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Heljan Class 104

Heljan Class 121 & 122

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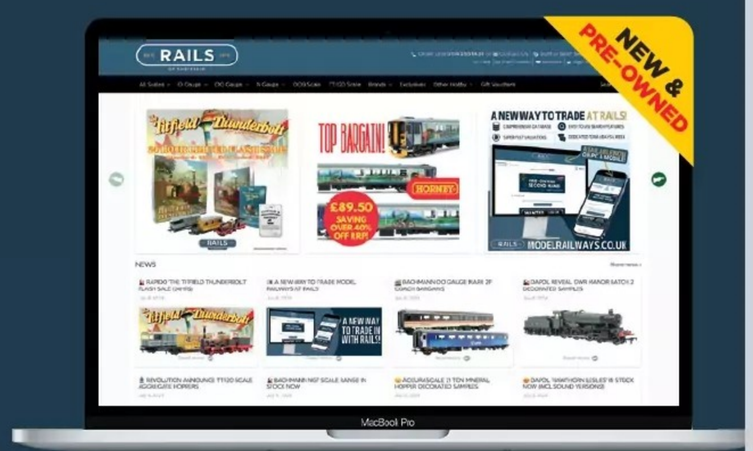

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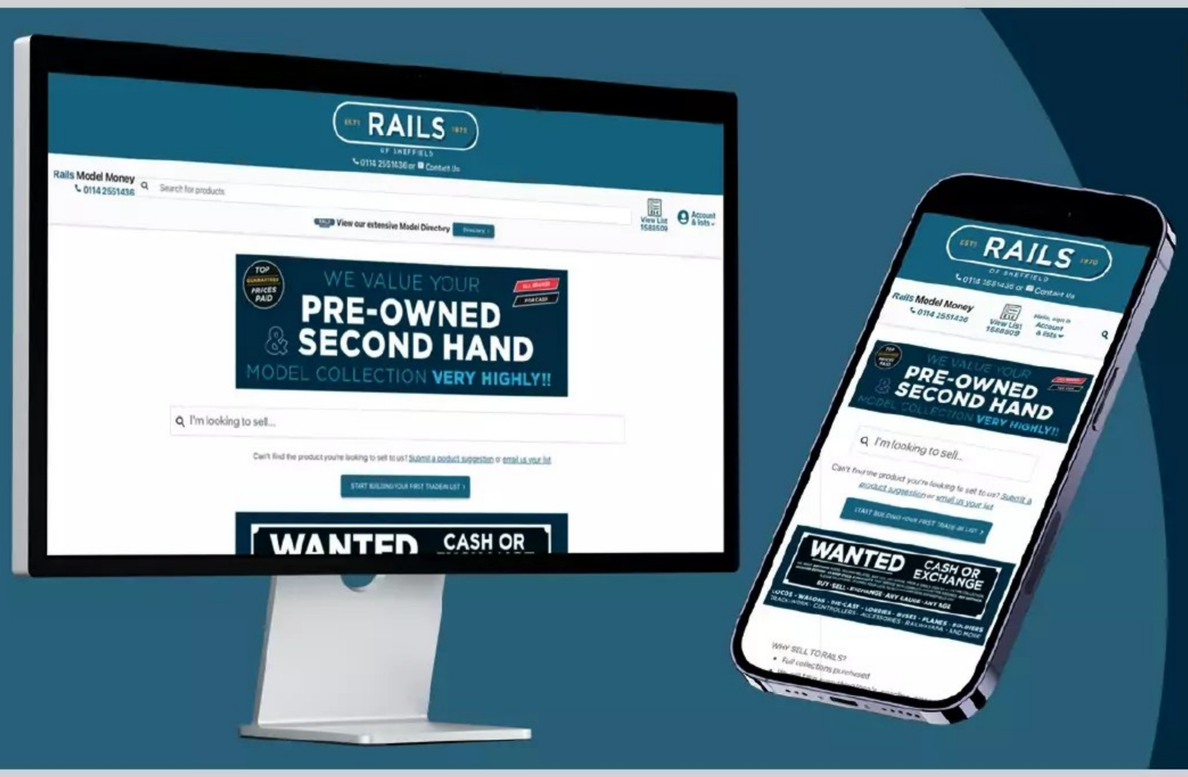

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This month's cover image

Ian Dalby sought to recreate a typical, grimy diesel depot with his 'O' layout, which is set somewhere in northern England. Turn to page 28 for the full story. CHRIS NEVARD

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Welcome

The BRC&W Class 104 DMU has been on modellers' wish lists for decades and George crafted this model way back in 2005, from a heavily rebuilt Hornby '110'.

We've had so much in the way of model booty arriving at *Model Rail* HQ recently. Indeed, this month's review pages are crammed with new 'OO', 'TT:120' and 'O' gauge releases from several manufacturers, but Heljan's Class 104 has stood out as a personal highlight.

One of the first railway photographs I recall ever taking was of a BR blue '104', in the early 1980s, and the Birmingham RC&W units have remained a favourite ever since.

One of the first 'big' modelling projects I undertook for *Model Rail* was a conversion of a Hornby Class 110 unit into a two-car '104' set, which appeared in the February 2005 issue. Utilising a set of whitemetal ends cast by *MR*'s then-editor Chris Leigh, much of the clunky Hornby underframe was also replaced with bogies and parts from the DC Kits range.

It took many, many hours to complete, but I was happy with the finished model and it pootled up and down my layout for years until an unexpected plunge to the floor saw it confined to a box awaiting major repairs. Once Heljan announced a ready-to-run '104', back in 2020, I knew my model was unlikely to be fixed. Although Heljan's model has a premium price, it can be balanced against the sheer amount of work required to create a super-detailed '104' by yourself.

You can read our review of Heljan's new model on page 86, while Chris Leigh gives his verdict on the 'O' gauge Class 121 and 122 railcars, also from the Danish manufacturer.

Away from the rails, there have been significant changes behind the scenes at *Model Rail* over the past year, with revised working methods implemented and a new editorial and design team assembled. Representing the final piece in this jigsaw is Helen Milbank, who we're delighted to welcome into the role of Deputy Head of Content. Helen is well-known at Bauer Media, having worked on a diverse range of titles over the years, so she brings a breadth of experience and insight to the role, and we're very much looking forward to moving *Model Rail* forward, bringing you more of the quality content that you love.

Happy modelling!

George Dent Head of Content

Meet the team behind the UK's best modelling magazine

Helen Milbank – Deputy Head of Content
Our newest member is 'on track' to help the team keep to the timetable.

Thomas Bright – Content Editor
Has a gift for telling great stories and a passion for steam.

Richard Gunn – Content Editor
Loosely modelling the Longmoor Military Railway in 'N' gauge.

This month's contributors

Model Rail essential information

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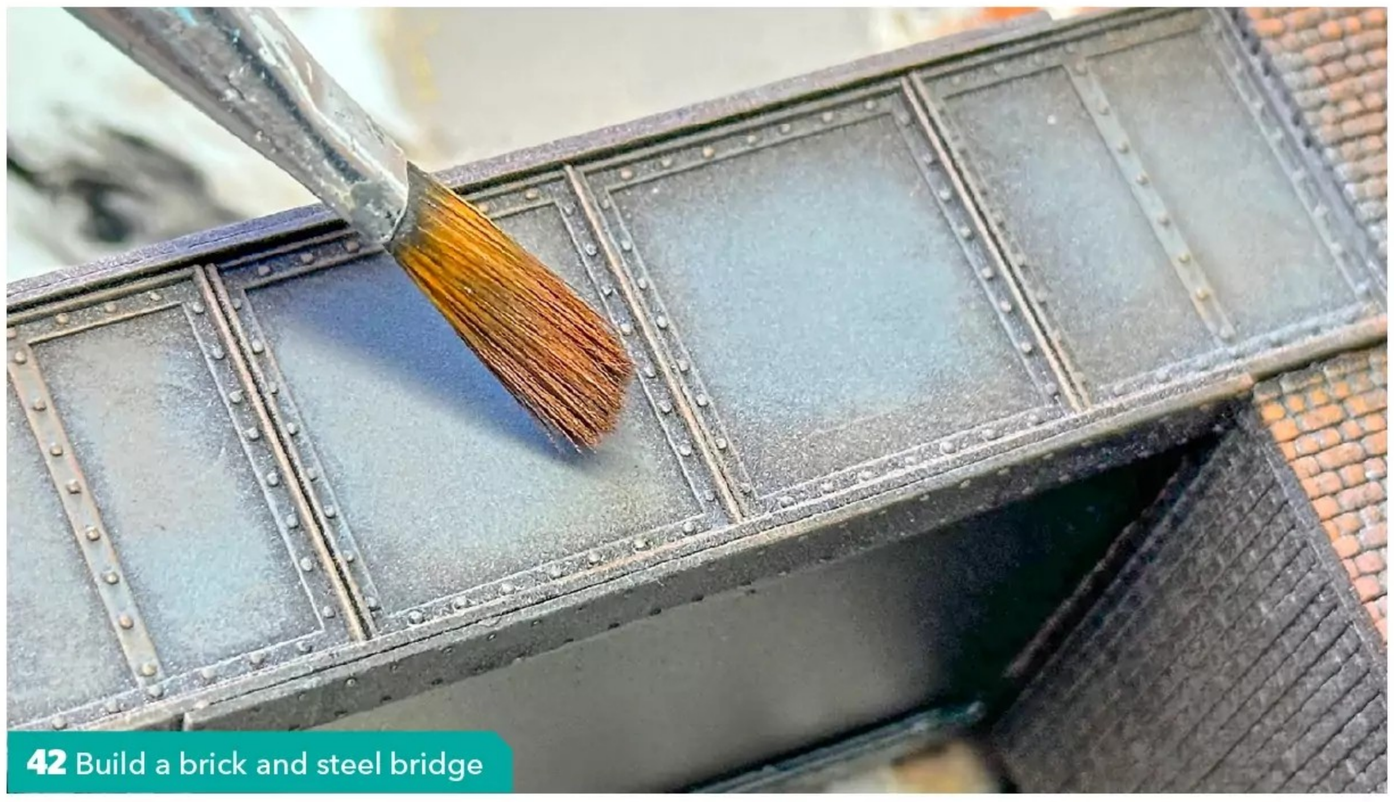

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42 Build a brick and steel overbridge

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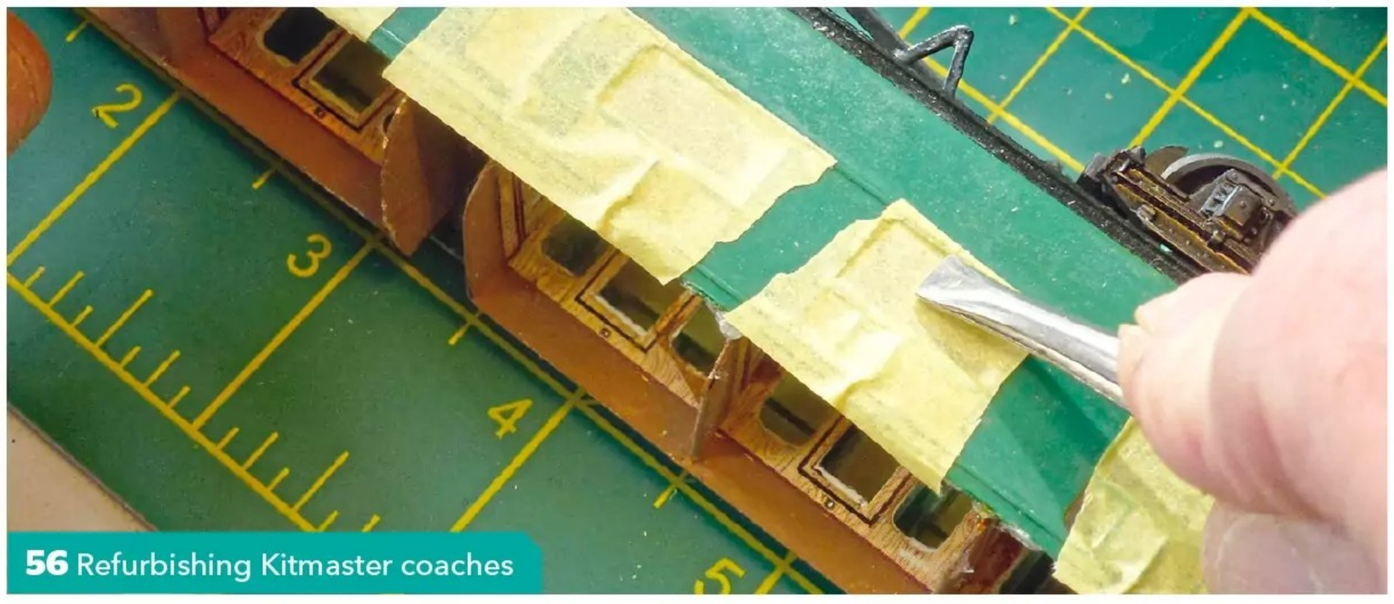

56 Refurbishing Kitmaster coaches

64 Layout: Lynhurst

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MODEL RAIL EXCLUSIVES UPDATE

009 GAUGE

Wearing lined BR green, Vale of Rheidol 2-6-2T No. 8 *Llywelyn* departs Aberystwyth in May 1964. COLOUR-RAIL

Things have been rather quiet on the Vale of Rheidol project recently, but plenty of work has been going on behind the scenes by *Model Rail*'s George Dent and the Revolution Trains team. A series of tweaks have been made to the tooling and electrical elements of this complex little model, following thorough testing of engineering prototypes. We've also been furiously researching and creating artwork for a range of potential livery variants. It has certainly proven to be a labour of love and, we freely admit, it has pushed us out of our respective comfort zones!

While the tooling – derived from extensive research and development work undertaken on our behalf by model designer Colin Albright – allows for many detail tweaks to be catered for, across all three prototypes, it simply hasn't been possible to cover every possible permutation without our costs spiralling out of control and, thus, adding to the retail price.

Accordingly, when choosing the ten proposed versions, we've aimed to create as representative a sweep of liveries as possible, taking on board many requests from readers and working within the parameters of what the tooling allows for, which primarily covers the 1940s-1980s period.

Although some minor compromise may be required in terms of detail fittings, many of the liveries are suitable for multiple eras, as the GWR and BR schemes have been reprised in more recent decades, including the imminent unveiling of No. 9 in Rail blue (due just after this issue goes on sale).

Research has shown us that, while a basic colour scheme may have lasted for several years, minor tweaks and enhancements were made regularly. Therefore, we opted to replicate as closely as possible the liveries that were captured in prototype photographs from various periods.

Thus, we will be producing three versions each of Nos. 7 and 8, plus four of No. 9, including one during its time as No. 1213 during the late 1930s through to the late 1940s.

Decorated samples are currently being prepared, and we're hopeful that these will arrive for assessment in the coming weeks. Provisional delivery of models into stock is hoped to be in Q3 2026, and prices are expected to be finalised soon. *Model Rail* subscribers will receive a 10% discount on all models, so now may be a good time to check out our offers – see page 26.

Look out for more updates on the project in the coming months.

◆ No. 7 GWR green with shaded initials.

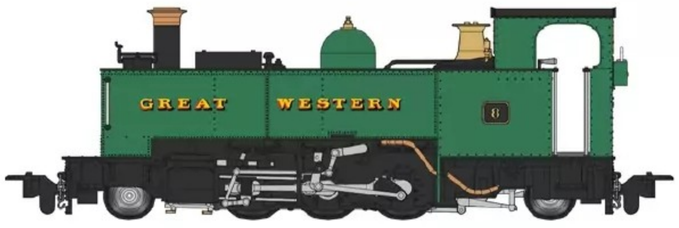
◆ No. 8 *Llywelyn*, lined BR green with late crests, 6F shedcode.

◆ No. 7 *Owain Glyndŵr*, BR lined green.

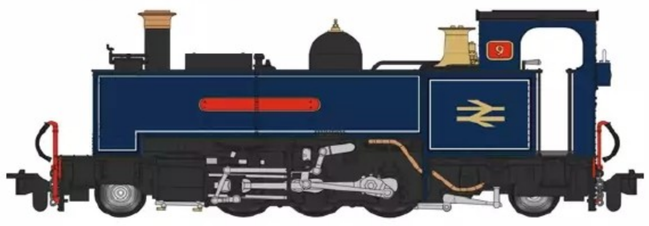
◆ No. 9, plain BR black with early crests.

◆ No. 7 *Owain Glyndŵr*, unlined BR Rail blue.

◆ No. 9 *Prince of Wales*, lined BR green, with late crests.



◆ No. 8 GREAT WESTERN green.



◆ No. 9 *Prince of Wales*, lined BR Rail blue.

◆ No. 8 *Llywelyn*, plain BR green with early crests, 89C shedcode.

◆ No. 1213, GWR green with 'shirt button' logos.

CLASS 12s MAKE IT ASHORE AND INTO STOCK

00 GAUGE

After a minor delay on their journey across the globe, our BR Class 12 models were finally cleared through customs and entered stock just as this issue closed for press.

Like our Class 11s, the '12s' have been manufactured exclusively for *Model Rail* by Heljan, and they feature the same impressive specification. A five-pole motor, with a brass flywheel, transmits power to the wheels via a high-reduction gearbox, all encased in a heavy alloy chassis block, ensuring smooth running and ample haulage power.

Our tooling faithfully captures the various differences from the Class 11, the most obvious being the addition of larger Bulleid-Firth Brown wheels, instead of the more conventional spoked pattern. All models come with pre-fitted speakers and Next18 DCC decoder sockets, plus fully detailed cabs with switchable interior illumination. Later era versions feature working electrical head and tail lamps.

British Rail's Class 12s were ordered initially by the Southern Railway and assembled at Ashford Works between 1949 and 1952. They had been inspired by similar locomotives that had been built for the LMS and War Department (which later became the BR Class 11s), employing English Electric diesel power units and electrical equipment.

A total of 26 Class 12s were assembled and they operated with BR until 1971, with three being subsequently sold into industry, including 15224,

which is the only survivor, being preserved at the Spa Valley Railway in Tunbridge Wells, and currently awaiting restoration.

Our models have been produced in strictly limited quantities, with five versions to choose from, including a post-BR industrial locomotive.

Turn to page 96 for full details.

Price: £169.00 each (£152.10 for *Model Rail* subscribers).
Order your Class 12 today!
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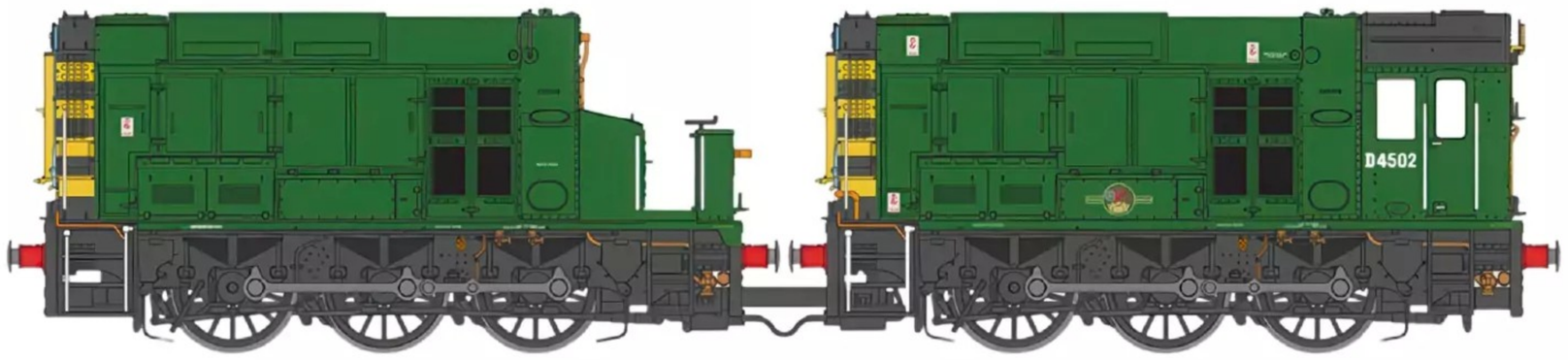
GETTING THE HUMP

OO GAUGE



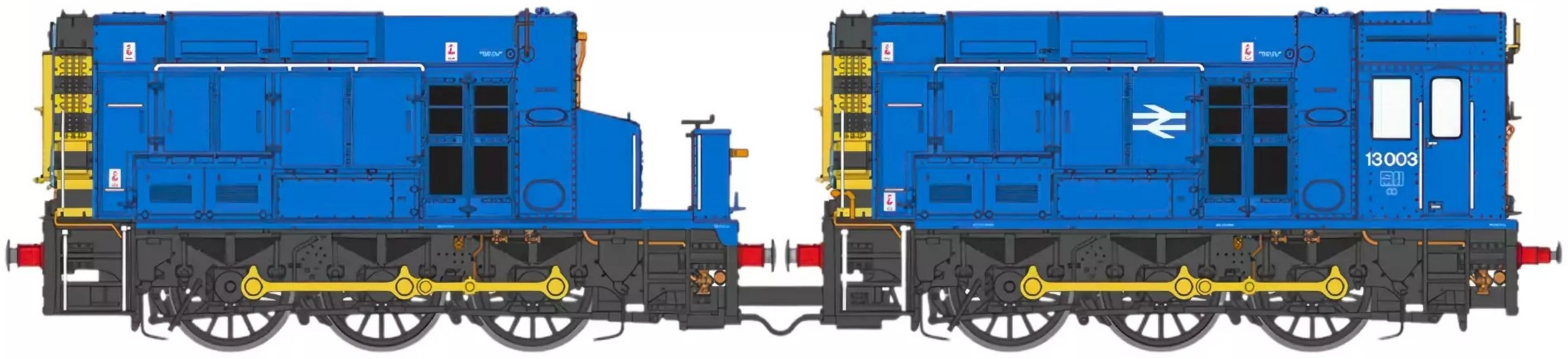
Although most BR diesel classes have been made available in ready-to-run form, there has been one quite notable exception; the Class 13 'hump shunters' that operated in Tinsley marshalling yard. Now Bachmann is filling that gap with new models of these unusual and idiosyncratic machines.

When Tinsley (near Sheffield) was opened in 1965, the distribution hub featured gravity shunting, whereby wagons would roll down gradients into formations from a central hump. Due to the risk of grounding and need for additional power, it wasn't possible to use a single Class 08, so three pairs of permanently coupled '08s' were created as a 'master and slave' combination. The leading unit had its cab removed for greater visibility. At 70,000lb/f, the resultant Class 13 had a greater tractive effort than any other standard BR diesel shunter at the time. With the demise of Tinsley in 1984, the two surviving Class 13s were withdrawn in 1985.

The models will make use of Bachmann's new Class 08 tooling, with both units powered from a five-pole motor and flywheel via all-wheel electrical pick-up. The Bach-Up Stay Alive system will be fitted to overcome power interruptions, and end marker lamps and cab lighting (illuminating the detailed interior) will also feature, with the latter user-configurable via microswitches beneath roof panels. Both will have PluX22 DCC decoder sockets and speakers, too.

All the aspects unique to the Class 13 – such as larger bufferbeams, antennas and aerials, longer vertical handrails and the multiple working pipes and cables – will be faithfully modelled. Two liveries, original BR green with wasp stripes and BR blue, will initially be released, representing D4502 and 13003 respectively, available in DC-ready, DCC sound and DCC sound-fitted Deluxe (with auto-release couplings).

When's it due? Q4 2025
Prices: £399.95 (DCC-ready), £539.95 (DCC sound) and £569.95 (DCC sound-fitted Deluxe)
Web: *www.bachmann.co.uk*



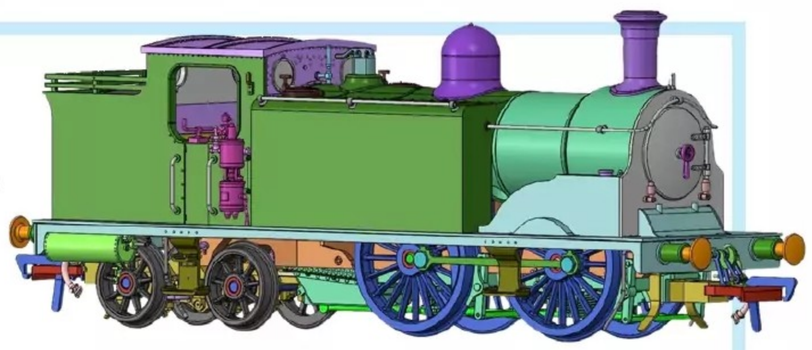
SCOTTISH TANKS AHEAD

OO GAUGE

Meanwhile, Rails of Sheffield is teaming up with Bachmann to produce the Caledonian Railway's Class '439' in 'OO' gauge.

The Rails Exclusive Caley tanks will encompass CR light blue liveries (original and preserved), along with LMS crimson and lined black, and BR lined black with late crest. In collaboration with the National Railway Museum, there will be a Railway Icons variant in 1975 Cavalcade condition of CR dark, lined blue, available via Locomotion Models.

Features will include a coreless motor, all-wheel pick-up, prototypical speed gearing and a wealth of separate fittings, including a detailed cab. The Bach-Up Stay Alive System will be installed, too.



Also incoming from Rails will be its new customisation service. The firm was going to take over Olivia's Trains to provide this; however, Rails announced soon after that Olivia's Trains had "decided not to proceed with the agreement, and will continue to operate independently".

When's it due? 2027
Prices: £184.95 (DCC-fitted), £294.95 (DCC sound), £324.95 (DCC sound Deluxe)
Web: *www.railsofsheffield.co.uk, www.locomotionmodels.com*

UPGRADE FOR BACHMANN CLASS 47s

OO GAUGE

There's even more 'OO' news from Bachmann, with a range of enhancements for its Class 47 locomotives along with fresh paint schemes. The 'Type 4' diesels, which date from 2021, will now feature auto-release couplings (on DCC sound-fitted examples) along with the Bach-Up Stay Alive system and new dual-fitted XL two-speaker system offering enhanced bass sounds. Cosmetically, the cab glazing has been upgraded and there have been improvements to the snowplough fitments too; they will now attach to the chassis, so remaining static on curves.

The first examples to feature these improvements will be released next year sporting liveries such as BR blue (47226 and 47238), West Coast Railways maroon (47826), Venice-Simplon Orient-Express-branded Rail Express Systems (47791) and Railfreight 'large logo' grey (47280).

In addition, The Model Centre has commissioned D1676 *Vulcan* in two-tone green with full yellow ends.

When it's due? Q1/2 2025
Prices: £239.95 (DCC-ready), £354.95 (DCC sound), £394.95 (DCC sound deluxe)
Web: *www.bachmann.co.uk, www.themodelcentre.com*

DECK THE HALLS

N GAUGE

Bachmann's 2mm arm, Graham Farish, has announced more details of its forthcoming Great Western 'Halls' and 'Modified Halls'. The new 'N' gauge versions of the GWR's mixed traffic 4-6-0s have been developed "from the rails up" and include Hawksworth tenders as well as Collett ones, along with separately fitted items such as smokebox door, dome, lower front lamp irons, steam pipes, whistle, reverser and handrails. The flat plate front of the leading bogie – a feature of the 'Modified Halls' – is included as an optional fitment for the NEM pocket.

Traction comes from a coreless motor in the engine, with electrical pick-up from the locomotive and tender wheels and the gearing set up for realistic speeds. A DCC sound-fitted model will be available in addition to the DCC-ready release. The first four engines to be released will be two 'Halls' – Nos. 4962 *Ragley Hall* and 4963 *Kinlet Hall* in BR green – and a pair of 'Modified Halls' in the form of Nos. 6959 *Raveningham Hall* in its 1975 GWR Cavalcade livery and 7904 *Fountains Hall* in BR lined early emblem black.

When's it due? Early 2026
Prices: £189.95 (DCC-ready), £299.95 (DCC sound-fitted)
Web: *www.bachmann.co.uk*

GRESLEY MAYBES

N GAUGE

Dapol is planning two new 'N' gauge Gresley coaches... but only if there's sufficient demand from 2mm modellers.

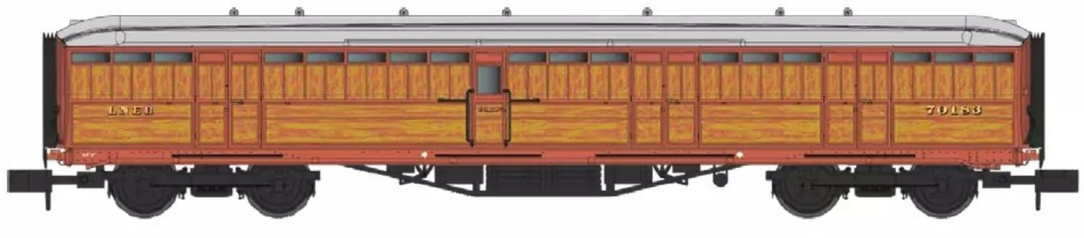
The company hopes to make versions of a Diagram 113 (1929-34) Full Brake (BG) as well as a Buffet. However, production will only begin after enough interest has been indicated.

CAD images have been drawn up showing the carriages, with the Full Brakes available in LNER teak and lined teak, and BR crimson, maroon and all-over blue.

The Buffet will be in BR blue/grey form, representing two refurbished coaches. The single 'celebrity' version allocated to the WR will be one; the other will be Eastern Region-numbered.

Expressions of interest can be registered via the Dapol website. No money will be taken until the models are ready for shipment. A decision is likely to be made at the end of November.

When's it due? Date TBA
Price: £39.95 plus £3.95 p&p
Web: *www.dapol.co.uk*



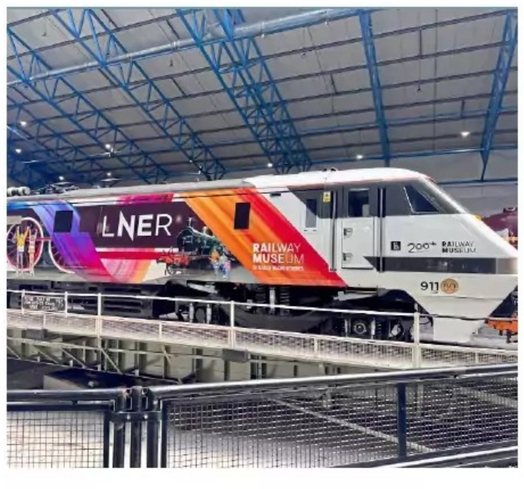
EXCLUSIVE NRM CLASS 91

OO GAUGE

In addition to its Caledonian Class '439' in 1975 Cavalcade condition, Locomotion Models is also releasing an exclusive Hornby 'OO' gauge Class 91 portraying 91150 *National Railway Museum 50 Years 1975-2025* in its one-off livery decorated with objects from the museum's collection.

The special colour scheme was unveiled at York in July and features illustrations of *Locomotion No. 1*, *Mallard* and *Duchess of Hamilton* down the locomotive's flanks. The release will be available in DCC-ready (with 21-pin decoder socket) and DCC sound-fitted specifications.

When's it due? Summer 2026
Price: £244.99 (DCC-ready), £299.99 (DCC sound-fitted)
Web: *www.locomotionmodels.com*



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TT:120 IS THREE

TT GAUGE

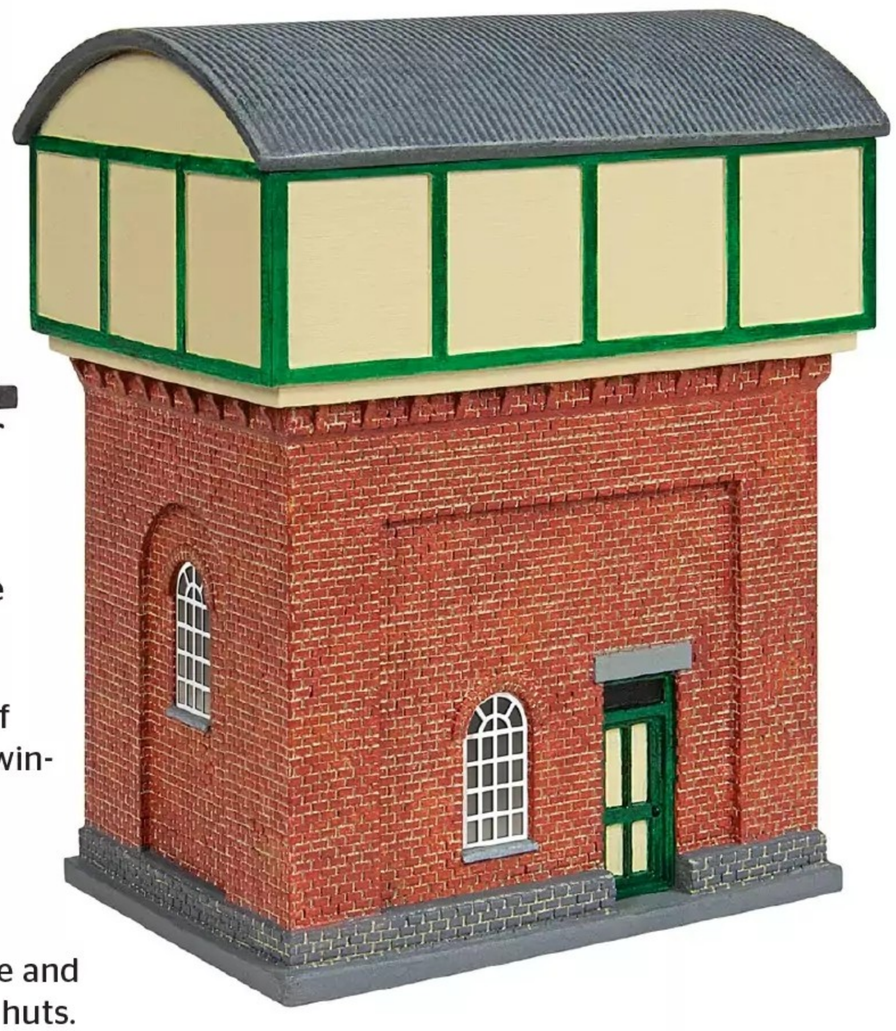
This month (October) marks three years since Hornby debuted its 'TT:120' range, and to commemorate the anniversary, it has further expanded its catalogue with a locomotive re-livery, new coaches, wagons and a large selection of fresh buildings.

Representing one of the mainstays of the British Rail scene of the 1970s and 1980s will be Class 37 No. 37086 in blue, with split-plated headcode nose and original front-end grilles, windscreen and fuel tank design. Like Hornby's other forthcoming TT:120 'Tractors', it will also have a five-pole skew wound motor with dual flywheels driving all wheels (with electrical pick-ups on all axles), directional lighting, and, via a DCC Next-18 decoder, cab interior illumination, night and day headlamps and separately controllable taillights. The '37' will be available in DCC-ready form.

On the passenger-carrying front, there will be three Virgin-liveried Mk 2Fs in Brake Second Open, Second Open and First Open formats, while freight

will be served by an ex-LNER 'Toad B' narrow-planked brake van in BR grey and (thinking well ahead to June next year) a Father's Day-decorated wagon. And following its announcement earlier this year, Hornby's triple pack of HFA coal hoppers in EWS colours with aerodynamic canopies has now found its way onto the shelves of stockists.

The range of 'TT:120' structures increases considerably with station facilities plus goods and servicing infrastructure (many displaying a distinct Southern Region green and cream theme). These include a station waiting room, station office, goods shed, signal box, water tower, and a double-road engine shed, all of which are part of what Hornby dubs its 'red brick' collection. Outside of this series will be a twin-track diesel maintenance depot, coaling stage, extended platform section, and concrete and wooden platelayers' huts.



When due? February 2026 (brake van, station office and waiting room, water tower, engine shed), March 2026 (goods shed, signal box, diesel maintenance depot, platelayers' huts, extended platform, coaling stage), April 2026 (Father's Day wagon), June 2026 (Class 37, Virgin Mk 2Fs)
Prices: £159.99 (Class 37), £41.99 (Virgin Mk 2Fs), £80.99 (HFA triple-pack), £19.99 (Father's Day wagon), £29.99 (Brake van), £12.99-£58.99 (Buildings)
Web: *www.hornby.com*

HORNBY'S GOLDEN DUO

OO GAUGE

Among Hornby's latest 'OO' announcements are a Class 66 and matching biomass wagon in eye-catching gold liveries, to mark last year's 50th anniversary of Drax Power Station in Yorkshire, Britain's largest power generator.

GB Railfreight's Class 66 No. 66301 *Drax Power Station 50* was repainted into its glittering commemorative livery in August last year. Hornby's version (R30461), due for release early next year as part of its more simply-detailed but competitively-priced RailRoad brand, will weigh in at under £100 in DCC-ready form with a 21pin socket.

Complementing it will be an IIA-D biomass hopper (R60322) in the same sparkling colours, used for the transportation of sustainable wood pellets to the Selby power station. It sports the running number 83700698001-0. The biomass wagons, the prototypes of which were unveiled in 2013 and are the largest freight wagons on the UK network, are also already available from Hornby in blue Drax Northern Powerhouse livery.
When due: March 2026
Prices: £94.99 (Class 66), £44.99 (Biomass wagon)
Web: *www.hornby.com*

HORNBY'S LATEST ARRIVALS

TOP-NOTCH FINISH FOR THE 'J13'

The latest of Hornby's all-new LNER 'J52' 0-6-0ST models has arrived, in the form of Great Northern Railway No. 1257, placing it firmly in the pre-Grouping era. The prototype was built at Doncaster in 1901, as a GNR Class 'J13', and Hornby's model is full of period-specific details, including tapered buffers, 'safari' style cab roof, Ramsbottom safety valves and plain connecting rods.

We reviewed Hornby's earlier 'J52' release in MR342, but the quality of paint finish on this lined green example is worthy of note. The gold-shaded lettering and numbers and various lining elements are flawless, while the contrasting sheen with the matt smokebox and cab roof make it look extra special.

Model: Hornby R30365 GNR Class 'J13' No. 1257, lined green
Price: £174.99

'A4' SILVER JUBILEE

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the Gresley Class 'A4' 'Pacifics', which were built to haul the LNER's express

passenger services between King's Cross and Newcastle and, eventually, to Edinburgh and other Scottish destinations. To mark this milestone, Hornby has produced a quartet of highly detailed 'A4s' under the collectable Hornby-Dublo banner.

Featuring modern mechanisms and 21-pin DCC interfaces, the 'A4s' are available individually, in attractive retro-style packaging. The range consists of Nos. 2509-12 and all are finished in original silver-grey livery with stylishly painted names. Our sample depicts No. 2512 *Silver Fox*, and is a thing of real beauty!

Model: Hornby-Dublo R30456/7/8/9 LNER Class 'A4' 'Pacifics', Silver Jubilee Collection
Price: £320.99 each

WARTIME RELICS

It's also 80 years since the end of the Second World War, so Hornby has created another limited edition quartet of steam locomotives, this time in wartime black livery. Three of the 'Big Four' are represented, with an LNER 'A4' and 'A3', a Southern 'Merchant Navy' and LMS streamlined 'Coronation', each based on the current toolings and presented in special VE Day 80th anniversary packaging.

Models:
- R30452 LNER Class 'A4' No. 4469 *Sir Ralph Wedgewood*
- R30454 LNER Class 'A3' No. 103 *Flying Scotsman*
- R30453 LMS 'Princess Coronation' No. 6247 *City of Liverpool* (pictured)
- R30455 SR 'Merchant Navy' No. 21C9 *Shaw Savill*
- **Prices:** £189.99-£279.99 each

GER EYE CANDY

Looking spectacular in lined blue livery, GER 'Y14' – later LNER/BR Class 'J15' – No. 564 has been immortalised by Hornby, capturing the 0-6-0 in its current preserved condition.

Model: R30407 GER Class 'J15' No. 564 GER lined blue
Price: £139.99

'MANK' PECKETT

Hornby's popular Peckett 'W4' 0-4-0ST returns, in the handsome lined green livery of the Manchester Ship Canal Company. Depicting Works No. 655, the 1897-built engine was named *Jaffa* and employed

on heavy shunting work at Manchester docks.

Model: R30409 Peckett W4 0-4-0ST *Jaffa*, MSC lined green
Price: £139.99

CRIMSON KING

A new version of the LMS un-rebuilt 'Patriot' 4-6-0 has been added to Hornby's RailRoad range, resplendent in LMS lined Crimson Lake livery, which has been applied to a very high standard.

Model: R30434 RailRoad LMS Patriot No. 5540 *Sir Robert Turnbull* LMS lined maroon
Price: £149.99

TOP TANK

On the wagon front, the ever-popular 14t tanker returns, in 1950s Shell-Mex/BP livery. The tooling may be dated in some areas, but the finish is top-notch.

Model: R60292 14ton tanker Shell-Mex/BP A5066
Price: £22.99
Web: *www.hornby.com*

PARKSIDE HOPS TO IT

O GAUGE

The latest addition to the Parkside by Peco 'O' gauge range of plastic kits is the BR/LNER 13ton hopper wagon. Built for the carriage of coal, stone, sand and iron ore, the kit offers the chance to replicate a large fleet of wagons employed between 1949 and the early 1980s, being a common sight in the north east of England in particular.

The same prototype was added to Parkside's 'OO' range a few years ago, so it's great to see a 7mm scale version too. As per Parkside's usual format, the kit is rendered mostly in injection-moulded plastic, with a set of high-quality metal wheels, brass bearings, three-link couplings and a sheet of waterslide decals all included, along with comprehensive instructions.

Price: £55.95
Availability: Peco stockists
Web: *www.peco-uk.com*

MORE 'J26s' IN STOCK

OO GAUGE

Following the initial raft of LNER 'J26' deliveries, further models arrived with Oxford Rail stockists during late September, showcasing more of the subtle tooling variations to suit different eras. We received a sample of No. 65736 in BR black with late crests, which, in contrast to the LNER version reviewed in last month's issue, sports Ross safety valves, a shorter chimney and a revised whistle arrangement, plus a different style coal rail atop the tender. The 'J26' is available in analogue or DCC sound-fitted formats.

Interestingly, Oxford is selling the 'J26' motor and flywheel assembly separately (£15.00), which may be a useful option for kit-builders.

