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Graham Farish Class 158 reviewed
- Early Accurascale Class 37/0
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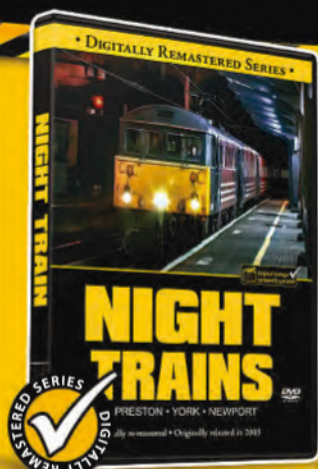
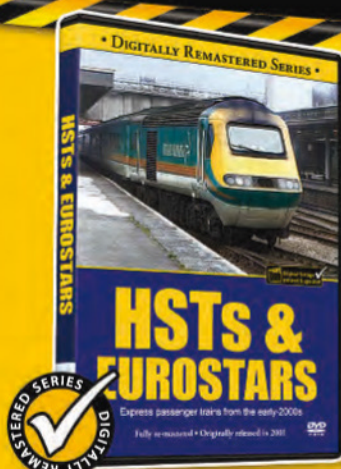
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Durham Coast and Middlesbrough: Sunderland to Hartlepool and Stockton is just under 30-miles in distance and along this railway are five freight terminals. Following years of decline, all five now see semi-regular flows with DB 66s working steel and scrap trains to Sunderland docks; Colas 70s working cement to Seaham; DRS 68s working flasks to Seaton Nook; DB 66s with steel trains to Hartlepool Pipe Mill and Colas 56s and 70s working oil trains to the recently reopened Haverton Hill, plus GB 60s on Biomass trains passing along the main line. All five terminals are featured. Plus: A look at freight around Middlesbrough and South Bank with the Class 08 and the Potash trains from Tees Dock to Boulby plus a feature on the (almost) freight-only lines at Northallerton where most freight to/from this area joins and leaves the ECML.

Peak Forest 20s and 60s: Our cameras return to this very popular Freightmaster hotspot, but this time in search of two specific loco classes: 20s and 60s. Both were found, working side by side, with one of the last DB Class 60 flows in the country and a weekly DCR 60. We filmed a typical day with no less than TEN different loco liveries including a BR Green Class 47!

North Wales Freight: North Wales has also seen an increase in freight in the past few years with the regular steel trains to Dee Marsh now hauled by GB 66s, joined by a regular flow of cement to the reopened Penyffordd terminal and along the coast, GB 66s working slate trains from Llandudno Junction and Colas 70s with stone trains from Penmaenmawr.

East Midlands Gateway: The freight-only East Midlands Gateway branch, off the freight-only Stenson branch has featured before on this series. We return with a look at moves to/from the container terminal. Various trains and light engine moves are featured.

56098: One of the freight highlights of 2023 has been the use of Large Logo 'Tinsley' 56098 on the biomass trains from Liverpool docks. Often described as a 'draw-back' loco or a 'banking' loco, it's neither - as the 56 usually hauls the train from the docks to Tuebrook sidings with the train loco banking on the rear. We tracked down this beast and filmed it on full power scream up the gradient! A large logo Grid hauling Biomass wagons in the year 2023 - wow!

Plus: Class 69 weedkilling trains; 69s and 73s on Engineers trains, RHTT action from autumn 2023 and much more.

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Actual footage



56096 at Haverton Hill



20s and 60s at Peak Forest



08410 at Tees Dock



Hawarden Viaduct



56098 on Biomass

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On a murky December 2, 2023, GB Railfreight No. 66709 *Sorrento* powers the 4M23 10.36 Felixstowe North-Hams Hall intermodal through Ketton. Ben Butteriss



Standing outside York Holgate Works on December 16, 2023, are Direct Rail Services Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower*, 37419 *Driver Tony Kay 1974-2019* and 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob*. Chris Gee

RAIL EXPRESS

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MODELLING

Hornby's 2024 catalogue features no new models but plenty of useful releases for modellers nevertheless, Graham Farish's all-new 'N' gauge Class 158 is reviewed, PC009 powder tank wagons from Heljan and Realism Defined are assessed, Accurascale's early Class 37/0 is put under the microscope while Revolution Trains' FNA-D has been released. Hornby's TXS sound system for a Class 47 is put to the test.



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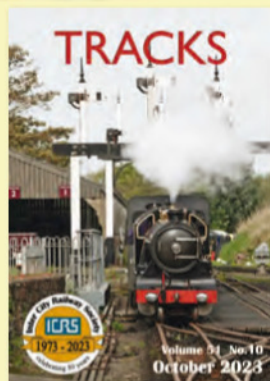


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Contents of Combine

All numbers as Pocket Book but includes more detail - class specs, owners, operators & liveries

RAIL EXPRESS

With a dusting of snow on the surrounding fields and hills, Northern No. 158753 passes Greengates on November 30, 2023, with the 1E65 13.36 Carlisle-Leeds.
John Longden







TPE ends Nova 3 operations

By Richard Clinnick

LITTLE more than four years after their high-profile launch, Mk.5A coaches have been removed from passenger traffic by TransPennine Express.

The 13 rakes of five coaches, hauled by Class 68s, have been removed from traffic as TPE seeks to improve the reliability of its services (RE331).

December 9, was the final day of locomotive-hauled services, with No. 68030 *Black Douglas* rostered to haul set TP06 (Nos. 11506, 12716-718, 12806) on the final duties (see panel). As has been the case throughout their TPE career, more sets should have been in traffic that day, but instead their duties were covered by Class 185s.

The coaches will remain leased by TPE until May, at a cost of £19 million (RE331). Fourteen Class 68s were sub-leased from Direct Rail Services (Nos. 68019-032) with that deal also due to expire in May. A further two locomotives, Nos. 68033/034, were modified to operate with the Mk.5As but were only ever planned to be used if the main fleet was unavailable.

Four locomotives returned to DRS during the summer, Nos. 68019/020/022/031, followed by three on December 13, Nos. 68023/029/032, however these will still be used by TPE until the end of the contract as it will need at least four locomotives for stock moves because it remains responsible for Mk.5As until the end of the lease. The coaches are expected to be stored at various locations including Crewe South Yard and Gascoigne Wood, but will move between locations in order to keep them operational ahead

of any transfer to a new operator. On December 15, sets TP02/05 were moved to Gascoigne Wood from Scarborough by Nos. 68025 *Superb* and 68030 *Black Douglas*. January 4, saw TP03 moved to Long Marston for storage, with No. 68032 *Destroyer* also moving to the site.

The coaches, built by CAF in Spain in 2017-2018, are yet to find a new home. Owned by Beacon Rail, they have been linked with several operators including Chiltern Railways and CrossCountry. TPE sources have told *Rail Express* that in the immediate future, the Mk.5As will be moved to Long Marston for storage.

Four sets had been affected by cracks (TP01/05) while two more sets, TP06/TP11 had begun to show signs of developing cracks. While TP06 remained in traffic, TP01 is currently at Wolverton Works undergoing modifications.

In a media briefing in Manchester on October 17, 2023, TPE explained that by removing around 20 trains per day from the planned timetable, it believes it will improve reliability within the overall fleet and help reintroduce passenger confidence. The cut in services includes reducing the number of off-peak trains across the northern Pennines route via Huddersfield. TPE claims it has also identified its busiest trains to ensure that short-formed '185s' will be kept away from them. Class 802s are now also serving Scarborough, with an off-peak shuttle running between York and the coast. On December 11, the first weekday of such operations, No. 802211 was employed on these duties. 

■ Feature, pages 88-91.



Enthusiasts swarm to get pictures of TransPennine Express No. 68030 *Black Douglas* at Manchester Piccadilly on December 9, 2023, as it waits to depart with the 1U47 11.35 to Scarborough, the final Class 68-powered train from the north west.

Tony Winward

FINAL TPE CLASS 68 DIAGRAM

Headcode	Train
1U23	05.35 Manchester Piccadilly-Scarborough
1U36	08.45 Scarborough-Manchester Piccadilly
1U47	11.35 Manchester Piccadilly-Scarborough
1U72	17.48 Scarborough-Leeds (via Castleford)
1U75	19.34 Leeds-Scarborough (via Micklefield)
1U88	21.48 Scarborough-York
1U87	23.03 York-Scarborough

No decision on future of '37s' - DRS

THE future of five Direct Rail Services Class 37 used on railhead treatment trains (RHTT) has yet to be determined, the operator has told *Rail Express*.

DRS supplied Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower*, 37419 *Driver Tony Kay 1974-2019*, 37422 *Victorious*, 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* and 37716 for RHTT duties based at York Holgate Works during the autumn. Following the end of those duties on December 15, five of the Type 3s were used for a charity photoshoot (see pages 84-86) before four of them (Nos. 37419/422/425, 37716) returned to Crewe Gresty Bridge on December 21.

A DRS spokesman told RE on December 21: "We are currently evaluating our traction options, which will include the Class 37s, as we look to decarbonise and modernise our locomotive fleet."

DRS recently sold five Class 37s (see *Power By The Hour*), with one, No. 37401 *Mary Queen of Scots*, having been used on RHTT duties early in the autumn period. A sixth '37', No. 37424 *Vulcan Avro XH558*, was also put up for sale but was not sold and remains stored at Carlisle Kingmoor.

Class 37s has been used by DRS since the late-1990s, when it first acquired '37/6s' from European Passenger Services (EPS) to supplement its Class 20/3 fleet. In recent years the operator has looked to move



Direct Rail Services Nos. 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* and 37422 *Victorious* pass Heyrod, near Stalybridge, on December 21, 2023, hauling DRS Nos. 37716, 37419 *Driver Tony Kay 1974-2019* and 66425 *Nigel J. Kirchstein* as the 0205 11.36 York Works-Crewe. Andy Parkinson

away from heritage traction, disposing of its Class 20s, '47s', '57/0s' and all but four of its Class 57/3s.

The company had looked to sell its '37s' and rehire them in a deal proposed in 2022, however this didn't

come to fruition. DRS plans to decarbonise its fleet as best it can and told RE322 that this could see either the Class 66 or '68' fleet sent off-lease in the future. No decision has yet been made.

GB Railfreight '47' to be withdrawn as more '57s' enter traffic

GB Railfreight plans to remove No. 47739 from traffic early this year, once Class 57/3s enter traffic on rail services duties.

The '47/7' is one of three bought from Colas Railfreight by

GBRf and which has been employed on rail services duties ever since. It has recently undergone heavy maintenance at UK Rail Leasing's Loughborough facility, however GBRf sources have described the

locomotive to *Rail Express* as "tired" and it is expected to be retired from traffic soon.

Another GBRf locomotive due to be stood down from traffic as the '57/3s' enter traffic is No. 56081. The

BR blue Type 5 is one of two Class 56s still in operation with the freight operator, often used on stock moves, but these are due to be retired in the near future as more Class 57/3s and '69s' enter traffic.

'Castle' fleet shrinks, but continues Cornish duties

GREAT Western Railway 'Castle' High Speed Trains now no longer operate east of Exeter St Davids, following another cull in the fleet at the start of the December timetable.

Having originally planned to withdraw all 16 short-formed 2+4 'Castle' sets by December 2023 (RE321), GWR has instead retained four sets until at least December this year. However, these sets will operate predominantly in Cornwall, with one late evening arrival in Exeter. Class 800/802 Intercity Express Trains have replaced the HSTs on these duties.

The final service east of Exeter ran on December 9, with Nos. 43029 *Caldicot Castle* and 43187 *Cardiff Castle* and set GW02 forming the 2C89 19.14 Newport-Taunton. This had been due to start at Cardiff Central, but the outward journey was curtailed, meaning that the final HST departure from the Welsh capital was that morning's 2C67 08.00 to Penzance, formed of the same 'Castle' set.

On December 11, Nos. 43154 *Compton Castle* and 43198 *Driver Brian Cooper 15 June 1947-5 October 1999/Driver Stan Martin 25 June 1950-6 November 2004* (with GW08) formed the 2E26 18.15 Penzance-Exeter St Davids. This is the only HST service east of Plymouth and it returns empty to Laira upon arrival. 'Castles' are otherwise restricted to Plymouth-Penzance duties. There are no HSTs in use on Sundays.

This has meant a reduction in the fleet, with the latest withdrawals being Nos. 43027/029/094, 43122/153-155/162.

In an exclusive interview with *Rail Express* in November 2023 (RE332), GWR managing director Mark Hopwood explained: "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 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.

"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



What turned out to be the final High Speed Train waits to leave Cardiff Central on December 9, 2023, with No. 43187 *Cardiff Castle* leading the 2C67 08.00 Cardiff Central-Penzance. On the rear was No. 43029 *Caldicot Castle*. Dean Parsons

running. So, it would be sensible to maximise that."

Four rakes of Mk.3s are left in traffic. 'Castle' power cars currently stored are: 43027/029/088/094, 43122/153-155/160/162/194 at Laira. The coaches left in traffic are Nos. 48107-109/114/117-124/126/136/137/150, 49105/106/108/112/117.

Those recently withdrawn remain stored at Laira, while Nos. 48127-129/143-148, 49110/115/116 are at Ely and Nos. 48140-142, 49114 are at Eastern Rail Services site at Great Yarmouth.

Other 'Castle' vehicles have been disposed of with Nos. 43022, 43158/170 exported to Mexico and Nos. 43009/010/016/040, 43172/192, 48101/103/113/115/125/131-133, 49101/107/111 exported to Nigeria

(where they arrived on December 4, 2023). Additionally, Nos. 43005/041, 43171, 48116/134/135, 49113 have all been scrapped.

Rail Express understands that

while there are talks regarding the possibility of more HSTs being exported, none of those recently stood down by GWR are set to leave these shores, at least in the near future.

WEEKDAY CASTLE DUTIES

Headcode	Train
2C02	06.38 Plymouth-Penzance
2P08	08.50 Penzance-Plymouth
2C11	10.15 Plymouth-Penzance
2C65	10.42 Plymouth-Penzance
2C68	11.42 Plymouth-Penzance
2P15	12.50 Penzance-Plymouth
2P16	13.15 Penzance-Plymouth
2P17	13.50 Penzance-Plymouth
2C29	15.47 Plymouth-Penzance
2C31	15.55 Plymouth-Penzance
2E26	18.15 Penzance-Exeter St Davids
2P27	18.50 Penzance-Plymouth

Review finds in favour of ORR over West Coast Railways

By Richard Clinnick

WEST Coast Railways has said it will now work with the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) on finding a long-term solution regarding the use of hinged doors on its trains, after the High Court decided that the ORR's decision to revoke a certificate allowing WCR to use such stock was lawful.

WCR had challenged the ORR via the High Court on five grounds: the ORR misinterpreted the Railway Safety Regulations, the ORR unlawfully fettered its discretion, the ORR failed to take relevant considerations into account, the ORR's decision was a disproportionate interference with WCR's right to the protection of property under Article 1, Protocol 1, of the European Convention on Human Rights and that the ORR's decision was irrational at common law given its disproportionate and draconian effect.

However, the High Court found in favour of the ORR on all five grounds.

In a statement, the ORR said: "ORR welcomes the decision of the court. As the rail regulator, we are committed to ensuring the safety of all passengers. Other charter heritage operators which use the main line railway have made the necessary investment to install Central Door Locking on 'hinged door'

carriages and it remains open to West Coast Railways to do the same. Such converted carriages can both retain their heritage appeal yet also reflect minimum modern safety standards."

Asked by *Rail Express* if the current exemption for WCR, due to expire on February 29, will be extended, an ORR spokesperson said: "I'm afraid I have no further details regarding that."

WCR issued a statement on December 27, stating: "West Coast Railways recently challenged the UK rail regulator on its decision to revoke a certificate which enables us to operate our much-loved heritage trains on the main railway network.

"While on December 22, the court concluded that the decision was lawful, the judgment does not require us to change or suspend our services.

"We are now committed to working with the regulator to find a long-term solution, as we prepare for our 2024 programme as planned."

The ORR had granted WCR a 10-year exemption in 2012 so that it could fit central door locking (CDL) to its rolling stock. In evidence presented to the court, the ORR expected that this would cost £1,393,920 for a fleet of four 12-coach trains, while WCR said it had 130 vehicles that would need fitting, initially suggesting that the cost

would be at least £3m. This figure later rose to £7m including direct costs and lost revenues.

In its findings, the Court said that underlying the present claim is a disagreement between WCR and the ORR as to whether the WCR's arrangements for secondary door locking system on hinged doors provides an equivalent level of safety to CDL. The findings stated that WCR believed that continuing with existing 'high quality' control measures is sufficient and that these measures include ensuring that stewards operate doors and not passengers, that stewards and staff are suitably trained in the procedures, that there are warning signs about safety throughout the coaches along with passenger announcements, and that consistent application of door maintenance and schedule checks are undertaken.

WCR also suggested that there was a risk of retro-fitted CDL. The findings said that the ORR disagreed and that the regulator was of the view that WCR was unable to demonstrate that its controls of the risks from secondary door locking made it as safe as CDL.

The exemption granted by ORR allowed WCR to operate coaches on the national network not fitted with CDL until March 31, 2023, but through various subsequent extensions, this will

now expire on February 29.

Other operators had been granted exemptions by the ORR until November 29, 2024 (Vintage Trains), The Great Scottish and Western Railway Company Limited (February 7, 2025), Venice-Simplon Orient Express (February 21, 2025) and March 31, 2028, for Hastings Diesels Limited, Locomotive Services Ltd, North Yorkshire Moors Railway and Riviera Trains. These companies had all submitted fitment plans to the ORR.

The ORR provided the court with a witness statement from LS managing director Tony Bush who claimed that LS Group began retrofitting CDL to stock in 2017. That statement added that the company had had to pass the cost of fitting CDL to the stock to the passengers. The statement claimed WCR had been able to operate at a lower cost base putting it at a significant competitive advantage.

WCR highlighted that its 'Jacobite' operation on the Fort William-Mallaig line has 101,429 passenger journeys generating £4.7m in fares and £5.7m in turnover per annum. The average return ticket was £46.58 and the average profit is £1m per annum.

The ORR told the court that it is not averse to a transition timetable for fitting CDL because it does not want to end the heritage train services. 

IN BRIEF

NEW HM CHIEF INSPECTOR

RICHARD Hines will take over as HM chief inspector of railways this summer, replacing Ian Prosser who is retiring from the role.

NEW HOPE VALLEY LOOP

THE final track was installed between Bamford and Hathersage on the Hope Valley, where an 850-metre-long passing loop is being constructed to provide additional capacity for freight trains. Some 1323 sleepers and 3600 tonnes of ballast have been installed as part of the work with the loop due to be operational from the spring.

The loop is part of the Hope Valley Railway Upgrade which includes a new platform and accessible footbridge with lifts at Dore & Totley station, a new overbridge at Hathersage West, signalling improvements and platform extensions.

NTS APPOINTS NEW MD

NUCLEAR Transport Solutions, which operates Direct Rail Services, has appointed Gottfried Eymmer as its new managing director. He will be responsible for driving the rail business and expanding into new markets. His experience includes leadership roles at Deutsche Bahn, Rail Cargo Group and Etihad Rail.

New Glasgow Subway trains in traffic

STADLER-built Glasgow Subway trains entered traffic from December 11, following a lengthy testing period.

The trains, which were ordered in a £280 million deal in 2016, were built in Altenrhein, Switzerland, with 17 on order. They all feature the potential for driverless operation. The new trains are the same length as the three-car Metro-Cammell trains built in 1980 that they are replacing but are formed of four vehicles rather than three.

Strathclyde Passenger Transport project director Mark Toner said: "Our old fleet has performed beyond its expected lifespan, and it has become more and more challenging to maintain them and find parts for them as the years have gone on. This new fleet will take time to grow towards its full capability and reliability levels but now that the first two trains have been introduced, passengers will have the opportunity to see them intermittently and experience them for themselves as they run alongside our existing fleet over the coming months. More new trains will be also introduced during 2024."

SPT plans to introduce half-height platform screen doors to station platforms, however Mr Toner said that that was "some way off".



New Glasgow Subway set No. 302 in traffic on December 11, 2023, the first day the fleet carried passengers. SPT

Branch Line Society is going places!

THE Branch Line Society has several tours lined up from the top to the bottom of the country in the coming months. The season kicks off with:

March 7 'Thunderbirds are go'. This is a one-way positioning move, open to non-BLS members, which takes a GB Railfreight Class 57/3 with Mk.2 stock from Derby to Linlithgow with pick-ups from Derby, Chesterfield, Swinton, Castleford, York, Darlington and Newcastle. Various goods loops traversed en route. First Class non-dining £69.

March 8-10 'BWC 2'. This three-day tour round Scotland uses No. 37403 *Isle of Mull* and the Mk.2 stock. A GBRf '66' will assist around Glasgow on the third day. You must be a BLS member to participate.

The first day starts at Bo'ness with the destination of Fort William. Day two is Fort William-Oban-Fort William, while day three is Fort William-Mallaig-Wemyss Bay-Bo'ness. Passengers will need to book their own accommodation.

March 11 'International Rescue'. This is the return positioning move from Linlithgow back to Derby. Traction is a '57/3'. The fare is the same as the outward and non-BLS members are welcome.

May 25 'The Hanson Hanse'. Using Mk.1 stock with No. 50008 *Thunderer* and a Class 20, this charter originates at Eastleigh with Kings Lynn the destination, while numerous loops are covered during the day. Pick-ups at

Basingstoke, Reading, Slough, Ealing Broadway and London King's Cross. This will be open to non-BLS members; Standard fare is £129, First Class non-dining £189.

May 26 'The Millbrook Meander'. Fancy visiting Southampton terminals? A rare opportunity to enter the hallowed confines of Southampton and Millbrook Freightliner terminals can be yours if you book on this tour, emanating from Eastleigh with a destination of Weymouth. You can join also at Southampton Airport Parkway, Southampton Central, Romsey and Salisbury. No. 50008 is the power, together with a GBRf '66'. Again, Standard fare is £129, First Class non-dining £189.



THREE charity photoshoots were held at Hope Cement Works during December, featuring shunting locomotives and Class 20s hired from Harry Needle Railroad Company (HNRC) that can be found at the site. On December 4, 2023, HNRC No. 20906 pauses during the coal discharging process. Vincent Hardy

FirstGroup plans open access to Sheffield

FIRSTGROUP hopes to start operating open access trains between London King's Cross and Sheffield via Retford, using currently off-lease stock, from the second half of 2025.

The plans were submitted to the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) on January 5, and would see two return trains per day call at Retford, Worksop, Woodhouse and Sheffield.

FirstGroup said it aims to offer a faster service between Sheffield and the capital than is available today.

The services would operate under the Hull Trains brand and would use an off-lease fleet, although the company didn't say what that would be, the trains would need to be capable of 125mph running.

If approved, this would be the first direct service between Sheffield and King's Cross since 1968 and FirstGroup estimates there are 350,000 people in the Worksop and Woodhouse catchment areas who would have direct access

to London via these proposals.

First also claims that "a sizeable number of rail users in these areas drive to Doncaster to pick up faster services to London, rather than travelling via Sheffield."

A consultation period will now follow, while FirstGroup will hold discussions with Network Rail regarding securing the required approvals and rolling stock will be finalised with the rolling stock leasing companies.

East Linton and Brent Cross West stations open

EAST Linton station opened on December 13, following Brent Cross West which opened on December 11.

The former is on the East Coast Main Line near Dunbar and is served by 22 trains per day, operated by ScotRail and TransPennine Express. It replaces a station closed in 1964. There are expected to be around 130,000

journeys to and from the station in the first year of operation.

The new station features two 158-metre-long platforms and is fully accessible with step-free access via a footbridge with lifts.

Meanwhile Brent Cross West, operated by Govia Thameslink Railway, is served by Thameslink and is located between

Cricklewood and Hendon stations on the Midland Main Line. GTR said it is the gateway to a new neighbourhood known as Brent Cross Town and features a public overbridge which provides the first pedestrian access across this section of the MML since it was built.

At Castleford, a second platform opened on December 11, which allowed

TransPennine Express to run trains between York, Castleford, Wakefield Kirkgate, Huddersfield and Manchester Piccadilly. TPE said this is the first time since 1970 that direct trains have operated between Castleford and York. Four trains per day operate in each direction, with a fifth running between Wakefield and Manchester.

IN BRIEF

NO CENTRALISED TICKET RETAILER FOR GBRTT

GOVERNMENT confirmed on December 14 that plans for a centralised online ticket retailer as part of Great British Railways have been dropped. The Department for Transport said: "the private sector plays an important role in driving innovation and attracting more customers to the railway. We are focused on opening up railway data and systems, lowering barriers to entry for independent rail ticket retailers to improve passenger experience."

"Train operators will continue to retail to passengers online alongside existing third-party retailers while we develop measures to spur further competition in the online rail ticket retail market to make things better for passengers."

TREHERBERT LINE REOPENING IMMINENT

CLOSED since April last year, the Treherbert line will reopen in February, Transport for Wales announced on December 21. The line has been electrified, three new loops have been installed and various new footbridges have been completed alongside platform extensions as part of the South Wales Metro programme.

BARMOUTH VIADUCT REFURBISHMENT COMPLETE

A £30 million restoration of Barmouth Viaduct was completed in early-December after four years of work on the 156-year-old Grade II* listed structure.

Trains resumed running on December 2 after a 13-week closure to complete the final stages of the work. Over the four years, the project has included strengthening the structure and moving two 160-tonne spans. Track has also been renewed and ballast replaced.

LEVEN DRIVER TRAINING STARTS

DRIVER training began on the Leven line on January 8, ahead of its planned reopening in June. ScotRail No. 158704 was the first to be used, and operated the 3K50 06.03 Haymarket depot-Leven, before forming the 3K04 08.33 Leven-Leven (via Glenrothes with Thornton), the 3K05 09.34 Leven-Leven (also via Glenrothes with Thornton) and the 3K06 10.36 back to Haymarket depot.

■ See feature, pages 80-83.

DB Cargo UK loses top spot in latest freight figures

By Richard Clinnick

DB Cargo UK is no longer the biggest freight operator in Britain, according to figures released by the Office of Rail and Road on December 12.

DBC was previously English, Welsh & Scottish Railways, which acquired five of the six trainload freight companies when the railways were privatised.

However, the figures show that between July 1, 2023, and September 30 last year, DBC moved 2.25 million freight train kilometres, compared with GB Railfreight's 2.38m during the same period. This is the actual kilometres (which is how the series is measured) travelled by freight operators on all mainline infrastructure, terminals and yards.

The ORR said that DBC now has the second largest share and saw the biggest decrease compared with the previous year – 12%. Meanwhile, GBRf and Colas Railfreight recorded their highest value since the time series began in April 2010, recording an 8% and 19% increase respectively.

The ORR said that during that period freight operators recorded 8.11m freight train kilometres, which is a 0.3% decrease on the same period last year.

Of the other operators, after GBRf and DBC, Freightliner Intermodal was next with 1.45m freight train kilometres, followed by Freightliner Heavy Haul at 1.09, Direct Rail Services with 0.58m (-11% compared with last year), Colas Railfreight and DC Rail with 0.05m

(+4% compared with last year). The Freightliner figures are not comparable, the ORR said, because from September 2023 the company has moved some services from Intermodal to Heavy Haul meaning that data for the latest quarter is not comparable with the same quarter the previous year.

DBC is only third in the freight vehicle kilometres metric. This is the actual vehicle kilometres travelled by freight operators and is calculated by multiplying the number of rail vehicles by the distance travelled. During the same period, the ORR said freight operators recorded 181.54m freight vehicle kilometres, an increase of 2% compared with the same quarter last year. Again, Colas and GBRf recorded their highest figures since figures

began in April 2010 at 22% and 10% respectively, while DBC dropped 12% compared with the same period last year. GBRf totalled 55.84m, Freightliner Intermodal was 45.49m, DBC was 40.87%, Freightliner Heavy Haul was 24.99m, DRS was 8.24m, Colas was 5.21m and DCR was 0.89m.

Overall, the total freight moved was 4.11 billion net tonne kilometres for the quarter, an increase of 3% compared with the same period last year. Construction saw the largest absolute rise in freight moved volumes and recorded its highest volume since April 1998.

ORR said the total freight lifted was 17.5m tonnes during the quarter, a reduction of 6% compared with the same period last year. 

Freightliner calling for 'statement of intent' with ambitious electric targets

FREIGHTLINER has hinted at acquiring new locomotives as part of a drive to reduce carbon emissions and drive rail freight growth.

However, the company has called on government to support the sector by halving track access charges, doubling the modal shift grant that businesses can access to support rail and by keeping up investment in the rail network to ensure there is sufficient capacity on busy rail corridors to allow more freight to run.

Louise Ward, Genesee & Wyoming Inc UK/Europe (of which Freightliner is a subsidiary) safety and sustainability director, said: "We're not just calling on the government for support, we

are also setting our own sustainability targets and roadmaps within Freightliner, for the benefit of our customers and our organisation.

"This includes expanding our use of electric freight trains as well as investments in alternative fuels, such as hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), and developing new technologies for future locomotives. As the largest freight operator of electric trains in the UK, we want to increase the number of electric services, but to do so requires electricity costs to be affordable and some of today's gaps on the rail network to be electrified."

The operator wants government to set a long-term target to treble rail

freight volumes by 2050. It said that such an ambition would be a clear statement of intent from government and would provide confidence to the private sector to make significant investments in long-term assets that deliver growth.

According to Freightliner, a trebling of rail freight would mean more than 20 million heavy goods vehicle (HGV) journeys removed from motorways, resulting in a reduction of carbon emissions by 2.5 million tonnes.

Tim Shoveller, CEO of Genesee & Wyoming Inc UK/Europe, said: "There is an increasing desire for businesses to become more sustainable and meet their ambitious sustainability targets. Rail

freight is a critical part of the solution, but to make rail the mode of choice for trunk haulage and bulk movements, the economics must work for customers. That means that rail must be able to compete with road haulage."

He said that while fuel duty, one of the largest costs for road hauliers, has been effectively frozen for 14 years, track access charges have increased by 35% for the same period. Mr Shoveller added that: "A clear statement of intent from government will provide confidence to the private sector and be a catalyst to make significant investments in long-term assets in what is a highly capital-intensive industry."



Northern No. 319369 stands at Manchester Victoria on January 1, having arrived with the 2V06 17.36 from Wigan North Western, before returning with the 2G96 18.13 back to Wigan. The following day, No. 319368, was used in traffic, but after that, no '319' has been used (see Units), ending use the class on passenger duties. Phil Chilton



The first frame of a GB Railfreight Class 99 at Stadler's Valencia factory, in Spain, on December 18 last year. The '99s' are Co-Co bi-mode locomotives that are due to be introduced by the operator from 2025. Initially 30 have been ordered and they are expected to haul intermodal trains. They will have a 75mph maximum speed. More details on the class are expected to be revealed later this year. GB Railfreight

Leaders say government freight target's a 'minimum'

GOVERNMENT targets of 75% growth for rail freight by 2050 have been described as "nothing to celebrate" by Railfuture.

Secretary of state for transport Mark Harper said on December 20: "Rail freight helps keep this country moving. Not only is it the most efficient and environmentally-friendly way of transporting many goods, but it helps grow the economy across the country."

"This ambitious plan demonstrates this government's confidence in the rail freight sector, and I hope it encourages businesses to capitalise on the extra opportunities, so the industry continues to thrive and deliver for our country."

However, Railfuture freight director Owen O'Neill said: "A target of 75% growth over 26 years is only 2.2% per year. Over the last 40 years, even

with the recent turmoil, GDP growth has averaged 2.0% per year.

"The amount of freight moved is closely linked to the economy, so the 'growth' target is effectively a no-modal-share growth target. This is the minimum cost option with no policy initiatives to drive achieving the target. "The freight sector seems to be falling over itself in fawning admiration at the mere mention of 'freight' and 'growth' in the same story. We note it, that's all."

Chief executive officer of G&W UK/Europe, of which Freightliner is a subsidiary, Tim Shoveller, said: "We welcome this target but know we can do more. We look forward to working with government and the wider industry in unlocking the policies that will ensure that the target is a floor and not a ceiling."

GB Railfreight chief executive

officer John Smith said: "Our railways have long been the backbone of our economy and this announcement allows private companies like GB Railfreight to continue to invest in innovative technologies."

Maggie Simpson, Rail Freight Group director general, said: "Such an ambitious increase will require continued investment by Government into capacity upgrades across the network, however, and we look forward to further commitments to give rail freight the help it needs to achieve its new growth target."

Rail Partners chief executive Andy Bagnall said: "While the 75% level of the growth target is a good start, we will need to go further to really shift the dial of moving freight from road to rail – if rail freight simply maintained its market share, that would mean 60% growth by 2050."

Pathfinder plans to take Class 50s to Aberdeen

PATHFINDER Tours plans to take a pair of Class 50 Alliance locomotives to Aberdeen and Inverness over the weekend of August 24-26.

Full details including price have yet to be released, however, PT has issued a 'save the date' announcement. This is thought to be the first time the Type

4s will have hauled a passenger train between the two Highland cities.

The train is expected to leave a "mid-west to Midlands" pick-up before running north via the West Coast Main Line to Scotland and up to Aberdeen.

The second day features a circular run from Aberdeen to Inverness,

Kingussie, Perth and Dundee. There will be a break in Inverness.

On the third day the train will run south via Fife, Edinburgh, Newcastle, York and the Pennines.

GB Railfreight will operate the train. Passengers will need to book their own accommodation.

Class 93 static testing underway at Crewe

STATIC testing of Rail Operations Assets No. 93001 was due to start as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

The Stadler tri-mode has been at Harry Needle Railroad Company's Workshop facility for various tests and training since July 1, 2023 (RE327) but has been moved to Crewe South Yard where it will initially undertake static testing with a rake of Eastern

Rail Services Mk.3 coaches. The stock (Nos. 10229, 10413, 11078/095, 12021/091) arrived at Crewe on January 5, hauled by No. 37901 Mirlees Pioneer. The '37/9' will be used to support the testing.

Sources have told *RE* that the '93' is expected to venture on to the West Coast Main Line under its own power during February. The tri-mode

locomotive, which features AC overhead electrification, a diesel engine and batteries, is expected to haul the Mk.3s between Crewe and Carlisle as well as far south as Bletchley.

There are a minimum of 10 Class 93s on order, with speculation a further 10 have been ordered, although this had not been confirmed as this issue went to press.

IN BRIEF

DB IDENTIFIES '66S' FOR RE-GEARING

TEN Class 66s have been re-allocated to a new WBHT pool by DB Cargo UK, ahead of being re-gear to Class 66/6s, where they will replace the dwindling Class 60 fleet (RE332). The first DB '66/6' is due to enter traffic in April. The first '66' allocated to the new pool was No. 66221 (see *Power By The Hour*) and this has been followed by Nos. 66149/156/161/167/171/174/181/183/194.

