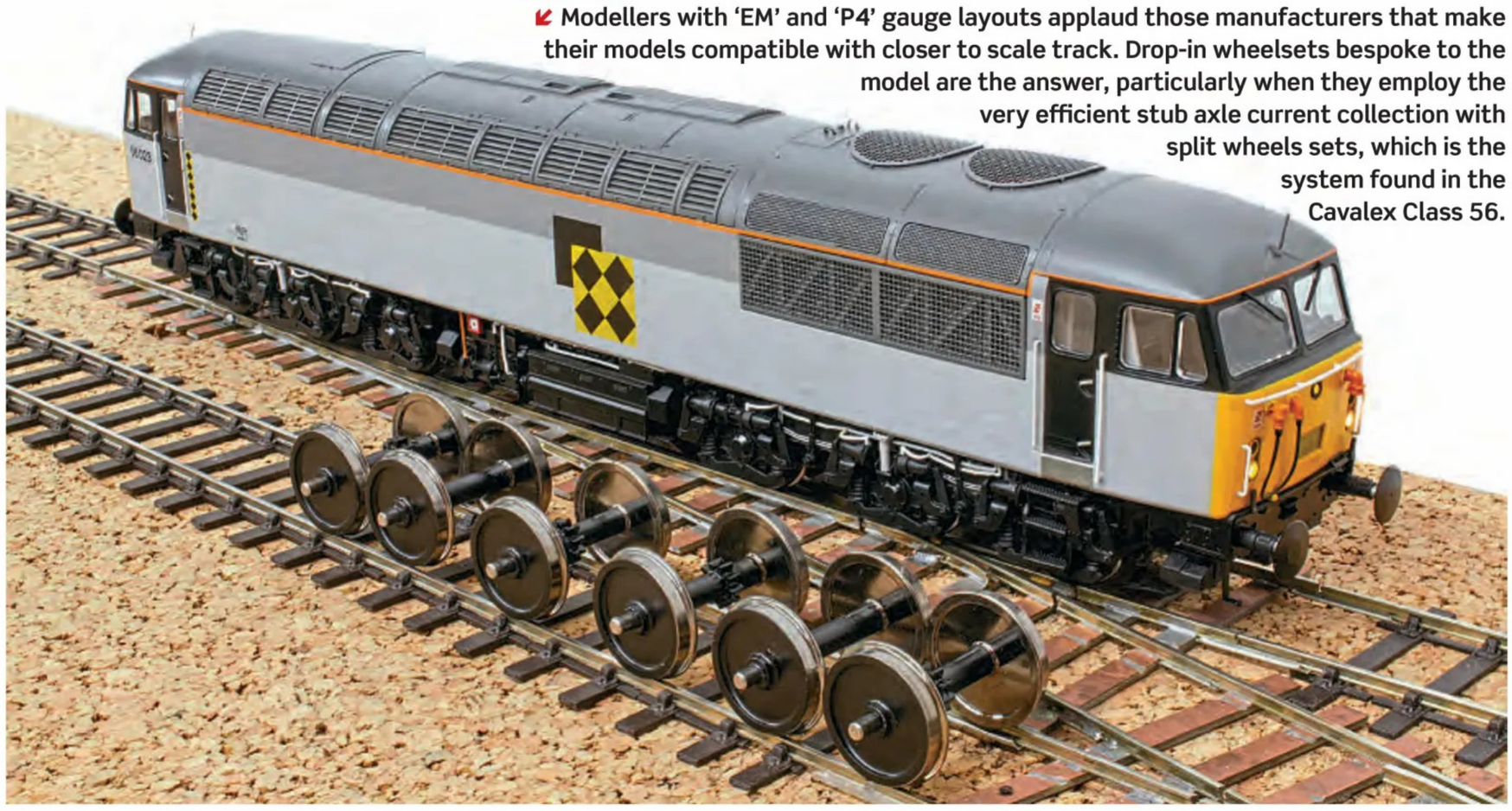
Closer to scale wheels for the Cavalex 'Grid'

FIVE MINUTES is the time it should take to completely regauge a Cavalex Models Class 56 to either 'EM' or 'P4' gauge – at least according to a video produced by Cavalex Models itself.

The company kindly submitted a set of its drop-in wheels to fit to the model of Trainload Coal No. 56023, allowing the conversion to be tested by someone who has no connection with the design and development of the model. Once completed, the model was performance tested on 'EM' gauge track with heavy loads.

Before tackling the project, the drop-in wheels were checked for gauge and assembly quality. Further, in the same manner as decoder fitting, the project locomotive was reliability tested with its supplied wheels before the conversion.

One of the advantages of the drop-in wheels is their appearance which is the same as the 'OO' gauge ones factory fitted to the models. The outside faces are painted black rather than chemically blackened which looks far better. They collect current from the axle ends (stub axle) which means that each wheel set is composed of two stub axle wheels fitted to a plastic spacing bush. Four of them have the final drive gear integrally moulded in the bush. Gauging was to specification and the wheels rolled through 'EM' gauge track without difficulty.



Modellers with 'EM' and 'P4' gauge layouts applaud those manufacturers that make their models compatible with closer to scale track. Drop-in wheelsets bespoke to the model are the answer, particularly when they employ the very efficient stub axle current collection with split wheels sets, which is the system found in the Cavalex Class 56.

PRODUCT FEATURES

- Correctly profiled wheelsets.
- Split axle design with correct gearing.
- Axle insulation bush sets the wheel gauge.
- Current collected from the axle ends.
- No need to adjust wiper pick-ups after installation.
- Wheels supplied pre-painted.

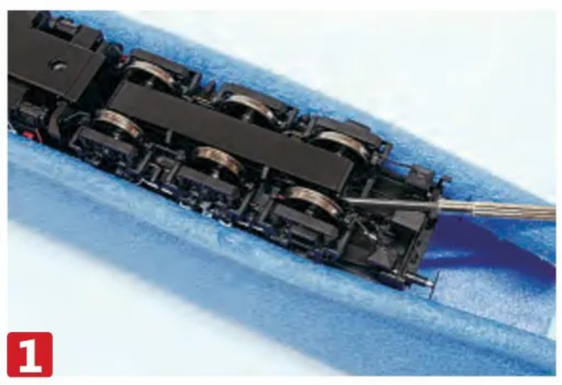


The new wheels are identical in design and colour to those fitted to the model. The plastic insulation bush with integrally moulded gear is clearly seen along with the stub axle ends. They are available in both 'EM' and 'P4' gauge, with the same technique needed to fit them to the model.

So, did the conversion take only five minutes? Yes, it did. Well, it took your editor considerably longer with the need to photograph the conversion, but the process was easier than it could have been due to the design of the bogies. The following train of photographs shows the process. M

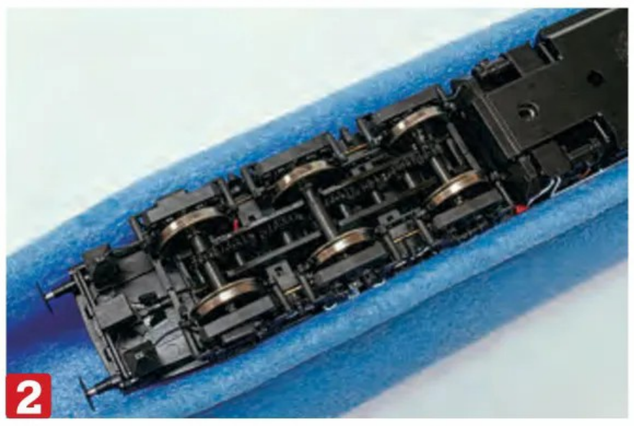
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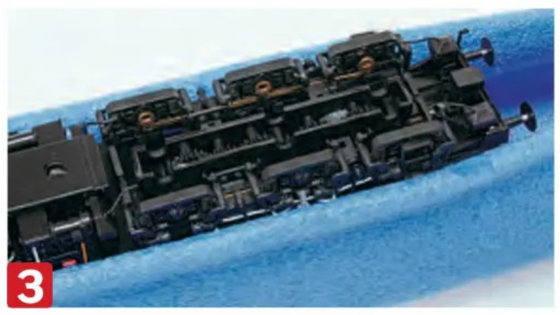
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One of the features of the Cavalex Models Class 56 is its relative simplicity. The bogies are complex assemblies where detail is concerned, but a simple plate retains the wheels which is easy to remove with a flat blade screwdriver.



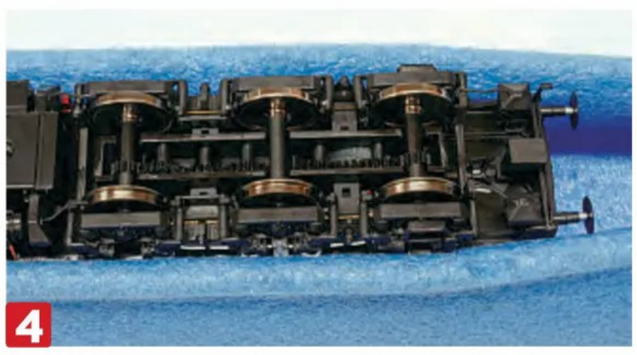
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There is a clip in each corner of the retaining plate. Once unclipped, release the wheels from the contact strip and axle bearings by gently pulling the side frames apart from the bogie inner frame.



3

This picture shows the assembly of the bogies, and a clearer view of the contacts for the stub axle current collection system. It is very efficient, less prone to wear than wiper pick-ups and should be seen as a desirable standard for both 2mm and 4mm scale models.



4

The new wheels drop straight in, with the axle gears aligning perfectly with the gears in the bogie frame. Any excess lubricant sitting in the bogie frame can be removed or transferred to the gears if needed. Note how the brake blocks clear the wheels.



5

To complete the conversion, the retaining plate is simply clipped back in place and the wheels checked to see they move freely in the bogies. The first tests through hand-built track were made in the layout's staging area which was done at low speed, whilst examining the way the wheels rolled through the common crossings and flangeways of hand-built track.



6

The converted locomotive ran perfectly from the start. After a spell of light operation to bed the mechanism in, No. 56023 was subjected to load testing with trains longer than the type it would normally be expected to haul. Twenty bogie wagons presented no challenge to the Cavalex Class 56 which ran superbly at all times. In terms of operation, Cavalex Models has a winner on its hands.

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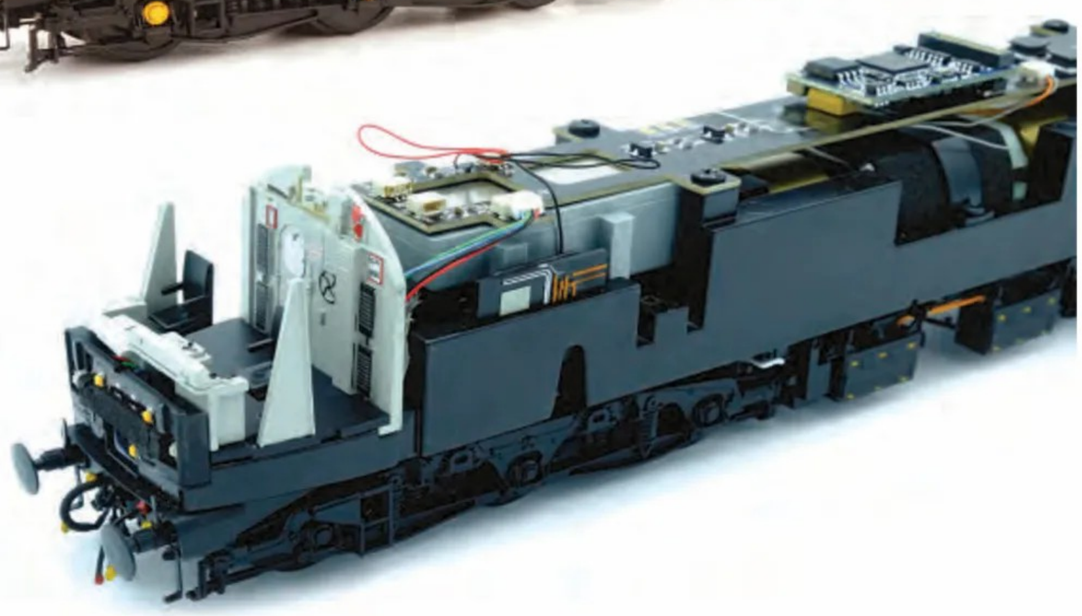
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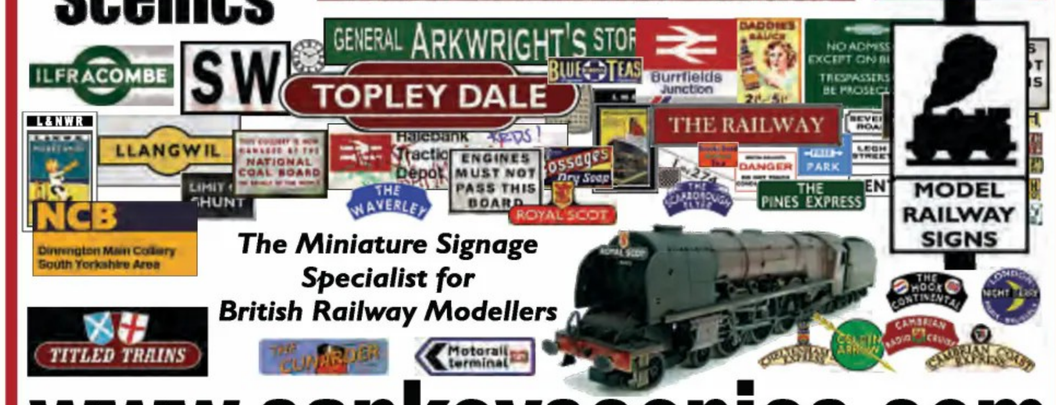
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A milestone has been reached by the Irish Railway Modelling and Accurascale family, with the arrival of the first 4mm scale passenger coaches to be produced by the group. The featured Northern Irish Railway Mk.2b stock were built in 1970 by BREL Derby for the cross-border 'Enterprise' service and strengthened by the acquisition of further stock from BR in 1980. The second-hand BR coaches included BFKs for rebuilding as generator coaches, one of which is included in the pack of three coaches submitted for review along with two former FO coaches.

Remarkable Mark Twos

Another first for the hobby is the arrival of the first passenger carrying coaching stock from the Irish Railway Modelling label in the form of Northern Irish Railways (NIR) stock. The models will further whet the appetite for the forthcoming BR Mk.2b stock from Accurascale.



Nos. 926 and 927 are models of former Mk.2b First Open coaches rebuilt as Second Class vehicles. They are models of former BR coaches acquired in 1980 rather than the Mk.2b stock specifically built for NIR in 1970.



Generator coach No. 914 is a completely new tooling including the B5 bogies. They were converted from former BR Mk.2b BFKs acquired by NIR in 1980.



Each coach in the NIR Mk.2b range is beautifully modelled with the correct profile and proportions. All of the underframe fittings are separately applied, and the bogies are specifically tooled for Irish gauge and will accept 21mm gauge wheels.

Not just reliveried UK-outline coaches

IRM has tooled bespoke bodyshells to correctly represent the coaches supplied in 1970, including those types unique to NIR: a First Open, two BDTS driving trailers, and a catering vehicle, the only bespoke one to be constructed (Grill-Bar No. 547) other than BR Mk.2 Pullman stock. The Second Open coaches are outwardly similar to the TSOs constructed for BR. They were fitted with B4 bogies adapted for Irish 5ft 3in gauge and finished in a smart blue and maroon livery.

