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Farish GWR 'Hall'



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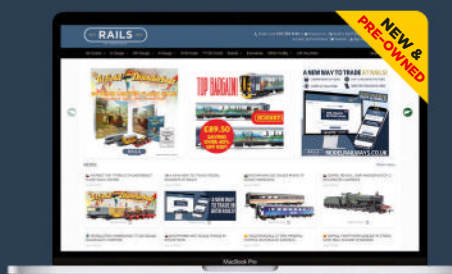
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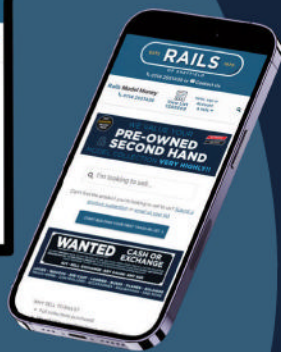
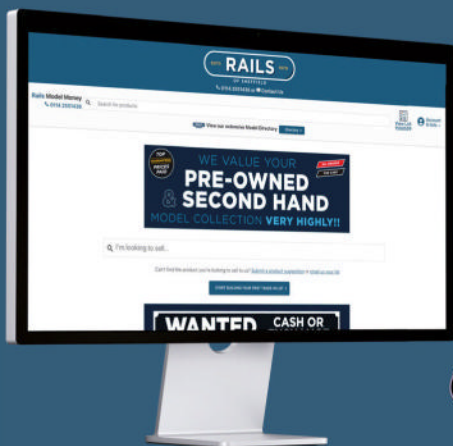
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This month's cover image



Ian Driver's charming 'OO' creation, 'Red Post Lane', depicts a BR Sectorisation-era depot. Turn to page 28 for the full story. CHRIS NEVARD

Welcome

It tends to come in waves; the urge to clear out large chunks of my model collection.

Over the decades, my eclectic tastes have led to me amassing locomotives and rolling stock to suit various eras and regions, not to mention different scales.

But reality tends to bite at certain times, such as impending house moves, significant life events, or just the need to raise a bit of extra cash. The process usually follows a familiar sequence: I'll resolve to be ruthless, concentrate on one era/scale/region, and sell or donate everything deemed superfluous to my current projects.

Surplus models are then retrieved from storage, examined and a list compiled for valuation by a pre-owned model dealer. The other, less hard-nosed inner voice then makes itself heard, and the doubt creeps in. "I could really do something with those coaches," or "but I've always fancied a layout based around Southern Region EMUs..."

Eventually, I'll dispose of only a fraction of the intended stock and, a year or two later, the pattern repeats itself.

I'm sure I'm not alone in this!

Furthermore, despite the practical side of my brain trying to convince my emotional core that I should concentrate on post-1980 diesel and electric subjects, I was recently reminded of how much I enjoy working on steam locomotives.

You can follow my mission to personalise an Accurascale '57XX' – for the BR steam era – on page 44, but I also tinkered with a Bachmann '64XX' in GWR green, using the same methods (pictured here). Both projects proved to be hugely rewarding, so I doubt



Modelling multiple eras provides lots of interest, but comes with the risk of hoarding too many models!

I'll be parting with many of my steam-era models any time soon!

And it's not just locomotives from the pre-diesel era that offer modellers a source of potential enjoyment, as Chris Nevard illustrates on page 48. His transformation of a handful of decades-old, neglected wagons into a beguiling rake of wagons really captured the imagination of the MR team. We hope you find it equally inspiring.

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 and contributors keep 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



Chris Leigh



Ben Ando



Ben Jones



Nick Brodrick

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see p26

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54 Sculpt an embankment

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58 Build a 3D-printed bus shelter



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Opening the box

The latest happenings from the world of model railways

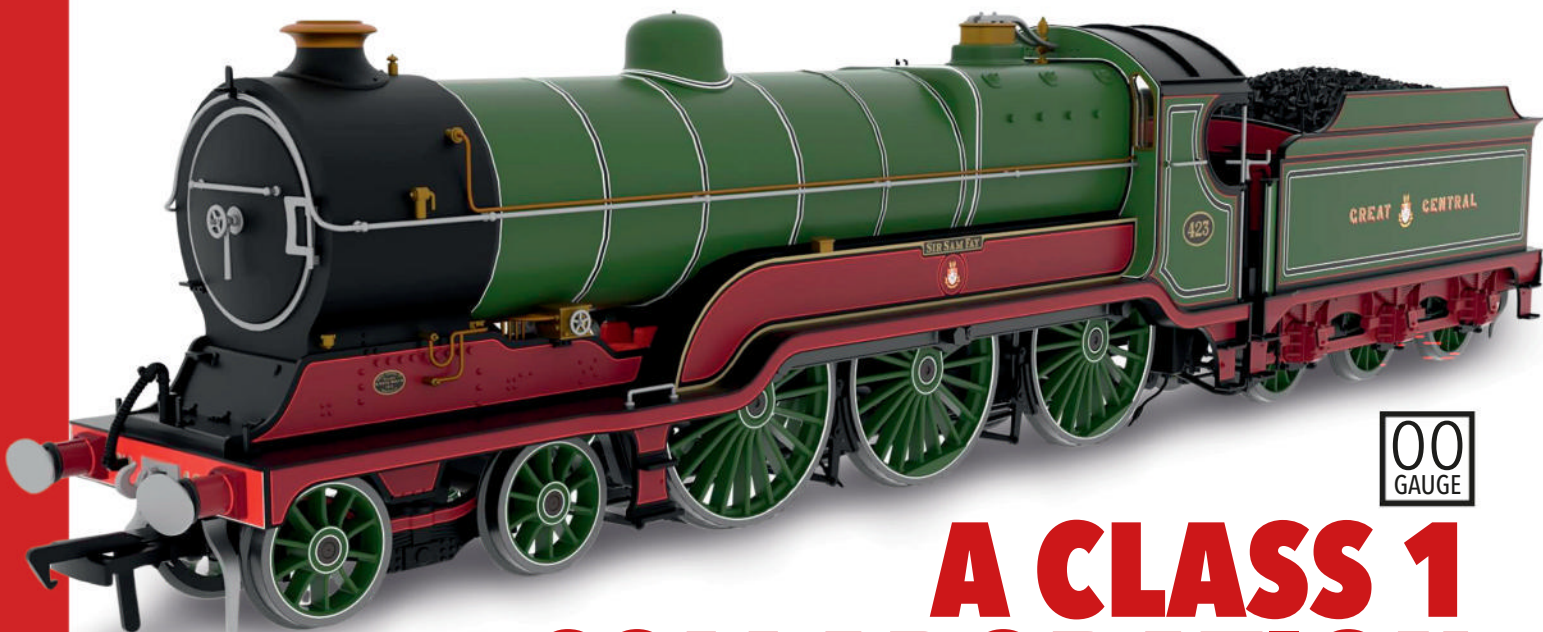
The Big Picture

It's been 40 years since British Rail relaunched its London & South East passenger sector operations as Network SouthEast, which precipitated a colourful new corporate identity adorning stations, locomotives and rolling stock. Simon Veasey has sought to capture the heady days of 'NSE', with his 'N' gauge 'Leadenhall', an evocation of a busy commuter terminus in the heart of the Capital.

Read the full story behind 'Leadenhall' in a future issue of *Model Rail*. And you can see it 'in the flesh', at the Mid-Essex MRC show in Brentwood on September 19 - see page 18 for details. Photography: CHRIS NEVARD







A CLASS 1 COLLABORATION

Rapido Trains UK and Rails of Sheffield have joined forces to create a 'OO' model of the Great Central Class 1 express passenger 4-6-0. Known as the 'Sir Sam Fay' class, after doyen No. 423 was named after the serving GCR General Manager, the locomotives were introduced in 1912, with all six examples taken over by the LNER following the Grouping, thus becoming the B2 Class. By 1945, they were reclassified as the 'B19'.

GCR, LNER and BR liveries are on offer, with a host of period-specific detail variations designed

into the tooling. The models will feature a high-quality mechanism, a 21-pin DCC interface, firebox flicker and a stayalive capacitor unit. Sound-fitted options are included.

With most of the class named after major cities, an extra 'what if' version is also offered: No. 61494 *City of Sheffield*, in BR-lined black.



All models will only be available from Rails of Sheffield, with pre-orders being taken now.

When's it due? Late 2027
Price: £239.95-£344.95
Availability: Rails of Sheffield
Web: www.railsofshffield.com

In Brief

'QUARRY HUNSLETS' CONFIRMED

The identity of the 'Quarry Hunslets' in Bachmann Narrow Gauge's impending re-run has been unveiled, as *Margaret* and *Una*, the former in lined Penrhyn

black and the latter in lined green. Also added to the 'OO9' line is a pair of new RNAD vans, in Corris Railway or Statfold Barn liveries.

009
GAUGE



ANOTHER FREIGHT SPECIES FROM CLARK

Hot on the heels of the LMS CCT, Clark Railworks has revealed another 'OO' project, with the GWR 'Mink G' being offered in eight different guises, for the GWR, BR and preservation eras,

all boasting a high level of detail. Models can be pre-ordered for no upfront cost, with delivery expected early in 2027.

Prices: £47.50 each
Web: www.clarkrailworks.com

OO
GAUGE

FARISH LIFTS 'HEAVYWEIGHT' CLASS 37



A handful of new tooling projects in 'N' and 'OO' were included in Bachmann's Autumn 2026 announcements. Topping the bill is an all-new BR Class 37 for the Farish range, which has been fully redesigned from the wheels up and offers the options of DCC sound for the

first time, using a Zimo Next18 decoder, plus enhanced lighting functions.

Interestingly, the first '37s' to be tackled are the 'Heavyweight' refurbished Class 37/7s – a first for RTR 'N' – with the tooling allowing for key differences between Series 1 and 2

locomotives, including flush nose ends and plated-over centre headcode panels. Cast or fabricated bogies, extended-range fuel tanks and other smaller details will be included where appropriate.

Four versions have been announced so far, featuring

original and sub-sector BR Railfreight schemes, plus Loadhaul and EWS liveries.

When's it due?

December/January

Price: £179.95-£294.95

Availability:

Bachmann stockists

Web: www.bachmann.co.uk

BACHMANN'S NEW ROLLING STOCK



A further new tooling project for the Farish range is the BR 24.5ton steel-bodied mineral wagon, which is being offered in pre- and post-TOPS era markings and caters for both the Dia. 1/115 and 1/118 designs. Available individually or in a pack of three, heavily weathered versions are also on offer (£22.95-£24.95 each, £61.95 three-pack).

Bachmann hasn't forgotten 'OO' wagon fans, with the MLA high-capacity ballast wagons providing an important modern vehicle, in GBRf/Metronet yellow, Network Rail yellow, EWS red and DB red, with Axiom AM or Y25 pattern bogies and with alternative body fittings catered for (£46.95 each).

The four-wheel SPA open wagon returns to the EFE Rail line-up, with BR Railfreight red, DB Schenker (ex-EWS) and Balfour Beatty blue options (£39.95 each), while the BR 'Turbot' ballast carrier appears under EFE branding for the first time (it was formerly offered by Kernow Model Rail Centre), with pristine or weathered 'Dutch' liveries (£39.95 each).

On the 'OO' coaching stock front, the Mk 2a returns to the Bachmann range, offered in BR blue/grey, Trans-Pennine, Network SouthEast, DRS blue and West Coast Railway Company maroon

liveries. These will be priced at £74.95 each.

All models are slated to arrive later this year.

Web: www.bachmann.co.uk



REVOLUTION '66' - TAKE THREE!



Thanks to the success of previous releases, a third batch of Class 66s is now in development by Revolution Trains, incorporating new tooling elements to allow yet more body and underframe variations to be captured, plus extra lighting options.

The new run offers various DB, GBRf and Freightliner schemes, the latter including special 60th anniversary G&W green and orange schemes, some of which will only be available from Rails of Sheffield.

Two models, DB red 66050 *Yorkshire Rose* and a re-run of



the hugely popular 66301 in Drax Gold, will raise further funds for Martin House Children's Hospice.

When are they due?

Early 2027

Prices: £159.95 (DCC-ready),

£254.95 (DCC sound)

Web: www.revolutiontrains.com
www.railsofsheffield.com





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NEW VANS MOTORING ALONG

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GAUGE

More specialist GWR freight wagons are in development by Rapido Trains UK, with the 'Mica A' and 'Tevan' vans offering modellers the chance to replicate perishables traffic. The unvented 'Mica A' was built in the 1930s, primarily to carry fresh meat. Internal walls featured cork insulation, and

rooftop boxes allowed special coolant (solid carbon dioxide) to be replenished by staff.

Many of the 'Mica A' vans were subsequently converted for tea and cocoa traffic, with zinc sheeting replacing the cork insulation and a new code of 'Tevan' adopted. Most wagons worked between London and Bristol for Fry's and Co. and Lyons Tea.

Also to come from Rapido is the 'Mogo' van, designed with large doors at

each end for loading road vehicles, while its regular side doors meant it could also be employed for general goods work. Also hailing from the 1930s, further batches of 'Mogo' were built in the 1940s, before nationalisation.

These new models all share a common 10ft wheelbase underframe, but four different body styles are being tooled, with various detail variations

employed where appropriate. Over a dozen versions of the 'Mogo', and a similar number of 'Mica A' / 'Tevan' wagons are being offered across GWR and BR guises. Pre-orders can be placed now at your local Rapido stockists, with delivery expected next year.

Price: £32.95 each
Availability: Rapido stockists
Web: www.rapidotrains.co.uk



A BRAKE FOR WAR AND PEACE TIME

00
GAUGE

The London & South Western Railway introduced an upgraded goods brake van design in 1907, designed to replace the ageing 'Road Vans' of the period. The new 20ton vans featured verandas at both ends, plus a small interior goods compartment.

Although only a small fleet was built by the LSWR, the War Department (WD) adopted this design as standard following the outbreak of war in 1914, with most examples sent to work overseas. After the war, returning vans were distributed among various pre-Grouping railway companies.

Rapido's new model caters for both the LSWR and WD designs, with all manner of

detail variations observed, including brake and running gear, buffers, door types, roofs with or without rain strips, duckets and handrail combinations. More than 20 individual versions are being produced

across an impressive array of liveries, with each brake van now available to pre-order.

Price: £44.95 each
Availability: Rapido stockists
Web: www.rapidotrains.co.uk



MORE RAPIDO PROJECTS ADVANCE

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GAUGE 009
GAUGE

Rapido's design team have been examining engineering prototypes of several ongoing 'OO' projects, most notably the L&Y Class 25 0-6-0, plus the SER open wagons and 'Evolution' range of horseboxes and open carriage trucks.

Meanwhile, following the success of Rapido's first batch, a host of new 'OO9' all-purpose wagons has been unveiled, offering new colours and branding across the goods and brake vans, tanks, opens and covered wagons. See our review of these models in MR355.

Each of these models are available to pre-order now.



A REGAL 'SCOT' AND MORE FROM HORNBY



The latest addition to Hornby's prestigious One:One Collection is ex-LMS 4-6-0 No. 46100 *Royal Scot*, in rebuilt form, carrying lined BR green with early-style emblems (R30500, £239.99). Presented in special packaging, the 'OO' gauge model is now available and captures the elegant locomotive in its post-2016 main line-registered condition, complete with modern overhead line warning signs. As well as a host of authentic details, the model also features an attractive semi-gloss finish, giving the paintwork a wonderfully deep lustre.

Also recently arriving in stock is the affordable RailRoad version of the BR Class 91 electric, which depicts 91018 *Robert Louis Stevenson* in InterCity 'Swallow' livery. Available in DCC-ready or DCC sound format (R30527/TXS,



£99.99/£154.99), the model is based on Hornby's older tooling, albeit enhanced with a superior motor and wheels, plus a 21pin decoder socket. A matching range of RailRoad Mk 4 coaches, including the essential DVT, is also due to arrive.

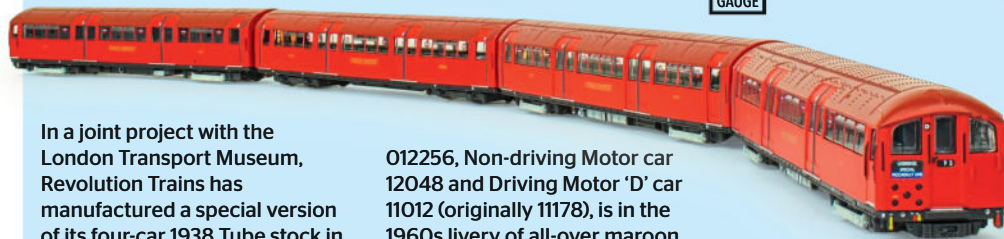
In 'TT:120', another version of the popular Class 50 has landed, in the guise of 50026 *Indomitable*, in BR 'large logo' blue (TT3067M, £167.99).

Availability: Hornby stockists

Web: www.hornby.com



MUSEUM SPECIAL TUBE TRAIN



In a joint project with the London Transport Museum, Revolution Trains has manufactured a special version of its four-car 1938 Tube stock in the guise of the museum's operational set, as currently preserved at Acton depot.

The unit, comprising Driving Motor 'A' car 10012, Trailer car

012256, Non-driving Motor car 12048 and Driving Motor 'D' car 11012 (originally 11178), is in the 1960s livery of all-over maroon with gold LONDON TRANSPORT lettering, a combination not previously offered by Revolution.

These strictly limited-edition models are available exclusively

from the London Transport Museum's shop, either in store or online, with every sale supporting the work of the museum in preserving London's

transport heritage.

Price: £300.00

Availability:

London Transport Museum

Web: www.ltmuseum.co.uk



RETURN OF THE 'SILVER BULLETS'



The much-sought-after ICA china clay slurry tanks, known as 'Silver Bullets', are set to return to Dapol's range in both 'N' and 'OO'. Modellers can choose from ECC/OEVA, NACCO and Ermewa branding and, as with previous releases, the distinctive wagons are offered in pristine or weathered condition.

These modes are always extremely popular, so pre-ordering is highly recommended, with delivery to retailers expected in early 2027.

Price: £37.95-£39.95 ('N'), £45.00-£49.00 ('OO')

Availability: Dapol stockists

Web: www.dapol.co.uk



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GET READY FOR TINGS



The annual International N Gauge Show returns to the Warwickshire Event Centre in early September, showcasing over 25 top-quality 'N' gauge layouts, sourced from the UK and overseas. The roster includes 'St Andrews and Guard Bridge',

as featured in this issue (see page 60), plus 'East Anstey' (MR343) and 'Hawes Junction'.

As usual, the event will also be attended by various specialist traders and model manufacturers, including Bachmann Europe, Dapol, Kato,

and Revolution Trains, who will be displaying new and ongoing projects.

The venue is easy to access by road and a special bus link will operate from Leamington Spa station on the Saturday only (£5 each way).

When is it? September 12-13

Opening times: 1000-1700 (Sat), 1000-1600 (Sun)

Where is it? Warwickshire Event Centre, CV31 1FE

Prices: Adults £14.50, Child £6, Senior £13

Web: www.ngaugeshow.co.uk

HEAD TO STAFFS FOR A TOP SHOW

Stafford Railway Circle's annual show will be held at Bingley Hall, Stafford County Showground, over the weekend of September 26-27. Boasting an impressive cast of over 50 layouts across various scales, visitors can see several models that have graced the pages of *Model Rail* recently, such as 'Richmond' (MR351), 'Corporation Road' (MR350), 'Weekend Yard' (MR338), 'Wellpark' (MR333) and 'Uppingham' (MR321).

The show also features plenty of trade support, with Accurascale, Heljan, Dapol and Peco all attending, plus a host of retailers and specialist traders, along with

plenty of clubs and societies. Practical demonstrations will be taking place too, so it promises to be a great show.

The venue is fully accessible, with ample free parking on site. A free bus service will run from Stafford railway station on both days.

When is it?

September 26-27

Opening times:

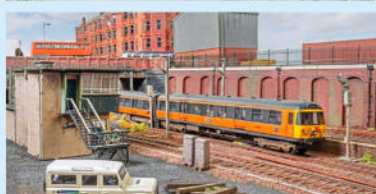
1000-1700 (Sat),

1000-1630 (Sun)

Where is it? Bingley Hall, Stafford County Showground ST18 0BD

Prices: Adults £18 (£16 advance), Child £5, Family £36 (£32 advance)

Web: www.staffordrailwaycircle.org.uk



In Brief

CUPAR SHOW A SUCCESS

Cupar Model Rail 2026, held in July and organised by Cupar and District MRC, saw a marked increase in visitor numbers and raised over £2,200 for various local charities. A club spokesperson said: "We are delighted with the success of this year's exhibition. Bringing together layouts from across Scotland and the north of England created a superb showcase of the hobby, and it was wonderful to see so many visitors through the doors over the weekend. The generosity shown towards our charity café was outstanding, and we congratulate all our award winners on the exceptional standard of modelling on display."

Clydeside Model Railway Club's 'Abbeycove' scooped the Club's Williamson-Wherrett Trophy, having been voted the Public's Favourite Layout by visitors during the exhibition.

Cupar Model Rail returns next year, in what will be the Club's 50th year, to be held at the town's Corn Exchange over the weekend of July 24-25.

Web: www.cuparmrc.co.uk



BRUNEL SHED PLAYS HOST TO WYCRAIL

The newly restored 1854 broad gauge railway shed, built for the GWR by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, is the venue for this year's High Wycombe and District MRS exhibition - Wycrail.

To be held on Saturday, November 7, the event will feature 24 layouts across a wide range of scales and genres, along with trade support. The event will be officially opened by TV personality - and contributor

to our sister title, *Steam Railway* - Tim Dunn, while the society's junior members will be showing off their popular 'OO' gauge layout 'Mothecombe'.

When is it? November 7

Opening times:

1030-1630

Where is it? Brunel Railway Shed, Station Approach, High Wycombe HP13 6NE

Prices: Adult £8, Child £2, Under-6s FREE

Web: www.hwdmrs.org.uk



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Rail Joiners with hand soldered connection of 16/02 wire a pack of 4 pairs (Red and Black). These joiners have centrally placed solder connections for joining sections of code 80 or 100 rail and provide wire connections for DCC and DC power Buss connections Ideal for those who do not like soldering themselves - Supplied in Packs of 4 pairs (8 wires).



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Our new range of Laser Cut Baseboards...
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(see our web page for full description and sizes etc)



Vehicle Lighting Kits



These vehicle lighting kits for land based vehicles (Head & Tail Light, Construction Lights, Emergency Light etc). Utilizing small LEDs and in some cases grain of wheat bulbs these kits add lighting effects to your models. These kits will bring the town or village scenes to life. The kits vary in power and voltage supplies some including a 2 x AAA Battery holder others use a standard 12v supply all are provided with detailed instructions and are easy self assembly.

Starting From £5.00

Layout Wiring

* colours: RD YL BL BK WH GR VI OR GY PK BR

	10m	100m
EW7/02	£2.00	£15.00
EW16/02	£2.60	£21.00
EW24/02	£3.80	£31.00
EW32/02	£5.00	£42.00
EW1/06	£2.00	£15.00
EW10/01	£2.00	£15.00

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Ultra fine wire
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SMT1	on/off	SPST	£1.20
SMT2	on/on	SPDT	£1.20
SMT3	on/off/on	SPDT	£1.25
SMT4	on/off or on/on		£1.30
SMT5	on/off/on	DPDT	£1.40
SMT6	[on]-off-[on]	SPST	£1.60
SMT7	[on]-off-[on]	DPDT	£1.90

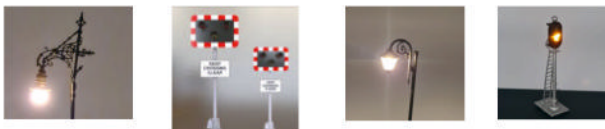
Switch Cleaner
£10.99



Lever covers Pack 10 - £2.00

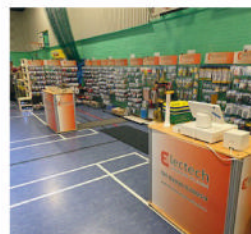
CC5 no solder connectors Pack 10 - £1.00

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Diary Dates for 2026... Upcoming Electech Exhibitions



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Rail Modellers

26-27 September 2026 - Stafford
Railway Circle, Staffordshire County
Showground, Weston Rd, Stafford
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PLATFORM FOR SUCCESS



This substantial plastic kit provides enough material to create a typical timber-built station platform, ideal for a wayside halt within a rural landscape, or perhaps even a workers' alighting point within an industrial or urban area. Based on a Great Western style, commonly built during the inter-war period, the 'timber' decking mimics repurposed sleepers atop a timber latticework frame.

Designed in modular fashion, multiple sections can be built and the overall length tailored to suit the available space, up to a total of 830mm. A pair of ramp sections is provided, plus an access staircase, fencing, nameboards and even a trio of traditional oil/gas lamps. As well as straight track, the platform can also be built around a gentle curve.



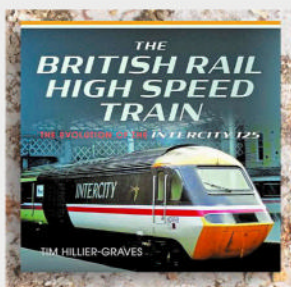
Assembly looks to be straightforward and full instructions are provided.

Product: Peco LK708
Wooden Platform Halt
Price: £35.00

Availability:
Peco stockists
Web: www.peco-uk.com

Modeller's Bookshelf

Richard Gunn presents a quartet of new titles that will inspire and inform your modelling.



