



**DB CARGO
TO WITHDRAW
CLASS 60s**

**NEW SIEMENS
UNDERGROUND STOCK
ON TEST IN GERMANY**



RAIL **EXPRESS**

Essential reading for today's rail enthusiast

A GREATER WESTERN

**Why GWR wants
new trains and
more electrification**



**1300
jobs to go
at Litchurch
Lane?**



MODELLING SECTION

- Dapol's EMU surprise
New '00' gauge Class 323 revealed
- Heljan Deltic delight
'O' gauge Class 55 assessed
- Exceptional CEP
Bachmann Class 411 4-CEP review



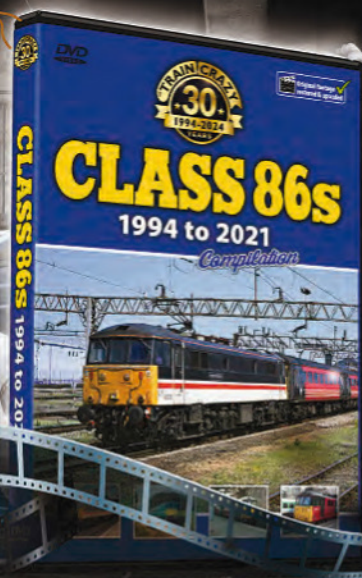
**LNER orders 10 CAF
tri-modes to replace '91s'**

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Train Crazy 30 Years 1994-2024 **CLASS 86** 1994 to 2021 Compilation



2024 marks the 30th anniversary of Train Crazy railway videos and DVDs. Starting out as a hobby in 1994, then a full time job from 1998, over the last three decades, just about every type of locomotive and unit has featured, with more than 400 passenger, freight, cab ride and tram titles, released on VHS tape, DVD, Blu-ray and download.

Here's the good bit... In the last few years, software to restore old grainy and wobbly film has become more accessible. Previously it was expensive, slow and not very good, but in 2022 huge advances were made. The old film used on these new compilation programmes is all being reworked, improved, cleaned up and upscaled. For the first time, all of the film shot in standard-definition (720 x 576 or less) can be upscaled and presented in top quality high-definition (1920 x 1080).

Long gone and long scrapped EMUs, DMUs, 31s, 37s, 47s, 86s and many other locos and coaches which were only ever filmed in SD, can now be appreciated in full HD! Whether on DVD or Blu-ray, the picture quality of this new series is better than anything seen before, of trains filmed in the same era.

The fourth release features Train Crazy film of the Class 86 locomotives from the period 1994 to 2021. The 86 needs little introduction and locos are featured far and wide including West Coast, Cross Country and Anglia passenger duties as well as West Coast container and mail trains. More than 50 different locos are featured wearing a rainbow of liveries - from Inter City and Virgin to the numerous Freightliner colours, RES and a few celebrities.

Presented in a no-nonsense format of on-screen captions with unit number, location and date, sit back and enjoy some top quality action from up to 30-years ago - with much improved picture quality and in HD for the very first time! This is far from a complete record of these units during these years but this is what was filmed, now re-edited, re-worked and upscaled.



Duration: 85 minutes **Price:** DVD £10.95 Blu-ray £11.95 **Code:** TC674

Download: SD - £9.95 / HD - £10.95



Actual footage



Also Available

CLASS 205 and 207 DEMUs 1999 to 2003 Compilation

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CLASS 31s 1994 to 2022 Compilation

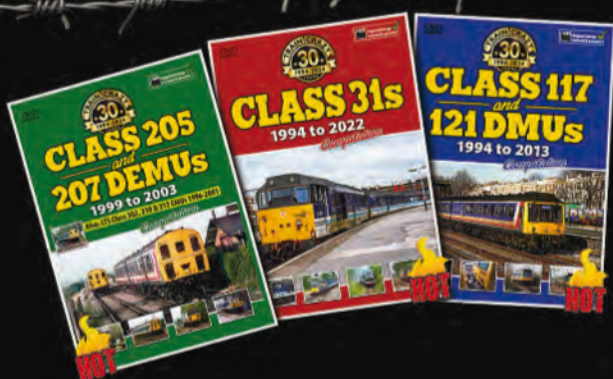
Duration: 83 minutes **Price:** DVD £10.95 Blu-ray £11.95 **Code:** TC672

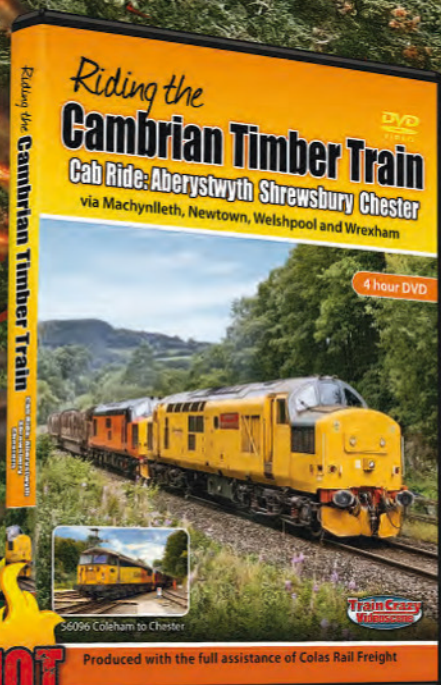
Download: SD - £9.95 / HD - £10.95

CLASS 117s and 121 DMUs 1994 to 2013 Compilation

Duration: 70 minutes **Price:** DVD £10.95 Blu-ray £11.95 **Code:** TC671

Download: SD - £9.95 / HD - £10.95





Actual footage



Departure from Aberystwyth



Machynlleth



Slow climb up Talerddig



Arrival at Sutton Bridge



Passing Gobowen

Riding the Cambrian Timber Train

Cab Ride: Aberystwyth - Shrewsbury - Chester

After a gap of almost 30-years, commercial freight returned to the Cambrian lines in 2022 in the shape of train conveying timber, running from Aberystwyth to Chirk. Only running occasionally, by the summer and autumn of 2023, it ran up to three times a week, usually empties down overnight, coming back loaded on either a late afternoon path or a daytime path the following day.

Operated by Colas, the flow initially employed 2 x 97s, but latterly has been a 97 on top - for the ERTMS signalling requirement - with a 37 tucked in behind.

This is a cab ride on board the Cambrian timber train, filmed on one of the daytime paths, in August 2023. 97302+37405 provide the power as far as Coleham depot, where the 97 is swapped for 56096 for the run through to Chester via Wrexham.

Although mid-summer this was a classic case of 'four-seasons-in-one-day' and the 97+37 combo struggled up the 10-mile Talerddig gradient, with sections as steep as 1 in 52.

The entire four-hour 123-mile journey is shown. Includes maps, on-screen captions and minimal narration. A thrash cam in the back cab records the locos at work and ambient sounds.

Duration: 240 mins

Price: DVD £19.95 (2 discs) - Blu-ray £22.95 (2 discs)

Code: TC162

Download: SD £14.95 HD £17.95



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...also still available
Riding the Carlisle Log Train

Duration: 240 minutes Price: DVD £9.95 - Blu-ray £9.95
Code: TC070



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On a dark autumn afternoon, Northern No. 158796 rolls into Garsdale, with the 1E20 15.20 Carlisle-Nottingham on November 19. Steve Sienkiewicz



Great Western Railway No. 57605 Totnes Castle stands at London Paddington on August 15, with the 1C50 23.45 'Night Riviera' Sleeper to Penzance. Tom McAtee

RAIL EXPRESS

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The most anticipated OO gauge model ever to be announced.

WD Austerity 2-10-0 (1943)

The War Department (WD) "Austerity" 2-10-0 is a type of heavy freight steam locomotive that was introduced during the Second World War in 1943, and is a powerhouse of an engine. The Austerity 2-10-0 commands respect wherever it roams, its presence on the rails could not be ignored. The Austerity 2-10-0 was based on the Austerity 2-8-0, and was designed to have interchangeable parts by R.A. Riddles. It was built cheap, but it was built powerful. It had the same power output as the 2-8-0 but a lighter axle load, making it suitable for secondary lines. 100 were built for the war effort, with 150 being built in total. Even now after 90 years, the Austerity still makes appearances on the rails, proving that the old guard won't be put down easily.

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RAIL EXPRESS

The East Lancashire Railway's diesel multiple unit gala was held on November 18/19, using members of the railway's home DMU fleet, while some 'unit drags' were also re-created. On November 18, No. 40012 *Aureol* stands at Ramsbottom with the 1670 17.50 Rawtenstall-Bury Bolton Street. Chris Gee



DB Cargo UK to withdraw Class 60 fleet

By Richard Clinnick

DB CARGO UK is withdrawing its Class 60 fleet from service, replacing them with modified Class 66s.

Speculation had suggested that the '60s' would be withdrawn by the end of 2023, but no date has been confirmed by the freight operator. However, Pathfinder Tours announced that its 'Festive Midland-lan' tour on December 16, set to feature top-and-tail DB Class 60s, would be the last such train DB would provide a '60' for.

As this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, there were four operational Class 60s in the WCAT pool, which were Nos. 60024 *Clitheroe Castle*, 60040 *The Territorial Army Centenary*, 60062 *Sonia* and 60074 *Luke*.

A DB spokesperson told *RE* on

November 23: "The Class 66 continues to form the backbone of DB Cargo UK's fleet, with the Class 60 currently only used on limited traffic.

"After careful consideration, analysis and in collaboration with our customers, we have established that some of our services currently operated by Class 60s could be more effectively and efficiently operated by the Class 66 HTE – this will benefit our customers and the company alike.

"To this end, we are investing in a significant programme of work to re-gear 10 of our existing Class 66s to provide enhanced traffic effort capability.

"These will be phased in from April 2024 onwards and allow us to continue with the phased withdrawal of our Class 60 fleet."

The 10 Class 66s are being converted into Class 66/6s to enable them to haul heavier trains, albeit at a slower speed, thus in theory being able to replace the '60s'. A Class 60 has 3100hp and a maximum tractive effort of 106,500lbf with a maximum speed of 60mph, while a Class 66/6 has 3200hp, a maximum tractive effort of 105,080lbf and a 65mph maximum speed.

In 2011, DB announced a £3 million scheme to upgrade an initial batch of seven Class 60s which was expected to extend their working lives by 15 years. A further 14 were to be overhauled, although that number grew slightly. First to be treated was No. 60007, and this was followed by Nos. 60001/010/015/017/019/020/024/039/040/044/054/059/062/063/066/074/079/091/092, 60100.

In 2023, DB had removed Nos. 60001/007/010/011/015/017/020/044/065/066/092, 60100 from traffic as the fleet has shrunk. It currently has 60 examples stored, and it's likely that these will be put up for sale.

Elsewhere, DC Rail has four serviceable Class 60s, Nos. 60028/029/046/055, with Nos. 60008/009/013/022/038/057/060/061/064/070/075/080/090/098/099 stored pending possible overhaul and reinstatement, GB Railfreight has 10 serviceable locomotives, Nos. 60002/021/026/047/056/076/085/087/095/096 and three stored examples, Nos. 60004/014/018. Locomotive Services owns No. 60081 while Nos. 60050/086 are privately-owned and stored at an industrial site at Kinsley, near Wakefield. One locomotive, No. 60006, has been scrapped. 



To celebrate the final months of Class 507s in service, Merseyrail, together with Merseytravel and Angel Trains, has returned pioneer No. 507001 to blue and grey livery. The three-car electric multiple unit, which carries branding for the various stakeholders, and has different colour doors due to accessibility guidelines, entered traffic in its 'new' livery on December 1. The '507' is expected to be one of the last of the EMU fleet that dates from 1978 to remain in traffic as more Stadler Class 777s delivered from Poland and Switzerland enter traffic. Merseyrail was expected to have withdrawn the final Class 508s from traffic by the end of 2023. On December 2, No. 507001 is pictured approaching Bidston forming the 2W18 10.51 West Kirby-West Kirby. Andy Parkinson

RMT votes to accept deal and end its industrial action

MEMBERS of the RMT union have accepted a deal to end the dispute over pay and conditions which has lasted for more than 18 months.

The union's general secretary Mick Lynch said: "Our members have spoken in huge numbers to accept this unconditional pay offer and no compulsory redundancies until the end of 2024.

"I want to congratulate them on their steadfastness in this long

industrial campaign. We will be negotiating further with the train operators over reforms they want to see. And we will never shy away from vigorously defending our members' terms and conditions, now or in the future.

"This campaign shows that sustained strike action and unity gets results and our members should be proud of the role they have played in securing this deal"

A Rail Delivery Group spokesperson said: "This welcome vote from RMT members will unlock a pay rise for our people and means that fair agreements have now been reached with three out of the four unions involved in the recent industrial dispute."

Secretary of state for transport Mark Harper said: "This is welcome news for passengers and a significant step towards resolving industrial disputes on the railway, giving

workers a pay rise before Christmas and a pathway to delivering long overdue reforms.

Anthony Smith, Transport Focus chief executive, said: "It is good news for passengers that RMT members and the rail industry have reached an agreement. In the long-term we hope that this will give passengers, who have had enough of the ongoing industrial action, some much needed certainty when travelling by train."



TPE unveils new livery designed to get men talking

TRANSPENNINE Express used International Men's Day on November 15 to unveil a wrap on No. 185111 designed to get men talking and raise awareness of men's suicide.

Working with the charity Andy's Man Club, the livery was unveiled on the three-car diesel multiple unit at Hull Paragon.

Suicide is the biggest killer of men under 50, and TPE managing director Chris Jackson said: "Charities such as Andy's Man Club are life savers for so many and we're extremely proud to work with them ahead of International Men's Day to unveil the new livery on our train."

"If just one person sees the train and it gives them the confidence to talk about the problems they are facing then our train wrap will have made a difference."

More than 750 TPE staff have completed a Safeguarding on Transport training scheme, while 500 body-worn



The new wrap applied to No.185111. TransPennine Express

cameras have been introduced and 34 Safeguarding Champions across the network have been trained to deal

with people who may need support and advice when dealing with a vulnerable person.

TfL calls for government funding as ridership rockets

TRANSPORT for London has used increased ridership on the London Underground network to again call for financial support to cover capital investment.

TfL said that it can cover three-quarters of the costs of planned investment next year, but that it was seeking confirmation from government that it would provide the remaining proportion it has consistently acknowledged that TfL requires.

However, this confirmation was not given in the Autumn Statement, and TfL said that the situation was now urgent if it was going to continue to provide services that can support growth.

TfL revealed on November 30 that ridership had exceeded four million passengers for the first time since the pandemic in March 2020.

Transport for London revealed

that 24.78 million journeys were made on LU between November 19 and 25, with around 4.05m journeys made on November 24.

This is up 7.6% on November 24, 2022, when ridership was around 3.76m. TfL said midweek ridership is now regularly around 3.7m journeys and up around 6.5% compared with the same period last year. Weekend ridership also continues to grow, TfL said.

Meanwhile the Elizabeth Line has now carried around 270m journeys, TfL said, with more than 720,000 journeys made each day during the Tuesday to Thursday period. The busiest ever day on the railway was November 9, when some 766,000 journeys were made.

On the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), some 325,000 journeys are being made on an average weekday, said TfL, while there are around

625,000 journeys made each day on London Overground.

London transport commissioner Andy Lord said: "It's great news that we are now seeing ridership numbers reach four million a day on the Tube again, and that ridership is growing across our services."

"Public transport is a fundamental component of our economic recovery, and we must continue to encourage public transport use if we are to revive and grow our economy."

"However, we need the government to urgently confirm that they will provide the capital investment support we need for 2024/25. TfL's investment in the supply chain supports more than 100,000 jobs across the UK, almost half of which are in small medium enterprises, who are also reliant on TfL's funding certainty."

First overhauled 92 TS train tested in passenger service



The interior of the first overhauled 92 TS unit which includes a new seat moquette. Once any changes have been made, the eight-car train will have a fresh vinyl applied prior to re-entering passenger traffic. Amir Dawoodbhai

FOLLOWING extensive upgrade work at London Underground's Acton Works, the first overhauled 92 TS (Tube Stock) unit was introduced into passenger service on November 24.

This initial test, involving Driving Motor end units Nos. 91001 and 91201, was undertaken on a Hainault-Woodford shuttle service, prior to the eight-car train retiring back to Hainault Depot.

Work on the new workshop began in 2018 (RE263), and the upgrade has been undertaken at the completed facility, which will now host the remainder of the 92 TS units as part of the upgrade.

Even though the 92 TS are approaching 30 years in age, the overhaul work is motivated by Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 2010 (RVAR). Meanwhile the DC Motors are also being replaced with AC equipment and related propulsion equipment.

Despite the work is being undertaken, the trains are still due for replacement, probably during the early-mid 2030s.

IN BRIEF

'805' INTRODUCTION DELAY

HITACHI Class 805 bi-modes currently being delivered to Avanti West Coast are now expected to enter traffic next summer. The five-car trains, of which Nos. 805001-007 have so far been released, will be used to replace Class 221 Super Voyagers. It had been hoped that the first '805s' would enter traffic from the December timetable change, however, that has been delayed as training on the '805s' continues.

CARDIFF MASTERPLAN

NETWORK Rail has launched a masterplan process around Cardiff Central station that could see a comprehensive design and redevelopment of more than 10 acres of railway land including the construction of new homes. Working with Transport for Wales and local developer Rightacres, NR is looking to deliver a 695-space car park that would create more space around the station and redevelopment of the surrounding area.

CONTRACTOR SOUGHT FOR HS2 INTERCHANGE

HS2 Ltd has launched its search for a contractor to lead enabling works for the Automated People Mover (APM) that will serve Interchange station in Solihull. The APM will operate between Interchange, the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham International and Birmingham Airport. The contract is worth up to £2 million. It is expected to take around one year to complete the works. The APM's main infrastructure will include four stops, a 1.4 mile viaduct and a maintenance facility. HS2 is due to open between 2029 and 2033.

£3.9BN PACKAGE FOR TRANSPENNINE UPGRADE

GOVERNMENT announced a £3.9 billion funding package for the TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU) on December 4, which will be used to double the tracks between Huddersfield and Ravensthorpe. The Department for Transport claims that £6.9bn has so far been invested in the TRU project, with £11.5bn planned in total, which it says is more than it provided for the Elizabeth line.

NEW TPE TRAIN FLEET

TRANSPENNINE Express will place an order for up to 29 new trains, the government confirmed on December 4. TPE has already been working on plans for the fleet, which will be delivered before end of the decade (RE331) and is expected to be bi-mode power. The new fleet will allow a cascade of Class 185s to other services.



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LNER orders ten CAF tri-modes

By Richard Clinnick

TEN 10-car tri-mode trains have been ordered by London North Eastern Railway (LNER) from Spanish manufacturer CAF.

The trains will feature electric, diesel and battery power and will be assembled at the manufacturer's factory in Newport, south Wales. They will replace the Class 91/Mk.4 sets used by LNER, although the new fleet will operate on more routes than the trains they will replace are currently used on, with LNER telling *Rail Express* that the CAF trains will likely serve all routes other than Aberdeen and Inverness.

David Horne, LNER managing director, said: "Successfully delivering this new fleet is an integral part of LNER's Business Plan. Our focus is ensuring we create a fleet that truly matches the needs of all our customers, with clear targets on setting new standards for comfort, accessibility, and exceptional customer service."

The 10 trains will be financed by Porterbrook and are the first new trains to be ordered since Avanti West Coast placed an order for 13 bi-mode (Class 805) and 10 electric multiple units (Class 807) with Hitachi in 2019.

CAF said that the trains will be based on the manufacturer's Civity platform. This is the same as the Class 195, '196' and '197' diesel multiple units in use with Northern, West Midlands Trains and TFW Rail respectively, the '331' EMUs used by Northern and the '397' EMUs operated by TransPennine Express.

The trains will be maintained at Neville Hill and the order includes an eight-year maintenance contract. The Leeds depot is currently home to the Class 91/Mk.4 fleet. No date has been revealed for the introduction into traffic, however the '91's must be withdrawn by 2027 when digital signalling is introduced on the southern section of the East Coast Main Line, as there are no plans to fit the '91's with that equipment.

The new fleet will have a maximum speed of 125mph, but LNER said that testing will be conducted up to 137mph. As for when construction would start, the operator told *Rail Express* that "further timings will be released in due course." The operator also said that the size and design of the batteries had yet to be finalised.

LNER said that the benefits of ordering tri-mode trains range from a reduction in emissions, particulates, noise and vibration pollution, lower maintenance and operating costs and upgradeable technology, with an expected increase in range and performance as technology develops further."

The operator said that the CAF fleet will help it reduce emissions by 67% by 2035 and be net zero by 2045 and LNER claims to have already



↑ → Artist's impressions of the new London North Eastern Railway CAF fleet of tri-modes. LNER

reduced carbon emissions by 50% compared with 2018/2019.

Rail minister Huw Merriman said: "Replacing ageing rolling stock is crucial to the sustainability, reliability and growth of our rail network, and I'm delighted passengers travelling on LNER services will benefit from improved services and greener journeys on these modern trains."

Richard Garner, CAF UK director, said: "The new CAF fleet of more sustainable and environmentally friendly tri-mode trains will reduce carbon emissions, noise and vibration pollution and optimise energy consumption, while increasing service operation efficiency and performance on the ECML."

Mary Grant, Porterbrook CEO, said: "Porterbrook is delighted to fund and take ownership of this new tri-mode



fleet for LNER, supporting its focus on creating a world-class service that matches the needs of customers with lower emission trains."

The trains will be fitted with CAF Signalling proprietary European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) digital signalling.

CURRENT LNER FLEET

Class 91s:	91101/105-107/109-111/114/119/124/127/130
Class 800:	800101-113, 800201-210
Class 801:	801101-112, 801201-230
Mk.4s:	10300/306/309/311/313/315/324/333, 11229/279/284-286/288/295, 11306/308/312/313/315/317/318/326, 11406/408/412/413/415-418/426, 12205/208/212-214/220/223/226/228, 12303/309/311-313/325/328/330, 12404/406/407/409/420/422/424/426-433/442/444/465/467/469/474/481/485, 12515, 82205/208/211-214/222/223/225

CAF FLEETS ON NATIONAL NETWORK

Trains	Operator
11501-513, 12701-739, 12801-814	TransPennine Express (Mk.5A coaches)
15001-011, 15101-110, 15201-214, 15301-340	Caledonian Sleeper (Mk.5 coaches)
195001-025	Northern
195101-133	Northern
196001-012	West Midlands Trains
196101-114	West Midlands Trains
197001-051	TFW Rail
197101-126	TFW Rail
331001-031	Northern
331101-112	Northern
333001-016	Northern (sub-contract from Siemens)
397001-012	TransPennine Express



Devolution deal discussed for Merseyside

LIVERPOOL City Region Mayor Steve Rotherham has signed a rail devolution deal with central government.

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) said on November 16, that the deal will open the door to talks that could ultimately lead to major improvements for passengers, with the mayor pushing for greater powers to build a fully integrated, reliable and affordable service which would have transparent management.

The mayor signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper during the official opening of Headbolt Lane in November.

Under the agreement, while Network Rail owns and operates

the railway, discussions could take place about how to better integrate infrastructure and regeneration opportunities with the rail industry and LCRCA across the Merseyrail network and region's six local authorities – Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and the Wirral. This would give the Combined Authority greater control over investments to create better station facilities, improve network performance and capacity and timetable enhancements, as well as expediting the delivery of projects to improve services.

One option the mayor is keen to explore is the consideration for better links between the region's existing network infrastructure with the LCRCA's transport network.

Steve Rotherham, Mayor of the Liverpool City Region, said: "Our region has been leading the transformation of Britain's railways for centuries. This deal signifies not only a massive moment for our region but the start of a new wave of devolution for the country. It puts us on track to open up the right conversations around how we can improve our rail network for the better and run it in the best interests of passengers."

Mr Harper said: "This agreement demonstrates this Government's commitment to transforming public transport across the country and empowering elected leaders to make decisions based on the priorities of local people."

Rail reform unlikely before election, admits Harper

TRANSPORT Secretary Mark Harper said it is "unlikely" that legislation to overhaul Britain's railways will be passed before the next general election.

The establishment of Great British Railways (GBR), first proposed in May 2021, was included in a draft Rail Reform Bill in the recent King's Speech.

But Mr Harper does not expect legislation to be passed during the current parliamentary session, ahead of a general election expected to take place next year.

He told the Commons' Transport Select Committee: "I think it's unlikely that we'll be able to proceed to full legislation this session."

He said this is because "we're not going to have time", but also stressed the importance of the Bill being scrutinised.

Contributions from committee members and other relevant parties "will inevitably produce improvements" which will get the Bill "into as good a shape as possible" to ease its passage through Parliament, he said.

Conservative MP Iain Stewart

chairs the committee. He told Mr Harper that the legislation is "fairly simple", adding: "There has already been a consultation on it. What else are you hoping to achieve by further scrutiny?"

Mr Harper said: "Well, given the debate over it, I don't think it is (simple)."

"I think people's views about it are not that straightforward."

"There's still quite a bit of difference of opinion about what people are trying to achieve with the legislation and there are different views from different parts of the industry."

Plans for GBR involve it carrying out functions such as awarding operating contracts to train companies and managing rail infrastructure.

Its creation was announced by then-Transport Secretary Grant Shapps in a White Paper in May 2021.

The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail was based on the recommendations of a review, carried out by former British Airways chief executive Keith Williams, established in September 2018.



Locomotive Services No. D9000 (55022)
Royal Scots Grey leaves Platform 9 at York on November 23, having uncoupled from Steam Dreams' 1Z46 08.44 London King's Cross-Edinburgh Waverley 'Edinburgh Christmas Market' four-day charter. The Deltic gave way to No. 60007 Sir Nigel Gresley, which hauled the train north to the Scottish capital.
Chris Gee

East Linton station opening date confirmed



The new station at East Linton, which was due to welcome passengers from December 13. Network Rail.

The newest station to open in Scotland, East Linton, was set to welcome its first trains as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

Network Rail confirmed that testing of the £15 million facility had been completed ahead of the first trains calling at the station on December 13.

The station is located on the East Coast Main Line and features two 158-metre-long platforms, 114 car parking spaces including blue badge priority parking, and 18 electric vehicle charging

points. There are lifts and a footbridge connecting the platforms.

Alex Hynes, Scotland's Railway managing director, said: "We are incredibly excited that the construction of East Linton station is now complete and, in a matter of a few weeks, passengers will be able to board a train at East Linton for the first time in 59 years."

ScotRail trains between Edinburgh and Dunbar will serve the station, while TransPennine Express trains from Edinburgh will also call there.

IN BRIEF

PAY-AS-YOU-GO FOR CORNWALL

GREAT Western Railway has teamed up with Cornwall Council to launch a pay-as-you-go touch smartcard. Once passengers have registered for the card and linked it to their bank account they can tap in and tap out on yellow card readers at stations between Penzance and Par. There are plans to extend the coverage to Plymouth. Passengers can register here www.gwr.com/your-tickets/smart-tickets/paygo/cornwall

RICHMOND REFURBISHMENT

SOUTH Western Railway is refurbishing the Art Deco station at Richmond. The £325,000 project, funded by SWR, Network Rail and the Railway Heritage Trust, includes cleaning the Portland stone façade, repairing timber entrance doors and polishing bronze work, repairing flagpoles and refurbishing toilets.

'720s' TO OCKENDON

AS part of its new December timetable, c2c has confirmed that new Alstom Class 720/6 electric multiple units will operate most of its Ockendon line on Saturdays. Previously these were four-car Class 357s. The '720s' entered traffic in October.

HS2 JOBS MILESTONE

MORE than 30,000 people are now working on the construction of HS2 Phase 1, according to data released by HS2 Ltd on November 13. Employment numbers grew by 455 between July and September 2023, taking the total workforce to 30,204, which is the highest figure to date.

Brent Cross opening date confirmed

BRENT Cross West was due to open on December 10, after this edition of *Rail Express* had gone to press.

The four-platform station in North London is on the Midland Main Line between Cricklewood and Hendon. Thameslink will serve the station with up to eight trains per hour calling there.

The station connects Barnet and Brent via a new overbridge which will have free access 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Brent Council said that the station is essential in unlocking wider development in the area and had been designed as a gateway to a new neighbourhood called Brent Cross Town, which is a 180-acre development delivering 6700 homes, 3 million square feet of offices creating space for 25,000 staff, and a new high street.

ORR grants West Coast Railways another exemption

By Richard Clinnick

WEST Coast Railways has been granted a further three-month exemption by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) to continue operating Mk.1 coaching stock on the national network.

A previous exemption had been due to expire on November 30, 2023, and the latest extension will now expire on February 29, 2024.

The regulator wants all operators using slam-door stock to provide a fitment plan for door locking systems, with the regulator providing exemptions for all companies that provided plans, however WCR did not provide one and so was originally given a deadline of June 30 (RE327) and has received subsequent exemptions.

WCR has challenged the ORR via a judicial review with a judgement expected early in the new year.

The exemption allows WCR to continue operating using the stock in question. An ORR spokesperson told *Rail Express*: "ORR has granted WCR a new three-month exemption from December 1, 2023 to February 29, 2024 to enable it to operate whilst its judicial review is determined."

The operator has already begun taking bookings for next year's 'Jacobite' steam operation on the West Highland Line extension between Fort William and Mallaig, while other tour operators that use WCR stock are currently planning to use the company beyond the end of February, *RE* understands.

Other operators granted exemptions

are: The Great Scottish and Western Railway Company Limited (deadline of February 7, 2025), Hastings Diesels Limited (March 31, 2028), Locomotive Services Ltd (March 31, 2028), North Yorkshire Moors Railway Limited (March 31, 2028), Riviera Trains (March 31, 2028), Venice-Simplon Orient Express Limited (February 21, 2025) and Vintage Trains (November 29, 2024).

The Regulation 5 exemptions, detailed on the ORR website, state: "The Company must ensure that the fitment of a method of centrally locking hinged doors in a closed position to the Rolling Stock shall take place in accordance with the fitment plan provided to ORR on February 28, 2023 (the 'Fitment Plan')."

Regulation 5 also states that the

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

➔ **WHAT** was only the second-ever High Speed Train carrying passengers to depart Great Yarmouth, former CrossCountry No. 43378, with No. 43007 on the rear, leaves the Norfolk town as the 1243 11.29 to Norwich. Using former XC Mk.3 Nos. 41026, 42052/053/097, 42380 and 44012, the '43s', owned by Romic (which also owns the stock), operated the 1243 11.29 Great Yarmouth-Norwich and 1244 12.44 return. The '43s' and stock are currently maintained by Eastern Rail Services, and in ERS' operational pool, while RailAdventure operated the train. The HST was used to carry guests involved in the export of High Speed Train vehicles to Mexico.

Rail Express understands that the vehicles are set to be exported either before the end of 2023, or during January. Due to move to Mexico are Nos. 43007, 43306/307/316/320/378 as well as Nos 40750, 40902, 41026/035/087, 41193, 42036-038/051-053/097, 42234/290, 42342/366/368/369/371-373/376/378-380, 42585, 44012/017/052/072, 45001-005. Steve Potter



Open access plan for Wrexham to Euston

OPEN access trains could once again serve Wrexham from May 2025 if plans submitted by The Wrexham, Shropshire & Midlands Railway Company (WSMR) are approved by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR).

Plans submitted to the ORR are for five trains in each direction on Mondays to Saturdays and four on Sundays. The trains would run between Wrexham General and London Euston and would call at Gobowen Shrewsbury, Telford Central, Wolverhampton, Darlaston, Walsall, Coleshill Parkway,

Nuneaton and Milton Keynes Central.

According to the plans submitted to the ORR, the trains heading south to London would set down only at Milton Keynes, with northbound trains only picking up there. Weekday departures from the Welsh town would be at 06.21, 07.54, 10.55, 14.54 and 17.30, with London departures at 07.00, 11.00, 14.00, 17.36 and 20.10. Journey times would take just over three hours.

Although WSMR's initial application is for a seven-year track access agreement, the aim is a 20-year

agreement. WSMR said in its application that it would use Class 22x trains and would hope to fit them with battery technology for short distances.

Open access services previously ran between Wrexham and London Marylebone, operated by Wrexham, Shropshire & Marylebone Railway (WSMR) from April 2008 until January 2011, when it was determined that the business would never be profitable. Chiltern Railways took over using the '67s' and Mk.3s WSMR had used.



→ **East Midlands Railway**
No. 810001 stands at Derby on November 27, forming the 5Q47 06.41 Old Dalby-Etches Park. This was the first time a Class 810 had operated on the national network under its own power. The five-car bi-mode ran to Etches Park for tyre-turning before returning to the Rail Innovation & Development Centre (RIDC) the following day. The '810' has been undergoing testing at the Network Rail facility. It is the first of 33 five-car trains built by Hitachi at Newton Aycliffe for EMR that will replace the existing Class 222 fleet. Unlike the existing Hitachi Class 800/802/805 bi-modes, the EMR fleet has four motor vehicles and features 24-metre vehicles rather than 26m vehicles.

Sam Pedley



Moorgate branch digital signalling introduced

GREAT Northern has begun operating Class 717 electric multiple units on the Moorgate branch using European Train Control System (ETCS) in-cab signalling.

This is part of the £1.4 billion East Coast Digital Programme (ECDP), with the first digitally-signalled train operating between Finsbury Park and Moorgate on November 27. In total, 12 round trips were made on the first day using the system.

The ECDP will enable ETCS to be introduced onto the East Coast Main

Line from 2027, becoming the first main line in Britain equipped with the technology.

GN said that more trains will operate using ETCS as more of its drivers are trained to use the technology. Lineside signalling will remain in situ until all drivers are trained.

Drivers using digital ETCS aren't told to stop and go by lineside signals, rather they drive according to a target speed set by the system in the cab that is kept continually

updated about the location of other trains by a multitude of beacons positioned along the track. The system effectively allows drivers to 'see' much further ahead than line-of-sight signals would ever allow, meaning trains can run more efficiently.

The next phase of ECDP involves introducing digital signalling between Welwyn Garden City and Hitchin, with the first digitally-signalled trains expected to operate on this section of the ECML by the end of 2025.

Rail reform before General Election "unlikely"

SECRETARY of State for Transport Mark Harper has admitted it's "unlikely" that legislation to overhaul Britain's railways will be passed before the next General Election.

The establishment of Great British Railways (GBR) was first proposed in May 2021, and a draft Rail Reform Bill was included in the King's Speech in early November.

However, Mr Harper told the Commons Transport Select Committee that he didn't expect legislation would be passed in time. Speaking on November 15, he said: "I think it's unlikely that we'll be able to proceed to full legislation this session." He said this is because "we're not going to have time", but also stressed the importance of the Bill being scrutinised.

He added: "There's still quite a bit of difference of opinion about what people are trying to achieve with the legislation and there are different views from different parts of the industry."

Plans for GBR involve it carrying out functions such as awarding operating contracts to train companies and managing rail infrastructure.

LNWR trains return to Marston Vale line

PASSENGER services resumed on the Marston Vale line between Bedford and Bletchley from November 20, with the 2S05 07.18 Bletchley-Bedford the first train to operate since December 2022.

London Northwestern Railway (LNR) operates the route but has been forced to replace trains with buses since Vivarail went into administration last December (RE320). Vivarail maintained the three Class 230s used by LNR on the line but could no longer provide maintenance for Nos. 230003-005, which were removed from traffic. They have subsequently

been sold to Great Western Railway.

Because of short platforms on the route, only certain trains could be used on the line, and LNR was able to sub-lease Nos. 150137/139/141 from Northern.

Initially four trains per day in each direction, focussing on the morning and evening peaks, will operate, with buses replacing trains for the rest of the day. LNR aims to resume the full timetable, including the reintroduction of a Saturday service, from early in the new year, once enough crews are trained on the '150s'.

GWR presents its 2024 calendar

GREAT Western Railway has released its 2024 calendar using images showcasing the scenic nature of its network. Local photographers, including regular *Rail Express* contributor Jack Boskett, have supplied images which include the Royal Albert Bridge, Okehampton, Box Tunnel, Newport, Maidenhead and St Ives. The calendar costs £11.99 and is available at www.gwrsouvenirs.co.uk/GWR/p-GWR152

→ **The cover of the Great Western Railway 2024 calendar.** GWR



IN BRIEF

CALVERT EWR CROSSING COMPLETE

HS2 Ltd completed the last section of earthworks that will carry the East West Rail (EWR) route over the new high-speed line near Calvert in late-November. Two bridges, one underpass and 2.1 miles of adjacent earthworks have been built. EWR trains will pass over HS2, while roads will use the underpass.

PETERBOROUGH STOP FOR GRAND CENTRAL

GRAND Central has been authorised to serve Peterborough by the Office of Rail and Road, making it the first open access operator to serve the Cambridgeshire station.

The ORR has confirmed that GC will have contingent rights for one train per day in each direction in each of its service groups to call at Peterborough on Mondays to Saturdays. There are no access rights to stop there on Sundays.

GC had applied for two stops in each direction but this was reduced to one after discussions with Network Rail.

INCREASE IN PASSENGER REVENUE

THERE has been a 6% increase in commuter revenue while business travel revenue is up 8%, according to figures released by Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) on November 17. This means that for the period between April 1, 2023 and June 30, 2023, rail passenger revenue was £197m for business travel, £929m for commuting and £1431m for leisure.

Passenger usage increase

PASSENGER numbers continue to rise following the pandemic, according to figures released by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) on November 9.

According to the regulator, there were 390 million journeys made between April 1, 2023 and June 30, 2023. This is a 19% increase on the 328m journeys made in the same quarter in the previous year (April 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022). ORR said that there were 1,447m journeys for the year to June 30, 2023.

It added that a total of 14.9 billion passenger kilometres were travelled during the April-June quarter in 2023, which represents a 10% increase on the 13.5bn passenger train kilometres travelled in the same quarter in 2022.

Govia Thameslink Railway recorded the most passenger journeys of any operator between April 1, 2023 and June 30, 2023, with some 68.3 million journeys recorded, while ScotRail recorded the largest percentage increase, 33%, compared with the same period in 2022. It carried 19.3m passengers during this year's first quarter.

Lack of orders puts Litchurch Lane at risk

By Richard Clinnick

ALSTOM is planning a significant reduction in activity at Derby Litchurch Lane which could involve the loss of more than 1300 jobs.

The Midlands site has no confirmed work after the first quarter of 2024 until final assembly work on the HS2 train fleet, which Alstom is constructing in a joint venture with Hitachi, begins. This is likely to be in 2026, with Derby fitting the interiors, bogies and electronics.