NEW RDG CHAIR APPOINTED

DAVID Brown is the new Rail Delivery Group non-executive chair. His appointment was confirmed on December 20, 2023, and he replaced First Rail managing director Steve Montgomery with immediate effect, although the latter will remain on the board. Mr Brown is the MD of UK Trains at Arriva. He was previously MD of Northern under Arriva and before that he was Transport for the North chief executive.

CLASS 91 RENUMBERED

LONDON North Eastern Railway No. 91105 has been temporarily renumbered No. 91000 to commemorate the 1000th edition of *RAIL*. The '91' re-entered traffic with its new identity on January 10.

VIADUCT MILESTONE FOR HS2 JUNCTION

HS2 has completed the first 920-tonne deck span on the first precast segmental viaduct being built at the triangular Delta Junction.

MOBILE COVERAGE FOR FOUR ELIZABETH LINE STATIONS

MOBILE phone coverage is now available at Bond Street, Farringdon, Liverpool Street and Tottenham Court Road stations on the Elizabeth Line.

Government announces fares rise capped at 4.9%

MOST regulated rail fares in England will be capped at 4.9% rather than the July Retail Price Index figure of 9%. Fares have historically been based on the RPI.

The fares will increase from March 3, and the Department for Transport said on December 22 that fare changes will now take place in March every year.

Defending the increase, the DfT said: "The 4.9% increase strikes the right balance to keep our railways running and financially sustainable, while not overburdening passengers with excessive fare rises as we bear down on inflation."

Transport Focus chief executive Alex Robertson said: "The highest priorities for passengers are value for money and reliability. After recent disruption and the pressure on household budgets anything that limits fare increases has got to be welcome."



In heavy rain, No. 50007 *Hercules* trails the 1252 16.24 Preston-London Euston UK Railtours 'Manchester Christmas Markets' charter through Salford Crescent. No. 50049 *Defiance* was leading. Tom McAtee

Rail Express award for Class 50 Alliance

By Richard Clinnick

THE Class 50 Alliance has won the Heritage Railway Association Mortons Media *Rail Express* Modern Traction Award.

The C50A has been chosen by this magazine in recognition of the 100 main line tours the organisation has supplied locomotives for. Editor Richard Clinnick said: "This award recognises the sheer scale of the achievement of a small number of volunteers who have consistently made Class 50s available for main line duties for more than 20 years. For any preservation group to achieve 100 tours is worth celebrating."

The award will be presented at

an HRA awards dinner in Brighton on February 10.

Pathfinder Tours' 'The Pilgrim Centurion', which ran from Swindon to Edinburgh Waverley on September 16 was the 100th tour. The train was powered by Nos. 50007 *Hercules* (carrying No. 50034 *Furious* on one side) and 50049 *Defiance*.

The first train, Past-Time Rail's 'The Pilgrim Hoover', hauled by No. 50031 *Hood* between Birmingham International and Penzance, ran on November 1, 1997.

Since then, the Fifty Fund (which supports shareholders through various fundraising activities to keep the locomotives operational) and the C50A

have supplied four locomotives for main line duties, with No. 50044 *Exeter* also having operated on the main line. Also, in the C50A fleet but never having operated on the national network in their preservation career are Nos. 50033 *Glorious* and 50035 *Ark Royal*.

Already more tours have been organised and run, with Nos. 50007/049 hauling the 101st tour on December 9 last year from London Euston to Manchester Piccadilly and a mini-tour to Preston, while PT has announced that '50s' will haul 'The Mazey Day Cornishman' from Dorridge to Penzance on June 29 (see *Railtours*). Other tours are in the planning stages and will be announced in due course.

In a recent *Rail Express* interview (RE331), C50A chairman Tony Middleton explained: "When we go out on the main line with a charter there are technical riders and we must always obey the various industry rules too, so for the Edinburgh trip on September 16, there were eight technical riders." They may be C50A volunteers based at Kidderminster, but they all have Personal Track Safety (PTS) certificates enabling them to be on the railway and on the locomotives when they are hauling trains.

"These guys are predominantly on the tours; back at Kidderminster there is a core of 20 people, and they are the backbone of what we do." 

Second giant HS2 TBM due for Birmingham

A SECOND tunnel boring machine (TBM) has been completed ahead of it starting to dig the second bore of the 3.5 mile Bromford Tunnel into Birmingham.

Two 600 tonne cranes were used to life the 125t cutterhead into place in front of the 125m-long machine in the bottom of a 12m-deep launch pit.

The first TBM, *Mary Ann*, started digging the first bore from the east portal site near Water Orton last August and has so far built more than 0.6 miles of the 3.5-mile tunnel between North Warwickshire and Washwood Heath in Birmingham.

The second TBM, which is currently nameless, will be launched in the spring and is planned to complete its journey in the middle of next year.

LNER includes sign language on screens



LONDON North Eastern Railway (LNER) is trialling the full integration of British Sign Language (BSL) across customer information screens at Doncaster.

Described as a "UK rail industry first", the screens display videos alongside latest information and translating updates into sign language. If it's a success LNER plans to introduce the full integration of BSL into further screens across its network.

◀ A new screen with British Sign Language at Doncaster. LNER

First electric passenger train to Barrhead

ELECTRIC passenger trains began operating between Glasgow Central and Barrhead on December 11.

Four-car No. 380107 operated the first train, the 2A36 06.52 Glasgow Central-Barrhead and 2A35 07.26 return. The '380' operated trains on the route all day, supported by SR Class 156s which continued on towards Kilmarnock.

Network Rail has recently completed the £63 million Glasgow-Barrhead Electrification Project, which was funded by the Scottish government and is the latest part of Scotland's rolling programme to decarbonise the country's passenger services.

On December 6, No. 380114 operated the 2A98 11.41 Glasgow Central-Barrhead and 2A99 12.12 return. This carried invited guests to see the work, including Scottish transport minister Fiona Hyslop, who said: "It's fantastic to join industry partners as we celebrate the first electric passenger train between Glasgow and Barrhead."

"This latest milestone in our rolling programme of electrification demonstrates this Scottish Government's commitment to greener public transport as we work towards our low carbon economy and net zero goals."

Alex Hynes, managing director of Scotland's Railway, said: "We are incredibly proud to be delivering this project on behalf of the Scottish Government."

"Electric trains are faster and greener, offering a better travelling experience and they're more reliable too. They encourage people to switch



Scotland's Railway managing director Alex Hynes (left) and Scottish transport minister Fiona Hyslop (right) at Barrhead on December 6, 2023, with a plaque celebrating the start of electric services to Glasgow Central. Network Rail

from road to rail and help us build on the railway's reputation as one of the greenest forms of public transport.

"We look forward to welcoming the communities along the Barrhead line onto our electric network and will continue to further expand our decarbonisation of Scotland's Railway in the years ahead."

The project has involved electrifying more than six miles of railway and renewing 130 metres

of track. Bridges have received major modifications including the replacement of one at Strathbungo and the removal of an old lattice footbridge at Nitshill station.

The '380s' being used by SR on the route will replace Class 156s which will be internally cascaded to replace Class 158s which, in turn, will be used for driver training on the Levenmouth line.

■ Scotland feature, pages 80-83.

Tributes paid at Clapham Junction disaster site

A CEREMONY marking the 35th anniversary of the Clapham rail disaster was held at the site of the accident on December 12.

On that date in 1988, 35 people died when faulty wiring in the signalling system caused three trains to collide on the approach to Clapham Junction.

Network Rail, South Western Railway, ASLEF and other industry bodies attended the annual service held at the Spencer Park memorial site. Relatives of those who died also attended the event.

SWR managing director Claire Mann said: "We're very grateful to our colleagues for organising today's commemoration and to those from the wider railway family who came together in remembrance."

"Today is a day to remember the 35 people who tragically lost their lives, to think about their families, and to recognise the efforts of all those who played a part in the rescue and recovery operation on Monday, December 12, 1988."



Wreath laying at the Clapham memorial on December 12, 2023. Network Rail

IN BRIEF

PECKHAM RYE PLANNING

FORMAL planning consent has been given to Network Rail to create a new station concourse at ground level at Peckham Rye. The plans include new lifts and stair access to all platforms, accessible toilets, wider platforms and additional gate lines. NR will now submit an Outline Business Case with a funding request to be completed by summer 2025. It's hoped that work will commence in autumn 2025 and take two years.

NEW CHILTERN DIRECTORS

THREE new directors have been appointed by Chiltern Railways. Tony Baxter is the new operations director and was most recently at Northern; Andy Camp is the new commercial and customer strategy director and moves from West Midlands Trains, while Tim Sayer has been appointed engineering and safety director.

BATTERSEA FIREWORKS PROVIDE PULLING POWER

SOME 52,814 entries and exits were recorded at Battersea Power Station on the Northern Line extension on November 4, the day of the Battersea Park fireworks, which Transport for London said was almost double the number of the previous Saturday.

ROYSTON FOOTBRIDGE OPENED BY GTR

GOVIA Thameslink Railway has opened a new footbridge at Royston, replacing the previous structure which was closed in 2020 for safety reasons. The replacement is being opened in phases with work to install lifts due to be complete early this year.

MORE NORTHERN SCREENS

NORTHERN has installed more than 100 new display screens at 77 stations as part of a £14 million upgrade scheme.

TRANSWILTS 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY EVENT

GREAT Western Railway marked the 10th anniversary of TransWilts services being increased with a celebration on December 8, confirming that more than one million passenger-carrying miles had been completed during the decade.

York Central developer

MCLAREN Property and Arlington Real Estate have been selected as strategic developers for the York Central development. Already £135 million of infrastructure work is underway including around two miles of new roads, footpaths, cycleways and two new bridges over the East Coast Main Line. Up to 2500 homes, station improvements and an expanded National Railway Museum will be built as part of the plan.

WELCOME ABOARD THE BIGGEST RAILWAY COMMUNITY

RAIL EXPRESS



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

RICHARD CLINNICK, EDITOR



GB Railfreight No. 66797 approaches Salhouse on June 7, 2023, with the 6P41 09.57 Harwich Refinery-North Walsham condensate tanks. RICHARD CLINNICK

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DB puts 22 Class 67s and '90s' up for sale

The German-owned freight operator continues its march towards a locomotive fleet formed primarily around the Class 66 with the release of two more batches of unwanted assets.

DB CARGO UK has put 22 locomotives up for sale, with nine stored Class 67s, Nos. 67001/003/004/009/011/018/019/026/030, and one currently active locomotive, No. 67028, as well as 12 Class 90s, Nos. 90019-021/024/026/028/029/034-037/039, and a large quantity of spares.

The decision to sell these locomotives follows a tender during 2023 which saw 12 long-stored Class 90s put up for sale, Nos. 90017/018/022/023/025/027/030-033/038/040, although their sales have not been confirmed.

The 12 Class 90s put up for sale at the end of December formed the entire previously operational fleet that was switched off between February and July 2023. All 21 stored locomotives have now been reallocated from WQBA to the lowest 'Group 4' WQDA pool.

No. 67019 is the longest stored Class 67, having been stopped at Toton in March 2015. Nos. 67009/011/026 at Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot were all sidelined between June and October 2016, while No. 67018 *Keith Heller*, named after a previous

chief executive officer of EWS/DBC, was taken out of service at the Cheshire depot in March 2019. Toton-located Nos. 67003/030 and No. 67004 were stored in October 2019 and May 2020 respectively, while No. 67001 at Crewe followed in May 2023. The list includes all but one of the last five remaining EWS-liveried '67s' and this survivor, co-incidentally, is the only out-of-service member of the class to not be up for sale, No. 67016. This was stopped as recently as October.

Thirty 125mph Class 67s were delivered from Alstom's Valencia plant in Spain between October 1999 and August 2000, primarily for use on Royal Mail services. From around 2014 around a quarter of the fleet has been in store, while January 2017 saw a pair of locos, Nos. 67023/027 sold

to Colas Rail. If all are sold from this tender the DB fleet will be reduced to 18 examples, although the company has indicated that it is prepared to maintain the '67s' if any are returned to service with other operators.

The first Class 90 debuted at BREL Crewe in October 1987, with the 50th and final locomotive not being taken into British Rail stock until November 1990. On privatisation, 25 passed to EWS, Nos. 90016-024, 90125-140 (although the latter 16 were later renumbered back to the 900xx series), later DB, while No. 90016 was acquired by Porterbrook in 2004 as a replacement for fire damaged No. 90050. The remaining 25 Class 90s are split between Locomotive Services (Nos. 90001/002) and Freightliner (Nos. 90003-015/041-050). **E**

Five more DRS Class 37s sold as remaining fleet enters final months

EUROPHOENIX has bought three of the six Direct Rail Services Class 37s that had been put up for sale.

EP has acquired Nos. 37069, 37218 and 37423 *Spirit of the Lakes*. Of the other three Class 37s, Locomotive Services has bought No. 37401 *Mary Queen of Scots*, Andania Engineering, owner of No. D213 (40013) *Andania*, which is currently hired to LS, is now the owner of No. 37402, while No. 37424 *Avro Vulcan XH558* remains unsold.

Nos. 37401/402 were quickly moved from Gresty Bridge to Crewe Diesel Maintenance Depot on December 20, while Europhoenix despatched Nos. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* and 37611 *Denise* from Loram Derby to collect its new trio of English Electric products on December 29. The new acquisitions were top and tailed back to UK Rail Leasing, Leicester as a 0M59 from DRS's Crewe maintenance depot. Of note is that Nos. 37401/423 have since been denamed. No. 37402 – now transferred to the MBDL pool – had already lost its *Stephen Middlemore* 23.12.1954-8.6.2013 plates a few weeks previously. All five are expected to return to service in due course, with No. 37218 already being noted moving around Leicester LIP.

This re-ordering vaults Europhoenix into the top three of Class 37 owners by fleet size with Harry Needle Railroad Company and West Coast Railways, although for active locomotives Colas Rail is still the main operator of the type with 11 regularly working EE machines under its banner, albeit four hired in from HNRC. The overall result of the sale is that the DRS allocation is down to just six examples.

Over at York, the final season of DRS Type 3 motive power on railhead treatment trains has drawn to a close. Enthusiasts that remember the last unreliable years of the DRS Class



Europhoenix 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* trails EP Nos. 37423, 37069, 37218 as they are hauled through Queensville Curve, Stafford, in heavy rain, on December 29, 2023, by Rail Operations Group No. 37611 *Denise*, as the 0M59 11.45 Crewe Gresty Bridge-Leicester. The three '37s' had recently been acquired by EP from Direct Rail Services. Rob Reedman

20/3s on the 'leafbusting' circuits will be pleased to hear that the final five working '37s' on the roster acquitted themselves much more admirably. Only Nos. 37419 *Driver Tony Kay* 1974-2019 and 37716 fell by the wayside towards the end, with traction motor and engine issues being cited. Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower* and 37422 *Victorious* were employed on the penultimate

3J51 09.50 York-York via Scarborough and Hull on December 14, while for the final day (December 15) the same diagram saw the large logo machine swapped out for No. 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine / Concrete Bob*.

Their reward for their impressive reliability was a deep clean for an evening photo session at Holgate Works on December 16 (see feature,

pages 84-86). Four days later, on December 21, No. 37425 was awarded the responsibility of hauling Nos. 37419/422, 37716 along with No. 66425 *Nigel J Kirchstein* 1957-2021 back to DRS territory and an uncertain future as a 0Z05 11.36 to Crewe Coal Sidings. Meanwhile, No. 37407 has remained at York as a route proving locomotive.

NEWS ROUND-UP

ANGEL TRAINS

The next batch of High Speed Train power cars for export is starting to be assembled at East Anglian locations ahead of the expected arrival of the next ship in January. On December 21, No. 43316 led a formation comprised of Nos. 43306/307/320 as a 0Q43 10.41 Kidderminster-Norwich Crown Point. This was the second time the four Class 43s had visited the Severn Valley Railway for preparatory work ahead of their new life abroad.

COLAS RAILFREIGHT

Following the debut of No. 43285 on the main line on November 6, the first of five former CrossCountry High Speed Train power cars that have been taken on by Colas Railfreight, it was the turn of Nos. 43321/357 on December 2. The pair were sent out light engine on a 0Z43 shakedown run from Loram Derby to Doncaster, returning two days later December 4 under the same headcode. They followed this up with a similar 0Z31 to Birmingham New St via the Cross City Line and heading back to Derby via the Chase Line. No. 43357, still without Colas branding, was the first to work a service train, being introduced to former London North Eastern Railway and East Midlands Railways No. 43274 on a 1Q30 10.54 Derby RTC to Holyhead and return on December 28 with Network Rail's PLPR4 (Plain Line Pattern Recognition) test formation.

No. 70812 disgraced itself on December 4, being failed at Ormside on the Settle & Carlisle line while in charge of the 6J37 12.52 Carlisle-Chirk loaded timber. An axle issue was identified, and the Class 70 spent 10 days at nearby Appleby before it was finally cleared to move on December 14, unusually under its own power via the use of a wheelskate. It worked a speed restricted 8Z56 19.25 to West Coast Railways' depot at Carnforth.

The Scottish Thirty-Seven Group's No. 37025 *Inverness TMD* has been reallocated from the COTS (Colas Railfreight) pool to the Bo'ness RAJV pool, ending an exciting chapter in this locomotive's history. Returned to the main line in January 2016 it was drafted in by Colas as a 'short-term' hire to assist the operator while it built up its own Type 3 fleet. This contract was continually extended until the Class 37/0 was stopped at Barrow Hill in April 2021 as its running gear came up for renewal. It returned to Bo'ness in May 2022 and was put back into service on the heritage railway, although since last year's summer diesel gala it has been on restricted duties. The retired wheelsets have returned from the supplier in Devon and replacement bogies sourced from No. 37214 are expected to have had their refurbishment completed by the end of 2024. A return to the main line will follow.



Four Class 43s destined for Mexico, led by No. 43316, pass Leicester on December 20, 2023, forming the 0Q43 Kidderminster-Norwich Crown Point. The other power cars are Nos. 43306/307/320. Due to space constraints at Eastern Rail Services facility at Great Yarmouth, the '43s' were stabled at Norwich Crown Point, but were due to move to the Norfolk coast for export as this issue of *Rail Express* was due to be published. Rob Reedman

DB CARGO

Having started the final month of 2023 with a quartet of working examples, the DBC Class 60 fleet was reduced to a trio by the end of the year.

No. 60040 *The Territorial Army Centenary* was the unlucky 'Tug', being stored unserviceable in the WQBA pool at Toton on December 12, having run out of engine hours. Also transferred to the same Level 2 storage group were Nos. 60010 and 60066, both ex-WQAA. They had been switched off in mid-October along with Nos. 60001/015/044. Of the three remaining operational locos, Nos. 60024/062 both worked throughout the period under review, while No. 60074 *Luke* only spent two days in service, unusually seconded to Victoria Railfreight at Peak Forest for shunting duties. It ran light to the Cemex quarry on December 21 but returned to Toton the following day. The Puma Energy-liveried Brush Type 5 had been allocated to work the 'Festive Midland-lan' tour on December 16, but in the end this was covered by No. 60024 *Clitheroe Castle* with No. 66194.

DB Cargo plans to regear 10 Class 66s to form a new heavy haul sub-class to match the capabilities of Freightliner's Class 66/6s, Nos. 66601-66625 (RE332), delivered in five batches between November 2000 and March 2007. *Rail Express* understands that these are to be renumbered into the same group as well, with Nos. 66651-66660 being mooted. The first to be modified is expected to be No. 66221, which has been redesignated to the new WBHT pool for these conversions. As for the current make-up of the fleet, the end of the railhead treatment train (RHTT) season has seen the usual exodus

of locomotives back to their original pools. No. 66192 was the first to be re-allocated, and this was quickly followed by Nos. 66010/025/041/044/070/085/088/089/097, 66130/155/185, all to the standard WBAT Class 66 pool, while Nos. 66104/113 were transferred to WBBT for RETB fitted GMs. Also moving to WBAT was No. 66092, which had returned to Toton after wheelset issues in South Wales in 2022 (RE332), along with No. 66067, now in DB red, and Nos. 66032, 66144/154.

Both Nos. 92029/041 were out on test during the month following attention at Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot. On December 11, No. 92029 ran to Carlisle and back, which was followed by No. 92041 *Vaughan Williams* on December 20 working a shakedown run to Stafford and return under the same headcode. The latter Class 92, still wearing its shabby two-tone grey delivery paint, was returned to Wembley the next day (0Z27, December 21) by No. 92029, still under test. The former *Dante* returned under the same headcode to Crewe to complete its rectification work.

DIRECT RAIL SERVICES

The use of DRS Class 68s and CAF Mk.5A 'Nova 3' stock on TransPennine Express passenger services has come to an end after just under four years and four months of operation (see *Headline News*). The last day was December 9, and featured No. 68030 *Black Douglas* and set TP06, and its last cross-Pennine run, sadly with the '68' pushing, was a 1U47 11.35 Manchester Piccadilly-Scarborough. It spent the rest of the day running between Scarborough, York and Leeds.

Meanwhile the four Class 68s sub-leased by DRS from TPE during the railhead treatment train season, Nos. 68019/020/022/031, have all returned to TPE, with December 21 being their last official day at DRS. The work for the TPE fleet has not entirely ceased with locomotives being used to move stored Mk.5A trainsets from TPE depots to secure locations. The '68s' are due to return to DRS at the end of May.

FREIGHTLINER

The doyen of the Freightliner GMs, No. 66501, has been stored DHLT from DFIM. Delivered to Newport Docks in July 1999 along with No. 66502, the almost 25-year-old Class 66/5 has been at UK Rail Leasing, Loughborough since late-November undergoing a G-Exam. Moving out of the storage pool is No. 59103 *Village of Mells*, which has had repairs completed at Merehead. The last remaining DB red example, No. 59201, moved to Eastleigh Works on December 4, running as a 0Z59 from Westbury for cosmetic attention.

One final reactivation to report is No. 70009, which was officially stored as far back as January 2017, although it was actually stopped at Leeds Midland Road in August 2016. This partnered Harry Needle Railroad Company No. 37610 on a OG01 test run to Doncaster on December 8 (the '37/6' is currently hired by Colas Railfreight). After further checks, the Class 70 was reinstated to the DFGI pool and was dispatched as 0Z30 to Rugby on December 12 to go on hire to Colas as cover for its own beleaguered Class 70 fleet. This leaves four Freightliner GE's still in store, Nos. 70011/013/018/019.

NEWS ROUND-UP Continued

GB RAILFREIGHT

Having received the first of its latest batch of 11 'Euro' specification Class 66s in December 2022 (RE321), none of the eight locomotives so far acquired had entered traffic as of the end of 2023. The first to arrive, No. 66306, the former CB1001, is the closest to completion. It was named *SCS Logistics* and given Skanska Costain STRABAG/HS2 brandings on its GBRf livery on September 21, and more recently was dragged from Doncaster Roberts Road to EMD Longport for final preparation work as an OM07 behind No. 66746 on December 1. As for its Akiem-leased colleagues, former 'Class 77s' (their European designation, not a TOPS code) Nos. 66307-309 (ex-77502/703/701) are still at Roberts Road following a repaint at Eastleigh, while Nos. 66310/311 (ex-77507/504) are at UKRL Loughborough. Also at the former Brush works are Nos. 66312/313 (previously 266107-2/CB 1000). The latter four are still in their European paint schemes.

LOCOMOTIVE SERVICES

Much anticipated has been the return of No. 57311 under the LS banner following its repaint in pseudo-LNWR livery and the reskinning of the cab fronts after Dellner removal (RE324).

Acquired from Direct Rail Services in January 2022, it finally departed Eastleigh Works on December 7 as a 0Z43 light engine move to Crewe Diesel Maintenance Depot with No. D6817 (37521) in tow. The '57/3' was sidelined in April 2018 and has been variously located at Longtown, Bo'ness and Kingmoor before it was dragged to Arlington's Hampshire site in June 2021. LS' other Class 57/3, No. 57302



Freshly repainted No. 20118 *Saltburn-by-the-Sea* passes Tamworth on December 12, 2023, with the 5Z20 10.07 Crewe Holding Sidings-Eastleigh Works, with LS No. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie* on the rear. The coaches, Nos. 3330 and 9479, were being moved for tyre-turning. Paul Keightley

Chad Varah, has also seen the removal of its drophead Dellner equipment at Eastleigh, but is otherwise externally unchanged from when it was placed in store by DRS in July 2017.

Also making its official debut under the aegis of Locomotive Services is No. 20118 *Saltburn-by-the-Sea*, which was part of a swap deal with Harry Needle Railroad Company that saw it along with No. 20132 moving west, while ex-DRS Nos. 20302/305 headed in the opposite direction. While its Class 20/0 colleague was sent out on November 24 as part of a rescue party

for A4 'Pacific' No. 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley*, a makeover at Crewe for No. 20118 meant it took longer to make a comeback. On December 12, it led a 5Z20 10.07 to Reading and Eastleigh with a pair of coaches and No. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie* on the rear. The English Electric Type 1 retains Railfreight red stripe colours, with which it has a long association. It was the only Railfreight-liveried member of the famed trio that powered the 'Three to the Sea' railtour on May 2, 1987, when it carried the Tinsley unofficial name *River Don*. Following its preservation in mid 1999,

South Devon Diesel Traction chose this scheme when it completed its restoration in October 2000, and it has worn it ever since.

VINTAGE TRAINS

Acquired from Boden Rail in 2022, No. 37240 has finally made its way to Tyseley, the Transrail-liveried Class 37/0 making its way from Nottingham Eastcroft on the back of a low loader on December 19. The next task for Vintage Trains is a bogie swap, and a new set of overhauled undergear has been sourced.

GB Railfreight No. 56081 stands at UK Rail Leasing's Leicester depot on January 2, during a photoshoot organised in collaboration between UKRL, GBRf, Network Rail and Europhoenix with funds raised from the event going to Great Ormond Street Hospital. The '56' was due to be stood down from traffic as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press and is set to be converted into a Class 69, albeit one for demonstration purposes rather than joining the GBRf fleet. Steve Sienkiewicz



Imerys ends Cornish industrial use

Recent activity in Cornwall has seen the mineral giant dispense with its last company-owned shunter.

EARLY-DECEMBER saw a flurry of shunter movements take place in Cornwall, these being centred on the Bodmin & Wenford Railway and linked to the transfer of the newly preserved CDA clay hoppers to the line from St Blazey.

Of the five relocations undertaken, the most notable was the departure of Sentinel No. 10150, otherwise known as No. P406D *Isaac*, from the Imerys works at Rocks, or Goonbarrow, in railway parlance. Dating from 1963,

the 0-6-0 diesel hydraulic was initially taken to Bodmin on December 12 before moving on to the Railway Support Services (RSS) yard at Wishaw soon afterwards.

Here it was reunited with Thomas Hill No. 261V, or No. P405D *Alex*, which made the same journey north back in June 2023. The removal of the two shunters from Goonbarrow means Imerys no longer has any shunters of its own in Cornwall, the firm just hiring

No. 08752 from RSS for operations at Rocks while its other remaining rail-connected sites have no shunter presence.

Unexpectedly, a second Sentinel, twin-axle chain-drive No. 10029, also departed Bodmin for Wishaw around the same time as its classmate. Dating from 1960, this was also once in Imerys ownership as No. P403D *Denise*, spending many years at Burngullow before entering preservation. Now on hire to RSS, a quick exam was undertaken at Wishaw before the Sentinel was dispatched to serve

as yard pilot at DB Cargo UK's Stoke wagon works.

Three more departures from the Bodmin & Wenford were recorded between December 9-11, including the completion of the weather-disrupted move of Class 10 No. D3489 to the Helston Railway, it finally reaching its new home on December 12. Meanwhile, two industrials, Fowler No. 22928 of 1940 and Ruston & Hornsby No. 443642 of 1960, have been transferred to Par Harbour, from where they are expected to be forwarded to St Blazey for display by the roundhouse and turntable. **B**



Still carrying EWS livery, Harry Needle Railroad Company No. 08879 stands at Hope Cement Works during a photoshoot on December 4, 2023. Chris Gee

NEWS ROUND-UP

HARRY NEEDLE RAILROAD COMPANY

The eight-year stay of No. 08700 at Ilford came to an end on December 1, the BR blue machine having arrived at the depot back in June 2015. It was delivered to Worksop three days later after spending the weekend in a haulier's yard. Meanwhile, the stripped shells of Nos. 08602 and 08802 were both scrapped at EMR's Attercliffe yard on November 6, six months after they arrived from Worksop. The component recovery was not quite finished though with the wheelsets being returned to HNRC.

RMS LOCOTEC

The departure of No. 08700 from Ilford was triggered by the arrival of No. 08762 on the same day, RMS now providing both shunters at the depot. The newcomer had departed from its short-term use at the Very Light Rail National Innovation Centre at Dudley on November 30, and is now working alongside stablemate No. 08588. In contrast, RMS Locotec no longer has a shunter at Wolverton Works, the previously-noted arrival of GB Railfreight No. 09009, under RSS control on November 22, precipitating the departure of No. 08754 to Great Yarmouth around November 30. Also bound for the Norfolk resort as 2023 ended was English Electric-built Dutch Class 600 No. 653, this departing Wolsingham as far as the Studley yard of Allelys just before Christmas. By January 3, it had arrived at the Norfolk coast.



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INDUSTRIALS

■ The turnover of the Ministry of Defence shunters at Barton-under-Needwood continued unabated during December, with three of the Thomas Hill-built machines appearing at the Hunslet workshops. On December 6, No. 01524 was dispatched to Bicester with the lorry returning to the Midlands the next day carrying No. 01525. However, its stay lasted barely two weeks before it headed back whence it came, allowing No. 01527 to depart Bicester for a festive stay with Hunslet.

■ A new shunter duty for Railway Support Services is at Hartlepool Docks where Clayton CD40 No. 4618/6 arrived a few days before Christmas to marshal the trains of concrete tunnel lining segments now being regularly dispatched by Strabag for use

on the construction of HS2. The shunter had begun December at DB Cargo UK's Stoke wagon works but departed for Wishaw in mid-month for a quick exam before heading to Hartlepool.

■ Noted undergoing attention and a repaint at Hunslet, Barton-under-Needwood, in mid-December was GEC-built No. 5430 of 1977, which was recorded at Daventry earlier in 2023 with its engine removed. This is owned by Hunslet's parent company Ed Murray and has latterly retained its former British Steel number of 261 on the cabsides. Also returned to Barton on December 20, ahead of the Christmas shutdown, was Hunslet-owned Thomas Hill No. V325, the three-axle Steelman DH75 being unloaded directly into the workshop upon arrival from Bardon Hill quarry.

PRESERVATION

The **Leiston Works Railway** took a significant step forward on December 20, with the arrival of the line's first locomotive in the form of Andrew Barclay 0-4-0DM No. 349. Dating from 1941, this has been acquired by the Friends of Leiston Railway from the Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust and was previously based at the West Somerset Railway. 2023 saw re-laying of the track on the available stretch of the Suffolk branch completed, and the shunter's arrival will support future passenger train operations.

Another of Andrew Briddon's shunter collection has returned to **Peak Rail** in the form of Hibberd No. 3777, the 1956-built diesel-mechanical departing the Whitrope Heritage Centre on December 7. Unloaded at Rowsley the following day, transfer to Darley Dale was still awaited as this issue of *Rail Express* went to press.

Northern Class 319s sent for scrap

Just two '319s' make it into 2024 as '331' shuffle between east and west is completed.

NORTHERN has continued to run down its Class 319 fleet with all but two sets being stopped during December.

Although there were no booked diagrams for the fleet after the timetable change on December 10, several units continued to see use beyond this date as the transfer of the four-car '331/1' sets from Yorkshire to the North West had not been completed; the last set was moved on December 28.

During the week leading up to Christmas (December 18-22), Nos. 319368/369/372/381/385 all saw use. No. 319369 subsequently

reappeared in traffic on January 1, with No. 319368 doing so on January 2. With London Northwestern Railway having retired its fleet in November (RE332), it means this pair were the last '319s' in passenger service, although Northern still operates its eight Class 769 'Flex' sets which were converted from Class 319s.

Rail Operations Group also has its Orion parcels conversion, No. 319373, although it is presently out of use at Castle Donington.

Following on from the disposal of No. 319375 (RE332), No. 319378 was hauled from Allerton to Sims,

Newport for scrapping on November 29, with Nos. 319367/384 following on December 13, and then Nos. 319366/383 (December 20) and 319361/370 (December 22). All the movements used ROG No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* as traction.

The withdrawal of the Northern '319' fleet before the transfer and introduction of former West Midlands Railway Class 323s has been made possible by reducing the number of vehicles on many services in both Yorkshire and the North West. The 12 four-car Class 331/1s have been reallocated from Neville Hill to Allerton,

being exchanged with nine three-car sets (Nos. 331001-009) which are now operating out of Leeds. The transfers, which were carried out by ROG between November 20 and December 20, are tabulated below.

Meanwhile, former LNWR Nos. 319217/219 were despatched from Northampton Kings Heath to Sims, Newport for disposal on December 6, ROG No. 37800 being used once again. Nos. 319433/457, which had remained at Camden for potential standby use, ran to Northampton, where they joined No. 319214 awaiting disposal, on December 19. 



Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* hauls ex-Northern Nos. 319361/370 through Churchdown, on December 22, 2023, as the 5Q76 07.58 Allerton Depot-Sims Metal, Newport Docks. Northern finished using '319s' in early January, ending passenger use for the electric multiple units first introduced in 1988. John Stretton.

CLASS 331 TRANSFERS - EAST TO WEST/WEST TO EAST

CLASS 331/0 (FROM ALLERTON)

Number	Date moved	Hauled to	Locomotive used
331001	November 27, 2023	Skipton	37611
331002	November 21, 2023	Skipton	37611
331003	December 7, 2023	Skipton	37601
331004	December 4, 2023	Skipton	37601
331005	December 8, 2023	Neville Hill	37601
331006	December 1, 2023	Skipton	37611
331007	December 16, 2023	Neville Hill	37510
331008	November 28, 2023	Skipton	37611
331009	November 30, 2023	Skipton	37611

CLASS 331/1 (TO ALLERTON)

Number	Date moved	Hauled from	Locomotive used
331101	December 28, 2023	Neville Hill	37800
331102	November 23, 2023	Skipton	37611
331103	December 1, 2023	Skipton	37611
331104	November 20, 2023	Skipton	37611
331105	December 7, 2023	Skipton	37601
331106	December 21, 2023	Neville Hill	37510
331107	December 18, 2023	Neville Hill	37510
331108	December 15, 2023	Neville Hill	37510
331109	November 28, 2023	Skipton	37611
331110	November 30, 2023	Skipton	37611
331111	December 6, 2023	Skipton	37601
331112	December 19, 2023	Neville Hill	37510

NORTHERN CLASS 319 STATUS - DECEMBER 2023

Sent for scrap: 319361-367/370/375/383/384.

