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Dapol Class 56



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Hornby 'Merchant Navy'



Rapido '009' wagons



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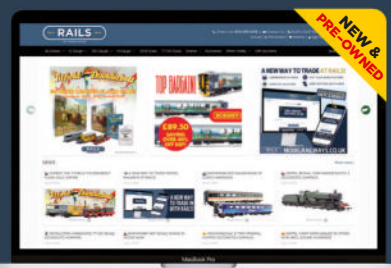
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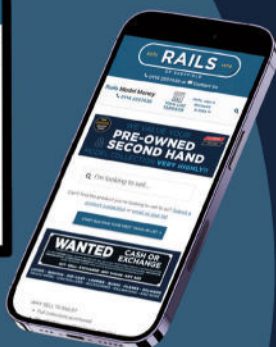
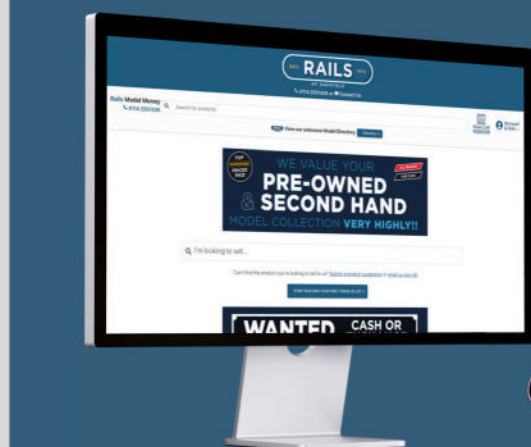
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This month's cover image



Chris Nevard has been working his magic on a fleet of bespoke private owner wagons – see how it was done on page 50. CHRIS NEVARD

Welcome

I know it's a cliché, but time really does fly.

While changing trains recently at Carlisle, amidst all the usual Avanti West Coast delays and cancellations, the sight of a Class 88 trundling northwards on a Daventry-Mossend 'Tesco Express' sparked the realisation that these Stadler electro-diesels are now over 10 years old. It doesn't seem that long ago that they were brand, spanking new.

Indeed, seeing a pair of the new tri-mode Class 93s, which are a development of the '88', stabled at Kingmoor Depot was illustrative of how time – and rail technology – marches on.

As my ScotRail '156' chugged towards Dumfries, I was reminded of how impressed I was by Dapol's 'OO' Class 88, produced exclusively for Rails of Sheffield last year (see MR338). I'm surprised it didn't fare better in our Model of the Year Awards last year (coming in 8th place in the 'OO' diesel/electric locomotive category), although it was a particularly strong field.

Maybe it's the familiarity of prototypes that sways our passions. Although I live close to a non-electrified route, the '88s' are actually one of the locomotive types I see most often, obviously running on diesel power, and in tandem with a Class 68 on nuclear flask workings.

One other thing that permeated my thoughts while waiting at Carlisle was the heavily weed-strewn track, with long grass burnt yellow by the summer heatwave (yes, it has even been hot this far north!). It's not a scenic aspect that many of us associate with a contemporary main line station, but should we consider it? It would certainly break up the sterile atmosphere of many modern stations.



DRS 88005 Minerva makes its way through the undergrowth at Carlisle, July 6 2026. GEORGE DENT

Talking of weeds, I did see a Network Rail weedkilling train working along the Tyne Valley line a couple of months back, in the dead of night. Alas, I was unable to photograph it, but with the various modules and tanks, aboard a trio of inter-modal wagons – and with bright spotlights illuminating the permanent way – it would make for a fascinating scratchbuilding project.

Happy modelling!

George Dent Head of Content

Meet the team behind the UK's best modelling magazine



Helen Milbank - Deputy Head of Content
Ensures the MR team keeps strictly to the timetable.



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



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

This month's contributors



Chris Nevard



Peter Marriott



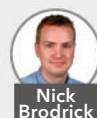
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44 Create a great 'Grid'
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Dave Lowery creates a pair of conjoined Class 20s, thus simplifying DCC operation.

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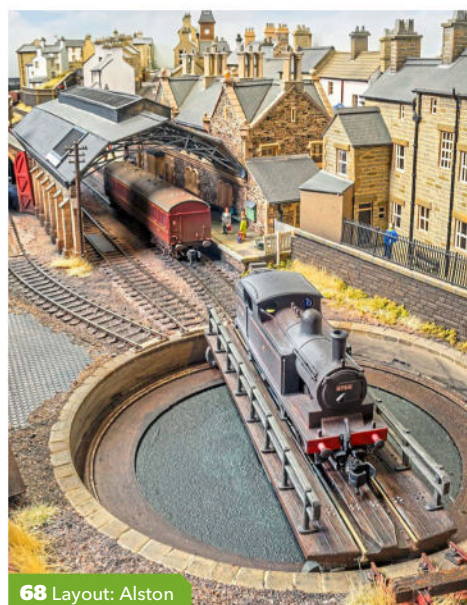
Steve Nail experiments with a photo-realistic weathering technique, employing a novel approach to create DIY decals.



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Opening the box

The latest happenings from the world of model railways

The Big Picture

Depicting a fictional light railway near Thirsk in North Yorkshire, 'Woodhill Goods' is a truly delightful 'O' gauge layout that has been charming viewers on the exhibition circuit for the past few years. The deeply rural setting and agricultural freight traffic evoke a long-lost way of life, all presented in exquisite detail. Read the full story behind this layout in a future issue of *Model Rail*.
Photography: Chris Nevard







CLUB DISASTER HITS STAGE AS A TOP COMEDY DRAMA

The *Market Deeping Model Railway Club* – the new play by *Made in Dagenham* and *The Great Escaper* writer William Ivory – had its world premiere at the Nottingham Playhouse during July, and has proven to be a huge hit.

Based on the infamous incident back in 1919 when the club's Stamford Model Railway Show was vandalised on the eve of its opening, followed by a public

response that saw over £130,000 donated, the production remains largely true to actual events, but fictionalises some of the characters involved. The result is a heartwarming, feel-good work, packed with lots of laughs throughout, but also capturing the tragedy and human cost of years of hard work being thoughtlessly destroyed – leaving a gulf that money alone can't put right.

There's always a concern with any portrayal of railway modellers

that they will come across as figures of fun; odd, eccentric types out of step with modern times and the real, full-size world. And while there are some elements of this in *TMDMRC*, any ribbing is gentle and done with affection. For example, there's the character who fondly reminisces about how much he enjoyed his honeymoon because the newly-weds' hotel room overlooked Oakham station, and he could admire the signal box that inspired Airfix's model.

That actual Market Deeping MRC members collaborated with the creative team during development means that not only

does the play generally avoid any obvious stereotyping, but is also good on modelling minutiae and historical accuracy too.

The enthusiasts who make up the fictional club are played by some well-known faces from TV, film and theatre, such as Paul Bradley (Nigel in *EastEnders*), Matt Bardock, Geoffrey Beevers, Adrian Scarborough and Babatunde Aléshé. They're a disparate bunch, and forever bickering about fundamental matters such as whether DC or DCC is better, or discussing why a rival club lost out on an exhibition prize because some of the roof details on their





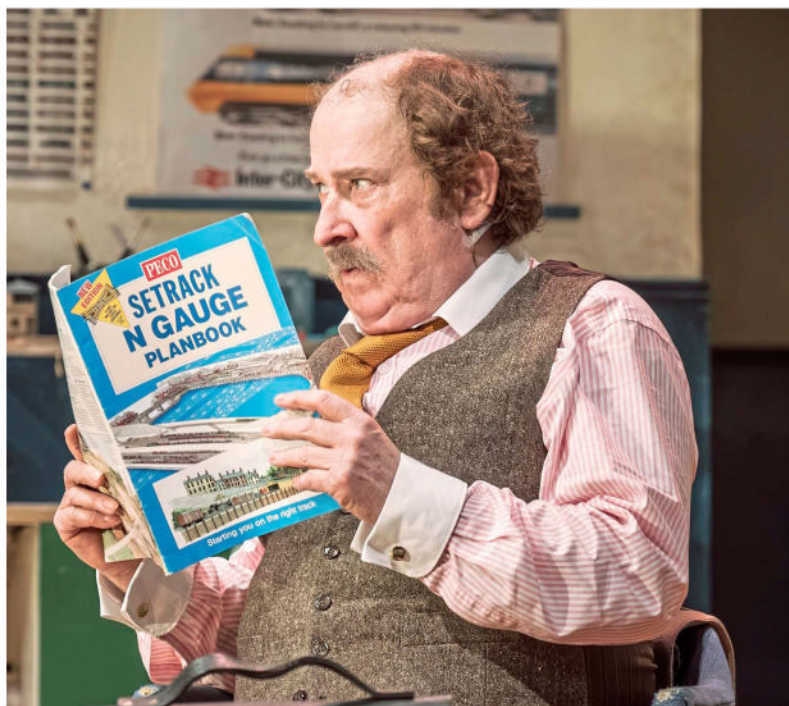
carriages were slightly off. But they're all played with a warmth, flair, authenticity and keen sense of comedy that is endearing – and so, by the time the scene involving the vandalism takes place as a climactic finale to the first half, it comes as genuine gut-wrenching shock to the audience.

While there's plenty of jokes post-interval too – not least the new-found obsession of some of the members with Sir Rod Stewart (who donated £10,000 to the club following the destruction) – it is tempered by how individuals are emotionally affected by the incident. There's one especially thought-provoking monologue telling of how a particular layout, decades in construction, was created in remembrance of the

late father of one of the members. As Peter Davies, who was the chairman of the club at the time, says: "What William (the playwright) has done is remarkable. The play is fictionalised and it doesn't portray our everyday lives exactly as they are, but it absolutely captures the sense of loss, shock and rebuilding that we all went through."

Ultimately though, the play is a positive and uplifting affair. These days, when a sense of community and unitedness often feels missing from everyday life, that support for a beleaguered model railway club in a small Lincolnshire town flooded in from across the globe, from schoolchildren donating their pocket money through to rock stars giving five figure sums, is a welcome reminder of the greater good, sympathy and sense of righteousness and sympathy in most people. Wherever and whoever they are.

While TMDMRC's opening run at Nottingham Playhouse ended on July 25, there are hopes that the production will tour in the future. If it does, don't miss it. You don't need to be a model enthusiast at all to appreciate it, but you'll laugh louder at some of the more specialist references if



you are. William Ivory has written a very entertaining, clever and compelling love letter to railway modelling and the people who practise it, brimming with very British wit and warmth.

And we wouldn't be too surprised if, a few years down the line, the play makes the jump to

television or even the movie screen. Very much in the mould of *Made in Dagenham*, and ordinary, sometimes quite idiosyncratic people battling against adversity, it's a story that deserves to be seen, enjoyed and mulled over by as wide an audience as possible.

'SCOTSMAN', BLUE 'SHEDS' AND MORE TT:120 MODELS FROM HORNBY



More new additions to Hornby's 'TT:120' range have just been announced, with a pair of GB Railfreight Class 66s in popular contemporary colour schemes, namely 66727 *Maritime One* and 66719 *Metro-Land* (TT3051M/TT30353M), while the evergreen 'A3' No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* also gets another run-out, this time in BR green in its current preserved condition, complete with smoke deflectors. A DCC sound-fitted option exists for *Flying Scotsman* too (TT3056M/TT3056XSM).



The rolling stock fleet continues to expand, with a pair of newly tooled wagons: a 100-ton bogie TEA tanker and LMS brake van, both of which are offered in multiple liveries, the latter including a BR Departmental guise, complete with ZTO TOPS branding.



The BR 21ton mineral wagon gains further versions, in single or triple-pack format, as does the LNER brake van.

The '66s' and 21ton minerals are due this autumn/winter, with the rest arriving throughout 2027.

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ANOTHER CLASSIC DIESEL FOR 'TT'



Rapido Trains UK has announced a range of Class 45 and 46 locomotives in 'TT:120', building on the success of its recent 'N' gauge models.

The 'Peaks' will feature working lights, etched grilles, a high-quality mechanism and a Next18 DCC interface, with a speaker pre-installed. DCC sound options are available and models are also compatible with Hornby's HM7000 wireless DCC sound decoders.

Over a dozen versions are in development, with the tooling allowing for different headcode types and period-specific fittings to suit the BR green and Rail blue eras. The ever-popular RTC blue/red scheme is also included, in the shape of 97403 *Ixion*, and there are a few unofficially named Tynsley 'Peaks' included too.

In addition to Rapido's main range, which is available direct or via Rapido's dealer network, The Model Centre (TMC) has also revealed

an exclusive version of 46026 *Leicestershire and Derbyshire Yeomanry*. Depicting 46026 - the only '46' to be named by BR - in Rail blue with alpha-numeric headcodes, it's perfect for the late 1970s/early 1980s era. This version is only available from TMC.



The project is currently in the tooling stage, but pre-orders can be placed now.
Prices: £159.95-£259.95 each
Web: www.rapidotrains.co.uk
www.themodelcentre.com



COALS TO GLOUCESTER



Rapido has unveiled another Private Owner wagon type for 'OO', in the form of the Gloucester RC&W Co. 7-plank mineral open, which features internal ironwork and strapping. Built in their thousands between the 1890s and 1920s, many of these wagons survived long enough to work on the nationalised railway.

As usual with Rapido, the models will feature a high level of detail and a huge range of Private Owner colour schemes are on

offer, emblazoned with the names of collieries, coal merchants, iron works and other operators to suit various regions.

The project has reached the EP stage, with production due to get under way soon.

Price: £32.95 each

Availability: Rapido stockists

Web: www.rapidotrains.co.uk



UPDATE: RAPIDO'S 'SMALL PRAIRIE' AND 'RECTANK'



Although delivery is not expected until next year, Rapido's team has been assessing engineering prototypes of its forthcoming '45XX' 2-6-2T, which is available in a number of GWR and BR guises, plus several preservation era versions. The tooling caters for multiple differences to be observed across the various

Churchward and Collett builds.

Also progressing well is the War Department 35ton 'Rectank' bogie wagon, with EPs received for inspection. These are being offered in WD, LMS, LNER, GWR and BR liveries, with loads including wheels, girders and, appropriately, sheeted army tanks.





CLARK RAILWORKS IS THE 'GUV'-NOR!

OO
GAUGE

After impressing customers with its previous 'OO' rolling stock projects, Clark Railworks has now announced a high-fidelity replica of the LMS 42ft General Utility Van (GUV).

Nearly 250 of these bogie vans were built in the 1930s as Covered Carriage Trucks (CCTs), for the conveyance of bulky luggage or parcels, and could be seen marshalled within passenger or dedicated parcels

trains well into British Rail days. Indeed, Rail blue examples remained in regular use in the late 1970s, and several lasted even longer in Departmental use.

Offering a huge improvement on the old Lima model, the Clark Railworks tooling offers plenty of body and chassis detail, including several 'in-life' modifications to match later livery options. In particular, revised bodyside beading patterns will be a feature

and the bogies have been designed to allow for easy conversion to 'EM' or 'P4' standards. A die-cast metal chassis frame will add heft and

eight versions have been announced, depicting

LMS lined red, BR maroon, BR crimson and BR crimson/cream liveries, along with Rail blue, Gulf red and Departmental yellow.

Models can be pre-ordered now,



with no upfront payment. Delivery is expected in early 2027.

Prices: £75.00 each

Web: www.clarkrailworks.com

K-TYPE PULLMANS... IN COLOUR!

N
GAUGE

Painted samples of Revolution Trains' all-steel K-Type Pullman cars have been received, and production is due to get underway this autumn.

Revolution's tooling provides for five vehicle types: First Kitchen, First Parlour, Third Kitchen, Third Parlour and Third Brake Parlour. Several era-specific detail alterations have also been factored in.

According to Revolution's Ben Ando, "Our K-type Pullmans combine the style and opulence of yesteryear with 21st Century model features such as working table lamps and saloon lighting, kinematic close couplers and detailed, car-specific interiors."

The Pullmans are being offered in curated two-, three- or four-coach packs to allow specific train formations to be modelled, such as the 'Queen of Scots', 'Bournemouth Belle' and a modern VSOE set. Delivery is expected around the turn of the year.

Prices: £119.99-£239.99

per set

Web:

www.revolutiontrains.com



MORE COACHES - AND A '90' - ARRIVE WITH HORNBY

TT
GAUGE

OO
GAUGE

The Class 90 'Electric Scot' makes a timely return to Hornby's accessible RailRoad locomotive range, in the form of 90020 *Collingwood* in EWS red/gold, plus class pioneer 90001 *Royal Scot*, in its current retro-style InterCity 'Swallow' livery (R30528/9, £99.99 each). Both come equipped with a 21pin DCC interface and DCC sound-equipped versions - equipped with HM7000 decoders - are also available (£154.99 each).

Another welcome re-stock for the 'OO' main range is a host of Mk 1 coaches with new running numbers, offered in BR maroon,

green, and blue/grey liveries, across four different vehicle types: SK, CK, BSK and TSO, (£49.99 each).

Meanwhile, in 'TT:120', the BR MK 2f coach is now available in the popular Virgin Trains livery, in SO, FO and BSO formats (£41.99 each). It's a shame there's not a matching Class 47 or '87' in this scale yet!

Availability: Hornby stockists

Web: www.hornby.com



REBUILT MTU POWERHOUSE WABTEC/GBRf CLASS 73/9

1:76.2 SCALE/OO GAUGE

EXPECTED Q1 2027

DC/DCC READY

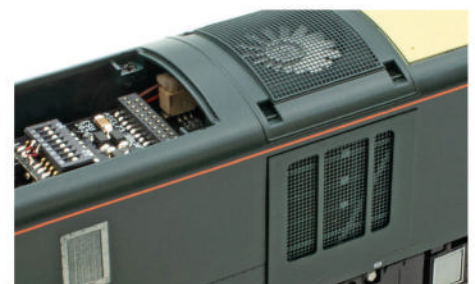
£179.99

DCC SOUND

£279.98



All MTU 73/9s came from the same drawing board, forming two visually distinct groups based on their operator and duties; Phase 1 (GBRf) and Phase 2 (Caledonian Sleeper). Our tooling enables us to cover all 13 Class members. The models have assured all-wheel drive, a powerful five-pole motor, lighting modes, Accurathrash speakers, and an impressive haulage capacity all backed by a lifetime warranty. **Pre-order** directly from [accurascale.com](https://www.accurascale.com)



Pre-production samples subject to change

All Class 73/9 models feature

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- Five-pole motor
- DCC ready & DCC sound (ESU loksound v5) options
- Details specific to individual prototypes
- Working roof fan
- High fidelity metal and plastic parts
- Sprung metal buffers
- Precision gears for maximum performance
- PowerBank line of capacitors
- Comprehensive lighting functions

Scan the QR Code or visit:
www.accurascale.com
to view the full range of exclusive Class 73/9 locomotives available to pre-order.



FULL-SIZED 'MODEL' LOCOMOTIVE LAUNCHED



The Audley End Enchanted Railway's new locomotive has taken model railway engineering to the extreme, by effectively being a full-size version of one

of Hornby's steam generator locomotives.

Launched into public service on Saturday July 11, *Neville* – as the new locomotive has been

named – is a steam-outline battery-electric locomotive. However, unlike other steam-outline locomotives, *Neville* is based on a genuine, historic steam design – a 2ft gauge North British Locomotive Co. 0-6-0 built for the Burma Mines Railway in the early 1900s – and

is fitted with steam generators to produce steam from the chimney, safety valves, and cylinder draincocks. Like high-end 'OO' scale model

locomotives, *Neville* also has speakers for sound effects, and firebox flicker for an authentic steam experience.

Costing £250,000, *Neville* has been designed by The Steam Workshop and built over a nine-month period to supplement Audley End's previous battery-electric locomotive, the 2024-built *Electra*. However, whereas *Electra* is a 'pure' battery-electric locomotive, *Neville* – which takes its name from the surname of Lord Braybrooke, who originally established the 10½in gauge railway in 1964 – is believed to be the first steam-outline battery locomotive in the world to incorporate a steam effects system.

Web: www.audley-end-railway.co.uk

BLUEBELL CHEESE DELIVERY

The Bluebell Railway has teamed up with Peco to offer a limited edition 'N' gauge Conflat A wagon, featuring a Type B container decorated in the distinctive colours of local cheese supplier High Weald Dairy. Sales of the wagon, which includes the instructions 'Return to Horsted Keynes' (the nearest station to High Weald's Tremains

Farm base in West Sussex), will help benefit the heritage line. The collectable release (product code NRC044), with a production run of just 120 examples, is available via the Bluebell's online store or at the railway's physical shop, Bluebell Gifts and Models, at Sheffield Park station.



Price: £22.00 (plus £5.00 shipping)
Web: www.bluebell-railway.com/shop/

MODERN SIGNALLING SHOWCASE AT RAIL LIVE 2026

The tradition of creating model railways for use by the industry has been continued by Simon Paley, with his newest layout recently travelling to the UK's largest rail industry trade event to support Network Rail.

In his role as Senior Design Engineer [Signalling] for Network Rail's internal Engineering

Services Design office, Simon was asked to take his layout to Rail LIVE, organised by *Model Rail's* sister title, *RAIL Magazine*.

Simon's layout 'Bryn Y Brenin Mawr', which depicts a contemporary standard and narrow-gauge terminus, was used to demonstrate and promote all the services provided by NR's

Engineering Services division. Simon had crafted many scenes including staff working on point rodding, signal testing and commissioning teams going about their business. As part of Simon's interest in model railway signalling systems, the layout also showed a working 'Driver Machine Interface' for the European Train Control System present on the standard gauge part of the layout and fully interlocked semaphore signalling provided on the narrow gauge lines.

The layout was even housed within one of the Mk 3 coaches of the Rail200 'Inspiration' train, which was making its penultimate stop as part of its UK tour.



In Brief

POOLE MRS IS 70

Founded in 1956, Poole and District Model Railway Society turns 70 in August. After building its first 'OO' layout in Bournemouth West's waiting room, the club resided in the former BR Signalling Dept. building in Poole from 1962 to 2020. The group is now based on Lagland Street in Poole town centre, with layouts in various scales, plus a multi-gauge DC/DCC test track. Visit www.pdmrs.com

KERNOW OPEN DAY

Kernow Model Rail Centre is to hold an open day at its Camborne store. Peco, Bachmann and Hornby will be attending and new product announcements are expected, while Gaugemaster will show its Infinity DC and DCC control systems. And there will be many special offers, too!

Where is it? 98A Trelowarren Street, Camborne, Cornwall TR14 8AN

When is it? September 11, 10.00-16.00

Web: www.kernowmodelrailcentre.com



'Slide to Perfection!'

Setting solutions for applying waterslide decals

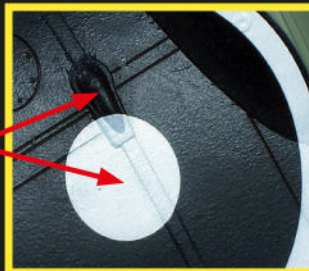
Decal Sure Set BD86 50 ml

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Photo courtesy of George Dent Model Rail



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Child (5-14): £6

Show Link Bus - SATURDAY ONLY: Every 30 minutes from Leamington Spa Station to the Event Centre. For full timetable and prices see website.



www.ngaugeshow.co.uk

BEYOND THE WIRE

00
GAUGE

Wargaming specialist The Army Painter has created a versatile pack of Battlefield Razor Wire, which is ideal for adding some extra security to your fencing.

Packaged in a handy plastic tub, each pack provides 4m of neatly coiled, flexible wire.

Simply wrap the wire around the shaft of a screwdriver to



create tight coils that can be manipulated to sit atop virtually any type of fencing, with the coarse outer texture convincingly suggesting barbs, especially in 4mm scale. It's perfect for surrounding a secure industrial or commercial compound, with

no need to paint it, and can be fixed in place with PVA, contact adhesive or cyanoacrylate glue.

Product: AP-BF4118P
Battlefield Razorwire, 4m

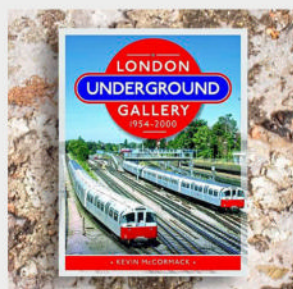
Price: £5.99

Availability:

www.airbrushes.com

Modeller's Bookshelf

Richard Gunn, Peter Marriott and George Dent present a quartet of books to inform and inspire your modelling.



UNDERGROUND, OVERGROUND...

