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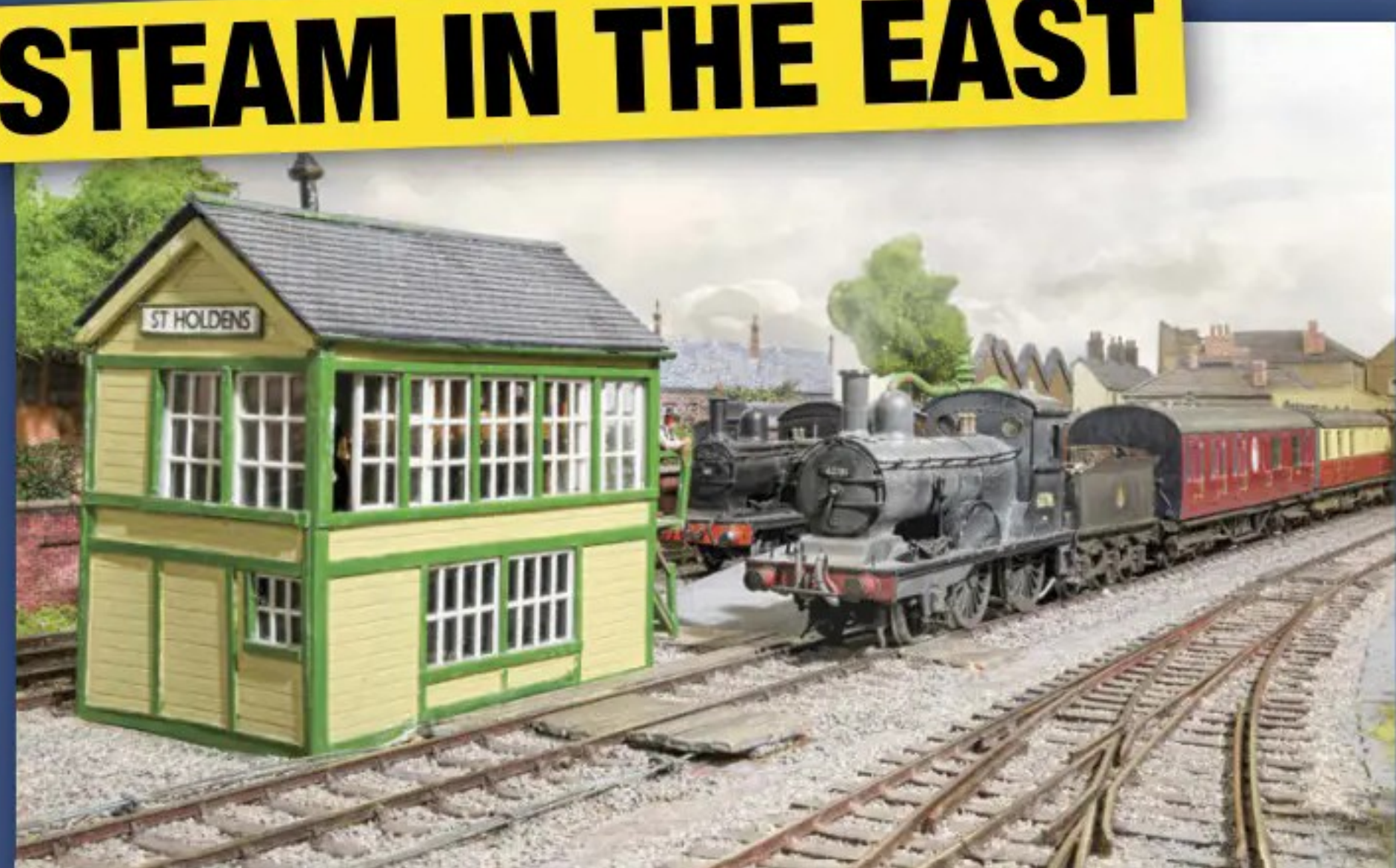
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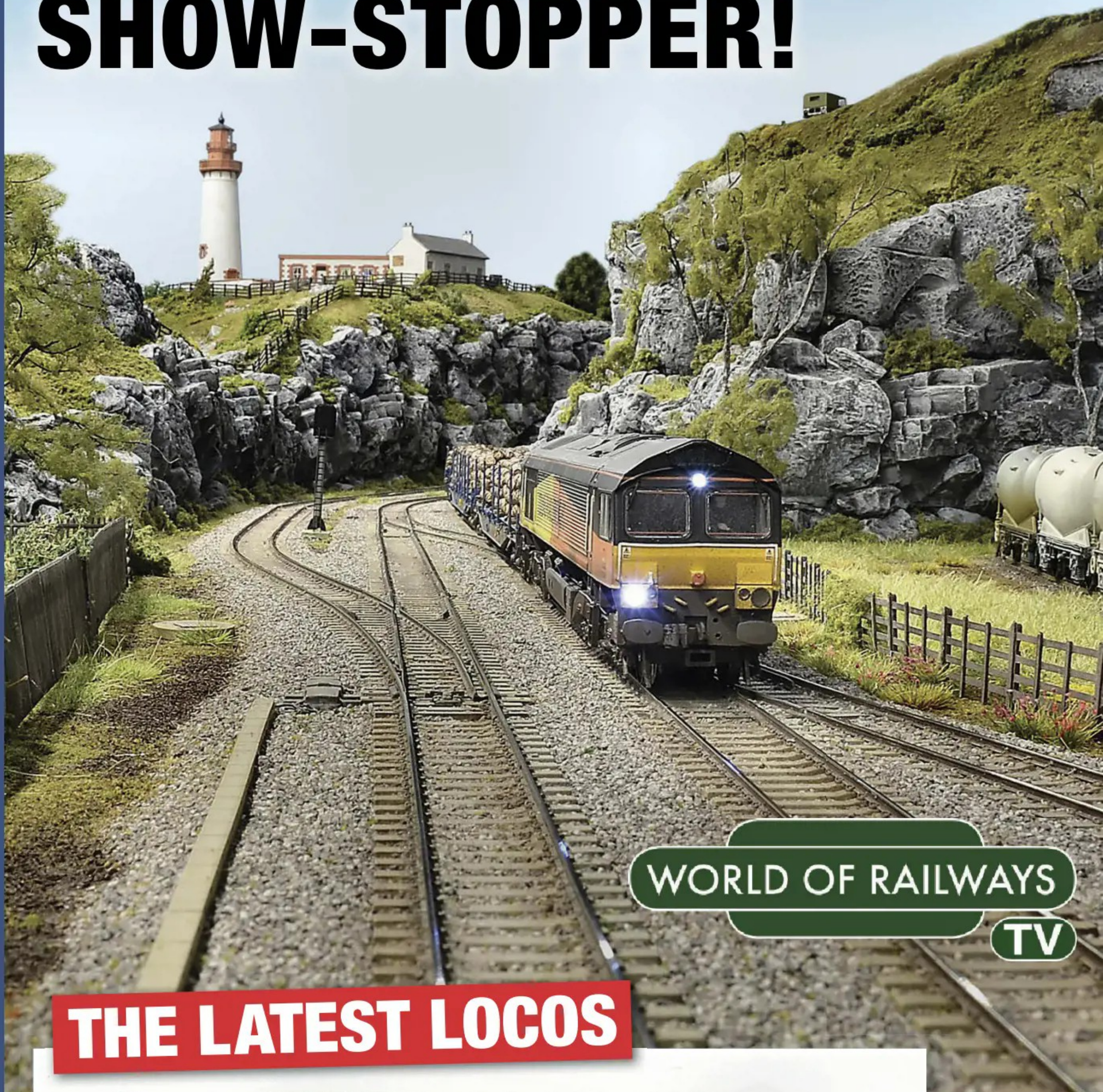
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It's our final instalment of the popular series, following the build of a new layout, 'Peppers Mill', in collaboration with Josef Pitura-Riley, aka @ThatModelRailwayGuy. We watch as the layout gets the final details and learn more about what's in store for the future.

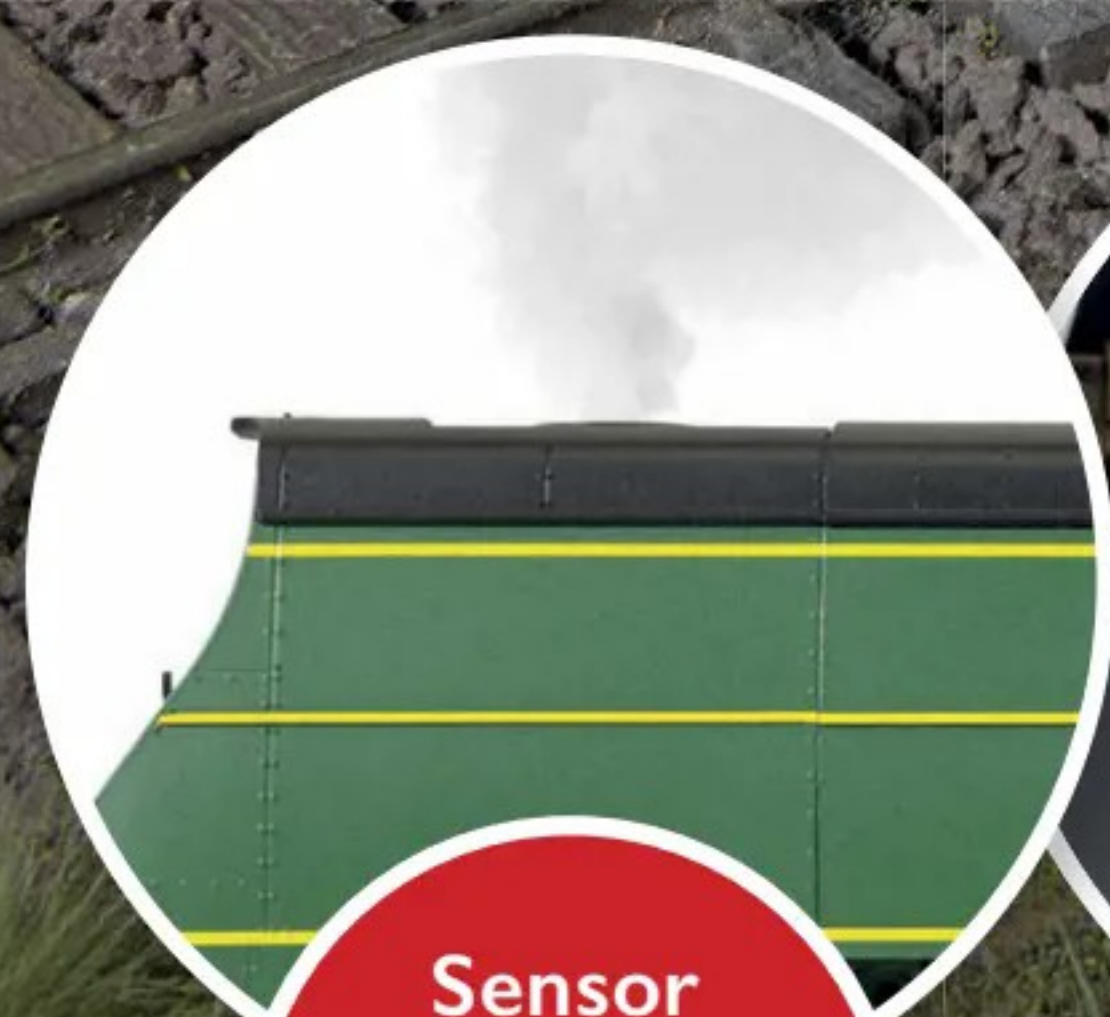
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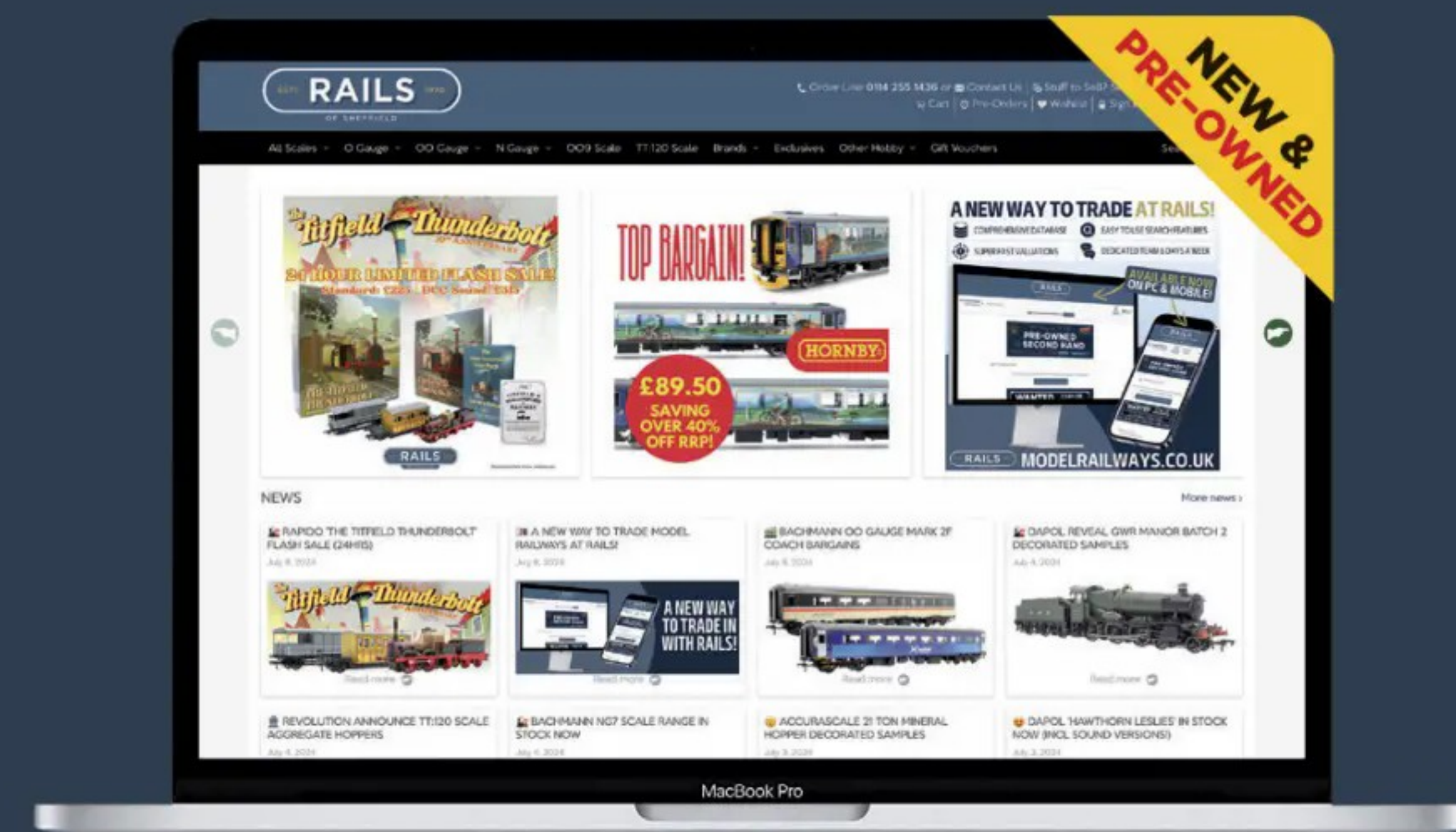
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T. Smart ★★★★★

I sold some used items to Rails recently, handled by Jake in the second-hand department.

All went very smoothly - once I'd packaged the items up, it was collected free of charge and I got a good price that was transferred direct to my bank a day after they received the items.

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S. Bartlett ★★★★★

Popped in last week to have a quick look. Wow, blast from the past! Huge collection of vintage toys, like a kid in a sweet shop. Recommend to anyone, shop assistant was very friendly and helpful, I'll definitely be going again.

R. Smalley ★★★★★

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D. Ager ★★★★★

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D. ★★★★★

I've been a satisfied customer of Rails for a long time with my previous online orders. I'm happy to say that my first visit to the store today did not disappoint, as I expected! The service was outstanding, the staff know exactly what they're doing and are more than competent enough to help you get exactly what you're looking for. Would recommend to anyone looking for anything to try them first!



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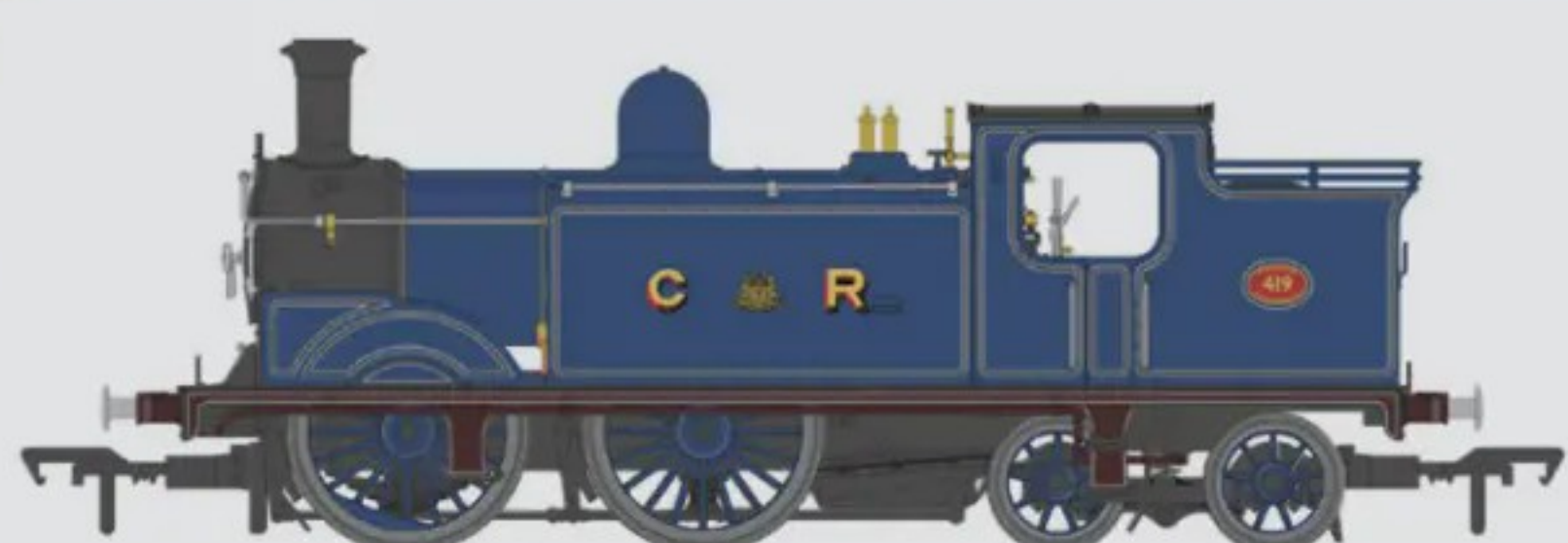
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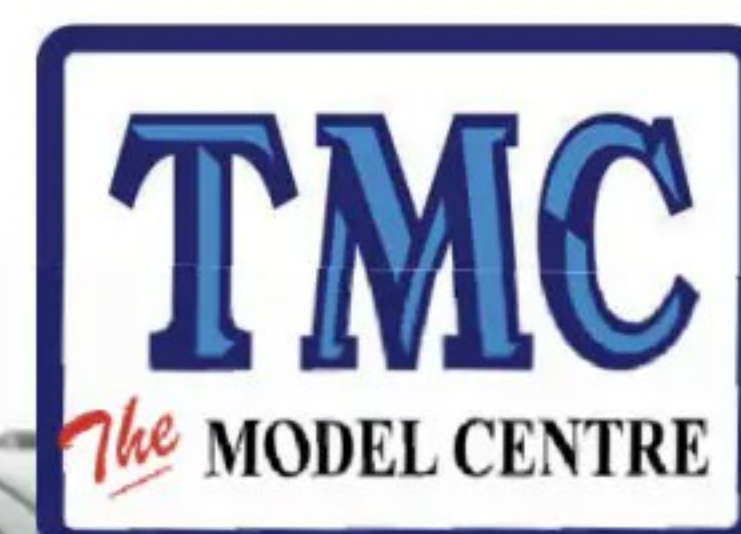
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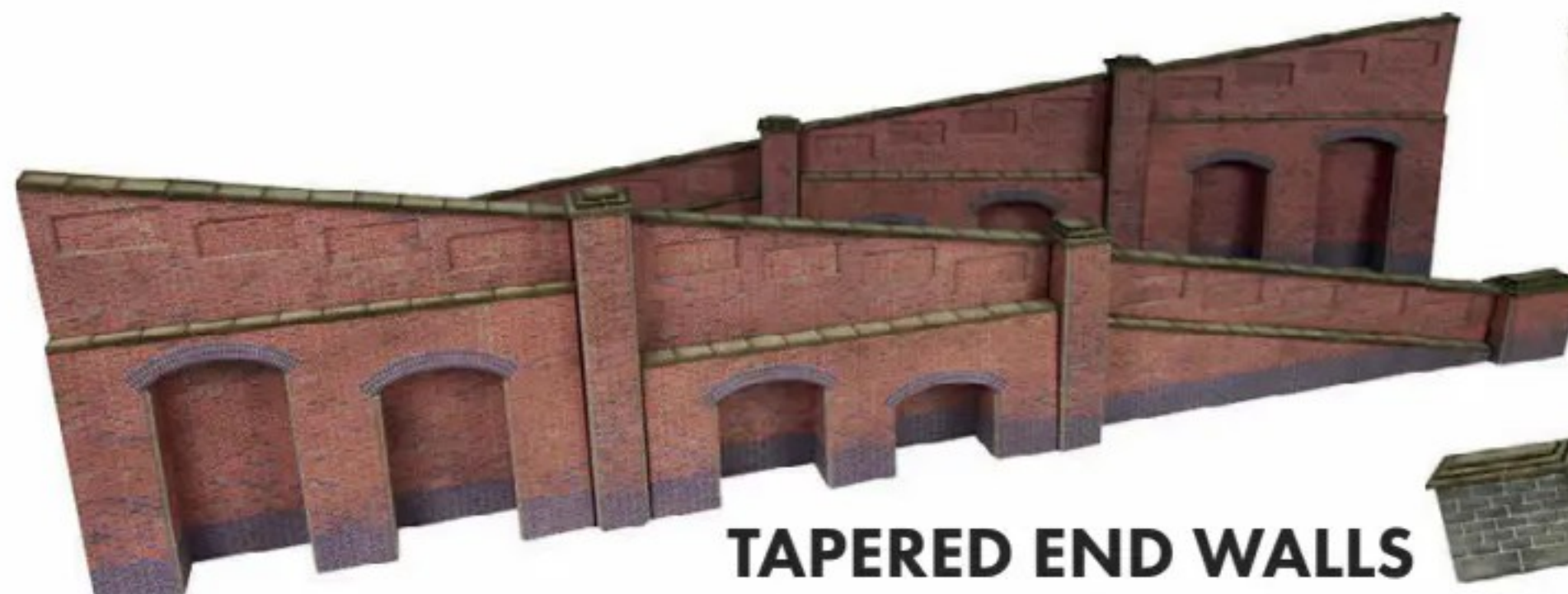
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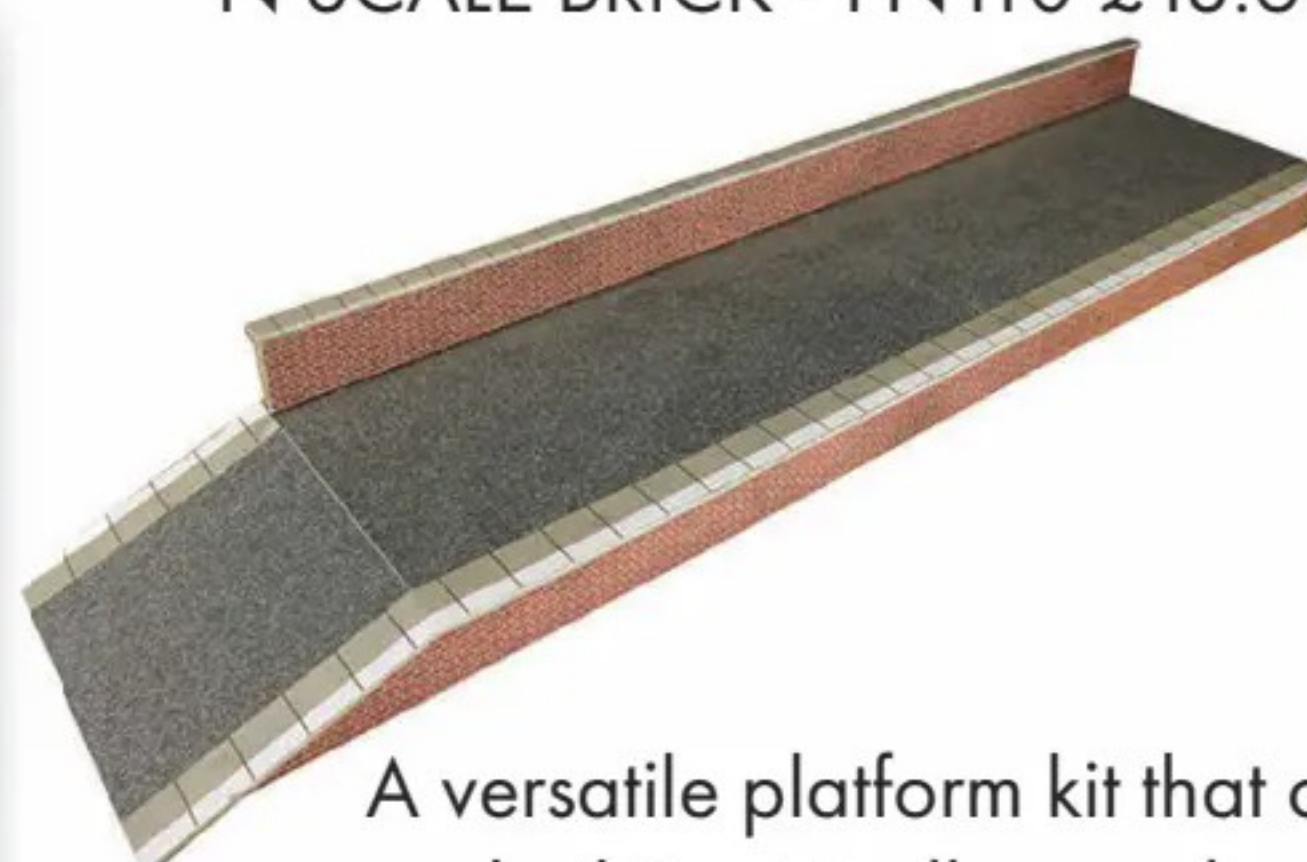
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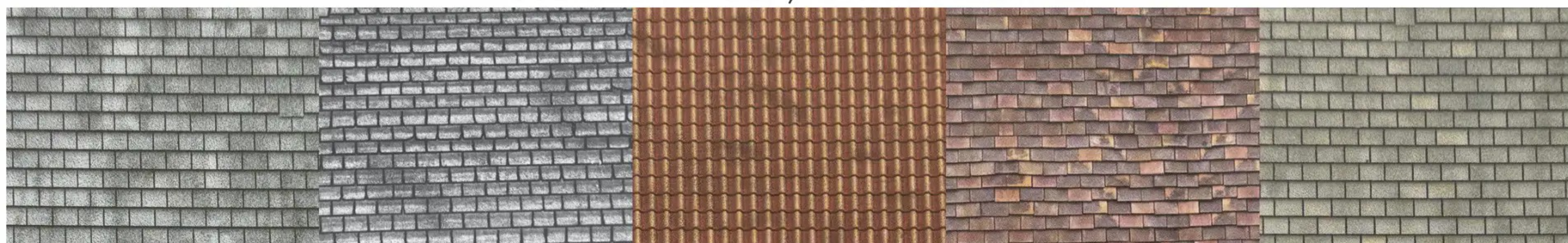


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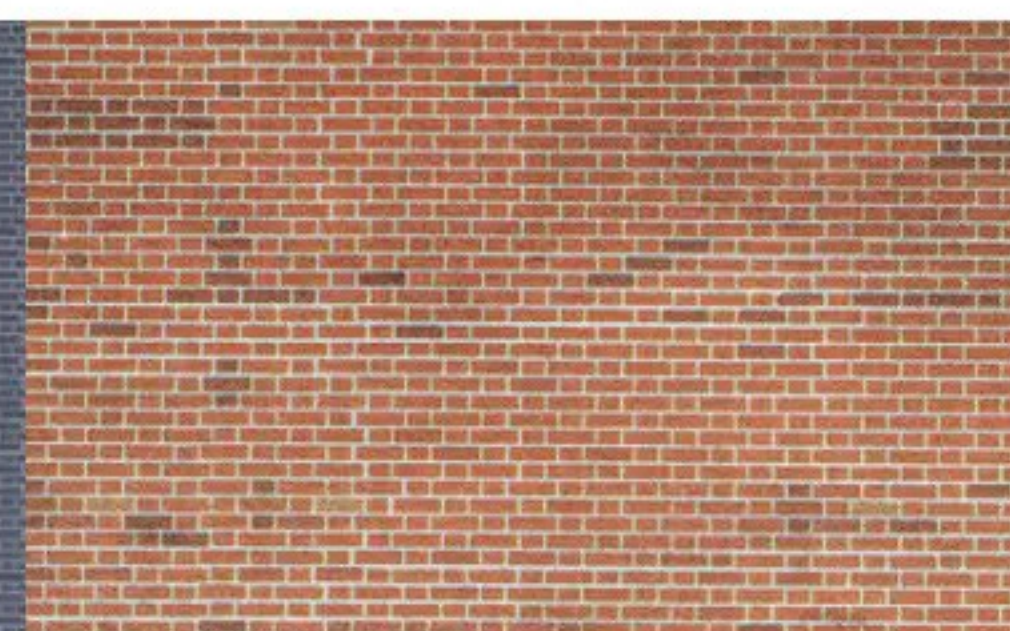
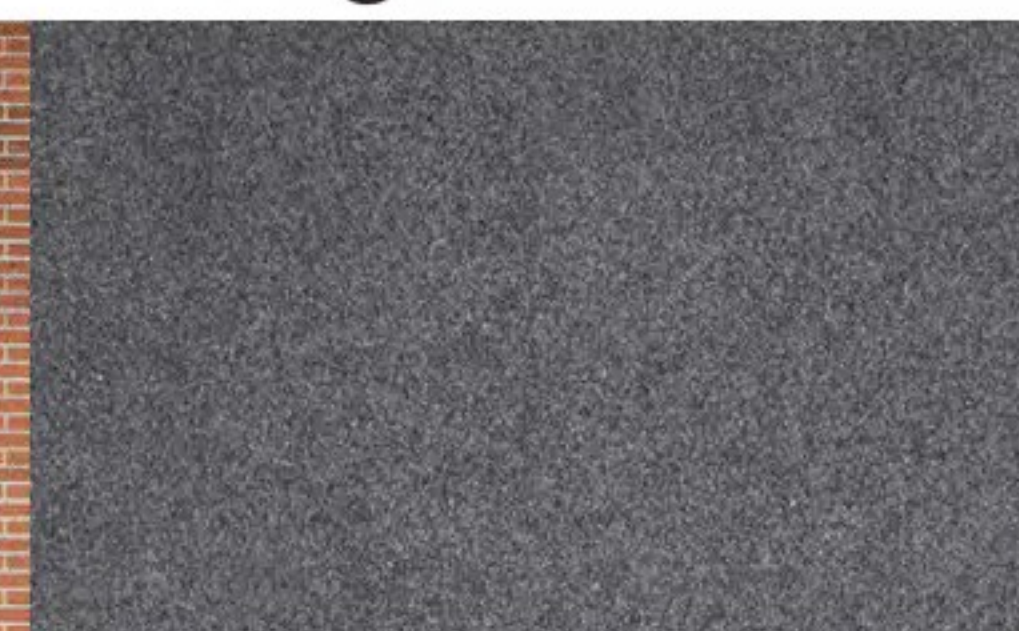
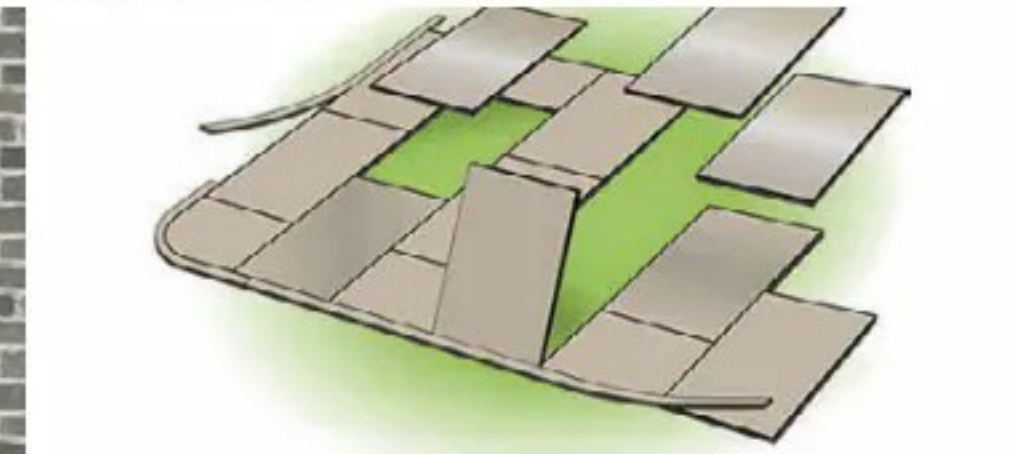


WORKERS COTTAGES

00 SCALE - PO255 £15.70 / N SCALE - PN155 £113.50

Two complete sets of cottages and outbuildings make up this attractive
kit. Based on the Workers Cottages on the Settle Carlisle line, this
design lends itself to many uses be it railway, agricultural or industrial.

BUILDING MATERIALS - Packs of printed card, perfect for scratch building!

				
COBBLESTONES £6.80 00/M0051 N/PN903	DRESSED GRIT-STONE £6.80 00/M0052	BLUE BRICK £6.80 00/M0053	RED BRICK £6.80 00/M0054 N/PN900	TARMAC £6.30 00&N / M0056
				
CUT STONEWORK M1 £6.80 00/M0057 N/PN901	CUT STONEWORK B1 £6.80 00/M0058 N/PN902	OLD MILL STONE £6.80 00/M0059 N/PN904	PAVING SLABS £7.30/M0060 (INDIVIDUAL)	PAVING SHEETS £6.80 00/M0062 N/PN903

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Opulence ...in N!

1928 K-TYPE PULLMAN CARS



Photo: Tom Everitt

VSOE-Belmond 3-pack

RT-KP-VSOE-231A

Ione, Lucille, Zena

PRE-ORDER: **£157.50** (MSRP £179.99)

In Revolution's K-type all-steel Pullmans your N gauge passengers can enjoy the luxury of yester-year with the latest modern features such as working saloon lights and table lamps, kinematic close coupling and detailed, car-specific interiors.

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Four car packs
**Queen of Scots, Bournemouth Belle,
GWR/SR, ECML**

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Two car pack
2 x Parlour Brake (for use with Mk1 Pullmans)

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Parlour brake third decorated sample.

For details of all packs, and to reserve yours, see revolutiontrains.com or your Revolution Trains stockist.

Revolution pre-orders closing: 31st July 2026

www.revolutiontrains.com

Revolution Trains



@baby_pendo

A view from the road crossing in the waste disposal sidings, looking across to the loading bunkers. All these buildings were built during Covid lockdowns, using images supplied from internet searches and a callout for information. These buildings dominate the real location and it was important that we made them big!



NEW HORIZONS

No stranger to new layout projects, the Wakefield Railway Modellers' Society introduces us to its latest creation, which enabled the team to develop new skills and trial the latest technology.

Words: Stephen Foster **Photography:** Tony Wright



FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Bardun
SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm:1ft/16.5mm/OO
SIZE: 24ft x 11ft
ERA/REGION: 2010 to modern day
LAYOUT TYPE: Continuous run

TOP RIGHT: A Class 60 on biomass service emerges from under the high stone-built road bridge. The bridge is an adapted Wills kit.

BELOW: A view along the length of the layout showing the loader, bagging plant, warehouse and workshop, all clad differently to represent the construction phases of the real site, giving the model a sense of a timeline.

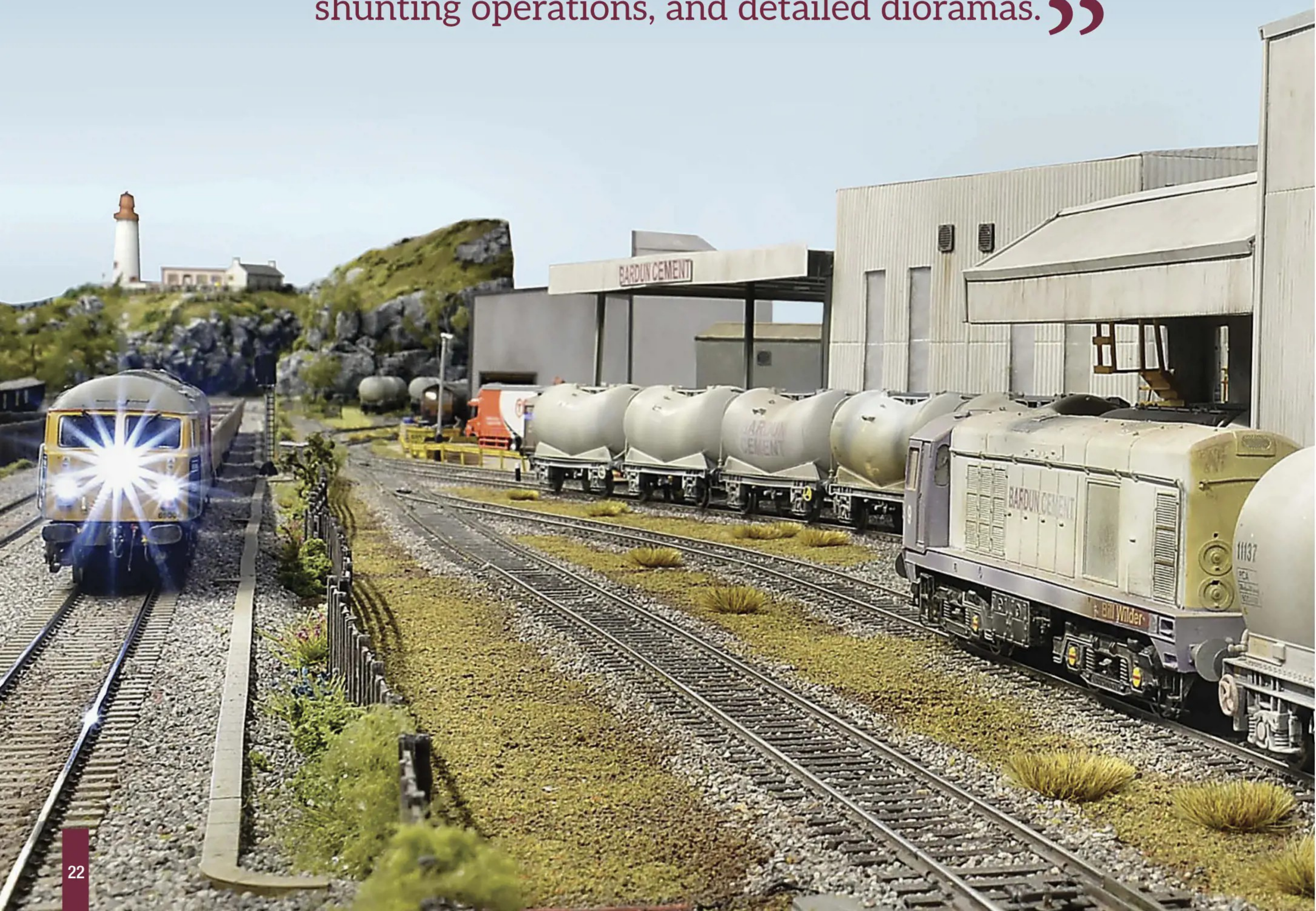


Following the success of the club's modern image layout, 'Troutons', and after seven years out on the exhibition circuit, the team decided that it was time to construct a new modern image layout. The chosen site, Dunbar (Oxwellmains) in Scotland, was selected due to it being adjacent to the main line between Newcastle and Edinburgh, and it offered industrial features such as a cement works and repurposed waste disposal sidings, as well as being close to the sea, allowing for the modelling of a seascape.

The layout was designed to provide continuous operational interest, with main line passenger and freight services, shunting operations, and detailed dioramas. The project was approved by the committee, but because of the Covid lockdowns and the subsequent reduction in club finances, this resulted in a smaller budget and a shift towards reusing materials wherever possible. This meant the layout moved from a direct representation of Dunbar to an interpretation, which we named 'Bardun'.

'Bardun' uses the same footprint as the 'Troutons' layout (24ft by 11ft), with repurposed baseboards and a revised trackplan. The existing fiddle yard was completely rewired. Extensive research helped shape the design, with many structures being modelled on the Dunbar cement works. Our thanks to all who were so generous in passing on information and images.

“The layout was designed to provide continuous operational interest, with main line passenger and freight services, shunting operations, and detailed dioramas.”





The layout uses Peco Code 75 track, Tortoise point motors, and DCC control via NCE handsets. Electrical systems are divided into three circuits for reliability and ease of maintenance, with an NCE Booster Unit ensuring there is sufficient power to support the many sound-equipped locomotives used on the layout. The layout is also wired with three circuits, so a short does not shut down the whole system.

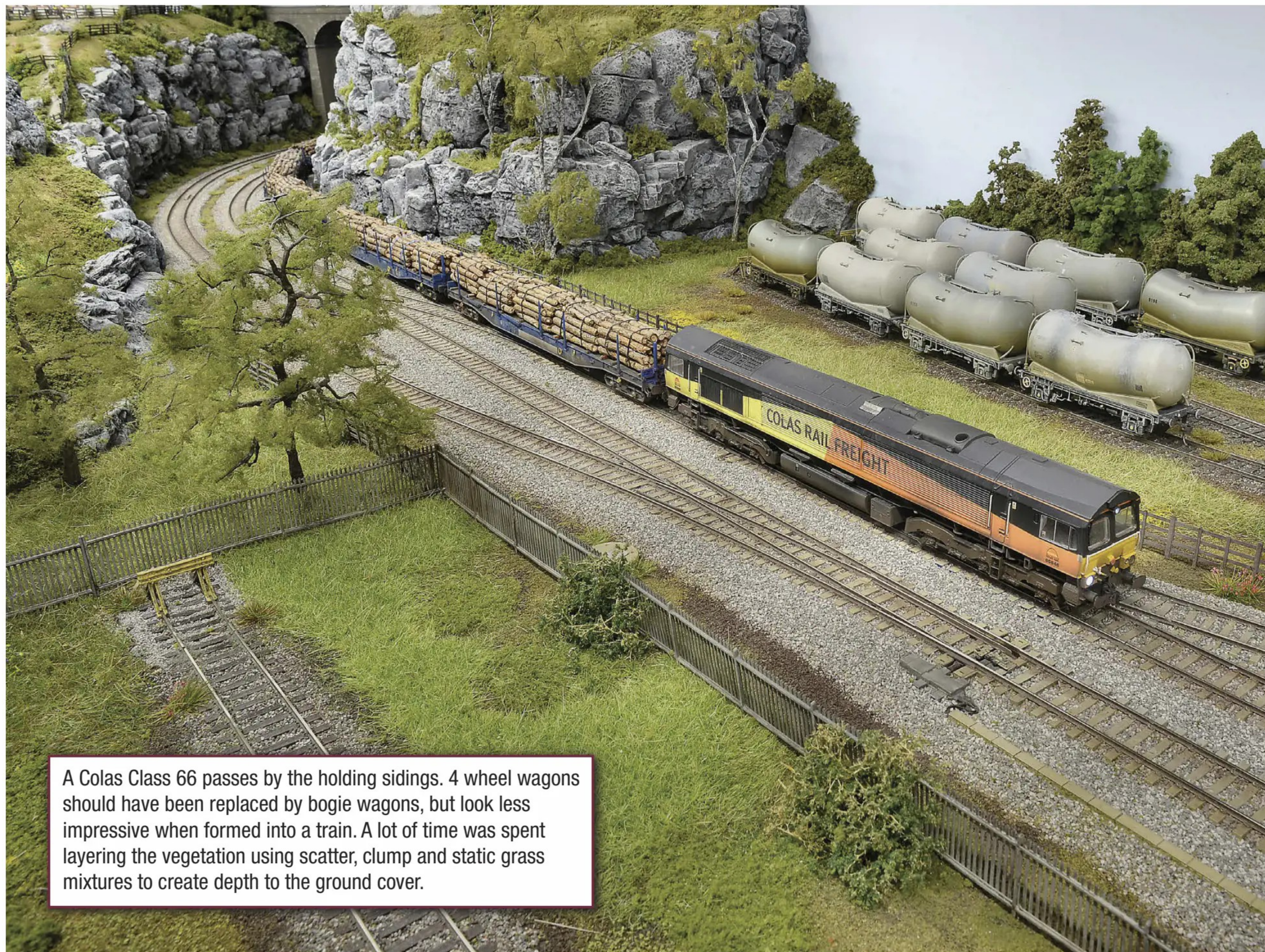
Creating the scene

The buildings provide the history of the site, from original structures in the 1960s to the modern wagon workshop of the 2010s. They are scratch-built using images from the internet and mainly use waste foamboard carcasses from a signage shop clad with differing types of Plastikard that reflect the building materials of the prototype. All are weathered with weathering powders. Some buildings have also been repurposed from the last layout. The use of 3D components, both in-house and externally-sourced, is the greatest change since the building of the former layout and the club is fortunate to have several members skilled in its use. This has been particularly beneficial when there has been a need to produce a number of the same items; examples being the waste containers, all of which have been produced in-house.



ABOVE: A Class 69 works an infrastructure stone train past the works. All members of the class can be seen on the layout, all scratch-built by one of the members of the team.

LEFT: It's a busy time on the main line as well as in the yard, where rakes of loaders wait their turn under the loading hopper to be made up into new trains for dispatch. The china clay slurry bogie wagons represent a prototype short-term working from Scotland to King's Lynn.



A Colas Class 66 passes by the holding sidings. 4 wheel wagons should have been replaced by bogie wagons, but look less impressive when formed into a train. A lot of time was spent layering the vegetation using scatter, clump and static grass mixtures to create depth to the ground cover.

MIDDLE RIGHT:

The East Coast Main Line hugs the coastline around Dunbar and we wanted to recreate this scene, giving an opportunity to recreate a cliff and seascape. The real cement works have taken into care the decommissioned lighthouse, which is a converted Walthers kit with scratch-built keepers' cottages. The lifeboat rescue adds a touch of drama!



BOTTOM RIGHT: The Faller road system runs from the end of the plant across the bridge and around to the waste sidings. Slopes have to be carefully constructed with a very fine wet and dry paper used as the road surface to give grip.



Main scenery blocks are made from hard insulation foam sheets, cut and sculpted to form the basic outline of the landscape. Paper towels soaked in dilute PVA provide the base, on which I add a variety of scenery products such as scatter, static grass, bush and sea foam to create larger bushes and trees. The trees, formed of twisted wire and car body filler, were constructed by a past member and used on the last layout; they've now found a home on 'Bardun', another example of reuse/repurpose. One attraction to the area was the proximity to the sea and the opportunity to provide a rock-cutting and sea-cliff scene. The rocks are mostly made using Woodland Scenic moulds and lightweight plaster and blended together with dilute plaster.