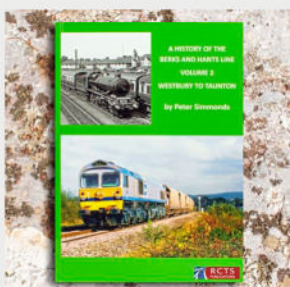
THE 125 AT 50

Released to celebrate 50 years of the High Speed Train, modellers will find much of interest in this well-presented hardback book. Starting with a look at the precursors to the HST, it then comprehensively charts the development and career of the Class 43s, over 248 pages. With 250 illustrations (all but 20 of them in colour), there's a wealth of livery information plus plenty of other details to glean from, while an appendix also lists colour schemes, names and current status. A worthy, comprehensively researched tribute to the HST. **(RG)**

Book: *The British Rail High Speed Train* by Tim Hillier-Graves

Price: £35.00

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



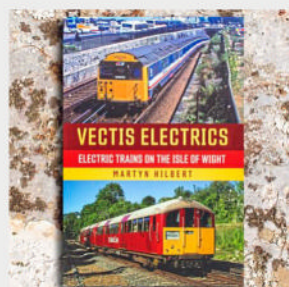
MORE BERKS & HANTS

In this second volume of a series focusing on the Berks & Hants line, the reader is treated to a detailed history of the Westbury to Taunton stretch, based on 25 years' worth of research. Accordingly, it's a very detailed work packed with colour and monochrome images, maps, posters, tickets, plans and railway notices. Presented largely as small sections within chapters, we can't imagine a more definitive work. The wealth of imagery - from the 1830s through to 1993 - offers modellers a feast of visual information. **(RG)**

Book: *A History of the Berks & Hants Line Volume 2: Westbury to Taunton* by Peter Simmonds

Price: £30.00

Web: www.rcts.org.uk/shop-for-books/



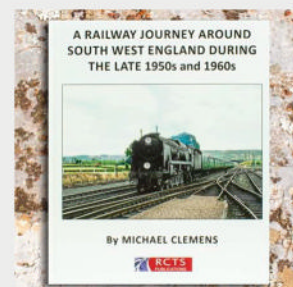
A TICKET TO RYDE

This book could hardly be timelier (well, at least for 'N' gauge modellers), given Revolution Trains' very recent Class 483 electric multiple units, as used for over 30 years on the Isle of Wight. The book covers all the ex-London Transport tube stock of this idiosyncratic Southern Region island enclave from 1967 onwards, including the current Class 484s. The resident permanent way diesel shunters also get a look-in. With chapters on the route's infrastructure and Ryde Depot as well, this is a great pictorial record of a fascinating little isolated system. **(RG)**

Book: *Vectis Electrics* by Martyn Hilbert

Price: £15.99

Web: www.amberley-books.com



NETWORK SOUTH WEST

While the title of this new Railway Correspondence & Travel Society book is a little ponderous, it does do exactly what it says on the tin. The author has collected an enviable, mainly unpublished selection of images, chronicling south-west England during steam's final two decades. That said, some shots date from the 1970s, and while steam predominates, there's plenty of diesel action too. There's plenty of infrastructure on show too, and coverage of less commonly chronicled locations mean a wealth of modelling interest. **(RG)**

Book: *A Railway Journey around South West England During the Late 1950s and 1960s* by Michael Clemens

Price: £25.00

Web: www.rcts.org.uk/shop-for-books/



ON THE WORKBENCH

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

GREAT ALL-ROUNDER

We've covered a few tools from the Japanese GodHand range over the past year, and I've been mightily impressed with them all. Crafted from high-grade carbon steel, they convey a tangible feeling of quality, and these pliers feature precisely machined, tapered jaws with smooth inner faces, allowing soft materials like brass, copper and plastic to be held and shaped without damaging the surface.

While suitable for a wide range of tasks, I've found them particularly effective for shaping wire handrails and pipework for locomotives and rolling stock, especially where subtle curves are needed, thanks to the rounded outer faces of each jaw. The spring tension is subtle, reducing fatigue and the vinyl-covered handles make them comfortable to hold. Highly recommended.

Product: GodHand all-purpose bending pliers

Price: £24.95

Availability: The Airbrush Company

Web: www.airbrushes.com



LUBE TUBE

This brand-new contact oil from Peco comes in a handy pen-like dispenser, complete with a fine metal applicator tip, making it easy to deposit the lubricant into awkward areas, so it's ideal for maintaining model locomotives in any scale.

The clear reservoir allows the user to see how much oil remains, and it's flexible too, so a light squeezing action helps to control the flow, reducing the risk of over-oiling.

This product replaces Peco's older Power Lube product, but its purpose is the same: providing lubrication for mechanisms and pick-up contacts, thanks to its electrolytic action. It's an effective cleaning medium for bearing and contact surfaces too, and is safe for use on most plastics and painted finishes, although it's always best to test on an inconspicuous area first, just in case!

Product: Peco PT64 Power-Lube Plus contact oil, 12ml

Price: £13.95

Availability: Peco stockists

Web: www.peco-uk.com



FINE FIGURES



A timely release by Osborn's Models is a pack of footplate crew for Rapido's Kerr, Stuart Sirdar Class O-4-OTs (see review on page 92), which fit easily into the cabs and come fully painted. Sporting denim overalls, the driver and fireman are suited to various eras.

Also new from Osborn's is a trio of North Devon Red Cattle, one of Britain's oldest native breeds. Again, they come fully painted, and the pack provides two cows and a mature bull. Perfect for a rural farm scene based in the West Country.

Products:

• OSBF226 Sirdar crew

• OSBF225 Devon Red cattle

Price: £14.00 per pack

Availability: Osborn's Models

SIGNAL STRENGTH



This pre-assembled and wired ground position shunt signal, from Train Tech, is a convincing replica of a commonly used piece of signalling equipment in use on the UK network for many years. Powered by a smoothed 12-16V DC supply, it's suitable for use on DC or DCC layouts, and the attached circuit board features connections for remote switching, mimic boards and track sensors, as well as power inputs. There's even an integral push switch to control the aspects, so it's basically ready to go once the power is connected.

A plastic plug collar is provided to aid installation through a 10mm diameter hole in the baseboard and comprehensive installation and wiring instructions are provided.

Product:

Train Tech

TTGS1 Ground Position Shunt signal

Price: £44.00 each

Availability: Gaugemaster

Web:

www.gaugemasterretail.com



CLEARING THE WAY

Italian hobby paint manufacturer LifeColor has released a range of new, high-quality clear acrylic finishes, formulated primarily for airbrush use (although they can be hand-brushed too).

The water-based formula offers low odour and fast drying time, producing a fine, even and durable coating that can enhance underlying paintwork and seal waterslide decals securely.

The gloss varnish is great for use before and after decal application, producing a high-shine finish, while the satin and matt formulas allow the final sheen to be tailored to your preference.

The 100ml bottles feature a handy flip-top cap, and thinning can be achieved with LifeColor's own acrylic thinners.

Product: LifeColor clear varnishes • LC27 Matt

• LC77 Satin • LC73 Gloss

Price: £10.55 each

Availability:

The Airbrush Company

Web: www.airbrushes.com



SIT AND WONDER



No public space is complete without a bench or two, and this set of six from Noch presents a typical public style of cast iron ends and wooden planks. Supplied pre-painted, they're versatile enough to install in a park, village green, market square, station forecourt and many other scenarios, allowing modellers to add that finishing touch to a 'TT:120' layout.

Product:

Noch 46849 Benches

Price: £14.25

Availability: Noch stockists or Gaugemaster

Web:

www.gaugemasterretail.com



EXHIBITION DIARY - AUGUST 27-SEPTEMBER 27 2026**August 27**

WELLING, KENT. Erith Model Railway Society 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. **Tel:** 020 8310 5018. **Email:** david.boneafcw1@gmail.com

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:** www.bdmrc.co.uk

August 29-31

BISHOPS LYDEARD, TAUNTON. Taunton Model Railway Group 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. **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/tauntonmodelrailwaygroup

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. **Email:** contact-us@harrogate-modelrailwaygroup.org.uk **Web:** www.harrogate-modelrailwaygroup.org.uk

September 5

BRIDLINGTON, EAST YORKS. Trainshed Model Railway Group, Bridlington Model Railway Show. Bridlington Club for Young People, Gypsey Road, Bridlington YO16 4AY. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £7, Accompanied children Free. **Tel:** 07811 254080. **Email:** bridmodelrail@hotmail.co.uk. **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/BridlingtonModelRailwayShow

WING, BEDS. Tring & District MRC, TaD-Rail 2026. Cottesloe School, Aylesbury Rd, Wing LU7 0NY. **Time:** 1015-1630. **Admission:** Adults £7, Children £3, Families (2+2) £15. **Email:** r.longman@btinternet.com. **Tel:** 01525 850703. **Web:** www.tringmrc.co.uk

MARCHWOOD, HANTS. Marchwood Modellers Charity Model Railway Exhibition. Marchwood Village Hall, Marchwood, Hampshire SO40 4SX. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £7, Children £2, Families (2+2) £17. **Web:** www.marchwoodmodellers.com **Email:** marchwoodmodellers@hotmail.com

September 12

CAMBRIDGE. RailEx East - Cambridge Exhibition. Cambridge Regional College, Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge CB4 2QT. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £8, Accompanied children £3 (1 child gets free entry for parties with 2 or more children and at least 1 adult), Accompanied under-5s Free. **Email:** exhibition@cambridge31a-mrc.org.uk **Web:** www.cambridge31a-mrc.org.uk/exhibition.htm

September 12 & 13

FAVERSHAM, KENT. Faversham Model Railway Club, Faversham Model Railway Exhibition. The Abbey School, London Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8RZ. **Times:** Sat 1000-1630, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults (17+) £7, Children (6-16) £3, Accompanied under-5s Free. **Tel:** 07904 078168. **Email:** exhibition@favershammrc.org.uk **Web:** www.favershammrc.org.uk

GWYNEDD, WALES. Little ByG Show, St Cyngar's Church Hall (underneath the church), Church Road, Borth-y-Gest, Porthmadog LL49 9TU. **Times:** 1000-1600 both days. **Admission:** Adults £4, Accompanied children Free. **Web:** www.ngaugeshow.co.uk **Facebook:** Meridienne Exhibitions Ltd

LEAMINGTON SPA, WARKS. International N Gauge Show. Warwickshire Event Centre, Nr Leamington Spa, Visitor Car Park, Common Road, Warwick CV31 1FE. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £14.50, Seniors £13, Children (5-14) £6

LEIGH, GREATER MANCHESTER.

Leigh Festival of Model Railways and Transport Modelling 50th Anniversary Exhibition. Leigh Sports Village, Leigh Leisure Centre, Sale Way, Greater Manchester WN7 4JY. **Time:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £8, Accompanied under-15s Free. **Web:** www.leighmodelrailwaysociety.wordpress.com

September 19

BRENTWOOD, ESSEX. Mid Essex MRC 47th Annual MRE. Brentwood County High School, Shenfield Common, Seven Arches Rd, Brentwood CM14 4JF. **Time:** 1000-1700. **Admission:** Adults £7, Children £4, Families (2+3) £20. **Tel:** 07973 382916 or 07918 638034. **Web:** www.midessexmrc.org

WILLAND, DEVON. Culm Valley Model Railway Club, 16th Annual Model Railway Exhibition. Willand Village Hall, Gables Road, Willand, Devon EX15 2LP. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £6, Accompanied children £1. **Web:** www.cvmrc.weebly.com

September 19 & 20

TROON, SOUTH AYRSHIRE. Ayr Model Railway Group Annual Exhibition. Walker and Concert Halls, South Beach, Troon KA10 6EF. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £7, Children £4, Accompanied under-5s Free, Families (2+2) £16. **Web:** www.ayrmrg.co.uk **Email:** secretary@ayrmodelrailwaygroup.org.uk **Facebook:** btopenworld.com

TUNBRIDGE WELLS, KENT. Spa Valley Railway Model Railway Weekend. Tunbridge Wells, West Station, Nevill Terrace TN2 5QY. **Times:** 1000-1700 both days. **Admission:** (including unlimited train travel): Adults £16, Concessions £15, Accompanied under-17s Free, Families (2+2) £32. **Tel:** 07507 182763. **Web:** www.spavalleyrailway.co.uk **Email:** richard.arding@spavalleyrailway.co.uk

September 26

EARLEY, READING. Loddon Vale MRC. St. Peter's Church Hall, Church Lane, Earley, Reading RG6 1EY. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £6, Children £2, Families (2+2) £13. **Tel:** 07972 115816. **Email:** ex.man.lvmrc@gmail.com **Web:** www.lvmrc.co.uk

HADDENHAM, BUCKS. Risborough & District MRC, Haddenham Model Railway Exhibition 2026. Haddenham Village Hall, Banks Road, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire HP17 8EE. **Time:** 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adults (18+) £7, Children (5-17) £1. **Email:** secretary@rdmrc.org.uk **Web:** www.rdmrc.org.uk

September 26 & 27

FOLKESTONE, KENT. Folkestone Hythe & District Model Railway Club Exhibition. Leas Cliff Hall, The Leas, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2DZ. **Times:** 1000-1630 both days. **Admission:** Adults £9, Children £4, Families £24. **Email:** secretaryfmrc@yahoo.com **Web:** www.folkestonemrc.wordpress.com/club2

WORTHING, WEST SUSSEX.

Worthing MRC Exhibition 2026. St. Andrews CE School, Sackville Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN14 8BQ. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £10, Accompanied children Free. **Tel:** 07970 633908. **Email:** exhibitions@worthingmrc.co.uk **Web:** www.worthingmrc.co.uk

...and finally**Unusual scenes captured by the lens of Chris Nevard**

Back in olden times, nearly all railway stations had a cat, but sadly there was no official railway budget for their upkeep. The station cat knew this, despite providing free comfort and entertainment for passengers, or 'customers' as we call them these days. So for this very reason, cats became very good at providing for themselves. Here we have such an occurrence with Bob, the station cat, taking advantage of the closed level crossing gates while fluttering his eyes at the dairy delivery man.

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24th & 25th October

CARDIFF MODEL RAIL EXHIBITION

31st October & 1st November

HORNBY		R3896	R&H 88DS BR 84£102.59	R614	LH Diamond Crossing£16.85	R044	Point Switch.....£13.05	35-418	BR Class 47 Construction£203.95
R3635	BR Lord Nelson 'Lord Rodney'£152.95	R3899	BR Class 08 yellow£166.95	R615	RH Diamond Crossing£16.85	R046	Two Way Switch£13.05	35-419	BR Class 47 Rft Distribution£203.95
R3833	LNER A2/3 Chamossaire£171.00	R3901	CI 60 Colas£161.99	R617	Uncoupling Ramp£4.45	R047	On/Off Switch.....£13.05	35-351	Class 20 BR green£152.95
R3859	BR J36£175.49	R30010	Sentinel Hitachi£98.09	R618	Double Isolating Rail£11.90	R602	Power Connecting Clip£3.20	35-352	BR Cl. 20 Green . £191.20
R3974	LNER Class A2/3 Airborne£251.99	R30013	R&H 48DS Gower Princess£98.10	R620	Railer Uncoupler£8.05	R8014	Point Motor£12.15	35-352A	BR Cl. 20 Green . £191.20
R3977	BR Class A2/2 Earl Marischal£251.99	R30015	Ruston WMJEA£112.50	R628	Half Curve 3rd Rad. .£3.20	R8015	Point Motor Housing £8.10	35-410A	BR Cl. 47 Green£203.95
R30140	BR M7 class.....£193.49	R30083	Sentinel 0-6-0 P o B£98.09	R643	Half Curve 2nd Rad. £2.75	BACHMANN Steam Locomotives		35-410B	BR Cl. 47 Green£203.95
R30200	Railroad 0-4-OST BR£43.19	R30084	Sentinel 0-6-0 M.S.C.£98.09	R8072	LH Point.....£14.45	31-002	Robinson BR Early Crest£94.99	DAPOL/HELJAN/RAPIDO	
R30221	The Railway Children Return 4F.....£125.99	R30115	CI08 Blue 604 Phantom£167.40	R8073	RH Point£14.45	31-065SF	NER E class sound£237.95	4S-018-009	B4 Wartime Black 87£93.50
R30228	LMS Coronation Queen Mary.....£217.79	R30141	GBRF Class 08£179.99	R8074	LH Curved Point.....£22.10	31-066	LNER J71 Black.....£135.95	4S-041-011	Large Prairie GWR 5132£129.50
R30287	United Glass Bottle 0-4- OST PUG.....£76.50	R30150	GBRF Class 66 Grey£87.30	R8075	RH Curved Point.....£22.10	31-127	CL3000 BR ROD .£118.45	2570	Class 25/3 BR Blue 7513£177.65
R30317	Railroad M&GNJR 0-4-OT£49.50	R30151	GBRF Class 66 HS2 Green£87.30	R8076	Y Point.....£16.99	31-128	BR ROD Weathered£102.45	2549	Class 25/3 BR Blue 25323£177.65
R30365	GNR J13 1257£157.49	R30167	Class 66 Fastline Freight£87.30	R8077	LH Express Point.....£22.10	31-136	DC D11/2 BR£115.90	2548	Class 25/3 Green FYE 7561£177.65
R30366	LNER J52 Black£157.50	R30180	BR Cl.37 Intercity ..£87.30	R8078	RH Express Point.....£22.10	31-464A	C Class SR Black.£174.20	2547	Class 25/3 BR Blue 25301£177.65
R30397	BR J52 Black£157.50	R30203	Class 121 Coca-Cola£87.30	R8261	4th Radius Curve.....£3.20	31-481	Class G2A BR Early£114.70	2546	Class 25/3 BR Blue 25904£177.65
R30406	LNER Streamlined B17£247.50	R30223	DRS Class 66.....£87.30	HORNBY Track Accessories		31-933A	BR Compound Late£169.95	2545	Class 25/3 ETHEL2 UNPOWERED£177.65
R30409	MSC Peckett 'Jaffa'£125.99	R30301	TXS BR Cl. 08 SOUND£237.60	R076	Footbridge.....£18.70	32-131A	GWR 4575.....£140.20	2544	Class 25/3 BR Blue 25095£177.65
R30410	SR T9 Green£206.99	R30420	Hornby Dublo Deltic£314.99	R169	Junction Home Signal£19.55	35-075A	LBSC E4 Lined Umber£140.20	2543	Class 25/3 Green SYP D5243£177.65
HORNBY Diesel Electric Locomotives		R30424	GNER Class 91£220.49	R170	Junction Distant Signal£19.55	35-080	LBSC E4 SR Black£140.20	2540	Class 25/3 ETHEL1 UNPOWERED£177.65
R3373	Class 71 BR Green w/panel£134.95	R30431	BR Cl.73 73132.....£80.99	R171	Single Home Signal£14.85	35-201	BR black V2£195.45	914004	LMS Jones Goods (Early)£186.50
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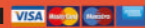


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News Real

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.

▣ Sole surviving Gresley tank locomotive, Great Northern Railway 0-6-2T No. 1744, returned to steam in July after an eight-year overhaul. The 1920-built 'N2' is owned by The Gresley Society and based at the North Norfolk Railway. THE GRESLEY SOCIETY



▣ Derby Lightweight railcar M79900 is celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2026. One of a pair of single-car vehicles built in the early days of BR diesel railcars in 1956, it was later employed by BR's Railway Technical Centre and named 'Test Car Iris' before being restored to near-original condition in the early 2000s. On July 17, 'Iris' was one of the star attractions at the Great Central Railway's DMU Day. BEN JONES



▣ The latest train operators to become part of government-owned Great British Railways are Greater Anglia and c2c. On July 16, newly reliveried 'Aventras' 720144 and 720501 lined up at London Liverpool Street alongside ex-c2c 'Electrostars' 357008/020 for the launch of GBR's unified Anglia operation. The '357s' are the first trains to be painted in GBR colours rather than using vinyls. BEN JONES



▣ Freight trains shunting on industrial branches are a once-common sight that has almost vanished from the modern railway. Par Docks in Cornwall is one of only a handful of locations where such operations still take place, although local sources suggest that this weekly trip will also cease very soon. On July 29, GB Railfreight's 66759 Chippy arranges its train of NACCO JIA china clay hoppers in the docks before making the short journey to nearby St Blazey Yard. BEN JONES



SHOW & TELL

The *Model Rail* modellers reveal what they've been working on this month.



LITTER PICKERS

Replicating as many aspects of real life as possible – the good and the bad – can be an interesting challenge for layout builders. **Peter Marriott** recently added some litter to one of his scenes, with the help of a handy kit.

Sadly, litter seems to have been an ever-present eyesore on the landscape for many years. Thoughtlessly strewn along roads and railway lines, in urban and rural areas, it's a highly visible feature of everyday life, unfortunately.

My travels around the country have shown me that, in terms of railways, stations, freight yards and maintenance depots seem to attract rather a lot of airborne rubbish. Blown by the wind, the detritus inevitably becomes trapped among weeds, undergrowth or impaled on fencing alongside the tracks.

Also, housing that backs onto railway land often sees all manner of junk thrown over the fences, especially old children's toys. Why do people do it? It's usually obvious where it has come from!

Ignoring the whys and the wherefores, if you're aiming to create a fully lifelike layout, maybe you will want to include some of the less seemly sides of human nature, with litter being one of the most obvious 'untidy'

aspects of life. All of this is easy to model, making good use of scrap materials or off-the-shelf products, and it can be quick too.

Recently, I came across a great value pack of printed details from Scale Model Scenery. The 'Litter' set contains a variety of miniature newspapers, magazines, plastic shopping bags, crisp packets, fish and chip wrappers, till receipts, flattened drinks cans and even train tickets – all perfect for creating the flotsam and jetsam we see discarded by the lineside.

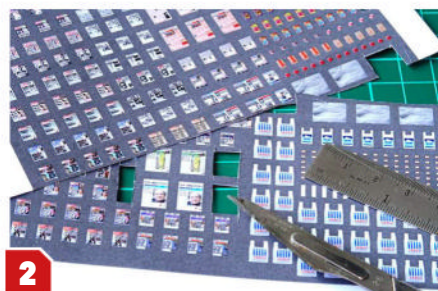
The A5 sheet is aimed at 4mm scale models, and contains over five hundred individual items, printed to a high standard. All you need to do is cut them out, scrunch them up and fix them into a scene. A similar sheet is available for 'O' gauge, too.

It's obviously up to you how much litter you place on your layout. A gritty area of a city or town may warrant a generous smattering of discarded trash, while in some instances, just a single Tesco bag or a packet of Monster Munch can have a more dramatic effect.



1

Scale Model Scenery's Litter pack contains hundreds of miniature items of litter, from newspapers and plastic shopping bags to snack packets and train tickets.



2

The A5 sheet is printed to a high standard, ensuring the brands and titles are recognisable for extra dramatic effect. Simply cut out the individual items with a sharp scalpel, using a steel rule if necessary.



What Peter used

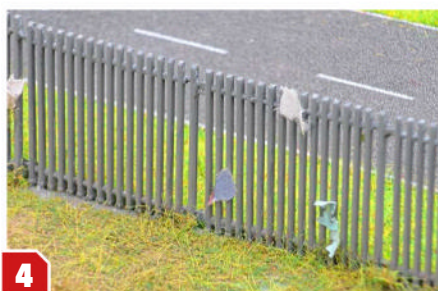
SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ **Product:** AX012-00 Litter
- ◆ **'OO'/4mm scale Availability:** Scale Model Scenery
- ◆ **Price:** £3.49
- ◆ **Web:** www.scalemodelscenery.co.uk



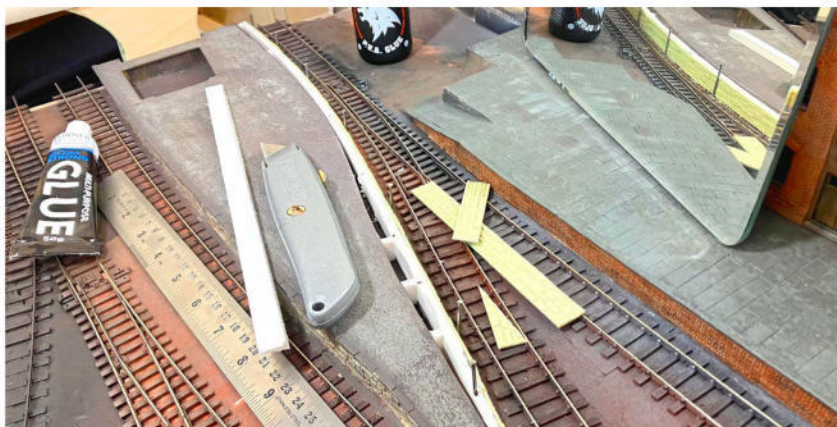
3

Scrum up the items of litter to give the items a realistic texture, then fold or straighten them out, as required before fixing them to the layout. I used small spots of PVA glue.



4

For more vague pieces of litter, simply cut or tear up some coloured paper into small, random pieces, scrunching them up and fixing in place.



PLATFORM ALTERATION

After a long hiatus, GEORGE DENT found time to work on part of his layout.

My 'Lisburn Lane' layout has stood dormant for much of this year, but a few spare hours were maximised recently, with the extension of the station platform. The initial idea was to have a single working platform face, despite another line running behind, which is essentially just a headshunt.

After months of reflection, however, I thought it would make more sense to suggest that the station was a true island affair. A small platform extension was therefore required, which was formed from foamboard, clad on the outside with Wills embossed stone plastic sheet and topped with mounting card and plastic strip for the edging stones.

Construction was fairly straightforward, except for the fact that the layout is set

within a diorama case-style baseboard, so I had to contort my upper body through the aperture in order to work.