The colourful cover hints at the pictorial joys inside, with 250 colour images chronicling almost half a century of London Underground operations (although most images were, understandably, taken overground). In fact, its breadth is expansive, since it includes large chunks of the BR network too, albeit alongside LUL territory (including a battery locomotive being dwarfed by a 'Deltic' at King's Cross) or on the Isle of Wight. That means plenty of steam and diesel content alongside the electric stock. Inspiring for London-centric modellers. **(RG)**

Book: *London Underground Gallery 1954-2000*
by Kevin McCormack

Price: £25.00

Web:

www.pen-and-sword.co.uk



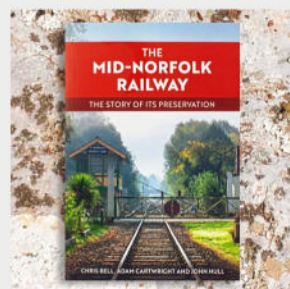
EURO INSPIRATION

Although no relation to *MR's* sister title, this 116-page bookazine comes from the team behind the Dutch *RAIL Magazine*, which features real and model trains. This special edition focuses on the superb layouts of Evan Daes, including 'Rosebecq', 'Vennheim' and 'Klein Zermatt'. As well as showcasing Evan's handiwork, various scenic tutorials are provided, which are equally applicable to UK layouts. Printed on high-quality paper, the text is in Flemish, but I found it easy to decipher with the aid of the Google Translate app on my smartphone. A truly inspirational - and informative - read. **(PM)**

Book: *RAIL Magazine: in the Footsteps of Evan Daes*

Price: €11.95

Web: www.railmagazine.nl



PRESERVATION STORY

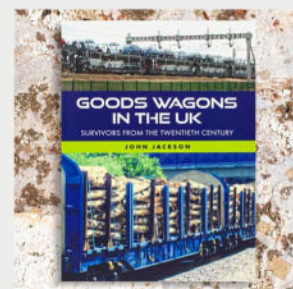
Winding its way through 12 miles of rolling countryside, the Mid-Norfolk Railway is a distinctive heritage line, and this book provides an overview of how the former GER Wymondham-Dereham line lingered on as a freight-only route before volunteers reopened it in the mid-1990s. The authors are all active volunteers, providing insight into the railway's development over the past 30 years, while setting out plans for a future expansion. A good selection of images illustrates the infrastructure, traction and operations, as well as the human element. An enjoyable read. **(GD)**

Book: *The Mid-Norfolk Railway* by C. Bell, A. Cartwright & J. Hull

Price: £15.99

Web:

www.amberley-books.com



WAGONS ROLL

Those interested in modern freight operations will like this, with an illustrated overview of the wagons employed on a huge range of commodities. The *Survivors from the Twentieth Century* subtitle reveals that all subjects were built before 2000, and there's a diverse selection of hoppers, opens, tanks, inter-modal, car carriers and all manner of specialist rolling stock. Infrastructure vehicles aren't overlooked, with informative captions about prototypes and freight flows. TOPS and modern Euro RIV numbering schemes are explained, and the colour images give modellers inspiration. **(GD)**

Book: *Goods Wagons in the UK* by John Jackson

Price: £15.99

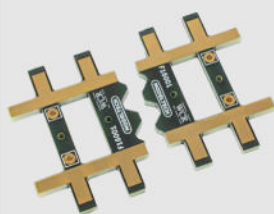
Web:

www.amberley-books.com



ON THE WORKBENCH

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



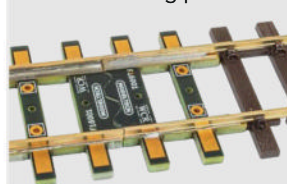
LINING IT UP

OO GAUGE

Do you find it a chore to fit and align rails across the baseboard joints of a portable layout? Well, these

handy alignment aids might be the answer. Available in 'OO' for standard and bullhead rail, each pack provides four pairs of aligners, formed from insulated copper-clad material, of a thickness to match most proprietary track components (especially PECO). Simply remove some of the plastic sleepers from the track and solder the rails to the aligners, which conveniently include power feed contacts.

The two halves of each aligner pair feature an interlocking profile at the outer ends,



ensuring perfect rail alignment every time, while also providing a more resilient base for the rails at the exposed edges of a

baseboard. Simple to install, once the track is painted and ballasted, the aligners blend into the surroundings.

Product: ModelTech ProTrack rail aligner ('OO' Bullhead)

Price: £10.00 (per four pairs)

Availability: www.modeltech.uk

HANDY ANGLE FINDER

Resembling a 180° protractor from a school geometry set, this etched metal tool provides

slots to allow plastic sheet or masking tape/film to be cut at precise angles. The slots are set at 10° intervals, with half-etched markings at 5° for reference. There's precious little

English text on the packaging, but the material appears to be stainless steel, giving the tool rigidity despite being only 0.3mm thick. It's undoubtedly a niche tool, but anyone faced with cutting masking for intricate paint schemes or scratchbuilding in thin sheet materials will find it helpful, not least as it makes it easier to cut parts accurately and consistently.

Product: MS-003 Multi-Angle Cutting Tool

Price: £7.80

Availability: www.scalemodelshop.co.uk



CONCRETE JUNGLE

OO GAUGE

The Modeltex range of photo-realistic printed foam sheets now includes pre-cast concrete panels, which can be used to recreate all sorts of structures, from retaining walls, underpasses and tunnel linings, flyovers or the base of a tower block.

The sheets are 5mm thick and available in A4 or A3 size, with packs designed to suit 'N', 'OO/HO' or 'O'. Printed on both sides, the sheets featured here are branded for 'N', but could look equally at home in certain 'OO' situations.

A few air vent panels break up the monotony, and a few areas of modern urban graffiti are included, which look ultra convincing.

The lightweight material is easy to cut and can be scored or scratched to impart extra texture. There's no mess involved either, making them extremely user-friendly. (PM)

Product: Modeltex Retaining Wall Concrete 01-Graffiti

Price: £17.00 per A4 sheet

Availability: www.modeltex.be

PERFECT PEEPS

OO GAUGE

More new packs of bespoke, 3D-printed footplate crews have been added to the Modelu range, designed to fit within specific steam locomotive models. Seen here are a driver and fireman to suit the Rapido or Hornby GNR 'J13'/LNER 'J52', attired (and bewhiskered!) to match the pre-War era. Other packs cater for the Oxford Rail LNER 'J26' and LSWR 'Adams

Radial', plus the Hornby LSWR 'T9' and SR 'Lord Nelson'.

For the lineside, an interesting new cameo pack provides a pair of workmen warming their hands against an oil drum brazier. This will be great for all manner of industrial settings, from a dockyard to a picket line, with the clothing suited to the pre-1980 era. As usual, 'OO'

versions may be featured here, but each pack is also available in other scales.

Products: 14304 Workmen & Brazier, 11407 GNR 'J13' crew, 11409 LNER/BR 'J26' crew, 11410 SR 'Lord Nelson' crew, 11411 LSWR 'Adams Radial' crew, 11412 LSWR 'T9' crew

Price: from £8.95 per pack

Availability:

www.modelu3d.co.uk



ANIMAL MAGIC

OO GAUGE

Dutch artist supreme, Geke van Petegem, has an expanding range of superbly painted animals to suit most modelling scales from 'N' up to Gauge 1. The figures are cast in resin or metal, some being produced by well-known outfits like Dart Castings, which Geke primes and paints by hand to produce truly beautiful models.

The range of animals includes various livestock breeds, such as Belted Galloways, Highland Cattle and Jersey Cows, plus sheep, pigs, donkeys, cats, and all manner of wildlife, including foxes, rabbits and deer. There is even a peacock displaying its magnificent feathers!

Products: Hand Painted Animals

Prices: £12.95-£69.95 per pack

Availability:

www.tencommandmentsmodels.co.uk



EXHIBITION DIARY - AUGUST 1-AUGUST 31

August 1

CAMBORNE, CORNWALL. Camborne Railway Modelling Group, Summer MRE. Camborne Community Centre, 9 South Terrace, Camborne, Cornwall TR14 8SU. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £4, Accompanied under-5s Free.

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

August 1 & 2

REDCAR, NORTH YORKS. Redcar MRE. Cleveland Model Railway Club. Redcar & Cleveland College, Corporation Road, Redcar TS10 1EZ. **Time:** 1000-1600 both days. **Admission:** Adults £6, Children £4, Families £18 (2+2). **Web:** www.clevelandmrc.co.uk/exhibition.html

August 5

BISHOPS LYDEARD, TAUNTON. Taunton MRG Open Day. Bishops Lydeard Station, Platform 1, West Somerset Railway, Bishops Lydeard, Taunton TA4 3RU. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Free. **Web:** www.tauntonmodelrailwaygroup.co.uk

August 8 & 9

WELLS, SOMERSET. The Wells Railway Fraternity, Railwells 2026.

Wells Town Hall, Market Place, Wells, Somerset. **Times:** Sat 1030-1700, Sun 1030-1600. **Admission:** Adults £10, Unaccompanied under-17s £5, Accompanied under-14s Free, Wheelchair users Free.

WIMBORNE, DORSET. Wessex Association of Model Railway Clubs, Wimborne MRE. The Hamworthy Club, Magna Road, Wimborne BH21 3AL. **Times:** Sat 1000-1630, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £7, Accompanied children Free. **Web:** www.wamrc.com

August 12

BISHOPS LYDEARD, TAUNTON. Taunton Model Railway Group Open Day. Details as August 5.

August 15 & 16

CRICH, DERBYSHIRE. Model Tramway and Railway Exhibition. The National Tramway Museum, Crich, Derbyshire DE4 5DP. **Time:** 1000-1730 both days.

ST ANDREWS, FIFE. East Neuk Model Railway Club, St Andrews Model Railway Exhibition. St Andrews Town Hall, Queens Gardens, St Andrews, Fife KY16 9TA. **Times:** 1000-1730 both days. **Admission:** Adults £6, Children £3, Families £15. **Web:** www.eastneukmrc.co.uk

August 19

BISHOPS LYDEARD, TAUNTON. Taunton Model Railway Group Open Day. Details as August 5.

August 22

WALWORTH, LONDON. Southwark & District MRC and St Peters Church, Walworth Model Railway Exhibition and Summer Fete 2026. St Peters Church, Liverpool Grove, Walworth, London SE17 2HH. **Time:** 1000-1700. **Admission:** Adults £5, Children & Concessions £2.

August 22 & 23

INVERNESS, HIGHLAND. Inverness and District Model Railway Club Exhibition. Leonardo Hotel (formerly Jurys Inn), Millburn Road, Inverness IV2 3TR. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £6, Accompanied children £2, Families £12 (2+2).

LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICS. The Soar Valley Model Railway Club's 2026 Exhibition. Loughborough Grammar School, Burton Walks, Loughborough LE11 2DU. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £12, Children under 16 £5, Families £25 (2+3). **Web:** www.svmrc.co.uk

PICKERING, NORTH YORKS. Pickering Model Railway Show. Memorial Hall, Potter Hill, Pickering YO18 8AA. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1530.

Admission: Adults £7, Accompanied children Free. **Web:** www.sdrmwweb.co.uk

August 26

TELFORD, SHROPS. Telford Steam Railway, Model Railway & Collectibles Exhibition. The Old Loco Shed, Bridge Road, Horsehay, Telford, Shropshire

TF4 2NF. **Admission:** Adults £15, Children £10, Families £42. **Web:** www.telfordsteamrailway.co.uk

BISHOPS LYDEARD, TAUNTON. Taunton Model Railway Group Open Day. Details as August 5.

August 27

WELLING, KENT. Erith MRS CIC, Annual Charity & Toy Train Fair. Falconwood Community Centre, The Green, Welling, Kent DA16 2PG. **Time:** 1700-2130. **Admission:** Adults £1.50, Accompanied children Free.

August 29 & 30

HIGHBRIDGE, SOMERSET. Burnham on Sea Model Railway Exhibition. The King Alfred School, Highbridge, Somerset TA9 3EE. **Time:** 1000-1600 both days. **Admission:** Adults £8, Children Free. **Web:** [https://bdmrc.co.uk](http://bdmrc.co.uk)

August 29-31

BISHOPS LYDEARD, TAUNTON. Taunton Model Railway Group Open Day. Details as August 5.

August 31

HARROGATE, NORTH YORKS. Harrogate Model Railway Group. Gracious Street Methodist Church, Chapel Street, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire HG5 8AN. **Times:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £7, Children £2, Families £15. **Web:** www.harrogate-modelrailwaygroup.org.uk

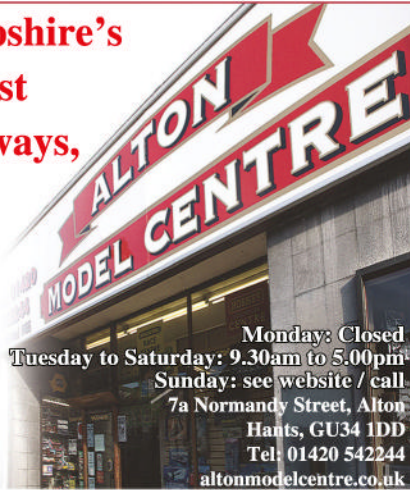
...and finally



Unusual scenes captured by the lens of Chris Nevard

Here we are at Brew Street, sometime in the late 1980s. What few people realise is that Deliberation Dave is a time traveller. Sadly, he has absolutely no control over when it happens, where he ends up, or indeed whether it's remotely convenient. When he staggered home from the Kettle Inn last night after the weekly Ladies' Wasp Chewing Evening, it was definitely 1958. However, in the morning he woke up 30-odd years in the future to find himself being interrogated by four hi-viz-clad jobsworths demanding to know why his uniform is three decades out of date. Dave, naturally, has no idea what hi-viz even is.

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DCC equipment from DCC Concepts, ESU, Gaugemaster, Hornby and Bachmann. Sound decoders from South West Digital.

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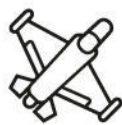
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News Real

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.

▣ Two ex-Colas Rail Class 56s (56094/56302) and 20 FSA intermodal flat wagons have been exported to Africa by Romic Group for use by the Ghana Railway Company. The vehicles left Marchwood Port, near Southampton, on June 3 and made their first test runs in Ghana in early July. ROMIC GROUP



▣ One of the newest liveries on the network is now being applied to Class 66s operated by Heavy Haul Rail, formerly part of the Freightliner Group. Unusually, the livery includes QR codes linking to HHR's website. On June 18, HHR 66537 was on display at the RAIL Live event, held at Porterbrook's Long Marston Rail Innovation Centre. BEN JONES



▣ Network Rail's fleet of ETCS-fitted Class 97/3s is currently receiving major overhauls, which include an updated version of NR yellow livery. Most notably, the mid-grey roof, bonnet and headcode panels are now painted black to match the bodyside grilles. Shortly before re-entering traffic, 97302 *Rheilffordd Ffestiniog ac Eryri/Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways* sparkles outside the Swietelsky workshop at Barrow Hill Roundhouse on June 16. BEN JONES

▣ London Transport Museum is restoring a historic 'Q Stock' train to working condition for use on special trains. Dating from the mid- to late-1930s, their distinctive flared body skirts and modern outline were a major departure from previous Underground trains and they remain one of the most iconic London Transport designs of the 20th Century. BEN JONES



SHOW & TELL MORE S&T FOR S&T

More of **George Dent's** collection of Signal & Telegraph Department rolling stock has been enhanced with a spot of weathering and convincing wagon loads, courtesy of Modelu.

Eagle-eyed readers may have noticed a host of new Modelu products mentioned in the *News Extra* pages of MR352 and 353, with packs of 3D-printed BR Western Region lineside relay cabinets and telephone cases, plus signal cable pulley wheels, point motors and cranks.

I was really impressed with the sample packs received and keen to make good use of them. However, without a suitable layout project on which to install them, the next best thing was to employ them as wagon loads in a pair of BR engineers' wagons.

Readers may also recall, in MR351, that I'd recently unearthed a *Model Rail* limited edition BR brake van in the vibrant colour scheme of the Signal & Telegraph Department. Having treated it to a weathered finish, I was keen to do the same on another MR exclusive model from many years ago, an OBA/ZDA open wagon, plus another Bachmann-made product, a BR 'pipe' wagon in matching S&T livery, lettered as a ZGV. I bought the latter second-hand at a DEMU Showcase event a few years ago, and the plan is to run this red/yellow trio within a rake of other ex-revenue wagons now in BR Departmental use, mostly OBA and OCA types.

Open wagons usually need some sort of load to look purposeful and, inspired by a few similar wagons at work on Merseyside MRS' 'Banks Road' layout (see MR315) - which were crammed with redundant signal posts, level crossing equipment and other lineside ephemera - those Modelu components seemed like the perfect solution.

Once the wagons had been weathered and the 3D-printed components painted and assembled, it took just an hour or two to install the loads, in suitably ramshackle fashion and accompanied by a smattering of dirty ballast. A little further weathering blended everything together, suggesting equipment at the end of its useful life, recovered primarily for scrap as part of a re-signalling project.

Engineers' trains provide plenty of potential for creating something eye-catching, providing welcome variety from more orderly freight services, especially in the later BR and post-privatisation eras, where uniformity tends to rule the roost. With a few more open

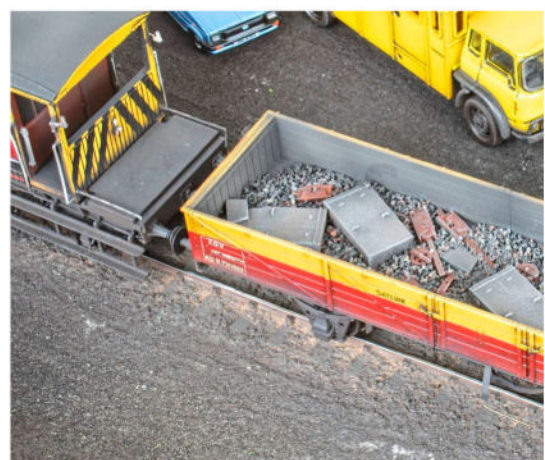
wagons to treat in future, I need to rootle through my boxes of salvaged signals and other lineside gear, as a few recovered semaphore and/or colour light signals would round out the 'story' I wish to tell with this train, to great effect.

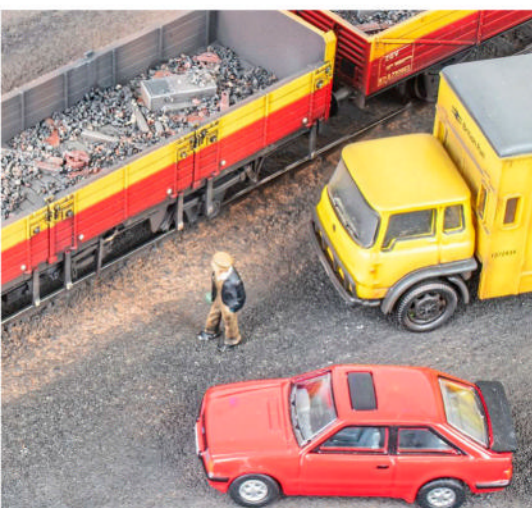
What George used...

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Modelu 2161/2/3/4/5 WR Lineside Cabinets (various types) and Telephone Cases • 2150 signal wire Pulley Wheels • 2131 BR FPL Point Kit
- Prices:** from £5.49 per pack
Web: www.modelu3d.co.uk

Following re-signalling work, the S&T wagons are being shunted back at the depot, where the old equipment will be sorted and disposed of.





The redundant relay cabinets and point machinery makes for a convincing load.



Providing the perfect accompaniment for a 'Dutch'-liveried Class 31 and a yellow 'P'WM shunter, the S&T stock adds vibrancy to the scene.



1

The first step was to add a suitably weathered finish to both wagons, starting with a blend of dark enamel washes, brushed over the bodywork and - as it begins to dry - the excess was wiped away with cotton swabs.



2

Pigment is retained in the plank seams and around the raised detail. Once the exterior and interior were treated - and allowed to dry - the underframe and body were misted with enamel weathering paints, via an airbrush.



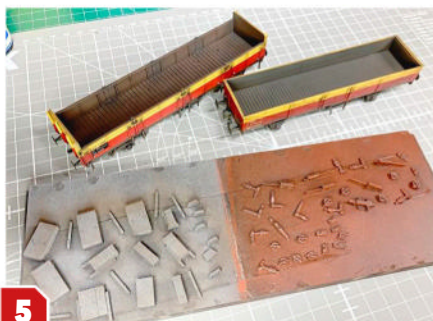
3

The various packs of Modelu 3D-printed lineside detail parts were gently cut from the support fretwork, using a fresh scalpel blade, and any nibs scraped away with the edge of the blade.



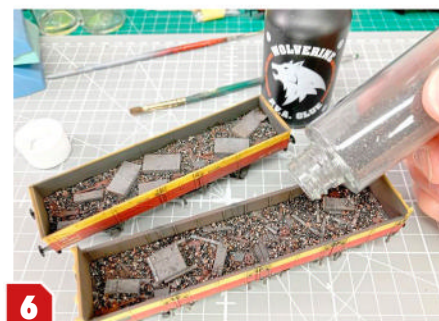
4

I did a trial run of loading the wagons to see how many parts were needed for each, and to gain an idea of how they'd look. I had just enough components to treat the two wagons.



5

The parts were held to a scrap of plywood using strips of strong double-sided tape, then sprayed with a black aerosol primer. The cabinets were then lightly sprayed with grey primer, and mechanical parts with red oxide.



6

The parts were fixed into the wagons with fast-setting PVA glue, arranging them to appear like they'd been hastily dropped in by a mechanical digger, with a few buckets' worth of dirty ballast too!



7

Once the glue had set, any loose material was shaken out and then I misted a very fine coat of a generic 'dirt' shade, just to blend everything together and disguise any shiny deposits of excess glue.



8

The airbrushed layer of 'dirt' did the trick, but it did mean that some of the definition was lost, so I lightly dry-brushed the loads with a pale shade of grey acrylic paint, which brought out the detail relief.

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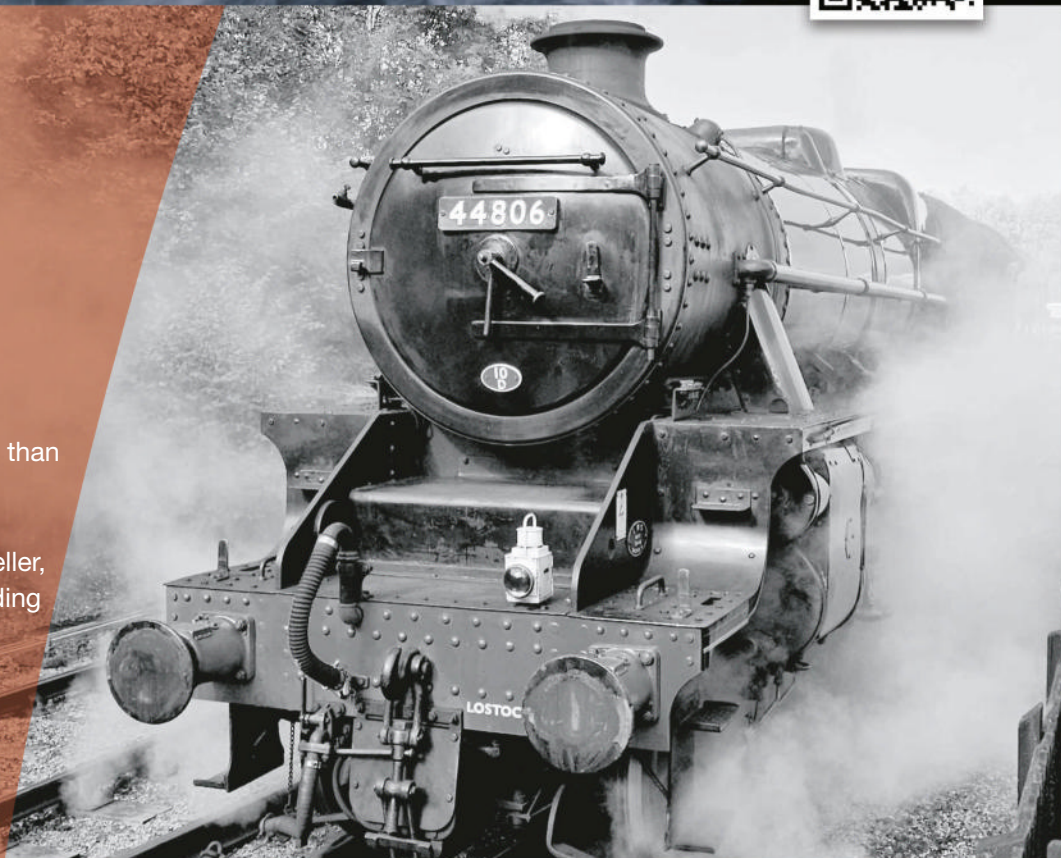


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Inside track with Ben Ando

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

The Enigma of Variations

Recently, I travelled to two different preservation sites to research new models that Revolution is developing. At both, the vehicles we were there to see were beautifully kept and a credit to their owners and the volunteers working to keep them in operational order.

The prototypes have a long(ish) history and, during their service careers, have been rebuilt, modified or altered numerous times. Each also has numerous sub-class variations.

This presents a dilemma for model railway manufacturers. Internal alterations, such as upgraded traction motors or modernised signalling systems – while often significant re-engineering projects in real life – are of little interest if the outward appearance of the vehicle is unaltered. However, visible changes, like altered headlights, can be a headache, and this leaves us with difficult decisions. Clever tooling, or separate components, can allow some variations to be depicted without too much additional cost. But with plastic injection moulds often costing over \$100,000, there are limits; especially as the scope of the project will have a significant impact on the final price to the customer.

It is tempting to want to depict every version of a particular piece of rolling stock. However, that is usually not possible and deciding which variants to offer and which to ignore can be a difficult process – especially as we are all enthusiasts and often have our own favourite ‘pet’ vehicles.