The sea cliff provided an opportunity to model a rescue scene of an inshore lifeboat and windsurfer. The cliffs are also the home of a small colony of kittiwakes. The sea cliff and lifeboat rescue have worked well, as has the use of the two bridges to hide the exit at one end of the layout. The viewer's eye is drawn down through the arch of the main bridge onto the lower second bridge. However, this section, although made from a core of insulation foam and lightweight plaster castings, this particular section has turned out to be very heavy!

On show

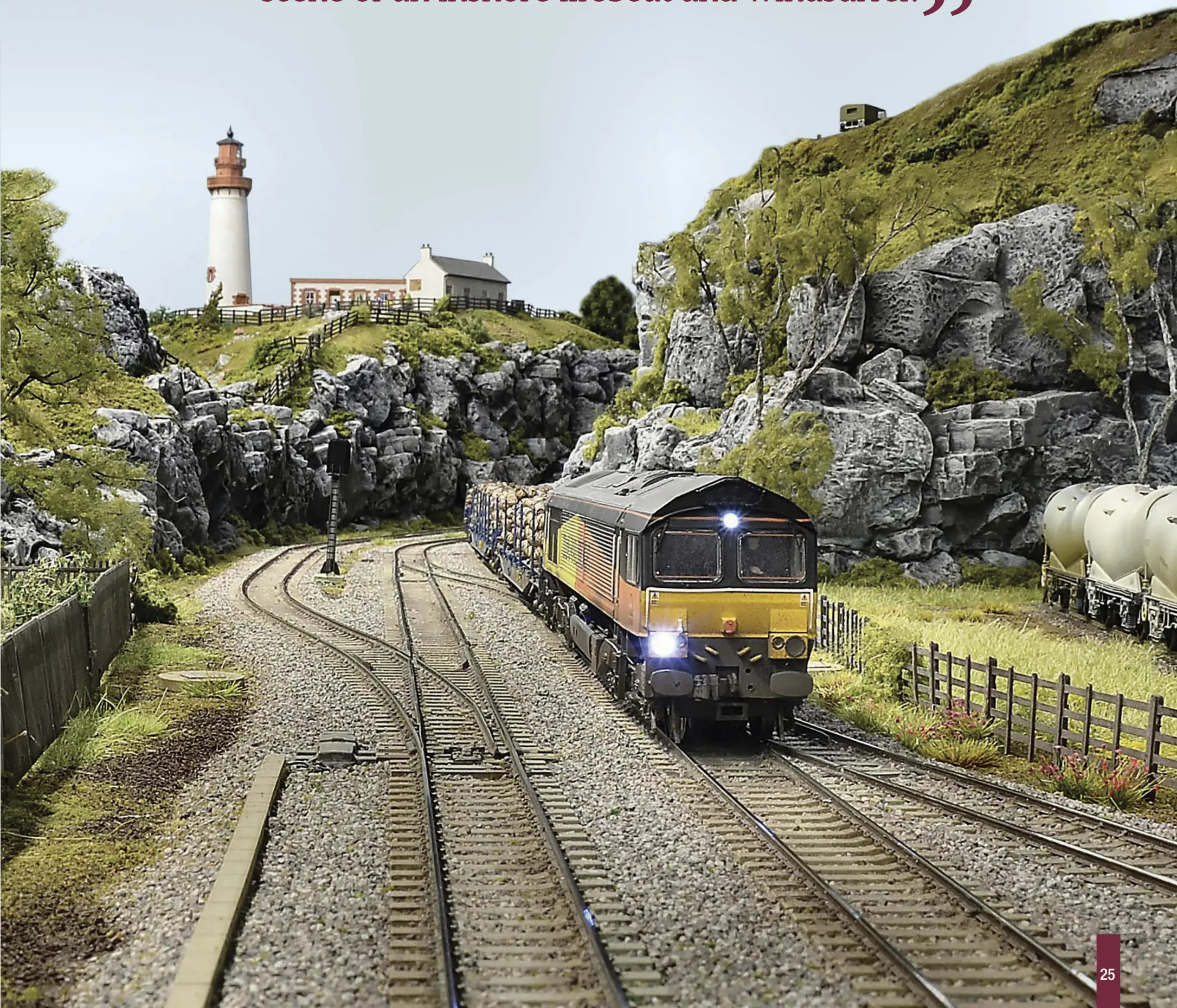
We operate the layout with a team of six operators, with three operators on at any one time, each managing different sections: the fiddle yards, cement works, waste siding, and limestone loading pad. 'Bardun' reflects changing traffic flows, such as the move away from domestic waste transport to the import of Solid Refuse Fuel (SRF) for the cement works and a nearby power station. All containers and transfers were produced in-house. 'Bardun Cement' does not exist, but the team decided on a house style to relivery wagons, vehicles, etc. This means instead of a jumble of real operator company names on wagons, there is consistency, which we feel adds to the realism and the development of a house style of lettering and colour we feel is important in setting the scene. The layout incorporates additional traffic flow for the disposal of SRF ash from other power stations.



LEFT: Resting in the headshunt awaiting its next duty is Cemex-liveried GBRf Class 66. The layout features many locos that have been resprayed and renumbered by members of the team. All stock is appropriately weathered before being run

BELOW: With the lighthouse high above on the headland, a GBRf Class 66 bursts around the curve with a heavy load of pulp wood. The rock cutting was made using Woodscenic moulds and lightweight plaster, but also smashed up plaster imitation rock.

“The sea cliff provided an opportunity to model a rescue scene of an inshore lifeboat and windsurfer.”



About Wakefield Railway Modellers' Society

Names: Chris Burnage Neale Burrows, Stephen Foster, Chris Naylor, Melvyn Price main members of the team. As a club layout, other members have had involvement.

Ages: 52 to 70

Number of years modelling: Between the group, 200 plus years

Name of your first layout: The club has had many layouts, the modern image before 'Bardun' was called 'Troutons'.

Favourite era/region: Modern image since privatisation

Favourite locomotive: The team has many among them from Class 69s to Class 37s. The many and varied liveries is of interest to the team.

Wakefield Railway Modellers' Society was formed in 1958 and has its own purpose-built clubrooms in the centre of Wakefield. It has currently a membership of around 75, and as well as 'Bardun' the club has a 1 48th scale US switching layout – 'Prime Cereals' and currently in construction, 'Stanley Ferry' in OO scale.

An extensive library covers many aspects of both prototype and modelling interests. There are a series of talks throughout the year on aspects of railway, transport and industrial topics. The Club also hosts an annual exhibition, this year on October 17th and 18th.

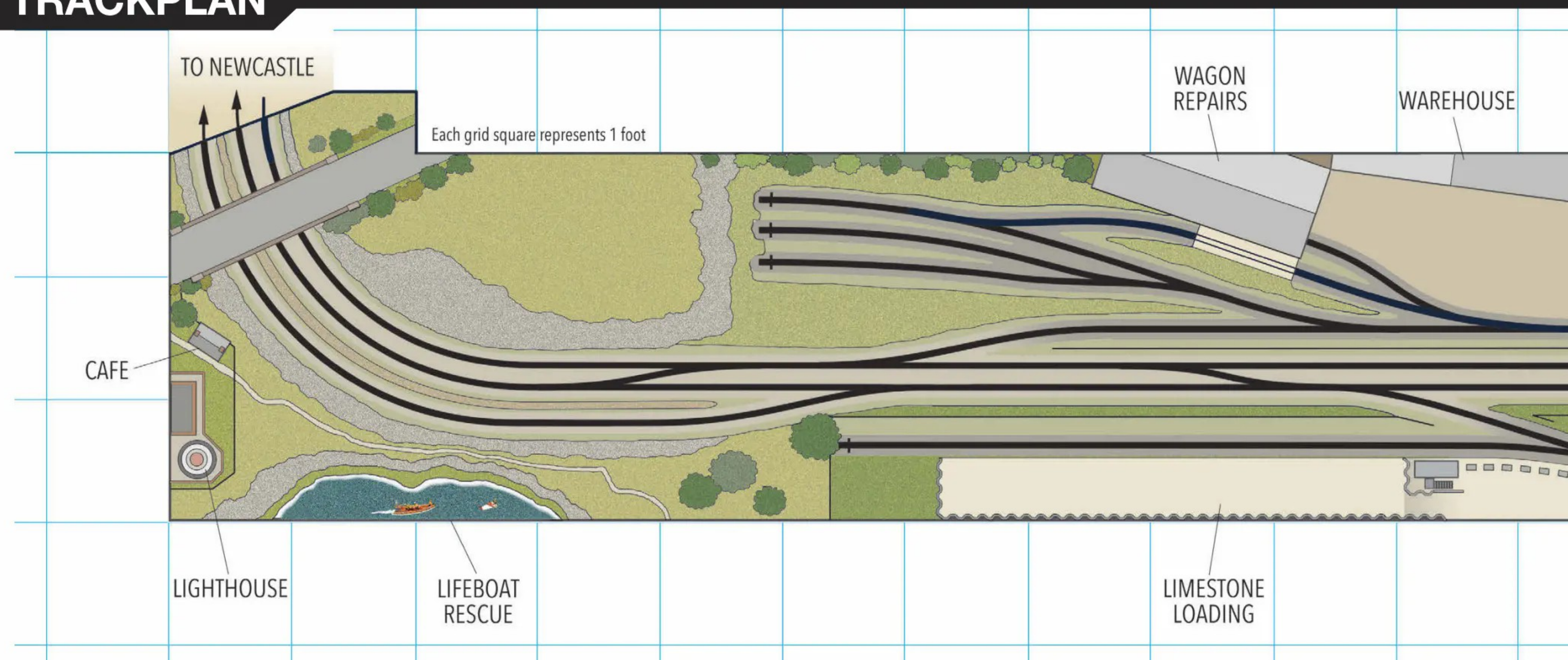


ABOVE: A Colas haulage on the biomass train. The Biomass wagons have all had their bogies and couplings modified to reduce the number of derailments on curves.



ABOVE: The modified and relivered Class 20 rests in between duties. The team took inspiration from the prototype Hope Cement works, where a Class 20 is the shunter. The buildings all have a carcass of sign-making foam board, which gives them a robust and stable base on which to add detail.

TRACKPLAN



The cement works are designed for efficient train handling, with shunting managed by a re-liveried Class 20 and a Janus shunter. Kaydee couplings and neodymium magnets provide hands-free shunting. The additional facilities, which include a wagon workshop, cement bagging plant, storage sidings, and a loco maintenance point, ensure there is always movement on the layout.

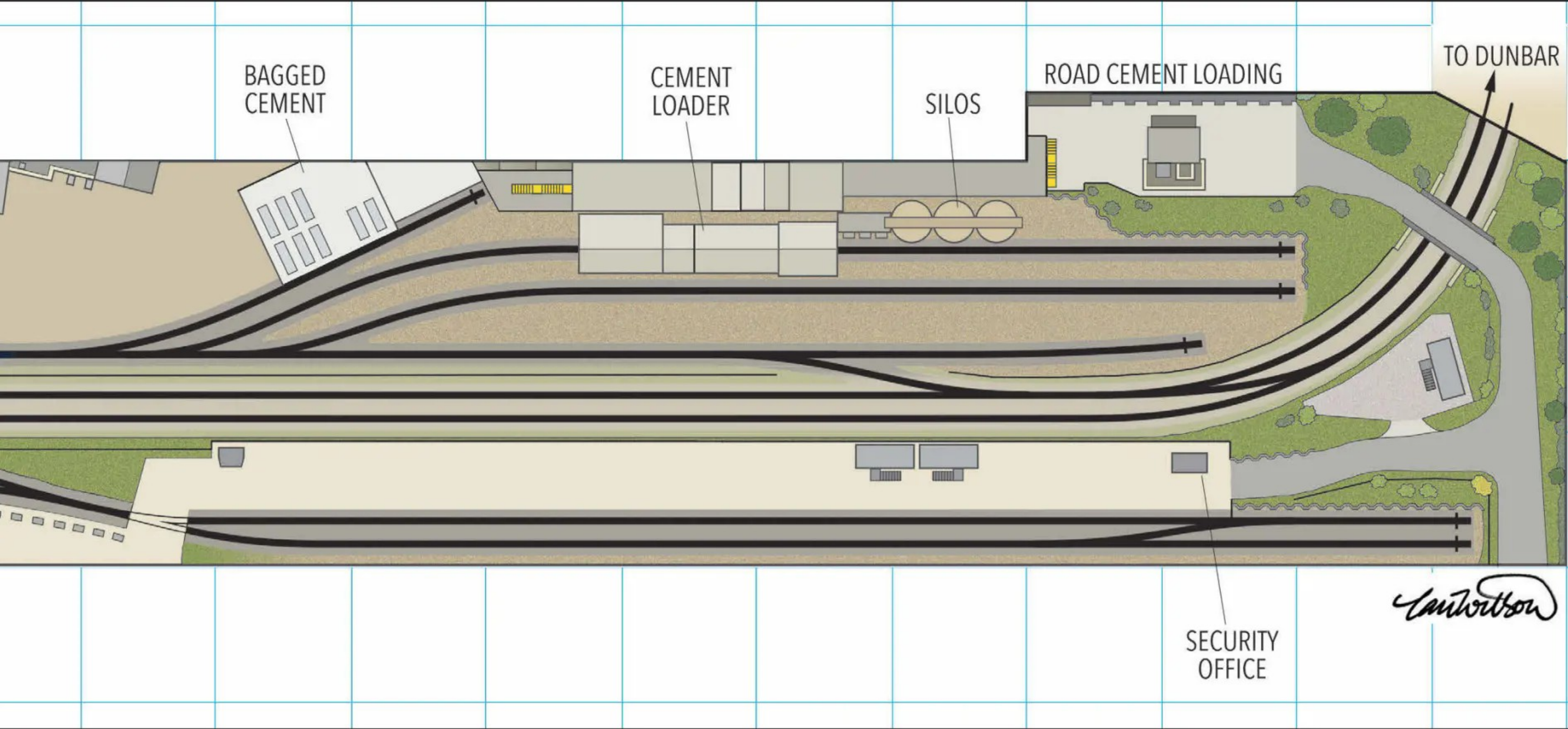
Main line operations feature express services (Class 800 variants), charter trains, local passenger services (Northern Class 156 and 158), with freight reflecting current flows such as biomass, timber, stone, and nuclear waste, china clay waste and infrastructure.



LEFT: A repainted Class 20 serves as the main shunter in the works. Although not a real location or company, the addition of Bardun branding to all stock and buildings helps to give the layout an identity.



Rounding the curve from the fiddle yard is a Freightliner Class 70 on a heavy bogie cement train. This is a firm favourite with the viewing public, as an expertly installed sound system marks its passing with ringing in their ears!



A very grubby GBRf Class 66 is receiving minor attention while a 5-car Azuma set speeds down the main line. Another Class 66 is awaiting the road to run around its now-loaded stone train and head out onto the relief line.



MIDDLE RIGHT:

A Class 69 runs light engine down the main line. This features many 3D-printed parts, as are the signal heads and posts, all designed and printed in-house.

BOTTOM RIGHT:

A full class set of 69s is available in the many liveried guises. Their construction is an excellent example of how being in a club can assist in model making, tapping into the skill sets of the membership to produce high-quality finished items. The majority of clubs give a trial period, why not see what is on offer in your local area?



All rolling stock is supplied and appropriately weathered by club members and is often exchanged from day to day over a weekend show. There is a 12-track fiddle yard with six Up and six Down tracks. A sequence of trains from the fiddle yard runs through the scenic section. The central control point shunts the cement works, waste sidings and limestone pad. This position dispatches and accepts trains into the various sidings.

The 12-track fiddle yard holds enough trains to provide a 20-minute sequence, which, when combined with the shunting of the cement yard, waste sidings and limestone pad, provides a total of 30 minutes before the sequence restarts.

A Faller road system adds vehicle movement, using Faller mechanisms grafted into 4mm scale vehicles, while scenic features include a coastal path, seascape, rock cutting, and modelled wildlife. Notable features such as a representation of the Barns Ness lighthouse, a prominent feature of the area, and a rescue scene enhance the regional focus and encourage visitor engagement.

Continuous running proves to be popular with viewers at exhibitions, allowing full-length trains to be run at realistic speeds along the layout. An industrial site, allowing shunting to occur with the arrival and dispatch of trains, has also proved popular with viewers.

Reflections

‘Bardun’ is an excellent example of what can be achieved as a club project with the team working to the strengths and skills of each member. Despite the extended build times and budget constraints due to Covid, the team is proud of the result. The club benefits from having its own purpose-built clubrooms and the layout, when not out at exhibitions, is erected in the clubrooms for members’ use, serving as a valuable club resource with monthly “run what you want” sessions.

If we were to offer any advice to modellers, it would be to consider joining a club. It’s not for everyone, but being a member does give you access to materials, opportunities, skill development and building layouts not able to host at home.

Club layouts have a life of around 10 years to ensure members can be involved in the construction of new ones. There is still much to be done in the detailing of parts of the layout and working on using the colour signals to control the movement of trains, producing more realistic running. ■



TOP LEFT: A passing of the heavyweights on the main line with a lull in the shunting in both the cement and waste sidings. The feather on the signal will allow the Class 70 to take the relief line that starts just beyond the limestone loading pad.



MIDDLE LEFT: Another firm favourite with the viewing public is the Midland Blue HST, sound-equipped in both power cars running as a full set of nine. Often, the request is, “Can you bring it around again, please?”

BELOW: The Class 66 is drawing forward into the waste sidings to run around its loaded stone train. The box in the foreground is based upon Cutsyke Crossing at Castleford.

“Continuous running proves to be popular with viewers at exhibitions, allowing full length trains to be run at realistic speeds along the layout.”



COMMUNITY

EDITOR'S COMMENT

It has been a busy month in the world of model railways, with several new products revealed, plus some key announcements and statements that have caused quite a stir. To name just a few, we've had the Hornby summer new product announcements, which include some exciting new models to look forward to, Ellis Clark has dived into the digital world, plus Rapido is dipping its toe into the TT:120 market.

The biggest news of all, though, was the announcement that KR Models has gone into liquidation. Following weeks of speculation, KR Models owner, Keith Revell, sent a long email to customers confirming the news. Some of the statement is included in our community pages here, and you can read the whole thing on our World of Railways website.

Obviously, the news will be very unsettling for those who have put money down for future models and will now need to go through the process of getting a refund. We hope it does not prove too difficult for those affected.

It's sad news that KR Models has had to cease trading; some exciting and niche models were in the pipeline, and we were really looking forward to seeing them operating on layouts in the future.

This issue isn't all about new models, though, and comes jam-packed with layouts and practical features to provide you with inspiration for your next project. The August issue also includes the concluding part of our collaboration with 'That Model Railway Guy', Josef Pitura-Riley, on The Build-Along Model Railway video series. We hope you have enjoyed following the build of the layout and would like to take this opportunity to thank Joe for his hard work and excellent craftsmanship in producing the layout and accompanying videos.

Looking ahead to summer, the traditional 'downtime' of the hobby seems to be something of the past, with some fantastic shows to enjoy, plus announcements of new models coming through almost daily. Make sure you sign up to our weekly newsletter at www.world-of-railways.co.uk to keep up-to-date with all the latest announcements as they happen.

Debbie Wood

WEEKEND PLANS...

Railwells 2026

Organised by The Wells Railway Fraternity, this busy show takes place at Wells Town Hall in Somerset. With multiple dedicated sections, including celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Scalefour Society and 80 years of the S Scale Society, there will be plenty of layout exhibits on offer for visitors. Entry costs £10 for an adult.

DATE: August 8th-9th, 2026

Inverness Model Railway Show

Held at the Leonardo Hotel (formerly Jurys Inn) on Millburn Road, Inverness, the Inverness and District Model Railway Club is once again hosting its annual exhibition, which will include a number of layouts and trade stands. Entry costs £6.00, with accompanied children £2.

DATE: August 22nd-23rd, 2026

Pickering Model Railway Show

Held in the Memorial Hall, Potter Hill, Pickering, this annual show will feature around 10 layouts, trade stands and demonstrations, plus competitions to win some great prizes. Doors open at 10am each day, and admission is £7 for adults, with accompanying children free.

DATE: August 22nd-23rd, 2026

The Soar Valley Model Railway Club's 2026 Exhibition

This large annual exhibition will take place at Loughborough Grammar School and will host a large variety of layouts, trade stands and demonstrators, including BRM favourites like 'Scarlington', 'Rolvenden' and 'Splott'. Entry costs £12 for an adult and £5 for under-16s. Doors open at 10am each day.

DATE: August 22nd-23rd, 2026

Charity Model Railway Exhibition

Held at Marchwood Village Hall in Hampshire and in aid of Hampshire and IOW Air Ambulance, this one-day show offers over 10 layouts, trade stands and refreshments. Organised by Marchwood Modellers, an entry ticket costs £7 for adults and £2 for children.

DATE: Saturday, September 5th, 2026

TINGS RETURNS THIS SEPTEMBER



© meridiene exhibitions

N gauge modellers rejoice, the popular annual show is back this September at the Warwickshire Event Centre, across the weekend of the 12th-13th. As usual, visitors can expect a large variety of layouts, trade stands and demonstrations.

The venue offers free parking, restaurant and coffee shop facilities, and a shuttle bus service from Leamington Spa Railway Station on Saturday, September 12th (charges apply).

Opening Hours:

Saturday: 10am-5pm, Sunday: 10am-4pm.

Ticket Prices:

Adults: £14.50, Seniors (65+): £13.00, Child (5-14): £6.00, Under 5s go free

Tickets are valid for any one day and can be purchased in advance.



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LETTER OF THE MONTH



FLYING SCOTSMAN REFRESH

Back in 2010, I submitted a picture of a project I was working on - painting an LNER A3 into BR lined black, and it was published in British Railway Modelling for May 2010.

I have just recently retired that model due to age/wear and tear, but I started the process again on a Hornby Railroad *Flying Scotsman* model and used proper transfers this time round and gave it a repaint. I'm really pleased with the final result.

Simon Lathwell

FUN FOR £5



© James Glossop / Trustees of the Science Museum Group

Flying Scotsman will return to Locomotion in Shildon from August 2nd-25th, 2026, with passenger rides behind the locomotive available from £5 as part of the museum's Summer Festival programme.

Locomotion said the pricing has been introduced to make steam locomotive travel more accessible to visitors during the six-week festival programme.

The visit forms the centrepiece of Locomotion's Summer Festival programme, which will also include rides behind the museum's replica of Stephenson's *Rocket*, engineering workshops, family activities and displays.

Workshop contributors include LEGO entertainer Bricks McGee, the North East Meccano Society and artist Dawn Belshaw, alongside a series of "Think like an Engineer" themed activities.

Locomotion will also mark the 150th anniversary of Sir Nigel Gresley's birth through a "Meet the Engineers" display, featuring past and present railway engineers.

More than 5,000 visitors travelled behind *Flying Scotsman* during its appearance at Locomotion in 2025, with tickets selling out within weeks.

Admission to the museum remains free, although rides and experiences are ticketed.

KR MODELS UPDATE

After weeks of speculation, KR Models owner, Keith Revell, announced that the company had gone into liquidation.

Some of the statement is below, you can read the full announcement at World of Railways:

It is with deep regret and sadness that we have to inform you that KR Models has gone into liquidation. Sadly, economic trading conditions at the moment are very tough for everybody. With global economic uncertainty, costs to every business have been pushed up to unforeseeable levels.

Our website and Facebook page have been taken offline. As we are no longer trading, we are required to do this.

Those with pre-orders paid up front should

contact their credit card provider for a refund where possible. If you cannot, then sadly, you become an unsecured creditor of the business and must wait for the outcome of the winding-up proceedings. If there is enough money left after other liabilities have been settled, then unsecured creditors will get some or all of their money back.

Warranty claims are no longer able to be met with the company no longer trading. We would like to reassure those who had already sent models to us that these are safe, and will be repaired and returned - your model will not disappear into an administration void. Please be patient and we will get the repaired model back to you as fast as possible.

The tooling exists and is complete for the

Shay, Bellerophon, Big Bertha, DHP1 and, in addition, the torpedo wagons are at an advanced state. The Shay is produced, but remains the property of the Chinese factory that made them. These may appear via another manufacturer in time, however, that is outside of our control. Please remember that even if you paid up front for a Shay, these models do not and never did belong to KR Models and you would need to pay the new owners for one if you chose to get one.

Currently, we are in negotiations with a manufacturer for the sale of our previous tooling. This should allow previous models to reappear at a future date. Whichever manufacturer buys them will tell you about it, if and when they are ready to.

RAIL GALA CELEBRATION EVENT

Amberley Museum is pleased to announce the return of its much-loved Rail Gala on Saturday, July 18th and Sunday, July 19th, 2026, offering visitors the opportunity to experience a celebration of railway history and heritage.

The Rail Gala will showcase a variety of steam, diesel and electric passenger trains operating throughout both days. Visitors can enjoy rides behind a range of historic locomotives while exploring the Museum's extensive collection and picturesque grounds.

A highlight of the weekend will be the opportunity to visit the historic Billingshurst Signal Box, where visitors can learn more about the vital role signal boxes played in the operation and safety of Britain's railways. Museum volunteers will be on hand to explain how signalling systems worked and share fascinating insights into operations of the past.

Visitors are strongly encouraged to pre-book tickets in advance to avoid disappointment.

For further information and to book tickets, visit the Amberley Museum website.



D6535 RETURNS

The return of D6535 to operational condition marks a major milestone for Britain's diesel preservation movement. Following an extensive restoration by the Great Central Railway and the 5305 Locomotive Trust, the National Railway Museum locomotive is once again running, preserving an important part of Britain's transition from steam to diesel traction.



© Great Central Railway



© Great Central Railway



Since arriving at the Great Central Railway in 2005, restoration teams have undertaken major structural repairs, replaced heavily corroded metalwork and rebuilt significant sections of both driving cabs. Engineers also tackled long-standing problems caused by failed internal guttering and trapped moisture within the bodywork.

Visitors will be able to see D6535 in action during the Great Central Railway's Autumn Diesel Gala in early September, where it will operate alongside visiting Class 33 locomotive 33103, courtesy of Nemesis Rail and the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway.

Further running dates are expected to be announced through the Great Central Railway's website and social media channels.

Inspirational modelling with **RMweb**



Get involved and visit rmweb.co.uk – under topic 'Show us Yours – Realistic Modelling' – and post your pictures!

A War Department Austerity trundles over the bridge on a sunny morning on my N gauge pizza layout.... **RMweb user: brmthtrains - David**



The old THRASH bag! **RMweb user: Cuthbert 80**



Summer's coming! A Hoover powers away on a summer Saturday special. **RMweb user: Daventry Parkway**



Cambois Bay. **RMweb user: Ian Blenk**



Ancient Toad at Aston On Clun. **RMweb user: Mr Wolf**



Thorne Yard. **RMweb user: 43110andyb**



Old and new at Sevastopol Works. **RMweb user: Ruston**



My first go at scenery. West Wortham engineers' sidings. **RMweb user: Petef**

LAYOUT | N | COKETOWN

The timber train is headed by a Dapol Colas 56105, assisted by a Farish Colas 47727 *Rebecca*. The wagons are Revolution IWA with 3D-printed timber.



FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Coketown

SCALE/GAUGE: 2mm:1ft/9mm/N

SIZE: 19ft x 3ft 3in

ERA/REGION: Modern Era/West Coast Main Line, North West England

LAYOUT TYPE: Continuous run

HARD TIMES

Looking for a new challenge in N gauge, coupled with his love of The Pendolino, led to the creation of this show-stopping layout, where nature, industry and Charles Dickens collide on an iconic section of the WCML.

Words: Dave Pallant **Photography:** Tony Wright



TOP RIGHT:

Coketown station building, built from a Kibri Böblingen station kit.

MIDDLE RIGHT:

The station car park is an Aoshima kit with LED strip lighting.

BELOW: Graham Farish Network Rail 08417 shunting auto-ballasters in the yard.



The design of 'Coketown' began almost 20 years ago, back in 2006. I had moved to the North West of England and joined my local model railway club in Preston. Taking our large layouts to weekend shows was exciting, so I decided I needed my own.

I wanted full-length express trains at scale speeds. Long, gentle curves with plenty of trains going by for the viewing public. That was going to be challenging with the space I had available unless I went for N gauge. N gauge was a difficult decision because, at that time, Bachmann had not long taken over the Farish product name, and only a few newly-engineered models were being released by Farish and Dapol.

The plan was to make the layout as up to date as possible, reflecting my local area - the Pennines and the West Coast Main Line, and the red brick of Preston and the light grey stone of the hills in a rolling landscape.

Real-life Inspirational

My commute took me on the motorway to Burnley, where there were great views of the hills of Pendle, the Trough of Bowland and the canal winding back and forth with the railway and the motorway. Early photos I gathered included the Accrington town centre viaduct, and I had visited Ribbleshead, so I knew I wanted a viaduct to be a main part of the layout. Elements of Victorian Lancashire

‘Coketown’ is a composite scene, rather than a scale model of a particular place. The visitor gets to see trains they might have just travelled on to get to the show and buildings that are representative of the North West.





needed to be present in the form of mill buildings and remnants of the early railway. Alongside those would be modern buildings where the 20th and 21st centuries were taking over. All these things went into the design pot. I think the ideas I had could have filled 100ft of layout, but I only had 18ft to work with.

Long trains need a large station, so I laid out platforms that could take eight-coach trains with a locomotive. That would also allow a seven-coach HST. Apart from the station, there would be a yard to shunt wagons, and some coach sidings. One aspect of Preston station that I liked was having a separate goods line through the station where trains could be parked up while they waited for an express to pass. A station throat with a good set of possibilities for changing platforms on approach would give a feeling of complexity and detail.

Another simple but important requirement was for the layout to include a canal. Bridges with areas below the track level would add another level and allow for a lowered section and a road under the tracks. To add further interest to the centre of the layout, there are two rail bridges over the road, as if built at different times, and the road was routed carefully to avoid it conflicting with the point motors above.

There were some restrictions designed into the trackplan, intended to make things a little more interesting for operation. For example, access to the coach sidings cannot be from a main line platform, only from the loop platforms.



ABOVE:

Graham Farish 70003 and Revolution 66623 G&W Freightliner wait in the locomotive sidings with the mill and the Pennines in the background.

MIDDLE LEFT:

The street scene outside the station, with the bus station and car park to the right.

BOTTOM LEFT:

Coketown town square with the Town Hall and market.

The freight relief lines were implemented with a single bidirectional loop. This would create interaction between the two main line operators, as, in one direction, it needs to cross both main lines. The freight loop also works as the headshunt for the yard, so more collaboration for the third operator. A long time was spent on the design to ensure I had a good combination of train movements.

The fiddle yard has six tracks in each direction and then two long tracks down the centre that were intended to be bidirectional. The trackplan was laid out in CorelDraw and I built a rough model of the complete layout out of card at about one-tenth the scale of N gauge, just to check that it looked about right.

And it needed a name! The name needed to feel historical and suggest the dark satanic mills of the Victorian period. ‘Coketown’ came from Charles Dickens’ novel *Hard Times* and was the name he gave to his fictional town that is believed to have been influenced by Preston.

Construction timeline

The frames were built from pine and topped with 6mm MDF - early decisions that foreshadow problems I now have some 18 years later. More on that later!

I laid the Peco code 55 track on cork. For modern-image, this allows a raised trackbed with a cess at the sides. Card layers were built up under the cork to give superelevation in the station approach curves. It helps with the feeling of speed and the smoothness of the curves.

The points were fitted with SEEP solenoid point motors with the intention that I would build a control panel with push buttons or contacts to drive the solenoids. At the time, the plan was a full DC layout - sidings and platforms had switched sections for locos to be isolated for shunting. Track and point circuits were wired through many 25-way D-type connectors, ready for a control panel. Track was laid and platforms built, but very little scenery had been constructed.

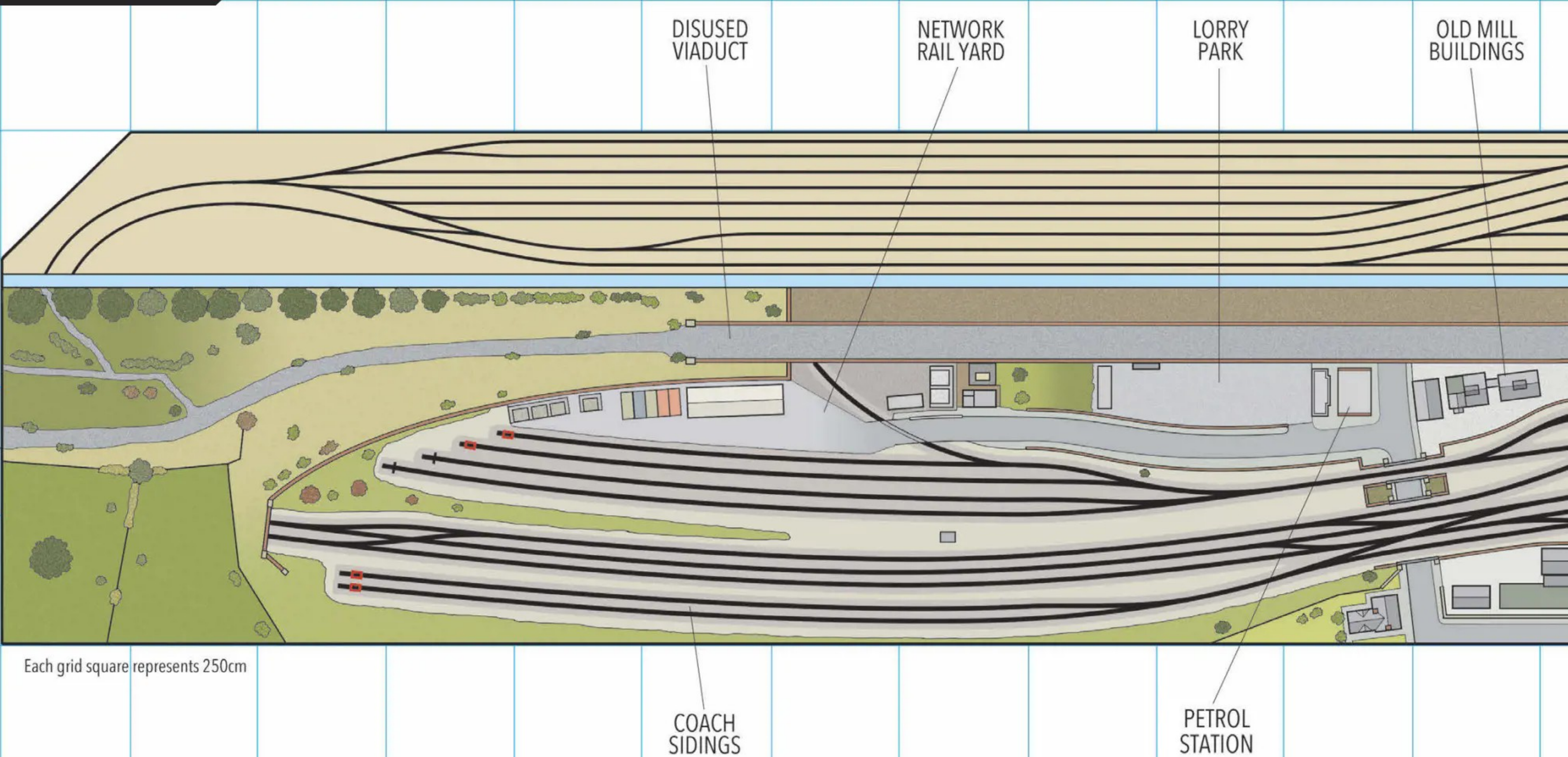


ABOVE: Left to right: Michael Duffy-Price, Jeremy Davison, Dave Pallant (author), Chris Wilkes and Carl Bowden.

About the modeller

Name: Dave Pallant
Age: 63
Number of years modelling: Over 50
Favourite era and region: Modern Image and the North West of England
Favourite train: The Pendolino
I grew up in South East London, so I only got to see EMUs and Class 33s day to day. My first layout was an 8ft by 4ft sheet of chipboard on a sofa bed. It was Hornby OO and the first train was a Christmas present of *Princess Elizabeth* and two coaches. Once I had my own house, I built a OO layout in the conservatory, but sun and heat wrecked it during its first summer.
After moving to Lancashire in 2000, I visited an N Gauge show in Wakefield, and that gave me the germ of an idea to build another layout in N gauge. I found the Preston and District Model Railway Society and have been a member since then. The club and its members have several modern image layouts that go out to shows across the UK, and so I also have modern image OO gauge stock to operate on our other layouts.

TRACKPLAN



And that's where the building of the layout stalled. The control panel was now an intimidating project and the layout construction ground to a halt.

Then came the Kickstarter. It was 2014, and Ben Ando and Mike Hale of Revolution were promoting an N gauge Pendolino. The Pendolino was a defining part of the modern WCML and made the finishing of the 'Coketown' layout more relevant. It was unlikely that any other manufacturer would build a Pendolino in N gauge, and so I pledged for multiple trains to help reach the target. I tracked the Kickstarter daily!

In the meantime, more DCC-ready, off-the-shelf modern image stock had arrived. I bought an NCE Powercab and started rewiring the layout for DCC.

The Pendolino Kickstarter failed. It was a bit of a blow, but it had given me the kick to restart construction. Fortunately, production continued with Rapido, given that I was now the prospective owner of multiple N gauge Pendolinos, the layout had to be finished!

One of the parts of the layout I wanted to be as accurate as possible was the signalling. In my day job, I used surface-mount components, but N-scale signals would stretch my capabilities! The signal bodies were all 3D-printed by Shapeways and built-up with surface-mount LEDs, using a stereo microscope. Signals that needed support over the tracks were mounted on Traintronics gantries, some of which were cut in half to give single-ended arms.

I still didn't want to build a control panel! I started using the open source JMRI control software on a PC to control the layout. It initially ran on a laptop. As the layout control evolved, I started using a 21-inch touchscreen, which is still the main method of controlling the layout. JMRI has quite a steep learning curve, but features can be added over time and adjustments made, which would not so easily be possible with a physical control panel.



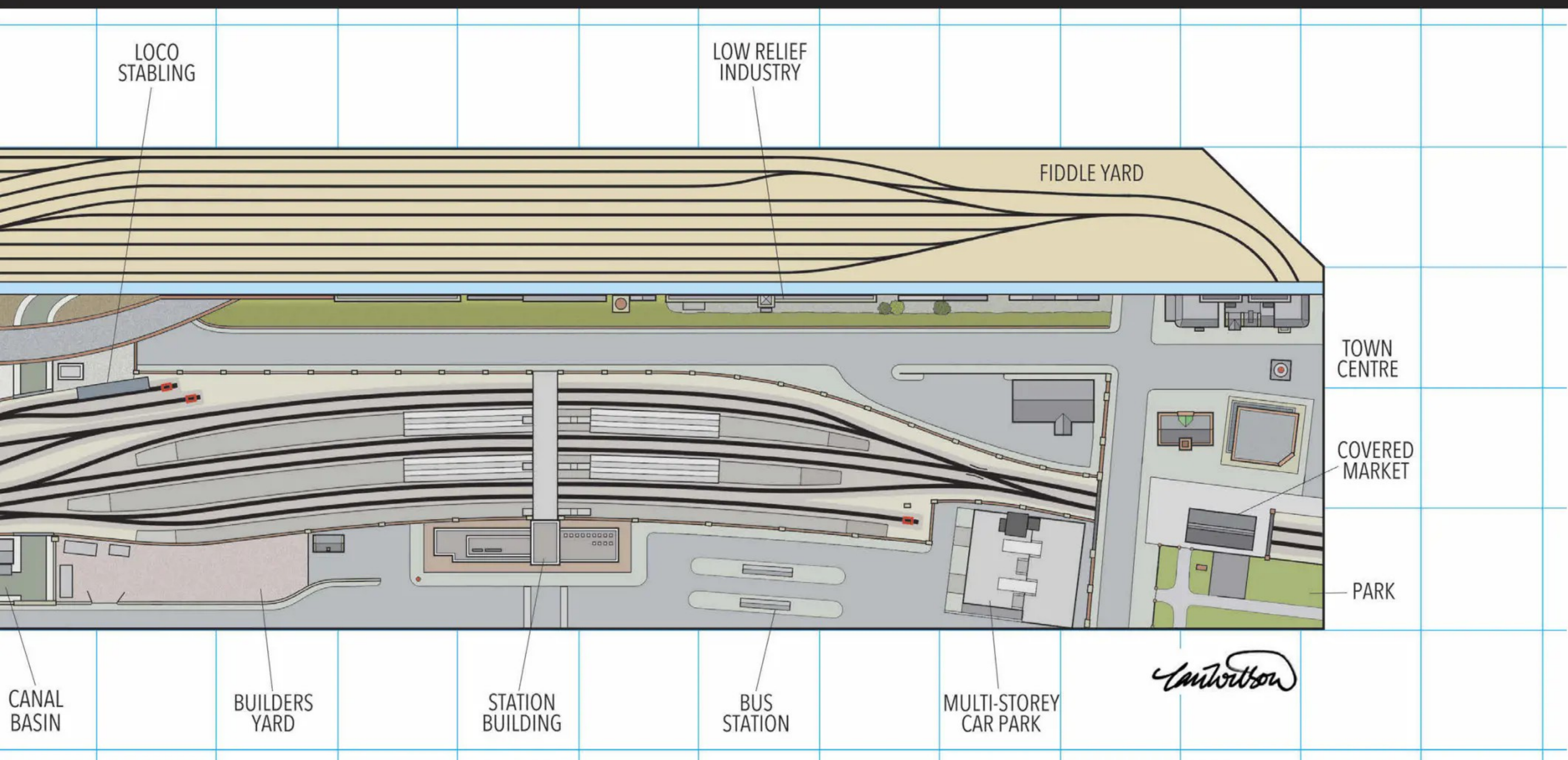
TOP LEFT: Looking back towards the platforms as Virgin Trains 390045 *Virgin Pride* departs.



MIDDLE LEFT: The view across the station to the industrial area with the Kibri-based mill building on the right.



BOTTOM LEFT: Revolution DB 66128 waits in the goods loop with a train of cars.



TOP RIGHT:

Coketown clock tower. The buildings on the right are all Scenecraft low-relief with an overall roof created to tie them together.

MIDDLE RIGHT:

The road under the station approaches.

BELOW: Revolution Pendolinos 390045 *Virgin Pride* and Arriva Trains 390156 *Pride and Prosperity* pass at the entrance to the main line platforms.

**Scenic touches**

Scenery started at the country end of the layout since fields were easier to construct than buildings! The viaduct uses Ratio kits with both extended and cut-down piers. A tunnel entrance was built far enough from the sharp curves to ensure the trains disappeared while still going in a straight line.

I initially planned to run a single line reversing track across the viaduct. Later, I changed the plan to make the viaduct support a modern tramway. In the end, it felt like it made the most sense to show the changes to the railway by simply putting a pedestrian and cycle path across the viaduct. It also meant not having to cut holes in the backscene for the rail access. The out-of-use viaduct has become quite a big discussion point with visitors at shows. The fact that I've built it and not used it for even more trains seems to be appreciated!

The town centre end of the layout was difficult as, when it was constructed 10 years ago, large British-based buildings or kits were few and far between. The first lucky find was the Aoshima car park kit, which was on the Plus Daughters stand at a show. The station building was found soon after and is a German Kibri kit combined with a scratch-built pedestrian bridge, stairs, lifts and Faller ICE platforms. Details added to the station to anglicise it include a coffee shop, BR logos and a 3D station name sign on the roof using a design similar to that at Cambridge North. The town centre has German and Japanese kits, including an early German station roof as the market cover. In the background behind the station is what looks like a Lancashire cotton mill with a chimney similar to

“...it felt like it made the most sense to show the changes to the railway by simply putting a pedestrian and cycle path across the viaduct.”





those found around Preston. It is actually a Kibri German coal mine kit. In front of the mill is a Faller Aldi kit, which needed nothing changing to make it less European!

Around the canal are a group of older buildings, which in the 21st century have been converted into a café and visitor centre. The mill behind the railway still has the Bounderby name painted on the chimney, referencing back to Dickens' *Hard Times*.

In action

The NCE Powercab was quickly replaced with the NCE Power box since the Powercab was not going to power a full fiddle yard. With up to 20 locomotives with sound and lights, and now many coaches also having lights, a bigger controller or booster was needed.

The layout went to its first show in Preston using the NCE system, but we had problems with the system keeping track of the direction, lights and sounds of so many locomotives and trains. Another initial problem I had was that the points and signals were initially connected to the main track bus. We soon ran into problems with track shorts, causing the signal controllers to reset.

The layout now runs with a Lenz controller and handsets, which have a larger stack to keep track of lights, loco directions and sounds, and is similar to the systems our club uses for our other show layouts. This means that operators from our club are immediately familiar with the system. A second DCC bus was created for the signals and points, and that was driven from a Sprog controller. The Sprog has a 5 Amp booster attached to it, but I still regularly have problems at the start of a show because the DCC Concepts solenoid drivers take a large current from the bus when first powered on.



ABOVE: The Dapol Network Rail HST passes a Revolution GBRf 66795 hauling a cement train on the station approach. Bounderby's mill is in the background.

MIDDLE LEFT: As Revolution GBRf 66795 takes a cement train through the station, it passes a timber train headed by Dapol Colas 56105.

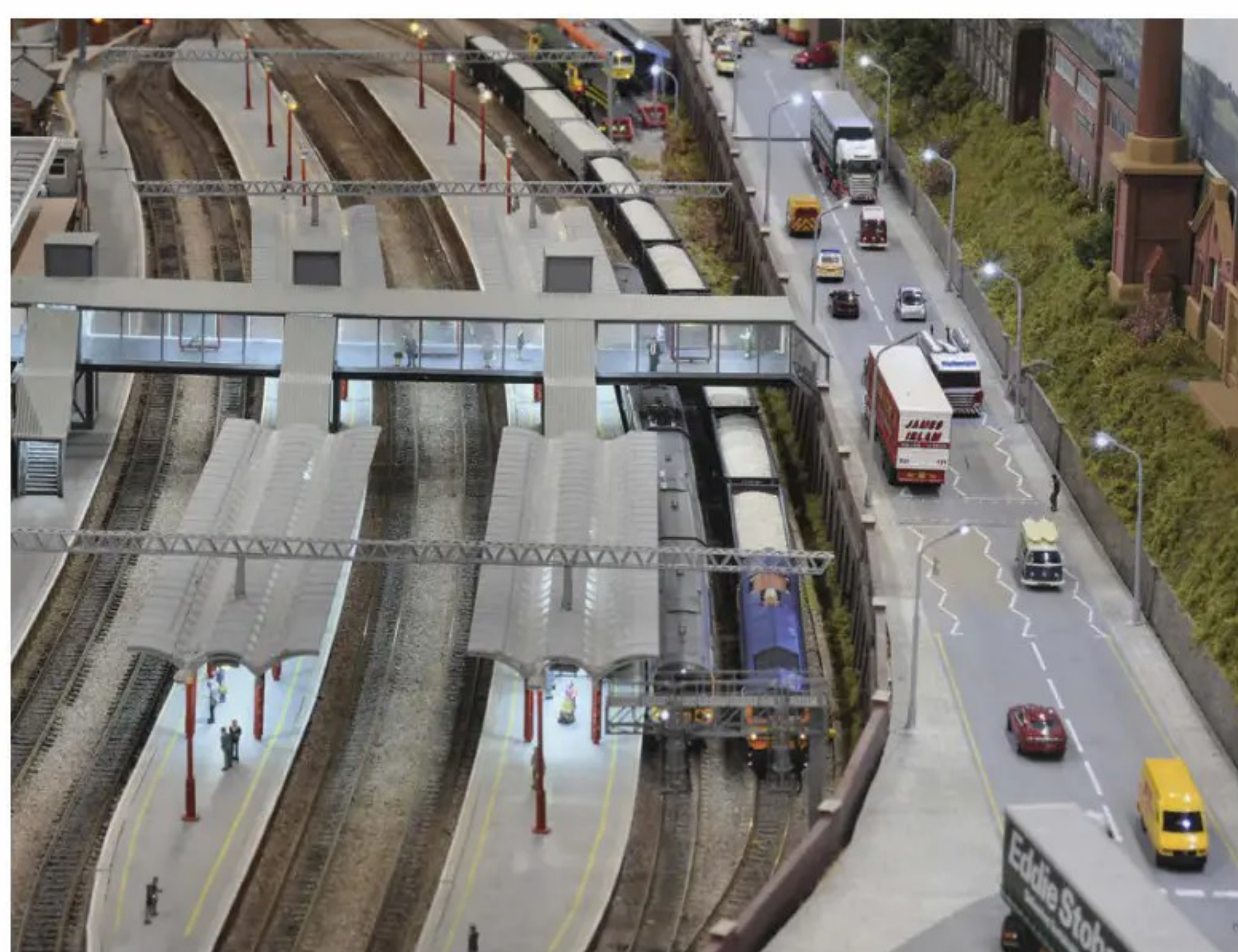
BOTTOM LEFT: Signals are surface-mounted LEDs in 3D-printed shells.