Construction of the final Greater Anglia Class 720, No. 720144, was completed in mid-November, while the final handful of South Western Railway '701s' are nearly complete. After that, there are '730/2s' for London Northwestern Railway to complete and the final vehicles for a contract exporting metro vehicles to Alexandria, Egypt.

An Alstom spokesperson told *Rail Express*: "Alstom UK has been working with government for the last six months with the joint objective of securing a sustainable future for our rolling stock factory at Derby Litchurch Lane, which has no confirmed workload beyond the

first quarter of 2024. No committed way forward has yet been found and therefore it is with deep regret that we must now begin to plan for a significant reduction in activity at Derby by entering a period of collective consultation on potential redundancies at Litchurch Lane. We will fully support our dedicated colleagues during this exceptionally difficult time."

RE understands that 550 Alstom staff and 780 contractors' roles are at risk. On July 21, the Railway Industry Association released a report recommending that government clients should make decisions in 2023 to allow the procurement and private financing of rolling stock upgrades or replacement of circa 2600 vehicles by 2030 to improve passenger services, reduce carbon and improve air quality as well as avoiding an imminent existential risk to the supply chain.

This report was published before London North Eastern Railway placed an order for 10 tri-mode sets (see pages 10-11) and before Chiltern Railways and Northern began work to procure new fleets. Great Western Railway, TransPennine Express, Scotrail and Southeastern are interested in acquiring new train fleets.

The Alstom spokesperson told RE: "The UK remains one of Alstom's most important global markets and we will continue to operate 36 sites throughout the country across our Rolling Stock, Services, and Digital and Integrated Systems businesses. We look forward to fulfilling our commitments on HS2 and successfully competing for rolling stock opportunities across the UK in the future."

"We remain open-minded as to the future of non-production functions located at Litchurch Lane and to potential future alternative uses for the Derby site. We will begin an extensive review of options and will fully involve our stakeholders in this process."

Elaine Clarke, Rail Forum CEO, said on November 15: "Today's announcement is deeply worrying

not just for those people employed directly by Alstom but for the thousands more employed in the wider supply chain across the UK."

"Alstom's factory in Derby has some key capabilities which in turn underpin opportunities for UK companies; if these activities cease this could have a devastating long-term impact on suppliers."

"The approach to rolling stock procurement has led to the current scenario of 'feast and famine' and we are already seeing redundancies in suppliers as their work dries up. We have raised our concerns with government and the Department for Transport on a number of occasions over the last year as this situation was, sadly, predictable."

"This industry desperately needs a long-term rolling stock strategy that avoids large peaks and troughs."

CURRENT UK ORDERS FOR DERBY LITCHURCH LANE

Trains	Order size	Operator
701001-060, 701501-530	750 vehicles	South Western Railway
720101-144, 720501-589	665 vehicles	Greater Anglia
730001-046, 730201-236	318 vehicles	West Midlands Railway



Greater Anglia No. 720119 leads the 1N37 12.05 Clacton-on-Sea-London Liverpool Street at Kelvedon on September 7. Alstom has recently completed the construction of the final GA '720' vehicle. Derby Litchurch Lane currently has no work beyond the first quarter of 2024, meaning more than 1300 jobs are at risk. Alex Ayre

Closures part of major south London signalling upgrade

NETWORK Rail is planning a nine-day blockade on parts of the south London railway affecting London Overground, Southern and Southeastern between February 10 and 18.

The work will take place between Crystal Palace, Tulse Hill and Peckham Rye and is part of a £400 million programme. Signalling equipment dating from the 1980s will be replaced during the project. NR warned that

there will also be more weekend closures in the same area before and after the February closure to enable engineers to prepare the new equipment and remove the redundant systems.

Sixty-five new signals have been installed as well as new signal gantries, two new power supply points as well as signalling, telecoms and power cables. Signalling control of the

Crystal Palace, Peckham Rye and Tulse Hill areas will move from the Victoria Area Signalling Centre to the Three Bridges Rail Operating Centre from February 16.

LO trains will be suspended between Canada Water and Clapham Junction on those dates. Between February 10 and 16, Southern will not serve: South Bermondsey, Queens Road Peckham, Peckham Rye, East

Dulwich, North Dulwich, Tulse Hill, West Norwood, Gipsy Hill, Crystal Palace, Birkbeck and Beckenham Junction. On the same days, Thameslink will not serve: Streatham, Mitcham Eastfields, Mitcham Junction, Hackbridge, Carshalton, Sutton, West Sutton, Sutton Common, St Helier, Morden South, South Merton, Wimbledon Chase, Wimbledon, Haydens Road and Tooting.



£61.5 million electrification for East Kilbride

CONTRACTS have been awarded for the £61.5 million East Kilbride Enhancement Project which includes electrifying the branch.

Network Rail said 14 single-track miles will be electrified, with contracts awarded to Story Contracting, AmcoGiffen, SPL Powerlines, Siemens, Rail Systems Alliance Scotland and

WSP. Over the next two years, the railway will be electrified to East Kilbride, a new accessible station will be constructed at Hairmyres to replace the existing structure, accessibility work at other stations and a 0.9-mile extension of the existing loop at Hairmyres.

Electric services are due to

introduced on the line in December 2025.

Engineers are currently carrying out ground investigation works on the line as part of the project, with (at time of writing) bridge clearance works due to take place at the end of 2023 and main construction works starting early in the new year.



ScotRail No. 380110 stands at Barrhead on November 7, the first electric train to reach the station. Network Rail

First electric train reaches Barrhead under own power

SCOTRAIL No. 380110 became the first electric train to reach Barrhead on November 7, when it completed several test runs along the newly-electrified line from Glasgow Central.

The four-car electric multiple unit reached speeds of up to 75mph ahead of the introduction of electric

services on the route as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

More than 360 stanchions and structures have been erected to support more than 66,000 metres of overhead power lines, while 130m of track has been renewed.

At Barrhead, platform 3 has

been extended by nine metres to accommodate the four-car Class 380/1s. Once the '380s' enter traffic on the Barrhead route, '156s' will be cascaded to replace '158s' which will be released for driver training on the Levenmouth line which is due to open during 2024.

Bigger Gatwick Airport station opens

A NEW-look Gatwick Airport station opened on November 21, featuring a new second concourse and airport entrance that doubles the space for passengers using the facility.

The first passengers to use the new concourse and entrance arrived on Thameslink's 9T45 03.43 Bedford-Brighton, which arrived at platform 7 at 05.47.

The new concourse now acts as the new entrance for people accessing the airport terminal, while the existing concourse will now be for those exiting the terminal. Network Rail said that the existing station concourse, station footbridges and South Terminal linkspan have been refurbished and reconfigured for a one-way system between the airport and station.

Eight new escalators and five new lifts, along with four new stairways and widened platforms, have been introduced at the station. There have also been track upgrades on the Brighton Main Line around the station.

The existing station concourse is also bigger, with new customer information systems, more ticket gates and a dedicated passenger assistance point have all been introduced.

Temple Mills electrification

MOVEABLE conductor bar electrification has been installed at Eurostar's Temple Mills depot. This can be moved out of the way when required, with the final stretch commissioned in October. The equipment has been fitted to all eight roads at the depot, covering around one mile of track. The overhead conductor retracts to allow maintenance crews to safely access the train roof and to load and unload certain components.

Okehampton smashes passenger predictions

MORE than 550,000 passenger journeys had been made on the Okehampton branch since it reopened on November 20, 2021, Great Western Railway has confirmed.

A special community event was held on November 20, 2023, to mark the second anniversary of the Dartmoor Line reopening. Matt Barnes, GWR head of strategic service development, said: "The continued demand shows just how important good rail connections are for the community, and the economies, they serve."

From May 2022, the previous two-hourly train service frequency was increased to hourly, seven days a week.

TPE honours Hull Paragon

TRANSPENNINE Express No. 185113 was named *Hull Paragon 175* on November 20, in a ceremony to mark the station's 175th anniversary. TPE plans to install new benches, trees and plants at the station over the coming months as well as refurbishing and expanding the toilets. Working with Network Rail, TPE will also bring platform 1 back into passenger use. There are also plans to introduce new retail options for the Interchange.

→ TransPennine Express No. 185113 displays its name after being named at Hull Paragon on November 20. TPE



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You simply cannot afford to miss an issue!

RICHARD CLINNICK, EDITOR



No. 50007 *Hercules* (masquerading as No. 50034 *Furious*) passes Buckenham on July 15, leading the 1270 06.48 Derby-Lowestoft 'The Merry Wherry' charter. RICHARD CLINNICK

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Mixed month for Class 37s

Colas and LS Class 37s back in action but DRS down to five

Colas Railfreight and Locomotive Services both reinstated Class 37s, however Direct Rail Services continues to reduce the size of its Type 3 fleet.

AFTER two years out of traffic, Colas Railfreight No. 37057 *Barbara Arbon* returned to service on November 13, while Locomotive Services' No. 37409 returned to main line action on November 29, after three-and-a-half years out of service.

However, Direct Rail Services No. 37401 *Mary Queen of Scots* was finally removed from traffic, ahead of its expected sale, which was due to be concluded as this edition of *Rail Express* went to press.

Following a brief visit to Lorum Derby on November 6/7, which resulted in a return to Nottingham Eastcroft with No. 37116, split-headcode survivor

No. 37057 returned to the former Railway Technical Centre site on November 9, to take up its first test train duties for two years. The first job for the '37/0' was a 15-hour long tour of North Yorkshire on November 13, with No. 37175 and Network Rail's PLPR (Plain Line Pattern Recognition)/Mentor (Overhead Line) monitoring formation.

The pair of Class 37s remained together for a week before No. 37175 was swapped out at Eastcroft for No. 37612. The month ended with No. 37057 working unaided on tours of the North East and North West with a Driving Brake Standard Open (DBSO) formed at the other end of the test coaches.

LARGE LOGO RETURNS AND RETIREMENTS

Sold to Locomotive Services from the second Direct Rail Services tender in April 2022, and stored as long ago as July 2020, No. 37409 made its return to the main line under its new owner on November 29, working from Barrow Hill to Worksop, and then on to Crewe Diesel Maintenance Depot.

The '37/4' has undergone major engine repairs at Harry Needle Railroad Company's workshop and was used to haul an eclectic formation containing LS Nos. D8096 and D8107 (20096 and 20107), GB Railfreight No. 57303 (which had undergone a wheelset change) and five former DB Cargo UK Mk.2 coaches. It was out again the following day tucked in behind LS No. D6817 (37521) on a 5Z84 08.28 Crewe-Carlisle Upperby empty coaching stock move to LS' new

depot, taking a rake of High Speed Train Mk.3s (Nos. 40221, 41063, 41117, 42100, 42220, 44047) for storage. The pair returned top-and-tailing two barrier coaches.

The news was not so positive at Direct Rail Services. The transfer of 'out of hours' No. 37401 from XHSO to the XSDP disposal pool at Crewe Gresty Bridge sees the DRS Type 3 fleet reduced to just five operational examples, Nos. 37407/419/422/425 and 37716, all of which saw use on York-based RHTT circuits during November. With the addition of the doyen of the Class 37/4s, XSDP now comprises for sale Nos. 37069, 37402/423 and next to be tendered Nos. 37218, 37401/424. All are at Gresty Bridge except No. 37424 *Avro Vulcan XH558*, which is at Carlisle Kingmoor. **B**



Locomotive Services Nos. D6817 (37521) and 37409 pass Bolton Le Sands on November 30, with the 5Z83 08.28 Crewe-Carlisle Upperby empty stock move. The '37/4' has returned to traffic after three-and-a-half years. Phil Metcalfe

DEVELOPMENTS

ANGEL TRAINS

Four High Speed Train power cars last used by East Midlands Railway, Nos. 43306/307/316/320, ran from Leicester to Kidderminster on the Severn Valley Railway on November 3, for fettling ahead of their export to Mexico (RE331). RailAdventure Nos. 43468/480 hauled their classmates to the SVR.

On November 11, Nos. 43306/320 were both sent out on a shakedown run to Worcester and back, which was followed by a similar move by Nos. 43307/316 on November 12. The four power cars were then dispatched to Great Yarmouth the following day (November 13), the formation running under a 0Q43 headcode. However, they

returned to the SVR on November 21, for final repairs before their export.

Former CrossCountry Nos. 43007 and 43378 sandwiched six Mk.3s on a special service from Great Yarmouth to Norwich on November 14, for their new owners, the blue and yellow-liveried Class 43 being formed at the Yarmouth end of the train.

COLAS RAILFREIGHT

How much time No. 37057 will have leading Network Rail infrastructure monitoring trains is questionable (see *lead story*) with Colas bringing three former CrossCountry High Speed Train power cars back into service during the period under review. Now branded for its new operator, albeit still wearing

its old XC livery, No. 43285 debuted on November 6, on a 1Q46 08.52 Derby RTC-Loughborough and return with No. 43257. Meanwhile, debranded XC Nos. 43321/357 were both observed with engines running at Lorum's Derby facility on December 1, having been moved over from Asfordby. Still at the latter location are Nos. 43301/303, both also slated for a return with Colas.

DB CARGO UK

Following its exhaust fire on October 26 it came as no surprise that No. 60015 was stored in the first week of November, being downgraded to WQBA. This leaves the WCBT extended range Class 60 pool without an allocation. The

four remaining operational members of the fleet, Nos. 60024/040/062/074, are all WCAT (standard range) and all saw service during the month (see *Headline News*).

There has been a slight reorganisation of the WBRT Railhead Treatment Train pool, with Nos. 66107/186 being swapped out for Nos. 66088/089 (ex-WBAE) and 66192 (ex-WBAR). The latter trio moved to Margam, Slateford and Peterborough respectively to take up their 'leafbusting' deployments. No. 66192 was even observed partnered with GB Railfreight No. 66721 *Harry Beck* on the 3J42 11.55 Doncaster Decoy to Peterborough via Sleaford working on November 21.

DEVELOPMENTS Continued

One of the second batch of Class 66s to return from exile to Euro Cargo Rail in mid 2021, No. 66205 has finally been allowed out from Toton for a test run, its first time working on UK metals since the middle of 2007. This is the eighth of 10 former ECR machines to return to employment on this side of the Channel and it was repainted in DB red as far back as the first month of 2022. The former No. 92 70 0066 205-0 was partnered with Nos. 66136/140 on a shakedown run to Doncaster and back.

South Wales to the East Midlands is not normally considered one of the epic railway journeys, but for No. 66092 (bizarrely still allocated to the WBRT pool) it has been a trip for the record books, taking around 50 weeks to move from Margam to Toton after suffering wheelset issues on RHTT work in December 2022. The errant Class 66 undertook the final leg on the back of a low loader, being collected by Allelys from Didcot on November 19, and completing its adventure the following day.

HVO 'Next Generation' branded No. 67028 has returned to active duty following a few weeks in store at Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot. It was transferred back to the WAAC standard Class 67 pool from WQAA.

DC RAIL

Another long stranded locomotive has finally been moved in the form of No. 56303, which has been extracted from North London after five-and-a-half years, following an unresolved incident at Willesden in May 2018, which caused the locomotive to be written off.

Now acquired by GB Railfreight as a spares donor for the operator's refurbishment programme, Allelys

collected the former No. 56125 on November 12, for onward movement to EMD Longport, which was completed two days later. The damage is reportedly too severe for the Crewe-built Type 5 to form the basis of an additional Class 69 and it will be scrapped following component recovery.

Finally, out of action since December 2020, and stored in the DCRS pool in 2021, No. 56103 is finally coming to the end of a protracted exam at Leicester LIP as evidenced by a reallocation to the active DCRO pool at the end of November. Cappagh told *Rail Express* that it was due to return to traffic as this issue went to press.

EUROPHOENIX

Following its challenging assignment shunting at Cemex's Peak Forest quarry, No. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* returned to Leicester LIP on November 8, working a 0Z37 light engine move. Its services were soon required again, this time on hire to Rail Operations Group as cover while other members of the operator's Type 3 fleet come up for major exams. The Mirrlees-repowered Class 37/9 departed the UKRL facility on November 27, working 0R57 to Derby RTC. The first of those to be removed from traffic for attention is No. 37884 *Cepheus*, which has been receiving repairs at Leicester, restarting the depot's association with the fleet now that low level exams are undertaken elsewhere.

GB RAILFREIGHT

The newest member of the GBRF fleet, spares donor No. 73138 was moved from Rowsley (Peak Rail) on November 19, to UK Rail Leasing's Loughborough facility courtesy of No. 69001 *Mayflower*, running under

the appropriate 0Z73 headcode. Meanwhile, rebuilt Caledonian Sleeper Class 73/9 No. 73970, which had moved south to the former Brush works site on October 11, behind No. 56081, returned to Sleeper duties on November 28, running light from Loughborough as another 0Z73, this time to Millerhill. It had been joined at the UKRL facility by CS No. 73968 on November 17, which had been brought down south the previous day by No. 92033 *Railway Heritage Trust* as far as Doncaster where No. 56081 took over for the final leg.

Also moving to Loughborough during the month were the shells of Nos. 92021 *Purcell* and 92045 *Chaucer* on November 10, and Nos. 92040 *Goethe* and 92046 *Sweetinck* on November 11, all from Harry Needle Railroad Company's Worksop site. The four long-stored locomotives had been moved away from Loughborough in December 2021, following the withdrawal of Wabtec Brush from the storied Falcon Works site.

HANSON & HALL

Once owned by Howard Johnston, Hanson & Hall acquired No. 31106 *Spalding Town* in December 2020, with plans to return the almost 65-year-old machine to service. Unfortunately, due to various issues, not least the expense of new wheelsets, the company has decided to scrap the locomotive with certain spares being sold to the A1A Locomotive Group. Stored at Nemesis Rail, Burton, since December 2022 after two years at the East Lancashire Railway, and before that at RMS Locotec at Wolsingham, the Class 31 departed for its final journey to EMR Kingsbury, still with its nameplates in situ, on November 28. It was retired

from Network Rail service in 2016, and last saw use on the Weardale Railway in 2019.

LOCOMOTIVE SERVICES

Back in action is No. 43049, which has become the fifth High Speed Train power car to carry Blue Pullman livery following the attention of the Arlington paintshop at Eastleigh Works. It returned to Crewe behind Nos. D6817 (37521) and D6851 (37667) *Flopsy* on November 3.

NETWORK RAIL

Looking immaculate in Network Rail yellow, No. 43013 *Mark Carne CBE* has become the first of the NR trio of power cars to debut on the main line following major exams and the fitting of European Train Control System (ETCS) equipment. Its first major duty was a 1Q28 10.22 Derby RTC to Tees Yard with No. 43277 *Safety Task Force* on the rear. Its QCAR pool colleagues Nos. 43014/062 are both at the Loram Rail depot undergoing final preparation work.

NEMESIS RAIL

Out of use since the first half of 2016 and with refreshed paintwork, No. 47701 has been returned to working order for use on the Wensleydale Railway's 'Polar Express' trains (see *Preservation*). It was moved north from Nemesis Rail's Burton-upon-Trent site on November 6 behind West Coast Railway No. 57012 as a 5Z67 11.25 to Northallerton. With Crewe Diesel Preservation Group's preserved No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* there are now two operational Class 47/7s out of the five remaining examples, the others being Nos. 47703/714 at Wabtec Doncaster and No. 47715 at Harry Needle Railroad Company, Worksop.



On November 12, No. 56303 stands on a low-loader at Willesden, ahead of its journey north to Longport where it will be used for component recovery. Rob Reedman

Cappagh to acquire additional Class 56

THE Class 56 Locomotive Group's No. 56301, never considered by the Group as officially preserved, will be sold to Cappagh (owners of DC Rail) at the end of March 2024. The

Group purchased the 'Grid', which still carries Fastline livery, in early 2011 for main line hire to support preserved No. 56006, and the arrangement between the C56LG and

DCR will see the former No. 56045 returned to an appropriate heritage paint scheme with *The Class 56* Group name. DCR will also make members of its Class 56 fleet

available to galas over the next three years, and when the time comes to retire No. 56301, the group will have the option to reacquire the locomotive.



On November 11, No. 56301 passes Rearsby, hauling the 6Z48 09.30 Wembley Receptions-Chaddesden. The '56' is hired by Cappagh for DC Rail operations and will be acquired by the company in March. Mick Tindall



◀ Freightliner No. 59101 Village of Whatley passes Pullman Drive, Salisbury, on December 4, forming the 0Z60 11.58 Eastleigh Works-Whatley Quarry light locomotive move. The '59/1' has been repainted into the corporate colours of Heidelberg Materials, which acquired Hanson in 2007, and which is part of the Mendips aggregates contract FL operates. Nos. 59001/002/004/005, 59101-104, 59201-206 are all owned by FL and used on the Mendips contract. The '59/2s' have been repainted in the operator's orange and black livery. Jon Harding

Preserved shunters move to new homes

A flurry of activity has seen several ex-British Rail machines gain new owners and, in some cases, homes.

RECENT weeks have seen little activity among the shunters remaining in use with main line operators, but this has been compensated for by several developments concerning preserved machines.

Unusually, much of this has centred on the Class 03s, where several sales have gone through. On November 1, No. D2051 departed the North Norfolk Railway after 23 years of inactivity, much of it spent at Holt, having been sold following the death of its owner. The part-restored shunter was delivered to the Telford Steam Railway the following day.

Also once at the NNR, No. 03063 was delivered to Dereham less than a week later and now belongs to the Mid-Norfolk Railway after it was bequeathed to the line.

The shunter has been away from public view since moving to the Suffolk

premises of Sonic Rail Services in September 2019 for repairs but is now operational, albeit currently unnumbered and in faded British Rail blue.

In a similar vein, the Swindon and Cricklade Railway has acquired outright ownership of long-term resident No. 03022, it having previously been privately-owned. It now joins No. 03152 in being an asset of the railway. Meanwhile, No. 03078 returned home to the North Tyneside Steam Railway on November 21 after an 18 month loan to the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway.

ENGLISH ELECTRIC TRANSFERS

The long-expected movement of Class 10 No. D3489 from the Spa Valley Railway to a new home in Cornwall went ahead at the end of October, although not to the Helston Railway as intended.

The low-loader spent the weekend of October 28/29 at Taunton services before heading onwards, but it found the access road to Prospidnick blocked by low-hanging trees damaged in a recent storm.

As a result, the former Felixstowe Docks pilot was instead taken to Bodmin General, where it will be a guest of the Bodmin and Wenford until delivery can be re-arranged.

The Severn Valley Railway has loaned No. 09107 to the Telford Steam Railway for the duration of its festive workings, it arriving on November 16. The '09' will share the diesel legs of the top and tailed 'Polar Express' trains with resident No. 08757 and provide spare resources to prevent a repeat of last season's disruption, which necessitated the emergency hire of No. 08511 from RSS. Meanwhile, stablemate No. 09012 returned to traffic at the Severn Valley in early November following the completion of a 12 month overhaul. 

PRESERVATION

LATE-October brought a new arrival at **Ruddington** in the form of Ruston & Hornsby 88DS No. 263001, which was previously at the Battlefield Line. Dating from 1949, some work is still required to return the locomotive to service.

The **Derwent Valley Light Railway** has carried out a repaint on Class 04 No. D2245, the Drewry losing its BR identity and green livery in favour of a return to its 1970s private owner appearance, when it was light grey and lettered in red as 'Derwent Valley Railway No.2'.

The Shed 47 Railway Restoration Group based at the **Lathalmond Railway Museum**, near Dunfermline, took delivery of diminutive Motor Rail Simplex No. 9925 in mid-November. Built in 1963, the privately-owned locomotive was originally used in the construction of the Tay road bridge and later at Tomatin Distillery. Most recently at the Prestongrange Museum, its transfer coincided with the repositioning of other industrial locomotives and rolling stock at the latter East Lothian Council-owned site, these now being housed inside a new modern shed, which should allow them to become publicly viewable again next year.

The **East Lancashire Railway** has taken custodianship of English Electric/Baguley battery-electric locomotive No. 1378/3217, this arriving from the Science and Industry Museum, Manchester, on October 30. Built in 1944, it worked for the Central Electricity Generating Board at Bolton for many years before entering preservation and will be displayed in the Bury Transport Museum.

INDUSTRIALS

THE latest exchange of Ministry of Defence 'Vanguards' at Barton-under-Needwood took place in late November with No. 01522 departing the Hunslet workshops on November 22. Although its destination was unconfirmed, the arrival of No. 01524 the following day from Ludgershall would indicate its likely new home.

Sentinel No. 10070 is next in line for rebuilding with battery technology

by Positive Traction, the RMS Locotec shunter arriving at the Independent Rail workshops at Chesterfield in the second week of November. The shunter had previously been used by sister company Eastern Rail Services at Great Yarmouth. As well as fitting the battery packs, the shunter will need to be converted from hydraulic to electric transmission. Meanwhile, the '08e' demonstrator No. 08308 remains

at Barrow Hill, it being employed on some well-patronised Branch Line Society passenger shuttles on November 8.

The last of the industrials stored at Long Marston by Harry Needle Railroad Company was removed on November 23, GEC 0-6-0DH No. 5395 of 1974 being taken to Rowsley. Unloaded the next day, it was then moved to the Briddon workshop at Darley Dale.

NEWS ROUND-UP

RAILWAY SUPPORT SERVICES

MID-November saw No. 08939 return to action after more than seven months at Wishaw, it being despatched to Garston for marshalling automotive traffic, although No. 08706 was also still at the Merseyside terminal at the end of the month.

No. 09009 was an unexpected arrival at Wolverton Works on November 22, this being its first use since RSS took over maintenance of the GB Railfreight shunters, while No. 08899 was returned to Wishaw from Nemesis, Burton, six days later.

WEST MIDLANDS RAILWAY

THE planned overhaul of the WMR Class 08 fleet continues to intrigue with No. 08495 acquired from preservation and is set to be the second locomotive to be processed after No. 08805.

Previously in private ownership, No. 08495 departed the North Yorkshire



On November 23, the remains of No. 08442 stand at Nemesis Rail, Burton, alongside ex-Freightliner No. 08575. Greg Hartle

Moors Railway for the Nemesis Rail depot at Burton in mid-November to join the queue. It arrived at the NYMR back in December 2016, following acquisition from DB Cargo UK, while a

replacement Class 08, in better overall condition, is expected at the Yorkshire line in due course. As detailed in RE331, WMR has also purchased the chassis of No. 08473 and the shunter's remains

were transferred from Lydney to Burton around November 17. Current indications are that Nos. 08442 and 08473 will be combined along with other spares to make a third serviceable locomotive.

Class 730s enter service with London Northwestern Railway

New Aventura fleet begins operating on Euston commuter workings

THE first of West Midlands Trains' Class 730 Aventura electric multiple units entered revenue-earning service on November 13, when one of the sets of diagrams previously worked by Class 319s went over to '730' operation.

The diagram on the first day, which began with the 2B02 06.04 Bletchley-Euston, was operated by Nos. 730007/010, while on November 14 and the next three days, Nos. 730006/011 covered the workings.

A second diagram was introduced on November 20 (see table), and this was operated by Nos. 730016/021 on the first day. Entering traffic later in the week (November 23) was No. 730018. The last services diagrammed for London Northwestern Railway '319' operation were due to be worked by Class 730s from November 27.

CLASS 730 PASSENGER DIAGRAMS

Diagram 1 (from November 13):

2B02	06.04	Bletchley-Euston
2T09	07.24	Euston-Tring
2T10	08.10	Tring-Euston
2T49	15.54	Euston-Tring
2T50	16.41	Tring-Euston
2B49	17.35	Euston-Bletchley

Diagram 2 (from November 20):

2T02	07.10	Tring-Euston
2T15	08.04	Euston-Tring
2T16	08.51	Tring-Euston
2K45	16.39	Euston-Milton Keynes
2K46	17.57	Milton Keynes-Euston
2T69	19.24	Euston-Tring
2Y70	20.15	Tring-Euston
2K63	21.06	Euston-Milton Keynes

Diagram 3 (from November 27):

2B06	06.56	Bletchley-Euston
2T53	16.24	Euston-Tring
2T54	17.15	Tring-Euston
2K51	18.09	Euston-Milton Keynes
2K52	19.27	Milton Keynes-Euston
2B61	20.54	Euston-Bletchley



No. 730010 and 730007 stand at Watford Junction on November 13, with the 2B02 06.04 Bletchley-London Euston. This was the first passenger service for Class 730s. West Midlands Railway/@DownOnTheStour

The use of three-car Class 730/0 fleet on LNWR workings into and out of Euston is only temporary; in due course they will be deployed on services in the West Midlands, such as the Cross City line and the Wolverhampton to Walsall route. The latter line is expected to see its first '730' workings early in the new year, possibly at the end of January. Once the five-car Class 730/2 units enter service in 2024, use of '730/0' sets in Euston workings will cease. The five-car fleet is still undergoing acceptance trials, and as of late November, only five sets had been released from Alstom, Derby. The most recent of these to emerge, No. 730205, was hauled from Derby to Oxley by Rail Operations Group No. 37611 *Denise* on October 26.

Of the other five-car sets, No.

730206 was hauled from Oxley to Old Dalby by No. 37611 on November 2. It returned to Oxley with No. 730101 (which has yet to be renumbered 730201) on November 21 behind ROG No. 37510 *Orion*. At Oxley, they joined No. 730103, and on November 23, the three sets undertook a 15-coach test run to Wavertree Junction (Liverpool) and then Dallam Junction (Warrington) before returning to Oxley.

Meanwhile, more three-car sets have been sent away for storage pending their entry to service. On October 26, No. 730023 was taken from Oxley to Doncaster Belmont Yard by ROG No. 37611, with No. 730024 following behind ROG No. 37800 on November 3. The '37' then hauled No. 730036 from Doncaster Belmont Yard to Gascoigne Wood. Deliveries of

new sets from Alstom, Derby have been Nos. 730044 (November 2) and 730046 (November 17), both being moved to Oxley by ROG No. 37611. Returned to Derby by the same loco for repairs was No. 730027 on November 6.

With the introduction of the '730s', as of November 27 the LNWR Class 319 fleet no longer has any rostered diagrams. However, some are being retained to provide standby cover until the end of the year.

Two sets were disposed of in November; No. 319215, which had been out of action since September, has been despatched by road to Sims, Newport, while No. 319220 has been sold to the Ministry of Defence for training purposes. These disposals left Nos. 319214/217/219/433/457 on London Northwestern's books. **E**

DMU

CLASS 156 SUPER SPRINTER

A long-term resident at Wolverton Works (having arrived on September 5, 2022), No. 156416 emerged after corrosion repairs and overhaul. Renumbered from No. 156916 at the same time, the former East Midlands Railway set, which is now part of the Northern fleet, formed the 5E12 11.06 Wolverton-Heaton.

CLASS 165 TURBO

HEADING to Bristol for Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) upgrade work by Arriva Traincare, Nos. 165008/029 formed the 5B65 08.02 Wembley LMD-Bristol Barton Hill on November 15. Dealt with the previous month had been Nos. 165016/021.

CLASS 166 TURBO

NEWLY-refurbished Great Western Railway No. 166203 was released from overhaul on November 14, forming the

5Q81 09.04 Wolverton-St Philips Marsh. Heading the opposite direction later the same day was No. 166209.

CLASS 175 CORADIA

DESPATCHED from Landore to Holyhead for storage on October 30 was debranded No. 175007, with No. 175106 heading the opposite direction two days later. No. 175006 left Landore for Holyhead on November 6 but the working was terminated at Chester.

No. 175009 was sent from Chester

to Landore on November 10, with No. 175102 heading from Landore to Crewe the same day – it subsequently ran to Ilford the next day. November 15 saw No. 175003 arrive at Landore from Chester.

CLASS 197 CIVITY

NEW into service on October 28 was No. 197108, with No. 197109 appearing on November 9, No. 197045 on November 21 and No. 197005 the next day.

➔ Northern's Class 319 fleet is in the process of being stood down, and No. 319375 was despatched for scrap on November 20. Its final movement, behind ROG No. 37800, was the 5Q80 09.20 Allerton-Sims, Newport. At time of writing, all the remaining units are expected to be stopped before the end of December, in advance of the last sets departing for scrap in January 2024.

Meanwhile, on November 26, Northern No. 319384 stands at Wilmslow, waiting to form the 2F12 09.41 to Liverpool Lime Street. On Sundays, two '319s' were diagrammed to operate Liverpool Lime Street-Wilmslow via Manchester Airport services. As these were some of the only work Manchester Piccadilly-based crews had on the electric multiple units, two drivers decided to celebrate what could be their last turns on '319s' by obtaining a headboard and Network SouthEast flashes to mark the occasion. The other '319' in action that day, and similarly treated, was No. 319370. Matthew Dodd



November 8 saw No. 197116 hauled from Wolverton to Crewe by Freightliner No. 66951, with No. 197118 following behind No. 66567 on November 14.

EMU

CLASS 323

THE first of 17 Class 323s to be transferred to Northern, No. 323208, ran from Soho (Birmingham) to Allerton on October 28, although four weeks later it had still not entered traffic with its new operator. Further units are due to be released by West Midlands Trains in the coming months – this should enable Northern to increase the length of several services following recent reductions (see below).

CLASS 331 CIVITY

ON November 20, a start was made on exchanging the 12 four-car Class 331/1 sets which operate in Yorkshire with a similar number of three-car '331/0' units from Allerton. This is being undertaken as part of several changes

which will see some services reduced in length, with the ageing Class 319 fleet being retired at the same time. Many workings in the North West which have previously employed pairs of Class 331/0s will instead be operated by a single '331/1', while other routes, such as Leeds to Doncaster, will be made up of three vehicles rather than four.

The first set to be transferred was No. 331104 which, having been taken out of service earlier in the day after working the 2S10 08.36 Bradford Forster Square-Skipton, departed as the 5Q36 12.00 Skipton-Allerton behind Rail Operations Group No. 37611 *Denise*. The '37' returned from Allerton to Skipton with No. 331002 early the next day and was also employed for the movement of No. 331102 from Skipton to Allerton on November 23.

The Class 331 fleet was quick to be put into service in the North West; No. 331104 was in action on November 23, and No. 331102 on November 24.

CLASS 390 PENDOLINO

RELEASED from Alstom, Widnes in November were Nos. 390006 *Rethink*

Mental Illness and 390016. Undergoing attention at the end of the month was No. 390040.

CLASS 458 JUNIPER

SENT north from Bournemouth to Alstom, Widnes for refurbishment and reforming as a four-car set on November 20 was No. 458524. Its transfer was carried out using GB Railfreight Nos. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle/Caisteal Dhùn Èideann* and 56081. Earlier in the month (November 7/8), the '56' had been used with No. 47739 to return No. 458428 (ex-458528) from Widnes to Bournemouth via a stop at Wembley.

CLASS 465 NETWORKER

ON November 11, No. 465925 was hauled by GB Railfreight No. 66774 from Slade Green to Wabtec, Doncaster for overhaul.

CLASS 466 NETWORKER

EMERGING from Wabtec, Doncaster on November 17 were Nos. 466022/039, which departed for Slade Green, where they arrived the next morning behind

GB Railfreight No. 66779 *Evening Star*. The '66' returned north to Doncaster the next day with Nos. 466006/026.

CLASS 508

ANOTHER two Class 508s were sent for scrap on November 6, Nos. 508112/137 being hauled from Birkenhead North to Sims, Newport by Rail Operations Group No. 37800.

CLASS 701 ARTERIO

MORE five-car sets have been despatched from Eastleigh to Bicester for storage. Arriving from Eastleigh behind GB Railfreight No. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle/Caisteal Dhùn Èideann* on November 9 were Nos. 701514/515, and Nos. 701507/511 followed on November 17, GBRf No. 47739 providing traction. A further two units, Nos. 701515/516, arrived on November 22, having been hauled from Eastleigh via Willesden to Bicester by GBRf No. 47749 *City of Truro*.

Newly released from Alstom Derby have been Nos. 701520 (November 1), 701521 (November 10) and 701522 (November 15), all taken to Eastleigh TMD by GBRf No. 47727. They were followed on November 21 by No. 701523, which was brought south from Derby to Eastleigh by GBRf No. 47749. Also now back at Eastleigh is No. 701004, which arrived from Long Marston, where it had been located since March 24, behind No. 47739.

CLASS 707 DESIRO CITY/CITY BEAM

A LAST-minute change of plan has seen Nos. 707024/030 retained by South Western Railway until April 2024. The pair had already been stood down and debranded before being moved to Clapham Yard pending transfer to Southeastern after their last working on October 17. However, they have since returned to Wimbledon Park, and returned to traffic with South Western Railway on November 4. On their first day back in service, they operated Shepperton services, and have also seen use on the Epsom, Guildford and Hampton Court routes.



Rail Operations Group No. 37611 *Denise* stands at Skipton on November 21, hauling Northern 331002 as the 5Q17 04.00 Allerton-Broughton Road. This was the first three-car Class 331/0 transferred from the North West for use in the West Yorkshire area. These are replacing the four-car Class 331/1s, which are gradually moving in the opposite direction. Chris Gee



Rail Operations Group No. 37611 *Denise* passes Water Orton on October 30, hauling West Midlands Trains Nos. 730033/032 as the 5Q58 08.58 Oxley-Old Dalby. The Alstom-built three-car electric multiple units were being moved for temporary storage. Daryl Hector

CLASS 720 AVENTRA

ALL c2c '720s' have now been used in service, with Nos. 720603/607/611/612 all making their debut revenue-earning runs on October 3, and the final set, No. 720608, doing so on November 17. Also entering traffic in mid-November was Greater Anglia No. 720128. Moved by road from Derby to Longsight for completion of work by Alstom in November was GA No. 720516. A further two sets are expected to follow.

CLASS 755 FLIRT

ON November 14, Greater Anglia No. 755403 ran from Norwich Crown Point to Derby Etches Park for tyre turning, returning to East Anglia the next day.

CLASS 756 FLIRT

FOLLOWING movement from Dollands Moors to Ripple Lane by DB Cargo UK No. 92042 the previous day, Nos. 756114/115 were hauled to South Wales on November 14. DB CNo.

66002 provided traction for the 5Q99 04.04 Ripple Lane-Cardiff Canton.

CLASS 777

HAVING arrived from Poland at the end of October, Nos. 777021/025/027 were collected by DB Cargo UK No. 66065, which formed the 6Q14 07.55 Dollands Moor-Wembley Yard, on November 1. They were taken north later the same day by RailAdventure Nos. 43468/480 and 43465/484 to Walton Old Junction before being

transferred to Kirkdale.