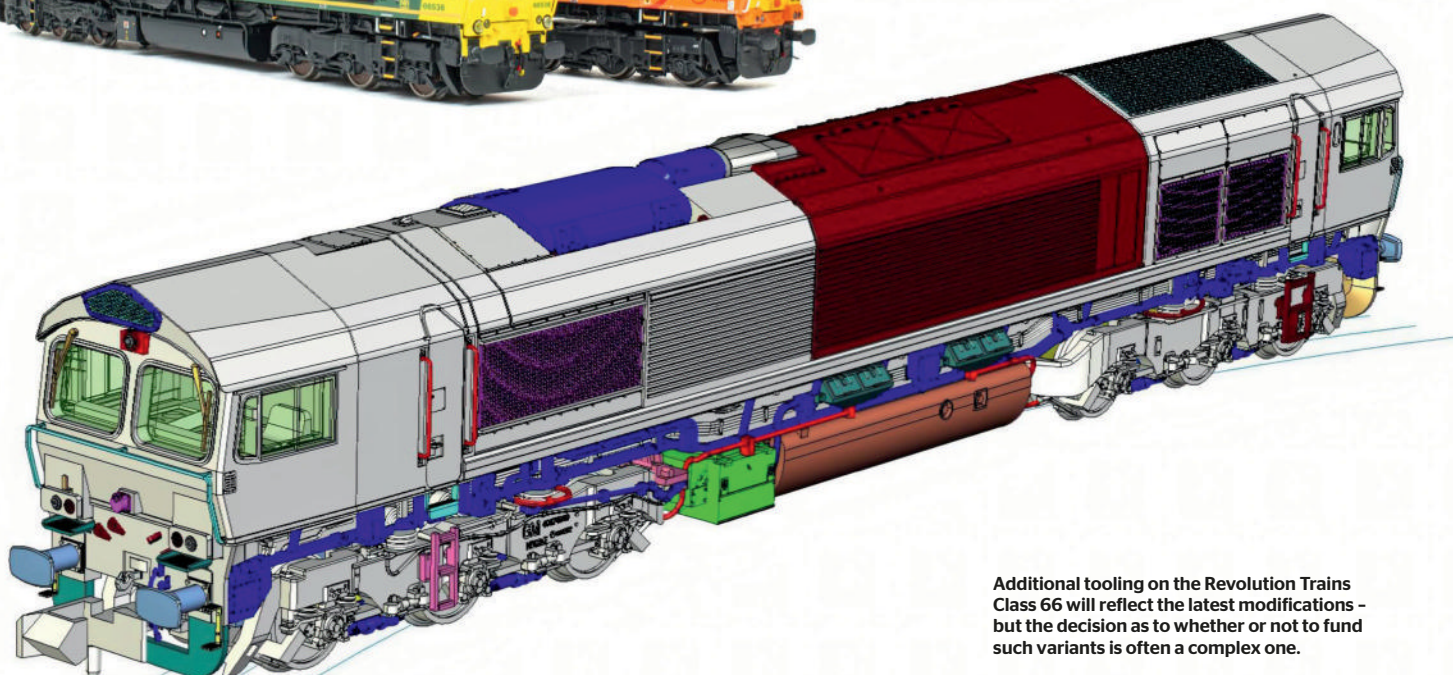
Similar decisions are also needed with existing models. An example of this is the Revolution Trains Class 66. We are about to announce a third run of these

locomotives, and two of those we wish to do have been modified compared to the original versions we first offered. Our existing tooling suite depicts NRN pods on the locomotive roof and two handles per door. However, the railway rarely stands still, and for present day locomotives this tooling is out of date.

The National Radio Network has been superseded by the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM-R), rendering the old roof pods obsolete, so most have been removed, and the upper doorhandles on some locomotives have been plated over for safety and security reasons. Although we have previously modelled both the original BMAC light clusters, with separate red tail lights and rectangular marker lights, along with the later versions combining the marker and tail lights into a single aspect LED, to add these lights to the new versions would require additional work.

We took the decision to fund additional tooling to represent these modifications, so the upcoming locomotives will be correct for the versions portrayed. Is it worth it? We think so, but the final verdict, as ever, will be with our customers.

While writing this article, I recalled the models of my 1970s childhood; for example the Hornby Class 37, which was fitted with bogies from the manufacturer's Class 47 model to save costs. Irrespective of the OCD tweaks I have been talking about above, imagine the outcry if a manufacturer tried the same trick now. The hobby has certainly come a long way...



Additional tooling on the Revolution Trains Class 66 will reflect the latest modifications – but the decision as to whether or not to fund such variants is often a complex one.

“Deciding which variants to offer and which to ignore can be a difficult process”

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SCAN HERE

FULL TO THE 'BRIM'

With encouragement from family, and a mate Down Under, **Matt Stringfellow** took the plunge and built his first ever layout, 'Brimmingham', based somewhere in Glamorgan or Lincolnshire... or both!

Words: **Nick Brodrick**, Photography: **Chris Nevard**





“ **What makes this layout great?** ”

'Brimmingham' is literally a model of what anyone can achieve with dedication and determination. From a standing start, Matt has created a harmonious presentation of a typical, scaled-down BR freight sectorisation operation on a small footprint which balances little 'Easter eggs' of intricate detail with a deceptive sense of space.

Matt Stringfellow is in an exultant state of shock. "I can't believe that the magazine sent a photographer," he says of his layout's 15 minutes of fame within the pages of this issue of *Model Rail*.

Immerse yourself in Chris Nevard's accompanying pictures of this 'OO' depiction of a late BR freight operation and you will appreciate that decision was entirely justified. It's quite the result for someone who'd never built a layout before.

"That was achieved with no modelling experience whatsoever," Matt reaffirms. Indeed, he hopes that its appearance here will "provide inspiration that anyone can do it too. The biggest learning for me is 'don't be afraid of it'."

By his own admission, Matt had become somewhat overwhelmed by the prospect of seeing the

construction of a serious model through to final completion. "It's the fourth time I've tried to build a model railway; there were three times where I never actually laid any track.

"It's that fear of not knowing whether you're capable of doing it or not, and there's a lot of jargon out there that might put people off, like insulfrog and electrofrog points, and you think, 'I'll never get my head around this'."

It was seeking encouragement from his wife Donna that spurred Matt on. She advised: "If you've always wanted to do it, just do it, but you've got to stick at it."

"And I thought, 'I can do this,'" he concluded.

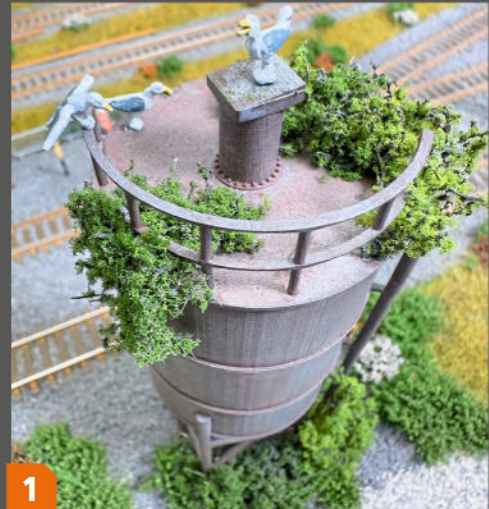
As well as support from his other half, Matt had struck up a productive friendship with Neil Barron, an ex-pat layout builder in Australia who'd bought some of his Accurascale PTA wagons. ➤

BELOW Rationalisation of 'Brimmingham' takes hold as the track is lifted outside the freight line's soon-to-be-demolished signal box. Class 31 31110 crawls into the loop with a train of telescopic hood wagons.





3 things we like



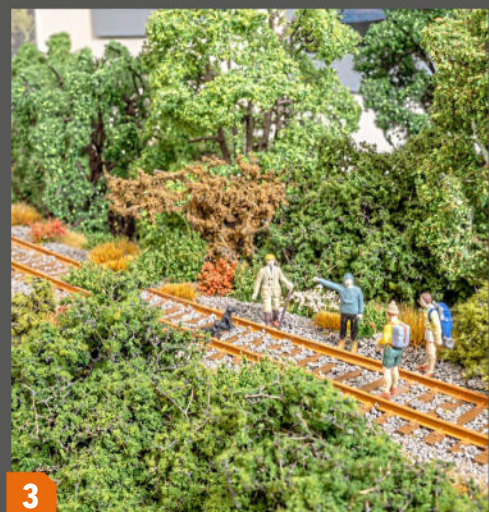
1

There is a sense of decay in areas and on buildings that no longer see railway use.



2

Traditional style resin buildings have been modified to suit the rationalised 1980s railway.



3

Confrontation between a local landowner and some ramblers on the disused embankment, perhaps?



"We kept in touch, and now we speak or email virtually every day to bounce ideas off each other. I can ask, 'What do you think about this?' and he might say, 'That's great, but why don't you try this?'"

WALES... ENGLAND?

With no ideal space in the house for the desired 'roundy-roundy' configuration, an insulated cabin was professionally built in the garden to house 'Brimmingham'. That brought the added advantage of being physically separated from domestic life, meaning it wasn't affected by any mess made during construction.

"I could just shut the door and go back to it the next day," Matt says. "I did that on a few occasions when I couldn't locate a problem with the electrics. I'm quite a neat person, so if I had to walk away from that mess in the house, it would have bothered me."

The prototypical basis for the model is, unusually, shared across two areas of the country: Glamorgan in South Wales and Barnetby/Immingham (hence 'Brimmingham') in north east Lincolnshire. Both areas are favourite haunts for Matt after he began spotting locomotives from 1983 onwards, "purely because of the vast quantities of freight that I saw".

Given the choice at the time of the layout's construction, he would have plumped for a pure South Wales theme, but a dearth of suitable high-end ready-to-run Class 37s (in particular) encouraged ➤

3

The Bachmann Scenecraft Modern Servicing Depot structure has been kit-bashed and detailed to become a dual-purpose locomotive servicing and wagon repair shop.





the track and scenic presentation to be generic, enabling those types that were more readily available (such as Class 20s and 31s) to depict 'Brimmingham' with its Lincolnshire face.

"It means that I can switch over, at any time I want," he confirms, helped by much of the region's freight traffic being the same: iron ore, coal, steel, oil and chemical consignments.

The track plan resembles a single-track freight avoiding line beside a station – and a sliver of platform is modelled on the nearside edge of the baseboard, leaving the rest of the station, which would be in the operating well, to the imagination. A passing loop adds operational interest, as do sidings which serve a locomotive and wagon repair depot.

"I would have ideally designed it as a double-track main line," Matt says, but with the 5ft 6in width of the cabin, "I just couldn't get the curves in to be able to do that." Even as just one continuous loop of track, the prevailing curves at each end of the circuit are the minimum practical.

"What I know now is that I would have had the cabin wider, even just by a foot and probably sacrifice a bit of the scenic area because I went for tight 'radius two' curves, which are also quite limiting in terms of some of the rolling stock that just won't go around them."

UNTRIED AND UNTESTED

It was the electrics – and the decision to dive into DCC control – that presented the biggest hurdle.

"Once the baseboards were down, the first thing I did was to get the track laid and wired." ➤



Bridges are used as scenic breaks at either end of the scenic section; one carries pipes and the other a disused branch line. They have been set at angles, rather than 90° to the track, to use as much scenic area as possible.





Matt does admit to taking “some easy options”, like using DCC Concepts solder-free connections between the droppers from the track to the bus wire. “I just couldn’t imagine myself climbing under the baseboards and soldering upside down.”

“Terrified” of the added wiring involved in using electrofrog points (which he now better understands!), Matt elected to use more basic insulfrog ones by Peco. His track plan afforded the freedom to insert short track sections between any two adjoining points to better maintain electrical feed, as well as ‘Stay-Alive’ circuitry in all motive power to prevent stuttering.

Peco’s ‘Twistlock’ point motor system was an added “game changer” because they were “just so easy”.

Even so, ‘Brimmingham’s’ builder says that connecting everything up “was quite a frightening experience because I didn’t at any time test it until that final wire had gone into the controller... probably because I wasn’t fully understanding of it.

“It took me a fair while – and all that time I never knew it was going to work!” But to Matt’s relief, it did.

“When the first locomotive started up and ran, I just couldn’t have been happier; other than when I married my wife, obviously!”

Control is via the Digitrax Evolution system which was, as Matt came to discover during so much of his modelling quest, “so easy to use”, even down to equipping each locomotive with sound.

“At first, I didn’t understand how to programme a Loco ID, nor all the different things you could do with it and the different sound functions. Now I do.”

FINISHING TOUCHES

If Matt could be accused of taking a chance with his brave methods for the electrics, he was more restrained when it came to the scenic aspects.

After painting the rails and sleepers, he recalls: “I got myself a piece of wood, put a bit of track on it and tested the different colours and grades of ballast until I was happy with what I found. Then I just worked my way around the layout until it was all ballasted.” As with Kevin Crane’s ‘Gonerby’ (MR352), Matt

RIGHT An overall view of ‘Brimmingham’ that emphasises how so much detail has been included in a small outbuilding. Note the two lighting strips which counteract unwanted, giant, human shadows.

'OO' GAUGE LAYOUT **BRIMMINGHAM**





FACTFILE: 'BRIMMINGHAM'

Era: 1983-1991

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

Size: 10.5ft x 5.5ft

Track: Peco Code 100

Power and control: DCC, Digitrax Evolution

Time to build: 16 months



ABOUT THE MODELLER: MATT STRINGFELLOW

Ilkeston-based Matt spent 27 years of his career running motorway service areas, and now works part-time serving meals in a junior school kitchen. As well as model railways, he and his wife travel far and wide to see live music, and last year went from seeing AC/DC in Seville, Spain, to the Eagles in Manchester.

continued the ballasting through the traditionally functional fiddleyard, so "the whole thing blends and is harmonious throughout."

"Aesthetically, it's more pleasing to play with, because even taking a train into the fiddleyard, you're still playing on a part of the layout."

Scenery, and static grass especially, was another facet that Matt "looked at and thought I could never do." However, by starting with 'planting' a small patch, he realised that it too is "actually quite straightforward."

The limited number of buildings that serve 'Brimmingham' are from Bachmann's range of ready-made resin mouldings. The brand's Modern Servicing Depot dominates the landscape, but rather than being used straight from the box, it has been individualised with a host of modifications, like corrugated steel sheets that hide the side windows, air conditioning grilles, a fuel point, lifting jacks, mobile tool trolleys and oil drums.

The building, like virtually all the layout's elements from locomotives to track, has yet to be weathered which is one of Matt's "next things to do".

Given that it only took him 16 months to get this far, you wouldn't expect it to take long for Matt to get to grips with that too.

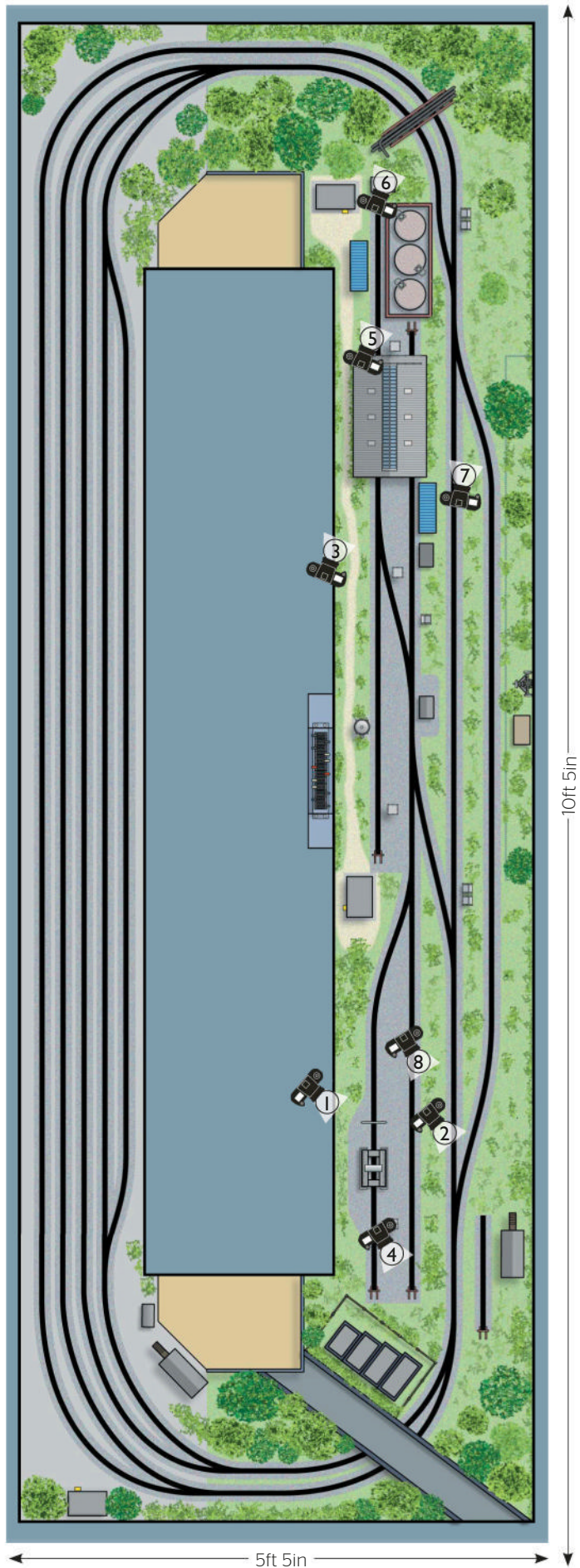
"What a big learning curve it's been, with a lot of trial and error," he reflects. "But the biggest learning is that it's not as hard as it looks."

"One thing that Neil Barron and I always talk about is as long as people see it as their layout and enjoy it, that's the most important thing." **MR**



'OO' GAUGE LAYOUT **BRIMMINGHAM**

Artwork: Andrew Mackintosh





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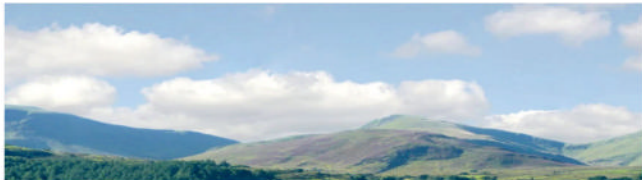
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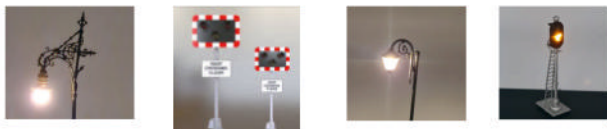
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Workbench

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Meet the Model Rail Expert modellers



George Dent
Learn from one of the country's best modellers.



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



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



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



Steve Nall
Steve loves trying new and unusual techniques.

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



HOW TO

CREATE A GREAT 'GRID'

George Dent sets about customising a pair of Hornby Class 56s, testing out a new range of decal setting solutions in the process.

The British Rail Class 56 was once a mainstay of the seemingly endless merry-go-round (MGR) coal trains emanating from South Yorkshire, the North East and the Midlands during the 1980s-90s.

Supplying many of the nation's coal-fired power stations – and thus keeping the UK's National Grid energised – the '56s' gained the apposite nickname of 'Grids'.

It wasn't just coal that formed their primary load, however, with many of the 135-strong fleet regularly employed on aggregates, oil and steel traffic. It's this latter traffic that I'm

MODEL Hornby Class 56
◆ Price (New) £228.99 - £294.99

6 hrs
per loco

AVAILABILITY Hornby stockists or pre-owned dealers Web: www.hornby.com

seeking to replicate with one of the latest additions to my fleet: Hornby's 56060 *The Cardiff Rod Mill*.

Wearing Railfreight Metals sub-sector livery, 56060 was released last year while 56086, the other 'Grid' to feature here, heralded from Hornby's 2023 range.

Both feature upgraded electronics provision, as introduced a few years back,

with a 21pin DCC interface – although I'm running them both on my analogue layout, so the TXS sound decoder from '060 has been removed.

Incidentally, a couple of new '56s' are due to arrive with Hornby stockists later this year, in the form of Romanian-built 56001 in Rail blue, plus 'Dutch' 56047 with Transrail branding, both offered with DCC sound



onboard. In fact, these models will also be equipped with large EM1-style speakers for the first time, to gain improved sound reproduction.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE?

Initially, my main motivation for this project was to titivate 56060, by adding a crew to the cab interior, installing fine etched nameplates and logos, and imparting a suitably weathered finish. All pretty straightforward stuff, giving me something appropriate to haul my early '90s era steel wagons.

Here's a little trivia regarding 56060's name: this was the third BR locomotive to carry *The Cardiff Rod Mill* nameplates, as two different Class 37s had the honour previously. Firstly, 37229 was christened after the Allied

Steel & Wire works in 1984, with the name transferred to 37712 four years later. Following its move from Toton to Cardiff Canton in late 1992, 56060 took over the mantle, but the nameplates moved yet again in 1997, to another Class 56, 56052.

The provenance of the name is important if you fancy purchasing replacement nameplates, as Fox Transfers has them listed for 37712. In fact, they're only available with red backing at present, so I had to repaint them black. Hornby does supply optional nameplates with its '56', plus depot plaques and BR logos, but I found them a little too bulky. The etched stainless-steel offerings from Fox are far superior.

Soon after starting on 56060, a delivery of some new decal setting fluids from Deluxe

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Etched nameplates, depot plaques, BR logos, waterslide decals, RailMatch enamel paints and thinners **Availability:** Fox Transfers **Web:** www.fox-transfers.co.uk
- ◆ White Large Logo TOPS number decals for Class 56 **Availability:** Railtec **Web:** www.railtec-models.com
- ◆ Deluxe Materials Decal Sure Set • Decal Soft Set • Roket Rapid cyano glue • Track Magic **Availability:** Model shops or Gaugemaster **Web:** www.gaugemasterretail.com
- ◆ Footplate crew figures **Availability:** Modelu **Web:** www.modelu3d.co.uk
- ◆ Mr Hobby Super Clear gloss, Super Clear matt • Mr Oxide Red Surfacer 1000 • Mr Finish Surfacer 1500 Black • Tamiya masking tape and pointed cotton swabs • MIG enamel weathering washes and thinners **Availability:** Scale Model Shop **Web:** www.scalemodelshop.co.uk
- ◆ LifeColor acrylic paints, airbrushes and equipment **Availability:** The Airbrush Company **Web:** www.airbrushes.com
- ◆ T-Cut Original automotive finish restorer **Availability:** Hardware or automotive stores or Amazon **Web:** www.amazon.co.uk

TOOLS

- ◆ Knife and spare blades
- ◆ Cutting mat
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Sanding pads (various grades)
- ◆ Mini metal cutting shears
- ◆ Paintbrushes
- ◆ Cocktail sticks
- ◆ Cotton swabs
- ◆ Airbrush and equipment

Materials gave me pause for thought. I needed to see how these fluids performed 'in the field', so how about a spot of re-numbering? And could I use them on a project already under way?

And yet, I didn't want to stray from 56060's identity, as it was perfect for my needs. Happily, I remembered another '56' was awaiting its turn in the customising queue, so step forward 'large logo' blue 56086.

A little research threw up some possible new identities among the Doncaster-built fleet of '56s', with appropriate detail features to suit the model. Eventually, I settled on 56114, thanks to its non-standard red bufferbeams which, in my humble opinion, suited this livery better than black. With a set of ready-made-up TOPS number



Despite the arrival of the superb Cavalex '56', Hornby's version still holds up well, and some attractively priced models can be found on the pre-owned market.



decals in hand, from the Railtec range, there would be no need to faff around with individual numerals, so all was set for a few fun evenings!

A SURE THING?

Deluxe Materials' Decal Sure Set fluid proved highly effective, helping the wet waterslide decal slide effortlessly into position. A further application, once most of the water had been absorbed, helped the clear carrier film to settle onto the surface both quickly and effortlessly.

Indeed, it visibly softened the film in seconds, and after a few light strokes with a soft, dry brush to expel any remaining air bubbles or creases, the decals were left to dry naturally. By the next morning, the carrier film was virtually invisible and the bond to the surface was secure. A sealing coat of clear gloss, sprayed from an aerosol, gave the decals a factory-printed appearance, leaving me extremely pleased with the results.

As for adding decals onto uneven surfaces, Deluxe Materials' Decal Soft Set fluid renders decals far more flexible, and this was put to the test by re-numbering a Hornby Class 67 – see panel opposite.

Both fluids left me impressed, making them an ideal addition to my workshop. Each jar provides 50ml of fluid, which should last for several years' worth of projects. Each can also be diluted with water when working on thinner, more delicate decals. They're definitely worth trying for yourself.

STEP BY STEP



Having unscrewed the body and unplugged the cab lighting connections, re-numbering could start. With a little T-Cut on a cotton swab, I gently rubbed at the printed digits.



The T-Cut works gradually. Get a clean swab when cotton is clogged. Once digits vanish, polish surface with a dry swab; remove any trace of T-Cut. Allow to sit overnight.



I gently manipulated the decal into its final position, absorbing moisture with cotton swabs. A few gentle strokes from a dry, soft brush help remove trapped water and air.



Once happy with its position, I applied a further light coat of Decal Sure Set. I could see the clear carrier film softening, helping it blend into the surface and effectively vanish.



DECALS ON UNEVEN SURFACES

To further road-test the Deluxe Materials decal solutions, I re-numbered an EWS Class 67 with a set of Fox Transfers waterslide decals, the TOPS numbers having to be assembled with individual digits. The corrugated sides of Class 66 and '67' locomotives provide a challenge to modellers and decals, but the combination of the two fluids helped considerably with this.

Firstly, once the surface had been prepared, Decal Sure Set was brushed onto the location of the new numerals, thus helping the decal slide precisely into position. Fine-tuning of the location was achieved with a soft-bristled brush. Once aligned, I applied some of the Decal Soft Set solution, which quickly softened the decal enough to help it conform to the uneven surface.

Light pressure from the brush ensured the decal sat down within the undulations and greatly improved adhesion. As the fluids act swiftly, progress was much quicker than with other brands of similar softening solutions, so this laborious task was completed in about half the usual time. The results were impressive too – so that's great!

Although the decals felt secure once dry, I treated the body to a coat of clear varnish anyway, to make it resilient to regular handling in future.

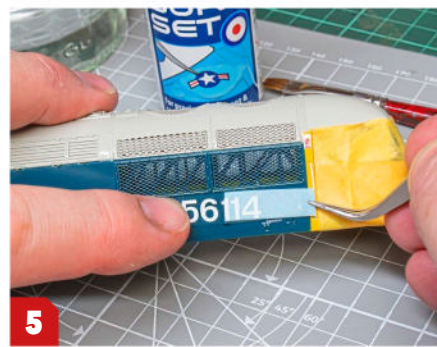
It's also worth pointing out that if things should go wrong with the decals, applying more of the Decal Soft Set fluid will allow the errant transfer to be removed without leaving any residue traces behind.