The modelled coaches include some additional Mk.2bs purchased from BR to strengthen the 'Enterprise' fleet. They include accurate models of the BGV generator coaches built from five second-hand Mk.2b BFK stock acquired in 1980 to supply train power when GM111 locomotives were introduced on 'Enterprise' services. Three of the packs include a generator car with bespoke bodyshell tooling, additional fittings and Irish gauge B5 bogies specifically produced for this vehicle.

They have been offered in packs of three coaches in various combinations of type and livery. It would appear that a Mk.2c has made its way into one of the NIR InterCity Corporate coach packs too (FO No. 903).

RPSI heritage coach pack

Note should be made of the sixth coach pack released at the same time as the NIR stock. A triple pack of coaches including No. 547 finished in Railway Preservation Society of Ireland green was produced to raise funds for RPSI. It is a limited-edition pack and still available at the time of writing.

Livery details

The liveries covered by the seven coach packs cover the fleet from refurbishment in the late 1970s when the blue and grey NIR scheme was first applied, through to the application of NIR 'corporate' scheme from 1988. One pack features the intermediate 'InterCity' scheme which saw the blue and grey livery enhanced with white lines and it is this pack which was kindly submitted for review by IRM.



↑ Gangway door detail

Several parts make up each gangway which has the correct pattern of twin folding doors in the passenger gangways and a plain one at the generator end of the BGV.

MODEL FEATURES:

- Single piece bodyshells tooled for each vehicle.
- Specifically tooled B4 and B5 bogies for Irish gauge.
- Provision for regauging to 21mm gauge.
- Magnetically controlled interior lighting.
- Stay-alive power pack for flicker-free lighting.
- Interiors built up from separate components.
- Flush glazing with minimal visible edges.
- Stub axle current collection.
- Finely detailed underframes.



↑ Glazing

Single piece glazing pieces are fitted to the inside of each coach side. They are properly seated and well secured, resulting in a clean flat appearance. Glazing bars are touched in with body colour and the glazing is adorned with 'no smoking' labels.



← BGV generator coach detail

Detailing of the generator car includes the roof grille and exhausts relating to the generator set. Note the tiny rivet detail on the rain gutter detail.



→ Irish gauge B5 bogies

The opposite side of the BGV with fine grille work moulded (not printed) in the coach side and a close-up of the B5 bogies with their heavier spring plank, springing and torsion rod compared to B4 bogies.



↑ Interior fittings

Careful research has been put into the interior of each type of coach to ensure the fittings are accurate. Some seating has the classic winged head rests whilst others such as the rebuilt FOs do not. It is worth noting that the interiors are not single mouldings, but constructed from individual seats, tables and partitions. Guard's and generator sections are also as carefully assembled.



↑ Current collection

Current collection employs the low friction stub axle system which uses split axle wheel sets. There is sufficient room for 21mm gauge wheel sets to be fitted, although the stub axle system makes standard wheel sets unsuitable. The supplied wheels could be regauged with the use of a wheel puller and spacing washers to maintain the gauge.

Bodyshells

Single piece bodyshells have been produced for all of the coaches, with detail accurately tooled in the more unusual coaches such as the Grill-Bar car; the generator coaches and Driving Trailers. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to this collection of beautifully finished stock which is supplied in packs of three coaches in three liveries, allowing the Belfast-Dublin 'Enterprise' trains to be correctly modelled from around 1978 onwards. All window openings, doors, grilles and other external features are properly tooled for each vehicle. There is no over-printing to represent ventilation grilles or blanked off windows to represent plain body panelling.

The bodyshells are properly profiled with the correct roof shape, tumblehome and curves at the coach ends. Window openings are the correct size and have the frames moulded as part of the bodyshell, not on the flush glazing.

A quite amazing number of small fittings are applied to the bodies including separate roof ventilators of the correct pattern, hand rails, generator exhausts and gangways.

Underframes

The underframe floor is a complex tooling designed to accept close coupling cams, power supplies from the bogies without connecting wires and all of the battery boxes and headstock detail. It is kitted out with individual brake cylinders, linkages and the pressure ventilation ducting too. Care has been taken to model the underframe fittings correctly for NIR stock rather than just applying a common set of components. Further, buffers to represent retracted and extended positions are supplied with the retracted position fitted to the model. Electric train supply fittings and footsteps completes what is a very complex and beautifully assembled area of the models.

On board lighting

Current for the interior lighting is fed to the interior circuits via split axle current collection. With no wiper pick-ups producing drag on the coaches, they are very free rolling. In addition to that benefit, the contact between the axle ends and bearing cups is more durable and less prone to dirt build-up. Sprung contacts between the axle bearing pick-ups and interior contact tabs has avoided the need for wired connections.

The lighting is correctly shaded and bright enough to display the beautifully detailed interior of all three coaches. It is supported by a power pack to prevent light flicker and can be controlled using the enclosed magnetic 'magic wand'. The driving cars (not included in the sample pack) also come with directional running lights for push-pull operation which are also controlled using the wand.

Fit and finish of the models

There is little doubt that these were very complex vehicles to assemble and finish. The outstanding number of small fittings are neatly and accurately applied to the body, underframes and bogies with no glue traces, or any item being fitted out of true. The overall finish is as blemish-free as it is possible to produce 4mm scale models, and photographic references indicate that the NIR colours and markings are accurately represented too.

Lining and legends are applied with dense white printing as are the markings on the coach ends. Small details such as the hinges of the red end gangway doors are picked out in silver.

Printed details extend to the flush glazing which sports 'no smoking' labels too.

Closing notes

Studying both the submitted sample coaches and other vehicles in the NIR Mk.2b range, reveals the time taken to research interiors, livery details and the exterior features of each vehicle type, including conversions. That effort by IRM has paid off in an amazing collection of finely detailed models which have some of the most advanced features of any ready to run 4mm stock currently available for Irish railway modelling, not to mention accuracy.

Technical features surpass those used by any other manufacturer for the price at the time of writing. Further, the fine balance between detail and practicality has been achieved well on these models. The railway scene on the island of Ireland is better catered for than at any time in the past and the new NIR stock fills an important gap in the range of available vehicles. It bodes well for the forthcoming Accurascale BR Mk.2b and Mk.2c coaches too, along with those currently in production by IRM for Iarnród Éireann modellers. M



↑ B4 bogies

There's some lovely spring detail in the B4 bogies which appear to be fitted to the coaches with the smallest gap possible between the body and bogie frame. There is enough clearance between the underside of the floor and wheels for reliable running unless the track is very uneven or has sharp transitions between level and inclined track.



↑ Coupling cams

Several options for coupling cams and couplings are supplied in each coach pack. Shorter coupling cam parts are supplied in the box should the minimal distance possible between coaches be desired. There are effective magnetic buck-eye couplings supplied in the box too, which are shown in action in this view. A satisfactory universal coupling to match the superb standards being set with 4mm scale models remains to be developed as a replacement for the obsolete tension lock coupling.

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TT:120 GAUGE 2.54mm:1ft

Early 1960s to circa 2020 ERA

Hornby 'TT:120' TTA tank wagons

A neat replica

HORNBY has produced a very neat replica of the TTA tank wagon for its 'TT:120' range which shares all of the features of the 4mm scale model including the underframe type which is a close replica of that used on Diagram TT088 TTA wagons. The green BPO version of the 'TT:120' model matches those built by Powell Duffryn in 1966/7, including the top walkway and end ladders. The other two models are fitted with end ladders are a very close fit to the model.

The level of detail is commendable given the smaller size of the scale and Hornby has also succeeded in replicating the character of the monobloc design by incorporating an impression of the curved tank barrel in the underframe. Unboxing impressions of the three models, which includes Total Oil No. PR 58260 instead of a SUKO version, are very positive.

Tank barrel

The feeling of covering the same ground again is reinforced by the manner in which the models are assembled. They follow the same pattern as the 4mm scale models in having a three-piece tank barrel which is neatly assembled with the joins hidden along the tank seam lines. No flaws in the mouldings could be observed along the barrel sides and they are fitted out with metal walkways and ladders too.

Different barrel ends can be tooled as a result of this design, to model variations in access ladders such as the end ladder on the ESSO and Total Oil wagons. One would hope to see conical ends to model Class B and bitumen tank wagons should Hornby take advantage of the huge scope of this tank wagon family.



Super power for a short rake of four ESSO Class A TTAs bound for Fawley refinery. EWS No. 66073 was photographed at Millbrook with the short train on December 2, 2003. A Class 66 is included in the Hornby 'TT:120' scale range but not in original and now classic EWS livery.



Three TTAs have been added to the 'TT:120' range, the first modern wagons to appear in the range. They are an excellent choice for the start of a new range, once numerous in number and offering conversion opportunities to add variety to a collection.

MODEL FEATURES:

- Dimensionally accurate monobloc tank wagon.
- Etched ladders and walkways.
- Underframe composed of numerous small fittings.
- Fixed buffers with metal heads.
- NEM coupling pockets.
- Close coupling cams.
- Air brake hoses supplied in the box.

Underframe features

A neatly modelled underframe including the impression of the tank barrel being set into it in the same manner as the prototype has been assembled from numerous small fittings. Bruninghaus springs are fitted to the BPO and Total Oil models, placing them in the BR Railfreight era and beyond. The modern springing replaced leaf springs which are present on the model of No. ESSO 6105. Having underframes with both spring types widens the scope of the model for Hornby.

Metal three-hole disc wheels are fitted which run in plastic at the rear of the axle box mouldings – but not particularly free-rolling, requiring a little fine tuning for reliable layout operation.

The clasp brake mouldings are very finely executed along with brake equipment and pipework which includes a through vacuum brake pipe even though two of the models are coded as TTA. The brake shoes align with the outside edge of the wheels and are close enough for appearances sake, but do not prevent the wheels from rotating freely.



Some differences between various designs have been incorporated in the models, namely the end ladder details. To keep costs down, Hornby has used some common components in the models, including the access walkways.



The model of No. ESSO 6105 covers a 1964 design built by Pickering. They were fitted with vacuum brakes, leaf springs as applied to the model and coded TTV. During the 1980s, they were modernised with air brakes and Bruninghaus suspension. They were renumbered in the ESSO56xxx number sequence too.



No. PR 58260 is a nice addition to the collection, representing a Powel Duffryn-built wagon hired by Procor to Total Oil. Both the end ladder and underframe details of the model are a good match to the livery and running number.

Overall, the model has an excellent level of detail in the underframe, some of which is particularly fine such as the pipe runs, brake linkages and brake levers. The level of detail to durability is about the right level to withstand repeated handling.

Assembly and finishing

Apart from a walkway not being fully seated in place on one model and the models lacking completely free-rolling wheels, quality of all three is very good. The etched metal walkways and ladders are consistently coloured to match the barrel assembly and they give the models a touch of refinement normally associated with more expensive 4mm scale models. No flaws were detected in the livery finish except some raggedness along the solebars in places. The overall finish is eggshell, the ideal base for weathering.

The use of some common components and the single one-size-fits all underframe aside, TT:120 modellers have an excellent model of a TT088 design on a Powell Duffryn underframe which covered quite a few BP and Shell Oil wagons and for an affordable price too. Whilst the 'TT:120' range grows, modellers can take advantage of the models for conversion work for POA wagons for aggregate and scrap metal traffic. Some tank wagon conversions are also possible too, and the underframe could be modified to create further variation in a collection. M



Paint finishes are neat except a little raggedness along the solebar of the BPO wagon. The overall assembly quality is excellent for the size of the models which are attractively priced at £25.99 each.



A good balance between detail and durability has been achieved with the models which have some very fine detail applied to the underframe. The same can be used to create other wagon types to expand a collection whilst the 'TT:120' range grows over time.

❐ Produced by Hornby Hobbies Ltd.
www.hornby.com

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£25.99

DB Cargo UK HRA wagons in 'N'

N GAUGE 2mm:1ft

2017 to present ERA

WHEN power stations were closed or switched to biomass fuel, freight operators started to look for a new use for coal hopper wagons as coal traffic declined. Wagons constructed for EWS and other operators were transferred to meet the growing demand for rail borne aggregate distribution.

The long hopper wagons built to carry coal are not ideal for heavy aggregate and could not be loaded to their full volume, making the load to train length ratio less than desirable.

DB Cargo UK has undertaken a programme of shortening part of its HTA wagon fleet inherited from EWS to improve their efficiency for carrying aggregate in the same manner as the GB Railfreight HYA cut-down hopper wagons. Effectively, one bay was removed reducing the wagon length by about 20% creating a cut-down version of the HTA which was recoded as HRA.

The new wagons increased the payload of a full length train by nearly 450 tonnes because of the increased number of wagons that could be used in a train compared to a rake of HTAs. Around 110 wagons were converted by Axiom Rail and WH Davis with all of the wagons returned to traffic by the end of 2018.

Cut-down model

Bachmann has followed in the footsteps of DB by producing a cut-down HRA wagon in 'N' gauge under the Graham Farish label. It uses common parts with its HTA model and indeed, it shares the same overall shape, bogies and underframe features of the longer coal wagon.

Four models were issued with individual running numbers which will help modellers build up a suitable rake, usually of about 25 to 27 wagons. The HRA is 88mm long over the headstocks, making a full length train nearly 2.3 metres in length in 'N' gauge.

Hopper proportions

The model follows the complex shape of the prototype well with good proportions, sharp angles between the top hopper sections and a correctly modelled interior dividing panel between two bays. The upper hopper section is separately assembled and applied to the integral lower hopper and underframe moulding. The seam line between both mouldings is well disguised, even at the sloped ends of the hopper with its well defined ribbed panel. Exterior detail is integrally moulded with the main mouldings including the pipework associated with the braking system, the hand brake wheel and discharge levers too. From normal viewing distances, the detail looks fine enough and could be better defined with the use of pin washing pigments and weathering.



← **Models of the cut-down HRA wagons have been issued by Bachmann in 'N' gauge, priced at £46.95 each. Four models with unique running numbers are available in the first run.**



↑ **Two mouldings make up the hopper and underframe which are joined along the lower part of the hopper sides. The join is not particularly visible from normal viewing distances**

The assembly method employed with this model is quite simple and in common with the EFE Rail Clay Tiger wagons, it is clear that the number of sub-assemblies and small parts is being kept to a minimum to keep tooling and assembly costs down. It does have the advantage of making the model less prone to damage too.

Bogies and wheels

The bogie mouldings are quite basic with the outside detail being neatly tooled but little else. There are no brake fittings apparent on the inside faces of the bogies and the coupling pockets are part of the moulding too. No close coupling cams are fitted to the frame of the wagon, even though this is one model that would benefit from them, unlike four-wheel wagons that are supplied fitted but do not need them. The use of close coupling cams remains inconsistent among 'N' gauge models at this point in time.

The coupling pockets are fitted to the bogies instead, with the usual 'N' gauge coupling. Fortunately, the HRA model is free rolling which should prevent some of the more common problems with the 'Rapido' design of coupling when used in the type of long train that the HRAs are employed.

Overall finish

Despite the simple construction of this model, it is enhanced with a sharp livery with good quality colour rendition and an even coverage too. Printed details are neatly applied, level and consistent in size. Modellers will have fun toning the fresh DB red colour down to the weathered pink shade that many of these wagons quickly developed. Tagging of them is also common with more than one layer of tagging apparent on individual wagons, offering the chance to customise an otherwise plain and relatively mundane rail vehicle. M

❐ Produced by Bachmann Europe Plc.
www.bachmann.co.uk

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MODEL FEATURES:

- Four different running numbers.
- Separate underframe hopper fittings.
- Accurately applied livery.
- NEM coupling pockets.
- Coupling pockets fitted to the bogie frames.
- Free-rolling metal wheels.



