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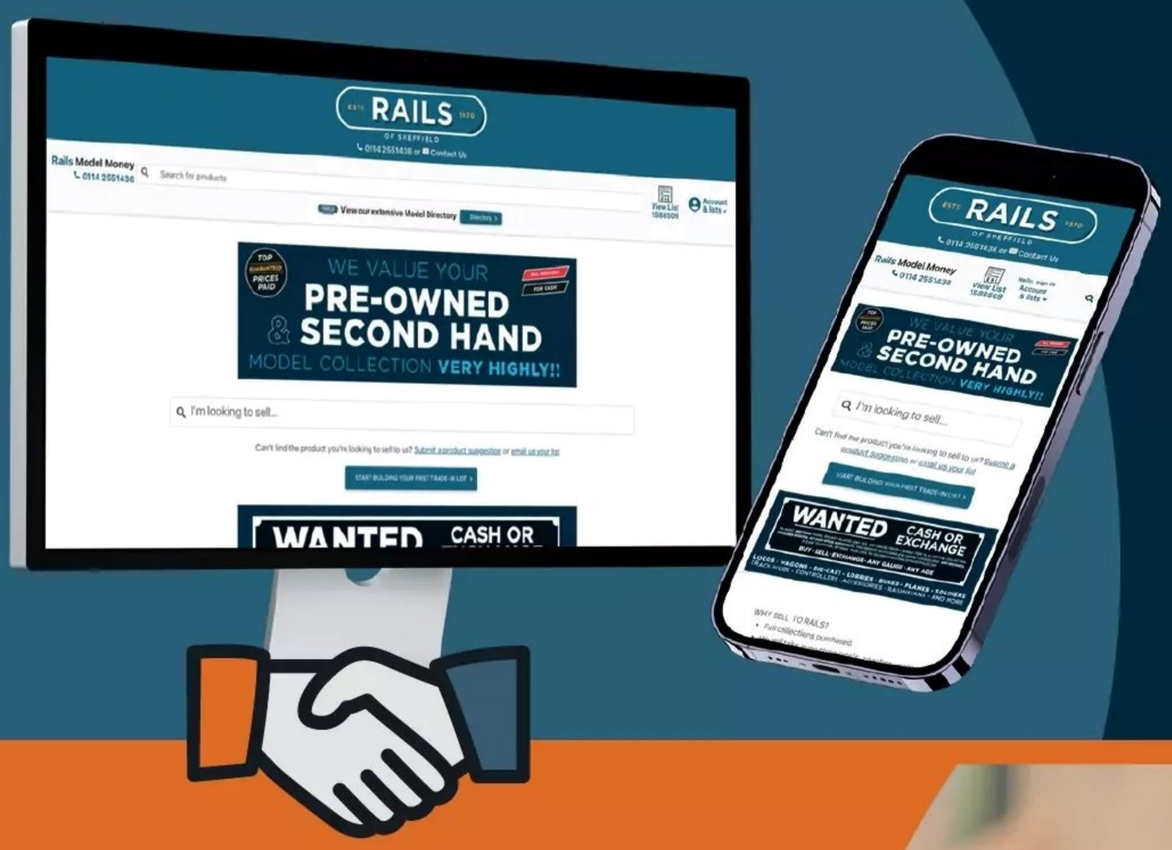

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This month's cover image

Mike Turton's 'Yeovil Central' re-imagines the town's station as a point where the Southern and Western regions meet. See page 32 for the full story. CHRIS NEVARD

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Welcome

Another Model Rail Scotland has come and gone, with the premier annual exhibition offering the usual diverse mix of layouts and trade support within a relaxed, family-friendly environment. I greatly enjoyed my two days at the event, admiring the handiwork of other modellers and being filled with renewed enthusiasm for my own ongoing projects.

That's one of the joys of attending model exhibitions, as looking at how other modellers have approached common challenges or the discovery of new products never fails to generate ideas in my own head. Chatting with fellow modellers is also helpful, exchanging concepts and experiences, which inevitably sows further seeds of inspiration.

A few days of travelling around the Glasgow rail network also proved inspiring. There are numerous busy junction stations which are ideal modelling subjects. Thanks to my discovery of the bargain SPT Roundabout rover ticket, I managed to explore much more territory this year, especially south of the Clyde, with the huge brick and concrete signal box at Newton catching my eye in particular.

Once governing the junction of the Argyle Line and West Coast Main Line, Newton signal box has been out of action for many years, but it still looms large over the remaining local platforms. Its austere appearance offers a straightforward scratchbuilding job and, due to its height, it would offer an effective scenic break or low-relief backdrop.

Another appealing element of Newton is the idea of a foreground station, served by a regular feast of local multiple units, while non-stop inter-city expresses whizz by in the background. If one was to manipulate history a little, the inclusion of the Hallside Steel Works – which is now but a memory – would make a dramatic backdrop.

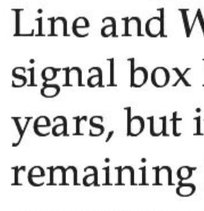
That's another modelling aspiration to add to my list…!

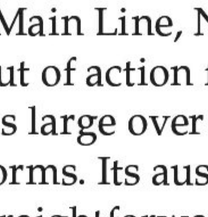
Enjoy the new issue!

George Dent Editor

The imposing edifice of Newton station signal box towers over ScotRail's 318259, arriving on a Dalmuir-Cumbernauld service. GEORGE DENT

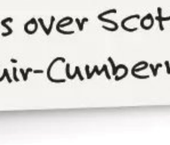
Meet the team behind the UK's best modelling magazine

Chris Leigh

He's been active in the hobby for over 60 years.

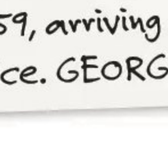
Chris Gadsby

The smaller the detail, the more interested he is.

This month's contributors

Chris Nevard


Peter Marriott

Ben Jones


Ben Ando

Dave Lowery

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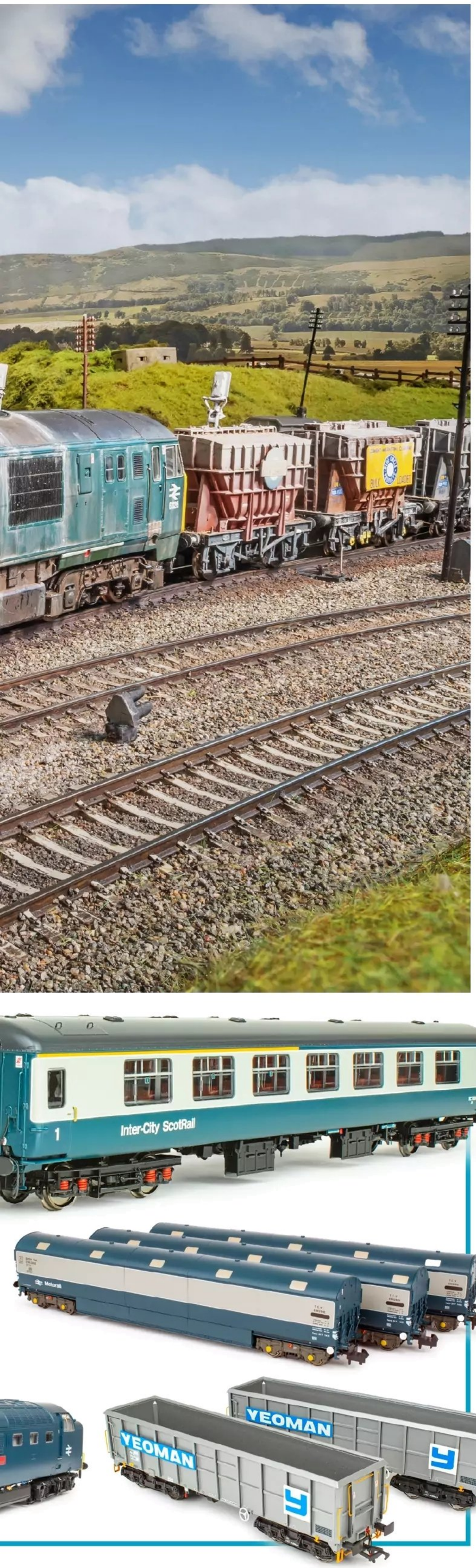

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EXCLUSIVE! CLASS 12 SHUNTS FORWARD

OO GAUGE

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After an unexpected delay, we're delighted to report that our 'OO' Class 12 project has now reached the decorated sample stage. Produced exclusively for *Model Rail* by Heljan, and following on from our Class 11s, the Class 12s feature the same impressive specification, including a die-cast metal chassis, powerful five-pole motor coupled to a brass flywheel and driving a set of high-reduction gears for optimal slow-speed running. A Next18 DCC interface is provided, along with a pre-installed speaker.

Like our Class 11, this is the first time the distinctive Class 12s have been offered in ready-to-run form, with a range of period and prototype-specific details incorporated into each model. Although outwardly similar to the Class 11s, we've included the various design alterations implemented by Oliver Bulleid when the Southern Railway placed the order for 26 locomotives prior to nationalisation. Most notable of which is the larger Bulleid-Firth-Brown wheels.

Furthermore, our tooling suite caters for the original and later style cab and nose end styles, with working electric lamps on the later versions, while all models feature cab interior lights which can be toggled on/off using the supplied magnetic wand or via DCC.

Five different versions will be available, encompassing the four main liveries carried during their career with British Railways, along with a rendition of the former 15231 in Tilcon blue, as it appeared during its life at Rylstone Quarry in North Yorkshire from 1971-85.

After a few years' worth of development work, it's exciting to see the Class 12s in colour and we're on course to see the models arriving later this year. These decorated samples are not quite perfect, with some detail parts omitted and several areas identified for correction or improvement. However, this is to be expected at this stage, as the manufacturer irons out any remaining issues prior to production getting under way.

This is a strictly limited run, with only 300 pieces of each version being produced. We've managed to maintain the same price as the Class 11s, despite rising manufacturing and shipping costs. Accordingly, these forthcoming models offer

great value, especially when a *Model Rail* subscriber's 10% discount is factored in. What better time to take out a subscription? See page 26.

We're unable to start taking orders until the models are on their way to the UK, which is expected in the second half of this year, so look out for more updates in *Model Rail* over the coming months.

PRICE £169.00

£152.10 *Model Rail* subscribers price

What's planned?

- MR-520 Class 12, 15220 BR black, early crests
- MR-521 Class 12, 15224 BR plain green, early crests
- MR-522 Class 12, 15221 BR green, late crests, 'wasp' ends
- MR-523 Class 12, 15212 BR blue, 'wasp' ends
- MR-524 Class 12, ex-15231 Tilcon blue, 'wasp' ends

LMS/BR CLASS 11 – THE PIONEERS

Designed and built in the 1940s, initially for the LMS and War Department, the Class 11 proved to be the precursor of British Railways' iconic Class 08 diesel-electric shunters. Produced in association with Heljan, our exclusive Class 11 is available in 15 versions, ranging from LMS black and War Department green to all of the key BR era liveries. There's a colourful pair of post-1970 industrial schemes too!

◆ Turn to page 98 to view the entire range.

BACHMANN'S SPRING UPDATE OFFERS VARIETY

PROTOTYPE POWER CARS STEAL THE SHOW

One of the most striking additions to Bachmann's Branchline range of 'OO' locomotives is the Prototype HST power car (HSDT). The project was launched initially in 2023 as a joint venture with Locomotion Models and Rails of Sheffield's Railway Icons brand, with the resulting model depicting 252001 arriving recently. Now, Bachmann's impressive model will also be available in the Collector's Club range.

Offered as a twin set, featuring both Class 41 Prototype power cars numbered as 41001 and 41002, the models are decorated in their original grey/blue livery with yellow warning panels. Both power cars are fully motorised and feature pre-installed speakers and PluX22 DCC sockets, plus a full array of lighting functions.

Additionally, a single powercar is offered in 41001's later Departmental guise as ADB975812 with full wraparound yellow end, with a choice of DCC-ready or DCC sound-fitted options. Employed by British Rail's research division, the power car hauled all manner of test trains, including APT vehicles, throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The models are on sale now, exclusively via Bachmann's Collectors Club (BCC), with members eligible for a 10% discount off the normal price. As with all BCC models, they're also now available to non-members at the full retail price.

Availability: Bachmann Collectors Club
Web: *www.bachmann-collectorsclub.co.uk*

What's available?

- 35-110K Class 41 HSDT twin set, 41001 & 41002, BR grey/blue
Price: DCC-ready £399.95 (BCC member price £359.95)
- 35-111K Class 41 HSDT ADB975812 BR grey/blue with full yellow end **Price:** DCC-ready £199.95 (BCC member price £179.95), DCC sound £309.95 (BCC member price £278.95)

RAIL 200 ANNIVERSARY SPECIALS

Depicting one of the locomotives that took part in the 100th anniversary celebrations of the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway in 1925, LNWR Class G2 0-8-0 is being offered in plain LMS black. The 'G2' is available with or without DCC sound.

Another steam locomotive to have taken part in an important event is a GWR '57XX' Pannier tank in GWR green, which took part in the 1975 cavalcade at Shildon to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the S&DR.

A pair of wagons with a link to the S&DR 100th anniversary has also been produced, including an RCH open mineral decorated in the livery of Tarslag Ltd of Stockton.

Each of these models come in specially designed souvenir packaging.

What's available?

- 31-483 LNWR Class G2 0-8-0, No. 9446, LMS black
Price: £189.95 (DCC-ready), £289.95 (DCC sound)
- 32-215A GWR '57XX' 0-6-0T, No. 7752, GWR green
Price: £124.95
- 37-026 RCH Five-plank open wagon, Tarslag Ltd, grey
Price: £26.95
- 37-944 NER Three-plank open wagon, NE grey
Price: £23.95

DESIRO CLASS 350 EMU RETURNS

OO GAUGE

The Siemens Desiro Class 350 EMU makes a welcome return this Spring, with four-car 25kV units offered in First TransPennine Express livery (Class 350/4) and London Northwestern Railway (Class 350/3). South Western Railway livery appears for the first time too, on third-rail powered Class 450/0. All sets feature 21pin DCC sockets and sound-fitted versions are offered for the first time.

Prices: £499.95 (DCC-ready), £599.95 (DCC sound)
Availability: Bachmann stockists
Web: *www.bachmann.co.uk*

BULLEID & BR COACHES ADDED

OO GAUGE

Bachmann's newly tooled BR Mk 1s (reviewed in MR335) gain some new livery options, with the First Open (FO) and Restaurant Buffet (RBR) rendered in the 'executive' version of BR's InterCity scheme, as well as BR's prestige InterCity 'Swallow' charter scheme with white roofs. Meanwhile, the Brake Second Open (BSO) is available in BR's West Highland green/cream livery. All are priced at £67.95 each.

The range of SR Bulleid coaching stock also gains a couple of newly tooled models (as revealed in last month's issue), in the shape of the Brake Composite Corridor and First Open, which are being made available in BR Southern region green, crimson/cream and maroon, priced at £74.95 each.

OPEN TOP PARADE

The Leyland Atlantean open-top double-decker bus is added to the 'OO' EFE Road range this Spring, just the thing for recreating your favourite football team celebrating a trophy. Five versions have been created, taking in London and Glasgow sightseeing tours, plus Western National, NBC Red Bus and a snazzy 1980s Ribble guise.

Price: £44.95 each

FARISH HIGHLIGHTS

N GAUGE

The GWR '64XX' 0-6-0 Pannier tank is a new addition to the catalogue this Spring, with five versions across GWR and BR liveries (including weathered versions), each equipped with a 6pin decoder socket. For the diesel era, the superb Farish Class 47 receives three new identities, with a pair of '47/4s' and a famous ScotRail '47/7'. The Brush Type 4s boast a high specification, including working lights, Next18 decoder interface and speakers pre-installed, although DCC sound-fitted options are available.

What's available?

- 371-986B GWR '64XX' 0-6-0T No. 6406, BR black, early crest
- 371-986C GWR '64XX' 0-6-0T No. 6413, BR black, early crest (weathered)
- 371-987A GWR '64XX' 0-6-0T No. 6408, BR lined green, late crest
- 371-987B GWR '64XX' 0-6-0T No. 6416, BR lined green, late crest (weathered)
- 371-990 GWR '64XX' 0-6-0T No. 6412, GWR green 'shirtbutton'

Price: £119.95 (£124.95 weathered)

- 372-245A Class 47/7 47712 *Lady Diana Spencer*, BR ScotRail
- 372-263 Class 47/4 47555 *The Commonwealth Spirit*, BR Railfreight Distribution
- 372-266 Class 47/7 47849, BR InterCity 'Swallow'

Prices: £179.95 (DCC-ready), £289.95 (DCC sound)

CLASS 74 IN COLOUR

OO GAUGE

Although first announced in January (see last month's issue), details have now been confirmed regarding EFE Rail's forthcoming BR Class 74 electro-diesels. While all five versions carry Rail blue livery (the real '74's' only colour scheme), there's a mix of pre- and post-TOPS numbers, plus a single weathered option. Models are due to appear into stock this autumn.

What's planned?

- E82006 Class 74, E6101 BR blue
- E82007 Class 74, E6104 BR blue
- E82008 Class 74, 74007 BR blue
- E82009 Class 74, 74010 BR blue
- E82010 Class 74, 74009 BR blue, weathered

Price: £214.95 (£224.95 weathered)

HUDSWELL, CLARKE ADDED TO EFE RANGE

O GAUGE

The acclaimed Ixion Models 'O' gauge Hudswell, Clarke 0-6-0T is a new addition to the EFE Rail range, with four attractive liveries to choose from. Featuring an 8pin decoder socket and ample space for a speaker, each model is available now and comes supplied with etched name and numberplates.

What's available?

- E85705 Hudswell, Clarke 0-6-0T, *Wissington*, green
- E85706 Hudswell, Clarke 0-6-0T, *Derek Crouch*, maroon
- E85707 Hudswell, Clarke 0-6-0T, Manchester Ship Canal lined grey
- E85708 Hudswell, Clarke 0-6-0T, lined blue

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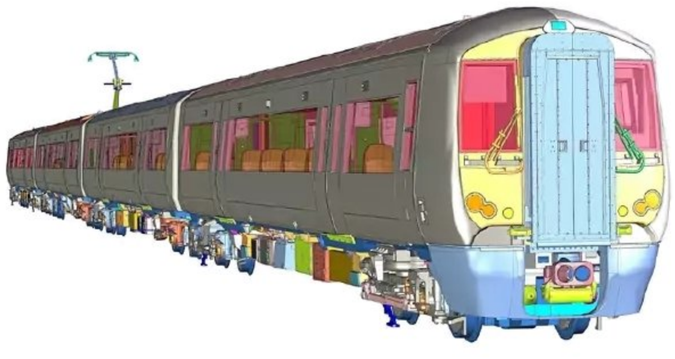
SIGN UP FOR A HIGHLY DETAILED 'ELECTROSTAR'

OO GAUGE

In a surprise move, Accurascale and Rails of Sheffield has revealed its intention to produce a high-fidelity range of 'OO' gauge models based on the widespread 'Electrostar' family of electric multiple units. With few of today's EMUs currently available in RTR form, this project seeks to redress the balance, and the plan is to offer a range of four-car EMU sets across Classes 375, 377, 379 and 387.

Built throughout the 2000s, the dual-voltage 'Electrostar' units have operated across a wide range of Train Operating Companies based mainly in the South of England, although units also regularly work up to Kings Lynn and to South Wales. Therefore, they offer good geographic coverage and there are numerous attractive liveries to cover, including Southern, Great Western Railway, Gatwick Express, Heathrow Express, Great Northern, and South Eastern.



The planned specification is impressive, with extensive detail differences catered for, full lighting functions including illuminated door locking lights and destination boards. DCC users will enjoy speakers in each car, controlled from a single decoder, and power-operated pantographs.

Rails and Accurascale are looking to modellers to express concrete expressions of interest, in the form of a £50 reservation fee per unit before March 28 (refundable if the project doesn't go ahead). This will then be deducted from the final price of each unit.

CAD work is complete and a preliminary 3D-printed render of a driving car was on show at Model Rail Scotland. Models would be available exclusively from Rails and Accurascale.

Prices: £499.95 (DCC-ready), £599.95 (DCC sound-fitted)
Web: *www.accurascale.com*
www.railsofsheffield.com

GREAT CENTRAL SIX-WHEELER

Another pre-Grouping wagon will soon emerge from Rapido's stable, based on the Great Central's 15ton six-wheel brake van. Built over a 20-year period from 1903, with the final batch manufactured under LNER auspices, the vans could be seen working along the length and breadth of the extensive LNER network, with many surviving into BR days, some of which were cascaded into the engineer's fleet for use on ballast trains. Others were bought by the National Coal Board and a single example was saved for preservation.

Rapido's model will feature the usual accoutrements we've come to expect from the manufacturer, including metal axle bearings and plenty of exterior detail, plus a fully appointed interior. A total of 16 versions have been announced, across GCR, Cheshire Lines, LNER, BR and NCB liveries.

The project is in the tooling stage, and pre-orders now being taken.

Price: £46.95 each
Web: *www.rapidotrains.co.uk*

RAPIDO'S 'COUNTY' LINES

OO GAUGE

Hawksworth's GWR 'County', the last of the GWR 4-6-0s, was very much a modern design informed by the prevailing wartime conditions. Designed for mixed traffic use, a total of 30 examples were built at Swindon between 1945-47, continuing in BR service until the mass cull of Western region steam in the mid-1960s.

Rapido Trains UK has announced a highly detailed 'OO' gauge model, which will be offered in 10 different versions, spread across various iterations of GWR and BR liveries. The tooling caters for numerous detail modifications carried out during their lifetime, particularly the move from single to double chimneys. All models will be pre-fitted with speakers and 21pin DCC decoder sockets, with glowing firebox effect and sets of optional etched brass nameplates. DCC sound-fitted options will be available for each version.

Models are available to pre-order now, with the project now at the tooling stage.

Prices: £249.95 (DCC-ready), £364.95 (DCC sound)
Web: *www.rapidotrains.co.uk*

What's planned?

- 954001 GWR 'County' 4-6-0, No. 1001, GWR lined green
- 954002 GWR 'County' 4-6-0, No. 1005 *County of Devon*, GWR lined green
- 954003 GWR 'County' 4-6-0, No. 1017 *County of Hereford*, BR lined green
- 954004 GWR 'County' 4-6-0, No. 1019 *County of Merioneth*, BR lined black, early crest
- 954005 GWR 'County' 4-6-0, No. 1013 *County of Dorset,* BR lined black, early crest
- 954006 GWR 'County' 4-6-0, No. 1006 *County of Cornwall,* BR lined green, early crest
- 954007 GWR 'County' 4-6-0, No. 1014 *County of Glamorgan*, BR lined green, early crest
- 954008 GWR 'County' 4-6-0, No. 1021 *County of Montgomery*, BR lined green, late crest
- 954009 GWR 'County' 4-6-0, No. 1000 *County of Middlesex*, BR lined green, late crest
- 954010 GWR 'County' 4-6-0, No. 1011 *County of Chester*, BR lined green, late crest

REVOLUTION UPSCALES HUNSLET 0-6-0DE TO 'OO'

OO GAUGE

One of the few new model announcements made at this year's Model Rail Scotland event was the Hunslet 0-6-0DH industrial shunter from Revolution Trains. Having produced an excellent model of this diminutive prototype for the N Gauge Society in 2021, the Revolution team is now developing a 'OO' version.

Representing one of Hunslet's most successful designs, the 50-55ton prototypes were constructed between 1965-1989 for a diverse range of industrial customers, with many examples still in use today.

Produced with support from Hunslet Locomotive Company, Revolution's tooling suite will allow for various detail differences to be observed, and some will even feature flashing rooftop warning lights. Four versions announced so far, depicting locomotives employed by the National Coal Board, British Steel, Esso and Harry Needle Railroad Company. More are expected to be revealed at a later date.

No details of pricing have been revealed yet, but the order book is due to open imminently, with expected delivery in early 2026.

Web: *www.revolutiontrains.com*

HELJAN DISPLAYS 'PEAK' & '153' PROGRESS

OO GAUGE O GAUGE

Amongst the highlights from Heljan's impressive display stand at Model Rail Scotland was a range of decorated 'O' gauge Class 153 samples, sporting Regional Railways, Transport for Wales and London Midland liveries. They looked great pootling up and down Heljan's demonstration layout, built by *Model Rail*'s Dave Lowery!

The 'OO' version of the '153' also shows promise, with an undecorated EP on display, along with a glimpse at the forthcoming Class 44 'Peaks'. Having already produced an admirable 'OO' rendition of the Class 45, the Danes have now turned their attention to the 10 Pilot Scheme Class 44s. Notable was that the EP depicted the slotted grilles as applied only to D9 and D10 – a first for RTR 'OO'.

Tooling for the '44' allows for variations/modifications, and like the preceding Class 45s, they'll feature a 21pin DCC interface, extensive lighting functions and a powerful mechanism. DCC-ready and DCC sound-fitted options are under development.

Web: *www.heljan.co.uk*

REVOLUTION REVEALS DETAILS OF K-TYPE PULLMAN & ALCAN

N GAUGE

First mooted back in 2021, Revolution's mission to recreate the all-steel K-Type Pullman cars in 'N' is moving forward, with nine different multi-coach packs revealed. The packs cater for the Eastern, Western and Southern-operated services in the pre- and post-nationalisation eras, including the prestige 'Queen of Scots' and 'Bournemouth Belle' services, along with a modern pack of VSOE cars.

Indeed, the tooling covers the full service life of these famous luxury carriages, from their birth in 1928 up to the present day, with original and rebuilt underframe gear and choice of bogies. Five different vehicle types are in development: Kitchen First, Parlour First, Kitchen Third, Parlour Third, and Parlour Third Brake.

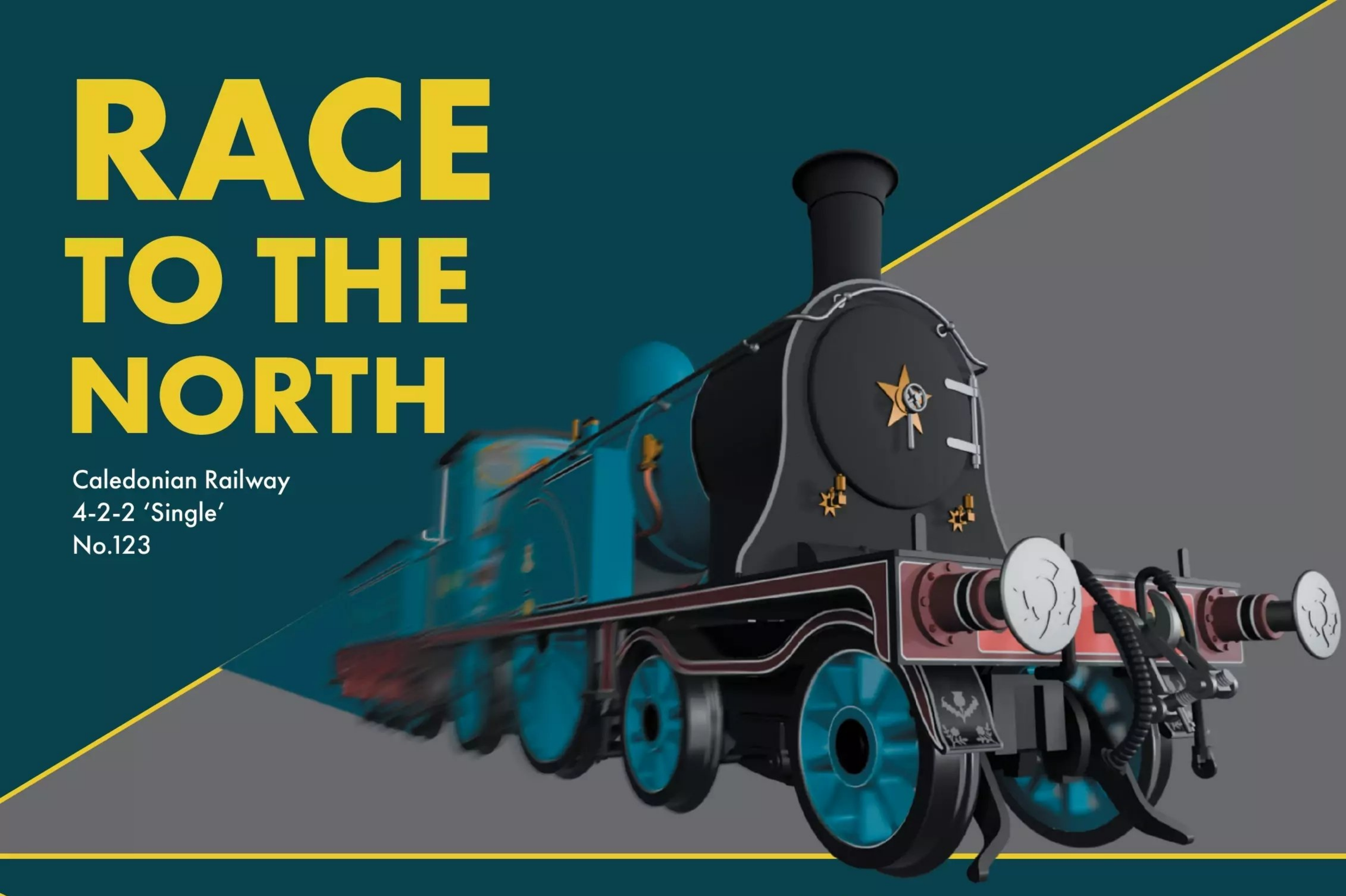
Models will feature fully detailed and illuminated interiors (including working table lamps). CAD work and tooling is now complete, with the first EPs on their way. Finished models are expected to arrive towards the end of this year and pre-orders are still being taken at the cheaper 'early bird' prices for a limited time (four-car pack £209.95, three-car pack £157.90, two-car pack £104.99).

Also in 'N' gauge, Revolution's forthcoming Alcan PCA powder tanks have reached the decorated samples stage, with models displayed at Model Rail Scotland. With Revolution's 'OO' PCAs proving a big hit, the smaller variants have also garnered much attention, with a comprehensive range of livery options being produced.

The PCAs are being offered in four-wagon sets, although the window for ordering at the cheaper 'early bird' rate of £149.95 is due to close very soon – so don't hang around!

RACE TO THE NORTH

Caledonian Railway
4-2-2 'Single'
No.123



SPEED TO THE WEST

Great Western Railway
4-6-0 'County'
10xx Class

Available to order NOW from RapidoTrains.co.uk or your local Rapido Trains UK stockist

RAPIDO TRAINS UK

'CROMPTONS' MOVE AHEAD

N GAUGE

Dapol's latest production run of its 'N' gauge Class 33 took a step closer in February, with the arrival of decorated samples, featuring all seven proposed new identities. Spread across the Class 33/0 and 33/1 sub-classes, there's a healthy choice of BR green and Rail blue versions, including 33056 *The Burma Star* in its special blue scheme with pale grey roof. For the post-BR era, 33025 sports DRS livery with Minimodal branding and 33103 *Swordfish* is decked-out in Fragonset black.

The 'Cromptons' are expected to arrive by the end of the year and they're available to pre-order from your local Dapol stockist.

Prices: £156.60 (DCC-ready), £189.00 (DCC-fitted)
Availability: Dapol stockists
Web: *www.dapol.co.uk*

PASSINGS

We're very sorry to report the passing of two lifetime modellers who made a considerable contribution to the hobby over their lifetime. Paul Towers, a former Editor of *Model Railway News* back in the 1960s, was a member of Warley Model Railway Club and a prolific layout builder. His keen interest, particularly in narrow gauge railways, led him to work in 'OO9' and 'N' gauge. He exhibited one of his layouts most recently at the very last Warley exhibition at the NEC. Paul passed away in mid-January, aged 91.

Mark Arscott, proprietor of Markits, passed away in February. An immensely knowledgeable modeller and engineer, Mark came to the fore after his acquisition of Romford wheels, then the predominant brand of wheels used in dozens of locomotive and rolling stock kits. A noted authority on Bulleid locomotives, he assisted ready-to-run manufacturers, most notably Hornby with the rebuilt 'Pacifics'.

MORE HIA HOPPERS

OO GAUGE

With previous batches selling through incredibly well, Dapol is producing another run of the Freightliner HIA aggregate hopper. Six versions have been revealed, in a choice of green or white livery, with new individual running numbers. Pre-ordering is recommended, with arrival due in Q4 2025.
Price: £33.45 each

OXFORD UNLEASHED!

OO GAUGE

Having been purchased back from Hornby by the Davies family last year, Oxford Diecast has been busy developing new 1:76 scale tooling of several classic British cars. The Humber Sceptre, Ford Cortina Mk5 and Hillman Minx Series IIIA have been much in demand, while the Aston Martin DB6 Mk 1l adds a touch of glamour.

Oxford's range of emergency vehicles will soon be boosted by a Bedford CF Hanlon Ambulance – perfect for the 1970s-80s era – and the iconic Bedford MK truck.
Web: *www.oxforddie-cast.co.uk*

FAB 'TIN TAB'

N GAUGE OO GAUGE

Three Peaks Models has announced a new kit of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Dia. 21 'Tin Tab' 10ton brake van. Almost 400 examples of this design were built between 1890-1901, with the bodywork consisting of riveted iron sides with wooden ends and doors.

The kit is available in 'N' and 'OO' gauges and features a one-piece body and chassis, with floor insert and separate details, including buffers, glazing, and handrail wire. Suitable waterslide transfers are also available.
Product: L&Y Diagram 21 'Tin Tab' Brake Van kit
Prices: £30.00 ('OO'/4mm), £15.00 ('N')
Availability: Three Peaks Models
Web: *www.threepeaksmodels.co.uk*

KRModels

The Leader

You asked for it, so we made it.

IN STOCK READY TO SHIP

All 5 liveries are available

KR Models are proud to announce 2 additional fictious liveries for The Leader. These will be the BR Green, Late crest, and BR Blue, Full yellow ends. Both liveries will be limited to just 200 units.

Model Specification

- Plux22 socket
- Directional LED Lighting.
- Heavy die-cast metal chassis with central motor and flywheels giving powerful performance.
- Sprung buffers.
- Flush glazing.
- Available in OO Gauge.
- Available in prototype brushed Aluminium and BR Black Early Crest
- DCC Ready **£199.00**, DCC Fitted **£225.00** and DCC Sound **£299.00.**
- Plux22 sound decoder

Orders now being taken, head to our website

krmodels.net

ESU

JACK IT UP

OO GAUGE

This set of 3D-printed locomotive stands is an ideal addition to a depot or works scene. Produced by West Hill Wagon Works, the pack provides four stands of two different styles, and the units simply need cutting from the support fretwork and painting.

Depicting fixed accommodation stands, the units will happily support a typical 'OO' gauge diesel or electric locomotive that has been lifted from its bogies for repair or maintenance. Indeed, the stands provide a means of repurposing a faulty model!

Product: Locomotive stands (pack of four)
Price: £7.95
Availability:
West Hill Wagon Works
Web:
www.westhillwagonworks.com

MOSSY ROCKS

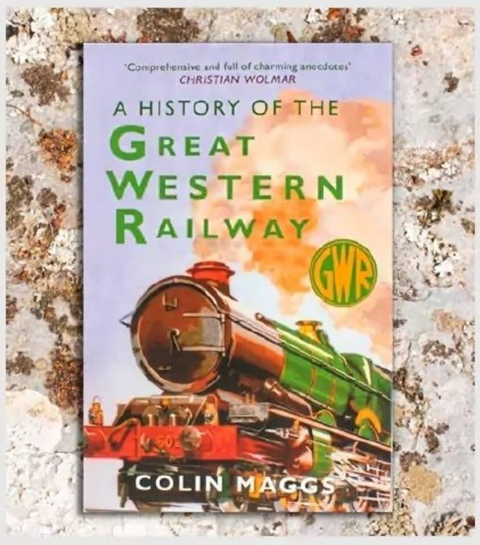
ANY GAUGE

WW Scenics is renowned for innovative scenic products and one of its latest offerings is a bag containing around 15 grey 'rocks' of various shapes and sizes, plus a bag of subdued green static grass fibres. The surface texture of the lightweight rocks is realistic and, by applying a little glue, the short static grass fibres can be applied to mimic moss and vegetation. A useful solution to the creation of rocky outcrops. ***(PM)***

Product:
WW Scenics Moss Rocks
Price: £7.99
Availability:
www.wwscenics.co.uk

Modeller's Bookshelf

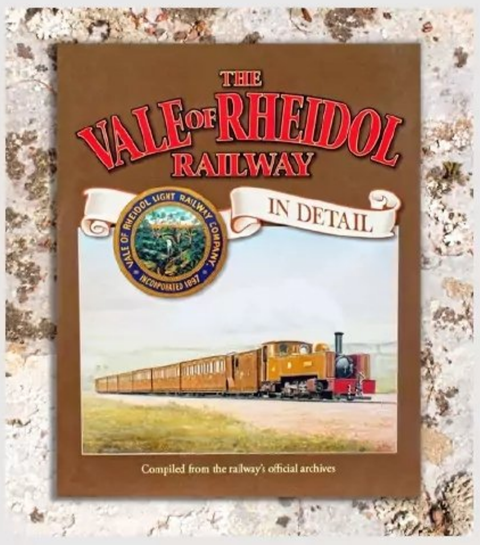
Chris Leigh and George Dent present four new titles that will inspire and inform your modelling.