ABOVE: Revolution GBRf 66795 pulls a cement train past the Network Rail yard with the now-disused viaduct in the background.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Dapol 50021 *Rodney/Dave* passes the yard with a charter train.

BOTTOM RIGHT: A Graham Farish TPE 350 sits in platform 5 next to a train load of ballast in the goods loop.



Feedback from the track for signal control uses solid-state magnetic sensors between the rails. Most modern locos have enough magnetism in their motors to trigger them, and any that don't have small neodymium magnets glued onto the chassis somewhere.

The layout now gets out to a few shows each year. There are two separate handsets for up and down, and a third for shunting between the coach sidings, the yard and the freight loop. The intention is to keep something moving at all times as far as possible. There is no timetable or list of trains to operate, and different operators run through their available trains in different orders. Normally, there is a Pendolino for each direction, a charter train with a steam locomotive, or the BR Blue Class 50 *Dave* and then a selection of two-car Northern DMUs, Arriva class 221 and TPE Class 68 with Mk. 5 coaches for passengers. For freight, there is now a good selection of sound-fitted locomotives, including 47, 57 and 60s from Farish, 68s from Dapol and 59s and 66s from Revolution.

Favourite freight stock includes the Drax biomass wagons and the Colas timber train, which carries 3D-printed logs courtesy of Andy Joel from our Preston club.

'Coketown' is a composite scene, rather than a scale model of a particular place. The visitor gets to see trains they might have just travelled on to get to the show and buildings that are representative of the North West. Children like recognising their favourite Pendolino or Voyager go by and find the playground in the park,

a bouncy castle in the square and an ice cream van. Hopefully, the layout gives the younger generation an interest in having their own layout at some point.

Looking ahead

Right back at the beginning, I alluded to the fact that wood and MDF are now causing us problems. When the layout was not being worked on, the boards were often stored leaning against a wall. That, and the effect of moisture and time, have meant that the frames are no longer flat and the board surfaces bow slightly. Another error I made was not laying track across the joints and then cutting the rails. Instead, I built each board separately and did my best to match the track up across joints. All this means it takes some time to ensure all of the board joints run smoothly when the layout is set up.

The answer is to rebuild the layout on new baseboards. I feel the operation of the layout works really well, so there is very little I want to change in terms of trackplan. The station will be slightly longer to better accommodate nine-coach Pendolinos, and the fiddle yard is slightly wider to give an extra two tracks in each direction.

The new frames will be plywood - 18mm for ends to give stability for bolts and alignment pins, 12mm for sides and 9mm for surfaces. A new control box has already been built with a controller driving two boosters along with a Yamorc command station for points, signals and track circuits. The new layout will be 'Coketown 2.0' and will be arriving in a few years! ■



TOP LEFT: A Graham Farish Northern 158844 departs Coketown.



MIDDLE LEFT: A Dapol 68 with nuclear empties passes a cement train at the entrance to the station.

BELOW: A Graham Farish Class 70 moves into the yard from the stabling point.

“Long trains need a large station, so I laid out platforms that could take eight coach trains with a locomotive.”





Wessex Trains 31601 *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, as released to traffic in 2004. Available in DCC ready, DCC sound-fitted and DCC sound-fitted Deluxe guises. The locomotive ran in this guise until Autumn, 2006.



The beauty is in our customisation. Coinciding with the Gauge 0 Guild's 50th anniversary in 2006, 31601 was re-named *Gauge 0 Guild 1956-2006*. An FM Rail (Fragonset/Merlin) white vinyl was applied to the sides but partially peeled off to leave 'Rail'. Note the web address applied to the cab front, too. This variant customised and DCC sound-fitted from stock: £407.95



FM Rail went into administration in 2006. The above guise shows the locomotive in 2007 guise. One year later, 31601 lost the remnants of its FM Rail vinyl, cab crests and the now defunct web address was crudely painted out in black, as opposite. This variant customised and DCC sound-fitted from stock: £407.95

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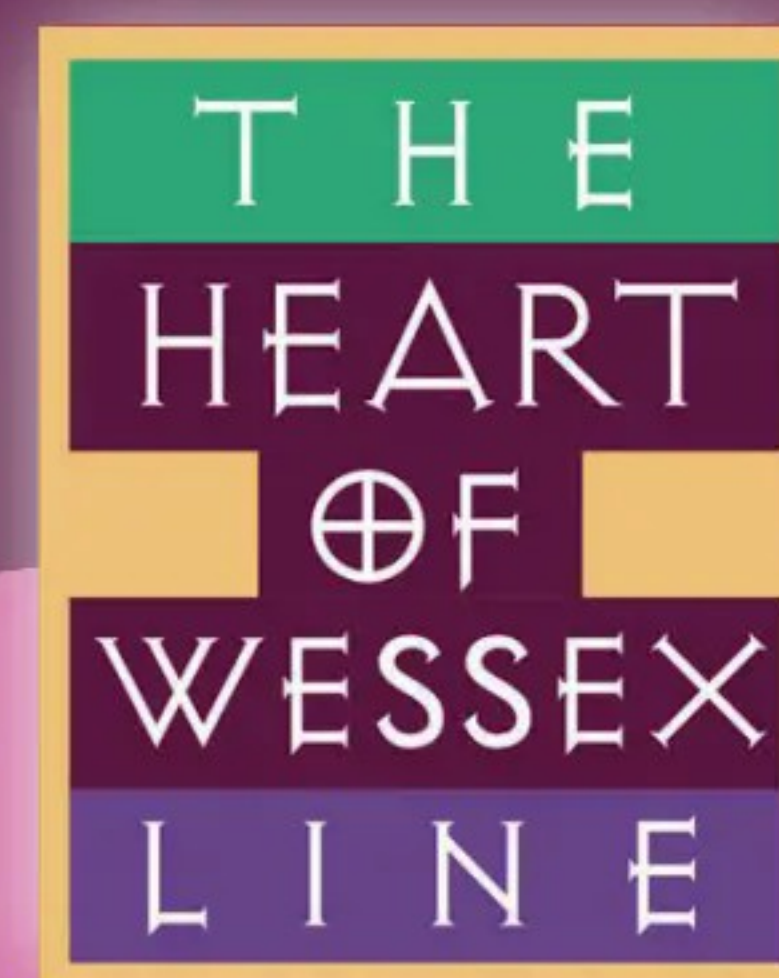
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31452 *Minotaur* in Fragonset livery (35-825Y) DCC ready (35-825YSF) DCC sound-fitted (35-825YSFX) DCC sound-fitted Deluxe

Getting Practical with...

TOOL of the MONTH

Nail file/sanding stick

I'm a big fan of sanding sticks, and it turns out that some of the best available are those sold to nail bars. One came to me with a wooden kit I built months ago, and it's still going strong, despite being my go-to tool for anything requiring abrasion. This Neonail stick has both 100 and 180-grit surfaces, and won't bend in a hurry. Not the cheapest version at £3.50, but as I'm still to wear out the first one, it should be good value for money. A quick search online brings up loads of suppliers, or ask nicely when you are having your cuticles attended to.



Got a practical question?
Get in touch.
Email: BRM@warnersgroup.co.uk



Ask Phil

My layout looks a bit sterile. What can I do?

A lot depends on the period you are modelling. Modern yards tend to be very tidy places, which, while correct, look a bit blank in model form. Go back to blue diesel days, or even earlier, and there's lots of opportunity for clutter, all of which brings the scene alive. The corner of my layout is full of little huts, boxes and sacks awaiting loading, and just "stuff". Adding this is a slow process. Do a bit, leave it, and come back with fresh eyes, but it's good fun, and perfect for a quick modelling session.

New on the workbench

TT:120 Class 02 diesel kit

I've always had a soft spot for the Class 02 shunters. My first loco kit was the OO DJH version, and I've since built etched models, one in O gauge. When I saw this Bayliss Bespoke Designs (www.baylissbespokedesigns.co.uk) kit, I couldn't resist adding a TT:120 loco to the collection. The 3D-printed, single-piece bodyshell fits on a modified Hornby B4 chassis. Etched handrails and bufferbeams are included, the latter being partly pre-wired for working lights if you are fitting DCC. The glazing is pre-printed to fold up inside the body. All this for £49.99, plus the cost of the B4 donor loco.





Michael Russell



Phil Parker



Ben Bucki

Adding coal

There's an old modelling adage that nothing looks more like coal than real coal. Well, the black-painted stuff on Hornby's TT:120 coaling stage isn't bad, but with a little work, we can make the model look even better. As an added bonus, this technique will also work for adding coal to locomotive bunkers and tenders.



1 Obviously, you'll need some coal, and the easiest way to get it is from eBay. Type in "Steam Coal" and you can buy the stuff model engineers use. It will need to be crushed for our use. Don't whack it with a hammer; the bits go everywhere. Crush lumps with big pliers; it's far easier.



2 The lumps should be really small for this scale; sprinkle them over the moulded coal, trying to build up piles, although it's been shovelled on. Lightly mist with warm water containing a little washing-up liquid. You need to thoroughly wet the coal for the next stage.



3 Apply a 50:50 mix of water and PVA glue, with a couple of drops of washing-up liquid that has been thoroughly mixed, and ideally left to stand overnight. Put a few drops on at a time - the washing-up liquid will break the surface tension, and allow it to flow through the coal.



4 Once the coal is dry, dust the model with black weathering powder. This gives the coal a slightly dusty look, and while you are at it, those very clean walls can be made suitably mucky, too. Work the powder into the brickwork, and there will be no need to seal it with varnish.

Getting Practical

Holiday-makers play as a Class
158 rattles past, somewhere on the
Cambrian Coast in the late-1990s...



On The Beach



Ben Bucki

THERE ARE quite a few places in Britain where you can still get to the seaside by train for your holidays; though the golden age of the rail journey to the beach is undoubtedly long gone, there's still something wonderful about the juxtaposition between railways and the coast, especially where there's a beach involved. Whether it's main lines (the famous section of the ex-GWR Penzance route around Dawlish Warren), preserved lines

like the Paignton and Dartmouth running on an embankment behind the beach huts, or West Somerset with its terminus on Minehead promenade, or surviving modern branch lines like St. Ives, Whitby, or Cleethorpes, there's a lot of inspiration to be had for modellers.

Continuing my run of summer-themed projects, when asked to model a beach scene, I turned to a personal favourite spot in Wales for reference. Criccieth is a small, traditional 'bucket and spade and beachball' kind of holiday town on the Cambrian Coast. Here, the railway runs along the shoreline, behind the beach and the promenade, before swinging slightly inland through the town and passing behind the castle. The beach itself varies from shingle in the south, then a patch with impressive rockpools marks the boundary between the wilder section and the golden sands around the promenade and cliffs. It's a lovely place to spend a day with the family, with the bonus for railway enthusiasts of having trains rattling past behind you!

WHAT YOU NEED

Citadel Acrylics

Mournfang Brown, Celestra Grey, White Scar, Abaddon Black, Mephiston Red, Technical Nihilakh Oxide, Nuln Oil, Warboss Green, Agrax Earthshade, Poster Paint; white, black, brown

Gaugemaster

'Summer Scenic' Grass Mat

Hornby

Railings, Figures

Javis

No.2 Mid Green Coarse Grass

Katy Sue Designs

Flowers, various shades

Ratio

Post and wire fence, railings

Slaters

Stone effect Plastikard

True To Scale

Sand; N and 00 scale

Woodland Scenics

Bushes, Light Green, and Dark Green
E-Z Water

Other

Reptile Calci gravel/sand, aquarium fine gravel, play sand (Early Learning Centre brand), upcycled packing materials - foam and paper, Rocket Adhesive PVA, PVA glue, UHU Wood Glue, hot glue, superglue, scrap MDF, ply, and 3mm Mountboard, round-headed map pins, various sizes, real twigs and wooden scrap, figures from bits box, vinyl (cut from a popped inflatable toy), craft knife, serrated-bladed knife, Swann-Morton scalpel (sizes 10 and 22 blades), scissors, steel rule, engineers' square, razor saw, cutting mat, hot glue gun.

THE CAMBRIAN COAST

The Cambrian Coast Railway in West Wales is one of the great scenic lines in Britain; splitting at Dovey Junction, near Machynlleth, one route heads south to the university town of Aberystwyth, the other heads north for the traditional holiday town of Pwllheli. It takes in several seaside resorts - Aberdovey, Tywyn, Barmouth, Porthmadog - castles like Harlech and Criccieth, and narrow-gauge heritage railways (Talylyn, Fairbourne, Ffestiniog, Welsh Highland). The railway hugs the coast, running along the shoreline itself in several places, crossing estuaries on timber bridges, or negotiating cliffsides on narrow shelves cut into the rock. Though the days of goods trains, loco-hauled expresses, steam specials and through-services to London are long gone, what the railway lacks in variety of motive power nowadays is more than made up for by character, scenic splendour, and impressive surroundings.



The Class 158 has been the stalwart motive power on the Cambrian for over 20 years, though as part of a modernisation/general rationalisation, they're due to be replaced by a smaller fleet of the new, lower-capacity Class 197s. Apart from the venerable sprinters, the only other machines presently cleared for use with the ERTMS signalling system on the coast are a trio of former Class 37s. Snapped during a day on the beach at Criccieth with the kids, 158821 heads a service to Pwllheli. 31.05.23



Since the trial digital signalling scheme came into operation, railtours on the Cambrian have been pretty few and far between (not helped by the infrastructure rationalisation of the 1980s, meaning the line is essentially at capacity now just with regular traffic). The Pathfinder Tours-operated 'Cambrian Coast Express' excursion from Bristol Temple Meads to Pwllheli, with ERTMS-fitted 97303 and 97304, is seen running beside the beach at Criccieth with the return leg. 20.08.21

Getting Practical



1 This was going to need to be quite a large diorama (as it would be doing double-duty as a scene for photographing some models for the Hornby Collectors Club, too). To try and make storage easier, it was designed to fold-up into an underbed storage box.



2 The landforms were made from upcycled packing foam, hot-glued in place, then carved to shape (I always save the offcuts, as they'll come in useful on other projects). More packing material - brown paper - was used to papier-mache over the top of it.



3 Taking inspiration from Criccieth, I wanted to model some wood and metal groynes for holding back the shingle; I-beam Plastikard and thin plywood were used, though they were maybe a little overscale for OO.



4 Slots were cut into the land to bed the groynes into the scene; burying them would help disguise the overscale nature of them a bit. Filler was used to patch up the gaps.



5 More filler was used in a few places to patch gaps or create rougher terrain; some larger rocks were created with yet more foam offcuts, then it was all painted with a dark grey acrylic. The promenade space on the left will be developed later.



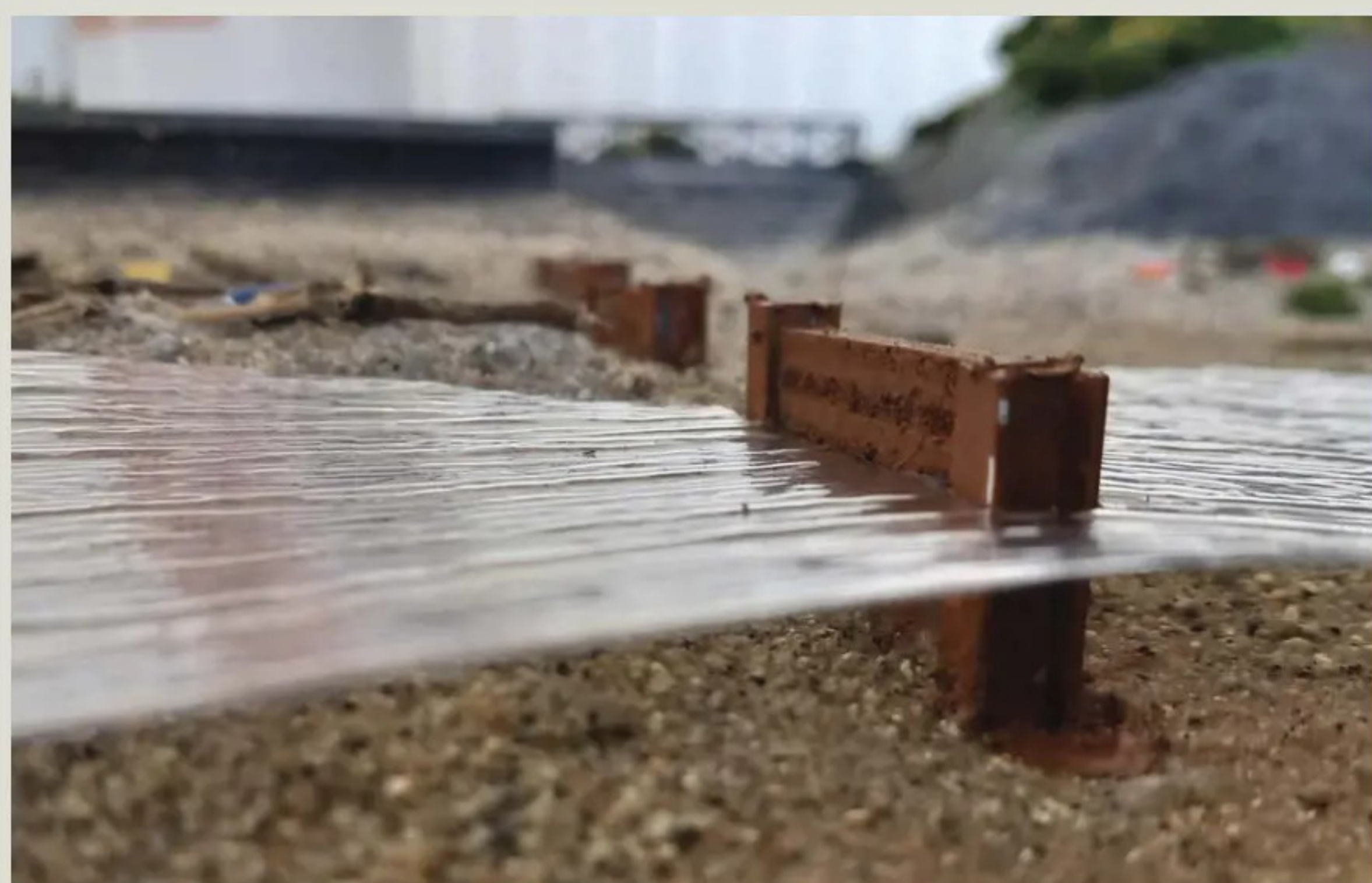
6 The shingle beach surface uses a mixture of ground cover; some scale scenic sand (in OO and N, from 'True to Scale'), aquarium gravel and Calci Sand (intended for reptiles), and Early Learning Centre 'Play Sand'. Static grass was used for the patches of greenery along the rear of the scene.



7 A quick test with the figures revealed that the aquarium stones were just a bit too overscale for the Criccieth-style shingle (the kids would turn an ankle playing on those stones!)



8 Using the stones as a base, a mix of the other scatter materials (especially the reptile gravel) was tamped over and around it all, to help fill the gaps. Some limited greenery was added, again following Criccieth as an example.



9 I was experimenting a bit with the sea - some ripple-effect Plastikard was used, and deliberately kept flexible (as opposed to laminating to thicker plastic sheet) to ape the swell and roll of the waves. It was cut to fit around the groynes and the landforms of the beach.



10 The rockpools would be another bit of experimentation; after carving out the still-drying ground cover, real lumps of slate were superglued in place. Attempt one used (supposedly) clear-drying hot glue for the water, and it failed spectacularly...



11 Attempt two worked a little better, using Woodland Scenics E-Z water pellets. Heated up in a pan (don't use the best cookware!), then poured into place, before bedding in with a bit more sand after it had set. If anything, it set too quickly, needing a bit of work afterwards.



12 A notable feature of Criccieth is the bands of driftwood (and, sadly, some rubbish) that wash up there. Raiding the garden for small twigs provided the former, then bits of plastic waste and vinyl (cut, appropriately, from an inflatable the kids at Scouts had accidentally burst) provided the rest.

Getting Practical



13 The water effects were bedded in a bit further with another pass of sand, gravel, and watered-down PVA glue, before some ripples and waves were added with white acrylic paint.



14 A small stream would help divide the promenade area and the wilder beach, as well as give somewhere a little safer for the miniature population to paddle and play with their inflatables, rather than in the sea. Again, the E-Z water was used.



15 The figures were a bit of a mix, mainly a cheap selection bought online, and needed some repainting. I tried to limit the amount of 'accessories' like beach toys, the real Criccieth not being the sort of coast massively suitable for safely playing with inflatables and floats.



16 At Criccieth, the railway is separated from the public by a lightweight, and very old, wire and post fence for much of its length. I used the Ratio kit and made it look quite old and scruffy to represent a suitably weather-beaten fence.



17 The railway line itself is modelled on Criccieth, complete with the weathering and rust, though the track used is a little coarse in appearance (again, this diorama will be used for a piece in the Hornby Collectors Club, so uses venerable Tri-ang track).

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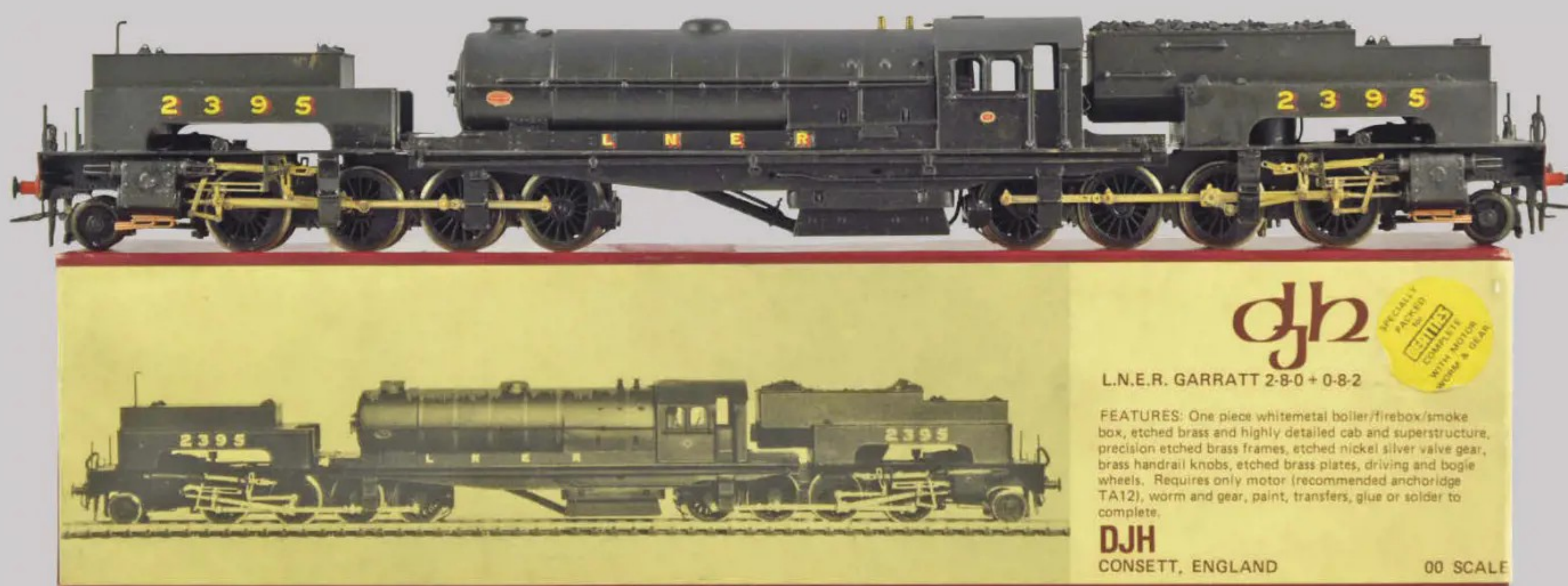


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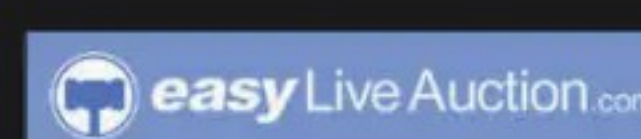
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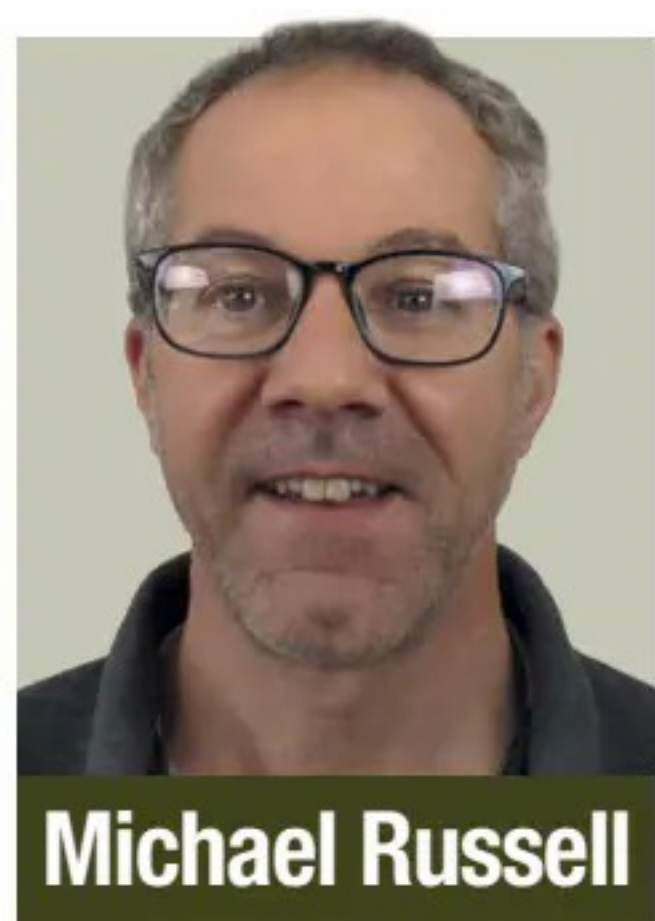
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Getting Practical



Build a Platform Kiosk



Michael Russell

PRINTED MATERIAL was popular entertainment on train journeys and so newspaper stands were common at stations. W.H. Smith is probably the best known, and John Menzies in Scotland. This model depicts a newspaper stand from Dornoch station in Scotland, but with rebranding, it could be used anywhere. You can certainly justify having one on all but the smallest of halts.

All the additional resources used in this project can be downloaded free of

charge from https://www.printables.com/@MJRailway_3705112. The 3D models can be printed on your own 3D printer, or one you have access to, or could be printed using an online service where you upload the source files and receive the prints back in the post. They are optimised for an FDM printer, but may also be suitable for resin printing.

If you don't have access to a 3D printer, the overlays can easily be made from plastic strip and sheet. Use Evergreen 142 (1mm x 1mm) square rod for the trim and 4031 clapboard or 4525 corrugated siding for the sheeting. There will be similar items available in the Plastruct range, too.

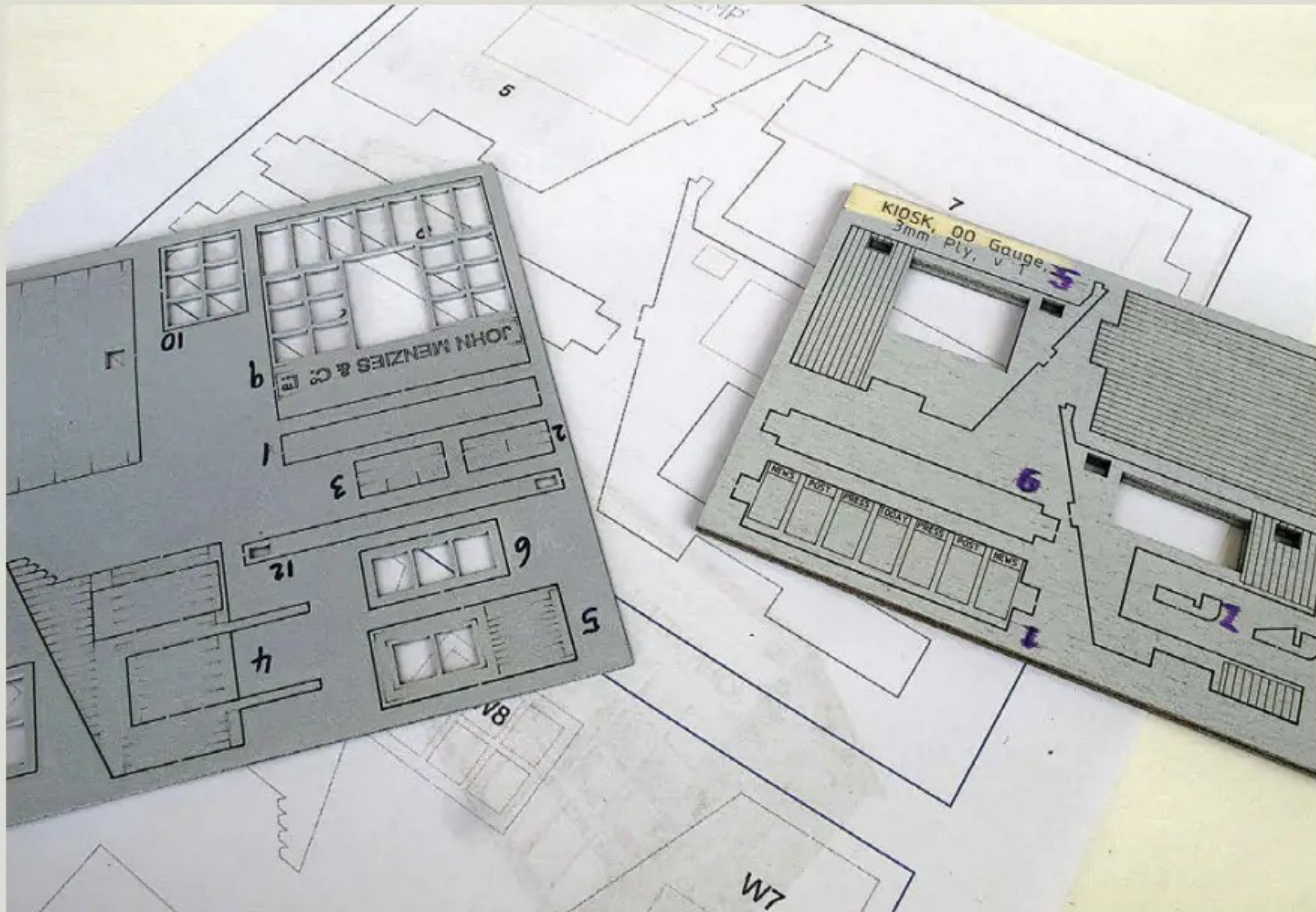
WHAT YOU NEED

Pop Up Designs

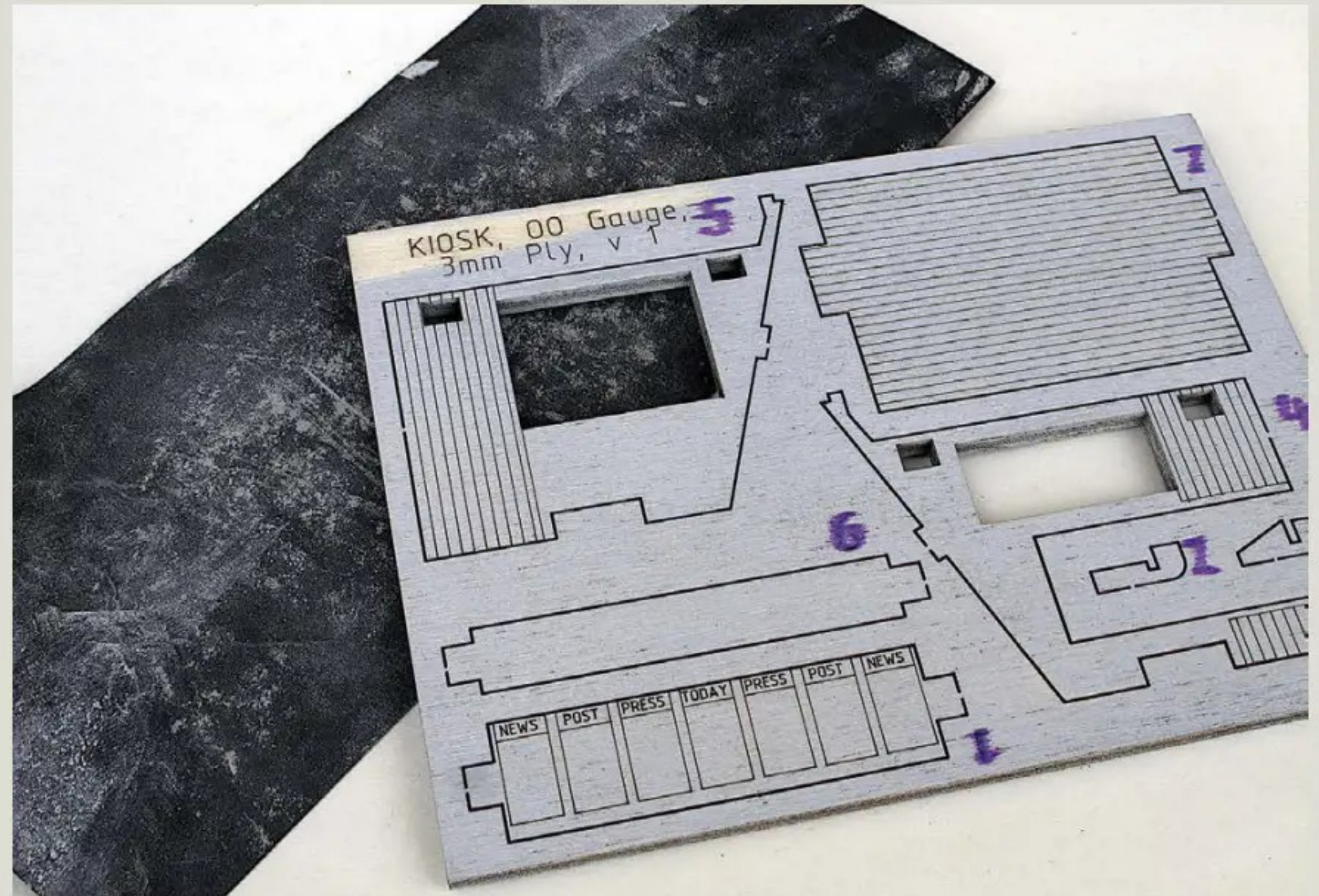
Kiosk kit

Other

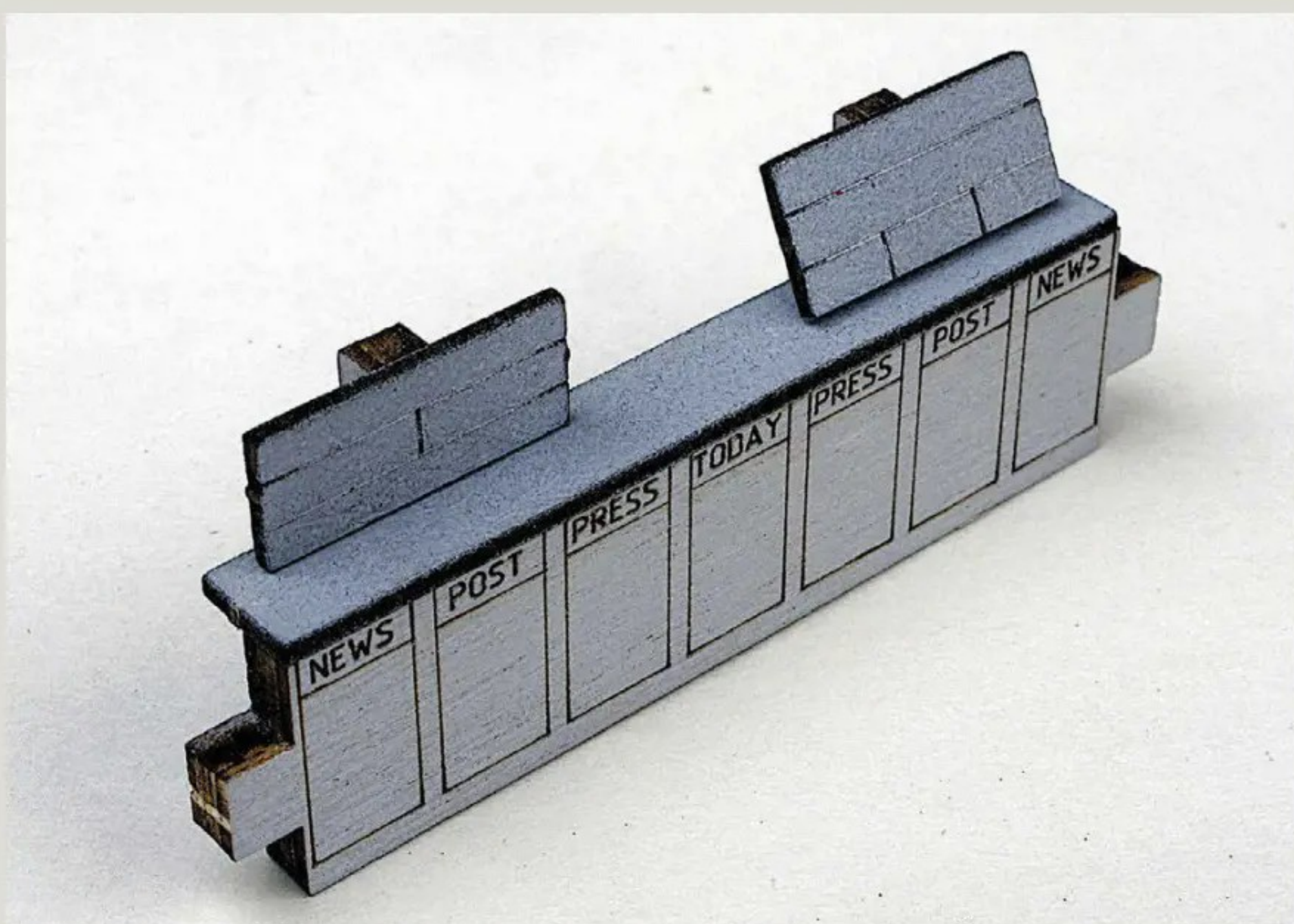
Brown acrylic paint, PVA glue, white A4 paper, car aerosol primer, fine grades of grit paper, OHP film or plastic sheet, model filler, FDM 3D printer with PLA filament, plastic sheet and square section (if no 3D printer), colour printer, scissors, craft knife, steel rule, marker pen, small clamps and weights, modelling files.



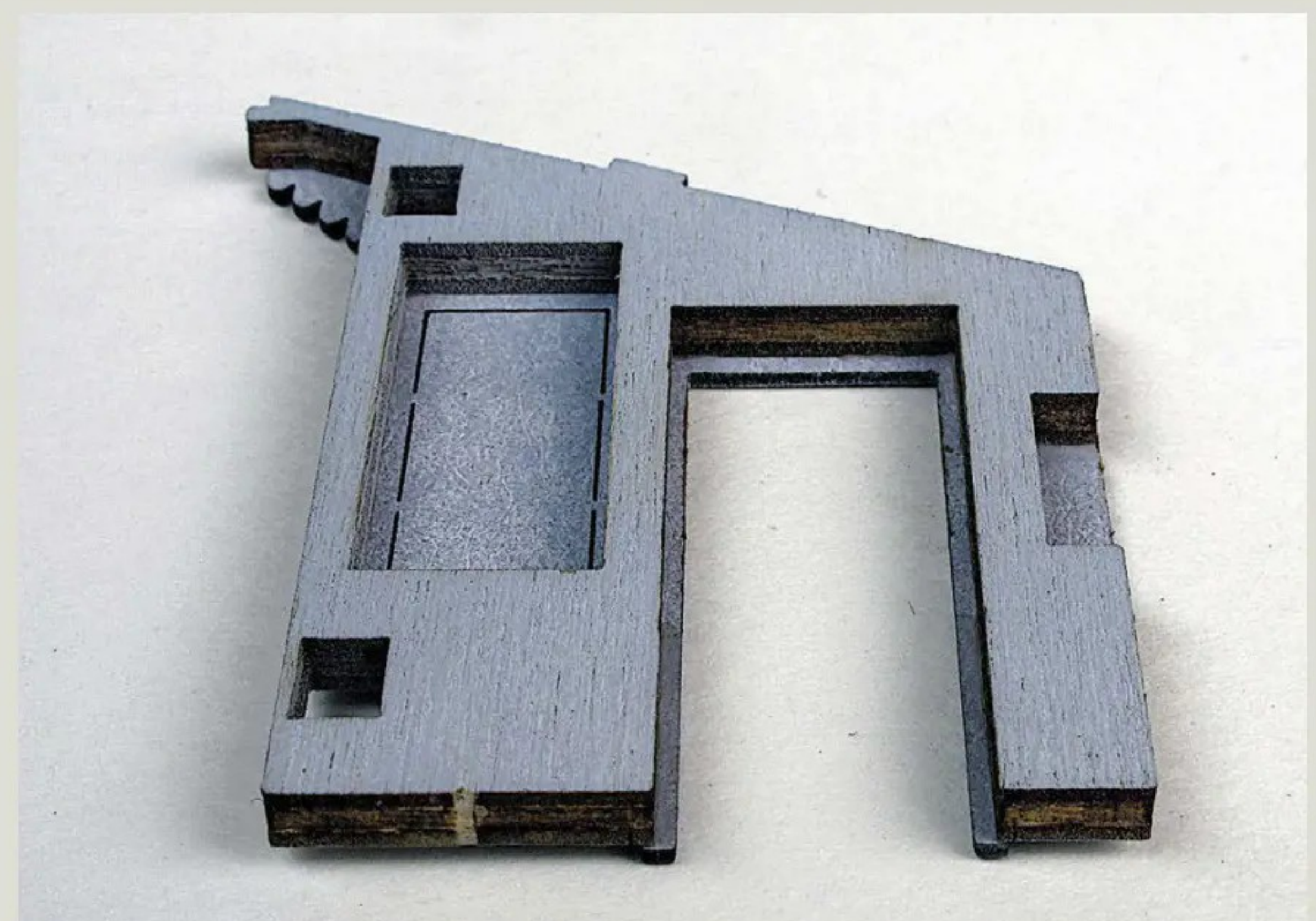
1 The two sheets of parts should first be sealed with a primer; car aerosol will suffice. It speeds things up slightly if you copy the part numbers over from the instructions using a marker pen.



2 The wooden sheet has quite a rough surface, which will show on the final finish if left. A quick rub over with a 100-grit paper will soon fix the issue and leave a smoother finish.



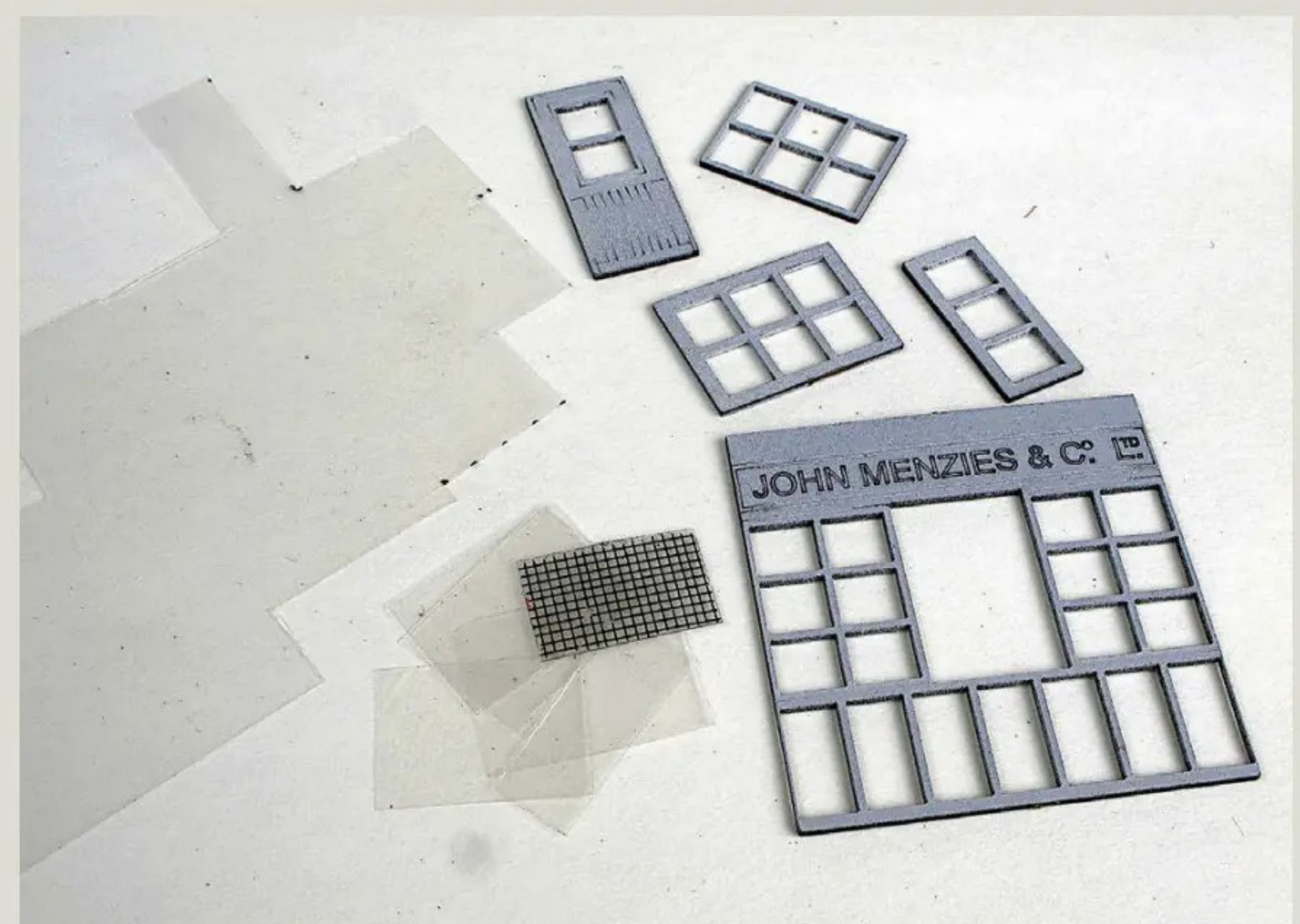
3 The two display boards fit on the back of the counter, one at either end, to leave the centre service hatch area clear. These are harder to decorate once in situ, so you could leave them off until the end, just before you add the roof.