Another move from Dollands Moor to Wembley Yard occurred on November 15, when Swiss-built Nos. 777022/032/034 were collected by DB No. 66084. As of November 25, they were still at Wembley.

New into service during November were Nos. 777020/023/024/036, 777152. The '777s' used on passenger trains now reads Nos. 777001-016/018-020/023/024/036/049, 777142/146/148/152.

DEPOT TALK

Correct to November 15, 2023

Allocations

197108/109 HQ-CH
319215 sent for disposal
319220 sold to MoD
323208 SO/EJHQ-AN/EDHQ
508112/137 sent for disposal
701518/520-522 newly delivered HQ/HYHQ
720128 HQ-IL
720603/607/611/612 HQ-EM
730006/007/010/011 HQ-BY
730044 newly delivered HQ/EJHQ
730205 newly delivered HQ/EJHQ
756111-115 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
777020/023/031/036 HQ-KD
777021/022/025/027/032/034 newly delivered HQ/HEHQ
777152 HQ-KD
805006/007 newly delivered HQ/HFHQ

Liveries

East Midlands Railway purple:
170423

Eurovision decals removed: 777013

South Western Railway:

444039/044, 450085, 450112/125,
458405/416/423/425/428
+ Andysmanclub decals: 185111

Named

196102 *The Shropshire Flyer*

Names removed

323208 *Five Ways*
507026 *Councillor George Howard*
508111 *The Beatles*

Now in passenger traffic

197108/109
720128
720603/607/611/612
730006/007/010/011
777020/023/031/036
777152

Stored/stopped locations

Cardiff Canton: 756111-115
Crewe Basford Hall: 197031, 197118
Derby: 730027

Doncaster Belmont: 730023/24

Eastleigh: 701004, 701518/520-522

Gascoigne Wood: 730036

Holyhead: 175006/007, 175105

Ilford: 175102/110

Kirkdale: 777028/030

Landore: 175003/009, 175106

MoD Bicester: 701021,

701505/506/513/514

Old Dalby: 730031/033

Oxley: 730044, 730205, 805006/007

Walton Old Junction: 777021/025/027

Wembley: 777022/032/034

Workshop: 465917, 466032

Disposals

EMR King George V Dock, Glasgow:

Arrival date: October 2: 71950,

77944 (321402)

Raxstar at Eastleigh Works: Cut

dates: October 25: 77053; October

30: 71582; October 31: 77005;

November 2: 62666 (all 317506)

Sims Metals, Newport:

Arrival dates: November 9-10:

319215; November 11: 508112/137;

November 14: 455722

IET

CLASS 800

RELEASED from Arlington, Eastleigh on October 27 following crack repairs, No. 800026 was put back into service with Great Western Railway on November 24.

CLASS 802 NOVA 1

OUT of action since its derailment at Heaton on March 22, 2022, No. 802207 emerged from Newton Aycliffe on November 10 following work on vehicles at the Hitachi site at Long Marston. The unit ran to Doncaster Carr but had yet to re-enter service with TransPennine Express as of November 26.

CLASS 805

TWO more new Avanti West Coast bi-mode units were released from Newton Aycliffe on November 2, Nos. 805006/007 forming the 5Q32 08.25 Merchant Park Sidings-Oxley. Unlike previous deliveries, the pair ran under their own power. Unlike No. 805005 which carries full Avanti livery, both sets are in plain grey.

DB's finally calling time on remaining 1950s era wagons

No one can say that the railways didn't get their money's worth from the Bogie Bolster D and 'Salmon' wagons, but these contemporaries with the BR standard steam locomotives are finally heading for retirement.

ALTHOUGH the past few decades have seen hundreds of Bogie Bolster D and 'Salmon'-based vehicles being sent for scrap, a rump of useful wagons still remained in service.

This changed at beginning of October as DB Cargo UK began to make serious inroads into the two fleets, with just under 100 vehicles making their final journey during that period.

The arrival of hundreds of new Network Rail bogie flat and box wagons leased from Wascosa, combined with the Loram Rail's JNA-Y programme, has had a huge impact on the legacy wagon fleet. This has so far manifested itself with the withdrawal of the 1990s-2000s period ballast/spoil open conversions that mostly run on chassis built between the 1960s and 1980s.

There are two fleets that have somehow escaped this cull until now, MXA 'Lobster' and YWA 'Salmon', both of

which are based on ancient underframes that in some cases date from the early 1950s.

Some 210 of the bright red MXAs were converted from BMA aluminium ingot carriers in 2015/2016. This was their third rebuild, following modification from BDA/BPA in the late 1980s, and their original air-braked upgrade during 1977-1979. Incredibly, the design itself was a subtle adaptation of a pre-nationalisation LNER design.

The 'Salmon' rail wagon has a not dissimilar background, albeit with LMS pedigree. The earliest batches were built for British Railways in 1949 and have proved versatile, undergoing numerous changes over the decades. The most recent was the mass replacement of the bogies in the late 1990s, and this was followed by the conversion of 200 wagons with rectangular pillars to secure track panels in 2009. The



On June 21, 2019, DB Cargo UK No. 66085 hauls YWA DB996131 through Crewe. This 'Salmon' was built in 1951 by Head Wrightson Ltd of Thornaby. Gareth Bayer

latter were recoded as YKA 'Osprey'. However, just over 110 unconverted YWAs remained in service and this group was boosted in 2019 following the removal of the stanchions from around 40 Osprey and their redesignation back to their original TOPS code.

All three major Midlands scrap merchants have successfully bid on both fleets and the disposition of the first 95 to go for scrap is as follows: **EMR Attercliffe:** MXA 950232/403/73/549, 951066/157, YWA DB 996122/5/

40/127/42/219/27/30/74/9/292/303/30/41/8/99/402/11/8/26/40/63/6/85/99/525/39/46/7/71/602/9/14/20/1/48/67/9/852/917/41/93, DB 997018 **EMR Kingsbury:** MXA 950010/204/517/76/783/888/932/63/8, 951192/246, YWA DB 996248/414/41/72/7/528/65/0/60/1/877, DB 997019 **C F Booth Ltd, Rotherham:** MXA 950272/371/527/690/965, 951017/179, YWA DB 996115/216/326/49/82/7/425/36/86/577/90/619/63/673/857/927, DB 997017 **B**

DEVELOPMENTS

■ **DB CARGO UK:** The number of BYA 'Stegasaurus' conversions increased by 19 during the period under review, DBC's Stoke-on-Trent maintenance and rebuild facility accepting an identical number of donor vehicles from Warrington Arpley over the same six-week period. These should be the final donors for this batch of rebuilds. Also of note is that the most recent deliveries in November were of wagons that had retained their hoods. The full list of arrivals and departures at the former Marcroft Engineering site are as follows:

October 23: 966058/85/176/254 (inbound), 966045/93/168 (outbound)

October 30: 966025/9/46 (inbound), 966031/96/253 (outbound)

November 6: 966084/185/217 (inbound), 966036/111/29/36 (outbound)

November 13: 966044/125/160 (inbound), 966058/181 (outbound)

November 21: 966085/237/54 (outbound)

November 27: 966043/82/138/54/8/239 (inbound), 966025/84/185/217 (outbound)

Correcting a transposed number in RE331, No. 966143 actually departed on October 9, while it was No. 966253 that arrived.

Taking a brief look at WIA five-unit car carrier overhauls, the only arrival at Stoke was No. 85 70 4971 014-1 on October 23, which was making its first visit to the Potteries for 30 months. Moving in the opposite direction on the same day was No. 85 70 4971 042-2 following attention. It was followed by No. 85 70 4971 014-1 on October 30. It wasn't until November 27 that the new WIA was brought from Arpley in the form of No. 85 70 4971 045-5. Meanwhile, Previously unreported in these pages was the departure of 85 70 4971 055-4 on July 31.

Finally, on site since September 11, former RMC

aggregates hopper No. RMC 19225 was given the green light to return to service and departed Stoke on November 21. There was no such good news for Nos. RMC 17209/28, which have both been removed for scrapping.

■ **DRAX POWER:** W H Davis has completed the follow-on batch of 30 IIA-D (UIC code Tafoos) biomass hoppers at its Langwith Junction site. With the first 15 having left in August, the final 15, Nos. 81 70 0698 240/242-255, departed on October 24 courtesy of DB Cargo UK No. 66169. This ran as a 4Z32 Shirebrook to Milford West Sidings.

■ **GB RAILFREIGHT:** Deliberately to contradict last month's column, GBRf's regular FEA-G delivery from Greenbrier Europe in Poland broke its third Monday habit and actually moved north from Dollands Moor on the second Monday of the month. Unbranded Direct Rail Services blue No. 66304 was charged with taking Nos. 81 70 4663 241-260 north on November 13, the formation running under a 4Z66 0515 headcode to Peterborough Yard.

Of interest, Touax Rail KFA No. TIPH 93357, which has been on site at DBC Stoke since January 11, finally departed on October 18, heading back into GBRf service.

■ **NETWORK RAIL:** No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach* continues its regular shuttle service between Derby at Toton in connection with Loram Rail's 'Hawk' rebodding programme. On September 27, the Class 37/4 removed freshly rebuilt JNA-Y boxes Nos. 81 70 5831 162-171 from the Railway Technical Centre site as a 6Z37 14.00 to Toton North Yard, returning with MRA side-tippers Nos. 501059/119/295-7 under the usual 6Z38 headcode (depart 16.30). On October 30,

Nos. 81 70 5831 182-187 formed the 6Z37 14.00 to North Yard, while the 6Z37 14.00 ex-Derby on November 20 was comprised of Nos. 81 70 5831 192-198. The large logo locomotive returned from Toton on the same day as a 6Z38 (departing at 12.25) with MRAs Nos. 501006/66/128/9/36 and possibly defective 'Hawk' No. 81 70 5831 197-5.

■ **DISPOSALS:** Summarising the remaining disposals for the period September-November. The other headline news was the almost complete obliteration of the CDA china clay hopper fleet on site at St Blazey by Cornish scrappers Henry Orchard & Sons. Also in line for their appointment with the gas axe are more modern types such as the steel-sided OCA opens and the usual selection of two-axle ballast/spoil wagons. As follows:

DBC St Blazey: CDA 375000-2/3/5-12/5-8/20/2/3/5/32/3/5/7/8/40/1/3-6/9/52/5/7-60/4/6/9/83/105/6

EMR Attercliffe: OBA 110026/182/298/618, OCA 112008/12/8/35/57/97/102/6/33/72/242/62/320/1/74/77, MFA 391001, MHA/MPA 394093/13

7/79/205/337/99/500/11/24/66/79/620/982, 396102/16, SPA 460025/88/129/272/469

EMR Kingsbury: MHA/MPA 394259/282/369/772/8 5/821/31/9/49/62/913/86, 396139/47/53/62

C F Booth, Rotherham: OAA 100004/96, OBA 110023/706, OCA 112003/41/56/74/86/120/2/3/37/56/92/218/21/70/375/9, MHA/MPA 394046/112/50/394/568/618/812, 396112/23/57/65

Finally, picking up on some wagons that were cut up earlier in the year:

Gwent Demolition, Margam: BAA 900016/21/30/11 3/32/8/48/73/86/258/83/305, BCA 900266, BIA 910025, BLA 910309/444/81, BZA 900005, HTA 311074, VGA 210610

March Whittemore: MTA 395152

DB Cargo UK withdraws its ‘Tugs’ - but all is not lost for railtourers

There will still be two operators which can provide Class 60s for railtour duties when DBC withdraws its fleet.

THE decision of DB Cargo to eliminate its Class 60 fleet (see *Headline News*) is, perhaps, not surprising in view of the downturn in traffic, with the operator already in discussion with unions regarding a reduction in its workforce (RE331). The ‘Tug’ fleet had been dwindling in the last year, repairs not being sanctioned as individual machines became due for repairs.

The last four operational machines on the company’s books, Nos. 60024/040/062/074, will bow out by the year end to await their fate, with DB either offloading them to other operators or selling them for scrap.

With two other operators, GB Railfreight and DC Rail, having another 14 operational examples on their combined books, opportunities for railtour duties look rosy and, of course, a diminishing, vintage freight class will become increasingly popular.

There are 10 ‘Tugs’ in GBRf’s operational fleet, Nos. 60002/021/026/047/056/076/085/087/095/096, while DC Rail uses four Class 60s. These are Nos. 60028/029/046/055.

But that’s not all – in reserve, DCR has no less than 15 others which may or may not return to traffic, depending on traffic requirements, but the option is there to make so many operational from a few ‘Christmas Tree’ spares donors.

It’s just over 34 years since No. 60001 *Steadfast* emerged from Brush Traction, Loughborough in June 1989 (taken into stock August 1991) so the class has had a good run, although a long period of store awaited most of the class in latter years. The first railtour to use ‘Tugs’ was on May 26, 1991, when Nos. 60057 *Adam Smith* and 60032 *William Booth* powered Hertfordshire Railtours’ ‘The Coalville Swansong’ from London St Pancras to Coalville. Illustrating how times change was the fact that that same day, another tour to Coalville, this time run by Pathfinder Tours, saw the same pair head that special from Coalville to Nuneaton. And, if you weren’t on either of those tours, haulage fans have been out of luck ever since, as neither ‘Tug’ has worked a passenger train since. 🚂

Headache for UK Railtours

UK Railtours has advised it has had to replan tours which were intending to use DB Cargo UK as an operator, and this has delayed publication of its spring tours.

DBC has been rumoured to be leaving the charter market, although a spokesman told *Rail Express*: “DB Cargo UK is not withdrawing from the charter train sector, we are simply concentrating on our contractual business, rather than ad hoc requests to run services.”

However, two tours have been announced, reflecting the statement from RE331 that its ‘Forgotten Tracks’ tours were likely to figure prominently in 2024. UK Railtours are advising that no bookings are being taken yet as details are being finalised – these are purely notifications to note the dates. Interestingly, UKR is calling these ‘Off the Beaten Track’ tours and not ‘Forgotten Tracks’.

‘The Gateway Galloper’ – Saturday March 23, 2024: Starting from London King’s Cross, with pick-ups to Grantham, Castle Donnington Distribution depot is the first port of call, followed by East Midlands Gateway terminal. Then the tour stops at Derby for a break after reversal at Burton West Yard. Chaddesden Sidings are visited, thence to Toton and the Mapperley branch before the return journey. Traction is expected to be GB Railfreight Class 66 top ‘n’ tail.

‘The Harbourmaster’ – Saturday April 13, 2024: This tour runs from London Paddington, with pick-ups to Bristol and Class 67 haulage. Then it runs to Newport where GBRf Class 66s take over for the run to west Wales (Swansea avoider) to Clarbiston Road Junction for the branch to Milford Haven, but also taking in the Robeston branch en route. There is an off-train option to visit the National Botanical Garden of Wales which is eight miles from Carmarthen.

Good start for Inter-City

2024 is starting well for Locomotive Services’ Inter-City subsidiary, with no less than four tours on the cards in the first two months. Besides January’s two ‘Push-Pull’ Class 47/7 outings (see table), February has two tempting charters:

‘The West Riding Ltd’ – Saturday, February 9. Starting from London King’s Cross with pick-ups at Stevenage and Peterborough, Leeds is the first destination, followed by Skipton, then back to Leeds and thence to Bradford Forster Square.

The charter states it is re-creating the era when Class 90s took over many of the Class 91-operated services when the ‘91s’ were receiving reliability modifications. LS’ Nos. 90001 *Royal Scot* and 90002 *Board of Badenoch* will be the traction.

Of interest is that although it is using LS’ First Class set, non-dining is under £100 by one pound, whilst full dining is £199, well under what other tour operators are currently charging.

‘The Whistling Highlander’ – Saturday/Sunday, February 24/25. The give-away clue is in the title. Privately-owned Class 40 No. D213 (40013) *Andania* takes this Inter-City tour from Crewe, Warrington Bank Quay, Wigan North Western, Preston and Carlisle stations all the way to Inverness. Day 2 sees the charter head to Aberdeen, thence via the Tay and Forth Bridges to Linlithgow and then rejoining the outward route to Crewe. This two-day outing (passengers book their own accommodation at Inverness) is costing £159 for non-dining and £249 for those who indulge in gastronomic pleasure.



No. D213 (40013) *Andania* stands at Rugby on October 21, having hauled Saphos Trains’ 1Z71 14.45 ‘Pennine Moor Explorer’ from Hellifield. The charter ran via Shrewsbury, with the Class 40 replacing No. 46100 *Royal Scot* at Crewe. The ‘40’ is booked to visit the Highlands during the final weekend of February as part of a two-day trip to Scotland. Phil Chilton

FORTHCOMING TOURS FOR JANUARY				
Date	Tour Name	From-To	Motive Power	Promoter
6	Settle & Carlisle Circular	Hereford, stations to Crewe-Settle & Carlisle, return via WCML	LS ‘47’x2	SR
13	Ayr Extension	Crewe, stations to Carlisle-Glasgow Central-Ayr	LS ‘86’ 86101 and LS ‘87’ 87002	IC
20	Settle & Carlisle Circular	Chester-le-Street, stations to Leeds-S&C, return via WCML	LS ‘47’x2	SR
27	East Anglian Push-Pull Day 1	Crewe, stations to Peterborough-Kings Lynn-Felixstowe-Norwich	LS DBSO set & No. 47712	IC
28	East Anglian Push-Pull Day 2	Norwich-Ipswich-Lowestoft-Norwich-Great Yarmouth-Crewe	LS DBSO set & No. 47712	IC
Operators: IC – Inter-City, SR – Statesman Rail				

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TUESDAY 30TH JULY – SUNDAY 4TH AUGUST 2024

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Celebrations to mark the 150th Anniversary of the Douglas to Port Erin line

Celebrations to mark the 130th Anniversary of Manx Electric Railway services to Laxey

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GATESHEAD INTERNATIONAL STADIUM

Neilson Road, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear NE10 0EF
(A184 off Felling bypass)

SUNDAY 25TH FEBRUARY

10am - 3pm. Admission: Adult £4. Senior/Child £3

2024 TOY FAIR DATES

MARCH 17th	Rainton	SEPTEMBER 8th	Rainton
MAY 5th	Gateshead	OCTOBER 13th	Gateshead
JUNE 9th	Rainton	NOVEMBER 2nd	Edinburgh
JULY 6th	Edinburgh	NOVEMBER 17th	Rainton
JULY 28th	Gateshead	DECEMBER 8th	Gateshead

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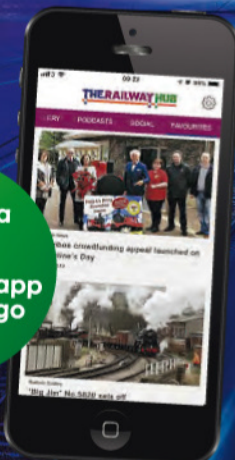


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Another 'Chopper' re-enters preservation

Kent & East Sussex Railway is new base for former HNRC Class 20

OFFERED for sale earlier this year by Harry Needle Railroad Company (HNRC), No. 20087 has been bought for preservation, and arrived at the Kent & East Sussex Railway on November 11. The English Electric Type 1 has been purchased by the owner of two

preserved industrial Austerity steam locos, *Sapper* and *Swiftsure*. It has recently undergone restoration by Heritage Rail Traction Supplies at the Battlefield Line, where it had been located since moving from Worksop in August 2021.

The Kent & East Sussex Railway has identified a requirement for two operational diesels for the whole of 2024, which is its 50th anniversary year, and No. 20087 will be based on

the line for the entire year, working alongside resident Class 14 No. D9504. A further loco is planned to be hired in for the summer period. In 2023, the line hired No. 33202 *Dennis G Robinson*, and the 'Crompton' returned to the Mid-Norfolk Railway at the end of October in advance of being used on Polar Express trains.

No. 20087 was one of several previously preserved Class 20s acquired by HNRC in the period

between 2007 and 2015. Although some saw further use in industry and even on the main line, No. 20087 was stored at the East Lancashire Railway until 2020, when it was transferred to Worksop. It first entered preservation in 1999, when it was bought from EWS, moving to the East Lancashire Railway where it became part of the Newton Heath Diesel Traction Group fleet which was based on the line at the time. **E**

COACH NEWS

PULLMAN MOVEMENTS

A pair of Pullman cars that were used on Winston Churchill's funeral train have been reunited at the Kent & East Sussex Railway. Nos. 246 *Lydia* and 247 *Isle of Thanet*, which went to the USA with No. 4472 *Flying Scotsman* in 1969 and were repatriated in 2000, have spent the last few years at Throckmorton and Carnforth respectively. No. 246 is expected to enter service on the line's Wealden Pullman dining trains in 2024, while No. 247 will be stored pending overhaul.

Another coach which went to the USA in 1969, former Devon Belle observation car No. 14, was moved from the Swanage Railway to the One:One Collection museum at Margate for undercover storage during November.

Located at the Bluebell Railway for just over two years (where it had previously been planned to return it to service), Pullman Kitchen First No. 305 *Aquila* has departed for a new home at a garden centre in Hewish, near Weston-Super-Mare. It is to be used as a static restaurant.

SLEEPER SCRAPPED

PREVIOUSLY located at the Nottingham Heritage Railway, Mk.3a Sleeper No. 10602 has been disposed of to scrap dealer Chris Allsop Ltd at Colwick in Nottinghamshire.



OUT of action for several years, No. 47701 has moved to the Wensleydale Railway for use on the line's 'Polar Express' trains. On November 11, the '47' approaches Primrose User Worked Crossing, near Constable Burton, with a 'Polar Express' from Leeming Bar. The Type 4 was hauled from Burton to the Wensleydale Railway by West Coast Railways No. 57012 on November 6. The Class 47 last saw regular use at the now-closed Dartmoor Railway and was once mooted for export to Hungary. Now part of the Nemesis Rail fleet, it was initially bought for preservation by Alan and Tracy Lear in 1997. Nigel Cockburn

Another '104' for East Lancashire Railway

NOVEMBER 16 saw another Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Company car, Driving Motor Composite Lavatory (DMCL) No. 50531, arrive at the East Lancashire Railway. Previously stored at the Telford Steam Railway, where it was last used in 2014, albeit as hauled stock, it is to undergo an assessment of its condition in the coming weeks. Its movement to Bury means the surviving Class 104s are now concentrated at three locations, namely the East Lancashire Railway (Nos. 50437/455/494/517/531, 59137/228), Llangollen Railway (Nos. 50447/454/528)

and North Norfolk Railway (Nos. 50479, 56182).

At the North Norfolk Railway, with Driving Trailer Composite Lavatory (DTCL) No. 56182 having returned to traffic back in September after its extensive restoration, work has begun on the bodywork overhaul of its partner, Driving Motor Brake Second (DMBS) No. 50479. A full height section of guard's van bodywork, which was in extremely poor condition, has been removed for replacement. Its restoration is expected to take between five and 10 years.

'ED' moves to East Kent Railway for 2024 season

FORMER European Passenger Services electro-diesel No. 73130, which has been based at the Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway since changing hands during the latter part of 2022, has been placed on loan to the East Kent Railway, where it arrived from South Wales on November 10. It will remain in Kent until at least March 2025, after which at some point it will return to the Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway.

It is planned for No. 73130 to enter service during the 2024

operating season, and the intention is to use it with the former Gatwick Express vehicles based on the East Kent Railway, which comprise Nos. 72505, 72620/629 and GLV No. 68509. Between 1984 and 1988, No. 73130 was a regular performer on Gatwick Express work. The locomotive, along with No. 73118, was modified with Scharfenberg couplings, primarily for use on Eurostar 'drag' movements, in 1994. The pair were retired from main line use by Eurostar in 2007.

DIESEL DIARY

More 2024 gala dates announced

VIRTUALLY all the 'big player' railways have now announced dates for galas in 2024, although there has already been one casualty; the Downpatrick & County Down

Railway has had to cancel its gala in January owing to flooding which has damaged both its infrastructure and its loco fleet (see *Irish Angle*, pages 30-31).

The season already looks like it will be particularly busy, with diesel events taking place at different railways over eight consecutive weekends in May and June.

2023 GALA DATES

December 29: Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway

December 29: Severn Valley Railway

2024 GALA DATES

January 6: Downpatrick & County Down Railway (Cancelled)

February 10: East Lancashire Railway (Theme day – theme TBC)

April 26-28: Great Central Railway

May 10-12: Swanage Railway

May 16-19: Severn Valley Railway

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

May 25-27: Mid-Norfolk Railway

June 6-8: West Somerset Railway

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 26-29: Ecclesbourne Valley Railway (14s@60)

August 2-4: Spa Valley Railway

September 6-8: Great Central Railway

September 13/14: East Lancashire Railway

September 14/15: Dean Forest Railway

September 20-22: Epping Ongar Railway

October 3-6: Severn Valley Railway

WLA 50th anniversary celebrations

THE Western Locomotive Association, which has recently seen an increase in membership by over 25% to more than 400, celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2024.

To mark this, an event featuring various presentations is being held at STEAM museum in Swindon, (appropriately located on the former Swindon Works site where 30 of the 'Westerns' were built), on the afternoon of January 27, followed by an optional dinner.

The agenda for the afternoon includes a presentation and update on the WLA, followed by a talk on the last days of the Westerns on BR and the early days of preservation by the WLA, followed by a question and answer session by Martyn Williams, who worked at Swindon Works and was involved in repainting No. D1062 *Western Courier* into maroon while it was stored there.

Following a break, well known photographer Bernard Mills will put on a slide show entitled 'The Last Months of the Westerns', after which the event concludes with a British Transport Commission film show. Tickets for the afternoon cost £15.00 and can be booked at westernlocomotives.com/shop

Later in 2024, No. D1013 *Western Ranger* is expected to return to service at the Severn Valley Railway after a 15-year overhaul. The locomotive was stopped for attention in October 2009. At its annual general meeting on November 11, WLA members voted unanimously, apart from two abstentions, for No. D1013 to remain in BR blue for the time being. Options for a livery change will be reconsidered at a later date.



AFTER a failure the previous weekend, Class 105 No. 51485 underwent a gearbox change at Bury on November 5. Later in November, the '105' was in action at the East Lancashire Railway's diesel multiple unit gala. On November 18, the ELR's Cravens set arrives at Bury Bolton Street. Chris Gee

IN BRIEF

DELTIC PROGRESS

STOPPED to enable the problem which occurred on recent main line outings to be identified and resolved, No. 55009 *Alycidon* (currently bearing the identity of scrapped No. 55013 *The Black Watch*) has been run up at Barrow Hill. Load regulator work has been carried out and oil leaks attended to, and further minor electrical issues have been detected and are being dealt with.

EXETER LATEST

ON October 28, No. 50044 *Exeter* was reunited with its overhauled train heat generator, and, after realignment, the locomotive's roof was refitted on November 11. Further work will be carried out in early 2024, prior to operation on the Severn Valley Railway in advance of it heading out onto the main line.

'RAT' REVIVAL

WORK has begun on returning the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's No. 25059 to service, it being damaged by flooding at Haworth in 2019. The locomotive's boiler and water tanks have been removed in advance of the Class 25 being dispatched to Barrow Hill for repairs.

CLASS 37 REPAINT

FOLLOWING the fitting of new Oleo buffers (RE331), North Yorkshire Moors Railway-based No. 37264 has now received bufferbeam skirts prior to a repaint into BR blue livery which will be undertaken over the winter months.

'PEAK' STARTED

NOW nearing the end of an extensive and lengthy restoration, the Pioneer Diesel Locomotive Group's No. 45105 was started for the first time in many years on November 16. Work on the locomotive began at Matlock in the mid-1990s before it moved to Barrow Hill in 1999.

PIONEER '47' BACK IN ACTION

WITH repairs now completed, No. 47401 *North Eastern* made some test runs and crew training trips at Butterley on November 20. It was due to see use on Santa Specials in December.

MULTIPLE UNIT DEVELOPMENTS

SVR CLASS 108 PROGRESS

FOLLOWING completion of contract repairs at Grosmont, Severn Valley Railway Class 108 car No. 51941 was reunited with its overhauled bogies in November, enabling a two-car set (with partner No. 52064) to return to service. A test run took place on November 18 and the unit should be in use on the line's winter diesel day on December 29.

Floodwater inundates preserved railway

Ireland's premier diesel preservation site damaged after heavy rainfall causes serious flooding.

THE Downpatrick and County Down Railway (D&CDR) suffered significant flood damage caused by heavy rainfall that began on October 30 and which continued into the next day.

Downpatrick was one of the worst areas affected by the floods

in Northern Ireland and buildings and stock at the D&CDR were damaged with most of the track submerged until waters began to subside.

Officials from the railway were only able to gain access to the premises on November 4, when it was discovered that the damage was so serious that the planned diesel gala on January 6 had to be cancelled due to concerns regarding possible damage to traction motors and axle boxes, as well as any other components that could have been damaged.

Established in 1982 on a barren site with only a derelict island platform and canopy on the Downpatrick avoiding line surviving from the line's closure in 1950, the D&CDR has been built-up from virtually nothing to a working railway museum and tourist attraction which features preserved steam and diesel traction, carriages, wagons and permanent way machines.

Its collection, which includes former CIE/IE locomotives Nos. E421, E432, G613, railbuses and ex-Northern Ireland Railways (NIR) diesel electric multiple

units, is augmented by ex CIE/IE locomotives owned by the Irish Traction Group (ITG) Nos. A39R, 146, C231 G611 and G617.

A Flooding Recovery Appeal has been launched by the D&CDR and other preservation societies and individuals have offered to assist in repairing damaged vehicles.

The only diesel stock to escape relatively unscathed was three-car ex-NIR 'Thumper' DEMU No. 458, which suffered some damage to the leading bogie of Driving Trailer No. 788. 

IARNRÓD ÉIREANN (IE)/ IRISH RAIL

■ TRAFFIC AND TRACTION:

DART and Dublin-Rosslare services were disrupted for a significant time on October 26, after a road vehicle damaged Serpentine Avenue level crossing between Lansdowne Road and Sandymount at around 13.00. On this date IE hosted a driver education day at various locations across the system to advise road users on how to use a level crossing safely. Heavy rainfall on October 28, saw flooding in the Waterford station area up to platform level. Services between Dublin Heuston and Waterford terminated and started from Kilkenny, with the 16.40 from Heuston reported to have terminated at Thomastown before running to Kilkenny. 'Bustitution' was in use between Kilkenny and Waterford until the floodwater receded. Flooding of the line at Glounthane and other locations in east Cork began on October 30, and saw Cork to Cobh/ Midleton services suspended until November 2, when normal operations resumed. A regular occurrence noted with the DART service in the Dublin area during the period under review was the

termination, usually at Connolly, of an electric multiple unit if it was proving problematic enroute. On November 1, the 07.45 Bray-Malahide was terminated at Blackrock, the 08.25 Bray-Howth was terminated at Connolly with its booked return trip, the 09.52 from Howth started from Connolly. Later the same day at around 20.30 passengers were escorted from a failed train between Shankill and Bray after problems with the overhead line electrification (OHLE) in the Killiney area stopped services between Dalkey and Greystones. Repairs were carried out and normal services resumed the following morning but further OHLE problems in the Greystones area saw services suspended once again until repairs were carried out. Technical issues saw the 13.10 Malahide-Bray cancelled on November 13, as was the 12.05 Bray-Malahide the next day. The 07.55 Bray-Howth on November 15, was terminated at Connolly as was the 17.40 Howth-Bray the following day. It should be noted that Ireland was not affected by Storm Ciaran, however, Storm Debi brought serious disruption to services

on November 13, with an overall 50mph speed limit imposed across the system from start of service to around 11.00, but local temporary speed restrictions remained in high-risk areas. The 05.25 Galway-Heuston was delayed at Oranmore because of a damaged level crossing. The 05.50 Gorey-Connolly encountered poor rail conditions and the 06.12 Longford-Dublin Pearse was delayed because of fallen trees between Longford and Edgeworthstown. The 09.05 Connolly-Sligo was cancelled and bustitution introduced between Boyle and Sligo until the line was cleared. Services were temporarily suspended on the M3 Parkway branch. The 11.00 Waterford-Heuston on November 14, was reported to have been worked by bus to Kilkenny. The diesel multiple unit that had formed the 10.15 ex Heuston was split at Kilkenny with one part continuing to Waterford and the other returning to Heuston.

■ **FREIGHT:** On November 11, GM No. 087 was hauled by No. 076 from Kildare to Inchicore for attention.

No. 087 had failed between Athy and Cherryville Junction on November 8, while hauling a Waterford-Ballina XPO container train. The locomotive was subsequently removed to the Plant Shop sidings at Kildare. GM No. 072 hauled a Waterford-Ballina XPO train on November 15, which had 13 loaded wagons. This train had 17 wagons in the consist as one wagon had been removed due to a faulty vacuum brake cylinder. Locomotives used on IWT container trains between Dublin Port and Ballina included Nos. 074, 215 and NIR No. 8209. No. 218 also saw use on IWT trains – see report elsewhere. Locomotives employed on Ballina/Westport timber traffic included Nos. 071, 076, 084 and 088.

■ **NEWS:** The redundant signal cabin at Cork was demolished on November 4/5. A new footbridge/ lifts and platform extension are being built at Banteer. IE has a requirement for 100 new drivers with recruitment starting immediately.

Locomotive fuel test programme launched by Iarnród Éireann

201 Class GM No. 218 *River Garavogue* is being used to test the viability of using hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) as fuel as an alternative to diesel.

The locomotive was in use on ballast train duties in the Drogheda area on October 27. It sports bodyside vinyls publicising IE's promotion of the environmentally friendly fuel. No. 218 having performed quite satisfactorily on Infrastructure duties was used on November 7, to haul the 09.40 Dublin North Wall to Ballina IWT container train which was reported to have been the first emissions-free freight train in Ireland. No. 218 returned to Dublin from Ballina the following day by working an IWT train. Active on these duties until November 13, the locomotive was promoted onto front rank passenger service on November 16, on the Dublin Heuston to Cork route and was noted powering a Mk.4 push-pull set on the 18.25 from Cork. No. 218 was diagrammed to work the 07.00 Heuston-Cork and 10.25 return on November 17.



No. 218 *River Garavogue* hauls the 08.05 Ballina-North Wall IWT intermodal through Cherryville Junction on November 13. No. 218 is the first of the Iarnród Éireann locomotives to use hydro-treated vegetable oil (HVO). Finbarr O'Neill.



Track and platforms in the process of being completed at Belfast Grand Central Station on November 8. This will be the new transport hub in the city and will result in the closure of the current Great Victoria Street Europa bus and rail station. The new hub will feature eight platforms, 26 bus stands, increased cycle and taxi provision, track and signalling improvements, car parking and a new public square, and is due to open in late 2024. Chris Playfair.

NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS (NIR)

THE period under review saw disruption and delays to services systemwide on a regular basis, with stopping patterns being altered to recover lost time and cancellations also a regular feature.

This was not only because of flooding and trees/debris on tracks when there was poor weather, but also due to poor railhead conditions and unavailability of units (see Cross Border). On October 24, the 15.45 Whitehead-Belfast Great Victoria Street (GVS), 16.15 GVS-Carrickfergus, 16.25 Carrickfergus-GVS and 16.45 GVS-Carrickfergus were cancelled due to 'train faults'. The 07.27 Whitehead-GVS the next day was cancelled with the 07.33 Larne Harbour-GVS making extra stops at Jordanstown and Yorkgate to facilitate passengers. Signalling issues in the Coleraine area during the afternoon of October 26, saw disruption to services with the 15.10 GVS-Londonderry delayed at Ballymoney. The Portrush branch set was used to work the 15.10 forward from Coleraine while 'bustitution' was introduced on the branch as required.

In late-October, Donegal Quay loop on the Dargan bridge between Yorkgate and Lanyon Place stations was in use again after being renewed. Heavy rain on October 31, which continued overnight, saw temporary

speed restrictions (TSRs) imposed across the system from start of service on November 1. The Coleraine-Londonderry section and the Belfast-Bangor line were closed temporarily for a period with rail tickets valid on parallel bus services on the latter route, which reopened at 10.15. On November 6, the 07.10 GVS-Londonderry and 09.38 return terminated at and started from Coleraine respectively, with road transport being provided in both directions between Coleraine and Londonderry with over-running engineering work the cause of the disruption. Signalling problems on November 8, saw the 09.10 GVS-Londonderry terminate at Bellarena and the 11.38 return start from there with buses used between Bellarena and Londonderry. The diesel multiple unit working the 08.10 GVS-Londonderry on November 14 stopped at Whiteabbey to allow traincrew to deal with an overheating engine. The unit returned as far as Yorkgate where the service was terminated, and the passengers transferred to the next service.

November 16 was a typical weekday on the Newry-Belfast-Bangor line with the 06.35 Newry-Bangor omitting all the booked stops between Lanyon Place and Bangor to make up late running. The 06.45 Whitehead-

Lisburn was terminated at Botanic; the 08.05 Lisburn-Bangor was cancelled, and poor railhead conditions were reported in the Cultra-Seahill section from start of service until 11.00. Multi-Purpose Vehicle (MPV) No. 11 was in regular use on railhead treatment train (RHTT) duties during the period under review. Anticipated extra demand for travel on the Belfast-Newry corridor on Saturday November 18, saw unit Nos. 4007/008, 3017/023 and 3019 working extras as required between Newry/Portadown and GVS/Lanyon Place.

■ **CROSS BORDER (NIR/IE):** Total possessions were imposed on the Dublin-Belfast line in late October, to allow both Iarnród Éireann (IE) and Northern Ireland Railways (NIR) to carry out infrastructure work with bustitution in use as required.

On IE, the work included ballasting in the Laytown area and renewal of trackwork at Malahide. The latter worksite saw the first use of the new Kirow 500 multi-tasker rail crane under overhead line electrification. On NIR, the work included stabilising cuttings in the Newry area, extending both platforms at Adelaide plus extending platform 3 at Lisburn and renewal of trackwork. While normal services resumed between Belfast

and Portadown/Newry from start of service on October 30, cross-border trains on this day ran only between Belfast and Drogheda as the work at Malahide was pre-planned for an extra day. Heavy rainfall which started on October 30, and continued into the next day, saw an accumulation of floodwater on sections of the railway and between Portadown and Scarva. This low-lying area is prone to flooding and deep standing water covered the railhead for a significant distance, with the result that services were suspended between Portadown and Dundalk. Bustitution was introduced until November 6, when normal services resumed but with temporary speed restrictions (TSRs) in affected areas. The period under review saw the continuing use of diesel multiple units due to the non-availability of De Dietrich/Mk.3 locomotive-hauled trains with vehicle suspension, electrical issues, door operation and wheel flats reported to be the usual problems.