→ **Bogies are simple mouldings and include the coupling box too, there being no close coupling cams fitted to the model. A simple pin secures the bogies to the model. The design is basic with the high use of integral moulding for smaller details including the brake wheels.**



↑ **The models were converted from HTA coal hopper wagons and introduced in 2017 and 2018. DB red livery was applied which has been replicated accurately on the Graham Farish model.**



↑ **The external shape of the hopper is accurate along with the two-bay hopper interior.**

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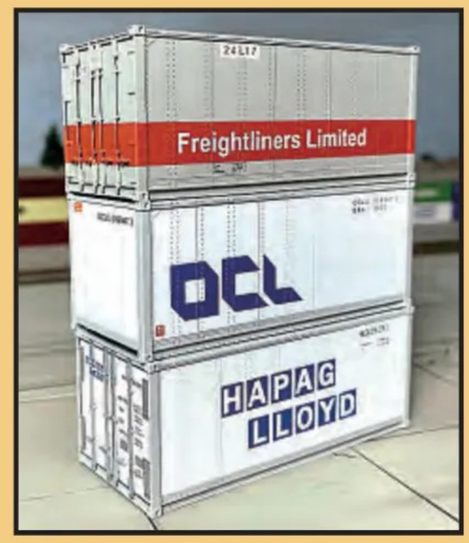
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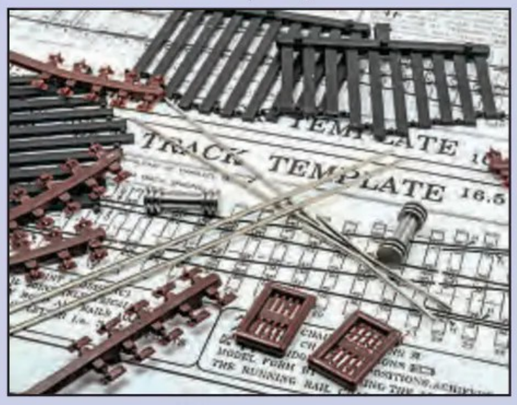
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Southern slam-door workhorses

Now the Class 423 4-VEP has been revamped by Hornby, the Class 421, 4-CIG four car third rail EMU is a missing part of the Southern Electric jigsaw.

THERE WAS LITTLE glamour surrounding the Class 423, 4-VEP third rail multiple units at any time in their lives and they attracted little railway glory, except perhaps No. 3417 *Gordon Pettitt* which is the only 4-VEP to have survived the cutting torch as a complete set.

4-VEPs were reliable, day in and day out, providing a large number of seats for peak hour services on many routes with their two by three standard class seating. The following selection of images taken in their twilight years gives a flavour of their duties right to the end when the last trains were withdrawn from daily service in 2005. M



↑ Hornby's revamped 4-VEP has been widely welcomed because it is a valuable signature model for almost any layout based on the Southern Region third rail network. The low-density version, the 4-CIG remains to be produced in any scale and is clearly an opportunity waiting to be snapped up at a time when manufacturers are looking for new subjects. Hornby could utilise many of the 4-VEP fittings and assemblies to produce a 4-CIG and if we are very lucky, the 4-BIG buffet unit too.



↑ Havant is the location of this view of South West Trains (SWT) No. 3408 which was taken on June 25, 2004. Facelifting and MBSO rebuilding were completed by 1993. It was painted in SWT colours in June 2000. Withdrawal from service came in March 2005 and disposal in November of the same year. Note the lifting lugs on the lower side of the trailers, a feature of the first batches of 4-VEP.



↑ No. 3514 was the only 4-VEP to be painted in the green and ivory livery of the Southern franchise, the repaint from Connex white and yellow taking place in late 2001. Its facelift and MBSO rebuilding were completed by June 1990. Withdrawn in November 2005, sadly this unit did not survive and was scrapped between December 2005 and March 2006. It was photographed at Oxted on July 18, 2003.





↑ Trailer Second (TS) No. 70799 was part of 4-VEP No. 3419 and was recorded at Havant on December 22, 2003. No. 3419 was an early SWT repaint which was done in March 1997. The unit was withdrawn in May 2004, stripped and scrapped shortly after.

← The Reading-London Waterloo route was a regular haunt of the 4-VEP, although they did share these duties with 4-CEP and 4-CIG units during the SWT franchise. SWT No. 3581 departs Wokingham for Waterloo on October 11, 2002. Its MBSO rebuild was complete by 1995 and repainting in SWT livery followed in October 1998. It was withdrawn in March 2005 and scrapped in the summer of the same year.



↑ The MBSO allocated to No. 3419 was No. 62354. It was not originally allocated to this set which was originally No. 3019, but came from No. 3153. The longer time required to rebuild the guard's area of the MBSOs compared to facelifting the trailers was inconvenient. To resolve this problem, all MBSOs were put in a loose vehicle pool and as each one was completed, it was allocated to the next unit to be outshopped. For example, the original MBSO from No. 3019 ended up in No. 3420 which was completed one month later.



← SWT livery, applied to No. 3425 in March 1998, followed the same lines, if not the same colours as Network SouthEast livery. No. 3425 pauses long enough at Eastleigh for this appreciation of one cab to be recorded. It's MBSO rebuild was complete by May 1988. Withdrawal came in July 2004, and it was scrapped in August 2004.



← The MBSO of No. 3425 has been photographed at the rebuilt end of the vehicle, showing the new saloon that replaced part of the guard's van. Whilst most of the new saloons were fitted with single pane windows as modelled by Hornby, this unit has one of the same type as the rest of the unit, with sliding ventilator (usually sealed shut) . Note the different style of 'No Smoking' labels.

THE CLASS 421, 4-CIG: A MISSING LINK FOR SOUTHERN MODELLERS

Any takers for the 4-CIG?

THE return of the upgraded Hornby 4-VEP has been widely welcomed and it highlights the lack of another important EMU type which became as widespread on Southern metals and eventually could be observed as far apart as Reading and Ramsgate.

The Class 421, 4-CIG was built in two phases between 1964 and 1972 with a fleet size of 138 units. The similar and related Class 422, 4-BIG buffet units were built at the same time, with 28 units being introduced.

They share many common features with the 4-VEP, including overall dimensions, underframes, bogies, cab and roof details to mention a few. Hornby, with its 4-VEP would seem to be best placed to take advantage of a once numerous and widespread EMU which was finished in many different liveries, yet outwardly did not change very much apart from unit reformation. Bachmann could also consider the experience and common parts it has from producing the 4TC trailer unit. So, are there any takers for a 'OO' gauge 4-CIG?



↑ The similarities and common features between 4-VEP and 4-CIG stock is apparent in this view of 4-VEP No. 3524 and 4-CIG No. 1880 taken at Ascot in January 1998. The 4-CIG was withdrawn and scrapped in the autumn of 2004.



↑ 4-CIG units were widespread, but particularly common on Central Section and South Coast routes. No. 1847 approaches Lewes with a Hastings to London Victoria service on July 18, 2003. It was withdrawn and scrapped in January 2005. The second unit in the train was No. 1851.



↑ In 2004, 4-CIG units, like the remaining slam-door EMU fleet, was approaching the end of their careers after serving all three divisions of the Southern Region well into the Privatisation era. No. 1877 passes St Johns Wood on May 21, 2004. It was painted in Network SouthEast livery in 1992 and carried it until withdrawal in late August 2004.



↑ Buffet units should not be overlooked. On a damp evening of October 3, 1992, 4-BIG No. 2256 pauses at East Croydon whilst leading a fast Brighton line service. It became a hybrid 4-CIG No. 1399 in September 1999 when the TS from 4-CEP No. 1595 replaced the buffet car. 4-BIG are part of the CIG family of units and also share common parts and features with the 4-VEP.

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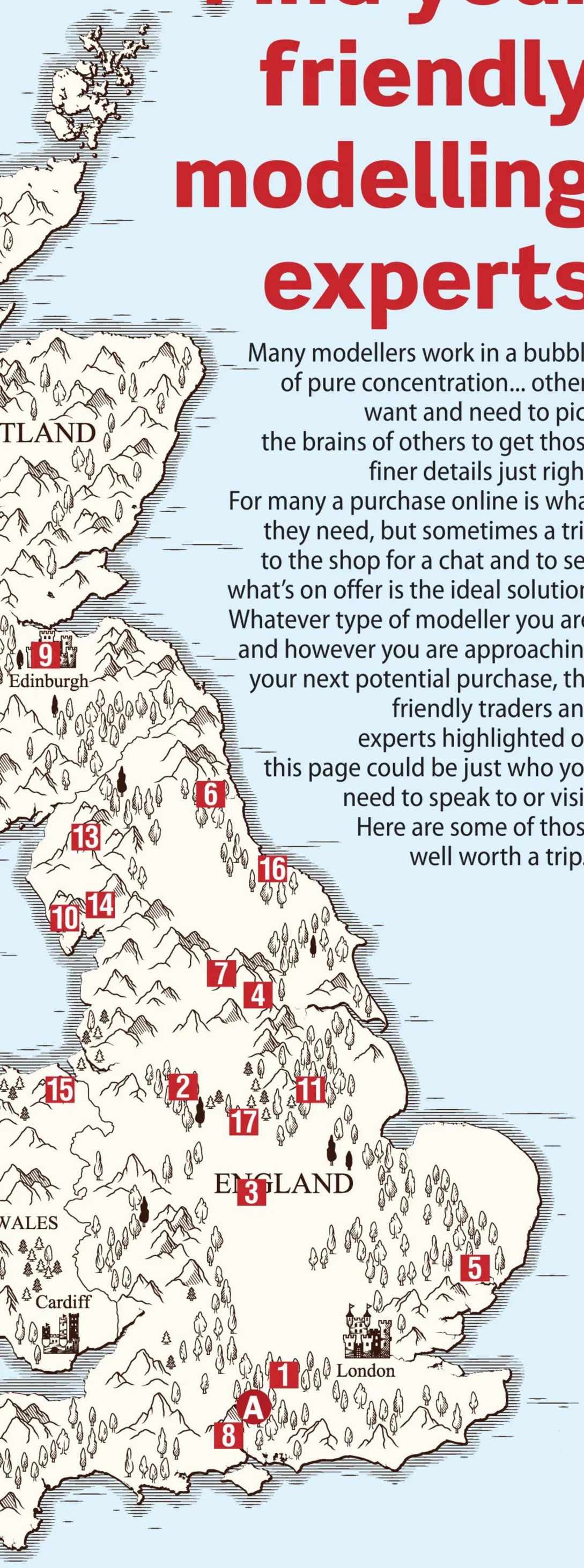
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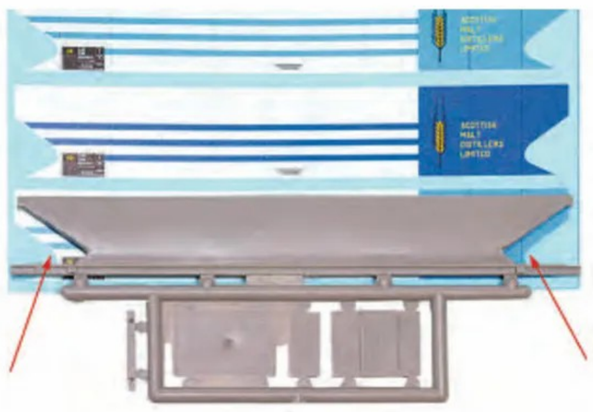
The 'N' gauge model of the Scottish Malt Distillers (SMD) PIA/JIA Polybulk is completed this month with painting, transfers and weathering.

THE TEST BUILD of The N Gauge Society's kit for the Diagram E538 (TOPS PIA/JIA) covered grain wagons, described in the last issue of *Rail Express Modeller,* continues this month with painting and finishing of this tricky and delicate model. You might think we are on the home stretch with this project, but it has a couple of tricks left up its sleeve to catch out the modeller.

Progress made so far

Work covered in the last issue covered assembly of the main superstructure, which is built up from some fairly thick plastic parts, and to get the wagons running. One challenge in assembling this kit appears to be that it uses the same parts as a similar kit also in the society's range, Kit 9a, which is probably to save tooling costs. Once assembled, the hopper has to be shaped along the shoulder to match that of the SMD wagons.

The model is detailed with a number of etched nickel-silver fittings including access ladders, cross platforms for the wagon ends, hand rails and ferry fittings which are tiny and challenging to use. Although the etchings are commendably fine, they have minimal folding lines which mean that they break easily.



The kit is supplied with transfers for the hopper side livery details. The ends of the plastic hopper are different in shape compared to the transfers. They can be used as semi-rigid overlays including the backing sheet or the ends modified so the livery can be applied as a transfer.

Using the hopper side transfers

During assembly of the hopper superstructure, a decision needs to be made as to how to use the supplied hopper side transfers. The hopper does not have complete side plating at the hopper ends, with the curved shape seen in the real wagons. The supplied transfers are designed to apply all of the SMD white and blue livery in one hit which makes finishing easier, in theory. The shape of the transfers includes the missing end plating including the curved profile.

The instructions suggest that they could be cut out around their edges, complete with the backing sheet, and applied to the assembled superstructure. They would have to be curved to fit the shape of the hopper and a suitable adhesive is needed to ensure they will stay in place.

Instead of using the approach described in the instructions, new plating shaped from 20-thou styrene was fitted to the hopper ends and shaped using the transfers as a template. It is tricky to do but produces a more durable model. It also allows the hopper side livery to be applied as a waterslide transfer.



Comprehensive testing of the models was continued before the hopper side transfers were applied.



Ready for painting: the fully detailed pair of SMD Polybulk wagons built from Kit NGSK0091 (Kit 9b) following the instructions as closely as possible.

Preparing for paint

The first job is to check seam lines and joins in the plating to see if they are acceptable. Some final finishing was completed with care to avoid dislodging fine detail. A couple of thin coats of white primer were applied after the model had been thoroughly cleaned and dried. Followed up with a coat of gloss white paint. Tamiya acrylic paint was used, applied in several thin coats to avoid texture from forming in the finish.

The wagon was examined again and if necessary, given some further finishing work depending on what the paint and primer revealed. Once the white painting is complete and thoroughly dry, livery transfers are applied to the wagon sides.



The one-piece bogies supplied in the kit work reasonably well and rotate freely around their pivots when the ferry hooks are correctly positioned. The wheels have too much sideways movement which can cause the flanges to catch parts of the bogie frame. The offending plastic can be pared away with care taken not to leave any shavings of plastic behind.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

Tools and materials include the following in addition to the usual workbench hand tools:

- Grade 800 and 1200 abrasive paper.
- White primer for plastic and metal.
- High viscosity cyanoacrylate adhesive (CA glue).
- Humbrol transfer setting solution.
- Gloss varnish.
- Gloss white paint (LifeColour, Tamiya).
- Matt white paint (LifeColour, Tamiya).
- Flesh coloured paint (Tamiya).
- Thinner for acrylic paint.
- Black paint.
- Rust and grime paints by LifeColour.
- AK weathering pencils.
- Matt varnish.

Gloss varnishing

It is worth pointing out that if the hopper side livery transfers are to be actually used as transfers, the best adhesion will be obtained when they are applied to a gloss finish rather than a satin or matt one. It is worth applying a thin coat of gloss varnish to the sides before proceeding with the transfers if the paint finish is not completely glossy.

Sliding transfers in place

Applying the hopper side transfers was no more challenging than any other, with the transfer detaching from its backing sheet in a couple of minutes of immersion in warm water. Soaking time is kept to a minimum to avoid the loss



The models were given a final rub-down with fine grade 1200 abrasive paper before being washed thoroughly (and carefully). The first coat is white primer followed by gloss white acrylic paint. LifeColour or Tamiya paint are ideal for the job when applied in thin coats. Black is applied to the bogies, solebars and underframe.