GWR HISTORY

This well-known writer tackles the story of the GWR through anecdotes and a look at early locomotives and rolling stock, plus a study of relations with neighbouring railways at the London end. The Brunel, Gooch and Dean eras dominate, while decades up to nationalisation are covered in less detail. Tabulated dates, mileages and gauge of lines and branches will be useful for reference. The section featuring posters and postcards is reproduced in full colour on good quality paper, but the lower quality of the rest of the book spoils the photographs. ***(CJL)***

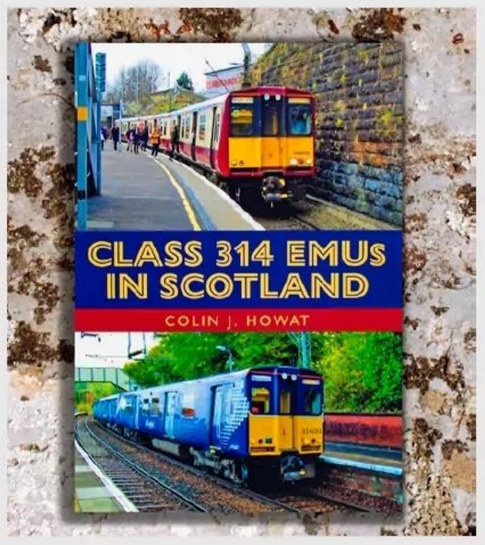
Book: *A History of the Great Western Railway* by Colin Maggs
Price: £11.99
Availability:
www.amberley-books.com



RHEIDOL BIBLE

For anyone with an urge to model the magical Vale of Rheidol railway, this book is a must. Collated from the railway's own archives, there's a vast amount of information, from building and rolling stock plans, colour livery diagrams, documents and archive photographs charting the history of the line from its inception to the present day. Track and infrastructure, signage and promotional materials are also included in the nearly 450+ pages, plus maps and timetables. Produced to the highest standards, it's well worth the investment. ***(GD)***

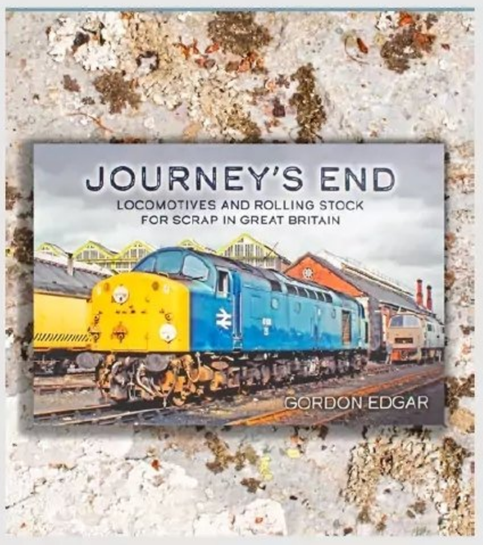
Book: *The Vale of Rheidol Railway in Detail*
Price: £70.00
Availability:
www.rheidolrailway.co.uk



SCOTTISH 'PEPs'

The unassuming Class 314s quietly went about their business of moving Glaswegians across the electrified Strathclyde network for four decades, before withdrawal in 2019. Developed as part of BR's 'PEP' programme of second generation electric multiple units, just 16 units made up the '314' fleet. However, their importance more than justifies this illustrated record, which provides a useful overview of the fleet, while the varied images depict the three-car EMUs in a colourful array of liveries, across each of their key routes. ***(GD)***

Book: *Class 314 EMUs in Scotland* by Colin J. Howat
Price: £15.99
Availability:
www.amberley-books.com



THE END IS NIGH

There's something unspeakably sad about the sight of locomotives being broken for scrap but, from a modeller's perspective, such images provide all manner of inspiration. This landscape format collection of images and reminiscences contains a wealth of useful information and detailed images of steam, diesel and electric traction in various states of disposal, at many locations around the UK, many of which became infamous. It's an essential reference for anyone planning a scrapyard scene, making good use of old and decrepit models. ***(GD)***

Book: *Journey's End* by Gordon Edgar
Price: £19.99
Availability:
www.amberley-books.com

ON THE WORKBENCH

What new items have appeared in **George's** workshop this month?

PUT A RING ON IT

This high-quality product from the Hungarian RP Toolz range is designed to allow material to be formed into curves of precise diameters. Featuring twin tapered ends, from 0.5mm to 30mm in diameter (in 0.5mm increments), copper, brass or other metal wire or strip is simply shaped around the tool, to form partial curves or complete rings. It's also possible to shape plastic strip or rod, after softening in hot water.

A slightly niche product, but those building metal kits or working from scratch are likely to find it a handy addition to the toolbox, as it greatly speeds up repetitive shaping tasks and ensures greater consistency.

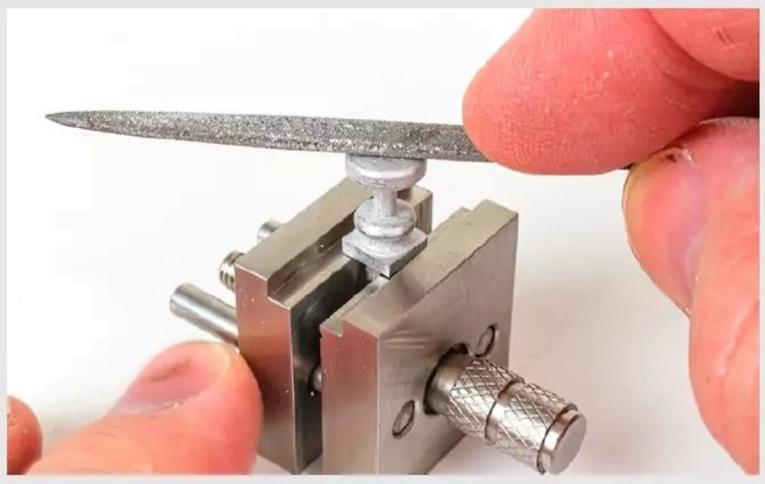
Product: RP Toolz Ring Making tool
Price: £19.99
Availability: Scale Model Shop
Web: *www.scalemodelshop.co.uk*

HOLD IT STEADY

This tiny stainless steel vice is machined to a high standard, with spring-loaded jaws and a knurled shaft, allowing a good amount of compression force to be generated. The square jaw blocks are sturdy and allow the tool to sit securely on the workbench and the stepped upper faces increase clamping capacity up to around 22mm. At 85g, it feels substantial too, and comes in a handy foam-lined case.

I've found it ideal for holding smaller kit parts while fettling, drilling and glueing, as well as holding miniature figures during painting. The square-edged jaws are also great for folding etched brass and nickel silver kit and detailing parts.

Product: Dspiae AT-MV Stainless steel mini vice
Price: £14.99
Web: *www.scalemodelshop.co.uk*



CLIMBING VEGETATION

GAUGE

Specified for 1:48 and 1:35 scales, AK Interactive's Ivy Foliage also looks perfect for 'O' gauge. Consisting of flexible branches and authentically shaped and coloured leaves, the condensed mass can be teased out into fine climbing vegetation or denser bushes. It's easy to manipulate and trim and can be bonded with any scenic adhesives or PVA.

A single pack has the potential to cover quite a large area.

Product: AK8234 Ivy Foliage
Price: £6.95
Availability: *www.scalemodelshop.co.uk*

RECOVERY POSITION

OO GAUGE

One of Oxford Diecast's recent releases is a 1:76 scale ('OO') Scania Topline recovery truck, in the bright orange livery of Leicestershire-based Crouch Recovery. At over 130mm long, it's a substantial vehicle, ideal for a roadside cameo scene or for parking within an industrial estate. Featuring a convincing rendition of heavy lifting and towing gear, plus an array of hazard and spotlights, a Mercedes Sprinter van is also available in matching branding, while the Scania truck is also available in plain white for easy customisation.

Product: SCA02REC Scania Topline recovery truck
Price: £25.95
Availability: Oxford Diecast stockists
Web: *www.oxforddiecast.co.uk*

TROLLEY DASH

HO SCALE

Yet another useful cameo figure set from Noch's Tiny Scenes range is this worker stooping to pick up a packaging crate, while a trolley stands loaded with boxes. The worker is decked out in modern high-viz clothing and the set has many potential uses, from an industrial scene to a domestic delivery. The parts are pre-painted and ready for use. ***(PM)***

Product: Noch 16525 Warehouse worker with pallet truck
Price: £9.75
Availability: Noch stockists or *www.gaugemasterretail.com*

COUNTRY BOOZER

OO GAUGE

One of the latest kits to emerge from Scale Model Scenery depicts a large country pub. Following the usual format from this manufacturer, the main structure is formed from 3mm thick MDF, with the laser-cut components slotting together to produce a sturdy foundation. More sheets of thinner laser-cut fibreboard provide windows, doors and various details, while printed paper sheets feature a convincing rendition of dressed stone, with yellow brick accents.

This comprehensive kit also provides parts to create a walled cobblestone courtyard, plus various outbuildings, with pre-shaped slate strips for the various roofs. It looks like it'll be a fun assembly project, with a choice of pub name signs provided and with plenty of potential for customisation and further detailing.

Product: KX120-OO Victorian Ale House
Price: £39.99
Availability: Scale Model Scenery
Web: *www.scalemodelscenery.co.uk*

EXHIBITION DIARY – APRIL 6–APRIL 27 2025

April 5

BLANDFORD FORUM, DORSET. North Dorset Railway, Model Railway Show. Shillingstone Station, Station Road, Blandford Forum DT11 0SA. **Admission:** Small donation, Under-16s Free. **Web:** *www.northdorsetrailway.co.uk*

HILLINGDON, LONDON. Hillingdon Railway Modellers – Test Track Open Day. Yiewsley Baptist Church Hall (side entrance), 74 Colham Avenue, Yiewsley, Hillingdon, London UB7 8HF. **Time:** 1000-1500. **Admission:** £6. **Web:** *www.hillingdonrailwaymodellers.co.uk* **Tel:** 0208 368 4090.

HORSHAM WEST SUSSEX. Horsham Model Railway Club Open Day. St Leonard's Church Hall, Cambridge Road, Horsham RH13 5ED. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adult £2, Under-16 £1, Under-5 Free. **Web:** *www.horshammrc.org.uk* **Facebook:** HorshamMRC. **Email:** *info@horshammrc.org.uk*

IPSWICH, SUFFOLK. Ipswich Railway Modellers Association Open Day. Welton House, 40a Norfolk Road, Ipswich IP4 2HB. **Time:** 1000-1500. **Admission:** Free. **Web:** *www.irma.org.uk*

LEICESTER, LEICS. Railway Gala Day with Model Railways. Abbey Pumping Station Corporation Rd Leicester LE4 5PX. **Time:** 1130-1600. **Admission:** Free. **Tel:** 0116 2995511. **Web:** *www.abbeypumpingstation.org* **Email:** *enquiries@abbeypumpingstation.org*

April 5 & 6

CHELTENHAM, GLOUCS. Cheltenham Great Western Modellers Group, Spring Model Railway Exhibition. St Margaret's Hall, Coniston Road, off Windermere Road, Hatherley, Cheltenham, Glos GL51 3NU. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1630. **Admission:** (Cash only) Adult £6, Child £2.50, Family (2+2) £12. **Web:** *www.cheltmodelrail.org.uk*

COTGRAVE, NOTTS. South Notts MRS. Cotgrave Welfare, Woodview, Cotgrave, Nottinghamshire NG12 3PJ. **Times:** Sat 1000–1630, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adult £5, Accompanied Under-16 and Concessions Free. **Tel:** 01242 517788. **Web:** *www.bingham-model-rail.co.uk*

MACCLESFIELD, CHESHIRE. Macclesfield Model Railway Exhibition. Tytherington School, Manchester Road, Macclesfield SK10 2EE. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700. Sun 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adult £10, Under-6 Free. **Web:** *www.macclesfieldmrg.org.uk*

ORPINGTON, KENT. Orpington and District MRS. Pratts Bottom Village Hall, Norsted Lane, Pratts Bottom, Orpington, Kent BR6 7PQ. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adult £6, Child £1.50. *www.odmrs.uk/exhibitions* **Facebook:** OrpingtonandDistrictModel RailwaySociety

April 12

EWELL, SURREY. Epsom & Ewell Model Railway Club Open Day. Ruxley Church, Ruxley Lane, Ewell, Surrey, KT19 0AF. **Time:** 1000-1700. **Admission:** Free (donation welcomed). **Web:** *www.eemrc.org.uk*

HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS. High Wycombe MRX25 Spring Exhibition. Cressex Community Centre, 203 Cressex Road, High Wycombe, Bucks HP12 4PZ. **Time:** 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adult £5, Child (6-16) £1, Under-6 Free. **Web:** *www.hwdmrs.org.uk*

NORWICH, NORFOLK. Norwich Model Railway Exhibition 2025. Hellesdon High School, Middletons Lane, Norwich NR6 5SB. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** £6, Accompanied Under-16 Free.

ROYSTON, HERTS. Royston & District Model Railway Club. Bassingbourn Village College, Bassingbourn nr Royston SG8 5NG. **Time:** 1030-1600. **Admission:** Adult £5, Accompanied child Free. **Web:** *www.roystondmrc.co.uk*

WELWYN GARDEN CITY, HERTS. De Havilland Model Railway Society. Ludwick Way Methodist Church, Ludwick Way, Welwyn Garden City AL7 3PN. **Time:** 1000-1700. **Admission:** Adult £6, Child £2, Under-5 Free. **Tel:** 07989 688750.

April 12 & 13

ASHFORD, KENT. AIMREC Ashford Festival of Railway Modelling 2025. Ashford College, Elwick Road TN23 1NN & The Elwick Club, Church Road, TN23 1RD. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1030-1630 (Early access on Sunday from 0930 for disabled). **Admission:** (both days): Adult £12.50, Under-16 £2.50. **Email:** *friends@aimrec.co.uk* **Web:** *www.aimrec.co.uk/Ashford180*

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND. Pentland MRG Lothians Model Railway Show. Heriot-Watt University Students Union, Riccarton, Edinburgh EH14 4AS. **Times:** 1000-1630 both days, 0930 for wheelchair users. **Admission:** Adult £6, Accompanied child (0-15) Free. **Email:** *pmrgsecretary@gmail.com* **Web:** *www.lothianmodelrail.co.uk*

HYDE, CHESHIRE. Rail Road 2025. Model Railway & Transport Show. Longdendale High School, Spring Street, Longdendale SK14 8LW. **Times:** Sat 1000-1730, Sun 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adult £6, Concessions £5, Accompanied Under-14 Free, Family £12. **Tel:** 07719 259638.

POOL, REDRUTH. The Great Cornish Model Show. Pool Academy, Church Road, Pool TR15 3PZ. **Times:** Sat 1000–1700, Sun 1000–1600. **Admission:** Adult £8, Under-16 £5, Family £15, Under-5 Free. **Web:** *www.hfmrc.uk*

April 16

TAUNTON, SOMERSET. Taunton Model Railway Group Open Days, Bishops Lydeard Station, Platform 1, West Somerset Railway Taunton TA4 3BX. **Time:** 1000-1630. **Admission:** Small charge, children to be accompanied. **Tel:** 07879 852736. **Web:** *www.tauntonmodelrailwaygroup.co.uk* **Facebook:** *www.facebook.com/tauntonmodelrailwaygroup*

April 19

MAIDENHEAD, BERKS. Berkshire Area Group N Gauge Society, 25th Anniversary Exhibition. Woodlands Park Village Centre, Manifold Way, White Waltham, Maidenhead SL6 3GW. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adult £7, Child £3, Family £10. **Tel:** 01189 760519. **Email:** *percy.richard1946@gmail.com* **Web:** *www.bagladdies.weebly.com/2025-exhibition.html*

April 23

TAUNTON, SOMERSET. Taunton Model Railway Group Open Days. Details as April 16.

April 26

BAWDESWELL, NORFOLK. 32A Model Railway Club, 10th Annual Model Railway Show. Bawdeswell Village Hall, Reepham Road, Bawdeswell, Norfolk NR20 4RU. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adult £6, Concessions/Child £3, Family £12. **Tel:** 07717 502597. **Email:** *alanscarpets@yahoo.co.uk* **Web:** *www.32amrc.co.uk*

CRAWLEY, WEST SUSSEX. Crawley Model Railway Society, Open Day. Milton Mount School, Grattons Drive, Pound Hill, Crawley RH10 3AG. **Time:** 1100-1600. **Admission:** Adult £3 Accompanied Under-16 Free. **Email:** *cmrs.secretary@gmail.com* **Web:** *www.crawleymrs.org.uk*

LUTON, BEDS. Luton Model Railway Club's Model Railway Exhibition. Stopsley High School, St Thomas Road, Luton LU2 7UX. **Time:** 1030-1700. **Admission:** Adult £8, Under-16 £4, Family (2+2) £20. **Tel:** 01582 612949 or 07875 796467. **Web:** *www.lutonmodelrailwayclub.org.uk*

April 27

GUILDFORD, SURREY. Guildford O Guage Group Spring Open Day. Normandy Village Hall GU3 2DT. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** £5. **Email:** *ron1patterson@yahoo.co.uk*

...and finally

Unusual scenes captured by the lens of **Chris Nevard**

In the days before tracking devices, locomotive and rolling stock often went missing. To tackle the issue, a special experimental department was set up to track them down, and it used alternative methods such as telekinesis, divining rods, sniffer dogs (and cats) and even meditation. In this case, Bath Green Park Shed's missing S&DJR 2-8-0 No. 53809 was found by following a suspicious rainbow which led to it being located at a disused colliery. It wasn't a pot of gold, but the flames from the firebox gave off a wonderful golden glow.

SALES LINE
01432 352809
EMail - sales@herefordmodelcentre.co.uk
www.herefordmodels.com
SHOP OPEN MON-SAT 9-5.00

THE HEREFORD MODEL CENTRE

4 COMMERCIAL ROAD, HEREFORD, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR1 2BB

009/HOE IN STOCK

WE HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF NARROW GAUGE STOCK AND TRACK FROM MINITRAINS, ROCO, LILIPUT AND PECO. WE ALSO STOCK DUNDAS KITS.

EXHIBITIONS 2025:

• Cheltenham 5-6th April • Ludlow 21st June • Ross on Wye 16-17th August • Swansea 13-14th September • Statfold 11-12th October • Cheltenham 25-26th October • NEC 22-23th November

HORNBY

R3527 N15 SR Black 'Camelot' £139.45
R3635 BR Lord Nelson 'Lord Rodney' £152.95
R3733 BR Robert Blake BR green late.....£202.50
R3734 LNER J36 .....£175.49
R3781 K&ESR Terrier.....£80.75
R3833 LNER A2/3 Chamossaire £171.00
R3982 BR 2MT Green £206.10
R30134 LMS Turbomotive 6202 .....£239.85
R30200 Railroad 0-4-0ST BR £43.19
R30221 The Railway Children Return 4F.....£125.99
R30225SS BR Black 5 Steam Generator £287.99
R30228 LMS Coronation Queen Mary.....£217.79
R30285 S&DJR Class 4F..£139.50
R30286 S&DJR Class2P...£139.50
R30287 United Glass Bottle 0-4-0ST PUG.....£76.50
R30316 S&DJR 3F Jinty Blue £71.99
R30317 Railroad M&GNJR 0-4-0T £49.50
R30325 S&DJR 3F Jinty Black £71.99
R30352SS LNER W1 Steam Generator.....£292.50

HORNBY Diesel Electric Locomotives

R3373 Class 71 BR Green w/panel £134.95
R3374 Class 71 BR Blue £134.95
R3376 Class 71 BR Green £134.95
R3705 R&H 48Ds Dewars.£71.99
R3707 R&H 48Ds Longmorn £71.99
R3742F Class 92 DB Romania £98.99
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News Real

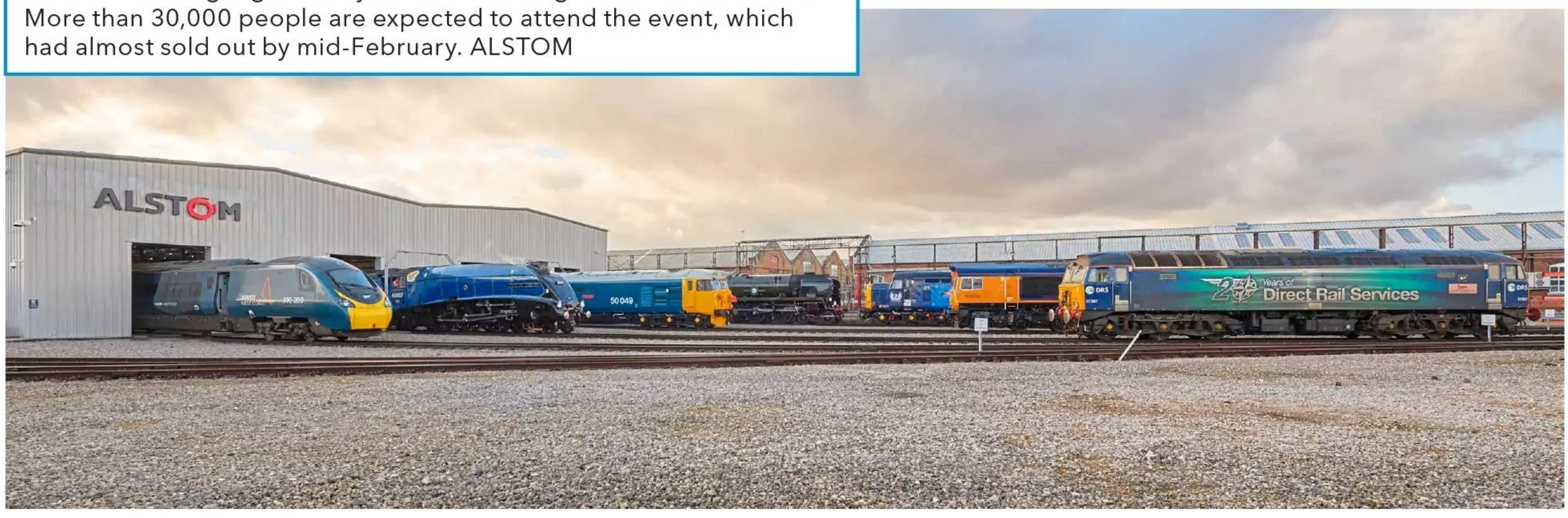
Our full-size railways are constantly evolving, providing fresh inspiration for modelling projects. BEN JONES looks at a few of the latest developments that could soon be appearing on our layouts.

▶ One of Britain's most astonishing restoration projects reached a major milestone on January 28 when The 5-BEL Trust's 'Brighton Belle' EMU returned to the main line for the first time since 1972. Four vehicles have been extensively rebuilt and restored to meet modern safety and performance standards. Initially the EMU was top-and-tailed by LSL's 20118/132 for ride tests but powered tests from Chester on the Merseyrail third-rail network are expected to take place soon. TOM MCATEE

◀ East West Rail saw its first passenger carrying train on February 7 when West Coast Railways' 47746 and 47847 powered a special working on behalf of GWR. The first section of EWR, using existing lines and a rebuilt section of line between Bicester and Bletchley, is expected to open later in 2025. Later phases will extend the route eastwards to Cambridge. JACK BOSKETT

▲ DRS has introduced two new freight flows in the north of England in recent weeks. Between January 31 and March 31, it will run 64 trains of aggregates from Shap Quarry to the Low Level Radioactive Waste repository at Drigg, on the Cumbrian Coast near Sellafield. The second flow started between Teesport in Middlesbrough and Trafford Park in Manchester on February 3, using IDA low-floor inter-modal wagons capable of transporting 'high cube' containers on routes with a restrictive loading gauge. DRS

▼ In January 30 'The Great Gathering' was officially launched. It's one of the biggest events of the Railway 200 celebrations in 2025. More than 50 rolling stock exhibits will be displayed at Alstom's Litchurch Lane works in Derby on August 1-3. Other attractions will include narrow gauge railways and rides along the works test track. More than 30,000 people are expected to attend the event, which had almost sold out by mid-February. ALSTOM



Staff Show & Tell

Wagons front and centre

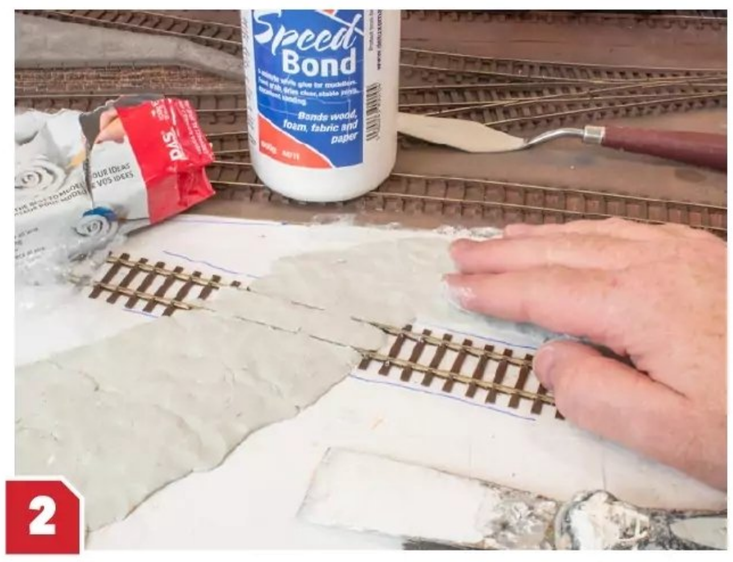
George Dent has made a little progress on 'Lisburn Lane', installing a siding in the foreground, complete with abandoned connection with the main line.

With practical modelling time at a real premium these days, I've had limited opportunity to move forward with my 'OO' layout 'Lisburn Lane'. I'm beginning to lose track, but I must be into my fourth year of working on this project, which is much longer than initially envisaged. That said, it's surprising how much can be achieved by simply spending the odd half-hour at a time, and I'm reassuring myself that some progress is better than no progress.

Most recently, the foreground area has received a shabby siding, which will be harnessed to pose some of my customised rolling stock beside the wagon repair facility. The premise consists of a former through siding from the main running lines, which traverses an overbridge across the low-level colliery line, and disappears through the backscene, disguised by the overhead filling hoppers. Initially, I was going to leave this siding unpowered, but have since opted to allow locomotives to shunt in and out via the right-hand fiddleyard, which will offer much more in the way of visual and operating interest.

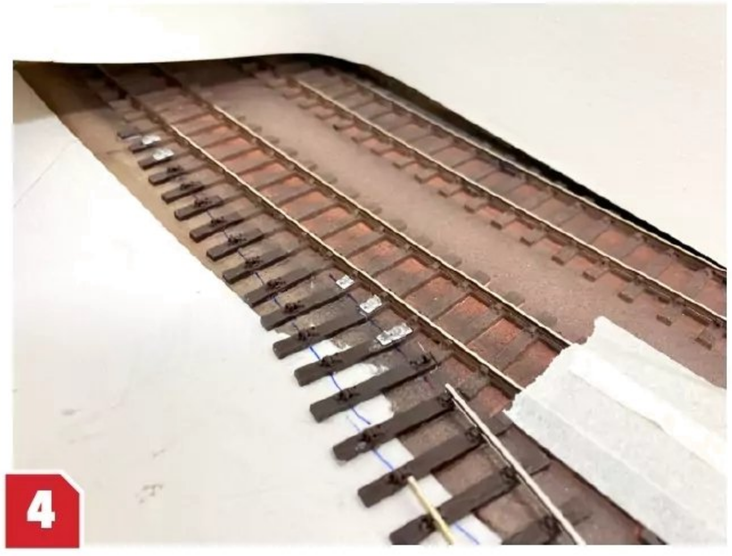
STEP BY STEP

1 Having glued a length of bullhead rail Code 75 flexible track in place to form the siding, the surrounding area was brushed with an even layer of Deluxe Materials Speed Bond glue and allowed to turn slightly tacky.



2 DAS clay was then kneaded and spread out over the tacky glue. Use warm water to help smooth out the clay. Miniature trowels helped to level the surface. It helps to work in a warm environment, as the clay is more malleable.

3 After levelling and smoothing the clay, a textured rolling pin was run over the surface to create a pattern. The tool is only 40mm wide, so a number of runs were needed. The roller was cleaned between applications.



4 While the clay dried, I turned my attention to mimicking a former connection to the main lines, using scrap sleepers and a few cast metal rail chairs. Much of this will be covered with ballast, so it didn't have to be perfect.

5 The short, abandoned section of siding was created with more of the scrap plastic sleepers and a few offcuts of rail, bonded in place with cyanoacrylate glue, taking care to get everything aligned convincingly.

6 With the glue dry, I masked the surrounding areas and structures before spraying mists of red oxide, brown and black aerosol primers, ensuring the disused rails had a rusty colour. All this will be refined at a later date.

At the left-hand side of the layout, the siding terminates at a stop block, but the rails and sleepers continue towards a former connection with the main line, which has been created using scrap sleepers and offcuts of rails, plus a few cast metal rail chairs I found in my stash of bits. Once ballasting and scenic work gets under way, this short abandoned section will be planted with weeds and encroaching vegetation.

The creation of a cobblestone road surface leading to the repair shed has been another 'win' this month, being created with DAS clay and a handy textured rolling pin from Green Stuff World. It took quite a few attempts before I got the hang of the tool and achieved satisfactory results, but the joy of using DAS clay is that the surface is easy to flatten with a damp finger or brush, allowing you to start again.

Ballasting is the next job on the list. Oh joy!

Left: To provide some visual interest, George has created a disused siding, with missing sections of rail and traces of a connection to the main line.

What George used

- Green Stuff World 10495 Textured Rolling Pin with handle, Sett Pavements Small (1/64-1/48 scale). **Price:** £8.99 **Availability:** *www.scalemodelshop.co.uk*
- Geoscenics Coal Dust (from Bumper Scenic Powder Kit). **Price:** £18.00 **Availability:** *www.geoscenics.co.uk*

7

By way of an experiment, I scattered some Geoscenics Coal Dust Powder over the abandoned section of track to act as a suitable ballast for this colliery setting.

8

A soft brush helped spread the coal dust around the sleepers. I'm happy with the appearance, so will be bonding this in place shortly. Eventually, it will contrast nicely with the conventional ballast of the main lines.

MIDLAND PULLMAN HST COMPLETE

As chronicled in *Model Rail* over much of the past year, Dave Lowery's mission to recreate a fleet of HSTs in 'O' gauge is almost complete. Having assembled power cars and Mk 3 coaches from kits (adapting the coach kits to allow the correct array of vehicle types to be modelled), it has been quite an odyssey, but Dave's latest rake – in Midland Pullman blue – is perhaps the most eye-catching yet.

After coating the cars with a light grey primer, the off-white elements were sprayed and, when fully dry, were masked up carefully prior to the Nanking blue coats. Masking removed, a coat of clear gloss preceded the application of decals from the Fox Transfers range, before a coat of satin varnish added the final touch.

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Inside track with Ben Ando

Ben Ando is the founder of Revolution Trains and a regular contributor to *Model Rail*.

Nearly every time a manufacturer (including Revolution) announces a new model in 'OO' the news is greeted with multiple pleas from 'N' gaugers that we 'put it through the shrink-ray.'

Similarly, at shows, we find many of Revolution's exclusively 'N' gauge models, such as the Class 313 EMU, are viewed avariciously in our display stand by 4mm enthusiasts who then urge us to do the reverse.

There seems to be a breezy idea that in a world of 3D computer design, CNC precision milling and high precision electrical discharge machining (EDM, or spark erosion) such a process is almost trivially easy.

Sadly, this isn't the case.

It is true to say that 3D computer design software does make it easier to proportionately increase or decrease the size of a virtual model.

However, there is a host of other considerations that make such conversions anything but simple.

For example, at Model Rail Scotland in Glasgow at the end of February, Revolution took the opportunity to launch its latest 'OO' powered model: the long-lived and widely used Hunslet 0-6-0DH diesel shunter.

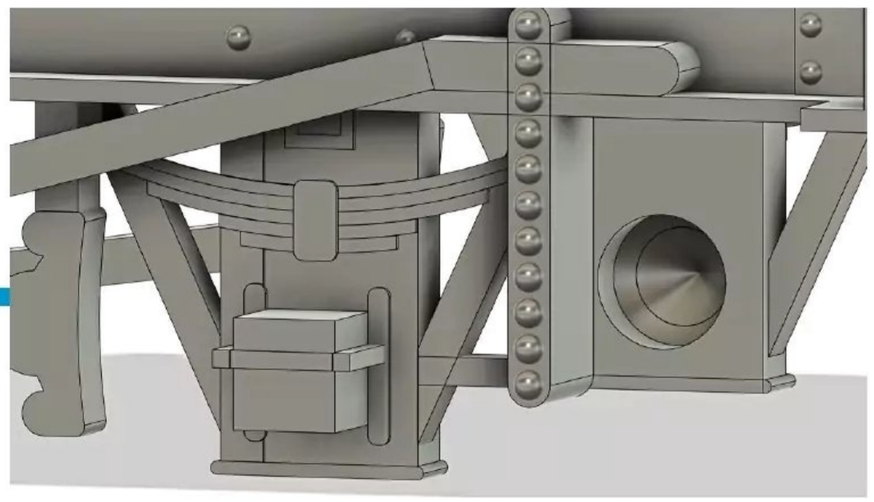
This is a locomotive that my co-director Mike Hale and I had previously helped research, design and manage in 1:148 scale as the N Gauge Society's 50th anniversary model.

But having taken the decision to fire the 'reverse shrink-ray' on this model, what are the steps required?

First, we had to decide on specification. The 'N' gauge model incorporated features not previously seen in RTR 'N' gauge, including an onboard stay-alive capacitor and flashing yellow light.

These were possible because all models were supplied with a DCC decoder integral to the main PCB; this was necessary because in 'N' the bonnets were so tiny there was no room for a separate socket and add-on Next-18 decoder, and we wanted to avoid obscuring the cab interior.

"There is a host of considerations that make such conversions anything but simple"



Producing a model in 'N' gauge is not as simple as scaling down a 'OO' CAD drawing. Some of the details on this 'OO' wagon CAD design would scale down to almost nothing on an 'N' gauge model. CHRIS GADSBY

In 'OO' all the same features would be expected, however there is some resistance to built-in DCC as some customers have their own preferences about which decoder to fit. Luckily, in 'OO', the space is not as constrained, so this is straightforward.

Then there are the detail considerations. In 'N', we tooled two different chassis and a selection of buffers, engine room breathers and footplate equipment boxes to reflect variations in the prototypes.

However, in 'OO' it was clear that some of the compromises made in 'N' would be more obvious in a model twice the size, so additional design work was needed.

Then there are the practical considerations of materials tolerances and moulding characteristics. In 'N', the handrails were etched metal, as plastic would be too chunky, whereas in 'OO' plastic was viable and is more forgiving of rough handling.

Finally, there is price. In the current market all manufacturers consider this at length. Every mould or assembly procedure adds to either the tooling cost or unit price of each model.

Revolution models is not positioned at the low-price end of the market, however we also know there is a limit to even the most generous budgets.

For this reason, even in 'OO', we do have to make some difficult decisions about where to compromise or the models could end up retailing at over £250.

The knack is in finding the sweet spot and producing a model that strikes the right balance between running quality, detail finesse, accuracy and price.

And, in due course, the market will deliver its verdict on whether we've de-shrunk it right!

Revolution Trains first produced the Hunslet 0-6-0DH industrial shunter for the N Gauge Society in 2021 and has now announced the model in 'OO' gauge (see page 12) GEORGE DENT

Enjoying

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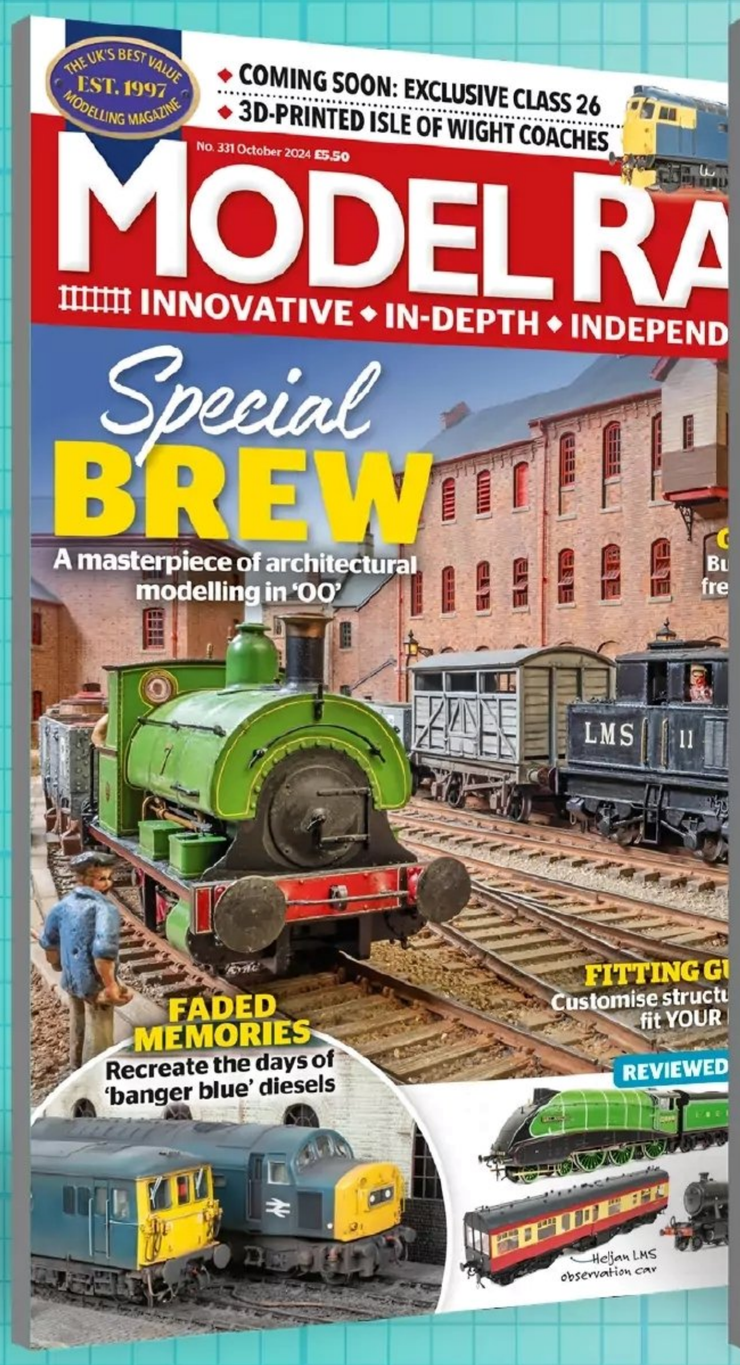

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MODEL RAIL MODEL OF THE YEAR 2024

The RESULTS

It's time to reveal the best ready-to-run locomotive and rolling stock models of 2024 – and the most popular retailers – as voted for by YOU.

