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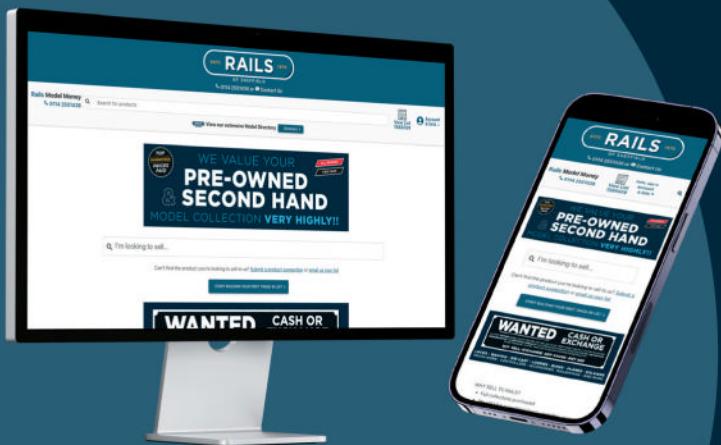
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This month's cover image



Paul Davey's 'St Paul's' is a large and impressive layout, set in the West Country and made up of several dioramas. Turn to page 30 for the full story. CHRIS NEVARD

Welcome

The recent announcement of EFE Rail's forthcoming 'OO' Class 313 and Class 314 EMUs has excited many enthusiasts, thanks to the prototypes spanning several important eras. It also goes some way to bridging a significant gap in the market.

Fans of Southern region 'slam door' third-rail EMUs have had numerous ready-to-run models to choose from over the past few decades, thanks to Hornby and Bachmann, while the post-British Rail era is increasingly well catered for. However, in terms of BR's second-generation EMUs, apart from kits or bespoke offerings from the likes of Bratchell Models, there has been precious little to choose from.

Revolution's 'N' gauge versions of the '313' and '314' – due to arrive with retailers soon – generated lots of interest during their development, and, personally, I'd love to see 'OO' versions of the similar Merseyrail Class 507 and 508 produced by EFE in future. But I imagine the '313s' and '314s' cater for a larger potential market. Will the Class 314s lead to even more Scottish-themed layouts being built?!

Also on the EMU front, it's great to see progress being made on Dapol's Class 323. I always enjoy riding Northern's '323s', and I did so on the way back from the recent MIOG event at Crewe Heritage Centre. This event raised an impressive amount of money for the Prostate UK charity and, as always, showcased some superb 'O' gauge modelling. While in Cheshire I also visited the Hazel Grove & District MRS exhibition in Woodford, where I bumped into some familiar faces.

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.



Chris Warner's 'Manchester Hardwick Bridge' was one of the stars of the recent MIOG show at Crewe Heritage Centre, bringing back memories of the Regional Railways era.

Both shows featured a host of high-quality layouts, many of which I hadn't seen before. The weekend served as a reminder that you don't have to go to the bigger shows to see a diverse range of model railways, when local events invariably throw up some real gems. And they usually offer a far more relaxed atmosphere too.

Happy modelling!

George Dent Head of Content

This month's contributors



Chris Nevard



Peter Marriott



Dave Lowery



Chris Leigh



Ben Ando



Ben Jones



Ralph Robertson



Steve Nall



Paul Gosden

Model Rail essential information

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46 Paint a 'Castle' for 1948

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62 Building Ponts Mill, Part 3

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58 Distressing BR ballast wagons

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Opening the box

The latest happenings from the world of model railways

The Big Picture

Modelling in 'O' gauge offers many potential benefits, not least the ability to include a high level of detail within the scenic areas. The boom in ready-to-run locomotives and stock, helped by a constantly growing range of building kits and accessories, makes 7mm scale ever more viable. And, as Mark Hemsley's 'Brook Street' proves, it's possible to build an engaging end-to-end layout in a reasonable amount of space.

Read more about Mark's layout in next month's issue of *Model Rail*.
Photography:
Chris Nevard



The Big Picture



BACHMANN'S WINTER 2026 PROGRAMME

EFE RAIL LAUNCHES

CLASS 313 & 314

OO
GAUGE



Headline news among Bachmann's Winter 2026 announcements is the forthcoming Class 313 and 314 electric multiple units, produced under the EFE Rail banner. The models portray some of the 'PEP' family of EMUs built by BR in the 1970s, which have never been offered in RTR 'OO' before.

Developed from early experiments, the Prototype Electro Pneumatic trains led to various production classes being introduced, the first being the three-car Class 313 dual-voltage units.

Built by BR between 1976-77, they were able to operate under 25kV AC overhead lines or on the 750V DC third rail system and they went on to work around the London and South East area until retirement in 2023.

The Class 314s were built for 25kV AC operation only and replaced aging EMUs on the electrified Glasgow suburban network, operating between 1979 and 2019.

The EFE models feature a pair of coreless motors within the centre car, along with a single PluX22 DCC decoder socket and pre-installed speaker. Conductive couplers transmit power throughout the unit, and a full array of directional and interior lighting is installed.

Liveries span the BR and privatisation eras, reflecting the long careers of both classes. Network Rail's 313121 is included;



this unit being converted as a testbed for ERTMS signalling systems in 2013.

Models will be offered in DCC-ready format only.

What's planned?

- ◆ E81001 Class 313 313034, BR blue/grey
- ◆ E81002 Class 313 313036, BR blue/grey
- ◆ E81003 Class 313 313018,
- ◆ E81004 Class 313 313026, BR Network SouthEast
- ◆ E81005 Class 313 313211, Southern (Coastway)
- ◆ E81006 Class 313 313114, Silverlink Metro
- ◆ E81007 Class 313 313024, WAGN purple
- ◆ E81008 Class 313 313201, Southern BR blue/grey (retro)
- ◆ E81009 Class 313 313121, Network Rail yellow

◆ E81010 Class 314 314202, BR Strathclyde PTE orange/black

◆ E81011 Class 314 314201, Strathclyde PTA carmine/cream

◆ E81012 Class 314 314212, ScotRail Saltire

◆ E81013 Class 314 314211, BR blue/grey Trans-Clyde

When are they due? Q2 2026

Price: £349.95

Web: www.bachmann.co.uk



SUPER SHUNTERS ALMOST HERE

00 GAUGE

First announced in early October (see last month's issue), production of the BR Class 13 'Master and Slave' diesel shunters - formed of pairs of modified Class 08s - is now complete, with models due to arrive with stockists before the end of the year.

This production run may well prove to be a one-off and, with some versions reported to be close to selling out on pre-order, it might be a case of grabbing one while you can.

What's available?

- ◆ 35-945 Class 13 D4502, BR green with 'wasp' ends
- ◆ 35-946 Class 13 13003 BR Rail blue

When are they due? December
Prices: £399.95-£569.95



OTHER 'OO' HIGHLIGHTS

00 GAUGE



On the wagon front, Bachmann's ever-popular Presflo powder tank wagon returns in Blue Circle and Tunnel cement liveries, plus an unusual blue ICI salt version. The BR 20t bulk grain hopper, Mk 1 'Carflat' and 14t/20t anchor-mounted tank wagons also reappear, in a range of interesting guises.

The latest of Bachmann's regional retailer exclusives feature the landmark BR Class 150 'Sprinters' in geographically appropriate colour schemes. Amongst the quartet, London Northwestern

livery is offered on a '150' for the first time.

What's available?

- ◆ 32-932RJ/SF Class 150/1 150101 Northern white/blue
- ◆ 32-943SD/SF Class 150/1 150139 London Northwestern Railway green/grey
- ◆ 32-944SS/SF Class 150/2 150245 Anglia turquoise
- ◆ 32-945DB/SF Class 150/2 150213 Transport for Wales grey/red

When are they due? May 2026
Prices: £309.95 (DCC-ready), £419.95 (DCC sound)



OTHER 'N' HIGHLIGHTS

N GAUGE

Also slated to arrive in the first few months of 2026 is a pair of SECR C Class 0-6-0s, in SE&CR lined green and BR black, together with a trio of Class 66s, in DB red, Freightliner green and GBRf Europorte liveries. There's a welcome return of the FNA nuclear flask wagon, with three versions to choose from.



FARISH HALLS FINALISED

N GAUGE

Bachmann's all-new 'N' gauge GWR 'Halls' and 'Modified Halls', produced under the Farish brand, are nearing completion, with four models to choose from in the initial batch, all coupled to Collett tenders. All are offered with or without DCC sound.

What's planned?

- ◆ 372-010 GWR '49XX' No. 4962 Ragley Hall, BR Lined green, early crest
- ◆ 372-011 GWR '49XX' No. 4936 Kinlet Hall, BR



P&T CRANE RETURNS, PLUS A 'LAB 10' FOR CLUB MEMBERS

00 GAUGE

they're due at the turn of the year. Meanwhile, BR RTC-liveried Mk 1 BSO 'Laboratory 10' will be a popular addition to Bachmann's Collectors Club range. Standard price is £67.95, but Collectors Club members get their usual 10% discount.

Web: www.bachmann-collectorsclub.co.uk



The EFE Rail Plasser & Theurer YOB crane gains a further production run, with a 1970s BR Departmental yellow version, plus a more contemporary Balfour Beatty-branded machine. Priced at £99.95 each,



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HORNBY REVEALS WINTER ADDITIONS

00 GAUGE

Late October saw Hornby unveil a raft of new steam, diesel and electric locomotive models, all of which are due to arrive with stockists between December and February.

With the first examples of the all-new GWR 'Saint' 4-6-0 soon to arrive into stock, Hornby has added an extra version to its roster in the form of No. 2920 *Saint David*, in lined BR black. The LMS rebuilt 'Patriot' makes a return too, with a choice of LMS post-war black (without smoke deflectors) or BR lined green. A further LNER 'J52' – No. 68846 – joins previous classmates, while the SR 'M7' also gains a new version.

For modern image enthusiasts, a DB red Class 67 is always welcome, while 87012 is offered in the special retro-style Network SouthEast livery applied to commemorate the 2012 London Olympics.

The RailRoad range is bolstered by more classic BR diesels, with the most striking being Police-branded 37093, equipped with DCC sound and complete with flashing blue lights and siren effects! Readers of a certain age may recall the famous British Rail ads starring this '37' as it tried to catch a speeding HST.

STEAM



◆ R30397 LNER Class J52 0-6-0T No. 68846, BR lined black, £174.99



◆ R30403 GWR Saint Class 4-6-0 No. 2920 *Saint David*, BR lined black, £234.99



◆ R30414 LMS 'Patriot' 4-6-0 No. 5514 *Holyhead*, LMS post-war black, £239.99

◆ R30415 LMS Patriot 4-6-0 No. 45540 Sir *Robert Turnbull*, BR green, £239.99

◆ R30418 SR M7 Class 0-4-4T No. 318, Southern lined green, £214.99

DIESEL/ELECTRIC



◆ R30425 Class 67 67015, DB Cargo red, £214.99



◆ R30426 Class 87 The 87012 Olympian, Network SouthEast (retro), £239.99



◆ R30016 R&H 88DS *Hilsea*, British Gas blue/grey, £124.99

◆ R30427 Class 153 153360 Northern Rail, £169.99

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HELJAN BOLSTERS '37' FLEET

Unveiled at the recent MIOG show at Crewe Heritage Centre (see report on page 14), Heljan is to add the Class 37/5 and 37/7 sub-class to its 'O' gauge locomotive stable.

Emerging during a mid-life refurbishment programme, these freight-oriented Type 3s featured numerous modifications, and Heljan's first production batch will portray former split-headcode locomotives with revised, flush nose ends, along with other appropriate details.



The tooling caters for the idiosyncrasies of both sub-classes, including the 'heavyweight' Class 37/7s. For now, seven livery versions are being produced, including a Colas '37/5' exclusively for Tower Models, all of which are available to pre-order now.

A specially hand-decorated sample was produced for the MIOG event by *Model Rail's* Dave Lowery, depicting 37517 in 'red stripe' Railfreight livery, complete with large TOPS numbers and Thornaby Kingfisher logos.

Looking further ahead, Heljan has indicated that it will offer centre-headcode variants of the '37/5' and '37/7' sub-classes, plus a revamped '37/4'.



What's planned?

◆ 3760 Class 37/5 un-numbered, original Railfreight grey

◆ 3761 Class 37/5 37517, Railfreight 'red stripe'

◆ 3762 Class 37/5 37506 *British Steel Skinningrove*, Railfreight Metals sector

◆ 3763 Class 37/7 37705, Railfreight Petroleum sector

◆ 3764 Class 3775 37714, EWS red/gold

◆ 3765 Class 37/5 37513, Loadhaul black/orange

◆ 3766 Class 37/7 37704, Railfreight Coal sector

◆ 3767 Class 37/5 37521, Colas orange/yellow (Tower Models exclusive)

When are they due? Q4 2026

Prices: £499.00 each

Web: www.heljan.co.uk

FIRST '323' EP BREAKS COVER

OO GAUGE



Dapol recently unveiled the first engineering prototype of its forthcoming 'OO' gauge Class 323 EMU. The fully functioning, unpainted model is currently undergoing testing and appraisal, and, despite a few issues being identified, things are looking promising.

The three-car units will be available in DCC-ready, DCC-fitted and DCC sound-equipped format, with all versions offering posable pantographs and a full interior and exterior lighting suite.

Although Dapol has promised to honour the prices of existing

pre-orders, rising project costs has seen a slight increase in the RRP for new orders.

Seven livery options have been proposed so far, covering the key schemes carried by the prototypes, ranging from early Regional Railways for both

Centro and GMPE regions) to the current Northern white/blue. **When's it due?** Mid-2026 **Prices:** from £361.00 **Web:** www.dapol.co.uk

DECORATED 'SHEDS', BIG AND SMALL

Dapol has also shared progress on its Class 66s, with a full set of decorated samples of 'O' gauge 'Sheds', showcasing the EWS, Freightliner, DRS and GBRf schemes on offer. The latter operator boasts three different liveries in the Dapol range, including the vibrant Biffa red 66783 and BR 'large logo' blue 66789 in addition to 66709 in the more usual blue/orange house colours, albeit with MSC container ship decals on each side.

Dropping down a few scales, Dapol's all-new 'N' gauge '66' is also taking shape, with fully decorated samples of each version received and tested. Production was due to get under way imminently, with an expected arrival within Q1 of 2026. The 'O' gauge versions should appear around the same time. **Prices:** from £172.80 ('N'), from £395.00 ('O') **Web:** www.dapol.co.uk



NORTHERN IRISH ENTERPRISE

OO GAUGE



By popular demand, Irish Railway Models is to produce another run of Northern Irish 'Enterprise' Mk 2 coaches, with the original maroon and blue livery reproduced for the first time. This will provide the perfect match for the forthcoming IRM Hunslet Bo-Bo diesel locomotives.

As part of the new production run, the tooling for Grille car No. 547 has been tweaked to portray the vehicle in original condition and a mix of Mk 2b and Mk 2c prototypes are being faithfully replicated, including a BDTS driving trailer

car, with 12 new models being produced in all.

All coaches are being supplied individually and feature internal lighting with 'stay-alive' capacitor units and prototypically wider bogie frames to suit Irish railways (and make conversion to finescale standards easier)

These Mk 2s are being produced in strictly limited numbers and are available only via the Accurascale website, with multi-buy discounts available. **When's it due?** Q4 2026 **Prices:** £74.95/£84.95 each **Web:** www.accurascale.com

NSE '47' FROM KMRC

OO GAUGE

The latest exclusive commission from Kernow Model Rail Centre is a Bachmann Class 47/4 in the ever-popular Network SouthEast livery. It depicts 47521 in the revised version of the blue, white and red scheme, as applied in the summer of 1989. The '47' was widely employed on Waterloo-Exeter expresses during this time, before transferring to the RES fleet in the mid '90s.

Bachmann's extensive tooling allows prototypical

details to be captured, including a flush headcode panel at the No. 2 end. The model will be available only from Kernow's stores and is available in DCC-ready, DCC sound and DCC Sound Deluxe formats, the latter with Bachmann's auto-release tension lock coupling system at each end. Models are available to pre-order now, with delivery due in May 2026. **Prices:** from £214.99 **Web:** www.kernowmodelrailcentre.com





SCOTTISH



LEGENDS



103

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49

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MIOG CHARITY SPECIAL

October 25-26 saw the Modern Image O Gauge (MIOG) team take over Crewe Heritage Centre for another great exhibition of diesel and electric era 'O' gauge modelling, with 10 superb layouts on show, from micros to room-filers!

This was the third consecutive annual event to be held at Crewe and a host of manufacturers and traders were in attendance too, including Heljan, Ellis Clark Trains, Footplate Models, Tower Models and many more. Each offered a wide range of products and support for this increasingly popular scale.

The show was held inside the exhibition building, with 87035 *Robert Burns* and the (relatively) recently restored Class 90 90150 serving as a spectacular backdrop to the trader stands. Outside, Locomotive Services had delivered gleaming Class 40 D213 *Andania* for the weekend, fresh from its groundbreaking trip to Oban (see page 19) while the centre's regular HST power cars,

Class 91 and APT exhibits were also available for perusal.

In memory of MIOG member Colin Burgess, this year's event was devoted to raising funds for Prostate Cancer UK and a special raffle, featuring prizes donated by traders, manufacturers and the *Model Rail* team, raised an amazing £6,112 for the charity.

Moreover, the MIOG team has been fundraising for the last 12 months. A spokesman told us, "We launched the show back in September 2024 at the Gauge O Guild's Stafford show 'GUILDEX' and we're hoping to have a combined total of around £10,000 with all the charity walks, events and raffles we've held over this period by key members of our team.

"They've all worked incredibly hard in donating not just their time but their efforts to raise awareness. We hope that doing the exhibition in aid of Prostate Cancer UK will have helped raise awareness in and around



the hobby and the importance of getting yourself checked, and just how many people have had their lives affected and can talk about it freely."

Following the event, MIOG also informed us that this will be the group's last exhibition for the time being, with the

team taking a well-earned break. MIOG will continue its other activities however, offering a range of resources and support for anyone interested in modelling the post-steam railway in 'O' gauge.

Web: www.modernimageogauge.co.uk

REVOLUTION FUNDRAISER

Thanks to the generosity of its customers, Revolution Trains has raised £13,000 for Martin House Children's Hospice. With the bonus of agreed match-funding arrangement, the charity received a total of £26,000.

The donation was made possible by sales of Revolution's two special 'N' gauge Class 66s, gold 66301 *Drax Power 50* and DB red 66190 *Martin House Children's Hospice*, plus limited-edition Drax gold IIA-D biomass hoppers.

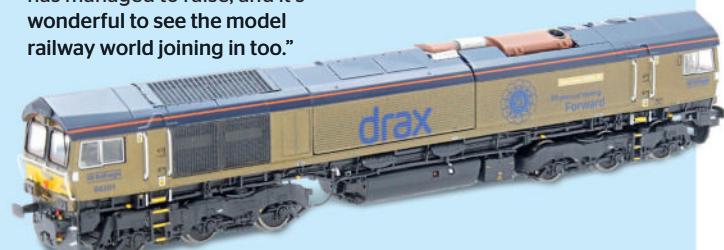
The cheque was handed over in a ceremony at York station during a larger event organised by Network Rail to

celebrate the railway industry's achievement in raising £380,000 for Martin House through charters, auctions and other charity initiatives over the past few years.

Martin House provides family-led hospice care, free of charge, for children and young people with life-shortening or incurable conditions. Revolution's Mike Hale said: "We'd like to thank our customers and supporters for their generous and enthusiastic support for these models and for showing that model railway enthusiasts are more than willing to do our bit to help."



Web: www.revolutiontrains.com



AIMREC OPENS ITS DOORS TO THE PUBLIC

In a culmination of 15 years of work by founder Cliff Parsons and his team, Ashford International Model Railway Education Centre (AIMREC) opened its new exhibition premises on November 15.

AIMREC's purpose is to safeguard and display a collection of classic model railways, in various scales, for

visitors to enjoy, while seeking to inspire new generations of modellers. AIMREC currently has a host of well-known layouts in its care, including 'The Gresley Beat' and 'Pempoul'.

The new building will initially be open on Saturdays up to December 20 and again from January 9. Opening times are 1030-1600, and free

parking is available on site. Entry to AIMREC's adjacent studio and workshop, including tea room, model and bookshop, remains free of charge.

Where is it? Mill Farm Business Units, Fridd Lane, Betherden, Kent, TN26 3DB
Prices: Adults £10, Children £5, Families £25, Annual pass £75.
Web: www.aimrec.co.uk



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
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EXHIBITION DIARY - NOVEMBER 22 2025-FEBRUARY 21 2026

November 22

GUILDFORD, SURREY. The Guildford O Gauge Group, O Gauge Model Railway Exhibition & Trade Fair. Leisure Complex, Parkway, Guildford GU1 1UP. **Time:** 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** Adults £8. **Tel:** 07736 374529.

LLANDUDNO, NORTH WALES.

Deganwy Railway Modellers Exhibition. Craig Y Don Community Centre, Queens Road, Llandudno LL30 1TE. **Time:** 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** Adults £5; Children £2.50; Under-5s Free. **Tel:** 07736 374529. **Email:** coastlineope@outlook.com

November 22 & 23

THORNBURY, BRISTOL. Thornbury & South Glos Model Railway Club Model Railway Exhibition. Turnberries Community Centre, Bath Road, Thornbury, Bristol BS35 2BB. **Times:** Sat 10:00-17:00, Sun 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** Adults £8; Under-16s £3; Families (2+2) £18. **Web:** www.tsgmrc.co.uk

November 29

ORPINGTON, GREATER LONDON. Orpington & District MRS Great Model Railway Sale. Pratts Bottom Village Hall, Norsted Lane, off Rushmore Hill, Pratts Bottom BR6 7PQ. **Time:** 10:00-15:00. **Admission:** Adults £2; Accompanied under-16s Free. **Email:** chairman@odmrs.uk **Web:** www.odmrs.uk

RAINHILL, MERSEYSIDE. Rainhill Model Railway Club's Christmas Model Railway Show. Rainhill High School, Warrington Road, Rainhill L35 6NU. **Time:** 10:00-17:00. **Admission:** Adults £5; Children £6 (includes visit to Santa & present). **Tel:** 01925 226266. **Web:** www.rainhillmrc.org.uk

November 30

SLEAFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE. Charity Model Makers Show. Hale Magna Village Hall, Little Hale Rd, Great Hale, Sleaford NG34 9LH. **Time:** 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** Adults £5; Accompanied under-16s Free. **Web:** www.ng34mrs.co.uk

December 6

HILLINGDON, LONDON. Hillingdon Railway Modellers Test Track Public Open Day. Yiewsley Baptist Church Hall (side entrance), 74 Colham Avenue, Yiewsley, Hillingdon, London UB7 8HF. **Time:** 10:00-15:00. **Admission:** £6. **Tel:** 020 8368 4090. **Web:** www.hillingdonrailwaymodellers.co.uk

December 6 & 7

NORTH SHIELDS, TYNE AND WEAR. Blyth and Tyne Model Railway Christmas Open Weekend. Redpath House (above Asda), 40 Saville Street, North Shields NE30 1NT. **Times:** Sat 10:00-16:00, Sun 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** £3; Under-16s Free. **Web:** www.btmrs.co.uk

OSWALDTWISTLE, LANCS.

Blackburn & East Lancashire MRS Christmas Exhibition. Oswaldtwistle Mills Business Centre, Pickup Street, Oswaldtwistle BB5 0EY. **Times:** Sat 10:00-17:00, Sun 10:00-16:00.

Admission: Adults £6; Accompanied under-16s Free. **Email:** belmrs2019@gmail.com **Web:** www.belmrs.com

December 13 & 14

MANCHESTER, GREATER MANCHESTER. Manchester Model Railway Society's Christmas Model Railway Show. The Sugden Centre, Sidney Street M1 7HB. **Admission:** Adults £10; Accompanied under-16s Free. **Email:** exhibition@mmrs.co.uk

December 29 & 30

MAIDSTONE, KENT. Maidstone & Mid Kent Model Railway Exhibition. Lockmeadow Market Hall, Barker Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8LW. **Times:** 10:00-16:00 both days. **Admission:** Adults £7; Children £2.

December 30

CONWY, CLWYD. The North Wales Small Scale Model Railway Club, Model Railway Exhibition. St Marys Church Hall (also known as Neuadd Nif), Rose Hill Street, Conwy LL32 8LD. **Times:** 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** Adults £5; Accompanied under-16s Free; Families (2+2) £10. **Tel:** 07796 640131. **Email:** oakleygrange@hotmail.co.uk

January 10 2026

BEAMINSTER, DORSET. Bridport & District Model Railway Club, Beaminster Public Hall, Fleet Street, Beaminster, Dorset DT8 3EF. **Time:** 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** Adults (over 16 years) £5; Under-16s Free. **Tel:** 07484 213267. **Email:** kbbnewhaven@hotmail.com

January 17 & 18

BLACKBURN, LANCASHIRE. East Lancashire Model Railway Exhibition. St

Marks Conservative Club, Preston Old Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 2SS. **Times:** Sat 11:00-17:00, Sun 10:00-15:00. **Admission:** Adult £5; Child/OAP £3; Families £12.