In service in January: 319368/369.

Stopped (at Allerton): 319372/378/379/381/385/386.

DMU

CLASS 150 SPRINTER

ON hire to Tfw Rail since July 2022, Nos. 150269/270 returned to Northern on December 3, their journey north running as the 5E17 13.52 Cardiff Canton-Neville Hill.

CLASS 153

PREVIOUSLY stored at Long Marston, Nos. 153330/332 have been taken by road to Sims, Newport for cutting up. Meanwhile, Nos. 153308/371 have been acquired by the Great Central Railway (see *Preservation*).

CLASS 156 SUPER SPRINTER

HAVING regained its original identity, former East Midlands Railway No. 156417 (ex 156917) was released from its eight-month overhaul and refurbishment for Northern on December 11, when it formed the

5E12 08.45 Wolverton-Heaton. Heading in the opposite direction the same day was No. 156482.

Another former EMR set delivered to Northern on November 25, was No. 156416, which entered traffic with its new operator on December 13, its first working after running empty stock from Heaton being the 2N07 06.39 Hartlepool-Hexham.

CLASS 165 TURBO

ANOTHER two Chiltern Railways units were sent away for Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) upgrade work on November 28, Nos. 165007/038 forming the 5V65 08.02 Wembley LMD-Bristol Barton Hill.

CLASS 166 TURBO

RETURNING to Bristol Barton Hill following attention at Wolverton on November 30 was Great Western Railway No. 166207.

The same day saw GWR

No. 166211 head in the opposite direction.

CLASS 170 TURBOSTAR

FOLLOWING the move of No. 170206 from Tfw Rail to East Midlands Railway on November 19, No. 170207 made the same move on December 6, when it formed the 5M57 10.56 Cardiff Canton-Derby Etches Park. The two transfers left just one Turbostar, No. 170208, with Tfw Rail and this is expected to move to EMR before the end of January.

Former Southern sets now with EMR, Nos. 170422/423, have been reliveried into EMR purple, leaving just No. 170424 in Southern colours.

CLASS 175 CORADIA

DECEMBER 21 saw the last '175' at Chester depot – No. 175110 – depart, although it only ran to the sidings at the back of the station. It had arrived from Ilford on December 8. Several other moves took place during the

month; on December 7, No. 175003 ran from Landore to Crewe Gresty Green, with Nos. 175108/116 following on December 14. The next day, No. 175108 continued to Ilford. December 20 saw No. 175005 form the 5V78 12.00 Crewe South Yard-Landore.

CLASS 196 CIVITY

ENTERING service during the first half of December was No. 196112.

CLASS 197 CIVITY

HAULED from Telford Railfreight Terminal to Crewe Basford Hall on December 13 and then on to Wolverton the next day was No. 197123, with identical moves with No. 197121 being carried out on December 20/21. Both transfers were undertaken by Freightliner No. 47830 *Beeching's Legacy*, which also provided power for the 6Q97 11.01 Wolverton-Crewe Basford Hall conveying No. 197117 on December 12.

Rail Operations Group Class 37s are used as Thunderbird locomotives on the Anglian network, although their use rescuing failed Stadler Class 745s has become increasingly rare. However, on December 6 last year, No. 37608 *Andromeda* drags failed Stansted Express No. 745106 towards Trowse Junction, near Norwich, having hauled the 12-car electric multiple unit as the 5P02 10.00 Orient Way carriage sidings-Norwich. Chris Boon



Making its debut passenger run on December 20 was No. 197115. It is the eighth three-car set to be put into traffic and the first with a section of 'Standard Plus' seating.

EMU

CLASS 321

VARAMIS Rail has taken on another two Class 321s for its expanding logistics operation. Nos. 321407/419, which last saw use with Greater Anglia in 2021, were released from Wolverton Works in December and join No. 321334 in the fleet.

CLASS 458 JUNIPER

THE eighth South Western Railway '458/4' conversion to be released, No. 458424 (ex 458524), emerged from Alstom, Widnes on December 12.

Following movement to Wembley, it continued to Bournemouth the next day, sandwiched between GB Railfreight Nos. 56081 and 69008. The two locomotives then took the next set away to Widnes for attention, conveying No. 458504, which will become No. 458404.

CLASS 508

FURTHER units have been retired from service with Merseyrail and despatched for scrap. On November 27, Nos.

508139/141 arrived at Sims, Newport from Birkenhead North behind Rail Operations Group No. 37800 *Cassiopeia*. The same locomotive formed the 5Q78 06.50 Birkenhead North-Sims, Newport on December 11 with Nos. 508103/136 in tow and again on December 18, conveying Nos. 508120/131.

CLASS 555

AFTER a gap of over six months, deliveries of new Tyne & Wear Metro units have recommenced. Having arrived in the United Kingdom the previous day, Nos. 555013/015 were hauled from Dollands Moor to Wembley by DB Cargo No. 66181 on December 13. In the early hours of December 15, RailAdventure power car Nos. 43468/480 formed the 7Q55 01.10 Wembley-York with the pair in tow, continuing to Pelaw the next day.

CLASS 701 ARTERIO

DESPITE the delays in their continued introduction (see *Headline News*), deliveries of new Aventra units from Alstom, Derby continued in December. Following the emergence of No. 701524 (which was hauled to Eastleigh TMD by GB Railfreight No. 47749 *City of Truro*) on November 24, No. 701525 was released on December 1, being moved from Derby to Eastleigh by GBRf No. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle/Caisteal Dhùn Èideann*. It was followed



TfW Rail Class 197s made their debut on the Vale of Glamorgan and Maesteg line on December 10, 2023, when a pair of two-car diesel multiple units undertook gauging work on all platforms. At Tondy signalbox, where the token to and from Maesteg is returned, TfW Nos. 197004/005 form the 3Z61 14.15 Maesteg-Bridgend gauging run. Kieran Marshall

on December 19 by No. 701526, which was brought south by No. 47749, running as the 5Q20 09.09 Derby Litchurch Lane-Eastleigh. The same '47' also hauled No. 701003 from Derby to Wembley on December 5, this set having been returned to Derby from Workop (where it had been located for just over a year) as long ago as June 29, 2022.

Another two sets were taken to Bicester for storage on December 20, the movement of Nos. 701520/522 from Eastleigh also being undertaken by GBRf No. 47749. Two sets have also been returned to Eastleigh in recent weeks: No. 701002 from Wembley on November 30 and No. 701005 from Workop on December 14. Both were moved using GBRf No. 47727.

CLASS 710 AVENTRA

RELEASED into service with London Overground on the Euston to Watford Junction route in December was No. 710375. The next to enter service should be No. 710270, which was hauled from Ilford to Willesden by GB Railfreight Nos. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle*/*Caisteal Dhùn Èideann* and 47749 *City of Truro* on December 6. It should enter traffic following a period of fault-free running which is due to begin before the end of January. This will leave just one set, No. 710374, still to be put into service.

CLASS 720 AVENTRA

PUT into traffic on December 22 for the first time was Greater Anglia No. 720509, its debut working being the 1N38 16.15 Liverpool Street-Clacton. The unit had emerged from Alstom, Derby on December 12, when it was hauled to Wembley Yard by GB Railfreight No. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle*/*Caisteal Dhùn Èideann*.

CLASS 730 AVENTRA

DELIVERIES of new sets from Alstom, Derby have been No. 730027 – which was hauled to Oxley by Rail Operations Group Nos. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer* and 37601 *Perseus* on December 11, and Nos. 730004/045 by No. 37601 again three days later. No. 37601 was also employed to take No. 730103 from Oxley to Brush, Loughborough on December 14, and then the following day formed the 5Q23 08.40 Gascoigne Wood-Doncaster Belmont Yard with No. 730036 in tow.



Avanti West Coast No. 807002 stands at Darlington on December 20, 2023. The seven-car electric multiple unit was hauled from Newton Aycliffe to Darlington by GB Railfreight No. 69008 before running to Oxley under its own power, via Edinburgh and the West Coast Main Line. AWC has 10 '807s', financed by Rock Rail, on order. They had been intended for a new half-hourly London Euston-Liverpool Lime Street service, but that has been cancelled. Tony Winward

An attempt was made to move No. 730101 from Oxley to Melton Rail Innovation & Development Centre on November 30, but the convoy of ROG No. 37800 *Cassiopeia* and the unit was terminated short, and it resumed its journey, which ran as the 8Q58 23.00 Central Rivers-Melton RIDC with Nos. 37800 and 37901 in top and tail mode, on December 15.

New units into service on the

peak hour diagrams into and out of London Euston (RE332) have been Nos. 730012/013 (November 28), 730014 (November 30) and 730019 (December 12).

CLASS 755 FLIRT

ON December 5, Greater Anglia No. 755404 visited Derby Etches Park for tyre turning, returning to Norwich Crown Point the next day. Similarly,

No. 755409 formed the 5Q57 06.16 Norwich Crown Point-Derby Etches Park on December 19, and then the 5Q48 16.07 return working on December 20.

CLASS 777

PRESENT at Wembley Yard since November 15, No. 777022 was moved to Walton Old Junction (Warrington) by RailAdventure's four operational power cars, Nos. 43465/484 and 43468/480, on December 7. It joined No. 777021 at Walton. The same power cars also worked the 6Q77 18.29 Wembley Yard-Walton Old Junction on December 18, conveying Nos. 777032/034. The next day they formed the 6Q79 23.09 Walton Old Junction-Kirkdale with Nos. 777021/022.

The first '777' diagram on the Southport to Liverpool South Parkway circuit was introduced on December 11, No. 777020 being used on the first day. A single diagram is in operation on the route for the time being. Put into revenue-earning service during December were Nos. 777019/026/028/030.

IET

CLASS 800 AZUMA

EMERGING from Arlington, Eastleigh on December 1 following completion of crack repairs was London North Eastern Railway (LNER) No. 800209. The five-car bi-mode ran to Reading and thence to Bounds Green.

CLASS 810

ON November 27, No. 810001 ran from Melton Rail Innovation & Development Centre to Derby Etches Park for tyre turning, returning late the next day (RE332). A further move saw the unit, which is the first of a fleet of 33 bi-mode units for East Midlands Railway, run from Melton RIDC to Doncaster Carr.

DEPOT TALK

Correct to December 16, 2023

Allocations

150269/270 CF/HLHQ-NL/EDHQ
153358/363 sent for disposal
156416 NH-HT
170206/207 CF/HLQ-DY/EMHQ
196112 HQ-TS
197005/045 HQ-CH
197122 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
319217/219 sent for disposal
319367/375/378/384 sent for disposal
331001-009 AN-NL
331102-105/108-111 NL-AN
398013 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
508103/136/139/141 sent for disposal
555013/015 newly delivered GF/PXGG
701523-525 newly delivered HQ/HYHQ
720608 HQ-EM
730012-014/016/018/019/021 HQ-BY
730045/047 newly delivered HQ/EJHQ
756116/117 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
777024/026/028/030 HQ-KD
777140 HQ-KD
805008/009 newly delivered HQ/HFHQ

Liveries

Blue and grey: 507001
East Midlands Railway Purple: 170422
South Western Railway: 444026, 458424

Named

185113 *Hull Paragon 175 years*
197049 *Castell Caeriw Cyflym/ Carew Castle Express*
802210 *Hailes Castle*

Names removed

508136 *Wilfred Owen MC*

Renumbered

458524-458424

Formations

458424: 67624+74024+74124+67724

Now in passenger traffic

196112
197005/045
720608
730012-014/016/018/019/021
777024/026/028/030
777140

Now in parcels traffic

321419

Sold

Great Central Railway: 153371

To industrial use

Greater Manchester Fire Training Centre: 144010

Stored/stopped locations

Bournemouth: 458424
Cardiff Canton: 175101/109, 756116/117
Castle Donington: 768001
Central Rivers: 730101
Crewe Gresty Green: 175006, 175116
Crewe South Yard: 197117/118/120
Derby Litchurch Lane: 701002/005
Eastleigh: 701523-525
Ilford: 175108
Kirkdale: 777025/027
Landore: 175104
Long Marston: 701517/519
Brush Traction, Loughborough: 730103
MoD Bicester: 701507/511/515/516
Northampton: 319214
Old Dalby: 730101
Oxley: 730004/027/045/047, 730206
Walton Old Junction: 777022
Willesden: 720509

Disposals

Sims Metals, Beeston: Arrival date: December 8: 153358
Sims Metals, Newport: Arrival dates: November 6: 508112/137 (corrected date); November 20: 319375; November 27: 153363; 508139/141; November 29: 319378; December 6: 319217/219; December 11: 508103/136; December 13: 319367/384

DBC completes second batch of 'Stegosaurus' coil conversions

The final 12 wagons, all rebuilt from BYA hooded steel carriers, have been outshopped, bringing the total number of the distinctive conversions up to 70.

DB CARGO UK's Stoke-on-Trent workshop has completed the second round of 'Stegosaurus' coil conversions from Thrall Europa-built 'Nissan hut' wagons. The additional 40 vehicles

brings the total fleet strength to 70 wagons, or just under a quarter of the original build of 50 BRA and 260 BYA steel carriers.

Of the final 12 to be returned to

service, Nos. 966029/44/6/160 were the first on December 4. The next to depart on the Arpley 'tripper' were Nos. 966125/54/76 on December 14, and they were followed by Nos. 966043/138/158/239 on

December 18. The final wagon to be converted at the former Marcroft Engineering site was No. 966082, and this headed back into traffic on December 21. 

DEVELOPMENTS

■ **FREIGHTLINER:** Overhauled KTA 'pocket' wagons Nos. GERS 97708/25/30 were the load for Freightliner's sole Class 47 on December 7, No. 47830 *Beeching's Legacy* being tasked with a 4H40 10.06 Stoke (Marcroft)-Crewe Basford Hall.

■ **GB RAILFREIGHT:** The penultimate delivery of FEA-G 'twin' container flats arrived in the UK in the second week of December, being sent north behind No. 66721 *Harry Beck* on December 16. The 4Z92 03.45 Dollands Moor-Peterborough Yard was formed of FEA-G Nos. 81 70 4663 261-280. This leaves just Nos. 81 70 4663 281-300 to make their way through the Channel Tunnel.

Meanwhile, GBRf has sent 24 former IIA biomass hoppers to WH Davis at Langwith Junction for reworking as cutdown aggregate hoppers. No. 66788 *Locomotion 15* was in charge of the move from York Holgate that featured Nos. 37 70 6955 225/235/248/257/245/267/273/274/277/282/284/286-288/312/315/320/321/323/329-331/342/343. This leaves the operator with just over 50 of the UIC code Fabfnoos hoppers still at their original length, albeit around half have had their roof doors (for biomass traffic) removed.

■ **NETWORK RAIL:** The period under review was busy for Steve Beniston's large logo No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach*, which has continued to ferry converted JNA-Y 'hawk' ballast wagons and MRA donors between Loram Rail's Derby RTC site and Toton North Yard. On October 30, the 6Z38 16.22 Toton-Derby included side-tippers Nos. 501020/80/178-80. On November 9, the 6Z37 18.30 Derby-Toton was made up of freshly-repainted Nos. 81 70 5831 188-191. Just under three weeks later, on November 29, the Class 37/4 was despatched with 'Hawks' Nos. 81 70 5831 197 (heading to the Nottinghamshire yard for the second time after being sent back to Loram for rectification on November 21)

and 81 70 5831 199-201 as a 6Z37 10.00 to Toton, returning as a 6Z38 (depart 12.22) with MRAs Nos. 501003/62/124/32/8. There were two more deliveries of JNA-Y boxes on December 12 and 20 respectively, the 6Z37 (depart 12.08) being comprised of Nos. 81 70 5831 202-207, while the 6Z37 (depart 10.00) eight days later featured Nos. 81 70 5831 208-211.

■ **TOUAX RAIL:** It was unlucky 13 for the baker's dozen of TDA tanks that formed the 6Z73 07.14 Margam-Liverpool EMR on December 16 behind No. 66175 *Rail Riders Express*. Nos. TIPH 78204/7/13/20/1/6/31/7/43/7/58-60/2 are the latest examples of these classic 90-tonne bogie vehicles to head for scrap and will leave 43 of the original 77 Marley Industries-built wagons intact. They were built for Tiphook in four batches between 1990 and 1993, with all being delivered in grey/red with Total branding except Murco red/white/blue Nos. TIPH 78253-62. Also, along for the ride from Margam was TEA No. GERS 89024, which was removed at Warrington Arpley for onward movement to Stoke for attention.

■ **VTG RAIL:** Originally built by Marcroft Engineering for CAIB/Railtrack during 1998-1999 using an eclectic mix of recovered bogies and brake equipment, the 120 green JNA-A box wagons are now coming to the end of their lives. Despite the harsh environment in which they work, some 113 examples were still extant at the beginning of this year, and all were allocated to Mendip Rail duties. December 4 saw a pair of moves of now off-lease wagons, totalling some 65 vehicles. Freightliner No. 70016 hauled the 6E53 10.20 Basford Hall-Gascoigne Wood with Nos. VTG 3404/6/8/10/1/4/9/23/4/8/30/1/7/9/43-5/7/8/50/3-7/9/61-3/6/7/9 in tow. Meanwhile, DB Cargo UK No. 66116 was tasked with a short distance 6Z32 09.52 Acton-Wembley Yard comprised of Nos. JNA VTG 3405/15/21/2/5/52/64/72/4/7/84/9/90/8, VTG 3513-5, as well

as former Yeoman boxes Nos. VTG 3145/6 (JXA), VTG 3162/6/8 and VTG 3259 (JNA), and ex-Channel Tunnel' boxes Nos. KEA VTG 3193/4/9, VTG 3200/10/1/4/6/25/45. The latter were most notably used for originally carrying pre-cast concrete tunnel lining segments when they were new.

■ **DISPOSALS:** As well as the standard bogie bolster BDA and BEA variants that have been going for scrap, DB has now disbanded its last remaining cable drum carrying YVA set. DB No. 66063, fresh off railhead treatment train (RHTT) duties, did the honours, powering a 6Z20 05.19 Hinksey Sidings-Kingsbury on December 13 that included Nos. KDC 950048/56/64/93/8/113/221/36 9/444/807/49. VXA generator vans Nos. 200493/879 that previously bookended the train were not included in the consist.

In the South West, Henry Orchard & Sons has continued to break up the remaining CDA china clay hoppers at St Blazey, with Nos. 375019/51/7 1/82/5/95/7/103/4/14/20 being disposed of during the period under review. This leaves just 19 examples,

Nos. 375054/72/4-8/87/93/4/9/107/8/12/6/8/21/5/35/7, still to be processed as of December 8. Meanwhile, the long-stored MEAs at Swansea Burrows have also met their fate, Nos. 391120/4/40/7/53/208/14/31/2/4/54/81/6/307/17/27/42/52/63/5/76/94/423/5/68/91/9/516/4 3/8/60/76/82/5/612/41/72/5/688/93 all being transferred by road to EMR Cardiff for scrapping.

Other recent disposals are:

EMR Attercliffe: OCA 112127, BDA 950002/232/403/73, BEA 950549/673/796, 951066/157, YWA 996474

C F Booth Ltd, Rotherham: SPA 460019/209/340/383/824, 461048, SSA 470072/98

EMR Kingsbury: OCA 112021/60/131/63/81/219/79, MHA/MPA 39 4141/63/207/55/318/62/647/89 6/97/937, BDA 950010/204/517, BEA 950576/783/888/932/63/8, 951192/246

Cardiff Tidal: BDA 950260/297/342, BEA 951188

Margam: BAA 900074/134, BCA 900046/84/5/102/63/200/21, BZA 900053/75/105/9/14/33/58, BLA 910035/202/30/59/566



Brand new JNA-V No. 81 70 5932 813-5 GB-VTGU stands inside the workshops of W H Davis at Langwith Junction during December 2023. Twenty-five of these rugged boxes have been ordered by VTG for hire to Direct Rail Services and they will be numbered 81 70 5932 812-836. They will be followed by a speculative batch of 35 similar wagons that have yet to be allocated to a customer (RE331). WH Davis

Locomotive Services acquires more Mk.2 'air-cons' from DB Cargo UK

Former Fife circle Mk.2s join expanding Crewe fleet

LOCOMOTIVE Services has acquired five maroon Mk.2f vehicles from DB Cargo UK. The coaches, Tourist Standard Open (TSO) Nos. 5922/924/959, 6036 and 6152, were hauled from Worksop to Crewe by another recent LS acquisition, No. 37409, on November 29. Also in the consist, dead in tow, were GB Railfreight No. 57303 and LS Nos. D8096, D8107 (20096, 20107).

Two of the coaches, Nos. 5922 and 6036, are expected to be used as spares donors for the growing LS fleet, while the other three are to undergo assessment. All five were taken from Crewe to Arlington, Eastleigh by Nos. 37409 and D6817 (37521) on December 6.

The five coaches, together with Brake Standard Open (BSO) Nos. 9529/531, last saw regular use with ScotRail between 2008 and 2010 on peak-hour Fife circle workings. All seven were moved to Eastleigh TMD for storage in 2011 and have since had periods at Bescot, Doncaster Belmont and Milford Sidings, as well as being used for evacuation testing at Healey Mills.

They were moved to Worksop Up Reception Sidings in March 2021, from where they have been gradually sold. No. 9531 is now based at the Weardale Railway, with the other six joining the

LS fleet; No. 9529 was dispatched to Great Yarmouth for attention by Eastern Rail Services in June 2023, leaving the remaining five to be taken to Crewe later in the year.

Between 2008 and 2015, ScotRail used 23 different Mk.2 vehicles supplied by EWS/DB, most of which are still in existence (see table). Many are only being used to provide spare parts, particularly those now owned by Riviera Trains, some of which had suffered vandalism and fire damage while stored at Thornton Yard in 2017. Riviera also purchased the three vehicles which were subsequently scrapped by Raxstar at Eastleigh, following spares recovery.

■ Several other coaches have also visited Arlington, Eastleigh, in recent weeks, to enable a predominantly Mk.2 'air con' rake to be formed by Locomotive Services for use on Steam Dreams' 'Santa Steam Express' trips from London Victoria, which ran on several days in December.

December 8, saw No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* take Buffet First Open (RFO) No. 1203, First Open (FO) No. 3438, Tourist Standard Open (TSO) Nos. 5366, 5912/91, Brake Standard Open (BSO) No. 9513, First Open Buffet (FOB) No. 10411 and Corridor First (FK) No. 13227 from Crewe to Eastleigh. They were joined two days later by Nos. 3330

FORMER EWS/DB MK.2 'AIR-CONS' HIRED TO SCOTRAIL - 2008 TO 2015

Number	Type	Owner/Status/Location
3279	Mk.2f FO	Riviera Trains, Burton
3292	Mk.2f FO	Riviera Trains, Burton
3318	Mk.2f FO	Riviera Trains, Burton
3331	Mk.2f FO	Riviera Trains, Burton
3358	Mk.2f FO	Riviera Trains, Burton
3400	Mk.2f FO	Riviera Trains, Burton
3424	Mk.2f FO	Riviera Trains, Burton
5631	Mk.2d TSO	Riviera Trains, Burton
5632	Mk.2d TSO	Scrapped, Raxstar at Eastleigh, December 2018
5657	Mk.2d TSO	Riviera Trains, Burton
5922	Mk.2f TSO	Locomotive Services, Eastleigh
5924	Mk.2f TSO	Locomotive Services, Eastleigh
5954	Mk.2f TSO	Riviera Trains, Burton
5959	Mk.2f TSO	Locomotive Services, Eastleigh
6036	Mk.2f TSO	Locomotive Services, Eastleigh
6110	Mk.2f TSO	Riviera Trains, Burton
6139	Mk.2f TSO	Riviera Trains, Burton
6152	Mk.2f TSO	Locomotive Services, Eastleigh
9494	Mk.2e BSO	Scrapped, Raxstar at Eastleigh, December 2018
9506*	Mk.2e BSO	Direct Rail Services, Escort coach
9522	Mk.2f BSO	Scrapped, Raxstar at Eastleigh, December 2018
9529	Mk.2f BSO	Locomotive Services, Great Yarmouth
9531	Mk.2f BSO	Weardale Railway

Note *: 9506 was hired to DB Schenker from Cargo-D.

and 9479, which arrived from Crewe, sandwiched between Nos. 20118 and D6851 (37667) *Flopsie*.

Subsequently, a charter rake was made up, comprising Nos. 1203, 3438,

5366, 5912, 9479 13227 plus Nos. 5919, 6046, 6173 and 9513 hired from Eastern Rail Services and support coach No. 35461. Following the charters, the set moved to Crewe on December 22. ■

IN BRIEF

RIVIERA RETURNEES

MAKING its first appearance in service for several years, Mk.2f Tourist Standard Open (TSO) No. 5952 was one of the coaches used on the 'Polar Express' trains from Edinburgh throughout December. Last used on Fife circle duties in 2019, it was repainted into blue/grey at Arlington, Eastleigh in 2020, but then spent over three years at Knottingley where Controlled Emission Toilet (CET) work was undertaken.

Similarly, TSO No. 6176, which was also at Knottingley for three years after repainting out of ScotRail colours at Eastleigh, returned to charter use on December 16, when it was used in 'The Midland-Ian' tour promoted by Pathfinder Railtours.

HST COACHES MOVE TO UPPERBY

SIX HST coaches from the Locomotive Services fleet - Trailer First Restaurant Buffet (TRFB) No. 40221, Trailer First (TF) Nos. 41063, 41117, Trailer Standard (TS) Nos. 42100, 42220 and Trailer Guard Standard (TGS) No. 44047 - were hauled from Crewe to Carlisle Upperby by Nos. D6817 (37521) and 37409 on ongoing storage.



← **TRANSPENNINE Express**
No. 68030 *Black Douglas* leads TPE Mk.5A sets TP02 and TP06 through Kirkham Abbey on December 15, forming the 5Z68 07.53 Scarborough TMD-Gascoigne Wood. TPE No. 68025 *Superb* was on the rear. With the final TransPennine Express workings having taken place the previous weekend (see *Headline News*), the two Mk.5A sets left at Scarborough, sets TP02 (Nos. 11502, 12704-706, 12814) and TP06 (Nos. 11506, 12716-718, 12806) were coupled together and taken to Gascoigne Wood for storage. The Driving Standard Open (DSO) in set TP02, No. 12814, was originally built as a spare vehicle, and has replaced No. 12802 which is stored at CAF's Newport factory. Keitao Ma

DEPOT TALK

Correct to December 16, 2023
Stored/stopped locations
Carlisle Upperby: 40221, 41063, 41117, 42100, 42220, 44047
Crewe South Yard: 11505/507-510, 12713-715/719-730, 12805/807-810

Eastleigh Works: 5922/924/959, 6036, 6152
Gascoigne Wood: 11502/506, 12704-706/716-718, 12806/814
Longsight: 11503/504/511-513, 12707-712/731-739, 12803/

804/811-813
Wolverton: 11501, 12701-703, 12801

Disposals
C F Booth Ltd, Rotherham: Cut dates: November 24: 12486

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Great Central Railway acquires two Class 153s, but not for preservation

Second generation units bought for testing and training as GCR seeks more main line contract work.

THE Great Central Railway has become the first line to take delivery of a complete Class 153 diesel multiple unit with the arrival of No. 153371 from Long Marston on December 11.

The former West Midlands Trains single-car unit, which was handed back to Porterbrook in October 2020, is due to be joined by No. 153308, a

former Angel Trains unit which last saw use with East Midlands Railway in December 2021. Since then, it has been stored at Ely Papworth.

The GCR is keen to emphasise that the pair of '153s' have not been acquired for preservation but are for use by its training and testing department. In the past, the line

has provided facilities for main line operators to undertake crew training, using its fleet of first generation DMUs. The '153s' will enable a more modern unit to be used for this function.

Additionally, it is hoped to use them for other commercial training contracts and they could also provide a testbed for other technology testing work; the GCR is able to operate test trains at speeds of up to 75 mph. Further work could include filming

contracts; several Pacers have been used for such work on other preserved railways where more modern rolling stock has been required by film-makers.

■ The only other Class 153 to have been obtained by a heritage line so far is No. 153374, although it is in the form of a grounded bodysell. Based at the Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway, it is being used to create a community cafe at its Cynheidre headquarters. ■

COACH NEWS

BFK MOVEMENTS

PREVIOUSLY based at the Mid Hants Railway, Mk.1 Brake First Corridor (BFK) No. 14023 has been purchased by the Mid-Norfolk Railway and is receiving attention to return it to service. The coach was, until 2003, part of the EWS charter fleet as No. 17023.

Another Mk.1 BFK, No. 14007, has recently moved from the North Yorkshire Moors Railway to the Chasewater Railway. It previously acted as a support coach for LNER B1 No. 61264.

DARTMOUTH ADDITION

USED as a dining coach since the 1990s initially at the Llangollen Railway and then at the Bodmin & Wenford Railway from 2002, Mk.1 Tourist Standard Open (TSO) No. 4484 has been acquired by the Dartmouth Steam Railway. It is now fitted with '2+1' First Class seating.

SECOND MK.3 SLEEPER FOR EMB SAY

THE Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway has gained a second Mk.3 Sleeper, with the arrival of No. 10565 from the East Lancashire Railway. It joins No. 10698 which, following repatriation from Denmark, has been located at Embsay since 2002.



The Class 40 Preservation Society's No. 40106 has temporarily lost its *Atlantic Conveyor* nameplates as part of an effort to return the locomotive to close to 1978 condition, prior to its repaint at Crewe Works in October that year. Other changes made have included the application of a BR blue data panel and black buffer beams/yellow horn grills at one end. On December 27, 2023, No. 40106 stands at Bridgnorth with the 17.33 to Kidderminster. Tom McAtee

MULTIPLE UNIT DEVELOPMENTS

WEARDALE DMU REPAIRS COMPLETED

COLLISION damage repairs to Class 108 Driving Motor Composite Lavatory (DMCL) No. 52054 have been completed by Rampart Engineering at Barrow Hill, and the vehicle was returned to its Weardale Railway base at the end of November. Also moved at the same time was another Class 108 DMCL, No. 51572, which was acquired by the Weardale Railway from the Wensleydale Railway to provide parts to assist with the repair

of No. 52054. It is expected to be used as a spares donor for the Weardale's fleet.

CLASS 104 PROGRESS

FOLLOWING its move to the East Lancashire Railway in November (RE332), a start has been made on assessing the condition of Class 104 Driving Motor Composite Lavatory (DMCL) No. 50531, which last ran under power at the Telford Steam Railway more than 15 years ago. One engine was

successfully started on December 10, and the same day saw an engine from its former partner, Driving Motor Brake Second (DMBS) No. 50479, started at the North Norfolk Railway.

PANTOGRAPH OBTAINED FOR PRESERVED CLASS 313

THE 400 Series Preservation Group, which owns No. 313201, has acquired a Stone Faiveley AMBR Pantograph, VCB and associated parts with a view to restoring the 25kV AC capability on the

unit. Its pantograph and equipment were removed when the set was refurbished for Southern in 2010 following its transfer from London Overground.

THUMPER REPAIRS

ONE car from the Epping Ongar Railway's Diesel Electric Multiple Unit No. 205205, Driving Trailer Standard Open Lavatory (DTSOL) No. 60810, has been dispatched to Nemesis Rail at Burton for bodywork repairs. The set has been out of action awaiting this work since 2019.



Pioneer No. 47401 North Eastern has returned to traffic at the Midland Railway Butterley. On December 2, 2023, the '47/4' arrives at Butterley while hauling a Santa Special. Robert Reedman

DIESEL DIARY

Second joint Ecclesbourne/Peak Rail gala announced

AFTER a successful collaboration in 2023, when the two railways held a joint diesel gala with vintage buses providing a connection between the two lines, the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway and Peak Rail are to hold another joint event in 2024; the three-day gala will take place on April 11-13.

This is in addition to the '14s@60' event being held at Ecclesbourne in July, for which another attendee has recently been announced – No. D9529 from the Nene Valley Railway will be attending. At least one more visitor is still to be announced.

The Kent & East Sussex Railway

has also announced that it will be holding a diesel gala in April, the first occasion it has held such an event for many years. In addition to resident Class 14 No. D9504 and recent arrival No. 20087, discussions are taking place regarding at least one more visitor.

2024 GALA DATES

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

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

April 12-14: Kent & East Sussex Railway

April 26-28: Great Central Railway

May 10-12: Swanage Railway

May 16-19: Severn Valley Railway

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

May 25-27: Mid-Norfolk Railway

June 6-8: West Somerset Railway

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

June 14-16: North Yorkshire Moors Railway

June 20-23: Keighley & Worth Valley Railway

June 27-29: East Lancashire Railway

July 12-14: Gloucestershire-Warwickshire Steam Railway

July 12-14: Mid Hants Railway

July 25-28: 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

SRPS Class 47 tyre appeal launched

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society has launched an appeal to raise funds for the re-tying of No. 47643 which has been stopped since December 2022.

The Brush Type 4, which was based in Scotland for almost all of its 26 years in BR service between 1965 and 1991, has been preserved at the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway since 1995, and its tyres were already well-worn when it was acquired from Inverness depot. These had reached a condition

whereby, at the end of 2022, the locomotive had to be taken out of traffic at Bo'ness.

It is now estimated that to strip the bogies, take out the wheelsets and send them to the South Devon Railway for new tyres to be fitted, will cost in the region of £80,000. Donations can be made by visiting cafdonate.cafonline.org/25163#

Another locomotive based at the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway which is undergoing bogie work, is the Scottish

Thirty-Seven Group's No. 37025 *Inverness TMD*. A pair of replacement bogies from No. 37214 are being overhauled for use under the '37', which is currently on life-expired bogies and restricted to yard duties at Bo'ness. Because of this, it was used to shunt No. 47643 into the bay platform for display at the line's gala on December 29.

It is hoped to have No. 37025 back in service in either late-2024 or the first part of 2025.

IN BRIEF

HYMEK READY FOR SERVICE

STOPPED in August 2023 after an issue with classmate No. D7018, the Diesel & Electric Preservation Group's No. D7017 has been declared ready to return to service. A problem with its engine governor has been resolved and a loaded test run is expected to take place in March. Meanwhile, No. D7018 remains in quarantine; several possible causes into the Hymek's uncommanded movement at Williton depot back in August (RE329) have been identified and testing is to be carried out to narrow this down further.

