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'68s' off-lease**

**DB sells '90s'
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Colas Rail quartet Nos. 37219 Jonty Jarvis, 37254 Cardiff Canton, 37057 Barbara Arbon and 37116 pass Wilmorton, near Derby, forming the 0270 09.45 Derby Railway Technical Centre-Rectory Junction on May 5. Steve Donald



Rail Operations
Group No. 37608 *Andromeda*, hired from Europhoenix, stands at Loram, Derby, on April 25. The '37' has received the same green livery applied to Class 93s, rather than ROG blue.
Steve Donald

RAIL EXPRESS

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MODELLING

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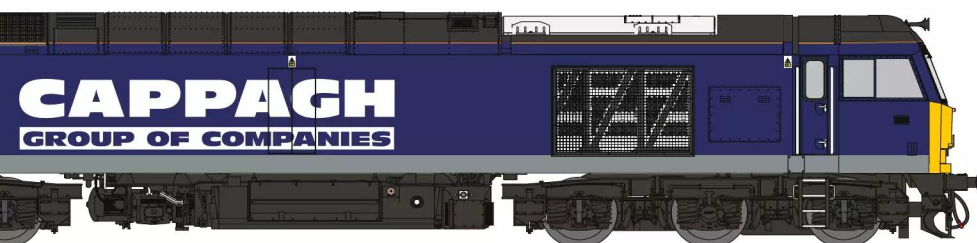
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RAIL EXPRESS

Network Rail Nos. 97304 and 97302 Rheilffyrdd Ffestiniog Ac Eryri/Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways cross Barmouth Bridge, powering Pathfinder Tours' 1Z67 06.20 Reading-Pwllheli 'The Cambrian Coast Express' on April 4. The '97s' replaced DB Cargo UK No. 67005 *Queen's Messenger* at Shrewsbury. Daryl Hector





Decision on ten new Derby-built Elizabeth Line trains due by end of May

A much-needed order for additional trains for the Elizabeth Line could be placed with Alstom by the end of May, with the trains built at Derby Litchurch Lane.

Concern for the future of the site had been raised after the final Class 730 was completed, meaning that the production lines were demobilised. This put jobs at risk with discussions held between the train manufacturer and Government to try and secure a future.

An Alstom spokesperson confirmed to *Rail Express* that "intense discussions" were ongoing and that a decision would be made no later than the end of May.

Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper has previously said that any deal must go through the correct legal processes and called the lack of orders a "short-term" shortage. Having

completed orders for 2651 Aventura vehicles there was, as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, no new train construction before 2026 when the fleet of HS2 trains will start to take shape.

However, a need for additional trains for the Elizabeth Line has been identified. Elizabeth Line director Howard Smith told *RE* last April that at least five additional Class 345s were required to meet demand that will be created by the decision to terminate HS2 trains at Old Oak Common when they first start running between 2029 and 2033, with passengers diverted on to other routes to reach the centre of London.

The continued success of the new cross-London railway has seen the demand for capacity on its other routes

and it now appears that the fleet of 70 nine-car trains could be boosted by a further 10 electric multiple units.

An Alstom spokesperson told *RE* on May 7: "We are now in a period of intense discussions with the Government and Transport for London about a potential train order for the Elizabeth Line given the levels of passenger demand. This could help secure the future of the Litchurch Lane site. The parties have agreed to conclude discussions as soon as possible and no later than the end of May. We will be making no further comment at this time."

Mr Harper, writing on X, formerly known as Twitter, said: "This Government is committed to supporting train manufacturing in our country." He also published a letter

he had written to Shadow Secretary of State for Transport Louise Haigh, in which he claimed she had been making a number of inaccurate statements and accused the opposition of "political point scoring."

In his letter, dated April 19, he wrote: "My department has held intensive discussions with the company over several months to explore options to enable it to maintain a sustainable "right size" capacity at Litchurch Lane, in line with the company's wider plans. This has not been an easy process, as we have had to assess all options thoroughly to confirm a clear market need for the trains, to comply with the law, and to ensure value for money for the passenger and taxpayer." He confirmed he had held talks with senior Alstom officials. 

Freight companies support latest Martin's House Hospice tours

THE latest charity charters to raise funds for the Martin's House Hospice ran on May 3 and 4, featuring an array of freight traction provided by DB Cargo UK, Freightliner and GB Railfreight.

Operated by GBRf and promoted by the Branch Line Society, the trains used London Underground's 4-TC unit as hauled stock with 71A Loco Group's preserved main line-certified No. D6515 (33012) *Lt Jenny Lewis RN* used on both days.

The first charter, on May 3, was the 'Return of the Shedi', which saw the '33' haul the 1Z32 09.21 Eastleigh-Hinksey Reception Lines. From there, DB Nos. 66114 and 66205 were added to the train to form the 1Z33 12.24 to Gloucester. There, the '66s' were removed and replaced by Freightliner No. 59005 *Kenneth J Painter*, which top-and-tailed the 1Z34 14.43 to Cardiff Central. The 1Z35 17.35 to

Westbury featured the '59' leading to Bristol Parkway where it was joined by FL No. 66541. The Type 5s ran to Westbury where they were removed and the charter continued as the 1Z36 20.42 to Eastleigh.

The next day, the 'May The Fourth Be With You' charter again used the '33'.

It left Eastleigh as the 1Z73 06.48 to Exeter Central, with the 'Crompton'

joined by GBRf No. 73136 *Mhairi*. At Westbury, FL Nos. 59101 *Village of Whatley*, 59104 *Village of Great Elm* and 59202 *Pride of Ferrybridge* were added to the train, atop the '33', with the '73/1' on the rear for the run to Devon. The '59s' were removed at Exeter Central, from where the '33' and '73' took over for the 1Z33 14.40 to London Waterloo and 1Z34 London Waterloo-Eastleigh.



Freightliner Nos. 59202 *Pride of Ferrybridge*, 59101 *Village of Whatley*, 59104 *Village of Great Elm* and 71 Loco Group No. D6515 (33012) *Lt Jenny Lewis RN* lead the 1Z43 06.48 Eastleigh-Exeter Central 'May The Fourth Be With You' Branch Line Society charter past flooded fields at Stafford Bridge, north of Exeter, on May 4. GB Railfreight No. 73136 *Mhairi* was on the rear, with the London Underground 4-TC used as coaching stock. Tom Braund



TfW buys two Class 67s from latest tender list

TWO Class 67s have been bought from DB Cargo UK by TfW Rail. The locomotives, Nos. 67026/028, were two of ten '67s' offered for sale by DB earlier this year, with No. 67028 still operational when it was made available, while No. 67026 *Diamond Jubilee* was stored in June 2016.

A TfW spokesperson confirmed to *Rail Express* on May 7 that one locomotive will likely be restored to

operational condition, while the other will be used for spares.

TfW uses Class 67s on its Manchester Piccadilly-Cardiff Central route but has suffered from unreliability since they were introduced. Initially planned to operate as four-coach sets plus a Driving Van Trailer, TfW is currently increasing its seven rakes of Mk.4s to five-coach formations (plus a DVT) and plans to

introduce an eighth set.

TfW also uses Nos. 67008/010/012-017/020/022/025/029 which are hired from DB. These have been modified to operate with the Mk.4s and are in the WAWC pool.

As this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, the fate of the other '67s' offered for sale by DB, Nos 67001/003/004/009/011/018/019/030, had not been confirmed.



Tri-mode Nos. 769959 and 769922 pass Prestwick Town on April 23, with a Kilmarnock-Newton Junction-Elderslie-Kilmarnock test run. The Class 769/9s were converted from redundant dual-voltage Class 319s and were destined for Great Western Railway, however their delayed introduction, combined with a need to reduce costs, meant that GWR sent them off-lease without a tri-mode Class 769 ever carrying passengers. Nineteen were converted and currently 17 are stored at Porterbrook's Long Marston facility. The rolling stock leasing company told *Rail Express* in October, after the trains moved to Brodie Engineering Ltd, Kilmarnock in September and October 2023 (RE330), that the moves were not connected with a new home for the trains and that were instead for 'routine maintenance'. Now, the ROSCO has told *RE* that the '769/9s' are not destined for freight services as had been rumoured but would not comment on suggestions that they would be used by ScotRail. Both units have retained their GWR interiors but have been repainted into a base blue livery. Simon Jones

GBRf names Class 66/3 after heroic signaller

GB Railfreight named No. 66308 *Signalman Willie Taylor* at a ceremony at Carlisle on May 1. The event marked the 40th anniversary of Willie's actions in preventing a disaster after a northbound container train became divided with the rear portion running

down Shap Bank unbraked. The two portions followed each other towards Carlisle and, while the locomotives hauling the train and five wagons were routed to safety, the rear portion was routed away from the station by Willie, thereby avoiding a London-bound train

that was stood there. The speed of the rear portion was such that it derailed and demolished a bridge over the River Caldew, with most of the containers falling into the water below. The '66' was named by Willie's two sons David and Ian.

June target for landslip repairs

NETWORK Rail plans to complete repairs to a landslip at Baildon, which has stopped trains running between Ilkley and Bradford, by the end of June.

Trains have been suspended since February 9 and work was subsequently paused due to complex issues found at the site. NR said that the volume of work required meant it would be the end of June before the railway could reopen. Northern has been operating buses while the railway has been closed.

ROG '37' for MNR gala

A Rail Operations Group Class 37 will star at the Mid-Norfolk Railway diesel gala, due to be held on May 25-27. The '37' will operate alongside D1933 (47596) *Aldeburgh Festival*, Nos. 03063, 33202 *Dennis G Robinson* and 47580 *County of Essex*.

These will be the first passenger workings at the MNR for the '03' and the shunter will also be named after its former owner at Thuxton on May 25.

Details regarding fares and timetables, and if trains will operate over the full length of the line had yet to be confirmed as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

IN BRIEF

'90s' REINSTATED

FREIGHTLINER has added Nos. 90018/040 to its DFCL active pool after buying the locomotives from DB Cargo UK (see *Power By The Hour*). The two '90s' were moved to Crewe Basford Hall at the end of April and will join FL's 23 other Class 90s.

CLASS 805 DRIVER TRAINING INTENSIFIES

DRIVER training on Hitachi Class 805s has been substantially increased following the signing of a Rest Day Working agreement between ASLEF and Avanti West Coast. More '805s' are now able to be used for training duties, however there is still no confirmed date for the five-car bi-mode units to enter traffic. They will be used to replace Class 221s on various routes. Already three '221s' have been stood down by AWC (see *Units*).

MIDLANDS TO LOSE CLASS 323 FLEET BY AUTUMN

CLASS 323s will have left West Midlands Trains by the autumn, following the introduction of Class 730/0s on Cross City services from April 15. With the Alstom three-car trains entering traffic in the West Midlands (see *Units*), 17 Class 323s are destined for Northern while the rest are being returned to Porterbrook. WMT said that the full introduction of the '730/0s' should be complete by the autumn.

Freightliner sells Coatbridge terminal

JOHN G Russell has bought Coatbridge intermodal terminal from Freightliner.

Following a strategic review of the terminal by FL, it was recognised that the facility would be better served under new ownership. FL freight services remain unaffected and will continue serving the terminal which it called: "Essential for maintaining effective intermodal connections into and out of Scotland."

Class 730 authorisation

CLASS 730/2s have been approved for passenger use by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), which has also approved them to operate in multiple with Class 730/0s already in traffic.

The five-car Aventras are currently being delivered for testing and commissioning to London Northwestern Railway by Alstom, and they are due to enter traffic later this year, albeit around three years late.

Thirty-six sets are on order and they will be used on the West Coast Main Line between London Euston, Milton Keynes Central, Birmingham New Street, Crewe and Liverpool Lime Street. Their introduction will allow LNWR to withdraw its 37-strong Class 350/2 fleet which will be returned to Porterbrook.

HNRC confirms plans for Class 20 fleet

FOUR more Class 20s are set to return to the main line with Harry Needle Railroad Company this year, managing director Harry Needle has revealed to *Rail Express*.

HNRC Nos. 20302/311 have been outshopped from Arlington Fleet Services, Eastleigh Works, in the operator's orange livery and attended the Swanage Railway diesel gala on May 9-12 where they would be "tested", according to Mr Needle.

He said that both '20s' had been fitted with pre-heaters and that the rest of the Type 1s to return to traffic this year would receive the same modification. Nos. 20168 and 20906, which are used for shunting at Hope Cement Works, are both also fitted with pre-heaters.

The locomotives returning to traffic will all be former Direct Rail Services Class 20/3s, he said, and currently HNRC has 20301/303-305/309/312 out of traffic while No. 20314 is operational. All are expected to return to traffic.

Meanwhile, Mr Needle confirmed that Nos. 20056/066/069, 20903/904 were all surplus to requirements. Of these, No. 20066 has just been restored to BR blue and is due to appear at the East Lancashire Railway diesel gala on June 27-29.

Potential new train order progress welcomed by RIA

ONGOING discussions between ministers and train manufacturers regarding potential new train orders have been welcomed by the Railway Industry Association (RIA).

Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper has confirmed the Government is talking to Alstom regarding an order for 10 trains for the Elizabeth Line (see page 8), however discussions continue regarding other potential orders for Chiltern Railways, Northern, TransPennine Express, ScotRail and Southeastern.

RIA chief executive Darren Caplan said: "Suppliers across the UK will hope current discussions between ministers and all train manufacturers achieve a positive outcome. The future of rail businesses of all sizes, factories and jobs depends on the decisions taken by the Government now."

"Immediate solutions are clearly needed to mitigate short-term risks and sustain jobs and UK capability. But the Government urgently needs to bring forward invitations to tender for new procurements in the medium term and listen to industry proposals which have called for a level playing field for manufacturers to bid for the £3.6 billion of upcoming work orders."

West Coast Railways resumes 'Jacobite'

'JACOBITE' trains began running between Fort William and Mallaig on April 15, after West Coast Railways sent a rake of Mk.2s fitted with central door locking (CDL) to the West Highlands on April 13.

However, the operator has been forced to cancel its usual afternoon train. A WCR spokesperson told *Rail Express*: "The morning and afternoon 'Jacobite' services cross over in the timetable. They are run with two separate locomotives and sets of carriages."

"WCR does not have enough CDL-fitted carriages to run both services."

While WCR is operating the 2Y61 10.15 Fort William-Mallaig and 2Y62 14.10 return, the 2Y68 12.50 Fort William-Mallaig and 2Y69 17.00 Mallaig-Fort William is being cancelled daily.

WCR had originally suspended the service from March 20, as it still had no exemption to operate Mk.1s not fitted with CDL (RE336). While it still has not

fitted CDL to any Mk.1s and has asked the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) for a further exemption to operate stock without CDL, it does have 31 Mk.2s in its fleet which it has used that are fitted with CDL (see *Coaches*).

While this number does include six Northern Belle Mk.2s, there are also vehicles currently being used for steam-hauled charters WCR continues to operate.

WCR sent First Open (FO) No. 3360 and Tourist Standard Opens (TSO) Nos. 6000/22 and 6103 to Fort William on April 13. Also sent north that day were Mk.1 Nos. 1860 and 35486.

Previously, despite not being able to carry passengers, WCR had sent Nos. 1840, 4951, 13306/320, 21266, 94225, 99326/329 to Fort William on April 5, hauled by Nos. 37676 *Loch Rannoch* and 37685 *Loch Arkaig*.

At the same time, Locomotive Services was operating trains between Fort William using Nos. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie* and 37409 *Loch Awe* and part of

the LS ScotRail push-pull set with Nos. 9707, 10404, 11082 and 12111. An LS source had told *RE* that the operator had been asked to run trains. No. 37409 powered the 1237 08.52 Fort William-Mallaig on April 8 and 9, and 1200 08.52 Fort William-Mallaig on April 19, while No. D6851 (37667) hauled the return 1238 11.34 Mallaig-Fort William on April 8 and 9, and 1201 11.34 Mallaig-Fort William on April 19. No further LS trains have run, and the '37s' and stock returned to Crewe on April 23, as the 5280 08.44 from Fort William.

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) had revoked WCR's previous exemption to use stock without CDL on January 10, after a judicial review rejected the operator's challenge against the decision to ban such vehicles (RE334). That decision meant that only stock fitted with CDL could be used by WCR, although it remains free to operate trains on behalf of others.

ORR is reviewing the current application, made on March 8, for an exemption, but that is expected to take as long as four months before a final decision is made. 





▲ Locomotive Services No. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie* leads the 1Z38 11.34 Mallaig-Fort William at Loch Dubh on April 9, with LS No. 37409 *Loch Awe* on the rear. LS ran three trains on the route during April, two during the week before West Coast Railways resumed operating the 'Jacobite', having previously announced it was suspended. Jamie Squibbs

▼ West Coast Railways No. 37685 *Loch Arkaig* leads No. 37676 *Loch Rannoch* on the 2Y61 1015 Fort William-Mallaig at Loch Nan Uamh Viaduct on April 9. WCR began operating 'Jacobite' trains the following week using Mk.2s fitted with central door locking. The previous week the operator ran trains on the route for training, while on two days Locomotive Services operated passenger trains. Jamie Squibbs



LNER launches live on-board digital updates

LONDON North Eastern Railway has launched a one-stop digital information service that can be accessed via a QR code.

By using the code, passengers can self-serve and have access to various information, including latest journey updates and destination information. Onward connection information, station facilities and ideas for attractions at their destination are also available to passengers.

Information on LNER's loyalty programme LNER Perks, is also provided, where passengers can receive £5 for signing up and earn credit for future journeys.

GBRf extends haulage contract

GB Railfreight has extended its haulage contract with Network Rail for a further two years, with an option for a third year.

The contract began on April 1, and includes the supply of possession trains and movement of NR wagons to support engineering trains, with up to 16 daily trains dedicated to network services.

Additionally, GBRf will continue to operate bulk services, facilitating the transportation of stone from quarries to NR Logistics Delivery Centres, with up to four daily trains allocated for bulk services. The agreement also includes the continuation of GBRf's operation of LDCs at Bescot, Eastleigh and Whitemoor (March).

16-day blockade for Chingford route

TRAINS will be unable to run between London Liverpool Street and Chingford for 16 days from July 20, while Network Rail replaces a bridge.

A 150-year-old structure over the railway, located south of Hackney Downs Park, carries the junction of Downs Park Road and Bodney Road and backs directly onto a tunnel which emerges further down the line towards Clapton.

The structure is monitored closely for safety reasons but its cast iron girders are in poor condition and continue to deteriorate. A replacement structure is required to prevent unplanned closures, says NR.

Over the 16 days, the old bridge will be demolished and a new structure constructed. This means that no London Overground trains will

operate between Hackney Downs and Chingford and there will be no rail service to or from Clapton, St James Street, Walthamstow Central, Wood Street, Highams Park and Chingford.

Greater Anglia trains between Liverpool Street and Hertford East will instead start and finish at Stratford. Stratford-Meridian Water services won't run and instead other trains will make extra calls at Meridian Water and Northumberland Park. GA trains between Liverpool Street and Cambridge/Stamsted Airport will be diverted via, and call at, Seven Sisters instead of Tottenham Hale. Bishop's Stortford-Stratford trains will not operate.

Preparatory and follow-up works will also take place on June 23, July 13/14, August 17/18, September 1/8.

IN BRIEF

GWR TO RETURN CASTLE POWER CARS TO TRAFFIC

TWO Castle High Speed Train power cars stood down by Great Western Railway in December are to be returned to traffic, sources have told *Rail Express*. Nos. 43154 Compton Castle and 43155 Rougemont Castle will be used to boost availability of Castle sets during the summer.

LATEST '66/3' IN TRAFFIC

GB Railfreight No. 66309 is the latest 'European' Class 66 to enter traffic. The locomotive, formerly Euro Cargo Rail No. 77501, arrived in this country in May 2023. It entered traffic on May 5.

NEW DUMFRIES FOOTBRIDGE

A new £3.6 million footbridge and lifts have been installed at Dumfries and these are set to open to passengers in the summer. The new accessible bridge incorporates elements from the original footbridge including a saltire design on the parapet and curved detail on the bridge deck.

WENSLEYDALE RAILWAY PATRON

ACCOMPLISHED mountaineer Alan Hinkes OBE has been appointed patron of the Wensleydale Railway Association (Trust) Limited charitable trust. The first Briton to climb all 14 of the world's mountains over 8000-metres in height, he grew up in Northallerton and continues to live in North Yorkshire.

DALSTON BRIDGE OPENS

NETWORK Rail has delivered a new bridge over the railway at Kingsbury Road, Dalston, that is designed to last for 120 years. Pedestrians and cyclists can use the structure. Occasional closures that were required on the railway to undertake the work have now finished.

HISTORIC METRO FOOTBRIDGE REFURBISHED

CULLERCOATS station footbridge has been refurbished in a £579,000 project. The wrought iron structure has been strengthened with new steelwork and the outer wooden panels and decking have been replaced. Previously boarded-up windows have been fully renewed with new glazing installed.

Glenfinnan repairs begin

NETWORK Rail has begun a £3.4 million repair project on Glenfinnan viaduct. Working with principal contractor AmcoGiffen, the project aims to futureproof the structure and will take just under 12 months to complete. The work involves assessing the condition and strength of the structure and making improvements to ensure that ballast remains in place. Repairs will also be carried out on the pier that sits in the River Finnan.

NR says that trains will not be disrupted by the work.

DRS confirms 14 Class 68s to go off-lease

FOURTEEN Class 68s are to be returned to Beacon Rail by Direct Rail Services at the end of May.

The locomotives, 68019-032, had been sub-leased from DRS to TransPennine Express to haul Mk.5A coaches on trains between Liverpool Lime Street/Manchester Piccadilly and Scarborough, however those were removed from traffic last December having only been introduced in 2019. TPE has continued to lease the 66 coaches as well as the '68s' until their lease expired at the end of May.

A DRS spokesperson told *Rail Express*: "DRS has received all of the Class 68s from TPE and they are in the final stages of preparation for their return to the leasing company. Their current lease expires in May and that is the month of their planned return."

While some locomotives are currently being debranded at Carlisle Kingmoor, others are being used to move Mk.5A coaches between storage locations at Crewe South Yard, Longsight and Long Marston. As this issue of *RE* went to press, eight

sets were stored at Long Marston, three at Crewe South Yard and one at Wolverton Works.

Chiltern Railways has been heavily linked with the ex-TPE stock and locomotives, but no decision has been made. Speculation has also suggested that the sets could even be sent abroad.

The 14 Class 68s were built by Stadler at its Valencia factory and were delivered to this country during 2015/16. Some, but not all, had also hauled trains for Greater Anglia

when it used Class 68s for a period on the Norwich-Great Yarmouth/Lowestoft branches.

The decision to return the '68s' to Beacon Rail leaves DRS with 20 locomotives, 68001-018/033/034, of which six are sub-leased to Chiltern Railways (68010-015) and a further two are modified to work for Chiltern (68008/009) but are not part of that operator's core fleet. The remaining '68s' are used on intermodal, infrastructure and nuclear flask trains.

Award for SVR

THE Severn Valley Railway (SVR) has been named the Best Regional Heritage Railway Attraction for 2024 at the UK Transport Awards. The awards are run by SME News, a quarterly digital publication aimed at small to medium businesses.

"Running a heritage railway attraction is very much a balancing act. You have to make sure visitors have an excellent experience, so they'll not only return but also tell their friends to come. And you've got to do it in a way that's financially sustainable. We work hard to get that balance right," said SVR managing director Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster.

WMT to maintain XC '170s'

WEST Midlands Trains (WMT) has signed a long-term maintenance contract with CrossCountry for its '170s' to continue being maintained at Tyseley.

The contract will last until 2031. The depot is also undergoing infrastructure upgrades, including the installation of four new high level mobile gantries and hoists, a synchronous lift facility to lift a full-length unit, a package of environmental improvements including shore supplies to reduce diesel engine running, extending two maintenance buildings, and the introduction of an Automatic Vehicle Inspection System (AVIS).

Blackpool Tramway extension to open

BLACKPOOL's tramway extension is due to open on June 16. The £23.42 million scheme will allow trams to travel from Transport Starr Gate tram depot at Squires Gate to a new terminus adjacent to Blackpool North station.

Special tram tours will operate on June 13-15, for which more details will be released at www.blackpooltransport.com

Ten pairs of tickets were also being made available, via a prize draw, for the first run on June 12, and the draw was available at <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Campaigns/Tramway-launch/First-Rider.aspx>

Testing of the new route began on March 16, 2022.

New engine for C37LG's locomotive

A rebuilt engine was fitted to the Class 37 Loco Group's No. 37003 at UK Rail Leasing, Leicester, on April 11.

The '37' was sent to UKRL for a simple engine rebuild and bodywork restoration in 2017, however the pandemic and discovery of a fracture on the main crankshaft added significant delays to the project.

The C37LG was able to acquire a 'short block' engine with a crankshaft that had low hours and this, together with parts from the old engine, have

been built into what is effectively a 'zero hours' engine, along with repaired main and auxiliary generators, by UKRL.

The engine was moved from UKRL's Loughborough site to its Leicester facility, where the '37' has been for almost seven years, on April 11.

This tied with in with existing work for the crane and transport company and, in quick order, within two hours the unit had been fitted on its new

mounting blocks and the roof refitted.

Now the '37' is inside the Leicester workshops being dried out to protect electrical systems while the final connections take place. Once the engine is tested and load banked the '37' will be run on site to test all systems and, should that be deemed a success, the plan will be for the locomotive to return to its Dereham base on the Mid-Norfolk Railway where the bodywork will be refurbished by local volunteers and contractors.



The engine is lowered into No. 37003 at UK Rail Leasing, Leicester, on April 11. The locomotive is the second-oldest surviving Class 37 and its owners plan to return it to as-built condition. C37LG

LNER remembers York bomb victim

A memorial and dedication ceremony, organised by London North Eastern Railway, the British Transport Police History Group, 'Raids Over York' heritage project and Normandy veteran Ken Cooke, saw a wreath laid at the site of a new headstone for

LNER post room worker Robert Smith who was killed during an air raid in York on April 29, 1942.

The ceremony took place on April 29, exactly 82 years after Robert and 93 others were killed during the raid.

In 2017, the BTP History

Group unveiled a wooden cross on his resting place but until now there has never been a memorial stone.

LNER has now arranged for a permanent headstone to be placed at this previously unmarked grave.



DB Cargo UK No. 66039, the first in class to be retro-fitted with European Train Control System (ETCS), leaves Progress Rail, Doncaster, on its way to the Rail Innovation and Development Centre (RIDC) at Old Dalby, on April 25. DBC No. 66183 hauled its classmate to RIDC. Network Rail

First ETCS-fitted '66' moves to RIDC

DB Cargo UK No. 66039 has moved to the Rail Innovation and Development Centre (RIDC) at Old Dalby for European Train Control System (ETCS) testing.

The DB '66' was fitted with the equipment by Progress Rail at Doncaster. Network Rail said it was the first locomotive in 'Britain's principal freight fleet' to be fitted with digital signalling equipment and that it had successfully passed through static testing. It was taken to RIDC by DBC No. 66183 on April 26.

Network Rail explained that the '66' is the 'First in Class' (FIC) to be retrofitted with ETCS. All freight operating companies have come together to share learnings and agree the base design with Siemens Mobility

as part of the East Coast Digital Programme (ECDP), NR said. Siemens Mobility is providing the design and fitment of its ETCS Trainguard 200 on-board equipment on the locomotives. NR said that the process has so far taken 16 months from the start of retro-fitting and that the base design involved will eventually provide regulatory approval for all types of Class 66 and the '67s'.

The DBC '66' will now undergo dynamic testing at RIDC before it must then accumulate 5000 miles of fault-free running before going through the necessary regulatory approvals.

Ed Akers, Network Rail Principal Sponsor, ECDP, said: "The task of retrofitting hundreds of freight

locomotives is one of the biggest challenges we face in the transition to a digital future. The Class 66 FIC project has required innovation, tenacity and perseverance to get to this point.

Neil Ethell, DBC chief operating officer, said: "Overall, the design and installation for the Class 66 has taken four years, which shows the level of complexity in a retro fitment project of this scale. We're excited to see how it performs under rigorous testing at RIDC."

Currently ETCS is in use in the central sections of Thameslink and on the Cambrian Line while the first stage of ECDP is in use on the Northern City Line from Finsbury Park to Moorgate. **B**

IN BRIEF

LEVENMOUTH LINE BRIDGE DELAY

THE active travel bridge connecting Methilhill to the new Cameron Bridge station on the soon-to-reopen Levenmouth line, will not be in place when the route opens on June 2, after the company building the structure went into administration.

Network Rail said that the structure should have been in position in mid-May however it will now be in place during the autumn. NR, working with the local council, is looking at alternative measures while an alternative supplier is sought.

CLASS 357 MILESTONE

THE Class 357 electric multiple unit fleet operated by c2c has recently completed 150 million miles in traffic. The operator says this is an average of two million miles per unit. Since 2016, the fleet have operated more than seven million miles per year.

PLAQUE RESTORATION

NETWORK Rail and the Railway Heritage Trust have partnered to refresh a commemorative plaque on Yarm Viaduct. This was part of a refurbishment project that began on the 175-year-old structure last November. The RHT funded the plaque's restoration.

NEW MML FOOTBRIDGE

A new footbridge has been built over the Midland Main Line at Kibworth as part of the MML electrification. The original structure at School Road was demolished as it was not high enough for overhead line electrification to pass under.

Railway reopens after landslide

THE line between Knottingley and Pontefract Monkhill reopened on April 29, after being closed for seven weeks following an embankment slipping in early-March.

Network Rail says that more than 2000 tonnes of stone has been installed as well as a new 30-metre retaining wall to strengthen the land. Some 60m of track has been removed and replaced with signalling and telecommunications work also completed.

NR believes that the landslide was caused by a recently prolonged period of wet weather. However, investigations also discovered minor voids beneath the embankment that are believed to relate to historic mineral mining in the area and this meant that the planned reopening was delayed because the work was more complex. These voids have been filled however engineers will continue monitoring the embankment to ensure it is safe for trains to operate. A temporary speed restriction has been put in place.

Wrexham FC owners honoured by Transport for Wales

TWO Class 197s were named after the home cities of Wrexham FC owners Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney by TFW Rail in a ceremony ahead of Wrexham's last home game of the season against Stockport on April 27.

No. 197001 has been named *Philadelphia Robin* while No. 197004 has been christened *Vancouver Red Dragon*. TFW Rail said it wanted to acknowledge the positive work and impact the owners have had on the area.

→ TFW Rail No. 197001 *Philadelphia Robin* (left) and No. 197004 *Vancouver Red Dragon* inside CAF's Chester depot ahead of their naming ceremony.

TFW Rail



GCRE to work with CAF

Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles (CAF) is the latest railway manufacturer to agree to use the Global Centre of Rail Excellence (GCRE) facility in South Wales.

The Spanish company, which has a factory in Newport, has agreed to use the GCRE facility and a range of services, including rolling stock and technology testing, digital signalling development and wider product innovation. It is likely that the 10 tri-modes CAF will deliver to London North Eastern Railway (LNER) from 2027 will be tested at the site.

The partnership will also allow CAF to use the GCRE site for fleet maintenance and training.

Long Marston to be electrified

PORTERBROOK will renew and electrify 2.1 miles of track at its Long Marston Rail Innovation Centre. The work is due to be completed at the end of next year.

"Substantial replacement of life-expired vehicles is needed over the next decade, and the track upgrades mean that we can deliver the best level of service with our manufacturing partners to provide a full turnkey solution for new rolling stock entering service," said Porterbrook CEO Mary Grant.

Trains will be able to test at speeds of up to 50mph, with the capability to support new European Train Control System (ETCS) in-cab signalling, and compatibility with other forms of traction including hydrogen, battery and diesel.

End of the line for LU Schoma Locos

LONDON Underground has made the formal decision to dispose of its fleet of Schoma locomotives, ordered in 1995 to assist with the construction of the Jubilee Line extension to Stratford. Once the work was completed, they were transferred to the core business transplant unit.

Ten of the 14 examples were converted to battery operation (RE219). However by the end of the decade none were in use as they were too underpowered to haul heavy engineering trains. As a result, most were stored at Ruislip Depot in recent years (RE310) causing their certificates to expire.

They were relocated to an adjacent site in early 2023. One of the four unconverted diesel versions of the Schoma fleet, No.9 *Deborah*, had been sent to Eastleigh in 2019, for final evaluation, returning to LU recently. The decision has now been made to dispose of the locomotives, which now await collection.

First new Dublin X'trapolis unveiled

ALSTOM unveiled the first X'trapolis DART+ train at its Chorzów facility near Katowice in Poland, on April 29.

The first two five-car trains are expected to be shipped to Ireland in the autumn and will enter traffic next year.

Alstom has a 10-year framework agreement with Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail) for up to 750 new vehicles as part of a €2.6 billion (£2.2bn) project that also involves electrification, new infrastructure and new depots. So far, 31 five-car battery electric multiple units and six electric multiple units have been ordered (185 vehicles).

The BEMUs will be able to operate for more than 50 miles on battery power away from the electrified network and will be the first of their kind to operate in Ireland. Energy stored in the battery system will be replenished via fast charging stations at selected terminus locations and by recovering braking energy while the trains are operating.

The 82 metre-long trains will carry 545 passengers with wide, walk-through gangways, low-level floors and an automatic retractable step designed to maximise accessibility for all passengers.

Other features of the trains include dedicated cycle and family areas and



The first X'trapolis DART+ unit for Dublin stands in Alstom's Chorzów facility in Poland on April 29. The first two of 37 trains will be delivered to Dublin this year. Alstom

enhanced passenger features including charging facilities, for mobile phones which are placed at shoulder level, as well as for e-bikes.

Also included as part of the deal is a 15-year support services contract. The trains are being constructed in

Poland as that is where the production line for the X'trapolis fleet is located.

The expansion of the DART fleet as part of the DART+ Programme has been funded by the National Transport Authority under the National Development Plan 2021-2030.



DB Cargo UK No. 66651 passes Castle Donington old station foot crossing on April 17, powering the 6E01 10.05 Wolverhampton Steel Terminal-Boston steel train. Tim Helme

Regeared Class 66/6 makes DB Cargo UK debut

DB Cargo UK No. 66651, converted from No. 66221, is the first of 10 regeared Class 66/6s to enter traffic.

The operator said that the regearing project is part of its plans to maximise efficiency of its fleet and phase out the Class 60s which, it said, were less reliable. DB has withdrawn all its '60s' and put most of them up for sale in recent weeks (RE336).

The modifications are being carried out at Toton and enables the '66' to haul heavier loads via a 14% increase in tractive effort.

DB explained that the '66s' are being modified when their bogie overhauls are due, with each also being repainted, fitted with new LED headlights and new wheelsets provided by DB's wagon maintenance facility at Stoke.

A second locomotive, No. 66652, has been physically renumbered from No. 66164 but, as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, had yet to be released into traffic.

The '66/6s' will be allocated to the WBHT pool, which so far contains Nos. 66149/156/161/164/167/171/181/183/194 and 66651.



Victa Railfreight teams with Network Rail

VICTA Railfreight has run the first of a series of successful Rail Freight Familiarisation Training courses for Network Rail Mobile Operations Managers and Mobile Incident Officers.

Developed in partnership with Network Rail, the initiative is primarily aimed at staff working in operating roles with responsibility for the safe, efficient and punctual service of rail operations across the railway.

Neil Sime, Victa Railfreight managing director, said: "We are

delighted with the early successes and excellent feedback we have received for this new training course. So far, we have delivered training to 42 Network Rail candidates with the intention to deliver a deeper understanding of rail freight operations and ultimately to enhance the safety and performance of the rail network."