January 24

LANGTOFT, PETERBOROUGH. In aid of The James Quest - Teenage Cancer Charity Event supported by Market Deeping MRC, Sleaford MRC, March and District MRC and the NG34 Model Railway Society. St Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, East End, Langtoft PE6 9LP. **Time:** 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** Adults £5; Accompanied under-16s Free. **Email:** webman@mdmr.org. **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/p/jamies-quest-for-lifesaving-cancer-treatment-61565582260764

January 24 & 25

IRVINE, AYRSHIRE. Kilmarnock and District Model Railway Club Exhibition 2026. Scottish Maritime Museum, Linthouse Building, Harbour Rd, Irvine KA12 8BT. **Times:** Sat 10:00-17:00, Sun 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** Adults £7; Concessions £5; Under-16s Free. **Web:** www.kilmarnockmrc.com **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/kdrcm71

KENDAL, CUMBRIA. Kendal Model Railway Club, Annual Exhibition 2026. Kendal Leisure Centre, Burton Road, Kendal LA9 7HX. **Times:** Sat 10:00-17:00, Sun 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** Adults £6.50; Children (6-18) £2.50. **Tel:** 01539 733844. **Web:** www.kendalmrc.org

PONTEFRACT, WEST YORKSHIRE. Normanton & Pontefract Railway Modellers Society, Pontefract Model Railway Exhibition. Pontefract Racecourse, Park Road, Pontefract WF8 4QD. **Times:** Sat 10:00-17:00,

Sun 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** Adults £10; Accompanied under-16s Free. **Facebook:** normanton and pontefract rms

January 31

SHIREHAMPTON, BRISTOL. Shirehampton MRC Annual Model Rail Exhibition. Shirehampton Public Hall, Station Road, Shirehampton, Bristol BS11 9TU. **Time:** 10:00-16:00. **Admission:** £6; Families (4) £8. **Web:** www.shirehamptonmrc.com

February 7

HILLINGDON, LONDON. Hillingdon Railway Modellers Test Track Public Open Day. Yiewsley Baptist Church Hall (side entrance), 74 Colham Avenue, Yiewsley, Hillingdon, London UB7 8HF. **Time:** 10:00-15:00. **Admission:** £6. **Tel:** 020 8368 4090. **Web:** www.hillingdonrailwaymodellers.co.uk

February 14 & 15

NEW MILLS, DERBYSHIRE. New Mills & District Railway Modellers (NMDRM). Chapel en le Frith Leisure Centre, Long Lane, Chapel en le Frith, Derbyshire SK23 0TQ. **Times:** Sat 10:00-17:00, Sun 10:00-16:30. **Admission:** Adults £8; Accompanied children Free. **Email:** exhibition@nmdrm.co.uk **Web:** www.nmdrm.co.uk

February 21

TONBRIDGE, KENT. Tonbridge MRC annual exhibition. Angel Leisure Centre, Angel Lane, off High Street, Tonbridge TN9 1SF. **Time:** 10:00-17:00. **Admission:** Adults £8; Accompanied under-16s Free. **Tel:** 01959 523840. **Web:** www.tonbridgemrc.com

...and finally



Unusual scenes captured by the lens of Chris Nevard

Here we are at the little-known halt of Catcott Burtle, on the former S&DJR line from Evercreech Junction to Highbridge. The 0903 Highbridge service arrives and the twin elderly spinsters Betty and Gladys, with their little niece Fifi, are off to play the slot machines in Burnham-on-Sea.

Alas, the train no longer goes there, so they'll have to get a bus for the final couple of miles from Highbridge. In just a few years they won't even be able to go anywhere by train from here, with so many branch lines being earmarked for closure. How will Betty and Gladys get their gambling fix?

Photographer: Chris Nevard

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WE HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF NARROW GAUGE STOCK AND TRACK FROM
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EXHIBITIONS 2025/6:

- NEC 22-23rd November • London 21-22nd March
- Cheltenham 11-12th April

| HORNBY | | R3742F Class 92 DB Romania | R614 LH Diamond Crossing | HORNBY Control Equipment | R32-652A BR Cl44 Blue Ingleborough |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| R3527 | N15 SR Black 'Camelot' | R3896 R&H 88DS BR 84 |£98.99 |£16.85 |£161.45 |
| |£139.45 |£102.59 | | | |
| R3635 | BR Lord Nelson 'Lord Rodney' | R3899 BR Class 08 yellow |£166.95 |£16.85 |£161.45 |
| R3731 | BR H class | R3901 CI 60 Colas |£161.99 |£4.45 | 35-312 Class 37 BR Blue |
| R3733 | BR Robert Blake BR green late | R30010 Sentinel Hitachi |£98.09 |£11.90 |£212.45 |
| R3763 | SR H class | R30013 R&H 48DS Gower Princess |£98.10 |£8.05 | 35-418 BR Class 47 Construction |
| R3833 | LNER A2/3 Charnosaire | R30015 Ruston WMJEA |£112.50 |£12.15 |£203.95 |
| |£171.00 |£196.20 |£2.30 |£8.10 | 35-419 BR Class 47 Rft Distribution |
| R3859 | BR J36 | R30030 BR Class 87 Large Logo |£175.49 |£14.45 |£203.95 |
| R3974 | LNER Class A2/3 Airborne | R30083 Sentinel 0-6-0 P o B |£251.99 |£14.45 | 35-351 Class 20 BR green |
| |£251.99 |£98.09 |£22.10 | | |
| R3977 | BR Class A2/2 Earl Marischal | R30084 Sentinel 0-6-0 M.S.C. |£251.99 |£14.45 | 35-352 BR Cl. 20 Green .£191.20 |
| R3982 | BR 2MT Green | R30115 CI08 Blue 604 Phantom |£206.10 |£16.99 | 35-352A BR Cl. 20 Green .£191.20 |
| R30140 | BR M7 class | R30141 GBRF Class 08 |£193.49 |£22.10 | 35-357 BR Class 20 Rft.£152.95 |
| R30200 | Railroad 0-4-0ST BR | R30150 GBRf Class 66 Grey |£43.19 |£22.10 | |
| |£179.99 |£87.30 |£3.20 | | |
| R30221 | The Railway Children Return 4F | R30151 GBRf Class 66 HS2 Green |£125.99 |£14.45 | BACHMANN Steam Locomotives |
| |£125.99 |£87.30 |£118.45 | | |
| R30228 | LMS Coronation Queen Mary | R30167 Class 66 Fastline Freight |£217.79 |£14.45 | 31-002 Robinson BR Early Crest |
| R30286 | S&DJR Class 2P | R30203 Class 121 Coca-Cola |£139.50 |£16.99 |£94.99 |
| R30287 | United Glass Bottle 0-4-0ST PUG | R30223 DRS Class 66 |£76.50 |£16.99 | 31-127 CL3000 BR ROD |
| R30317 | Railroad M&GNJR 0-4-0T | R30242 GNER Class 91 |£49.50 |£22.10 | 31-128 BR ROD Weathered |
| |£121.50 |£220.49 |£22.10 |£102.45 | |
| R30365 | GNR J13 1257 | R30249 GBRf Cl. 66 Chinook |£157.49 |£14.45 | DAPOL/HELJAN/RAPIDO |
| R30366 | LNER J52 Black | R30301 TXS BR Cl. 08 SOUND |£157.50 |£14.45 | 4S-018-009 B4 Wartime Black 87 |
| R30396 | BR Class 9F |£251.99 |£237.60 |£115.90 |£93.50 |
| HORNBY Diesel Electric Locomotives | | R30424 GNER Class 91 |£134.95 |£87.30 | 31-443 BR Ivatt 2mt tank |
| R3373 | Class 71 BR Green w/panel | R30429 GBRf Cl. 66 Chinook |£134.95 |£87.30 |£140.20 |
| R3374 | Class 71 BR Blue |£85.50 | | | 31-464A C Class SR Black |
| R3376 | Class 71 BR Green | R30431 BR Cl.73 73132 |£134.95 |£80.99 |£174.20 |
| R3705 | R&H 48Ds Dewars |£71.99 | | | 4S-041-011 Large Prairie GWR |
| R3707 | R&H 48Ds Longmorn |£71.99 | | | 5132£129.50 |
| HORNBY TRACK | | R574 Trackside Accessories |£237.60 |£114.70 | 2570 Class 25/3 BR Blue 7513 |
| R083 | Buffer Stop |£2.80 |£18.70 |£177.65 | |
| R207 | Track Fixing Pins |£4.45 |£19.55 | 31-932 DC BR Compound | |
| R600 | Straight |£2.75 |£19.55 |£127.75 | Class 25/3 BR Blue 25323 |
| R601 | Double Straight |£3.20 |£19.55 | 31-932 BR Compound Early |£177.65 |
| R604 | Curve 2nd radius |£2.85 |£19.55 |£169.95 | 31-933A BR Compound Late |
| R605 | Double Curve 1st Rad. |£3.60 |£19.55 |£169.95 |£177.65 |
| R606 | Curve 2nd Rad. |£3.20 |£19.55 | 32-131A GWR 4575 |£140.20 |
| R607 | Double Curve 2nd Rad. |£4.05 |£19.55 | 32-883 BRITISH RAILWAYS Fairburn |£157.20 |
| R608 | Curve 3rd Rad. |£3.20 |£19.55 | 35-201 BR black V2 |£195.45 |
| R609 | Double Curve 3rd Rad. |£4.05 |£19.55 | | |
| R610 | Short Straight |£1.90 |£19.55 | | |
| HORNBY Trackside | | R645 Single Level Crossing |£22.10 |£17.99 | BACHMANN Diesel/Electric Locomotives |
| R658 | Inclined Pier Set |£11.45 |£22.10 |£8.55 | 32-265A Class 419 MLV BR green |
| R659 | High Level Pier Set |£9.35 |£22.10 |£133.99 |£135.95 |
| R645 | Single Level Crossing |£19.55 |£22.10 |£157.20 | 32-267A Class 419 MLV Blue/Grey |
| R658 | Inclined Pier Set |£11.45 |£22.10 |£135.95 |£135.95 |
| R659 | High Level Pier Set |£9.35 |£22.10 |£133.99 | 31-392 Class 414 Network South East |
| R645 | Single Level Crossing |£19.55 |£22.10 |£220.95 |£169.95 |
| R658 | Inclined Pier Set |£11.45 |£22.10 |£133.99 | 31-579 Windhoff MPV NR Orange |
| R659 | High Level Pier Set |£9.35 |£22.10 |£133.99 | 32-613SF Class 90 Intercity Sound |
| R645 | Single Level Crossing |£19.55 |£22.10 |£221.45 | 32-620SF Class 90 Freightliner Sound |
| R658 | Inclined Pier Set |£11.45 |£22.10 |£221.45 | 32-620SF Class 90 Freightliner Sound |
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News Real

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

One of the most remarkable rail events in living memory occurred over September 26-28 when a replica Stockton & Darlington Railway train made a three-day journey from Shildon to Stockton. During the early hours of September 28, the train worked into Darlington station, posing alongside LNER 'Azuma' 801207 *Darlington*. The trip was the centrepiece of the S&DR200 celebrations. JACK BOSKETT



September 27 saw the first ever visit of a Class 40 to Oban on the west coast of Scotland. BR green D213 *Andania* hauled the Scottish Railway Preservation Society's 'Oban Bucket' charter from Carlisle. In dismal weather, the EE Type 4 rests at its destination after tackling the challenging route via Glasgow and Crianlarich. PIP DUNN

Network Rail has introduced a new design of station clock, which can now be seen on electronic screens at major stations. The double arrows make their way around the face of the clock every minute - and every 12 hours the completed arrow takes a journey around the face. A 1.8m diameter physical version has also been installed at London Bridge and will eventually be rolled out across other stations. NETWORK RAIL



Chiltern Railways unveiled its new Class 68+Mk 5 trains with a media trip from London Marylebone to Birmingham Moor Street on October 14. The re-liveried ex-TPE locomotives and five-piece Mk 5 sets will filter into service from December, adding 10,000 extra seats per day by the end of 2026. PIP DUNN



Staff Show & Tell

BELGIAN BLOCKS

On a recent visit to a model railway exhibition in Belgium, **Peter Marriott's** imagination was captured by something a little different.

On one of my regular jaunts to the Continent via Eurostar, I visited Leuven, Belgium. This city is the capital of the Flemish region of the country and is only about 16 miles east of Brussels.

It's an attractive city, with a rich cultural heritage. But it was a large model exhibition that was my main focus and, while exploring the show, one of the layouts really caught my eye. It wasn't a case of ultra-realistic scenery or expertly weathered rolling stock, but the fact that everything was made from Lego.

And I mean everything! Trees, platforms, locomotives, rolling stock, signals, buildings and, of course, the distinctive figures. I was aware that Lego trains had been around for decades, but this was the first time I'd seen such a comprehensive 'scenic' layout built from the colourful plastic blocks.

It struck me as a fantastic way for children to be introduced to the hobby. Furthermore, I also love the idea of being able to take

everything apart easily, in order to build another layout in future.

Once I was back in England, I spent some time exploring the internet and realised that Lego model railways were a 'big thing'. There's even a Lego UK Railway Club, which showcases some amazing creations, from a replica of the Forth Bridge to working Bulleid 'Pacifics' and HSTs, and a layout featuring a Lego Angel of the North. There are Lego train podcasts to listen to and a global Brick Train Awards competition. Who knew?!

I'm sure many readers were already aware of how big Lego trains have become, but it has been quite a learning curve for me. While it appears that the Lego train community is predominantly a scene for grown-ups, seeing how popular the exhibits were among youngsters shows how effective it could be for harnessing the interest of youngsters who, hopefully, would also be drawn into our hobby, thus helping it continue for further generations.

Web: www.lukrailway.co.uk



The rolling stock was equally impressive, resembling Belgian prototype wagons.



There was also a display of Lego-built locomotives and rolling stock, including this attractive 0-6-0ST.



This handsome 4-4-0 tender locomotive also caught Peter's eye.



IT'S ALMOST PANTO SEASON! (OH YES IT IS)

DAVE LOWERY has been a busy bee this year, rolling out more kit-built 'O' gauge HST power cars, plus a variety of matching rolling stock.

We've featured some of Dave's British Rail-era HSTs in *Model Rail* already, but his latest ones are something a little different.

Depicting a pair of Colas Rail Class 43s, the power cars still carry their redundant LNER and East Midlands Trains colour schemes, as per the real 43272/274, albeit with Colas' yellow diamond logos.

Dave's customer's brief was to create a complete Network Rail pantograph test train, top-and-tailed by these Class 43s, both of which were built from PRMRP kits. As for

the coaches, an NR yellow Heljan Mk 2 BSO and a Mk 1 BG generator van were available off-the-shelf. The Mk 3 pantograph testing coach, however, had to be built from a converted Skytrex kit, with the pantograph coming from the PRMRP range. Transfers for the HST power cars and Mk 3 came courtesy of Rainbow Railways. Dave says he had a great time test-running the completed train before it was sent off to the customer.

Web: www.prmrp.com
www.rainbowrailways.co.uk



One of the main challenges was this ex-TGS pantograph testing car, built from a much-converted Skytrex kit.



Many of Colas Rail's active fleet of HST power cars still carry colour schemes of former employers, making for fascinating modelling subjects.



Having built several PRMRP Class 43s in the past two years, Dave has the assembly techniques for these mixed-media kits down to a fine art. Heljan's RTR range provided the NR yellow Mk 2 BSO and Mk 1 BG. Both power cars feature a full suite of DCC-controlled lights and sound.

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Inside track with Ben Ando

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

“The real pleasure was simply watching the children – and their parents – discovering the fun of playing with trains”

Railnuts Peter, Mark, Chris and Kat join Mike Hale, Mike Buick and Ben from Revolution Trains during the 'Making Tracks' event at the Vale of Rheidol Railway.

Playing trains...?

Recently, the Revolution team travelled to the charming Welsh seaside town of Aberystwyth to take part in a model railway event at the famous Vale of Rheidol railway.

Regular readers will, of course, know that Revolution is producing models of the three iconic 2-6-2 narrow gauge tank locomotives that operate on the line for *Model Rail*.

However, our reason for visiting was a Revolution Takeover on 'Making Tracks', the remarkable travelling layout built by well-known model railway enthusiast Pete Waterman and the Railnuts team.

'Making Tracks' was officially declared the world's largest portable model railway 18 months ago, and its visit to the Vale of Rheidol during school half-term holidays was the first time it had been shown in its record-breaking format since then.

The visit was a huge success, with the railway reporting record numbers of visitors for what is normally a fairly quiet time of year, as it prepares to close to the public during the winter months to allow time for maintenance and repairs.

'Making Tracks' depicts a compressed stretch of the West Coast Main Line from Roade to Milton Keynes and Watford Junction in 'OO'. It is unashamedly a modern railway, with scale-length trains depicting rolling stock anyone might see when travelling by rail today.

The magic of 'Making Tracks' is its interactivity; visitors young (and not so young!) can actually drive trains on the layout.

Each child is offered a ticket on arrival, and when their turn comes, they are handed a tablet device with which they can control a train, walking along the front of the layout to follow its progress; following signals; making station stops or rushing through 'at speed' if they prefer.



Revolution's Mike Hale and Ben Ando grab a selfie with the man himself: Pete Waterman.

They are usually accompanied by a member of the 'Making Tracks' team – in a suitably branded hi-viz vest – to help them should they require instruction or run into problems.

They can choose 'Pendolinos', charter rakes hauled by *Flying Scotsman* or *Sir Nigel Gresley*, suburban Class 350 stoppers and even heavy freights with Class 56, 66 or 92 haulage.

For the 'takeover' we loaded up the fiddleyard with a selection of Revolution models: rakes of WIA covered car transporters, IHA steel carriers, JNA box wagons, TEA tankers, HOA hoppers and more.

However, while it was fun watching our models being put through their paces on such a huge layout, the real pleasure was simply watching the children – and their parents – discovering the fun of playing with trains.

We often worry about the future of the hobby in the face of perceived indifference by the young; the joy I saw on those young faces tells me the hobby has a healthy future – and I wonder how many train sets have been added to Christmas lists this week?

Talking of Christmas, Pete Waterman's 'Making Tracks for Christmas' is on display from Saturday December 13 until Sunday January 4 at Cheshire Outdoors, at Blakemere Village near Northwich. Why not take along a young member of your family?



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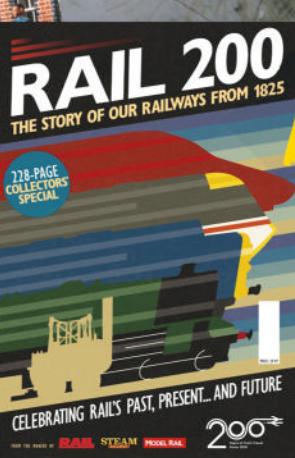
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MODEL RAIL'S Christmas GIFT GUIDE

All we want for Christmas is this sparkling line-up of 10 of the best gifts for railway modellers, as chosen by George Dent and the *Model Rail* team – plus you could win a Hornby retro train set worth £170!



LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

Give every room in the house that platform feel with these fun metal British Rail station signs, which can be personalised for the rail lover in your life. A great value stocking filler (with smaller signs from just £6.99), we love the fact they can be clean and fresh looking, or 'weathered' as though freshly pilfered from the trackside.

Product: Personalised BR station metal sign

Price: £6.99 to £24.99 depending on size

Availability: Six Zero One

Web: www.etsy.com/uk/shop/SixZeroOne



PLough AHEAD

Get your layout ready for the winter months with a set of snowploughs. Accurascale has recently re-released the former Hattons Originals BR Beilhack 'ploughs, which made use of redundant bogies from Class 40 and 45 diesel locomotives. Introduced by British Rail in the late 1980s, they're still in use today with Network Rail and can be seen stationed at strategic locations for use when required.

Traditionally, a pair of diesel locomotives would operate a pair of these snowploughs, allowing them to run in either direction and guard against breakdowns. To tackle deeper drifts, BR created larger snowploughs atop former steam locomotive tender chassis, copying earlier practices. Some of these are also still in use with Network Rail, and suitable models are available individually from Footplate Models, in either 'OO' or 'O' gauge.

Product: Accurascale Beilhack snowploughs (£69.95 per twin-pack), Flangeway BR independent snowploughs in 'OO' (£39.95) and 'O' (£99.95)

Availability: Accurascale, Footplate Models

Web:

www.accurascale.com
www.footplate.co.uk





GREAT SCOT!

The Christmas TV guide will be well and truly redundant as soon as this is unwrapped. It's a model of the legendary *Flying Scotsman*, featuring over 2,700 pieces, with the set also including two crew figures and a track section. The coupled wheel mechanism features moving

parts. Pitched at railway modellers as young as 10, it's a fantastic set for the children in your life – or the young at heart.

Product: COBI 6292 1:35 scale *Flying Scotsman*

Price: £179.99

Availability: Scale Model Shop

Web:

www.scalemodelshop.co.uk



STAY ON TRACK

Ditch the socks in favour of a stocking filler that will stop everything else in its tracks... This six-colour acrylic paint set allows you to achieve a realistic finish across long sections of railway track using just five simple airbrush steps – no complex masking or brushwork required. ATOM paints are water-based, self-levelling, fast-drying and, once dry, highly durable and compatible with acrylics, enamels, lacquers and decal solutions. This set comprises six 20ml bottles in colours ATOM-20055 Umber, ATOM-20045 Weathering Rust, ATOM-20058 Leather, ATOM-20163 Matt Black, ATOM-20143 Dust and ATOM-20051 Earth.

Product: AMMO ATOM-20853 Railway Fast Method Paint Set

Price: £17.99

Availability: Scale Model Shop

Web:

www.scalemodelshop.co.uk



ENJOY A RETRO CHRISTMAS

Mix yourself a snowball, lean your new Raleigh Chopper against the wall, and relive the excitement of opening this on Christmas morning circa 1980... Replicating the retro look of the famous Hornby R685 train

set, it's now 50 years since the Inter-City 125 High-Speed Train was introduced. This set comes with a pair of Class 43 diesel driving cars - one powered with illuminated headlights and the other a non-powered driving car. It also has one Mk 3

passenger coach, an oval of track with a siding, a bufferstop and a controller with mains power supply.

Product: Hornby R1289M 1:76 scale BR HST Retro Train Set

Price: £169.99

Availability: Hornby stockists

Web: www.hornby.com



POP THE KETTLE ON

Nothing says 'Happy Christmas' quite like inviting four giants of British railway innovation into your loved ones' homes. Featuring original artwork by Norfolk-based artist Emma Jackson, this brand new collection of four mugs showcases her pencil portraits of Gresley, Bulleid, Stanier and Collett - the men behind the design philosophies that helped shape the UK's 'Big Four' steam network. Available as individual

mugs or as a collector's set of all four, either on its own or with a set of matching coasters, this is guaranteed to top every railway enthusiast's festive wish-list.

Product: Mugs of the Big Four

Price: £15 each, collector's set of four mugs £55, deluxe set with four mugs and four matching coasters £65, set of four coasters £15, all including p&p.

Availability: Jackson Drawings

Web: www.jacksondrawings.co.uk/shop

SEE THE LIGHT

Second only to the joy of building model railways is the art of capturing fantastic images of them - and a mini, portable LED light box makes for a useful (if delicately wrapped) stocking filler for budding photographers on your list. Amazon has lots to choose from, including this Photo Light Box from Puluz. In a range of sizes, we've picked the 30cm x 30cm option, which comes with backdrops and a reflector.

Product: Puluz Photo Light Box

Price: £34.99 (30cm x 30cm)

Availability: Amazon

Web: <https://amzn.eu/d/9ECWoob>





WIN THIS TRAIN SET!

Thanks to Hornby, one lucky *Model Rail* reader can win this fantastic retro train set in our FREE prize draw. Simply head to www.model-rail.co.uk for your chance to win.



HOP IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

For those who might enjoy modelling within digital realms, the latest *Train Sim World 6* railway simulator has recently been released. Available on PC, PlayStation and Xbox, calling it a 'game' doesn't really do it justice – the graphics and physics are superbly realistic with actual routes from around the world. Lots of British content – steam,

diesel and electric – is available, along with the option of creating your own liveries, formations and scenarios. If you've ever wanted to experience the Dawlish Sea Wall during a storm from the driver's cab, this is probably as close as you're likely to get.