3 For a unified paintwork finish and optimum surface on which new decals can adhere, I applied a coat of clear gloss varnish from an aerosol. The glazing was masked beforehand.



4 Let the clear varnish cure completely before adding decals. I cut the decal from the sheet, put it in a bowl of clean water, then brushed a little Decal Sure Set onto where it will sit.



5 When the decal starts loosening from the paper, slide it into position with a fingertip or blunted cocktail stick. Align closely. Decal Sure Set fluid helped it glide over the surface.



8 With the new decals on both sides, the model was left overnight to dry. A light coat of clear gloss was sprayed over the body to seal decals and help give a 'painted on' look.



9 A high-gloss finish is seldom appropriate for a workaday diesel, so I sprayed a coat of clear matt to tone it down. Mr Hobby clear coats dry fast, but I left it for 24 hours to be sure.



10 I sprayed the bufferbeams with a red oxide primer, followed by RailMatch enamel red. When dry, I touched-in the relevant areas with a matt black acrylic paint.



11

On another '56', which didn't need a change of identity, I wanted to add etched nameplates. A quick check revealed the new 'plates would cover the printed versions.



12

The nameplates were only available with a red background, so I sprayed black primer, sanded away paint from the beading and letters, and coated the plates with clear gloss.



13

For a basic weathering wash before fixing the plates, a blend of MIG enamel washes was created, brushed over one side, and wiped away with a cotton rag, in vertical strokes.



15

The roof was the last area to be treated, with a darker wash blend. Again, it was brushed over each panel, working it into the recesses, then wiped away in lateral strokes with a rag.



16

After an overnight rest to dry, low-tack masking tape acted as a guide to fixing the etched nameplates. I used a very thin bead of cyano glue, applied with a cocktail stick.



17

A set of etched depot plaques and BR logos enhanced the cab sides. These were installed in the same way. Cut carefully from the fret with a set of miniature metal cutting shears.



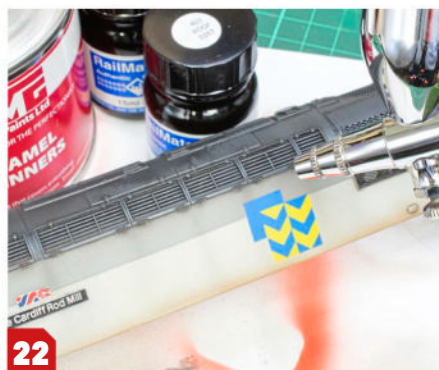
19

The ability to remove the bogie frames made it easier to weather the underframe. With thinned RailMatch enamel Frame Dirt, I misted the paint over the bogie frames.



20

The underframe, wheels and bufferbeams were treated likewise. I then added a little RailMatch Roof Dirt to the mix, airbrushed here and there to break up the monotony of the Frame Dirt and create some subtle shading effects.



22

With thinned RailMatch Roof Dirt, I began working a fine mist along the roof, with a few faint vertical streaks suggesting rain has washed exhaust stains down the bodywork.



23

The Roof Dirt was also worked over the roof panels, laterally to suggest the work of rain and gravity. Using Weathered Black, I worked in darker staining around the exhaust ports.



24

The enamel weathering paints were left for 24 hours to dry before cleaning the wheels and power contacts with Track Magic fluid and cotton swabs.



14

Most of the wash was removed, leaving dark pigment and staining in recesses and around raised details. Pointed cotton swabs allowed the wash to be manipulated in tight areas.



18

The new etched plates looked too clean, so I carefully brushed enamel wash over the parts. The excess wash was wiped away with a swab. I then masked the glazing with tape.



21

RailMatch Frame Dirt was then sprayed along the lower edges of the bodysides. Angle the airbrush upwards to mimic the action of real dirt spraying upwards from the track.



25

The cab interiors were treated with enamel weathering washes before the crew were fixed in place. The seat armrests had to be carefully cut away to allow the figures to fit.



Adding etched stainless-steel nameplates, BR logos and depot plaques give the Hornby model a more refined air.



The new TOPS numbers look like they were printed as part of the factory finish - the sign of a successful decal application!



The red bufferbeams of 56114 add some subtle variety to a fleet of similarly attired 'Grids'.

HOW TO

WEATHER TIMBER-BODIED PRIVATE OWNER WAGONS



Chris Nevard transforms a rake of pristine timber-bodied coal wagons, with an eye on creating a more distressed appearance.



MODEL Bachmann, Rapido Trains UK, Hornby or Oxford Rail PO open wagons
♦ Price from £11.95 each

AVAILABILITY
Model shops

2 hrs



PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRIS NEVARD

It's all the detail... that's a common refrain in the model railway industry, and it's certainly true, as it is often the smaller things that help to create a sense of realism and place to a miniature scene. That might be a particular style of vernacular architecture, or specific types and colours of scenic features, or it may refer to aspects of the actual trains.

In the pre-diesel age, timber-bodied open wagons ruled the roost, providing a simple and effective transport solution to all manner of commodities, particularly minerals. With so many independent industries served by the railways it was inevitable that privately owned wagons came to be seen in vast numbers.

In the interests of standardisation across the myriad railway operating companies of the pre-Grouping era, Private Owner open wagons were built to specifications laid out by the Railway Clearing House (RCH). The most common vehicles came in five- or seven-plank format, and were used to carry a range of minerals, especially coal, as well as more generic loose or crated cargoes.

Accordingly, the Private Owner (PO) wagons would be emblazoned with the name of the company, sometimes with an accompanying logo too, plus details of the location and operating instructions. While wagons would potentially travel far and wide, for those of us with layouts set in particular

locations or featuring specific industries, it really helps to operate an appropriately branded rake of wagons, as this serves as yet another small detail to help cement a model scene in the desired place and time.

Thankfully, the more common types of PO wagon have been produced by most of the leading model manufacturers, in most scales, with 'OO' being served by Bachmann, Dapol, Hornby, Oxford Rail, and Rapido Trains UK. The branding of countless industries has appeared over the years, with a decent geographical spread in terms of the UK. And now there's a chance to create bespoke liveries, capturing real or fictional operators and locations - see panel over the page.



Hundreds of thousands of Private Owner RCH wagons were in use on Britain's railways from the late 1800s to the 1950s, with many continuing in industrial use for a further decade or two. I recommend looking at old photographs of timber-bodied RCH wagons, especially during and after the Second World War, when many became common-user wagons. Later, in British Railways ownership, several gained BR numbers (with a P prefix), often crudely painted over the traces of whatever previous liveries survived.

Study of prototypes reveals that individual planks were often replaced during repairs, but wagons were not fully repainted. One explanation for this, is that the wagons would have been close to the end of their lives, as steel-bodied wagons gradually took over. Unsurprisingly, repair expenditure would have been kept to a minimum. Another fun aspect is noticing that no two wagons look the same, as each weathers in its own way. This gives freedom to experiment with colour, weathering intensity and techniques.

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Smiths 3-link couplings
Availability: Peter's Spares
Web: www.peterspares.com
- ◆ Humbrol • 27004 Metal Cote gunmetal enamel • Humbrol 49 acrylic matt varnish (aerosol) • PVA woodworking glue • weathering powders **Availability:** Model shops

TOOLS

- ◆ Knife and spare blades
- ◆ Cutting mat
- ◆ Paint brushes
- ◆ Cotton buds
- ◆ Needle files
- ◆ Nail files
- ◆ Fibreglass pen

STEP BY STEP



1

I have started with a personalised Rapido model, via a service that allows modellers to create bespoke graphics (see panel overleaf). Some might shudder at 'messing up' a bespoke wagon, but collectors' pieces are not really my thing.



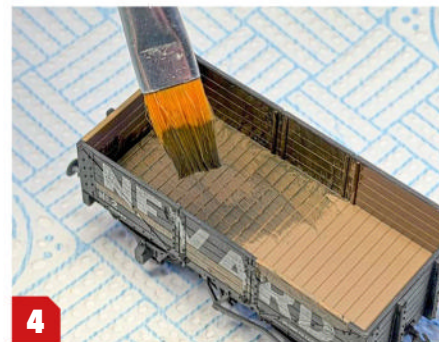
2

Looking at photographs and spotting wagons while out and about, I have noticed that planks are often replaced, but the wagon not fully repainted. To recreate this, a few planks have been painted to represent bare wood.



3

A word to the wise: provided you're not too 'neat' in your approach, a good dose of weathering over the top works wonders. Next follows a good slop of matt black interior emulsion, which you can then work until it's almost dry.



4

This may sound obvious, but don't forget the inside of the wagon too, as this will be seen from certain angles and adds to the wagon's authentic look. Take your time and again do your research, looking at old photos to inspire you.

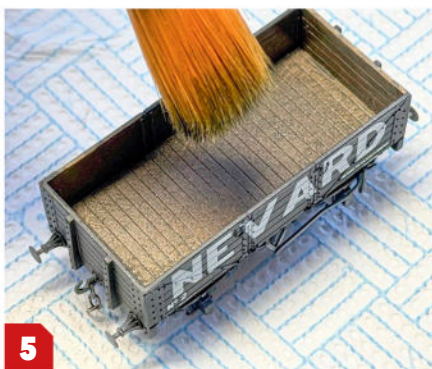
Make your mark

Anyone familiar with my previous layouts may notice the names emblazoned on the side of my wagons, and you too can create personalised rolling stock...

In collaboration with The Wagon Yard, Rapido Trains UK offers a custom wagon printing service that allows you to choose your own branding for five- or seven-plank open wagons.

Using Rapido's 'OO' gauge RCH Private Owner wagons as a basis, modellers can choose a livery colour (red, yellow, blue, green or black), main and secondary branding in three different text layouts, and lettering styles. It's also possible to specify a 'Return to' destination and wagon number, with multiple wagons of the same design being produced with individual numbers if desired.

At £50 each, they're great value (given that Rapido's regular wagons are around £32 each) and the results are highly professional, akin to a factory finish. It's a great way to replicate specific brands and industries to suit your layout, create fictional concerns or personalised gifts for friends. Find out more at www.customwagons.co.uk



Next, 'stipple' the paint (effectively creating lots of small blobs) using a clean, soft-bristled brush, and keep at it until the paint is dry. This helps to give an authentic-looking finish and will help to get rid of any brush marks, too.



A nice touch is to add a little trace of what the wagon might have been carrying before it was emptied, having done its job. For this, I always think there's nothing better than to use finely crushed real coal.



Now to tackle the rusty bits. Being a 'bodger', I use whatever I have lying about - raw sienna artist's acrylic and rusty interior emulsion. 'Proper' modellers might prefer matt enamel, as it can be worked for a while before it sets.



Good quality barbecue charcoal is another option, with traditional coal increasingly difficult to source. As an aside, my lump of coal came from a long-closed colliery spoil heap near Radstock in Somerset.

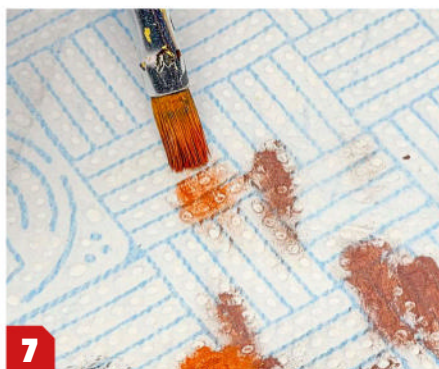
Chris has also been busy with some steel-bodied mineral wagons, especially older models that are available at 'pocket money' prices - see how he got on in next month's issue, on sale August 27.

You can be creative with regard to what your wagons are carrying. Here, I've fashioned some timber pit props from a wooden skewer, but finely crushed real coal or barbecue charcoal are other options.

RESEARCH ESSENTIALS

Paul Bartlett's website is a fabulous online resource if you're looking for photographs of rusty old wagons to help inspire you. Free to browse, downloads can be ordered if you require them. Take a look at paulbartlett.zenfolio.com





7 If you can, try to choose more muted rusty colours. These are best added by dry-brushing, a technique where you load a brush with paint and then wipe almost all of it off using kitchen roll so just the pigment is left.



8 Next, with your 'dry brush', work the pigment around areas that are likely to be rusty - allowing the paint to catch on the raised detail. You might want to use a few different 'rust' colours, but avoid anything too red.



9 Don't forget the wheels. It makes life easier to remove them from the chassis to reach the spokes. Clean the wheel treads and flanges at the end of the project to keep rails clean. It's a good idea to clean pinpoint ends too.



12 Next, paint on a little diluted PVA woodworking glue onto the flat bed of the open wagon...



13 ...Before sprinkling on some finely ground coal. The PVA glue will dry to give a matt finish, again creating an authentic appearance.



14 Here we can see the finished wagon and, while it's complete, I might well do a little more weathering work on it in due course. Sometimes, standing back and reappraising things with fresh eyes can be a good thing.



HOW TO MAKE REMOVABLE COAL LOADS



I can't take credit for this neat idea, but if you want to be able to have a removable coal or other mineral load, this works well.



16 Stack up offcuts of foamboard or wood to a height just below the rim of the wagon. Ensure bottom layers are narrow to allow the load to tilt. Size-wise, measure 2-3mm less than the inside of the wagon, as this will make extraction easier. Add glue and sprinkle it on your coal load.



17 Here we are with the coal loaded. However, pressing down on either end allows the coal to tilt, thus making extraction a doddle. Another option is to embed something that will attract a magnet, like a steel nut or similar. You can then use a magnet to lift the load out.



HOW TO

DOUBLING UP A PAIR OF 'TWENTIES'

Dave Lowery creates a pair of electrically conjoined Heljan Class 20s, simplifying DCC operation and saving a few 'bob' in the process.

There's nothing quite like the sight and sound of a pair of Class 20s at work, especially on a heavy freight train. With two English Electric

power units chugging away, and exhaust tones akin to a squadron of helicopters, these versatile locomotives were once a key part of British Rail's traction fleet.

For the most part, they operated in pairs, coupled nose to nose to ensure maximum visibility for the crew and providing up to 2,000hp, making them ideal for a range of freight services, especially merry-go-round coal trains between collieries and power stations.

Modellers in 'OO' are well-served for Class 20s, with Bachmann's model being fully revamped a few years ago and new versions



MODEL Heljan BR Class 20
♦ Price approx. £375.00

AVAILABILITY: Not in current range,
but available second-hand



being produced almost every year. *Model Rail* featured the Bachmann '20' in last month's issue, with George adding a few detail tweaks and a weathered finish. Oh, and the old Lima Class 20, which originated in the 1980s, still gets a run out in Hornby's budget RailRoad range, too.

In 'N', the Farish '20' also recently gained a detail and electrical upgrade from Bachmann, while in 'O' gauge, Heljan's model has been hugely popular over the years. Sadly, it's not in the current range, but examples can still be found at retailers, especially in pre-owned

condition. First appearing in 2010, initially just the original disc headcode '20s' were offered by Heljan. Thankfully, by 2018, the later box headcode variants were added to the catalogue, and it's a pair of these later-style '20s' that feature here.

Faced with running a pair of Heljan '20s' on my layout, which will be semi-permanently coupled, I pondered if I could simplify matters slightly by running them both with a single sound-fitted DCC decoder and a speaker in each locomotive. Given that a single LokSound XL decoder, pre-loaded with authentic Class 20



sounds, is well over £200, this would offer a significant cost saving.

It also occurred to me that running four separate electric motors was a bit of overkill (each '20' is equipped with a pair of motors, one-per-bogie), so I stripped one from each loco.

To improve performance, I also decided to link the power collectors on each model, therefore expanding the pick-up 'footprint' which should virtually eliminate any stalling or breaks in contact over the baseboard joints, points and crossings.

This task required multiple cable connections between the two locomotives but, by painting the exposed areas of wire black, they can represent the various brake hoses and multiple working jumper cables that would link the '20s' in real life. You could, of course, just use black wire, but then you'll lose track of which wire is which, making any repairs or modifications in future a bit of a headache!

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ LokSound XL DCC sound decoder, speaker **Availability:** Roads and Rails **Web:** www.roads-and-rail.co.uk
- ◆ 40-pin berg connector strips, cable (various colours) **Availability:** Model shops, electrical suppliers or Amazon **Web:** www.amazon.co.uk
- ◆ BR TOPS numbers and double-arrow logos, 'domino' headcode panels **Availability:** Railtec Transfers **Web:** www.railtec-models.com

TOOLS

- ◆ Miniature screwdrivers
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Fine-nose pliers
- ◆ Hacksaw
- ◆ Files and abrasives
- ◆ Drill and bits
- ◆ Modelling knife and spare blades
- ◆ Soldering iron and equipment

Looking at what's needed to make everything work, there are three wires for the head and tail light functions, plus another for the cab interior light. Two cables feed power to the speakers, the pick-ups for the track supply require another two, and then a further pair for the twin polarity connections to the motor. That gives us a total of 10.

Over the years I have used several types of plugs and sockets, strip connectors and multipin connectors, but have now settled on single strip male and female strip connectors (see Step 10), known as berg strips. They're available from electrical suppliers or Amazon, with packs of several strips costing less than a 'tenner'. I find them a good size for 'O' gauge locomotives and are strong and resilient and are great for all manner of electrical work on locomotives and layouts, especially miniature LED lighting connections and DCC sound. Available in long 40-pin strips and can be simply cut to whatever size you need. The cables can then be soldered to the pins.

In terms of a physical coupling between the '20s', I've found the supplied screw-link couplers to work just fine, thanks to the sprung draw hooks and the ability to adjust the length of the coupling with screw, just like the real thing. As long as there's enough clearance to avoid the sprung buffers locking up on curves, there should be no issues. My conjoined '20s' have been working well in either direction and, with a motor in each locomotive, the tractive effort is spread between the pair.

With just a single decoder, operation is simplified and, with a separate speaker in each locomotive, the sound effects are convincing, especially in the setting of a large layout where any small nuances between two separate sound systems would be lost.

So now I can sit back and watch - and listen - as this pair of English Electric Type 1s rumble along with a long rake of freight wagons.

Job's a good 'un!

STEP BY STEP



1

Very gently prise out the cab windscreens with the tip of a scalpel, taking care not to scratch the clear glazing. Work your way around the edge until it comes loose.



2

Working through the open windscreens, release the two small screws inside the cab, which hold it to the bonnet. Carefully remove them and keep them somewhere safe.



3

With the screws released, you can wriggle the cab loose. You may need to ease a plastic shim between the cab and body to release the locating tabs before it can be lifted away.



4

Now remove the four screws below the floor that secure the body to the chassis. Then ease the body away, taking care with the couplings at each end.



With TOPS numbers in place, and a weathered finish, the electrically conjoined Class 20s are ready for service.



It's the early 1990s and Class 20s 20117 and 20121 approach Arpley Yard, having deposited its load of coal at Fiddler's Ferry power station. COLOUR RAIL

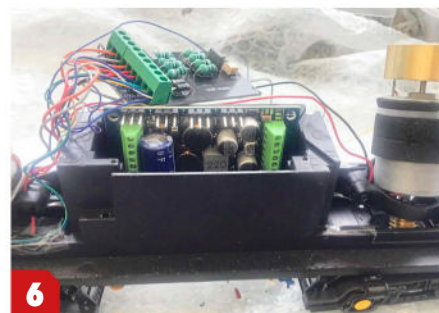


Ready to depart Point of Ayr colliery, 20214 leads 20143 on a freshly loaded merry-go-round coal train in September 1991. This North Wales colliery, which worked a plentiful seam beneath the Dee estuary, supplied coal to Fiddler's Ferry power station, near Warrington. D. HOWARD/COLOUR RAIL



5

You always need a lot of power in 'O' gauge, but most layouts won't need four individual motors in this set up, so I removed one from each '20'. Release the screw on the retaining brace and ease the motor out.



6

Remove the electronics plate on the chassis and you will see the LokSound XL DCC decoder will drop into the slot in the chassis. Cover the rear of the decoder with a non-conductive material to prevent any shorting.



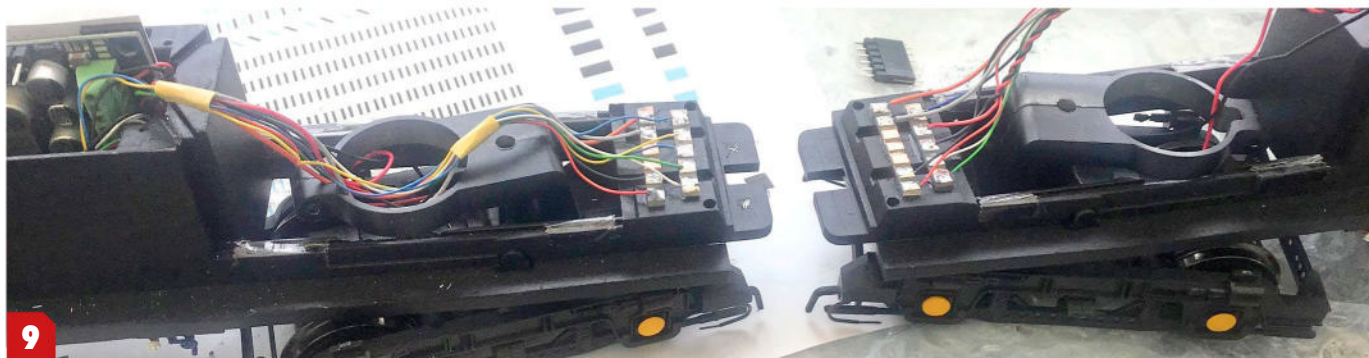
7

As the chip is sitting in the hollow the speaker can go underneath. This will require cutting the cast metal supports away that hold the fuel tank in place with a good hacksaw. Vacuum away all traces of the metal swarf.



8

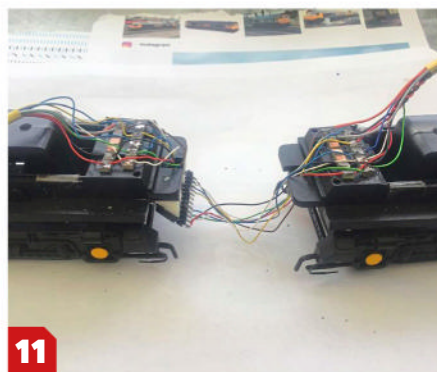
Try the speaker in place and mark the tanks where the speaker sits. Then cut away any plastic so there is a snug fit. I glued the speaker and tanks into place with UHU contact adhesive.



Now it's time for the jumper cables to link each '20'. I used copper clad sleeper strips, filing sections of the copper away to form insulated pads onto which each of the wires could be soldered.



To allow easy disconnection of cables, I used these connection strips, which can be cut to the desired size. Colour-coded cables were soldered to the connector pins.



Work out how long the cables need to be. They need to allow the locomotives to operate on curves, but not too long. Once happy, all the remaining solder connections were made.



Now for the detailing. I fitted the supplied snowploughs to the outer cab ends only. Firstly, I opened out the mounting holes until the parts fit easily, then glued them in position.



These '20s' lacked TOPS numbers and BR logos. I masked the windows and sprayed a coat of gloss varnish. When fully dry, I added some Railtec waterslide transfers.



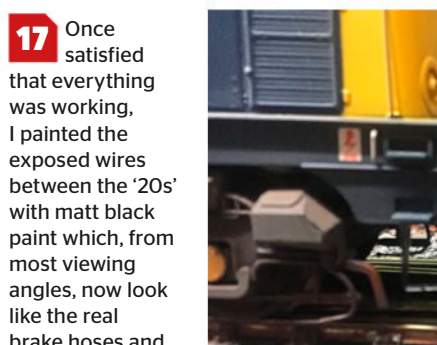
To suit the 1980s era, I removed the panels from the box headcodes and abraded away the alphanumerical codes to leave clear panels. The panels were then re-fitted into the boxes.



I applied 'domino' panels with the help of waterslide transfers from Railtec, which are more suitable for my chosen time period. Make sure you get the transfers central and even.



The final detailing job was to add a footplate crew and reassemble the bodysheils. The models were then test-run to check everything worked correctly.



Once satisfied that everything was working, I painted the exposed wires between the '20s' with matt black paint which, from most viewing angles, now look like the real brake hoses and jumper cables.



HOW TO

BUILD A CEMENT LOADING SIDING



A trip to Switzerland inspired **Peter Marriott** to make this modern single siding terminal, based on an industrial scene close to Lake Lucerne.

This project is based on an intriguing rail freight installation I stumbled across recently beside Lake Lucerne in Switzerland.

Located close to Lucerne's impressive railway station, the siding is fed by a short branch running from the main yard, across Werftstrasse, and passing between modern apartment blocks and trendy cafés and restaurants.

The simple facility consists of a steel shed, formed from an old shipping container, and a concrete pad equipped with pressurised loading equipment to service a handful of tank wagons at a time. The siding's operation is connected to the nearby SEEKAG cement and concrete manufacturing plant, which sits behind an inconspicuous outer façade.



The SEEKAG company manufactures cement and concrete products, which are transported by road and rail, while raw materials are also moved to the site on large barges, via the lake.

When I visited, I thought the location - with a diesel shunter pushing a few cement wagons in and out - could be a boon to any space-starved modeller wishing to add an industrial facility to their layout, regardless of the location. One siding and a connection to the main line are all that is needed.

Furthermore, cement is not the only commodity that could be handled at such

a facility. Any cargo in powder or liquid form could be handled (loading or discharging), such as lime, chemicals or oil, to name a few.

Various pressure-loaded tank or hopper wagon types are available in RTR form, such as BR 'Presflos' (Bachmann), 'Prestwins' (Clark Railworks), PCV (Accurascale), and various PCA types (Accurascale, Bachmann and Hornby), while TTA and TEA tanks and derivatives are available from Bachmann, Hornby and Revolution Trains.