The use of a mirror proved helpful, allowing me to see what I was doing, especially when installing the textured cladding. The fun will really begin when I come to paint the stonework to match the front platform edge and nearby structures.

Talking of which, I'm having second thoughts about the red sandstone shades I've employed, as everything is looking overly uniform now all the red brick industrial structures are complete. Maybe I should have gone for a more neutral shade of stone? After all, the plan is for this layout to represent several areas of the UK, rather than one particular locality, so red sandstone is probably too specific.

Something to ponder...!



BUILT LIKE A TANK

Chris Nevard has been beavering away on multiple projects, including this elevated tank structure, which could easily be either a water tower or a fuel oil supply for industrial traction.

Readers may recognise some of the component parts, as Chris has been using up bits and bobs from his spares box. You can follow the project in full in a future *Model Rail Workbench* feature - watch this space!



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Inside track with Ben Ando

“Seeing an idea laid out in black and white has presented a solution that, in my head, was elusive”

Start dreaming - armed with a pencil and sketchpad - and there is no limit to what can take shape. PAUL LUNN

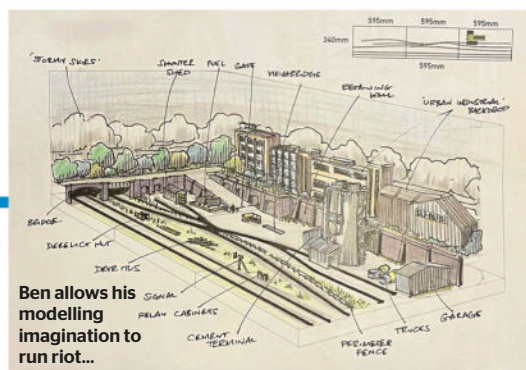
The model you build in your mind

As a self-confessed 'wagon-phile' (if that is a word!) I tend to obsess over details, livery variations and weathering on rolling stock – and deep-diving into myriad and arcane variations is what gives me pleasure. I don't expect everyone to like it!

Similarly, if you want to sit back and watch your French TGV overtaking your *Flying Scotsman* with a rake of blue-grey Mk 1 coaches tearing around your layout at maximum speed, that is fine.

For me, the important thing is not what you do, but what you get; and ideally, that is the opportunity to immerse yourself fully in what you are doing, take a break from everyday pressures and enjoy a comforting mental health break.

However, while playing trains, studying details or setting signals is lots of fun, model railways can even give pleasure when there are no trains involved at all. As I write this, we have all 'enjoyed' week after week of exceptionally hot, dry weather. Those of us who enjoy just playing trains may have had to vacate an unbearably hot loft or shed – so what to do?

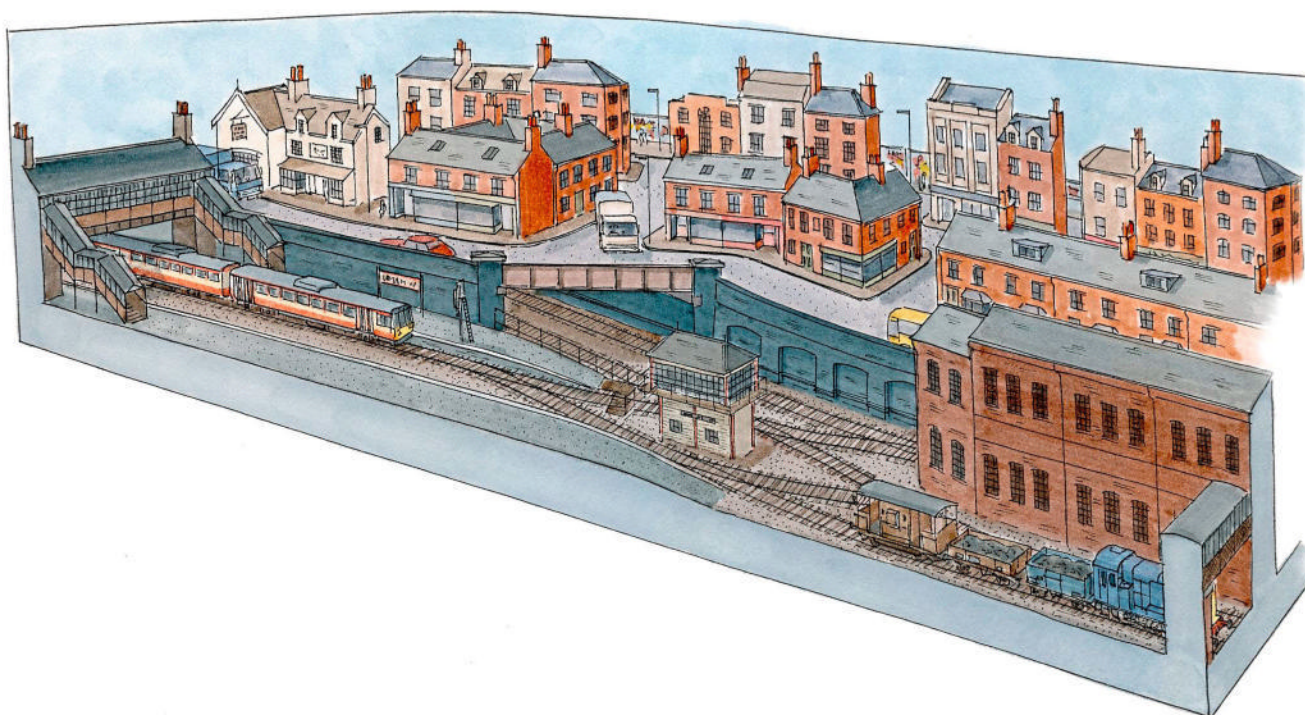


My solution is to start dreaming – with a pencil and sketchpad. Sit back, in the shade, and let your mind roam. You might want to draw up a plan for that random layout you always fancied building but never had the space, time or rolling stock for. Or maybe you can come up with an idea for some kind of industrial plant that would fit neatly into that unused corner of your layout, sketching the track layout and designs for possible buildings you might need to fabricate. You could learn about signalling and work out the correct signals for your existing layout – even if you never intend to fit them!

It does not matter if that Welsh Highland trackplan you have just designed is never built; or that brewery for your layout never leaves the pad. You do not need to be a skilled draughtsman or artistically gifted. No one has to see the sketches but you. And translating ideas onto paper often helps highlight issues or engender fresh thinking in another aspect of your modelling that is causing frustration.

In the past, when doodling trackplans, or sketching out ideas for a new wagon scratchbuild, seeing an idea laid out in black and white has presented a solution that, in my head, was elusive.

But even if the sketching leads nowhere, the possibilities are endless; the limits are nonexistent. Every moment you spend focused is a chance for the rest of your brain to reboot, and when you have completed your sketch or design, you can return to reality, refreshed and invigorated.



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SCAN HERE

DOUBLE DUTCH



“ What makes this layout great? ”

It may be compact - which is what Ian wanted to achieve - but a lot of detail and thought has still gone into 'Red Post Lane'. And, of course, when Ian fancies a change from running Dutch-liveried Class 33s, he can go for genuine Dutch locomotives instead, thanks to the layout's 'Maasdijk' split personality.

Ian Driver's 'Red Post Lane' depot was built as a low-cost project over winter – and, on the show circuit, has the ability to transform into a Netherlands-based layout with a few simple tweaks.

Words: **Richard Gunn**
Photography: **Chris Nevard** and **Ian Driver**





When Ian Driver's wife suggested a winter project for him last year, it was the perfect excuse to retrieve an old layout from where it had been confined, no longer used, in the garden shed. Ian had moved into modelling the Dutch scene, inspired by work visits to the Netherlands, where Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS) locomotives and rolling stock had fascinated him. "Waalhaven" was an infrastructure/departamental yard layout," he recalls. "It was originally 6ft long; I noticed a few issues, so I extended it to 10ft, although that then made it difficult for just one person to handle when transporting to shows. So it eventually ended up in the shed, doing nothing."

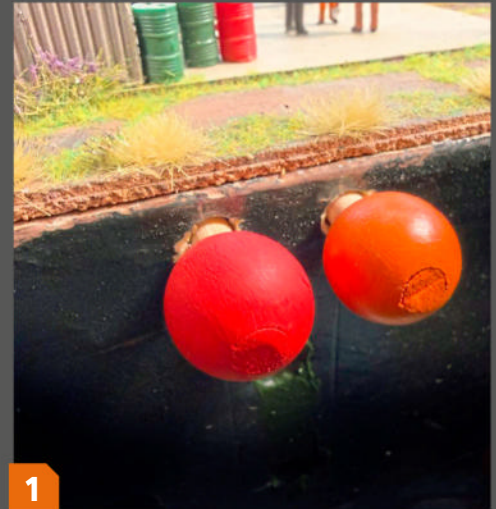
Fast forward a while, and what Ian (and his wife) decided on was a small layout that could just be stuck on a table. The result was 'Red Post Lane', a Southern Region-based location set during the late 1980s/early 1990s, with military connections. Much was salvaged from 'Waalhaven' (plus other layouts), and in a nod to its predecessor, 'Red Post Lane' has a Continental alter ego – change the magnetic signs, locomotives and ➤



ABOVE Ian reckons that Lima's Class 73 was "probably one of the best model locomotives that it ever made. In a roundabout way, it probably runs better than the Dapol one. And despite its age, it was still able to accept DCC." Dapol steps and LEDs front lights have been added to enhance the electro-diesel.

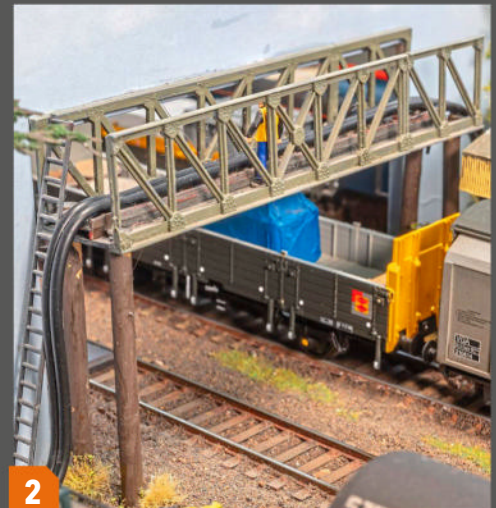


3 things we like



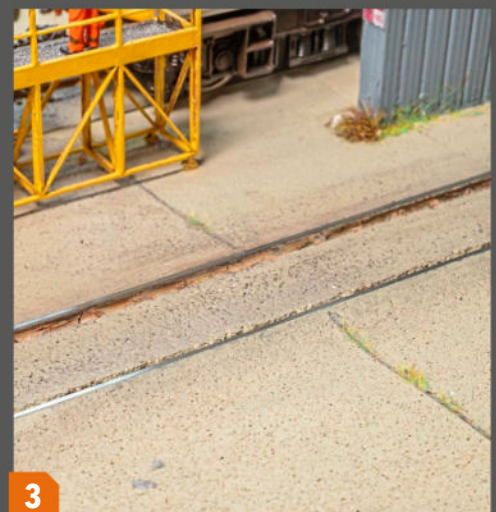
1

Colour-coded knobs allow points to be operated by the public – and Ian's six-year old grandson.



2

The pipework gantry effectively masks the entrance to the partially-ballasted fiddleyard.



3

Cork is used to represent concrete track pads – and very convincing it looks, with weeds in the joints.





wagons, and the road vehicles, and it becomes 'Maasdijk' instead. The metamorphosis can be so quickly done that, at some shows, Ian has gone British in the morning and transformed it into a Dutch location for the afternoon session.

Thanks to so much being recycled, Ian reckons he only spent around £40 on new items for 'Red Post Lane'. "That was for the backscene, some cork and doweling, and a 3D-printed Portacabin building from Litprints. The rest of it has all been sort of cobbled together from various bits and pieces. The loading bay, for example, is some old Airfix engine shed kits, laid sideways and shortened."

The invented backstory to the 'Red Post Lane' maintenance shed and refuelling point is that "there is a Red Post Junction just west of Andover, on the line that used to go from Andover to Swindon, close to what was RAF Andover and is now the headquarters of the Army. So I imagined it as a stabling point to hold a couple of locomotives for the military trains in and out of Ludgershall, as well as provide a 'Thunderbird' service for London Waterloo to Exeter trains. But it's all pure fiction."

Reusing the stripped baseboards of 'Waalhaven' and after resurfacing them with a layer of cork, the trackwork for 'Red Post Lane' was a mixture of ►







TOP People are a mix of Preiser, Noch and Airfix, all of whom have done service on previous layouts. They include 'Fred the Flag', a steam age figure who Ian added a hi-vis vest to.

Peco Code 100 Setrack and Flexitrack salvaged from the layout of a modelling friend who had passed away. This was pinned down onto a further bed of cork. "Fine casting sand was used as ballast; as it had already been used and burnt, it didn't need painting. It's the same with the building roofs, the same stuff."

For areas with concrete padding, more cork was used, up to rail height, and painted with RailMatch concrete paint. "In some instances I've put down some mucky colours. I didn't do too much; I wanted it to be subtle and not over-weathered. Although there's quite a lot around the fuelling point." This was initially done with a "gloopy black paint" to represent fresh oil stains, but it dried matte. "So all I did was add a little bit of superglue to the paint, which made it slightly shiny again."

Another way in which things were kept simple and fun was the points – operated by dowel rods passing through the board. This was done in collaboration with Ian's six-year-old grandson. "Originally the knobs were just plain wood, but I thought that if I made them the colours of the rainbow, it would make them easy – I can tell him ►



that he needs to push the red or the orange one, etc. This also means they can be operated from the front or the back, and I can interact with the public at shows by asking if they want to change the points."

REUSING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE

The maintenance shed incorporated parts from Hornby's diesel depot, albeit clothed in a "bit of foamboard with some plastic cladding on the side. I should probably rebuild that at some point though. The fuel area came from 'Waalhaven', with the tank itself an old wagon body. The shelter was also an ex-'Waalhaven' refugee. "I tried to re-use as much as possible, otherwise it would have all ended up in the bin, which is one of the things I didn't really want to do."

Being a working depot, there's little natural scenery but the random clumps of overgrown grass came from WWScenics, again generally reclaimed from 'Waalhaven'. The trees are made from seafoam, from another layout. An iD Backscenes view completes the rear – it's meant to portray a retail park but its rather barracks-like appearance convinced Ian that "it could easily be a military backdrop".

Ian found that the most challenging issue was the disguising the "hole in the wall" exiting to the fiddleyard. The solution was a small girder bridge carrying pipework over the tracks. "It was left open for a while. The girder was re-used from elsewhere, the pipework is twin electrical cabling. That the ballasting continues through into the fiddleyard helps perpetuate the illusion of a line beyond."

Cars are from the Oxford Diecast range, and their choice is quite personal to Ian. "They're all vehicles I've owned. The Austin 1300 was a police car that I de-liveried and filled in the hole in the roof for the blue light. All the bicycles came from 'Waalhaven' – being Dutch, there were loads."

Class 33 'Cromptons' make up most of the motive power, along with a couple of Class 73s (including an old Lima model, albeit more finely detailed by Ian) ➤

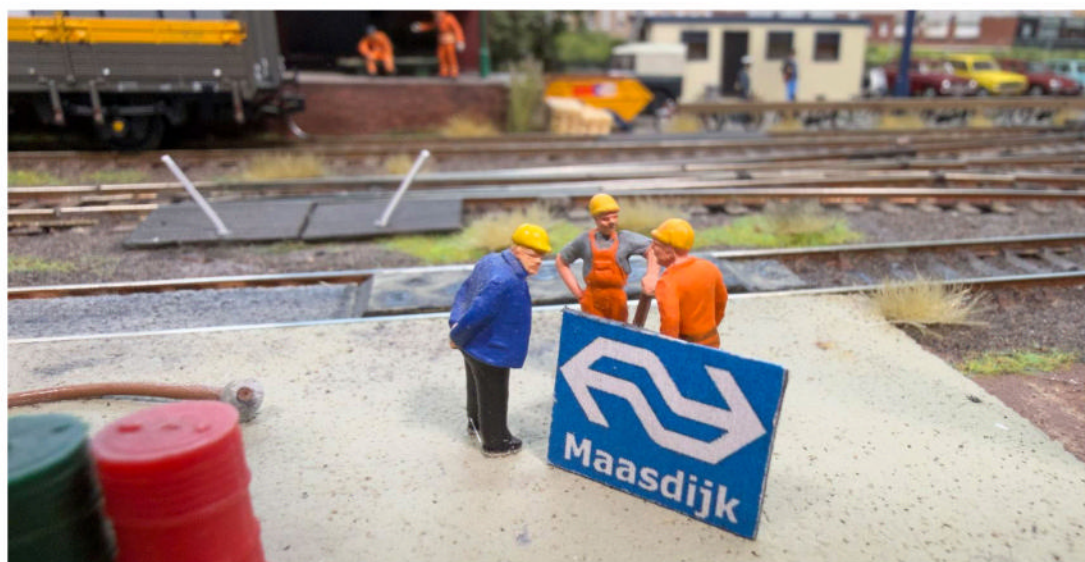
"Thanks to so much being recycled, Ian reckons he spent only around £40 on new items"







ABOVE 'Red Post Lane' is equally at home as 'Maasdiijk', set in the Netherlands, and gives Ian the opportunity to roll out his Dutch stock left over from previous layouts such as 'Waalhaven'.





now. "Whenever you look at a picture of a Southern shed, 90% is generally 'Cromptons'. So instead of a variety of different classes, I've gone for alternative liveries instead. There are six variations on the 33s. There's a story behind two; my father was involved in the Burma campaign during World War Two, and like a lot of other chaps received the Burma Star medal. So there's *The Burma Star* and *Earl Mountbatten of Burma* – my father used to talk about him a lot. Thus I tend to run those (33202 and 33207) as a pair." All the engines are weathered to some extent and feature magnetic couplings – magnets for uncoupling are strategically situated across the layout.

When asked what his favourite part of 'Red Post Lane' (or 'Maasdiik', depending on whether it's in a British or Continental mood) is, Ian replies "All of it – I just like the way this layout has gone together. It's just gelled." Not bad for £40 and four months work...

If you'd like to see 'Red Post Lane'/'Maasdiik' on display, it will be at the Basingstoke & North Hants Model Railway Society (www.basingstokemrs.uk) open day on September 6, along with its own show over March 13-14 next year. On October 31 this year, it will also be at the Newbury Model Railway Club (www.newburymrc.co.uk) exhibition. **MR**



LEFT The covered load is a block of wood on a redundant mini-drill chuck holder, covered in the foil from a packet of Polos. "It makes an absolutely brilliant tarpaulin," says Ian. "So my son's now doing a whole load of 'clay hoods' using the same method."



FACTFILE: 'RED POST LANE'

Era: Late 1980s/Early 1990s

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

Size: Scenic area 4ft, overall 5ft 6in x 15in with fiddleyard

Track: Peco Code 100 with Insulfrog pointwork

Power and control: DCC Roco Multimaus

Time to build: Four months (and £40)



ABOUT THE MODELLER: IAN DRIVER

After his father took five-year-old Ian to the local station to see the 'Golden Arrow' ("with a proper 'Spam Can' unrebuilt Bulleid on the front"), Ian badgered him for a model railway. Since then, he's modelled from 'N' gauge to gauge '3', and is a member of the Basingstoke & North Hants Model Railway Society along with the Benelux Railways Society (www.beneluxrailways.org.uk). He also builds and sails radio-controlled model warships, and used to play drums in a pipe band – having gone to the same obviously musically inspiring school as David Bowie and Peter Frampton.



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66710 Karen Harrison



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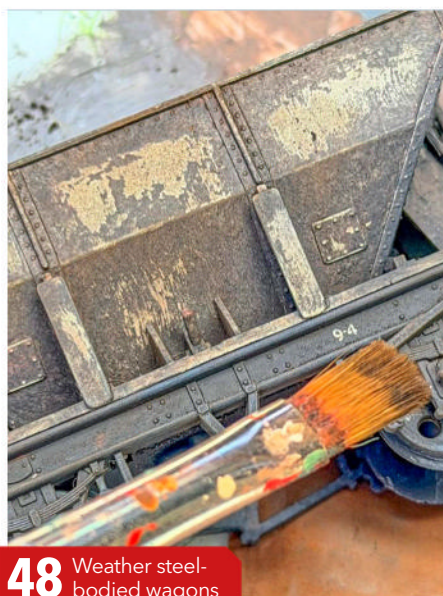
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44 Detailing tips for tank locos

Workbench

Inspirational projects, advice and top tips that show you how



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58 Build a 3D-printed bus shelter

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HOW TO

GET YOUR PANNIER TANKS LOOKING TIP-TOP

There's nothing quite like the sight of a pannier tank pootling up and down a Western Region branch line, with a set of tools hanging off the rear. **George Dent** set about enhancing a member of Accurascale's excellent '57XX' family.

There's something especially beguiling about the Great Western's O-6-O pannier tanks, with their distinctive looks and character.

We've certainly been well-served – in 'OO' at least – with good quality model locomotives of many different iterations of GWR/BR pannier tanks available from various manufacturers, including *Model Rail*'s own '16XXs', produced exclusively for us by Rapido.

Accurascale's suite of pannier tanks, released earlier this year (see MR349), catered for the '57XX', '67XX' and '8750' classes, with models selling out quickly. Indeed, not long after the first batch landed in the UK, Accurascale announced a second production run, offering a host of new versions for the GWR, BR and preservation eras, plus a striking industrial scheme.

One of the review samples we received from Accurascale is No. 8763 in lined BR black, a scheme befitting its regular use as

OO GAUGE MODEL Accurascale GWR '57XX' pannier tank
◆ Price £139.99-£239.99

8 hrs | 11 tools

AVAILABILITY Accurascale stockists or direct (pre-orders) Web: www.accurascale.com

a station pilot at Paddington, although my model is earmarked for use on a branch line layout. As well as adding the supplied extra details – etched numberplates, screw couplings and oil lamps – I also wanted to install a footplate crew and a set of fire irons to the rear bunker, given that this is my favourite aspect of these tank locomotives.

A couple of oil cans and a few smaller tools also add some extra visual interest, and it's handy to be able to easily source such ephemera these days, thanks to the growth in 3D-printed detailing parts and accessories.

My other main task was to impart a suitably weathered finish while maintaining the polished look of the sides, which was a common feature of steam locomotives in the BR era. It proved to be a hugely

enjoyable project, spread over just a couple of days and employing mostly simple materials and techniques.

I did unleash my airbrush for part of the process, but that was simply to tidy things up and add the 'polished' sheen. However, if you don't have an airbrush, similar results can be achieved by spraying a coat of clear gloss varnish over the body sides beforehand.

Alternatively, you could gently polish the key areas with a tiny amount of T-Cut automotive finish restorer, using cotton buds, before the weathering commences. Just take care not to damage the lining (if your model has it) or printed markings.

One thing I did have to be careful with was working around the wiper contacts, which transmit power from the inner faces of the

DIY TOOLS

Ready-made fire-iron sets are available from multiple sources, including Springside Models (cast metal) and Modelu (3D-printed). Some RTR models also come with injection-moulded plastic tools, such as *Model Rail's* '16XX' – see page 102.

For a more refined appearance (and to save money), I made my own tools from scraps of 0.4mm brass wire, shaped with round-nose pliers. The end of the 'pricker' tool was formed from a blob of cyano glue, while the shovel blade came from a broken cast metal tool. The tools were painted with brown and red oxide aerosol primers before being installed on the model.



What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Modelu footplate crew figures, tank locomotive tool sets (various)
Web: www.modelu3d-co.uk
- ◆ Springside Models locomotive tool sets, lamps
Web: www.springsidemodels.com
- ◆ LifeColor acrylic paints and dry pigments, airbrushes and equipment
Web: www.airbrushes.com
- ◆ Tamiya acrylic paints and clear varnish, thinners, primers, paintbrushes
Web: www.scalemodelshop.co.uk

TOOLS

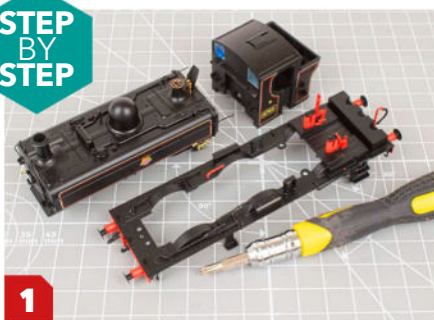
- ◆ Miniature screwdrivers
- ◆ Knife and spare blades
- ◆ Cutting mat
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Fine nosed pliers
- ◆ Hacksaw
- ◆ Files
- ◆ Paintbrushes
- ◆ Cotton buds

wheels to the motor. These metal strips are very delicate and easily distorted, so I tried to keep away from them wherever possible, and the wheels were given a thorough clean after the weathering had been applied. It's worth checking that the wipers maintain contact with the wheels as the axles move around in their bearings, adjusting as necessary.

In fact, Accurascale's forthcoming second batch of pannier tanks (available to pre-order now from your local stockist) will feature improvements to the wiper power contact design, following customer feedback.

Such was the enjoyment gleaned from customising No. 8763 that I was moved to tackle a Bachmann '64XX' too, employing the same processes to bring out the deep lustre of the GWR green livery (see page 3).

STEP BY STEP



1

The Accurascale '57XX' was easy to dismantle, with screws (hidden below the NEM coupler pockets) releasing the chassis. Further screws allow the cab and boiler/tanks to be separated. Keep all the screws safe.



2

Another screw releases the cast metal 'coal', which doubles as an extra weight. Make a note of which screw goes where to aid reassembly. I have a plan for the metal coal, so it was put to one side for now.