Product: *Train Sim World 6*

Price: £44.99 (standard edition)

Availability: Train Sim World

Web: trainsimworld.com/gb



THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Every modeller needs a good basic set of tools, and this 11-piece set is a real Christmas cracker. Ideal for assembling, cleaning and customising models, it comes with a precision side cutter, modelling knife, five fine files and sandpapers, three

files (flat, round and half round), and fine-tipped tweezers.

Product: AK Interactive AK9559 Essential Modelling Tools

Price: £22.90

Availability: AK Interactive stockists/Hobby Workshop

Web:

www.hobbyworkshop.co.uk

A YEAR-LONG GIFT

Remind your friends and family that you're an ace present giver – every single month. A subscription to *Model Rail* and/or *Steam Railway* will be a gift that keeps on giving. As an added Christmas bonus, every subscriber to *Model Rail* gets 10% off all models at ModelRailOffers.co.uk – including the '16XX', which is on offer from Nov 7-Dec 20 for just £130 – a saving of £19 off the RRP. View the '16XX' range on page 100.

Products: Subscription to *Model Rail* or *Steam Railway*

Price: £19.99 for six issues (print and digital)

Availability: Great Magazines

Web: www.greatmagazines.co.uk/modelrail
www.greatmagazines.co.uk/steamrailway

THE ROOM FILLER

Paul Davey refers to his 'St Paul's' layout as compact – yet it takes up an entire room of his house and is still only a quarter of the size of what he's planning.

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



“

What makes this layout great?

For many modellers, this wonderfully detailed multi-level layout, with its many different scenic locations and huge amount of operating potential, would be all they'd ever need. But Paul has been so motivated by building it, and all the skills he's learnt along the way, that he now wants to go much, much bigger. Truly inspiring.

”



For what Paul Davey describes as "the first serious layout I've built as an adult", he has pulled off a triumph. His busy 'OO' gauge creation of a fictional late 1980s Western Region location, christened 'St Paul's', not only fills an entire room, but it's also split-level, with its operational storage area hidden beneath the main deck and CCTV-monitored. That leaves the entire top level devoted to scenic work, including a station, depot, redundant freight loading dock, redundant goods yard and a (rather boozy) little village. However, it's only the start of what he wants to build one day... he just needs to find a place big enough!

"I was collecting models for years while waiting for a permanent place to live so I could construct a proper layout," he says. "The house now is basically a model railway room and music storage warehouse!"

However, what he's made is still a compromise because Paul eventually aims to transform it into something around four times the size. "I did think about going through the walls and taking the bedroom out," he admits. But instead, he's constructed it as "basically a load of dioramas that all work together. There is a retirement scheme to use everything that I've got when I've more space – a barn conversion in the West Country would be nice! I wanted to cram in as much as I could and make all the buildings etc. ➤

RIGHT Responsible for much of the weathering on the locomotives was Scott Illingworth of The Weathering Works. Paul is delighted with his efforts, and still has boxes of new engines requiring 'dirtying up'.



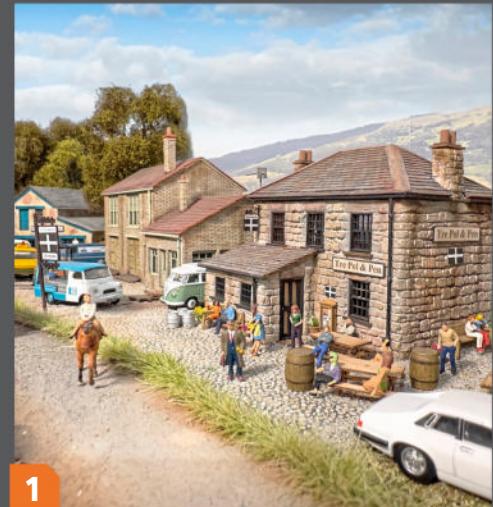
BELOW The busy traction motive power depot uses parts of an American kit, although Paul has modified it to meet the needs of 'St Paul's' and make it more UK-centric.

3



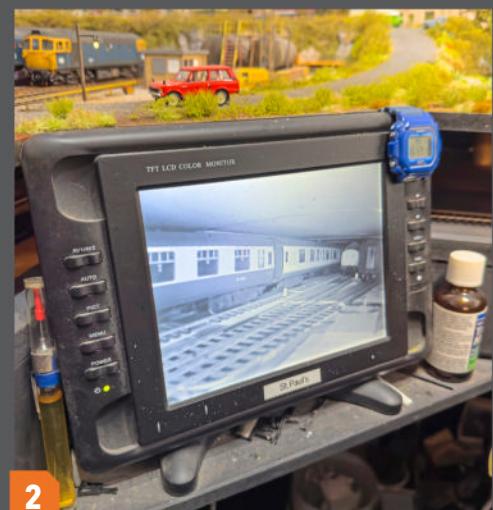


3 things we like



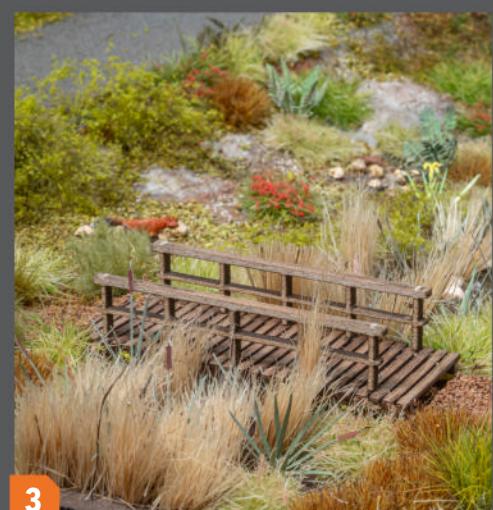
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A busy scene at one of the several pubs of 'St Paul's', with lots of people, vehicles and horses.



2

The operational storage area is below the main scenic layout and monitored by closed-circuit TV.



3

The delightfully overgrown nature area by the stream, complete with a prowling fox.



4



"It's a little compact, but you can't really tell that from the photos. I already have the track plans in my head. I'd be happy just to hang my guitars up and spend the rest of my days creating models." To enable this, all the buildings are on plinths, so they can be lifted off for future re-use.

The layout's name has three inspirations. It doesn't just echo Paul's own name; he also lives on a street called St Paul's and with there being a Bristol area named St Paul's, it validates the West Country location. The most challenging part of the build came right at

BELOW A Southern Region incursion from a Class 33/1 into Western Region territory makes for a busy scene at 'St Paul's' station.

the start: designing a large track network with limited space. "I could have just built a rural branch line – that would have worked well in the space – but I wanted to have an impressive amount of track. I think that was the ultimate thing." The most complicated pointwork is just outside of the station, in a prime spot for anyone viewing 'St Paul's' from the usual position by the room's doorway. The ballasting also took a lot of time.

"I used diluted PVA, but instead of airbrushing the rusty bits, I did it by hand with powder, so I could give it light and shade. For areas where the locomotives



stand, I added oil effects." And Paul has quite a few locomotives standing around. He estimates there are around 40, from Class 08s through to Class 56s, by manufacturers such as Hornby, Dapol, Bachmann, Heljan and Accurascale. "There's stuff in boxes that hasn't been weathered yet. A lot was done by Scott Illingworth of The Weathering Works. I don't want to take the credit for his great work." All are DCC sound-equipped.

SUBTERRANEAN STORAGE

To accommodate everything, there are 21-roads of subterranean storage sidings, meaning 'St Paul's' is effectively two layouts, one stacked on top of the other. "Cameras monitor what's going on underneath," says Paul. "I'm making the most of the room I have." ▶







LEFT Something nefarious is afoot in the freight loading dock. "What's going on is open to everybody's interpretation," says Paul.

BELOW If it's the West Country, then there has to be a train of 'clay hood' wagons somewhere on the scene.





8

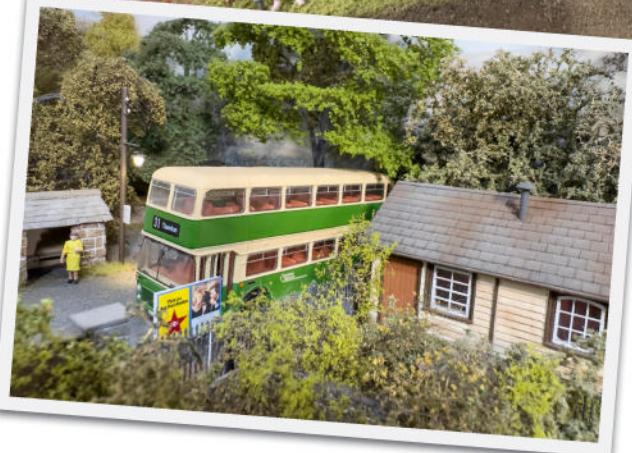


Putting together 'St Paul's' was an experiment for its creator. "I learnt all my electronics, laying track, trying to create realistic scenery, making trees, etc. I wanted to sample lots of techniques and develop my skills.

"I'd never done a river before, so there's a stream there. I was quite pleased with the water effect; so much so that I wish I'd done it wider and more visible. But I kind of disguised it a bit because I wasn't sure."

While the reeds and flowers are proprietary items from Noch and Woodland Scenics, some of what surrounds them came from an unusual source. "Yes, the stones and rocks around it were swept up from outside a pub in Oxfordshire; I put them in a little money bag and brought them home. The reeds and flowers around it are by Noch and Woodland Scenics.

"I'd never done trees before, so I tried different methods after buying some ready-made ones to give me something to go after. I started twisting wires, adding modelling clay, spraying, and using lots of hair spray and flock. There was a lot of trial and error, but I got there in the end. I took pictures of trees in the countryside and then tried to make everything look as real as possible. I am happy because everything on there is my first attempt. I've learnt so much now." ▶



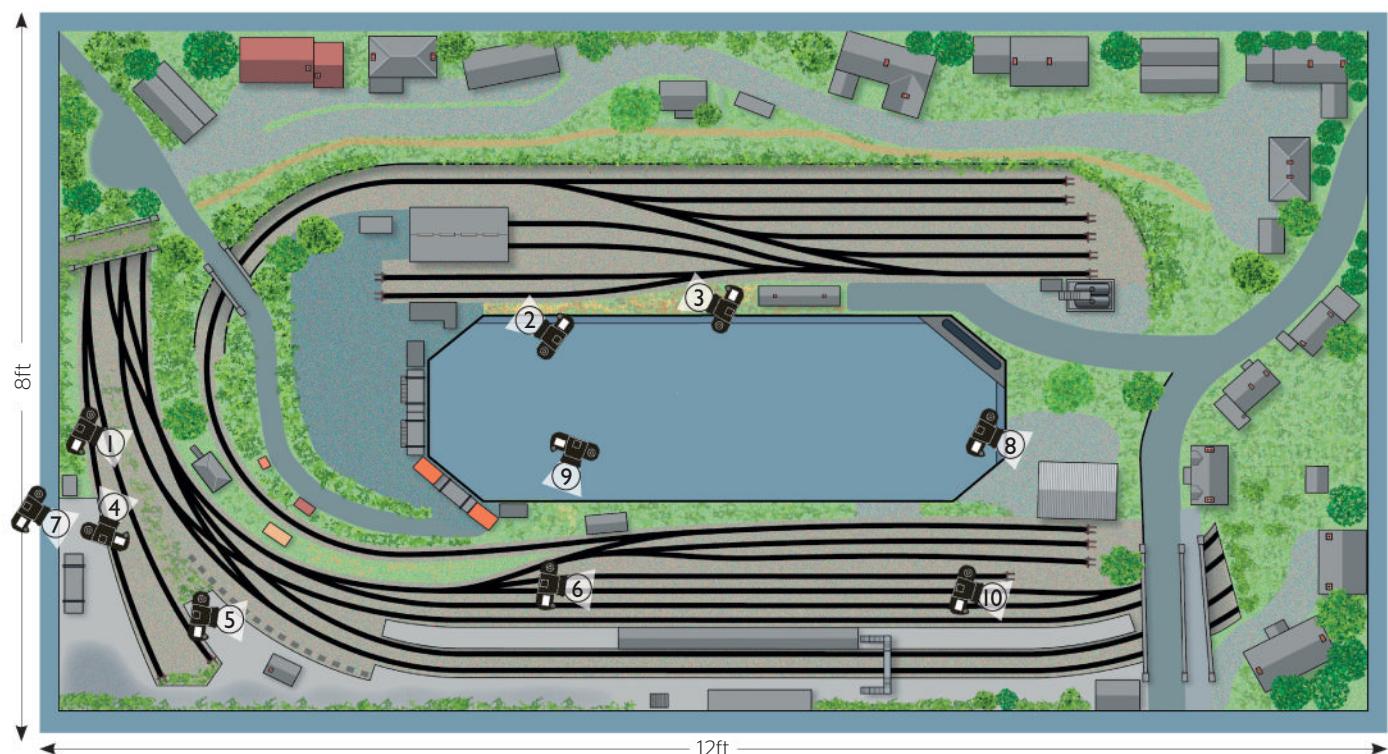
ABOVE The four pubs are The Old Oak, The Weymouth Arms, The Tre, Pol & Pen (a Cornish name brought by a publican who fled from Cambourne after an altercation) and The Burma Star - named by a friend who was a big fan of Class 33 diesels, after 33056.

Many of the structures are scratchbuilt or use laser-cut framework, which Paul has then clothed with something more individualistic. The station building and a couple of nearby structures are proprietary items or kits, as is the disused ex-GWR goods shed – albeit then heavily detailed to make it look derelict and unloved. But Paul prefers to do his own thing as much as possible. “I had a ready-made locomotive shed, and it used to haunt me that it was off-the-shelf. So I did one from pieces of an American kit and then put all the details on myself. Because of the West Country location, there’s a lot of stonework. I used cheap Polyfilla and spent many hours sitting there with a sharp blade. I carved every single one of those lines. The roofs are a combination of Model Scenic Supplies in Norfolk – I’ve taken nearly all my raw materials from there – and Scale Model Scenery in Cornwall, who did a lot of laser-cut stuff. ➤

BELOW The full extent of ‘St Paul’s’, filling an entire room nicely. This is the typical viewing location from the doorway, unless you’re lucky enough to be invited into the centre control position amid all the action.







Artwork: Andrew Mackintosh



"Before I discovered that SMS did tiles, I used old greetings cards for roofs. The Weymouth Arms pub, for example, has its one made from an ex-girlfriend's birthday card. Luckily, I don't think she reads *Model Rail*."

Ah, yes, the pubs. Out of the nine village buildings, four are busy public houses. "Yes, it's a very alcoholic village," laughs Paul. "Well, I do like rural pubs. But I made so many because they're intended for the layout that will follow this one. They'll all be more remote on that one." LED lighting is featured throughout inside structures (as are colour light signals from Absolute Aspects controlling the tracks). "Everything that has a window has a light in it," notes Paul.

The local population are figures from Bachmann, Preiser and Noch. Being 'OO', the Bachmann figures are used for closer scenes such as the station while the 'HO'-sized Preiser and Noch ones occupy more distant parts. Oxford Diecast provides their road transport. "I'm just as much interested in the vehicles as everything else," Paul says. A suitably undulating iD Backscenes rural backdrop finishes everything off.

Paul has written a timetable for 'St Paul's', which means he can "spend all day just operating it. There's a lot of fun to be had, although I do miss the building." Of course, there will be a lot more of that to come in time, when he's able to enlarge 'St Paul's' into the huge sprawling layout that is his real dream. We're looking forward to seeing how that turns out. **MR**

FACTFILE: 'ST PAUL'S'

Era: Late 1980s

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

Size: 12ft x 8ft

Track: SMP finescale with Marcway pointwork

Power and control:

DCC with Gaugemaster controls

Time to build: Seven to eight years, in stages



ABOUT THE MODELLER: PAUL DAVEY

Railways, small and big, are a major part of Paul's life, as he's a Direct Rail Services locomotive driver. Hobbies outside of modelling include classic buses and passenger jet airliners. He also plays in a punk band and is walking the English coast path, in stages. "As you can probably appreciate, it all takes a lot of my time," he says.





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One of 2025's most eagerly awaited new 'OO' models has arrived - and it's a cracker! Humble DMUs might not have the glamour of a named express locomotive but they were the backbone of BR's passenger operations for three decades. High-quality models to modern standards are hard to find in 'OO' but these new Class 104s are packed full of easy to use 'must have' features, exquisite period-specific details and authentic touches that will take you back to happy spotting days in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. Each set requires just one decoder to control all functions and all DMBS/DMCL cars have a factory fitted speaker. Order yours today!

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46 Paint a 'Castle' for 1948

Workbench

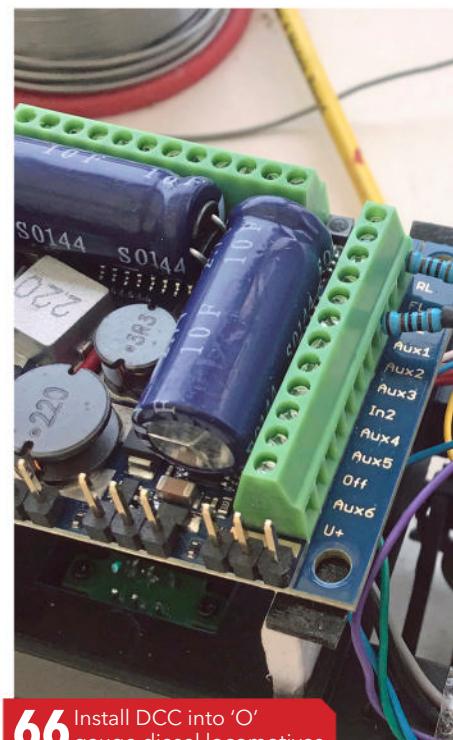
Inspirational projects, advice and top tips that show you how



50 Make your own laser-cut buildings



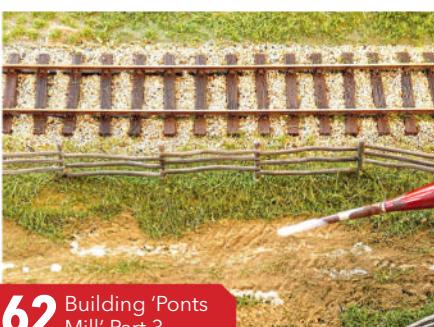
58 Distress BR ballast wagons



66 Install DCC into 'O' gauge diesel locomotives



54 Customise a set of Railtrack Auto-ballasters



62 Building 'Ponts Mill' Part 3

Meet the Model Rail Expert Modellers

George Dent
Likes to try his hand at all kinds of modelling.

Ralph Robertson
Brings years of experience and a passion for modelling.

Steve Nall
Steve loves trying new and unusual modelling techniques.

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

Dave Lowery
Professional model maker with a lifetime's experience.

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



Project difficulty ranges from easy:



one screwdriver, to very hard:



five screwdrivers.



HOW TO

PAINT A 'CASTLE' FOR 1948

The advent of Great British Railways reminded **Chris Leigh** of the first time Britain's railways were nationalised, and some of the livery experiments that took place.

The launch of Great British Railways, the re-nationalisation of the network, set me thinking about the previous nationalisation, back in 1948. Unlike today's seemingly half-hearted 'tagging' of multiple units with a splash of red, white and blue, British Railways chose to have a more thorough overhaul of liveries. It needed to address two issues; brightening up a railway that was still in the early stages of recovering from the Second World War and uniting the 'Big Four' rival railway companies.

Experiments were carried out in 1948/9 to assess possible new liveries, but it would be the early 1950s before any liveries developed from those experiments would manifest themselves across the railway network. It was the bid to 'brighten' things up that was most striking, particularly with a proposed new livery for express passenger locomotives.

PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS LEIGH, GEORGE DENT

00 GAUGE MODEL Hornby GWR 'Castle' 4-6-0 (new and second-hand models available) ◆ Price £50.00-£229.99

8 hrs

AVAILABILITY Hornby stockists

In his book *Railway Liveries: BR Steam 1948-1968*, BR design guru Brian Haresnape revealed conversations which he had with R.A. Riddles, and how Riddles had leaned towards perpetuating black and LNWR lining, which was, of course, eventually adopted across a large part of the fleet for mixed traffic locomotives.

The British Transport Commission, however, had wanted colour, so some new 'Black Five' 4-6-0s were painted in shades of green and lined out on one side only, in LNWR red and grey. Subsequently, some locomotives were more fully painted so that they could be viewed in service by the public for comment. Among these were 'Castle' 4-6-0s, though I can find only one

colour picture and a couple of black and white photographs depicting 'Castle' No. 4091 *Dudley Castle* in what Haresnape describes as 'light apple green'. From this description and the one colour photograph, I have convinced myself that this was not 'pure' LNER Apple green but a lighter, more lime green shade.

EXPERIMENT IN COLOUR

I was asked to paint a 'Castle' in this experimental livery for a project in connection with Rail 200. In due course, the project was cancelled, but by then I had bought the 'Castle' plus the paint and transfers. Rather than waste them, I decided to go ahead with the project anyway.



'Castle' 4-6-0 No. 4091 *Dudley Castle* was turned out in 'light apple green' with red and grey lining and 'British Railways' on the tender.
KENNETH LEECH/COLOUR RAIL

STEP BY STEP



1 Finding a suitable 'Castle' proved difficult – the elderly Hornby model I purchased through eBay had a number of defects and some minor damage.



2 I began by dismantling the model, including separating the damaged cab carefully from the boiler and removing the glazing to avoid the need for masking.

lining as intended for locomotives in BR's black mixed traffic livery.

Haresnape says that the livery was rejected at least in part because the lining looked 'insipid'. The model shows that remarkably well but, even so, I don't dislike it as much as I thought I would. In real life, however, I imagine the green would have been difficult to keep clean. On reflection it seems ironic that one of the liveries that was not tried, GWR green with orange and black lining, turned out to be the one that was adopted and which, I dare to say, looks good on any locomotive to which it is applied – and that extends from '14XX' 0-4-2Ts to LNER 'A4' 4-6-2s and even a BR Standard '9F' 2-10-0!

Transfers and name and numberplates came from the Fox Transfers range and were applied to a well-used and elderly

Hornby 'Castle' bought from eBay. More recent variants were available but these toolings have the later, square-cornered inside-cylinder casing. This is not suitable for No. 4091 with its early fluted version.

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Grey aerosol primer
- Availability:** Halfords stores
- Web:** www.halfords.com
- ◆ Humbrol 38 Lime Green aerosol paint
- Availability:** Model shops
- Web:** www.humbrol.com
- ◆ Etched name and numberplates, waterslide lining and British Railways logo transfers
- Availability:** Fox Transfers
- Web:** www.fox-transfers.co.uk

TOOLS

- ◆ Knife and spare blades
- ◆ Cutting mat
- ◆ Precision scissors
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Masking tape and fluid
- ◆ T-Cut automotive restorer
- ◆ Cotton swabs
- ◆ Miniature screwdrivers
- ◆ Pliers





3

I removed the BR crests with T-Cut and gentle scraping, but left the lining so that it would show through the paint just enough to be a guide to positioning the new lining.



4

I usually find that tampo-printing needs a gentle scrape with the back of a knife blade to loosen it before finishing off with a cotton bud to remove all traces of the T-Cut.



5

I wanted to preserve as much of the black paint as possible to avoid the need to repaint it. So I masked the smokebox and running plate with Tamiya masking tape.



6

To avoid the need to repaint the safety valve bonnet I masked it with Deluxe Materials' Masking Magic, applied carefully with a small paint brush and left to dry.



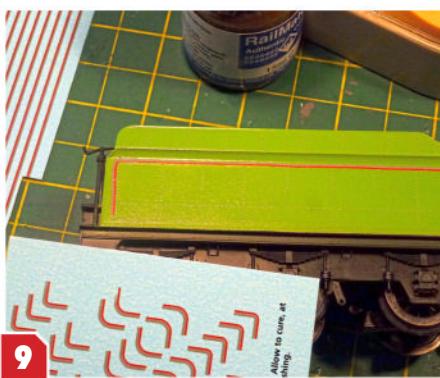
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The tender was also masked to preserve the black areas and the two sections, plus the cab, were sprayed with Halford's grey primer from an aerosol can.



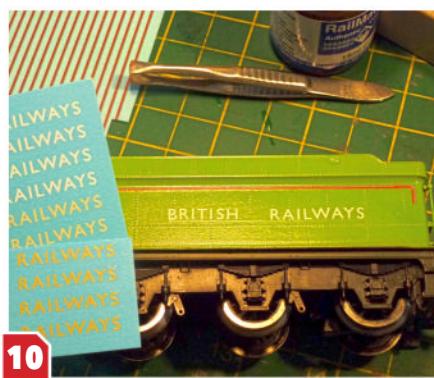
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All three sections were then given a finish coat of Humbrol Lime Green 38, which seemed to me to be closer to Kenneth Leech's Colour-Rail picture than LNER Apple green.