It seems to be a common opening line for our Model of the Year results reveal, but 2024 has yet again proven to be a busy year for model railways. As well as the ever-expanding range in the three major scales and 'OO9', this year we have added 'TT:120' categories to our awards, making them bigger than ever before. As ever, *Model Rail* readers have helped to recognise excellence in the design and manufacture of model locomotives and rolling stock from a range of manufacturers. Waiting for the polls to close and getting the final results is one of the most anticipated days in the *Model Rail* teams' calendar, and it's fascinating to see what has been chosen as the winner. Sometimes they match our predictions, sometimes they have been very different!

Once again, you have been voting in your thousands in our Model of the Year competition, but because of differing interests across the voting categories, not everyone placed votes in all categories. With this in mind, the percentages you see listed among the winners are as a proportion of those who voted in that category, rather than the overall voter numbers. As expected, most people voted in the 'OO' categories, followed by 'N' and 'O' gauge at about the same level, closely followed by 'OO9' and 'TT:120', which goes to show how quickly the scale is taking off.

For the fourth year in a row, Accurascale has taken the largest prize of Overall Manufacturer of the Year, despite only one model taking the top spot, compared to the 'OO' gauge sweep from 2023. Rapido Trains UK and Bachmann Europe have also kept the second and third spots respectively, but like Accurascale, have gained a slightly higher share of the vote in 2024.

Finally, we'd like to thank everyone who took the time to cast their votes – we really do appreciate your contributions. Out of everyone who took part, we'll soon be choosing 18 readers at random to receive models from our £3,500 prize draw.

'OO' gauge

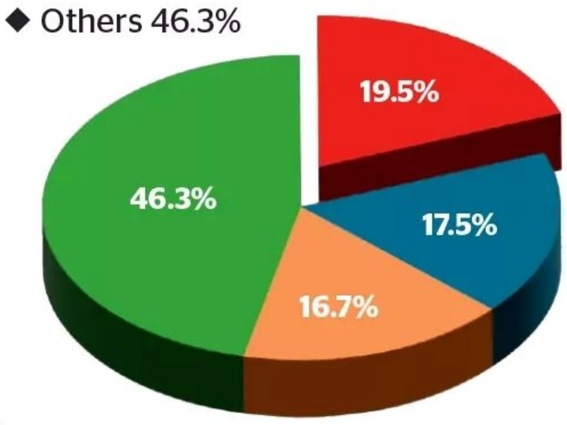
With over 50 models shortlisted this year, it certainly has been another busy year in 'OO' gauge. This year again, freight stock was the largest category and we had a larger category in 'diesel and electric' locomotives than we did in 'steam' locomotives, which may be an indicator as to the direction the hobby is going.

Kernow Model Rail Centre's GWR Steam Railmotor took over 20% of the votes in the steam category, narrowly beating Dapol's Hawthorn, Leslie 0-4-0ST in what was both manufacturer's only entry in the category this year. In the diesel and electric locomotive category it was Accurascale once again that took the top spot, as well as second this year, with the Class 31 and the Class 66, with Cavalex Models claiming third with its first ever locomotive release. Accurascale also secured second and third places in the coaching stock category with the Mk 2b and Mk 1 Suburban stock, but Hornby took the top spot with the LNER 'Coronation' stock. For freight, the EFE Rail Plasser & Theurer 25T crane, which was only released late in 2024, beat Accurascale to the top spot, but it was nice to see Clark Railworks getting recognition for the BR 25T 'Lowmac', securing third.

With such an array of manufacturers placing highly in the model categories, it is no surprise that the OO Manufacturer of the Year category was closely run. Accurascale has still emerged at the top of the pile, but Rapido Trains UK has closed the gap from 19% to 12.7%, and Bachmann Europe has overtaken Hornby for third.

'OO' DIESEL/ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVE OF THE YEAR

1st Accurascale Class 31 19.5%
2nd Accurascale Class 66 17.5%
3rd Cavalex Models Class 56 16.7%
◆ Others 46.3%



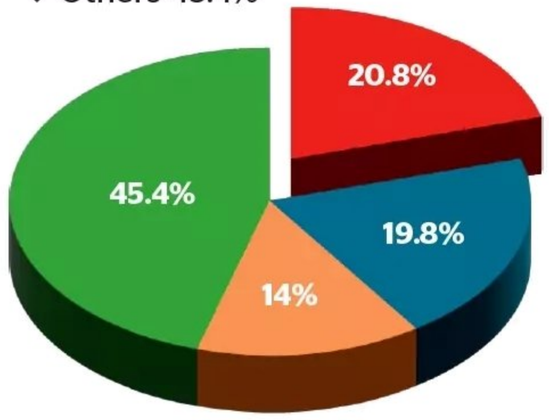
‘00’ STEAM LOCOMOTIVE OF THE YEAR

1st Kernow MRC GWR Steam Railmotor 20.8%

2nd Dapol Hawthorn, Leslie 0-4-0ST 19.8%

3rd Hornby LMS ‘Black Five’ 4-6-0 14%

◆ Others 45.4%



K M R C 1 DAPOL www.dapol.co.uk 2 HORNBY® 3

‘00’ FREIGHT STOCK OF THE YEAR

1st EFE Rail Plasser & Theurer 25T crane 17.5%

2nd Accurascale SR Banana vans 13.7%

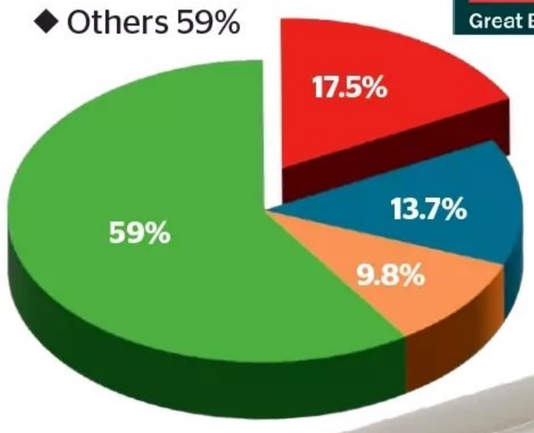
3rd Clark Railworks BR 25T ‘Lowmac’ 9.8%

◆ Others 59%

1 EFE Rail Great British Model Railways

2 accurascale

3 Clark RAILWORKS



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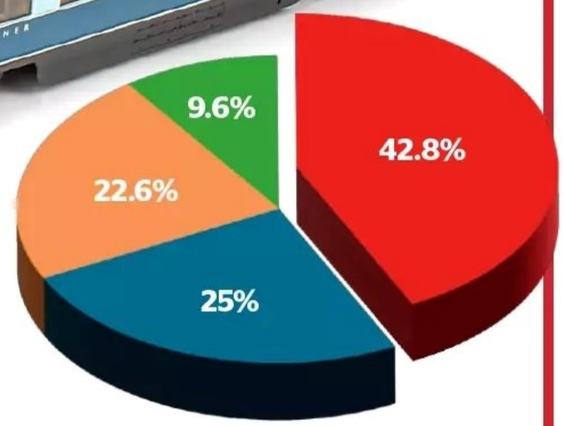


‘00’ COACHING STOCK OF THE YEAR

1st Hornby LNER ‘Coronation stock’ 42.8%

2nd Accurascale BR Mk 2b 25%

3rd Accurascale BR Mk 1 Suburban stock 22.6%

◆ Others 9.6%

3 accurascale

2 accurascale

1 accurascale

‘00’ MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

1st Accurascale (including Irish Railway Models) 33.8%

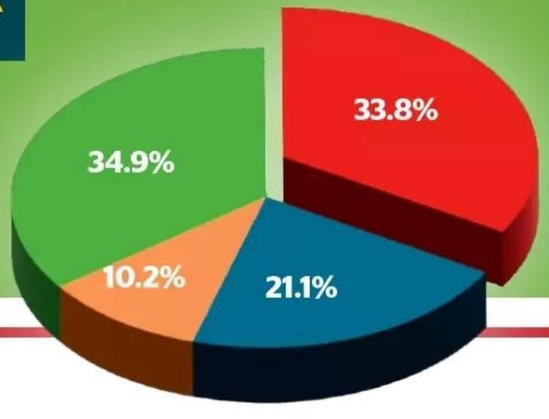
2nd Rapido Trains UK 21.1%

3rd Bachmann Europe (including EFE Rail) 10.2%

◆ Others 34.9%

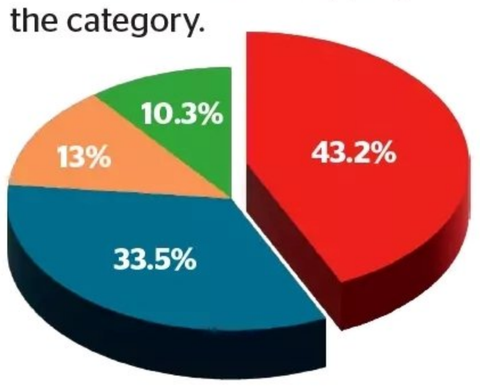
2 RAPIDO TRAINS UK

BACHMANN Europe plc Quality Since 1833 3



‘009’ gauge

Narrow gauge modellers only had four models to choose from, with two new locomotives and two new coaches to vote for. Unsurprisingly it was the two locomotives which claimed the top two spots, with the FR ‘Small/Large England’ from Peco/Kato winning with 43.2% of the votes. Bachmann Narrow Gauge won the manufacturer’s award for the sixth time in the eight years we have run ‘009’ as a category, but the scale is still seen as a niche, with more than half of voters skipping the category.



‘009’ MODEL OF THE YEAR

1st Peco/Kato FR ‘Small/Large England’ 43.2%

2nd Bachmann Baguley-Drewry 70hp 4wDH 33.5%

3rd Bachmann ‘Tin car’ saloon 13%

◆ Others 10.3%

1 PECO

2 BACHMANN Europe plc Quality Since 1833

3 BACHMANN Europe plc Quality Since 1833

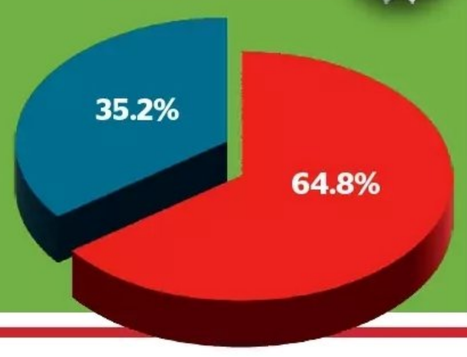
‘009’ MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

1st Bachmann Europe 64.8%

2nd Peco 35.2%

1 BACHMANN Europe plc Quality Since 1833

2 PECO

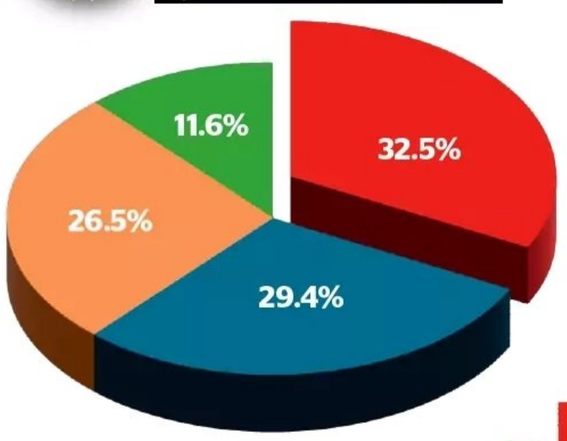


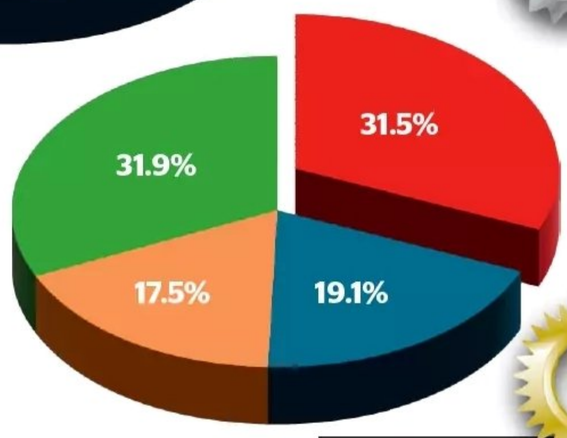
‘N’ gauge

It was another steady year for ‘N’ gauge with four all-new locomotives and eight new rolling stock items released in 2024. Graham Farish narrowly beat Revolution Trains to the top spot with the LMS 10000/10001 ‘Twins’ by fewer than 50 votes over the Class 59, with Sonic Models’ GWR ‘Large Prairie’ securing third. Revolution Trains rolling stock secured more than 50% of the total vote share in that category, and has climbed to the top spot in the Manufacturer of the Year category, displacing Bachmann Europe which drops to second.

‘N’ ROLLING STOCK OF THE YEAR

1st Revolution Trains Southern Region General Manager’s saloon 31.5%
2nd Revolution Trains FNA-D flask wagons 19.1%
3rd Rapido Trains UK SECR wagon pack 17.5%
◆ Others 31.9%





‘N’ LOCOMOTIVE OF THE YEAR

1st Graham Farish LMS 10000/10001 ‘Twins’ 32.5%
2nd Revolution Trains Class 59 29.4%
3rd Sonic Models GWR ‘Large Prairie’ 2-6-2T 26.5%
◆ Others 11.6%

‘N’ MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

1st Revolution Trains 33.3%
2nd Bachmann Europe (Graham Farish) 28.6%
3rd Dapol 12.1%
◆ Others 26%

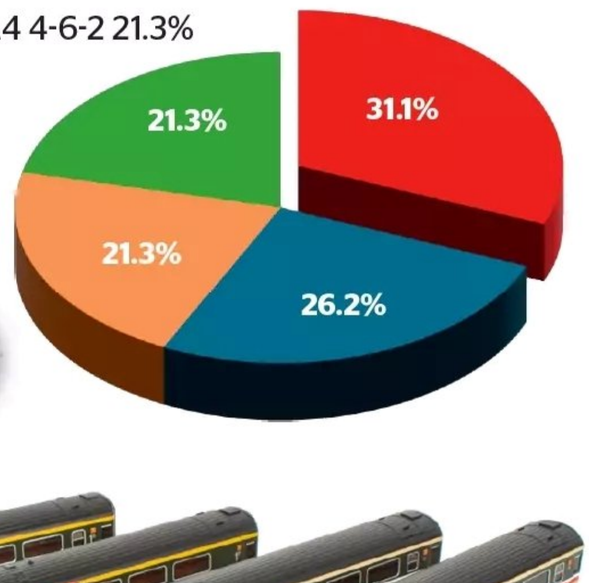
TT:120 gauge

As the range of available models in TT:120 grew significantly in 2024, we offered readers the chance to vote for their favourite models in the scale for the first time in this year’s awards. It will come as no real surprise that Hornby has swept the board, as it produced 14 of the 15 models across the two categories. Peco’s RCH seven-plank open wagon came fourth in the rolling stock category, only missing out on a place on the podium by 46 votes. Interestingly, all four locomotives receive a placing, with the BR Class 50 and LNER ‘A4’ both receiving exactly the same number of votes for a tie of third.

‘TT:120’ was the category with the fewest number of votes this year, however it is not far behind the votes received in ‘N’ and ‘OO9’. With its popularity growing, we may see a very different-looking result next year.

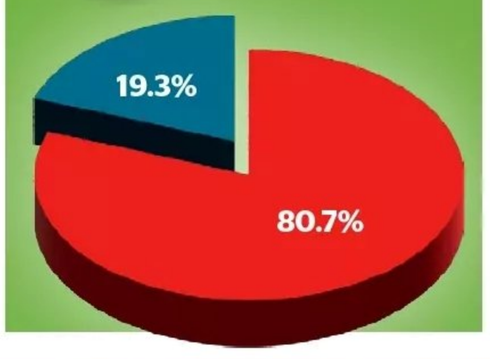
‘TT:120’ LOCOMOTIVE OF THE YEAR

1st Hornby LMS Duchess 4-6-2 31.1%
2nd Hornby BR Class 43 HST power cars 26.2%
3rd Hornby BR Class 50 21.3%
3rd Hornby LNER A4 4-6-2 21.3%



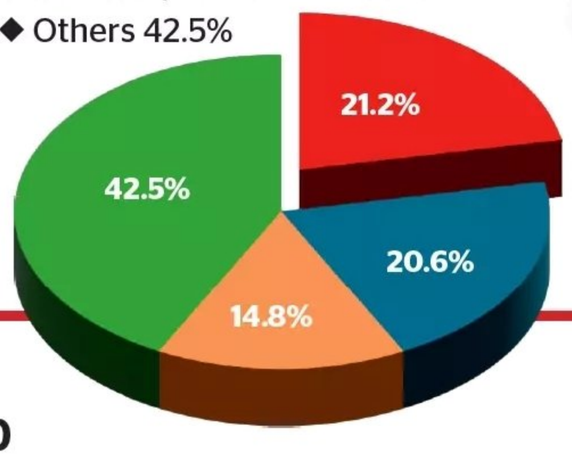
‘TT:120’ MANUFACTURER

1st Hornby 80.7%
2nd Peco 19.3%



‘TT:120’ ROLLING STOCK

1st Hornby BR Mk 3 HST coaches 22.1%
2nd Hornby LMS 57ft coaches 20.6%
3rd Hornby BR Mk 2f coaches 14.8%
◆ Others 42.5%



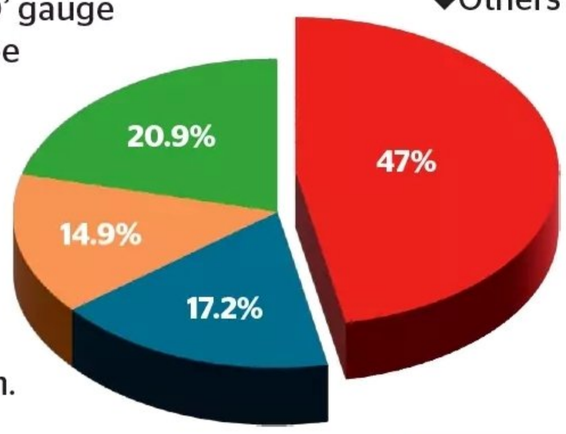
‘O’ gauge

2024 was another fascinating year for ‘O’ gauge, not least with the emergence of ‘NG7’ narrow gauge stock. But it was Ellis Clark Trains’ superb LMS ‘Black Five’ 4-6-0 which secured nearly half of all the votes in a convincing victory in the locomotive category, with this undoubtedly helping Ellis Clark Trains to the top spot in the ‘O’ gauge manufacturer category as well.

Bachmann Narrow Gauge’s ‘NG7’ offerings secured two second-placed finishes as micro ‘O’ gauge layouts appear to be enjoying a bit of a resurgence, and Heljan has a hat-trick of third places, as well as a first with its LMS Observation saloon.

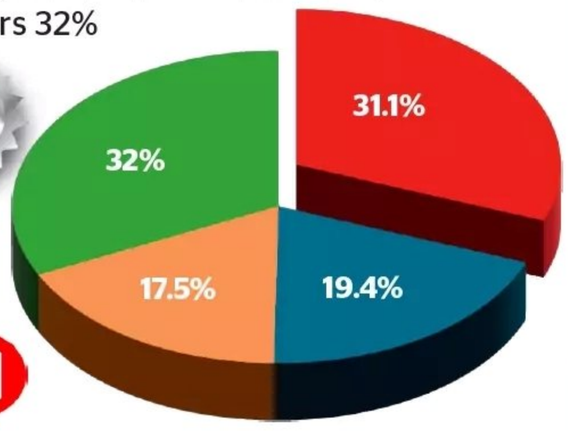
‘O’ GAUGE LOCOMOTIVE OF THE YEAR

1st Ellis Clark Trains LMS ‘Black Five’ 47%
2nd Bachmann Narrow Gauge ‘NG7’ ‘Quarry Hunslet’ 0-4-0ST 17.2%
3rd Heljan BR Class 37/0 (split headcode) 14.9%
◆Others 20.9%



‘O’ GAUGE ROLLING STOCK OF THE YEAR

1st Heljan LMS Observation saloon 31.1%
2nd Bachmann Narrow Gauge ‘NG7’ Quarry wagons 19.4%
3rd Heljan BR Mk 2 coaches 17.5%
◆ Others 32%

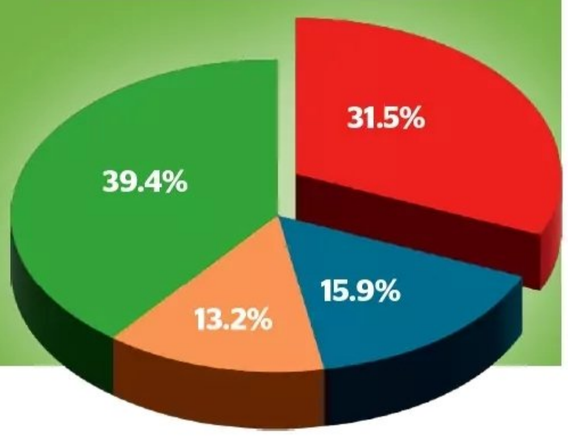


‘O’ MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

1st Ellis Clark Trains 34.7%
2nd Dapol (including Lionheart Trains) 27.9%
3rd Heljan 21.3%
◆ Others 16.1%

OVERALL MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

1st Accurascale (including Irish Railway Models) 31.5%
2nd Rapido Trains UK 15.9%
3rd Bachmann Europe (including EFE Rail & Graham Farish) 13.2%
◆Others 39.4%



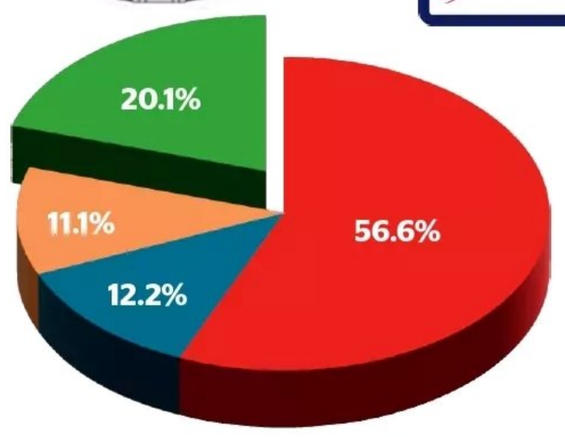
Retailer of the Year

There has been a change in last year’s top three ‘large’ retailers, as, with Hattons ceasing to trade, Rails of Sheffield collected well over half of the votes, with Kernow increasing its share of the vote and The Model Centre rounding off the top three. Once again a range of retailers from far and wide were nominated, which is encouraging to see.

Locally, Great Eastern Models in Norwich has won Local Retailer of the Year for the third year running with Derails in second place again, but this year Ron Lines in Southampton has broken into the top three.

RETAILER OF THE YEAR – LARGE

1st Rails of Sheffield 56.6%
2nd Kernow Model Rail Centre 12.2%
3rd The Model Centre 11.1%
◆ Others 20.1%



RETAILER OF THE YEAR – LOCAL

1st Great Eastern Models, Norwich
2nd DeRails, Coleford
3rd Ron Lines, Southampton

‘OO’ GAUGE LAYOUT **YEOVIL CENTRAL**

What makes this layout great?

“Many of us can only dream of a layout this size. It’s immersive, it’s complex and it provides plenty of operational potential. If a mix of shunting and long distance running is your thing, ‘Yeovil Central’ has everything you’d want to see.”

1

Interchange of the **imagination**

Reimagining Yeovil Junction as a place where Southern and Western regions met, **Mike Turton** then had to figure out how to fit it into his garage, while still accommodating the car.

Words: **Chris Gadsby** Photography: **Chris Nevard** Artwork: **Andrew Mackintosh**

There was a time when garages were used for cars and that was it. Today, 53% of drivers in the UK say that they never put their car in the garage, the number one reason for not doing so being that they have too many other items stored in them to fit a car in as well. 83% of people say they use the garage for additional storage and nearly half use it as a workshop or DIY space. Does a model railway count as DIY? Mike Turton has filled as much of his garage as possible with a model railway while still being able to get his car in, although he does need a plastic bottle suspended from the ceiling to ensure he stops in the right place!

"The layout started life as a 15ft by 9ft loop which incorporated the station area and a fiddleyard. This came with me from a previous house, but in 2018 I decided to start afresh with new baseboards and build the layout again from the ground up. You won't be surprised to learn from the layout's name that I have based it in Yeovil, but rather than trying to model a station exactly, I have reimagined Yeovil Junction as Yeovil Central, giving me the ability to add a bit of modeller's licence to the area. This all came about from seeing a photograph years ago of a station in Yeovil, later discovering that it was Yeovil Town, but by the 1970s that had disappeared, Yeovil Junction being the main station for the area. I wanted to model a station that could feasibly have connections to the Western Region and Southern Region, allowing me to combine everything I loved about modelling into one. I took a basic track plan of the station and modified it with features from other stations in the area, gave it a 1930s feel, and away I went."

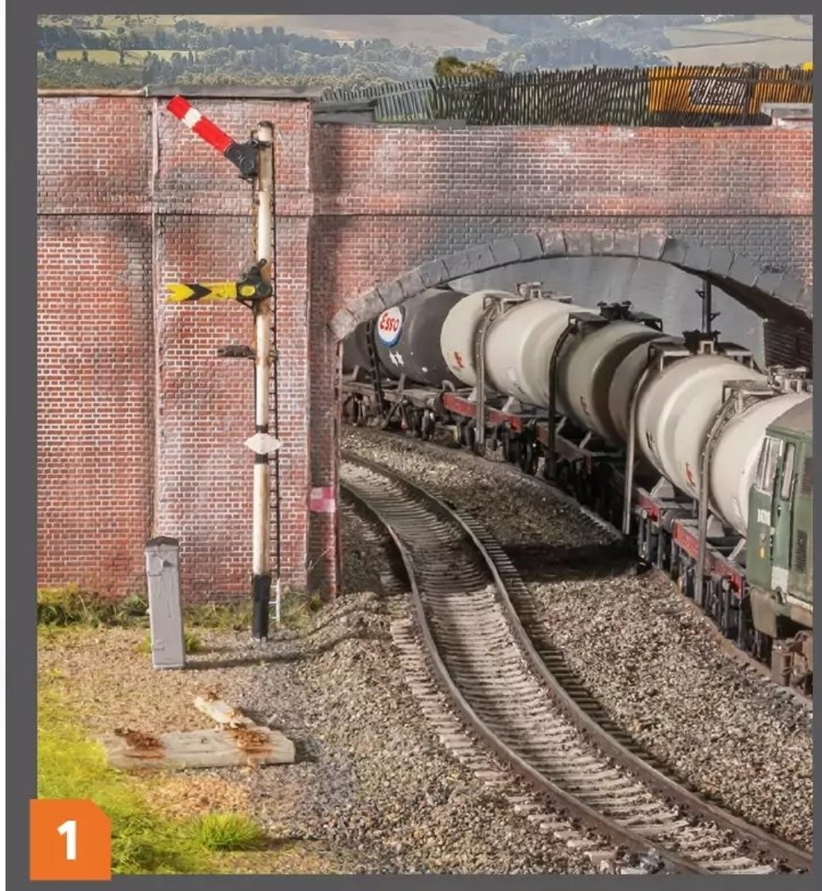
CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE

The whole station has been scratchbuilt in an Art Deco style akin to Templecombe, of which Mike has numerous photographs, creating his models with a mix of card and plastic card for the final effect. The surrounding areas, such as the coaling tower, turntable and engine shed have been made from various plastic kits or the Bachmann Scenecraft range. ➤

"I wanted to model a station that could feasibly have connections to the Western Region and Southern Region"

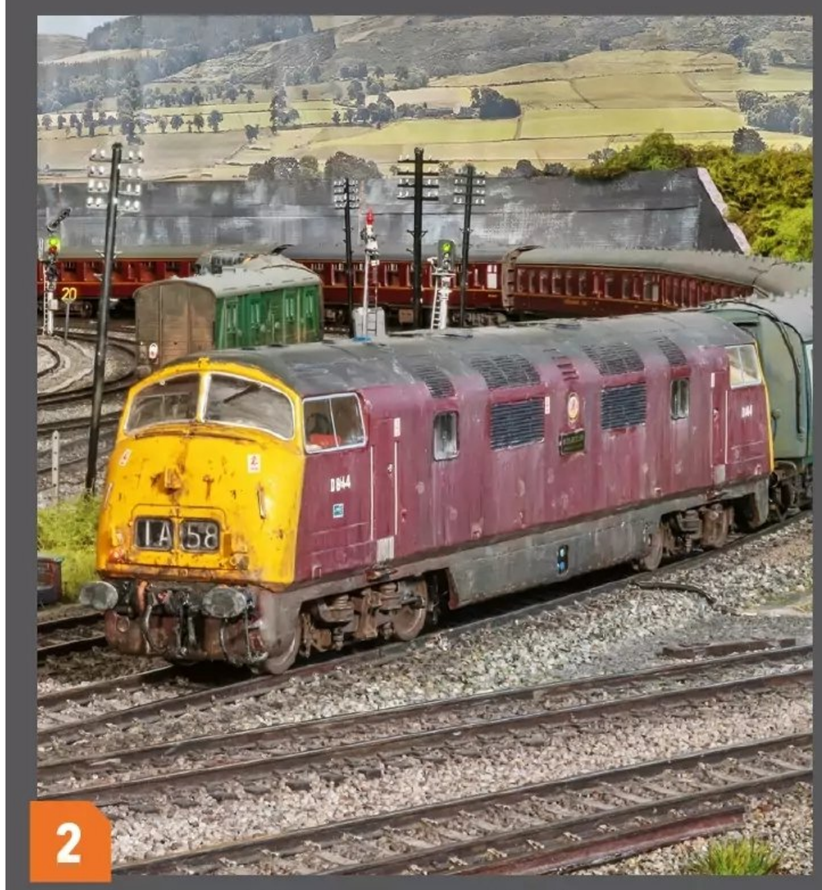
②

3 things we like



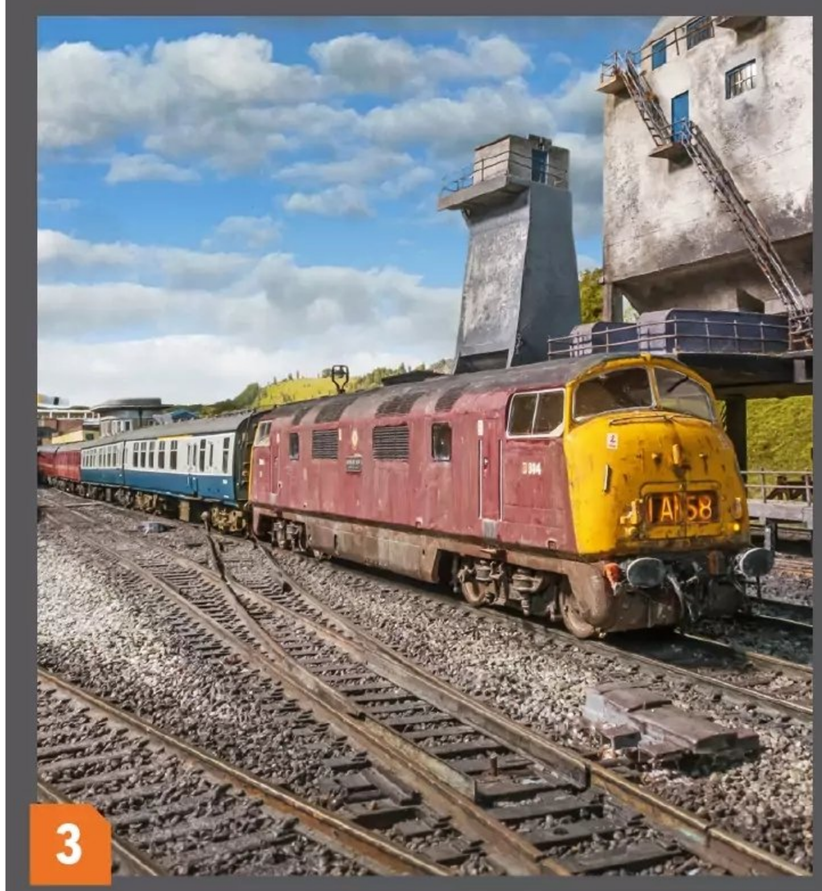
1

The abandoned sleepers with rusted chairs.



2

The weathered locomotives and rolling stock...



3

... and the grimy track and infrastructure.

4

5

"I've previously used Scalescenes kits to make these structures but I found that they weren't durable enough to survive the house move. I'm more of an atmospheric modeller than a detail modeller so as long as I can get the layout looking right, the details can be added in later if I ever decide to go that way. That mentality probably comes from my career as a visualiser. I would capture the overall look and feel of a project and then somebody else can worry about the smaller details! For example, in the period I've modelled here, the 1960s, the paint is still Southern Region green and cream, management being hesitant to repaint it, not knowing if closure would be just around the corner. My aim is to capture the run-down feel of the 1960s when the majority of the railways in

the West Country were in rapid decline and closure."

Creating a run-down, grimy atmosphere extends to the locomotives, rolling stock and lineside, all weathered by Mike. He's been weathering models since he was a teenager, but having seen the photographs taken by Chris Nevard, he's going back and refining some of them.

"Mr Nevard's expert camera has shown the models warts and all, so I've been going back and altering a few of them that I wasn't completely happy with. At the time the locomotives looked pretty rough as they weren't very well looked after, and nor did the coaches they were pulling. I choose to do my weathering with drybrushing and weathering powders as I feel an airbrush can give too much of ➤

8 Mike has gone through countless bags of static grass in the creation of Yeovil Central. The addition of a derelict wayside station helps to place the layout in the transitional 1960s era.

a uniform feel to the models. What I try to do is take the sheen off the BR blue and make sure they look as though they've been used."

Mike has modelled a relatively niche period of British railway history, where most of the lineside still looks pristine but the mentality is shifting to just dumping old components at the side of the line.

"Diesel-hydraulic locomotives would just throw oil all over the railway so the tracks are very dirty, but in some areas a section of track has been replaced with new concrete sleepered track. Unlike in steam days, when the ballasting and the lineside would be immaculate, in these days the permanent way teams would start piling the old ballast up at the lineside, so that's something I've started to replicate sparingly at 'Yeovil Central'. The embankments are just starting to become overgrown as well. Not as bad as they are now, but beginning to become less kept than they were."

EXPANSION

Getting a fully functioning layout and a large car into the same room was always going to be a challenge for Mike, but he was determined that once the looped section through the station was complete, he wanted to extend 'Yeovil Central'.

"This took a fair amount of planning as I had some specific requirements for both loops, most importantly that I would still be able to get the car in and out. I also wanted to have a continuous run that would be ➤

separate from the station so I could have a couple of trains running while doing movements in the yard and to include a connecting line, so trains could get onto the looped line easily. This is similar to the line from Castle Cary down to Yeovil Penn Mill and the line to Weymouth so I could emulate this and give myself the prototypical connection."

A more recent addition means more realistic products in the country section, where Mike has used DCCconcepts Legacy bullhead Code 75 track. This is more fragile than Peco Code 100, but it has given him a superior finish in those areas. The two extensions also give him a more immersive experience.

"If I sit at my chair controlling the station with the NCE Powercab then the scenic section runs all around my vision and I really feel as though I'm in Yeovil watching trains. Trains can originate at the fiddleyard, come through the station and go round the country extension, round to the right through the reverse loop, back through the station and return into the fiddleyard. If I set them up correctly I can have three or four on the line for a bit until inevitably one starts to catch up the other, but I get 15 minutes or so of continuous running before I have to intervene."

You'd think that with a 20ft square layout and a car in his garage that there wouldn't be room for anything else, but Mike has not ruled out making Yeovil Central even bigger as he might add another station to one of the loops. Perhaps he will eventually become one of those who never use their garage for a car after all? MR

Mike can run 'Yeovil Central' in two periods. Either around 1960, when steam was the main motive power. Or the late 1960s, as seen here, when BR's early diesels were in control. It's this latter era that Mike recalls from his childhood trainspotting jaunts.

'Yeovil Central' is run on DCC control from an NCE Powercab. Mike began with a Hornby Elite controller but found that it was not powerful enough for such a large layout, making the switch to NCE to give him additional flexibility.