GET ROLLING

The real shed at Lucerne - which houses the machinery to power the pressurised loading system - looks to have been converted from a 40ft shipping container, so converting an off-the-shelf model is an option. However,

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Mounting cardboard, balsa wood, grey, black and white acrylic paints, H girder plastic length, Redutex timber cladding
Availability: Model shops
- ◆ Auhagen 52233 Corrugated Sheets
Availability: www.goldenvalleyhobbies.com
- ◆ AMMO Oilbrusher Rust and Wet Effects, Fresh Dust enamel paint, MIG enamel weathering washes and thinners, Nature Effects
Availability: www.scalemodelshop.co.uk

TOOLS

- ◆ Modelling knife & fresh blades
- ◆ Self-sealing cutting board
- ◆ Steel ruler
- ◆ Pencil
- ◆ Paintbrushes
- ◆ Tamiya fine sandpaper
- ◆ Mod Podge adhesive



These detailed Hornby (ex-Lima) PCA bulk powder tanks are an ideal wagon type for such a facility.



adding the large double doors on the side of the structure and blanking off the existing end doors would not be easy. Instead, I decided to scratchbuild the shed, as well as the loading equipment.

Over the years, I have amassed various plastic and corrugated sheets from different manufacturers, and I was keen to see if I could use Auhagen products again (readily available in the UK). In addition to the Auhagen plastic sheets, I used mounting cardboard as the basis for the roof, overlaid with a piece of Redutex cladding I had to hand, plus miscellaneous items from my spares box. While it takes a lot longer to make structures from scratch, it is a lot more satisfying – and the result is a unique structure that won't appear on any other layout.

On studying images of real modern huts, it was clear the structure is simply a rectangular box. However, it's the details that make it look more realistic, so I assembled various



Workbench

EXPERT MODELLERS SHOW YOU HOW

detailing bits and pieces, including signs, to add interest to this tiny building, which now forms part of a display diorama for modern rolling stock.

Auhagen's range of plastic sheets are useful for scratchbuilding, saving hours of repetitive work creating various surface patterns and textures. The corrugated sheets I used (no. 52233) are suitable for 'HO' and 'TT' scales, and can be used for the roofs and sides of warehouses and industrial buildings. I acquired mine from Golden Valley Hobbies, www.goldenvalleyhobbies.com

The building and concrete unloading equipment took around five hours to build in total. Once it was in position, I then spent a couple of hours working to blend it into the landscape and adding a few more details to it, including the placing of a number of figures.

Why not add a bit of modern freight operation to your layout? As you can see here, just a short siding and a few hours' work is all that's needed, and it provides a perfect excuse for indulging yourself in some lovely new RTR wagons!

PROTOTYPE INSPIRATION

The real location, close to the shore of Lake Lucerne, with a pair of Holcim twin-silo cement wagons being loaded via the pressurised hose system. This type of wagon is available in 'HO' from Roco, but a host of UK-outline 'OO' gauge wagon types are also suitable for a facility like this, which is eminently modellable.



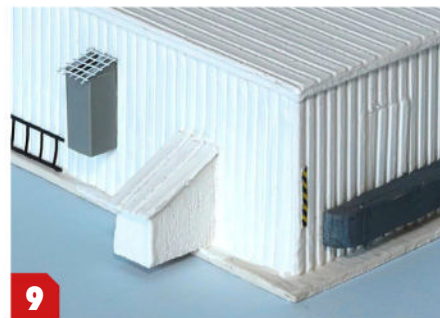
STEP BY STEP



The corrugated sheets by Auhagen (52233) contains a pair of 100mm by 200mm sheets of moulded styrene, approx. 1mm thick. I used another Auhagen pack (80352) for the corners of the building.



I used three coats of white Revell acrylic paint to colour the building, applied with a flat paintbrush in vertical movements to minimise visible brush strokes. Each coat was allowed to dry before applying the next one.



Extra details added to the hut, including the warning markers on the corners of the building, which are cut out from a Kibri paper insert.



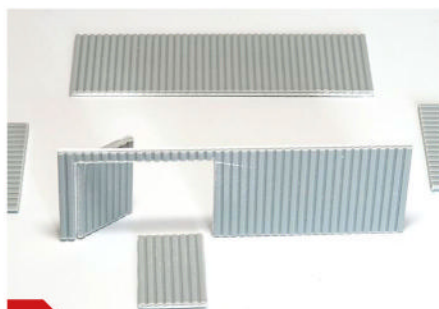
A wooden skewer was used as the main line carrying the cement to the wagons. The other details were made from leftover parts from all sorts of plastic kits, most of which I painted black.

Nicely weathered

Replicating rust, corrosion and general weathering has been made far easier with AMMO's range of oil paints, specially formulated for modelling use. The cap has a built-in precision brush to apply the paint directly onto the model, rather than having to put the oil paint on a palette before use. Usefully, the container includes a dispenser-cleaner system that works to remove any excess paint from the brush, which is a handy feature that helps keep paint use to a minimum. The colour range includes common shades - all with the built-in applicator brush.

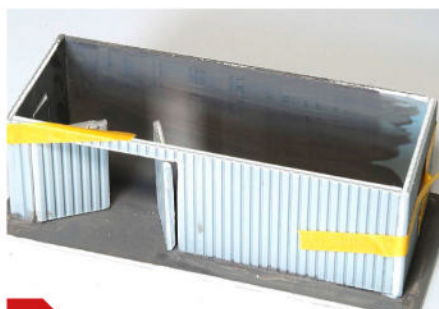
AMMO's Rail Center enamel-based weathering washes and odourless thinners are also excellent, allowing subtle effects to be created with ease.





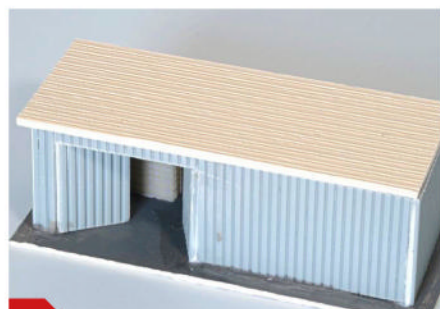
2

The lower edge of the sheets has raised moulding 'pips', which I sliced off with a sharp craft knife before I started to assemble the structure. Here you can see the main pieces for the walls after they've been cut out.



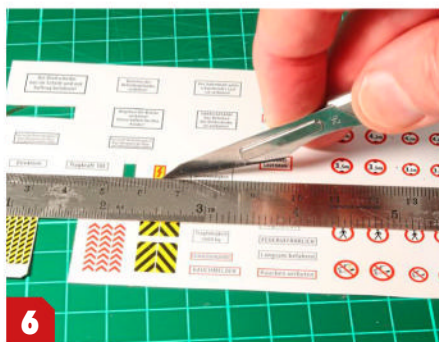
3

I used masking tape to hold the walls in position once they'd been glued using Mod Podge. This worked well, as the glue dried in a short time, and the fix was good. It also filled any gaps between the pieces.



4

I fixed the walls to a thin piece of cardboard for stability as the glue dried. The roof was something I found in my spares box, being a piece of Redutex timber cladding that looked good once it was weathered.



6

I wanted to add a little visual interest to the white walls of the modern small building, and found that cutting a few different coloured signs from a sheet in a Kibri plastic kit was just the job.



7

A few small notices and signs draw your eyes to the plain walls of the hut. I was keen to leave one of the doors open and make the interior a cameo scene, to add extra interest to the structure.



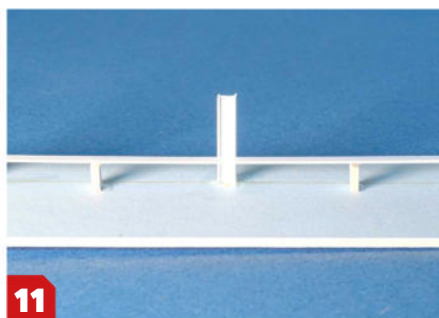
8

Around the outside of the real hut were various extractor fans and channels. I used pieces of balsa wood to shape these additional details, in addition to using bits and pieces from my spares box.



10

To weather the building, I used Rail Center Fresh Dust (from the AMMO range), applied with a large paintbrush to give a smooth finish. Only one coat was needed.



11

To build the cement loading equipment, I used pieces of H plastic strip by Plastruct for the upright supports, with various thicknesses of cardboard used as additional supports.



12

Here, the plastic and card pieces are shown next to the piece of black wire that will replicate the loading tubes to connect the wagon openings to the loading equipment.



14

Here, the loading pipes made from electrical wire have been shaped between my fingers and glued to the structure with Mod Podge, then covered in masking tape to create a smooth finish.



15

Using the Rail Center Fresh Dust wash, I weathered the concrete around the loading equipment. The modern shed was detailed with miscellaneous items from my spares box including ducting made from balsa wood.



16

To add life, I used Noch Tiny Scenes pack no. 15616, comprising a workman picking up a crate of tools, trolley with canisters on it, and painted oil drum. A couple of weathered figures by Preiser finish off the site.



HOW TO

WEATHER A WAGON - WITH A TWIST

Steve Nall experiments with a photo-realistic weathering technique, employing a novel approach to create DIY decals.

On one of my days volunteering at Didcot Railway Centre, I looked closely at an area at the back of the locomotive shed, which has a line of unrestored GWR wagons. Looking even closer, the textures of these wagons soon fascinated me; they looked so highly complex. If I built a similar collection of old GWR wagons in 4mm for my preservation layout (I already have a Bloater, a 'Fruit D' van and a 'Mink G' goods van built and primed, stuck in a siding waiting to be preserved), how could I replicate these patterns?

Normal weathering techniques wouldn't do it. Maybe, I considered, I could make a photo of the



MODEL: Parkside by Peco PC85 GWR 6T Insulated Van Mica B kit. Price: £18.15

AVAILABILITY: PECO stockists, web: www.peco-uk.com



side of the wagon and then 'stick' it on a model? My plan was to create and print my own decal 'wrap', akin to how many modern trains are now finished. This would portray the real wagon exactly how it appears in my photographs.

I roped my daughter Holly in to help with image manipulation, via the free smartphone app, Snapseed (see Step 6). I scaled it down by trial and error, rather than any complex mathematical equations. Once it fitted correctly and looked right, I was happy. The

images were then printed onto an A4 sheet of Lazertran Inkjet waterslide decal paper.

Waterslide decal papers are available from art and craft stores, usually with a white background, which allows colours to be applied to their best effect, or with a clear backing film. I opted for the white-backed sheets, as printing onto clear film can be tricky, especially with most home inkjet printers. The printed sheet needs to be sealed before use with a water-resistant, clear varnish, because



What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Lazertran A4 Inkjet waterslide decal paper
- ◆ Winsor & Newton Galeria Gloss Varnish, 250ml (water-based)
Availability: Art and craft stores, or London Graphic Centre
Web: www.londongraphics.co.uk

TOOLS

- ◆ Knife and spare blades
- ◆ Steel rule
- ◆ Cutting mat
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Files and abrasives
- ◆ Paintbrushes



The 'Tevan' among other preserved GWR wagons at Didcot Railway Centre.

otherwise the inkjet printer's ink will run when the decal is soaked in water. Full instructions are usually supplied with packs of waterslide decal paper, so do study and follow them.

One decal covered the whole side, slotting within the raised vertical corner beading, which provided a natural frame, along with the overhanging roof. Working with a large

decal has challenges, namely ensuring it is cut precisely to size and correctly aligned. I took care to ensure no air bubbles were trapped below it, using soft brushes, cotton swabs and kitchen towels to soak up excess water.

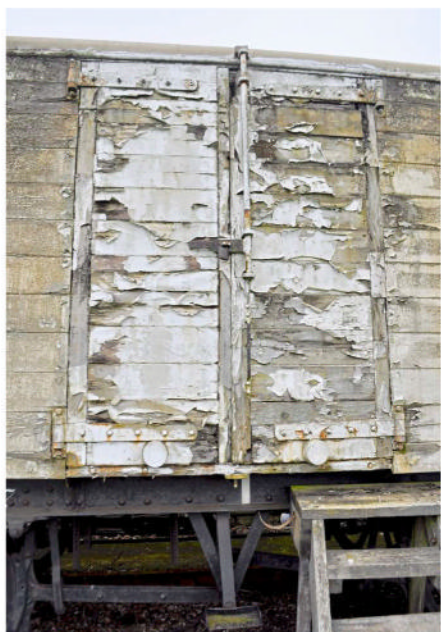
Printing multiple decals is recommended in case something goes wrong on the first (or second!) attempt. I considered splitting the image up into four sections, relating to the left-hand side, two parts to the door, and the right-hand side, but decided it wasn't worth it. If faced with more complex sides on other wagons, I'll definitely have to do that.

To improve adhesion, I applied a coat of acrylic varnish to the rear of the decal while it





This quick, one-off project to try a new technique has paved the way for future weathering jobs as the results are rather impressive.



Note the peeling paint, plus the timber stairs, as this wagon has been in use as a static store – something worth considering for the end of a siding, maybe.



The texture of algae and moss is difficult to recreate with paints, so a photo decal may be the answer.

was wet, as this helped it stick to the wagon's side. An alternative would be to add some PVA glue to the water in which the decal is soaked. Once positioned and fully dry, applying a further coat of clear satin or matt varnish over the decal will add another layer of protection.

My model is designed to be seen from one side only, and from a distance. It will be static, so there was no need for the brass axle bearings or added weight, but I couldn't resist adding the usual three-link couplings purely for visual purposes. After all, this mini project is only really about cosmetics and looking good from a certain perspective.

I did notice at an early stage that there was a wooden set of steps and a handrail right in front of the wagon (see left) – a legacy of it being employed as a static store – and part of the handrail would show on the final image. I didn't panic or get annoyed, but instead dabbled with a drop of paint, chalk and a pencil, before a final waft of matt varnish sealed everything in. The only omission I made was the wagon's number and a couple of small white tare weight markings on the solebar.

A LEARNING CURVE

This was a quick, one-off project to try out a new approach; I plan to use other materials to recreate this severely aged effect in future. However, I'd use this technique again as I like the overall look. With the larger GWR wagons, I will probably have to separate the decal image and fit the sections between the side ribs. Also, I'd probably do two things differently next time: take the photos further away to avoid distortion, with a tripod and a shutter release, and higher up if possible; and print the image at the highest quality available on the printer.

• Steve thanks Roger Orchard, Operations Manager at GWS Didcot, for his assistance.

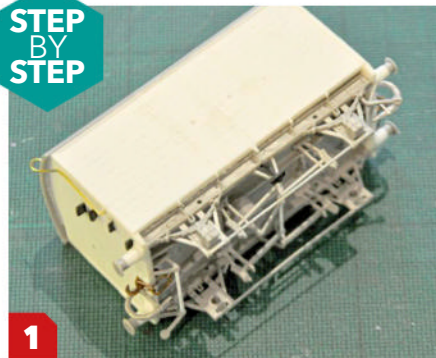
PROTOTYPE FACTFILE

Converted from a GWR 'Mica B' refrigerated meat van in 1938, 'Tevan' No. 79933 was originally built at Swindon in 1922. The interior was lined with zinc sheeting and carried cocoa from the J.S. Fry works at Keynsham, often on overnight express goods trains to London. It would also carry tea from the J. Lyons depot at Greenford, running back towards Bristol.

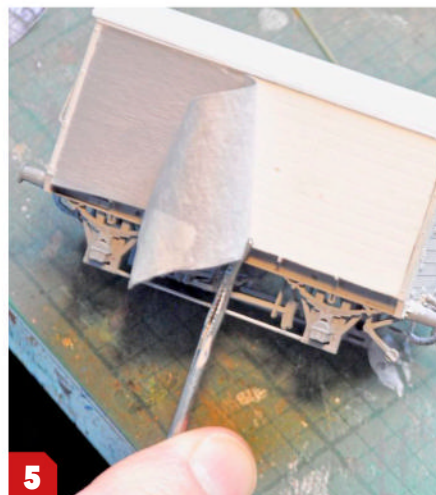
The 'Tevan' is now in the care of the Great Western Society at Didcot Railway Centre, which has its website at www.didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk



STEP BY STEP



I won't repeat the kit's instructions here, but before assembling the body, carefully flatten the moulded handle and hinge detail from the side(s). I assembled the sides and ends and tacked the roof in place, using liquid poly cement throughout. I prefer to squeeze the floor into place from below, as it makes the most of the precise fit around the body corners. This way, the floor can be gently fettled into place until it fits snugly.



When the grey paint was dry, I gently peeled off the masking tape and tidied up any areas where the primer had seeped through. This unpainted area was then coated with white paint and left to dry thoroughly.



I printed the images out on a sheet of A4 Lazertran Inkjet waterslide decal paper and allowed the sheet to dry for about an hour, as per the instructions. Images printed on this kind of paper will need a white background because, once a final layer of varnish is applied, they turn transparent.



2

Leave aside to cure overnight before assembling the chassis. As this model will be static, I saved the brass bearings for another project and modelled the Dean Churchward brake handles in the lower position (this wagon is going nowhere!). As well as creating the wire handrails using the brass wire supplied, I also added vacuum brake hoses and scale three-link couplings.



3

Next, I taped over the wagon side, within the raised external corner beading. This is the area where the printed decal will sit. The rest of the wagon was then sprayed with grey primer using an aerosol.



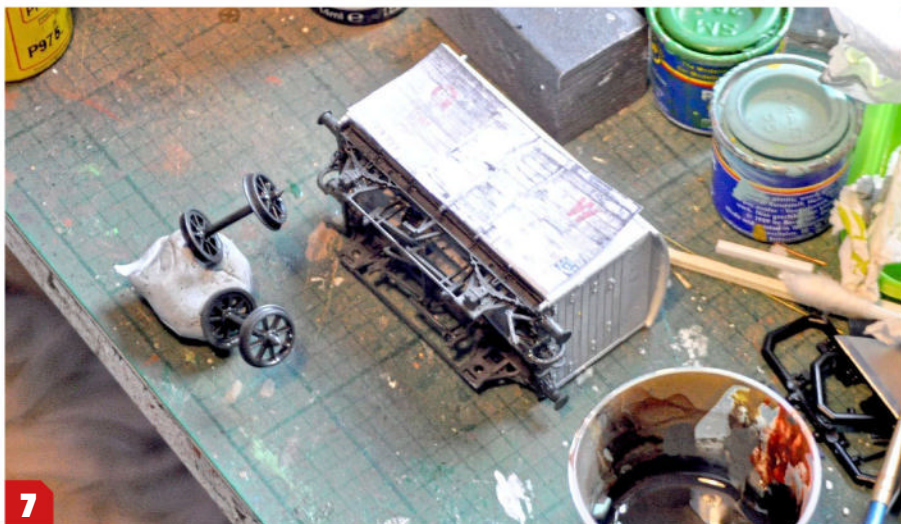
4

The corner beading, ends and roof were painted a light grey shade by hand. There is a light blue hue to the real van and, overall, it's lighter than you may think such a decaying vehicle should be. I mixed up a colour that matched the shade visible here as close as possible.



6

Having photographed the real wagon from ground level and in close quarters, there were naturally some issues around perspective. Our daughter Holly came to the rescue: "I imported the image into the phone app Snapseed, then used the 'perspective' tool to alter the horizon angle and square up each corner of the image, using tilt, rotate and scale commands," she told me. Thank goodness for 21st Century daughters!



7

Once corrected, the image was eventually - after trial and error - cropped and scaled down to 61.5mm by 27mm, manipulating it as part of a Microsoft PowerPoint slide (I am no good at all with numbers, just what looks right). A few test prints on regular paper followed, which were cut out and fixed to the wagon with Blu-Tac to gauge how it would look.



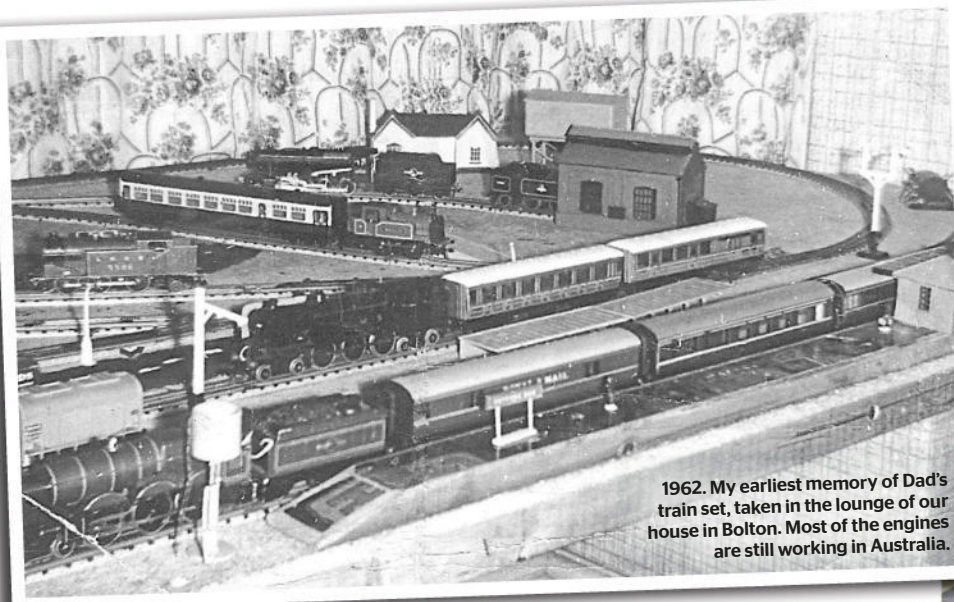
9

Using Winsor & Newton Galeria Gloss Varnish, I brushed on a thin layer on the white side and immediately put the transfer into a small bowl of lukewarm water, left it for about 30 seconds to uncurl, and slid it on. I avoided sliding it around too much, but once I was happy with the position (and had checked for air bubbles) I carefully dabbed it with tissue to ensure a snug fit before leaving it overnight to dry.

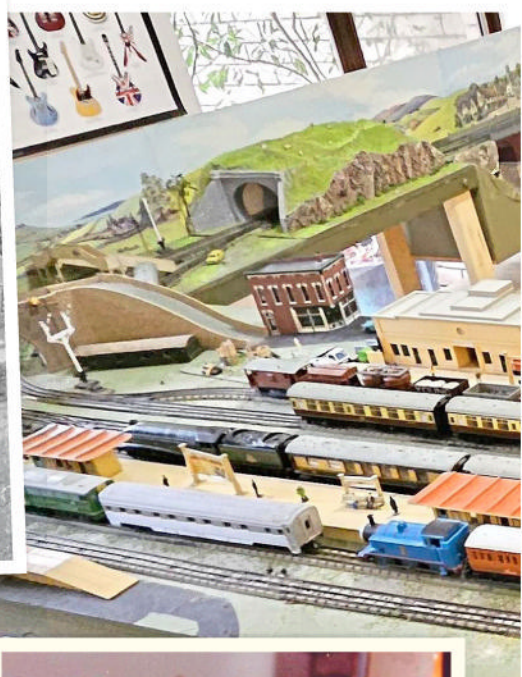


10

Seal with more varnish if necessary. The underframe was painted in order to give a weathered finish, then, following a wash of dark brown for anything below the body, I dusted the whole section with AK Interactive Pigments (weathering powders) - a mix of No. 44 and black. Green was dry-brushed onto the buffers to represent organic growth - this was a mix of Revell green SM 364, Humbrol yellow 154 and white.



1962. My earliest memory of Dad's train set, taken in the lounge of our house in Bolton. Most of the engines are still working in Australia.



SHOW & TELL

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

From Bolton to Perth, with love

By Dave Hodson, Perth, Australia; Photographs by Dave & Chris Hodson

I read with interest the 'Ebridge' article in the March 2025 issue of *Model Rail*, where the author mentioned that his layout was over 40 years old and had been through several house moves. My layout has had a similar life, but over 60 years, and includes a move to Australia!

My father, Frank Hodson, was the founder member of the now-defunct Bolton Model Railway Group in 1955. My earliest memory of his train set is when he had the layout in the lounge of our house, much to my mother's dismay!

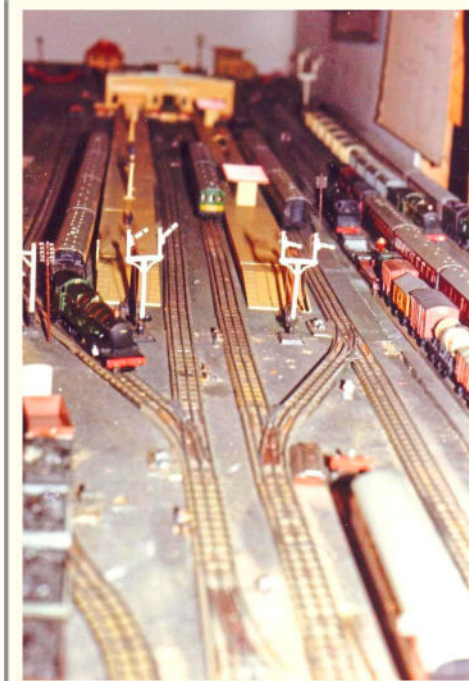
I inherited my dad's love of model trains, and Dad and I decided to convert the loft of our terraced house into a railway room. This meant we could then have a real layout, being able to run two trains consecutively

using the now-defunct method of double-throw double-pole cab control. Such sophistication in those days...

This provided a lot of fun for Dad and me until 1970, when Dad passed away. I continued to operate the trains until I moved to Australia with my wife in 1981.

Once we were settled in Australia, I went back to the UK, dismantled the train layout and transported the main parts (track, engines, rolling stock, accessories) to Australia, where my eldest son Andrew and I built an 8ft by 3ft layout, firstly in Adelaide and then later in Perth, where we now live.

The departure of our first son from the family home meant I then had a room to start again with a new layout, initially 8ft by



1979. The railway my dad and I made in the loft of our house in Bolton.



1997. Our first railway in Australia, initially in Adelaide, then moved to Perth.



2007. The railway was significantly expanded once our eldest son moved out. The layout at the rear of the image is unchanged.