Candidates undertake training in practical and theory-based environments, on subjects including coupling and uncoupling rail freight

vehicles, an introduction to the rail freight vehicle braking system and the procedures and arrangements for completing a brake continuity test. Also covered are the key component parts of a rail freight vehicle, and specific arrangements for controlling freight train movements.

The latest one-day courses were held at Network Rail's Thames Valley Signalling Centre and DB Cargo UK's Didcot Yard throughout January and February.

TPE Mk.5As officially go off-lease

TRANSPENNINE Express's fleet of 66 Mk.5As was due to go officially off-lease after this issue of *Rail Express* went to press. The 13 rakes of five coaches and one spare Driving Trailer Standard Open were withdrawn in December after less than five years in traffic.

They remained leased by TPE until the end of May due to the nature of

their contract, with the operator paying around £19 million for the coaches even though it wasn't using them (RE331).

The coaches will be returned to Beacon Rail. Fourteen '68s' sub-leased to TPE from Direct Rail Services to haul the Mk.5As will also return to the same rolling stock leasing company at the same time (see page 12).

The stock is stored at Crewe South Yard, Long Marston, Longsight and Wolverton Works, while No. 12802 is at CAF's Newport factory. They are being moved between sites for routine maintenance still. The coaches were built by CAF in 2018-2019 and although linked with Chiltern Railways, there is currently no new operator lined up.

New look for Rail Operations Group '37'

RAIL Operations Group has released No. 37608 *Andromeda* in the green version of its livery, as carried by the 10 tri-mode Class 93s it has on order.

The '37/6', which is hired from Europhoenix, will be used as part of the main line testing programme for the Class 93s, which is expected to start towards the end of May or start of June.

Loram undertook the repaint at Derby, with the '37/6' released on April 25. ROG had been intending to use No. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* as the dedicated locomotive for the

'93' project, and the '37/9' had been used earlier this year to collect Mk.3s from Eastern Rail Services at Great Yarmouth to move to Crewe South Yard where compatibility testing was undertaken. The '37/9' also moved No. 93001, which so far remains the only Class 93 delivered to the UK, from Worksop where it is currently based, to Crewe for testing.

The '93s' are owned by Rail Operations Assets Ltd (ROAL) and have been authorised to operate in this country by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), however so far fault-free

running has yet to start.

Of the other ROG Class 37s, Nos. 37611 *Denise* and 37800 *Cassiopeia* carry the company's blue livery, while Nos. 37510 *Orion*, 37601 *Perseus*, 37884 *Cepheus* and 37901 all carry Europhoenix livery.

No. 37608's new look is the latest new livery applied to a Class 37 this year following No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach* receiving Loram colours and Locomotive Services Group No. 37409 *Loch Awe* being painted into ScotRail colours as applied to Class 47s and push-pull stock in the 1980s.



Rail Operations Group No. 37608 *Andromeda* passes Syston, Leicestershire, on May 8, with the 5Q65 09.09 Old Dalby-Soho, taking West Midlands Trains No. 730012 back to its home depot following a period in store. Tom Pickles

IN BRIEF

GWR NAMES IET AFTER HRH PRINCESS ROYAL

GREAT Western Railway No. 800024 was named *HRH The Princess Royal* in a ceremony at London Paddington on May 2. The naming recognised her support for more than 300 charities, organisations and military regiments in the UK and overseas. Her Royal Highness attended the ceremony along with her husband Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence, who is a member of the GWR advisory board.

NEW ROUTES FOR '197S'

CLASS 197s have entered traffic on the Ebbw Vale line, serving both Cardiff and Newport. They made their debut on April 22. TfW Rail said that they will be introduced onto the Pembroke Dock route later this year and the Cambrian line in 2025.

GRANGE-OVER-SANDS REOPENS AFTER A MONTH

TRAINS resumed running between Lancaster and Barrow-in-Furness on April 22, after Network Rail completed repairs following the derailment of a pair of Northern Class 195s at Grange-over-Sands on March 22 (RE336). A void in the ground was found about 150 metres from the derailed train and more than 8100 hours of work saw 400 tonnes of spoil removed from embankments, while almost 84 tonnes of new material was installed to repair the damage.

Test train duties for former XC Mk.3s

FOUR former CrossCountry Mk.3s have moved to the Severn Valley Railway for storage ahead of use as a test train on the Midland Main Line as part of its electrification.

Owned by Romic Consultancy Ltd, the coaches, Nos. 42097, 42376, 44012 and 45003, were hauled from store at Eastern Rail Services at Great Yarmouth by Nos. 43301/303 on April 5, as the 5Z40 09.00 to UK Rail Leasing, Loughborough, however the train was terminated at UKRL, Leicester.

On April 25, the '43s' and Mk.3s moved to Kidderminster on the Severn Valley Railway as the 5Z40 09.32 from Leicester. The HST has since moved to Arley and, as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, was planned to operate at the SVR gala on May 16-19. This was also the first time the ex-XC power cars had run on the main line since they were leased from Porterbrook by Colas Railfreight.

Romic has told *RE* that it is planning to offer Mk.3s for hire, and believes there is a market to support test trains and other similar operations.

WELCOME ABOARD THE BIGGEST RAILWAY COMMUNITY

RAIL EXPRESS



Great Western Railway No. 802017 approaches Dawlish on August 10, 2023, with the 2C73 11.00 Cardiff Central-Penzance.
RICHARD CLINNICK



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!

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First Class 90s head for scrap while DB Cargo UK sells two to Freightliner

Freightliner increases its electric fleet, but DB Cargo UK begins disposal of long-stored Class 90s.

SCRAP processors Sandbach Commercial Dismantlers Ltd (SCDL) has acquired Nos. 90017/022/023/027/030/032/033/038, European Metal Recycling (EMR) has acquired Nos. 90025/031 and Freightliner has bought Nos. 90018/040 from the Class 90 tender issued by DB Cargo UK in September 2023.

While Freightliner will reactivate the two it has bought, the other 10 are set to be scrapped. Meanwhile, the results of the second, and final, group of 12 Class 90s put up for sale by DBC in December, Nos. 90019-021/024/026/028/029/034-037/039, was not yet known as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

SCDL was quick to remove the first of its acquisitions from Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot (IEMD). No. 90033, stored since April 2005, departed on the back of a Reid Freight low-loader on April 22. It was quickly followed by Nos. 90027 (stored August 2007), 90030 (stored

January 2006) and 90038 (stored July 2005) the following day. All four were subsequently deregistered from TOPS. Notably Nos. 90033/038 are the last pair to wear the Europeanised version of the Railfreight Distribution scheme, originally applied to 11 Class 90s.

No. 90022 is another survivor but was 'patched' with a large EWS logo.

The next to depart was No. 90023 (also stored July 2005) on April 30, while No. 90032, the longest stored '90' having been parked up in February 2004, said goodbye to its home of the last two decades on May 1. All were moved to a private site at Middlewich for storage.

Freightliner sent Nos. 66504 and 66505 to collect its pair on April 26, the Class 66s sandwiching Nos. 90018/040 for the short trip from the EMD back to Crewe Basford Hall.

While not as well known as other scrap merchants, SCDL, previously known as Sandbach Car & Commercial Dismantlers, has had some success in the past on bidding on Class 86s, with



Two doomed former DB Cargo UK Class 90s, Nos. 90022 (left) and 90025 wait their extraction from Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot on April 26. Both have been sold for scrap, with the former acquired by Sandbach Commercial Dismantlers Ltd and the latter by European Metal Recycling. Martin Turner

Nos. 86208/229/241/247, 86419, 86602/621/623/633/635 and 86901 all being disposed of by the company at various locations in the Crewe area

between 2003 and 2020. No. 37054 and No. 47763 were also cut up by a Sandbach crew at Motherwell depot in September 2003. 

NEWS ROUND-UP

BALFOUR BEATTY

After almost one month at Bristol Barton Hill, Balfour Beatty's two recently acquired Class 20/9s have emerged in the track maintenance/

renewal company's corporate image. Of note is that Nos. 20901/905 exhibit several differences compared to the previous pair of white and blue Balfour 'choppers', Nos. 20142/189, that

were hired from Michael Owen during 2014-2015. The principal change is the adoption of gloss black for the solebar and roof, rather than grey. The sparkling Type 1s departed the

Arriva Traincare depot on April 21 and ran under their own power to Harry Needle Railroad Company's Barrow Hill depot as the 0Z20 13.00 from Bristol Barton Hill.



Balfour Beatty Nos. 20901/905 pass the crumbling remains of Dodmoor Farmhouse, near Westerleigh (Bristol) on April 21, running as the 0Z20 13.00 Bristol Barton Hill-Barrow Hill. The '20s' were bought from Harry Needle Railroad Company by BB and have been repainted from their previous GB Railfreight colours. The livery does differ from that applied to Nos. 20142/189 when they were hired by BB a decade ago. Edward Gleed

NEWS ROUND-UP Continued

COLAS RAILFREIGHT

The final two former CrossCountry High Speed Train power cars acquired by Colas Railfreight in October 2023 have now entered traffic, Nos. 43301/303 leaving 'warm store' at the Rail Innovation & Delivery Centre (Melton RIDC) at Asfordby on April 4, to run as the 0Z40 09.50 to Great Yarmouth.

Unlike many of their classmates, they were not making a one-way trip for export, instead they collected four Romic Consulting Limited Mk.3 trailers that are intended for use on another round of Midland Main Line testing. They left for the East Midlands on April 5, as the 5Z40 09.00 from Great Yarmouth which was initially planned to head to Loughborough, however it was 'caped' at UK Rail Leasing's Leicester facility.

The six-car formation remained there until April 25, when it formed the 5Z40 09.32 to Kidderminster on the Severn Valley Railway. The set has since been stored at Arley but was due to see action at the SVR diesel gala on May 16-19.

The other three power cars previously with XC, Nos. 43285 and 43321/357, entered service with Colas in November and December respectively last year, although No. 43321 is currently out of service at Colwick TMD undergoing traction motor repairs. Colas has five other Class 43s in the COTS pool, Nos. 43251/257/272/274/277, all ex-East Midlands Railway or London North Eastern Railway vehicles.

Meanwhile, the two GB Railfreight GMs on long-term hire to Colas, Nos. 59003 *Yeoman Highlander* and 66791, have both been reallocated to the COLO pool. The Class 59 even went a step further, swapping its GBRF decals for Colas 'diamonds'. However, as of the end of April, Beacon Rail blue No. 66791 was untouched.

DB CARGO UK

The 31 additional Class 60s that were put up for tender as the last issue was closing for press (RE336) have now been transferred to the WQDA disposal pool. 'Super 60s' Nos. 60054/091 were reallocated from WQBA (Group 3 storage) having been taken out of service in January 2022 and September 2021 respectively, while the other 29, none of which were upgraded, had all been languishing in WQCA (Group 4 storage). Of these, No. 60088 was stopped as long ago as November 2005, when the EWS '60' fleet counted an impressive 85 operational examples, while Nos. 60003/033/067 met the same fate in 2006. No. 60067 was stored in 2007, when EWS could still find employment for 60 'Tugs', but this had dropped to just 50 locomotives in 2008 when Nos. 60023/025/030



Colas Railfreight No. 43321 rests at Kegworth at Junction 24 on the M1 on May 1. The '43' was being moved to Boden Rail Engineering Ltd's Colwick depot for traction motor repairs. Steve Donald.

/034/042/043/053/058/082/083/097 and 60500 last worked.

In 2009, the operator called time on Nos. 60027/031/041/072, with Nos. 60051/094 being stopped in 2010 and No. 60073 in 2011. By 2014, when No. 60045 was sidelined at Toton, the fleet strength was down to about a quarter, although there was also positive news the same year as Colas Rail acquired 10 examples to be refurbished and put back into traffic. Finally, the end came for Nos. 60035/049/071 in the first two months of 2016.

Toton's paintshop was on a roll during the period under review, with four Class 66s being turned out in DB 'traffic' red, Nos. 66002, 66177/183 and 66224. The latter is the last of the repatriated ex-Euro Cargo Rail machines to be reactivated for use on this side of the Channel. However, while the other three were put back in use while the paint was still wet, No. 66224 has yet to leave the confines of the Nottinghamshire depot. Notably, No. 66181 was one of the 10 locomotives previously stopped and identified for regearing as Class 66/6. DB has indicated that the modifications will take place when bogie overhauls become due, so this locomotive may have been removed from the programme or will be called back at a later date.

The doyen of this sub class, No. 66651, previously No. 66221, was released for a shakedown run on April 9, with No. 66119 to Rotherham and back. Its first revenue work was a 6E02 12.20 Toton Up Yard-Boston Sleaford Sidings loaded steel train on April 12. DB is reporting a 14% increase in

tractive effort for the variants, which have received new wheelsets from DB's wagon maintenance facility at Stoke-on-Trent, as well as new LED headlights.

The second member, No. 66652 has already received its 'painted' number, although it was still registered as No. 66164 on the TOPS system at the end of the month. Also ready is No. 66039, the first fitted with European Traffic Control System (ETCS) hardware. No. 66183 dragged its classmate to the Rail Innovation & Development Centre (RIDC) at Asfordby on April 26, for deployment to the Old Dalby test track (see *Headline News*) as the 0Z01 08.14 from Doncaster Belmont Yard, with the ETCS-fitted '66' collected from Doncaster Roberts Road for its move south.

DATA ACQUISITION & TESTING SERVICES LTD

High Speed Train power car No. 43054, stored at the Chinnor & Princes Risborough railway since colliding with No. 97205 (31163) during a diesel event in April 2022, has finally departed the heritage line. Moving by road to Locomotive Services at Crewe Diesel Maintenance Depot, it is expected to receive the cab from No. 43052, currently at Nemesis Rail, Burton. The rest of the former DATS Class 43 was scrapped at EMR Kingsbury at the end of 2023.

DIRECT RAIL SERVICES

The disposition of the final six Class 37s on DRS' books is now known, with Harry Needle Railway Company acquiring Nos. 37419 *Driver Tony Kay*

1974-2019, 37422 *Victorious* and 37716, *Meteor Power* picking up Nos. 37424 *Avro Vulcan XH558*, 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine Concrete Bob*, and Europhoenix grabbing a second Class 37/4 in the form of No. 37407 *Blackpool Tower*. None had moved during April, with No. 37424 remaining at Gresty Bridge, while the rest could be found at Crewe Coal Yard. Most are expected to return to traffic in due course.

The sale gives Europhoenix 11 members of the class with Nos. 37069, 37218, 37423 and 37901 (all EPUK), 37510, 37601/608/611 and 37800/884 (all GROG), battery repower specialist Meteor three examples with No. 37207 (currently at the Great Central for the next stage of its conversion), and HNRC 14 locomotives with Nos. 37038, 37259 and 37602 (all HNRS), 37059 and 37603/604/609 (all HNRL), 37405 and 37607/610/612 (all COTS).

Meanwhile, eight former TransPennine Express Class 68s that have been stored at Kingmoor following the end of TPE locomotive-hauled trains in December, Nos. 68020 *Reliance*, 68021 *Tireless*, 68022 *Resolution*, 68023 *Achilles*, 68024 *Centaur*, 68028 *Lord President*, 68029 *Courageous* and 68030 *Black Douglas*, have begun to lose their TPE vinyls and nameplates, returning them to their base DRS blue. Debranded No. 68023 escaped the Carlisle depot on April 5, with Nos. 68006 *Pride of the Nation*, 68018 *Vigilant* and 66126, and was further reported hauling Nova 3 set TP10 from 5Q32 Crewe South Yard-Longsight.

NEWS ROUND-UP Continued

EUROPHOENIX

Following the rebranding of Nos. 37611 and 37800 in the familiar Rail Operations Group blue 'PCB' scheme in a similar style to the operator's previously hired-in Class 47 and '57' locomotives, No. 37608 *Andromeda* has swapped its Europhoenix livery for the green 'PCB' vinyls as applied to Rail Operations Assets Ltd's new tri-mode Class 93s. The work was undertaken at Loram's Derby Railway Technical Centre paintshop.

FREIGHTLINER

Modified for a new life with Freightliner Poland, No. 66956 (92 70 0066956-8) departed Leeds Midland Road on April 1, bound for Immingham Docks behind No. 66509 *Josiah's Wish*, departing for the continent shortly afterwards. Meanwhile, at Arlington Fleet Services, Eastleigh, No. 59102 *Village of Chantry* has become the first member of the four-strong former ARC/Hanson Class 59/1 fleet to gain Freightliner's G&W orange livery.

GB RAILFREIGHT

As recounted in RE336, GBRF was one naming away from completing the association of the Class 60s with the 10 original 'Peak' Class 44 locomotives, which gained their famous nickname after being dedicated after various mountains in

England and Wales. This has now been achieved with the fitting of reproduction *Scafell Pike* nameplates to debranded Colas orange and yellow No. 60047, twinning the Brush Type 5 with 44001 (originally D1). It had previously worn the unofficial vinyl name *Faithful* since 2018, but was originally dedicated after Robert Owen, a textile manufacturer and founder of the co-operative movement.

The other four GBRF 'Peaks' are Nos. 60021 *Penyghent* (44008), 60026 *Helvellyn* (44002), 60085 *Snowdon* (44009), and 60095 *Whernside* (44006), while British Rail included the other five in its original 100 Class 60 names: Nos. 60005 *Skiddaw* (44003), 60006 *Great Gable* (44004), 60022 *Ingleborough* (44007), 60084 *Cross Fell* (44005), and 60094 *Tryfan* (44010), none of which still carry these 'plates. This leaves three operational GBRF machines still unnamed, Nos. 60056/087/096, while No. 60002 is named *Graham Farish* and 60076 *Dunbar*. The operator's other trio of Class 60s (Nos. 60004/014/018), all acquired from DB in December 2018 and long stored, notably transferred pools during the period under review, moving from WQCA to the GBSD storage group via a brief spell in GBTG.

GBRF received No. 69011 on April 15, in the Class 69 version of its corporate livery (with whiskers and black window surrounds) after it was outshopped from Arlington Fleet Services at Eastleigh Works.

This is the fifth member of

the class to receive this scheme, including flag-waving No. 69001. The other three are Nos. 69003/006/008. Five wear special liveries (Nos. 69002/004/005/007/009), while No. 69010 remains operational in primer green. Unlike the Class 69s, No. 57310, which was released at the start of April, sports a white cantrail stripe to adequately differentiate from the orange cab and upper body stripe, previously only seen on the Genesee & Wyoming-inspired Freightliner repaints. No. 57306 at Loughborough will be the next to be repainted with Nos. 57303/305 remaining in their current Oxford blue due to the good condition of their paintwork.

HANSON & HALL

Repainted into RailAdventure's house colours in June 2021, No. 50008 *Thunderer* has undergone a slight image change, with the 'Springtime Green' half of the H+H logo being updated in baby blue. This follows the dissolution of the partnership between the two operators in the second half of 2022.

LORAM RAIL

Stored by Direct Rail Services in September 2019, No. 37606 was the first of the Class 37/6 sub variant to be released for tender by the Kingmoor-based operator. Reported to have been heavily stripped but salvageable, it was sold to Steve Beniston, owner of No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach*, at the end of 2021 and moved to Nemesis Rail's Burton Wetmore workshop the following February for reactivation work. Initially allocated to the Colas COTS pool,

the Type 3 completed a repaint back into original Railfreight grey with colourful Thornaby Kingfisher depot mascot in early 2023 following the replacements of its light clusters and top headlight with conventional sealed beam headlight and tail-light combination. Now part of the Loram LRLO pool and officially renumbered to No. 37508 in March of this year to match its painted number, the Class 37/5 achieved its next milestone on April 19, its main line return, leading the 0237 12.30 Burton upon Trent-Derby Railway Technical Centre light engine move with No. 37418. It is expected to be available for spot hire work and to act as a backup locomotive for the Loram-liveried Class 37/4.

NETWORK RAIL

Spares donor No. 97301 was moved from Peak Rail at Rowsley to Colwick TMD, Rectory Junction, on April 8/9. This is the non-standard Class 97/3's second journey to a Boden Rail facility, following its move to Nottingham Eastcroft in May 2023 to donate its power unit and generator to Nos. 97303 and 97304 respectively. The former No. 37100 was still at Boden's depot at the end of April.

SCOTRAIL

One of two InterCity High Speed Train power cars sent to Brodie Engineering at Kilmarnock for repairs in March, No. 43150 was returned to Edinburgh Haymarket depot in the first half of the following month and was reported back in service on April 17. Its colleague, No. 43129 is expected to take a little longer to complete its visit thanks to the attentions of a fallen tree at Broughty Ferry, downed by storm Gerrit on December 27.



No. 37508 has returned to the main line following reactivation work at Nemesis Rail's Burton upon Trent depot. The '37' has also been renumbered from No. 37606 after it was bought from Direct Rail Services and has had the various modifications applied by DRS removed, including its WIPAC light clusters. On April 18, the '37' trails No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach* away from Derby as the 0238 12.30 Burton upon Trent-Derby Railway Technical Centre. Sam Pedley

Freightliner trials Class 18

A Beacon Rail hybrid shunter has found employment at Crewe Basford Hall.

FREIGHTLINER has become the second company to take a Class 18 hybrid shunter on trial, with No. 18006 arriving at Crewe Basford Hall on April 9.

The Clayton-built locomotive had departed from Wolverton Works the previous day to start what *Rail Express* understands to be a year-long assessment.

Initially unloaded alongside Freightliner's maintenance depot, the shunter was noted in the adjacent marshalling yard a few days later, where it is expected to be used to marshal ballast trains in the virtual quarry and trip wagons to the track recycling centre.

Of the main line freight operators, only GB Railfreight has previously utilised a Class 18, its trial of No. 18001 at Whitmoor Yard having ended in February last year. However,



No. 18006 stands in Crewe Basford Hall on April 12. Paul Hewson

the company is still expected to take up to five of the class on lease in conjunction with Network Rail to carry out similar infrastructure work at

Eastleigh, Bescot and Whitmoor. The only other Class 18 currently deployed is No. 18003 with British Steel at Scunthorpe. [B](#)

New locomotives from Clayton

CLAYTON Equipment is well advanced with the construction of two locomotives, with one currently at the Chasewater Railway for testing, and the other still at its Burton upon Trent workshops.

The first of these is a 40-tonne two-axle battery-only shunter for use at Sellafield, which arrived at the heritage line for testing on April 26. The CB40 is intended to traverse lines within the plant that are too tightly curved for the two Clayton CBD80s delivered in 2021. Once commissioned, it will allow two of the remaining Hunslet 0-4-0DHs to be withdrawn, with the third taking up a reserve role. Works No. B4668 carries the same mid-blue livery as the CBD80s and is currently unnumbered.

Meanwhile, nearing completion is a new battery-electric locomotive for the 15-inch gauge Bure Valley Railway in Norfolk. The CB12, which is a six-axle bogie design, is intended to supplement the existing fleet but also offer an option to reduce operating and maintenance costs as well as emissions. The locomotive will be capable of hauling the line's heaviest trains over its nine-mile length.

INDUSTRIALS

■ Harry Needle Railroad Company has outshopped Thomas Hill 0-6-0DHF No. 257V at Barrow Hill following the completion of a lengthy overhaul. The shunter, which is TOPS registered as No. 01562, is now finished in the blue livery of Breedon Aggregates, having previously carried Aggregate Industries white/blue. Now carrying the identity of No.6, it will be dispatched to Hope cement works once the final tasks have been completed, HNR already supplying a range of locomotives at the site.

■ WH Davis completed the cosmetic transformation of Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0DH No. D1387 at its

Shirebrook workshops during April. Following arrival at the wagon works last June, the shunter has been repainted in mid-green with yellow embellishments, with the final touch being a naming competition involving pupils at St Joseph's School, which is located across the road from the site. The winning entry of *Dwayne the Train* is now applied to the loco's solebars with the school's crest also carried on the cabsides.

■ The Hunslet workshops at Barton-under-Needwood outshopped a second overhauled GECT-built former British Steel shunter for parent company Ed Murray during April. Dating from 1977, No. 5465 was

noted outside in the small yard early in the month with a fresh coat of black and yellow but yet to have its former British Steel identity of No. 268 reapplied. It was expected to join No. 261 at Daventry.

■ At Darley Dale, work was well advanced on the scrapping of Hunslet 0-4-0DH No. 7161 by mid-April, the loco having undergone component recovery and gradual dismantling over the previous two months to leave it reduced to just a chassis. Previously part of the HNR fleet, the shunter, which dates from 1970, was only intended as a source of spares upon arrival at the Briddon workshops.

NEWS ROUND-UP

FREIGHTLINER

Newly-repainted in orange, No. 08531 was released from its exam at Nemesis Rail, Burton, on April 9, with the low-loader arriving at Felixstowe early the following morning to deposit the shunter. This allowed No. 08624 *Rambo Paul Ramsey* to be collected for the short trip to Freightliner's maintenance depot in Ipswich Yard to replace No. 08891, the latter being transported back to Burton to undergo repairs.

HARRY NEEDLE RAILROAD COMPANY

No. 08877 has become the latest HNR shunter to be repainted in the company's orange livery following the

completion of a D-exam at Workshop. Most recently utilised at Cardiff Tidal, the shunter had carried its previous Departmental Grey livery since August 1991 when it was overhauled by RFS at its long-closed Kilnhurst workshops.

RAILWAY SUPPORT SERVICES

GB Railfreight-liveried No. 08703 *Steve Blick (Concrete Bob) ShunterSpot* has returned to traffic after more than a year stopped at Wishaw awaiting replacement wheelsets. The shunter was dispatched to Whitmoor Yard on April 10, allowing No. 08507 to be returned to Wishaw the following day. After a quick exam, No. 08507 was on the move again on April 21, being taken

north to the ICL (Cleveland Potash) terminal at Tees Dock. RSS took over the shunter duty here from Ed Murray back in February with Thomas Hill No. 261V provided but with the overhaul of the second shunter, Sentinel No. 10150, still ongoing at Wishaw, the Class 08 has been sent as a stand-in.

RMS LOCOTEC

The latest Class 08 to arrive at Stagecoach's Chesterfield bus garage is No. 08754, its transfer from Great Yarmouth occurring on April 5. However, unlike its classmates already on site, the shunter is undergoing preparations for deployment on a new hire contract later in the year.

PRESERVATION

After 13 years based at West Coast Railways' Carnforth depot, Class 03 No. D2084 arrived at the **Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway** on April 23. Freshly-repainted in BR green, the shunter is due to spend between 12-18 months at the Yorkshire line and is expected to see use on passenger turns. No. 03084 was last away from Carnforth in March 2016, when it made a gala appearance at the East Lancashire Railway.

Another Class 03 with a much-needed fresh coat of BR green is No. D2023, which was completed just ahead of the **Kent & East Sussex Railway's** diesel gala at the beginning of April. As before, it is in plain green without wasp stripes. Also with a new look is No. 08022 at the **Cholsey & Wallingford Railway**, its previous Guinness livery having given way to plain black with new oval cabside plates incorporating the number and *Lion* name.

The **Severn Valley Railway's** spares donor No. 08896 was moved away from the turntable area at Kidderminster on April 5, being shunted into the depths of the carriage shed for further storage. The former EWS machine was acquired by the railway in November 2009 but had increasingly become an eyesore with many parts removed and badly-faded paintwork.

June launch for modified Class 458/4s

SWR to introduce reformed 'Junipers' on different routes to those planned.

THE first of South Western Railway's Class 458/4 units, of which 13 had been converted and released by late April, are expected to enter service in June, although not on services between London Waterloo and Portsmouth as originally planned.

Instead, they are to be used on inner-suburban duties out of Waterloo to Hounslow and Weybridge, which should, via a cascade, enable Class 455s to be removed from the Reading line as well as allowing further '458/5' sets to be released for conversion to Class 458/4.

As of late April, South Western Railway had 20 five-car Class 458s in service (see table), of which 13 are due to be converted to four-car Class 458/4 sets. The remaining seven, Nos. 458529-532/534-536, do not form part of the conversion programme and will, in due course, go off-lease, along with No. 458533 which has not been in service for over two years, although this set is in the process of being returned to traffic.

Released from Alstom, Widnes on April 15, was No. 458421 (ex 458521). It was hauled to Wembley Yard by GB Railfreight No. 57303, where, after recessing, it continued to Bournemouth the next day. The '57' then collected No. 458513, taking it to Eastleigh East Yard in advance of its move north to Widnes on April 17 for attention.

CLASS 458 - FLEET STATUS (APRIL 2024)

Number	Status
458501	Arrived Widnes for '458/4' conversion on March 28, 2024
458502	In traffic as five-car set
458503	In traffic as five-car set
458504	Now 458404, released from Widnes on January 22, 2024
458505	Now 458405, released from Widnes on September 4, 2023
458506	In traffic as five-car set
458507	Now 458407, released from Widnes on July 20, 2023
458508	In traffic as five-car set
458509	In traffic as five-car set
458510	In traffic as five-car set
458511	In traffic as five-car set
458512	In traffic as five-car set
458513	Arrived Widnes for '458/4' conversion on April 18, 2024
458514	In service as five-car set
458515	Now 458415, released from Widnes on March 12, 2024
458516	Now 458416, released from Widnes on February 12, 2024
458517	Now 458417, released from Widnes on July 17, 2023
458518	In traffic as five-car set
458519	In traffic as five-car set
458520	Now 458420, released from Widnes on February 26, 2024
458521	Now 458421, released from Widnes on April 15, 2024
458522	Now 458422, released from Widnes on March 25, 2024
458523	Now 458423, released from Widnes on September 25, 2023
458524	Now 458424, released from Widnes on December 12, 2023
458525	Now 458425, released from Widnes on October 10, 2023
458526	In traffic as five-car set
458527	In traffic as five-car set
458528	Now 458428, released from Widnes on November 7, 2023
458529	In traffic as five-car set
458530	In traffic as five-car set
458531	In traffic as five-car set
458532	In traffic as five-car set
458533	Awaiting parts, stopped since January 2022
458534	In traffic as five-car set
458535	In traffic as five-car set
458536	In traffic as five-car set

Meanwhile, a further two redundant trailer cars, removed from '458/5' sets at Widnes, have joined No. 74424 at

Cockshute Sidings. Arriving in April were Nos. 74401 (ex 458520) and 74438 (ex 458521). 

DMU

CLASS 150 SPRINTER

ONGOING construction work at Newton Heath resulted in two of the depot's Class 150 allocation, Nos. 150101/124, being dispatched to Heaton for C4 overhaul during April.

Having been sent back to Wolverton for rectification on March 25, Great Western Railway No. 150207 returned to Exeter on April 12. Another set, No. 150216, was sent for overhaul on April 23, forming the 5H70 10.30 St Philip's Marsh-Wolverton.

CLASS 165 TURBO

THE programme of Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) upgrades involving the Chiltern Railways fleet, being carried out by Arriva Traincare, is continuing at Bristol Barton Hill. Nos. 165003/035 returned to Banbury on April 17, and on site a week later were Nos. 165013/039.

CLASS 166 TURBO

DEPARTING Wolverton for St Philip's Marsh on April 11 after its overhaul was Great Western Railway No. 166204. Heading the opposite direction the next day, as the 5Q84 10.02 St Philip's Marsh-Wolverton, was No. 166210.

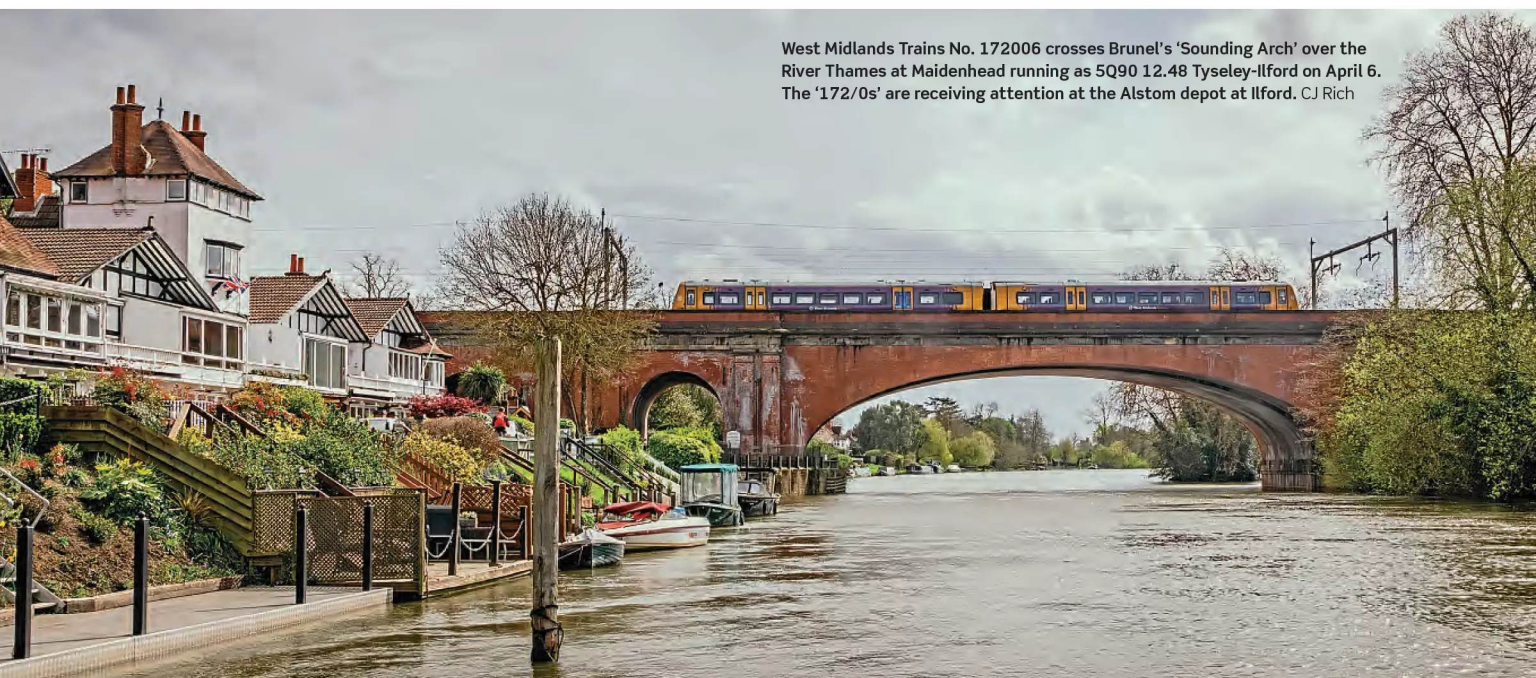
CLASS 170 TURBOSTAR

THE last former TFW Rail Turbostar to be put into traffic with East Midlands Railway, No. 170207, entered service with its new operator in early April.

CLASS 175 CORADIA

RECENTLY moved to Central Rivers for attention have been Nos. 175101 from Landore on March 25 (moved by Rail Operations Group Nos. 37800 *Cassiopeia* and 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer*) and 175113 from Holyhead on April 17 (using No. 37901 and 37884 *Cepheus*).

West Midlands Trains No. 172006 crosses Brunel's 'Sounding Arch' over the River Thames at Maidenhead running as 5Q90 12.48 Tyseley-Ilford on April 6. The '172/0s' are receiving attention at the Alstom depot at Ilford. CJ Rich





Former TfW Rail Nos. 175102/106 pass Hanwell on April 4, with the 5Q46 08.14 Landore-Ely, where they joined four classmates for storage. The '175s' have been replaced by Class 197s and are being stored pending a decision on their future. Howard Lewsey

More sets have arrived at Landore for handback work to be undertaken. Arriving from Crewe Gresty Green on March 22, sandwiched between ROG Nos. 37800 and 37901, was No. 175011, and this was followed from Crewe by Nos. 175112 on March 28, 175115 on April 15, and 175105 (April 23). ROG undertook all the moves, using Nos. 37611 *Denise* and 37901 on March 28, and 37884 and the '37/9' for the other two moves.