POLAR EXPRESS HIRES

IN addition to the use of No. 47701 at the Wensleydale Railway (see RE332), two other locomotives made short-term visits to other lines to provide traction for Polar Express trains during December. No. 20048 left the Severn Valley Railway on December 1, for a temporary visit to the Churnet Valley Railway, acting as cover for No. 33102, while No. 09107 was also loaned from the Severn Valley Railway to the Telford Steam Railway.

VINTAGE TRAINS CLASS 37 REACHES TYSELEY AT LAST

ACQUIRED by Vintage Trains from Boden Rail Engineering in October 2022, No. 37240 finally arrived at Tyseley from Nottingham Eastcroft on December 19. Currently sat on a pair of accommodation bogies, it will undergo a swap once its bogie overhaul has been complete. The English Electric Type 3, which is expected to retain its Transrail colour scheme for the time being, will then take up its duties on Vintage Trains charters.

SULZER TYPE 2 STOPPED

LEAKING liners has resulted in No. 5081 (24081) being taken out of traffic at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway. It is hoped to have the locomotive back in service during the summer.

NORTH STAR BACK IN ACTION

DURING December, the top end engine overhaul of the Diesel & Electric Preservation Group's No. 47077 *North Star* was completed at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. A successful loaded test run was undertaken on December 22.



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Irish government confirms two railway reopenings for 2025

Draft All Island Strategic Rail Review identifies railway reopenings.

THE Irish government has approved the reinstatement of the Athenry to Claremorris and Waterford (Belview) to Rosslare Strand lines, which were mothballed in 2001 and 2010 respectively.

The decision was announced on December 5.

These reinstatements had been identified in the *Draft All Island Strategic Rail Review* as potentially being important passenger and freight links in the cross-country route between Rosslare Europort and Ballina.

The decision to reopen the lines was made before a formal adoption of recommendations contained in the review. Previously, on November 27, transport minister Eamon Ryan, Iarnród Éireann CEO Jim Meade and other VIPs attended a ceremony at Woodbrook,

between Shankill and Bray in south Dublin, to mark the start of construction of a new DART station. Planned to be opened during 2025, this will feature two 174m platforms and the usual elements of an inner suburban station. It is being provided prior to the building of more than 2000 houses on a green field site in an area which previously had a halt which closed in 1960.

On December 5, there was an announcement by IE that the long-awaited contract for the redevelopment

of Galway station had been awarded to BAM Ireland and that the €24 million project was to start in early 2024. Three new platform faces will increase the total to five, while passenger and staff facilities will also be upgraded.

On the freight side, Boliden, owner of Tara Mines at Navan, stated that it was hoped to resume mining operations during 2024, which would see a resumption of the bulk ore traffic from Navan to Dublin Alexandra Road which was suspended last September. 

Harper announces money for Northern Ireland

SECRETARY of State for Transport Mark Harper announced on December 7, that Translink was to receive a total of £4.8 million as part of the Union Connectivity Review.

The money will fund a £3.3m study to examine the feasibility and value of electrification of the railway between Belfast to the border. Other projects to receive funding are a £700,000 feasibility study to examine the possible reopening of the mothballed Lisburn to Antrim branch with a new connection to Belfast International Airport, and a further £800,000 study into reinstating the closed Portadown to Armagh line, which shut in 1957.

A previous study of the latter scheme, jointly financed by the Department for Infrastructure and the local council, had found that reinstatement was technically deliverable and would also promote sustainable travel. The three projects were included in the *Draft All Island Strategic Rail Review*.



On December 11, 2023, GM 075 powers the 11.25 Waterford-Ballina XPO container train through Muine Bheag (Bagenalstown), passing Track Recording Vehicle (TRV) No. 701, which is waiting to head south. Finbarr O'Neill

NORTHERN IRELAND RAILWAYS (NIR)

■ **STRIKE:** Translink employees in the Unite, GMB and SIPTU trade unions staged an all-out strike on December 1, after discussions with management regarding a cost-of-living wage increase broke down. The strike, the first for the publicly-owned company since 2015, saw no rail or bus services operating in the province on that date. No trains ran north of Dundalk and a limited service was provided between there and Dublin. Further action was taken on December 15, when another all-out strike saw all services cancelled.

■ **TRAFFIC AND TRACTION:** The 09.10 Belfast Great Victoria Street (GVS)-Londonderry on November 30, terminated at Bellarena after being delayed en route. The return 11.38 ex-Londonderry started from Bellarena. Services on the Portadown to Bangor corridor were exceptionally busy on December 2, with extra trains running

between Portadown and Belfast on a regular basis. Demand for travel on December 9 saw the 10.38 Londonderry-GVS full and standing from Ballymoney. A landslip between Ballymena and Ballymoney caused by heavy rain saw delays, with the 16.38 ex-Londonderry reported to have started from Coleraine. A 12.49 Coleraine-GVS extra ran on December 10, to augment timetabled services.

■ **NIR INFRASTRUCTURE:** Fitting out of the main buildings and tracklaying continues at the new Belfast Grand Central station with each platform line in place and points and crossings (P&C) installed at the station throat but not yet connected to the existing track in the Westlink Junction area. This will be carried out later during a total possession. Two signal gantries that will each carry starters for their respective platforms 1-4 and 5-8 have been erected. The

Lisburn Area Renewals Project is progressing with new P&C installed at the Portadown end of Lisburn station. The layout replicates the previous arrangement but is located further from the platform ends and features longer radius P&C. The extension to platform 3 is almost complete and incorporates a curve due to a requirement to provide sufficient space to accommodate the downside outer loop. This running loop which will be fully signalled when commissioned will provide extra operating flexibility. This was not fully available previously due to track curvature, with access to the outer loop and yard being made via the Belfast end connection. New down signals to control the layout at the Portadown end of Lisburn have been erected on the main line and Antrim branch and are sited beyond the existing ones but have yet to be commissioned. A stop block remains in place on the Antrim branch at the

site of Knockmore Junction and no work has commenced in this area on the planned new Lisburn West station. Work continues at Derriaghoy on extending the up platform and building a new down platform on the Belfast side of the adjacent A1 Road bridge. The foundations for the platform extensions at Adelaide are in place.

■ **PRESERVATION:** Members of the Downpatrick and County Down Railway (D&CDR) continued to repair locomotives, DEMUs and other stock damaged by flooding in early November (RE332). Progress had been made returning three-car diesel electric multiple unit (DEMU) No. 458 and locomotive No. 617 to traffic by early December but further flooding during the weekend of December 9/10 saw as much stock as possible removed to, and stabled in, sidings on higher parts of Downpatrick yard.

IARNRÓD ÉIREANN/IRISH RAIL

■ **NEWS:** A new systemwide timetable was introduced on December 10. Principal alterations were a new 06.00 Dublin Heuston-Cork on Mondays to Fridays (M-F), arriving at Cork at 08.32 with a connection at Limerick Junction to/from Limerick. A new 07.20 (M-F) Cork-Mallow, 07.50 return and 12.20 (M-F) Heuston-Carlton, 15.15 return.

On Sundays there are eight extra trains from Portlaoise to Heuston, with seven returns. A new 16.20 (M-F) Westport-Athlone and 21.08 Athlone-Westport with connections with the latter service at Manulla Junction for Ballina and Foxford passengers. There are also new (M-F) 12.20, 13.27, 14.20 Connolly-Drogheda, 11.40 and 12.40 returns.

■ **TRAFFIC AND TRACTION:** HVO-fuelled No. 218 was a regular performer on Dublin-Cork Mk.4 trains during late November and early December. The 06.49 Hazelhatch-Grand Canal Dock and 07.48 return were cancelled on November 27, while the 07.05 Drogheda-Bray became problematic between Sydney Parade and Booterstown which delayed other services until the issue was resolved.

Services on the Mallow-Tralee line on November 29 were disrupted around midday after a road vehicle damaged a level crossing at Rathmore. Late-morning trains in each direction between Connolly and Pearse stations were suspended on November 30, due to a bridge strike. Services resumed

after the structure was inspected and declared safe. A technical issue caused the 10.10 Malahide-Bray to be terminated at Connolly on December 1, and the return working, the 11.35 Bray-Howth, was also cancelled. The 17.10 Heuston-Westport and 18.20 Westport-Heuston were delayed near Castlerea and Roscommon respectively after a road traffic collision at a level crossing at Castlerea. Five-car ICR diesel multiple units were active on the Cross-Border route during the period under review. No 22x37 formed the 13.20 Connolly-Belfast Lanyon Place and 16.05 return on December 2, while the 18.05 ex-Lanyon Place was worked by Northern Ireland Railways (NIR) units Nos. 3001/005. December 5 saw two more incidents at level crossings that affected services. The 09.00 Cork-Tralee was delayed between Rathmore and Killarney while the 13.15 Westport-Heuston was delayed between Roscommon and Knockcroghery loop after a road vehicle damaged the crossing at Ballymurry.

The 17.55 Bray-Howth was terminated at Connolly on December 7 due to a mechanical issue on the electric multiple unit. Late-night extra services were scheduled to run at weekends between Dublin Connolly/Pearse to Dundalk, Maynooth, Kildare, Howth and Greystones from December 7 to 23. With two trains per route, departure times were from 23.50 to 02.00 with selected intermediate stations being served. Northbound DART services were suspended

temporarily on December 9 from around 12.45 due to a problem with the overhead line electrification at Clontarf Road, while a bridge strike at around 12.00 two days later saw services suspended between Pearse and Grand Canal Dock stations until the structure was inspected and declared safe. Also on December 11, evening peak services on the Howth branch were suspended temporarily because of signalling problems.

■ **FREIGHT TRAFFIC:** IWT container traffic between Dublin Port and Ballina continued to be buoyant with many trains fully loaded.

A typical train was the 09.37 from North Wall on November 30, which had five boxes with the remainder of the 18 wagon consist fully loaded with tank containers. No. 088 headed a fully loaded Ballina-bound IWT train on December 12. The Waterford (Belview) to Ballina XPO container flow continued to feature loads that varied in tonnage. On November 27, No. 074 worked the 11.25 from Waterford conveying six boxes and two tank containers. The 10.05 from Ballina the next day, hauled by No. 083, had 11 boxes while this service on December 5, was worked by No. 075 and conveyed seven boxes. This locomotive was in charge of a Ballina bound train on December 11 which had seven boxes and eight tank containers. No. 083 was noted at Westport on December 12, with a loaded timber train destined for Waterford.

■ **INFRASTRUCTURE:** The platform road and siding at Cobh were relayed in early-December. GMs Nos. 076 and 088 topped and tailed four flat wagons loaded with redundant track panels on December 2, destined, it was understood, for Portlaoise Permanent Way Yard. The Barrow Bridge on the mothballed Waterford (Belview) to Rosslare Strand line remains locked open for shipping and fenced off at each end to prevent trespass. Redundant and long-stored 1979 Plasser and Theurer built Ballast Cleaner No. 780 has been sold to a buyer in Italy. The machine, which was jointly owned by IE and NIR, began the road journey to its new home from Limerick Junction yard on December 6.

■ **SANTA SPECIALS:** The Railway Preservation Society of Ireland (RPSI) organised a series of Santa Special trains for the first three weekends of December, all of which sold out.

The Dublin Connolly to Maynooth and return trains featured steam haulage for two trips each day with one diesel hauled. On December 2 and 3 No. 072 hauled the consist of eight Cravens and former British Railways van No. 3173. This locomotive also hauled the empty coaching stock from Inchicore to Connolly and return which ran on both days due to there being no siding space available at Connolly. No. 076 was the traction for the booked diesel trips and ECS workings on December 9 and 10.



The Waterford-Ballina XPO container flow continues to feature varied tonnages depending upon customer requirements. On December 4, 2023, GM No. 071 Great Southern & Western Railway hauls the 11.25 Waterford-Ballina XPO container train through Knockmoylan, between Thomastown and Waterford. Finbarr O'Neill

Powerscene

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

CLASS 20

Resplendent in a new coat of red stripe Railfreight livery, Locomotive Services' No. 20118 *Saltburn-by-the-Sea* returned to action on December 12, heading the 5Z20 10.07 Crewe-Eastleigh Arlington along with Type 3 No. D6851 (37667). Sandwiching a pair of Mk.2 coaches, a stop was made at Reading Traincare to detach Mk.2f Open First (FO) No. 3330 for tyre turning. The coach was collected by the same locomotives the next day and returned to Crewe. Also, on December 13, Nos. 20007 and 20205 ran light from Peak Forest to the Severn Valley Railway at Kidderminster, where they were joined by Nos. 20142 *Sir John Betjeman* and 20189 on December 21, the duo having arrived from Tyseley Steam Centre. No. 20189 had previously been involved in several 'Polar Express' trips between Birmingham Moor Street, Dorridge and Whitlocks End with No. 7029

Clun Castle over the previous two weekends.

CLASS 33

Pathfinder Railtours' Chester Christmas Cromptons special on December 9, took Class 33s to the Roman city where for a brief spell in the mid-1980s they were daily visitors. The 1Z33 07.00 from Eastleigh travelled north behind West Coast Railways Nos. 33207 *Jim Martin* and 33029, with No. 47826 at the rear, routed via Salisbury, Westbury, the Severn Tunnel, Hereford, Shrewsbury and Wrexham.

CLASS 37

December 1 found Locomotive Services No. D6851 (37667) *Flopsie* taking charge of three Mk.2 coaches forming the 5Z37 13.57 Reading Traincare-Crewe via Northampton. The Type 3 was used on a private charter from London Victoria to Dover hauled by Bulleid Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton* on

December 11. Stablemate No. D6817 (37521) left Crewe bound for Eastleigh Arlington on December 6, with five Mk.2 coaches, only to succumb to a fault at Stafford. Rescue arrived from Crewe in the shape of recently resurrected No. 37409. Given a thorough wash at York Holgate Works following the railhead treatment train (RHTT) season, ahead of a charity photoshoot on December 16 (see feature, pages 84-86), four Direct Rail Services Type 3s Nos. 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob*, 37422 *Victorious*, 37716, 37419 *Driver Tony Kay 1974-2019* and 'tailed' by No. 66425 *Nigel J Kirchstein* returned together to Crewe on December 21.

To commemorate the end of the North Wales RHTT season, the final journey from Holyhead to Shrewsbury (Coleham) on December 7 was formed of Harry Needle Railroad Company No. 37405, Network Rail No. 97303 *Dave Berry* and Colas Railfreight

No. 56113 (all used by Colas through the season) followed by the wagons and No. 56051 *Survival* bringing up the rear.

On December 16, Colas Railfreight No. 37254 *Cardiff Canton* and HNRC No. 37405 (the latter hired by Colas) were paired to haul the 6K01 12.46 Doncaster Belmont-Dalreoch long welded rail train. From Millerhill the train was 'top and tailed' and during the weekend possession the Type 3s reached Balloch, yet, within five days, No. 37405 had ventured to Llandrindod Wells with NR No. 97304 *John Tiley* on the 6C42 17.50 from Basford Hall.

A regular in these columns, No. 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach* had a relatively quiet month moving wagons between Derby Railway Technical Centre and Toton on December 12 and again eight days later. The Saturday working of 6C56 09.50 Aberystwyth-Chirk timber train runs via Chester to run round used NR 97302 *Ffestiniog* &

Colas Railfreight No. 37254 *Cardiff Canton* and Harry Needle Railroad Company No. 37405 (hired by Colas) power the 6K01 12.46 Doncaster Belmont-Dalreoch long welded rail train through Skelton, near York, on December 16, 2023. Keitao Ma





DB Cargo UK No. 66077 *Benjamin Gimbert G.C.* shunts Colas Railfreight Nos. 56051 *Survival* and 56049 *Robin of Templecombe 1938-2013* at Tyne Yard on December 18, 2023. In the background are four Freightliner Class 66s. Barry Gill

Welsh Highland Railways/Rheilffyrdd Ffestiniog ac Eryri and 97304 on December 23.

On December 8, Europhoenix No. 37901 *Mirrlees Pioneer*, hired by Rail Operations Group, found employment hauling two stoneblowers on the 6E15 08.32 Woking Yard-Darlington. Three days later, the '37/9' was paired with ROG No. 37601 *Perseus* to haul West Midlands Trains electric multiple unit No. 730027 from Derby Litchurch Lane to Oxley, while the '37/9' was alone on December 13, at the head of two translator vehicles forming the 5M57

12.47 Worksop-Derby RTC. A further job before Christmas led to the '37/9' being partnered by ROG 37800 *Cassiopeia* moving London Northwestern Railway EMU No. 730101 on the 8Q58 23.00 Central Rivers-Old Dalby wheel skate move on December 14, the unit having made slow progress when reaching Central Rivers from Oxley on December 1, behind No. 37800. The latter Type 3 had a busy time transferring Class 319s from Allerton to Newport Docks on half a dozen occasions (see *Units*), while during the second half of December, ROG No. 37510 *Orion* was employed

moving Northern Class 331s between Allerton and Neville Hill (see *Units*).

CLASS 40

No. D213 (40013) *Andania* 'top and tailed' with No. D1935 (47805) *Roger Hosking MA 1925-2013* on the Christmas 'Golden Arrow' special, 1Z88 06.31 Gloucester-Canterbury West on December 16, the English Electric Type 4 being replaced at Hanwell Bridge in favour of Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton*, before replacing the steam engine there on the return journey. Five days later, LSL No. 47593 *Galloway*



DB Cargo UK No. 66165 stands at Par Harbour on December 6, 2023, with eight preserved CDAs bound for the Bodmin & Wenford Railway (see RE332), as well as No. 375030, destined for the Plym Valley Railway, and No. 375102 which has also been preserved and will stay at KP Kernow's complex alongside the turntable at St. Blazey. Craig Munday

Princess and D213 powered the 'Christmas Statesman' from Leicester to Edinburgh.

CLASS 43

ScotRail power car No. 43129 suffered severe cab damage when it struck a tree between Barry Links and Broughty Ferry on December 27, whilst leading the 1A37 10.46 Perth-Aberdeen. The final scheduled Great Western Railway High Speed Train service east of Exeter ran as the 2C89 19.14 Newport-Taunton on December 9 (see *Headline News*), with power cars Nos. 43187 *Cardiff Castle* and 43029 *Caldicot Castle* in charge. The quartet of Nos. 43306/307/ 316/320 finally left the Severn Valley Railway for pastures new on December 20, heading east as the 0Q43 10.41 Kidderminster SVR-Norwich Crown Point, Nos. 43316/320 having undergone a test run from Kidderminster to Bridgnorth and back the previous day. All four power cars will be exported to Mexico via Great Yarmouth in the New Year. Now with Colas Railfreight, former CrossCountry power car No. 43357 'tailed' No. 43274 on the 1Q30 10.54 Derby RTC-Holyhead test train on December 28, later heading back to Crewe prior to two

round trips to Liverpool Lime Street and back to Derby early the next morning.

CLASS 47

Aside from passenger charter work, several '47s' undertook other various roles during the lead up to Christmas. For instance, on December 6, West Coast Railways No. 47804 along with stable companion No. 37516 *Loch Laidon* ventured to the National Railway Museum at York to collect two steam locomotives destined for relocation, taking them to the Thrall Europa yard for onward movement by road. That same afternoon, GB Railfreight Nos. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle/Caisteal Dhùn Eideann* and 47749 *City of Truro* 'top and tailed' London Overground electric multiple unit No. 710270 from Leicester to Ilford. Freightliner No. 47830 *Beeching's Legacy* had three KTA wagons for company on December 7's 4H40 10.06 Stoke Marcroft-Basford Hall before transferring TfW Rail diesel multiple unit No. 197117 from Wolverton to Crewe on December 12. The next day No. 47830 had No. 197123 in tow on the 6Q97 10.07 Donnington Railfreight Terminal-Basford Hall prior to hauling the diesel unit to

Wolverton on December 14. Tyseley-based No. D1755 (47773) operated several 'Polar Express' trips from Birmingham Moor Street with No. 7029 *Clun Castle* during December in addition to 'tailing' 'The Merchant Venturer' charter on December 5, hauled from Solihull to Bristol Temple Meads by 'Castle' No. 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*.

In its role as London North Eastern Railway 'Thunderbird', WCR No. 47812 'dragged' No. 91114 *Durham Cathedral* and the very heavily laden 1F88 15.33 London King's Cross-Doncaster forward from Peterborough on December 10, travelling via Spalding and Lincoln following overhead line damage.

Early on December 19, the 1Y00 05.06 Doncaster-London King's Cross became incapacitated at High Dyke after striking objects on the track. No. 47812 was sent to the rescue to haul LNER No. 91106 and its Mk.4 stock to Neville Hill. During the late evening, No. 47812 found itself at Peterborough collecting LNER No. 91127 and its empty coaches for removal to Neville Hill following the failure of the 1A48 18.45 Leeds-London King's Cross. Locomotive Services No. D1935 (47805) *Roger*

Hosking MA 1925-2013 hauled a mixed quartet of coaches from Eastleigh to Crewe HS on December 22 while Crewe Diesel Preservation Group No. 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer* passed Winchester on the afternoon of December 14, taking empty stock from Eastleigh to Southall.

WCR Nos. 47813 and 47848 covered many miles around Edinburgh with 'Polar Express' trips during the month, the last being the 1Z32 19.06 Portobello Junction-Edinburgh Waverley on December 22. Bringing its centenary year to a close, No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* was accompanied by WCR No. 47804 on the 1Z37 08.00 York-Carlisle and 15.30 return on December 10. The iconic locomotive's final special ran on December 13 when No. 60103 hauled the 06.25 Cambridge-Worcester Shrub Hill 'tailed' by No. WCR 47746 *Chris Fudge* 29.7.70-22.6.10, the steam engine coming off at Leicester Humberstone Road ready to head to the National Railway Museum (and to Shildon the following day), while No. 47746 took the charter on to Cambridge. A return York to Norwich special on December 16 was 'top and tailed' by WCR Nos. 47802 and 47245 *V.E. Day 75th Anniversary*, the

DEPOT TALK

Correct to December 16, 2023.

Allocations

37025 COTS-RAJV
56103 HQ/DCRS-LR/DCRO
59103 DHLT-DFHG
60040 TO/WCAT-WQ/WQBA
66025/088/089/092/097,
66130/155 WBRT-WBAT
66113 WBRT-WBBT
66144 WBAR-WBAT
66154 WBAE-WBAT
66192 WBAR-WBRT-WBAT
66205 WBAI-WBAE
66501 LD/DFIM-FD/DHLT
70009 FD/DHLT-LD/DFGI

Liveries

DB Cargo red: 66067
Heidelberg Materials green: 59101

Names removed

37409 *Lord Hinton*
43049 *Neville Hill*
57303 *Pride of Carlisle*

Sold

Andania Engineering: 37402
Europhoenix: 37069, 37218, 37423
Locomotive Services Ltd: 37401

Operational

56103
66205

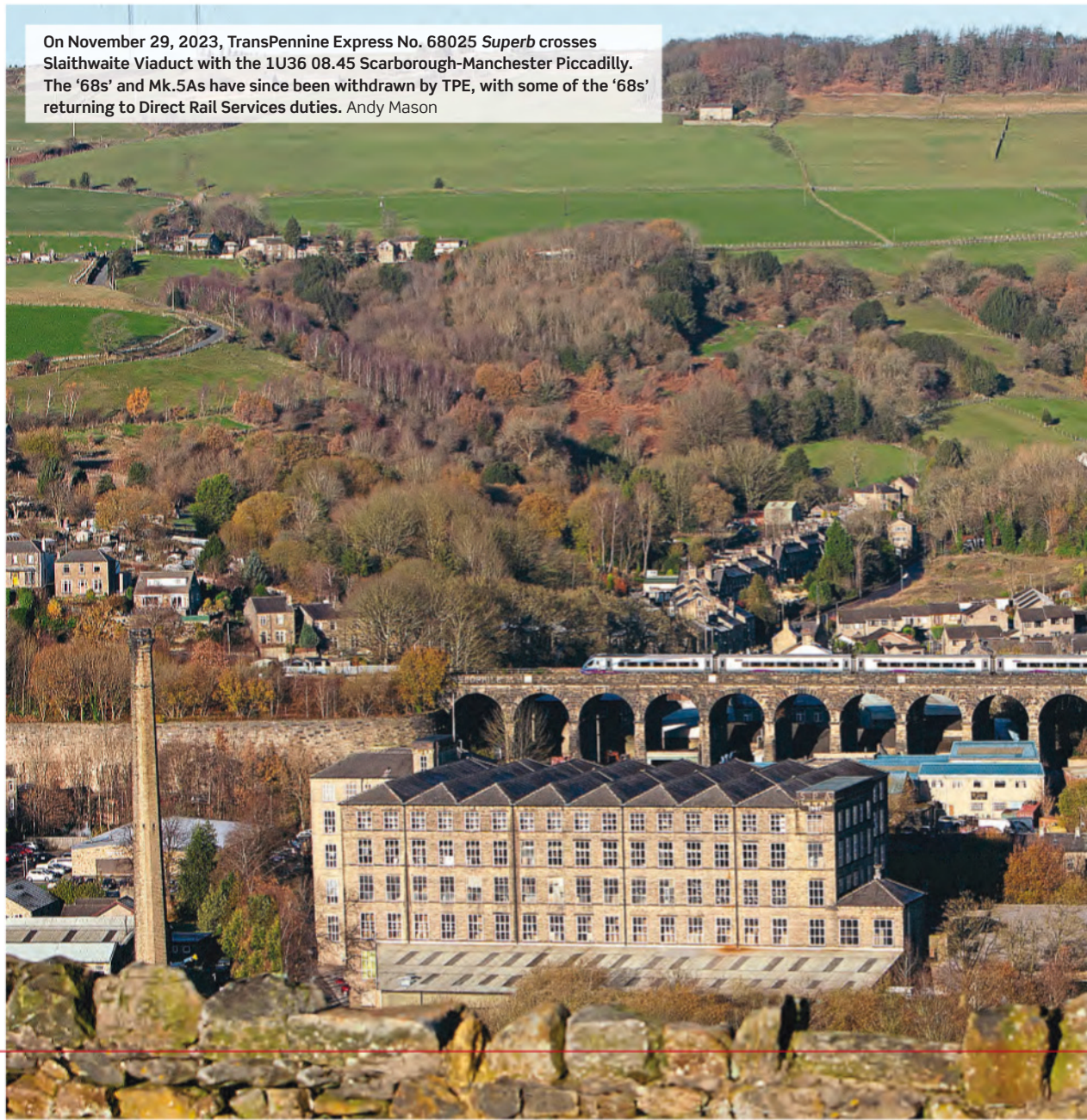
Stored/stopped locations

Longport: 56303
UK Rail, Leasing Loughborough:
73138
Toton: 60040

Disposals

EMR Kingsbury: Arrival date:
November 29: 31106

On November 29, 2023, TransPennine Express No. 68025 *Superb* crosses Slaithwaite Viaduct with the 1U36 08.45 Scarborough-Manchester Piccadilly. The '68s' and Mk.5As have since been withdrawn by TPE, with some of the '68s' returning to Direct Rail Services duties. Andy Mason



latter replacing 'Royal Scot' No. 46115 *Scots Guardsman* which had powered the outward journey.

LSL Nos. 47593 *Galloway Princess* and D1924 (47810) *Crewe Diesel Depot* set off from Bury St Edmunds on December 1, with a tour destined for Bath Spa, the former being substituted with Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton* at Hanwell Bridge. Four days later the same '47s' had charge of the 1237 05.29 Solihull-Bristol Temple Meads via High Wycombe although on this occasion No. 47810 was the locomotive replaced by 'Black Five' No. 45231 at Hanwell Bridge. A series of four 'Santa Steam Express' circular jaunts out from London Victoria via Willesden (reverse) and Barnes and back to the terminus were 'top and tailed' by No. 47810 with No. 45231 on December 15 and with Pacific No. 34046 *Braunton* on December 18 and 21.

CLASS 50

Class 50 Alliance Nos. 50007 *Hercules* and 50049 *Defiance* hauled a main line tour on December 9, their first since mid-September, the pair 'top and tailing' UK Railtours' 1Z50 07.48 London Euston-Preston via Manchester



West Coast Railways provides 'Thunderbird' locomotives on the East Coast Main Line that are used to rescue failed London North Eastern Railway passenger trains as well as freight trains. On December 10, 2023, the '47/8' waits to leave Peterborough with the 1F88 15.33 London King's Cross-Doncaster, which was diverted via Spalding and Lincoln, following overhead line damage. The LNER '91' was No. 91114 *Durham Cathedral*. Jon Benton



Victoria. Next day the '50s' took the empty coaches to Nemesis Rail at Burton-on-Trent. No. 50008 *Thunderer* made a brief appearance on the national network on December 8 running light as the 0Z27 15.29 Chaddesden-Knottingley.

CLASS 56

An unexpected visitor to Glasgow Central station on December 1, was Colas Railfreight No. 56049 *Robin of Templecombe 1938-2013*. The locomotive had run light from Carlisle Yard with the intention of assisting failed Avanti West Coast No. 390009 *Treaty of Union* to Polmadie depot, the Carlisle-based 'Thunderbird' '57/3' being unavailable. In the event, the '56' was only required to assist the Pendolino to build enough air to enable the unit's pantograph to be raised. Soldiering on to the end, GB Railfreight No. 56081 left Merseyside on December 12, along with GBRf No. 69008 at either end of South Western Railway electric multiple unit No. 458424 forming the 5Q62 18.46 Widnes TT-Wembley Yard. Having delivered the unit to Bournemouth depot, Nos. 56081 and 69008 collected SWR No. 458504 for transfer to Widnes the following day. No. 56081 then travelled to Old Dalby on December 18; its work done. The locomotive was expected to move to EMD Longport early in January for likely conversion to a Class 69. On December 29, an otherwise quiet day for the Colas Class 56 fleet, Nos. 56049 and 56051 *Survival* were recorded at Ribbleshead atop the 6J37 12.52 Carlisle Yard-Chirk timber.

CLASS 57

Out of service for nearly five years, Locomotive Services No. 57311 left Eastleigh Arlington on December 7, and

travelled to Crewe in the company of LSL No. 37521. No. 57311 was painted into lined LNER black livery during 2023. Following their autumnal use on RHTT duties, GB Railfreight Nos. 57305, 57306 *Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate 175* and 57310 *Pride of Cumbria* ran light from Tonbridge Yard to Leicester on December 20.

West Coast Railways No. 57009 *G.J. Churchward* spent a day with No. 47813 covering the 'Polar Express' tours around Edinburgh on December 1, while two other former Direct Rail Services '57/0s' in the WCR fleet were in action on December 14, with No. 57010 running from Burton Wetmore to provide motive power for the 6Z57 12.05 Toton Yard-Grindleford with crane DRK81613 plus three KFAs, while Newark-based 'Thunderbird' No. 57012 was called out that evening when DB Cargo UK No. 66009, in charge of the 6V33 15.32 Sunderland (Ward Brothers)-Cardiff Tidal Sidings, failed at Tollerton and the '57' dragged the failed '66' and train to Milford Sidings. Throughout December, WCR Nos. 57313 *Scarborough Castle* and 57601 *Windsor Castle* toured the network with the Northern Belle, handling tours on a dozen separate occasions and visiting the likes of Sunderland, Norwich, Trowbridge, Swansea and Chester in the course of their days out.

CLASS 60

Giving the DB Cargo UK Class 60 fleet a last chance at passenger work, Pathfinder Railtours' 'Festive Midlandian' on December 16, set off from Gloucester initially bound for Banbury in the care of Nos. 60024 *Clitheroe Castle* and 66194. 1260 was routed via Worcester Shrub Hill, Stourbridge Junction and Birmingham Moor Street. Later, the charter took



Colas Railfreight No. 56049 *Robin of Templecombe* 1938-2013 makes for an unusual sight at Glasgow Central on December 1, 2023, after being sent to assist Avanti West Coast No. 390009 *Treaty of Union*, which had failed the previous evening. The '56' had been sent from Carlisle Yard as the usual Direct Rail Services Class 57/3, also stabled at Carlisle, was unavailable. The plan was for the Type 5 to drag the errant Pendolino to Polmadie, however AWC instead decided that the '56' would be used to help build enough air for the '390' to move under its own power. Jack Prentice

in Fenny Compton MoD on its way to Wolverhampton Steel Terminal, thence to Stafford via Portobello Junction and finally back to Gloucester. No. 60024 was soon back at its Warrington base ready to handle the 6H02 09.29 Warrington Arpley-Tunstead BLI on December 19, DB No. 60062 *Sonia* having covered the diagram the day before. While No. 60024 remained at Warrington after Christmas hauling 6H02 on December 29, No. 60062 powered the 6E01 11.41 Wolverhampton Steel Terminal-Toton Up Yard on December 21, before retiring to the depot. It was joined there next day by DB No. 60074 *Luke* following its 24-hour stint at Peak Forest. On December 8, No. 60040 *The Territorial Army Centenary* took charge of the 6E11 11.47 Appleford-Milford West Sidings with a rake of FCAs prior to the 'Tug' heading to Toton next day and the likely cessation of its use with DB Cargo.

CLASS 66

UK Railtours' 'Another Awkward Week Adventure' charter on December 30, had an awkward start with departure from Peterborough being delayed by an hour after DB Cargo UK No. 66185 failed on the empty stock. DB No. 66028 'topped' the faulty No. 66185 and they eventually set off bound for Southampton Eastern Docks routed via Hounslow and Wokingham to Reading, thence via Basingstoke to the planned destination having recovered most of the lost time. DB No. 66158 was attached for the trip to Southampton Western Docks and Eastleigh and all three '66s' returned the tour to

Peterborough. An intermodal trial with 'tanktainers' ran as the 4A02 05.40 Mossend-Aberdeen Waterloo on December 12 hauled by DB No. 66004 while the next day No. 66185 had brand-new Tyneside Metro units Nos. 555013/015 in tow on the 7Q42 17.25 Dollands Moor-Wembley. The two sets were taken forward to York and then Pelaw by the four Rail Adventure power cars on December 15.

Direct Rail Services No. 66091 and 66434 took Network Rail Independent Snow Ploughs ADB965242/243 on a test run from Carlisle Kingmoor to Appleby and back on December 1, and three days later reached Barrow-in-Furness with Ploughs ADB965210/242. By December 14, DRS No. 66434 and No. 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* were in harness with Ploughs ADB965217/240 on the 7Z76 11.05 York Yard North-Malton and return. GB Railfreight 'Royal Scotsman' No. 66746 hauled former Dutch-based No. 66306 from Doncaster Roberts Road to Longport on December 1, while GBRf No. 66721 *Harry Beck* reached Peterborough on December 11 with new FEAs from Dollands Moor.