10ft with an operating well in the middle. Control is via an H&M Duette, only about 40 years old!

The layout has since survived three further moves into what I hope is its final resting place.

Our second son Chris also inherited the railway gene, and he has done a significant amount of the scenic elements including the Faller viaduct and the Superquick church, which my father and I both built too, three generations building the same kit.

The layout is currently in its fourth generation of Hodson family lovers: it began with my father, then moved through me and my children and now is of interest to our four grandchildren. Indeed, the most recent comment from my grandchildren was: "Grandad we want a tunnel!"

Fortunately, my daughter leaving home meant that what was my music/train room became just my train room, so I was able to extend the layout by 900mm to allow room for the tunnel. This meant I could have an extra 900mm on the other side to keep the layout square, so I built a harbour and street scene, utilising Metcalfe Models houses, Langley boats and a free *Model Rail* kit, which became a bus shelter.

I have always believed model railways should be working and not static, and my layout is used a lot. One of the most satisfying parts of operating is the number of children who come and watch the train set in operation - with sun and sport both being prevalent in Australia, there are far fewer train sets per head of population than in the UK, so our layout is often the first train set children see. The working Mail Pickup is of particular interest to young and not-so-young children.

Finally, hats off to Hornby-Dublo for the quality of its products, still going after 60+ years on the other side of the world. They have brought much pleasure to four generations of the Hodson family, and I am very proud of this legacy from my father.



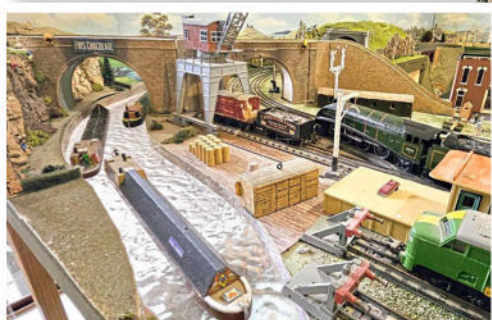
FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

All 2025. One of the new sections, featuring a town scene, market square and harbour. Girder bridges are Dapol and the stone bus shelter was a free kit from *Model Rail*.

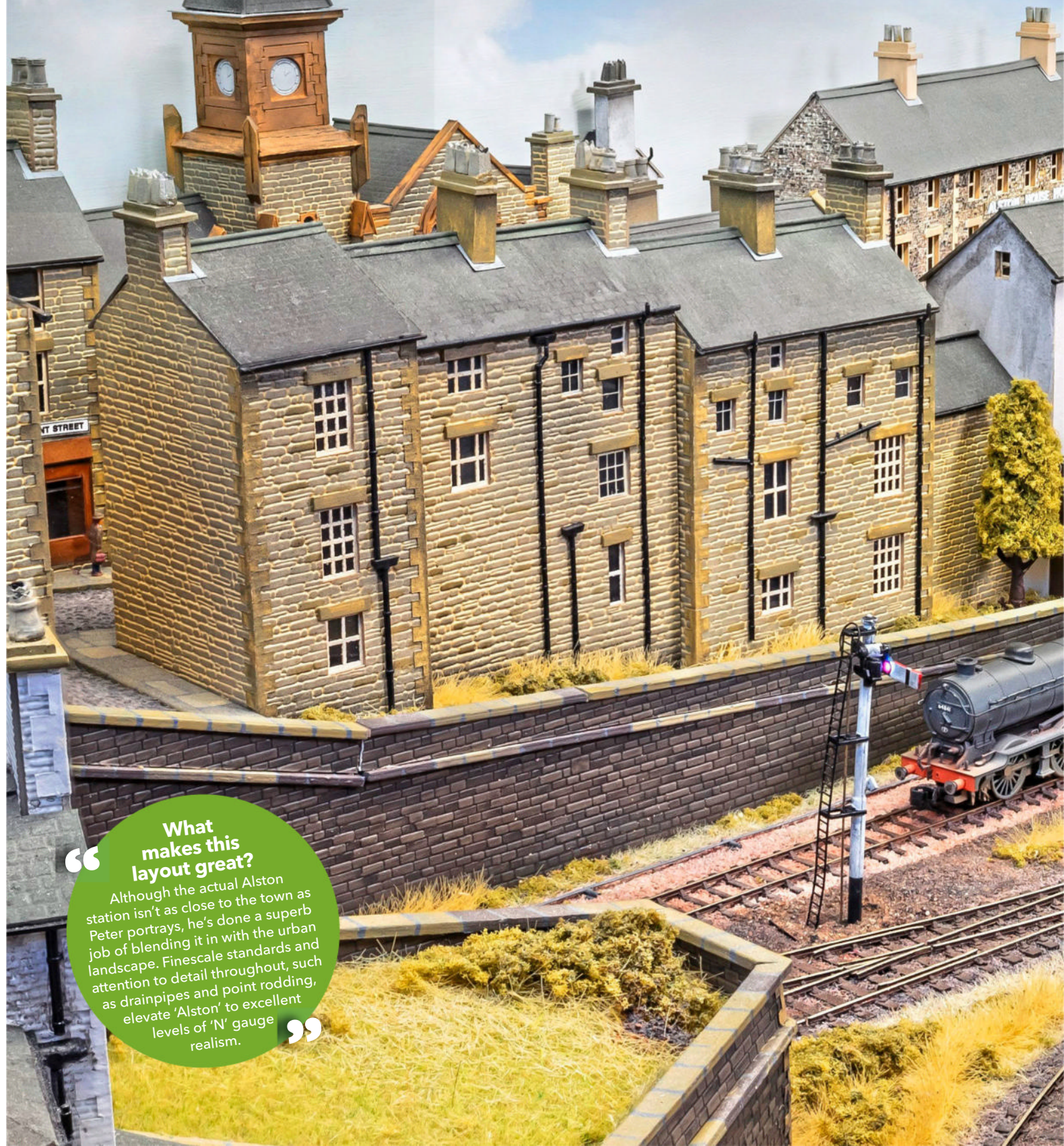
The third Superquick Church kit to grace the layout. The first was built by Frank Hodson, the second by me, and then my son Chris assembled this latest version. Note the poetic licence of son Chris modelling a funeral and wedding being held simultaneously.

The *Model Rail* team advised me this EAMES LMS 'Baltic' tank is very rare. Here it trundles light engine over the Faller Viaduct to pick up a freight.

'Canal corner' - note the Dapol crane and the rock and bridge climbers.



ALTERNATIVE ALSTON



“ What makes this layout great? ”

Although the actual Alston station isn't as close to the town as Peter portrays, he's done a superb job of blending it in with the urban landscape. Finescale standards and attention to detail throughout, such as drainpipes and point rodding, elevate 'Alston' to excellent levels of 'N' gauge realism.

Peter Brown's reinterpretation of Alston recreates the railway and urban landmarks of the Cumbrian town, but does so in compact 'N' gauge finescale form, more easily transportable for exhibitions.

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





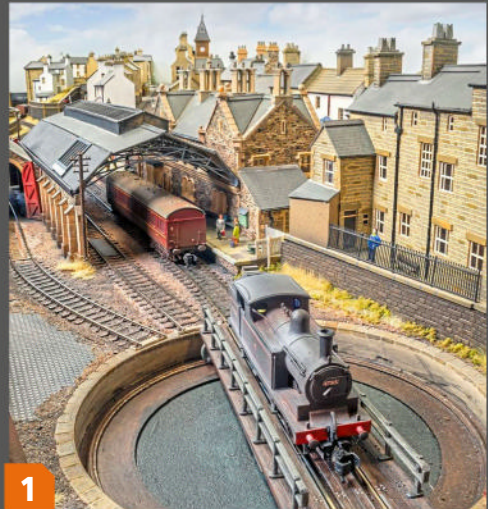
If you cast your mind back to MR351, Peter Brown's excellent 'N' gauge 'Richmond' layout featured in that issue, showcasing his own vision of the North Yorkshire market town. In many ways, this earlier layout, 'Alston', was its prototype. As with 'Richmond', it's based on an actual location, Alston in Cumbria, but re-imagines the distant station brought into the centre of a town whose loftier streets and houses now overlook the railway. Also like 'Richmond', the station is an architecturally interesting terminus with an ornate roof, plus goods yard, raised coal staithes,

ABOVE The station building, with its distinctive roof and attached single-road engine shed, is Peter's favourite part of the layout. Chinchilla dust is used for the main line, silica sand for sidings.

engine shed and gasworks nearby. And both 'Alston' and 'Richmond' include real buildings from the two stone-built settlements, modelled so accurately that those familiar with both places will immediately recognise their 2mm counterparts.

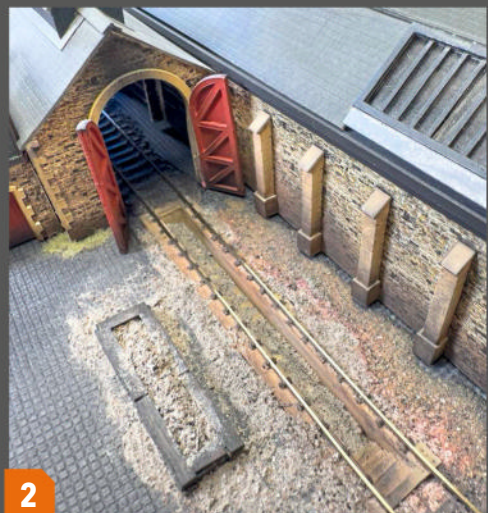
Alston itself has an intriguing railway history. It was arguably the last line shut under the Beeching Report; its closure was recommended in 1963 but because of its isolated position, snow often blocked road access during winter. It wasn't until May 1976, after highway improvements had been undertaken, that train services were permitted to be withdrawn. However, ➤

3 things we like



1

The turntable directly at the end of the station, a distinctive feature of the actual location.



2

Real ash is used around the engine shed area. "Railways are rarely clean," notes Peter.



3

The realistically cobbled and narrow, winding, undulating streets of the town.



the station now serves as the southern terminus of the 2ft narrow gauge South Tynedale Railway.

Peter picked the late 1950s/early 1960s as his setting. "I started in 2019, after I'd finished 'Monkchester', the Newcastle & District Model Railway Society layout I'd been working on since 1972. For the last few buildings, I'd used laser cutting and become quite excited at the idea of being able to model quite finescale stuff in 'N' gauge. 'Monkchester' was also so big that it needed a long wheelbase Transit van and crew of four for exhibitions. So I fancied something smaller that could fit in a car, made using my new techniques. That was really the driving force behind 'Alston'."

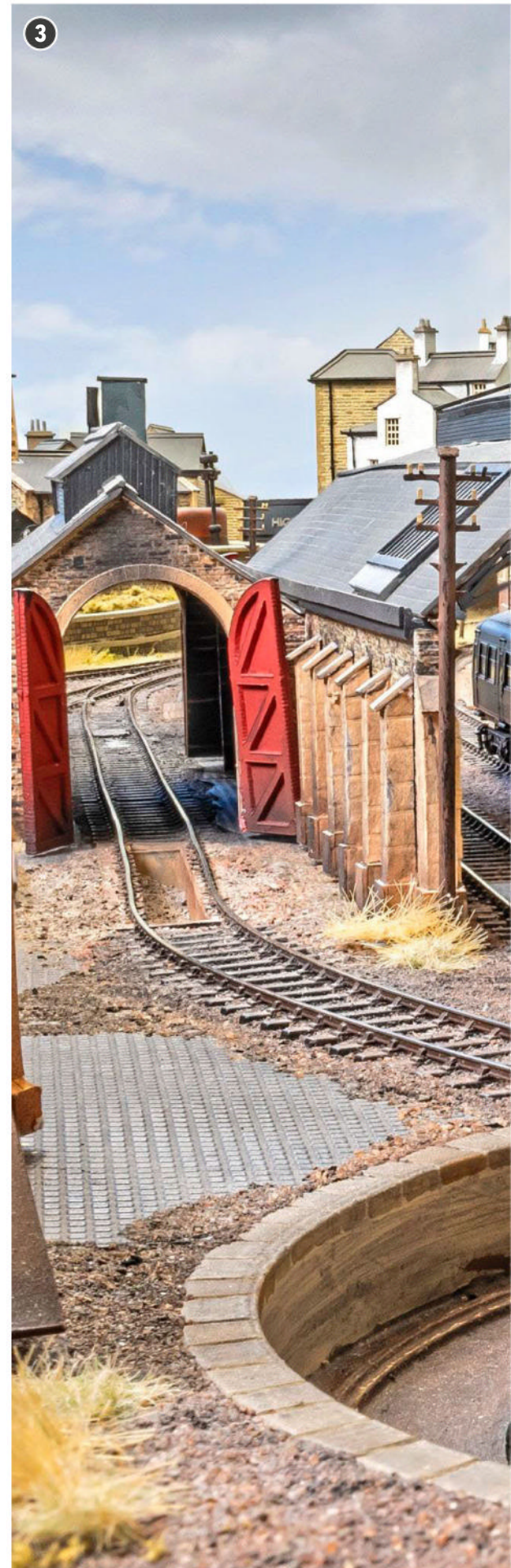
However, Peter was initially cautious about finescale track, never having tried it before. "At the time, it was out of my comfort zone but I bought a Code 40 point kit and Peco Code 55 point, and took them into the club to ask for opinions. That left no doubt at all that I needed to go down the Code 40 route. But I still wasn't confident until the 2mm Society did a workshop on soldering, led by Mick Simpson. I went along and Mick was very patient with me and my first efforts. With Code 40, of course, there are no fishplates, so every bit of track has to have a dropper on it. It's laborious but rewarding. You can't test it until it's all complete, so you just have to hope that trains will run successfully. Fortunately they did." For ballasting, Peter used chinchilla dust for the main line and silica sand in the sidings, tinted and then airbrushed.

REAL WORLD RESEARCH

Peter made visits to Alston for research and pictures. "The station is quite a way out of the town; if I'd modelled things as they were, I would have needed a baseboard four times the size, so I used artistic licence to move some buildings around and bring Alston High Street down to the railway – because ➤

"All the right buildings are there, but not necessarily in the right order"

RIGHT The turntable is kit-bashed from a Peco item, shortened from a scale 75ft to 55ft. The real turntable at Alston was 42ft, but as the North Eastern Railway found out, that was soon too small for most engines.





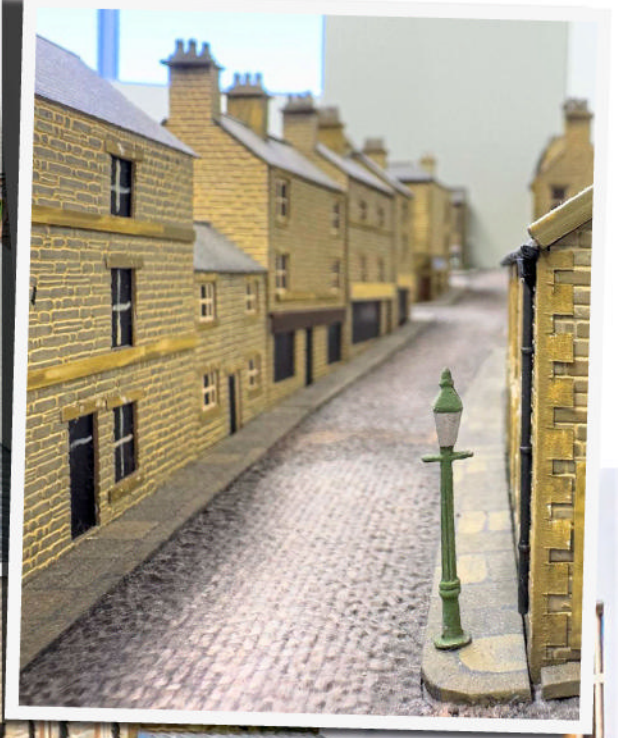
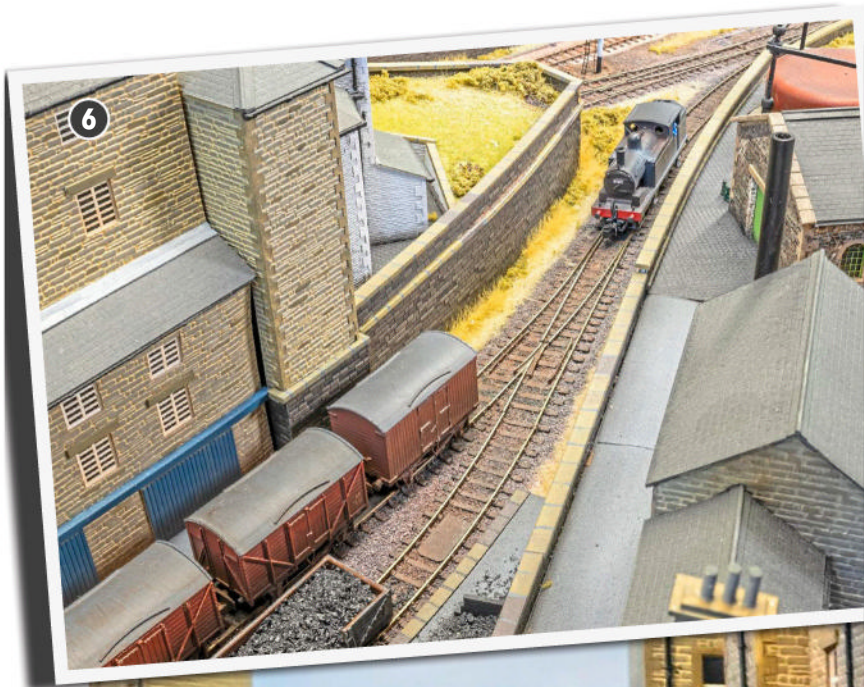
there were so many lovely structures in the town I wanted to model. To paraphrase Morecambe & Wise, all the right buildings are there, but not necessarily in the right order!"

With the station now in heritage use and recently having had a new trainshed roof, Peter approached the architects to ask if they had any survey drawings. "They sent me some, and I was able to manipulate them to 'N' gauge and create a schedule for laser cutting. So I was quite confident then that the building was absolutely to scale." Further details came from Ken Hoole's book *North-Eastern Branch Line Termini*. The stonework pattern came directly from photos Peter took, which he then made into 'brick' paper. ➤



Buildings such as the Cumberland Inn and Alston House Hotels are based on the real places in the town. The tower in the background is Alston Town Hall, with its Gothic window being a "standard item from York Architectural Models".





This process was also used for other structures. Every building on 'Alston' has been scratchbuilt using a combination of Slater's Plastikard and/or Daler mountboard, with all the roofs Plasticard. Aspects Peter was particularly keen to include were the downpipes and guttering on buildings. "I think they're very important; I used industrial amounts of Ratio guttering. Because you get all the brackets moulded on the Ratio items, it looks so much better than just using rod."

Elsewhere, the gasworks utilised an upturned aerosol can for its larger gasometer (albeit now replaced by a 3D-printed item), while a Humbrol enamel tin formed the basis of the smaller one. "The

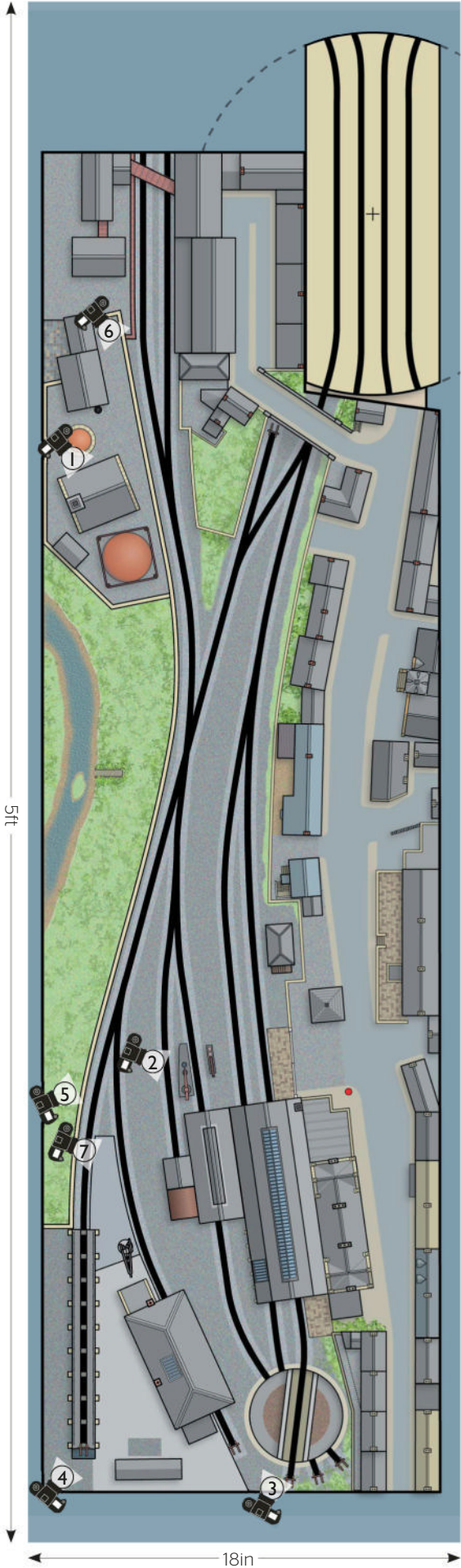
BELOW A Graham Farish Ivatt '2MT' enters 'Alston' with a local passenger service. The point rodding is styrene rod. "It's meant to be indicative rather than strictly accurate, but I think it's important to be there," says Peter. "It looks right."

only photo I had of the gasworks was a 1904 one of it in the distance, so I had to base it on not very good information," says Peter.

"People comment to me that there are a lot of buildings. But one of the things I try to do with my layouts is create a scene in which there happens to be a railway, other than a railway with a few buildings added on."

Out of all of the structures on 'Alston', it's the station building, with its adjoining engine shed, that Peter is especially proud of. "I chose Alston because it was a challenge. That's a building I want to make, I thought." The complex station roof features laser-cut trusses and, says, Peter, "they're very delicate and fragile, ➤







ABOVE It was getting a sound-equipped Graham Farish DMU that prompted Peter to add DCC control to 'Alston': "It sounded great on analogue, I thought it would be even better with digital."

LEFT Despite its compact size, 'Alston' sees a lively combination of passenger and varied goods services.

but somehow when you glue it all together, it becomes like a shell, and is quite strong." The station and shed scooped a 2mm Society award, although disaster subsequently struck when one of the layout's overhead light fittings fell on the shed and smashed it. Fortunately it was repairable.

Another notable feature is the turntable at the end of the station. "It was only 42ft when built, so very quickly the North Eastern Railway ran out of engines that could be turned on it," notes Peter. "It was there until the 1950s but for my model, I decided to reinstate it." He used a "butchered" Peco kit, which was the scale equivalent of 75ft. However, Peter reduced it to 55ft so it could take a 'J39' – just! "I cut bits out either side of the centre but kept the Peco electrics. The well was made by a club friend, Dennis Ogle, using resin turned in a lathe. The motor is a two revolutions per minute worm drive from eBay, powered by its own dedicated Gaugemaster controller."

Stock is mainly proprietary, albeit fitted with Dapol magnetic couplings allowing hands-free uncoupling.

FACTFILE: 'ALSTON'

Era: Late 1950s/early 1960s

Gauge and scale: 2mm finescale: 1ft, 'N' gauge

Size: 5ft x 18in

Track: Fine Trax Code 40

Power and control: Switchable DC and DCC
Gaugemaster Prodigy

Time to build: 18 months



ABOUT THE MODELLER: **PETER BROWN**

Peter is chairman of the Newcastle & District Model Railway Society, and has been involved with the hobby for most of his life, having started out with a Hornby clockwork 'O' gauge when aged five. Three-rail 'OO' gauge followed by the time he was 11; he later discovered 'N' gauge thanks to a friend's loft layout and started modelling 2mm scale himself in 1972. He's now trying '009', building a narrow gauge Ffestiniog Railway-themed line based on Portmeirion. When not immersing himself in miniature worlds, he enjoys cultivating the real one, as a keen gardener.

There is, however, an ex-LNER 'G5' with a 3D-printed body and Dapol 'M7' chassis, plus a scratchbuilt snowplough lurking in the sidings, adapted from a Graham Farish goods van – a nod to the real Alston's tendency to be cut off by snow in winter.

Peter has very recently sold 'Alston', but the good news is that its new South Wales-based owner still plans to exhibit it. Its first confirmed appearance will be at the Cardiff Model Railway Show over October 31/November 1. "It's been to plenty of exhibitions in the north," says its old custodian. "So I'm very pleased that it will now be seen down south as well." Keep an eye out for it! 

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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 a love for anything Southern.

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.





Irish Railway Models NIR DL Class Hunslet

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Irish Railway Models NIR DL Class Hunslet 103 *Merlin*, maroon; 101 *Eagle*, blue
 ◆ **PRICE** £220.00 (DCC-ready), £319.99 (DCC sound) ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Accurascale website only **Web** www.accurascale.com

One of the priorities of the newly formed Northern Ireland Railways (NIR) was to enhance the Dublin-Belfast 'Enterprise' cross-border express. In the late 1960s, these services were operated by diesel railcars, but a move towards diesel locomotives and new coaching stock – running in push-pull mode – would offer faster times and greater passenger comfort.

The Hunslet DL Class diesel-electric Bo-Bo locomotives, built especially for the NIR 'Enterprise' services, entered traffic in 1970 and remained in use until the 1990s, garnering something of a cult following with enthusiasts

along the way. Despite only three examples being built, their importance and multiple livery options make them a compelling subject for a model.

Irish Railway Models, part of the Accurascale family, revealed its intention to produce a RTR 'OO' DL Class a couple of years ago, and the models began arriving with customers in June. An impressive 11 different versions have been produced, across Nos. 101, 102 and 103, spanning the NIR maroon and blue schemes, but with various detail and livery tweaks to suit different periods in the working lives of all three.