Model: Oxford Rail OR76J26003 LNER 'J26' No. 65736 BR black, late crest
Price: £129.95-£229.95
Availability: Oxford Rail stockists
Web: *www.oxforddiecast.co.uk*

SOUTH FOR WINTER SUNSHINE

The SR U Class 2-6-0 in OO Gauge

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

RAPIDO TRAINS UK

CLASS 92 BATCH TWO ANNOUNCED

With Accurascale's first production run of Class 92 arriving to great acclaim in 2023 (see our review in MR309), the manufacturer recently unveiled a new batch of models, which is due to reach stockists in around a year's time. Several popular liveries and prototype guises have been chosen, encompassing BR Railfreight Distribution, EWS red/gold, GBRf Europorte blue and the ever-popular Caledonian Sleeper teal liveries.

A number of enhancements have been made to the tooling, following customer feedback, including finer etched grilles, etched 'Polo Mint' Channel Tunnel discs, and improved bogie detail, plus an improved performance for DCC sound-fitted versions.

Additionally, Accurascale has teamed up once again with DB Cargo to produce a special model of 92029, which starred in the 'Garsdale Growler' charity railtour in August 2023. As per Accurascale's recent model of 66190, profits from this limited edition '92' will be donated to the Martin House Children's Hospice.

Accurascale's Director of Marketing, Fran Burke, said, "It's an honour to once again work with DB Cargo and Martin House to raise much-needed funds for such an inspiring organisation. The dedication of the staff at Martin House is extraordinary, and we know our customers will once again rally behind this important cause." The DB red '92' will be available only via the Accurascale website.

All of the new '92s' are available to pre-order now.
When's it due? Q4 2026
Prices: £229.95 (DCC-ready), £299.95 (DCC sound)
Availability: Accurascale stockists
Web: *www.accurascale.com*

BEILHACKS PLOUGH ON

OO GAUGE

Formerly produced under the Hattons Originals brand, BR ZZA Beilhack snowploughs are available once again, now exclusively from the Accurascale website. Four packs are available, each with a matching pair of wagons, and boasting BR yellow and Network Rail black liveries.

The tooling features slight differences to accurately depict snowploughs built from redundant Class 40 or Class 45 bogies between 1982 and 1990. A total of ten were constructed at Stratford and Ashford. One of the most eye-catching sets features BR's Stratford depot pair, one of which is distinctively adorned with a shark's mouth design, as per the real thing in the 1980s.
Price: £69.95 per pair
Availability: Accurascale
Web: *www.accurascale.com*

SOUND-FITTED CLASS 89 ARRIVES

OO GAUGE

Following delivery of analogue versions of Accurascale's Class 89s during late August, DCC sound-fitted models followed a few weeks later. You can read our full assessment of the '89' – a model produced in partnership with Rails of Sheffield – in last month's issue, but Accurascale kindly sent us a sound-fitted 89001 in GNER blue, allowing us to enjoy the hugely convincing array of effects and servo-operated pantograph.

From the jangling of the driver's key to the distinctive spaceship-style humming as the '89' gets under way, the digital driving experience proved to be great fun. The various compressor and blower noises, plus windscreen washer and driver's beeper sounds, provide an immersive experience from this model Class 89.

Liveries available are BR InterCity 'Executive', 'Swallow' and GNER blue liveries.
Prices: £229.99 (DCC-ready), £329.99 (DCC sound)
Availability: Rails of Sheffield
Web: *www.railsofsheffield.com*

BULLEID PALVANS NEXT FROM IRM

Irish Railway Models is getting plenty of mileage out of its 10ft wheelbase Bulleid triangulated wagon chassis, with a new set of Palvans recently announced.

Following various open and flat wagons, plus the 'H' vans reviewed on page 94 of this issue, the Palvans depict a fleet of almost 500 wagons built for CIÉ for the expanding market in palletised goods. Featuring large, offset sliding side doors, the vans could be loaded by forklift or pallet trucks. They could be seen within mixed freight trains across the Irish network throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Some were even used for mail traffic between the port of Dún Laoghaire and Dublin's Connolly station.

Like previous offerings, the IRM Palvans will be offered in unfitted and vacuum-fitted format, with a choice of grey and brown liveries, with a number of detail differences observed. Six different packs are currently in production.
When's it due? Q1 2026
Price: £109.95 per triple-pack
Web: *www.accurascale.com*

KRModels

SR 4DD EMU

In 1948 BR asked O.V.S Bulleid to come up with a solution to help reduce overcrowding on suburban routes to and from London. In 1949 2 Double Deck units rolled off the production line, numbered 4001/4002 these were an experiment that lasted 22 years and finished on 1st October 1971. These were renumbered to 4901/4902 for the BR Blue livery.

- All running numbers
- Internal lights
- Close coupling
- Steel buffers

Available in Full Green, Green Small Yellow End, BR Green Full Yellow Ends, BR Blue

DCC Ready, DCC Fitted and DCC Sound (LokSound V5.0) **also available**

Prices start $390.00

In stock
ready to ship

krmodels.net

SHUNTERS FOR MODELLING PUNTERS

OO GAUGE

While Chris Nevard converted a diecast tractor to a rail shunter in *Model Rail* a few years back (MR286), now they're available off-the-shelf, thanks to Oxford Rail. Portraying a Fordson Major in three different colour schemes, these models are equipped with shunting bars at each end and extra weights over the driving wheels. A BR maroon version is particularly eye-catching, thanks to the 'wasp' stripes.

These vehicles could be seen throughout the UK in the post-war years, at wayside freight yards, docks and industrial sites, being more economical than a locomotive or draft horse. They could easily propel or, with the use of ropes or chains, haul single wagons around.

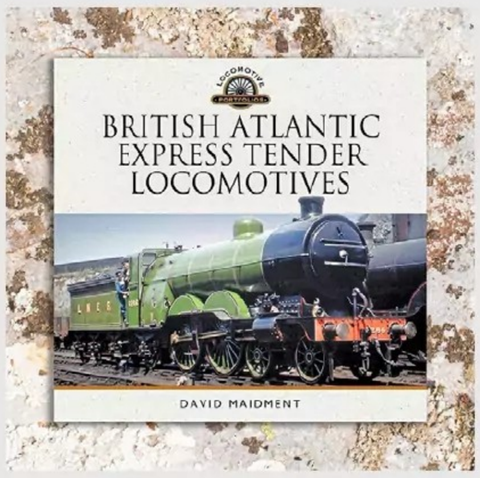
They make for great cameo scenes. Note, the driver figure is not included!

Products: Oxford Rail Fordson Tractor Rail Shunter
- OR76FTRS001 blue
- OR76FTRS002 Muir Hill yellow
- OR76FTRS003 British Railways maroon,

Availability: Oxford stockists
Web: *www.oxforddiecast.co.uk*

Modeller's Bookshelf

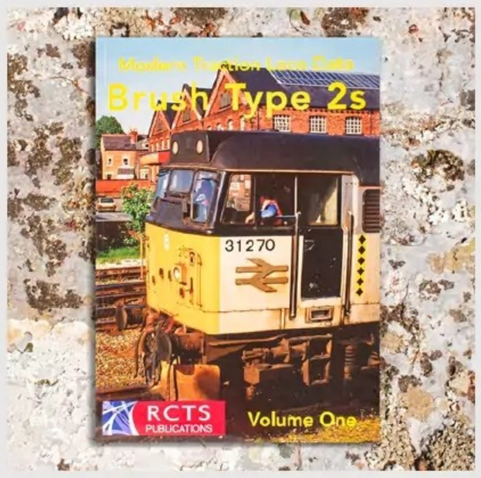
George Dent and **Chris Leigh** present four new titles that will inspire and inform your modelling.



ATLANTIC EXPRESS

David Maidment describes the design, building and operation of the 'Atlantic' steam locomotives of pre-Grouping railways, including the GNR, GCR, NER and LB&SCR. The L&Y 'Highflyers' are not overlooked, while Churchward's GWR 4-4-2s are considered in detail, along with the French Compounds. Featuring previously unpublished images, this hardback will appeal to more technically minded readers, as well as anyone with an interest in modelling these splendid locomotives. ***(GD)***

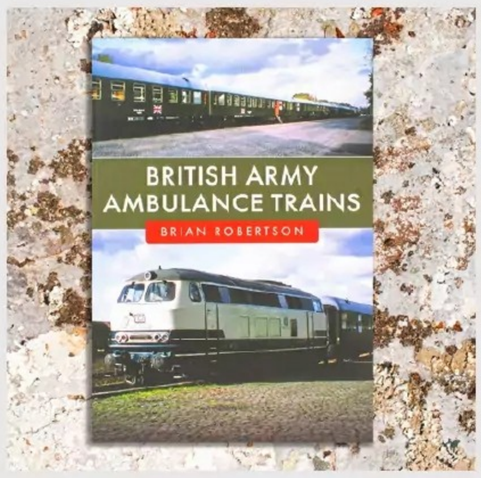
Book: *British Atlantic Express Tender Locomotives* by David Maidment
Price: £30.00
Web: *www.pen-and-sword.co.uk*



TYPE 2 FACTFILE

Produced by the RCTS, this new paperback reference book builds on the amazing work carried out by Roger Harris, charting the allocation history of individual locomotives, in this case the Brush Type 2/Class 31. It's a comprehensive record of depot allocations, re-numberings, namings, repairs and disposal information. The text is broken up with high-quality colour images, showing off various liveries, and an informative class overview is also provided. Produced to a high standard, this is an essential companion for anyone planning on customising a model '31'. ***(GD)***

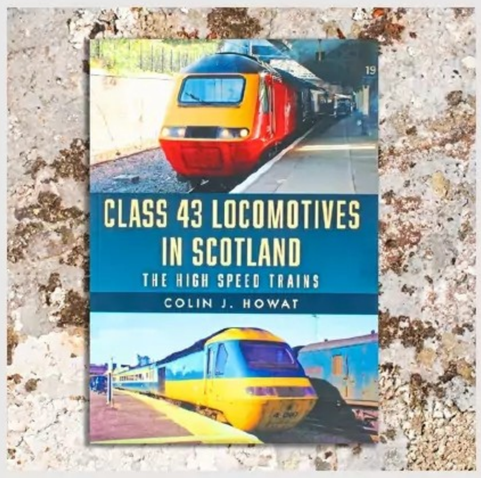
Book: *Modern Traction Loco Data: Brush Type 2s*
Price: £15.00
Web: *www.rcts.org.uk*



CALL AN AMBULANCE!

Living in a former station, which had its platform extended in 1941 to accommodate military ambulance trains, it's good to find a book devoted to operations of the British Army. The author spent years operating ambulance trains with the British Army and many of the illustrations feature European stock. But a Maunsell ambulance coach is seen at Longmoor, being part of BR's Lourdes pilgrimage trains into the 1960s. It's also fascinating to see Mk 2f coaches converted for 'home' use. We learn something new every day. ***(CJL)***

Book: *British Army Ambulance Trains* by Brian Robertson
Price: £16.99
Web: *www.amberley-books.com*



SCOTCH HST ACTION

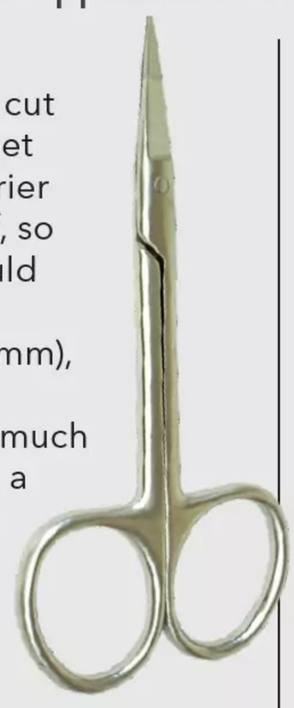
British Rail's iconic High Speed Trains became a key part of Scotland's rail scene, working Anglo-Scottish expresses to Edinburgh, Inverness and Aberdeen. Post-privatisation, they ventured even further, and Scotland is now one of the last outposts for these popular trains. This book offers a pictorial record of the HSTs, captured in many locations – including some unusual routes – and showing off a rainbow of different liveries. Both passenger and departmental HST sets are featured, as is informative supporting text. ***(GD)***

Book: *Class 43 Locomotives in Scotland* by Colin J. Howat
Price: £15.99
Web: *www.amberley-books.com*

ON THE WORKBENCH

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

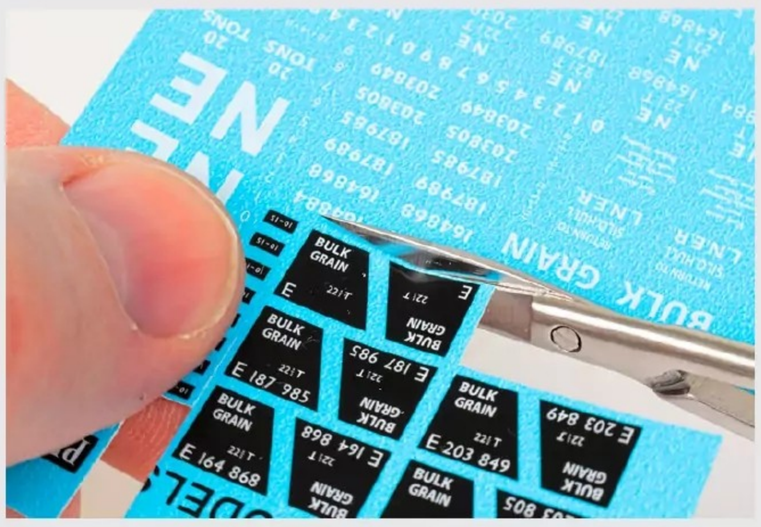
CUT IT OUT



Using any old pair of scissors to cut out individual decals from a sheet risks damaging the delicate carrier film or the printed transfer itself, so this pair of precision cutters could prove a wise – and modest – investment. Featuring small (25mm), super-sharp jaws and a smooth pivoting action, they make it so much easier to safely navigate around a busy decal sheet. The edges of the sheets are cut cleanly, ensuring the decals remain in tip-top condition before being dunked in a bowl of water.

Keeping these scissors clean and dry, and making use of the protective sleeve supplied, will ensure a lifetime of use. At well under a tenner, they offer superb value, making them a vital addition to any modeller's toolbox.

Product: AK Interactive AK-9310 straight scissors
Price: £7.50
Availability: Scale Model Shop
Web: *www.scalemodelshop.co.uk*

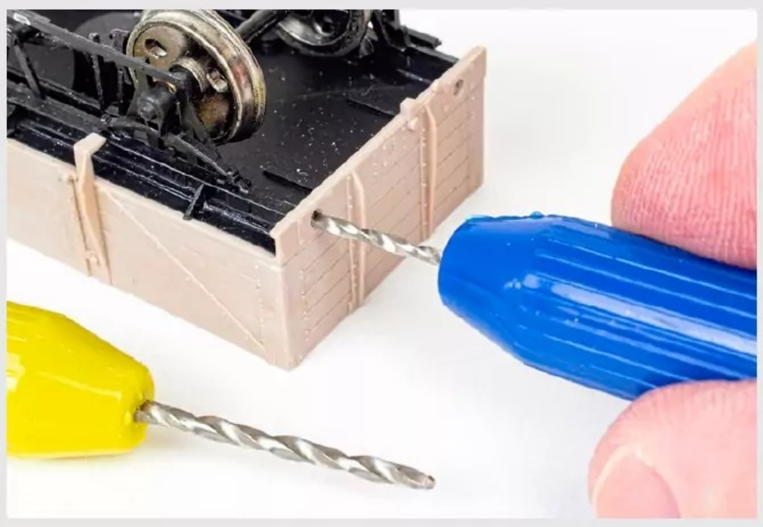


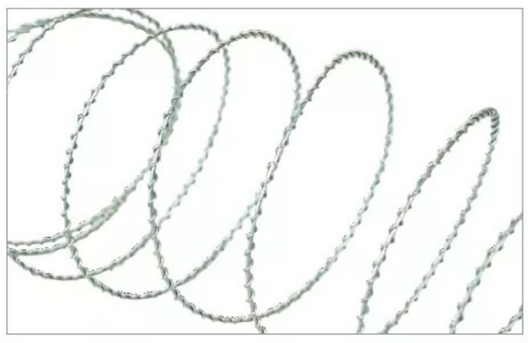
FIXED DRILLS

If, like me, you hate having to faff around popping different drill bits into a pin vice, then this may be the answer to our prayers.

Presented in sets of five tools, in handy flip-top cases, Mr Hobby offers high-quality twist drill bits permanently fixed into ergonomically shaped pin vices, complete with soft-grip handles and rotating palm stops. This particular pack features 1.0mm, 1.5mm, 2.0mm, 2.5mm and 3.0mm diameter drill bits, with colour-coded grips to make it easier to identify the sizes on the fly. The drills work effortlessly through various materials, from plastic, wood and resin, to brass and softer metals (with the aid of a centre punch). Other packs are available with different diameter bits.

Product: Mr Hobby Mr Pin-Vice Basic Set
Price: £12.95
Availability: Scale Model Shop
Web: *www.scalemodelshop.co.uk*





SECURITY MATTERS

00 GAUGE O GAUGE

Coils of barbed wire add an extra touch of realism when mounted atop a fence or wall, in an urban or industrial setting, and this pack from the Green Scene range is suitable for either 'OO' or 'O' gauge scenes. The metre-long roll is formed from a flexible steel wire, which has another wire tightly wrapped around it to mimic the barbs.

It's easy to cut into manageable lengths and wrapping it around a screwdriver shaft allows it to be shaped into tighter coils before fixing in position. It looks the part too.

Product: Green Scene GS344 Barbed wire 1m
Price: £2.49
Availability: Squires Model & Craft Tools
Web: *www.squirestools.com*

SHINE A (MODERN) LIGHT

00 GAUGE N GAUGE

New to the Ratio line of plastic lineside accessory kits is a pack of ultra-modern station lampposts, offered in 'OO' and 'N' gauge. The 4mm scale kit provides parts to build five lamps, with pre-cut lengths of stiff brass tube forming the main structure. Various injection moulded plastic fittings can be added to form a hinged base with an access panel, plus a two-piece lamp housing that can accept a mini LED, with the leads threaded through the hollow brass tube. CCTV cameras, public address speakers and platform numbers and station signs are also provided.

The 'N' gauge set features all-plastic components, with enough parts to complete ten lamps, again with cameras, speakers and signs included, but there's no provision for adding working lights.

Our samples proved easy to assemble, with instructions provided and the 'OO' versions can be built to any desired height by simply trimming the brass tube.

Product: Ratio 457 'OO' Modern Platform Lamps (£12.95), 282 'N' Modern Platform Lamps (£10.95)
Availability: Peco stockists
Web: *www.peco-uk.com*

TERRIERS AND GAMEBIRDS

ANY GAUGE

New to Modelu's range of 3D-printed miniature animals is a pack of two West Highland Terriers, with the plucky little pooches in seated and standing poses. A set of five pheasants is also available – all in the same standing pose – although we recommend taking care when cutting these from the fret as the legs are easy to snap off.

The likenesses of these animals are superb, and they just require painting before they can star in cameo scenes on your layout.

Products: Modelu 31018 West Highland Terriers, 31406 Pheasants
Price: from £5.49 per pack
Availability: Modelu
Web: *www.modelu3d.co.uk*

EXHIBITION DIARY – OCTOBER 25-NOVEMBER 16 2025

October 25

EXETER, DEVON. South Devon Garden Railway Group Garden Railway Show. Matford Centre, Matford Park Road, Marsh Barton Industrial Estate, Exeter EX2 8FD. **Time:** 1030-1630. **Admission:** Adults £12, Accompanied under-14s Free. **Tel:** 01548 550077. **Email:** *show.coordinator@sdgrg.org.uk* **Web:** *www.exetergardenrailwayshow.com*

MANSFIELD, NOTTS. East Midlands NG Modellers Group, Narrow Gauge NOW. Portland College, Nottingham Rd, Harlow Wood, Mansfield NG18 4TJ. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £10 (cash only), Accompanied children Free. **Email:** *narrowgaugenow@hotmail.com* **Web:** *www.narrowgaugenow.uk* **Facebook:** *www.facebook.com/groups/3052081245086394*

October 25 & 26

ABERDEEN. Aberdeen MRC 2025 Exhibition. Curl Aberdeen, Eday Walk, Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire AB15 6LN. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £8, Children £4, Families £20. **Facebook:** *www.facebook.com/AberdeenModelRailwayClub*

CHELTENHAM, GLOUCS. Cheltenham Great Western Modellers Grout, Autumn Model Railway Exhibition. St Margaret's Hall, Coniston Road, Hatherley, Cheltenham GL51 3NU. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adults £6, Children £2, Families (2+2) £12 (cash only). **Tel:** 01242 517788. **Web:** *www.cheltmodrail.org.uk*

LEEDS, WEST YORKS. Leeds MRS 2025 Exhibition. The Grammar School at Leeds, Alwoodley Gates, Harrogate Road, Leeds LS17 8GS. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adults £10, Accompanied children Free. **Web:** *www.leedsmrs.org*

October 26

WIMBORNE DORSET. Central Southern Gauge 0 Group. Allendale Centre, Hanham Road, Wimborne Minster, Dorset BH21 1AS. **Time:** 1000–1600. **Admission:** Adults £7, Accompanied children Free. **Tel:** 01202 581631. **Email:** *csgog@outlook.com* **Web:** *www.csgOg.org*

November 1

CRAWLEY, WEST SUSSEX. Seaboard Southern Model Railroad Groups Open Day. Clubroom, Hut 13, Tilgate Park Recreation Centre, Tilgate Drive (off Brighton Road), Crawley RH10 5PQ. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Free. **Tel:** 07915 068816. **Email:** *malcolm.g.dickie@gmail.com* **Web:** *www.seaboard-southern.org.uk*

HIGHBRIDGE, SOMERSET. Bristol & Somerset Group HRCA's 15th Vintage Hornby Train Show. The King Alfred School, Burnham Road, Highbridge, Somerset TA9 3EE. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £5 (cash only) Accompanied children Free. **Tel:** 07779 377046. **Web:** *www.somersethrca.org.uk*

NEWBURY, BERKS. Newbury Model Railway Club. St Bartholomew's School, Buckingham Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 6JP. **Time:** 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adults £8, Children £4, Families £20. **Tel:** 07590 429643. **Web:** *www.newburymrc.co.uk*

RUGBY, WARKS. Heart of England Narrow Gauge Modellers Industrial & Narrow-Gauge Model Railway Exhibition. Rugby Indian Association, Edward Street, Rugby CV21 2EZ. **Time:** 1000-1530. **Admission:** Adults £5, Under-16s Free. **Email:** *exhibition@hoengm.co.uk* **Web:** *www.hoengm.co.uk* **Instagram:** *heartofenglandnarrowgauge*.

SHEFFIELD, SOUTH YORKS. Sheffield Model Railway Enthusiasts Open Day & Mini Exhibition. Carterknowle Methodist Church, Edgedale Road, Sheffield S7 2BQ. **Time:** 1000–1630. **Admission:** Adults £3, Accompanied children Free.

WESTBURY, SOMERSET. West Wiltshire Gauge 0 Group's Westbury Model Railway Show. The Paragon Hall, 9 Haynes Road, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 3HA. **Admission:** Adults £6, Concessions £5, Children £2, Families £12. **Tel:** 07870 515 807.

November 1 & 2

ELGIN, MORAYSHIRE. Elgin Model Railway Club's Elgin Modelfair. Moray Sports Centre, Linkwood Road, Elgin IV30 8AR. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £8, Children £4, Families (2+2) £20, Under-5s Free. **Email:** *enquiries@elginmodelrailwayclub.co.uk*

NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT. Wightrail 2025. Medina Leisure Centre, Fairlee Road, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 2DX. **Times:** 1000-1600 both days. **Admission:** Adults (16+) £6, Accompanied under-16s Free. **Facebook:** WMRG (Wight Model Railway Group).

NORTHFLEET, KENT. The 50th Gravesend Model Railway Show. Northfleet School for Girls, Hall Road, Northfleet, Kent DA11 8AQ. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £6, Accompanied under-16s Free. **Tel:** 07703 657157. **Web:** *www.gres.org.uk*

PONTCANNA, CARDIFF. 37th Cardiff MRE. Sophia Gardens Cricket Ground, Sophia Walk, Pontcanna, Cardiff CF11 9XR. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £10, Under-15s Free. **Web:** *www.cardiffmodelrailwayshow.co.uk*

November 8

SOLIHULL, WEST MIDS. Solihull Model Railway Circles Annual Exhibition. St Marys Church Hall, Hobs Meadow, Solihull, West Midlands B92 8PN. **Time:** 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adults £5, Children £3, Families (2+2) £15.

November 8 & 9

CREWE, CHESHIRE EAST. Alsager Railway Association Crewe Exhibition 2025. Legends Conference Centre, Bentley Motors Ltd, Sunnybank Road, Crewe CW2 8WD. **Times:** Sat 1000–1700, Sun 1000–1600. **Admission:** Adults £10, Accompanied children Free. **Email:** *jrfcox93@gmail.com* **Tel:**0774 708 7050. **Web:** *www.alsagerrailwayassociation.co.uk*

November 15

BARRY, SOUTH GLAMORGAN. Barry and Penarth MRC Exhibition Day. Highlight Park Community Centre, Stirling Road, Highlight Park, Barry CF62 8NX. **Time:** 1030–1630. **Admission:** Adults £5, Accompanied under-16s Free. **Tel:** 07900 857719 **Email:** *bmd6753@yahoo.co.uk* **Web:** *www.bpmrc.club*

BOOTLE, MERSEYSIDE. Liverpool and West Lancs. 'O' Gauge Group (LAWLOGG) Open Day. 1st Floor (use far left door), St Monica's Parish Centre, Stewart Avenue, Bootle L20 9JD. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Free (donations welcome). **Web:** *www.lawlogg.uk* **Facebook:** *www.facebook.com/lawlogg*

CAMBORNE, CORNWALL. Camborne Railway Modelling Group Exhibition. Camborne Community Centre, 9 South Terrace, Camborne TR14 8SU. **Time:** 1000-1700. **Admission:** Adults £3, Children £1.

HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS. High Wycombe and District MRS MRX2025 Autumn Exhibition. Cressex Community Centre, 203 Cressex Road, High Wycombe. Bucks HP12 4PZ. **Time:** 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adults £6, Children (6-16) £1, Under-6s Free. **Web:** *www.hwdmrs.org.uk*

PORTSMOUTH, HANTS. South Hants MRC Show. Admiral Lord Nelson School, Dundas Lane, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO3 5XT. **Time:** 1030–1630. **Admission:** Adults £8, Accompanied children Free. **Web:** *www.shmrc.org.uk/exhibition*

November 15 & 16

HOYLAND, BARNSLEY. Barnsley MRC Exhibition. Hoyland Leisure Centre, West Street, Hoyland, Barnsley S74 9HX. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adults £8, Accompanied under-16s Free. **Email:** *keithpalmer18@btinternet.com*

PATCHAM, BRIGHTON. Brighton Model Railway Club's 45th annual Model Railway Exhibition. Patcham Community Centre, Ladies Mile Road, Patcham, Brighton BN1 8TA. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £5, Seniors £4, Children £3, Families (2+2) £12. **Tel:** 01273 771929. **Web:** *www.brightonmrc.wordpress.com*

...and finally

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

Testing is well under way for the new HS2 trains, with some modifications to the original brief due to some of the northern route being axed. The experimental train seen here is making use of some old Advanced Passenger Train coaches and a Sentinel Steam Waggon (allowed due to the likely relaxation of Net Zero targets). It has the ability to run on normal roads as well as rail, thus still allowing access to the original planned destinations. It can also be powered by anything that can burn, including bio-fuel, and while it might not reach the much-hyped 225mph, the rumour is that it can cruise happily at 45mph on a good downhill run with a following wind. *Photographer: Chris Nevard.*

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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.

▶ Direct Rail Services (DRS) is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2025 and held an open day at Carlisle Kingmoor depot on September 21. As part of the celebrations, 68007 was unveiled in a unique new livery and named *30 Years of DRS*. DIRECT RAIL SERVICES

▲ Network Rail Windhoff Multi-Purpose Vehicle (MPV) DR98923/973 now carries a special autumn-themed livery and has been christened 'CTRL ALT DELEAF' following a public competition to find a suitable name. Other suggestions included 'Buster Grimes' and 'Britney Clears'. At least it's not 'Trainy McTrainface'! KIERAN CLEEVES/ PA MEDIA ASSIGNMENTS

▼ GWR 0-6-0ST No. 813 is back in steam at the Severn Valley Railway three years after suffering a major failure. The former Port Talbot & Docks Railway has been outshopped in National Coal Board livery, as carried when it worked at Backworth Colliery in Northumberland before being sold to the SVR in 1967. BEN JONES

◀ One of the most important and largest new stations on the British rail network is almost complete and due to open in early 2026. Cambridge South is the city's third station, serving the internationally important biomedical campus, which employs around 23,000 people. Around 1.8 million passengers a year are expected to use the £200m station, which will see up to nine trains per hour stopping. NETWORK RAIL

Staff Show & Tell

Sulzer Type 2 takes to the rails

George Dent completes the weathering of *Model Rail*'s exclusive Class 26, adding a crew and some simple extra details to the cab interior.

As chronicled over the past couple of issues, I've been customising a Heljan 'OO' gauge Class 26 with a weathered finish, which has been built up over a few separate layers. Last month, I explained the use of enamel-based weathering washes, which brought greater definition to the bodyshell detail, depositing pigment within recessed areas and subtly highlighting raised fittings and beading.

The washes also began to take away the pristine finish on the paintwork, adding some discreet streaking effects and exaggerating the depth of certain details, especially the roof vents. After this stage, the bodyshell and cab interiors looked pretty convincing as they were, but the finely dispersed pigments do not show up too well on black surfaces, so the underframe required a different approach.

Two shades of RailMatch enamel paint were enough to produce a variety of generic weathering tones, applied in fine mist coats from an airbrush. It's vital to stir and thin the paint properly before attempting to spray it, using RailMatch's enamel thinners to create a liquid of a similar viscosity to milk (just ever-so thicker than water). A good way of testing the thickness is to see if the mixed paint will drip from the end of a metal stirrer in small self-contained blobs. If it runs off in streaks, the paint's still too thick and requires a few more drops of thinner.

I used the Iwata HP-C Plus airbrush reviewed in last month's issue, which was a real joy to operate and so easy to clean afterwards. The air pressure was set to around 18psi, tweaking it until the paint flowed out of the airbrush in a fine, controllable mist, while testing on a sheet of paper. Whenever I teach modellers how to use an airbrush, one of the things I try to stress is the importance of building up paint in fine, misted coats, especially when weathering. It's always easier to apply another coat, if necessary, rather than spray too much too soon and be faced with a mess.

Accordingly, the bodyshell received only an ultra-light mist along the lower edges, with a little more work concentrated on the roof area. A look at prototype images will show that bodysides and cab ends were generally cleaned far more regularly than rooftops were, so there'd inevitably be a greater concentration of dust and diesel exhaust staining up top.

What George used

- RailMatch enamels 402 Frame Dirt, 412 Weathered Black, enamel thinners, Deluxe Materials Glue 'n' Glaze adhesive, Track Magic cleaning fluid
- **Availability:** Model shops or Gaugemaster *www.gaugemasterretail.com*
- 10232-076 Late BR Class 25 crew pack
- **Availability:** Modelu *www.modelu3d-co.uk*

TOOLS

- Tweezers, craft knife and spare blades, paintbrushes, cotton swabs, airbrush and equipment

As for the underframe, these areas were only really cleaned during maintenance work, so the airbrush was used to build up a greater depth of paint on these areas, albeit still maintaining that fine mist, repeating the coverage a few times. The slow-and-steady approach allows the paint to be targeted in and around all the complex detail to ensure even coverage, without causing pooling or runs of excess paint.

It's that old chestnut of 'practice makes perfect', which couldn't be more true of airbrushing. If you fancy having a go, take the time to practice the control and build-up of paint on pieces of card, paper or scrap models in order to hone your technique.

Incidentally, I shall be running a series of practical airbrushing courses in West Sussex next March, courtesy of The Airbrush Company. Places have been filling up quickly but, at the time of writing, a few spots were still available (see *www.airbrushes.com* for full details).

Back to the '26', and I'm very pleased with the finished model. Heljan's all-new tooling really looks the business, and the weathering job has brought out much more of the superb detail, especially the underframe and bogies. Adding some simple interior detail – from scrunched up pieces of paper to a crew – help bring the locomotive to life, and I can't wait to see 26043 chugging around my layout with a rake of ballast wagons. Talking of which, I really need to finish customising a rake of Dapol 'Turbots' I started last year...

● *Model Rail*'s exclusive model of 26043, complete with Engineers' department cabside stripes and Haymarket depot logos, is still available. Turn to page 100 for more details.

STEP BY STEP

Heljan supplies a set of plastic three-piece snowploughs with the Class 26, which are easily fixed in place. Beforehand, I painted the rear faces, mounting brackets and the moulded supports with matt black acrylic.

This dark shade was also misted over the locomotive's roof, following panel lines and recesses. All the while, I was spraying just a fine mist and, where a greater concentration was required, I layered multiple coats.

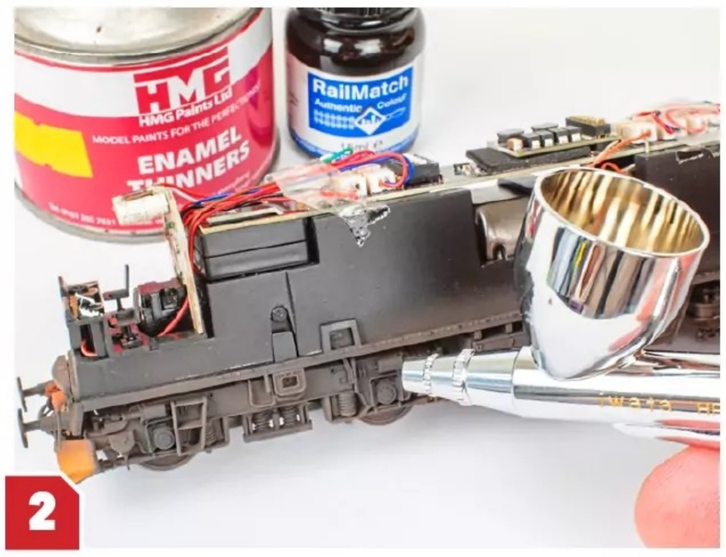
Keeping pace

One of the latest diesel multiple units to roll out of Dave Lowery's workshop is this 'O' gauge Class 143 'Pacer', which carries the vibrant Tyne & Wear PTE livery from the late 1980s. Built from a PR Model Railway Products kit, which consists of etched and cast metal components, interior seating and cab consoles are included, although wheels, motor and gears must be sourced separately. The kit's instructions can be freely downloaded from the PRMRP website, which gives an idea of the work involved and the nature of the various parts.

Dave has also installed working lights to this unit, and it has been happily 'nodding' around his layout while under test.

Web: *www.prmrp.com*

With a crumpled newspaper and roughly folded high-vis vest atop the interior consoles – plus a suitably weathered finish – the Heljan '26' has really come to life.



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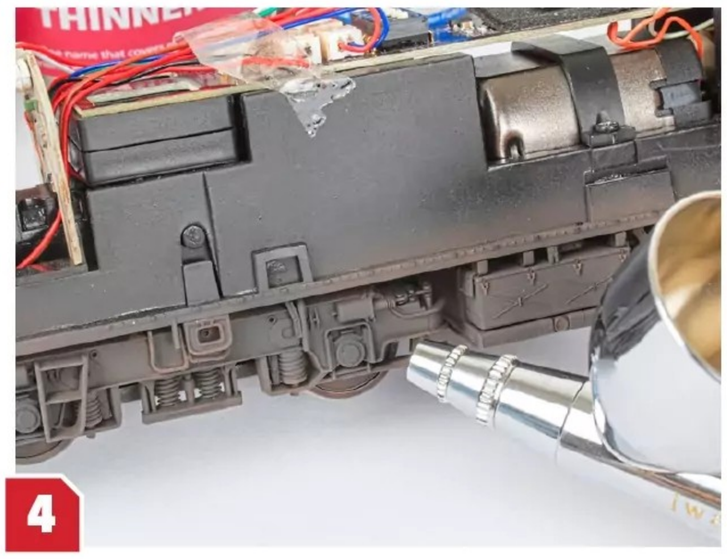
The weathering process continued, working on the chassis first. RailMatch enamel Frame Dirt was thinned and sprayed in a fine mist from an airbrush (set to between 15-20psi). The paint was directed around the frames.

3

With the same Frame Dirt shade, the lower edges of the bodyshell were treated to a fine mist, from the airbrush, with the nozzle aimed at a light angle to mimic the spray pattern of dust being thrown up from the tracks.



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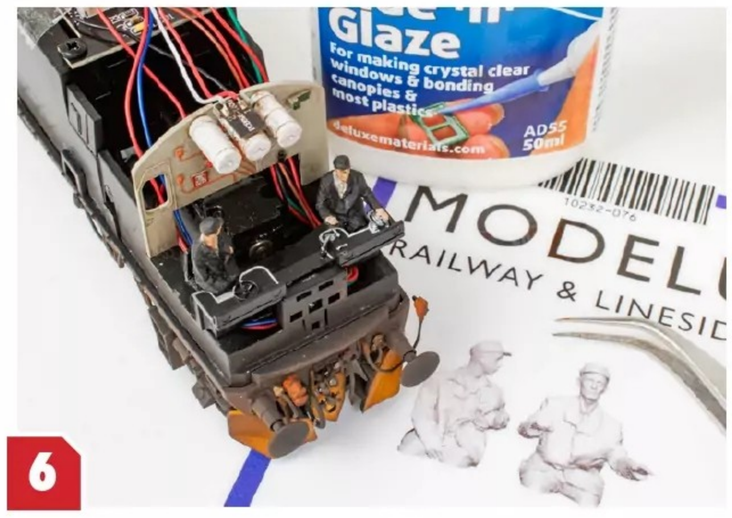
I blended RailMatch Weathered Black with the Frame Dirt and targeted this darker shade into key areas of the underframe to add tonal variety and suggest concentrated deposits of oil around the axleboxes and fuel tanks.



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When the airbrushed paints had dried, I added the crew. This pair of figures are from the Modelu range and required painting before fixing into the seats. I used Glue 'n' Glaze adhesive for a strong, flexible bond.

7

Scraps of paper were cut into small rectangles, scrunched up and flattened, then painted to mimic high-vis bibs and newspapers. They were then carefully glued to the top of the interior console.

8

Before reuniting the body and chassis, I took the time to thoroughly clean the wheels and power collectors using cotton swabs soaked in Track Magic fluid, which softens and removes paint and grime quickly.

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Inside track with Ben Ando

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

Research – the double-edged sword!

One of the great pleasures of being a model train manufacturer is the opportunity it gives you to spend many hours researching the wonderful railways of today and yesteryear; discovering forgotten facts and little known details.

Paradoxically, one of the great pains of being a model train manufacturer is the reality that hours, days and even years of research can still seem inadequate.

It is more than three years since Revolution unveiled plans to produce an 'N' gauge model of the Swindon-built Class 120 diesel unit. It seemed, at the time, to be a good choice.

The real things ran in short two-car and three-car formations and were designed for cross-country services, unlike the local or suburban first-generation diesel units previously available to 'N' gauge enthusiasts.

They operated across much of Britain, from south Wales, across to East Anglia, into the Midlands and north west England, and in large parts of Scotland.

Most obviously of all, unlike the already available Class 101s, 108s and 121s, they had two, rather than three, windscreen panes making them immediately distinctive.

Yet over time, it became clear that researching the model was going to be a challenge. A visit to the only surviving Class 120 car – TSLRB 59276 – proved elusive. Decent drawings were apparently non-existent. And while we were able to examine the supposedly similar Class 126 unit at Bo'ness there were lingering doubts about whether the cabs really had been constructed on the same jigs.

At the same time the popularity of the proposed model became clear as progress (or apparent lack of it) on the 120 became the most popular question we were asked at shows.

"One of the great pains of being a model train manufacturer is the reality that hours, days and even years of research can still seem inadequate"

Inside the sole-surviving Class 120 DMU car, TSLRB 59276, revealed a treasure trove of BR-era signage, crockery and glassware. BEN ANDO

Even the BR-era first aid kit was intact! BEN ANDO

And yet, just when we were becoming disheartened, everything changed. We came across a treasure trove of drawings and within days received an invitation to see the surviving car in Leicestershire.

The visit itself was a joy; it was a day of glorious sunshine and (while achieving access proved a challenge as the vehicle had not moved in years and all the doors were seized) once inside, the gloriously evocative character of the unit – with its authentic period details including Formica panelled buffet/bar counter, British Rail-branded beer glasses and untouched first aid kit proved irresistible.

With numerous measurements taken, and the drawings now cross-checked with dimensions measured on the day, the Swindon cross-country sets are back in the race!

Fifty not out

Wow! Who'd a thunk it?

It was in late 2021 that George Dent and I first had a discussion about the possibility of my contributing a regular column to *Model Rail*.

George felt that he could spare a single page each month for my ramblings, and that the trials and tribulations of a small-time model train maker with big ideas might make for interesting reading, at least for a while.

I have no idea how long either of us expected it to last, but the first column (which was entitled *The Golden Age Is Now*) appeared in January 2022 and now, here we are, nearly four years and a half century of columns later!

I'd like to thank all the readers who take the time to read this column and chat with me at shows. If there is a question you'd like me to answer, please email *modelrail@bauermedia.co.uk*

And be warned – I still have plenty to say!

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1

LIFE IN A NORTHERN DEPOT

For **Ian Dalby**, capturing the grimy glory of the real railway was one of the chief objectives of his depot-based 'O' gauge layout with an extraordinary level of fine detail.

Words: **Richard Gunn** Photography: **Chris Nevard**

What makes this layout great?

At first, it's the obvious, larger things you notice; the superbly weathered locomotives, the realistic-looking buildings. But then you start to spot the wealth of small details that help make Ian's re-creation of an MPD so remarkably true to life. Rarely has littering and fly-tipping looked so creative!