4 Be careful to align the overlays with the end pieces. The door frame should be lined up carefully so that the door has something to rest on and to avoid gaps in other areas.



5 The rough edges of the two end pieces will show on the finished model, and since they are small areas and easy to access, it is best to hide them with model filler. When dry, file smooth and sand.



6 Before you fit the windows, cut the glazing pieces to size from a piece of plastic sheet while they are easily accessible. I laser-printed a grid of lines on some OHP film for the door window to depict security glazing.

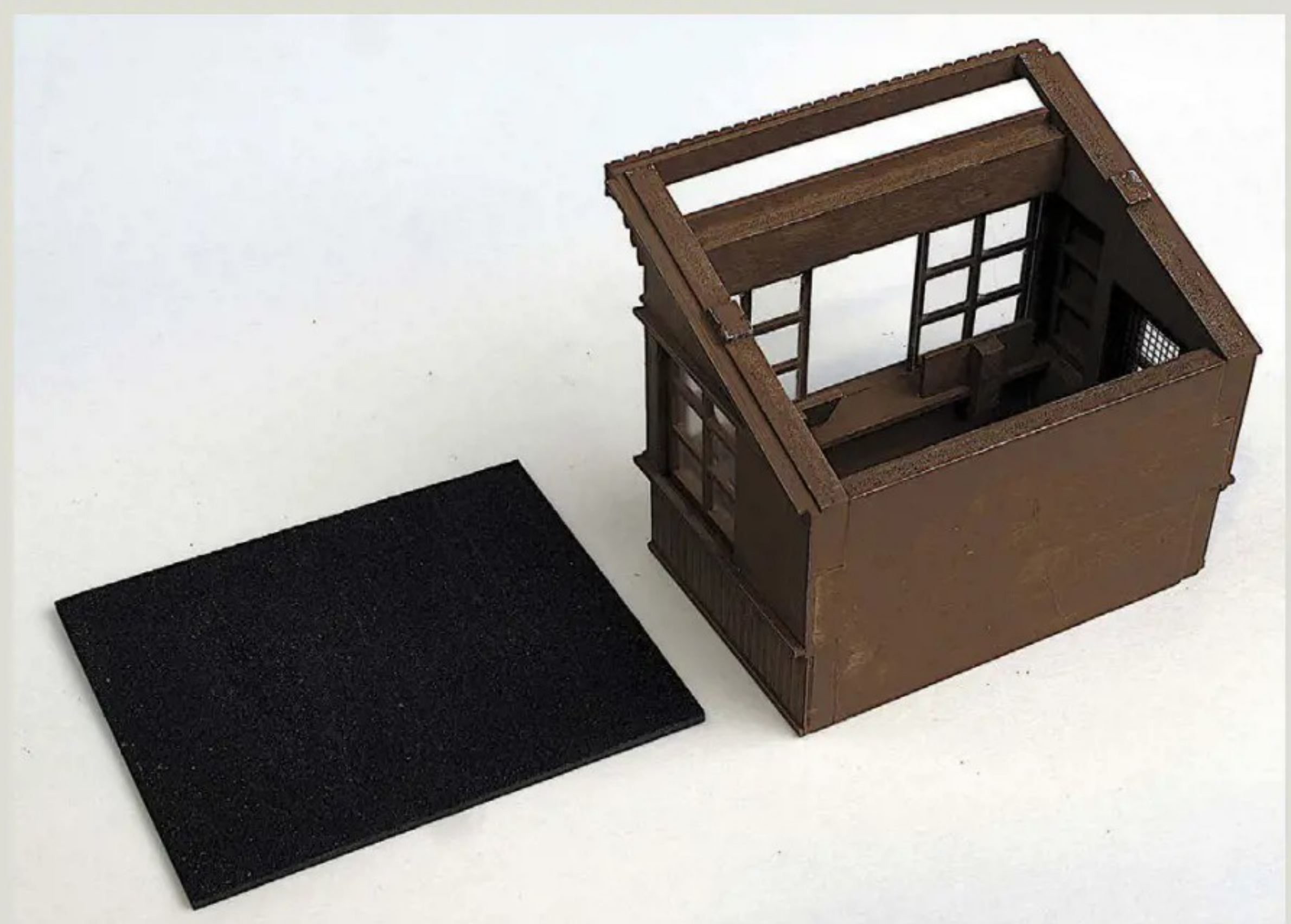
Getting Practical



7 Since the back of the model will be hidden, I chose to fit the rear wall with the detail on the inside. You could do the same with the end pieces, too, both to swap the location of the door and to add detail inside the model. Overlays can easily be added on the outside to compensate.



8 I designed and 3D-printed overlays and additional trim to enhance the model, which has some awkward tab location joints to cover over. Simply print them out and stick in place with PVA. You could easily make these from plastic sheet and square section, too.



9 The roof also has visible tabs that need to be covered up, as arguably this is the most seen area. I used a sheet of fine-grade grit paper, cut to size and supported with weights until the PVA was set.



10 Newspaper and magazine covers were designed in Libre Office Writer and printed in colour and then cut out and attached using PVA. The main sign is better printed out and attached, as painting the one engraved on the kit is challenging.



11 Last, glue the internal hatch window in place and then the roof. The former can be glued in an open or closed position. Use PVA so that any overspill has a minimal impact on the glazing.

CONCLUSION

With a little work, this kit builds into a fine model. It is easy to customise and you can swap the position of the door, add shutters, re-brand and add custom sales products easily. As it is laser-cut, everything fits together very accurately.

It is worth covering up the assembly tabs with overlays as they are quite intrusive on the finished model, but it is not a big job. Overlays are much more preferable to using filler, where you can, being quicker and neater. There are some fine examples of the finished kit on the source website at popupdesigns.co.uk.





Weathering Hornby Mk. 3 Coaches



Michael Russell

THE PRINCIPLE behind exterior coach cleaning is that stock is seen by passengers only when they are boarding and alighting, namely the part above platform level and then at head height. So only the sides of coaches are kept clean and everything else is allowed to weather.

As usual, the level of weathering depends upon how long the vehicle has been in use and if parts have been disturbed during servicing. I would argue that weathering from use is likely to build up very quickly on the premise that railway stock is used intensively, as it

doesn't generate income when out of use. Therefore, high mileage occurs quickly, resulting in a rapid build-up of dirt, but the area seen by the passengers is washed regularly. Modern coaches tend to be used in fixed formations, meaning that the whole set weathers at the same rate. So, by all means, have a coach or two with lighter weathering that has been spliced into the formation, but have this as the exception rather than the norm.

I used enamel paint on this project to avoid damaging the factory paintwork when using thinners and to avoid paint beading on the surface, which may occur if you use acrylic, since the model has quite a glossy finish.

WHAT YOU NEED

Hornby

R4938A and R4942A
Cross Country Mk. 3
Sliding Door TGS/TFD
coaches

Other

Light grey, black and light brown enamel paint, enamel thinners, masking tape, dual action airbrush, paint stirrers, small clean rags, small modelling paint brushes, flat-bladed screwdriver.

TOP TIP

The windows on these models are very easy to damage. Any rubbing will mark them, so be sure to mask them before starting work. If you are unfortunate enough to contaminate a window with paint, then clean it with a rag dampened in thinners. To cure the resulting opaqueness, treat it with a coat of varnish such as Hornby Clear Gloss. You must leave the coach on a level surface so that the windows dry on the horizontal, which will allow the varnish to self-level. Repeat the application if the marking is particularly bad.

Getting Practical



1 Cut lengths of masking tape and stick them over the main windows down each side. Cut smaller pieces to cover the door windows.



2 Mix Light grey with a light brown colour and spray on bogies, underframe and steps. Only give a light dusting to start with.



3 Take a rag dampened with thinners and remove some paint from the underframe and bogie pipework, then spray lightly over the top again with the same mix.



4 Use the thinner-dampened rag to remove any overspray on the lower body sides, but leave traces at the very bottom where it curves to the underframe.



5 Using the same colour, spray the coach ends and buffer beams, ETH coupling sockets, steps and faces of the wheels (not the treads). Spray the model couplings, too; otherwise, attention will be drawn to them.



6 Spray the door ends, ensuring that the spray reaches any recesses. Be sure to include the gap below the doors and the treads of the passenger step. Use a thinner-dampened rag to remove overspray so that the colour is left only in the recesses.



7 Add black to the mix to create a roof dirt shade and spray the roof with a light misting. To create variation on the roof, use thinners and a rag to remove areas of spray. Now spray the roof again to blend these areas in.



8 Where the roof meets the body sides, use a small brush that has been moistened with thinners to feather the dirt in. This creates an ideal streaking effect.



9 Remove the wheels from the model by levering the bogie sides with a flat-bladed screwdriver. Use a rag and thinners to remove the paint from the brake discs, leaving paint only on the outer edges. You may need to touch up afterwards.



10 Peel off any masking tape and gently remove any paint that has collected where the masking tape edges were. Make sure you do not rub the windows, as you will mark them. The final step is to refit the wheels.

CONCLUSION



These coaches certainly look better after weathering and by using the method outlined here, you should be able to process a rake quite swiftly. Only two colours are needed and no change of paint in the airbrush cup. It only takes a moment to mask the windows, too.



Building a Fireless charging point



Phil Parker

EVER SINCE Rapido's excellent fireless locomotive arrived, I've been fascinated by the operation of these machines. We know steam locos will need access to coal and water, diesels to fuel oil, but a fireless is filled with steam. How?

After limited success looking through books and websites, I did the sensible thing and asked RMweb. You can read the discussion here - www.rmweb.co.uk/topic/200317-charging-points-for-fireless-locomotives

From these, I learned a couple of important points. First, I'd always assumed that the receiver (the boiler-shaped part of the loco) was filled with steam from a boiler elsewhere on the site they operated. Apparently, very little steam is actually involved. The boiler is filled with two-thirds superheated water (water that has a temperature above 100c, but owing to the vessel it was heated in was unable to actually boil), and then the rest with steam in order to create the pressure. The decreasing pressure causes the superheated

water to then boil and create extra steam (my thanks to RMweb member *pheaton* for this).

Photos show a wide variety of arrangements for filling the receiver, so I'm freelancing something that I hope looks plausible. The main thing we need is some fat pipe running from the on-site boiler to the charging point. For this, I can think of nothing better than Knightwing's Industrial Pipes set. Looking online, this set, while long in the tooth, is still available, but I'm not sure how widely. One of those "grab it while you can" products.

An alternative would be to use the spares sprues from the edge of plastic kits, being round and about the right size, with slices of plastic tube to make flanges and pipe joints. Valves will be trickier, although you could make a suitable control out of wire, or even old car wheels.

Assembly is a case of measuring and joining the sections with plastic cement and solvent. Let each stage harden before moving on, or you'll be wrangling a floppy length of plastic that will keep falling apart.

After this, consider adding more pipes to your model. Industrial buildings were often festooned with them, and on a model, this looks fantastic.

WHAT YOU NEED

Citadel Miniatures
Nulin Oil

Knightwing
UN10 Industrial Pipes

Other
Plastic solvent and cement, sharp knife, sanding stick, grey primer, plastic tube, thin wire and fat electrical cable.



1 On our exclusive model of the Barclay *Caledonia*, the locomotive charging points are under the footplate, just behind the front steps. There is a point on either side, but some locos had a single one on the front.



2 We're going to need lots of pipes and fittings. I'm using Knightwing's Industrial Pipes set, which has several different diameters of pipe, plus fittings including flanges and valves. You could scratch-build using old plastic kit sprues as a basis for a budget, yet pretty decent, result.



3 I'm adding to an existing layout, and assuming the steam is piped out from elsewhere on site. Building my pipe involves checking the length of pieces and gluing them together. You can plan this stuff, but I find it easier to test each piece and cut it to length as I go.



4 The finished pipe takes a couple of hours to produce, as I make a bit, then let the glue harden before moving on to the next section. I'm using slices of plastic tube to represent the supports along the length. Wires will lift the end off the ground.



5 Before fitting, the pipe is given a coat of grey spray primer, as most photos show this is the popular colour in steam- and early-diesel eras. Weathering is a simple wash of Citadel Nulin Oil. Try not to get too much on the building, but a little is good, as dirt will collect around the supports.



6 At the end of the fixed pipe, there should be a length of flexible tube that will be connected to the charging point on the loco. A piece of nice fat wire can be bent to shape, and handily, comes in red, which seems a popular prototype colour, once toned down with more Nulin Oil.

Getting Practical



Detailing a Deltic



Phil Parker

HORNBY'S RAILROAD model of Deltic 55 002 *The Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry*, or *KOYLI* as it's often referred to, is based on the old Lima model, launched in 1977, albeit with a much-upgraded drive system, and DCC with sound-fitted.

I have history with this model. A very young Phil decided, on returning from the National Railway Museum once upon a time, that he would like to model KOYLI. Seeing the real thing had provided the inspiration, and ownership of a Lima Deltic provided the opportunity.

He carefully masked and repainted (with a brush) his model. The number was changed, and a set of etched nameplates attached. The result was very satisfying.

Do I still own it? Sadly not because not long after completion, I left the model in its box on a windowsill. The sun shone, and when I returned, the loco resembled a banana! Only the etched plates could be salvaged, and a valuable lesson was learned.

Nowadays, there is no need for masking and paint, Hornby can do all that to a far higher

standard than I can, even on a Railroad model. Even etched nameplates are supplied in the box.

But there is scope for a little detailing, and this is the perfect model to cut your teeth on.

We have to start by being honest. If you want a really accurate Deltic, buy a Bachmann or Accurascale model. For reasons lost in the mists of time, Lima decided to shrink the impressive proportions of the real loco on its model.

Basically, it doesn't matter how much detail you throw at this locomotive, it's always going to be underscale. However, when you see and hear it thrashing away on your layout, does that matter? With this in mind, I've just made a few changes. Cheap ones, that lift the model a little, and are really easy to do.

You could argue that replacing the nose handrails would be good, and you'd be right. We could do the horns on the nose while we are at it – but then the paintwork would need to be patched up, and matching the colour is best described as “tricky”. Since *KOYLI* tends to be kept clean, I can't hide anything with a bit of weathering, either.

So, what we'll do is a few tweaks to make this model look magnificent at the head of a fast express, with the emphasis on simplicity and low costs. Just don't leave it in the hot sun!

WHAT YOU NEED

AK Interactive

RCM034 paint pen

Deluxe Materials

Glue'n'Glaze

Hornby

R30438TXS BR Class 55 Deltic

Humbrol

Enamel paints: 34 (White), 67 (Tank Grey) and 147 (Pale Grey)

Roxey Mouldings

4A111 Screw-link Couplings

Other

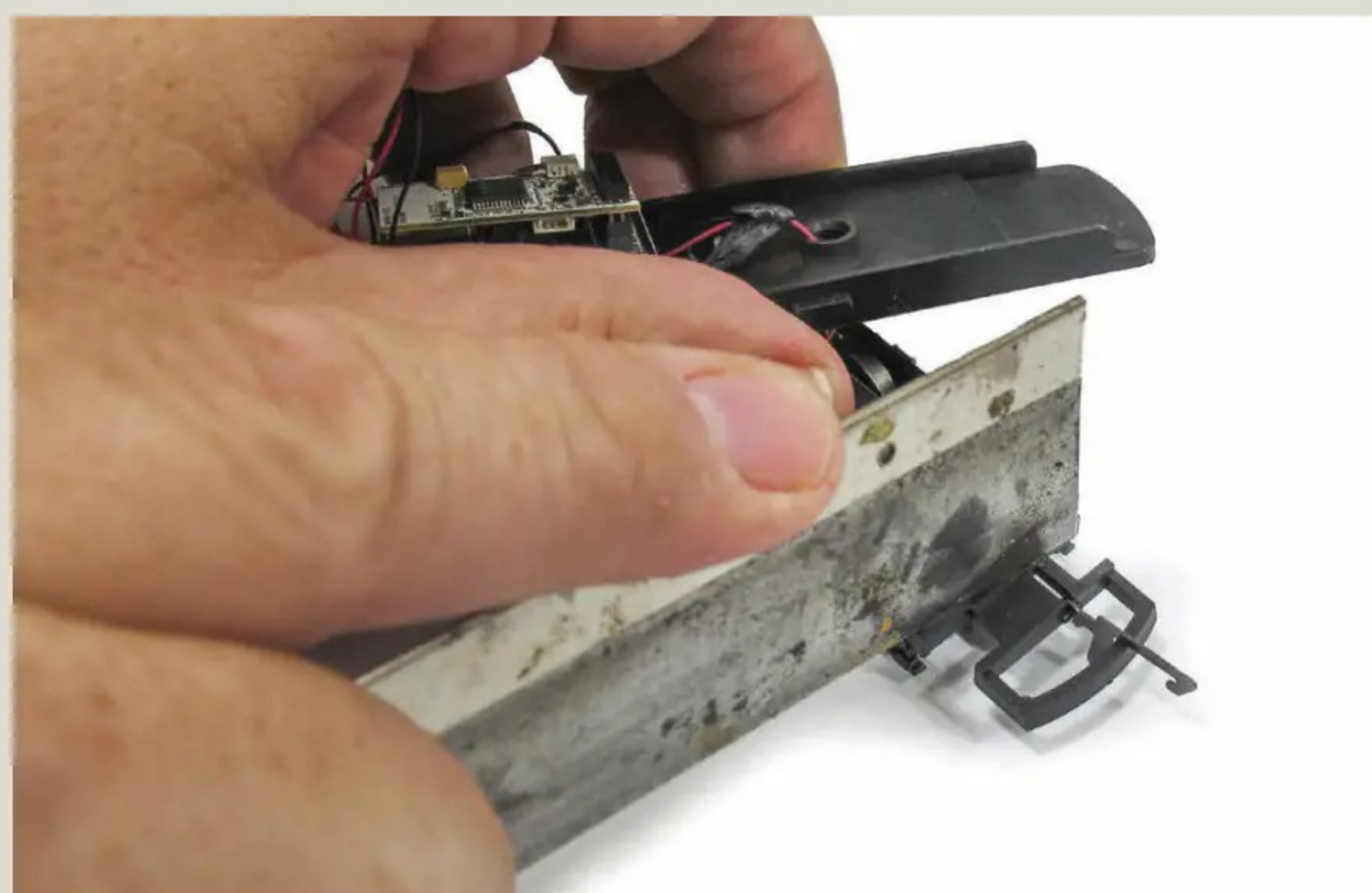
Xacto saw, tweezers, small drill bits, fine brush, lengths of wire, black weathering powder and superglue.



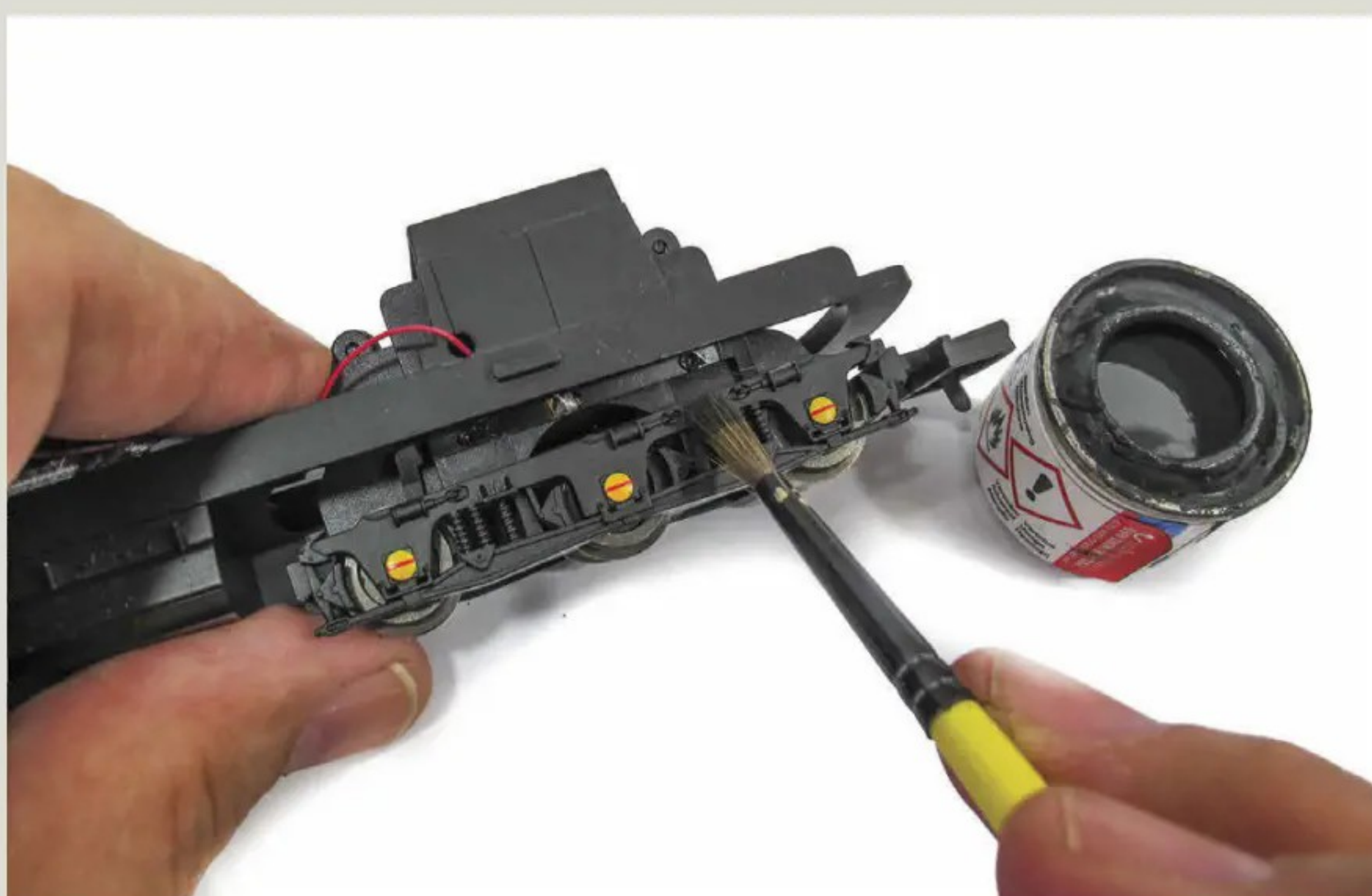
1 Straight from the box, this isn't a bad-looking model. The decoration is excellent, far better than I managed years ago with a paintbrush. Hornby has even included a set of etched nameplates, an odd but welcome part of the Railroad package.



2 Taking the body off is a little fiddly, but simple enough. The cab steps are clips holding it on. Gently flex the body away from the chassis at the front until it unclips. Stick a piece of card in the gap, then do the other side. Repeat for the back end, and the body is free.



3 There's no easy way to remove the front coupling. I had to cut it away with an Exacto saw and smooth the remains away with a sanding stick. NEM coupling pockets would be much easier. Would you believe I once did this at a show and got told off by a visitor?



4 I like to lightly dry-brush all the black areas of a model with Humbrol 67, Tank Grey. This emphasises all the detail and helps to bring the model to life. Even though this will be a clean locomotive, it adds to the finished result.

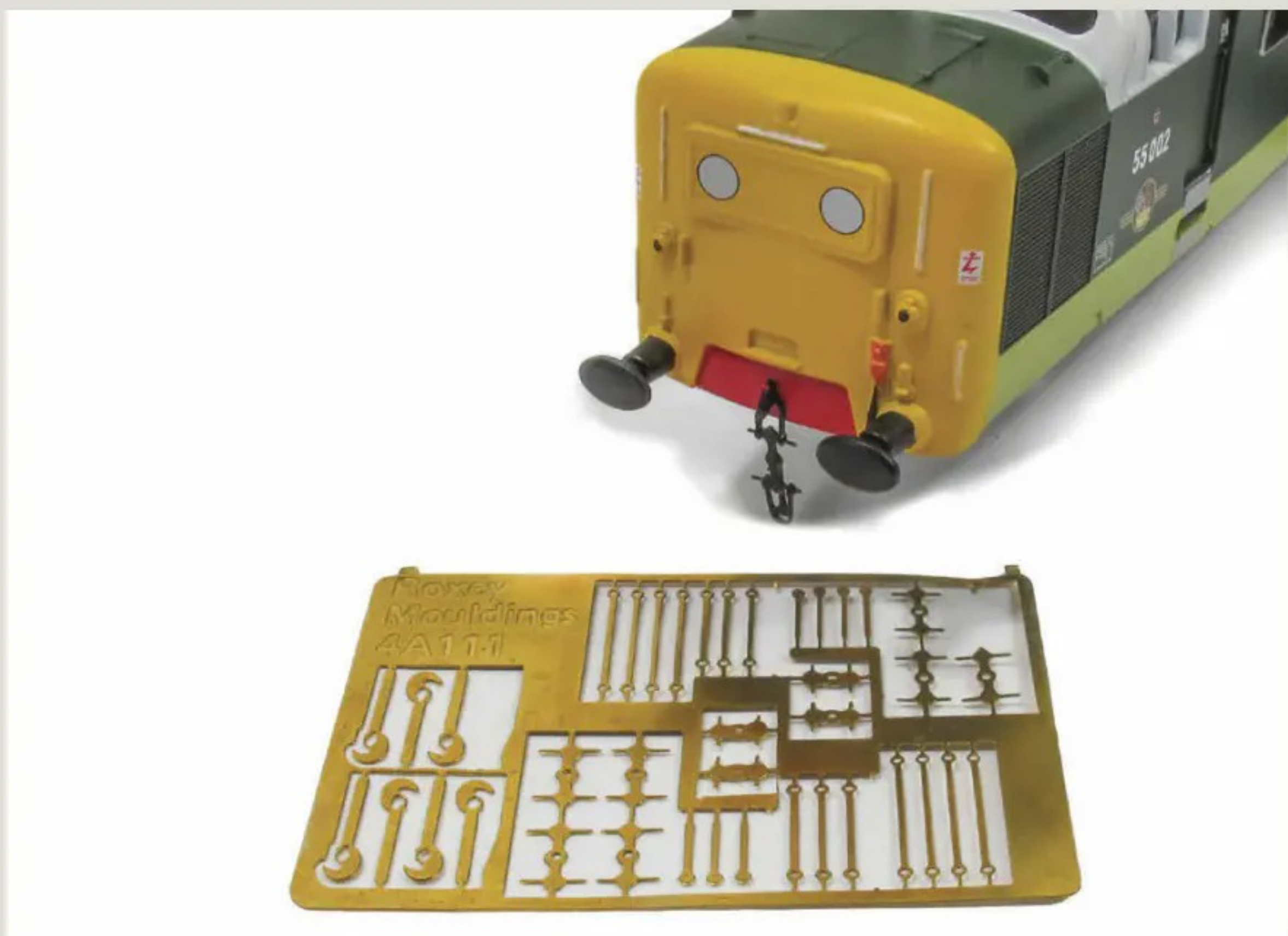


5 Prototype photos show that KOYLI is often fully "bulled up" with white tyre sides on the wheels, and the same colour on the springs. The latter are slightly fiddly, but a steady hand and small brush will do it. For the tyres, there's nothing better than a paint pen.



6 While the paint pen is to hand, I pick out the handrails on the nose, another feature of the fancy livery. This might not be as good as replacement with wire, but it's a lot easier, and the colour helps to emphasise them. I'll paint the lights and cable connection, too.

Getting Practical



7 Without the coupling, the front end looks empty, so we need some “dangly bits” from the bufferbeam. Work starts with a screw coupling. I’m using an etched kit, but there are lots of options out there, including ready-made versions from Accurascale, available as spares.



8 Vacuum and air pipes are made from lengths of wire. Once the body is refitted to the chassis, I’ll bend these and cut them to length. I’ll also need to ensure each wire is trimmed flush with the inside of the body, as the chassis is a snug fit behind there.



9 If you prefer a ready-made, and admittedly, more detailed option for the nose end pipework, West Hill Wagon Works produces a nice 3D-printed set. These were out of stock as I write, but I’m assured that by the time you read this, the set will be available again.



10 Moulded fan grilles will never look as good as etched versions, but a worthwhile improvement is to wash over them with some black paint that has been heavily thinned. A couple of coats might be needed for coverage, but thin paint is better than thick for this job.



11 KOYLI is normally maintained in an immaculate condition, a good excuse, you might think, for not weathering the model. However, even a clean loco produces fumes when the engine is on, so a little dirt using weathering powders around the exhaust port is a nice touch.



12 Finally, the etched plates are attached to the sides. Not with Blu-tack, as the instructions bizarrely suggest, but a smear of Deluxe Materials Glue’n’Glaze adhesive. Look at the model from all angles to check the plates are level. It stands out a mile if this is wrong!



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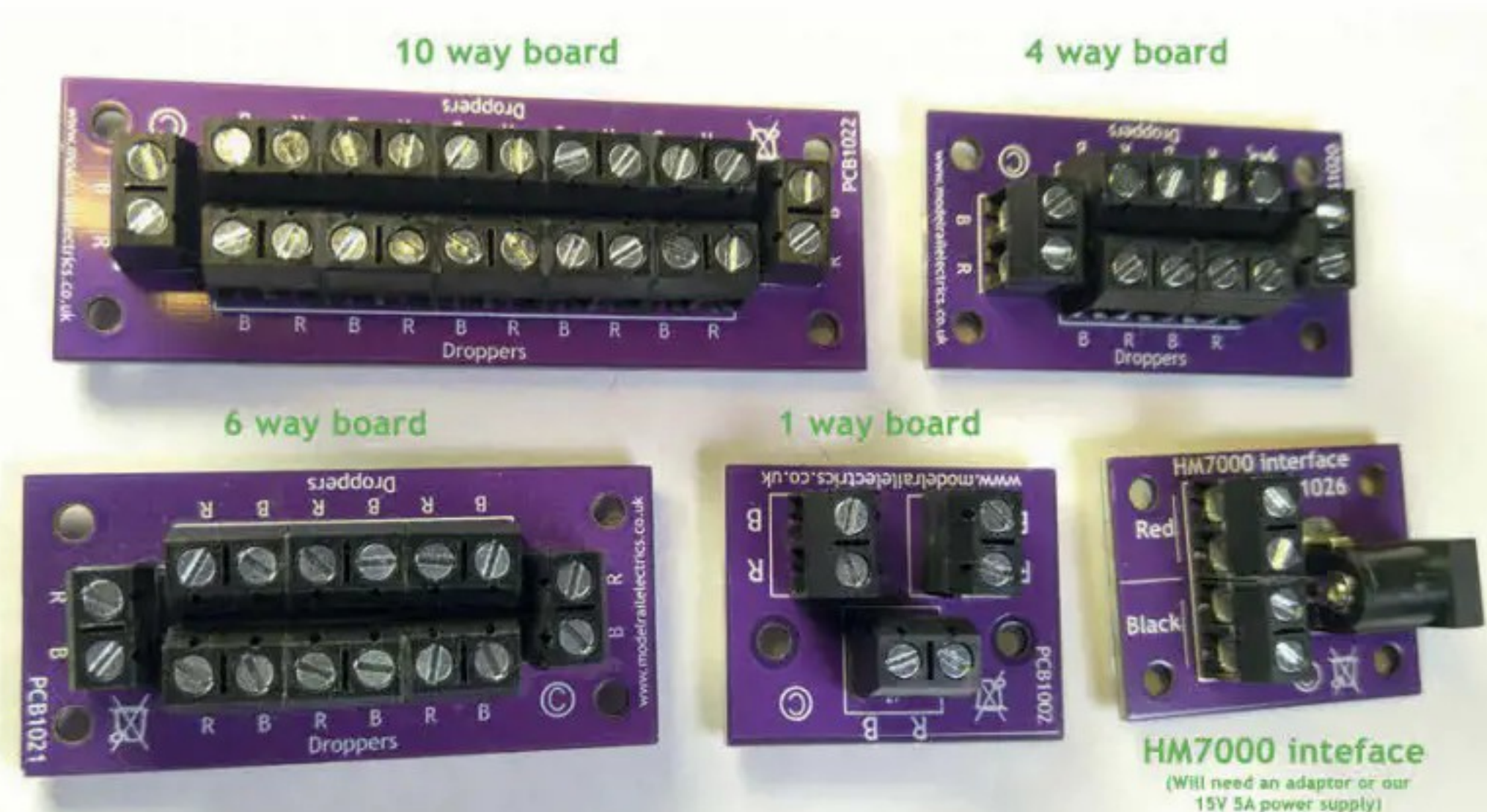
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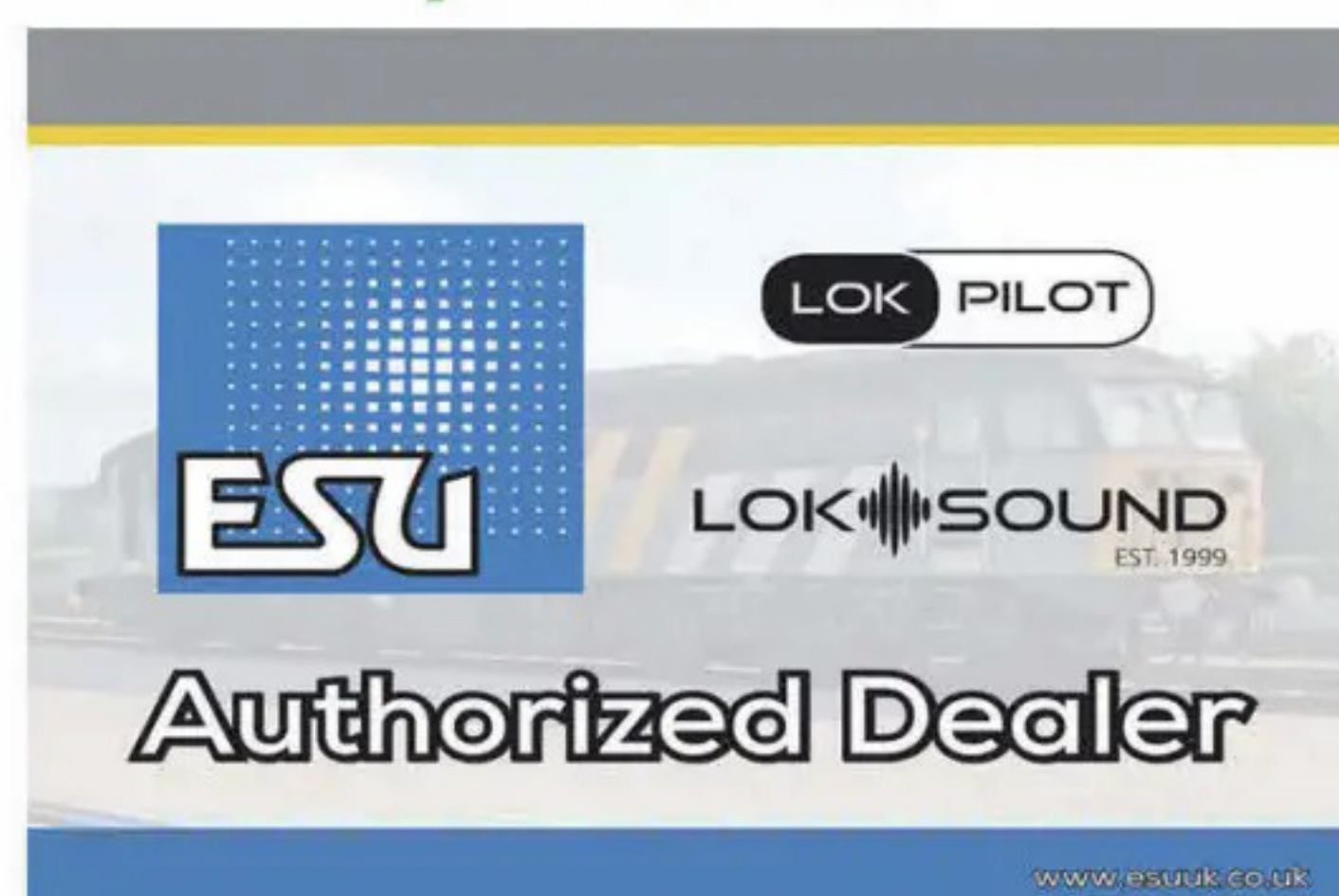
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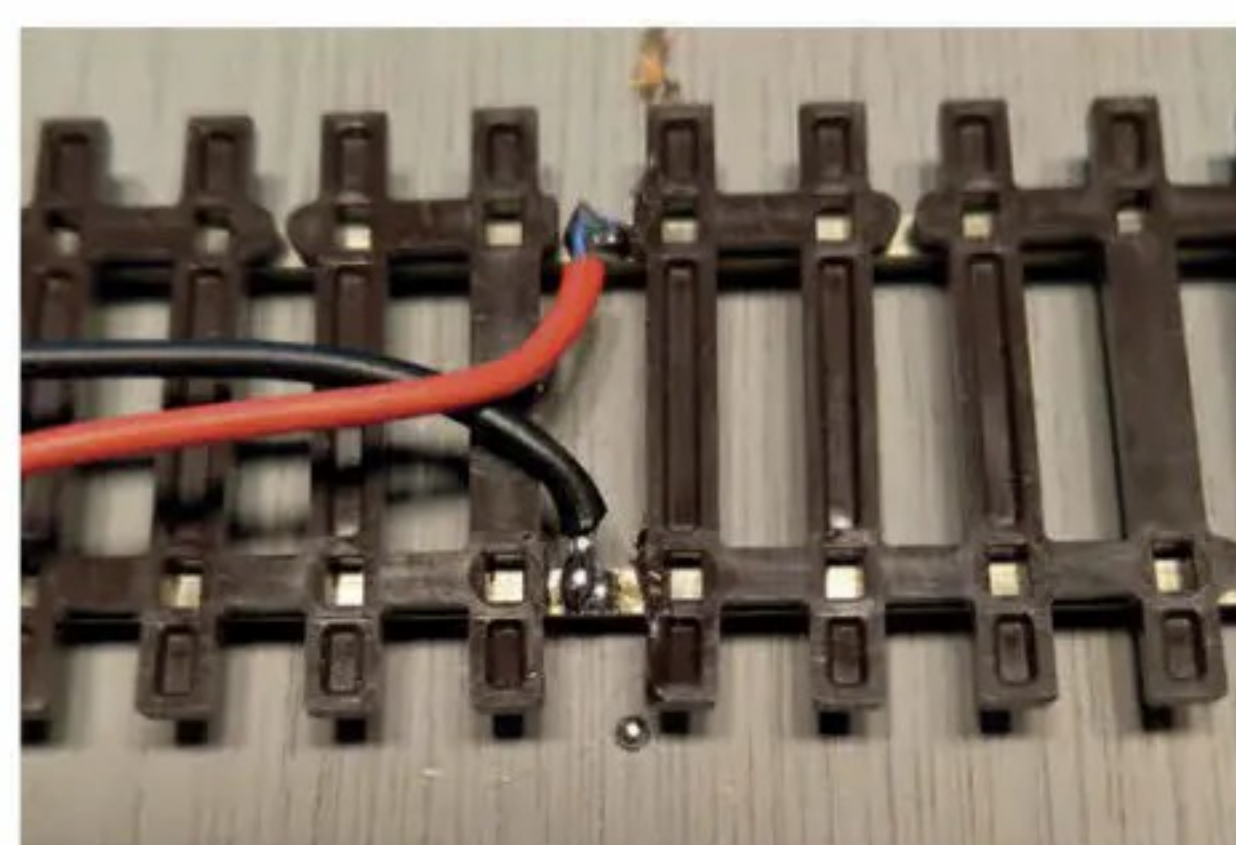
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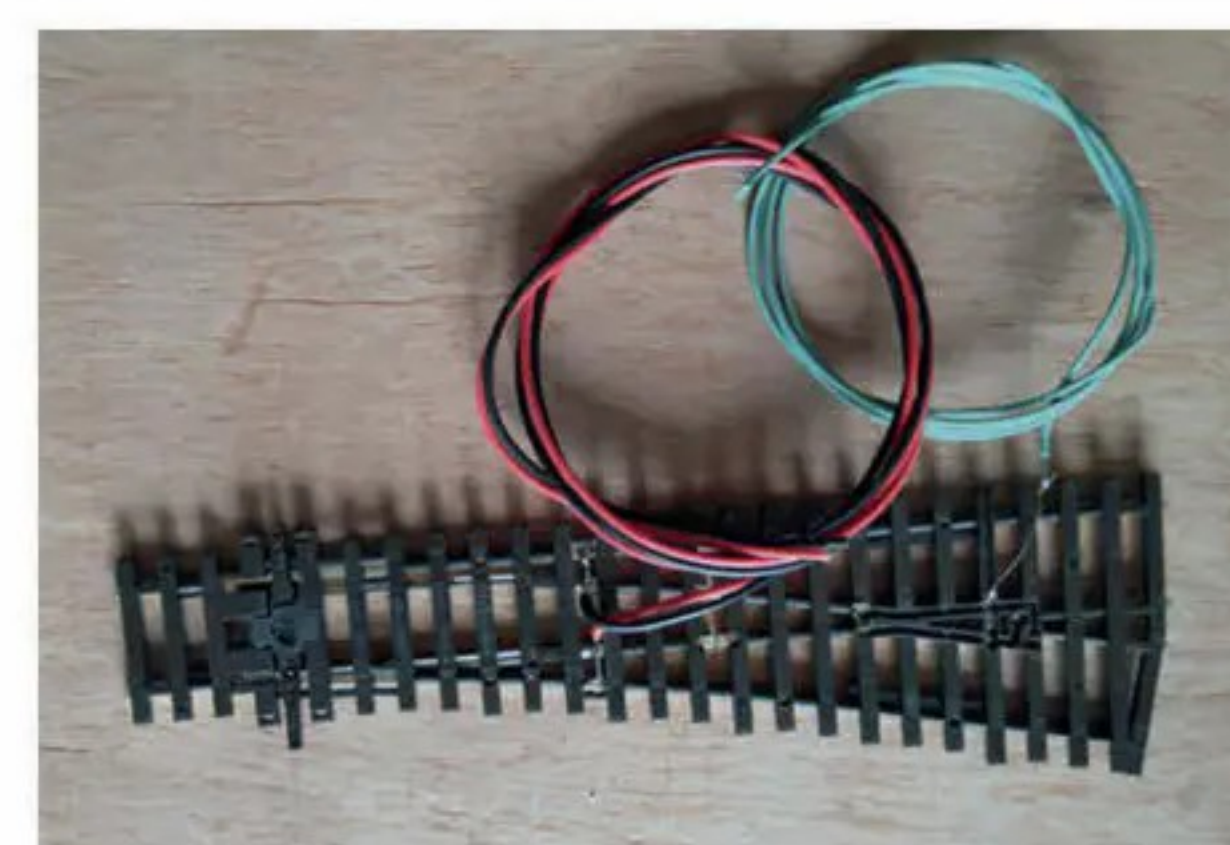


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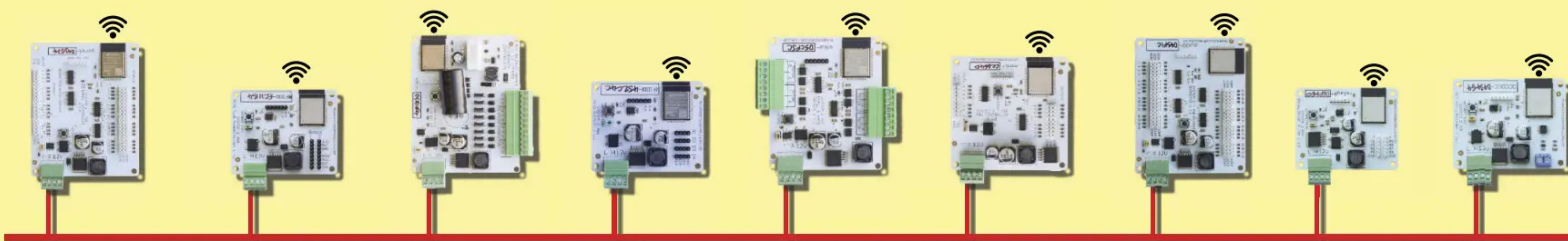


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ISSUE 312 | AUGUST 2026

TOTON EARLY MORNING



ALSO INSIDE:

- Inverness Class 37s
- Level Crossings
- The D95XXs



EARLY MORNING AT TOTON

By John Dedman



My first visit to Toton was a depot open day visit in 1979. This was made with train journeys from the South Coast to Nottingham, from where we travelled on a very crowded DMU shuttle to the depot. I do not have much in the way of information from this visit, other than a few black and white images, mostly of Class 44s. My film of 36 slides never returned from the processors, assumed to be lost in the post!

My next visit was in July 1986, when we came to explore the local freight areas. We started with a quick visit to Toton on July 15th, and arrived at the footbridge at the south end of the yards about 08:30. We were immediately drawn to the

line of withdrawn Class 45s and we set off on a walk along the line. We then returned to the footbridge, which was a good location for movements in and out of the yard. Here, we caught 20133 and 20160 heading south with two cement PCAs, 10 minutes later, 20163 followed with a brake van, one of the few Class 20s that had the headcode box removed from its nose. Another two pairs of Class 20s then passed, 20197 and 20151 with loaded coal wagons and 20066 and 20089 light engine. The final moves here were 37303 arriving with empty HAA wagons and 56070 heading south light engine. We then left to explore more of the area around the local coalfields for the rest of the day.

06:40, July 16th, 1986: 25190 is going south with a departmental working with a variety of wagons and a BR brake van. 25190 was withdrawn from service a year later and scrapped.





09:00, July 15th, 1986: 20133 and 20160 heading south away from the yard with a pair of cement PCAs.



05:44, July 16th, 1986: 56118 + 37159 + 37095 are rolling into the yard with the Lackenby to Corby steel coil wagons. The three locos were then detached from the stock and moved to the depot.



05:45, July 16th, 1986: 31117 is reversing the Speedlink from Bescot into the yard, and 25190 is at the depot exit waiting to move across to the yard. An unidentified Class 45 is waiting behind 25190. Another Class 25 can be seen behind the snowplough and Class 45.



09:10, July 15th, 1986: 20163 heading south away from Toton yard with a single BR brake van.