Accurascale's research and product development was aided

by careful study and laser-scanning of the sole preserved example, 102, which is on display at the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum near Belfast and the manufacturer kindly supplied us with a pair of models to review.

In original maroon, with stylish yellow warning arcs, is 103 *Merlin*, while the natty NIR blue scheme is carried by 101 *Eagle*, with red warning arcs. Other versions feature the different styles of warning panels and branding.





3 things we like



1 The lift-off roof panel allowing DCC decoder access.



2 Beautifully detailed underframe and bogies.



3 Retractable buffer sleeves and securing chains.

“ Inside the cabs, the fully detailed driver consoles are highly visible through the windows, and the internal illumination (including the control panels) ensures it can be appreciated ”

Presented in Accurascale's usual foam-lined boxes, the model's instruction sheet is complemented by an informative booklet, outlining the history of the real locomotives, illustrated with contemporary advertisements, timetables and even a menu from the 'Enterprise' dining car (a full mixed grill for only £2.45!). All together, it's a very pleasing package.

HEAVY METAL

For such a stubby little 'Bo-Bo', this is a hefty model, weighing in at well over ½kg. The substantial die-cast chassis block accounts for most of the bulk, and yet the bodysell and underframe are highly detailed, while the plastic body has been moulded with a high degree of finesse.

The prototype's unique character has been captured

well, from the overhanging cab roof to the various bodyside grilles, the largest of which are separate etched metal fittings,

with a pleasing sense of depth. Fine wire handrails are fitted throughout and the glazing, complete with metallic 'alloy'



IRM NIR DL CLASS HUNSLET - in detail



Factfile: NIR DL Class Hunslets

In the late 1960s, Northern Ireland Railways (NIR) placed an order with the Hunslet Engine Co. of Leeds for three 1,350hp diesel electric Bo-Bo locomotives, as part of a revamp for the Dublin-Belfast 'Enterprise' express.

Hunslet was happy to take the order, but lacked production capacity at its own works, so assembly was sub-contracted to British Rail's Doncaster Works, with traction equipment supplied by English Electric/AEI Traction. In fact, the EE 8CSVT Mk 11 diesel power unit was an updated version of the power plant employed in BR's Class 20s.

The first of the trio - 101 *Eagle* - was handed to NIR in the spring of 1970 and 102 *Falcon* and 103 *Merlin* followed soon after, being shipped to Belfast via Preston Docks. Employed in tandem with push-pull rakes of BR Mk 2b and Mk 2c coaches, the

DL Class - also known as '101s' - worked the 'Enterprise' services between the capital cities until displaced by newer trains in the early 1980s.

This wasn't the end, however, as the '101s' could still be seen working to and from Dublin on off-peak services, summer extras or rugby specials. They also worked loco-hauled passenger services to other destinations in the North, while freight and infrastructure work became more frequent during their later years.

The first to be withdrawn was 103 *Merlin*, in 1989, with 102 *Falcon* the last in service, succumbing in 1998. The only survivor is 101, which now resides in the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum.

beading strips, is neatly flush-fitting and super-clear.

Atop the roof, the radiator cooling fan (powered by a separate motor), is visible below an etched multi-layer grille and the engine room access panels and exhaust port are all crisply rendered.

Inside the cabs, the fully detailed driver consoles are highly visible through the windows, and the internal illumination (including the control panels) ensures it can be appreciated. Sprung buffers are installed, complete with cosmetic retracting sleeves (for when running in 'push' mode) secured with fine chains. There are delicate safety chains linking the bogies to the chassis frames too.

The battery boxes, air brake gear and various reservoir tanks, valves and pipework make for an impressive sight, as do the bogies, which have a likeness to

those fitted below BR Class 20s. There's a wealth of suspension and brake gear inside of the bogie frames as well as

externally, and there's ample room to allow for finescale wheels to be installed if you prefer to model in something

closer to the real broad gauge of the Irish network.

Indeed, the model's external proportions have not been



'fudged' to fit into a 'OO' gauge, UK-outline profile, being a few millimetres wider than most British rolling stock, as it should be. All prototype dimensions look to have been scaled correctly, save for the 'OO' wheelsets, of course.

LIFT THE LID

In common with other Accurascale diesels, the roof features a discreet, magnetic lift-off panel, which can be dislodged with the edge of a fingernail. This allows easy access to the 21pin DCC interface and the centrally mounted 42mm by 22mm passive radiator speaker (which is fitted to all models). It also gives a good view of the radiator fan, plus a bank of small slide switches to allow the lighting functions to be governed by those running on analogue control.

Excitingly, our sample of 101 *Eagle* is a DCC sound-equipped version, so we could put it through its paces. As the real locomotives were equipped with virtually the same English Electric diesel engine as the BR Class 20s, there's understandable similarity in the sound and, thanks to that large radiator speaker, the audio experience is as rewarding as the visual.

The mechanism is nigh on silent and super-smooth, especially after a running-in period of about 30 minutes, on analogue and DCC control. A 'Stay Alive' capacitor unit ensures uninterrupted operation of the sound and light effects. Helped by all that weight, the tractive effort is substantial, with a dozen bogie coaches handled on the test track with no issues.

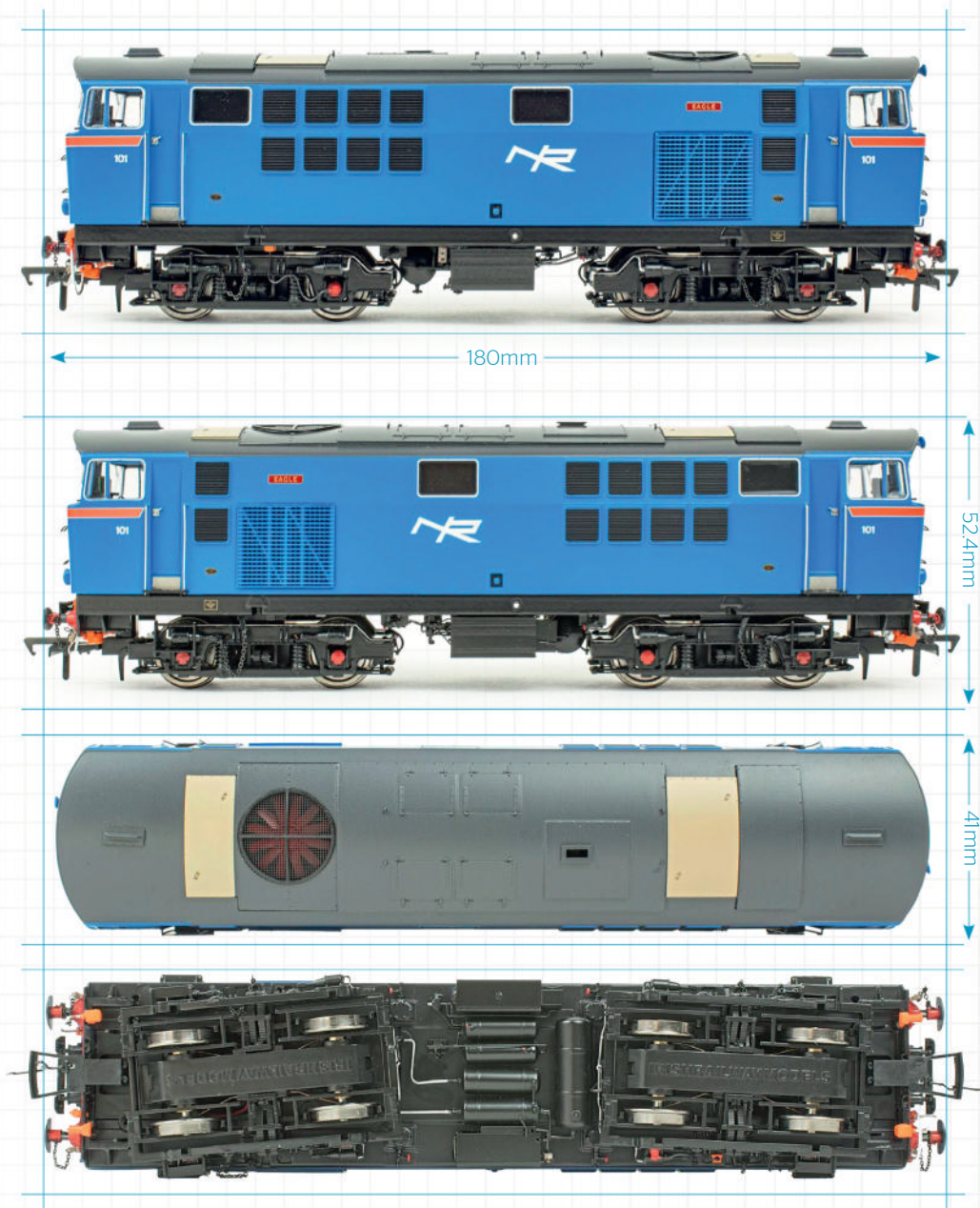
Each model comes with a generous bag of optional details, including etched nameplates (plus etched 'Enterprise' headboards), brake hoses, cosmetic oil tail lamps and magnetic NEM couplers to replace the slimline tension locks pre-fitted into the kinematic close-coupling units. These will be handy if running a fixed rake of coaching stock.

Talking of which, IRM's matching Mk 2b and Mk 2c 'Enterprise' carriages shouldn't be too far off, and the sight of a complete train will definitely be something to behold.

Build quality and paint finish are top-drawer, with accurate paint shades and flawless application. They're a bit more expensive than many of Accurascale's other diesel

locomotives, but the reduced production quantities and smaller potential market make this understandable.

Available only via the Accurascale website, they're reportedly selling well and will be very much welcomed by anyone who is modelling Northern Ireland's railways, as well as areas of the Republic through which they operated. (GD)



SUMMARY

PROS

- Faithful replicas.
- Excellent level of detail.
- Build quality and finish.
- Superb performance.
- Sound-fitted version adds extra fun.

CONS

- Nothing.

FINAL VERDICT

Gorgeous.

VITAL STATISTICS: IRM NIR DL CLASS HUNSLET

OVERVIEW

Manufacturer: Accurascale
Ref. No. IRM1333-DCC/IRM1322
Unit No. 101/103
Scale/gauge: 1:76 scale, 'OO' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 550g
Min. curve radius: 438mm (second radius)
Wheel back-to-back: 14.4mm

DIMENSIONS

Length (over buffers) 45ft 0in
 Height 13ft 0in
 Width 10ft 3in
 Wheel diameter 3ft 3in
 Bogie wheelbase 7ft 9in

PROTOTYPE

45ft 0in
 13ft 0in
 10ft 3in
 3ft 3in
 7ft 9in

1:76 SCALE

180mm
 52mm
 41mm
 13mm
 31mm

MODEL

180mm
 52.4mm
 41mm
 13mm
 31mm

ELECTRICS

Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail
Motor type: Five-pole
Lights: Directional head/tail, cab interior
DCC-ready? 21pin socket, speaker pre-fitted

MECHANISM

Drive system: Motor drives both axles of each bogie via cardan shafts and gears
Flywheel(s): Two
Traction tyres: No



Dapol BR Class 56

◆ **GAUGE 'N'** ◆ **MODELS** Dapol 2D-004-013 Class 56 56-59 EWS red/gold, 2D-004-015 Class 56 56006 BR blue ◆ **PRICE** RRP £156.60-£188.99 each

◆ **AVAILABILITY** Dapol stockists or Rails of Sheffield **Web** www.railsofsheffield.com

The BR Class 56 was first introduced to Dapol's 'N' gauge range in 2012, offering modellers a much more convincing rendition than the ageing Farish model from the early 1990s (now discontinued). I recall the *Model Rail* team being impressed by Dapol's model when it arrived but time marches on... and customer expectations continue to rise.

Accordingly, last year, the Welsh manufacturer announced plans for a fully re-tooled bodyside and other enhancements for its '56', and the first raft of models duly arrived with retailers in early June. A host of popular liveries are on offer, with BR blue, Railfreight Coal Sector, Transrail and EWS schemes available. Also soon to arrive (at the time of writing) are models in BR 'large logo' blue,

Fastline grey and DCR green, while a Railfreight Metals version is offered as part of the Gaugemaster Collection.

All models are available in DCC-ready and DCC fitted formats, but no factory-fitted sound options are on offer, as yet.

Under review here is 56006 in BR Rail blue and 56059 in EWS maroon/gold, both samples being kindly supplied by Rails of Sheffield. They make an interesting pair, with '006 being

a Romanian-built prototype while '059 was a product of Doncaster Works.

Indeed, Dapol's design team has catered for the subtle differences between the locomotives built in Romania, Doncaster and Crewe, as well as era-specific fixtures and fittings, thus opening the opportunity to accurately portray the whole 135-strong fleet. There are tangible improvements to the all-round level of finesse, with crisply moulded detail, especially on the roof and cab fronts, while the subtle differences in cab profile between the European- and British-made versions are visible.

The etched metal roof and bodyside grilles help the overall appearance, with red cooling fans visible below the roof grilles. On the sides, an authentically coarse mesh pattern can be





“Dapol’s design team has catered for the subtle differences between the locomotives built in Romania, Doncaster and Crewe, as well as era-specific fixtures and fittings”

discerned on the Romanian ‘56’, with the characteristic body framework visible behind each set of grilles.

EWS 56059 features the later style of air intakes at the No. 2 end, and this version also carries cab roof aerials. The marker lights (recessed or flush), air horn grilles, buffer types, and bufferbeam cowling (or lack thereof) are also well-observed. The pronounced rubber grommets around the windscreens and forward cabside windows are also present and picked out extremely neatly in black paint.

The underframe equipment looks to be unchanged from previous releases, with the bogie frames featuring plenty of moulded detail, while the fuel tank/battery box/compressor array amidships also looks the part, despite being a solid moulding.

Inside the model, the same heavy die-cast metal, split-frame chassis design is employed, equipped with a five-pole Super-Creep motor and low-friction

transmission, with drive to all wheels. Power is collected from each wheel too and the mechanism performed extremely well under test, on both samples. The ‘56’ runs smoothly and quietly, with superb slow-speed performance and ample haulage power, even for a heavy freight diesel.

The old 6pin DCC interface of the original models has made way for a Next18 interface, although no provision for a speaker is offered, which is a shame. In fact, there’s precious little space inside the bodyshell as things stand. The directional head and tail lamps work well, with a pleasing amount of light emitted.

In terms of finish, the liveries have been applied to a high

standard, with convincing paint shades employed and each colour separated crisply. The printed legends and symbols are neatly executed too, although I’m not fully convinced by the typeface of the large EWS lettering and numerals.

Detail bags are provided, offering optional air brake hoses and cosmetic screw couplings for the bufferbeams, if eschewing the bulky standard couplers (which simply clip into NEM sockets). There’s also a set of sandboxes and pipes for the outer corners, slotting into holes beneath the cabs.

It’s great to see these Class 56s reaching the shelves of retailers, offering us a much-improved rendition of a classic prototype at a great value price. **(GD)**



3 things we like



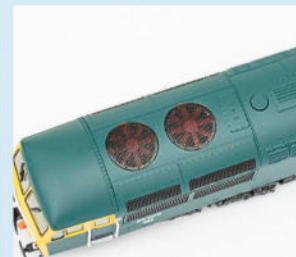
1

Improved all-round looks compared to predecessors.



2

Correct mesh pattern to suit Romanian- and UK-built ‘56s’.



3

Cooling fans visible beneath etched rooftop grilles.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Improved looks.
- Attention to detail.
- Superb runner.
- Quality finish.

CONS

- No DCC sound options.

FINAL VERDICT

Welcome tweaks to a popular model.



Hornby SR 'Merchant Navy' with Steam Generator

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Hornby R30399SS SR 'Merchant Navy' 4-6-2 No. 21C1 *Channel Packet*, SR lined Malachite green ◆ PRICE £364.99

◆ AVAILABILITY Hornby stockists Web www.hornby.com

Due to its popularity, Hornby's Steam Generator technology is gradually spreading across its range of 'OO' gauge tender locomotives, with a host of new versions recently announced, including the Gresley 'A4' and GWR 'Saint', which

should arrive next year. Available now, however, are two different Southern Railway 'Merchant Navies', in the form of No. 21C1 *Channel Packet* and No. 21C4 *Cunard White Star Line*.

Building on Hornby's existing tooling for the 'Light Pacific', both models portray the locomotives

with Bulleid's air-smoothed cowling to the boiler, cab and tender, along with the original front-end cowl and 'post-box' style slot.

Under test here is *Channel Packet*, and it's an impressive-looking model, which really captures the character of the

prototype, with many eye-catching features, especially the distinctive wheels. The cab interior is detailed, and I was pleased to see the adoption of a clip-together loco-tender coupling, which is simple to use and allows transfer of power between the two units.



“With hard acceleration come more intense exhaust ‘puffs’ and, while the smoke effect is subtle, it’s effective and, importantly, great fun!”

With power collected from all six driving wheels and each of the tender wheels, the 21pin DCC interface is located within the tender, along with the speaker. A HM7000 Bluetooth-enabled sound decoder is pre-installed.

As you might expect, the steam generator unit is located at the front of the locomotive, and a simple tool is provided to allow the magnetic smokebox door to be removed, thus revealing the fluid reservoir filling point. A plastic pipette and precision applicator tip are provided, and the reservoir’s maximum capacity is 3ml. Full instructions are provided, but filling is a simple process, simply using water (tap water is fine).

With the DCC sound function activated, the steam effects appear almost instantly. I found the most satisfying effects were created by activating function F28, which automatically goes through the motions of releasing steam through the cylinders, blowing a short blast on the

whistle, then opening the regulator. Both the sound and steam effects run in sequence with the mechanism, the ‘chuffing’ and exhaust picking up as the locomotive gathers pace.

With hard acceleration come more intense exhaust ‘puffs’ and, while the smoke effect is subtle, it’s effective and, importantly, great fun! It certainly adds an extra dimension to DCC operation.

The sound files are redolent of a real Bulleid ‘Pacific’, both during running and while stationary. There are, naturally, plenty of individual sound functions that can be toggled or activated at will, including braking, flange squeal (locomotive and/or carriages), coal shovelling, injectors, wheel slip, and doors slamming.

There are no unpleasant odours created from the steam effects, nor any oily residues, making for a clean and safe system. It’s important to note the guidance about running the

model until the water is exhausted before packing it away, and to ensure the water does not get into the electrics or mechanical elements of the model, being careful not to overfill the reservoir (note the measurements that are on the clear pipette).

There are no lighting effects, which is a minor shame, especially given the electric lamps on a ‘Merchant Navy’. As per usual, a comprehensive pack of optional detail parts is provided, including brake rigging, cylinder drains, footsteps, brake and heating hoses, but there’s no optional flanged wheelset for the pony axle.

While clearly priced at the more ‘grown-up’ sector of the market, this is a model that will appeal to the kid in all of us. It looks good (the Malachite green livery is superb), runs beautifully, and the sound and steam effects add an extra element of fun. The ease of use is a real boon, making it a very tempting prospect. **(GD)**



3 things we like



1

Fluid reservoir accessed via smokebox door.



2

Smoke and sound effects are convincing.



3

Clip-together, conductive loco-tender coupling.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Looks and finish.
- Authentic sound and smoke effects.
- Easy to operate.
- Runs beautifully.

CONS

- It’s not cheap!

FINAL VERDICT

A treat for one’s eyes and ears.

Hornby LNER Class J52

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Hornby R30367 LNER/BR Class J52 0-6-0ST No. 68873, BR black

◆ PRICE £174.99 ◆ AVAILABILITY Hornby stockists **Web** www.hornby.com

Hornby's all-new GNR 'J13'/LNER 'J52' first appeared last year, offering a timely replacement for the positively geriatric 1980s-era tooling that had been offered previously, albeit with several upgrades over the years. This much-improved version, however, is so much more refined and authentic, both visually and technically.

Rather than release a host of versions at once, Hornby has staggered the appearance of the 'J52', each version featuring distinctive detail variations to suit different time periods. Our first sample, reviewed in MR342, depicted LNER No. 4225 as it appeared in the 1920s/30s era, while GNR No. 1257 (MR345) captured a 'J13' in true pre-Grouping guise.

It's exciting, therefore, to finally get our mitts on a BR version, in the form of No. 68873, which carries the austere plain black livery, complete with 'cycling lion' crests on the side tanks.

A Hornsey shed plate adorns the smokebox door, placing it in the very early 1950s, after it had moved to North London from King's Cross shed, and before it migrated to Nottinghamshire prior to withdrawal in 1955.

Impressively, it's not just the paint scheme and shedcode that place the model in this era, but a multitude of details do the work too. The extended coal bunker (with elegantly flared upper profile and 'filled-in' coal rail and shortened chimney) is perhaps the most obvious modification, along with the presence of Ross

“A removable plastic coal load is a particularly welcome – and modeller-friendly – feature, giving us the option of adding as much, or as little, real coal as we prefer”

'pop' safety valves in place of the Ramsbottom originals, parallel buffershanks and the later style of steam injector pipework and valves on both sides of the firebox.

On the subject of the bunker, a removable plastic coal load is a particularly welcome – and modeller-friendly – feature, letting us add as much, or as little, real coal as we prefer. I wish

more tank locomotives offered such a facility.

Without repeating too much of my original assessment from last year's initial release, Hornby's new 'J52' really nails the look of the real locomotives, with a superb level of detail, finesse and impressive build quality.

Fine wire handrails are installed throughout; there's realistic daylight visible below the

boiler, along with a convincing suggestion of the inside valve gear between the frames. The cab interior is exquisitely detailed, and the spectacle plate glazing is neatly plug-fit into the apertures, so there's no unsightly excess clear plastic visible inside.

Ample use of die-cast metal on the chassis and body gives the model plenty of heft (240g all-in), and performance is excellent,



Model Rail 355 August 2026

0-6-0ST (later version)



with ample haulage power and a smooth, quiet mechanism, powered by a five-pole and skew-wound motor. A 21pin DCC interface is provided, accessed by unscrewing the bodyshell (it's an easy job), and all models come with a speaker pre-installed. There's even space to fit a Hornby Power Bank unit to improve performance on DCC control, and a HM7000 wireless DCC sound

decoder can be accommodated. A firebox glow effect unit also features as well.

As before, a small bag of optional extra details provides vacuum brake hoses and a selection of cosmetic oil lamps, which slot over the finely etched metal brackets at each end of the locomotive. Once in position, they're quite a secure fit, but remain easily repositioned. There are no cosmetic screw couplings.

It's great to have such an attractive and impressive recreation of this handsome prototype and, with Rapido also releasing a 'J52' in 'OO' late last year (MR347), there's certainly plenty of choice in terms of liveries and detail variations. Hornby's designers have done a cracking job and this BR version is sure to be popular with modellers who have an interest in the ex-Great Northern route.

It's a little beauty! (GD)



3 things we like



1

Extended bunker and removable coal load.



2

Period-specific details, including short chimney and parallel buffers.



3

Easily repositioned lamps.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Really looks the part.
- Superb level of authentic detail.
- Smooth runner.
- Top-notch finish.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Truly delightful.



Hornby 'TT:120' BR Class 37s

◆ **GAUGE** 'TT:120' ◆ **MODELS** Hornby TT3057M BR Class 37/0 37086 Rail blue, TT3044M Class 37/4 37413 Transrail grey, TT3045M Class 37/0 37254 InterCity 'Swallow'
 ◆ **PRICE** £159.99 each ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Hornby stockists **Web** www.hornby.com

The BR/English Electric Class 37 deserves pride of place in any model manufacturer's range, thanks to the importance, versatility and longevity of the real locomotives. Hornby's decision to add the Type 3 to its 'TT:120' range was something of a 'no-brainer' and, when the first versions arrived earlier this year, they impressed many fans of these hugely popular diesels.

Our first sample, reviewed in MR348, came in the

form of 'Heavyweight' Class 37/7, 37704, in EWS red/gold, and carrying all the relevant post-refurbishment programme details, including flush-fitting marker lights in place of the split headcode discs. A couple more versions arrived at the turn of the year, showcasing the various tooling options

created by Hornby, the most obvious being split- or centre-headcodes and pre- or post-refurbishment condition.

A handful of new '37s' have arrived this summer, offering new liveries, in the form of Rail blue 37086 and 37254 *Driver Robin Prince M.B.E* in its modern day (but retro!) Intercity

'Swallow' scheme. Both of these feature cutaway bufferbeam cowlings and plated-over boiler

compartments to suit the post-1980 era, with '086 also boasting plated-over split headcode boxes with marker lights. Furthermore, the blue '37' also carries the correct roof panels and cant rail level grille arrangement to match locomotives with the original nose style.

Completing the trio is Class 37/4 37413 *Loch Eil Outward Bound* in triple-grey livery with Transrail branding and St Blazey depot plaques, portraying the former Scottish





“Hornby has done a magnificent job of producing an authentic scale replica of the Class 37”



Region '37/4' during its time based in Cornwall. Again, this model also features the correct pattern of grilles and appointments to suit a post-refurbishment, electric train heating-equipped locomotive and, like 37254, sports central headcode boxes and extra high-intensity headlights.

As I explained in my review in the February issue, Hornby has done a magnificent job of producing an authentic scale replica of the '37', with impressive attention to detail to match each prototype subject. The tooling captures the look of the real things, especially around the cab and nose areas, and the level of detail - above and below platform height - is impressive. Even the cab interiors are fully detailed and illuminated for good measure.

Each comes equipped with a Next18 DCC decoder socket, which is easy to access via the clip-fit body - a simple tool is provided to make body removal simple. A speaker enclosure, for a 15mm by 12mm unit, is also provided. The full directional head/tail lighting suite is effective and our samples have performed faultlessly under test.