CLASS 67

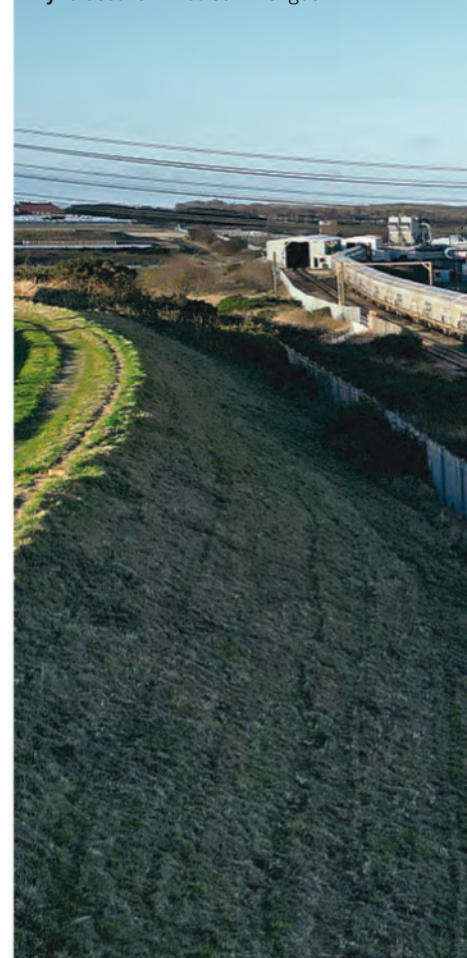
With the Pullman-liveried Nos. 67021 and 67024 back in partnership on the Belmond British Pullman, 'Royal' No. 67006 *Royal Sovereign* was relegated to working the 6G51 07.55 Warrington Arpley-Donnington Railfreight Terminal on December 7. It was at Stafford early on December 11, collecting three Royal Mail electric multiple units Nos. 325003/008/014 to form the 8Z25 02.11 Stafford Sidings-Crewe

International Electric Maintenance Depot and at Burton Wetmore late on December 22, ready to pick up the coaches for use the next day. December 22, found No. 67006 at the head of UK Railtours' Carols at Sherborne Abbey special running outward as the 1Z15 07.15 Peterborough-Yeovil Junction. Meanwhile, fellow 'Royal' No. 67005 *Queen's Messenger* spent Christmas at Toton arriving there from Crewe on December 5, while the purple-liveried No. 67007 remains out of action at Crewe IEMD having last worked a train on September 30.

CLASS 68

With the end of TransPennine Express locomotive-hauled services early in December (see *Headline News*), the Mk.5A coaches have been placed in store at various locations. For example, on December 4, Nos. 68023 *Achilles* and 68024 *Centaur* took set TP04 from Scarborough to Longsight, while No. 68025 *Superb* and No. 68030 *Black Douglas* had sets TP02/TP06 in tow on December 15, as the 5Z68 07.53 Scarborough-Gascoigne Wood (see *Coaches*). Former TPE '68s' in the XHTP pool continue to cover freight work such as the 6O62 01.00 Crewe CLS-Dungeness flasks on December 7, handled by Nos. 68019 *Brutus* and 68020 *Reliance*, the same pair handling the Crewe-Bridgwater flasks on both December 11 and 14. Having finished railhead treatment train (RHTT) work on December 15, No. 68022 *Resolution* accompanied No. 68003 *Astute* on the 6S99 05.21 Carlisle Kingmoor-Georgemas Junction four days later, while No. 68031 *Felix* proved a regular

Freight has recently returned to the Blyth & Tyne network with biomass traffic restarting between Tyne Coal Terminal and Lynemouth Power Station. On December 1, 2023, GB Railfreight No. 60021 *Penyghent* departs Lynemouth with the 6N87 13.27 to Tyne Coal Terminal. John Longden



sight on the 6K05 12.29 Carlisle Yard-Basford Hall covering the diagram on five occasions including December 12 when partnered by No. 66428 *Carlisle Eden Mind*.

CLASS 69

The old year ended with the GB Railfreight fleet well spread out being out-stabled as follows: Nos. 69001 *Mayflower*, 69002 *Bob Tiller CM&EE* and 69005 *Eastleigh* at Tonbridge, No. 69003 *The Railway Observer* at Doncaster Roberts Road on exam, No. 69004 at Hoo Junction, No. 69006 *Pathfinder Railtours* at Toton, No. 69007 *Richard Trevithick* at Liverpool, 69008 at Doncaster and Nos. 69009/010 at Leicester. Amongst the most adventurous during the month was No. 69008 which was involved in the transfer of South Western Railway electric multiple units between Widnes and Bournemouth (see *Class 56*) before visiting the north east on December 20, to drag Avanti West Coast No. 807002 from Merchant Park to Darlington. Having accompanied GBRf No. 56098 from Doncaster to Leicester on December 19, No. 69007 travelled on to Merseyside on December 19 ready to take up banking biomass trains between the Port of Liverpool and Tuebrook Sidings, Edge Hill.



CLASS 70

Having spent some six years out of use, Freightliner No. 70009 returned to the main line on December 8, undergoing a test run from Leeds Midland Road to Doncaster with Harry Needle Railroad Company No. 37610 (on hire to Colas Railfreight). Four days later No. 70009 left Doncaster destined for Rugby and a period of hire to Colas Railfreight, although it had not been used by the end of the year. On December 29, Nos. 70807/813 visited the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway's Winter Diesel Gala, both finding use on passenger trips with resident locomotives. That evening the duo departed with No. 70806 on the 6M34 21.51 Grangemouth-Dalston tanks before a problem developed with 70807 which saw the train delayed overnight at Law Junction, eventually terminating at Carlisle Yard at 10.25 the next morning. No. 70812 suffered a seized axle on December 4, when near Ormside with the Carlisle Yard-Chirk timber train. It was removed to sidings at Appleby and left at slow speed for Carnforth West Coast Railway's depot late on December 14. It was still there on December 30. No. 70810 was noted on December 1, hauling two High Output Ballast Cleaner ballast system

propulsion machines from Westbury to West Ealing, while three days later Freightliner No. 70016 had charge of the 6E53 10.20 Basford Hall-Gascoigne Wood conveying 32 JNA wagons destined for scrap.

CLASS 90

Locomotive Services No. 90001 *Royal Scot* was replaced at Crewe by its steam locomotive namesake No. 46100 on December 12. Hauling a passenger train for the first time in nearly five months, No. 90001 set off atop the 1Z80 06.02 Rugby-York 'tailed' by No. D1935 (47805) *Roger Hosking MA 1925-2013* before No. 46100 took charge of the special. No. 90001 reclaimed control at Crewe for the last leg of the trip during the evening. Meanwhile, LSL classmate No. 90002 *Wolf of Badenoch* awaits a return to use having last worked during the weekend of the HM Queen Elizabeth's funeral in September 2022.

CLASS 92

Following attention at Crewe International Electric Maintenance Depot, where it had arrived in mid-November, DB cargo UK No. 92041 *Vaughan Williams* was sandwiched between DB Nos. 92029 and 66131 on

the 0Z27 08.00 Crewe IEMD-Wembley on December 21, moving on to Dollands Moor next day. The latter two locomotives later returned to Crewe albeit heavily delayed by an overhead line fault at Bourne End. Caledonian Sleeper No. 92014 spent the best part

of three months under repair at UK Rail Leasing, Loughborough, before finally leaving behind GB Railfreight No. 47727 *Edinburgh Castle/Caisteal Dhùn Eideann* on December 21. It was back at work on the 1S25 21.15 Euston-Inverness as far as Edinburgh on December 29. **B**

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JULIA SHEFFIELD

TREVETHICK

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1965
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ASSOCIATED ELECTRICAL INDUSTRIES
& THE ENGLISH ELECTRIC CO. LTD.

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3012

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Out on test in the company of T30004, T30034 is seen at Creve on 15 May having arrived from Nimes.
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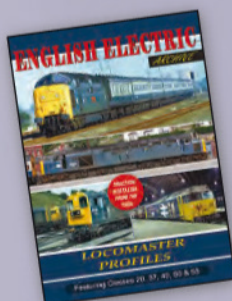
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1980s traction nostalgia from Locomaster Profiles

ENGLISH ELECTRIC ARCHIVE



This DVD takes a nostalgic trip down memory lane to look at all five classes of English Electric-built main line locomotives that were in regular use with British Rail during the 1980s - **classes 20, 37, 40, 50 - and the legendary Class 55 Deltics.**

Includes forty-four different Class 20s, twenty-five Class 37s (from all the sub-classes), eighteen Class 40s (including pioneer D200 and the departmental Class 97s), twenty-six Class 50s and nineteen different Deltics (with original sound). The Class 55s are seen at work on East Coast Main Line services between King's Cross, Newcastle and Leeds, as well as on ECML diversionary routes via Cambridge, the Hertford Loop and the GN/GE Joint Line. **£19.95**

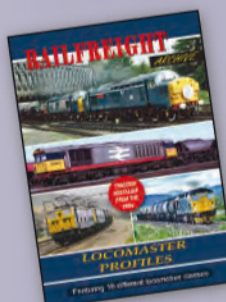
SULZER ARCHIVE



This DVD features the six classes of Sulzer-engined main line locomotives that were in regular use with British Rail during the 1980s - **classes 25, 26, 27, 33 'Cromptons', 45 'Peaks' and the 'Brush' 47s.**

Includes twenty-five different Class 25s, twenty-two Class 26s & 27s (including the SRPS Class 27 Farewell tour), twenty-six Class 33s (working on and off the Southern Region), thirty different Class 45 'Peaks' (on a good mix of passenger and freight work) and over forty different Class 47s (from all the sub-Classes). Like all four DVDs in this series, it's not only the traction that provides the nostalgia here - so does the surrounding railway infrastructure, most of which has long since been swept away by modernisation. **£19.95**

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6 Newsdesk: Hornby's 2024 range announced!

Reissues of popular and useful wagons compensates for the lack of any new-tooled models. 2024 looks like a year of catching up with previously announced models.

9 Newsdesk: Accurascale's Class 66 fundraiser

Another fund-raising drive is being promoted by Accurascale. Proceeds from a model of Freightliner No. 66415 *You Are Never Alone* are destined for Samaritans.

14 Review: Graham Farish Class 158

The brand-new 'N' gauge model of the two-car Class 158 is put through its paces in a thorough layout test.

18 Review: PCA for Realism Redefined

A definitive check of the brand-new 'O' gauge PCA Vee-tank wagon is conducted, and the findings reported in a comprehensive review.

22 Review: Early Class 37 in 'OO'

Another variation of the Accurascale Class 37 from the first batch is submitted for review. We find a model with exemplary levels of bespoke detailing.

25 Review: Revolution's FNA-D

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28 Review: TXS Class 47

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34 Modelling: Four-wheel ballast wagons

ZBV 'Grampus' are the subject of a Kit Corner project: a humble but once numerous engineer's wagon which should be found on almost every layout up to the 1990s and in number too!

RAIL EXPRESS MODELLER EDITOR

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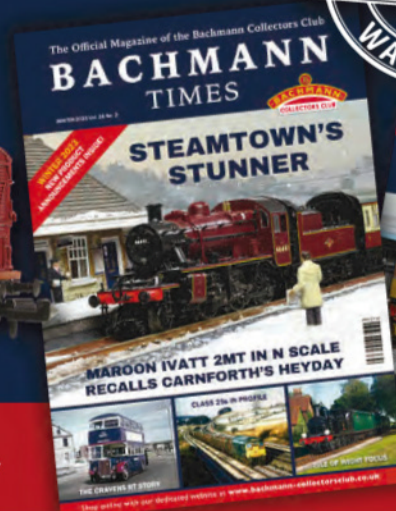
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Hornby in 2024

Although there are no completely new 'OO' gauge models for D&E modellers in the January 2024 Hornby announcement, some useful favourites make a welcome return.

The January announcement

A HIGHLIGHT of the New Year is the annual Hornby announcement, where the company reveals its 'OO' gauge model plans for the coming year, and sometimes beyond.

2024 is little different, except there are no completely brand-new models for D&E modellers this time round. If anything, the range shows signs of consolidation and a more cautious approach as finances tighten further in households around the country.

Several wagons make a welcome return to the range, some after a long absence from the catalogue and in several different liveries too. The budget end of the market is carefully considered in the range with a number of 'Railroad' and 'Railroad Plus' models providing budget models below the £100 mark for low-cost modelling, except when one of the new TXS digital decoders is installed.

The range announced in January

is not the end of the story for 2024. Mid-range announcements are hinted at with further new models to be released, along with a TT:120 update. When viewing the pictures of the new models, bear in mind that they are for illustrative purposes and the final products are subject to revision.

Models outstanding from previous announcements

Hornby heads into 2024 with quite a back catalogue of items to drop out of the pipeline, including some completely new models which might account for the more cautious approach for the D&E side of the 2024 catalogue. The company has been successful in delivering most of the 2023 range with the brand-new TTA tank wagons making their way to the shops in time for Christmas.

Some outstanding items are from 2022, including the much-anticipated



↑ Heritage condition Class 09 No. D4100 *Dick Hardy* (R30369) and an InterCity liveried Class 08 as No. 08570 (R30368) make the cut for this year for £189.99. The '09' was one of the first to be produced when the current model was introduced, finished in BR general user grey livery. Some modellers would be delighted to see more Class 09s in BR condition appear in the catalogue in the future.

Class 755 'Flirt' units expected in April and a number of Hitachi Class 800-series units including the TransPennine Express Class 802 Nova 1 train pack (due in May) and Lumo Class 803 (due August).

April is likely to be the busiest month for back catalogue releases,

with a large number of Mk.3 coaches in BR and InterCity livery set to arrive alongside the EWS Business Train, brand-new 'Salmon' wagons and several different locomotives. Most of the previously announced models should arrive in the shops before August, although deliveries can be affected by a number of different issues.

New models

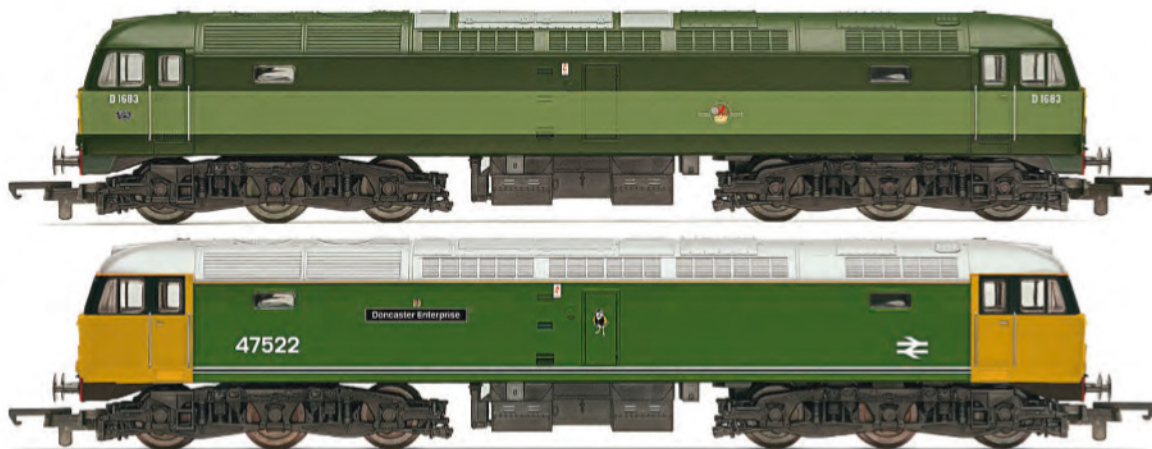
The new additions to the range are all reissues and topping the list for wagon collectors are six bogie ballast hopper wagons including three YGB 'Seacow' and three YGH 'Sealion'. Period modellers are not forgotten with two useful versions of the 'Trout' appearing, one finished in BR black. They will be useful for repainting projects to bring them more up to date if desired.

Locomotives include Class 47s and Class 66s in the 'Railroad' Range. On the railcar front, the Class 153 also makes a return to the range in GWR 'dazzle' livery whilst the 'Razor Edge' parcels car GWR No. 34 appears in GWR livery.

In the more detailed range comes several Class 67s in contemporary liveries, whilst at the other end of the scale, we see a return of *Dick Hardy*, the Class 09 which was used to develop the new Hornby Class 08 and Class 09 shunter model, but in heritage condition this time round. We suspect repainting back to a classic BR livery will be the order of the day for the Class 09!

HSTs are not forgotten, with a power car pack and a full set of trailers for a GNER set, finished in the classy and now classic blue livery with its orange stripe and original blue doors.

Other rollingstock includes a reissued VDA van, a single HAA wagon and a VIX ferry van. Finally, the brand-new TTA wagon is issued in new liveries and runner packs of three wagons, a very useful way for modellers to build up complete trains. www.hornby.com



↑ Two more 'Railroad' range Class 47s are included in the range. No. D1683 in BR green with TXS sound (R30182TXS) is competitively priced at £119.95 for a sound locomotive. The unique Parcels Sector green No. 47522 *Doncaster Enterprise* (R30382) is also modelled for £94.99.



↑ GWR No. 34 is priced at £84.99 (R30384). It is a good base model for further detailing!



↑ The other railcar appearing in 2024 is the Class 153 in GWR livery as No. 153361 (R30357), priced at £152.99.



↑ Hornby's detailed model of the Class 67 produces another special livery, this time for the Platinum Jubilee. It is applied to a model of DB Cargo No. 67007 (R30333). Another recent relivery is presented in the form of GB Railfreight No. 67027 (R30372). Both models are priced at £194.99.



↑ The GNER HST power car pack with No. 43096 *Stirling Castle* and No. 43119 *Harrogate Spa* fills a gap in the HST fleet for £359.99.

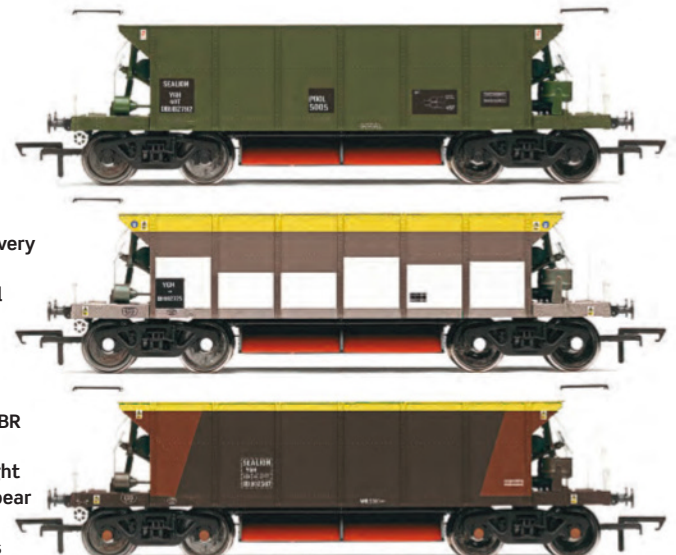


↑ Four Class 66s, three in GB Railfreight liveries and one in rebadged DB/EWS livery are offered using the 'Railroad' range tooling. It is a popular model and TXS sound is offered in a Class 66 for the first time, being installed in No. 66754 *Northampton Saints* for £139.99 (R30353TXS).

← A full set of Mk.3 trailers to go with the GNER power car pack will be available for £44.99 each.

→ Making a very welcome return to the range is the YGH 'Sealion' model in three liveries: BR olive green No. DB982792 (R60245); BR engineer's yellow and grey livery with patches as No. DB 982725 (R60246) and Loadhaul No. DB 982587 (R60247). All bogie ballast hopper wagons are priced at £37.49 each.

↓ Back in the catalogue: DB 980xxx-series 'Seacow' bogie ballast hoppers, finished in BR engineer's yellow and grey livery as No. DB980033 (R60242) and Mainline Freight blue No. DB 980115 (R60243). It would appear that the EWS version is represented by a 'Sealion' in the presentation graphics but is numbered for a YGB.



↑ 'Trout' ballast hoppers appear in two liveries for £29.99. BR black DB992039 is likely to be of most interest to D&E modellers (R60249).



KFAs continue to be released with a variety of containers. No. TIPH93385 comes with two 20ft. boxes and a tanktainer, finished in plain blue for £49.99 (R60239).



The brand-new TEA wagon is reissued as triple packs in common liveries including Shell and Total Oil legends. They appear to be consecutively numbered rather than having random numbers from the relevant fleet. Each pack is priced at £109.99.



A single HAA wagon carrying the number No. 354966 is included for 2024 for £19.95 (R60266).



The Railfreight part of the range includes the issue of close-fit VDA van No. 210127 for £23.99 (R60264).



Another version of the VIX ferry van comes in the form of Railfreight No. DB787299 priced at £25.99 (R60265).

NEW IN THE SHOPS: HORNBY TTAS

The first of the retooled TTA wagons arrived during December and will be reviewed in the next issue. Priced at

£34.99, they are being followed up with more TTAs in 2024 (see above) along with TT:120 scale models.



Each of the first three Hornby TTA models are fitted with different access ladders and walkways which match the applied livery and number. BP No. BPO 67765 (nearest to the camera) represents a wagon built by Norbitt-Pickering in 1966.



No. ESSO 56046 is a model of a 1965 Norbitt-Pickering wagon whilst No. SUK 67004 is of the same pedigree but built in 1967.

Fund-raising Class 66 for Samaritans

ACCURASCALE'S last announcement of 2023 revealed its second charity fund-raising '00' gauge Class 66, this time for Samaritans. The exclusive model aims to raise £10,000 for the charity which does valuable work to prevent suicides in the UK.

The chosen Class 66 is Freightliner No. 66415 dressed in G&W Freightliner orange livery. It was named *You Are Never Alone* at Ipswich station in November 2019 following a collaborative effort by Freightliner, Greater Anglia and Samaritans to raise awareness of suicide and mental health issues.



➤ A special edition model of Class 66 No. 66415 *You Are Never Alone* in G&W Freightliner livery is being produced by Accurascale to raise funds and awareness of mental health issues.



↑ The model is being produced with the aim of raising £10,000 for Samaritans and will be delivered in the first batch of Class 66s.

Suicides are primarily committed by men, usually aged 40 or over, which happens to be the age profile of most railway modellers (and Accurascale customers). Accurascale wished to recognise the valuable work put into preventing suicides by Samaritans in both Ireland and the UK by producing the fund-raising Class 66 model. It will not only raise funds, but awareness of mental health issues and the causes too.

Anyone who spends time at platform ends will see small signs

placed there by Samaritans urging potential suicide victims to call its helpline number. Some station staff may ask enthusiasts not to walk beyond platform end signals (Southport is one example) or may walk down the platform to discretely check on people standing there in an effort to prevent someone using platform ends to commit suicide. This indicates how seriously the issue is taken by the railways, making Accurascale's initiative an important one.

Freightliner No. 66415 *You Are Never Alone* is being produced as part of the first batch of Class 66 models which are in production at the time of writing and due for delivery in the first quarter of 2024. Pre-orders for the DCC-ready and DCC sound version are being taken on the Accurascale website with prices starting at £169.99. www.accurascale.com/collections/class-66
www.samaritans.org

METROTRAIN CLASS 110

➤ Hornby's older model of the Class 110 makes a return to the range, and the twin set will be welcomed by 1980s modellers as a good foundation for a detailed model. MetroTrain No. E52075/E52084 is one of two Class 110 models released late in December and is finished in a pleasing interpretation of BR rail blue and grey livery with good lining and neatly printed details. The model best suits a 1980s themed layout when Class 110s were reduced to two-car sets.



↑ Although the model is basic compared to current standards, with some legacy features from Hornby's past, it still boasts passenger compartment glazing that is flush fitted, and detailed interiors. The blocky underframe detail provides space for its eight-pin DCC interface. No interior or running lights are fitted. The two-car model is priced at £149.99.

BRIGHT LIVERIES FOR THE HORNBY CLASS 31

↑ Representing the post-Privatisation era is Fragonset No. 31454 *Heart of Wessex* as painted in heritage InterCity livery. It was first applied to match former InterCity Mk.2f coaching stock used on the locomotive-hauled Wessex Trains services. The model is fitted with flush glazing, separate hand rails and a moulded square headlight detail on both cabs.



↑ Both Hornby 'Railroad Plus' models are fitted with DCC interface sockets, single drive bogies with traction tyres and NEM coupling pockets. Hornby's budget Class 31s will be popular with modellers who like to detail and enhance models without spending huge amounts of money. Both models are priced at £96.99. www.hornby.com

← Taking a step back to the 1980s is departmental No. 97203 which was part of the Derby RTC fleet. The model has different moulded detail to the Fragonset locomotive including bodyside beading which is also present on the cabs. The headcode boxes are modelled plated with marker light detail.

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Review model

THE OBSOLETE Graham Farish Poole-designed Class 158 model with its flat clear sided bodysheells has finally been retired in favour of a new contemporary design with solid bodysheells, separately applied glazing and more advanced technical features. It has been some time in development, so has it been worth the wait?

Bachmann kindly supplied Central Trains No. 158856 for review, dressed in the company's attractive green, yellow and blue livery which sat well with modellers and enthusiasts at the time.

The model is not fitted with the gangway door covers which were usually painted yellow, dating it to the earlier years of the Central Trains franchise which commenced in March 1997. A little time would have passed before the first units were outshopped in the new livery which first had the Central Trains' customer services telephone number applied. This was soon replaced with the website address. Other livery variations included the black detail around the cab front windcreens and the colour of the front fairings.

Around 36 units painted in BR Regional Railways livery were allocated to the franchise in 1997. As is normal during a long franchise spell, fleet numbers change, with 21 units in two- and three-car formation remaining on the books when the franchise came to an end. The Central Trains franchise ceased in November 2007, by which time, its Class 158s had been displaced from many long-distance services such

as Birmingham New Street-Liverpool and Birmingham New Street-Standed Airport by new Class 170s. The livery lived on for several years after 2007 with rebranding which included Arriva legends being applied to units transferred to the Wales franchise.

Build quality

Immediately upon unboxing, the difference in quality and design over the original model became apparent, with the new model clearly streets ahead of its predecessor. The first feature to catch the eye was the fully detailed interior thanks to a low-profile mechanism fitted to one of the two vehicles.

Not only has Bachmann improved the look of its Graham Farish Class 158 with the new tooling, the quality of build and assembly is also dramatically improved along with the technical specification. Furthermore, no parts had fallen off the model during transit and they were all neatly fitted and secure. It will cope with normal handling straight from the box and required little workbench time to prepare it for layout operation other than a short running-in session.

Bodyshell shape and proportions

The Class 158 is a unique type of unit and different in appearance to trains previously constructed for the BR Provincial and Regional Railways sector, with aluminium used in the unusually

The first new Graham Farish Class 158 models are two-car sets offered in a variety of popular train operating company liveries.

shaped bodysheells. A new bogie design appeared, along with disc brakes which were used in a regional diesel multiple unit for the first time. Air conditioning and end vestibule entrance doors completed a train with 22.5 metre long bodysheells which have a sleek appearance, which has been captured in the model.

The face of the units is good with an effective representation of the cab windscreen shape and the end gangway doors. Bachmann has tooled the shape of the long and relatively narrow bodysheells well, effectively distilling the design to create a satisfying 'N' gauge model which stands up to close scrutiny.

Bodyshell detailing

Externally, the smooth-sided Class 158 needs few small fittings to detail it, other than the gangways on the cab front and on the inner ends, along with a neat exhaust and heat guard on the inner ends. The roof has separate air conditioning unit vents applied too, which makes them appear very much like the real things, more so than if these details had been integrally moulded.

Flush glazing is modelled using tinted mouldings fitted to each window opening, and effectively too, although

a slight edge can be seen around the inside of the windows when the interior lighting is switched on. Interior fittings are also neatly fitted and includes seats, bays with tables and interior partitions.

Drive mechanism

The drive mechanism is fitted to one of the two cars and consists of a coreless motor and flywheels driving both bogies via drive shafts, which is a different arrangement to the 'OO' gauge model which has a powered bogie at the inner end of each car. The drive is built into the floor of the unit, allowing the interior to be modelled, almost in its entirety in the powered car.

The model ran smoothly after running-in and with a controllable and realistic top speed in both analogue and DCC control. It negotiated 10-inch radius curves without difficulty, the close coupling cams on the inner ends of the unit enabling the model to do so. No loss of traction or speed was observed during test runs at different speeds through curved trackwork and turnouts.

Electrical power

The advances made to the electronics fitted to other new Graham Farish models have been applied to



Following a long period in development, the new 'N' gauge Class 158 model, intended to replace the old Poole-designed model, finally arrived in December 2023, in a variety of popular operating company liveries including Central Trains No. 158856.

the new Class 158. Care has gone into configuring the forward and reverse running lights for both DCC and analogue control users, with two switches located in the underframe to manually control the interior and running lights on a conventional DC layout.

The design of the electronics means that only one decoder is required for on-board power in both cars. The decoder bay is conveniently located in the underframe of the unpowered car and power distributed throughout the train through contacts fitted to the inner couplings.

Fitting a NEXT18 decoder is simple, taking a few minutes to complete and thanks to a built-in speaker, no soldering work is needed for a digital sound decoder installation.

Illumination is by LEDs which are warm white in colour and with a subtle level of illumination. The solid, one-piece plastic bodysell prevents light

from showing through where it is not wanted, although a little escapes from around the cab window frames.

On the underside, the trailing car uses split axle wheel sets with stub ended current collection and sprung contacts with the internal circuit board. During operation over complex track formations composed of Peco Streamline track, no loss of power was observed. Overall, the electronics are sophisticated, well-designed and comprehensive, adding to the model driving experience in DCC.

Livery notes

Livery application is as good as it gets in 'N' gauge, with the model able to stand close-up photography. Lining is sharp, colours accurate and evenly applied along with printed details and legends. From normal layout viewing distances, the model looks sharp, well assembled and very much the part,

MODEL FEATURES:

- All-wheel drive in one car.
- All-wheel current collection.
- Low profile drive mechanism.
- Flush glazed with interior detail.
- Interior LED lighting.
- NEXT18 decoder bay located in the underframe.
- 8 Ohm sugar cube speaker pre-installed.
- Working outer BSI couplings.
- Close coupling cams.

giving it a five-star rating. The rating takes into account its size relative to detail density, livery detail, and the level of factory-installed technology including the low-profile drive. 

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

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The 'face' of the model showing the bodysell taper which is well modelled along with black panels below the windscreens and white numerals. The review model was not supplied with the solid yellow door screens.



Colours applied to the model are both of the correct hue and as vibrant as those seen on the full-size Central Trains Class 158s. The various colours are consistently applied, and the bands of colour are properly aligned on both cars.



Central Trains No. 158794 approaches Burton-on-Trent with a Nottingham-Cardiff Central service on June 3, 2005. It is fitted with a yellow door screen and also sports a yellow front faring. Note the yellow applied below the driver's windscreen and the unit number applied in black.



Another example of how liveries can vary is seen on No. 158857, which was photographed near Little Bytham on July 13, 2004, on a Norwich - Liverpool Street service. It has green farings, yellow applied up to the bottom of the windscreens and the set number applied with black numerals. This picture shows that Bachmann has applied the correct passenger saloon windows to the model and has the livery and its colours properly applied. It's up to you to introduce the small livery variations!

CENTRAL TRAINS NO. 158856 IN DETAIL



Underframe detail

Most of the small details applied as separate parts can be found in the underframe. It has a high level of definition on both cars even though a low-profile drive has been fitted to one car and a panel hides the decoder bay in the other.

Trailing bogies

Stub-axle current pick-up is fitted to the unpowered car which uses sprung contacts between the bogie and body to conduct the track current to the circuit board. The outer ends of both cars are equipped with close coupling cams fitted with neat representations of BSI couplings which will engage for unit-to-unit operation.

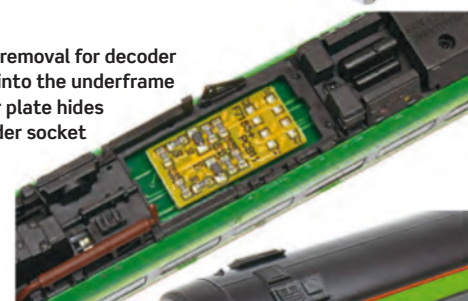
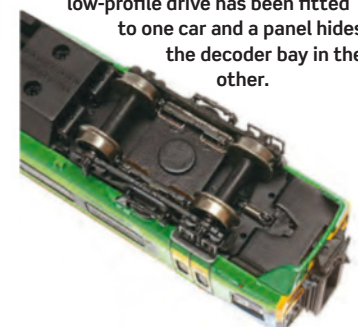
Decoder bay

To save the task of bodysell removal for decoder fitting, a decoder bay is built into the underframe of the unpowered car. A cover plate hides the bay and its NEXT18 decoder socket from view. There is sufficient space for a digital sound decoder which is all that is needed for sound installation thanks to a factory installed speaker.



Inner couplings

Inner couplings clip together to keep the electrical connections between both cars engaged during operation. They are also fitted to close coupling cams.



Livery finish and detailing

Detailing includes flush cab glazing, separate gangways and bogie details such as footsteps and damper details. Livery detail printing and finishing is very good for 'N' gauge too, with a high level of finish being achieved on this model.

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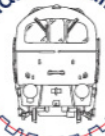
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PC009 powder tank wagons in 'O' gauge

A collaboration between Heljan and Realism Defined, the retail arm of 'Britain's Biggest Model Railway', sees the Diagram PC009 'Presflo' depressed centre powder tank wagons produced in 'O' gauge for the first time.

FIRST INTRODUCED in 1973 for Blue Circle Cement following the success of an early 1960s depressed centre cement tank wagon, the Diagram PC009 'Presflo' was built in large numbers for Blue Circle. A single chamber depressed centre tank was fitted to a 16ft underframe with Gloucester floating-axle suspension

and disc air brakes. The first wagons were allocated Diagram numbers PC009A, PC009C and PC009G and numbered as Nos. APCM 9100-9399 and Nos. APCM 9425-9434, constructed at BR Shildon. Some carried advertising boards whilst others were painted bright yellow instead of the usual grey livery.



↑ A collaboration between Realism Defined and Heljan has produced a highly detailed and technically excellent 'O' gauge model of the PC009E/K PCA depressed centre tank wagon. Both a BCC-registered and an Albright & Wilson version are reviewed.

MODEL FEATURES

- Accurate model of a 1979 Diagram PC009 wagon.
- Modelled with Gloucester floating-axle suspension.
- Etched metal walkways.
- Sprung suspension pedestals.
- Sprung Oleo buffers.
- Working, sprung Instantan couplings.
- Separately applied pipework and discharge equipment detail.



↗ The V-shape of the tank together with the dished ends is a complex shape to model and this has been done well in the Heljan model.

An equally common type and one which remains in use today is Diagram PC009E built by BR Shildon, BR Ashford and Procor between 1979 and 1981. This is the design represented by the model, 10 of the first batch of 13 being decorated as Blue Circle Cement (BCC) registered wagons. The design has disc brakes on all four wheels instead of two as seen on the 1976 batch and is fitted with brake wheels.