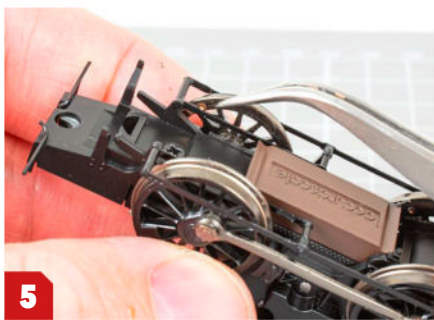
3

I brushed masking fluid onto the front glazing panels. To ensure some dirt accumulated around the edges of the glass, I applied the Masking Magic in a random pattern. Clean the brush in water and allow the fluid to dry.



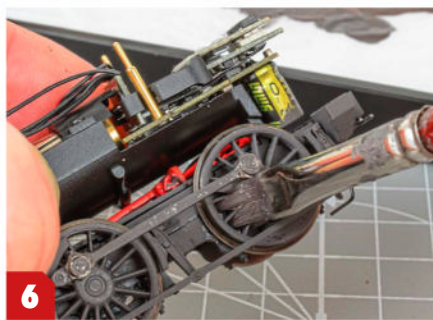
4

On a mixing palette, I created a blend of LifeColor acrylics (LC02 Matt Black, LC37 Burnt Umber, UA610 Dunkelgrau 52), plus a smidgen of PG101 Golan Dark Earth dry pigment to add some grit.



5

Before doing anything to the chassis, I made a note of the location of each wiper contact. These collect power from the rear faces of the wheels and are very delicate. I needed to steer clear of them wherever possible.



6

The paint was brushed very carefully over the chassis and wheels, working it between the spokes and onto the frames, remembering to avoid those wiper contacts. The inside valve gear and base of the boiler were treated too.



7 For this non-DCC-fitted model, I could touch the terminals of a 9V battery to the wheels to energise the motor and gain access to hidden areas. This is NOT recommended for most models with DCC decoders installed.



8 The same paint mix was stippled over the top of the boiler, smokebox and tanks, working it around all the details. The underside of the tanks and firebox sides were treated likewise, but the tank sides were left clean for now.



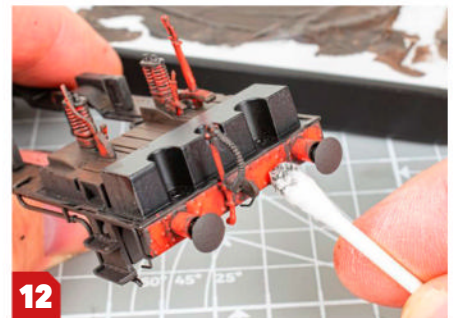
9 After stippling the paint and dry pigment over the smokebox, and with the paint still wet, I dabbed at the surface with a cotton bud to impart a random texture. The numberplate and shedcode panel were wiped clean.



10 A similar blend of paint, minus the dry pigment, was brushed over one side of the cab. Immediately, I wiped away most of the paint with a dry cotton swab, leaving traces of pigment around the raised detail.



11 After treating all four sides of the cab in turn, the same 'brush-on-wipe-off' process was employed on the tank sides, cleaning away almost all traces of paint, but leaving deposits around the handrail mounts.



12 The running plate was treated next, stippling the paint along the upper surfaces, footsteps and edges. The red bufferbeams were wiped partially clean. Use vertical strokes to create streaks in harmony with gravity.



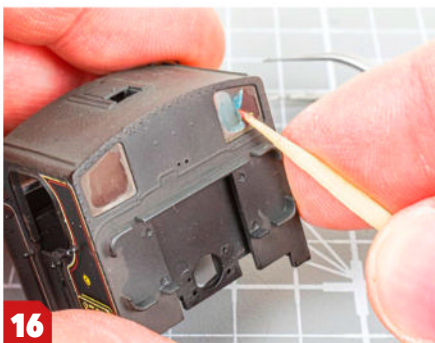
13 Adding more of the earthy brown shade to the mix, I stippled on some contrasting staining to the chassis frames and running plate, along with the cab interior floor. The model was then left overnight.



14 An airbrush was employed to refine the effects, with an ultra-fine mist of generic 'dirty' brown and dark grey-brown shades sprayed over the chassis and bodywork, but keeping clear of the 'clean' cab and tank sides.



15 Tamiya's X-22 Clear (a translucent gloss) was later airbrushed over the cab and tank sides, again in very lightly misted coats. This gives the underlying paintwork a shiny look, as if it has been polished with an oily rag.



16 After another overnight rest to allow the Tamiya paints to harden fully, I removed the masking film from the cab windows, using a wooden toothpick. The 'dirt' around the edges looked convincing.



17 I cut away the top 3mm or so of the cast metal 'coal', clamping the block in a vice and using a hacksaw to cut through the material. Any rough burrs were removed with a flat file, and all traces of metal swarf were cleaned away.



18 The metal block was screwed back into the cab moulding and any gaps around the inner edges of the bunker sealed with strips of electrical insulation tape. This will allow the real coal to sit lower within the bunker.



19

Coal was poured into the bunker and secured with Ballast Bond glue via a precision tip. This glue easily penetrates the coal and, after 24 hours, sets hard. The insulation tape prevents the glue from running out the bottom.



20

While the coal load hardened, I cleaned the wheels using a track cleaning fluid. The wheel treads, flanges and inner faces were cleaned, and the wiper contact faces were checked and adjusted as necessary.



21

No working locomotive is complete without a footplate crew, so I primed and painted a few 3D-printed figures from the Modelu range. Many packs are available, to suit different locomotive types and eras.



22

In this instance, it made sense to fix the fireman in position before the cab was refitted, although I did check for clearance before he was glued in place. I used cyano glue, but PVA or contact adhesive is also suitable.



23

The model was fully reassembled before I installed the driver, as he needed to lean against the frame of the cab. After adding a dab of glue to his feet, I carefully guided him through the side of the cab and into position.



24

A feature of many GWR tanks is the fireman's set of tools resting in the external brackets. Off-the-shelf options exist, but I made my own from wire - see panel. Once painted, they were fixed in position with tiny drops of PVA glue.



25

Lifecolor PG107 Eroding Burnt Rust dry pigment was brushed onto the sides of the ashpan with a dry, stiff-bristled brush. Blended with some PG101 Dark Golan Earth, the pigments were also added to the brake blocks.



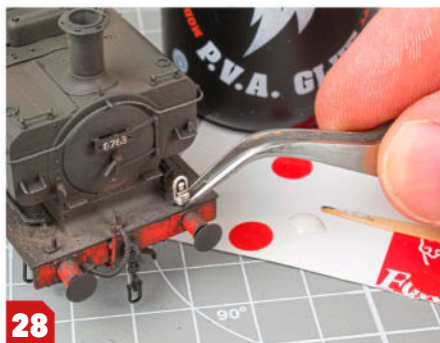
26

The Golan Dark Earth pigment was then dusted onto the running plate below the smokebox door. A brush then swept away excess pigment and created a softer, subtle appearance, blending with the earlier weathering.



27

There's no need to seal the dry pigment, as it sticks well to the weathering paint. I then ran the edge of a grey pencil over high-traffic areas such as footsteps, handrails and water filler hatches to mimic burnished metal.

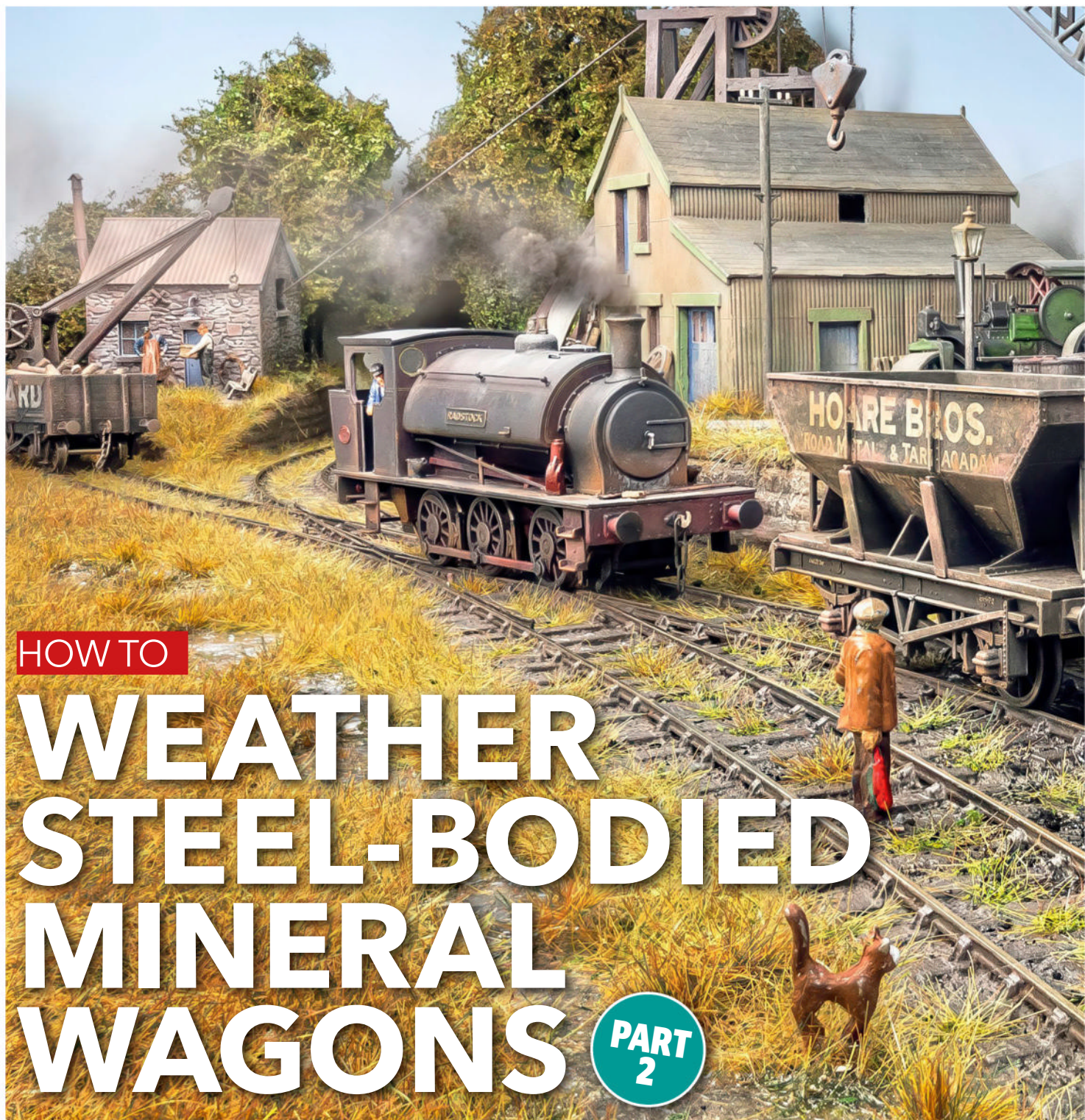


28

The final embellishment was an oil lamp, a pair of which was supplied with the Accurascale model (they're also available separately from Modelu or Springside). I fixed the lamp with PVA, so it can be removed in future.



The contrast between the shiny side panels and the gritty appearance of the rest of the locomotive brings the model to life, mirroring how the real O-6-OPTs appeared in real life.



HOW TO

WEATHER STEEL-BODIED MINERAL WAGONS

PART
2

Chris Nevard shows what can be done with older – and cheaper – mineral wagons, using acrylic paints and a bit of creativity.

Like many fellow modellers, I have quite a motley collection of wagons. In my case, many of them were bought second-hand well over 20 years ago.

If you're anything like me, disposal of older items of rolling stock happens very rarely, as I often tend to hoard. If models are not in front-line service, they usually populate the bottom of drawers, pending some updating,

or more likely repair work; broken brake gear and buffers are the usual culprits.

Alongside these older 'OO' gauge wagons, I also have some more recent models and, if

AVAILABILITY
Bachmann, Hornby
and Dapol stockists,
pre-owned dealers

2 hrs

111111

running them side-by-side, the more mature stock can sometimes look a little out of place.

Is there a way of unifying the appearance of freight wagons? Well, yes. Indeed, in this



Chris has breathed new life into his collection of tired old wagons, and enjoyed playing around with some novel weathering techniques in the process.

Workbench feature, I'm going to look at a selection of wagons that have been languishing in my bottom drawer to see what can be done with them.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

After looking at timber-bodied Private Owner mineral wagons in the previous issue, this time I'll be concentrating on steel-bodied hoppers and opens, which offer a few different challenges. Once again, browsing images of the real thing is highly recommended, so you can appreciate how and where they tend to accrue dirt and corrosion. Paul Bartlett's

wagon photography website is my go-to reference source, which is full of inspirational images. See paulbartlett.zenfolio.com

One of the key players in this demonstration is an old Mainline BR 24ton iron ore hopper from the 1980s. This model has actually been perpetuated by Bachmann Branchline and is still in the current range, albeit with enhanced underframe tooling with brake gear that aligns with the wheels, plus improved wheels and axles, more accurate buffers and other embellishments.

I bought it some years ago, for a few pounds from a second-hand stall, and it came

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Smiths 3-link couplings
Availability: Peter's Spares
Web: www.peterspares.com
- ◆ Humbrol enamel and acrylic hobby paints, weathering powders
Availability: Model shops

TOOLS

- ◆ Knife and spare blades
- ◆ Drill and bits
- ◆ Needle files
- ◆ Nail files
- ◆ Fine-nose pliers
- ◆ Paintbrushes
- ◆ Fibreglass pen



The wagons are now permanent fixtures on Chris' layout, rather than gathering dust in the bottom of the drawer.

in weathered condition, care of a previous owner. The weathering looked to consist of a wash with 'dirty thinners', a highly diluted blend of enamel paints, usually collected from a jar of white spirit or turpentine for cleaning brushes over years. As long as it was a generic dirty brown/black, it was deemed suitable.

Forty-odd years ago, weathering wasn't as popular – or, dare I say it, refined – as it is these days, so such an approach was often about as far as many modellers were prepared to go. As you'll see, it's possible to create some authentic weathered effects on the Mainline ore hopper, plus a couple of

Hornby and Dapol wagons, using household or modelling paints and a few simple tools, transforming these cheap models into attractive and convincing items of rolling stock. Naturally, working on models of this nature, which are affordable and lacking in delicate, easily broken fine detail components, offers a perfect way of experimenting with weathering techniques, with much less jeopardy if things don't go quite to plan.

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

Another fun aspect of weathering these types of wagon is that, as in reality, no two vehicles should look the same. This gives us plenty of freedom to experiment with variations in colour and weathering intensity, and of course different materials and techniques. There's no singular 'right way' of doing things, so don't be afraid of tailoring your approach to suit your own preferences and end goals.

I had great fun playing around with slightly different approaches and am pleased with the results. All of the wagons you see featured here are now permanent fixtures on my layout, rather than their previous life gathering dust in the bottom of a drawer or being disposed of for 'peanuts'.

They're now much more visually arresting, not because of the aged tooling and lack of fancy detail fittings, but due to their varying degrees of decrepitude.



We are in 'ore' of Chris' results! All achieved using household or modelling paints, and a few simple tools.

STEP BY STEP



1

I bought this old Mainline ore hopper cheaply second-hand, and it features an attempt at weathering by a previous owner. The model dates from the 1980s, but there's some welcome detail relief in the body moulding.



2

The underframe is pretty basic by today's standards, but the model offers an ideal testbed for trying out weathering techniques without the risk of ruining an expensive modern product. I began by unscrewing the bulky tension lock couplers.



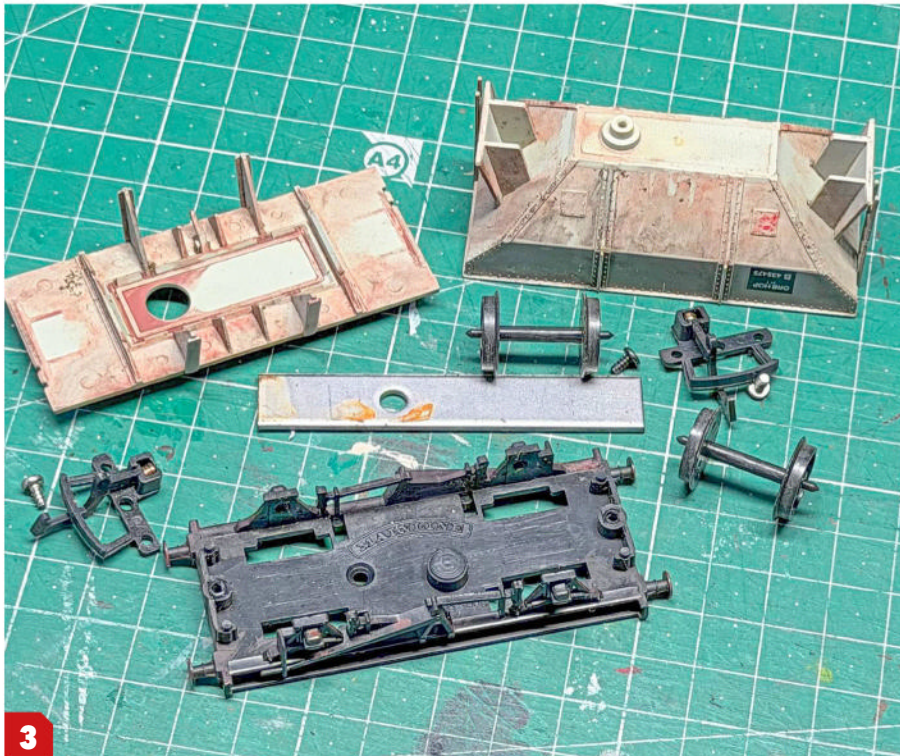
4

With the model apart, I took the opportunity to sand away the unsightly moulding seam along the headstocks and buffers with a nail file. I intend to fit scale three-link couplings, so the moulded hooks needed to go too.



7

Now for the fun bit! Of course, there are countless paints in appropriate colours but, being a bodger at heart, I use whatever's to hand. A few artists' acrylics and emulsion tester pots were pressed into use. Basically, I needed various browns, rusty red and dark greys.



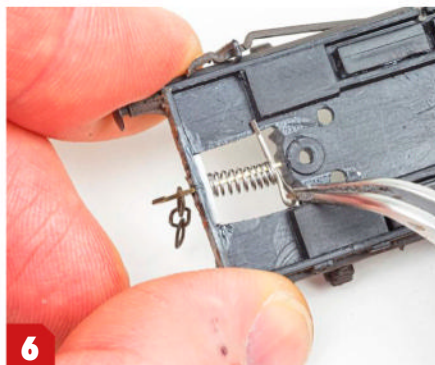
3

The screw holding the model together was also removed, as it will be easier to treat the complex hopper body while disassembled. If the model has plastic wheels (as some older models do), now would be a good time to upgrade to a metal set.



5

Depending on the wagon's chassis design, it may be necessary to cut a cavity into the floor to provide room for the new draw hook, spring and split pin. On this different model, a drill, knife and file have been used to remove the waste.



6

An extra strip of plastic has been glued to the inside face of the headstock to add strength before the holes are drilled and cut into a slot for the draw hook. With the spring in position, the split pin is threaded into place and opened up slightly.



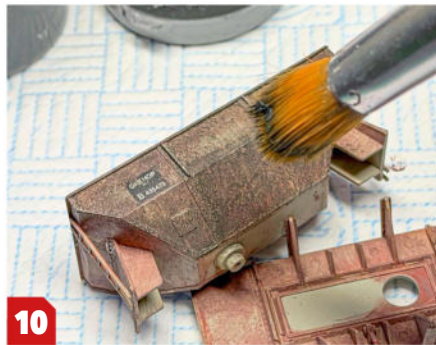
8

With a stiff brush, I stippled on some 'rust' coloured matt emulsion paint to the hopper body and its cradle, taking care to apply a greater amount to recesses and crevices and other areas that are likely to receive abrasion from minerals being loaded.



9

After looking at prototype images, I decided to add some darker colour on top of the reddish rust, again working it onto the surface with a stiff, flat brush, ensuring it reached in and around all the bodywork and bracketry.



10

Switching to a broader paintbrush, I stippled the darker shade of paint onto the hopper body as it began to dry, which introduced the rough, random texture so redolent of corroded steel.



11

The hopper cradle and floor section was treated likewise. Once I was happy that I'd covered all the important areas, I set the parts aside to dry. Acrylic paints dry fast to touch, but they need a longer break to dry completely.



12

Before finishing, I treated the wheels to a dry-brushed coating of earthy brown and rusty red paints. Wipe most of the paint off the bristles onto a tissue, then stroke over the wheel faces to pick out the relief before cleaning the wheel treads.



13

The next day, I dug out my fibreglass brush and began selectively removing the weathering layer. It was satisfying to watch the original paint break through the grime. I tried to keep the strokes of the brush vertical to ensure all streaks mimicked the action of gravity.



14

This is how it looked after some attention from the fibreglass brush. Be sure to wear gloves to avoid skin irritation from the fibreglass particles (and maybe eye protection too), and vacuum away all debris at regular intervals.



15

The underframe was treated in much the same way as the body: the stippling action of the almost-dry paint taking away some of the 'plasticky' feel of the chassis frames.



17

The dry pigment adhered readily to the matt surface created by the weathering paint layers, and this rusty red/brown shade turned out to be perfect for this ore hopper, mimicking the colour of real iron ore dust.



18

Don't forget the interior! I applied the same blend of paints and powders as the exterior. Misting matt varnish from an aerosol will seal the powders, but don't apply too much or it will reduce the intensity of the weathering effects.



20

With my confidence boosted by how the ore hopper turned out, I tackled a couple more wagons. This 21ton mineral open is from Hornby, and a similar product is also in the Dapol range, both of which can be found cheaply new or second-hand.



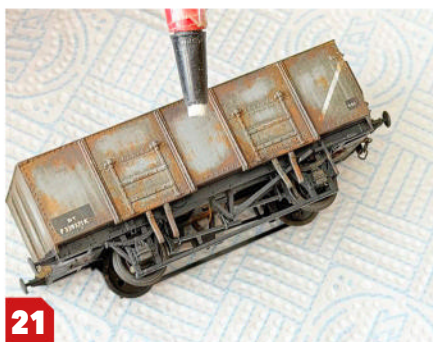
16

I was going to leave things there, but then I found some old dark rust coloured weathering powders, so applied a little here and there, using a soft, flat brush.



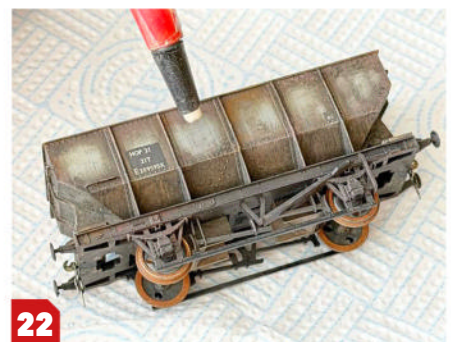
19

Although now in use to carry coal, the ore hopper's appearance suggests a hardworking life moving various minerals, as per the real thing. The heavy weathering certainly distracts the eye from any shortcomings of the 40-year-old model.



21

The same processes were employed, starting with stippled layers of rusty red, then darker acrylic paints. When fully dry, the bodywork surfaces were distressed with the fibreglass brush, which unveils the layers of grime and imparts a lifelike texture too.



22

Another cheap wagon found in both the Hornby and Dapol ranges is this 21ton coal hopper. Varying the shades and intensity of the paint layers, and how much paint is abraded away with the fibreglass brush, ensures that no two models look exactly the same.

HOW TO

SCULPT A ROCKY EMBANKMENT

Peter Marriott releases his arty side as he uses sculpting materials to create a rockface on a railside embankment.



PHOTOGRAPHY: PETER MARRIOTT AND GEORGE DENT

On my new 'micro project' warehouse layout, I have been experimenting with new materials and methods. Experimentation keeps the hobby alive and is a lot of fun.

Mifoshape is a new sculpting powder from Belgium for rock faces and landscapes that has been formulated to be easy to work with. It was developed out of a dissatisfaction with established plaster-type materials, with the aim of making a product that can be worked with for up to half an hour before it begins to set. During the curing period, it is still possible to add detail.

The powder enables the fine detailing of rockfaces. It dries according to the amount of water used in the mix and the thickness of the layer, with initial curing taking place

00 GAUGE | **6 hrs (with extra drying time)** | **4 tools**

within the first two hours, and subsequent evaporation of any remaining water taking a few days. You can speed this up by using a fan to ventilate the area.

To give even finer details in rockfaces, it's recommended to add a little wood glue to the water/powder mix. Various mixing ratios are a personal choice, but the most common is three parts powder to one part water. The less water used, the quicker the drying time, but I suggest experimenting with the ratios to discover what works best for you.

The powder has a minimum shelf life of six months once a new bag is opened, but it's

important to reseal it using the strip provided to prevent any moisture from entering the bag. Pieces of black foam (that came in a parcel) were used as the basis for the landscape, which was covered in a layer of plaster cloth to give the Mifoshape a surface to adhere to. This was left overnight until it was fully dried.