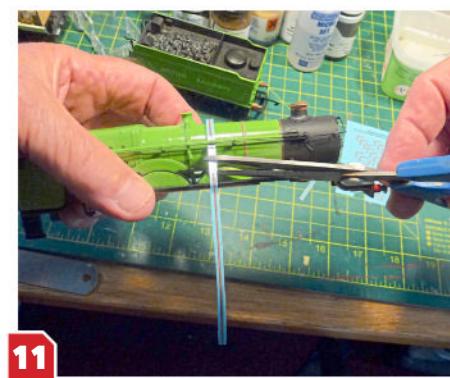
9

The Fox Transfers BR Standard red/grey lining transfers provide straight sections and a variety of curves. Sharper curves are required for the tender. They're waterslide decals.



10

I used the paler shade of BR lettering. The transfers were floated for around half a minute in lukewarm water until they became loose and could be slid into place.



11

Lining the boiler bands is easier if the decal is cut to length while dry. Once it has been wetted and is loose, it can be passed behind the handrail and slid off the backing paper.





12

With the lining fully complete, the new etched name and numberplates were installed. A coat of clear satin varnish will seal the various decals in place and guard against any damage during normal handling.





HOW TO

MAKE YOUR OWN LASER-CUT CARD KITS

PHOTOGRAPH: RALPH ROBERTSON | GEORGE DENT

My railway modelling life changed ten years ago when I visited the Fab Lab in Manchester. This was an organisation that had a series of 3D printers and laser cutters available for the public to use for one-hour slots once a week but, sadly, the service is no longer available. Seeing such commercial machines and, even better, being able to use them myself was a game changer.

00 GAUGE | 5 hrs | 4444

Prior to that, all my modelling was done laboriously by cutting out parts in metal or plastic. I had already gone down the etching route, so 2D drawing was no problem, and extending this skill to drawing for laser cutting proved an eye opening

opportunity. It wasn't long before the one-hour slot was nowhere near long enough, so the decision was made to buy my very own laser cutter.

Learning the machine and materials took time, but before long, I was producing model buildings using a new material for me: card. I discovered that this material suited the machine best and, by using different layers combined with

Getting to grips with a laser cutter proved to be a game changer for **Ralph Robertson**.



painting it in shellac, it made for strong and easy-to-build models. I quickly learned that diode lasers don't like cutting white card, so buff became the standard colour where possible.

Never having been happy seeing interlocking corners for buildings (they always show that they are interlocking corners despite filling and painting), I worked on ways of improving this and finally settled on using thin office card overlays butt jointed, which looked just right.

Several models were thrown away before finding a process that worked, and before long the need for a model of part of a cotton mill to house the control panel on 'Slattocks Junction' came to the top of the pile. This building had ornate brickwork and the laser proved ideal to produce this. The photographs on page 53 show what we were trying to copy as well as the test piece, which proved it could be done.

TOP TIP

If it doesn't look right and you think you can improve on it, do it again - you will always see your own faults. It never takes as long the second time around.

SHARING TECHNIQUES

Fast forward a few years and the opportunity arose to encourage fellow club members to use these techniques to help them with their modelling. Using the Pendon Museum idea of getting budding model contributors to build a 'garden privvy', I found a drawing for a LMS platelayers' hut in an Ericplans book produced by Peco many years ago, and used this as a basis and a good place for modellers to start making buildings.

By using different thicknesses of card a kit was produced that allowed members to build an accurate scale model, which was also well

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ 1.5mm mounting board, art/craft suppliers
- ◆ 0.4mm and 0.9mm laserboard by PolyBak
Availability: www.hobarts.com
- ◆ Thin paper for slates, office suppliers
- ◆ Sanding sealer
Availability: www.toolstation.com
- ◆ Chimney - whitemetal or 3D-printed
- ◆ Chalk sticks, art suppliers (weathering powders will work too)
- ◆ Isopropyl alcohol
- ◆ PVA glue
- ◆ Kitchen towel or tissue

TOOLS

- ◆ Knife
- ◆ Steel rule
- ◆ Files and abrasives

detailed. The only thing the laser didn't produce was the chimney, but that was done on a 3D printer as I had, by that time, bought one of those too.

The main carcass of the building is made from mounting board, a card used by picture framers and easily available from artists' shops. The brick overlays are done with standard office card engraved on the laser, and the slates for the roof are from thin paper. Cheap PVA glue is used throughout, and I found a quick and easy way of painting mortar, which I have never seen used before; it worked well for me and produced a realistic finish.

The upgrading of the laser cutter from a 5-watt to a 10-watt diode later introduced MDF to the materials library, but I still use card where possible, as it is a cheap material and cuts easily and fast. One new material for me that has really changed my views is laserboard from PolyBak. This is a hard but easy-to-cut material, which sands and files easily, too. My brick overlays are now done using this, and you will see this cream (0.4mm) and brown (0.9mm) material in the Step 1 image overleaf.

The downside to all this is that you seem to become a self-taught bricklayer and every time you are out and look at buildings you focus on the style of brickwork. Flemish, English, garden wall bond and so on, all become second nature, but getting all of this translated accurately into your model building can be a work of art.

These techniques have now been used by some members, who have built models for 'Slattocks Junction', the Manchester Model Railway Society 'P4' layout. The carcasses were cut in card using my laser and finished as shown in this article. Highly detailed models are easily made and now, with the availability of cheaper machines, these techniques are available to more and more modellers.

Workbench

EXPERT MODELLERS SHOW YOU HOW

STEP BY STEP



1

The kit contents produced by the laser cutter. 1.5mm mounting board forms the main carcass, 0.4mm PolyBak roof panels, door and windows and brick overlays and grey paper slates. The latter example has 0.9mm PolyBak brickwork.



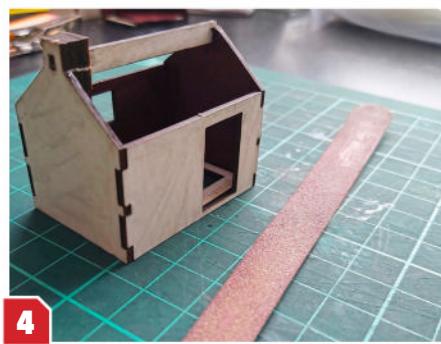
2

Gluing the sides to the ends using standard PVA glue and hair clips. These aluminium hair clips can be easily bent to different shapes and are useful for holding things while the glue dries.



3

The completed carcass is painted in sanding sealer. When dry, this hardens the card so it can be sanded. Sanding sealer can also be bought from hardware stores as shellac flakes, to mix with methylated spirit, or as knotting solution.



4

Using an abrasive stick the corners are sanded to ensure that they are square, which allows the brick overlay to fit nice and snugly. An emery board is the ideal tool for achieving this.



5

The finished carcass having been neatly sanded and now ready for the next step. The three layers for the chimney can be seen glued to the roof ridge to achieve the correct width for the chimney stack.



6

The end brickwork overlay is glued first, making sure it is aligned to the base. Once both ends are glued, they are shellacked and dry-sanded flush to the sides. The front and back overlays can then be glued on.



7

The rows of slates are glued to the roof sections. The lines have been engraved on the surfaces to help getting everything straight. PVA is the glue used and once dried the excess is cut away forming the shape of the roof.



8

The chimney has been mounted and the slates have all been glued in place. Here, 0.9mm PolyBak has been used for the brick overlays, and one chimney overlay still needs completing.



9

The model next gets a coat of grey paint. I used an acrylic primer, but any grey paint would work. The red paint for the brickwork is one coat of Humbrol Matt 60 enamel, well applied. Sometimes more than one coat will be required.



10 Once the paint has hardened the mortar courses can be filled. Grey chalk from a pastel stick is scraped using a knife blade into a container (milk bottle tops) and mixed with isopropyl alcohol (IPA) to create a 'chalk paint'. Mix it so that it creates a smooth blend.



11

Paint the mix onto the brickwork. In the picture you can see the area where the IPA has evaporated leaving a light grey texture. The darker grey areas are evaporating, but don't do the next stage until all of it is light grey.

**12**

Using a piece of kitchen towel rub the wall until the grey only remains in the grooves formed. The colour of the red is transformed. The photo shows the difference between the complete side wall and the front, which is yet to be done.

**13**

The window and door are glued to the backing and painted. In this case I used RailMatch Frame Dirt to represent a wood door and window frame. These are then glued in place from the inside.

**14**

The slate panels and the ridge are glued in place and the roof is painted. The door lintel is painted to represent aged concrete and, once the chimney is painted, the building will be finished.

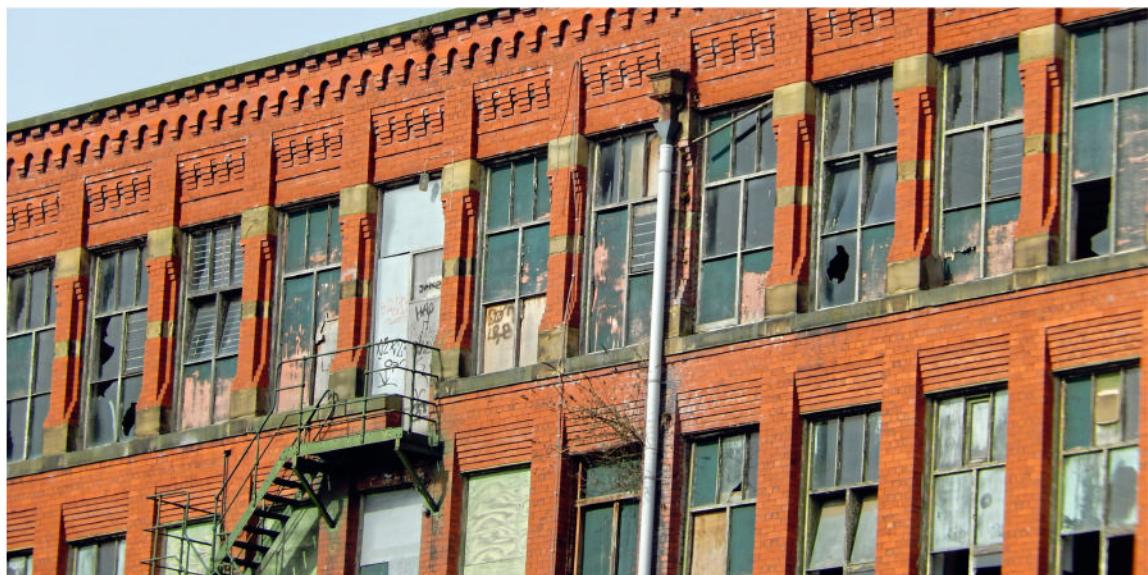
Using card layers

At first sight an ornate building looks daunting, but by using four layers of different thickness card for the mill walls depth was obtained, which allowed me to model this decorative brickwork. The walls consist of two layers of 1.5mm

The ornate brickwork on Warwick Mill was common to all mills in the Oldham area. Styles varied slightly between each mill, but this window design was typical of all George Stott-designed mills. This mill was built around 1908.

mounting board and two layers of a good quality 0.5mm card, all glued together with PVA - but not in that order. Overlays of engraved brickwork are then cut to size to fill the required places using 0.2mm standard office card, as shown in the

photograph. This resulted in a satisfactory presentation of the prototype wall on Warwick Mill, the prototype chosen as the basis for Alpha Mill on 'Slattocks Junction' layout (which will appear in *Model Rail* in a future issue).



The test piece, which is made up of four base layers of card. Then there are 95 additional thin card layers, plus some plastic sheet for the top, which produces the relief required to emulate the prototype as closely as possible.



HOW TO

CUSTOMISE A SET OF RAILTRACK AUTO-BALLASTERS

A chance visit to Didcot Yard inspired **Steve Nall** to model and weather a fixed formation of Bachmann JJA Auto-Ballaster wagons in Railtrack livery.



Models: Bachmann JJA Auto-ballaster wagons
Price £94.95 each or available second-hand

AVAILABILITY Bachmann stockists
Web: www.bachmann.co.uk



2 hours
per wagon



A few years ago, I casually turned up at Paddington station, bought a day return ticket to Didcot Parkway, alighted there and made my way through the old tunnel to the Didcot Railway Centre. I was looking forward to my very first visit. But the sign read CLOSED! I should have looked at its website, of course. However, rather than simply head home, I explored the area around the site, via roads and bridges.

There was a lot to see. Didcot Yard was full of wagons, including Network Rail's impressive HQA ballast vehicles (many still in Railtrack livery), so I took a few photographs, with an eye on customising Bachmann's superb models.

The JJA ballast hoppers - very similar to the HQAs, albeit with different bogies - have been around in model form for 15 years now, with Bachmann offering them in both 'OO' and 'N' gauge, the latter under the Farish brand. They still look fantastic, even by today's crazy standards of detail and finish, although

they're priced at the higher end of the spectrum when purchasing new.

In fact, for 'OO' modellers like me, they have been missing from the current range for a couple of years, although a special version was added to the Bachmann Collectors Club for 2025, wearing Network Rail branding over patch-painted yellow hoppers and a suitably weathered finish. Indeed, with the real wagons being over a quarter-century old now, they're starting to look a little battered these days.

GETTING TO WORK

After a bit of browsing, I bought a pack of four Bachmann JJA 'inner' wagons, plus the all-important generator-fitted version, which would be positioned at the end of the rake.

My photographs from Didcot were really useful for copying weathering effects during this project, and I chose to model a particular formation that my images captured. Usually, the wagons seem to be marshalled in

a sequence, with the pronounced end covers facing the same direction, so I decided on my own formation and marked each wagon accordingly.

I removed the standard NEM coupling mounts and turned the bogies around so the empty sockets would not be visible. With my wagons in a permanent rake, I could add the appropriate brake pipes and electrical jumper cables, plus Smiths' three-link couplings (easier to operate than miniature screw couplers), as well as glueing in the superb hook mouldings that came with the models.

The wires and couplings were all given a light coat of grey primer, sprayed onto a small jar lid, then hand-painted on, ready for weathering later on.

I should point out that these very close coupling arrangements mean I must run the wagons straight through my layout - no curves or turnouts allowed - so you may need to tailor my approach to suit your own layout.



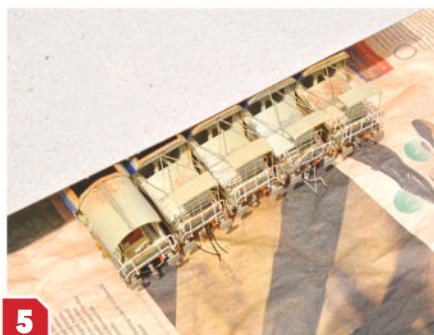
STEP BY STEP



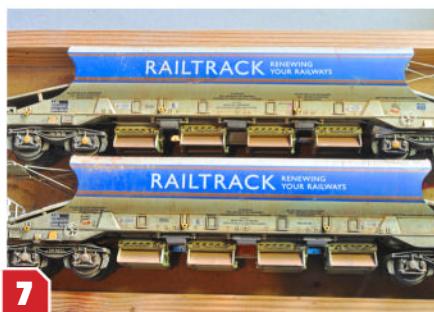
1
Having decided on the sequence of wagons in the rake, I marked each model discreetly with a number and direction arrow to help marshal them correctly.



3
I sprayed matt varnish into the hoppers and added a blend of rusty red and earthy brown weathering powder, stippled into the surface while the varnish was wet. This was then sealed with a further coat of matt varnish.



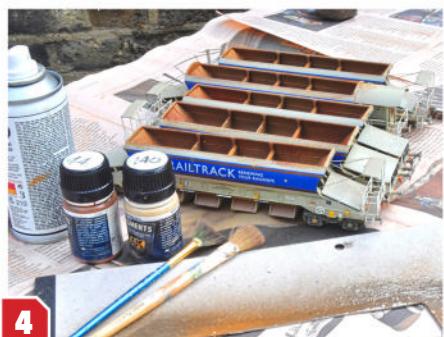
5
Using another simple card mask, I lightly sprayed both ends of each wagon with a mist of Humbrol Desert Yellow and Dark Brown. These paints dried quickly so after a few minutes, I sprayed more matt varnish and then lightly dappled them with powders.



7
A darker pin wash followed, using Vallejo Light Grey, which brought out extra depth in some areas, emphasising seam lines (on the bonnets) and corners nearer track level. Be sure to shake the fluid thoroughly before use and apply with a soft brush.



2
I decided to run these wagons empty, so began by painting the interior of the hoppers with two thin coats of a dirty brown/orange enamel colour, brushed on and left to dry.



4
In order to ensure that no unwanted varnish built up elsewhere, a simple spraying mask was created from card. It was cut to accurately match the size of the hopper's aperture.



6
With the wagons back on their sides, they were treated to a light pin wash of Vallejo European Dust weathering fluid, which served to highlight all the detail in Bachmann's mouldings, while also giving the paintwork a lived-in appearance.



8
At this point I used various grades of abrasive sheets to start removing earlier signs of fingerprints and excessive varnish build up, which added to the overall distressed effect. A first coat of paint was applied to the discharge chutes.

Shopping list

- ◆ AK Interactive • 043 Medium Rust
- 044 Light Rust • 140 Sienna Soil
- 2014 Burnt Jet Engine dry weathering pigments
- ◆ Vallejo • 76.523 European Dust
- 76.515 Light Grey weathering washes
- ◆ Humbrol • 93 Desert Yellow
- 29 Dark Brown • clear matt varnish aerosol paints
- ◆ Copper and brass wire

Availability: Scale Model Shop
Web: www.scalemodelshop.co.uk

TOOLS

- ◆ Knife and spare blades
- ◆ Steel rule
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Files and abrasives
- ◆ Fine-nose pliers
- ◆ Drill and bits
- ◆ Paintbrushes



9

Starting on the hopper sides, I used another card mask, this time separated from the surface with Blu Tack. When I aimed the spray from the Humbrol Dark Brown rattle can toward the centre, the spray was contained on the upper sides, as per the real things.



10

Matt varnish was applied later and Pinnacle Medium Mud and AK Medium Rust powders were tapped over the surface by brush, again, only in the centre. The trick is to make each wagon look slightly different, yet maintain a consistency of pattern, coverage and tone.



11

Achieving the streaks on the discharge chutes required considerable practice – my brush strokes alone simply didn't look accurate enough.



12

Even coarse sandpaper didn't work – it just produced scratches – so three passes of different colours later I used a small file to create the streaks. One or two chutes were left fairly clean, as per prototype images.



13

Other tasks included painting the backs of the buffers a dark grey, cleaning any weathering away from safety markings and touching in the axlebox caps and ferry hooks with yellow paint.

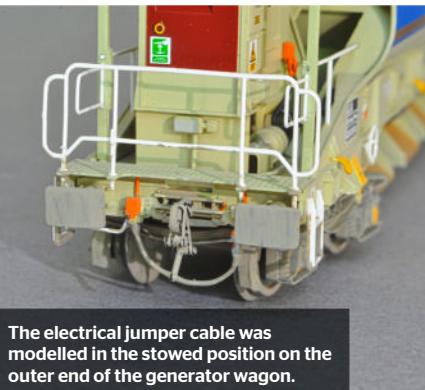
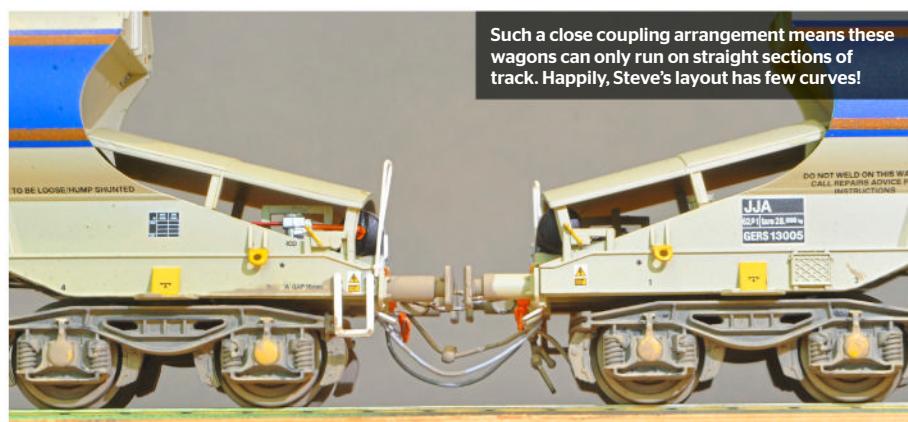


14

I added a 'dirty' shade of white to the buffer safety hangers, lock handles and circular handles, as well as the footsteps and upper handrails. I also repaired some broken handrails – vulnerable items on the wagons.

Top tip

For a smoke 'plume' effect above the generator's exhaust, I spot-painted with thinned-down matt varnish and some AK Interactive Burnt Jet Engine weathering powder, then turned the wagons upside down to dry.



The electrical jumper cable was modelled in the stowed position on the outer end of the generator wagon.

A rake of Railtrack-liveried HQA auto-ballast wagons, seen at Didcot, inspired Steve's project.



Prototype inspiration

Network Rail typically employs semi-fixed, five-vehicle auto-ballaster rakes, consisting of HQA or JJA wagon types, the latter being available in 'OO' and 'N' gauge from Bachmann/Farish.

Built at Doncaster in 2001, the HQA wagons are marshalled into formations consisting of a single

generator-equipped wagon (coded HQA-F or HQA-J), along with four non-generator wagons (with D, E, G or H suffixes).

This five-wagon set, in Network Rail yellow, was captured at Westbury in April 2022, top-and-tailed by a pair of Freightliner Class 66/9s, and

displaying some fascinating rust and weathered effects. As Steve noted, the safety and operating notices are often wiped clean, while certain important components, such as footsteps, brake handles and jacking points, have either been cleaned or received more recent paintwork.

PHOTO: GEORGE DENT





HOW TO

CUSTOMISE BR BALLAST WAGONS

There's nothing fishy about Dapol's 'Turbot' ballast wagons, as they offer a superb rendition of these bulk ballast carriers from the late British Rail era. **George Dent** explains how he gave his fleet a distressed appearance.



Model: Dapol BR 'Turbot' ballast wagons ◆
Price: £26.60 each ◆ Web: www.dapol.co.uk

AVAILABILITY Dapol stockists



3 hours per wagon



Railway operators have often been adept at recycling, with freight rolling stock being a good case in point. When traffics dried up or the nature of loads changed, the railways have sought to adapt existing wagons to meet current demands.

Accordingly, wagon chassis have been repurposed to carry very different commodities to their original purpose. British Rail, always with an eye on minimising costs, proved particularly good at recycling redundant wagons. In particular, BR's Civil Engineer's fleet boasted all manner of conversions, with twin-axle and bogie vehicles adapted to carry ballast, rail, sleepers, machinery, plant and equipment.

The 'Turbot' fleet made use of redundant underframes from BR's Bogie Bolster E wagons, which were found to be too short for

most of the prevailing steel traffic by the 1970s. Over 1,000 'Turbots' were constructed, mostly at Shildon Works, between 1982-88. Equipped with a steel body, with three drop-down doors on each side, they were intended to carry ballast from quarries to concentration depots and to worksites across the network.

They lasted throughout the late BR period and into the privatised era, with EWS operating them until 2002. Surplus wagons were sold to industry - particularly steelworks - and their sides were removed completely.

GOING DUTCH

BR's engineering fleet has been an enduringly popular subject, especially for modellers interested in the post-1970s era, with the grey/yellow 'Dutch' paint scheme being particularly inspiring. I'd had a few un-built Cambrian

Models plastic kits of the BR 'Turbot' in my stash for a couple of years when Dapol's 'OO' gauge model appeared, with the RTR version being difficult to resist thanks to the impressive level of detail and attractive price.

Accordingly, I gradually built up a six-wagon rake and made a start on weathering some of these Dapol models before realising that the bodies were made up of individual parts. With a little persuading, I realised that the side doors could be removed, offering the potential of posing them in the open position, or allowing them to be distressed individually before being re-fitted.

Distressing plastic parts, by physical means, requires a degree of bravery, but by working gently and patiently, you can remain in control of the process. I heartily recommend practising the process on scraps of plastic or, ideally, on similar wagons in



plastic kit form. Indeed, I've employed this process many times on Parkside and Dapol (ex-Airfix) 16-ton mineral wagons prior to assembly, when the components can be treated individually on the workbench.

Inevitably, the parts may end up slightly elongated or misshapen, so reassembly may require a little fettling of the edges to allow everything to fit back in place. But the type of plastic commonly employed on these parts is elastic enough to be re-shaped by hand if necessary or dunked in hot (not boiling) water to render it more supple. As always, some experimentation is the key to success.

When reassembling the body, after test-fitting and shaving some material away from the side edges to allow a neat joint, I bonded the parts with a strong liquid poly cement. Some poly cements aren't aggressive enough to soften the plastic sufficiently to affect a resilient bond, but the EMA Plastic Weld has done a good job. It was applied fairly generously with a paintbrush to the inside of the wagon only, taking care not to damage the exterior paintwork.

Everything felt a little wobbly at first but, with the parts clamped in position and left overnight to harden fully, the resultant bonds have proven resilient.