A similar design was built for Albright & Wilson's Tri-Polyphosphate traffic between Whitehaven and West Thurrock. They differed slightly in having heavier external pipework, an additional length of walkway and manual valves in the side of the barrel. Two of the 13 new models are offered in Albright & Wilson's attractive veridian green livery, numbered as PR 9498, a Diagram PC009K wagon built in 1983; and No. TRL 10530, a Diagram PC009F wagon built in 1981 by Standard Wagon. The latter was fitted with BSC Friction pedestal suspension, tread brakes and brake levers, making the model a close fit.

The last model is decorated as one of the small fleet of wagons used by Lever Bros and painted in its bright purple livery. It too is a Diagram PC009K wagon and is identified as No. TRL 10525.

Tank barrel

Two models were offered for review, Procor No. PR 9498 in Albright & Wilson livery and Blue Circle Cement No. BCC 10777. Upon unboxing, the quality of assembly and finish was immediately apparent, creating a very positive first impression.

First area of the model for close scrutiny was the tank barrel itself which is a multiple-piece assembly carefully put together so the joints between the dished ends and the barrel are well hidden by the welded seam lines.

Shape-wise, Heljan has certainly caught the character of the PCAs well, with the complex shape of the inward sloping tank section properly modelled. Definition of moulded detail is excellent throughout, including the small detailing components which are neatly and securely applied.

Underframe

A good look along the length of both models revealed properly assembled underframes with straight solebars and all parts properly fitted and seated in place, including the axle guards, pipework and headstock fittings.

The sharp-edged tooling apparent in the tank barrel assembly is also present in the solebars and the plates that supports the barrel located immediately above it. There is no discernible gap in the join between the barrel assembly and the top of the solebars.

Wheels are composed of metal and are fitted with brake disc detail in the outside faces. The inside face of the wheels is flat, a common feature of models tooled today. A correctly profiled inner wheel disc and brake discs would have further enhanced what is a beautiful model of the PCA.



↗ Assembly quality is excellent, with all small parts and fittings properly attached without glue marks or any parts being fitted to over-sized mounting holes.

Sprung suspension

An ingenious suspension system has been worked into the Gloucester floating-axle suspension models which gives an impression of the primary suspension springs being compressed into their hangers. Little or no rotation of the 'floating' section of the suspension pedestal could be detected due to the manner in which it slots into the upper section. Springing is soft but keeps the models at the correct ride height when measured at each corner of the headstocks. Neither model leaned to one side showing how well this feature has been designed.

There is a little side play of the wheels in the suspension units, but nothing significant that would affect the model's operation.

Headstocks and fittings

When it comes to looking at the headstocks, we start to examine the finer features of the model which includes beautiful representations of Oleo buffers which are sprung. The springing is a little stiff – they take some compressing. The shanks for the buffer heads are coloured silver adding to their realism, and the buffer faces themselves are the correct shape.

Noteworthy are the sprung, working Instantan couplings which were found to operate well during tests. The couplings themselves are also fine in appearance but durable enough to work in long trains – an awkward balance to achieve, but successfully executed in the PCAs.

Small details

The closer one looks at the new PCA models, the more detail becomes apparent. The fixings along the bottom edge of the barrel support plates are moulded with hexagonal nut detail and a hint of the end of the corresponding bolts. The walkways are of etched metal and lead to loading hatches with sharp hinge detail and clearly moulded wing nuts used to tighten the hatches down.

The sprung Oleo buffers have the correct shank detail along with well-defined nut and bolt detail where they are secured to the headstocks. Brake fittings align perfectly with the wheels and the complex pipework on



↑ From the side, the underframe is impressively modelled and has no sign of distortion along the solebars. Pipework detail is neatly fitted along the solebars which are of the correct profile.



↑ A mix of separately applied parts and integral moulding makes up the detail on top of the barrel. Noteworthy is the detail moulded into the filler hatch covers.

the underframe is composed of a series of small fittings, all well assembled and neatly applied to the model.

Overall appearance and finish

Despite a couple of small points such as a lack of profile on the rear of the wheels and a slightly rough surface on the wheel treads resulting from the manufacturing process, the new PCAs are first class models produced to a five-star standard. The accuracy of the suspension springing; superbly moulded details and a razor-sharp livery with top-notch printed details all go towards making the PCAs excellent value for money. 

 Produced by Heljan A/S for Realism Defined.
www.heljan.co.uk
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↑ Headstocks are fitted with neat models of Oleo buffers, working Instantan couplings and a single airbrake pipe.



↑ The tank barrel's distinctive shape is carried through into the underframe which is detailed with the bottom discharge hatch and aeration pipework.

→ All of the first batch of 13 models are fitted with Gloucester floating-axle suspension and disc brakes applied to all four wheels. The model's underframe is sprung, with some clever design of the pedestals resulting in the spring detail sliding into the upper part of the suspension unit.



↑ An end view showing the fit of the barrel superstructure to the underframe. The warning notices on the dished ends are clearly printed and easy to read.



↑ Livery features such as logos, warning notices, instructions for repair and the TOPS panel are beautifully reproduced.



↑ In March 2007, PCA No. BCC10777, the same number as the BCC-registered version reviewed in this issue, was photographed at Inverness. The gap in the tall wall along Millburn Road has since been filled in making this view across the yard impossible today.



↑ The PCAs operated by Albright & Wilson were long out of traffic when No. PR 9494, a wagon of the same pattern as the model of No. PR 9498, was recorded at Longport on June 6, 2008.

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Completing Run 1 of the Accurascale Class 37

THE FINAL instalment of Accurascale's complex Class 37 project, which has seen a diverse selection of different models produced with locomotive-specific details, concludes with the early Class 37/0s and specifically, the first five.

Nos. D6700-D6704 has been produced in various early liveries such as BR green as delivered, with full yellow ends and also BR blue with TOPS numbers. The review sample is No. 37001 in BR blue and sporting train reporting codes in split boxes.

Locomotive-specific detail

This small group of Class 37s is another mini fleet not modelled in the past by a mainstream manufacturer. They are characterised by unique cantrail grilles and double-riveted roof panels over the steam heating generator compartment, making them different in appearance.

The model of No. 37001 covers a short time slot between TOPS in 1974 and the loss of its train heating generator fittings on the outside of the locomotive. The train reporting codes were also abolished about the same time, which closes the time slot for this model.

It is fitted with fabricated bogies, full bufferbeam trim and round buffers to create a lovely example of an early TOPS Class 37.

Technical specifications

Many features are shared with the rest of the first run of the Class 37 including advanced electronics, running lights and provision for digital sound. A capacitor power pack ensures power continuity in DCC control, and the lighting is comprehensive too, with cab and engine room lighting. A removable roof panel is also fitted to this version of the locomotive.

It can be converted to 'EM' and 'P4' gauge using the Accurascale wheel set packs, although as shown in a previous article, the conversion does involve some dismantling of the brake fittings, the bogies being very complex assemblies in their own right.

Assembly and finish

As complex as these models are, the quality of assembly, fit and finish of parts and small details is excellent. Nothing came adrift during the testing of the model or whilst taking photographs.

As always, the overall finish of the model is an eggshell sheen which will take weathering well. The shade of BR blue is perfect for early BR TOPS era and the yellow is the correct shade of early warning panel yellow.

The box contains further detailing parts which are discretionary for the modeller to fit, including radiator cover grilles. All of the small parts, both attached and supplied in the box, are consistently coloured throughout. There are no jarring colour difference taking away from the lovely overall appearance of this five-star model.

Produced by Accurascale
www.accurascale.com

RRP
Analogue model: £169.99
Digital sound version: £259.99

Once again, careful research has been put into the models of Nos. D6700-D6704 to incorporate locomotive-specific fittings such as the unique cantrail grilles; full buffer beam cowls, round buffers, riveted roof panel with two rows of rivets per rib and train steam heating generator details.

A sheet of train reporting codes is supplied with a detailed guide on how to use them. They are joined by a pack of bufferbeam fittings, including miniature snow ploughs along with etched radiator grille covers.



As with the first three sub-class models released in the first run of the Class 37, the Accurascale Class 37/0 of 1960s and early 1970s condition enjoys that fine balance between museum quality and practicality. The review model is No. 37001 (D6701) which was one of the first five locomotives to be released to traffic in 1960.



Bonnet fronts are detailed with fittings appropriate to the era, including glazed headcode boxes and end doors.

MODEL FEATURES

- 1970s condition Class 37/0.
- Era-specific detail and livery combination.
- DCC controlled cab and engine room lights.
- Stay-alive power pack.
- Subtle running lights with fade feature.
- Removable roof panel for decoder fitting.
- Fabricated bogies fitted.
- Detailed cab interior with illuminated control desk.
- Conversion packs for 'EM' and 'P4' gauge available.



Detail specific to this group of five locomotives is visible in this view of the roof, including the cantrail grilles.



No. 37001 fits that small time slot between being painted in rail blue with TOPS numbers, applied after March 1974 and removal of the boiler fittings such as side footsteps a couple of years later. It should be noted that the actual steam generators were removed from Nos. D6700-D6704 around 1969.



An appreciation of the riveted grilles along with the double rows of rivets on the roof panel. No. 37001 retained these features after its heavy general repair and conversion to a Class 37/7 as No. 37707. Regrettably, this locomotive has not survived.



Accurascale has applied good shades of rail blue and early warning panel yellow to No. 37001. Finishing is an eggshell sheen, and paint coverage over raised moulded detail and into the grille work is also good.



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In July 2013 at the National Railway Museum, York, the last surviving members of the Class A4 gathered in celebration of 'Mallard' achieving the World Speed Record for Steam locomotives which occurred on 3rd July 1938. Four of the A4s were UK based while two, 'Dwight D. Eisenhower' and 'Dominion of Canada' had been shipped over from the North American continent.

In celebration of 'The Great Gathering', a limited edition run of just 510 Hornby Dublo models of each of the six A4s are being produced as seen in July 2013. Presented in specially commissioned 'Great Gathering' packaging, each exclusive model will include a 'Hornby Great Gathering' headboard as fitted for the 2013 celebrations, plus a Limited Edition certificate commemorating the anniversary.

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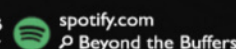
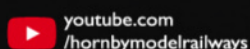
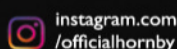
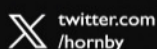
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FNA-D in '00' by Revolution Trains

Wagons for the modern DRS layout

MODELLERS of the contemporary Direct Rail Services scene are pretty spoiled when it comes to rolling stock. The range of nuclear flask-carrying wagons suitable for short trains using the available range of quality traction models continues to grow, with Revolution Trains contributing with a fine model of the 2014 FNA-D nuclear flask carrier.

It represents the 40 new wagons built in three batches by WH Davis, which replaced the classic FNA design from the BR Railfreight era. They operate in trains of varying length, with PFA barrier wagons over the Far North Line, usually with two locomotives in either top and tail formation, or double-headed for reliability.

The new model is highly detailed with a sliding flask cover and smaller parts made up of injection moulded plastic and etched metal. Noteworthy is the attention paid to modelling the



↗ FNA-D wagons in '00' gauge are currently available to order from the Revolution Trains website, with eight different wagons in the range. The review model is version 7 which carries the number 11 70 9229 023-0.

☐ Produced by Revolution Trains
www.revolutiontrains.com

£ RRP
£32.95

brake fittings on the underside of the wagon along with the cover mechanism and the brake wheels applied to the bogies.

Livery application is as neat as any '00' gauge model with very fine printed warning notices and instruction panels. Look closely and an impression of the padlocks used to secure the hazard materials boards have been printed in place too.

The models were produced as eight single wagons with different numbers applied to each one. They are available to order from the Revolution Trains website priced at £32.95. 📄



↗ Detail is finely moulded in the main wagon superstructure, including accurate checker plate effect on the sloping decks, and the correct cover slide rail detail located on top of the side panels. The large numerals applied to the top of the flask cover are the last four digits of the wagon number.

MODEL FEATURES:

- Finely detailed bogies and brake details.
- NEM coupling pockets.
- Lightly sprung buffers.
- Neat livery application with excellent printed detail.
- Underframe is detailed with separate brake fittings.
- Separately applied plastic end hand rails.
- Sold singly with eight different running numbers available.



↑ The FNA-D sits on a pair of nicely modelled Barber BER 22.5 'Easy Ride' bogies fitted with free-rolling metal wheels. The NEM coupling box is fitted to a frame-mounted close coupling cam instead of the bogies.



↑ A significant amount of the delicate detail and the careful assembly of this model becomes apparent when it is turned over. Brake fittings include the distributor, air tank, pipework and even the securing brackets too. Note the separate moulding for the floor panel located behind the bottom frames of the wagon – all completely hidden from view when the model is placed on a layout.



↑ The cover opens and slides along the side panels running towards one end to reveal a ballast weight and an impression of the interior detail. Note the small moulding incorporating the cover catch detail which is delicate and should be treated with care when sliding the cover open.



↑ Livery application is first class with excellent printing of data panels and the hazardous materials panels. The finish is flawless, without dust or any imperfections being noted.

Model event's the flower of Scotland for railway fans

THE first of the major set-piece events on the modelling calendar is now only a few weeks away, with enthusiasts from across the UK preparing for a feast of layouts and inspiration at Model Rail Scotland.

The show is once more at the SEC (Scottish Event Campus) in the heart of Glasgow from Friday, February 23 to Sunday the 25th, and there will be scores of layouts and a host of societies and exhibitors for visitors to see.

Among the layouts this year are Glen Farist, Levenbank and Eyemouth in N gauge, OO scale models of Dalziel North, Griffen Road, Depot 254 and Fountainhall TMD to name just a few, as well as the O gauge Eastfield, Harviestoun and much more, in these and other scales, including N, P4, table top, HO gauge and even Lego.

When it comes to societies, you'll be able to meet folk from the Highland Railway Society, the Caledonian Railway Association, the Scalefour Society, the Rail Riders Club and so many more... plus there will be demonstrations

by Wigan Finescale Modellers, the Scottish Region Study Group and a host of others... which all-in-all makes for a brilliant day out for any modeller or enthusiast.

And of course it's not just the layouts and dioramas, as there will be something to pique everyone's interest, with accessories, techniques of painting, lighting systems, white metal castings and components, plus many more activities and experts.

The host of traders will be keen to help you transform your own layout, or even just provide that background information or friendly piece of advice for a fellow enthusiast or someone just starting out.

The businesses featured on this page will be delighted to say hello, the team from Rainbow Railways at Linlithgow having made the trip west... while many more such as Digitrains and Going Loco have made the journey north from England's north and midlands.

Don't miss out, enjoy the show.



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Hornby's TXS Class 47

Hornby's new HM7000 Bluetooth digital command control system has generated much excitement in the hobby with its range of affordable wireless control decoders and digital sound files. Railfreight Distribution (RfD) No. 47200 *Herbert Austin* is one of the first factory installed TXS sound diesel locomotives to be released by Hornby. How sound is the sound?

HM7000 DCC so far

A BARRIER to entry to Digital Command Control can be the initial outlay on a digital system. Digital sound is a particularly expensive feature to adopt for anything other than a small fleet of models. Hornby's new Bluetooth DCC system changes all that, whilst retaining compatibility with existing DCC systems. It uses Bluetooth short-range wireless technology for communication between mobile and fixed devices to create a wireless throttle DCC system using mobile devices such as smart mobile telephones. It bypasses a command station to communicate directly wirelessly to Hornby's Bluetooth capable decoders using a bespoke app.

Since its introduction, HM7000 has been a success for Hornby with considerable net revenue being generated from 12 new products and 6000 app downloads. It is an encouraging start for the system which, on the whole, has received a lot of praise. The use of smart phones as DCC controllers is not to everyone's taste, but with such devices being an integral part of most people's lives, especially the young, it makes this system appealing (and therefore model trains) before the cost benefits come into play.

Hornby has been clever in making both the app and downloadable digital sound files for its TXS decoders free of charge, making the system very attractive. The digital sound decoders when bought separately, are nearly half the price of other types and allow reprogramming with different sound files should

the decoder be swapped from one locomotive to another. The sound files are downloaded using the device app and installed in the model using the Bluetooth connection between the device and decoder.

Not needing a command station to send digital signals through the rails removes one expensive device from the equation. Power is supplied directly to the track from a wall-mounted transformer and the R7324 power adapter. A power bundle (R7337) is available for £59.99 which includes the adapter. That is all that is required – the app does the rest in sending commands to the Bluetooth decoder in place of a command station.

Sound volumes, decoder CV writing, driving control and the control of decoder functions are all done using the app on a readily available device. Updates and upgrades are all done with the app making the system very flexible.

Livery to model details

The main focus of this review is the model of Class 47 No. 47200 *Herbert Austin* and the factory installed TXS decoder. The locomotive is a 'Railroad Plus' model with a more refined livery application. It is a close but not accurate fit to the model's pattern which is the upgraded Lima tooling with the new drive and electronics fitted by Hornby. The full-size No. 47200 was painted in RfD European livery in 1994, by which time it had received a number of life extension modifications including extended range fuel tanks and cut-away buffer beams known as the 'Crewe Cut'.

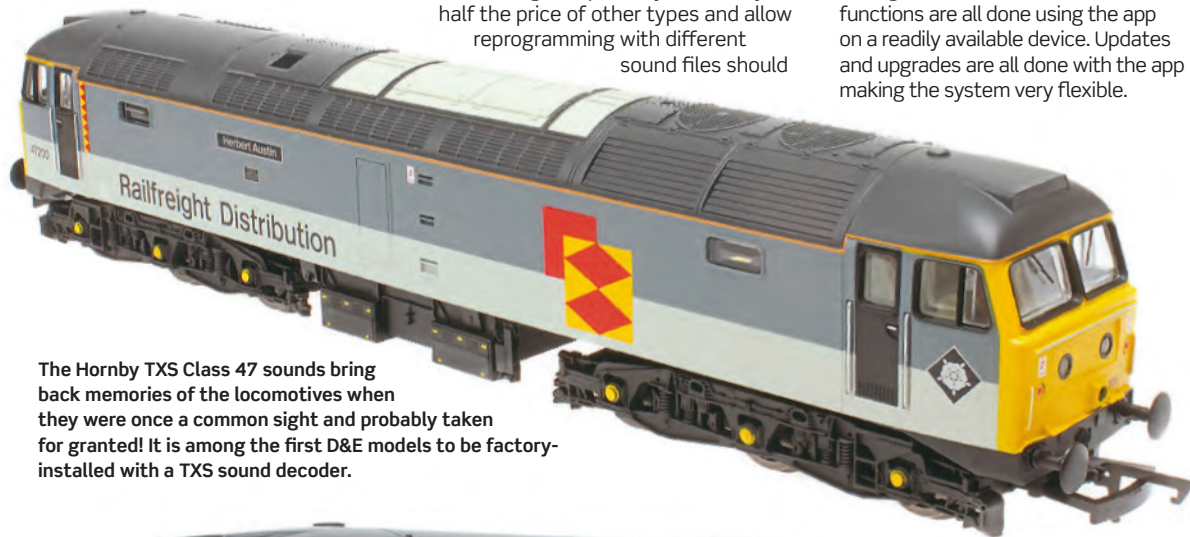
Details that do not match the model's livery include the bufferbeams, some buffers, underframe boxes and tanks (none of the latter) and the No.2 end roof blanking plates where a train heating boiler would have been located if fitted.

The livery is pretty good in terms of colour and application other than the roof which is grey instead of RfD international blue. It could be interpreted as a weathered finish resulting from exhaust carbon which is fair enough. Printed details are good, and a set of metal nameplates and depot plaques is supplied in the box to cover up the printed ones to further enhance the appearance of the model.

Model specification

A single drive bogie is fitted to the model which powers two of the three axles requiring the use of traction tyres. There is plenty of room in the bodyshell under the speaker installation to fit more ballast to bring the model's overall weight to improve performance.

The Hornby TXS Class 47 sounds bring back memories of the locomotives when they were once a common sight and probably taken for granted! It is among the first D&E models to be factory-installed with a TXS sound decoder.



The Class 47 model represents No. 47200 *Herbert Austin* in RfD European livery, a livery applied in 1994 along with the nameplates. It is a close fit to the actual model which has the features of a mid-life Class 47. It was statically tested on a KPF Zeller rolling road before layout testing, to listen to the various sounds without having to chase the model around the layout!



← Livery details are accurately applied such as the nameplates, emblems and the Railfreight Distribution legend. The roof colour is grey, not blue, which might have been chosen to represent a dirty roof.

MODEL FEATURES:

- Post 1994 RfD European livery.
- Livery a close fit to model style.
- TXS digital sound decoder installed.
- Separate metal nameplates.
- NEM coupling pockets.
- Eight-pin DCC interface.

Internally, the model is fitted (in addition to the TXS sound decoder and speaker) with an eight-pin DCC interface and all wheel current collection. No running lights are present, although the wired decoder could be used to power a lighting kit if desired.

The model ran well with the decoder after the wheels had been cleaned, although sound reproduction was interrupted when the model stalled prior to thorough wheel cleaning. The HM7070 power bank is a useful device to fit in this model. Layout testing was completed with both the HM7000 DCC app and on a conventional DCC system using Digitrax equipment without difficulty.

Decoder set-up

The TXS decoder itself is a sophisticated piece of equipment making the £124.99 list price of the model very reasonable. A separate guide is enclosed in the box detailing the functions and CV settings. Interestingly enough, the app allows simple sound volume control through a slider so it can be controlled easily without having to go into CVs.

All of the controllable driving sounds, called 'spot sounds', are grouped in the first 12 functions which suits most conventional DCC handsets (throttles) well. Most can control between 10 to 12 functions without having to delve into second menu layers of control.

When using the app on a mobile phone, there are clearly labelled buttons for control of the functions, along with other features such as volume control, making Bluetooth app control quite intuitive.

On a DCC system throttle, engine start is via the usual Function F1 button. Horns are at positions F2 and F3 whilst useful driving controls such as notching up and down follow. 'Return to idle' is a very useful driving function along with 'thrash' when the locomotive is putting all of its power to lift a heavy train or is running at maximum throttle! It is only after

Function F12 when the less useful controlled sounds come into play such as 'guard's whistle', 'wagons clanging' and 'door slamming' which is as well as they would be in a second menu level and are not really necessary. Functions that affect the way in which the model actually moves are further down the ladder with 'shunting mode' and 'creep' modes being found at F25 and F26 respectively.

Another superb feature is being able to adjust the volume of individual sound slots which means some of the more annoying ones can be downplayed to enhance the driving experience.

Decoder performance

Once the model's wheels were cleaned, it was put to work on a layout and the various spot sound functions tested. The model's sounds using the supplied speaker were relatively soft, but clear, lacking much of the hiss of the Hornby TTS decoders thanks to the improved speaker. Overall sound volume is set to a relatively quiet setting of 50 which is a touch low for a busy club room environment. At the same time, when following your train around the layout, using higher sound volumes is not desirable for realistic operation and increases stress on the decoder. It may also spoil the train driving experience for another operator working a train close by. The CV setting was found to be pretty near perfect for solo operation.

The various spot sounds worked well when required, allowing various driving situations to be simulated such as coasting prior to braking; thrash for full power and being able to notch up at places on the layout where power would be applied – the notch up and down functions being momentary means they are cancelled by releasing the button. The sounds override the automatic decoder sounds generated as the model's speed changes, including 'idle' which simulates coasting.

A number of hours of operation, both on a rolling road and layout, were spent testing the various functions and the conclusion is that the decoder is fun and easy to use. It has clear sounds and good volume control offering a good driving experience.

Conclusions so far

A sophisticated development such as the HM7000 DCC system requires time to test and evaluate, particularly as new digital sound files remain in development and new products are in the pipeline, including more sound-fitted models. A more in-depth use of the system on a small layout will be reported on in the future.

Clearly, the TXS sound decoders are in themselves a very important development within the HM7000 DCC range and worth a review using the Class 47 model as an example. We can conclude that the HM7000 system delivers, as far as digital sound is concerned, a far more economical way of buying into sound which can be upgraded with the power bank when necessary. There is plenty of room to fit a larger 8 Ohm speaker in the Class 47 too along with more ballast and the power bank to really enhance performance.

Overall, the TXS sound decoder is very impressive in terms of the quality of sound reproduction, locomotive control, the number of sound functions and its design, such as the simple edge connectors to attach speaker leads and the power bank. When bought separately and with free sound file downloads, is very competitively priced. The Class 47 with TXS sound installed for £124.99 was always going to be popular and so it has proven to be so with it being sold out at Hornby. 📌

Produced by Hornby Hobbies Ltd.
www.hornby.com

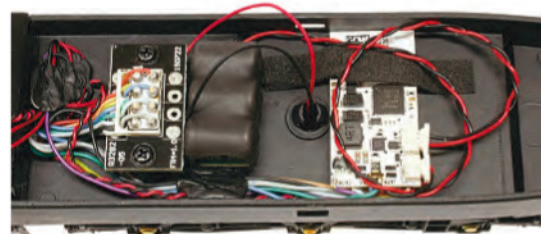
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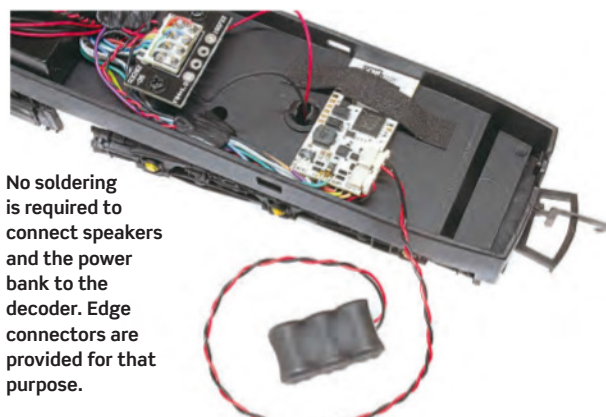
The former Lima Class 47 has scope for detailing and reworking to better match the full-size locomotives. This model will need cut bufferbeams, changes to the roof detail at this end of the model along with green spot MW equipment, and changes to the underframe boxes to mount long range fuel tanks.



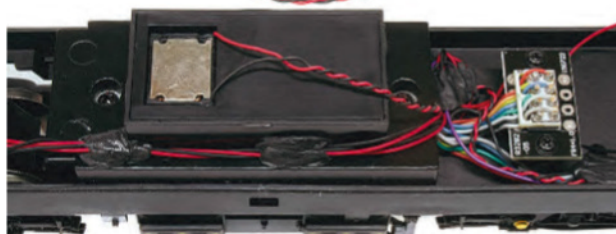
Performance of the decoder is excellent for its price and free sound file downloads make it a particularly economical way to introduce digital sound to a layout, whether it is operated by a DCC system or the HM7000 DCC app.



The power bank is an excellent device for maintaining power in sound locomotives and it's easy to connect to a decoder along with a speaker. It fits the Class 47 easily which is equipped with an eight-pin DCC interface.



No soldering is required to connect speakers and the power bank to the decoder. Edge connectors are provided for that purpose.



The supplied 8 Ohm speaker is fitted with a large enclosure. When bought separately, the TXS sound decoders come with a fret of differently-sized enclosures to suit different models.



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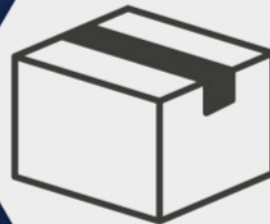
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Kit Corner:

Building a fleet of 'Grampus'

A return to the workbench is the perfect antidote to the excesses of Christmas, with more wagon kits lined up including the Diagram 1/574 vacuum braked 'Grampus'.

ALTHOUGH a '00' gauge ready-to-run model of the ZCO and ZCV 'Grampus' ballast and spoil wagons is released by Dapol from time to time, the current Parkside kit remains popular with modellers because of its versatility.

Two basic types of 'Grampus' were constructed by various builders from the mid-1950s following a design built by the GWR. Diagram 1/572 was an unfitted wagon with long link brakes, spindle buffers and a variety of oil axle boxes. Records indicate that around 3800 wagons of this basic design were built. One of the very first Parkside Dundas kits was for the unfitted wagon type which were coded as ZBO in the TOPS system.

The second type is Diagram 1/574, with vacuum eight-shoe clasp brakes and roller bearings from new. Over 700 wagons of this type were constructed from 1958, and they remained the longest lived of the 'Grampus', the unfitted wagons either being retired by the 1980s or converted with eight-shoe vacuum brakes so they were outwardly similar to Diagram 1/574, with some variation in buffers and axle boxes.

'Grampus' wagons were subject to numerous conversions and variations such as different axle box covers, buffers and other fittings. Despite this, the majority of the 'Grampus' led ordinary lives, being the 'standard' general materials wagon for BR until the 1980s. This view is upheld by photographic evidence that shows that 'Grampus' could be found on almost any part of the network and in considerable numbers in various yards.

It was a versatile design due to the removable ends and drop-down flap which allowed machinery to be driven along the train for unloading. They could be found carrying fresh ballast to work sites and equally as useful for transport of rubbish, spent ballast and other materials to ballast tips.

The kit chosen for this session of Kit Corner is the Parkside Models by Peco kit No. PC72 for the Diagram 1/574 eight-shoe clasp brake 'Grampus', which will suit the late 1980s and early 1990s themed layout for which they are intended. A lot of 'Grampus' are needed because they ran in rakes on their own or were mixed with other



A mix of 'Grampus' and 'Turbot' wagons are hauled out of a ballast handling area at Didcot by No. 08946 on September 28, 1989. 'Turbot' and 'Grampus' were often found in the same train, sometimes as separate blocks and sometimes mixed throughout the train.

vacuum braked wagon types. On the Southern Region, they were mixed with 'Crab', 'Dace', 'Turbot' and 'Lamprey' from time to time. One could look over a yard such as Tonbridge West and see a sea of four-wheel engineer's wagons such as 'Grampus' mixed with bogie ballast wagons and rail carriers. It takes a little dedication to build large numbers of such wagons, but one good time management technique is to construct two or more at a time, being sure that all the additional detailing parts are to hand so as not to hold up the project.

The kit

The Diagram 1/574 kit is a far cry from the first one produced by Parkside Dundas (which can still be found for a few pounds each). The body sections go together neatly and there is minimal flash on the underframe parts too. Excellent quality '00' gauge wheels are provided along with metal cup bearings and transfers.

When first examining the kit contents, note the duplication of some parts such as vacuum cylinders, vee-hangers and brake levers – very useful spares to be retained for other projects. The kit also contains parts to model the handful of ZBA 'Rudd' upgrades of the 'Grampus' which were rebuilt with fixed ends and air brakes. They led to the building of a large fleet of ZCA 'Rudd' using underframes recovered from 21t HTV coal hopper wagons. 'Rudd' wagons



'Grampus' engineer's wagons were a common sight throughout the country at one time making the building of a small fleet worthwhile. An early 1990s layout theme dictates the modelling of the fitted Diagram 1/574 type for which a plastic kit is produced under the Parkside Models by Peco label.

were instrumental in the withdrawal of 'Grampus' alongside other types of air braked wagon conversions.

Pre-assembly preparation

Several tasks are completed before any assembly work is started. The L-shaped sprue is removed from the body side pieces and the top edge rubbed along wet and dry paper to smooth away the moulded ridge.

Underframe parts are cleaned of moulding flash, particularly the brake levels and along the top of the

solebars. A pin vice is used to drill 0.5mm holes through the brake shoes ready for the yokes and the axle box holes opened out with a 2mm drill ready to fit the supplied brass bearings. With the same drill, open out the holes in the rear of the desired axle boxes. Two types are supplied with the kit and photographs should be consulted as to which one to use for a given wagon.

When building a ZBV 'Grampus', remove the tie bars from the axle guards and the small vee hanger from one solebar moulding. This will be

fitted to the 'X' side of the underframe. Finally, look over the solebar for spigots of plastic on the rear side, especially above the axle guards and file them flat. This may prove important when modelling in 'EM' or 'P4' gauge where clearances between wheels and axle guards is tighter.

Body assembly

After completing the part preparation and cleaning, work commences with the body. To save time built two, three or more at a time until a production line is established. The body starts with one end, seated on the floor. A side follows next, care taken to align them with the corresponding rebate in the ends. The opposite side is next, and the body is finished with the second end. While the solvent-treated edges are still relatively flexible, check that the body or bodies are assembled straight and flat by placing them upside down on a flat surface. Ensuring that all of your 'Grampus' and other four-wheel engineer's wagons are all correctly aligned when run in a train is important for achieving realism.

Underframe

Before the solebar mouldings are detached from the sprue, press the metal cup bearings into place from the rear. Detach from the sprue and gently rub the top edge along wet and dry paper to remove the moulded ridge. This will prevent the solebars from seating properly if not removed.

Fit the appropriate vee-hangers, referring to the instructions as to which one to use on each solebar.

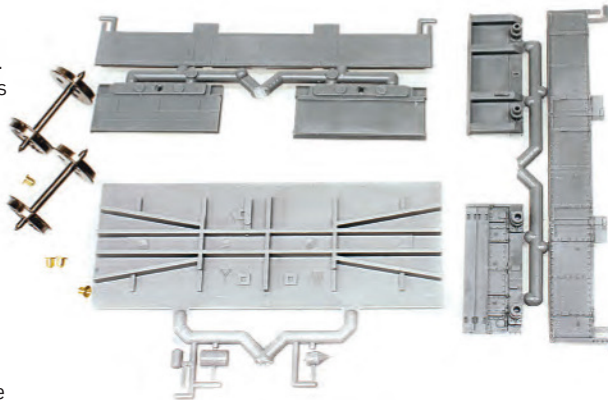
Apply solebars to the underframe with sparing amounts of solvent cement – the solebar without the small vee-hanger is fitted on the side with the letter 'Y'. Be careful with solvent – excess will soften plastic too much, causing warping of the floor. This will give you an awkward three-legged underframe which will be difficult to fix.



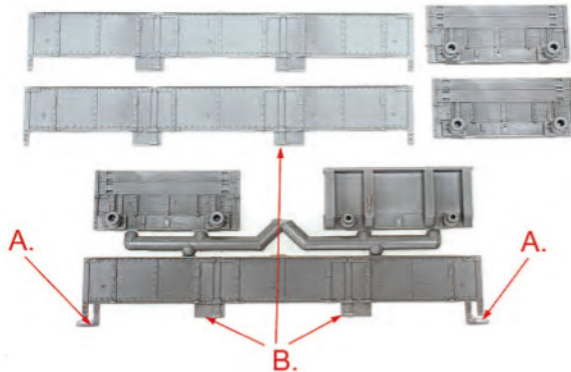
Another small preparation job is to drill holes through the brake shoes for fitting brake yokes, or at least a piece of 0.45mm diameter wire to give the impression they are present.