FINISHING TOUCHES

The next day, I marked the areas on the dried plaster cloth where I wished to make the rocks, before mixing some of the Mifoshape powder in a plastic tub with water and PVA adhesive. I mixed it thoroughly with a wooden stick and, once I was happy it was mixed fully, started to apply it to the embankment, covering it initially to a depth of 2-3mm. I left that for a few minutes while I added the mixed



What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Mifoshape sculpting powder
Availability: DCC Train Automation, www.dccautomation.com and Scape Supplies, www.scapecsupplies.com
- ◆ PVA adhesive • selection of acrylic paints • static grass fibres of different colours and lengths
Availability: Model shops
- ◆ Fine sand • selection of trees
Availability: Model shops
- ◆ Twigs from the garden to represent felled trees

TOOLS

- ◆ Mixing bowl
- ◆ Two plastic pots for water and PVA adhesive
- ◆ Small trowel
- ◆ A mix of wide and narrow paintbrushes
- ◆ Electrostatic grass planting tool
- ◆ Small sponge
- ◆ An artist's palette knife

STEP BY STEP



1

I repurposed the black foam that came as packaging in a model as the basis for the embankment. It cut well with a sharp craft knife – and it was free.



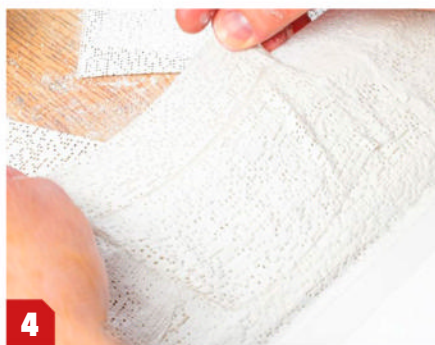
2

I made a freestanding embankment, 33 x 12cm, to incorporate into the larger project with a baseboard of corrugated cardboard, with the embankment made from the foam. I fixed the foam to the baseboard with PVA glue.



3

Once the glue had dried, plaster bandage was used to help seal the surface of the soft foam and fine-tune the contours. Cut into manageable strips (about 6in square) and briefly dip into a bowl of clean water...



4

...then lay the wet plaster sheet over the foam contours, pressing it firmly into place. Overlap successive sheets and fold the bandage over any baseboard edges.

Experimenting with materials and modelling methods is a lot of fun – and, in this instance, new sculpting powder Mifoshape has proven to be a success.



Mifoshape to the taller rock face to the same depth. Once it was covered, I left it to dry while I returned my attention to the embankment.

Using a small trowel, I shaped the damp Mifoshape into rocky formations within the first 30 minutes of application, and revisited it after a full 45 minutes to make a series of finer cuts and shapes. Then I left both structures to dry overnight.

The next day, I used a selection of acrylic paints to spot-paint the surfaces, later adding a black wash over the two entire rock faces. After the paint had dried, I sprinkled sand over thinly spread glue to provide a nice texture for the static grasses and scatter materials that would be added once the glue had dried. Later, several mixed trees were also added, and I was really pleased with the finished result.



The bandage will adhere to most surfaces, and one layer is usually enough to add rigidity. Here, the foam has been fully covered and left to dry - this may take a few days.



Mifoshape is a new sculpting powder for rock faces and landscapes, formulated for easy application. Ensure the packaging strip is fully sealed after use to prolong shelf life.



To improve the fix of the mixed Mifoshape to the landscape, it's possible to add in 10% by volume of woodworking glue, along with the water.



I used a 20cm trowel to mix and apply the Mifoshape to the landscape. It allowed me to load up sufficient material, and was good for adding textural features into the rockface.



To the left is the water, in the middle is the Mifoshape, and to the right is the woodworking glue. All three can now be mixed.



Following the instructions, I began blending the three elements together. As I'll be working on a relatively small area, I used a modest sized mixing bowl to avoid waste.



After mixing some of the water and PVA glue with the Mifoshape, the substance becomes 'claggy' and will remain on the trowel. We are now ready to add it to the dried plaster cloth.



With the trowel partially loaded, apply the mixture directly onto the plaster cloth. Over most of the rockface, I applied enough to cover to a depth of between 1-2mm.



About 20 minutes after I had applied the first layer of the Mifoshape, I used the blade of the trowel to shape the rockface texture. It remains workable for at least 30 minutes.



After about 30 minutes, this is what the rockface looked like as it was left to dry overnight.



I chose several AV acrylic paints to colour it. I made a wash from each of the paints, mixing approximately 90% water and 10% paint.



Next, using the 'leopard spot' technique, I applied the wash with a brush, one colour at a time.



17

After the 'dotted' brown colours had started to dry I applied a thin black wash over the rockface.



18

On some parts of the rockface itself, and on its top, I glued a little fine sand to add a different texture to the scene.



19

As you can see from this photograph, the sand settles into the nooks and crannies of the rockface, giving an authentic craggy look.



20

Here, the pin from the electrostatic grass planting tool is seen with a small piece of sponge adding a little more Static-Tac glue to the landscape.



21

A little Static-Tac glue was applied along the top of the rockface...



22

...which was then spread more evenly using a brush.



23

Next, I added short static grass fibres to parts of the diorama. These were left to dry overnight.



24

After the glue had dried, I sponged on some Static-Tac, spreading the glue on top of the first layer in places. This meant I could add taller fibres in some areas, as well as grass tufts.



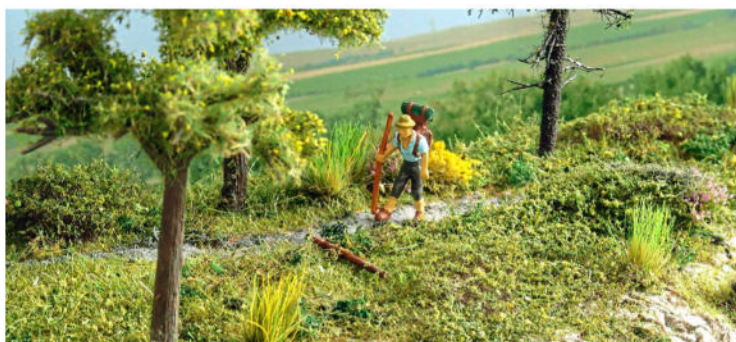
25

Small twigs were added to represent felled trees, and then it was up to my imagination as to how the landscape developed (see MR354 for how to create great value fir trees).



26

The completed embankment after the addition of trees, grass tufts, scatter materials, twigs from the garden and foliage.



You can let your imagination run wild (quite literally) with regards to the planting.

PHOTOGRAPHY: GEORGE DENT



HOW TO

BUILD A 3D-PRINTED BUS SHELTER

George Dent creates a typical roadside scene, providing a useful test bed for a new adhesive formulated especially for 3D-printed components.



MODEL London Transport 1950s style queue shelter
◆ Price £5.00 per pair

AVAILABILITY Isinglass/Thatcham Create
Web: www.isinglass-models.co.uk

30 mins



The 3D-printed shelter adds an interesting feature to the roadside, with assembly proving quick and easy.

For local journeys, I probably spend more time travelling by bus than train these days, thanks in part to the £2.50 flat fare rolled out across England since the Covid pandemic. The equivalent train journey to my workshop costs more than twice as much!

While many modern bus shelters are rather dull, I had begun wondering about adding a steam-era equivalent to one of my layouts. A little online browsing revealed an attractive - and affordable - 3D printed kit from Isinglass of a 1950s London Transport queue shelter.

This design, created for bus and tram passengers, has an interesting, utilitarian

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

◆ Deluxe Materials
AD94 3D Weld adhesive, 40ml
Price: £9.99
Availability: Model shops or Gaugemaster
Web: www.gaugemasterretail.com

TOOLS

- ◆ Sprue cutters
- ◆ Needle files
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Paintbrushes

style, and the kit provides a pair of shelters rendered in ABS. The surfaces are generally smooth, with minimal unwanted surface texture, and the material is fairly flexible, giving the structure impressive resilience.

The main framework is printed as a single unit, but a set of optional wind break panels is provided. The kit's instructions recommend PVA to bond the parts together.

However, I decided to try a new liquid solvent from Deluxe Materials, 3D Weld. As the name suggests, this is formulated specifically for 3D-printed filament plastics, such as PLA, PLA+, ABS, PETG and ASA. As it's not suitable for some of the bulkier resins employed on some building and rolling stock kits available, it's best to check for compatibility beforehand.

Working in a similar way to liquid poly cements on injection moulded plastic parts, 3D Weld chemically fuses the surfaces together, creating a seamless, non-brittle joint. It offers a fast grab time, of less than 10 seconds, and allows parts to be adjusted before they're stuck fast. A fine applicator brush is supplied integrally to the bottle cap, while a larger separate brush is provided too.

The thin liquid penetrates the gap between parts easily and it can be applied while the components are held together, or by brushing a layer of cement to both parts before bringing them together. It does depend on close-fitting joints, however.

A welcome bonus is the ability to smooth surfaces by brushing an overall layer of 3D Weld, minimising unsightly textures created by the printing process. Once the cement is dry, the parts can be painted as usual.

I was impressed by the adhesive, as it allowed the panel sections to be bonded neatly into place, with no unsightly blobs of excess glue to clean up. Assembly was fast and the bonds have proven to be strong. Easy to use and made in the UK, it's certainly worth trying for yourself if you have a few 3D printed projects in mind.

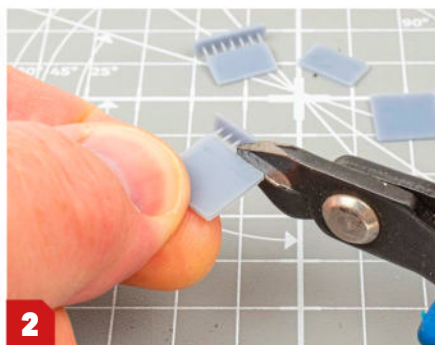
And I'm happy with my miniature bus shelter too, as it adds a splash of colour and interest to an otherwise mundane street scene.

STEP BY STEP



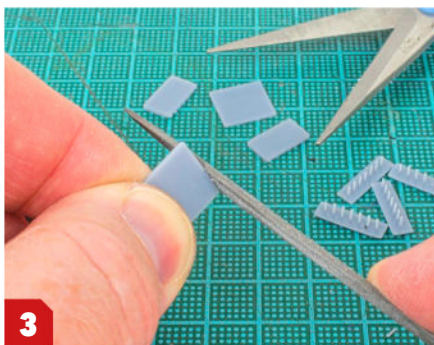
1

The Isinglass Models kit provides a pair of shelters, rendered as single components, along with a set of optional barrier panels for the rear.



2

I cut the panels away from the support structures with a set of sharp sprue cutters. I find these tools safer than a knife on 3D-printed parts.



3

There were a few traces of the support 'pips' left behind, so a few gentle passes with a flat needle file cleaned up the panel edges nicely.



4

To double-check whether the 3D Weld would be suitable, I tested it on some waste material, running the liquid into the joint. The bond was secure within about 30 seconds.



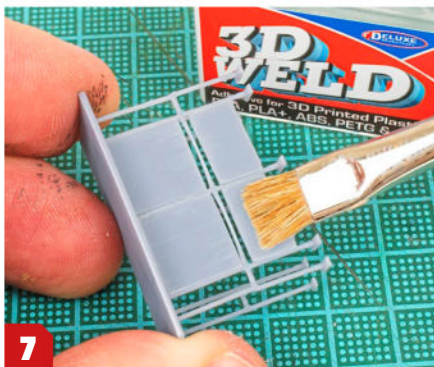
5

After test fitting the panels, I secured one at a time, running the 3D Weld into the joint with the supplied fine brush. The thin liquid wicked into the joint instantly.



6

All four panels were installed in turn, with assembly taking just a few minutes. The glue allowed just enough time to ensure the parts were correctly aligned.



7

After about 30 minutes, I used a wide flat brush to spread more of the 3D Weld over the panels, which effectively smoothed the surfaces, removing traces of the printing process and any marks left by the needle file.



8

I left the assembled model overnight before priming with a blend of black and brown aerosol primers. Gloss red was then sprayed over the framework and, when dry, it was ready for planting on my layout.

1



WHOLE IN ONE

When Scottish modellers **Arran Aird** and **Duncan Stewart** wanted to create a locally based layout, they drew inspiration from the 'Home of Golf', St Andrews – and devised a novel way to shorten distances.

Words: **Richard Gunn** Photography: **Arran Aird**

“ What makes this layout great? ”

Arran and Duncan have created a fascinating portmanteau of two characterful Scottish locations, and linked them together in a very clever way via an extremely realistic river. This layout of two halves thus creates a lot of visual and operating interest for anyone who sees it, and proves a real draw at exhibitions.



Even for modellers in smaller scales, incorporating more than one station on a layout can be problematic. On most national rail lines, there's usually at least a few miles between stops, and unless you've got a large, winding layout, it's difficult to find the space to realistically recreate such expanses. Imagine, then, trying to do so with something portable enough for exhibition.

That was the challenge facing Arran Aird and Duncan Stewart of East Neuk Model Railway Club when they decided to recreate both St Andrews in Fife – famous for its internationally renowned golf course – and ‘nearby’ Guardbridge. By nearby, though, we mean four miles away; that’s how far apart these two Scottish locations are. Oh, and with the small but significant matter of the River Eden between them.

However, an ingenious solution was found that telescoped the two stations into a distinctly more compact 15ft. The break between the two is cleverly disguised by trains disappearing into the backdrop,

RIGHT Being set in the mid-1950s to 1965, the layout sees steam and diesel services. They're all analogue. "I don't find digital for 'N' ever works that well," says Arran. "How do you see a loco 14 feet away and know which one it is? I'm not converted to that side of the hobby yet, at least in 'N' gauge."

BELOW The layout did its first show as a work-in-progress. "I probably talked more that weekend, and was more engaged, than at any other," says Arran. "People were interested in how you do it, how you plan it, what the compromises are. We got a lot of information too; one guy came to the club with the actual plans for the viaduct."

completing a circuit of the hidden loop that forms part of the fiddleyard, and then re-emerging ‘further down the line’. A few miles becomes a few feet, eight minutes travelling time becomes 30 seconds or so. Viewers can move from the ‘Guardbridge’ scenic location to ‘St Andrews’ in plenty of time to see trains emerging – and vice versa. It’s an innovative approach to linking the two separate halves.

Although, as with any club layout, the finished product includes input from multiple members, ‘Guardbridge’ was mostly done by Duncan while Arran tackled ‘St Andrews’ and the River Eden Viaduct. “The motivation was, number one, that it’s local, and number two, other people have tried it and failed,” says Arran. “It’s quite a famous spot, with the bridge over the river – the pillars are still there.”

Indeed, even though Guardbridge closed in 1965 and St Andrews in 1969, there’s still quite a bit of surviving infrastructure to draw on for information and inspiration. “There are enough books on the ➤



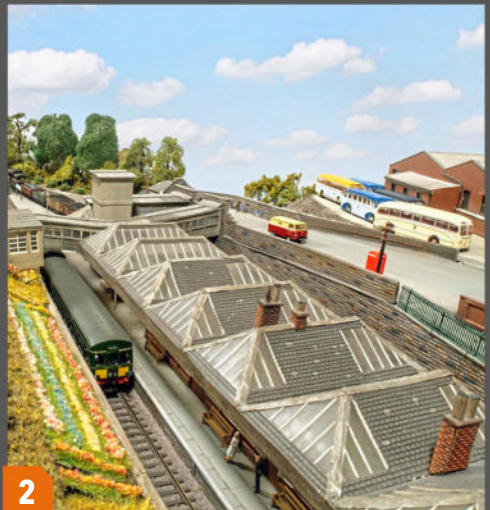


3 things we like



1

The River Eden, with the highly effective 'water' reflecting the bridge above.



2

The partly-glazed roof and angled footbridges of St Andrews have been accurately captured.



3

The busy bus garage next to 'St Andrews' station creating a transport interchange.

subject to be able to model them to the best of your ability," Arran say. "Some of the structures are still there, like the Guardbridge Inn and the bus garage. When you model a prototype, you learn about the area and its history – the wheres and whys. The buildings were mostly made from pictures we took and measurements we could still make, including the remaining piers from the River Eden bridge, so we could get all the correct spacings for the stone coursing. Even a drone was deployed. Another invaluable resource was the National Library of Scotland online maps service (<https://maps.nls.uk/>)."

Thus every building on the baseboards (made by Arran, a joiner by trade, out of birch plywood "to everybody's horror, so nobody can even push a drawing pin into them, bar me") is scratchbuilt, mainly out of Plasticard but with some using ordinary card. "Some of them use proprietary items, such as windows or texture papers, although others were painted by Duncan and then had fine sand sprinkled on for rough texture. Things like awnings are etched brass." The curve on the complex station roof proved quite challenging to recreate accurately. "Yes, there were two attempts. The first one either got thrown in the bin or thrown against the wall!"

SCALE SLIGHTLY SHORTENED

While 'Guardbridge' station is pretty much to scale, 'St Andrews' is slightly shortened. "There's one bay missing from the roof, I think, and the platform is shorter by a carriage length," believes Arran. In a nod to St Andrews' frequent 'best-kept station' awards, the embankment features a floral display. Also accurate are the overlooking tennis courts. "They're an unusual red colour; it's red granite dust from a nearby quarry. Red Blaze, it's called. They're the right size too; people think they look awfully big, but that's how they were."

Arran's favourite part is the viaduct. "It's the standout feature of the two halves, and the bit that people always recognise. It's as close as we can get it. For the piers, we got one of our pals to do a wooden template, and we made all our castings out of resin for that; they're like chess pieces. The girders were Micro Engineering ones left over from an American layout, while the railings are 4-mil nickel silver; I strung them up like a guitar and then put all the bits in – one by one – going along with a drill and drilling all the holes. But that was one of those jobs done during the pandemic when you had time of your own. There was nothing else to do. ➤





4

ABOVE Fairburn tank No. 42096 crosses the River Eden with a local train from 'Guardbridge', bound for 'St Andrews'. Shortly after this point, it will disappear through the backdrop and then appear at 'St Andrews' a little while later.

LEFT See for yourself! 'St Andrews & Guardbridge' will be appearing at the International N Gauge Show (TINGS) at the Warwickshire Event Centre in September.

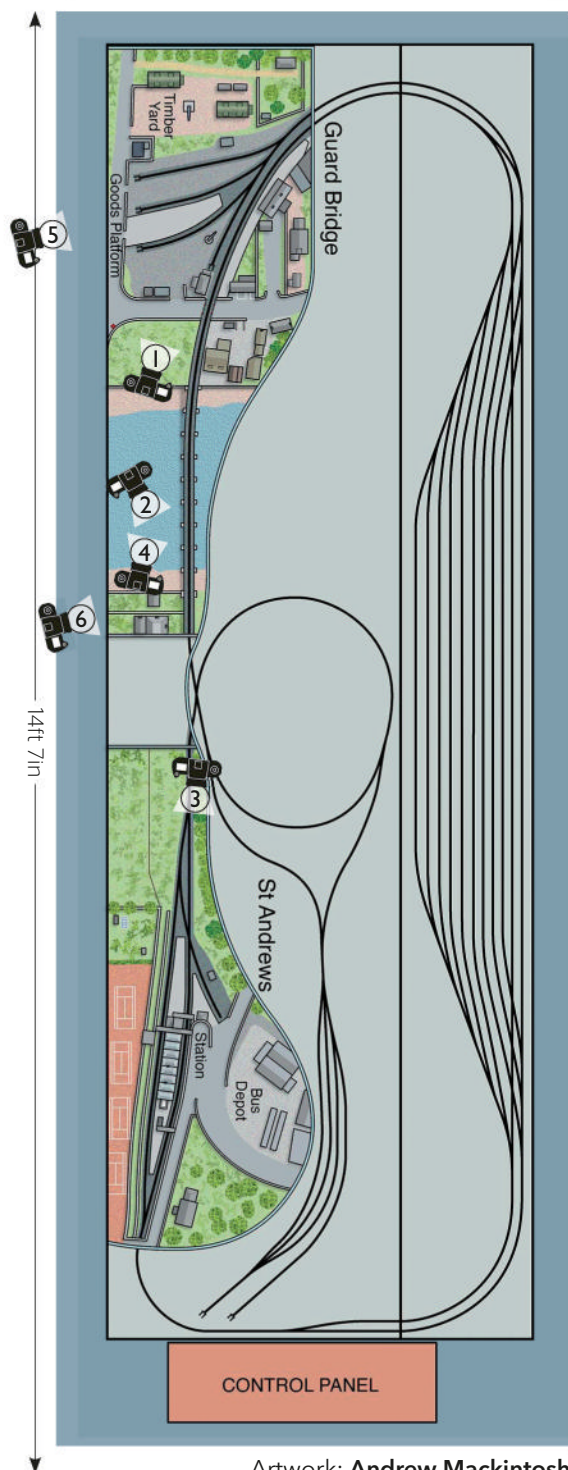
RIGHT The track in the goods yard at 'Guardbridge' isn't operational and is laid as 2mm finescale, in contrast to the Peco Code 55 elsewhere. "We did that to annoy people," laughs Arran.



5



4ft 10in

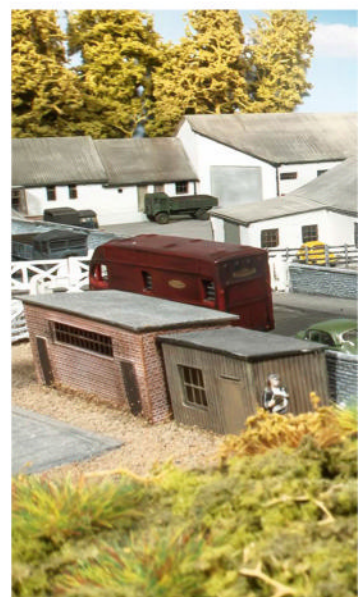


Artwork: Andrew Mackintosh

"All the finer parts got done during the pandemic, such as the signals; they're all etched brass, from Model Signal Engineering (MSE), I think. And if we care to wire them up, they do function. There's a program we need to get that will make them work properly. We'll get there one day. Making them did, um, push, shall we say, my patience on occasions. And it was a learning curve. But a good one. Having done it once, would I do it again in that scale? It wouldn't be high on my list, let's put it that way. Although it probably would be easier this time because I've had my cataract done!"

Some of the most favourable observations that people make are about the river 'water'. It has a real depth and reflection to it. But this effect was largely an accident. "We tried it with glassfibre resin the first time, but that didn't work because it badly affected the foam underneath," recalls Arran. "So then we put down some brown emulsion, which dried out and cracked, and everybody thought it looked wonderful. And then we built it up with varnish, bit by bit, and that's how we got the end effect. It was all by hook or by crook. But that's how you learn."

The locomotives, DMUs and coaching stock are a mixture of Graham Farish and Dapol, weathered by Duncan. The wagons are the same, with some Peco items thrown in plus the odd kit. "What's made 'N' gauge a lot better and more possible is the amount of decent ready-to-run now," says Duncan (although he has no love for tender-drive steam locomotives). Vehicles hail from the Oxford Diecast range. "There's a real mish-mash of buses, because you could pretty much get anything at St Andrews as it was a holiday destination." The bus garage adjacent to the railway station was "a proper wee transport hub back in the day. The integration was just common sense; there's not much of that these days!"



ABOVE LEFT The tennis courts overlooking 'St Andrews' station have a distinctive red shade thanks to the red granite dust from a local quarry.





So, the big question? Would Arran ever attempt another multi-station layout based on real locations? "Not likely, there's too much work. That's the killer." But given how much he and Duncan obviously relish a modelling challenge, we're not sure we believe him in the slightest.

'St Andrews & Guardbridge' is an exhibition circuit regular, and while its natural stamping ground is Scotland, it will be appearing at The International N Gauge Show (TINGS) at the Warwickshire Event Centre, Leamington Spa, over September 12-13. See www.meridiennexhibitions.co.uk for more details. **MR**

ABOVE The curved backscene is painted heavy MDF, done by a former member of the East Neuk Model Railway Club, Stuart Knowles. "He did a very nice job of it," says Arran.

FACTFILE: 'ST ANDREWS & GUARDBRIDGE'

Era: Mid-1950s-1965

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

Size: 14ft 7in x 4ft 10in

Track: Peco Code 55 (with 2mm finescale in 'Guardbridge' goods yard)

Power and Control: Analogue Gaugemaster (with digital control for pointwork)

Time to build: "Too long" (approximately five years, on and off)

ABOUT THE MODELLERS: ARRAN AIRD & DUNCAN STEWART

As part of his job as a joiner, Arran has worked in and on some of the buildings he's modelled on 'St Andrews & Guardbridge'. "It's probably easier to say, when was I not into model railways?" he reflects. "They've just been with me for as long as I can remember. The East Neuk Model Railway Club started up in 1984, and I joined later that year as a teenager." He also manufactures and sells inter-modal containers and wagons. Fellow club member and creator Duncan got into railways as his late father was a lifelong enthusiast. He joined the club in 1995. "I have built several small layouts and have recently completed my first exhibition layout." His other hobbies are classic cars and model aircraft.



Reader SHOW & TELL

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Let the ideas flow...

There's a British Railways Western Region theme to JOHN MORRIS' 'N' gauge layout, 'West Somerford', inspired by Andrew Bartlett's 'Blueball Summit' - with a little Southern Region influence thrown in on the branch line.

I employ traction and rolling stock from the BR green/maroon 'transition' era through to early privatisation, and the layout occupies one wall of my garage, measuring 18ft by 23in.

The baseboards consist of an open-top framework to enable scenery to be rendered below track level - seen to good effect on the long embankments - and the layout features traditional analogue control, with the points operated by wire-in-tube slide switches. These also switch the polarity of the live point frogs for additional conductivity, thus improving the performance of trains.

The layout plan consists of a simple double-track circuit with Up goods loop and a branch that rejoins the main Up line behind the backscene, with a couple of sidings at the Up end of the layout - the purpose of which is still to be decided!