"Come and watch this!" With those words, uttered during the fading months of 1974, Ian Dalby and one of his mates headed for a lineside embankment alongside the West Coast Main Line to watch Class 50s double-head Anglo-Scottish expresses towards the inhospitable summits of Shap and Beattock. And the youngster became hooked on railways.

Of course, as often happens, later years brought new interests and, after extensive trainspotting sessions, traction mileage and depot visits, the railway bug faded. But decades later, while passing Bescot depot en route to a family holiday down south from his northern England home, Ian noticed a Class 37 in EWS livery. Intrigued by the maroon 'Tractor', he bought a railway magazine to check out the current scene. "And that reignited my interest again. A while later, I visited the East Lancashire Railway, to see what was going on there. And there was a Class 55 in Porterbrook livery. I thought, 'Goodness me, we used to watch 'Deltics' go middle-road through Doncaster at about 100mph and now there's one on the East Lancashire Railway'. What have I been missing all these years? And that just drew me back in.

With Ian's interest in real railways revitalised, all that was needed was the spark to lead him back to model ones. It came from a few different sources. "My son was keen on Warhammer so I made a few bits and pieces for him. Having not done it for years, it gave me the impetus to consider returning to modelling." ➤

RIGHT: Ian remembers from his own engineering days how hi-vis jackets would be casually discarded or hung up on whatever object was close to hand, and wanted to create something similar on his layout.

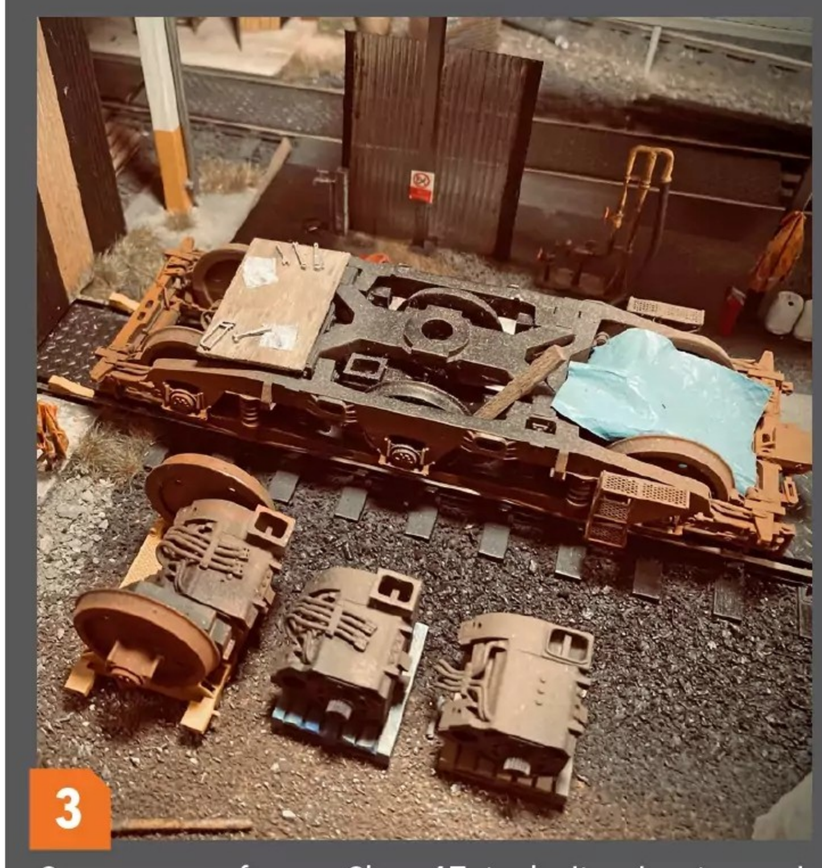
3 things we like

1

The intense depth of detail even extends to discarded Tesco plastic bags.

2

Taking a break, reading the news about the 'World Wide What?' Ideal for the era.



3

Components from a Class 47, including bogies and traction motors, dismantled for parts and scrapping.

3
4
NOT TO BE MOVED
064
TRANSRAIL

Seeing Nick Gurney's well-known 'Dyserth Road' layout in a magazine also proved a catalyst ("I've since met Nick again and told him he's to blame") as did a visit to Ian's local model shop, Tower Models in Blackpool. "I walked through the door and there was this 'O' gauge Class 37 in Transrail livery. And I thought 'Wow'. That was it. Just by walking through the door…" The short-lived Transrail (formed in 1994 following the break-up of BR's Trainload Freight and taken over in 1996 by EWS) was an era Ian had missed. So he set about visiting it in model form. "I bought a locomotive – the Transrail '37' – and thought, 'We'll see how it goes'. Then I started adding bits of track, and it just seemed to snowball… before I knew it, it was 12ft long. It's all a bit cut-and-shut, added on bit by bit. It became a Frankenstein type of thing."

Having had a career in engineering (albeit in aerospace – when much younger, he did work very briefly for British Rail and its Travellers Fare division; he lasted a week), Ian wanted to build something that reflected what he was familiar with. "I worked in industry for 40-odd years; I'm an old school engineer. I'm used to muck, I'm used to grime, I'm used to grunge. The railway scene is never, ever clean, is it? Whenever I travel, I'm always looking out for details and infrastructure and I always see it – how it often looks quite messy. Which ➤

LEFT: Items such as the oil cans – of which there are a great many scattered throughout the depot – are from bespoke accessory specialist Bunters Yard.

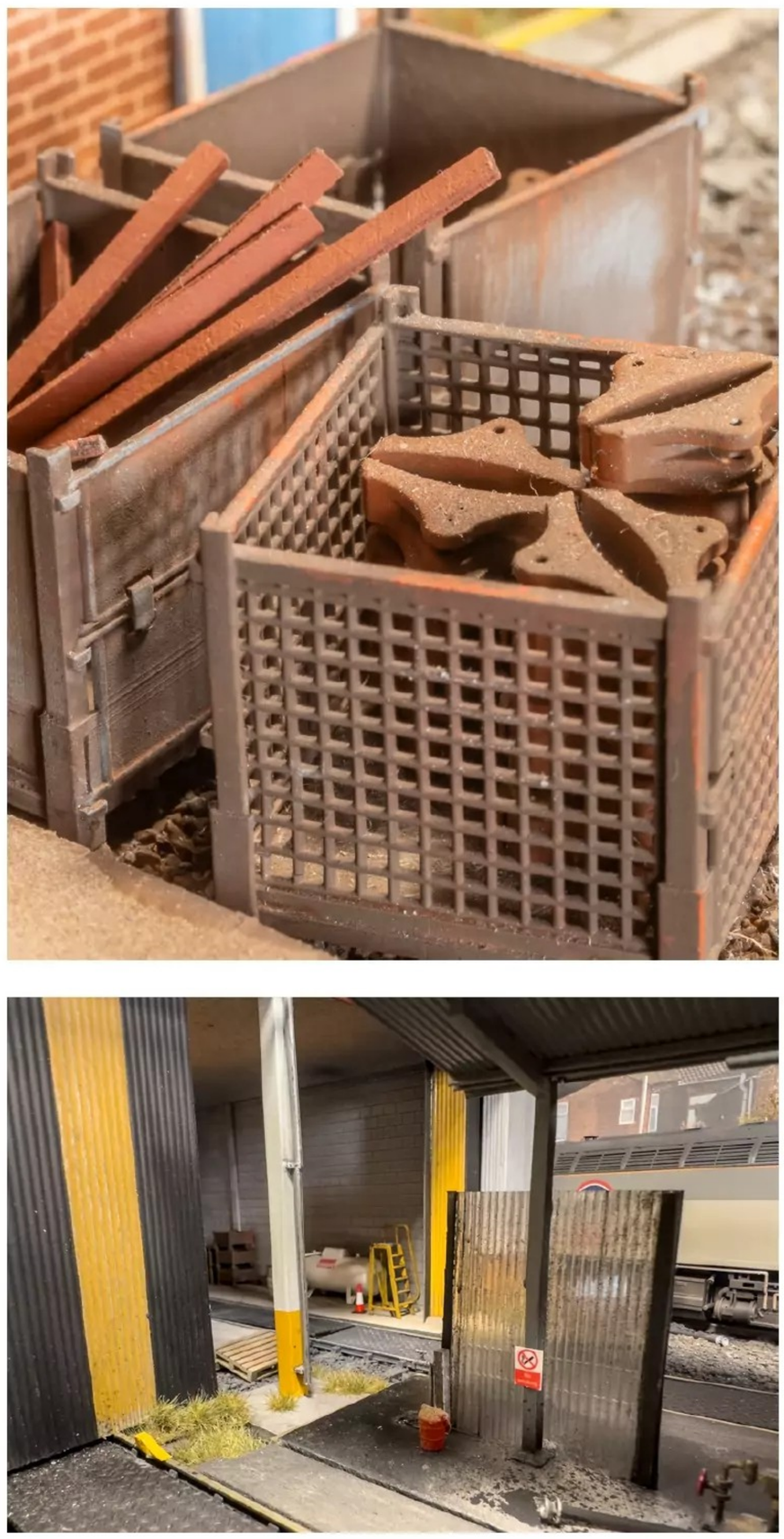
gives you inspiration. My wife asks why I don't ever do a nice countryside scene. It's just not me; it's the grime that gets me."

ALL THE DISORDER

What eventually metamorphosed was a depiction of a typical 1990s-era depot loosely based on aspects of Tinsley, Immingham and Thornaby. Ian has dubbed it 'A-exam (East Works)', referring to the 40-hour service given to diesel locomotives. "I like to get away from naming things after roads, streets, places and things like that, just to be different." Although relatively compact – well, in 'O' gauge terms at least – the layout packs in a major amount of minutiae. There's all the disorder you'd expect of a railway environment away from the public gaze; bags of ballast, sleeper stacks, rusting oil drums, redundant pallets, random bits of old metal, cast-off hi-vis vests, fluid stains that still look wet etc. And there's also the general detritus of old newspapers, plastic shopping bags, black rubbish sacks and a washing machine and shopping trolley tipped over the depot wall.

The main baseboard was recycled from a previous substantial 'OO' gauge layout underframe by Ian's father-in-law, Paul. While the landscape is minimal, it's very lifelike. "The slate is from the Lake District, up near Honister. There's an old mine with loads of spoil so you can just go and help yourself. It's the real thing, ➤

BELOW The depot is a working environment and that's something that Ian was keen to reproduce on 'A-Exam (East Works)', with lots of discarded items around the place awaiting either re-use or disposal.



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TRANSRAIL

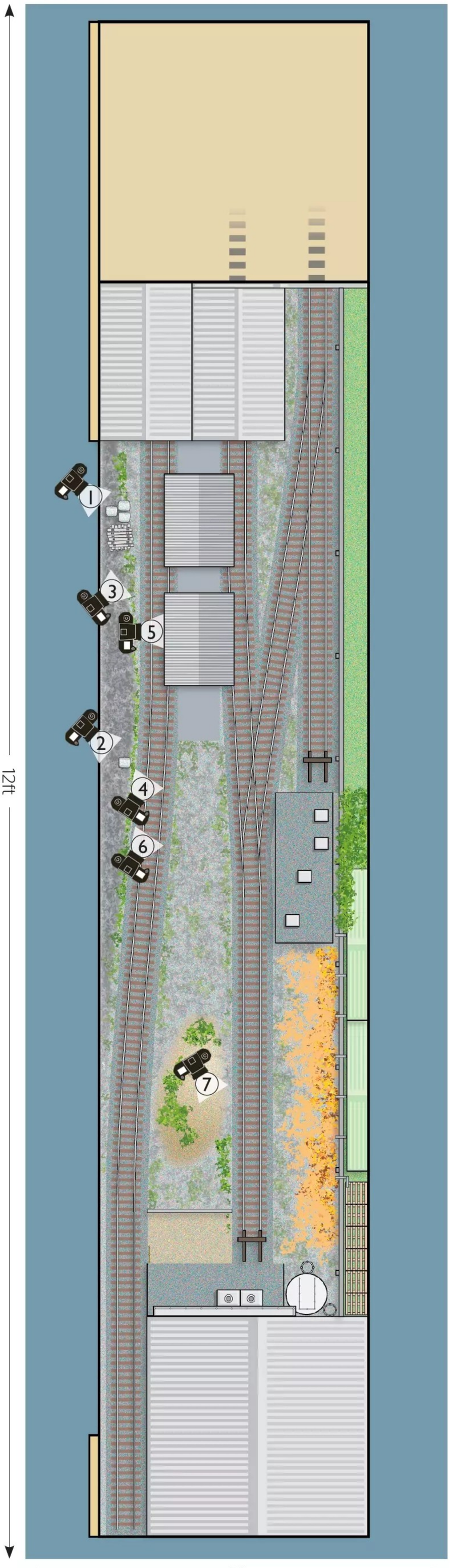
graded out and then glued down – a bit more interesting than just scale ballast." Ian's approach to securing it was unconventional. "I assembled all the track and then suspended it from the rafters of the garage. Then I flooded the baseboard with PVA white adhesive and plonked all the track down, before scattering the material. There's no washing-up liquid or sprays. It's a more difficult way because you need to just drop it all down in one go, and you've got to be careful you don't gum the points up or anything like that. It's hard and frustrating but it's the way it has always worked for me."

ABOVE: The scenic backdrop of the rear of terraced homes is from iD Backscenes and looks practically tailor-made for the layout. Ian grew up in such housing, so remembers it with fondness.

Grass is a mixture of hanging basket liner along with a Christmas wreath, plus some proprietary tufts for more overgrown areas. "The hanging basket liner is becoming quite difficult to find now, so I'm experimenting at the moment with static grass," says Ian.

Most of the buildings are carcasses from Railway Laser Lines. However, Ian has modified and/or extended them. "I put styrene or brick sheets on so I could get the weathering as I wanted. For the mortar, where appropriate, I used real plaster ➤

Artwork: **Andrew Mackintosh**



filler." The fuelling stage is a Skytrex Models item, to which Ian has added Perspex screens. Overlooking everything are terraced housing rears from the iD Backscenes range. "They're the sort of house I lived in as a child, during my early northern upbringing," says Ian.

Populating the layout are a variety of generic Modelu figures, with Ian commissioning Dan Evason of Tunnel Lane Model Railways to do the painting. "He can do things like that far better than me, his work is absolutely first class."

Ian's diesel fleet consists of a Class 37, 56 and 60. "That's it for the moment, as they are expensive. They're all Heljan. A couple of TTA tank wagons and a Turbot ballast wagon also make the occasional appearance. Of course, being a depot, there are also bits of locomotives scattered around, with the Class 47 bogies, wheelsets and redundant traction motors from West Hill Wagon Works. "They're absolutely phenomenal 3D prints," says Ian.

Wanting to recreate all the intricacies of the real-world railway was Ian's aim with 'A-exam (East Works)'. He's done that, and much more. But he's now looking for a fresh challenge to bring his talents to, so the layout is for sale. If you're interested, he can be contacted at: *losendos@talktalk.net* MR

All figures are from the Modelu range; the painting was done by Dan Evason of Tunnel Lane Model Railways, as Ian was so impressed by his skills with fine paint detailing.

FACTFILE: 'A-EXAM (EAST WORKS)'

Era: Mid-1990s

Gauge and scale: 7mm: 1ft, 'O' gauge

Size: 12ft by 2ft

Track: Peco Bullhead

Power and control: DCC NCE PowerCab

Time to build: 10 months "on and off"

ABOUT THE MODELLER: IAN DALBY

Ian was a modeller in his youth, and says "I must have gone through the whole Airfix catalogue as a kid and had train sets, like the Hornby 'Hymek', on the dining room table or carpet". He also enjoys fell-walking in Cumbria with his wife and their pair of Border Terriers, plus he's into prog rock and playing bass guitar.

HELJAN

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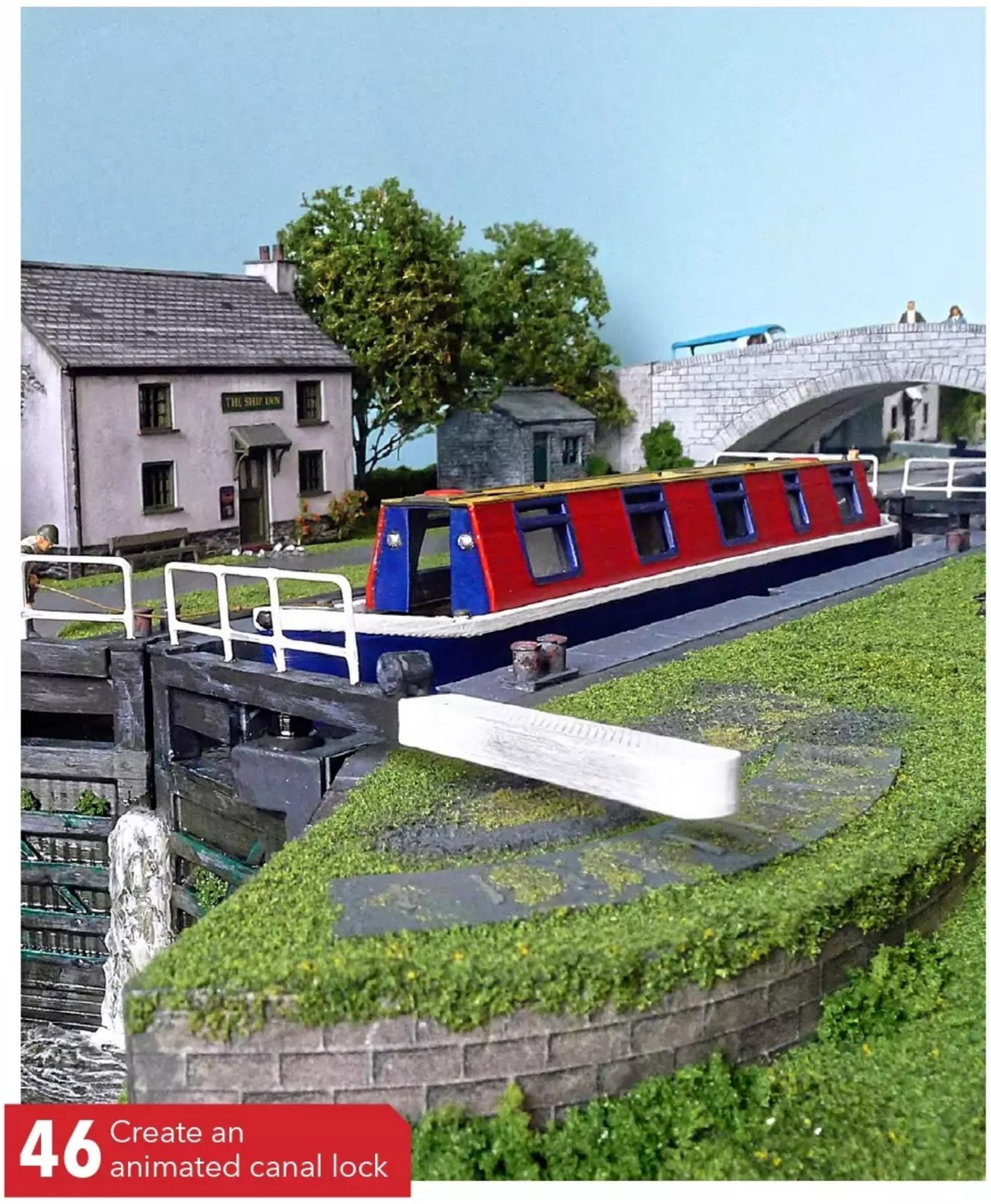
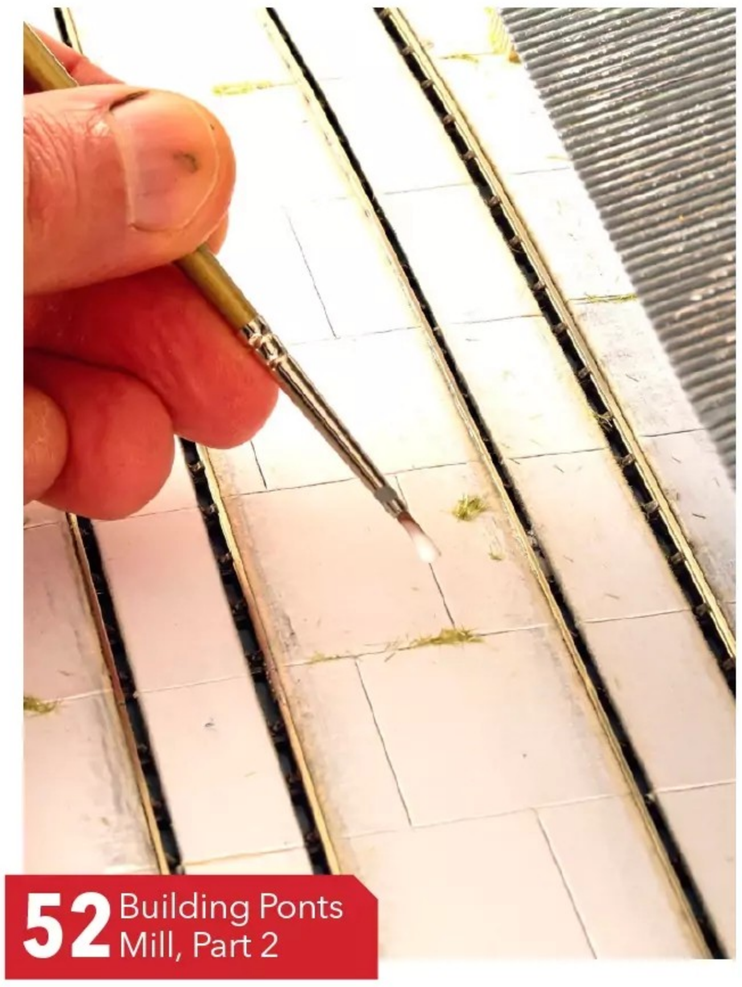
42 Build a brick and steel overbridge



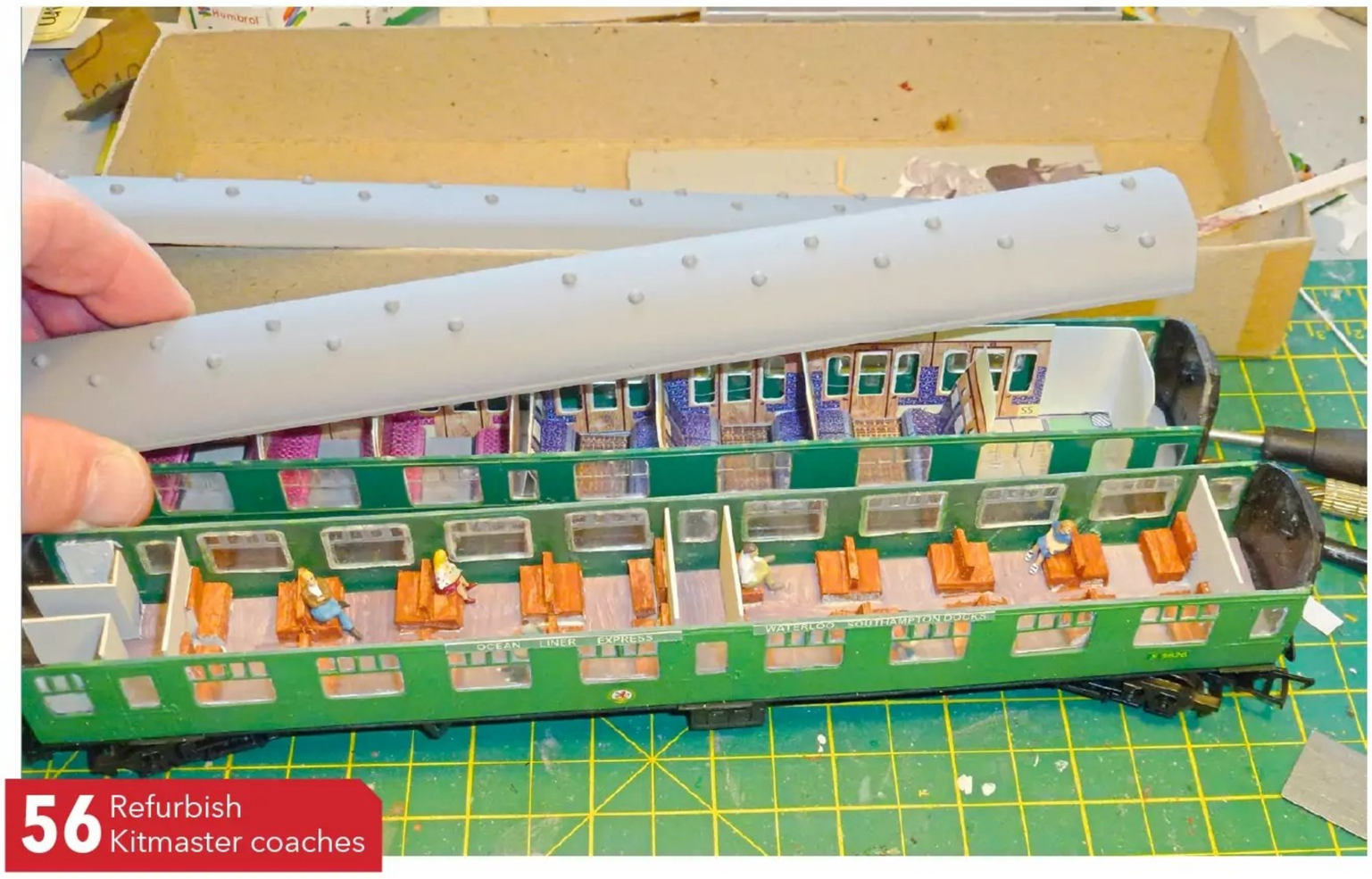
46 Create an animated canal lock

Workbench

Inspirational projects, advice and top tips that show you how

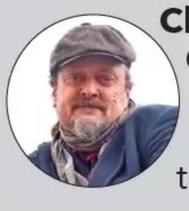


52 Building Ponts Mill, Part 2



56 Refurbish Kitmaster coaches

Meet the *Model Rail* Expert modellers



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.

Graham Goodchild
A modeller who loves to innovate with electronics and automation.

Project difficulty ranges from easy: one screwdriver, to very hard: five screwdrivers.

HOW TO

BUILD A BRICK AND STEEL OVERBRIDGE

Another scenic element of **Chris Nevard**'s embryonic new layout has been completed, in the form of twin overbridges, which will form effective scenic breaks. Here, Chris offers a range of useful assembly and painting tips.

MODEL Wills SS64 Abutments & Wings Walls (£13.95), SS57 Vari-girder Bridge Spans (£9.50)

00 GAUGE

6 hrs

AVAILABILITY Peco stockists WEB *www.peco-uk.com*

Brick or stone abutments with a plate girder bridge span are a common feature of the real railway, yet there are surprisingly few 4mm scale kits, apart from the odd 3D-printed set of components or downloadable 'print your own' paper and card kits.

I've never had much luck with domestic colour printers, so I tend to shy away from the latter, especially given the price of ink cartridges these days, and the fact that many of today's inkjet printers don't survive much beyond the first ink change. Therefore, while downloading and printing your own might appeal to the budget-conscious, especially for those who already own good quality printers, they can be far from that in reality. That's my experience, anyway.

However, there's a pair of plastic kits in the Wills range (produced by Peco), which have been around for many years, that still provide a very useful option. The Abutments & Wings Walls kit (ref. SS64) and the Vari-girder Bridge Spans kit (ref. SS57) can be combined with a little fettling to produce just what is required, which in this case is a Cornish project I'm currently working on.

Okay, stone abutments would have been even better, but the brick I think works, even though the area being modelled tended to lean more towards stone structures. But not everything is as expected in the real world, so I'm happy to exploit that.

The style of bridge is perfect for carrying a road or a railway over another road or railway, or even a canal or river. The raw materials are provided, but after that it's up to the constructor to decide on the bridge's actual dimensions, with enough material being provided to cater for single or multiple tracks or carriageways to be spanned and/or carried overhead.

I'm quite pleased with the result, although merging the two kits proved a little trickier than expected, especially in terms of adding the roadbed. The modular nature of the girder sections, which can be built up from as many sections as required, allows the bridge to be tailored to your exact needs – no two bridges are ever the same, after all!

PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRIS NEVARD

KEEP IT CONSISTENT

As many key railway structures, within the same locality, are likely to have been constructed around the same time and from similar materials, it's important ensure a consistent appearance. That's one of the reasons why Chris built and painted both of these bridges at the same time, employing the same blend of paints across the brickwork and steel girders.

Note the left hand bridge only has one wing wall, this is due to the nature of the bridge's intended location on the layout. Look out for further updates on Chris' layout project in *Model Rail* over the coming months.

What you will need

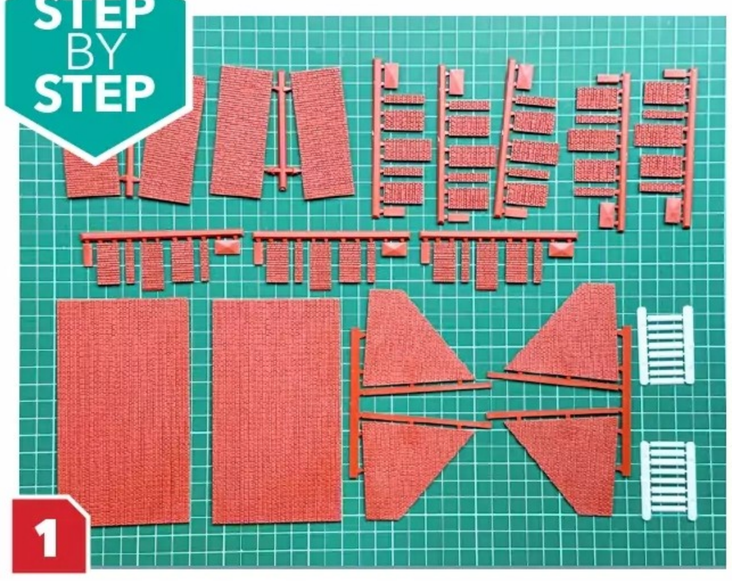
SHOPPING LIST

- • 2.0mm thick plastic card
  • Plastic Weld or similar liquid poly cement • Humbrol Matt 79 Blue Grey acrylic or enamel paint
  • Burnt sienna and yellow ochre artists' acrylic paints
  Availability: Model & craft stores
- Matt black, grey and red oxide aerosol primers
  Availability: Halfords stores
  Web: *www.halfords.com*
- Black, beige and rust brown matt household emulsion match pots
  Availability: DIY/hardware stores

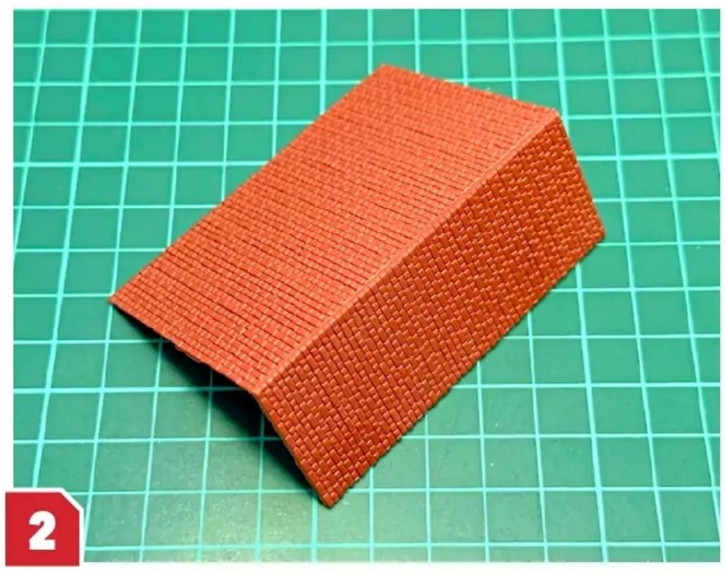
TOOLS

- Hobby knife and spare blades
- Cutting mat
- Steel rule
- Needle files
- Paint brushes
- Old plate to mix paint on

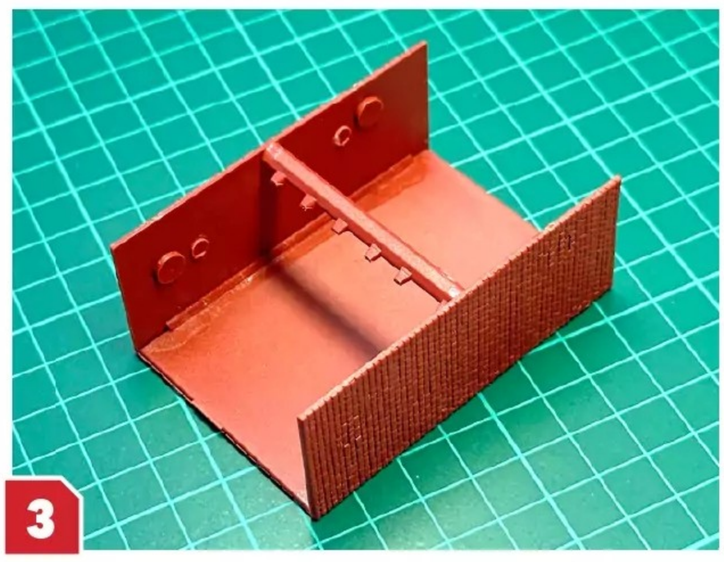
STEP BY STEP



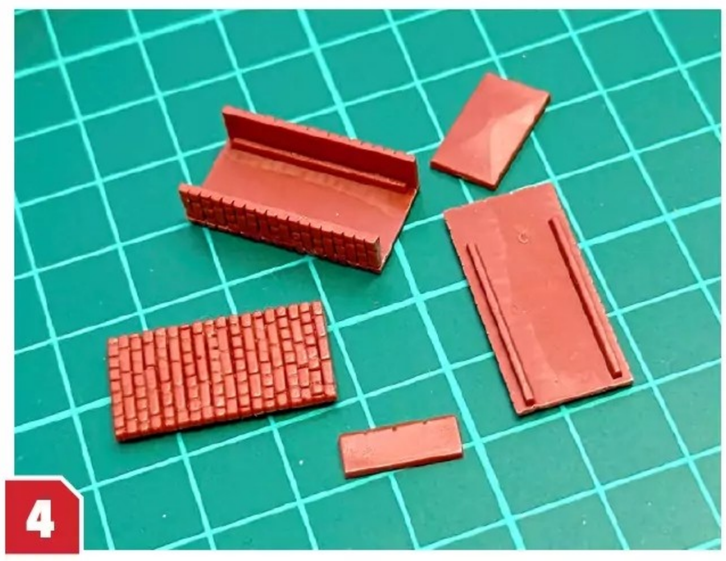
1 The contents of the Wills bridge abutments and wing walls kit. The parts allow for various options, and a simple exploded diagram is provided by way of an assembly guide, which I find more helpful than wordy instructions!



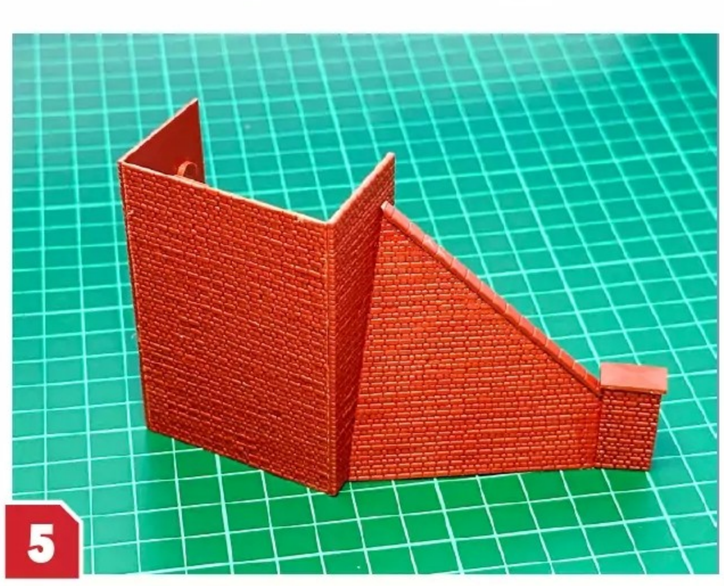
2 The main walls need trimming to suit the required depth of the main abutment. I wanted just enough for a single vehicle-width bridge. After cutting the walls to size, the joint faces are chamfered to produce mitred joints.



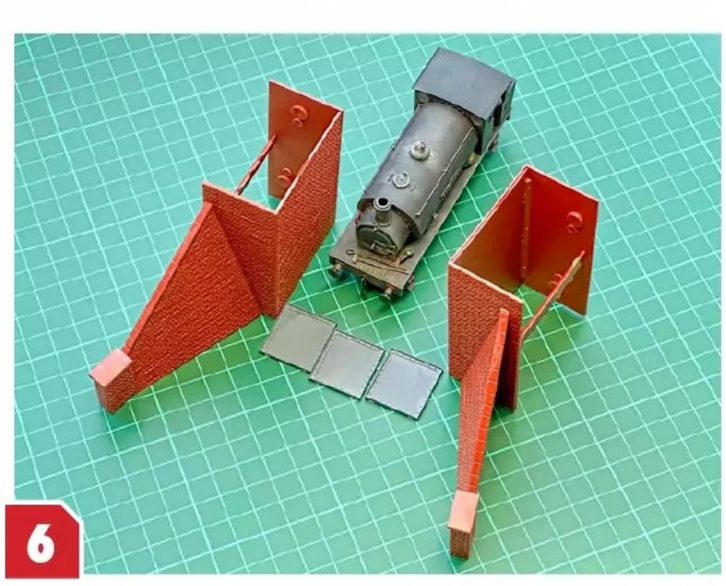
3 After mating the walls of the abutment and bonding with poly cement (applied to the inside of the joint), I reinforced it with a piece of sprue. Plastic joints can move as the solvent sets. This was repeated with the opposite wall.



4 Pilasters are easy to assemble. The outer face is a bit taller. The newels (posts) that sit at the end of the wing walls are assembled the same way. You should end up with four pilasters and four newels each topped with a capstone.



5 Next add the wing walls to the main abutments. The angle will vary depending on your need. You might need to run a file along the edge to avoid any gaps and hold in place until the glue catches, then add the newels.



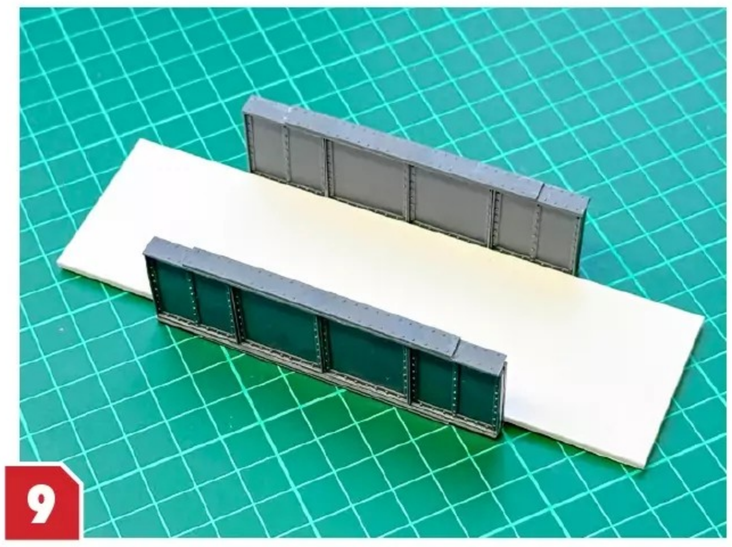
6 The girder kit supplies enough sections to span two tracks, but it's a good idea to gauge how many sections you need using a model. If your bridge is on a curve, allow clearance for the swing of longer vehicles.

7 You may need to trim a little of the top of the abutments away. After a little trial and error, trimming 2 rows of brick courses was right for me. This is probably best done before assembly, rather than after, as I did.

8 The girders have a front and rear as illustrated in the instructions. I laid the sections out to ensure that everything was square before bonding. Additional strips of plastic are supplied to go top and bottom of the girders.

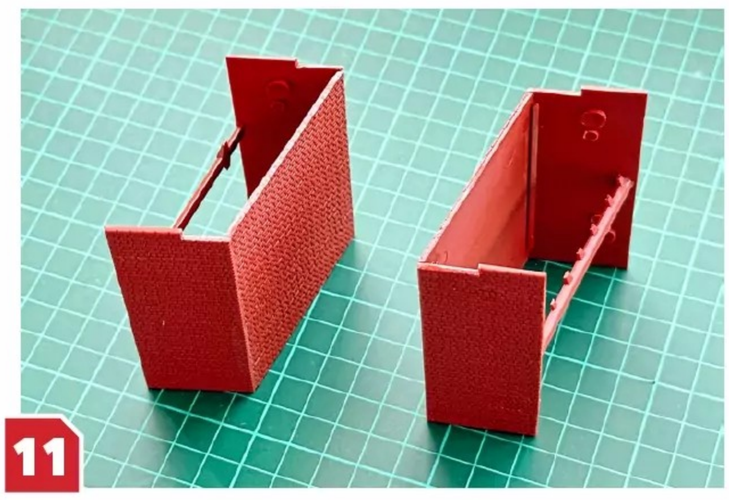
Indeed, I needed a pair of bridges to act as scenic breaks in different locations on the layout, including one skewed structure, which didn't demand anything too complicated in terms of modifications to the kit, as demonstrated here.

This is a common bridge type and I do feel there is scope for a bespoke girder bridge kit with brick and/or stone abutments in one box, without the fettling which could prove challenging or off-putting to some modellers.