TOTON YARD - TUESDAY 15-7-86

08:30	Withdrawn locos at south end of depot: 45010, 25080, 46023, 45002, 45004, 45001, 45060, 45048, 45026, 45064, 45059, 45065, 45020. Fenced off compound: ADB968024 (Ex 45017) 25151 (7501)			
09:00	20133 + 20160	S		2 PCA cement wagons
09:10	20163	S		1 BR brake van
	20197 + 20151	N		Coal: 6 HEA & 2 MGR wagons
09:20	20066 + 20089	S		Light engine
	37303	N		Empty HAA wagons
	56070	S		Light engine

TOTON YARD - WEDNESDAY 16-7-86

05:40	20040 + 20085			Light engine from depot
05:44	56118 + 37159 + 37095	S	6M29	23:00 Lackenby BSC to Corby BSC steel coil to yard
05:45	31117	N	7D82	04:40 Bescot to Toton Speedlink arrive and reverse into yard
05:50	25190			Light engine from depot
05:55	45070	S	7M88	01:27 Dringhouses NY to Derby St Marys yard Speedlink arrive
06:00	37095 + 37159 + 56118			Light engines to depot : 37159 failed
06:20	20085 + 20040	S	7A84	06:26 Toton Old Bank to Willesden Brent Sidings Speedlink
06:30	58043	N		Loaded MGR arrival
06:37	56010	N		Loaded MGR arrival
06:40	25190	S		Departmental departure
06:50	45070	S	7M88	01:27 Dringhouses NY to Derby St Marys yard Speedlink depart
07:20	47372	S		HTV loaded coal depart
07:30	20160 + 20133	S		Speedlink depart
07:35	47232	N	6E94	01.25 Severn Tunnel Junction to Doncaster Belmont Yard arrive
07:37	58023	N		Loaded MGR arrive
07:40	47205	S	7M76	05:32 York to Loughborough ARC
07:50	58021	S		Loaded MGR depart
07:55	56118 + 37095	S	6M27	23:00 Lackenby to Corby steel coil depart
08:00	45137	N		VB hoppers arrive
08:20	56122	S		Loaded MGR arrive
	31xxx			Light engine from depot
	20025 + 20020			Light engines from depot
	20065 + 20042			Light engines from depot
	08623			Shunting with brake van in yard
08:42	47232	N	6E94	01.25 Severn Tunnel Junction to Doncaster Belmont Yard depart
08:44	20144 + 20107	N		3 HEA & 13 MGR depart
	58017			Light engine from depot
08:45	20163	S		Departing depot with brake van



06:37, July 16th, 1986: Romanian-built 56010 is arriving from the south with an empty MGR. 56010 was one of only a very few of its class still in BR Blue livery in 1993.

The following morning we returned for an early start at Toton, which is the main subject of this article. We started at 05:30 on the A52 road bridge at the north end of the yard, which gives great views of the depot and the sidings. Unfortunately, you have to cross the dual carriageway to view any trains arriving from the north, and, while this was possible then, it became very difficult in later years with so much more road traffic. There were locos regularly departing from the depot and I may have missed some of these on the accompanying table.

Our first arrival was the 'Tubeliner' steel coil train from Lackenby, which must have had a failed '37', as 56118 was leading the pair of Thornaby Class 37s, 37159 and 37095. As this was rolling into the yard under our bridge, 31117 was slowly heading north past the depot with a Speedlink from Bescot. This was one of only two Class 31s seen on our visit, and not long after it had passed, it reversed its stock into the yard. 25190 was at the depot exit and moved across to the yard. The trio of locos from the 'Tubeliner' had left their wagons in the yard and proceeded to the depot.

06:20, July 16th, 1986: 20085 and 20040 are heading south from the yard with a Speedlink freight made up of HEA coal wagons and two air-braked vans.





06:50, July 16th, 1986: 45070 spent less than an hour in the yard with the Dringhouses to Derby Speedlink and is now on its way south. Four wagons had been detached from the rear of the train whilst in the yard.



07:30, July 16th, 1986: 20160 and 20133 have a Speedlink trip working consisting of one bogie scrap wagon, two POA scrap wagons and seven HEA coal hoppers as they head away from the yard.



07:20, July 16th, 1986: 47372 has just left the yard with a loaded coal train made up of vacuum-braked HTV hoppers. During the 1990s, 47372 was in 'Dutch' departmental livery and later in Freightliner livery before withdrawal in 2000. It was eventually converted into 57314 in 2004.



07:55, July 16th, 1986: After a visit to the depot to dispose of the failed 37159, the other two locos, 56118 and 37095 British Steel Teeside, are continuing their journey south to Corby with the steel coil wagons from Lackenby on Teeside. 56118 later went into Loadhaul livery and was eventually taken into the Fertis fleet.

07:37, July 16th, 1986: 58021 is departing south from the yard with a loaded MGR consisting of around 35 HAA hoppers. At least three sets of HAA coal hoppers can be seen in the distance on the left side of the main line. At this time, all the Class 58s were in the Railfreight grey livery with red solebars.





07:40, July 16th, 1986: 47205 is heading south with a train of empty ballast wagons consisting of two Catfish, eight Dogfish, six Seacows and four more Dogfish wagons. All but one of the Dogfish wagons have extended sides. 47205 eventually became a Freightliner loco until withdrawal in 2001, in 2004, it was moved to the Northampton and Lamport Railway, where it was overhauled and is now operational.

A check on the other side of the road bridge found 45070 arriving with a southbound Speedlink working into the yard. We decided to try and catch this working again, so we moved to the footbridge at the south end of the yard. Our first working here was 20085 and 20040, heading south with a Speedlink working. This was followed by two loaded MGR workings from the south; these were hauled by 58043 and 56010 respectively. A welcome sight was 25190 heading south with a variety of departmental wagons complete with a BR brake van, the only Class 25 working that we saw, although there was another '25' in the depot. Next came 45070 with the Speedlink for Derby, which was a bit lighter now, having detached the four rear wagons in the yard.

With virtually all the coal trains consisting of air-braked HAA and HEA wagons, it was good to see 47372 going south with a long rake of vacuum-braked loaded HTV wagons. The next southbound departure was 20160 and 20133 with three scrap wagons and seven HEA coal hoppers. In the opposite direction came 47232 with a Speedlink from Severn Tunnel Junction. This had a good variety of wagons, including two Yeoman bogie stone hoppers probably going for repair, as well as containers,

vans, opens and coal hoppers. A couple of minutes later, 58023 arrived with another loaded MGR. We then had a trio of departures heading south, 47205 with empty ballast wagons for Loughborough, 58021 with a loaded MGR and the impressive sight of 56118 and 37095 working hard with the Lackenby to Corby steel coil wagons. Our final train at this location was 45137 from the south with empty HKV hopper wagons, which prompted us to move back to the north end of the yard to catch it again.

Once back on the A52 road bridge, we found 45137 already in the yard and there were two 08s, 08858 and 08623, both moving brake vans around. 56122 arrived from the north with a loaded MGR and passed by on the main. The depot exit was still busy with a Class 31 leaving followed by two pairs of Class 20s. The Speedlink from Severn Tunnel with 47232, which had been held, then proceeded into the yard. While it was manoeuvring, 20144 and 20107 headed past with empty HEA and HAA coal hoppers. At the depot exit was 20163 with a BR brake van, which it propelled out onto the main before heading south, the same move that we saw the previous morning. This was the end of our very busy early morning at Toton, as we moved on to other local locations.



08:20, July 16th, 1986: 47232 is reversing the Severn Tunnel Speedlink into the yard. There is a great mix of wagons in the consist, including two Yeoman bogie stone wagons. 20144 and 20107 are creeping along the main line with empty coal wagons.



08:44, July 16th, 1986: 20144 and 20107 are passing the diesel depot with three HEA and 13 HAA empty coal wagons. 20163 is at the depot exit, propelling a BR brake van, which it will take south once it gets out onto the main line.

HIGHLAND SULZER TWILIGHT 1984

By Richard MacLennan

37262 is seen on the Kyle line near Achnashellach in June 1984. IAN HARRISON



This article was originally intended to be a celebration in memory of the life and times of the Inverness fleet of eight Class 37 locomotives. By this date in time, most of the fleet of eight had been through main works and with over two years' experience of maintaining the class at the Highland outpost, the expectation was set around writing a positive article on a high-performing fleet with minimal in-service failures. The reality was somewhat different, with failures on an almost daily basis, low availability (far below the rest of the United Kingdom). I really cannot explain why the picture was so bad and it is not how I remember the fleet after being closely associated with them for the whole duration of their time in Inverness.

The summer months of 1984 had taken its toll on the fleet, with 37035, 37114 and 37183 all requiring main works' attention at some point or other. 37262 had ongoing issues, both electrical and mechanical, and both 37017 and 37025 had suffered in-service failures on more than one occasion. Additionally, 37017 had managed to travel that bit further north than any of the

other fleet members when it managed to crash through the buffer stops at Thurso on June 16th. Thankfully, no injuries were sustained by passengers or crew. 37292 and 37122 had both worked far north services during June. On the plus side, 37260 had recently been named *Radio Highland* (Scotrail delaying the 10:45 to Kyle for 30 minutes at Dingwall to do so) to publicise the fitting of radio signalling to the Kyle line, and 37035 had also been released off exam in the attractive large logo paint scheme. In fact, its first passenger train in this livery was the 06:35 to Wick on Tuesday, August 28th.

As the Class 37 failure rate increased, the number of Class 26s in operation on the route became more frequent. The only problem is that, with the Class 26 refurbishment underway, the number of steam-heat locomotives available fell and this led to the more frequent use of Class 27s. From memory, this type of traction working passenger trains north of Inverness was almost unheard of before 1984, although I seem to remember 27108 working to Kyle in the summer of 1981.



The summer of 1984

Let's go back to late summer 1984; we have a story to tell.

Sunday, September 2nd

The day did not get off on a positive footing with 37183 failing with flat batteries for the 08:03 newspaper train to Lairg. This resulted in 26038 being provided for the job instead, at the time, the train returned empty stock as 5N03 at 11:00. The through Sunday trains to Wick/Thurso fared better with 37017 and 37035 working northbound and southbound respectively. No other 37 action took place that day other than 37130 working a special to Kyle of Lochalsh.

Monday, September 3rd

37017 was in trouble with electrical problems on the early morning train from Wick, and 37035 failed for the 06:35 to Wick with low power. It was therefore left to 37011 to step into the breach by covering the high mileage 06:35/12:05/17:35 diagram. 37035 went out on test on the 06:58 to Invergordon, a trip which saw it require further maintenance on return to shed. Thankfully, 37025 became available off repairs to work the 10:45 to Kyle and 37183 the 11:35 to Wick and return, thus limiting the amount of Class 26 work to 26036 on the Kyle line and 26035 on the Thurso branch.

Tuesday, September 4th

37017 suffered further electrical problems, with the driver reporting the batteries discharging (in simple terms, a failure of the battery charging equipment to keep battery levels topped up and risked the engine shutting down and being unable to restart) on the return from Wick at 18:05; needless to say, the locomotive was taken out of traffic upon arrival at Inverness. 37035 undertook a further test run in the afternoon and was then made available to the operators for further use. However, due to its ongoing general unreliability, 37011 was given preference heading back north with the 17:35 service. 37025 successfully worked to Wick and back on the early morning train and 37183 worked to Kyle with the 10:45 and 17:05 return. I believe at the time this train was priority one for the provision of a Radio Electronic Token Block (RETB)-fitted Class 37 on Mondays to Fridays to enable ongoing commissioning of the system on the Kyle road and also for improvements to be

INVERNESS BASED CLASS 37s IN SUMMER 1984

Loco No.	Last overhaul date	Details
37017	Unknown	n/a
37025	21/12/83 Doncaster	General and dual braking
37035	31/5/83 Doncaster	General and dual braking
37114	23/11/82 Doncaster	General and dual braking
37183	06/10/79 Crewe	Intermediate
37260	25/5/82 Crewe	General
37261	12/8/82 Crewe	General
37262	24/2/82 Crewe	General

made to the software ahead of fitting to the Far North Line.

Work continued throughout the day to ensure *Radio Highland* would be available for service later in the week. 26035 continued its tour of duty as branch pilot. Another day with all diagrams covered, but only by the skin of the operating department's teeth...

Wednesday, September 5th

With 37260 available for traffic and 37017 now on repairs, the fleet situation remained static at 50%. This did not prevent, however, an extremely rare appearance of a 37 on the 06:55 to Kyle with 37025 doing the honours and following 37260 along the shores of the Beaully Firth with 2K03 the 06:35 to Wick. With 37035 still not being trusted with any long-distance jobs, the plan was for it to work the 10:45 to Kyle and 37011 to be turned round for the 11:35 to Wick. Sadly, after arriving in Inverness with 2N14, it was discovered that 37011 needed brake blocking and was therefore stopped. Thus, driver Bobby Hoban was given 26034 and 26038 as power for the 11:35 to Wick and 18:05 back. At Georgemas Junction they met up with branch engine 26035. With three Type 2s on display, it was very much a return to the old order. 37025 was stopped after returning from Kyle with a sticking brake relay, and this required 37183 to be brought off an 'A Exam' slightly early to work the 17:35 to Wick, a plan that would backfire the next morning. 26041 took out the 17:55 to Kyle as a result of no serviceable Class 37s available. The day ended with four different Class 26s having worked passenger trains.



37035 is at Inverness Traction Maintenance Depot together with 26035 on October 6th, 1983. JOSEPH PORTER – IVAN STEWART COLLECTION



One of the locomotives referred to in the article was 37025, seen here on the Kyle line in June 1984. NORMAN SMART

Thursday, September 6th

37260 *Radio Highland* worked the 06:35 to Wick and 12:05 return and 37035 made it a second day running for Type 3 power on the early morning Kyle service. 37183's engine kept shutting down as a result of a water leak on 2N14 and was therefore stopped upon arrival at Inverness at 10:30. With 37025 already allocated to the 10:45 to Kyle and 26038 and 26034 in use on Aberdeen turns, this left nothing better for the 11:35 to Wick than 26041. As 26035 now needed fuel, the two Type 2s were paired up at Georgemas Junction to work 2N37 back to the Highland capital. To balance the situation in the north, 37017 and 37011 ran in multiple on the 17:35 to Wick to enable 37011 to take over as the new branch engine. Another challenging and complex day over with, and all diagrams covered thanks to the skill and ingenuity of the control staff in 'Highland House' adjacent to the station.

Friday, September 7th

37260 once again worked the 06:35 to Wick, and 37035 followed close behind on the 06:55 to Kyle, to be followed by 37020 on the 06:58 tanks to Lairg and later 37196 on a local ballast job to Dingwall. What would you pay to see that today? 37017 successfully worked the first southbound train of the day from Wick before being stopped for brake blocking. As a result of some hurried decision-making the day before, 37011 was reported as low on fuel and therefore a further change of branch loco was needed, with 37183 working the 11:35 from Inverness before taking up branch duties. 37011 returned home on the 18:05 ex-Wick and the driver reported having his red low fuel warning light shining brightly by Dingwall. This would have meant less than 50 gallons remaining in the tank; the locomotive must have travelled the last few miles on fumes! 37025 worked the 10:45 to Kyle and 17:05 return, before once again being stopped with brake problems. With a couple of trouble-free days now under its belt, 37035 was sent north on the 17:35 from Inverness. The 17:55 to Kyle produced the recently re-blocked 37017.

Saturday, September 8th

37260 worked the now-familiar 06:35 and 12:05 Far North diagram, with this time 37025 following behind on the 06:55 to Kyle. 37017 worked in from Kyle, and 37035 from Wick. Some quick work saw 37017 being turned round for the 11:35 to Wick, with 37011 taking out the 10:45 to Kyle. One of the last specials of the season went to Kyle as well, with 37081 and 37184 working an 11:55 departure from Inverness, which I assume to have been an SRPS special. I watched the pair passing near my home of Muir of Ord while walking my girlfriend Morag to the local pub on the return trip. After spending the day on shed, 37035 headed north with the 17:35 to Wick. 37025 headed to Kyle at 17:55 to put it in position for a weekend by the coast. The reason for this would become much clearer on Monday morning. It was a much-improved situation with some stability returning to the operation.

Sunday, September 9th

The loco position at 09:30 was as follows:

- 37017 - Allocated to 2K09
- 37025 - Kyle spare
- 37035 - Allocated to 2N26
- 37114 - En route Inverness
- 37183 - Thurso Spare
- 37260 - En route Lairg 1S03
- 37261 - Polmadie
- 37262 - Inverness TMD painting

Monday, September 10th

37025 worked in from Kyle at 07:00 to immediately be taken out of traffic for a 'D Exam', to be followed by 37011 on the first inbound Wick train. 37035 worked the 06:35 to Wick and return before being stopped for brake blocking and special cleaning. 37260 made a double trip to Kyle of Lochalsh with the 06:55 and 11:10 return and was then strategically placed at Kyle via the 17:55 departure from

DIAGRAMMED WORK FOR INVERNESS BASED CLASS 37s IN SUMMER 1984					
Diagram 1	Diagram 2	Diagram 3	Diagram 4	Diagram 5	Diagram 6
2K03 (06:35 Inverness-Wick)	2N14 (06:05 Wick-Inverness)	2K02 (06:55 Inverness-Kyle)	2N12 (07:00 Kyle-Inverness)	Thurso branch locomotive	Spare
2N26 (12:05 Wick-Inverness)	2K09 (11:35 Inverness-Wick)	2N20 (11:10 Kyle-Inverness)	2K08 (10:45 Inverness-Kyle)		
2K14 (17:55 Inverness.-Kyle)	2N37 (18:05 Wick-Inverness)	2K12 (17:35 Inverness-Wick)	2N35 (17:05 Kyle-Inverness)		
Diagrams operated thus 1-4-3-2-6 with a Class 37 being swapped onto diagram 5 as and when required, although my experience suggests that diagram 2 was the preferred but by no means only way of exchanging branch locomotives					

Inverness. This was all in readiness for the next morning. 37017 made it a full house on the Kyle line by working the 10:45 and 17:10 services before being stopped for an ‘A Exam’. 37114 was put straight to work on the 11:35 to Wick and 18:05 return, 37011 covered the 17:35 to Wick, and with 37183 still on the branch, all trains were covered with the diagrammed motive power, albeit not from the correct depot.

Tuesday, September 11th

Running as a 2Z01, 37035 was used to work an officers’ special to Achnasheen conveying senior members of the British Railways board to demonstrate the use of the then-novel RETB equipment. Prior to joining 2Z01, they had observed token exchanges being made from the cab of 37260 and the ‘Control’ North signalling centre at Dingwall. To keep the circus rolling, 37260 was sent straight back to Kyle on the 10:45 train to this time show ‘top brass’ how a cab-to-cab token exchange was undertaken. All worthy stuff, other than as a direct consequence of all this show boating, the only loco available for the 06:55 to Kyle was 27050. I am sure driver Jimmy Smith would have been pleased to be well away from the limelight that day, with a Tuesday evening darts match probably on his mind, although more often than not, the train crew of such specials was invited aboard for lunch after the worthies had finished theirs. 37114 was unavailable for the 11:35 to Wick, as a result of a blowing exhaust joint, causing the fire bells to keep ringing every time the locomotive was warmed up. Thus, the old order in the shape of 26035 and 26041 deputised with another no fuss, no nonsense performance. 37011 worked the 17:35 to Wick and 37017 the 17:55 to Kyle.

Wednesday, September 12th

With only three of the eight now available for service, 26034 and 26038 were the chosen motive power for the 06:35 to Wick and 12:05 return. I don’t suppose the top team from London from yesterday hung around to see the perilous state of their Class 37 fleet. If they had, I am sure that depot manager Bob Taylor could have shown them quite a collection in his shed. 37035 was kept on the Kyle road and headed west at 06:55 from Inverness, returning home at 14:00. 37114 was also kept under observation by maintenance staff and did the middle trip to Kyle, arriving back in Inverness at 19:55. Upon arrival at Inverness from Kyle, 37017 was allocated to the 11:35 to Wick and 18:05 return. 37011 worked the first up train from Wick and returned north at 17:35 from Inverness. With 37025 on a ‘D’ exam and 37260 now out of service with a wheel slip fault (WSP), no Type 3 was available for the 17:55 to Kyle, resulting in 26035 working west into the evening sunset.

Thursday, September 13th

Grim is the only way to describe today’s events. The early turn Thurso driver reported 37183 as being low on power and, therefore, another change of branch loco would be required. With 37260 now also placed on an ‘E’ exam, things were unravelling rapidly. 37017 worked the 06:35 to Wick and 12:05 back. On the return, the locomotive was reported as suffering from intermittent power loss and was therefore taken out of traffic upon arrival at Inverness. 37011 hauled 37183 back to Inverness on the 06:05 from Wick and thus the fleet was down to only two serviceable locomotives. Sulzer power was called into action as a pair of Class 26s worked to Wick, with 26038 and 26034 once again doing the honours, this time with the 11:35 from Inverness. 26041 kept active with two trips along the scenic Kyle line. The ever-reliable 37011 kept the English Electric flag flying with 2N14 and 2K12. Even the Inverness Class 08 fleet was in big trouble, with 20228 providing cover as passenger shunt locomotive.

Friday, September 14th

The position at 06:00 was as follows:

- 37017 - Inverness TMD B exam
- 337025 - Inverness TMD D exam
- 337035 - 2K01 Thurso
- 337114 - Inverness allocated 2K02/2N26
- 337183 - Inverness allocated 2K09/2N37
- 337260 - Inverness TMD E exam
- 337261 - Polmadie repairs
- 337262 - Inverness TMD painting

Unsurprisingly, Class 26s were once again active, with 26026, 26035 and 26041 all working Kyle turns. Sadly, 26026 managed to derail at Kyle, running round its stock after arrival at 13:40, a defective set of hand points being the cause. The return service at 17:10 was cancelled, the Highland Omnibus Company came to the rescue with a couple of road coaches. 37011 worked its customary 2N14 and 2K12. The only bright spot was 37017 released from its exam to rejoin the active pool.

Saturday, September 15th

Eastfield’s 37081 was drafted in from Glasgow via a Highland line freight to work the 06:35 to Wick and return. 26034 and 26038 worked the 06:55 to Kyle, 26034 being used to recover 26026 and its stricken stock after the re-railing train hauled by 37017 had successfully recovered it. 26038 returned alone with the 11:08 passenger and mail train. 37114 worked the 10:45 to Kyle and 17:05 return and 37183 once again went to Wick with the midday train. 37011 kept to recent form with 2N14 and 2K12. Sadly, 37081 failed later in the day with low power and no speedometer. Somehow, through all the mayhem, 37171 made it to Kyle with a 1Z95 charter. From memory, this was the ‘Mid Kylesman’ tour from Wolverhampton. On the return from Kyle to Inverness, the tour combined with 2N14 and resulted in 37171 and 37114 double-heading the 13-coach train. This was to save a path and ensure the train had a reasonably timed trip over the Highland line for the returning tour, which it did behind 26008 and 26037.

Sunday, September 16th

The only locomotive to turn a wheel in revenue-earning service all day was the former Landore-based 37183, which made the 134-mile round trip to Lairg with the 08:05 newspaper train. 37035 whiled away the day at Thurso and 37011 did likewise at Wick. 37114 joined the casualty list by being taken out of service at Inverness with an AWS fault.

Monday, September 17th

37017 worked the heavy 06:35 departure from Inverness, shown in the working timetable as D315, the train usually being comprised of five passenger coaches and four mail vans from memory. The vans, arriving overnight from Glasgow. Strangely, the vans did not all return on the 18:05 from Wick; two did, with the other two the next morning on 2N14. 26035 went west on the 06:55 to Kyle. 37011 worked the first up train from Wick and 26038 from Kyle, all without incident. Such was the shortage of power that 37011 was fuelled and quickly sent back out on the 11:35 to Wick, as the only other serviceable machine, 37183, had already left for Kyle with the 10:45 departure. 37114 was now on a ‘B’ exam and therefore out of the operational pool. 37035 had unspecified faults at Thurso and was dually dispatched south on 2N37 with its place on the branch now taken by 37011. The vacuum-brake-only 37017 was stopped on arrival from Wick with power problems and 37183 stopped after arriving from Kyle with an oil leak. As a result, 37081, itself recently off repair, was sent north on the 17:35 from Inverness. 26035 made its second visit of the day to Kyle with the 17:55 from Inverness.

Tuesday, September 18th

With the power situation still desperate, 37017 was hastily repaired for the 06:35 to Wick and this time managed to cover the whole diagram, including the 17:35 back to Wick, with no problems. 37011 struggled south on 2N14 and was stopped for electrical repairs upon arrival, the repair booking showing high amps present whenever the power controller was opened. 37183 once again went to Kyle with the 10:45 service, the only Type 3 to do so, with all other services being worked by 26035 or 26038. 37114 worked to Wick and back with the 11:35 without incident to end another frenetic day of activity. As an aside, 37087 worked two return trips on the Aberdeen line, still relatively rare for the class.

Wednesday, September 19th

Following repairs, 37011 was given a successful test run on the 06:58 Invergordon goods before replacing 37017 on the 17:35 to Wick, the latter being stopped for an overdue 'B' exam. 37035 regained its place as branch loco by working the 11:35 from Inverness and being exchanged with 37081 via 2N37. 37114 went all the way on the 06:35 from Inverness, and 37183 once again headed west with 2K08 and 2N35. To complete the picture, 26041 slotted into the Kyle turns not covered by 37183.

Thursday, September 20th

A truly appalling day with Inverness having no serviceable home-based Class 37s for the start of service. The grim availability sheet looked like

37017 - 'B' exam
37025 - 'D' exam
37114 - Out of service - exhaust joints blowing
37183 - Out of service - cylinder heads leaking
37260 - 'E' exam
37261 - Works
37262 - Out of service - painting

37017 was eventually employed on a train, this being the 11:35 to Wick and return, the only other locomotive in use being 37035, as the Thurso branch locomotive. To balance the lack of Inverness

Class 37s, both 37011 and 37081 were given further use as cover, although 37081 was still suffering with intermittent speedometer failure. Due to a complete lack of any other power, 27045 was put to work on the 06:55 to Kyle and back. This was also the day that it is believed that the last ever Class 40 operated north of Inverness in revenue-earning service, 40152 and driver Stan Paton setting forth on the 06:58 to Invergordon, a turn that I had enjoyed much Class 40 action on in the previous four years. The furthest north I ever managed to travel on the footplate with this type of class was with 40181, on a train of fertiliser to Tain. Other operations on the day saw 26041 work in with 2N12 from Kyle, 37011 worked 2N14, and Eastfield's 37081 went north on 2K03, 2N26 and finally 2K12, to be followed by 26038 on the 17:55 to Kyle.

Friday, September 21st

The motive power situation as of 0800 still showed no signs of improvement:

37017 - Inverness TMD allocated to 2K08/2N35
37025 - Inverness TMD 'D' exam
37035 - Georgemas Junction
37114 - Inverness TMD cylinder head repairs
37183 - Inverness TMD exhaust joint repairs
37260 - Inverness TMD 'E' exam
37261 - Works
37262 - Inverness TMD 'A' exam

37081 worked the 06:05 from Wick but was reported as having further problems with its speedometer, and as a result had a 'for home depot' restriction placed upon it after arrival at Inverness. The machine left the area later that day via the 18:35 Friday's only goods to Millerhill. 37011 covered the gruelling 2K03/2N26/2K12 circuit and type 2s 26038 and 26034 worked the 11:35 to Wick and return. Former Aviemore driver Freddie Mason and I had an enjoyable trip to Kyle of Lochalsh and back with 26041 on the 06:55. It was a sociable turn booking on at 05:55, an hour to catch the air in Kyle and home in time for late lunch. Stan Paton had another rare machine on the 06:58 goods, this time in the form of Gateshead's 37003.

On September 8th, 1985, 37021 is seen being uncoupled from 37260 at Ardgay with the 14:50 Wick to Inverness. JOSEPH PORTER – IVAN STEWART COLLECTION



Saturday, September 22nd

Once again, the venerable Class 26s stepped up to the mark when asked on the Far North line with myself and Driver Johnston; 'jammy' crewing 26038 and 26034 on the 06:35 to Wick as far as Lairg. We returned with 37011 on the 06:05 from Wick. I recall driving the pair from Tain to Lairg and keeping the window open as they rasped up the bank from Invershin to Lairg. Upon arrival at Inverness, 37011 was fully-fuelled before heading back north with the 11:35 to Wick and replacing 37035 as the branch engine. While all this was going on, 26035 and 27021, the latter on test, worked the 06:55 to Kyle and return. 37017 once again worked to Kyle on the 10:45 service. 37114 made a return to service with the 17:35 to Wick, and 26034 was split from 26038, the former heading west with the 17:55 train and the latter remaining spare on the depot. 37262 undertook a test run fresh from its long lay off and large logo painting, in multiple with 37028 on an overnight engineering train to Kingussie. During the course of the day, 37063 and 37265 worked to Kyle of Lochalsh with a 1Z30 charter train. The train was the fifth 'Skirl of the Pipes tour' from Plymouth. Passengers were then bussed and ferried to or from Mallaig to connect with the Class 27-hauled portion of the tour. Those on the anti-clockwise leg had arrived in Inverness behind 26032 and 37038 and those on the clockwise tour left behind a brace of Class 27s on the Saturday evening.

Sunday, September 23rd

With 50% of the fleet now available, a respite seemed at hand. 37017 worked the only passenger train of the day with a trip to Lairg and back with the 08:05 from Inverness. 37025 and 37262 were spare at Inverness and 37011 and 37114 were at Thurso and Wick, respectively. Two further locomotives remained at Inverness, 37035 needing a new set of batteries and 37183 a new exhaust manifold.

Monday, September 24th

37017 and 37262 went north on 2K03 to enable 37017 to take over the Thurso branch, after 37011 had been commandeered to pilot an ailing 37114 back to Inverness on 2N14. 37262, under the charge of driver Jock Russell, must have looked immaculate next to its grubby and care-worn sister. 37114 was immediately taken out of service upon arrival at Inverness with power problems. 37262 worked its first solo train in large logo livery, heading back south

with the 12:05 from Wick. Both 26041 and 26035 worked the 11:35 to Wick and 18:05 return. Sadly, 37025, which had been spare, worked to Invergordon on the 06:58 goods. On the return from Invergordon, 37025 was stopped for further rectification, thus necessitating the use of 37011 on the 17:35 to Wick. 37035 worked to Kyle and back on the 10:45 service, the remaining Kyle diagrams being covered by 26034 and 26035.

Tuesday, September 25th

37035 went north on the first train of the day, crossing 37011 returning south with 2N14. 37262 worked the 06:55 to Kyle after many days of Type 2 haulage. 37183 made it a Class 37 day on the Kyle road by heading from the Highland capital with the 10:45 to Kyle. 26038 continued its spell of good work by hauling the remaining Kyle trains. 37114 had been allocated but subsequently failed on depot for the 11:35 to Wick, the locomotive spending the rest of the day on repairs. This resulted in 26041 and 26035 clocking up further miles on the 11:35 and 18:05 Wick services. 37035 had no working boiler for the 17:35 to Wick, and 37262 therefore had to deputise. Earlier that day, Class 47, 47118, made a very rare appearance for the type at Lairg. Following an 'E' exam, the series-parallel 'Brush' undertook a test run on the 06:58 tanks. Sadly, the loco had a power earth fault and returned with a pair of traction motors isolated and was therefore placed back on repairs upon arrival at Inverness.

Wednesday, September 26th

The curse of the unreliable Clayton steam heating boiler today affected 37017, resulting in it being dispatched south on 2N14 with a 'no heat' restriction on the locomotive. I am not sure if the train had any heat at all as sometimes it was possible to keep some heat to the train by constant tinkering in the boiler room (I remember once doing such a thing all the way from Muir of Ord to Brora with 37262, a task that resulted in the guard buying me a Mars bar the next day in Aberdeen as a thank you). 37035 worked 2K03 and 2N26 as booked, before being stopped for further repairs upon arrival at Inverness. 37114 made a morning trip to Kyle on the 06:55 and then to Wick on 17:35 service. Sister loco 37183 made the middle Kyle run at 10:45. 37011 once again worked the 11:35 to Wick and returning to its adopted home at 18:05.

37183 awaits departure from Inverness on April 10th, 1985, with the 17:30 to Wick and Thurso.
STEVE GRIFFIN



Thursday, September 27th

The gradual improvement continues with no in-service failures and all diagrams covered. 37114 worked the first up Wick service, returning north at 17:35. 37183 went north at 06:35, returning at 12:05. 37017 went to Kyle at 06:55, followed by 37035 at 10:45; both locomotives returned with their respective east-bound trains. 37011 worked the 11:35 to Wick, returning at 18:05. 37262 worked Thurso branch shuttles all day and 26038 worked in from Kyle at 07:00, returning later in the evening at 17:55. 37025 remained on depot still awaiting its new boiler, 37260's 'E' exam continued and 37261 remained on works. Driver Duncan Finlayson and I worked 37011 to Brora, returning home with 37183 on 2N26. The diagram saw us book on duty at the rather sociable time of 07:55, we prepared a Class 47 for the 10:32 to Aberdeen, then relieved the 06:05 ex-Wick crew in platform 6 at 10:10 before taking the locomotive onto the fuel road. After this, we collected our own Class 37, usually from the wagon shops, and left the shed at the Welshes Bridge end around 11:00. If the Wick engine was working straight back, we would fuel and leave the depot via the Rose Street end. A dash to Brora and back resulted in an arrival in Inverness at 16:10. This was one of only two dayshift turns at the depot where you could eat both breakfast and an evening meal at home. We would then have been relieved by the crew who had booked on at 15:55 and would later work to Brora with the 17:35 Wick train. The ever-reliable 26035 and 26041 today provided cover for unavailable Class 47s on the Aberdeen road.

Friday, September 28th

A solid end to the week and the continued upsurge in availability and reliability continues. 37011 took over from 37262 as branch locomotive, the latter returning home by way of the 18:05 from Wick. 37114 needed the assistance of 26043 on the 17:35 to Wick as the Clayton boiler had once again failed and a 'no heat' restriction enforced. The scenic Kyle line again echoed to the sound of English Electric power as 37017 and 37035 put in a repeat performance of yesterday. On the return from Kyle, 37035 must have changed locomotives at Garve with the engine off the 17:55 as it managed to arrive back in Kyle at 21:00 on 2H85. The handwritten notes from the source material for this article shows 26038 as being allocated to the 17:55 to Kyle of Lochalsh, but the next morning 37035 arrived in Inverness on 2H80. A loco failure would be the most likely cause of such an event. The status of 37025, 37260 and 261 all remain unchanged.

Saturday, September 29th

Today saw the welcome return of 37261 to frontline action. The locomotive arrived back home in Inverness as pilot locomotive to 1H05, the internal overnight from Glasgow and Edinburgh, before being placed on an 'A' exam. 37183 worked to Wick with no problems on the 06:35 service. However, on the return, she was low in power once again and 37261 was quickly scrambled north to Tain to pilot 37183 and her stricken train home. Patience had finally run out with this particular machine as she was dispatched south for work's attention the next day in multiple with 37125 on the 18:25 Non-Passenger Carrying Coaching Stock (NPCCS) service. 37114 managed the 17:35 to Wick as a solo trip and 37262 successfully worked 2K08 and 2N35. 37017 and 37035 were kept busy on Kyle road diagrams in the same manner as the previous few days. 37017 was later sent to Kingussie on a 9Z80 overnight engineers' train. With only 37025 and 37260 out of service, the availability figures now crept to 75%. All those involved in operating these fickle locomotives hoped the worst was now behind them. 26038 kept the Type 2 flag flying by working 2K14.

Sunday, September 30th

The status of the fleet as of 07:00 was as follows. The story ending pretty much as it had begun.

- 37017 - InvernessTMD spare
- 37025 - InvernessTMD boiler repairs
- 37035 - InvernessTMD RETB repairs
- 37114 - Wick spare
- 37183 - InvernessTMD 'LOP'
- 37260 - InvernessTMD 'E' Exam
- 37261 - InvernessTMD allocated to 1S03
- 37262 - InvernessTMD spare

TOTAL FIGURES			
Loco No.	Number of days in service	Mileage covered in service	Number of in service casualties
37017	25	6006	3
37025	21	1982	nil
37035	25	4283	1
37114	13	4055	1
37183	20	3665	2
37260	7	1169	nil
37261	1	44	n/a
37262	8	1237	nil
Fleet mileage 22,441 giving a miles-per-casualty figure of 3205			

Summary

So what does all this tell us about the capability of these fine locomotives in operating in such a challenging terrain? I think first and foremost, it is probably untypical of the excellent work the fleet did under extremely arduous circumstances over a number of years. From personal experience of over 30,000 miles on the footplate, I can never recall requiring assistance or the failure of a Class 37 to at least get you home.

The table above endeavours to show the reality of the situation over the period under review.

The nature of the work undertaken by the locomotives must also be considered as a possible factor for their apparent unreliability. The Far North line was a high-speed sprint between station stops on a very tight timetable with little margin for recovery from late running. Full power and coasting were the preferred driving technique, so the engine very quickly heated up to design temperatures. The Kyle line, however, was a very different proposition, with the locomotives being grossly overpowered for the work they did. Most of the 63.75 miles from Dingwall to Kyle of Lochalsh were undertaken at very low or no power settings and with the cooling fans constantly running, engine over-cooling was a real risk.

The Class 26 and 27, on the other hand, were perfect for the Kyle line and was almost certainly the power of choice for most, if not all, of the footplate crews at Inverness for this type of work. Even when running on only three traction motors, they would keep time and their Bo- Bo wheel arrangement made the tight curves and roller coaster nature of the route that little less obvious. However, by 1984, it is my opinion that most, if not all, of the fleet was past its best from a performance perspective and the call to works for heavy refurbishment was only months away for many of them. It was not uncommon to not even manage five hundred amps on the clock when accelerating hard, such was their decline. Pairs of Type 2s more often than not worked Far North trains when deputising for a 37. With 2360hp at our disposal, time keeping was never an issue, and time lost due to locomotive a rarity. In later life, whilst driving at Ayr, I found the Class 26s were never the same machines again following refurbishment, and the gutsy performances of their Highland days became a thing of the past, albeit on a very different kind of work.

The Class 37 fleet took many months to return to any kind of normality and it was really well into 1985 before things settled down. The autumn played havoc with wheelset damage, primarily caused by excessive slipping on the steeply graded parts of the line. It was not uncommon, as an example, to have to walk ahead of the locomotive, applying sand to the rails to have any hope of a successful departure from Golspie with 2K12. In the winter months, the frost and ice penetrated deep into the locomotives with boiler and brake failures, causing day after day of disruption.

So, in conclusion, it was probably not the most glowing review of the Class 37s' work during their four-year tour of duty before being replaced by the refurbished electric train heating (ETH) machines, nor was it completely untypical of the kind of problems the operating authorities had at this lonely Highland outpost. The Class 26 and 27 provided able cover when needed, but both classes of locomotive were beginning to become long in the tooth, with many years of hard work starting to catch up with them.

Level crossings have always been a familiar part of the railway scene, although in recent years many have been removed where they are no longer safe or suitable for today's high speed world.

As the East Coast Main Line heads north away from Peterborough, it encounters several interesting crossings in relatively quick succession. Over the years, some have disappeared, and in 2015, Network Rail announced plans to remove the remainder, although this has yet to happen.

But there was a different transition taking place when I visited the area during the late-1970s. HSTs were gradually replacing the 'Deltics' on the East Coast expresses and I wanted to capture images of both during that period. As far as Helpston, the old Great Northern Railway (GNR) line runs parallel with the former Midland Railway (MR) line to Stamford and beyond, so the crossings have always occupied a wide area.

On the outskirts of the city is Walton, where I worked briefly in the mid-1960s. At that time, the GNR line here consisted of six tracks, although to reduce the width of the crossing, two of them were briefly interwoven at this point, thus effectively merging them into one, but with no physical connection between them. The adjacent MR line added two more tracks, so motorists using the road to Marholm had a wide stretch of railway to cross. Undaunted by this, a local farmer apparently used to walk his cows over the crossing each day for milking, as the field in which they grazed was on the opposite side of the railway to the dairy!

When I returned to Walton a decade or so later, everything had changed. The road crossing had closed, and the GNR line reduced to just three tracks. A concrete footbridge had been provided for pedestrians, and the fields where the cattle grazed have since become part of the city's new developments.



47085 passes Hurn Road crossing, Werrington, with the 09:05 Kings Cross to Harrogate on August 16th, 1979.

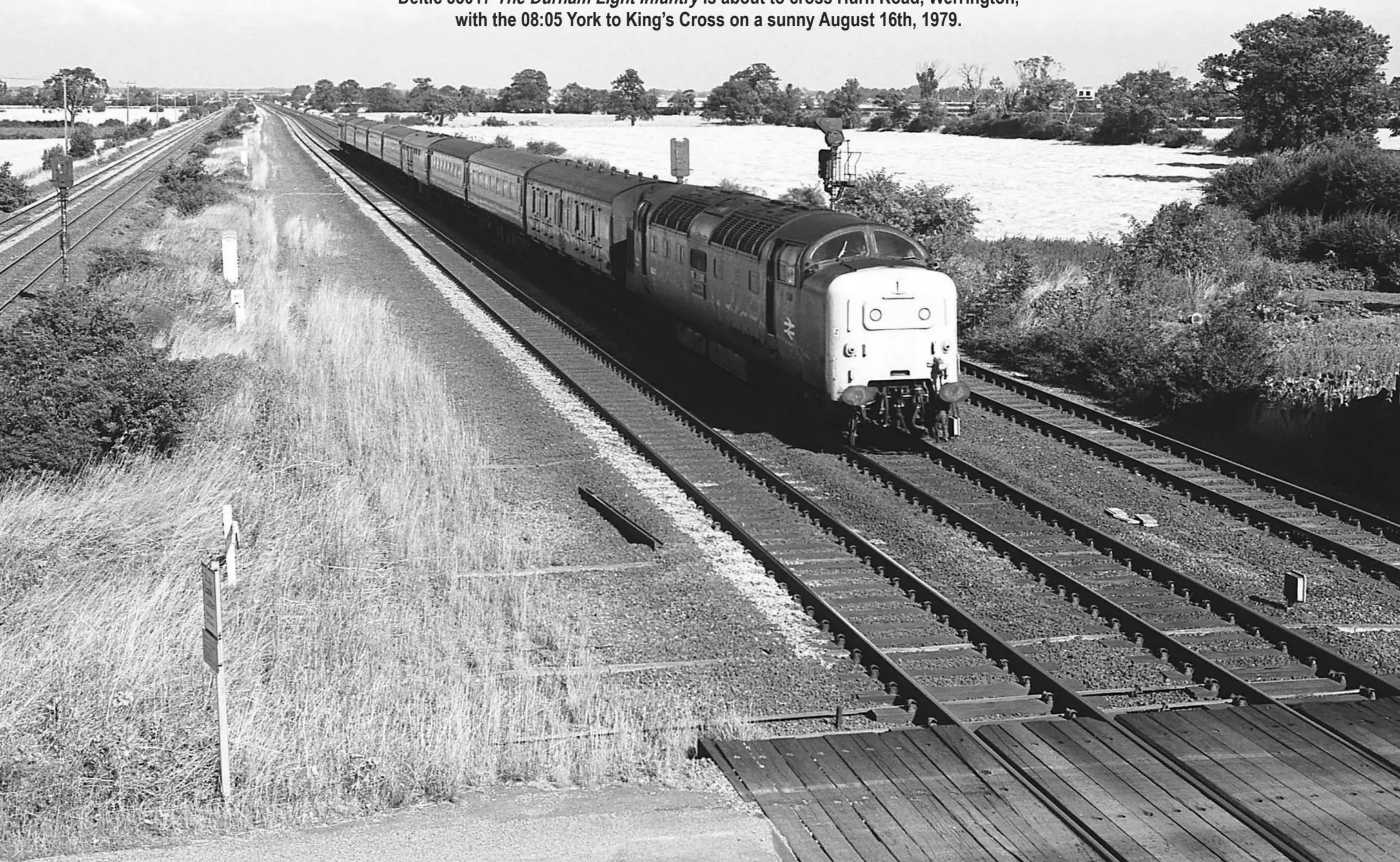


31161 is on the former Midland Railway line at Hurn Road crossing, Werrington, with a train from Leicester on August 16th, 1979.

ON THE LEVEL

By Chris Cole

Deltic 55017 The Durham Light Infantry is about to cross Hurn Road, Werrington, with the 08:05 York to King's Cross on a sunny August 16th, 1979.



47520 keeps the traffic waiting at Lolham Bridges, north of Peterborough, as it speeds past with an up express on August 23rd, 1978.



The next level crossing at Werrington suffered a similar fate. Hurn Road had been blocked off, but in the 1970s, both the gates and the old footbridge still existed, and this was one of my favourite locations for clear views of the railway, long before the overhead wires arrived. Further on, the very minor road crossing at Woodcroft was never busy, particularly as road traffic often had a lengthy wait. The locked gates were operated by a crossing keeper, and this is said to be the last remaining crossing of its type in the country.

After the more normal B1443 crossing at Helpston, the next one over the Maxey Road is more unusual, as it is here

that the ECML begins to curve away from the Midland line. Consequently, this crossing claimed the distinction of being the widest in the UK, spanning a total of six tracks, plus a gap in the middle, all contained within a single set of barriers.

The separation of the two routes has been completed by Lolham Bridges, so motorists following the old Roman road, King Street, had to cope with two rail crossings within less than half a mile. As a result, there was often traffic congestion along the narrow road until a one-way system was introduced. This was as far as I travelled during my visits to the area in the late-1970s, and all the pictures featured here were taken at that time.



The width of the crossing at Maxey Road, Helpston, is evident in this picture, taken from outside the barrier on the west side, with the Midland Railway line in the foreground. Complete with white cab roof, Deltic 55018 *Ballymoss* speeds past on the Down fast line with the 10:05 Kings Cross to York on December 1st, 1979.

FOR SALE- A TEDDY BEAR, ONE CAREFUL OWNER

By J Crosse

The story of the scandal of the D95xx 0-6-0 650 hp diesel hydraulic class, nicknamed 'Teddy Bears' by railway enthusiasts, has been the subject of a number of articles and at least one book. Questions such as 'Why were they ordered?' and 'Why did they have such a swift demise?' have been debated ad nauseam.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing, but it would seem that there were two main factors at play. Firstly, the degree of change of British Railways in the 1960s was far more rapid and wide-ranging than almost anyone could have predicted, and the seeds of the 'Teddy Bear' project were sown before the impact of the Beeching report was known.