A five-car ICR DMU continued to be diagrammed to work the 07.35 Connolly-Lanyon Place and 10.35 return with unit No. 22x36 noted on November 8. A 08.02 Dundalk-Connolly relief to the late running 06.50 ex Lanyon Place on November 9 was formed by four-car DMU No. 29x11.

Powerscene

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

CLASS 20

Passing through Tamworth High Level station at 16.30 on November 23, the 6X21 14.42 Butterley-Bescot was in the hands of Nos. 20142/189. The pair had run light from Kidderminster to collect Railvac No.4, prior to heading light to Tyseley. A rare duty of late for the elderly Type 1s, although No. 20132 made its Locomotive Services debut on November 24 when running light from Crewe to Edinburgh with stable companion No. D213 (40013) *Andania*, the Class 40 being a replacement for an ailing No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*.

On November 27, No. 20132 hauled the steam engine and its support coach from Joppa to Carlisle and on to Crewe passing Acton Bridge at 20.45 that evening. Two days later LSL Nos. 20096 and 20107 moved from Barrow Hill to Crewe, via Worksop, with Nos. 37409 and 57303.

CLASS 37

No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach* strayed from freight work in the East Midlands to head Vintage Trains' 'Illuminations Explorer' from Birmingham New Street to Blackpool North on November 11, No. 47773 'tailing' the

special. On November 22 No. 37418 had saloon No. 975025 *Caroline* for company on a jaunt from Derby to Cheltenham Spa and back to Birmingham International. Next day the duo travelled from Crewe to the Wirral providing a rare spectacle of a daylight locomotive-hauled train between Chester and Rock Ferry and later between Bootle Junction and Southport.

With No. 37884 *Cepheus* sidelined at Leicester for an exam, Rail Operations Group used No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* to haul condemned stock from Merseyside to Sims Metals at

Newport Docks. The disposal of Class 319 electric multiple units saw No. 319375 leaving Allerton behind No. 37800 on November 20, and No. 319378 nine days later. Already at Crewe South Yard, Orion No. 319373 was transferred to Castle Donington on November 16, No. 37800 returning there next day with Orion bi-mode No. 768001 in tow. Meanwhile the disposal of Merseyrail Class 508 EMUs approaches its conclusion, with Nos. 508139/141 taken from Birkenhead to Newport on November 27, by No. 37800.



Class Forty Preservation Society No. D345 (40145) passes Bristol East Depot on November 25, hauling Pathfinder Tours' 1240 07.07 Burton-on-Trent-Salisbury, 'The Winchester Christmas Excursion'. Peter Walton

On November 11, ROG No. 37611 *Pegasus* powered the 5L48 09.31 Barrow Hill-Great Yarmouth formed of nine former CrossCountry Mk.3s (see *Coaches*) and returned with a further nine vehicles two days later. Also, on November 13 Locomotive Services No. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie* reached the East Anglian port with Mk.3 buffet No. 40902, which it had brought from Eastleigh. Back on November 3, No. 37667 had combined with LS No. D6817 (37521) to move two coaches and repainted High Speed Train power car No. 43049 from Eastleigh to Crewe.

CLASS 40

Two English Electric Type 4s powered tour trains on November 25. The Class Forty Preservation Society's No. D345 (40145), in 'top and tail' mode with West Coast Railways No. 47848, formed the 1Z40 07.07 Burton-on-Trent-Salisbury via Winchester, while No. D213 (40013) *Andania* hauled the 'Edinburgh



On November 13, former London North Eastern Railway Nos. 43306/320/316/307 pass Walton, near Peterborough, forming the 0Q43 10.41 Kidderminster-Great Yarmouth. The '43s' are being reactivated at the Severn Valley Railway depot after more than two years stored at Ely Potters Group facility, ahead of export to Mexico. However, they were moved to the Norfolk coastal town for inspection by their new owners, before returning west a few days later. Stuart West

Christmas Market' special along with No. D1944 (47810) *Crewe Diesel Depot*. The latter pairing set off with the 1Z48 11.03 Edinburgh-Dunfermline and 12.57 return, the Class 40 standing in for steam locomotive No. 60007. Next day, the '40' and '47' began the homeward journey to London King's Cross with the Class 40 being replaced by Deltic No. D9000 (55022) *Royal Scots Grey* at York. Meanwhile, on November 26, No. D345 was tucked inside WCR No. 57313 *Scarborough Castle* on the 5Z53 11.45 Burton Wetmore-Carnforth Northern Belle empty stock with No. 57601 *Windsor Castle* bringing up the rear.

CLASS 43

After depositing three new Merseyrail Class 777 electric multiple units at Walton Old Junction and later taking two '777s' to Kirkdale depot on November 1, the four RailAdventure power cars travelled back to Wembley. By November 4, Nos. 43468/480 were at Leicester preparing to take power cars Nos. 43306/307/316/320 to Kidderminster (Severn Valley Railway). On November 8, Nos. 43468/480 reached Great Yarmouth with three HST Mk.3s from Ely Papworth (see *Coaches*). Nos. 43306/307/316/320 ran light from Kidderminster to Yarmouth on November 13 for inspection, heading back to the SVR eight days later for pre-export work to be carried out.

Former CrossCountry power car No. 43285 made its Colas Railfreight debut on test train work on November 6, paired with No. 43251 and visiting Coalville and Toton. Two days later No. 43285 undertook a test run with another returnee No. 43013 *Mark Carne* CBE, the latter having been fitted with European Train Control System (ETCS)

equipment. No. 43013 returned to test use with No. 43277 *Safety Task Force* on November 12, in the north east and found employment daily for the remainder of the month travelling to such locations as Swansea, Paignton, Cambridge, York and Carlisle. Towards the end of the month Nos. 43257/285 were in partnership north of the border, based at Mossend. Early on November 24, they traversed the line to Tweedbank and next day visited the termini at Wemyss Bay, Gourrock and Largs before heading to Inverness and Aberdeen.

CLASS 47

On November 11 'The Armistice Kentish Belle' tour took No. 45596 *Bahamas* and West Coast Railways No. 47746 *Chris Fudge* 29.7.70-22.6.10 from London Victoria to Strood via Paddock Wood and on to Sheerness. Christmas Market tours began on November 18, when three Class 47s were involved. WCR No. 47802 accompanied No. 44871 on the 1Z44 07.42 London King's Cross-York which returned via Lincoln. The steam locomotive came off at Peterborough. The 1Z68 08.07 Carlisle-York via the Settle & Carlisle line had No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* 'tailed' by WCR No. 47804. Once again, the steam engine only worked part of the return journey which left Hellfield 'top and tailed' by WCR Nos. 47245 and 47804. LSL Type 4 No. D1935 (47805) *Roger Hosking* MA 1925-2013 along with No. 45231 left London King's Cross bound for York routed by way of Lincoln on the northbound journey.

On November 15, Saphos Trains' 'Cotswold Explorer' ran from Peterborough to Worcester Shrub Hill initially in the hands of Nos. 47593 *Galloway Princess* and D1924 (47810) *Crewe Diesel Depot*, although the

former was replaced at Hanwell Bridge by No. 34046 *Braunton*. A Chesterfield to Bath Spa 'Statesman' tour on November 25, was in the care of Crewe Diesel Preservation Group No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* and LS No. D1935 (47805), the same Type 4s handling the 1Z48 05.06 Hull-Bath Spa on November 29. Vintage Trains' 'Polar Express' trips between Birmingham Moor Street, Dorridge and Whitlock's End commenced at the end of November with No. 7029 *Clun Castle* leading south and Tyseley-based No. 47773 hauling the trains back to Birmingham. Both locomotives featured on a Birmingham New Street to York charter on November 28.

When an overhead line electrification fault brought London North Eastern Railway No. 91109 *Sir Bobby Robson* and the 1D10 10.33 London King's Cross-Leeds to a stand at Fitzwilliam on November 13, WCR 'Thunderbird' No. 47848 dragged the train back to Doncaster before hauling two empty stocks from York to Leeds via Micklefield, each with a Class 91 and rake of Mk.4 coaches. With its centenary year drawing to a close, No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* steamed away from York bound for Carlisle on November 19 with WCR No. 47826 at the tail of the 1Z37 08.38 departure. Two days later No. 44871 and No. 47802 left the capital with the 1Z33 07.05 London Victoria-Cardiff, the return being 'top and tailed' by Nos. 47746 and 47802. The steam locomotive moved on to Bristol and hauled the 1Z25 07.16 Temple Meads-Chester accompanied by No. 47746 on November 25. The first 'Polar Express' trips between Edinburgh and Gorgie Junction ran on November 29 'top and tailed' by WCR Nos. 47813 and 47848. ➤



Locomotive Services No. 37409 hauls GB Railfreight No. 57303 and LS Nos. D8107 (20107) and No. D8096 (20096) past the site of the former Avenue Coke Works at Wingerworth on November 29, as the 5Z63 12.49 Worksop Down Yard-Crewe. This was a test run for the '37/4', which had undergone major engine repairs at Harry Needle Railroad Company's Barrow Hill facility, and for the '20s', which have undergone E-exams. The '57' has received a fresh set of wheelsets. The Mk.2Fs being moved, Nos. 5959, 6152, 5924, 6036 and 5922, have been acquired by LS and were last used on the Fife Circle, hauled by Class 67s. Vincent Hardy

CLASS 55

Chester station played host to Deltic No. D9000 (55022) *Royal Scots Grey* on November 7, when it undertook a test run from Crewe along with fellow English Electric Locomotive Services traction in the shape of Type 3s Nos. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie* and D6817 (37521). *Royal Scots Grey* then took charge of the first leg of a four-day tour from

London to Scotland on November 23, setting off with the 1Z46 08.44 London King's Cross-Edinburgh 'tailed' by No. D1924 (47810) *Crewe Diesel Depot*. At York the Deltic was replaced by No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* for the run to Edinburgh Waverley although D9000 was on hand to power the 1Z70 09.15 Edinburgh-London King's Cross return leg forward from York on November 26.

CLASS 56

The two 'Grids' in DC Rail's DCRO pool Nos. 56091 *Driver Wayne Gaskell* and 56301 (on hire from the Class 56 Locomotive Group) continue to find employment on aggregate traffic to the HS2 site in Buckinghamshire. Standing in for No. 56103, still lingering at Leicester after three years though planned for a return to traffic (see *Headline News*), the Fastline-liveried No. 56301 operated more than a dozen freight trains during the first half of November. On November 15 it was noted atop the 6Z84 14.10 Brandon-Chaddesden and two days later returned to Chaddesden with the 4Z48 16.57 from Burton West Yard. Straying briefly from the Willesden to Quainton route, No. 56091 teamed up with DCR No. 60046 *William Wilberforce* to power the 6Z23 14.12 Willesden-Tythingerton Quarry on November 16, while Nos. 56091 and 56301 were back in harness on November 27, in charge of the 6Z82 11.43 Peak Forest-Chaddesden. Out of use since the summer of 2018, DCR green No. 56303 was taken by road from Willesden to EMD Longport for component recovery on November 14.

GB Railfreight No. 56098 left Liverpool behind GBRf No. 60047 on November 4, in the formation of the 6E17 12.32 Liverpool Bulk Terminal-Drax Power Station, the pair going forward to Doncaster next day. On November 6, GBRf Nos. 56081 and 47739 collected No. 56098 for transfer to Leicester for attention. Two weeks later, No. 56098 was back on Merseyside, however, along with GBRf No. 60087 on the 6Z51 14.24 Doncaster-Tuebrook Sidings. No. 56081 undertook a few stock moves starting on November 7, when employed with No. 47739 moving South

Western Railway electric multiple unit No. 458428 from Widnes to Wembley and on to Bournemouth the following morning (see *Units*). Both locomotives set off from Bournemouth two days later with SWR EMU No. 458524 but had to turn back after encountering a dragging brake. The transfer of No. 458524 recommenced on November 20, when GBRf Nos. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle/Caisteal Dhùn Èideann* and 56081 powered the 5Q58 18.39 Eastleigh-Widnes, having left Bournemouth a few hours earlier and recessed at Eastleigh.

CLASS 57

On November 10, one of the West Coast Railways 'Thunderbird' locomotives stabled at Newark Northgate, No. 57012 was used to drag Royal Mail electric multiple unit No. 325005 from Doncaster on the diverted 1E06 22.45 Willesden Princess Royal Distribution Centre to Low Fell. A landslip on the East Coast Main Line at Aycliffe resulted in 1E06 being routed via Northallerton, Picton, Stockton-on-Tees, Norton East Junction and Stillington before regaining the main line at Tursdale Junction. 1E06 had been diverted the same way the previous night with WCR No. 47848 hauling EMU No. 325015. On November 2, WCR No. 57012 accompanied WCR Nos. 47812 and D345 (40145) on the 5Z48 10.53 Carnforth-Burton Wetmore, taking a pair of Mk.2 coaches with them. Four days later, No. 57012 was out again, this time hauling two different coaches and Nemesis Rail No. 47701 from Burton to Northallerton for the Wensleydale Railway (see *Preservation*) while the early hours of November 15, found the WCR '57/0' in charge of the 1E06 mail once more. Another WCR example, No. 57006, was given a

DEPOT TALK

Correct to November 15, 2023.

Allocations

37218 XHSO-XSDP
37401/424 XHSO-XSDP
43007/008 EC/EHPC-HQ/SCXL
43009/016 LA/EFPC-HQ/SCXL
43184 EC/EHPC-HQ/SCXL
43238 EC/IECP-HQ/SCXL
43239 EC/EHPC-HQ/SCXL
43285 EC/EHPC-HQ/COTS
43301/303/321/357 EC/EHPC-HQ/COTS
43304 EC/EHPC-HQ/SCXL
43366/378 EC/EHPC-HQ/SCXL
57002 XWSS-XSDP
59002 MD/DFHG-FE/DHLT
59103 MD/DFHG-FE/DHLT
60001/044 WQ/WQAA-TO/WQBA
60015 TO/WCBT-WQ/WQBA
66063 WBRT-WBAE
66068 WBRT-WBAR
66088/089 WBAE-WBRT
66107 WBRT-WBBT
66186 WBRT-WBAE
66552 LD/DFIM-FE/DHLT
67028 WQ/WQAA-CE/WAAC
70011 LD/DFGI-FE/DHLT
91131 SAXL-MBEL

Liveries

DB Cargo red: 66110

Freightliner orange: 08624
Northern Belle: 57315
+ Colas decals: 43285

Named

66508 *City of Doncaster*
66623 *Lest We Forget*

Names removed

20132 *Barrow Hill Depot*
43088 *Dartmouth Castle*
43160 *Castle-an-Dinas*
66413 *Lest We Forget*

Exported to Poland: 66526
Exported to Nigeria: 43008-
010/016/040, 43172/184/192,
43239, 43304/366

Stored/stopped locations

Crewe Gresty Bridge: 37401
EMD Longport: 56303
Great Yarmouth: 43007,
43306/307/316/320/378
Leeds Midland Road: 59002, 66552,
70011
Loughborough: 92021/040/045/046
Merehead: 59103
Toton: 60015

Operational

67028

test run along with Nos. 37676 *Loch Rannoch* and 47854 *Diamond Jubilee* on November 8, with the trio taking a Mk.1 coach from Carnforth to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway.

CLASS 60

Only four examples of the DB Cargo UK fleet were serviceable over the last weekend of November (see *Headline News*, *Railtours*) although Nos. 60024 *Clitheroe Castle* and 60074 *Luke* were already at Toton, the former since November 3, and plans are in hand to cease using the type. Elsewhere, No. 60040 *The Territorial Army Centenary* was at Margam and No. 60062 *Sonia* at Warrington. Prior to reaching Toton on November 3, No. 60024 hauled Mk.2 coach No. 6067 on the 5Z45 12.05 Knottingley-Burton Wetmore. GB Railfreight still employs 10 Class 60s, although No. 60085 has spent much of the past two years at Toton. The four currently operative DC Rail examples (Nos. 60028/029/046/055) have been kept busy on HS2 aggregate traffic, regularly working between Tytherington Quarry, Willesden and Quainton Railhead with trains to and from Quainton often 'top and tailed'.

CLASS 66

A survey of the former Fastline Class 66/3s taken during the middle of the day on November 20, highlighted a wide variety of their work with GB Railfreight. No. 66301 was about to leave Wellingborough bound for Tunstead, while No. 66302 was stabled at Fort William having arrived paired with Caledonian Sleeper No. 73967 at 09.51 on the Sleepers. Four FYA wagons formed the 4Z77 12.18 Marchwood-Southampton



GB Railfreight has replaced Colas Railfreight in operating the 6N71 11.45 Doncaster Decoy-Tyne Yard engineer's train. On October 30, GBRf No. 69002 *Bob Tiller CM&EE* heads north through Sunderland Bridge, with the working. Alex Ayre

Western Docks powered by No. 66303, while Nos. 66304 and 66787 were bound for London Euston with the 3J01 RHTT 11.52 from King's Norton. To complete the set, No. 66305 had empty JNAs in tow bound for the Peak District on the 4H89 05.21 Small Heath-Hillhead Sidings.

On November 1, DB Cargo UK No. 66065 was tasked with moving three new Class 777 electric multiple units on the 6Q14 07.55 Dollands Moor-Wembley, the same train having

DB No. 66084 for motive power on November 15, with three more '777s' for Merseyrail. The movement of seven Transport for Wales Mk.4 coaches from Landore to Warrington Arpley took place on November 8, with the vehicles sandwiched between DB Nos. 66057 and 66152 *Derek Holmes Railway Operator*. The same coaches were taken to Crewe Carriage Sidings five days later by DB Nos. 66083 and 66114, before three of the vehicles Nos. 12215, 12477 and 82220 formed

the 5Z67 14.30 Crewe CS-Margam, still in the charge of the same Class 66s. Next day Nos. 66083 and 66114 returned the trio to Landore (Swansea). When London North Eastern Railway Azuma No. 800108 suffered a windscreen wiper defect while forming the 1E13 07.55 Inverness-King's Cross on November 18, the service was terminated at Perth and GBRf No. 66771 *Amanda* dispatched from Mossend to haul the set to Edinburgh for attention.



Rail Operations Group Class 37s have been employed on several unit moves through November and early-December, taking condemned stock for scrap and moving various operational electric multiple units between depots. Northern is moving several three-car Class 331/0s to West Yorkshire to replace the four-car Class 331/1s that are moving to the North West, and on November 28, ROG No. 37611 *Denise* hauls No. 331008 through Docker Park, near Arkholme. Phil Metcalfe



GB Railfreight No. 66771 *Amanda* stands at Edinburgh Waverley on November 18, powering London North Eastern Railway bi-mode Azuma No. 800108, which had failed with a defective windscreen wiper while forming the 1E13 07.55 Inverness-King's Cross on November 18. The '66' was dispatched from Mossend to haul the set to Craigentinny for attention. Jack Prentice

CLASS 67

Newsworthy items remain thin on the ground for Class 67 despite their daily use on Transport for Wales passenger services. Elsewhere, most duties revolve around the Belmond Pullman (VSOE) on which DB Cargo UK's dedicated Nos. 67021 and 67024 have performed regularly. On November 21, however, No. 67021 along with No. 66170 ran light from Wembley to Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot, thus allowing No. 67006 *Royal Sovereign* to take a turn on VSOE work hauling the 1Z60 09.45 London Victoria-Winchester on November 24. Previously, on November 16, No. 67006 had found employment on the 5K32 13.32 Crewe IEMD-Stoke Marcroft hauling Royal Mail electric multiple unit No. 325005, while on November 10, it hauled DB Nos. 92029/041 from Wembley to Crewe IEMD.

CLASS 68

For more than a fortnight, TransPennine Express No. 68020 *Reliance* and Direct Rail Services No. 88010 *Aurora* were inseparable, covering numerous freight trips together. For instance, on November 3, they handled the 6M55 05.30 Carlisle Kingmoor-Hunterston and 6M23 13.22 Hunterston-Sellafield before heading for Somerset early on November 6, with the 6V74 01.58 Crewe-Bridgwater flasks. On November 14, the pair teamed up with DRS Nos. 68007 *Valiant* and 88007 *Electra*, taking the 6C50 01.25 Crewe CLS-Sellafield north reaching Lancaster

◀ New Transport for Wales Class 197 diesel multiple units continue to be moved between Donnington Railfreight Terminal, Crewe and Wolverton, with Freightliner locomotives providing power. On November 1, FL No. 90015 hauled set No. 197031 between Wolverton

and Crewe with the DMU going forward to Donnington next day behind No. FL 66517. November 8 found Nos. 66591 and 197116 passing Stafford bound for Crewe and six days later Nos. 66567 and 197118 covered the same stock transfer. With No. 197120 in tow, FL

No. 66566 powered the 6Q97 10.02 Donnington-Crewe CS on November 28. That evening the failure of a Harsco Maintenance train led to FL No. 66515 leaving Midland Road, Leeds to drag the defective machine from Altofts Junction to Wakefield Kirkgate.



at 03.15. Nos. 68020 and 88010 split after working the 6K73 08.30 Sellafeld-Crewe CLS on November 18, whereupon No. 68020 took up duty on the 6G94 12.22 Basford Hall-Bescot and later the 6K97 19.33 Sandiacre-Basford Hall with DB Cargo UK No. 66094.

The regular Basford Hall, Bescot, Toton diagram (6G94, 6D95, 6K97) was in the hands of TPE No. 68019 *Brutus* on November 14, and again the following day before Nos. 68019/020 were paired together to move three FNAs from Crewe to Leeds Midland Road for tyre turning on November 22. They remained in harness to haul the 6K97 from Toton on November 23 and the following afternoon made a fine sight in charge of 15 ex-works JNA wagons forming the 6K06 12.11 Shap Summit-Basford Hall. Other TPE locomotives featuring on regular railhead treatment work during November included Nos. 68022 *Resolution* and 68031 *Felix*.

Chiltern Railways' No. 68012 was a surprise at the head of two PFA flats forming the 6Z66 10.40 Crewe-Eastleigh Arlington Works on November 23, routed from Nuneaton to Coventry, passing Oxford at 13.55. Next day No. 68012 ran light from Southampton to Winfrith prior to returning east to Willesden. Stable companion No. 68014 in its 'greener' livery passed Warrington Bank Quay on November 21, running light to Carlisle Kingmoor for an exam. Before the work commenced, No. 68014 teamed up with TPE No. 68031 on the morning of November 22 to power the 3J11 RHTT duty, heading from Kingmoor to Wigton

and then over the Settle & Carlisle line to Skipton and Blackburn. Both 68s operated the same diagram the following day and, having returned to Carlisle at 21.55, set off again for Barrow via Shap and Carnforth.

CLASS 69

Formerly operated by Colas Railfreight, the 6N71 11.45 Doncaster Decoy-Tyne Yard engineers' train now comes under GB Railfreight jurisdiction and on November 1, was hauled by No. 69002 *Bob Tiller CM&EE*. Over the following three weeks the service ran on only a handful of occasions before GBRf No. 69004 was noted in charge of 6N71 on November 22, and again on each of the following two days.

Meanwhile No. 69002 took up residence on Merseyside travelling over the Pennines on November 5, in the company of No. 60047 on the 6M51 12.03 Doncaster Down Decoy-Liverpool Bulk Terminal. Following two weeks of use assisting biomass trains over the Bootle branch, No. 69002 returned to Yorkshire with No. 60047 atop the 6E17 12.32 Liverpool Bulk Terminal-Drax on November 18. Within two days, No. 69002 was back on railhead treatment train (RHTT) work assisting GBRf classmate No. 69006 *Pathfinder Tours* on the 3S70 11.55 Whittemoor-Broxbourne via Cheshunt and Barking to Pitsea. The previous week Pitsea had hosted GBRf Nos. 69003 *The Railway Observer* and 69007 *Richard Trevithick* on November 13, and GBRf Nos. 69005 *Eastleigh* and 69006 the following day on the same 3S70 RHTT diagram.

CLASS 73

A third of the Caledonian Sleeper electro-diesel fleet could be found at UK Rail Leasing's Loughborough facility towards the end of November, with both Nos. 73968 and 73970 there. The former arrived for attention on November 17, hauled from Doncaster by GB Railfreight No. 56081. That same afternoon, No. 73970 left for Doncaster but returned the next day. GBRf Electro-Diesels Nos. 73961 *Alison* and 73962 *Dick Mabbutt* passed Altrincham on the afternoon of November 20, with a Derby Railway Technical Centre to Crewe test train that later ventured from Wrexham to Bidston, Helsby, Warrington Bank Quay and back to the Wirral peninsula. Early next morning the '73s' travelled to Liverpool James Street, New Brighton and West Kirby. Having headed back to Derby, the same Class 73s returned to Merseyside to cover the Northern Lines during the early hours of November 22. After a lengthy stay at Peak Rail, GBRf No. 73138 was hauled from Matlock to Loughborough behind GBRf No. 69001 *Mayflower* on November 22.

CLASS 86

Prior to receiving attention at Nemesis Rail, preserved No. 86259 *Les Ross/Peter Pan* ran light from Rugby to Lichfield Trent Valley on November 15 from where it was hauled to Burton-on-Trent by West Coast Railways No. 47813.

CLASS 92

Caledonian Sleeper No. 92033 *Railway Heritage Trust* was given the task of

hauling CS No. 73968 from Craigentinny to Doncaster Decoy on November 16, the electro-diesel being destined for UK Rail Leasing at Loughborough. Next day, No. 92033 continued south as the 0Z92 09.59 Doncaster-Wembley passing Biggleswade at 13.50 and later being recorded at Gospel Oak. Two more Transport for Wales Class 756/1 Flirt tri-mode units, Nos. 756114/115, were transported from Dollands Moor to Ripple Lane on November 13, behind DB Cargo UK Nos. 92042+66002, followed by DB Nos. 92015+66002 hauling Nos. 756116/117 on November 27. GBRf Nos. 92021 *Purcell* and 92045 *Chaucer* were transported by road from storage at Harry Needle Railroad Company's Workshop to UKRL Loughborough on November 10, Nos. 92040 *Goethe* and 92046 *Sweelinck* being similarly treated next day. 

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On November 13, Great Western Railway Nos. 43186 *Taunton Castle* and 43189 *Launceston Castle*, were used to cover for GWR No. 150219 on the Newquay branch after the diesel multiple unit had failed with a faulty horn. The '43s' power through Manuells Crossing, near Quintrell Downs, with the 2N06 12.13 Par-Newquay. Craig Munday

IN BRIEF

LOCOMOTIVE SERVICES MOVES

ON November 2, No. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie* took three coaches, Restaurant First Modular (RFM) No. 10212, Trailer First (TF) 41182 and Trailer Guard First (TGF) No. 44078 from Crewe to Arlington, Eastleigh. The RFM is a former 'Pretendolino' vehicle, while the TGF is from the 'Midland Pullman', but since August has been replaced by former Rail Charter Services vehicle No. 44081.

Heading in the opposite direction the next day were TF No. 41162 and Mk. 1 First Open No. 3140, the latter coach having recently being overhauled for the Saphos Trains rake. It last saw regular main line use more than 10 years ago. Traction was provided by the aforementioned No. D6851 along with No. D6817 (37521).

MORE WCR MK.1 LOANS

A further two Mk.1 coaches have been placed on hire to preserved railways to provide the lines with additional coaching stock for special trains in the run-up to the festive period. Tourist Standard Open (TSO) No. 4973 arrived at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, where it is being used on 'Elf Express' trains, on November 9. Traction for its move from Carnforth to Keighley was provided by West Coast Railways Nos. 37676 *Loch Rannoch*, 47854 and 57006, the working doubling up as a test run for the '47' and '57'.

The Spa Valley Railway has taken delivery of a second vehicle for its 'Polar Express' trains. TSO No. 5035 arrived in early November and joins No. 5033 (99328).

TFW MK.4 MOVES

FIVE coaches which are to be used to extend Transport for Wales' Mk.4 sets by one vehicle departed Landore for Arriva Traincare, Crewe on November 8. Nos. 12434/447/452/454/464, together with Nos. 12215 and 82220 acting as barriers, were moved north by Nos. 66057/152 in top and tail formation. The two barriers returned south with No. 12477 on November 13, Nos. 66083/114 forming the 5Z67 14.30 Crewe CS-Margam, which continued to Landore the next day.

RIVIERA CET PROGRESS

NOW fitted with Control Emission Toilet tanks, Mk.2f Tourist Standard Open (TSO) No. 6067 returned from Knottingley to Nemesis Rail, Burton behind DB Cargo UK No. 60024 on November 3.

More HST stock moves to Great Yarmouth

Further coaches sent to ERS site pending export

MORE High Speed Train Mk.3s have arrived at Eastern Rail Services' Great Yarmouth site pending sale and export abroad. By November 23, no less than 40 such coaches could be found on site.

On November 8, RailAdventure Nos. 43468/480 took three slam-door vehicles from Ely Papworth to Great Yarmouth. Two of the coaches (Nos. 40750 and 41087) were former London North Eastern Railway (LNER) coaches, while the third (No. 42585) was previously part of the East Midlands Railway fleet. A week or so earlier, former CrossCountry Nos. 42036 and 44017, which are expected to be used as spares donors, were moved from Ely Papworth to Great Yarmouth by road.

The two rakes of coaches which had been taken from Laira to Barrow Hill for temporary storage on October 14/15 (RE331) have also completed their journey to Great Yarmouth. Rail Operations Group No. 37611 *Denise* was used for both moves, the first of which (the 5L48 09.31 Barrow Hill-Great Yarmouth) ran on November 11, comprising Nos. 41193, 42234/290, 42366/369, 44052, 45002/004/005. The other nine coaches, Nos. 42368/371-373/376/378, 44072, 45001/004, followed two days later.

Also on November 13, a catering car which has been sold by Locomotive Services for export to Mexico, arrived at Great Yarmouth. No. 40902, which still carries Great Western Railway colours, arrived from



Rail Operations Group No. 37611 *Denise* passes Shipley Gate, in the Erewash Valley, on November 11, while hauling the 5L48 09.31 Barrow Hill-Great Yarmouth empty coaching stock move taking former CrossCountry Nos. 41193, 45003, 42366, 44052, 45005, 42369, 42290, 45002 and 42234 between barrier Nos. 6340 and 6330. Phil Chilton

Arlington, Eastleigh behind No. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie*.

November 14 saw former XC power car Nos. 43007/378 with trailers Nos. 41026, 42053/053/097/380 and 44012 undertake a demonstration run from Great Yarmouth to Norwich and back, for

representatives from Mexico.

On top of these Mk.3s, 22 coaches have already been exported to Mexico (Nos. 41091/100, 42026/179/401/402/405, 44034/061/063/094) and Nigeria (Nos. 48101/103/113/115/125/131-133, 49101/107/111). 

HST COACHING STOCK AT GREAT YARMOUTH FOR POTENTIAL EXPORT - NOVEMBER 2023

Slam-door:

TRFB - 40750/902, TF - 41087, TS - 42585.

Sliding door:

TF - 41026/035/193, TS - 42036-038/051-053/097/234/290/342/366/368/369/371-373/376/378-380, TGS - 44012/017/052/072, TC - 45001-005, TS - 48140-142, TGS - 49114.

DEPOT TALK

Correct to November 15, 2023

Allocations

4932 sent for disposal
48101/103/113/115/125/131-133 exported to Nigeria
49101/107/111 exported to Nigeria

Stored/stopped locations

Crewe TMD: 12215,
12447/452/454/461
Great Yarmouth: 40750,
40902, 41087, 41193,

42036/038/052/053/097,
42234/290, 42366/368/
369/371-373/376/380,
42585, 44012/017/052/072,
45001-005
Spa Valley: 5035
Wensleydale Railway: 5292, 5376
Wolverton: 40608, 42019/055,
42571

Exported to Nigeria

48101/03/13/15/25/31/32/33,
49101/07/11

Disposals

C F Booth Ltd, Rotherham: Cut

dates: October 30: 42217;

November 8: 42310

Ron Hull at Carnforth: Cut dates:

February-April: 1644/650/652/670,
2108/127, 4860, 5453/463,
5740/756, 5943, 17168(99319),
92908, 94408/428/498,
94512/525/526/542, 95300,
96110/165/182/192

EMR Kingsbury: Arrival date:

October 23: 4932

Refurbished PNP coaches to Wensleydale and South Devon

A pair of Mk.2a Tourist Standard Open (TSO) coaches acquired by PNP Events earlier this year, have moved to the Wensleydale Railway to provide sufficient capacity for the 'Polar Express' trains which are being operated by PNP in the run-up to Christmas.

Nos. 5292 and 5376, which now carry BR lined maroon following overhaul by Nemesis Rail, were moved from Burton to the Wensleydale Railway by West Coast Railways No. 57012 on November 6. No. 5292 was a former Riviera Trains vehicle,

while No. 5376 was previously based at the GCR(N) at Ruddington and prior to 2010 it was also a Riviera Trains coach.

PNP Events also has Mk.2b TSO No. 5446 at Burton, this coach had been a training vehicle at PNP's

Telford warehouse. Also at Nemesis Rail's depot are Mk.3a TSO Nos. 12061/079/090/137/146/164/167. PNP Events has also recently acquired Mk.1 TSO No. 4927 from Riviera Trains and it has joined Mk.3a Sleeper No. 10680 at the South Devon Railway.

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R30306 0-6-0 'Sentinel' diesel shunter DL81 in London Transport green (Hor) £98.09



R30115 Class 08 shunter 604 'Phantom' in BR blue (Hor) £167.39



1401 Class 14 14029 in BR Blue - as preserved (Hel) (RRP £199) BARGAIN £160



2547 Class 25 25301 in BR blue domino headcodes (Hel) NEW £194.65



2549 Class 25 25323 in BR blue (pre-1976 style) (Hel) NEW £194.65



2570 Class 25 7513 in BR blue (Hel) NEW £194.65



2545 Class 25 ETHEL train heating unit AD897251 in BR blue and grey (Hel) NEW £194.65



2546 Class 25/9 25904 in BR blue (Hel) NEW £194.65



9770 Ruston 165 0-6-0 diesel shunter in industrial yellow (Hel) £169.15



R30012 Ruston 48DS 4wDM shunter 1 'Qwag' in GCR green flat wagon (Hor) £98.09

Electric locos



R3893 Class 91 91117 'Cancer Research UK' in GNER (Hor) (RRP £217.99) BARGAIN £158



R40219 Pair of Class 43 HST Power Cars 43049 'Neville Hill' and 43060 in East Midlands Trains (Hor) (RRP £362.99) BARGAIN £229

Coaches



R40214 Mk1 BSK research vehicle 'Test Coach Mercury' in BR research department red and blue - RDB975280 (Hor) £40.49



R4937 Mk3 'Sliding door' TS second open 42561 in ScotRail '7 cities' - Coach 'C' (Hor) (RRP £34.99) BARGAIN £15



R40370 Mk4 DVT driving van trailer in LNER Flying Scotsman - 82205 (Hor) £76.49

Wagons



ACC1103 Coil A steel wagons in BR Bauxite TOPs numbering - Pack D (Acc) NEW £74.95



R60224 KFA Container flat in Touax blue 40' Turkon container & 20' Bell container (Hor) £44.99



ACC1089 MDO 21 ton steel mineral wagons in BR grey TOPs numbering - pack of 3 - version H (Acc) NEW £74.95



9625 NVV Car Transporter Vans in BR blue & grey Motorail branding & grey roof - weathered - pack of 3 - E96288E, E96289E & E96293E (Hel) £220.15



9624 NVX Car Transporter Vans in BR blue & grey Motorail branding & grey roof - pack of 3 - E96291E, E96294E & E96299E (Hel) £194.65

Buildings - railways



R7367 Low Relief Viaduct Lockups (Hor) (RRP £47.99) BARGAIN £35

Buildings - general



R9821 Skeldale Wayside Halt Building (Hor) (RRP £36.49) BARGAIN £10

Commercial vehicles



SCA02REC Scania Topline Recovery Truck 'Crouch Recovery' (Oxf) £21

N Gauge

DMUs



2D-009-009 Class 121 'Bubble Car' W55023 in BR blue (Dep) £128.52

Wagons



NR-2008XM 12-ton box van 'Vanlit' in 'Santa's Workshop Christmas 2023' red and green (Pec) NEW £17.96

O Gauge (1:43 Scale)

Diesel locos



5607 Class 56 in LoadHaul black and orange - unnumbered (Hel) (RRP £729) BARGAIN £447



5854 Class 58 in EWS red and gold - unnumbered (Hel) (RRP £749) BARGAIN £446



7302 Class 73 73137 in BR blue full yellow ends - lightly weathered (Hel) NEW £679.15



7310 Class 73/1 73107 'Tracy' in GB Rail blue and orange (Hel) NEW £662.15



7306 Class 73/1 73126 'Kent & East Sussex Railway' in revised Network SouthEast (Hel) NEW £662.15



7303 Class 73/1 unnumbered in BR large logo blue (Hel) NEW £662.15



7304 Class 73/1 unnumbered in Intercity Executive (Hel) NEW £662.15

Cars



VA15102 Ford Transit Custom Trail in Race red front grille and side skirt trim options (Cor) NEW £34

Commercial vehicles



C80605 Wallace & Gromit Austin A35 Van Collection including 'Cheese Please!', 'Top Bun' and 'Spick & Span Mobile' (Cor) NEW £51.19



RAIL EXPRESS

Modeller

No. 237
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Refurbished Class 411 reviewed



6 Newsdesk: Class 323 surprise

A '00' gauge Class 323 EMU is announced by Dapol for a mid-2025 delivery. Bachmann launches Kenesis, a new wireless DCC hub and handset system.

7 Newsdesk: Heljan keeps busy with new models

'O' gauge Class 24/0 and Class 24/1 locomotives alongside a '00' gauge Class 44 are revealed at the Warley Show, whilst existing projects make good progress including a new batch of '00' gauge Class 57s.

8 Newsdesk: New 'N' gauge Class 66

Revolution Trains reveals a new Class 66 fully loaded with features and detail.

9 Newsdesk: China Clay CDA rerun

Accurascale now offers its '00' gauge CDA in classic

ECCI blue. Hornby continues to deliver its 2023 catalogue with the first TXS sound-fitted diesel locomotive and privatisation-era Class 121s.

14 Review: Late-life Deltic in 'O' gauge sets pulses running

The new Heljan Deltic, in late-life condition, is tested, checked and admired!