The tracks drop and loop below the main baseboards, providing storage for four trains in each direction, while also providing through tracks. I've used insulated points for access to the hidden sidings to simplify the wiring. Signals are a mixture of CR Signals (colour-light) and Dapol GWR semaphores. A colour light unit with route indicator is about to replace the Dapol square post version in the station.

Talking of which, the platforms, buildings and permanent way hut are scratchbuilt, with the two signal boxes constructed from kits. The Pratt truss girder bridge at the Down end of the station is scratchbuilt, based loosely on Stannells Bridge near Stratford Racecourse on the former Stratford-Honeybourne-Cheltenham line.

The track is Peco Code 55, ballasted using Natural Scenics' materials, fixed with 50/50 PVC adhesive and water-weathered with dry powder paints once the adhesive had set.

The canal lock was constructed on a workbench and glued in place below the baseboards once completed.

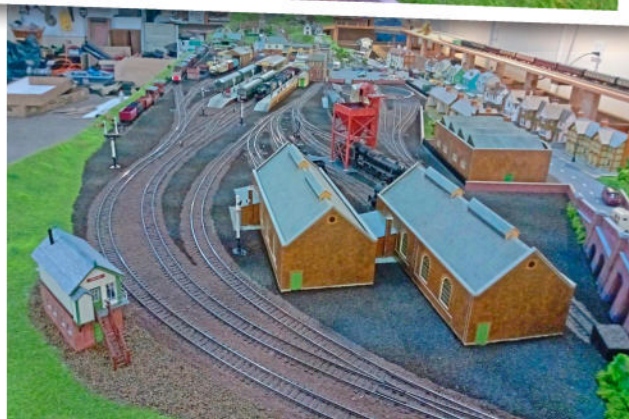
John Morris



First time's a charm

Thank you so much for your great magazine. I love reading *Model Rail* each month, and it has inspired me to finally build a model railway. I started the framework in April last year, and the layout is now nearly complete. I just turned 70 and think it's not too bad for an old guy's first attempt!

Alan Peover,
Whidbey Island, USA



SUGAR BEET AND GARLIC BREAD!



1

Adrian Walby and **Robin Coulthard** explain why they have never regretted taking the plunge into the world of 'O' gauge with their delightful light railway creation.

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



What makes this layout great?
"Woodhill Goods" simply oozes the genteel atmosphere of a classic Vale of York light railway. That's some accomplishment, given it's a first venture into 'O' gauge. Contained in such a small space, it proves almost any home can accommodate a layout in this large scale."

It wasn't so long ago that it felt as though you needed a degree in wizardry and the wealth of a hedge fund manager to build an 'O' gauge model railway. But, as the experience of Adrian Walby and Robin Coulthard proves, 7mm:1ft is now just as approachable and achievable as any other scale. That phenomenon has been driven by the growth of the mass-produced ready-to-use models, from locomotives and rolling stock to track and buildings.

After decades of building layouts in 'OO', the most popular gauge, it was a combination of circumstances

BELOW Although most locomotives are second-hand 'Big Four' and BR types, this little Hudswell, Clarke O-6-OST is characteristic of the motive power employed on the former Easingwold Railway. The EFE model is paired with a North Eastern Railway tender truck, made from Connoisseur Models' brass kit.

that led the Thirsk-based duo to 'go large'. "As you get older, your eyes tend to go a bit, so it seemed a logical step to take," Adrian explains. As well as the practicality, he (and modelling cohort Robin) was swayed by the "mass" and "presence" inherent to 'O'.

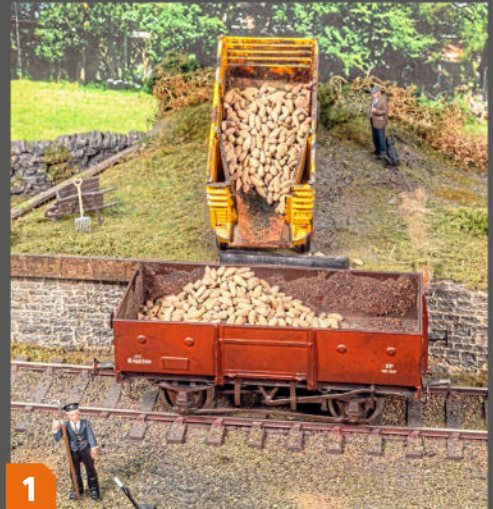
"They don't look like a toy; they're scale models", Robin says. "The availability and quality of the models is superb.

"Nowadays, the price of ready-to-run is so much more comparable to the 4mm stuff. You can even buy an 'O' gauge locomotive now for less than a 'OO' one. You had to build kits or scratchbuild, whether in ➤



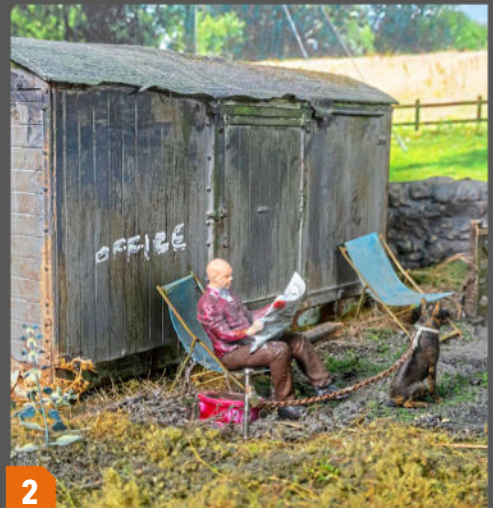


3 things we like



1

The live action tipping of sugar beet from farm trailer into wagons.



2

Who needs a beach to relax in a deckchair reading the paper, when you have a grounded van body?



3

The gentleman painting the phone box and kindly posing for Chris Nevard's camera.

brass or white metal, but it's now been opened up to the entry level."

Even so, Adrian's impulsive purchase of Dapol's 2016-released BR '08' shunter at Glasgow's Model Rail Scotland exhibition didn't immediately lead to a change of scale. Instead, it was one of many fork-in-the-road conversations during the 2020 lockdown that prompted the idea to build a compact layout around the highly detailed BR 0-6-0 diesel, using a pair of spare 4ft x 2ft baseboards which had been knocking about the house.

Just two years later, 'Woodhill Goods' made its exhibition debut. Indeed, the bug has bitten so hard that the 'O' gauge converts have already built another five layouts, with another under way.

Building layouts, Robin adds, is a continuation of what he describes as 'the Railway Modelling Addiction Process!' "We would never go back to 4mm now. Like garlic bread, it's the future!"

LIGHT RAILWAY, SMALL LAYOUT

The stimulus for 'Woodhill Goods' came from Adrian's childhood upbringing near Thirsk and is a belated (and somewhat futile!) pointer to something he recognises "should have happened in real life"; namely, the construction of a 'Thirsk & Sowerby Light Railway'! "Because Thirsk station on the East Coast Main Line is so far from the town, the story goes that the local squire and businesses ►

RIGHT The nifty sugar beet tipping operation on the loading dock is activated by a hidden wire-in-tube from the rear of the layout.

3



'O' GAUGE LAYOUT **WOODHILL GOODS**





collaborated to fund a light railway into the town and surrounding villages.”

‘Woodhill Goods’ represents one of the rural hamlets that the fictional four-mile branch line served after passing through the North Yorkshire market town on its way to Avenue Grange, running parallel to Newsham Road. Like most railways, the Second World War and subsequent drives towards mass road transport pushed the T&SLR toward financial jeopardy.

Peering into this imaginary world, we can see that the last couple of miles of the backwater branch have been severed, emphasised by a level crossing gate now permanently shut, adjacent to a sleeper chained to the railhead, as weeds are beginning to take hold.

Practically, it avoids the need for another space-gobbling fiddleyard, while the theoretical historical justification is that there has been a landslip on the

RIGHT The Worsell ‘J70’ is the only non-RTR locomotive on ‘Woodhill Goods’. It was a ready-built O-6-OT Connoisseur kit found on eBay, but it ran like a bag of spanners. That was cured by replacing the chassis with a donor Dapol Sentinel O-4-O type, neatly disguised inside the tram engine’s skirts.

section of line to Avenue and with no money to repair it, ‘Woodhill’ became the new, unplanned terminus of the T&SLR.

“In the 1950s, light railways started to struggle which is why it looks beat up and uncared for,” Adrian affirms.

While there was never a full-size T&SLR, the theme takes inspiration from a couple of the real light railways in the area: the Easingwold Railway and the Derwent Valley Light Railway. Like those lines, ‘Woodhill Goods’ exists primarily to serve the local farms, and so sugar beet and potatoes are a staple of the pick-up goods service that forms the focus of operating sessions.

Motive power draws on the established principle of relying on hand-me-downs and loans from the ‘big railway’, and so ‘Woodhill’ showcases an eclectic ►





mix of types, such as an 'Austerity' 0-6-0ST, LMS 'Jinty', '03' diesel shunter and a Class 14.

The creators of 'Woodhill' appreciate this variety. "Modelling a light railway gives a licence to do pretty well what you want, whereas a main line railway ties you to certain locomotives and wagons," says Adrian.

"A few visitors at exhibitions have even believed it was a real railway. We must be doing something right that people recognise what we're trying to depict."

Pick-up goods shunting sequences are enhanced with an extra touch of realism: a tipping farm trailer, which is raised and lowered using the same wire-in-tube technology that also switches the only two points on the layout.

Explains Robin: "At exhibitions, we distract people's attention and, when they're not looking, load up the lorry with loose sugar beet by hand. Then when they're looking again, we load the '13 tonners' with the sugar beet. We have a lot of fun doing it – and after all, it is supposed to be just that."

ALL IN THE DETAIL

For all the enthusiasm that Adrian and Robin have for 'O' gauge, they do also sound a cautionary note.

"Laying the track and wiring it up, no problem; that's a transferable skill from 'OO';" says Robin. "In 4mm:1ft you can fudge a lot of the scenery, but not in 7mm." An example is the bridge-cum-tunnel mouth entrance, which disguises the traverser fiddleyard, which took several attempts to get right. The first ►

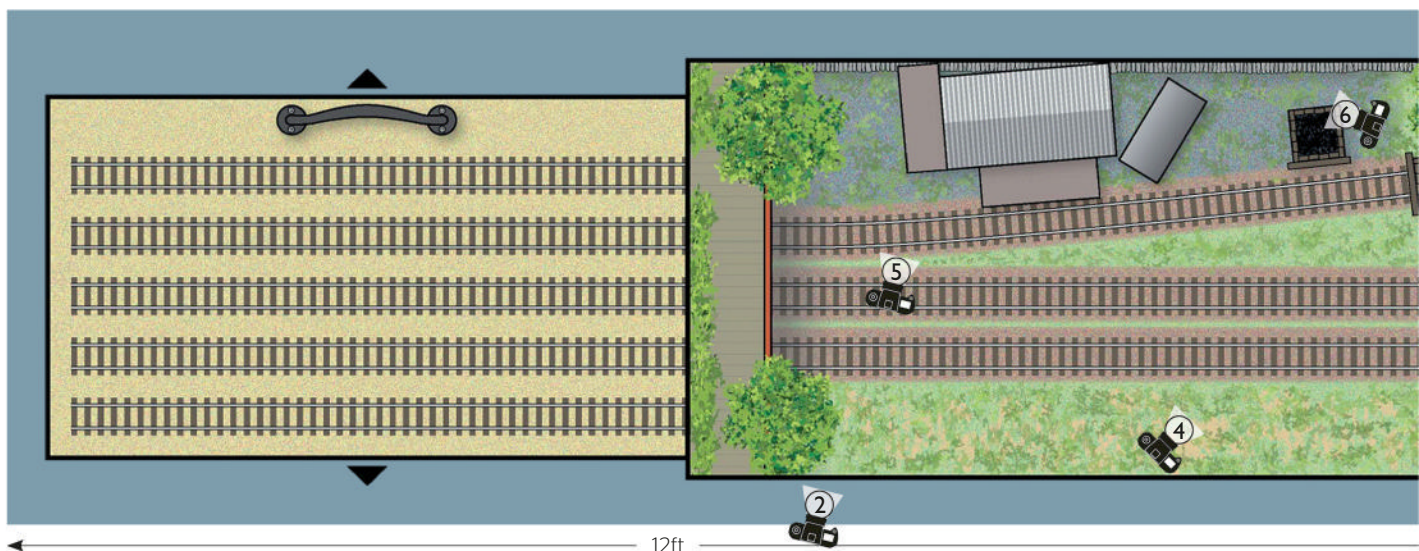
Stop right there! The 'Thirsk & Sowerby Light Railway's' second-hand 'Jinty' O-6-O No. 5 rolls up to the line's improvised boundary, which has been moved following a landslip beyond the now permanently closed level crossing.



Nothing says agriculture more than sheep, a sheepdog and a Land Rover...



Artwork: Andrew Mackintosh





was based on a printed paper, which appeared "too flat" in this bigger scale, leading to the final three-dimensional plastic card structure "to give depth".

Adrian emphasises that the bigger gauge "means there has to be more detail, so you do have to do more fine work". Inevitably, the Thirsk modellers added elements generally not that necessary in 'OO', such as the full bowl of water for a thirsty dog ("also in case we have any animal rights activists inspect the layout at shows!").

Elsewhere, there's a chain that secures the level crossing gate to its post. Indeed, the gate, made from brass rod, is one of those areas where 'Woodhill Goods' builders have pursued scratch-built individuality rather than wholly rely on the proprietary market.

The provender store and stone-walled loading dock are similarly bespoke (using materials supplied by CM3 Models). Peco provided kits for the distressed grounded van body and telephone box, and the wooden loading dock extension is a resin assembly from 422 Modelmaking.

The essential air of dereliction for this down-at-heel light railway is enhanced with a variety of weathering techniques: dry brushing, airbrush and powders. Ammo by Mig has been deployed to replicate muddy ground. An ID backscene, replicating the low-lying pastoral nature of the Vale of York, blends in seamlessly too.

Adds Robin: "There are some layouts, but they look like they've simply just been taken out of their wrapping. For us, building a layout is a bit like a set on the stage – it's about creating an illusion. And that's what we've tried to do by making it as realistic and detailed as possible."

What final piece of advice might the creators of 'Woodhill Goods' have for budding any modellers contemplating taking the plunge into 'O' gauge?

"Just do it," Adrian pronounces. "You won't regret it. It doesn't have to be expensive, and you don't need a lot of room. As long as you're happy with it, that's the main thing." 

"The bigger gauge means more detail, so you do have to do more fine work"

FACTFILE: 'WOODHILL GOODS'

Era: 1950s

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

Size: 8ft x 2ft (plus 4ft x 2ft fiddleyard)

Track: Peco

Power and control: DCC (NCE PowerCab)

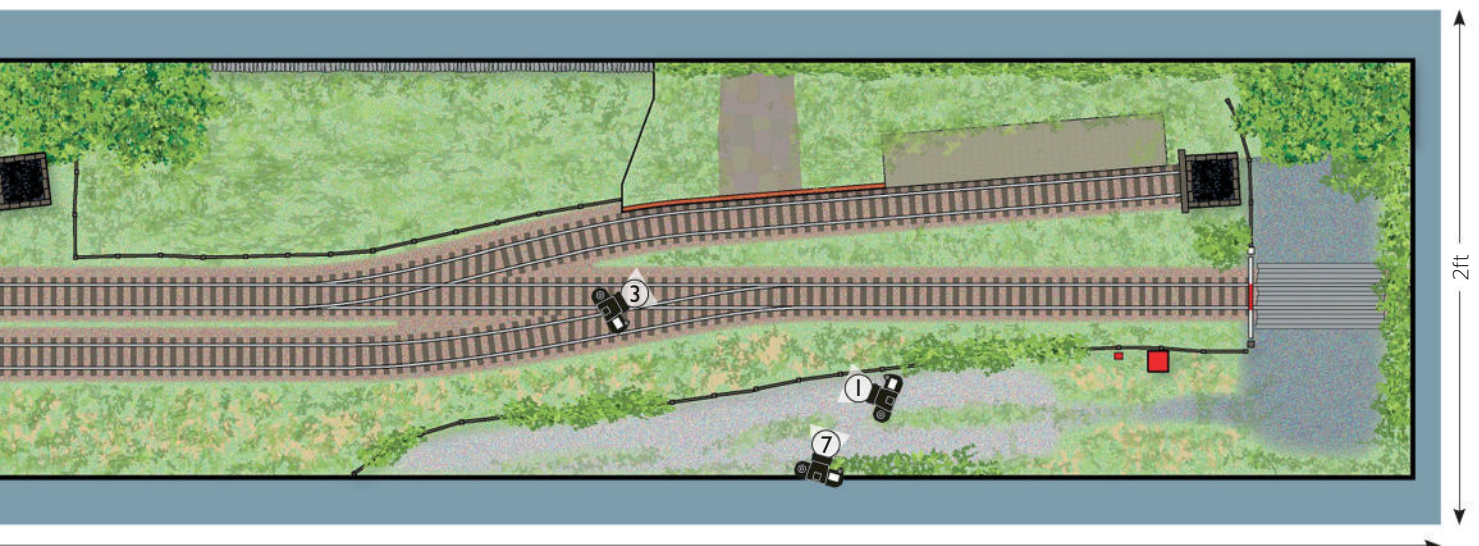
Time to build: Two years



ABOUT THE MODELLERS: ADRIAN WALBY AND ROBIN COULTHARD

Railways are in the blood for Adrian and Robin, whose paths first crossed on Thirsk station 20 years ago. As a child, Adrian was taken by his father to the lineside of the East Coast Main Line to watch 'Deltics' and Class 40s roar past. Adrian's career started as an electrical fitter at BREL's Carriage Works in York, and ended three years ago as a rolling stock maintenance engineer at the Wensleydale Railway. In between times, he became involved in the Class 37 Locomotive Group as a volunteer, re-wiring No. 37003 (among others).

Robin was raised in south Birmingham and recalls shed bashing ventures to see Western Region steam with his dad, as well as spotting on Snow Hill station. He became a freight and passenger guard for BR in the Manchester area, and rose to the position of driver, initially under BR and latterly for Northern Rail based at York. Robin retired in 2026.



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In-depth and unbiased reviews of the latest products

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Class S160 2-8-0**

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'Modified Hall' 4-6-0s**

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Sirdar 0-4-0T**

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**98 Peco Pig Iron and
Bolster Twin wagons**

**99 Peco 'Covhop'
grain hoppers**



Our reviewers

George Dent

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

Richard Gunn

Models in 'N' gauge with a love for the Southern and Longmoor.

How we test

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





Rapido Trains UK USATC 'S160' 2-8-0

◆ **GAUGE** 'OO' ◆ **MODEL** Rapido Trains UK 926005 USATC 'S160' No. WD700 Major General Carl R. Gray Jr., Longmoor Military Railway blue

◆ **PRICE** £269.95 (DCC-ready), £379.95 (DCC sound) ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Rapido Trains stockists **Web** www.rapidotrains.co.uk

Given Rapido Trains' strong links with North America (with a Canadian founder, who established the British company in Birmingham in 2003 before incorporating it in Canada a year later), it's logical enough that the firm has launched a model with connections to both

America and Europe. Announced back in August 2023 and, according to the firm, "one of our most requested models", Rapido's version of the United States Army Transportation Corps 'S160' 2-8-0 is now in stores, with all variants having already sold out from the manufacturer itself.

While prototype 'S160s' were American-designed and built, vast numbers were shipped across the Atlantic to serve in Britain during the Second World War. And although their initial period of UK use was very limited – just three years, before nearly all made the much shorter ocean trip over the English Channel to

continental Europe in the wake of D-Day – examples brought back from abroad are now preserved on heritage lines here.

Rapido's range is a comprehensive one, with ten models available plus two limited-edition specials commissioned by Rails of Sheffield. There are two examples



3 things we like



1

The cluttered front end, with prominent Westinghouse air pump on the smokebox door.



2

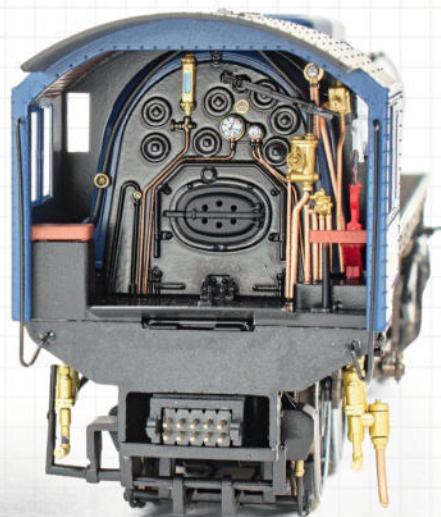
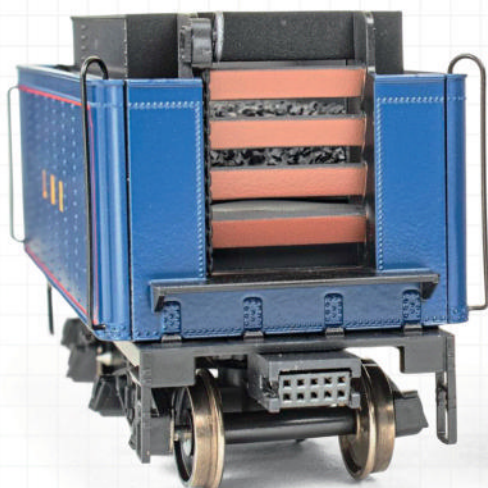
The complex Walschaerts valve gear and realistic gap between boiler and frames.



3

Fully kitted-out cab with realistic dials, and brass and copper features, plus secure tender pin and socket connection.

“The locomotive is beautifully ugly. We mean that in the best possible way, for the real things were no oil paintings. They possessed an imposing, utilitarian bluntness devoid of any frills”



Rapido Trains UK USATC 'S160' 2-8-0 - in detail



Factfile: USATC 'S160' 2-8-0

During the Second World War, vast resources from the United States flowed across the Atlantic, both before and after America's entry into the conflict. This included railway locomotives to aid the wrecked railways of war-wracked Europe (and other continents, including Africa, Asia and South America). The process began in 1941 under the Lend-Lease agreement, with the supply of 'S200' 2-8-0 and 2-8-2 'Mikado' engines to support British operations in the Middle East. However, with America joining hostilities after the attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941, a simpler, more austere design was needed that could be quickly mass-constructed yet still be rough and tough enough for wartime use. The result was the United States Army Transportation Corps' 'S160' 2-8-0.

There was little beauty or grace about the 'S160', designed by Major J. W. Marsh of the Railway Branch of the Corps of Engineers. The locomotives were as much blunt, unadorned instruments of war as the tanks and aircraft that also journeyed across the North Atlantic, with their Spartan looks echoing the severity of British contemporaries such as the War Department 'Austerity' 2-8-0s and Bulleid's 'Q1' 0-6-0s.

Of the 2,120 'S160s' constructed by three US builders between 1942 and 1945, almost 800 were shipped to the UK, with the first 396 distributed to the GWR (174), LNER (168), LMS (50), and SR (a mere six). Theoretically, this was for running-in purposes, but the reality was that the 'S160s' did lots of general hard, heavy work to help keep Britain's network going. A further 400 were stored for use before D-Day; after the liberation of Europe got under way, all the UK engines left for the continent and beyond.

Only one - WD700 *Major General Carl R. Gray Jr.* - stayed behind in Blighty for training purposes on the Longmoor Military Railway. However, during the preservation era, eight have been repatriated to the UK, out of 26 that have survived, to greater or lesser extents of completeness, worldwide.

of those supplied to the Great Western Railway, London Midland & Scottish Railway, London & North Eastern Railway and Southern Railway, as well as a Longmoor Military Railway one and four preserved machines. Of the latter, there are two different versions of the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's No. 5820 'Big Jim', including the pseudo-British Railways black with 95820 number and early crest that it ran in briefly during 2014 - Rapido, of course, loves a fictional livery!

Rails' exclusive duo represent No. 3278 as WD701 'Franklin D. Roosevelt', in the LMR-inspired Prussian blue with red lining that it wore while on the Mid-Hants Railway, along with No. 2582 Pvt. *H. J. O'Brien*, as deployed to mainland Europe between 1944 and 1947 before sale to Polish State Railways. All have tooling differences appropriate to the actual locomotives and period they were in use, such as different lamp irons, smokebox doors, air pumps, pipework, tender details and other tweaks.

ATTRACTIVE PRUSSIAN BLUE

Our review sample is No. 700 *Major General Carl R. Gray Jr.*,

named after the Army Director of Railway Services for North Africa, Italy and Northwest Europe. It arrived at Longmoor in 1946 and received the attractive, vibrant blue livery of this Hampshire military training railway in 1955. However, it didn't survive long in this state, being involved in an incident in 1957 that led to its scrapping.

You don't even need to unpack the 'S160' to appreciate that Rapido has gone to some lengths to create a high-quality product. The sturdy and substantial box is finished in Prussian blue, with the engine and its tender separately and very securely suspended inside in clear plastic clamshell packaging. There's lots of foam to protect against knocks, so despite the delicacy of items like the handrails and pipework, the 'S160' reached us in perfect condition. A compact 18-page booklet, looking like a military handbook, provides a potted history, DCC information, and parts diagrams and lists.

With electrical pick-ups on both the engine driving wheels and tender wheels, a pin and socket arrangement connects the two parts of the locomotive - it's handy to be able to easily split them; combined, they are one very weighty machine. The DCC socket is in the tender, and there are also two factory-fitted speakers - one in the engine, the other in the tender - although, as our version was DCC only, these remained silent. However, it's reassuring to know they're already there for any future upgrades.