Transfers are applied over the gloss white finish where the shiny surface assists with the adhesion of the transfer film. They are thin and flexible, which is a good thing. This also makes them very prone to distortion, making the task of keeping the stripes straight and level challenging.



Note that the light faded blue version of the livery has been used because the models were to be finished in the heavily weathered condition as seen in lime traffic. Blue patches are applied over the SMD legends.

of adhesive from the contact surface. It was slid into place with the assistance of Humbrol transfer setting solution, patted dry and checked for trapped bubbles of air. If any are found, they are teased gently to the edge of the transfer.

The kit's instructions warn that the transfers can stretch a little when used in the traditional way. Distortion can be avoided mostly by being prompt in positioning to avoid excess stretching. Even so, they stretched enough so about 2mm of excess developed at either end. When the transfers were properly in place and dry, some trimming was done to finish this area of the project off.

The rest of the work consisted of applying some of the solebar markings and some touch-in of colour here and there. The models won't be used to represent 1980s grain traffic, but lime traffic in the 1990s instead. The faded blue version of the livery was chosen, and blue patches of a darker coloured transfer applied over the SMD legends. This forms the base for the faded, rusted and limed wagons that this one set of pristine wagons became, or at least those allocated to lime traffic.

Tackling problems

The hopper side livery transfers are susceptible to damage depending on the paint base being used to apply weathering. Despite using a coat of matt varnish to seal them, some slight bubbling was encountered after a thin wash of acrylic grime was applied to start the weathering process. One side was removed and the process of applying another transfer started again, this time with greater care to ensure there was no repetition of this problem by preparing the surface for the best adhesion possible. Care was taken thereafter to protect the transfers from excessive acrylic thinner or alcohol during the weathering process. In fact, most of the weathering was applied through an Iwata airbrush.

Rust and lime

Weathering was intended to make the models look as dirty and rusted as the full size wagons became in the 1990s, with faded livery colours and corrosion along the top surfaces of the hopper. Dark rust patterns were applied to the shoulders of the hopper and on the end platforms using a mix of stippling technique with paint and AK weathering pencils. Further weathering and rusting effects were applied using quick drying oil paint for a translucent rust effect.

This was followed with a dusting of off-white to represent dirtied lime spillage and rail grime combined and was applied over all of the wagon using the Iwata airbrush. The paint was thinned to a high degree and was matt-based. This softens the otherwise hard edged rusting effects.

Each wagon was inverted to apply track grime to the underframes along with more lime dusting around the discharge hatches. Railmatch frame dirt was applied to the bogies, couplings and wheels.

Weathering was completed in small steps and the effect assessed before continuing with more of the same effect or moving on to the next one. It is important to keep much of the livery, as faded as it is, yet show the models in a very grimed condition. The level of weathering also brings out the features of the models by highlighting detail which is not easy to see on a wagon with a predominantly white livery.

Looking at the overall result

Modelling the Distillers Polybulk wagons as lime hoppers, including the patched logos, places a different value to the kit and the resulting models. The platform hand rails coped with the repeated handling better than expected and the final result is of a finely detailed model which adds a different dimension to the fleet.



Rusting of the hopper shoulders and end platforms was done with a combination of fast drying oil paint, AK weathering pencils and dark rust by LifeColour, from its Rust and Dust paint pack.

The wagons were, according to records, used to supplement the ageing Diagram 1/252 CBA hopper wagon fleet (Lime covhop) on lime traffic from Hardendale Quarry to Margam during the 1990s, and have been recorded as running in trains with CBAs. A small fleet of CBAs will be modelled to complete a train. In the meantime, the wagons will be mixed with other wagons as if being returned to traffic following repair. M



Two well and truly rusty and grimy wagons sit awaiting transfer to wagon repair shops. The rust is applied in several layers using stippling and dry brushing technique. The lime dust is matt white paint with a hint of Tamiya flesh colour in one dusting, and a touch of grey in the second. It was applied in light drifts of colour to build up a dusty, dry and slightly encrusted appearance.

N BRASS LOCOS CLOSES

February brought the news of Mr Nick Tilson's decision to retire after 32 years of trading as N Brass Locos. The comprehensive range of 'N' gauge OHLE masts, portals and fittings are no longer available at the time of writing.
A TransPennine Express Class 350 runs under portals built from N Brass Loco kits. They helped considerably in the creation of authentic-looking electrified railway scenes. The Graham Farish Class 350 was given its TPE livery using Electra Railway Graphics overlays, another company which had ceased trading but has been acquired by new owners – thankfully! We wish Mr Tilson well in his retirement.



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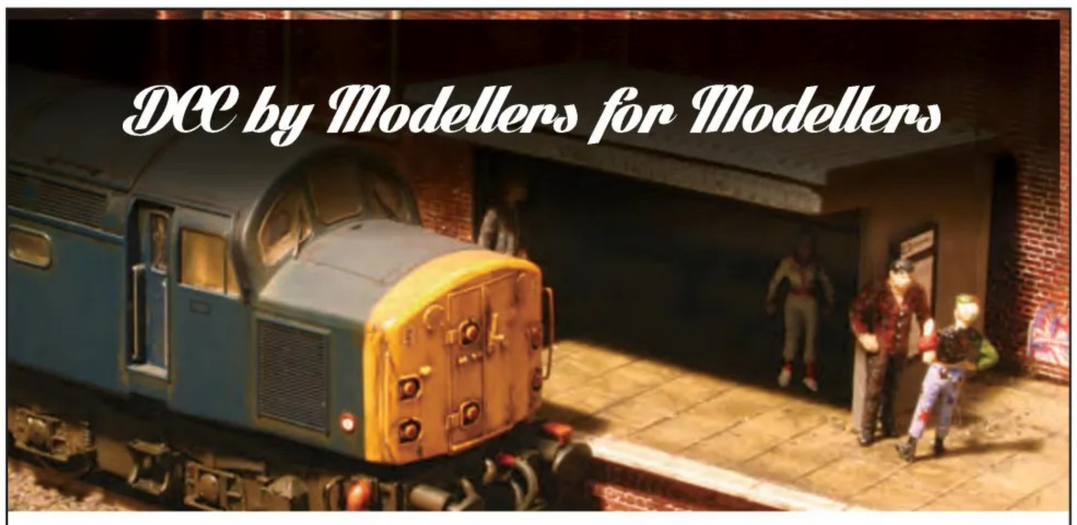
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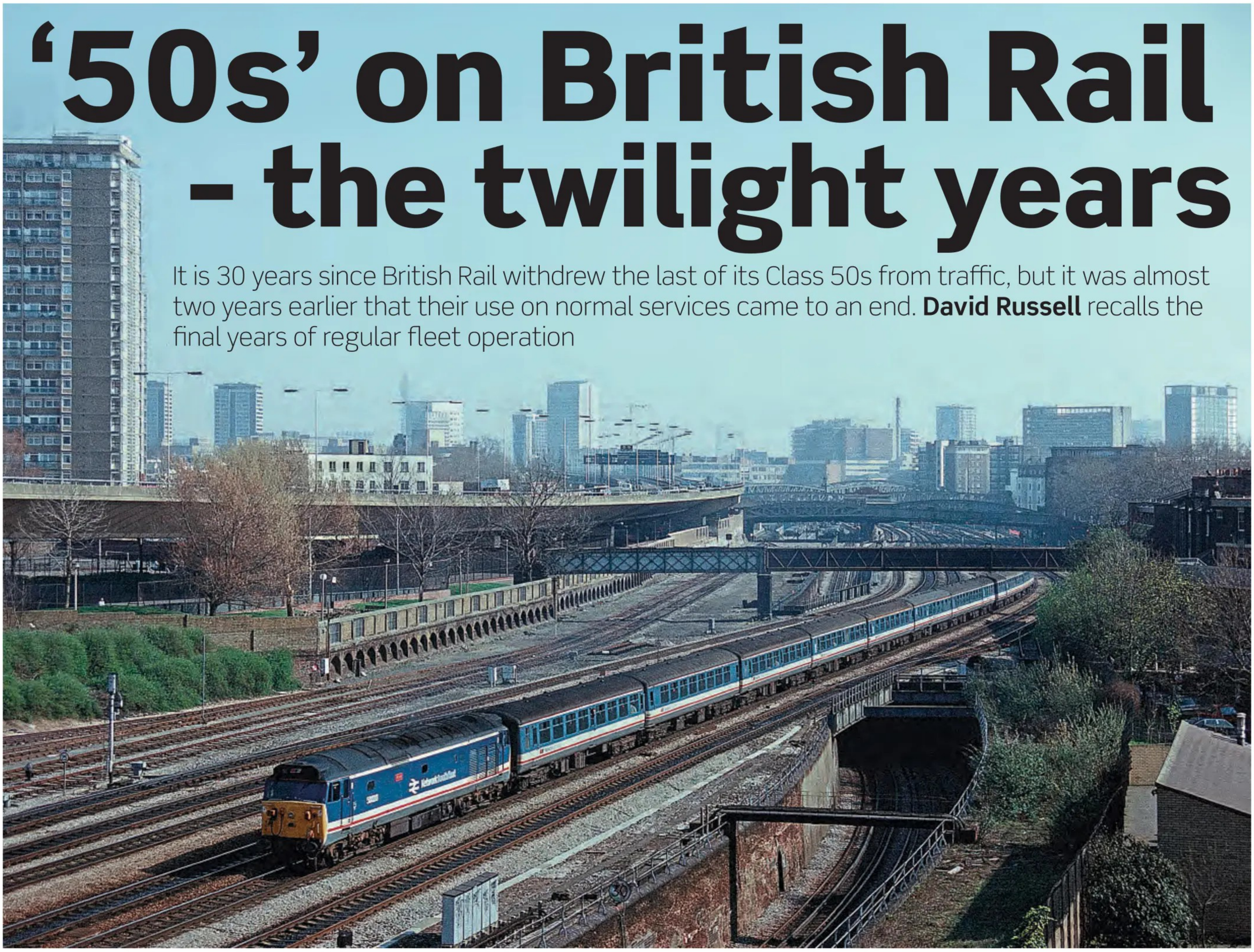
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‘50s’ on British Rail – the twilight years

It is 30 years since British Rail withdrew the last of its Class 50s from traffic, but it was almost two years earlier that their use on normal services came to an end. **David Russell** recalls the final years of regular fleet operation



No. 50023 *Howe* starts out from London Paddington with the 1F18 12.15 to Oxford, accelerating towards Westbourne Park alongside the Westway on March 17, 1990. Diagrammed workings of Class 50s out of Paddington were to cease less than two months later. Duncan McEvoy

THE run down of the Class 50 fleet began in 1987, when No. 50011 *Centurion* was taken out of traffic for use as a testbed in connection with Class 50 power unit overhauls at Crewe Works.

British Rail had introduced a new Cost Effective Maintenance (CEM) regime, whereby instead of being dispatched to a BREL Works for overhaul, locomotives would undergo a major exam at a depot, with components being sent away for attention. For many years, Class 50s had been traditionally overhauled at Doncaster, but under the new procedure, they would undergo an F-exam at Laira, with power units being sent to Crewe.

By the end of 1989, the fleet had been reduced further, with 13 more ‘50s’ having been withdrawn for various reasons; among these were major failures, the withdrawal of the fleet from parcels use and the loss of Provincial Services work following the continued ‘Sprinterisation’ of many routes.

At the start of the new decade in January 1990, regular passenger diagrams were, in the main, restricted to two routes – Paddington to Oxford (Table 116) and Waterloo to Exeter (Table 145). InterCity work had largely ceased in 1987, but a few Cross-Country services, mainly into and out of Paddington, remained in the hands of 50s, as did some summer weekend workings to/from the West Country.

Other locomotives were allocated to Civil Engineers departmental duties, primarily in Devon and Cornwall.

The writing was already on the wall for the ‘50’ workings on services between Paddington and Oxford. Network SouthEast had already transferred some of its Stratford-based Class 47s to Old Oak Common, and since 1988 services on this route had been operated by both Classes.

As well as the core services between Paddington and Oxford, the duties included several peak hour additionals and extensions, with trains from and to Westbury/Bedwyn as well as some Oxford workings extended to serve Banbury. There was also a morning peak working and corresponding return via the Chiltern route from Banbury to Paddington, providing commuters from High Wycombe with a locomotive-hauled train.

The arrival of further Brush Type 4s in the form of surplus ‘47/7s’ displaced from Edinburgh-Glasgow services and NSE examples previously used on the Kings Lynn route, together with the need for additional Class 50s at Laira owing to reliability issues, resulted in Old Oak Common losing its Class 50 allocation in July 1990. The depot’s fleet had already been reduced at the May timetable change just two months earlier; May 11, saw the last booked Chiltern working take place, when No. 50026 *Indomitable* hauled the 1G58 18.12 Paddington-Banbury via Princes Risborough.

The last diagrammed working on the Paddington to Oxford route occurred on July 12, the final train being the 1F95 21.35 Oxford-Paddington, handled by No. 50023 *Howe*. It took up its new duties on the Waterloo to Exeter route the next day. The removal of the Class 50 fleet also marked the end of planned summer forays for the Class between Paddington and Paignton; such workings had been shared between NSE’s Old Oak Common-based Class 47s and ‘50s’, and the last of these to utilise Class 50 traction took place on June 23, when No. 50026 *Indomitable* was provided to haul the 1C13 08.02 Paddington-Paignton and 1A65 13.24 return. However, within a few weeks, Class 50s would reappear on these ‘holidaymaker’ services...

On July 28, issues with No. 47716 *Duke of Edinburgh’s Award* earlier in the day resulted in No. 50050 *Fearless* hauling 1A65 from Paignton to Exeter St Davids, where it was replaced by No. 50044 *Exeter* which took the service through to Paddington. Remarkably, No. 50044 stayed in the London area for several days, even working the evening Paddington to Banbury service via the Chilterns (Princes Risborough/High Wycombe) on July 31. The same day saw the final appearance of a ‘50’ on a Cross-Country service out of London, when, in place of a Class 47, No. 50009 *Conqueror* hauled the 09.20 Paddington-Manchester to the West Midlands, returning from Birmingham with the 1V96 12.18 Manchester Piccadilly-Paddington. It then went on to work the 1C71 18.47 Paddington-Bristol Temple Meads, the last Class 50-hauled service between these two stations.



Class 50s replaced '33s' on Waterloo-Salisbury stopping services in May 1989. No. 50043 *Eagle* approaches Clapham Junction with the 16.15 to Salisbury, hauling a pair of 4-TC non powered electric multiple units, on the late afternoon of March 17, 1990. Duncan McEvoy

This still wasn't the end for Class 50 activity at the London terminus. When No. 47547 failed while working the 1C13 08.02 Paddington-Paignton on August 25, the return working (1A65 13.24 Paignton-Paddington) was hauled by No. 50032 *Courageous* to Exeter St Davids, where No. 50018 *Resolution* took over for the run to Paddington.

TABLE 145 WOES

From some of the aforementioned workings, it would be easy to think that Class 50s were regularly standing in for '47s' owing to poor reliability of the latter. However, that was not the case, and such instances were quite isolated; in fact, Class 50 reliability was at rock bottom. When the decision was made in July 1990 to transfer the last two locomotives based at Old Oak Common to Laira, fleet availability on the Waterloo to Exeter route was under 40% on some days. Several locomotives were stopped with engine or main generator issues, and No. 50016 *Barham* had worked its last train the previous month.