New arrivals at Ely Papworth have been Nos. 175106/112, which arrived from Landore on April 4. It brings the total number of Coradia sets on site to six, Nos. 175004/005/009, 175104/106/112.

CLASS 195 CIVITY

ON April 3, Northern No. 195125 undertook gauging trials at all stations on the Harrogate loop; Northern has, however, no plans to introduce regular diagrams for its Civity fleet on the Leeds-Harrogate-York line.

CLASS 197 CIVITY

THE first passenger run of a '197' on the Ebbw Vale branch took place on April 17, when No. 197115 formed the 2N09 10.02 Cardiff Central-Ebbw Vale Town and 2N10 11.05 return. The same day saw No. 197123 hauled from Wolverton to Crewe by Freightliner No. 66953.

April 21, saw Nos. 197005/009 undertake clearance runs on the Pembroke Dock branch in advance of their introduction on the route later in the year.

DEMU

CLASS 221 SUPER VOYAGER

THREE Class 221 sets have been stopped by Avanti West Coast and handed back to Beacon Rail in advance of their transfer to CrossCountry. The first to be taken out of service was No. 221115, followed by No. 221116 *City of Bangor/Dinas Bangor* which made its last passenger run with Avanti, the 9G41 19.16 Euston-Birmingham New Street on March 20 prior to going off-lease in April. Making its final run on April 4 was No. 221114 *Royal Air Force Centenary 1918-2018*, its last working being the 9G35 17.16 Euston-Birmingham New Street. All three sets, together with a further two which are to be stopped in June, are destined for Cross Country.

EMU

CLASS 321

HAVING spent several weeks parked up at Crewe station, Varamis Rail No. 321341 ran to Wolverton for modifications in the early hours of April 9 with No. 321428.

CLASS 323

THE fourth Class 323 to be handed back by West Midlands Railway, No. 323202, arrived at Wolverton from Soho for handback work on April 15. Four days later, it completed its transfer to Northern when it formed the 5Q36 13.02 Wolverton-Allerton.

CLASS 390 PENDOLINO

AS planned, No. 390008 *Charles Rennie Mackintosh* was released from its refurbishment at Alstom, Widnes on March 30, with No. 390042 similarly returning to Longsight on April 13. Taking the latter's place at Widnes was No. 390046, which emerged on April 27.

CLASS 466 NETWORKER

ARRIVING back at Slade Green on March 23 after overhaul at Wabtec, Doncaster, were Nos. 466034/038. Their return south was handled by GB Railfreight No. 66731 *Capt. Tom Moore*.

CLASS 507

AFTER a short spell at Crewe South Yard (where they had arrived on March 27), Nos. 507020/031 were hauled to Sims Metals, Newport by Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* on April 10. Stopped in April were Nos. 507014/021, reducing the fleet to 11 sets. A further four, Nos. 507011/015/028/033, were due to go off-lease in early May.

CLASS 555

HAULED from Dollands Moor to Wembley by DB Cargo No. 66002 on April 16, new Tyne & Wear Metro Nos. 555001/020 continued north to York Holgate Sidings behind RailAdventure power car Nos. 43468/480. Their journey to Pelaw was completed on April 18.

CLASS 701 ARTERIO

A revised passenger diagram was introduced from April 15, the

sole working now covering the following services:

2U29 06.33 Waterloo-Windsor
2U16 07.53 Windsor-Waterloo
2U19 09.03 Waterloo-Windsor
2U26 10.23 Windsor-Waterloo
2U29 11.33 Waterloo-Windsor
2U36 12.53 Windsor-Waterloo

On the first day of the amended diagram, No. 701043 was used.

On April 4, GB Railfreight No. 69009 *Western Consort* hauled No. 701014 from Eastleigh TMD to Marchwood before forming the 5Q85 12.30 Marchwood-Eastleigh with No. 701019. The same locomotive was used to return No. 701022 from Marchwood to Eastleigh on April 9. The following week, two sets were taken from Eastleigh to Marchwood, GBRf No. 47749 *City of Truro* moving Nos. 701004 on April 16 and 701016 on April 17. The Brush Type 4 had earlier undertaken the delivery of No. 701058 from Alstom, Derby to Eastleigh on April 11 and was also used to transfer No. 701029 from Bicester to Wimbledon Park on April 18. The following day, it worked the 5Q75 09.21 Eastleigh-Bicester with No. 701530 in tow.

Returning from Worksop, where it had been located since September 2, 2021, to Alstom, Derby behind GBRf No. 69011 on April 17 was No. 701008. Moving the opposite direction behind GBRf No. 69008 *Richard Howe* on April 23 were Nos. 701503/504.



Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* passes Loughborough on April 25, hauling West Midlands Trains No. 730006 as the 5Q58 13.48 Soho-Old Dalby. Class 730s are being shuffled between various sites currently until they are needed in traffic. Neil Walking

EMU continued

CLASS 710 AVENTRA

THE final Class 710 to enter service, No. 710374, made its debut passenger runs on April 2, when it was used on the Richmond to Stratford (North London Line) route.

CLASS 720 AVENTRA

NEW deliveries to record are those of Nos. 720519 on April 9, which was hauled from Alstom, Derby to Willesden by GB Railfreight No. 47749 *City of Truro*, and 720101, similarly

moved from Derby to Willesden by GBRF No. 69011 on April 19. Following mileage accumulation on the West Coast Main Line, No. 720519 ran from Wembley to Ilford on April 17.

Put into revenue-earning service for the first time on March 28 were Nos. 720102/138. The same day saw No. 720139 return from Worksop to Alstom, Derby behind GBRF No. 69008 *Richard Howe*, and it was followed by No. 720504, a long-term resident at Worksop, where it had been stored for two days short of three years, on April 5; the set was moved by GBRF Nos. 47749 *City of Truro* and 57303.

CLASS 730 AVENTRA

On April 15, the first Aventura workings on Birmingham's Cross City line were introduced, starting with the 2P03 06.06 Birmingham New Street-Lichfield Trent Valley. Nos. 730008/009 were the first to be used and they then spent the day on the Lichfield to Bromsgrove circuit, finishing with the 2G75 23.31 Bromsgrove-Birmingham New Street. Further diagrams will be introduced in the coming months, and by the autumn, use of Class 323s on Cross City line services should have ceased.



GB Railfreight No. 57303 passes Werrington, near Peterborough, with the 5Q79 12.55 Worksop-Hornsey, taking No. 379006 south. This was the first of 30 Class 379s delivered to Govia Thameslink Railway following the agreement to lease the four-car electric multiple units from Porterbrook (RE336). Stuart West

THE three former Heathrow Connect sets retained for use as test units at the Global Centre of Rail Excellence were all moved from Bicester to Lydney Junction on the Dean Forest Railway in April, prior to being taken by road to the developing site at the former Onllwyn colliery. Rail Operations Group Nos. 37611 *Denise* and 37901 *Mirreles Pioneer* were used for all three movements, which took place on April 2 (No. 360202), April 5 (No. 360201) and April 9 (No. 360203). On April 8, No. 360203 stands at Lydney Junction before being moved to its new home by road. Martin Turner



Running as the 5Q67 10.00 Derby Litchurch Lane-Oxley, Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* undertook the delivery of No. 730214 on April 12. Four other '730/2' sets have been sent to Camden, Nos. 730212/217 arriving from Oxley on April 8, with Nos. 730210/211 following two days later. The aforementioned No. 730214 was taken from Oxley to Melton RIDC by ROG No. 37884 *Cepheus* on April 19.

On April 23, Nos. 730040/041 were transferred from Gascoigne Wood to Doncaster Belmont Yard by No. 37800

Cassiopeia, after which the '37' took Nos. 730037/039 to Gascoigne Wood.

CLASS 777 STADLER

NEW into traffic in late March was No. 777041, and this was followed by No. 777039 (April 6) and 777021 (April 10).

Temporarily stored at Walton Old Junction since March 11, Nos. 777038/051 departed for Kirkdale on April 17, Nos. 20189/205 and RailAdventure High Speed Train power cars Nos. 43465/484 being used for the stock transfer.

IET

CLASS 805

HAVING returned to Newton Aycliffe just over six months ago for removal of test equipment and fitting of interiors as well as application of Avanti West Coast livery vinyls, No. 805001 was released from Hitachi's site on April 10 and returned to Oxley to begin a period of fault free running in advance of it being accepted into the fleet.

Another delivery took place on April 17, when No. 805012 formed the 5Q32 08.21 Merchant Park Sidings-Oxley.

CLASS 807

EMERGING from Newton Aycliffe on April 15, Avanti West Coast No. 807002 was moved to Darlington by GB Railfreight Nos. 66724 *Drax Power Station* and 66798 *Justine*, after which it ran via Edinburgh and the West Coast Main Line to Oxley. The unit still carries base grey colours.

DEPOT TALK

Correct to April 20, 2024.

Allocations

197103 HQ-CH
319214 sent for disposal
319454 sent for disposal
321339 HQ/SAXU-GW/VRMU
507020/031 sent for disposal
555001/020 newly delivered GF/PXGG
701058 newly delivered HQ/HYHQ
710374 HQ-WN
720102/138 HQ-IL
730214 newly delivered HQ/EJHQ
769922/959 SBXH-MBCS
777039/041 HQ-KD
805012 newly delivered HQ/HFHQ

Liveries

Pride: 755421
Unbranded blue: 769922/959
South Western Railway: 458421/422

Named

168215 *Marylebone Station* 125 years
1899-2024

Names removed

323201 *Duddeston*
323202 *Butlers Lane*
323205 *Blake Street*

Renumbered

458521 – 458421
458522 – 458422

Formations

458420: 67620+74020+74120
+67720
458421: 67621+74021+74121
+67721
458422: 67622+74022+74122
+67722

Now in passenger traffic

197103
710374
720102/138
777039/041

Sold

Porterbrook: 379001-030
Varamis Rail: 321339

Stored/stopped locations

Belmont Yard: 730023/024
MoD Bicester: 701530
Central Rivers: 175101/113
Cockshute Yard: 74401 (458520),
74422 (458522), 74438 (458521)
Crews: 197123
Derby Litchurch Lane: 701008,
720139/141, 720504
Eastleigh: 701019/022/058

Ely: 175102/106

Global Centre of Rail Excellence:

360201-203
Kirkdale: 777038/051
Landore: 175011, 175112/115
Marchwood: 701004/014/016
Old Dalby: 730020, 730214
Oxley: 805012, 807002
Soho: 730016
Taff's Well: 398002
Willesden: 720101, 720519
Wolverton: 321341, 323202
Workshop: 720144

Disposals

C.F.Booth Ltd, Rotherham: Cut date:
April 2: 64566
Sims Metals, Newport: Arrival
dates: April 4-5: 319454; April 10:
507020/031

More West Coast Railways Mk.2s return to traffic

'Air cons' fitted with Central Door Locking head to Fort William.

WEST Coast Railways has dispatched several air-conditioned Mk.2 coaches to Fort William for use on its 'Jacobite' service, which began operating on April 15.

Along with Mk.1 Nos. 1860 and

35486, four coaches, First Open (FO) No. 3360 and Tourist Standard Open (TSO) Nos. 6000/22 and 6103, were taken north from Carnforth by WCR No. 47245 V.E. Day 75th Anniversary and 'Black Five' No. 45212 on April 13. A further move on April 25 saw FO No. 3350 along with Mk.2b TSO No. 5453, together with Mk.1 No. 99318 and steam support coach No. 35517, taken from Carnforth to Fort William by 'Black Five' No. 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier*.

Of the Mk.2s sent to Scotland on April 13, the FO, No. 3360, was previously used on Statesman Rail charters prior to that company being taken over by Locomotives Services in 2017. It has lost its Pullman umber/cream colours in favour of WCR maroon. The other three coaches had seen little use in the past few years.

With the Northern Belle passenger vehicles having been fitted with Central Door Locking (CDL) earlier this year, WCR now has three sets of CDL-fitted Mk.2s in service. As well as the short set at Fort William, nine vehicles make up a rake used on other charters, primarily promoted by Railway Touring Company. All three sets also contain non-passenger Mk.1s.

Over the past 25 years, WCR has operated more than 30 CDL-fitted Mk.2s, but some have not seen service for several years and a number have been disposed of. Most were acquired with CDL already fitted, although the eight pressure-ventilated (Mk.2b/2c) coaches were so fitted while in WCR ownership, for use on Train Operating Company work with Wales & West/Valley Lines. Mk.2d Brake First Corridor (BFC) No. 17168 (which had a Private Owner TOPS identity No. 99319) was similarly fitted as a spare brake coach.

WEST COAST RAILWAYS CDL FITTED MK.2 STOCK

Number	Type	Status
3174	Mk.2d FO	Part of Northern Belle set
3247	Mk.2e FO	Part of Northern Belle set
3267	Mk.2e FO	Part of Northern Belle set
3273	Mk.2e FO	Part of Northern Belle set
3275	Mk.2e FO	Part of Northern Belle set
3313	Mk.2f FO	Part of Northern Belle set
3326	Mk.2f FO	In service (WCR/RTC charters)
3350	Mk.2f FO	In service ('Jacobite')
3352	Mk.2f FO	In service (WCR/RTC charters)
3359	Mk.2f FO	Located at Carnforth
3360	Mk.2f FO	In service ('Jacobite')
3362	Mk.2f FO	Located at Carnforth
3392	Mk.2f FO	In service (WCR/RTC charters)
3395	Mk.2f FO	In service (WCR/RTC charters)
3408	Mk.2f FO	Located at Carnforth
3431	Mk.2f FO	In service (WCR/RTC charters)
5453	Mk.2b TSO	In service ('Jacobite')
5463	Mk.2b TSO	Scrapped at Carnforth in 2023
5478	Mk.2b TSO	Located at Carnforth
5487	Mk.2b TSO	Located at Carnforth
5491	Mk.2b TSO	Scrapped at Carnforth in 2023
5569	Mk.2c TSO	Scrapped at Carnforth in 2023
6000	Mk.2f TSO	In service ('Jacobite')
6012	Mk.2f TSO	Located at Carnforth
6022	Mk.2f TSO	In service ('Jacobite')
6041	Mk.2f TSO	Located at Carnforth
6103	Mk.2f TSO	In service ('Jacobite')
6115	Mk.2f TSO	In service (WCR/RTC charters)
6723	Mk.2d RFB	Located at Carnforth
6724	Mk.2d RFB	In service (WCR/RTC charters)
9440	Mk.2c BSO	Located at Southall
9448	Mk.2c BSO	Disposed of in 2009 (Eastern Rail Services)
9489	Mk.2d BSO	Located at Carnforth
9493	Mk.2d BSO	In service (WCR/RTC charters)
17168	Mk.2d BFK	Scrapped at Carnforth in 2023

A full list of CDL-fitted Mk.2s which have been part of the WCR operational fleet at some time appears in the accompanying table. Not included are

those which have never seen service (such as those at Southall recently offered for disposal), or vehicles which have been hired in for periods. [B](#)

IN BRIEF

MK.5A MOVEMENTS

APRIL 9, saw DRS No. 68027

Splendid take TP07 (Nos. 11507, 12719-721/807) from Longsight to Long Marston. The next day, No. 68032 *Destroyer* moved TP03 (Nos. 11503, 12707-709/803) from Crewe South Yard to Longsight in advance of a planned transfer to Long Marston on April 11. However, this failed at Stafford and the ensemble returned to Crewe behind DRS No. 57304 *Pride of Cheshire*. On April 24, No. 68025 *Superb* took TP02 (Nos. 11502, 12704-706, 12814) to Long Marston.

RIVIERA MOVEMENTS

FIVE Riviera Trains coaches were taken from Burton to Carnforth for attention on April 3. West Coast Railways Nos. 47812 and 57012 were employed to move Mk.1 Restaurant Buffet (RBR) No. 1671, Generator Van (GV) No. 6310, Restaurant Kitchen (RK) No. 80042, Mk.2e Brake Standard Open (BSO) No. 9507 and Mk.2f Tourist Standard Open (TSO) No. 5921.

ERS ACQUIRES MK.3S

EASTERN Rail Services has added another four Mk.3 vehicles to its expanding fleet, with the purchase of Standard Open (SO) Nos. 12049/067/118 and Driving Van Trailer (DVT) No. 82114 from the Northampton & Lamport Railway. The first of the vehicles, No. 82114, arrived in mid-April.

DEPOT TALK

Correct to April 20, 2024.

Stored/stopped locations

Great Yarmouth: 10237, 12091
Leicester: 42097, 42376, 44012, 45003

Long Marston: 11507, 12719-721, 12807

Wishaw: 5238 (Corrects previously reported cut).



On April 13, West Coast Railways No. 47245 V.E. Day 75th Anniversary and 'Black Five' No. 45212 lead the 5Z12 10.50 Carnforth-Crianlarich empty coaching stock move, taking WCR stock to the West Highlands for the 'Jacobite' operation. As well as Mk.1 Nos. 1860 and 35486, four air-conditioned Mk.2s fitted with Central Door Locking were included in the formation, Nos. 3360, 6000/22 and 6103. Robert France

EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY

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27 - 29 JUNE 2024

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Image: Chris Gallagher
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CLASS 20

With the Network Rail 'Linsinger' milling machines in tow, Nos. 20189 and 20142 *Sir John Betjeman* formed the 6Q01 18.00 Harwich-Rugby OTPD on April 9. Once back at Kings Norton, Nos. 20189 teamed up with No. 20205 and Rail Adventure Nos. 43484+43465 to head to Warrington on April 17. There they collected new Merseyrail electric multiple units Nos. 777038/051 for movement on the 5Q77 22.14 Walton Old Junction-Kirkdale prior to taking the barrier vehicles back to the West Midlands next morning. Following a repaint into Balfour Beatty white and blue livery, Nos. 20901/905 ran light from Bristol Barton Hill to Barrow Hill on April 21. Few English Electric Type 1s have been to Blackpool North station in recent years but that changed on April 23 when Locomotive Services Group

Nos. D8096 (20096) and D8107 (20107) *Jocelyn Feilding 1940-2020* arrived at the Fylde coast resort having run light engine from Crewe. They stayed for just 11 minutes before returning to base.

CLASS 33

On April 5, No. D6515 (33012) *Lt Jenny Lewis RN* undertook a brief main line jaunt when running light from Swanage to Eastleigh to collect No. 50026 *Indomitable*. Later the pair formed the 0Z50 14.30 departure from Eastleigh Works to Swanage. This was only the second use of a Class 33 on the network this year after No. 33029 ran from Southall to Carnforth at the end of January, although as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, No. 33012 was earmarked for several tours in early May leading up to the Swanage Railway diesel gala.

CLASS 37

After more than five years out of use, No. 37508 returned to the main line in the company of No. 37418 on April 18, the pair running light as the 0Z38 12.30 Burton Wetmore-Derby Railway Technical Centre. Now sporting the early style of large logo Railfreight grey livery, No. 37508 has regained the number it lost when renumbered as No. 37606 in July 1996, ostensibly for European Passenger Services 'Nightstar' operations. The locomotive began life in January 1963 as D6790.

With the start of the summer 'Jacobite' service delayed, West Coast Railways Nos. 37676 *Loch Rannoch* and 37685 *Loch Arkraig* undertook a crew training exercise on April 8, hauling five empty coaches between Fort William and Mallaig, repeating the trip the next day. On both days

Locomotive Services Group ran the additional 1Z37 08.52 Fort William-Mallaig and 11.34 return using Nos. 37409 *Loch Awe* and No. D6851 (37667) *Flopsy* in 'top and tail' mode at either end of four Mk.3 coaches. The same LSG locomotives and stock operated the diagram once again on April 19. The scheduled 'Jacobite' passenger service commenced on April 15, however Stanier 'Black Five' No. 45212 slipped to a stand on wet rails at Glenfinnan and required rescuing by No. 37676. Such was the sudden climatic change, however, that No. 37685 powered the 2Y61 10.15 Fort William-Mallaig on April 22, in place of the rostered steam locomotive to counter the fire risk. Steam motive power returned for the remainder of the week albeit with No. 37685 assisting at the rear.



On April 5, West Coast Railways No. 47848 storms through Two Mile Bottom, near Thetford with the 5Z78 06.25 Carnforth-Norwich empty coaching stock. On the rear was 'Black Five' No. 44871 which hauled a charter from Norwich to Worcester Shrub Hill. Ryan Hayward



GB Railfreight No. 69001 *Mayflower* powers the 7M18 07.20 Doncaster Up Decoy-Toton North Yard through Chevin on April 30. Mick Tindall



Two Pathfinder Railtours ran to Pwllheli during the month, starting out at Reading on April 4, and East Midlands Parkway on April 18. In both cases DB Cargo UK No. 67005 *Queen's Messenger* hauled the specials to Shrewsbury where Network Rail Nos. 97302 *Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways/Rheilffyrdd Ffestiniog ac Eryri* and 97304 double-headed the tours over Cambrian metals. Of the other '97/3s', No. 97303 was at Barrow Hill during the second part of April, while No. 97301 was moved by road from Peak Rail to Rectory Junction on April 9 for component recovery.

CLASS 43

Colas Railfreight power cars Nos. 43301/303 travelled from Old Dalby to Great Yarmouth on April 4, to collect four Mk.3 High Speed Train coaches for transfer to Loughborough the following day. A shortage of space at the UK Rail Leasing facility resulted in both power cars and vehicles being deposited at Leicester, before moving on the 5Z40 09.32 Leicester-Kidderminster on April 25, noted passing through Birmingham New Street station at 13.05. Rail Adventure Nos. 43468/480 handled the 7Q55 01.14 Wembley-York Holgate on April 17, going forward next day as the 21.50 to Pelaw with new Metro units Nos. 555001/020. The two units had previously been taken from Dollands Moor to Wembley behind DB Cargo UK No. 66002 on April 16. Locomotive Services Midland Pullman tours increased during April with power cars Nos. 43049 *Neville Hill* and 43055 taking the train from Plymouth to Llandudno on April 5, before Nos. 43047 and 43055 *Geoff Drury 1930-1999 Steam Preservation and Computerised*

Track Recording Pioneer were paired to form the 1Z62 07.42 Berwick-on-Tweed-Penzance on April 12. Next day they took the Pullman to Kingswear and Exeter returning to the Cornish terminal before undertaking the strenuous 13-hour journey from Penzance to Berwick on April 14. Having travelled over the Settle and Carlisle line on April 18 with a Wolverhampton to Carlisle excursion, Nos. 43047 and 43055 remained in charge handling the 1Z43 05.40 Crewe-Aviemore tour five days later and then the 1Z43 06.05 Dundee-Blackpool North on April 27.

CLASS 47

Two West Coast Railways '47s' were employed on this year's 'Great Britain XVI' event which set off from London Victoria on the morning of April 13. The first leg of the mammoth nine-day tour ran as the 1Z30 07.15 to Margate hauled by Stanier 'Black Five' No. 44871 with No. 47812 at the rear. Later the pair travelled west with the 1Z31 10.03 Margate-Cheltenham Spa, adding another 'Black Five' No. 45407 at Southall. The same three locomotives formed the Cheltenham to Lancaster leg on the following day before the train was stabled overnight at Carnforth. WCR No. 47802 replaced its classmate on April 15, setting off from Lancaster bound for Glasgow Central via the Settle & Carlisle line with Bulleid Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere*. Thereafter, No. 47802 remained with the tour covering a total of 1400 miles over the seven days, only missing out on the Craven Arms to Llandeilo Junction section, over which Class 47s cannot operate. With the occasional change of steam motive power, GBXVI visited Inverness, Kyle of Lochalsh, Aberdeen,

Edinburgh, Liverpool, Swansea and Gloucester before terminating at London Paddington during the early evening of April 21. WCR No. 47746 *Chris Fudge* 29.7.70-22.6.10 tailed No. 44871 on the 1Z27 07.01 London Paddington-Gloucester on April 27, while No. 47245 *VE Day 75th Anniversary* assisted the 'Jacobite' in rear on both April 27 and 28, when the dry weather in the Scottish Highlands necessitated the steam locomotive, No. 45407, taking it easy.

In 'top and tail' mode preserved Nos. 47828 and 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*, both used by Locomotive Services, operated the 1Z60 05.22 Stafford-Windsor & Eton Riverside on April 11. They were back together nine days later this time in multiple when powering the 1Z72 07.56 Worcester Shrub Hill-Appleby and back via Carlisle Upperby. No. 47712 returned to Windsor & Eton with No. D1935 (47805) *Roger Hosking MA 1925-2013* atop the 1Z60 05.20 from Crewe on April 25, running via Wrexham and Brentford, while earlier in the month No. 47805 performed singly for much of the day on a Leicester to Carlisle special after Pacific No. 70000 *Britannia* suffered a problem at Carlisle.

GB Railfreight No. 47749 *City of Truro* continues to earn its keep on the transfer of multiple units around the network. On April 9, for example, it had Greater Anglia electric multiple unit No. 720519 in tow heading from Derby Litchurch Lane to Willesden, prior to hauling South Western Railway No. 701058 from Derby to Eastleigh two days later, before taking SWR No. 701004 to Marchwood on April 16, SWR No. 701016 to the same storage location the following day and No. 701029 was also taken to Marchwood by the '47' on April 18.



April was a busy month for GB Railfreight No. 47749 *City of Truro* in terms of hauling Alstom electric multiple units to various destinations. On April 18, the '47' arrives at Wimbledon with South Western Railway No. 701029, forming the 5Q78 13.19 from Marchwood, where the '701' had been stored for several months. Alex Ayre

The next day, the GBRf Type 4 took SWR No. 701530 to MoD Bicester. Based at Old Dalby since early March, GBRf No. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle*/*Caisteal Dhùn Èideann* returned to Leicester on April 22, while the third Type 4 in the GBDF pool No. 47739 has seen little action since December.

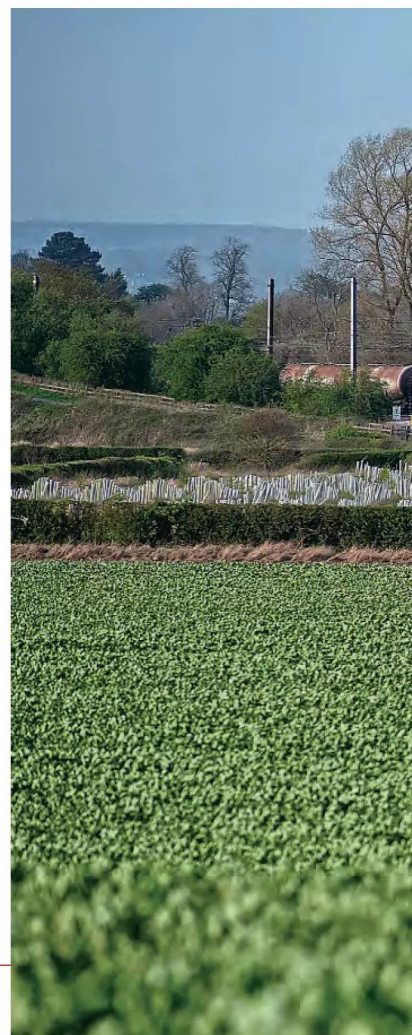
CLASS 56

Engineering work took Colas Railfreight Nos. 56049 *Robin of Templecombe* 1938-2013 and 56105 north of Perth with a set of autoballasters late on April 9. The following night the

same '56s' powered the 6K11 17.36 Millerhill-Blair Atholl with a similar load, returning to Millerhill early on April 11. By April 20, Nos. 56049 and 56113 were in harness on the 6J37 12.46 Carlisle Yard-Chirk timber but after just two days on that diagram the same pairing was recorded on the 6S37 10.14 Carlisle Yard-Ravenstruther on April 24. Elsewhere, No. 56090 handled the 6M43 02.26 Haverton-CR Ribbles and the 6E44 10.05 return on both April 18 and 19 while the former date found No. 56105 atop the 6S48 10.21 Workington-Aberdeen Waterloo.

CLASS 57

Following a lengthy spell as an East Coast Main Line 'Thunderbird' based at Newark Northgate, West Coast Railways No. 57012 accompanied No. 47812 on the 5Z47 10.00 Burton Wetmore-Carnforth empty coaching stock move on April 3, conveying a selection of Riviera Trains coaches for attention. WCR No. 57314 *Conwy Castle* replaced its '57/0' stable companion at Newark on March 27, and spent the whole of April on this duty. Meanwhile, WCR Nos. 57601 *Windsor Castle* and 57313 *Scarborough Castle*



DEPOT TALK, CORRECT TO APRIL 20, 2024

LOCOMOTIVES

Allocations

20901/905 HNRL-BBXX
43305 HQ/SCAL-HA/HAPC
60001/007/010/015/019/020/039
/040/044/054/059/063/065/066/
079/091/092, 60100 WQBA-WQDA
60003/005/023/025/027/030/031
/033-035/041-043/045/049/051/
053/058/067/069/071-073/082/
083/088/094/097, 60500 WQCA-WQDA
60004/014/018 WQCA-GBTG
66002/003/015/020/028/034/050
/053/063/073-075/078/080/082
/086/087/090/093/098, 66115
/116/125/128/131/133-137/
139/140/143/147/148/150-152/
164/170/172/182/186/187/197/
199 WBAE-WBAT
66105 WBBT-WBAT
66164 WBAT-WBHT
66174 WBHT-WBAT

Liveries

Balfour Beatty white and blue:
20901/905
DB Cargo red: 66002, 66177/181
Freightliner orange: 08531, 59102
GB Railfreight: 69011
Harry Needle Railroad Company orange: 08877
TransPennine Express branding removed: 68023/029/030
+ Colas decals: 59003

Named

08805 *Hunslet*

Names removed

08649 *Bradwell*
08805 *Robin Jones 40 Years' Service*
43029 *Caldicot Castle*

Renumbered

37606 – 37508

Exported

To Poland: 66956

Sold

Europhoenix: 37407
HNRC: 37419/422, 37716
Meteor Power: 37424/425

For Sale

60003/005/023/025/027/030
/031/033-035/041-043/045/049/
051/053/054/058/067/069/071-
073/082/083/088/091/094/097,
60500

Stored/stopped locations

Boden Rail, Colwick: 97301
Crewe Diesel Maintenance Depot:
43054, 47841

Disposal

C.F. Booth Ltd, Rotherham: Cut date:
April 2: 91104

took the Northern Belle from York to Carnforth on April 6, the former handing over there to steam motive power for the onward journey to Carlisle and Preston, WCR Nos. 57313 and 57315 teaming up for the homeward bound run from Preston to York that evening. Both '57/3s' remained in harness on the next 'Belle' outing on April 13, from Liverpool to Carlisle with Pacific No. 34067 *Tangmere* replacing No. 57315 at Carnforth. The roles were reversed the following Saturday, April 20, when *Tangmere* took over from No. 57313 on the 1258 07.30 Telford Central-Carlisle. WCR No. 57009 *G J Churchward* ran light from Southall to Leicester on April 6, as the planned replacement for the steam locomotive on the 1280 16.39 Worcester Shrub Hill-Norwich going forward in 'top and tail' mode with WCR No. 47848. Both locomotives returned the empty coaches to Southall the following afternoon.

GB Railfreight No. 57303 hauled UK Railtours' 'Harbourmaster' charter from London Paddington to Newport and back on April 13, taking a break from its more normal role. Once in South Wales it handed the special over to a pair of GBRF Class 66s (see below). Next day No. 57303 tailed diesel hydraulic No. D1015 *Western Champion* on the 1256 13.52 London Paddington-Birmingham New Street as far as Bescot where the Class 52 was removed allowing No. 57303 to



RailAdventure Nos. 43480 and 43468 approach York on April 17, with the Q55 01.14 Wembley-York Holgate. The '43s' were hauling new Nexus Metro units Nos. 555001/020, built by Stadler. The new units stabled at York before being moved to Pelaw the following day. Jack Bowley

cover the last few miles to New Street station. Thereafter, No. 57303 hauled refurbished South Western Railway electric multiple unit No. 458421 from Wides to Wembley on April 15, going forward to Bournemouth next day prior to collecting No. 458513, the next unit for attention at the Merseyside plant. In

addition to covering several Class 379 moves during the month, No. 57305 took Caledonian Sleeper No. 92033 *Railway Heritage Trust* from Leicester to Loughborough via Toton on April 2, reappearing at the UK Rail Leasing site on April 15, having hauled CS No. 92006 from Wembley. Locomotive Services

Group No. 57311 had a single Mk.2f vehicle in tow forming the 5258 09.55 Eastleigh Works-Crewe on April 4, and accompanied No. D1935 (47805) *Roger Hosking MA 1925-2013* on the 1280 06.02 Hereford-York tour on April 17, the pair working as far as Crewe where Nos. 34046 *Braunton* and 47828 took over. ➤

After years out of traffic at Leeds Midland Road, Freightliner No. 70009 has been hired to Colas Railfreight. On April 15, the '70' passes Overton, near York, with the 6D43 Jarrow-Lindsey empty fuel tanks. Duncan McEvoy



CLASS 66

The 'Harbourmaster' railtour on April 13 visited Haverfordwest, Robeston and Milford Haven in the hands of GB Railfreight Nos. 66718 *Peter, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill* and 66730 *Whitemoor*, the duo having taken over from GBRf No. 57303 at Newport Alexandra Dock Junction. Having circumnavigated much of West Wales the '66s' retraced their steps back to Newport to enable No. 57303 to return the charter to London. Another Class 66 pairing in West Wales, Nos. 66719 *Metro-Land* and 66725 *Sunderland*, ventured to Fishguard with a weed-killing train on April 22, while DB Cargo UK examples Nos. 66105 and 66076 'top and tailed' the 6W99 04.30 Haverfordwest-Westbury long welded rail train on April 23.

Regeared No. 66651 (the former 66221) undertook its first loaded work on April 12, when taking charge of the 6E02 12.30 Toton-Boston Sleaford Sidings empty BYAs. A week later on April 20, No. 66651 was recorded passing Altrincham at the helm of the 6H03 08.47 Warrington Arpley-Tunstead BLI and remained on trips to and from the Peak District for the remainder of the month. Meanwhile, classmate No. 66164 was physically renumbered as No. 66652 at Toton depot during the latter part of April but had not been released back to traffic by the end of the month.

The Royal Scotsman season began on April 3 when GBRf No. 66746 departed from Edinburgh Waverley with the 1H89 13.45 to Boat of Garten. Its companion No. 66743 remained on freight work for a while handling biomass trains between Liverpool and Drax before taking up duty with the 1H85 13.56 Edinburgh-Spean Bridge on April 19. Six days later, however, No. 66743 traversed the Rylstone branch, later working the 6D99 15.31 Rylstone-Doncaster Down Decoy. GBRf Nos. 66784 *Keighley & Worth Valley Railway 50th Anniversary* and 66752 *The Hoosier State* appeared at Shoburyness with a set of autoballaster wagons during the evening of April 4, while No. 66772 *Maria* rescued classmate No. 66776 *Joanne* following the latter's derailment at West Ealing. The pair moved to Tonbridge on April 8, three days after the incident in West London. No. 66798 *Justine* reached Darlington with new Avanti West Coast electric multiple unit No. 807002 on April 15, having travelled the short distance from Merchant Park. The Hitachi Class 807 was destined for Edinburgh under its own power.