My wagons are loosely loaded with Geoscenics ballast for now, as I wanted to retain the ability to run them empty when required. The real stone ballast has a dual purpose, in that the natural dust adds an authentic extra layer of weathering to the interiors and, especially, the end hoods.

The ballast also adds some extra mass, giving the wagons a welcome sense of inertia. That said, the cast metal chassis frame means that Dapol's 'Turbots' have ample presence even when empty.

Talking of which, the metal chassis frames took a little tweaking to accept the working scale couplings I employ on my layout. Part of the inner end framework had to be cut out to make room for the sprung hooks, as well as fettling the hooks themselves and opening up a suitable slot in the headstocks. This was the most tedious element of the project, but the design of the models allows the frames to be removed easily, which was a big help.

My weathered and loaded 'Turbots' complement my 'Dutch' Class 31 perfectly, making for an attractive, visually consistent train. The physical distressing work was varied between wagons, so there's a welcome variety throughout the rake, with no two 'Turbots' looking exactly the same.

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Smiths LP2 Instanter couplings
Availability: Peter's Spares
Web: www.petersspares.com
- ◆ 0.7mm copper wire, MIG enamel weathering washes and thinners
Availability: Scale Model Shop
Web: www.scalemodelshop.co.uk
- ◆ RailMatch enamel paints • 403 Frame Dirt • 413 Weathered Black • enamel thinners
Availability: Howes Models
Web: www.howesmodels.co.uk

TOOLS

- ◆ Modelling knife with spare blades
- ◆ Miniature screwdriver set
- ◆ Fine-nosed pliers
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Needle files
- ◆ Small and medium cross-pein and ball-pein hammers
- ◆ Flat metal punch
- ◆ Drill and bits (including tapered reamer bit)
- ◆ Liquid Poly cement
- ◆ Lightweight mini spring clamps
- ◆ Cotton swabs
- ◆ Paintbrushes
- ◆ Airbrush and equipment (optional)

'TURBOTS' IN MINIATURE

Dapol's 'OO' model first appeared in 2019 and continues to be produced in regular batches, offering BR's 'Dutch' livery and EWS red/gold. It's still regarded as one of the manufacturer's best wagons, boasting a blend of crisply moulded plastic parts enhanced with various etched metal details. An 'O' gauge version is also in the Dapol range and is equally impressive.

Kernow Model Rail Centre's 'Turbot' is also available for 'OO', which was first released in 2018 and produced initially by DJ Models. Alas, this model features a number of detail errors on the underframes, while the body is a single-piece moulding, thus precluding some of the processes shown in this demonstration.



STEP BY STEP



1

My first step was to dismantle the Dapol 'Turbots', to allow working Instanter couplings to be installed. The bogies were unscrewed and the NEM coupler pockets slid out of their slots. With the bogies removed, the chassis mounting screws can be accessed.



2

The plastic buffers are a clip-fit, so they were removed for safety before the cosmetic drawgear was cut away from the metal skeletal frame, along with the two longitudinal struts close to the centre line, using a pair of end-cutters. The remnants were filed away.



3

The modification work caused the headstocks to bulge outwards slightly so, using a small hammer, the cast metal was tapped gently over a hard, flat surface to carefully get everything back to being square and true.



4

I also tidied up the outside faces of the headstocks, using a flat needle file. Final tidying up was achieved with abrasive strips, of medium and fine grades, to remove the tool marks from the files.



5

The brass drawhooks from the Smiths Instanter couplings required some fettling, to refine the edges and reduce the depth of the shafts, as they were almost as deep as the chassis frames. New, smaller diameter holes were drilled for the retaining pins.



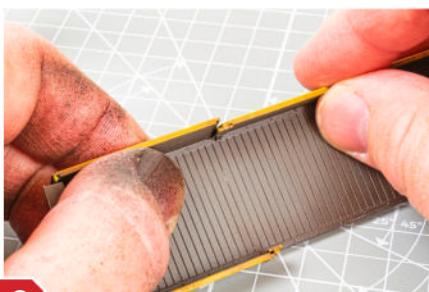
6

After drilling and reaming out the holes to create suitable slots, the modified coupling hooks and springs were fitted. The supplied cotter pins were too big, so I improvised with some copper wire. The buffers were fixed back in place, plus the vacuum pipes.



7

It was a rather slow, tedious job to treat the chassis from a full rake of wagons, but setting up a production line proved an efficient way of doing it. Once all the sprung coupling hooks were installed, the chassis were sprayed with a mix of black and dark brown primers.



8

While the paint on the chassis dried, I decided to experiment by distressing one of the wagon bodies. Dapol's model is made up of separate side doors and stanchions, which can be broken apart by gently flexing the parts.



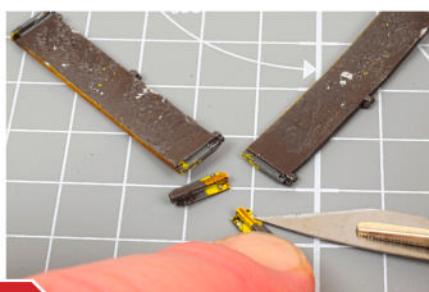
9

To mimic the rough texture and bulging profile of many real 'Turbots', I set about hammering the inside faces of the doors with the pein end of a small cross-pein hammer, working onto a small block of softwood to absorb the blows.



10

The hammer's pein causes the plastic to distort, with the effect tailored by the amount of force used. I also used a flat-bottomed metal punch, driven by a slightly heavier hammer, to add even more texture. I only struck the inside faces of the doors.



11

All that pummelling of the inside door faces was intended to mimic the force of the heavy stone ballast being loaded repeatedly into the wagons. Due to the distortion of the doors, the locating pins on the upright stanchions had to be cut away.



12

After a few dry runs to check that everything fitted back together, the sides of the doors were trimmed where necessary to account for any elongation during the distressing stage. When happy with the fit, the parts were bonded with EMA Plastic Weld.

**13**

One door was added at a time, with the inner stanchions added too. The parts were held in position with lightweight spring clamps. A second coat of the liquid solvent was applied and the model set aside overnight to cure.

**14**

Another experiment saw one wagon posed with a side door in the lowered position. The door's spring bracket parts had to be removed to allow the door to be re-fitted in this position (they were kept for future use). The door was fixed with a few drops of cyanoacrylate glue.

**15**

With all the modification work complete, the weathering began with overall coats of a blend of dark grey and brown enamel weathering washes. Most of the wash was wiped away with cotton swabs, leaving the pigment in the various recesses.

**16**

A dry, flat brush was used to drag the remnants of the still-wet wash down the sides of the doors and body panels, creating subtle streaking effects. The process was repainted around each side of the wagon and the interior, then the wagon was left to dry.

**17**

RailMatch enamel Frame Dirt was thinned and sprayed through an airbrush in a very fine mist, coating the entire underframe and lower edges of the bodywork and interior. The airbrush was moved carefully to ensure all surfaces were covered evenly.

**18**

Railmatch Weathered Black was added and targeted shading work began, especially to the interior and underframe areas. When the paint was dry, the wheels were cleaned and the Instanter couplings installed – the wagons were then ready for action!



The aim of the physical distressing was to create an authentic bulging effect to the lower section of the doors, while the upper edge – strengthened by the horizontal beam – remained intact.

PART 3



In this latest instalment of his Cornish china clay micro layout build, **Peter Marriott** talks us through the creation of the delightful scenery.

PHOTOGRAPHY: PETER MARRIOTT, CHRIS NEVARD

Whenever I'm creating layouts or dioramas for *Model Rail*, I try to make use of at least a few new products. There's also the hope that my new project will look slightly different from the last one. It also keeps things interesting for me and provides the chance to sharpen my modelling skills.

In this instance, I have worked with static grass fibres in a slightly different way, trialled some new (to me) background trees from Woodland Scenics and refined my multi-layer scenic approach. I also created a rutted, bare earth farm track in a new way, bringing visual interest to an otherwise nondescript field.

00 GAUGE | 6 hrs |

THINK BEFORE YOU PLANT

Planting static grass can be a simple process, being a matter of brushing adhesive onto the landscape, shaking an electrostatic tool and watching the fibres stand upright. However, such a basic approach creates a rather boring, uniform appearance. Yes, it looks like grass, but it does not look like realistic grass.

Over the years, I've found it much more effective to adopt a layered approach. Covering the landscape in a base layer of

earth-coloured scatter material, with fine sand being especially effective. Subsequent layers of grass fibres and green foliage tend to look more realistic when the viewer can glimpse patches of bare soil below, as that is what we see in real life.

This layered approach takes a little longer, but the effects make it worthwhile.

TREES A CROWD

Clumps of trees can serve as scenic breaks or help a three-dimensional foreground scene blend with a one-dimensional backscene. For this layout, the china clay buildings act as one of the main focal points, but with Ponts Mill

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- Woodland Scenics • static grass fibres, flowering tufts and grass tufts (various colours and sizes)
- foliage • TR3582 Hedgerow set
- TR1602 Dead Elm trees • Foam Putty • Scenic Glue • Static Tac

Availability: Bachmann stockists

Web: www.bachmann.co.uk

Gaugemaster grass tufts and

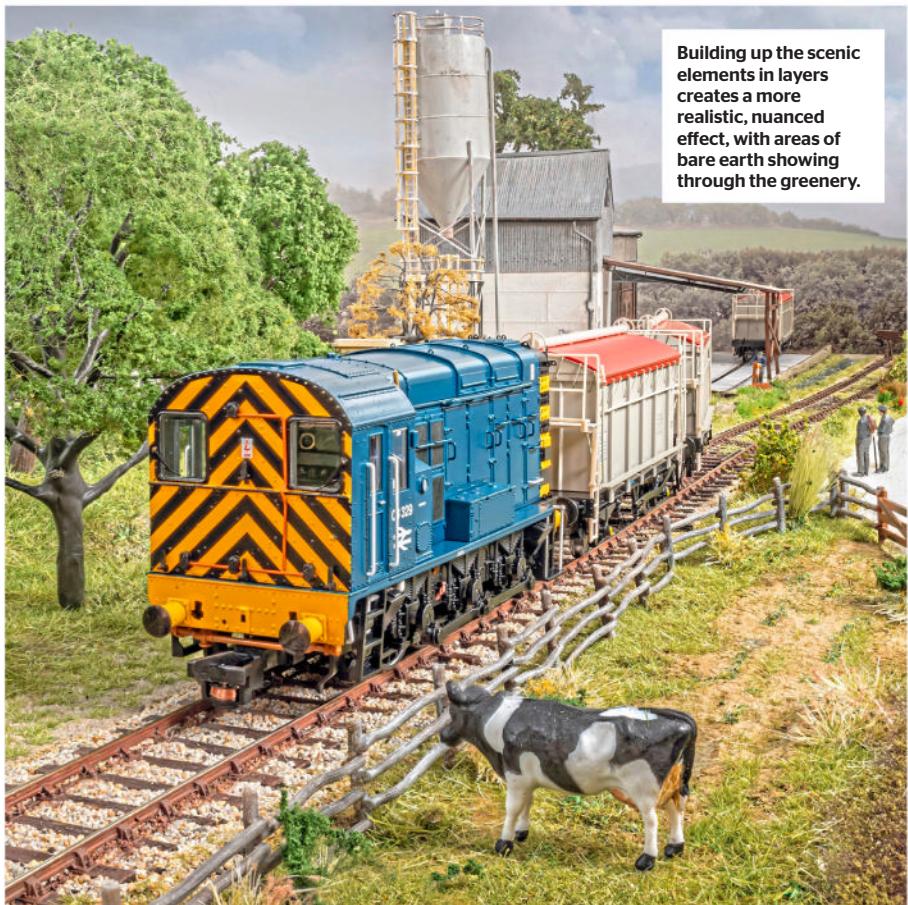
scatter materials **Availability:**

Gaugemaster stockists or direct

Web: www.gaugemasterretail.com

TOOLS

- Knife and spare blades
- Paintbrushes
- Spatulas
- Electrostatic grass applicator



Building up the scenic elements in layers creates a more realistic, nuanced effect, with areas of bare earth showing through the greenery.



being set in a rural landscape, trees also have a vital role to play.

There are so many good quality trees on the market these days, from the likes of Busch, Faller and Primo Models, as well as Noh's Master Trees and the Premium range from Woodland Scenics. With a need for a row of dense trees to skirt most of the rear edge of the baseboard, I plumped for a Hedgerow set from Woodland Scenics.

Supplied ready-made, the set features a pleasing range of trees and hedges, featuring differing shades and textures of green foliage. They come pre-mounted to a plastic base, making it easier to install into the scene and the base is readily disguised by some extra foliage and bushes.

Next month, we'll look at how the structures of the china clay works were created.

STEP BY STEP

1

At the rear of the baseboard, the land was raised to create the illusion that the railway line runs within a valley. The embankment was created using a foam riser, with one edge chamfered and fixed in place with scenic glue.



3

I fine-tuned the rest of the contours with plaster cloth. Short strips were dipped in water and stretched over the riser and other formers. When the plaster was dry, the surface was sealed and coloured earthy brown.



2

A small stream was to be created between the running line and sidings. I made use of offcut strips of mounting cardboard to form the raised banks of the stream, covering them with plaster cloth to form gentle contours.



4

When the paint had dried, the top of the rear embankment was covered with Scenic Glue, using a wide paintbrush to spread the adhesive evenly over the surface. The brush was cleaned with soapy water afterwards.



5

To provide an authentic backing for grass fibres, I initially covered the embankment with finely chopped leaves and brown scatter material, which were sprinkled onto the wet glue.



6

To add textural and visual variety, a fine green turf scatter material was sprinkled over the wet glue. I used a Woodland Scenics Scenic Accent Shaker, which helps disperse the material more evenly, avoiding big clumps.



7

I brushed more of the scenic glue onto the inclined of the embankment, and sprinkled fine sand on it. Again, the aim of this was to create a more visually interesting base for subsequent layers of grass. The glue was left to dry.



8

More of the glue was brushed over the sand and, while still wet, the first layer of static grass fibres were 'planted', using an electrostatic applicator. I used Woodland Scenics grass fibres, choosing subdued colours.



9

Further layers of different static grass fibres were built up, adding fresh layers of glue in between (extra-hold hairspray is effective). I still wanted some of the bare 'earth' (sand) to show through, so I applied the glue carefully.



10

In the foreground of the scene, I kept the grass in the field short, to represent the edge of a pasture. However, for added interest, I decided to create some muddy tracks, and this Foam Putty seemed like an ideal medium.



11

Firstly, I brushed a light layer of scenic glue over the grass to aid adhesion and, when it had turned tacky, I spread the Foam Putty over the surface, using a wooden spatula, working it especially around the gate.



12

A model tractor was gently pushed up and down the track to impart the tyre patterns into the wet putty. Once happy with the results, the tractor's wheels were cleaned with warm water before the putty dried.



13

After about 30 minutes, the surface was dry, with a realistic, gritty texture and could be painted with brown acrylics. When the paint was dry, I brushed patches of glue onto the surface and applied more short grass fibres.

INDUSTRIAL IMPACT

Rather than have the scene appear too idyllic, I decided to plant a dead tree next to the china clay drying works as a means of reinforcing the industrial nature of the location. Perhaps the heat and dust were responsible for the tree's demise.

The ailing elm tree is 80mm tall and part of a twin-pack from the Woodland Scenics Premium range - see Shopping List.



14

The process was repeated, with some more lines of glue brushed over the surface and some slightly longer grass fibres applied through the electrostatic machine, producing even more variety and texture.

**15**

As a final touch, I added various ready-made tufts of weeds in the exposed earth, fixing them in place with PVA glue. If necessary, the tufts can be trimmed and tidied up in situ with fine scissors, once the glue has set.

**16**

This Woodland Scenics hedgerow comes on a plastic base (visible here) and features around 20 mixed trees measuring about 190mm by 30mm and up to 55mm tall. It's a super-fast way to create a tree-lined background.

**17**

The hedgerow set was glued in place and the base disguised by layers of foliage. It was complemented with combinations of standalone Woodland Scenics trees, of different heights and colours for realism.

**18**

The finishing touches came from various ready-made clumps of tall grasses and tufts, fixed with small dabs of PVA glue. The natural variety of colours and textures makes for a realistic scene.

TUFTS ADD REALISM

Flowering tufts are an effective way to add dashes of colour and different textures to the lineside or anywhere that plants and shrubs might grow. The colour of the flowers on the bushes can help determine the season that the layout is set in and, on this project, I used yellow, purple, and red tufts aiming to create the impression of a spring scene.

I used tufts from Woodland Scenics and Gaugemaster, some of which were cut in half with scissors to double the number. The tufts have a sticky base but, to ensure they stayed put on the portable layout, I added a small dab of PVA glue and pushed them into place within the landscape.



A combination of Woodland Scenics trees and hedgerows provide an effective transition from the scenic area to the printed backscene.

Ian Dalby's 'A Exam (East Works)' featured in last month's issue and showcased how a DCC-controlled 'O' gauge layout can really capture the imagination, especially when lights and sound effects are incorporated. CHRIS NEVARD



HOW TO

INSTALL DCC INTO 'O' GAUGE DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES

In **Dave Lowery's** own words, he's no electronics nerd, but he's successfully equipped countless Heljan locomotives with DCC-controlled lights and sound. Here, he shares his tried-and-tested approach.

By no means am I an electronics whizz, and I'm sure I'm about to make many of them throw their hands up in horror. But this is how I fit Digital Command Control (DCC) decoders to Heljan 'O' gauge locomotives, using the handsome Class 50 as a guinea pig.

Heljan's '50' is designed to accept an ESU LokSound XL decoder, which is a straight swap for the central circuit board atop the chassis. Banks of screw terminals allow for easy conversion, with only minimal soldering involved in this demonstration.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVE LOWERY

 **Model:** Heljan Class 50
Price: £729.00

The basic premise is that the two wires from the locomotive's pickups, which would be wired to the motor in DC/analogue models, are instead connected separately to the DCC chip. Then two wires are added from the motor to the chip - all very straightforward, in theory.

The real fun and games come with the addition of extra lights. Unlike Heljan's more recent 'O' gauge releases, the Class 50

AVAILABILITY
Heljan stockists

 8-10 hrs per loco



features directional head and tail lamps, but lacks interior lighting. Adding LEDs requires an understanding of diodes, but it's not overly difficult, provided you identify the anode and cathode connections, and don't forget to protect the LEDs with a resistor.

On the requirements for lights, it is nice to make the red rear lights switchable, so they can be extinguished when the locomotive is connected to a train, as is the convention on



UK railways. Having said that, I have recently seen real locomotives with their rear lights switched on, even with a train behind them, so there's a prototype for everything, as they say.

Also, it is nice to have cab interior lights. Particularly if you have gone to the trouble of buying a decent driver, it is nice to see them. And the final challenge, if you are fitting a sound chip, is the location of the speaker. Or even better, multiple speakers, with each locomotive type featuring a slightly different interior layout to navigate.

With the Heljan Class 50, space is provided within the underslung fuel tank for a 42mm diameter round speaker, but there's also ample space on top of the chassis block for a more substantial square or rectangular unit.

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ ESU V5 LokSound XL DCC sound decoder **Price:** £219.99
Availability: Howes Models
Web: www.howesmodels.co.uk
- ◆ 100mm by 45mm bass reflex speaker (£9.99) and 28mm by 32mm mega bass speaker (£8.99)
Availability: Road & Rails
Web: www.road-and-rails.co.uk

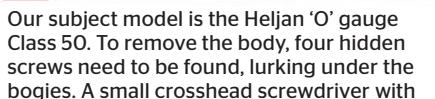
TOOLS

- ◆ Miniature screwdrivers
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Fine-nosed pliers
- ◆ Piercing saw
- ◆ Needle files
- ◆ Wire cutters/strippers
- ◆ Soldering iron and equipment

The techniques employed here can be tailored to suit a variety of Heljan's diesel locomotives and, if a non-electrical expert like me can do it, so can you!

STEP BY STEP

1

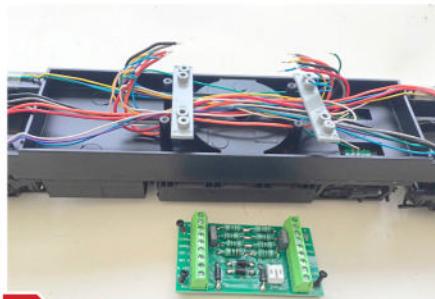


Our subject model is the Heljan 'O' gauge Class 50. To remove the body, four hidden screws need to be found, lurking under the bogies. A small crosshead screwdriver with a long shaft is required to remove them.



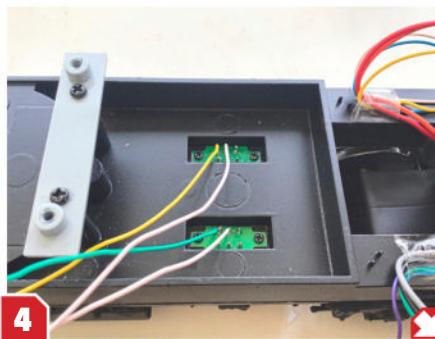
2

It's always worth noting the orientation of the body in relation to the chassis, to make sure you put it back on properly later. Take a quick snap on your camera phone, or I use an antique piece of equipment called a pencil.



3

The Heljan board needed to be disconnected from the various wires, the mounting bolts removed and the board removed. I kept the screws, as the grey beams will be needed to hold the ESU V5 sound chip later.



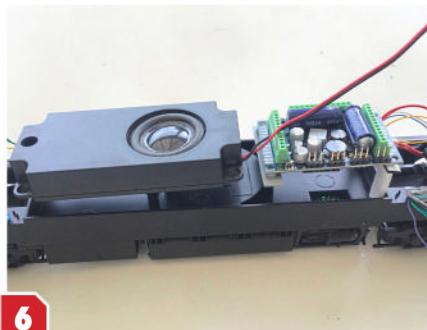
4

Ease all the wires out and separate them, also noting where they came from. These wires, connected to the slide switches below the chassis (light functions, for non-DCC users) can be cut away, as they're no longer needed.



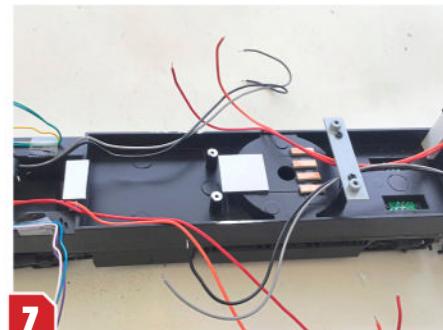
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Using a piercing saw blade, I cut away two of the cast metal spigots sticking up from the chassis, to provide room for the large bass reflex speaker I'll be installing. Be sure to vacuum away the metal filings immediately.



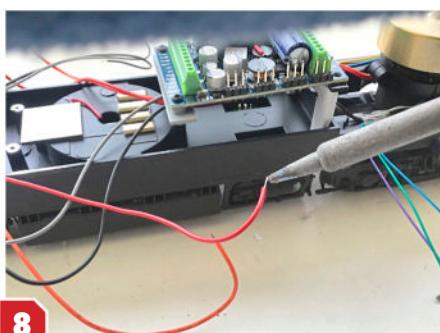
6

Next, I trial-fitted the DCC decoder, using the remaining spigots and a simple plastic mount at the other end. The large bass reflex speaker takes up a lot of room, but it just fits. I also checked for clearance with the bodyshell.



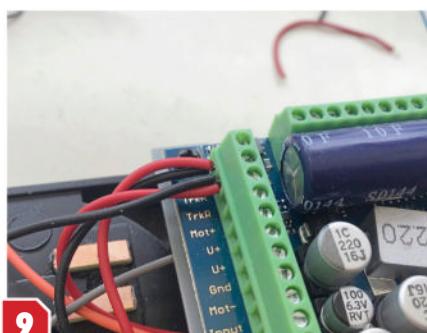
7

I glued copper-clad sleeper strips to the centre of the chassis, close to where the decoder will be. The first sets of wires to be identified were from the pickups - red and black - followed by the motor wires, which are grey and orange.



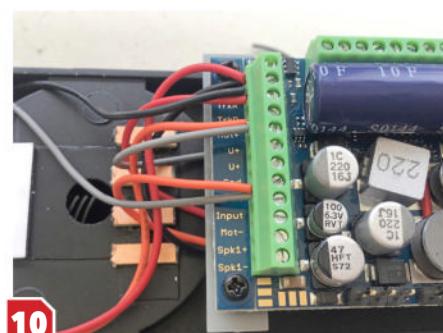
8

I cut the wires to length so they can reach the decoder, but without leaving excess wire all over the place and cluttering the interior. When happy, I stripped the ends of the insulation and 'tinned' the exposed wire with solder.