18 Review: Bachmann completes the CEP story

Bachmann's refurbished Class 411, 4-CEP will certainly turn heads with its detail and livery application.

24 Review: Heljan's AEC express parcels car reviewed

Another model of a one-off vehicle is released by Heljan, despite the commercial risks involved.

30 Review: Heljan's Newton Chambers car carriers checked over

In a busy month for Heljan, it also delivers its '00' gauge car transporter vehicles which are given a thorough examination and layout testing.

35 Review: 21t mineral wagons retooled by Accurascale

The second run of Accurascale's '00' gauge 21t mineral wagons upgraded with a redesigned underframe which is checked for its 18.83 'P4' gauge compatibility.

RAIL EXPRESS MODELLER EDITOR

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The last six weeks have been a remarkable time for new product arrivals, updates and announcements in the hobby. Numerous delayed projects are complete and are now arriving in model shops, while confidence in the hobby is demonstrated by a swathe of new announcements, particularly in the lead up to the Warley National Model Railway Exhibition (Warley show). This issue of *Rail Express Modeller* is a new product special, providing comprehensive coverage and reviews of much-anticipated releases, along with a few surprises.

Class 323s make the news

RARELY REGARDED with much affection by many enthusiasts, the Class 323 EMU comes of age in the modelling world with an announcement of a '00' gauge model by Dapol, and that is one of the surprise announcements alluded to above.

At last, modern and second-generation EMUs are being recognised as viable candidates for commercial scale models and very welcome it is, making this announcement the headline one for this issue of *Rail Express Modeller*, and against a tough field of competition!

Its announcement at Warley is appropriate, with the units being local to the area, but not for much longer.

Technical specification

Dapol intends to take advantage of the unusual sounds made by Class 323



EMUs when under power by including factory-fitted speakers to each of the three cars and to offer models with digital sound decoders programmed with bespoke sound files. The model will



↑ Introduced to traffic in 1994 after numerous teething problems, the Class 323 has already seen operation with several private TOCs and Regional Railways in the West Midlands and North West. This is reflected in the wide variety of liveries being offered in the first run.

be capable of operation with a single PluX22 decoder, achieved through the use of multi-pin connectors built into the model's inner couplings.

Comprehensive lighting includes the running lights, door lock lights and interior lighting, all of which will be independently controlled with a decoder. Tail lights will be controlled through manual switches when running on DC power.

Internal couplings are to be fitted to close coupling cams and a working BSI coupling fitted to the fronts to allow multiple working.

The tooling

The model's tooling suite will cover the lifetime of the trains including separate tooling for the centre car for pre- and post-refurbished units. The same applies to the running lights and side destination indicator displays.

Care is being taken to research the interior fittings and colours which are to be carefully represented in the

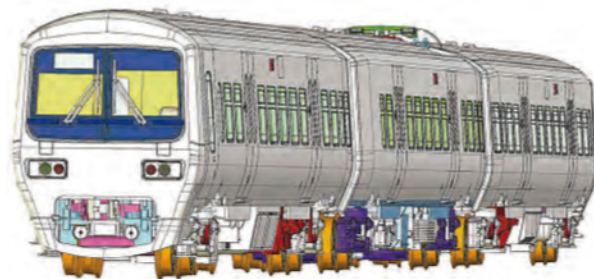
model. Flush glazing is a given with a model of this type. Alternative destination labels are also part of the specification. A posable cosmetic pantograph completes what will be a highly detailed model.

Pricing and availability

At the time of the announcement, the Class 323 project was at the CAD stage. It is a complex project and one which will require considerable attention to details, including the liveries and digital sound decoder files. Arrival of the new models is expected in the summer of 2025 with prices starting at £350 for an analogue DC model.

Seven units are proposed for the first release, covering all of the liveries carried by the Class including No. 323221 in heritage Regional Railways/Centro colours. At this early stage of the project, there is a chance that the specification may be changed and the Dapol web site should be consulted as

to progress on the project at www.dapol.co.uk.



↑ CAD design for the new model, which is expected to be delivered by the middle of 2025.

← No. 323213 displays its original Regional Railways/Centro colour scheme at Bescot Stadium on June 7, 2005, a livery scheme replaced by London Midland colours shortly after. It has taken 30 years for the 43-strong Class 323 fleet to be recognised as a viable candidate for a scale model.

NEW INTEGRATED DCC HUB FROM BACHMANN

BACHMANN held back one item from its Winter 2023/24 announcements which was unveiled at the Warley show. Kinesis is being described as a flexible wireless DCC system that will revolutionise the way we view and work our model railways.



handsets to be connected at any one time. It also has built-in Wi-Fi and USB to connect devices such as a PC running the RailController application and smartphones running the Apple and Android

compatible app, all of which can be used together and with seamless transfer between them.

The system will be released in 2024 alongside power supplies to boost the system's two Amp power capacity and separately available Edge handsets.

For more information, go to www.bachmann.co.uk.

↑ Bachmann Kinesis is the latest DCC control system to be developed by a UK manufacturer and is based around a hub which combines wireless, PC and smartphone technologies to operate a model railway.

It has been completely designed from the start and is a hub for the integration of various wireless and computer technologies to work together seamlessly. The starter system is priced at £399.95 and consists of a hub DCC station, Kinesis Edge wireless handset and a full licensed copy of Bachmann's RailController software, around which the new system has been developed.

The hub has a 2.4GHz wireless capability which will allow up to five



← Original Regional Railways/Centro livery with unmodified centre car. An 'N' gauge model of this train type would be much welcomed too.

RETOOLED FARISH CLASS 158S ARRIVE

→ Central Trains No. 158856 is part of a range of completely new Graham Farish 'N' gauge Class 158s to arrive from Bachmann this winter. It is considerably more advanced than the original model, particularly where the electronics are concerned. The new model will be reviewed in the next issue of *Rail Express Modeller* as we keep you up to date with the flow of new models in all scales.



'O' gauge Class 24 revealed



WARLEY SHOW announcements came thick and fast, and not least among them was the revealing of an 'O' gauge Class 24 by Heljan, with samples showing a wealth of detail, much of it locomotive specific.

Dubbed as '24s for 24', by Heljan, the brand-new model has reached the first engineering prototype stage with samples being displayed at Warley to whet the appetite of those modellers that appreciate the smaller

locomotive designs. They will be much welcomed by those looking to squeeze a compact 'O' gauge layout into the average home, perhaps with some portability.

All-new bodysell tooling for several versions along with dedicated underframe and bogie fittings, together with differences in roof fittings, will ensure that a wide range of locomotives with specific detailing to suit applied liveries will be available.

→ The Class 24/0 cab showing marker lights, buffer beam fittings including a working screw shackle and sprung buffers.

← Heljan certainly has the bit between its teeth with 'O' gauge, revealing new models of the Class 24/0 and Class 24/1 at Warley. The body shells are new designs and will be supported by finer separate details, wheels with weight-saving holes and fine underframe fittings.

→ Inverness allocated Class 24/1 locomotives fitted with car headlights are included in the first run of the Class 24 which is due in early 2025.

↓ Later Class 24/1 first engineering prototype with the cab roof headcode boxes and specific roof and underframe detailing.



The Class 24/1 is included

In addition to the 'skin head' version of the Class 24, the later Class 24/1 with headcode boxes and – importantly for Scottish Region fans – the headlight fitted version is also being produced with working lights. It is likely to inspire some compact Scottish-themed layouts based on the Highlands in the 1970s when the locomotives were allocated to Inverness.

Technical specifications

Heljan describes the models as a 'next generation' 'O' gauge model and certainly if the recently released Class 73/1 is the benchmark for future releases, the new Class 24 will be a treat.

There will be provision for an ESU

XL decoder including a sound option which will be a plug and play option. Full lighting modes are being built into the electronics for tail lights, train reporting disc marker lights, headcode panel illumination and cab lights.

Power for the Class 24s comes from heavy duty twin drive bogies with five-pole motors and flywheels. A third motor is also included and that will drive the radiator cooling fan through a separate circuit.

The Class 24 is an exciting addition to the Heljan 'O' gauge range, but do not expect them to linger – the six Class 24/0 and five Class 24/1s are being produced in limited quantities and with prices starting at £649. 

HELJAN FOLLOWS UP WITH THE CLASS 44 IN 'OO'

THE SECOND new D&E model to be announced by Heljan in time for the Warley show is the Class 44 in 'OO' gauge, one of the classic Peak locomotives and, in its now usual style, Heljan has produced new tooling for both bodysell variants. The model builds on the success of Heljan's Class 45 model and will utilise the same durable and reliable chassis and mechanism.

What can we expect from the new model?

The new model is intended to cover all the variants of the class in 'OO' gauge for the first time. Further, the slotted grilles of the last two Class 44s are included in the specification along with a plethora of etched and injection moulded small details designed to introduce the various differences between locomotives introduced during their operational lives. Detailing will include separate headcode discs, detailed cab fittings and flush glazing.

Variations include, but are not limited to, differences in underframe tanks; boiler ports; water tanks and plating of access steps and water filler hatches to model the time train heating boilers were removed.



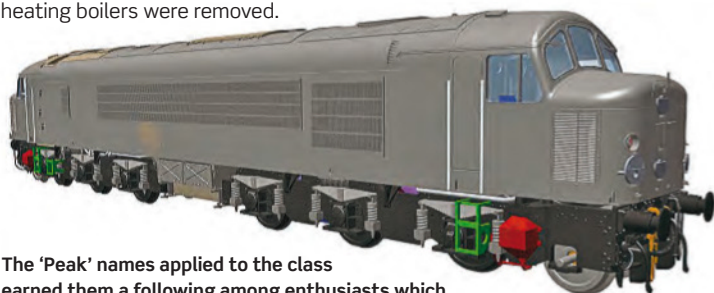
Class 44s in various guises follow on from Heljan's successful Class 45 model and will be fully loaded with locomotive-specific details and lighting functions.

Technical specifications come as no surprise to those who bought the Class 45 model.

A frame-mounted motor and twin flywheel assembly provides power to the bogies, built into a heavy cast metal chassis. Six lighting functions are to be incorporated in the design for disc marker lights, taillights and cab lighting.

The new model is being produced in four versions including DCC-ready versions for £249.95 and factory installed digital sound for £389.95.

www.heljan.co.uk



The 'Peak' names applied to the class earned them a following among enthusiasts which will make the models highly sought-after. Two of the four models are to be fitted with the experimental slotted grilles as applied to Nos. D9 and D10.

BODY-SNATCHER LIVERY SAMPLES

HELJAN'S upgraded 'OO' gauge Class 57s are close to completion, with production samples being revealed in October.

The impressively finished models which include Virgin Trains, GWR, First Great Western and Network Rail examples were approved for production in the autumn. They are expected in early 2024 with prices starting at £179.

They have an upgraded chassis with a 21-pin DCC interface, provision for digital sound and better lighting functions. The drive features two driven axles per bogie with the middle axle floating for reliable track holding. Flush glazing, cab interiors, sprung buffers and wire hand rails are also part of the model's specification.



First Great Western No. 57603 *Tintagel Castle* is one of eight new Heljan Class 57s due for release in early 2024 (including one for the Gaugemaster Collection).



Virgin Trains is represented by No. 57309 *Brains*.

New, hi-tech 'N' Class 66 for 2024

WITH THE CLASS 59 nearing completion, Revolution Trains has decided to utilise the chassis to produce a comprehensive range of 'N' gauge Class 66s in various liveries covering both Tier 1 and Tier 2 locomotives which had important external detail differences between them.

Further, the tooling suite, which has been developed from no less than 15 CADs, will have to take account of changes made to individual locomotives of both tiers including the running light arrangements, cab-side windows and those applied to locomotives imported from Europe.

Technical specification

With the model being based on the Class 59 project (due for delivery in early 2024, the 10th anniversary of Revolution Trains) work has progressed quickly. The mechanism of the locomotive is already available in the Class 59 along with the electronics, which will be the most advanced in an 'N' gauge locomotive developed by Revolution Trains so far. The model is



Both Tier 1 and Tier 2 locomotives in various liveries together with a bespoke number service will be available. The first models are due in the summer of 2024.

designed to work with the new ESU E24 nano decoder with the decoder interface and analogue DC lighting switches located under a removable engine compartment body section.

A sound speaker is pre-fitted at the factory with through-wiring as part of the circuit board, making retrospective fitting of a sound decoder easy for the modeller to complete.

Bespoke number service

An exciting innovation is the new bespoke numbering service. With so many Class 66s in service in standard liveries such as the first 250 operated by EWS, it is likely that modellers will want more than the single EWS locomotive included in the first batch of releases (No. 66083). This avoids having to renumber models, especially those locomotives with large bodyside numbers such as EWS and GB Railfreight locomotives.

Revolution Trains has teamed up with Rainbow Railways (www.rainbowrailways.co.uk) to offer this service. Each renumber attracts a surcharge of £20 per locomotive. Nameplate fitting is charged at an additional £10. The service cannot be offered on one-off liveries.

New couplings?

Revolution Trains has recently alluded to the urgent (in our view) need for a new coupling design for 'N' gauge.

Nothing has been decided, according to Ben Ando, but the need for a new universal system capable of magnetic uncoupling and delayed action for shunting has been long recognised in the hobby and the continued use of the current one is likely to be one of the major



A regular EWS Class 66 with rear view mirrors is included in the first batch of models as No. 66083 which was photographed approaching Didcot with coal for the power station on September 19, 2006.



First engineering prototype of the forthcoming Revolution Trains Class 66, which has a removable engine compartment body section for decoder fitting and access to DC lighting switches.



Etched metal and wire details are used to finish the models which will be available in several different forms plus detail variations to cover most of the Class 66s in operation.

factors holding 'N' gauge back.

Rail Express Modeller has been banging this drum for some time now. We have seen huge advances in technology in 'N' gauge, including sophisticated digital sound, lighting and mechanisms capable of fine levels of control that makes 'N' gauge almost unrecognisable compared to even 10 years ago. It seems inconceivable that nothing has been done about couplings to take advantage of the new levels of train handling now possible, especially given that locomotives now start at around £150 or more.

The design would have to be universal which can take advantage of NEM coupling mounts in 'N' gauge stock to be of most use to all 'N' gauge modellers. An open-source design adopted industry-wide with a MOROP NEM standard is the ideal. How that position is squared with the desire of a commercial business to benefit from its innovation is a difficult issue to resolve.

Pricing and availability

There has been a departure from the usual ordering model used by Revolution Trains in the past because the tooling has already reached first engineering prototype stage, with livery samples being revealed at the Warley

show. Production is expected to start after Chinese New Year in February with delivery anticipated for the summer of 2024.

A DC locomotive is attractively priced at £159.95, which is excellent value for money given the degree of sophistication in the model. DCC sound models are priced at £254.95. Discounted pre-order prices are also being offered until the end of January.

Some modellers have queried the need for another Class 66 model in 'N' gauge. Revolution Trains recognised that there are numerous versions that have not been accurately covered by existing models and there is no current model with the technical sophistication built into its Class 59. Further, with the design being able to piggyback on the Class 59 project, it made a lot of sense to offer the models.

www.revolutiontrains.com



A train that will soon be easily modelled with 'N' gauge models by Revolution Trains was documented heading north to Georgemas Junction on May 15, 2019. The Nairn viaduct is in the background and DRS Class 66 No. 66303 was at the rear of the train consisting of one FNA-D and two PFAs.



It's a warm sunny morning at Stenson Junction and Freightliner No. 66538 in original Freightliner green as offered by Revolution Trains passes with an intermodal working on June 9, 2008.

CAVALEX MODELS 56091 MEETS DCR 56091



The Cavalex Models 'OO' gauge Class 56 is now expected in early 2024, an event which is generating a lot of intense interest, with the models being the first locomotives to be produced by this company. Working samples have been around for a while, allowing the model of DC Rail No. 56091 to be posed on the front step of the real thing. Photo by David Fletcher of DC Rail.

China Clay classics

ONE of the missing prototypes from the first run of the Accurascale MGR collection was the CDA china clay hopper in original ECC International (ECCI) livery with a blue hopper cradle.

A total of 124 purpose-built CDA wagons were introduced in 1988 followed by conversions from MGR wagons.

The classic ECC International livery was applied from new, and it managed to survive into the early 1990s when the ECCI logos started to be removed. The wagons are closely associated with St Blazey allocated Class 37/4s in the 376xx number sequence which will make them popular models for the late BR Railfreight era.

They will share specifications with previously released models including a cast metal underframe, provision for 26mm long axles and a wealth of small details and fittings, bespoke to the CDA



design, including the converted MGR wagons.

In addition to the hood and opening mechanism, the CDA model will be correctly detailed with brake equipment mounted on the end of the underframe and the correct pattern of buffers.

A late summer or autumn 2024

delivery is anticipated for the models. Prices start at £79.95 for packs of three individually numbered wagons with discounts available for purchases of two packs or more. Eight packs are available with and without the ECC International branding. 

www.accurascale.com



ACCURASCALE completed delivery of the first batch of Class 37s (Run 1) with the delivery of pioneer locomotives Nos. D6700-6704, also referred to as 'early' Class 37s, which were built in December 1960.

The model is one Class 37 type not previously offered in 'OO' gauge with the distinctive shoulder grilles which were different to those fitted to the remainder of the Series 1 locomotives.

A further batch of Class 37s making up Run 2 is expected next year and will cover more specific locomotives, including a batch once allocated to the Western Region. In the meantime, the new model, in the form of BR blue No. 37001, will be featured in the next issue of *Rail Express Modeller*.

HORNBY CLASS 121S ARRIVE

ORIGINALLY a Lima tooling acquired by Hornby, the 'OO' gauge Class 121 makes a welcome return and in useful privatisation era liveries too.

A small number of units survived to see operation with several TOCs including Chiltern Railways, upgraded with safety features current at the time including central door locks, guards fitted over the footsteps and equipped with high intensity headlights. Several also entered departmental service, often being found at Aylesbury between duties.

The model is basic and the livery application is a close fit to a one-size-fits-all moulding. The price reflects this with both models being available for less than £100 each. They are fitted with upgraded drive bogies compared with the Lima version along with NEM pockets, a DCC interface and all wheel current collection.

The model, despite the age of the original tooling, has some useful features including a detailed interior and flush glazing. It remains a popular model for modellers wanting to put their own angle on the Class 121. It has reasonable overall proportions making it the perfect base for some good old-fashioned detailing and repainting.



The Class 121 is a basic model, ripe for detailing with running lights, roof seams, buffer beam fittings and bogie details such as footsteps and speedometer drive cables. Both the Railtrack and Chiltern Railways models are priced at £96.99.



An unusual livery choice is the sand and grey Railtrack scheme applied to Departmental Class 121 No. 977723. Railtrack is rarely represented by any off-the-shelf model these days, making No. 977723 a pleasing change from the sea of models finished in Network Rail yellow. Appropriate windows are painted over to represent blanked-off window openings of the full-size unit and a grille is printed in place on the sides.

FIRST BLUETOOTH TXS SOUND DIESEL

HORNBY released its first TXS 'Triplex Sound' fitted model earlier than expected in the form of Railroad Plus Class 47 No. 47200 *Herbert Austin*.

It is erroneously listed as No. 47188 on the Hornby website, a locomotive which never carried nameplates. The model is based on the Lima tooling with upgraded drive and an 8-pin DCC interface which has the new Bluetooth TXS sound decoder installed along with a sugar cube speaker.

It is the first time we've had chance to test the sounds from Hornby's new decoders and findings will be reported in the next issue. Initial tests indicated that the sounds are vastly superior to the original Hornby sound decoders and the level of control is more comprehensive too.

Priced at £124.99, it is good value with sound installed and as shown in previous issues, can be used for budget detailing projects. www.hornby.com



Hornby's TXS sound is factory fitted to its Railroad Plus Class 47 which is finished in Railfreight Distribution European livery (was the dark grey roof intended to represent weathering?). The livery is a close fit because the real No. 47200 had cut buffer beam cowls and different underframe tanks by this stage of its operational life (September 1994).

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Late-life and heritage Deltics created by Heljan in 'O' Gauge

Brand new models of the Class 55 by Heljan recreate the glory years of the Deltics prior to withdrawal along with their main line rail tour reprieve.

HIGH STANDARDS continue to be upheld by brand new 'O' gauge models from Heljan, with the Class 55 continuing the trend set by the recently released Class 58 and particularly the Class 73/1.

The 2023 edition of the Class 55 consists of seven models in late BR condition (post-1976) along with three covering the heritage years, fitted with high intensity headlights.

It is not the first time that Heljan has produced a Class 55, but this is a completely brand-new model which has been redesigned with a better body shell and a tooling set which allows a wide number of different locomotives to be modelled at different times in their careers.

Late-life Class 55s had a very specific character with recognisable spotting features. They include plated cab quarter lights; Electric Train Supply equipment (ETH); plated headcode boxes or glass ones with domino dots and air horns mounted on the bonnet top to mention a few.

Locomotives fortunate enough to enter preservation and heritage main line status were fitted with high intensity headlights along with safety features such as orange warning stripes. The 2023 edition covers many of the popular locomotives in both daily condition and in their rail tour finery, including the review model of No. 55022/D9000 *Royal Scots Grey* in rail tour BR blue.



The 2023 edition of the Heljan Class 55 Deltic locomotive is a brand-new model with new tooling for the bodysell and its associated small fittings.

Body shell tooling and detailing

How well has the retooled model captured the character and lines of the real Class 55s?

On first inspection, the body shape appears to be nicely shaped all round. It has the bulbous character of the bonnet fronts and the subtle inward curve of the tumblehome too, which fades into the flatter bonnet sides with the same degree of subtlety as the full-size Deltics. Studying photographs and making comparisons, the Class 55 model has the right transition

from the shoulder curve to the roof line too and the larger bodysell fittings such as the shoulder grilles and radiator fan grilles are very neatly applied.

There are no seams in the bodysell, with each one being a single piece tooling featuring the locomotive and era-specific details such as the high intensity headlights applied to the heritage main line versions. While on the subject of smaller details, the marker lights and headcode panels are correctly positioned and accurately shaped too.

Looking across the bonnet tops, the shape of the cab windscreens may be appreciated along with

the clear flush glazing and cab interior detail. A clear crease in the windscreen panel has been tooled, making this area of the cab front appear sharply defined, perhaps slightly more than would be seen on a work-worn, late-life locomotive. The curve along the cab sides along with the matching glazing is well done and after intensive comparison with photographs of the full-size locomotives, no discrepancies of any note could be found.

Small details

Completing the bodysell are features such as wire hand rails which are properly fitted and in the right place. Single windscreen wipers along with bonnet mounted airhorns, appropriate for the era of the models, are fitted as separate details. Glazing is flush fitting, neatly applied and properly seated in each window opening. Frames are moulded as part of the glazing and appropriately finished too in silver or body colour.

Underframe and bogies

Both fabricated and cast bogies have been tooled for the new Heljan Deltic range with the latter being fitted to the late life BR models, including the review model. They are multiple layer assemblies, which brings out the depth of detail in this type of bogie. Suspension springs, brake rigging and brake blocks are all correctly positioned within the side frame assemblies.

Small fittings applied to the bogies include the brake cylinders, brake chains and footsteps which are properly attached.



The review sample is one of seven late BR condition locomotives. No. 55022/D9000 *Royal Scots Grey* is dressed in pristine BR rail tour blue with silver embellishments as applied for rail tour duty.

Fuel tanks are equally well detailed and fitted as separate assemblies to the underframe. Again, the quality of finish and the fit and finish of the parts, including separately applied pipework, is excellent, with nothing coming adrift during handling for studio photography.

Bufferbeams and brake pipes

Detail abounds on this model, with fully modelled buffer beam equipment including one defining piece of equipment: The Electric Train Supply (ETH) cables and boxes. Buffers are modelled with the correct shank style and are sprung, with little unwanted rotation of the buffers being observed.

The airbrake pipes, vacuum brake hoses and screw shackle couplings are all beautifully made, with the usual tiny screw adjuster fitted to the shackle itself.

Drive mechanism

There are two drive mechanisms in the Heljan Class 55, one fitted to each bogie delivering refined and powerful drive performance through the speed range. Both are well balanced to work together and when combined with the model's weight, trains of significant length can be hauled.

The mechanisms are equipped

with large flywheels which are now an industry standard and have value in smoothing out the operation of a model and providing stored energy for minor interruptions in power.

Despite the size and heavy duty nature of the twin-drive system, there is sufficient room in the model's interior for two digital sound speakers; a pair of exhaust smoke units and sophisticated electronics which provides a range of control over the running lights. On top of this is engine room detailing which is visible through the side windows. Most of the cab detail is also visible, although a small part of the mechanisms can be seen in the back of both cabs.

Overall appearance and finish

The 2023 edition of the Heljan Class 55 has brought numerous improvements to the model in terms of appearance and its technical features. Paint finishes and accuracy of the colours is first class, as is the fit and finish of the small components and details. The smaller sub-assemblies are all well put together with parts properly and securely seated in place too.

The £729 price tag is attractive for such a large 'O' gauge model. When set against the time and effort needed to build and finish a kit or pay

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- Flush glazed and fully detailed cab and engine room interior.
- Etched metal cooling fan grilles.

someone to paint a livery as complex as that applied to BR Green No. 55002 *King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry* including its full yellow ends, the price of Heljan's 'O' gauge models is realistic for a complete, ready to go model. This growing range will certainly tempt more modellers to have a go at an 'O' gauge layout. 

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Tooling allows for alternative headcode panel arrangements such as the glass-fronted type with domino dots. The Electric Train Supply (ETH) fitting is a late addition to the locomotives which dates it to the late 1970s and early 1980s. Bufferbeam fittings are accurately tooled including the brake hoses and the coupling is a working model too.



The shape of the body is pretty good with subtle tumblehome and taper towards the bonnet sides.



Bonnet top detail includes the airhorns, relocated there during the life of the class. Single windscreen wipers are fitted to each of the flush-fitted cab windcreens.



Shoulder grilles are very delicate mouldings with evenly spaced slats. The roof is detailed with neatly fitted etched metal cooling fan grilles and cooling fans powered with separate motors.



Sprung oval buffers are fitted with the correct pattern of shank.



The engine room windows are moulded in the bodysheet tooling, unlike the cab windows where the frames are moulded on the glazing inserts. An impression of the engine room is visible.



Several layers of detail are used to build up the bogies including the suspension springs and brakes. Small fittings include the footsteps and brake cylinders. Note the 'BR Timken' legend moulded in the axle box covers.



Detail for the discerning modeller including the brake chains.



The long fuel tank moulding is designed to house speakers for digital sound.



Accurate colours and neat printing finish off this impressive model. Note the York coat of arms and YK depot sticker applied with the running number.



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Bachmann refurbishes its '00' gauge Class 411, 4-CEP

Bachmann makes an important addition to its third rail EMU range, one which covers a long-time frame and a wealth of different liveries. How well does the new model fit with the rest of its EMU collection?



Once a common sight throughout the Eastern Division of the Southern Region, Class 411, 4-CEP units are now extinct on the national rail network. Network SouthEast, seen as a period of optimism and progress, is also history. The Class 411 were express passenger units with through gangways. Yet, they often found work on secondary lines such as the Sittingbourne-Sheerness-on-Sea branch and Paddock Wood-Strood line. No. 1520 is a 1957 Phase 1 unit and a match to the Bachmann model. It was observed working at Sheerness in November 1991.



Newly tooled body shells, glazing and interiors brings the Bachmann Class 411, 4-CEP up to date. It is modelled with shell ventilators appropriate to a 1957 Phase 1 unit.

IT HAS BEEN a number of years since the release of the as-built Class 411, 4-CEP model which represented the class from its construction until the 1980s refurbishment programme undertaken at Swindon works.

The new model concludes the CEP story from the start of the 1980s through to the withdrawal of surviving units in 2004 when Class 375 Electrostars were introduced on Kent Coast lines and Class 444 along with Class 450 Desiro units on the South Western.

The 4-CEP was slowly diminishing in number during the 1990s as ways to remove the old and increasingly tatty units from Kent Coast routes were sought. Further, during the 1990s, Stagecoach needed more units for its South West Train franchise resulting in a sizeable number being transferred, tidied up and repainted in the TOC's bright livery. It is a rich period in the history of the class which has some modellers wondering why it has taken so long for the refurbished version to appear.

Refurbishment

In the late 1970s, Class 411 and 412 EMUs working on the South Eastern Division of the Southern Region had become quite tatty and dated. At the time, no capital for new stock was available to replace such a large fleet of vehicles, making a heavy general repair and refurbishment the best option to bring the fleet up to date.



The Network SouthEast version of the new 4-CEP is numbered as No. 1512. The unpowered DMSO is numbered as DMSO(A) No. 61321. It is the one fitted with an MG set and would be at the No.1 end of the unit, coupled to the TBC or Trailer Brake Composite. Bachmann has provided a diagram showing the correct formation of the unit in the instruction leaflet.

After the completion and testing of prototype refurbished unit No. 7153, which became No. 411500 or No. 1500 after TOPS was applied to third rail EMUs, a programme of refurbishment was authorised for the whole fleet. The first unit to emerge in 1979 after a year at Swindon was No. 1506, with the last units being released to traffic by early summer in 1984. Notably, the units were not all done in numerical order and to complete the fleet of 121 standard refurbished 4-CEP for South eastern Division and seven 4-BEP for the South Western, 14 locomotive hauled coaches were used in the programme to replace withdrawn buffet vehicles.

Variations in the fleet

The refurbished 4-CEP units inherited certain features from their original build phases. The first four units built in 1956, Nos. 7101-7104, called 1951 stock, were built as prototype units with 1951-type electrical equipment and contactor control gear. They, along with a pair of similar 4-BEPs, were intended to make up two prototype 12-car sets.

Further pre-production units were built in 1958, numbered as Nos. 7105-7110 which were grouped with the 1957 Phase 1 units.

In a nutshell, the production units were divided into 1957 Phase 1 and 1957 Phase 2 units. Phase 1 units were all ready for traffic in the summer of 1959 numbered as Nos. 7111-7153. They were mounted on Mk.4 motor bogies and were fitted with shell

roof ventilators. 1957-type electrical equipment was fitted along with camshaft control gear.

The 1957 Phase 2 units, Nos. 7154-7204, had some detail differences including different roof ventilators. To overcome problems with rough riding encountered with 1957 Phase 1 units, they received Mk.3B motor bogies and Commonwealth trailing bogies.

A small batch of seven units was introduced in 1963, Nos. 7205-7211. They were different from older Phase 2 units in having a smaller headcode glass in the same size of headcode box along with slightly different cab windscreens. Further, they were fitted with dome ventilators along with part rain gutters.



No. 1512 in its full formation with the powered DMSO to the left. The one on the right has the MG set.

There were other differences between units, most of which would not be relevant to a scale model. However, when refurbished, the build phases were kept separate as follows: **1957 Phase 1 units:** (41)1506 to (41)1562.

1957 Phase 2 units: (41)1563 to (41)1621.

1951 units: (41)1501 to (41)1505.

Prototype refurbished unit was No. 1500 and was a 1957 Phase 1 unit. It differed from the rest of the refurbished fleet in retaining conventional Mk.1 coach style windows and different interior finishes and fittings.

They inherited original features such as roof ventilators, sometimes including the ventilators fitted to locomotive hauled coaches used in the refurbishment programme. Phase 1 units had their trailer bogies replaced with Commonwealth bogies while the Phase 2 units retained the Commonwealth bogies fitted from new. Those Class 411 and 412 4-BEPs refurbished using vehicles from Nos. 7205-7211 retained their distinctive headcode boxes, cab windscreens, dome ventilators and the part rain gutter strips. While most sets remained in formation, exchanges of vehicles saw units with a mix of details from the various builds.

The models

A 3-CEP and 4-TEP were first announced in Bachmann's autumn 2023 statement, the former in Stagecoach SWT livery as No. 1199, a short-term formation along with 4-TEP No. 2703, also a short-term reformation to cover buffet facilities during the 1980s refurbishment programme.

The standard four-car sets were

revealed in November with one each in BR blue and grey livery (411506); London and South East Sector colours (No. 1522) and Network SouthEast (No. 1512).

The subject of this review is Network SouthEast No. 1512 (31-422) which enjoyed a long operating life, eventually being operated by Stagecoach SWT and being withdrawn from service in 2002. It was released to traffic following refurbishment in June 1980, giving it a 22 year life extension. Network SouthEast livery was applied in September 1989 which it carried until 1997. It was transferred to SWT in 1996 after being taken off lease by Connex South Eastern and repaired and repainted in SWT livery during 1997.

Refurbishment

Bachmann's 4-CEP model has been thoroughly reviewed in the past and is an award-winning model. Its features, including the drive; electronics and the bogie current collection system have been used in subsequent third rail EMU models released by Bachmann including the 2EPB, MLV and 2-HAP.

The new refurbished 4-CEP model enjoys completely new body shell mouldings to reflect the changes made during the repair and refurbishment programme where the two guard's compartments in the DMBS vehicles were converted to passenger accommodation and a new one installed in the TCK vehicle, increasing the seating capacity of each unit.

Conversion of the TSK to an open TS vehicle is a further change requiring new interior mouldings.

New glazing has been tooled to match the hopper windows fitted to the standard refurbished units.



↑ Cab detail

The face of the Class 411 is very well represented. Its austere lines and simple layout around the gangway are neatly modelled. Separate jumper cables and brake hoses, along with a separate door and gangway moulding, are fitted. The two strips on the inside of the gangway (seen on the full-size units) are not modelled.



↑ Inner end detail

One of the inner ends showing the correctly shaped gangway moulding and equipment covers not seen of locomotive-hauled Mk.1 coaches.



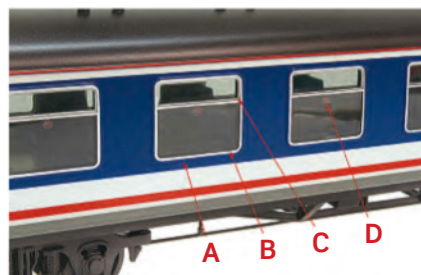
↖ Trailer Brake Composite (TBC)

The original TCK was changed by adding a guard's van making it into a TBC vehicle. No. 70311 has a single Standard Class compartment, and the rest is First Class.



↗ Trailer Second (TS or TSO)

TS No. 70268 would have been the Standard Class corridor vehicle prior to rebuilding and refurbishment.



↑ Hopper windows (side lights)

Glazing is comprehensively modelled with the body-coloured window frame (A); aluminium framed glazing unit (B) set into the opening and the separate cosmetic opening section at the top (C). The glazing (D) is tinted like the full-size units and is detailed with no-smoking labels.

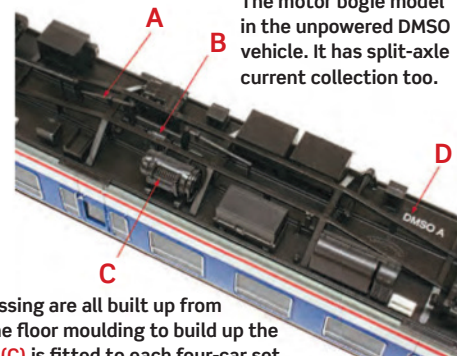
→ Underframe detail

The brake rodding (A), brake cylinders (B) and trussing are all built up from finely moulded parts all carefully assembled to the floor moulding to build up the underframes. Only one Motor Generator (MG) set (C) is fitted to each four-car set.



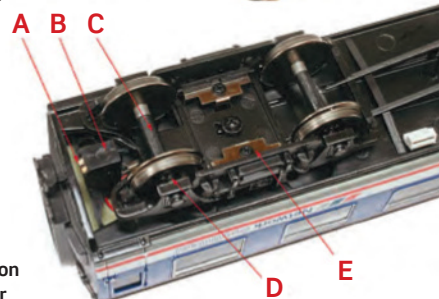
↑ DMSO(A) bogie

The motor bogie model in the unpowered DMSO vehicle. It has split-axle current collection too.



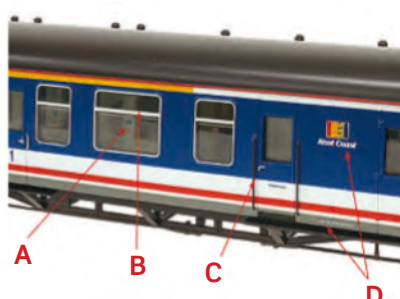
→ Inner end bogies and couplings

Each vehicle is fitted with coupling pockets with two electrical connections (A). The boxes accept dedicated couplings with through wiring (B). Each Commonwealth bogie has split-axes with an insulation sleeve (C) for end of axle or stub-axle current collection (D). The contacts in the bogie are linked to the interior through contact spigots and springs in the underframe (E).



↙ TBC vehicle

Detail applied to the models has been carefully researched to the point that the differences in sealed and opening windows has been modelled. Note the window labels (A); sealed corridor windows (B), wire hand rails (C) and neatly printed labels and the Kent Coast route emblem (D).





As before, the underframes clip into the underside of the body shells and are moulded from plastic for the unpowered DMSO(A); TS and TCK, fitted with individual components for the trussing, battery boxes, brake gear, motor generator (MG) set and resistance banks.

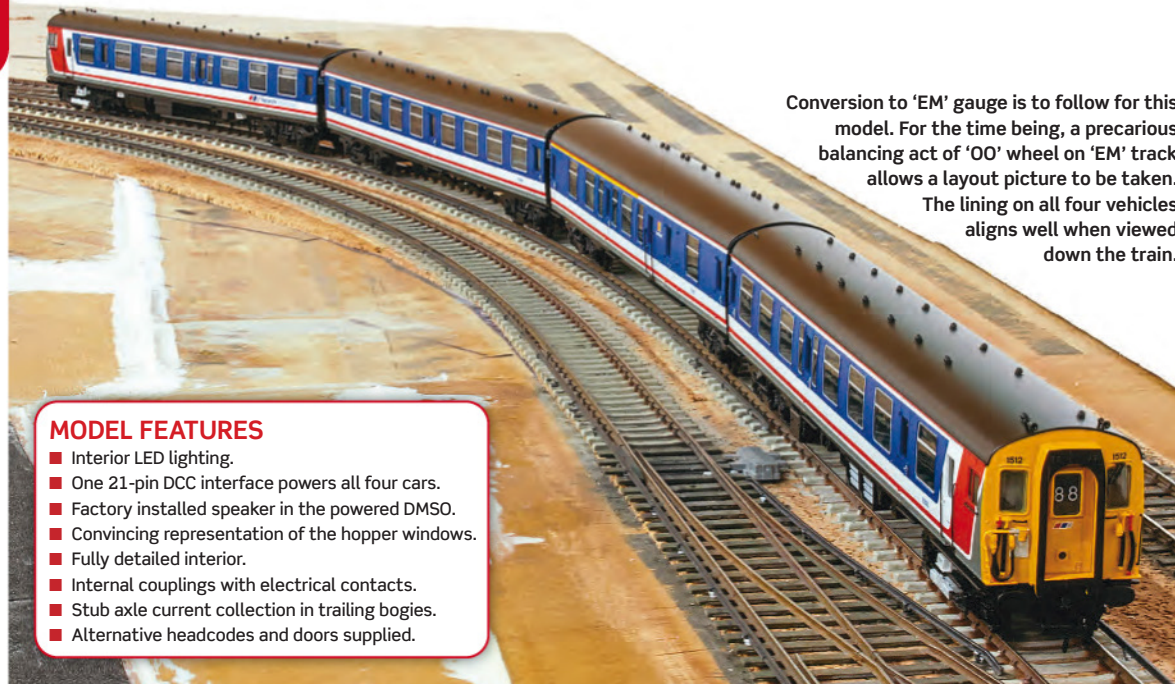
The powered DMSO (which is the driving vehicle without an MG set) has a cast metal chassis which also incorporates a single drive bogie and motor block mounted on the underframe.