Opening the holes in the rear of the axle box mouldings will make it easier to fit them over the metal cup bearings.



The body and floor mouldings supplied in the kit. This version enjoys some sharp tooling for the sides and ends.



Sides and ends for both the 'Grampus' and the 'Rudd' rebuild, the ends for which are on the right. Preparation of the parts includes removing the L-shaped sprue from the lower edge (A), but not the plates that support the hinge detail at (B).



Removing moulding pips from the solebars, an important job when closer-to-scale wheels are to be used in the model.



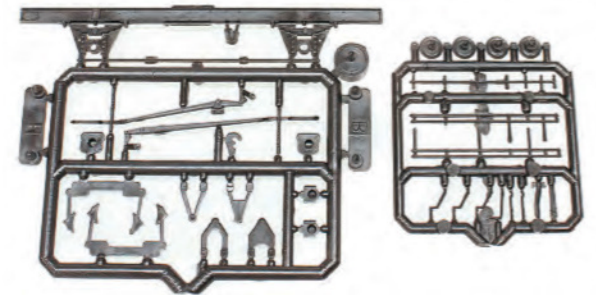
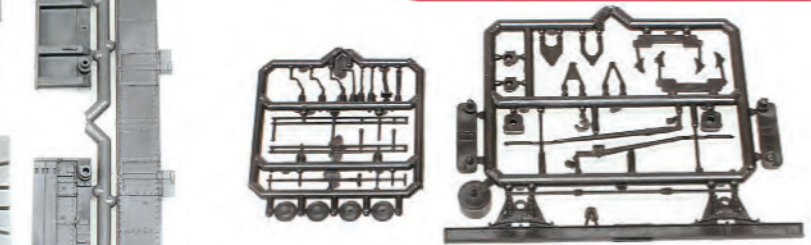
There is a ridge of plastic on the top of the solebars, the surface which bonds to the underframe floor. It is removed with fine grade abrasive paper.

Clip in the wheels and either hold or secure gently but firmly with elastic bands to keep the axle guards from splaying out while the plastic hardens once again. Do not over-tighten to avoid pushing the middle section of the sides inwards. This part of the assembly process should be left for several hours to allow the parts to set before adding brake details. Check that the wagon sits correctly on flat track with all four wheels in contact with the rails before adding brake fittings.

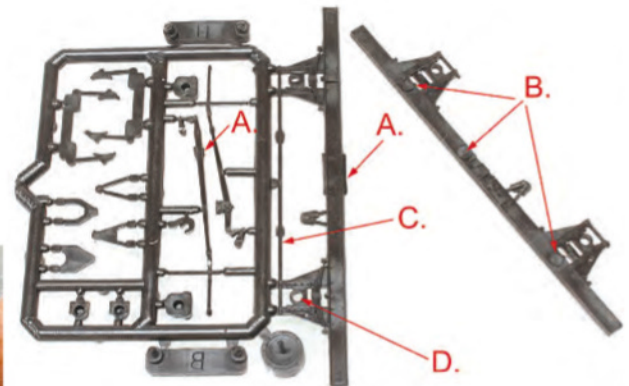
Brake fittings and small details

A single vacuum cylinder is added to the 'X' side of the underframe, mounted on the raised blocks on the underside. A piece of styrene rod is supplied to model the linking bar between the vee-hangers added when the solebars were prepared for use. The final link between the vacuum cylinder is fitted and all of this work is completed with sparing amounts of solvent cement.

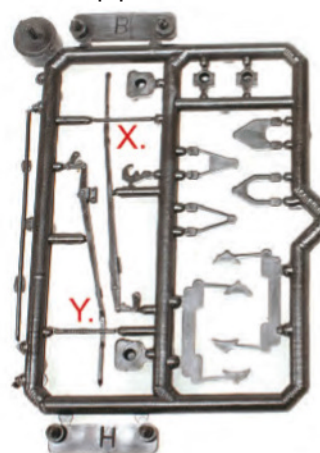
Next comes the brake shoe mouldings. If using closer-to-scale wheels, trim the mounting block to ensure that there is good clearance for



Underframe parts are comprehensive, allowing quite a detailed model to be constructed. The sprues include a choice of axle box details and there will be useful spare parts left over due to the balance of parts on the sprues.



Time spent preparing and cleaning the kit parts will assist in the assembly of the kit. The underframe components need flash and sprue ejection pips removing from the brake levers and solebars (A). Pips should be filed off the rear of the solebars (B) and when building ZBV 'Grampus' the tie bar between the axle guards is not needed (C). Finally, open out the axle bearing holes with a 2mm drill before pressing the brass bearings in place (D).

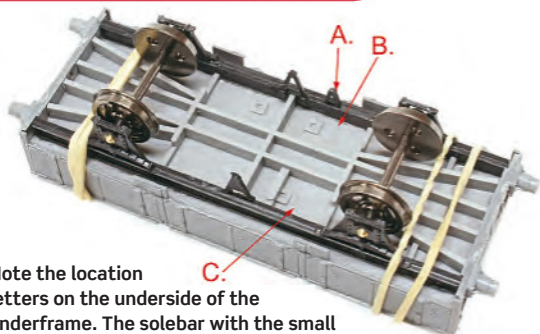


The wagon's underframe is handed, so be sure to fit the solebars to the correct sides. The brake levers are also different on either side – the letters correspond to those on the underframe floor.

the wheels. They should be positioned with the shoe aligned towards the outside of the wheel tyres for the best appearance. Check that they are fully perpendicular to the floor and consistently applied for a good appearance when the model is viewed from a low angle.



Once the brake shoes are positioned, fit the brake levers carefully and follow up with the door bangers, which are best fitted after the brake levers. The mould line on the bangers should be pared away as far as possible before fitting – they are far from the best mouldings in the kit.



Note the location of the letters on the underside of the underframe. The solebar with the small vee-hanger (A) is fitted to side 'Y' (B). Note the letter 'X' which receives the solebar with the small hanger removed (C).

Another detail to fit are the storage baskets slung from the underside of the wagon underframe. They will be tricky to fit depending on the coupling type you plan to use. NEM coupling pockets and other types using a draft box will occupy the same space as the basket detail.

Adding weight

Weight can be added to this model in several ways and even using a combination of methods. A load is the obviously way to ballast a model and this should be applied after painting and weathering. But what if your train is returning from the ballast tip and is running empty? There is sufficient room between the underframe members to apply fine, lead-free shot which can be secured with regular CA glue. It can be teased into various places to maximum effect. If planning using the fine basket mouldings for storing the wagon end panels, fit the ballast first. Experience with this kit shows that this is probably sufficient for a wagon of this size. The fine metal wheels provided with the kit will also contribute some mass to the model. Additional white metal fittings

will help in this regard, as will any traces of spent ballast modelled in the body of the wagon.

Be aware when using lead shot that water-based adhesives should be avoided to prevent oxidation of the metal. Seal the weight in with CA glue to prevent damage through oxidation expansion of lead.

Model painting

The original black or engineer's olive-green livery are among the easiest to apply, while the yellow and grey scheme requires some masking work to separate the two colours. The relatively flat sided 'Grampus' allows masking to be applied with relative ease. Rust soon takes over as the wagons quickly become work-worn, and some green examples were pretty woebegone by the late 1980s!

When applying engineer's yellow and grey livery, small details were painted white such as the round tie-down points on the sides. The door bangers of 'Grampus' of various colours were often painted white to aid visibility. Walking into one in the dark during a poorly lit engineer's possession

would have been very painful indeed.

Transfers are available from RailTec Models in various scales. Sheet No. 6354 has sufficient markings on it for at least 12 wagons. If your fleet is larger than that, duplication can be disguised by rust and dirt!

Finishing touches

With the kit essentially complete, the chance to fit some optional parts can be taken including vacuum brake hoses, cast metal coupling hooks and brake yokes soldered together from off-cuts of 0.45mm wire. They improve the general appearance of the wagons, although belief in one's sanity will determine if the wire safety loops are to be fitted, especially when batch building the kit to create a sizeable fleet.

A related wagon project

A relatively common ballast and spoil wagon operated in the south was the ZCV 'Dace'. Repurposed from Shock Hood B wagons around 1984, they have not been produced as a ready-to-run model or a kit. Possibly a touch limited for a commercial model, but awkward for modellers needing a handful to enhance

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

Tools and materials used in this project include the following in addition to the usual work bench hand tools:

- Grade 800 abrasive paper.
- 'Plastic Weld' solvent cement or similar.
- Cyanoacrylate adhesive.
- 2.1mm diameter drill.
- 0.5mm diameter drill.
- Pin vice.
- BR engineer's olive-green paint.
- Railfreight grey paint.
- Matt black and white paints.
- Lanarkshire Models & Supplies coupling hooks.
- Matt varnish.
- Weathering colours: Rust and coal dust shades.
- Ballast weight (lead-free shot etc.).
- 0.45mm diameter wire.

Optional items for scale modelling:

- Scale Instantan couplings and hooks (Springside Models).
- Cast metal axle box details (MJT Scale Components).
- Metal buffer heads.
- Lanarkshire Models & Supplies cast vacuum brake hoses.
- Oleo buffers by Accurascale and Lanarkshire Models & Supplies.

a fleet of four-wheel engineer's wagons, particularly if modelling Southern Region infrastructure trains.

Fortunately, a 3D printed resin kit is available from Scale Model Innovations which does need detailing with various bits of brake gear for the heavy duty eight-shoe brakes. This where the 'Grampus' kit comes in to play! Remember all those spare underframe parts in the kit? 📦



Three more ZBVs are assembled ready for painting and finishing. They will be followed with yet more models of the same type of wagon to build up a sizeable fleet.



Completed kits in dirty and rusty BR engineer's live green livery. A ZBA 'Rudd' built using the same kit sits behind the 'Grampus'.



No off-the-shelf model of the ZCV 'Dace', which were used extensively on the Southern Region and in early privatisation, is currently available. A printed resin kit is available from Scale Model Innovations. Many of the spare underframe parts left over from the 'Grampus' kit can be used to finish this model.



ZBV No. DB991684 was photographed at Toton (from a safe place) on April 22, 1987.



ZBA No. DB 985728, one of the small number of rebuilt 'Grampus' allocated fishkind name 'Rudd', was photographed at Dalmeny on April 8, 1994. It can be modelled using parts supplied in the Diagram 1/574 'Grampus' kit.



ZBV No. DB984292 was one of the rebuilt Diagram 1/572 unfitted wagons rebuilt with vacuum clasp brakes. It was photographed, along with a number of other very battered 'Grampus', at Hinksey Yard where they were stored for a time in the 1990s.

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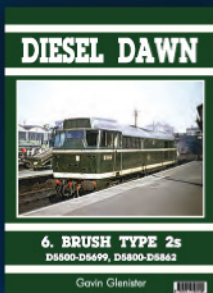
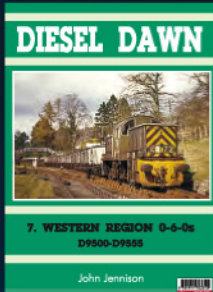
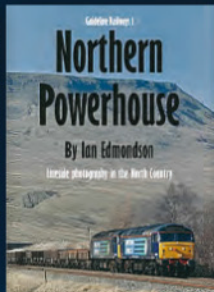
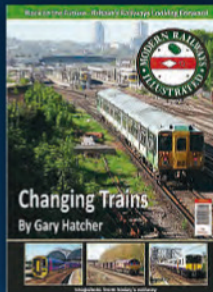


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Looking forward to Leven's reopening

This year's reopening of the Levenmouth line follows the opening of a new station and electrification of a suburban route from Glasgow. **Richard Clinnick** reports.



The new station sign for Leven on December 15, 2023. Richard Clinnick

SCOTLAND seems to be the land of opportunity when it comes to rail. While cuts abound in England, electric trains have begun operating on the Barrhead route from Glasgow Central (see *Headline News*), a new station has opened at East Linton on the East Coast Main Line (see *Headline News*) and, later this year, passenger trains will return to the Levenmouth route some 55 years after the last passenger services.

As this issue of *Rail Express* went to press, driver training was due to get underway on the five-mile line to Leven, ahead of the planned reintroduction of passenger trains from June.

The line runs from Leven to the Fife Circle at Thornton Junction, with a station at Cameron Bridge. South East Scotland Transport Partnership and Fife Council promoted the project which received formal approval by the Scottish government in August 2019.

Trains first arrived in Leven on July 3, 1854. Just like the soon-to-reopen

service, they served the seaside town of Leven plus Cameron Bridge. A new station site opened in Leven in 1885; 24 years later in 1909 the line was doubled. Freight was a major user of rail in the area until 1966 when that ceased running east of Leven. Passenger trains ended in 1969 and three years later the railway to Kirkland Yard, Leven was singled.

THERE IN SPIRIT

The railway was kept open as a freight-only route to serve the distillery at Cameron Bridge and Methil power station however, regular freight ceased in 2001 when the power station was mothballed.

The railway remained unused but in situ until 2011 when a mile of the route reopened to act as a railhead for the loading point of the opencast coal mine at Earlseat with trains running between 2012 and 2015.

Visiting Leven today it's easy to see why the railway needs to reopen. You must arrive by car. Even during

mid-December these roads are busy, but there seem to be few buses. Public transport is an important driver of economic prosperity. Leven, like so many seaside towns in Britain, has suffered from the decline of its main industries. While neighbouring towns have seemingly prospered, that has not been the case for Leven. The largest employer remains multinational beverage company Diageo, which not only owns the facility at Cameron Bridge but also owns sites in Leven.

House prices are lower in Leven than many other places and the hope is that by trains returning to the Fife town there will be economic input as people begin to commute, although this will likely take a decade to bear fruit.

Until trains return later this year, Levenmouth remains the largest urban area in Scotland without a direct rail link. The area has a population of 33,000 but with the local catchment area that could increase to 43,000. Furthermore, Network Rail and local

authorities believe that as well as people leaving the area by train for work and leisure, services will also make the area appealing for walkers and cyclists keen to use the railway as part of their activity.

Campaigns to reopen the railway to passengers have been ongoing ever since passenger services ceased in 1969. In the late 2000s, the estimate for reopening the line was £28 million, although this nearly doubled by the end of the decade.

Studies found that extending Edinburgh Waverley-Kirkcaldy trains to provide an hourly service to Leven were feasible. Another option was to extend Edinburgh Waverley-Cowdenbeath services which would create a half-hourly service.

There was also a hope that freight could return to the line, and while it did between 2012 and 2015, there are currently no planned freight services on the reopened route. That is not to say that they may not ever return.

↓ An aerial view looking towards Thornton Junction, where some of the first rails were laid on March 17, 2022. Network Rail

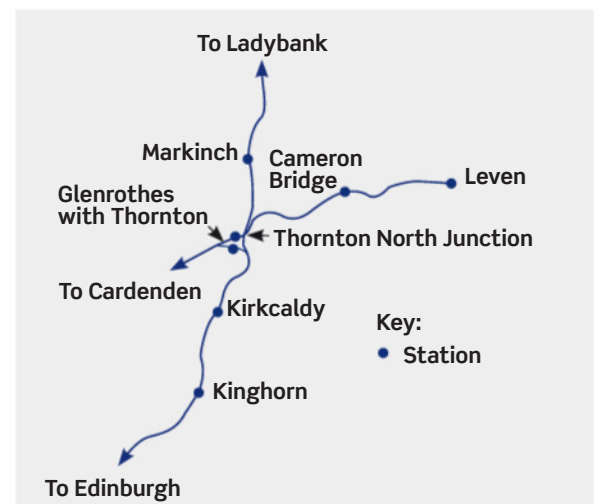




Leven platform construction. Network Rail



The start of construction at Cameron Bridge on January 24, 2023. The new station is being built closer to Leven rather than on the site of the former station. Network Rail



Diageo, likely working with WH Malcolm, is keen to investigate the use of rail freight while Network Rail would be interested in replicating the Highland Spring terminal at Blackford, Perthshire, although that is more of a nationwide idea but could be used for Diageo potentially.

The number of lorries on the road during RE's visit certainly suggests there is an opportunity, while there is also the Thornton Yard site that could be used as a railhead if anything was to occur, indeed this was used as a storage site for sleepers during the line's reconstruction.

REOPENING GO-AHEAD

Plans to reopen the Levenmouth railway were approved by the Scottish government on August 8, 2019. The plans included 11 miles of single-track new/reinstated railway, two new fully-accessible stations and the provision for eventual electrification.

While the Scottish government wants to decarbonise the railway, it remains the case that finances will dictate what is possible. RE understands

that the plans to electrify the line from Haymarket West Junction to Dalmeny will be reintroduced and this will help with ScotRail's plans for a new fleet of hybrid trains, likely a mixture of battery-electric units (RE321).

The then-cabinet secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson confirmed the reopening when meeting council leaders and local community groups. He said at the time that a proposed rail link with stops in Leven and Cameron Bridge, combined with improved bus services as well as cycling and walking facilities, emerged as the best performing options in the Levenmouth Sustainable Transport Study. At the time he said the cost was around £70m. He added at the time: "I am extremely pleased that the case has been made for the Levenmouth rail link and I look forward to seeing this project being taken forward to the next stages of design."

"The detailed appraisal work that has been carried out suggests that improved transport links, which give Leven a direct rail link to the capital,

will lead to an enhanced local economy, bringing better access to employment and education and the potential for new investment. Easier and more sustainable travel options will make it easier for people to reach hospitals, schools and visit other areas of the country as well as giving better access to Levenmouth.

"I would like to acknowledge the hard work of local MSPs, elected members and interest groups who have campaigned for the reopening of this line, and I look forward to working with all partners to realise all of the benefits that improved connectivity can bring."

WORK BEGINS

On March 4, 2022, Network Rail announced that work on the Levenmouth Rail Link project had got underway. Confirming that the project would cost £116.6m, the infrastructure owner said that the work would include the removal of the former track bed and other route preparation work ahead of the rebuilding of the double-track railway.

NR said at the time that: "By utilising

much of the existing double track bed it allows a cost-effective delivery of capacity for passenger, charter and freight service growth and a step-change in new journey opportunities across the wider economic area to places of education, work and leisure."

There was also confirmation that while the first trains to operate on the route will be diesel-powered, electrification will be undertaken as early as possible.

NR also said that the project will explore the potential opportunities for rail freight and charter trains "to maximise the value of this transformational investment can bring to the Levenmouth area".

At the same time, Transport Scotland director of rail Bill Reeve said: "The Levenmouth Rail Link demonstrates our ambition not just for improving and investing in Scotland's Railway, but also our commitment to communities as new rail links bring many additional benefits such as connectivity to the wider economic area to allow new journeys for work, education and leisure."

“Our experience from the highly successful Borders Railway project makes clear the maximum benefits of the railway investment are realised where they are delivered as a package of improved transport measures and underpinned with community initiatives and projects. That is exactly what we are doing at Levenmouth as we work towards our decarbonisation and net zero targets.

“It will give people the opportunity to travel to and from Levenmouth more sustainably, and by including active travel links we can encourage greener end-to-end journeys.”

At the start of this work, Network Rail highlighted that since Mr Matheson approved the scheme in August 2019, the scope had changed to include further investment for electrification and active travel routes as well as the opportunities for freight and charters.

The first rails for the project were laid on March 17, 2022, and followed extensive preparatory work around Thornton Junction, which connects the reopened railway to the Fife Circle. NR explained that: “Existing track sections within the first mile were utilised to deliver the new ballast, sleepers and rails to where they would be needed

in the section. The old track was then lifted, and the top layers of ballast removed back to the formation level of the track bed. With the materials all to hand, the track bed could then be quickly re-formed.

“Specialist plant positioned the concrete sleepers in batches of seven covering 72 metres per hour and creating the early chance to put down the first of the new rails. Seven pairs of continuously welded rail sections in 240 metre lengths were positioned on the sleepers before being clipped into place to form the first mile of the new line.”

Planning applications for the two new stations at Cameron Bridge and Leven were submitted by NR on October 7, 2022. The former was at a new site rather than on the former station site, due to the proximity to the Diageo distillery which has a 500m exclusion site for new construction on safety grounds.

Cameron Bridge, which is expected to act as a park-and-ride station for the surrounding communities, will initially feature a car park with 125 spaces but there is contingency for more than 300 spaces in total. There is a footbridge with lifts, as well as waiting shelters and ticket machines at the new site.



A view of Cameron Bridge on December 15, 2023, looking towards the Diageo distillery. Richard Clinnick

Leven features a 210m island platform with level access. There is some car parking, however, it is envisaged most passengers will likely access it by foot due to the integration of a walkway that offers direct connectivity to the High Street.

Despite there not being any overhead line electrification initially,

that didn't stop NR starting piling work on October 18, 2022. The first phase was between Thornton Junction and Haugh Mill Lade. The piles have been installed along the full length of the line, including at stations, so that when authorisation for erection of OLE is given, work can commence immediately.



An aerial view of Leven station on November 20, 2023. Network Rail



Cameron Bridge station on December 15, 2023, looking towards Leven. Richard Clinnick

On January 24, 2023, construction of the new station at Cameron Bridge began. This station is designed to serve both Cameron Bridge and Methilhill as well as acting as a park-and-ride. The platforms are 196m long and were constructed using more than 100 precast units and approximately 200 cubic metres of concrete.

Along the line at Leven, ground was broken at the new station site on February 27, 2023. Featuring two 205m platforms as an island construction there will also be a pebble-styled pavilion area as the station entrance. It is next to the town's leisure centre.

Work began with the construction of the foundations for the platforms. The platforms themselves were constructed using 98 precast units and around 200 cubic metres of concrete. At the start of this work, Alex Hynes, Scotland's Railway managing director, said: "This new line will also serve other areas of Fife and allow the community better

connectivity which means increased access to employment, education and make it easier for people to visit this beautiful part of the Fife coast. The benefits this brings are countless."

On August 25, 2023, Scotland's transport minister Fiona Hyslop installed the final Pandrol clip to mark the completion of tracklaying on the railway. NR confirmed that since work began there had been 80,000 tonnes of spoil removed and around 75,000 tonnes of ballast laid. Additionally, some 29,000 sleepers have been installed while 21.7 miles of rail had been laid in 165m and 215m-long sections. Existing bridges have also been repaired.

Fast-forward to 2024 and driver training is about to start. When *RE* visited on December 15, there was still some work to complete on Cameron Bridge and Leven stations, while some footpaths were yet to be finished, but this would not affect the driver training.



On December 15, 2023, Leven station is taking shape, with a shelter constructed and lights being erected. Richard Clinnick



Leven station on December 15, 2023. The circular cover in front of the light is for the electrification stanchion. Although wires are not being erected ahead of the line's reopening, piling has been undertaken so this work can be undertaken quickly when wiring is authorised. Richard Clinnick



Looking west from Leven station on December 15, 2023. Richard Clinnick

ScotRail has undertaken an internal shuffle of trains to be able to begin training. SR operations director David Simpson explained to *Rail Express* that Class 158s and '170s' will be used on the Levenmouth line when passenger services begin.

Initially one train per hour will operate from Edinburgh Waverley but this will increase to two per hour next year. To release the diesel multiple units for training, Class 156s have been reintroduced on the Glasgow Queen Street-Anniesland route, replacing '158s' that had replaced them. The '156s' have been freed following the electrification of the Barrhead line which switched to '380' operation in December (see *Headline News*). The increase in timetabled services in 2025 will require a further shuffle of fleets with more DMUs required for the new line. That is still being discussed, however there will not be any new trains added to the fleet.

The project to reopen the railway is one that should benefit the local economy, communities and those seeking to move away from the Scottish capital.

It's a scheme that shows the power of rail... something the British government could perhaps learn. [B](#)

Fund-raising farewell for DRS Class 37s

Network Rail programme director **Chris Gee** organised a charity photoshoot at York Holgate Works to say farewell to the fleet of Direct Rail Services Class 37s used on railhead treatment train duties last autumn.

MORE than £3000 was raised for Martin House Children's Hospice during a photoshoot held at York Holgate Works on December 16, 2023, featuring five Direct Rail Services Class 37s.

The locomotives had been employed on railhead treatment train

duties in the area during the autumn, however their work finished the previous day. Network Rail programme director Chris Gee arranged for the event to take place, although this was on the proviso that the five Type 3s expected to take part in the event,

Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower*, 37419 *Driver Tony Kay 1974-2019*, 37422 *Victorious*, 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* and 37716 were tidied up ahead of the event and not covered in the usual grime associated with locomotives employed on RHTT jobs.

There were more than 70 photographers in attendance across two shoots, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Volunteers had cleaned the Type 3s prior to the event, while those attending the shoot had paid a donation to attend.



Standing at York Holgate Works on December 16, 2023, are, from left to right, Direct Rail Services Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower*, 37419 *Driver Tony Kay 1974-2019* and 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob*. All photos: Chris Gee

Mr Gee said: "We had a brilliant evening as over 70 people from across the industry and beyond came down to Holgate Works to mark the end of railhead treatment train season through pictures, and raise a great amount of money for Martin House."

"It has been a busy season for the locomotives based at Holgate and it was lovely to see them presented so nicely after working hard throughout the autumn keeping the nation's passengers moving."

"Network Rail has supported Martin House's incredible work for a number of years now, and it is amazing that we have been able to raise even more money for them through this special event."

Another DRS locomotive, No. 37401 *Mary Queen of Scots*, had been used in the area at the start of autumn, however it was soon withdrawn and has since been sold to

Locomotive Services (see *Power By The Hour*).

Recent sales of Class 37s by DRS (see *PBTH*) leaves these five locomotives, plus stored No. 37424 *Vulcan Avro XH558* (which had not been used on RHTT duties this year, and which had been made available for sale but was not purchased), as the final examples in its fleet.

Four of the five used in the photoshoot returned to Crewe on December 21, leaving No. 37407 at York for any required duties. Speculation suggests that the operator will look to sell the remaining locomotives as it looks to decarbonise its fleet and rid itself of its heritage fleet (*RE322*). In a statement, the operator told *Rail Express*: 'we are currently evaluating our traction options, which will include the Class 37s, as we look to decarbonise and modernise our locomotive fleet.' 

CLASS 37 RAILHEAD TREATMENT TRAIN DUTIES

SUNDAYS

Diagram NE02

3S29	08.27	York Works-York Works via Harrogate, Leeds, Hellifield, Leeds and Harrogate.
3S20	16.55	York Works to Selby (not necessarily the same pair of '37s' that worked 3S29, a locomotive swap often took place)
3S21	20.25	Selby-Harrogate
3S22	21.34	Harrogate-Hall Royd Junction (reversed at Todmorden station)
3S23	23.47	Hall Royd Junction-Leeds
3S24	02.00	Leeds-Leeds via Skipton and Ilkley (early hours Monday)
3S25	04.55	Leeds-Leeds via Knaresborough (early hours Monday)
3S26	06.25	Leeds-York Works (Monday morning)

WEEKDAYS

Diagram NE02

3S20	16.46	York Works-Selby
3S21	20.16	Selby-Harrogate
3S22	21.23	Harrogate-Hall Royd Junction (reversed Todmorden station)
3S23	23.10	Hall Royd Junction-Leeds
3S24	02.00	Leeds-Leeds via Skipton and Ilkley (early hours the following day)
3S25	04.55	Leeds-Leeds via Knaresborough (early hours the following day)
3S26	06.25	Leeds-York Works (the next morning)

Diagram NE05

3J51	09.50	York Works-York Works via Scarborough and Hull (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays)
3J51	09.50	York Works-York Works via Scarborough and Hull (Tuesdays and Thursdays)

Note: Timings for the weekday 3J51 turns were different depending on the day. Class 37s had to be used on 3J51 due to route availability on the Hull-Scarborough line, however No. 37716 was too heavy to be used.

Saturdays

3J51	09.50	York Works-York Works via Scarborough and Hatfield and Stainforth (Saturdays only).
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Note: Class 37s had to be used on 3J51 due to route availability on the Hull-Scarborough line, however No. 37716 was too heavy to be used.



Direct Rail Services No. 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* is viewed from inside York Holgate Works.



↑ Displaying a British Rail double arrow and its pre-conversion identity of No. 37266, Direct Rail Services No. 37422 *Victorious* stands outside York Holgate Works on December 16, 2023.



↑ Two volunteers clean Direct Rail Services No. 37407 *Blackpool Tower* inside York Holgate Works on December 16, 2023, prior to the photoshoot.

← The sun sets on Direct Rail Services Nos. 37407 *Blackpool Tower*, 37419 *Driver Tony Kay* 1974-2019 and 37425 *Sir Robert McAlpine/Concrete Bob* on December 16, 2023.

→ Network Rail programme director Chris Gee.



↓ A filthy Direct Rail Services No. 37422 *Victorious* (left) stands at York Holgate Works on December 16, 2023, as the railhead treatment train (RHTT) set used on the previous day's 3J51 09.50 York Works-York Works via Scarborough and Hull is emptied. On the right are DRS No. 37407 *Blackpool Tower* and No. 37419 *Driver Tony Kay* 1974-2019.



An additional £250 million of capital investment for TfL

Central government provides funding, but there are strings attached to the latest financial deal.

TRANSPORT For London (TfL) has negotiated an additional £250 million of capital funding with the Government.

Announcing the money on December 18, London transport commissioner Andy Lord said: "Through a huge effort to reduce costs and rebuild our ridership and revenue following the pandemic, TfL is now on track to be financially sustainable in terms of its day-to-day operations. We are also able to cover the cost of the majority of our capital investment."

The agreement comes with terms and conditions including a commitment that TfL will become financially sustainable by the end of March 2024. It will also need to provide a plan how it will "maintain and strengthen its

financial sustainability from FY24/25."

Additionally, TfL is unable to request or assume any further contribution from central government until the next Spending Review period. This could be viewed as a rebuke targeting Sadiq Khan, as the London mayor referred to an assumption that TfL would receive £475m during a London Assembly meeting on July 6 last year (RE328). This assumption was based upon the finding of the Independent Financial Review of December 2020, imposed upon TfL as a condition of the first Covid-19 bailout agreement.

The report recommended that "grant contributions will be needed for major enhancements to the network, including major renewals." Although the

DfT committed to this recommendation, there is clearly irritation that the mayor has used and reflected this finding back towards central government. The added expectation by the Department for Transport (DfT) that TfL will balance its finances by this March will also apply added pressure, aimed specifically at Mr Khan.

On paper, the claim by the DfT that this is "further £250 million government funding investment in upgrades" represents a benefit to passengers. Yet, this is significantly less than the £475m figure anticipated. Meanwhile, there is no acknowledgement of the fiscal cost of inflation upon TfL in recent years. Consumer price inflation has risen from less than 1% in early 2021, to around 11% in the autumn of 2022. Even now inflation still stands at 4.8% and, according to the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), will still be around

3% in the last quarter of 2024. With TfL previously estimating that this would cost them more than £130m, in truth it is more likely to be closer to £200m.

Continuing high inflation was one of the two risks highlighted by TfL that might prevent it from balancing its book by the end of 2023/24. The other was inadequate capital funding from central government. With the Mayoral elections taking place in May 2024, it seems the decks are being stacked against the Labour Mayor by a Conservative administration.

Meanwhile, following the announcement of £250m capital funding, Mr Khan's Conservative opponent, Susan Hall, claimed on social media "As mayor I'll ensure Londoners get a better deal." That's quite a guarantee, were a party of a different political persuasion elected to central government at the next General Election. **B**

Restoration plans for former IoW CL.483/LU 38TS units

SEVERAL examples of the former 1938 Tube Stock have entered their third chapter, having first served London, then on the Isle of Wight (IoW) and now beginning their preservation careers.

The London Transport Traction Group (LTTG) has announced that it will return No. 006 back to Network South East livery to denote the 35th anniversary of the units entering service on the Isle of Wight.

Meanwhile, the LTTG reports that its other unit, No. 008, is in poor cosmetic condition and will be stored for the foreseeable future.

However, once it has the resources, the LTTG intends to restore the unit to London Transport Bus Red, the livery carried by the 1938-Stock fleet during the 1970s and 1980s.

New TfL chief operating officer

CLAIRE Mann has been appointed Transport for London chief operating officer.

The current South Western Railway managing director will join TfL in March and replaces Andy Lord who has been formally promoted to TfL commissioner.

While Mr Lord undertook that role on an interim basis, his role was temporarily covered by Glynn Barton who will become director of buses.



Mayor of London Sadiq Khan inspects a refurbished Central Line train at Hainault. Transport for London

Mayor of London inspects first CLIP project

MAYOR of London Sadiq Khan visited the first refurbished Central Line train at Hainault Depot. The visit took in mid-December.

Referred to as the Central Line Improvement Programme (CLIP), the £500 million refurbishment programme ensures that the 92 Stock complies with Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2010 legislation.

Initially, one train is due to be reintroduced per month throughout

this year, with is likely to increase as all units are due to be reintroduced during the next four years. At any one time, five trains will be out of service, so it is highly likely that TfL will need to apply for a further extension beyond the current December 31, 2024, deadline.

The cars exist as four-car units, with two units forming each eight-car train. The RVAR work undertaken focuses upon replacement AC motors, LED lighting, wheelchair-compatible doorway and handrails, LED passenger

destination displays, and a new CCTV system with two cameras in each car. The cars have been stripped back to the frame, to address cracks along with new flooring also being installed along with new cars ends, completing the work which began in 2012.

The 92 TS trains were initially introduced in 1993, replacing stock dating from 1962. The long-awaited overhaul will extend the passenger service of the Central Line trains well into the 2030s (RE332).



No. 45144 hauls the 1E82 09.03 Liverpool Lime Street-Scarborough under the gantry alongside Falsgrave Signalbox, Scarborough, on April 25, 1987. Duncan McEvoy

Trans-Pennine to Scarborough - is it finally the end?

TransPennine Express' Class 68-hauled trains ceased in December, bringing down the curtain on the second spell of trans-Pennine locomotive-hauled trains to Scarborough. **David Russell** looks back at the two periods of operation from 1982 to 1987 and from 2019 to 2023.

THE December 2023 timetable change saw the withdrawal of the Nova 3 fleet, made up of Class 68s and Mk.5A coaches, from active operation on trans-Pennine routes after just four years of service (see *Headline News*).

The somewhat controversial decision, announced in summer 2023 (RE330), demonstrates the change in direction of the trans-Pennine operation in recent years; it was brought back into full government control in May

2023 having previously been operated by FirstGroup since 2016. Services between Leeds and Manchester, which ran five times an hour back in 2017 and were described as 'walk on', have been reduced, and since the latest timetable change there are now gaps of up to 30 minutes between trains.