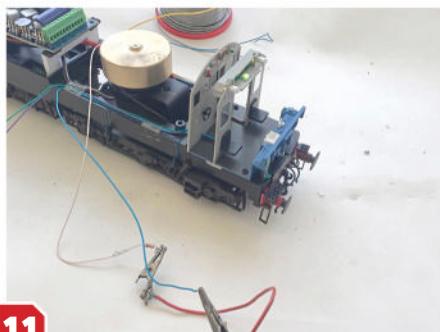
9

Beware: the wires are handed and so are reversed between the two power bogies. For example, the red pickup wire from one bogie is connected to the black wire from the other bogie.



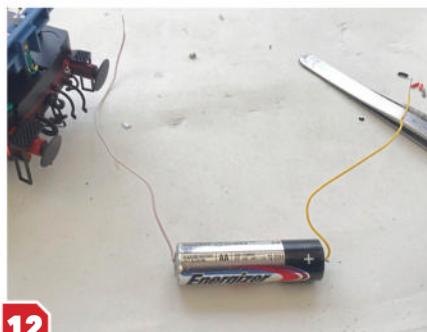
10

The same goes for the twin motor wires, with the orange linked to the grey from one motor and vice versa for the other wires from each motor. Soldering the wire ends prevents strands breaking when screwing into terminals.



11

Moving to the lights, I separated all the wires, and the first job was to identify the wires that operate each LED. I used a 12-volt DC controller with a protective 1k resistor.



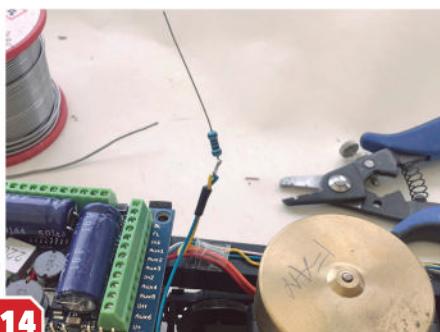
12

It's also possible to use a low voltage battery, such as a 1.5V AA cell, to test the LEDs, but more importantly, to find the positive anode. Power will only travel in one direction from the anode to the cathode.



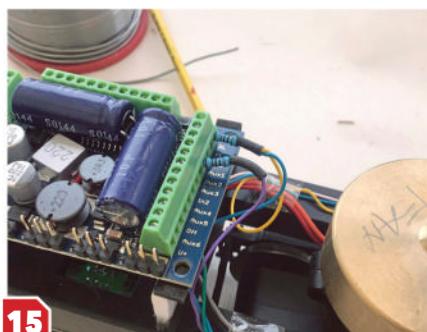
13

With my temporary power source, it's possible to work around the model identifying the LEDs and their relevant wires. I always make a note of everything, as it's so easy to forget otherwise, believe me!



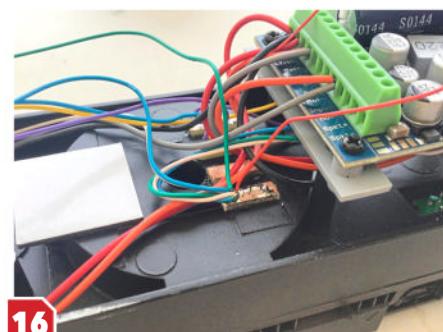
14

Once everything has been identified, I soldered a 1k resistor to the negative wire of the LED, with heat-shrink tubing added over the bond. The positive wire will join all the others to make a common positive return wire to the decoder.



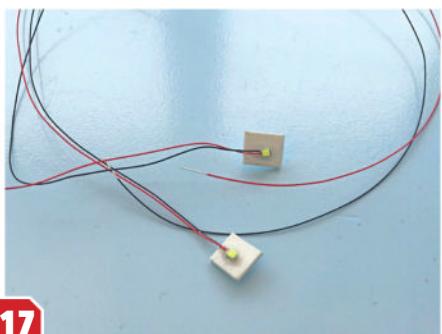
15

The LEDs are then connected to the decoder - the resistors being fitted to the two main outputs, while the lights are connected to the auxiliary outputs that can be switched on and off using the DCC controller's function buttons.



16

All the positive wires from all the LEDs are brought back to those pieces of copper-clad board I bonded to the chassis in Step 7, along with a single wire which then goes to the positive output on the decoder.

**17**

There's no cab interior lighting on the Class 50, so I used mini, prewired LEDs for the cab lighting. As they're so small, it is worth glueing them to a piece of plastic card to make it easier to locate within the cabs.

**18**

I removed the fuel tank moulding to reveal the aperture for a speaker. I installed a 28mm by 32mm unit into the opening, fed the twin wires through the chassis, ready to connect to the decoder terminals, then refitted the tank cover.

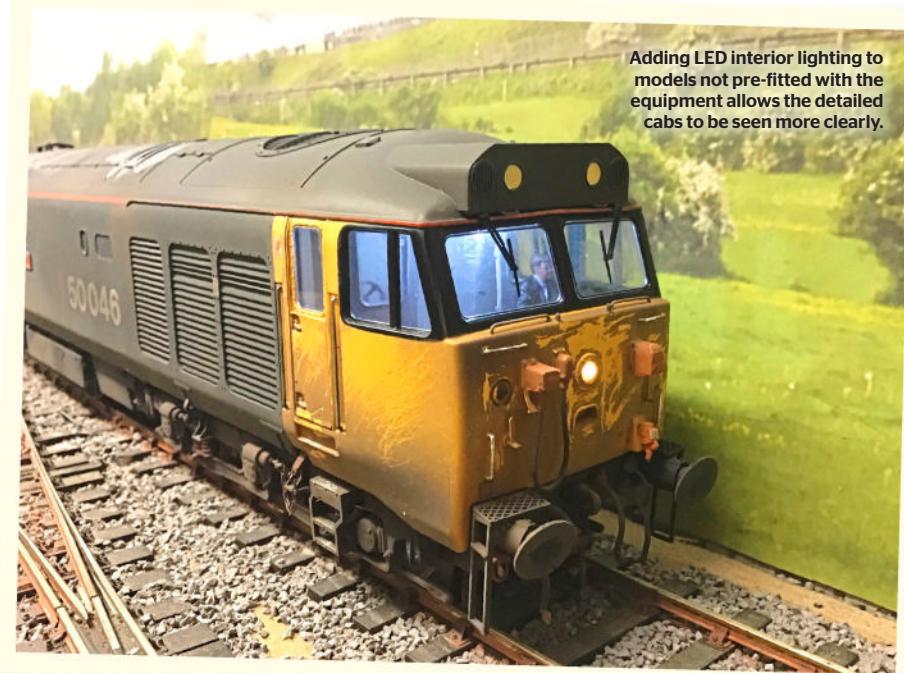
**19**

A 100mm by 45mm bass reflex speaker was located in place with double-sided tape and the wires connected to the decoder's terminals. Try and keep everything as neat and tidy as possible.

**20**

The body can be refitted and the models tested on DCC to check for performance and correct sound and light functions. Always remember to read the decoder's instructions and the model's handbook before starting work.

With a pair of sound-equipped 'O' gauge Class 50s, fitted with bass reflex speakers, the railway room can be filled with the dulcet tones of twin English Electric power units at full chatter!



SHOW & TELL

The place to share your projects with the *Model Rail* community.

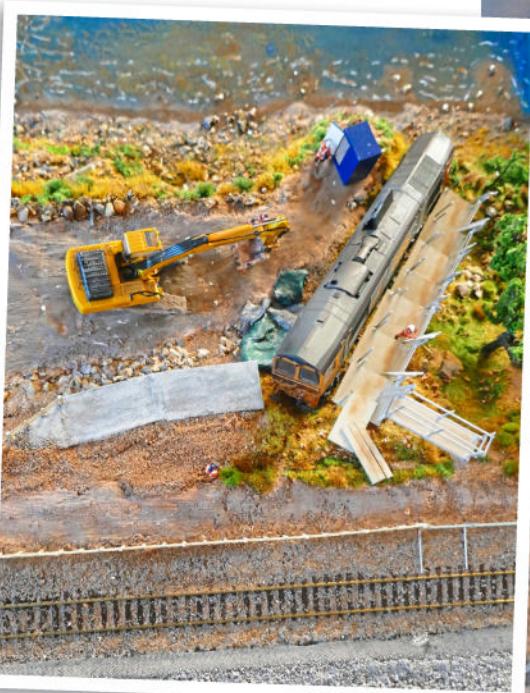
Off the rails

Lying on a steep, remote embankment in the Scottish Highlands following a derailment, the fate of GBRf locomotive 66734 inspired Paul Gosden to create this hugely detailed diorama.

In June 2012, drama struck the West Highland Line, which runs from Glasgow to Fort William and Mallaig in the Scottish Highlands. Diesel-electric freight locomotive No. 66734 - operated by GB Railfreight (GBRF) - and five of its wagons derailed, sliding down a steep embankment near the remote Loch Treig, 12 miles east of Fort William.

The result of a landslide above the track caused by heavy rain, the incident sparked one of the most challenging (and costly) recovery operations ever faced by engineers as the 130-ton locomotive came to rest perched on a ledge above the water, hanging over the side.

With no road access, a year-long logistical puzzle ensued. Heavy-lift cranes couldn't reach the site, and only single-track rail access was possible. It became clear that dismantling the wreckage on site was the only option, which meant cutting the engine into sections, which could then be winched clear. The last remnants were cleared more than 12 months later, in September 2013, and GBRf marked 66734's legacy by introducing a replacement locomotive carrying the same number. As an interesting aside, the



wreckage of the locomotive was later used to build simulators for a new GBRf training school in Peterborough.

I first read about the incident in one of my railway magazines after the locomotive had finally been dismantled. I then found a video on YouTube showing time-lapse footage of the recovery operation. I captured



screenshots, which gave me the idea to build the diorama.

I had never attempted to build an embankment before, nor create 'water,' so this inspired me to try something new. I used crushed paper covered in modelling plaster bandage for the embankment, and then started to build it up with grasses, shrubbery and rocks.

The tricky bit was building the raised platforms used by the salvage team to dismantle the engine bit by bit. Cyanoacrylate glue (super glue) came into its own for this part. I was lucky to find an excavator on traction wheels that appeared very similar to the one used. I recreated the QTS logo found on the real machine, printed it on decal paper and used decal fix.

The model took about three months and once finished, I found QTS' head office number and made contact to see if it would like to see what I had done. After sending over several photos by email, I was asked if a QTS director could buy it off me. A price was agreed, and it now sits in his office up in Scotland, as pictured here.

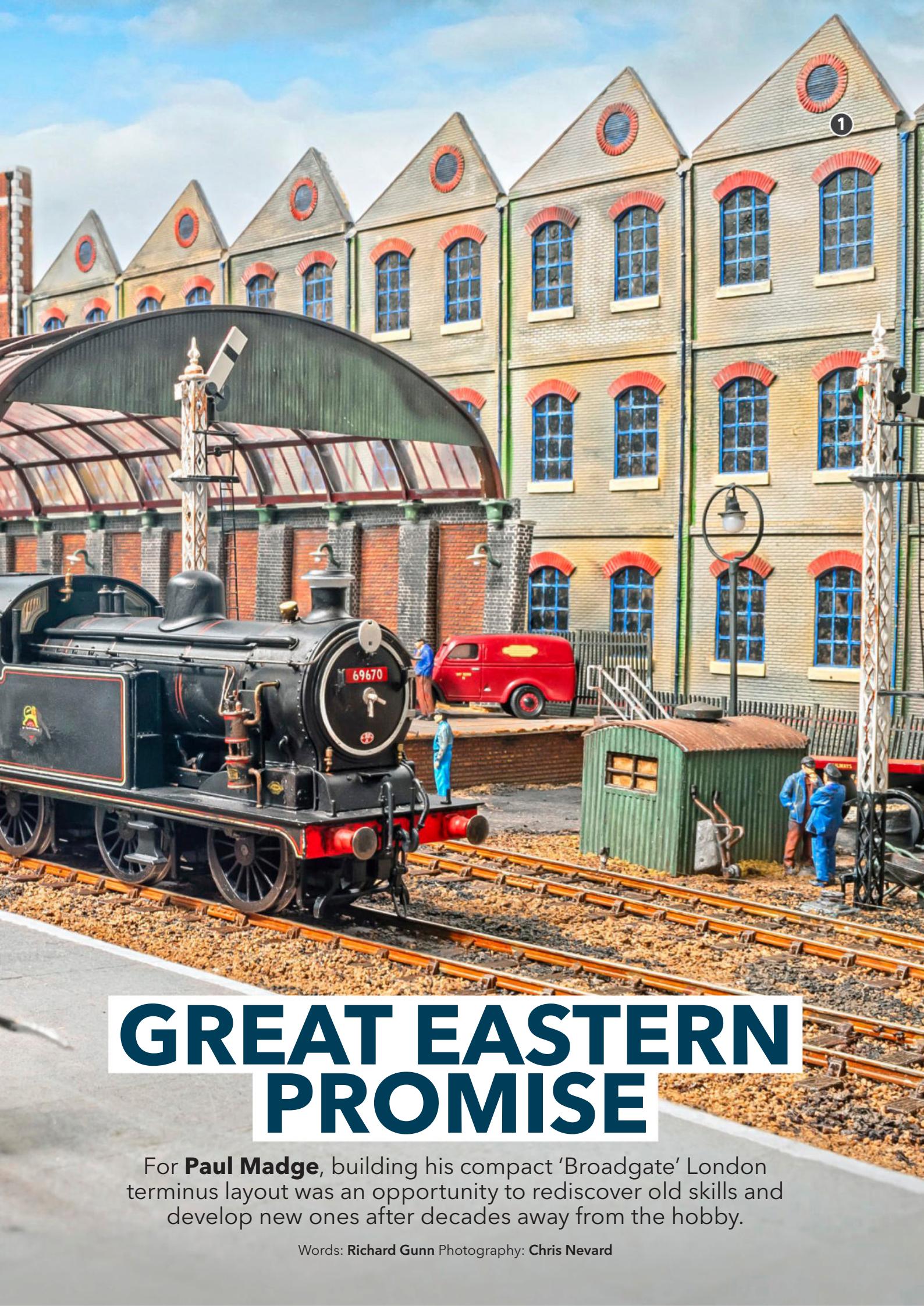




“
What makes this layout great?

Paul has captured a wonderful snapshot of mid-20th century London life with his compact terminus, overlooked by a chaotic road scene. In order to do so, he had to learn a lot of new skills. But you can become lost in the final result for hours, with its fascinating details and little cameos.”





GREAT EASTERN PROMISE

For **Paul Madge**, building his compact 'Broadgate' London terminus layout was an opportunity to rediscover old skills and develop new ones after decades away from the hobby.

Words: Richard Gunn Photography: Chris Nevard

“It’s a bit of a mash-up really,” says Paul Madge when describing ‘Broadgate’, his mid-20th century London-themed layout. “I liked the idea of trying to combine something ex-Great Eastern and Great Northern; sort of King’s Cross but trying to draw in a bit of Broad Street. So I thought a clever name would be ‘Broadgate’, forgetting, of course, that there is now a Broadgate.” The name was bestowed on the office and retail development that consumed the site of Broad Street station in the late 1980s. “But the basic idea is that it’s former Great Eastern, but with the idea that some ex-Great Northern stuff uses it as

BELOW ‘Broadgate’ stands 36in high, so Paul’s idea is that viewers sit down and have a look at it on the plane rather than “hovering overhead as if in a helicopter”.

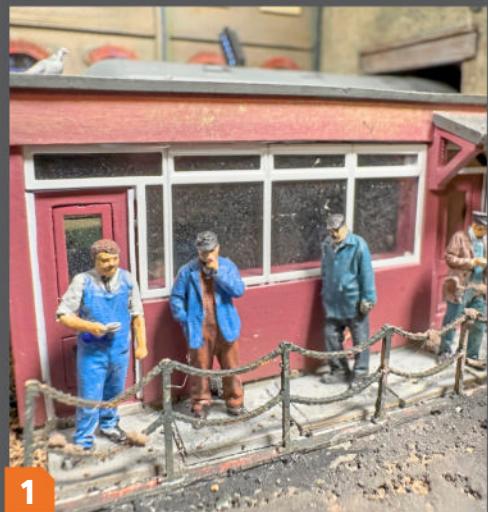
well. And because it’s British Railways, I’ve thrown some London Midland Region stuff too. It allows me to run a lot of stock.” So, that’s a lot of bases covered for a modeller who freely admits that he’s “collected far too many locomotives”. And just for good measure, he’s also thrown in a London Transport line as well!

The concept behind ‘Broadgate’ is that it’s part of a much larger main metropolis terminus. “Imagine it’s sort of the edge of a big station, like the milk dock or York Road at King’s Cross, a relief platform used for excursions etc. There’s also some goods traffic, such as fish trains, etc.” ▶

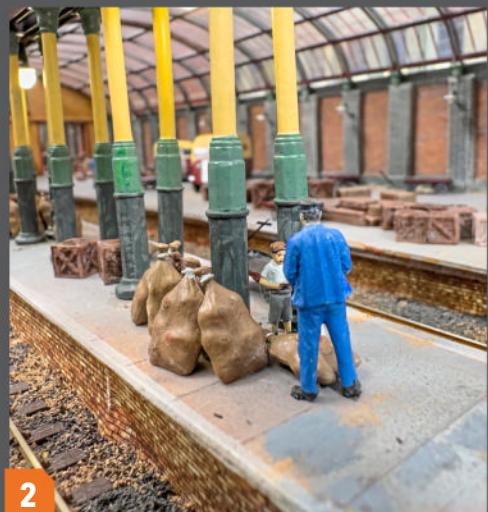




3 things we like



Taking a break outside the mess hall – a modern addition to the largely Victorian railway environment.



Trainspotters being told off by staff for straying into one of the non-public areas.



The faded ghosts of advertising past occupying a vacant brick wall.



Paul started work on 'Broadgate' just before Covid hit. The pandemic caused "a bit of a hiatus", not least because he'd commissioned specialist Model Railway Solutions to construct the baseboard along with its six-road traverser storage area. But once the pandemic had passed, he was able to properly dive into the project to "build something on a smaller scale but make it very detailed and have fun doing it".

The format is a two-road throat of the station passing under a busy street, with the London Underground (but overground) siding at the rear. The latter wasn't part of the original scheme. "But I saw Heljan's Metropolitan Bo-Bo electric locomotive and thought, I've just got to have that, before I'd actually built the layout. Then I nearly had a heart attack when I thought about how it would alter all my plans. But I managed to wiggle it in."

Peco bullhead rail was used throughout, with just a single point on the whole system. To 'electrify' the four-rail LT spur, Paul used smaller Peco rail mounted on plastic insulator pots placed every fourth sleeper. "It looks convincing enough and doesn't foul the locos, which is the important thing. It was quite an entertainment doing that. All the accompanying wall cabling drove me insane, though." Signalling is working, Dapol items controlled via DCC – albeit with a single Train Tech item on the LT line.

Buildings are a mixture of proprietary structures – generally modified and/or weathered – and scratchbuilt items. The station canopies, for example, are Peco while the block of flats that overlooks the line from the road bridge is Skytrex. The large brick building in front of the bridge (a Peco product) is scratchbuilt; Styrofoam covered with Redutex.

4
A passenger's eye view of a careworn Bachmann '4F' preparing to depart 'Broadgate' at the head of a short parcels train. The station is fully illuminated, although Paul found it a bit of a struggle to get all the lamps functioning properly. They all worked in the end though.

5
The gridlocked street above the tracks includes a cameo from *Peaky Blinders'* flat-capped Tommy Shelby, walking his dogs (seen here alongside the green-over-black Vauxhall PA). All the vehicles are proprietary models.





6
The London Transport electrified line at the rear was an afterthought because Paul fell in love with Heljan's Metropolitan Bo-Bo locomotive and wanted to have one. The colour light aspect is a Train Tech product; all other signals are Dapol semaphores.

7

Hornby 'B1' No. 61032 *Stembok* enters the station. While most of the buildings are illuminated, Paul hasn't fitted lights to the locomotives because he feels that modern LEDs are a little too bright for locomotive lamps of the era.





texture sheets. "The Redutex stuff is absolutely fantastic for painting," remarks Paul. "It's rubbery, so if you don't like something, you can just rub it off and start again. On that building, I even went to the trouble of finding out the typical size of the lead roof sheets, along with the size and type of TV aerial. They were just things I wanted to get correct. If you're going to be obsessive, you might as well get it right."

THE BRICKS MUST BE RIGHT

The signal box is a laser-cut kit, while at the end of the main passenger platform (made of balsa wood with card on top, painted and scribed) is a Peco lineside hut, but "redressed with proper brickwork and then dirtied up; I can't stand it when the bricks aren't right". Nearby is a post-war mess hall for railway workers, originating from Bachmann. ▶



My thought is that "there has been some development at the station, rather than everything looking purely Victorian," says Paul.

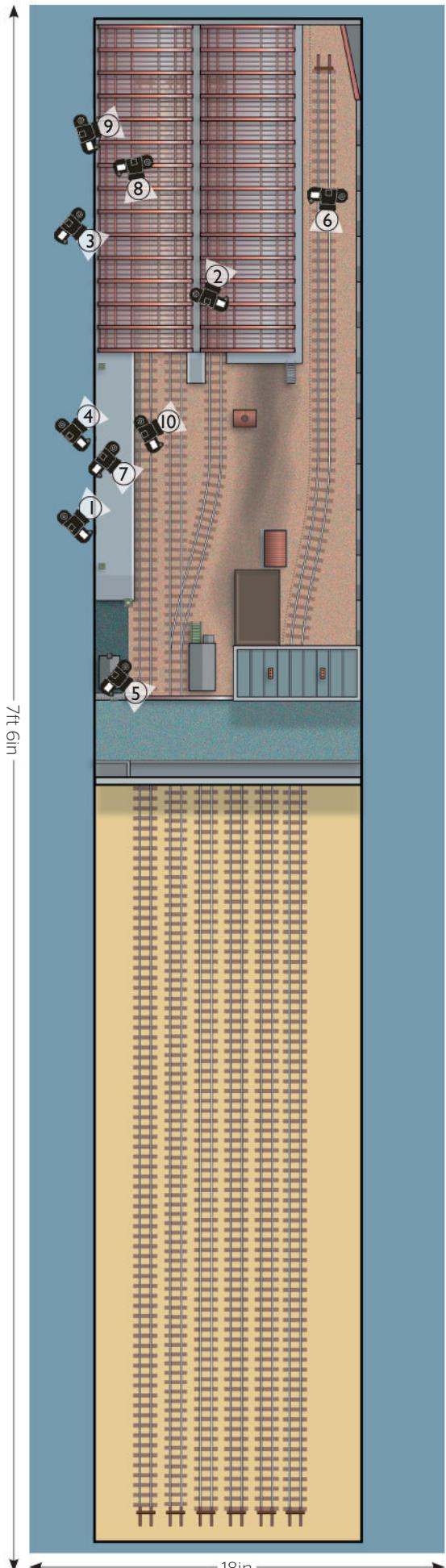
Speaking of the 19th century, there's a hint of Liverpool Street to the back wall of the station. It was hand-built, with Slater's embossed Plasticard brickwork and Wills Kits window frames. "I placed baking paper behind them; it looks good from a distance because you get a sort of dirty glass effect." Another trick Paul has incorporated is small mirrors in the exits to provide a sense of depth. "It looks reasonably convincing; you've got things in front of it that could also be behind it. I've tried to learn from what I've seen in magazines and at exhibitions."

All the buildings (apart from the warehouse backscene) have lights; there's also a flickering brazier in front of the mess hall. "There are lamps all down the station; it was an absolute fiend to try and get them to work. Overall, the most challenging part was doing all the electrics for the dimmable lighting; the endless different levels of current and connecting this to that, etc. I learnt an awful lot about electrics."

Most of the figures are all Modelu, albeit with a few celebrity cameos from bespoke resin characters. "If you look at the road bridge, there's Tommy Shelby (from *Peaky Blinders*) walking two spaniels, while Harry Palmer is on the corner. I just put a few little ➤

BELOW A Bachmann 'V3' tank awaits its next duty by the bufferstops. Liverpool Street provided some of the inspiration for the back wall of the station.





ABOVE Paul's approach to weathering was "just try it and see. I didn't want to try and go too dark; I think sometimes people can get quite carried away. I wanted dusty and dirty suburban, not completely filthy".

jokes in like that." The busy street scene features both roadworks and police activity – two events guaranteed to result in the sort of London gridlock Paul has created.

There's a lot of traffic on the rails below, too. "I have quite a bit too much rolling stock," laughs Paul. "It's all proprietary, including one of *Model Rail*'s Class 11 diesel shunters, after I saw a shot of a black one at Liverpool Street. There's even a 'W1' for no other reason except that I liked it. I've also got a Great Northern 'Single' because it's just the most gorgeous model." Sound is installed in all but one loco, an Ivatt '2MT', which was Paul's first attempt at wiring DCC. "I was so proud of having successfully put a chip in it, albeit primitively, that I didn't want to take it apart again. I'm very grateful to Kevin, of Coastal DCC, for his help, as well as Brett at my local shop, Orwell Model Railways in Ipswich. They're both fantastic and have been a huge help.