FACTFILE: 'YEOVIL CENTRAL'

Gauge and scale: 4mm:1ft, 16.5mm gauge, 'OO'

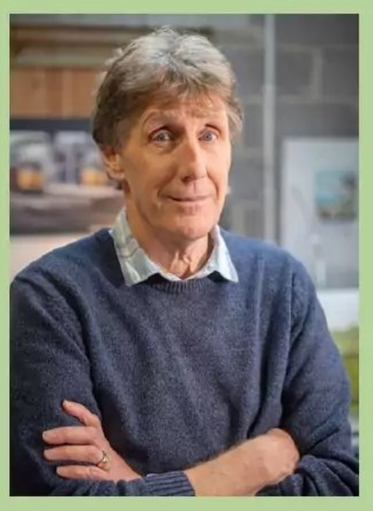
Size: 20ft by 20ft

Track: Peco Code 100 and DCCconcepts Legacy Code 75

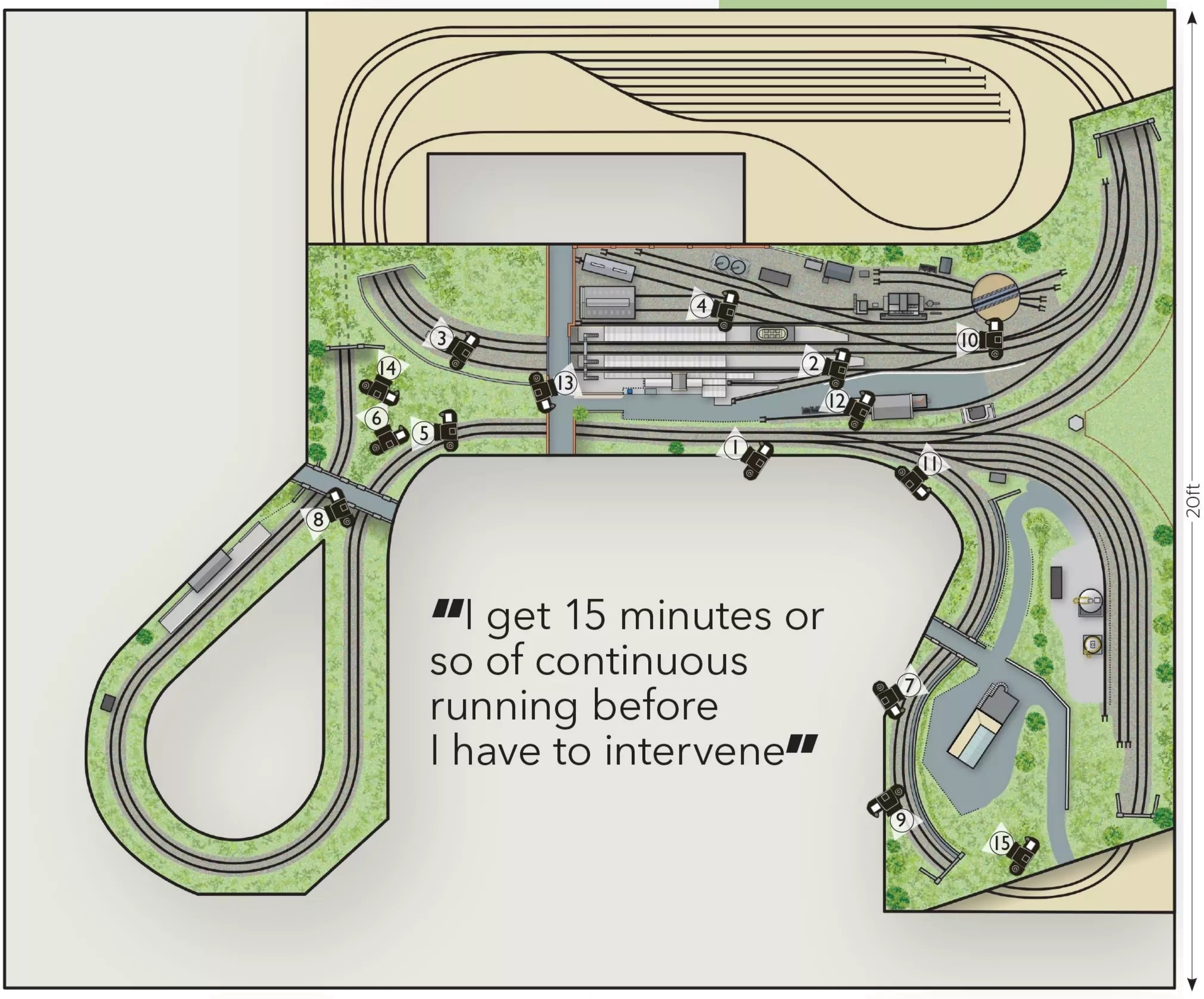
Power and control: NCE Powercab

Time to build: Six years

ABOUT THE MODELLER: MIKE TURTON



"I'm an artist and still do a little bit of freelance work for one or two companies. Since retiring I've mainly done my own illustrations which tend to be anything mechanical. I've also got very involved with YouTube and Facebook and the layout has its own page."



"I get 15 minutes or so of continuous running before I have to intervene"

Artwork: **Andrew Mackintosh**

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1114	REGENT Black B Tanks 370/375/400/401
1115	FINA Black B Tanks 200/209/236/237
1116	Grey TSV Molasses B Tanks 48559/48591/48617/48623
1117	ICI Blue/Orange 35T B Tank 384
1155	ESSO Silver/Red A Tanks 3200/3201/3202/3203
1156	ESSO Grey/Red A Tanks 4022/4023/4305/4306
1157	ESSO Grey/Red A Tanks 43237/44101/44283/44292 (Hazchem Panels)

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Chris Nevard
Our ace snapper is also a hugely talented modeller.

Chris Leigh
Quite simply, what Chris doesn't know isn't worth knowing.

Peter Marriott
Scenic guru! Knows what's available and how to use it.

Project difficulty ratings

Easy: one screwdriver

Very hard: five screwdrivers.

HOW TO

CUSTOMISE A SIGNAL BOX KIT

Chris Nevard tweaks Peco's new Highland Railway signal box kit and transplants it to a light railway setting in the South West of England.

PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRIS NEVARD

Laser-cut kits have been around for some time, especially in the USA, but they've only become mainstream here in the UK relatively recently, with several suppliers like Petite Properties, Scale Model Scenery, LCUT Creative and Fair Price Models to name just a few championing the medium which is frequently based around thin plywood, card, paper and MDF.

Peco has also joined the scene with a range of buildings, many of which are currently based on Scottish prototypes. The kit employed here is based on the now-listed former Highland Railway signal box at Helmsdale in Sutherland, Scotland.

I'd seen the kit lurking on the shelf in my local model shop several times, and wondered if it might just pass for a more southerly building on a Colonel Stephens-inspired light railway, with just a slight modification and a suitable paint scheme.

It's a lovely kit, featuring lots of finely rendered detail. A choice of roofs is provided, with the laser-cut parts depicting a corrugated iron covering, while a generic set of plastic mouldings offer a slate or tile roof, although these parts require marking and cutting to size.

After a little consideration, I plumped for some laser-cut roof slate strips from Scale Model Scenery, which are applied in overlapped layers, as per the real thing, providing a more realistic appearance. Indeed, I feel that a set of similar tile strips would be a great option for Peco to include with this kit instead of the moulded plastic parts.

This was a fun project, and it's certainly nice to do a bit of (virtually) plastic-free modelmaking for a change. While the prototype is a Scottish one, having perused several old books, I see that the overall design isn't too

dissimilar to signal boxes seen elsewhere in the country, especially in rural areas.

So, what's with the Wedmore name on my signal box? It's actually the beginning of a possible new layout project for myself, based on a little-known Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway line which would have run between Shapwick Junction on the Evercreech Junction to Highbridge line, through Wedmore across to Cheddar, where it would have linked up with the GWR.

A Google search suggests that there were plans for Wedmore to have a railway, but it never happened. But those rose-tinted glasses are so very wonderful I'm sure you'll agree!

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

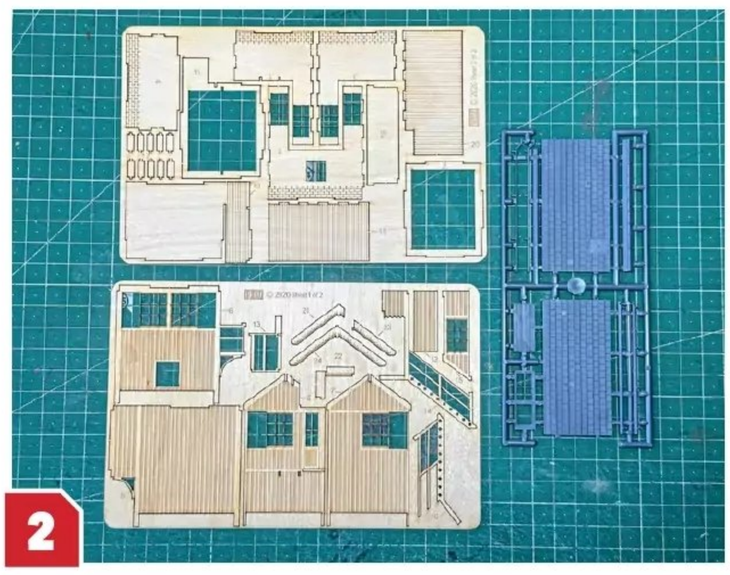
- Peco LK-201 Highland Railway Signal Box kit **Price:** £26.50 **Availability:** Peco stockists **Web:** *www.peco-uk.com*
- Laser-cut roof slates LX228-00 **Price:** £8.99 **Availability:** Scale Model Scenery **Web:** *www.scalemodelscenery.co.uk*
- Grey, Red, Filler (yellow) primers and Matt Black aerosols **Availability:** Halfords stores **Web:** *www.halfords.com*
- Humbrol paints • Matt 101 Mid Green • Matt 103 Cream (acrylic or enamel) • Gorilla Glue PVA • Modpodge 'Gloss Lustre-Lustre' **Availability:** Model/hardware stores

TOOLS

- Scalpel or hobby craft knife
- Needle file or disposable nail file
- Metal ruler
- Cutting mat
- Tweezers
- Paintbrushes
- Masking tape

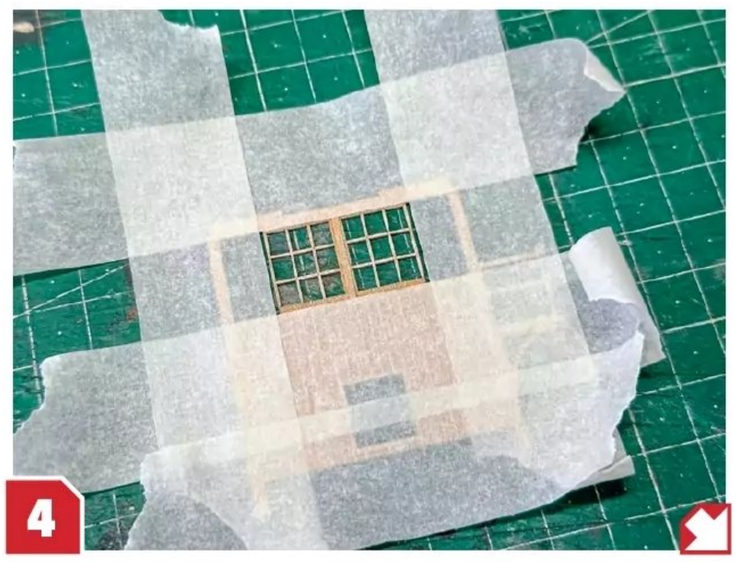
STEP BY STEP

1 Peco's Highland Railway signal box kit comes with excellent instructions and an optional plastic roof. Be sure to keep the clear packaging for glazing, which is often the norm for building kits these days.

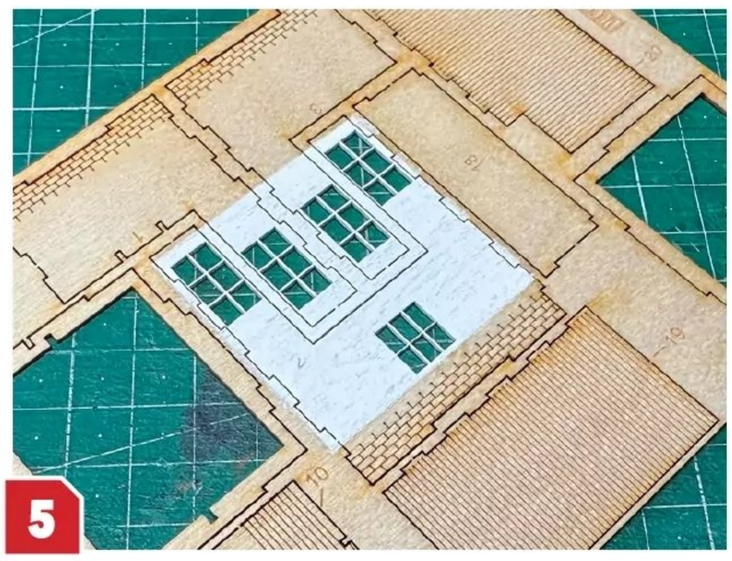


2 It's worth laying everything out to see exactly what's involved, and reading through the instructions of course – even if you're a bloke! Give yourself an idea of how the parts are intended to go together and in which order.

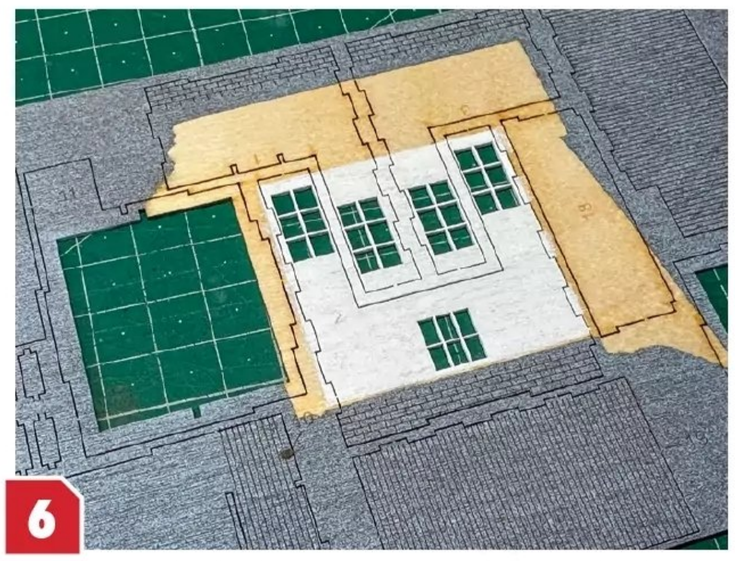
3 It's impressive what can be achieved laser-cutting. The kit's components feature sharp panel lines and superbly aged grain texture on the wooden planks. Parts are easily removed with a scalpel loaded with a fresh blade.



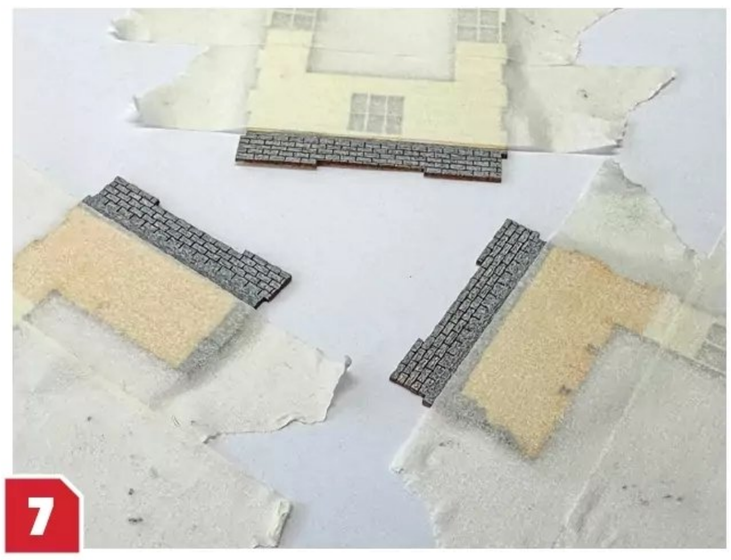
4 As an experiment I painted some of the parts before assembly using Halfords white primer for the window frames. Primer covers well, dries quickly and doesn't clog up. Mask off areas as required.



5 Here's the result after a couple of quick coats of the white aerosol primer. It's best to use aerosol paints outdoors, preferably on a still day, as the fumes can be toxic.

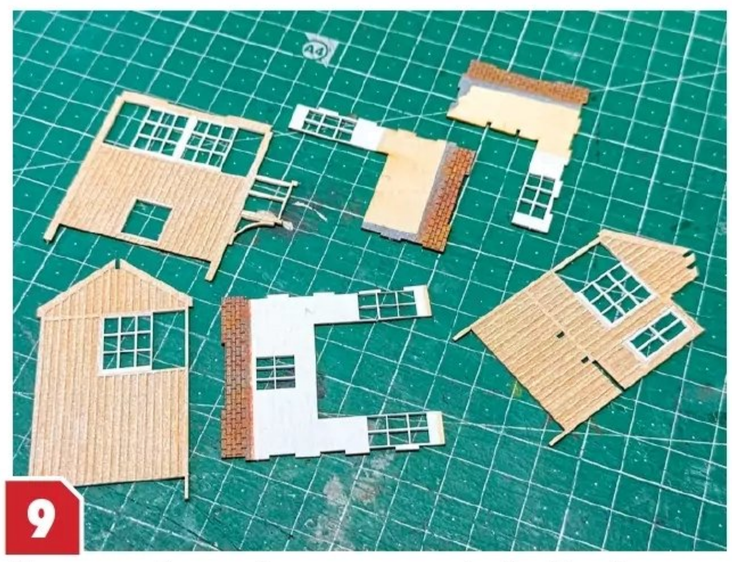


6 I also masked off other areas that needed to retain a bare wood finish, then primed other parts, such as the roof panels and brick wall sections with Halfords Grey Primer, followed by a dusting of matt black.



7 This isn't essential, of course – it was more of an experiment. But I figured that the dark grey/black coating would provide an ideal colour for the mortar courses. You may, of course, just decide to paint everything after assembly.

8 Using different shades of red-brown acrylic paints and a stiff flat brush, I dry-brushed the areas of masonry to pick out the bricks without disturbing the dark primer in the recessed mortar courses.



9 Here are the main components for the four walls, with the brickwork and windows pre-painted. All ready for assembly to begin! A trial run, without glue, is recommended to ensure everything slots together. With this kit everything fitted perfectly.

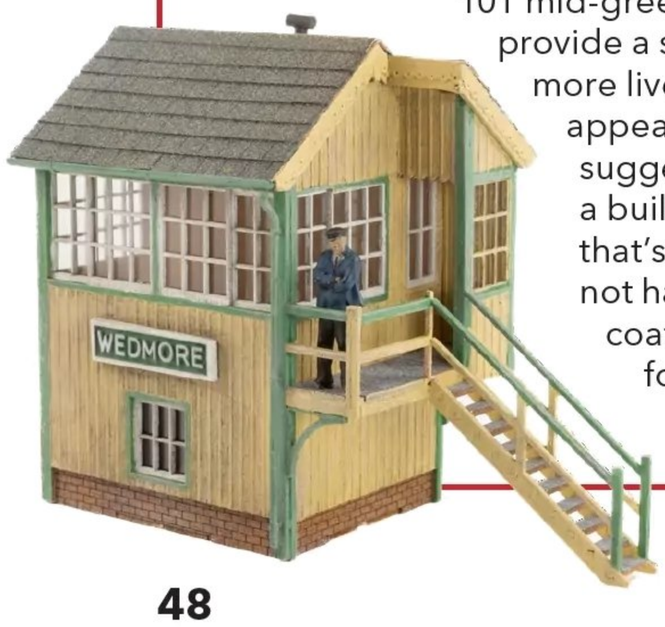
10 Following Peco's instructions, assembly began. Special laser-cut kit glues exist, but I found that PVA glue is equally effective. Gorilla's Wood Glue produced a good bond very quickly indeed, and any excess can be wiped away with a damp cloth before it dries.

COLOUR THEORY

Being of a certain age, I remember buildings in BR Southern region cream and green, the latter in particular being almost copper oxide in colour unlike what you see on preserved railways which almost certainly have far more love and attention than those in the steam era ever had. And of course, I imagine modern exterior paints are far better and hardier.

Luckily there are several wonderful books available these days, in colour, which make a great window into the past, allowing us to see what colours were really like, subject to the limitations of old colour film and scanning.

Therefore, rather than rely on authentic railway colour paints to represent BR's Southern region colours of the pre-1965 era, I prefer to use Humbrol 103 cream and Humbrol 101 mid-green, which provide a softer, more lived-in appearance, suggesting a building that's probably not had a fresh coat of paint for several years.



11 The walls are erected around the inner floor. I found generic decorator's masking tape great for holding things in place while the glue cured. Don't leave the tape in place too long, as it may leave behind stubborn residue.

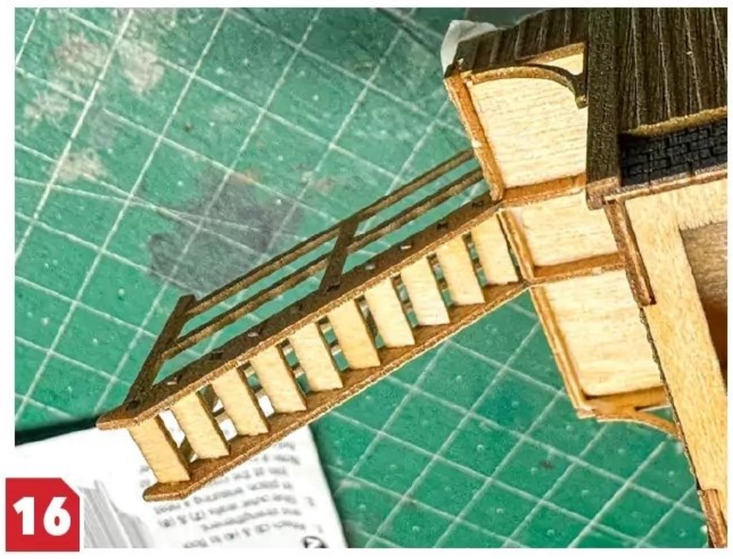
12 With three of the four walls in position, the character of the signal box is beginning to show. It doesn't hurt to check the corner angles with a set square or simply use the grid pattern on your cutting mat as a reference.

13 Once all the walls are in place, the upper internal former is installed, creating an impressively rugged construction which should resist warping or distortion in future, if the model is kept in a stable environment.

14 The trickiest part of the build was about to begin, as the staircase is formed. The first section consists of one banister frame, incorporated into the vestibule framework.

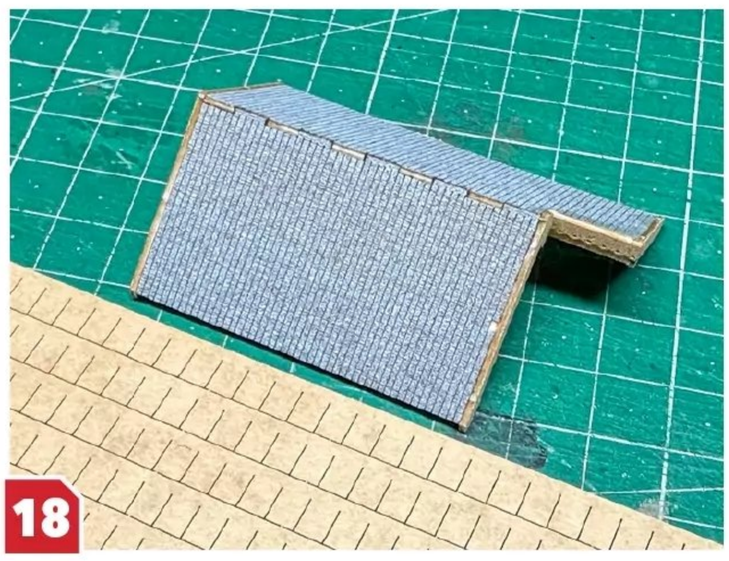
Peco's laser-cut wood kit may be based on a Highland Railway prototype, but similar structures could be found in other areas of Britain.

15 Luckily, the stair treads fit firmly into the side frame, so they don't slop around. However, getting the opposite banister frame attached was a little trying. The trick is to be nice and calm, and with a bit of fettling I got there.

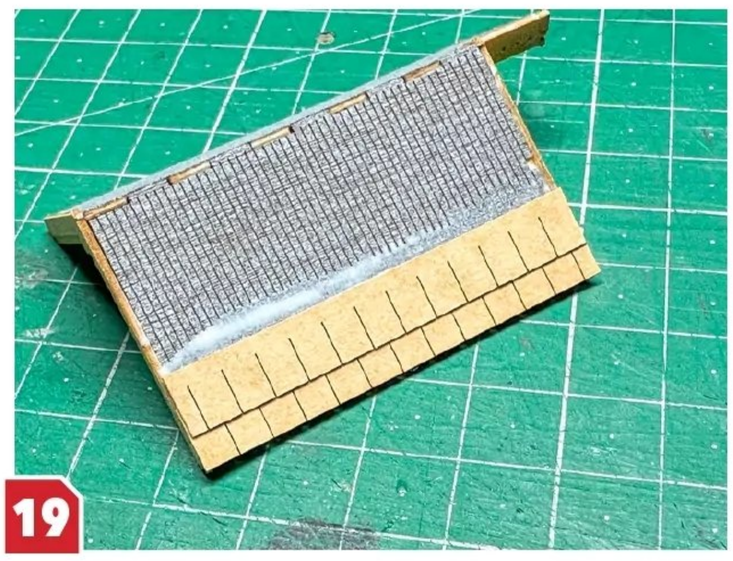


16 Luckily the thin wood is flexible and can take a little abuse as you shoehorn the steps into the locating holes.

17 I kept the roof removable, so at a later stage I can add a proper interior. I also didn't want to glaze the model until everything was painted and weathered. Note the masking tape keeping the panels together as the glue set.



18 The kit parts depict corrugated iron sheets or something similar, while the plastic alternative features moulded slate/tile detail, but it must be cut to size. Instead, I opted for laser-cut roof slates from the Scale Model Scenery range.



19 Applying the Scale Model Scenery roof slates is straightforward, taking around 20 minutes to treat the whole roof, layering the strips from the lower edges upwards to the apex, bonding them with PVA, then adding a ridge tile strip.

20 Finally, prior to painting, I applied a super-thin layer of PVA wood glue to the unpainted areas of the outer walls. This will partially fill the fine wood grain, while leaving the coarser laser-cut grain texture visible, for a more coherent appearance.

21 When the PVA had set, it felt like it had added strength to the building. I suggest having a little test to see what works best on a bit of the scrap plywood fret, for all PVA glues are different. I used Evo-Stik General Purpose PVA neat, as it's a little less 'gluey' than Gorilla Glue.

22 To represent BR Southern Region's pre-1965 colours, I used Humbrol 103 cream and Humbrol 101 mid-green. I've used authentic paints in the past but find them too bold for a building that's not been painted for years.

23 To be honest this probably wasn't the easiest of buildings to paint, the wood texture making paint application a little trickier than with plastic. However, the wood does represent the real material more effectively.

24 Weathering helped to disguise a less-than-perfect paint job, and began with a thin wash of highly diluted poster paint, applied by brush. This was then dabbed off, thus leaving the pigment in the recessed areas. There followed a lightly dry-brushed coat of grey/beige interior matt emulsion from a tester pot.

25 Dry-brushing a little grey/beige acts to soften the underlying colours a little, especially the green, with the added bonus that it hides wiggly paint lines effectively.

26 Once painting was complete, glazing followed as the final step. I used Modpodge's Gloss formula – a most useful product which I often use to represent water. It's like a thick PVA glue, but it dries completely clear and features a high degree of 'tack', making it perfect for attaching glazing, and if you do get a little on the glazing where you don't want it, it hardly shows once set.

27

I wanted to add a nameboard, featuring the cut-out letters seen on the LSWR and many other signal boxes and station boards. Slater's Plastikard offers packs of plastic alphabets in various sizes and I cut out the required letters.

28

It can be a little fiddly to fix the individual characters to a base of thick plastic card, but it's a very rewarding job. I then added a raised framework from styrene strip, all bonded with a liquid poly cement.

29

After priming and painting in the necessary colour (Humbrol 101 mid-green) – and leaving to dry overnight – I filed the face of the framework and letters to reveal the original white plastic. Simple!

HOW TO

DETAIL YOUR 'LEADER'

CHRIS LEIGH tweaks the KR Models Bulleid 'Leader' for a fictional future in the West Country.

00 GAUGE | **MODEL** KR Models Bulleid 'Leader' ◆ **Price** £162.50 | **AVAILABILITY** www.krmodels.net | 4 hrs

Whatever we might think about Oliver Bulleid's headstrong attempt to give steam traction a final fling, I've always been fascinated by his 'Leader' 0-6-0+0-6-0T design. It enjoyed (though that's hardly an appropriate word) the briefest of test careers on the Brighton line and around Brighton and Eastleigh. It suffered numerous failures and, as R.A. Riddles pointed out, was so overweight that it was unsuited to the work for which it had been intended.

It's brief test career reminds me of that rhyme by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow about the little girl who had a little curl right in the middle of her forehead. When she was good she was very, very good but when she was bad, she was horrid. On test, 'Leader' seems to have been very good on occasions but 'horrid' far more frequently. Bulleid was, of course, a master at designing boilers, and it was said that 'Leader' could raise steam more quickly than a 'Terrier' 0-6-0T. Unfortunately, other aspects of the design wasted much of that steam.

Had Riddles not ensured that it was cancelled, it is unlikely 'Leader' could ever have filled its 'go anywhere' role. In the end, the likely costs of finding and rectifying its numerous faults would simply have not been worthwhile, especially as the Southern Region of BR was moving rapidly towards diesels and more electrification. But, unless we model a real location at an exact time in its history, our model railways are fantasyland, and reflect what could have been, in a way that we might like things to have been. That's my model railway philosophy, anyway. In that fantasy land and with KR Models' 'Leader' fulfilling my desire to have a model of one of these bizarre locomotives, I decided to tweak the model so that its imaginary career on my layout is very real.

My main station serves the fictitious Cornish town of St Petrock somewhere at the Cornish end of the Southern Railway's 'withered arm.' It represents the period in which I first took an interest in trains, the mid-1950s-1960s. A successful 'Leader' would suit that period and I intend mine to work the through coach section of the 'Atlantic Coast Express' from Exeter Central to St Petrock. Those through coaches would number 5-6, which is the length of the station platforms and will doubtless include the two-vehicle Bulleid 'Tavern car' set when Hornby launches it. ➤

The task list

Rectifications – definite
- Paint bufferbeams
- Fit route indicator discs (supplied with model)
- Remake the coal load
- Correct the B-F-B wheels
- Detail painting
- Straighten/refit lamp irons
- Change numbers
- Fit 'ACE' headboard

Rectifications – maybe
- Correct the lighting
- Fit wash-out plugs
- Add crew
- Open a door

PHOTPGRAPHY: CHRIS LEIGH/GEORGE DENT

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- HMRS Pressfix transfers
  Availability: *www.hmrs.org.uk* **Price:** From £9.00
- Deluxe Materials Glue 'N' Glaze
  Availability: *www.deluxematerials.co.uk* **Price:** £8.75
- Fox Transfers nameplates and headboard
  Availability: *www.foxtransfers.co.uk* **Price:** from £6.75

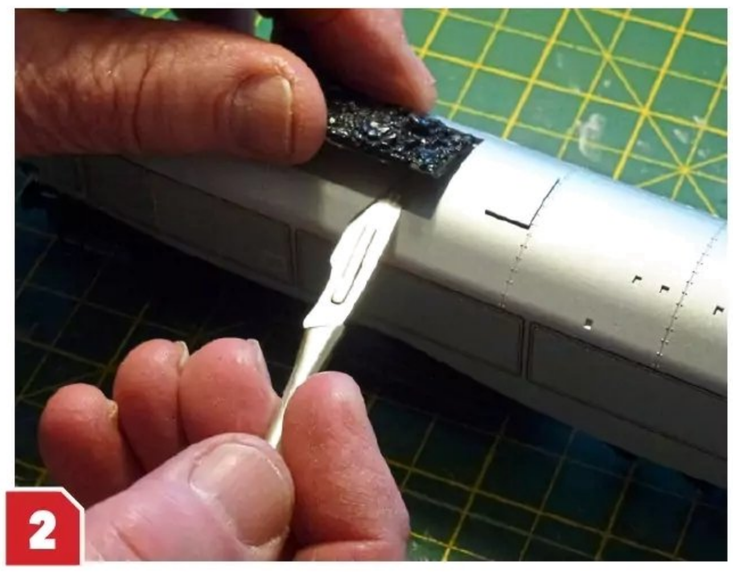
TOOLS

- Craft knife
- Tweezers
- Small hand drill
- PVA
- Matt paint

STEP BY STEP

1

I began by comparing the model with any photographs that I could find in books or on the internet. The basic shape of the model is good, but some details have been missed.



2

The lumpy coal load is close to the loading gauge limit and I had already decided to replace it. It is held in place by double-sided tape and popped off easily with a craft knife blade.

3

One or two of the metal lamp irons and one whistle were at crazy angles. These were easily corrected with a pair of tweezers but the whistle needed great care to avoid breaking it.

4

Removable plastic headcode discs are supplied. I opened the mounting hole slightly with a small drill and glued the discs in place with cyanoacrylate.

5

Ian Allan's *Abc British Railways Headcodes* is a useful guide but the information is also available online. There are four on eBay as I write this but at a lot more than the 2s 6d cover price!

6

Having removed the coal, the flat recess has no coal space detail. I cut a piece of black paper to fit so the new coal could be easily removed if necessary.

THE TASK

So what needs doing to give 'Leader' a purpose in my motive power collection? I should start by pointing out that my local retailer, Trains4U in Peterborough, carefully selected a KR Models 'Leader' in my chosen livery from his stock, avoiding any which had obvious defects. As has been widely reported, including in my own review in *Model Rail* 336, poor quality control has resulted in a number of sub-standard or defective examples entering the supply chain.

So, getting hands on a good 'un is a necessary start, although rectifying such defects as a loose wheel should not be beyond the skill of an average modeller with some Superglue. Yes, I know you shouldn't have to, but social media has been round and round that argument. My 'Leader' turned out to be a particularly good one, running very smoothly for well over an hour on the Kettering club's test track, with eight Bachmann Bulleid coaches on the drawbar.

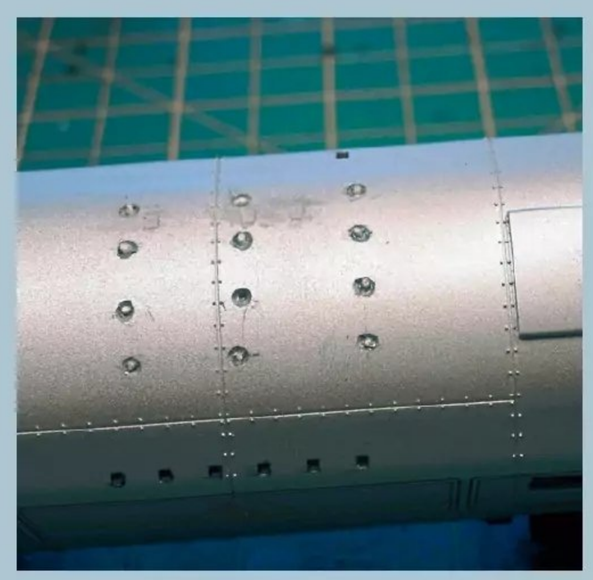
I began by making notes as I compared the model with as many photographs as I could find. Kevin Robertson's book *Leader: the Full Story* is a good place to start. I split my list of modifications into two columns headed 'definite' and 'maybe'. The latter jobs would depend on finding suitable reference pictures or on how complex they might prove to be.

Though the see-through wheels need to be rectified, I had no intention of dismantling the bogies or of attempting to fit replacement wheelsets. That would have meant either using 'locomotive kit' wheels, which I long ago found to be one of the shortcomings of locomotive kits, or possibly cannibalizing two Hornby 'Q1s'. Whatever I did to the wheels would need to be done without removing them from the model.

Wash-out plugs

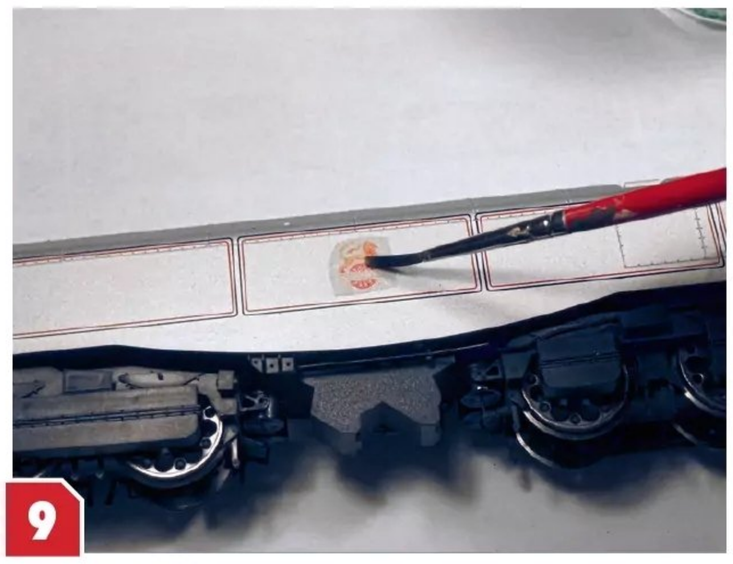
In practice I did fit wash-out plugs, though I'm far from certain they are the correct number or in the right place. I created 12, across the firebox area of the roof, in three rows of four. I marked the locations in pencil and drilled a 20thou hole in each. I used that as the centre and twisted a much larger drill several times to create a dimple or recess. It is important to just twist the drill between fingers as any mechanical or electric drill will go straight through the soft plastic.