The requirement for Class 50s on Table 145 had been increased in May 1989, when the Salisbury to Waterloo services operated by Class 33/1 locomotives with 4-TC units went over to Class 50 operation. In addition to these and the core workings between Waterloo and Exeter, there were various extensions including part of the moves to and from Laira, there was an early morning Class 50-hauled train from Newton Abbot to Exeter, and an evening working from Exeter to Totnes.

Between Friday and Sunday, a '50' would also visit Portsmouth Harbour on a service which ran between Plymouth and Brighton; the legs east of Portsmouth were handled by a Class 73. The Portsmouth workings came to an end on January 20, 1991, No. 50046 *Ajax* hauling the final working out of Portsmouth Harbour. By this time, fleet availability was so bad that a revised timetable had to be introduced; even with the use of surplus Departmental machines, it became impossible to find sufficient Class 50s to cover the 13 passenger diagrams.

DEPARTMENTAL DOWNTURN

At the start of 1990, Laira's Departmental (DCWA pool) Class 50 fleet comprised 10 locomotives, Nos. 50004/008/015/019-021/037/040/042/046. Their primary role was on Civil Engineers workings, and, on paper at least, they were restricted to 60 mph, being locomotives which were considered 'tired' with high engine hours. Much of their work involved hauling ballast trains in the Bristol and Exeter areas, often working to and from Meldon Quarry. The number of locomotives required on each day varied, so quite often, there were spare locomotives which were available for other duties.

The summer of 1990 saw DCWA '50s' appear on passenger workings quite regularly. If a Class 47 had issues on a Cross-Country working in Devon or Cornwall, one of the Departmental Class 50s would often provide assistance, and they would also be used to pilot ailing High Speed Trains over the Devon banks. Poor availability of the first generation Diesel Multiple Unit fleet afforded further passenger work; a scratch rake of four Mk.1/2 coaches, which included three brake vehicles, was normally stabled at Exeter and saw quite a bit of use on the Barnstaple branch, with a Class 50 at the head of the train if a DMU was not available. On occasions, failed DMUs would be hauled by a Class 50.

›

Class 50s were synonymous with the sea wall between Dawlish and Teignmouth, and hauled service trains along it until the end of their regular careers. On August 17, 1991, No. 50030 *Repulse*, heads west between Clerks Tunnel and Parsons Tunnel, near Dawlish. Tom McAtee.



On May 26, 1991, No. 50049 *Defiance* stands at Exeter St Davids with a train bound for London Waterloo. Class 47s would replace the '50s' on this route in 1991, with this '50' withdrawn that year. Today it remains operational on the main line as part of the Class 50 Alliance fleet, and carries GB Railfreight colours. Al Pulford

By August 1990, the fleet had been reduced to eight and further reductions occurred as the year went on, Class 37s taking over their duties. In January 1991, the fleet was disbanded, three of the five remaining Civil Engineers Class 50s moving to Network SouthEast to assist the ailing fleet on Waterloo to Exeter duties, and the other two, Nos. 50008/015, being retained for charters and special duties; these two were placed in NSE's reserve (NWCX) pool.

SPECIAL REPAINTS

With interest in the Class 50s at an all-time high, and the locomotives in demand for special events, a Laira depot initiative, led by area fleet manager Geoff Hudson, saw Nos. 50008 *Thunderer* and 50015 *Valiant* undergo repaints in January 1991. The area fleet manager was keen to avoid tatty looking locomotives appearing on high profile trains, so No. 50008 was turned out in what had previously been dubbed 'Laira blue' (and carried by Nos. 50019 *Ramillies* and 50037 *Illustrious* in 1989/90) and No. 50015 in Civil Engineers grey/yellow 'Dutch' colours. They made their debut appearance in their new liveries at the head of Pathfinder Tours' 'Cornish Centurion' on January 26.

Through the rest of 1991, the pair of '50s' operated various charters and attended several open days. During the autumn period, they were used on Sandite duties, and shortly afterwards, on November 23, they operated their last railtour. The 'Valiant Thunderer' was another Pathfinder Tours trip, which visited Paignton and Newquay.

Nos. 50008/015 were not the only Class 50s to be specially repainted in 1991. In April, pioneer No. 50050 *Fearless* emerged in as-delivered BR blue as No. D400 with no nameplates, while No. 50031 *Hood* received a new coat of large-logo colours the following month; this was done to commemorate 50 years of the sinking of *HMS Hood* in the Battle of the Denmark Strait during the Second World War.

WATERLOO-EXETER RUNDOWN

As mentioned on page 77, an amended timetable came into effect from January 21, 1991. The number of weekday trains between Exeter and Waterloo were reduced by two in each direction, and changes were made to the Waterloo to Salisbury stopping services as well. This timetable rationalisation reduced the loco requirement from 13 to 11. Three of the former Civil Engineers locomotives were added to the fleet, but there was no increase in fleet numbers, as in the first five weeks of the year, no less than five '50s' from the Network SouthEast pool were condemned.

It had been announced at the beginning of the year that Class 47/7s would begin to operate on the Waterloo to Exeter route later in 1991. Additional '47/7s' were procured by Network SouthEast from Rail Express Systems, along with some Class 47/4s from Railfreight Distribution following the demise of the Speedlink network. The latter were put onto the Paddington-Oxford route to release '47/7s' for Exeter services; these had the advantage of longer-range fuel tanks and 100mph permitted speed. Class 47s were no strangers to Table 145; for a brief period in 1988/89, a small number were operated on the line.

The additional Class 47s did not arrive until the summer months, and although some '47s' began to appear on workings out of Waterloo from the beginning of 1991, in the first half of the year it was more common to see Class 33s substituting if insufficient Class 50s were available to cover all diagrams. The arrival of the '47s' saw six Class 50s stopped in July, including GWR green-liveried No. 50007 *Sir Edward Elgar*. Another two were withdrawn in August, leaving eight Class 50s in traffic. By mid-September, this had been reduced to five: Nos. 50029 *Renown*, 50030 *Repulse*, 50033 *Glorious*, 50046 *Ajax* and 50050 (D400).

Later in the month, No. 50030 became the final '50' to leave Paignton on a service train, when, on the last day of the summer timetable (September 29), it hauled the 1O43 17.35 Paignton-Waterloo. This seasonal working was an extension of an Exeter to Waterloo service and had featured Class 33 power on two occasions in the preceding weeks owing to non-availability of the booked Class 47 or '50'.

Also, during September 1991, it was revealed that No. D400 (50050) was to be retained for special events and charters once the remaining '50s' had been withdrawn. A few weeks later, an announcement was made that No. 50007 *Sir Edward Elgar* was to be reinstated to partner No. D400. The Brunswick green 'Hoover' had been a firm favourite among depot

staff at Laira, although its return to traffic would be at the expense of No. 50046 *Ajax*, which was stopped in November to enable its power unit and other components to be used in the restoration of No. 50007.

The end of '50s' on Waterloo to Exeter services, and service train operation in British Rail ownership, came in May 1992. Regular use of the diminishing fleet on the route had ceased two months earlier, but Network SouthEast made plans for three locomotives to be used on May 24. Unfortunately, No. 50033 *Glorious* – which by now was also being retained as a back-up for Nos. D400 and 50007, failed at Basingstoke while working the 1038 14.22 Exeter St Davids-Waterloo the previous day, a move which was intended to put it in position for the final day's workings.

Consequently, only Nos. D400 and 50007 appeared on the final day; now restricted to 75mph, they ran as a pair on two return trips between Exeter and Salisbury. The last of these, which became the final BR service train to be hauled by a Class 50, was the 1V17 16.55 Waterloo-Exeter St Davids, the '50s' taking over from No. 47715 *Haymarket* at Salisbury.



No. 50046 *Ajax* was popular with enthusiasts but was withdrawn in 1992 to enable component recovery to return Brunswick green No. 50007 *Sir Edward Elgar* back to traffic. On January 19, 1991, the large logo '50' stands at Clapham Junction, awaiting its next duty. Paul Bigland

RAILTOURS & SPECIAL APPEARANCES

Fortunately, the flashover that had occurred on May 23, proved not be too serious, and No. 50033 *Glorious* was able to be retained for special duties along with Nos. D400 and 50007 *Sir Edward Elgar*. As well as charter trains, the three survivors also appeared at various galas and open days. One such gala was that on April 24, 1993, which saw Nos. 50007/033 work a triple-header in tandem with preserved No. 50031 *Hood*, which had become part of the Fifty Fund fleet in 1991. Who, at that time, would have imagined that 30 years later, all three locomotives would be in the care of the Fifty Fund/Class 50 Alliance?

Another tour, the 'Bishops Triple' on June 6, 1993, took Nos. 50007/033 and D400 from the West Somerset Railway to York, where No. 50007 was put on display at the National Railway Museum for the summer period. It returned south as far as Reading atop No. 47833 *Captain Peter Manisty RN* on the return leg of 'The North Yorkshireman' tour from Paddington to Scarborough on August 30.

With rail privatisation looming, it was announced that the three Class 50s would be retired in March 1994. The first three months of that year were a busy period for the locomotives, two of which were given repaints as part of sponsorship deals. Video producer Locomaster Profiles sponsored the repainting of No. 50033 into original BR blue as No. D433 to match No. D400 for the 'Midland Scotsman' to Glasgow on February 5. The following month saw the pair repainted again, this time into large logo blue, funded by Pathfinder Tours, in advance of the 'Cornish Caper' tour on March 19. This saw the pioneer in action as No. 50050 with its *Fearless* nameplates for the first time since 1990.

March 20, saw No. 50033 *Glorious* handed over to the National Railway Museum after working the 'Glorious Sunset' from York to Scarborough and back, leaving just one tour and two locomotives left. Six days later, the farewell tour, 'The 50 Terminator' took Nos. 50007 *Sir Edward Elgar* and 50050 *Fearless* on an outing taking in not only on routes associated with the '50s', but three termini which were synonymous with the Class – Waterloo, Penzance and Paddington. This brought to an end a chapter in the history of the Class 50s, but another one, the preservation era, was just beginning. E



Class 50s served London Paddington regularly until 1990 before being replaced by Class 47s. On May 7, 1990, No. 50036 *Victorious* enters the London terminus with a train from Oxford. Paul Bigland

CLASS 50 WITHDRAWALS

1987 (3):	50006/011/014
1988 (5):	50010/013/022/038/047
1989 (3):	50012/025/039
1990 (15):	50004/005/016/019-021/023/026/032/034/035/040-042/045
1991 (16):	50001-003/009/017/018/024/027/028/031/036/037/043/044/048/049
1992 (5):	50008/015/029/030/046
1994 (3):	50007/033/050



Pairs of '50s' often hauled trains from Exeter in the final months of operation as a way of moving locomotives (and stock) between depots. On August 17, 1991, Nos. 50046 *Ajax* and 50002 *Superb* wait to leave Exeter St Davids with the 2C59 22.15 to Newton Abbot. Tom McAtee

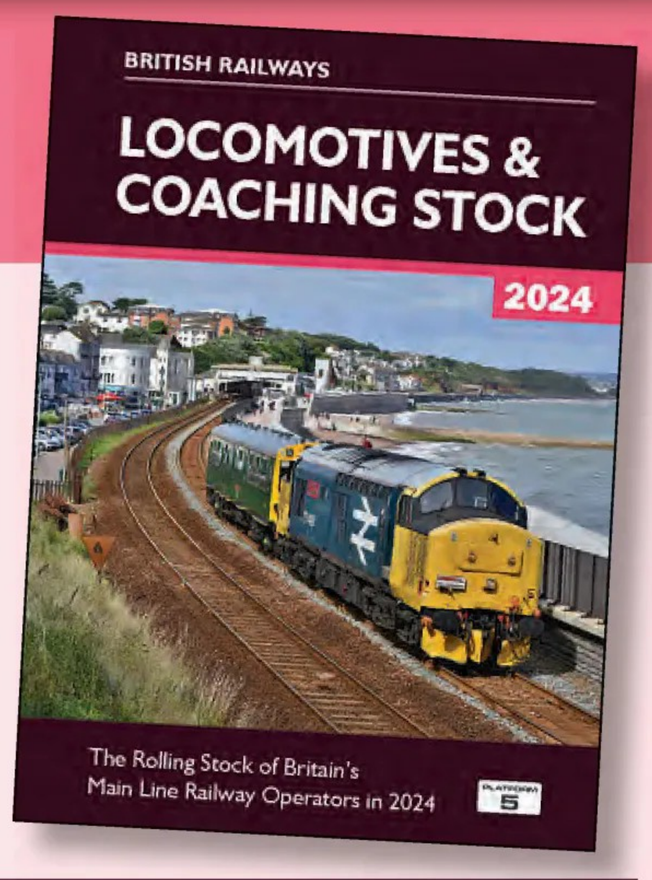
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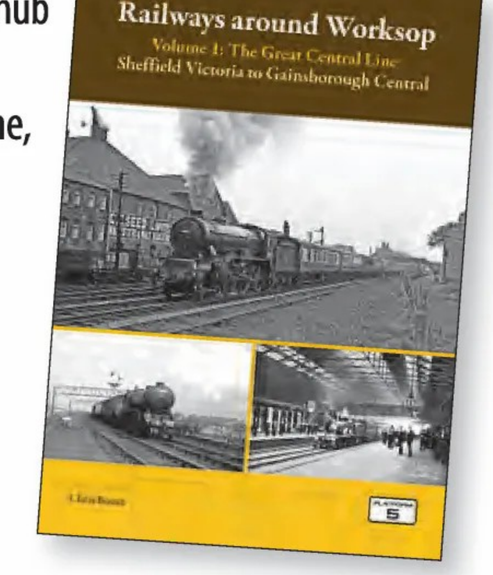
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Richard Clinnick presents a selection of images from around the rail network submitted to *Rail Express* this month.

1 **Freightliner Heavy Haul No. 66618 *Railways Illustrated* rolls past the flooded fields at Marston Marsh, crossing the River Yare towards Harford Bridge, south of Norwich on February 12. The '66/6' is hauling the 6Z67 05.12 Tunstead Sidings-Trowse Yard aggregates train.** Chris Boon

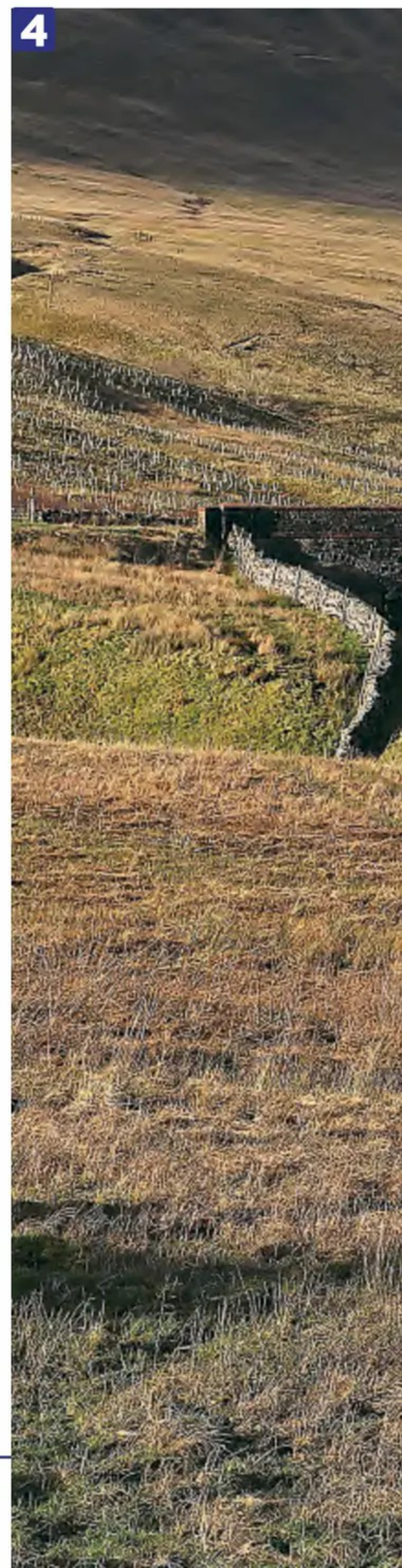
2 **The East Lancashire Railway held a Winter Diesel Day on February 10, with members of its home fleet in action. Carrying ScotRail colours, No. 47765 passes over the River Irwell at Summerseat, with the 1J56 11.03 Rawtenstall-Heywood.** Henry Thomas

3 **With the introduction of the first South Western Railway Class 701s now underway (*RE*334), attention will inevitably turn to the electric multiple units they will replace – the Class 455s. On February 8, Nos. 455715 and 455718 pass at Vauxhall at dusk.** CJ Rich

4 **Colas Railfreight Class 56s continue to haul timber trains on the Settle & Carlisle line, often operating in pairs. On January 30, Nos. 56105 and 56049 *Robin of Templecombe 1938-2013* head towards Ais Gill with the 6J37 11.59 Carlisle-Chirk.** Phil Metcalfe







2


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COLAS RAIL FREIGHT
COLAS RAIL FREIGHT

“If it’s not right, it’s not going out”

Richard Clinnick visits Strawberry Hill, where a small team are returning a Mk.1 slam-door unit to main line condition.