The locomotive is beautifully ugly. We mean that in the best



possible way, for the real things were no oil paintings. They possessed an imposing, utilitarian bluntness devoid of any frills. Rapido has captured this chunky inelegance superbly, with the robust industrial appearance looking spot-on.

However, this heavyweight bruiser also includes some intricate fine details, such as the sprung buffers, handrails, pipework, drain taps and air compressor on the smokebox door. The complex Walschaerts valve gear is also superbly modelled, and almost mesmerising in slow-speed action. The sizeable gap between the boiler and the frames is also very noticeable, and although, if you look very closely, some red wiring can be seen, it's buried so deeply amid the underframe that it's invisible under normal viewing.

MINIMALIST BUT SLICK

While the tender coal has a slightly plastic appearance, it's quite a small load, meaning that anyone wanting to top it up with something more realistic can easily do so. Five wooden planks are correctly in place to hold the black fuel back. As per the prototype, the simplistic-looking tender has twin archbar-style bogies rather than a fixed wheelset, which is good news to those with layouts featuring tighter pointwork. The cab interior and controls are quite minimalist compared to many British locomotives of a similar size from the same era, but they're very slickly done.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Realistic looks capturing the spirit of the prototypes.
- Very high levels of detailing throughout.
- Extremely competent performance.
- Ideal motive power for Rapido's LMR coaches and wagons.

CONS

- Almost nothing of any note.

FINAL VERDICT

A luxury recreation of an austerity engine.

An orange glow behind the firebox door draws further attention to the area.

Small details for the owner to add, if wanted, include bufferbeam pipework, a NEM coupling pocket for the front end, ashpan blackout covers (for wartime use) and, of course, the etched nameplates. Livery application is, frankly, fantastic – while there isn't much decoration given the nature of this beast, what is present is very crisp and clear.

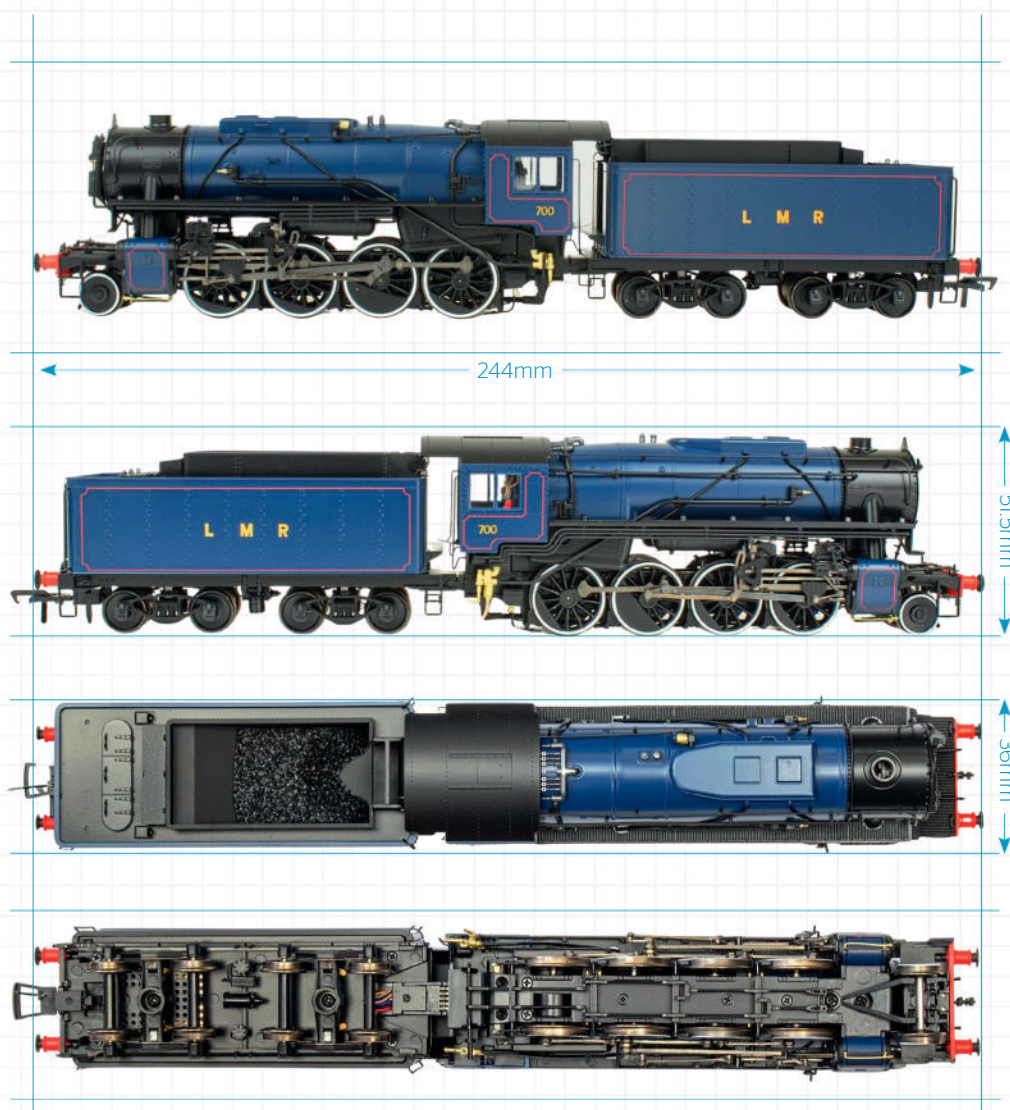
At 484g Rapido's model has the weight to match its muscular

looks, meaning excellent haulage capabilities, once fully run in. The powerful mechanism is quiet and smooth throughout its speed range, and thanks to the pick-ups on the driving wheels and tender bogies, it's largely immune to any gaps in electrical current. While the 2-8-0 arrangement means that the 'S180' requires second radius curves and greater, there's plenty of play in all four driving wheel axles and the articulated coupling rods to allow it to negotiate these with no issues.

Tackling an 'S160' must have been an ambitious undertaking

for Rapido, but fortunately, it has done a superb job. This is a premium product, albeit with a premium price tag, but you can clearly see where all the money has gone. It's difficult to fault.

If there's one problem, it's going to be justifying the running of 'S160s' on many layouts, given that they were used in Britain for such a limited time. But it is models like this that embody the golden 'Rule 1' – 'it's your railway, and you can run what you like'. Fascinating and characterful releases like this completely justify that philosophy. **(RG)**



VITAL STATISTICS: RAPIDO TRAINS UK USATC 'S160'

OVERVIEW

Manufacturer: Rapido Trains UK
Ref. No. 926005
Unit No. WD700 Major General
Carl R. Gray Jr.
Scale/gauge: 1:76 scale, '00' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 484g
Min. curve radius: 438mm (second radius)
Wheel back-to-back: 14.4mm

DIMENSIONS

Length (over buffers)
 Height
 Width
 Wheel diameter (pony)
 Wheel diameter (driving)
 Wheel diameter (tender)
 Coupled wheelbase

PROTOTYPE

61ft 0in
 12ft 10½in
 9ft 0in
 2ft 9in
 4ft 9in
 3ft 2in
 15ft 6in

1:76 SCALE

244.64mm
 51.64mm
 36.12mm
 11.03mm
 19.05mm
 12.7mm
 62.03mm

MODEL

244mm
 51.5mm
 36mm
 11mm
 19mm
 12mm
 62mm

ELECTRICS

Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail
Motor type: Five-pole, skew-wound
Lights: Firebox glow
DCC-ready? 21pin socket

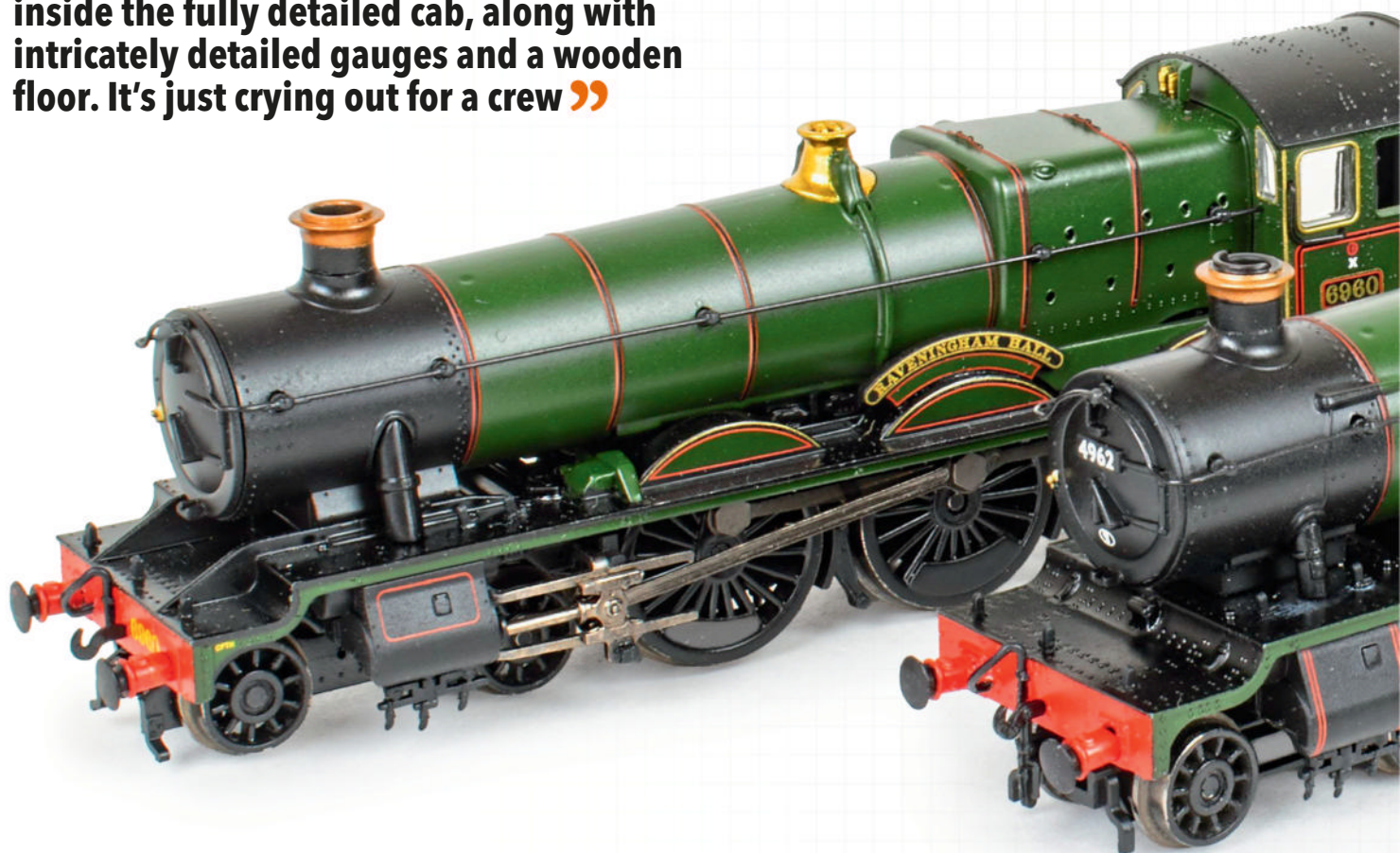
MECHANISM

Drive system: Motor drives rear driving wheels via direct gears
Flywheel(s): Two
Traction tyres: No

SERVICING

How to dismantle: Body and tender unscrew from chassis.
Where to oil: Gear wheel – see handbook.

“You’ll find more brass and copper fittings inside the fully detailed cab, along with intricately detailed gauges and a wooden floor. It’s just crying out for a crew”



Graham Farish GWR ‘Hall’ and ‘Modified Hall’



◆ **GAUGE ‘N’** ◆ **MODELS** Graham Farish • 372-010 GWR ‘49XX’ ‘Hall’ No. 4962 *Ragley Hall*, BR lined green (early emblem) • 372-450 ‘6959’ ‘Modified Hall’ No. 6960 *Raveningham Hall*, GWR lined green (Great Western crest) ◆ **PRICE** £189.95 (DCC-ready), £299.95 (DCC sound) ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Graham Farish/Bachmann stockists **Web** www.bachmann.co.uk

Graham Farish first introduced a ‘Hall’ model in ‘N’ gauge way back in 1975, which, although well-regarded for its era, was obviously crude by today’s standards, featuring thick, shiny wheels and a rotund look to its very plasticky body. In 2011, Dapol brought 21st-Century standards of 2mm manufacturing to the class with an extensive range of engines and liveries. However,

although a considerable visual improvement over its aged rival, it was still compromised by having a tender drive mechanism – resulting in an unsightly driveshaft extending from the tender through to the cab.

Thus, when Bachmann’s Graham Farish brand revealed last year that it planned to launch a new Collett ‘Hall’ complemented by a suitably altered Hawksworth ‘Modified Hall’, there was great anticipation

among ‘N’ gauge modellers. Less than a year after that announcement – a comparatively short time in model locomotive development – deliveries have now reached retailers.

Keeping things relatively simple, Graham Farish’s initial run features four locomotives: two ‘Halls’ and two ‘Modified Halls’. No. 4962 *Ragley Hall* in BR lined green with early BR emblem and No. 4936 *Kinlet Hall* in BR lined green with late crest represent

the original type, while No. 6960 *Raveningham Hall* in GWR lined green with ‘GREAT WESTERN’ tender lettering and coat of arms, and No. 7904 *Fountains Hall* in BR lined black with early emblem portray the later upgraded engines. We’re certain though that subsequent batches will introduce more variety. All are available in DCC-ready and DCC sound-fitted specifications.

For our review, we were supplied with DCC-ready



examples of *Ragley Hall* and *Ravingham Hall*. While the former is in Graham Farish's standard black and yellow container, the latter is part of Bachmann's 'Railway Celebrations' range, and thus comes in a smart silver and blue outer box, with a brief history of the locomotive on its rear. Beyond that though, the packaging is the same. Compact but strong clear plastic clamshell casing means a safe home for the 'Halls' when not in use - although we did notice that the front left buffer of *Ragley Hall* was bent slightly downwards, as if it had been involved in a heavy

shunting incident. While, in such a small scale, it isn't that obvious, it looks more noticeable in our pictures. Some gentle manipulation with small bent-nose pliers did improve matters, though. Extras in the box include a short NEM coupling, tender coupling hook and, for the 'Modified Hall', a front 'bash plate', for anybody who doesn't want to fit a front coupling.

A GRAND JOB

Both locomotives do a grand job of capturing the character and appearance of the actual mixed-traffic GWR 4-6-0s. The real

things were handsome machines, and the 'N' gauge versions also possess those good looks. Separately fitted detail parts include the smokebox door, sand boxes, lower front lamp irons, steam pipes, whistle, reverser and tool tunnels, along with dome, filler cap, water scoop and vacuum pipes, while handrails, buffers and sand pipes are all metal additions. The coal in the tender also doubles as a metal chassis and gearbox, to bring the weight of the engines up 67g. While some may want to prise this plate out and add their own 'fuel', ►

3 things we like



1

Detailed footplate, with gauge markings and needles visible.



2

Crisp and clear printing, with realistic nameplates.



3

Frame differences between 'Hall' and 'Modified Hall' accurately modelled.

Graham Farish GWR 'Halls' and 'Modified Halls' - in detail



the coal does look sufficiently realistic that it's unlikely to grate (if you'll pardon the pun).

There's glazing to the cab front and sides, with brass-effect window frames. In fact, the 'brass' features across the engines, such as the dome, are particularly well done, as is the 'copper' chimney rim. You'll find more brass and copper fittings inside the fully detailed cab, along with intricately detailed gauges and a wooden floor. It's just crying out for a crew, which, as there's no Dapol-esque propshaft protruding from the tender through the backhead, there's little reason not to do so.

The differences between the Collett and Hawksworth locomotives are faithfully reproduced, including the additional frame plates below the

Factfile: GWR '49XX' 'Halls' and '6959' 'Modified Halls'

The GWR's Hall Class 4-6-0s (and subsequent 'Modified Halls') were among the most successful mixed-traffic locomotives produced at Swindon Works. Conceived by Charles Collett, the design was heavily influenced by his predecessor George Churchward's Saint class. In 1924, No. 2925 *Saint Martin* was rebuilt with smaller 6ft driving wheels, realigned cylinders and a 'Castle' pattern cab. Three years of trials between 1925 and 1927 were enough to convince Collett he'd was onto a winner.

Swindon received an order for 80 locomotives in 1928, following on from *Saint Martin*, which had been renumbered 4900. Christened the 'Hall' class after they adopted the titles of English and Welsh country houses, manufacture of Nos. 4901 to 4980 continued until February 1930. In those pre-internet days, there were several spelling or punctuation errors in the names, not all of which were ever corrected.

The all-round competence of the 'Halls' - whether on goods or passenger services - led to further orders, beginning again in 1931 and continuing steadily through the 1930s and wartime

years, with the 259th and final original 'Hall', No. 6958 *Oxburgh Hall*, completed in 1943. Both the LMS and LNER used the design as a template for their 'Black Five' and 'B1' 4-6-0s.

With Frederick Hawksworth superseding Collett in 1941, he finessed the specification further, leading to the first 'Modified' example, No. 6959 *Peatling Hall*, appearing in March 1944. Although externally similar, the new locomotives incorporated redesigned frames, cylinders and draughting arrangements, together with improved bogie suspension and a larger three-row superheater.

A further 71 'Modified Halls' were constructed, the final one, No. 7929 *Wyke Hall*, emerging in 1950 under British Railways. Together, the two classes totalled 330 locomotives. They remained a significant cog in BR's Western Region operations until withdrawals began in the early 1960s, with the last disappearing from service in 1965. Fortunately, 17 'Halls' and 'Modified Halls' have survived into preservation (an 18th, *Willington Hall*, was dismantled as a source of components).



smokebox that were one of the more distinctive differences sported by 'Modified Halls', along with a different leading bogie (including that optional 'bash plate'), fire iron tunnel and slightly altered chimney. The changes are bigger than just some superficial mild tweaks that a manufacturer hopes might not be too noticeable in the tiny scale, and are something Graham Farish is to be commended for.

PRINT QUALITY

Something else to be applauded is the quality of the printing. The lining is delicately done, while numberplates and nameplates look sharp as well. While there's the inevitable lack of depth to the printed cab numbers, the nameplates mounted atop the splashers do look very convincing.

Although the instructions recommend the usual running in period of half an hour each way, both locomotives ran smoothly and quietly straight out of the box. Being on the lengthier side, they're recommended for second radius curves and larger, and we didn't try them over anything tighter, but short points were handled well enough with no derailling issues. The haulage capabilities of these 'Halls' is

notable; while all the driving and tender wheels have electrical pick-ups (with a discreet wiring connection between the tender and engine), there are traction tyres pre-fitted on the rear driving wheel axle, which means appropriately sizeable loads can be handled easily enough, with no interruption in electric feed. For anybody wanting to upgrade

to digital, the tender simply unclips to reveal the decoder socket underneath, complete with factory-fitted speaker already in place.

Unless you're modelling somewhere far away from Great Western heartland territory, it's almost difficult to find an excuse not to buy one of these 'Halls' or 'Modified Halls'. So many were

built, and they roamed so far and wide (especially in BR days) on so many different types of traffic, that they became ubiquitous even away from their traditional stamping grounds. These are great little models with superb looks and excellent running and traction abilities, and a significant leap forwards compared to their 1975 and 2011 predecessors. **(RG)**



SUMMARY

PROS

- Handsome looks that mirror the prototypes.
- Good runners with laudable haulage capabilities.
- Excellent lively reproduction.
- Far better than any previous 2mm 'Hall'.

CONS

- Very little of any note.

FINAL VERDICT

A strong response to the calls for new 'Halls'.

VITAL STATISTICS: GRAHAM FARISH GWR 'HALLS' AND 'MODIFIED HALLS'

OVERVIEW

Manufacturer: Graham Farish/Bachmann

Ref. No. 372-010/372-450

Unit No. 4962 Ragley Hall/6960 Raveningham Hall

Scale/gauge: 1:148 scale, 'N' gauge

Body: Plastic with metal parts

Chassis: Metal

Weight: 67g

Min. curve radius: 263.5mm

(second radius)

Wheel back-to-back: 7.65mm

DIMENSIONS

Length (over buffers)

Height

Width

Wheel diameter (pony truck)

Wheel diameter (driving)

Wheel diameter (tender)

Coupled wheelbase

PROTOTYPE

63ft 0.25in

13ft 3.25in

8ft 11.5in

3ft 0in

6ft 0in

4ft 1.5in

14ft 9in

1:148 SCALE

129.8mm

27.33mm

18.45mm

6.18mm

12.36mm

8.5mm

30.38mm

MODEL

129.5mm

27mm

18.5mm

6mm

12mm

8.5mm

30.5mm

ELECTRICS

Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail

Motor type: Coreless

Lights: No

DCC-ready? Next18 DCC decoder in tender, speaker pre-fitted

MECHANISM

Drive system: Motor drives driving wheels via gearbox

Flywheel: One

Traction tyres: Two, on rear driving wheel axle

SERVICING

How to dismantle: Body unscrews from chassis, tender unclips

Where to oil: Driving wheel axles and connecting rod moving parts



Rapido Kerr, Stuart & Co. Sirdar 0-4-0T

◆ **GAUGE** '009' ◆ **MODEL** Rapido Trains UK Kerr, Stuart Sirdar 0-4-0T • 986007 'Long Tank' plain green • 986201 'Short Tank' Penrhyn lined black
 ◆ **PRICE** £139.95-£179.95 each ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Rapido stockists **Web** www.rapidotrains.co.uk

Arriving hot on the heels of Rapido's all-purpose narrow gauge wagons (reviewed last issue) is the hotly anticipated range of Kerr, Stuart Sirdar 0-4-0 tank locomotives. Both products are a real boost for the ready-to-run '009' gauge market, things having been a bit quiet in recent years, particularly on the locomotive front. Offering modellers some welcome variety, they're also suited to layouts based throughout the UK and much further afield.

The 2015 restoration of the most famous Sirdar locomotive, Works No. 1158 *Diana* (built 1909),

after 60-odd years of lying dormant, was a pivotal moment in the preservation era, with the locomotive making guest appearances across the UK.

Narrow gauge industrial locomotives were invariably built to order, customised to suit specific roles, but in a savvy move, Rapido has used *Diana* as inspiration for a fleet of 'long tank' Sirdar tanks, while a host of 'short tank' variants have also been produced. The latter are termed 'what if' locomotives, featuring design elements from numerous prototypes, thus creating a wholly believable suite of models.

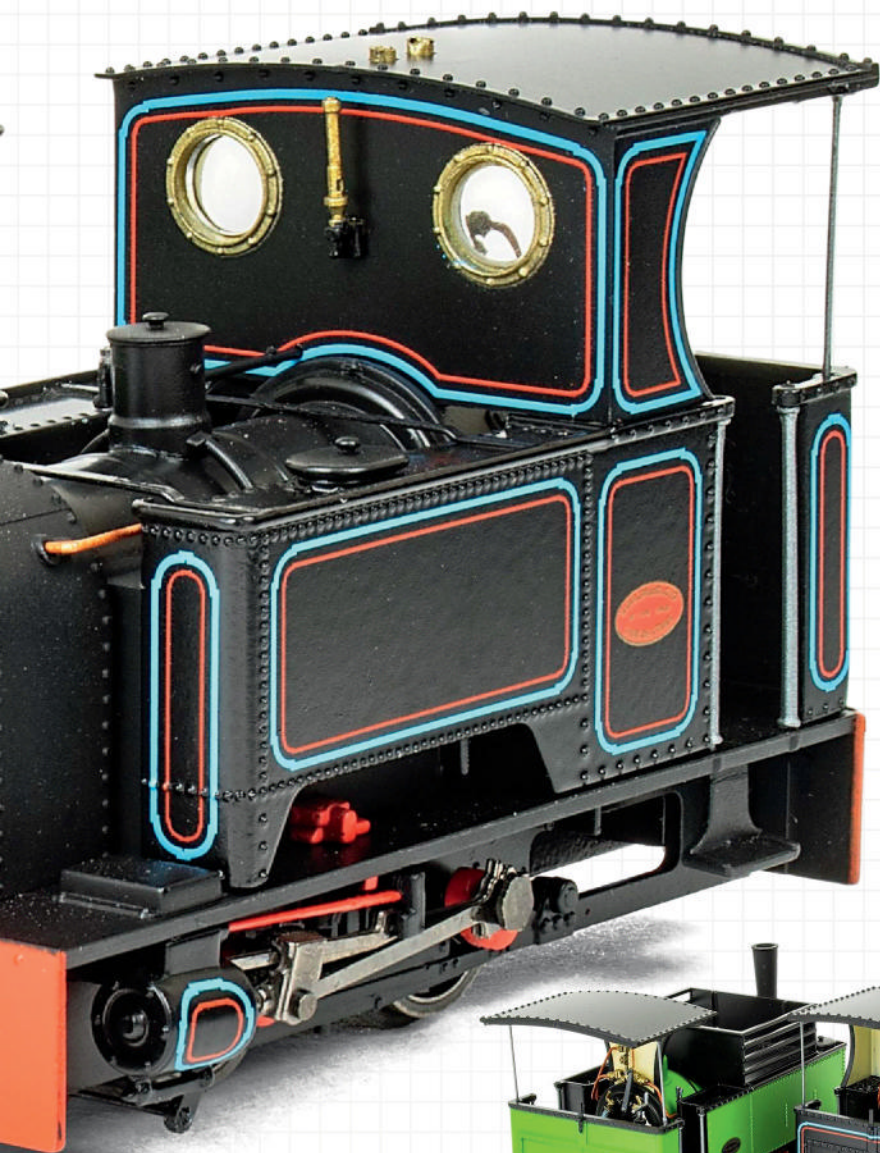
For review, Rapido kindly sent us a 'long tank' 0-4-0T in plain green, featuring an open-sided cab and stovetop chimney, plus an eye-catching log bunker atop the boiler. By way of contrast, a 'short tank' variant was also supplied, wearing the handsome Penrhyn livery of lined black and featuring a partially enclosed cab and flared-top chimney.