9

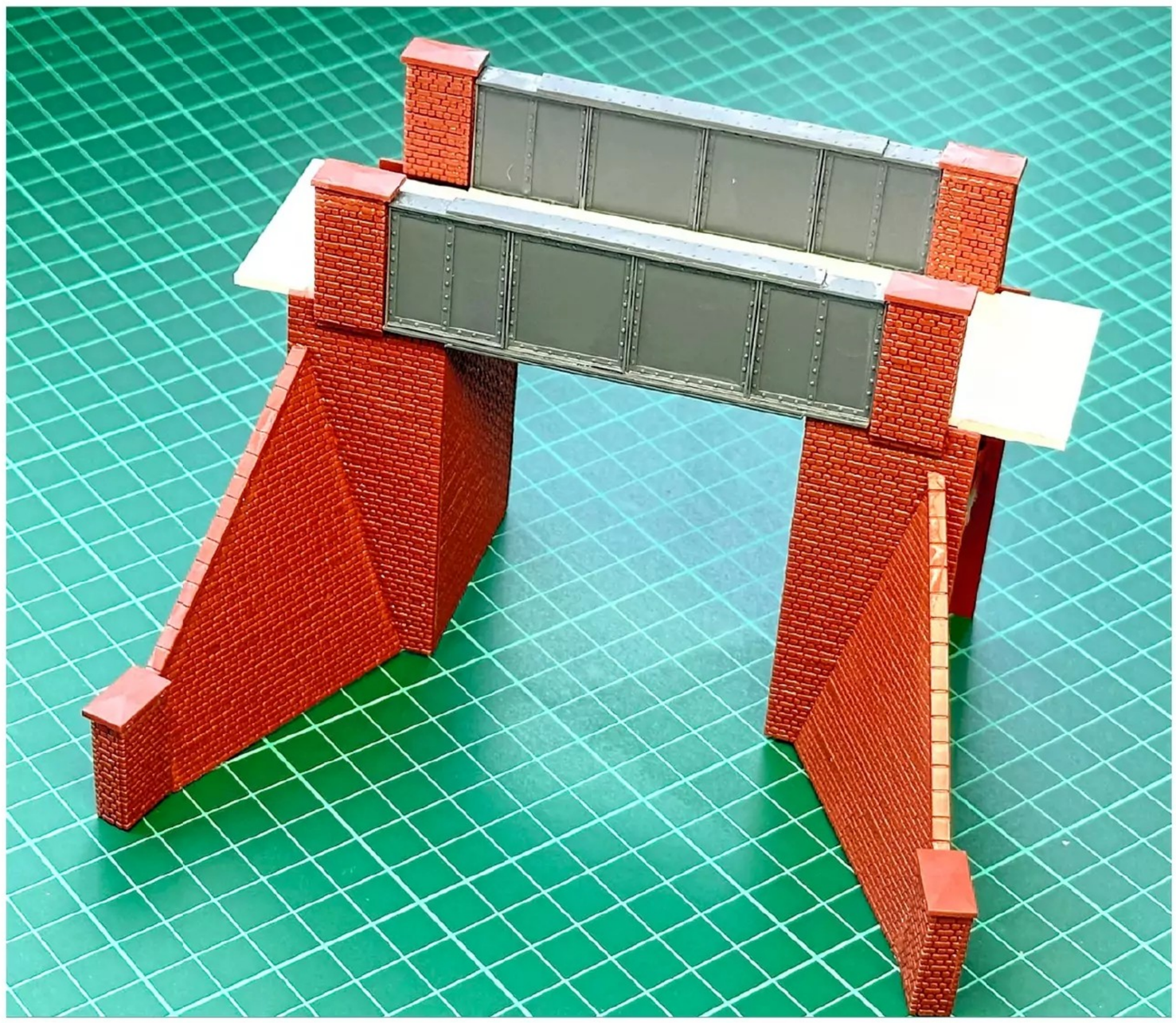
Before attaching the girders to the abutments, you'll need to add a road or rail bed. I used some 2mm plastic card that I had to hand. Mounting board or similar could also work, but plastic sheet is easier to bond to the girders and walls.

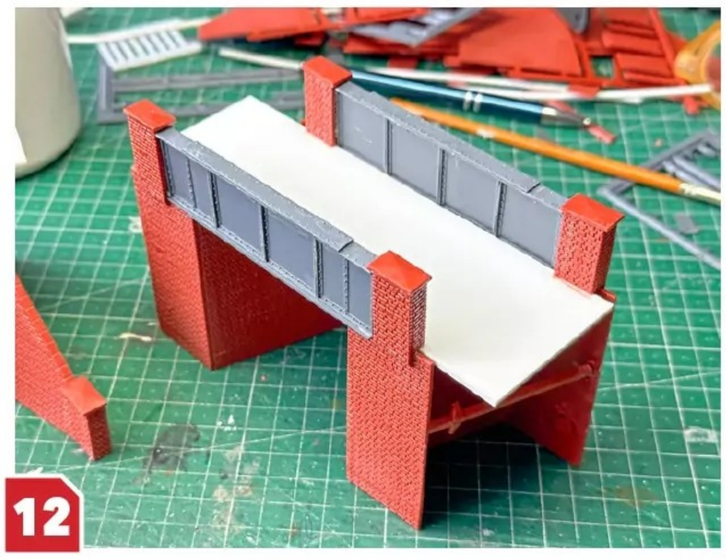


11

The bridge can also be assembled as a skew bridge where the road crosses the railway at an angle. Assembly follows the same procedure, but you'll need to chamfer the angle of the wall joints to appropriate angles and ensure a neat bond.

10 Before you cut your road (or rail) base, you'll need to get the depth right. Ideally, you want the centre of the girders to line up with the centre of the pilasters. I suggest cutting the plastic base a little too wide, then cutting it down a millimetre or two until you get the width correct. Blu-Tack and/or masking tape can be useful for holding everything together while marking out. Once cut to size, bond the plastic bed to the girders, then to the walls. Leave to set, then fit the pilasters on either side of the girder sections.





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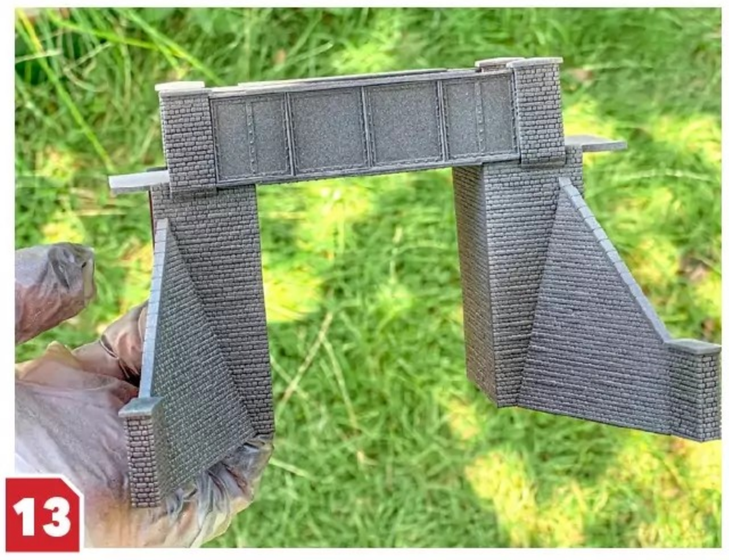
The same process of building the girder sections, pilasters, bridge deck and wing walls was followed. Plastic filler gets rid of gaps. When cured, tidy with a file or abrasive sheets, but take care not to clog the mortar courses.



13

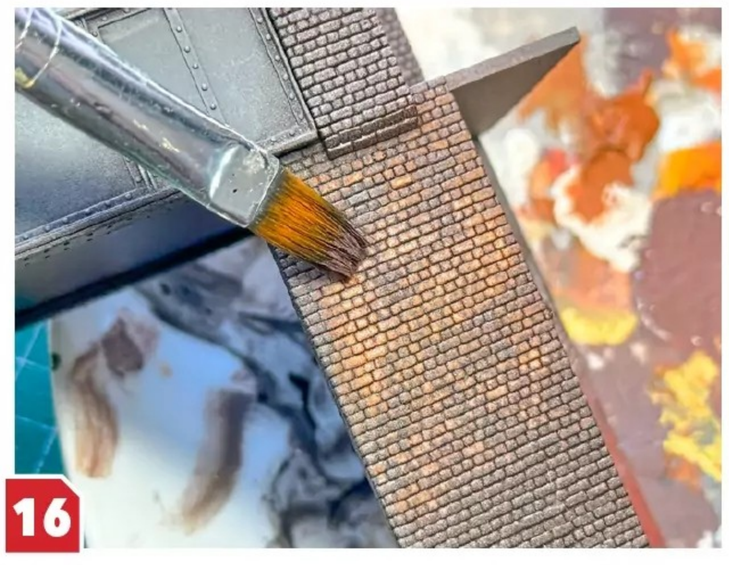
Painting began with a matt black aerosol primer, followed by a misting of a little red and then grey primers, allowing the black base coat to still show through. Be sure to work in a very well-ventilated area and wear a facemask.

14

For the girders, I dry-brushed on Humbrol Matt 79 'Blue Grey Matt' (acrylic or enamel will do). Dabbing the brush over the surface allows the colour to be suggested, while maintaining the shading and gritty texture.

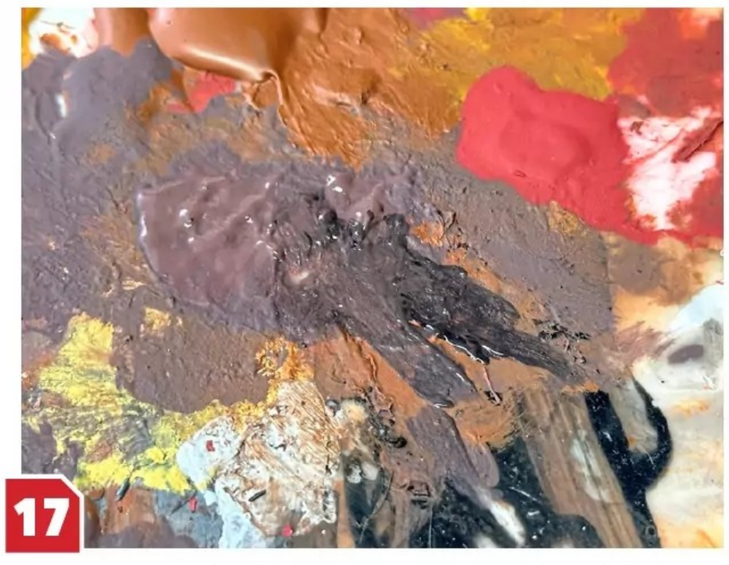
15

A small brush was then used to suggest rust, using a tiny amount of black and brown acrylic or emulsion paint. This is a blend of Manzanillo household emulsion from B&Q and some children's black poster paint.



16

For the brickwork, I dry-brushed on a little raw sienna artists' acrylic, so it just caught the tops of the brickwork. Next, I applied some yellow ochre artist's acrylic sparingly in a random fashion, then added a little of the Manzanillo.



17

On the fly I blend colours and randomly apply them here and there, doing my best to avoid a 'painting by numbers look' which looks ever so contrived as well as no doubt taking forever. Take inspiration from the real thing.

18

I've described the paints used, but it doesn't really matter, just choose the shades that look right to you, although emulsions usually give a softer flatter look. I dry-brushed a little B&Q Caracas into the capstones.

19

I also applied the Caracas – a sort of dull mucky beige – very lightly over the whole bridge, the effect being purely to soften the look with the beige catching the raised areas a little.

20

A finishing touch was to add smoke and exhaust staining to the girders, which would have built up over decades, thanks to locomotives trundling back and forth below. Most of the paint was deposited on a tissue...

21

...before dry-brushing the girders, concentrating the worst of the staining along the lower edge towards the centre of the bridge, which will be plumb above the rails. Less is more is usually the case, so work gradually with the minimum of paint on the bristles.

22

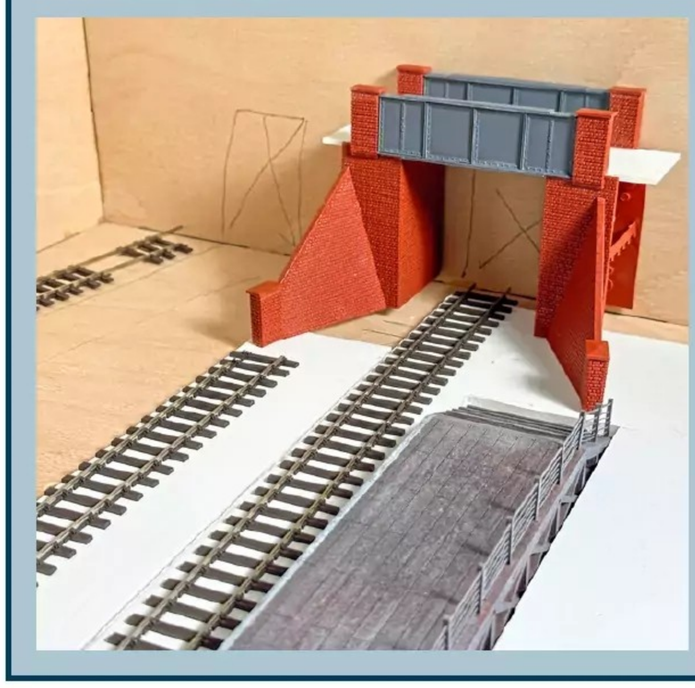
The finished bridges are ready for installation on the layout. While it's good to get the finishing as complete as possible while the bridge is freestanding, we have to be prepared to touch up the paintwork slightly after all the scenery is installed.

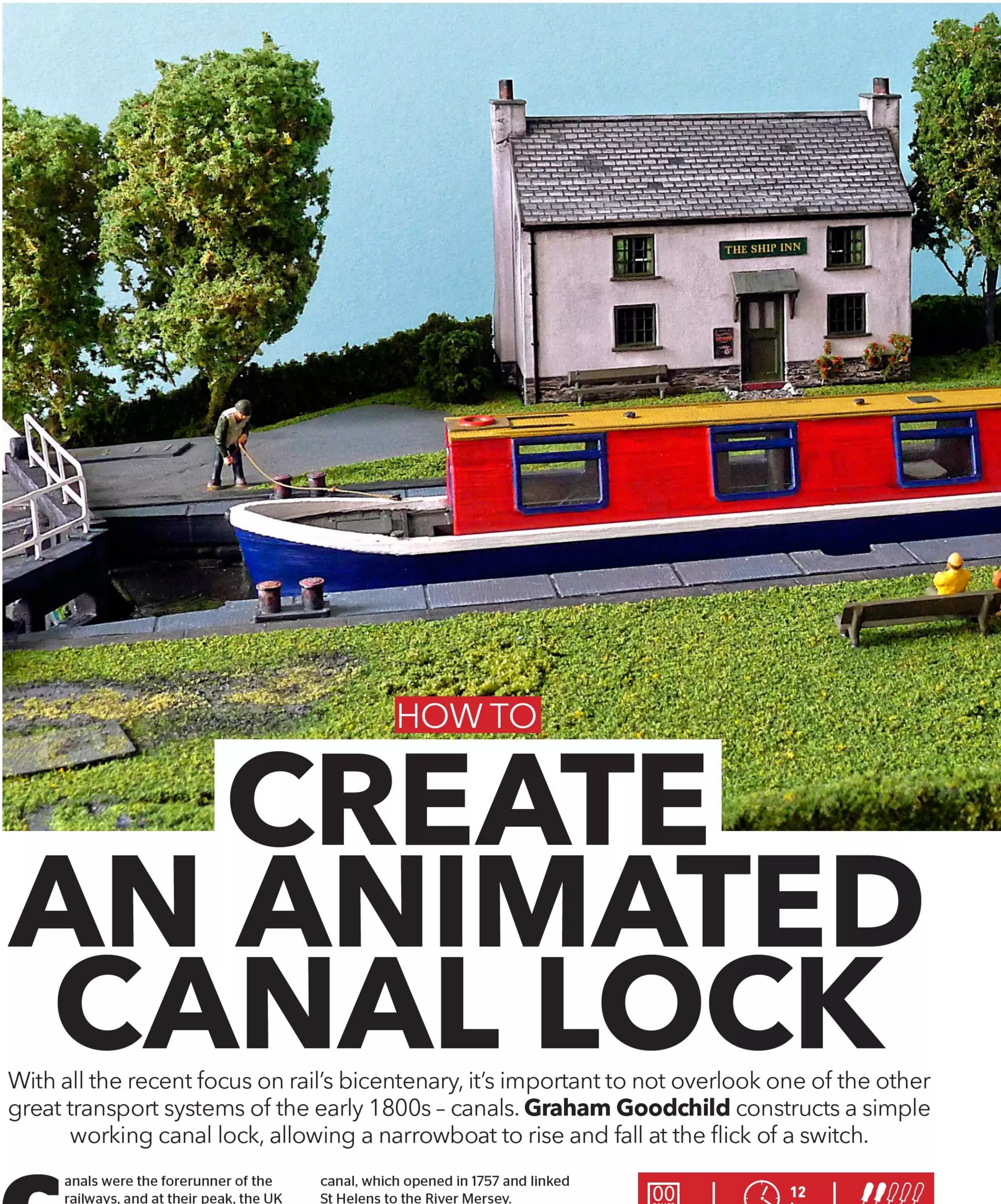
The Wills bridge abutments and girder kits offer a modular solution to help create structures of varying shapes and sizes.

BREAKING THE SCENE

Overbridges provide one of the most effective scenic breaks on a model railway, allowing trains to enter and leave the scenic areas of a layout discreetly. Once the landscape contours have been created, and the country road installed, this corner of the baseboard will be transformed.
The narrow bridge will disguise the aperture that is to be cut into the backscene to allow the trains to access the fiddleyard beyond.

Chris explained how he built a timber platform and pagoda-style waiting shelter for this layout in the September issue (MR343).





PHOTOGRAPHY: GRAHAM GOODCHILD

HOW TO

CREATE AN ANIMATED CANAL LOCK

With all the recent focus on rail's bicentenary, it's important to not overlook one of the other great transport systems of the early 1800s – canals. **Graham Goodchild** constructs a simple working canal lock, allowing a narrowboat to rise and fall at the flick of a switch.

Canals were the forerunner of the railways, and at their peak, the UK network spanned nearly 4,000 miles of waterways. In medieval times, the routes of several British rivers were modified to permit navigation by boats to aid the transit of cargo, while the first canal of the industrial era was the Sanket canal, which opened in 1757 and linked St Helens to the River Mersey.

The boom in railway building during the mid-1800s saw the importance of the canal network dwindle although, ironically, canals were employed to carry materials to build some of the railway network. Moreover, as rail gained the ascendency, many struggling canal companies were eventually purchased by the railways.

There are numerous locations throughout England, Wales and Scotland where rails ➤

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- LitPrints 3D-printed canal lock and narrowboat kits
  Web: *www.litprints.co.uk*
- 3V Miniature Motor with 30rpm reduction gearbox, Micro Motor mount kit, switched enclosed 2xAA battery box with cover and leads
  Web: *www.railwayscenics.uk.com*
- Single track road bridge kit
  Web: *www.ancortonmodels.com*
- Public house (Percival Cottage) kit, public house signs
  Web: *www.scalemodelscenery.co.uk*
- Ratio workman's hut kit
  Availability: Peco stockists
  Web: *www.peco-uk.com*
- Mirror sheet and other canal lock and boat kits • 9mm MDF baseboard • scrap wood block and dowel • 3mm plywood • 5mm foamboard • 2mm styrene sheet • 1mm clear styrene sheet • card • 6mm brass square tube • 4mm internal dia. shaft wheel collet with grub screw • connecting wire • screws • PVA glue • liquid styrene cement • epoxy resin • Woodland Scenics Water Effects mouldable resin • paints
  Web: *www.hobby.uk.com*

TOOLS

- Craft knife and spare blades
- Cutting mat
- Hack saw
- Steel rule
- Compasses
- Drill and bits
- Files

One of many locations in the UK where trains run alongside a canal – this is the Kennet and Avon Canal at Little Bedwyn, Wiltshire, as a Class 59 rumbles by with a Mendip stone train.

The narrowboat has entered the lock and awaits the lowering of the water level before it can move on.

and waterways run (or formerly ran) alongside each other. One such example is the Kennet and Avon canal in Wiltshire, which provided my inspiration.

I had a plan to make a working canal lock diorama which could also be built into a railway layout. I chose to adapt a plastic kit to remotely control a canal boat, allowing it to rise and fall mechanically within the sluice gates of the lock basin.

There are several kits of canal locks which are available that can be adapted. However, I decided on a 3D-printed canal lock kit, with a matching narrowboat, both of which are available from LitPrintshop 3D Printing Company.

The narrowboat is placed on a plywood platform, which is cut to the shape of the lock's interior, providing a base for the water effect. This base is glued to the top of a brass square tube, which telescopes into a bearing at the bottom of the lock, providing the rise and fall action, courtesy of a rotating cam powered by a geared motor.

The surrounding scenic diorama was constructed from a foamboard sub structure around the canal lock, including typical features such as a road overbridge, public house and workman's hut. The module is lightweight and portable and can easily be incorporated into a model railway baseboard.

Watching the narrowboat rise and fall at the touch of a button adds an extra dimension to a layout and it's a feature that is sure to grab the attention of viewers.

Mirror mirror…

The addition of a sheet of mirrored glass behind the overbridge reflects the image of the lock gates, giving the viewer the impression that the canal carries on, way beyond the backscene. Simple scenic tricks like this can be hugely effective, especially on smaller layouts.

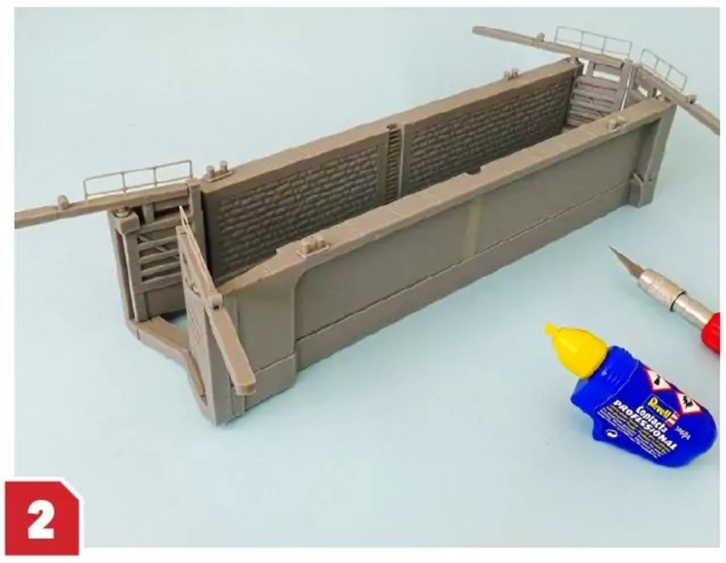
The lock at low level.

… and here is the lock with the water at its highest level.

STEP BY STEP

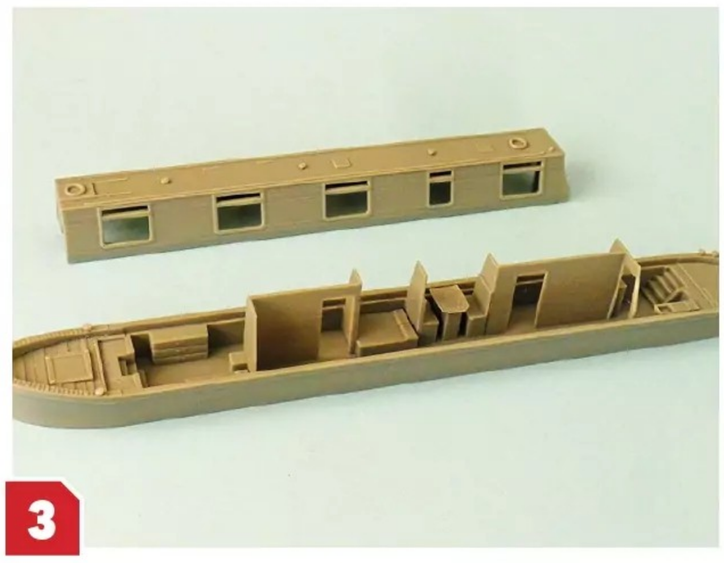
1

Here are the parts of the LitPrints 3D-printed canal lock and narrowboat, which is rendered in a grey polymer with a pleasing dressed stone texture to the interior walls. The lock gates are made up of several parts.



2

The lock was glued together with Revell Contacta adhesive, after cleaning up any imperfections with the edge of a fresh scalpel blade. The kit is designed to allow the lock gates to be hinged.

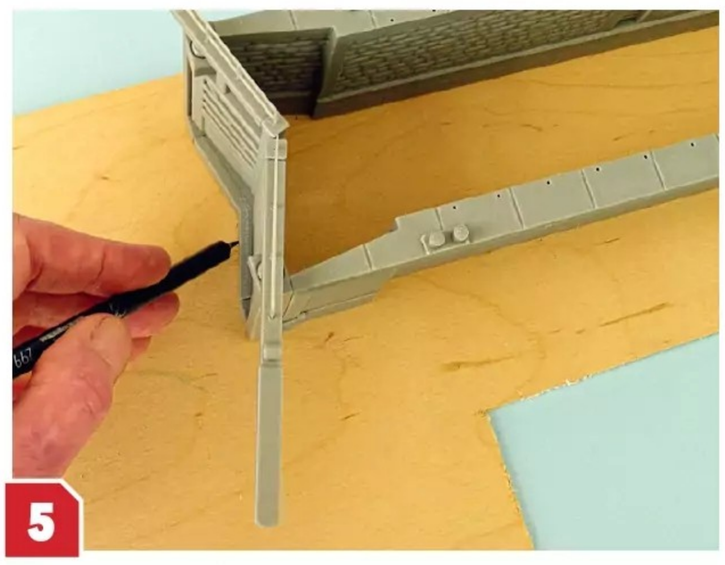


3

The narrowboat features a hull, complete with interior, and an upper body shell. The parts can be painted and detailed – including the fitting of clear styrene glazing, before assembly – but more on this later...

4

The main building materials needed: a sheet of 3mm thick plywood, 2mm sheet styrene, 1mm thick clear plastic sheet and 6mm square brass tube. As well as the boat's glazing, the clear styrene sheet is used to make the water effects.

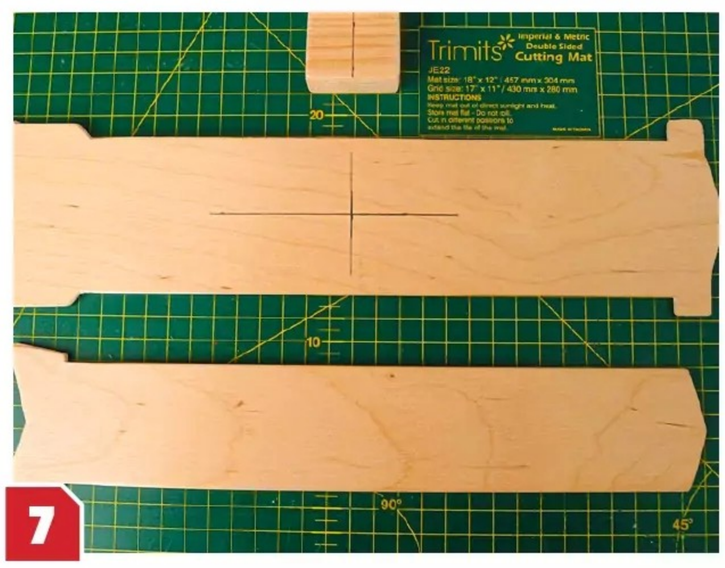


5

The only modification required to the 3D-printed canal lock kit is to make a plywood base for the overall canal basin. Mark the outline of the base onto plywood using the ends and sides of the lock as a guide.

6

Cut the plywood to form the canal footprint, and mark the outline of the water base platform for the interior of the lock onto another sheet of 3mm plywood. Mark out the shape, leaving a 2mm margin.

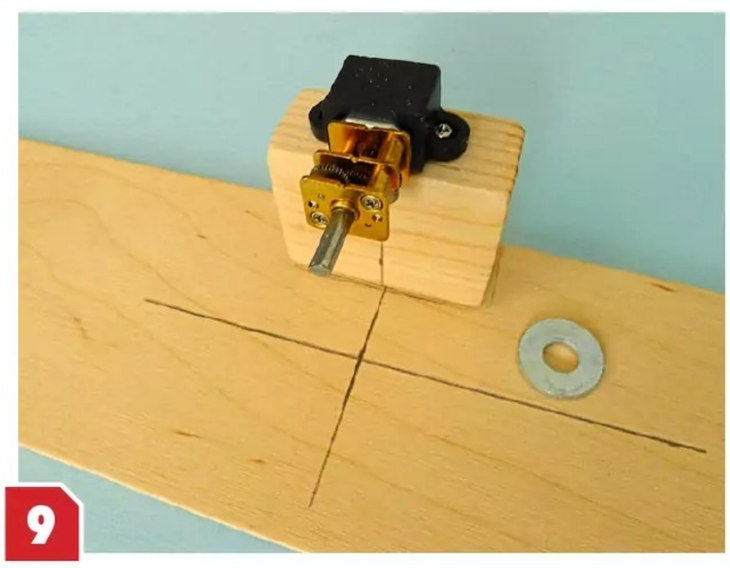


7

Here are the two cut sections of plywood. Run some sandpaper along the cut edges to ensure the surface is smooth and any splinters have been removed.

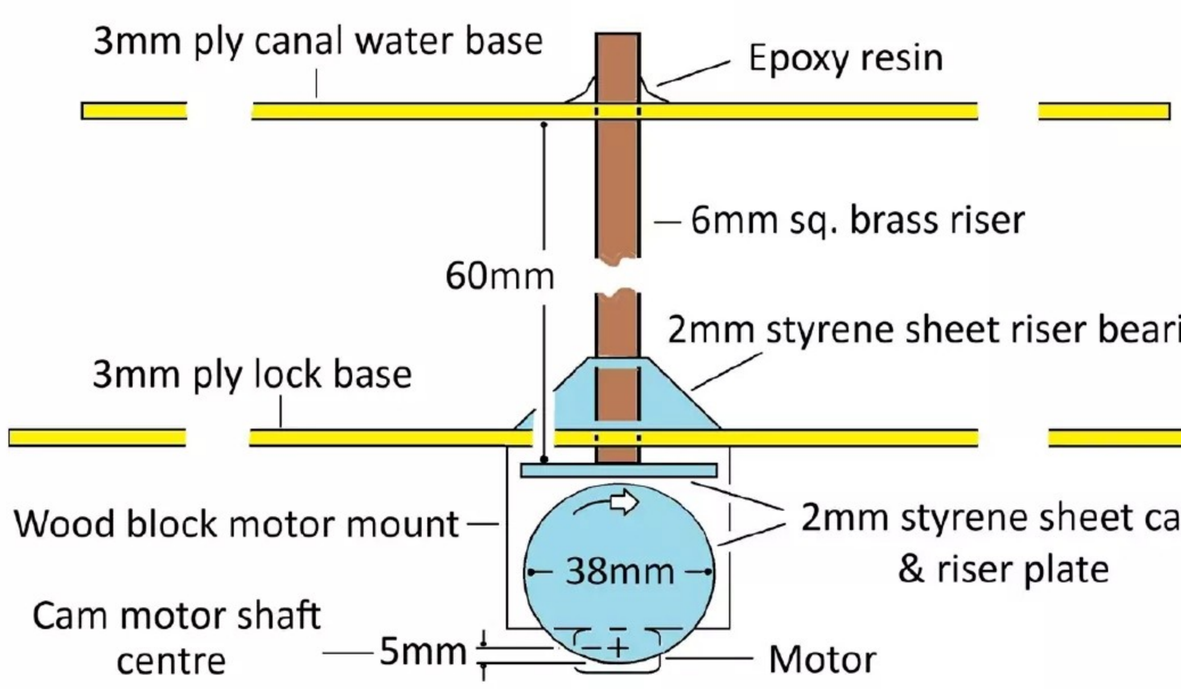
8

Carefully discern and mark the centre of the lock base as a guide for the position of the riser tube bearing and motor mount, which can be cut from a block of wood.

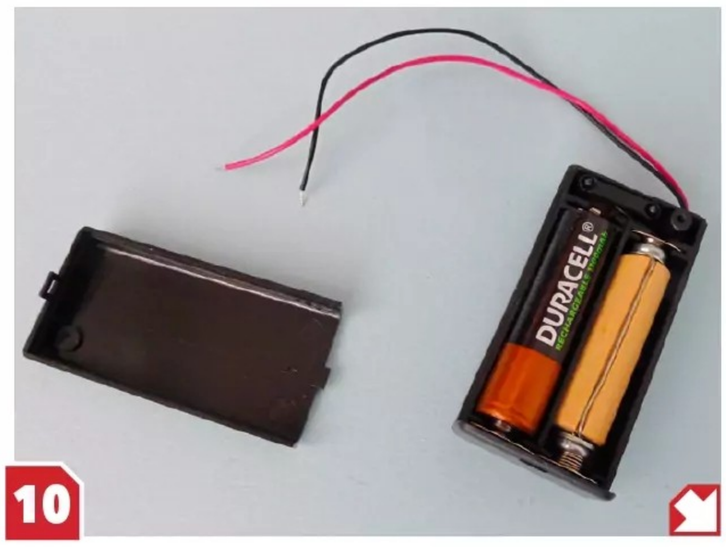


9

The geared motor is screwed to the wood block and a washer can be inserted between the wood block and plywood base to adjust the height of the water base platform.

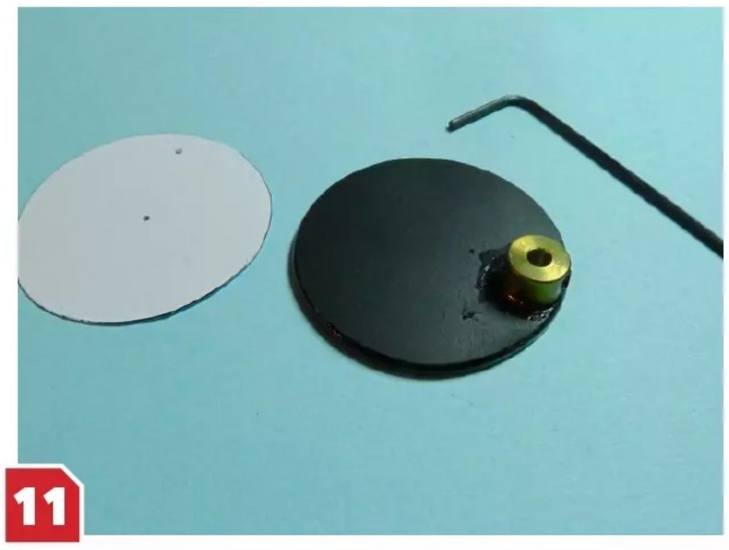


Schematic diagram with dimensions showing the water base platform in the raised position.

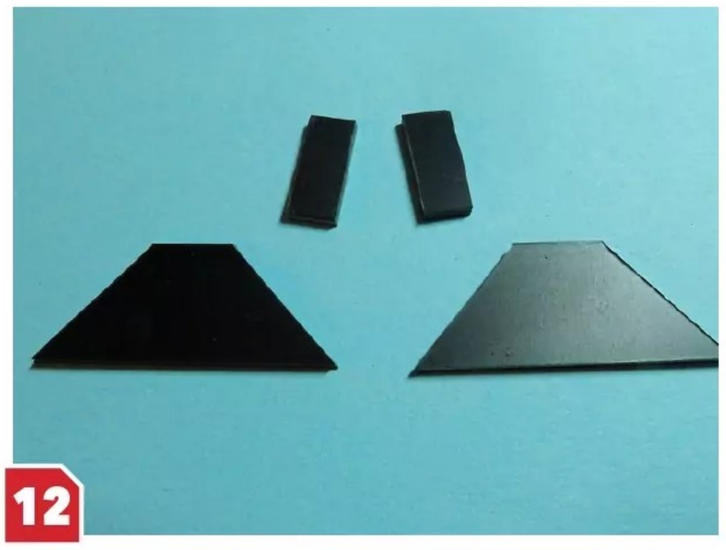


10

The 2xAA holder keeps everything tidy. A slow operating speed is required, so the motor only needs power from a single battery. A shorting plug was made using wood dowel with screws inserted at each end, linked by a length of wire.

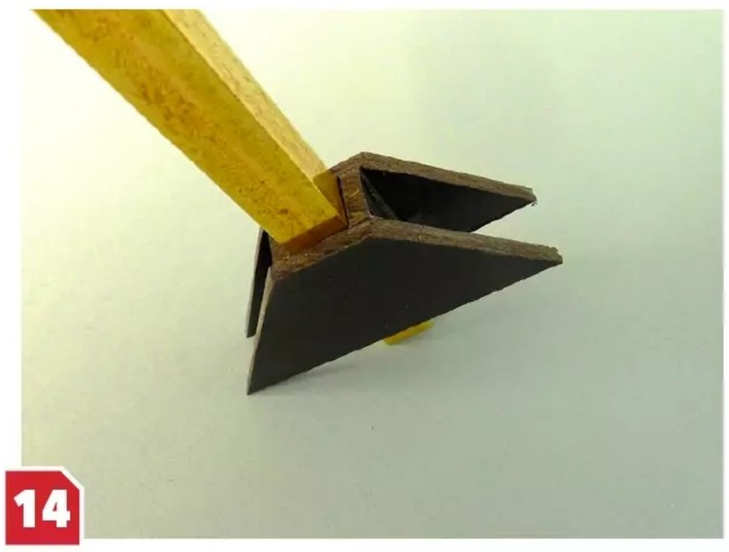


11 The operating cam is cut from styrene sheet and a model radio-controlled aircraft wheel retaining collet was epoxied near the edge for fastening to the motor shaft with a grub screw.



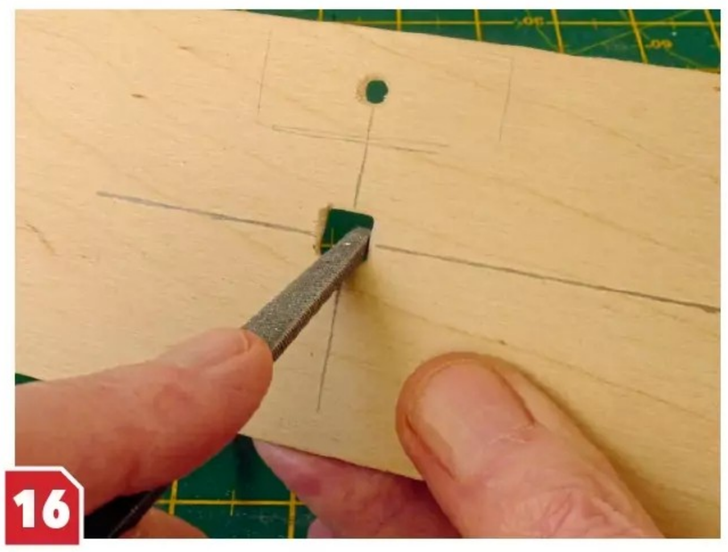
12 The riser bearing sides were marked out and cut from the 2mm thick styrene sheet.

13 The square brass riser tube is used as a guide for assembling the riser bearing components, bonding them together with poly cement. The brass tube needs to slide within the bearing, so it needs to move freely, but not sloppily..



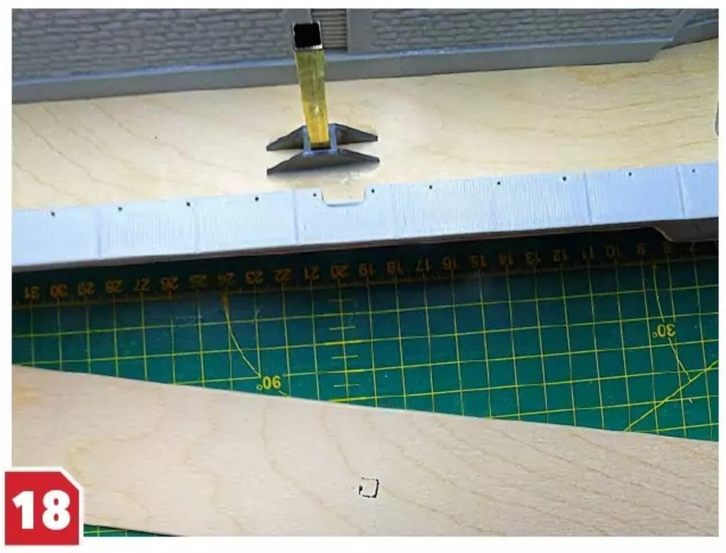
14 The completed riser bearing assembly. Check the parts have been assembled squarely, then allow the poly cement to cure fully, preferably overnight.

15 One end of the brass tube was plugged tightly with wooden cocktail sticks, which were trimmed flush. This provided a secure attachment for the styrene cam plate, which was drilled and screwed into position.

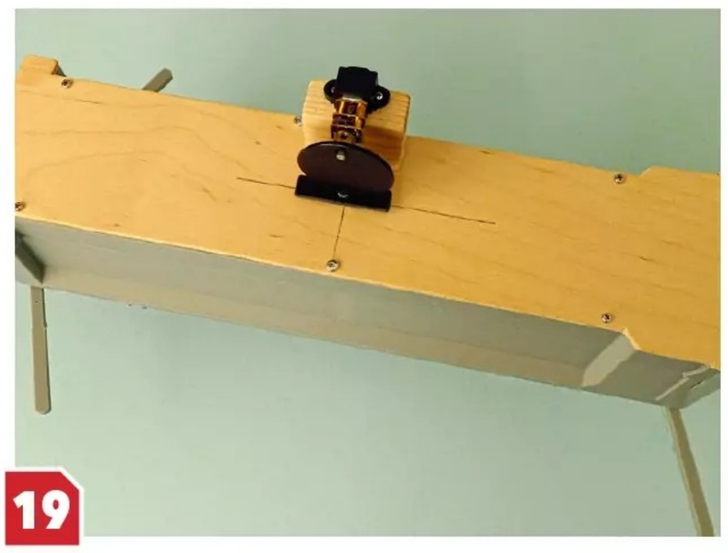


16 After drilling a pilot hole into the plywood canal base, a square-edged file was used to create a suitable opening for the square brass riser tube to pass through.