I then inserted a piece of 20thou plastic rod into each hole, secured it from the underside with liquid polystyrene cement and then snipped it off flush with the outside of the roof.



I still have a small stock of the crushed real coal that I've used on my 'OO' models since I picked up the original lump of coal at the site of Tetbury shed's coaling stage!

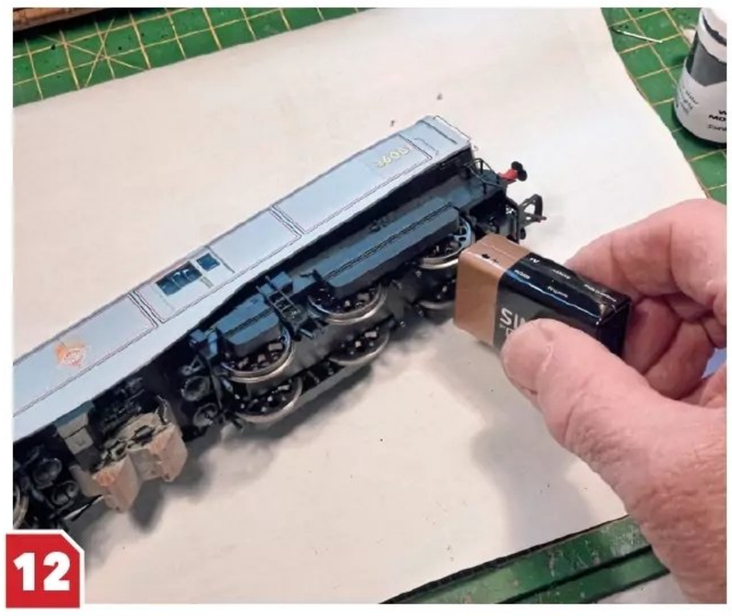
I sprinkled the loose crushed coal on wet PVA glue. If you don't have any coal, a piece of paper would replicate the canvas cover which was sometimes used over the coal space.



I wanted my 'Leader' to have an 'in service' look, so I applied HMRS Pressfix transfers to the centre side panels. I used the larger version of the early logo, both sides facing the No. 1 end.

I wanted to replace the pale printed numbers with correct straw-coloured lettering. The font is correct and Pressfix numbers fit perfectly over the top of them.

Both bufferbeams needed painting red but red does not coat well over black. I had to apply a coat of matt white paint as an undercoat. Matt signal red followed once the white was dry.



Attention turned to correcting the holes in the B-F-B wheels. This took several evenings. A 9V battery turns the wheels a little at a time (but this only works on non-DCC-fitted models).

I used Deluxe Materials Glue 'N' Glaze to fill the circular and tear-drop holes in the wheels, applying it sparingly to the edges with a cocktail stick and stretching it over the hole.

I filled all the openings I could see before using the battery to move the wheels and repeating the process. After allowing overnight drying I painted them matt black.

As this is a 'fantasyland' model I had no qualms about naming the 'Leader'. While choosing which 'West Country' name to misappropriate I stumbled across this set in the Fox range.

I was gilding the lily now, but as my 'Leader' will be working 'Atlantic Coast Express' through coaches I decided it should carry the 'ACE' headboard, also from Fox Transfers.

HOW TO

SCRATCHBUILD A RAIL OVERBRIDGE

Peter Marriott revisits a favourite prototype structure and constructs a replica using foam sheet and mounting card.

PHOTOGRAPHY: PETER MARRIOTT

The plate girder rail overbridge, which forms the centrepiece for my compact West Highland Line project, is based on a real structure near Fort William oil terminal. In fact, this is my second attempt at modelling the bridge, having used it as inspiration for a small layout I built during the first Covid lockdown in 2020.

Then, the bridge formed a scenic break at one end of the layout. Here, however, the bridge forms an important focal point towards the centre of the scenic area, taking the West Highland main line across an access road (more of a track actually) to the lower level timber-loading siding, inspired by the facilities that once existed at Crianlarich, as explained in MR335.

The main line runs along an elevated section, formed using polystyrene 'risers' from the Woodland Scenics Sub Terrain

OO GAUGE | 4 hrs

System. These are available in different heights and are flexible to allow the tracks to curve to whatever geometry you require. Atop the foam risers, I laid a strip of artist's mounting card, painted a dark grey (as an undercoat for subsequent ballasting).

A gap in the risers was left in a strategic location for the addition of a bridge, with the mounting card continuing across the divide and the track subsequently laid on top.

With the trackwork complete, the bridge structure would have to be created before the surrounding landscape contours were formed, as they would have to complement the position and profile of the retaining walls.

I opted to build most of the bridge from hard foam sheet, to maintain the lightweight nature of the baseboard, to keep costs to a minimum, but also as something of an experiment, to see how it would turn out.

Hard foam sheets and Styrofoam are great materials for the creation of scenery and for the basic framework of lineside buildings. These foams, which are aimed squarely at modellers and crafters, offer many advantages. They're very easy to cut and shape, particularly with a sharp blade. Indeed, special foam knives with an extra-long blade can be highly effective, working through deeper material with fewer passes or allowing contours to be carved more effectively.

The tougher nature of the foam also reduces mess, as it doesn't flake into tiny, annoying fragments like the softer expanded polystyrene-like foams often found in packaging. Accordingly, the cut edges of the sheet remain intact (provided a sharp blade

STEEL

has been used), allowing straight, square lines to be rendered, which is vital when building structures like bridges.

The finished bridge has proven strong enough to cope with the weight of passing trains, helped no doubt by the relatively short span. I'm pleased with the appearance too, as the foam captures the texture of the concrete walls. The use of mounting card for the heavy plate steel girder sections, which must have been repainted many times during the bridge's lifetime, also provides a subtly grainy texture, which is accentuated by painting and weathering – something that is often lacking when using smooth plastic components.

There's also the added satisfaction from not simply going out and buying a kit or ready-made structure. All told, I've used perhaps £2 worth of materials on this bridge, and I'm more than likely to use similar materials and techniques again in future. It was a very enjoyable experience, which is always important to maintain enthusiasm for our modelling.

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- Woodland Scenics Foam Risers, Assorted Foam Sheets (C1177), Shaper Sheet, Tuft Tac adhesive, Scenic Glue, Earth Undercoat
  Availability: Bachmann stockists
  Web: *www.bachmann.co.uk*
- Noch cobblestones paving sheet (60325)
  Availability: Noch stockists or Gaugemaster
  Web: *www.gaugemasterretail.com*
- AMMO by MIG weathering washes and paints
  Availability: Scale Model Shop
  Web: *www.scalemodelshop.co.uk*
- Static grass fibres (various lengths and colours, fine green scatter material, fine sand, acrylic paints
  Availability: Model shops

TOOLS

- Foam knife with a new blade
- Steel ruler
- Self-sealing cutting board
- Paintbrushes
- Woodland Scenics Foam Nails.
- Tamiya fine finishing paper

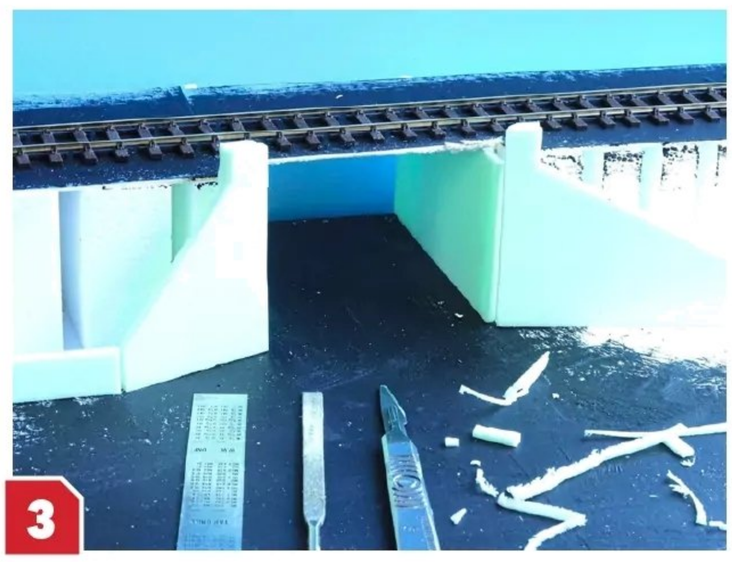
STEP BY STEP

1

I raised the trackbed above the baseboard level by using a 2in Woodland Scenics Riser, fixed to the baseboard using Foam Tack Glue. The trackbed is a strip of mounting card.

2

I used a light green Styrofoam sheet that I had in stock (Woodland Scenics Assorted Foam Sheets pack is also useful), cut to size on a self-sealing cutting board with a sharp scalpel and steel rule to ensure that the cuts were straight.

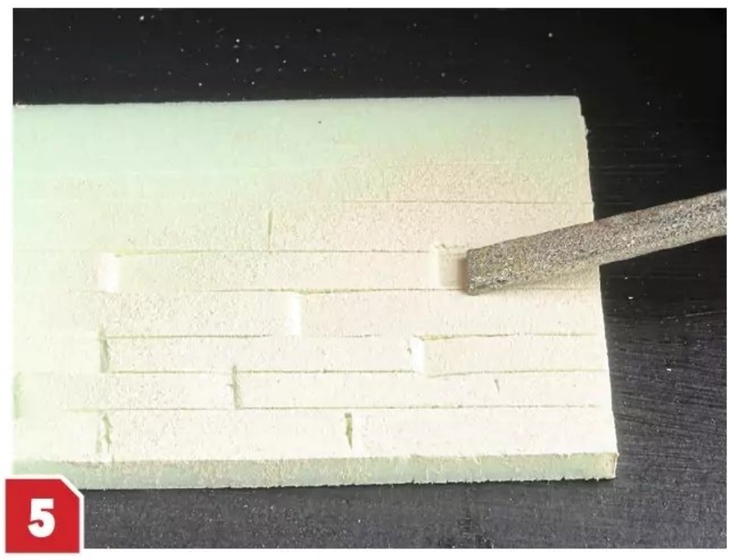


3

The retaining wall sections were test-fitted and trimmed as necessary, using a flat needle file or abrasive sheet to fettle the edges where necessary. Nothing would be glued in place yet, so it helped to achieve a snug fit with each component.

4

To paint the supporting walls of the bridge, I used Woodland Scenics Concrete acrylic colour, applied with a wide flat paintbrush. It took a couple of coats to build up the colour.



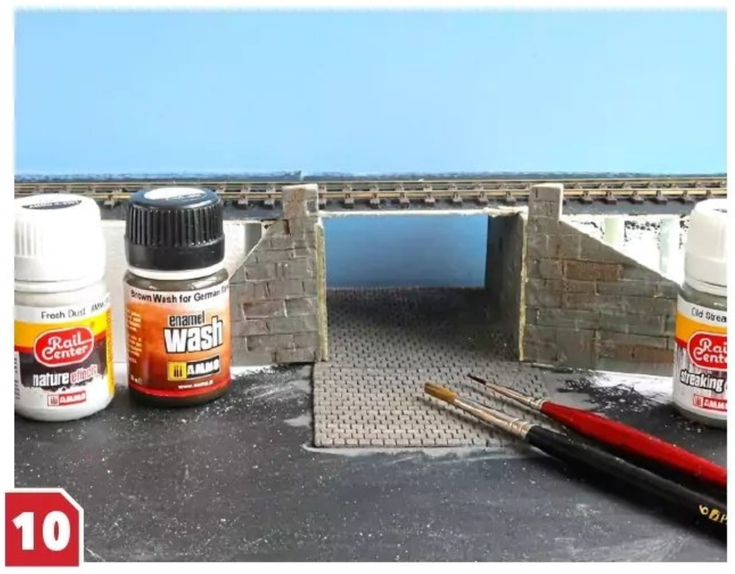
5 After making a start on painting, I realised I ought to scribe the outline of blockwork into the face of the materials with a craft knife. I also used a flat file to push random indentions into the foam.

6 Many structures on the West Highland route are formed from concrete but, if you look closely, many feature a discernible blockwork pattern, rather than the large, smooth sections we see on modern concrete walls.

7 I knocked up a similar section of wall as a test bed for various paints and washes, which were subsequently applied to the bridge sections. My aim was to recreate the appearance of a bridge that had been in situ for almost a century.

8 While my experiments with painting and weathering continued, I added sections of Noch embossed cobblestone sheet onto the road surface. The sheet had to be cut into sections to fit under the bridge.

9 Any gaps between sections were filled using Deluxe Materials Create and Shape, a fast-drying acrylic putty which can be manipulated and smoothed with a damp brush or cotton swab. It can also be sanded when dry.



10 Having treated the cobblestones to a coating of paint, the pre-painted and weathered wall sections could now be bonded into position. I used Woodland Scenics Foam Tack Glue which dries more quickly than most PVAs.

11 I capped the retaining walls with pieces of card, which were painted and weathered to blend in. A little brown enamel wash was added here and there to accentuate the relief.

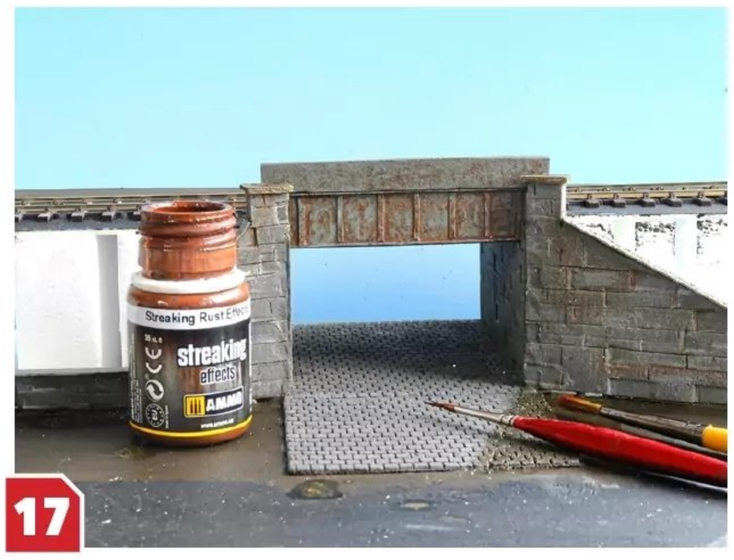
12 Artist's mounting card was cut to form the plate girders, along with thin jointing strips and upper and lower plates. Everything was bonded together with PVA glue (but not fixed to the bridge just yet).

13 The girder sections were painted grey to see how they looked, before the upper girder sections were cut from Styrofoam and fixed in place with foam tack glue, taped in place while it cured.

14 When the glue bonding the Styrofoam extensions had cured, the girders were removed from the bridge and painting was completed on the workbench, prior to weathering.

15 I mixed up a little fine sand with some enamel brown wash to create a coarse, gritty coating, which was brushed over the girder sections to introduce some extra surface texture.

16 A little Streaking Rust Effects enamel weathering wash, from the AMMO by MIG range, was dribbled down each corner of the girders with a fine brush...



17

...then the rust was smudged on the girder using a small piece of sponge to create more of a random appearance. The enamel washes dry to a convincing matt finish and pick out the texture created from the gritty undercoat.

18

A few grains of fine green scatter were glued into the areas of the bridge that were likely to attract moss, algae and weeds, searching out images of similar structures for inspiration.

19

With the bridge complete, it required blending into its surroundings. Woodland Scenics Shaper Sheet would be used to form the contours of the railway embankment, either side of the bridge.

20

I glued the Shaper Sheet to the side of the trackbed then pushed it behind the retaining wall, holding it in place with Foam Nails as the glue dried. The next job is to refine the contour profile and start adding the vegetation.

PROTOTYPE INSPIRATION

The bridge upon which this model was based is a road overbridge at Fort William Oil Terminal. These images were taken on September 22 2015.

HOW TO

BUILD A PLATFORM FOOTBRIDGE

CHRIS LEIGH builds a delicate but straightforward laser-cut kit of a staple GWR structure.

It's easy to assume that the Great Western Railway built one style of footbridge, the distinctive lattice girder pattern with a corrugated iron roof and stairs with a landing at two-thirds height. That design has been modelled by various manufacturers in 'OO', perhaps most recently Hornby Skaledale. However, your station may be more rural, and might not warrant a covered footbridge, or you might prefer to build a kit rather than use a ready-made product.

These days there are few surviving GWR lattice girder footbridges. BR was ruthless in removing the roof covering of many in the 1960s, allowing the structure itself to deteriorate more rapidly. Station closures and replacement by modern disabled-accessible bridges have seen most of these late 19th-century bridges scrapped.

PHOTOS: CHRIS LEIGH/GEORGE DENT

00 GAUGE | **MODEL** L-Cut Creative B00-31 GWR style platform footbridge ● Price £17.99 | **AVAILABILITY** www.lcut.co.uk | 4 hrs

Though they may, at first impression, appear to all be the same, there were distinct differences. There were roofed and roofless versions, the former being more common. There were plain girder and lattice girder versions. Despite first impressions, not all had the 'solid' triangular section with the construction date on the upper stair section. Indeed, roofless bridges like the L-Cut model tended not to have the GWR monogram and date panel, and just had a lattice section, as the Culham example illustrated.

L-Cut Creative's little Great Western kit was a bit of a mystery to me until I read that it is based on the footbridge at Bridgnorth which dates from 1887. The bridge at Bala Junction, illustrated, is similar but has the staircases in opposing directions. The kit can be built to represent this version or the more usual arrangement of parallel staircases.

Note: It is worth noting that this is a platform-mounted model. Ready-to-run manufacturers have tended to make footbridge models that are tall enough for ground-mounting (such as adjacent to a level crossing). These are usually too tall for platform-mounting (unless you have overhead catenary). Equally, this model is not tall enough for ground-mounting unless set on some extra step units.

What you will need

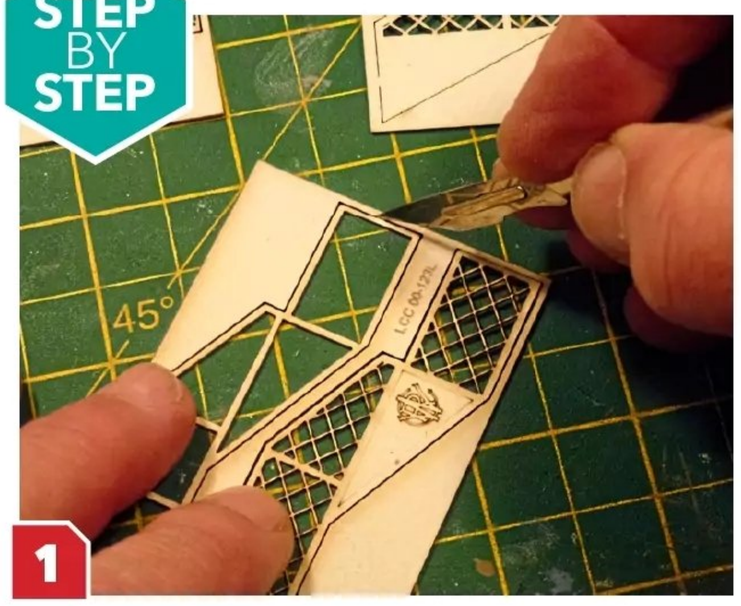
SHOPPING LIST

- L-Cut Creative B00-31 GWR style platform footbridge **Price:** £17.99 **Availability:** *www.lcut.co.uk*

TOOLS

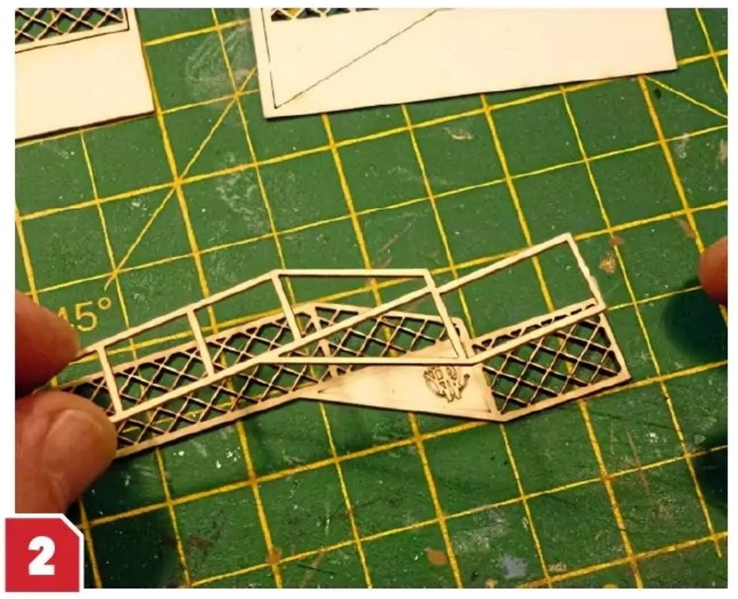
- Craft knife and fresh blades
- Cutting mat
- Small pliers or tweezers
- Cocktail sticks
- Javis Velo-Set adhesive

STEP BY STEP



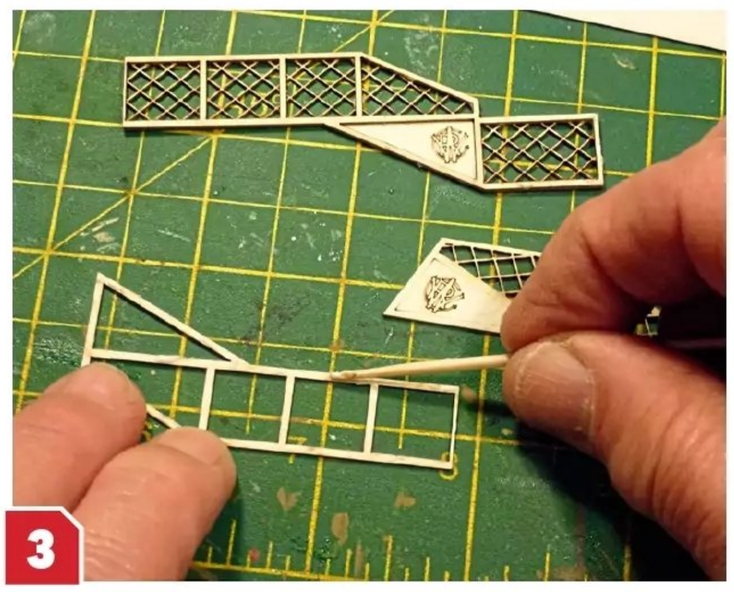
1

I began by laying the parts out so that I could visualise the assembly. They're held in the frets by narrow tags which can be cut through with a sharp craft knife, on a self-healing cutting mat. Take care as many of the parts are very fine.



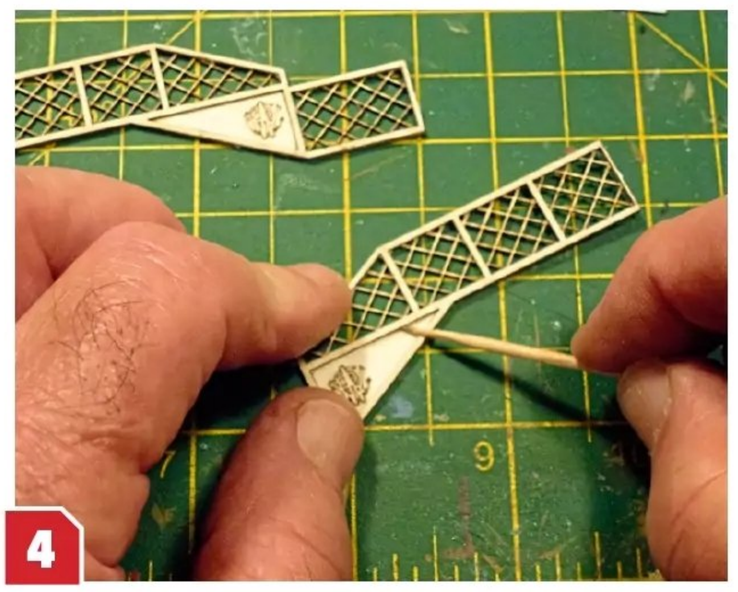
2

I started with the parts for the span which has four half-girders to make the two sides. Each half-girder has a lattice section and an outer frame to be glued over it.



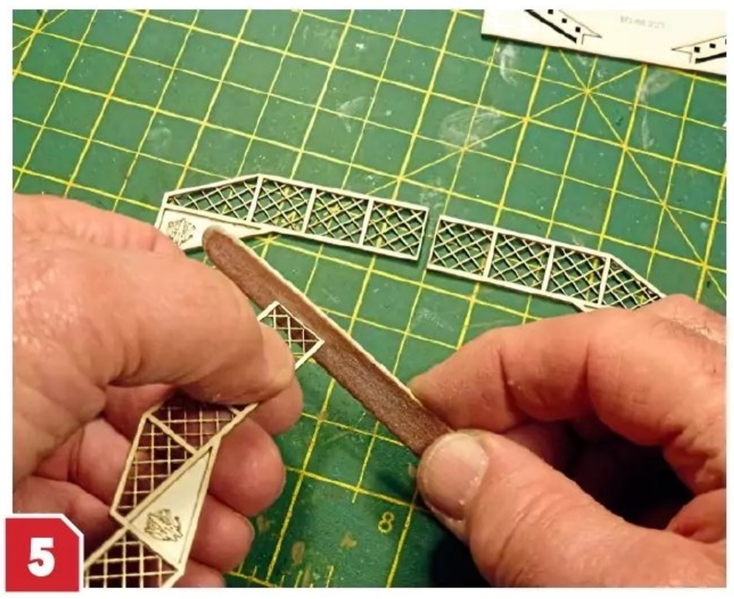
3

I used my favourite Velo-Set quick-drying PVA adhesive, applying it to the back of the narrow frame section with a cocktail stick. Be sure to make matching pairs.



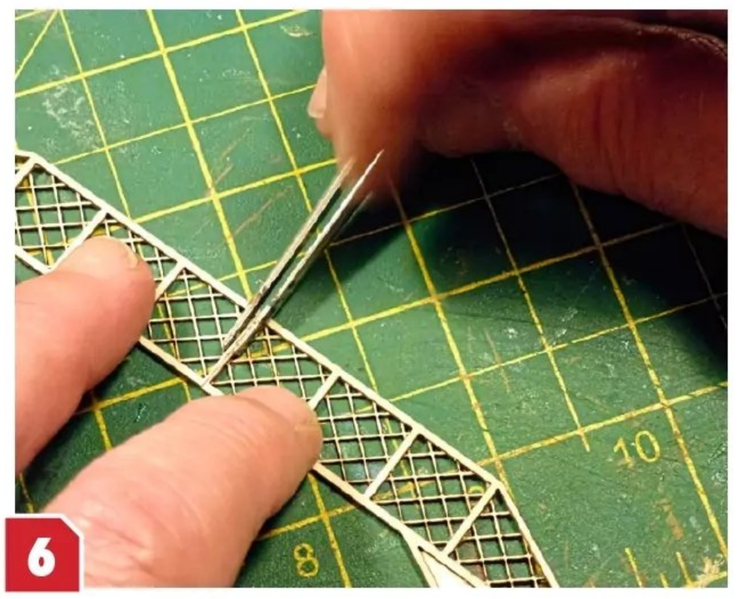
4

Any excess glue should be removed before it dries. I used a clean cocktail stick for this. If you are using the brown and cream colour scheme, the parts are best painted before assembly.



5

Check for any remnants of protruding tags, particularly where parts are to be butt-joined. A few strokes with a fine emery board will remove them.



6

The four half-spans are joined to create an inner and an outer span. I used a pair of tweezers to gently press the two half spans together for a nice tight joint.

7

When cutting parts from the fret check that there are no residual bits that the laser-cutter has left behind. I found just one, and removed it with a pointed craft knife blade.

8

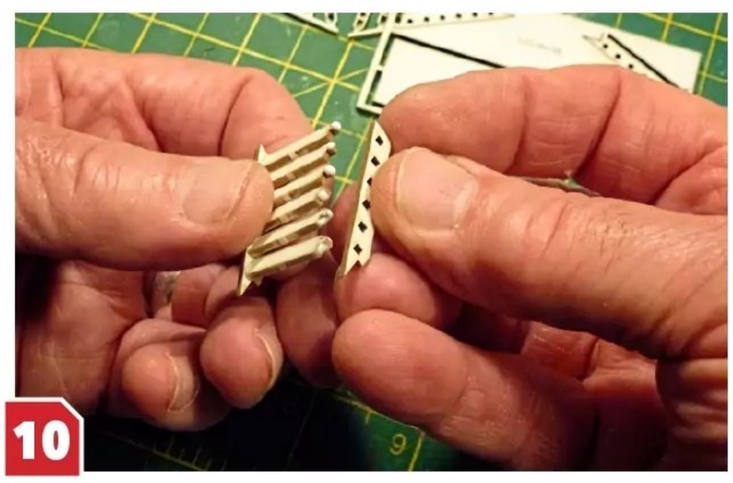
The assembly of the stairs, two long and two short sections, is quite tricky and requires care. Start with a short section in order to devise a method that works for you.

9

Each stair unit consists of steps with pegs which insert into square holes in the risers. I glued all six steps into one riser, making sure that the riser was correctly oriented.

Bala Junction footbridge with 'opposed' staircases and a fairly elaborate WR brown and cream paint job. KEITH JAGGERS

The remains of the station footbridge dumped in a field at Culham. This bridge originally had a roof and did not have the monogram panels. CHRIS LEIGH

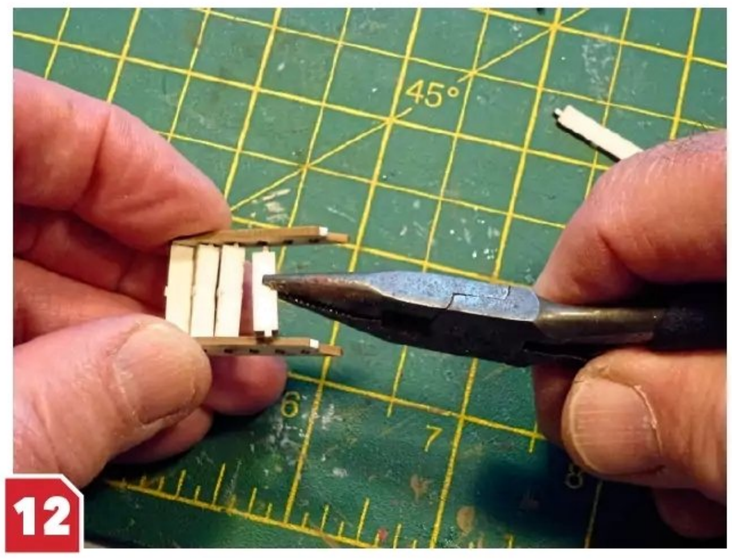


10

Adding the second riser is tricky. Make sure it's the right way round, and it may be preferable to apply glue to the holes rather than the pegs.

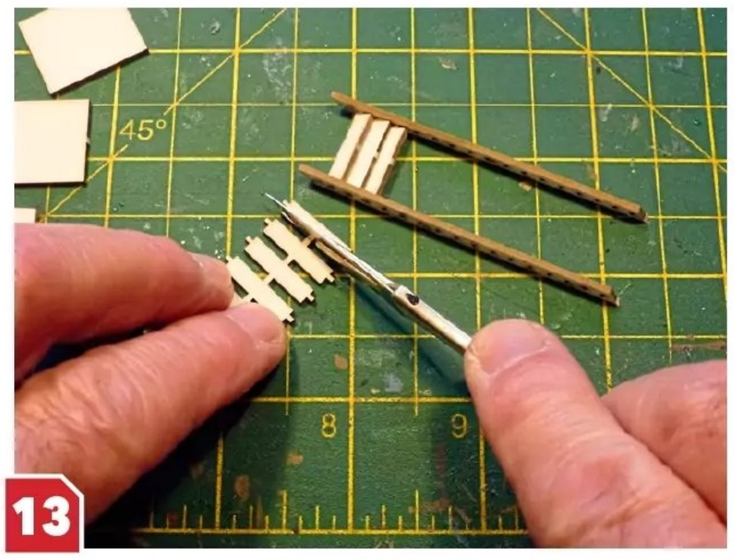
11

Before fitting the steps, a quick rub on the emery board will remove any remnants of the tags. This is particularly important on the front edge of the steps, which are visible on the finished model.



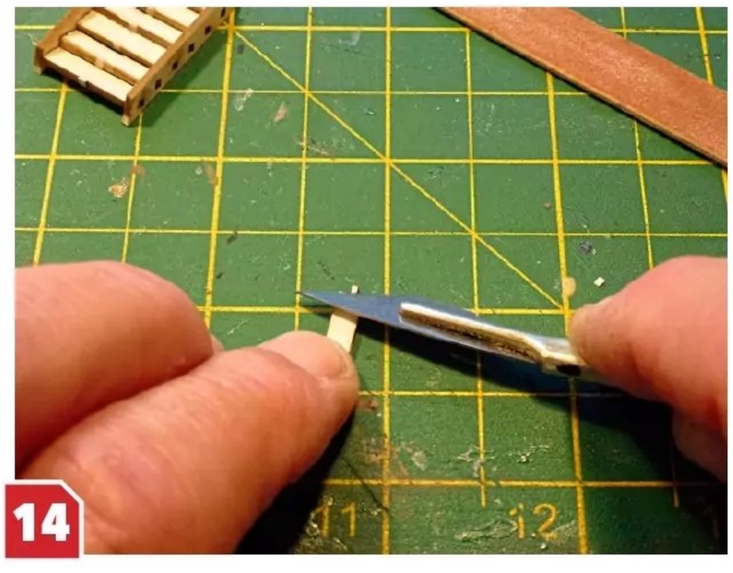
12

I found that it was easier to fit each step individually into both risers at the same time. If the risers are held firmly, the step can be pushed in with pliers. Use minimal amounts of glue applied with a cocktail stick.



13

The long stair sections are built in exactly the same way. The tags holding the steps cut easily with a sharp blade but a rub with an emery board will removed all trace from the leading edge.



14

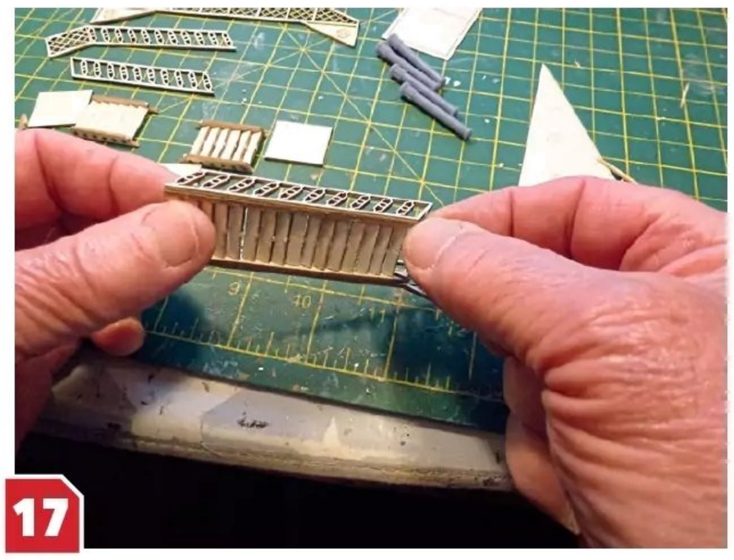
It will be easier to fit the step-pegs into the risers if you shave just the slightest amount off the top of the peg using a sharp knife blade.

15

The completed parts ready for main assembly. A dry run is important early on, to make sure you glue the external frames to the correct side of the lattice to suit your chosen stair layout.

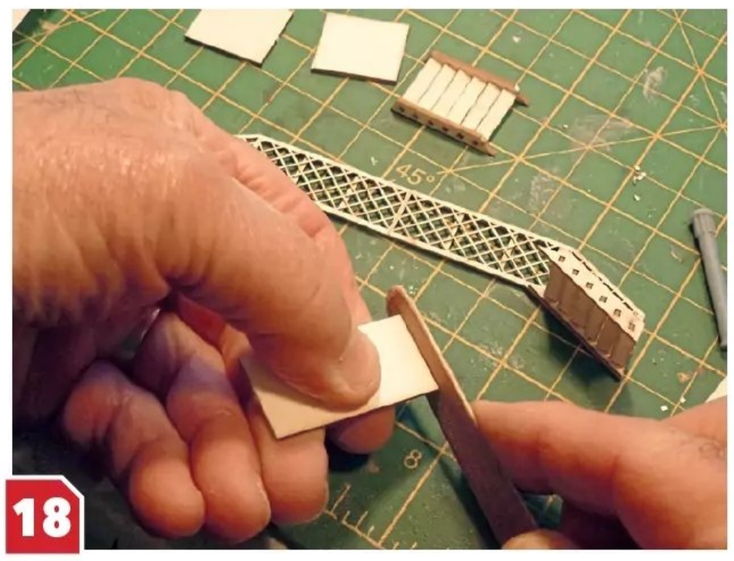
16

The bannister sections can now be glued to the stair units. The shorter bannister sections go on the inside (the 'track' side) of the stairs. Glue along the bottom edge, applying with a cocktail stick.



17

Take care to align the bannister section with the bottom edge of the stair riser and flush at either end. You will need left and right-handed versions for a conventional footbridge layout.