When No. 68027 *Splendid* hauled the 06.54 Liverpool Lime Street-Scarborough on August 24, 2019, it marked the return of regular locomotive-

hauled timetabled services across the Pennines to the east coast resort for the first time since May 1987. When introduced, TPE had planned to operate its Nova 3 trains on virtually all services between Liverpool/Manchester Airport in the west and Scarborough/Middlesborough in the east. However, this never came to fruition.

The previous period of locomotive-hauled trans-Pennine workings to and from Scarborough had begun in May 1982, and lasted for five years. These came about because services between Liverpool and York were extended to/from Scarborough. Initially such workings were rostered to be hauled by Class 47s, but this changed in October of that year with the influx of Class 45/1s previously used on Midland Main Line workings. These had become surplus following the introduction of

High Speed Trains on services into and out of St Pancras. The Toton-based '45/1s', which were reallocated to Tinsley in November 1986, would work alongside their Brush Type 4 counterparts for the next few years.

Typically, services on the route were made up of seven or eight coaches. A Mk.1 Gangwayed Brake (BG) could normally be found at the Liverpool end of the rake, with a Mk.2a First Corridor (FK) located adjacent to it. Five or six second class (as it was still known back then) vehicles would follow, normally including a 65xx series micro-buffet, and, in many sets, one or two declassified Mk.1 First Open coaches, renumbered into the 36xx series. Several of these later reverted to their first class status with the InterCity Special Trains Unit coaches and are still in use on charter trains to this day.



No. 45124 passes Seamer West Junction shortly after calling at Seamer on April 25, 1987. The train is just a few miles in to its journey west with the 1M75 13.53 Scarborough-Liverpool Lime Street, some two weeks before the last trans-Pennine locomotive-hauled service to Scarborough. Duncan McEvoy

NORTH WALES BOUND

A further timetable alteration took place in May 1983, when some Scarborough services were diverted to run to North Wales rather than Liverpool. The following list details the weekday trans-Pennine workings into and out of Scarborough from the change.

Westbound

1M62	07.45	Scarborough-Liverpool LS
1M58	08.50	Scarborough-Bangor
1M63	11.00	Scarborough-Bangor
1M26	12.57	Scarborough-Bangor
1M76	15.00	Scarborough-Liverpool LS
1M77	16.00	Scarborough-Liverpool LS
1M32	17.00	Scarborough-Liverpool LS
1M80	19.25	Scarborough-Liverpool LS

Eastbound

1E00	07.05	Liverpool LS-Scarborough
1E06	09.05	Liverpool LS-Scarborough
1E08	09.15	Bangor-Scarborough
1E99	11.15	Bangor-Scarborough
1E98	12.05	Liverpool LS-Scarborough
1E53	13.24	Llandudno-Scarborough
1E16	15.05	Bangor-Scarborough



A subdued scene at York on December 9, 2023, as No. 68030 *Black Douglas* is about to leave with the final TransPennine Express Nova 3 service, the 1U87 23.03 to Scarborough. Duncan McEvoy

On the first day (May 16), the first working from Scarborough to Bangor (1M58) was worked by No. 45145, while No. 47459 handled the corresponding working in the opposite direction (1E08). A year later, in May 1984, 1M80 was diverted to run to Holyhead instead of Liverpool, providing a 'coast to coast' service. Similarly, 1E08 was amended to start at Holyhead rather than Bangor.

Sadly, a serious and fatal collision involving the 1E79 10.05 Liverpool-Scarborough, hauled by No. 45147, occurred later in the year on December 4, 1984, when the 'Peak' ran into the back of an oil train near Eccles, resulting in a fire. The driver of 1E79 and two passengers were killed, and the locomotive was written off, along with the two leading coaches, Mk.1 Second Open (SO) No. 3603 and Mk.2a Tourist Second Open (TSO) No. 5289.

Substitutions of 'Peaks' and '47s' continued to take place on a relatively frequent basis, normally with a Class 31 or '40'. These two types were also regular visitors to Scarborough on summer-dated trains from the likes of Sheffield, Wakefield and Manchester. 1984 was, however, to be the last for the Class 40s on summer extras as by February 1985, the fleet had all been withdrawn apart from pioneer

LOCOMOTIVE-HAULED TRAINS

No. D200 (40122). Despite this, at least one 'Whistler' still managed to appear at the beginning of the year, No. 40118, which is now preserved at the Battlefield Line, rolled into Scarborough with 1E74 (14.05 from Liverpool) on January 8, 1985. It returned west with the 1M79 18.00 Scarborough-Liverpool Lime Street.

Over the next two years, workings remained broadly similar, but a splash of colour was added to the rolling stock; the '47s' used on the route began to appear in large-logo blue, and in 1986 a start was made on repainting the coaches into Provincial Services colours with Trans-Pennine branding as BR prepared itself for sectorisation.

The introduction of new diesel multiple units from 1985 onwards enabled not only the replacement of many of the first generation units dating from the late 1950s and early 1960s, but also the elimination of locomotive-hauled services from many routes. Pairs of new Class 150/2 Sprinters were put into use on some trans-Pennine workings out of Scarborough in March 1987, with the remaining Scarborough services going over to '150/2' operation from the May timetable change. Whether the passengers considered the new rolling stock, with no micro-buffet/trolley, 3+2 seating layout and lack of first class accommodation, to be an improvement on the spacious old trains, is up for debate. Fortunately, they were replaced with more suitable Class 156s in 1989.

The last working out of Scarborough took place on May 10,

1987, when No. 45150 worked the 1M80 17.45 Scarborough-Liverpool Lime Street. A couple of hours later, No. 47425 arrived with the final inbound service, the 1E33 17.03 Liverpool Lime Street-Scarborough. Thereafter, locomotive-hauled timetabled workings to and from Scarborough were restricted to summer-dated trains, although these too reduced over the next few years.

By 1992, the only such services were two Cross-Country workings, the 1E31 06.40 Derby-Scarborough and 1V54 10.16 Scarborough-Swansea. Although booked for Class 47 haulage from the ILRA pool, a traction shortage resulted in No. 56009 working 1E31 and then 1V54 as far as Derby on June 13, 1992.

CLASS 47S RETURN FOR ONE DAY

More than 25 years after the final workings in 1987, Class 47s returned to the Liverpool to Scarborough route for one day on July 5, 2014. To provide additional capacity when the Tour de France cycle race visited Yorkshire, Direct Rail Services (DRS) was contracted to operate two return workings between the two termini. Formed of six DRS Mk.2 air-cons, the train was operated in top-and-tail formation, No. 47853 *Rail Express* leading out of Liverpool and No. 47841 returning both services from Scarborough.

Most expected these workings to be a one-off return, but things took a turn with the new TransPennine Express

franchise which came into effect from April 1, 2016. When the Department for Transport issued its invitation to tender in February 2015, it included a stipulation on what rolling stock could be proposed by bidders. This included "Vehicles of Class 442 following their release from the TSGN franchise" and "Any new-build rolling stock that the Bidder commits to procure." Obviously, the former 'Wessex Electric' units would have had to be hauled, but the winner of the franchise, First Group, chose the latter option, and in May 2016, the company announced that it had ordered from CAF, via Beacon Rail Leasing, 13 five-coach rakes of stock which would be powered by Beacon Rail Class 68s sub-leased from DRS. A Driving Standard Open (DSO) coach would prevent the need for any shunt release or running round the stock.

In its announcement concerning the new trains, First Group explained its reasoning for ordering the locomotive-hauled trains in addition to 12 CAF electric multiple units (Class 397) and 19 bi-mode units from Hitachi (Class 802/2), stating "Most of the required Class 68 engines are already built and by buying state of the art carriages to be pulled by these engines, much needed additional capacity can be introduced quickly to the network."

True to its statement, the '68 and Mk.5A stock' combination was the first of TPE's new fleets to enter traffic, although it was around a year later than originally intended and a previous plan to use former 'Pretendolino' Mk.3 coaches to make up two short rakes until the Mk.5A stock became available

was ditched; four of those coaches were used to operate a Manchester Piccadilly-Manchester Airport return on December 30, 2017, with Nos. 68003 *Astute* and 68030 in top-and-tail mode, ensuring the train operator met its franchise obligations.

A soft launch on August 24, 2019, saw No. 68027 *Splendid* form the 1F48 05.55 Manchester Victoria-Liverpool Lime Street before making two return trips from Liverpool to Scarborough. The locomotive was one of 14 in total (Nos. 68019-032) which received TPE colours and were modified for use with Mk.5A stock in 2017/18. A further two '68s', Nos. 68033/034, also received the Mk.5A modifications and were regarded as standby locos, retaining DRS livery.

By September, two diagrams on the Liverpool to Scarborough circuit had been introduced, these also including an evening Sunday working from Scarborough to Manchester Airport. Two months later, on November 22, 2019, an official launch of the three new TPE 'Nova' fleets took place; the locomotive-hauled sets being given the name 'Nova 3'. In explaining the name, TPE said "The name Nova reflects the positive changes that will truly transform rail travel for our customers, with an enhancement to customers' experience on board and an increase in capacity of 80% on all routes." Few, if any, could have predicted that, just over four years later, one of the new fleets would be ditched, having never even begun work on one of the routes they were planned to be used on.

On December 1, 2023, TransPennine Express No. 68027 *Splendid* passes Seamer Carr Farm, near Seamer, with the 1U40 09.48 Scarborough-York. Andy Mason





Direct Rail Services supplied locomotive-hauled trains in July 2014 to provide extra capacity for the Tour de France when the cycle race visited Yorkshire. On July 5, 2014, DRS No. 47853 *Rail Express* stands at York with the 1Z80 06.22 Liverpool Lime Street-Scarborough. David Russell

The intention was that 12 of the 13 Mk.5A sets would be in use each day; seven on the Liverpool to Scarborough circuit and the remainder between Manchester Airport and Redcar. While the latter never happened, the December 2019 timetable change saw the number of diagrams on the Scarborough route increased to four.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Things were to change unexpectedly three months later, when the United Kingdom went into lockdown because of the Covid-19 pandemic. With few people travelling, an emergency timetable was introduced on March 23, 2020, and the number of Class 68s in use on TPE between Liverpool and Scarborough was reduced to two. At the same time, crew training had to be suspended. The diagrams were further changed in May, when the two diagrams were concentrated largely on Scarborough to York shuttles, with just a small number of services running across the Pennines. A third working, which restored some Liverpool runs, was reintroduced in July when restrictions on travel were partially eased.

December 2020 saw most of the Liverpool workings dropped as duties were once again focused on the Scarborough to York route. This continued for much of 2021 as the country drifted in and out of restrictions. The trans-Pennine timetable changed frequently, as did the locomotive-hauled diagrams; at one point towards the end of the year, the diagrams included two services from Scarborough to Stalybridge and back, others running between Scarborough and Manchester

Victoria. Plans for the use of '68s' on trains to/from Saltburn were abandoned in favour of the south Pennine route via Sheffield to Cleethorpes. Despite extensive crew training, passenger operations, which began in December 2022, were restricted to a rather erratic one service in each direction per day; they were abandoned less than eight months later following a decision to concentrate workings on the Scarborough route.

By summer 2022, Scarborough '68' workings had become more settled, once again focusing on shuttles to/from York, with a few journeys to the west, including one to Manchester Airport. Five diagrams were in places, although there were frequent cancellations or substitutions by Class 185s for various reasons, including coaching stock issues and traincrew availability.

A further shake up of the timetable in December 2022 saw the timetable and five associated locomotive-hauled diagrams revised to primarily cover a mix of York shuttles and Scarborough to Manchester Piccadilly workings. Although First Group had plans to step up the number of workings in 2024 (RE324), things changed after the TPE franchise was brought under government (DOHL) control on May 28, 2023 (RE326). A review of operations and a desire to simplify the business and cut costs saw timetable reductions and the fleet stopped from December 10, even though it remains on lease until May 2024 (see *Headline News*).

Services during the last nine days of operation were affected by an ASLEF overtime ban plus strike

CLASS 68 FINAL TPE PASSENGER WORKINGS

Number	Name	Date	Working
68019	<i>Brutus</i>	10/06/23	1U47 11.35 Manchester Piccadilly-Scarborough*
68020	<i>Reliance</i>	25/09/23	1U80 19.48 Scarborough-Manchester Piccadilly
68021	<i>Tireless</i>	05/12/23	1K42 20.43 Scarborough-Manchester Victoria
68022	<i>Resolution</i>	05/09/23	1K42 20.43 Scarborough-Manchester Victoria
68023	<i>Achilles</i>	20/11/23	1K42 20.43 Scarborough-Manchester Victoria
68024	<i>Centaur</i>	23/11/23	1U75 19.34 Leeds-Scarborough
68025	<i>Superb</i>	30/11/23	1U75 19.34 Leeds-Scarborough
68026	<i>Enterprise</i>	07/12/23	1U80 19.48 Scarborough-Manchester Piccadilly
68027	<i>Splendid</i>	06/12/23	1U80 19.48 Scarborough-Manchester Piccadilly
68028	<i>Lord President</i>	28/11/23	1U80 19.48 Scarborough-Manchester Piccadilly
68029	<i>Courageous</i>	29/11/23	1U29 06.27 Manchester Piccadilly -York*
68030	<i>Black Douglas</i>	09/12/23	1U87 23.03 York-Scarborough
68031	<i>Felix</i>	30/08/23	1U47 11.35 Manchester Piccadilly-Scarborough*
68032	<i>Destroyer</i>	13/11/23	1U80 19.48 Scarborough-Manchester Piccadilly *
68033^	<i>The Poppy</i>	18/05/23	1U80 19.48 Scarborough-Manchester Piccadilly
68034^		02/02/23	1U68 16.48 Scarborough-Manchester Piccadilly *

Note ^: Nos. 68033/034 were standby locos suitably modified for TPE/Mk.5A operation but retains DRS blue colours

Note *: Did not operate for entire journey.

action on December 8, thus making November 30, the last day of full services. In use on this date were Nos. 68025-027/030, the fifth diagram being covered by a '185'. Thereafter, workings were more restricted, and while many expected December 7 would see the last locomotive-hauled trains to/from Scarborough as December 8 was a strike day, December 9, saw No. 68030 *Black Douglas* sent out from Longsight for the last time, beginning its day with the 1U23 05.35 Manchester Piccadilly-Scarborough.

The curtain came down with the 1U87 23.03 York-Scarborough, ending the revival of regular locomotive-hauled trains to Scarborough, which had lasted just over four years. A list of final TPE passenger workings for each

of the locomotives can be found in the accompanying table.

Will locomotive-hauled service trains ever return to Scarborough? In response to the risks of possible long-term overcrowding following the service cuts, TPE says it is "working on a range of options to mitigate this which may include reintroduction of the Class 68 fleet subject to substantial investment in depot facilities and retraining needed to fully deploy the fleet reliably." Given the training requirements and stabling issues, along with the higher costs of operation compared to other rolling stock in the fleet, their reappearance would appear to be highly doubtful. Locomotive-hauled passenger trains will, in all probability, be restricted to occasional charters in future. But never say never!



London Liverpool Street is the country's busiest station with growth driven by the opening of the Elizabeth Line. Jack Boskett

Britain's busiest (and least busy) stations

Richard Clinnick reports on the latest station usage figures, which have been dramatically altered thanks to the opening of the Elizabeth Line.

THE opening of the Elizabeth Line has transformed not only travel across London, but judging by the latest station usage statistics, the way in which people travel too.

BRITAIN'S TOP TEN BUSIEST STATIONS

Station	Entries and exits
London Liverpool Street	80.4 million
London Paddington	59.2 million
London Waterloo	57.8 million
London Bridge	47.7 million
London Victoria	45.6 million
Stratford (London)	44.1 million
Tottenham Court Road	34.9 million
St Pancras International	33.3 million
Farringdon	31.5 million
London Euston	31.3 million

Source: Office of Rail and Road.

Published by the rail regulator the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) on December 14, the latest figures revealed that London Liverpool Street is now the busiest station in Britain for the period covered (April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023), but that the top 10 stations are now all in the capital, with five served by the new railway (Liverpool Street, Paddington, Stratford, Tottenham Court Road and Farringdon).

The ORR states that 2578 stations were served during that period, including eight new stations. It said that some 1385 million passenger journeys were made during that period, which was a 40% increase from the 990 million made in the previous year (April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022) thanks to the relaxation in restrictions following the pandemic as people returned to the railways.

Figures released by the regulator

shows that 37 stations (1%) had more than 10 million passengers, while 452 (18%) had more than 1 million. There were 1635 (63%) which had more than 100,000 passengers, while 2327 stations (90%) had more than 10,000 passengers. Some 2510 stations (97%) had more than 1000 passengers.

According to the figures, London Liverpool Street was the most used station with an estimated 80,448,194 million entries and exits. In the previous year it was the fourth busiest station with 32,165,310 entries and exits, however the opening of the Elizabeth Line in May 2022 has seen an increase in the number of journeys. As a comparison, prior to the pandemic, the station's busiest year was 2018-2019 when 69,482,532 entries and exits were recorded. During 2020-2021, when the pandemic restrictions were in place, this fell to 2,683,600.

The success of the Elizabeth Line is replicated at London Paddington, which was the second busiest station during 2022-2023 according to the ORR, rising from sixth place. According to the figures, there were 59,182,926 entries

and exits during the latest period, up from 23,870,510 in 2021-2022. During the pandemic year, Paddington recorded 6,391,896 entries and exits, while 2019-2020 was its busiest pre-pandemic year with 44,871,096 entries and exits.

Historically, Waterloo has usually been Britain's busiest station. This has been the case for 17 of the previous 18 years, only losing its top spot during the pandemic when the advice was not to travel.

The reduction in office working will have led to it recording 57,789,780 entries and exits during the latest period, which is much lower than its heyday in 2016-2017 when it recorded 99,403,096 entries and exits. Thanks to the pandemic, in 2020-2021, Waterloo had dropped to 12,212,626 entries and exits when it was beaten by Stratford, which recorded 13,985,162.

Also of note is that although it only opened to passengers on May 24, 2022, Tottenham Court Road was the seventh busiest station in the period covered, with some 34,877,768 entries and exits.

Outside of the capital, Birmingham New Street was the busiest station

with some 30,726,280 entries and exits. This was followed by Leeds (23,964,156) and Manchester Piccadilly (23,558,364).

Glasgow Central was Scotland's busiest station (and the fourth busiest outside London), with 20,767,954 entries and exits, while Cardiff Central was the busiest Welsh station with 10,185,022 entries and exits.

At the other end of the scale, Britain's least used station was Teesside Airport with two entries and exits, although this had its service suspended in May 2022. Of those open for the full year, Denton (in Greater Manchester) was the least used with 34 entries and exits.

The ORR station figures are always estimates based primarily on ticket sales. It says that this is the best approach possible to working out the figures because the railway is not "fully gated" and doesn't have a "fully comprehensive and robust count data" at every station. There is an admission by the regulator that some

TOP TEN BUSIEST STATIONS OUTSIDE LONDON

Station	Entries and exits
Birmingham New Street	30.7 million
Leeds	24.0 million
Manchester Piccadilly	23.6 million
Glasgow Central	20.8 million
Edinburgh Waverley	18.2 million
Gatwick Airport	16.5 million
Brighton	14.1 million
Reading	12.4 million
Glasgow Queen Street	12.3 million
Liverpool Central	11.4 million

Source: Office of Rail and Road.

ticket sales are ticketless travel and are not included, which could result in an underestimation for some stations, while it also warns that ticket sales data does not always specify precise journey data origins and/or destinations meaning that these are estimated using data sources. ➤

NEW STATIONS

EIGHT new stations opened during the period under review, April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023. Of those eight, five were on the Elizabeth Line, one was on the London Overground network and two were in Scotland.

The five which opened on the Elizabeth Line were Canary Wharf, Custom House, Tottenham Court Road and Woolwich, which all opened on May 24, 2022, followed by Bond Street on October 24, 2022. The LO station was Barking Riverside, which opened on July 18, 2022, while in Scotland there was Reston, which opened on May 23, 2022, and Inverness Airport, which opened on February 2, 2023.

Of those stations, Tottenham Court Road was the busiest with 34.9 million entries and exits,

followed by Bond Street with 19.4m, Canary Wharf with 9.92m, Woolwich with 8.34m and Custom House with 5.27m.

Away from the Elizabeth Line, Barking Riverside station recorded 461,000 entries and exits while there were 13,200 at Reston and 6,100 at Inverness Airport.

The ORR says that the three stations with the most journeys to or from Tottenham Court Road were London Liverpool Street (5.79m journeys), London Paddington (4.4m) and Bond Street (3.93m).

In Scotland, the three stations with the most journeys to or from Reston were Edinburgh Waverley (9370), Dunbar (950) and Berwick-upon-Tweed (810). For Inverness Airport it was Inverness (2390), Elgin (1130) and Forres (610).



Outside of London, the busiest station in Britain was Birmingham New Street. On March 7, 2023, a West Midlands Trains Class 323 arrives at the station. Tom McAtee

TOP FIVE LEAST USED STATIONS IN BRITAIN

Station	Entries and exits
Teesside Airport	2
Denton	34
Elton and Orston	56
Kirton Lindsey	94
Reddish South	100

Source: Office of Rail and Road.



With only two entries and exits, Teesside Airport is the least busy station in Britain, not helped by the fact that it was closed for almost the entire period the latest station figures cover. However, it is often near the bottom for station usage. This is a view of the station on February 12, 2018. Alex Ayre

As for the least used stations, after Teesside Airport and Denton, there is Elton and Orston (served by East Midlands Railway once a day in each direction although not on Sundays) with 56 entries and exits, Kirton Lindsey (served by Northern once a day, on weekdays, in each direction) with 94, and Reddish South with 100 (served by one train a day in each direction on a Saturday). The ORR points out that of these five stations, the three lowest-used have historically had low usage with each one appearing on the list more than once in recent years.



For 17 of the previous 18 years, London Waterloo has been the busiest station in Britain, however the opening of the Elizabeth Line combined with the continued change in commuter habits means it came third in the latest station figures. On October 3, 2023, South Western Railway Class 455s and '450s' serve the station. Jack Boskett



The Office of Rail and Road has, for the first time, reported on passenger flows between stations. The fourth busiest flow involving one London terminal was between Manchester Piccadilly and Euston with 2.9 million journeys. On November 22, 2022, two TransPennine Express Class 185s and an Avanti West Coast Class 390 wait to leave Manchester Piccadilly. Tom McAtee

BUSIEST FLOWS OUTSIDE OF LONDON

Route	Journeys
Birmingham New Street-Coventry	2.1 million
Edinburgh Waverley-Glasgow Queen Street	2.1 million
Birmingham New Street-Wolverhampton	1.7 million
Birmingham New Street-Selly Oak	1.5 million
Glasgow Central-Paisley Gilmour Street	1.4 million
Leeds-York	1.3 million
Birmingham International-Birmingham New Street	1.3 million
Manchester Airport-Manchester Piccadilly	1.1 million
Bath Spa-Bristol Temple Meads	1.1 million
Huddersfield-Leeds	1.1 million

Feras Alshaker, ORR director of planning and performance, said: "Our official statistics released today show how the full opening of the Elizabeth Line has changed the way people travel into and across the capital. Waterloo had been the busiest station in Britain for all but one of the previous 18 years. The busiest stations outside of London remain more stable with Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester leading the list.

"These statistics offer insight not only for the public but also for industry and planners, and we have continued to evolve them this year with the inclusion for the first time of data about journeys between stations."

A London TravelWatch spokesperson said: "It's positive to see a post-pandemic recovery of sorts on the railway even after all the disruptive strike action that's taken place this year.

"Passengers who use some of the busiest stations in the country, including Liverpool Street, Paddington and London Waterloo, will want to see much more reliable services in the year ahead. In the most recent rail industry 'on time' scores, punctuality on the Transport for London's Elizabeth Line actually got worse. This will be no surprise to passengers who have experienced some really challenging incidents recently." [B](#)

PASSENGER FLOWS

The ORR also revealed what the busiest flows between pairs of stations were; these represent all journeys, in both directions, between a pair of stations.

Again, the Elizabeth Line had an impact, with the busiest flow on the new section between London Liverpool Street and Tottenham Court Road (5.8 million journeys). While there is every chance that the route in second, between London Liverpool Street and Stratford (5.4 million journeys) can put its success down to the new railway, there is also the national rail route operated by Greater Anglia.

The third busiest flow was also from London Liverpool Street, but to Stansted Airport, with some 4.8 million journeys. The first route not to serve a London terminal was in fourth, which was between Barking and West Ham recording 4.9 million journeys. Fifth was between Gatwick Airport and London Victoria with 4.6, followed by between London Paddington and Tottenham Court Road (4.4), between London Paddington and Reading (4.1), between Bond Street and Tottenham Court Road (3.9), between Bond Street and London

Paddington (3.7) and rounding off the top 10 was between Romford and Stratford (3.6).

As for flows where at least one station is outside the capital, the ORR revealed that after the routes between Stansted Airport and London Liverpool Street, Gatwick Airport and London Victoria and Reading and London Paddington, which were all in the top 10, the fourth busiest flow involving one London terminal was between Manchester Piccadilly and Euston (2.9 million), followed by Milton Keynes Central and Euston (2.7), Watford Junction and Euston (2.7), Woking and Waterloo (2.6), Chelmsford and Liverpool Street (2.6), Birmingham New Street and Euston (2.5) and rounding out the top 10 was Cambridge and London King's Cross (2.5).

As for flows not including a London station, the busiest was between Birmingham New Street and Coventry (2.1 million journeys), level with between Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Queen Street (also 2.1). The busiest flow in Wales was between Cardiff Central and Newport, with 900,000 journeys.



Locomotive Services No. 47593 *Galloway Princess* powers the 1Z34 06.08 Leicester-Edinburgh Waverley through Ricknall Grange, on the East Coast Main Line, on December 21, 2023. On the rear was No. D213 (40013) *Andania*, and the '40' hauled the return south. John E Longden

Great news for 'Western' fans

THE Diesel Traction Group's No. D1015 *Western Champion* is set to return to the main line this year. Final preparations are being made to organise a test run prior to it being available for main line charters.

The 'Wizzo' suffered a failure when it undertook a test run in September 2021, prior to its last planned return to service. This was a bitter blow to the DTG which has spent many hours and many pounds in returning D1015 to working order. It now has two later-build Maybach power units obtained from Germany.

Hastings unit sorties

HASTINGS DIESELS has provided possible destinations for its main line-certified diesel electric multiple unit.

On April 6, it will head to Exeter St Davids, on June 8 it will run to Skegness if the group is given viable timings, Derby is the destination on July 13, while the Gloucester area is the aim of a tour on September 14.

IN BRIEF

'HOOVERS' TO PENZANCE

PATHFINDER'S tour to Penzance on Saturday, June 29, will feature two of the Class 50 Alliance machines, thus returning this popular class to its former haunts. 'The Mazey Day Cornishman' departs from Dorridge, with pick-ups to Bristol Temple Meads.



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Second DPS Deltic moves closer to main line return

DPS seeks quotes for fitting mandatory equipment for use on Network Rail.

THE Deltic Preservation Society No. 55019 *Royal Highland Fusilier* could return to the national network, hauling railtours, before the end of this year.

Following a repaint and other attention, at Barrow Hill, the locomotive is set to go to the Great Central Railway (GCR) to participate in special events and, possibly, to make use of the GCR's facility for higher speed test running. For certification purposes, the DPS is using Technical Construction, based at Eastleigh, which was instrumental in returning the DPS' No. 55009 *Alycidon* to the main line in 2023.

Should the testing be successful and considering the lead time for planning tours, No. 55019 could be back

on Network Rail metals later this year.

Following the disastrous, and expensive, failure of No. 55009 *Alycidon* in March 2019, the DPS took the decision to have a second Deltic available for charter trains, this being to allow a back-up in case one or the other was unavailable – protecting revenue the thinking behind the move.

No. 55019 *Royal Highland Fusilier* last ran on the national network in 2005, but has since been a reliable and regular attendee at gala events around the country. To permit it to return to main line action, it was necessary to fund and fit updated GSM-R (radio) equipment, a newer TPWS (Train Protection & Warning

System) and, finally, the on-train monitoring recorder (OTMR).

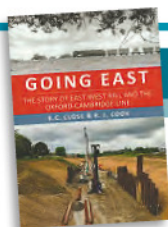
Because insufficient miles had been accumulated since No. 55019's bogies were last given a classified overhaul, minor attention is being given, including fettling brake rigging and overhaul of the 12 brake cylinders (now fitted).

The DPS launched three separate appeals for the various equipments, and, thanks to members and followers, the three appeals have been successful. It now remains to have the equipment fitted, especially the OTMR. This requires specialised contractors, with the DPS approaching several companies with a view to obtaining the best value. 

FORTHCOMING TOURS FOR FEBRUARY

Date	Tour Name	From-To	Motive Power	Promoter
3	Settle & Carlisle Circular	Stoke-on-Trent, pick-ups to Chesterfield-Settle & Carlisle line	LS '47'x2	SR
9	A Moving Murder Mystery	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
9	West Riding Limited	London King's Cross, Stevenage, Peterborough-Skipton, Bradford	LS '90'	IC
11	Champagne Afternoon Tea	London Victoria-Surrey Hills circular via Guildford	DBC '67'	BBP
14	Historic Bath	London Victoria-Bath	DBC '67'	BBP
15	Garden of England	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
16	A Moving Murder Mystery	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
17	Historic Bath	London Victoria-Bath	DBC '67'	BBP
17	Settle & Carlisle Circular	Leamington, pick-ups to Crewe-Settle & Carlisle line	LS '47'x2	SR
21	Le Manoir Aux Quat'Saisons	London Victoria-Oxford Parkway	DBC '67'	BBP
22	Golden Age of Travel	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
23	A Moving Murder Mystery	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP
24-25	Highland Whistler	Crewe, pick-ups to Carlisle-Aberdeen	No. D213	IC
25	Champagne Afternoon Tea	London Victoria-Surrey Hills circular via Guildford	DBC '67'	BBP
28	Historic Bath	London Victoria-Bath	DBC '67'	BBP
29	Garden of England	London Victoria-Kent circular	DBC '67'	BBP

Operators: BBP – British Belmond Pullman, IC – Inter-City, SR – Statesman Rail



Going East: The story of East-West Rail and the Oxford-Cambridge line

Published by Amberley Publishing
www.amberley-books.com
 ISBN: 978-1-39811-273-5
 Price: £15.99

THE East-West Rail route is in the news now, as work on the project to reconnect the route between Oxford and Cambridge is nearing completion, with the newly rebuilt sections expected to be brought into use for test trains from spring 2024, with passenger services due to return at some point in 2025. Its reinstatement will provide a useful cross-country artery and also a potential feeder route for HS2.

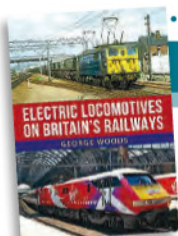
It is perhaps surprising that the authors didn't wait until the East-West Rail route is complete and opened, but this is a great book that looks at the

route, its history prior to parts of the route being closed and the campaign to rebuild the missing sections of the line. There is still plenty of scope to provide a more detailed second volume on the reconstruction and opening of the line in the future.

The book is illustrated by a wide variety of monochrome and colour photographs, both of a historic nature and those in relation to the current rebuilding of the lost sections of the route. The text is well written and lively, detailing the history of the line and the campaign for its reinstatement

well, without being too technical and over-complicated. As mentioned earlier, the book does give a potential for a second volume in a couple of years as the revitalised route is brought back into use.

This 96-page book is priced at £15.99 and produced on decent quality paper with a softback card cover, much the same as their photo albums. Going East is a welcome addition to the Amberley catalogue and I hope that the publisher now looks at producing more similar volumes as an alternative to their tried and tested photo album books. (AMC).



Electric Locomotives on Britain's Railways

Published by Amberley Publishing
www.amberley-books.com
 ISBN: 978-1-39810-201-9
 Price: £15.99

ANOTHER recent release from Amberley is Electric Locomotives on Britain's Railways, using the photography of prolific photographer George Woods, who has now authored several photo albums released by this publisher.

The book starts with a rare colour view of Southern Railway Class 70 electric locomotive No. 20001 in 1969, just before withdrawal, before moving through the various other electric designs that have graced the railway network over the last seven decades, looking at various views of Class 73, '74', '76', '77', '81', '82', '83', '84', '85', '86', '87', '88', '89', '90', '91' and '92'.

The picture selection is good, with a representative selection of images for each of the designs featured within the pages and while some of the locomotive designs, such as the Class 86s, 87s, 90s and 91s, have far more coverage than others, this is understandable due to the overall fleet size and operating areas that have been worked by these locomotives during their working lives. Most liveries carried by the locomotives are also represented, which should help anyone interested in electric traction modelling.

An introduction at the start of the book provides a good overall summary of the development of

electric traction throughout the years, while the photo captions are mostly quite short, but provide sufficient information about the working pictured, locomotive and location. Most of the pages feature two images per page, while there are some that contain three photos and others which are dedicated to a single landscape picture.

As with most Amberley photo albums, the book is priced at £15.99, contains 96 pages and has a softback card cover. Reproduction is of a good standard and, overall, this book would be appreciated by any enthusiast with an interest in the development of electric traction. (AMC).



Modern Traction in the North of England

Published by Amberley Publishing
www.amberley-books.com
 ISBN: 9781398116627
 Price: £15.99

JOHN Whiteley is a renowned photographer and the quality of his work shines through in this excellent 96-page publication.

Produced in the standard Amberley format of two pictures per page, the book features modern traction from the 1960s onwards.

It covers mainly diesel traction in the north of England during the final years of British Rail, with John offering a photographic survey of the changing scene. Class 50s on the West Coast Main Line prior to electrification, pairs of Class 25s hauling tanks at Stalybridge and a wonderful black and white shot of a Class 40 and 'Peak' at Carlisle in 1963 are just some of the highlights.

The photographs cover the period

from the early-1960s to the 1990s. At the start of this period BR was divided into regions, with the North of England covered by the London Midland Region and North Eastern Region and Rail Blue became the predominant livery during the 1960s.

Sectorisation is included, but the main theme of the book is definitely BR blue, and with this comes some simply fantastic photography.

The captions are mostly very detailed and provide details on not just the train in the picture but in many

cases also the history of the locomotive which is the subject of the photograph.

The area covered in the book ranges from northern Derbyshire and northern Cheshire, including Chester, to Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cumbria up to the Scottish border as well as in and around Manchester and Liverpool.

The reproduction is also superb, of course helped by the quality of the images.

This is a wonderful book and really is worth the money. Thoroughly recommended. (RC).



Got something to review?

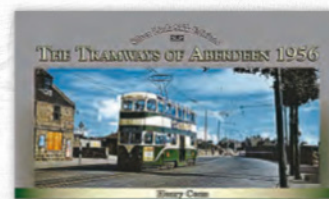
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