Some of the Bristol allocation were out-stationed at Gloucester, which in turn saw them rostered for duties in the Forest of Dean, well away from the attention of the average enthusiast. Some brave souls did follow them around, and on March 31st, 1967, encountered D9501 at Lydney Junction playing with some oil tanks. It was the first of the type to be allocated to Cardiff Canton, but later moved to Bath Road, then back again and on to Landore before being put in store in Worcester - a long way to take an engine just to keep it out of use. It was reported that it was sold to R E Trem, a company that was only interested in removing the diesel engine from its purchases, and it is said that the remains then passed to C F Booth at Rotherham. However, another version of events suggests that it was sold as a working engine for industrial use overseas. COLOUR-RAIL.COM





Old Oak Common shed was the recipient of just four 'Teddy Bears', with D9521-4 arriving there in November and December 1964. They were transferred en bloc to Bristol Bath Road in October 1965, and pictures of their activities in the London are quite rare. D9522 had wandered quite some distance from its parent shed when caught on camera at Newbury on March 25th, 1965. Its load of various box vans does not appear to be onerous and well within its capabilities, thus justifying the reason for its existence, but was it a profitable day's work? This loco was one of the few that did not have an afterlife, as it ended up being scrapped by W H Arnott Young in 1968. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



Swindon Works was not always noted for the speed of delivery of new engines, but the construction of the D95xx Class was not that demanding, especially as many components were bought in and so it was basically an assembly process, one that took just 15 months to deliver 56 engines, numbered D9500-D9555. In this view, we see brand new D9543 at Swindon shed on May 30th, 1965, which, according to official records, was two days after completion and allocation to Cardiff Canton. It would soon move to Landore, but before its second anniversary in traffic, it had been placed in store. This turned out to be short-lived as, along with many of its compatriots, a new life awaited it in Hull, or so it was thought. How many arms had to be twisted to get the Eastern Region to take them may never be known, but it turned out to be a pointless exercise as after just 10 months in the bracing sea air in Hull, the engine was stored again and withdrawn on April 1st, 1968. It does not take a genius to calculate that it had done less than three years of work. This loco was one of the unlucky few as it was consigned to C F Booth at Rotherham in October 1968 and had been cut up by the year end, a life span of just 37 months! F HORNBY/ COLOUR-RAIL.COM





By the end of 1966, the 'Teddy Bears' that remained active on the Western Region were on borrowed time, with one such being D9553. The official record for this engine shows that it was new to Bristol Bath Road on September 16th, 1965, and was transferred to Hull Dairycoates in December 1966. Working there for 15 months, it was then stored in March 1968 and condemned in the April, so having a working life of just 30 months. It went on to complete 12 years in industrial service and over 40 in preservation. However, this view was taken at Dursley and dated as December 29th, 1966. Given that it officially moved to Hull in the same month, was this its final Western Region turn? COLOUR-RAIL.COM

Bristol Bath Road was the lucky recipient of the first of the class in July 1964 and also had D9502-5 straight from Swindon. Despite the short life of the class, it was home to quite a number of the type and they could be quite elusive for the spotters of the day, as there were a number of obscure freight-only lines, which they made their home, indeed fulfilling the role for which they had been designed. This view depicts D9524 at Narrowways Junction, Bristol, heading for Clifton and possibly on towards the industry in the Severn Beach area. The photographer has given a date of 1964, but the loco was allocated to Old Oak Common then, not arriving at Bristol Bath Road until October 1965. It was one of the longest survivors, holding on until 1969 before finding a new career in Scotland. It then had a Rolls Royce engine fitted and, in subsequent preservation, enjoyed a career numbered 14901. G H HUNT/ COLOUR-RAIL.COM





The Class 14s working in South Wales could be found in widely scattered locations, although there seems little evidence that they worked the valley routes around Cardiff. We find D9511 working in the west of the principality at Llandeilo Junction with the image carrying another interesting date, that being October 1st, 1964. D9511 had only been allocated to Wales on September 17th, when it was added to the books of Cardiff Canton. It then became the first class member to move to Landore with a quoted date of 'October' 1964. A duty at Llandeilo would clearly be from Landore, but it would seem unlikely that it would be out and about on the day that (in theory) it arrived from Cardiff Canton, which highlights the questionable data provided by BR at the time. J L LEAN/ COLOUR-RAIL.COM

Secondly, the time lapse between the concept and delivery of the first machines was sufficiently large for it in the end, but too late to be evident that they were not required. With most of the major components already on order for the complete build, it would have cost nearly as much to cancel the order as to complete it.

The condemnation and disposal process might be a little more debatable as it may be thought that across the whole of BR there would be suitable duties for at least some of them, but again at what cost, as they were clearly 'non standard' and with a shrinking

requirement for motive power, stocking spares for a small number of engines that might have been deployed right across the system was probably the nail in the coffin.

As time would show, clearly, it was not due to major mechanical foibles that led to the decision to move them on. Perhaps only the sales deals would be worthy of further scrutiny. Whatever the case, a remarkable number of the type have survived to become firm favourites on heritage lines via years serving British Industry.



Over 30 'Teddy Bears' were sent to Hull for local trip workings, but did not find favour, as for some duties they did not have sufficient power and so had to work in pairs, but, as they were not fitted for multiple working, two crews were required and the whole allocation was condemned in April 1968, with none of the locos having achieved four years in service. D9532, seen here at Hull Dairycoates on July 2nd, 1967, had arrived from Cardiff Canton in May 1967 and had just 10 months use in Hull. It went on to serve the British Steel Corporation at various sites around Corby for over 10 years before being broken up in 1982. K MARSDEN/ COLOUR-RAIL.COM



As recounted, many of the class passed into industrial service after their brief BR careers, with the two main customers being British Steel for use around the iron ore sites in the East Midlands and the National Coal Board, with most of their fleet working around Ashington, which is where we find their No. 3 in April 1981. Its former guise was D9521, having served at Old Oak, Bath Road and Landore and it ran until April 1969. It also had a spell at Lynemouth before being sold to C F Booth for scrap in 1987. However, a preservation rescue was staged and it has since been based at the Rutland Railway before moving to Swanage and then returning to South Wales. It is currently a resident at the Dean Forest Railway. COLOUR-RAIL.COM

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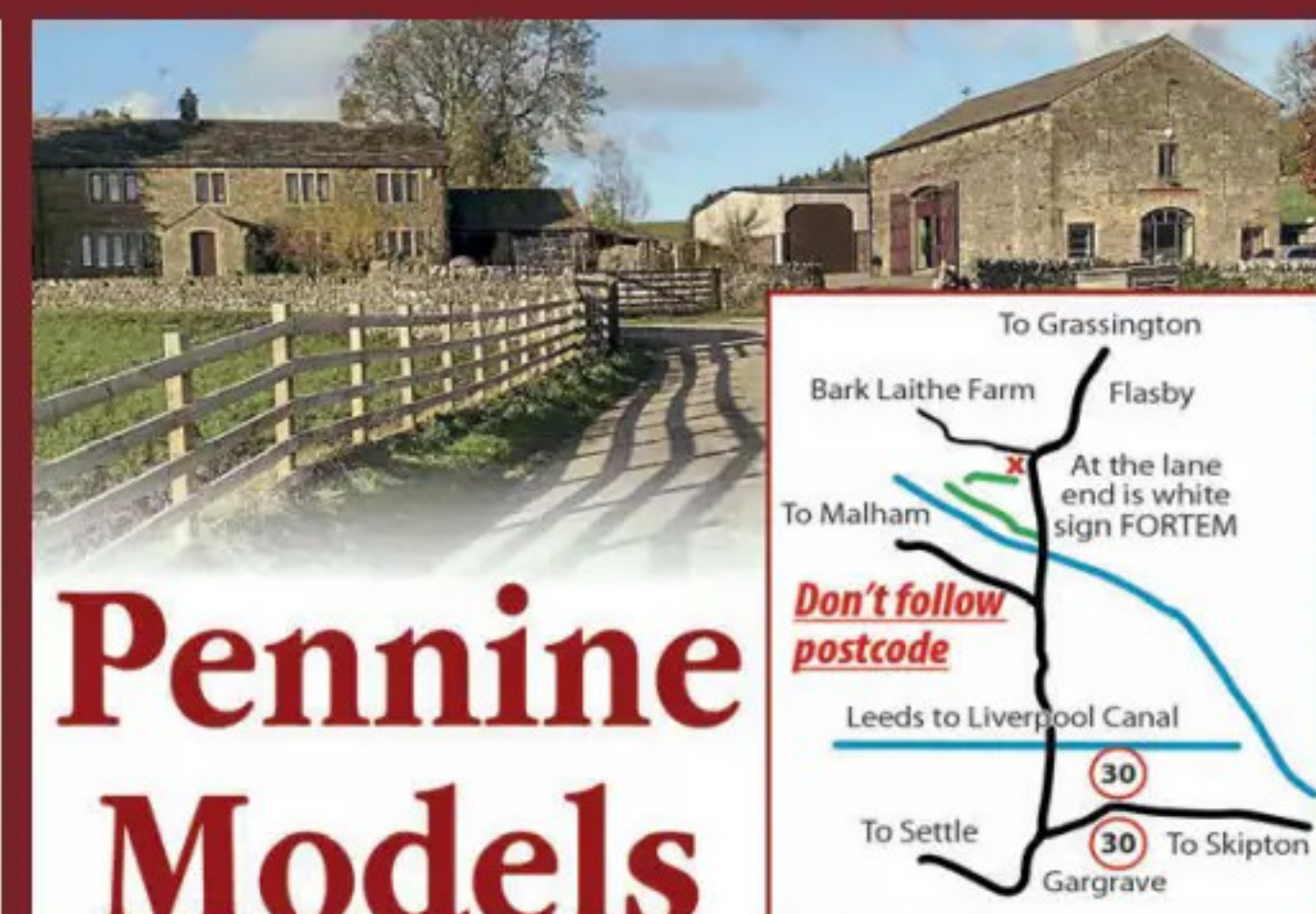
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Cambridge-bound E4 62781
prepares to take the single-
line token from the signalman.



STEAM IN THE EAST

Retirement prompted this builder to dive into his first layout project, which, alongside learning new skills, enabled him to share memories of the steam days of his youth.

Words: Richard Gower **Photography:** Steven Draper



FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: St. Holdens

SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm:1ft scale/18.2mm gauge/EM

SIZE: 17ft x 2ft 6in

ERA/REGION: Middle 1950s/Eastern Region

LAYOUT TYPE: End-to-end run

TOP RIGHT:

The town centre viewed through the level crossing gates.

MIDDLE RIGHT:

An Eastern National Bristol K on a rail replacement service to Braintree and Chelmsford while the line south is closed.

BELOW:

Rush hour at St. Holden, as the 07.45 departs for Cambridge, with the push-pull Saffron Walden branch service ready to follow, and the mixed train stock for Debden waits in the back bay.



M

ost modellers base their railways on the trains they grew up with, often childhood memories of family holidays in the West Country. In my case, having cycled all over the UK from Land's End to John o' Groats in my teens, I knew any model railway I built had to be based on grimy and rusty steam trains ambling through the Great Eastern 1950s rural East Anglian countryside before Dr. Beeching got at it.

Being colourblind and with electrical knowledge limited to knowing the difference between straight and wobbly electricity (DC/AC), was not the most promising start. Luckily, at an exhibition I found and joined a local club, Winchester Railway Modellers.

Just as an artist can choose the material they work in and the subjects they paint, railway modellers will have their own preferences between researching, building, locomotives/scenery/buildings, or actually running trains. Joining a club has given me the opportunity to be surrounded by, and involved in all the above areas. It has enabled me to join a team researching, creating and exhibiting award-winning club layouts at both local and national level. At the same time, club members have given me a huge amount of advice and practical support in building my own layout, 'St Holdens', which continues to be shown at local exhibitions.

“General advice I received when starting out in this hobby was to limit your first layout to 5ft x 1ft, learning from your mistakes before trying anything bigger.”





The backstory

The Maldon, Braintree and Saffron Walden Railway was proposed and approved by Parliament in the 1840s. In the event, only the Malden East to Braintree via Witham sections were built. 'St Holdens' assumes that the Great Eastern Railway extended the line from Witham via Braintree to Cambridge in the 1860s, joining up with the Colchester to Cambridge 'Stour Valley' line near Haverhill: thus providing a secondary cross-country route from Cambridge to London. Saffron Walden is serviced by a push-pull/freight branch from St. Holdens to Audley End. It was also the junction for the now-closed line from Thaxted (which the 1912 Harmsworth atlas genuinely shows as extended to Castle Hedingham!). The old Thaxted branch J68 still hovers around St Holdens yard.

It is now late-summer 1955, and steam still reigns supreme. The line is currently truncated with no service south to Braintree, due to an unfortunate minor nuclear incident at the nearby Weathersfield airbase; a.k.a. lack of space in the railway room. As a result, St. Holdens has become a temporary terminus, supporting a sub-shed of 31A Cambridge, busy with servicing the visiting locos. In view of the airbase incident, a short branch diverting from the Saffron Walden line has been quickly laid into nearby RAF Debden, in order to assist the carrying out of secret MOD goings on. So secret that even the fireman's dog needs security clearance to get in. A J70 tram loco, which has been rescued from the Stratford Works scrap line, runs a mixed traffic service to handle RAF personnel and stores requirements.



ABOVE: Built from an old white metal kit, F5 67213 push-pull arrives in the bay platform.

MIDDLE LEFT: A J15 on shed, all coaled up and ready for the day's work.

BOTTOM LEFT: The Saffron Walden branch trip freight coasts into St. Holdens past the maltings.



Making a start

General advice I received when starting in this hobby was to limit your first layout to 5ft x 1ft, learning from your mistakes before trying anything bigger. As I was over 70 before starting, I knew this would be my one and only layout, so knowing what features I have always wanted, I ignored all that good advice. As expected, many mistakes and much learning have taken place along the way. After 14 years, I am satisfied that I have made some progress towards a working layout and made many friends on the way.

Requirement would be an end-to-end EM gauge, able to be operated single-handed or with a team, with a fiddle yard at one end. Plenty of shunting and loco turning was an absolute necessity to give operating interest; as was being based on the borders of Suffolk/Essex, with infrastructure giving an impression of being in that area.

St. Holdens is a fictitious town in the Sampford's area of the Essex/Suffolk border. Fictitious because it is now too far for me to comfortably travel to research accurately, so it has always been planned to give a generic feel of the local area and infrastructure, while being small enough to fit into the available space.

Building begins

Cluttering a house with a hobby tends not to go down well with tidy domestic management, but being blessed with a large garage, heating and dust are really the only challenges. So, three 4ft scenic boards and a 5ft fiddle yard fit in snugly. The baseboards are constructed of 5mm birch ply with 3mm bracing strips. Resting on fixed Dexion angle iron against the garage wall while erected at home, the boards sit on trestles when travelling away at exhibitions.

Baseboards are covered in cork for the main line area, and foam for the yard and sidings. It took several months to get around the apparently common problem of ballast turning green once PVA was applied. After trying many alternatives, an eventual solution was found with N gauge Woodlands Scenics, suitably weathered.



TOP LEFT: Tea break at the maltings.

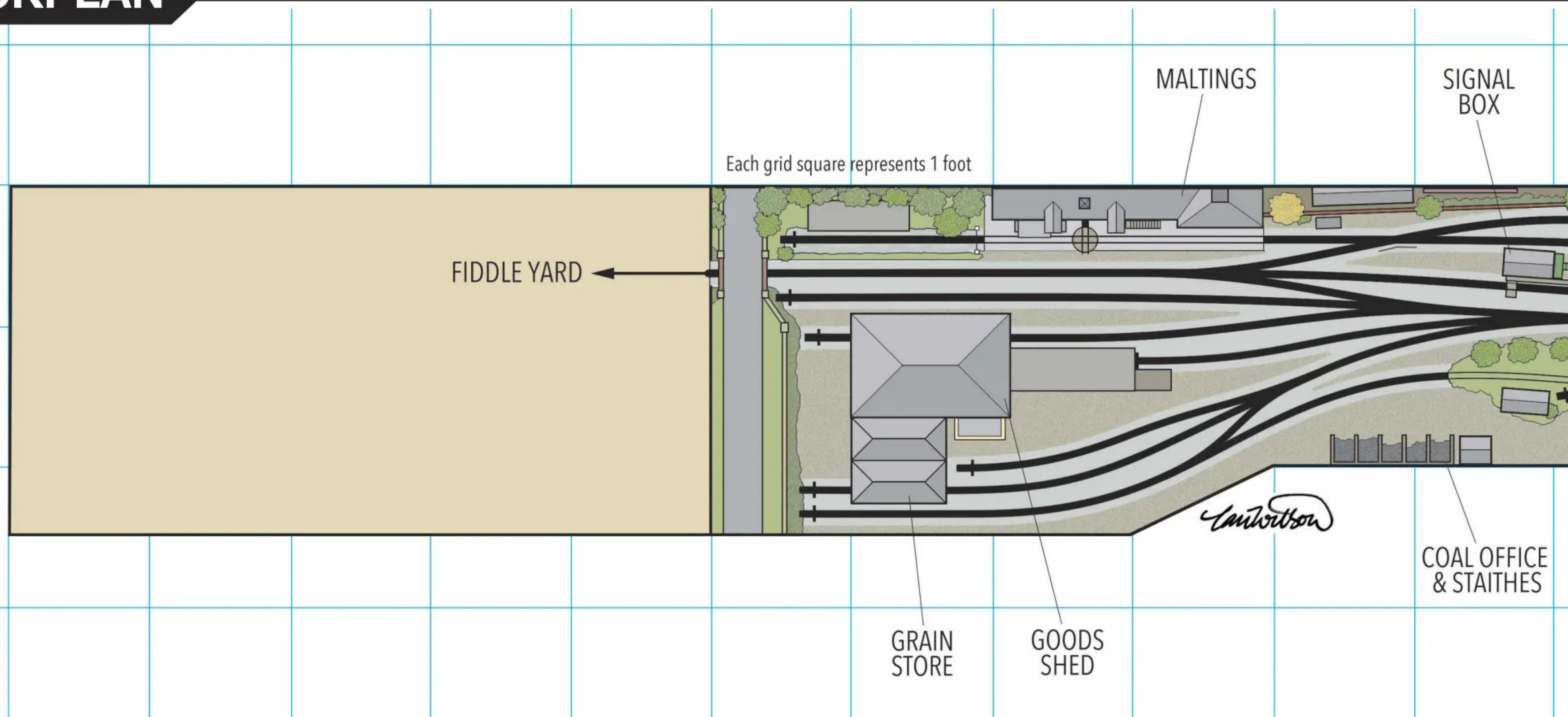


MIDDLE LEFT: Next stop, Haverhill for a semi-fast departure to Cambridge.



BELOW LEFT: The yard pilot takes a breather.

TRACKPLAN



TOP RIGHT: The Saffron Walden branch train waits hopefully for passengers: it is not market day.

MIDDLE RIGHT: The 12.30 departure to Haverhill and Cambridge.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Out of use J68 and J17 in store at the back of the engine shed



About the modeller

Name: Richard Gower

Age: 83

Number of years modelling: 14

Name of your first layout: 'St Holdens'

Favourite era/region: 1950s, East Anglia

Favourite locomotive: GE E4 2-4-0

Born in London and brought up in West Essex, my daily commute to school was on a dirty, smoky, noisy, steam train between Sawbridgeworth and Newport. By the time my local vicar arranged a footplate ride up and down the Buntingford branch on an old N7 when I was about 11, I had started a lifetime's love affair with dirty, smoky, noisy steam engines. Eventually, this led to a career working on the railways across Essex, Cambridge and London areas.

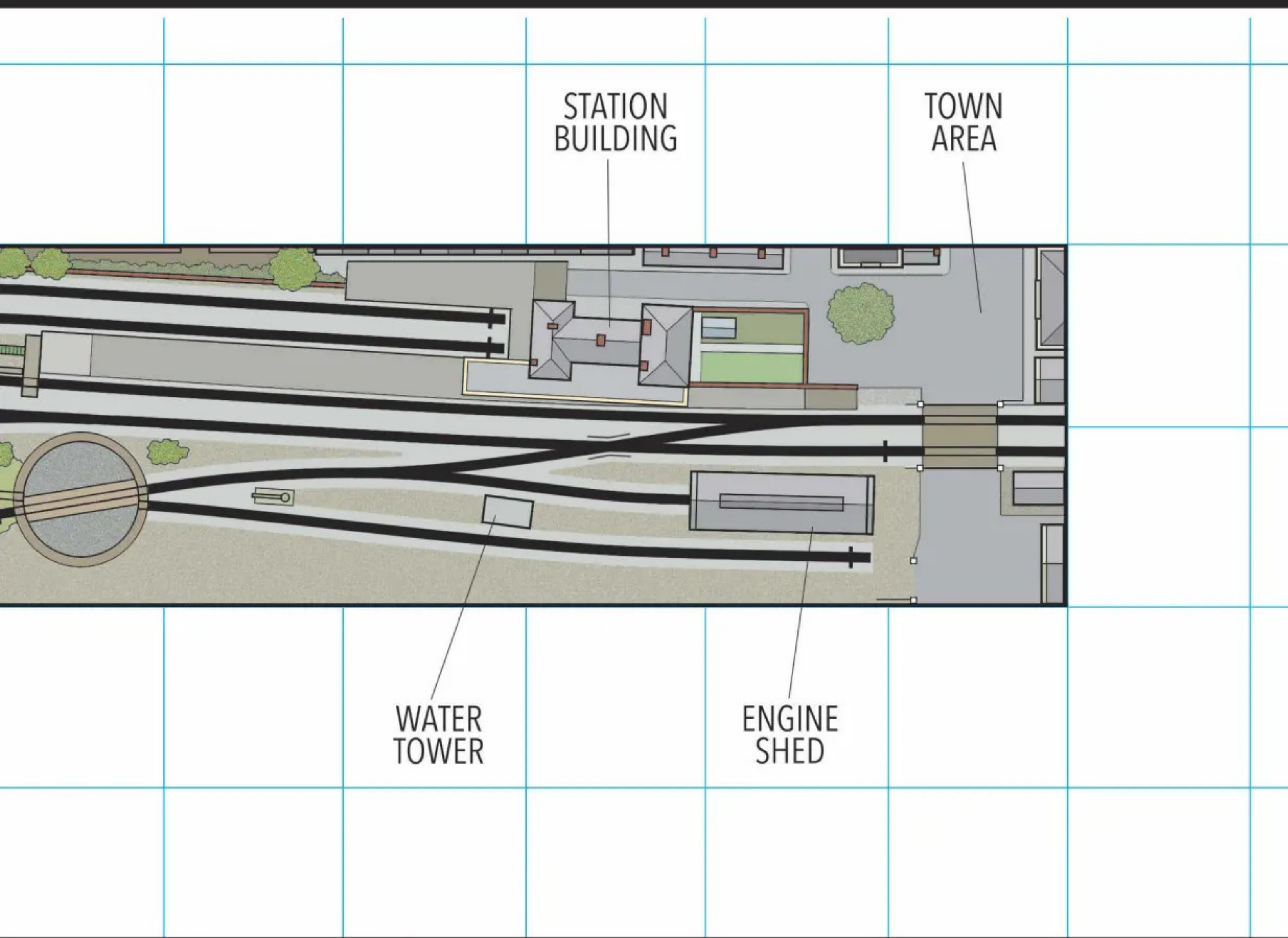
After the standard boyhood attachment to Airfix and Meccano, a career, 10 house moves, marriage and a family took priority before landing permanently (so far) in Hampshire, land of the Southern & GWR.

After many years of researching and planning something that would represent both the environment, rather than just somewhere to run toy trains, retirement finally gave me the opportunity to start building my own layout.

Standard C&L EM gauge track is used throughout, with hand-built pointwork. Point motors are DCC Concepts Cobolt. Were I to start from scratch again, I would probably go down the DCC route, but as 'St Holdens' is my first layout, many locos are early white metal kits, and given the limits of my modelling skills, it has currently ended up as analogue controlled. The turntable movement is controlled by Arduino microcontrollers, designed by one of my electronically expert friends.

The control board normally sits in front of the layout at home, but can be swivelled 180 degrees to enable operating from the back when exhibiting. The control unit hosts two Gaugemaster walkabout controllers, enabling two trains to run at once. Against the norm, all movement is controlled from one end.

The fiddle yard operates through cassettes; these are made from strips of MDF with aluminium angles for rails. The cassettes join the layout with brass U-shaped strips, and Plastikard end plates stop rolling stock from leaping off to their destruction.





ABOVE: A general view of the goods yard.

MIDDLE RIGHT: The goods shed and grain store.

BOTTOM RIGHT: St. Holdens maltings are based (very) loosely on those at Snape.



Key structures

Buildings are constructed from various materials. The engine shed is laser-cut and based on that at Ongar, from drawings kindly provided by the architectural specialist at the Great Eastern Railway Society. The station building was made from an old CDC card kit, cut and altered to include a canopy, and is yet to have a toilet block and a newsagent's stand added. It is based on a large GER standard 1865 building, such as Haverhill and Sudbury.

The goods shed and attached grain store are scratch-built from card and Plastikard, based on a foreshortened version of that at Ware, on the Hertford East line. Not very prototypically Suffolk, but of necessity included as that was where I started my railway career.

The maltings started life as a Lasercutmodels façade based on those of Snape, with an extra storey added to balance the infrastructure and add interest to shunting operations. The brewery likewise has moved from Chelmsford and changed shape. However, all decent-sized towns had to have a brewery, and Riddleys did supply the Station Hotel, otherwise known as the repainted Red Lion Inn in Great Samford.

Rolling stock

Rolling stock is about as wide a variety as is possible - locos from 1960 white metal kits to Hornby RTR, through to resin-bodied on proprietary chassis and a collection of brass kits. One brass kit and one Hornby D16 4-4-0 provide motive power for the Cambridge main service, backed up by an old NuCast E4 2-4-0. Freight haulage to and from Cambridge and Whitemoor is provided by a hugely heavy McGowan white metal J20 0-6-0 kit, excellent at squashing minor track imperfections, and the only one of the Class not to be converted from a Belpaire boiler.

An RTR Hornby J15 0-6-0 runs the Saffron Walden daily branch trip. I acquired a BEC white metal J17 0-6-0 in poor condition, with wrong numbering and some spare EM wheelsets. I gave them to a friend at the club with a request to renumber and re-gauge with the intention of putting a tarpaulin over the funnel and putting it around the back of the engine shed as a withdrawn diorama. It came back fully completed and is one of my best runners!

The branch push-pull passenger service is powered by a white metal kit F5 stolen from the Ongar branch, as no proprietary 0-4-4T G5s were available at the time of building.



TOP LEFT: What comes around goes around; a Cambridge-based D16 on the turntable.



MIDDLE LEFT: The goods shed and attached grain store are scratch-built, based on those at Ware. They make a good scenic break for trains passing behind.

BELOW: The J15 branch locomotive, having deposited its train in the headshunt, heads for the shed.

“If I had my time again, I would probably dive in at the deep end and go DCC, and give a little more contouring of the landscape.”





ABOVE: E4 62791 backs down onto its trip to Cambridge.

MIDDLE RIGHT: The wagon turntable in the maltings.

BOTTOM RIGHT: D16 on the shed road is waiting for a tender refill.



A selection of J68 and J69 0-6-0 tanks are available to roam the yard. Back in the 1970s, there was very little in the way of RTR Great Eastern locos available, so any small manufacturer kits that became available were snatched up and put in the cupboard to be built proverbially, 'sometime'. One such was the Wills J69, purchased new with 30 shillings on the box, which I did make a start at in GER blue, but it got lost in a house move somewhere over the years. Then, CDC brought out a 3D-printed version, so I obviously snapped up several versions to be fitted on Lima Terrier chassis. The wheelbase is too short, but much better than nothing. Then, of course, there was the Iain Rice brass J69, which had also been sitting in the cupboard for years: to be brought out and peered at now and then, and with a sigh put back through lack of skills for constructing several sheets of closely-packed brass etchings. Eventually, I had it professionally-built. Now, of course, Accurascale has brought out superb, ready-to-run versions, so I'm just waiting for an early BR version to be announced!

Coaching and wagon stock is a similar mixture of RTR, plastic and brass kits. All converted to EM and weathered by various methods. Most couplings are Sprat & Winkle, with a pair of pigeons on the station roof to line up the uncoupling point where the magnet is out of sight behind the platform.

Running trains

Operating can either be with one operator when at home, or two teams of three when exhibiting: main station area controller, shunter and secondary area controller, and fiddle yard operator. The whole layout fits in three family-sized cars.

Belonging to a very active club, getting a team of operators together for a show is thankfully seldom a problem, for which I am very grateful.

Special thanks are due to club members Dave Renshaw for building the brass D16 4-4-0, D&S push and pull coaches, mechanising the turntable, and lying upside down with a soldering iron when out on the road: to John Shaw for building the control unit, signalling and sorting out electrical gremlins; and to Tony Pearson for the building and painting of many of the white metal kits, and their constant maintenance.

If I had my time again, I would probably dive in at the deep end and go DCC, and give a little more contouring of the landscape. But as mentioned before, this will be my first and last layout, with arthritis reducing dexterity, and home downsizing looming. I just consider myself so lucky to have made such good friends through the club, and continue to be able to enjoy 'playing trains' in the meantime at home, and on the road around the country with our major club layout. We have a new shiny clubhouse near Winchester and are always on the lookout for new members. Details of this can be found on the Winchester Railway Modellers' website. ■



TOP LEFT:

The new arrivals engine uncouples and runs around its train.

MIDDLE LEFT:

Ready to depart with the 12.45 all stations to Cambridge, 62791 was built from an old Nu-Cast white metal kit.

BELOW:

Turned and watered. 62543 is a Blacksmith brass kit-build.



“ Belonging to a very active club, getting a team of operators together for a show is thankfully seldom a problem, for which I am very grateful.”



During the late-1950s and early-1960s - my train-spotting days - I took note of all that I witnessed – not just locomotive numbers, but the whole railway infrastructure, including buildings, signals, ships and road vehicles. Among these observations, I noted that the railway took on a different guise at summer-time weekends, when labouring goods trains all but disappeared to be replaced by extra passenger workings - often mixed traffic locomotives displaying a white indicator board above the smokebox door, hauling elderly carriage stock.

I refer mainly to the day excursions, the named expresses bound for esteemed coastal resorts set quite a contrast.

My favourite local pull & push, affectionally known as the ‘Tutbury Jinny’ (Burton upon Trent-Tutbury), would pass my

lineside location, on its outward bound journey, with two extra corridor carriages, on a summer Saturday morning, to be connected to the Derby-Llandudno special working. Later in the afternoon, for the return working, the auto-trailer would lead an unusual formation with through carriages to the rear and the tank engine sandwiched in the centre.

Prior to the railway age, when roads were nothing more than cart tracks, many residents of inland areas never saw the sea, let alone enjoyed a plate of fish and chips; only the wealthy travelled to far-off places, and edible saltwater fish was impossible without speedy transport from the docks by rail. Railway operators, realising that motive power standing idle for two days each week did not make economic sense, laid-on Saturdays/Sundays only (SO) workings to seaside towns, inland spas and rural beauty spots.

TRAINS TO THE SUN

Memories of holiday-time specials and excursion workings.

By Clive Baker

Enthusiasts re-lived the Pines Express experience by travelling behind preserved ex-S&DR Class 7F 2-8-0 on a circular rail tour from Leicester via the Derbyshire Peak District to York, May 1981.

Copies of posters from the Victorian period bear testimony to these weekend and summer services. Many seaside towns, featured on the posters, such as Blackpool, owed their growth into thriving seasonal playgrounds to the arrival of a railway route providing a link to inland industrial communities. Blackpool became part of the rail network in 1846 with the arrival of the Preston and Wyre Railway. Later, both the Lancashire & Yorkshire (L&Y) and London & North Western (LNWR) Railways served the town.

These summer services, either transporting working people on a day excursion or for a week's holiday, made possible by the 'Holidays with Pay Act' of 1938, introduced working-class people to beautiful parts of the United Kingdom for the first time.

Summer Saturday lunchtimes at holiday resorts could be manic experiences. I recall observing holidaymakers, some arriving and some heading home, at Rhyl station in the 1950s: families bearing large suitcases on their shoulders shepherding their children, some looking sad, others excited. A service for collection and delivery for luggage was offered so bulky belongings would be delivered to the family's lodgings in advance of their arrival. I witnessed such workings, often on Thursday afternoons, heading south hauled by a mixed traffic locomotive with a rake of full brakes and parcels vans.



During the 1950-1960 period, to encourage rail travel for families requiring the odd day-out during the holiday period, some divisions of the London Midland Region offered day trips; different destinations each weekday, each train would depart at breakfast time and return in the early evening. These destinations included Blackpool, Southport and the Manchester-based zoo and amusement park known as 'Belle View'.

The London North Eastern Railway (LNER), keen to attract tourist business, introduced 'Buffet Tourist Trains' (BTT) in 1933. Coupled in two sets of seven vehicles each, passengers in each set enjoyed the benefit of a buffet car. Wearing their own green and cream livery, the make-up of the sets varied depending on their section of operation.

My parents took advantage of these excursions, often enjoying a bank holiday ride to the Lincolnshire resorts like Skegness, but, unfortunately, the excellently appointed interior fittings, table lamps, mirrors, etc., proved too tempting for some customers to leave them behind for future travellers.

Many rail routes to holiday destinations passed through highly scenic areas, and although early rail travel entailed steam-hauled compartment carriages, by the mid-1950s, diesel multiple units had been introduced, offering forward vision to those sitting in a suitable seat in the leading carriage.

A classic example is the Cambrian Railway route from Machynlleth to Pwllheli; now marketed as the 'Cambrian Coast Line', the single-track line hugs the northern bank of the Dovey estuary, affording panoramic views at every turn.

Holidaymakers heading for the Torbay and other South Devon resorts would catch their first glimpse of the sea as their train passed Dawlish Warren station to run beneath the red cliffs, along the sea wall towards Teignmouth.

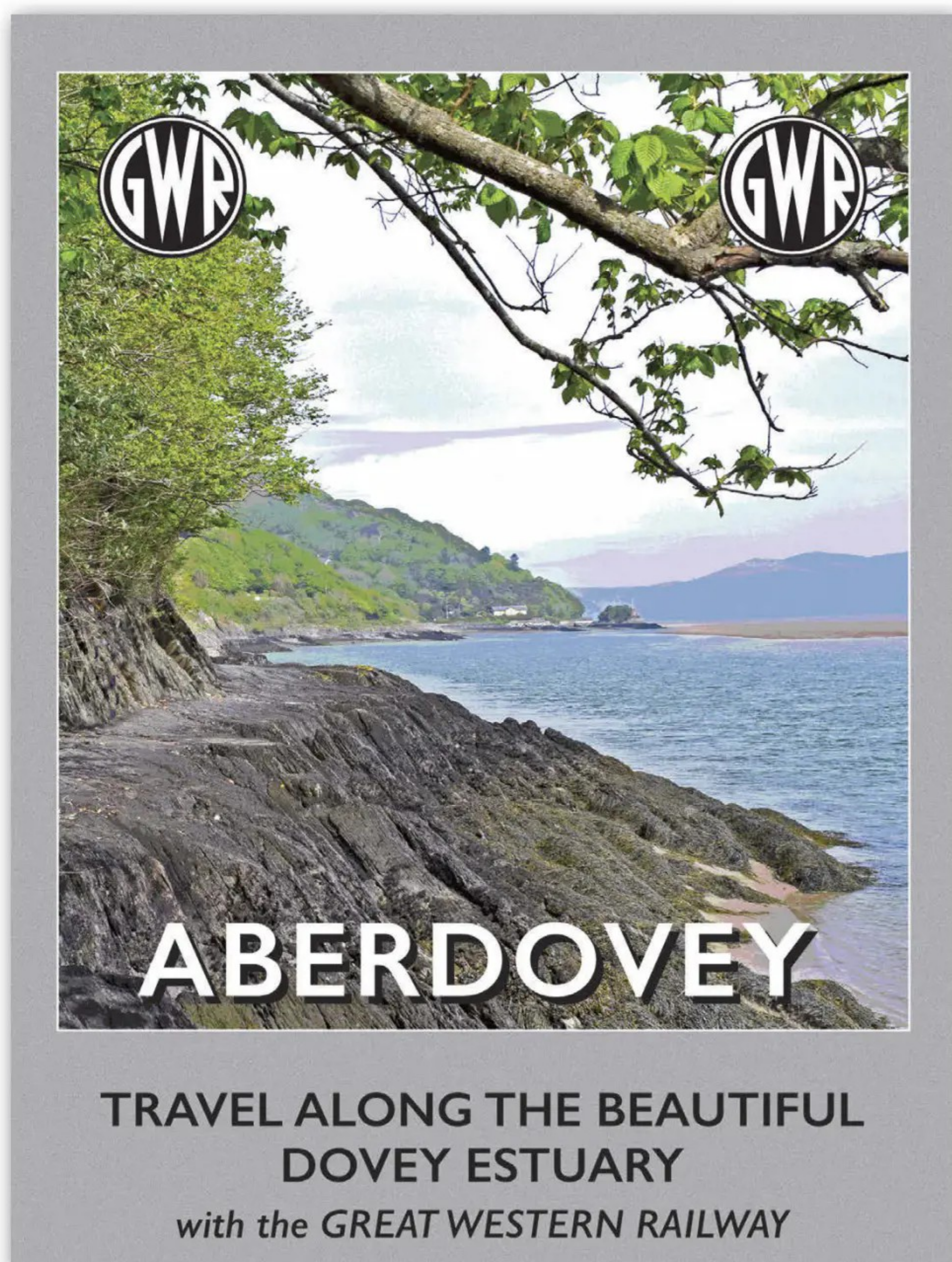
When travelling to the Scottish Highlands between Perth and Inverness, the Pass of Druimuachdar cannot fail to impress, before changing trains at Inverness to travel along the Kyle of Lochalsh line; skirting the shore of Loch Carron, the passenger could then cross the sea to the Isle of Skye.

Alton Towers by rail

My own experience of travelling on a special rail excursion occurred circa 1959 on the occasion of a 'Sunday School Treat', an annual summer outing from Burton upon Trent to what is now a popular theme park in the Staffordshire moorlands. In those days, Alton Towers, once the country retreat of the Earls of Shrewsbury, offered, among other attractions, landscaped gardens, a miniature railway and an extensive 00-gauge model railway.



A Class 158 two-car set, ex Machynlleth, bound for Pwllheli, passes along the Dovey estuary at low tide, about to pass through the tunnel by Frangoch Quarry with its harbour where slate was once transferred to ships, via a narrow gauge tramway.



Impression of a 1930s railway poster of a style displayed in station areas and on railway property to encourage customers to take pleasure trips either to the seaside, or other attractive venues.

While we awaited the arrival of our special train, on another platform an SO working arrived; a long train, it had, we thought, the most unusual motive power in the shape of a Standard Class 9. One normally associated such locomotives hauling 50 16-ton coal wagons at what seemed like walking pace, but this 2-10-0 made a very impressive start with its heavy holiday special.

The Sunday School special created more surprises on its arrival on the opposite platform. Ex Leicester, the train would have had to negotiate an undulated route via the South Derbyshire coalfield; in many cases, due to subsidence, two locomotives were needed at the head of eight non-corridor carriages. The pilot locomotive, an ex-London, Midland & Scottish (LMS) Class 4 0-6-0, was uncoupled,



An English Electric Class 50 wearing the livery of the later 'blue period', circa 1982, heads its train through the curves, past the red cliffs of the south Devon coast, towards Teignmouth.



An English Electric Class 37 with its train bound for Kyle of Lochalsh, prepares to leave Garve, circa 1985. To the south-east of this picturesque passing station, loom the mountains surrounding Glen Orrin.

having travelled tender-first for the first stage of the journey. Our train engine, an ex-LMS Hughes/Fowler 2-6-0, had the task of hauling our train, albeit at a leisurely pace, onwards to Alton, situated on the ex-North Staffordshire Railway, 'Churnet Valley' line.

As diesel multiple units replaced loco-hauled trains, the non-corridor carriage disappeared, but some did survive for excursion and other duties, such as football specials. Traveling on a bank holiday Monday excursion from Derby to Llandudno in 1972, I experienced a very motley assortment of rolling stock. Among the inevitable Mk. 1s and XP64 types, some of the former retaining the maroon livery, were two Bulleid carriages adorned in Southern green livery.

A typical excursion working in the author's locality, taken on Easter Monday 1962, ex-LMS Class 4F locomotive returns an eight-coach rake of non-corridor stock from Alton Towers towards Burton upon Trent and Leicester. Although closed since 1949, the platform edging at Rolleston-on-Dove was maintained for the occasional excursion workings, which continued until 1965 (the platforms, including the carriage/cattle dock survive as part of a heritage site). Note the white panel displaying the reporting number of the special working for the signallers to record. Photograph by Phil Waterfield.



Not exactly top link, with a secondary appearance, ex-LMS Class 5 eases its train of pre-WW2, ex-LMS carriages into Blackpool North station.

The Bass Brewery Annual Outings

Being one of the principal employers in the 'Brewing Capital of the World', the organisation of a day excursion for such a large workforce would have been a colossal task. The management of Bass, Ratcliff & Gretton, apart from considering an outing to be a sweetener to maintain a healthy relationship with staff, also saw the trip as an educational adventure.

Early trips from 1865 occurred bi-annually, but from 1883 until 1914, visits occurred each year to a variety of destinations, including Blackpool, Scarborough, Crystal Palace and Liverpool. The year 1907 saw 17 trains, all operated by the Midland Railway Company, depart Burton upon Trent, carrying a total of 10,000 workers for a day in Blackpool.



As one would imagine, precise organisation was paramount. William Walters, a keen railway enthusiast, succeeded to the position of Traffic Manager in 1883 and attended to every detail regarding the outings. He produced a guidebook each year that explained all necessary information. The details of the locomotives hauling the trains of 'modern carriages' built to the latest design, hotels and hostelrys that served good Bass ale and extra activities available at the destination, such as boat trips, all could be found in the guidebook. A reminder of how to 'conduct oneself' whilst at the destination was also included.

Although not up to the same scale as in pre-WW1 days, brewery and works day-outings did take place. In post-WW2 times, my uncle, who managed the W.H. Smith's station bookstall would receive details of forthcoming trips, so that an adequate supply of newspapers and magazines were available to sell on the day.

Blackpool North

In 1966, I joined a motor coach party to visit Blackpool - a sign of the times! The principal purpose of the outing, to view the seasonal illuminations; arrival at noon, with time-permitted exploration of the Lancashire playground. Joining some like-minded enthusiasts, we opted to assess the rail situation in a town that had needed three stations to handle the multitudes of holidaymakers and day-trippers during halcyon times.

Central station, next door to the tower, closed in 1964, leaving a vast area that had once accommodated a six-platform terminus remaining open throughout the year, but also eight adjacent bays coming into use in summer to serve the vast amount of holiday traffic. South station, serving the same line, had become a small terminus.

Our attention was drawn towards North station where we observed activity a-plenty. Holiday services still had a place in the timetable. The accompanying images will describe the Saturday lunchtime scene - workings from Lancashire and Yorkshire as well as Glasgow, hauled by Stanier Jubilee, Class 5 and Britannia class locomotives.

The 'Sunny South Express'

Residents of Liverpool and Manchester, attracted by south coast sunshine, could travel on a joint working operated by the London



The skyline is broken by Blackpool's iconic tower as ex-LMS Stanier Jubilee, No. 45647 *Sturdee* reverses back towards the shed, having arrived with a SO working from Leeds.

& North Western Railway (LNWR) and London, Brighton & South Coast Railway (LBSCR) to Brighton and Eastbourne.

Although commencing in 1904 as a daily service, when I witnessed a similar working in 1961, it had been reduced to summer Saturdays only. During pre-Nationalisation years, connections were available at Sheffield and Birmingham.

From Willesden Junction, the train avoided the London main termini by traveling along the route of the West London Railway extension line to Kensington West, later to be known as 'Addison Road', where the LNWR locomotive was relieved by one of the LBSCR. A reference photograph shows the train hauled by LBSCR, 4-4-2 tank locomotive, no.21 shortly after leaving Willesden Junction. The coaching stock consists of LNWR panelled carriages in the company's purple-brown and spilt milk livery (*this reference would suggest that not all locomotive exchanges occurred at Addison Road*).

When meeting family members who had travelled direct from Leicester to Eastbourne in 1961, the surviving service had clearly retained its prowess - a rake of pristine maroon MK. 1 carriages were hauled by re-built West Country Class 34100 *Appledore*, a locomotive kept in immaculate condition, often seen working the prestigious 'Golden Arrow' international service.

Britannia Class locomotive no. 70004, *William Shakespeare*, awaits attention at Blackpool North shed before returning day-trippers after 'doing the lights'. The shed plate '9B' indicates that the locomotive belonged to Stockport Edgeley shed.



The 'Pines Express'

Also commencing its route at Manchester, this service to the sunny south took a not altogether simple route to Bournemouth. Initially running on weekdays in 1910, the service ceased during WWI but was reinstated in 1922. Becoming a named train in 1927, the service continued until the outbreak of WWII. Restored to the timetable in 1949, with a Sheffield portion, the final 'Pines Express' ran in 1967. Direct from Manchester to Birmingham New Street, the onward journey involved the Lickey Incline, Gloucester Eastgate and Mangotsfield before reaching Bath Green Park.

A locomotive of the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway would take over the train for the final leg of the journey to Bournemouth West - an undulating route crossing the Mendip Hills, much of it along single track. It is this section that caught the attention of enthusiasts. During the British Railways' era, the joint administration of the line remained - Southern Region (SR) locomotives and rolling stock working alongside those of the London Midland Region (LMR).

Summer Saturday operations required extra locomotives suitable to haul the heavy holiday traffic, double heading being essential for the section between Radstock and Evercreech Junction. An LMR 2P, 4-4-0 piloting an SR West Country Pacific was not unusual, the classic I recall, features the Pines Express on Christmas Eve approaching Bath, its train engine a rebuilt West Country Pacific and the pilot an LMR 'Jinty' 0-6-0 tank engine. The class of locomotive unique to the S&DR was the Derby-built Class 7F 2-8-0; designed to handle heavy freight, these locomotives were frequently called on for passenger workings, including the Pines Express on summer Saturdays.

The final Pines Express over the S&D ran in September 1962; hauled that day by BR Class 9F 2-10-0, *Evening Star*. Members of this class were the first to handle heavy holiday trains over the Mendip Hills without a pilot engine.

All aboard

Many, having taken the train to the coast, enjoyed a cruise, they would say it's 'to justify the trip'. The towns situated along the Clyde estuary could be reached more easily by ferry or 'steamer' due to the geography of the area. The railway companies, such as the Caledonian and Glasgow & South Western Railway, operated ships as an extension to their rail routes. Many railway ships emerged from the Clyde shipyards; whether paddle, turbine, or diesel, the railway companies took great pride in their vessels, which appeared on publicity material.

A day out for the workers, many employed at the numerous shipyards, would have been a trip 'down the water' to Dunoon or Rothesay, both seaside towns with no rail connection and reliant on the railway steamers to bring customers.



This image, captured at Corfe Castle along the heritage Swinay branch line, shows a West Country class Pacific locomotive of the same type as No. 34100, with a train of stock similar to those I recalled when observing the Sunny South Express in 1961.



Built for the Caledonian Steam Packet Co. in 1934, Paddle Steamer *Caledonia*, with a gross tonnage of 624, had capacity for 1300 passengers. This 1967 image shows the ship departing Gourock pier en-route for Dunoon, a popular holiday resort, having commenced the service at Glasgow Broomielaw.



M. V. Tern is the oldest of the three heritage vessels operating on Windermere between Lakeside, Bowness and Ambleside. Built for the Furness Railway Co. by Forrest & Son, Wivenhoe, Essex; supplied by rail in sections, she was launched in 1891. Originally a steam yacht, but under British Transport Commission ownership in 1957/8, her steam engines were replaced with diesels and her tall funnel replaced by a shorter version bearing the 'arrow' symbol. As the photograph of her moored at Bowness pier indicates, she has regained her long, narrow funnel and the appearance of a steam yacht. Note her canoe-like prow.

The Furness Railway Co. opened a branch line in 1869 to link its main line at Ulverston with the southern end of Windermere, at Lakeside station, giving tourists easy access to the Lakeland steamers. The Kendal & Windermere Railway Co. opened a branch line from Oxenholme to Windermere in 1847; although the company struggled, the town of Windermere flourished from the enormous amount of excursion traffic it attracted. The LNWR acquired the branch in 1859 and replaced the original station building with a grand terminal with overall roof.

Forward travel by Lakeland steamer from Bowness pier involved a short journey by road. Since the railways arrived, Windermere has retained its appeal for excursions aboard elegant Lakeland steamers, originally railway-owned, in majestic surroundings. Although powered by diesel engines, three of the fleet of four vessels have a heritage status.