"My goal was to create something visually convincing from a reasonable distance," sums up Paul. "Plus, I wanted to acquire and develop my skills, such as electronics. It was a challenge."

That it may have been, but it was definitely one that Paul rose to. He's now working on a rural layout, and if he brings the experience he's gained from 'Broadgate' to that, we reckon it's going to be a corker. **MR**



FACTFILE: BROADGATE

Era: 1950-1962

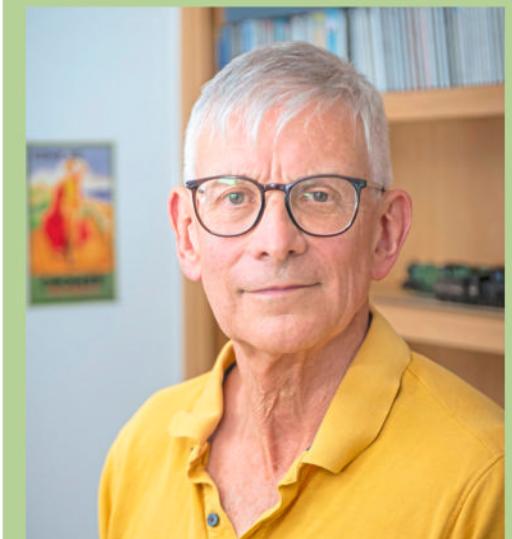
Gauge and scale: 4mm: 1ft, 'OO' gauge

Size: 4ft x 18in (visual), 3ft 6in x 18in (traverser)

Track: Peco Code 75 Bullhead

Power and control: DCC NCE PowerCab with DCC sound

Time to build: Two years "off and on".



ABOUT THE MODELLER: PAUL MADGE

Former teacher Paul was a keen Hornby 'OO' gauge modeller as a boy. He returned to 2mm finescale in the 1990s but admits it didn't really go anywhere. However, when Orwell Model Railways opened nearby to him, he took it as a sign to return to the hobby. He also enjoys reading, gardening and walking his dog.





Reviews

In-depth and unbiased reviews of the latest products

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Our reviewers

George Dent

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

Richard Gunn

A keen 'N' gauge modeller with eclectic tastes.

How we test

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





Heljan BR Class 117 three-car DMU

◆ GAUGE 'O' ◆ MODEL Heljan 1178 BR Class 117 three-car DMU, BR Rail blue & grey ◆ PRICE £1,049.00 ◆ AVAILABILITY Heljan stockists Web www.heljan.co.uk



In common with 'OO' and 'N' gauge, the array of classic British Rail main line diesel locomotive types is now well represented in ready-to-run 'O' gauge, thanks especially to the efforts of Heljan. A move into diesel multiple units (DMUs) has, therefore, a definite logic.

There are several DMU types from the 1960-1990 era that are extremely popular with enthusiasts, and yet there is an element of risk for manufacturers due to the inherent size and cost.

Individual locomotives, especially all-time classics like the Class 37 or 'Deltics', have the power to attract enthusiasts who may not necessarily have an

'O' gauge layout. Plus, they provide a compelling reason to build a working diorama or small layout on which to display them. Ian Dalby's 'A Exam (East Works)', featured in last month's issue, is a prime example.

Heljan's single-car BR Class 121 and 122 railcars, reviewed last month, are also perfect for space-challenged modellers, but a two- or three-car DMU is a much more substantial thing. This attractive three-car Class 117, newly arrived in the Heljan range, measures over 1.4m long - that's nearly 5ft - so it demands much more room in which to operate.

That said, the nature of DMUs also brings numerous advantages,

just like the real things. Terminus stations do not require run-round facilities, and there's no need for awkward coupling/uncoupling. They simply pootle back and forth in fixed formations, so a layout with multiple units as the main traction requires a more simplistic track plan.

DERBY INFLUENCE

The Class 117 vehicles may have been built in Scotland, but they closely followed BR's Derby mould, sharing a family likeness to many other contemporary DMUs, especially in terms of the cab design.

Heljan has produced a variety of Class 117s, in original green



“The bodysides are furnished with separately installed commode handles and handrails for the crew access doors, while even the small apertures for the individual door locks are present”

livery (with speed 'whiskers' or small yellow warning panels), plain Rail blue, blue/grey and Network SouthEast liveries. There's a choice of two- or three-car formations too, with the twinsets priced at £699.00 and, just like the three-car sets, shopping around will reveal retailer discounts of well over £100, making them a reasonable proposition in this scale.

For review, Heljan kindly supplied Midland Region three-car set T306, with the

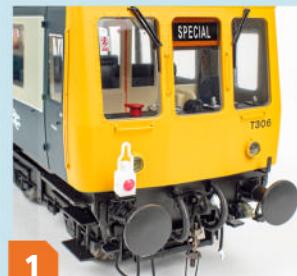
illuminated destination blinds showing Birmingham New Street at one end, and SPECIAL at the other. Although these DMUs were originally constructed for Western Region commuter services around London and the South West, the '117s' ventured much further afield during their long careers - see Factfile panel for more details.

In terms of overall looks, Heljan has captured the profile and character of the real trains

admirably, especially in terms of the cab fronts. The raised fastener detail around the windscreens and fine wire grab handles are nicely executed, while the wipers and twin marker/tail lamps also look the part.

The rooftop headcode boxes are correctly blacked out, and the neatly installed, crystal clear glazing allows the fully detailed cab interiors to be fully enjoyed. The addition of brightly coloured safety equipment in the guard's

3 things we like



1

A cosmetic oil tail lamp is provided, which slots onto the fine metal brackets.



2

Impressive underframe detail, with correct equipment for each vehicle type.



3 1

Nicely detailed interiors of passenger and crew compartments, with lighting units.

compartment and correctly coloured seats throughout really brings the model to life. ▶





Heljan BR Class 117 - in detail

Factfile: BR/Pressed Steel Class 117 DMU

As part of British Railways' mission to replace steam traction on suburban passenger services, an order was placed with Pressed Steel for 39 three-car Diesel Multiple Units, which became the Class 117.

Assembled at the Linwood factory, near Paisley, between 1959-60, the vehicles were built to BR's own 'Derby' design of steel-bodied DMUs. The three-car sets were made up of a trio of individual vehicle types: a Driver Motor Brake Second (DMBS), Driver Motor Second (DMS) and a Trailer Composite Lavatory (TCL).

Initially, inter-connecting gangways between cars were not fitted, with doors provided for passengers at each seating bay to allow for rapid ingress and egress on busy commuter services. However, to improve the customer experience and allow access to the First and Second class lavatories, gangways were added during refurbishment work in the 1970s.

The three-car units were built ostensibly for the London Division of the Western Region, operating West London and Thames Valley commuter services, although some units did migrate to Bristol, Birmingham, Cardiff and Plymouth during their lifetime.

Each driving car was equipped with a pair of 150hp Leyland diesel engines and featured high-density 3+2 seating in Second (later Standard) class, and 2+1 in the small First class compartment of the centre car.

A four-character headcode panel was installed above each cab, but these fell out of use in the mid-1970s and, during refurbishment work, pairs of dual head/tail lamps were installed below the cab windscreens. Indeed, the '117' was included in BR's mass DMU refurbishment programme of the 1970s and, by the 1990s, two-car sets could be seen working Cornish branch lines, while other surviving sets had emigrated to Scotland, operating Fife Circle services until 1999.

Delivered to BR in lined green livery, the '117s' also carried Rail blue, white with blue stripes, blue/grey, Network SouthEast and Regional Railways liveries, plus a few heritage schemes.

Due to their longevity, many vehicles have survived into preservation.



1: A Western Region three-car Class 117 set, with DMBS W51343 nearest the camera, departs Paddington in 1961. Note the original 'clipped' buffers and oil tail lamp. COLOUR RAIL



2: With what looks like a Metro Cammell Class 101 centre car, Class 117 set B450, rolls into Worcester in July 1987. COLOUR RAIL



3: With DMS 51374 leading, Network SouthEast set L400 awaits departure from Oxford on a Reading service in May 1992. COLOUR RAIL

The bodysides are furnished with separately installed commode handles and handrails for the crew access doors, while even the small apertures for the individual door locks are present.

I was impressed by the hollow tips to the slender exhaust pipes, and this being a post-refurbishment '117', gangway connectors are present, with ultra-realistic flexible bellows and delicate hanger brackets. The rooftop water filler pipework on the centre car is nicely observed, and sprung buffers are fitted throughout, along with vacuum brake hoses and jumper cables pre-installed to all bufferbeams.

Each vehicle features sprung drawhooks and working screw couplings, but an optional set of magnetic couplers is also provided for the inter-car connections. These are better for coping with curved track and make it easier to couple and uncouple the cars on the layout. They're discreet too.

WEIGHTY ISSUES

Despite the plastic bodyshells, there's a good amount of heft to each car, thanks to the heavy die-cast metal chassis, onto which is fitted a wealth of finely moulded plastic details and underframe components. The diesel engines, transmissions and driveshafts, battery and fuse boxes, heating and brake equipment are all captured faithfully, while the spring and axlebox detail on the bogie frames is equally effective. The brake shoes are separately fitted and aligned with the wheels.

Both driving cars feature a self-contained motor bogie at one end, featuring a similar drive system to that fitted on Heljan's Class 121 and 122 railcars.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Captures prototype's looks and character well.
- Impressive level of detail.
- Well built and finished to high standard.
- Performance.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

A fabulous rendition of a popular DMU.

Electrical power is collected from the wheels via wiper contacts bearing on the axles and causing no discernible drag.

The same, rather bulky, inner bogie unit is used throughout the train, whether a motor is contained within or not. While this bulk can be noticeable, especially from ground level, it's only a minor obstruction, and there's something to be said for a sense of consistency across each car. A more slender, realistic bogie unit would simply draw more attention to the bulkier motor bogie unit. Furthermore, each of these metal inner bogie frames ensures an even distribution of weight onto all axles, which helps keep the train on the tracks, regardless of direction.

Naturally, the use of the motor bogie ensures that the carriage interiors are kept free of unsightly equipment, allowing the various compartments to be rendered accurately. With all-wheel power collection,

running proved to be reliable and smooth after a running-in period, with the two powered bogies working harmoniously in analogue mode.

There are no inter-car power connectors, so a 21-pin decoder is required for each vehicle if choosing to operate on DCC. The decoder socket is located atop the lighting bar, so the bodyshells need to be unscrewed from the chassis. I did find that some of the mounting blocks for the body securing bolts had come adrift and, with the chassis being so much heavier than the plastic bodyshells, it made me worry about carrying the vehicles by the bodyside alone. I'd therefore recommend holding them from below too.

Mounting points are provided below the floor for speakers, for those wanting digital sound.

The overall quality of assembly is high, and the paintwork has been finished to an excellent standard, with just a few minor

blemishes on the yellow ends. The fine white lining between the blue and grey elements has been neatly applied, and the no-smoking and First class window stickers are excellent. The inward-facing warning panels in each droplight window are present, too.

This is a hugely impressive model, which has made me long for enough space in which to build a suitable layout on which to run it. Although the Class 117s were not a class that I recall travelling on, the family likeness to other BR Derby DMUs that worked in my locality brought back warm, nostalgic memories. These were the trains I spent most of my childhood on, rather than the more glamorous loco-hauled stock. So the ratty, smoky DMUs with their springy seats, steamed-up windows and wet vinyl floors will always have a special place in my heart.

Will other DMU classes follow in future, I wonder...? (GD)



VITAL STATISTICS: HELJAN BR CLASS 117 DMU

OVERVIEW

Manufacturer: Heljan
Ref. No.: 1178
Unit No.: M51411, M59521, M51369
Scale/gauge: 1:43.5 scale, 'O' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 1,350g per power car (4,950g 3-car set)
Min. curve radius: 1,524mm (5ft)
Wheel back-to-back: 30mm

DIMENSIONS

| | PROTOTYPE | 1:43.5 SCALE | MODEL |
|----------------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| Length per car (over headstocks) | 64ft 6in | 452mm | 442mm |
| Height | 12ft 8½in | 88mm | 88.5mm |
| Width | 9ft 3in | 64mm | 64mm |
| Wheel diameter | 3ft 0in | 21mm | 21mm |
| Bogie wheelbase | 3ft 0in | 21mm | 21mm |

SERVICING

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

ELECTRICS

Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail.
Motor type: Five-pole, x2.
Lights: Directional marker/tail lights, interiors, destination blinds.
DCC-ready? 21-pin socket in each car.

MECHANISM

Drive system: 2x motor bogies, one in each driving car.
Flywheel(s): Yes.
Traction tyres: No.



Cavalex Models Bardon JGA hoppers

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Cavalex Models JGA hopper wagons, Bardon Aggregates white/blue, unbranded brown/grey ◆ PRICE £45.00 each or £135.00 per triple-pack

◆ AVAILABILITY Cavalex stockists [Web](http://www.cavalexmodels.com) www.cavalexmodels.com

Built at Shirebrook in 1990 by W.H. Davis Ltd, the PHA/JGA bogie hoppers were ordered by Bardon Hill Quarries as part of an ongoing plan to modernise its rail-borne aggregate operations. Numbered BHQ17130-151, the wagon fleet remains in traffic today, carrying stone from the Leicestershire quarry to numerous destinations, predominantly in the Midlands and Southern England.

Cavalex Models has produced a fantastic 'OO' gauge replica of the JGA, available individually or in

triple-packs. Three liveries are on offer too, from the stylish original green/yellow livery, post-1997 white/blue with revised branding and unbranded brown/grey for modellers interested in operations from the past decade or so.

Packaged in Cavalex's usual orange boxes, the wagons are impressive, even at first glance. Featuring a cast metal chassis frame, the plastic hopper body is made up of several parts and allows for a full rendition of the interior. The large guard plates at either end are separately installed, with a superb rendition

of the air brake gear and pipework visible below, including the ladder-type vertical strengthening ribs.

DECK DETAIL

The chequer plate decking at each end is also faithfully reproduced, along with the access ladders, handbrake wheels and tiny apertures to provide access to the brake test valves. Lamp brackets are separate etched metal parts, and the buffers are sprung.

Below platform level, the hopper chutes, door actuating

gear, levers and cabling are rendered from many individual parts, creating a superb overall composition. Some light weathering with dry pigments and/or dry-brushed paint will really bring these areas to life.

The prototype's cast Y25 bogies are replicated well, with crisply moulded detail and accurately rendered inner framework. NEM coupler pockets are moulded integrally with the bogie frames. Black slimline tension locks come pre-fitted.

A pair of detail bags is provided with each wagon, offering pairs of



“Below platform level, the hopper chutes, door actuating gear, levers and cabling are rendered from many individual parts, creating a superb overall composition”

brake pipes for each end (mounting holes are provided but those on the white/blue version were clogged with paint and needed re-drilling), plus a set of cosmetic screw couplings.

Weighing in at 87g apiece, they have enough mass to ensure smooth running when empty, while pouring a load of loose stone chippings into the hoppers doesn't leave them overly heavy. The metal pinpoint axles rotate smoothly, and there's space

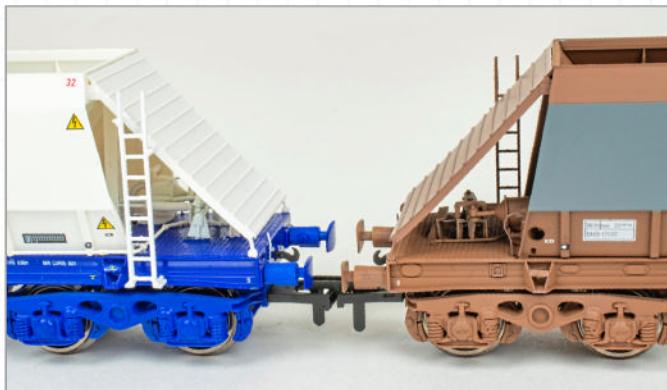
between the bogie frames to allow for 'EM/P4' finescale standards. Indeed, the brake blocks may not require moving for such a conversion, as they sit forward of the 'OO' wheels, albeit not obtrusively so.

These are yet more excellent modern wagons from the Cavalex team, with a level of accuracy and finesse that's difficult to fault. The finish is excellent too, with neatly printed logos and instruction panels.

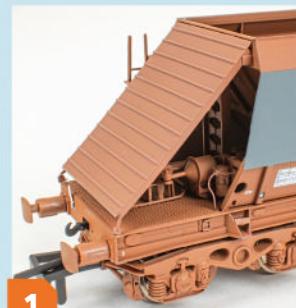
The underframe of the white/blue version has received a coat of clear gloss to match the real livery (when brand new at least - I can only recall seeing them in an overall layer of brown dirt!). The clear gloss coat extends to the self-coloured plastic bogies to ensure a consistent sheen, which is a nice touch.

The super-detailed nature means that they need to be handled carefully - avoid gripping the wagon around the chassis frames lest the hopper chute handles get damaged. An end guard also broke off one of our samples during handling, but it was easy to reinstate with a little glue.

The JGAs make a perfect load for a Class 56 or Class 60 (both also produced by Cavalex) or, for more recent times, the ubiquitous Class 66. And with aggregate traffic being one of the most important commodities on the modern railway, it's great to have another important prototype available in RTR format. (GD)



3 things we like



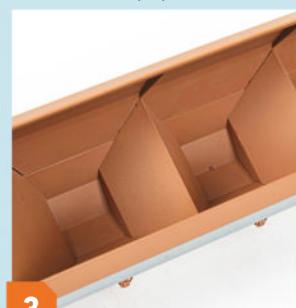
1

Full array of brake gear and plumbing behind the protective end guards.



2

Superbly detailed discharge chutes and equipment.



3

Full rendition of hopper interior.

SUMMARY



PROS

- Captures prototype perfectly.
- Impressive level of detail.
- Good quality finish.
- Smooth running.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Excellent.



Brynfaer Cambrian Railway two-plank opens

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Brynfaer Cambrian Railways two-plank open wagons, GWR grey ◆ PRICE £29.70 each

◆ AVAILABILITY Rails of Sheffield Web www.railsofsheffield.com

Modelau Brynfaer Cyf is a new addition to the 'OO' ready-to-run market. Founded by Rhobat Bryn, the manufacturer's plan is to offer high-quality replicas of Welsh rolling stock from the pre-Grouping era.

The subject of the first release is the Cambrian Railways two-plank open, which is offered in fixed-side and drop-side formats, and is currently available exclusively from Rails of Sheffield. Several hundred examples of this wagon

type were built for the Cambrian, proving to be the railway's most common freight vehicle.

Commonly employed for slate, timber and general merchandise traffic from North and mid-Wales, they could be seen in transhipment yards, being

loaded from narrow gauge wagons, for onward transit to customers throughout the UK. Many examples continued into GWR ownership and, in later years, they could be seen on permanent way work.

Four models have been produced in this preliminary batch, with a pair each in Cambrian and GWR liveries. Featuring an injection-moulded plastic body and a metal underframe (with plastic detail fittings), the models come packaged in small boxes with bilingual historic descriptions of the prototypes.

The two GWR versions are under review here, and each features an impressive level of finesse in the moulded bodyshells. Detail differences between the two body types are correctly observed, with large corner braces on the fixed-sided version, for example. The tapered end strengthening ribs are separately fitted parts, with





“Several hundred examples of this wagon type were built for the Cambrian, proving to be the railway's most common freight vehicle”



a purposeful air, while the fine spindled buffers (all plastic and unsprung) are equally refined.

The interior features a full rendition of the planking detail, and the solebars carry well-defined mounting brackets and builder's plates, albeit blank.

The axleguards feature renditions of grease axleboxes and spring detail, while the single-sided handbrake gear is impressive, with the shoes in close proximity to the wheel rims, but without any fouling.

Metal pinpoint axles rotate freely, and the metal wheels have split-spoke centres. NEM coupler pockets have slimline tension locks pre-installed, set to the correct height to match other RTR wagons.

Build quality is excellent, and the GWR grey scheme has been applied immaculately, with a cream interior and neatly printed lettering and numbers.

At 25g each, the wagons match similar RTR wagons from other manufacturers and both samples ran well under test. One wheel set was not entirely concentric but, after a little adjustment, the issue was corrected and the wagon was running faultlessly.

This is an impressive first effort from Bryngær, and these wagons will appeal to modellers of the pre-Grouping and 'Big Four' eras, especially those with an interest in Welsh railways. We're looking forward to seeing what comes next. *(GD)*

SUMMARY

PROS

- Looks the part.
- Good level of detail.
- Build quality and finish.
- Useful prototype for the pre-BR era.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

An excellent first release from a new manufacturer.

3 things we like



1 Crisply defined planks and stanchions.



2 Excellent axlebox and spring detail.



3 Metal chassis frame adds weight.



Bachmann LMS/BR 20ton brake van

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Bachmann Branchline 38-977 LMS 20T brake van, BR bauxite ◆ PRICE £38.49 ◆ AVAILABILITY Bachmann stockists [Web](http://www.bachmann.co.uk)

There has been a bunch of new goods brake van releases over the past few years, filling in some of the gaps in the RTR 'OO' market, especially in terms of pre-Grouping designs. And yet it's great to see a more ubiquitous vehicle type appear from Bachmann, in the form of the LMS Standard 20ton van.

Over 2,700 examples were built to this basic design, from 1935, with the newly nationalised British Railways seeing fit to continue construction until 1951. Bachmann's all-new tooling offers some impressive appointments and caters for many individual detail differences across the fleet, reflecting the design tweaks and later modifications carried out to this large fleet.

For review, we have a BR-built van, B950118, built at Derby to Lot No. 2025 and allocated the BR Diagram 1/505, in bauxite livery with early BR-era markings. Although not equipped with vacuum brakes, it depicts a through-piped variant, complete with appropriate detail fittings.

All scale measurements are correct, and it certainly looks the

part, with well-defined horizontal plank detail on the sides and inner cabin ends, while the outer veranda ends correctly feature steel plate panels. The long horizontal handrails - so often prone to distortion through handling on some other models - are fashioned from stiff metal wire, painted white and neatly fitted.

The vertical handrails are also wire, as are the four safety rails for the veranda entrances, which come supplied in the detail bag. These small parts need to be carefully threaded through their plastic mounts, allowing them to be posed in raised or lowered positions, although I found it hard to keep them raised without the aid of glue. I also found it helpful to ream out the holes in the plastic mounts ever so slightly, as they were a tight fit. Be aware that these small wire rails are prone to pinging off into the ether if trying to force them into position with tweezers, being swallowed by the dreaded carpet monster (don't ask me how I know this).

The glazed bulkheads are neatly done, and the hand brake





wheel is just visible inside, although there's no other discernible interior detail, nor any contrasting interior paintwork. The roof seems to be formed as part of the bodyshell, making access to the interior tricky. Indeed, removing the screws below the floor didn't allow the body and chassis to separate.

For a new 'OO' wagon model in 2025, it's not unreasonable to

expect separately fitted lamp brackets at each end, which are, after all, a key element of any brake van. Alas, they're moulded integrally with the plastic bodyshell. The side brackets are almost invisible as a result.

The underframe sports handbrake rod and the through vacuum pipe, while the inner and outer brake yokes are supplied for the customer to fit, simply clipping into place and looking effective, without impeding the function of the NEM coupler pockets. The distinctive underslung rectangular boxes - filled with scrap metal on the real things to add ballast - are nicely

rendered, while the brake, suspension and axlebox detail is exceedingly crisp.

The long plastic running boards need to be handled with care, especially towards each end, and the blackened metal wheels and axles rotate freely on their pinpoint axles (without metal bearings). The stout buffers are unsprung.

With this type of brake van remaining in frontline use well into the 1980s, outlasting many contemporary GWR and LNER designs, Bachmann has chosen a highly useful prototype. Many examples were retained by BR's Engineers department for a variety of functions, ensuring they could still be seen for a further decade and, unsurprisingly, plenty survived into preservation.

Accordingly, as well as LMS and BR standard liveries, Bachmann has also produced a BR 'Dutch' Engineers' version, complete with ZTP TOPS codes, which is bound to be extremely popular. (GD)

“The long horizontal handrails - so often prone to distortion through handling on some other models - are fashioned from stiff metal wire, painted white and neatly fitted”

3 things we like



1

Underframe detail.



2

Separate wire safety rails.



3

The stove chimney and insulation plate.



SUMMARY

PROS

- Crisply rendered detail to body and underframe.
- Top-notch paint finish.
- Fine, yet resilient wire handrails.

CONS

- Moulded lamp brackets disappointing.