Build quality is also excellent and livery application is to a high standard across the board. A generous detail bag is provided with each '37', containing bufferbeam fittings and optional etched nameplates and other plaques, where appropriate. A

SUMMARY

PROS

- Captures looks and character of prototype.
- Impressive level of detail.
- Fit and finish.
- Excellent performance.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Terrific 'Tractors'.

set of miniature three-piece snowploughs is also supplied for 37086 and 37413.

Possibly my favourite locomotive model so far in this scale, each version looks great hauling passenger or freight stock. They're attractively priced too, especially with some retailers offering attractive discounts. With more classic BR diesel types under development by Hornby, Heljan and now Rapido, 'TT:120' is becoming increasingly difficult to resist! (GD)

3 things we like



1

Livery application is mightily impressive.



2

Tooling allows for lots of prototype-specific details.



3

Appearance captures the profile of the real thing.



EFE Rail/TMC BR six-wheel Luggage Brake van

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL EFE Rail (for TMC) E86044 BR 'BZ' six-wheel van E70666, BR lined crimson ◆ PRICE £47.95

◆ AVAILABILITY The Model Centre Web www.themodelcentre.com



Recently arrived in stock are the BR 'BZ' six-wheel vans, manufactured under Bachmann Europe's EFE Rail banner, exclusively for The Model Centre. Many modellers of the BR steam era have been hoping for an RTR version of this van for some time, as it has never been available in 'OO' before.

Although fully informed by LNER practices, these 5t Brake

Luggage vans were actually built by British Railways in 1950, at Stratford Works, albeit from pre-assembled parts crafted in Darlington. A total of 80 vehicles were built to this design, which featured a timber-framed body, clad in steel sheet, and employed BR underframe components. Of note was the unusual leaf spring arrangement, which sat behind the axleguards, rather than in front, as was the usual practice.

These vans were an unusual addition to BR stock, given that six-wheel van and carriage designs had fallen out of favour before the war. Nevertheless, the fleet roamed far and wide across the BR regions, with examples lasting in everyday use until the late 1970s. Apparently, the timber frames were notorious for rot, which may explain why only a single example survives in preservation.

TMC is offering eight different versions across BR crimson, maroon and Rail blue liveries, with a few different running numbers in each colour. Employing a conventional arrangement of an injection moulded plastic body and chassis, a substantial steel weight is screwed into the floor (hidden inside the body), giving it a respectable overall mass that certainly aids performance.



“These vans were an unusual addition to BR stock, given that six-wheel van and carriage designs had fallen out of favour before the war”

The model boasts an excellent level of detail, particularly around the underframe, with the suspension and vacuum brake gear captured faithfully, complete with yokes and rodding, as well as dynamo and battery boxes. The brake shoes align with the wheels and, while the outer axles run in pinpoint bearings, the centre axle works within a compensated inner housing, allowing plenty of lateral movement to cope with second radius curves and points.

There's a slight drawback to the presence of all the brake rodding, as it makes removal of the outer wheelsets difficult to do without there being a degree of disassembly work.

The buffers are sprung, and the NEM mounts work in sprung, kinematic close-coupler units that operate well. The footsteps below the guard's doors are moulded in a tough plastic and are securely installed. In fact, despite the high level of detail,

there's nothing too fiddly or easily broken when handling.

The body benefits from wire handrails either side of the guard's door, while the ends are enhanced by separately installed etched lamp brackets, plus electrical jumper cables and glazed panels, complete with security bars etched into the clear plastic. Indeed, all the glazing is neatly flush-fitting and crystal clear.

The small roof vents are also separate fittings, glued in place from below, and access to the interior is easy, thanks to the clip-fit roof. An optional lighting pack is available from TMC, although the interior is empty.

The paint finish on this sample was excellent, with the lining and numerals neatly printed, and the chalkboard panels at each end are a nice touch. A few chalked destinations – applied with a fine white ink pen, perhaps – would add the perfect finishing, customised touch!

Talking of which, as period images typically show these vans in shabby condition, TMC's optional custom weathering services may well be worth considering! Standing out from the crowd, six-wheel vans always add something a little different, and now we can introduce some extra variety to our BR era parcels trains. Additionally, the 'BZ' vans could also be seen marshalled within passenger services, to provide extra luggage space.

Coupled with their wide geographic spread, EFE Rail and TMC have delivered an attractive, interesting and versatile model. **(GD)**

3 things we like



1

Nicely detailed bodyshell.



2

Compensated centre axle system works well.



3

Full array of brake gear.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Looks and fidelity.
- Finish.
- Runs well.
- Interesting prototype.

CONS

- Lack of interior detail.

FINAL VERDICT

Excellent.





Irish Railway Models CIÉ Park Royal coaches

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Irish Railway Models Bulleid CIÉ Park Royal D176 Suburban coaches ◆ PRICE £74.95 each ◆ AVAILABILITY Accurascale Web www.accurascale.com

The Irish railway network and its rolling stock were in dire need of regeneration by the late 1940s and, as part of a general push towards modernisation, former Southern Railway (UK) CME Oliver Bulleid was retained as a consulting mechanical engineer to Córus Iompair Éireann (CIÉ). Bulleid would eventually oversee the widespread dieselisation of the CIÉ traction fleet, as well as a revamp of freight and passenger stock as well.

As part of the latter provision, two sets of coaches were supplied in component form by Park Royal in 1955-56. The famous London coachbuilding

firm fabricated the carriage bodies from steel and aluminium, and these were married to all-welded triangulated 61ft 6in steel underframes, built in Wolverhampton by John Thompson Pressings Ltd. The actual assembly took place at the CIÉ's Inchicore works.

The coaches featured a common bodysell design, employed for both suburban (Diagram 176) and main line (Diagram 177) use, with only the interior layouts changing. The bodysells made full use of the generous Irish loading gauge, although the outer ends had to be slightly narrower to provide clearance against curved platforms. Perhaps the most clearly identifiable feature of the

Park Royal coaches was the prominent external strengthening framework, which allowed extra space inside.

Irish Railway Models, a part of the Accurascale group, has delivered its first production run of 'OO' Park Royals, with the emphasis on the suburban versions, plus a couple of snack car conversions. As well as the provision of original 1950s mid-green livery (with delicate Eau-de-Nill stripe) and black-and-tan liveries - the latter with single or double white stripes - each model also has period-specific features too.

We received a pair of coaches for review, showcasing the differences between the as-built and later-era versions. Indeed,

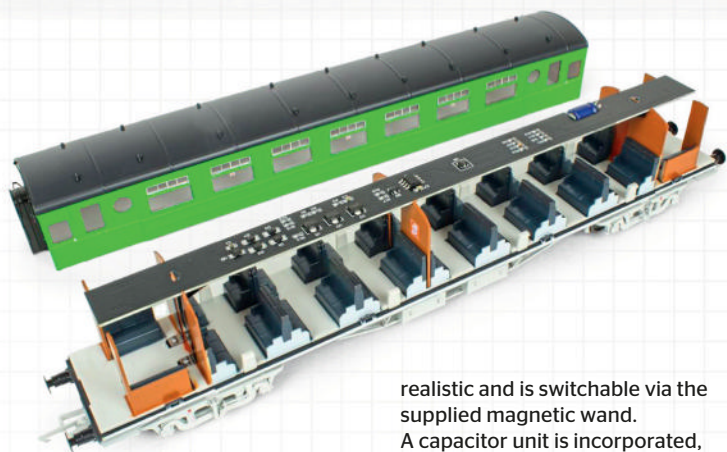
the green coach displays the original distinctive porthole-style windows, which were plated over on many cars by the 1980s. The other most obvious difference is the provision of battery boxes and a dynamo on the 1950s vehicle (plus steam heating pipework), but this equipment has been stripped away on the post-1980s version, as CIÉ was by then employing generator cars for electric train heating and lighting. Instead, therefore, there's just a small fusebox suspended from the underframe.

These carriages feel rather substantial, thanks to the die-cast metal chassis frames, with each weighing in at 220g. Brass axle bearings are fitted throughout for minimal drag, and they are, indeed, extremely free-running.

The plastic bodysell captures the profile and unique exterior appearance correctly, with subtle rivet detail visible along the panel seams, and various beading strips and strengthening beams are crisply moulded. The roof vents are separately installed, as are the lamp brackets, emergency brake



“The plastic Commonwealth-style bogies look fantastic, complete with twin lower compensation bars, plus hydraulic dampers and sway bars”



'tell-tales' and gangways, making for a refined overall feel. The flush-fitting glazing is flawless, complete with 'no smoking' stickers, allowing the interior units to be seen. These feature correctly coloured seats and bulkheads, the latter even featuring maps of the Irish rail network.

Overhead lighting is installed, fed by conductive axle bearings and sprung contacts, so there are no fiddly wires to navigate when removing the body (which is a clip-fit to the chassis). The lighting effect is warm and

realistic and is switchable via the supplied magnetic wand. A capacitor unit is incorporated, producing flicker-free operation. Below solebar level, the plastic Commonwealth-style bogies look fantastic, complete with twin lower compensation bars, plus hydraulic dampers and sway bars, each of which is a separate component. The brake gear and shoes are set up to match the 'OO' gauge wheelsets, but there's ample space between the bogie frames to allow for finer scale wheels. That said, the brake gear will need to be modified.

The triangulated chassis framework is visible and well-rendered, especially over the bogie centres, and the underslung trussing

arrangement is also authentic – it's delicate, though, so take care when handling the model.

Sprung kinematic close-coupler units are installed at each end, with NEM pockets pre-loaded with slimline tension locks. These coupler units displayed a degree of friction on our samples, and the rotation of the bogies is limited somewhat compared to other RTR coaches, although I encountered no issues when road-testing the cars on second radius curves and PECO's short-radius Code 75 points. Furthermore, I purchased a few more of the later style coaches for my own collection and the five-car rake performed faultlessly on the test track, hauled by an IRM A Class – and mighty fine it looked too!

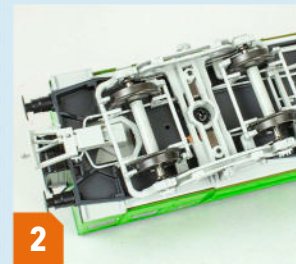
Main line variants of the Park Royal coaches are also in development and, given the speed at which this first batch sold out, they will be eagerly awaited.

As the last examples were not withdrawn by CIÉ until 1994, they span a long period in Irish rail history, bridging the steam and diesel eras, making them an ideal subject for an RTR model. The fact that they look so distinctive is a bonus, and these 4mm scale replicas are superb. (GD)

3 things we like



1 Detailed, illuminated interior.



2 Intricate bogies and underframe.



3 Period-specific details.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Really look the part.
- Highly detailed, inside and out.
- Run smoothly.
- Popular, long-lived and distinctive prototype.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Superb.



Rapido Trains UK all-purpose narrow gauge wagons



◆ **GAUGE** '00' ◆ **MODEL** Rapido Trains UK Peaked Roof Van, Stake Wagon, Droptop Open, Cylindrical Tank ◆ **PRICE** £25.95-£29.95 each
◆ **AVAILABILITY** Rapido stockists **Web** www.rapidotrains.co.uk

Kicking off Rapido's emerging Narrow Lines range, a fleet of 'all-purpose' '009' gauge wagons arrived with stockists in early July, which are intended to complement the same manufacturer's 'Sirdar' 0-4-OT steam locomotives, the latter also appearing just as we closed for press (look out for a review in MR356!).

The range consists of various goods vans, open, flat and tank wagons, plus brake vans, 'manriders' (for carrying workers) and livestock wagons. In all, there are nine different vehicle types, each offered in several liveries, and all

based around a common four-wheel chassis.

It's great to have something other than slate or mineral wagons, providing far greater choice to those modelling narrow gauge railways. The designs are not slavish copies of particular prototypes but, in a similar spirit

to Rapido's Evolution range of '00' coaches, are informed by the diverse rolling stock types employed across the UK and much further afield.

There's a pleasing degree of whimsy to these wagons, which is often par for the course with '009', but they all look wholly convincing and purposeful.

Those carrying corporate branding are especially eye-catching, with household brand names employed on appropriate wagon types, as well as regionally specific private owners. There are a handful of light-hearted schemes too, such as G. Fawkes Gunpowder and K.A. Boom Explosives.



“There’s a pleasing degree of whimsy to these wagons, which is often par for the course with ‘009’, but they all look wholly convincing and purposeful”



For review, Rapido sent us a representative quartet of models, consisting of a Peaked Roof Van (in Saxa Salt branding), Dropside Open (Merionethshire Coal Co.), Cylindrical Tank (United Dairies) and an unbranded stake wagon, the latter being ideal for logs or sawn timber.

At just 37mm long (over headstocks) – a scale 9ft 3in – and around 8g each, these are diminutive models with huge character, which employ a cast metal core, around which

moulded plastic fittings are installed. The chassis frames and bodywork feature crisply moulded detail relief, the fine securing straps of the tank wagon being especially good.

Hand brake equipment is installed on one side of each wagon, as was common on real narrow gauge stock, and the finely profiled metal spoke wheels (just 6mm in diameter) look the part. The axles rotate freely on pinpoint axles and ‘standard’ hook-and-loop style

couplings are installed into pivoting NEM pockets which offer plenty of rotational travel to cope with tight curves.

The lighter metal of the loop section of the couplings could benefit from being darker, to blend in with the rest of the underframe, but that aside, these are delightful little wagons. Well-built, well-priced and smooth running, they have much to offer for those with an existing or embryonic interest in narrow gauge modelling. (GD)



3 things we like



1

The underframe is detailed and functional.



2

Excellent livery application.



3

Standard ‘009’ NEM couplers and mounts.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Characterful and convincing.
- Build quality and finish.
- Smooth runners.
- Welcome variety of vehicle types and liveries.

CONS

- Shiny coupling loops.

FINAL VERDICT

Delightful.

LMS/BR CLASS 11 0-6-0DE

CHOOSE FROM 15 VERSIONS

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

00
GAUGE

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

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



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



MR-505 BR 12043, black, BRITISH RAILWAYS lettering



MR-503 LMS 7120, pre-war black



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



MR-501
War Department 70271, olive green



MR-504 LMS 7128, post-war black



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

WEATHERED

BR/SR CLASS 12 0-6-0DE

00
GAUGE

FIVE VERSIONS AVAILABLE

Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: Next18

Features: • NEM coupler pockets • brass flywheel and high-reduction gears • working exterior lights (where appropriate) • cab interior lights • factory-fitted speaker • tooling allows for early and late BR versions

OUT
NOW

Featuring Bulleid-Firth Brown wheels, our tooling caters for the original and later versions, with and without electric head/tail lamps. *All five versions now in stock!*



Pristine models

£169.00

£152.10

Model Rail subscribers price





MR-508 BR 12125, black, early crest



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

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MR-509 BR 12131, black, early crest,



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



MR-510 BR 12105, green, late crest



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



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



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

Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: Next18

Features: • NEM coupler pockets • brass flywheel and high-reduction gears • working exterior lights (where appropriate) • cab interior lights • factory-fitted speaker • tooling allows for LMS, WD, GWR and BR versions

OUT
NOW

Pristine models

£169.00

£152.10

Model Rail subscribers price

Weathered versions

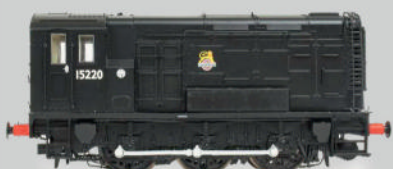
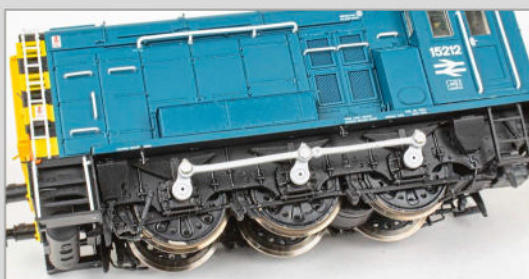
£179.00

£161.10

Model Rail subscribers price

What's available?

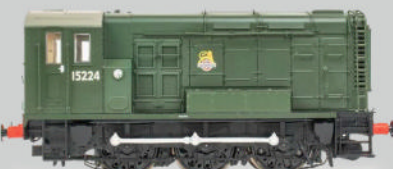
- ♦ MR-520 BR/SR Class 12, 15220, BR black, early emblem
- ♦ MR-521 BR/SR Class 12, 15224, BR green, early emblem
- ♦ MR-522 BR/SR Class 12, 15221, BR green with 'wasp' stripes, late emblem
- ♦ MR-523 BR/SR Class 12, 15212, BR Rail blue with 'wasp' stripes
- ♦ MR-524 BR/SR Class 12, (ex-15231) Tilcon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



MR-520



MR-522



MR-521



MR-523



MR-524

'16XX' 0-6-0PT

CHOOSE FROM 19 VERSIONS 

Specification list

Made by:

Rapido Trains Inc.

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: Next18

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

£149.00

£134.10 price for Model Rail subscribers



BR BLACK, EARLY CREST (PRISTINE)

- ◆ MR-301A: No. 1609
- ◆ MR-301C: No. 1624
- ◆ MR-301D: No. 1657
- ◆ MR-301F: No. 1658
- ◆ MR-301G: No. 1668
- ◆ MR-302A: No. 1646

LOW STOCK

BR BLACK, EARLY CREST (WEATHERED)

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

BR BLACK, LATE CREST (PRISTINE)

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

BR BLACK, LATE CREST (WEATHERED)

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

'BUSBY' CHIMNEY

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

NCB GREEN

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

PRESERVED GREEN

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



BR Class 26/1 26043

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

ON SALE NOW!



Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: 21-pin

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

£210.00

£189.00 price for Model Rail subscribers

Ruston 'PWM' 0-6-0DE

CHOOSE FROM EIGHT VERSIONS



Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Coreless

DCC socket: Next18

Features: • Cab interior lights

• NEM coupler pockets

£169.00

£152.10 price for Model Rail subscribers



MR-403 PWM653
BR light green



MR-405A PWM 97651
BR yellow



MR-405B PWM 97652
BR yellow



MR-402 PWM651
BR green, 'wasp' ends



MR-400A PWM651
BR green



MR-400B PWM652
BR green



MR-401 PWM654
BR green, 'wasp' ends



MR-404 PWM652
BR Rail blue

LNER Sentinels - the latest batch



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



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



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



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

Specifications

Made by: Dapol

Motor: Five-pole 'Super-Creep'

DCC socket: Eight-pin

£99.00

£89.10 price for Model Rail subscribers

LNER 'J70'

Specification list

Made by: Rapido
Trains

Motor: Coreless

DCC socket: Six-pin

Features:

- NEM coupler pockets
- Space for speaker
- Removable cowcatchers
- Etched workplates

£127.50

£114.75 price for Model Rail subscribers



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

**JUST ONE
VERSION
LEFT!**

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TO SEE THE LATEST SPECIAL OFFERS**

'USA' 0-6-0T

Specification list

Made by: Bachmann **Motor:** Three-pole

DCC socket: Six-pin

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

MR-107
£124.95

£112.46
price for Model Rail
subscribers

SOLD OUT



MR-107 No. 36,
National Coal Board black

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OR 01209 705459



Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: 21pin

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

BR/BRUSH TYPE 4 CLASS 48

FOUR TO CHOOSE FROM

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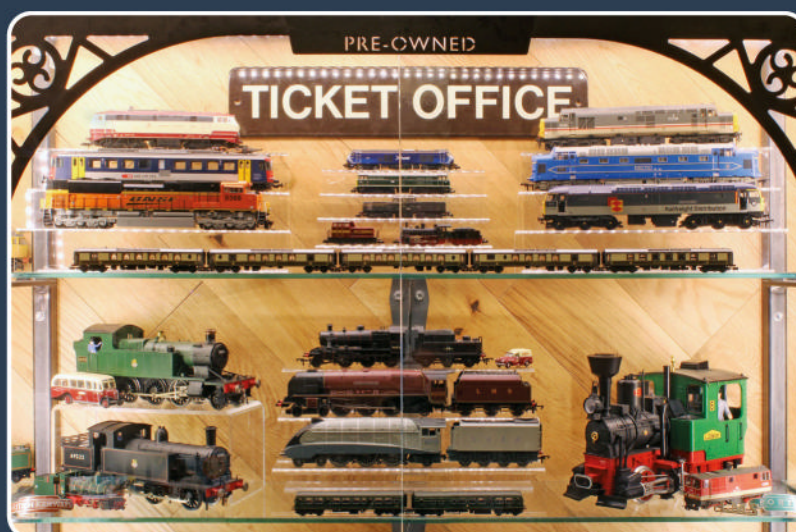
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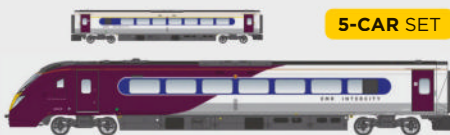


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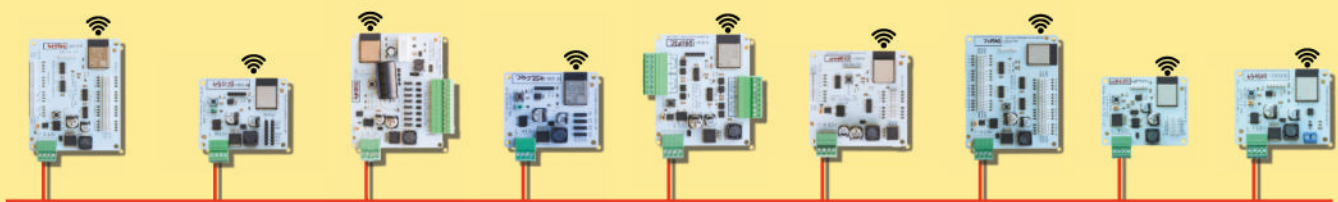
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Backscene



Are layouts only of real importance to the builders? asks **CHRIS LEIGH**.

I was pleased to see, in the news pages of MR351, that AIMREC (the Ashford International Model Railway Education Centre) has opened at last. Cliff Parsons spent years and overcame numerous setbacks to create a model railway museum to house his 'Gresley Beat' layout and ensure its survival for posterity.

Dogged determination has succeeded, but his success is a rare exception. I recall first encountering an individual's attempt to establish a museum around his model-making way back in the 1960s, not so long after I started work on *Model Railway Constructor*. E.T. Rawlins sought to establish a museum around his Wye Valley Railway model of Ross-on-Wye station. The modelling standard was good for its time, but the consensus among my office colleagues was that it was not quite up to museum standards. I don't know what happened to it, but to this day I admire his soldered construction of all that spiky ironwork on the station roof.

The Iliffe-Stokes husband and wife team's modelling efforts of GWR stations would have been even more worthy of preservation. John Ahern's wonderful 'Madder Valley' is lovingly preserved at Pendon Museum along with Guy Williams' locomotives and Royce England's superb cottages. The establishment of Pendon Museum was equally fraught with difficulties, but it is a lot more than a museum of model railways. It was established as a museum of miniature landscape, reflecting a way of life lost after the Second World War, with the railways, fully authentic as they are, merely providing movement and interest to the scenes of 1920s/30s rural life in the Vale of the White Horse.

I think it is fairly safe to say - without wishing to be controversial - that most layouts are only of importance to those who built them. Two years ago, I helped

'Polwyddelan', Chris Leigh's Cornish harbour layout, is now with an after-school crafts club at a Dorset school. CHRIS NEVARD

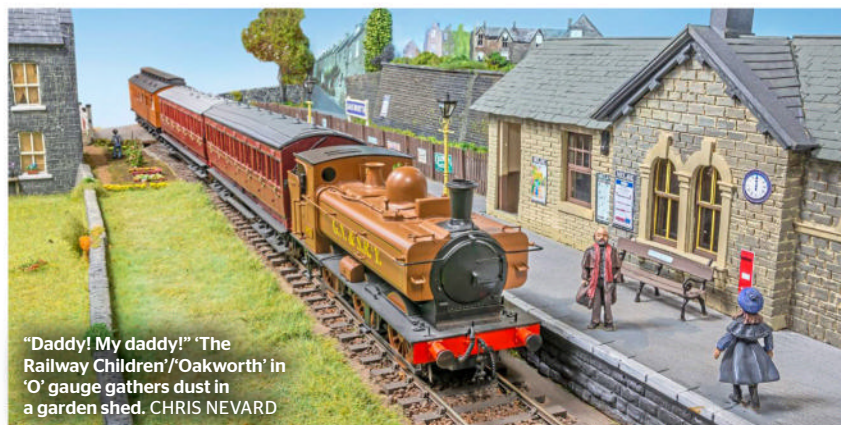


dismantle a club layout after the builders had all either died or moved away. No one else was interested in it, despite some unique features. On a personal note, I tried to donate my 'Oakworth'/'Railway Children' 'O' gauge layout for permanent public display, but the deal fell through, and the layout languishes in a garden shed.

My own Canadian layout includes my 5ft long model of the Kinsol Trestle. It took seven years to build, and I estimate it contains well over 5,000 individual pieces of balsa wood. I've no idea what will happen to it when I'm no longer around to run trains over it, and my house has to be cleared.

As my generation of railway modellers, who worked predominantly in 'OO' gauge, passes away, large amounts of secondhand models have come onto the market. While the shops have often been happy to have their secondhand shelves well stocked, there is a limit to just how much they can 'move on' particularly as detail and quality often does not match current models. My last visit to my local store for Mk1 coaches for a conversion revealed a vast stack of Hornby Mk1s, some of them clearly decades old.

However, while stacks of rolling stock might sell eventually, disposal of layouts, even portable, exhibit-able layouts, is fraught with difficulty and, in my experience, usually ends in disappointment.



"Daddy! My daddy!" 'The Railway Children'/'Oakworth' in 'O' gauge gathers dust in a garden shed. CHRIS NEVARD

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