Bound for Poland, Freightliner No. 66956 was hauled from Leeds Midland Road to Immingham Docks behind No. 66509 *Josiah's Wish* on April 9, while No. 66508 *City of Doncaster* reached Penzance shortly before midnight on April 24, with a ballast train from Westbury. It returned east at 00.18. Classmates Nos. 66504 and 66505 sandwiched former DB Cargo UK Class 90s Nos. 90018 and 90040 on a short trip from Crewe International Electric Maintenance

Depot to Basford Hall on April 26. New Class 197 CAF Civity diesel units for Transport for Wales continue to be ferried around by Freightliner '66s' such as No. 66419 *Lionesses Roar* taking No. 197124 from Donnington RFT to Crewe on April 10, No. 66953 and 197123 forming the 6Q97 10.01 Wolverton-Crewe on April 17, and 66525 and 197031 on a Donnington-Basford Hall move on April 30.

CLASS 67

On the occasion of the Grand National on April 13, DB Cargo UK Nos. 67006 *Royal Sovereign* and 67021 visited Merseyside with the VSOE coaches running as the 1Z39 07.50 London Victoria-Liverpool South Parkway. No. 67005 *Queen's Messenger* undertook a couple of rail tours (see Class 37) while Class 67 continues to operate Transport for Wales services with three examples in action on the last day of April. Pullman-liveried No. 67024 spent the month at Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot while neither of the Colas pair currently at Westbury, Nos. 67023 *Stella* and 67027 have seen much action this year making Class 67 news rather gloomy. Nevertheless, Nos. 67005 and 67016 travelled from Crewe to Toton TMD on April 25, with a view to the latter being restored to use with TFW whilst No. 67006 ran as insurance when Pacific No. 35028 *Clan Line* powered its test run with a full British Belmond Pullman set from Stewarts Lane to Dover on April 22.

CLASS 68

A quartet of DRS locomotives Nos. 68006 *Pride of the North*, 68018 *Vigilant*, 66126 and 68023 passed Lancaster on April 5, heading from Carlisle Kingmoor to Crewe Gresty Bridge. No. 68023 has lost its TransPennine Express vinyls and *Achilles* nameplates and is back in the base dark blue as delivered. On April 8, No. 68023 was seen heading the 5Q32 10.08 Crewe South-Longsight stock transfer hauling Mk.5A set TP10 (Nos. 11510, 12728-730, 12810). Indeed, the only recent work for the former TPE locomotives has been similar movements of Mk.5A coaches. For instance, on April 4, No. 68031 *Felix* took set TP04 (Nos. 11504, 12710-712, 12804) to Long Marston and returned to Manchester with debranded set TP12 (Nos. 11512, 12734-736, 12812). Similarly, on April 9, No. 68027 *Splendid* reached Long Marston with TP07 (Nos. 11507, 12719-721, 12807) and collected TP05 (Nos. 11505, 12713-715, 12805). On April 30, No. 68032 *Destroyer* passed Droitwich Spa at 08.40 hauling TP11 (Nos. 11511, 12731-733, 12811) to Manchester on the 5Q32 06.57 from Long Marston.

Class 68s saw little use on the Basford Hall, Bescot and Toton diagram during April although two locomotives were reported on the 6K97 19.33 Toton Yard-Basford Hall final leg with Nos. 68006 and 68034 *Rail Riders 2020* on April 11, and Nos. 68008 *Avenger* and 66423 on April 24, while No. 68034 was in sole charge of

6K97 on April 12 and 17. No. 68001 *Evolution* remains out of action at Carlisle Kingmoor since November last year.

CLASS 69

Following a repaint at Eastleigh Arlington, GB Railfreight No. 69011 departed late on April 10, along with No. 66742 *ABP Port of Immingham Centenary 1912-2012* on the 6E15 21.17 Eastleigh Yard-Scunthorpe Trent Yard. On April 15, it was part of a quartet of locomotives accompanied by GBRf Nos. 69004, 66786 *Cambridge University Railway Club* and No. 57310, the latter repainted into GBRf livery (RE336) leaving UK Rail Leasing, Loughborough for Leicester. No. 69011 operated its first unit move on April 17, taking South Western Railway electric multiple unit No. 701008 from Worskop to Derby Litchurch Lane. GBRf No. 69002 *Bob Tiller CM&EE* handled the 4Z14 12.53 Ipswich Yard-Peterborough North Yard on April 12, with FEAs while early that morning GBRf No. 69008 *Richard Howe* left Leicester heading for a weekend on a variety of trains at Peak Rail, Matlock. GBRf Nos. 69006 *Pathfinder Railtours Peter Watts 50 Years Service 1973-2023* and 66797 'top and tailed' the 6E85 08.15 Middleton Towers-Barnby Dun on April 15, as did Nos. 69001

Mayflower and 69002 on April 22. An odd job befell No. 69004 on April 16, when collecting stored hoppers to form the 4E86 13.58 Ratcliffe Power Station-Wrenthorpe.

CLASS 73

GB Railfreight Nos. 73212 *Stephen Eaves* and 73202 moved deicing units and two ploughs on the 6Y65 13.32 Eastleigh Yard-Tonbridge West Yard on April 2, and passed Orpington on April 16, running light between the same two points. GBRf No. 73213 *Rhodalyn* was also noted at Orpington that day on its way to Kensington Olympia and Willesden South West Sidings returning to Tonbridge in mid-afternoon. April 17 found GBRf Nos. 73109 *Battle of Britain 80th Anniversary* and 73119 *Paul Taylor* in charge of the 6Y12 13.23 Tonbridge-Hoo Junction with four KFA wagons passing Paddock Wood at 13.35 while GBRf Nos. 73201 *Broadlands* and 73136 *Mhairi* left Totton Yard with a deicing train bound for Tonbridge via Virginia Water, Richmond and Denmark Hill.

CLASS 90

A Steam Dreams tour running as the 1Z90 08.15 London King's Cross-Newcastle on April 6, was hauled by Locomotive Services Group No. 90001 *Royal Scot* with No. D1924 (47810)

Still carrying Caledonian Sleeper livery from its days hired to CS, West Coast Railways No. 86401 *Mons Meg* leads WCR No. 47815 *Great Western* away from Crewe on April 26, with the 5Z70 11.00 Carnforth-Rugby Northern Belle empty coaching stock. Martin Turner



Locomotive Services Group No. 90001 Royal Scot passes Yaxley Lode, near Peterborough, on April 6, with the 1Z90 08.15 London King's Cross-Newcastle Statesman Rail charter. LSG No. D1924 (47810) Crewe Diesel Depot was on the rear. The '90' was replaced by No. 60007 Sir Nigel Gresley at Newcastle. Hayden Sheppard



Crewe Diesel Depot at the rear of the train. Gresley A4 Pacific No. 60007 Sir Nigel Gresley powered the return trip still accompanied by No. 47810. No. 90001 began its return journey

from Heaton to Wembley on April 8, but succumbed to a fault at Loversall Carr Junction, Doncaster and was rescued by the Newark-based 'Thunderbird' West Coast Railways No. 47826.

The removal from Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot of long-stored Class 90s began towards the end of April when Nos. 90023/027, 90030/33/38 were

taken away by road for further storage prior to disposal. Meanwhile, Nos. 90018 and 90040 have been acquired by Freightliner and moved to Basford Hall Yard. **B**



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Class 37 to be restored at Ruddington

Heavy Tractor Group to assist in returning former Crewe Heritage Centre resident to service.

No. 37108 has been moved to the Great Central Railway (North) at Ruddington where, in conjunction with the Heavy Tractor Group (HTG), it will be restored to working order. Work on the '37', which had been preserved at Crewe Heritage Centre since 2010, is expected to begin in the next few months.

The locomotive left Crewe Heritage

Centre, where it has recently been repainted into BR green with full yellow ends as No. D6808, on April 24, moving initially to the NEC at Birmingham, where it was displayed at the *Model World Live* exhibition on April 27/28. Sponsorship for its move was provided by model manufacturer Accurascale.

The renovation of No. 37108 has previously been regarded by its owner

as a long-term project, and although work has been carried out at Crewe, it is still in the early stages of restoration and there is still a lot of work to do.

No deadline has been set for its completion, but when it does return to traffic, it will give the combined Great Central Railway a fleet of four Class 37s; No. 37009 is nearing the end of its rebuild at Ruddington, while the HTG's No. 37714 *Cardiff Canton* and pioneer No. D6700, which is on loan from the National Railway Museum to the HTG, are based at Loughborough.

The project to reunify the two halves of the Great Central Railway will create an 18-mile preserved railway with a main line connection. Around £6 million has already been raised and invested, and a design for a new 200 metre 'urban viaduct' has been revealed.

No. 37108, which carried the identity No. 37325 between 1986 and 1989 for use on Ravenscraig steel trains, last ran in 1996. Stopped at Bescot, it was put up for sale by EWS in 1999 and spent the next 10 years at Carnforth before being sold again and moving to Crewe. **B**

COACH NEWS

ARSON ATTACK DESTROYS RUSHDEN MK.1

AN investigation is taking place after a fire destroyed Mk.1 Brake Second Composite (BSK) No. 35073 at the Rushden, Higham and Wellingborough Railway. Based at the line since 1997, the vehicle was not operational.

NORTHAMPTON IRONSTONE RAILWAY ADDITION

AFTER around 20 years in static use at Wynyard Woodland Park in Stockton-on-Tees, Mk.1 Tourist Standard Open No. 4393, latterly part of Chipman's weedkilling train as No. 99018, was moved to the Northampton Ironstone Railway during April.

DIDCOT MK.3 SLEEPER GOES FOR SCRAP

MADE surplus after the arrival of former Caledonian Sleeper No. 10527 in 2020, No. 10509 departed Didcot Railway Centre in April, moving to EMR, Kingsbury for scrap. It had been used to provide volunteer accommodation at Didcot since 1994.

'Teddy Bear' suffers power unit failure

THE return to service of No. D9525 suffered a setback on April 19, when, while some static checks were being undertaken, its Paxman Ventura power unit seized. Regrettably, this means it will be unable to operate at the 14s@60 event at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway on July 25-28.

The Class 14 has, since its acquisition in 2022 by those who maintain No. D9537 at Ecclesbourne,

undergone a power unit strip and rebuild, including the fitting of a replacement crankshaft. The power unit was refitted in May 2023. Various options have been explored to see if the locomotive could be used in July, but none are viable or achievable in the timescale required. The owners now have a plan in place which will see No. D9525 return to traffic in September, by which time No. D9537 will have been stopped.

Taking its place at the 14s@60 gala is No. D9523 from the Wensleydale Railway, and the event organisers have expressed their thanks to the locomotive's owner for making the Class 14 available. This locomotive attended the 50th anniversary celebrations at the East Lancashire Railway, but failed, preventing it from operating for most of the event.

MULTIPLE UNIT DEVELOPMENTS

NEW HOME FOR 3-CIG

AFTER almost seven years at the Spa Valley Railway, blue/grey 3-CIG No. 1497 was being prepared for transfer to a new base at the Lavendar Line in late April.

FILMING JOB FOR '315' CAR

ONE car from No. 315856, owned by the Class 315 Preservation Society, was moved from the Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway to the Dean Forest Railway on April 25, to take part in

a filming contract. Driving Motor Standard Open (DMSO) No. 64571 was due to return to Llanelli in early May.

BUTTERLEY UNITS VANDALISED

THREE Diesel Multiple Units based at Butterley were damaged in two separate attacks in April. On the first occasion, vandals broke into Class 108 car No. 54490. Later in the month, Nos. 141113 and 142011, the latter having only recently having

been repainted in Provincial Services blue, were covered in graffiti on one side.

'108' LEAVES LAVENDAR LINE

PUT up for sale in 2023, Class 108 Driving Trailer Composite Lavatory (DTCL) No. 54279 has been moved to a site near Toprow, a few miles south west of Norwich. It is planned to convert the vehicle into holiday accommodation.



On April 13, a multiple-locomotive cavalcade ran from Rolvenden to Tenterden ahead of the start of that day's operation at the Kent & East Sussex Railway diesel gala. Class 03 No. D2023 leads No. D8568, No. D9504, No. 20087 and visiting No. 37714 *Cardiff Canton* up Tenterden Bank. Neil Walking



GB Railfreight No. 69008 *Richard Howe* (converted from No. 56038) stands at Rowsley on April 13, with No. D1501 (No. 47402) acting as a vacuum brake translator, after arrival with the 15.40 from Matlock. The '69' was attending the joint Peak Rail/Ecclesbourne Valley Railway diesel gala. Andy Flowers

DIESEL DIARY

'Old favourites' return to NYMR

TWO types of locomotive which were resident at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway in the 1980s are set to return to the line for its gala in June. Deltic No. 55009 *Alycidon*, currently disguised as No. 55013 *The Black Watch*, was based on the railway between 1982 and 1990, and will be joined by a

Class 14, No. D9537 from the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway.

Although this 'Teddy Bear' has never previously been on the NYMR, two other examples (Nos. D9520/29) operated on the line from 1981 to 1984. The NYMR's third guest visitor will be No. 45108 from the East Lancashire Railway.

Two Class 50s, Nos. 50008 *Thunderer* and 50021 *Rodney*, are booked to visit the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway on June 20-23, along with a Class 69, courtesy of GB Railfreight. The freight operator is also supplying a '66' for the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway's event in late May.

2024 GALA DATES

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
September 21/22: Midland Railway – Butterley (DMU gala)
September 21/22: Tanfield Railway
October 3-6: Severn Valley Railway
October 5/6: Llangollen Railway (Heritage Railcar weekend)

Baby Deltic project progresses at Barrow Hill

WORK on the re-creation of a Class 23 Baby Deltic at Barrow Hill continues making good progress, although there is still a considerable amount of work to be done.

In recent weeks, work has been undertaken on the cab roofs and the first of the four cab door frame reinforcements has been completed; this is a purely cosmetic job, to ensure that the former Class 37 bodysell replicates a Baby Deltic. The reinforcements were fitted to Baby Deltics and Class 40s, but not '37s'. Fitting of all pipework and cabling, the installation of the air receivers and cab fit-out all still needs to be done.

Simon Hartshorne from the Baby

Deltic Project told *Rail Express* that the two questions most frequently asked are those of the livery and the completion date. The locomotive, to be numbered D5910, will be outshopped in the colour scheme carried by the Baby Deltics when built, this being green with a cream lower bodyside stripe, with a red stripe around the lower nose end. It is too early to provide a date for its completion; in the past, many other restoration/rebuild projects have come up with dates which have proved to be highly inaccurate.

The Baby Deltic power unit was first installed in No. 37372 some 15 years ago, the locomotive initially

being planned for use as a test bed. It was only later, in September 2010, that a decision was made to use the '37' as a donor to create a Baby Deltic, shortening it in three places and mounting it on Class 20 bogies; much other work has also been necessary, including replacement of all the superstructure between both ends, new roofs and designing and installing an adaptor to enable the Class 20 bogies, which have been overhauled, to be used.

A more detailed story of the rebuild can be found in the Baby Deltic Project's updated book 'Baby Deltic: The Rebirth of an Engine', available via www.babydeltic.co.uk

IN BRIEF

WORK BEGINS ON WARCOP '37'

THE restoration of No. 37042 at the Eden Valley Railway has begun, with an examination of many parts taking place over the past few months. The power unit, which last ran over 15 years ago, has successfully been barred over, and the brake cylinders are receiving attention. The 'A' side water pump was found to be leaking and has been removed for attention.

LARGE LOGO FOR CLASS 50 DUO

HAVING carried GB Railfreight livery since March 2019, the Class 50 Alliance's Nos. 50007 *Hercules* and 50049 *Defiance* are to be repainted into large logo blue after their appearance on Pathfinder's 'Mazey Day Excursion' on June 29. In the case of No. 50007, it last carried large logo colours more than 30 years ago, being repainted into Brunswick Green in February 1984; it ran in large logo livery for less than a year.

CLASS 56 SALE POSTPONED

THE planned sale of the Class 56 Group's No. 56301 to Cappagh/DC Rail, which was due to take place on April 1, has been delayed. The sale was subject to the locomotive being operational, but it has been out of service since it failed at Water Orton on January 12. The '56' is now at Loughborough pending engine repairs, and discussions have taken place with DC Rail to delay the sale until the '56' is back in traffic.

'CHOPPER' TO VISIT GREAT CENTRAL

THE Class 20 Locomotive Society's No. D8001 (20001), currently located at the Epping Ongar Railway, is to pay an extended visit to the Great Central Railway for the 2024 season. It is planned to be used on an English Electric running day on July 12 (which will also see four other locomotives in action) and at the line's autumn gala on September 6-8. The line is also planning a Class 31 mileage day on June 7, offering over 90 miles of haulage behind No. 31108, and a Sulzer running day on August 18.

DEPG HYMEK ON TEST

HAVING undergone three days of testing between April 9 and 11, on the West Somerset Railway, during which time the only fault was a split radiator element gasket, the Diesel & Electric Preservation Group's No. D7017 has been declared fit for service.

'ED' INTO SERVICE AT EAST KENT

FORMER Eurostar 'ED' No. 73130 made its first public passenger workings at the East Kent Railway on April 28. It is due to remain on the line until at least March 2025.

DB Cargo UK completes first BYA slab carrier conversions

The latest modified 'Nissen Hut' steel carriers are for carrying slab from Port Talbot.

DB Cargo UK has released the first examples of its latest BYA rebuilds from its Stoke-on-Trent site, the vehicles being adapted for carrying steel slabs.

This is the second batch of the

characteristic 'Nissen Hut' coil carriers to be reworked for this purpose, following the conversion of 29 wagons in 2021-2022. These were used on a short term Margam-Llanwern-Portbury flow of export steel bound for the

Netherlands for rolling while Tata Steel took the mills at Port Talbot offline for maintenance. These were further modified as 'Stegosaur' coil carriers later in 2022.

The first of the new 'slab' wagons, No. 966039, left Stoke-on-Trent on April 8. It was followed by Nos. 966133/91/206 on April 15, and Nos. 966001/66/101/4/6 on April 22.

As with the previous conversions, they retain their original TOPS code and number. Meanwhile, donor BYAs have continued to arrive at Stoke, with 13 examples arriving in the last week of March and all of April, as follows: Nos. 966091/246/55 on March 25, 966053/107/86 on April 8, 966099/177/219/300 on April 15, and 966010/76/166 on April 22. **B**

DEVELOPMENTS

■ **DB CARGO UK:** Having arrived at DB Cargo UK's wagon facility at Stoke-on-Trent on March 13, WIA five-unit car carrier No. 85 70 4971 043-0 departed the yard and back into traffic on April 3, swapping with No. 85 70 4971 008-3. The latter completed its scheduled maintenance on April 15, and was sent out on the weekly 6F52 13.01 trip to Warrington Arpley. It was replaced a week later on April 22, by No. 85 70 4971 019-0.

There have also been several sightings of ancient 'Salmon' and 'Osprey' track carrying flat wagons on the trains into the former Marcroft Engineering site, proving that there is life in the fleet yet. On April 3, YWA No. DB 996300 replaced No. 996508 at Stoke. However, this departure proved to be premature and the YWA returned from Arpley on April 15. Also heading to the Stoke workshops in April were KTA 'pocket wagons' Nos. VTG 97715/39, which were moved from Crewe Basford Hall on April 23.

■ **DIRECT RAIL SERVICES:** Wabtec at Doncaster is continuing to cycle through IDA 'Super Low 45' container twins for modification. On April 18, No. 66424 Driver Paul Scrivens 1969-2021 transferred No. 33 70 4901 011-9 as the 4Z70 07.40 Kingmoor-Doncaster, returning north as a 4Z71 13.34 to Motherwell TMD with Nos. 33 70 4901 032/040/065.

■ **GB RAILFREIGHT:** GBRf has leased 12 Dutch-registered timber/pipe wagons (UIC code Rfnos) from Touax Rail for conversion to translator wagons for Siemens Piccadilly Line stock moves from Goole. Numbered 83 84 3523 002/003/005/006/008/010/012/015/016/020/021/050, they join the existing fleet of 30 IWA wagons of identical origin that have been in the UK since 2012 for Colas Rail's Kronospan timber services to Chirk (Nos. 84 3523 011/017/019/022/023/025-049). No. 66748 West Burton 50 moved the 12 vehicles to WH Davis on April 5, as the 6N64 08.40 from Doncaster Down Decoy Yard. The work will include the fitting of a dropped headstock and autocoupler at one end. The existing stanchions will be retained.

■ **NETWORK RAIL:** The period under review was a significant one for the extended JNA-Y 'Hawk' rebuild



After running around its train in Chaddesden Sidings, Colas Railfreight No. 37057 Barbara Arbon powers the 6Z37 10.15 Derby Railway Technical Centre-Toton North Yard at Derby on April 18, hauling five JNA-Y wagons. Martin Turner

programme still underway at Loram Rail's workshops at Derby. Not only were there a large number of arrivals and departures, but there appeared to be a change in traction provider in the third week of April as Loram's hired in Class 37/4 made way for Colas Rail motive power.

March 21 also saw only the second use of a Europhoenix-owned locomotive on these trains with the deployment of No. 37800 Andromeda (part of the Rail Operations Group fleet) to work light from Chaddesden to collect MRA donors Nos. 501312/32/74-6. It returned to Derby as the 6Z38 18.30 from Toton North Yard. No. 37418 An Comunn Gaidhealach was back leading five days later on March 26, to move an impressive 13 JNA-Y boxes (Nos. 81 70 5831 176/239-250) as the 6Z37 09.00 Derby-Toton via Chaddesden. There was an identical 6Z37 09.00 to Chaddesden on April 5, again with No. 37418 in charge, albeit with just four 'Hawks' in tow, Nos. 81 70 5831 251-254. After dropping the wagons off it ran light to Toton to pick up MRA side tippers Nos. 501309/29/65-7, heading back under a 6Z38 10.43 headcode to the former Railway Technical Centre site.

It was all change at the front on April 18, as Colas Rail's No. 37057 Barbara Arbon, only the fifth Class 37 to work these trains, was tasked with the 6Z37 10.15 Derby to Toton North Yard comprised of Nos. 81 70 5831 257-259. These will be the last JNA-Y in this series, future rebuilds will be numbered upwards from 81 70 5830 251. The split headcode Class 37/0 returned the same day with MRAs Nos. 501311/31/71-3 as a 6Z38 12.27 to Derby.

■ **PRESERVATION:** Following the news of MHA 'Coalfish' No. 394001 being saved by the National Wagon Preservation Group (RE336), the Churnet Valley Railway has purchased Nos. 394296/558/684 and 396071. They arrived at the line in mid-March and will be used for similar duties to their previous life with EWS/DBC. Meanwhile, Nos. 394094/780 have been moved to Wishaw for storage but are eventually bound for a new life as barrier wagons at Wolverton Works. Finally, ex-Balfour Beatty SPA No. 460335, which was acquired last year by James Hartley and Kieran Fallows, finally moved from Sandiacre to its new home at Wirksworth on

the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway on April 17.

■ **DISPOSALS:** BAA steel carriers and their derivatives have been in the firing line in the last month or so, with another 11 examples being sent for scrap. On March 26, a train ran from Milford West Sidings to CF Booth, Rotherham, comprising of BZA coil conversions Nos. 900048/87/106/16/229/38/67/70/90 and BTA pipe carrier No. 950187. The following day, BAA Nos. 900150/98 were part of a trip from Newport Alexandra Dock Jn to Sims Newport for cutting. That train also included BBA No. 910395, MHA Nos. 395065/79/148/338 and SPA No. 460373/587/797, 461015.

Also transferred to Sims in South Wales, albeit by road, was DB Cargo prototype CGA biomass wagon No. 310604, converted from an HTA in 2014. This had been stored at DB's maintenance facility at Stoke since March 2016. Four other wagons departed the Stoke site by road during the month, OBA No. 110375, HKA No. 300681, BEA No. 950599 and YWA No. 996143. All were sent to EMR Liverpool for their appointment with the gas axe.

TfL finances still affecting maintenance and renewals

Transport for London's continued financial concerns mean difficult decisions are required.

DIFFICULT decisions regarding fleet maintenance and infrastructure renewals based on cost continue to be made by Transport for London, despite an announcement last December that it would successfully balance its 2023/24 budget.

One example is the London Underground S-Stock fleet, used across the sub-surface railway. The S7 fleet, formed of seven cars, is used on the Circle, District and Hammersmith & City Lines, while the S8 fleet, formed of eight cars, is used solely on the Metropolitan Line.

The S8s were delivered first, entering passenger service in July 2010, with the initial S7s introduced on the District Line, just under two years later in June 2012. On average, the S7 units are approximately three to four years younger than the S8 trains, which is reflected in failure rates, with S7 units experiencing approximately 10-15% fewer failures.

Being so similar, the fleets have very similar maintenance regimes, based upon the distance units have travelled. By the end of 2023, the ongoing overhaul programme of the S8s was nearing the completion. Most of the work has focused upon overhauling the bogies (wheels, bearings and axles) and the air system. However, it has been discovered that components on the S7s have been wearing at slightly different rates, suggesting that there are subtle differences in their day-to-day operation and interaction with infrastructure.

Yet, instead of continuing with the overhaul programme on the shorter S-Stock variety as planned, page 49 of the Investment programme report Quarter 3 2023/24, announced: "preparations continue to start the overhaul of the S7 fleet (Circle, District

and Hammersmith & City lines) but later than previously planned (now 2025/26) and at a reduced rate of one train per period due to financial constraints."

Fast forward four months and having reviewed its 2024/25 priorities and budget allocations, TfL has reversed this decision.

Having achieved a budget surplus of £79 million in 2023/24, TfL has been presenting itself as being fiscally responsible. The imposed TfL Independent Review, a condition of the first Covid-19 pandemic bailout, completed in December 2020 and quietly published late the following year, acknowledged that: "TfL is much more reliant on passenger income than comparable transport authorities."

Not finding any irresponsible spending, the report suggested options that TfL should consider to achieve long-term financial sustainability, given it was struggling with a £2.2 billion annual funding gap. The options discussed included increasing taxation upon motorists (e.g. ULEZ expansion to the North and South-Circular), setting VAT or a 'sales tax' and/or increases in Business Rates or Council Tax, the authors describing the latter as being "not fit for purpose".

The TfL independent review said: "failing to address this gap will mean that both the condition of London's core transport network will deteriorate, and that TfL will be unable to deliver planned wider enhancements."

Meanwhile, TfL has an obligation to schedule overhauls to maintain asset performance and safety. The recent issues impacting the Central Line 92 Tube Stock being a prime example, where issues with DC Motors have resulted in multiple trains being withdrawn from service, reducing passenger services.



A trailer vehicle from S8 unit No. 21021/22 sits on temporary stands next to its wheelsets, which have been removed during an early maintenance programme at Neasden Dept on August 13, 2013. Note the A-Stock Rail Adhesion Train in the distance, which was retired in 2017. Christopher Westcott

TfL has already estimated that the fiscal impact of the pandemic has resulted in a backlog of asset renewal that will need "five to ten years of sustained asset investment" alongside new requirements that arise year-on-year.

Consequently, projects across fleet, track and stations are regularly

reviewed and prioritised, referring to the latest asset data and risk assessments. Focussing principally upon safety, with elements of unreliability creeping in, for examples the Central Line, TfL is clearly needing to review and change its priorities, ensuring that reliable services across the SSR is maintained in the short, medium, and long term. ■

Khan re-elected as Mayor of London for a third-term

SADIQ Khan won an unprecedented third term as London mayor on May 2.

Campaigning has been typically negative with the distance between the Conservative and Labour candidates being greater than the first round of the 2021 election. Mr Khan received 43.8% of the vote in 2024, compared to 40% in 2021.

Whilst this win was never as significant as initially reported during early voter indicators, it came despite the often-questionable claims and campaigning by the Conservative candidate. Examples include Susan Hall's claim, initially on LBC Radio,

that her wallet and Oyster card had been stolen on a London Underground service, insinuating that crime was rife in London. Not only was her card returned, but also the cash contained in the wallet. Then despite the mayor stating that pay-per-mile would never be introduced within the M25 area whilst London mayor, Conservative party supporters distributed bright yellow leaflets entitled 'Driving Charge Notice' and 'Do not ignore' across the capital, suggesting that drivers were to be charged for driving. This resulted in formal complaints by the Labour party to the Crown Prosecution Service.

Of relevance, a London Assembly Transport Committee report, formed by a cross-party group, called 'Future Road User Charging in London' published in March 2024, included evidence from industry experts, even stating that effective pay-per-mile smart technology does not even currently exist.

Arguably the most satirical prospective mayoral candidate was Count Binface, although this was debateable given the Reclaim Party's candidate, Laurence Fox, failed to submit his electoral paperwork correctly, excluding himself from

the entire democratic process.

The Independent candidate, Count Binface, had pledged to rename Underground lines, in the same manner that London Overground routes had been rebranded. Suggestions included, the Bin Line, Punch Line, Dead Line, Vas-e-Line, Masco-Line, with the most crowded being called the Bread Line!

With an imminent General Election due, no later than January 2025, current polling suggests a Labour government. Might this suggest that Transport for London is less likely to be used as a political football?

Concern for future of through trains between Dublin and Rosslare Europort line stations

DART trains could replace through services on Dublin-Rosslare route.

THE National Transport Authority (NTA), which oversees public transport in the Republic of Ireland, is studying various options in regard to the future of through services on the Dublin Connolly to Rosslare Europort line.

One option being considered is to use DART trains between Connolly and Greystones or Wicklow, when the latter is served by Battery-Electric Multiple Units (BEMUs) currently being built by Alstom, with diesel multiple units being used to work connecting

services to/from Gorey, Wexford and Rosslare Europort.

Since its introduction in 1984, the DART system has received priority from the authorities over other services and its intensive all stops timetable and slow schedules hinders progress for

Intercity trains and also reduces the number of paths available.

Critics of the plan include lobby groups South East on Track and Rail Users Ireland who have said that should it be implemented it will relegate the Rosslare route to the level of a dysfunctional secondary line when the focus should be on promoting it. **B**

IARNRÓD ÉIREANN (IE)/ IRISH RAIL

■ TRAFFIC AND TRACTION:

Locomotives rostered for freight duties continued to be swapped between various flows but with members of the 201 Class normally limited to hauling IWT container trains. Locomotive variety on the Ballina to Dublin Port IWT service continued to be of interest with Nos. 072, 074, 087, 088, 215, 225 and 227 each being noted during the period under review. The use of No. 227 on the traffic was short-lived, as after a brief period the locomotive was swapped with No. 225 on March 27. Loadings on the IWT trains continued to be very good with only a small number having space to spare. Tank containers and boxes of varying sizes and liveries usually made for an interesting and colourful consist. The Belview to Ballina XPO container traffic has been dominated by 071 Class locomotives with Nos. 072, 074 and 088 each being noted. The inconsistent loadings on this twice-weekly flow was underlined in early April as the Belview to Ballina train on April 1, had only two loaded wagons, while the return working the following day had 12 loaded.

No. 074 provided traction for both trains. Timber traffic from Ballina/Westport to Waterford continued to be consistent with Nos. 074 and 078

noted. No. 082 transferred ICR diesel multiple unit intermediate cars Nos. 22446 and 22449 from Inchicore to Heuston valeting shed on March 28. No. 086 was noted on a low-loader at Inchicore Works on April 3, having been brought in for unspecified repairs.

No. 215 was turned on April 5, using the Kilkenny/Lavistown triangle, in order to have its larger and quieter No. 1 cab positioned correctly for operation with Mk.4 push-pull sets, thus observing a long-standing agreement between drivers and management. In the event No. 215 was rostered for freight duties the next day and hauled a Dublin Port-Ballina IWT service.

On April 6, Storm Kathleen made landfall with 70mph-plus winds causing widespread damage and disruption to transport. Services were suspended in both directions on the Heuston to Cork mainline after a fallen tree blocked the line at Monasterevan. It was reported that the late-running 08.00 Heuston-Cork terminated at Mallow, with the return 11.25 ex-Cork started from there with passengers accommodated on another service. Fallen trees caused problems elsewhere with services on the M3 Parkway branch temporarily suspended, while the same problem affected the Heuston to Galway route,

and on the Sligo line due to a blockage between Enfield and Killucan. Staff were assigned to various locations to clear debris to enable services to resume as soon as possible. GM No. 075 was in charge of a North Wall-Portlaoise loaded rail train on April 10.

On April 15, No. 075 hauled 12 empty Tara wagons from North Wall that were destined for Limerick. However, the train recessed at Ballybrophy but later continued to its destination the next day. An ICR diesel multiple unit was diagrammed to work the 07.35 Dublin Connolly-Lanyon Place and 10.35 return from April 15, for two weeks due to the usual locomotive-hauled train being used for driver training purposes. Six-car unit No. 22x37 formed these services on April 15, plus the 13.20 ex-Connolly because the locomotive-hauled train was unavailable. No. 22x37 was again on Enterprise duties on April 18. Through services had resumed on the Limerick-Athenry line by April 21, after floodwater had receded at Ballycar. The sold out Railway Preservation Society of Ireland (RPSI) 'Sea Breeze' railtour on April 21, from Dublin Connolly to Wexford and Rosslare Europort was cut short on the outbound run at Rathdrum after a lineside fire was reported between

Bray and Greystones. GM No. 082 ran light to Rathdrum from Connolly to where it returned hauling former British Rail van No. 3173, six Cravens coaches and steam locomotive No. 131.

■ **NEWS:** Boliden, the owner of Tara Mines, Navan, and trade unions, have reached agreement to a phased reopening of the mine later this year. As rail is the preferred choice for transporting the ore to Alexandra Road, Dublin Port for export, it is anticipated that this flow will recommence shortly after mining operations restart.

Fourteen bridge strikes were reported during the first quarter of 2024 (January-March) with Laytown and Portlaoise being hotspots. No serious damage or injuries were reported but train services suffered disruption. A 2600 Class diesel multiple unit has been reliveried at Inchicore back into the original black, orange and white 'Arrow' livery that the class sported when new in 1994. The 30th anniversary of the introduction of the 2600 Class fleet is to be marked by special events including a railtour. Construction of the new DART station at Woodbrook between Shankill and Bray is continuing.



◀ On April 15, No. 075 hauled 12 empty Tara wagons from North Wall destined for Limerick. However, the train recessed at Ballybrophy when one of the wagons suffered problems with its brakes but later continued to its destination the following day. On April 16, the train waits at Ballybrophy as No. 229 passes with a Mk.4 set on the 1300 Dublin-Cork. Finbarr O'Neill

NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS (NIR)

■ **TRAFFIC AND TRACTION:** On March 22, GM No. 8113 ran light engine to Ballymena Infrastructure Depot from Belfast York Road to where it returned later the same day hauling a ballast hopper wagon that required wheel reprofiling. The trip ended a significant period of inactivity for the locomotive, but Nos. 8111 and 8112 remained inactive. The popular Belfast Lanyon Place-Portrush 'Family Trains', which serve selected stations, ran again this year on Easter Monday and Tuesday, April 1 and 2. Diesel multiple unit Nos. 4010 and 4011 worked the 09.50 ex-Lanyon Place and 18.30 return on April 1. Two six-car 4000 Class DMUs were unavailable during the period under review which saw the use of three-car units on the Londonderry line as well as peak-hour services on the Larne line that normally merit a six-car unit.