The drive bogie is unchanged and is fitted above floor level on the DMSO. This was fine for the 4-CEP in original condition (also the 2EPB and 2-HAP) when the driving vehicles included the guard's compartments as MBSOs. With that section having been converted to passenger accommodation, the motor block is more obvious through the windows.

The models are detailed internally, with the correct changes being made to reflect the different layout of refurbished units including open seating in the former TSK and the guard's section in the TBC.

Bogies and current collection

In keeping with the rest of the third rail EMU range, the new model retains the



MODEL FEATURES

- Interior LED lighting.
- One 21-pin DCC interface powers all four cars.
- Factory installed speaker in the powered DMSO.
- Convincing representation of the hopper windows.
- Fully detailed interior.
- Internal couplings with electrical contacts.
- Stub axle current collection in trailing bogies.
- Alternative headcodes and doors supplied.

excellent stub-axle current collection system used in the past which collects current throughout the train. This time, it is the turn of the Commonwealth bogie to appear under the 4-CEP, even though the un-refurbished 4-BEP model's catering vehicle was fitted with them.

There are no wire connections between the trailing bogies and internal

electronics. Only the powered DMSO drive bogie has conventional wiper pickups and wire connections.

The trailing Commonwealth bogies make electrical contact with the internal circuit boards through a prong and contact strip system which is very efficient. The bogies can be removed for wheel cleaning or maintenance

Conversion to 'EM' gauge is to follow for this model. For the time being, a precarious balancing act of 'OO' wheel on 'EM' track allows a layout picture to be taken. The lining on all four vehicles aligns well when viewed down the train.

without having to disconnect any wiring.

Electronics

The powered DMSO is fitted with the model's main circuit board fitted with a factory-installed speaker. It is through wired to the 21-pin DCC interface via the circuit board. Each of the 4-CEP trailers are fitted with lighting circuits fitted to the roof of the body shell with phosphor bronze contacts between the underframe circuits and the roof.

Inner couplings fitted with electrical connections allows all four cars of the train to be supplied with power for running lights and interior lighting using the single 21-pin decoder interface located in the powered DMSO.

Overall finish

The very first impression of the model of No. 1512 was formed by its livery.

Bachmann has achieved a very fine result in this area with some superb printing of livery details and very sharp lining. Furthermore, the new glazing representing the aluminium-framed hopper windows is particularly well executed and fitted, resulting in a very convincing appearance. Look closely at the opening hopper sections. Although they are modelled in the closed position, they are properly modelled where appropriate.

It is an exceptional model of an important multiple unit type for BR sector era and privatisation era modellers modelling the third rail system.

Further, the retention of the same tooling style and drive means that it will match the rest of the Bachmann range in terms of appearance and performance.

There is one question remaining: How much longer do we have to wait for the 4EPB centre car to be tooled enabling, with the correct roof and underframe fittings, the modelling of both original and refurbished 4EPBs? 

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

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DMSO No. 61320 which is unpowered. Bachmann has applied the broad upswept red band of Network SouthEast livery to this unit. Some units were painted with narrower red bands.



Trailer Brake Composite No. 70311 as viewed from the compartment side.



Trailer Standard or TS No. 70268. The lavatories are at the right-hand end where the coach is coupled to the powered MBSO(B).



The MBSO(B) vehicle with the power bogie and internal circuit board. It carried the number No. 61321. The unit is modelled as a 1957 Phase 1 set and has shell roof ventilators and complete rain guttering.

4-CEPS IN TRAFFIC



↑ The interior of the TS of No. 1531 showing Network SouthEast blue seating moquette, the fluorescent strip lighting fitted during refurbishment and orange end panels.



← 3-CEP No. 1105 approaches London Bridge on November 28, 2002. It was reduced to a three-car set in October 1998 along with four other sets to allow 11-car trains to be formed for peak hour services to Tunbridge Wells where the platforms are too long for 12-car trains. It was originally 4-CEP No. 1619. Note the different cab windscreens and headcode box style.



↑ Network SouthEast livery survived well into the privatisation era and was often seen on stock operated by Stagecoach SWT. No. 1517 approaches Eastleigh with a Waterloo service on June 1, 2000. Noteworthy is the black applied over the front gangway and the roof weathering.



↑ Platform 1 at Orpington and No. 1570, a 1957 Phase 2 set, is about to form the all-stations to Victoria via Herne Hill instead of EPB stock. Network SouthEast period pieces include the Krone destination screen, red and white painted canopy columns, the platform signage and of course, No. 1570 itself, photographed on December 9, 1992.



↑ 4-CEP No. 1698 is one of three units re-bogied in 1996 and was originally identified as No. 1540. They were fitted with Mk.6 motor bogies and B5 trailer bogies in 1996 in the same manner as the 4-BEPs after 1989. Intended for cover on South Central during the Class 319 overhaul programme, they worked on Brighton line services until 1998 when they were transferred to Stagecoach SWT. They retained Network SouthEast livery until 2000 and worked for SWT until 2004 when they were transferred to Connex South Eastern. They were the last 4-CEPs, albeit not instandard condition, to remain in traffic. No. 1698 was the very last one, being withdrawn in September 2005. It was photographed on June 1, 2000, at Eastleigh.



↑ Dover Priory is the location of this study of No. 1525 taken on October 10, 1992. Looking around the unit, there is so much information in the picture, from the Hovercraft signage to road vehicles in the streets beyond.

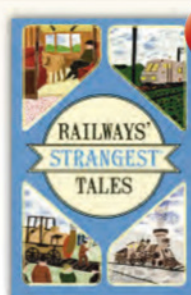


↑ In happier times, No. 1609 rests between runs at London Victoria on March 7, 1992. Note the narrower red band across the cab side window compared with No. 1698.

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Following the success of its '00' gauge 'razor edge' GWR railcars of 1940-41, Heljan has added the similar express parcels car to the range.

GWR express parcels car No. 34

The '00' gauge 'razor edge' GWR passenger railcars enhanced Heljan's reputation for producing quality models of unusual or minority railcar classes when released a few years ago. Heljan now follows up with No. 34, the single GWR 'razor edge' express parcels railcar.

THE 'RAZOR EDGE' AEC express parcels railcar is a unique vehicle of which only one was constructed by the GWR at Swindon in 1940. It spent most of its working life under BR ownership and lasted until 1960 where it would have rubbed shoulders with pioneer BR diesel classes in daily service. In common with the passenger version previously released by Heljan, it was fitted with two AEC diesel engines of 105hp along with conventional draw gear enabling it to haul an additional parcel van or two.

GWR No. 34 or BR No. W 34 W was constructed with the same angular

fronts and straight body panels as passenger cars Nos. 19-33 which meant it differed from the only other parcels car, No. 17. It operated parcels services along the Great Western main line, being capable of carrying up to ten tons. It was allocated to Southall throughout its working life. Sadly, like No. 17, its Gloucester RCW counterpart, it did not survive to see preservation.

Bodyshell appraisal

A single-piece bodyshell has been tooled for the model which incorporates the lower underframe skirts too. Having successfully modelled Nos. 19-33, it would be a surprise if Heljan did not faithfully replicate the same straight lines and angular panels of this series of GWR railcars. This it has done successfully for the express parcels car, with crisp lines, subtle detail and the correct angles too. Small details complete the bodyshell including separately fitted roof vents and wire hand rails on the cab fronts and adjacent to the side doors.



Heljan kindly supplied No. W 34 W in BR lined crimson with a mid-grey roof for review, a condition in which the railcars would have seen service into the 1950s alongside pioneer BR diesel classes. It was a unique vehicle in the AEC rail car family, there only being one of its type being built with the 'razor edge' bodysell.

The angular cab ends have all of the correct angles as does the distinctly shaped roof, particularly at the cab ends with the middle ridge flaring to accommodate the top marker light.

Windows in the double leaf loading doors are of the correct size and shape, being fitted with individual glazed units with safety bars for a flush-glazed effect. The same approach is applied to the cab glazing which fits the complex shape of the cab structure well and with minimal prism effect in the smaller glazing pieces.

Motor and flywheels

All-wheel drive is fitted to the model, powered by a frame-mounted motor

and drive shafts hidden under the floor. The flywheels smooth out the model's performance which is quite refined, as we have come to expect from Heljan. The model is heavy enough to haul a surprising number of vans due to the use of a cast metal underframe floor, although more than two vans or the equivalent of about 60 tons trailing load would be unrealistic. NEM coupling pockets and standard tension lock couplings are supplied with the model for this purpose in model form. The pockets are attached to the bogies, so will require some of the neat factory applied buffer beam detail to be removed and stored when a coupling is fitted.

MODEL FEATURES

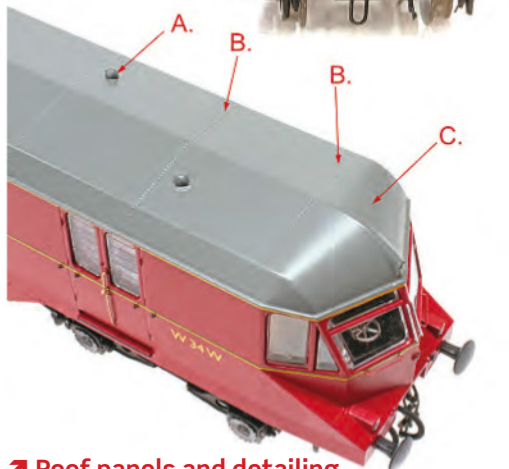
- Advanced electronics support the running lights.
- Illuminated cab interiors.
- Flush glazed cab windows.
- 21-pin decoder interface.
- Nine analogue lighting control switches.
- Motor and flywheels hidden in the underframe.
- All-wheel drive.
- All-wheel current collection.



Application of the lined BR crimson livery is smooth, with rich colours and straight, even, lining. No. W 34 W was introduced in September 1941 and withdrawn in September 1960. It was allocated to Southall Shed at the time of its withdrawal.

→ Cab 'face'

The razor edge design, with its angles and straight lines makes this parcels car different to other GWR types which were streamlined with more rounded panels. Conventional draw gear is fitted which allowed the cars to haul NPCCS vehicles.



↗ Roof panels and detailing

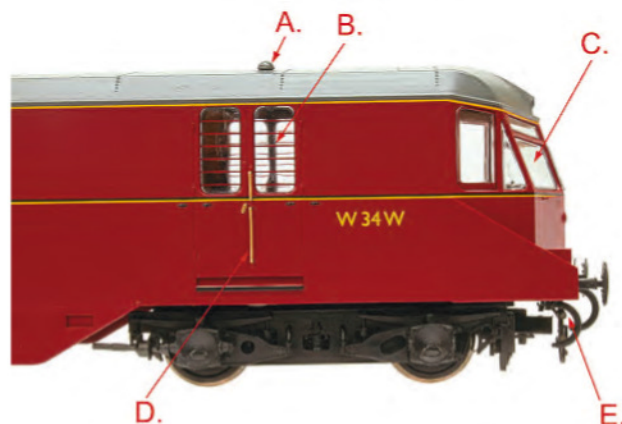
Another view of the characteristic roof panels of this design of GWR rail car. Roof ventilators are separate fittings (A) whilst panel lines are subtle and in keeping with the prototype (B). The cab roof domes are smooth and have good transition between the flat roof panels and the rain gutter (C).

↑ Razor edged!

Heljan has captured the straight lines and angles of the body and as a result, the true character of this type of GWR/AEC railcar design. The body is without tooling flaws and has subtle riveting on the roof panels.

→ Cab front detail

Detailing of the cab fronts includes interior detail visible through the windscreens (A); wire cab front hand rails (B); marker lights with rounded lenses (C) and sprung buffers (D). The factory-applied buffer beam detail may have to be removed if the NEM coupling pockets are to be used.



↑ Cab side view

Roof detail is applied using small detailing parts, including the roof ventilators (A). Door glazing has window bars (B). Cab glazing is also neatly applied (C) along with adjacent hand rails on the cab and side doors (D). Sprung buffers and fully detailed bufferbeams are standard on the models (E).

The motor and its twin brass flywheels can be accessed for maintenance by releasing the four screws that hold the box behind the underframe skirts in place. The instructions provide guidance on running-in and lubrication of the model.

Drive bogies

Part of the external bogie drive shaft was removed from both bogies by BR, a detail replicated on the model matching applied BR lined crimson livery. The bogie side frame detail is crisply tooled and appears to be accurate when compared to photographs. There is a shortened piece of the cosmetic drive shaft running back towards the underframe skirt which allow the bogies to rotate into model railway curves. On the full-size vehicle, this would be connected to the transmission.

Well-profiled metal wheels of the correct diameter are fitted, which have black-painted faces rather than being treated with chemical blackening, making them look so much better. Current is collected from all eight wheels through conventional phosphor-bronze wiper pick-ups, allowing the model to run well through complex junctions. The wheels are fitted to 2mm diameter axles making rewheeling with closer-to-scale wheels possible using commercially available wheel sets and reuse of the drive gears. They are retained in the bogie with the usual base plate which is secured with clips.

Lighting controls

The full use of the 21-pin DCC interface has allowed control of the model's array of lighting effects – there is a total of nine lighting functions. With a

decoder equipped with the correct number of functions, the directional headlights; top lights; individually controlled tail-lights and the cab lights may all be controlled independently of each other. DC-users can use the miniature switches located in the underframe which allows individual lights to be controlled manually for use on analogue controlled layouts.

Whilst any 21-pin decoder with at least six functions can be used, the circuit board is wired to suit the function mapping of an ESU 'LokPilot' or 'Loksound' V5 decoder. Remapping

of other brands of decoder to make the lighting work as intended may be required.

Final analysis

Assembly quality and finish of the model is very good, with flawless livery application and neat assembly of components, although the loading door grab rails are delicate and easily distorted through less than careful handling. The single piece plastic body is without flaws, sink marks or other tooling faults which gives the model a quality feel.

Heljan has done a very good job of the lined BR crimson livery applied to the sample model. The lining is straight, and level as is the 'Express Parcels' legend on both sides of the railcar. The lining is carried neatly on to the angular cab fronts and with a consistent width of line throughout.

Heljan has a reputation for modelling unusual prototypes well, particularly railcars, and the GWR/AEC express parcels railcar is another feather in its cap. However, be aware that Heljan has only produced No. 34 in limited quantities, and they might be difficult to find once they have sold out.

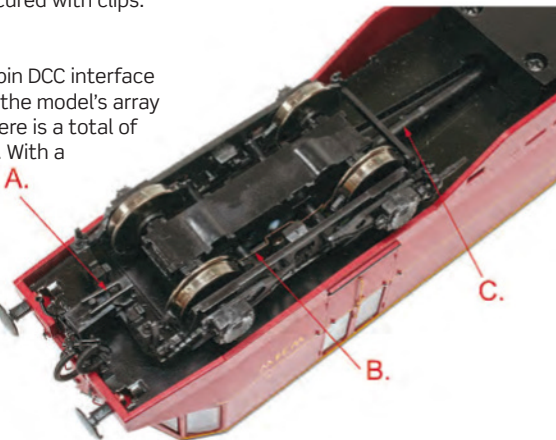
More information about the GWR railcar family can be found at www.greatwestern.org.uk 

↑ Analogue lighting control

There is a bank of nine switches for controlling the lighting functions when the model is run on an analogue layout. The model has a total of nine individual lighting functions which can be controlled individually with an appropriate 21-pin decoder.

↑ Drive bogies

Both bogies are powered and fitted with NEM coupling pockets (A). Current collection is through sprung pick-ups contacting with the rear of the wheels (B). The connecting drive shafts are hidden under the floor (C).



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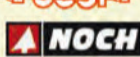
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↑ New to the Heljan range: Newton Chambers TCV car transporters which have been produced with detail and livery features to cover the life of the vans from introduction to their final withdrawal in 1987. They have been supplied in runner packs of three vans alongside some single models.

TCV car transporters in '00'

Realistic East Coast Motorail traffic can now be modelled with Heljan's '00' Newton Chambers car transporters.

FOURTEEN TCV car carriers were designed and built by Newton Chambers of Sheffield to replace older car carrying vehicles used on the East Coast Main Line (ECML).

Introduced in 1961, they were fitted with some interesting innovations for the time, including a second car deck in a well between the bogies which was accessed through a hydraulic lift system, a feature whose use was discontinued after an accident.

The capacity per TCV was six cars, an increase over conventional car carrying vehicles. The lower well could accommodate two smaller cars and four on the upper deck to a maximum load of 12.5 tons.

The vehicle design was also innovative, being a metal framed vehicle covered with fixed lightweight GRP panels to protect the load, giving the vans a clean and streamlined



➤ The featured models are from Pack 3 which covers TCVs when fitted with vacuum brakes (NNV) and painted in BR blue and grey livery.

appearance. Loading doors and ramps for loading when vans were coupled together were located in the ends. In the roof were lights to help illuminate the vans during daylight hours.

They were used on dedicated Anglo-Scottish daytime and sleeper services after introduction, working with Mk.1 coaches, although the Newton Chambers TCVs were not a Mk.1 coach design and shared few standard features with other BR rollingstock. Liveries matched express passenger stock of the time with BR maroon and eventually corporate blue and grey being applied.

Changes in traffic patterns saw them used in other Motorail services which took them to other parts of the network. To suit more modern traction, TCVs were fitted with through electric train supply wiring and dual brakes towards the end of their working lives. Codes changed too, with the TCV identification giving way to NNV for vacuum-braked vans and NVX for dual braked vans.

Review models

Heljan initially offered the vans in runner packs of three vans in matching liveries and identified with different running numbers. The packs covered BR maroon and BR blue and grey models with TOPS codes and variations in train heating details. It subsequently offered the vans singly in various detail and livery combinations too for £79.95.

The models sent in for test and examination are from Motorail Pack 3 which contains weathered BR blue and grey models with vacuum brakes coded as NNV. They are numbered as No. E96288E, No. E96289E and No. E96293E. The E suffix is a mystery because the vans were never operated prior to Nationalisation!

Bodyshell design

Newton Chambers car transporter vans had a unique body profile thanks to the GRP side panels which has been replicated well by Heljan. Two pieces make up the bodyshell which consists of a roof moulding and the body itself. The five bodyside panels and seam lines are neatly tooled and are without any flaws. The bodyshell, when viewed down the length of the rain gutter, is perfectly straight too.

Interestingly enough, the roof is designed to be easily removed and is secured with eight magnets. The interior is completely empty and with no windows in this vehicle, there is little point in detailing it.

On the plus side, adding a tail lamp circuit is made easier with the removable roof moulding. Also, the model's designer probably decided that a roof secured with magnets might be a better design than one using clips which could break easily. The result is a tight-fitting roof with no gap showing along the sides or at the van ends.



➤ All three vans in Pack 3 are finished in weathered condition which is applied evenly over the lower half of the body and bogies. Some of the colour has reached the roof too.



↑ Livery application is sharp (under the grime) with accurate lettering for the van data, numbers and legends.



↑ The magnetic couplings supplied in the box are curved to simulate brake hoses. They are delicate, needing careful handling when fitting to the NEM pockets.

Coupling options

It is good to find close coupling cams and NEM pocket assemblies which are lightly sprung but do not have too much slack in them, fitted to this model. The NEM pockets are correctly mounted for height and position relative to the headstocks. The tension lock coupling length will allow operation on curves down to second radius without buffer-lock occurring.

The models are supplied with magnetic bar couplings with NEM compatible mounts which is a growing trend in the hobby. This allows the three vehicles in the pack to be coupled together as a set but without the inconvenience of solid bar couplings.

The supply of magnetic coupling bars with new models highlights the need to develop a better universal coupling system for 'OO' gauge as well as 'N' gauge.

Fine details

There are many fine details and refinements on this model to enjoy and the bulk of them are located in the van ends. The moulded loading doors are finely executed and convincing too. They are supported by separately applied hand rails and door retarders. Footsteps and wire hand hold are applied to the headstocks too, along with lightly sprung plastic oval buffers, which do not rotate out of alignment.

✗ Heljan's TCVs are all well-assembled, completely straight, square and level with no moulding flaws in the sides or roof. They rolled freely and smoothly during layout testing.



↑ Crisp but subtle detail is moulded in the unique bogies fitted to the Newton Chambers car transporters.

A detailing pack with brake pipes is supplied in the box, although these fittings won't go with the close coupling cams when a coupling is fitted.

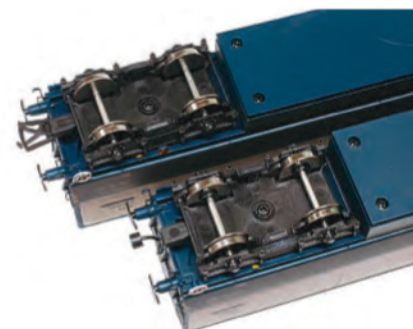
Closing comments

Printed detail is neatly applied and includes the RIV train ferry anchor and data panels too, the TCVs being fitted with ferry fittings. It is assumed that the base livery colours are accurate because Heljan takes a great deal more care over this area of its models these days.

The even coat of track grime applied to the models has made the checking of colour hues difficult. Weathering is finely applied and covers the lower well and bogies too. It is a durable coat of colour which does not show any signs of rubbing away from raised detail on the body or bogies, nor is it shadowed in hard-to-reach areas of the model, such as the headstocks and buffers.



↑ Most of the small fittings can be found on the van ends, including sprung buffers, wire hand rails and steps.



↑ Sprung close coupling cams with NEM pockets are fitted behind the headstocks. Both tension lock and magnetic bar couplings are supplied with the models. The magnetic couplings will only couple according to the pole of the magnets.

Assembly quality is excellent, with all parts properly attached and no obvious gaps where there should not be any, such as along the roof to body join. Small details are properly seated and are level too, including the buffers. No sign of glue marks or other flaws arising from less than careful assembly practices can be found on any of the three models. With their perfectly concentric wheels, decent level of weight and good balance on their bogies, the TCVs will run well in long trains of passenger stock. 📌

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

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MODEL FEATURES

- Sprung plastic buffers.
- Bright metal wheels painted black.
- NEM coupling pockets.
- Magnetic bar couplings supplied.
- Close coupling cams.
- Removable roof secured with magnets.
- Steam and dual heat options.

Bogies and wheels

Unique (meaning non-standard) bogies with a relatively short 6ft 9in wheelbase were fitted to the TCVs which have been perfectly modelled with tiny rivet detail and subtle spring leaf detail. Brake blocks are aligned with the wheels which are composed of bright metal rather than brass. The faces are painted black which has resulted in good-looking wheels which look much better than blackened brass ones. The rear face of the wheels has not been profiled.



↑ Printed details are sharply applied and level. There are minor variations in the liveries between the three vans in Pack 3, including the electrification warning notices.



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MDW 21t scrap wagons

VACUUM-BRAKED MDV 21t mineral wagons were converted for use in scrap metal traffic between 1985 and 1987. Wagons from both Diagram 1/119 and Diagram 1/120 MDV series were modified with a through air brake pipe allowing the wagons to be operated in the formation of air-braked trains, primarily Speedlink services.

TOPS-coded MDW, the scrap wagons were added to the second batch of 21t mineral wagons to be released by Accurascale, which arrived this past October. The new batch includes further packs of Diagram 1/120 MDVs and unfitted Diagram 1/107 MDO wagons, all with new numbers and upgraded underframes.

Upgrades and corrections

The upgrades applied to the model are in response to feedback from customers. They are better detailed with small details such as the position of lamp irons being corrected on the MDVs. A new chassis is included and has finer detail, and features the through air pipe fitted to MDW wagons converted for scrap metal traffic.

Paint finishes have been subject to further improvement too, with each wagon in the triple packs being numbered individually and matched to the precise markings applied to full-size wagons, including patching and differences in type face, along with a weathered interior finish to the bodies.

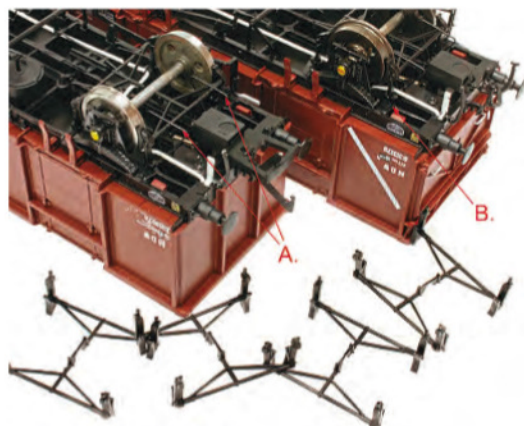
In addition to the vacuum brake pipes and Instantan couplings supplied with the MDVs, the MDW packs include the air brake hoses relating to the through air brake pipe.

Overall, the very fine and delicate appearance of the model has been retained and enhanced with the retooling and they are fitted with close coupling cams, sprung buffers of the correct pattern, along with a wealth of small fittings making up the brake equipment.

Closer to scale conversion

The model comes with a retooled underframe to make conversion to closer-to-scale gauges easier to complete than was found with the first batch. MDV and MDW wagons come with additional brake yoke and brake shoe mouldings to use when converting

→ Conversion to 'EM' and 'P4' gauge has been made easier with the redesigned underframe. Spare brake block and yoke mouldings are supplied which have the brake shoes spaced further apart compared to those fitted to the wagon. The mouldings have to be carefully worked through the safety loops (A) during conversion. Additional mounting holes are provided for the spare mouldings (B).



MODEL FEATURES:

- Finely detailed underframe with brake pipe detail.
- Thin axleguards with neat spring and axle box detail.
- Three-hole metal disc wheels.
- Close coupling cams.
- NEM coupling pockets.
- Correctly detailed single piece bodies.
- Sprung Oleo buffers.

→ The vacuum-braked and through air-piped MDW model is based on the Diagram 1/120 wagon. Conversions were started in 1985 and the wagons remained in use until around 1992.



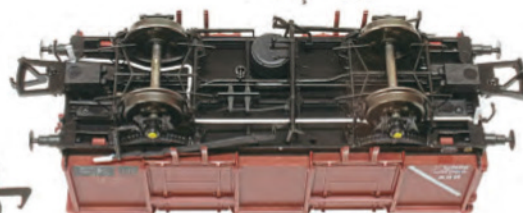
↑ Each MDW carries its own number and associated variations in livery details as seen on No. B313052. Weathering is left to the modeller to complete.

the models to 'EM' or 'P4' gauge. The brake shoes are spaced further apart on the mouldings so they will line up with the finer wheels. Holes are moulded in the underframe to accept the wider brake shoe position to align them accurately with replacement wheel sets.

They are more of a fiddle to use than anything, but with a little patience, the replacement brake shoe and yoke moulding can be changed in around 10 minutes per wagon. The fine wire safety loops are first twisted to an angle before the '00' gauge brake shoe mouldings are unclipped and wriggled carefully out of the loops.

The new mouldings are carefully

↑ Accurascale's 21t mineral wagons are reissued with a retooled underframe and parts to model the air-piped MDWs used on scrap metal traffic in the 1980s.



↑ Roller bearings and Oleo buffers were fitted to the vacuum-braked MDV alongside eight shoe clasp brakes. The buffers are sprung, and cosmetic Instantan couplings are supplied in the box along with brake hoses. The through air pipe is applied using a white moulding.

worked through the wire safety loops and clipped into position using the outer mounting holes in the chassis which are beside the ones used by the '00' gauge mouldings. The wheels are replaced and brake blocks tweaked if necessary, so they allow the wheels to rotate smoothly.

Additional small details

Instantan couplings along with air and vacuum brake hoses are supplied in the box for use when the tension lock couplings are removed from the NEM pocket. There is a mounting hole at the end of the white through air brake pipe, located in the bottom edge of the headstocks which accepts the delicate air pipes. The vacuum brake

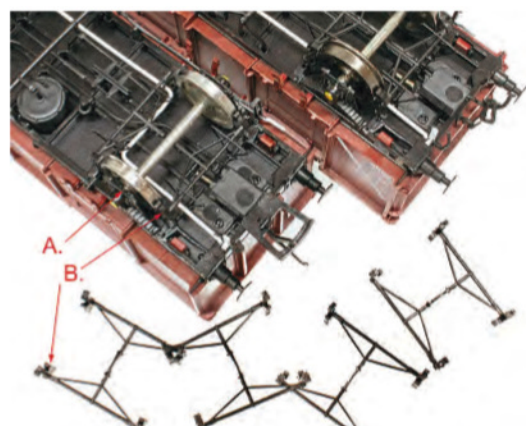
hose mounting holes are nearly hidden by the NEM pockets.

Accurascale's enhanced 21t mineral wagons along with tooling parts for the MDW variant has added value to the range, but at no additional cost to the modeller – the price of a triple-pack being held at the same level as the first batch and remains very good value for money given the level of detail and finish. They also offer the opportunity to strengthen rakes of what was a very common and numerous mineral wagon. 

Produced by Accurascale
www.accurascale.com

RRP £74.95.

→ There is sufficient room for wheel sets with 26mm long axles between the axle guards (A) which allows the fitting of closer-to-scale wheels such as the Ultrastyle 'P4' wheels on the nearest wagon. The brake shoes in the spare mouldings align perfectly with the wheels (B).



'O' WHAT A USEFUL LOCO

G5 Class No. 67322 spent the entirety of its BR life allocated to ex-Great Eastern sheds, either Stratford or Cambridge. In an early 1950s view at the former shed, the O-4-4T shows off its handsome lines. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



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THE NER CLASS O/G5 IN PROFILE

They were stout and handsome machines, but sadly none survived. To mark the arrival of the new North Eastern Railway O/G5 class in model form, **Nick Brodrick** looks into their history... and future! *Article Courtesy of Bachmann Times Magazine*

If the Southern Railway's go-to, do-all, branch line motive power was the Drummond M7, the GWR with its Collett 14XX and the LMS the Fowler 3F, then the former North Eastern Railway (NER) G5 tanks must have a claim to most useful and successful ever used by the LNER.

Perhaps it is that multiple examples of the ex-SR, GWR and LMS locomotives survived into preservation that they jump readily to mind, whereas the total wipe-out of the G5s has left them behind, now only documented in photographs and fading first hand memories.

With that, it is to be celebrated that these well-proportioned Darlington 'tankies' should finally be made in OO scale, ready-to-run form, thanks to a tie-up between Bachmann Europe and The Model Centre, giving the class some overdue love and attention. With eight different versions to choose from, what better time to remind ourselves of exactly what these locomotives were and how they came into being?

Introduced in 1894 as NER Class O, what became the G5 was the creation of the railway's then Locomotive Superintendent, Wilson Worsdell. The Crewe-born engineer had taken over the position four years previously, from his older brother, Thomas. Thomas Worsdell had been responsible for the smaller Class A 2-4-2T (built 1886-1892) – subsequently redesignated F8 by the LNER. This class, along with several other of his designs, incorporated a raft of new features that became standard on NER engines all the way to Grouping in 1923. These included a tapered chimney, brass covers for the safety valves, and a large protective cab.

Sixty engines of this design were built at Gateshead between 1886 and 1892. The last two of the six batches that made up the class were produced during Wilson's own tenure, but experience of their performance led him to the view that this small passenger engine was actually inferior to its predecessor, the larger Bogie Tank Passenger O-4-4T, designed by Edward Fletcher. The latter's own 28-year stint as NER Locomotive Superintendent was merely the final chapter of a remarkable career that began with his apprenticeship to George Stephenson and involvement in the construction of Liverpool & Manchester Railway O-2-2 'Rocket' for the Rainhill Trials.

The Bogie Tank Passenger, later reclassified G6 by the LNER, was designed for passenger duties on NER branch lines. In total, 124 engines of this design were built across five locations between 1874 and 1884; the LNER liveried G5 Class No. 2097 stands at Whitby Town station in the 1930s. The distinctive NER style of ironwork of the trainshed roof can today be seen replicated on the reinstated roof at Pickering station on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. R S CARPENTER PHOTOGRAPHIC



In the transition era from LNER to BR, No. 67271 arrives at West Hartlepool – its 'home' town – with a well-laden passenger train. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



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majority within the NER's own works at Gateshead, York and Darlington, the remainder by third-party manufacturers.

NOUGHT TO 60...

In designing its successor, Wilson brought to bear the experience he had gained working with larger engines during a spell working the Altoona Works of the Pennsylvania Railroad in America, focusing on the advantages in range and performance that could be achieved by creating greater coal and water capacity and by reverting to Fletcher's choice of wheel arrangement.

A total of 110 Class Os (later G5s) were constructed at North Road Works, Darlington, in seven discrete batches, in the period between 1894 and 1901. First off the rank was No. 1096 (BR No. 67240) which emerged into the Victorian daylight of County Durham in May 1894.

They soon carved out a reputation for both performance and reliability. Allocated widely across NER territory, they were equally at home with modest branch line passenger trains and heavier suburban services around the likes of York,

Newcastle, Hull and Darlington. They were quick off the mark, too, often timed at upwards of 60mph on five-coach Tyne-Tees operations.

Their pre-eminence around Newcastle lasted until 1907, when larger classes, such as the Class A8 4-6-2Ts, began to be introduced. That was already two years after many of the city's suburban services had been electrified, already cutting into the O's work, but without withdrawals being necessary; the class simply hoovering up the work of ageing G6s and F8s. The O's range was enhanced further in 1917 with the fitting of cages on top of the coal bunker to increase coal storage capacity. These were extended further four years later.

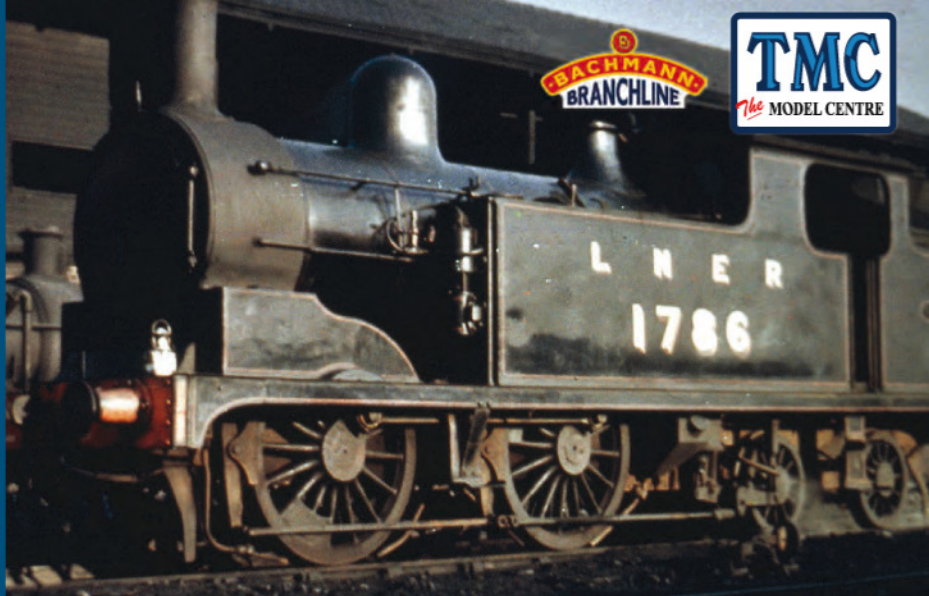
A representative selection of the services the Worsdell engines could be found working was thus: Hull–Selby–Leeds, Northallerton–Hawes, Pickering–Scarborough, Malton–Whitby, Barnard Castle–Bishop Auckland, Ferryhill–Stockton, Sunderland–Pittington, Newcastle–North Wylam, Haltwhistle–Alston, Monkseaton–Blyth, and Kelso–St Boswells.

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Now well into the BR era, a pull-push train for Goole awaits departure from Selby behind No. 67311. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



A rare colour view of a G5 in pre-nationalisation days: No. 1786 is captured in 1937 at an unrecorded location in commendably clean LNER lined black. COLOUR-RAIL.COM

Dunfermline and Parkhead, Glasgow) and No. (6)7287. None of the Scottish trio ever returned south of the border. The Statford complement of G5s were later supplemented by a clutch of classmates dotted around the former GER system. Cambridge G5 duties included turns from its sub-shed at Saffron Walden to work the Audley End to Bartlow branch, while others found gainful employment on the Epping–Ongar line prior to being absorbed as part of the London Underground in 1957.

MINOR TWEAKS

Although the G5s received relatively few modifications during their lifespan of over 60 years, the early 1930s saw the introduction of a new boiler design, Type 69, which featured a single plate barrel (rather than riveted) and 199 tubes – later increased to 207 – and a re-siting of the dome 20in further back from its original position. Around the same time, approximately a quarter of the class were given hopper coal space extensions, to cope with the company's newly-installed mechanical coaling plants.

Such was the success of Worsdell's O-4-4T that they continued into the 'Big Four' era relatively unmodified. As well as the aforementioned tweaks, further changes were limited to minor details, like the removal of the ornate safety valve bonnet, with the whistle moving from the cab roof to the top of the firebox and replacement of the wheel smokebox 'door dart' with a standard twin-handle fixture.

As built, the G5s were painted in T W Worsdell's rather fetching 'standard' lined green with black edging and white lining. This was offset by oval number/works plates. The large plates were disposed of by the LNER, which favoured small works plates with the numbers painted in shaded numerals on the tank sides beneath the company initialism. Gone too was the green, in favour of black with neat red lining.

The later LNER and early BR era brought unlined black and unshaded lettering into play for the first couple of years, but pride

The advent of Grouping in 1923 saw the NER subsumed into the LNER, of which it was the largest constituent part. The O class was reclassified G5, in line with the company's policy of allocating letters to wheel arrangement types.