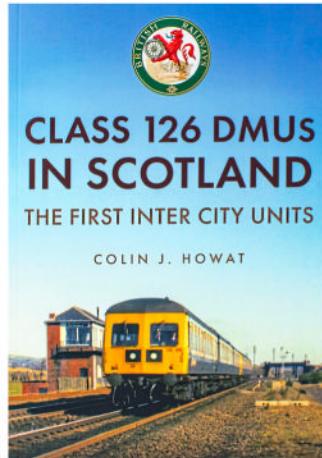
FINAL VERDICT

A very nice replica of an important prototype.

Modeller's bookshelf review special

We've received a bumper crop of new books this month, so here's a special edition of Modeller's Bookshelf, featuring a range of titles that will inform and inspire your modelling.

SCOTTISH INTER-CITY UNITS



They may not have been the most elegant of BR's diesel multiple units, especially on the outside, but the Swindon-built Class 126s helped to modernise passenger services in southern Scotland, especially between Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Introduced in 1956, the vehicles of each three-car set were based closely on BR's Mk 1 carriage design, and the initial batch featured two large windscreens and a full-width cab. However, subsequent builds incorporated smaller cabs and gangways at each end to facilitate joining into longer

rakes, thus rendering their appearance even more ungainly.

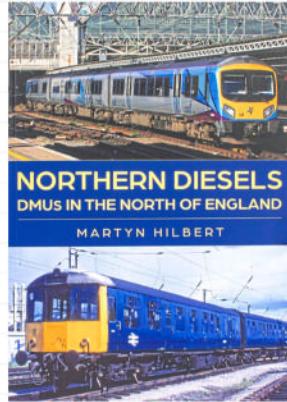
This fascinating pictorial overview charts their operating career until withdrawal in 1983, with plenty of useful information.

From a modeller's perspective, other existing titles offer more technical information, but the largely colour images contained here are vital for showing the real things hard at work. Indeed, many livery and detail variants can be discerned. (GD)

Book: *Class 126 DMUs in Scotland*, by Colin J. Howat

Price: £15.99

Web: www.amberley-books.com



DIESELS IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

For anyone wondering what type of diesel multiple units have operated across northern England over the past 50-odd years, this collection of colour images provides a good account.

It is packed with shots taken at countless locations north of Stoke, stretching from coast to coast. The photographs encompass first-, second- and third-generation units captured on long-distance expresses, commuter services or trundling along sleepy branch lines.

There's a colourful spectrum of liveries on show, even during the BR years, and there are some interesting oddities and interlopers captured here and there. I had no idea that a few Class 143s operated on the Windermere branch during the early 1990s, while images of the Swindon-built cross-country Class 120s are compelling. A good read and an excellent resource for modellers. (GD)

Book: *Northern Diesels - DMUs in the North of England*, by Martyn Hilbert

Price: £15.99

Web: www.amberley-books.com

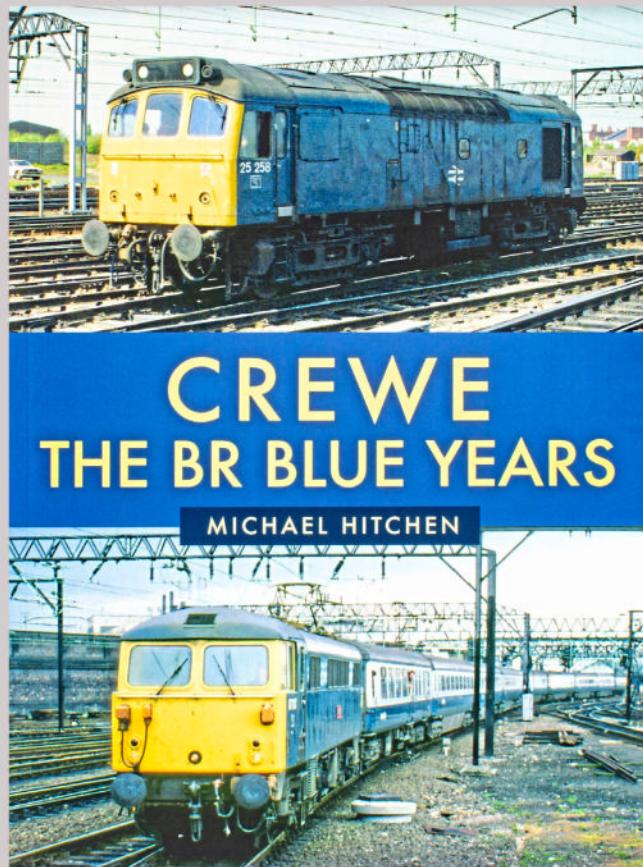
CREWE JUNCTION BLUES

So many railway enthusiasts have made the pilgrimage to this once-mighty Cheshire town, which was, essentially, created by the LNWR. Crewe remains a passenger and freight hotspot today but, arguably, the BR Rail blue years were something of a last hurrah.

The Works was still very much in operation, building and refurbishing all manner of diesel and electric traction, while the large diesel and electric locomotive depots and freight yards ensured a steady stream of fascinating trains through the station.

This colour album is a veritable treasure trove of images taken from platform ends or during depot and works visits, showcasing a fabulous array of classic BR diesel and electric traction, between 1971 and 1986. There are also a few shots of the APTs during testing.

Most images have not been published before and, as well as providing visual inspiration in terms of locomotives, there is the incidental detail of platform furniture and BRUTE trolleys laden with parcels. The text and captions contain plenty of useful information, making it



a useful volume for anyone interested in this era of BR history. (GD)

Book: *Crewe - The BR Blue*

Years, by Michael Hitchen

Price: £15.99

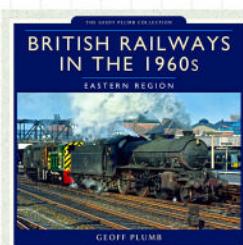
Web:

www.amberley-books.com

END OF AN EASTERN ERA

This is the final instalment in Geoff Plumb's photographic series covering the most pivotal decade on the former 'Big Four' areas under British Railways; the Southern, London Midland and Western Regions have already been covered.

The author was still a schoolboy when he began recording a rapidly changing scene, and while that meant his time, income and quality of photographic equipment were more limited than an adult would have enjoyed, he nevertheless managed to capture an enormous variety of trains and locations in both monochrome and colour.



There's plenty to interest modellers; the filth and grime of steam during its final years contrasting with freshly painted diesels - sometimes both in the same consist (as on the front cover). Steam engines make up the lion's share of photos, but there's a healthy amount of diesels and a scattering of electric traction, along with images of infrastructure and

even shipping. The very detailed captions comprehensively explain the scenes too. (RG)

Book: *British Railways in the 1960s: Eastern Region*, by Geoff Plumb

Price: £29.99

Web: www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

THE RAILWAYS UNDER ATTACK

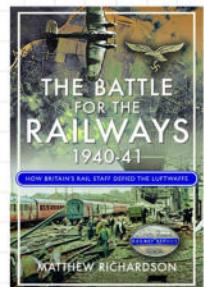
Britain's railways faced their greatest ever challenge during World War Two, when they had to keep vast amounts of vital supplies and personnel moving, all while being subjected to constant bombing. It was a huge undertaking and this book tells the story by focusing on the human tales during the height of the 1940-41 Blitz and the Herculean efforts of staff to keep the trains going.

The four operating companies receive a chapter each, and while the imagery is quite sparse - 50 black and white illustrations among the 184 pages - this is understandable given that film was difficult to obtain and wielding a camera may well have seen photographers accused of being German spies. It may limit the usefulness to modellers, but if you're recreating the wartime era in miniature, the stories alone - and there are a great many of them, both uplifting and tragic - should provide much inspiration. (RG)

Book: *The Battle for the Railways 1940-41*, by Matthew Richardson

Price: £25.00

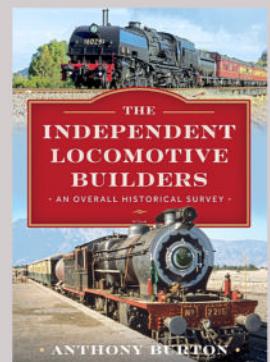
Web: www.pen-and-sword.co.uk



INDY RECORDS

Although all the major railway companies built their own locomotives, there was still plenty of scope for independent businesses to provide engines for both the home market and worldwide export.

This survey of such firms is exhaustive in its depth and breadth; there are the well-known names you'd expect, such as Robert Stephenson & Co., Beyer, Peacock, and Hunslet, etc, along with manufacturers who only produced a handful of locos. Three different centuries are covered, spanning the Middleton Colliery's *Salamanca* of 1812 through to present-day diesel and electric traction.



The research is extraordinarily thorough and author Anthony Burton's writing style is entertaining and informative. The illustrations include photographs of some fascinating (and often forgotten) machines, along with engineering drawings - which will intrigue and inspire modellers who look beyond the mainstream. And any scratchbuilders who delight in the idiosyncratic will find much to spark their interest within this work's 200 pages. (RG)

Book: *The Independent Locomotive Builders: An Overall Historical Survey*, by Anthony Burton

Price: £25.00

Web: www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

X-RATED INFO

The late Peter Rampton's fabled 'Collection X' has acquired semi-mythic status among enthusiasts, primarily because so little was publicly known about it. What was in it? How many locomotives were there? This book answers those questions and more.

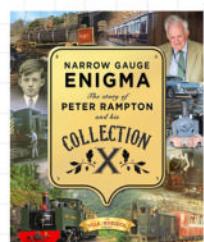
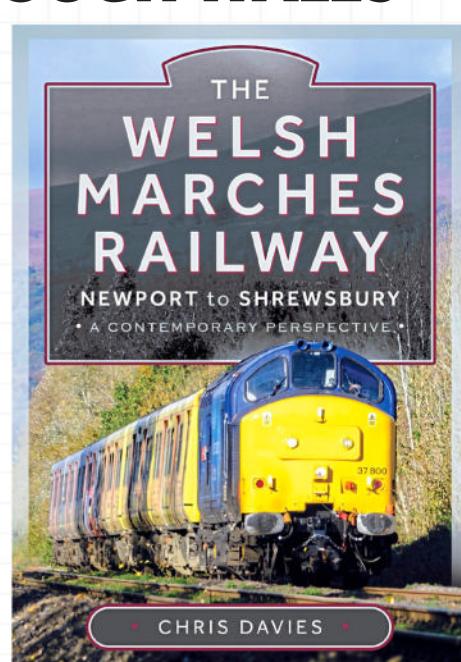
This is a combined biography of Peter and an exploration of 'Collection X', and is the definitive story of them both, covering Peter's life and achievements, as well as a detailed breakdown of the individual vehicles within 'Collection X'. It is comprehensive, well-researched, and rich in detail, with historic and contemporary photos, works drawings and maps, covering every possible aspect of 'Collection X'.

A deeply impressive tome and extremely well presented. The cover price may be off-putting for some, but it's worth every penny. Highly recommended. (TB)

Book: *Narrow Gauge Enigma - The Story of Peter Rampton and his Collection X*, by Stephen Phillips (Vale of Rheidol Railway)

Price: £80.00

Web: www.rheidolrailway.co.uk



MARCHING THROUGH WALES

The Welsh Marches railway is the 95-mile route between Newport and Shrewsbury, boasting some notable features, such as the UK's longest Absolute Block method of signalling and the world's largest working mechanical signal box at Shrewsbury's Severn Bridge Junction.

This book looks at the line in extensive detail, although those after more historic information may be disappointed as the focus is on 21st-century operations - albeit with a section looking at the past (and steam locomotives over the route, both in period and preservation) bringing the book to a close.

However, if modern image Wales is your modelling bag, then this book really dives into the minutiae of the line. There are chapters on stations, signalling, passenger and freight services, and geographical sections. Over 200 colour pictures do a grand job of illustrating what author Chris Davies has obviously taken great pains to explore, examine and explain. (RG)

Book: *The Welsh Marches Railway: Newport to Shrewsbury*, by Chris Davies

Price: £29.99

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MR-510
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Motor:

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DCC socket:

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BR green



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Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Coreless

DCC socket: Next18

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Made by: Rapido

Trains

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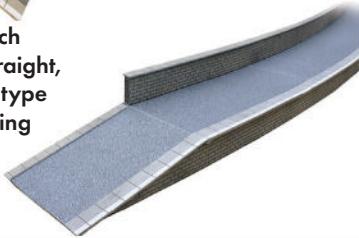
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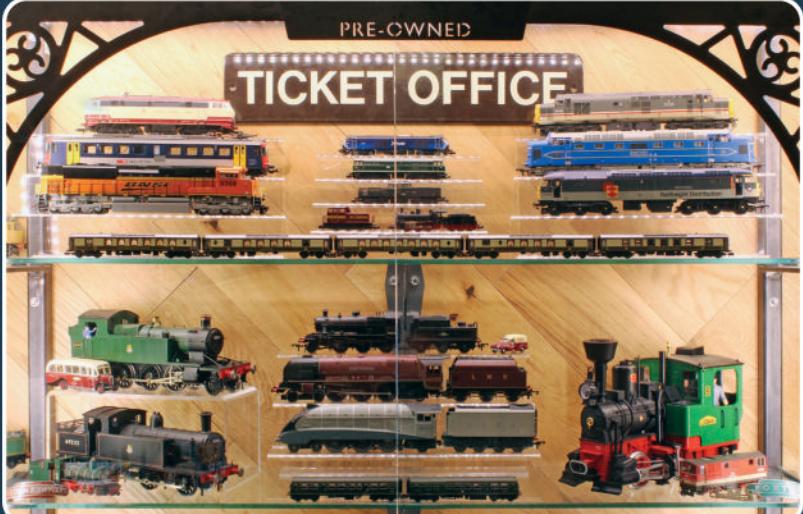
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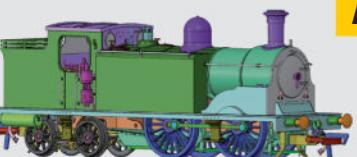
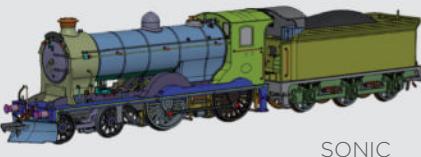
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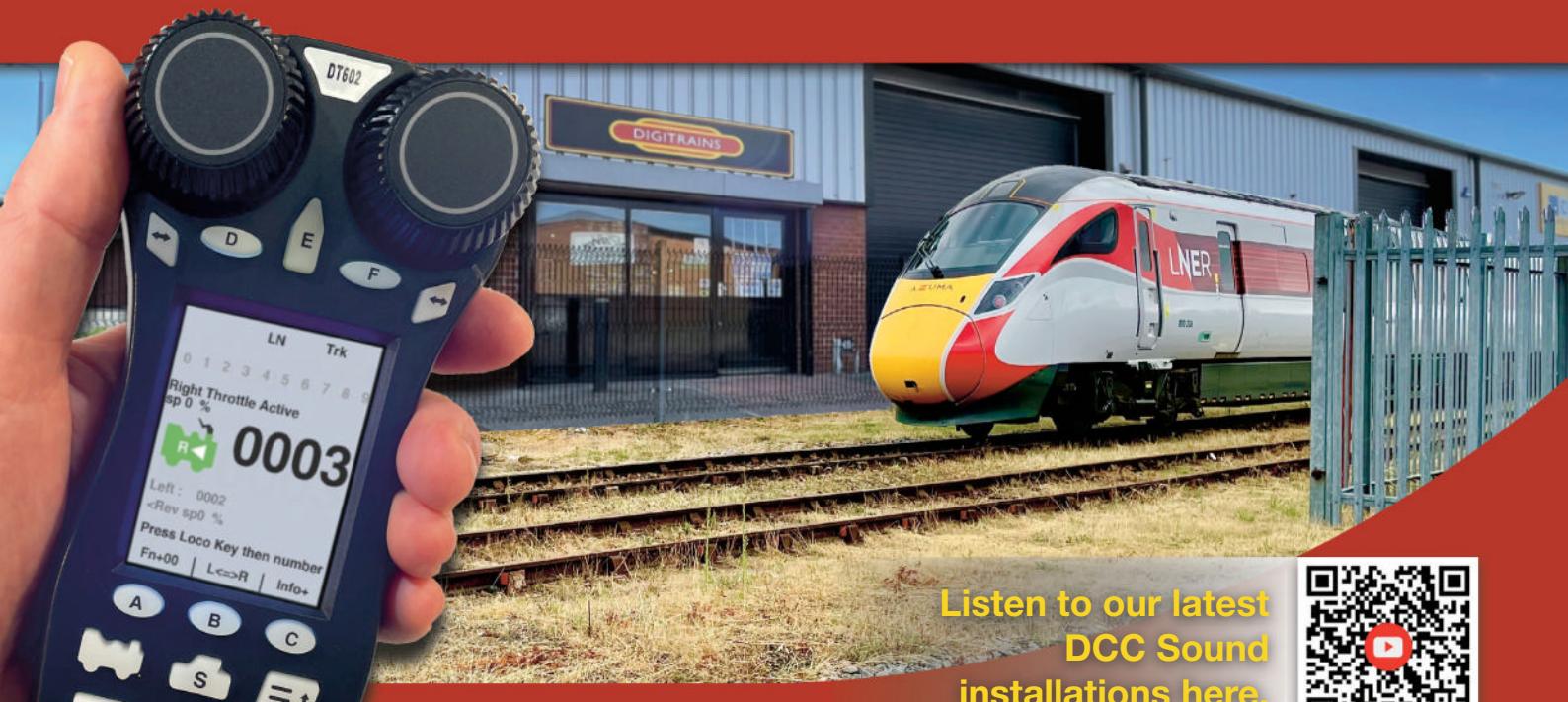
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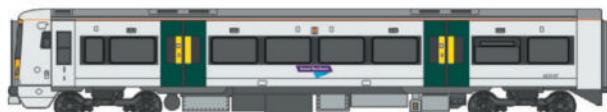
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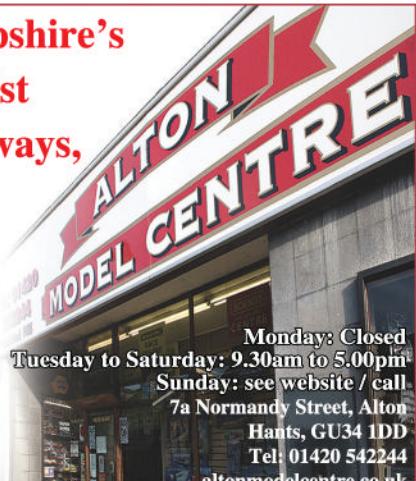
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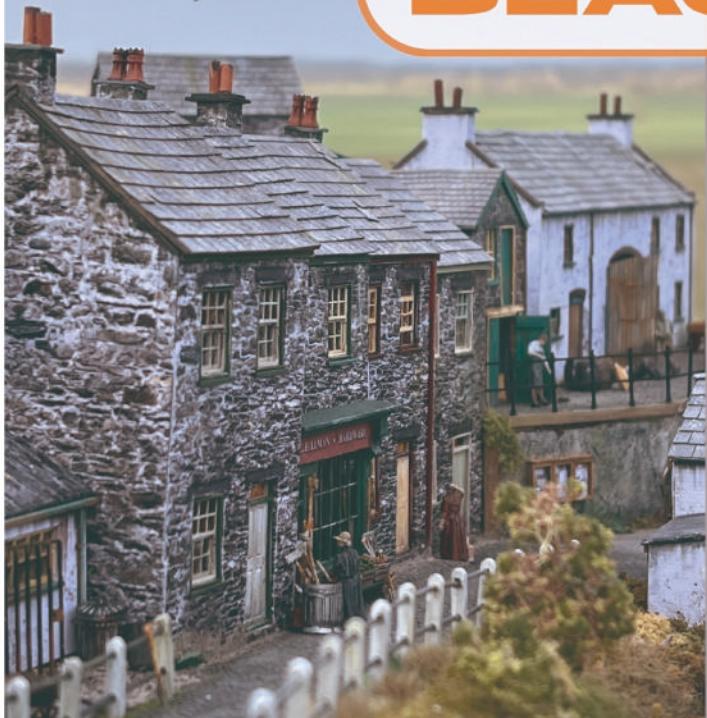
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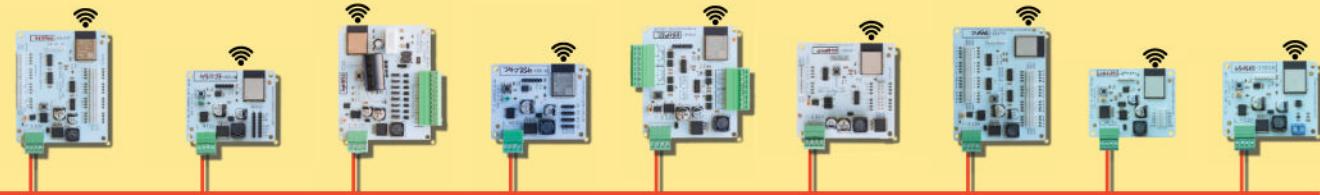


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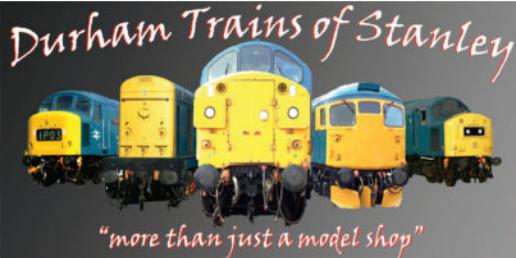
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Backscene



For all of us, there are good days and there are bad days. **CHRIS LEIGH** ponders picking up the pieces and starting again.

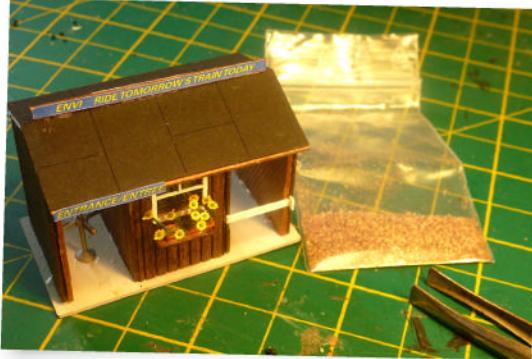
"I've had one of those days," is a greeting I've both heard and used frequently, during my life when I've asked, or been asked, "How are you?"

Making model railways is reputedly a therapeutic pastime and something that's recommended for our mental wellbeing. Well, most of the time!

There's no doubt that I relax and am totally absorbed when I'm building a model. I have Dutch, Canadian and British model railways under construction or renovation at present, and I'm working in 'N', 'OO', 'HO', and 'O' gauges when I'm not testing and reviewing models for this magazine. It is thoroughly relaxing and enjoyable, most of the time. It is also fascinating to challenge oneself from time to time.

I recently embarked on a project which has included building a small laser-cut ticket kiosk in 'HO' scale, by Busch. It is the custom for European kits of this sort to include every possible detail and the kiosk comes with a window box, some fine powder 'soil' and some daisies with yellow flowers and green stems. The latter are separate plastic mouldings, the stems having to be glued into the flowers. I reckoned it was impossible and wasn't going to bother. Temptation got the better of me and successful assembly of the little hut with its window box and flowers pepped me up after another, less successful exercise.

There are certain aspects of railway modelling that I have never mastered and, at my age, I never will. I don't build track (it's utterly boring) and I've never mastered airbrushing, despite George's efforts to teach me. I tend to be impatient, and the chore of cleaning an airbrush successfully after use is something I've never mastered. The result is that the airbrush never works for me next time I come to use it.



A good day. The little ticket kiosk with its 'impossible to assemble' daisies which proved quite easy with tweezers.

My lack of enthusiasm for airbrushing, coupled with my desire for a good paint finish, has inevitably led me to use 'rattle cans' for most of my modelling jobs. Like the bicycle, the 'rattle can' is an instrument of the devil! I'm generally successful with the Humbrol aerosol paints, but if I need genuine railway colours, I have to resort to RailMatch 'rattle cans'.

These are usually OK when first used but I've never been able to store them successfully without the nozzle blocking and rendering the can unusable. My current project, a conversion of some carriages into a DMU, has caused more than a few headaches. The final sequence involved spraying the coach sides with GWR coach cream, masking the lining and spraying with Malachite green. When I lifted the masking, all the paint, green, cream and even grey primer, came with it, right down to the bare plastic surface!

A major 'rectification' was necessary and as it was several days later, I bought a new aerosol can of Malachite green. I'm sure the instructions used to advise shaking the can for two minutes. 'Two' has now become 'several', so I did as instructed. When I pressed the nozzle it flew off under a lot of pressure,

swamping the can and my hands in green paint, which fortunately, did not spatter the model or my eyes.

This is a project which may well be finished off with some careful brushwork. It might just be less stressful than modelling mishaps where I just don't know exactly what I did wrong. I hate having to say I had a bad day, but that's really the truth of it.



Bad day. I had to wipe up most of the green before I could touch the camera. I have no idea what I did wrong.

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