On April 11, Nos. 4011 and 3016/3018 were noted on Londonderry line services. One of the unserviceable units, No. 4015, which was sidelined following a fire onboard while working the 15.38 Londonderry to Belfast Great Victoria Street (GVS) on January 22, (RE335) incurred more extensive damage than was initially known. A driveshaft on car No. 4415 broke with debris causing damage to intermediate cars Nos. 4715 and 4815, including the fuel tank on the latter being punctured, causing the fire which was extinguished by the driver. No staff or passengers were

injured. Iarnród Éireann GM No. 207 and Mk.3/De Dietrich set Driving Brake First Open (DBFO) No. 9001 ran empty from Lanyon Place to York Road for attention on April 11, after working the 09.30 from Dublin Connolly. A pair of three-car units was reported to have been used for the return service, 12.35 ex-Lanyon Place.

■ **INFRASTRUCTURE:** The centenary of the opening of the Bann Bridge at Coleraine by the LMS (Northern Counties Committee) was marked by Translink on March 22, with a film of the structure broadcast on the media and special news reports. Total possessions were imposed in the Belfast Lanyon Place Lisburn/Portadown corridor (including Great Victoria Street [GVS]) during the period March 30 to April 7 to facilitate trackwork, signalling renewals and platform extensions. The first new pointwork on the existing down line between Central Junction and Westlink Junction has now been installed. This facing turnout will connect into the throat of the new Belfast Grand Central Station when preparatory formation work in that area is completed. It will form part of a third line and both existing up and down lines between these two junctions have also been partially relaid. At Adelaide Halt both up and down concrete platform extensions at the Lisburn end have been installed while the new down platform at

Derriaghy was opened on March 25, with the new extension to the up platform also opened. The former down platform has been demolished. At Lisburn the new points and crossings and signalling at the Portadown end have been commissioned with the partially relayed down loop platform line (P3) now able to accommodate six-car trains, while the previously underused down outer loop has been partially relayed and upgraded and signalled for bi-directional running, meaning that all four through lines at Lisburn now feature this operational asset. While Platform 3 and the mainline/branch turnouts and crossovers are restricted to 15mph or 25mph, the outer loop is restricted to 5mph. While a short section of the Antrim branch has been relaid and the signals at Lisburn that apply to running to and from it have been commissioned, the signal heads of those in the Knockmore area of the branch remain covered and the temporary buffer stop on the curve there has been removed. Elsewhere, a new LED banner repeater signal on the up line at Lambeg displays a totally green background when the signal is "off".

■ **NEWS:** On April 16, the Department for Infrastructure of the Northern Ireland Assembly stated that the cost of building Belfast Grand Central station had been revised to €340 million. The reason for the substantial

increase, from the original €200m when the project was approved in 2020, was given as inflation and cost of materials. The project will be completed, however, with the Northern Ireland Executive reporting a significant shortfall in its budget, it is anticipated that future spending on public transport may be adversely affected. Two blockades have been planned for 2024 in connection with the closure of Great Victoria Street station (GVS) and the commissioning later of Belfast Grand Central station and associated trackwork and signalling. The first blockade is from May 11 to July 5, during which GVS will close and Londonderry, Bangor and Larne line trains will start from and terminate at Lanyon Place. The second will be from July 6 to August 12 when a total possession of the Lanyon Place to Lisburn section will be in force. Bustraitment will be in operation with "Enterprise" trains running between Portadown and Connolly.

■ **CROSS BORDER:** It was announced on April 9, that the Northern Ireland Executive and Irish government had received European Union funding of €141.9 million (€165m) for the acquisition of eight new trains for the 'Enterprise' service. The total value of the contract is €565,423,800 (RE331). It is anticipated that the successful bidder for the trains will be announced later this year.



Two Waterford line trains cross at Kilkenny on March 20. On the left, the 18.25 Waterford-Dublin arrives as the 17.35 Dublin-Waterford waits for the road back to Lavistown Junction. Finbarr O'Neill

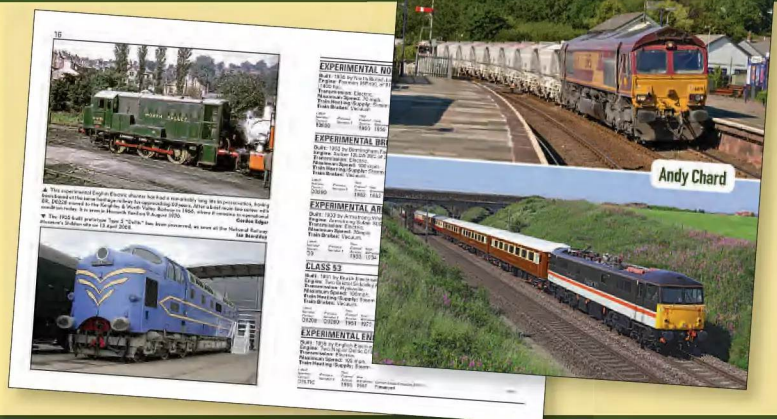
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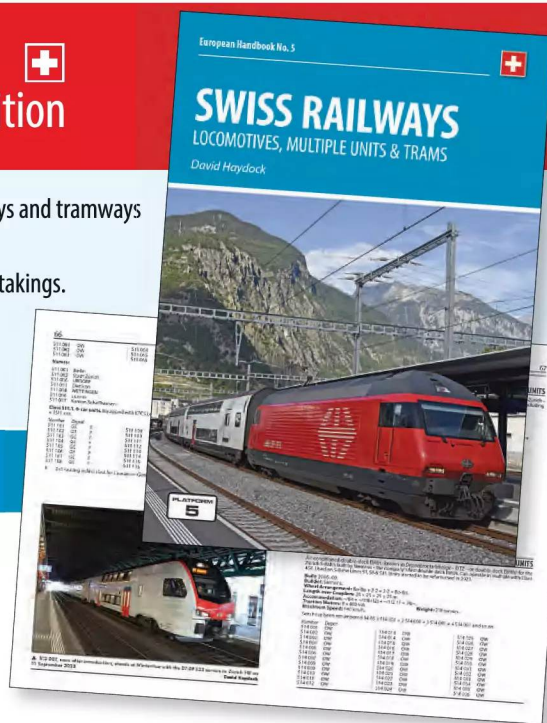
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No. 242
DIESEL AND
ELECTRIC ERA
MODELLING

New gen Brush Type 4

Heljan's retooled Class 47 reviewed



5 Newsdesk: New Mk.1 coaches from Bachmann

A BSO, FK and catering car are added to the Bachmann 'OO' gauge coaching stock range. South West Railway Class 450s are imminent in 'N' gauge and Class 25s in 'OO'. IRM builds on its 'Project Bulleid' wagon collection with bulk grain wagons, and a WIA car carrier is announced too.

6 Newsdesk: New 'OO' gauge Class 26s edge closer

Livery samples indicate that the new Heljan Class 26 models are not far off. In 'O' gauge, liveries for the forthcoming Class 153s are revealed.

10 Review: Brush Type 4 brought up-to-date

The new generation 'OO' gauge Class 47 from Heljan is given a thorough examination and test in a comprehensive review.

14 Review: LMS diesel prototypes in 'N'

Graham Farish has produced the LMS 'twins' in several formats and liveries. No. 10001 is subject to our usual rigorous review process.

18 Review: Loco-hauled legends

The Accurascale Mk.2b coaches are examined and checked for accuracy. Were they worth the wait?

22 Review: Table top power cars

'TT:120' HSTs have emerged from Hornby with both power cars and trailers becoming widely available. How well do the new models measure up?

29 Modelling: New models on the workbench

Two recently released 'OO' gauge models are converted to 'EM' gauge. The techniques and pitfalls are described in detail along with the results.

33 D&E Files: Mk.2b coaches in traffic

A cross-section of the full-size coaches including No. 5449, one of the TSOs modelled by Accurascale.

RAIL EXPRESS MODELLER EDITOR

Nigel Burkin

REMeditor@mortons.co.uk



ALL NEW CLASS 25s

in OO Scale from Bachmann Branchline



These brand new models of the Class 25 Diesel Locomotive will be arriving this Summer, and with the launch range comprising a varied selection of models, there's something for everyone! Designed from the rails up, these new models depict the Class 25/1, 25/2 and 25/3 sub-classes, capturing each of their distinguishing details along with the many variations seen on the real locomotives during their careers.



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32-342SFX - Class 25/2
D7525 BR Two-Tone Green
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D7660 BR Blue (Small Yellow Panels)

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- Comprehensive lighting functions
- Enhancing the model with redesigned axle boxes for the smoothest running
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- Revised lighting to give access to day, night and yard mode under DCC
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- Cab access step and handrails have been moved from body mount to chassis mount to allow for breakage free access to chassis
- Cab Front Handrails now have the option of 5 point or 7 point mounting with correct round profile handrail mounts
- And other typical Accurascale features.

www.accurascale.com

Bachmann expands its Mk.1 coach range

THREE brand-new models of BR Mk.1 coaching stock not previously produced under the Branchlines label, have been announced by Bachmann for release this summer. They include Diagram 183 Brake Second Open (BSO) and Diagram 73 First Open (FO). The third is Diagram 24 Restaurant Buffet cars (RB) which were the most numerous of the various Mk.1 catering vehicles.

Prototype models were revealed in April showing a difference in the design of the coaches compared to earlier Bachmann Branchlines Mk.1 stock. The fixing method for the separate roof moulding does not have the tab above the gangways and the bodyside appears to not use the modular side assembly system. Further, the bogies have been retooled for the same style of stub axle current collection as employed in its EMU range.

The adjacent pictures of the new models show the use of numerous small fittings for underframe equipment, particularly on the RB stock. Wire is used extensively for hand rails and filler pipes, whilst the interiors are also modelled along with flush fitting glazing. Liveries include BR maroon, crimson and cream along with regional liveries. Each coach is priced at £67.95.



↑ Mk.1 BSO coach to Diagram 183 is one of three brand-new Mk.1 coach models which will suit layouts dating from 1955.

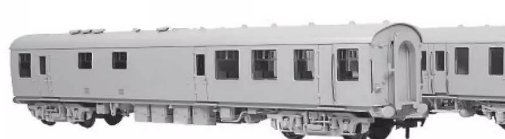


↑ Diagram 73 FO coaches were built between 1953 and 1963 and outshopped in a variety of early BR liveries along with BR maroon which are included in the planned summer releases.

→ The third rail modelling community will welcome the new Graham Farish Class 450 dressed in SWR livery which sits well on the trains as demonstrated by No. 450060.

Class 450 in 'N'

A popular move will be the adaptation of the Graham Farish Class 350 looking to produce the Class 450 'Desiro'.



↑ A common catering car was the Diagram 24 RB which saw service in to the BR sector era making it a useful coach for all manner of services from 1960s through to heritage use.



Bachmann has included South West Railway No. 450036 in the range for release in the summer. The Class 350 will also be produced in London North Western colours for the first time too, with prices set at £399.95.

Heavy lifting from EFE Rail

Brand-new tooling for the Plasser 12t mobile crane has been prepared with

three different models set for release in the summer. Two are finished in BR yellow, whilst the third is adorned in Javis/Fastline maroon. All three models are unpowered, the intention is to see them posed in engineers' yards or in the formation of infrastructure trains. Prices are set at £89.95 for all three liveries. www.bachmann.co.uk

PROJECT BULLEID: GRAINS FOR CIÉ

THE latest models to be announced under Irish Railway Models 'Project Bulleid' is the Corás Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) 12 ton bulk grain wagons. They were constructed on the standard 10-foot wheelbase triangulated underframe design developed by Bulleid which forms the back bone of the IRM project to cover numerous 1950s freight vehicles.

The bulk grain wagons were similar to the H Vans which were under construction at Inchicore works around the same time. Adaptation for grain traffic included roof hatches, ladders and walkways, all of which are modelled in etched metal.

The underframe floor is composed of cast metal with plastic fittings for the solebars and axleguards, providing the model with



Three packs of three individually numbered wagons are being produced with advance orders being accepted on the IRM web site. They are an important part of the 1950s to 1970s railway history of Ireland.

integral weight. The underframe is also fitted with a discharge chute of moulded plastic and turned metal.

IRM also points out that a number of the similar H Vans were converted to bulk grain wagons.

They saw service for 20 years, working in mixed freights transporting grain from numerous loading points until the mid-1970s when they were retired following the collapse of grain traffic. The model is being produced in three packs of three individually numbered and finished models for €89.95. Delivery is set for late 2024, all being well with livery samples and shipping.

www.irishrailwaymodels.com

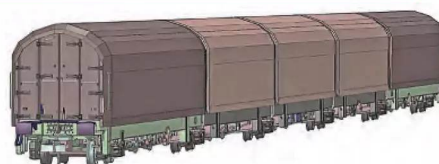


The underframe is built up around a cast metal floor which is fitted out with plastic solebars, axleguards and discharge chute. Metal is used for the buffers, wheels and pin point axle bearings.

WIA FOR 'OO' AND 'N' GAUGE BY REVOLUTION TRAINS

→ An exciting announcement for the Railfreight era and Privatisation railway modellers are the covered five-unit WIA car carriers (Sefoors)

of which 60 were constructed in 1994 by Arbel-Fauvet. Revolution reports that the CAD work for new models has been completed and pre-orders are being sought.



Tooling for the WIAs in both scales will commence once sufficient orders have been received by Revolution Trains. Few details about the model's specification or pricing was available at the time of writing. One unit of WIA No. 85 70 497 1012-5 was recorded at Oxford Hinksey Yard on September 19, 2006. The wagons are characterised by their large light blue covers which hides the internal structure of the wagons. www.revolutiontrains.com

Heljan's retooled Class 26s edge closer

LIVERY samples of the forthcoming reworked 'OO' gauge Class 26 indicate that the wait for the improved model is nearing an end. The new model replaces the original Heljan model which had fallen behind in terms of technology and detail compared to recent Heljan releases.

A retooled bodysell with a removable roof hatch for decoder installation is fitted to a new chassis with detail appropriate to the model's era and livery.

Heljan promises several body styles including the as-built type with tablet catchers along with the unrefurbished locomotive style with plated catcher recess. There will also be refurbished Class 26s with the underframe cradle and air tank assembly. Differences in cab window arrangements is also present in the range of models.

The internal circuit board is also an improvement with built-in speaker for DCC sound along with LED lighting

circuits for the marker and tail-lights connected to a 21-pin interface. Running lights also include working twin headlights fitted to the Far North Line version.

It is an exciting selection of new models with at least one version meeting the needs of most ScR modellers from the introduction of the locomotives in Scotland through to the Railfreight sectors.

Delivery is expected in the third quarter of 2024 and prices for DCC-ready versions start at £209. www.heljan.co.uk



No. D5333 is fitted with train reporting discs and tablet catcher apparatus. All of the Class 26 models are fitted with cab and engine room illumination.



Railfreight No. 26038 is finished in Railfreight red stripe livery with features to match including the underframe air tank frame, revised cab windows and flush front.



Another late-life version of the model is finished in engineers' yellow and grey livery as No. 26026. The models are fitted with a removable roof hatch and digital sound speakers as standard.

COLOURS FOR O GAUGE 'DOGBOXES'

LIVERIES for the forthcoming 'O' gauge Class 153 have been revealed by Heljan. Five general release models together with a Gaugemaster Collection special edition are set for release in 2025. Classic Regional Railways scheme tops the list, followed by five Privatisation liveries including the colourful Stagecoach East Midlands Trains and London Midland versions, together with Transport for Wales, Northern and Great Western. All of the models will be offered in DCC-ready and sound versions with prices starting at £399.

The models come fully loaded with features including eight light

functions which can be individually controlled including interior and cab lighting; door lock lights and even illuminated door buttons. BSI auto couplings are fitted which can be removed should an alternative system be required. The mechanism is fitted to a power bogie which will be carefully concealed to allow the passenger saloon to be modelled.

The next step is factory decorated samples which will be sent to Heljan for examination in the summer. All being well with samples, the models should be produced in time for a Q1 2025 delivery.

www.heljan.co.uk



Colourful 'Dogboxes' in 'O' gauge have been unveiled by Heljan. The six liveries cover popular train operating company liveries, together with original Regional Railways livery.

COOL CLASS 88



It's a chilly outlook for the Rails of Sheffield special edition model of No. 88010 *Aurora* which is adorned in a special refrigerated rail livery.

RAILS of Sheffield recently showcased its special edition 'OO' gauge Class 88 model as No. 88010 *Aurora* in DRS 'Refrigerated Rail... Cool Move' livery, which is applied to the brand-new model being developed by Dapol. It will be available towards the end of 2024 along with No. 88001 *Revolution*;

No. 88003 *Genesis* and No. 88007 *Electra* finished in DRS compass livery.

No. 88010 *Aurora* is available in DCC ready; DCC Fitted and DCC sound onboard. The DCC models are equipped with working pantographs. Prices start at £199.95 for the DCC-ready model. www.railsofshffield.com

NEW HORNBY ARRIVALS



The useful ZBA 21t ballast and spoil wagon returns to the Hornby range. Two models are issued, one in classic engineers' yellow and grey livery with Transrail markings placing it in the post 1994 era. The wagon is numbered as No. DB972154.



The second model is a departmental version of the ZBA which has a patched white and blue livery applied to it. It is based on ZBA No. DB972606 which was preserved on the Spa Valley Railway. Both models are priced at £25.49.



One of Hornby's Ruston & Hornsby 88DS shunters lagged behind the main release of the models and that was the North British Distillery & Co. No. 4 model which is finished in a brightly coloured lined livery. It is priced at £113.99 which is excellent value for money when the complex livery is considered. www.hornby.com



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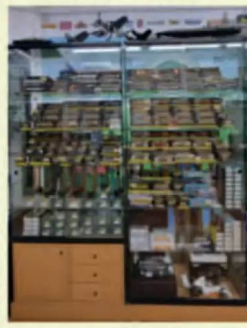
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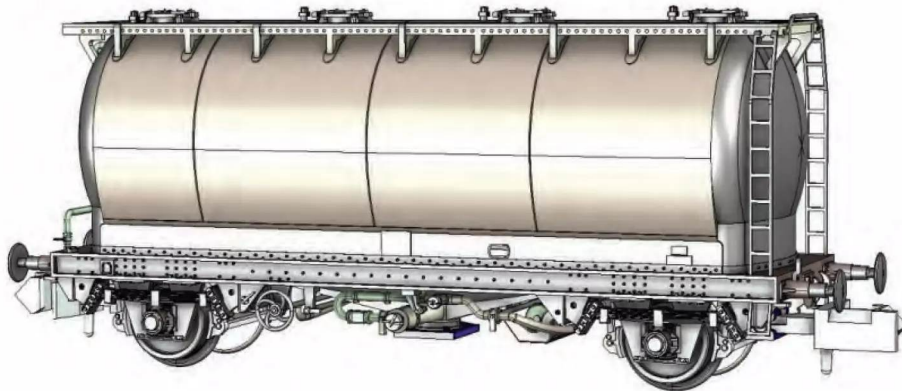
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Heljan's new generation Class 47

Brand-new Class 47 models have arrived from Heljan, initially detailed for early and midlife locomotives. No. 47214 *Tinsley Traction Depot* in late 1980s condition is thoroughly examined.

WHEN the first Heljan Class 47 was produced it was widely welcomed, despite a number of shortcomings in the model. It redeemed itself with good running qualities and with a number of different versions being produced in a departure from the one-size-fits-all approach to modelling of the time. It quickly became a common sight on most D&E layouts.

An over-width bodyside, problems with the metal chassis frame, and other faults such as too-narrow bogies and proportional issues became more apparent as newer models from other manufacturers entered the market. The time was ripe for a retol whilst taking advantage of the excellent and durable drive system.

This review of a model from the first batch of Class 47s covering early- and mid-life locomotives examines whether Heljan has produced a Class 47 for the future. Based on its specification and the design of the tooling which allows many of the variants and era-specific features to

be incorporated in subsequent batches, the model appears to be a step change improvement over the original.

No. 47214 *Tinsley Traction Depot*

The review model represents a mid-life locomotive from the late 1980s, finished in the striking but sadly short-lived Railfreight red stripe livery. The name is appropriate, with No. D1864 being allocated to Tinsley from new in May 1965 and was subsequently allocated to the same depot when named.

It received its No. 47214 TOPS number in 1974 and was painted in Railfreight red stripe livery in 1987, a livery worn by 17 Class 47s and only seven of them Class 47/0s. Nameplates and plaques were applied at a ceremony on September 20, 1987 at Tinsley.

By December 1989, the locomotive had lost both nameplates and Tinsley depot plaques as applied to the model. A trip to Crewe Works for overhaul was not far away where the locomotive would be repainted in Railfreight Distribution livery. It was displayed at the public open day weekend in July 1990, after overhaul, which closes the time slot for this particular model.

A small detail to note is the fitting of the cab radio aerials to the roof of both cabs at some point when this locomotive wore Railfreight red stripe livery.

Standard features

Compared to the original Class 47 model, the new version, described as a new generation Class 47 model, is loaded with new and upgraded features. The electronics have seen

a quantum leap forward in design to include more independently controlled lighting including engine room illumination. Twin speakers are factory installed in DCC sound locomotives, which come with bespoke sound recordings.

The original four axle drive format has been retained with the view that a floating middle axle on both bogies can actually benefit the model's haulage capacity. As seen on the Cavalex Class 56, this view is not unique but potentially controversial.

The model itself is tooled to allow details such as underframe boxes and tanks, headcode panels, radiator grilles and bufferbeams to be changed to suit the livery and number.

Bodyside

Unboxing impressions of the model immediately suggests a Class 47, and in the case of No. 47214, a very neatly presented model with excellent livery colours. Closer examination reveals that the bodyside is not a single piece but has separate cabs with the join along a line behind the cab doors, where a line occurs on the full size locomotive. Modular tooling of this nature is how Heljan has decided to incorporate many of the differences in the class which will be produced in subsequent batches.

It appears to be a very tidy and well assembled model at first inspection, but something is going on around the cab area. Head-on, the headcode box looks to be slightly out, although this is mitigated with a plated one painted yellow on No. 47214 compared to photos of the glass fronted version.

Then it became apparent why some details

➔ Straight from the box:

No. 47214 *Tinsley Traction Depot* dressed in Railfreight red stripe livery which was worn by this locomotive between September 1987 and July 1990, give or take a few days! The model appears to be trim, neat and well finished.

MODEL FEATURES

- Five pole motor and brass flywheels.
- Four axle drive.
- Wiper current collection from eight wheels.
- 21-pin DCC interface.
- See-through roof fan grilles with cosmetic fans.
- Sprung metal buffers with correctly modelled shanks.
- Bogie-mounted NEM coupling pockets.
- Fully detailed bufferbeams and working screw couplings.
- Eight lighting functions including cab and engine room lights.

➔ Bodyside inspection revealed no flaws in the tooling such as sink marks, bowing or distortion along rain gutter lines or in the roof. The neat paint finish partially conceals a touch of clumsy tooling at the bottom edge of all four cab sides where they meet the bufferbeam fairings.



➔ Despite a slightly squared off shape to the cab and too shallow an angle between the front cab windscreens, the model looks like a Class 47 when viewed from normal layout viewing positions.



➔ Head-on, the model appears to taper excessively, causing discrepancy in the cab proportions and consequently, the appearance of smaller details is affected. The model has the correct marker lights fitted to each cab along with the single frame end plate in the bufferbeams.

look too large and the cab front slightly tall. The taper from the bodysides (which are correctly spaced) to the cab front is slightly out, causing the smaller details to appear out of proportion. Further, the cab windows and some other features are too angular when compared to photographs.

This proportional issue is not that apparent until viewing the model head-on and it shows in photographs. Another more obvious and easily identified issue is the engine room roof hatches which are missing important door detail. They are modelled as twin doors rather than four.

The body sides are the correct distance apart, resulting in a correctly profiled roof and shoulders which enjoy beautifully moulded grille detail.

Fine detailing is subtle, with very fine engine room window frames and the famous 'eyebrows' above the cab windows. They are present on the model of No. 47214. Reports of them missing from other models might be due to excessive paint application. Further, the fine rain gutter above the cab windows is sharp and well defined on the review sample.

Underframe and bogies

The inner frame is composed of diecast metal which is the foundation for the drive and underframe fittings. They include battery boxes, tank and pipework detail visible from the side. The plastic parts are well attached to the frame and appear well tooled and accurate when compared to photographs.

The bufferbeams are also neatly fitted to the chassis frame rather than being moulded to the body, with screws being used instead of clips. It has been designed so the supplied miniature snow plough can be attached to the frame rather than the bogies.

It is with the bogies that we encounter another discrepancy and one that occurred on the original Heljan Class 47 model too. It might add to the impression of the model looking too tall when viewed cab-on.

The bogie side frames are plugged into the inner bogie frame in the usual Heljan manner, and this is helpful for detailing and maintenance. However, they are fitted inboard of the bodysides by about 1mm to 2mm too much. The bogie footsteps do not align vertically with the cab doors like the full size locomotives. The cure is simple: shim out the bogies with washers fitted to the mounting spigots and secure the side frames with a spot of glue.

Decoder and electronics

Modellers are enjoying more advanced electronics in new locomotive models of this generation and the Heljan Class 47 is no exception. Comprehensive lighting is fitted which requires a 21-pin decoder with at least eight functions to control cab and engine room lights. It is not as advanced as a recently released Type 5 locomotive, but all of the lighting can be controlled with any decoder type with sufficient function outputs and without any need to do advanced setting of decoder CVs or

Heljan has developed a superb mechanism for its new model which testing has shown to be very smooth and quiet. A five-pole motor and eight powered axles provides good haulage capacity, whilst the new circuit board has provision for digital sound and circuitry for eight lighting functions.



other Heljan models. They are durable and in the case of the final drive gears, wide enough to prevent excessive side play of the powered wheels.

The middle axle of each bogie floats to assist with track imperfections, preventing the outer wheels being lifted from the track. It improves traction in a way and makes the bogie more flexible for track holding. Does it impact on haulage capacity? Does a well-balanced six-axle drive locomotive perform better? Some haulage testing might provide the answer, although other factors such as wheel profile and overall weight may have to be factored in in some manner.

Painting and assembly quality

Comment can only be made on the model on the editorial desk and in the case of No. 47214, the finishing and assembly quality is excellent. The livery finish is almost flawless, including detail painting to the neat cab interiors, cab windows and the bufferbeam fittings too. Printing is sharp, opaque and livery features are correctly located.

Small details are neatly applied, including wire hand rails and the flush

glazing which has little or no edge to it. Glue marks are not found on any fitting on the body or bogies. Modellers modelling conductor rail railways may wish to check clearances on sharper than average curves just in case the full underframe fittings as applied to No. 47214 catches the rail.

Closing notes

Well, it is rare when a brand-new model attracts as many comments on proportions and moulded detail as this one. Yet, there is still something compelling about it. Perhaps the model's neat finish as based on the sample in the photographs helps to conceal some of the proportional issues. They are slight in effect from most viewing angles and some modellers may choose to ignore them in favour of the model's good drive and comprehensive but straightforward electronics.

The illustrated issues could be resolved with some retooling for future batches, given that the cab mouldings are separately applied. The engine compartment roof hatch could also be corrected too. It will be interesting to see where Heljan goes next with its new Class 47. 

 Produced by Heljan A/S
www.heljan.co.uk

 RRP: £249.95

DETAIL EXAMINED ON HELJAN'S NO. 47214



↑ Cab features

Clear flush glazing shows a detailed cab interior with separate seats and control desk details. This view shows the lack of an angle between the windscreen plates.



↑ Bogie drive wheels

Four of the six wheels in each bogie are powered, with the middle axle allowed to 'float'. There are no current collection pick-ups on the centre wheels.



↑ The roof

The roof tooling is neat and has the correct curves along the shoulders between the cab mouldings. Note the style of the engine room hatch doors which are not properly represented. No. 47214 is correctly modelled with plated boiler ports which is correct for the time period represented by the livery. The locomotive was fitted with a universal boiler compartment, although its Stone-Vapour boiler was removed some years before.



← Bufferbeams

Air brake hoses and a vacuum brake pipe are fitted to both bufferbeams, along with working screw couplings.

The bufferbeams are attached to the chassis frame.



→ Underframe fittings

Modular pieces are used to build up the underframe tank and battery box details.



↑ Cooling fan grilles

Serck shutter detail is modelled with some sharp tooling and enhanced with separate wire grab rails. Etched grilles are fitted to the model which allow the cosmetic cooling fans to be seen.



↑ Bogie side frames

A good level of definition is apparent in the moulded side frames which includes good spring detail and brake blocks aligned with the wheels. The vertical position of the bogies relative to the body matches photographs of real Class 47s well.

← Cab fittings

The clear glazing applied to the Heljan Class 47, along with the cab lighting, means that it needed an accurately modelled cab with lots of detail, which was provided by Heljan. Note the cab bulkhead detail which includes printed notices, separately applied seats and driving desk.



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LMS diesel pioneer re-created in 'N'

The famous LMS 'twins' were among the first main line diesels, and signalled the desire by the LMS to transition away from steam traction. The new Graham Farish model will be a delight for early British Railways era modellers.

Model overview

TWO PROTOTYPE 1600hp locomotives were designed for the LMS by English Electric and constructed at Derby Works in 1947 and 1948. Numbered as No. LMS No. 10000 and No. 10001, they became known as the LMS 'twins', although were classified as D16/1.

They were intended as the prototypes for a replacement diesel fleet for LMS main line passenger and freight services, but Nationalisation intervened, with No. 10000 being presented to the press literally weeks before Nationalisation and No. 10001 being completed in July 1948.



Graham Farish steps back to the era of early pioneer diesels with a brand-new 'N' gauge model of the LMS 'twins' No. 10000 and No. 10001, a first for the scale.

The featured model is of No. 10001 finished in BR green livery, although like its sister, it was outshopped in the black and silver LMS scheme but without any markings other than its large cab side numerals. It commenced service on the Midland Region, hauling trains solo and in multiple with its sister locomotive. It should be noted that No. 10001 has some detail differences compared to its older sister.

It was repainted in the short-lived lined BR green around 1955, following overhaul at Derby and two years of trials alongside Southern Region prototypes. It was repainted again, this time in unlined green with the white strip and eventually gained small yellow panels in 1962, the final livery that No. 10001 would wear before withdrawal.

Its sister locomotive was withdrawn completely in 1963 and donated parts to No. 10001 which saw out its final years at Willesden. Sadly, despite efforts to save one locomotive, both were disposed of in 1968.

Bachmann has produced both locomotives before, in 'OO' gauge and now in 'N' gauge under the Graham Farish label for the first time. They are available in several liveries including the black and silver scheme, BR lined green, and the final livery applied to No. 10001. Digital sound versions are also available, which given how long ago these locomotives were withdrawn from service, is a remarkable project to undertake. So how successful has Bachmann been in reproducing the 'twins' in 'N' gauge?

Unboxing impressions

Pioneer diesels often step across the line between steam and diesel designs,



The feature model is of No. 10001 in BR green livery with small yellow panels, the last livery it wore before withdrawal in 1966.

resulting what might seem like quite archaic styles compared to the angular diesel locomotives of today. The 'twins' were streamlined to a certain extent, particularly around the bufferbeams.

The styling from new with silver bogies and other features on a black base livery was designed to be eye-catching. Have the models captured this transition styling? Upon unboxing, it appeared to be so, with the rounded bonnets, tapered cab roofs, rows of rivet heads and the style of the cab windows captured neatly.

In fact, the whole model is a very neat looking product but with the paradox of having the slightly untidy character of a pioneer diesel but modelled with crisp tooling and a smooth, tidy paint finish.

Bodyshell

A single piece bodyshell tooling has been produced which clips firmly to the chassis frame. The quality of detail tooling is noteworthy, with superb definition for the radiator grilles, side doors, roof hatches and around the bonnets. Comment should be made about the moulded fan grille which has depth and shows some fan detail

too. The model's shape has the right proportions including the curves of the bonnets and cab area. It is sharp from cab to cab, remarkably so given the scale.

Integral moulding for detailing not only includes the fan grille, but the cab side hand rails and roof panels. Small components added to the bodyshell are few in number, making it a durable model without the risk of losing small but important details like the front lamp irons and roof-mounted airhorns.

It should be noted that both locomotives saw changes, albeit minor ones during their operational lives. The tiny grab rails later applied to No. 10001 are not shown on the model, for example. There were differences between the two locomotives too, including some bodyside detail such as footstep wells which are present on the model of No. 10000 but not No. 10001 which is correct. The original large radiator grille pattern also appears to have changed at some early point, and an oval hatch on the sides of No. 10000 relating to the train heating steam generator was plated over. Some of these features are modelled on the appropriate Graham Farish models.



Quite a number of curves make up the semi-streamlined face of the 'twins' and they have been replicated beautifully in the model and without any signs of mould lines or other distractions.



Moulded detail is crisp throughout the bodyshell. Noteworthy is the moulded fan grille with integral cooling fan detail.

Bogies and underframe

The bogie side frames are single piece mouldings but with a good level of relief to the detail. They are not built up from layers of detail, the inside faces being flat. The moulded detail is as crisp as that found on the bodysheet and is fitted with a couple of small details including footsteps and sanding pipes. The front of the bogie frame is also modelled including the life guard irons which helps the model's appearance when viewed head-on.

There is more separately fitted detail applied to the underframe, between the bogies. They include brake cylinders and linages along with some of the fish-belly framing.

The underframe sits low on the bogies with a minimal gap between the two. This gives the model an authentic 'heavy' appearance and has been achieved without losing the ability for the bogies to turn freely.

Electronics

Chassis switches are fitted to the circuit board to set lighting configurations for analogue control, with the default position being 'passenger mode'. When

fitted with a NEXT18 decoder, the model has a useful lighting function set-up which has been used in some recent Graham Farish releases including the Class 31 and Class 90.

The running lights can be controlled directionally using the usual function FOF and FOR and will show 'passenger mode' unless chassis switch 3 is changed. However, the running lights can be independently switched off at either end using function buttons F1 and F3. The cab lights are illuminated though function F4.

Digital sound is also provided for with a factory installed speaker and through wiring from the NEXT18 decoder interface. Connections between the body-mounted running lights are through sprung contacts at the leading edge of both ends. Despite the marker lights being tiny, they are clearly seen during operation thanks to some neatly fitted and clear light guides. No sign of light leakage in the cab was observed during tests.

Fit and finish

No one could fault the quality of finish of this model which is as smooth

and sharp as one should expect in 'N' gauge. Assembly of small parts is also neat and without flaws or glue marks. All parts are properly seated and finished in the same paint colours as the main body and underframe moulding. Particular mention has to be made of the engine room windows which are particularly clear and fitted with no edge to the glazing pieces. They show an impression of the engine room. Cab windows are equally clear, although cab detail is a little sparse on this model.

Closing notes

A note about the internal packaging tray is needed in that it is quite a tight fit along the underframe and bogies of the model. Place the model in the tray without due care and the bogie footsteps are likely to become caught on the edge and pinged across the room.

Otherwise, the model is a superb little replica of a fascinating and popular pioneer diesel which will suit transition era modellers well, both for the Midland Region and the Southern Region, the latter for a short time.

MODEL FEATURES

- Finely tooled bodysheet of the correct proportions.
- Couplings fitted to the bogie frames.
- Sophisticated LED cab and running lights.
- NEXT18 decoder socket.
- Built-in sugar cube speaker.
- Sprung contacts between body and main circuit boards.
- All wheel drive and current collection.
- Modelled engine room detail.

The real locomotives enjoyed quite a long operating history for non-standard prototype locomotives. They also racked up some considerable mileage between them on both freight and passenger service, making them particularly attractive and hopefully a commercial success. 

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

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↑ Cab shape

The cab is nicely proportioned with window positions matching what few photographic references could be found. The cab side hand rails are moulded and neatly picked out with printing.