The new company was soon faced with profitability issues on branch line services, as a consequence of the significant increase in the use of motor cars, and many of the O-4-4Ts used on such routes were replaced by steam railcars, with the advantage that they could run to-and-fro without time wasted running-round stock. As it was, 21 of the versatile tank G5s were converted to vacuum-operated push-pull working in the late 1930s when the Sentinel railcars started to become less reliable in service and more difficult to maintain.

As well as giving the tank engines extra versatility on home North Eastern metals, these conversions also enabled their relocation for use in places as far apart as Stratford on the former Great Eastern Railway in the south (six members), and in 1939, three were sent to the Moray Firth on the ex-Great North of Scotland Railway in the Highlands.

Keith shed's No. (6)7292 was frequently used on the Banff branch, when not required on station pilot duty. Kittybrewster (Aberdeen) also provided work to Nos. (6)7327 (after spells at



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LNER Lined Black No. 2082 with Push/Pull apparatus, Cage Bunker and Ross Pop Safety Valve [Smokebox door handles].

was eventually restored with the application of fully lined mixed traffic black with both BR crest variants in the early 1950s.

A short-lived experiment with larger side tanks to give greater water capacity on what were designated 'lightweight express trains' in the Hull area didn't proceed beyond the modification of No. 387 in 1938.

Two years prior to nationalisation, the LNER renumbered all the locomotives in the class from 7240 to 7349. All 110 were transferred to the newly-created British Railways on 1st January 1948, but it was a close-run thing. The first of the class to be withdrawn, No. 7306, lasted in BR service for only six months. It and No. 7285 were the only pair to never actually display their allocated BR running numbers.

Under BR, the class was allocated a prefix of 6, creating a number range of 67240-67349. As the 1950s progressed, withdrawals from the class gathered pace, reaching a crescendo in the period 1955-58, as the introduction of BR-designed railcars and DMUs began to spell the end for branch line steam services. The final 11 survivors were withdrawn in December 1958.

Of those late survivors, No. 67246 (1783) holds claim to the longest service record at 64 years and three months, having been originally turned out from North Road in June 1894. Unusually for pre-Grouping locomotives in the BR-era, the lack of early casualties meant that, without exception, the whole class scored at least 50 years. Sadly, none made it to the preservation era.

TIME FOR RENEWAL

Determined to address this gap, a group of enthusiasts took the decision to create a brand-new G5 from scratch. The Class G5 Locomotive Company (CG5LC) was founded in 2007, and is based, appropriately, at Shildon, right in the heart of the former locomotives' sphere of influence.

The company has acquired copies of more than 130 original drawings, which have been updated and redesigned, where appropriate, to take advantage of improved methods and materials.

Steady progress is being made. The frames have been assembled, sandwiching the cylinder block and stretcher castings. The bogie is complete and underneath the frame, with the leading driving wheel complete and awaiting the finishing of its crank-axle mate.

The 111th G5 takes shape at the Class G5 Locomotive Company's Shildon workshops. CG5LC

Brake linkage has been made and temporarily positioned, as work gets underway on funding and making the final motion parts. Already, the slidebars and motion bracket are fitted, while the coupling rods await fitting.

If sufficient funds for the motion and valve gear can be raised quickly enough, the aim is to have a completed bottom-end, rolling chassis in time for the 200th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway in 2025 (the S&DR was a direct ancestor of the NER).

The sense of visual progress has been enhanced by the fabrication of a smokebox, chimney, cab and bunker. An all-welded boiler has been made, ready to metaphorically drop onto the G5's wheels.

The aim is to replicate the appearance of the original prototype as closely as possible and to have the locomotive certified for use on preserved railways, whilst building it to the standards required for operation on the main line. To ease operations, a rocking grate is being fitted, which will save the fireman having to ladle ash and clinker out through the firehole door.

When complete the new locomotive will be numbered No. 1759, after the engine, later West Auckland's LNER No. 7306 and BR No. 67306, built at Darlington in 1897.

For more information about this exciting project, visit the CG5LC website at www.g5locomotive.co.uk



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Making the western wonderful

Mark Hopwood has been managing director of Great Western Railway for almost 16 years, during which time there has been significant change. As the operator looks to the future, he talks to **Richard Clinnick** about those plans.



Great Western Railway No. 80222 passes stormy seas at Dawlish on October 30, 2021, with the 1A80 08.15 Penzance-London Paddington. Recent problems encountered by Intercity Express Trains along the sea wall have been identified by GWR and Hitachi, with repairs underway. Tom McAtee

GREAT Western Railway is once again preparing significant changes on its network.

Since 2014, the Great Western Main Line has been electrified, between London Paddington and Cardiff Central, and from Reading to Newbury. Planned electrification from Didcot Parkway to Oxford, from Chippenham Junction to Bristol Temple Meads via Bath Spa, and from Cardiff Central to Swansea, which were all part of the original wiring plans, were cancelled on cost grounds as the Great Western electrification project expenses soared.

On October 16, 2017, the first Hitachi Intercity Express Trains (IETs) entered traffic, and the subsequent introduction of 93 IETs enabled GWR to remove High Speed Trains from long-distance services from London in May 2019. But that wasn't the end of the HSTs. Due to the delays to the GWML electrification, the planned cascade of diesel trains west was affected, with

GWR deciding to operate a small fleet of short-formed HSTs in the west country to cover for diesel multiple units being forced to continue on routes that should have been electrified.

A fleet of 11 four-coach sets, later increased to 16, was modified, with sliding doors and controlled emission toilets fitted to the Mk.3s allowing them to meet accessibility standards. These entered traffic on the Cardiff-Penzance, Cardiff-Taunton, Worcester-Bristol and Plymouth-Penzance routes.

Delays in electrification saw 21 Class 801/3 electric multiple units originally ordered for GWR instead delivered as bi-mode '800/3s', thus improving their flexibility. The IET fleet includes 36 Class 802s ordered separately from the Intercity Express Programme Class 800s.

Another fleet ordered was the Class 769/9 tri-modes. Based on Porterbrook's Flex, which took redundant Class 319s and converted

them to bi-mode by fitting a diesel engine, the GWR version took the project on a step by keeping both the overhead and third-rail electrification capabilities, but added the diesel power. The 19 four-car sets were destined for the Thames Valley and Gatwick Airport routes and would allow for the cascade of DMUs west. However, due to various delays, these trains never entered traffic and were returned to Porterbrook earlier in 2023 when their lease expired.

Also on the Thames Valley, MTR Elizabeth Line (MTREL) took over the inner suburban services as the Heathrow Connect service. GWR now operates alongside MTREL eastwards from Reading, with its Class 387/1 fleet used on electric services to Didcot Parkway. These changes freed Electrostars to serve Cardiff Central too.

In charge through all the changes has been GWR managing director Mark Hopwood. A well known rail enthusiast,

he joined GWR in January 2008. He held a similar role at South Western Railway on an interim basis for 12 months from January 2020 but remained at GWR.

Rail Express met him in GWR offices adjacent to London Paddington on November 21. Typically for someone so hands-on, he'd been dealing with 'operational issues' prior to the interview. He speaks with passion and enthusiasm for the railway, about what has been achieved and what is to come. And there is certainly a lot to come.

"We are pleased there's a lot of positive things happening in what is quite frankly quite a challenging environment." He points to the opening of new stations on the GWR network. These include Okehampton, where 550,000 passenger journeys have been made since it reopened on November 20, 2021, some 49 years after it reopened (see *Headline News*), Reading Green Park, which opened on May 27, Marsh Barton (near Exeter),



On August 16, Great Western Railway No. 43098 Walton Castle and 43094 St Mawes Castle approach Langstone Rock, between Dawlish and Dawlish Warren, with the 2U12 06.40 Penzance-Cardiff Central. The Castles are being withdrawn as and when they require their next overhauls. Ryan Hayward



Some diesel multiple units operated by Great Western Railway will remain in traffic beyond their 40th birthday, although the operator is investigating buying new trains. On August 23, 2021, GWR Nos. 150246 and 150265 pass Carbis Bay, forming the 2A29 14.48 St Erth-St Ives. Tom McAtee

which opened on July 4, and Portway Park & Ride which opened on August 1. "I think it's good to see the new stations open. There's a lot of talk about opening new railway lines and stations, but not always as much delivery as people would like. We're pleased to have achieved that."

He says there is more coming too. A station at Ashley Down is due to open during 2024, between Filton Abbey Wood and Stapleton Road in Bristol. This will feature two accessible platforms and provide journeys of around 10 minutes to Bristol Temple Meads. There will be an hourly frequency, increasing to half-hourly at peak times. This station is being funded by the West of England Combined Authority with some additional funds from Bristol City Council, South Gloucestershire Council and GWR, and forms part of the wider MetroWest programme of rail enhancements.

Other stations in the planning

stage are at Cullompton and Wellington, between Exeter and Tiverton Parkway, Edginswell on the outskirts of Torquay, Charfield (between Yate and Cam & Dursley), the new HS2 station at Old Oak Common (see panel), the Henbury line as part of Phase 2 of Bristol's MetroWest project which aims to reintroduce passenger services on the line between Filton Abbey Wood and

Henbury with stations at North Filton and Henbury, and the Portishead line, which is Phase 1b of the MetroWest project and which aims to open the 8.6-mile branch with stations at Pill and Portishead.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is soon raised. "We've come through Covid-19 and are out the other side of that, but it's resulted in some

service reductions, and it's affected some operators more than others.

"I think we're pleased that we've also been able to launch some new services. We've been extending Swansea services every two hours and that's going really well. Transport for Wales was quite supportive in the end because it recognised that capacity was needed."



This issue of *Rail Express* went to press before the start of the new December 10 timetable. Mr Hopwood points out: "we're achieving our long-held aim of running half-hourly to Gatwick Airport."

"Gatwick was in serious trouble through the pandemic, but it's bounced back stronger than before. Heathrow is predominantly full-fare services and a lot of lower cost flights for EasyJet goes through Gatwick so that link is important."

INTERCITY EXPRESS TRAINS

For the past year, the operator has been withdrawing Castle HSTs. Their duties have been covered by IETs cascaded from intercity services. Sources within the business have told *Rail Express* that this is putting a strain on what is required operationally across the business, even allowing for changes from the original planned duties for many fleets.

Mr Hopwood tells *Rail Express*: "Obviously a lot of focus is on the IETs, and I think it is true that we would like to see them perform better than they do. But you must remember that they're generally performing at a rate that's, on average, at least four times more reliable in terms of incidents between failures than the HST fleet." Hitachi has reviewed maintenance regimes, he says, but that's something normally done with a new train he suggests.



With its passengers waiting on March 19, Great Western Railway No. 800017 enters Cardiff Central. GWR has 93 Intercity Express Trains, all of which will receive repairs to cracks that saw the fleet temporarily withdrawn in May 2021. Jack Boskett

"We've taken some trains out of the timetables, so things like the super-fast to Bristol is not running. London-Bedwyn was going to use three IETs and we have replaced that with a new service from Reading using '387s', so we're not actually using any

more IETs each day than we originally planned to, but we are using them in a different way.

"It is true that we're running more of the diagrams on diesel because some of the West of England diagrams, and the diagrams that have replaced

the HSTs are obviously predominantly on diesel, although we do raise the pantograph from Cardiff to just outside Filton Abbey Wood so we can get value for money from the electricity supply there."

He discusses the cracks which grounded the fleet in May 2021. After a thorough investigation, Hitachi has begun a repair programme using Arlington Fleet Services' Eastleigh Works site for the work. So far, Nos. 800022/026, 802003/011 have either been released or are undergoing repairs.

Mr Hopwood calls the cracks "a key issue", saying: "there's been a lot of scientific research gone into understanding how serious they are. The answer is they're a lot less serious than might initially appear because a lot of the cracks are not on parts of the vehicle that are important to the structural integrity. So, there are things like the lifting plate, which only ever takes the weight of the train when you're doing maintenance.

"It took a long time to get No. 800026 done because that was the set Hitachi cut a large chunk out of the bodyside for research purposes, but we've got that back now and other repairs continue."

He says that the rate at which trains are being treated is not where he would like, but adds that Hitachi is working on that, however he explains: "they've taken a lot of individual bespoke trains like No. 800026 which have got different cracks to what the rest of the fleet have, but I mean I think we're fairly confident once sorted the trains will be in and out in two weeks." He also confirms that while the cracks are not as bad as first feared, they will still be treated otherwise they will deteriorate over time.

Another high-profile issue, more recently, has been the issue of waves hitting the trains at Dawlish. When

'NIGHT RIVIERA'

The 'Night Riviera' sleeper operates using Class 57s hauling Mk.3 coaches. Last year First Group went to the market looking for new locomotives for TransPennine Express, with an option for additional locomotives for GWR. With TPE being taken over by the Government's Operator of Last Resort, the plan has been cancelled. Now, a G-exam programme has begun at Laira on the '57s', with the first locomotive, No. 57604 *Pendennis Castle*, expected to take around five months to complete, with the other '57s' expected to take around four months.

Mr Hopwood said GWR was not planning to withdraw the coaches. "The train only runs once a day, six

days a week, so compared to the HST Mk.3s, the level of utilisation is significantly less."

The locomotives are the immediate challenge, he suggests. "The G-exam is a very comprehensive overhaul, and it will see that the '57' operate for probably another five or six years. It would be foolish for us to go through that programme and then immediately look for something new. But, while I can't guarantee this, it is certainly my aspiration that this is the last heavy overhaul that we give those locomotives."

As a result, he would like to take advantage of technological developments, and cites the Stadler tri-mode Class 93 and bi-mode '99',

both of which are on order. He says: "I think the challenge with the '93' is that it is reasonably impressive on diesel but it's still not quite as powerful as we need. The '99' is probably more in that territory. The only thing that I think we would like to add to that is potentially the capability to run on battery power."

The battery power would not be for long-distance but rather to counter noise complaints at Penzance where the engine could be switched off and the locomotive could propel its stock to Long Rock at 5mph.

"We are not in a rush to progress this because there's going to be a reasonable amount of life left in the '57s'."



On August 20, 2021, No. 57605 *Totnes Castle* pauses at Camborne with the 1A50 21.45 Penzance-London Paddington. A G-exam programme is underway on the '57s' which will see them in traffic for another five to six years. Tom McAtee

introduced, the IETs, specifically the '802s', were heralded as being 'Dawlish-proof' allowing GWR to continue operating trains during poor weather. In recent weeks, when storms have battered the Devon coast, IETs have suffered failures. Mr Hopwood says: "We were disappointed with the way some of the trains performed, particularly through the last storm. We've identified the issue around the brake resistors on the roof, which are effectively a ceramic material. And while Hitachi has been cleaning those, like a lot of that type of material, the act of cleaning is helpful in some ways, but you do gradually degrade the nature of the surface. So, I think what that has told us is that those components are probably going to need renewal on a more regular basis than we thought."

"I think it would be wrong to suggest that every train that goes past Dawlish in poor weather has failed. I think we had three or four, and the other thing to remember is that they have operated along the sea wall in rough conditions before."

"In an ideal world you wouldn't have any equipment on the roof. The challenge is that if you look at all of the rolling stock manufacturers now, they're all putting stuff on the roof. One of the reasons why is that trains have a lot more fitted to them now. I mean, everybody expects much better air-conditioning, for example. And with the loading gauge in the UK being much more restricted than elsewhere, realistically, the only place you're going

OLD OAK COMMON STATION

High Speed 2, when it opens sometime between 2029 and 2033, will serve Old Oak Common. Initially it will be the terminus for the new railway until Euston opens. Construction is underway, but Mr Hopwood explains the impact it will have on GWR in the future. He calls this "quite a big challenge."

He says one plan will be diverting GWR trains into other termini, with Euston and Waterloo under consideration. "I think there will need to be some degree of co-operation across the network to allow people on the GWR network to still have a through service into central London, but I think we'll find a way of doing that."

This won't just be at Christmas but also at bank holidays and possibly some weekends too. This affects the North Pole depot too, he says. "The depot entry is to the east, but there is the old access from the West London Line that Eurostar used. We recently took a Class 33 there with a saloon and one of the things we did was that we went into North Pole from the west London Line and waited

while the route was reset, using quite a complex process that's been in place ever since the depot was resignalled by Hitachi. It took about half an hour, so we are exploring with signalling designers and Network Rail whether we can find a way of speeding up that process so that we can have more departures in a shorter space of time."

Euston, he says, is the preferred option. Not because Waterloo is a bad station, but because the former has more facilities suitable for GWR passengers. Then there is the journey time to consider. "It's about half an hour longer than getting to Euston from Acton. So not only are you putting the passengers through a longer journey, but you're also then effectively tying up another four trains. In the resource plan it requires a lot more train crew. It needs more route conductor drivers." Should an agreement be reached then GWR could be serving Euston towards the end of year.

Mr Hopwood also speaks about HS2. He says that GWR: "will be

expecting quite large numbers of passengers who will be changing onto the Elizabeth Line. I think Transport for London thinks it needs about five extra trains."

There is a concern regarding connectivity for the new station. GWR is expected to serve the station, as will the Elizabeth line, but London Overground and the Central Line won't. Mr Hopwood suggests that the connectivity could be better. That raises concerns over performance, he says. "I'm very concerned with stopping our trains and adding four minutes to the journey time but not actually offering people the benefit from that. I think that needs a serious review as to whether or not the GWR services should stop." That is ongoing, he says. "The challenge that we'll face is that there'll be an increasing resource flow, for if we're going to add four minutes to the journey, time in and out effectively, that then bursts turnaround times in London, which means we'll need more rolling stock."

to put this stuff is on the roof. The other problem that we've had is with the entire train system so that when we do get the electric systems knocked out by water, we've been struggling to restart the engines because they have a safety system that prevents you continually trying to restart the engine.

"So, what we've done is we have fitted an override device that the driver can activate, and the software then looks at the geofencing and says: "Where am I?" And if the geofencing says you're somewhere between Exeter and Newton Abbot, that allows you to operate, and you can then get about 20

times as many restarts as you would anywhere else. But that does have to be activated beforehand. We haven't had all the benefit we'd like from that. We think there's some more benefit to come. So, there's about three or four things that Hitachi are doing that I think will improve the situation."



Mark Hopwood has suggested that he would like to see electrification into Bristol Temple Meads via Bath Spa. On December 8, 2022, a Class 800/3 departs Bath heading for London Paddington. Jack Boskett

ELECTRIFICATION

Electrification has long been a topic for the railways. Wiring the GWR network was scaled back during the 2010s, but Mr Hopwood is undeterred. "I'd like to see everything electrified, but I'm realistic. I don't think Swansea is currently on the cards although it's possible the Welsh government under devolution might find a way of making that happen. I think Oxford probably has the strongest business case because as well as allowing the IETs to run on electric we could extend the Didcot Parkway services to Oxford as well."

"We'd like to see electrification into Bristol. I mean, certainly Filton Bank and finishing that off, but also getting the railway electrified into Bristol from Chippenham. Those schemes will also potentially help us as we move towards looking at new rolling stock with battery units."

GWR had planned to trial a five-car Class 802/0 using battery power, but that has been cancelled. Mr Hopwood explains: "Everyone realised that the distances we're running on diesel are just so great that we would run out of battery and not have the capability to recharge, and while there was an expectation for the battery to be capable of charging off the other diesel engines that wasn't part of the original design. The concern that we had was that we'd leave London on electric, we'd get to Newbury on a five-car set and it would have two diesel engines instead of three, with the battery on the third vehicle. "The battery would add some value as far as somewhere like Castle Cary and run out and then you run the '802' around with a dead battery and two diesels instead of three, so that was never going to work."

Mr Hopwood moves onto the Castle situation. Originally scheduled to all be withdrawn by now, their use was extended, albeit with reductions through the year. He says: "the financial challenges for the industry led us to have a serious look at where we were because we knew that we didn't have enough funding to keep all the fleet going. So, we took the difficult decision to not put the Castles through their next heavy overhaul. But we have got some sets that were put through that



Passengers are returning to Great Western Railway following the pandemic, and the operator is also targeting new markets such as those using the Elizabeth Line. On September 17, 2022, passengers leave an Intercity Express Train at London Paddington.

Jack Boskett

programme just before we took the decision and so rather than withdraw them prematurely, we decided to keep them going. So, there'll be four sets that are going to run for another year." RE suggests they could be operating until May 2025. "I would like to keep them running as long as they can. What I don't want to do is take trains out of service that have got miles left on the clock. The reason we're taking them out is because we don't want to fund heavy maintenance. There isn't any other reason that physically prevents them running. So, it would be sensible to maximise that."

Mr Hopwood says that recent engineering blockades in Cornwall and industrial action will have helped possibly extend their lives by reducing their use. "But let's see. It is always a challenge having a small fleet of trains from a train crew and traction knowledge perspective. We're generally

going to run those trains between Plymouth and Penzance. I mean, that's not to say they can't go east. But there'll be a lot less drivers who sign them and so we have changed the timetable to split some services."

D-TRAINS

In early-2022 it was announced that, with funding from the Department for Transport, GWR would operate a trial with a Vivarail Class 230. The unit, No. 230001, was to be prepared ahead of testing on the Greenford branch. However, that was put at risk when Vivarail went into administration. Eventually, GWR acquired the '230', and more. Mr Hopwood explains: "at the point the business went into administration we spoke to the receiver, and the receiver was looking for the simplest deal possible. The scrap value of the vehicles is a bit of money, but not hugely significant. We were

offered a package which gave us the battery train that was operational, the intellectual property, the components and the facility in which they were being built, the research that was being done and all the bodysells, and we took the view that we would go with that package."

One of the reasons GWR bought so many, he says, was that should the battery unit project be taken forward, then these vehicles will be required; had they been bought by another party that would not have been possible. "Ultimately the scrap value of those vehicles remains what it was, so if at some point in the future, we decided we don't need them, we can recover that value, so it sort of made sense."

He says the trial will start initially without passengers. Commencing the trial without passengers is why Mr Hopwood personally moved the

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY FLEET, NOVEMBER 25

Class 08:	08641/644/645, 08822/836
Class 43:	43004/021/027/029/042/092-094/097/098, 43122/153-156/162/186-189/198
Class 57:	57312, 57602-605
Class 150:	150202/207/216/221/232-234/239/243/244/246-249/261/263/265/266
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:	387143-171
Class 800:	800001-036, 800301-321
Class 802:	802001-022, 802101-114
Mk.3 (locomotive-hauled):	10217/219/225, 10532/534/563/584/589/590/594/596, 10601/612/616, 12100/142/161, 17173-175
Mk.3 (High Speed Train):	48104-109/112/114/117-124/126/130/149/150, 49102/103/105/106/108/109/117
D-Stock vehicles:	7001/013/015/019/031/041/045/048/054/060/063/064/078/082/085/091/094/097, 7101/110/113/116/126/129, 7502/512/515/528/536-538, 17011/013/015/023/025/029/043/045/047/049/052/054/056/058/062/064/065/067/076-078/082/085-087/090/096/098, 17102-104/110/112-114/117/118/120/124/127/129, 17522/528

Note: No. 57312 is hired from GB Railfreight. As this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, eight Class 43s and three rakes of Castle Mk.3s were due to be withdrawn. The D-Stock vehicles are stored at Long Marston.

trial from the Henley branch to the Greenford route. Henley was initially selected because it was closer to Reading depot, where the '230s' will be based. "I said I think the Greenford branch is better because it's double-track, so it allows you to operate the passenger service with one train and run the trial without passengers if we need to do that. It's worth remembering we're not actually trialling the train, the train works. What we're testing is the fast charging system."

The three '230s' used on the Marston Vale line by London Northwestern Railway prior to Vivarail entering administration, Nos. 230003-005, have also been acquired by GWR. Mr Hopwood explains that they were bought to ensure an opportunity wasn't missed. These are already refurbished internally and quite a large cost of returning other vehicles to traffic, he says, would be dealing with the interior condition, whereas these were ready.

But what will GWR do with the '230s', and could more be introduced? "The strategy with this technology is to take a look. There's potentially two different types of battery trains that we're going to be interested in. There's the type of which the technology already exists which, if you take a train, say from London to Bedwyn, the train will leave London on electric with batteries. The batteries will be charged at Newbury, or by Newbury. It then runs on batteries to Bedwyn and back, and then the batteries would be largely drawn down at that point before going back on charge when it returns to electric power.

"What we're looking at with the

fast charging technology is branch lines where the power draw is relatively modest. So, you know to get a train from Bourne End to Marlow, it's a seven-minute journey, but the maximum speed is 40mph, so you're not thrashing the train to death up and down the line. We believe Thames Valley branches are all suitable for that technology. Network Rail has been working with us, and potentially there are the Cornish branches as well. Now, whether that will end up with D-Stock, or whether it may be a case of proving the technology and using it on a more modern vehicle, we'll have to see."

NEW TRAINS

The Office of Rail and Road recently published figures relating to UK passenger operator's train fleets, revealing that GWR has 1087 vehicles, of which 12% are electric, 22% are diesel, 56% are bi-mode and 10% are locomotive-hauled vehicles. It also showed that the average age of GWR's fleet is 14.9 years, exactly 15 years lower than the oldest average train fleet (Chiltern Railways), placing it 14th out of 24 operators. However, that fails to mention that GWR's regional fleet is considerably older than the EMUs used in the Thames Valley and the IETs.

Mr Hopwood explains: "We've got quite a lot of trains that are approaching the point where they'll need replacement. Within the last decade we did quite a lot of rolling stock replacement. We replaced the HSTs while we cascaded the Turbos, but the '150s' are 38 years old now and they're going to get to their 40th birthday and beyond; Turbos – most of

them are 32 years old; '158s' are a bit older. We want to have a programme in place to bring some new trains into the business and we're working on that.

"Our aspiration is that it's a fleet of new trains. What we want to be able to do is to use battery power, where that works and where it's capable of doing what we need, but also recognising that if we could get some small bits of additional electrification that would help as well." The latter could include discontinuous electrification in the south west, he suggests. "I think the case of Oxford is fairly straightforward. But Devon and Cornwall is going to be a bit harder, and I guess it will partly depend on where government policy is with this and whether they're prepared to spend any money, whether it's this government or a different government in the future."

Asked if he has any inkling as to what could happen, he replies: "in terms of buying new trains, ultimately, anyone who wants to buy a new train must demonstrate a business case. And the business case effectively says that by spending money on these new trains, we will end up in a better financial position than we'd be in doing nothing."

He says GWR would need to show that by ordering new trains it would be saving money and that it would also drive revenue. He highlights his SWR days when he operated the 1938 Stock on the Isle of Wight, however he says there comes a point where the financial implication of running older trains becomes prohibitive. "If you're going to engineering companies and manufacturing companies and asking them to manufacture components that

ELIZABETH LINE

The Elizabeth Line has had an impact on GWR, as Mr Hopwood explains. "I think it has been a really good thing for GWR. We effectively donated our inner suburban services into that and the Heathrow Connect operation and I think the result for passengers has been really good. People travelling on GWR can travel to other parts of London. I went to an event last night in the city and I could travel from Farringdon to Paddington in eight minutes, whereas it used to be 20-25 plus minutes on the Hammersmith and City Line.

"The other thing we've done is to open up GWR to a new market." This new market, he says, is people in East London, South Essex North Kent, for whom getting to Paddington was harder, but which is now a much easier proposition. "If they want to do a day trip to Oxford or day trip to Bath that is much more doable." Targeted marketing has been undertaken around this, he says, citing examples of Stratford in east London. "Over the last couple of decades that has been completely transformed with huge amounts of housing. There are huge amounts of development around south Essex and north Kent. Plugging into that I think is important for us."

they would not be manufacturing then that becomes quite expensive. So, I think our view is that we can make a case for new rolling stock in terms of money that we will save."

He highlights the current '150/2' C6 overhaul programme. "We're finding quite substantial amounts of corrosion. There's a degree of 'Trigger's Broom' to some of this stuff; so, you have a '150' built in 1985, but when you do a metallurgical analysis of the body, you'll find most of its metal is newer. But we have a cost of that, both in terms of actually doing the work and the cost of having the train out of service.

"We also know from our own experience with other new trains that most normal customers much prefer to travel on new trains."

He discusses Levelling Up. "I think a lot of people, politically, get obsessed with the sort of north south divide and that actually, the south west often gets forgotten. A lot of politicians think that the need to level up starts somewhere just south of Birmingham, and don't think about South Wales and the West Country, where a lot of the same type of issues that people are seeing in the north of England also exist.

"We have had some investment in the railways in the south west but nothing on what's been proposed for the North."

Looking into the future offers an exciting glimpse into what could come at GWR. Mr Hopwood has led one transformation at the operator and is well-placed to do that again. It will be fascinating to watch. [E](#)



From left to right, Nos. 802103, 800023, 800034 and an unidentified Class 80x stand at London Paddington on July 14, 2022. While performance of these trains, which entered traffic from October 2017 onwards, is not where it could be, Mark Hopwood says it's still four times better than the trains they replaced. Jack Boskett



Q23 car No. 4248 on the 'Raised Table' on July 21, 2023, within the London Transport Museum's flagship Covent Garden site. Immediately behind is Metropolitan Electric locomotive No. 5 *John Hampden*. Christopher Westcott

100 years of London's G-Stock

A century after they were constructed, **Christopher Westcott** explores the history of the former G-Stock cars and discovers the contrasting condition of the two survivors, both in the care of the London Transport Museum.

As custodian of London's transport heritage, the London Transport Museum (LTM) has a huge responsibility. It displays and stores its conserved exhibits in two exhibition sites.

The flagship is the 1872 Grade II listed former Victorian Flower Market in Covent Garden, which opened its doors to the public for the first time in March 1980, formally opened by HRH Princess Anne. Since then, the collection has been rearranged twice, most recently undergoing a £22 million refit between 2005 and 2007.

One of two surviving former G-Stock Driving Motor (DM) cars, No. 4248, can be found on the 'Raised Table', built in 1993 during the first refit, mounted alongside Metropolitan Railway locomotive No.5 *John Hampden*, Class 4-4-0T steam locomotive No.23, built in 1866, and Chesham coach 400. All exhibits are maintained in carefully controlled humidity and lighting conditions, to prevent deterioration.

Meanwhile, the other surviving G-Stock DM car, No.4184, is stored at

the LTM's Acton Depot site at Acton in Zone 3. Instead of being on display, the car is rarely seen by the public. Located externally, to the rear of the depot building, having been covered with tarpaulin for some years, the car is no longer part of the Q-Stock restoration project. At face value, the juxtaposition of where both cars now find themselves, could not be starker.

THE G-STOCK STORY

In 1920, 100 new steel bodied F-Stock cars were constructed by the Metropolitan Carriage, Wagon and Finance Company for the District Railway. They had been part funded by the Government to help the railway industry recover from the First World War. With timber B-Stock cars, constructed between 1904-05 in poor condition, additional rolling stock was still needed. As a result, 50 G-Stock Driving Motors [DM] cars were ordered from the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company, being built during 1923 and 1924.

These G-Stock cars featured upgrades and improvements over the F-Stock design, which were unpopular with drivers, and featured cramped cabs fitted with oval windows, which obscured vision. Whether the upgraded cab design was any improvement is up for debate. In time they were referred to as "horseboxes", also being rather small. They also gave a draughty experience for Motormen, with inadequate heaters. In winter, they were extremely cold, being damp and draughty. Meanwhile in the summer, they behaved like greenhouses.

The first example of the G-Stock delivered to the District Railway, was car No. 640 on July 10, 1924 – four more examples arriving later that same month. When introduced to passenger service in August 1924, they were coupled to steel framed B-Stock trailer cars which had themselves been converted from Driving Motors, alongside younger C, D and E-Stock. However, it was the expansion of electrification of the District Railway east towards Upminster, that

resulted in orders for additional rolling stock to maintain services. K-Stock was constructed from 1927, being a refined upgrade on the box-like G-Stock, further developed by L-Stock in 1931. Even after the creation of the London Passenger Transport Board [LPTB] in 1933, orders for M & N cars were placed, with construction beginning in 1935. These stocks were the last to include the raised American-style clerestory roof design.

Q-STOCK CONVERSION

The District Line, as it became under the management of the LPTB, was now operating and maintaining an eclectic range of cars from different generations. Consequently, as part of the New Works Programme, the economic and practical decision was made around 1936 to upgrade all cars delivered from 1923 onwards, taking advantage of technological advances. This meant that the G, K, L, M & N-Stocks were to, in 1930s management speak, become 'rehabilitated'. Being fitted with compatible electro-pneumatic brakes and guard-controlled air-operated doors, the introduction of standardised equipment allowed all cars prior to the F-Stock, to be withdrawn.

A new letter: 'Q', was introduced to identify the 'rehabilitated' sub-surface rolling stock. Yet, to denote the variety of cars, the year of initial construction of each stock was added. Using the former G-Stock as an example, they became Q23s. Meanwhile, facilitating the complete withdrawal of all pre-F-Stock cars on the District Line, an order for Q38 stock was placed with the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company (GRC&W) in August 1936. Orders for visually identical O and P cars for the Metropolitan Line were also placed with the Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Company, along with the GRC&W. However, the equipment under the solebar differed considerably.

The first of 25 Driving Motor and 183 trailer Q38 cars entered service on November 14, 1938. Like the O and P-Stock, these cars were constructed using steel, with flared lower sides, which included the doors. This was a specific design feature aimed at psychologically dissuading passengers from the dangerous behaviour of jumping onto the door footplate as trains departed stations. Previously, impatient passengers had either then opened the heavy manually-operated doors, held onto adjacent handrails until the next station or paid the ultimate price for their foolishness. All Q38 cars had been delivered to the District Line by November 1939.

"Q-Stock always presented a somewhat 'eccentric' appearance with different designs of car appearing in a given formation," says Nick Agnew, former operations manager District Line, LTM Friend & Epping Ongar Railway (EOR) volunteer.

Of note, two of the 50 G-Stock cars, Nos. 4167 & 4176, were never converted to Q-Stock. Instead, they were rebuilt to operate as single cars in 1938, with another cab constructed into the guard's compartment at the opposite end. These unique cars operated shuttle services between Acton Town and South Acton, remaining in service until the line closed, on February 28, 1959.

Only one Q23 car, No.4146,

was lost due to enemy action during the Second World War, being damaged beyond economic repair in September 1940. In the latter years of use there were some changes. In 1959, 14 of the Q23 DM cars were converted to trailers during overhaul. Several others were renumbered, so not to duplicate numbers with new Victoria Line 67 Tube Stock that was introduced in the late-1960s.

With replacement parts becoming harder to source and survivors less cost effective to repair, withdrawals began in 1964. By the end of 1967, only 11 of the original 48 'rehabilitated' former G-Stock cars remained in service. Using spares stripped from scrapped cars, all remained in passenger service at the start of 1971, their final year. By this time, they were loved by drivers for their reliability and operational flexibility, with an ability to 'stop on a sixpence'.

With new C69-Stock trains being delivered to take over Circle Line services, Converted O and P-Stock cars, now referred to as CO/CP or even COP Stock, were being cascaded across to the District and East London Lines (ELL). This allowed the last of the Q-Stock, including the final 11 Q23s to be withdrawn from the District Line during the first half of the year.

The final examples continued to serve in shorter four-car trains on the ELL. The final passenger service ran during the morning of Friday, September 17, 1971. The unit transferred to Ealing Common depot later that day, using the now closed S. Mary's curve which used to connect the East London Line to the District between Whitechapel and Aldgate East.

A Q-Stock train re-entered District Line passenger service on Friday, September 24, 1971, for a final passenger soiree. It was purposely used as set 100, which covered most of the line, running until the early evening.

Two days later, on September 26, a special railtour denoted the end of the Q-Stock. Besides covering much of the District, the tour also travelled along sections of the Metropolitan Line and to Hounslow, which was then a terminus of the southern branch of the Piccadilly Line. Of note, this section of line had been shared between the Piccadilly and District from 1933, until District Line services ended on October 9, 1964.

Meanwhile, two Q23 cars, Nos. 4204 & 4264 spent their final few months acting as depot pilot cars. Car No. 4264 was turned off for the final time at Ruislip Depot on October 26, 1971, exactly a month after the final railtour.

CONDITION SURVEYS:

A century after construction and more than 50 years since they last carried passengers, what is the condition of the two surviving former G-Stock DM cars and what does the future have in store?

THE FINAL Q23 IN SERVICE: 4248

Mounted on the 'Raised Table' in Covent Garden, this Q23 car remained in service until the very end. It was one of the two driving motor cars at either end of the train reintroduced to passenger service on September 24, 1971, and again during the final railtour two days later. Initially being displayed on the ground floor until the early 1990s, the car is presented as it would have operated in passenger service at the end of its 48-year career. Advertisements are those that were installed when the car was withdrawn, with an original, but faded, 'Farewell to the Q-Stock Trains' poster mounted in a frame of the car.

Only minimal work has ever been undertaken, with the sole aim of conserving the car from further damage. One example are the lights, which were changed from incandescent bulbs, which produce concentrated heat which can cause damage to nearby surfaces over time, to LED lights of the same design, which produce the same lux levels.

Meanwhile visitor access is limited to just a double doorway, with transparent plastic barriers having been installed either side, blocking access to the seating areas within the car. Two 'stirrup' grab handles have also been removed immediately above the entrance double doorway, so that visitors do not accidentally damage them. Besides these, all the original 'stirrup' handles and lamp shades remain.

One curiosity though, are missing heater elements located at foot level, which are located to the rear of the transverse seats. These have survived in car No. 4184. Perhaps they were intentionally removed when the car was still in use, as all signs of any fittings have been removed, with surfaces made good and painted over.

"GOOD IN PARTS": 4184

When visiting the Q-Stock project back in 2017, Geoff Thorne, the lead technical volunteer referred to the condition of 4184 as being "a bit like the Curate's Egg; good in parts".

Following withdrawal from passenger service, the car had been returned to its builder, becoming a 'Gatekeeper' outside the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company. ➤



A three-quarter side view of a four car Q23-Stock train at an unknown location on December 6, 1965. The unit nearest the camera is No. 4248. Transport for London from London Transport Museum Collection.

However, when the company closed in 1986, ownership had transferred to the local authority. Plans for the car to be reused, being converted into a coffee bar, resulted in an intervention when, to borrow the words of Nick Agnew, former District Line operations, “a deal was done”.