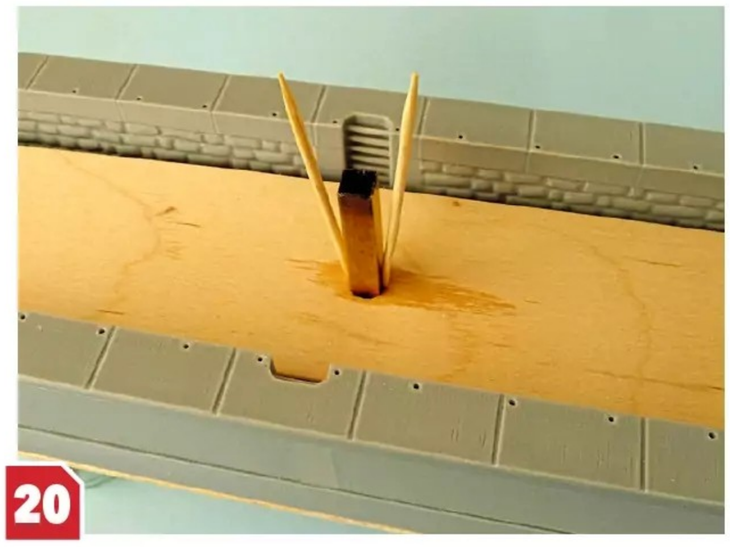
17 Blu Tack temporarily held the riser bearing assembly in place on the plywood lock base, while double-checking that the bearing was square, before applying epoxy resin adhesive to bond it into position.



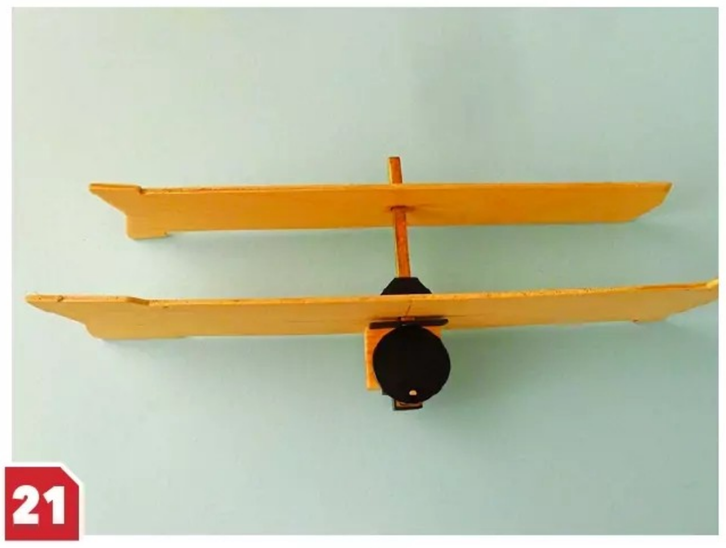
18 With the lock base in position, the position of the top of the tube is marked onto the platform by covering the edge of the brass with pen. The water base was dropped into the lock and the position of the required hole was then revealed.



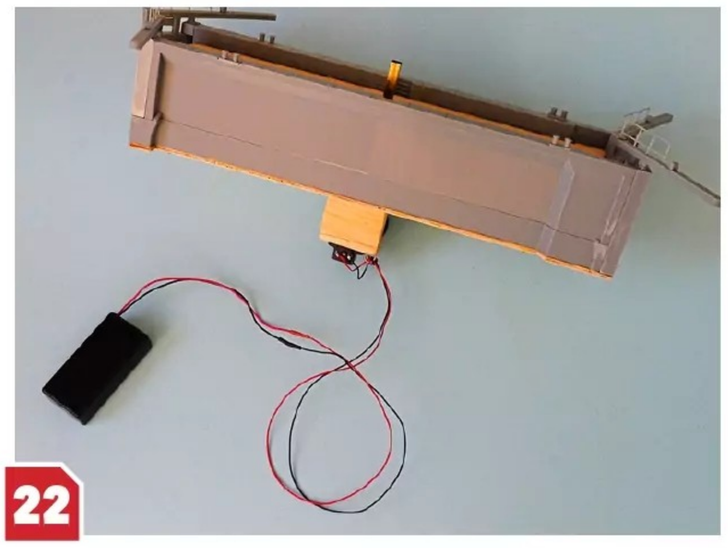
19 The geared motor and cam assembly was fastened to the lock base with self-tapping screws. The same screws also fixed the plywood to the base of the 3D-printed lock walls.



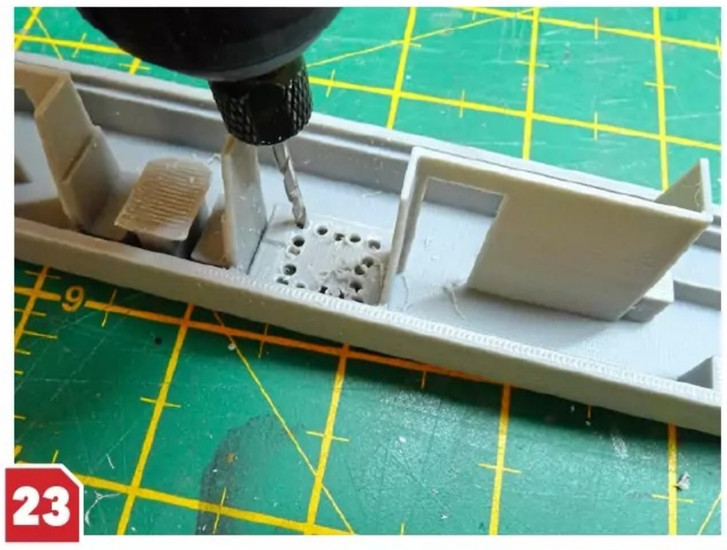
20 Cocktail sticks were used to wedge the riser tube into the hole in the water base, allowing checks to be made for clearance against the lock sides. Throughly test the operation of the mechanism after hooking up the battery pack.



21 A view of the mechanism. The brass tube slides up and down through the bearing in the lower section, actuated by the rotating cam. When everything was working OK, the upper base was bonded to the brass tube with epoxy.

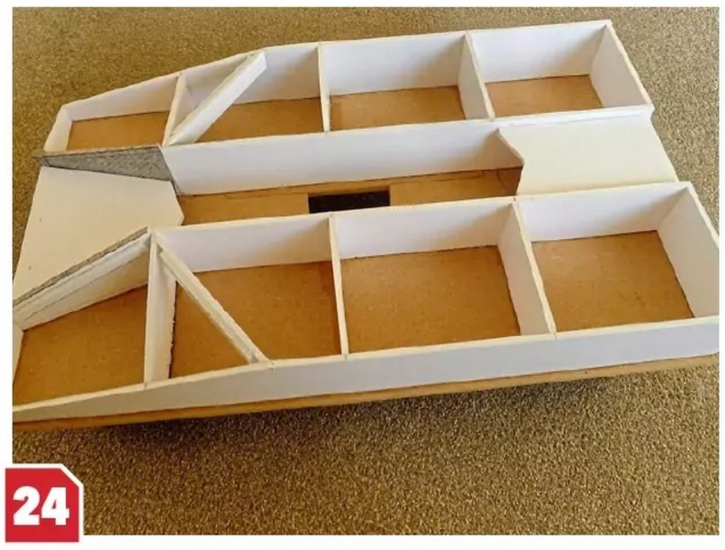


22 With the mechanism re-fitted to the lock structure, extension wires were soldered between the battery holder and motor for a flexible operating position.



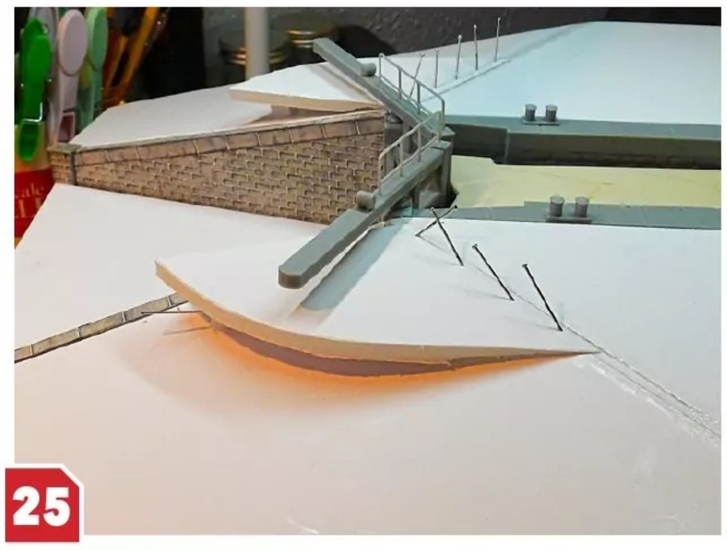
23

The canal boat hull was drilled out to allow it to sit over the protruding end of the riser tube and the interior and exterior of the boat could then be painted with the windows glazed using clear polystyrene sheet.



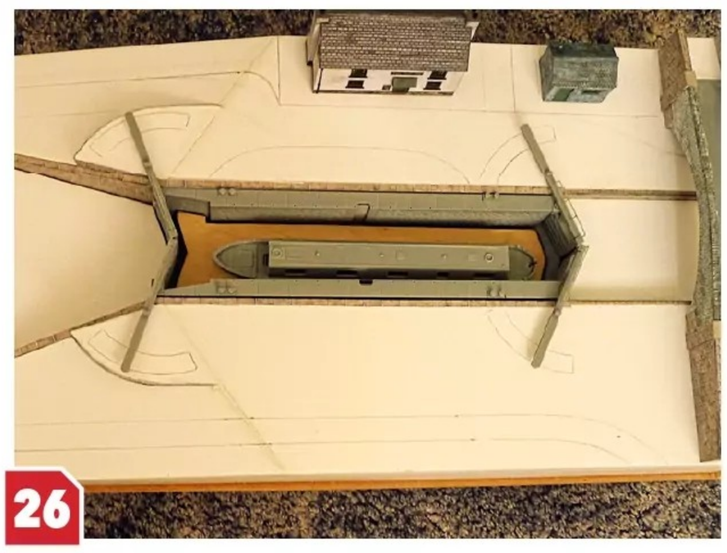
24

Foamboard was used to make the substructure to accommodate the lock and a hole cut out in the baseboard for the mechanism. Foamboard was also used for the base of the canal at each end – note the different levels at left and right.



25

The walls were made from printed stone card glued onto the foamboard formers. Curved sections of groundwork were also formed from foamboard for the stepways The foam was held in place with nails while the PVA glue set.



26

Structures were added to the scene, including a pub, with the rear wall cut away to allow it to fit. A Ratio plastic hut kit and a road overbridge kit from Ancorton Models were installed, along with approach roads at each end of the bridge.

27

The canal 'water', including that within the lock, was created from sheets of clear plastic, with each section cut to fit and painted a muddy brown colour on the underside. I used a Revel enamel-based paint, applied by brush.

28

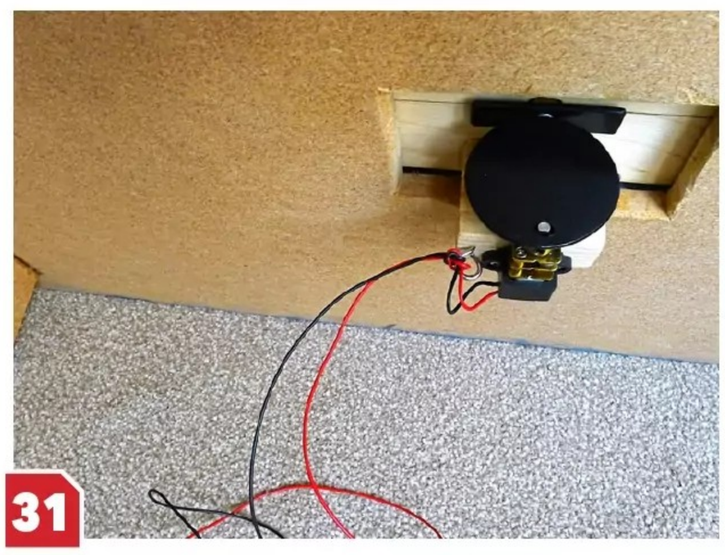
After painting the footpaths and then adding the greenery, a few figures complete the scene. The entire diorama measures just 60cm by 36cm. A railway bridge could be installed instead of the road bridge.

29

Water pouring through gaps in the lock gates and ripples on the water surface were replicated using Woodland Scenics Water Effects. Black paint wash was brushed over the printed stone card to give it a lived-in appearance.

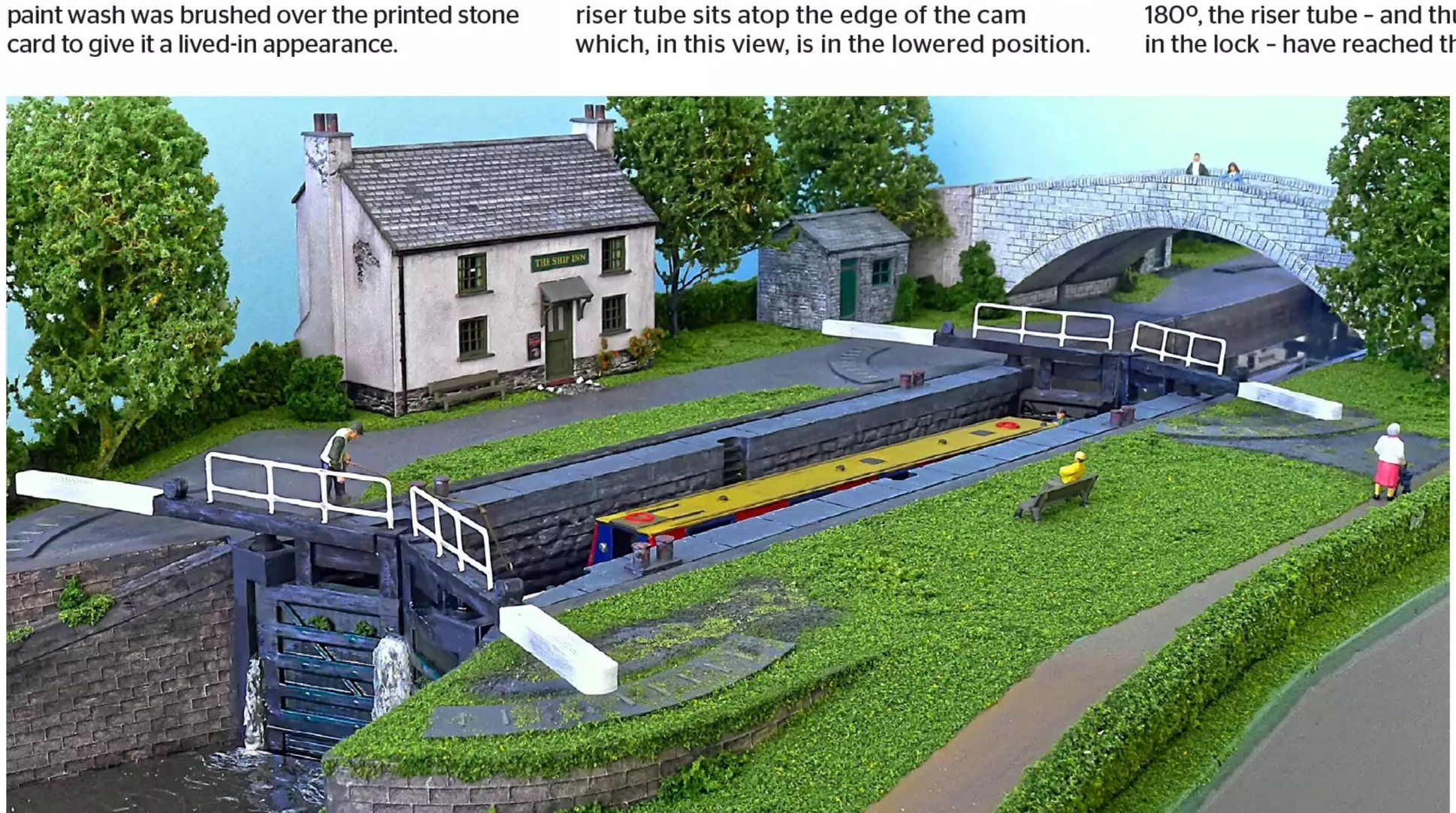
30

Here's the cam system below the diorama, which protrudes through the square hole mentioned in Step 24. The plastic base of the riser tube sits atop the edge of the cam which, in this view, is in the lowered position.



31

When power is applied, the cam rotates on its axis, which begins to push the tube gradually upwards. With the cam having rotated through 180º, the riser tube – and thus the 'water' level in the lock – have reached their apex.



Left: The mechanism has cycled through its movement to gradually lower the 'water' level and allow the boat to fall.

The concrete apron of Ponts Mill china clay loading facility was created from artists' mounting card, carefully scored to represent separately cast sections, with weeds appearing through the cracks. CHRIS NEVARD

PART 2

HOW TO

BUILDING PONTS MILL

After outlining the baseboard construction last month, **Peter Marriott** turns his attention to laying the track and installing a concrete apron on his new Cornish-themed layout.

PHOTOGRAPHY: PETER MARRIOTT, CHRIS NEVARD

With just two points, a headshunt and three short sidings, the track layout for this project was never going to set the hearts of track plan enthusiasts aflame. However, as a reliable inglenook design it cannot be faulted.

Within compact dimensions, it permits shunting of several wagons using one of today's state-of-the-art shunting locomotives, in the form of an all-new Bachmann Class 08 with DCC-operated auto-release tension lock couplings.

Usually on 'OO' gauge layouts I would use Peco flat-bottomed rail track, in either Code 100 or Code 75 format. In this instance, I opted for Peco's Bullhead rail range. I am

OO GAUGE | 8 hrs

very pleased with the results, not only in terms of its appearance, which is much more authentic for a sleepy branch line in British Rail days, but also because it has performed extremely well, allowing the modern rolling stock to run reliably.

Furthermore, Peco's matching turnouts (I used a pair of medium radius points) employ the new Unifrog system, which is a vast improvement over insulated frogs (the crossing 'V' section of the point). There's still the option of electrically switching polarities if required, as per the traditional Electrofrog system, but these new versions speed up track laying and wiring, especially for those building simpler, smaller layouts and when working in DCC. Each Peco turnout comes with helpful installation and wiring instructions, so there's little point in repeating the information here.

One challenge I did encounter with the Peco track came from the small, conductive rail joiners, which I found quite fiddly. But once I'd worked out a way of easing their travel onto the rail ends, the process became easier. It's important to ensure a secure bond, though, so compressing them against the rails once they're installed will help ensure proper conductivity. That said, adding extra track power feeds around

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- Peco • SL108F flexible track • SLU1195 left-hand turnout • SLU1196 right-hand turnout • SL1140 bufferstop • SL114 fishplates **Availability:** Peco stockists **Web:** *www.peco-uk.com*
- Mounting cardboard **Availability:** Art and craft stores
- Woodland Scenics • Foam Putty • Scenic Glue • Static-Tac adhesive • 2mm static grass fibres **Availability:** Bachmann stockists **Web:** *www.bachmann.co.uk*

TOOLS

- Pliers
- Flat screwdriver
- Craft knife
- Self-sealing cutting board
- Steel ruler
- Static grass puffer bottle
- Paintbrushes

a layout is always recommended, rather than relying on metal rail joiners alone to maintain continuity.

Peco's matching bullhead rail-built bufferstops were also employed on the layout, with each pack providing parts for two stop blocks. The plastic parts are easy to assemble, and the finished units slot onto the rails and simply require painting to finish. This latter step was achieved at the same time as painting the sides of the rails with a suitable brown shade of paint.

CONCRETE DECISION

The china clay loading facility, around which this layout is based, demanded a concrete apron around the track, which was created using regular artists' mounting card. This material is widely available from art and craft stores, usually offered in various colours. I plumped for sheets of white-faced card, as the surroundings would need to be covered in the distinctive white dust anyway, so this would save some of the weathering work.

After cutting several strips of the card, fettling the sections to fit around and within the rails, typical scalpel blades will soon become dull. While sharp blades are necessary to effect clean, accurate cuts, I retained a blunt blade to score cosmetic panel section lines into the card, after it had been bonded to the baseboard's surface. This blunt blade created shallow cuts, with slightly rough edges, giving the 'concrete' sections a realistically imperfect texture. A few random cracks were added here and there, too.

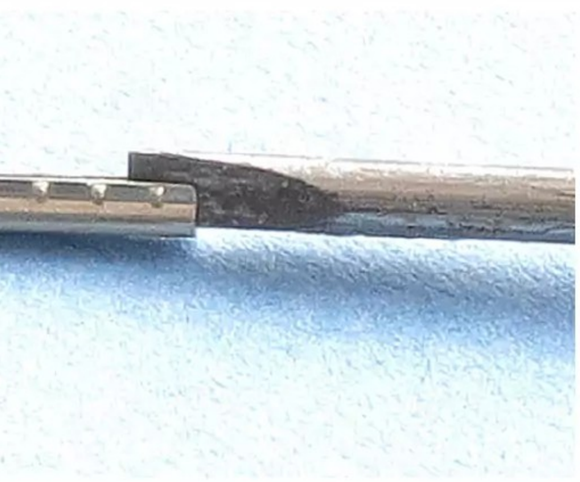
Although there was no point in painting the completed apron, I did run a highly thinned wash of black acrylic paint over the surface to bring out some of the card's surface texture, as well as bringing greater definition to the scored panel seams.

Once this wash had fully dried, I planted some weeds using 2mm static grass fibres along the joins between the supposed concrete panels which proved fun to do and gave a nice realistic finish to the simple project.

STEP BY STEP

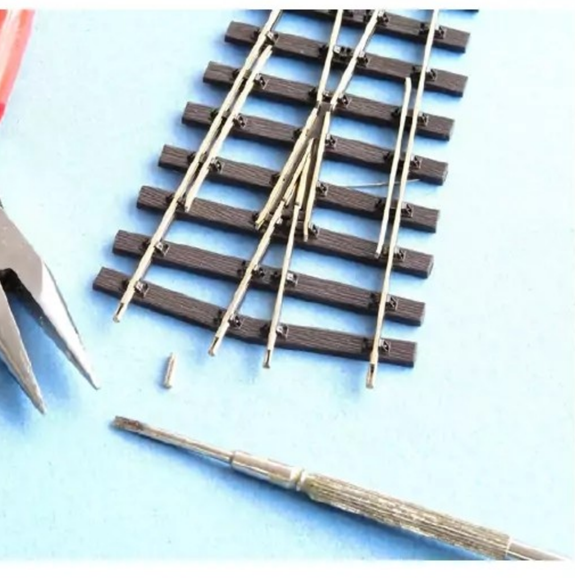
1

For my inglenook-style layout plan, I required two lengths of Peco Code 75 bullhead rail flexible track, plus a pair of turnouts (one left-hand and one right-hand). I also purchased a pack of Peco's matching rail-built bufferstop kits.



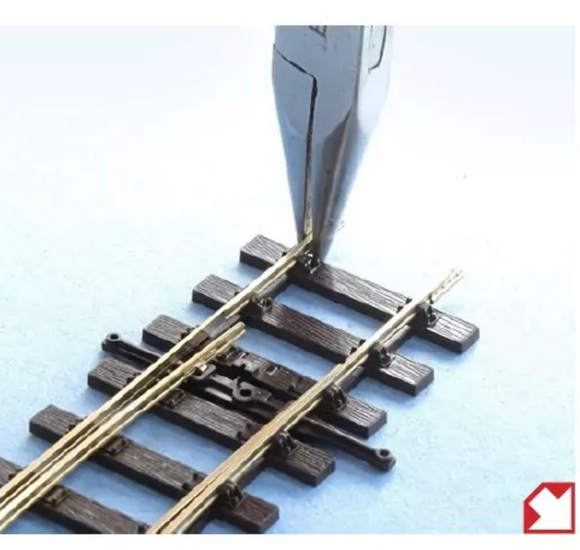
2

Peco's conducting bullhead rail joiners are designed to mimic prototypical fishplates, although I found them a tad difficult to slide onto the rail ends. Teasing them open with a small flat screwdriver helped.



3

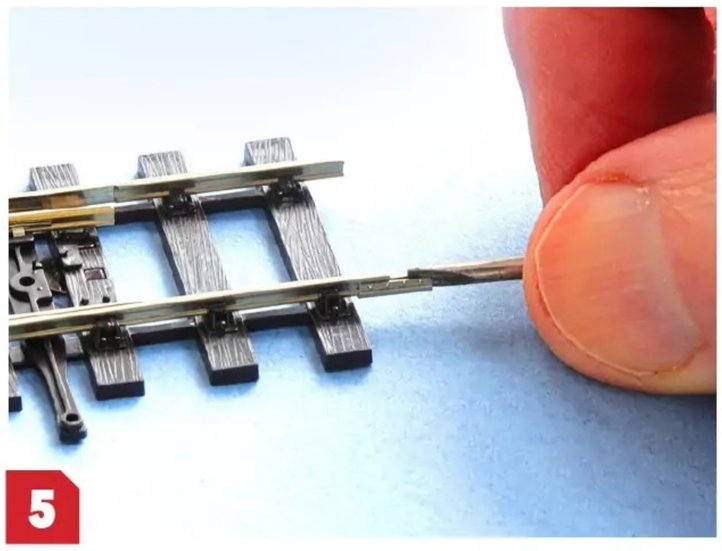
The rail joiners were then slid into position, aiming to position them with the rails of each track section halfway into the joiner, just like the prototype. A small set of pliers were used to gently push them into place.



4

The pliers were then used to squeeze the joiners slightly, ensuring a tight fit to the rails for a strong bond and full electrical conductivity.

Ensuring adequate clearance for locomotive and rolling stock wheels is essential when fixing sections of 'concrete' between the rails. Test-running all your stock, and fettling the card accordingly will ensure trouble-free running.

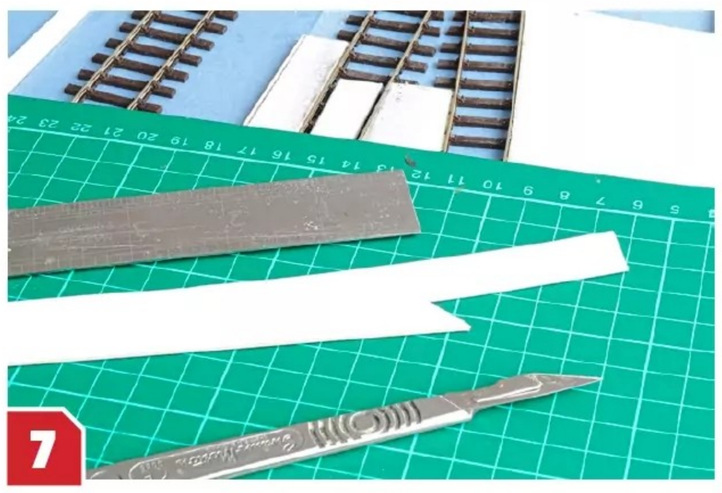


5

The process of opening the slots slightly was repeated before joining with the next section of track, then again squeezing the joiner with the pliers. Adding plenty of track power feeds throughout a layout is worthwhile, to ensure against poor conductivity in future.

6

To create the concrete apron into which the rails are set, artists' mounting card was employed. A first layer was cut and fixed beside the rails to act as a spacer, allowing the top layer of card to sit atop the sleepers of the Peco track.



7

The mounting card is about 1.5mm thick and is best cut with a fresh scalpel blade, working against a steel rule on a cutting mat. Card tends to dull blades quickly, so keep a few spares handy and make cuts in two or more passes to avoid wandering off course.

8

To cut the sections to match the track's curved profile, I placed a strip of card over the rails and exerted pressure with my thumb to create an indentation on the underside. This was then fine-tuned with a pencil before cutting.

9

To provide clearance over the moulded rail chairs, I chamfered the lower edges of the card sections, test-fitting and fettling until the fit was good. I then ran a black marker pen along the card's exposed white edges.

10

The card sections were secured with a PVA-type glue, holding them in place with weights (piles of books were useful) while the adhesive cured. Excess glue was wiped away with a damp cloth.

11

Once the glue had dried, I scored lines into the surface to represent concrete panels. Deeper lines will be more obvious than shallow cuts, although the depth can be exaggerated with a coating of dark weathering wash.

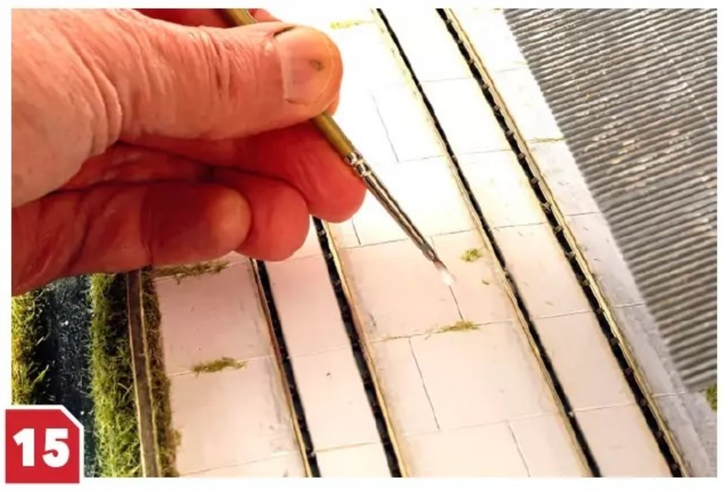
12

After studying images of the real location, I realised a low wall was required along the edge of the concrete apron, so I cut a strip of dense foamboard and glued it in position.

13 Any unwanted gaps between the sections of card, and along the base of the low wall, were filled with Woodland Scenics Foam Putty, leaving it to dry overnight before smoothing any rough edges the next day with sandpaper.

14

Before continuing, it was vital to check clearance for wheel flanges, using all the different wagons and locomotives destined to operate the layout, as tolerances inevitably differ. Any tight spots were addressed with a sharp scalpel and all debris removed.



15

The off-white card was left unpainted, given the nature of the layout's china clay operations, although a few shiny areas created by stray glue were tempered by matt varnish. I brushed a little Static-Tac adhesive along some of the joins in the concrete apron.

16

A 'puffer' bottle was filled with 2mm static grass fibres, which were 'squirted' onto the wet Static-Tac adhesive. The glue was allowed to dry before blowing away any excess, unsecured fibres.

17

The Static-Tac adhesive dries invisible, leaving the weeds to accentuate the cracks in the apron and give the area an aged, lived-in appearance.

Aging the ballast

After ballasting the track and adding the surrounding greenery, the fine stone looked too clean for this rarely used branch line, so I mixed a few drops of Woodland Scenics Stone Grey Earth Colours with water. This diluted mix was then delivered to the ballast (once the glue had dried thoroughly) via a pipette.

The thinned paint finds its own way among the uneven ballast surface and, once it dries out, it takes on a matt sheen. With the dark grey pigment adding greater definition to the stone chippings, the results were subtle but effective.

Peco's 'OO' gauge Code 75 bullhead rail track offers modellers the means to accurately portray typical UK branch lines in the pre-privatisation era.
CHRIS NEVARD

HOW TO

REFURBISH KITMASTER COACHES

Can **Chris Leigh** manage to make a serviceable Southern Region express formation from a donated carrier bag of elderly Kitmaster Mk 1 coaches?

PHOTOGRAPHY: GEORGE DENT, CHRIS LEIGH

A fool's errand, a great piece of recycling, or just an old chap trying to recapture his mis-spent youth? I'll leave you to decide. It all began with a carrier bag of Kitmaster coaches left at a Kettering Model Railway Society meeting with the words, "They're free to a good home." At the end of the evening no one had taken them, so I did.

In the early 1960s, Rosebud Kitmaster was a prolific producer of moulded plastic kits. The Rosebud Dolls Company in Raunds, Northamptonshire, had introduced a novel plant for manufacturing dolls in high volume using polystyrene mouldings. It was these machines, 25 of them, with the expertise of toolmaker Dennis Franklin, which were used to produce the Kitmaster range of easy-to-assemble plastic railway kits.

00 GAUGE | **MODEL** Kitmaster Mk 1 coach kits | **AVAILABILITY** Second-hand and collectable dealers, online auction sites | 4 hrs per coach

At first the kits were merely for unpowered locomotives, but other companies and individuals soon began to produce motorising kits. Kitmaster was a game-changer because at that time neither Hornby nor Tri-ang paid close attention to dimensional accuracy. Moreover, those manufacturers produced only 'shorty' coaches, and it was the decision to produce full scale-length BR Mk 1 coaches in kit form that really brought Kitmaster to the fore and prompted the others to follow suit.

Like the proprietary manufacturers, Kitmaster chose, first, to produce a Corridor Composite (CK) and Brake Second (BSK) to which it later added a Restaurant First (RF) and an Open Second (SO). The Restaurant car was a curious choice as the coach was an open, dining vehicle with no Kitchen and was

always operated as a pair with a Kitchen car, which Kitmaster never made.

The bag of models contained parts for at least eight coaches, including two or three restaurant cars but no brake vehicles. I found a Brake Second easily enough, on eBay. With ready-to-run coaches now costing anything from £40-£80 each, I felt that I could afford to spend some money on upgrading the bogies.

I bought Bachmann bogies which have integral tension-lock couplings and are an easy fit on the Kitmaster mounting bosses. They eliminate the need to re-wheel Kitmaster bogies and they also solve the issue of couplings. At £12.95 per pair, they are the most expensive aspect of the rebuilds, but are well worth the expenditure.

I began by assessing which of the coaches I would refurbish and which ones I would cannibalise for parts, particularly window glazing. The surfeit of Restaurant cars proved extremely useful window donors but they were also the only Kitmasters which had interior detail and that interior is not suitable for any other vehicle. A couple of the models had been fitted with Peco card interior details and these were salvaged for re-use.

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- Comet Models B21S BR Mk 1 Kitchen car brass sides **Price:** £18.00
  Availability: Wizard Models
  Web: *www.wizardmodels.ltd*
- RailMatch paints, adhesives, masking tapes
  Availability: Model shops or Gaugemaster
  Web: *www.gaugemasterretail.com*

TOOLS

- Craft knife and spare blades
- Tweezers
- Needle files
- Fine abrasive sheets
- Masking tape
- Drill and bits
- Paintbrushes

Kitmaster never produced the Mk 1 Kitchen car, so Chris made use of a set of etched replacement sides from the Comet range.

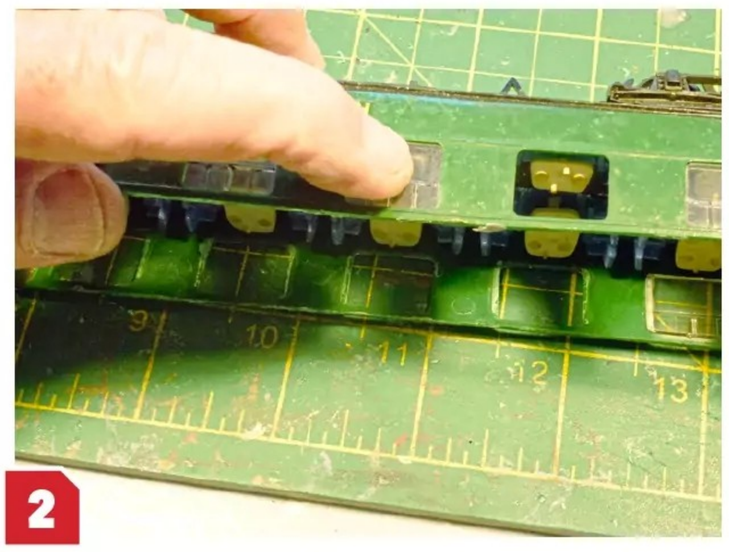
Restored, repainted and with an enhanced interior, Chris now has a Restaurant and Kitchen car pair, which is operating within his 'Ocean Liner Express' rake behind a Bulleid 'Merchant Navy'.

I found two features which worked in my favour and would probably be much the same for any secondhand Kitmaster coaches. Firstly, the 1960s adhesives were poor, especially if the original owner used the little capsule of adhesive supplied with the kit. Secondly, (and I don't wish to be critical here) but the standard of assembly (often by younger modellers) was generally pretty poor. This meant that they might come apart easily but some areas would have an excess of glue.

My aim was to restore six coaches to create an 'Ocean Liner Express' to accompany my recently renamed 'Merchant Navy' No. 35012 *United States Lines*. I achieved my goal and have enough leftovers for at least one more vehicle, though I am also including a Hornby Pullman car (as 'Ocean Liner Expresses' often did) and six cars is really the limit for my station platforms. ➤

STEP BY STEP

1 The roofs were seldom well fitted and were quite easy to remove by inserting a blade and levering. The guard's periscopes indicate that this is the wrong roof fitted to a Restaurant car.

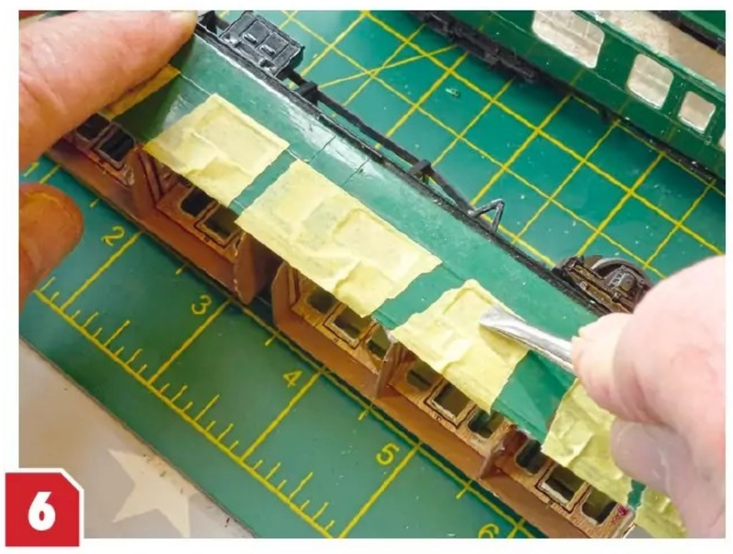


2 Loose window glazing could be pushed out. It was largely the fit of the window glazing that decided which coaches were renovated. Those with loose glazing generally became donors.

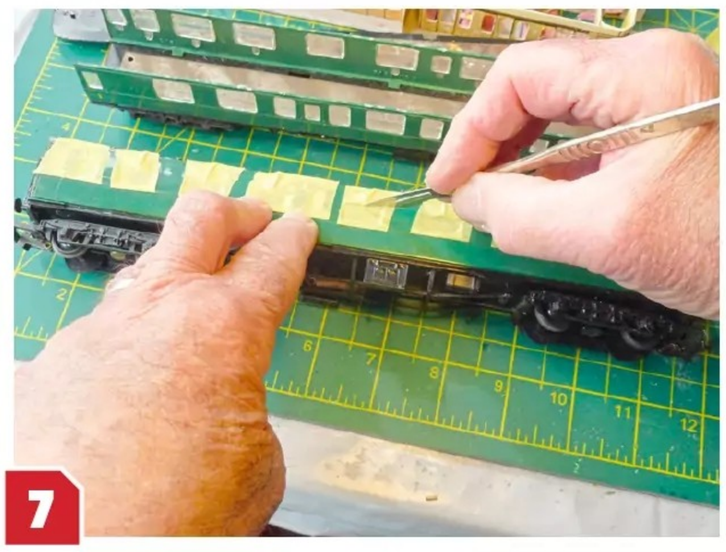
3 Where necessary, the Peco printed paper interiors were removed by slipping a steel rule under them to break the glue joint. The interiors were set aside to be renovated and refitted later.

4 The bodysides have two raised ribs to aid lining the maroon versions. I removed what I could by scraping with a knife, avoiding details, followed by a rub-down with fine abrasive paper wrapped around a block of hard wood.

5 Some window mouldings had become slightly clouded or dirty. I had some limited success improving them with T-Cut on a cotton bud, but I replaced any that were beyond remedy.

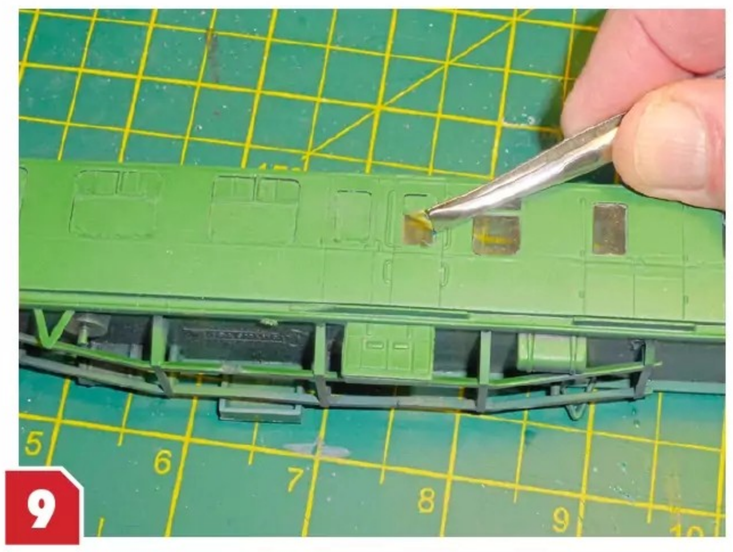


6 With the sides ready and all the glazing fitted, I began masking the outside of all the glazing using Tamiya masking tape, using tweezers to press the masking tape closely round the edges of the vent windows before cutting it.



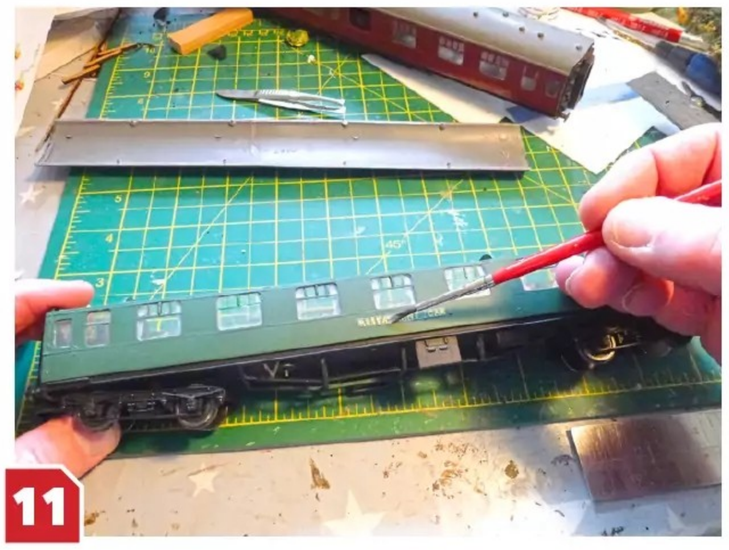
7 Using a scalpel, I cut the masking, using the raised detail as a guide and peeling away the excess with tweezers. This was time-consuming, but it's the window frames must match the rest of the bodyside.