“IT’S just like Wimbledon,” says Chris Buckland as he walks around 4-VEP No. 423417 *Gordon Pettitt* at Strawberry Hill on February 21. “Sometimes I just come in here and listen. The unit is cut in and people are working on it... it’s wonderful.”

The depot is just that, a working depot, complete with live 750v DC third-rail. Next to the main shed, a pair of South Western Railway Class 450s are stabled between peak-time duties.

The site is in the midst of a triangle with various electric multiple units passing all day. Staff for the SWR site come and go.

Inside the shed are a mix of current and former railway people busying themselves on various tasks required to keep the ‘423’ operational. These tasks have been devised by Chris who wants the depot to operate as if it was still Wimbledon, the depot he only recently retired from having spent 41 years on the railway. There are spares storage areas, workbenches and all sorts of modern equipment required to keep trains operating.

Outside the main shed is an office building where exams are planned, payments are made and tea is consumed. It’s here that Steve Upton comes into his element with his cheerful attitude, incessant jokes and, on the day of *RE*’s visit, cooking for the troops.

Together with Gwilym Jones, Steve and Chris were the original ‘Three Musketeers’ who, in a pub, decided (most likely after at least five pints each Steve jokes) that saving a Southern Region Mk.1 slam-door EMU and returning it to the main line was a good idea. Sadly ‘Gwil’ passed away in 2019, but his memory and legacy lives on through his friends. “He’d have been so proud,” says Steve.

Electric multiple unit preservation is tough. Projects have been abandoned and vehicles scrapped. In the same week *Rail Express* visited Strawberry Hill to see the work on the 4-VEP, news broke that the sole-surviving Class 503 would leave Margate with two vehicles set for scrap. They won’t be the first EMU vehicles saved that have subsequently been disposed of and it’s doubtful they will be the last.

“You need a plan. What do you want, how will you do it, how will you fund it and where will you keep it?” says Steve Upton while making *RE* coffee at the depot. In this corner of London, all of this is in place, and more! There are ideas and there are aspirations. Chris laughs and says that some ideas will only happen “when I’m pushing up daisies”, but he says that not as a defeatist or someone who is against what others, mainly Steve, suggest, rather, he looks at the costs, timescales and changing goalposts as the obstacles to any dreams.

The Southern Electric Traction Group (SETG) are the operators of the only preserved and main line-registered EMU in Britain – No. 423417. It is owned by the Bluebell Railway, but the SETG are its custodians.

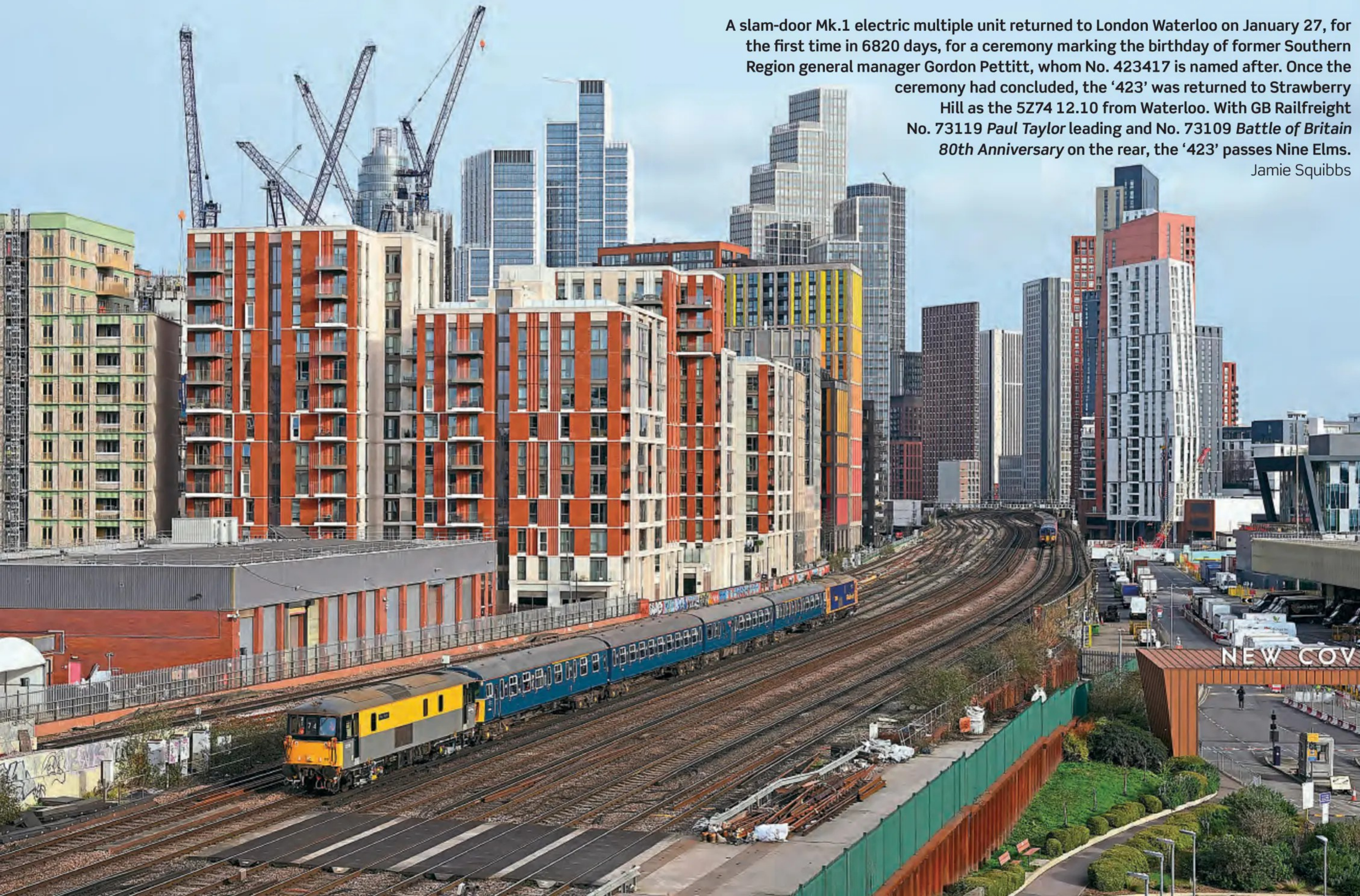
Ideally the dream would be for the 4VEP to roam the railway it once operated, under its own power, but that won’t happen. The group are aware that, from an operational point of view, Network Rail would be uncomfortable with the unit running solo. When it goes, finally, it will be accompanied by a locomotive, likely a Class 73, although Steve dreams of a main line-registered Class 33/1 with it.

The EMU visited London Waterloo on January 27, for a special ceremony to mark the birthday of Gordon Pettitt, whom the EMU is named after. This was the first time in 6820 days that a slam-door Mk.1 set had visited the terminus. It arrived top-and-tailed by Nos. 73109 *Battle of Britain 80th Anniversary* and 73119 *Paul Taylor*, both provided by GBRf.

Both Chris and Steve are quick to praise the operator for the effort it put into getting the ‘423’ into Waterloo, as well as Network Rail, SWR and the Bluebell Railway. That one of the locomotives, No. 73119, was named in memory of a GBRf staff member who worked with the fledgling SETG in the past, made that gesture more poignant for the SETG team. For the group it’s not just about returning the EMU to the main line, it’s about the people involved too.

Much like the Crewe Diesel Preservation Group’s idea to return a push-pull ‘47/7’ to the main line with a Driving Brake Standard Open (DBSO) set, which went on to win the Heritage Railway Association *Rail Express* Modern Traction Award last year (*RE*324), the best ideas surface in a pub. And saving a 4-VEP came from there.

Steve explains: “South West Trains wanted to mark the end of the slam-door sets and decided to paint one. Chris was the fleet production manager at Wimbledon, and he decided it had to be one of the first 20 4-VEPs. No. 3401 was the preferred choice, but it was in a poor state. In the end, No. 3417 was selected as it was in the best condition. It had only recently had an overhaul and throughout its life it had had few repairs.”



A slam-door Mk.1 electric multiple unit returned to London Waterloo on January 27, for the first time in 6820 days, for a ceremony marking the birthday of former Southern Region general manager Gordon Pettitt, whom No. 423417 is named after. Once the ceremony had concluded, the ‘423’ was returned to Strawberry Hill as the 5Z74 12.10 from Waterloo. With GB Railfreight No. 73119 *Paul Taylor* leading and No. 73109 *Battle of Britain 80th Anniversary* on the rear, the ‘423’ passes Nine Elms.
Jamie Squibbs

SURVIVING 4-VEP VEHICLES

Number	Vehicle	Location
62236	MBSO	Strawberry Hill
62266	MBSO	LNWR Heritage, Crewe
62321	MBSO	Barrow Hill
70797	TSO	Strawberry Hill
70904	TSO	East Kent Railway
76262	DTCsoL	Strawberry Hill
76263	DTCsoL	Strawberry Hill
76397	DTSsoL	East Kent Railway
76398	DTSsoL	East Kent Railway
76527	DTSsoL	Allelys, Studley
76528	DTSsoL	Allelys, Studley
76875	DTCsoL	East Kent Railway
76887	DTCsoL	Mizens Woking Miniature Railway

Key: DTCsoL - Driving Trailer Composite semi-open with Lavatory, **DTSsoL** – Driving Trailer Standard semi-open with Lavatory, **MBSO** – Motor Brake Standard Open, **TSO** – Trailer Standard Open.



Doors are open on No. 423417 *Gordon Pettitt* on February 21, as restoration work continues on the 4-VEP at Strawberry Hill. Richard Clinnick



The front cab of No. DTCsoL (Driving Trailer Composite semi-open with Lavatory) No. 76262 from No. 423417 *Gordon Pettitt*. Three of the four vehicles in the Class 423 are from its original formation. Richard Clinnick

The unit received a repaint and refreshed interior before it was relaunched by SWT on June 2, 2004. Until the operator dispensed with the 'Slammers' on its main line routes, No. 423417 remained in traffic, after which it was moved to Wimbledon where it was used for various duties including shunting EMUs and even new-build steam locomotive No. 60163 *Tornado*.

The 4-VEP also visited galas but it was becoming non-standard. Even with enthusiasts in senior positions at SWT the EMU would eventually be disposed of, and on January 17, 2009, it arrived at the Bluebell Railway. The exact intentions for its use cannot be remembered by Steve, but he says Bruce Knights, who at the time was running Eastleigh Works, admired the set and, having spoken to the heritage railway, offered it a home. Three days later it was on the move, although sadly it had already attracted the attention of local vandals.

And so the infamous pub meeting saw the SETG born, with the idea of getting a Mk.1 EMU back on the main line. The Bluebell Railway bought into it with the idea of the SETG looking after the unit. Steve says: "Their attitude is pretty much that we know what we're doing so get on with it and keep them posted. And we do." The model, he said, was organisations such as the Diesel Traction Group, which had returned No. D1015 *Western Champion* to the main line, and the Class 50 Alliance, which keeps '50s' running on the national network. The DTG model came from 'Gwil' who was keen for its success to be replicated with the SETG.

Despite the EMU changing hands, its existence became nomadic. It spent periods stabled at various depots including Wimbledon, Bournemouth and even Tonbridge West Yard. It visited Swanage again, as well as the Mid-Hants Railway and back to the Bluebell. However it then moved to Clapham Junction, and a chance encounter with respected railway journalist Chris Jackson on a Class 458/5 press launch resulted in the offer of a repaint for the unit by Bombardier at Ilford.

Chris had used his contacts on an international level to see if the manufacturer would be keen to celebrate the anniversary of Derby Works, where the '423' was built, by repainting the EMU. It was, and so the unit was tripped to Ilford where apprentices carried out the work. This took a year but it meant that the 4-VEP was once again presentable. And, crucially, back in the public eye.

However, the question of what to do with the unit became an issue as Bombardier neared the completion of the work. This is where the benefits of having experienced railway people such as Chris Buckland in your team came in to play. At that point, Strawberry Hill was a Siemens depot being used for various projects. The site had stabling sidings and a two-road shed with pits. This would be perfect for the '423'. Chris was able to get the unit access to the site. "It all comes down to Chris' contacts and knowledge," says Steve. "He says it's the team but he knew the right people in the right place.

"He knew that the four-car railway was dying and that a five-car railway was on the cards, and yet here was a four-car shed. However, we had to prove we would not be a nuisance or a distraction." With its band of volunteers, or 'Minions' as they are dubbed by Steve on social media, all being from a railway background, that would not be an issue. On the day *RE* visited, there was a pair of SWT '450s' stabled in sidings adjacent to the shed. Five-car '701s' are expected to visit the site in the future for stabling, while 10-car sets have also been stored there in the past. The SETG stays out of the way. The continued use of the site is part of the reason they do not entertain the thought of selected open days to see the unit, or the possibility of other organisations sharing the space. Steve says he would love access to the entire site but knows that is not possible.

"What is key to remember with *Gordon* is that it is a preserved unit that lives in an operational depot. For that reason, we don't, and cannot, mess about."

The unit arrived at the site at 23.20 on December 23, 2015. It was moved by GBRf from Ilford Works and pushed into the shed. It didn't move then until January 27 this year.

From there the hard work started. It was stripped for assessment. "It was a wreck internally," says Steve. "It had not been 'juiced' for many years and 80% of the interior was damaged. It was lots of smaller things. Things like seals had worn away where water had got in and not evaporated.

"It became obvious that some of us were out of our depth without Chris who could do a lot of the work. Chris worked hard to expand the technical side of the team. The only spares we had at that time were those in the brake van. Luckily, Unipart had stores of obsolete equipment we were able to acquire. You hear about wastage on the railway but that is so valuable to groups like us and it's recycling."

Soon the SETG 'Minions' were hard at work with the aim of returning the EMU to its former glory. "One of Chris' favourite phrases is: "if it isn't right, it doesn't go," and we stick to that. At Wimbledon if there was a unit that they were not happy with, it wasn't allowed out and we have brought that attitude here. We have to," he says.