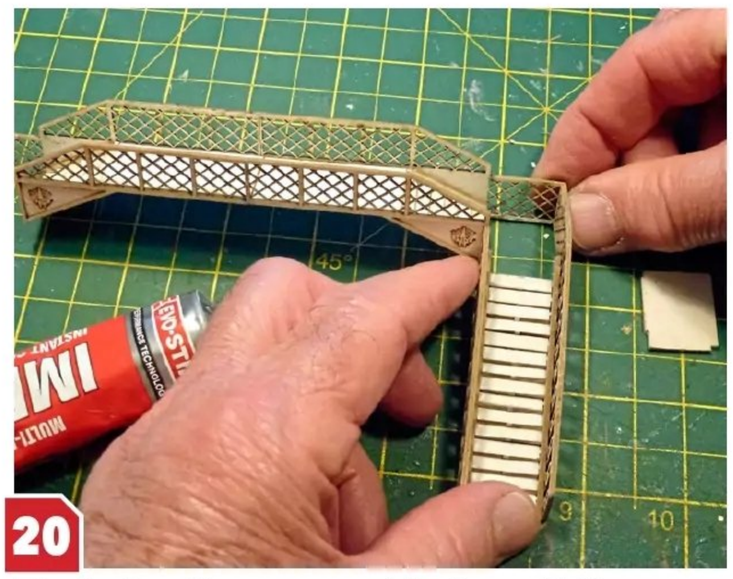


18

The floor sections for the span and the two landings will need to be a good fit, so check them with a dry run and file off any residual tags which might prevent a perfect fit.

29

With the bannister span placed face-down on the work mat, the two floor sections and the two short stair units can be glued in place, aligning them carefully.



20

The instructions suggest that you fit the bannisters accurately as they will be the most visible, but don't worry too much about the landing floors. I began with the bannisters and ensured a good fit.

21

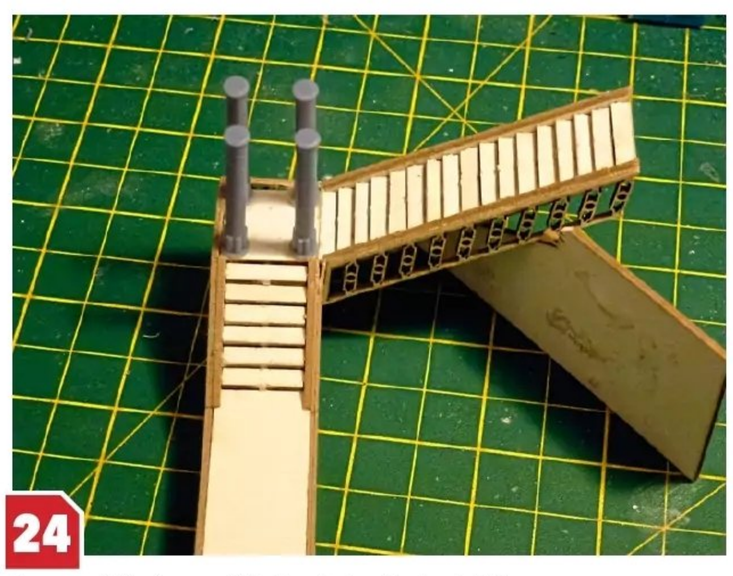
Both stair units and bannisters have been test-fitted and accurately assembled, allowing the glue to set thoroughly before attempting to fit the landings.

22

In fact the landings required only minimal trimming and notching of one corner to obtain a good fit. It is important as there is no roof to cover one's mistakes.

23

A set of eight 3D-printed columns are provided and these are glued under the landings with the decorative flange to the top. Position them carefully and ensure all are vertical.



24

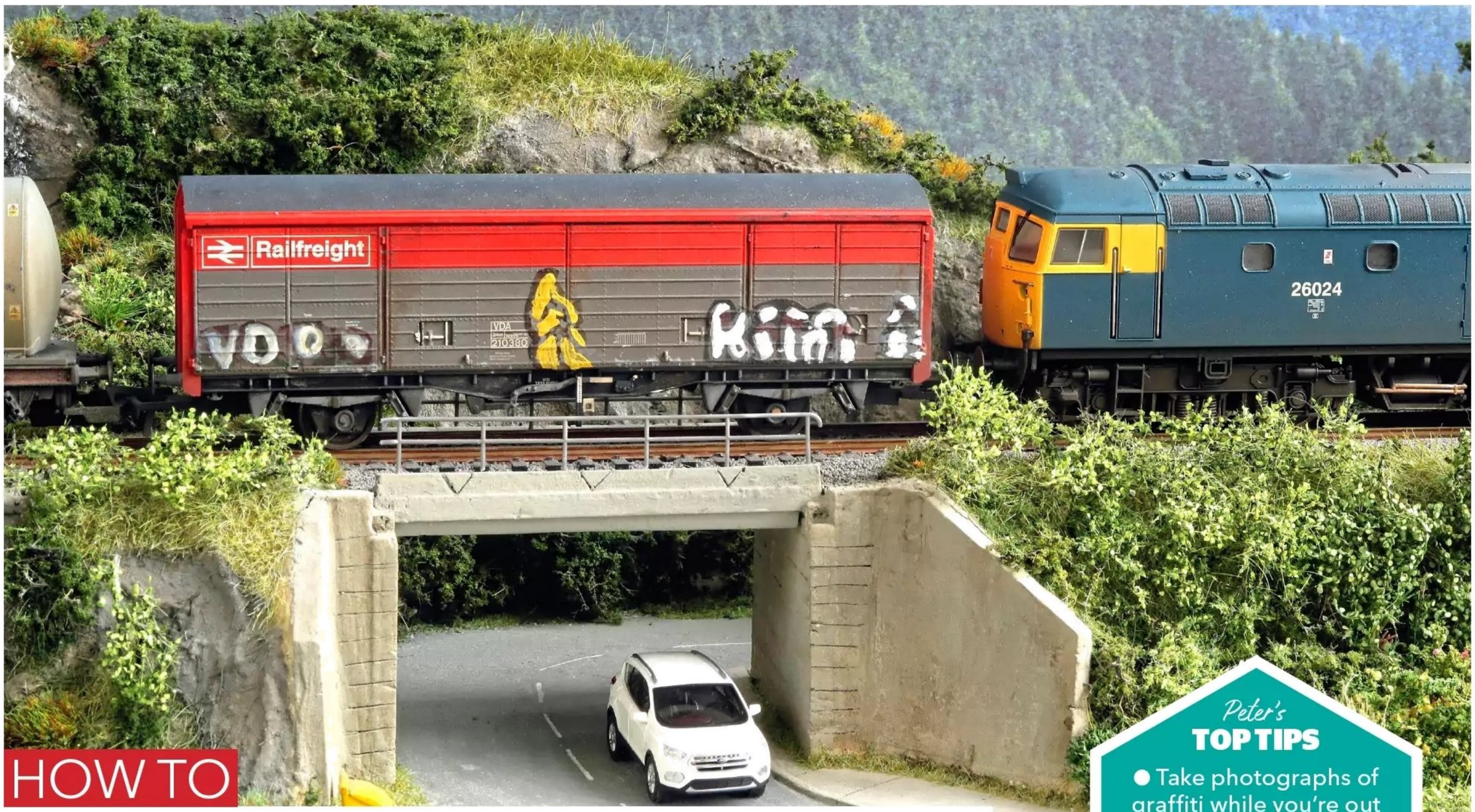
I used Deluxe Materials Roket Max cyanoacrylate adhesive to attach the columns to the underside of the landing and I propped the bridge with offcuts of the board material while the glue set.

25

I sprayed the whole bridge with GWR coach cream and, once dry, wrapped some masking tape around the pillars and painted the lower parts chocolate brown.

26

I painted the floors, landings and steps with a mix of dark grey and dark brown, picking out the middle of each step with a little light grey to represent the most worn areas.



HOW TO

MAKE YOUR OWN GRAFFITI TRANSFERS

Peter Marriott sets out on a mission to see if he can create his own decals – and learns a few things in the process.

Peter's TOP TIPS

- Take photographs of graffiti while you're out and about, on rolling stock or buildings. Take the photographs square-on to the subject where possible.
- Choose white water-slide transfer paper when working on wagons painted in darker colours.
- Clear waterside paper is good for recreating black 'tags', or coloured graffiti if it's to be applied over lighter livery colours such as pale grey or white.

For some years I have bought ready-made sheets of waterslide transfers of graffiti for use on rolling stock, buildings and retaining walls. I happened to have a BR VDA wagon knocking around and its vibrant Railfreight livery looked a little plain and pristine for my liking. It needed a bit of graffiti and weathering to bring it to life.

Instead of using off-the-shelf graffiti decals, however, this time I thought I'd try my hand at making my own transfers. I ordered a pack of five A4-sized clear waterslide transfer sheets from Amazon and, although larger packs offer better value for money, I wanted to have a trial run first with a smaller pack, before committing. Accordingly, the cost of the sheets worked out at around £1.50 each, which is not bad compared to purchasing ready-made decals.

I already had plenty of photographs on file featuring numerous graffiti-covered wagons from all over Europe, which I whittled down to a handful of examples, prioritising images that had been captured square-on to the subject, rather than from an angle.

I then set about experimenting with my

ANY GAUGE | 2 hrs

printer, using sheets of plain paper initially until I had scaled the images to the desired size. Next, it was a case of choosing the 'Best Quality Print' in the printer's dialogue window, plus setting the paper type to 'Photo Paper'. The transfer sheet was then loaded into the paper tray, ensuring that it was set the right way up (models of printer differ, but I had to have the backing sheet facing upwards). I clicked PRINT on my PC, then waited while the first sheet was printed. The results were good, and I left the sheet aside, allowing the ink to dry for a few hours.

The next step was to seal the printed images with a clear acrylic varnish. Here was my first mistake – I brushed on a little neat matt acrylic varnish which proved too strong, removing and smudging some of the printed detail. I then tried diluting some MIG acrylic matt varnish in a ratio of 1:1 with cool water, applying it over the sheet with a wide soft brush. This worked well and I left it to dry overnight. The next day I recoated it with another layer of the MIG varnish and left it to dry again. An aerosol-based clear coat may be suitable, but I'd suggest testing it first to see if the paint formula reacted with the ink or transfer film.

Having cut out the graffiti motifs from the sheet, they were soaked one by one in lukewarm water and gently transferred onto the wagon, dabbing away excess water with a small piece of kitchen towel. As the transfers dried, I began to feel disappointed, due to the translucent nature of parts of the graffiti. In hindsight I realised I should have used white transfer paper instead of clear, although these would have needed extra care when cutting from the sheet to avoid a stark white outline to each motif.

Anyway, once the transfers had dried, I gave the wagon a weathered finish which actually improved matters. However, to take things a little further, I used paint to redraw sections of graffiti and give areas a more vibrant appearance. It took time but ultimately proved worthwhile.

PHOTOGRAPHY: PETER MARRIOTT

STEP BY STEP

1

I set my Canon Inkjet printer to High Quality and Photo Paper settings, undertook a test print onto regular paper and, when satisfied, fed the transfer paper into the printer, ensuring it was the correct side up.

2

To show the difference between the results from the printer on different settings, here's a test I created using plain paper (right) contrasting with the final sheet of waterslide transfer paper (left), which is far better defined.

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- A4 waterslide white transfer paper
  Price: About £8.99 for 10 sheets
  Availability: Craft stores or *www.amazon.co.uk*
- Micro Sol decal softening solution
  Price: £5.00
  Availability: Model shops or *www.scalemodelshop.co.uk*

TOOLS

- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Wide soft paintbrushes
- A small dish for water
- Kitchen towel

3

After sealing the printed sheet with clear varnish, I used a set of small, sharp scissors to cut carefully around each of the pieces of graffiti 'art', being careful to leave a small margin around the edges to avoid too harsh an edge.

4

I placed the various bits of graffiti on the sides of the wagons to see which motifs worked best. Once the composition was decided, a small dish was filled with clean, lukewarm water and the first decal was submerged, as I waited for the film to loosen from the backing paper.

5

I brushed the model's surface with Microscale Micro Sol decal setting solution immediately before sliding the decal into position. This liquid improves adhesion while also softening the film slightly to help it conform to uneven surfaces.

6

More Micro Sol can be applied over the decal if needed. When dry, this was the disappointing result, with the graffiti 'art' appearing translucent. In hindsight, I should have used white transfer paper. But at least my home-made decals adhered well to the model.

7

While I pondered what to do about the 'bleached-out' graffiti, I set about weathering the wagon with a dark enamel wash, applied sparingly with a block of sponge, dabbing it here and there. I also dry-brushed the chassis with a grey acrylic paint to pick out the relief.

8

The wagon's overall grubby appearance ameliorated the faded nature of graffiti decals, and I was tempted to stop there. However, I came up with an idea that was worth a try...

9 I gathered up a few random acrylic shades and brush-painted colour onto the graffiti, using the existing dark borders as a guide. I know this isn't ideal, but it did create some interesting results. After all, not all graffiti is the same.

FFORDD
PASSENGERS
CROSS

Branch line

Ffestiniog Railway volunteer Nigel Smith was keen to depict the railway he works on as accurately as possible, and used his knowledge of trees to good effect.

Words: **Chris Gadsby** Photography: **Chris Nevard** Artwork: **Andrew Mackintosh**

What makes this layout great?

Even when there isn't a train running there is plenty to look at at 'Tanybwlch'. Whether it's lineside workers or hikers, you'll be spoiled for choice for viewing pleasure while you wait for the next train.

The Ffestiniog Railway is the world's oldest independent railway, and the Ffestiniog Railway Society, which exists to support the line, is celebrating its 70th anniversary this year. Nigel Smith has been volunteering on the line for just over 40 years, and now he's taken his knowledge and experience of the prototype to shrink it down into 'OO9' scale.

"I've found that this is one of those lines that gets under your skin when you pay it a visit on holiday and it never really leaves you. I live in the Midlands now but like being able to model somewhere I want to be rather than somewhere I am at that moment. I've been modelling in 'OO9' since the 1980s but this layout only really got going once my father-in-law built the baseboards for me in 2011. Based on Tanybwlch station, the third down the line from the terminus at Blaenau Ffestiniog, the layout is a fairly accurate representation of the area, but I have had to compress the station to make it fit on two boards to get it into the car."

Built with exhibitions in mind, but not solely for that purpose, Nigel's creation measures 8ft by 2ft and focuses primarily on the scenery surrounding the single line.

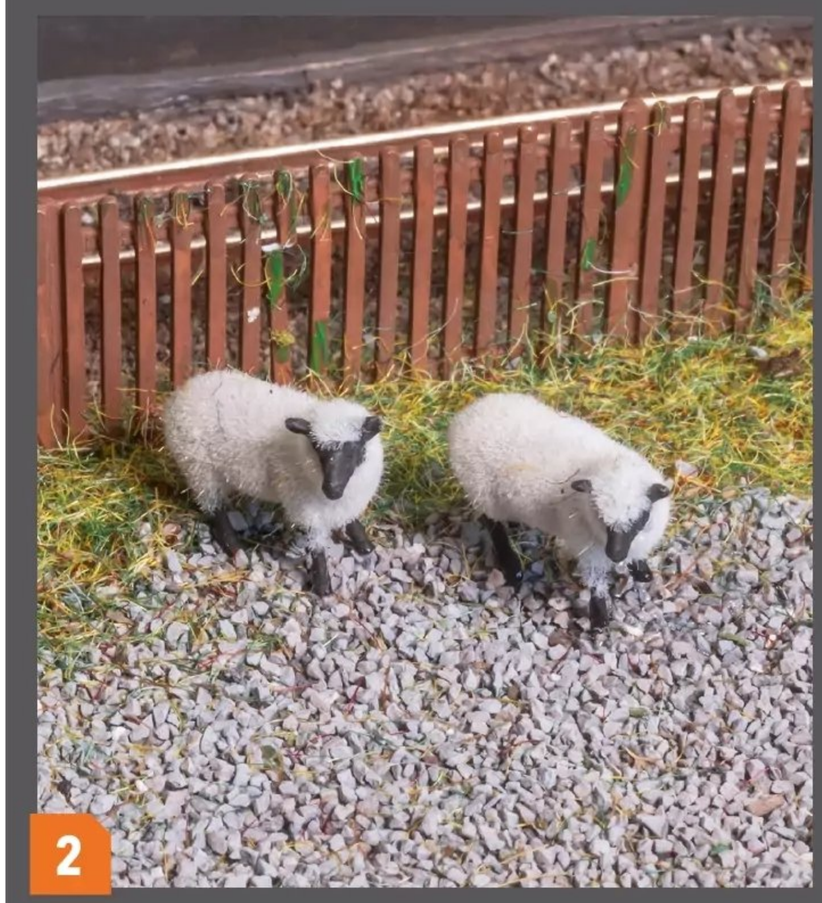
"The Ffestiniog Railway isn't somewhere that you can model and fill your baseboard with lots of track all over the place, but as I am more a scenic modeller than a railway modeller, I was able to put my skills to good use. The trees are the most important part of the layout from my perspective as I used to teach and train arborists (tree surgeons) in colleges. The mistake often made, and mainly because the ones that are offered by most manufacturers are wrong, is that modelled trees are very often too short. An 80ft tree would be around 12 inches tall but then you have the secondary problem of needing to include some smaller ones at the back to increase the depth perception of the layout. I spent quite a bit of ➤

2

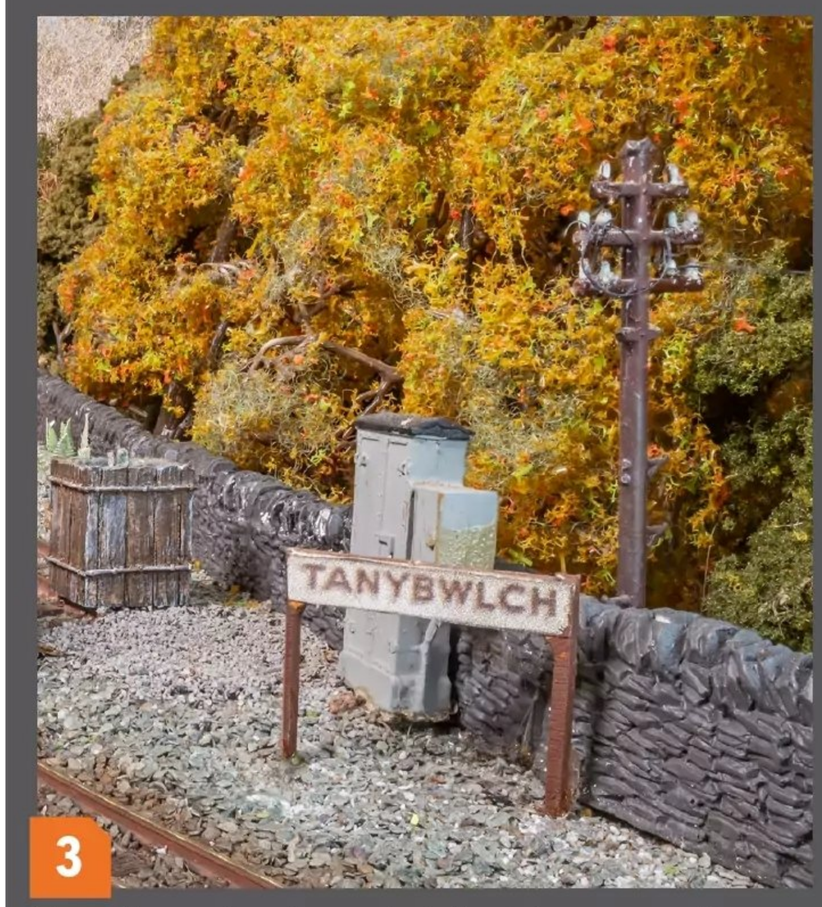
Nigel's favourite part of 'Tanybwlch' is the section heading towards the tunnel on the right-hand side, as the trees in the corner of the layout force the viewer to look along the line and watch the train disappear around the corner.

3 things we like

1 The custom-made Absolute Aspects signals.



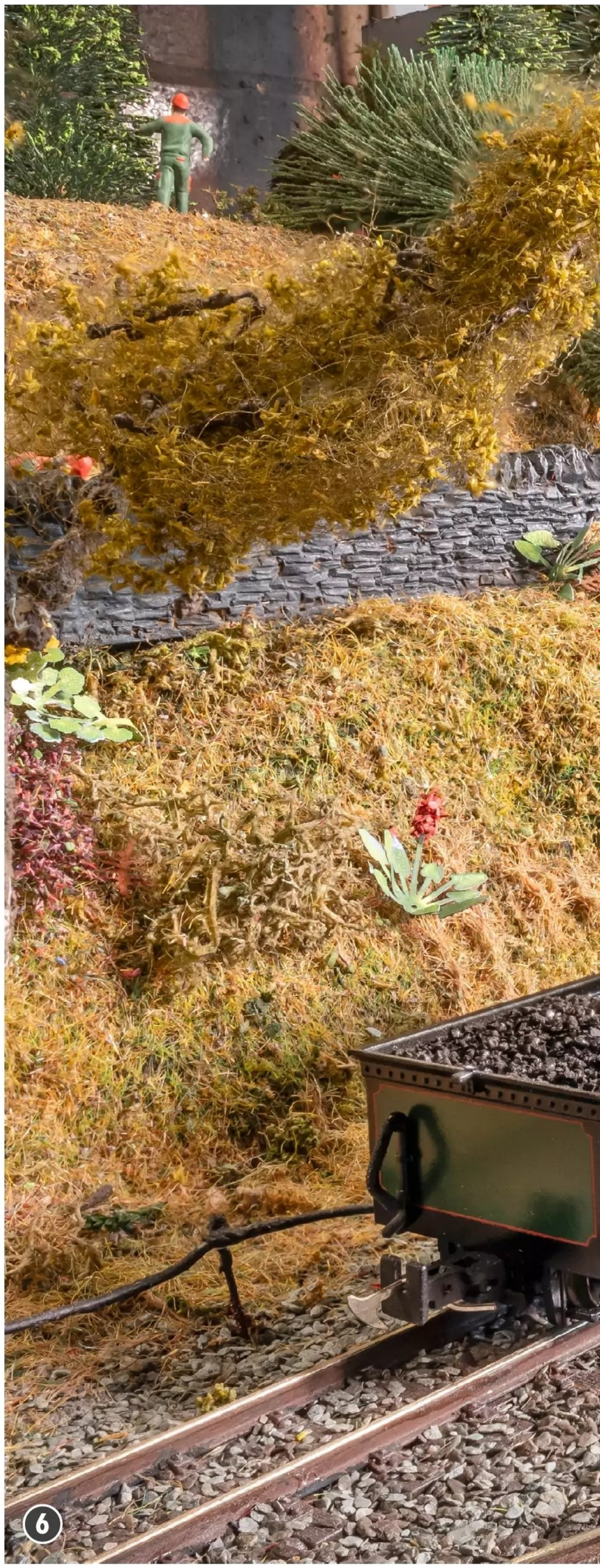
2 The roving sheep.



3 The telegraph poles with delicately entwined wires.

4

5


6

money on acquiring trees of different species for the front of the layout, where viewers can observe the bark detail, and reducing the number of conifers on the layout as, although they are getting better, they still don't look right off the shelf."

Nigel's carefully selected trees are located above a polystyrene base covered in papier mâché and wet plaster of Paris, dribbled down the contours so that the landscape wasn't too smooth. He then

painted the dried hillsides with a mix of browns and greens for an undercoat before adding layers of flock and static grass. Modelling a layout in autumn brings with it additional challenges, but Nigel has used a variety of colours to great effect at 'Tanybwlch'. He has even sourced some slate from the local area to go around the tunnel mouth.

"I've tried to replicate what you see in real life. If you go out for a walk through the countryside you ➤

www.model-rail.co.uk

might see a train move across the landscape nearby. You'll say 'oh look there's a train', and then just carry on walking and forget about it. At an exhibition, everybody is looking for trains all of the time, it's very different to real life. What I've tried to do is give people viewing windows, where they can look through the trees and see the trains flash past, which is also why I've set the layout on quite tall legs so that the viewing angle is closer to eye level. For the full countryside effect I've started taking along a soundtrack of Woodland noises and the occasional chainsaw to accompany the tree felling cameo scene on the left hand side of the layout. I can remember when I took it to the first exhibition in Northampton I was really unsure whether or not it would be deemed good enough, but I have evidently done something right as I keep getting more invitations! That's high praise, but what really does it for me is when families who have been on the line for a holiday view the layout and recognise the location. Clearly I've modelled it to a sufficient standard." ➤

ANYBWLCH

The telegraph wires were very difficult to thread. They are very fine, like fishing wire, but the smallest bit of contact can break them. The fence was easy in comparison as Nigel simply drilled holes into the uprights and dropped the wire through.

12

13

ONGOING IMPROVEMENTS

'Tanybwlch' may focus primarily on the scenery, but that doesn't mean Nigel has neglected the railway. Work is continually ongoing to upgrade and replace worn out models, as high-quality ready-to-run models hit the shelves.

"Bit by bit I'm replacing the kits that I built when the layout was first constructed. These were mostly whitemetal kits from Langley models, but as the ready-to-run models have improved in quality I've slowly been adding to my collection and phasing out the whitemetal ones, although it is still pleasing to have something I've built complete a circuit. All of the ready-to-run models have had Golden Arrow couplings fitted, as well as lamps, nameplates and other extra details. Some I have even given a complete repaint to so that they would match the colour scheme of the prototype currently at the Ffestiniog Railway. I do use a bit of modeller's licence ➤

14

15

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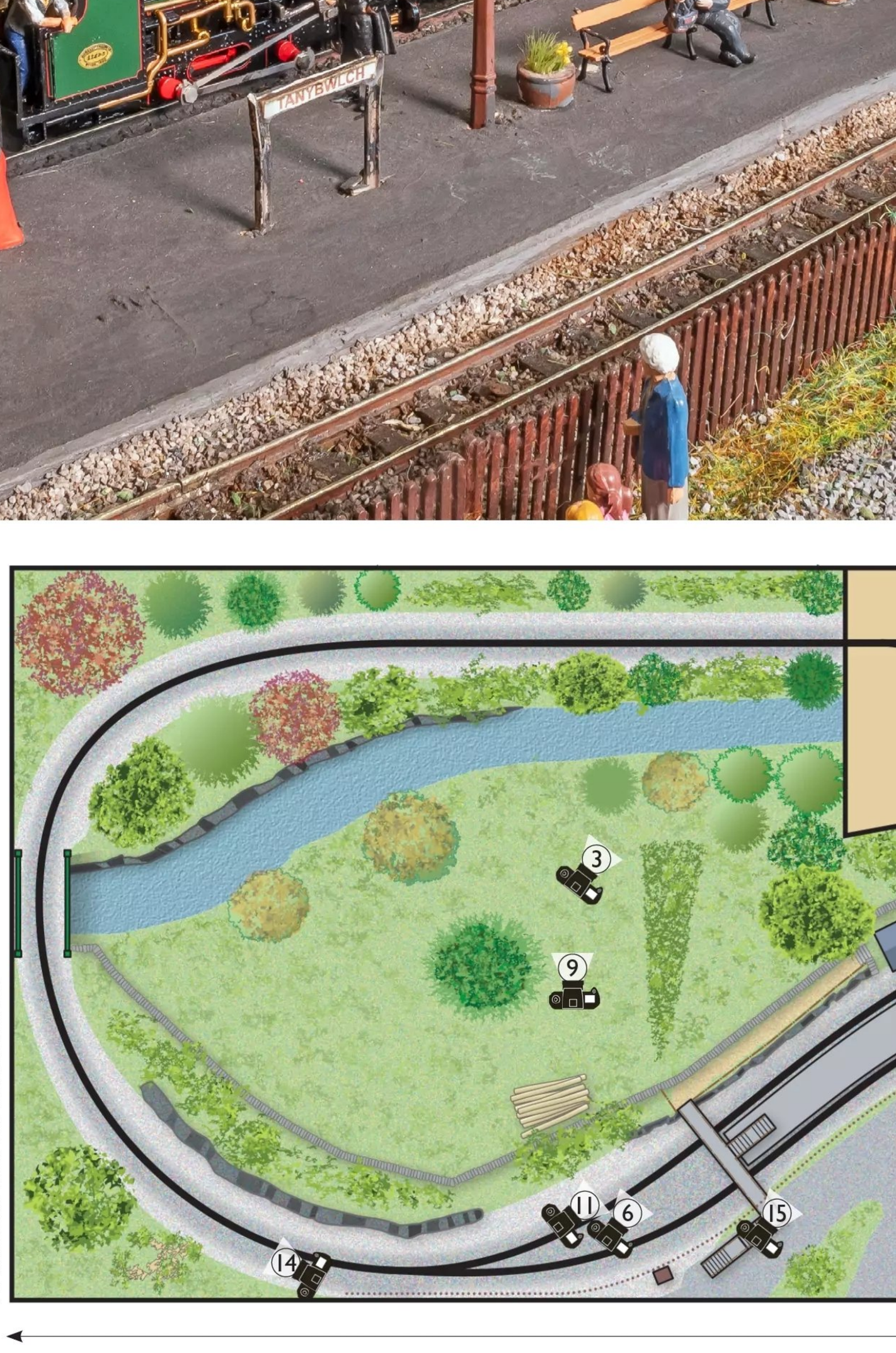


Artwork: **Andrew Mackintosh**

when it comes to the era I run as some of the models have been altered to depict modern day trains, but the rake of coaches might be from the 1980s!"

Creating a layout in 'OO9' grants the modeller the ability to portray some of the country's most stunning scenery with the space saving advantage of using what is essentially 'N' gauge track. It combines the best of both scales as the scenery is not so small that it's hard to work with but you can do more with the available space. Nigel takes his layout onto the exhibition circuit not only because he has enjoyed building it and showing it but also to highlight the garden and station area renovations which are taking place at Tanybwlch, and the work of the Ffestiniog Railway Society. If you're interested in finding out more about the Society visit *www.ffestiniograilway.org.uk*

Nigel has previously scratchbuilt the majority of the buildings. However, he now uses MS models a lot as he feels that those models capture the character of the buildings well, and although you have to paint them yourself, the models are superb representations because they're scaled from the actual building. The problem Nigel had was that he had to compromise the build to make it fit, so has used some 'TT:120' buildings to give the impression of depth.

FACTFILE: 'TANYBWLCH'

Gauge and scale: 4mm:1ft, 9mm gauge, 'OO9'

Size: 8ft by 2ft

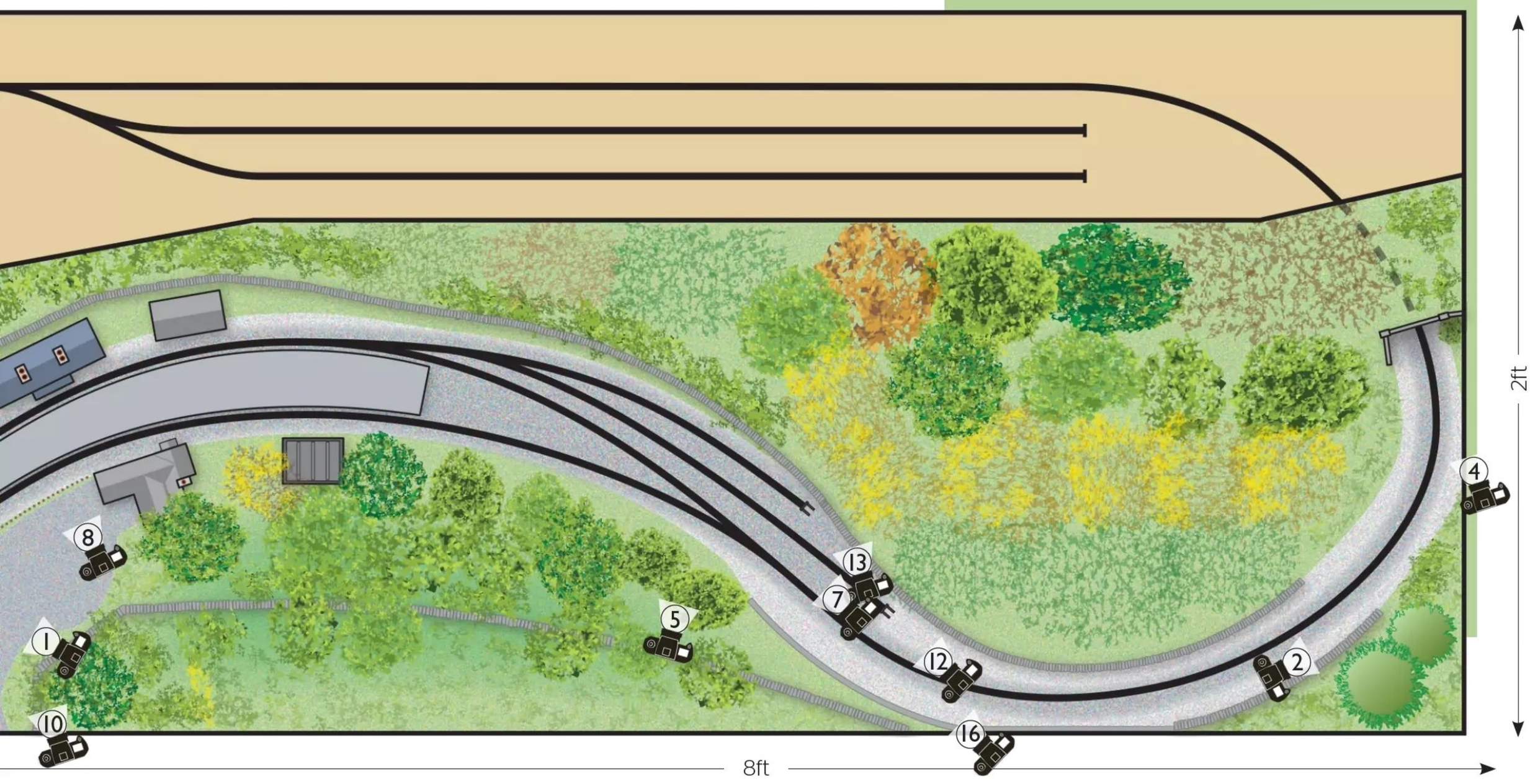
Track: Peco Mainline flexitrack and points

Power and control: Analogue

Time to build: 13 years

ABOUT THE MODELLER: NIGEL SMITH

"If I'm not volunteering on the Ffestiniog Railway then I'm either volunteering on the Great Central or helping my son out with his garden railway. Basically, if it has rails, I'll be there!"



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Reviews

In-depth and unbiased reviews of the latest products

80 **Heljan Class 26/1**

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97 **Peco BR 'Clayhood' wagons**

Our reviewers

George Dent
Model Rail's modern image expert also has a passion for steam.

Chris Leigh
Wrote his first review in 1964 and hasn't stopped since!

How we test

At *Model Rail*, we pride ourselves on the quality, thoroughness and unbiased nature of our reviews. We assess models on their looks, performance, features and value for money. We also run them on our own test tracks, which feature various gradients and numerous challenging track configurations.

Heljan Class 26/1

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Heljan • 2626 BR Class 26/1 26032 BR blue with twin headlights • 2645 Class 26/1 26038 Railfreight 'red stripe'
◆ **PRICE** £209.00 (£219.00 weathered) ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Heljan stockists **Web** *www.heljan.co.uk*

With Heljan's 'OO' Class 26 proving extremely popular since its first release in 2006, it was no surprise when the Danish manufacturer revealed its plans to fully revise its tooling for the Sulzer Type 2. The aim was to offer greater finesse, improved DCC functionality and to allow greater variety in terms of prototype detail differences across their operational lifetime.

It has taken a few years for the project to come to fruition, but models arrived in the UK during January, including our own exclusive commission of BR blue 26043 (see page 100). As we deem it inappropriate to review our own exclusive models, I obtained a couple of '26s' from Heljan's main production run, which form the basis for this assessment.

Heljan's model concentrates on the Class 26/1 fleet, which differed from the Pilot Scheme '26/0s' in several ways (see Factfile panel). Under test here is Rail blue 26032, complete with twin car-style headlamps, as installed on Inverness-based examples to aid visibility over Scotland's Far North lines. Providing an interesting contrast is Railfreight grey 26038 in refurbished form. Various other versions are available, across BR green (with small or large yellow ends), Rail blue and 'Dutch' civil engineers' grey/yellow, with various prototype and era-specific details.

WHAT'S NEW?

Compared to the previous '26', the enhanced level of detail is palpable on these new versions, but also in terms of subtle improvements to

“The car-style headlamps of Inverness’ 26032 look great when illuminated, finally offering an off-the-shelf version of these locomotives in ‘OO’”

the overall profile, especially around the windscreens. Cooling grilles on the bodysides feature fine metal mesh of the correct pattern, mounted beneath a separately moulded frame. There’s also a convincing representation of the ‘A’ frame interior structure behind the mesh. The roof fan grille and surround are equally well rendered, with a red fan visible below.

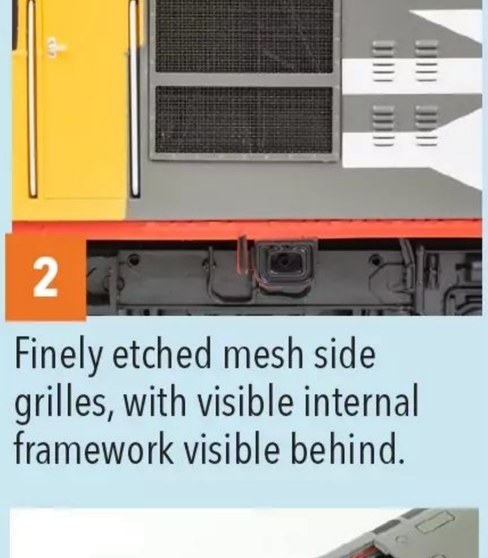
Fine wire handrails are neatly installed and painted where appropriate, with the separately installed lamp brackets offering a notable upgrade compared to earlier ‘26’ releases. Moreover, the moulded relief across the entire bodyshell looks to be superior to the previous tooling, particularly the shoulder level grilles, and there’s the facility to represent the different types of rooftop aerials fitted across the fleet during the 1970s/80s, with these two models featuring contrasting equipment.