The car was transferred back to London, where it was inspected. Although internally the vehicle was reasonably complete, with spare fuses even being found in the cab immediately behind the driver's seat, important equipment such as traction and electric motors were missing. This is the primary reason that prevents the car from being easily restored to working order. The London Transport Museum took ownership of No. 4184 in 1993, it being one of the first cars to be housed at the new Acton Depot once it opened in 1999.

Once the Q-Stock restoration project began in earnest, it was soon realised that the equivalent fiscal investment and time invested in the restoration of Q38 DM cars No. 4416, 4417 and Q35 Trailer No. 08063, would be required for car No. 4184 alone. Consequently, the understandable decision was made to remove the car from the Q-Stock restoration project. Instead, it is now destined to be presented as a static vehicle in the future.

ON BOARD

With the tarpaulin that covers the exterior creating a gloomy environment, a strip of lights had been hung along within the car to assist with my inspection. Upon boarding, my immediate impression was of flakes of bright white paint that had fallen from the ceiling panels onto the dark discoloured maple floor below. Quite when the roof was last painted is unclear, although there is still a previous layer of yellow paint underneath, probably from when the car was in passenger use in the late-1960s, until 1971.

Fortunately, though, the ceiling panels have not bowed, unlike in Q38 DM car No. 4416, part of the Q-Stock restoration project, where condensation has resulted in all the ceiling panels to be replaced (RE329).



One of the two saved Q23 cars. Facing north, DM No. 4184 is captured on April 25, 1970, on the East London Line's Whitechapel platform, which was never well lit being immediately below the District Line, especially on a damp April day. Tom Burnham

All seats have been removed from the interior of the car, along with light fittings, and all but two ‘stirrup’ grab handles. “It is, what it is” explains Julian Urry, Q-Stock project manager. There is logic though, with the interior fittings having been removed for conservation reasons. Outside storage can be damaging for parts that suffer from damp or heat, such as seats or leather straps. Seats will harbour moisture as temperature fluctuates. These fittings have been stored inside the Museum Depot, on pallet racking, or in some cases, on other rail vehicles.

The exposed electrical contacts for the light fittings reveal where these would have been. However, despite being stripped out, the car is structurally sound, with ornate

features, such as the decorative and practical ventilation grills in the clerestory roof space clearly from a time gone by.

Meanwhile the cramped cab of No. 4184 is very smart, with its cerulean blue looking like it was recently applied. The wooden Deadman's handle, missing in No. 4248 at Covent Garden, is present, albeit, with a sizable split in the wood. The moquette covering the driver's seat is in remarkably good condition, which I found in its raised position, being held tightly in place by a buttoned leather strap, which was difficult to undo. Yet, there have been some modifications since withdrawal, with three-pin plug sockets having been fitted adjacent to the J door on the back wall.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Currently even getting No. 4184 to a static presentation standard, will require a significant amount of work. For example, cab timber door joints have failed and will need to be rebuilt. As all current manpower is focussed upon the Q-Stock Project, there is no immediate capacity to work on the car. Consequently, it will remain in storage externally to the rear of the Museum's Acton Depot site at Acton, protected by high quality conservation grade tarpaulin. Two sheets are used per vehicle, costing more than £1000 per sheet, which overlap towards the middle, both reaching below the solebar. With most passenger doors also having been bolted shut, there is little, if any opportunity, for water to congregate anywhere, causing damage. [B](#)



↑ The tarpaulin-covered cab of No. 4184. Christopher Westcott

← The stripped-out interior of Driving Motor car No. 4184 captured in July 2023, with peeling ceiling paint that has fallen to the darkened maple floor below. Christopher Westcott

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Siemens Mobility unveils first pre-Production 24 Tube Stock

With Siemens Mobility revealing the first unit in Germany, **Christopher Westcott** explores the features and development of London Underground's new Piccadilly Line trains.

SIEMENS Mobility unveiled the first completed pre-production 24 Tube Stock [TS] unit on November 16. Although the unit was built in the Austrian capital Vienna, the event was held at the company's Test and Validation Centre in Wegberg-Wildenrath, Germany.

Once testing has been completed, the unit will be transferred to the UK, destined to operate on the Piccadilly Line from 2025.

At a cost of £1.5 billion, Siemens is currently contracted to manufacture 94 trains, which includes the supply of spare parts for five years, following the commissioning of the first unit. Siemens will also supply technical support for the first five years after the contracted warranty period, with the option for further support packages throughout the life of the train.

There is the anticipation orders will be placed to replace trains on the Bakerloo, Central and Waterloo & City Lines. Yet that may not be all, with papers presented to the Transport for London Board proposing that an additional 18 Piccadilly Line trains could be ordered as part of a second stage of upgrades.

However, there are challenges before this order is placed, not least issues around investment and timings of projects to upgrade the Piccadilly Line, one example being the upcoming upgrade to the signalling system.



The first pre-production 24 Tube Stock unit undergoing testing at Siemen's Test and Validation Centre in Wegberg-Wildenrath, Germany. Siemens Mobility

TRAIN FORMATION & EQUIPMENT

The production of the 24 TS for the Piccadilly Line consists of a nine-car unit, using articulation throughout. There are three types of cars; traditional Driving Motor [DM] cars that can be found at either end, with the other seven cars alternating between four shorter Intermediate [IM] cars and three longer Key Motor [KM] cars. The number of bogies has been reduced across the entire train, from 18 (assuming two bogies per car), to just 10, with only the DM and KM cars having two bogies each. This is an innovation based upon a tram concept for Siemens created by Manfred Tiefelberg, who led the engineering teams in Siemens through the bid phase and design phase.

There are several benefits in reducing the number of bogies. It creates additional space to enable additional equipment to be housed below the solebar of the IM cars. In turn, this allows the passenger cabin to be increased in size. It also reduces weight, so there is less impact between the train and rail infrastructure, causing less inadvertent damage, being, as Siemens calls it, "track friendly". However, with less contact between the train and track, might there be an issue during the autumn, when wheels slip on slippery rails? Apparently not, with Siemens advising that it has installed a clever wheel management system, to counter slippage caused by leaves at the wheel interface.

The IM cars therefore can house additional equipment, such as air-cooling units, below the solebar. This enables more space to be created within the passenger cabin, while also reducing weight across the train, which as a result uses, an anticipated, 20% less energy. Coupled with the articulated design of the cars, each train will be able to transport approximately 10% more passengers than the 73 TS that currently serve the Piccadilly Line.

Siemens and TfL have made some limited changes to the original specified design, but these are beneficial to the overall product. The example being the reduction on bogies and resulting space it created. Meanwhile, other components such as batteries have also been redesigned from standard Inspiro units, as the contract with TfL is very specific with regards weight, energy and capacity.

At a high level, if TfL places an order to replace rolling stock across all four lines, Siemens expects to manufacture 310 trains. Therefore, standardising Deep Tube stock with the same equipment makes sense, creating savings through economies of scale when ordering replacement components in bulk. While the basic frame design will be identical across all the stocks, there are practical challenges. Examples are existing infrastructure, dictating the hardware and software interfaces such as with differing signalling systems. Tunnel geography will also impact gauging, with the Central, for example, being expected to operate with 11-car units. Therefore, there will be an element of difference between the stocks produced for each line.

DESIGNED TO BE ICONIC

The design is referred to by Siemens as 'Inspiro London', being based upon the Inspiro family of metro trains already in use, or due to be introduced, across Europe (Bulgaria, Germany, Austria and Poland), Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Australia. An early concept version was exhibited in London's Docklands by Siemens during The Crystal exhibition in October 2013 (RE211). However, instead of accepting Siemens' off-the-peg suggested concept, produced by Siemens to capture the imagination, TfL wanted to take control at the initial design stage. It wanted to develop an iconic concept acknowledging London's transport heritage, much like it had with the New Routemaster buses, built between 2011 and 2017. The resulting project was referred to as The New Tube for London (NTfL).



Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) of the interior of the 24 TS based upon the specification produced by PriestmanGoode. Siemens Mobility

Turning to design consultant PriestmanGoode, TfL produced an initial internal and external concept, that could be incorporated into the tender process (RE223). This concept used a palette of colours and finishes that reflected London Underground branding and heritage. It also incorporated industrial designs and new features, such as walk-through cars and new technologies, such as LED lighting.

The smaller square windows were an acknowledgement of a successful and iconic past train design: "We wanted to design something that is very much part of the London Underground design family. The 1938 Tube Stock had a warmth to it and a series of very distinct features. The challenge is to create something that celebrates the great history of transport design in London while acting as a beacon of innovative 21st century public transport," said Paul Priestman: former chair of PriestmanGoode.

TESTING

Despite the challenges of Covid-19 lockdowns, both Siemens Mobility and TfL have spent the past four years developing the new 24 TS to TfL specifications. This means that Siemens is not planning for a repeat of the first Victoria Line 09 TS trains that were built by Bombardier which were scrapped due to the significant number of modifications needed, making it more cost efficient to manufacture replacement trains.

With the first train at Wegberg-Wildenrath comprehensive testing can be undertaken prior to building of the production units. This is focusing upon dynamic tests to confirm acceleration and braking capability, with related vibration and noise tests also undertaken at the same time. With the Siemens contract with TfL, all aspects of train performance are expected to be an improvement over existing rolling stock.

Meanwhile another three-car unit has been undergoing environmental testing in a climate chamber, simulating extreme weather types. These three cars represent each of the DM, IM

and KM type cars. Examples of these climate tests include diverse 55°C temperature fluctuations from -15°C to +40°C. There are also tests undertaken to understand the damage that might be caused by solar energy loads of 600W/m² as well as ice and high wind speeds of up to 100kph. Monitors are being used to understand what passengers would experience in these extreme conditions, measuring humidity and temperatures in the carriages.

While Siemens can undertake basic design tests now to confirm the envelope and capabilities of the train, the stock will need to be sent to London Underground. This will allow it to be tested in the real-world environment, interacting with signalling systems and line infrastructure. The first unit is due to be delivered to LU ready for testing next summer.

Full production of the new 24 TS trains is already underway in Vienna. The current plan is for the second half of the order to be built in Goole, East Yorkshire, with manufacturing starting in March 2024. Yet, there may be an opportunity to flex and change the current 50/50 plan. It is Siemens' ambition to construct a higher proportion of the trains in the UK, based on being able to deliver to the contract timescales. Once UK manufacturing has started at Goole, initial testing is expected to take place at Network Rail's Rail Innovation & Development Centre at Melton, prior to being transferred to London.

"Although we are still in the early stage of testing, we are learning a lot about this test train and its future performance," said Sambit Banerjee, joint CEO for Siemens Mobility UKI.

GOOLE MANUFACTURING SITE DEVELOPMENTS

Both TfL and Siemens have an understanding that there will be further orders for Bakerloo, Central and Waterloo & City Line trains, all of which are due to be built once the production of Piccadilly Line 24 TS units has been completed.

This means production of 'Inspiro London' trains could continue well into



The three-car pre-production unit example, consisting of DM-IM-KM cars at the Siemens climate chamber. Siemens Mobility

the 2030s. However, there is one issue in the way. "The most important thing now is that we are making the case to government for the vital long-term capital investment we need to continue with improvements like this, which support jobs and economic growth. But such vital improvements will not be possible without continued capital investment from the government from April 2024," says Stuart Harvey, TfL chief capital officer.

The comment reveals both TfL's thinking and concern. Using Alstom as an example, the production line at Litchurch Lane could close shortly, affecting up to 1300 jobs (see *Headline News*) unless further orders are forthcoming. This is despite a need for additional Elizabeth Line trains to be built to support passenger demand between Old Oak Common and London, given the government's decision to terminate HS2 services at the West London station for the foreseeable future.

When might the cut-off date be for Siemens be, so it can look towards other manufacturing income streams to justify its investment in a new facility in the UK?

Siemens has invested more than £200 million in the rail village site at Goole. This investment represents 700

skilled roles, an additional 1700 in the supply chain and 250 during the actual construction process. During November, work on an additional materials and logistics warehouse began at the Rail Village serving the north of England and Scotland. Another recently opened at Kettering, in the East Midlands, to serve the south, with another 40 jobs created. These warehouses will store components for the manufacturing process, with the aim of reducing transportation costs. This is also pitched by Siemens as also being an opportunity to reduce its carbon emissions. The Goole warehouse site is due to be completed next Summer.

A Siemens press release quotes the Conservative MP for the neighbouring Haltemprice and Howden constituency David Davies, as saying: "It is fantastic to see Siemens going from strength to strength. The decision to make further investment in Goole Rail Village and open another facility here is a massive vote of confidence in the local economy and workforce."

Would the government happily risk Siemens' investment by failing to provide capital funding as agreed during the latter TfL bailouts, sacrificing the new jobs created, for political ends to frustrate a London Mayor of a different political persuasion?

The London Mayoral elections are taking place in May. Meanwhile, following the autumn financial statement in late-November, some political commentators have speculated on a late spring general election, with the two perhaps taking place at the same time. This is just when the final sections of the manufacturing facility at Goole will be nearing the end of its final fitting out phase.

If, perhaps due to a lack of central government funding, no follow-on orders for trains for other Underground lines was forthcoming, Siemens would instead turn to construct rolling stock for existing orders, while also bidding to build other units, for example for South East Trains. Any new order for trains in the UK will be built at Goole; after all, the investment being made in the Google factory by Siemens is part of a global investment strategy, rather than being based solely on orders coming from TfL. 



The CGI concept which was presented in Docklands to generate interest during The Crystal exhibition in October 2013. Siemens Mobility

Nova 3s near the end

Richard Clinnick presents a selection of images of TransPennine Express's Nova 3s during their final few weeks of operation.

TRANSPENNINE Express was due to remove the Class 68-hauled Mk.5A Nova 3 sets from traffic as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

Although they will remain on lease to TPE until May (RE331), the plan is for the operator to store the CAF-built stock while the '68s' will be returned to Direct Rail Services. Two sets were found to have cracks, TP01 and TP05, and the former has moved to Wolverton Works for modifications.

Four Class 68s had also already returned to DRS duties by the start of November, Nos. 68019/020/022/031,

although they were still available to TPE if required. This left Nos. 68021/023-030/032 for the final few weeks.

There was also a spare pair of locomotives, Nos. 68033/034, which had been modified to operate the Mk.5A stock, as per their classmates, but these have long since returned to DRS.

Despite the removal of the Nova 3 sets from service, which TPE says is due to reliability, cost and availability of staff across the business, TPE is also pressing ahead with plans to reduce its timetable from December

following a decision it says was taken to try and improve reliability. There will be fewer off-peak services between Manchester and Leeds via Huddersfield, although the operator has admitted that should there be demand then services could be reintroduced ahead of a much larger timetable recast in December 2024.

As for the 66 Mk.5As, their future is undecided, although various industry speculation suggests Chiltern Railways could be a home for some of the fleet, with CrossCountry also mentioned as a possible destination. [E](#)



1

3



2



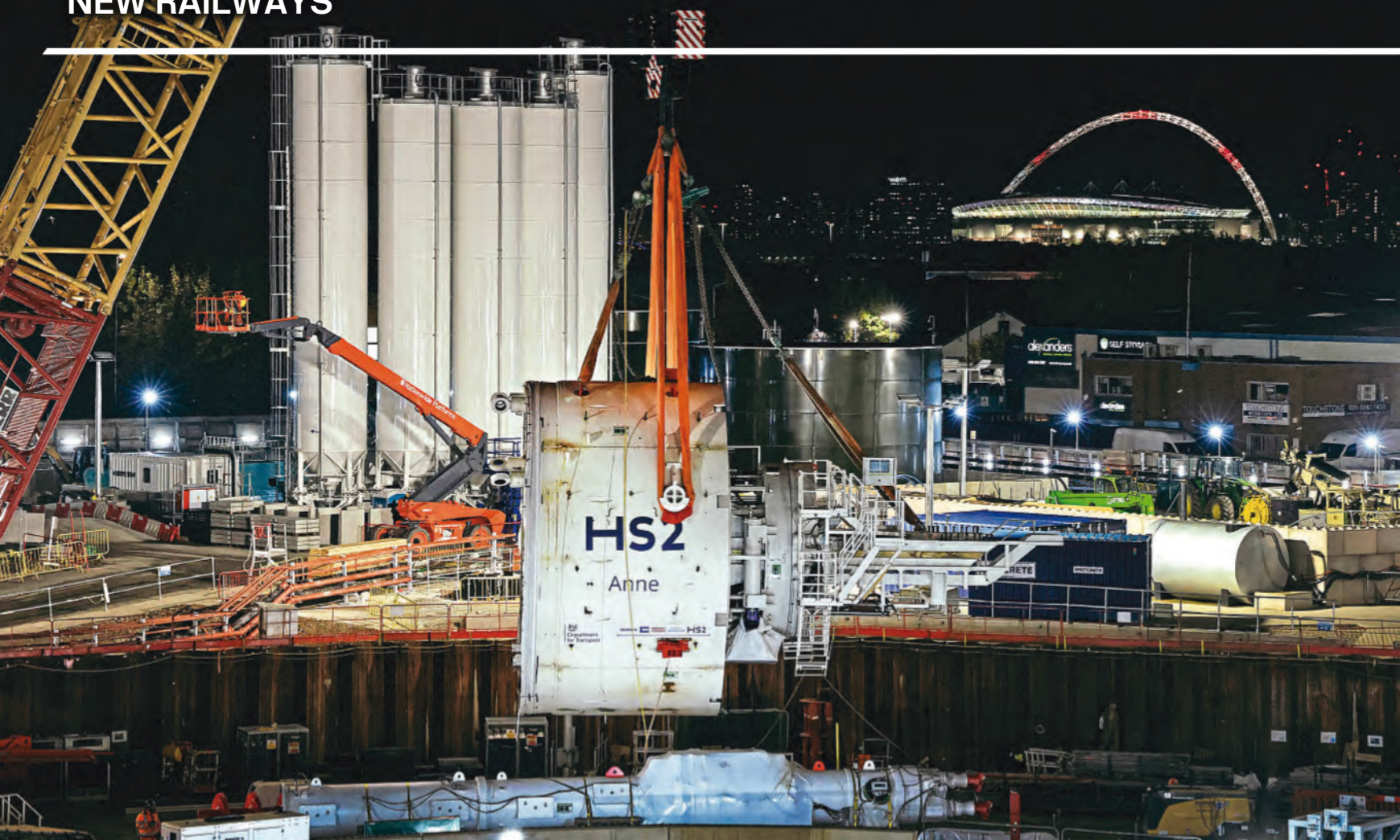
1: TransPennine Express No. 68025 *Superb* waits at Manchester Piccadilly with the 1U63 15.35 to Scarborough on November 27. Tony Winward

2: A sight soon to vanish; three Class 68-hauled TransPennine Express sets at Scarborough. From left to right, on November 8, are Nos. 68029 *Destroyer* (coupled to set TP12), 12810 (with 68021 *Tireless* out of view) and 12809 (with 68023 *Achilles* out of view). Tony Winward

3: TransPennine Express No. 68028 *Lord President* approaches Kirkham Abbey, in the Derwent Valley, near Malton on November 16, with the 1U40 09.48 Scarborough-York. CJ Rich

4: On November 13, TransPennine Express No. 68024 *Centaur* prepares to haul the 1U63 15.35 Manchester Piccadilly-Scarborough away from York. Chris Gee





Despite the cancellation of Phase 2 north of Birmingham, work continues at 350 active sites on Phase 1. On November 17, tunnel boring machine Anne is lowered into the Victoria Road crossover box, with the illuminated Wembley Arch in the background. HS2 Ltd.

HS2: what now according to the rail minister

Weeks after HS2 north of Birmingham was cancelled, rail minister Huw Merriman provided parliament with an update on the remaining sections of the new railway. **Richard Clinnick** reports.

ON November 15, Rail Minister and HS2 Minister Huw Merriman delivered his six-month update on High Speed 2. Although this is a twice-yearly event anyway, this came little more than a month after the Government axed the planned new railway north of Birmingham (RE330) to much criticism.

Speaking in the House of Commons on November 15, Mr Merriman once again claimed Network North, which Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced would 'replace' the HS2 investment, would direct spending away from the future phases of HS2 towards local and regional transport schemes. This is despite that money having never actually been allocated to the new railway. The Government suggests that this will be £36 billion, and that the railway will benefit from the investment, however, when it was announced the document contained projects that were not costed, or which had already been built!

Mr Merriman said: "We will complete Phase 1 of HS2 between London and

the West Midlands. There will be two branches: one to central Birmingham, and one to Handsacre, near Lichfield, meaning passengers will be able to travel on HS2 trains through to Manchester, Liverpool and Scotland, joining the West Coast Main Line for the rest of their journeys. No decisions have been made on the train service that will run when HS2 is operational."

He once again stated that the Network North command paper states that the Government's view is that the best interests of the country are not served by progressing with further phases of the project, in the face of diminishing relative benefits and more pressing transport priorities elsewhere."

The cancellation does affect Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), some of which was anticipated to use the same sections as HS2 Phase 2b Western Leg. Now, the Government says it will "take time to consider next steps for the Phase 2b legislation that has been reintroduced into parliament and whether there is a

way to repurpose that to deliver NPR." He said that a further £12bn (2023 prices), which is additional to the £36bn 'saved', has been earmarked to improve connections between Manchester and Liverpool. This, he said, would allow the delivery of NPR as previously planned to include high-speed lines.

Euston station is also being scaled back and a new development-led approach is being adopted. According to Merriman, this will deliver a station "works, is affordable and can be open and running trains as soon as possible. We will not provide design features we do not need and will instead deliver a six-platform station which can accommodate the trains we will run to Birmingham and onwards and which best supports regeneration of the local area. In this way we will attract private funding and unlock the wider land development opportunities the new station offers, while radically reducing its costs to the taxpayer."

As for Phase 1, which is the section between London and Birmingham, he

said that its scope will be reviewed to guarantee delivery of only that which is required for updating the reduced programme, and he said that delivery remains on track for the initial services between Old Oak Common and Birmingham Curzon Street for the window between 2029 and 2033.

Initial plans suggest eight trains per hour on HS2 between the capital, Birmingham and the north west, and work is now under way on creating an updated business case for the revised programme.

Mr Merriman said: "This will update the strategic case for HS2 in light of Network North and provide a full economic assessment following decisions being made on the HS2 train services running to and from Euston. These will be made in due course, taking advice from West Coast partnership development, High Speed 2 Limited (HS2 Ltd) and Network Rail, and will be subject to consultation. An updated Phase 1 business case will be published in due course."

PROGRAMME UPDATE

As for the actual railway being built, Mr Merriman confirmed that the initial section will run between Old Oak Common and Curzon Street and will open between 2029 and 2033. There is now no official date for the extension to Euston, and he said that an update on that 'range' will be provided 'in due course'.

He mentioned cost, saying that HS2 Ltd's Board has advised that its estimate at completion (EAC) for Phase 1 is £49bn to £57bn based on 2019 prices. The scope of this, he said, was the route from Euston to Birmingham and works north to Fradley and the Handsacre Junction. "This is a very significant upwards revision compared with HS2 Ltd's previous projections and is a wide range in comparison to the scope of the remaining work," he warned.

HS2 Ltd had advised him, he claimed, that the increases in cost were due to design performance, delivery productivity, consenting delays, and a difficult operating environment with Covid-19 and the Ukraine War affecting the supply chain. In particular, the costs of the main civils work has increased in cost, rising from £21.8bn to £23.4bn (again, in 2019 prices).

He also claimed that Government "disagrees with the £49 billion to £57 billion figure for two reasons. First, it was drawn up by HS2 Ltd before it was notified of the decision to cancel Phase 2. It reflects HS2 Ltd's understanding of the project in September that it would be proceeding to Manchester and the East Midlands, and with more expansive plans for Euston. The scope and costs of Phase 1 will now be reassessed following the decision not to proceed beyond the Midlands, including the decision to adopt a development-led approach to Euston."

Secondly, he said that the Department for Transport (DfT) makes different assumptions on how much cost risk remains addressable, including different assessments of how future risks could be actively mitigated, how revised incentives could change the trajectory on the costs of completing the civils and systems work and the size and composition of HS2 Ltd's own operating costs. DfT officials have, instead, estimated a provisional range of £45bn to £54bn based on the same data used by HS2 Ltd, but using different assumptions on how much remaining cost risk remains addressable.

HS2 Ltd executive chair Sir Jon Thompson has been asked to update the company's estimate to consider the revised scope of Phase 1 and the cancellation of the wider scheme. This will reflect the reduced scope and the costs of any changes. He must also explain and provide evidence as to why the upwards revisions have been so significant, and their causes. He must also agree an EAC with Government and provide an action plan on how HS2 Ltd will deliver the revised scope at the lowest reasonable cost, detailing



Initially HS2 trains will terminate at Old Oak Common, with connections into London available via the Elizabeth Line. This is a view of the site looking towards the Great Western Main Line and Hitachi's North Pole depot. HS2 Ltd.

actions needed to support HS2 Ltd and its supply chain from Government. Mr Merriman said he would update parliament once the revised estimate new cost targets have been provided. These will be stated in both 2019 values and 2023 values to show the cost in current terms and to reflect high inflation.

DELIVERY

Construction of Phase 1 has been under way for three years with 350 active construction sites. Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) *Florence* and *Cecilia* have successfully reached the Little Missenden ventilation shaft, meaning that more than three-quarters of their 10-mile drive beneath the Chilterns is now complete. Two more TBMs, *Sushila* and *Caroline*, are creating the first section of tunnel that will make up the 8.4-mile Northolt Tunnels between West Ruislip and Old Oak Common, and have completed the first mile of twin-bored tunnel in the capital. Since their launch in November 2022, the 2000-tonne TBMs have each installed over 847 tunnel rings, made up of 5929 concrete segments in total.

Overall, half the TBMs for the route have launched, one-in-six tunnel journeys, comprising more than 14 miles of new tunnels, have been completed and 16,897 rings have been installed.

Stage 1 of the design and build contract for Birmingham Curzon Street was awarded to Mace Dragados joint venture in May 2021, and an update on Stage 2 is expected soon.

Mr Merriman said that at Old Oak Common the excavation of the underground box that will house the HS2 station platforms is now over 50% complete. In line with the programme, groundworks for the conventional rail station which will accommodate eight platforms on the realigned Great Western Main Line and relief lines, commenced in October 2022.

A contract between HS2 Ltd and Network Rail has been confirmed for the delivery of the rail systems element of the GWML platforms.

"The DfT and HS2 Ltd have started working to bring the work on Phase 2a to a stop in a safe and efficient way, whilst ensuring value for money," he said. "There are a wide range of tasks, including wrapping up contracts and not progressing the design and delivery partner and Main Works Civil framework contracts. Land will be remediated where early/enabling works had commenced and where new habitats have been completed, a suitable long term management plan will be established to support our no net loss of biodiversity commitment."

He also explained that despite the cancellation of the HS2 Crewe-Manchester scheme, a Hybrid Bill Select Committee continued work up until the cancellation was announced, however the committee has now adjourned pending further instruction. Nevertheless, the Bill has carried over into the next parliamentary session and its future is being considered as part of the investigations into how NPR can be delivered.

BENEFITS

Despite the cancellation of the railway north of Birmingham, the Government claims that there are still benefits to be gained from the delivery of Phase 1.

Mr Merriman said: "HS2 between London and Birmingham will continue to act as a catalyst for local investment and regeneration, unlocking growth around new and existing station sites and in the wider area. Local places are best placed to develop strategies and delivery plans aimed at making the most of the arrival of HS2."

"DfT and HS2 Ltd are working closely with partners across both central and local government to ensure places along the HS2 route take

full advantage of the opportunities for economic growth, investment, regeneration and placemaking."

Regarding Euston, he said that lessons will be taken from Battersea Power Station and Nine Elms where, he says, more than £9bn of private sector investment was secured.

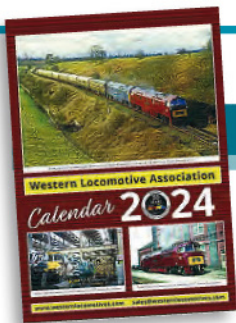
Also, despite cancelling HS2 north of Birmingham and planning to spend billions on roads, Mr Merriman spoke of the green benefit of the new railway. He says that HS2 Ltd continues to: "make progress in its ambition of reducing the carbon emissions associated with building the railway. The company exceeded its carbon reduction target for 2022 to 2023."

"The programme remains committed to supporting projects that create and restore woodland along the HS2 route. The HS2 woodland fund was relaunched in June, with £3.25 million available to support landowners near the route create new native broadleaved woodlands and restore existing ancient woodland sites."

He mentioned that the safeguarding of land for Phase 2a will be "lifted within weeks", meaning that it can be redeveloped, while Phase 2b safeguarding will be amended for next summer considering any requirement for NPR.

Work will now continue the cost effective delivery of Phase 1, said Mr Merriman, while the DfT has begun developing a revised business case for the revised scheme. Regarding the cancelled eastern leg, a study is to be conducted to consider connectivity in the Midlands and connecting areas, he said.

When, and if, the entire HS2 Phase 1 opens remains to be seen. Sources have questioned the connectivity on offer at Old Oak Common and the impact it could have on the GWML but, for now, all eyes will be on revised cost estimates and whether or not Euston station happens.



Western Locomotive Association 50 Years of Preservation 2024 Calendars

Published by the Western Locomotive Association
westernlocomotives.com
 Price £12.00 (plus P&P) – desktop calendar, £14.00 (plus P&P) wall calendar

THE Western Locomotive Association is one of our longest-established preservation groups, with responsibility for D1013 *Western Ranger*, D1048 *Western Lady* and D1062 *Western Courier* on the Severn Valley Railway. Each year, the WLA produces two calendars, with a large format A3 wall calendar and a desktop calendar.

The wall calendar is produced on good quality paper and this year depicts

colour views of both D1013 and D1062 both during their working lives on BR and in preservation, with the top half of the page devoted to the picture, while below the calendar gives plenty of room to write appointments and important occasions on the page. The wall calendar is priced at £14.00, which is good value for money.

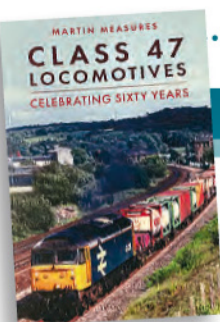
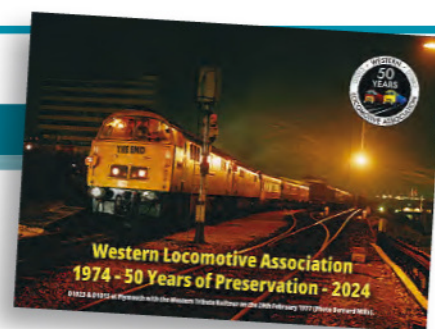
Why is D1048 not featured in the pages of the wall calendar? Well, this is

simply because the locomotive has only recently been gifted to the WLA by its previous owners, so was not part of the WLA collection at the time the calendar was being prepared.

The desktop calendar features BR-era photographs of the Westerns – and one preservation era image of D1062 – in mainly night images. Other locomotives featured in the desktop calendar are D1013, D1023, D1033, D1041, D1053,

D1054 D1056 D1065 D1068 D1070 D1071 and D1072. While the quality of some of the pictures isn't the same as those of the digital age, they are atmospheric.

As with the 125 Group calendar, anyone purchasing the WLA's calendars are supporting the efforts of the preservationists who maintain and operate these classic Western Region locomotives. Recommended. **(AMC)**



Class 47 locomotives – celebrating sixty years

Published by Amberley Publishing
www.amberley-books.com
 ISBN: 9781398117938
 Price: £15.99

THIS is an excellent book previously unseen photographs, not just from the author but from those who have faithfully followed Class 47s throughout their careers.

The 128-page book is a standard Amberley design with two images per page. It features some wonderful shots of the locomotives in action in

their formative years, with all but a handful in colour too. The quality of the reproduction is superb, and the captions are mostly incredibly detailed, with information about not just the image, but the career of the '47' in the shot too.

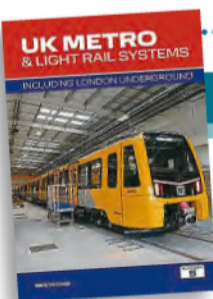
As is to be expected from a class with 512 locomotives and a lifespan of more than 60 years, a wide array of

locations and duties are illustrated.

While the BR blue era is probably the most represented part of the '47' story in this book, there is also ample space provided for the plethora of liveries that have appeared on the locomotives since Privatisation.

Preserved Class 47s are also featured in the book which, while it

doesn't have chapters, is presented in chronological order, complete with a shot of GB Railfreight No. 47749 *City of Truro* hauling South Western Railway No. 701048 to Long Marston for storage on April 6, 2023. This book is a must-have for fans of '47s' or indeed those who enjoy classic diesel locomotive. **(RC)**.



UK Metro & Light Rail Systems

Published by Platform 5
www.platform5.com
 ISBN: 9781915984043
 Price: £21.95

THIS is the third edition of this very useful publication. For many years Britain's light rail systems appeared in Platform 5 combined volumes, but by publishing this separate book a lot more information can be provided.

The layout is as per Platform 5 combined volumes when it comes to the rolling stock. The London Underground is featured in this publication and there is a brief introduction regarding travel and rules of photography for those wishing to visit the network. Maps are provided and the LU system is split into the individual routes with facts and figures

of the individual lines. Non-passenger carrying LU vehicles are included, as are the sets converted by Vivarail. Preserved former LU vehicles are also included.

Away from the capital, the other major light rail systems are all featured, complete with maps and details of the systems.

All the sections are supported by colour photography, and this book is perfect for those who wish to visit these various systems either for spotting, photography or haulage. **(RC)**.



Railfreight Archive DVD

Produced by Locomaster Profiles
www.locomaster.co.uk
 Price: £19.95

IT IS often said that you don't know what you've got until it's gone. Times change and I personally don't subscribe to the view that the railway of the present day is boring, because that's simply not true – it's different now, but there's still plenty to see if you go out and look for it.

However, it's also nice to be able to look back at the railway and the trains that operated on it on occasions, and this DVD is the perfect nostalgia kick for anyone who has an interest in the Railfreight era of British Rail during the 1980s.

Railfreight Archive has been released by Locomaster Profiles and features almost two hours of classic British Rail locomotives working a wide variety of freight services, featuring many classes of locomotive that have long since been consigned to the

history books, with quite a few of the freight workings now also very much a thing of the past.

The DVD is split into eight distinct sections, these being aggregates; coal; flyash, sand & cement; Freightliners & Binliners, metals & minerals' papers and parcels; tank traffic and, finally, Speedlink.

The quality of the filming is up to the standard expected of Locomaster Profiles and the informative commentary is provided by David Maxey, giving additional information about the workings being viewed and the locomotives and wagons featured.

Overall, this was a very enjoyable DVD which should appeal to any enthusiasts who remember the wide variety of freight traffic carried on the railway. And there isn't a Class 66 in sight! Recommended. **(AMC)**



Got something to review?

Send any books, DVDs or other items to the editor at:
 Rail Express, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6JR



Aerial Images 2024 Railway Calendar

Published by Tom McAtee
Email tom.mcatee@aol.co.uk
Price: £14.99

THE name of Tom McAtee should be familiar to regular readers of *Rail Express* and the talented photographer has published his third annual calendar under the 'Aerial Images' banner, with 2024's featuring a good selection of diesel – and one electric – locomotives in a variety of attractive settings, both on the main line and in preservation on heritage railways.

The cover of the calendar features DB Cargo's No. 66143 passing through Ribbleshead station on the Settle & Carlisle

line in a wintry scene, while each of the month pages feature a high quality image depicting locomotive-hauled trains, with Classes 37, '43', '50', '55', '56', '60', '66', '67', '68' and '86' featured on the pages. As a proficient drone photographer, some of the images have been taken using a drone, whereas the others have been taken from closer to the lineside using a photographic telescopic pole for the aerial theme of the calendar.

There isn't one of the pictures selected that doesn't deserve to be

included and it demonstrates Tom's prolific presence at the lineside that most of the images were taken over the past two years.

Priced at £14.99, inclusive of postage and packing, the calendar is sent out in a clear cellophane wrapper and is posted in a sturdy cardboard box to protect it in transit. Overall, this is another excellent calendar from Tom McAtee, which will look good on any enthusiast's wall throughout 2024. (AMC)



Britain's railways from the air

Published by Amberley Publishing
www.amberley-books.com
ISBN: 9781398108462
Price: £17.99

DRONE photography has become increasingly popular, and this book is a superb collection of such work from across the country.

This 128-page publication is very different from most Amberley books in that it features one image per page. The reproduction is superb, and all the images have so much detail it's easy to get lost studying the pictures, such is the crispness of the photography.

The book flies from the Scottish

Highlands to Cornwall, from marshalling yards to routes hugging the cliffs and beaches. Lineside industries, all manners of railway infrastructure such as viaducts and swing bridges are included, as are depots and terminals.

Freight and infrastructure trains are included, alongside passenger trains, and it's not just locomotives that feature throughout the publication, showing that there is so much more to see on the railway.

The only downside to what is a thoroughly excellent book are that the captions are sparse in terms of detail and at least a couple have the wrong locomotive identities, and while the latter doesn't detract a huge amount from the quality of the publication, more information regarding the trains recorded in the image wouldn't have hurt. But, for the quality of the imagery alone, this book is worth adding to your collection. (RC).



125 Group 2024 Calendar

www.125group.org.uk
Price: £12.00

THE 125 Group has achieved so many things over the past few years, with the preservation of no fewer than five Class 43 high speed train power cars, a large fleet of Mk.3 High Speed Train trailers and locomotive-hauled coaches and is celebrating the operation of its first main line charter using its own power cars and coaches.

But with their impressive fleet growth comes some heavy costs to keep their power cars and coaches in serviceable condition, and the money

generated from sales stock is a useful source of income for the leading HST preservationists.

Always a popular release by the 125 Group is their annual calendar and the 2024 publication is now available for a very reasonable £12.00. The calendar is A4-sized and produced in a landscape format, with each month page featuring a single image, with a column for the dates and appointments to the right. All the images in the 2024 calendar feature pictures of HSTs at

work on the main line throughout their long working lives, with just one month (August) featuring the 125 Group's preserved Midland Mainline-liveried 43159 *Rio Warrior* in action on the Midland Railway Butterley.

The caption information can be found at the back of the calendar to avoid cluttering up the main pages and it has been printed onto good quality card. Overall, it is a very good quality calendar that celebrates the legacy of the iconic HST fleet. (AMC)

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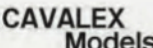
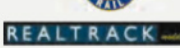
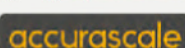
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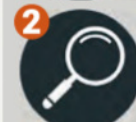
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