At just 49mm long (a scale 12ft), these are delightful little models, packed with character and displaying an impressive array of detail. The chassis and bodywork are made up of a mix of cast metal and plastic, so there's a decent amount of mass (44g)

and they're well balanced too, which is crucial for a locomotive with such a short wheelbase.

There's plenty of rivethead detail on the frames, tank tops, cab and smokebox, and fittings such as the smokebox door





“At just 49mm long, these are delightful little models, packed with character and displaying an impressive array of detail”



handles, handrails, lamp brackets and lubricator pots are all individual fittings. The cab interiors are a work of art, with all controls, gauges and copper pipework exquisitely rendered, while the glazed spectacle plates feature polished brass surrounds on both the outside and inside.

The chassis frames feature authentic cut-out sections, giving an extra sense of depth, aided by the brake gear and refined coupling rods. Although most of each wheel is obscured by the frames, there's a visible hint of spoke detail.

Rapido has ensured the body is easy to remove, via four screws (a matching screwdriver is supplied!), allowing access to the 6pin DCC interface. DCC-fitted versions are available, but no sound options and, unsurprisingly, there's no speaker installed. A tiny but powerful coreless motor, complete with flywheel, drives the rear axle via a worm and gears, with six wiper contacts collecting power (four working on the leading wheels).

After a running-in period, both samples ran extremely well under test, charmingly pottering around with a rake of Rapido's wagons in tow. The short, four-coupled wheelbase ensured they could cope with tight curves, making them ideal for use on the smallest of micro layouts. On level track, haulage power was certainly adequate for an engine of this size, and the mechanism proved quiet and smooth.

A generous array of optional details is supplied with each model, including alternative chimneys (including a spark arrester version), dumb buffers, vacuum brake hoses, toolbox, front steps, bunker lids and alternative couplings.

The paintwork is another highlight, neatly applied, and the lining of the Penrhyn black version is flawless. Builders' plates are crisply printed (no etched options are provided), and I love the contrast in sheen between the bodywork and smokebox.

Blending cuteness with fine detail and top-notch performance, Rapido's Sirdar tanks are lovely little models, which are sure to tempt more modellers towards dabbling in narrow gauge railways. Furthermore, it's great to hear that the powered chassis is also available separately, which will make it easier to build or kit-bash a host of '009' kits. (GD)

3 things we like



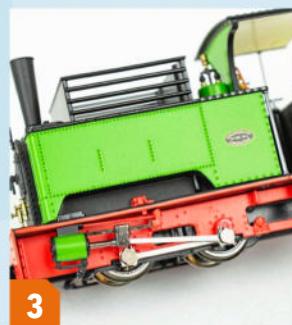
1

Fully appointed cab interiors.



2

The locomotives feature lots of different detail options.



3

Great sense of depth to the chassis frames.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Convincing appearance.
- Impressive level of detail.
- Performance.
- First class finish.
- Charming subject.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Gorgeous!





Rapido Trains UK GER Dia. 17/48 open wagons

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Rapido Trains UK GER • Dia. 17 5-plank open • Dia. 48 7-plank open ◆ PRICE £32.95 each ◆ AVAILABILITY Rapido stockists Web www.rapidotrains.co.uk

Despite the Great Eastern Railway's sphere of operation being within an area of England devoid of collieries, there was a pressing need for a large fleet of mineral wagons for the importation of coal from further afield, notably from pits in Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire.

From the 1890s, the steel-framed Diagram 17 five-plank open wagon began replacing older timber-framed vehicles. The new design offered greater load capacity, and the full-height side doors allowed for rapid unloading. Furthermore, it was equally suited to general merchandise as well as mineral traffic. Construction continued into the 1900s, with over 12,000 examples eventually entering service.

The GER's Diagram 48 wagon featured a seven-plank timber body atop a similar steel-framed chassis and provided a further increase in payload capability. This later design emerged in 1903 and featured twin cupboard-style doors above the main drop-side door on each side. Over 1,000 were built, while many existing wagons were converted to match the Diagram 48 specification.

Rapido has modelled both wagon types, with a host of GER, Great Central, LNER and BR guises on offer. As per many of Rapido's previous steam-era wagons, the tooling has been tailored to suit different periods, with alternative brake gear, buffers, axleboxes and door styles on offer.

Our samples of the five-plank design feature grease axleboxes

and hand brakes on one side only, plus round-shanked buffers. The seven-plank version, meanwhile, includes oil axleboxes and open-front brake lever guards, along with ribbed buffershanks. There are also different styles of brake rod safety loops too, for the eagle-eyed to spot.

PIN-SHARP MOULDING

All models share several common features, notably the exquisitely rendered plank and strapping detail on the exterior of the body. The safety pin chains and sheet fastening hoops may be moulded, but they're pin-sharp, with the former picked out extremely well with black paint. The Dia. 17 wagons feature prominent twin bump springs for the side doors, while the Dia. 48 has a separately installed lever bracket.

The spoked wheels run on pinpoint axles, and the models feature an optimum level of mass, ensuring super-smooth running. Impressively, even the strengthening rim around the spoked wheels has been captured, showing excellent attention to detail.

We're currently spoilt for choice when it comes to timber-bodied open wagons, but these are a worthy addition to Rapido's range, providing modellers of the GER network with some extra variety, especially given the subtle visual differences to other mineral and general merchandise open vehicles from the period. As we've come to expect, build quality and finish are top-notch. (GD)



SUMMARY

PROS

- Impressive looks.
- Smooth runners.
- Build quality and finish.
- Interesting prototypes.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Splendid.



Rapido Trains UK LBSCR Dia. 8 10ton vans

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Rapido Trains UK LBSCR Dia. 8 10ton goods vans ◆ PRICE £34.95 each ◆ AVAILABILITY Rapido stockists **Web** www.rapidotrains.co.uk

Rapido's promotional material heralds these models as the first-ever RTR 'OO' rendition of a London, Brighton & South Coast Railway (LBSCR) van, and they're certainly an attractive addition to the manufacturer's burgeoning range of pre-Grouping rolling stock.

Diagram 8 vans were built for general goods traffic, with several hundred examples turned out between 1878 and 1915. Featuring a 9ft 9in wheelbase, twin side doors and a small end vent, they were also used for perishable cargoes and fish. Operating across much of the LBSCR - and subsequently Southern Railway - network, several made their way over to the Isle of Wight. The last examples continued in use with BR until the mid-1960s, predominantly in Departmental use, and three survive in preservation.

Rapido's model is dimensionally accurate and captures the look of the real wagons well. The plastic bodysell features crisp plank and bracket detail, with separately installed metal lamp brackets at each end. Metal wheels and pinpoint axles run freely within metal bearings, while the bufferheads are also metal, giving them extra strength and a prototypical profile.

The tooling allows for variances in brake gear, axlebox types, and the presence of steps either side of the doors (as seen on the Southern brown version featured here). Different wheel patterns feature where appropriate, and there are nearly 20 individual models from which to choose, across LBSCR, SR and BR liveries, the latter including a few Departmental guises, plus a van in use with the Ministry of Defence.



Our two samples are both unfitted, but the SR version features handbrake gear on both sides, while the LBSCR has it on one side only. The brake shoes align with the wheels perfectly (without being too close), and the safety loops have been

correctly replicated. The brake handles sit within slotted brackets, and the spring and axlebox detail is really impressive, presenting a very pleasing all-round appearance. The finish is exemplary too.

These are yet more impressive, useful freight wagons from Rapido. (GD)



SUMMARY



PROS

- Excellent level of detail.
- Smooth runners.
- Build quality and finish.

CONS

- Not a lot.



FINAL VERDICT

Excellent.

Revolution Trains 'Borail' & 'Super Tench'



◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Revolution Trains BR 'Borail' MB, EWS YQA 'Super Tench' wagons ◆ PRICE £109.95 per twin-pack

◆ AVAILABILITY Revolution Trains stockists **Web** www.revolutiontrains.com

Produced initially in 'N' gauge (see MR334), Revolution Trains 'OO' versions of the BR 'Borail' family of wagons have duly arrived with retailers – and have sold extremely well, with several versions already out of stock at the time of writing.

BR's 50ton flat wagons were built initially from 1959 and rode on 8ft wheelbase plate steel bogies. Designed to carry rails (hence the operational name 'Borail'), long pipes, steel girders or concrete beams, they proved extremely useful for revenue-earning freight work as well as Departmental duties.

The real fleet was modified significantly over time, leading to many variants, and Revolution

has created an impressive array of tooling to cater for the EC and EB/MB 'Borails' (with vacuum or air brake gear), plus the air-braked YLA 'Mullet', YQA 'Parr' and YQA 'Super Tench', with Y25 bogies and many other detail differences, as appropriate.

All wagons come in twin-packs, and we received a pair of 'Borail' MBs for review, plus a YQA 'Super Tench' duo, the latter complete with mesh side panels. Indeed, the real 'Super Tench' variant appeared as late as 2010, rebuilt by EWS to include removable 20ft modules. In contrast, the 'Borail' MB depicts an early condition wagon, with five bolsters and a set of retaining pins (supplied for customer fitment).

Both wagon types are reproduced to an impressive

standard, with plenty of attractive detail above and below solebar level. There's ample use of cast metal to ensure a healthy weight and promote smooth running, with the bogies and axles rotating freely. The deep side frames feature an array of cast detail, as well as separately installed load-securing rings on the 'Borail'.

The YQA's mesh side panels are rendered in etched metal, and there's realistic daylight between the original decking and the underside of the modules. The sprung buffers really look the part and, hidden between the chassis frames, is an array of vacuum ('Borail') and air ('Super Tench') brake gear. There are no brake fittings on the bogies, but the gear is barely visible on the real wagons, so this is not an issue.

NEM coupler pockets are mounted to the bogie frames,

SUMMARY

PROS

- Looks and fidelity.
- Impressive level of detail.
- Smooth runners.
- Interesting prototypes.
- Numerous versions produced.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Impressive.

and our samples ran extremely well under test, coping easily with second radius curves. The corner footsteps of the YQA are a little delicate and quite easily broken, but aside from this, the build quality is impressive, as is the paint finish, with the various number and information panels neatly printed.

At a scale 65ft 6in long, these are substantial wagons and will look great with suitable loads installed. They certainly offer something a little different and, due to the success of this first production run, hopefully more will follow in future. (GD)





Revolution PCA alumina powder tank wagons

◆ GAUGE 'N' ◆ MODEL Revolution Trains • RT-PCA20-201C Alcan-liveried PCA tanks (with ladders) four-pack • RT-PCA20-203H RioTintoAlcan PCA tanks (no ladders) four-pack
 ◆ PRICE £169.95 ◆ AVAILABILITY Revolution Trains stockists Web www.revolutiontrains.com

While Graham Farish and Realtrack Models have both produced 'N' gauge PCA tank wagons, their main focus was on cement traffic. Revolution Trains' latest 2mm release introduces a welcome and very well-tooled variation in the form of versions for transporting alumina from north-eastern England to the Scottish Highlands.

It was in 1988 that 43 PCO20A design code powder tanks were built for British Aluminium Alcan, ferrying imported alumina (the raw material for smelting aluminium) from Blyth Bulk Terminal to the Lochaber smelter just outside Fort William. Thanks to the stunning Scottish scenery they passed through,

the trains proved very popular with photographers – especially in 2011 when 'Deltic' No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* was hired to cover a motive power shortage. These PCAs were replaced by modern bogie tankers last year.

Revolution's series features nine packs, each of four PCAs, covering all liveries carried: original Alcan (1988 to mid-2000s), debranded with Alcan logos faded or peeled off (mid-2000s), RioTintoAlcan (2007-2016), Lochaber Power/Liberty (2016-2020) and Alvance (2020 onwards). All have different unit numbering.

Revolution provided us with Alcan and RioTintoAlcan sets for review. The wagons come in the manufacturer's usual sturdy card boxes, securely ensconced in

clear, hard plastic surrounds, and with a brief user guide and history. There's also enough optional bufferbeam pipework for all wagons, for those who choose to remove the standard NEM couplings.

The PCAs both look and feel very impressive. At 26g each, there's an impressive bulk to them, but the metal RP25 wheelsets ensure that they're very free-running nevertheless. The wagons capture the character and appearance of the real things very well, with a high level of accuracy and complexity. They feature the correct parabolic spring-suspended underframe rather than the 'pedestal' type of most PCAs (due to West Highland Line restrictions), and even the bottom of the underframe is realistically modelled with chute plate and piping, even though these aspects will usually be out of sight.

Other separately fitted plastic and photo-etched parts include handbrake wheels, tank end pipework, and on the Alcan versions, ladders up to the top walkway (with this catwalk being very fine mesh rather than a solid plastic moulding). The filling ports are so crisply executed that they look like slipping a fingernail underneath the cap ends would actually open them. The end ladders (which were removed during the mid-2000s) are on the

delicate side, and care is needed when handling and packing the wagons away, as they can be damaged if the wagons are placed the wrong way around back in the plastic surround.

The printing is just superb; lettering simply too small to decipher with the naked eye becomes readable under a magnifying glass or camera lens. It's all pin-sharp with no fuzziness and spot-on colours.

These are wonderful models that pack in a wealth of prototypical intricacy, and will look absolutely terrific snaking behind a pair of Class 37s or a single Class 60 or 66. (RG)



SUMMARY

PROS

- A welcome new breed of PCA.
- Impressive amount of detail.
- Nicely weighty and smooth-running.
- Full range of liveries.

CONS

- Care needed with end ladders.

FINAL VERDICT

Tankers to give thanks for.



Peco BR Pig Iron and Bolster Twin wagons

◆ **GAUGE 'N'** ◆ **MODEL** Peco NR1100B BR Pig Iron wagon (£17.50), Twin Bolster wagons • NR1150W GWR • NR1151E LNER • NR1152S SR • NR1153M LMS • NR1154B BR (£28.95 per pair) ◆ **AVAILABILITY** Peco stockists **Web** www.peco-uk.com

Peco has unveiled two newly tooled wagon models, offering modellers of the 'Big Four' and BR steam eras (and the early diesel era) some welcome variety.

The BR 20ton steel-bodied Pig Iron wagon rides atop a 9ft wheelbase twin-axle chassis and depicts one of many vehicles built to Diagram 1/004 in the early 1950s, intended for the carriage of heavy iron ingots.

Meanwhile, presented in twin-packs, is the four-wheel bolster wagon, featuring a 10ft wheelbase chassis. These often ran as twin-sets and could be

seen carrying long cargoes, such as logs, steel rail and pipes.

The Pig Iron wagon is offered in BR livery only, while the bolster wagons are available in LNER, GWR, LMS, SR and BR schemes. All feature metal wheels and attractively detailed chassis, with separate brake handles and shoes that align with the wheels. The buffers are crisply moulded, as is the bodywork, with impressive rivet and bracket relief.

Notably, the bolster wagons sport a mix of spoke and disc wheels, plus a few minor detail

differences, to suit the pre- or post-BR eras. Indeed, the BR set features different axle guard patterns and truss rods, making for an interesting pairing.

Pairs of plastic bolsters are provided with the twin-wagon packs, which slot into holes in the deck, allowing them to rotate with a load in place. At just 4g apiece, there's just enough mass to ensure they run well, but allow for loads to be crafted and installed. Standard 'N' gauge couplers are installed in demountable sockets.

All of our samples ran freely, without issue; the paintwork is neatly applied and most of the printed legends – while not as crisp as those on other 'N' gauge models – are still legible under a magnifier.

It's great to see more all-new wagons emerging from Peco, which, of course, are made in Devon and are available from your local model shop. **(GD)**

SUMMARY

PROS

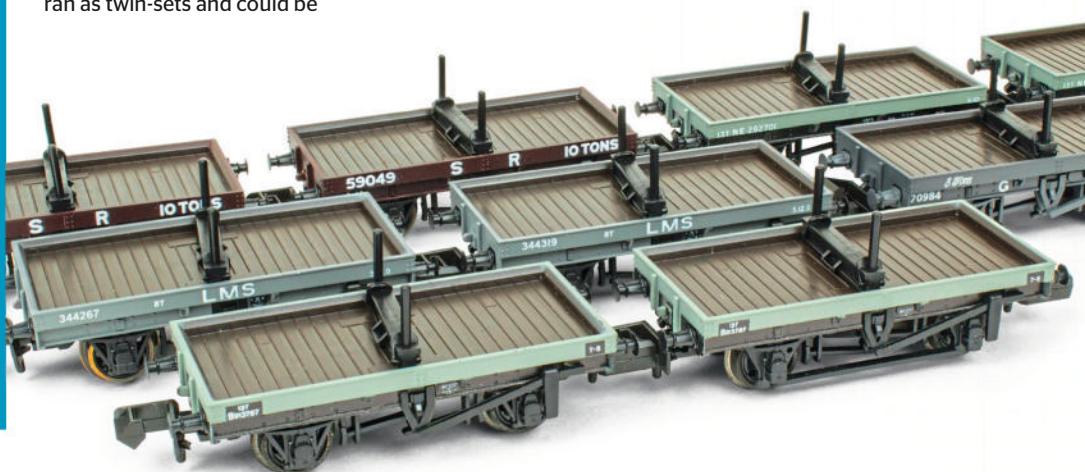
- Look the part.
- Good level of overall detail.
- Good runners.
- Interesting, useful prototypes.
- Made in UK.

CONS

- Lacking a little finesse here and there.

FINAL VERDICT

Really useful additions.





Peco 'Covhop' grain hoppers

◆ GAUGE 'N' ◆ MODEL Peco 'Covhop' grain hoppers • NR63P Johnnie Walker No. 5846 • NR65P Dewar's No. 5811, • NR68P Haig No. 5823 ◆ PRICE £18.95 each ◆ AVAILABILITY Peco stockists **Web** www.peco-uk.com



In a welcome move, Peco has just reissued its four-wheeled covered grain hopper, which has been out of the range for several years. A few enhancements have been made, bringing it a little more up to date in terms of looks and performance.

These wagons originated in 1966, built for the Associated British Maltsters Ltd and Scottish Malt Distillers companies, expressly to carry malt barley grain from East Anglia to various whisky distilleries in Scotland. Operating well into the 1980s, the wagons were eventually phased

out in favour of higher-capacity air-braked hoppers.

Peco's models portray the wagons in their earlier condition, replete with advertising panels on the sides, which were employed until the late 1970s, thus offering the chance to feature a host of different whisky brands. This first production batch offers a choice of Haig, Jonnie Walker or Dewar's, the latter featuring much larger branding.

The hopper body and support framework features plenty of crisply moulded detail, especially the rooftop loading hatches, mesh-effect walkways and access

ladders. The vacuum brake cylinders are visible within the framework at one end.

The underframe is largely accurate, save for the discharge equipment, which is lacking (the chassis is re-used from Peco's TTA tank) and the buffers are a bit stumpy, in contrast to the elegant Oleo units on the real thing.

The addition of metal, three-hole disc wheels is a marked improvement over older models, and they turn freely; their blackened finish helps them look the part. Our trio of samples ran well under test, with the standard 'N' couplings doing their job. At 8g each, they're similar to

most four-wheeled RTR wagons in this scale, while the paint finish is neat, with a noticeable uplift in the quality of printed legends, especially the whisky brands and BRT leasing logos.

The attractive shade of blue certainly provides a pleasing contrast to the drab bauxite and grey BR stock of the period, and they're bound to be popular with modellers of Scottish and East Anglian locations, as well as those who simply enjoy a wee dram! Further releases are expected later in the year, featuring more well-known whisky brands. (GD)



SUMMARY

PROS

- Nicely rendered body detail.
- Improved finish.
- Good runners.
- Attractive prototype.

CONS

- Incorrect underframe detail.

FINAL VERDICT

A welcome return for a bonnie wagon.

LMS/BR CLASS 11 0-6-0DE

CHOOSE FROM 15 VERSIONS

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BR/SR CLASS 12 0-6-0DE

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Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: Next18

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➡ **MR-511** BR 12100,
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Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: Next18

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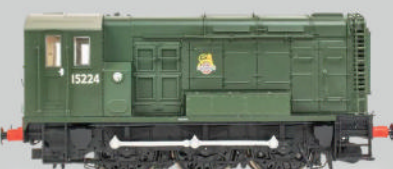
- ♦ MR-520 BR/SR Class 12, 15220,
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- ♦ MR-522 BR/SR Class 12, 15221,
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- ♦ MR-523 BR/SR Class 12, 15212,
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➡ **MR-520**



➡ **MR-522**



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➡ **MR-523**



➡ **MR-524**

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DCC socket: Next18

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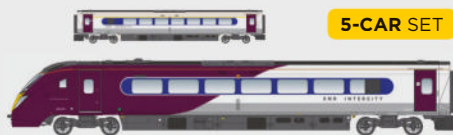


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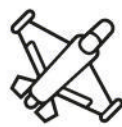
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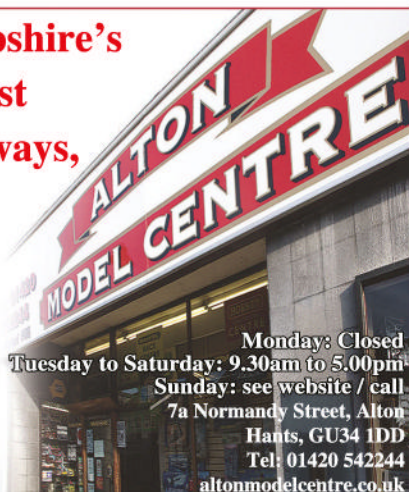


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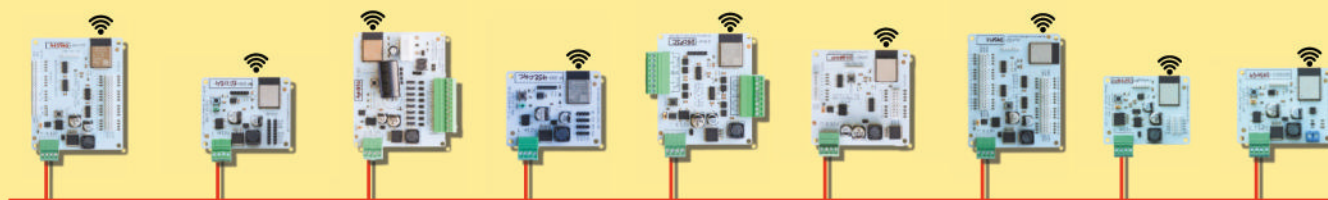
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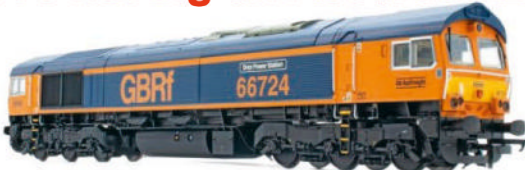
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Backscene



A couple of candid snaps reveal a layout in a state of flux but, as **Chris Leigh** enters his 80th year, can he find an easy way to renovate it?

With every issue of *Model Rail* featuring top-notch layouts photographed by Chris Nevard, one can't help but feel a need to keep up and always present one's efforts in a state of perfection. This month, however, I'm showing a couple of candid views of my present efforts to revitalise the British-outline section of my layout.

For those who are not familiar with my layout, my main layout consists of a double-track, 'OO' British outline oval within an 'HO' Canadian single-track circuit. The British layout is really little more than a scenic test track, having been built to serve that purpose for *Model Rail* reviews. However, I did take the opportunity to include two stations, simply because I like modelling station buildings. The Canadian side also has a station and two 'flagstop' halts, but its main feature is a 4ft long model of the Kinsol trestle.

The British layout suffered some upheaval with the replacement of one station with a CLASP building, and some accidental damage to the High Street area. Dissatisfaction with the state of the layout was compounded by the use of the open space at one end, which had once been an airfield, as a dumping ground for models that I hadn't bothered to put away!

Early 2026 has seen a major clear-up and a decision to replace the buildings on one station, and to replace the 'airfield' with a small dock area (to force me to complete one of my ship models) and a deer park to make good use of a recently completed gamekeeper's cottage.

However, any decision to do scenic work on the British layout is tempered by the difficulty of access by way of a 'duck under'. This was originally intended to be a lift-up



Cleared ready for new scenery - the former airfield hard-stand is in the foreground.

section but was too complex and instead became a duck under. That was fine when it was built, some 15 years ago, when I was an agile 60-plus-year-old. At 79, I like to minimise the number of times I crawl in and out, and that is not possible when scenic work requires frequent access to materials, water supply and so on.

So I came up with an idea to build the scenery off the layout and to complete the whole section, which is 3ft by 2ft and has scenery up to 3in high, as a lightweight structure that I could build on the dining table. I cast my mind back to my scenic efforts on Egham club's first Canadian layout. We used off-cuts of plaster bandage laid over a web of cards strips fixed across plywood profiles.

My portable scenery plan would use the same system, except that the plywood profiles would be replaced with 5mm foamboard to keep the weight manageable, and, with 'plaster bandage' now available from various sources through model shops, I no longer needed a colleague who worked in a hospital. As a bonus, I could take the whole scenic unit outdoors and photograph it in the garden, which always fascinates, and sometimes confuses, my family!



Photographed in the garden, the new scenery is quite pleasing.

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