Another welcome addition is the removable roof section, which fits snugly in place but can be unclipped with the edge of a fingernail (there’s no need for retaining magnets), revealing the 21pin DCC interface, plus a bank of slide switches to govern the various exterior and interior lighting functions for analogue users.

As well as directional head and tail lights, which operate well, the cabs can also be illuminated, showing off the impressively appointed interiors, which feature decorated control desks and bulkheads, plus ceiling-mounted air cylinders and pipework. The car-style headlamps of Inverness’ 26032 look great when illuminated, finally offering an off-the-shelf version of these locomotives in ‘OO’, which have been sought after for years.

A set of pre-painted headcode discs are supplied in the detail bag for 26032 (they’re pre-weathered too for this version), with plenty of open and closed versions which can be slotted into small mounting lugs and secured with a tiny drop of PVA glue if desired. Although it irritates some modellers, all bufferbeam hoses and jumper ➤

3 things we like



1 Working car-style headlamps are a first for a RTR ‘OO’ Class 26.

2 Finely etched mesh side grilles, with visible internal framework visible behind.

3 Removable roof section provides easy access to the 21pin DCC socket and lighting function switches.

Heljan Class 26/1 – in detail

Factfile: BR Class 26

British Railways Type 2s D5300-19 emerged from the Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Co. works in Smethwick during 1958, equipped with 1,160hp Sulzer diesel engines. Ordered as part of BR's Pilot Scheme programme, the BRCW/Sulzer Type 2s proved one of the more capable designs, leading to a further 26 examples (D5320-46) being built the following year.

While the pilot batch (Class 26/0) initially went to work in the London area, the later batch ('26/1') went straight to Scotland, with the entire fleet soon consolidated north of the border. The '26/0s' operated within lowland areas for the most part, but the '26/1s' – which featured a different pattern of ventilation grilles, cabside windows and revised suspension – headed for the Highlands, which demanded the fitting of tablet exchange equipment and snowplough brackets.

To improve visibility along the bleak Highland lines, Inverness depot fitted pairs of car-style headlamps to its Class 26s from 1976 (26015/022/030/2/5/8/9/041-043, 045/6), in addition to in-cab radio gear. A handful more '26s' gained single headlamps (26021/4, 040/4).

Operating a wide range of passenger, parcels and freight traffic, the '26s' were eventually replaced by newly transferred Class 37s during the early 1980s. The Type 2s soldiered on, however, relegated mostly to parcels and civil engineers' workings, which saw examples working south of the border to Carlisle and Tyne Yard.

Final withdrawals took place in late 1993 but, due to their popularity and versatility, no fewer than 13 examples have survived into preservation.

1: Stabled at Inverness in August 1969 is D5335, having gained full yellow ends, pending a repaint into the new 'corporate' Rail blue livery. Note the recessed tablet catcher equipment on the cab side. RAIL PHOTOPRINTS

2: Sporting a set of car-style headlamps and Highland Rail stag emblems, BR blue 26032 shunts engineers wagons at Blair Athol in June 1985. RAIL PHOTOPRINTS

3: Proudly adorned with a Glasgow Eastfield 'Scottie Dog' emblem, Railfreight-liveried 26038 is seen in refurbished condition at Stirling, November 1988. RAIL PHOTOPRINTS

cables come pre-installed at each end, along with dummy screw-link couplers, which will have to be removed in order to add the supplied tension locks into the NEM pockets.

A fabulous set of miniature three-piece snowploughs is provided with all the Class 26s, with a set of small mounting screws. I love the fact that the mounting brackets for the centre blade slot over the front of the bufferbeam and, although a little adjustment of the brake hoses is necessary and the NEM pockets need unclipping, installation takes just a few minutes. A '26' looks naked without snowploughs in my book.

Other optional details include etched metal air horn grille baffles and upper covers, plus earlier tapered style bogie steps (included with certain models).

The underframe also looks to have been enhanced, with a greater sense of depth to the bogie side frames, helped by the addition of pipework runs, speedometer cable and other small details. The fuel and water tanks and battery boxes – plus the air cylinders on refurbished 26038 – are equally impressive.

In terms of finish, both of these samples feature high-quality paint jobs, with accurate looking shades, neat colour separation and crisply printed logos, numbers and data panels. Worthy of note is the rendition of the translucent glass fibre engine room rooftop panel, which really looks the part. The factory-applied weathering on the Rail blue version is fairly generic, with a finely misted layer of earthy brown around the chassis and lower bodyshell, and a dusty black/grey along the roof. The effect is more than subtle, but not excessive – probably just right for a hardworking Highland-based Type 2.

TURNIN' WHEELS

After running in both models for 30mins in each direction on a medium speed, the '26s' were let loose on the test track and performed faultlessly. Heljan's tried-and-trusted drivetrain provides smooth, quiet operation, with plenty of haulage power and gentle transitions throughout the speed range, aided by the twin flywheel arrangement. Power is collected from all eight wheels via wiper contacts, which were found to be aligned and working perfectly.

A little adjustment was needed to the snowploughs I fitted to 26032 to permit more clearance for the bogies to rotate on tighter curves, but it was nothing major.

For DCC users, fitting a decoder is easy thanks to the lift-off roof panel, but the bodyshell will need to be removed (it simply unclips – but unplug the jumper cables first!) to provide access to the twin speaker mounts. These are located at the No. 1 end and, due to an unfortunate mix-up at the factory, speakers have not been installed. Heljan is aware of the issue and taking steps to address the matter, so it will be worth chatting to your local dealer.

Is the new Class 26 an improvement over the previous tooling? Yes, absolutely. It looks better and sports more up-to-date features. As the earlier models featured excellent running performance, it's hard to discern much of an uplift in this respect, although the upgrade to a 21pin DCC interface is welcome.

There's also now a greater variety in terms of detail fittings, with the Inverness-based 26032 being a prime example. Having tried to make-do with cosmetic headlamps retrofitted to older Heljan models in the past, it's great to finally be able to model a Highland '26' more faithfully. So I'm a very happy bunny! ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

PROS
- Looks the part.
- Impressive level of detail.
- Performance.
- Improved functionality.

CONS
- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Excellent – a notable improvement over earlier versions.

VITAL STATISTICS: HELJAN CLASS 26/1

OVERVIEW
Manufacturer: Heljan
Ref. No. 2626/2645
Unit No. 26032/26038
Scale/gauge: 1:76 scale, 'OO' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 420g
Min. curve radius: 438mm (second radius)
Wheel back-to-back: 14.3mm

DIMENSIONS	PROTOTYPE	1:76 SCALE	MODEL
Length (over buffers)	50ft 9in	203mm	204mm
Height	12ft 8in	51mm	51mm
Width	8ft 10in	35.5mm	35.5mm
Wheel diameter	3ft 7in	14.3mm	14.5mm
Wheelbase	10ft 0in	40mm	40mm

SERVICING
How to dismantle: Body unclips from chassis.
Where to oil: Gears, bearings and axles – see instructions.

ELECTRICS
Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail
Motor type: Five pole
Lights: Directional head/tail lamps, interior lighting
DCC-ready? 21pin socket, twin speaker enclosures

MECHANISM
Drive system: Central motor drives all four axles via cardan shafts and gears
Flywheel(s): Two
Traction tyres: No

Accurascale Ruston & Hornsby 88DS

◆ **GAUGE** 'O' ◆ **MODEL** Accurascale ACC2864 Ruston & Hornsby 88DS, National Coal Board 63-000-352, blue ◆ **PRICE** £229.99 (DCC-ready), £319.99 (DCC sound) ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Accurascale stockists **Web** *www.accurascale.com*

Representing Accurascale's first foray into 'O' gauge locomotives, the diminutive Ruston & Hornsby 88DS diesel shunter offers a tantalising prospect for seasoned 7mm scale modellers, or anyone tempted to try their hand in the senior scale. Well-priced and offering an impressive specification, it's a difficult model to ignore, despite the relative mundanity of the prototype.

Offered in 10 different liveries, including a couple of BR guises, a colourful array of options is available (with or without DCC sound) and Accurascale kindly provided us with a sample depicting the National Coal Board's 63-000-352 (Ruston Works No. 338413), which entered traffic at East Cannock Colliery in April 1953, working predominantly around the NCB's wagon workshops until it was scrapped in the early 1980s.

Wearing a coat of BR Rail blue and a prototypically uneven set of 'wasp' stripes on the headstocks, the model impresses straight from the deeply foam-lined box. At less than 15cm long, it's a small model by 'O' gauge standards, but it's weighty nonetheless, thanks to ample use of die-cast metal in the frames and chassis block.

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

All scale proportions are virtually exact, and the Ruston's slightly eccentric character has been captured faithfully. For a relatively simple locomotive, the model features plenty of individual detail parts, including metal handles on the cab doors and bonnet side panels, plus wire handrails, etched radiator grille, air horn (with diagonal bracket) and hollow exhaust pipe. The underframe is well appointed too, with brake rigging and sanding pipes, while a set of girder obstacle deflectors is provided for customer fitment, slotting snugly into place behind the headstocks.

The cab interior is a real highlight, with a full array of control levers, dials and folding seats for the crew, all picked out in appropriate colours. Thanks to the crystal clear glazing panels and interior lighting, all this beautiful detail can be enjoyed to the max. As a bonus, the cab roof is held in place with four small magnets, making the installation of a driver figure as simple as possible. Further lighting is provided in the form of headlamps, installed at each end.

The paint finish is excellent, with a deep lustre to the main colour elements and a consistent overall satin sheen. There's a slight fuzziness between the yellow and blue around the nose end, but otherwise the colour separation is sharp and accurate. The printed Ruston logos and builder's plates are well done, and there's an option to add superb etched (and fully finished) replacements, which are supplied in the detail bag.

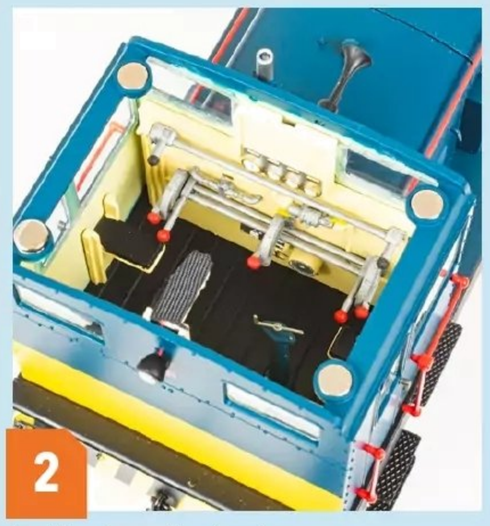
"Like the real thing, the engine goes through a drawn-out starting procedure and then putters around, sounding like an old bus"

PERFORMANCE MATTERS

A chunky five-pole skew wound motor sits at the heart of the model, mounted horizontally within the bonnet area, with power transferred to both axles via a series of helical gears. A brass flywheel added to the motor's other output shaft to balance things out. The transmission has been designed to offer optimal

3 things we like

1 Etched metal radiator grille with correct mesh pattern.



2 Fully detailed cab interior and magnetic roof.

3 Exquisite set of etched metal builder's plates and logos.

slow-speed performance and an authentically modest top speed.

A 'Stay Alive' capacitor unit is provided, to help the short wheelbase locomotive cope with any 'dead' spots or insulated crossings and access to the PluX22 DCC decoder socket is via the removable bonnet top. With only part of the bonnet lifting away, the full-length handrails need to be removed also, which proved easy on the first attempt, but led to some of the mounting knobs snapping on the second attempt, so do take care.

On the rails, the locomotive performed extremely well, shunting and hauling a good ➤

VITAL STATISTICS: ACCURASCALE RUSTON & HORNSBY 88DS

OVERVIEW

Manufacturer: Accurascale
Ref. No. ACC2864
Unit No. 63-000-352
Scale/gauge: 1:43.5 scale, 'O' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 507g
Min. curve radius: 1020mm (2nd radius)
Wheel back-to-back: 29.2mm

DIMENSIONS	PROTOTYPE	1:43.5 SCALE	MODEL
Length (over buffers)	20ft 6in	143.8mm	143.8mm
Height	10ft 0in	70mm	70mm
Width	7ft 10in	54.85mm	54.85mm
Wheel diameter	3ft 0in	21mm	21mm
Wheelbase	5ft 9in	40.54mm	40.54mm

SERVICING

How to dismantle: Body unclips from chassis.
Where to oil: Axles, bearings, gears – see instructions.

ELECTRICS

Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail
Motor type: Five-pole, skew wound
Lights: Directional lights, cab interior
DCC-ready? PluX22 socket, speakers pre-fitted

MECHANISM

Drive system: Power to both axles via gears
Flywheel(s): Yes
Traction tyres: No

FACTFILE: RUSTON & HORNSBY 88DS

Ruston & Hornsby carved itself a niche within the railway industry by building small petrol- and diesel-powered locomotives for a huge range of customers in the UK and overseas. Indeed, the Lincoln-based firm would go on to become one of Britain's foremost builders of diesel locomotives.

The 88DS type first appeared in 1938, with the first example constructed for Tunnel Cement's facility in Essex. Many more orders followed, resulting in a fleet of 88hp locomotives created for diverse industrial users, such as steelworks, quarries, collieries, chemical works, gas works and power stations throughout the UK.

Powered by Ruston's own diesel power plant, coupled to a mechanical transmission, the twin axles were chain driven. Despite their small size, an 88DS was capable of moving a train of up to 500t on level track, with the addition of weights on the side frames improving adhesion.

The War Department placed an order for several 88DS locomotives during the 1940s, as did British Railways in the late 1950s, with an eye on operating within works and civil engineers' yards. Accordingly, examples could be seen operating at Reading Signal Works and various locations in the North East of England, including York and Newcastle.

Built for British Railways in 1957, Ruston & Hornsby 88DS 20 spent its working life at Reading Signal Works, where it is captured in March 1961. COLOUR RAIL

Above: Another '88DS' built for BR is the North Eastern Region's Departmental No. 83, seen at Ponteland, near Newcastle, in 1961. COLOUR RAIL

Ruston & Hornsby built its 271st and last 88DS in 1967, with examples sent to work at locations across Europe, Africa and South East Asia.

BR's final 88DS was withdrawn in the early 1980s, but many locomotives continued in industrial use, leading to several examples being secured for preservation, providing heritage railways with a handy and economical form of motive power.

Left: BR's 88DS 20 is seen again at Reading in June 1974, in Rail blue livery. By 1981 it had gained the TOPS identity of 97020, but its duties were taken over by a Class 06 and it was eventually scrapped. COLOUR RAIL

selection of wagons without any issues. There's certainly enough hauling and propelling capacity to represent the full-size equivalent, which were only designed to move modest loads. Our sample happily coped with half a dozen wagons, including heavy metal kit-built stock and the sprung buffers and drawhooks proved helpful when operating over tight curves.

It's a quiet operator too, gliding around the layout effortlessly. This being a DCC sound-fitted version, once the sound files were activated, the locomotive really came to life. Like the real thing, the engine goes through a drawn-out starting procedure (involving compressed air) and then putters around, sounding like an old bus. The array of sound effects proved very pleasing, and includes the option to toggle in the secondary 'donkey' engine (used to recharge the air reservoir), while the twin 'sugar cube' style speakers mounted into an enclosure beneath the main circuit board create a satisfying din.

MINI MARVEL

Full marks go to the Accurascale team for producing a characterful and accurate rendition of a useful and widespread prototype, which will look at home within industrial and main line settings, depending on the livery options chosen. It has the looks and performance – and the tempting price – to prove a real winner. With Heljan's smaller Ruston & Hornsby 48DS also appearing last year (see MR332), now is the perfect time to take a step into the world of 'O' gauge modelling. ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

PROS

- Overall looks and character.
- Impressive level of detail.
- Build quality and finish.
- Runs well, plenty of haulage power.

CONS

- Can be slightly fiddly to remove bonnet top section.

FINAL VERDICT

A superb entry-level 'O' gauge locomotive.

Accurascale BR Mk 2c coaches

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Accurascale BR Mk 2c ACC2694 CK SC7551 blue/grey ScotRail • ACC2697 TSO 5614 Trans-Pennine • ACC2703 TSO(T) 6528 WCRC maroon • ACC2704 BSO 9440 WCRC maroon ◆ **PRICE** £74.95 each ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Accurascale stockists **Web** *www.accurascale.com*

As featured on page 29 of this issue, Accurascale's BR Mk 2b coaches scooped the runner's up spot in our Model of the Year awards for 2024. There's no doubting that their arrival piqued the interest of modellers of the post-1960s BR era, and this follow-up production run of the slightly different Mk 2c vehicles is proving just as popular.

Originally intended as a simple continuation of the Mk 2b design, the 250 carriages built at Derby in 1969-70 were re-designated as Mk 2c and five different vehicle types emerged: Tourist Standard Open (TSO), Open First (FO), Corridor First (FK), Brake Corridor First (BFK) and Brake Standard Open (BSO).

Like the Mk 2b, the plan had been to retrofit the Mk 2c with air conditioning equipment at some point after entering service. As a result, the carriages incorporated lift-out roof panels and lowered ceilings to expedite installation. However, the work was never carried out.

Employed on primary express services on the London Midland and Western regions from new, the Mk 2c fleet was eventually cascaded to secondary services following the introduction of air-conditioned stock and HST units. As a result, the Mk 2c could be seen far and wide into the 1990s when withdrawals began in earnest. From the 1980s, surplus examples had begun to appear in Ireland, and some even ended up in Israel, while others survived into the privatised era with charter operators.

Accurascale has reproduced each of the five vehicle types, plus the four declassified First class variants, which were converted in the 1980s, with a colourful array of liveries reproduced. There are also lots of detail configurations possible to replicate specific coaches in particular timeframes.

"The body profile and appointments are correct and the distinctive toilet windows are an immediately recognisable element of the real Mk 2c vehicles"

Received for review is TSO 5614 in Trans-Pennine livery, blue/grey CK SC7551 (a former FK) with Inter City ScotRail branding, plus a pair of West Coast Railway Company maroon cars, TSO 6528 with mini buffet counter, and BSO 9440. Straight out of the boxes, the models look great, with a superb level of paint finish, crisply printed legends and super-clear flush-fitting glazing.

The body profile and appointments are correct and the distinctive toilet windows are an immediately recognisable element of the real Mk 2c vehicles. The moulded relief is sharp, especially the door seams and lines of rivets, while the various handrails are formed from fine wire and neatly installed.

Below the carriages, the B4 bogies are superb, featuring extended axles (making conversion to 'EM/P4' easy) running in metal bearings which also collect power from the track supply for the interior lighting. The various equipment boxes, tanks and valves are correct for each vehicle type, and they're enhanced by fine pipe and conduit runs.

The headstocks feature a set of retracted buffers, but these can be unclipped and replaced by extended versions, which are included in the detail bag. Etched metal footsteps are securely installed, along with jumper cables and sockets at each corner on these electrically heated coaches. Sprung, close-coupling units are equipped with NEM sockets, with tension locks pre-fitted, but a set of magnetic alternatives supplied. Also provided in the detail bag is a set of air brake hoses, steam heat pipes and dummy knuckle couplers.

As for the interiors, they boast appropriately coloured seats, complete with distinctive winged headrests, plus tables and glazed partitions. Although less visible, the guard's compartment of the BSO is also fully detailed, while the luggage storage area is equipped with authentic mesh caging.

As mentioned, interior lighting is installed, incorporating 'stay alive' capacitor units for flicker-free operation and a magnetic wand is included to allow the lighting to be switched on or off at will.

Under test, all four coaches ran smoothly on my test track and layouts, coupled with a variety of BR Mk 1 and Mk 2 stock, negotiating Second radius curves without any issues.

It's great to see another under-represented BR coach variant rendered to such a high degree of finesse and authenticity. Indeed, it's the first time that the Mk 2c has appeared at all in RTR format. ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

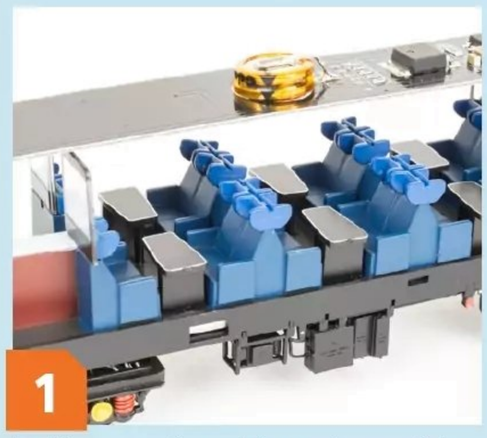
PROS
- Looks and fidelity.
- Attention to detail.
- Top notch finish.
- Interior detail and lighting.

CONS
- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Superb.

3 things we like



1 Fully appointed interiors with lighting and 'stay alive' units for flicker-free operation.

2 Underframe and bogies are impressive, with lots of authentic detail fittings.

3 Detailed ends, with option to fit extended buffers, brake hoses and dummy couplers.

Cavalex Models O&K PHA/JYA wagons

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Cavalex Models PHA/JYA aggregate wagons ◆ **PRICE** • £49.99 single • £99.99 twin-pack • £249.99 five-pack
◆ **AVAILABILITY** Ultimate Model Railways **Web** *www.ultimatemodelrailways.com*

In tandem with investment in new technology at its Torr Works quarry and Merehead stone terminal, Foster Yeoman also sought to modernise its traction and rolling stock options. While the Class 59 locomotives grabbed the headlines, among the fleet of new wagons to emerge was 61 vehicles commissioned from Orenstein & Koppel in 1988. With an eye on maximising payload within the shortest possible train length, the compact PHA bogie aggregate wagons ran in semi-fixed rakes with conventional draw gear at the outer ends, and knuckle couplers employed on the 'inner' wagons.

Operating behind Class 56s and Class 59s on Mendip stone services, the wagons' TOPS code was changed to JYA in 1990 and they have carried a silver-grey livery throughout their lives, with varying styles of blue Yeoman branding and, in more recent years, no branding at all.

Cavalex Models has produced a stunning depiction of the PHA/JYA in 'OO', as an exclusive commission for Ultimate Model Railways, with various packs on offer containing single, double or five-packs of vehicles, in 'inner' and 'outer' format. Each of the livery variations are also catered for, with original Foster Yeoman branding suiting the 1988-late 1990s era, 'Big Y' branding for the 1997-mid-2010s and unbranded wagons for the 'Noughties onwards. In all, 22 individual wagons have been produced.

We received a pair of samples from Cavalex, consisting of 'outer' (OK3268) and 'inner' (OK3300) vehicles, both presented in original Yeoman livery. Sporting a zinc alloy chassis and plastic body, there's a satisfying amount of mass, with each wagon weighing in at 79g.

The bodies feature a wealth of detail in addition to the distinctive rib structure. The Yeoman branding is carried on separate boards, as per the real things, while all the various handrails are rendered in fine, stiff wire, which have been painted and installed neatly. The side maintenance doors feature superb detail to the locking latches and hinges, while the access steps on the ends contain the correct tread texture.

Lamp brackets, ferry tie-down cleats, footsteps and brake hand wheels are other highlights, with the 'outer' wagon featuring sprung buffers and operable knuckle couplers employed for the 'inner' connections, which feature adequate 'swing' to allow a rake to navigate second radius curves. Scale release levers are even incorporated into the knuckle couplers.

Underneath, the wagon's cast metal skeletal chassis frame is adorned with a cat's cradle of pipework and air brake equipment and the bogies are equally well rendered, with excellent detail relief on the outer frames and a full set of brake linkages around the wheelsets.

The disc wheels rotate freely on their pinpoint axles and the models have been designed to allow easy conversion to 'EM' or 'P4' standards.

The overall level of detail is exceptional, but a check of dimensions also confirm that the prototype has been scaled down to 'OO' perfectly. On the rails, the two wagons ran smoothly around the test track and look very much at home behind a matching Class 59 or a Cavalex '56'. An NEM coupler pocket is mounted to the bogie frame on the 'outer' wagon, with a slimline tension lock unit already in place. Pairs of air brake hoses are pre-installed at each end and the decoration of both samples is flawless. The subtle metallic sliver-grey paint looks just right – metallic paints can be tricky to pull off on miniature models – and the various printed logos, numbers and data panels are crisp and legible.

"The side maintenance doors feature superb detail to the locking latches and hinges, while the access steps on the ends contain the correct tread texture"

Anyone with an interest in Mendip stone operations will be tempted to invest in a rake of these wagons, which represent a long-lived and important prototype for the post-1980s rail freight scene. They carry a somewhat premium price, but there's no doubting that they're a premium quality product. Cavalex Models has done a tremendous job in creating an authentic, highly detailed replica, which can be ranked among the best RTR 'OO' freight wagon models. ***(GD)***

3 things we like

1

Highly detailed underframe and bogies. Cast metal frame provides plenty of mass.

2

Exceptional level of detail, with separately applied handrails, door furniture, footsteps and more.

3

Knuckle couplers for 'inner' connections perform well and look the part.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Prototype fidelity.
- Exceptional level of detail.
- Flawless finish.
- Performance.
- Attractive and interesting prototype.

CONS

- Nothing.

FINAL VERDICT

Wow!

Accurascale/ Locomotion Models Class 55

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Accurascale/Locomotion Models ACC2973 Class 55 'Deltic' 55002 *The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry*, Rail blue
◆ **PRICE** £169.99 (DCC-ready), £259.99 (DCC sound) ◆ **PERIOD** V22-21 ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Locomotion Models **Web** *www.locomotionmodels.com*

Accurascale's 'Deltics' took the 'OO' gauge market by storm in the summer of 2022 and modellers have been eagerly awaiting the second production run, which landed in the UK recently. Amongst Accurascale's own products, featuring a range of BR blue and green versions – plus another run of the Porterbrook purple D9016 *Gordon Highlander* – is an exclusive rendition of preserved 55002 *The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry*, crafted especially for Locomotion Models.

A number of minor improvements have been made to Accurascale's tooling, following customer feedback, with the handbrake chains now supplied as optional details in the accompanying bag of brake hoses, cosmetic screw couplings and extra pipework. Thus, it's a lot easier to access the model's interior to add a footplate crew. The fit of the handrails on each nose has also been enhanced, while the speaker installation (for DCC sound versions) has been tweaked to reduce vibration.

As per the original release, there's a wealth of prototype-specific detail fitted to each model, with the correct pattern of cab side windows, horn location, wipers, headcode panels and various other fittings reflecting individual 'Deltics' within specific timeframes.

Our particular sample captures 55002 in its mid-to-late 1970s condition, following application of TOPS numbers but before the alphanumerical headcode panels were plated over. The cabside windows are in original condition too and there's a (correct) lack of overhead line warning legends. Gateshead depot markings feature below the TOPS panels and the pre-fitted headcodes feature 1E05 and 1S42, denoting typical Anglo-Scottish East Coast main line express services of the period (alternative headcodes are also provided).

Supplied with a numbered certificate, this limited edition model is available exclusively from Locomotion Models, in either DCC-ready or DCC sound format. The level of finish is exemplary, with neat separation between colours and crisply printed legends. A set of high-quality etched nameplates is provided, already cut from the fret and ready to install if desired.

Access to the 21pin DCC socket is via a discreet, lift-off roof section which is retained by strong magnets, and a full array of exterior and interior lighting is installed. However, the small tail lights emit white beams when the model is running forward, which is not prototypical (only the headcode displays should be lit). Accordingly, Accurascale is offering customers the option of fitting blanking covers over the lighting bar, with full instructions available online (*www.accurascale.com*).

One of the windscreen wipers looks to have come adrift on our sample, but otherwise all details are securely installed and the model ran beautifully under test. Lighting issue aside, it's fabulous to see Accurascale's 'Deltic' return and this particular version captures a popular prototype during its 1970s heyday. ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

PROS
- Looks and fidelity.
- Detail specification.
- Top class finish.
- Superb performance.

CONS
- Lighting issue.

FINAL VERDICT

Fantastic.

Sonic Models Motorail Car Transporters

◆ **GAUGE** 'N' ◆ **MODEL** Sonic Models S2303-04 Newton Chambers Car Transporter cars, three-pack, BR blue/grey
◆ **PRICE** £124.95 per pack ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Rails of Sheffield **Web** *www.railsofsheffield.com*

British Railways launched its Motorail brand in the late 1950s, enticing motorists to take their cars by train between key urban centres. In pre-motorway Britain, tourists aiming to tour Scotland or the West Country faced the prospect of countless hours navigating narrow roads and clogged town centres, so eliminating the most arduous stretches was an attractive prospect.

Initially, BR made use of Mk 1 GUV vans for the transit of motor cars, but the Eastern Region commissioned Newton Chambers to construct a fleet of 14 cars with double-decked interiors to maximise capacity. Entering traffic in 1960/61, the carriages operated Motorail services on the East Coast Main Line, between London-York-Edinburgh, with six cars typically marshalled with a rake of Mk 1 passenger stock and hauled by steam or diesel traction.

I never really expected to see these vehicles offered in ready-to-run form, but we've already had 'OO' versions from two different manufacturers – Heljan and EFE Rail – and now we have an 'N' gauge product, courtesy of Sonic Models.

Available exclusively from Rails of Sheffield, six different triple-packs have been produced, split evenly across original BR maroon and blue/grey liveries. Under review here is a set in the latter scheme, featuring E96290/97/98, each carrying TCV TOPS codes. They're nicely packaged in individual clear acrylic cases, securely retained within plastic inner 'clamshells'.

The models capture the profile of the prototype perfectly, with all scale dimensions being spot on, and there's an impressive level of detail relief to the carriage ends, featuring the various door components.

The bogies are rendered well too, with crisp spring and axlebox detail, brake changeover levers (on red backgrounds) and fitted with fine profile metal disc wheels. Secondary suspension is set back from the frames, as per the real things, and an array of brake gear and yokes are present, with the shoes lining up with the wheels perfectly.

The pinpoint axles rotate freely, resulting in smooth running and sprung kinematic close coupler units are installed to the underside of the floor, with NEM mounts. The springs were a little weak on our samples, but everything performed correctly when the carriages were put through their paces on the test track.

Livery application is excellent throughout, with accurate paint shades, neatly printed legends, numbers and data panels, all of which are fully legible.

At 34g each, they have a good amount of mass, and a detail bag provides optional dummy screw couplings and brake hoses for adorning the tail end of a rake, once the standard NEM coupler is removed.

It's great to see these car transporters arriving in 'N' gauge, providing modellers with extra variety, not least as 'N' layouts offer greater facility for modelling full-length passenger trains. They're perfect for East Coast Main Line-based layouts, but examples also saw service to other destinations in northern England and to the South West in latter days, with examples continuing well into the 1980s. ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

PROS
- Capture the prototype perfectly.
- Performance.
- Top notch finish.
- Interesting prototype.

CONS
- Nothing.

FINAL VERDICT

Excellent.

Rapido GWR 'B-set' coaches

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Rapido Trains UK 946010 GWR Diagram E140 'B-set' Post-war GWR lined livery ◆ **PRICE** £169.95 per set
◆ **AVAILABILITY** Rapido Trains stockists **Web** *www.rapidotrains.co.uk*

The Great Western Railway was renowned for doing things differently, so it's no surprise to find that its method of making up non-corridor local trains varied from other companies. With an array of push-pull auto-trailers for one-coach branch trains, 'engine-sandwich' autotrains with two trailers, and its larger sets of non-corridor stock (as modelled in 'OO' by Dapol) for suburban services, the GWR also found a need for fixed two-car non-corridor formations.

These were used for peak services on branch lines where one coach was inadequate, but also for adding to trains to boost capacity at peak times. On the St Ives branch in Cornwall, for instance, three or four coaches would be adequate across the 'shoulder' of the day, but when holidaymakers were heading to the beaches in the morning or back to base in the late afternoon, the trains would be strengthened with extra coaches. These would often take the form of a 'B-set', a permanently coupled pair of identical non-corridor brake composites.

The Diagram E140 B-sets – 41 pairs – were delivered from 1930 and lasted in service into the BR era until replaced by DMUs. They were usually worked by 'small Prairie' 2-6-2Ts or pannier tanks but in the 'West Country' could be seen behind NBL Type 2s. Rapido Trains' Diagram E140 B-set precedes the promised range of small 'Prairies' and two-coach packs are offered in GWR chocolate and cream, wartime brown, BR carmine and BR maroon. As is so often the case with models, it's the little details which really catch the attention. In the case of these models, my eyes were immediately drawn to the separate, bright red 'butterflies' fitted to the communication cord rods on the coach ends. These would flip up so that staff could see immediately in which coach the communication cord had been pulled.

The two coaches feature a simple bar coupling between the vehicles, with standard tension-locks in NEM pockets on the outer ends. This prevents the cars being marshalled incorrectly, a perennial problem with past 'B-set' models from the likes of K's, Dapol and Hornby.

Access to the interior, to fit passengers, is straightforward thanks to the clip-fit roofs, and the compartments feature 'bench'-style maroon seating, with dark green in the First class compartment. Etched luggage racks are supported on curly brackets, with mirrors and carriage prints below. These look particularly effective when viewed through the windows with the lights on. Talking of which, the interior LED lighting bar is powered from the rails (via friction-free conductive axle bearings), with a magnetic 'wand' supplied to activate the switch.

Glazing is lightly glued in place so that it can be removed and replaced with the open droplights supplied in the accessory bag – a nice touch. Detail in the 'van' includes the guard's desk and pigeon-holes,

seat, handbrake standard and the brake pipes and gauges complete with printed faces.

Each chassis is equipped with battery boxes, dynamo, brake cylinders and very fine brake rodding. The Diagram E140 vehicles had Collett's 7ft bogies and these are well modelled with very fine detail and with brake blocks in line with the wheel treads. Unfortunately, the stretcher bars between the axleboxes have been fitted upside-down so the very distinctive 'drop' of the rods under the suspension gear is absent. The rods appear to be separately fitted but it looks to be a tricky and delicate operation to remove, reverse and refit them.

The quality of finish is exemplary, with a realistic sheen to the brown and cream paintwork and very fine gold lining and lettering. The GWR crest is printed in full colour and the ends of our sample are branded 'Kingham Branch'. Most GWR coaches were allocated to specific services and 'Kingham Branch' is the correct, albeit curious, branding carried by coaches Nos. 6894/5 which were allocated to services on the Banbury and Cheltenham line, via Kingham, illustrated in Jim Russell's *Banbury & Cheltenham Railway* (OPC).

These are heavy coaches, weighing in at 204g (7.2oz) giving a two-coach train a weight approaching 1lb. Accordingly, they perform well at all realistic speeds and through Peco Code 75 track and points. Modellers with tight curves (second radius) may need to watch for buffer locking if using the close-coupling which Rapido calls a 'tommy bar'.

It's great to see some 'everyday' GWR stock given the 21st-century modelling treatment almost a century after the real thing entered traffic. At £70 per coach, they aren't cheap but you get what you pay for. ***(CJL)***

3 things we like

1

Alternative glazing supplied to replicate droplights in open position.

2

Interior detail is terrific, with etched luggage racks, framed pictures and fully appointed guard's compartment.

3

Finish is superb, with all lining, lettering and GWR crests applied flawlessly.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Fine detail inside and out.
- Easy interior access.
- Superb quality of finish.

CONS

- Incorrectly fitted bogie stretcher bars.

FINAL VERDICT

Excellent.

Oxford Rail RCH 12ton tank wagons

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Oxford Rail RCH 12ton brake vans • OR76TK2011 Pratt's Perfection Spirit No. 795 • OR76TK2009 Naval Store No. 87 • OR76TK2010 Royal Daylight No. 745 ◆ **PRICE** £23.95 each ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Oxford Rail stockists **Web** *www.oxforddie-cast.co.uk*

First released in 2020, Oxford Rail's 12ton tank wagons greatly impressed the *Model Rail* team, offering a convincing re-creation of the once-ubiquitous Railway Clearing House Diagram 72 vehicle, first introduced in 1907.

Employed by a great variety of private owners during the ensuing decades – and duly painted in all manner of attractive liveries – it makes an ideal choice for a RTR model in 'OO'. Therefore, it's great to see the model returning to the Oxford Rail range after a hiatus, with three new versions now available.

Oxford Rail kindly supplied samples of the new models, presenting a colourful trio. The highlights of the tooling include a superb rendition of the riveted tank sections and filler hatches, plus separate securing straps, tie rods and open-framed chassis. The 'W' irons, axleboxes, springs and brake detail is all spot-on, with crisply defined mouldings and profiled handbrake levers.

The spoked wheels feature a refined flange profile and rotate smoothly in pinpoint bearings and, thanks to the welcome amount of weighting (42g per wagon), they run supremely well. Slimline tension lock couplers are fitted into pivoting NEM pockets and the buffers feature a fine profile without being too delicate. Optional pairs of cosmetic three-link couplings are supplied with each model.

The paint finish on all three samples is excellent, with full opacity to the printed legends, even on the Naval Store black version, while all of the smaller legends and builder's plates are fully legible.

Seen across the length and breadth of the UK network well into the 1960s, this is an essential freight wagon for most steam (and early diesel) era layouts, working in block or mixed goods trains. Oxford Rail's model offers great value, so let's hope that more versions appear in the near future. ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

PROS
- Convincing re-creation.
- Impressive level of detail.
- Superb finish.
- Smooth, reliable runners.