Conclusion

I hope that in this article I have demonstrated the scope and diversity that holiday specials and tourist workings offer the modeller - elderly carriages pressed back into service to cope with bank holiday crowds, locomotives performing unlikely roles, and rolling stock working away from their usual territory.

Just as we now depend on the airlines to transport us to sunshine holidays, the Victorians, to a much greater extent, depended on the railways, experiencing a whole new world of rail travel, even if that new world stayed on British soil.

STEAM IN SNOWDONIA

Inspired by holidays to North Wales and wanting to keep things small and portable, Chris Richardson embarked on his latest layout, which combines agriculture with scenic vistas.

Words: Chris Richardson **Photography:** Phil Parker



FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Bryn Coeden

SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm.ft/9mm gauge/009

SIZE: 4ft 5in x 2ft 3in

ERA/REGION: Preserved/Talyllyn – North Wales

LAYOUT TYPE: Continuous run



The sheep are gathered after the lineside fire, while the passing train takes on water from a bowser after the water tower was emptied, fighting the fire.

TOP RIGHT: Passengers take a break at the picnic tables, awaiting the next train, while tree surgeons tackle a dangerous tree on the hillside above.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Crowd barriers are being used to provide a temporary fence after the original was burnt down in the fire, while a rake of kit-built Tallylyn coaches pass by.

BELOW: *Blanche* passes over the stream with a train of four-wheel coaches. These are some of the best kit-built coaches I have seen and were obtained from the 009 Society.



A couple of years ago, I had been on holiday in North Wales and visited the Tallylyn and Ffestiniog railways, which inspired me to build something based on the area. I already had a narrow-gauge layout ('Millthorpe', BRM Feb 2023) and was completing 'Somewhere' (BRM April 2025), so, for reasons of space and ease of transport, I wanted something small. Having attempted a couple of narrow-gauge layouts before, I have come to the conclusion that narrow-gauge is best suited to continuous run, and bearing in mind I prefer dioramas with movement, continuous run seemed to be the best configuration.

For lightness, the baseboard is a single piece of 100mm insulation foam with 2mm ply used to face the edges. Track, which is Peco crazy track, is pinned to a piece of 2mm ply cut to the trackplan and glued to the foam. Because of the baseboard construction, it was not feasible to use undermount point motors, so wire-in-tube was used running through the road bridge to the rear panel, which also houses the Gaugemaster combi controller. The layout is DC-controlled with four isolating sections; the wires are laid into the base of the foam.

“I am particularly pleased with the scene created by the supposed lineside fire, where the fence has been burnt down and is being replaced with some crowd barriers to prevent livestock wandering onto the line.”





Scenic touches

There are few buildings on the layout, nearly all of which are 3D-printed and then painted with either match pot emulsion or acrylics. The carriage shed was a TT scale model of a GWR shed, which worked perfectly, although it was particularly difficult to build due to being very fragile. The secret compound with the military yellow Land Rover (there has to be a yellow Land Rover somewhere, as it is my daily drive) is fenced off with Ratio posts and a net curtain, sprayed aluminium colour.

Scenery is carved into or built up from the base using more insulation foam. This is then shaped and covered in layers of paper towel soaked in PVA glue. Onto this, I then add a layer of grey tile grout mixed with more PVA. This is kept fairly stiff, the smooth roadways brushed as it dries and then finally smoothed with the fingers. Chalk pastels are used to give the final finish. Rock faces are brushed on using an old brush in the direction I want the strata to form, and, as it dries, a wire brush is used to give further texture. When it is all dry, a black wash is applied, which settles in the grooves and highlights the strata. The grassed areas are the usual mix of static grass layers, with various Woodland Scenics and home-made scatters used to form weedy areas.

Trees, as mentioned, use various methods, including branches off overgrown lavender, which has a very realistic bark texture. The majority, however, are made from an armature of 7-strand electric fencing wire, which is very similar to Bowden cable but without the



ABOVE: The farmer attempts to hold the cattle back while they are being fed. I wouldn't trust that bull!

MIDDLE LEFT: The Peckett (a 3D-printed kit on Minitrains chassis) removes coaches from the carriage shed (a TT gauge kit).



BOTTOM LEFT: A repainted and detailed Bachmann Skarloey passes over the guider bridge with a pair of steel-sided coaches.



ABOVE: Paul Sheen (left) and Chris Richardson (right).

About the modeller

Name: Chris Richardson

Age: 65

Number of years modelling: 55 years

Name of your first layout: 'Fairford'

Favourite era/region: Preserved, as it allows for a lot of modellers' licence

Favourite locomotive: J72

I live in South Lincolnshire and grew up with the Bourne – Sleaford line at the bottom of the garden. I can just about remember trains passing in the final years of the line.

I have more of an interest in modelling than real railways. For me, it's about creating a scene in which the railway provides movement, and I am as happy creating small cameos as I am whole layouts.

I am presently vice-chair of Sleaford Model Railway Club and also host a small group of similar-minded modellers in a farm building. This group was set up during Covid, when only groups of six could meet, and the village hall where SMRC meets was not available.



TOP LEFT: A Baldwin passes the derelict cottage, a 3D print kindly finished by fellow SMRC member, John Blake.



MIDDLE LEFT: The David Brown tractor and manure spreader wait for the train to pass. The water tower is empty after the contents were used to fight the fire.



BELOW LEFT: The station building is being repainted while a couple of bystanders have a conversation in front of the TT gauge carriage shed. The pigeons on the roof seem undeterred.

BOTTOM: An overall view of the station side of the layout showing how trees have been used as a scenic break between the two halves. I feel this works far better than a sky backscene.



springiness. This is bound together with florists' tape, and a hot glue is used to cover and shape the branches after the wires have been unwound to give a realistic tree structure. There is nothing like winter pictures to give inspiration. The whole thing is then covered with the PVA/grey grout mix working along the branches. This leaves a generic bark colour (tree bark is rarely brown), but this can be coloured with spray or brush-painted in a colour to suit. Polyfibre, as found in pillows, was teased out, then sprayed with either a mix of black and red oxide or Halfords camouflage green or brown cans. This was further teased out and stretched over the branches, sprayed with matt lacquer and various coloured scatters applied and fixed with hair spray. An alternative on some trees was to use rubberised horsehair, covered in the same way. Hedges and scrubby areas use the same poly fibre or pan scourers covered with scatters as per the trees.

The river was created by first sanding down the base grout layer, then painting with a mix of greens and browns. Multiple layers of yacht varnish were then painted on, with small stones added to represent rocks. Brush bristles, sisal string and some mosses were then glued along the banks to represent rushes and other riverbank plants.



TOP LEFT: A works train heads under the road bridge past the scene of the fire with the burnt fence and scorched hedge; thankfully, the rock face prevented further spread.



MIDDLE LEFT: A Pecket draws a construction train out of the works siding, complete with mini excavator. Perhaps there has been a landslip somewhere!

BELOW: An end view of the layout, demonstrating the use of trees as a break between the two sides. A much weathered Oxford JCB excavator clears debris from the wooden bridge.





ABOVE: A Baldwin draws ballast hoppers into a passing loop, ready for track repairs once the line closes for the day. The dead tree illustrates the tree-making to good effect.

MIDDLE RIGHT: The works siding with a well-used open wagon. I hope no trains pass while the portaloo is being used!

BOTTOM RIGHT: Another works train passes under the road bridge and through the cutting, which is created using grey tile grout.



Bringing the layout to life

Rolling stock, of which little is needed, is borrowed from my other layouts and comes from Bachmann, Peco and kit-built, many from the 009 sales stand at shows. Good quality, unusual items can often be acquired at very reasonable prices.

Some of the road vehicles have been altered for other uses, such as the old brewery tanker modified to be towed by a tractor for farm use and the trailer used for the removal of the branches in the tree cutting scene.

A number of cameo scenes have been created around the layout; I am particularly pleased with the scene created by the supposed lineside fire, where the fence has been burnt down and is being replaced with some crowd barriers to prevent livestock wandering onto the line. Sheep are being gathered from the area before they stray. There is also the farmer's water tanker on the platform to water the locos, as all the water in the tower was used to fight the fire! I also like the model of the David Brown tractor and muck spreader; something different from the farm scenes usually seen. The silage bale being opened for the cattle is made from a piece of dowel covered in static grass and then wrapped in strips of real stretch wrap. This was then opened up to represent a bale being opened.

Final thoughts

Now the layout is complete, I hope to enjoy exhibiting it, something I enjoy doing, especially discussions with other exhibitors and the public. As the layout is continuous run, the operation is not taxing, which allows conversations without disrupting the operation.

To maximise the viewing potential, the layout is viewed from three sides (which can cause headaches for exhibition managers). I had originally intended to put a backscene partway down the middle, but decided that a wooded hill would look better and be a good aid when doing tree building workshops or demonstrations. For this reason, there are several different methods used for the trees.

The next layout to complete is an OO model that fits in two Christmas tree boxes. It will include extensive cattle handling facilities as well as a quarry and working 009 tipplers. Once a forced house move comes about, I hope to continue work on a large layout based on Weybourne on the North Norfolk Railway, but until then, I need to keep things small and portable. ■



LEFT: The Range Rover has stopped on the bridge to view the works train while the road ahead is blocked by the tree felling; he may have to wait a while...

BELOW: The David Brown tractor and loaded muck spreader wait for *Blanche* and steel-sided coaches to pass the empty water tower. The tree opposite has partially fallen down.

“As the layout is continuous run, operation is not taxing, which allows conversations without disrupting the layout operation.”



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Pre-Production artwork. Colours and details on the final models may vary

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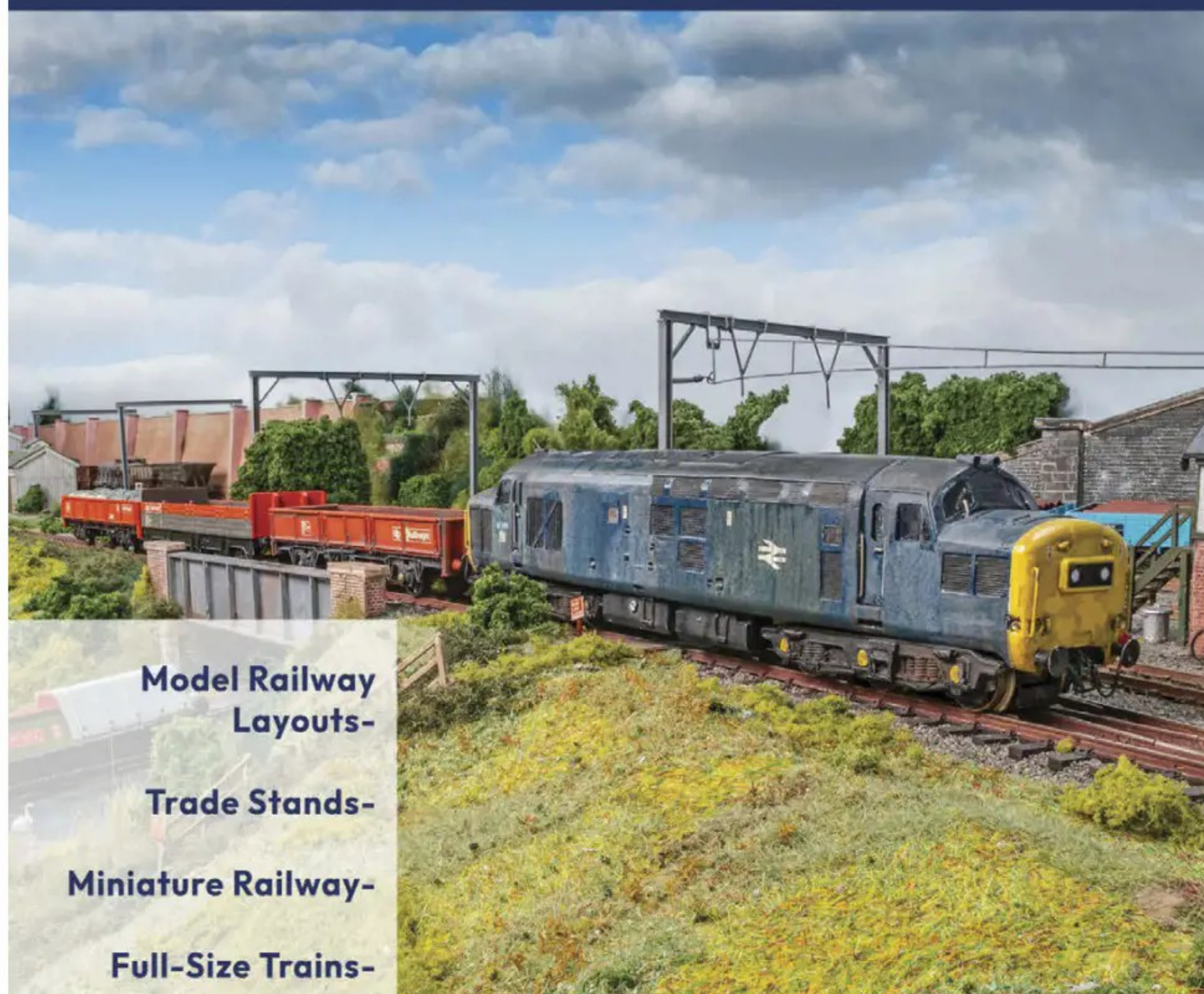
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THE LATEST HEADLINES

Hornby Summer OO announcements



Spanning the history of railways in Britain, Hornby unveils additions to its 2026 OO model railway range, with new products due to be released in the coming months.

Among the big announcements is the arrival of the pioneering locomotive *Planet*, perfect to recreate the early days alongside the previously released *Rocket* and *Lion*.

Coming right up to date, the striking brand new red, white and blue GBR livery features on the Railroad Class 800, and more popular steam locomotives are fitted with steam generators.

Steam locomotives

- R30472SS - Bulleid Merchant Navy Class - No.35028 *Clan Line* - Late BR Green - with Steam Generator. RRP £364.99 - expected Jan 27
- R30474SS - LNER Thompson A2 - No.500 *Edward Thompson* - with Steam Generator. RRP £364.99 - expected Jan 27
- R30476SS - LNER Gresley A3 - No.60063 *Isinglass* - Steam Generator - BR Early Express Blue. RRP £319.99 - expected Aug 26
- R30477 - Hornby Dublo - Merchant Navy - No.35019 - *French Line CGT* - BR Early Express Blue. RRP £319.99 - expected Dec 26
- R30497SS - GWR Saint Class - No.2980 *Coeur de Lion* - Great Western - with Steam Generator. RRP £314.99 - date TBC
- R30498 - GWR Saint Class - No.2945 *Hillingdon Court* - Great Western. RRP. £234.99 - expected Sep 26
- R30499/R30499TXS - GNR J13 - No.1252 - GNR Grey. RRP £174.99/£224.99 Sound-Fitted - expected Oct 26
- R30511 - L&MR *Planet* Locomotive. RRP £184.99 - expected Jan 27



- R30512 - Terrier - No.643 - LB&SCR - RRP £164.99 - expected Dec 26
- R30513 - Terrier - No.72 *Fenchurch* - Newhaven Harbour Company. RRP £164.99 - expected Dec 26
- R30553SS - Class A4 - No.60024 *Kingfisher* - British Railways Blue - with Steam Generator - RRP £389.99 - expected Oct 26
- R30554SS - Class A4 - No.60002 *Sir Murrough Wilson* - BR Early Green - with Steam Generator. RRP £389.99 - expected Oct 26





Diesel and Electric Train Packs

- R30469 - Class 423 4 VEP Train Pack - 3417 *Gordon Pettitt* - BR Blue - £399.99 - expected Oct 26

Coaches

- R40537 - BR Kitchen and Buttery car & Composite Restaurant twin pack - *At the Sign of the Dolphin* - £139.99 - Oct 26
- R40538 - 6 wheel First class coach - No.452 - LB&SCR - £39.99 - Nov 26
- R40539 - 6 wheel third class coach - No.612 - LB&SCR - £39.99 - Nov 26
- R40540 - 6 wheel Brake third class coach - No.106 - LB&SCR - £39.99 - Nov 26
- R40541 - 4 wheel Passenger Brake coach - No.90 - LB&SCR - £39.99 - Nov 26
- R40542 - BR MK1 BSK - 35010 - Network South East - £49.99 - Nov 26
- R40543 - BR MK1 TSO - 4914 - Network South East - £49.99 - Nov 26



Hornby Railroad

Locomotives

- R30519/R30519TXS - LNER Peppercorn Class A1 - No.60163 *Tornado* - British Railways Apple Green. RRP £169.99/£224.99 - expected Dec 26
- R30562 - GWR County Class - No.1023 *County of Oxford* - £144.99 - Dec 26
- R30523 - LMS Jinty - No.16440 - £69.99 - Dec 26
- R30530/R30530TXS - BR Class 73 - 73235 - Intercity Swallow. RRP £89.99/£144.99 - expected Nov 26

Train Packs

- R30561 - Class 800 Train Pack - GBR Livery. RRP £149.99 - expected Oct 26

Rolling Stock

- R60354 - Box Van - Raeburn - £17.99 - Dec 26
- R60356 - Open Wagon - C Dunning - £17.49 - Dec 26
- R60357 - Open Wagon - Faulkner - £17.49 - Dec 26
- R60364 - 100T Tanker Wagon - Shell - £29.99 - Sep 26
- R60365 - 100T Tanker Wagon - Esso - £29.99 - Sep 26
- R40570 - GBR Class 800 MS Coach 2 - £29.99 - Sep-26
- R40571 - GBR Class 800 MS Coach 3 - £29.99 - Sep-26
- R40572 - GBR Class 800 MC Coach 4 - £29.99 - Sep-26

Hornby BR J52 joins the range

The new Hornby J52 was fully reviewed in BRM September last year, and finally, the manifestation in BR condition has arrived, representing the appearance of the class under BR ownership during the early-mid '50s. It's in the form of Hornsey-allocated (34B) 68873 in ex-works condition, and all the plaudits of excellence apply to this latest release. It is a splendid model.

Hornby first introduced a J52 in 1981, in the guise of the preserved No. 1247 (J13) in full GNR lined green regalia. It ran on the standard 0-6-0 chassis, with an open-framed motor with straight gears, driving the leading axle. As such, it was simplified, compromised and a noisy runner. This latest manifestation is both visually and mechanically superb!



Priced at 174.99 and available to order now, the model is finished in plain black with BR early 'cycling lion' crest as applied in the 1950s, with the five-digit number on the increased-capacity bunker sides. The locomotive also has the later-type safety valves and steam injectors.

Osborn's delivers coal exclusive

Devon-based Osborn's Models has unveiled a South West-themed limited-edition TT:120 mineral wagon. Limited to just 100, the model features the branding of Renwick, Wilton & Co.Limited, Torquay and Dartmouth and the running number 521.

Produced by Peco using its seven-Plank model, the UV printing produces sharp lettering. Exclusive issues have been produced by several model shops across the UK, helping the growing number of TT:120 modellers expand their wagon fleets, typically in the regions they model.

The model is available now from the Osborn's Models website at an RRP of £21.50, or a triple pack at £62.00.



Accurascale reveals new Class 37 run

Accurascale has announced a brand-new run of its popular Class 37 range, with the latest selection of locomotives developed in response to customer feedback and requests.

Spanning more than six decades of the class's history, the new release covers everything from the earliest English Electric Type 3s of the early-1960s through to locomotives still operating on the national network today.

Leading the new range is Accurascale Exclusive No. 37800 in Rail Operations Group blue. One of the most requested modern-day Class 37s, the locomotive carries one of the most complex liveries ever applied to the class and will be supplied with exclusive packaging and a numbered certificate.

The main range, available to pre-order from Accurascale and its network of over 170 stockists, features a broad selection of eras and liveries. Modern traction is represented by West Coast Railways' 37516 *Loch Laidon*, while BR's Civil Engineers sector is covered by Dutch-liveried 37106. For enthusiasts of the BR Blue era, 37185 appears complete with distinctive Cornish Railways 'lizard' logos, making it an ideal partner for Accurascale's china clay wagon range, while 37088 represents a classic unrefurbished locomotive with split headcode boxes and original bufferbeam fairings.

The range also returns to the origins of the class with D6713, presented as one of the original Stratford-allocated English Electric Type 3s. Built at Vulcan Foundry in 1961, the model captures the class in its formative years as diesel traction began to replace steam across the Eastern Region.



Alongside the main range, previously announced Accurascale Exclusives remain available to order, including D6724 in partnership with the Heavy Tractor Group, heritage green 37403 *Ben Cruachan* supporting the Scottish Railway Preservation Society, and 37716 in Direct Rail Services 'fade' livery, produced in conjunction with Rainbow Railways.

The new production run continues the enhanced tooling introduced on the preceding third run. Features include an operating roof fan synced to the DCC sound file (also functional on DC), refined bonnet top doors, improved glazing, and upgraded grilles.

Prices have been maintained as the previous run, at £189.95 for the DC/DCC-Ready variant and £289.96 for the DCC Sound-Fitted locomotive.

Accurascale's main range of locomotives can be purchased from its network of over 170 stockists, as well as direct. Exclusive locomotives can be ordered directly via the Accurascale website. Delivery is scheduled for Q2 2027.

'AccuraBone' joins modern image range

Accurascale has announced an all-new OO gauge model of the British Rail Class 58 diesel electric locomotive.

Known to enthusiasts as "Bones" due to their narrow-bodied design and full-width cabs, the Class 58 entered service in 1983. Built by BREL at Doncaster Works, the locomotives were designed for heavy Merry-Go-Round coal traffic operations, transporting coal between collieries and power stations across Britain.

The new release continues the manufacturer's "Powering Britain" theme, following its HUO coal hopper range, and has been developed with a range of prototype-specific tooling variations covering different periods of operational life.

Six locomotives have been announced for the first production run:

- 58016 – Railfreight Coal
- 58017 – Mainline Freight Triple Grey
- 58023 – Mainline Freight Blue
- 58040 – Railfreight Red Stripe
- 58042 – Railfreight Coal
- 58046 – Mainline Freight Blue

Accurascale highlights that the tooling will allow several variations across the range, including:

- Narrow, experimental and wide exhaust silencers
- Bodysides with and without door handles
- CP3 and CP3A bogie variations
- Cabs with and without side air vents



- Deep and shallow rear cab corner profiles
- Multiple cab handrail and baffle arrangements
- Cab roofs with and without NRN radio pods
- Three cooler group configurations
- Windscreen washer fillers with and without guard

The Accurascale Class 58 is scheduled for delivery in Q4 2027 and is available to pre-order exclusively through the manufacturer. Prices are £169.99 - DC/DCC-Ready and £259.99 - DCC Sound-Fitted.

KMRC releases exclusive trio



Kernow Model Rail Centre has announced a new batch of exclusive models, including a Bachmann OO gauge Class 170 in CrossCountry Trains Pride livery alongside a selection of private owner seven plank wagons in OO, TT:120 and O gauge.

Leading the announcements is an OO gauge Bachmann Class 170/6 in CrossCountry Trains Pride livery. The model depicts 170618, which received the operator's Pride-themed vinyls in May 2024. CrossCountry currently operates a fleet of 29 Class 170 Turbostars on services between Cardiff Central and Nottingham, and between Birmingham, Leicester and Stansted Airport.

Produced by Bachmann Europe using the manufacturer's newly announced Class 170 tooling, the three-car unit features low-profile drive units in each vehicle, with drive transmitted to the inner bogie through diecast gearboxes driving both axles.

Lighting features include directional lighting with selectable day and night modes, passenger saloon lighting, illuminated destination panels, independently controlled cab lights and door interlock lights.

Two versions are available to pre-order for delivery in Q1 2027.

- The DCC ready model is priced at £429.99
- The ESU LokSound V5 fitted version costs £499.99

KMRC has also announced a pair of Moger & Co Ltd seven plank wagons in TT:120 and O gauge, representing wagons operated on the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway.

The TT:120 model is being produced by Peco, while the O gauge version is being produced by Dapol, both based on existing seven-plank open wagon tooling.

- The Peco TT:120 model - TTC031 is priced at £25.00
- The Dapol O Gauge model - K7074 costs £65.99

Both models are available now.

Completing the announcements is an OO gauge Franks & Co seven-plank wagon, produced by Rapido Trains UK.

The model represents wagon No.85 operating on the London & South Western Railway. Franks & Co was a coal, gravel and salt merchant based near Guildford station and operated several private owner wagons in a black livery with white lettering.

Based on Rapido Trains UK's RCH 1907 specification seven-plank wagon tooling, the model features side and end doors, double-sided brakes, Ellis axle boxes, smooth tapered buffers and split spoke wheels running in brass bearings.

The model is priced at £32.95 and is due in Q3 2026, with pre-orders now open.

Minerva announces GWR 1361 and 1366

Minerva Model Railways has recently announced new finescale O gauge models of the GWR 1361 saddle tank and 1366 pannier tank classes.

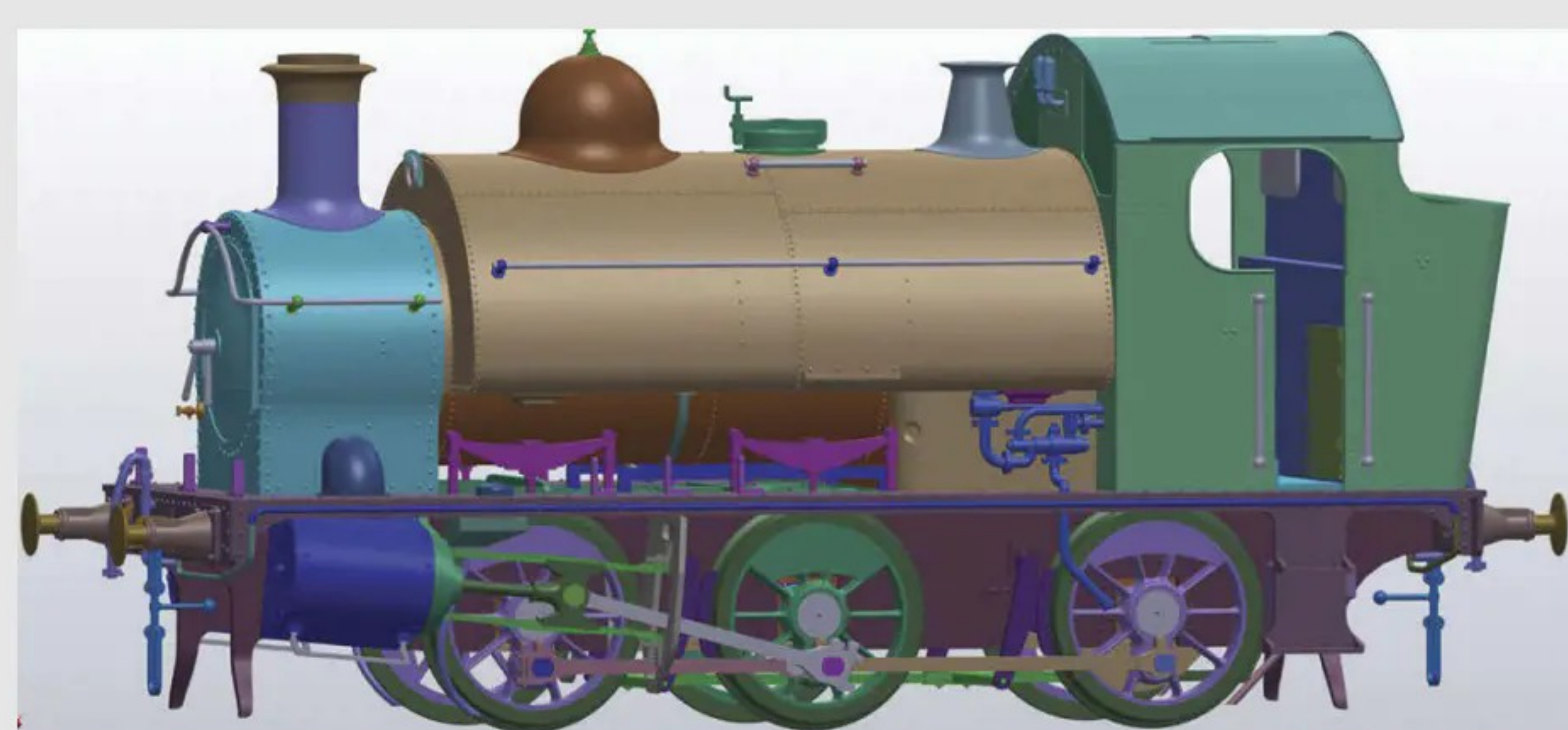
Both projects have been developed together due to the similarities between the prototypes, with the 1361 expected to arrive at the start of 2027 and the 1366 due later the same year.

The announcement marks the first time Minerva has revealed two locomotive projects simultaneously. Both models are being produced to the same general specification as the Manufacturer's previous O gauge releases and will be offered in DC, DCC-Fitted and DCC Sound-Fitted formats.

The 1361 will initially be produced in three liveries:

- GWR plain green with roundel
- BR unlined black with early crest
- BR unlined black with late crest

Minerva has also stated that, if sufficient demand exists, a fourth GWR livery carrying "G W R" lettering on the tank sides may also be produced. An alternative chimney option will also be available. A bespoke DCC sound project is also in development.



Expected retail prices for the 1361 are:

- DC: £325
- DCC-Fitted: £375
- DCC Sound-Fitted: £475

Pricing for the 1366 has not yet been confirmed.

Advance orders are now being accepted directly through Minerva Model Railways. No deposit is required, and payment will only be taken once models have been delivered, tested and prepared for dispatch.

Rapido unveils O in OO

Rapido Trains UK has announced a new OO gauge model of the South Eastern Railway O Class 0-6-0, with nine liveries covering SER, SECR and Southern Railway eras.

The range spans the locomotive's operational life, with the nine versions covering multiple eras and tooling variations.

The project is already at the tooling stage, with pre-orders now open through its website and official retailers.

Livery information

- 825001 - No.315 - SER Cudworth Green
- 825002 - No.378 - SER lined black with red lining
- 825003 - No.80 - SER lined black with red and yellow lining
- 825004 - No.1 - SECR Wainwright Green
- 825005 - No.381 - SECR Wainwright Green
- 825006 - No.171 - SECR plain green
- 825007 - No.142 - SECR grey
- 825008 - No.A8 - SR lined black with Egyptian lettering
- 825009 - No.436 - SR plain black with Egyptian lettering

According to Rapido, the model will feature diecast metal and injection moulded construction, alongside a MoPower stay alive capacitor, plunger pick-ups on the locomotive, wheel-bearing pick-ups on the tender and a firebox flicker with dynamic fire-draw effect on DCC-fitted models.



Tooling variations across the range include different tender fronts, 'garden shed' or 'coal board' toolboxes, alongside both smooth and riveted smokeboxes. Painted numberplates for SER and SECR versions will also be included in the detail packs, together with additional optional detailing parts.

Pricing has been confirmed at £209.95 for DCC-Ready models and £319.95 for DCC Sound-Fitted versions.

The project is currently in tooling, with pre-orders available now through the manufacturer and official retailers.

Rapido Trains enters TT:120 with TMC

TMC has announced that Rapido Trains UK will produce its first TT:120 models as part of a new partnership between the two companies. The collaboration will see the BR Diagram 1/801 Fish and Parcels Van introduced to the scale for the first time.

The announcement represents a notable expansion for Rapido Trains into the growing British-outline TT:120 market, with TMC describing the project as an "ice-breaker" for the manufacturer in the scale.

The range has been developed from exclusive tooling and is intended to cover multiple periods of the prototype's operational life, from dedicated fish traffic through to parcels and departmental use.

The announced range includes models depicting the vans in both fish traffic and later parcels and departmental service conditions. Multiple running numbers are planned

across the range, allowing modellers to assemble realistic wagon formations without duplication. TMC will also offer optional weathering and detailing upgrades.

The range is available to pre-order now from TMC. Pricing has been announced as:

- Single packs - £32.95
- Triple packs - £95.95

Delivery is expected in Q2 2027.



Class 21/29 production samples arrive

Dapol has received the first three production samples of the eagerly-awaited OO Gauge Class 21 and Class 29 models, and these have been approved by the design team and are now on their way to the UK.

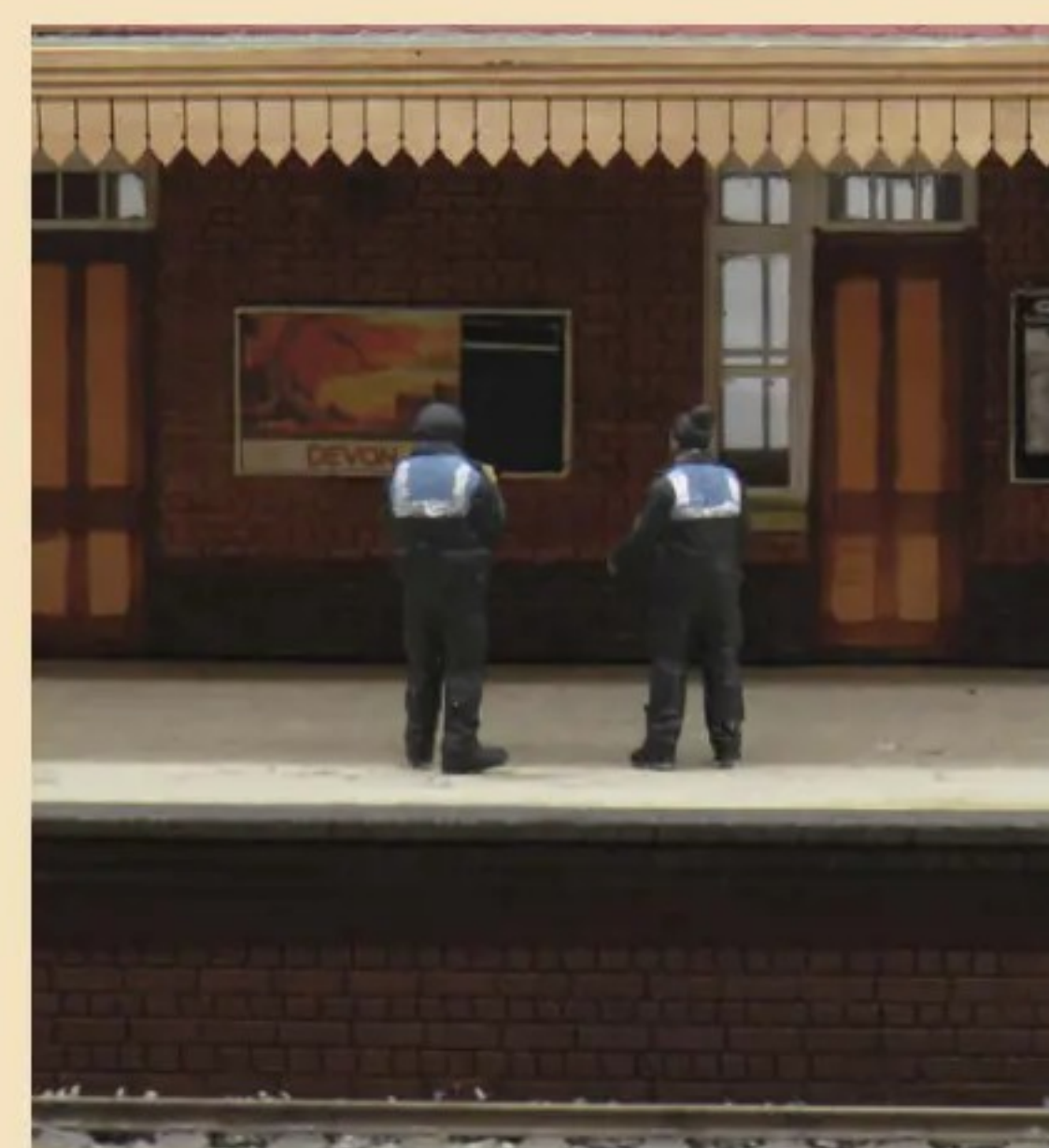
Both Class 21 models are now modelled with a moulded representation of the tablet catcher on the cab side, and have a snow plough in the accessory pack. Priced at £189.66 DCC-Ready, £223.13 DCC-Fitted and £346.52 Sound-Fitted, pre-ordering is available now at your preferred Dapol stockist.



Protect your stations with Osborn's Models

Osborn's Models has announced the OSBF220 Revenue Protection Team figure set from Arch Laser Designs, featuring two modern railway staff figures for OO gauge layouts.

The set includes two Revenue Protection Team staff, posed in discussion and inspection scenarios, reflecting scenes commonly found across today's UK rail network. The figures are available now from the Osborn's Models website and priced at £13.00.



Oxford Diecast introduces Bedford CF Hanlon Ambulance

Oxford Diecast has announced a newly tooled Bedford CF Hanlon Ambulance model in 1:76 scale, expanding its long-running range of British emergency vehicle replicas.

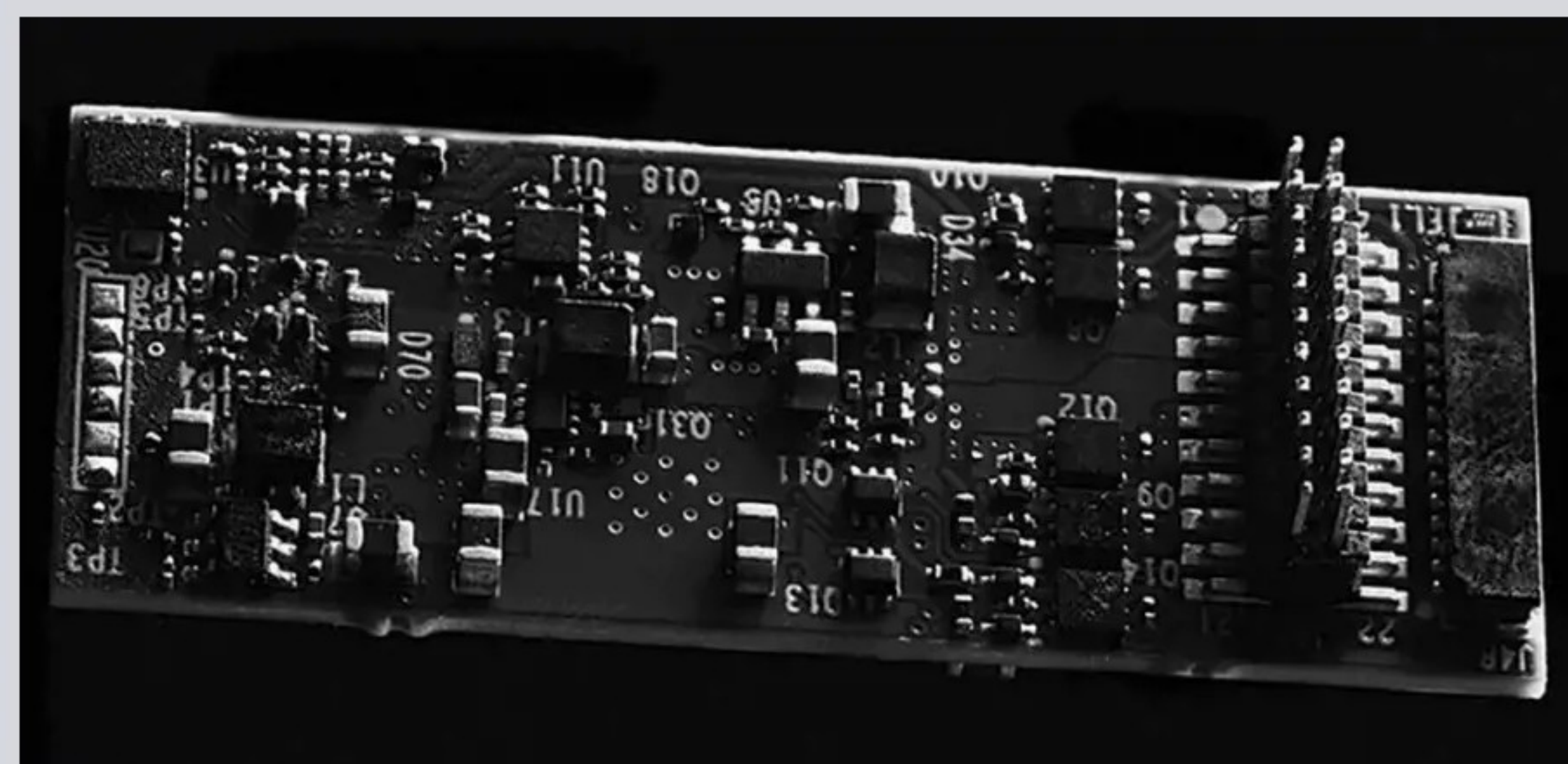
The new release recreates one of the best-known ambulance conversions based on the Bedford CF commercial vehicle platform, produced by Irish coach builder, Hanlon.

The Bedford CF became one of Britain's most widely used commercial vehicles, gaining a reputation for reliability and adaptability across a range of industries. Its layout and interior space also made it suitable for ambulance conversion work.

The model has an RRP of £12.95 and is available via the Oxford diecast website and Oxford diecast authorised retailers.



Ellis Clark plans to rewrite the digital soundscape



Ellis Clark Trains has announced the launch of Nexus Decoders, a new DCC decoder range that the company says will deliver more realistic sound and advanced digital operation for railway modellers.

The new decoder platform features dual-channel technology and will be produced in a variety of sizes to suit different locomotive installations, including compact applications where space is limited.

Phil Parker spoke with Ellis and John at the launch event.

Ellis Clark says the Nexus range has been developed to improve realism and performance while simplifying digital operation for modellers.

A major part of the launch is the company's confirmation that all future Ellis Clark locomotive releases will be supplied with Nexus technology onboard, making the decoder platform a core part of its future product strategy.

The move represents a significant expansion for Ellis Clark Trains, which is best known as one of the UK's leading model railway retailers and auction specialists.

By developing its own decoder ecosystem, the company is entering a highly competitive DCC market traditionally dominated by long-established electronics manufacturers.

According to Ellis Clark, Nexus Decoders have been designed around the needs of railway modellers, with a focus on sound realism, operational flexibility and compatibility across a wide range of models.

Further details on the Nexus Decoder range are available at Nexus Decoders via the Ellis Clark website.

Accurascale's second run of GWR pannier tanks



Accurascale has announced a second production run of its OO gauge GWR pannier tank range, following the release of the original models last year.

The new batch will feature a selection of tooling variations, liveries and identities covering Great Western Railway, British Railways, industrial and preservation eras.

This production run will also incorporate refinements to the electrical pick-up arrangement, while retaining the specification and level of detail seen on the original release.

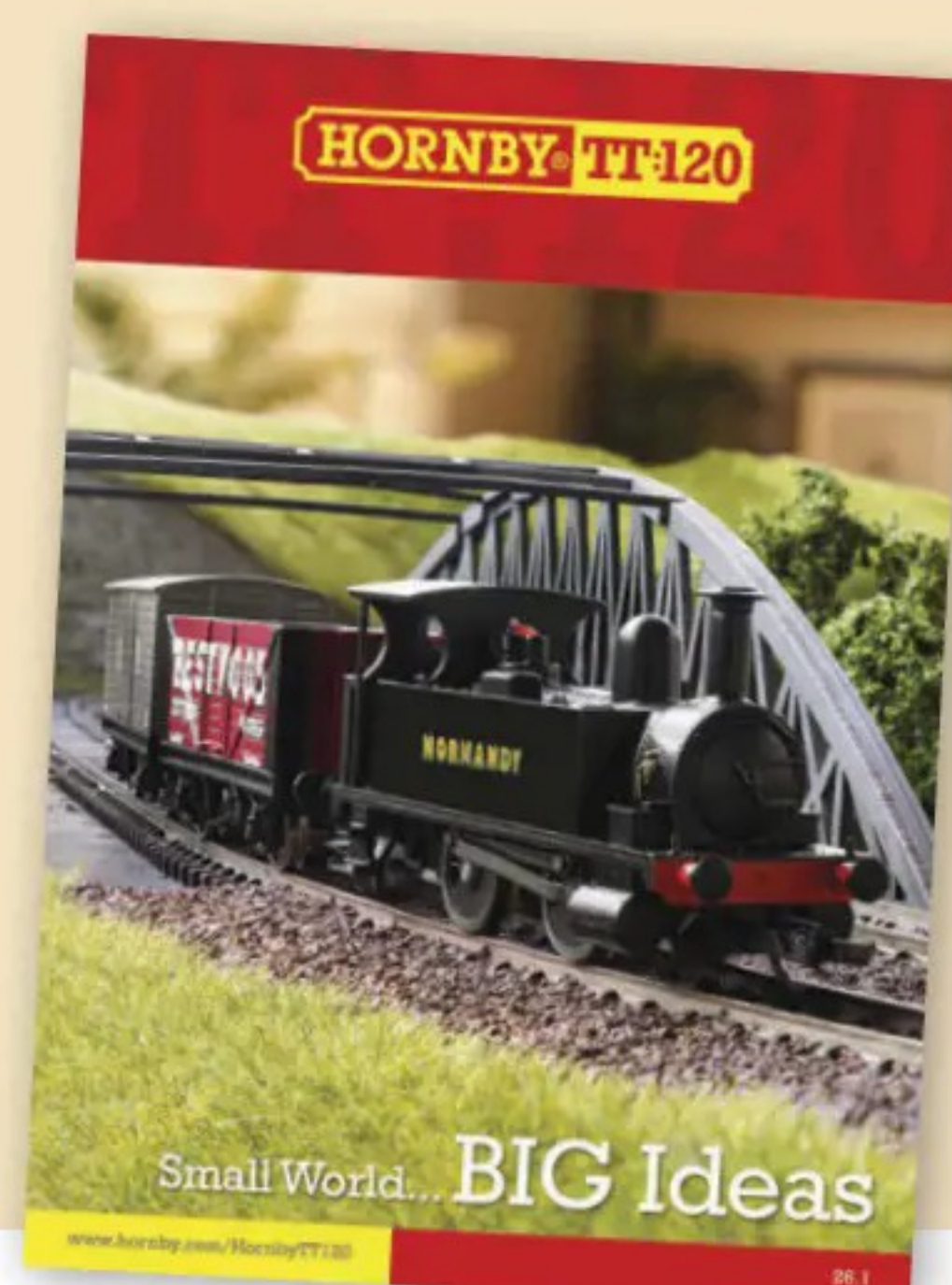
DC/DCC-Ready models will be available at £139.99

DCC Sound-Fitted versions will retail at £239.99

Hornby unveils 2026 TT:120 catalogue

Hornby has announced a catalogue dedicated to TT:120, containing details of the growing range of locos, rolling stock and scenic models it produces in the popular new scale.

Model railway catalogues have been the source of 'dreams' for many generations, and following on from Hornby's TT:120 Spring announcements, a new catalogue dedicated to the scale will be a welcome addition for many exploring what the UK's newest size of model trains has to offer.



Oxford announces Rail Gun re-run

Due to continued strong demand for the Rail Gun, Oxford Rail has announced three new liveries and a final re-run of the WW1 Boche Buster, plus the double-pack, including Dean Goods ROD2308.

RRP Rail Gun £79.95

RRP Dean Goods & Boche Buster £195.95

Expected - TBC

In addition, the Standard Cowans Sheldon 15T Crane will see an additional GW livery.

RRP £99.95

- Expected TBC



WIN A HORNBY 5-CAR TRAIN PACK!