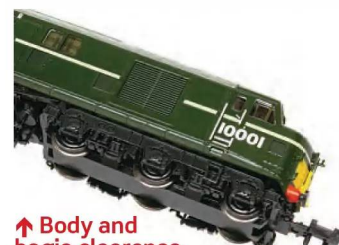
↑ Glazing and cab interiors

Glazing is shiny and clear, well fitted to the window openings and shows the somewhat sparse cab interior.



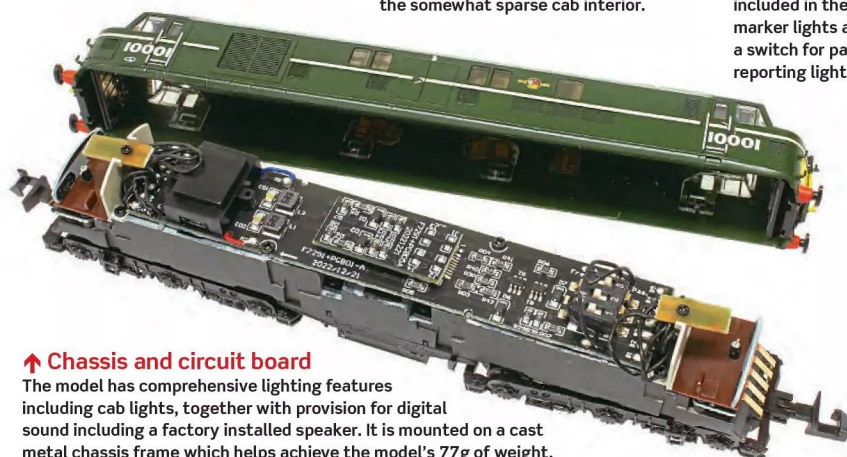
↑ Bonnet front detail

The marker lights and lamp irons are tiny details on this model but faithfully replicated. Train reporting discs are included in the model's box too. The marker lights are illuminated and with a switch for passenger or freight train reporting lights.



↑ Body and bogie clearance

Minimal clearance has been provided between the bogie and body, yet is sufficient for the model to work round typical 'N' gauge layout curves without anything catching.



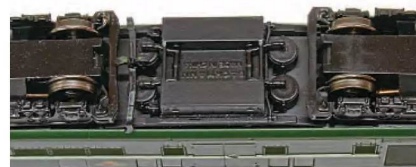
↑ Chassis and circuit board

The model has comprehensive lighting features including cab lights, together with provision for digital sound including a factory installed speaker. It is mounted on a cast metal chassis frame which helps achieve the model's 77g of weight.



↑ Removable bogies

It is possible to carefully unclip the bogies from the metal chassis block for maintenance, wheel cleaning and to check lubrication.



↑ Underframe details

Small separate mouldings have been used to build up the fittings located between the bogies.



↑ Livery application

Smooth and flawless and with only a hint of raggedness between paint colours (showing in close-up photography) is the finding after examining the paint finish. The tiny lion and wheel emblem demonstrates the point about the livery finish – the level of detail is remarkable for the size.

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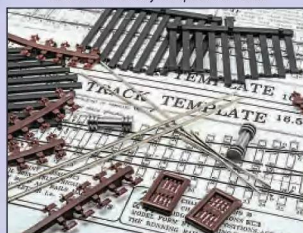
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BR loco-hauled icons: Mk.2b coaches

Accurascale rekindles memories of 'bashing' various locomotive classes with the release of its '00' gauge Mk.2b coaches, a design which saw use on services as widespread as Inter-City, Network SouthEast 'Network Express' and regional services.

Time to dig out those locos!

YOUNGER MODELLERS might wonder what all the fuss is about, but the Mk.2b and the forthcoming Mk.2c coaches from Accurascale bring back happy memories of bashing Trans-Pennine locomotive hauled services, or racking up mileage behind Class 50s on Network Card days when the large Network SouthEast (NSE) system could be explored for a pound.

The quality of the models, along with the refined level of detail and excellent livery application, helps to rekindle those memories. The new stock will certainly go well with the forthcoming Accurascale Class 31s and Class 50s, along with some of the Class 37s released over the last year.

They will also work well with Heljan Class 33s too when re-creating the locomotive hauled services on the Waterloo to Salisbury route. Most of the Mk.2b stock was originally allocated to the Western Region. To this end, the BR blue and grey models are numbered with Western Region prefixes. Cross-Country services via the West London line saw BR blue and grey liveried Mk.2bs in train formations mixed with air-conditioned stock from time to time until around 1991.

Mk.2b stock has survived due to its

use with private operators.

Today, it is operated by charter and hire-in companies such as West Coast Railways and several of the new models are finished in WCR lined maroon. West Coast Railways also hired Mk.2b stock to the Wales and West franchise during the late 1990s too.

Bodyshells

Mk.2b stock was an important evolution of the Mk.2 design which set the scene for future locomotive-hauled coach builds. The bodyshells are longer than previous Mk.2 stock and they were fitted only with air brakes. Internally, the coaches could be equipped with air conditioning and to improve the ambience for what would be long distance stock, the middle vestibules and doors were removed, being replaced with wider wrap-round doors at the coach ends.

The model's bodyshells are properly profiled with the correct roof shape, tumblehome and curves at the coach ends, making them excellent representations of this type of coach. Window openings are the correct size, and the frames are of the correct width, moulded as part of the bodyshell, not on the flush glazing.

Numerous small fittings are applied



One open and one corridor coach from the new range of Accurascale Mk.2b coaches are examined in detail by this review, to determine if the new models significantly raise the bar for D&E coaching stock.



Network SouthEast No. 5449 finished in the lighter shade of NSE blue and was accompanied by TSOs No. 5455, No. 5462 and No. 5480 along with NSE First Corridor stock.

to the bodies, including separate roof ventilators of the correct pattern, hand rails, gangways and commode handles. They are all neatly applied as is the glazing, which is almost flawless, not easy to achieve with moulded plastic.

The end vestibule doors are of the correct pattern of folding door, finished in an excellent shade of red and detailed with silver for the hinges.

Underframes

The underframe floor is designed to accommodate close coupling cams at the end of the coaches, the track current power supply from the bogies along with the separately applied boxes and brake details.

Individual parts have been tooled

for the brake cylinders, linkages and the pressure ventilation ducting too. Retracted buffers are fitted to the models for coupling to adjacent coaches.

Extended buffer heads are supplied in the box (along with alternative coupling cams and magnetic couplings) for modelling the end of a set of coaches for coupling to a locomotive. Electric train supply fittings and footsteps completes what is arguably one of the more complex areas of the model.

Interior illumination

Lighting is installed in all of the coaches within the range, and illumination comes from subtle warm LEDs fitted up in the ceiling of the coach. One of the issues with fitting current collection in rolling stock is the accumulated drag as coaches are added to a train. A set of eight coaches would present quite a load if fitted with friction wiper pick-ups acting on the rear of the wheels.

This is overcome by using split axle current collection, a technique which is gaining traction in 4mm scale models. The metal bearing cups and pinpoint axles used for electrical contact makes the coaches very free-rolling.

Furthermore, the electrical 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 replaced wired connections between bogies and underframe.



No. W17107 is a BFK finished in classic BR blue and grey livery, as applied to the stock from new. There were no BSOs in the batch of 111 Mk.2b coaches constructed in 1969.



End detail applied to the models is well researched including the smaller notices such as 'Dual Heated', 'Air Braked' and 'BKF(A)100 M.P.H.'.

MODEL FEATURES:

- Single piece bodyshells tooled for each vehicle.
- Specifically tooled B4 bogies.
- Stub axle current collection.
- Magnetically controlled interior lighting.
- Stay-alive power pack for flicker-free lighting.
- Interiors built up from separate components.
- Flush glazing with minimal visible edges.
- Finely detailed underframes.
- Close coupling cams with different coupling options.
- Orange curtain material supplied with the BFK.



↑ TSO interior

Clear glazing and fully modelled interiors with the classic winged seats in Standard Class are all modelled with individually tooled components. The interior is not a single moulding but has seats built up from separate parts. They are properly coloured too.



↑ BFK interior

The same attention to detail is applied to the interior of the BFK, with the three-aside compartment seating in orange. Curtain material is supplied in the box.



↑ Glazing

The single piece glazing units are properly seated in the bodyshell and well secured resulting in a clean flat appearance. Glazing bars are properly coloured in aluminium on the BFK, and note the small circles in the lavatory window.



↑ Underframe fittings

An accurately shaped chassis is fitted out with a mix of integral moulded detail for conduit and cables which is balanced with fine mouldings for battery boxes, air brake cylinders, brake rodding and pressure ventilation ducts.



↑ Current collection

Current collection employs the low friction stub axle system which takes advantage of bearing cups and pinpoint axle contact to complete the pick-up circuit. It is generally more reliable than wiper pick-ups and produces minimal drag.

→ Network SouthEast TSO No. 5449

Memories of Network Expresses on the West of England route from London Waterloo are kindled by the range of Network SouthEast coaches in the first batch of coaches. The livery colours are excellent, although the rain gutter stripe should be NSE red on this coach.



↑ B4 bogies

Accurate models of B4 bogies are fitted to the coaches with sufficient clearance between the underside of the floor and wheels for reliable running. Some contact may occur on uneven track or poorly planned transitions between level and inclined track.



↑ Headstocks and couplings

Much of the detail located behind the headstocks cannot be seen from normal viewing distances, including buffer damping, but it has been modelled. Note the separate footsteps, accurately moulded buffers in the retracted position and close coupling cam.



The lighting is correctly shaded and bright enough to display the beautifully detailed interior of both the corridor and open coaches. Light flicker is prevented by the use of a small capacitor power pack flicker and a magnetic 'magic wand' switch allows the lighting to be controlled independently – each coach is supplied with one.

Assembly quality and finish

Apart from one livery error, there is little to report about the finish of the pair of review samples other than the accuracy of the livery colours, which is excellent along with the printed details such as lining. Livery elements all seem

to be in the right place and small details like the smaller grey section of the NSE logo have not caught Accurascale out.

One thing has, and it is not a unique situation either. The featured TSO is No. 5449, which was a regular on NSE Waterloo-Salisbury-Exeter St Davids services. It is finished with an excellent shade of early NSE blue and with straight lining too. The rain gutter is painted warning orange when it should be Network SouthEast red.

Most, if not all, hauled stock operated by the sector had NSE red red stripes at rain gutter level in common with EMUs, instead of orange, except in the odd case. This has to be carefully checked for individual coaches. In the

early days of NSE, the rain gutter was painted white on hauled stock.

Overall verdict

Accurascale has a Mk.2b coach it can be proud of and the speed at which the remaining stocks sold after its release shows that modellers agree too. It is a first class model of the highest standard for the price, raising the bar to a new level for BR coaching stock.

Assembly quality is excellent in the main, as is the application of livery colours. One or two small details are not fully seated in place on both coaches, such as the end door glazing, revealed by photography.

The quality and accuracy of the

new model throws into sharp relief the somewhat strange attitude from another major manufacturer that D&E modellers don't want highly detailed passenger coaches, even though steam era modellers do.

This may provide the opportunity for quality models of the Mk.2d and Mk.2e to be produced to the same standard as the coaches reviewed here. Certainly, the foundation has been laid! 

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www.accurascale.com

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← BR blue/grey BFK No. W17107

So many attempts have been made to get BR blue right over the years, and with some dismal results. Accurascale has succeeded with its BR blue/grey stock as demonstrated by No. W17107.

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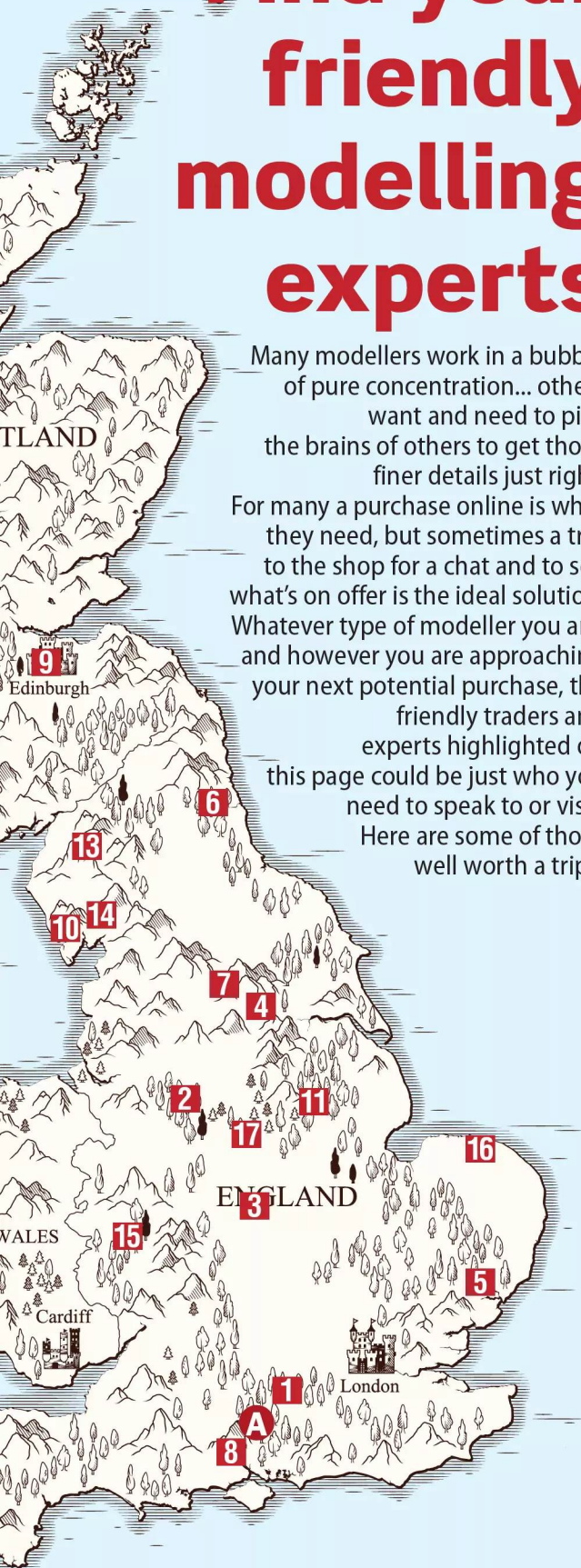
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HST for 'TT:120'

The HST may be regarded as the flagship 'TT:120' D&E model for Hornby. How well do the new HST power cars measure up?

Unboxing impressions

THE HST power car sets featured in this review were chosen because they represent HSTs from completely opposite ends of the spectrum.

Upon unboxing, the differences were immediately apparent, showing that Hornby is applying some era-specific detail to its 'TT:120' range.

The BR blue version is not fitted with exhaust deflectors and features the end guard's van windows. On the other hand, the GWR green pair are fitted with the last type of running light format which was more or less flush with the front panelling of the power cars when in good condition. This is the same as can be seen on the power cars operated by ScotRail too.

A closer inspection showed signs of poor moulding of the bodyshells in places, including prominent mould lines, and some detail not showing through the paint finishes particularly well. The exhaust deflector on the GWR model also looked like an after-thought and for a premium quality model, could have been better executed.

Positive first impressions is the weight of the motorised model, the level of detailing and that the models have not been produced like toys as some detractors of 'TT:120' believe, but are clearly scale models for serious adult collectors and modellers.

Bodyshell assembly

Moulded detail in the bodyshell is good overall, particularly along the shoulder grilles and over the roof.

The side



At the opposite end of its career in front line long distance services comes the GWR set with *Y Cymro The Welshman* legends and logos. This model has some late life features not found on the other models.



Era-specific detail between models includes the exhaust deflector plates, cooling fan opening covers or grilles along with the exhausts, to mention a few.



Three HST power car packs have arrived from Hornby representing the trains from different eras. The BR blue and grey Inter-City 125 set marks the start of the long history of the HST from introduction to the late 1970s fitting of exhaust deflectors.

At first glance, this is a well-proportioned model with all of the character of the HST power cars. The level of detail is good for the size of the models, but this should be the norm given what is routinely achieved in 'N' gauge.

Motorised power cars are nicely weighted and will assist with delivering the best tractive effort possible for their size.

radiator grilles allow a view into the interior of the model on both sides, although this is a compromise in only having 16 horizontal ribs instead of 21 of the full-size power cars. Only six of the seven vertical ribs are present, although the internal bracing is modelled, and very nicely too, giving this area of the model some good depth.

Behind it is located an impression of the radiator moulded in the cast metal chassis frame.

As attention moves to the all-important face of the model, the general feeling is that the network of complex curves has been replicated reasonably well, although as mentioned earlier, the excessive mould lines do detract from the smoothness of the rounded cab corner pillars.

Moulded detail such as the front cover which would be lifted for coupling to locomotives, is not crisp enough to be seen through the livery paint. The

cab door lines are also nearly invisible and some small details are far from sharp, including the bodyside lifting point covers, although the van loading doors are well defined for the scale.

Chassis and drive

Where this model really impresses is the very competent and smooth running drive mechanism which is fitted to one of every power car set. As much of the bodyshell is filled with metal as possible, including the lower section of the front fairing. Yet, room remains for a good quality skew wound five-pole motor, flywheels and all wheel drive gear towers. Operation of the drive is quiet, allowing the digital version's sounds to be clearly heard.

Mounted on top of the chassis is a cosmetic cooling fan and in the sides are the aforementioned radiator impressions.

The decoder bay is just large

enough for the current TXS decoder which is fitted to a NEXT18 socket. At the opposite end is the speaker, a quite large one for the size of the model. It appears that Hornby has achieved that difficult balance between much needed ballast for traction and room for onboard systems and internal detail.

Sufficient room has been left for the cab interior, which is quite spacious in Class 43s compared to some locomotives (ever tried to squeeze through the cab door of a Class 92 with a full kit bag?). This has been modelled well with separate seating too, although some of the leads supplying the running lights can be seen on the cab floor.

Bogies, wheels and couplings

Bogie frames are a single, one size fits all moulding, and are a single piece tooling too. Some quite prominent detail on the real locomotives could have been added as separate fittings. The bogies feature details that are not present on the GWR power cars and painting them orange has highlighted their presence too. However, the bogies are accurate with the correct shape of footsteps and life guards are fitted to leading bogies.

Wheels are fully concentric and fitted with brake discs which is a good feature. They rotate freely in the trailing model despite the use of conventional wiper pick-ups working on the rear of the wheels. This is one model that would have benefited from stub-axle current collection to reduce drag and improve conductivity between the track and internal circuits.

MODEL FEATURES:

- All wheel drive with five-pole motor.
- All-wheel current collection.
- Digital sound provision in both power cars.
- NEXT18 DCC interface.
- Flush glazed with interior detail.
- Close coupling cams and NEM 355 pockets.
- Working directional running lights.

◀ Fine details and finishing

Livery finishing is good overall, and the colours look accurate too. The eggshell finish on the GWR models is pleasing along with the printed detail for *Y Cymro The Welshman* logos which really lifts the plain green livery applied to No. 43187 and No. 43188.

The BR blue duo, No. E43062 (unpowered) and No. E43063 are also well finished in the main. A little raggedness is visible between the blue and yellow in some spots around the front cab pillars. Printed details are level and accurate too.

The subject of orange warning stripes and the lack of exhaust deflectors comes to the fore with the BR blue version of the model. Did the Class 254 carry orange stripes above the cab windows in this condition? Well,



Inner ends of the power cars showing detail differences such as the small guard's windows which were not fitted to later batches of power cars and eventually removed from the earlier ones. Electric train supply sockets are modelled along with the correct format of gangway. Couplings are fitted to frame-mounted kinematic coupling cams.

a survey of photographic evidence suggests this was an added feature during the short time between introduction and when deflectors were fitted. Some power cars were observed with stripes, whilst others were not.

In conclusion

Apart from being produced in a new scale, the new models do not break any new ground for models of this locomotive class. There are no new innovations to report, the models being solid, reliable and honest replicas of the full size locomotives with established technology such as all-wheel drive, basic running lights and traditional wiper pick-ups. It is good that kinematic close coupling cams are included in the

specification. However, a less complex model design is not necessarily a bad thing, especially if they are to be used on temporary table-top layouts.

They perform well, are capable of handling eight Mk.3 trailers and run smoothly. The shape and proportions match photographs well and apart from a couple of details, they are reasonably era-specific too.

Are they value for money? With the suggested retail price starting at a penny below £220, they have a good cost to feature ratio. A little more attention to assembly and finishing quality for future batches could lift these models into the five-star category for the price. One thing they will do and that is show that 'TT:120'



A head-on view which shows some of the cab interior through the windscreens, along with the original and later running light formats.

is a serious scale for modellers and the new models have potential for the same modelling techniques, detailing and weathering as 'N' and 'OO' gauge. 

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www.hornby.com

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'TT:120' HST POWER CARS IN DETAIL



◀ Cab detail

The glazing is nowhere as clear as it could be with modern tooling practices, especially the cab door and quarter lights. The use of wire for the hand rails is a good touch whilst the cab door detail is difficult to see.



↑ Bogies and wheels

Simple single layer mouldings for the bogie side frames are fitted, with all of the prominent features moulded in place, including the footsteps. They will be durable and capable of withstanding the constant handling associated with temporary weekend and table-top layouts.

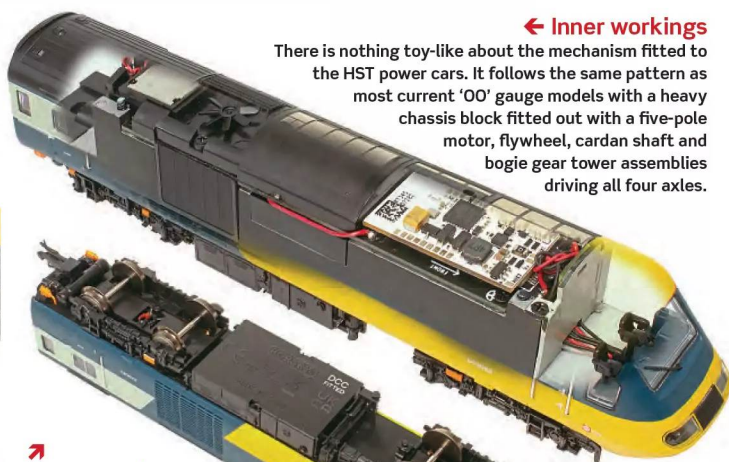
↑ Bodyshell grilles

Both the shoulder and radiator grilles are neatly moulded with a good degree of relief.



↑ GWR *Y Cymro The Welshman* livery

The shade of green used on the GWR power car pack is just right and not too shiny either. Application of the *Y Cymro The Welshman* features along with the GWR legend is good; a feature which lifts the plain green livery.



◀ Inner workings

There is nothing toy-like about the mechanism fitted to the HST power cars. It follows the same pattern as most current 'OO' gauge models with a heavy chassis block fitted out with a five-pole motor, flywheel, cardan shaft and bogie gear tower assemblies driving all four axles.

↑ Unpowered underframe

One power car model in each pack is unpowered but has current collection for the lighting circuits. They are equipped with NEXT18 decoder sockets and can be fitted with a sound decoder in the same manner as the motorised power cars.

◀ BR livery

Whilst a slightly ragged line or two is noticeable on this livery, along with slight differences in coverage of the yellow paint shade in areas around the front, the BR version of the model is nicely presented and correctly numbered for an early era HST.



↑ Drive car underframe

All wheel drive and current pick-up will give the motorised power cars the best chance to lift a scale length train and Hornby is producing sufficient Mk.3 trailers in all three liveries to build up a reasonable representation of HST sets.

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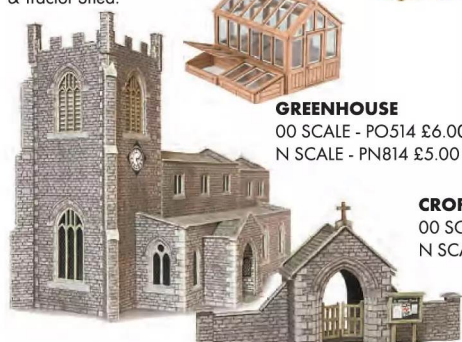
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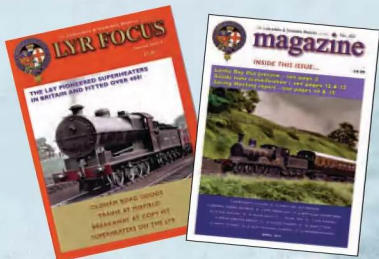
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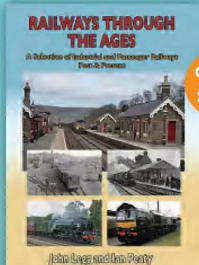
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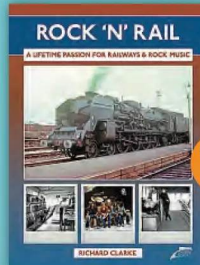
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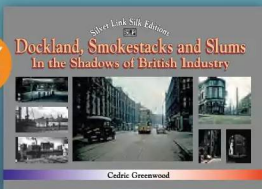
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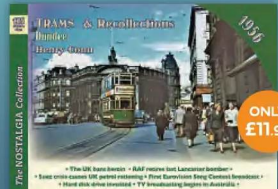


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Low-cost 'EM' gauge conversions for new models

The latest session of technical modelling at the workbench looks at how the new Bachmann refurbished 4-CEP and Heljan Class 47 can be converted to 'EM' - economically.

AS THE COST of replacement wheelsets continues to rise, along with limited availability, the wheel conversion methods employed by 'EM' gauge modellers are becoming ever more creative. Every time a brand-new model is released, the design of wheels, powered bogies and current collection systems can differ, making conversion projects interesting to plan and execute.

This article covers the new Heljan Class 47 which has a little twist in having a completely floating middle axle on both bogies which requires some attention if the model is to work on fine scale track.

The conversion of Bachmann third rail slam-door EMUs has been undertaken before and explained in a past article. The previous method used was to completely abandon the stub or end of axle current collection and fit traditional wheelsets and wiper pick-ups. Whilst the Bachmann EMUs are sufficiently powerful to work with friction wiper pick-ups, they are not ideal, and will increase drag throughout the train. It is with the 4-CEP (and similar Bachmann EMU bogie designs) that the workbench starts work on a different approach to EMUs this month.

Bachmann refurbished 4-CEP conversion

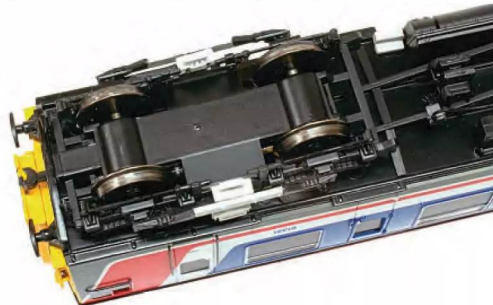
The new Bachmann 'OO' gauge model has been available in the shops for some months now. It uses the same current collection system, wheels and drive as the previously released slam-door EMU models. All Bachmann EMUs have free-rolling trailers and a single bogie drive which copes with the three unpowered vehicles of a 4-CEP without difficulty.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Good quality modeller's drill.
- Accurate chuck fitted to the drill.
- Good quality smooth-cut metal file.
- Abrasive papers, grade 800 through to 2000.
- Vernier calipers.
- Wheel puller tool.
- Wheel back-to-back gauge.
- Solvent cement.
- 20- and 30-thou black styrene.
- Matt black acrylic paint.
- 2mm inner diameter brass shim washers.
- Optional fibre washers.
- 10BA brass countersink screws.
- 0.4mm P-B wire.
- Black tack.



On the workbench this month for low-cost 'EM' gauge wheel conversions are the new Bachmann 4-CEP EMU and the Heljan 'new generation' Class 47. Can their existing wheelsets be reprofiled to save money over bespoke replacement wheel sets?

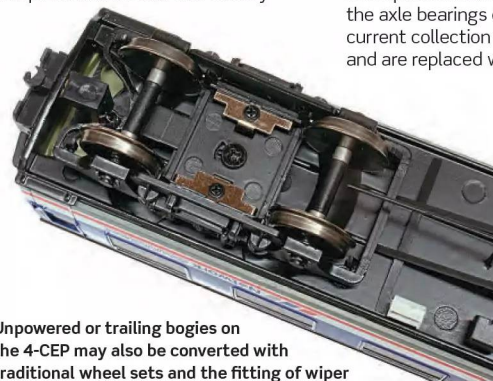


The 4-CEP power bogie requires a more traditional conversion approach using replacement wheel sets. The originals plug into the final drive gear which is not long enough to allow them to be regauged securely.

The power bogie is converted in the more traditional manner using conventional wheel sets with 2mm diameter axles. They will accept the existing drive gears after they have been drilled out with a very clean and sharp 2mm twist drill. The factory

fitted wheels are not easy to reuse, unfortunately.

The axle bearings fitted to the drive bogie are needed and on one side, used for current collection as designed. Because the split axle wheels are replaced with solid axle wheel sets, the axle bearings cannot be used for current collection on the opposite side and are replaced with wiper pick-ups.



Unpowered or trailing bogies on the 4-CEP may also be converted with traditional wheel sets and the fitting of wiper pick-ups which would replace the end of axle bearing cups. This could increase drag and noise too.



The power bogie conversion has been described before and requires the use of wiper pick-ups on one side of the bogie, acting on the wheelset's insulated wheel. The original bearing pick-up system can be retained for the opposite side where the wheel is bonded with the axle.

Using trailing bogie wheel sets

When it comes to the trailing bogies, it seems a shame to abandon the model's efficient current collection which uses split-axle wheels and end of axle current collection between the wheels and bogie frames.



The best option is to retain the end of axle current collection system by modifying the existing wheel sets. It is a low friction system and very reliable. Unfortunately, the bogie frames are set too close together for a simple wheel set regauging exercise as was described for the Revolution Trains inspection saloon.

Having moved away from using expensive replacement wheel sets for various 'EM' gauge conversions in favour of reprofiling the wheels supplied with models, thinking turns to how to use the split-axle wheel sets fitted to the 4-CEP trailing bogies. They are composed of two wheels bonded to short or stub axles and separated by an insulation sleeve. Logically, some modellers would consider spreading the wheels in the sleeve, but this just serves to lengthen the axles beyond what will fit between the bogie frames. Further, the bogie frames are a touch narrow on Bachmann EMU models, so using the original wheels requires the bogies to be modified too.

4-CEP Wheel set modifications

The wheelsets are dismantled, and the insulation sleeves placed safely to one side. Each wheel is placed in a wheel puller and moved along its length of axle by 0.5mm or so. The pinpoint must be retained and be clear enough to fit in the bearing cups.

Each wheel is turned to allow metal to be removed from the rear of the wheel (0.3mm) and from the front too, including the centre boss (0.2mm). This reduced the wheel width to around 2.4mm and also reduces the flange thickness.

The flange is also reduced in height by a fraction, which allows more metal to be removed from the rear of the wheels.

The technique used is the 'no-lathe' method, a term coined on the EMgauge70s website (www.emgauge70s.co.uk) where every trick in the book appears to be used to get models running, and running well by some of the best modellers in the business!

As the wheels were turned in a high quality mini-drill, they were finished with very fine wet and dry paper to remove scratches from the tyre surface. Particular care is taken to avoid contaminating gears with metal filings. The wheels are reassembled and the gauge set using a suitable back-to-back gauge. There is sufficient length of axle remaining in the sleeve to



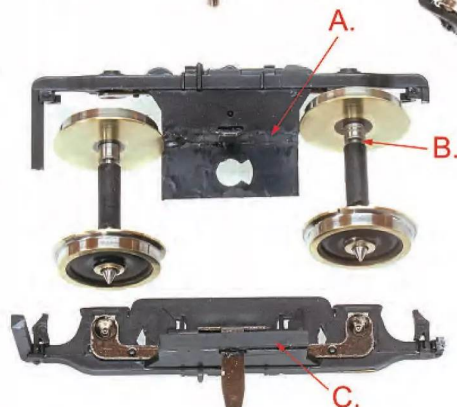
← Reprofilng the wheels is quite simple with sharp cutting tools and fine abrasive papers for finishing. 0.2mm is removed from the face of the wheel (A). The centre boss is also reduced by 0.2mm (B) to improve clearances with the bearing cups. The rear of the wheel is reduced by 0.3mm and the flange reduced in height too (C).



↑ The frames are cut in two places inboard of the contact spigots resulting in two pieces with the side frame detail and a middle section with the pivot hole.



← The spacing fillets of styrene are reinforced with pieces of 20-thou strip, fitted at right angles to the original cuts. Compare the modified bogie with an original at the top of the picture.



↑ Fillets of 30-thou styrene are used to increase the distance between the side frames and bearing cups by 1.5mm (A). Modified wheels are assembled to the axle sleeve and gauged to 'EM' gauge (16.5mm). The gap between sleeve and wheel is not a problem and could be filled with shim washers (B). Rough edges on the bogie frame are cleaned up with a file (C).

secure the wheelsets and although not strictly necessary, shim washers could be used to maintain the gauge.

Bogie frame modifications

The 4-CEP trailing bogie frames are widened by about 1.5mm including the

current collection bearing cups which must remain in place on the inside of the bogie side frames. Cuts are made with a razor saw in the frame inboard of the spigots designed to complete the electrical path between the wheels and internal circuit board.

↑ The spigots in the top of the bogie make contact with the internal circuit board through slots in the underframe. Fortunately, the slots are wide enough to take up the additional 1.5mm width introduced by the bogie modification.

Fillets of 30-thou styrene are used to pack out the bogie frame along these cuts. The position of the cuts and fillets retains pivot hole in its original position. The frames are widened relative to it including the current collection cups. The joins in the frame are strengthened with strips of 20-thou styrene applied to the top of the bogie.

The converted wheels are used to check the fit of the bogies and if the 30-thou styrene fillets are sufficient. As the fillets along with the strengthening strips harden, the bogies are minutely adjusted to ensure the wheel sets fit with minimal slop and with all four wheels sitting square on a flat surface.

Reassembling and testing the 4-CEP

Returning the modified bogies to the 4-CEP was simple. Thankfully, the slots in the underframe for the bogie contact spigots are large enough to accept the slightly wider spacing. It was found, during tests, that the extended wheel sets did not run particularly well in the bearing cups, even though electrical contact was being made.

With any closer-to-scale conversion, clearances between wheels and other fittings are reduced and this may require small pieces of plastic to be removed from bogie frames and also the rough edges to the bearing cups to be filed to smooth them off. This solved the clearance issues, and the model subsequently ran confidently through hand-built 'EM' gauge turnouts and crossings.



Fine tuning is inevitable after such a conversion, but after several hours of tweaking wheel sets and checking that bogies are rotating correctly, the Bachmann refurbished 4-CEP ran well. It is ready for an enhancement project which will include renumbering, replacement roof vents and weathering.

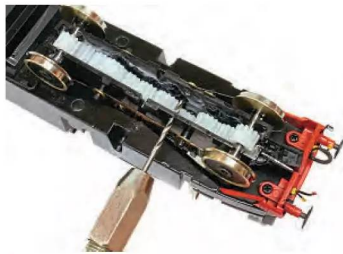
Tackling the new Heljan Class 47

Heljan's brand-new Class 47 caused a feeling of déjà vu: there is something very familiar about the drive employed in this model. It is almost exactly the same as that fitted to the first Class 47 model including the floating middle axle and the plug-in bogie side frames (which are much finer mouldings this time round). It is a robust and reliable drive system and easy to convert to 'EM' and 'P4' gauges when using replacement wheel sets with 2mm diameter axles.

The wheels fitted to the model are also suitable for reprofiling to suit 'EM' gauge. The existing axles can be used too because there is sufficiently large enough boss on the wheels to grip the axle firmly after regauging.