CONS
- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Excellent.

Peco BR ‘Clayhood’ wagons

◆ **GAUGE** ‘N’ ◆ **MODELS** Peco NR1200B/NR1201B/NR1202B BR ‘Clayhood’ wagons, bauxite ◆ **PRICE** £22.50 each ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Peco stockists **Web** *www.peco-uk.com*

BR’s 13ton capacity ‘Clayhood’ covered open wagons were once an everyday sight, working to and from many different locations in Devon and Cornwall, transporting ball clay and china clay to various destinations and ports. Nearly 900 examples were built during the 1950s and examples lasted in daily service well into the 1980s before being superseded by modern steel-bodied hoppers.

The ‘Clayhood’ forms the latest member of Peco’s fleet of RTR ‘N’ gauge wagons to be upgraded, following the various timber- and steel-bodied mineral wagons which appeared over the past couple of years. Three individual wagons are currently available, featuring a mix of UCV and OOV TOPS codes, depicting vacuum-braked wagons in the post-1975 era.

The plastic wagon body features well defined plank, side and end door detail, while the solebars and underframe are equally well appointed, with Morton style brake gear and split oil axleboxes. The pale blue hoods feature the distinctive logos of the English China Clay (ECC) company and there’s a convincing rendition of the characteristic sagging and tensioned areas of the tarpaulin.

The hoods slot snugly over the wagon bodies (the wagons feature no interior detail), with the retaining ropes printed onto the sides, so running the models without the covers is not really viable. That said, the real things were rarely seen without the covers in place, so it’s not much of an issue.

Standard ‘N’ gauge couplers are clipped into NEM pockets and the three-hole metal disc wheels feature a refined flange profile, turning freely on their pinpoint axles. At only 5g each, they’re light enough to allow a prototypically long train to be formed without taxing a typical locomotive, but just heavy enough to ensure reliable running.

The level of finish is good, although there’s a slightly coarse texture to some of the printed livery elements. This is only really discernible when viewing enlarged images of the models, however – it’s barely perceptible when regarding the models within a layout setting.

With china clay traffic a perennial favourite with modellers, these lovely new wagons will be welcomed by many ‘N’ gauge adherents. ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

PROS
- Look the part.
- Good amount of detail and finesse.
- Hoods look particularly effective.
- Made in England.

CONS
- Plain interiors.

FINAL VERDICT

Great stuff.

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LMS/BR CLASS 11 0-6-0DE

CHOOSE FROM 15 VERSIONS

00 GAUGE

The Class 11 holds an important place in railway history, emerging in the steam era and offering sterling service to the Allied cause during the Second World War.

Our exclusive model has been several years in the making and is based on exhaustive research by the *Model Rail* and Heljan teams, along with detailed measurements of preserved locomotives.

To reflect the long and varied careers of the real Class 11s, we've produced 15 different versions, each limited to just 300 pieces. The tooling has been carefully designed to allow several key variations to be observed across LMS, War Department and British Railways locomotives, while the handful of Western Region locomotives built at Swindon have also been included.

MR-502
War Department 878 *Basra*, Longmoor Military Railway blue/red

MR-505 BR 12043, black, BRITISH RAILWAYS lettering

MR-503 LMS 7120, pre-war black

MR-506 BR 15101, WR green, BRITISH RAILWAYS shaded lettering

MR-501
War Department 70271, olive green

MR-504 LMS 7128, post-war black

MR-507 BR 15106, WR green, BRITISH RAILWAYS shaded lettering

BR/SR CLASS 12 0-6-0DE

00 GAUGE

FIVE VERSIONS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Specification list

Made by: Heljan
Motor: Five-pole
DCC socket: Next18
Features: • NEM coupler pockets • brass flywheel and high-reduction gears • working exterior lights (where appropriate) • cab interior lights • factory-fitted speaker • tooling allows for early and late BR versions.

COMING SOON – Expected mid-2025

Pristine models
£169.00

£152.10
Model Rail subscribers price

Featuring Bulleid-Firth Brown wheels, our tooling caters for the original and later versions, with and without electric head/tail lamps. ***We're not taking orders yet, but look out for further announcements later this year.***

*Pre-production models shown

MODELRAILOFFERS.CO.UK OR 01209 705459

MR-508 BR 12125, black, early crest

MR-512
BR D12062, Rail blue with 'wasp' stripes

MR-509 BR 12131, black, early crest

MR-513 BR 12052, Rail blue with 'wasp' stripes

MR-510
BR 12105, green, late crest

MR-514 MP228 (ex-12052), Derek Crouch Mining Co. red/cream

MR-511 BR 12100, green with 'wasp' stripes, late crest

MR-515 (ex-12099), National Coal Board orange

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Specification list

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Made by: Heljan
Motor: Five-pole
DCC socket: Next18
Features: • NEM coupler pockets • brass flywheel and high-reduction gears • working exterior lights (where appropriate) • cab interior lights • factory-fitted speaker • tooling allows for LMS, WD, GWR and BR versions.

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Weathered versions
£179.00
Model Rail subscribers price **£161.10**

What's planned?

- MR-520 BR/SR Class 12, 15220, BR black, early emblem
- MR-521 BR/SR Class 12, 15224, BR green, early emblem
- MR-522 BR/SR Class 12, 15221, BR green with 'wasp' stripes, late emblem
- MR-523 BR/SR Class 12, 15212, BR Rail blue with 'wasp' stripes
- MR-524 BR/SR Class 12, (ex-15231) Tilcon blue with 'wasp' ends

MR-520

MR-522

MR-521

MR-523

MR-524

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'16XX' 0-6-0PT

CHOOSE FROM 20 VERSIONS 00 GAUGE

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Specification list

Made by: Rapido Trains Inc.

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: Next18

Features: • Speaker fitted • firebox glow effect • NEM pockets

£149.00

£134.10 price for *Model Rail* subscribers

BR BLACK, EARLY CREST (PRISTINE)

- MR-301A: No. 1609
- MR-301B: No. 1623 ← LAST FEW
- MR-301C: No. 1624
- MR-301D: No. 1657
- MR-301F: No. 1658
- MR-301G: No. 1668
- MR-302A: No. 1646 ← LOW STOCK

BR BLACK, EARLY CREST (WEATHERED)

- MR-302B: No. 1649
- MR-303: No. 1604

BR BLACK, LATE CREST (PRISTINE)

- MR-304A: No. 1636
- MR-304B: No. 1655

BR BLACK, LATE CREST (WEATHERED)

- MR-305A: No. 1627
- MR-305B: No. 1628

'BUSBY' CHIMNEY

- MR-307A: BR black early crest, No. 1616
- MR-307B: BR black early crest, No. 1629
- MR-308: BR black early crest, No. 1661 (weathered)

NCB GREEN

- MR-309A: NCB green, No. 1600
- MR-309B: NCB green, No. 1607

PRESERVED GREEN

- MR-310A: BR green early crest, No. 1638
- MR-310B: Green 'Dart Valley', No. 1638

BR Class 26/1 26043

2647 BR Class 26/1 26043 in Rail blue with DCE stripes and Haymarket depot logos

ON SALE NOW!

Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five pole

DCC socket: 21pin

Features: • Working head/tail and interior lights • NEM coupler pockets • optional snowploughs, air horn covers and footsteps

£210.00

£189.00 price for *Model Rail* subscribers

Ruston 'PWM' 0-6-0DE

CHOOSE FROM EIGHT VERSIONS

00 GAUGE

MR-403 PWM653
BR light green

MR-405A PWM 97651
BR yellow

MR-405B PWM 97652
BR yellow

MR-404 PWM652
BR Rail blue

Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Coreless

DCC socket: Next18

Features: • Cab interior lights
• NEM coupler pockets

£169.00

£152.10 price for *Model Rail* subscribers

MR-402 PWM651
BR green, 'wasp' ends

MR-400A PWM651
BR green

MR-400B PWM652
BR green

MR-401 PWM654
BR green, 'wasp' ends

LNER Sentinels – the latest batch

00 GAUGE

MR-018 LNER Class Y3
Sentinel, No. 8172,
LNER black with Gill Sans
lettering/numerals

MR-021 LNER Class Y1
Sentinel, No. 45,
LNER black with shaded
lettering/numerals

MR-019 BR Class Y1
Sentinel, No. 68144,
BR black, early crest

MR-020 BR Class Y3
Sentinel, No. 68162,
BR black, early crest

Specifications

Made by: Dapol

Motor: Five-pole 'Super-Creep'

DCC socket: Eight-pin

£99.00

£89.10 price for *Model Rail* subscribers

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LNER 'J70'

00 GAUGE

SIX TO CHOOSE FROM

Specification list

Made by: Rapido Trains

Motor: Coreless

DCC socket: Six-pin

Features: • NEM coupler pockets • space for speaker • removable cowcatchers • etched worksplates

£127.50

£114.75 price for *Model Rail* subscribers

MR-203
No. 68225, BR early emblem, no skirts

MR-203
No. 68225, BR early crest, no skirts

MR-204
No. 68226, British Railways lettering, no skirts

MR-206 No. 7128, LNER wartime livery, full skirts

MR-207 No. 8223, LNER post-war livery, full skirts

MR-208 No. 7126, LNER lined livery, no skirts

MR-210 No. 7139, LNER lined livery

LOW STOCK

'USA' 0-6-0T

00 GAUGE

MR-111
£129.95

£116.95 price for *Model Rail* subscribers

Specification list

Made by: Bachmann

Motor: Three-pole

DCC socket: Six-pin

Features: • NEM coupler pockets • prototype-specific cab, bunker, smokebox and footstep details

MR-111
'USA' 0-6-0T No. s73
British Railways unlined black, 'Sunshine lettering'

ONLY 3 VERSIONS LEFT!

£124.95

£112.46 subscriber price

MR-101
No. 1968,
USATC black

MR-107 No. 36,
National Coal Board black

MODELRAILOFFERS.CO.UK OR 01209 705459

BR/BRUSH TYPE 4 CLASS 48

FOUR TO CHOOSE FROM

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Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: 21pin

Features: • NEM coupler pockets • directional and interior lighting • sprung buffers • speaker mounts • includes optional snowploughs

£230.00 £207.00 price for *Model Rail* subscribers

*** Weathered versions £245.00**
(Subscriber's price £220.50)

When Heljan announced its all-new 'OO' gauge Class 47 project, we took the opportunity to commission the first ever ready-to-run model of the Class 48 – a small fleet of Brush Type 4s equipped with experimental Sulzer V12 power units. Although very similar to a '47', the Class 48s featured significant alterations to the roof to accommodate a revised exhaust system, engine room access doors and ventilation grilles.

Our exclusive model boasts the same high specification as Heljan's all-new Class 47, with a specially tooled bodyshell to accurately reflect the changes made to the '48s'.

All four versions are now available, and each has been produced in strictly limited quantities.

Don't miss out – order yours today!

What's available?

- 4820 Class 48, D1702 BR two-tone green, small warning panels
- 4821 Class 48, D1704 BR two-tone green, small warning panels, weathered
- 4822 Class 48, D1706 BR two-tone green, full warning panels
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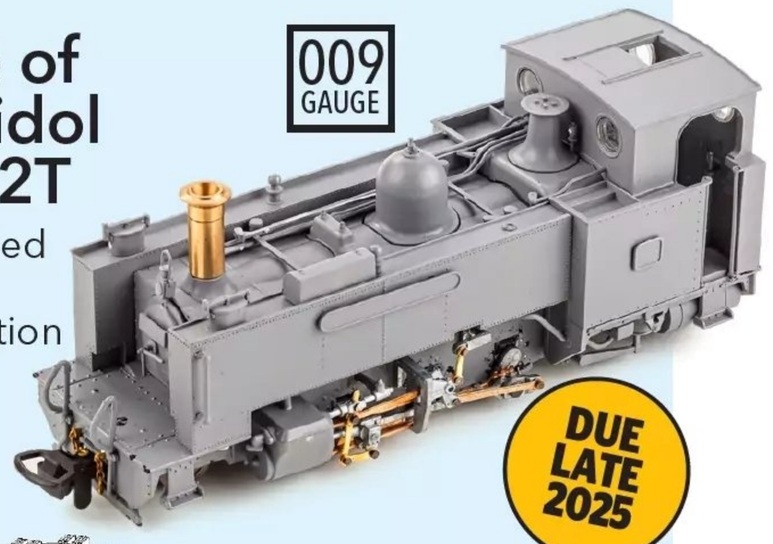
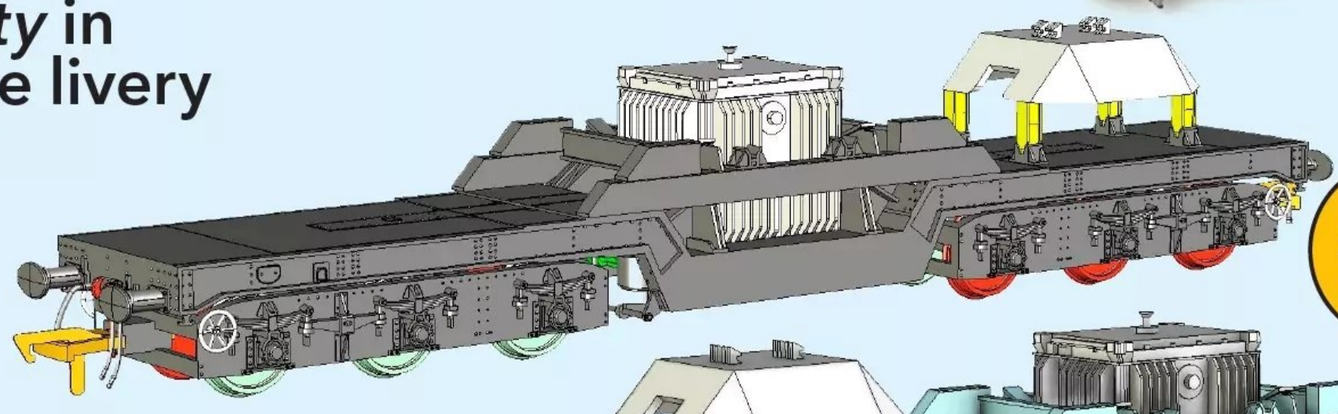
009 GAUGE

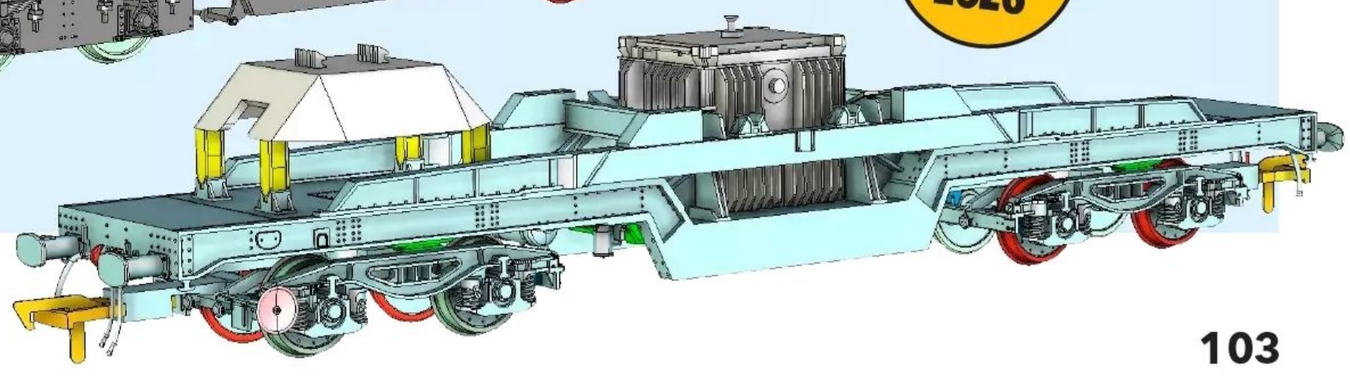


DUE LATE 2025



DUE EARLY 2026

BR 'Flatrol MJ'/XKB atomic flask wagons 00 GAUGE
Produced by Revolution Trains



Next Issue

ON SALE APR 10

Weekend warriors

Tasked with building a fully functioning 'O' gauge layout in a noisy exhibition hall over the course of a single weekend, the Gauge O Guild rose to the daunting challenge.

Back home

Follow our essential guide to creating lifelike, low-relief terraced houses for your backscene.

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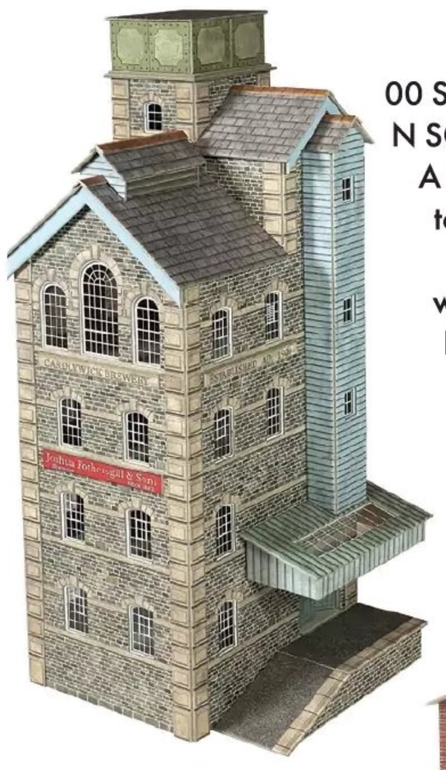

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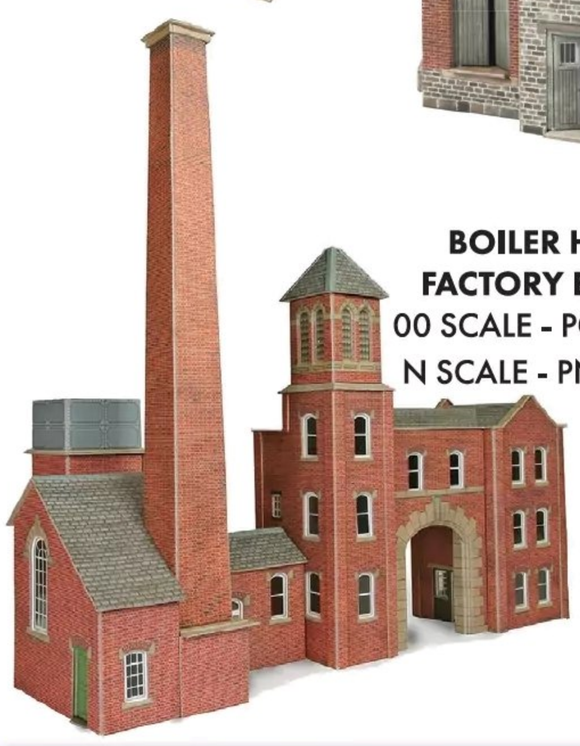

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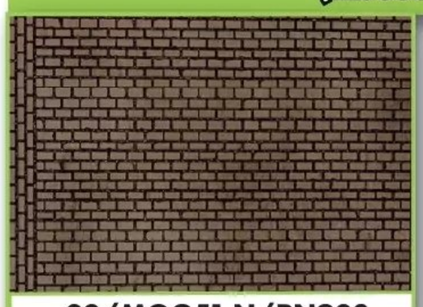

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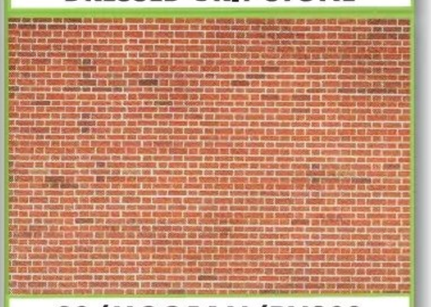

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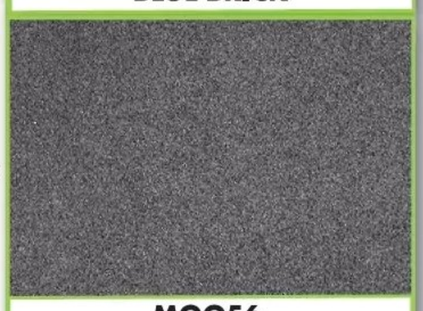

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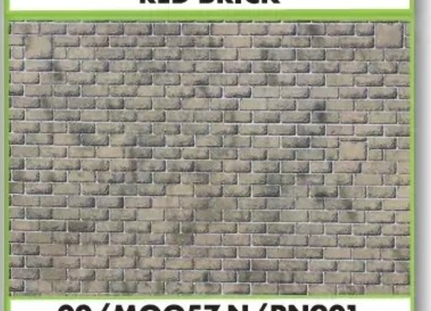

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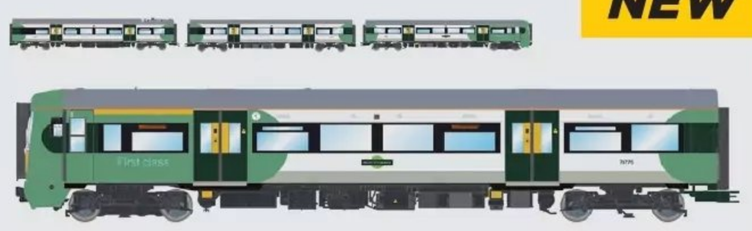

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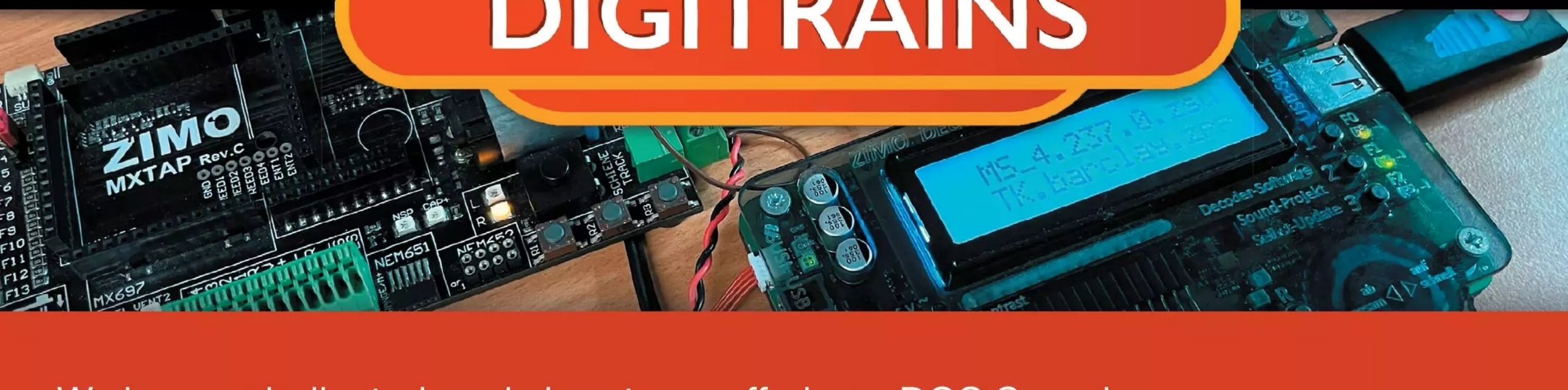

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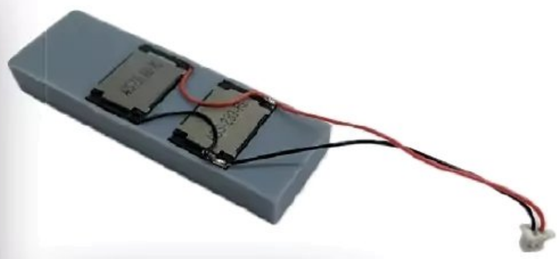

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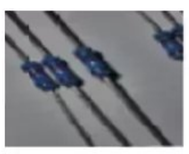

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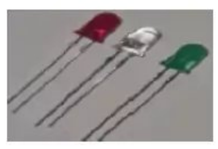

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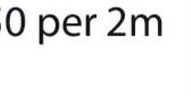

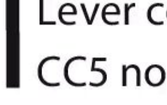

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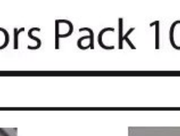
CDP4 4pin.....65p	CM4 4pin.....65p
CDP5 5pin...180...70p	CM51 5pin....180...70p
CDP5 5pin...240...70p	CM52 5pin...240...70p
CDP6 6pin.....75p	CM6 6pin.....75p
CDP7 7pin.....80p	CM7 7pin.....80p
CDP8 8pin.....85p	CM8 8pin.....85p

Tiny Connectors



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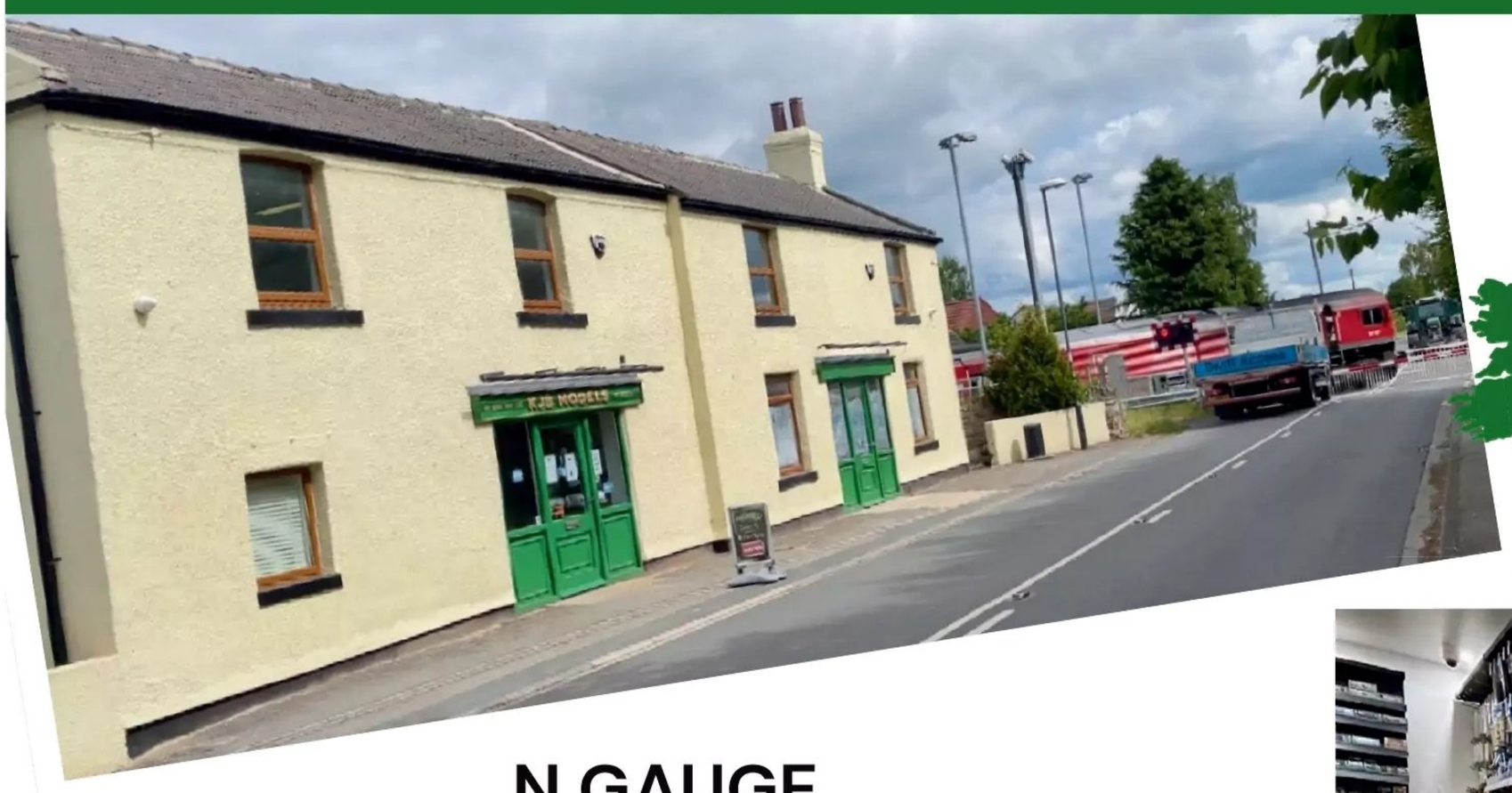

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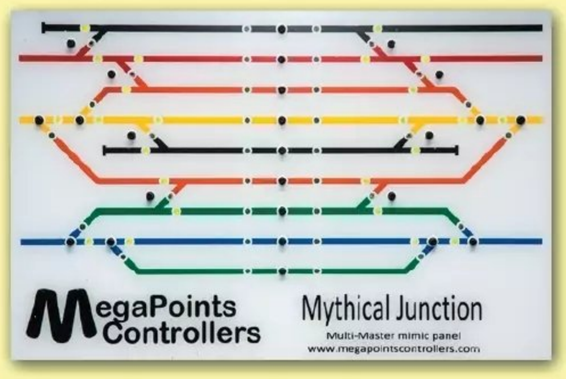

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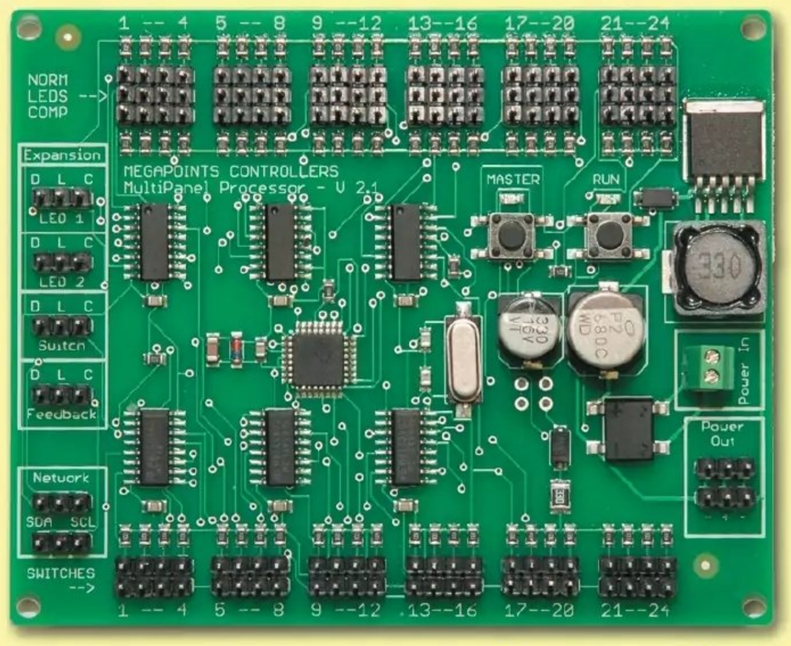

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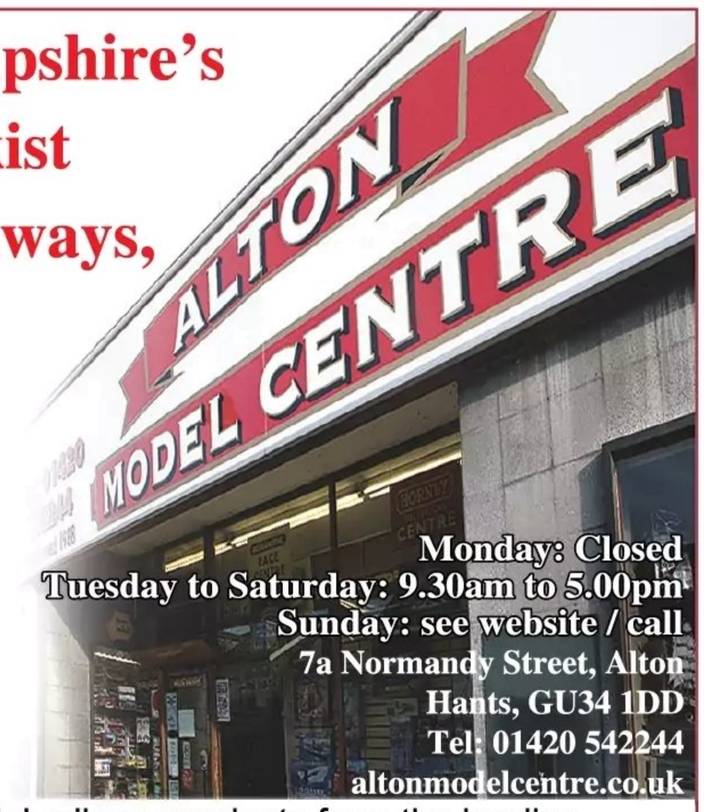

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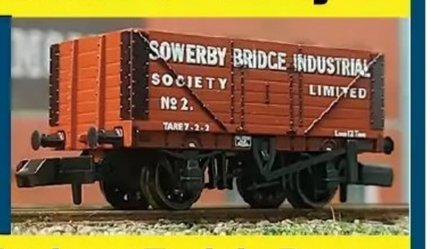

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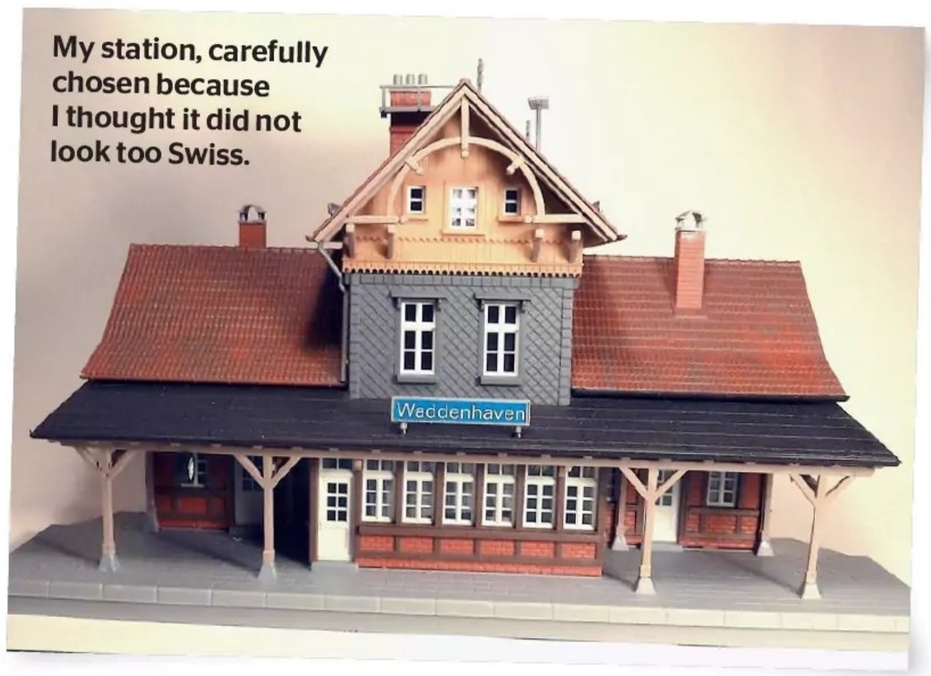
Backscene

Too many projects? **CHRIS LEIGH** defends keeping busy – very busy!

I sometimes wonder what visitors think of my home. I have a kitchen, dining room and two small, former offices. The dining table is usually covered in part-finished modelling projects. Of the two small, former offices, one is my study, where I keep my reference books and where I work on *Steam World* magazine. The other has an 'N' gauge layout around the walls and is set up with a soldering station.



I keep railway modelling out of my sitting room and bedroom but beyond them is an extension which currently contains two 'HO' layouts, one of which has a 'OO' British-outline layout within it. Then, of course, there's some 'O' gauge in the garden. In my defence, it does represent over 60 years of diverse railway interests and model-making.

My most recent activity, aside from working on KR Models' 'Leader' to bring it up to scratch, has been concentrated on the new 'HO' scale Dutch layout. You can't really have a Netherlands layout without overhead wires and I had several older models of Dutch electrics. I don't like running with folded pantographs, so some OHLE was essential. Peco's system is easy to obtain, so I bought a starter set and have spent several evenings stringing the wires.

It's not difficult but it does involve soldering. I've never been 'proficient' in soldering so the practice is useful and has led me to think about completing an 'O' gauge locomotive kit that's been on the bench for years. It's a little Lambourn Valley 0-6-0T for which Dave Lowery built the chassis. It just needs me to build the body but each time I make a start, I soon 'chicken out'. It's time, perhaps, to grasp the nettle.

In fact, when I needed a break from the Dutch OHLE I went upstairs and began a major clear-up on the British 'OO' layout. This involved clearing the 'High Street' area of damaged buildings and broken street lamps.

When that's done, I'll return to the Canadian layout to complete the incorporation of the barge and slip from Egham club's layout. That was progressing well until I got distracted, and it only requires a few hours' work to finish it.

I have found that having a lot of projects on the go simultaneously is actually helpful. If progress on one is stalled, I simply turn my attention to one of the others. I really do have plenty to keep me busy but I find the 'work' relaxing and much more rewarding than falling asleep in front of the TV.

Now, a funny story. I needed a station for my Dutch layout and the majority of European 'HO' scale plastic kit stations have a distinctly 'Tyrolean' or 'Alpine' character or are too modern in styling for my taste. It took a while to locate an Auhagen station kit which would suit my location and was, I thought, suitably anonymous in styling. Having built it and added my own nameplates and details, I was leafing through a box of old family photographs when I came across a picture I took in 1960, while on a school trip to Switzerland. The Swiss station at Wilderswil is a similar shape to my model, which was carefully chosen because I thought it *didn't* look Swiss! Sometimes you can't win.

Wilderswil station, typically Swiss, taken on my Kodak Brownie, 60 years ago. CHRIS LEIGH

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