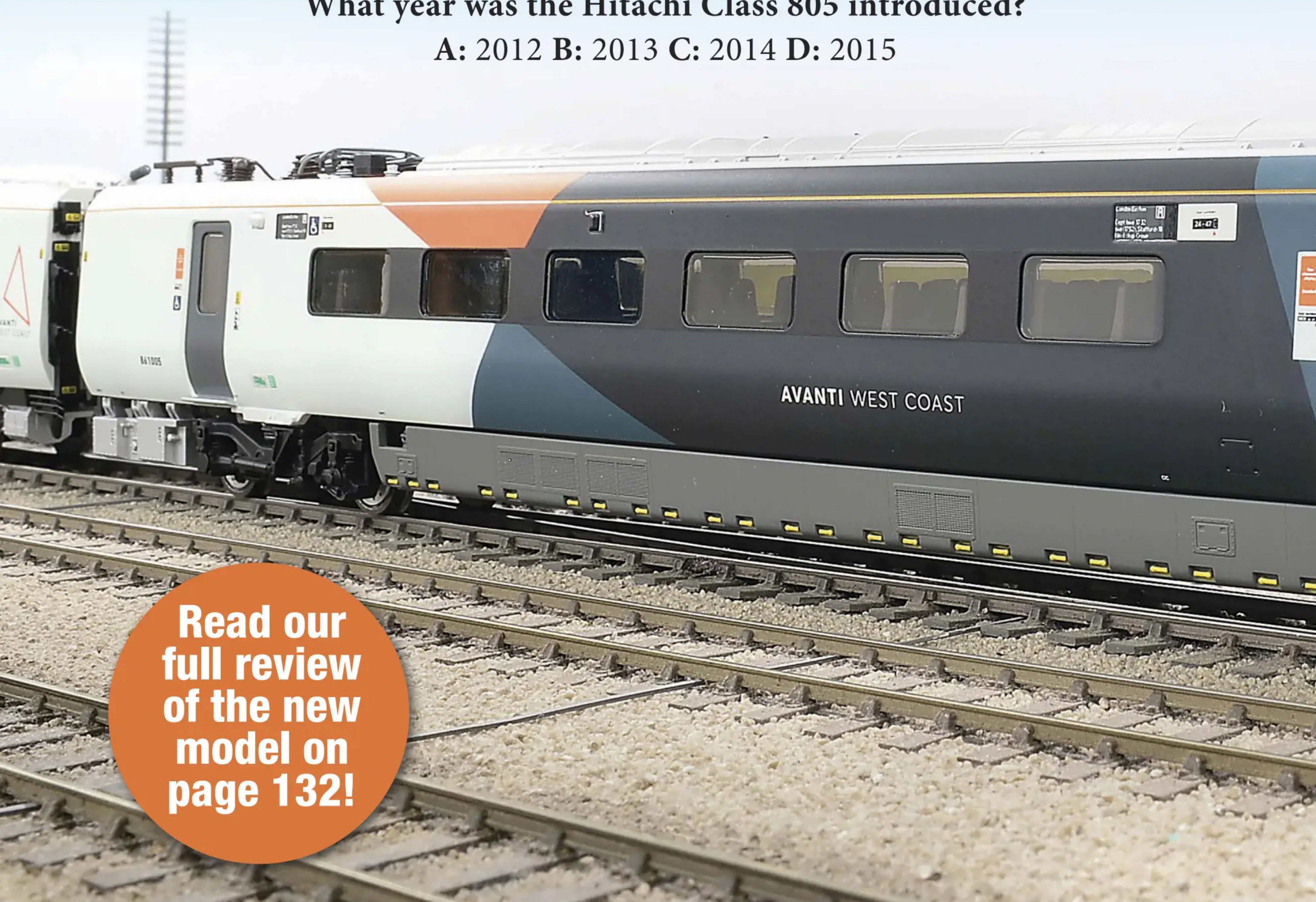
This fantastic prize is ideal for many modern-day modellers and collectors, and includes two model power cars (one motorised and one dummy), plus three coaches in DCC-Ready guise.



For your chance to win, answer the question below to enter the prize draw.

What year was the Hitachi Class 805 introduced?

A: 2012 B: 2013 C: 2014 D: 2015



For your chance to win head to:



Competition will close on August 31st, 2026.



world-of-railways.co.uk/Competitions

Bachmann Class J71



Tony Wright



A lovely model, though pity about the chimney.

Successor to the J71, the J72 has been in the Bachmann range for many years, from the upgrade of the original Mainline/Palitoy examples to the wholly retooled later versions. And now we have a wonderful model of the J72s' predecessor, the Worsdell-designed NER Class E, LNER/BR J71, built from 1886-95. The main differences between the J71 and J72 classes were the larger diameter driving wheels of the former and the vacuum-brakes of the latter (though at least one J71 – No.972 – had smaller driving wheels and vacuum brakes and several J72s remained steam-braked only; as always, when contemplating building or altering/detailing a model, check prototype references). The class was very long-lived, with the final withdrawals taking place as late as 1961. In early LNER days, red-lined black livery was applied, then plain black, apart from No.8268, which was painted in full LNER apple green in 1947, then, as BR 68286, in lined BR green, the reason being its status as York's principal station pilot. It was the only one so treated and was withdrawn in 1952.

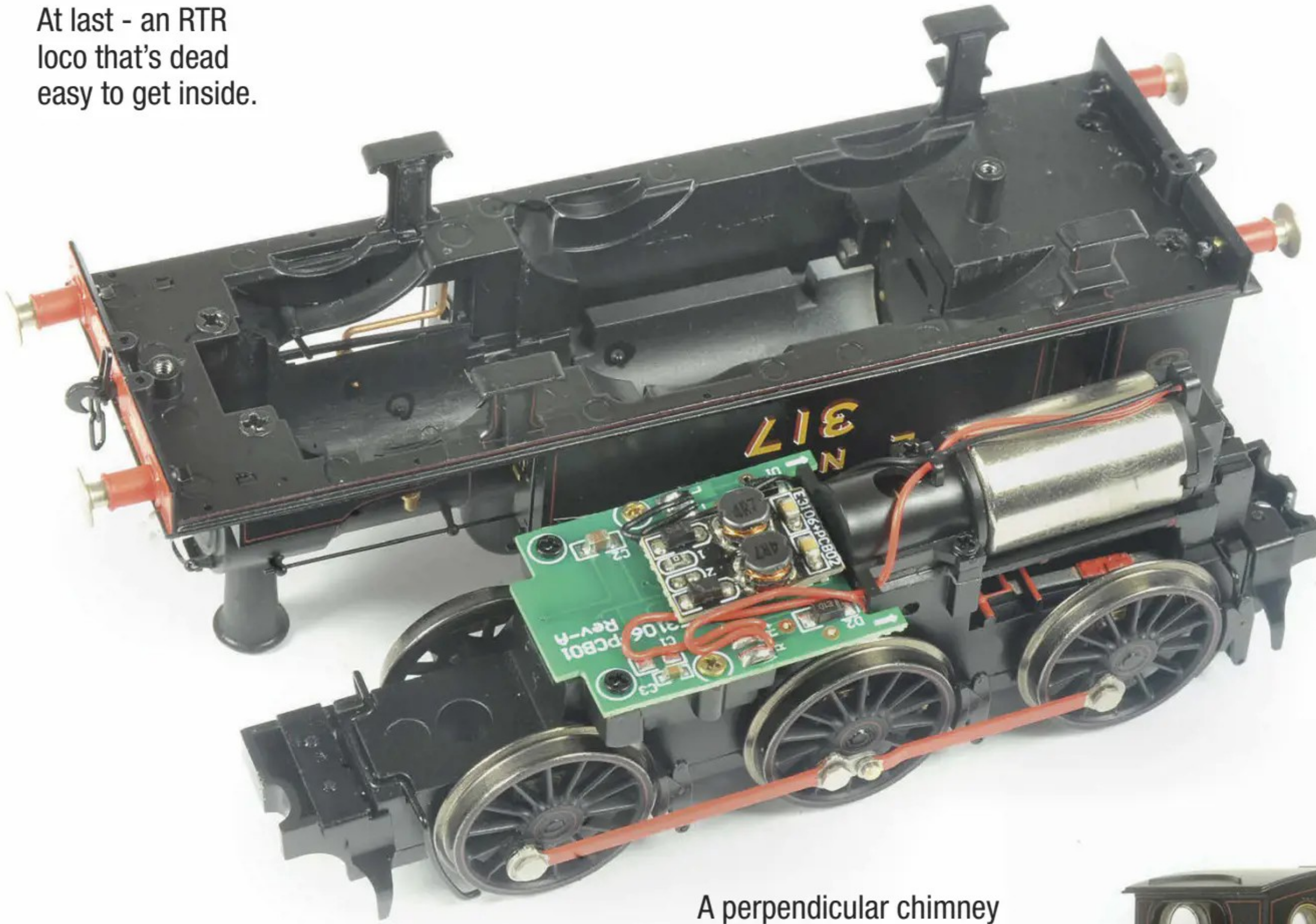
The review model is representative of earlier LNER days, No. 317, in lined black livery. The prototype was built in 1886 and withdrawn as early as 1936, making it a relative 'youngster' at a mere 50 years old! On first inspection (and most subsequent ones), it is a truly delightful little loco. Accurate in all minor and major dimensions, the model fully captures the neat proportions of this quaint little tank. All relevant detail

is present, much of it separately-applied. The buffers are sprung (though one had come loose during passage from the Far East – easily re-fixed with a bead of superglue). Regarding the buffers, though I see no reason to doubt that the parallel shank type fitted are correct, take care if altering the loco's identity because some of the class were fitted with taper-shank buffers or even Group Standard ones.



Now with the chimney on straight - much better!

At last - an RTR loco that's dead easy to get inside.



A perpendicular chimney makes a big difference.



Take care because the lamps are held in place mainly by gravity.

One disappointing aspect was the fixing of the chimney – far from perpendicular and strongly glued in place. In attempting to straighten it, it broke free, and though it's now no longer at a jaunty angle, the fit of its base to the smokebox top is not perfect.

A fully-detailed cab interior is present, and the livery is perfectly applied, even down to the red-painted coupling rods (though how long this pristine condition would last in service is questionable, because these were freight-only/shunting tanks in the main).

As expected now from the RTR manufacturers, performance was exemplary; sweet, quiet, totally jerk-free and silky-smooth. It has enough weight to handle any typical load, and ran through my mix of



ready-to-lay Peco and hand-built pointwork due to its consistent back-to-back dimensions and the concentricity of the wheels.

For once, removal of the body from the chassis was simple (once the front tension-lock coupling was taken off), with no ominous cracking noises or the need to separate body parts (though take care because the rear guard irons fell off on lifting the body!). Fitting a decoder is thus made very easy indeed.

There's a little bag containing extra details, should the purchaser wish to fit them. These include scale couplings – described in the instructions as three-link, but illustrated as screw-links, when, in fact, they're supplied as four-link – surely an error? The lamps (which fit perfectly onto their irons, though they can drop off if the loco is turned upside down) are very neat, but the handles are the wrong orientation for LNER types.

In conclusion, a lovely little loco, surely of great appeal and I recommend it.



Look closely and there's a perfect cab interior.

FACTFILE

Model (Review item in bold):
NER E (J71) Tank 317 LNER
Lined Black

NER E (J71) Tank 68260 BR Black (Early Emblem)

NER E Tank 495 NER Lined Green & Maroon

Construction: Diecast footplate and chassis, plastic body

Weight: 190g

Era: 1923-36

Price: £159.95-269.95

Minimum curves: Radius 2

Accessories: Scale couplings, cab doors, steam heat pipes and lamps

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ General accuracy
- ✓ Excellent performance
- ✓ Quality of running

Rapido Manning Wardle L Class



**Steven
Draper**



Shining with a captivating charm and character, Rapido's latest adds colour to any layout.

There are many reasons to visit a model shop. Maybe you need track, a bottle of glue, or simply an excuse to chat with the owner while admiring the display cabinets.

But beware. If they happen to be a Rapido stockist, there is a strong chance a recently arrived locomotive that isn't your era, doesn't fit your layout and may not even be to the scale you currently model is about to tempt. And the moment you make eye contact, it will provide more than enough reasons to open the wallet and give one a home.

The culprit is Rapido's latest offering, the Manning Wardle L Class.

Until recently, few would have imagined a model like this appearing ready-to-run in OO gauge. The prototype is simply too obscure, too industrial and, on paper at least, too niche to make commercial sense. Yet, as Rapido has demonstrated several

times in recent years, some of the most interesting locomotives are precisely the ones nobody else is prepared to make.

Built by Leeds-based Manning Wardle, around 100 L Class locomotives were produced. They formed part of a family of Victorian industrial designs intended to provide contractors and private operators with a proven off-the-shelf solution for a wide variety of duties. Quarries, construction projects, military railways, light railways and industrial concerns all found uses for the type, while a number ventured overseas.

Customer requirements gave individual locomotives their own appearance and character. Rapido has embraced that variety wholeheartedly. Across the eight models released in the first batch, there are different combinations of cabs, frames, wheels, smokebox doors and liveries, while

additional parts in the accessory pack allow owners to personalise their locomotive further.

The review sample depicts *Bombay* in a dark red, beautifully applied, with crisp lining and supplied etched nameplates, adding another touch of quality.

Despite its modest size, there is a surprising amount to look at. Fine handrails, pipework, and springs are all neatly represented, while the cab itself is packed with detail. Most impressive is the daylight beneath the boiler, offering a glimpse of the bright red motion between the frames.

On the track, my example needed a little encouragement to begin with, but after a decent running-in period, settled down nicely. Thanks to a healthy amount of die-cast metal and a degree of springing on the centre axle, it hauled more than enough stock to look convincing on my rural layout.



Paint, decoration and detailing are impressive.



The cab detail is really well executed.

DCC provision comes via a Next18 socket and every model is supplied with a pre-fitted speaker. Body removal is explained in the instructions, although with so much delicate detail, I'd suggest going for a sound-fitted version if there is any chance you might want this later.

I've reviewed plenty of new locomotives over the last year, but in terms of not really needing but immediately wanting, the L Class sits at the top of the list. It's been designed with love, shines with character and simply makes me smile.

The only question is which version, or perhaps versions, to choose.

Although small, the model demands visual attention, revealing fantastic levels of detail and plenty of tooling variations.



FACTFILE

Model (Review item in bold):

SKU 960001: Manning Wardle L Class - *Matthew Murray*

SKU 960002: Manning Wardle L Class - *Arthur*

SKU 960003: Manning Wardle L Class - *Sir Berkeley* as preserved

SKU 960004: Manning Wardle L Class - *Sir Berkeley* (circa 2000s)

SKU 960005: Manning Wardle L Class - Logan and Hemmingway No.20

SKU 960006: Manning Wardle L Class - *Forward*

SKU 960007: Manning Wardle L Class - *Bombay*

SKU 960008: Manning Wardle L Class - Plain Red

Construction: Plastic and diecast body, diecast chassis

Weight: 117g

Era: 1881 to mid-1960s - Present day in preservation

Price: £149.95-£259.95

Minimum curves: Radius 2

Accessories: Etched nameplates where appropriate, and a detailing bag

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Finesse and detail
- ✓ Character
- ✓ Collectability



Revolution Class 66



Steven Draper



Spot the differences - tooling allows many detail variations.

The Class 66 is one of those locomotives that has become inseparable from Britain's modern railway. Whether hauling containers, aggregates, or engineering trains, it has dominated freight operations for almost three decades. For many modellers, it's not a question of whether a Class 66 belongs on the layout, but which one or, in fact, how many!

Revolution Trains clearly understands that significance, and having recently paid close attention to newly-tooled OO and TT:120 models, I was eager to see how an N gauge model compares.

Straight from the box, the model really impresses. The injection moulded body shell captures the distinctive proportions of the prototype exceptionally well, from the purposeful cab front to the characteristic and superfine bodyside grilles, which also offer a glimpse of the moulded interior.

Detail levels are outstanding throughout, with finely moulded handrails, excellent livery application and an underframe packed with intricately rendered pipework and equipment. If I'm honest, the model would feel just as at home in a jeweller's window displayed next to expensive watches as it does on the layout. Even better, nothing had fallen off in transit and it felt fairly robust while handling.

Two models showcasing different chapters of the Class 66 story were kindly provided for review. The Freightliner green represents the locomotive's early years, when newly-arrived 66s transformed freight operations across the country. Alongside it sits GBRf's vibrant orange and blue, reflecting the type's later career as the established backbone of Britain's freight network.



Just like the real thing, internal access via a lift-off section.



The super fine side grills offer a hint of the interior.



All-axle power and excellent running were experienced.

Revolution has gone beyond simply applying different liveries. Multiple tooling variations reflect the changes seen across the Class 66 fleet throughout its long career, ensuring each model accurately represents its chosen era. These include items like cab windows, underframes, bogies, sandboxes and couplers. The differences in lighting arrangements are particularly noteworthy on the review models, with the characteristic headlight clusters and marker lights faithfully reproduced.

Under DC, lights are switchable using microswitches, easily accessible from a lift-off body section, which also revealed the Next

28 (ESU24) decoder socket. All models are factory-fitted with a speaker, making a user upgrade to a fully featured DCC-controlled model very quick and easy.

A kinematic coupling mechanism separate from the bogie enables model railway curves to be negotiated, and the NEM pockets allow either a super-detailed front end or tension-lock couplings to be fitted.

Performance is equally impressive. Slow-speed running is smooth and controlled on DC straight from the box and plenty of torque was evident. While it wasn't possible to test just how many wagons it would pull, the weight from



Paint and decoration reinforce the finesse of the model.



Both models demonstrate that impressive detail can shrink to N gauge.

FACTFILE

Model (Review items in bold):

RT-N66-EW-083 - 66083 - EWS

Maroon & Gold

RT-N66-DB-128 - 66128 - DB Cargo Red

RT-N66-FL-538 - 66538 -

Freightliner Yellow and Green

RT-N66-GB0-704 - 66704 - Original

GBRf Blue & Orange

RT-N66-GBS-795 - 66795 *Bescot* -

GBRF Standard Euro-import variant

RT-N66-DRP-303 - 66303 - DRS Plain

Blue

RT-N66-DRC-404 - 66404 - DRS

Compass Blue

RT-N66-GW-623 - 66623 - Freightliner

Orange & Black

RT-N66-GBE-752 - 66752 *The Hoosier*

State - GBRF Europorte Blue & Orange

Construction: Injection moulded

body, die cast chassis, etched and

separately-fitted details.

Weight: 103g

Era: 1998 - Present Day

Price: £159.95-£254.95

Minimum curves: Radius 2

Accessories: Etched nameplates (where appropriate), super-detailed front air dam

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Smooth running
- ✓ Excellent paint and decoration
- ✓ DC lighting controls
- ✓ Fineness of detail

the diecast chassis and low-friction gearing, delivering power to all axles, certainly suggests excellent pulling power, and a model that's been designed to operate just as well as it looks.

Revolution Trains has not only delivered a Class 66 that captures both the appearance and character of Britain's most influential modern freight locomotive, it also demonstrates the fabulous level of finesse and performance available today in the scale.

Hornby Hitachi Class 805



Jerry Clifford



The distinctive nose cone of the 805 is perfectly captured.

Modellers of the contemporary scene are well served by the big RTR manufacturers with the Class 221 Voyager from Bachmann and the Class 390 Pendolino and Class 800 Azuma from Hornby. The latter has now introduced its much-anticipated, all-new tooling version of the Avanti West Coast Class 805.

The Class 805 Evero is a bi-model multiple unit, built by Hitachi for Avanti West Coast and based on its successful A train design. Orders for 13 five-car units, to be built at the Kasado works in Japan and Newton Aycliffe in County Durham, were placed in December 2019 to replace the all-diesel Class 221 Voyagers on West Coast Main Line services between Euston, Birmingham, Chester and the North West coast line. The bi-model nature of the 805s would allow for the elimination of the



The roof has a full complement of separately-fitted details.

need to run on diesel power over the long stretches of electrified line. Static testing started in the summer of 2022, with main line testing commencing the following February. The units entered service in June 2024. The Class 805 and 221 units shared services for the first few months until the Voyagers were transferred to Cross Country in December 2024.

First impressions on removing the train from the box are very good. The sleek, modern lines of the prototype have been well captured and, as far as my limited information goes, the model is very accurate.



Underside view showing the three screws that release the fairing, giving access to the DCC socket.



The livery application is superb with crisp lines between the colours with no fuzziness. The numerous information panels are all fully legible, though I had to blow them up on the screen to check this! The sides are largely flush, but what detail relief there is, such as the recessed doors, steps, door controls and vents are nicely done. Grill detail on the underframe cowling is subtle, and the battery boxes and other electrical items under the ends of the coaches are all separate fittings.

Where there is much more scope for detail is the roof, an area not always obvious to the lineside observer. The various grills, fans and insulators are all present and again, largely separate fittings. The pantographs are very finely detailed plastic mouldings, although they are a little flimsy. Nose detail is good and the large windscreen, with its separately-applied wiper, gives a good view of the cab interior, which is crying out for a driver. The side windows allow the detailed interior to be seen, though the motor unit in the power car does intrude a little, but the tinted glass means this isn't too obtrusive. Access to the interior to allow for the fitting of passengers and crew is via clips on the body sides. There is no provision for interior lights.



The complex livery is different on all five cars of the unit.



The livery has been faithfully reproduced by Hornby.



The plethora of lettering, information panels and geometric décor is superbly printed.





The Hornby 805 is being put through its paces on 'Little Bytham'.

Performance is excellent, being smooth and quiet throughout the range with a good turn of speed. The heavy driving car contains a large sealed unit can motor driving all eight axles and provides ample power for the five-car set. The neat coupling mechanism means the unit is capable of negotiating second radius curves, though the resulting excessive overhang does look a little ridiculous.

The model is DCC-ready with a 21-pin socket housed in the underframe fairing and easily accessed through the removal of three screws – a plus point as far as I'm concerned. Hornby doesn't do electrical couplings, so if you want to make full use of the head and tail lights, the dummy power car will require its own DCC chip, though there is no mention of this in the rather brief, though adequate, information leaflet.

Nor is there any mention of how to turn off the tail lights of the unit if running in multiple to make up a 10-car train, as they sometimes do on the prototype, though, as there is no provision for a removable nose cone and coupling, as there is on the same manufacturer's Azuma class 800, this isn't possible anyway. There is also no factory speaker nor any provision for stay alive, which I think is a little disappointing for a model with an RRP north of £500, although, to be fair, there is plenty of room in the DCC compartment.

Overall, with the few minor caveats aside, I think this is an excellent model and Hornby should be congratulated for the way in which they support modellers of the contemporary scene. Recommended.

FACTFILE

Model:

R30443 Avanti West Coast - Class 805 - 805005 - 5 Car Train Pack

Construction: Plastic body with metal chassis

Weight: 486g (motorised power car)

Era: 2014-current day

Price: £549.99

Minimum curves: Radius 2

Accessories: N/A

WHAT WE LIKE

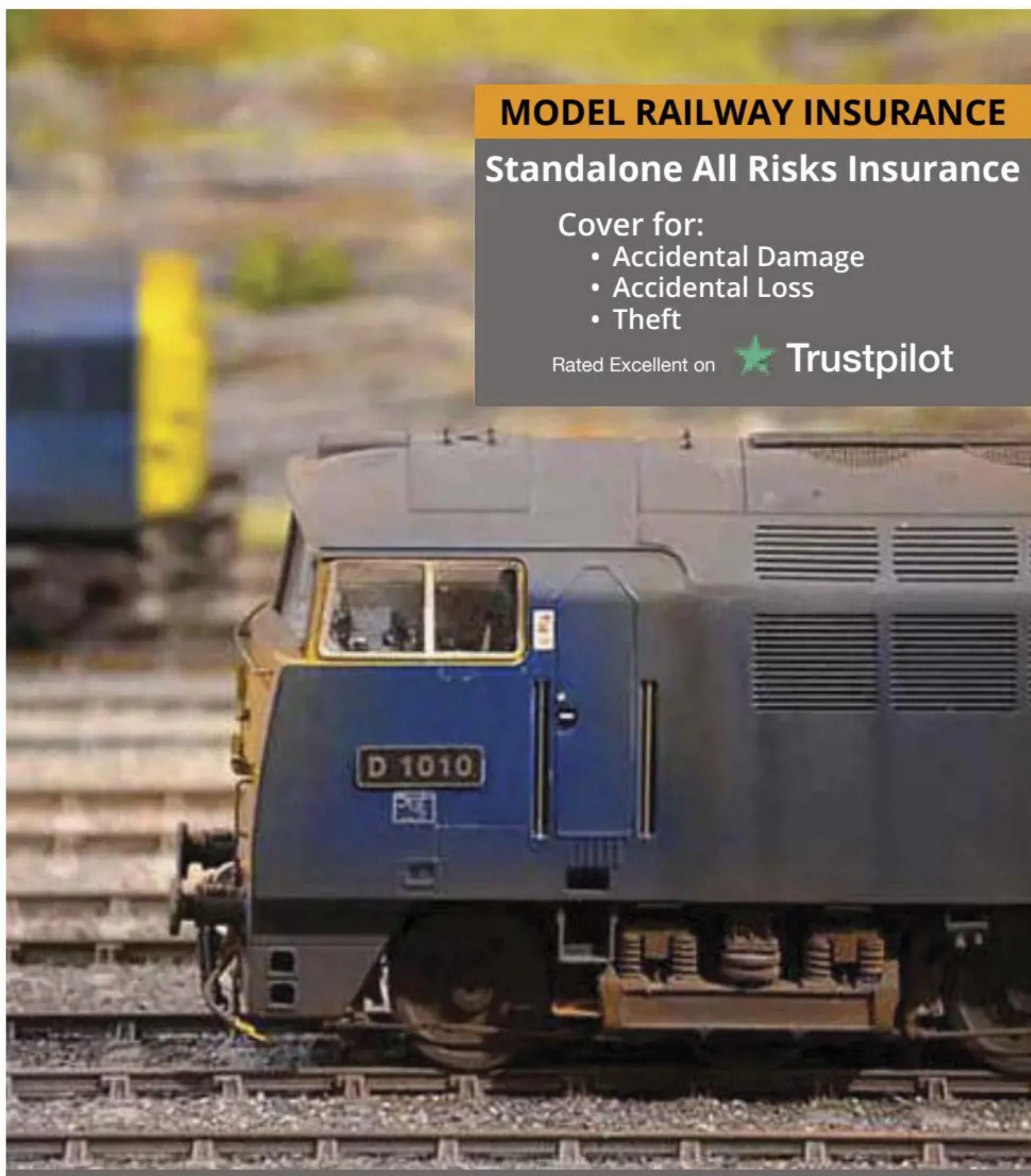
- ✓ Livery application
- ✓ Excellent performance
- ✓ Fine roof detail

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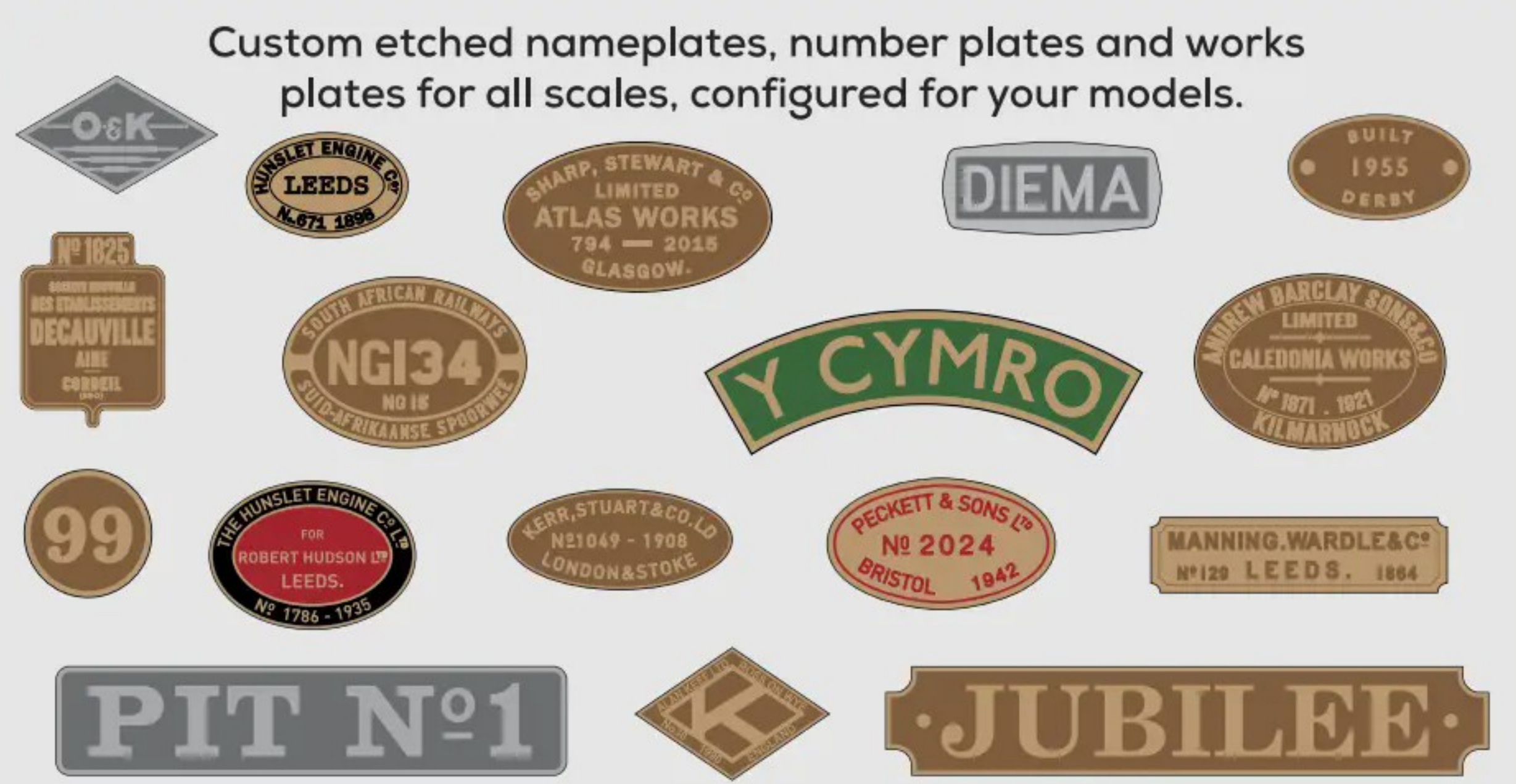
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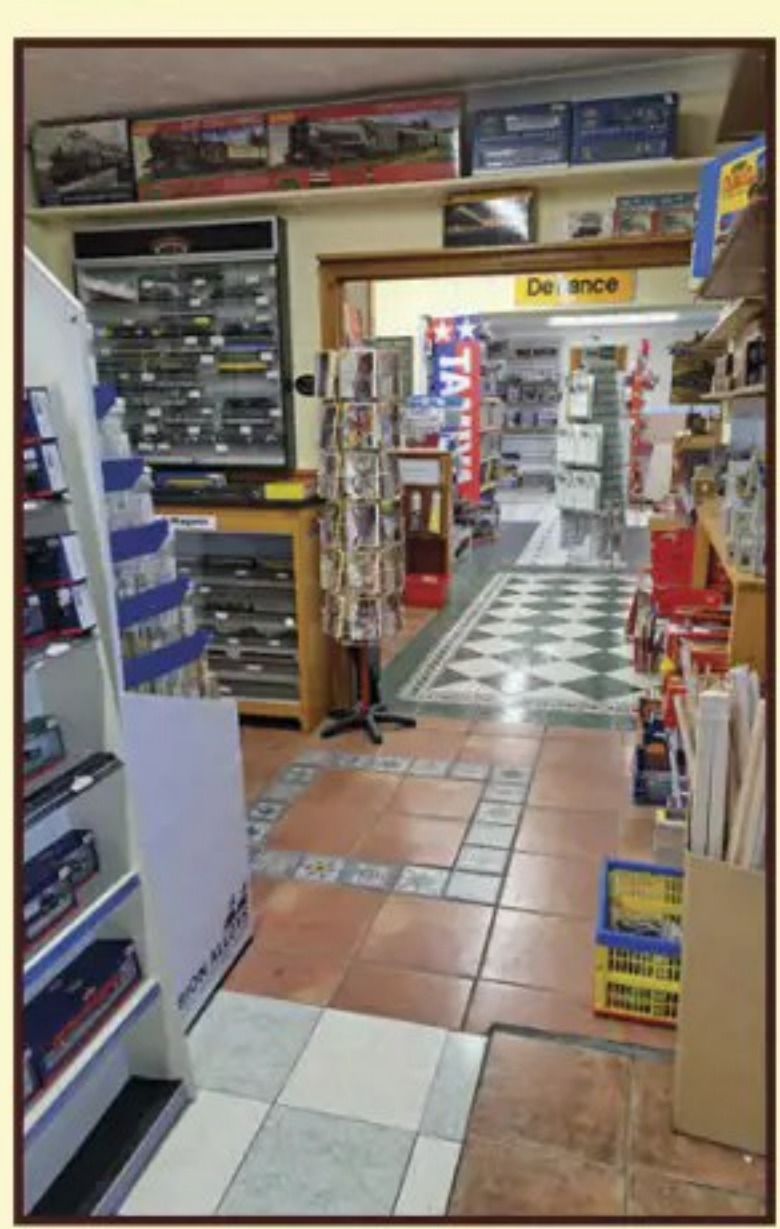
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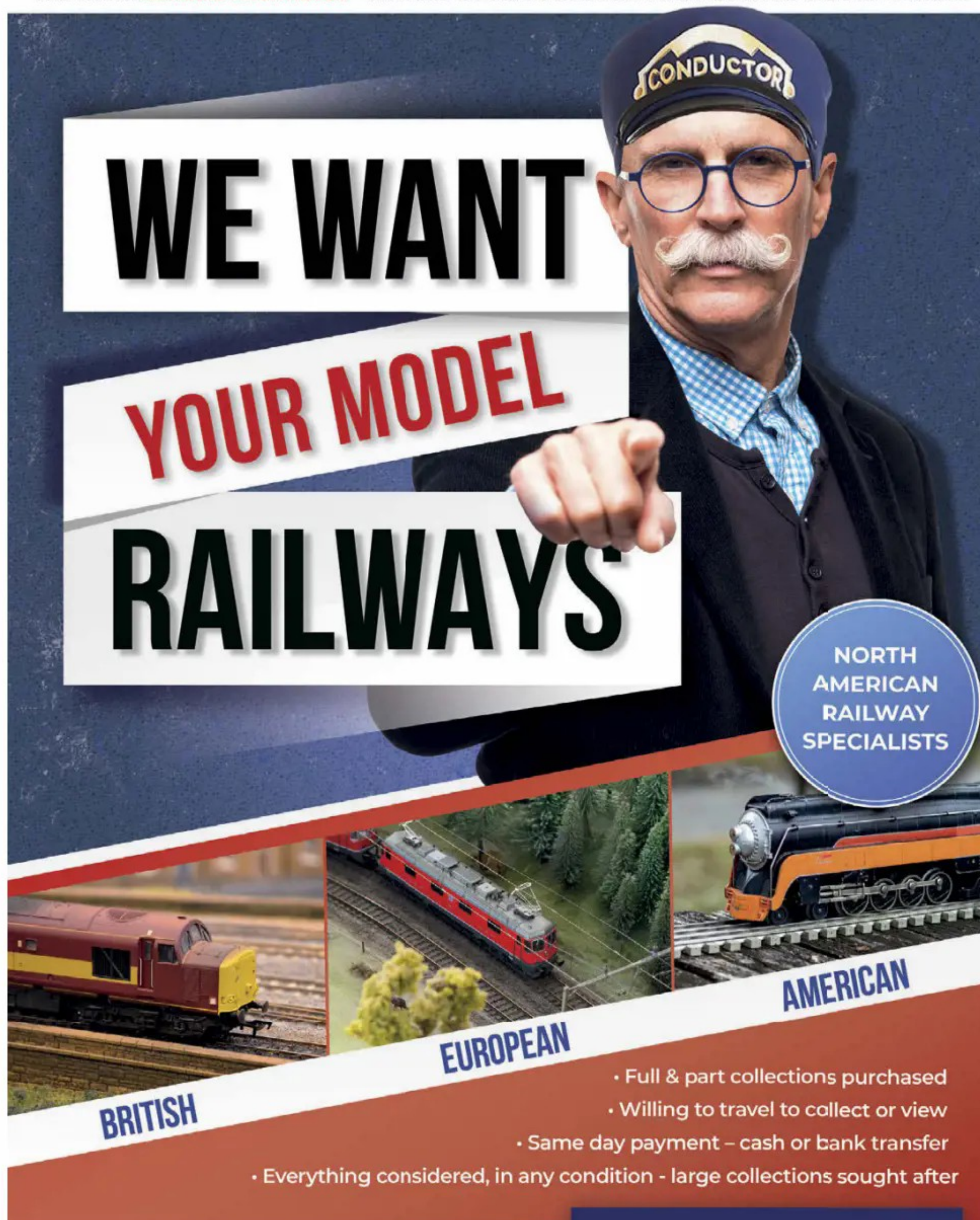
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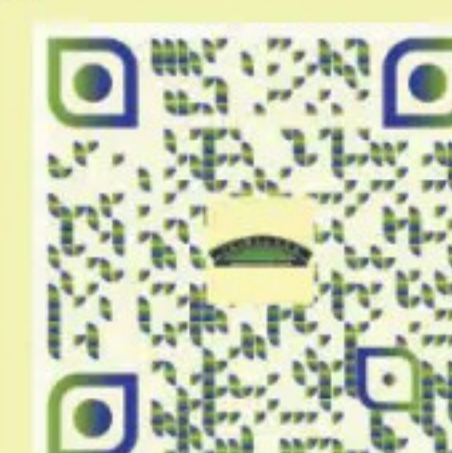
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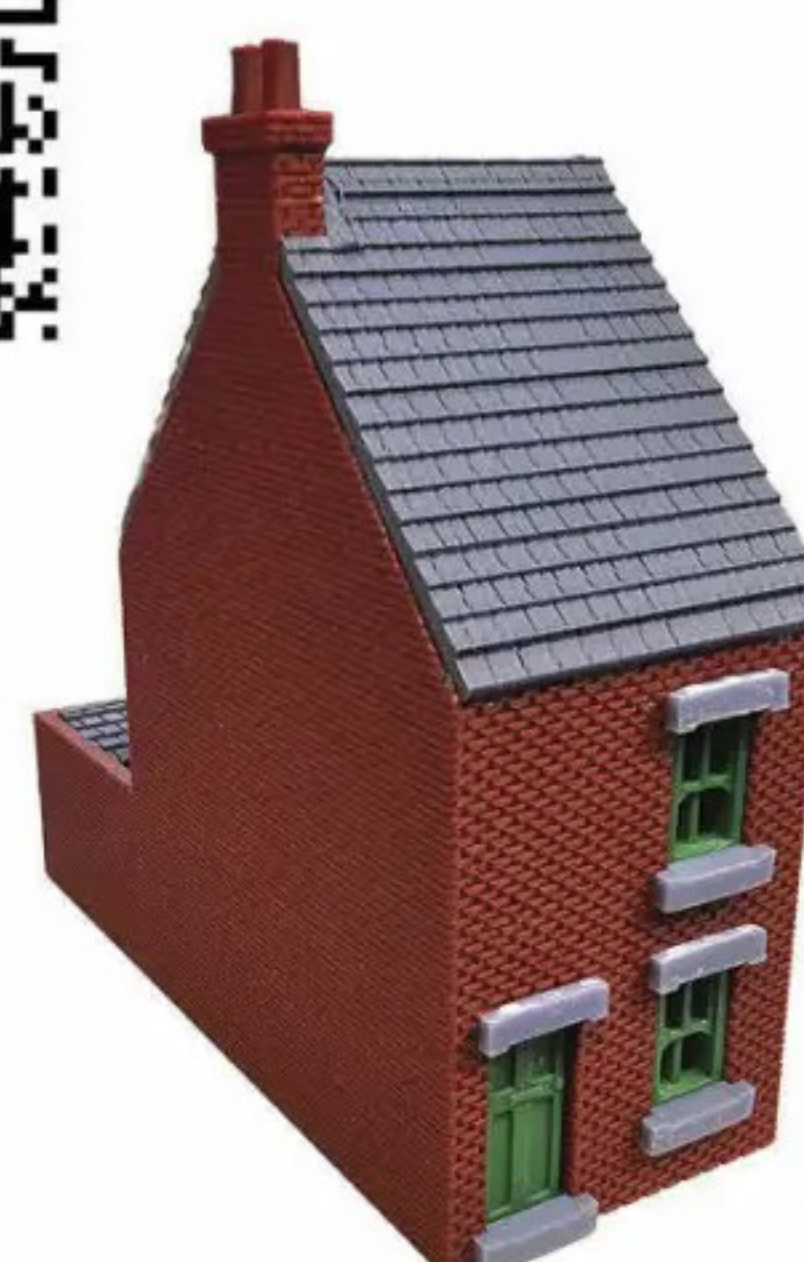
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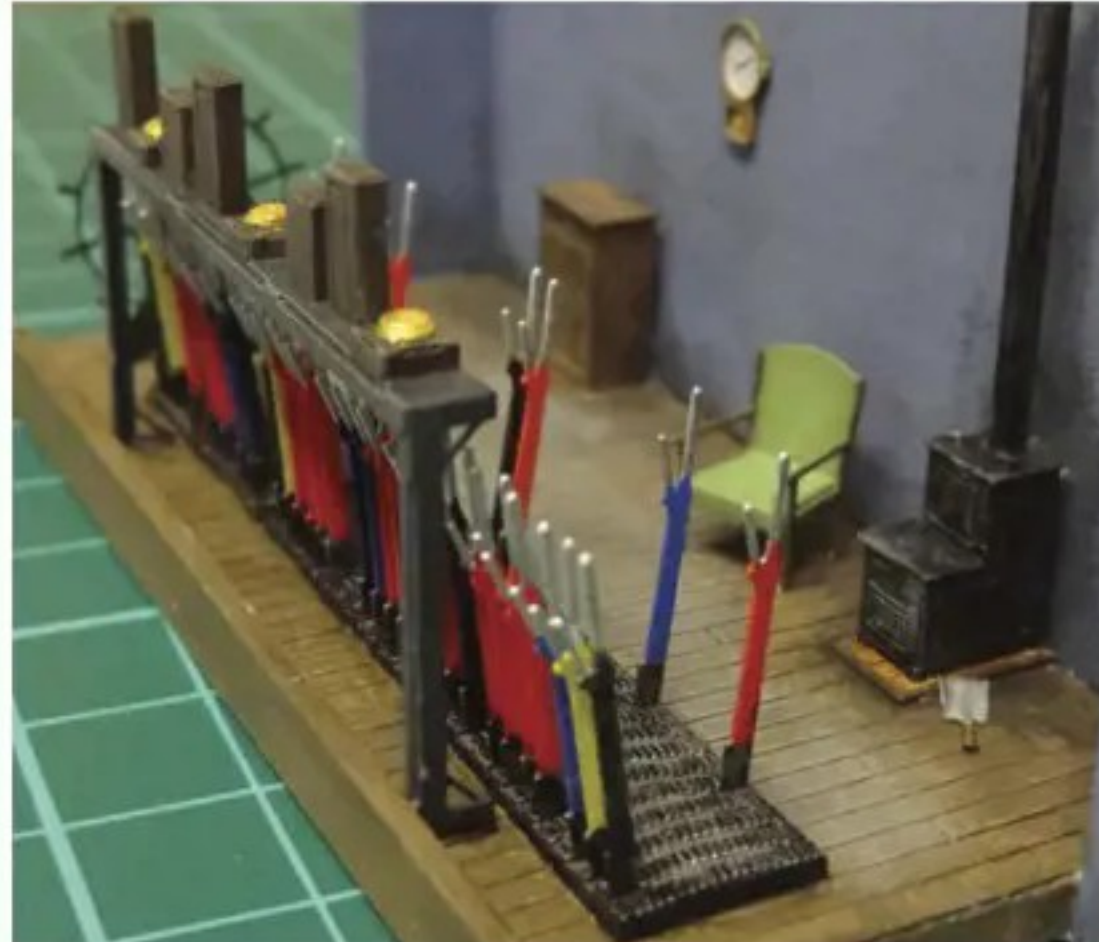
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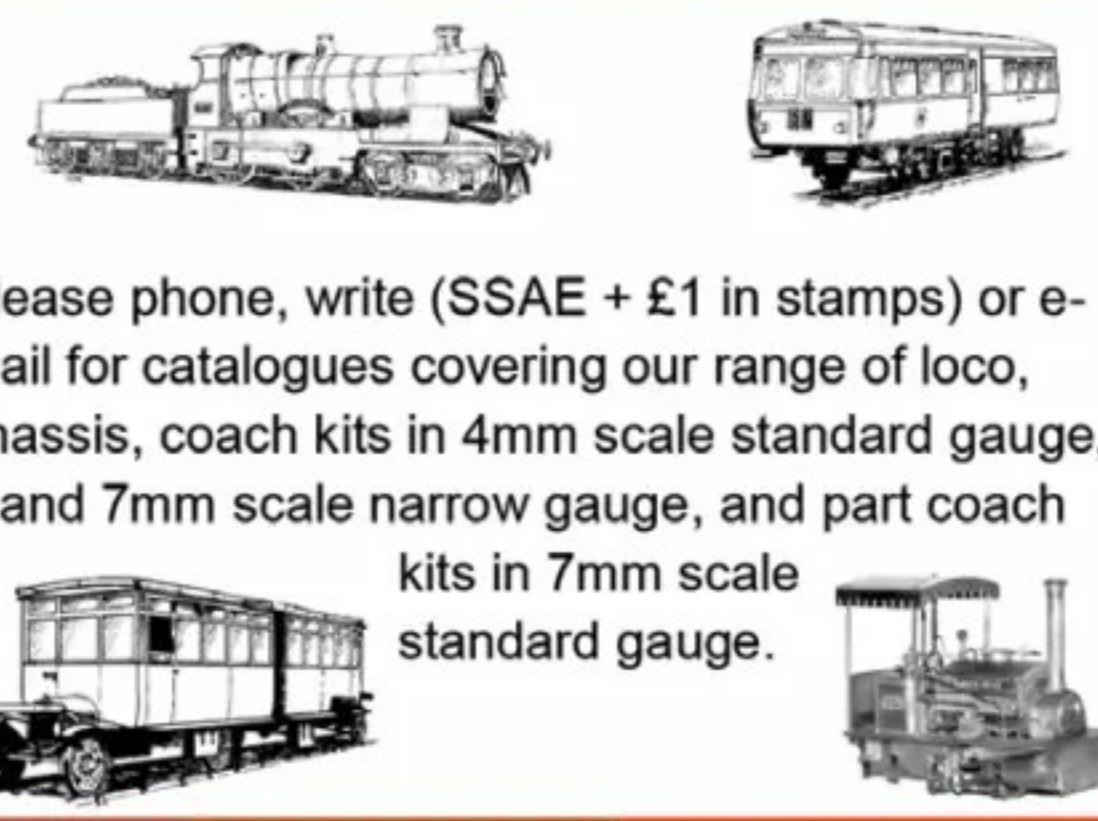
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This month in pictures



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Chris from Minerva Models didn't exactly need the hard sell to persuade Steven to buy one of its new GWR cattle wagons.



Does Phil need a wooden kit for an American S gauge watermelon reefer kit? No. But he couldn't resist it anyway.



Debbie's trip wasn't any cooler. She and Thomas found the underground a bit toasty.



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A little large-scale action on the test track at the Gauge 3 Society AGM and exhibition.

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