The SETG operates the site as a mainline depot. Single person working isn't allowed and Chris Buckland runs the site as if it's Wimbledon. He laughs when *RE* asks if it adds stress, and admits it does. He retired from the railway but this keeps his mind occupied he says. He also swears at the amount of paperwork needed, but he knows it's vital. He insists on it being right up to date so that any visiting authority can see it's "being done the right way." ›

Returning No. 423417 to service is known as *Project Phoenix*. This is in two phases, the first of which involves returning the 4-VEP to a condition that allows it to be hauled on the national network and to allow passengers to be carried on preserved railways.

The first phase has been achieved, but not without a lot of work! This included a brake exam which saw the unit's brake system overhauled and air tanks recertified. Much was done in-house but some of the work was done externally, such as the overhaul of Brake Control Chests under each coach and the ultrasonic testing of the air tanks. Brake cylinders were also stripped, serviced and rebuilt. This work was supported by Armstrong Powerhouse.

RealTime Trains stepped in to support the production of new step boards which have been fitted to each vehicle. Some had rotted through and would not support any load. All those deemed life-expired were replaced while those assessed to be in good condition remained in situ.

The seating was described by the SETG as the single largest task in the restoration. Research into sourcing the appropriate material to reupholster the set found that £36,000 was required to fund the minimum order of raw materials and this was deemed to be beyond the SETG's capabilities.

However, thanks to assistance from Gordon Pettitt himself, the group was invited to work alongside the National Railway Museum's Project Commuter team, which is cosmetically restoring 2-HAP No. 4308. This enabled the SETG to order just under 100-metres of trim to enable the start of refurbishment. A further 120m was sourced from the North Norfolk Railway. Funding was achieved through a Crowdfunding appeal launched in 2017 and now Strawberry Hill has a dedicated trim shop where the group strips, salvages, retrims and produces fresh cushions and quarter pads for the unit.

Phase Two involves the work needed to enable No. 423417 to operate on the main line under its own power, as well as carry passengers at preserved lines.

Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM-R) is required to satisfy current Office of Rail and Road (ORR) and Rail Safety Standards Board (RSSB) requirements. This means that the unit must, as a minimum, carry two pieces of safety-critical equipment which must be fully functional in both driving cabs for it to leave Strawberry Hill without a piloting locomotive.

GSM-R is the first of these and this allows the driver to be in full contact with any controlling signalbox or signalling centre. GSM-R allows the '423' to be stopped independent of a controlling signal through the Railway Emergency Call (REC) protocol, which, when a train receives an emergency stop message, requires the train to be brought to an immediate stand. The SETG said that the existing Cab Secure Radio (CSR) is obsolete and will be replaced. The organisation has the equipment required to fit the unit with GSM-R but is now raising funds to allow engineering drawings to be produced and allow the equipment to be tested, fitted and inspected.



The seating was described by the SETG as the single largest task in the restoration. On February 21, wide open doors at Strawberry Hill show the quality of the work already undertaken on the Class 423. Richard Clinnick

The '423' also requires On-Train Data Recorder (OTDR, which is also known as OTMR, On-Train Monitoring and Recording). OTDR is also a mandatory requirement. It allows all control inputs, speed changes, brake pressures and other information to be recorded for examination at a later date. Circumstances under which information may be needed can include monitoring and assessment of driving quality and style and investigation of incidents. The approximate cost of fitting OTDR, as new, with preparation of drawings, fitting and certification, is approximately £5000 per cab which also includes sourcing spares. Currently the SETG is approaching potential sponsors to reduce the costs.

Controlled Emission Toilet (CET) was never fitted to No. 3417. It's not compulsory as the existing facilities could be locked out of use but it is the intention of the SETG to make the unit as comfortable and accessible as possible. Currently the group is researching requirements in terms of design and fitting, and only once that is understood can fundraising begin.

Central Door Locking (CDL) is a hot topic now, and it is no different for the SETG. The unit must be fitted with this to allow it to carry passengers on the main line. Schematics and specifications for a locking system designed by Network South East in the early-1990s are in the possession of the SETG and this is believed to be suitable, with modifications, for current requirements. The plan is that, in the interests of cost control, the '423' would only have some doors fitted with locking mechanisms, with the remaining doors locked to prevent unauthorised use.

Sat at his desk, Chris takes a break from paperwork to explain the plans for *Gordon*. "Engineering plans are the next big task for us. We need to fit the (buckeye coupling) anti-overriders as we cannot run without them, and we also need to fit restrictors to the droplight windows. On four doors, two bars will also be fitted 176mm apart, but the restrictors also help so nobody can put their head out. It's not allowed on the main line and we must make sure it doesn't happen."

Chris is tough on himself, but he feels he must be. Nodding towards the shed where the 'Minions' are working on the unit, he says: "I class that as a '455', I have to do so. That means it has a 28-day exam cycle and the more of them we do, even though it doesn't move, the better the unit gets. It needed one this time because it has been to Waterloo. If it was at Wimbledon it would get that exam, so it gets it here. I'm working as if it is going out this evening in the peak from Waterloo. Yes, it's added pressure, but it means it's right and I want it right." The rest of the SETG has bought in to this method.

But after the '423' visited Waterloo, what is stopping it going out now? "Compliance," is Chris's answer. "We are developing various plans for it to be able to run on the main line. I will need someone to come and check the unit too... I cannot mark my own homework!

"I want it to work. It has to work. That is our mindset. If it is there, it has to be 100% right and has to be done 100% right. If that mentality isn't there then standards slip."

Once the window restrictors have been fitted he says that *Gordon* will go out and visit heritage railways. There have already been requests, some from within the Southern Region, some from further afield. Although it won't be under its own power, the 4-VEP will gain exposure. "We want it out there, but it's difficult to say how long that will take. I cannot put a date on it, and I wouldn't want to."

As for what it will do, railtours are an obvious idea, as are continued gala visits, but the SETG team is also realistic in that they know after the initial excitement vanishes, raising interest, and money, will be harder.

4-VEPS

The 90mph four-car 4-VEPs were built between 1967 and 1974 at York Works, although the Motor Brake Standard Opens (MBSOs) and Trailer Standard Opens (MSOs) of the first 20 sets were built at Derby Works.

They were the last trains built with slam-doors next to every seating row for British Rail and were mostly used on outer-suburban duties around south London. The trains lasted until 2005 with Southern, South Eastern Trains and South West Trains.

BR ordered 194 four-car EMUs which were designated Class 423s under the TOPS programme. Initially numbers Nos. 7701-7894, they were renumbered into the 30xx and 31xx series in the 1970s. During a rebuild in the mid-1980s the Motor Brake Standard (MBS) was fitted with additional seating where the luggage space had been. Only Nos. 3001-3020 were renumbered to Nos. 3401-3420, with the rest renumbered as they were refurbished. Motor cars were swapped during refurbishment due to the length of work required on these vehicles. For example, No. 3417 features three of its original vehicles, but not the MBSO.

After Privatisation, South Eastern Trains had the largest 4-VEP fleet, with the final scheduled passenger service using Nos. 423545/565/568 on October 7, 2005.

Network SouthCentral, which eventually became Southern, included a fleet of 19 Class 423s that were modified to operate inner suburban Metro services which required the removal of compartments and declassification of first class seating. These were renumbered in the 39x range and reclassified as 4-VOPs. Some were later reformed with the swapping of a driving trailer with that from a standard unit, with the latter gaining an ex-4-VOP driving vehicle. This created Class 423/8s, and classified as 4-VIPs, and these were numbered Nos. 3813-3844. Eventually only eight were reformed.

Southern's final diagrammed Class 423 service ran on August 19, 2005, formed of Nos. 3486 and 3535 together with 4-CIG No. 1866. A week later, Nos. 3490, 3505/535 formed the final slam-door trains, running between Brighton and London Victoria.

One 4-VEP made it to Germany when No. 3810 went to Wildenrath to assist in the design of the Class 444/450 Desiros that would replace the 'Slammers' with South West Trains. This unit was one of four transferred to SWT from Connex South Eastern, but which retained its standard interior.

The final SWT train ran on May 26, 2005, formed of 4-VEP No. 3536 sandwiched between 4-CIGs Nos. 1396/398.

PRESERVED EMUS

AS the run down of second-generation electric multiple units occurs, so the cries of "it must be saved" grow louder. Plans are in place to save a Merseyrail Class 507, while an ex-TfL Rail Class 315 was preserved at the end of 2022. Plans to save No. 321440 fell through. There remain plenty of preserved EMUs, but how many will work again remains a concern.

Nevertheless, currently there are 34 25kV overhead electrification EMU vehicles preserved, while there are 124 third-rail vehicles so far preserved. These are not only at preserved railways but also various locations including Sutton Bridge, with many no longer used for railway purposes.



Strawberry Hill is a live depot and the Southern Electric Traction Group, members of which all have a railway background, work on the '423' as if it is off into service that evening. On February 21, No. 423417 *Gordon Pettitt* stands in the shed undergoing restoration.

Conversations have been had about adding a fifth vehicle to the set, which would be a motor coach. This could have a bar and fully accessible interior for less-able passengers. There is also a possibility of further coaches which could be used in a similar fashion to the successful and flexible Hastings Diesels DEMU set. Other suggestions include hiring the EMU for corporate events, even if it were stabled at a station and used as a meeting room during Ascot race days, for example. "They can paint it pink for all we care, as long as it comes back in the condition the company received it in, we are happy," says Steve.

However, the costs are eye-watering. For it to go out on the main line, powering and with a '73' attached to it, as already explained, requires a minimum of CDL and CET. Then there is GSM-R and OTDR to consider. The cost, Chris suggests, could be as high as £300,000.

Friends have been gained. Friends have passed. But the will remains. For this small band of mates, a four-car EMU, one of hundreds that carried commuters to and from London with little, or no, fanfare, is a love affair. A chance to meet up and re-create a part of their past before re-creating the past for so many more. Judging by the reaction on January 27, the return of No. 423417 is something people cannot wait for.

"In some ways it looks prohibitive," says Chris, "but you've got to dream, haven't you?" E

HOW YOU CAN DONATE

DONATIONS towards the continued restoration of No. 423417 *Gordon Pettitt* can be made by visiting the Southern Electric Traction Group website, or by visiting www.setg.org.uk/donate/



The shed at Strawberry Hill is considered the most important part of the restoration of No. 423417 *Gordon Pettitt* as it enables the unit to be kept safe and dry while providing a quality working environment for Southern Electric Traction Group volunteers. On February 15, work progresses on the '423'. Richard Clinnick

Christopher Westcott & Piers Connor

80% of new Piccadilly Line trains to be built in Goole

Transport for London confirms more trains will be built in UK.

SIEMENS Mobility has confirmed that 80% of the 94 nine-car 24 Tube Stock trains due to enter traffic on the Piccadilly Line from next year, will be built at its new factory in Goole.

Previously, construction was due to be split 50/50 between the firm's Vienna site and the new factory, which has now been completed in Yorkshire.

Dynamic testing of the first pre-production cars is already well under way, with the first completed prototype train being unveiled at Wildenrath, Germany, last November (*RE*332).

Transport for London (TfL) is currently expecting to take delivery of the first train for testing in August.

Meanwhile, TfL reports that the Estimated Final Cost (EFC) has risen beyond the Programme and Project Authority of £2994m, to £3050m. Whilst this increase is not enough for TfL to seek additional funding currently, research is being undertaken to identify alternative delivery plans. Only once confirmation of any mitigation measures has been identified to inform the Stage 1 EFC position, will decisions be made. The resulting report is due to be delivered to the Programmes and Investment Committee as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

In preparation for the arrival of the first new Siemens trains for testing, trackwork around Northfields depot was renewed during February. A five-day possession west of Hammersmith allowed track equipment to be replaced, some elements dating back to the 1930s. The extended length of time, unusual as it also involved closure between Monday and Wednesday inclusive, was necessary, as this was not like-for-like renewal. Three new sidings are being constructed to the west of Northfields station to improve capacity across the line.

To the east of the line, preparatory work has begun to upgrade high voltage equipment at the Cockfosters substation. There is also work under way which will allow the nearby depot to provide wheel turning facilities, allowing the site to upgrade its maintenance stabling and servicing abilities.

Detailed designs are nearing completion throughout the Piccadilly Line, with work due to have commenced by the end of March. Such work includes one-person operation closed circuit TV (OPO CCTV) systems for platforms.

Delays for CAF's Docklands fleet

A reported failure where the test train exceeded the stopping point during a possession in 2023, has resulted in a delay of the introduction of the new trains into passenger service.

Previously it was hoped to introduce the first of 54 new B23 stock trains, currently being constructed in Spain, by the end of the Quarter 4 (Q4) of 2023/24. This is now expected to be in Q1 of 2024/25.

Meanwhile, work at Beckton Depot continues, although the insolvency of the main contractor has contributed to increasing costs. As a result, the final costs are estimated to exceed the financial authority awarded to the project, with a further reported due to be submitted to the Programmes and Investment Committee during the spring of 2024.



➔ **The first of the DLR B23 trains built by CAF was delivered in January 2023, with testing commencing in March. All 54 trains are due to be introduced by the end of 2026, replacing 33 trains consisting of B90/B92/B2K trains.** Transport for London

TfL and Unions settle 2023 pay dispute

TRANSPORT for London has reached a pay settlement with the National Union of Rail, Maritime and the Transport Workers (RMT), Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF), UNITE and UNISON unions.

The deal, which ends the most recent period of threatened industrial action, sees the lowest paid staff receive a wage increase of up to 11%, with higher paid grades receiving around a 5% increase.

Smaller battles remain to be fought, with Unite reporting that some of the staff it represents are having an increase of 4.4% imposed upon them.

The previous pay agreement, a four-year deal in 2019, came to an end in 2022, with wages increasing by the Retail Price Index and 0.2% in the final year. Yet the dramatic increases of inflation, which rose to approximately 11% in 2023, exacerbated negotiations, especially amongst union members who represented lower grade staff.

This agreement will mean that London Underground workers will have any outstanding remuneration backdated to April 2023, bringing the ongoing pay dispute and previous stalemate to a close. Whilst this halts industrial action in the immediate future, there are impending negotiations later this year regarding the 2024 pay agreement.

The RMT reports that all staff will receive a flat increase of £1000, with the lowest earners, those earning below £35,000, also receiving £400. Meanwhile, staff paid between £35,000-£40,000 will also receive £200 more per annum. The union highlights that it has successfully achieved an increase for the lowest grade members, for example Customer Service Assistants 2 (CSA2), 9.6% and CSA1 and storemen, 8%.

This means that political opponents of the mayor won't be able to highlight poor industrial relations anymore. Mayoral elections are due to take place on May 2.

Consultation begins for proposed DLR extension

A six-week public consultation period began in early February, regarding plans to extend the Dockland Light Railway's (DLR) from Gallions Reach to Thamesmead (*RE*334).

The consultation will end just after this edition of *Rail Express* is published. The proposal expects to allow up to 30,000 new homes to be built and support the creation of approximately 10,000 new jobs.

Once complete, TfL will then commence work on a business case, engaging with the Royal Borough of Greenwich, the London Borough of Newham, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and landowners.



Merseyrail No. 777024 waits to leave Chester with the 13.31 Chester-Chester via Liverpool Lime Street on February 13. John Heaton

0 to 60!

Just how nimble are today's locos and units, and what's the quickest off the mark?

John Heaton takes a 'ticket to ride' on the new Merseyrail Class 777 electric multiple units.

THE headline statistics announced for the new Merseyrail Class 777 units, purchased to replace British Rail Class 507 and '508' stalwarts, were impressive.