Wheel modifications

The wheels are about 2.9mm wide which means that up to 0.6mm of metal can be removed along with a fraction from the flange depth. In the end, the approach was to reduce the flange first to a thicker part of its cross-section and then take 0.3mm from the rear of the wheel which thins the flange down. On a completed wheelset, 0.6mm of the needed 2mm regauging for the correct back-to-back measurement comes from metal removal rather than moving the wheels on the axles.

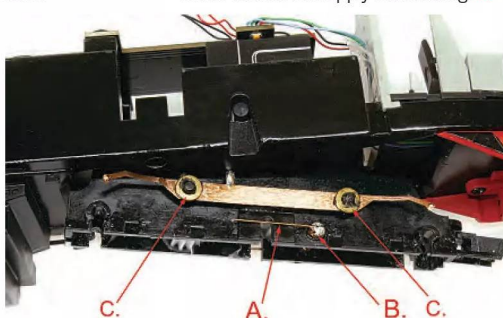


↑ Testing soon revealed that the freely floating middle axle was not going to perform properly on 'EM' gauge track, and would not do so on anything finer either. It needs springing, which is done by fitting 10BA brass countersink screws to the bogie inner frame. Holes are drilled ready for the screws which cannot touch the gears.



↑ The completed wire springs which are short pieces of 0.4mm Phosphor-bronze wire soldered to the screws.

→ Here is another view of the modifications made to the bogie inner frame. Note the 0.4mm wire (A) soldered to the 10BA brass screws (B). The shim washers fitted to the side frame mounting spigots are also seen (C).



Less metal was taken from the front of the wheels, restricted to the tyre which preserves the external appearance of the wheels. The wheel sets were reassembled, gauged and fitted to the drive bogies after finishing with fine abrasive papers. The final drive gears are an excellent design. They are wide enough to fill the inner bogie frame, minimising sideways slack and making the use of shim washers unnecessary.

Completing the conversion was simple at first. The bogie side frames were removed and two 0.5mm thick shim washers fitted to the mounting spigots to space the side frames out. The side frames were refitted and temporarily secured with black tack with the result that there is now enough room for the modified wheelsets. Once they are weathered and detailed in a future enhancement project, the side frames can be restored using a more permanent method such as PVA glue.

Centre axle considerations

Testing soon revealed a problem with the floating middle axles. They work well on 'OO' gauge track, but the finer tolerances of 'EM' gauge meant that they would not sit on the rails properly when running through turnouts. The solution is to fit a light spring to each one to apply downward pressure on the axle.

In theory, it is a simple task to drill a 1.2mm hole through the frame and tap in a short 10BA countersink screw on both sides of the inner bogie frame. It requires care to avoid the drive gears and be sure that no plastic waste gets into the mechanism!

Space constraints mean that the mounting screws were close to the middle axle. This is compensated by using 0.4mm phosphor-bronze wire which was soldered (quickly!) to the screw heads. Once cool, the wire springs can be adjusted and if necessary, fixed in place with a spot of CA glue.

The position of the spring is set to allow about 2mm of vertical movement in the middle axle which gives the bogies some flexibility and allows the wheelset to work as intended. This modification is also worth considering for 'P4' gauge models and even unmodified models will benefit from it.

The Heljan Class 47 soon settled down after the mechanism was broken in and was found to be capable of hauling long trains of less than forgiving bogie ferry wagons, some fitted with cast metal bogie kits. Performance of the reprofiled wheels was also good and the model is now ready for the next stage of its commissioning, which is to upgrade some details and apply weathering. M



↑ Heljan's new model of No. 47214 Tinsley traction Depot on test on an 'EM' gauge layout. It was required to haul long trains of ferry vans, some of which are 35-year-old scratch-built models with cast metal bogies and a lot of rolling resistance!



↑ Four clips a-side secure the baseplate to the inner bogie frame. They are tricky to remove.



↑ The bogie frames are too close together on this model and an immediate improvement in appearance results from fitting two 0.5mm shim washers to the mounting spigots. This will be necessary for 'EM' and 'P4' gauge conversions.



↑ Two powered wheel sets and a floating middle axle are found along with a good supply of grease. Note how wide the drive gears are, which removes the need for shim washers and makes them particularly durable.



↑ Clearances for the wheels can be improved by paring down the brake mouldings where they are attached to the inside of the bogie side frames.

→ Before and after views of the reprofiled wheel sets. There is just enough axle length to secure the wheels after regauging and thinning the wheels from the rear assists with reuse of the original axles ('EM' gauge modellers do this whenever possible!).



↑ Out on the high iron with those heavy ferry vans! The model looks good in a layout setting, even one without scenery. It will be improved and upgraded with some additional small details and weathering now it has been accepted to traffic.

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No. 5449 was part of the large fleet of Mk.2 stock operated on services between Waterloo, Salisbury and Exeter St Davids. It is one of the coaches represented by the Accurascale NSE TSO models, four of which have been produced, and was photographed on October 10, 1991. Note the red applied to the rain gutter.

Mk.2b memories

THE DAYS of traditional locomotive-hauled scheduled passenger trains are almost behind us, making the new Mk.2 coaches from Accurascale all the more compelling.

First to arrive are the Mk.2bs which saw service on a number of routes, with Network SouthEast and Provincial Trans-Pennine being two that generated most of the attention from enthusiasts in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as regional locomotive hauled trains were slowly replaced by trains formed of multiple units.

The swathe of Class 158s and '159s' saw the end of many locomotive-hauled services and the consequent loss of the associated traction, with

Class 50s being one of the more painful losses for many enthusiasts.

Despite the loss of much Mk.1 and Mk.2 stock in the early 1990s, Mk.2 soldiered on with private operators including Wales and West (1996-2001) which hired in Mk.2 stock to cover for the lack of multiple units.

The stock was used on Valley Lines services in the same period too, and in the formation of numerous charter services. Mk.2b stock remains in limited use today with charter operators and this is reflected in the range of 23 Accurascale models, where two are finished in West Coast Railways maroon and fitted with Central Door Lock detail. 



Classic Network SouthEast livery as applied to TSO No. 5435 and in use on Network Expresses between Waterloo and Exeter St Davids. Note the unpainted window dividing frames and the light shade of NSE blue. Rain gutters are red whilst the ends are painted black.



Use after privatisation includes the hire of coaches to South Wales and West by West Coast Railways. Some of the Mk.2b and Mk.2c coaches were finished in plain blue with a white line and Wales & West legends. TSO No. 5478 had received Central Door Locks by the time it was photographed at Westbury on June 28, 1998.



Lined maroon started to appear on West Coast Railways stock around 1998. Fresh paint was still evident on TSO No. 5487 which was recorded at Westbury on June 28, 1998. Spotting features of this stock includes the lack of a middle door and cross vestibule compared to previous builds of Mk.2 stock; larger corner doors at the coach ends and scallop roof ventilators. The lavatory windows are characterised by having small circles in the upper panes. No. 5487 has had some of the glass replaced and it is a different colour.

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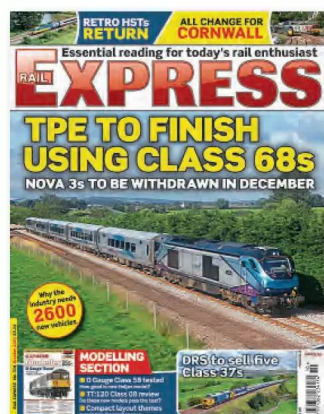
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What alternative awaits GWR?

Orders for new trains are being discussed for operators, but for Great Western Railway, there needs to be a wider discussion regarding the type of train ordered, as **Richard Clinnick** reports.

NEW trains, or at least refurbished trains, are being planned for a handful of operators, with 'commitments' from ministers regarding the possibility of fleets being ordered in the near future.

Great Western Railway has not yet received confirmation regarding plans for a new order, which means that for the time being it must soldier on with a regional and local fleet, of which the oldest units are approaching 40 years old.

Much has been made of the age of trains in Northern England, however

GWR managing director Mark Hopwood told *Rail Express* in November 2023 (RE332) that "levelling up" was about more than just one part of Britain.

There are aspirations to replace the GWR Sprinter fleets dating from the mid-to-late 1980s, and the Turbo fleets first introduced on the Thames Valley in the early 1990s which have, largely, been cascaded westward and operate on services originating in the Bristol and Exeter areas.

However, for the time being, these remain aspirations rather than any firm

commitment. There is no formal plan, yet. While Chiltern Railways, London North Eastern Railway, Northern, TransPennine Express, ScotRail and Southeastern have commitments regarding, at the very least, new trains, there is nothing for GWR. So, as it stands, the '150s' will easily pass 40 years in traffic, while some of the handful of short-formed Castle High Speed Trains will be almost 50 years old when they are planned to be withdrawn from traffic next year!

Rail minister Huw Merriman, in a letter on February 22 to the rail industry regarding concerns about the lack of new trains and the situation facing Alstom at Derby Litchurch Lane (see *Headline News*), would only say that market engagement was underway for GWR.

More services are being introduced by GWR, including the planned Cornish Metro next year (RE336) but that will require more trains. *Rail Express* sources suggest that these could well be the off-lease Class 175s currently either in store at Ely or undergoing handback exams at Landore after they were replaced by Class 197s at TFW Rail. GWR has not confirmed this move.

INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES

One of the problems facing any operator seeking to order new trains in the mid-2020s relates to the power these trains will use. The railway must decarbonise by 2050, however there are no plans for electrification schemes as it stands, beyond what has already been committed to, which means that alternative power is the likely answer.

Great Western Railway Nos. 150263 and 150247 pass Coryton Cove on August 16, 2023, with the 2F07 06.34 Paignton-Exmouth. The Class 150/2s were built in 1986-1987 and are used on various services in the West Country. Decisions regarding their replacements are being discussed but nothing, yet, has been confirmed, meaning that they will likely still be in traffic in their 40th year. Ryan Hayward



CAF is still building diesel multiple units for TFW, while West Midlands Railway has also recently taken delivery of DMUs from the Spanish train builder, but the consensus is that the industry needs to move away from diesel-only trains. The problem is, unless the infrastructure for the route these trains will operate is known, these decisions become a lot harder.

Chiltern Railways is known to be looking at hybrid power, and recent orders by Greater Anglia and TFW have sought to take advantage of, at the very least, bi-mode capabilities. Launched back in 2019, the GA Class 755s can be converted from diesel to alternative power to run alongside their electric power capability. Could this be the future for any new fleets operating away from the wires?

The Railway Industry Association (RIA) has suggested that the ongoing trials of alternative power need to result in orders for such trains

soon if there is seriousness about decarbonisation. But that, again, relies on knowledge of the infrastructure in place.

Currently Porterbrook has a hydrogen-powered Class 799 being tested from Long Marston (No. 799201), GWR is testing a battery-powered Class 230 on the Greenford branch (No. 230001), albeit so far without any passengers, and TransPennine Express is due to commence trials in the near future with a Class 802/2 fitted with batteries replacing a diesel engine on one vehicle (No. 802207).

Seven independently powered electric multiple units (IPEMU) Class 777/1s have been delivered to Merseyrail for the Headbolt Lane extension that opened last year (Nos. 777140/142/144/146/148/150/152) although this suffered various issues, while TFW's fleet of hybrid Class 230s were also heavily-delayed and suffered from reliability issues when introduced. However, no major orders have yet been placed and so far, there have been no firm commitments to orders of significant numbers of alternative-powered trains.

THE GWR FLEET

As it stands, Great Western Railway's fleet contains 1087 vehicles, of which 22% are diesel-powered. The average age is 14.9 years, making it the 14th oldest fleet in the overall table of oldest trains in Britain, according to figures released by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) last autumn. But what must be factored in is that 56% of GWR's fleet is bi-mode (the 93 Class 800s and '802s') and a further 12% is electric (the 30 Class 387s). This still leaves 24 Class 150/2s, 18 Class 158s, 36 Class 165s and 21 Class 166s which will need replacing in the not-too-distant future. There are also the Castles, although they are due to be withdrawn in May 2025.

The man charged with looking after the GWR fleet, and investigating the various options for fleet replacement, is Dr Simon Green, the operator's engineering director. In an interview about the Class 230 battery unit being tested on the Greenford branch (RE336), he discussed other parts of the fleet too, explaining the rationale required before any order is made.

He explains that while GWR owns enough D-Train and D-Stock vehicles to

make up to 14 trains, they will only be used on the Thames Valley if they are ever put in to traffic. He also explains that the driving motors are the vehicles GWR really requires, and that it in the event of these trains entering service, it was likely that they would operate as two-car sets. Multiple working could be an option too. The Greenford trial, he says, is about looking at what is available in terms of alternative technology to diesel power. Should other '230s' be introduced then they would operate on the Thames Valley branches allowing a cascade of Class 165s and '166s' westwards.

Mr Green says: "It's clear that there are certain places that are never going to be electrified. So batteries are going to form a part of that [fleet replacement]. But it's also clear that potentially in certain parts of the world the electricity supply isn't strong enough to support [full scale electrification] at this stage. So, there's a real question around how might you do this? How might you do the Devon Cornish branches for example? Well, you can do this [battery power] on a much smaller electricity supply than has historically been done for our electrification. That's what we're hoping one of the outcomes of the trial will prove – how do you do lineside energy storage and how do you then access that energy?"

"The acceptance that electrification, full scale anyway, will not happen across the entire GWR network is a reason the operator is assessing what is available, even though there is no confirmation, yet, that a fleet of new trains is headed to the West Country.

"When we look at our proposals around new trains, and we're still working out the precise combination about how that would work in consultation with the Department for Transport, we've got to be cognizant of the fact that there's an opportunity to do battery, new-style trains or bi-mode or any combinations."

Plans had been announced for a GWR Class 802/0 to be fitted with batteries as part of a trial, with TransPennine Express similarly trialling an '802/2'. However, the GWR trial has now been cancelled. Dr Green suggests that the TPE trial makes more sense as there is electrification at either end of the routes the '802/2s' will operate and, indeed, No. 802207 has been modified at Newton Aycliffe in readiness for the trial. "Our problem is

that for 250 miles or so to Penzance, how do we charge the batteries which will probably be dead by the time we reach Castle Cary on the way out! So, I think if we had discontinuous electrification, for example, and we put batteries on trains, then that might be an opportunity."

But, looking at the local and regional fleet, the question remains what will replace the fleets there? Dr Green points out that there are issues around capacity. For example, a three-car train in the summer is not enough for the St Ives branch, and there needs to be at least a four-car train. "We run four-car Class 150/2s and they are full and standing." He also highlights that when it comes to the Greenford battery-train trial, the topography further west is trickier. "We have looked at some of that and there is always an engineering solution but it's going to depend on how many fast charge points you want. A lot of the London and Thames Valley branches are doable with a charger at one location on the branch, whereas the Cornish ones might require a charger at each end.

"And then you've got to have enough dwell time to charge the batteries to be able to get back." He is keen to point out that these discussions are being had alongside the Class 230 battery trial, it remains the case that there is no widespread '230' fleet introduction plan.

Dr Green discusses the possibility of a hybrid fleet, which seems the way Chiltern Railways is planning to go. Greater Anglia's bi-mode fleet operates on diesel power on rural branches and electric power where the trains run under the wires, even on rural services (mainly Ipswich-Stowmarket and Ely-Stansted Airport). "The idea would be to use running on 25kV to charge the batteries for running on sections with no overhead line. We have looked at some of this as part of our new trains proposals. When we were looking at how we would decarbonise the route we have contemplated quite a lot about where we think you would need to be able to put the electrification, to be able to support, for example certainly the new fleet, but also potentially, far greater running on electric for the Hitachi fleet."

All these considerations are required before any order can be confirmed. It will be an interesting decision whatever is made. **B**

GWR FLEET

Class 43:	43004/042/092/093/097, 43156/186-189/198
Class 57:	57312, 57602-605
Locomotive-hauled Mk.3s:	10217/219/225, 10532/534/563/584/589/590/594/596, 10601/612/616, 12100/142/161, 17173-175
Class Mk.3s:	48102/104-109/114/117-124/126/130/136/137/149/150
Class 150:	150202/207/216/219/221/232-234/238/239/243/244/246-249/261/263/265/266
Class 158:	158745/747-750/760/762/765-769/771/798, 158950/951/958/959
Class 165:	165101-114/116-137
Class 166:	166201-221
Class 230:	230001/003-005
Class 387:	387142-171
Class 800:	800001-036, 800301-321
Class 802:	802001-022, 802101-114

Note: No. 57312 is hired from GB Railfreight. Nos 230001/003-005 are not yet in traffic. Stored D-Stock vehicles are not included in this table.

RIA's plans for replacing rolling stock in a more balanced manner

A new report suggests ways in which rolling stock can be replaced in a cost-effective way.

Richard Clinnick reports.

A PATHWAY showing how to make rolling stock procurement decisions now has been released by the Railway Industry Association (RIA), which also targets the industry's need to operate a lower cost, higher performance railway, by 2050.

Delivering a lower cost, higher performing, net zero railway by 2050 was published on April 11.

RIA claims that the whole system blueprint maximises current Government infrastructure plans while, at the same time, sets out how a co-ordinated 'track and train' approach could deliver improved outcomes for both passenger and freight users as well as the supply chain and the taxpayer.

This new strategy, says RIA, fast tracks benefits by focusing on opportunities for carbon reduction and air quality improvements in the short-term and will also enhance performance by introducing newer trains, which it claims will be more reliable (although figures published regularly suggest that this is not always the case), while also achieving lower costs and greater economic benefits by reducing the 'boom and bust' culture for the rail supply sector.

The key findings from RIA's strategy are that whilst Government plans will increase the proportion of the UK rail network that is electrified from 38% to 51% (the latter figure was a commitment made in March), a further 15% has been identified by RIA which if electrified would mean 100% of passenger services and 95% of freight services operating could be decarbonised incrementally by 2050.

There is a suggestion that around a third of the network does not actually need to be electrified and can be decarbonised now with the use of battery trains. RIA suggests that an order for a fleet of battery-electric trains should be accelerated as a matter of priority to bring forward benefits at no additional cost to the public purse. It is likely that the planned new fleets for Chiltern Railways and Northern (as well as any for Great Western Railway, see pages 76-77), could use this technology.

However, the current uncertainty around the capacity of future UK rail manufacturing again highlights the need for a more consistent pipeline of work for infrastructure and rolling stock suppliers to support investment in skills and improve productivity, says RIA.

David Clarke, RIA technical



GB Railfreight No. 69009 Western Consort hauls South Western Railway No. 701502 away from Chaddesden Sidings on May 1, forming the 5Q12 12.55 Worsnop Down Yard-Derby Litchurch Lane. GBRf No. 47749 City of Truro was on the rear. The '701s' were one of several fleet ordered in recent years that have been delayed in entering traffic. Steve Donald

director, says: "Our analysis provides an 'art of the possible' strategy for the Government and the railway industry. Ordering a fleet of battery-electric trains, a strategic and a consistent approach to electrification and quick green wins on less intensively used routes can all help achieve a more efficient and low-carbon railway by 2050. Considering this as a 'track and train' strategy allows us to permanently lower the cost of running the railway.

"Recent RIA-commissioned research by Steer found that passenger numbers will grow between 37% and 97% by 2050, depending on future rail policy. So, it is vital that the Government now makes some decisions on infrastructure and rolling stock which will enable investors, rail planners and suppliers, as well as the wider rail economy, to deliver a better and more sustainable railway for passengers and taxpayers in the future."

In the report RIA acknowledges that similar work has also been undertaken by Network Rail and Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT), but that has not yet been published. Instead, RIA recommends there is a cross industry collaboration to develop and publish a whole system rail-plan.

RIA says: "approximately half the GB fleet was replaced in the last 10 years, a short-term increase in orders which stretched the supply chain, affecting delivery times, quality and cost. Without action this costly peak

will be repeated when these vehicles become life expired. The RIA strategy shows that it is possible to avoid this situation by making early strategic decisions with a knowledge of a rail plan, combined with an intelligent approach to responding to demand."

ELECTRIFICATION

Which routes should be electrified? RIA highlights that the routes where full electrification is in progress (in various stages) are the Midland Main line, Transpennine Route Upgrade, Wigan to Bolton and Scottish major routes including Aberdeen to the Central Belt. Furthermore, the Core Valley Lines, Borders and Fife are in progress but are partial electrification. Some of these are also many years from any electric trains operating. Proposals for electrification include the Hope Valley, North Wales, Leeds to Hull, Sheffield to Hull and potentially East West Rail, although that has not yet been confirmed.

RIA adds: "RIA understand that all Network North proposals are subject to business case and we agree with this. However, we believe that the projected growth in passenger demand will only strengthen business cases for electrification.

"In addition, the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) has recommended 783 miles of infill and strategic electrification which would electrify 95% of rail freight. Of this, as

little as 62 miles of infill electrification would allow three million train kilometres a year to be decarbonised whilst also improving air quality. This is equivalent to 130 million diesel HGV miles removed from Britain's roads each year. In this strategy, RIA are adopting the CILT recommendation."

The recommended routes are Felixstowe-Nuneaton (135 miles), an East Coast Main Line diversion via Spalding and Lincoln (90 miles), Southampton to Reading (75 miles), Bristol to Birmingham (64 miles), the main line to serve the Mendip Quarries (52 miles), the ECML to Saltburn via Middlesbrough (42 miles), Salisbury to Swindon (39 miles) and Doncaster to Immingham (39 miles).

RIA also suggests that ideal locations for in-service fast charging BEMUs are the Scottish Highlands, Wales and the North West. It recognises that hydrogen could be an option, however battery bi-modes are available and offer a consistent fleet it says.

ROLLING STOCK

RIA has built a database of all the existing passenger rolling stock in use either on the main line or on Transport for London metals (London Underground). In the report it says that by knowing the date the vehicle was introduced, and assuming an average life of 35 years it is possible to forecast when replacement or life extension would be required.

It suggests that: "With a current fleet of around 15,000 vehicles, and a commercial design life of 35 years then the annual fleet refresh rate, for stable production, is around 430 vehicles per year for mainline passenger multiple unit rolling stock (500-600 including Tube and coaching stock). Assuming most vehicles have at least one major refurbishment and upgrade in their lifetime there should be a similar volume of opportunity for refurbishment businesses.

"With new rolling stock procurements at enquiry stage, the potential work bank up to 2030 is approaching this number. However, these enquiries need to be converted to firm orders and, even then, without intelligent intervention, this is only a temporary demand rate, and the 'boom and bust' cycle would continue. "Whilst very welcome, even if these orders are placed quickly, which at the time of writing seems unlikely, there remains a risk of a circa-24 month gap when there will be little work on factory floors and so some cross industry collaboration may be needed to ensure that essential capability is not lost in the meantime."

RIA says that these prospective orders represent about 75% of the 2600 vehicles which will be 35 years old, or older, by 2040 and which RIA itself recommended for replacement or refurbishment in a report published in July 2023 (RE329). "Importantly, these circa 2600 vehicles include circa 1100 diesel multiple unit vehicles which creates an opportunity for replacement by BEMU," says the report.

The new fleets need to reflect what is happening in the passenger sector. There is a belief that rail passenger numbers could grow between 37% and 97% within the next 26 years and that will require a growth in the number of vehicles in the passenger fleet, as well as infrastructure improvements to help the railway cater for such numbers.

It suggests that to balance demand and speed up decarbonisation of the network, DMUs reaching their 35th birthday after 2045 could be replaced slightly earlier. Northern's CAF DMU fleet was introduced from 2019, with the trains delivered from 2018 onwards, which would mean that it would be 2053 before they are life-expired, while the West Midlands Trains Class 196s and Transport for Wales Class 197s currently being delivered could reach 2059 before they are life-expired! Meanwhile the WMT Class 172s date from between 2009 and 2011 and so would be life-expired, in theory, but around 2045.

NEW-BUILD TRAIN ORDERS DELIVERED SINCE 2010

Fleet	No of trains	No of vehicles	Power	Delivered	Notes
Class 66	28	28	Diesel	2014-2016	
Class 68	34	34	Diesel	2012-2016	
Class 88	10	10	Bi-mode	2015-2016	
Class 93	10	10	Tri-mode	2023-2024	
Class 99	30	30	Bi-mode	2025	First '99' for testing this year in Europe.
Mk.5	70	70	Hauled stock	2016-2018	
Mk.5A	66	66	Hauled stock	2018-2019	
Class 172	39	93	Diesel	2009-2011	
Class 195	58	149	Diesel	2017-2020	
Class 196	26	80	Diesel	2019-2021	
Class 197	77	180	Diesel	2020-2024	
Class 231	11	44	Diesel	2022-2023	
Class 331	43	141	Electric	2017-2020	
Class 345	70	630	Electric	2015-2019	
Class 350	20	80	Electric	2013-2014	
Class 377	34	170	Electric	2013-2014	
Class 378	57	285	Electric	2009-2015	
Class 379	30	120	Electric	2010-2011	
Class 380	38	130	Electric	2009-2010	
Class 385	70	234	Electric	2016-2018	
Class 387	107	428	Electric	2014-2017	
Class 390	4	106	Electric	2012	Four new 11-car trains and 62 additional vehicles were ordered.
Class 397	12	48	Electric	2018-2019	
Class 398	36	108	Electric/battery	2023-2025	Tram-trains
Class 399	7	21	Electric	2014-2015	
Class 700	115	1140	Electric	2015-2018	
Class 701	90	750	Electric	2019-2024	
Class 707	30	150	Electric	2017-2018	
Class 710	54	216	Electric	2017-2024	
Class 717	25	150	Electric	2017-2018	
Class 720	145	725	Electric	2018-2023	
Class 730	84	324	Electric	2020-2024	
Class 745	20	240	Electric	2019-2020	
Class 755	38	138	Bi-mode	2018-2020	
Class 756	24	89	Tri-mode	2022-2023	
Class 777	53	212	Electric*	2019-2024	Seven '777s' use battery power.
Class 800	80	536	Bi-mode	2015-2018	
Class 801	42	330	Electric	2016-2020	
Class 802	60	300	Bi-mode	2017-2019	
Class 803	5	25	Electric	2020-2021	
Class 805	13	65	Bi-mode	2022-2024	
Class 807	10	70	Electric	2023-2025	
Class 810	33	165	Bi-mode	2023-2025	
Total	1908	8842			

Note: London Underground Tube orders, Eurostar Class 374s, Stadler Class 555s for Nexus and HS2 trains are not included.

RIA suggests that BEMUs could be used to replace the fleets, while some of the routes covered by DMUs that require replacing could be fully electrified any way.

"To smooth the peak of vehicles reaching their 35th birthday soon after 2050, caused by the recent large fleet replacements, their life expectancy could be considered to be 40 years, rather than 35. This seems plausible for aluminium bodied stock. Planning this would allow the optimum maintenance and refurbishment strategies to be developed and implemented for these fleets during their lifetimes to

ensure a consistently reliable fleet for that duration."

BALANCING ACT

There is still further opportunity to smooth the fleet growth to match demand growth, says RIA. This could consider a post-GBR implementation scenario, with track and train being managed as a system to both stimulate and respond to passenger demand growth, it suggests. There are tools in GBR's arsenal to deploy in balancing a fleet to demand growth including actions to stimulate demand, revenue models to control growth and rolling

stock frameworks to bring flexibility.

RIA suggests that as the fleet growth is balanced to reflect passenger demand, the smoothed vehicle demand profile will create a consistent refresh rate. In this model the refresh rate increases from around 430 vehicles per year to around 600. Doing this breaks the 'boom and bust' cycle, while a similar volume of new build and refurbishment would need to come to market for competition each year to avoid reverting back to that cycle.

The next few years are key for rail and decisions regarding rolling stock are vital. Decisions need to be made! 

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.

High Speed Trains head for the high seas

Richard Clinnick presents a selection of images of High Speed Trains at Great Yarmouth earlier this year, ahead of their export to Mexico. These vehicles have recently arrived in their new home.

GREAT Yarmouth has never been a High Speed Train hotspot.

The occasional charter aside, until last summer, the only Mk.3s to serve the Norfolk town were hauled stock taken there when locomotive-hauled through trains from London operated, or the very occasional charter that used the coaches for a short period.

That changed in early August 2023, when three former Great Western Railway Class 43s and an array of slam-door Mk.3s arrived by road from store at Potter Group, Ely, destined for a new career in Mexico.

The power cars, Nos. 43022, 43158/170, had all been converted to operate the 'Castle' sets for Great Western Railway, having initially been made redundant by the introduction of Hitachi Intercity Express Trains from 2017 onwards. However, a need to reduce costs enforced by the Department for Transport (DfT) meant GWR decided to cut its 'Castle' use. This saw redundant vehicles put up for sale and while three power cars were sent for scrap, the rest were sent to store and, to date, nine have passed through

Great Yarmouth for new careers.

Over the next few months, more redundant HST vehicles made their way to Great Yarmouth, with the majority travelling by rail. Convoys of power cars arrived, while other moves ran as more traditional Class 43-hauled Mk.3 formations. Many of the HSTs made the journey via a short period in store at Ely, some for a few days and others for a few months, indeed some of the stock and '43s' had been stored at the Cambridgeshire city since being retired from main line use in 2021, and even earlier in a couple of instances, but had been resurrected by experts ahead of their export.

As well as former GWR 'Castle' stock, recently-withdrawn CrossCountry Mk.3s and '43s' also made the trip east. These had been withdrawn during August and September 2023, and yet were making the move to Great Yarmouth (and further afield) only days later. Indeed, Nos. 43007/008 powered the XC farewell charter from Leeds to Swanage on September 26 (RE330), and on October 16, No. 43008 had arrived at



↑ Having been moved from storage at Eastern Rail Services' Great Yarmouth facility, former CrossCountry Nos. 43007 and 43378 stand on the dockside at Great Yarmouth in early-February, alongside with ex-East Midlands Railway Nos. 43306/316/307 and a CrossCountry Mk.3 ahead of being loaded aboard the MV Louise Aurebach for their trip to Mexico. All photos Colin Turner, Turner Photography/Romic Consulting Limited

Yarmouth by road (RE331). Three of the coaches used on the farewell charter, Nos. 41193, 42373/378, have also gone to Mexico.

Romic Consulting Limited has been responsible for the export so far of 21 Class 43s and 40 Mk.3s (see Tables). They are finding new homes in Mexico and Nigeria, with 39 vehicles in Central

America and 22 vehicles in West Africa (see panel). More are likely to follow, indeed, 19 Mk.3s are at Eastern Rail Services' Great Yarmouth facility along with six Class 43s which have recently arrived by road (RE336). While the coaches are set for further use, the future of the power cars depends on future business opportunities.



↑ With former CrossCountry Trailer Guard Standard (TGS) No. 44072 closest to the camera, and ex-Great Western Railway Trailer Restaurant Buffet First (TRFB) No. 40902 standing on a low-loader, a collection of 14 Mk.3s destined for Mexico stand at Great Yarmouth (former East Midlands Railway No. 43320 can just be seen behind the TRFB).

The first exported HST vehicles are now in traffic in Mexico, with Nos. 43007 and 43320 also seen on test as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press. All the Mexican-bound HSTs are shipped to Altamira, in the Tamaulipas state in the country's Gulf Coast. Some, but so far not all, vehicles have received Corredor Interoceánico branding. The project is under control of the Secretariat of the Navy, and the railway will connect the Pacific and Atlantic coasts via the Tehuantepec Isthmus Railroad.

Robert Coleman, Romic managing director, said: "At the time we received the initial enquiry for the HST sets, we were very focussed on the sale of US rolling stock to our global clients, and I am very proud of how our team responded to the engineering and logistical challenges this project presented."



↑ No. 43007 is lifted on to the *MV Louise Aurebach* as former CrossCountry No. 43378 waits a similar journey. The power cars arrived at Great Yarmouth by rail on October 30, 2023, and were used for a private charter to Norwich on November 14, 2023, which was used to demonstrate the High Speed Train to potential parties.



↑ With No. 43007 safely aboard, former CrossCountry No. 43378 is lowered on to the *MV Louise Aurebach*.



↑ Prior to loading, six Class 43 power cars and 17 Mk.3s stand on the dockside at Great Yarmouth in early-February. Eastern Rail Services and Romic Consulting Limited have worked together to install track panels at the port so that future exports are not delayed.

POWER CARS EXPORTED TO MEXICO

Power car	Livery when exported	Last operator	Notes
No. 43007	BY	XC	
No. 43022	GW	GWR	Repainted since arrival. Moved to Great Yarmouth by road.
No. 43158	GW	GWR	Repainted since arrival. Moved to Great Yarmouth by road.
No. 43170	GW	GWR	Repainted since arrival. Moved to Great Yarmouth by road.
No. 43295	LN	EMR	
No. 43306	LN	EMR	
No. 43307	LN	EMR	
No. 43316	LN	EMR	
No. 43320	LN	EMR	
No. 43378	XC	XC	

Livery code: BY – HST blue and yellow, GW – Great Western Railway green, LN – Virgin Trains East Coast/London North Eastern Railway red, XC – CrossCountry.

Operator code: EMR – East Midlands Railway, GWR – Great Western Railway, XC – CrossCountry

MK.3S EXPORTED TO MEXICO

Slam-door stock: 40750, 40902, 41091, 41100, 42026, 42179, 42401/402/405/408, 42585, 44034/061/063/094

Sliding-door stock: 41026, 41193, 42036/052/053, 42366/373/378/380, 44017/052/072, 45002/005



↑ A former East Midlands Railway Mk.3 Trailer Standard (TS) is lowered on to the *MV Louise Aurebach* prior to the vessel setting sail for Mexico.



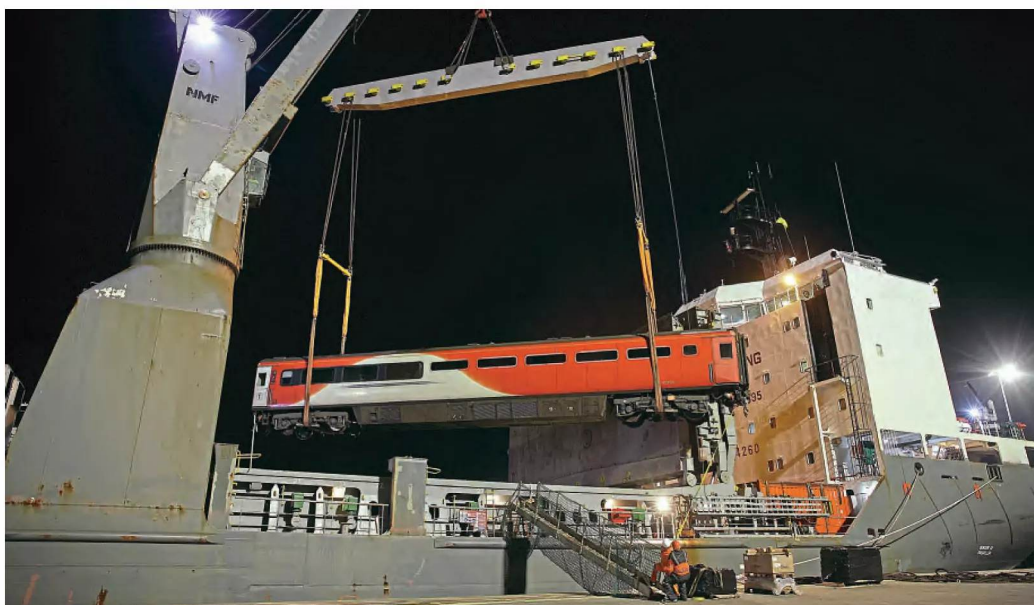
↑ Former East Midlands Railway No. 43320, one of several '43s' that transferred to EMR from London North Eastern Railway at the end of 2019, was one of the final vehicles loaded on to the *MV Louise Aurebach* prior to departure for Mexico. The '43' has also since hauled trains in Central America. The '43' stands on the back of a low-loader from where it will be lifted onto the vessel.