8 With the roof in place to protect the interior from overspray, I sprayed the coach with Halford's grey primer – sides ends and roof. After 24 hours, the primer was dry enough for the green to be sprayed.



9 Using a pointed blade and tweezers, I carefully removed the masking. Having tried the dark green on one coach, I used SR malachite on the others as it's closer to the shade I remember.

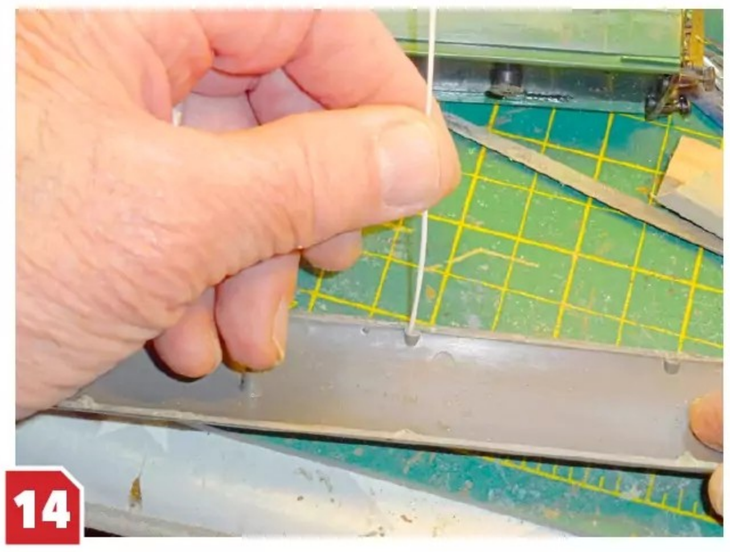
10 The Restaurant car was the only Kitmaster coach to be supplied with interior details. I left it in situ before re-spraying the exterior with RailMatch Southern Region coach green. I then repainted the interior, including the tabletops.



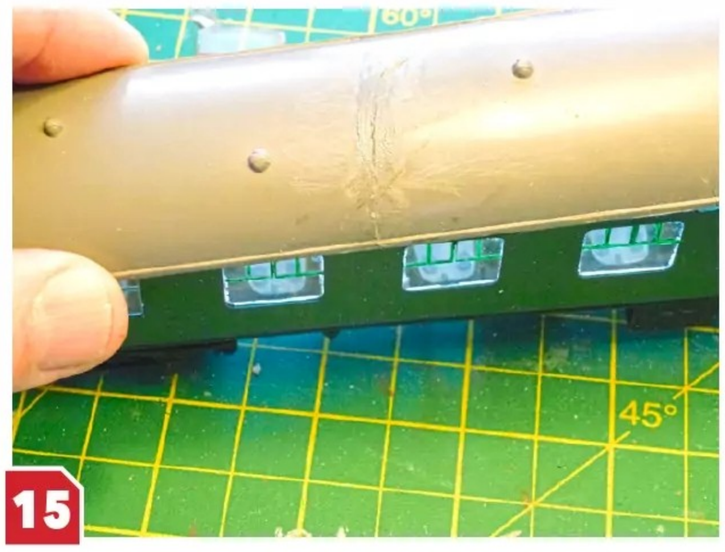
11 With the masking removed, the benefit of painting the vent window frames can be seen. I used HMRS Pressfix transfers for the lettering, soaking off the backing with a brush of clean water.

12 Recovered windows. The top ones need cleaning up. Builders often made the mistake of leaving the bottom 'tag' in place. I removed it. The toilet window will be painted white inside.

13 The Kitmaster roofs were always a difficult part to fit neatly, and modellers tended to use excessive glue in order to try and do so. I cleaned all the residual glue off the roof edges using files and abrasive paper.



14 In the hope of achieving a neater, more reliable fit of the roof, I took care to tidy up the locating pins, replacing them if necessary with plastic rod, bonded into shallow drilled holes where necessary, using liquid poly cement.



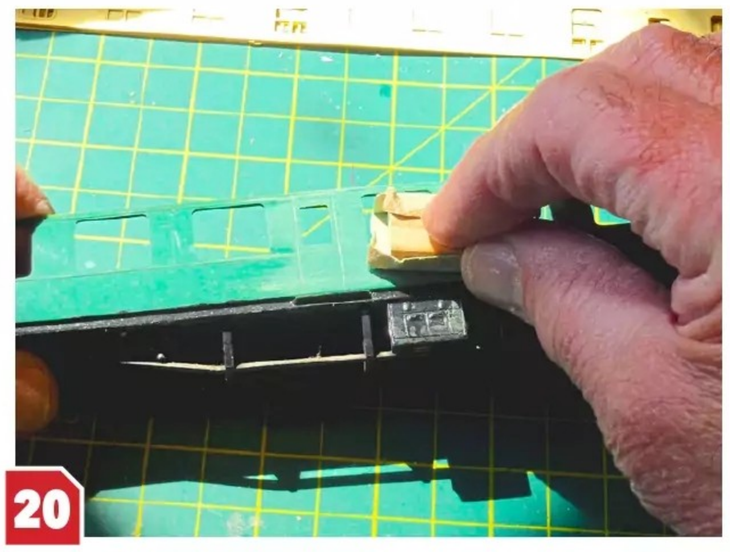
15 Among the roof mouldings, I found only one that was correct for the Restaurant car, with very few vents. However, it was badly split and thus required repair with liquid polystyrene cement.

16 For those carriages without interiors, I found some old Peco interior kits for sale on eBay. They were in good condition but needed a couple of nights under some heavy books to flatten them out.

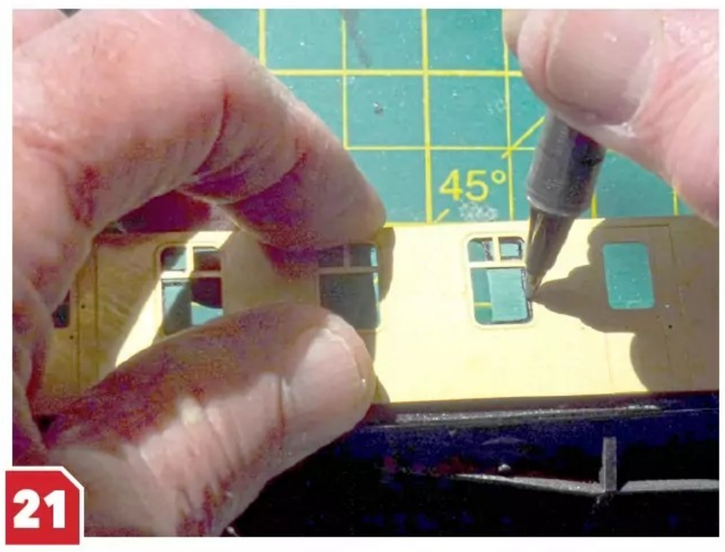
17 The lack of an interior can be a problem, as the Mk 1 coach has large windows. I had enough bits to make up an Open Second (SO), but had to make the interior from styrene and balsa. I added some cheap seated figures (eBay).

18 I used liquid polystyrene cement around the roof ends and relied on the locating pins and little or no adhesive along the sides to hold the roof in place. Elastic bands hold it until the glue dries.

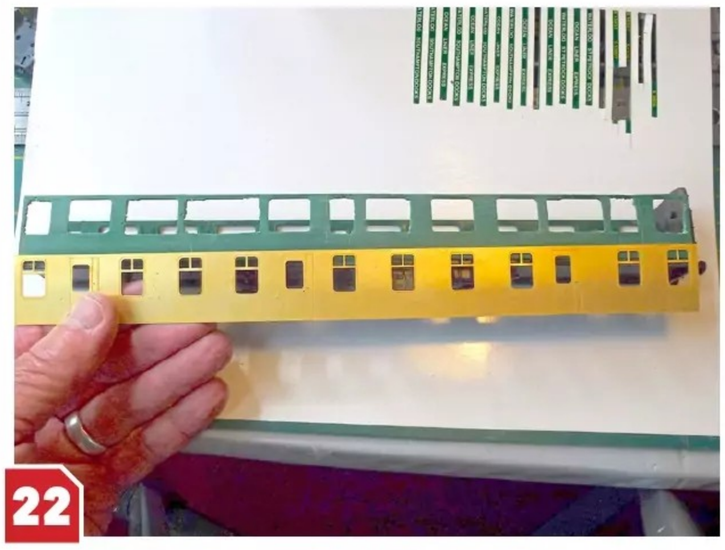
19 I decided that the Restaurant First needed a full Kitchen car to accompany it, so I ordered a pair of Comet Models etched Kitchen car sides from Wizard Models. No interior will be needed as this coach had obscured glass.



20 All raised detail had to be abraded from the donor coach sides to allow the etched overlays to fit flush. All windows were removed. The brass sides needed a few strokes with a fine file to remove residual tags from the edges.

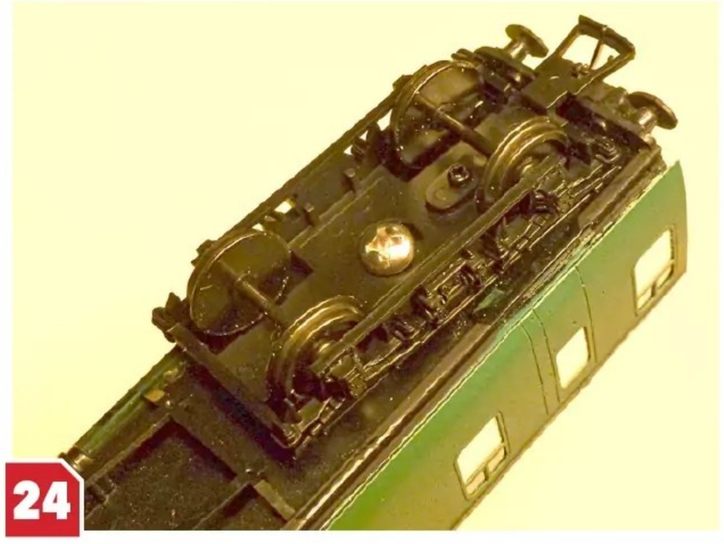


21 With the overlay held in place temporarily, I marked all the areas of plastic that needed to be removed for window openings. As the windows are opaque, I might have got away without doing this.



22 Large sections of the original coach sides needed to be cut away in order to clear the windows of the Kitchen car panels, leaving a very skeletal plastic side to support the etched sheet.

23 I painted and glazed the etched sides, painting the inside of the glazing white where necessary, before applying Evo-Stik Impact to the plastic side and glueing the etched overlay in place.



24 Finally, I fitted Bachmann bogies, BR1 or Commonwealth, to all my Kitmaster rebuilds. The pivot bosses were drilled to remove the old pin and a self-tapping flat-headed screw used to mount the bogie.

200+ YEARS OF THE RAILWAY IN MINIATURE

The urge to create model trains can be traced back to the genesis of the real railway. **George Dent** examines how what was once a pastime of the affluent few became a mass-market hobby that endures to this day.

There's compelling evidence that youngsters are drawn towards layouts that feature contemporary subjects, making the miniature scenes more relatable. This is 'Nictun', a 'OO' gauge layout built by members of Fareham Model Railway Club. CHRIS NEVARD

It has been hard to miss all the brouhaha surrounding this year's bicentenary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, which was the world's first 'proper' public railway. Most of the focus has, unsurprisingly, focused on the full-scale trains and the impact of the railways on the UK's – and the world's – economy and social fabric.

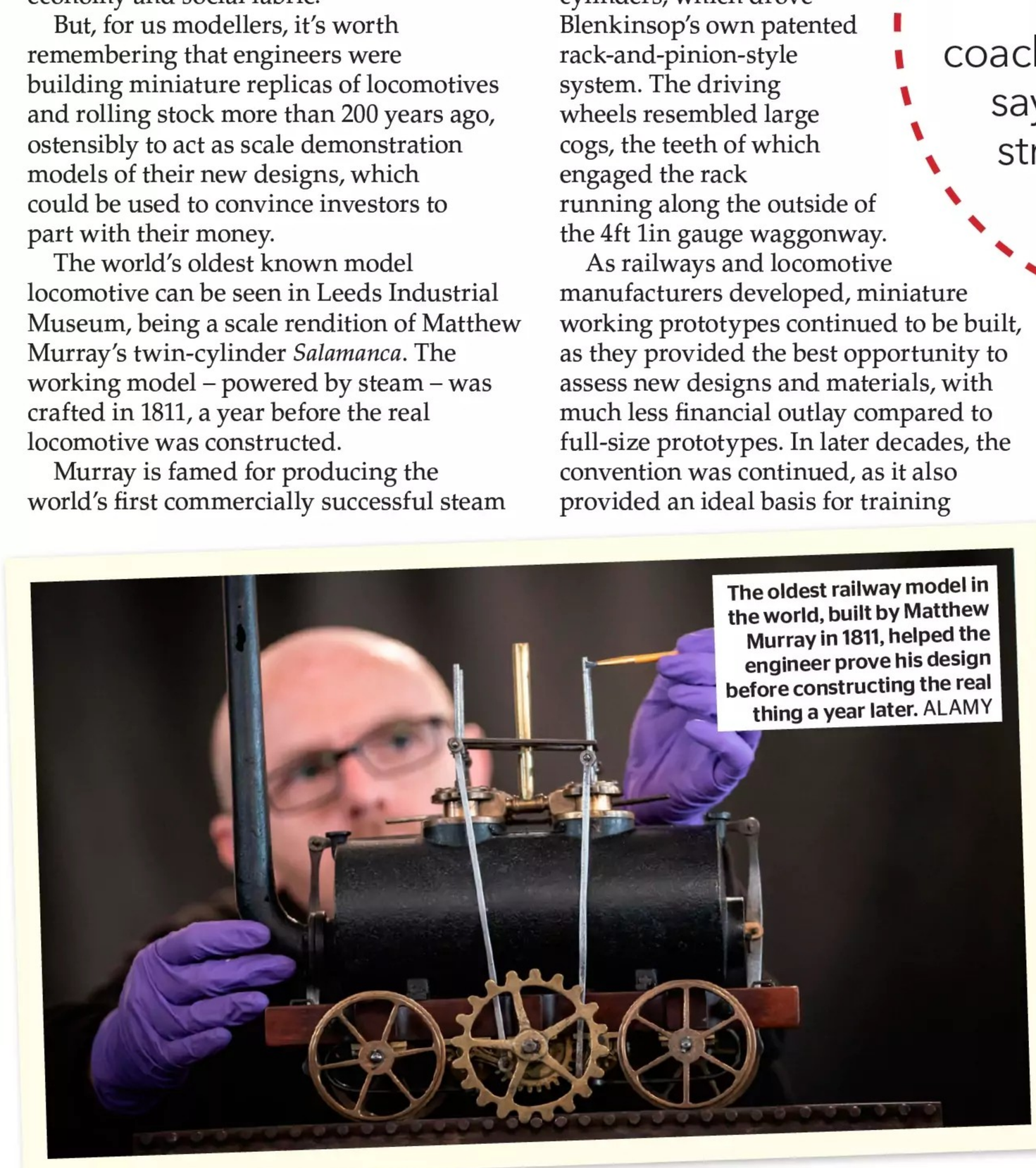
But, for us modellers, it's worth remembering that engineers were building miniature replicas of locomotives and rolling stock more than 200 years ago, ostensibly to act as scale demonstration models of their new designs, which could be used to convince investors to part with their money.

The world's oldest known model locomotive can be seen in Leeds Industrial Museum, being a scale rendition of Matthew Murray's twin-cylinder *Salamanca*. The working model – powered by steam – was crafted in 1811, a year before the real locomotive was constructed.

Murray is famed for producing the world's first commercially successful steam locomotives, building on the ideas of James Watt and Richard Trevithick. Murray's early locomotives were built for John Blenkinsop's Middleton Colliery waggonway, near Leeds, to provide greater efficiencies compared to horses. *Salamanca* featured twin vertical double-acting cylinders, which drove Blenkinsop's own patented rack-and-pinion-style system. The driving wheels resembled large cogs, the teeth of which engaged the rack running along the outside of the 4ft 1in gauge waggonway.

As railways and locomotive manufacturers developed, miniature working prototypes continued to be built, as they provided the best opportunity to assess new designs and materials, with much less financial outlay compared to full-size prototypes. In later decades, the convention was continued, as it also provided an ideal basis for training apprentice engineers, allowing them to develop all the different design, fabrication and machining skills necessary to work on full-size locomotives and rolling stock.

> "The fact that the model railway's route was built with the aid of the family's groom, coachman and gardeners says much about the strata of society that young Henry hailed from"



The oldest railway model in the world, built by Matthew Murray in 1811, helped the engineer prove his design before constructing the real thing a year later. ALAMY

THE FIRST HOBBYISTS

Away from the railway industry, skilled craftsmen such as watchmakers, tinsmiths and cabinetmakers were tasked with building replica trains by wealthy enthusiasts. With everything having to be made from scratch, mostly by hand, hobbyists would need deep pockets, so it was very much a whim of society's elite.

One of the most famous early model railways was built in the 1850s for Emperor Napoleon III, as a gift for his young son. But it wasn't just royalty or despots that indulged their fancy, with many examples of the British upper classes spending large sums on operational miniature railways.

As showcased in the July 2025 issue of the HMRS *Journal*, a young Henry Greenly and a fellow Etonian school chum designed an

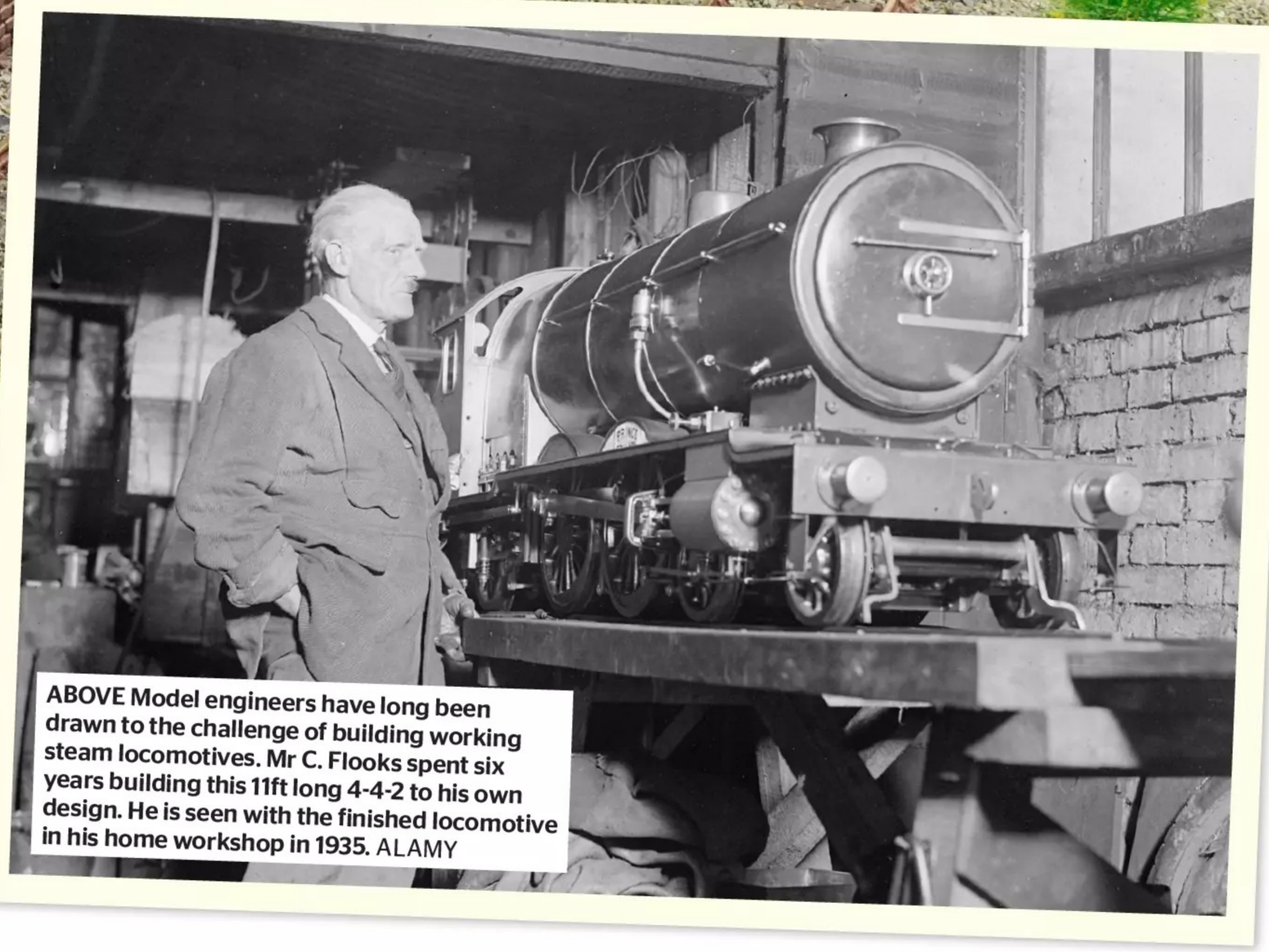
8in gauge railway in the garden of his family home near Dartmouth. The fact that the model railway's route was built with the aid of the family's groom, coachman and gardeners says much about the strata of society that young Henry hailed from. Featuring working steam locomotives and handmade carriages built to accommodate a menagerie of small animals, the Warfleet Railway was started as early as 1870.

Greenly eventually founded his own model engineering company and worked closely with W.J. Bassett-Lowke, the pair founding and editing *Model Railways and Locomotives Magazine*. Greenly would also go on to work with Capt. J.E.P. Howey on designs for the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, ultimately serving as Chief Engineer.

While miniature trains powered by steam may not have been suitable for young children, clockwork mechanisms, courtesy of the clock-making trade, became a popular form of propulsion, which continued for well over a century. Indeed, my own first miniature railway in the early 1980s was a clockwork affair.

Toy trains became a much more common sight by the 1890s, thanks to the famous toymakers centred around Nuremberg in Germany. Rendered in wood and tinplate, they remained the preserve of wealthier families and became known as 'carpet trains'.

Anticipating large demand in Blighty, Bassett-Lowke, aided by Greenly, commissioned Bing of Germany to produce toy trains for the British market, painted in the liveries of the main railway operators of the time. And it wasn't just the trains that were being modelled. Track systems, stations, signals and lineside structures were offered as well.



ABOVE Model engineers have long been drawn to the challenge of building working steam locomotives. Mr C. Flooks spent six years building this 11ft long 4-4-2 to his own design. He is seen with the finished locomotive in his home workshop in 1935. ALAMY

SCALES AND GAUGES

Model and toy trains could be found in various scales until manufacturers began a prolonged process of standardisation. In the early 1900s, models were built in ➤

The world's first 'OO' gauge train set was produced by German manufacturer Bing during 1922. ALAMY

Gauges 0-3, with 0 (zero) proving the most enduring of these. Later to be known as 'O' gauge, it became a scale of 7mm to 1ft and, as we know, demands a good amount of space in which to operate trains.

In the inter-war period, 'HO' scale emerged (Half of O), offering 3.5mm:1ft, and a much more viable size to be accommodated within the average family home. However, with the move to electric-powered model trains, British manufacturers struggled to fit existing miniature motors into locomotives in 'HO' scale (UK trains being slightly smaller than Continental equivalents).

As a compromise, 'OO' gauge (4mm:1ft) was born, with trains running on the same 16.5mm track gauge as 'HO' models. This 'fudge' has still not been corrected by mainstream manufacturers, over 100 years later, leading to the more specialist 'P4' and 'EM' gauges which retain 4mm:1ft scale, but with a more authentic spacing between the rails of 18.83mm or 18.2mm, respectively.

A HOUSEHOLD NAME IS BORN

Having launched Meccano in 1901, Frank Hornby turned his attention to trains and launched a range of clockwork 'O' gauge models in 1920, followed by a raft of 'OO' gauge products in the 1930s, under the Hornby-Dublo brand, using electric propulsion via a three-rail system.

By now, model train sets had become more widely attainable, due to the lower costs arising from mass production. Following the Second World War, models began to take on a more authentic appearance and developments in plastic injection moulding allowed other brands, such as Tri-ang, to steal a march on Hornby's dominance.

Expanding product lines and lower prices saw the hobby flourish in the 1950s and '60s, supported by model railway magazines and books. As we moved into the 1970s and '80s, Palitoy (Mainline), Airfix and Italian firm Lima all gained large shares of the UK market, putting pressure on Hornby. The hobby's profile continued to rise in popular culture too, with the BBC and Channel 4 running television series showcasing model railways and providing practical demonstrations. The wonderful Bob Symes thus became something of a legend among railway modellers.

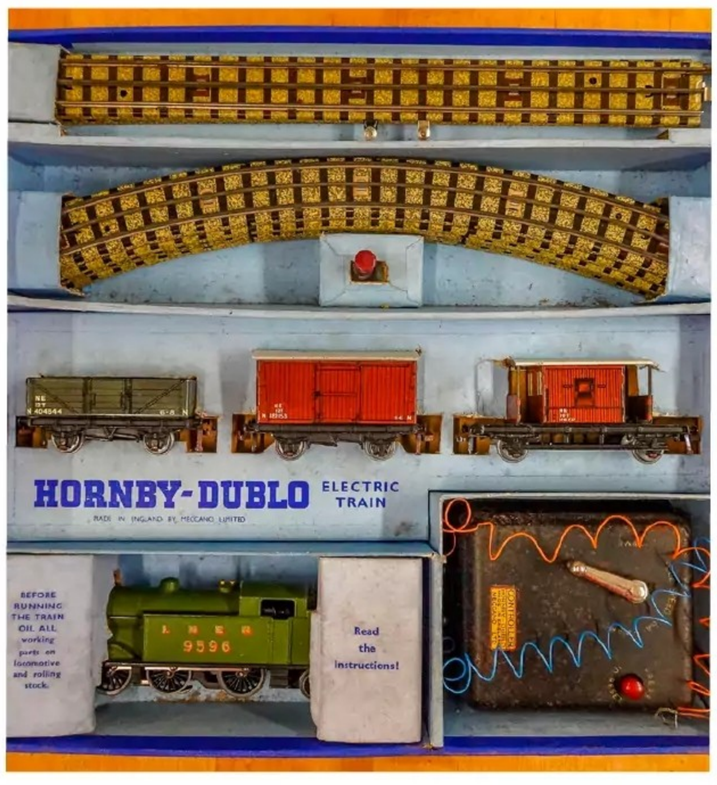
Hornby also began running primetime television commercials. And there was the famous *Yellow Pages* ad featuring a boy searching for a Hornby R186 signal box for his dad's layout.

Manufacturing had begun moving abroad in the 1970s, although Hornby continued production at its famous Margate factory until 1999. The shift to factories in the Far East saw a significant uplift in the level of detail and authenticity, while improved mechanisms and electrical systems helped spark a real boom in the hobby, which, despite a few challenges since the Covid pandemic, remains extremely buoyant.

While Hornby maintains its position as one of the hobby's most famous brand names, the UK market is now serviced by a wide range of manufacturers, including Accurascale, Bachmann, Dapol, Heljan and Rapido Trains. The proliferation of technology, access to expertise in China and the viability of lower volume production runs have also allowed many smaller concerns to spring up, including Cavalex Models and Revolution Trains.

And, of course, *Model Rail* has been able to commission its own model trains, either by securing limited edition runs of special liveries or, more recently, by investing in all-new toolings. Thus, we've been able to offer models of hitherto unavailable prototypes to enthusiasts, such as the

W.J. Bassett-Lowke became a well-known figure in model railways, launching a wide range of products to the UK market and editing *Model Railways* and *Locomotives Magazine*. Here, he's demonstrating a half-inch scale model of a LNER Class A3 to schoolboys during a lecture at the Royal Society of Arts in 1948. ALAMY



An early electric three-rail Hornby-Dublo set. Detail standards have come a long way since. ALAMY

As well as the trains, Hornby-Dublo, Tri-ang and other brands also offered a wide range of lineside buildings and accessories to allow a fully populated railway to be recreated. ALAMY

Sentinel 4wVBT, 'USA' 0-6-0Ts, Ruston & Hornsby 'PWMs', BR Class 11 and 12 and the Hawksworth '16XX' 0-6-0T.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

Across the board, the quality of today's model railway products is exceptional. The level of detail, finesse and technical sophistication is light years ahead of what was available even 20 years ago. There's a seemingly endless array of choices, especially in 'OO', which remains the most popular scale by far.

We've seen a real resurgence in 'O' over the past decade, aided by greater coverage by the RTR brands and greater affordability, while 'N' gauge will always offer the chance to cram far more railway into smaller spaces.

Hornby's launch of its 'TT:120' range in 2022, with other manufacturers also getting on board, is attracting new entrants to the hobby, offering a convenient halfway house between 'OO' and 'N', and may well prove to be the next growth sector.

Train sets remain a popular gift for youngsters, especially at Christmas and, thanks to more enlightened marketing strategies, model railways are becoming less of an all-male preserve. Enthusiasts are still keen to recreate miniature worlds or simply enjoy watching trains pootle around an oval track, while innovations in control systems now allow trains to be operated via Bluetooth technology and smartphone apps, with authentic light and sound effects emitted from the trains and rolling stock.

Modelling what we can relate to has long been a major motivating factor within the hobby. The 'Banger Blue' era of British Rail is perhaps one of the most lucrative markets for models at the moment, which is thanks to my generation hitting that age when kids have moved out and the chance is presenting itself to return to the hobby and rekindle memories of the trains we saw as children. Meanwhile, for today's youngsters, market research has shown that their imagination is more likely to be piqued by the idea of running LNER 'Azumas' and other modern-day prototypes on their train sets, rather than more 'classic' types of traction. That's the reason why Simon George's famous 'Heaton Lodge Junction' is undergoing conversion to a more contemporary period, in order to broaden its appeal.

The hobby's evolution over the past two centuries ensured its survival. It will continue to change to meet demands and, for as long as real railways exist, the urge to replicate trains in miniature will continue.

***Model Rail*'s first-ever limited edition model was a Hornby Class 90 in Virgin Trains livery, released to coincide with our first issue in 1997. One of our most recent is a Class 31 in BR Infrastructure yellow/grey, produced for us by Accurascale – see page 103.**

AGAINST THE ODDS

This is a layout that probably wouldn't have been built, had not **David Joughin** battled back against a life-changing medical condition. The results speak for themselves.

Words: **Richard Gunn** Photography: **Chris Nevard**

1

What makes this layout great?

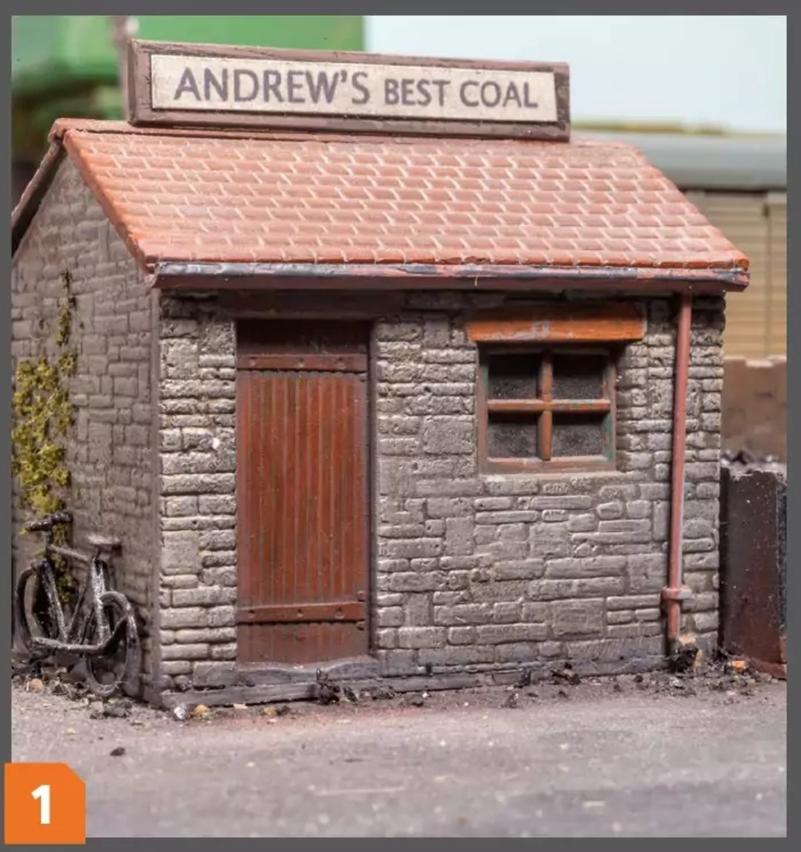
This is about so much more than just the construction of a layout. It's a symbol of David overcoming considerable adversity to continue with a lifelong hobby that holds great significance for him. With 'Lynhurst', his modelling talents and skills have shone through despite – or perhaps even because of – the challenges he faced.

By any standards, 'Lynhurst' is a lovely layout, accurately capturing the look and feel of a sleepy little Southern branch line terminus in its final years at the dawn of the 1960s. However, what makes it more remarkable is that its creator, David Joughin, suffered an ailment that robbed him of much of his sight. The bi-ocular haemorrhages that occurred during 2015 meant "No driving, no modelling, no reading of books or magazines, not even being able to recognise friends across the street". For David, an enthusiastic scratchbuilder of Gauge '1' locomotives and rolling stock, it must have seemed that his model railway career was over.

But it wasn't. A specialist at his local eye clinic convinced him that, with powerful magnifying glasses, carrying on with his hobby wasn't just possible but also beneficial. "Try your best to have a go, it's worth it," he told David. Fortunately, David concurred. However, he also realised that holding ➤

ABOVE: Although there's third rail into the platforms, David also runs steam alongside the EMUs. The 'M7' is a Hornby item while the '2-SUB' is a detailed Tri-ang model which would have been new during the era in which 'Lynhurst' is set.

3 things we like



"My nephew, Andrew, gifted me the coal yard building kit. So I thought I'd name it after him!"

A busy scene at the station with the local 'Her Ladyship' arriving with a lot of luggage for London.

The fiddleyard may be small but with eight roads and a locomotive spur, it's very practical.

a strong magnifying glass while also trying to manipulate large models would be difficult. "So I decided to go back to my good old scale of 4mm to the foot," David continues.

Having been born in Kent, and with early memories of travelling in the electric multiple units of the day, he drew up a plans for a small Southern Region-themed terminus, 'Lynhurst'. "I imagined that my branch was built to Lewes, giving connections to the London to Brighton line just north of Burgess Hill. The third rail was added prior to the Second World War, although steam-hauled passenger and freight services continued up until closure. An island platform station and some sidings give a reasonable amount of operating potential, with both passenger and goods services."

David's brother-in-law, Paul Clarke, built the baseboards for the terminus and the removable fiddleyard. He also installed all the electrics as, says David, "I can't do electrics; with my eyesight, I'd be putting the black leads onto the red ones". That left him to concentrate on the modelling side of things.

"I used Peco Code 75 flat-bottomed rails and points, and to save space, a three-way point for the station sidings. Ballasting was completed in the usual way using PVA/water." Installing the third rail proved one of the biggest challenges David (with Paul) had to contend with. "Because of my eyesight, trying to focus that close is very difficult. In the end, we used a piece of brass, the right length from the end of the rail to the sleeper, and we drilled a hole in that for where the Peco third rail insulator pots should go into the sleeper. That took an age, you have to stop them bending over when you press them in the hole. I even sent a message to Peco suggesting it could produce them in brass rather than plastic. Eventually, I got them done to my satisfaction but I'm glad it was only two short lines I had to do. I take my hat off to those guys who do layouts with third rail everywhere!"

OFF-THE-SHELF AND KIT-BASHING

The condensed platform was constructed using Peco platform sides with its balsa framework then covered in cork. For buildings, David opted for a mixture of off-the-shelf structures as well as kit-bashing. "Most of the kits I buy, I like to alter. The station is a Peco one, but I modified it by adding a gents' toilet to the end. The water tank is a Dapol Kitmaster item; the length of the tank now was its original width. I carefully cut ➤

3066
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CATBURNE
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31556

through the longer sides to make something that didn't dominate the layout so much. Small engines wouldn't have needed that amount of water anyway!

"I didn't do anything to the Bachmann signal box except get the point rodding down. That was a bit of a nightmare too. It isn't perfect but I think I've got it just about right for normal viewing." The scenic break is a Wills overbridge leading to a very snug but well-laid out fiddleyard. Although it's only just 3ft 9in long, David has managed to fit in eight bays plus a locomotive spur. "I was very pleased to get eight roads in; the use of Peco's small radius Y-points made it possible. Although I think I have more isolating switches than I have points." Because most of the motive power is EMUs and small tank locomotives, they can negotiate the tight curves ➤

LYNHURST
2P
30051
BRITISH RAILWAYS

7

An EMU driver's view of the approaches to 'Lynhurst' from under the bridge that also serves as the entrance to the fiddleyard. David was very relieved he didn't have too much third rail to lay.

It simply wouldn't be a Southern branch line without a 'Terrier'! The Oxford Diecast 1957 Land Rover 88in, 'PSL 193', is well-known in railway circles; the real 'Plimsoll' is owned by Mark Saville on *MR*'s former sister publication, *Land Rover Owner* and, fitted with flanged wheels, has run on many heritage lines.

LEFT: The intricate point-rodding emerging from the Bachmann signal box proved tricky given David's limited vision, but he's satisfied with the way it has turned out.

easily. Has he ever felt like running, for example, a Bulleid 'Pacific' to 'Lynhurst'? "Yes, I've been tempted, but it wouldn't be right."

The motive power and rolling stock comes primarily from the Hornby, Bachmann and Dapol stables… and, in one case, from one of their famous predecessors. "In addition to a passenger push/pull set operated by an 'H' class 0-4-4T, there are three EMUs. One is an original Tri-ang model. It looks a bit like a '2-SUB'. I fitted a set of flush window glazing from South Eastern Finecast, which makes all the difference to the look. I also varnished the sides and added roof detail. It now looks like the sort of thing I climbed into to get to London Bridge as a child." The vehicles are also proprietary items, although David has repainted some of the lorries in particular, because too many were yellow. Much of what he purchased for 'Lynhurst' came from suppliers such as Model Junction and DJ Collectibles.

Weathering has also been undertaken on buildings, stock and vehicles, mainly using dry powders with cotton buds to wipe them off. "It seems to work quite well and gives a nice grubby feeling," says David. "Everything has also had a liberal coating of talcum powder, too; it tones everything down." This was all ➤

ABOVE: The largest steam locomotive that David operates on 'Lynhurst' is a Bachmann Branchline Ivatt Class '2MT' 2-6-2T. Despite being more substantial than his other engines, it's still able to negotiate the tight curves without any issues.

part of his goal to "try and reproduce things as close to reality as possible. I'm a stickler for detail; I want things to be right. If it looked wrong, I'm afraid I threw it away and started again."

With 'Lynhurst', David has proved that a medical ailment that might well have resulted in him having to give up his cherished hobby could be successfully overcome. He's constructed a wonderful little time capsule of the sort of scene he remembers from his youth, with the process being therapeutic (third rail and points rodding struggles notwithstanding) as well as creative. "Because of this problem with my eyes, which is permanent, I wanted to produce something I was able to see through to completion," he reflects. "And I think it looks okay." Here at *Model Rail*, we'd go further than that – we reckon it looks superb! MR

FACTFILE: 'LYNHURST'

Era: Late 1950s/early 1960s

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

Size: 8ft 9in by 18in (including fiddleyard)

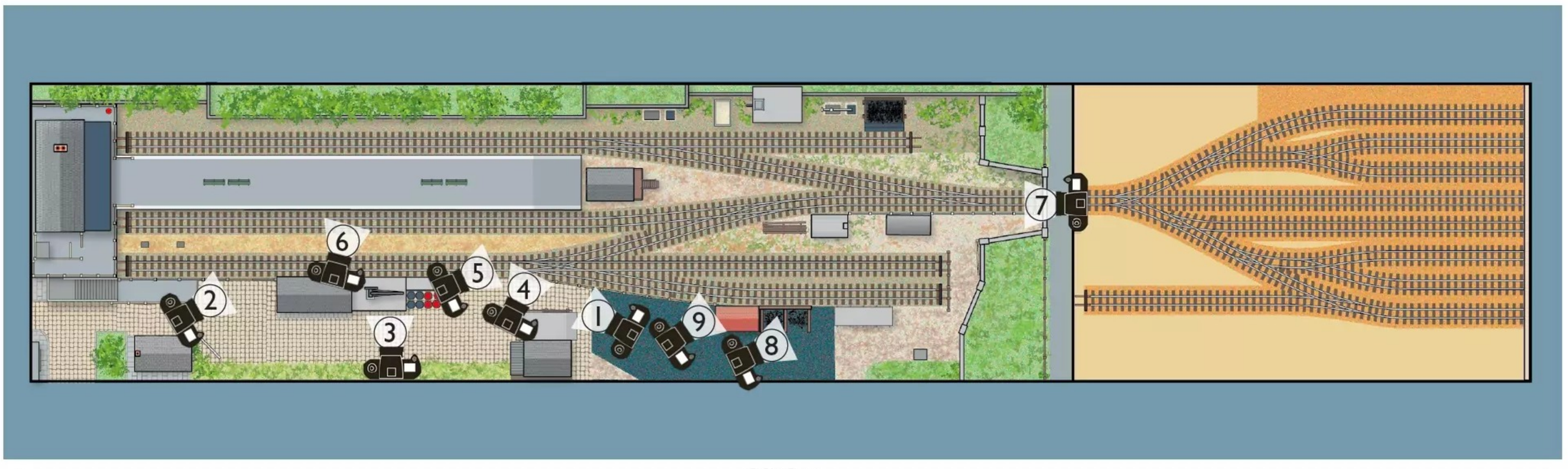
Track: Peco Code 75

Power and control: DC analogue

Time to build: Approximately four years

ABOUT THE MODELLER: DAVID JOUGHIN

David started out in railway modelling during the late 1950s with 'TT3' gauge, before moving to 'OO' and then onto Gauge '1', building static locomotives and stock. It was his eyesight issues that prompted a return to 4mm scale. He also enjoys walking and reading (via a Kindle) and is also a keen church organist.