Manufactured by Stadler using aluminium, and featuring articulated bogies, their weight is a mere 99 tonnes for a four-car formation. With horsepower grossing 2820, the 28½hp/tonne power/weight ratio for these 75mph suburban units was over three times higher than the outgoing classes, but would a network with a maximum permissible speed of 60mph over most of its distance mean their prowess would be wasted?

Lines such as the 19 miles from Liverpool Central to Southport have 15 intermediate stations and the 17 miles southbound to Chester have 13.

Heading back north towards Liverpool, whilst still in Cheshire and before the onset of urban sprawl, there is a brief 70mph stretch – an ideal location for measuring 0-60mph acceleration. The three miles northbound from Capenhurst to Hooton is completely level for the distance needed to reach 60mph. The Class 507s were tested for *RE 0-60* on this stretch, reaching the 60mph target in 1400 yards and 73 seconds. By comparison, the Stadler set needed little more than 500 yards to reach 60mph in just 31 seconds.

It has been a long wait for the '777s' to enter squadron service, but this level of performance means it has almost been worth it. Beware though that it is only alternate trains that call at Capenhurst.

In terms of the train's *RE Factor*, the availability of that massive power/weight ratio means the figures do not match the efforts of some other lower horsepower classes, placing the sets in the same achievement range as a Hitachi Class 800... in the event of one having all engines working.

So, 'hold the front page' the *Rail Express* 0-60mph acceleration record time for a train on the UK network is now held by a third-rail direct 1500 volts current EMU on a suburban commuter route...but for how long? Rumours of a faster time by another Stadler unit, a bi-mode Class 755/3 on an electric section in East Anglia are circulating. Watch this space. E

THIRD RAIL EMUs (by time)

Time	No.	Load	*RE* Factor	Notes
31	777012	105t	11782	
69	465196+465921	275t	13267	
69	700021	281t	8-car, DC mode	
70	707020+707027	325t	14521	
70	375606	179t	12715	4-car, DC mode
73	507005	103t	15817	
80	313207	107t	15313	DC mode
82	377407+377205	337t	10245	2x4-car, DC mode
83	700102	421t	7822	12-car, DC mode
91	450126+450019	346t	7043	
92	458509+458532	405t	10134	
100	444xxx	230t	8613	

Note: The *RE* (*Rail Express*) Factor provides a weighted comparison of performance, taking into account time, load and rated horsepower. A higher score is better.

0-60 time: 31 seconds
RE FACTOR: 11782
COMMENT: Mersey beats the rest

Note: The *RE* (*Rail Express*) Factor provides a weighted comparison of performance, taking into account time, load and rated horsepower. A higher score is better.

DEPARTING CAPENHURST TO HOOTON

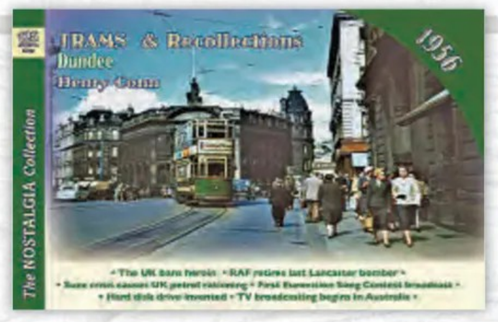
Unit 777012
Vehicles/tare/gross tonnes 4/99/105
Train 12.45 Chester-Chester via Liverpool Lime Street
Date February 13, 2024
Recorder/position J Heaton, 1st of 4

Miles	Timing point	Sch	M S	MPH
0.00	Capenhurst (d)	0	0 00	1E
0.01			0 06	10
0.03			0 10	20
0.06			0 14	30
0.11			0 18	40
0.18			0 24	50
0.29			0 31	60/69
2.96	Hooton (a)	4½	3 51	

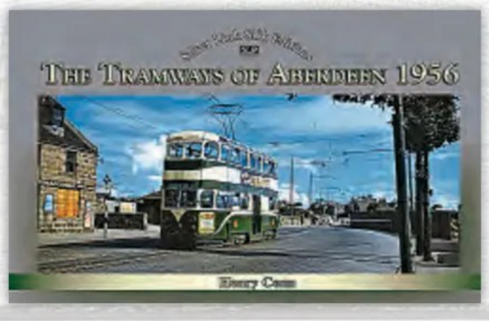
Note: Timed to 1/100th of a second rounded to nearest full second for publication. Mileages rounded to two decimal places for publication.

RAIL EXPRESS

BOOK CORNER



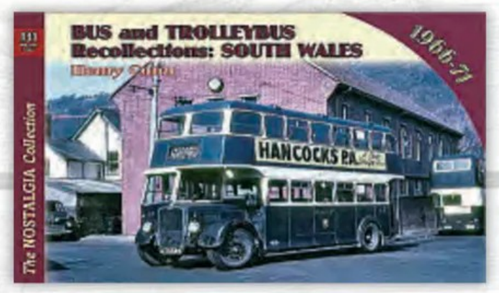
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The Tramways of Aberdeen 1956
Henry Conn
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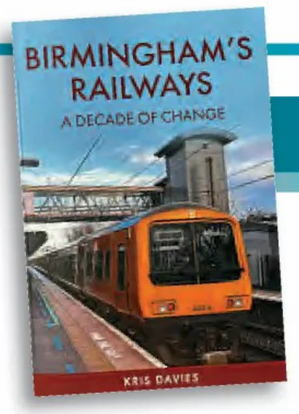
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Birmingham's Railways A Decade of Change

Published by Amberley Publishing
www.amberley-books.com
ISBN: 9781398117341
Price: £15.99

AS this issue of *Rail Express* was being put together, Alstom Class 730s were finally entering traffic in the West Midlands, and so the publication of this book feels incredibly timely.

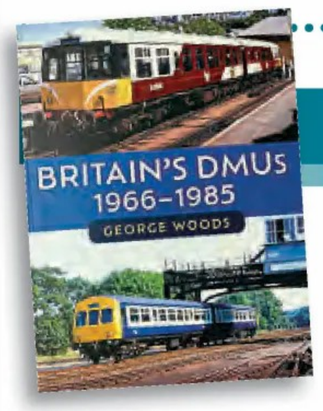
Produced in the standard 96-page paperback design you come to expect from the publisher, this publication seeks to present a photographic survey of the railway scene in and around Birmingham in the last decade.

Kris Davies presents images from his own collection which highlight the introduction of a new operator that is accountable to the regional authority. New liveries, new trains and improved infrastructure have all been introduced in the past decade, and this book looks at these developments on a line-by-line basis.

There are 12 chapters covering: city centre stations, Birmingham-Coventry, Birmingham-Wolverhampton, Birmingham-Walsall, Cross City North, Cross City South, Birmingham-Whitlocks End, Birmingham-Stourbridge, Birmingham-Dorridge, West Midlands Metro and the future and the past.

Images are predominantly from the ends of platforms and do get repetitive. There are few freight pictures and while the final chapter mentions the future via the introduction of Class 196 diesel multiple units and '730' electric multiple units, HS2 is not illustrated despite all the work taking place around the region.

Overall, this book is a good, detailed look at the region, and one for historians. **(RC).**



Britain's DMUs: 1966-1985

Published by Amberley Publishing
www.amberley-books.com
ISBN: 9781398115620
Price: £15.99

FIRST generation diesel multiple units were the workhorses of the railways for many years but were usually overlooked during the 1960s-1980s in favour of locomotive-hauled trains.

These days the various DMU fleets are looked back at with much more fondness, with several heritage railways even hosting events celebrating the humble trains.

George Woods has put together a 96-page paperback illustrative publication of these trains which, he describes in the introduction as: "when first introduced they were seen as bright and clean and a modern replacement for the elderly and dirty steam trains, but as time progressed the DMUs themselves became outmoded, becoming rattly and smelly and it was with some relief that modern designs were introduced in the 1980s."

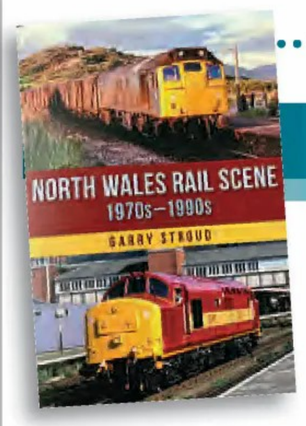
The book is not split into chapters; however, it also does not follow the usual Amberley Publishing style of two pictures per page, rather it varies between three and four images per two pages.

There are some very lovely colour images from the mid to late-1960s showing the railway as used to be, for example pairs of Class 105 Cravens on the southern section of the East Coast Main Line and a '103' at Crewe in the early-1970s.

Images are published in chronological order and feature shots from across the country. Considering the age of many of the images, the reproduction is excellent, however the captions could include ideally more details regarding the trains.

Second generation Sprinters also make an appearance and, bizarrely considering the title, DMUs carrying Regional Railways livery and even No. 121020 in Chiltern Railways colours in June 2003, are included in the publication.

Despite the inclusion of images outwith the book's title, and the lack of information in some captions, if you are a DMU fan then this title is worth a place on your bookshelf. **(RC).**



North Wales Rail Scene: 1970s - 1990s

Published by Amberley Publishing
www.amberley-books.com
ISBN: 9781398116269
Price: £15.99

NORTH Wales has some of the most varied and wonderful scenery across all of Britain and this presents the backdrop for this title which looks at the railways of the region.

The images cover two decades from the late-1970s to the late-1990s and seek to capture some of the locomotives and diesel multiple units that worked in the area during this period. Whether it is a Class 01 at Holyhead Breakwater shed to the first working of a Class 66 at Penmaenmawr or a High Speed Train service, they are all there.

Images are presented in a geographical basis starting at Holyhead and finishing in the Wrexham area with the northern section of the Cambrian line also featured, as well as the Llandudno and Blaenau Ffestiniog branches.

BR blue dominates the pages, while Class 37s, '40s' and '47s' appear frequently, as you would expect for the region. Picture reproduction is, largely, excellent, and the captions are well-detailed.

Images are taken both from platforms but also from the lineside, and include depot visits, and present a true picture of the railway operations during the period covered.

Overall, this is an excellent publication covering an area that proved popular with enthusiasts for many years. Recommended. **(RC).**

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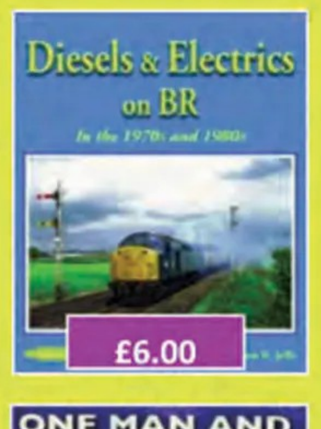
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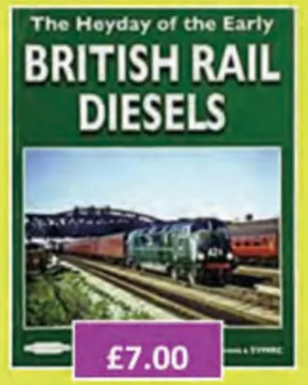
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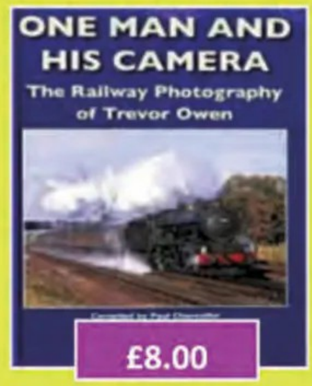
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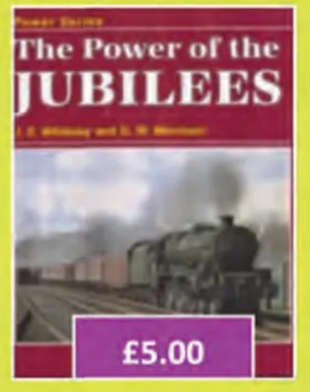
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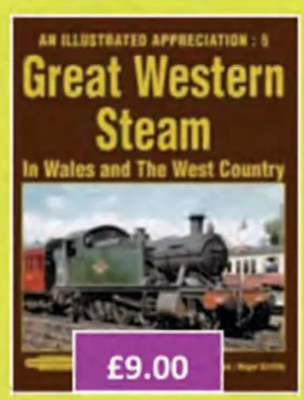
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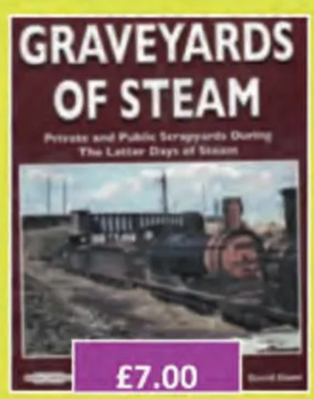
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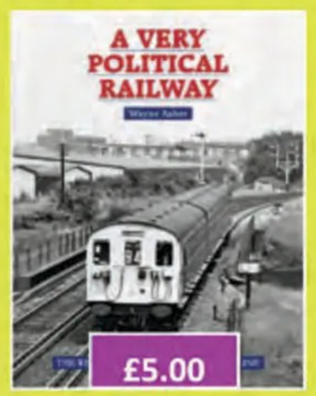
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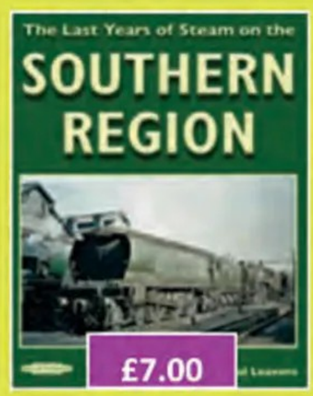
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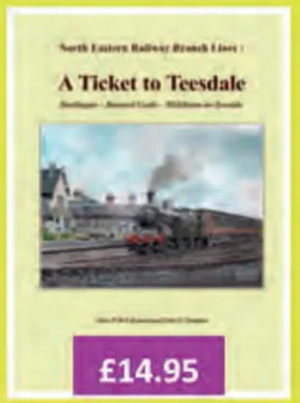


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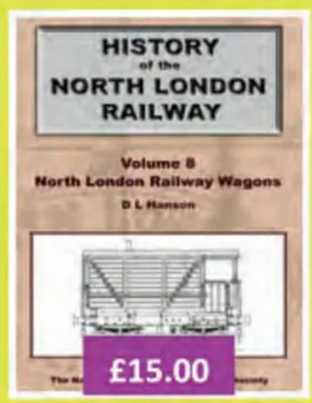


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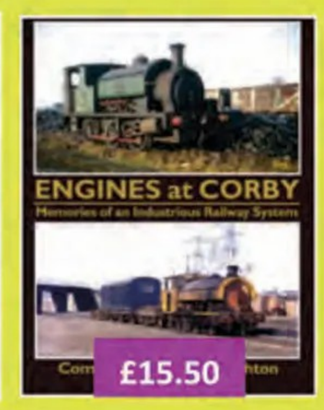
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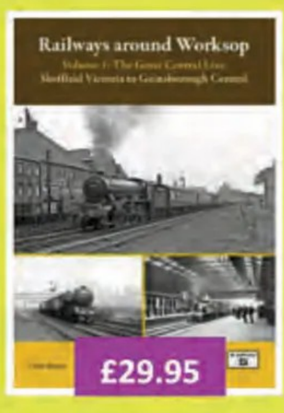
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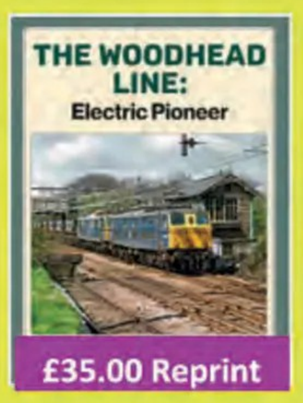
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