↑ The *MV Louise Aurebach* has several levels used to store the High Speed Train vehicles for their journey to Mexico. Former East Midlands Railway No. 43307 is lowered onto the vessel alongside two other '43s' and five Mk.3s.



↑ Former CrossCountry Nos. 43378 and 43007 (right), show the depth of the loading bay on the *MV Louise Aurebach*, after they were the first High Speed Train vehicles loaded on to the vessel.



↑ While all the Mk.3s exported to Nigeria have been coaches fitted with sliding doors, those headed to Mexico have included many fitted with slam-doors. One such vehicle, former East Midlands Railway (but still carrying Virgin Trains East Coast livery used by London North Eastern Railway) Trailer Restaurant Buffet First (TRFB) No. 40750 is lowered on to the *MV Louise Aurebach*. The first set of Mk.3s operating in Mexico are all slam-door vehicles.

A feasibility study concluded that the repowering project on Class 43s during the 2000s, when MTU power units replaced the original Paxman Valentas, combined with operating at lower speeds and hauling shorter trains meant that new operators could be provided with a reliable and cost-effective passenger train for many years to come.

Mr Coleman says: "Our focus is on providing an end-to-end service; we are not just selling locomotives and passenger coaches, and our technical teams are there to assist the new operators through a detailed handover and an ongoing supply of parts to ensure they have the technical knowledge and resources to effectively maintain the units."

The company says that more shipments are planned, and that the HST project is expected to continue for a further two to three years, with more to be expected to Mexico and Nigeria. 

Future editions of *Rail Express* will feature interviews with both Romic Consulting Limited and Eastern Rail Services.



↑ A former CrossCountry Trailer Guard Standard is lifted on to the MV Louise Aurebach, while various High Speed Train vehicles, including ex-XC No. 43378 and ex-London North Eastern Railway No. 43320 wait on the harbour for their turn to be loaded.

↓ With staff watching on, former East Midlands Railway No. 43307 is loaded on to the MV Louise Aurebach. The '43' is one of seven exported to Mexico earlier this year, taking the number there to 10. More are expected to follow.

POWER CARS EXPORTED TO NIGERIA

Power car	Livery when exported	Last operator	Notes
No. 43008	IC	XC	Moved to Great Yarmouth by road.
No. 43009	GW	GWR	
No. 43010	GW	GWR	
No. 43016	GW	GWR	
No. 43040	GW	GWR	
No. 43172	GW	GWR	
No. 43184	IE	XC	
No. 43192	GW	GWR	
No. 43239	XC	XC	
No. 43304	XC	XC	
No. 43366	XC	XC	

Livery code: GW – Great Western Railway green, IC – InterCity Swallow, IE – InterCity Executive, LN – Virgin Trains East Coast/London North Eastern Railway red, XC – CrossCountry.
Operator code: EMR – East Midlands Railway, GWR – Great Western Railway, XC – CrossCountry

MK.3S EXPORTED TO NIGERIA

Sliding-door stock: 48101/103/113/115/125/131-133, 49101/107/111

STORED VEHICLES

Ely: 48127-129/143-148, 49110/115/117
Great Yarmouth: 41035/087, 42037/038/051, 42234/290, 42342/368/369/371/372/379, 43006/027/029, 43112, 43238, 43319, 45001/004, 48140-142, 49114

EXPORTS

August 10, 2023, to Mexico: 41091, 41100, 42026, 42179, 42401/402/405, 43022, 43158/170, 44034/061/063/094
November 5, 2023, to Nigeria: 43008-010/016/040, 43172/184, 43239, 43304/366, 48101/103/113/115/125/131-133, 49101/107/111
February 7, 2024, to Mexico: 40750, 40902, 41026, 41193, 42036/052/053, 42366/373/378/380, 42408, 42585, 43007, 43295, 43306/307/316/320/378, 44017/052/072, 45002/005.





South Western Railway No. 455868 leads No. 455906 into Clapham Junction with the 2K35 13.57 London Waterloo-London Waterloo circular on April 16. The '455' was repainted into British Rail blue and grey to mark the start of the rundown of the Class 455 fleet. Alex Ayre

Labour's plans for taking control of the railways

Ahead of a General Election, Labour has revealed its plans for the railways. **Richard Clinnick** reviews the party's ideas.

RAILWAYS have perhaps never dominated the national news as much as they have in recent times.

Industrial action, the future of factories in this country, the opening of the Elizabeth Line, the construction of High Speed 2, the cancellation of HS2 north of the Midlands, Northern Powerhouse Rail and the constant stream of news regarding delays have put the railway higher and higher on the news agenda.

Rail ministers and their opposition counterparts are vocal on social media, particularly on X, formerly known as Twitter, where claim and counter claims are made. Wild accusations from social media users are thrown towards the ministers, but likewise, some of the suggestions from the politicians also fail basic levels of scrutiny.

Against that backdrop has been Labour's constant calling for railways to be taken in to public ownership. Shadow Secretary of State for Transport Louise

Haigh has led these calls, but when repeatedly asked by railway experts and commentators, and editor of *Rail Express*, on the social media platform, she has failed to reply.

Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper is quick to suggest that it is operators who make the decision regarding ordering trains, yet it is Rail Minister Huw Merriman who has been writing to the industry regarding new train orders. It is the DfT that requested operators reduce costs which has resulted in High Speed Trains being withdrawn by CrossCountry and Great Western Railway and starting new careers abroad. They have left behind short-formed or overcrowded trains. Or, in many instances, both!

It was May 2021, when the much-hyped *Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail* was published. This, it was said, would detail the plans for rail reform and was commissioned off the back of the May 2018 timetable mayhem. Yet three years later, although Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) has been created, there has been much talk but precious little action towards the reform. Now, with an election on the horizon, the railways are in the headlines and Labour decided, on April 25, to release its plans, entitled *Getting*

Britain Moving: Labour's plan to fix Britain's railways.

In a statement, the opposition party said: "Britain's railways should be a source of pride, not exasperation. As the country which created the railways, they are an iconic part of our heritage, and have played an essential role in enabling people to see our country, spend time with loved ones, and seize economic opportunities for more than two centuries.

"Labour's plan is to create a unified and simplified governance structure that places passengers at the heart of the goal, objectives and incentives for the railway, and to bring train operators under public ownership and control.

"Public ownership for our railways is about the practical need to deliver better services where they have failed.

"Even the Conservatives have had to bring failed franchises into public ownership, most recently TransPennine Express, just like the last Labour government brought infrastructure into public ownership and control in 2001 after the disastrous collapse of the privatised Railtrack.

"To achieve high standards in our rail services, a Labour government will establish a new, arms-length body, Great British Railways. This will be led by

rail professionals and industry experts and be responsible for the day-to-day operational delivery of the railways, for ensuring infrastructure and services work together, and for innovations and improvements in the experience of passengers and freight users.

"Labour's plan will fix our railways for the benefit of passengers and the taxpayer. It can usher in a decade of growth, innovation and service improvement, with the railways playing their part in Britain's national renewal."

There are six key objectives, it says and that a Labour government "will set the strategy for GBR, to make sure it delivers for passengers against our six key objectives." The six are: **reliable**, so that people can have the confidence in their journey, whether it's a one-off trip or their daily commute. It says this will be achieved via: "better coordination of the timetable and engineering works will reduce delays, improve reliability and reduce cost."

Affordable, so that prices are kept, wherever possible, at a point that works for both passengers and taxpayers.

Efficient, so that people know that their journey will be as straightforward as possible from booking to travel and to provide better value for money for the passenger and taxpayer quality.

Labour cites Switzerland here, saying: “timetabling is carefully coordinated across different modes of transport, according to an hourly rhythm of services which is easy to understand, navigate and rely upon, by a single body, the publicly-owned federal railway, SBB. This model is viewed as world-leading and has led to both significant passenger growth and increased workforce productivity.

Quality, so that the passengers have the service experience they have a right to expect. **Accessible**, so that the railways are available for everyone to use and safe. Labour says it will: “take advantage of the benefits of a unified network to deliver a more reliable and consistent experience for passengers with accessibility needs. We will also use the ability to plan across the whole rail network to better target investment to raise accessibility standards across the board and give local authorities more control over their transport networks to better consider accessibility needs for door-to-door journeys.” The statement doesn’t suggest level-boarding will be key there.

Safe. Labour says: “we will improve rail safety through seamless, reliable timetabling, better integration with other modes of transport to reduce waiting times between connections, and working with the police on staffing where there could be safety issues. We will also seek to accelerate, target and better standardise the deployment of technologies across the network to enhance safety, promote reporting of crimes and ensure evidence is recorded.”

Labour also said it will establish a powerful new passenger watchdog, the Passenger Standards Authority, to independently monitor standards and champion improvement in service

performance against these measures. Labour claims that specific improvements for passengers will include: automatic delay and cancellation refunds; more integrated timetables, ticketing and fares; an ambition to introduce a best-price guarantee (highlighting something already offered by Transport for London); digital season tickets; the PSA; clear standards that need to be met by all services; better mobile connectivity including moving towards 5G and better integration with other modes including buses and cycle hire.

GBR, the party says, will be an arm’s length body and ‘directing mind’ of empowered rail industry experts and professionals, tasked by the secretary of state for transport with improving the rail network with a relentless focus on passengers and freight customers.

Within the clear strategic direction set by the SoS, GBR will be responsible for planning timetables, improving services, and the operation, maintenance, and improvement of rail infrastructure.

GBR, Labour claims, will have a robust governance structure, accountable to the public, the UK and devolved Parliaments and operating within a long-term strategy for services and infrastructure determined by the SoS. It will also bring finances together into a single body, enabling it to take long-term decisions to increase patronage and deliver improvements for passengers and freight “without the micromanagement of the current system or of British Rail but while remaining accountable to the Secretary of State, whose agreement will be necessary for significant decisions around services and infrastructure.”

That does somewhat suggest that the idea of micro-management, in place now, could continue!

REACTION

The railway responded to the plans. Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper, writing on X, said: “buried in Labour’s rail nationalisation: greater control for the unions, more ministerial meddling, leading to “fewer” services. Making things worse for passengers. Labour would take us back to square one – and the bad old days of British Rail.”

RMT general secretary Mick Lynch, said: “Labour’s commitment to bring the train operating companies into a new unified and publicly owned rail network is in the best interests of railway workers, passengers and the taxpayer.

“We strongly welcome these bold steps to fix 14 years of Tory mismanagement of our privatised railways and Labour’s promise to complete a transition to public ownership within its first term in office. “This announcement however should be a first step to completely integrating all of our railway into public ownership. “It is time for a railway fit for the 21st century that serves the public, not the privateers and shareholders.”

Rail Partners, which provides advocacy and policy solutions for private sector passenger owning groups and freight operator members wasn’t keen on the idea. Its chief executive, Andy Bagnall, said: “Train companies agree that change is needed for the railways, but nationalisation is a political rather than a practical solution which will increase costs over time.

“Creating a thriving railway for customers and taxpayers does not have to be an ideological choice between a monopoly railway in public hands and one that delivers private investment and innovation through franchising.

“There is an alternative plan which gives the best of both worlds and is already being used by Labour mayors and increasingly across Europe.”

“To change the railway for the better, we must correctly understand the causes of the current situation to get the right solutions. Since the pandemic, train companies have been effectively renationalised and subject to a level of micromanagement by Government not even seen under British Rail. Exclusively blaming train companies for all the challenges facing the railway doesn’t stand up to scrutiny.

“Over time, the increased costs to the taxpayer of nationalisation due to the loss of commercial focus from private train companies will lead to either reduced train services or increased subsidy. That means rail competing for funding with other public services like the NHS. Historically, British Rail often lost this battle.

“There’s already an alternative plan that has been proven to work, exploiting the investment, innovation and commercial expertise of train companies but under the public control of a new governing body to join-up the railways and act on behalf of passengers. Rail users in London already benefit from this approach used by the capital’s mayor to run buses, trains and trams. Manchester’s mayor takes the same approach for the Bee bus network.

“Labour’s proposals are also moving in the exact opposite direction to what we’re seeing across Europe where other governments are seeking to copy the previous successes of the British model using competition amongst train companies, both for contracts and on the tracks, to reduce subsidies for taxpayers and provide a better service for passengers.”

He said his organisation welcomed Labour’s recognition in its plans that private sector freight and open access operators have a lot to offer, but claimed that ejecting private train companies would create a prolonged and messy transition at a time when all parts of the railway needed to pull together for passengers and freight users.”

Maggie Simpson, Rail Freight Group director general, said: “We are pleased that the Labour Party has highlighted the huge economic potential of rail freight and is committed to measures including statutory duties for freight and long-term growth targets. Our members are working to get more goods moving by rail and we strongly welcome this support.”

Likewise, GB Railfreight chief executive officer John Smith welcomed a focus on freight. He said: “We welcome Labour’s plans to seize the huge economic potential of railfreight – an industry which already contributes £2.45 billion to the UK economy.

“Railfreight helps to deliver millions of items to consumers across the UK each year, from Pinot Grigio to paracetamol, all the while helping to reduce road congestion and carbon emissions.

“We look forward to the opportunities Labour’s plans may present to our industry in the future.”



MTR Elizabeth Line No. 345019 leaves Seven Kings on April 12, 2023. The concession model in the capital is used as an example by Rail Partners as a way railways could be run instead of being taken in to public ownership as per Labour’s plans. Richard Clinnick

THE PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING GREAT BRITISH RAILWAYS

Five core principles underpin Labour's approach to the new body.

■ **Passenger-focused:** the new structure will be incentivised by the targets and performance criteria set by the secretary of state to focus on passengers and on delivering a reliable, safe, efficient, accessible, affordable and quality network.

■ **Long-term, whole-system thinking:** accountabilities and responsibilities will be realigned

to allow Great British Railways to take a system-wide view, underpinned by a long-term strategy for the railway set by the secretary of state.

■ **Empowering devolved authorities:** decision making will take place as close to local communities as possible, so the railway can be responsive to local needs.

■ **Bringing cost and revenue together:** track and train will be brought together so that decisions can

be made on a whole-industry basis, with a single view across railway costs and revenue, rather than being driven by what is best for individual organisations. Open access will continue to exist alongside this.

■ **Arm's length decision making:** day-to-day operations and decisions will be managed by professional industry experts, with only the most substantive decisions on services and infrastructure to be agreed with the secretary of state.



Railfreight is seen as key to railways under Labour. On April 5, Freightliner No. 66623 *Lest We Forget* passes Croxton, between Thetford and Ely, with the 6245 13.36 Trowse Yard-Tunstead Sidings. Ryan Hayward

HOW WILL IT WORK?

In *Getting Britain Moving: Labour's plan to fix Britain's railways*, the party says: "DfT, OLR Holdings (DOHL, the operator of last resort, which already manages services taken into public ownership) and Network Rail will be instructed to work closely together from day one of a Labour Government on getting the basics right. This will be done through a partnership model, with a newly appointed leadership team for a 'shadow' Great British Railways beginning to bring decisions together and tasked by the secretary of state with delivering improvements for passengers while primary legislation is progressed. This will fire the starting gun on reform and begin the process of creating a single, unified body to deliver improvements for passengers." The newly appointed leadership will be tasked by the SoS with creating a functioning organisation within six months, building on the work already undertaken by the existing GBRTT staff.

GBR's leadership will be tasked by the SoS to: "Convene the industry to begin transforming delivery and implementing a plan for continuous real improvements. There are experienced professionals in every part of the sector who will be empowered to deliver. Customer service experts from outside the rail industry will also be brought in, to stimulate innovation that is genuinely focused on the customer."

The DfT will prepare the legislation needed to transfer relevant powers to the new body without delay, according to Labour. The SoS will direct the newly-

appointed GBR leadership to create an expert team who will address the key priorities which will include operations where, according to Labour, a "resource-led, viable timetable will be devised, agreed with the secretary of state, and implemented at speed to tackle train crew management, timetabling, and service delivery issues. Existing private operators will need to be held strictly to account against contractual performance criteria to ensure that they do not allow services to deteriorate in advance of their contracts expiring."

Fares will begin to be reviewed with the aim of simplification and introducing digital innovations. The Rail Delivery Group (RDG) will transfer to GBR in due course and reforms to the underlying fares regulations will be implemented as soon as possible, while making sure to avoid unintended consequences.

Labour also mentions industrial relations, stating: "The politicised, adversarial approach to industrial relations pursued by the Conservatives will end when Labour takes office. An experienced industry professional will lead a team within Great British Railways tasked with developing a plan and establishing a forum to foster a more productive relationship with rail workers and their trade unions, in which they are valued and respected as partners for the positive change we need to see on the network."

The plans include encouraging modal shift and better coordination between service delivery and planning infrastructure improvements.

According to Labour: "GBR will

have a robust governance structure, accountable to the public and the UK and devolved parliaments and operating within a long-term strategy for services and infrastructure determined by the secretary of state.

"It will bring finances together into a single body, enabling it to take long-term decisions to increase patronage and deliver improvements for passengers and freight without the micromanagement of the current system or of British Rail – but while remaining accountable to the secretary of state, whose agreement will be necessary for significant decisions around services and infrastructure.

"As a directing mind, Great British Railways will manage competing cross-network planning and operations requirements on a forward looking basis, making informed trade-offs between different uses of the railway while maintaining consistent assumptions and updating its plans and risk analysis over time, which is as crucial for the efficiency of freight operations as it is for passenger services. It will be operationally independent but will have to agree the most substantive decisions with the secretary of state. It will be a new organisation, with a new culture dedicated single-mindedly to delivering for passengers and taxpayers."

The current government planned for its version of GBR to have its headquarters in Derby, and Labour intends to stick with this plan.

Labour also says that a Railways

Act will be delivered in the first parliamentary session, as a critical step to enable the full benefits of a unified railway and deliver reform.

The new GBR will be placed on a statutory footing as an arm's length body and will be operationally independent of, but accountable, to the secretary of state. Labour's report says: "It is not enough for Great British Railways simply to answer to the secretary of state. It will also be accountable to the UK and devolved Parliaments, devolved regional bodies, passengers and regulators."

The SoS will be 'a passenger-in-chief' says Labour. In this role, the SoS will hold GBR to account for delivering for passengers and freight, alongside a powerful new passenger-focused watchdog. As a result, the SoS responsibility will be threefold. The first involves setting the long-term strategic direction for rail. Labour says that a long-term strategy, set by the SoS, will outline how the railway should deliver against clearly stated passenger objectives and the overall objective of growing rail use.

"It will outline the role of rail in growing the economy, addressing regional and national inequality, delivering an integrated transport network, and helping to achieve our climate objectives." This will be updated on a five-yearly basis. Issuing such a strategy will enable government and the sector to make aligned decisions on the best use of funding, resources and investment and provide a key mechanism for ministers to ensure that

the railways respond to public priorities. It will also create a stable foundation for innovation and problem-solving; allowing, for example, electrification to be delivered efficiently in due course and for investors to understand the long-term outlook for the industry.

Labour says this will set out how the industry should make the most of the significant planned investment in rail and how these enhancements will be integrated with the existing network and transport system. It claims that this will save time, reduce costs and enable innovators to develop new ideas and solutions, allowing the full benefits of investment to be realised. The strategy will seek to integrate and reflect the ambitions of devolved and regional and national stakeholders into a single coherent strategy for the railway, underpinned by regionally and nationally focused delivery plans. It will be published early in a new Labour government, clearly setting out the benefits that the Government wants to achieve from rail.

As the 'passenger-in-chief', the SoS will set clear objectives for passengers by defining the long-term strategy and the clear set of objectives and detailed outcomes that those who run the railways will need to deliver and will hold them to account for it. GBR's regulatory regime and performance monitoring will ensure that it is not overly bureaucratic and stymied by the wrong incentives, claims Labour. The SoS will appoint GBR's chair.

Everything, from executive pay to unlocking future investment, will be tested and measured against the key performance indicators that will drive progress in making the railway safe, accessible, reliable, quality, affordable and efficient, the party claims. The SoS will also hold statutory powers to ensure proportionate strategic interventions, where appropriate, to drive performance improvement for passengers and freight.

Lastly, the SoS will approve targets for the growth of railfreight, with a duty on GBR to enable that growth. A duty will be imposed on GBR to enable the growth of railfreight alongside passenger services, setting clear and meaningful targets for rail freight growth within pre-defined periods.

Labour says that some organisations, such as the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) will remain while the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) will retain responsibility for accident investigations. The Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) will be reviewed for its exact remit while the British Transport Police (BTP) will continue its current role. The ORR will also continue to make approval decision on open access applications based on an updated framework and guidance issued by the SoS.

ROLLING STOCK

Unions have long suggested that the rolling stock leasing companies (ROSCOs) should be nationalised.

Labour states: "With 10 current rolling stock companies owning and leasing trains and carriages worth billions, it would not be responsible for the next Labour government to take on the cost of renationalising rolling stock as part of our urgent programme of reform. GBR will continue to lease rolling stock when taking on operator contracts but will apply the single directing mind approach to ensure that barriers to sharing rolling stock across the network that currently cause systemic delays are eliminated.

"Over the longer term, we will develop a long-term industrial strategy for rolling stock which supports British manufacturing, innovation and interoperability and aligns with the wider objectives of the industry. This will seek to end the current boom-and-bust cycle, ensure a strong pipeline of work, and consider the best financing structures for future orders, in partnership with private capital."

But how long will all these plans take? The party says that within five years of a Labour government, the core terms of the existing contracts will have expired and it is expected that they will have transitioned into management by GBR.

Says Labour: "In the pursuit of a more efficient and passenger-focused rail system, the approach to bringing rail services back into public ownership will be measured and pragmatic." Each contract will transition as it comes to an end.

Labour says that this phased approach ensures a smooth transfer of operations, allows for careful planning and integration into the new system and avoids imposing costs on passengers and taxpayers in compensation for contractors. Labour claims it will deliver a Railways Act for England, Scotland, and Wales "to enable the full benefits of a unified railway, by achieving the following: giving statutory force to GBR and implementing the new structure which will bring the decisions that matter to passengers together under one set of goals; transferring expiring train operator contracts directly to the new statutory body and removing the requirement to return franchises to the private sector."

Caution is required. Labour said prior to its 1997 election win that it would reverse Privatisation. That didn't happen. Likewise the 2004 Northern franchise was let, by Labour, on a zero-growth deal which created problems in the mid-2010s. Rail Partners cites London as an example where private investment is working, however as LU World shows, Transport for London is still having to make decisions on upgrades and renewals based on a lack of funding.

Labour is, currently, seemingly odds-on to form the next government. What it does with the railways could be fascinating. But who owns the railway will not matter to passengers (and freight) if things do not improve. What happens next is crucial to the long-term future of our railways. 

TransPennine Express was the most recent franchise taken back 'in-house' by the Department for Transport. Under Labour's plans, more will follow over five years. On April 30, TPE No. 802202 passes Marsden with the 1P25 11.54 Liverpool Lime Street-Newcastle. Tom McAtee



Will it be second time around for LSL Class 45?

Locomotive Services Group announces plans for inaugural 'Peak' run.

OPTIMISM is in the air with Locomotive Services Group, owner of No. 45118 *The Royal Artilleryman*, that it will operate its first main line tour on July 27.

Should the '45' haul a charter that day as planned, then it will be 37 years since the Sulzer Type 4 last ran on the national system. This is the second time the 'Peak' was scheduled to make its long-awaited LSG debut and return to main line action, but the extensive workload, undertaken by Harry Needle Railroad Company at Barrow Hill, as well as at Loram prior to that, conspired against an earlier appearance.

Even now, the charter is being advertised by LS's subsidiary, Inter-

City, before 45118 has completed its test running.

The train is 'The Diamond Jubilee Express', which will depart from Bristol Temple Meads and follows the long-trodden route undertaken by the class, the north-east to south-west route, with calls at Bristol Parkway, Cheltenham Spa and Birmingham New Street. Destination is both Duffield and Chesterfield. At Duffield, passengers can partake in the Diamond Jubilee of the Class 14 diesel hydraulic 'Teddy Bear' machines, with six in operation over the eight-mile line to Wirksworth. The cost of entry is included in the fare for the charter.

Passengers detraining at Chesterfield can sample this market town with its famed 228ft crooked spire (nine feet out of vertical) of St Mary and All Saints church.

New as No. D67 to Derby (17A) on

May 3, 1962, it gained its name without ceremony at Derby Works in September 1965. Converted to ETH, it assumed its present number of No. 45118 on December 20, 1973.

Withdrawn on May 8, 1987, after several years stored at March, the locomotive was bought by David Young and moved to Pitsford on the Northampton Steam Railway in September 1990. There it suffered severe vandalism. Repairs were started at Loram, Derby, however whilst it was at Derby, LSG bought the '45/1' and contracted HNRC at Barrow Hill to return it to working order. As it nears completion, HNRC has asked the Deltic Preservation Society for access to its adjacent depot to weigh it.

Fares for the 'Diamond Jubilee Express' are notably good value considering that it is the 'Peak's' inaugural run. Standard is from £110 and First (non-dining) from £150. 

A folly not to book

UK RAILWAYS has released details of its 'North West Freighter' on July 14. Starting at Watford Junction with a GB Railfreight Class 57/3, at Crewe, a GBRf '60' is tagged on the rear. The first stop is the one-mile Folly Lane freight branch at Runcorn.

Reversing, and traversing the single line Frodsham curve to Helsby, another reversal sees the charter bound for Warrington and Preston, then along the Preston Docks line to the Ribble Steam Railway where participants can indulge. Thereafter, after climbing the 1-in-29 back to the main line, Chester is the next stop, with hospitality of the Chester Down and Up Goods. Detaching the '60', the charter then powers south via Wrexham, Shrewsbury and back to base.

Standard Class fare is what has become the norm - £129. Dining option is available at a hefty £299!



Following its successful main line test run on April 14, from London Paddington to Tame Bridge Parkway, No. D1015 *Western Champion* is booked to haul its first 'proper' railtour charter on June 1. This is Pathfinder Railtours' 'The English Riviera Airshow' from Tame Bridge Parkway to Torquay and Paignton. On April 14, the Western passes Kings Sutton with the 1256 13.52 London Paddington-Birmingham New Street, which it hauled as far as Tame Bridge Parkway. Steve King



Locomotive Services Group No. D1935 (47805) *Roger Hosking MA 1925-2013* passes Settle Junction on April 13, powering Statesman Rail's 1Z18 16.30 Carlisle-Leicester 'The Lakelander' charter. No. 70000 *Britannia* hauled the train to the Cumbrian city from Preston but failed at Carlisle, meaning that the '47' had to take the train back to the East Midlands. Chris Gee

FORTHCOMING TOURS FOR JUNE

Date	Tour Name	From-To	Motive Power	Promoter
1	English Riviera Air Show	Tame Bridge Parkway, stations to Swindon-Torquay and Paignton	No. D1015	PR
5	Great British Seaside: Whitstable	London Victoria-Whitstable	DBC '67'	BBP
5	Bucket & Spade Charter	Crewe, stations to Manchester-York and Scarborough	'40' D213	BLS
6	Garden of England	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
6	Holt Hoover	Eastleigh, stations to Peterborough via Warwick-Holt (one way).	No. D6515 (33012), No. 50008	BLS
6	Chatsworth House	Norwich, Ipswich-Chesterfield	WCR '47'/'57'	NB
8	Moving Murder Mystery	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
8	Skegness	Hastings, stations to London-Skegness (tour tentative)	HD '201' DEMU	HD
8	Blyth & Tyne / Beamish Open Air Museum	London King's Cross, stations to Doncaster-Durham & Newcastle	RA '43'x2	UKR
9	Champagne Afternoon Tea	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
9	Cromer Crompton	Sheringham-Water Orton (one way)	No. D6515 (33012), No. 50008	BLS
12	Historic Bath	London Victoria-Bath	DBC '67'	BBP
12	Settle & Carlisle Coastal Pullman	Gerrards Cross, stations to Solihull-Carlisle	LS HST	MP
14	Carriage Club	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
15	Dorset Coast Statesman	Norwich, stations to Shenfield-Weymouth	LS '47'x2	SR
15	Ancient Kingdom	London King's Cross, stations to Peterborough-Alnwick and Berwick	DBC '67'	UKR
18	Oban and West Highland Pullman	Preston, stations to Motherwell-Oban	LS HST	MP
19	Gusbourne English Garden Party	London Victoria-Appledore	DBC '67'	BB
19	Snowdonia Statesman	Cardiff Central, stations to Birmingham New St-Blaenau Ffestiniog	LS '47'x2	SR
20	Garden of England	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
20	Ladies Day at Ascot	Manchester, Crewe, Birmingham-Ascot	WCR '47'/'57'	NB
21	Moving Murder Mystery	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
21	Spirit of Travel Lunch	Crewe-Chester-Wrexham circular	WCR '47'/'57'	NB
21	Champagne Afternoon Tea	Crewe-Chester-Wrexham circular	WCR '47'/'57'	NB
22	Settle & Carlisle Coastal Pullman	Holyhead, stations to Wigan North Western-Carlisle	LS HST	MP
22	Return of the Jolly Fisherman 125	London St Pancras, stations to Leicester-Skegness	RA '43'x2 & 125 Group Mk.3s	UKR
23	Champagne Afternoon Tea	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
26	Le Manoir Aux Quat' Seasons	London Victoria-Oxford Parkway	DBC '67'	BBP
26	Royal Kew Gardens	Manchester, Crewe, Stafford-Hounslow	WCR '47'/'57'	NB
27	Torbay Riviera Pullman	Crewe, stations to Wolverhampton-Torquay and Paignton	LS HST	MP
28	Carriage Club	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
28	Gatsby Gala Dinner	London circular	WCR '47'/'57'	NB
29	Mazey Day Cornishman	Dorridge, stations to Bristol Temple Meads-Penzance	CFA '50'x2	PR
29	Cornish Riviera Mazey Day Statesman	Wolverhampton, stations to Cam & Dursley-Penzance	LS '47'x2	SR

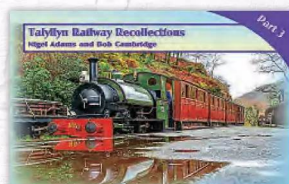
Operators: BBP – British Belmond Pullman, BLS – Branch Line Society, HD – Hastings Diesels, MP – Midland Pullman, NB – Northern Belle, PR – Pathfinder Railtours, SR – Statesman Rail.

RAIL EXPRESS

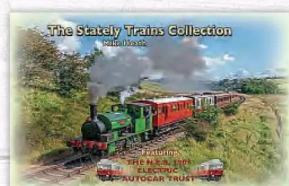
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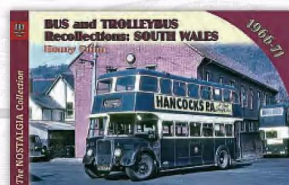
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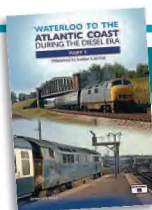
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Waterloo to the Atlantic Coast During the Diesel Era (Part 1): Waterloo to Exeter Central

Published by Platform 5
www.platform5.com
ISBN: 9781915984142
Price: £21.99

THIS 96-page softback publication by respected photographer Bernard Mills follows the course of the renowned 'Atlantic Coast Express', which ran from London Waterloo to various destinations on the north coast of Devon and Cornwall, including Ilfracombe, Bude and Pastow.

Split into three chapters, this book looks at: the South Western Main Line from Waterloo to Battledown Flyover, the West of England Main Line from Andover to Salisbury to Yeovil and from Yeovil to Exeter Central.

The images are drawn from the author's extensive collection and

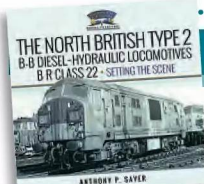
feature the various locomotive-hauled trains that could be seen on the route, as well as some of the variety of multiple units. All images are colour and date back as far as the mid-1960s. As you would expect diesel-hydraulics, Class 47s and '50s' feature heavily but there are rare visitors too.

Details are incredibly detailed and lean not only on Bernard's notes but also knowledge and expertise from experts based on the route. There are anecdotes from Bernard's career with British Rail, as well as detailed maps and a history of the route which

focuses on the arrival of diesel-hauled trains, to the demise of such operations in the early-1990s when Class 159s replaced them.

Part 2, to be published later this year, will look at the northern coast of Devon and Cornwall and promises to be just as fascinating.

There are some truly wonderful and atmospheric images and, although the reproduction of some are not up to the usual high Platform 5 standard, this book is still recommended for anyone who remembers this route during its locomotive-hauled heyday. (RC).



North British Type 2

Published by Pen & Sword Books Limited
www.pen-and-sword.co.uk
ISBN: 9781399045032
Price: £28.00

THE first of a two-part series is claimed, by the publisher, to be the first book devoted exclusively to the full history of the British Rail Class 22 diesel-hydraulics.

Written by Anthony P. Sayer, the 176-page hardback book features 60 colour and 145 mono illustrations and includes history of each of the 58 locomotives from their delivery to withdrawal.

The North British Locomotive Company machines were delivered between 1959 and 1962 and lasted intact until 1968 when around half of the fleet was withdrawn due to

declining traffic levels. All 58 had been withdrawn by January 1, 1972.

This book seeks to set the scene surrounding the short history of the class, covering its introduction, technical aspects, appearance design, delivery and acceptance testing, works histories and allocations, while detailed individual histories of each of the 58 locomotives are also included. All this information is split across eight chapters.

It must be highlighted that the review copy sent to *Rail Express* by the publisher was a PDF and so a comprehensive review of the quality

of images cannot be given. A scroll through the publication shows it is overflowing with information presented in various forms including tables and bullet points. There are also diagrams showing how the '22s' were designed and their various details.

Images from newsletters of the time and cab interior shots also provide fascinating insight to a locomotive design that vanished from our railways more than 50 years ago.

Overall, this book looks like a valuable addition to the bookshelf of anyone with an interest in the early diesel designs. (RC).



Beeching: 60 Years since the Axeman

Published by Gresley Books
www.mortonsbooks.co.uk
ISBN: 9781911703228
Price: £9.99

MARCH 27, 1963, is a date that few people who worked on British Railways at the time will forget. This was the date that BR published its infamous *Reshaping of British Railways* report, commissioned by chairman Dr Richard Beeching.

The report recommended widespread and scathing cuts to the extensive BR network, closing numerous railway routes and stations which had been deemed to be uneconomical and cementing the name of Beeching in British folklore and making the 'axeman' a household name for all the wrong reasons.

The editor of our sister title *Heritage Railway*, Robin Jones, has written extensively about Richard Beeching and analysed his role in British history, with this new bookazine-style

publication taking a detailed look at the life and legacy of Beeching and his report more than six decades since that landmark document was released to a shocked British public. There are many people who have never forgiven Beeching for the mass railway closures of the 1960s and 1970s, even though he has now been dead for almost 40 years, but is his reputation as the railway axeman fair?

This 140-page A4 portrait format softback book is well written and comprehensively researched, with many good quality colour and monochrome pictures, maps and tables provided.

The book also brings the story up to date, looking at the reopening to timetabled services of the Dartmoor Line and the forthcoming reintroduction of passenger services on the Northumberland Line over the coming months, as well as the decision by the Government last autumn to cancel the second phase of the planned HS2 route north of Birmingham.

This is a well-produced book that is attractively presented and gives a good overall view of this fascinating aspect of our railway history, and for £9.99 it is a bargain. Recommended. (AMC).



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