Artwork: **Andrew Mackintosh**

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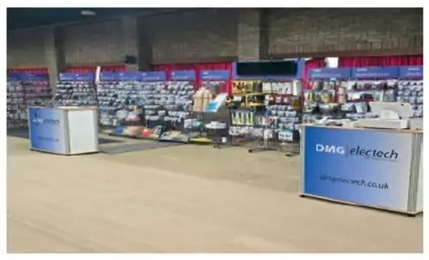

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78 **Rapido Trains SECR Class ‘O1’ 0-6-0**

82 **Heljan BR Class 121 & 122 railcars**

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90 **Hornby BR Caprotti ‘Black Five’ 4-6-0**

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Nick Brodrick
An all-original steam fanatic.

George Dent
Model Rail’s modern image expert.

Chris Leigh
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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.

Rapido SECR Class ‘O1’ 0-6-0

◆ **GAUGE** ‘OO’ ◆ **MODEL** Rapido Trains UK 966004 Class ‘O1’ 0-6-0 No. A7 SR lined black (DC /silent) ◆ **PRICE** £199.95
◆ **AVAILABILITY** Rapido stockists **Web** *www.rapidotrains.co.uk*

It is remarkable to think that the arrival of Rapido’s ‘O1’ means that the key gaps in South Eastern & Chatham Railway’s glorious pre-First World War era have been filled in ‘OO’ ready-to-run form.

Bachmann got the ball rolling with its Wainwright ‘C’ class in 2012, followed progressively over the next 13 years by the Hornby ‘H’ 0-4-4T, Rails of Sheffield/Dapol ‘D’ 4-4-0 and Hattons/Accurascale ‘P’ 0-6-0T.

Rapido however, has saved the most fascinating design till last.

For while the ‘C’, ‘H’, ‘D’ and ‘P’ are all pure Wainwright design, the ‘O1’ has split parentage; the bottom end of the South Eastern Railway’s James Stirling ‘O’ class of 1878 married to a new boiler more than two decades later. It was in this form that the ‘O1s’ became well known and much loved, not least on the Kent & East Sussex Railway, and the last two soldiered on as late as 1961.

As well as becoming part of the ‘classic’ Southern Region scene, the preservation of (310)65 at the Bluebell Railway in flamboyant lined green ticked sufficient boxes for Rapido to add it to its range.

Instead of the ornate pre-Grouping colours, it is a more modest impression that our review sample gave off as it emerged from the box.

‘O’ THAT LOOKS GOOD

Our version is a 1920s Southern Railway-era A7, which, at first glance, appears to carry plain black. But closer inspection reveals incredibly fine sage green lining. The mellow yellow Egyptian Southern lettering and etched cabside numberplates (to be added separately by the modeller but already cut from the sprue) give this ‘O1’ a quiet air of distinction.

The paint finish is helped using die-cast metal for the boiler, footplate and tender body which offer a good surface for the realistic satin sheen; harder to replicate with plastic injection moulding. Rapido has however, used plastic for the smokebox and chimney which are pleasingly finished in matt black resembling the real thing

“One of the most impressive features is what appears between the frames, with eccentrics, expansion links, and valve and piston rods all represented”

once heat has burnt off the ex-Works gloss paint.

Presentation is one thing, but what about the overall shape?

A distinguishing feature of the class is the globular smokebox and the shallow door with its subtle dished centre. Rapido has got this spot on, as it has with the delightful flowerpot chimney.

Working backwards, there really is nothing to fault about the shape and definition of any of the ‘O1’s’ features. And for a simple 0-6-0 locomotive, there are plenty of them.

One of the most impressive features is what appears between the frames, with eccentrics, expansion links, and valve and piston rods all represented with prototypical daylight between the red and steel-coloured motion. These can be readily viewed from above, below or most pleasingly, through the cutouts in the frame plates. Observation of the exploded parts diagram in the owner’s manual confirms that the inside motion is a very clever single-piece moulding.

This luxurious level of detail extends onto the largely open footplate. Even the water gauges have separate, tiny test and drain cocks, although the glass itself is represented by black plastic – but that really is nit-picking of the highest order. The SR primrose painted cab sidesheets and roof help illume the myriad fittings. And speaking of light, the firehole doors are cracked open for the in-built firebox bulb to fill add its own glow to the cab (which flickers in DCC mode).

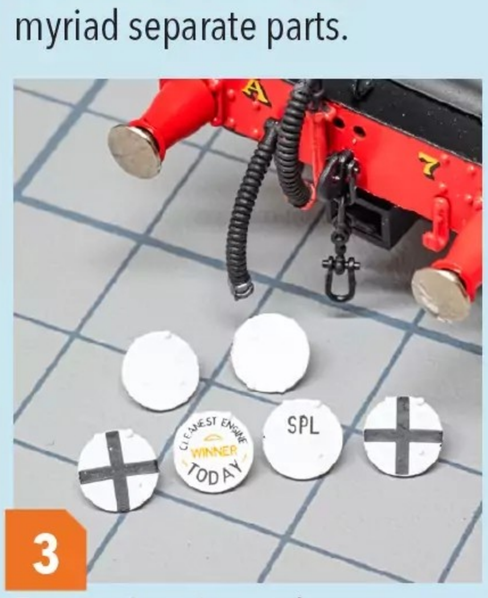
We’re used to seeing wire handrails threaded onto turned brass handrail knobs on ‘OO’ models, but for the ‘O1’ Rapido has elected for moulded plastic to no visual detriment. It does mean that it should be handled with real care.

Tooling caters for various styles across different livery and

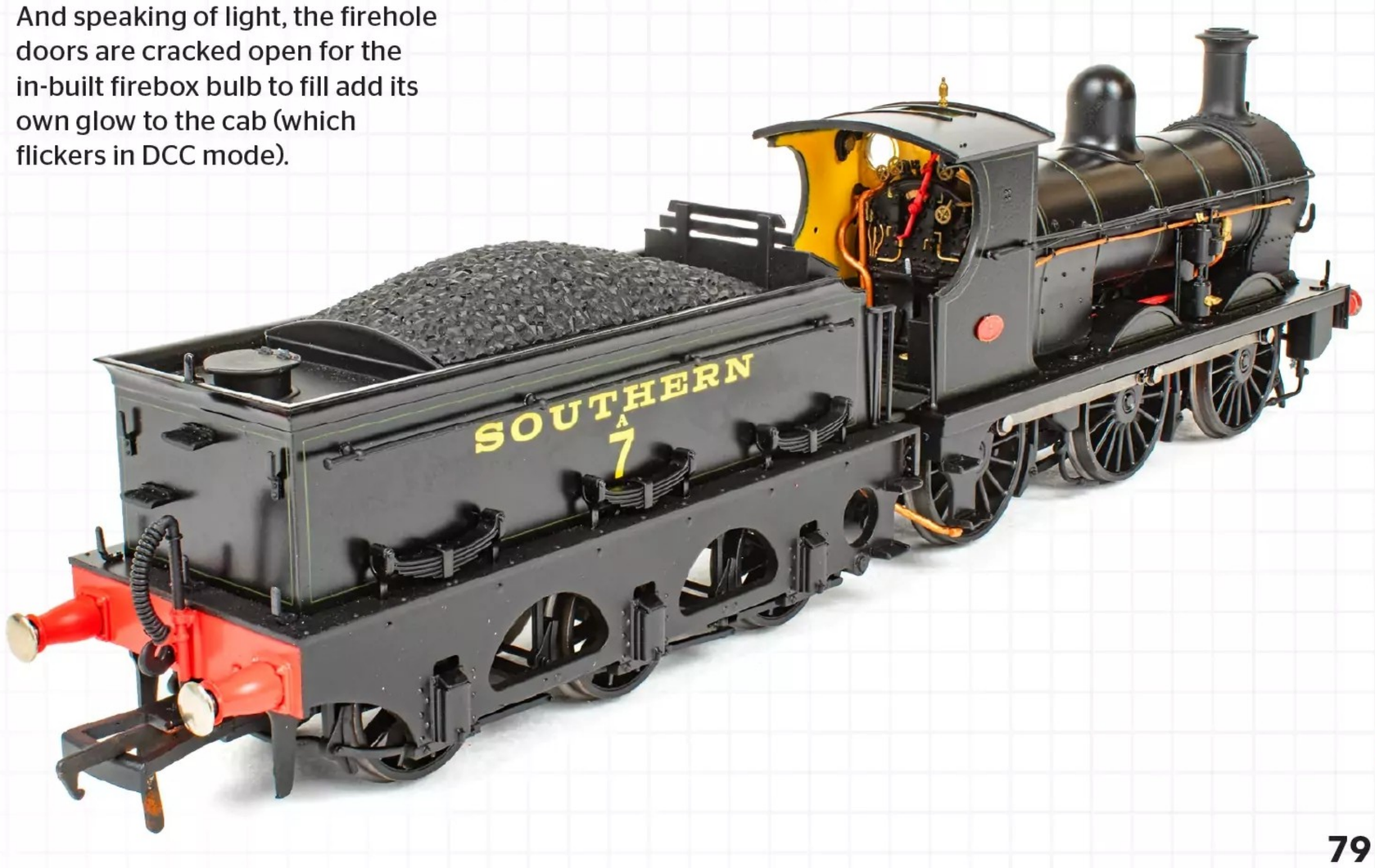
3 things we like

1 The inside motion is subtle but very effectively done.

2 Cab interior fitted with myriad separate parts.



3 Engine head signals are commendably crisp.



Rapido SECR Class ‘O1’ 0-6-0 – in detail

Factfile: Wainwright ‘O1’ 0-6-0

The ‘O1’ can trace its ancestry to the Glasgow & South Western Railway, where the South Eastern Railway’s Scottish locomotive superintendent James Stirling had been employed immediately before.

Construction of 122 of his domeless ‘O’ 0-6-0s was split between the railway’s own Ashford Works and under contract by Sharp, Stewart between 1878 and 1899; the final five being completed after the SER and London Chatham & Dover Railway’s merged into the new South Eastern & Chatham Railway. In their late 1800s prime, these were the go-to goods engines in the South East.

Stirling’s successor, Harry Wainwright, rebuilt 58 of the ‘Os’ into ‘O1s’ from 1903 onwards. New ‘H’ class type boilers (with domes) and deeper fireboxes were fitted, as was a squared-off cab replacing of the earlier curved type.

Even so, the SECR’s more powerful ‘C’ 0-6-0s were already under construction and the ‘Os’ and ‘O1s’ were soon relegated to lesser duties; some were simply withdrawn. A handful of the Stirling/Wainwright machines were sold to the East Kent Light Railway, where they were used through the 1920s and ‘40s. Others saw use on the Kent & East Sussex Railway between Headcorn Junction and Rolvenden, often hauling just a solitary bogie Brake Third.

Despite their age, 49 of the ‘O1s’ remained in use beyond nationalisation in 1948. One of the last pair, 31065, hauled the last railtour over the Hawkhurst Branch in June 1961 before it was withdrawn.

Unlike all other ‘O’/‘O1s’, 31065 was preserved and is today in working order at the Bluebell Railway in SECR green as 65.

1. It’s summer 1953 and ‘O1’ 31065 stands at Tenterden on the Kent & East Sussex Railway. Both the engine and station have been preserved. COLOUR RAIL

2. Wearing inter-war Southern black, ‘O1’ 1396 stands at an unidentified depot. COLOUR RAIL

3. Preserved No. 65 is seen in SECR livery at Didcot in August 2025. NICK BRODRICK

number combinations. Ours has the early bottle-shaped buffershanks (BR fitted some with parallel ones); fully rivetted smokebox (others were partially flush rivetted); toolbox on the tender front (some had these missing); standard bufferbeams (others had extra rivets); but no smokebox saddle mounted lubricators (unlike the earlier SECR versions).

Although fitting extra detailing parts can be a fiddly-faff, there was something satisfying in replacing the front tension-lock coupler in favour of the exquisite dummy screw link coupling which comes in the little bag of extras. The shackle even be hooked onto its bufferbeam mounting with fine tweezers and a delicate hand. While we were at it, the steam heat 'bag' was added. The extra cab doors will be attached once running-in is complete and the model subject to less handling (these will restrict use on curve tighter than third radius).

The moving parts are similarly impressive. The shallow wheel flanges and delicate coupling rods boast all the fidelity of a professionally built fine-scale kit. Really impressive stuff. Indeed, to this eye, the chemical blackening of the rods is much more realistic than the bright steel of Rapido's recent 'E1' 0-6-0Ts.

The tender is authentically spartan, but captures the archaic looks of the 1870s layout, with the narrow coal and water space nestled in between the springs that protrude above footplate level.

The moulded plastic 'coal' isn't very realistic at all (they seldom are!) but this offering also sits rather awkwardly with a visible gap between the platework. Mercifully, it is removable allowing the modeller to replace it with a teaspoon of the real material.

GOODS LITTLE RUNNER

The locomotive and tender are joined by a boxy pin-and-socket coupling which encases eight electrical pin connectors. Although operationally effective, these were a bit of a pig to align and gently persuade into position. Thanks to the overlapping fallplate between engine and tender, this connection is all but impossible to see.

As you'd expect, the tender body has space for a 21-pin DCC decoder and twin speakers (already working on deluxe versions).

A can motor and flywheel, contained within the weighty die-cast body, combine to provide smooth and powerful operation. Electrical contact comes via plunger pickups on the engine and bearing pickups on the tender.

Although our 'O1' still requires more running-in time to fully bed the gears in, it was appreciably quiet from the off and handled six bogie carriages with ease.

All in all, this is a cracking little model. Top work Rapido! ***(NB)***

SUMMARY

PROS
- Flawless shape.
- Professional finish.
- Exquisite small details.

CONS
- Fallplate is a loose fitting.
- Fiddly loco-tender coupling.

FINAL VERDICT

Pre-Grouping goods engine perfection.

VITAL STATISTICS: RAPIDO SECR 'O1' 0-6-0

OVERVIEW
Manufacturer: Rapido Trains UK
Ref. No. 966004
Unit No. A7
Scale/gauge: 1:76 scale, 'OO' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 244g
Min. curve radius: 438mm (second radius)
Wheel back-to-back: 14.3mm

DIMENSIONS	PROTOTYPE	1:76 SCALE	MODEL
Length (over buffers)	49ft 1¼in	196.9mm	199.5mm
Height	12ft 11 15/16in	52.1mm	52.5mm
Width	8ft 5in	33.7mm	32.6mm
Wheel diameter (driving)	5ft 2in	20.7mm	20mm
Wheel diameter (tender)	3ft 9in	15mm	14.7mm
Coupled wheelbase	38ft 8 5/8in	62.2mm	62mm

SERVICING
How to dismantle: Tender body unscrews from underframe (recommended) and body unscrews from chassis (not recommended).
Where to oil: A drop of oil in the keeper plate beneath the rear axle – see instructions.

ELECTRICS
Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail
Motor type: Coreless
Lights: Firebox glow
DCC-ready? 21pin socket in tender

MECHANISM
Drive system: Motor drives rear coupled axle via worm and gears.
Flywheel(s): Yes
Traction tyres: No

Heljan BR Class 121 & 122 Railcars

◆ **GAUGE** 'O' ◆ **MODEL** Heljan • 1210 Class 121 W55021 BR green • 1232 Class 122 W55012 BR Regional Railways
◆ **PRICE** £369.00 each ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Heljan stockists **Web** *www.heljan.co.uk*

As a teenage trainspotter, having exhausted most of the Southern Region 'cops' I could get at Weybridge, I sought a new spotting location. Mum suggested that I take the 'old pull and push' from Staines West station and that I give West Drayton a try. On my first visit to Staines' unique GWR terminus I encountered, not the steam pull-and-push, but a single dark green railcar, No. W55021.

Writing this in September 2025, it is nine years since Heljan first revealed it was dabbling with 'O' gauge DMUs. A lot has happened in the intervening years, including the (also delayed) release of a Class 121 and 122 by Dapol, and a global pandemic. Setting change and uncertainty aside, Heljan's Class 121 and 122 railcars are soon to arrive with stockists, and we had the opportunity to test a couple of samples.

One of the models supplied is W55021 in the original dark green with cream lining and 'whiskers', and it carries 'West Drayton' and 'Staines West' destinations. I've an idea that was no accident!

Placed alongside the Dapol Class 121, Heljan's green is a little darker, and the roof is a much darker shade of grey. The models also differ substantially in that Dapol used a centrally placed motor with shaft drive to both bogies, while Heljan uses a conventional single motor bogie at the brake end of the car.

That's enough of comparisons, though, and both are good representations of a characterful prototype. Heljan has a reputation for weighty models and, despite its predominantly plastic construction, the railcars weigh in at a whopping 1,349g each. This amount of weight ensures positive current collection through all eight wheels, but it does also mean that careful handling is necessary to avoid putting strain on separately fitted underframe components, for instance.

Much of the weight is centred in a metal baseplate between the internal floor and the underside details. The moulded body captures well the appearance of the 'Derby suburban' arrangement with large windows devoid of upper ventilators, and

“The large windows provide a good view of the correct pattern original seats, maroon-coloured and with pale beige leatherette headrests”

doors to every seating bay. The doors have their ‘twist’ door handles picked out in brass colour and separately fitted commode handles.

The large windows provide a good view of the correct pattern original seats, maroon-coloured and with pale beige leatherette headrests. There is interior detail in the visible areas of the guard’s van and a fine mesh effect over the window. The cab interiors are particularly well detailed.

A small bag of customer-fit parts contains two speedometer drive units and a red tail lamp. The latter is for use when hauling stock on sharp radius curves, where the pre-fitted screw couplings would not cope. A hole is provided in the outer left-hand axlebox to accept a pin on the speedometer drive, but there is no obvious locating point for the top end of the speedometer cable. The cable itself is quite rigid, so one suspects that it is intended to be left loose at the top end, which may not be practical on anything but straight track. Nothing is mentioned in the instructions.

On the ends, all the bufferbeam details are separate fittings, including the ‘cut’ buffers, which were a distinctive but not universal feature of Pressed Steel DMUs. Ironically, at the time that I saw and photographed W55021 at Staines, it had oval buffers! These were, however, often changed during the many overhauls these cars would have received during their long careers, and it seems most ended up with round buffers. W55021 certainly had round buffers by the time it became a Sandite car.

While we are dealing with minor detail discrepancies, the ➤

3 things we like

1 Illuminated destination displays and directional marker/tail lights.

2 Guard’s compartment interior detail.

3 Cab interior detail is well observed.

Heljan BR Class 122 & 122 – in detail

Factfile: BR Class 121 & 122

As British Railways sought to modernise in the 1950s, orders were placed for a fleet of diesel multiple-units to replace steam-hauled local trains. The Western Region was unique in that it also had its original 35 GWR railcars to replace. So, 36 Derby-designed single-unit railcars were ordered, 20 from Gloucester RC&W and the remainder from Pressed Steel. The design was a double-cab version of the Derby suburban (later Class 116), the main difference between the two batches was the addition of a four-character headcode 'box' on the Pressed Steel cars. Two AEC bus engines were fitted, one driving each bogie via a mechanical final drive.

The first of the Gloucester-built cars appeared in 1958 and was numbered W55000. Subsequent cars took the number series to W55019 and the Pressed Steel cars took Nos. W55020-35. They were capable of hauling a tail-load and each type was provided with a matching, non-powered Driving Trailer Second. There were fewer driving trailers than motor brake seconds as many of the services would never require a second car.

The Gloucester cars came initially to the London area for the Thames Valley branch lines, but once the Pressed Steel cars were available these took over the London area services to simplify the spare parts situation as Pressed Steel 3-car units were prevalent in the area. The Gloucester cars then moved to the West of England and to Worcester.

Under TOPS the Gloucester cars became Class 122 and the Pressed Steels, Class 121. Both carried a wide range of colour schemes throughout BR ownership, including several one-off schemes. The variety continued into the privatisation era, with an assortment of oddball liveries applied to sandite cars and route learners.

When Chiltern Trains acquired two Class 121s for its Princes Risborough-Aylesbury shuttle service, No. 55020 was given a major overhaul in which the distinctive cab-end exhaust pipes were re-routed through the guard's compartment. Together with W55024, they were to be the last first-generation DMUs to remain in front-line service, being withdrawn in May 2017.

A total of 20 examples (eight Class 122s, 12 Class 121s), survive in preservation. One example was scrapped after vandals set fire to it. W55034 is used as a route learning vehicle by Locomotive Services Ltd and is apparently the last of the 'bubble cars' still classified for main line use.

1. Typically showing the wrong headcode (Ealing-Greenford) Pressed Steel railcar W55021 and a driving trailer stand at Staines West station c.1961. CJL COLLECTION

2. The original Gloucester RC&W car, No. W55000 at Penzance in full Regional Railways livery, awaiting departure for St Ives. CHRIS LEIGH

3. Shortly before withdrawal, Pressed Steel car W55020, much modified by Chiltern Trains, stands at Aylesbury depot. CHRIS LEIGH

'Load 25cwts evenly distributed' should be on the guard's van end on both sides as it relates to the loading of the van section. On one side it is at the left-hand, 'passenger' end, but this is the only noticeable error in the livery application. This information has been correctly applied to the Regional Railways Class 122, which also came in for review.

Indeed, the Class 122 features a similarly impressive specification, with the correct detail differences observed, which are most notable at the cab ends, with small destination displays in place of the four-character headcode boxes and straighter exhaust stacks. This example features traces of the plated-over twin-character displays below the centre windscreens.

Overall, the livery application on both samples was pleasing, with the correctly placed and correct thickness lining on the green '121' (including the 'upsweep' over the windscreens) rather better achieved than some preservation societies have managed on the real things!

CHASSIS AND DRIVE

In order to keep the interior clear and the floor at a realistic level, Heljan has opted for a very traditional chassis arrangement with a motor bogie housed in the guard's van area and electrical pick-up on the wheels of both bogies. The electrical pick-up is via phosphor bronze wipers, running in grooved channels on the axles.

A central 28mm by 31mm housing on the underframe is provided for mounting a speaker for DCC sound and a 21pin decoder socket is located atop the interior lighting unit, accessed by unclipping the bodyshell.

A superb array of separately fitted details depict the engine, exhaust system, tanks, radiators, heater and battery boxes. The exhaust pipe from one of the engines is somewhat exposed and rather vulnerable and could do with painting in a rather more subdued colour. In fact, the whole underfloor area will benefit from some careful weathering. The bogie sideframes are somewhat 'flat' and lacking in relief, but it does not really detract from their overall appearance.

On test, the model proved smooth and quiet throughout the speed range. On analogue control the interior lights and the marker lights and headcodes are illuminated and so, too, is the destination display. This is a really nice touch.

A magnetic coupling bar is provided for running with other stock when used on anything sharper than scale curves, which will be useful if running with one of Heljan's unpowered Class 149 or 150 trailer cars, which are available separately in a range of BR liveries. In practice these cars ran coupled to other powered units, a driving trailer car, or a single parcels van or horse box. Such operation is well within the capacity of this model.

A top-notch 'bubble car' for 'O' and well worth the wait. ***(CJL)***

SUMMARY

PROS

- Captures prototype character.
- Easy decoder/ sound installation.
- Underframe detail.

CONS

- A few minor niggles.

FINAL VERDICT

Super job!

VITAL STATISTICS: HELJAN BR CLASS 121 & 122

OVERVIEW

Manufacturer: Heljan
Ref. No. 1210, 1232
Unit No. W55021, W55012
Scale/gauge: 1:43.5 scale, 'O' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 1,349g
Min. curve radius: 5ft
Wheel back-to-back: 29.5mm

DIMENSIONS	PROTOTYPE	1:43.5 SCALE	MODEL
Length (over buffers)	64ft 6in	451.5mm	453mm
Height	12ft 4½in	86mm	86mm
Width	9ft 0in	63mm	63mm
Wheel diameter	3ft	21mm	21mm
Bogie wheelbase	8ft 6in	59.5mm	60mm

SERVICING

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

ELECTRICS

Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail
Motor type: Five-pole
Lights: Direction marker/tail lights, interior lights, destination boxes.
DCC-ready? 21pin socket.

MECHANISM

Drive system: Single motor bogie, both axles powered.
Flywheel(s): Yes.
Traction tyres: No.

Heljan BR/BRCW Class 104 DMU

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Heljan 1454 BR Class 104 three-car DMU, BR Rail blue ◆ **PRICE** £489.00 ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Heljan stockists **Web** *www.heljan.co.uk*

The absence of the BR/BRCW Class 104 from the ready-to-run market had felt like a huge omission, so Heljan stirred a lot of interest when it announced a 'OO' gauge model back in 2020.

Heljan's Ben Jones, once of this parish, and I talked about the '104s' many times in the *Model Rail* office, sharing our youthful recollections of these handsome units, and we collaborated on a Masterclass feature way back in February 2005, with Ben charting the history of the '104' and its close relative the Class 110, while I undertook a few complementary modelling demonstrations.

As mentioned on this month's Welcome page, my converted Class 104 model from that article was a prized member of my collection for many years and, after an accident, I intended to repaint it from green to Rail blue livery to better suit my own layout projects. Once Heljan revealed the forthcoming RTR version, however, that model has been relegated to the back of a very long queue of jobs.

Now, five years later, Heljan's models have finally arrived, with nine versions on offer, across two- and three-car formations. BR green, Rail blue, Network SouthEast and the unique ScotRail maroon/cream liveries are all represented, and I was delighted to receive a 'Blackpool blue' set for review, featuring the distinctive white horizontal stripes.

BLACKPOOL BOUND

Heljan's tooling has been adapted to allow for various detail differences across the fleet, to match the appropriate time periods and regional allocations (the LMR and NER sets featured different guard's compartment doors for example). This particular set correctly features front ends shorn of their two-character headcode panels and the destination blinds feature Preston and Blackpool North at alternate ends.

Consisting of a Driving Motor Brake Standard (DMBS), Trailing Composite Lavatory (TCL) and Driving Motor Composite Lavatory (DMCL) formation, this Heljan model comes packaged in an attractive foam-lined container with matching livery artwork on the box lid. The individual cars look striking when removed from their clear plastic slip cases and,

helpfully, the handbook provides a plan of how to marshal the three cars correctly.

Strong magnetic couplings are pre-installed, mounted into pivoting close-coupler units, which hold the cars close together on straight track, with minimal daylight visible between the gangway bellows. There's a fiddlier element to connecting the cars, however, thanks to the 10-pin electrical connectors that need to be plugged in, and the cables stowed inside the gangways.

Once connected, the entire unit can be controlled via a single DCC decoder, the socket for which is located within the guard's compartment. In an innovative touch, the bodyshells do not require unscrewing, nor does one have to faff around with plastic shims to release locating clips. Instead, you just pull the bodyshells gently away from their chassis, as they're retained with a series of small magnets. Just be aware of the lighting cables joined to the chassis with small plugs.

With the bodies removed, the detailed interiors can be appreciated, with authentic-looking seats individually installed into each compartment (it would be great if these moulded plastic seats were offered separately for kit-builders), plus driver's consoles and correctly coloured bulkheads. Speakers are pre-installed into the roof space of each driving car, so adding DCC sound will be easy. The interiors are lit by rows of LEDs too.

OUTSIDE OPINION

But what about the exterior? Heljan has been displaying prototypes of the '104' at shows for several years now, building anticipation among modellers, and it's been clear for a while that the model would capture the character and looks of the prototype effectively. Now that the production models are here, there's no sense of anticlimax, as they really do look splendid. The all-important 'face' of the driving ➤

3 things we like

1

Impressive underfloor detail.

2

Magnetic-fit bodyshells afford easy access to the interior and DCC decoder socket.

3

Magnetic close-coupler units with tight-fitting bellows.

"The all-important 'face' of the driving cab ends look spot on, and the neatly installed flush glazing is free of any prismatic effect"

Heljan BR/BRCW Class 104 DMU – in detail

Factfile: BR/BRCW Class 104 DMU

The Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Company built several hundred diesel multiple unit (DMU) vehicles for British Railways during the late 1950s, the most numerous being the Class 104, which debuted on BR in 1957.

Early three-car sets were sent to Longsight to operate London Midland Region (LMR) services out of Manchester. By 1960, 302 individual vehicles had been constructed, with the fleet of two, three and four-car units split between the LMR and North Eastern Regions.

The BRCW units could be seen operating over large parts of Northern England and North Wales, as well as venturing into Lincolnshire and Norfolk. From 1981, a small number of units headed south to work services around Bedford, St Albans and on the Gospel Oak-Barking line. Furthermore, a shortage of trains in Scotland saw a dozen Class 104 vehicles moved north, with one two-car set becoming famed for its unique maroon/cream livery – known as the 'Mexican Bean' – which operated shuttles between Oban and Crianlarich in the West Highlands.

The '104s' became a major fixture of the Manchester rail scene, being closely associated with Buxton and Blackpool services from Piccadilly and Victoria stations respectively. Units allocated to Blackpool services had their suspension modified in the late 1960s to improve ride quality, and these could be discerned by the addition of a white horizontal stripe to the plain Rail blue livery.

Unusually, the Class 104 was not included in BR's refurbishment programme of the late 1970s, yet the fleet would go on to be one of the longest-serving First Generation DMU designs. Withdrawals began in the 1980s, with many NER sets rendered redundant by the new Tyne & Wear Metro system, while the steady influx of Second Generation 'Pacer' and 'Sprinter' units saw the '104s' surplus to requirements.

They operated their last services in the North West in 1990, but a handful of two-car sets continued with Network SouthEast for another three years while Departmental vehicles lasted even longer.

A dozen vehicles from this fleet survive in preservation, with two- and three-car units to be found at various heritage railways in working order or awaiting restoration.

1: The North Eastern region operated 26 four-car Class 104 sets, one of which is seen in original green livery at Garforth, on its way to Leeds in September 1959, with the two-character headcode panel prominent. COLOUR RAIL

2: Manchester was a Class 104 hotspot until the late 1980s. Wearing plain Rail blue livery, a three-car unit departs Piccadilly for Buxton in August 1985. Note the small marker light atop the cab roof. COLOUR RAIL

3: One of the last handful of '104' units still in active service, and running as a two-car unit, Network SouthEast 53540+53539 was captured at Oxford in August 1993 with a Bicester service. A high-intensity headlight has been installed, and the rooftop ventilators removed. COLOUR RAIL

cab ends look spot on, and the neatly installed flush glazing is free of any prismatic effect, almost fooling the viewer into thinking the bodyshell could be etched brass.

Indeed, the crystal-clear glazing allows the interior detail to be appreciated and the alloy strips on the droplight windows and no smoking/First Class window stickers add the final touches. The bodyshells are adorned with small wire grab and commode handles, plus separately installed door handles. The water filler pipes leading to the rooftop tanks are also fine wire fittings and the tooling allows for cab roof dome with or without upper marker lights to be replicated.

Etched metal lamp brackets and windscreen wipers, sprung buffers and multiple working jumper cables and sockets, plus tiny air horns, are pre-installed to the headstocks. As for the underframes, they're festooned with individually moulded components, including engines, cooler units, battery and fuse boxes, fuel tanks, exhaust pipes and reservoir tanks.

The bogies look the part too, with nicely defined spring and axlebox detail and fine profile disc wheels turning freely on their axles. To match this 'Blackpool' set, small bogie swing link parts are included as customer-fit parts (the instructions refer to them as etched metal parts, but they're actually plastic), with a diagram provided to explain where they should go. The parts feature locating pips, but there are no corresponding holes in the bogie plates, so I ended up trimming the mating surfaces flush before glueing them in place. Furthermore, the swing links had to be cut to fit around the small footsteps on the bogie below the guard's compartment. Once in place, though, the extra parts look correct.

Also provided in the detail bags are cosmetic screw couplings, vacuum hoses (not enough were supplied with our model) and speedometer cables which slot into holes in the axleboxes, but the other end just rests against the side of the solebars. Optional tension lock couplers are provided too, along with spare traction tyres...

GAINING TRACTION

That's right, the good old traction tyre makes a return on this three-car set, which is powered by a single motor. Located below the floor of the DMBS car, the compact power unit (measuring 32mm by 12mm) boasts twin brass flywheels and drives all four axles via cardan shafts and gears. Four of the eight wheels are fitted with low-profile traction tyres, which are virtually invisible and, thanks to all-wheel power collection throughout the entire train (via low-friction wiper contacts), there's no danger of a lack of electrical continuity.

When fully coupled, the three-car set ran extremely well in either direction, with no issues on modest gradients and second radius curves. The lighting works extremely well, with directional marker and tail lamps, plus illuminated destination panels and interiors. DCC users can toggle through the various lighting functions, but for us analogue types, there's a bank of slide switches in the vestibule beside the guard's compartment.

Overall fit and finish is excellent, with the BR blue livery and adornments applied neatly and boasting a pleasing, uniform sheen.

The three-car '104' is priced at the 'premium' end of the spectrum for a 'OO' multiple unit, which is not surprising given the impressive specification and intricacy of the design. The RRP of the two-car sets is £100 cheaper, although a little shopping around will reveal varying discounts from many retailers across the full range. With this level of detail and DCC functionality, and a product produced by a family-owned business, the full retail prices are understandable in today's market.

It's great to see the Class 104 finally taking its place in the world of RTR model railways, and by all accounts, sales are reportedly healthy. If a project such as this proves a financial success for Heljan, one hopes that other previously mooted – and hitherto overlooked – DMU classes may also be deemed viable. With the pool of potential BR locomotive subjects virtually exhausted, maybe it's time to start mining the fertile seam of multiple units? ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

PROS

- Authentic looks.
- Impressive exterior and internal detail.
- Effective lighting functions.
- Smooth running.

CONS

- Inter-car electrical connectors fiddly.

FINAL VERDICT

At last, a high-quality '104' in 'OO'!

VITAL STATISTICS: HELJAN BR/BRCW CLASS 104 DMU

OVERVIEW

Manufacturer: Heljan
Ref. No. 1454
Unit No. M50472/59180/50524
Scale/gauge: 1:76 scale, 'OO' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 737g
Min. curve radius: 438mm (second radius)
Wheel back-to-back: 14.5mm

DIMENSIONS	PROTOTYPE	1:76 SCALE	MODEL
Length (over buffers, per car)	60ft 8in	242mm	240mm
Height	12ft 7in	51mm	52mm
Width	9ft 3in	37mm	36mm
Wheel diameter (driving)	3ft 0in	12mm	12mm
Wheel diameter (tender)	8ft 6in	34mm	34mm

SERVICING

How to dismantle: Body held to chassis with magnets.
Where to oil: Gears, bearing, axles – see instructions.

ELECTRICS

Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail.
Motor type: Five pole.
Lights: Directional marker/tail lamps, destination boxes, interior lights.
DCC-ready? 21-pin socket, speakers fitted.

MECHANISM

Drive system: Centrally mounted motor drives all four axles of DMBS car via cardan shafts and gears.
Flywheel(s): Two.
Traction tyres: Four.

Hornby LMS/BR Caprotti 'Black Five' 4-6-0

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Hornby R30389 Caprotti 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 44748 BR lined black, late crest ◆ **PRICE** £249.99 ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Hornby stockists

Web *www.hornby.com*

When Hornby announced an all-new Hornby LMS Class 5MT in 2022, anticipation built among fans of Stanier's versatile 'Black Five', as the previous tooling was starting to feel somewhat long in the tooth.

As well as enhanced levels of detail and DCC functionality, Hornby's all-new version also promised greater variety, allowing more of the 800-plus prototype examples to be recreated faithfully. Furthermore, for the first time in RTR format, we'd be able to obtain a 'Black Five' with Stephenson's Link or Caprotti valve gear.

The latter variation is particularly intriguing, with 20 of the post-war 'Black Fives' being built with Caprotti's style of poppet-valve gear, resulting in a markedly different appearance. Aside from a pair of bulbous outside steam pipes and modified cylinders, the Caprotti locomotives also featured a repositioned boiler, extended coupled wheelbase, revised cab and several other key differences. Accordingly, it would require quite a commitment from Hornby in order to pull off a convincing replica.

Just a single Caprotti-fitted 'Black Five' was unveiled initially, depicting No. 44755 in BR lined black (early crest) with a double chimney, and this was available last year, only via Hornby's website. Unsurprisingly, it sold out rapidly, and we missed out on obtaining a sample for review. Happily though, another Caprotti 'Black Five' was added to Hornby's 2025 range and, this time, it's available also from Hornby stockists.

SHARED SPECIFICATION

Hornby kindly provided a sample of this new release, which portrays No. 44748, which was

“The exterior steam pipes, which resemble an angry person with their hands on their hips, really look the part”

3 things we like

1 The loco features functioning head and tail lamps.

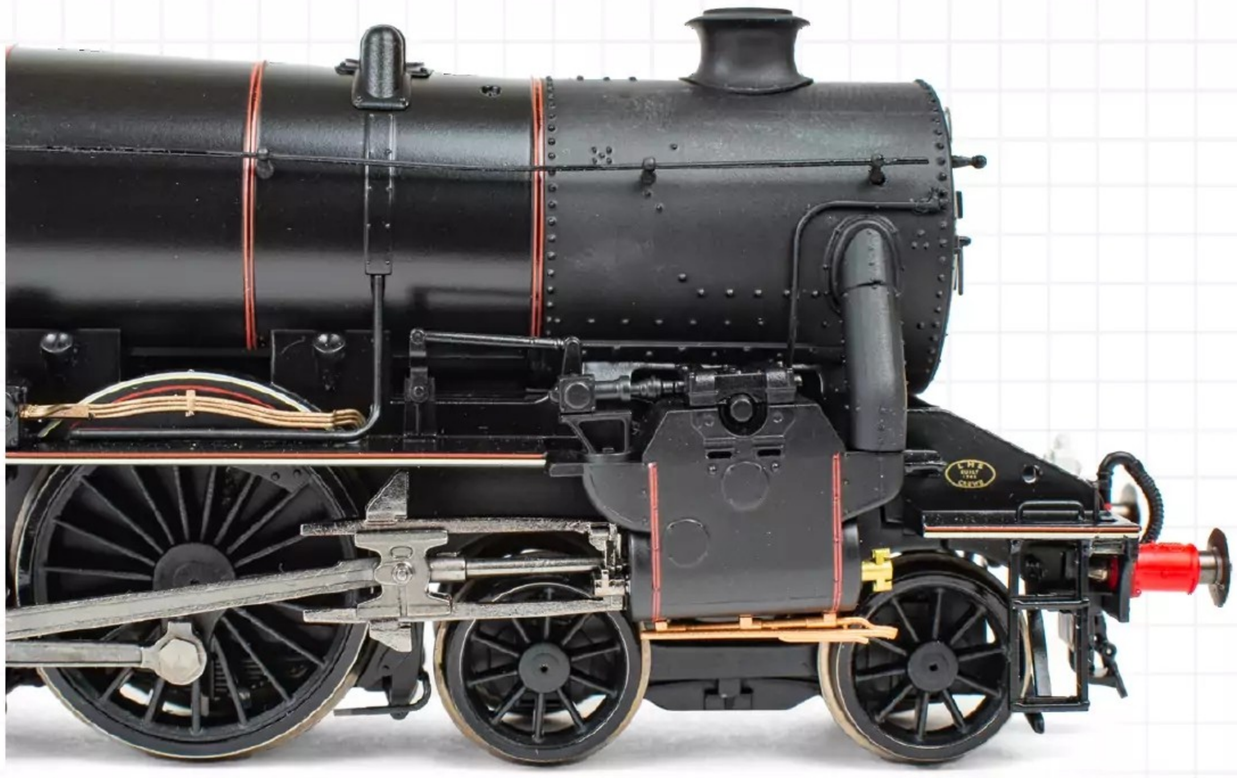
2 Accurately rendered Caprotti valve gear.

3 Effective loco-tender coupling and detailed cab interior.

turned out from Crewe Works in early 1948, initially numbered M4748 and allocated to Longsight shed in south Manchester. Apart from a brief spell at Derby, No. 44748 remained a Longsight engine throughout its career, being withdrawn and scrapped in 1964.

Not only does it differ from Hornby’s earlier exclusive release in terms of livery (it carries the later style of BR crests), but it features a single chimney too. While there are many common features with Hornby’s ‘standard’ iteration of the Stanier Class ‘5MT’ which we reviewed in detail in the June 2024 issue (MR326), the nature of the prototype dictates that there are many different parts employed on the Caprotti version.

Referencing a host of period photographs and published plans, everything looks to have been replicated accurately, with Hornby’s design showing impressive attention to detail. Prototype dimensions scale correctly, including the revised coupled wheelbase, and the lowered running plate features fully lined splashers and some exquisite runs of copper-effect lubricator pipework. ➤



Hornby Caprotti 'Black Five' – in detail

Factfile: LMS/BR Caprotti Class 5MT 'Black Five'

One of Sir William Stanier's biggest achievements was the creation of the mixed traffic Class 5 4-6-0, which was built in prodigious numbers from 1934 until 1951, with a total of 842 eventually entering service. These maids-of-all-work could be seen working virtually any type of passenger or freight train, from the far north of Scotland to the South Coast, and became known as 'Black Fives' due to their black livery.

Assembly of the huge fleet was undertaken at Crewe, Derby and Horwich Works, as well as by outside contractors Vulcan Foundry and Armstrong Whitworth. Following Stanier's retirement as Chief Mechanical Engineer of the LMS, his successors Charles Fairburn and H.G. Ivatt continued production into the nationalisation era, with British Railways overseeing the final batches and introducing a number of experimental features, most notably the use of Caprotti valve gear, which was installed on 20 '5MTs' built at Crewe in 1948 (44738-757).

Initially designed by Italian engineer Arturo Caprotti, the system employed poppet, rather than piston, valves and, in the case of the 'Black Fives', the valves were operated by a series of gears and shafts actuated by the leading coupled axle. The experiments proved worthwhile, leading to modified Caprotti valve gear being employed on some of BR's standard steam locomotives, including the unique No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester*.

In order to accommodate the necessary equipment, the boiler of the '5MTs' had to be raised slightly, the firebox extended and the spacing between the centre and rear coupled axles enlarged by 4in. The level of the running plate had to be lowered, to provide clearance for the linkages between the valve gear and internal gears, resulting in a set of splashers also being added, something which the standard 'Black Fives' lacked.

Timken roller bearing axleboxes were fitted to half of the Caprotti-equipped fleet and a few examples also gained a double blastpipe and chimney arrangement. The Caprotti locomotives proved a success, with all 20 lasting into the mid-1960s.

In addition to the 20 locomotives already discussed, the final pair of 'Black Fives' to be assembled, Nos. 44685/6, emerged in 1951 with a revised Caprotti design, featuring a raised running plate, thus providing a foretaste of the BR Standard 4-6-0s which followed shortly after.

Sadly, none of the Caprotti 'Black Fives' survived into preservation.

The unorthodox cylinders and valve linkages, with a control lever running back to the cab, are nicely captured using many individual parts, and the exterior steam pipes, which resemble an angry person with their hands on their hips, really look the part. However, these are let down slightly by the gaps between the lower sections, which are not as neat as one would hope, due to the parts having to remain separate to allow the body to be removed.

The utilitarian, ladder-style footsteps are pre-installed below the cab, with

1. The pioneer Caprotti '5MT' No. 44738, built at Crewe in 1948, is seen taking water at Chester in June 1951. COLOUR RAIL

2. The low running plate and enlarged cylinders and steam pipes are evident in this view of No. 44741 at Stockport Edgeley station, in March 1960. It would be withdrawn and scrapped in 1964. COLOUR RAIL

3. A begrimed No. 44747 sits at Blackpool North shed in October 1959. The Caprotti-equipped 4-6-0s had a more utilitarian appearance compared to Stanier's original design. COLOUR RAIL

the front steps provided in the detail bag for optional fitting, should your layout's curves permit it (they will interfere with the front bogie on tighter curve radii). A coupling shield plate is also provided for the front end which, if eschewing a tension lock coupler, is an essential addition given that this locomotive carries the battery box and air tanks of the AWS system on the running plates.

Other optional details include cylinder drainpipes, a painted footplate crew, two different styles of miniature snowplough, dummy screw link couplings, and two spare fibre optic-equipped headlamps. Talking of which, the model comes equipped with a pair of working headlamps, which emit a realistic warm light. They're arranged to describe an ordinary freight or ballast train, which is apt for a 'Black Five'.

In theory, the lamps can be repositioned and substituted with spare lamp brackets (also provided), but it's not an easy task. Indeed, the model's instructions stress this point, stating that "a good degree of modelling ability is required". I attempted to swap one of them but, fearing damage to the model, I changed my mind and left it alone. A working tail lamp, with a red lens, is pre-installed at the tender end. A firebox glow effect also features.

PULLING POWER

Hornby's new 'Black Five' tooling features a rugged, sealed motor which drives the centre axle via a brass worm and nylon gears. No flywheel is fitted, but performance was more than satisfactory, especially after a running-in period. As I write this, the model has been running on and off for a couple of hours per day, and the mechanism is smooth, quiet and responsive, with ample haulage capacity to suit the prototype.

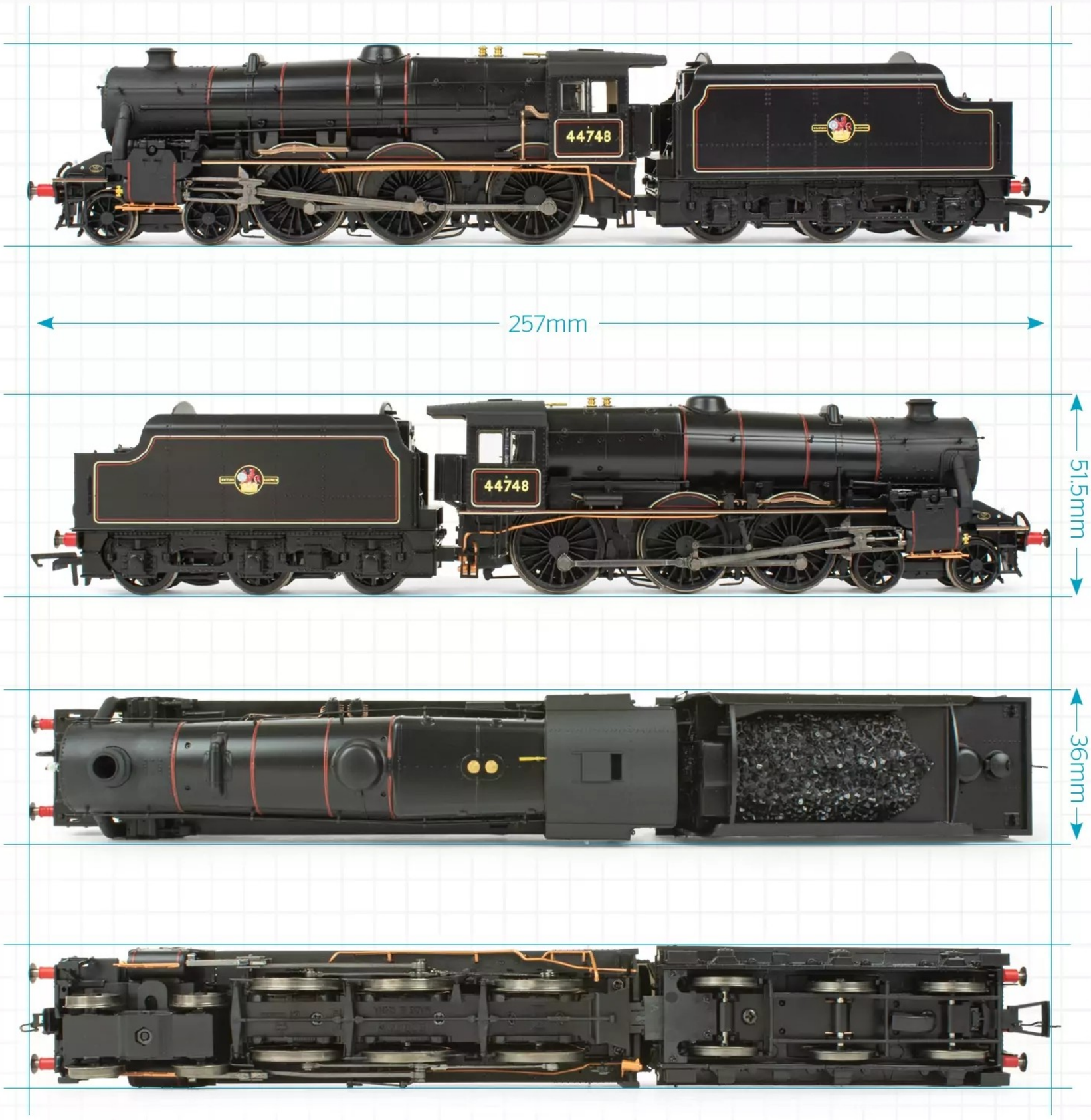
Power is collected from all six coupled wheels and all tender wheels, with a handy clip-fit connection between locomotive and tender. A 21-pin DCC socket is located inside the tender, with ample room for a sugar cube-style speaker.

In terms of finish, the paintwork is virtually flawless, especially regarding the lining application, BR logos and numbers. Builder's plates, 9A shedcodes and tender capacity plates are also present and fully legible. It's great to see more new models featuring a contrast between the predominantly shiny bodywork and a matt smokebox and cab roof which, to my eyes, exudes class. Alas, there are some fingerprints (not mine!) ingrained into the smokebox paintwork, which became even more visible during photography. That aside, the finish is first class.

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

Although the graceful looks of Stanier's 'Black Five' were compromised by the fitting of Caprotti valve gear and its associated components and necessary design modifications, I do find Hornby's model to be impressive on various counts. It definitely looks the part and faithfully replicates the complex equipment without the model feeling overly delicate and fussy.

It runs sweetly, the lighting – although fiddly to adjust – works well and, in the main, the finish is excellent. Having toyed with idea of building a Caprotti 'Black Five' from a metal kit on numerous occasions, it's great to finally be able to add one to my collection without the need to test my skills and patience with brass and whitemetal components. ***(GD)***



SUMMARY

PROS
- Looks and fidelity.
- Impressive level of detail.
- User-friendly features.
- Good runner.

CONS
- A couple of minor fit/ finish issues.

FINAL VERDICT

Great to see this unusual variant in the main catalogue.

VITAL STATISTICS: HORNBY CAPROTTI 'BLACK FIVE'

OVERVIEW
Manufacturer: Hornby
Ref. No. R30389
Unit No. 44748
Scale/gauge: 1:76 scale, 'OO' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 372g
Min. curve radius: 438mm (second radius)
Wheel back-to-back: 14.4mm

DIMENSIONS	PROTOTYPE	1:76 SCALE	MODEL
Length (over buffers)	63ft 11¾in	260mm	257mm
Height	12ft 10in	51.5mm	51.5mm
Width	8ft 10¾in	35.5mm	36mm
Wheel diameter (pony)	3ft 3½in	24mm	24mm
Wheel diameter (driving)	6ft 0in	13.3mm	13.2mm
Wheel diameter (tender)	4ft 3in	17mm	17mm
Coupled wheelbase	7ft 0in	28mm	28mm
	+ 8ft 4in	+ 33.6mm	+ 33.6mm

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

ELECTRICS
Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail.
Motor type: Five pole.
Lights: Working head/tail lamps, firebox glow.
DCC-ready? 21-pin socket in tender.

MECHANISM
Drive system: Motor drives centre axle via gears .
Flywheel(s): No.
Traction tyres: No.

IRM CIÉ Bulleid ‘H’ vans

◆ **GAUGE** ‘OO’ ◆ **MODEL** Irish Railway Models 12t Bulleid ‘H’ vans • IRM1264 CIÉ grey (‘Flying Snail’ era) • IRM1270 CIÉ brown (Roundel era)
◆ **PRICE** £109.96 per triple-pack ◆ **AVAILABILITY** IRM/Accurascale stockists **Web** *www.accurascale.com*

Irish Railway Models released a raft of impressive CIÉ wagons earlier this year, all based on Oliver Bulleid’s versatile 10ft wheelbase chassis design. Corrugated steel opens, covered grain carriers and flats were joined by the 12ton general-purpose ‘H’ van, reviewed in the June issue (MR339).

Initially, vacuum-braked ‘H’ vans were offered, but now the unfitted versions have arrived, with a choice of six different triple-wagon packs available, in grey with either CIÉ ‘Flying Snail’ or roundel-type logos, or brown liveries. IRM kindly sent us two packs for review and they’re just as impressive as the earlier releases, with a high level of detail to the body and underframe.

The lack of vacuum brake equipment means that the chassis look a little primitive in comparison to the fitted vans, with just a single brake shoe per side, although the replication of the equipment is faithful and refined. The short brake handles, linkages, brackets and safety loops are exquisite.

These are terrific models, replicating an important, well-travelled and long-lived freight vehicle to the highest standards. Each pack provides individually numbered wagons, and the finish and build quality are flawless throughout, with the printed legends being fully legible, including the tiny builder’s plates.

All the vans ran smoothly thanks to the steel pinpoint axles and brass bearings. The healthy weight (58g) of each wagon helps too, and the chassis is designed to ease conversion from 16.5mm ‘OO’ to Irish finescale standards of 21mm gauge track. Each pack includes sets of cosmetic three-link couplings, along with alternative tension locks.

With previous CIÉ wagon packs selling out fast, this latest batch of models is sure to follow suit, so if you need more freight vehicles for your collection, don’t hang around. ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

PROS
- Looks and fidelity.
- Superb level of detail.
- Build quality and finish.
- Smooth runners.

CONS
- Nothing.

FINAL VERDICT

Superb.

Clark Railworks BR Demountable tank wagons

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Clark Railworks BR Demountable tank wagons • C3023 Bass Charrington • C3024 BR Eastfield ◆ **PRICE** £40.00 each

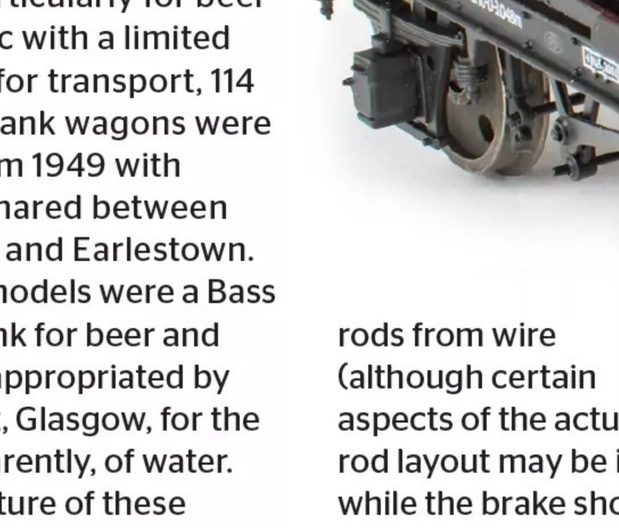
◆ **AVAILABILITY** Clark Railworks **Web** *www.clarkrailworks.com*

The arrival of samples of Clark Railworks' demountable tank wagons for review sent me scurrying for some references, as I was not familiar with the prototypes. Paul Bartlett's wagon photography website proved to be a useful source of reference, and the Clark team clearly used this website as the source for both the models supplied for review.

Intended particularly for beer and cider traffic with a limited time available for transport, 114 demountable tank wagons were introduced from 1949 with construction shared between Shildon, Derby and Earlestown.

Our review models were a Bass Charrington tank for beer and a later vehicle appropriated by Eastfield Depot, Glasgow, for the transport, apparently, of water. The skeletal nature of these vehicles certainly gave the manufacturer a chance to show off its prowess.

BR used second-hand chassis for these wagons. The Eastfield tank has LMS-designed vacuum brake rigging with auxiliary suspension. Except for the tank itself, the model is almost entirely metal, to add weight. The wagon consists of solebars and headstocks with a scale 6ft long 'floor' at each end. On the model, this is a metal casting to which the detailed components, some metal, some plastic, are attached.



Brake levers, for instance, are metal with cross and pull rods from wire (although certain aspects of the actuating rod layout may be incorrect), while the brake shoes are moulded in plastic.

The tapered buffer shanks have turned and blackened metal heads and are lightly sprung.

Clark Railworks has produced different chassis to suit alternative prototypes. The two examples supplied for review have similar chassis but there are others with differing arrangements of brake gear. The Eastfield wagon also has only one stress-relief hole in the W-irons compared to the Bass Charrington model's two.

The tank sits in a frame, angled downwards towards the discharge end and is held in place by some very fine shackles, which can be removed with extreme care if you wish to run the wagon empty or change its load. Alternative loads are available separately such as other tanks – mounted in transit cradles – or a pair of trefoil crates of the type used for pre-war aircraft propellers (all £13.50 each).

Indeed, a version of the wagon is available with this twin propeller crate load, although I understand that this is based on a modern replica produced for a wagon preserved at Didcot Railway Centre, rather than a truly authentic BR-era load.

Tension-lock couplers are fitted in self-centring, pivoting NEM pockets. On test, I ran the tanks with 17 wagons behind them and, despite their apparent lightness, they performed faultlessly.

These are examples of modern ready-to-run wagons at their very best. They will certainly bring variety and interest to any wagon fleet, representing as they do, an authentic and unusual type of tank wagon for beer and cider transport, and latterly for Departmental use.

Thanks to Paul Bartlett for his assistance with this review and for directing me to the 4mm:1ft scale drawing in *An Illustrated History of BR Wagons Volume 1*. **(CJL)**

SUMMARY

PROS

- Very fine detail and impressive build quality.
- Authentic skeletal chassis.
- Superb quality of finish.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Excellent.

Hornby 'TT:120' four-wheel coaches

◆ **GAUGE** 'TT:120' ◆ **MODEL** Hornby LBSCR four-wheel coaches • TT4055 First class • TT4056 Third class • TT4057 Third class Brake • TT4058 passenger Brake
◆ **PRICE** £34.99 each ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Selected Hornby stockists **Web** *www.hornby.com*

One of the highlights of Hornby's 2025 'TT:120' range launch was the LBSCR 'Terrier' locomotive and an array of four-wheel coaches, providing modellers with an idyllic branch line train. With pre-Grouping, Big Four and BR liveries announced for both locomotives and coaches, these additions are a welcome contrast to the main line express stock hitherto available in this growing range.

The coaches are first to arrive, with Hornby providing samples in LBSCR lined brown, encompassing the four different vehicle types on offer. Available individually, the coaches are also offered in SR green and BR crimson. Based on the generic four-wheel coaches that first appeared in Hornby's 'OO' range in 2021, the tooling provides for First and Third class compartment stock, plus a three-compartment Third class Brake and a full Brake car.

All share a common chassis, with the wheels equipped with wood effect centres, and the brake shoe, axlebox and spring detail is impressive. Pairs of running boards are provided for customer fitment, which simply slot into mounting holes and are quite a snug fit, so I didn't bother with glue, and they've stayed put so far, during testing, without working loose.

Sprung, close coupler units are installed, complete with NEM pockets equipped with standard Continental-style 'TT' couplings. These are easy to replace or remove, if desired, and a set of optional hoses is supplied for fitting to the headstocks. The metal bufferheads provide a refined touch.

The plastic bodyshell features super-sharp detail relief, kidding the viewer into thinking the door furniture may be separately applied details. The handrails are integrally formed too, but the crispness of the moulding and the neatness of the brass-effect paint combine to great effect. Indeed, the quality of the lining and printed crests is first class.

Glazing is flush-fitting and crystal clear, revealing painted interior mouldings and there's even a handbrake standard in the guard's compartments. The roof vents are individual parts and, to suit the different eras, the tooling allows for different roof and underframe detail to be installed, as per the 'OO' equivalents. Conveniently, the body unclips easily from chassis, making it easy to fit passengers.

Our samples ran smoothly and reliably around our 'TT' test track, with the coupler units ensuring a minimal gap between the buffers on straight track. On Second Radius curves, the cam-mounted couplers prevented the buffers locking. Hornby's website suggests the coaches are suitable for First radius curves also, but I was unable to verify that with certainty.

Hopefully, a series of battery-operated lighting strips will be offered for these coaches, as was the case with Hornby's 'OO' versions. Overall fit and finish are excellent and, by all accounts, these coaches have been selling fast. The forthcoming 'Terrier' is likely to be equally popular, and we await its arrival eagerly. ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

PROS
- Looks.
- Excellent finish.
- Smooth runners.

CONS
- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Lovely!

Hornby TT:120' KFA container wagons

◆ **GAUGE** 'TT:120' ◆ **MODEL** Hornby TT6030/6031/6032 KFA container wagons ◆ **PRICE** £54.99 each ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Selected Hornby stockists **Web** *www.hornby.com*

The KFA inter-modal wagons emerged in the late 1980s, constructed in Finland for Tiphook Rail and offering a 60ft payload deck, which could accommodate various sizes of shipping containers. Produced as single-unit vehicles – with buffers and regular drawgear at each end – the fleet is still in everyday use in the UK with Freightliner, GBRf and DB Cargo.

Hornby's 'OO' gauge KFA has proven popular over the years, with a colourful variety of containers supplied with each release. Thus, it makes sense for Hornby to offer the KFA in 'TT:120' also, with a trio of wagons announced as part of the 2025 range.

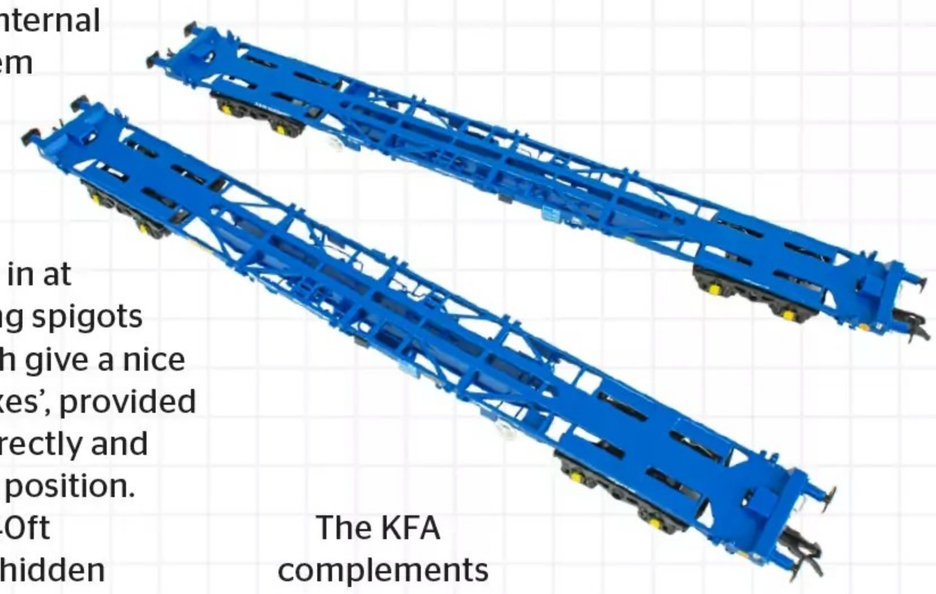
We received samples of all three 'TT:120' KFAs, which all feature a blue body and the later style of bogies. There's a welcome array of 20ft containers, including bulk tanktainers, while one version also sports a vivid Freightliner orange 40ft 'box'.

In common with the 'OO' version, the main body of the KFA is rendered in cast metal, providing some welcome ballast, even when the wagon is empty, tipping the scales at a respectable 23g. A wealth of detail parts adorn the skeletal framework, with super-fine pipework linking the air brake apparatus, while the actuating rods and handbrake cross shafts are impressive too. The brake handwheels are plastic, but finely moulded, and the plastic bogie frames sport a good level of suspension and brake detail.

Wire grab handles are installed beneath each buffershank, the latter fitted with rectangular, unsprung bufferheads. Sprung, pivoting close-coupler units are installed, equipped with the usual Continental style NEM couplers, and the metal disc wheels rotate freely. Indeed, the wagons ran extremely well under test, both loaded and unloaded.

In a welcome touch, each of the plastic containers is also equipped with an internal weight, helping them to stay put on the wagon and add to the overall mass. Each fully laden wagon came in at 67g apiece. Locating spigots are pre-fitted, which give a nice snug fit for the 'boxes', provided they're aligned correctly and pushed gently into position. Conveniently, the 40ft container features hidden recesses in the base to clear the intermediate spigots.

The containers are nicely rendered, with crisply moulded detail. The etched walkways atop the tanktainers are particularly notable. The door locking bars on the 'boxes' are moulded integrally but neatly done. The level of finish across the wagons and containers is top-notch, with the Tiphook and Touax leasing company branding – and the container liveries – placing these models in the post-2015 era.



The KFA complements Hornby's existing 'TT:120' IFA (reviewed in MR333) and a string of these wagons behind a Class 66 makes for a hugely attractive, contemporary freight train. ***(GD)***

SUMMARY

PROS
- Faithful rendition of prototype.
- Impressive level of detail.
- Smooth runners.
- Colourful array of containers.

CONS
- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

A very welcome addition to Hornby's 'TT:120' range.

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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 TO CHOOSE FROM

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 • Bulleid-Firth Brown wheels

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MR-520 15220, BR black, early emblem

MR-522 15221, BR green with 'wasp' stripes, late emblem

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MR-508 BR 12125, black, early crest

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

MR-509 BR 12131, black, early crest, weathered

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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DCC socket: Next18

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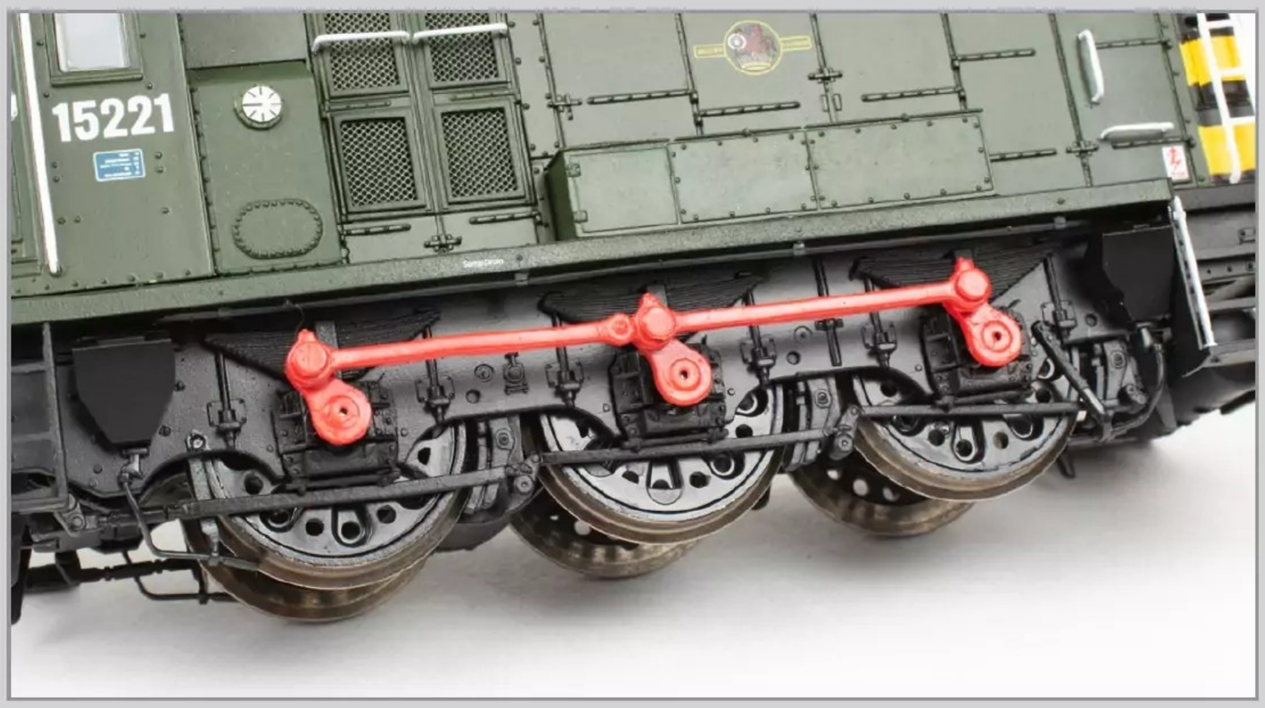
MR-521 15224, BR plain green, early emblem



MR-523 15212, BR Rail blue with 'wasp' stripes

MR-524 (ex-15231) Tilcon blue with 'wasp' ends

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Made by: Rapido Trains Inc.

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: Next18

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

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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

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.

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Ruston 'PWM' 0-6-0DE

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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

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Sentinel, No. 8172,
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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

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LNER 'J70' 00 GAUGE

Specification list
Made by: Rapido Trains
Motor: Coreless
DCC socket: Six-pin
Features:
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• space for speaker
• removable cowcatchers
• etched worksplates

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

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'USA' 0-6-0T 00 GAUGE

MR-107
£124.95
£112.46 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-107 No. 36, National Coal Board black

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- 4821 Class 48, D1704 BR two-tone green, small warning panels, weathered
- 4822 Class 48, D1706 BR two-tone green, full warning panels
- 4823 Class 48, D1703 BR two-tone green, full warning panels, weathered

Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: 21pin

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Motor: Five-pole

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With our railway on course for re-nationalisation, we look back at one of British Railways' short-lived experiments with colour.

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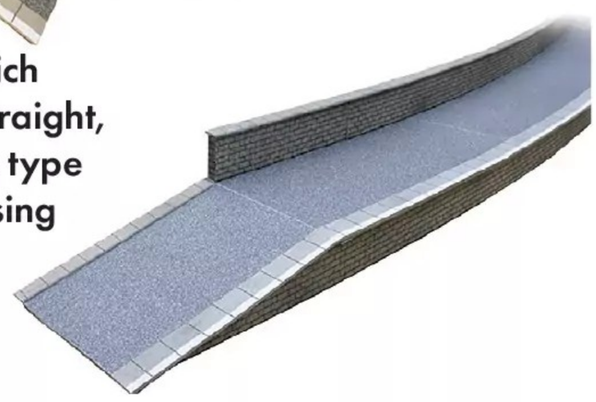

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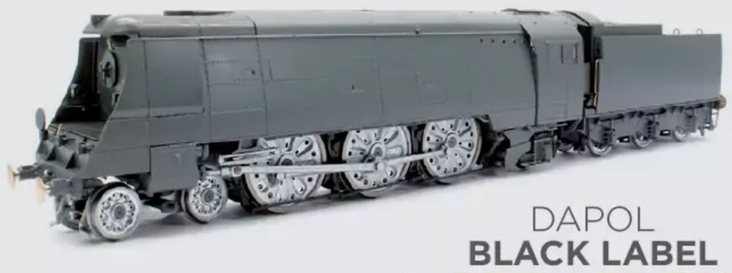

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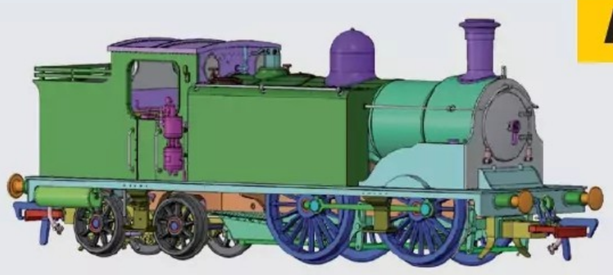

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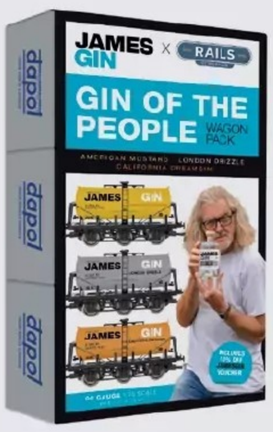

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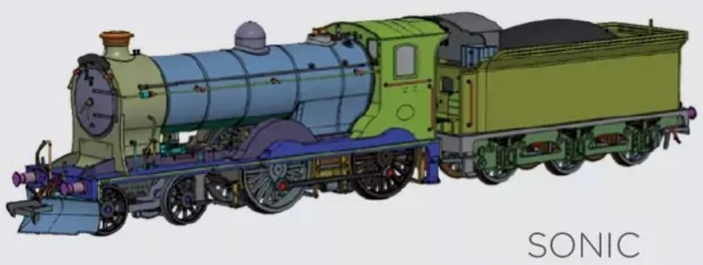

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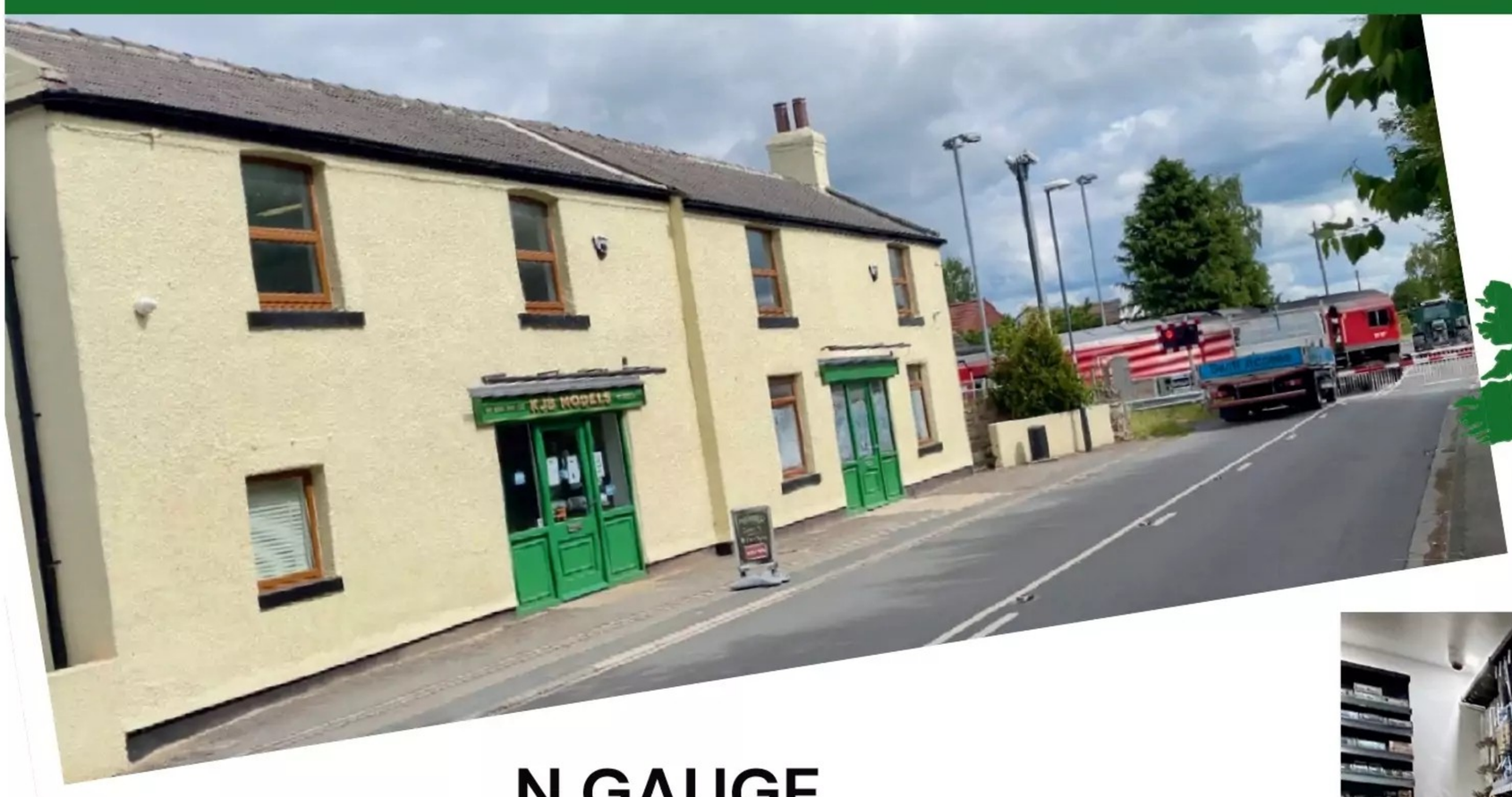

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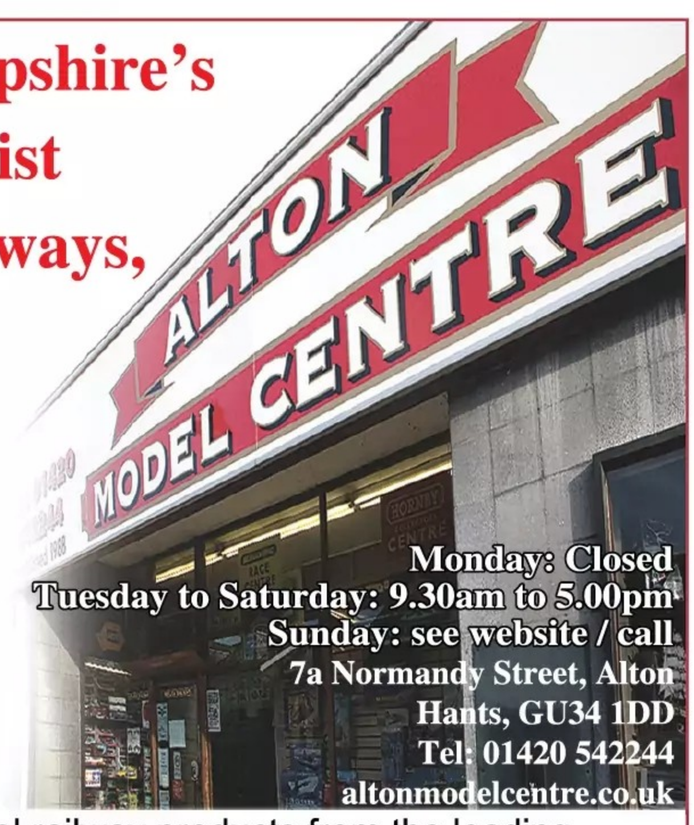

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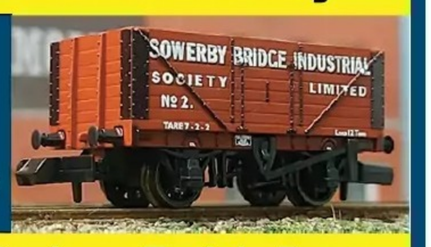

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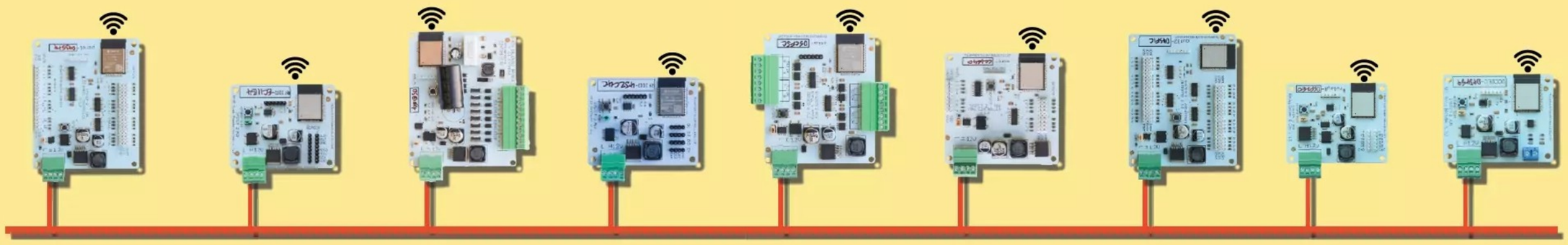

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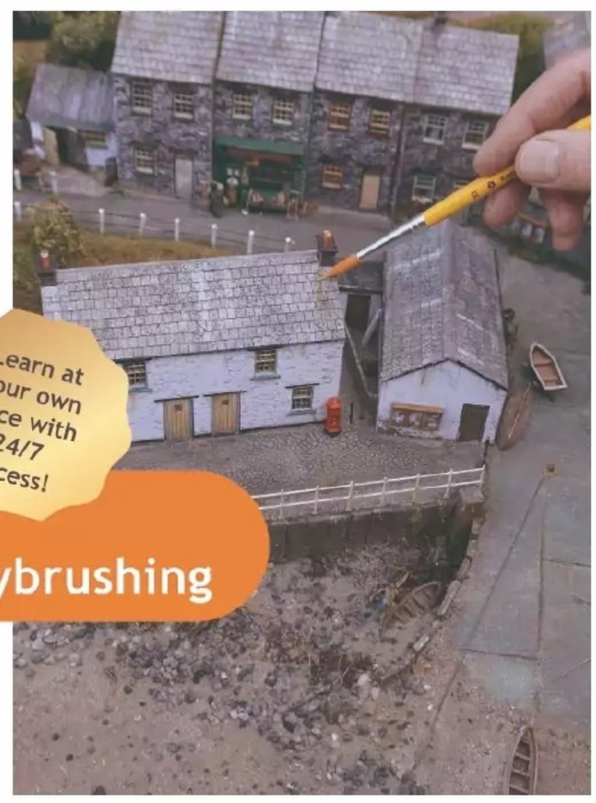

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Backscene

The model railway hobby may have some issues with the advancing age of modellers, but it's not all gloom says **CHRIS LEIGH**.

It's not that 'the media' doesn't like railways and sees railway modellers as 'grown men playing trains,' it's just that they have to have 'an angle'. Fuelled by Hornby's share price and annual report, they have become convinced that ours is a hobby in decline, because boys no longer want a train set for Christmas.

I presume that is the background to a piece in one of the national papers that caught my attention. Here's an extract:

"Sorry, but something is not right," says Antony Cox, chair of the Model Railway Club, Britain's oldest model railway fan club, where fans meet every Thursday just off the Pentonville Road in north London to discuss gauges, listen to guest speakers and generally do the miniature locomotion."

I haven't been to Keen House in many years but the picture that this piece of nonsense conjures up would, I am sure, make most MRC members cringe. Of whom are they 'fans'? I guess it's Little Eva (or Kylie Minogue for younger readers) as these – mostly mature – gents are apparently donning their dancing shoes to shuffle about the floor in a miniature space doing *The Locomotion*!

I have been a guest speaker there in the past. I don't recall any dancing or discussion of gauges. I presume the reporter spent some time actually at a meeting, but he/she obviously didn't take much in. The report makes no mention of a skilled craft hobby, the construction of working models and miniature landscapes or even of the benefits which creative hobbies are said to bring to hard-pressed modern working people. Perhaps such a comment would have been far too constructive.

There seems to be a Welsh element at work on Northampton & District MRC's junior layout, 'Rheilffordd Nant-y-Clag', at least in the title.

In fact, the fortunes of the hobby and its clubs seem as varied as any other facet of life. At Kettering & District Model Railway Society we do have an issue with attracting younger members, but the club meets in a village hall which is inaccessible without private transport. Our neighbours at Corby seem to have a younger membership and you may recall they won a TV modelling challenge with a sci-fi layout.

No problems either in Northampton. A wet Saturday in July saw plenty of visitors at Roade village hall for the Northampton & District Model Railway Club's exhibition, to which I'd been invited. On arrival, I was almost immediately greeted by a young modeller who said he reads this page every month! He wasn't alone, for one of the club's layouts was being operated (and had been built) by the junior members.

I promised them a plug, so here goes – from their website. 'The Northampton and District Model Railway Club is one of Britain's many thriving model railway clubs. Across the country, clubs like ours work hard to ensure that railway modelling remains a vibrant and welcoming hobby for enthusiasts of all ages and experience.'

I couldn't have said it better myself.

Take a bow! Northampton & District MRC junior members. Back row: Jacob Portas (16), Jacob Rumens (19), Joshua Raven (17). Front row: Finn McIntyre (12), Tom Harvey (14). BOTH: CHRIS LEIGH

CONTACT US

Media House, Lynchwood, Peterborough Business Park, Peterborough PE2 6EA
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EDITORIAL

Telephone: 01733 468000
Head of Content: George Dent
Deputy Head of Content: Helen Milbank
Content Editor – News: Thomas Bright
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Senior Editorial Assistant: Sara Herbert-Mattick
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PRODUCTION

Telephone: 01733 468377
Print Production Manager: Richard Woolley
Advertising Production: Zoe Bellamy
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